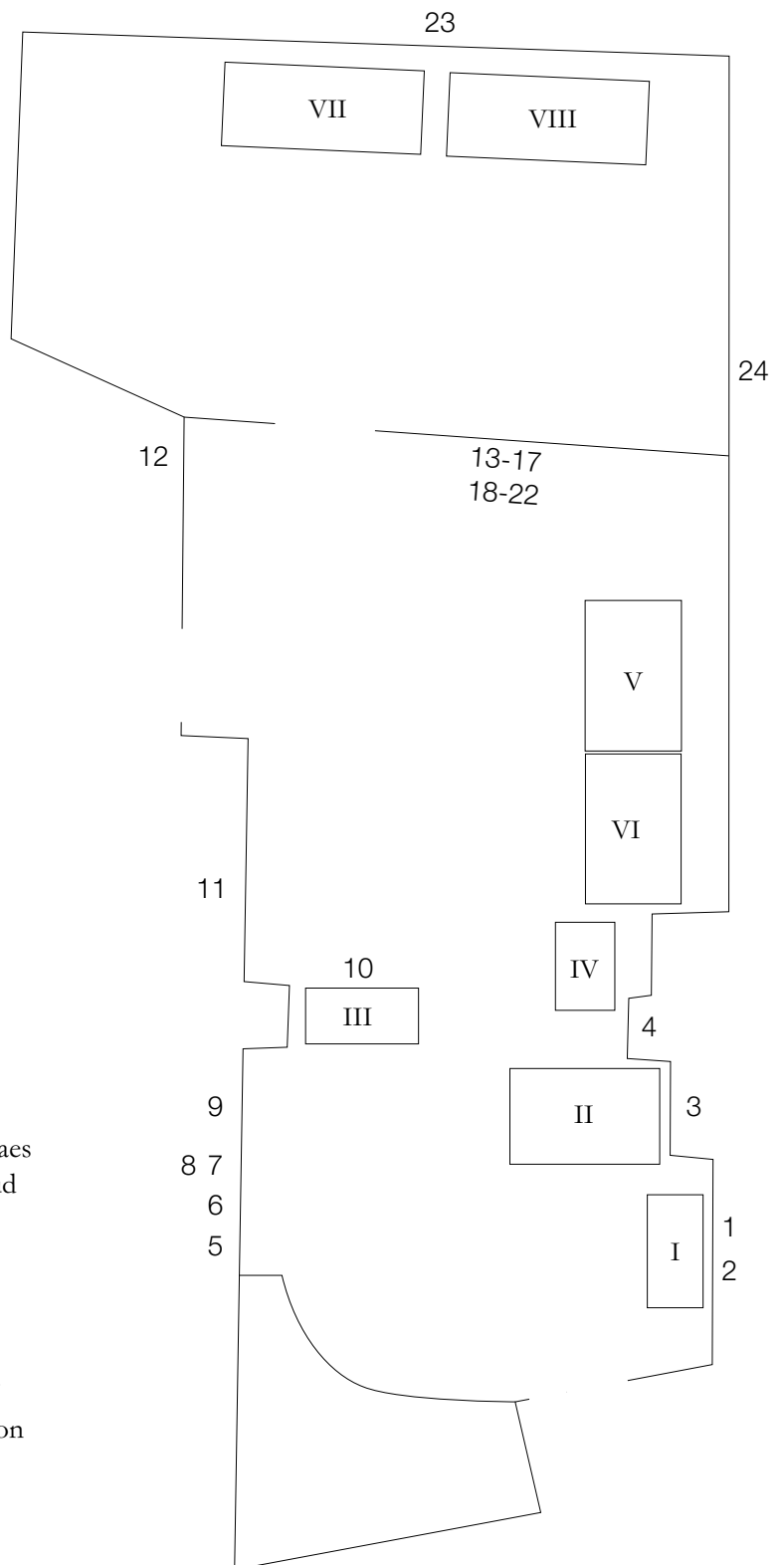


Christophstraße 18
50670 Köln

**Antonin Artaud
Balthus**

This exhibition is the third at Christophstraße 18 conceived with Michael Sanchez, following presentations devoted to Raymond Roussel and Claes Oldenburg / Jack Smith. It turns to Antonin Artaud and Balthus, tracing their initial encounter and subsequent collaboration during the 1930s.

Organized around their work on the theater production *Les Cenci*, the exhibition also explores the motif of the double that is essential to both of their thought. Alongside material from the collection of Daniel Buchholz and Christopher Müller, the exhibition also includes essential loans from the collection of Reiner Speck.



