

**The Glass in Front of the Painting:
Reflectivity in Francis Bacon's Exhibitions from a Textual-Semiotic Perspective**

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Abstract

The semiotic approach that is attempted in this paper concerns the phenomenon of reflectivity that is caused by the imposition of glass panes in front of the paintings of Francis Bacon (1909-1992) during their exhibition. First, I investigate the properties of glass that sustain a conceptualization of its functions within the space of an art exhibition, pointing out its character as a semiotic boundary. Then, I examine the implications of views of the glass panes as technical or artistic devices, moving forward to their inclusion into the researcher's conception of the artistic text, and further analyzing this textualization with regard specifically to reflectivity, using the theory of Juri Lotman on the structure of the artistic text. Finally, I attempt to integrate some considerations on Bacon's aesthetics, in order to illustrate the significance of reflectivity within the specific context of his artistic endeavor.

Keywords glass, reflectivity, boundary, textualization, juxtaposition

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to provide a semiotic approach to the phenomenon of reflectivity that accompanies the shielding of the paintings of British painter Francis Bacon (1909-1992) with glass panes, during their exhibition in art galleries and art museums (see Fig. 1, 2, 3). For this purpose, I will examine the potential implications of excluding or incorporating the glass panes from or into the artistic text of the painting respectively, focusing on the latter of these options and extending its consequences on the theoretical level, as far as reflectivity is concerned. The textualization, whose dynamics I investigate, is guided basically by the theory of Juri Lotman on the structure of the artistic text, but I will furthermore attempt to integrate a conceptual analysis of the spatial-functional dimension of this phenomenon and further elementary considerations that pertain to the aesthetics of Bacon's art, which might contribute to the illumination of the significance of reflectivity in his art.

1. Spatial-functional conceptualization: the glass pane as semiotic boundary

Let me examine first what are the relevant properties of the glass as material that justify its installment in front of a work of art. The most obvious one, and the sine qua non for its use, is its transparency: it enables the viewer to see what is behind it. The most effective one, and its functional legitimization, is its insulative capacity: it protects what is behind it from being directly, physically touched or otherwise accessed and harmed; this quality of the glass, when it comes to its usage within the context of an art exhibition space, serves the usual "conservation considerations, or protection against the most insane threats from the public" (Poprzęcka, 2010: para. 1). The third, perhaps distracting, property of the glass is its reflectivity: "Glass is transparent. But when placed on a non-transparent surface, it becomes reflective. The painting [...] works as the amalgam, so that the glass that is 'coated' with it becomes a mirror" (ibid: para. 2). The glass though is not a mirror, but has only one mirroring function along with the other two mentioned before.

Each one of the three properties, coupled with a respective function within the exhibition context, articulates the segmentation of its space in respective spheres. Transparency provides access to what is behind the glass; insulation separates what is behind from what is in front of the glass; reflectivity projects what is in front of the glass. In other words, the spheres rendered evident by the imposition of the glass pane are the painting and the exhibition area, mediated by the glass itself as spatial boundary. Each one of these represents an occupant on the conceptual level of artistic communication, a factor or agent in the process of transmission of an artistic text: the author (namely the painter), the mediating art institution, and the audience (namely the viewer).

In order to fully comprehend the semiotic –and not just metaphorical- nature of this spatial conceptualization, one has to invoke Juri Lotman’s notion of ‘semiosphere’, defined as “the semiotic space necessary for the existence and functioning of languages” (1990: 123), whose “entire space [...] is transected by boundaries of different levels [...] and the internal space of each of these sub-semiospheres has its own semiotic ‘I’” (ibid: 138). The significance of this concept lies in its pointing out the crucial character of boundaries between semiospheres, as both delimiting mechanisms, constitutive of the very possibility of semiotic individualities in the first place, but further and foremost as dynamic “bilingual translatable ‘filters’, passing through which the text is translated into another language (or languages), situated *outside* the given semiosphere [italics in the original]” (Lotman, 2005: 208-209).

