



Romaine Brooks: A Life

Cassandra Langer

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The artistic achievements of Romaine Brooks (1874–1970), both as a major expatriate American painter and as a formative innovator in the decorative arts, have long been overshadowed by her fifty-year relationship with writer Natalie Barney and a reputation as a fiercely independent, aloof heiress who associated with fascists in the 1930s. In *Romaine Brooks: A Life*, art historian Cassandra Langer provides a richer, deeper portrait of Brooks's aesthetics and experimentation as an artist—and of her entire life, from her chaotic, traumatic childhood to the enigmatic decades after World War II, when she produced very little art. This provocative, lively biography takes aim at many myths about Brooks and her friends, lovers, and the subjects of her portraits, revealing a woman of wit and passion who overcame enormous personal and societal challenges to become an extraordinary artist and create a life on her own terms.

Romaine Brooks: A Life introduces much fresh information from Langer's decades of research on Brooks and establishes this groundbreaking artist's centrality to feminism and contemporary sexual politics as well as to visual culture.

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