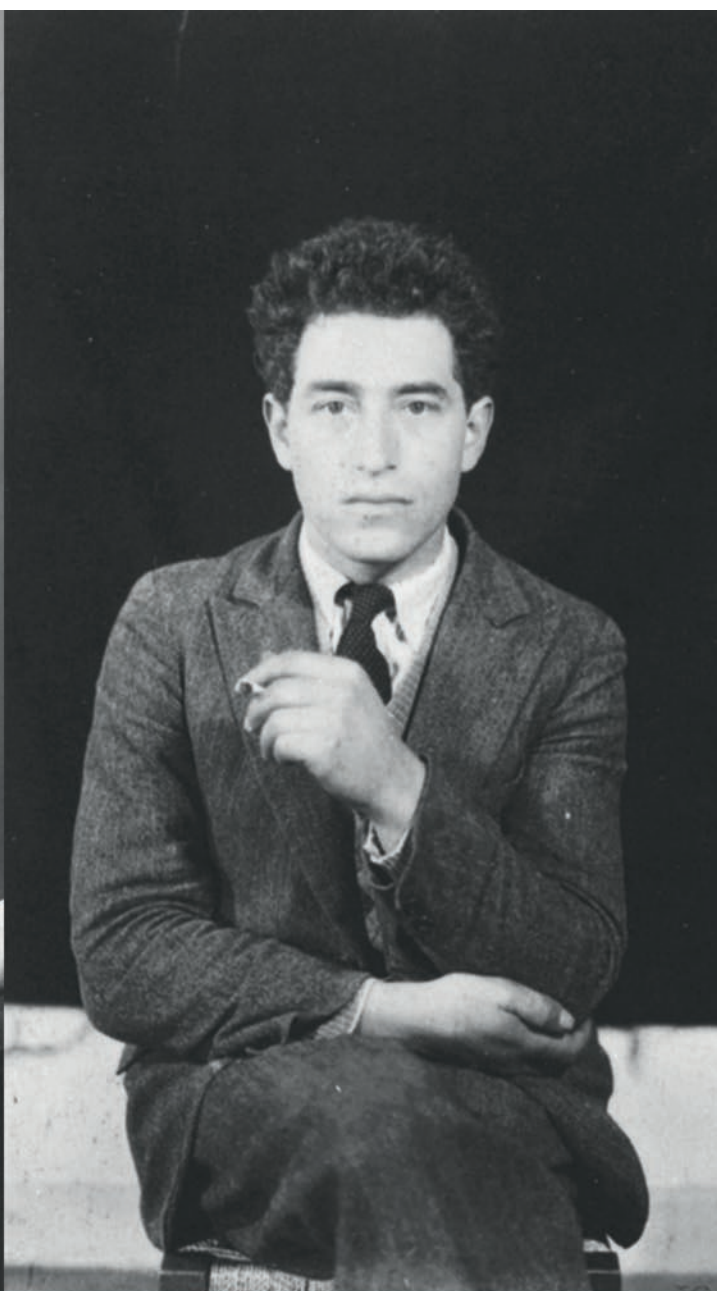
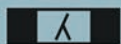


PRESS DOSSIER



INSTITUT-
GIACOMETTI



19 janvier
→ 10 avril
2022

exposition
exhibition

Alberto Giacometti
André Breton
Amitiés surréalistes
Amitiés surréalistes



Alberto Giacometti, Jacqueline Lamba, André Breton, Nusch and Paul Éluard. Photo Man Ray

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI - ANDRÉ BRETON SURREALIST FRIENDSHIPS

19-01 > 10-04-2022

**PRESS VISIT
Tuesday 18 January 2022
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

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*Alberto Giacometti, Jacqueline Lamba,
André Breton, Nusch and Paul Éluard*

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI - ANDRÉ BRETON SURREALIST FRIENDSHIPS

19-01 > 10-04-2022

The Giacometti institute, in partnership with the Association Atelier André Breton and the Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne, presents an original exhibition, "Alberto Giacometti - André Breton, surrealist friendships", from 19 January to 10 April 2022.