Within this theoretical framework, the glass pane in front of the painting acquires the characteristics of a semiotic boundary¹, and therefore resists any attempt to be isolated and autonomized, since “[i]t is always the boundary of something and so belongs [...] to *both* contiguous semiospheres [italics mine]” (Lotman, 1990: 136), namely the semiospheres of the artistic text and its concrete audience. To treat it so, means to acknowledge its full semiotic potential, grounded on the embodiment of all three of its abovementioned functions at once. From this perspective, the glass pane is conceptualized as the necessarily bilingual (or polylingual) semiotic device that not only conditions the transmission of the original artistic text from the author to the audience, but, what is more

¹ Lotman has registered the possibility of materialization of semiotic boundaries as follows: “When the semiosphere involves real territorial features as well, the boundary is spatial in the literal sense” (1990: 140).

important, renders the semiotic individualities engaged in this transmission evidently distinct, elevating thus the necessity and actuality of translation processes to the status of conscious awareness on the side of the audience.

1. The glass pane as technical or artistic device?

The aim of the preceding analysis is not only to illuminate the complexity of the object behind glass and how the latter interferes in the process of visual perception, which is admittedly not a monopolizing particularity of some artistic exhibitions². What is of further interest in an artistic exhibition is the more than often neglected or, better, “[t]reated as necessary evil” (Poprzęcka, 2010: para. 1), reflective function of the glass, which is inseparably attached to the surface of the work of art, and thus suggests at once an alien, yet inextricable device -impeding, yet permitting the original aesthetic experience of the viewer at once.

Reflection in this framework is usually regarded as mere ‘noise’, which in the mathematical communication model of Shannon and Weaver stands for “things [that] are added to the signal which were not intended by the information source” (Weaver, 1949: 7), and which further raises the question: “How can one minimize the undesirable effects of noise [...]?” (ibid: 8). Indeed, seen from this perspective, the task of minimization or elimination of ‘noise’ is subject to the regulatory expertise of the art institution and will take place on grounds of the interference of another technical means -for example through adjustment or modification of the lighting system in the exhibition space- that counterbalances the distortion generated (or magnified) by reflectivity. An approach that ascribes purely technical considerations to the glass pane –and thus emancipates it from the artistic text of the painting- necessarily entails the treatment of reflectivity as ‘noise source’ and seems to conceal, and thus sustain, a generalized view of art institutions as authorized mediators, surreptitiously neutralizing the ‘flaws’ of artistic communication by excusing their presence from the site of art proper and deploying insipid technical strategies.

² The most common example from a non-artistic domain comes in the form of shop windows and display cases.

The first logical step away from the technicality of the glass pane brings one to the intentionality of the artist himself. Francis Bacon was notably famous for insisting that his artworks be exhibited behind glass panes; in one of the interviews he gave to the art critic David Sylvester (which were edited, compiled, and published under the title *The Brutality of Fact: Interviews with Francis Bacon*)³, he was directly asked by the critic about this preference and its rationale:

D.S. [...] I know you always like to have the paintings under glass [...] Are the reflections something you positively want to have, or are they something to be put up with?

F.B. I don't want them to be there; I feel that they should be put up with. I feel that, because I use no varnishes or anything of that kind, and because of the very flat way I paint, the glass helps to unify the picture. I also like the distance between what has been done and the onlooker that the glass creates; I like, as it were, the removal of the object as far as possible.

D.S. So it's not that you feel that the reflections add something by adding to the scrambling of the forms?

F.B. Well, oddly enough, I even like Rembrandts under glass. And it's true to say in many ways they're more difficult to see, but you can still look into them.

D.S. Do you feel, perhaps, that having to look through the reflections forces one to look harder? Is that a factor?

F.B. No, it isn't. It's the distance –that this thing is shut away from the spectator.

[...]

