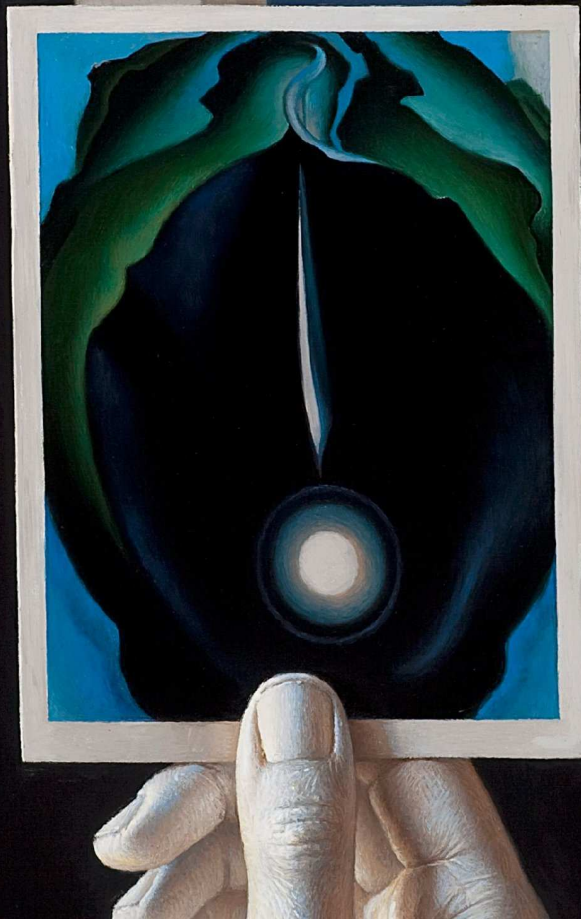


THE ICON SERIES

SCOTT FRASER



THE ICON SERIES

© 2012 by the author of this book. The book author retains sole copyright to his or her contributions to this book.

The Blurb-provided layout designs and graphic elements are copyright Blurb Inc., 2012. This book was created using the Blurb creative publishing service. The book author retains sole copyright to his or her contributions to this book.



Icon Series

In 2007 I began a group of paintings I call the Icon Series. In each painting, a plaster cast of my hand is placed in a central position. All the works are the same size in order to maintain consistency. As you can see, the artists I have chosen to highlight are a diverse group, but each has a special resonance with me and my interest in art history.

Below the Moon

I have always shared a sense of kinship with Georgia O'Keefe because of her love of the natural world, especially flowers. She had a simple, direct way of painting and a keen eye for color and stripped down composition. Pick up a book of her images, turn it upside down and flip through it, and you will notice how well her pieces work, even when inverted. This is a mark of a superior talent. She did a whole series of paintings of Jack in the Pulpit flowers, and my piece is an interpretation of *Jack in the Pulpit IV* (1930) from this series. I kept her image upright in my hand and placed it in front of *Night City* (1926), which is upside down, as a background. I really liked how the two worked together. The crumpled green paper at the bottom is an echo of the ruffled leaves, and the luminous moon from *Night City* is mirrored in the throat of the flower.



Below the Moon
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

Spider Lullaby

Louise Bourgeois has intrigued me since I saw her fascinating sculpture titled *Nature Study* back in the 1980's. I have been captivated by her work ever since that time, and sought out other exhibitions whenever I could. Then came the spiders. I marveled as I stood under one of her giant spider sculptures. Here was an instant connection, since I love bugs and spiders and have included them in many of my paintings. Louise Bourgeois was a complex and unique individual, and her personal voice comes through strongly in her work. She and her art are inseparable, and so I chose to superimpose her face on to the head of the spider sculpture, since she was often referred to as “the spider woman”. The post card web references her passion for spiral designs, which I have used in many of my works as well. Pity the poor fly trapped in the web.



Spider Lullaby
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

Dickinson

Edwin Dickinson is one of my long time artistic heroes. His painting *The Cello Player*, in the de Young collection, is one of those mysterious works that has always stuck in my mind. In fact, Dickinson has several key pieces that have inspired me since I first discovered them in art school. I have always been drawn to his unique perspective. There is an almost hallucinogenic sense of atmosphere in some of his work that borders on surrealism. He likes to pepper his work with blocks, arches, curves, spirals, and other architectural references, and his images often includes mirrors, objects in pairs, shells, water pitchers, figures and windows. All of these are things that I love. Even with its central figure, it is much more about the densely packed and peculiar objects he crams into the space.