1.
Balthus
Portrait of Antonin Artaud, 1935/c. 1990
Lithograph
35 x 29 cm
Edition of 60
Signed lower right and numbered (9/60) lower left

2.
Balthus
Self-Portrait (Cr 1716), c. 1933-1935?
Ink and pencil on paper
26.3 x 16 cm

Vitrine I.

Artaud, Antonin
“Les Cenci.”
In: *La Bête Noire* 2 (May 1, 1935), p. 1. Illustrated with a portrait of Artaud by Balthus.

Balthus
Self-Portrait (D443), 1933 (reproduction)

Balthus
Cathy Dressing, 1933 (reproduction)

Balthus
Portrait of Antonin Artaud, 1934 (reproduction)

This drawing of Artaud seated in a chair in Balthus’s studio appears to be the artist’s first portrait of him.

Balthus
Portrait of Antonin Artaud (D458), 1935 (reproduction)

Balthus
Portrait of Antonin Artaud (D456), 1935 (reproduction)

These two closely related portraits, depicting only Artaud’s head, were likely produced during rehearsals for *The Cenci*. The first, in which Artaud faces left, was previously owned by the poet Tristan Tzara and is now at the Bibliothèque nationale de France. The second, drawn on the reverse of Le Dôme café stationery and showing Artaud facing right, was formerly in the collection of Balthus’s dealer Pierre Matisse. It appeared as an illustration to Artaud’s text on *The Cenci* in *La Bête Noire* (May 1935) and was issued as a lithograph around 1990 (see no. 1).

Artaud, Antonin
Letter to Balthus, January 31, 1936.
In: *Die Tarahumaras. Revolutionäre Botschaften. Aus dem Französischen von Brigitte Weidmann* (Munich: Rogner and Bernhard, 1975), pp. 266–267.

In this letter from Havana, sent shortly after leaving for Mexico in 1936, Artaud told Balthus that the divergent orientations of these Janus-faced portraits expressed the transitional character of his life at that moment: “Your terribly unconscious understanding has managed to show me – with the weariness and the excess of the feminine profile facing left, which leaves behind a hideous past, and with the fiery, alert, excited aspect of the profile facing right, which wants to devour my future—exactly my place, and beyond that, to point me toward a new one.”

3.

Balthus

Study for "It was one of their chief amusements to run away to the moors and remain there all day" (recto) / Studies for "It was one of their chief amusements to run away to the moors and remain there all day" and "You need not have touched me" (verso), all from "Wuthering Heights" (11557), c. 1932

Ink on paper

26 x 19.7 cm

Around 1932, Balthus began a series of illustrations for Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, in which he modeled the figure of Heathcliff on himself and on Artaud. The complete set of fifteen was only published in 1993 by the Limited Editions Club. The largest drawing on this double-sided sheet is a study for the scene of Heathcliff and Cathy on the moors, the finished version of which appears in the Limited Editions Club publication.

Vitrine II.

Balthus and Brontë, Emily

Wuthering Heights. Fifteen Lithographs and an Afterword by Balthus

New York: The Limited Editions Club, 1993.

42 x 31.5 cm, publisher's crushed morocco, title stamped in brown, 208 pp.

One of 300 copies signed by the artist

Balthus

"Illustrations pour 'Wuthering Heights.'"

In: *Minotaure* 7 (1935), pp. 60–61.

Eight of Balthus's illustrations for *Wuthering Heights* were published in the review *Minotaure* in 1935.

Balthus and Jouve, Pierre Jean

Urne. Avec un dessin de Balthus

Paris: G. L. M., 1936

25 x 19.5 cm, loose sheets in printed wrappers, 12 pp.

One of 70 copies on Normandy vellum teinté. With an additional suite of five proofs of the frontispiece by Balthus on different colored paper. Inscribed by Jouve to Georges Hugnet.

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

The poet and novelist Pierre Jean Jouve was a supporter of Balthus in the 1930s and collaborated with him on the artist's book *Urne* (Urn) in 1936. His frontispiece illustration is reminiscent of his drawings for *Wuthering Heights*.

Artaud, Antonin

"Annabella au Théâtre des Champs-Élysées."

In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 254 (November 1934), pp. 797.

