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PRESS RELEASE

exhibition: **Alberto Giacometti: Drawings**

date: **1 May - 27 June 2009**

**opening reception: 8 May, 6 - 8 pm**

Peter Freeman, Inc. is pleased to present an exhibition of drawings by Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966). While there have been previous exhibitions dedicated to specific periods of the artist's works on paper, and while drawings have always been an important component of Giacometti retrospectives, this will be the first exhibition in New York devoted exclusively to the entire oeuvre of drawings by Giacometti. Curated by Meredith Harper, the exhibition presents over thirty sheets from throughout his career, providing an intense look at the artist's inimitable drawing style.

The exhibition spans almost the entirety of Giacometti's career, with equal focus on all of the artist's subjects: portraits, landscapes, interiors, still lifes, and studies related to sculpture. The earliest drawing in the exhibition, Reclining Nude (1922-23), is typical of those done from life while Giacometti studied in Paris with Antoine Bourdelle. It already displays the origins of his almost "nervous" line with rapid pencil strokes and nimble shading. La Table surrealiste (1933), as suggested by the title from the artist's Surrealist period of 1929-1935, demonstrates Giacometti's translation of sculptural form into an intricate web of pen and ink in two dimensions.

Throughout his career Giacometti vacillated between working from life and his imagination, at times using only one method and at others combining the two in various works. From 1940-45 he struggled with what he considered to be too strong a focus on tiny figures, a difficulty he was only able to resolve through drawings: "But head and figures seemed to me to have a bit of truth only when small. All this changed a little in 1945 through drawing. This let me to want to make larger figures, but then to my surprise, they achieved a likeness only when tall and slender." This resolution is apparent in Homme debout sur une stele (1948) and Nu debout (1950), two works that show, as observed by Peter Selz, the human form "reduced beyond its ultimate minimum, [and] barely able to withstand the onslaught of the void."

Among the portraits exhibited will be examples of many of those closest in his circle, including James Lord, Igor Stravinsky, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Dupin, and a commanding rendering of his dealer Pierre Loeb (1950) in an interior surrounded by African sculptures and works by Giacometti. Vase de fleurs (1952) is a masterful example of Giacometti's particular use of erasure in the creation of space and movement, making visual his statement, "Figures were never for me a compact mass but like a transparent construction." Considered one of the most important sculptors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Giacometti consistently searched for ways to convey the modern human condition, and he considered drawing to be an equally important medium in his dialogue between form and space.

For more information, please call Chris Moss at Peter Freeman, Inc. at 212-966-5154.