

NEWS RELEASE

Bechtler Museum of Modern Art Presents Exclusive Exhibition of Works by 20th-century Titan Alberto Giacometti

More than 80 masterful artworks in several media capture Giacometti's artistic maturation from youthful explorations to his greatest achievements.

August 29, 2012 (Charlotte, N.C.) – The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art brings to Charlotte the exhibition *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* August 31, 2012 through February 8, 2013. The exhibition features more than 80 works in various media from all periods of the Swiss artist's life.

The exhibition includes sculptures, paintings, prints, drawings and decorative objects by Alberto Giacometti, revealing the aesthetic evolution, emotional power and existential qualities of his work. Pieces are from the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art collection as well as the Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung in Zürich and the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation in Paris, which loaned more than 60 works, including rarely seen plasters.

This exhibition, to be seen only at the Bechtler, profiles Alberto Giacometti (1901-1966) as one of the titans of 20th-century modernism. Designed chronologically, it captures Giacometti's artistic maturation from youthful explorations to his greatest achievements.

Highlighted in the exhibition are seven plasters on loan from the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation. Sculpture plasters are fragile and are rarely seen in exhibitions. *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* presents plasters side-by-side with the resulting sculptures. The plasters give viewers a sense of the intended qualities of the work, often fashioned by the artist's own hand, and how those characteristics are revealed in a bronze.

After exploring many of the most important art movements and approaches, such as Cubism and Surrealism, Giacometti developed his own profoundly influential style that was insightful, philosophical, mystical and charged by an unending inquiry into the fundamental nature of our existence. He had a compulsive approach to drawing and considered it to be at the heart of all his activities. He drew people and images again and again, capturing a special animating quality. Throughout the latter half of his career, efforts to commit his vision to canvas and sculpture consumed him.

Audiences will experience the sense of intimacy Giacometti conveyed in much of his work. On view are images that represent his close bond with his two brothers, Diego and Bruno, and his parents, Giovanni and Annetta, as well as his wife and frequent model, Annette. To examine those key relationships further, the exhibition includes pieces created by Giacometti's father and brothers, significant artists in their own right.

Finally, the exhibition illustrates Alberto Giacometti's relationships with some of the most important cultural and intellectual leaders in Europe before and after World War II – philosophers, publishers, poets and artists – as well as collectors and patrons. One of his significant friendships was with the Bechtler family.

Hans Bechtler (father of Bechtler Museum of Modern Art patron Andreas Bechtler) met Alberto Giacometti in 1957 while purchasing a sculpture by the artist at a Paris gallery. That work, *Femme Assise (Seated Woman)*, and its corresponding plaster are included in *Giacometti: Memory and Presence*, along with other Giacometti works acquired by Hans and his wife, Bessie. Hans went on to serve as founding president of the Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung in Switzerland for 25 years and was a champion of Giacometti's work for the remainder of his life.

Underscoring the relationship between the Bechtler and Giacometti families, the exhibition includes works of decorative art by Diego Giacometti, which filled the Bechtlers' Zürich home, and architectural plans by Bruno Giacometti for a Bechtler home in St. Moritz.

Midway through the exhibition, 17 of Giacometti's drawings will be replaced with 15 different drawings, which will remain through the end of the exhibition.

The exhibition is organized and curated by the Bechtler Museum of Modern Art.

The museum acknowledges the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation as the major lender of the exhibition and its director, Véronique Wiesinger, for supporting the effort to bring Giacometti's works to Charlotte. The Bechtler also acknowledges the Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung at the Kunsthaus Zürich as an additional significant lender.

The exhibition is made possible with a generous grant from Wells Fargo Private Bank. "Wells Fargo Private Bank is pleased to be the presenting sponsor of this noteworthy exhibition," said Madelyn Caple, Wells Fargo Private Bank Regional Director. "We are proud to demonstrate our continued support of Charlotte's cultural life by sponsoring a show with incredible works by an artist of this caliber."

Additional funding is provided by Grant Thornton and Moore & Van Allen. Media sponsorship is provided by WFAE 90.7fm.

