

# Robert Frank

published by Steidl





## The Robert Frank Project

“The Robert Frank Project” is an ambitious long term publishing programme which encompasses Robert Frank's complete oeuvre – reprints of his classic books, reprints of some less well known small books, the publication of previously unseen projects, newly conceived bookworks, and his Complete Film Works in specially designed collector's DVD sets. This ensures the legacy of this original and seminal artist and that Robert Frank's work will be available and accessible for many years to come in a scheme and to a standard that the artist himself has overseen.

The publication of a new edition of “The Americans” on 15th May, 2008, the fiftieth anniversary of the first edition, is the fulcrum of The Robert Frank Project. It presages a major touring exhibition and accompanying catalogue from the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., “Looking In: Robert Frank's *The Americans*”, which opens in January 2009.

This brochure contains details of all the books and films which are currently available and those planned for the future.

**Gerhard Steidl**

Publisher

**Ute Eskildsen**

Editorial Adviser

**Laura Israel**

Film Works Adviser



417-890  
492-0

360

Monday 7:00  
Change -

1240182

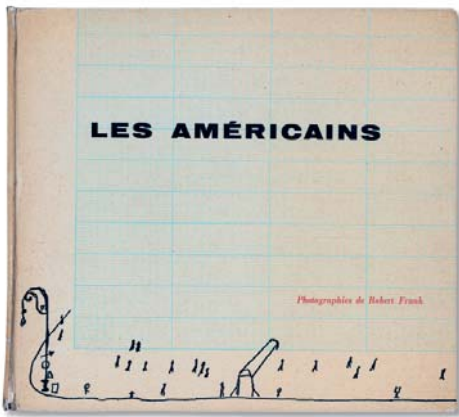
Handwritten notes and sketches, including a small drawing of a bird or wing.

Handwritten notes and sketches, including a small drawing of a face or head.

