

A WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE TO DRAW ON

2Years 2Wars

Sergeant Major Douglas Farthing is no ordinary soldier. Out in the field, alongside his military equipment, Sgt Maj Farthing is also armed with a sketchbook, paints and brushes.

With more than 20 years of service - firstly in the Parachute Regiment and now with the Royal Anglians of the Territorial Army - Sgt Maj Farthing has drawn on considerable experience to depict his more recent deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, and to show the world the reality of war from the soldier's perspective.

Already, many of his pictures hang in regimental messes, with several in the National Army Museum

To Sgt Maj Farthing, war art is born in the trenches. His perspective is not just that of an artist but also that of a soldier. His work shows the reality, energy and anticipation of the soldier in the theatre of operation.

He said: "I paint or draw quickly, capturing the essence of a scene, sometimes on an ammo crate, or often in my sketchbook. When I paint a landscape, I look with the eye of a soldier, my focal point becomes the likely enemy firing point; when I paint a soldier, I show him carrying his equipment correctly".

"War art is important. I document the real life events of serving soldiers. Our profession is different to any other and the position you can find yourself in, at a moment's notice, is so different to anything at home. To record these events in art is important" he says. "Yet," he also adds "many of my paintings are about the monotony of being at war".

Born in Suffolk, 42 years ago, Sgt Maj Farthing signed up for life in the military at the age of 16. He learnt his soldiering in Northern Ireland in the late 80s and 90s and kept diaries of his seven tours, but has yet to record what he saw in his art there "because of the many bad memories", including the death of several friends.

He was amongst one of the first British troops to enter the Afghan capital Kabul, in 2002, and noted the beauty of the snow capped mountains surrounding the medieval streets saying "I hope Kabul becomes safe enough for tourism in the future and that I will visit again in more peaceful times".

Leaving the regular army in 2007, Sgt Maj Farthing set up as an artist. He joined the Warehouse studio in Lowestoft, meeting many well known and influential local artists, whom he is grateful to - for both helping him with painting techniques, and moving back into civilian life.

In the meantime, Sgt Maj Farthing's paintings can be seen at Mandell's Gallery in Elm Hill, Norwich.



Mandell's Gallery, founded in 1965, has always been associated with quality and tradition. The gallery now exhibits traditional and contemporary fine art and sculpture

For further information contact 01603 626892 info@mandellsgallery.co.uk www.mandellsgallery.co.uk



DOUGLAS FARTHING

A Soldiers Perspective



Mandell's
Gallery

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