



Gilbert & George: The Paradisical Pictures

Michael Bracewell

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- The book focuses on the fantastical, allegorical and psychedelic *PARADISICAL PICTURES* by Gilbert & George, arranged in chronological order
- Includes a fascinating commentary of the paintings by writer Michael Bracewell
- Hurtwood's Special Edition of ***PARADISICAL PICTURES*** is released to celebrate the opening of the Gilbert & George Centre and will include foiling, colored edges and original artwork

Writer, novelist and cultural commentator Michael Bracewell explores the paradise behind the *PARADISICAL PICTURES*; the 35 artworks made by Gilbert & George in 2019. The artists' work confounds and rejects all art historical classification or affiliation to other schools or movements in art. As affirmed by the *PARADISICAL PICTURES*, there is no formalist, aesthetic or conceptual precedent to the ideology and vision they convey with such intensity.

The paintings are fantastical, allegorical, narrative, representational, psychedelic, absurdist, modern yet archaic, surrealist-grotesque, inflected with both tragedy and comedy, filled with pathos, touchingly eloquent of human frailty, age and exhaustion. The art of Gilbert & George is a visionary art, above all – reports from a cosmic journey through life that begins on the streets of London.

The *PARADISICAL PICTURES* suggest a chapter in a story that has been unfolding before them and will continue beyond them. This 'paradise' is not a destination but a stage on a longer journey. It is a dream of paradise and the exploration of an archetype that is both secular and sacred.

The paradise of these *PARADISICAL PICTURES* proposes a more ambivalent view – a place of biomorphic mutation, exhaustion, watchfulness and possession.

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Michael Bracewell is the author of six novels and two works of non-fiction including the much acclaimed *England is Mine*. His writing has appeared in *The Penguin Book of Twentieth Century Fashion Writing* and *The Faber Book of Pop*, and he has written catalog texts for many contemporary artists, including Gilbert & George, Richard Wentworth and Jim Lambie. He was co-curator of *The Secret Public: The Last Days of the British Underground, 1977–1988*, at the Kunstverein Munchen in 2006, and was a Turner Prize judge in 2007.