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## “Not to talk of painted sculptures” Alberto Giacometti

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Alberto Giacometti  
*Figurine in a cage*, 1950  
Painted plaster, 66 x 11,3 x 16 cm  
Fondation Giacometti  
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The Institut Giacometti presents for the first time the bulk of its collection of painted plasters, showing to the public a moving and hidden part of the artist's oeuvre. In every stage of his career, Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966) expressed his desire to tightly connect sculpture and painting by painting some of his plaster and bronze sculptures. From his first works to those he created close to his death, he made a hundred or so painted plasters, 55 of which belong to the Fondation Giacometti, as well as 60 or so painted bronzes..

Prompted by a desire to make “living” figures, the artist took up his palette and paint brushes and “breathed life” into his sculptures, small as well as big. At times, he went as far as painting on completed works installed in an exhibition. In this undertaking, Giacometti was influenced by his taste for the art of archaic Antiquity, of Italian Primitives as well as non-Western arts.

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**“Not to talk of painted sculptures, only sculptures”**, Giacometti explained to his gallerist Pierre Matisse in 1950, “the colour is part of the sculptures, they are painted with oil, like the paintings.” The painted bronze sculptures he spoke of here, perplexing and fragile, had little success though, and the reticence of the collectors put an end to his passion. Several of these sculptures have lost the intensity, if not the integrality of their colours with the passing of time. The painted plasters, on the other hand, for the most made on works that remained in his studio, were conserved by the artist until his death, which kept the colours fresh.

In the first experimentations made during his pre-surrealist period, he applied paint plainly, using a rather free and naturalist palette for the portraits (Flora Mayo); in the post-war works, the paint replaces or completes the lines the artist etched into the material in order to “draw” the surface of his figures. The coloured interventions are made with hatchings and lines in a colour range limited to red, brown and black. Giacometti went back to applying paint plainly in his last period, especially in the big painted bronzes he set up in the courtyard of the Fondation Maeght, not paying much attention to the predictable effect of bad weather.

The exhibition gathers an exceptional body of painted plasters, among them *Stele* (1958), *Women of Venice* (1956-57), several very tall figures; two versions of *The Cage* (1949-1950), one of which is a painted bronze; several paintings on canvas and a series of drawings, most never shown before.

## Around the exhibition

A richly illustrated catalogue in a bilingual French/English edition co-edited by Fondation Giacometti, Paris and FAGE éditions, Lyon accompanies the exhibition.

A cultural programme will be proposed to the public for the duration of the exhibition, as well as guided tours in French and English, and workshops for families and children.

## Practical information

Institut Giacometti  
5, rue Victor-Schoelcher  
75014 Paris

Open from Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Weekly closure on Monday

Ticket office on line and on location (by bankcard)

Full fee: 9 €  
Reduced fee: 3 €