Lucian Freud 1922–2011

**Artist biography**

British painter and draughtsman. Freud spent most of his career in Paddington, London, an inner-city area whose seediness is reflected in Freud's often sombre and moody interiors and cityscapes. In the 1940s he was principally interested in drawing, especially the face. He experimented with Surrealism. He was also loosely associated with Neo-Romanticism. He established his own artistic identity, however, in meticulously executed realist works, imbued with a pervasive mood of alienation.

Two important paintings of 1951 established the themes and preoccupations that dominated the rest of Freud's career: *Interior in Paddington* (Liverpool, Walker A.G.) and *Girl with a White Dog* (London, Tate). Both paintings demonstrate an eagerness to establish a highly charged situation, in which the artist is free to explore formal and optical problems rather than expressive or interpretative ones.

By the late 1950s brushmarks became spatial as he began to describe the face and body in terms of shape and structure, and often in female nudes the brushstrokes help to suggest shape. Throughout his career Freud's palette remained distinctly muted.

A close relationship with sitters was often important for Freud. His mother sat for an extensive series in the early 1970s after she was widowed, and his daughters Bella and Esther modelled nude, together and individually. Although the human form dominated his output, Freud also executed cityscapes, viewed from his studio window, and obsessively detailed nature studies. The 1980s and early 1990s were marked by increasingly ambitious compositions in terms of both scale and complexity.

  