

# The Influences of Heidegger's Philosophy of Beauty in Francis Bacon's Paintings

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i1/20436>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBSS/v14-i1/20436

**Published Date:** 05 January 2024

## Abstract

Heidegger's existentialism is generally considered the one ideological root of modern Western art. It has significantly influenced the formation and development of modern art which reflects people's mistrust and hopelessness toward capitalist society as well as their alienation in a time of social crisis. In this study, it will look into Francis Bacon's paintings as a representation of modern Western art. This study aims to identify that Francis Bacon's paintings were influenced by Heidegger's philosophy of beauty. The document review and images are used to obtain data for the investigation. Visual analysis and thematic analysis are used to analyze the data collected. The findings showed that Francis Bacon's paintings are in accord with significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty which are pursuing the truth, existence, and transcendence. The research findings confirm the significant influence of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty on paintings and provide important insights into understanding the diverse phenomena of beauty.

**Keywords:** Philosophy of Beauty, Heidegger, Truth, Existence, Transcendence.

## Introduction

Within the realm of human spiritual culture, there is a tight tie between philosophy and art. Philosophy is a discipline that focuses on worldviews and methodology, primarily studying the universal principles that govern nature, human society, and human thought. Philosophy and art embody the highest peaks of the human spiritual realm, with philosophy representing the highest point of human reason and art the height of human sensibility (Peng, 2022). Jixiang (2022), a professor at Peking University, advanced the influence of philosophy on art. It first shows up in the ways that it influences artists. Certain philosophical ideas always have an impact on artists when they work on their artwork, whether on purpose or accidentally. Second, the influence of philosophy on art is also reflected in the emergence of many philosophical works of art. Third, it is reflected in its ability to promote the formation of

artistic trends. Art also has some influence on philosophy at the same time. Both artists and philosophers can draw inspiration from one another's ideas. Philosophers usually incorporate their opinions about art into their theoretical frameworks.

In Western philosophy, I choose Heidegger (1889-1976). Martin Heidegger was a German philosopher who is best known for his contributions to existentialism. He is among the most important and influential philosophers of the 20th century (Miller et al., 2020). In the book entitled *The Western Aesthetic History Course*, Professor Li Xingchen (2021) said that *"Heidegger is the founder of existentialism"*. According to Professor Li Xingchen (2021), Heidegger believed that the value of art lies in revealing the truth in Heidegger's speech on the origin of works of art. Heidegger's aesthetic social theme is to oppose the rule of technology over man, save the modern world and restore the real human nature. Heidegger (2018) expressed in his book entitled *Being and Time*, as a "being", people face nothingness. The reason why people suffer is that people are facing an absurd world, and people can only have angst and fear. It is angst and fear that reveal people's real existence. Existentialism advocates exploring life and asking people's living conditions in artworks.

In Western art, according to Sylvester (2016); Francis Bacon (1909-1992) is a significant British painter of the twentieth century. His paintings are famous for rough, violent, distorted, deformed images. The common image of Bacon's painting is the combination of man and animal which metaphors alienation of people, and the distorted faces and bodies reveal the pain and helplessness of human beings. Bacon often used a closed space to indicate a dilemma of human survival, and metaphorically implied a series of psychological emotions such as alienation, loneliness, fear, and so on (Sylvester, 2016). Dr. Liu Wenwen (2017) who has been committed to the study of Bacon mentioned that Bacon's paintings express a kind of violence, despair, or angst, show that human beings exist in an unrealistic and absurd world without faith and morality, and further emphasize the relationship between Bacon's art and existentialism. In the book *Francis Bacon: Painting, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis* (Ware & Caygill, 2019), the author states that Bacon is often associated with deconstruction, because his work appeared to many as one of the most convincing artistic versions of the Heideggerian destruction. It is also agreed by Arya (2012), who mentioned in her book entitled *Francis Bacon: Critical and Theoretical Perspectives*, that existentialism became popularized in European milieu, at the same time, Bacon had established himself as a painter, a fact that further encourages the parallel between Bacon's art and existentialism. Arya (2012) said, *"The similarity of iconography between Francis Bacon's art and existentialist literature about the single figure who contemplates destiny in unfamiliar surroundings and with no escape route has prompted critics to think about his work in relation to existentialism"*.

The purpose of this research is to identify that Francis Bacon's paintings were influenced by Heidegger's philosophy of beauty. This research aims to explore the significant influence of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty on paintings, and deepen the understanding on the essence of beauty of Heidegger's philosophy.

### **Literature Review**

This section consists of two major parts. In the first part, the significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty will be listed. In the second part, a general introduction to Francis Bacon which includes biodata and Francis Bacon's contribution will be listed.

**The Significant Elements of Heidegger's Philosophy of Beauty**

There are three significant elements of Beauty in Heidegger's Philosophy of Beauty. These are: firstly, pursue the truth. Heidegger (2022) clearly pointed out that beauty is a way for truth to occur as enlightenment. Beauty, like truth and goodness, originates from the existence of ontology. It is merely a means to reveal reality and direct existence, a means by which various aestheticians approach their own domains. It is a language that tells us the truth while simultaneously revealing itself. Western modern aesthetics are characterized by their inherent, subjective, dynamic, and non-utilitarian qualities. When people investigate beauty, they often find connections between their inner will, life impulses, subconscious instincts, emotions, experiences, existence, and other things. Deny the social and political roles, the role of moral education, or the joyful role of beauty's image. Isolate beauty from the purportedly external universality and commonality of social politics, morality, and history. They do not look for the causes of beauty in the objective world or external objects. Instead, they believe that beauty is the result of pure personal emotions and experiences. Modern people focus on defining beauty from the subjective feelings within themselves, and this subjective feeling is often a pure and irrational instantaneous intuitive feeling and experience of an individual. They view individual's unique feelings and experiences as beautiful and refuse to accept a certain eternal and objective standard of beauty, making modern people's aesthetic concepts more subjective, irrational, and complex, presenting a non-ordered characteristic. The value orientation of modern aesthetics is not an order, harmony, and unity, but rather a destruction of order and unity. It is no longer a static harmony, but a dynamic beauty with obvious anti-traditional characteristics. This beauty is a reflect of the rapid pace of change and life experienced by modern people, as well as of their living circumstances following the loss of some shared ideals and the strain that technology has placed on them. The battle and resistance to conventional pressure is also a manifestation of contemporary, deeply conscious individual consciousness. It is a true manifestation of people's spiritual survival status and represents the contradiction and suffering in people's inner spiritual world under the conditions of extraordinarily wealthy material affluence and advanced technological civilization in modern times (Lin & Kou, 2004).

Secondly, existence. The basic spirit of Heidegger's literary and artistic aesthetics is humanistic care, which should pay attention to humanity and also face the problem of harmonious coexistence between humans and nature. Heidegger's aesthetic thought has completely broken free from the constraints of traditional Western metaphysics, mainly focusing on the overall survival situation of humanity. Heidegger believed that the fundamental nature of science and technology was hidden by traditional Western metaphysics, and what is even more terrifying is that we humans have not yet realized this dangerous situation. Science and technology have two sides to them. They can be employed, on the one hand, to improve material well-being and advance production. The significance of human subjectivity and subjective factors in social development is rapidly increasing due to the phenomenal growth of modern industry and technology, which has demonstrated and encouraged the development of human subjectivity, advanced higher standards for human development, the expression of human creative spirit, and opened up enormous possibilities; on the other hand, the enormous advancement of contemporary technology since the 18th century has brought about a variety of negative effects due to an excess of scientific information and an overuse of scientific procedures. It is also agreed by Andrew Feenberg (2005), in his book *Heidegger and Marcuse*, he stated new dilemmas emerge in a society

reconstructed around these new technical means. Specific technological successes and failures are meaningless because our reliance on technology itself leads to global disasters. Heidegger has reflected most deeply on this situation. The true state of a person is concealed, so their true existence should be a continuous process of removing this obscuration and moving toward clarity. So, art and beauty are the revelation, illumination, and opening up of the true and clear state of human existence. Heidegger's aesthetic theory connects human existence with beauty closely, while existentialists frequently see human existence as a painful, absurd, and lonely existence. Thus, beauty and art have become the revelation of human suffering, absurdity, and lonely existence.

In addition, many contemporary aestheticians no longer see beauty or art as directly educating or providing pleasure to people. According to Russian formalist Shklovsky, the purpose of beauty or art is to reawaken people's emotions because modern society leaves them feeling emotionally detached. In order to create beauty, the artists intentionally change, alter, and invert objects that people are accustomed to seeing as part of the defamiliarization process. People are shocked by this. Uncomfortable and unfamiliar in order to draw people in, maintain their attention, and accomplish the goal of bringing people's acute awareness back. When something is still close, consistent, and conforms to expectations, it is difficult for modern people to catch its beauty. The German philosopher Marcuse believed that due to the alienation of human beings in modern society into numb one-sided individuals completely dominated by material desires and deprived of their instincts, art is to cultivate new feelings in the form of astonishing beauty to liberate people, save people, and save society (Lin & Kou, 2004).

