



Robert Frank

November 9, 1924 - September 9, 2019

New York, New York

Robert Frank died on September 9, 2019, in Inverness, Nova Scotia. He was ninety-four. Born in Zurich on November 9, 1924, he emigrated to New York after the war and made the photographs that forced American readers to look at their own roads, flags, jukeboxes, and funerals without the magazine smile.

The Americans, shot on Guggenheim money and published first in France, then in the U.S. with an introduction by Kerouac, was received as an insult by much of the establishment and as revelation by a generation of younger photographers. Frank's framing was off-center on purpose. He trusted grain, blur, and the sideways glance. Later he turned to film - Pull My Daisy among other experiments - and to a more private, jagged autobiography in stills after personal losses.

He kept a foothold in New York and a long retreat in Mabou with the artist June Leaf. Citizenship and subject matter made him a figure of U.S. visual culture even as he refused to become its official portraitist. Museums eventually came around; the early hostility looks, in hindsight, like proof the pictures had landed.

He disliked being reduced to a single book. Fair enough. The book remains the door most people walk through. New York was where that door opened.

Services

Died on September 9, 2019, in Inverness, Nova Scotia. Long associated with New York and with Mabou, Nova Scotia. Cremation; private arrangements.

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