Balthus's first theatrical project was designing the sets for this production of Jules Supervielle's adaptation of William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, starring the actress Annabella as Rosalind. In his review of the production, Artaud singled out Balthus's set designs of forests for particular acclaim: "All of Balthus's forests in this production are profound, mysterious, full of somber grandeur. Unlike other set designs of forests, they contain shadows and have a rhythm that speaks to the soul. Behind the trees and lights of nature, they evoke screams, words, sounds. They are all imaginary conceptions, where the spirit breathes." Artaud's enthusiasm for these designs led him to invite Balthus to create the sets and costumes for *The Cenci*.

[Balthus]

Production photograph of the forest set in *Comme il vous plaira* (As You Like It) at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, 1934 (reproduction)

4.

[Balthus]

Poster for *Comme il vous plaira* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, October 12–November 4, 1934

Lithograph

60 x 40 cm

The large drawing by Balthus on this poster appears to depict Rosalind disguised as a shepherd boy. Her facial features are modeled on Antoinette de Watteville, who also served as the prototype for Cathy in Balthus's *Wuthering Heights* illustrations.

5.

Balthus

Study for "The Barracks" (D424), 1931

Ink on paper

26.7 x 34.8 cm

Signed lower right

Balthus met Artaud upon returning to Paris from his military service in Kénitra, Morocco, where he was stationed from November 1930 to early 1932. These early studies for the large painting *The Barracks* (1933) appear to have been made during this period. In drawing D428, the positioning of the horse and the perspectival lines are modeled on Leonardo da Vinci's study for the background of *The Adoration of the Magi*.

6.

Balthus

Study for "The Barracks" (D427), 1931

Ink on paper

26.5 x 31 cm

Signed lower center

7.

Balthus

Study for "The Barracks" (D428), 1931

Ink on paper

26.5 x 32 cm

Signed lower right

8.

Balthus

Study for "The Barracks" (D425), 1931

Ink on paper

26.5 x 35 cm

Signed lower left

9.

Balthus

Study for "The Spahi and His Horse", 1949

Oil on canvas

73 x 60 cm

Signed and dated lower left

10.

Balthus

Study for "The Street" (D413; recto), 1929–1930 / *Dormitory in Kénitra (D420; verso)*, 1931

Pencil and ink on paper

23 x 28.5 cm

Signed on verso lower left

This double-sided sheet contains an early study for *The Street* and a finished drawing of a military dormitory in Kénitra – a subject that Balthus reconceived as an outdoor scene in *The Barracks* (1933).

Vitrine III.

Balthus

The Barracks, 1933 (reproduction)

Balthus

The Spahi and His Horse, 1949 (reproduction)

[Balthus]

Invitation card to Balthus's solo exhibition at Galerie Pierre, April 13–28, 1934 (reproduction)

Balthus's first solo exhibition was held at the Galerie Pierre, owned by Pierre Loeb, in April 1934. The annotations on this copy of the card are in the hand of Loeb's assistant, Henriette Gomès.

Artaud, Antonin

"Exposition Balthus à la Galerie Pierre."

In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 248 (May 1934), pp. 899–900.

Artaud's review of the Balthus exhibition at the Galerie Pierre in 1934 marks the first publicly documented trace of the friendship between the two men. The exhibition included major works such as *The Street*, whose scenographic quality relates to his own preoccupations with theater at the time. In his review, Artaud noted the specific type of theatricality in Balthus's paintings, which he described as "a kind of *trompe l'oeil* that extends beyond the painting itself to include the setting in which the canvas is placed." His characterization of the nude figure in *Cathy Dressing* as cruel and dangerous resonates with his contemporaneous writings on the Theater of Cruelty.

Vitrine IV.

Artaud, Antonin

Autograph letter, signed (twice), to André Gide

[Paris], Tuesday, March 23, 1932

21 x 13.3 cm, 22 pp., in ink.

In 1932, Artaud began to formulate a new theatrical project—what he would soon call the Theater of Cruelty. This unpublished letter appears to be the first that Artaud wrote to André Gide proposing to found such a theater. It was part of a broader campaign in which Artaud wrote to several writers affiliated with the *Nouvelle Revue Française*—including Valéry Larbaud, Paul Valéry, Julien Benda, and Jean Paulhan—soliciting their support for an advisory committee for his new theatrical enterprise. It appears that Gide did not respond to this initial appeal, as a follow-up letter dated March 29 reiterated the request and proposed a meeting. In a third letter, dated August 7, Artaud asked again for permission to list Gide's name among the proposed committee in a text he intended to publish shortly thereafter in the NRF, likely "Le théâtre de la Cruauté (manifeste)" of October 1932. Gide finally responded on August 16, apologizing for the delay but declining Artaud's request.