Thirdly, transcendence. There are three elements: first, nothingness. According to the book *Heidegger and Nietzsche Blond* (2010), Heidegger asserts that he is explicating the essence of the nothing (and hence being) owing to it being a condition for the emergence of beings. The essence of the nothingness comprises of transcendence. Consequently, nihilation is the transcendence of the nothingness, and the essence of the nothingness - that which separates it from all other entities or nonentities - consists in revealing its existence through transcendence. The nothingness is required to indicate its presence through the activity of nihilation. Second, to find an ideal spiritual homeland. After addressing the meaning of existence, Heidegger raised a question: why is human existence concealed? He responds that technological advances and industrial civilization have hidden and even caused humans to lose their existence. Of course, he does not fully reject technology and oppose it; rather, he encourages appropriate and moderate use. Only by utilizing technology in harmony can one reside on the earth poetically and return to their spiritual homeland. Returning to the spiritual home places more emphasis on the preservation and restoration of the natural environment than on constant conquest and control. Heidegger thought that poetic dwelling was a real existence, involving the restoration of all things to their original state and the reunification of humanity with nature. Heidegger integrated art into philosophy because he believed that human poetic dwelling and the possibility of returning to one's spiritual homeland could only be achieved through poetry and art. Third, about death. Death is the ultimate state of existence, according to Heidegger. The heuristic function of Being-towards-the-end is to reveal Dasein's temporality. It is also agreed by Levine (2008), that in this impending character of death, it is present, present as my ownmost possibility. Hence, death is not understood existentially if I understand it simply as the ending of Dasein, someday, someplace, due to

some cause. The ending that we have in view when we speak of death does not signify Dasein's Being-at-an-end but a Being-towards-the-end. Thus, death is a structural determinant of Dasein wherever and however it exists. The average individual immerses themselves in daily life in an attempt to avoid death due to a fear of mortality. Death permits humans to truly exist, and only when people gaze directly at their death can they reveal their possibilities. It forces us to view people as physical beings with finite chances of surviving and existing. Some people also believe that such survival beliefs and practices may induce a sense of urgency in people, preventing them from living in a condition of survival, minimizing death and its impending arrival, and ultimately making them feel comfortable to go to the end of life. According to Heidegger's dialectical analysis, only by comprehending death can one comprehend life; only by recognizing the limits of existence can one comprehend its limitless growth. The so-called infinity of one's development is contained within the limitations of one's existence.

### **Francis Bacon**

Francis Bacon is a legendary artist who influenced art history and set the trend in the 20th century. According to the book *Francis Bacon: The Power to Break the Rules* expounds on Bacon's complete life experience and artistic trajectory from the 1920s designed stage to the late 1990s through Peyré (2022) who was Bacon's best friend and the book's author. This book is based on the artist's real experience, from the perspective of philosophy, poetry, literature, and other aspects, that complete analysis of Bacon's more than 100 paintings, at the same time with a detailed interpretation of Bacon's unknown story, so as to present Bacon's art world and spiritual world comprehensively and systematically, restore the artist who is closest to the truth--Francis Bacon. Much of the data is original and authoritative because the author, Yves Pell, had close personal contact with Bacon. The book combines his understanding and way of thinking about philosophy, poetry, and art creation in the process of the interpretation of Bacon's many paintings. It is known that Francis Bacon was born on October 28, 1909, in Dublin, Ireland. Both Francis Bacon's parents were English. His father was a horse trainer. Moving became commonplace for him because his father had a job in Ireland. He was always changing residences between Britain and Ireland. Bacon had a strained connection with his father. The education in Bacon's family was fairly rigid. Bacon's father was quite disrespectful and frequently irate. The child's heart will be greatly impacted by this. There will be deficiencies in self-confidence, dignity, and interpersonal communication with others.

Moreover, Bacon's childhood issues with homosexuality weren't given enough attention. When Bacon's father saw him trying on his mother's underwear in front of the mirror, he even whipped him with a horsewhip. He got into so many violent fights that he had to leave his home. Bacon could not withstand his father's scolding. Not to mention that Bacon's childhood asthma attacks caused his father to loathe him. Although Francis Bacon's parents invited his tutor to instruct him at home, he mostly studied lonely by himself. Bacon did not go to school like other kids did. The fact that Bacon's family disapproved of him being a painter and he had a strained relationship with them throughout his early years which he talked about his family many times in the Interview. Bacon made it apparent that he didn't like his father anymore due to his bossy and strict temperament, and criticism of others without any remorse. He was a frustrated, stubborn, and neurotic person. Bacon's relationship with his father was tense. Later, his ability to make a difference was due to the money he earned through painting. When Bacon was younger, he had severe asthma. His

father thought that his introverted and asthmatic son was not tough at all, especially after his attempts to train him to be a horse trainer had failed. Following the violent debate, 16-year-old Bacon traveled alone to England in 1926 and began working there as well as in France, Germany, and other nations. Bacon was exempted from military service because of asthma after the outbreak of the Second World War, which launched his career as a professional painter.

In addition to having a family without love, Bacon also lives in a turbulent social milieu. Many biographies about Bacon have recorded Bacon's family and the complex environment of his life. His family's life was disrupted by the political unrest and violence that resulted in Ireland's independence at the time because Ireland had been dominated by the British since before his birth. The First World War took place between 1914 and 1918. The Second World War, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, had a profound effect on humanity, particularly after it started in Europe. Bacon caught up with the two world wars. He saw the country being destroyed by the war, the economy being in a depression, people being in terrible condition, and many injustices. Additionally, Bacon lived through the Nazi Holocaust, the atomic bombing, the Spanish Civil War, and more. Bacon experienced anxiety, violence, and painful sensory experiences like blood streaming during this series of bloody and horrific historical periods. This is one of the reasons why could see images of violence, anxiety, and screaming in Bacon's artworks. Bacon represented these painful feelings in his later paintings truthfully, leaving the past events and painful memories forever. After people deviated from their original beliefs and mixed with the plot of human nature and animalism, Bacon's paintings just found a reasonable explanation for all these distorted scenes and undertook salvation. In the book *Francis Bacon: Painting, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis*, the author states that: *"Bacon's painting would appear unchangeable, faithful to their normal features, while faces and bodies found themselves systematically distorted due to their secret mutability. The means that Bacon employed to project his acquired concepts in his paintings was to subvert the brains inherited concepts of what faces and bodies should look like. Further: Bacon violated and subverted deliberately the brain template for registering faces and bodies"* (Ware & Caygill, 2019). The distortion of faces and bodies was systematically created by Bacon out of the destruction. The demise of spiritual belief following World War II, as well as the depression and even the craziness of people's hearts, are well captured in Bacon's artworks. Around this same period, Europe too began to decline and suffered severe economic setbacks. Some countries were even more depressed after losing. We seemed to enter the post-war era through Bacon's paintings. The artist, and artworks all inevitably carry the traces of their respective eras.

In the President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts Wieland Schmied's book *Francis Bacon* (1996), the author evaluated him: *"At heart, Bacon is an abstract painter, a painter who makes figurative pictures, but who does so without sacrificing any of the artistic freedom achieved by abstract art. These paintings are about Bacon's own experience, about the fund of content accumulated in the course of a long and eventful life. For him, the painting process and the life process are of a piece. His life is at once the subject, the pursuit and the goal of the painting process. For Bacon, art and life have a shared content, giving meaning and form to one another via a continual reciprocal exchange. The identity of the painting process with its object is therefore repeated at the level of the relationship between the work and the*

*artist's entire existence. The goal of the process of making is not just the individual picture. It is also the epiphany of the artist, the final self-actualization of the painter Francis Bacon."*

## **Method**

This section consists of two major parts. The first part will conduct a visual analysis of Francis Bacon's paintings using the Feldman Method of Art Criticism, and make points from the perspective images, painting language, and nihilism. The second part will conduct a thematic analysis to find the meanings of the paintings more systematically according to the results of visual analysis, and make points. Then, the results are to prove that Francis Bacon's paintings were influenced by Heidegger's philosophy of beauty.

Visual analysis is a method of understanding art that focuses on an artwork's visual elements such as color, line, texture, scale, etc. In its strictest definition, it is a description and explanation of visual structure for its own sake. Yet the purpose of visual analysis can also be to recognize the choices that an artist made in creating the artwork, as well as to better understand how the formal properties of an artwork communicate ideas, content, or meaning. Visual analysis is often used as a starting point for art historical writing. For this method, I will choose the Feldman Method of Art Criticism (1994): The Feldman method can complete the in-depth study of a classic painting from different perspectives so as to obtain a comprehensive interpretation and judgment of the paintings step by step in the process of appreciation and comparison. It will help me to overcome the bias in painting appreciation and study it with critical thinking. Edmund Feldman developed a four-step method for evaluating a work of art, firstly, description. Make a list of the visual qualities of the work that are obvious and immediately perceived. Secondly, analysis. Focus on the form aspect of elements of art, principles of design, and other formal considerations: exaggeration, composition, etc. Thirdly, interpretation. Propose ideas for possible meaning based on evidence. Viewers project emotions, feelings, and intentions onto the work. Fourthly, judgment. That is the evaluation of work and discussing the overall strength of the work (Feldman, 1994).

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006) in the book entitled *Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology*, as " *A method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data in (rich) detail*". They developed six stages for thematic analysis: firstly, familiarize the data and identify items; secondly, generate codes which are pithy labels that capture the interesting data; thirdly, generate themes and gather all coded data relevant to each theme, select vivid and compelling examples of data for each theme; fourthly, review potential themes; fifthly, define and name themes; sixthly, producing the report about the final analysis and findings.

## **Results and Discussion**

### **Visual analysis on Francis Bacon's paintings**

This section will employ the Feldman Method of Art Criticism which includes description, analysis, interpretation, and judgment, to explore Francis Bacon's paintings, then make points from the perspective images, painting language, and nothingness.



**Figure 1:** Study for a head. 26 x 22 in. (66 x 56 cm). Oil and sand on canvas. 1952.

**Figure 2:** Study for a portrait. 26 x 22 in. (66 x 56 cm). Oil on canvas. 1952.

### Description

The best theme of Francis Bacon's works is without a doubt the several papal paintings he produced between the 1950s and 1960s, which are based on Velasquez's Pope Innocent X as shown in Figures 1 and 2. The screaming mouth, a crucial facial element of the pope's image, is one of several important themes in Bacon's papal paintings. In numerous variations of this well-known painting, Bacon purposefully gave Pope Innocent X a ridiculous appearance. The Pope appears to be very lonely in this painting as he sits on the chair as shown in figures 1, 2, and 3. He is stretching his neck, opening his mouth and yelling loudly. Bacon declared that he would make an effort to visualize a specific emotion. By creating a waterfall-like screen and using flowing oil painting strokes, Bacon's portrait's frenzied emotion is also represented. In front of the Pope is a fence. His rough treatment confused and frightened the audience.