Alberto Giacometti's adhesion to the surrealist movement lasted barely five years (1930-1935) during which his research around eroticism, play and oneirism distinguished him as one of the most innovative artists of the movement. During that time, he forged strong links with his artistic and intellectual companions, which stood the test of time even after he distanced himself from the group.

The result of a research in Giacometti's personal archives as well as Breton's archives, this exhibition brings together a selection of surrealist works by the sculptor, a series of masterpieces exceptionally loaned by Centre Pompidou, Musée d'art moderne de Paris (MAM), Musée national Pablo Picasso, Musée des Beaux-Arts in Bruxelles and Moderna Museet in Stockholm, as well as private collections. The strong friendship that was established between Giacometti and Breton is in focus, as much as his relationships with the surrealist artists and intellectuals to whom he was closest. Hans Arp, Claude Cahun, Leonora Carrington, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, André Masson, Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Yves Tanguy, and also René Crevel, Lise Deharme, Paul Eluard, Georges Hugnet, Jacqueline Lamba and Tristan Tzara are represented too.

Curator

Serena Bucalo-Mussely, curator at Fondation
Giacometti,
In collaboration with Constance Krebs, editorial
director, Association Atelier André Breton

Scenography

Éric Morin

Production

Stéphanie Barbé-Sicouri
Sandra Jouffroy

www.fondation-giacometti.fr
www.andrebretton.fr

Follow us on social medias
#GiacomettiBreton

**Around the exhibition****Guided visits**

from Tuesday to Saturday
at 11 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.

Visits in English

Saturday, at 10 a.m. and 4.30 p.m.

Family visits

Sunday at 11 a.m.

ASSOCIATED PROGRAMME

- Projection of documentary films
from the Phares collection, dedicated to the
surrealist artists in partnership with Association
Breton: Jacqueline Lamba, Max Ernst, Claude
Cahun, Victor Brauner, Benjamin Péret, Dora
Maar, Yves Tanguy and André Breton.
Every Tuesday at 6.30 p.m.
Free admission

- Reading nights
Reading of André Breton's Mad love,
date to be specified.

Art workshops

During school holidays:

Thematic workshops in connection
with the exhibition (drawing,
modelling, writing, embroidery...)
For family and children

Throughout the year:

Art workshops in connection with
Alberto Giacometti (drawing,
modelling, painting, comics...)
For children, teenagers, adults.



Alberto Giacometti
Suspended Ball, 1931

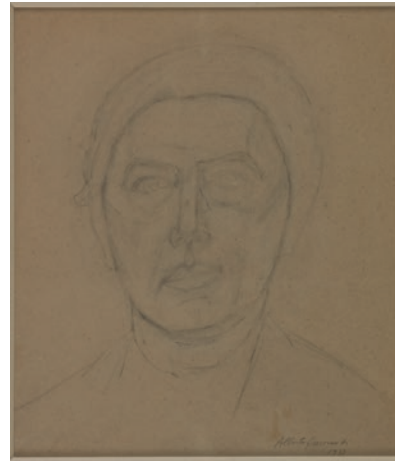
In the surrealist circle of André Breton

In 1930, Alberto Giacometti created *Suspended Ball* (plaster and metal), a cage inside which a sphere is suspended above a crescent seemingly sliding on the arsis, suggestive of the scopic drive and a kind of impossible eroticism. He exhibited that sculpture at Galerie Pierre, and it was met with unexpected success. It attracted the attention of André Breton, the leader of the surrealist group, who purchased the wooden version, a unique piece that he kept throughout his life in his Parisian studio in rue Fontaine. Breton loaned *Suspended Ball* for surrealist events, as in 1936 for the exhibition "L'exposition surréaliste d'objets" at Galerie Ratton, even though Giacometti had already left the group.

Within the surrealist group, Giacometti established lasting bonds of friendship with the artists, photographers and writers. He shared the taste for automatism developed by Masson, the representation of the irrational and oneirism of the landscapes of Arp and Tanguy, the game and cruel love that Picasso, among others, illustrated. He was also fascinated by images with double interpretation and the theme of William Tell in Dalí's work.



