

The Bone House

By Joel-Peter Witkin, Eugenia Parry



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The image exudes torture and pain, but this is not the extent of the photographer's ambition for it. He envisions a huge scale; the print will be the largest he can make because he has mapped a grand conception, and, after more than forty years as a photographer, arrived at a place of understanding more lucid than he has ever before achieved. With his vanitas he establishes an erotic territory of majestic sacrifice and sacrament, the meaning of which, for him, lies somewhere between the unspeakable suffering of the crucified Christ and that of the Jews under Hitler.



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Editorial Review

From Library Journal

Witkin's longtime publisher brings out this latest update of his oeuvre with the lush reproductions and immaculate design one expects from Twin Palms. Featuring "First Photograph, Brooklyn, 1950," one photograph from 1998, and even a couple striking paintings, this work ranges widely, but the vast majority of the roughly 90 pieces are from the well-documented 1980s and 1990s. The macabre and sublime mix in these images, mostly tableaux on mythical themes, which Witkin explains with the observation that "I consider myself a portraitist; not of people, but conditions of being." A prominent photography writer, Parry contributes a thoughtful if not revelatory afterword. This may well be the finest collection of Witkin's work to date, and contemporary photography collections will want a copy to complement other titles; public libraries and general collections might make do with the catalog to Witkin's Guggenheim Museum retrospective show (Joel-Peter Witkin, LJ 9/15/95). AEric Bryant, "Library Journal" Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Jose York:

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Paul Greenblatt:

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Dorothy Betancourt:

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Joan James:

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