F.B. There is no attempt to do what Duchamp did, which was a perfectly logical thing. Whereas to want the person reflected in the glass of a dark painting is illogical and has no meaning. I think it's just one of those misfortunes. I hope they'll make glass soon which doesn't reflect. (Sylvester, 1993: 86-87)

³ The excerpt quoted here belongs to the *Interview 3*, which "is based on three private recordings made in December 1971, July 1973 and October 1973" (Sylvester's editorial note, 1993: 202). Regarding the editorial procedure followed by Sylvester, as well as contingent issues of originality of the finally published material, see: *ibid.*

This excerpt sheds valuable light on the meaning ascribed by the artist to the glass in front of his paintings. Despite the fact that Bacon explicitly rejects reflection as an intended effect of this practice and considers it further as an undesired and meaningless one, he advocates nonetheless the artistic function of the glass, as a device supporting the appearance of a unified canvas, and foremost as a device creating distance between the canvas and the viewer. His emphasis on the latter acquires a particularly aesthetic significance, resonating Walter Benjamin's definition of the 'aura' of an (artistic or natural) object as "the unique phenomenon of a distance, however close it [i.e. the object] may be" (1969: 222). Of course, the auratic character of the original, that Benjamin had in mind, far exceeds the idea of a literal device creating distance between the object and the viewer, and in the case of Bacon's art the *semblance of distance* is basically to be rooted in his primary aesthetic endeavor. Nevertheless, the glass panes in the case examined here support substantially the phenomenology of the auratic effect, in concordance with the artist's desire, and this has been registered further by his critics:

He prefers [...] even going to the extent of protecting the painted surface with glass that, while protecting the natural form, impede our visual contact with it by adding a further element of interference, the reflection of light. At this point, from an accidental nuisance, the reflection becomes a rhetorical tool: the real spectator sees himself and his real outline reflected in a painting that is intermittently perceptible and thus becomes *impenetrable, distant, and mysterious* itself [italics mine]. (Ficcacci, 2006: 27)⁴

The paradox of physical proximity, yet aesthetic recession of the artwork, then, becomes all the more salient in the actual encounter of the viewer with the original shielded paintings of Bacon in the context of an exhibition, whereas it is crucially weakened during an encounter with photographic representations of the 'pure' uncoated canvases of the artist in a book, on the Web etc. (see and juxtapose Fig. 4 and 5), thus bearing witness

⁴ Ficcacci's employment of the additional quality of 'impenetrability', in order to describe the distance effect, reveals another coordinate of affinity with Benjamin's 'aura', exemplified by Benjamin himself in terms of 'unapproachability': "Distance is the opposite of closeness. The essentially distant object is the unapproachable one. Unapproachability is indeed a major quality of the cult image. [...] The closeness which one may gain from its subject matter does not impair the distance which it retains in its appearance." (1969: 243, Note 5)

(even if laterally) to Benjamin's seminal position that "that which withers in the age of mechanical reproduction is the aura of the work of art" (1969: 221).

Having suggested this connection, however, one should wonder how the imposition of glass in front of the painting is capable of bringing about Bacon's desired effect of distance. To address this question, one has to make recourse to the above illustrated properties of the glass: transparency is supposed to enable visual access and therefore eliminate the distance; insulation is incapable by itself to generate distance, when it comes to objects not meant to be touched anyway (visual exhibits); reflection creates the distracting sense of visual confrontation with an extra-pictorial space and therefore produces effectively the real illusion of distance from the pictorial space. This proposition is further in alignment with Ficacci's observation, as articulated in the excerpt above. That is to say, that even if Bacon himself repudiated the intentionality of reflectivity in his exhibitions, one can hardly imagine the achievement of the same desired effect of distance without it. The second step in this examination, then, has to overcome both the impediment of traditional views on the glass panes as technical devices, and the perspective of their limited artistic integration, itself limited by considerations of the direct intentionality of the artist.

