

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

SIXTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215 extension 224

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAJOR GIACOMETTI SCULPTURE ACQUIRED FOR GALLERY'S TWENTIETH-CENTURY COLLECTION

WASHINGTON, D. C. July 10, 1974. A major work in the stylistic development of sculptor Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966) has been acquired by the National Gallery of Art through the Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund.

The sculpture is on view in the Gallery's current exhibition of Recent Acquisitions and Promised Gifts: Sculpture, Drawings, Prints, which will close August 4.

Entitled The Invisible Object: Hands Holding the Void, the piece is the first work by this important sculptor to enter the National Gallery's collection of twentieth-century art.

The life-size bronze (60 1/4" x 13" x 12") is one of two examples cast by Alexis Rudier with a blond patina, and is signed and dated by Giacometti.

Made in 1934, The Invisible Object represents the climax of Giacometti's Surrealist period (1930-1934). The artist has returned to the human figure, which he continued to concentrate on almost in seclusion from 1934 through the end of World War II. The resulting post-war manner is his famous style of the thin human figure enveloped in space.

Giacometti, in identifying 1934 as the year of the pivotal

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change in his work, said of The Invisible Object that "I could have destroyed it. But I made this statue for just the opposite reason--to renew myself. Perhaps this is what makes it worthwhile."

The artist's reliance on works of the past is evident in The Invisible Object; this is particularly noticeable in the head, which is reminiscent of primitive Oceanic death idols, in the frontal stance, and in the emblem of the bird head taken from Egyptian cult figures. The intensity of the figure contrasts strongly with the emptiness of the void which she holds, and thus symbolizes Giacometti's persistent concern with human uncertainty and isolation.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director, or Pamela Jenkinson, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C. 20565. area code 202, 737-4215, ext. 224.

With compliments

Ernst Beyeler

Basel

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5520

GALERIE BEYELER BASEL

GIACOMETTI Alberto

Objet invisible (avec oiseau) 1935

Bronze

H. 153 cm, 60¹/₄"

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