

FONDATION-
GIACOMETTI



21 June - 16 September 2018
**THE STUDIO OF ALBERTO
GIACOMETTI BY JEAN GENET**



Jean Genet and Alberto Giacometti in the Studio, 1957- Photo Isaku Yanaihara
Giacometti Foundation Archives, Paris
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For the first time in Paris, an exhibition is dedicated to the bonds of friendship and profound admiration between **Alberto Giacometti** and **Jean Genet** who met in 1954 through Jean-Paul Sartre. Their friendship led Jean Genet, who had come a model, to write one of the most beautiful texts from the literature on modern art, ***The Studio of Alberto Giacometti***.

Sixty years after its release with Éditions L'Arbalète, this book remains one of the most precious testimonies of the artist's work and a unique description of his creative world. Constructed around this text, the exhibition visit illustrates the three main themes broached by Genet: the studio, the representation of women, and death.

With the permanent reconstruction of the artist's studio, the visitor will discover what Genet considered to be "the most important and the most complete" of

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Giacometti's artworks, "his other self, the essence and ultimate residue of his artistic contribution." It was in this legendary space, covered in dust and plunged into silence, that Genet, seated on an uncomfortable straw chair, posed on several occasions between 1954 and 1957. Between the two men, an intense dialogue was established, which revealed the very essence of art and of Giacometti's personality.

Describing the artworks around him, Genet lingered on the figures of standing women. Among these, the ones that the artist associated with his frequentation of bordellos, sites of the staging of bodies that the artist's gaze transformed into goddesses. It was these same slender, motionless women that Giacometti represented on the cover of Genet's famous play, *Le Balcon*. Like Genet, Giacometti was fascinated by death, a subject that haunted his work throughout his career. His sculptures and paintings show a world on the fringes of life, inhabited by the "immeasurable population of the dead" described by the poet.

Alongside emblematic artworks such as the group of ***Femmes de Venise*** [**Women of Venice**] in plaster from 1956, presented for the first time in France, features a group of artworks seen by Genet at the studio, as well as the famous painted portrait of the writer conserved at the Centre Pompidou. The original manuscript of ***The Studio of Alberto Giacometti, a selection of drawings and sketches (some of which have never been shown), notebooks, photographs, and video archives*** from the Foundation's richly diverse collection, complete this ensemble and contribute to shedding light on the unique bond formed by these two rebellious geniuses of the 20th century.

Exhibition curator: Serena Bucalo-Mussely