



ALBERTO
GIACOMETTI:
INTIMATE
IMMENSITY

Giacometti in his room at Hôtel de Rive, Geneva, October 1944.
Photo: Eli Lotar, Courtesy of Fondation Giacometti

Intimate Immensity: Alberto Giacometti Sculptures, 1935–1945

Luxembourg & Dayan New York

64 East 77th Street

October 17 – December 15, 2018

Opening Reception October 17, 6–8 PM

New York, NY... Luxembourg & Dayan is pleased to announce *Intimate Immensity: Alberto Giacometti Sculptures, 1935–1945*, the first United States exhibition dedicated exclusively to the artist's cycle of very small human figures created in France and Switzerland during the Second World War. Evolving against a backdrop of unprecedented socio-political upheaval, this unique body of work represents a profoundly transformative phase of Giacometti's career: at no more than three inches tall and as thin as nails, these works reveal the path that led the artist to the elongated figures for which he became famous in the final two decades of his life.

In spite of their size, or perhaps precisely because of it, the figures in *Intimate Immensity* are monumental in their presence, expressing Giacometti's desire to withdraw from what he called "natural size" in order to best represent his own perception of scale and experience. In addition to his sculptures, the exhibition will include a never before exhibited casket that Giacometti created from a matchbox to serve as a case for one of his figures.

Opening to the public October 17, 2018, on the heels of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum's comprehensive survey *Alberto Giacometti: A Retrospective*, the exhibition at Luxembourg & Dayan is curated by leading Giacometti scholar Casimiro Di Crescenzo. *Intimate Immensity* is installed in collaboration with the contemporary Swiss sculptor Urs Fischer, who shares Giacometti's passionate commitment to redefining the human form as conduit for and conveyor of psychological experience. The choice to present the show at the gallery's venue on 64 East 77th Street, in Manhattan's second narrowest townhouse, foregrounds Giacometti's insights concerning scale and emphasizes their relevance to the contemporary conditions of sculpture.

In organizing *Intimate Immensity*, Luxembourg & Dayan is honored to collaborate with the Pierre and Tana Matisse Foundation and other private lenders.



*Giacometti in his room at Hôtel de Rive,
Geneva, October 1944.*

Photo: Eli Lotar

Courtesy of Fondation Giacometti

About the Exhibition

Intimate Immensity draws its title from a passage in Gaston Bachelard's philosophical treatise, *The Poetics of Space* (1958), a meditation upon the ways in which private domestic space can become a limitless universe of psychological experience and creative discovery. In his statement that "immensity in the intimate domain is intensity, an intensity of being, the intensity of a being evolving in a vast perspective of *intimate immensity*," one finds insight into Giacometti's experience of the war years. His sculptures from this period express a sentiment of infinite regression, one in which reality is constantly pulling away and can be seen only from a distance. That sentiment took form through a gradual process in which Giacometti reduced his sculptures and diminished their size. Frustrated by his inability to find the correct sculptural expression for his thoughts, impressions, and feelings, the artist wrote in 1948 to Pierre Matisse, his art dealer in New York, "wanting to create from memory what I had seen myself, the sculptures gradually became smaller and smaller, bearing resemblance only when they were small... Often they became so very small that with one touch from my knife they vanished into dust."

Later in life, in an interview with French journalist, writer, and film producer Pierre Dumayet (1963), Giacometti would explain how the gradual diminution of his sculptures in this period finally found its true purpose in a portrait of his model and intimate friend Isabel Rawsthorne. "The sculpture I wanted to make... was meant to capture precisely the vision I had of her in the moment that I saw her for the first time in the street, from a certain distance. I wanted to give her the *grandeur* that she had at that distance." He added, "I saw an immense blackness over her, the row of houses; so, in order to give that impression, I had to make an immense pedestal so that the ensemble will match the vision."

Intimate Immensity is accompanied by a new publication featuring an extended essay by Casimiro Di Crescenzo, analyzing this period in Giacometti's career; a translation of a rare interview with Alberto Giacometti on the subject of scale, conducted by Pierre Dumayet in 1963; and excerpts from Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*.

This exhibition forms part of Luxembourg & Dayan's ongoing, critically admired program exploring tendencies in postwar European art through curated exhibitions, new scholarship, and original publications. Following this exhibition, the gallery's New York space will host a survey of Lucio Fontana's rarest ceramic works.

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