**Figure 3:** Head VI. 36 ¾ x 30 ¼ in. (91.4 x 76.2 cm). Oil on canvas. 1949.

**Figure 4:** Portrait of Pope Innocent X. 140 x 120 cm. Oil on canvas. 1650. Diego Velázquez

### Analysis

Bacon worked on his pope paintings, variations as shown in Figures 1, 2, and 3 on Velázquez's magnificent portrait of Pope Innocent X as shown in Figure 4, for over twenty years. He was already exploring the idea while in the South of France in late 1946. The first surviving version (Head VI) dates from late 1949, and he finally stopped in the mid-1960s. Bacon changed the Pope described by Velasquez as seeming assured and at ease into a victim with an open mouth who screamed like a ghost. The amusing representation of the Pope appears to be shaking uncontrollably, as if he were chained to the electric chair, propelled by both external forces and an inner spirit. Bacon's execution by electric chair or the helpless scream of the



Pope—who was in a dilemma, had no personality, no reason, and was tortured—replaced the timeless tranquility and serenity of Velasquez's image of the Pope.



Figure 5: Russian Films, the scene of a nurse opening her mouth and shouting in The Battleship Potemkin, 1925.

### Interpretation

Francis Bacon mentioned in his interview with Sylvester (2016) that “I hope to make my painting more and more artificial, more distorted. The more you can make it artificial, the more likely you are to make it appear to be real”. It explains how the image of an artificial entity formed through distortion, isolation, and display, has strengthened its reality and believes that realism should be reinterpreted. He employs the photograph in his painting. The decorating, preaching, entertainment and other functions of traditional painting are rapidly replaced by photography developed from its initial recording function to an art medium with independent methods and a new art form. Photography has the power to fix and enlarge the distant reality. As a result, painters started to consider utilizing photographs in their art. They would portray the dynamic photographs that were taken in the form of paintings. They would capture the reality of painting expression in addition to the reality of photography. According to the book Francis Bacon: The Logic of Sense, the author Deleuze (2007), a French contemporary postmodernist philosopher, said "In modern painting, a large number of photos and pictures have occupied the canvas before painters began to work. They invade and besiege modern painting". In other words, whether or not painters embrace or reject these images, the age of images has arrived, and images have influenced painters' vision. Since the middle of the 19th century, when the camera was invented, painting has been greatly impacted.

On the one hand, artists can imitate and excavate the new observations of photography on reality based on photos and academic realism skills. On the other hand, many painters, such as impressionists, expressionists, and modernists, started to consider the distinctiveness of painting language in an effort to develop a distinct aesthetic value by separating themselves from photographs. Bacon used photographs as the basis for several of his paintings. For this reason, he collected a substantial collection of photographs and images from publications, including family portraits, images from television and film, paintings by well-known artists like Velazquez, Picasso, and Van Gogh, photographs from newspapers and magazines, and book illustrations. These diverse and intricate picture elements serve a transitional function in the creation of Bacon's paintings by reflecting reality, war, or concealed intimate experience. Bacon drew inspiration from the images and incorporated entirely distinct figures into his paintings. Through the dislocation of illusion and reality, as well as the characters' helplessness and isolation in the limited area, Bacon brought the

paintings into a previously claustrophobic space, thereby defining the manifestation of human existence. Pictures with political significance and a clear reference purpose, as well as those with scientific value but no aesthetic taste, such as X-ray films used in medical research, human anatomy, and action pictures depicting human decomposition in sports, were all selected by Bacon as the materials for his paintings. In terms of the usage of images, Bacon dislikes splicing or tracing images directly, but he has a definite subject and aims to illustrate reality by giving the utilized image a new appearance.

As shown in Figure 5, Soviet filmmaker Eisenstein filmed the battleship *Potemkin* in 1925 (Ware & Caygill, 2019). It primarily portrays the revolutionary tale of the proletariat's struggle against oppressive rule. The Tsar's army descended the *Odyssey* ladder in 1905 to subdue the sailors who fought on the *Potemkin* battleship and shot them madly. This is the most iconic and impactful scene in the movie. A nurse pulling a baby carriage received a fatal blow to her right eye and started bleeding. She yelled horrified and in pain, opening her mouth widely, and the Pince-nez fell off her face. Bacon watched the film in 1935 and has watched it repeatedly since then. According to the *Interviews with Francis Bacon*, Sylvester (1995) mentioned that the image Bacon used was a photo of a nurse shouting from the *Battleship Potemkin*, Bacon replied: "I was also influenced by Eisenstein's film, the *Potemkin* and the *Odessa* set sequence which is a wonderful shot of a nurse screaming. That was an impressive film I saw before I started painting. For a while, I hoped without any special psychological factors, that one day I could paint the best human scream. I have never done it well. Eisenstein had greater success than I did". In the series of *Pope's* theme paintings, Bacon integrated the image of the nurse into the deformed image of *Innocent X* as shown in figures 1, 2, and 3. The *Pope* opened his mouth widely, exposed his teeth, and the two irregular ellipses drawn with thin lines outside his eye sockets suggested the connection with the image of the nurse, screaming in terror with the broken Pince-nez. According to Martin Hammer (2014), Bacon said: "It can be used as a highly subjective record of the painful emotions experienced at a period through the combining of photographs. There may be methods for making some things more interesting and realistic, similar to how someone may experience a historical record".

### **Judgement**

We will never know if Bacon's scream indicates despair, fury, misery, agony, sexual bliss, or gasping for air. In this way, Francis Bacon entered the scene just like all humans do. However, he also made an effort to guarantee that his own primal scream would be as much as possible stripped of each and every unequivocal meaning, devoid of a clear sense, so that it could erupt from the canvas as a pure sensation of lived experience, as unadulterated life force.

The acclaimed reputation of Spanish art in Britain at the time may possibly be responsible for Bacon's decision to use the *Pope* as a motif and his replication of Velasquez's artwork. Reynolds also actively supported pure artistic taste and ideals in the 18th century, championed grand style, and vigorously valued Renaissance and ancient Greek and Roman art. Bacon declared his interest in anti-traditional culture, another aspect of British visual art history, rather than attempting to make a direct connection with it. The ironic, sometimes grotesque style contrasts with the sublime and epic creative perspective, creating an anti-tradition that is taken to its logical conclusion in Bacon's paintings. Bacon's painting is not only

a deviation but also a unique reinterpretation of grand style. From the image of Bacon, the Pope has indeed become an ordinary and even anti-hero figure.

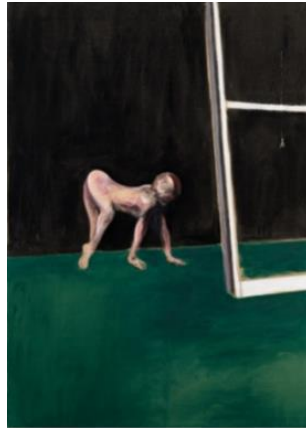


Figure 6: Paralytic child walking on all fours from Muybridge. 78 x 56 in. (198 x 142 cm). Oil on canvas. 1961.

### Description

In the painting, as shown in Figure 6, the distorted human figure that we previously observed on Bacon's canvas takes on a three-dimensional form in space. A naked, lone zoomorphic figure crawls clumsily on limbs that are too big for its body. The figure is put against a pitch-black background, suggesting that it might be an animal in need of protection who is afraid of being attacked by a predator. And perhaps this predator, as suggested by the open window blind on the right side of the painting—is none other than you and me, the viewer. Although Bacon agrees with some of Freud's assertions that the human animal is a terrible beast by nature, a closer examination reveals that his paintings nevertheless contain a great deal of tenderness behind the screams and mutilations.

### Analysis

Francis Bacon once said in one of his well-known interviews with David Sylvester, Francis Bacon remarks: “we are meat, we are potential carcasses. If I go into a butcher’s shop, I always think it’s surprising that I wasn’t there instead of the animal.” In the butcher’s shop, as Bacon continues, we “see how beautiful meat can be”, but we are also reminded of the whole horror of life. Francis Bacon draws inspiration from a photograph taken by British photographer Eadweard Muybridge, *Paralyzed Infant* as shown in Figure 7. It is a photo from one of the renowned series in which Muybridge chronicles the movement of humans and animals. Bacon attempts to understand the movements of the human body by carefully studying the series. His figures take on a lifelike quality thanks to the moving snapshot effect, which condenses a series of events into a single picture. Bacon demonstrates why it is difficult to understand life from just one perspective.

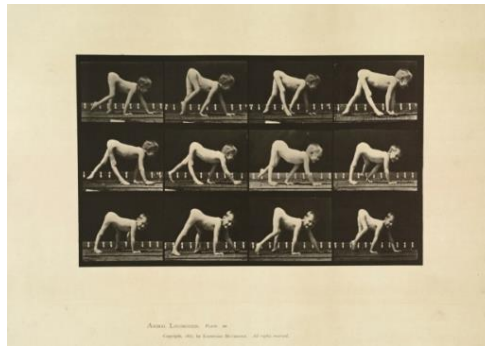


Figure 7: Animal locomotion. Plate 539. Photograph by. Muybridge, Eadweard. 1887.

