

Jonathan Richardson by Himself



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(Noble Hagenes)

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Paul Holberton Publishing. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, Jonathan Richardson by Himself, Susan Owens, Jonathan Richardson (1667-1745) was one of 18th-century England's most significant cultural figures. A leading portrait painter and influential art theorist, he also amassed one of the period's greatest collections of drawings. But there was another, highly unusual dimension to his pursuits. In 1728, at the age of 61 and shortly before his retirement from professional life, Richardson began to create a remarkable series of self-portrait drawings. Not intended for public display, these works were unguarded explorations of his own character. In one of the most astonishing projects of self-examination ever undertaken by an artist, for over a decade Richardson repeatedly drew his own face. His self-portrait drawings are usually dated precisely, and they document, from month to month, his changing state of mind as much as his appearance. Many were drawn in chalks on large sheets of blue paper, from his reflection in the mirror. Some of these are bold and psychologically penetrating, while others, in which he regards his ageing features with gentle but unflinching scrutiny, are deeply touching. A further group of self-portraits is drawn with graphite on small sheets of fine vellum, and in these Richardson often presents himself in inventive and humorous ways, such as in profile, all'antica, as though on the face of a coin or medal; or crowned with bays, like a celebrated poet. Sometimes, too, he copies his image from oil paintings made decades earlier, in order to recall his appearance as a younger man. In this extraordinary series of self-portraits, Richardson offers a candid insight into his mind and personality. Together, these drawings create nothing less than a unique and compelling visual autobiography. This publication - which accompanies the first ever exhibition devoted to Richardson's self-portrait drawings,...



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