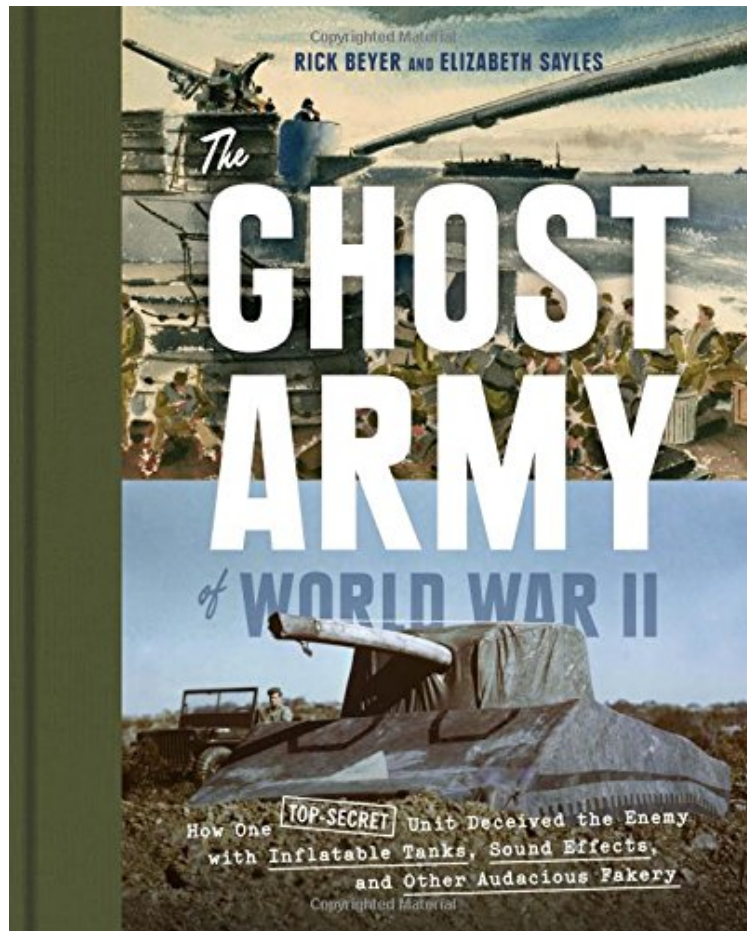


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The Ghost Army of World War II: How One Top-Secret Unit Deceived the Enemy with Inflatable Tanks, Sound Effects, and Other Audacious Fakery

Rick Beyer, Elizabeth Sayles

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Rick Beyer, Elizabeth Sayles : The Ghost Army of World War II: How One Top-Secret Unit Deceived the Enemy with Inflatable Tanks, Sound Effects, and Other Audacious Fakery before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Ghost Army of World War II: How One Top-Secret Unit Deceived the Enemy with Inflatable Tanks, Sound Effects, and Other Audacious Fakery:

46 of 46 people found the following review helpful. A MUST READ FOR ANY FAN OF WWII By RC MayerImagine, captured German maps showing 15,000 Allied troops in a location that there were no troops. Imagine, Nazi's keeping their soldiers out of position opposite what they think are thousand of enemy troops. Imagine, they can hear the US tanks lining up on the opposite riverbank. They can even here the soldiers yell "Hey Private! Put out that