### Interpretation

The representation of individuals in Bacon's paintings is a noteworthy aspect. Figures are frequently warped and blurry, with distorted and malformed bodies. The human body is still largely complete in his early works. The body is simply a portion of the body in many later paintings. The depiction of the body in Bacon's paintings is consistent with his creative goal of attempting to accurately capture emotions. In addition to serving as the vehicle for the human spirit and thought, the body is always in motion as a result of how we perceive the world. The sense of the body has become the most essential existence in human sensory activities. The monsters in Bacon's paintings which are half human and half animal as shown in Figure 6, are the truest expression of the alienated people, expressing the various alienation, absurdity, and chaos in the European wartime and post-war society. Bacon blends cruel comedy with a callous nightmare in his depiction of sexual desire, violence, and decay, while the characters' animal essence is subdued and hidden beneath their dignified appearance.

Bacon investigated the significance of human innate behavior and stressed the most basic emotion in human nature through the study of animals in frail, furious, and agitated states. The static posture of the man and beast figures in the painting is evident regardless of their inability to communicate or move. Nonetheless, the artist attempts to create a strong appearance of life in this frozen state and to allow the frantic emotion to suddenly burst. Therefore, according to the book entitled Francis Bacon: Full Face and In Profile (Leiris, 1983), Bacon's paintings reflect the sober reflection of people living in an era filled with terror but still in lyrical turmoil. In this case, perhaps those who share Bacon's experience will feel resonance when they view his paintings.

### Judgement

Bacon's emphasis on the body is not only a change in the artistic expression itself, but also in line with the broader changes in philosophy and social and cultural trends of thought. According to him, the distorting depiction of a figure's appearance contains the essence or reality of that subject. His deformed faces and vanishing bodies are not abstract in any way; rather, they are a method of getting to the real through the artificial, which is paradoxically more real than reality itself. In the book Francis Bacon: Painting, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis (Ware & Caygill, 2019), the author states that So, what exactly is this reality that the painting aims to depict is nothing less than the reality of transience. According to the book Francis Bacon: New Studies Bacon & Harrison, (2009), Bacon said that what I wanted to illustrate is

not the human condition, but everyone's reaction to their times. This emotion has universality to the entire human destiny and mankind.



Figure 8: Man in blue. 60 x 46 in. (152.5 x 117 cm). Oil on canvas. 1954.

Figure 9: Man in blue II. 59  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 45  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (152 x 116.5 cm). Oil on canvas. 1954.

### Description

The two paintings as shown in Figures 8 and 9 belong to the series Man in Blue. We find the man alone at the bar. He holds himself rather than sexily cradling a martini. His face is a swipe of paint, the features indistinguishable against the dark blurred background. The setting is the Imperial Hotel, Henley-on-Thames in Oxfordshire, England. Bacon had run away from his abusive partner, Peter Lacy. Bacon calls Lacy the love of his life and remarks that being physically and completely in love with someone is the same as having a serious illness. Knowing this makes it more challenging to determine if we are being seduced. Is Bacon out cruising? Is this man frightening him? The tension in the painting is evident. In the remaining paintings in this series, there is no resolution; the same mysterious figure is seen from various perspectives, occasionally peering out from the canvas and, once, even checking his watch as if he was tired of being stared at. In contrast to Bacon's customary screaming heads, this is a refreshing change. Since the subject is still anonymous, nobody is sure what kind of relationship Bacon had with the blue man beyond that of a model and an artist.

### Analysis

In his paintings from the 1950s, Bacon made use of the absorbency of canvas fibers by frequently utilizing dark oil paints as backgrounds. The canvas is painted flatly, and the color is absorbed by the canvas fibers, just as if the canvas had been dyed. While the flat, abstract background creates a profound sense of space, the absorbed black or dark blue background provides a very secluded feeling. The striking blue palette is a recurring theme in the Man in Blue series. The painting gains mystery and perhaps a melancholy quality from the gloom. The background, with its curtains, cell bars, or lights is another recognizable element. This characteristic was called shuttering by Bacon. While it eliminates the real setting, it does allow the viewer's imagination to run wild as we speculate about what might happen in the smoky bar.

### Interpretation

In the President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts Wieland Schmied's book Francis Bacon (1996), the author said: *"Bacon's space subverts our habits of seeing, abandoning perspective*

*and breaking up the familiar appearance of our everyday surroundings. It is a space of pure contradiction, an essence distilled from many conflicting or dissonant spaces, which themselves refuse to be brought into the picture. Space is constructed anew for each figure, with which it lives and dies. This determines its specific psychological quality, its sense of nervous animation interspersed with the bleakness of solitude. All Bacon's spaces are conceived with human life in mind. Every corner of the space is related to a person, whose presence charges it with extreme tension. It is only through the figure that we really see the space and, in turn, it is only through the space that we learn to see the individual human being. That is its function. The purpose of space is the revelation of the human”.*

When Sylvester and Bacon discussed the connection between the painting's image and the background in the interview, Bacon declared that he despised the homely setting. He frequently thought that the painting contained too much of a homely background. He preferred to use a colder background for the image. Bacon refers to the traditional painting's harmonious background, which lacks a striking contrast with the image and the background's three-dimensional space. In the background, Bacon uses thick oil paint to quickly drag over the canvas. With the change of the amount of paint dipped in the pen, the degree of the underlying color is also changed, and the change of the thick, light, virtuality, and reality will appear in one stroke. In contrast to a dark background, a background color that is more covered will give the area a feeling of brightness. In order to deal with the dark portion of the image, Bacon almost entirely reveals the color of the background, pushing the tension between the virtual and the real to its extreme. The striking contrast between the real and the virtual in the image has acquired a sense of harmony due to the background's strong absorption.

### **Judgement**

The Man in Blue series represented an unusual shift for Bacon since, at least in part, he seems to have painted directly from life in the Imperial Hotel rather than using photographic images as a prompt, which was more typically his method, to allow him to drift more freely across the image. Each artwork is an interpretation of the idea of a lone person lost or trapped in a completely dark place. The approach has a very existential quality. Similar to a lot of Alberto Giacometti's work, Bacon has captured this small, isolated, yet incredibly alive and vital figure. It is also incredibly daringly minimalist, with its stark, empty expanse of monochrome painted canvas and its austere, modern geometric grid. Man in Blue, in particular, creates a visual representation of Bacon's own profoundly existentialist perspective on life: here you are, existing for a moment, then brushed off like flies on the wall. This is demonstrated by the man's almost miraculously painted visage. This intensely animated force contrasts dramatically with the overt nothingness of the man's surroundings.



Figure 10: Seated figure. 60 x 47 in. (152.5 x 119.5 cm). Oil on canvas. 1960.

### Description

Bacon mentioned in Interviews with Francis Bacon that in his paintings, he identified three crucial components. Included are the flat coating of color used as a material structure, an isolated image, and their fields, that is, circular sports fields or frameworks as shown in Figure 10 (Sylvester, 1995). Bacon frequently set his characters in a dim, enclosed space. The painting combines a grotesque image with weird spatial colors oddly. The background of the painting is a sea of dark hues without spatial sense. It neither establishes the image's spatial existence in the painting nor does it characterize the image's social function. This area exists solely to represent absurdity and nihilism. The figure is imprisoned in misery and loneliness by the enormous flat painting's monotonous color and abstract geometric frame structure.

### Analysis

The background in Bacon's paintings intentionally simplifies the details and is set cold and impersonal to transcend the specific individuality. It has no narrative elements, does not provide context and visual clues, except for emphasizing the alienation of individuals in the environment. This sense of isolation and imprisonment is effectively transmitted by arc-shaped devices or quadrangular frameworks. Bacon has transcended specific events and emotional expression. The distorted figure in the painting gives people a surreal illusion, which further strengthens the anxious and depressing atmosphere created by space. Bacon is able to expose the inner self, allow the characters to confront their own desire and fear, and finally allow them to recognize their own strangeness because he has lost all visual realism. Not only is the enclosed room a natural space, but it's also a psychological and emotional environment. Bacon frequently places his characters in a small, dark space.

### Interpretation

This space, to be precise, is a nihility void. Its prototype is based on the desolate and declining European spirit after the two world wars which are the destruction of reason and the alienation of science. This space serves as a metaphor for the difficulties of human existence and the limits of one's own endurance. It's a symbol of such feelings as I could feel the cold space of our world in the interior of a family. Bacon's use of space language went beyond representation and specifically addressed the existential dilemma. He utilized the metaphor of a constricted space to sum up the distorted psychology and emotions brought on by the times. As Bacon himself stated everything in art appears to be cruel because reality is cruel (Sylvester, 1995). In several of his paintings, the various individuals are in a confined, dark

environment. When coupled with the background of the conflict, this tremendously constrictive atmosphere is closer to the terrible living conditions of people after the two world wars, when civilization is destroyed, the reason is put in question, and human nature is estranged. Both the outer world and the inner spirit are in a state of tremendous distress, full of various forms of agony, concern, uneasiness, and other disagreeable emotions. The picture takes a close look at the harshness of reality and people's everyday lives in an environment that is both objective and psychological.

### Judgement

Bacon's background processing explores the existence of modern individuals while keeping away from familial settings. In order to solve the issue, according to Bacon, an artificial structure should be created. Bacon thought that reality could be captured in an artificial structure. By creating a framework, Bacon defines space in a restricted manner. He doesn't make a formal game out of the real world or make it up as a three-dimensional illusion on a two-dimensional plane. Bacon seeks a point of expression in space that strikes a balance between reality and nihilism. Similar to the blank spaces previously described in Chinese paintings, this type of space expression relies on the viewer's feeling to fill in. The space bears a quality of nothingness because it is the dark and void dimension, within which and out of which something visible may appear and may be given. Additionally, in the occurrence of the void space, there is also a moment of concealing and restraining the granted. This constraining concealment is presumably related to something that is the self-concealment of space.



