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FÉLIX VALLOTTON. CRITIQUE D'ART

Rudolf Koella and Katia Poletti

This book illustrates Félix Vallotton's work as an art critic, in which the artist was able to exploit his training to turn his penetrating eye on the Parisian art scene at the turn of the century.

Félix Vallotton penned his first art criticism in 1890, at a pivotal moment in his own career as an artist. He was to write some forty articles by 1921—appearing mostly in *La Gazette de Lausanne*—and essays on art. Writing mainly for a Suisse Romande readership, he expressed himself freely in a very unaffected, even ironic, tone which made no bones about his own aesthetic preferences.

The present project was coordinated jointly by the Fondation Félix Vallotton and the Institut Suisse pour l'étude de l'Art (SI-ISEA) and consists of the re-publication of a critical, annotated, and illustrated edition of all his writings which are currently virtually inaccessible, namely twenty-three pieces on the Salons and other collective exhibitions in Paris, ten monographs on ancient and modern artists, two essays on art, and five replies to enquiries. Each article is preceded by an explanatory introduction and accompanied by a critical apparatus consisting of notes and illustrations.

The book includes a pair of introductory essays by Rudolf Koella and Katia Poletti: one on the place art criticism has in Vallotton's oeuvre on the one hand, and the other on his view of his predecessors and contemporaries. The lavish illustrations enable both the general reader and the expert to appreciate for himself Vallotton's opinions on works that are sometimes forgotten or inaccessible.

Rudolf Koella is an art writer and exhibition organizer, mounting several exhibitions devoted to Vallotton in Switzerland and Germany. His part in the project includes the essay on Vallotton's assessment of his predecessors, as well as commentaries on Vallotton's monographs, his writings on art, and his replies to enquiries.

Katia Poletti is a curator at the Fondation Félix Vallotton and collaborated on the catalogue raisonné, *Félix Vallotton. L'Œuvre peint*. On this occasion, she contributed the essays on Vallotton's opinion of his contemporaries and art criticism's place in Vallotton's oeuvre, as well as commentaries on Vallotton's criticism of various collective exhibitions.