cigarette! There's gas tanks over there!" Imagine, Nazi civilian spys transmitting radio broadcasts to Berlin that they overheard conversations in a pub in from soldiers in 4th Infantry Division that they were moving into Metz this evening. They also saw jeeps with the 4th Infantry Division markings. Nazi radio interceptors also reported to Berlin that they overheard the 4th Infantry radio transmission reporting heavy traffic as they were moving into Metz. All of this was an illusion created by US soldiers that were talented artists, camouflagers, radiomen, soundmen, and actors. Because of their great and successful illusions and deceptions, the 23rd Special troops are more commonly called the Ghost Army of WWII. They saved many American lives while impersonating many different Infantry Divisions including the 4th, 8th, 90th, 75th, 80th, 87th, 95th, 30th, and 70th. They also faked being the 2nd, 5th, and 6th Armored divisions. In most of their 21 operations, the real combat divisions were able to move to a better strategic position. Operating mostly behind the front lines, as the war progressed and their ruses became more successful, they were moved front and center at the crossing of the Rhine, allowing Montgomery's 9th US Army to cross the Rhine with minimal casualties. Their top-secret mission was one of the longest kept US Government secrets of WWII and hence there is very little written about their fascinating role in the war. Rick Beyer and Liz Salyes have put together a magnificently detailed and entertaining book, that not only details the many ruses the Ghost Army perpetrated on the Nazi's, but also follows many of these talented soldiers beyond their war years. Any aspiring or practicing artist will love this read and will feel proud that their profession truly saved lives and contributed to the Allied victory in Europe. The section on "Selected Postwar Biographies" is a fascinating read about many of these soldiers that went onto fame in their private lives. A small sample of these: designing the Ellis Island Museum and WWII Museum in New Orleans, awards from Presidents Obama and Kennedy, dress designer Bill Blass. The book details many covert operations of the 23rd Special Troops that will be exciting news to even the most ardent World War II buff. For example that Patton met with the Ghost Army to request their help to deceive the German while he tried to breakthrough the Nazi grip on Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge. Physically the book is very classy and honors and exemplifies the creative talents of the men of 23rd Special Troops. It is a combination of art and history and contains hundreds of actual war photos, declassified documents from the National Archives, and Ghost Army artwork produced by the soldiers while deployed in Europe. A MUST READ FOR ANY FAN OF WWII. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Not Your Regular Blood-and-Guts. By Janet K. Schwartzkopf. I thoroughly enjoyed this book, although it's not one of the great history books of World War II. However, it does tell an interesting story that almost sounds like it could be a novel. The idea of recruiting people to make a concerted effort to fool the enemy takes the work done by Gen. George Patton to disguise the site of the D-Day landing and carries it onto the battlefields of Europe, where a small group of men capable of changing uniform patches and vehicle markings, deploying rubber tanks and trucks, sending and receiving faked radio messages and making one heck of a lot of noise all combined to confuse the Germans as to just who they were facing across the line, and in what numbers. It's also interesting that some of these men -- Bill Blass and Ellsworth Kelly, for two -- went on to have quite distinguished careers after the war. Their original drawings and the end of the book outlining the subsequent activities of several of the men featured was especially appreciated. It's not a deep read, but it's definitely a fun one, and certainly worthy of a movie -- except there's a lightness to the story that helps remove it from the regular blood-and-guts tales. 3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Good story with a less than stellar presentation. By Havedogwilltravel. I already knew most of the story from watching all or most of the PBS program regarding the excellent work that did in the war. This book filled in many details and characters along with their entertaining sketches. I reduce the stars because of the presentation. I'm not certain which came first, program or book but it looks like it was program. For some much better written details on not these, but other allied deception operations in the Second World War read Ben McIntyre's books.

"The Ghost Army of World War II describes a perfect example of a little-known, highly imaginative, and daring maneuver that helped open the way for the final drive to Germany. It is a riveting tale told through personal accounts and sketches along the way—ultimately, a story of success against great odds. I enjoyed it enormously." – Tom Brokaw. In the summer of 1944, a handpicked group of young GIs—including such future luminaries as Bill Blass, Ellsworth Kelly, Arthur Singer, Victor Dowd, Art Kane, and Jack Masey—landed in France to conduct a secret mission. Armed with truckloads of inflatable tanks, a massive collection of sound-effects records, and more than a few tricks up their sleeves, their job was to create a traveling road show of deception on the battlefields of Europe, with the German Army as their audience. From Normandy to the Rhine, the 1,100 men of the 23rd Headquarters Special Troops, known as the Ghost Army, conjured up phony convoys, phantom divisions, and make-believe headquarters to fool the enemy about the strength and location of American units. Between missions the artists filled their duffel bags with drawings and paintings and dragged them across Europe. Every move they made was top secret and their story was hushed up for decades after the war's end. The Ghost Army of World War II is the first publication to tell the full story of how a traveling road show of artists wielding imagination, paint, and bravado saved thousands of American lives.