Artaud, Antonin

"La mise en scène et la métaphysique."

In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 221 (February 1932), pp. 219–234.

In this essay titled "Staging and Metaphysics," Artaud outlined the theoretical tenets of the new conception of theater that would preoccupy him for the next several years. Central to this project was a rejection of the traditional Western model of theater subordinated to text in favor of an embodied language of gesture. Artaud aligned this approach with non-Western performance traditions, such as Balinese theater, and with modern physical comedy, notably that of the Marx Brothers.

11.

Balthus

Study for "Young Girl at the Window" (D895), 1957

Pencil on paper

43.5 x 28.2 cm

Vitrine V.

Artaud, Antonin and Vitrac, Roger
Le Théâtre Alfred Jarry et l'hostilité publique

[Paris]: Le Théâtre Alfred Jarry, 1930

19.2 x 15 cm, wrappers illustrated by Gaston Louis Roux, 48 pp. With nine photomontages by Eli Lotar.

The Théâtre Alfred Jarry was the direct precursor to the Theater of Cruelty. From 1927 to 1929, Artaud, together with Roger Vitrac and Robert Aron, staged productions of avant-garde plays under the auspices of this theater. Hosted by different Parisian theaters, its repertoire included new works by Vitrac and Artaud as well as plays by precursors such as August Strindberg. This booklet, published shortly after the troupe's dissolution, gathers excerpts from hostile reviews of their productions.

[Artaud, Antonin]

Théâtre Alfred Jarry (3e Spectacle): Le Songe ou Jeu de Rêves de Strindberg. Traduction française de l'auteur. Mise en scène d'Antonin Artaud. Joué pour la première fois à Paris les samedi 2 et 9 juin 1928, à 15 heures au Théâtre de l'Avenue

Paris: [Le Théâtre Alfred Jarry], 1928.

21 x 13 cm, wrappers, 6 pp.

Artaud, Antonin

"Le théâtre de la cruauté (manifeste)."

In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 229 (October 1932), pp. 603-614.

In this essay—known as the "First Manifesto" of the Theater of Cruelty—Artaud expands on ideas first outlined in "Staging and Metaphysics," offering concrete guidance on staging practices including set design, lighting, costumes, and sound. These principles would later be realized in his 1935 production of *The Cenci*.

Artaud, Antonin

Le théâtre de la cruauté (manifeste)

Paris: La Nouvelle Revue Française, 1932.

22 x 13.5 cm, wrappers, 12 pp.

Offprint of the article published in *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 229 (October 1932).

Artaud, Antonin

Le théâtre de la cruauté

[Paris]: [Denoël et Steele], 1933.

17 x 11 cm, wrappers, unpaginated.

Published the year after Artaud's initial text titled "The Theater of Cruelty," this essay—often referred to as the "Second Manifesto"—emphasizes the theater's roots in myth and ritual. Artaud calls for the elimination of the stage and full immersion of the audience within the performance space. He also defines cruelty as a form of strictness or rigor, a concept that resonates with the stiffly posed figures that populate Balthus's paintings.

Artaud, Antonin

"Le théâtre de la cruauté."

In: *14 rue du Dragon* 2 (April 1933), no. 15.

Artaud published an excerpt from the opening pages so-called "Second Manifesto" in *14 rue du Dragon*, a short-lived review named after the address of its publisher, Tériade. Tériade also published the review *Minotaure*.

Artaud, Antonin

"Le théâtre et la peste."

In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 253 (October 1934), pp. 481-499.

In this essay, Artaud introduced the idea of theater as contagion – capable of physically infecting the audience and disrupting social order, much like outbreaks of plague had done centuries earlier. This notion may have been influenced in part by his encounter with Balthus's exhibition several months before. In later notes on Balthus's work, recorded in several of his 1947 notebooks, Artaud remarked: "I do not know why

the painting of Balthus reeks so much of the plague, of storms, and of epidemics.”

Artaud, Antonin
Héliogabale, ou l'anarchiste couronné
Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1934
19.5 x 14.3 cm, wrappers, 191 pp.
Copy 1 (of 5) on alfa paper

A precursor to the figure of Count Francesco Cenci that appeared in his adaptation of *The Cenci* the following year, Heliogabalus embodies Artaud's interest in transgressive characters who disrupt social and moral order through excess and violence. In *Heliogabalus, or The Anarchist Crowned*, Artaud presents the Roman emperor as a priest-king who dissolves the boundaries between the sacred and the profane through ritualistic excess and sexual transgression—much as he himself sought to do in his Theater of Cruelty. The destruction of the family—which occurs through acts of incest in both *Heliogabalus* and *The Cenci*—emerges as a key theme in Artaud's later work, which positioned itself against normative family structures and the forms of biological reproduction that sustained them.

