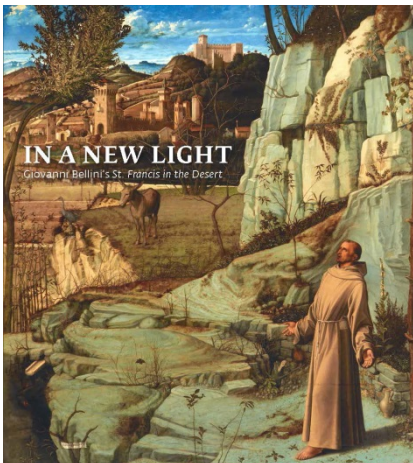




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THE FRICK COLLECTION

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NEW PUBLICATION ON AN ICONIC FRICK PAINTING
IN A NEW LIGHT: GIOVANNI BELLINI'S
ST. FRANCIS IN THE DESERT



Giovanni Bellini's *St. Francis in the Desert* is a masterpiece of Venetian Renaissance painting that has enthralled visitors to The Frick Collection for generations. The work is also profoundly mysterious, its beauty and depth of detail matched only by the enigma of the artist's intentions. For centuries, viewers have puzzled over the painting's meaning—seeking explanations in a variety of pictorial and textual sources. Until now, the artist's practical conception and realization of this extraordinary picture have remained largely unexplored. The Frick is pleased to announce the publication of **In a New Light: Giovanni Bellini's *St. Francis in the Desert***, which presents the collective findings of an unprecedented technical examination of *St. Francis*

in the Desert and offers new understandings of its meaning through an examination of the artist's process. In 2011, the results of the study were the subject of an acclaimed dossier exhibition of the same name. Published this month by the Frick in association with D Giles Limited, this highly anticipated and beautifully illustrated monograph is edited by Susannah Rutherglen and Charlotte Hale, with contributions by Denise Allen, Michael F. Cusato, O.F.M., Anne-Marie Eze, Raymond Carlson, and Joseph Godla and a foreword by Keith Christiansen.

Comments Frick Director Ian Wardropper, "*St. Francis in the Desert* is one of the most beloved pictures in the collection and arguably one of the most important Renaissance paintings in the United States. The discoveries made through the technical analysis published here present a new way of interpreting this masterpiece that will be invaluable to this area of scholarship for years to come. That this volume's publication coincides with the 100th anniversary of Henry Clay Frick's acquisition of the picture in 1915 makes it all the more significant.

The authors add, “The study of a great work of art always benefits from an interdisciplinary approach, as each specialist brings a different perspective that generates further lines of inquiry. This volume reflects years of ongoing collaboration between The Frick Collection and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. We are proud that the unique collections, resources, and expertise of both institutions are represented.”

ABOUT THE PUBLICATION

Following an in-depth technical examination—including infrared reflectography, X-radiography, microscopy, and paint analysis—an international group of specialists considered the artist’s working process and its implications for the picture’s meaning. Their findings provide a “glimpse over Bellini’s shoulder” and open new avenues of research into Venetian Renaissance painting and its cultural and religious context. Also published here for the first time are recently discovered documents pertaining to the provenance of *St. Francis in the Desert* during the nineteenth century, as well as synthetic studies of the work’s Franciscan milieu and early history.

In a New Light: Giovanni Bellini’s St. Francis in the Desert (hardcover, 232 pages; \$55.00, member price \$49.50) is available at the Museum Shop of the Frick, by phone at 212.547.6848, and on the institution’s Web site [here](#).

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Susannah Rutherglen served as Andrew W. Mellon Pre-Doctoral Curatorial Fellow at The Frick Collection from 2009 to 2011. **Charlotte Hale** is Paintings Conservator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Denise Allen is Curator of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. **Michael F. Cusato, O.F.M.**, is Distinguished Professor of History, St. Bonaventure University, and former Director of its Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure, New York. **Anne-Marie Eze** is Consulting Curator at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. **Joseph Godla** is Chief Conservator at The Frick Collection. **Keith Christiansen** is the John Pope-Hennessy Chairman of the Department of European Paintings at the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

About the Painting and its Technical Analysis

This monumental panel painting portrays Francis of Assisi, the medieval Christian saint who renounced earthly riches to embrace a humble existence of poverty, prayer, and obedience to the Gospels. Departing from canonical representations of the holy man’s life and miracles, Bellini has imagined Francis alone in a mountainous wilderness, stepping forward from his simple shelter into a golden light that seems to transfigure him spiritually. In March 2010, the painting was sent to the Metropolitan Museum of Art for technical examination by a team of specialists led by Paintings Conservator Charlotte Hale. They employed infrared reflectography to create the first complete image of the underdrawing that guided the artist’s hand as he painted, and microscopy to study his exquisite manipulation

of the oil medium. During a collaboration initiated by Denise Allen, then curator at the Frick, an international group of conservators, curators, educators, and art historians assembled to interpret the results of the investigation and to address their implications for the painting's meaning. These collective findings were presented in a dossier exhibition at the Frick organized by Susannah Rutherglen during her tenure as Andrew W. Mellon Curatorial Fellow.

INTERACT

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BASIC INFORMATION

General Information Phone: 212.288.0700

Web site: www.frick.org

Building project: www.frickfuture.org

E-mail: info@frick.org

App: frick.org/app

Where: 1 East 70th Street, near Fifth Avenue

Museum Hours: open six days a week: 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays through Saturdays; 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sundays. Closed Mondays, New Year's Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day. Limited hours (11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) on Lincoln's Birthday, Election Day, and Veterans Day

Admission: \$22; senior citizens \$17; students \$12; "pay what you wish" on Sundays from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE TO YOUR READERS: Children under ten are not admitted to the Collection

Subway: #6 local (on Lexington Avenue) to 68th Street station; Bus: M1, M2, M3, and M4 southbound on Fifth Avenue to 72nd Street and northbound on Madison Avenue to 70th Street

Tour Information: included in the price of admission is an Acoustiguide Audio Tour of the permanent collection. The tour is offered in six languages: English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, and Spanish.

Shop: the shop is open the same days as the Museum, closing fifteen minutes before the institution.

Group Visits: Please call 212.288.0700 for details and to make reservations.

Public Programs: A calendar of events is published regularly and is available upon request.

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For further press information, please contact Alexis Light, Senior Manager of Media Relations & Marketing
Phone: 212.547.6844 Email: Light@frick.org