

Eagle at Taranto: An In-Depth Analysis of Alan Evans' Historical Masterpiece



Alan Evans' *Eagle at Taranto* is a meticulously researched historical painting that depicts one of the most daring and successful naval attacks of World War II. On the night of November 11-12, 1940, British aircraft launched a surprise attack on the Italian fleet in the port of Taranto, crippling several battleships and cruisers. The raid, codenamed "Operation Judgement", was a major victory for the Royal Navy and helped to shift the balance of power in the Mediterranean.

Eagle at Taranto by Alan Evans

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 1696 KB



Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 249 pages
Screen Reader : Supported



Historical Context

In the early years of World War II, Italy was a major naval power with a large fleet of battleships, cruisers, and destroyers. The Italian fleet was based in several ports around the Mediterranean, including Taranto. Taranto was a well-defended port, with anti-aircraft guns and torpedo nets protecting its ships.

The British Royal Navy was determined to neutralize the Italian fleet and prevent it from interfering with Allied operations in the Mediterranean. In early 1940, the Royal Navy began planning a surprise attack on Taranto. The plan was to use aircraft carriers to launch torpedo bombers and dive bombers against the Italian ships.

The Raid

On November 11, 1940, two British aircraft carriers, HMS *Illustrious* and HMS *Formidable*, launched a total of 21 Fairey Swordfish torpedo bombers and 12 Blackburn Skua dive bombers. The aircraft were led by Lieutenant Commander John "Johnny" Walker.

The British aircraft flew over 100 miles to Taranto, arriving at around 11:00 pm. The Italian fleet was caught completely by surprise and was unable to mount an effective defense. The British aircraft launched their torpedoes and bombs, hitting several Italian ships.

The Aftermath

The raid on Taranto was a major success for the Royal Navy. Three Italian battleships and two cruisers were sunk, and several other ships were damaged. The raid crippled the Italian fleet and prevented it from interfering with Allied operations in the Mediterranean.

The raid on Taranto was a turning point in the Mediterranean campaign. It showed that the British Royal Navy was capable of launching successful attacks against heavily defended targets. The raid also helped to boost British morale and gave the Allies hope for victory in the war.

Alan Evans' Painting

Alan Evans' painting *Eagle at Taranto* depicts the raid from the perspective of the British aircraft. The painting shows several Swordfish torpedo bombers flying over the Italian fleet, while in the background, explosions can be seen as the Italian ships are hit by torpedoes and bombs.

Evans' painting is a powerful and evocative depiction of one of the most important naval battles of World War II. The painting is meticulously researched and accurately portrays the events of the raid. Evans' painting is also a beautiful work of art, and it has been praised for its composition and use of color.

Alan Evans' *Eagle at Taranto* is a historical masterpiece that captures the drama and excitement of one of the most important naval battles of World War II. The painting is a powerful reminder of the courage and skill of the British sailors and airmen who fought in the war.

Eagle at Taranto is currently on display at the National Maritime Museum in London.



Eagle at Taranto by Alan Evans

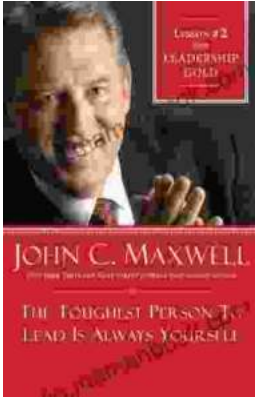
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