Victor Brauner
Portrait of André Breton, 1934



Alberto Giacometti
Portrait of André Breton, 1932-1933

Surrealist friendships

In Breton's circle, Giacometti took part in the research on "the irrational knowledge of the object", and contributed to the books and publications of the movement, publishing illustrations, poems and accounts of dreams. His works were photographed in his studio or during the hanging of exhibitions by the big names like Man Ray, Dora Maar, Brassai and André Boiffard, who also made the first official portraits of the artist.

As soon as he joined the surrealist group, he became politically engaged. He went to the meetings of the Association des Artistes et Écrivains Révolutionnaires with Louis Aragon, Claude Cahun, René Crevel, Paul Éluard and Tristan Tzara. Archive documents never displayed before show the strong relationships binding him to the most committed surrealists.

Around 1932-1933, Giacometti worked on a painted portrait of his friend Breton, but not being successful, he decided to destroy his attempts, only keeping a study in pencil that he offered to the writer as a token of friendship. A last portrait of Breton was drawn in 1936, showing that in spite of breaking up from the surrealist group the previous year, the two men carried on having a friendly relationship. Those two portraits are displayed together for the first time.



Cube in Alberto Giacometti's studio, circa 1934. Photo : Man Ray

Cube

When Giacometti's father died in June 1933, the artist was very depressed and sent very intimate letters to his friend from Switzerland, confiding in him his fears and anxieties concerning the future. He made *Cube* in this state of mind, an irregular polyhedron with twelve facets, a piece connected to death and melancholia. The theme of the polyhedron came back several times in the work of the artist as drawings or as element in his sculpture *Table* (MNAM - Centre Pompidou).

At the same time, the sculptor was working on another sculpture with facets, *Head-skull*, whose arrangement on several planes, alternating reliefs and hollows, contributes to giving a dramatic impression to that life-size skull. Fascinated by that piece, Breton asked him for a cast for his collection.



Alberto Giacometti
Illustrations for the Air of the water by André Breton, 1934

The Air of the water

On 29 May 1934, André Breton met Jacqueline Lamba, a young artist who was to become his wife a few months later. The newly engaged asked Éluard and Giacometti to be their witnesses and Man Ray to photograph the event. Breton composed the collection of poems *The Air of the water* for his wife and asked his friend to illustrate them with etchings. The artist began by drawing with a pencil on a notebook, and with a nib on loose paper. They will be shown for the first time in this exhibition.

Among all those drawings, only four made it as prints to illustrate the book: a chimera with almond-shaped eyes, a serpent's tail and claws; the "salt fairy", represented on top of a crystal ball, signalling the couple's interest in clairvoyance; Jacqueline's hand carrying a tower of Babel in its palm, a reference to the "too white little Babylonian", a Babylonian statuette kept at the Louvre, symbolising love; the "straw knight", a character made of wisps of straw and mounted on a horse. On a notebook a portrait of Jacqueline also figures, the only one made by the artist known to this day.



Alberto Giacometti
Invisible Object, 1934 – 1935

The equation of the found object

Gradually getting closer, Giacometti and Breton shared at that time the same questioning on love and the beloved woman, and had intimate exchanges. During a walk at the flea market in spring 1934, the artist and the writer found an object, a half-mask in sheet metal that inspired Giacometti in the making of his sculpture *Invisible object*. That unusual object, marvellous to them, would have helped the sculptor to get over his indecision, and inspired the shape to give the head of his sculpture. Breton devoted the text "The equation of the found object" to the episode, attributing that find to the intervention of "objective chance". *Invisible object* represents a half-seated woman on a kind of throne, holding in her hands an invisible object. Her face is worked like a polyhedron with hypnotic eyes. Giacometti also gave it the name of "Hands holding the void/ Mains tenant le vide", a wordplay for "Maintenant le vide/Now the void", and it was reproduced in André Breton's *Mad love* in 1937. Considered a significant sculpture in the artist's production, *Invisible object* took Giacometti's back to realism, and to the abandonment of surrealism. He declared in an interview at the time: "That statue that Breton preferred, has turned upside down everything in my life again. I was happy with the hands and the head of that sculpture because they corresponded exactly to my idea. But with the legs, the torso and the breasts, I was not happy at all. They seemed too classic, too conventional. And it gave me the desire to work again from life."

