



Franz Kline

Harry F. Gaugh

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- Acclaimed as the definitive volume on artist Franz Kline, this book provides firsthand accounts of his Bohemian life and powerful work

A model of art-historical writing, *Franz Kline* is, remarkably, still the only available monograph on its subject. With its detailed yet thoroughly readable text and 170 illustrations (many published here for the first time), this book brings to light much new information about Kline, a leading figure among the Abstract Expressionists, and enriches our appreciation and understanding of his art. This book belongs on the book shelf of everyone with an interest in American painting.

Franz Kline's energetic black strokes on a white field are as recognizable as Jackson Pollock's drips or Mark Rothko's rectangles of glowing colour. He spent years struggling to find a style for himself and then achieved "overnight success" with his dramatic black – and – white abstractions. They were, in fact, so successful that they overwhelmed every other aspect of Kline's art, and as a result he has been oversimplified and underestimated. Based on nearly 20 years of research, this seminal monograph provides a comprehensive view of Kline's life and work and reveals how unexpectedly complex they both were.

Using interviews with the artist's friends and critics, and quoting from his letters, the author, Harry F. Gaugh, has created an evocative portrait of Kline's evolution from ambitious art student, to penniless Greenwich Village artist painting murals in bars, to, finally, a mature artist in command of his own unique and hard-won style.

Harry F. Gaugh, an art historian specialising in postwar American art, taught at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York, until his death in 1992. The leading authority on Franz Kline, Gaugh curated the landmark exhibition *The Vital Gesture: Franz Kline in Retrospect*. His other books include the volume on Willem de Kooning in Abbeville's *Modern Masters* series.