Exhibition-related Programming

- Modern Mondays (September 10). Modern Mondays programs enrich the museum experience by providing informal, interactive opportunities to participate in hands-on activities, tours and lectures about works in the Bechtler collection and exhibitions. Dr. Bradford Collins, University of South Carolina Associate Professor of Art History, will lead a discussion and lecture on Alberto Giacometti's Surrealist and existentialist works. Modern Mondays programs are free for museum members and \$8 for non-members and begin at 6 p.m. with a cash-bar reception. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.
- Music and Museum (September 16). Music and Museum concerts combine visual art, chamber music and thought-provoking discourse. Complementing the familial elements of the *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* exhibition, which includes artworks by the three Giacometti brothers, the theme of September's Music and Museum concert is *Family of Artists*. The concert will feature works by members of the Bach family, the Mendelssohn family and the Stravinsky family. Selected pieces from the *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* exhibition will be the focus of discussion. A cash-bar reception

begins at 5 p.m. and the performance begins at 5:30 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for members and \$20 for non-members. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.

- Louise Bernstein Distinguished Lecture Series (September 27). Véronique Wiesinger, Director of the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation in Paris, will present the lecture *Alberto Giacometti and the Curse of Art Forgery*. As the commercial value of art has grown, so too has the number of illegal copies of highly priced works entering the market place. Because Alberto Giacometti's artwork consistently commands top market prices, his works are some of the most susceptible to forgery. Wiesinger will illustrate the growing counterfeit problem and discuss the role the Alberto and Annette Giacometti Foundation plays in combating it. The lecture begins at 6 p.m. and is free for museum members and \$10 for non-members. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.
- Jazz at the Bechtler (October 5). Complementing the familial elements of *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* (which includes artworks by the three Giacometti brothers), the popular Jazz at the Bechtler series presents *Families in Jazz*. The concert takes place 6 to 8 p.m. in the museum lobby and is free for museum members and \$12 for non-members. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk. Cash bar available. Space is limited.
- Modern Mondays (October 8 and 15). A two-day, hands-on workshop based on Giacometti's methods and influences. Participants will tour the exhibition *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* and create a sculpture using bendable wire, paper, fiber sculpting medium and paint. Tickets are \$20 for museum members, \$30 for non-members. The program begins at 6 p.m. with a cash-bar reception. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.
- Jazz at the Bechtler (November 2). Jazz at the Bechtler presents *The Existentialism of Jazz*. The concert takes place 6 to 8 p.m. in the museum lobby and is free for museum members and \$12 for non-members. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk. Cash bar available. Space is limited.
- Modern Mondays (November 19). Davidson College Associate Professor Dr. Ann Fox leads a combination lecture and discussion on the connections between existentialist art and theater. Tickets are free for museum members, \$8 for non-members. The program begins at 6 p.m. with a cash-bar reception. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.
- Modern Mondays (December 3). A hands-on workshop based on Giacometti's monochromatic oil paintings. Participants will create self-portraits using conté crayons. Tickets are \$10 for museum members, \$15 for non-members. The program begins at 6 p.m. with a cash-bar reception. Purchase tickets online at bechtler.org, by phone 704.353.9200 or at the visitor services desk.
- Family Day (January 12). Kids of all ages can experiment with methods and materials addressed in the exhibition *Giacometti: Memory and Presence*. Hands-on activities and family-friendly tours will be held throughout the museum from noon to 4 p.m. Admission is free for those under 18 years old; all others receive a discounted ticket price of \$4.

The Bechtler Museum of Modern Art is dedicated to the exhibition of modern art from the mid-20th century. It is named after the family of Andreas Bechtler who assembled and inherited a collection created by seminal figures in modernism. The museum is at Levine Center for the Arts, 420 South Tryon Street, Charlotte. The museum is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and on Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. Admission is \$8 for adults; \$6 for seniors, college students and educators; \$4 for youth ages 11 to 14; and free for younger children. For details, visit www.bechtler.org.

#

ARTWORK IMAGES: Artwork images for *Giacometti: Memory and Presence* are available upon request. Contact Pam Davis, Director of Communications and Marketing, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, pam.davis@bechtler.org, office: 704.353.9204 / mobile 704.975.2363

MEDIA CONTACT: Pam Davis, Director of Communications and Marketing, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, pam.davis@bechtler.org, office: 704.353.9204 / mobile 704.975.2363