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI (1901-1966)

Born in 1901 in Stampa, Switzerland, Alberto Giacometti was the son of Giovanni Giacometti, a renowned postimpressionist painter. He was then taught at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris, where he attended the classes of the sculptor Antoine Bourdelle. There, he discovered the avant-gardes and met in 1929 the sculptor Jean Arp and the painter André Masson. The latter introduced him into the dissident surrealist group gathered around Georges Bataille and the magazine *Documents*. Michel Leiris published there the first significant critical essay on the sculptor's work. These first encounters were determining and enabled him to widen his circle of acquaintances. He met Louis Aragon, then André Breton and exhibited at Galerie Pierre, then at Galerie Pierre Colle, both places representative of the surrealist movement. His first solo exhibition took place in 1932 in the latter. He built sincere friendships with the surrealists, among them André Breton, to whom he became very close in the years 1933-1934. His contribution to surrealism was of importance. He was considered the sculptor of the group: *Suspended Ball* generated much interest in the question of the Object and Dalí included it in the "Objects with a symbolic function", a series of mobile sculpted pieces with erotic and cruel connotations, or with playful overtones. His works illustrated the movement's magazines, *Le Surréalisme Au service De La Révolution* and *Minotaure*, to which Giacometti contributed actively by publishing texts, poems and visual pieces. He also took part in political activities (reunions of the A.E.A.R.). In the tensions and "cases" the group went through, he supported political freedom and creation (Aragon Affair, Dalí Affair). In 1935, he distanced himself from the surrealist group and went back to working from models, devoting himself intensely to the human figure, driven by the questions of scale and space. After spending the last years of the war in Switzerland, he returned to Paris and to his research. Working mainly from the model, he made more generic figures. In 1947, he made a first version of *Walking Man*, then used this theme in several pieces of smaller dimensions. In 1962 he won the Grand Prix for sculpture at the Venice Biennial. In 1965, there were retrospectives at Tate Gallery (London), Museum of Modern Art (New York) and the Louisiana Museum (Humblebaek, Denmark). He passed away in January 1966 at the Coire hospital in Switzerland.



Alberto Giacometti in the 1930s
anonymous photo

ANDRÉ BRETON

André Breton was 19 when he was enlisted in 1915. Studying medicine, he had already written poems. But it was the dreams of traumatised infantrymen and their "associations of free ideas" that made him the founder of surrealism.

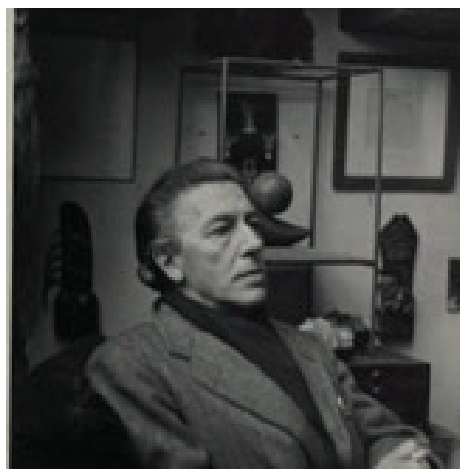
He met Apollinaire in 1918, read Dada and associated with young men scarred like him by the war. Facetious, rich with their talents only, they wanted to be modern, free, and they showed it. It was all about poetry, painting, psychoanalysis, eroticism, finds and games. Writing became automatic (Breton and Soupault, *The Magnetic fields*, 1919); painting, metaphysical (De Chirico); objects, found (Duchamp) or interpreted; sleeps, hypnotic; dreams, waking...

In 1922, he settled in rue Fontaine with his wife, Simone Kahn. He abandoned medicine for writing, launching publications and organising exhibitions, and even creating a research lab... Surrealism was born in 1924, with his *Manifesto*. The death of the novel was expressed in 1928 in *Nadja*, an encounter described by photography and the narrative only.

