



Alberto Giacometti  
1942

# Head of a Woman

Alberto Giacometti

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## Not on display

**Title/Description:** Head of a Woman

**Artist/Maker:** Alberto Giacometti

**Born:** 1947

**Object Type:** Drawing

**Materials:** Paper, Pencil

**Measurements:** Unframed: (h. 490 x w. 310 x d. 1 mm) Framed: (h. 738 x w. 534 x d. 20 mm)

**Inscription:** signature

**Accession Number:** 63

**Historic Period:** 20th century

**Production Place:** France

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**Credit Line:** Donated by Robert and Lisa Sainsbury, 1973

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This haunting drawing dates from the period when Giacometti's second mature style was coming into focus; the extraordinary elongation that characterises his sculpture after 1947 is, in modified form, discernible here. The features are described by a series of rhythmic ellipses and triangular elements, and, as with the sculpture, the end result is a curious but compelling combination of closely observed naturalism and distinct stylisation. As Giacometti himself subsequently remarked, when reflecting on this phase of his development: 'In time, I realised what sculpture is all about. I understood new things and I looked at old things in a new way - how should I express it? Have you ever noticed that the truer a work is the more stylised it is? That seems strange, because style certainly does not conform to the reality of appearances, and yet the heads that come closest to resembling people I see on the street are those that are the least naturalistic - the sculptures of the Egyptians, the Chinese, the archaic Greeks, and the Sumerians' (Hohl, 1972:278).

Entry taken from *Robert and Lisa Sainsbury Collection* 3 volume catalogue, edited by Steven Hooper (Yale University Press, 1997).

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## **Provenance**

Acquired by the Sainsbury Family in 1952. Donated to the Sainsbury Centre, University of East Anglia in 1973 as part of the original gift.

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