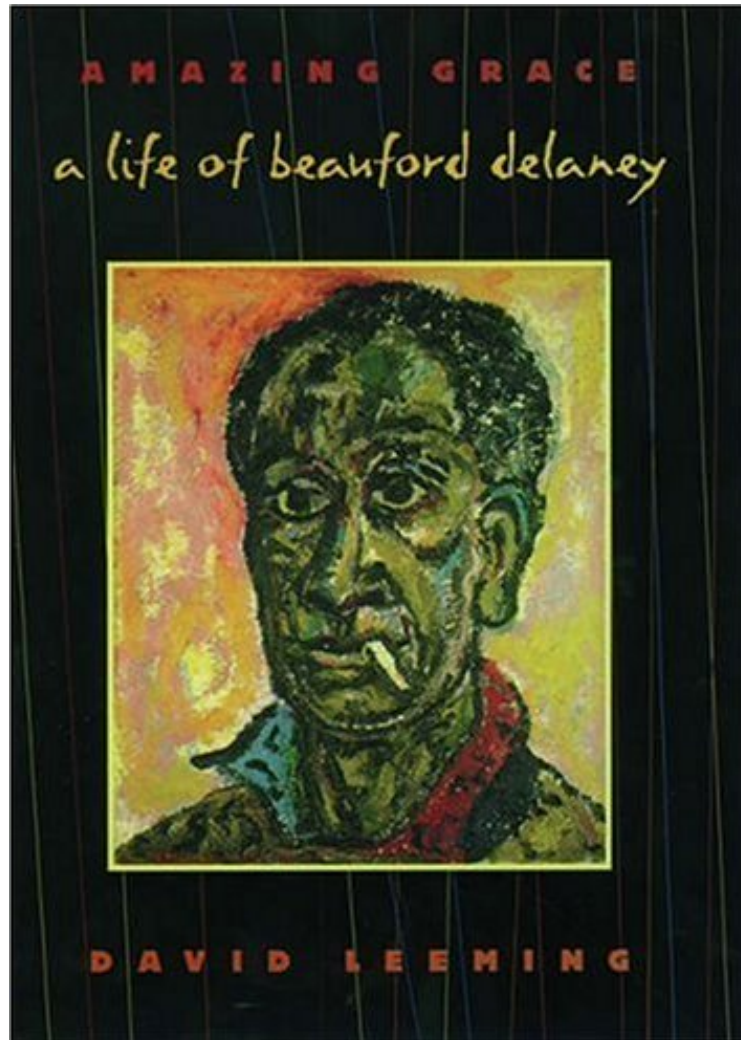


(Download ebook) Amazing Grace: A Life of Beauford Delaney

Amazing Grace: A Life of Beauford Delaney

Von David Leeming

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Von David Leeming : Amazing Grace: A Life of Beauford Delaney before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Amazing Grace: A Life of Beauford Delaney:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. SAVED BY GRACE? Von Bonita L. Davis America's artistic milieu is known for dismissing from its memory those artists whose works and lives are deemed trivial and not worthy of consideration. Such an attitude has denied younger generations of artists the experience of knowing some of the great artistic man and women of our time. Beauford Delaney was one of those artists relegated to the halls of obscurity. Amazing Grace is David Leemings biographical piece that examines Delaney's life and contributions to the art world. He looks at the forces which brought forth America's premiere modernist artist and shows how his gift impacted on the way one views life and art. Who is this

