



Constantin Brancusi

Friedrich Teja Bach, Margit Rowell, Ann Temkin

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In twentieth-century sculpture, one name towers above all others: Romanian-born Constantin Brancusi (1876-1957). This book accompanies a major retrospective exhibition of Brancusi's sculpture, drawings, and photographs, organized by the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. Profusely illustrated throughout, with photographs by the artist and images culled from a wide range of archival sources, it is the most definitive work yet published on this influential artist. The authors provide a detailed reassessment of Brancusi's work, incorporating and extending the profound revisions in scholarship that have been taking place since the last major retrospective in 1969-1970.

The three major essays present new information on such diverse issues as the sculptor's sources of inspiration, his formal approach, and the works' original presentation. Friedrich Teja Bach rejects the notion of Brancusi's oeuvre as hermetic, timeless, and pure, and examines instead the heterogeneous combinations of form and material that make Brancusi's works compellingly paradoxical. Margit Rowell explores the sculptor's place in the artistic climate of Paris in the 1910s and 1920s and his rejection of dominant styles and subject matter in favor of non-Western sources, particularly Asian art. Ann Temkin traces the history of Brancusi's American patronage during his lifetime by such influential collectors as John Quinn, Katherine Dreier, James Johnson Sweeney, and Louise and Walter Arensberg.

The plate section features full-color reproductions of over 100 sculptures, with accompanying texts and visual references. In addition, 55 photographs by Brancusi in full-page duotone are shown for the first time alongside a major selection of his sculptures. There are also color and black and white reproductions of over forty of his drawings—the richest documentation to date of this aspect of Brancusi's work—as well as prefatory essays on the photographs and drawings, a chronology, and bibliographic and exhibition listings.

Distributed for the Philadelphia Museum of Art

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