



# Peggy Guggenheim: The Shock of the Modern (Jewish Lives)

*Francine Prose*

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One of twentieth-century America's most influential patrons of the arts, Peggy Guggenheim (1898–1979) brought to wide public attention the work of such modern masters as Jackson Pollock and Man Ray. In her time, there was no stronger advocate for the groundbreaking and the avant-garde. Her midtown gallery was the acknowledged center of the postwar New York art scene, and her museum on the Grand Canal in Venice remains one of the world's great collections of modern art. Yet as renowned as she was for the art and artists she so tirelessly championed, Guggenheim was equally famous for her unconventional personal life, and for her ironic, playful desire to shock.

Acclaimed best-selling author Francine Prose offers a singular reading of Guggenheim's life that will enthrall enthusiasts of twentieth-century art, as well as anyone interested in American and European culture and the interrelationships between them. The lively and insightful narrative follows Guggenheim through virtually every aspect of her extraordinary life, from her unique collecting habits and paradigm-changing discoveries, to her celebrity friendships, failed marriages, and scandalous affairs, and Prose delivers a colorful portrait of a defiantly uncompromising woman who maintained a powerful upper hand in a male-dominated world. Prose also explores the ways in which Guggenheim's image was filtered through the lens of insidious antisemitism.

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