



24,5 x 28 cm, 136 pp.

140 colour illustrations

hardcover

French edition

ISBN 978-88-7439-590-3

€32.00

co-published with the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts,

Lausanne and the Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne

Exhibitions

Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts,
Lausanne

from June 1 to August 26, 2012

Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne

from June 1 to October 28, 2012

ALOÏSE

LE RICOCHET SOLAIRE

Jacqueline Porret-Forel and Céline Muzelle

This richly illustrated work, with commentary by Jacqueline-Forel and Céline Muzelle, was published by the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts and the Collection de l'Art Brut, in Lausanne, together with the Fondation Aloïse, to coincide with the online publication of the catalogue raisonné of the artist's work, thus filling a considerable gap on bookshop shelves.

Aloïse Corbaz, known simply as Aloïse (1886–1964), was the daughter of a postal worker and was born in Lausanne. She worked as a dressmaker, but her dream was to become a singer. Following an unhappy love affair, she took up a number of positions as a governess in northern Germany. Employed at the court of William II in Potsdam, she became besotted with the emperor. But when war was declared she was obliged to return to her native Lausanne, where she fell prey to bouts of anxiety and religious fervour that often took a humanitarian or anti-militarist turn. In the end, she was confined to the asylum in Cery, near Lausanne. The diagnosis of schizophrenia mentions her intelligence and her memory, as well as her wild ideas, language dissociation, and frequent use of neologisms. Her condition evolved into autism, but gradually stabilised to the point that she was able to be moved to the more relaxed institution of La Rosière, in Gimel, where she lived until her death.

Aloïse began to draw and write soon after she entered the asylum. However, she pursued this activity in secret until 1936, using a lead pencil and ink. When she had no alternative, she even used juice squeezed from petals, crushed leaves, and toothpaste. As a support, she sewed together pieces of wrapping paper with thread to obtain a large surface, or envelopes, bits of cardboard, and the backs of calendars.

Aloïse created her own personal cosmogony peopled by princely figures and historical heroines (for example, Mary Stuart, Elizabeth of Austria, and Cleopatra). Pairs of lovers, the theatre, and the opera were her favourite themes and abound in her oeuvre. Jean Dubuffet took an interest in her work in the mid-1940s, calling it "Aloïse's huge tapestry made of a thousand pieces" and considered it a wonderful example of entirely feminine art brut.