



Francis Cunningham

Text by Christopher Knight

Text by Edward Lifson

Text by John Walsh

Text by Valentina De Pasca

Text by Regina Hawkins-Balducci

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- A new take on perception and preconceptions about the unclothed body and how, through art, the naked becomes the nude

When the American art world turned toward abstract art and action painting, Francis Cunningham remained focused on figurative art and the human form. His interest never waned. This book chronicles his development over an astonishing seven decades. Presented in a nonlinear order, the arc of his work is there for the discerning eye to see. Landscapes, still life, and human forms are interrelated. Cunningham's work reveals the connection between abstraction and representation. Their coexistence is the material and subject of this book, disclosing a new understanding of American painting by a living artist.

Accompanying over 180 high quality reproductions, the artist's many facets are explored in essays by art historians and art critics, including Christopher Knight, Edward Lifson, John Walsh, and Valentina De Pasca, as well through the reminiscences of one of his life models, Regina Hawkins-Balducci.

Cunningham attended the Art Students League of New York, where he studied drawing and anatomy with Robert Beverly Hale and painting with Edwin Dickinson. He became an influential master instructor, cofounding the New Brooklyn School of Life Drawing, Painting and Sculpture (1977-1983) and the New York Academy of Art in 1983. At his current age of 90, he continues to paint in his studio in Manhattan and in the rural western part of Massachusetts, known as the Berkshires.

This is the first monograph devoted to his work.

Francis Cunningham is an American figurative painter known for working across three genres - nude, landscape and still-life - and for being an influential master instructor. He co-founded the New Brooklyn School of Life, Painting, Drawing & Sculpture, Inc. (1980-1983), and the New York Academy of Art in 1983 with sculptors Barney Hodes and Stuart Pivar. **Christopher Knight** is chief art critic for the *Los Angeles Times*. A three-time finalist for the Pulitzer Prize in Criticism (1991, 2001 and 2007), Knight received a Lifetime Achievement Award in Art Journalism from the Rabkin Foundation in 2020, and the 1997 Frank Jewett Mather Award for Distinction in Art Criticism from the College Art Association. **Edward Lifson** is an award-winning writer on art, architecture, design, and culture. He created and hosted a public radio show on the arts called *Hello Beautiful!* Lifson was also a U.S., foreign, and war correspondent, and domestic and foreign bureau chief for National Public Radio. **John Walsh** is Director Emeritus of the J. Paul Getty Museum. He served as Director from 1983 until October 2000. He is the author of many articles and catalogues on Dutch paintings of the 17th century, and of several books including *Jan Steen, The Drawing Lesson*. **Valentina De Pasca** is a historian of ancient art. She obtained a PhD in art history and medieval archaeology from Milan University with a thesis titled *Intercultural Exchanges and Interactions with the Eastern Mediterranean Area in Lombard Art in Italy (16th-17th Century): the Case of the Disk Fibulae*, which she defended in 2018.