Artaud, Antonin
“Les Cenci.”
In: *K: Revue de la poésie* 1–2 (1948), pp. 14–20.

This is the first publication of Artaud's script for *The Cenci*.

[Artaud, Antonin]
Production photograph of *The Cenci*, Théâtre des Folies-Wagram, 1935
In: Fau, Guillaume, ed., *Antonin Artaud* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 2006), p. 124.
This photograph shows the scene from *The Cenci* depicted in Balthus's set design study (see no. 12).

Artaud, Antonin
“Notes de mise en scène d'Antonin Artaud pour *Les Cenci*.”
In: *Cahiers Renaud Barrault* 51 (November 1965), p. 20–37.

Jouve, Pierre Jean
“Les Cenci d'Antonin Artaud.”
In: *La Nouvelle Revue Française* 261 (June 1935), pp. 910–915.

Antonin Artaud
Le Théâtre et son double
Paris: Gallimard, 1938
19 x 14 cm, wrappers, 154 pp.
One of 400 copies on Châtaigniers

In October 1937, Artaud was forcibly institutionalized for the first time. This volume, published in February 1938 without his direct involvement, compiles a selection of his writings on the theater from the past six years. Although only loosely related to the book's contents, the title emphasizes the theme of the double—a motif that would become increasingly central to Artaud's thinking in the period that followed.

Artaud, Antonin
Le théâtre de Séraphin
Saint-Maurice d'Ételan: Pierre Bettencourt, 1948
19 x 10 cm, wrappers, 52 pp.
One of 220 copies on Arches

Vitrine VI.

Artaud, Antonin

Autograph letter, signed, to Cécile Denoël.

[Paris], [c. February 1935]

28.5 x 19 cm, 2 pp., in ink

Collection of Reiner Speck

This letter to Cécile Denoël—the wife of Artaud's then-publisher, Robert Denoël—was sent with a copy of the script for *The Cenci*. In it, Artaud recommended that she play the role of Lucretia, which she ultimately did. The letter also refers to corrections in the script similar to those visible in the copy below.

Artaud, Antonin

Original typescript, signed (twice), of the script for *Les Cenci*.

[Paris], [c. February 1935].

27 x 21 cm, 36 pp., typewritten, with autograph corrections in a secretarial hand

Signed by Artaud on the first and last pages

Artaud's biographer Florence de Mèredieu has suggested that typescripts such as this one were produced in February 1935, in preparation for a private reading of *The Cenci* at the apartment of Artaud's friend and supporter, the aviator Jean-Marie Conty. The purpose of this reading was to recruit potential actors and patrons for the production, including Robert and Cécile Denoël and Lady Abdy.

[Artaud, Antonin]

Ticket for the opening gala of *Les Cenci* at the Théâtre des Folies-Wagram, May 7, 1935

Letterpress with handwritten corrections

12 x 18 cm

The opening gala for *Les Cenci* was originally scheduled for May 6, but was postponed to May 7—a change reflected in all surviving copies of the ticket, each of which is corrected by hand. The gala benefitted the Cercle François Villon, a charitable organization that operated a restaurant for unemployed artists and intellectuals in Montparnasse. The patrons committee included the American heiress Winnaretta Singer, known as Princesse Edmond de Polignac, and Comte Étienne de Beaumont, both of whom were prominent supporters of the avant-garde.

12.

Balthus

Set design study for Act 4, Scene 3 of "Les Cenci" (T1612), c. 1935

Ink on paper

21 x 27 cm

This study depicts the set for the final scene of *The Cenci*, in which Beatrice Cenci awaits execution for her role in the conspiracy to murder her father. The shadow of the execution wheel—suspended from the ceiling—is cast on the floor. Once lowered, Beatrice Cenci is tied to its spokes by her hair, emitting screams as the wheel turns. The broken staircase at left is inspired by Giovanni Battista Piranesi's etching *Gothic Arch* (c. 1749), while the pedimented structure in the background references Piero della Francesca's fresco cycle *The Legend of the True Cross* (1447–1466) a frequent source for Balthus's paintings.

13.

Balthus

Costume design study for Beatrice Cenci (T1617), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

30.5 x 19 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

14.

