

Giacometti vs. Picasso: The South and the North. The Mediterranean and the Alps

By Tatyana Franck (translated by Lauren Hasty)



Alberto Giacometti and Pablo Picasso are two essential auction houses references. After a record 65 million pounds for a Giacometti sculpture, *The Walking Man I*, Picasso has taken the top spot with a work of art sold at Christie's New York for \$ 106.4 million. The piece, entitled *Le Nu au plateau du sculptor* or, *Nude, Green Leaves and Bust*, is unlike it's name suggests, an oil painting and not a sculpture.

In museums, Giacometti and Picasso are the subject of numerous exhibitions. From season to season, from country to country, and exhibition to exhibition, the work of the Swiss artist continues to make history. In 2009, we saw "The Egyptian Giacometti" at Kunsthaus Zurich, which showed how ancient Egyptian art influenced the sculptor, and in 2011, "Giacometti and the Etruscans" at the Pinacothèque Museum in Paris which presented works by Giacometti inspired by the Etruscan civilization.

Of course, the two artists, so different in their style, are not seen as rivals. A recent exhibition even suggests, on the contrary, a sort of resonance. The exposition at the Picasso Museum in Malaga "Alberto Giacometti, a Retrospective" unites 198 of Swiss designer's works. The Spanish painter and Swiss sculptor, overcome by this visceral creative passion and insatiable curiosity, were very good friends. It is therefore not surprising that the Picasso Museum in Malaga currently hosts a retrospective in Giacometti's honour.

Pablo and Alberto, two poles as contradictory as hot and cold. "Two poles that attract, however, like everything that is opposed in life," says José Lebrero, co-curator with Veronique Wiesinger, director of the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation. There are many notable similarities: both were born to artist parents, have equivalent academic training and decided to move to Paris. The choice of this city, peripheral to their home countries, not only brought them together in space, but in their aesthetic sensibility, which developed an admiration for old masters. Like Picasso, Giacometti also frequently visited Paris's Musée de l'Homme. He became interested in Oceanic and African cultures as is evidenced by some of his sculptures.

The two giants were followed during their lifetime by photographers who became friends (1).

(1) To learn more, see the article by Julien Beauhaire *Reflection in a Golden Eye* in Flash News

Giacometti. A retrospective, Picasso Museum in Malaga (Spain)
Until February 5, 2012.

For more information:

<http://www.fondation-giacometti.fr/> (<http://www.fondation-giacometti.fr/>)

<http://www.museopicassomalaga.org/> (<http://www.museopicassomalaga.org/>)

<http://artyparade.com/en/news/43>