Please take a few minutes for looking over the Return you have been

Return you have been

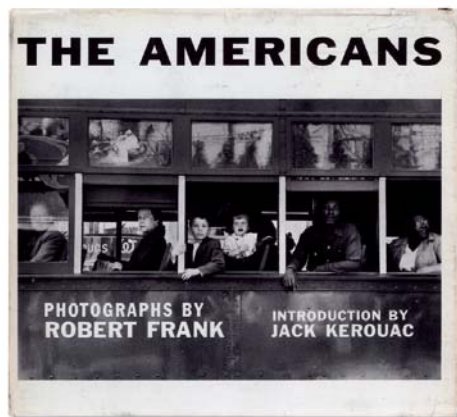




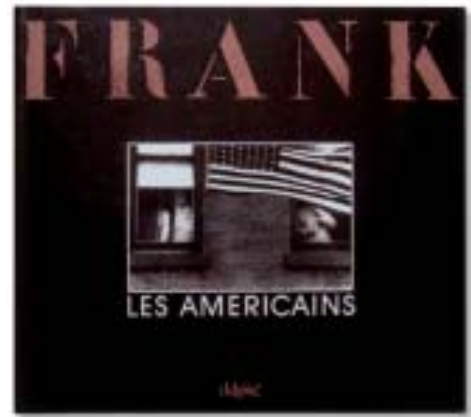
Delpire, 1958



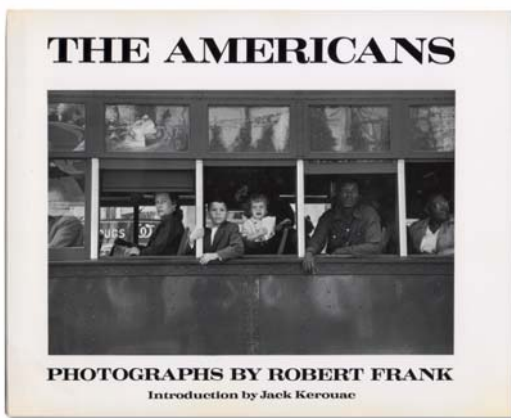
Il Saggiatore, 1959



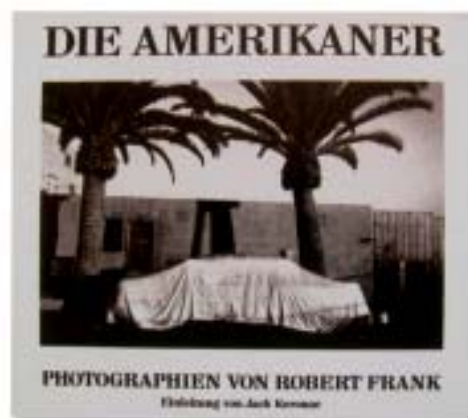
Grove Press, 1959



Delpire, 1993



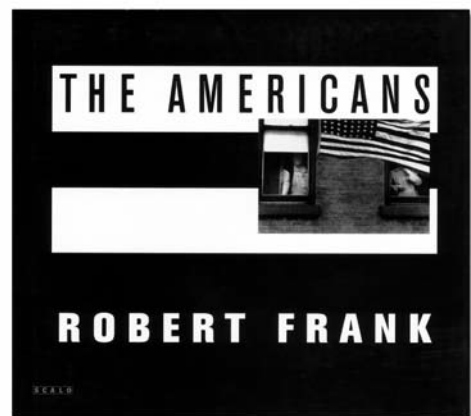
Aperture, 1969



Christian, 1986



Scalo, 1993



Scalo, 2000

# A Short Publishing History of “The Americans”

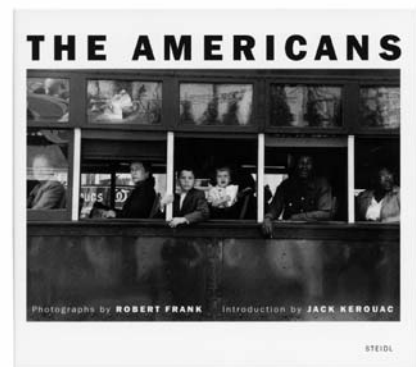
by Monte Packham

Robert Frank’s “The Americans” was first published in 1958 by Robert Delpire in Paris. It featured 83 of Frank’s photographs taken in America in 1955 and 1956, accompanied by writings in French about American political and social history selected by Alain Bosquet. Delpire’s “Les Américains” formed part of the *Encyclopédie essentielle* series, which presented foreign countries to a French audience. Each of Frank’s photographs in this edition is placed on a right-hand page, with the texts on the left-hand pages.

The first English edition of “The Americans” was published in 1959 by Grove Press in New York. It presented the same photographs as the Delpire edition, but a text by Jack Kerouac replaced the French writings. The book begins with Kerouac’s introduction, followed by Frank’s photographs in the same sequence as the Delpire edition. On the left-hand pages are short captions from Frank, which describe the location.

Since 1959 “The Americans” has been reprinted by different publishers, in multiple languages and formats. Frank has had varying influence on these editions; some were printed without his input, approval or knowledge. When the Steidl edition of “The Americans” was printed, Frank was involved in every step of its design and production. The 83 photographs were scanned in tritone from vintage prints in Frank’s collection, which revealed that many images in past editions were actually crops of the originals. For the Steidl book Frank studied and revised these crops and in many cases included the full photographs. The Steidl edition also reproduces two photographs printed from negatives different to those used for all previous editions. These photographs depict the same two subjects as in other editions (“Metropolitan Life Insurance Building–New York City” and “Assembly Line–Detroit”) but from a slightly different perspective.

Kerouac’s text and Frank’s captions remain unaltered from the Grove Press edition, the typography however was redesigned. As well as revising the book’s design, Frank selected the paper, endpaper and book linen. He opted for a thread-stitched book, and conceived a new dust jacket made from the same paper as in the book (Xantur 170 g from Scheufelen), sealing it with a simple varnish. Frank personally oversaw printing on July 18, 2007, inspecting and approving each sheet at Steidl’s press in Göttingen.



Steidl / National Gallery of Art, Washington, 2008



Pages from a handmade maquette, showing the full size of the scanned vintage prints. The red rectangles show the crops in the Delpire and Grove Press editions, which except in one instance, Frank altered for the Steidl edition.

