

MODIGLIANI

The Primitivist Revolution

Exhibition Facts

Duration	17 September – 9 January 2022
Virtual Opening	16 September 2021 6.30 PM on Facebook-Live & YouTube
Venue	Propter Homines Galleries / ALBERTINA
Curator	Marc Restellini
Assistant Curator	Gunhild Bauer (ALBERTINA)
Works	128
Catalogue	Available in English (EUR 34,90) and German (EUR 32,90) onsite at the Museum Shop as well as via www.albertina.at
Website	https://modigliani.albertina.at/
Hashtags	#AlbertinaModigliani #AlbertinaMuseum
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Modigliani

The Primitivist Revolution

On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his death, the ALBERTINA in Vienna pays tribute to the artist Amedeo Modigliani (1884-1920). Not very successful throughout his life, Modigliani became one of the most important painters in history, whose paintings today fetch hundreds of millions. An impressive show of over 120 paintings, sculptures and drawings by the myth-enshrouded Italian takes you to Paris in the early 20th century: the birthplace of modern painting.

This exceptional exhibition presents the painter's work in a holistic way never seen before: his drawings, sculptures and paintings are presented here simultaneously. The art genres were not illuminated separately, but can be viewed in the same context and in relation to each other: in this way, the ALBERTINA once again realises the principle of the indivisibility of the artistic, the basis of all major exhibitions of the last 20 years.

The exhibition goes beyond a purely monographic retrospective, as it is interested in Modigliani's place in the seething cosmos of so-called "primitivist" influences at the heart of the early 20th century Parisian art scene. This major exhibition shows how Modigliani was fascinated by African art, the 4,000-year-old sculptures of the Cyclades or even the art of the Khmer of Cambodia. As with Picasso, Derain and Brancusi, these influences merged with Modigliani's sculptures, paintings and drawings.

On view for the first time in Austria are important works from the world's most renowned museums and private collections from three continents, from the USA to Singapore, from Great Britain to Russia. The most important contributions come from the Musée Picasso in Paris and the collection of Jonas Netter, who was one of Modigliani's first collectors while he was still alive.

Art between archaic and avant-garde

The ALBERTINA places the artist in the context of an extraordinary circle of avant-garde painters and, above all, in the vicinity of Pablo Picasso. The curator of the exhibition, the art historian Marc Restellini - an internationally recognised specialist on Amedeo Modigliani and author of the catalogue raisonné to be published next year - speaks of a revolution of plastic, visual and symbolic influences. This revolution was the result of the encounter with ancient and non-European objects from the fields of art and archaeology, which were increasingly accessible in museums and on the market at that time. It affected Modigliani as much as his colleagues (Pablo Picasso, Constantin Brancusi, André Derain, etc.) and was

reflected in a change of forms, bodies, ideas and feelings expressed in their works. Unlike his contemporaries, for whom the Great War of 1914 to 1918 represented a caesura, Modigliani's work was marked by this revolution until his death in 1920.

This look at Modigliani's work and his relationship to other artists takes us away from the dramatic story that is often remembered: that of a young artist from Livorno who contracted pleurisy at the age of eleven, then typhoid fever in 1898, and who suffered his entire life from chronic tuberculosis - the disease that finally claimed him in 1920 at the age of 35. His young fiancée, Jeanne Hébuterne, mother of their daughter Jeanne and pregnant for the second time in her eighth month, followed him two days later by taking her own life.

With the exhibition "Modigliani - The Primitivist Revolution", the ALBERTINA sheds new light on the artist: enlightened, inspired and surrounded by an extraordinary circle of talented painters and artists, he made an invaluable and very individual contribution to art history by succeeding in building a bridge between antiquity and modernity as well as between the different art genres themselves.

The exhibition is organised with the special support of the Musée national Picasso-Paris.

Exhibition Texts

Amedeo Modigliani (1884–1920)

The Primitivist Revolution

Marking the one hundredth anniversary of Amedeo Modigliani's death, the Albertina Museum devotes a comprehensive exhibition to this important artist of the twentieth century.

It is the first show to contextualize his sculptures, drawings, and paintings in the center of what is referred to as the "Primitivist revolution," juxtaposing Modigliani with artists leading the contemporary Parisian avant-garde, from Pablo Picasso and Constantin Brancusi to André Derain.

"Primitivism" is seen as a term identifying a style and an epoch, similar to such terms as "Impressionism" or "Fauvism," regardless of the fact that it was often the high art of monarchies, from the Khmer people to African kingdoms and tribes, that offered a source of inspiration for Western art in the form of these fantastic works. Throughout Modigliani's oeuvre one can observe the influence of the art of various world cultures, which he encountered as a young painter at the Louvre and the new ethnographic museum upon his arrival in the art metropolis of Paris and by whose formal reduction to the most essential he was deeply impressed.

