

VEDOVI GALLERY



Balthus
Modigliani

September 12 – November 9, 2024
Vedovi Gallery
11 Bd de Waterloo, Brussels

Vedovi Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of two modern masters: Balthus and Amedeo Modigliani. This unique showcase brings together the distinct visions of these 20th century artists whose work challenged conventions, revealing their shared interest in the subject of the human form as a vehicle in exploring the emotional depth to the nature of being.

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Balthus, Modigliani highlights each artist's distinct approaches to figuration while providing a rare opportunity to witness a dialogue between two of the most enigmatic figures in modern art.

Through a pensive juxtaposition of their celebrated portraits and figurative works on paper, this exhibition composes a delicate tension between sensuality, mystery, and restraint that pervades both remarkable artistic legacies into today.

Balthus (born Balthasar Klossowski de Rola) (1908-2001), is renowned for his dreamlike yet controversial depictions of young girls often situated within stuffy bourgeois interior settings.

These elegant works on paper capture the artist's studied obsession with his subjects, blending Renaissance attention to gesture and presentness of the subject with a surreal, heightened state of enigmatic stillness. The artist's work has often stirred critical debate, challenging societal boundaries and transgressions between the artist and his subjects. By flirting with notions of the taboo, Balthus explores to great depth the subtleties of innocence, desire, and time the longstanding antagonist to the fleeting presence of youth.

In contrast to the subjects of Balthus' studies, Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920) became renowned for his elongated figures and soulful portraits representing the artist's inner circle, including fellow artists, family members and patrons of his work. Through a unique use of bold contours which have become emblematic of the artist, Modigliani infuses his work with an emotional intensity that captures the inner life of his pensive subjects. Modigliani's iconic painted portraits, of which *Portrait inachevé de Paul Alexandre* (c. 1911) is included in this exhibition, are characterized by their graceful, sculptural lines the echo the societal transition towards the modern aesthetics of the 20th Century. This attention to form, equally attributed to the work of Balthus, conveys a deep sensitivity to the human condition. Through a concentrated selection of his works presented here, Modigliani's masterful figuration carries an imbued attention to the Italian artistic traditions of order, balance and harmony.

Though separated by their personal histories and individual styles, Balthus and Modigliani both explored the subject of the human form in ways that continue to shape contemporary art. *Balthus, Modigliani* offers a fresh, poignant dialogue between these two artistic legacies. Their explorations on the question of beauty transcend time, leaving a profound impact on the nature of artistic expression. Brought together, these works invite a close reflection on the lasting emotional integrity of the human form.

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