

Pressemitteilung

Press release



Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum

**Zentrum
Internationaler
Skulptur**

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Stand: 28. Januar 2010

Press kit: Alberto Giacometti: Woman with Chariot. Triumph and Death

In cooperation with Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris

Duration: January 31 through April 18, 2010

Opening: Sunday, January 31, 2010, 11.30 a.m.

Press conference: Friday, January 29, 2010, 11.30 a.m.

- p. 2 Press text on the exhibition**
- p. 4 Biography of Alberto Giacometti**
- p. 6 Main works**
- p. 8 Contact / Information / Visitor's Service**

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 2/28. Januar 2010

January 31 through April 18, 2010

Alberto Giacometti: Woman with Chariot. Triumph and Death

In cooperation with Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti

Curators: Véronique Wiesinger and Gottlieb Leinz

Beginning on January 31, 2010 Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum – Center for International Sculpture, Duisburg will present a unique exhibition on the work of the sculptor Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966). With the support of the Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti in Paris as Lehmbruck Museum's academic and organizational partner the exhibition will bring some 120 works and photographs together in Duisburg, as loans from international museums and private collectors. All of the central loans of Giacometti's works are indispensable components of the exhibition, which focuses on the pivotal "Woman with chariot", thus extensively highlighting the sculptor's figurative reorientation for the first time. The exhibition showcases about thirty sculptures, just as many paintings and prints, more than forty original photographs as well as documents and archival material.

Focus: „Femme au chariot“

The eponymous life-sized sculpture, which forms the focus of the exhibition, was made around 1945. It is the only plaster sculpture by Alberto Giacometti in a German museum, acquired by the Lehmbruck Museum with funds from Peter Klöckner Stiftung, and highlights the style and the way the sculptor worked in great detail. In comparison to the miniature-like and fragile plaster figures which Giacometti created as of 1930 through to 1945, it was to be the only large piece of work from this period of figurative reorientation when the sculptor was in Geneva and Maloja (1942-5).

The exhibition unites for the first time both of Giacometti's chariot sculptures and places them in the extensive complex of works in which they belong: For the first time, the large "Chariot" (1950) on loan from the Museum of Modern Art, New York stands opposite the Duisburg work. The motif of the chariot, which Giacometti introduced for the first time with "Woman with Chariot", plays a crucial part in how the figure impacts and the importance it has had through the way it forges a dramatic tension between immobility and vitality, distance and proximity. Together with the other works on loan from inside and outside Germany, viewers will gain a comprehensive insight into the motif of the ceremonial chariot, and the sculptures are thus imbued with a mythical character in the cycle of triumph and death.

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 3/28. Januar 2010

It is not the first time Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum – Center for International Sculpture – has showcased works by the Swiss sculptor as back in 1977 the Foundation held the very first retrospective of Giacometti in Germany. Dr. Gottlieb Leinz, Deputy Director of Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, and Véronique Wiesinger, Director of the Alberto et Annette Giacometti Foundation, Paris, curated the exhibition. The show is the result of years of intensive research that has given rise to new arthistorical findings, following the identification of the woman on the chariot by Véronique Wiesinger as being Isabel Nicholas, English painter and Giacometti's muse.

Research efforts

In preparation for the exhibition, the Duisburg "Woman with Chariot" has undergone a number of radiological examinations by the French laboratory CIRAM, sponsored by the Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti. The plaster figure is not only very fragile but conceals a hitherto unknown inner structure – the artist made use of various different tool parts to stabilize the sculpture's core.

Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a comprehensive catalogue published by Hirmer Verlag, Munich: approx. 224 pages, approx. 230 illustrations; price of the museum edition approx. EUR 25. With contributions by Christoph Brockhaus, Pucci Corbetta and Roberto Sarfatti, Carol Jacobi, Jacques Vistel and the curators Gottlieb Leinz and Véronique Wiesinger. The catalogue also features an extensive interview with the artist Stephan Balkenhol, who will examine the figure in the context of the exhibition.

Generously supported by Germany's Kulturstiftung der Länder, Ernst von Siemens Kunststiftung, the Minister President of the State of North Rhine/Westphalia, Pro Helvetia and other partners.

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 4/28. Januar 2010

Biography (Excerpt)

Alberto Giacometti (1901 – 1966)

1901 Born in Borgonovo ob Stampa (Kanton Graubünden), father: postimpressionist painter Giovanni Giacometti (1868–1933), mother: Annetta Giacometti-Stampa (1871–1964).

1921 Journeys to Naples, Paestum and Pompeji, return to Maloja in July; acquaintance with 61-year-old State archivist Pieter van Meurs from Den Haag, who dies shortly afterwards and whose death Giacometti will never forget.

1922 Arrival in Paris, admission to the sculpting class of Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929) at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière.

1926 Moving to the studio shack in Rue Hippolyte Maindron 46 without electricity and heating. This is where Giacometti will work until his dying day.

1927 First independent main work: "Spoon Woman"

1928-29 Rise to prominence, meeting artists like Hans Arp, Joan Miró, Max Ernst, Alexander Calder, later Pablo Picasso as well as the writers Jacques Prévert, Louis Aragon, Robert Desnos, Raymond Queneau and Georges Bataille.

1930 Realization of „Floating sphere“ („La boule suspendue“) for the exhibition Miró – Arp – Giacometti; new impulses for surrealist object art.