More than eighty works by Amedeo Modigliani trace the development of this pioneering outsider and artistic maverick. Like Picasso, Brancusi, or André Derain, Modigliani sought to overcome the traditional academic norms through Primitivism. Each of these artists looked for and admired the simplification of form and its abstraction and stylization in the culture of another early civilization.

Chronology

- 1884 On July 12, Amedeo Modigliani is born into a Jewish family in Livorno, the fourth child of the merchant Flaminio Modigliani and his French wife, Eugénie Garsin.
Still a child, Modigliani suffers from weak lungs, an ailment forcing him to give up school prematurely. At the age of sixteen he falls seriously ill with tuberculosis for the first time.
- 1902/1903 Modigliani studies painting in Florence and Venice.
- 1903–1907 The Spaniard Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) settles in Paris. In a run-down studio building in Montmartre, which he shares with his fellow artists (many of whom would later become famous), Picasso paints his masterpieces of the Blue and Pink Periods and finally, having studied African and Oceanic sculpture at the museum of ethnography in Paris, his *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (1907).
- 1904 Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957) leaves his native country Romania for Paris to study sculpture. Like his friends André Derain and Picasso, he develops a passion for non-European art and becomes an assistant to Auguste Rodin—a post he quits again in 1907, deeply impressed by the work of Paul Gauguin.
- 1906–1909 In 1906, Modigliani moves from Italy to Paris, where he soon joins the circle of artists gathering around Picasso, Apollinaire, Max Jacob, Derain, and Brancusi. His first participations in the exhibitions of the Salon d'Automne in 1907 and at the Salon des Indépendants in 1908 and 1910 did not bring any monetary or artistic success.
- 1909–1914 Influenced by Brancusi, Modigliani devotes himself exclusively to sculpture. He creates calm, strictly frontal, and mostly elongated heads betraying his preoccupation with non-European art. In 1912 he exhibits these sculptures at the Salon d'Automne. He would stick to the ideal of the archaic “Primitivism” of his sculptures throughout his short life, even after giving up sculpture in favor of painting.
Heavily impoverished, Modigliani is forced to frequently change domicile in Paris. In 1913 he returns to his native city of Livorno for the last time to be close to the famous Carrara quarries with their snow-white marble. However, falling seriously ill again, Modigliani has to give up sculpture and returns to painting, which is less demanding physically.
- 1914–1918 During World War I, Modigliani first lives in Montmartre with his girlfriend Beatrice Hastings, an English writer for whom he has left the impressive Russian poet Anna Akhmatova. Later he moves to Montparnasse, where he

frequents the circle of Chaïm Soutine, Picasso, Juan Gris, and Diego Rivera. Their alcohol and drug consumption is a widely discussed topic in the press. Modigliani attracts the attention of the art dealer Paul Guillaume, who is the first to acquire several works by the exiled Italian.

In 1916, the poet and art dealer Leopold Zborowski from Poland offers Modigliani a contract. In the years to come, the artist paints some twenty female nudes, which are received controversially at first because of their sexual liberty but would soon become legendary works of art. In 1917, Modigliani's first solo exhibition, which takes place at the gallery of Berthe Weill, turns out a scandal because of a nude painting in the display window. As the police threaten to close the exhibition, the nudes are taken down. Not a single painting is sold.

In early 1917, Modigliani meets the young art student Jeanne Hébuterne (1898–1920). Due to her immoral relationship with Modigliani, her family disowns her.

1918–1919 Modigliani and Jeanne Hébuterne flee from the war to Nice and Cagnes-sur-Mer. In November, their daughter Jeanne is born. They hope in vain that their stay in the South of France will also bring some recovery from the artist's dramatically exacerbating tuberculosis.

In 1919, Modigliani, fatally ill, returns to Paris. The artist has his first successes with exhibitions at the Paris Salon d'Automne and in London.

1920 Amedeo Modigliani dies at the Paris hospital La Charité on January 24, leaving behind his one-year-old daughter Jeanne. His fiancée, pregnant again, plunges to her death from an open window two days later. It is only in 1930 that the couple is reunited at the cemetery of Père-Lachaise in Paris.

Primitivism

In the early twentieth century, the Parisian avant-garde embraced the means of expression of archaic and non-European art, which radically broke with the academic pictorial tradition of illusionism.

