



# Alfred Cohen

## An American Artist in Europe

Max Saunders  
Sarah MacDougall

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- Lavishly illustrated with over 140 colour and over 30 black and white images
- Reassesses a once celebrated, later neglected figure
- Accompanies a major centenary exhibition at Bush House, London

This lavishly illustrated monograph reassesses the life and career of neglected American émigré painter Alfred Cohen (1920-2001), now the subject of a major London exhibition marking his centenary. In Chicago, Paris and London, Cohen's work moved between the European figurative tradition and emerging American abstract expressionism, exploring motifs including the French coast, the River Thames and figures from the *commedia dell'arte*, concluding later, in Kent and Norfolk, with intensely coloured, richly textured landscapes ablaze with light and colour.

Co-edited by Max Saunders (Trustee, Alfred Cohen Art Foundation) and Sarah MacDougall (Head of Collections and Research, Ben Uri), this first full overview of Cohen's career and achievements combines an extended biographical account with analytical and interpretative approaches to his work, locating him among his historical and contemporary peers. Contributors include art historians and curators: Paul Greenhalgh (Director, Sainsbury Centre), David Peters Corbett (Courtauld Institute of Art), Rachel Dickson (Ben Uri), Claudia Milburn (Pallant House), Hope Wolf (independent curator), and critics and writers: Tom Overton (John Berger's editor and biographer), Devorah Baum, Jacky Klein and Philip Vann. The volume also includes evocative biographical photos and a timeline of major exhibitions.

Cohen's work is included in public collections including the Arts Council, Ben Uri Collection, the British Council, the Fitzwilliam Museum, the Jerwood Collection, Pallant House Gallery, the Castle Museum in Norwich, and the Sainsbury Centre for the Visual Arts at the University of East Anglia.

**Max Saunders** is Professor of English and Co-Director of the Centre for Life-Writing Research at King's College London, where he was Director of the Arts and Humanities Research Institute, 2012-18. He studied at the universities of Cambridge and Harvard, and was a Fellow of Selwyn College, Cambridge. He is the author of *Ford Madox Ford: A Dual Life*, 2 vols. (Oxford University Press, 1996), *Self Impression: Life-Writing, Autobiographical Fiction, and the Forms of Modern Literature* (Oxford University Press 2010); and *Imagined Futures* (Oxford University Press, 2019), his study of the *To-Day and To-Morrow* book series. In 2019 he became Interdisciplinary Professor of Modern Literature and Culture at the University of Birmingham.

**Sarah MacDougall** is Head of Collections and the Ben Uri Research Unit for the Study of the Jewish and immigrant Contribution to the Visual Arts in Britain since 1900 at Ben Uri Gallery and Museum. She studied literature and the visual arts at the University of Reading. She is the author of a biography of *Mark Gertler* (John Murray, 2002), co-author of *Bombberg* (Ben Uri, 2017) and numerous exhibition catalogues including *Jankel Adler: A 'Degenerate' Artist in Britain, 1940-49* (2019). She is a committee member of the Research Centre for German and Austrian Exile Studies at the University of London and a co-editor of and contributor to the *Vol. 19 Yearbook Applied Arts in British Exile from 1933* (Brill, 2019).