

CHECKLIST

Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes, Spanish, 1746-1828
The Women Use Force; The Women Give Courage
(*Las muheres dan valor*)

Number 4 of 80 from the series *The Disasters of War*
(*Los Desastres de la Guerra*), published by the Royal Academy
of Fine Arts of San Fernando, Madrid, Spain, 1863
1810-20

Etching, aquatint, scraping, and burnishing
Gift of Adolph Weil Jr., Class of 1935; PR.991.50.1.4

James Nachtwey, American, born 1948
San Miguel Province, El Salvador
1984

Color photograph
Gift of Hugh J. Freund, Class of 1967; PH.2004.75.4

Marius Jean Antonin Mercie, French, 1845-1916
Gloria Victus! (Glory to the Vanquished)
After 1874

Bronze
Purchased through a gift from Jane and W. David Dance,
Class of 1940; S.999.5.2

Käthe Kollwitz, German, 1867-1945
Uprising (Aufruhr)

Published about 1931 by A. von der Becke, Berlin
1899
Etching on wove paper
Purchased through the Julia L. Whittier Fund; PR.964.70.2

Dmitri Baltermants, Russian, 1912-1990
Tanks Advancing through the Snow
2003

Gelatin silver print
Purchased through a gift from Harley and Stephen C. Osman,
Class of 1956, Tuck 1957; PH.2003.56.45

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HOOD MUSEUM OF ART

Designed by Christina Nadeau, DPMS



Marius Jean Antonin Mercie, *Gloria Victus! (Glory to the Vanquished)*, after 1874, bronze.
Purchased through a gift from Jane and W. David Dance, Class of 1940; S.999.5.2

IMAGES of WAR



Francisco Jose de Goya y Lucientes, *The Women Use Force; The Women Give Courage (Las mujeres dan valor)*, 1810–20, etching, aquatint, scraping, and burnishing. Gift of Adolph Weil Jr., Class of 1935; PR.991.50.1.4

Depicting war is often a challenge for artists because of the huge emotional toll it takes on those who experience it. Capturing war's moments of suffering, bravery, endurance, and even hope is a daunting task. In these works we see the struggle that artists face when confronting these issues. There is a tension among these pieces, which are very different responses to war. Stark, beautiful, and compelling, they shed light upon one another, sharing their artistic approaches despite dramatic thematic differences. References to allegorical and religious figures appear and reappear. Despair, anger, fear, and a raw humanity emanate from the pieces and combine to form a profound and moving picture of war and its victims.

The engravings of Francisco de Goya y Lucientes are at once timeless and firmly grounded in their era. In *Las mujeres dan valor (The Women Give Courage)* (1810–20) Goya uses female figures to comment on the atrocities of the war Spain waged against Napoleonic France. Here, the women, who metaphorically represent the concept of the motherland, take action to defend themselves. The plate references the rape of Spanish women by French soldiers, and the ongoing struggle to defend Spain.

Similarly emphasizing empowerment and agency is Käthe Kollwitz's print *Uprising* (1899). However, while Goya's marks convey panic and action, Kollwitz uses forceful lines to depict the march of peasants to battle in a way that humanizes them by calling attention to their anger, desperation, and individuality. Although Kollwitz claims that she was inspired by a sixteenth-century peasants' war, the work is almost identical to a later print she created depicting a more recent rebellion. In this print, Kollwitz uses a historical lens and an allegorical figure to legitimize the class struggle she portrays. The ethereal and spiritual "Revolution" is physically contrasted with the peasants' sharply rendered individuality.

Gloria Victus (Glory to the Vanquished), a bronze sculpture by Marius Jean Antonin Mercie, features a winged Gloria figure lifting a fallen young soldier to heaven, a reference to the defeated fighters of the 1870–71 Franco-Prussian War. The strong lines of the majestic Gloria contrast with the slack body of the dead soldier, with the human and the superhuman coming together to form an homage to death on the battlefield. Mercie, a French sculptor, created the piece for the Paris Salon of 1874, using these figures mostly to display his considerable talent. The fact that this piece was not designed with a specific incident in mind may be one of the reasons for its marked difference in style from the pieces created from the other artists' personal experiences.

The two photographs have a markedly different impetus. The work of James Nachtwey, one of today's foremost war photographers, is firmly grounded in a specific time and place by its title, *San Miguel Province, El Salvador*. Nachtwey's body of work chronicles areas that are currently in conflict around the globe. His goal is to raise awareness of the impact of war by showing how it affects people in a daily way. Dmitri Baltermants's work is similarly striking, capturing Europe at one of its lowest points in the twentieth century. Baltermants chronicled World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. His greatest work portrays combat on the Russian front, and the photograph included here is a notable example.

These five works were created by artists in different times, working under distinctly different circumstances. They collectively broaden our understanding of both war itself and the diverse approaches artists take when depicting it. One of the most striking aspects of all of the works is their reliance on allegorical and religious symbolism. *Uprising* and *Gloria Victus* both contain allegorical figures, perhaps in an attempt to explain the gravity of war in terms of figures

greater than individual humans. Nachtwey's photograph evokes otherworldly images, as the background figures unconsciously reenact the descent of Christ from the Cross. The photograph epitomizes the adage "life imitates art," because the human figures act out a biblical scene that has moved artists and art viewers for centuries.

While the similarities among these works show us universal aspects of war, their differences demonstrate the diversity of creative genius that artists bring to this theme. The pieces vary in media and style, but Mercie's sculpture in particular stands out. While the four works on paper attempt to demystify war and explore its intricacies, the sculpture does the opposite, elevating the notion of war just as Gloria literally raises the dying soldier. This contrast forces the viewer to ask questions about the language and images people have used to talk about war, both historically and in the present day. As we watch Gloria support a fallen soldier, we might wonder, at what expense does she do this? The other pieces perhaps respond to this very question. The contrast of beautiful rhetoric and a starker, more painful reality deepens our understanding of how war is depicted, viewed, and received in people's lives.

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Käthe Kollwitz, *Uprising (Aufbruch)*, 1899, etching on wove paper. Purchased through the Julia L. Whittier Fund; PR.964.70.2 © 2006 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn

