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SUBSTANCE AND SHADOW: ALBERTO GIACOMETTI SCULPTURES AND THEIR PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER LINDBERGH

Opening reception:
Thursday, May 18, 6–8PM
May 19–July 22, 2017

6–24 Britannia Street
London WC1X 9JD

All the sculptures of today, like those of the past, will end one day in pieces... So it is important to fashion one's work carefully in its smallest recess and charge every particle of matter with life.

—Alberto Giacometti

Photography gives you the opportunity to use your sensibility and everything you are to say something about and be part of the world around you... you might discover something much larger than yourself.

—Peter Lindbergh

Gagosian is pleased to present an exhibition of sculptures by Alberto Giacometti, together with photographs by Peter Lindbergh. In 2016, Lindbergh was invited to photograph bronzes and plasters by Giacometti held in the collection of the Kunsthau Zurich—the largest and most important collection of Giacometti works in a museum, including one hundred and fifty sculptures, as well as key paintings and drawings.

Giacometti's work presents an unprecedented visual discourse on the figure and its relation to space. His highly distinctive entities, molded in plaster or cast in bronze, charge the spatial voids that surround them. Exemplified by the cast bronze *Diane Bataille* (1947), Giacometti's

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oeuvre is at once conceptual and emotional, anonymous and specific, archaic and modern. In his attenuated, elegiac figures—here spanning the period 1919–65—a sense of mortality clashes with vivid embodiment, figuration becomes existential, and a suffocating compression opens onto both urgency and contemplation. In *Femme assise* (1956), the folded arms and mottled head of a female figure seem to signify forbearance and resignation, the form as gestural as it is abstract. Often considered as testimony to the ravages of postwar Europe, Giacometti's art has a timeless, perpetual quality, even as it continues to inflect art-historical narratives.

The impulse to photograph sculpture harks back to the mid-nineteenth century, with the advent of photography itself. Since then, the two mediums—ancient and modern—have become deeply enmeshed. Photography has become part of sculpture itself; sculptors such as Auguste Rodin, Constantin Brancusi, and Medardo Rosso, for example, used it as a developmental tool for their work, producing images that created dramatic new interplays of light and perspective. From a fixed viewpoint, the camera lens directs, freezes, and manipulates the appearance of three-dimensional objects. In turn, sculpture, being a static object, was used as a means by which to discover how timed photographic exposure could reveal its subject differently.

In their stark, tenebrous realism, Lindbergh's potent black-and-white photographs assiduously capture the mood and texture of Giacometti's sculptures. In images of single sculptures and assembled groups, Lindbergh positions Giacometti's works as both subject and object. The photograph *Buste (Tête tranchante)* (2016) has echoes of early pictorial photography as well as portraiture, while *Group of Nine* (2016) suggests an almost scenographic narrative. Both documentary records and autonomous works of art, Lindbergh's photographs provide fresh perspectives on a titan of twentieth century art. Shown in the company of the subjects that they depict, each photograph engages with Giacometti's sculptures in ways that are both critical and celebratory.

Alberto Giacometti was born in 1901 in Borgonovo, Switzerland, and died in 1966 in Chur, Switzerland. His work resides in institutional collections worldwide. Recent exhibitions include “The Studio of Alberto Giacometti: Collection of the Fondation Alberto et Annette Giacometti,” Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (2007–08); Kunsthall Rotterdam, The Netherlands (2008); Pushkin Museum, Moscow (2008); Fondation Beyeler, Basel (2009); Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Germany (2010, traveled to Museum der Moderne Mönchsberg, Austria, through 2011); “The Origin of Space. The Mature Works,” Museum der Moderne, Austria (2011); Pinacoteca do Estado, São Paulo (2012, traveled to Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro; and Fundación Proa, Buenos Aires); “Space, Head, Figure,” Musée de Grenoble, France (2013); “La scultura,” Galleria Borghese, Rome (2014); Pera Museum, Istanbul (2015); Fonds Hélène&Edouard Leclerc pour la Culture, Landerneau, France (2015); Musée Mohammed VI d'art moderne et contemporain, Rabat, Morocco (2016); Yuz Museum, Shanghai (2016) and “Alberto Giacometti—Beyond Bronze,” Kunsthaus Zürich, Switzerland (2016–17). Gagosian mounted its first Giacometti exhibition in 1993 and inaugurated its new gallery in Geneva with his work in 2010.

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“Picasso-Giacometti,” Musée Picasso (2016–17) is on view at Qatar Museums, Doha through May 21, 2017, and “Giacometti,” a survey exhibition, is on view at Tate Modern, London from May 10 to September 10, 2017.

Peter Lindbergh was born in 1944 in Leszno, Poland and currently divides his time between Paris, New York, and Arles, France. Recent institutional exhibitions include “Images of Women,” Bunkamura Museum of Art, Tokyo (1996, traveled to Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Kunsthaus Wien, Austria; Palazzo Delle Esposizioni, Rome; Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, and other locations); “Stories Supermodels, photographs by Peter Lindbergh,” Ludwig Museum Schloss, Germany (2003); “Vizioni,” FORMA Centro Internazionale di Fotografia, Milan (2006); “Beauduc,” Rencontres Internationales de la Photographie, Église des Frères Prêcheurs, France (2008); “The Unknown,” Ullens Center For Contemporary Art, Beijing (2011); FotoMuseum, Antwerp (2011–12); “Berlin,” Maison de la Photographie, France (2013); “The Unknown & Images of Women,” HDLU Museum, Croatia (2014); and “Peter Lindbergh/Garry Winogrand: Women on Street,” NRW-Forum Düsseldorf (2017).

“Peter Lindbergh—A Different Vision on Fashion Photography,” Kunsthal, Rotterdam (2016–17) is on view at Kunsthalle, Munich from April 13 to August 27, 2017.

For further inquiries please contact the gallery at london@gagosian.com or at +44.207.841.9960. All images are subject to copyright. Gallery approval must be granted prior to reproduction.

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