



## Francis Bacon: 1909-1992

*Luigi Ficacci*

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## **Francis Bacon: 1909-1992** Luigi Ficacci

Francis Bacon (1909-1992) possessed the rare ability to transform unconscious compulsions into figurative, human-like forms that seem to evoke the raw emotions that bore them. Mixing realism and abstraction, Bacon delves deep beneath the surfaces of things, opening up the human body to reveal the chaos that lies within and struggling with all that is inexplicable. Erotic and grotesquely beautiful is the work of this legendary painter whose haunting, distorted figures have inspired entire generations of painters who seek to emulate his highly original style.

## **Francis Bacon: 1909-1992 Details**

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Author : Luigi Ficacci

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# From Reader Review Francis Bacon: 1909-1992 for online ebook

## Fraser Kinnear says

Not impressed with the crit, it doesn't hold a candle to Robert Hughes or Kirk Varnedoe, but it has all the paintings I like and will be a good accompaniment to the Bacon biography I'm starting.

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## Hasan Makhzoum says

Bacon's art is intriguing as much as amazing.

Some viewers might not admire his 'bizarre' portraits as much as I do, but they surely don't leave them indifferent.

Overall the book is informative and it overviews the creativity/ inspirational concepts/ perspectives/ characteristics etc of Bacon's artistic style, based on the study and analysis of some of his masterpieces.. What I like the most about this series by Taschen is that the edition is beautiful and the numerous images included are wonderfully printed, all for a very reasonable price.

But Ficacci's interpretation of Bacon's artistic characteristics is not as profound and philosophical as Deleuze's analysis of Bacon's conception of art in his essay **The Logic Of Sensation**.

If you're interested to learn more on Bacon's idiosyncratic Art, Deleuze's book is highly recommended. It elaborates on a series of philosophical concepts such as the metaphysical notion of meat (in contrast to Merlau-Ponty's phenomenological notion of the flesh); and the impact of art on our senses, feelings and acts.. Deleuze's central point is that the violence involved in Bacon's paintings ("My painting is not violent, it's life itself that is violent", asserts Bacon) is the "violence of sensation" that is opposed to "the violence of the represented" (the sensational, the cliché?).

Through the violence of sensation, Bacon aims to capture in his paintings the invisible and intensive forces. His contorted figures depict the combat between the invisible forces of becoming, all while taking place within the visible (revealed in the meat and emphasized with vivid colors).

According to Deleuze, Bacon has continuously rejected the dictates of the ideal form. The depictions of human bodies in his paintings reveals his attempts to rethink the figuration of the body outside of the dualist logic dominant in Western art.

Therefore, Bacon disrupts the field of the representations of body:

*Bacon assigns them (the human bodies) a transgressive character. He challenges the set of boundaries that shape the body in representation and in so doing bring out or rather set free the fundamental hysteria of painting. Deleuze conceives of Bacon's bodies as acting out a form of hysteria that leads them towards a non-representational pure presence.*

*The hysteria of Bacon's paintings indicates a breakdown in the conventional sufficiency of representational norms. The hysterical body in Bacon's paintings is stripped of any representational functions assigned by the cultural order (..)In other words he traces from the classical figuration towards the Lyotardian figural.*

- [Mu?ge Telci]

However, Deleuze's essay on Bacon was criticized by many scholars and critics. [For an interesting article that synthesizes his theory and criticizes his arguments in favor of sensation as the primary modality of art:

<http://www.artnet.com/magazineus/revi...>].

If you also like Kundera's literary essays as much as I do (but much less his novels), read the unexpected analogy he makes between Bacon (who btw has disapproved it in an interview after reading it) and Beckett in his collection of articles titled **Encounter**.

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### **Martin McDonald says**

Possibly one of the worst books on art I have ever read. The high-brow academic style of the writing is almost impenetrable and largely incomprehensible as well as totally lacking in any genuine analysis of the paintings, let alone Bacon's techniques or inspirations. And, with such a small format, the illustrations are interesting but not very useful. If you want a book on Francis Bacon for his art then buy something in a larger format and if you're interested in him as a person then *The Gilded Gutter Life of Francis Bacon* by Daniel Farson is a far better read.

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### **Spooky Hokum says**

It hurts me to rate this book so low. Francis Bacon has been my favorite painter since I was 6. The images presented here are all gorgeous, and worth the price of the book alone, but Ficacci's writing is painfully stilted and pedantic. Typical academic drivel. They should have sent a poet.

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### **S. M. says**

Great artwork of course, and some good interpretations, but this book was just too crippled by the writing's pompous tone.

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### **Agate says**

i loved the paintings but wanted to stab myself reading the author's comments. to me they seemed pretentious and far fetched

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### **Jeffrey says**

Disappointing overall because Ficacci is a writer who likes to hear himself talk but doesn't really help the lay reader understand the complexities of Bacon's work - too much academic rhetoric and not enough explanation which is what I needed - I'm going to try the Phaidon Focus book and see if it is any better

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## **Tim Newey says**

"Wonderful" - Account - Francis Bacon - Delightful - "Lovely"!!..

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## **Deborah says**

I bought this book after viewing the 'Terror and Beauty' Bacon and Moore exhibition at the Art Gallery of Ontario. I wish they had sold tiny copies of the exhibit descriptions because they would have been a lot more entertaining than this book. The exhibition was stunning, thought provoking, gave me an appreciation of Bacon that I had never thought I'd develop (I went for Moore not Bacon) and I was searching for a book that would describe his pieces in conjunction with some biographical context, just as the exhibition had done. I am not sure if the fault lies with Ficacci's writing, the translation, or both but the overall feel is turgid. Many, many, many words are used and yet nothing much is said. The best parts of the book are the illustrations and the short 3 page biography at the end. They are the only reason I gave the book 2 stars. Disappointing.

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## **Fish Furman says**

Francis bacon was definitely an oddball, but nonetheless talented. Of all the books I read about him this is my favorite.

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## **Kitty says**

"Erotic and grotesquely beautiful" just about sums him up. My favourite artist, by far.

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## **Claudia says**

I LOVE BACON

NOMNOMNOM

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## **Becca Du says**

"Bacon" is a book written for artists. I love Francis Bacon. I love the horror in his work, the physicality morphed into pure emotions, the combination of geometric shapes with abstract humanoids and the use of surprising colors and insolation in a space.

Yet reading this book felt like a chore. It felt very snobby and 'well you just don't understand art enough' in its style. I had to apply extra effort to reach the end of overly complicated sentences. The author also ignores obvious symbolism in vertain paintings he writes about like the Jewish star in 'Painting 1946' and the Nazi

armband in 'Crucifixion.' I was able to extract some interesting insights into specific paintings but overall felt talked down to. It sounded like the author wanted to show off his intelligence and 'deep understanding of art' more than give the reader insight and/or enjoyment of Bacon's work.

I enjoyed being able to put some of Bacon's work into sequence and see the evolution of form and styles. Though I also wished certain pieces were discussed which were completely left out such as 'Study After Velazquez's portrait of Pope Innocent X' or 'In Memory of George Dyer.' Overall, glad I have the book for the paintings but not impressed by the text.

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