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NY CULTURE

From Old Masters to the Cartoonish

By **LANCE ESPLUND**

Updated Oct. 30, 2010 12:01 a.m. ET

(Please see Corrections and Amplifications below.)

In Giacometti's Studio—An Intimate Portrait

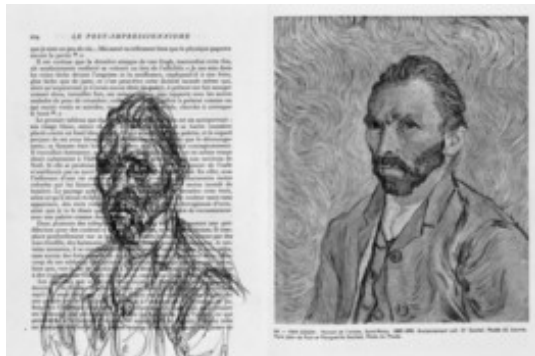
Eykyn Maclean

23 E. 67th St., 2nd fl.

212-772-9425

Through Dec. 18

From 1927 until his death, in 1966, Alberto Giacometti lived and worked in a small, dilapidated studio in the Montparnasse section of Paris. Visitors included Pablo Picasso, Igor Stravinsky, Jean-Paul Sartre, Samuel Beckett and Henri Cartier-Bresson. Among all artists' workspaces, it remains the most legendary.



Alberto Giacometti's ballpoint-pen portrait of the artist Vincent van Gogh from 1961, part of 'In Giacometti's Studio—An Intimate Portrait.' **EYKYN MACLEAN**

By itself or as a backdrop for portraiture, Giacometti's studio—crowded with his slender, eviscerated bronze, plaster and clay figures, some of which were tightly wound with wet canvas, suggesting mummies—was a recurring subject for him. In drawings, paintings and photographs, the studio's pockmarked walls, covered with incisions, drawings and paintings, resembled war-torn ruins, catacombs or prehistoric caves; and the artist, his sitters and their portraits appeared to interact and intermingle, as if on a stage where ancient and modern collide.

A mystique, if not cult status, still surrounds Giacometti's now-vanished studio, and numerous books, memoirs and photographic essays have been devoted to it. Eykyn Maclean's inaugural exhibition, curated by Michael Peppiatt and accompanied by his book "In Giacometti's Studio" (Yale), is the latest homage.

Eykyn Maclean's retrospective of rarely- and never-exhibited works from 1919 to 1965 is intimate, elegant and alive. It comprises 45 sculptures, 28 drawings and only six paintings, as well as four documents and eight books, all used liberally by Giacometti as drawing surfaces. In a lovely tempera portrait from 1947, the artist's seated mother is a flurry of spirals amid gray, gold and reddish fog. Her torso opens into the distance like a seascape sunset. In the undated pencil drawing "Femme Debut," a scaffolding of lines jostles with a figurative blur. Giacometti's working environment is an enthralling subject. However, in this exquisite exhibition, the link to the artist's studio is merely a romantic lure—a hook—for a show inconceivable without the masterpieces Giacometti produced there.

Body and Soul: Masterpieces of Italian Renaissance and Baroque Sculpture

Andrew Butterfield Fine Arts and Moretti Fine Art
24 E. 80th St.
212-249-4987
Through Nov. 19



Andrea del Verrocchio's 'Head of a Gorgon' (c. 1480) MAGGIE NIMKIN/ANDREW BUTTERFIELD FINE ARTS

The final frontier for art collectors, according to Andrew Butterfield, is Old Master sculpture. Mr. Butterfield—a treasure-hunter,

scholar and dealer who recently brought to light Gian Lorenzo Bernini's miraculous life-size bronze "Corpus" (1650s) and his "Modello for "The Moor"" (1653), the finest extant Bernini terracotta—has proved himself to be an expert on Renaissance and Baroque sculpture. He and Fabrizio Moretti have organized "Body and Soul," a museum-quality exhibition of 12 recently discovered and authenticated masterpieces from the 15th through 18th centuries.

Theatrically lit, some of these works will remind viewers of the dramatic installations at the now-defunct Salander-O'Reilly Galleries, where Mr. Butterfield, who left two years before the gallery closed, was a senior vice president. Swoon-worthy terracotta sculptures here are Andrea Riccio's solemn "Madonna Dolorosa" (c. 1500-10), Giuseppe Mazzuoli's reclining, nearly ecstatic "Dead Christ" (c. 1670-80) and Alessandro Algardi's "Allegory" (1630), a taut, graceful male figure raising a crown, which was commissioned by Pope Urban VIII and made under the direction of Bernini. Andrea del Verrocchio, Leonardo's teacher, is represented by a frightening bas relief "Head of a Gorgon" (c. 1480); Jacopo Sansovino, by the figure of "Charity" (c. 1513)—the basis for a painting by Andrea del Sarto and a bridge between the cool classicism of Raphael and the emotional exuberance of the Baroque.

But what makes these works worthy of our attention is not their provenance (and newly assessed value), but their aesthetic quality. In Mr. Butterfield, we have a frontiersman-

scholar with a keen eye.

"Tony Oursler: Peak"

Lehmann Maupin

201 Chrystie St.

212-254-0054

Through Dec. 5



Tony Oursler's 'Mirror Return' (2010), a video projection TONY OURSLER/LEHMANN MAUPIN GALLERY, NEW YORK

New
York
video
artist
Tony

Oursler (b. 1957) is the David Lynch or Tim Burton of the art world—the quirky, eerie showman dazzling (and sometimes annoying) audiences with a mixture of the amusing and macabre. One of his favorite subjects is parts of the human body, particularly the eye, disembodied and projected on walls, trees or objects at enormous scale. His collaged installations, comprising moving images, sounds, text and the spoken word, can be as abrasive as "Eraserhead" and as entertaining as Saturday morning cartoons.

In Mr. Oursler's current show of eight new minuscule works—timed with his "Valley" (the inaugural online exhibition of the Adobe Museum of Digital Media at www.adobemuseum.com)—the artist continues to explore the nature of the disturbing and uncanny. His installations are still juvenile and cliché-driven—occasionally trying. But by creating performance-art vignettes—sometimes projected at nearly pinhead-scale—on tiny stages, sculptures and boxes, Mr. Oursler, in his best work yet, has transformed his vision into miniature cabinets of curiosities and turned spectacle on its head.

—*Mr. Esplund writes about art for the Journal.*

Corrections & Amplifications

Two photo credits in a previous version of this column were incorrect. The photo of Tony Oursler's "Mirror Return" should have been credited to Tony Oursler/Lehmann Maupin Gallery, New York, and the photo of Andrea del Verrochio's "Head of a Gorgon" should have been credited to Maggie Nimkin/Andrew Butterfield Fine Arts.

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