**Figure 11:** Three studies for portrait of Henrietta Moraes., 14 x 12 in. (35.5. x 30.5 cm). Oil on canvas. 1963.

### Description

As shown in Figure 11, it allows us to observe Moraes's face from different angles, which may indicate that she is constantly moving. Bacon depicts Moraes in three different shapes. Through the connection of the backgrounds, the three images give the impression that they are taking place in the same space. In Bacon's portrait paintings, the head portrait is changed into a head with a big mouth, a blurred face, and malformed eyebrows and eyes. It appears like the muscles in the face are also being rotated and squeezed, exposing the muscle tissue that was before covered by the skin and exposing an inner personality. The conventional portrait painting has been affected by this approach, which has ruined the basic method of portraying individuals primarily through realistic depictions and instead adopted the technique of manipulating the flesh to expose the soul.



### **Analysis**

Three Studies for Portrait of Henrietta Moraes, painted in 1963, is without a doubt one of Francis Bacon's greatest and most successful small portrait triptychs. It is a piece of enormous historical significance and unparalleled execution. These three canvases, which seamlessly blend paint and image, are the pinnacle of Bacon's unwavering power and supreme painting ability. Bacon had the power to convey beauty, pathos, and brutality in a single stroke unlike anybody else before or after, a skill that went beyond the simple rendering of form and resemblance to produce something closer to the raw fact of existence. By the use of daring brushstrokes and bold imagination, Moraes's own essence emerges in the painting as a potent coalescence of color, texture, and form that exudes pure energy. The current triptych, which is supported by an armature of deformed face characteristics contained by the concentrated proportions of these three canvases, uses chaos, chance, beauty, and brutality to produce images of astounding intensity and carnal grace.

### **Interpretation**

Bacon is more obviously conscious of the motion elements present in the image. He believes that an object does not have a fixed representation. In other words, the representation of the object is the object as viewed by the observer's subjectivity, not an objective representation only. This representation will change with objective light and shadow, as well as how the person perceives the object in different time and space. The images in Bacon's paintings give people the impression that they are watching the twisting process of the faces. It is difficult to distinguish which shapes belong to the front and which belong to the side, which is a comprehensive impression and feeling. Movement is not represented as a concept, but as a state of occurrence, or a sense of movement that can be experienced by human feelings. This is a new field of painting developed by Bacon from Picasso's paintings in the period of analyzing cubism. Bacon especially likes photographs that capture human movement. He believes that the dynamic body can show a form that cannot be seen by the eyes through photography, and there is continuity between the known and the unknown, which is also his unique means to express the inner world of figures. In order to change the narrative, graphic, and representational nature of the painting itself, Bacon uses erasure and destructive methods to make the image different from the image in the photograph, so as to remove the correlation and realistic logic between the image in the painting and the image in the photograph. In terms of the method of expression, Bacon connects various shapes with motion-inspired strokes and creates collisions between various thick and thin hues. Movement is portrayed as an actual condition of events or a sense of movement that can be felt by human feelings. This kind of movement actually contains a kind of temporal expression. Traditional art depicts the passage of time discontinuously, whereas Bacon's portrait depicts the passage of time continuously. Since it is impossible for the observer to see all the details of an object in motion and must instead concentrate on one or two key areas, most of the details are neglected, and Bacon no longer views the object being described as a fixed entity. He also does not describe the representation of the object in the manner of natural realism.

### **Judgement**

Bacon conceals and modifies the original image using visual relationships and discovers different kind of truth that is concealed behind the figure. He engages in games between the image that is already present in the painting and the imagined image when he paints. There is a certain distance between the subjective image and the image in his painting, which differs

from the image in reality. His painting acquires an internal existence as a result of this dynamic tension relationship. The artificial images mix up truth and falseness, making them seem more absurd and real than the actual ones. The figures in his paintings have the ability to manipulate men's hearts due to this paradoxical interaction. Bacon makes painting closer to reality on a visual level. The figure was no longer the objective object when Bacon painted it. The figure returned to a more genuine state of existence when the surface social existence's mask was removed. This image is also Bacon's expression of his state of existence. Bacon's transcendence of the individual in his portrait is also a process of elimination.



Figure 12: Three studies of Lucian Freud. Each panel 77 x 58 in. (197.8 x 147.5 cm). Oil on canvas. 1969.



Figure 13: Lucian Freud (photographed by John Deakin, 29.7 x 25.4cm, c 1960s (from The Estate of Francis Bacon)

Figure 14: Photograph of Lucian Freud (detail) by John Deakin, circa 1964. Image retrieved from Christie's e-Catalogue, pp. 150-151.



Figure 15: Working document retrieved from Bacon's studio showing Lucian Freud photographed by Daniel Earson, 1963; Image retrieved from Christie's e-Catalogue, pp. 158-159.

### **Description**

It was made in 1969 and is made up of three separate paintings as shown in Figure 12. The protagonist, Lucien Freud, is Sigmund Freud's grandson and a well-known psychologist. He is a friend and a fellow artist of Bacon. All three panels show Freud sitting on a cane-bottomed wooden chair within a cage, on a curved mottled-brown surface with a solid orange background, in Bacon's signature abstract, deformed, isolated style. Behind each figure is a headboard of a bed, originating from a photograph of Freud by John Deakin as shown in figures 13, 14, and 15 which Bacon used as a reference.

### **Analysis**

The triptych painting's serene, flat yellow background and the loose, light sand color ground simply and effectively highlight the central figure; The figures' sensation of isolation in captivity and a sense of constant movement is conveyed by the usage of the perspective frame and cutting line in the image; As props, the chair and bedstead evoke a dramatic mood and get the viewer to consider the characters' emotional expression in the painting. The background's arc treatment also makes the image's internal rhythm of continual movement stronger. The space treatment in Bacon's painting breaks through the limitation of fixed-point perspective and uses feeling and imagination to create the reality of space. Bacon adopted the method of multiple viewpoints, moving viewpoints. The painting is composed like a circus ring, it uses an amphitheater as its venue. It is a very simple technique that consists of isolating the Figure. Other methods of isolation include putting the figure inside a cube, or rather, inside a parallelepiped of glass or ice; sticking it onto a rail or stretch-out bar, as if on the magnetic arc of an infinite circle; or combining all these means, the round area, the cube, and the bar as in Bacon's strangely flared and curved armchairs. Not only is the painting an isolated reality, and not only does the triptych have three isolated panels which above all must not be united in a single frame. Bacon often explains that it is to avoid the figurative, illustrative, and narrative character the figure would necessarily have if it were not isolated.

### **Interpretation**

A common theme in Bacon's paintings is a single image in a locked cage-like structural space appears frequently, which prompts a connection with the topic of existentialism. The characters in the enclosed space are all posing in their own way. Even when several characters are put together, there is no apparent way for them to communicate. They share some similarities with social alienation and human estrangement. They are also an echo of existentialism and a metaphor for the social void after the world war, reflecting the truth of human relationships.

### **Judgement**

Bacon experienced the brutality of the war and saw how it alienated individuals from one another. In several of his paintings, the closed, geometrically structured environments confined the characters imprisoned in cages. For Bacon, the reason he confines his characters to a multiple linear framework is a fear of nothingness. This can be viewed in part as the pain, confusion, and even decay of the human spirit brought on by the cruelty and violence of the outside world. After the decline of the Christian faith in Europe, the decline of the social communal value gave rise to extreme individualism and a lack of attachment to the individual spirit. In order to make a direct allusion to the problem of human survival during the war, Bacon used a closed environment full of nihilism and a lack of sense of reality, as well as more

symbolically, some psychological feelings including alienation, loneliness, fear, and so forth, each of which is a direct analysis and realistic portrayal of the brutality of the human experience in his particular way.



Figure 16: In memory of George Dyer. Each panel: 78 x 58 in. (198 x 147.5 cm). Oil and dry transfer lettering on canvas. 1971.

### Description

The figure in this triptych as shown in Figure 16 is curled up and shows a painful look while lying on the ground on the left screen. The room is opened by the figure in the middle screen, which is next to dim lights and a set of narrow hotel steps. On the right screen is an image of Dyer dressed in a suit. In this triptych, the only connection of the painting is that both the left and right paintings pass through a curved crossbar. The space erratically traversed by the crossbar is unbounded and indeterminate: it extends across the entire picture plane.

### Analysis

George Dyer, a close companion of Bacon's, unexpectedly killed himself the night before Bacon's painting show at the Grand Palace in Paris in 1971. Bacon's emotions were severely hurt. He spent the years following indulging in the overwhelming guilt and sorrow over losing Dyer. Dyer's figure still frequently appears in the scenes of his daily life. In the year after Dyer's passing, Bacon created a series of paintings about him. Bacon's artistic creation career has also reached a crucial turning point. In this triptych, a curved crossbar connects the triptych's left and right images. The reflection of Dyer on the right seeps through the mirror and appears in the lower-right mirror. Dyer's self-relation extends into the mirror. The terrible vision of crouching flesh and blood in the left image is linked to the bent crossbar on the right side. The ominous and tense blackness in the background draws the audience's attention between the images on the left and right. In the middle shot, Dyer's figure looks to be returning to Bacon's studio in the middle of the night. The door is ajar at the bottom of the stairs, and one lightbulb can be seen dangling there. According to Bacon, the different painting spaces of the triptych convey varying degrees of suffering and terror. With the mirror in front of him, Bacon examines and touches himself. This form of openness to ourselves leads us into a state of purity towards ourselves.

### Interpretation

Is the vertical cut in the triptych the same as the painting's framework, as was asked in David Sylvester's interview? In response, Bacon stated that there would be some vertical cuts dividing the images from one another, that the narrative continuity between the images would be destroyed, and that the literary narrative that was present in traditional paintings

would be lost. This discussion demonstrates Bacon's belief that a painting's form alone may communicate a wealth of information. The intention and performance of Bacon's triptych profoundly subverted the application of the form of the triptych. It was clear that Bacon wanted to see the triptych develop a kind of entangled feeling from the inside out when Dyer came out. It might also aid in the expression of Bacon's thoughts regarding alienation of humans, the general nihilism he seems to be indicating, and the sense of crisis that exists among people during a war. Bacon believed that even ordinary individuals like Dyer were caught up in this era's vortex. Bacon therefore frequently used his paintings to convey his thoughts and emotions. According to Bacon, he has spent his entire life exploring the connection between painting and life, representation and essence. He thought that the triptych's images would allow him to convey his inner hysteria more deeply.