man, Delaney? A superficial view of his life reveals him as an impoverished homosexual Black artist who is plagued by many demons as he struggles to find himself as an artist and at peace with his sexuality. James Baldwin called him his spiritual father who was a cross between Brer Rabbit and St. Francis of Assisi. Others knew him as the good negro or an eccentric gadfly. Whatever one may call him, Delaney's goal was to infuse the concept of love within his work that would bring him the wholeness that he failed to capture in his life. Plagued by paranoia, alcoholism and guilt over his homosexuality, Delaney failed to achieve intimacy in his relationships but poured out his inner struggle through his art. Like many artists, he went through several stages of development in his career which reached its climax in France. Unfortunately the demon of paranoia stripped him of his artistic ability in his later years. This book must be read to get a handle on the artistic struggles of African Americans and how they succeeded in spite of their alienation from the mainstream art world. Delaney also struggled with being homosexual which undoubtedly alienated him from his family and Black colleagues. His struggle opens up a new chapter in examining how sexuality impacts on a minority artist's life. Delaney was saved from obscurity through this view of his life. Whether he was saved by grace is a moot point for his demonic voices did him in. 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Reviewed in Harvard Gay Lesbian Review Von Ein Kunde James E. Coleman, Jr., writing in the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Review, Vol. 6, No. 1, 1999 notes: "Whether Leeming is as successful in taking on an artist's life as he had been with the literary life of [James] Baldwin, I am not certain. His knowledge of Baldwin's literary world is not quite matched by his savvy of the art world of the same period. Nevertheless, we have a fine introduction to an artist whose reputation is growing and who lived a fascinating life." That's high praise coming from Coleman, editor of *The Encyclopedia Homophilica*.

Kurzbeschreibung Described by those who knew him best as a Buddha, a Merlin, and "a cross between Brer Rabbit and St. Francis of Assisi," the artist Beauford Delaney was anything but ordinary. James Baldwin, his closest friend, wrote that "He has been starving and working all of his life--in Tennessee, in Boston, in New York, and now in Paris. He has been menaced more than any other man I know by his social circumstances and also by all the emotional and psychological stratagems he has been forced to use to survive; and, more than any other man I know, he has transcended both the inner and the outer darkness." Indeed, these themes--grinding poverty, excruciating psychological torment, and the transcendence of inner and outer darkness through the light of his art--give shape and drama to Beauford Delaney's most extraordinary life. In *Amazing Grace: A Biography of Beauford Delaney* David Leeming, author of the acclaimed life of James Baldwin, tells the story of one of the most important black artists of our time with an affection, tact, and insight all too rare in recent biography. In chronicling Delaney's remarkable trajectory from a strong religious family in Knoxville to his death in an Parisian insane asylum, Leeming maintains a dual focus on Delaney's troubled inner life--his complicated homosexuality and the "voices" that would drive him mad--and his vibrant external life--his friendships with an amazing range of writers, artists, and musicians. Delaney seems to have known everyone, from Henry Miller, Jean Genet, Countee Cullen, and Elizabeth Bishop to Al Hirshfield, W.C. Handy, Alfred Steiglitz, Georgia O'Keeffe, Louis Armstrong, and virtually every other significant creative figure in New York and Paris. In many ways, Delaney's life focuses the major currents of twentieth century art. Leeming quotes generously from the journals, notebooks, letters, and critical reviews, tracing Delaney's movement away from representation--the street scenes and portraits of his "blues aesthetic"--into the abstract paintings where his dominant concern is with the "architecture" of color and a religious sense of light that "held the power to illuminate, even to redeem and reconcile and heal." Along the way, we're treated to a wealth of delightful anecdotes--Delaney in the manner of a Zen master telling James Baldwin to look at the water standing in a gutter; William de Kooning trying to tell Delaney how to market his work better and Delaney responding by rolling his eyes, patting de Kooning on the shoulder, and saying "Bless you, child"; Delaney immersed in the cafe life of Greenwich Village and Montparnasse, painting in his unheated studio in a parka and wool hat, giving away to friends and strangers what little money came to him. *Amazing Grace* illuminates both the work and milieu of a major black talent and gives us a portrait of a man spiritually devoted to his art, a man we would have very much liked to know and who, after closing the book, we feel we have known..de *Amazing Grace* is an intimate portrait of African American artist Beauford Delaney (1901-79). Author David Leeming, who knew Delaney, limns the complex inner life that informed his paintings--notable for psychological depth and vibrant colors--but also fueled his alcoholism and mental illness. A gentle, charming man, Delaney maintained close friendships with writers as diverse as Henry Miller and James Baldwin, yet often felt lonely and underappreciated as an artist on his life's journey from Tennessee to New York City to Paris. Leeming tells this culturally and personally poignant story with sensitive grace.

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