In the age of the Belle Époque, France as the world's second largest colonial power concentrated its policy on West Africa, the Maghreb, and Indochina. Numerous expeditions brought works of art from these regions to Paris on a large scale, while the indigenous population was in many cases systematically robbed of its art. At the Universal Exhibitions of 1867 and 1889 in Paris, the life of foreign civilizations was reenacted with original architecture populated by native inhabitants. At the Palais du Trocadéro opposite the Eiffel Tower, non-European objects were on display. In 1882 it opened as the first ethnographic museum with a separate wing for Indochina, its artifacts having been declined by the Louvre.

The term “primitive” implies that the artists, similar to Byzantine icon painters or practitioners of European folk art, followed century-old archaic traditions. The temples of Angkor in today’s Cambodia, overgrown by the rain forest, were thought to date back to ancient times and associated with the Temple of Solomon; African sculpture was compared to the formal idiom of ancient Egyptians. These “primitives” were believed to represent the origins of art.

In 1905 the Parisian avant-garde discovered archaic and non-European art for its purposes. Derain later referred to this vogue as “archaiomania”: an obsession with the archaic. André Derain, Pablo Picasso, Constantin Brancusi, and Modigliani established an aestheticism that was to be plain, powerfully eloquent, and independent of academic art. Matisse and the Fauvists as well as Picasso, Derain, Brancusi, and Modigliani were the first to base their art on the style of the expressive masks and sculptures they had been studying in museums and galleries. At the sight of “primitive” art, they experienced a new meaning of their artistic work: “Painting is not an aesthetic undertaking, it is a form of magic!” (Pablo Picasso)

What had been called “art nègre” until World War I, was later described as “les primitifs.” National-Socialist terror persecuted this very art inspired by non-European works as “degenerate.”

Modigliani the Sculptor

In 1906, Modigliani arrived in Paris, where he would soon become part of the circle of the Bateau-Lavoir, a studio house where several modernist artists who would later be among the most famous spent the beginnings of their careers, including Pablo Picasso, Apollinaire, Max Jacob, and André Derain. Although a trained painter, Modigliani wished to become a sculptor. Impressed by the art of Paul Gauguin and Picasso’s and Derain’s early sculptural works, he devoted himself almost exclusively to innovations in the plastic arts between 1909 and 1914. In Constantin Brancusi he found a master of the technique of *taille directe*: the stone was directly worked by the artist instead of his preparing a model and leaving the realization proper to his assistants, as was common practice in academic sculpture. Modigliani and Brancusi worked side by side in Montparnasse. During this phase, Modigliani, relying on the art of Primitivism, developed all of the features that would characterize his future style. The extended facial forms on elongated necks resembling columns and the nose wedges he borrowed from Cycladic and African sculpture; for the faces solely animated by subtle smiles and introverted gazes, he resorted to Asian art; for the Eye of Horus, the strict frontal or radical profile views, and the block-like shapes he was indebted to Egyptian art. Like the works of Picasso, Derain, and Brancusi, those of Modigliani similarly reveal traces of the chisel next to polished areas on the surfaces of longish sandstone blocks he and Brancusi had abstracted from construction sites in Paris at night.

Modigliani wished to see his sandstone heads combined within a temple honoring humanity, a “Temple of Voluptuousness” flanked by “Columns of Tenderness.” The cherubim of the Bible, the Kabbalah, Dante, theosophical and symbolist literature, and

occultism guided his thoughts in his installation. The mysterious temples of Angkor at the Indochina museum and the art from Egyptian pyramids at the Louvre fascinated him. The fusion of these elements was a product of Modigliani's search for a transcultural beauty that had ceased to follow the European ideal.

In 1914, however, Modigliani was forced to give up his career as a sculptor prematurely, although one year earlier it had still been his dream to work in marble now instead of sandlime when in Carrara. His severe lung disease, from which he had suffered since childhood days, thwarted all further ambitions in this direction. Yet he was to remain true to his stylized ideal of the human image in his paintings.

Picasso's "Époque nègre"

When Modigliani arrived in Paris in 1906, he moved into the vicinity of a run-down building of workshops named Bateau-Lavoir ("Washhouse Boat") in Montmartre, where Pablo Picasso, among other pioneers of modern art, had his studio. The two artists exchanged ideas and in 1907 visited the museum of ethnography independently of each other. Both of them were fascinated by the archaic, non-European formal idiom of African art, each adopting it for his art in his own way. Picasso referred to his proto-Cubist phase as his "époque nègre." Picasso's carved wooden figures made between 1906 and 1908 and Modigliani's limestone heads created between 1909 and 1914 reveal the immense significance of non-European and archaic art.

Sculpture generally played a prominent role in archaizing the human figure. With his coarsely chiseled blocks of wood, Picasso violated conventional rules of proportion. In his studies for *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*, he alternately relied on the Iberian and African formal ideal.