"A fascinating read, and a fun one as well. Audacious is the right word for this daring sideshow that protected Patton's

flank and other American soldiers. The original art is superb and frequently humorous. A well-crafted account of the amazing combination of shenanigans and tremendous courage that characterized the Twenty-Third Headquarters Special Troops." - Libby O'Connell, chief historian of the History Channel, author of *The American Plate: A Culinary History in 100 Bites*"World War II was the greatest event in the history of mankind, and although it has been the subject of countless books, documentaries, and academic courses, there is so much still to know. The Ghost Army of World War II describes a perfect example of a little-known, highly imaginative, and daring maneuver that helped open the way for the final drive to Germany. It is a riveting tale told through personal accounts and sketches along the way-ultimately, a story of success against great odds. I enjoyed it enormously." - Tom Brokaw"World War II history buffs will get a charge out of Rick Beyer and Elizabeth Sayles's *The Ghost Army of World War II*, about a top-secret group of GIs who in 1944 deployed rubber tanks, fake artillery and other decoys to distract and mislead the Germans in France. This little-known episode is recounted alongside photographs, memos, maps sketches and other memorabilia." - *Newsday*"What a story! In 1944, an American unit of 1,100 artists, designers, and sound engineers, known as "The Ghost Army," snuck around France, using inflatable tanks, fake street signs, sound-effects records, and other tricks in order to deceive the German army into believing the Allies were somewhere they weren't. The book is full of drawings, paintings, and sketches by the men of the unit. In the end, it's a book about this weird (and successful!) project, but it's also a personal visual record of the last year of the war, executed by soldiers who had been selected for their artistic talent." -- *Slate*"This book is a complete delight. An engaging account of the battlefield sleights of American GI artists during WWII, it is unprecedented in the breadth and detail of its telling. The suspense of its text is enlivened by a wealth of on-scene photographs, artists' sketchbooks, diaries, and other compelling first-person accounts. This is the eyewitness story of the Ghost Army as told by the artists who made it succeed." - Roy R. Behrens, author of *False Colors: Art, Design and Modern Camouflage*"The Ghost Army of World War II is a veritable hive of fascinating information based on sound research. It's apparent that Rick Beyer and Elizabeth Sayles enjoy the subject with a level of dedication and passion that warms the hearts of irascible military historians such as me. I heartily recommend this book." - Martin King, author of *Voices of the Bulge* and *The Tigers of Bastogne*, consultant to the History Channel"The Ghost Army is a unique book in many ways, which is little surprise given its subject; but perhaps the most striking thing about this tome is the fact that it can be enjoyed in two distinct ways. The hardcover book is large - it is of what one would call coffee table proportions, measuring about eight by ten inches - and about 240 pages long. Those pages are an almost even blend of captioned photographs, sketches, maps, graphics, and pure text. You could flip through *The Ghost Army* reading only the captions and looking at the pictures and be left with a decent understanding of what the unit did and who comprised its ranks. Alternately, you could read the prose without glancing at a single image and come away with a thorough grasp of who they were and what they did. But of course *The Ghost Army* is best enjoyed when every word is read and every image appreciated." - *The Manual*"Brings to life a whale of a tale of World War II innovation-one laced with brash creativity. The notion of a special Army unit using dummy equipment, mobile loudspeakers, of?cer impersonations, and foul rumors to deceive German forces seems outlandish, but the tactics worked. This theater-goes-to-war story is finely told and beautifully illustrated-an important contribution." - Gordon H. "Nick" Mueller, president and CEO, the National WWII Museum

About the AuthorHistorian Rick Beyer is a best-selling author, award-winning filmmaker, and popular speaker. He wrote and directed the acclaimed documentary film *The Ghost Army*, which premiered on PBS in 2013.Elizabeth Sayles is the award-winning, best-selling illustrator of more than twenty-five books for children. Her father, William Sayles, was a member of the Ghost Army, and she grew up listening to his war stories.