

Alberto Giacometti
Grande Femme II [Tall Woman II]
1960



Alberto Giacometti, Grande Femme II (1960), Courtesy of the Fondation Louis Vuitton, © Succession Alberto Giacometti
(Fondation Alberto et Amélie Giacometti) © Adagp, Paris 2021. Photo: Marc Donaghe

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Alberto Giacometti

Grande Femme II [Tall Woman II]

1960

Bronze with dark brown patina

Susse Foundry (cast of 1961, ed. 1/6)

277 x 29 x 57,2 cm

Courtesy of the Fondation Louis Vuitton

The series of *Tall Figures* in 1960 is, after that of *Women of Venice* in 1956, the last that the artist dedicated to the female nude. *Grande Femme II [Tall Woman II]*, whose plaster was exposed in Venice, is the largest sculpture ever made by the artist. The flared shape of the hips, the extreme narrowing of the waist and the tight position of the legs, recall the *Femme cuillère [Spoon Woman]* of 1926-27. The forward sloping base accentuates the upward momentum of the figure, while the erosion of the silhouettes, as well as the enlarged feet, change the relationship to space. Hieratic, she imposes her quest for eternity.

The work was designed for the square in front of the Chase Manhattan Bank building in New York (USA), requested by American architect Gordon Bunshaft. Giacometti had proposed "a woman standing," "a man walking" and a "head on rod", representing the three main themes of his later years. Placed directly on the ground so that spectators can move freely between the figures and activate the space between them, the group would have blended into its environment.

About the artist

Born in Borgonovo (Switzerland) on October 10, 1901, **Alberto Giacometti**, at an early age, was introduced to Post-Impressionism and Symbolism by his father, a painter. In 1919, he left school to study at the Fine Arts College of Geneva. He moved to France in 1922 where he studied the nude at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, sculpture with Antoine Bourdelle and often visited the Louvre. His work brought him close to the post-Cubism movement (in particular, *Le couple* [*The couple*] (1926) and *Femme Cuillère* [*Spoon Woman*] (1927)), and then developed within the Surrealist group (the *Boule suspendue* [*Suspended Ball*] sculpture (1930), exhibited at Galerie Pierre alongside works by Joan Miró and Jean Arp, marked this turning point). In 1935, breaking away from avant-garde circles, he began to work exclusively on the living model.

During the World War II, in 1941 he returned to Switzerland where he met his future wife, Annette Arm, who became one of his favorite models. In the after-war period, he started to create new tall and spindly figures. In the 1950s, Giacometti's reputation grew considerably. In 1956, he represented France at the Venice Biennale where he presented *Femmes de Venise* [*Women of Venice*] (he would later win the Biennale's Grand Prix for Sculpture in 1962). Before leaving Paris for the last time in 1965, Giacometti made three portraits of photographer Eli Lotar, who became his final model.

Giacometti died on January 11, 1966 at the Cantonal Hospital of Coire.

About the Fondation Louis Vuitton

The Fondation Louis Vuitton serves the public interest and is exclusively dedicated to contemporary art and artists, as well as 20th century works to which their inspirations can be traced. The Collection and the exhibitions it organises seek to engage a broad public. The magnificent building created by the Canadian-American architect Frank Gehry, and already recognized as an emblematic example of the 21st century architecture, constitutes the Fondation's seminal artistic statement. Since its opening in October 2014, the Fondation has welcomed more than six million visitors from France and around the world.

The Fondation Louis Vuitton commits to engage in international initiatives, both at the Fondation and in partnership with public and private institutions, including other foundations and museums such as the Pushkin Museum in Moscow and the Hermitage Museum in Saint-Petersburg (*Icons of Modern Art: The Shchukin Collection*), the MoMA in New York (*Being Modern: MoMA in Paris*), and the Courtauld Institute of Art in London (*The Courtauld Collection. A Vision for Impressionism*) among others. The artistic direction also developed a specific "Hors-les-murs" programme taking place within the Espaces Louis Vuitton in Tokyo, Venice, Munich, Beijing, Seoul and Osaka, which are exclusively devoted to exhibitions of works from the Collection. These exhibitions are open to the public free of charge and promoted through specific cultural communication.