On the other hand, Modigliani's caryatids—female figures supporting the roof of a building instead of columns—betray an ascetic dematerialization and stylization. He heavily silhouetted their shapes. In their austerity and rigidity they echo hieratic prehistoric idols. The motif of pupilless or closed eyes—a sign of introspection and spiritual composure—goes hand in hand with the figure's anonymization. These are eyes that do not see anything visible and are nevertheless all the more present.

In the case of both artists, their preoccupation with archaic and non-European sculpture subsequently also made itself felt in their painting. In 1907, Picasso completed his famous picture *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon*. Modigliani only was to give up sculpture in 1916, for health reasons; he would then translate the essential features of his art, such as the long necks and mask-like oval faces featuring empty eyes, into painting.

Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957)

Between 1909 and 1914, Modigliani and Brancusi worked side by side in Montparnasse, practicing the technique of *taille directe*. Brancusi, a wood carver from Romania, was used to carving the material directly. Now he also worked the stone himself instead of leaving this toil to an assistant, having been one himself in the studio of Auguste Rodin.

Brancusi arrived in Paris in 1904 to study sculpture at the Académie des Beaux-Arts. In 1907, after only one month, he quit his position as a chiseler in Auguste Rodin's studio, which was run like a factory: more than fifty assistants, relying on plaster models, realized the master's works in countless steps, producing casts or marbles.

Like André Derain and Pablo Picasso, Brancusi was impressed by the sculptural work of Paul Gauguin. Inspired by non-European art and Romanian folk art, he limited his forms to a few simplified, geometrized volumes. Initially he kept the raw stone that still showed the furrowing traces of the chisel, but later he took to smoothing the surfaces and eventually switched to burnished bronze. He polished his objects to such an extent that the reflections gave the impression of infinity. Brancusi: "I don't care what these surfaces reflect, as long as it is life."

With their plain volumes, almond-shaped eyes, and calm face solely animated by a faint smile, his busts of the Hungarian painter Margit Pogany are examples of Brancusi's appropriation of the art of India and of the Khmer people in Cambodia, which he and Modigliani studied at the Indochina museum in Paris. Over the following twenty years, Brancusi was to advance the abstraction of the head until the facial features of his artist friend were no longer recognizable and one could only perceive the beauty of the pure form.

Admiring the American Edward Steichen, who had photographed Rodin's sculpture of Balzac in moonlight, Brancusi intensively dealt with the photography of his own sculptures from 1914 onward: for him, these pictures were autonomous and genuine works of art. In 1921, advised by Man Ray, he bought a camera and began taking photographs of the works himself: they turned out deliberately blurred and underexposed, but full of charm.

Return to Painting

In 1914, Paul Guillaume, one of the most important art dealers of the Parisian avant-garde, took Modigliani under his wings. Following his advice, Modigliani finally gave up sculpture and returned to easel painting.

In the painted likenesses of his friends and in his portraits of anonymous ladies, he translated the style of his sculptural oeuvre into his pictures, overpainting old sketches with which he had once prepared his sculptures. In 1915 he did the first of altogether only two self-portraits realized during his short life of thirty-five years. He constructed his portraits out of plain curves and combined them with circular or oval faces resembling masks. Elongated cylindrical necks borrowed from the carved reliquary guardian figures of the

Fang, a Central African tribe in Gabon, or from Cycladic figurines dating from the third millennium BCE, give his sitters a stylized appearance.

Similar to Picasso's head studies for the *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, many of Modigliani's portraits feature blind, almond-shaped eyes that have been deprived of their pupils. Both artists had been particularly receptive to this detail when studying non-European cultic objects. In this way, the sitters give an impression of intense introspection, renunciation of all things external, and a quality of transcendence. Picasso said: "Painting is not an aesthetic undertaking but a form of magic: destined to mediate between an alien, hostile outer world and us."

In the Circle of the École de Paris

Whereas in 1914 the Frenchmen were drafted for military service, foreign artists, many of them Jews from Eastern Europe, populated the cafés of Montparnasse: from that year on, the neighborhood became a new hub of the Parisian avant-garde, next to Montmartre. The artists lived in the dilapidated studio and residence building of La Ruche under the most miserable conditions. Art critics close to this group of foreign artists soon referred to it as "École de Paris" ("School of Paris"), in response to the xenophobia and anti-Semitism prevalent in France at the time and in an effort to "francophonize" these artists.

Modigliani was friends with Chaïm Soutine, Maurice Utrillo, Jacques Lipchitz, Moïse Kisling, Max Jacob, and Diego Rivera; he frequented the local cafés such as the Café de la Rotonde, the Café du Dôme, or the Closerie des Lilas with his compatriot Gino Severini and Pablo Picasso, frequently offering drawings as a form of payment. Modigliani rejected Cubism and Futurism as overly intellectual and "inhuman."