The surrealists came together by engaging in Left politics, but differed at the smallest sign of complacency. *Littérature*, *La Révolution surréaliste*, *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution*, *Minotaure* were publications that proclaimed an international and politically engaged movement. Prague, Tenerife, Brussels then London and Mexico followed, where conferences and exhibitions were organised.

In 1934, Breton married the painter Jacqueline Lamba - Mad love. The marriage was marred by many quarrels, in spite of the birth of Aude in 1935. Trip to Mexico in 1938, at Diego Rivera and Frida Kahlo's, meeting with Trotsky who wrote *Manifesto* for an independent revolutionary art. The following year Breton was enlisted, and condemned to exile till the armistice.

He reached New York in 1941, where he tried to relaunch the movement with the publication *VVV*. In the United States, the couple separated. In 1945, Breton married the star of *Arcane 17*, Elisa Claro, before going back to Paris in May 1946. A second surrealist period began, with young converts, new publications and exhibitions (at Maeght in 1947, then EROS at Cordier's in 1959. For a long time his books, *Surrealism and Painting* and *Magical Art*, influenced our way of looking at art.



André Breton rue Fontaine, 1957
Photo : Robinson



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SUMMARY

Alberto Giacometti and André Breton. All those lost traces

Serena Bucalo-Mussely

What is the surrealist group? Or the communicating vessels!

Anne Egger

Alberto Giacometti's surrealist female friends

Meret Oppenheim, Leonor Fini, Dora Maar, Jacqueline Lamba, Sonia Mossé

Emilie Bouvard

Alberto Giacometti / André Breton

Correspondence 1932-1959 (extracts)

Paris, 9 March 1932

Dear Breton,

I read your leaflet, and I regret having to tell you that I don't approve of it in any respect. I don't see its point, I don't find it dialectic nor guided by a revolutionary idea.

I disapprove of the motives that made you attack Peyralbe Moussinac and Tréville (for example, you attack Moussinac by quoting a passage from Hegel on architecture, which you use, it seems to me, abusively, architecture being (for Hegel himself, I believe) the art that expresses a period in the best possible way.

As far as I'm concerned, the position you give to poetry is conservative therefore reactionary.

I am surprised that you find La Mort de Barlois "ridiculous". It seems to me very defensible, there are enough reasons for that. I can't conceive of poetry and art without a subject.

I've made drawings for La Lutte, drawings with immediate (1) subject, and I intend to continue, I will do all I can to be useful to the class struggle.

Kind regards, Alberto Giacometti

Maloja, 8 August 1933

My dearest friend,

[...] In the evening [in bed], I read Arnim's Contes, but too fast, I'm going to read them again, they are very impressive and extremely contemporary, the last one especially, I think. I partly read again the preface which is rightly on the destruction of objectivity.

[...] I thought about an article on Saturn read the other day in a German magazine; small things that make a strong impression on me. Stone and wood belong to a Saturnian matter, and the polyhedron, in its irregularity, is a Saturnian symbol. It is the same shape I wanted to represent on my plaster table, a table which, for me, has to do with death, or rather a kind of hopeless abolition (this word is not the right one) of all things and movement. The same polyhedron is represented on Dürer's print Melancholia. But Saturn was also the god of the golden age – for us childhood, I think. Did you work on the things for the magazine? [...]

Affectionately yours, your friend
Alberto Giacometti

Alberto Giacometti / André Breton

Correspondence 1932-1959 (extracts)

Maloja, 11 August 1933

My dearest friend,

[...] Last night, I dreamt I was at the café Place Blanche; there were several of us, there was a white tablecloth on the table, but I no longer remember the details of the dream. Since I no longer have tasks imposed on me by circumstances, since Wednesday, I find myself here alone, completely disorientated in a void where all things escape me (my work projects and other realities in Paris have lost all substance). I'm down to looking for a plank to help me stand up. So many things that, in Paris, still had some sort of reality are lacking here, but I don't regret that, at least not for the time being. It's as if I was in the middle of a complete unknown where the first word is to be found. And then the air here is very dissolving, especially during the day, a light breeze is blowing from all sides and seems to go through my head; I feel like a skull with large windows draped with very thin curtains through which currents of air and sunlight pass, so I end up coming back home where I try to paint, draw or read [...].