2. Textualization of glass pane and reflectivity

At this point comes the contribution of Lotman's "relativity of the opposition between the text and extra-textual structures" (1977: 285), which can be summarized in two postulates. First, "the concept of text is *not absolute* [italics mine]" (ibid). Second:

[...] one must take into account the possible difference between what *the author* considers a text to be, what *the audience* regards as a primary artistic whole, and finally the perspective of *the scholar*, who perceives the text as a *useful abstraction of artistic unity* [italics mine]. (ibid: 286)

Out of the three conceptions of text, we are concerned here with the third one. A closer inspection of it reveals two fundamental determinants for the conception of text that

the researcher employs: the usefulness of the abstraction and the unity of the artistic object. The usefulness implies the satisfaction of certain objectives, purposes or priorities, whereas the unity sets the limit beyond which an element cannot contribute artistically to the perceived as artistic whole, because by entering the analytical field, it would alter it towards a new configuration, no more corresponding to the established objectives of the researcher, but to new ones.

Having this conception of text as a guide, one can move forward to the total integration of the glass pane and its reflectivity in the artistic text of the painting. Inclusion of the glass in the textual domain of the painting determined by the researcher leads to an acknowledgement of its full functional capacity, as a properly artistic and semiotic device that presents the only possible pathway of claiming access to the original painting through a juxtaposition with the actual, spatiotemporal occurrence in front of it, conditioned by the art institution's strategies, but activated and signified uniquely by the viewer. The inclusion of the glass in the *textual* domain means not postponing or displacing it into a meta-level, whereby it would be regarded as a detachable filtering device, but embracing it as a constitutive element of the text in the first place -provided that the researcher of Bacon's art is concerned with the original artwork in its final modality of exhibition, which retains a conspicuously auratic character. By treating the glass as an intra-textual structure, the following analytical configuration emerges: the ostensibly transparent painting is conveyed safely insulated by the art institution only to recede behind a reflective juxtaposition with the single viewer. What will follow, then, is an attempt to outline a general semiotic conceptual framework that accommodates the integration of the glass structure in the artistic text of the painting, by making recourse to Lotman's earlier idiosyncratic structuralism.

According to Lotman, "one of the basic structural laws of an artistic text is its *unevenness* – the concurrence of structurally heterogeneous segments [italics in the original]" (1977: 280). What is meant by this 'structural heterogeneity' is the segmentation of the text into substructures, which exhibit a differentiated character of organization or, in other words, are constituted according to different structural principles. Yet the artistic text as a whole, encompassing these substructures, exhibits necessarily a superstructural organization, based on a structural principle of a higher order. This principle, due to the

multivalent nature of the aggregate substructures, bears the character of a juxtaposition - “the juxtaposition of heterogeneous elements as a compositional principle” (ibid: 279)- and, further, due to the difference and multiplicity of levels that the substructures occupy, this juxtaposition acquires the character of interaction. Interaction then generates unpredictability, which is a key feature of the artistic text (cf. Eco’s concept of ‘open work’ (see 1989: 93-94), and Barthes’ conceptualization of ‘Text’ in opposition to ‘work’ (see 1977: 155-164)):

[...] the more complex the organization of a text and of each of its levels, the more unexpected will be the points of intersection of individual substructures [...] Hence the familiar paradox that arises only in an *artistic text*: the more it is structured, the less predictable it becomes [italics in the original]. (Lotman 1977: 280)

Taking this into account, the reflectivity of the glass, that engenders the ad hoc instances of reflection, seems to present the structural principle according to which a different type of substructures is brought into existence. Furthermore, it presents an organizing principle that guides the reading of the text through a constant visual juxtaposition. These generative and organizing capacities of reflectivity endow the latter with a higher-order structural meaning; they allow it to be characterized as an organizing subsystem of the artistic text of the painting, in a similar way that the spatial organization of the famous poem *Un Coup de Dés* by Mallarmé provides different itineraries for its reading, staging a ‘spatial drama’ instead of a definitive work (see Drucker, 2011), and thus schedules the act and outcome of reading in a crucial way. Similarly, reflectivity in the paintings of Bacon introduces new visual elements into them, of a totally different structural nature, but in a forceful way that, while paving different paths for viewing the painting, deprives each of them of the privilege of ‘properness’.

