

EARLY DRAWINGS BY AMEDEO MODIGLIANI ON VIEW FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THE U.S. AT THE JEWISH MUSEUM

Modigliani Unmasked

September 15, 2017–February 4, 2018

New York, NY, March 28, 2017– The Jewish Museum will present ***Modigliani Unmasked***, an exhibition featuring early drawings by Amedeo Modigliani (Italian, 1884–1920) that were acquired directly from the artist by Dr. Paul Alexandre, his close friend and first patron. These works—many of which are being shown for the first time in the U.S.— will illuminate how Modigliani’s heritage as an Italian Sephardic Jew is pivotal to understanding his artistic output. The exhibition will be on view at the Jewish Museum from September 15, 2017 through February 4, 2018.

Modigliani Unmasked will consider the celebrated artist shortly after he arrived in Paris in 1906, when the city was still roiling with anti-Semitism after the long-running tumult of the Dreyfus Affair and the influx of foreign emigres. Modigliani’s Italian-Sephardic background helped forge a complex cultural identity that rested in part on the ability of Italian Jews historically to assimilate and embrace diversity. The exhibition will show that Modigliani’s art cannot be fully understood without acknowledging the ways the artist responded to the social realities that he confronted in the unprecedented artistic melting pot of Paris. The drawings from the Alexandre collection reveal the emerging artist himself, enmeshed in his own particular identity quandary, struggling to discover what portraiture might mean in a modern world of racial complexity.

The exhibition will include approximately 150 works, those from the Alexandre collection as well as a selection of Modigliani’s paintings, sculptures, and other drawings from collections around the world. Modigliani’s art will be complemented by work representative of the various multicultural influences—African, Greek, Egyptian, and Khmer—that inspired the young artist during this lesser-known, early period.

Among the works featured are a mysterious, unfinished portrait of Dr. Alexandre, never seen before in the U.S.; impressions of the theater; life studies and female nudes, among them the Russian poet Anna Akhmatova; and

drawings of caryatids and heads, which are telling of Modigliani's sculptures, created over a five-year period from 1909 to 1914.

Modigliani Unmasked is organized by Mason Klein, Curator, The Jewish Museum.

Catalogue

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue published by the Jewish Museum and Yale University Press. The book will include an essay by Mason Klein that offers close analysis of Modigliani's portraits and figure studies in pencil, ink, gouache, and crayon, ultimately arguing that the artist demonstrated a modernist embrace of difference, as well as an understanding of identity as heterogeneous, beyond national or cultural boundaries. The book will also include an afterword by Richard Nathanson. Featuring 165 color illustrations, the hardcover will be available worldwide and at the Jewish Museum's Cooper Shop beginning in September 2017 for \$50.00.

Support

Modigliani Unmasked is made possible by The Jerome L. Greene Foundation. Additional support is generously provided by Barbara and Ira A. Lipman, Capital One, an anonymous gift in memory of Curtis Hereld, the Stanley, Marion, Paul and Edward Bergman Family Foundation, and the Horace W. Goldsmith Exhibitions Endowment Fund. The catalogue is supported by the Dorot Publication Fund. The audioguide is made possible by Bloomberg Philanthropies.

About the Jewish Museum

Located on New York City's famed Museum Mile, the Jewish Museum is a distinctive hub for art and Jewish culture for people of all backgrounds. Founded in 1904, the Museum was the first institution of its kind in the United States and is one of the oldest Jewish museums in the world. The Museum is devoted to exploring art and Jewish culture from ancient to contemporary, and offers diverse exhibitions and programs, and a unique collection of nearly 30,000 works of art, ceremonial objects, and media reflecting the global Jewish experience over more than 4,000 years.



Location: 1109 Fifth Avenue at 92nd Street, New York City
Hours: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday, 11am to 5:45pm;
Thursday, 11am to 8pm; and Friday, 11am to 4pm.
Admission: \$15.00 for adults, \$12.00 for senior citizens, \$7.50 for students,
free for visitors 18 and under and Jewish Museum members.
Pay What You Wish on Thursdays from 5pm to 8pm.
Free on Saturdays.
Information: The public may call 212.423.3200 or visit
TheJewishMuseum.org

#

Press contact: Daniela Stigh, 212.423.3330 or dstigh@thejm.org

General Press Inquiries: 212.423.3271 or pressoffice@thejm.org