*With much affection, your friend
Alberto Giacometti*

Paris 2 February 1934

Dear Child and Friend,

You know that you are the person whom I miss the most. When you are not there, there's no longer any youth, light, game or certainty on the intellectual level, and that apart from the fact that if it's not you we are waiting for at the café in the evening, it's perhaps because we are not expecting anyone.

*Apart from the pleasure of seeing you again, it's absolutely essential that you should come back very soon. It's not going very well here. [...] I have, actually, challenged Dalí by letter to renounce what I consider his recent misguided ways: apology of Hitler, of formal painting, public presentation rue Gauguier, of his big painting *The Enigma of William Tell*. A stormy discussion followed, during which Dalí was even excluded. As he came back, agreeing to sign a very explicit text that gave us full satisfaction, that exclusion has naturally been lifted, but, from Nice, Éluard and Tzara informed me that they clearly disapprove of that formal notice. However, I don't think it will have serious consequences for surrealism. [...] Think of what you can do in this issue which must be, the more I think of it, in spite of all. [...]*

With all my heart, André B.



GIACOMETTI INSTITUTE

The Giacometti Institute is a place devoted to exhibitions and to research in art history and pedagogy. Chaired by Catherine Grenier, the director of the Giacometti Foundation since 2014, its Artistic Director is Christian Alandete.

A museum on a human scale, enabling the visitor to get close to the works, the Giacometti Institute is an exhibition space, a place of reference for the oeuvre of Alberto Giacometti, a research centre in art history specialising in modern art practices (1900-1970) and a place for discovery accessible to all public. An exceptional reconstruction of Alberto Giacometti's studio, whose elements, in their entirety, had been kept by his widow, Annette Giacometti, is on permanent display. Among these elements are several very fragile plaster and clay pieces, some of them not shown previously in public, as well as the furniture and the walls painted by the artist.

The ambition of the Institute is to refresh the way we look at the work of the artist, and at the creative period in which he was involved. The programme for research and teaching, L'École des modernités, is open to researchers, students and art lovers. Conferences, symposiums and master classes give a platform to art historians and curators who present their works and the current state of research.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Institut Giacometti
5, rue Victor Schoelcher
75014 Paris

Open: Tuesday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Closed: Mondays

Ticket reservation online and on site:
www.fondation-giacometti.fr/fr/billetterie
Price: 8.50€
Reduced prices: 3 €



ALBERTO GIACOMETTI'S STUDIO

Introducing the visitors to the private universe of the artist's creative process, the studio displays around sixty original works, and faithfully restores all the furniture and the studio walls painted by Alberto Giacometti.

2022 EXHIBITIONS

DOUGLAS GORDON, *The Morning After*

22 April - 12 June 2022

Curator : Christian Alandete

After Annette Messager, the Giacometti Institute gives carte blanche to the contemporary artist Douglas Gordon. Born in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1966, Douglas Gordon is a multi-disciplinary artist working in video, drawing, sculpture and installation. His work on the distortion of time and the tension between opposite forces (life and death, good and evil) shares common ground with Giacometti's questioning on the human condition. Douglas Gordon imagines a dialogue between his work and Giacometti's work and makes, for the occasion a series of original works never exhibited before that will be presented with some sculptures and drawings by Giacometti that are little-known.

GIACOMETTI AND LANDSCAPE

22 June- 18 September 2022

Curator : Romain Perrin

Alberto Giacometti was born in a remote valley in the Grisons region, in Italian-speaking Switzerland. His first impressions were those of high mountain, and a life in close contact with nature. For years, Giacometti painted and drew landscapes of mountains and views of Stampa, rocks and mountainous reliefs that made a lasting impression to the point of reappearing in the uneven surface of his busts.

ALBERTO GIACOMETTI / SOPHIE RISTELHUEBER

27 September - 30 November 2022

Curator : Christian Alandete

Sophie Ristelhueber has been invited to create a dialogue between her work and Giacometti's. The artist will transform the Institute into a Family Home. Invoking her genealogy and Giacometti's, her work will be placed under the sign of intimacy.