Parade - Montreal, New Jersey



Milwaukee Life Insurance Building - New York City



St. Petersburg, Florida



State park - Ann Arbor, Michigan



# 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY EDITION

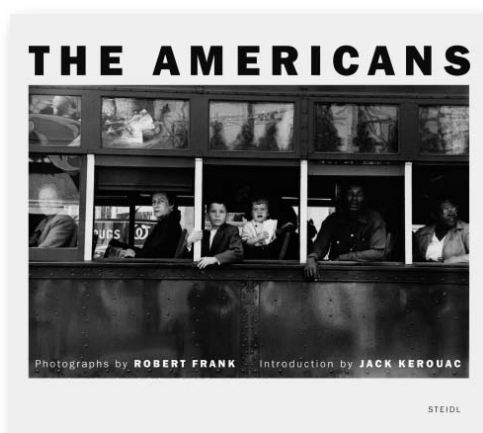
## Robert Frank "The Americans"

"Few books in the history of photography have had as powerful an impact as 'The Americans'" – The New York Times.

The worldwide release of a new edition of "The Americans" on May 15, 2008, will be accompanied by extensive media coverage, launch events, in-store co-ops and both trade and consumer advertising.

In January 2009 the National Gallery of Art, Washington, will celebrate the 50th anniversary of "The Americans" with an exhibition that will examine both the construction of the book and the photographs themselves. "Looking In: Robert Frank's *The Americans*" will tour to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue.

Robert Frank was born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1924 and went to the United States in 1947. He is best known for his seminal book "The Americans", first published in 1958, which gave rise to a distinct new art form in the photo-book, and his experimental film "Pull My Daisy", made in 1959. His other important projects include the book "Black White and Things", 1954, the book "The Lines of My Hand", 1959, and the film "Cocksucker Blues" for the Rolling Stones, 1972. He divides his time between New York City and Nova Scotia, Canada.



Robert Frank  
The Americans

Introduction by Jack Kerouac  
Book design by Robert Frank, Gerhard Steidl and Claas Möller  
180 pages with 83 tritone plates  
8.25 x 7.25 in./20.9 x 18.4 cm  
Clothbound hardcover with dust jacket  
US\$39.95/£20.00/€30.00  
English Edition: 978-3-86521-584-0  
German Edition: 978-3-86521-658-8  
Chinese Edition: 978-3-86521-657-1 (RMB 288)



# Robert Frank in Göttingen

by Joel Sternfeld

Robert Frank and I must have made an interesting sight that warm July afternoon on Düstere Strasse. We resemble each other but he is older than I so no matter what we were up to we could have made sense as father/son.

And in one important sense we were: when I was becoming a photographer in the late 1960s, his book, "The Americans" was already a landmark—that's much too weak a word but what other word for a body of work that changed the course of the river of Photography in a way that it could never take the old course again.

I would look at it before I went to sleep and in the morning I would reach for it like a smoker reaches for a cigarette. I needed to see it again. The country was so bleak in those sooty pages, each one an artifact ripped from the landscape and brought straight to the bindery. Frank had found a way to give form to the formless lives that went unmilled in America.

Two years before I encountered his book I had taken my first cross-country trip—three of us in an immense gold driveaway car that needed to be delivered to its owner in Los Angeles. We sailed from the East Coast to the West in less than three days—one of us sleeping across the back seat, one up front trying to stay awake with the driver.

It was December. We angled into New Mexico as the sun was going down and pulled into an *A. and W. Root Beer* stand. The dirt parking lot seamlessly joined the desert and the desert night. A cold wind came up as the sky turned black—the same cold wind every traveller without a room feels as the sun goes down.

A wrapper from someone's fries blew into the desert in a moment of Americanized infinity. Frank's book reminded me of that moment. And now here he was on Düstere Strasse in Göttingen and here I was beside him. Inside at Steidl "The Americans" was being printed—the reproductions were to be as close a match as possible to the Delpire edition that had set Photography on its fat ear when it first came out in 1958.

A very tired, 83 year-old Robert had come to Germany from Switzerland to supervise the printing—presumably the final edition of the book. I thought about the apocryphal tale of the young Robert Frank kicking in the swinging doors of a cowboy bar in Nevada, hollering in "you mother fuckers," before taking the picture and then running like hell. No running now but the mischief was still in his smile.

He had come to Europe to receive a prize in Spain but the real agenda was to try out the Switzerland of his childhood as a place to come for his final days. Surprisingly, it had failed in that regard. Robert wanted to go home—to America.

"You can't go home again. Home hasn't changed, you have." How many others in a borderless world would face this dilemma?

