

Publisher's Information

Sophie Taeuber-Arp

A Life through Art / Ein Leben für die Kunst

by Silvia Boadella

translated from the German by Tess Lewis

The life and art of a leading artist of the 20th century

Sophie Taeuber-Arp is a pioneer of modern art. She was at the center of Zurich's Dada movement and is considered the most important female Swiss artist of the early twentieth century. She was a modern dancer, painter, sculptor, textile artist, designer, and interior architect. She made paper, textiles, wood, and glass shine – she bound light to matter in paintings, jewelry, embroidery, rugs, marionettes, furniture, and sculptures.

This unique portrait shows how Sophie remained passionately devoted to her art despite the threat of two world wars. Through her work, she not only found and preserved her inner self and joy in extremely difficult circumstances, but also tapped enormous strength to endure the challenges in her life and remain true to herself.

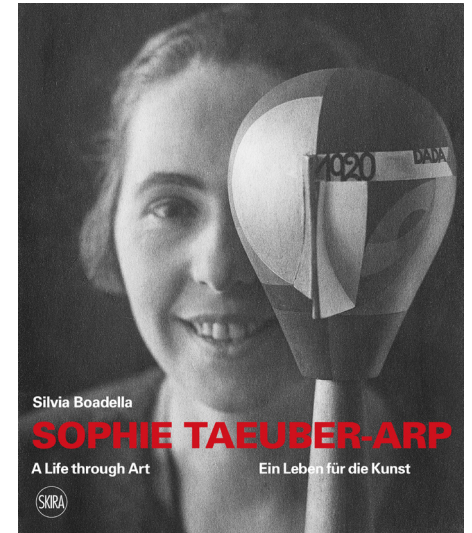
The author, Silvia Boadella, is Sophie Taeuber-Arp's great-niece and grew up with Sophie's art. Her approach is intimate and empathetic, as if she were looking at the world through Sophie's eyes, when drawing from family memories, stories, and documents as well as from unpublished sources. She has created a visually and verbally powerful narrative that for the first time connects stations in Sophie's life with her works. Through the many, well-chosen illustrations, including photographs from the family archives, she makes this story into a lively experience. Fundamental topics central to every human life, such as love, birth, and death, are woven through the text to offer direct emotional access to Sophie's works and allow the reader to engage with them creatively, and to experience first-hand how the artist lives on through her art.

Exhibitions on Sophie Taeuber-Arp

- This book was inspired by the major retrospectives of 2021 and 2022 at the Kunstmuseum Basel (March 19 - June 20, 2021), the Tate Modern, London (July 13 - October 17, 2021), and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (November 21, 2021 - March 12, 2022).
- 15 key works in the retrospective are reproduced in color, together with 65 additional, mostly full-color illustrations. Together with Silvia Boadella's personal and poetic text, they provide insight into Sophie Taeuber-Arp's creative process and the exhibited works.

Author

Silvia Boadella, PhD, great-niece of Sophie Taeuber-Arp, is a writer and psychotherapist and directs the International Institute for Biosynthesis (Switzerland), where she teaches her unique combination of art, therapy, and dance.



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Perlen

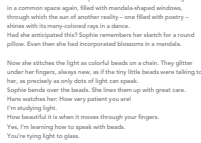
Ein Tag ist es soweit. Hans nimmt sie in seine Arme. Sie öffnet sich darin wie eine Blüte...



23 Sophie

Beads

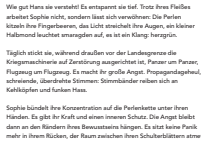
One day, the time has come. Hans takes Sophie in his arms. She blossoms in his embrace like a flower...



23 Beads

Zur Zeit auf. Einmal beginnt. Sie wird entworfen von ihrer Schmelze, ihr geht es aufzuarbeiten.

Liebe und Kunst werden ein. Sophie und Hans finden sich in einem gemeinsamen Raum wieder...



24 Sophie

How well Hans understands her. This was her complexity at once. Despite her diligence, Sophie does not do any work...

Sie umschließt every play while on the country's borders her ear machine goes up for distraction...



24 Beads

Sie hält die Geduld fest. Sophie sucht ein Perlenstückchen. Sie will, die Geduld fest zu erhalten...



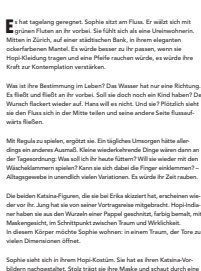
25 Sophie

Sophie focuses her concentration on the necklace of beads under her hands. This gives her strength and an inner protection...



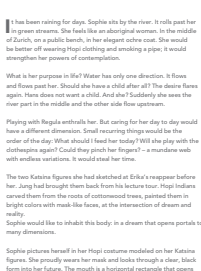
25 Beads

Was ist die Bestimmung im Leben? Das Wasser hat nur eine Richtung. Es fließt und fließt an ihr vorbei...



26 Sophie

I have been waiting for you. Sophie sits by the river. It rolls past her in great streams. She feels like an abandoned woman...



26 Beads

Man schneidet Form in ihre Zukunft. Der Mund ein legendäres Becken, öffnet sich in der Mitte zu einem Dreieck...



27 Sophie

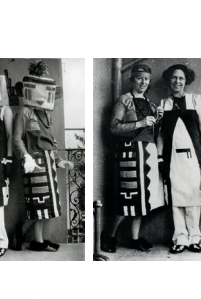
to a triangle in the middle. It is at once nose and eyes which she can smell and see. The tallest white border lends the black shape a dominating magic...



27 Beads



28 Sophie



28 Beads

Sophie and Hans

Erne nichterne Andacht umringt den Raum, in welchem sie beide arbeiten. Sophie blickt sich über ihre erstarrte Gusschale...



29 Sophie and Hans

Sophie and Hans

erwachen erwachen die Räume in denen sie beide arbeiten. Sophie blickt sich über ihre erstarrte Gusschale...



29 Sophie and Hans

Sophie and Hans

die Entscheidung das brauchte Zeit. Sie gehen sich gegenseitig Rückenlecken in Arbeit und Inspiration...



30 Sophie and Hans

Sophie and Hans



30 Sophie and Hans

Staffelung

Sophie ist es wohl in ihrem eigenen Haus, ein schmalen, hohen Kubus aus eckförmigen Mühleinheiten...



31 Sophie

Echelons

Sophie is in peace in her own house, a tall, narrow rectangular box of cubic-shaped modules, the rooms divided between three stories...



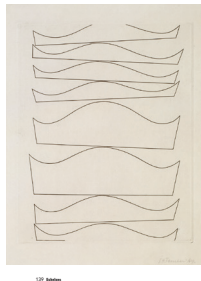
31 Echelons

Sophie erwirbt ein neues Bild. Sie stellt sich Gebilde überhandeln...



32 Sophie

Where is it going? It rises from nowhere and ends somewhere...



32 Beads