Together with Utrillo, Soutine, and his mistress Beatrice Hastings, who, as a columnist working for *The New Age*, wrote about society life in Paris, he indulged in the excessive use of alcohol and drugs, as was reported in the press. The legend of Modigliani as an "artiste maudit," a condemned artist and bohemian, continues to inform the image of this artist, who was underestimated during his lifetime and carried off by pulmonary consumption prematurely.

The Portraits

Modigliani was first and foremost a portraitist, but he did not paint to commission. He captured his fellow artists in numerous sketches, frequently to pay the bill for a frugal meal. In their fluid linearity, these drawings follow Ingres's classicist drawing style: they are pure silhouettes, outline drawings. Whereas Modigliani idealized his mistress, Beatrice Hastings, he interpreted the portrayals of his fellow artists in a more personal manner. Ironic inscriptions, almost always containing the sitter's name, and dark ochre tones are vaguely reminiscent of Cubism; sometimes he caricatured his friends or gave them the empty eyes borrowed from African or East-Asian works of art, which speak through their very absence.

Modigliani paid a lot of attention to the hands as symbols of creativity. His models are moved up extremely closely to the viewer. Sparsely furnished interiors—like Schiele’s drawings, Modigliani’s art ignores the idea of possession—and warm reddish hues express his attachment to bohemian life in a foreign country: the ocher of the Italian terra di Siena gives pervades each of his pictures with a Mediterranean air. No one painted the flesh in such bright tones as Modigliani. His colors are as unmistakable as are the outlines of his figures, the curves of their eyebrows, shoulders, head, and hands.

The Nudes

Modigliani earned admiration for his female nudes early on. They have long had a permanent place in the history of nude painting, which ranges from Botticelli’s representations of Venus to nineteenth-century salon painting, from Goya’s *Nude Maja* and Ingres’s *Grande Odalisque* to Édouard Manet’s *Olympia*.

It was in 1916 that Modigliani directed his attention to this traditional genre for the first time. The art dealer Leopold Zborowski from Poland encouraged the collectors Jonas Netter and Roger Dutilleul to acquire a substantial number of these works, which rescued Modigliani from his miserable financial situation at least temporarily. Zborowski also made models and a studio available to him, where Modigliani could withdraw for nude painting.

By the end of 1917, he had created as many as 25 female nudes, which present themselves against dark red backdrops. There is a balance between the intimacy of voyeuristic observation and the matter-of-course naturalness of the nude body. What is particularly sensual about these works is the unprecedented closeness and powerful presence of corporeality, which has not been softened by any mythological narrative. Modigliani trusts in glowing colors rather than in the imitation of the skin and flesh for the creation of eroticism. The stylized curvilinear outlines, permitting Modigliani to let go of a realistic rendition of the body, are another guarantor of sensuality. Only by openly showing the model’s pubic hair does Modigliani violate the taboo of exposing the sex. The stylization of the silhouettes and the formalization achieved by curvilinearity are archaic stylistic features borrowed from Cycladic figurines. In their natural corporeality, however, Modigliani’s nudes are far removed from the strictly stylized caryatids of his almost geometrically constructed early work.

In 1917, Modigliani exhibited twenty nudes at the gallery of Berthe Weill in Paris: it was to be the only solo exhibition during his lifetime. The show turned out a scandal. When the police threatened to confiscate the pictures because they were considered an “offense against public decency,” the nudes were taken down. Modigliani did not sell a single picture and from then on until his death would only paint ten chastely covered nudes, as well as pictures in the nude of his great love Jeanne Hébuterne, the mother of his daughter.

“Botticelli nègre”

In 1917, Modigliani met the young art student Jeanne Hébuterne (1898–1920): the love of his short life. They moved in together, living in the rue de la Grande Chaumière in Montparnasse.

In the nearby studio, Modigliani painted erotic female nudes on red grounds, whereas in the apartment he simultaneously did elegant portraits of ladies in brightly shimmering blues, featuring manneristically elongated bodies and necks. The folded hands and austerity of the seated figures underscore their solemn expression, while a light contrapposto animates the frontally viewed sitters.

The sitters float in space rather than sit. They are reminiscent of Christian icons painted on monochrome blue. Modigliani quotes the motif of the seated Madonna, the *Maestà*. These portraits are the milestones of Modigliani’s so-called “classicist” phase, his final period: the walls of his apartment were covered with photographs of works by classical artists, from Botticelli to Titian.