The printing had been going on for two days and it was going well. Steidl was utterly himself—unshaved and getting things done. Robert was being especially sweet to everyone despite his exhaustion. I noted the care he took when he autographed books for Steidl staffers who timidly came up the stairs to the library. He took sincere interest in the work of other artists who waited in the library like it was a pitch-

er's bull pen—we were ready for the nod that would allow us to go downstairs to press.

He especially remarked a postcard that was being printed for Tacita Dean. It was of an olive tree in Spain that she had designated to be the one beneath which García Lorca and Salvador Dalí had conducted their suspected tryst. Robert pronounced it beautiful and asked her to sign one for him—for his postcard collection.

Earlier in the afternoon I had gone downstairs to watch as Robert corrected his sheets. I was taken aback by the precision of his memory of the Delpire edition. From the comments Robert was making I could see it wasn't just the first edition he was remembering—it was the moments out there, in 1950s America and how they had looked. The realization gave me a chill.

Here we were in the garden outside the press—I don't know if it was for the flat light, or for the pleasure of a summer day but Gerhard had placed an easel out the doors. Robert was trying to “open up” a person you can barely see behind the passengers in the windows of the streetcar in New Orleans. A bird came up and pulled my eye on as I tried to think about the provenance of the moment.

Every few minutes he would speak of his exhaustion and of his desire to go back to his hotel room but when a sheet came out his comments were acute—a lion always sleeps with one eye open. Later in the afternoon I went down to the carless street—none of the streets in Göttingen permit automobile traffic—and saw Robert wandering in the middle of the bricked roadway. He was ambling. I went up and asked him where he was going. He said he was going to hail a taxi and go to his hotel. One of us made a joke about escaping—Gerhard likes to picture himself as sheriff.

I told Robert I didn't think there were any taxis to be hailed but if he would just come back inside and finish the last form a taxi could be called. Robert made no direct response but he seemed glad of my company and he suggested that we go into the antique store across the street so he could look for postcards. (For a guy thinking about the end of things he was certainly keen about keeping his postcard collection up. Perhaps this was in the daytime: in the middle of the night there are no postcards to be collected.)

I went into “Kitsch & Kunst” with him—now I was AWOL too. There weren't really any postcards but there were some albums of family trips—journeys long ago cornered into sheets and now for sale.

As Robert leafed through them I went back to Gerhard to appraise him of the situation. He asked me to bring Robert back to press: the men were waiting, the press was idle.

What followed next is difficult to describe. Robert came out into the street and for the next hour he did a sort of performance. It was a dance of remembrance and reluctance with commentary by the performer interspersed.

In the grey July afternoon he appeared to be weightless—a trained bear doing slow-motion pirouettes. He butoh'd toward the door to Steidl but the closer he got to it, the more interesting everything outside it became. He would turn in the street, float up to a rain gutter and tap it. “I just wanted to see if it's made out of lead,” he explained as his eyes followed it up to the roof. He went back into the street, pirouetted again and came back to the wall as his arms floated up a ledge which was at shoulder height. Did he know that he looked like Christ on the cross as he spoke of his desire to return to America? Of what a good country it was—it had given him his chance.

I thought about “home” and its power; and about an idea I have that many of the great practitioners photograph their “home” landscapes. I had excluded Frank from my thesis because America was not his home—but now it was. A phrase, “I did not choose this place but now I am of it” came to mind.

The moment was broken by a man with a sort of flame thrower. It was a blow torch with a three-foot extension tube off the nozzle so that a small flame could be used to burn weeds coming up through cracks in the sidewalk. Robert feigned fascination and he began questioning the operator of the device—soon others joined the conversation and there was a general discussion of the topic of weed killing with Robert a full discussant.

Eventually, after various other petite excursions Robert went in and finished the form. The next day he was in the library in a dark blue shirt and a baseball cap—shaved and with his hair combed he looked 25 years younger. His body had solidity—he was flying home from Frankfurt that afternoon.

Seeing him so transformed helped me to understand what I had witnessed the day before. Of course he was avoiding—why would he want to come in and say goodbye to the work of his youth? Didn't he tell us he was "sick of goodbyes"? Of course it was exhausting—putting a closure on the work that had defined a life must be. Which one of us would willingly approve a "final edition"?

I remembered these words, "there is no strange behavior it's just that some behavior requires more understanding than other behavior."

Faced with no good choices Robert Frank did a dance.



