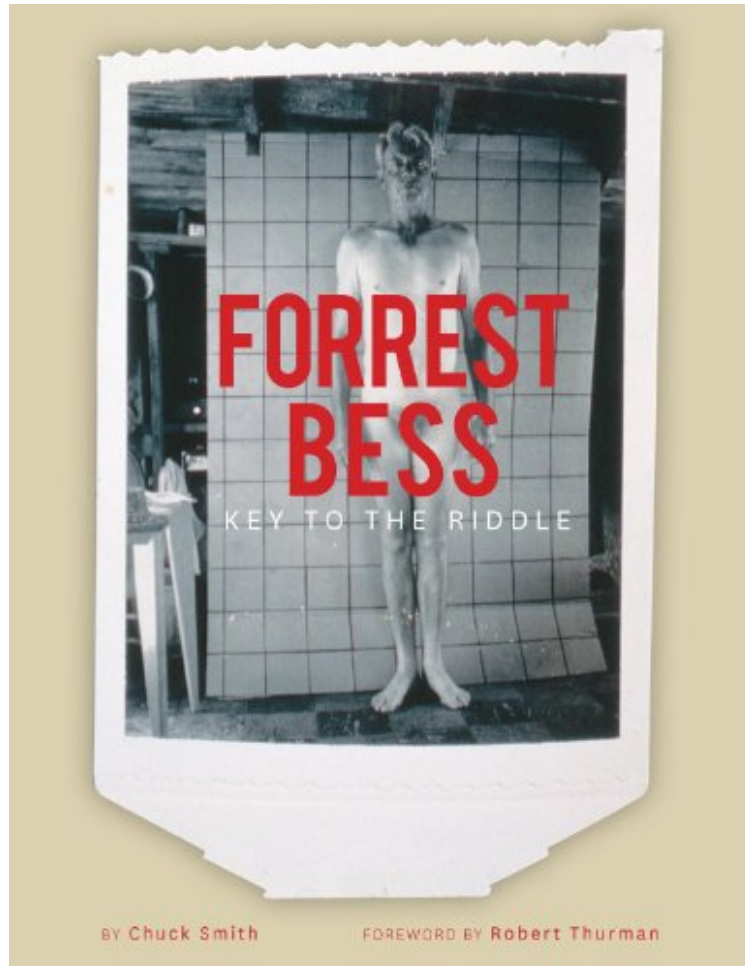


(Download) Forrest Bess

## Forrest Bess

*Chuck Smith*

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**Chuck Smith : Forrest Bess** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Forrest Bess:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. This is the book we have been waiting for! By GOSmith's book is the cherry on top of a sweet Forrest Bess moment, and the summation of Smith's life-long passion for the Texan artist. We hear from Bess himself in Chuck Smith's follow up to his 1997 documentary, *Forrest Bess: Key to the Riddle*. Having cherry-picked through the daunting scores of letters held in the Smithsonian Archives, Smith presents a condensed route through the development of Bess's theory concerning the unification of male and female. Bess's own texts are printed alongside texts that influenced him. Smith's book represents the most complete effort to-date to follow the confusing and sometimes disjointed logic that Bess traveled from painting to genital modification. Bess's writing is given center stage in Smith's book, which reproduces a vast array of primary sources, including letters and journal entries alongside never-before-seen photographs. Most importantly for those who love the paintings first and the painter second, many of Bess's canvases are reproduced here for the first time. Smith's information-rich book may well

become the starting line for all future Bess researchers. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A must read on the power of vision, and pursuit of transcendence ...By James HondoWonderful book. Anyone interested in the arts, or creativity in general, should read it. It's engaging, concise, and very well-illustrated. I wish all artist books could be as cleanly designed, and well-written. It is blessedly free of post-modern art jargon. The author uses Bess's own writings, which are fascinating, to great effect. As I read this book, and pondered Bess's amazing and curious life, I cannot help but wonder why some visionary film director like Paul Thomas Anderson or Darren Aronofsky hasn't seized this material. Bess's life would make an extraordinary epic film. The angles and interpretations with which he could be approached are endless and so intriguing. Just an idea: Using a voice-over to read from his letters would be an excellent touch. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A Fantastic Introduction to a Visionary PainterBy Joe M.PowerHouse Books consistently produces beautiful editions, and this is no exception. Facsimile letters from the artist, along with journal entries, are interspersed with archival photographs and strikingly beautiful color plates of Bess's small, exquisite paintings. Author Chuck Smith (a successful documentary filmmaker) brings an artist's sensibilities to his presentation of these materials; he avoids the dry tone of the historian and instead allows his short introductory essays to ring with genuine enthusiasm and affection for his subject. Enthusiasm and affection prove contagious, as Smith presents the story of Forrest Bess's life, and his work, in a volume that is a must-have for Bess aficionados as well as the uninitiated -- a thoroughly fascinating overview of this compelling twentieth-century American painter.

Painter, fisherman, pseudo-hermaphrodite-Forrest Bess lived his life in obscurity at an isolated bait camp off the east coast of Texas. From 1949 through 1967, Bess showed at the Betty Parsons Gallery in New York City, alongside superstar artists such as Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko. Rediscovered after his death in 1977, Bess's small visionary paintings are now prized by museums and collectors for their primal beauty, and can fetch over \$200,000 apiece. Bess's treasured canvases were only part of a grander theory-based on alchemy, Jungian philosophy, and aboriginal rituals-that proposed that hermaphroditism was the key to immortality. As an artist, Bess could never equivocate, and in 1960 he underwent an operation to become a pseudo-hermaphrodite. For the first time ever in print, Forrest Bess: Key to the Riddle combines the beauty of Bess's art with the drama and tragedy of his personal life. Using Bess's own hauntingly sincere words (in letters to Betty Parsons, Meyer Schapiro, and others) the book traces the life and logic of this forgotten artist and explains how a love of beauty and a desire for wholeness lead Bess to self-surgery and, ultimately, a mental hospital. Forrest Bess: Key to the Riddle is a fascinating look at one of America's most notorious cult visionaries-a man who truly believed that art could save his life.

"Smith compiled the painter's works and letters to take us inside the mind of the enigmatic artist."-Huffington PostAbout the AuthorChuck Smith is a New York based producer, writer, and filmmaker who has directed numerous documentaries and series for the National Geographic Channel, Discovery, and TLC. Prior to his work for cable TV, Smith was a producer for CBS News and Michael Moore's TV Nation. In 1997, Smith and photographer Ari Marcopoulos, author of Transitions and Exits (powerHouse Books, 2000), produced and directed the award-winning documentary Forrest Bess: Key to the Riddle, which features actor Willem Dafoe as the voice of Forrest Bess. Smith's short films and video interviews with artists such as Agnes Martin can be found on YouTube at chucksmithNYC.Robert Thurman is Professor of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Studies in the Department of Religion at Columbia University, President of Tibet House U.S., and President of the American Institute of Buddhist Studies. He has BA, AM, and PhD degrees from Harvard and has studied in Tibetan Buddhist monasteries in India and the United States. The New York Times recently hailed him as "the leading American expert on Tibetan Buddhism."