

500 Portraits: BP Portrait Award

Sandy Nairne

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This beautifully produced compendium features 500 paintings from many of the best figurative artists active over the last twenty-one years. Reflecting the diverse methods of contemporary portrait practice, the book includes a dazzling array of styles, from immaculate photorealism to intense expressionism.

The BP Portrait Award is one of Britain's most prestigious art prizes, and each year nearly 300,000 people visit the exhibition based on the competition. It has acted as a springboard for many painters' careers, notably the prize-winners who have been subsequently commissioned by the National Portrait Gallery to paint an eminent sitter. This book includes full-colour reproductions of many of those commissions – including paintings of Dame Helen Mirren, J.K. Rowling, Sir Michael Caine, Fiona Shaw, Sir Ian McKellen, Sir Paul Smith and Dame Cicely Saunders.

As well as these high-profile commissions, the book features an inspiring wealth of subjects: unflinching self-portraits, warm portrayals of children and babies, conversation pieces, studies of people at home and at work – a rich and varied selection of hundreds of faces by some of the finest portrait painters of our time.



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