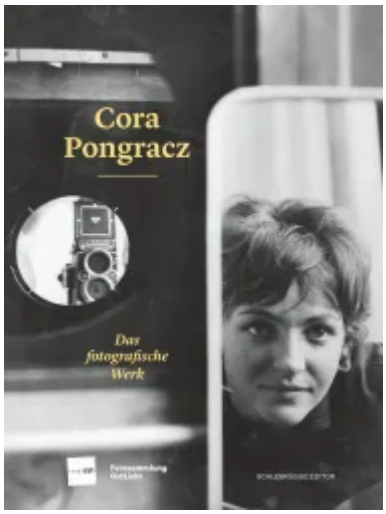
Cora Pongracz
Das fotografische Werk

Edited by Marie Röbl, Peter Coeln, Fotosammlung OstLicht

German, 200 pages, 22.3 × 29.7 cm, numerous illustrations in b/w, 348 illustrations, softcover
Texts by Peter Coeln, Carola Dertnig, Silvia Eiblmayr, Felix de Mendelssohn, Cathrin Pichler, Cora Pongracz, Reinhard Priessnitz, Marie Röbl, Ferdinand Schmatz, Rosemarie Schwarzwälder
Gestaltung: Martha Stutteregger
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Cora Pongracz: Das fotografische Werk is the first retrospective of the complete works of Austrian photographer Cora Pongracz. Her estate, which was acquired by Fotosammlung Ostlicht in 2015, served as the basis for this in-depth exploration of her stylistic phases, her life, and her artistic environment. This book marks the first time that Pongracz's biography and bibliography were extensively researched. Several previously unknown images were discovered while processing the comprehensive archive of negatives; many others could be accurately classified for the first time.

Cora Pongracz was born in Buenos Aires in 1943 to Austrian emigrants. After her return, she lived in Vienna until the late 1950s and later moved to Frankfurt and Munich, where she studied photography at the Bavarian Staatslehranstalt für Photographie, continuing her studies in London in 1966. In 1969, she returned to Vienna once again, where the author Reinhard Priessnitz, whom she married in 1974, put her in contact with Austrian artists and writers. Whoever was in front of Cora Pongracz's camera from the late 1960s on, probably still belongs to the artistic and literary avant-garde today: Arnulf Rainer, VALIE EXPORT, Gerhard Rühm, Ernst Jandl, Franz West—to name only a few.

However, Cora Pongracz is not only a documentarian. Her portraits attest to her ability for artistic reflection and her search for a new place as a photographer. From the mid-1970s on, she worked on several conceptual series, for instance the 8 erweiterte portraits – Frauen in Wien (8 extended portraits—Women in Vienna) and the verwechslungen (mix-ups). In order to convey the many layers of a personality, she created not only individual portraits but translated the portrayed person's environment into an associative photo series. In doing so, Pongracz joined the then-current discourse about identity, pose, and performativity—aspects that have been shaping the contemporary artistic discourse to this day.



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Cora Pongracz participated in numerous exhibitions and published three photobooks (Martha Jungwirth – Franz Ringel from 1972, among others). She photographed Arnulf Rainer and Dieter Roth, actions by Otto Muehl, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Friedrich Achleitner, Heidi Pataki, and many other famous and non-famous people—always close up and personal, decentralizing and animating the rigid relationship between subject and object.

This book also allows room for the artist's early and late works. Her portraits, photo stories, and lifestyle photographs were published by many newspapers. The London-based travel guide publisher J. Cape commissioned her to photograph her travels to Greece, Yugoslavia, and the Channel Islands. Pongracz did not even stop working when she withdrew from the public eye due to illness in the late 1980s. She continued her investigation of identities and their photographic representation until she died in 2003.