



Windows on the West: The Art of Frank Reaugh

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Artist, educator, inventor, and naturalist, Charles Franklin Reaugh (1860–1945), pronounced “Ray,” is one of the Southwest’s earliest and most distinguished artists. Working in the vein of American Impressionism, Reaugh devoted his career to visually documenting the immense unsettled regions of the Southwest before the turn of the twentieth century. Drawing on more than one hundred artworks from the Harry Ransom Center’s Frank Reaugh collection, as well as public and private collections across the state, the book examines Reaugh’s mastery of the pastel medium and his sophisticated yet direct approach to landscape painting, particularly the challenges of painting outdoors.

Born in Illinois, Reaugh arrived in Texas by covered wagon in 1876 at the age of fifteen and, by the early 1880s, was sketching scenes while riding with cattlemen during the height of Texas’s historic roundups. The shimmering opalescent color of the vast southwestern plains became a lifelong subject of study for Reaugh, as did the native longhorn, the main protagonist in his visual narrative of the West. A restless and intrepid traveler, Reaugh took sketch trips with students to some of Texas’s most spectacular and remote locations almost annually for over fifty years, producing hundreds of colorful and mesmerizing pastel studies.

Seven contributors knowledgeable in the field of early Texas art and art of the American Southwest discuss Reaugh’s life and long career in this beautifully illustrated book. Their essays offer new insights into this fascinating and resourceful man who is often called the “Dean of Texas Artists.”

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