The instances of reflection, then, acquire the character of discrete and momentary configurations, crucial elements of actuality, juxtaposed to the artificial elements of the canvas. This juxtaposition enriches the capacity of the artistic text to constantly generate new images through processes of projection and contextualization or intertextualization. At the same time, the hybridic nature of the images that arise foregrounds a constant shift in

the semiotic awareness of their distinct coding: “The more extreme the untranslatability of the codes of a textual inclusion and the basic code, the more perceptible is the semiotic specificity of each of them” (Lotman, 1988: 49).

What is important to remember, is that the type of reflection that appears on the glass is not the same as the type of reflection in a mirror. The latter, regardless of its equally representational nature, becomes the sole occupant of the mirroring surface. The juxtaposition that takes place in this case is clearly between reality and its reflection. In the case examined here, though, the juxtaposition occurs on a primary level between what is depicted in an artistic language and what is reflected upon it, and on a secondary level between both of them and reality. This multilayered juxtaposition becomes clear with the following observation:

A picture behind glass is not simple, not homogenous, but entangled in complex relationships with other images. [...] [T]here is no way of reaching the ‘presence’ of the picture, disrupted by the invasion of another reality and a different mode of representation. (Poprzęcka, 2010: para. 20)

3. Juxtaposition of languages

The mode of representation that the reflection introduces is of a profoundly different nature than the mode of representation that the painter has imprinted upon the canvas. The relation of any system of representation to reality is perhaps (one of) the most highly contested site(s) of semiotics and philosophical discourse during the 20th century - subsumed under the idea of *crisis of representation* (see, for example, Nöth, 2003)- and therefore cannot suggest a distinct object of inquiry for the purposes of the present paper. Whereas, in the more specific context of reflection, Yair Neuman has acutely noted that “[i]t is only through the metaphysics of denotation that representation in general and mirroring in particular mistakenly achieved their celebrated status as gates to reality” (2004: 67), what is argued in the present is that exactly such considerations are rescued and foregrounded on the aesthetic level of appearances, through the juxtaposition brought about by the glass between depiction and reflection. In order to differentiate between the

two, at this point, it is sufficient to understand their diverse mode of coming into existence, their opposed modalities of formation, at least as experienced by the viewer.

Depiction appears as the outcome of human mediation; that is, the attempt of the artist to visualize a mental model of reality. According to Lotman, “art is always an analogue of reality (of an object), translated to the language of the given system” (2011: 250). Lotman distills further this translation process by observing that “[t]he content of art as a modeling system is the world of reality, translated to the language of our consciousness, translated in turn to the language of the given form of art” (ibid: 250-251)⁵.

Reflection, on the other hand, appears as an immediate imprint of reality, whose phenomenal dimension suffers a reduction on the visual channel, caused principally by a physical law; that is, it is only on the level of activation of this law, and subsequently on the level of signification of its operation, that reflection undergoes some process of human mediation. Since it remains, though, “a structure of elements and rules of their combination, existing in a state of fixed analogy to the whole sphere of the object of perception, cognition, or organization” (ibid: 250) –this being the definition of a *modelling system* offered by Lotman- it “may be treated as a *language* [italics in the original]” too (ibid).

