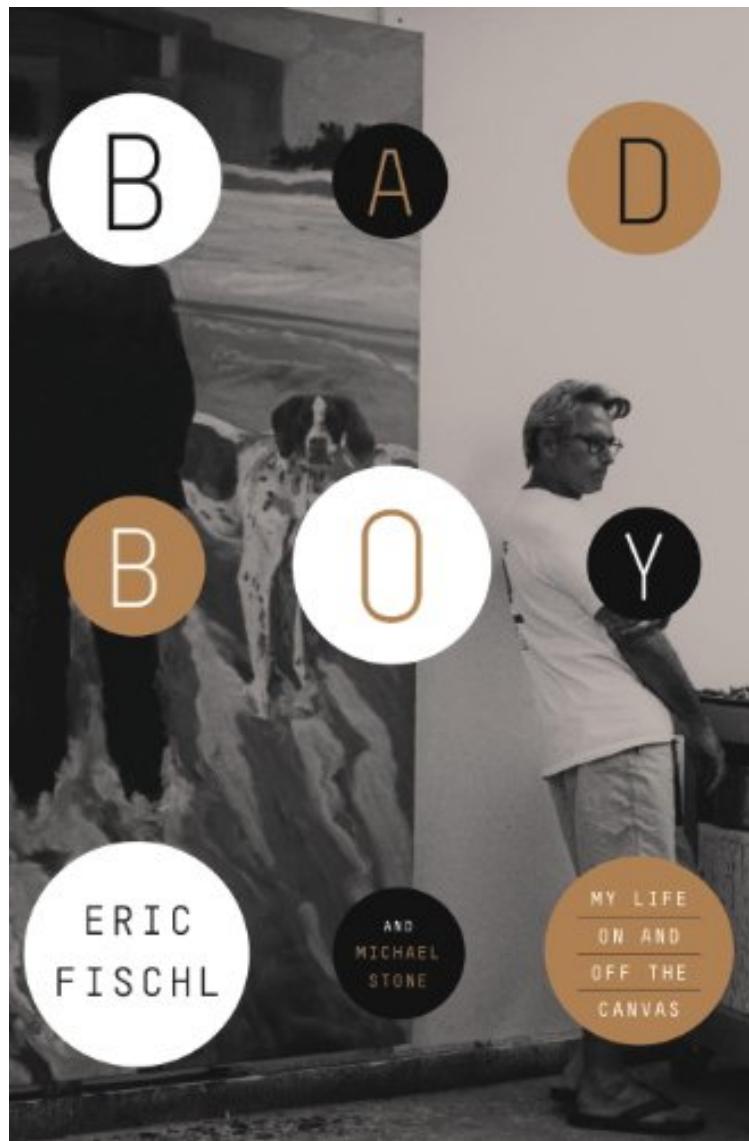


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## Bad Boy: My Life On and Off the Canvas

*Eric Fischl, Michael Stone*  
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**Eric Fischl, Michael Stone : Bad Boy: My Life On and Off the Canvas** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Bad Boy: My Life On and Off the Canvas:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. "Art is a Process and a Journey . . ." By Tessal I'm not a fan of his paintings but I must say, this is quite an excellent memoir. Enjoyed reading his account of his art school experiences and his journey to find a way of painting that made sense to him. But the most meaningful and memorable part of the book was Fischl's account of his mother. She was an artist but never really worked at it, and eventually succumbed to alcoholism. Fischl writes, in one absolutely brilliant paragraph that is worth the whole book something to the effect

that "art is a process and a journey." In order to progress you need to push past all the "voices in your head that tell you how much you suck." His mother could not do that. She was defeated before she began. Sometimes in a book there is one bit that really bites, and that really sticks. This was it for me. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. I'm fortunate that I escaped being a painter. By Bradford Shaw I've spent much of my life wishing that I had chosen the life of an artist instead of entering a profession. Reading this book, I'm fortunate that I escaped being a painter. I would have hit the street about the same time as Fischl when 'realism' and even painting itself were very much out of fashion. He prospered and carved a niche for himself by being an 'ironic' realist. In the contemporary art world, you don't dare appear sincere, in spite of the desperate sincerity of your ambition. And you must hope to be shocking. It's his weird world and he is welcome to it. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Fischl fans won't be disappointed. He goes in depth about his childhood and ... By Buffy If you are an Eric Fischl fan this book will give you everything you wanted to know about his life and career. Fischl fans won't be disappointed. He goes in depth about his childhood and formative years, his days in art school, and his professional career up to the present. Fischl provides plenty of insight into the background and thinking that went into some of his paintings which will give the viewer a great understanding of his works. As someone who likes to read a lot of art books I feel this book will mostly be of interest to those who are already bid Fischl fans.

