

Bacon's Books (Dublin, 19–20 Oct 2012)

Dublin, Oct 19–20, 2012

Deadline: Aug 17, 2012

Monika Keska

Bacon's Books: Francis Bacon's Library and its Role in his Art

The painter Francis Bacon had a voracious interest in books, and his range of interests is evident in the substantial collection he amassed, on subjects as diverse as art history, literature, photography, history, politics, philosophy, cinema, sport, crime, medicine, languages, and travel. The personal library of an artist is widely recognised as an invaluable resource for understanding their work, and there is ample evidence that this was the case for Bacon. His studio was piled with books, and littered with loose leaves torn from them for reference. Evidence indicates that he plundered these for ideas and forms, both from the images and text, liberally interpreting them for his own purposes, and there is much remaining to be explored. The purpose of this call for papers is to invite scholars to present new research on the connections between Bacon's art and his interest in books.

This symposium is presented as a stage in the joint project between the History of Art Department, Trinity College Dublin and Dublin City Gallery the Hugh Lane. The Gallery is well known as the home of Francis Bacon's meticulously relocated Reece Mews studio. In addition the Gallery has responsibility for Francis Bacon's entire collection of c. 1,300 books. The Bacon's Books project is intended to bring this invaluable resource to a wider audience, to facilitate further insight into the work of this major artist.

Generously funded by the Government of Ireland via the Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences (IRCHSS) the collaboration is led by Barbara Dawson, Director of Dublin City Gallery, the Hugh Lane, and Yvonne Scott, Head of the History of Art Department, Trinity College Dublin. The book collection has been comprehensively digitally catalogued, in a searchable database, drawing on the expertise of Dr Margarita Cappock, Head of Collections, and of Dr Monika Keska, IRCHSS-funded Research Assistant to the project. In addition to recording full publication details, the process involves photographing pages with notations and paint accretions, and documenting missing pages; it is also facilitating the identification of hundreds of the loose leaves found in the studio.

This invaluable database will be available for researchers visiting Dublin, and an annotated version will be accessible online from June on the websites of the Gallery and the College (see below).

Applicants for the symposium should send an abstract of no more than 300 words for papers of 20 minutes, along with an academic curriculum vitae or résumé, to: Yvonne Scott (scotty@tcd.ie)

and Barbara Dawson (bdawson.hughlane@dublincity.ie) by Friday, August 17th, 2012. For further information on the project partners, see:

http://www.tcd.ie/History_of_Art/ and <http://www.hughlane.ie>

For general queries about the symposium, contact Dr Monika Keska: keskam@tcd.ie

Bacon's Book Project details:

http://www.tcd.ie/History_of_Art/research/centres/triarc/bacon.php

Reference:

CFP: Bacon's Books (Dublin, 19-20 Oct 2012). In: ArtHist.net, Jul 4, 2012 (accessed Jun 4, 2026),

<<https://arthist.net/archive/3594>>.