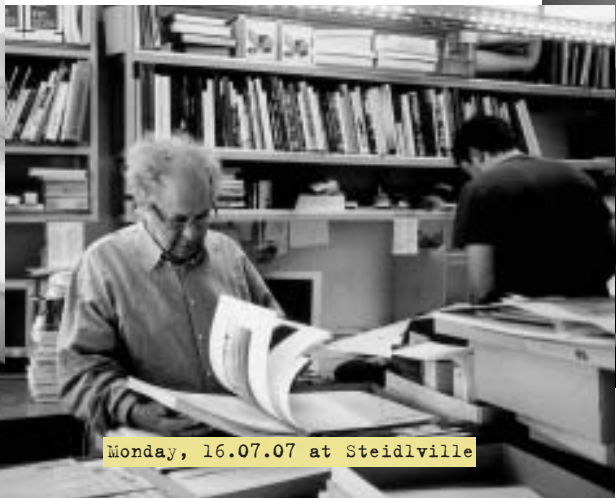
Photographs by Joel Sternfeld



Zurich, Saturday 14.07.07:  
Hotel Heimhaus



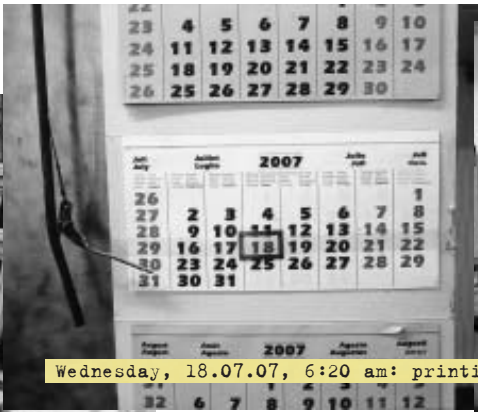
Final approval of a handmade maquette



Monday, 16.07.07 at Steidville



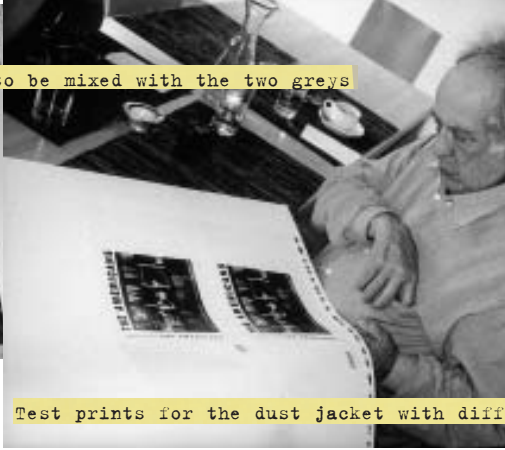
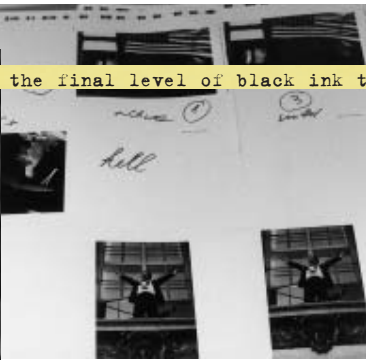
Tuesday, 17.07.07: last corrections



Wednesday, 18.07.07, 6:20 am: printing commences on the brand-new Roland 706 press



Tritone printing: inspecting density variations to fix the final level of black ink to be mixed with the two greys



Test prints for the dust jacket with differ



Farewell to Joel Sternfeld



Departing from Steidville to Frankfurt airport





Finalizing crops on each of the photographs



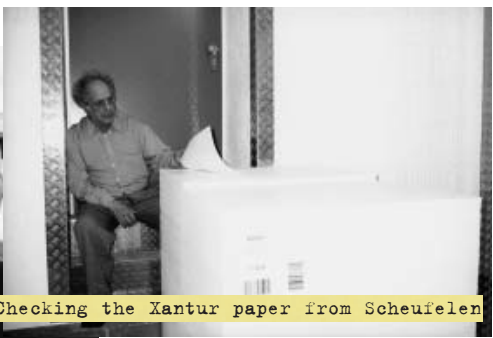
Dust jacket design



Discussing dust jacket variations



Last editions of "The Americans" including the original 1958 Delpire book, and vintage prints were on hand at press



