



Tamara de Lempicka: Dandy Deco

Gioia Mori

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An aura of mystery has surrounded Tamara de Lempicka since she was born, not in Warsaw in 1902, as she claimed, but according to official records in 1898 in Moscow. The beautiful and scandalous Tamara was the extravagant muse of Art Deco, an icon of the roaring twenties, and a successful painter of intensely sensual portraits that were powerfully sculptural with Cubist lines, embellished with sophisticated decorative elements. Cool colors, cramped spaces and stark contrasts between light and shade surround the unforgettable faces of rich, elegant, emancipated, and theatrical women fixed in their existential melancholy. The catalogue includes a careful selection of unforgettable paintings and valuable historic photographs offering us a fascinating thematic reconstruction of the personal and professional aspects of Tamara's life, including the places she lived, her involvement in the sophisticated fashion world of the period, and her studies of the nude, as well as her still-lives and portraits.

Contents:

Tamara's worlds: from Russia to Mexico; Still life - a recurring theme in Lempicka's work, with echoes and references that range from 17th-century Flemish painting, to the rediscovery of trompe-l'oeil in the 1930s to 1950s, and contemporary photography; Devotion - a constant theme in Lempicka's oeuvre is religious. It is identified and analyzed in terms of the art of the period. Portraits - Paintings and drawings are analyzed, and the initial classical sources pointed up, as well as how they relate to modern photography and cinematography. A section is dedicated to the portraits of children; The nude - The study of the nude from mannerist sources to the photography of Albin-Guillot e Brassai; Fashion - Lempicka's close ties to the fashion world examined through her paintings, her experience as a photographic model, and her sophisticated wardrobe.

Published to accompany an exhibition at Palazzo Chiabrese, Turin (19 March - 30 August 2015).

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