The language of reflection thus comes in juxtaposition with the artistic language of depiction, each one of these suggesting a differentiated form of mediation and modelling of reality. This appears to be the ultimate elevation of reflectivity to a status higher than that of an organizing subsystem of the artistic text. This is the status of a modelling system in the sense of language, a complete system of representation, in pronounced opposition to the language of Bacon. The language of reflection is dynamic and open, coextensive with and utterly dependent upon its object, with which it engages in a modelling relationship; it projects upon the glass every actual instance which falls in the scope that the viewer determines by fixing his position in front of/relative to the painting: “When standing before

⁵ The concept of ‘language’ is employed here as signified by Tartu-Moscow Semiotic School, namely as a ‘modelling system’. It is therefore unnecessary –and outside the aspirations of the present endeavor- to engage in the questioning of pictorial semiotics regarding the plausibility of the concept of ‘pictorial language’ (registered as early as 1969 by Roland Barthes: “[...] how many times has he been asked this question: Is painting a language? Yet, till now, no answer: we have not been able to establish either painting’s lexicon or its general grammar [...]” [1991: 149]).

a painting placed behind a pane of glass, we can see the reflection of everything in front of it: the space across from it, other pictures [see Fig. 6], viewers, and last but not least – ourselves [see Fig. 7]” (Poprzęcka, 2010: para. 2, see also Sylvester 1993: 86). What is more important, though, is that its principal operation remains uncontrolled by human interference, subject solely and unconditionally to the physical law of reflection.

When these two diametrically opposed languages of reflection and depiction collide on the viewing surface, their juxtaposition brings about primarily two significant results: first, the mutual tension and enrichment of their discrete modelling capacity, through complementarity; second, the unmasking of the basic principle of the artistic, pictorial language. The first result is the extension of the juxtaposition mentioned in the previous section on the level of language: the new, hybridic images that arise from the juxtaposition of elements are susceptible of transformation into new meanings. These meanings appear on a level that does not cease to exist at the moment that the instantaneous materializations of reflection disappear from perception. The second -and perhaps most significant- result has been noted by Lotman in two studying frameworks. First, in the framework of “Text within a Text”, one discovers the general, operative principle of the mechanism of textual inclusion as follows:

Introduction of an alien semiosis that is untranslatable into the “maternal” text puts the latter in a state of excitation: the object of attention shifts from the message to the language as such and reveals the explicit code heterogeneity of the code of the maternal text itself. (1988: 40)

Second, in the framework of “Iconic Rhetoric”, Lotman exposes the specific operation of mirror reflection, as a textual inclusion, relative to the pictorial space of a painting. The theme of ‘mirror within a painting’ that he describes can be expanded so as to accommodate the case of ‘reflection upon a painting’ that is examined here:

[...] every reflection is at one and same time a dislocation, a deformation which [...] shows up the structural principle of the language into whose space the given object is projected. [...] In fact it is the mirror and the perspective reflected in it which reveal

the contradiction between the flatness of the canvas and the three-dimensionality of the world represented on it, i.e. reveal the very language of art. (1990: 56)

I will attempt now to bring reflectivity into the more specific context of Bacon's aesthetics, in order to show from a different perspective how the former operates as a juxtaposition precisely to his paintings and therefore why in this respect its integrated textualization appears to bear fruit and justify my focus on it as an object of study. The aesthetics of Bacon's art can be characterized by what Gilles Deleuze in his study of the British painter calls *the logic of sensation*:

What directly interests him is a violence that is involved only with color and line: the violence of a sensation (and not of a representation) [...] The violence of sensation is opposed to the violence of the represented [...] The former is inseparable from its direct action on the nervous system [...] being itself a Figure, it must have nothing of the nature of a represented object. [...] The painter would thus *make visible* a kind of original unity of the senses, and would make a multisensible Figure appear visually [italics in the original]. (2003: x, 39, 42)

What Bacon's language tries to capture and transmit to the viewer, according to this perspective, namely the sensation as a condensed empirical perception of the Figure and its expression upon the canvas as a visual spasm, oscillating between abstraction and figuration, rather than as a visual representation (regarded in the tradition of representational art), pertains to his own view on art: "[...] what is of importance is not imagery of reality, but production of images, focusing on reality, and a brief clincher of sensation" (Hinton, 1985).