Checking the Xantur paper from Scheufelen



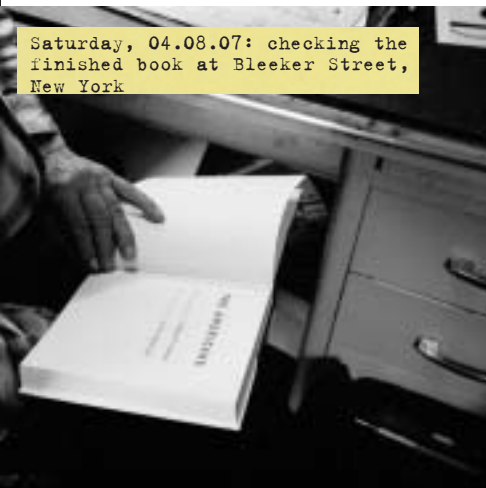
Checking the dust jacket in daylight



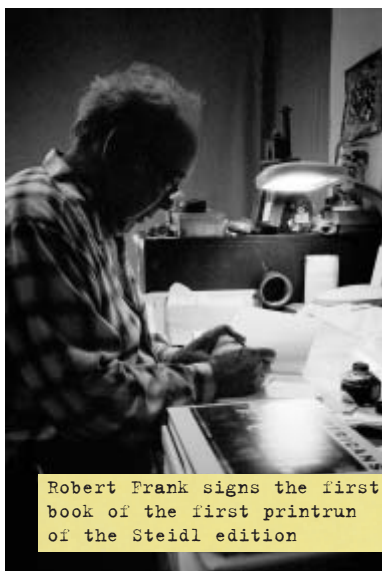
In the evening the last printed sheets are moved to dry



Tacita Dean showing her limited edition postcard "Lorca's Olive", printed at Steidl on the same day



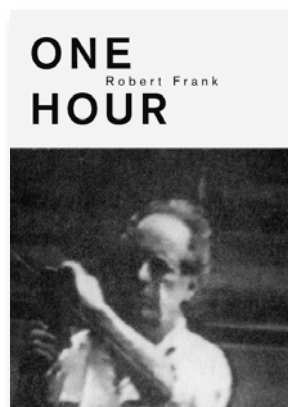
Saturday, 04.08.07: checking the finished book at Bleeker Street, New York



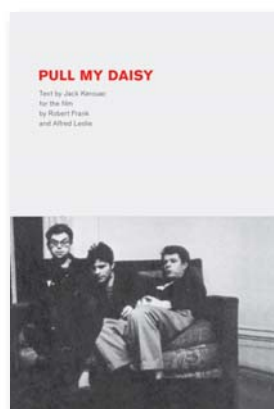
Robert Frank signs the first book of the first print run of the Steidl edition

