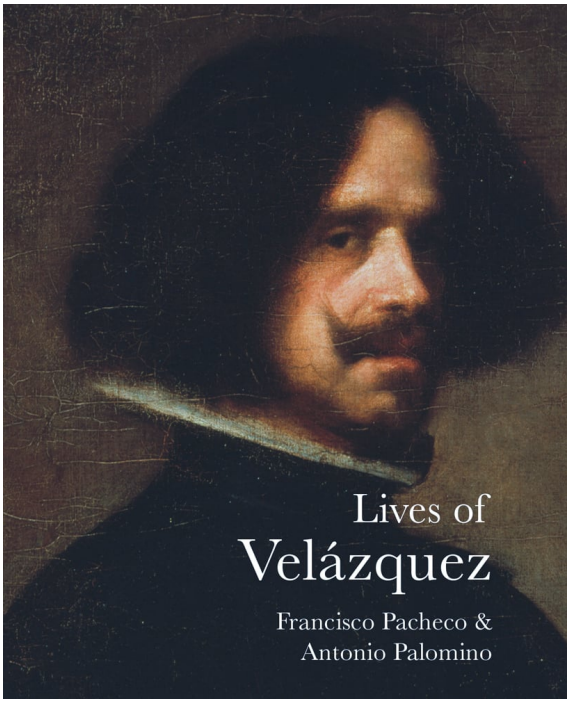
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Lives of Velázquez

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ISBN	9781843681670
Publisher	Pallas Athene
Binding	Paperback / softback
Territory	World
Size	145 mm x 114 mm
Pages	192 Pages
Illustrations	53 color
Name of series	Lives of the Artists
Price	£10.99

- The two most important contemporary accounts of the life and work of Velázquez

Collected for the first time in a new translation: two of the most important and far-reaching biographies of an artist ever written, and our principal sources for the life of Velázquez. Diego Velázquez (1599-1660) is for many the greatest painter ever to have lived. His astonishing naturalism had an immediate and lasting impact on his contemporaries, inspiring both awe and fierce debate. Most of what we know about Velázquez's life and incomparably successful career comes from these two biographies. Francisco Pacheco, a second rank painter, was Velázquez's teacher and eventually father-in-law – possibly the closest relationship between a painter and his biographer in all art. *This Life*, part of Pacheco's theoretical work, the *Art of Painting*, has never been translated before, and it reveals the scale of the challenge to traditional painting presented by Velázquez's insurmountable talent. Antonio Palomino, the Spanish Vasari, was born just after Velázquez died, but knew many of the painter's friends and colleagues. His biography, precise and detailed, is an incomparable source, but like Pacheco's text, also tackles the aesthetic debate engendered by Velázquez's choice of subject matter and style. Together these biographies give an excitingly close insight into the mind and world of a great painter. The introduction by Michael Jacobs situates these biographies in the context of Spain's Golden Age, and the intellectual ferment in painting and in the theatre that lie behind Velázquez's magic. The translations are by Nina Ayala Mallory, the leading scholar of Spanish artistic biographies. The volume is richly illustrated with 30 plates illustrating the full gamut of Velázquez's work.

Published 6th Apr 2023