

Did Bacon always bet on black?

Who knew that Francis Bacon lived and sometimes worked in Monaco? The hard-living British artist was sooner found in the casino than the studio, however, and completed few paintings during the summers he spent there from 1946 until the early 50s. None, in fact, survive from 1947. (Perhaps Francis discovered roulette that year?) Still, there is enough material for a Lebanese-Swiss hotelier, Majid Boustany, to establish the Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation in Monaco, focusing on this period in the artist's career. Boustany has built up a collection of Bacon's works ranging from the late 1920s to the early 80s, including a little-known early foray into interior design, an archive of photos of the artist taken by friends and lovers, and a library of exhibition catalogues and studies. These will be available by appointment to researchers and members of the public when the foundation opens in the autumn—and when they can tear themselves away from the craps tables.

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Francis Bacon (right) with Reinhard Hassert in Monte Carlo, November 1981. Photo: MB Art Foundation © Eddy Batache