

## ALBERTO GIACOMETTI & FRANCIS BACON AN INTRIGUING DIALOGUE BETWEEN TWO GIANTS

**With Alberto Giacometti and Francis Bacon the Fondation Beyeler and Hatje Cantz are presenting two outstanding classic modern artists. They were friends and rivals, equally, whose creative visions have strongly influenced art from the latter half of the 20th century to this day. Even though each artist's body of work is distinct, the exhibition and catalogue point out their shared traits and astonishing parallels.**

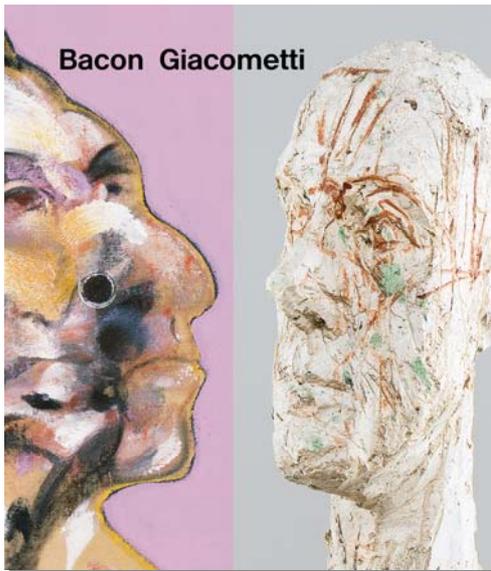
Berlin, May 7, 2018 — Bacon and Giacometti shared an unshakeable faith in the significance of the human figure and the role of tradition. Both studied, copied, and paraphrased the Old Masters. Both were interested in the problems of two- and three-dimensional depictions of space, often including cage-like constructs in their works in order to isolate the figures in their surroundings.

The artists dealt with the fragmented, deformed body, and shared an obsession for the portrait as such and the image of human individuality associated with it. Each one described himself as a “realist”. And even though they always referenced the human figure, they intensified its abstraction to the extreme, each in his own way. In this way they questioned the opposition of figuration and abstraction that has been so important to the history of modern art.

“This is the man who has influenced me more than anyone else,” says Francis Bacon about his great role model, Alberto Giacometti.

The painter Isabel Rawsthorne played a key role in the relationship between Giacometti and Bacon; she was a close friend of both artists and for a while, Giacometti's lover. She posed for both artists, and was a muse for both, as well. Like Giacometti and Bacon, she was also fascinated by the human abyss. The dark sides of sexuality, loneliness, and melancholy, and a tendency toward excess: Giacometti and Bacon exuded fascinating auras that met in the person of Rawsthorne, but went far beyond her: the artist as someone who pushes his limits to the extreme in society.

Now, the Fondation Beyeler takes on the ambitious task of juxtaposing both artists in its large exhibition *Bacon — Giacometti*, running from April 29 through September 2 in Basel (Switzerland). The large, richly illustrated companion catalogue features texts by Hugo Daniel, Sylvie Felber, Catherine Grenier, Ulf Küster, and Michael Peppiatt.



## **BACON / GIACOMETTI**

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