The return to Italian “Primitivism” and the allusion to Mary, the Mother of God, were probably motivated by the progressing war and its atrocities. Modigliani added such fashionable details as necklaces, collars, scarves, or ties to the hieratic figures with their emotionless expressions, vacant stares averted from all things visible, and simplified silhouettes, all of which still relied on archaic, non-European examples. The art critic and writer Adolphe Basler thus referred to Modigliani as “Botticelli nègre.”

Exile in Nice

In March 1918, Modigliani and Jeanne Hébuterne escaped the German air raids on Paris together with Hanka and Leopold Zborowski. It was also Modigliani’s health, having deteriorated since 1917, that drove the chronic lung patient south, to Cagnes-sur-Mer and Nice. Modigliani and Jeanne stayed for over a year. Shortly after the armistice was signed in November 1918, their daughter Jeanne was born.

The “classicist” style of Modigliani’s late period, with its elongated, rounded contours and loosely applied pastel tones, developed. It underlines the harmony of the subject and the model’s beauty. The colors only show subtle contrasts. The extended proportions give the impression of transcendence, the faces with their empty eyes appearing as removed from reality as masks. In spite of the numerous references to Raphael and Botticelli, Modigliani’s passion for archaic and non-European art lives on in these figures. Lacking professional nude models, Modigliani resorted to prostitutes, but unlike 1916/17 he now painted them bashfully covered. In the last two years of his life he mostly painted those closest to him, first and foremost Jeanne Hébuterne, his love and mother of his daughter. Under the impression of fatherhood approaching, he began portraying children for the first time. He eventually became a sensitive painter of anonymous fellow human beings, from maids and shop girls to working-class women and kids.

The Final Months in Paris

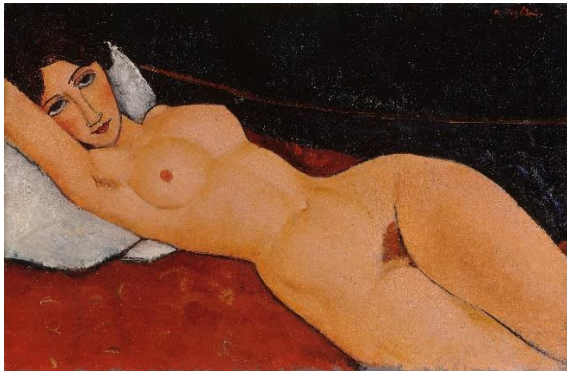
By the end of May 1919, Modigliani and Jeanne Hébuterne were back in Paris. Modigliani's health had deteriorated dramatically: his open tuberculosis was incurable. He continued portraying the people in his immediate surroundings, such as Hanka Zborowska, Jeanne, and Zborowski's maid. After the Fauvists' and Cubists' deformations of objects and bodies, Cézanne's somber palette and the volumes of Picasso's classicism heralded a "return to order" ("retour à l'ordre") in his painting that was generally typical of the period. He applied the paint to the canvas thinly and fluidly, elongating his figures to such an extent that they would appear supernatural. Modigliani has virtually put the burden of the present, the weight of life, into the heavy hands resting in the laps of his sitters, members of the working class with which he identified profoundly. A few years earlier he had similarly placed his focus on the hands of his fellow artists. At that time, Modigliani created some of his most superb works. In autumn 1919 he finally lost his strength and was no longer capable of working.

Only thirty-five years old, Modigliani died of tuberculous meningitis on January 24, 1920. Eight months pregnant, Jeanne Hébuterne, an unmarried mother of a fourteen-month-old daughter and repudiated by her family, jumped to her death from her parents' apartment on the top floor of their house two days later. Modigliani's funeral on the next day at the Cimetière du Père-Lachaise turned out quite an event: "As if a prince had died," they said in Montparnasse. His fellow artists had collected money to pay for the burial. Painters, writers, models, art dealers, past lovers, and the owners of the bars and bistros of Montmartre and Montparnasse bid farewell to Modigliani.

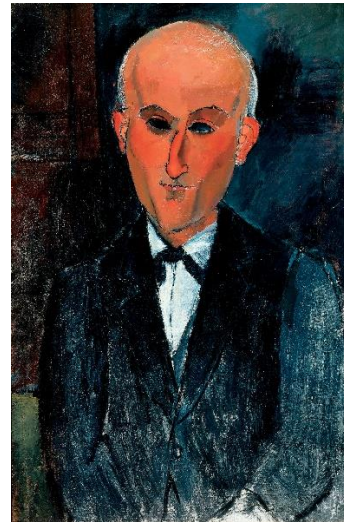
Jeanne Hébuterne and Modigliani would only be reunited in a grave at the cemetery of Père-Lachaise in 1930. Their daughter Jeanne, only fourteen months old, was adopted by Modigliani's sister in Livorno.