*In the President of the Bavarian Academy of Fine Arts Wieland Schmied's book Francis Bacon (1996), the author said: "In the various phases of his career Bacon used many different techniques to articulate the contradictions of space. Phases in which he favored empty space as the setting for his figures were followed by others in which he crowded his disturbing interiors with furniture and incidental detail. The rooms alternate between the private and the public, and take every possible shape and size. They include bedrooms, living rooms, waiting rooms and operating theatres there are spaces with the dimensions of a cathedral or a museum, spaces that convey the cramped feeling of a railway sleeping compartment or a hotel staircase, spaces that have the animated quality of a Soho Street scene or a Spanish bull-ring. They can be open or closed, antiseptically clean or awash with blood and entrails. They may seem accessible or inaccessible and often both at once. In Bacon's art everything is a question of space, and space calls everything into question. Space is a projection of the viewers wish to identify the figures more clearly, but also of the figure's wish to shut itself off and escape the viewers' curious gaze. Space is a mental construct. Of its reality we know very little".*

### **Judgement**

In the book Francis Bacon: Painting, Philosophy, Psychoanalysis (Ware & Caygill, 2019), the author states that what Bacon's painting shows is that the destruction of the form still is a form, the distortion of the organic is never without organs, and a symbolic escape from raw materiality is impossible. There is no such thing as a body without organs. When distorted, faces and bodies, far from revealing their irreducibility to their biological texture, disappear in this texture itself, thus revealing that they were never anything else than contingent life forms.

Each painting in the triptych is the future of the one before it and the history of the one after it because of the triptych's detachable structure. Its form creates the internal view of the painting and lets the viewer get involved in the circulation field it has established. Therefore, the edges and frameworks of the three paintings no longer point to the boundary of the painting, but travel through time and space, and may have different meanings in different times.



Figure 17: Three studies of George Dyer. Each panel: 14 x 12 in. (35.5 x 30.5 cm). Oil on canvas. 1969.

### Description

In the painting, as shown in Figure 17, Dyer's disintegrated face and the vibrant pink background of the entire image give this setting a peculiar atmosphere. Dyer is depicted from three different angles. As another key component of the modeling, Dyer's facial organs have complicated hues that make them appear random, but the contour of the image is still distinct and recognizable, and the background is always a weird shade of pink. He depicts the head in a state of liquefaction. Every twist and turn of the body are rendered in line and tone, which is reflected in the misshapen form and bruised coloration. These elements provide the idea that his figures are experiencing extreme mental and bodily pain. These techniques are also prevalent in other paintings by Bacon during that era.

### Analysis

The body of Bacon's figure is always in a state of motion. This sense of fluidity and instability is achieved through the distortion caused by the application and scraping of paint. Bacon tried to capture the actual existence of the figures in a distorted way, making the figures appear as if they were really in front of us. Black holes are present in many of Bacon's curved bodies, and they resemble deep, profound mysteries. How do the holes in a person's eyes, nose, and mouth form when he draws their heads, Bacon once remarked. If you look closely, you will see that these holes don't have features like eyes, noses, or mouths, but rather resemble the figures that describe due to the pigment applied to various contours. Bacon made an effort to make it more noticeable, similar, and better, but he was unable to grasp the image and lost it all. It feels as though he is balancing between the abstract and the concrete in this image. It might jump right to the abstract or it might do the opposite. The attempt is to place the physical above the neural system more forcefully and acutely.

### Interpretation

The holes in Bacon's paintings frequently show up in scenes from daily life, human bodies, or portraiture. The holes are full of temptation, and human holes turn into the channels through which they enter the fleshy world, the holes in the washbasin, the toilet hole, the hole in the door lock, and the holes sprayed by the pipes that have attracted Bacon. They have the potential to serve as both a channel for human interaction with the world of flesh and a route for the fleshy body to flee. In the painting, the face's deformation causes the nostrils to shift from their natural position and turn into a route for peeping inside the body. Unbelievably seductive, the deep black hole becomes the focus of the body's twisting and deformation. This hole becomes the channel to open the physical body and the fleshy world. Bacon describes and investigates the flesh of the body in order to explore the original world of the

human flesh body, to feel the structure of the flesh of the world with the individual's body, and to use the flesh body as a means of communication to form a contrast with the flesh bodies of others in order to better comprehend and reveal the real world.

### Judgement

Our perspectives on and comprehension of the world are expanded by Bacon's paintings. Meat is a main theme in Bacon's paintings. In various holes, he investigates the visible fleshy world. An unavoidable step in the perception process of his own fleshy body is the presentation of the fleshy bodies of others. Through this process, he is able to penetrate the physical body deeply and experience the surrounding environment through homology. Whether they are portraits, images of naked bodies, or natural landscapes, Bacon's paintings have deeper implications. Bacon lived through the two world wars, a period that was marked by a tremendous desire for destruction. Humans were tortured during and after the war, human beliefs and values were severely questioned, and the violence of war brutally twisted and ruined all civilizations' brilliance. Barbarism and violence have thus come to represent the only reality, and the only emotions that can truly describe the time are loneliness, fear, and anxiety. With his keen insight and interpretation of the body and flesh in paintings after the war, Bacon addressed significant problems since post-modernism and carried out a deeper reflection on the history, present, and future of human existence.



Figure 18: Study of a bull. 78 x 58 in. (198 x 147.5 cm). Oil, aerosol paint and dust on canvas. 1991.

### Description

The Study of a Bull is the last painting of Francis Bacon as shown in Figure 18. The painter completed this painting of the bull shrinking to nothingness in his studio in South Kensington, London. The bull appears weak in Bacon's painting, and it is unclear whether it is attempting to enter or escape the bullring. The image of the bull is ambiguous. It seems to be emerging from a black rectangle towards the light, while at the same time disappearing into the adjacent white shape. As is customary in bullfights, the bull emerges from the darkness into the light of the arena, where the bullfighter who will kill it is awaiting in his Voiture. The two-meter-tall painting is entirely blank except for a bull in the top left corner. The bull's underside was covered in dust that had been gathered at Bacon's South Kensington studio. Bacon was probably attempting to convey that he was aware that he was dying. He had asthma during this time and was extremely weak. Many scholars think that Bacon depicted and announced his inevitable death in this painting, which is positioned between the necessity of death and

the temptation of life. Although Bacon was clearly filled with nostalgia for life, he was also aware that he was on the brink of death.

### Analysis

Bacon visited many places during his extensive travels in the 1950s and 1960s, including Monaco, southern France, Spain, and Africa. His travels to southern France and Spain, where he had the opportunity to see bullfights in person, are likely what first sparked his obsession with bullfighting. Bacon must have been inspired to paint these themes repeatedly by his attendance at these bullfights as well as his respect for Picasso's art and Lorca's literature. According to the critics, the bull in this painting is a representation of Bacon himself and conveys the artist's perspective on death.

### Interpretation

A possible source for Bacon's fascination with bulls is his friend, the French surrealist Michel Leiris. Leiris described the bullfighting that with his feet almost firmly nailed on the ground, the matador skillfully wields his cape, constantly tempting and nudging the bull until the animal has been tamed and they have formed a perfect accompaniment. Man, and this huge, heavy, horned beast become unity through this physical interaction, and the moment they meet becomes an eternity. Perhaps the bull had some deep sense of destiny for Bacon. As curator Peppiatt said the bull that we see might represent the artist, who is ready to be overwhelmed by the darkness behind him. The bull is incredibly caught between the temptation of life and the certainty of death. The bull of the dark emptiness appears to be burning in Bacon's painting and the bull appears to be escaping over the railing into the light of heaven.

### Judgement

Instead of the brutality, confrontation or madness of previous works, the painting is largely empty, with a bull looming between the black and white barriers. In this painting, we can no longer feel the life-and-death game between the matador and the bull, or the sexual dance. The bull stood still, like an illusion of life, no longer raging, struggling, as if all colors would reconcile in the darkness. Bacon once said that death has absolute certainty. Artists know they can't defeat it, but death follows. Bacon tried to use his own painting to simply and rudely let the viewer return to reality. When the artist was about to die forever, a bull became the theme of Bacon's last painting. The real dust used in the painting, like a medium, connects life and death. For Bacon, it also represents permanence.

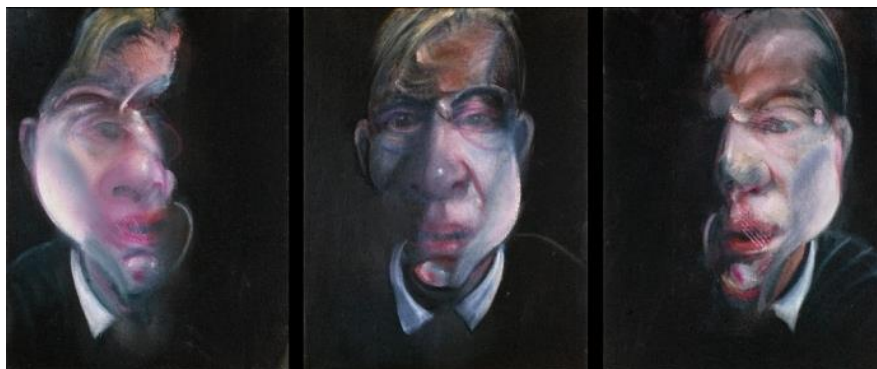


Figure 19: Three studies for self-portrait. Each panel 14 x 12 in. (37.5 x 31.8 cm). Oil on canvas. 1979.



