

## Willem de Kooning Nonstop: Cherchez la femme

Rosalind E. Krauss

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**Rosalind E. Krauss : Willem de Kooning Nonstop: Cherchez la femme** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Willem de Kooning Nonstop: Cherchez la femme:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Too big a stretch. By G. Dorfman 'Willem de Kooning/ Looking for the Woman' is a series of essays, each seemingly generated by the preceding one, which attempts to make the case that the female image is somehow transferable to his entire oeuvre. In order to make this case, which is by no means apparent even to a de Kooning devotee, she strains language and thought beyond measure. She takes selected elliptical lines of the artist over-literally; for instance stating that the artist felt himself 'inside the picture' when he is also on the record as stating he painted himself out of the picture. She repeats quotations several times as if that will make her assumptions clearer. She repeats another's speculation that a 'v' of 25 degrees in a painting is somehow 'perspectival'. She repeats another's speculation that his masterpiece 'Excavation' was influenced by pits of detritus from the

dismantling of the 3rd avenue El, which was still up and running past 10th street several years after the picture was painted and sent off to Chicago. She brings in Greenberg's charge of illusionism and shading without further comment or analysis. She brings in Freud for 'content.' She feels justified in comparing the 'effulgence' of ten feet of unprimed cotton duck in the center of a Morris Louis 'Unfurled' to de K's close quarter jerry-rigged planes. She also lassos Picasso and Jasper Johns' inclusion of the artist's image into their pictures to create an tripartite analogy mdash; artist/model/painting mdash; of her own devising. But de Kooning did not include his own image or use models. She claims that the complex scrape on the right of Woman I is also a doppelganger for the woman. There is no female discernable resemblance apart from its verticality. No one can claim that these observations are 'wrong,' and perhaps standing next to her in front of these paintings might be more convincing, but moving back and forth from the prolix text to the (excellent) reproductions in the back leaves this sympathetic reader scratching his head more often than not. 1 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Do not buy this book. Sorry that I did ...By Madeline SadofskiDo not buy this book. Sorry that I did , save your money and buy De kooning a way of living.

In the early 1950s, Willem de Kooning's Woman I and subsequent paintings established him as a leading member of the abstract expressionist movement. His wildly impacted brushstrokes and heavily encrusted surfaces baffled most critics, who saw de Kooning's monstrous female image as violent, aggressive, and ultimately the product of a misogynistic mind. In the image-rich Willem de Kooning Nonstop, Rosalind E. Krauss counters this view with a radical rethinking of de Kooning's bold canvases and reveals his true artistic practices. Krauss demonstrates that contrary to popular conceptions of de Kooning as an artist who painted chaotically only to finish abruptly, he was in fact constantly reworking the same subject based on a compositional template. This template informed all of his art and included a three-part vertical structure; the projection of his male point of view into the painting or sculpture; and the near-universal inclusion of the female form, which was paired with her redoubled projection onto his work. Krauss identifies these elements throughout de Kooning's oeuvre, even in his paintings of highways, boats, and landscapes: Woman is always there. A thought-provoking study by one of America's greatest art critics, Willem de Kooning Nonstop revolutionizes our understanding of de Kooning and shows us what has always been hiding in plain sight in his work.

ldquo;Krauss's short book is written in lucid, cogent prose, making its argument as strongly through its 73 illustrations as it does through the written text. . . . Willem de Kooning Nonstop offers a fresh and persuasive perspective on its subject, provoking thoughtful engagement with his work and with paintings by other artists who influenced him.rdquo;