



Conversations with Picasso

Brassaï, Jane Marie Todd (Translation)

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"Read this book if you want to understand me."—Pablo Picasso

Conversations with Picasso offers a remarkable vision of both Picasso and the entire artistic and intellectual milieu of wartime Paris, a vision provided by the gifted photographer and prolific author who spent the early portion of the 1940s photographing Picasso's work. Brassai carefully and affectionately records each of his meetings and appointments with the great artist, building along the way a work of remarkable depth, intimate perspective, and great importance to anyone who truly wishes to understand Picasso and his world.

Conversations with Picasso Details

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From Reader Review Conversations with Picasso for online ebook

Andreea says

Fantastic book that nourished my interest in painters' life and talks of life and art.

Richelle says

This was a fantastic book. Reading the conversations that occurred between Picasso and Brassai really made me wish that I had been in Paris during the 1930s and 1940s (of course, not during the war, though...). The conversations that Brassai recorded revealed not only much about his main subject, Picasso, but also much about life, art, and culture in Paris during this period. Everyone from Henry Miller to Matisse to Salvador Dali and Simone de Beauvoir appeared in this book. Brassai's musings and recollections also opened my eyes to a completely new persona of Picasso. It also revealed much about their great friendship. I highly recommend this book.

Will says

Picasso: But those are *my* thumbtacks.

Brassai: Yes, they're *your* thumbtacks.

Picasso: Okay, I'm taking them back.

Brassai: Don't take them! I need some for my backdrop.

Picasso: Good, keep them. I'll leave them here. But you have to give them back to me. They're *my* thumbtacks.

Jeffrey Berman says

A great book.

Joel says

An incredible oral history of the conversations between Brassai, Picasso, and the host of other artists, writers, and hangers-on who passed through Picasso's Paris studios over the span of twenty-some years. A really beautiful book about some incredible artists.

Seamus Thompson says

Spent a morning glossing and perusing this book. I'd only known Brassai as a photographer (his photos of

Picasso and his studio and circle of friends would make this a fascinating book by themselves) so I was pleasantly surprised to find that he also writes well. Clear, concise, evocative accounts of conversations and gatherings (based on notes Brassai jotted down at the time and then stuffed in a large vase) make up the bulk of this book.

Pablo says

Brilliant.

Unbridled says

I've been skeptical of painters for many years – some, it seems to me, are outright frauds, mere ad men selling middling images, like Warhol. And yet I've always been strangely fascinated with painters and they amount to some of my favorite people of all time. So it will not surprise that Picasso has always been a source of peculiar fascination for me. Of course I'd seen his seminal work and I never doubted his genius, but I never quite understood the precipitous reverence for the man of whom it was once claimed that only God created more. But I slowly started poking around: starting with Arianna Huffington's short, gossipy, and guilty-pleasure read, Picasso; watching Anthony Hopkins in the execrable Surviving Picasso (quite faithful to the Huffington book); and reading Norman Mailer's admirable, if misfired, Portrait of Picasso As a Young Man. Still, nothing. No rousing of the fire. But then I came across Henri-Georges Clouzot's film, The Mystery of Picasso, which was a documentary of sorts that filmed Picasso painting. It's a bit of a stunt, won't interest everyone, but I was mad for it, enraptured, and at the finish, I raised my fist to the sky in celebration of what I saw. Witnessing Picasso's radiant creativity in the very act, stroke by color by stroke by obliteration into sensation and thought into life extraordinaire – well, raw creative power like that is like sitting through a thunderstorm with heavy rains and the sun still shining strong. Seeing Picasso paint made me understand what genius means; I see everything by Picasso differently now. Which finally brings me to Brassai's Conversations with Picasso. As much a biography as a series of conversations, but a biography of the epoch as well, when so many titans still reigned and called Paris home. The book is filled with the personalities who drop into Picasso's orbit, like Paul Eluard, Matisse, Braque, Henry Miller, Dali, Man Ray, Andre Breton, Apollinaire, Miro, Andre Malraux, Cocteau, Sartre, Camus, de Beauvoir, Max Jacob, and many, many others – it's dizzying and I've forgotten more than I remember so I will list no more. Can I say it is a definitive work? No. But reading this book fits Picasso the personality into the demoniacal force that I watched paint in the Clouzot film.

Ola Loobeensky says

It was amazing. Truly, it was. Not because of the language or composition (In fact I "deBrassaised" this book a bit - Picasso is far more important than the Author) but as a portrait of an Artist. Rather a picture than a literature.
