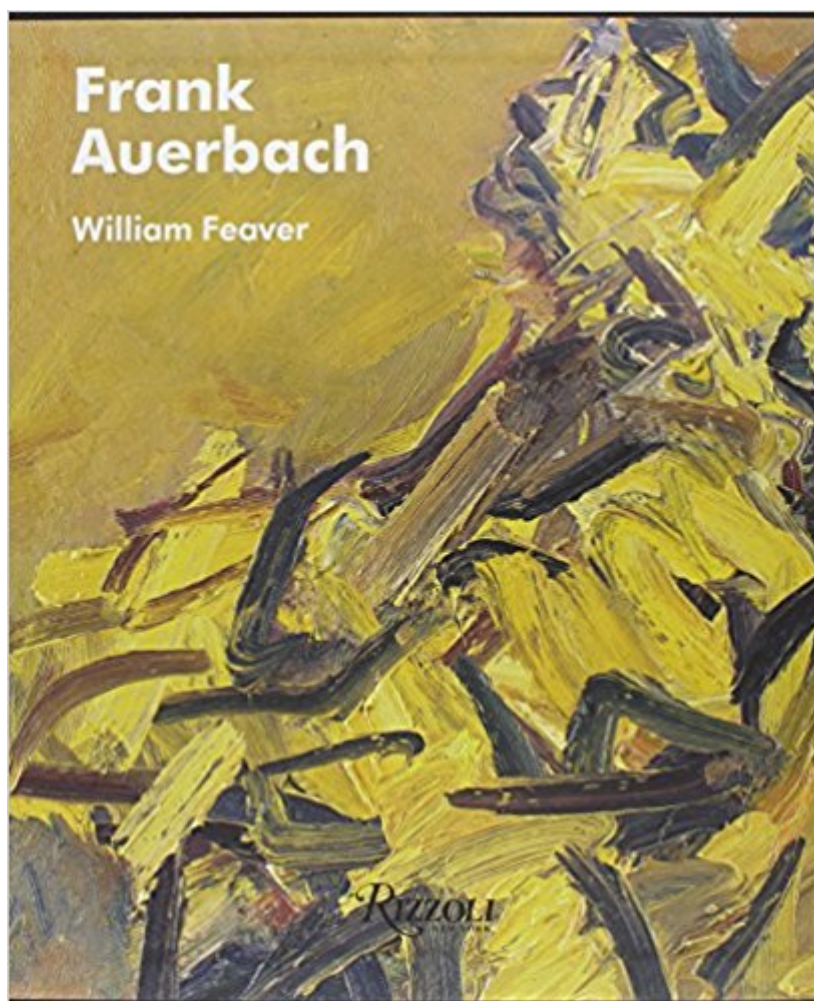


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# Frank Auerbach



## Synopsis

This is the most comprehensive publication to date, and the only book in print, on the work of Frank Auerbach, a painter who has become one of the pre-eminent artists of our age, widely admired for his vivid, impulsive depictions of the world around him. His is, ostensibly, a narrow world, a small area of north London where he has lived and worked for more than fifty years, but within it he achieves images of marvelous poignancy and feel. "I'm hoping," Auerbach has said, "to make a new thing for the world that remains in the mind like a new species of living thing."

Auerbach, who was born in Berlin in 1931 and came to Britain when he was eight, repeatedly paints people he knows well and places he is familiar with. His drawings and paintings are strikingly immediate; their impact has urgency; they relate in various ways as much to certain preferred Old Masters as to the contemporary artists with whom he tends to be associated, notably Francis Bacon and Lucian Freud. The book includes 200 color plates together with a separate reference section comprising around 900 images of Auerbach's complete works to date—many of them not previously reproduced. Writer and art historian William Feaver discusses Auerbach's work both in its immediate context and in relation to the great tradition of painting. Extensive conversations with the artist are also included.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

The definitive book on the British artist, Frank Auerbach, a much admired and very influential figurative painter.

William Feaver is a painter, writer, critic, and one of Auerbach's regular sitters. He is the author of *Lucian Freud* (Rizzoli 2007) and was the curator of *Lucian Freud* (Tate, 2002) and *Freud & Auerbach* (V&A Museum, 2006).