In *Bad Boy*, renowned American artist Eric Fischl has written a penetrating, often searing exploration of his coming of age as an artist, and his search for a fresh narrative style in the highly charged and competitive New York art world in the 1970s and 1980s. With such notorious and controversial paintings as *Bad Boy* and *Sleepwalker*, Fischl joined the front ranks of America artists, in a high-octane downtown art scene that included Andy Warhol, David Salle, Julian Schnabel, and others. It was a world of fashion, fame, cocaine and alcohol that for a time threatened to undermine all that Fischl had achieved. In an extraordinarily candid and revealing memoir, Fischl discusses the impact of his dysfunctional family on his art; his mother, an imaginative and tragic woman, was an alcoholic who ultimately took her own life. Following his years as a student at Cal Arts and teaching in Nova Scotia, he describes his early years in New York with the artist April Gornik, just as Wall Street money begins to encroach on the old gallery system and change the economics of the art world. Fischl rebelled against the conceptual and minimalist art that was in fashion at the time to paint compelling portraits of everyday people that captured the unspoken tensions in their lives. Still in his thirties, Eric became the subject of a major *Vanity Fair* interview, his canvases sold for as much as a million dollars, and The Whitney Museum mounted a major retrospective of his paintings. *Bad Boy* follows Fischl's maturation both as an artist and sculptor, and his inevitable fall from grace as a new generation of artists takes center stage, and he is forced to grapple with his legacy and place among museums and collectors. Beautifully written, and as courageously revealing as his most provocative paintings, *Bad Boy* takes the reader on a roller coaster ride through the passion and politics of the art world as it has rarely been seen before.

From Booklist How much fame does it take to stop an artist from working in top form? How much pain does it take to keep an artist going? Controversial painter and sculptor Fischl addresses these questions with almost masochistic honesty in this revealing memoir. While chronicling his upbringing in a troubled family savaged by his mother's suicidal alcoholism and his highs and lows in the shifting New York art scene of the 1970s and 1980s, Fischl offers raw confessions of the emotional hardships that drove his life as a professional artist along with revelations about his own evolving creative ethos. As with his acclaimed and notoriously provocative portraits, Fischl's self-portrait draws its best energies from exhibition and confrontation as he pulls no punches in depicting his experiences as a gritty bohemian and upscale urbanite. Fischl's look back is equally absorbing as an insider's chronicle of the late twentieth-century art world's booms and busts. Complementing each chapter are commentaries from Fischl's friends, mentors, and lovers; the result is a remarkably objective warts-and-all memoir. --Greg Baldino "Fischl is entertaining company. The same observational frankness that imbues his paintings makes this a brave and candid book. It's also, in many ways, a painful book: he's such a deft portraitist that he captures himself at his most unknowing, wounded, prideful, and self-contradictory. . . . Occasionally vain, occasionally score-settling, it's as unsparing as the aging Rembrandt's blunt self-portraits." —New York Times Book "Given Fischl's aptitude for telling stories as a painter, it probably shouldn't be a surprise that *Bad Boy*, a memoir that covers his life from his earliest years to the present, is so engaging. The book, which takes its name from a celebrated 1981 painting of Fischl's that shows a boy facing a naked woman in a bedroom, is unusual among the writings of artists in its novelistic drive and readability . . . folding painful family memories into accounts of the artist's years in high school, his experiences with girlfriends and teachers, and the art scene he began encountering in New York in the late 1970s." —New York of Books "At once a confessional and a manifesto . . . Will move readers with its tales of a fraught life in art." —Wall Street Journal "A sharp critique of the art world's recent evolution" —Los Angeles Times One of Jeanette Winterson's picks for the season's most arresting personal stories —O Magazine "Must-read for culture vultures." —New York Post "Captivatingly written." —Huffington Post "A clear-eyed account of the art world's profound transformations over the past thirty or so years, told by an artist whose career perfectly maps

that period." —New York Observer "Will probably stand as one of the more revealing documents about the late twentieth-century art world." —ARTnews "A uniquely intimate account of big-time art in [the 1980s]."

—National Post "Editor's Choice" —Buffalo News "An in-depth look at the life of America's foremost narrative painter Eric Fischl." —Hamptons.com "[Fischl] pulls no punches in depicting his experiences as a gritty bohemian and upscale urbanite. . . . Equally absorbing as an insider's chronicle of the late twentieth-century art world's booms and busts."

—Booklist "A brave and beautiful book about the difficulties of practicing as a painter in America, and a reminder of how essential the courage of the pursuit of a personal vision is to art." —Adam Gopnik, staff writer for The New Yorker and author of *Paris to the Moon* "Erich Fischl's *Bad Boy* is powerful and important: emotionally incisive, brilliantly well-crafted, and completely authentic. In short, it is just like his art." —Steven Naifeh and Gregory White Smith, Pulitzer Prize-winning authors of *Jackson Pollock and Van Gogh: The Life* "So good, so incredibly honest, vulnerable, real, moving, compassionate; an incredible document of a man's life, an artist's development and a particular moment in time . . . the best artist-memoir I've ever read." —A. M. Homes, author of *The End of Alice* and *May We Be Forgiven* "Eric Fischl's *Bad Boy* is a thoughtful, honest, revealing—and frequently moving—memoir of a life in art." —Francine Prose, president of PEN American Center "Only an artist of Eric Fischl's intellect, resilience, and wit could have survived his dreadful childhood, conquered a nearly fatal addiction to booze and cocaine, salvaged his marriage to the marvelous painter April Gornik, and written this compulsively riveting book." —Francine du Plessix Gray, Pulitzer Prize-nominated writer and literary critic "As Eric relates across this absorbing chronicle, the ongoing quest for authenticity amidst the thralls of dysfunction would come to constitute one of his primary themes. . . . And as in his art, so here in his writing, he does so with vivid, striking and memorable dispatch." —Lawrence Weschler, author of *Seeing is Forgetting the Name of the Thing One Sees* and *Uncanny Valley: Adventures in the Narrative*