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GIACOMETTI, MARINI, RICHIER

LA FIGURE TOURMENTÉE

Text by Casimiro Di Crescenzo, Angela Lammert, Camille Lévêque, and Maria Teresa Tosi

This catalogue published to accompany the exhibition at the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, in Lausanne, examines the work of three renowned artists: Alberto Giacometti, Marino Marini, and Germaine Richier.

The artistic community found it impossible to continue depicting the human figure in the traditional manner; in the face of the atrocities committed in World War II and the collapse of humanist values. The three artists under discussion made their own contributions by experimenting with new ways of approaching figurative art, looking with fresh eyes at the classical forms of head, busts, standing figures, and equestrian portraits (Marini).

Throughout their careers, Giacometti, Marini, and Richier explored different ways of representing space, rendering movement, and expressing scale. They examined the relationships people established between each other; or with space and emptiness. In their world, bodies, whether entire or fragmented, are fragile, only seemingly stable, frequently off-balance and sometimes in freefall. Outlines disappear; forms emerge out of tormented matter that is forced into shape or ripped out of the ground, often retaining the marks made by the artist's fingers or tools. The rough, scratched surfaces are covered with sharp edges and ridges. The question of how the human figure is perceived and represented is central to the work of these three twentieth-century sculptors. With the human condition as their constant backdrop, they make heads and bodies the recurring subject of their art and give birth to "new images of man": a tormented figure.

Casimiro Di Crescenzo is an art historian and exhibition organizer. He was Director of Brolo, Centro d'arte, in Mogliano Veneto, from 2001 to 2007, and is at present in charge of the Armando Pizzinato archives, in Venice.

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