Balthus

Costume design study for Beatrice Cenci (T1616), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

29.8 x 18.7 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

15.

Balthus

Costume design study for Beatrice Cenci (T1618), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

30.5 x 18.7 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

Beatrice Cenci was played by Lady Iya Abdy, a Russian émigré and amateur actress who Balthus had introduced to Artaud. Balthus used her face as the model for these designs. Costumes of different colors reflected her shifting emotional states during the play; she wore a black dress in the scene where she plotted the murder of her father.

16.

Balthus

Costume design study for Beatrice Cenci (T1615), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

29.5 x 19.3 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

17.

Balthus

Costume design study for Lucretia Cenci (T1619), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

20 x 16.5 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

The role of Lucretia Cenci, the wife of Francesco Cenci, was played by Cécile Denoël.

18.

Balthus

Costume design study for Count Francesco Cenci (T1622), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

29.8 x 18.7 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

The role of Count Francesco Cenci was played by Artaud himself; in this sketch, the face of the figure is modeled on Artaud's own.

19.

Balthus

Costume design study for Count Francesco Cenci (T1623), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

29.2 x 18.5 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

20.

Balthus

Costume design study for a male figure, probably Bernardo Cenci (T1624), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

29.5 x 18.7 cm

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

21.

Balthus

Costume design study for Bernardo Cenci (T1621), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

30.5 x 18.7 cm

Annotated lower center

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

22.

Balthus

Costume design study for Giacomo Cenci (T1620), c. 1935

Pencil, ink, and watercolor on paper

30.5 x 18.7 cm

Annotated lower center

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

The roles of Count Cenci's sons Giacomo and Bernardo were played by Julien Bertheau and Yves Forget, respectively. The raggedness of Giacomo's costume alludes to his mistreatment at the hands of his father.

Back Room

23.

Pierre Klossowski

La cheminée, 1954

Pencil on paper

100 x 72 cm

Signed and dated ("Hiver 1954") lower right

Collection of Reiner Speck, Cologne

In 1953, the writer Pierre Klossowski asked his brother, Balthus, to create a series of drawings to illustrate his novel *Roberte ce soir*. Finding that Balthus's drawings strayed too far from the details of the text, Klossowski decided to make his own illustrations instead. *La cheminée* (The Fireplace) was the first of these to appear in the book. Its composition seems to draw partly from an earlier painting by Balthus titled *Les Beaux Jours*, but with significant changes, most notably the transformation of the main female figure into a woman modeled on his wife, Denise Morin-Sinclair.

Vitrine VII.

Klossowski, Pierre

Roberte ce soir. Illustré par l'Auteur.

Paris: Editions de Minuit, 1954

18.8 x 12 cm, wrappers, 138 pp., illustrated with four drawings by the author

One of 50 copies on Johannot paper, which include two additional drawings laid-in on pp. 86 and 132, each of which is titled in pen by Klossowski on the reverse. Inscribed by the author to Henriette and André Gomès.

[Klossowski, Pierre]

Invitation card to Pierre Klossowski's private exhibition at 3, cour de Rohan, Paris, June 29, 1955

Letterpress

10.5 x 14 cm

Klossowski's first exhibition was organized by Henriette Gomès in Balthus's studio in the cour de Rohan, where he moved following his suicide attempt. It included the drawing *La cheminée*.

Balthus

Les beaux jours (1944-1946)

Reproduced in: *Balthus* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1956), p. 23.

Klossowski, Pierre

"Du nom de 'Roberte' en tant que signe unique."

In: *Les lettres nouvelles* 19 (November 1961), pp. 78–101.

Vitrine VIII.

Klossowski, Pierre

Origines cultuelles et mythiques d'un certain comportement des dames romaines

Montpellier: Fata Morgana, 1968

25 x 16.3 cm, wrappers, 78 pp.

One of 60 on vélin d'Arches, with a signed and numbered copy of the frontispiece illustration. With an additional sheet of three original pen-and-ink drawings by Klossowski.

Hoffmann, Heinrich

Der Stuwwpeter

Mainz: Jos. Schulz, c. 1935.

25 x 19, illustrated boards, 24 pp.

Carroll, Lewis

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland. With 42 Illustrations by John Tenniel

London: Macmillan, 1898.

18 x 12.5 cm, illustrated boards, 187 pp.

Piero della Francesca

The Legend of the True Cross, 1477–1466 (reproduction)

24.

Balthus

Tobias and the Angel (D373), 1926

Ink on paper

21.7 x 18 cm