Dickinson
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

Heaven and Earth

Holbein has always held a strong interest for me. I think two of his best pieces hang in the National Gallery. One, the double portrait of Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve, is a somber study of the two men surrounded by fascinating objects, rich in symbolic meaning. The strange elongated skull floating above the floor really captured my imagination when I saw it in London years ago. In the painting *Heaven and Earth* I chose to place it over a portion of Holbein's fabulous portrait of Christina of Denmark. I left off her head, replacing it with the skull. I also wanted to concentrate on her beautifully painted hands. This portrait was commissioned by King Henry VIII, designed to secure a marriage contract. She kept her head and declined his offer of marriage, an auspicious decision, as it turned out. In the painting "Heaven and Earth" I chose a blue background in reference to Holbein's portrait of King Henry VIII.



Heaven and Earth
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

Francis B

Francis B has a vivid orange background in keeping with Francis Bacon's frequent use of that color. The idea for *Francis B* rose out of my interest in the friendship between Francis Bacon and Lucien Freud. Freud did this stunning little portrait of Francis Bacon, which was stolen from the Tate a number of years ago and has never been found. A cast of my hand holds the image of Bacon over one of his surreal black doorways with an arrow, another reference to Bacon, evoking the unanswered question - where did you go?



Francis B.
Oil on board
22.25 x 18 inches

The Thief

In *The Thief*, my subject matter includes the face of a young gypsy woman in Georges De La Tour's *The Fortune Teller*. She is trying to steal the watch of a prosperous-looking man who is being distracted by an old fortune teller. I have included her enigmatic face in several paintings over the years, because her expression really fascinates me. De La Tour was a French artist from the 1500's who was extraordinary in his ability to portray candle light in his paintings. I set my gypsy girl against a dark background which has many floating, lit matches that she is eyeing surreptitiously, as my way of honoring his mastery of candle light.



The Thief
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

A Lesson in Paint

A Lesson in Paint is a tribute to Swiss painter and sculptor, Alberto Giacometti. Giacometti is one of those artists that had to grow on me, but after many years of study I finally got what he was after. One of the most basic yet difficult forms for a beginning artist to work with is an egg. Understand its form and volume and you will better understand how to paint the human head. Giacometti repeatedly gravitated to this shape when painting his figures. He had a systematic, almost mathematical way of dividing up the oval, working it over and over, building up numerous monochromatic layers as if he was sculpting with paint. Eventually he broke free from representing what was in front of him. It was as if he saw *through* space, deep into his subject, and created his own language – all a good artist can hope for.