Press images

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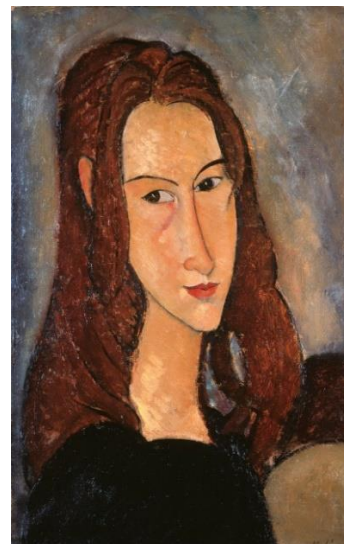
Amedeo Modigliani
Reclining Nude on a White Cushion, 1917
Oil on canvas
© bpk / Staatsgalerie Stuttgart



Amedeo Modigliani
Max Jacob, 1916/17
Oil on canvas
© Cincinnati Art Museum, Ohio, USA. Gift of Mary E. Johnston



Amedeo Modigliani
Young Woman in a Shirt, 1918
Oil on canvas
© ALBERTINA, Wien – Sammlung Batliner



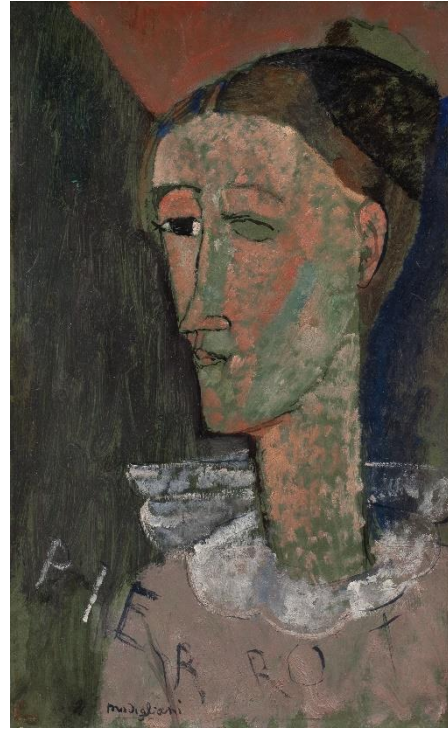
Amedeo Modigliani
Red-Haired Girl (Jeanne Hébuterne), 1918
Oil on canvas
© Private collection

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Amedeo Modigliani
Seated Nude, 1917
Oil on canvas

© Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp,
www.artinflanders.be, photo: Rik Klein Gotink



Amedeo Modigliani
Self-Portrait as Pierrot, 1915
Oil on board

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Amedeo Modigliani
Caryatid with a Vase, ca. 1914

Watercolor, pencil, blue colored pencil on paper
Tate London, Bequeathed by Mrs A.F. Kessler 1983
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Amedeo Modigliani
Head, Sandstone, 1911/12

© Minneapolis Institute of Arts. Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
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Amedeo Modigliani
Woman with blue eyes, ca. 1918
Oil on canvas

© Paris, Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris,
Legs du Docteur Maurice Girardin en 1953

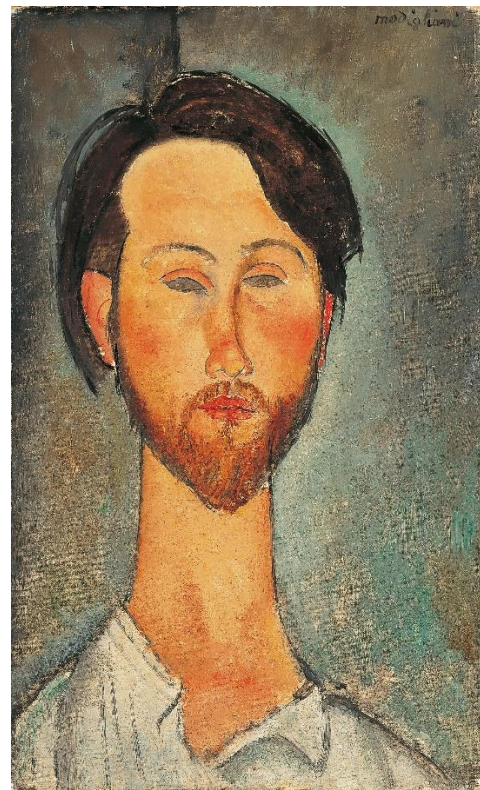


Amedeo Modigliani
Jeanne Hébuterne, 1918
Oil on canvas
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Amedeo Modigliani
Young Man with Cap, 1918
Oil on canvas