1931 Member of the surrealist group around André Breton (until 1935)

1932 First single exhibition in the gallery Pierre Colle; development of the "Palace at four a.m.", one of the most significant surrealist objects (purchased by the Museum of Modern Art, New York in 1936).

1934 End of surrealist epoch; resumption of modeling in accord with nature.

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 5/28. Januar 2010

1935 Acquaintance with the 23-year-old English woman Isabel Nicholas, who becomes an important friend and model as of 1936.

1937 Works on the miniature sculpture format, effort to represent persons similar to the way they are perceptible in the field of vision.

1938 Traffic accident in Paris, observation of medicinal roll cars at the hospital, on which the "Chariot" of 1950 will be based on.

1940-41 Acquaintance with Jean-Paul Satre and Simone de Beauvoir; nut-sized sculptures on square shaped socles; joins the refugee trail to the south.

1942-45 Giacometti lives and works in Geneva; meets the 20-year-old Annette Arm (1943), whom he marries in 1949; return to the Parisian studio after three and a half year absence.

1947-48 Reaches a normative figural shape in his plastic work; preparation of single exhibition in the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York, his first single exhibition after the war.

1950 Exhibition in the Pierre Matisse Gallery with the "Chariot" as main work; purchase of the work by the Museum of Modern Art.

1955 First exhibition in German museums in Krefeld, Düsseldorf and Stuttgart.

1959-60 Draft of the group composition for the Chase Manhattan Plaza in New York.

1962 Preparation of the first monograph by Jacques Dupin on behalf of gallery Maeght; diagnosis of a gastric tumor.

1965-66 Shooting of the film „Alberto Giacometti“ by Ernst Scheidegger and Peter Mürger; Journeys to New York and Copenhagen for exhibition projects; Decease at the Kantonsspital Chur due to an inflammatory heart affliction on January 11, 1966.

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 6/28. Januar 2010

Main works

Alberto Giacometti: Femme au Chariot (v.l.n.r. im Ausstellungsraum):

Femme au Chariot/Woman with chariot, around 1945, gypsum, painted, new wood cart, 163,5 x 33 x 36,5 cm (without cart), 10 x 40 x 36,5 cm (cart), permanent loan by Freundeskreis Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, purchased in 1986 with funds by the Peter Klöckner-Stiftung, Duisburg.

Femme au Chariot/Woman with chariot, around 1945, gypsum, 154,5 x 33,5 x 35,3 cm, Fondation Alberto et Annette, Giacometti, Paris

Femme au Chariot/Woman with chariot, around 1945, gypsum, 154,5 x 32,4 x 35,3 cm, Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris

Femme au Chariot/ Woman with chariot, around 1945, bronze, cast 1964, copy Susse 5/6, 161,5 x 40 x 37 cm, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart,

Sculptures

Tête d'Isabel/Head of Isabel, 1936, gypsum, 30,3 x 23,5 x 21,9 cm, Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti, Paris

Femme Leoni/Frau Leoni, 1947–1957, bronze 1958, Exemplar Susse 6/6, 153 x 14,5 x 35,5 cm, private collection

Le Chariot/Chariot, 1950, bronze, cast 1950, painted, on wood blocks, copy 1/6, 144,8 x 65,8 x 66,2 cm, New York, Museum of Modern Art, purchased 1951

Composition sept figures-tête (la forêt)/Composition of seven figures and a head (The Forest), 1950, bronze, 55,5 x 61 x 49,5 cm, cast Alexis Rudier, copy 5/6, Stiftung Wilhelm Lehmbruck Museum, Duisburg, purchased in 1964 with support of the Westdeutscher Rundfunks

[Cheval/Horse], around 1951, bronze, 15 x 25 x 0,8 cm, private collection

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 7/28. Januar 2010

Paintings

[Nu debout (Maloja)/Standing Nude (Maloja)], 1943–1945, fragment of a wall painting, oil and gypsum on a tracing in plumbago and red wax crayon on section of wood plate, 163 x 42,5 cm, private collection

Draft for the *Cage*, 1st version, draft for *Four Figurines on a Pedestal*, drafts for the *Chariot* (two head-on and a profile), fragment of a wall painting, around 1949-1950, pencil, oil and carvings on the wall plaster of the studio, transferred onto canvas

Tête de cheval/Head of a horse, 1951, oil on canvas, 73 x 54 cm, dated and signed at the upper right, private collection

Portrait d'homme [Corbetta]/Portrait of a man [Corbetta], 1961, oil on canvas, 60 x 50 cm, dated and signed at the upper right, private collection

Pressemitteilung

Press release

Seite 8/28. Januar 2010

Visitor's Information and Service

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Opening hours

Tue – Sat 11–17 Uhr
Sun 10–18 Uhr
Mon closed

Admission

Single person: 8,- / 5,- Euro
Family tickets: 15,- Euro
Children accompanied by relatives: free
Group ticket (15 persons): 5,- Euro (each person)
Schoolclasses and kindergarden: 1,- Euro (each person)
Guided tours: 45 to 75 Euro (available in Englisch, Dutch, French, Italian)

Annual tickets:
annual tickets: 25,- / 12,50 Euro
Audioguide (German / English / Dutch): 2,50 Euro

Reservation and Information
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Press and PR

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January, 31 2010 until April, 18 2010

Stephan Balkenhol - Alberto Giacometti

The exhibition on Alberto Giacometti is complemented with approximately 30 works by the contemporary German sculptor Stephan Balkenhol (born in 1957), who consistently produces figurative work.