Photographs by Gerhard Steidl

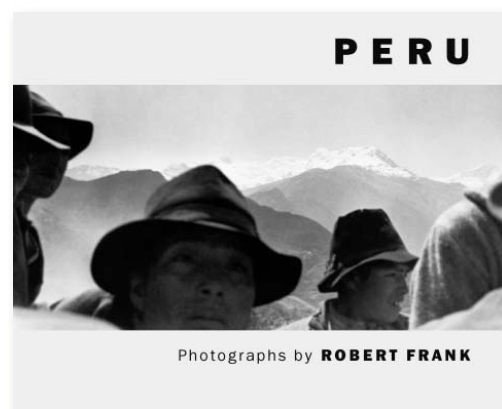
## Currently Available



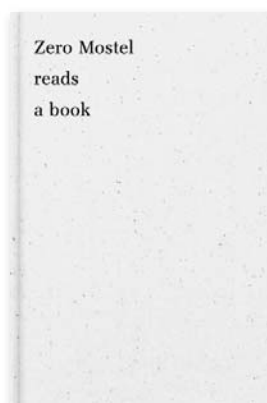
One Hour  
ISBN 978-3-86521-364-8



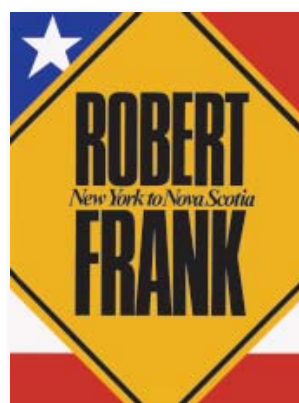
Pull My Daisy  
ISBN 978-3-86521-673-1



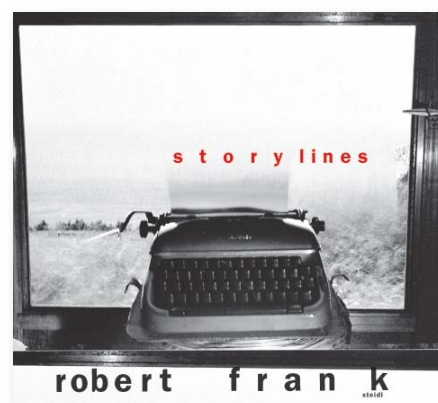
Peru  
ISBN 978-3-86521-692-2



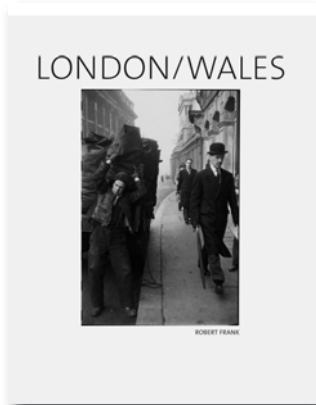
Zero Mostel Reads a Book  
ISBN 978-3-86521-586-4



New York to Nova Scotia  
ISBN 978-3-86521-013-5



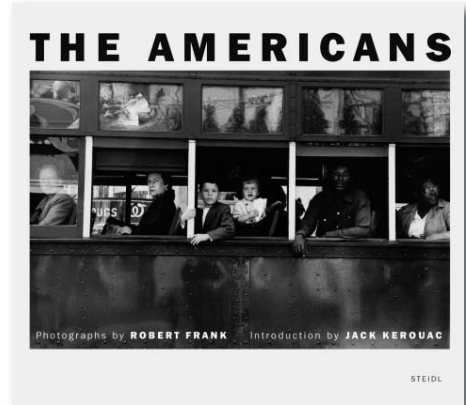
Storylines  
ISBN 978-3-86521-041-8



**London/Wales**  
ISBN 978-3-86521-362-4



**Come Again**  
ISBN 978-3-86521-261-0



**The Americans**  
ISBN 978-3-86521-584-0 (English edition)  
ISBN 978-3-86521-658-8 (German edition)  
ISBN 978-3-86521-657-1 (Chinese edition)



**Paris**  
ISBN 978-3-86521-524-5 (English edition)  
ISBN 978-3-86521-544-4 (French edition)  
ISBN 978-3-86521-754-7 (German edition)



**Me and My Brother**  
ISBN 978-3-86521-363-1



**Robert Frank**  
**The Complete Film Works**  
Vol. 1: ISBN 978-3-86521-365-5  
Vol. 2: ISBN 978-3-86521-525-3  
Vol. 3: ISBN 978-3-86521-591-8

**Robert Frank**

*The Complete Film Works*

**Vol. 2**

*OK Bad News*  
12 minutes - 1963

*Conversations in Vermont*  
26 minutes - 1969

*Lifescape South*  
37 minutes - 1969

STETEX



Robert Frank  
The Complete Film Works  
Vol. 2  
OK Bad News  
12 minutes - 1963

Robert Frank  
The Complete Film Works  
Vol. 2  
Conversations in Vermont  
26 minutes - 1969



# The Complete Film Works Volumes 1 – 10

**The Complete Film Works** consists of 10 volumes which together encompass Robert Frank's entire oeuvre in film and video in chronological sequence. Each volume will consist of 3 or more films, each film on a separate DVD housed in a film-tin, and all the tins of a volume contained in an archive-box.

**Volume 1** – Spring 2008:

Pull My Daisy – 28 minutes – 1959  
The Sin of Jesus – 40 minutes – 1961  
Me and My Brother – 85 minutes – 1968

**Volume 2** – Spring 2008:

OK End Here – 30 minutes – 1963  
Conversations in Vermont – 26 minutes – 1969  
Liferaft Earth – 37 minutes – 1969

**Volume 3** – Spring 2008:

About Me: A Musical – 35 minutes – 1971  
Keep Busy – 38 minutes – 1975  
S-8 Stones Footage from Exile on Main St. – 5 minutes – 1971

**Volume 4** – Fall 2008:

[Cocksucker Blues – 90 minutes – 1972]  
Life Dances On... – 30 minutes – 1980  
Energy and How to Get It – 28 minutes – 1981

