

Willem de Kooning

Works | Writings | Interviews

Sally Yard



Willem De Kooning: Works. Writings. Interviews

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- A study on Willem de Kooning, detailing biography and works
- De Kooning was a leading figure in the emergence of abstract expressionist painting in New York
- An essential sourcebook for everyone concerned with Modern and Contemporary Art

A leading figure in the emergence of abstract expressionist painting in New York, Willem de Kooning arrived in the United States in 1926 as a twenty-two-year-old stowaway from Holland. During the Depression years, he was a dedicated visitor to the museums and galleries of Manhattan, and did a brief stint as a WPA painter, which was curtailed because he was not a citizen. With resolute determination, De Kooning ventured beyond the radical departures of cubism toward the visceral physicality of the abstractions that comprised his first one-person exhibition, in 1948. Five years later, an exhibition of women painted in aggressive, lashing gestures stunned contemporaries not only for the vehemence of the artist's attack but also for the evident reversal of direction. Yet across six decades, the alternation and intertwining of abstraction and figuration remained fundamental to De Kooning's work.