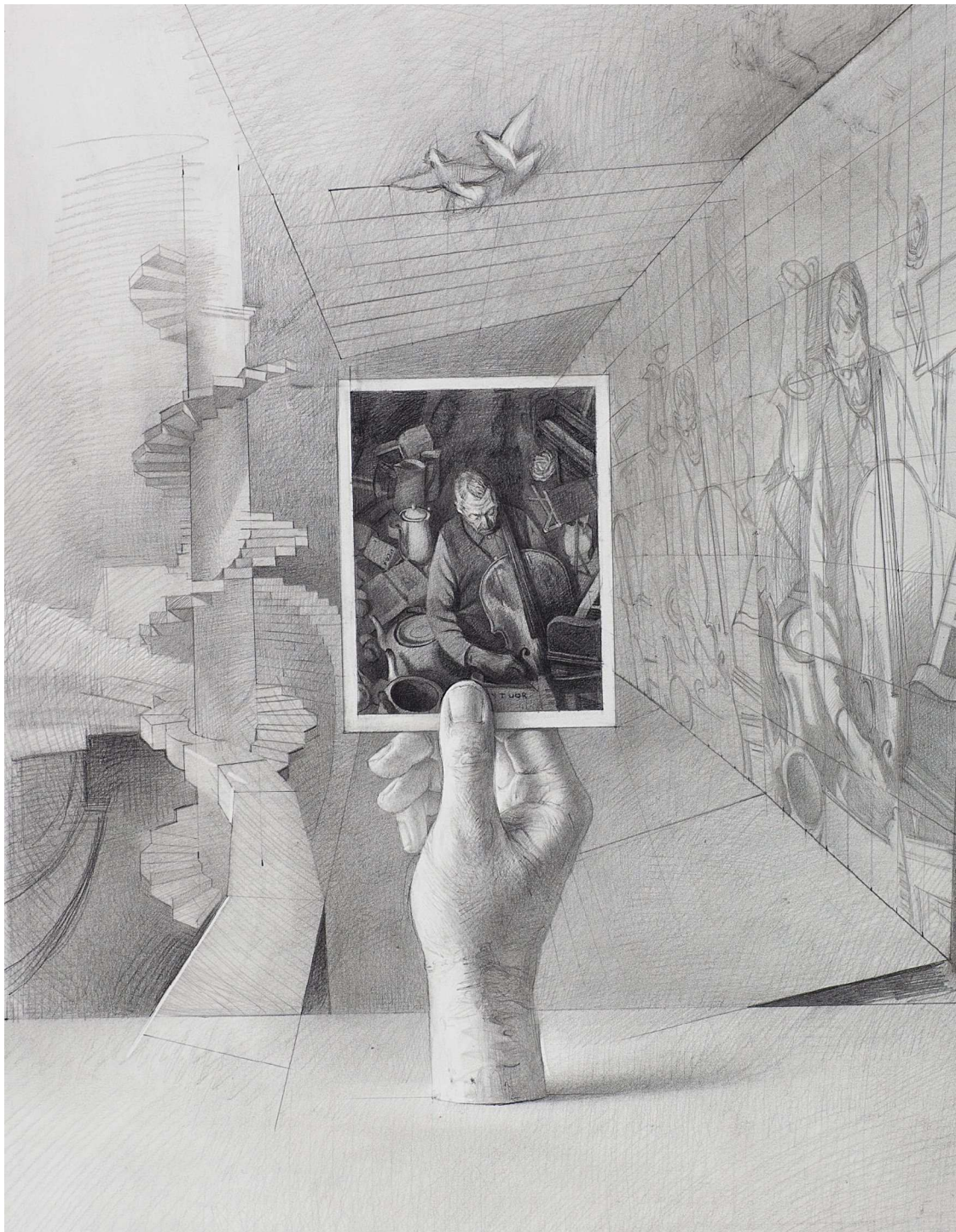
A Lesson in Paint
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches

Magritte Framed

I have always admired Magritte. His ideas fascinate me, and I was lucky enough to see a large exhibition of his work several years ago in San Francisco. My painting references two of his works -- *Golconda*, which has dozens of floating figures dressed in suits and bowler hats, and *The Human Condition*, which shows the summer countryside through a window. Against the window ledge Magritte has propped three easel legs and below the sash is the device an easel has for securing a canvas onto its frame. The implication is that the window itself is a painting, and I was after this effect when I framed the floating men in my paper frame. I like the sense of alternate reality this invokes.



Magritte Framed
Oil on board
23.5 x 18 inches



Dickinson: pre-study
Graphite on paper
23.5 x 18 inches

SELECTED COLLECTIONS:

Acadia Foundation collection, Northeast Harbor, ME

Amarillo Museum of Art - Amarillo TX

Arizona Sonora Desert Museum - Tucson AZ

Arkansas Art Center - Little Rock AR

Arnot Art Museum - Elmira NY

Brandywine River Museum - Chadds Ford PA

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center - Colorado Springs CO

Denver Art Museum - Denver CO

Evansville Museum of Art and Science - Evansville IN

Flint Institute of Arts - Flint MI

Foothills Art Center - Golden CO

Kansas City Art Institute - Kansas City MO

Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art - Denver CO

Longmont Museum and Cultural Center - Longmont CO

Metropolitan Museum of Art - New York NY

Mint Museum - Charlotte NC

Museum of New Mexico - Santa Fe NM

Philbrook Museum of Art - Tulsa OK

Reading Public Museum - Reading PA

San Diego Museum of Art – San Diego CA

San Jose Museum of Art - San Jose CA

Springfield Museum of Art - Springfield OH