Writer, critic and painter William Feaver has created the finest book of the work of Frank Auerbach, the 78-year old British artist known for his heavily-worked portraits and cityscapes. The beautifully produced volume, presented in a slipcase, is done in a large format and very importantly has superb color reproductions of every work by the artist from 1950 to the present. Auerbach is said to have breakfast every morning with Lucian Freud, fellow member of the so-called "School of London" group which included David Hockney, Leon Kossoff and the late Francis Bacon and Ron Kitaj. He also reportedly shares Freud's extraordinary work habits. Auerbach's reputation continues to grow and one can only admire the painterly results of his intense focus on his subjects. This book will certainly bring wider appreciation of his achievements. Happily, after a 20-page introduction the next 200 pages of the new book are devoted to single, selected works in full color. The following 113 pages present a catalogue raisonné assembled by Kate Austin showing all of Auerbach's known work over the past 60 years, nine color reproductions per page, omitting only smaller drawings. The book was printed in Italy and every page was apparently examined carefully for perfect color registration and reproduction. If you have seen Robert Hughes' excellent 1990 monograph on the artist, printed in Japan but now out of print, you will be pleased to know that the reproductions are every bit as good in the present work. The 240-page Hughes book has more biography and discussion of his work, but Feaver has chosen to let the art itself do most of the talking and he also convinced Rizzoli to do every page in color instead of just 80 color plates which Thames and Hudson provides in the Hughes book, the rest being B&W. The other good book on Auerbach is the Royal Academy catalogue for the 2001 show created by its curators, Catherine Lampert, Isabel Carlisle and Norman Rosenthal, also produced in Italy. While offering excellent critical insights of the artist and his work, its 156 pages cannot compare to this 356-page tome for illustration of his paintings and drawings.

Yes, this is a lovely collection, and the quality of the book is outstanding. It also catalogs much his work, with larger thumbnails, at the end of the book. This book makes a great gift for any art lover. That being said, if you only get one book on Auerbach, I recommend the less expensive one by Robert Hughes. Even though Hughes has fewer images, there is a decent sampling of high quality portraits that Auerbach is famous for, to give a good grasp of his brilliance, and eccentricity. I'm a tad

less enthused about the Feaver book only because it packs in so many less interesting paintings, like muddy, overworked abstract landscapes (a handful of the Auerbach landscapes are gorgeous). Altho Hughs also includes too many of what I call "filler" landscape paintings, you aren't paying a fortune for the book. Auerbach lovers, like myself, will want both books, of course.

Beautifully presented and a good read. The brushstrokes and technique jump out of the pages. Loved the juxtaposition of the landscapes and portraits.

A fine book for the big price, but you get what you pay for. Boxed, with plastic still on it; never read. Lots of high quality colored plates and fine commentary, photos, bio and gallery history.

This substantial monograph reproduces many hitherto unpublished works by the German-born British painter Frank Auerbach. Thus, it will be greatly appreciated by artists and art-lovers alike for the many, many high-quality, large-size color reproductions of the artist's paintings (which appear on nearly every page!). But, perhaps the greatest feature of this publication is the small-scale chronological sequencing of full-color reproductions located in the back of the book, which depict nearly every painting made by the artist, from his student years up until this publication. Of course, Auerbach can always be counted-on for a very competent and focused interpretation of his own work; and this book, like previous publications on the artist, includes yet another brilliant and insightful interview with the painter himself. For those unfamiliar with his work, Auerbach may appear (both in his language and his image style) at once intensely formal and compellingly impulsive. He is certainly the most modern (yes 'modern', without the 'post-' prefix) artist of the contemporary scene, such that each work embodies a canon of image makers as disparate as Walter Sickert and Piet Mondrian. Yet, Auerbach's deepest allegiance is not to modernism itself, but rather to a quality of artistic temperament and doggedness as passionate and hard-won as anything by Rembrandt or VanGogh (the traces of which are, also, quite apparent in his work). Somehow, despite his fondness for making visual reference to so many other master painters, Auerbach's imagery is always extremely unique and fresh-seeming. This is an artist who sometimes spends several years on a single image, and yet is equally noteworthy for his striking use of spontaneous mark-making. The biographical text at the beginning of this book provides a very suitable introduction to the artist's background, and also some pertinent points as to his past and current concerns; but for further reading I would certainly still recommend what continues to be the seminal work on Auerbach, by Robert Hughes.

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