What appears then to be an essential function of reflectivity during the exhibition of his paintings is exactly the introduction of the element of reality in its ostensibly accurately represented form: that of reflection. This breach that allows the violation of the artistic language by the intrusion of another kind of language -which is dynamic, yet organized by means of a physical law, operating indiscriminately, and thus deterministically viewed as true- engenders a juxtaposition of the two that questions the fundamentals of each: what is

the 'truest' form of representation of reality? And further, how does the issue of 'truthfulness' interfere with the value ascribed to each form?

Luigi Ficacci has further noticed: "Afterwards, he tries to distance the entire object, the painted picture, from mingling or being confused with reality. He prefers placing his paintings in heavy frames that distinguish them from the context [...]" (2006: 27). What I recognize as the effect of this gesture, without examining the intentionality of the painter himself, is exactly the reverse: the framing of the painting in such a distinctive way, in combination with the imposition of the glass pane, function effectively as a trap that attracts the focus of the viewer inside the painting, forces them to read the latter behind reflection and ultimately hesitate in the process of decoding, oscillate between two essentially different languages that appeal to their perception. This juxtaposition involves no victory, but rather moments of predominance, moments of complementarity and moments of opposition.

Conclusion

What I attempted to analyze in this paper can be finally translated as the tripartite relationship between reality, reflection, and depiction, which takes place during the exhibitions of Francis Bacon in a visualized modality, thanks to the crucial device of the glass pane in front of the painting and the multiplicity of its functions. Reflectivity is the basic function that gives rise to this visual dialectics, since without it the field of the painting would remain occupied solely by "the painter's brutal gesture" (Kundera, 1997: 8). The significance of this function can only be apprehended and further exploited if we include it in the *useful abstraction of artistic unity* that the text represents for the researcher, namely if we integrate it in our conceptualization of the artistic text of the painting. By doing so, a new textual field opens ahead, a more comprehensive one that encompasses all three factors of artistic communication -the author, the art institution and the audience- as each one of them manipulates differently the work of art; within this field, questions about the nature of representation itself acquire a distinctly aesthetic articulation.

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Figures



Fig. 1 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From exhibition at MoMA (Museum of Modern Art) in New York, 2011. Retrieved from <http://ritournelleblog.com/tag/modern-art/> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Triptych*, 1991.



Fig. 2 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From exhibition *Francis Bacon: Paintings of Contradiction*, held at Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, 2006. Retrieved from <http://www.mgk-siegen.de/eng/exhibitions-und-collection/exhibitions/past/francis-bacon.html?ref=32> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Study from the Human Body and Portrait*, 1988.



Fig. 3 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From exhibition *Francis Bacon, Henry Moore: Terror and Beauty*, held at Art Gallery of Ontario, 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.livewithculture.ca/art/terror-beauty-at-the-ago/> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Second Version of "Triptych 1944"*, 1988.



Fig. 4 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From centenary exhibition *Francis Bacon*, held at Tate Britain (London), 2008-2009. Retrieved from <http://www.thecityreview.com/bacon.html> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Triptych*, 1976.



Fig. 5 Uncoated 'version' of previous painting *Triptych*, 1976. © Sotheby's Images.



Fig. 6 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From centenary exhibition *Francis Bacon* (see caption of Fig. 4 for details). Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/uknews/2712082/Francis-Bacon-Centenary-exhibition-at-the-Tate-Britain-London.html> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Triptych Inspired by T.S. Eliot's Poem "Sweeney Agonistes"*, 1967 (only two of the three panels shown in the photograph).



Fig. 7 Instance of reflection on Bacon's painting. From centenary exhibition *Francis Bacon* (see caption of Fig. 4 for details). Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/picturegalleries/uknews/2712082/Francis-Bacon-Centenary-exhibition-at-the-Tate-Britain-London.html?image=2> (accessed 03.10.2014). Painting: *Two Studies for a Portrait of George Dyer*, 1968.