**Volume 5** – Spring 2009:

Home Improvements – 30 minutes – 1985  
This Song for Jack – 30 minutes – 1983  
Ginsberg/Corso Reading – Harry Smith-Herbert Hunck

**Volume 6** – Fall 2009:

Hunter – 37 minutes – 1989  
C'est vrai (One Hour) – 60 minutes – 1990  
Candy Mountain – 91 minutes – 1987

**Volume 7** – Spring 2010:

Run/New Order – 4 1/2 minutes – 1989  
Last Supper – 52 minutes – 1992  
Moving Pictures – 30 minutes – 1994

**Volume 8** – Fall 2010:

The Present – 24 minutes – 1996  
Summer Cannibals/Patti Smith – 4 minutes – 1996  
Flamingo – 10 minutes – 1996

**Volume 9** – Fall 2010:

What I Remember from my Visit (with Stieglitz) – 7 minutes – 1998  
San Yu – 27 minutes – 2000  
Fragments – 5 minutes – 2000

**Volume 10** – Fall 2010:

Paper Route – 30 minutes – 2002  
The Tunnel – 5 minutes – 2005  
True Story – 30 minutes – 2004  
Egypt Δ 1995/96 – 2006



THE AMERICANS



PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
ROBERT FRANK

INTRODUCTION BY  
JOSEF KORNBLAU

THE AMERICANS



THE AMERICANS

## **Publications to come in 2009 and 2010**

### **Polaroids**

**Hold Still, Keep Going**

**Henry Frank, Stereo-Photos**

**Black White and Things**

**Egypt Δ 1995 / 96 (book and DVD)**

**The Hunter (book and DVD)**

**40 Photos**

### **Frank Films**

edited by Brigitta Burger-Utzer / Stefan Grisseemann

## **National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.**

### **A 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration of Frank's book**

**National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.,**

January 18–April 26, 2009

**San Francisco Museum of Modern Art,**

May 17–August 23, 2009

**The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York,**

September 20 – December 27, 2009

### **Looking In: Robert Frank's "The Americans"**

edited by Sarah Greenough

ISBN 978-3-86521-748-6

Co-Published by National Gallery of Art and Steidl

in conjunction with the exhibition



## How to order

### Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Steidl Verlag  
Robert Walther  
Düstere Str. 4  
37073 Göttingen  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 551 49 60 612  
Fax: +49 551 49 60 649  
dotten@steidl.de

### French Language Titles

Patrick Remy  
22, Place Charles Fillion  
75017 Paris  
France  
Tél.: +33 (0)1 40 05 08 10  
Fax.: +33 (0)1 40 05 08 19  
contact@inextensodiffusion.com  
www.inextensodiffusion.com

### USA and Canada

D.A.P.  
155 Sixth Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10013-1507  
USA  
Tel.: +1 212 627 1999  
Fax: +1 212 627 9484  
dap@dapinc.com

### All other territories

Thames & Hudson Ltd.  
181a High Holborn  
London WC1V 7QX  
United Kingdom  
Tel.: +44 20 7845 5000  
Fax: +44 20 7845 5055  
sales@thameshudson.co.uk

## Press enquiries

### Germany, Austria and Switzerland

Steidl Verlag  
Claudia Glenewinkel  
Düstere Str. 4  
37073 Göttingen  
Germany  
Tel.: +49 551 49 60 650  
Fax: +49 551 49 60 644  
cglenewinkel@steidl.de

### French Language Titles

Patrick Remy  
22, Place Charles Fillion  
75017 Paris  
France  
Tel: +33 1 4263 2167  
Fax: +33 1 4226 5518  
patremy2@wanadoo.fr

### USA and Canada

D.A.P.  
Alexander Galan  
155 Sixth Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10013-1507  
USA  
Tel.: +1 212 627 1999 Ext. 211  
Fax: +1 212 627 9484  
agalan@dapinc.com

### All other territories

SteidlMack  
Vale Studio  
62 Wood Vale  
London SE23 3ED  
United Kingdom  
Tel: +44 20 8299 8847  
Fax: +44 20 8299 8827  
press@steidlvile.com  
www.steidlvile.com



**STEIDL**

Düstere Str.4 37073 Göttingen Germany Tel +49 551 496 060 Fax +49 551 496 0649  
mail@steidl.de www.steidl.de To order our books visit [www.steidlville.com](http://www.steidlville.com)