© Detroit Institute of Arts / Bridgeman Images

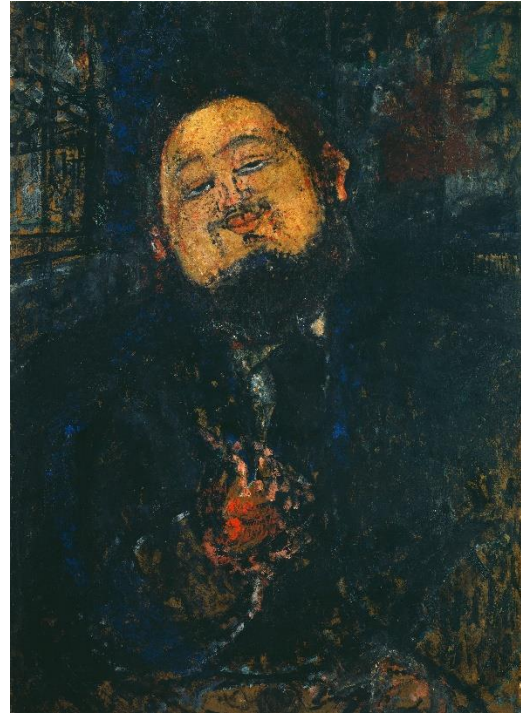


Amedeo Modigliani
Léopold Zborowski, 1916
Oil on canvas
© Fonds de dotation Jonas Netter

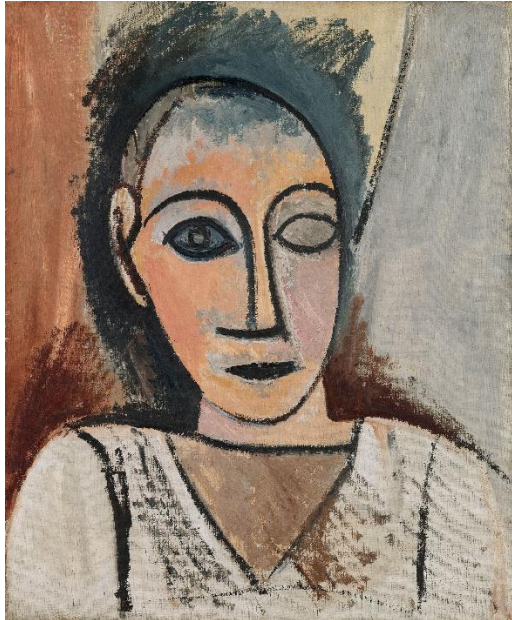
ALBERTINA



Amedeo Modigliani
Elvira with White collar, 1917-1918
Oil on canvas
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Amedeo Modigliani
Diego Rivera, 1914
Oil on canvas
© Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen



Pablo Picasso
Bust of a Man (Study for *Les Femmes d'Alger*), 1907
Oil on canvas
© Succession Picasso / RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean



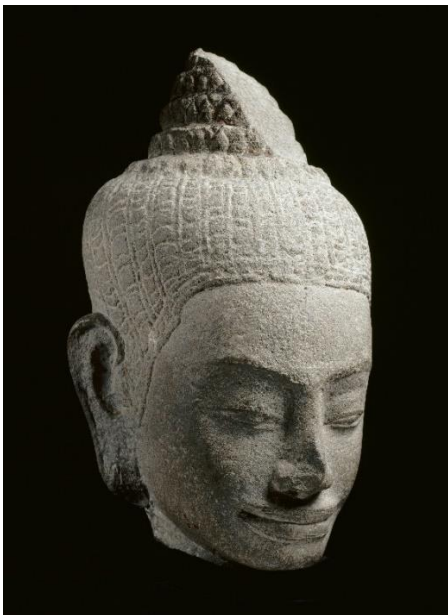
Pablo Picasso
Head of a Woman, 1908
Gouache on paper
© Succession Picasso / GDKE_Landesmuseum Mainz (Ursula Rudischer)



Constantin Brâncuși
Mademoiselle Pogany I, 1913
Polished bronze with black patina
Louisville, The Speed Art Museum
© Speed Art Museum, Louisville. Bequest of
Mrs. Mabel Hussey Degen



Constantin Brâncuși
The First step, um 1914
Vintage silver gelatin print
© Collection David Grob



Anonymous
Female Head Angkor, Bayon style, 12th-13th cent.
Sandstone
© Musée Guimet – Musée national des arts
asiatiques, Paris. Foto:RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG,
Paris) / Michel Urtado



Anonymous
Relic Head, Fang, 19th cent.
Wood and brass
© Sainsbury Center, University of East Anglia,
Norwich (former collection Paul Guillaume)