### **Description**

Francis Bacon's face is deformed, shrouded in darkness, and his eyes are fixed on the viewer in the painting as shown in Figure 19. Half of the painting is in darkness, and the other half is illuminated from the side. Bacon's facial characteristics are more easily distinguished due to the ingenious strokes and striking details. Studies for Self-Portrait were made in 1979 and had been collected by the same private collector for nearly 40 years. They are Bacon's final collection of miniature self-portraits. Bacon is exploring his inner world and capturing the complexity of his paintings. The paintings have evolved into a model for Bacon's later works due to their exquisite color and powerful light and shade contrast.

### **Analysis**

When Bacon painted his self-portrait, he was already close to 70 years old, and the signs of his extensive life experience were visible all over his visage. The man in the painting has experienced with the dark and painful existence as evidenced by the deep forehead wrinkles and sunken eye sockets. His eyes were anxious and painful. He appeared to be intoxicated on recollections as he glared at the front and bowed his head slightly. The nuances of Bacon's prominent cheekbones are obscured by intense side lighting, and a hollow, dark mouth is revealed by slightly pursed lips and deep reds and purples that emphasize deep wrinkles in the skin. The dramatic lighting also casts the figure's right visage in shadow, obscuring its features as they melt away. Bacon's portrait occupies the whole painting and reveals his difficult life. His expressive visage, which is tilted slightly forward, exposes everything to the viewer.

### **Interpretation**

Bacon dramatically manipulates light to heighten the psychological strain hidden in the self-portrait. Although the left painting depicts his front, Bacon's right face melts into the darkness, and the cheekbones, clear jaw, and deep eye sockets all disappear. On his left face, the fierce side light revealed and deepened his facial features, but his right face fell into an impenetrable mysterious darkness. This impact results from Bacon's fascination with photography, which has grown to be a significant component of his paintings. Because he could accurately deconstruct a person's facial features, he has always stated that he chooses to depict figures using photographs rather than actual people. In his later years, Bacon still maintained a high degree of artistic creativity. He combined poetry, drama, religion, history and other elements to create a number of outstanding trilogy paintings following the theme of his early years. At this point, Bacon deepened his analysis of the image and began to deform it, and the way he described the subject's face underwent a major shift in both style and technique. He admires the figures' distinct personalities and interior spiritual expression. After the passing of his lover George Dyer, the photographer John Dickin, and his close friend Muriel Belcher in the 1970s, Bacon began to focus increasingly on self-portraits. People's positive facial expressions, reduced facial distortion, and emphasis on the skeletal structure are all common in portraits from this era. Moreover, the processing of light experience has started to become more apparent.

### **Judgement**

Bacon's paintings are among the most influential works in the history of modern art. They are not only eye-catching, but they also depict the state of modern humans. The self-portraits he created in the ten years before his passing, is one of his most striking pieces from the later

part of his artistic career. Bacon creates his own perception of painting by deconstructing his own image. He once admitted that he occasionally fears that distortion will cause a painting to change significantly. It is worth debating whether these distortions constitute some devastation. He rejects the idea that this is sabotage. Although this may be considered devastation in terms of drawing, it is not from the perspective of art. One may only express their feelings about life in their own unique way. Eventually, Bacon produced portraits that have great personal meaning, immediately displaying his complexity and laying the groundwork for new directions in portraiture. Bacon's painting is neither a straightforward representation of the object nor a broadly subjective expression. It conveys a perspective on the nature of existence in addition to his own special state of being. Bacon portrays the oppression, desperation, loneliness, dread, and absurdity of human nature in the context of modern society with profound authenticity. More importantly, he faced the hidden darkness and always returned to real life or human nature. In this regard, Bacon's portrait has made a brave and sincere exploration of the essence of life with its unique artistic quality.

From the above analysis, I will focus on three elements of the paintings: images, painting language, and nihilism.

### **Image**

First, grotesque images. Bacon creates images with a distinctly unique aesthetic by fusing the characteristics of animals and human beings. Many of his paintings depict images with sharp teeth exposed, but there are also elements of humanoid body structure and brain. Many of Bacon's paintings stress the transformation and blending of human and animal images in ways that show the similarities between humans and animals. They are logically related even though they appear grotesque and contradicting.

Second, distorted images. Many of the images in Bacon's paintings are extremely distorted through his wild brushstrokes and strong colors - both in portrait and others, none of them are spared. In his portrait, it is evident that the faces of the figures seem to have been violently torn apart, with no complete parts, making it impossible to recognize them. In some paintings, the body seems to have been cut open or there are obvious defects, and the connections between various parts are illogical, resulting in an incomplete ambiguity.

Third, violent images. This is especially true of the subject of violence, which underlies Bacon's paintings. Lots of his ideas revolve around violence. The acrobats balancing on the high wire or hanging from trapezes, the paralyzed child in the circus arena, the wrestlers on the bed or in the long grass, the popes in their glass boxes, the figures sitting on the toilet or stumbling towards the washbasin, the people slumped in their chairs by the glass-topped table or in the middle of an empty room—all these unfortunates appear to be under attack, pursued by unbearably painful memories, scourged by the fates, racked by convulsions. They are often directly related to animals -apes, birds, or bats-and they always appear to be at the mercy of dark and terrifying forces. Their lives are characterized by constant violence; in fact, their mere existence serves as a form of punishment.

## Painting Language

### Metaphor

Taking Three studies for figures at the base of a crucifixion as shown in Figure 20 as an example, the entire painting is an odd fusion of unusual organisms and unsettling spatial colors: the color of the background is orange without spatial sense, which obscures the view and is dense with visual pressure. It doesn't describe the social functions or emphasize the geographical presence of the figures. This area only exists to represent nothingness and absurdity. The irregular brushstrokes that pound across the canvas vertically and the flat, monotonous colors of the huge paintings give off an oppressive feeling that shackles the figures in misery and isolation. People are given a strange illusion by the distorted images that look like humans but aren't humans, which feeds their anxiety and oppressive atmosphere.



Figure 20: Three studies for figures at the base of a crucifixion. Each panel 37 x 29 in. (94 x 74 cm). Oil on canvas. 1944.

This space is monotonous and lonely, and dominates the emotions of the entire painting. Bacon removed all visual reality through such a surreal space, allowing the human inner self to be exposed naked, allowing the figures to face their anxiety and desires, and then perceive their unfamiliarity. The confined space is not just a natural space, it is also a psychological and emotional space. Bacon is accustomed to placing his figures in a closed and dark room, which is, to be precise, a void without time and space. And it is precisely based on the desolate and declining European spirit after the two World Wars, the destruction of reason, and the alienation of science. This space serves as a metaphor, representing the inner limits and human survival.

### Time and Space

First, Time is movement, and life is movement. The very core of life is expressed through movement. Bacon's portraits depict the continuity of time. In speaking of memory traces, Bacon raised the question of time, and its significance as a further form of experience-in addition to space -that played a major part in shaping his art. Bacon, inspired by emerging media such as photography and movies, transformed the discontinuous representation of time in traditional painting into a continuous representation of time, bringing new expressive power to painting. With these visual resources, Bacon takes a non-prescriptive approach by letting the senses take over, transcending logical reasoning, and combining them while using methods like creases, fragments, and stitching to obliterate the original fixed image. There is a gap in the damaged image, and it may match the images and materials on the painting. In essence, this matching is an overlap of multidimensional time.

Second, in the various phases of his career Bacon used many different techniques to articulate the contradictions of space. Phases in which he favored empty space as the setting for his

figures were followed by others in which he crowded his disturbing interiors with furniture and incidental detail. The rooms alternate between the private and the public, and take every possible shape and size. The employing of geometric frameworks is a unique feature of the multidimensional portrayal of Bacon's painting. This geometric framework outlined by lines is frequently used in Bacon's works, which typically merely show a very abstract spatial structure without a qualitative description. Time is movement. Bacon frequently uses circular bars in his paintings. movements begin on a broad flat background and this circular field. The flat painting's background advances to accommodate the image, and the figure fully cooperates with this movement to create its own isolation. The representativeness and narrative in the image are removed and the image can only be referred to be the pure image once it has enclosed itself. The figures in Bacon's paintings appear to be in a virtual place like a stage, either an abstract space encircled by an arc or an indoor space split by vertical lines, with props like chairs, sofas, or beds as well as some accessories like washbasins or toilets, which may suggest a bathroom space. In these spaces, there is no description of identity for figures, and Bacon's portraits strip away the veil of social existence. As if it were just a pure human existence, a physical existence.

### **Nihilism<sup>1</sup>**

The background in Bacon's paintings has no individual characteristics, just like what he referred to as a nihilistic and cold background. This nonspecific spatial background has the effect of allowing the viewer to focus their attention on the images in the painting. The background intentionally simplifies details and is set in a cold and impersonal manner, in order to transcend specific individuality. The background does not provide context or visual clues, except for emphasizing the individual's alienation in the environment. This sense of isolation and imprisonment is effectively conveyed through curved devices or quadrilateral frames.

### **Death**

In Bacon's paintings, the relationship between survival and death is transformed into visual elements, with the first being the choice of subjects. Bacon's obsession with portraiture stems from the fact that they are the best medium for conveying ideas about survival and death. Furthermore, Bacon demonstrates the influence of death by clearly portraying the human body in motion, so we see that Bacon's figures are always in a process of flow - they twist and transform themselves, overflowing the boundaries of the body. Bacon pays great attention to the depiction of human flesh. Because of the physical body, it is connected to both life and death, and while living, it is life. It is a lifeless body after death. The physical body is connected to time, and living things are always subject to specific time restrictions. As a result, from the perspective of time, the portrait of a figure is constantly changing and cannot be noticed quickly. But the boundary between life and death is very clear.