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For Alberto Giacometti's works

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André Breton rue Fontaine, 1957

Photo : Robinson

Association Atelier André Breton

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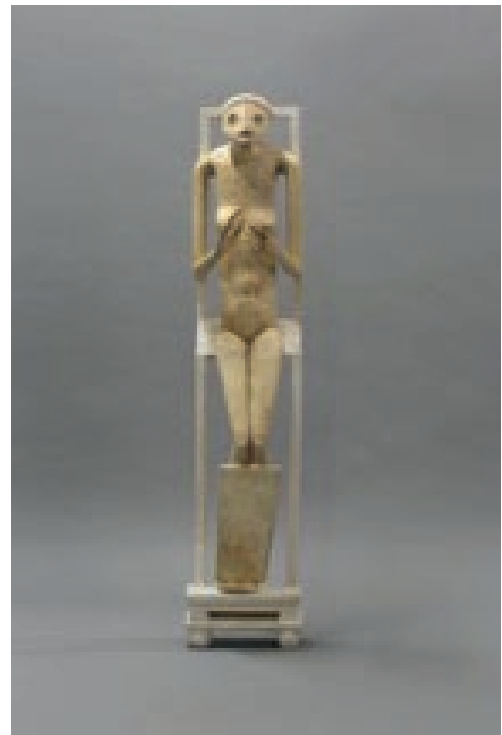
Portrait of Alberto Giacometti, 1931

Photo : Jacques-André Boiffard

Archives Fondation Giacometti



Alberto Giacometti
Suspended ball, 1931
Wood, iron and rope
60.4 x 36.5 x 34 cm
Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art
moderne - Centre de création industrielle,
Paris
Photo Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist.
RMN-Grand Palais
© Adagp, Paris 2022



Alberto Giacometti
Invisible Object, 1934
Plaster
153 X 32 X 29 cm
Fondation Giacometti
© Succession Alberto Giacometti / ADAGP, Paris 2022



Surrealist chessboard, 1934
Photo : Man Ray
Archives Fondation Giacometti
© Man Ray 2015 Trust / Adagp, Paris, 2022



Victor Brauner
Portrait of André Breton, 1934
Oil on canvas - 61 x 50 cm
Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris
© Adagp, Paris 2022



André Masson
The Prey, 1925
Oil on canvas - 60 x 73 cm
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle
Photo Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Philippe Migeat
© Adagp, Paris 2022



Meret Oppenheim
The ear of Giacometti, 1933
Bronze, 10cm
Fondation Giacometti
© Adagp, Paris 2022



Pablo Picasso
Woman with a watch, 1936
Oil on canvas - 65 X 54,2 cm
Musée national Picasso - Paris
Photo RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau
© Succession Picasso 2022



Max Ernst
Head of man, 1947
Oil on canvas - 50.8 x 30.3 cm
Gift of the artist to Alberto Giacometti
Fondation Giacometti
Cadeau de l'artiste à Alberto Giacometti
© Adagp, Paris 2022



Joan Miró
The Catalan, 1925
Oil and pencil on canvas, perforations - 100 x 81 cm
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle
Photo Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Philippe Migeat
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Salvador Dalí
William Tell, 1930
Oil and collage on paper
113 x 87 cm
Paris, Centre Pompidou, Musée national d'art moderne - Centre de création industrielle
Photo Centre Pompidou, MNAM-CCI, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Jean-Claude Planchet
© Salvador Dalí, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí / Adagp, Paris 2022



Alberto Giacometti
Portrait of André Breton, 1932-1933
Pencil on paper - 29.5 x 25.5 cm

Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris
Photo Paris Musées, musée d'Art moderne, Dist. RMN-Grand Palais / image Ville de Paris
© Succession Alberto Giacometti / ADAGP, Paris 2022



Cube in Alberto Giacometti's studio, circa 1934

Photo : Man Ray
Archives Fondation Giacometti
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© Man Ray 2015 Trust / Adagp, Paris, 2022



Alberto Giacometti
Caresse, 1932
Plaster - 46.3 x 48.2 x 11.9 cm
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