### **Thematic Analysis on Francis Bacon's Paintings**

I will use thematic analysis to find the meanings of the paintings more systematically according to the results of visual analysis, and make points clearly. Then, the results are to prove that Francis Bacon's paintings were influenced by Heidegger's philosophy of beauty.

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<sup>1</sup> The state or fact of being nothing; nothingness, nullity; nonexistence.

### **Pursue the Truth**

Bacon intentionally destroys a person's natural appearance in his paintings to get closer to a more real person by creating grotesque, distorted, and violent images. Bacon lived in a time when people had extraordinarily strong destructive urges. He created a tragic scene that reflects the true emotions of personal pain, loneliness, and anxiety by distorting images into blurred flesh and simplifying the world into a dark space full of claustrophobia. This revealed the cruel experience brought about by war and the absurdity of human survival reality. He exposed the horrifyingly negative aspects of life.

Critics have frequently and carelessly referred to Bacon's paintings as horror, although the artist insisted that this was never his objective. He viewed his paintings as a form of realism that went beyond physical appearances and sought to emotionally engage the viewer's nervous system. It was only because life was horrible that his images appeared to be horrific. In the words of Thomas Bernhard, Bacon was an exaggeration artist, yet exaggeration was not his explicit aim. He had no wish to create monsters or to shock the viewer, and felt that the image of humanity projected in his art was, if anything, an understatement, rendering only a per-functor account of the awful truth (Schmied, 1996). Bacon was unable to imagine a great work of art that was separated from reality, from the specifics of human existence in a dangerously hostile world where its citizens are becoming more and more alienated. Insisting that art must confront reality, he was convinced that only this form of art could provoke an emotional response, and that only art that did so could be considered great. His art is primarily motivated by the concept that altering, mutilating, and disfiguring reality in some way is the best—and sometimes the only—means to connect with it. He never stopped trying to acquire a sense of direct contact with objects in order to present them to the viewer directly, or rather to put them in their face or use them as a blunt instrument to beat them into submission. In 1966 Bacon explained: What I want to do is to distort the thing far beyond the appearance, but in the distortion to bring it back to a recording of the appearance (Sylvester & Bacon, 1987). Over and over again he emphasized that the development of the vocabulary of modern art was conditioned by the need to distort the visible world. This was the only effective means of attacking the viewer's nervous system and stirring his emotions, of telling him something about a world in which he lived but of which he was largely ignorant.

### **Existence**

First, the subject of portraits expresses the characteristics of life. Bacon has always been fascinated by portraying humans, whether it is a facial portrait or a full body portrait. Bacon represents the truth of the object, which is not the consistency of appearances, but rather the energy particular to a particular living being, that is, what a living person possesses, in short, vitality. The focus on individuals and life is related to the era in which Bacon lived. Bacon's concern for the body lies in the fact that the body is the carrier of life, and his concern for life and existence connects Bacon's paintings with contemporary existentialist philosophical ideas. Many of the viewpoints mentioned by Bacon in the interview have obvious existential implications.

Second, Bacon uses the technique of metaphor to confirm the existence. Bacon tells the plot and emotions of an era through his confined space. We can only fully comprehend the pervasive misery of modernity in the image by carefully understanding this metaphorical space. The reason why the Western art world appreciates Bacon's paintings so much is

because of his acute understanding of the era and his precise grasp of its qualities. The space that Bacon portrayed is a spiritual landscape of contemporary humans. In his visual representations of alienation, people are pushed into a private interior environment. They appear alone and lost due to a lack of obvious certainty: mirrors cannot reflect, lights cannot illuminate, and spatial metaphors are likewise quite perplexing. The lack of connection between the people in the painting only serves to heighten this feeling of estrangement. This spatial framework instills a feeling of seclusion and restriction, and the enclosed space corresponds to the existentialist paradox of freedom and seems oppressive. Human existence is a process of becoming more and more estranged from matter in a society where material civilization is exploding. Returning to oneself in this circumstance, especially to the immensely deep and intricate inner world of humanity, has great significance and value.

Third, Bacon uses time and space to confirm the existence. Time functions like a sieve, separating people and things alike. But whereas things seem to remain as they are, people are subject to continual change. Bacon's theme is the impermanence of human existence: the fact that life is always lived with death in prospect. Time changes, distorts, destroys, and its reflection in a painting has the same effect: it disfigures and kills. Furthermore, two additional aspects of photography-- blurred focus and the negative also inspired Bacon's creative exploration of the dimension of time. The destruction of photographic images pointed directly to the process of taking and developing the painting, and thereby reintroduced the figure of the artist-as maker. At the same time, it also emphasized the interdependence between the painter and the subject of his painting.

In Bacon's art everything is a question of space, and space calls everything into question. Space is a projection of the viewer's wish to identify the figures more clearly, but also of the figure's wish to shut itself off and escape the viewer's curious gaze. Space is a mental construct. Bacon gives all his figures their own space, in which they are locked as in a prism. But often the spaces are interlinked, like crystalline spheres or geometrical structures. Bacon's space subverts our habits of seeing, abandoning perspective and breaking up the familiar appearance of our everyday surroundings. It is a space of contradiction, an essence distilled from many paradoxical or dissonant spaces, which themselves refuse to be brought into the painting. Space is constructed anew for each figure, with which it lives and dies. This determines its specific psychological quality, its sense of nervous animation interspersed with the bleakness of solitude. All Bacon's spaces are conceived with human life in mind. Every corner of the space is related to a person, whose presence infuses it with extreme tension. It is only through the figure that we really see the space, and only through the space that we learn to see the individual human being. The purpose of space is the revelation of the human life.

### **Transcendence**

First, Bacon's portrait paintings show the transcendence of a particular figure. This transcendence ultimately moves away from the portrayal of creatures' existence and toward a more in-depth investigation of existence itself. The traditional concept of reality and the traditional representation of beings ultimately lead to the study of an entity's essence. The original meaning of Bacon's questioning of existence, which is the universal state of existence of modern humans, transcends individual, substantial, and objectified life. Bacon revealed the existence, thereby showing the deeper fundamental reality.

Second, there is some ultimate concern in Bacon's paintings, it is existence and death. In Bacon's view, death is not a state that appears at the end of life, but rather an inherent state in the living body. Bacon distills his own emotions about death—the death of his friend and companion, which might as well be the death of some other, anonymous individual -into a form whose extreme concentration makes it almost unbearable. He intensifies and heightens his feelings by ruthlessly showing death as a universal and inescapable fact of human existence, as the great leveler that comes to us. This very death makes his dying exemplary and authentic, which is what connects him to his fellow creatures. This death, as depicted by Bacon, is coextensive with other outstanding representations of human suffering throughout cultural history, including Greek tragedy, Japanese classical theater, Baroque mystery plays, and the death cults found in numerous global faiths.

## Results

From the above analysis, it can be seen that the results found after visual analysis and thematic analysis of Francis Bacon's paintings are in accord with significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty. The results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*The results of Francis Bacon's Painting are in accord with significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty*

Visual analysis	Thematic analysis	Significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty
<b>Image:</b> grotesque images; distorted images; violent images.	→ Pursue the truth Inner truth	Pursue the truth (√)
<b>Painting language:</b> Metaphor; Time and space.	→ Confirms the existence	Emphasis on existence (√)
<b>Nihilism:</b> Composition; Background; death	→ Transcendence	Transcendence (√)

## Discussion

Beauty and ugliness coexist in the complex, diversified, and essentially rich world of perception. Simply studying beauty images, one of the many categories of perception, while neglecting ugly images in art, is a one-sided approach. People hold the opinion that, whether it be a natural object or a work of art, what matters most is how it expresses the life force of the universe, not whether it appears beautiful or ugly. People can accept and admire ugly things, whether they be people, natural objects, or works of art, as long as they fully show vitality. Likewise, ugly images also be beautiful images. In this context, ugly is a transcendence of ugly in ordinary life. It creates imagery as a result of its manifestation of the sublimity, the strength of the inner spirit, and the artist's grief and indignation toward the world, giving it a sense of completeness. In addition to correcting the prejudice of ignoring ugliness in

traditional aesthetic study and extending the diverse orientation of beauty, the rise of ugly images in contemporary academic viewpoints also prompted the discipline to develop towards an open and dynamic modern cultural form.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study have confirmed that Francis Bacon's paintings are in accord with significant elements of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty. This study analyzed Francis Bacon's paintings as a case study by conducting an analysis focused on the visuals and themes in paintings to deepen the understanding on the essence of Heidegger's philosophy of beauty more systematically. The significant elements of Heidegger's philosophies of beauty applied to Francis Bacon's paintings which could serve as a guide to deepen understanding of the expression of beauty in modern painting, help people to understand the general characteristics and laws of beauty, and improve people's ability for appreciation.

Furthermore, Heidegger was a key figure in the transformation of Western aesthetics from modern to postmodern, and his theories signaled the end of modern aesthetics and the start of postmodern aesthetics. Based on Heidegger's foundation, postmodernism in aesthetics inverted modern spiritual ideals more drastically, forming the basic principles and universal trends of postmodern aesthetics and establishing the fundamental course of aesthetics in this particular historical era (Xu, 1995). For further studies on Heidegger's philosophy of beauty could consider connecting it with specific disciplines in life, making theory more practical and concrete. On the one hand, to better understand Heidegger's philosophy of beauty, it is crucial to relate his philosophy of beauty to specific disciplines. This will also help reveal and clarify the phenomena of beauty. On the other hand, aesthetics belongs to the humanities. This leads to an important characteristic of aesthetics: the philosophy of beauty is closely related to life. The study of various parts of beauty can't be separated from life, the meaning and value of life. The goal of aesthetic study is eventually to encourage individuals to work toward a better quality of life and to pursue a more fascinating, valuable, and meaningful existence.

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