

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Pierre Klossowski

130 East 64th Street, New York
November 10 – December 19, 2015
Opening November 8, 12–5 pm

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce an exhibition of works by Pierre Klossowski. Immersed in literature and art within his family of artists since childhood, Klossowski was mentored by Rainer Maria Rilke and André Gide. Fluent in French, German, and Latin, the artist translated works by Benjamin, Kafka, Virgil, Nietzsche, Hölderlin, and Saint Augustine, among others. The arrival of World War II prompted Klossowski's theological studies, which concluded only a few years later when he renounced Catholicism and Lutheranism. Klossowski published several novels and essays before his career in art, and was commended by Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, and other postmodern figures. Klossowski's artistic career began at age 49 when he included six drawings to accompany his novel *Roberte ce soir*.

This exhibition will include Klossowski's early graphite drawings from 1957 as well as several polychromatic works made after 1972, when he began using colored-pencils in his work. The graphite drawing of a figure resembling his wife, titled *Etude de nu, Denise* (1957), is the smallest and earliest work on view in the exhibition. Also bearing resemblance to Denise, the character Roberte reoccurs as the protagonist in Klossowski's erotic compositions, and is seen in *La Déclaration Intempestive ou Roberte à l'Hotel de Longchamps* (1979), *La generosite de Roberte* (1983), and *Roberte aux barres parallèles* (1984). His artworks evoke characters and scenes from his novels, but they are not merely illustrations of his writing. Instead, Klossowski's drawings and writings alternate as vehicles of ritualistic and repeated returns to allegories, myths, and literature.

Described by Klossowski as *grandes machines*, his large drawings are rich with Sadean decadence and Surrealist sensibilities; the Mannerist-like figures are rendered in labor-intensive feathery pencil strokes. Repetition is central to Klossowski's works, whether it is via notions of "simulacrum" or *mise en abyme*. *La migraine de Charmide* (1984) and *Charmide se soumettant à l'incantation de Socrate* (1985) belong to the Charmide and Socrates series, referencing Plato's dialogue and mirroring the Socratic relationship between Klossowski and André Gide. As one rendition of the archetypal myth Klossowski has depicted since the 1950's, *Lucrece et Tarquin* (1990) is also a work by the fictional artist Tonnere within Klossowski's novel *La Révocation de l'édit de Nantes*. Very different from Titian or Tintoretto's Lucretia and Tarquin, Klossowski's version conveys a peculiarity through the matron's hand gestures and facial expressions; the latter modeled after the artist's wife, Denise.

Pierre Klossowski (1905-2001) was born in Paris and lived between France, Germany, and Switzerland. His work has been the subject of major survey exhibitions at Circulo de Bellas Artes de Madrid, Madrid (2007); Centre Pompidou – Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris (2007); Museum Ludwig, Köln (2006); Whitechapel Art Gallery, London (2006); Sala Parpalló, Valencia (1991); Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (1991); and Kunsthalle, Bern (1981). Klossowski's works were included in *documenta 7*, Kassel, in 1982. The Artist authored several publications, including *Le Bain de Diane* (1980); *Le Baphomet* (1965); *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (1969); *La Monnaie vivante* (1970); and the trilogy *Les Lois de l'hospitalité*, consisted of *Roberte ce soir* (1954), *La Révocation de l'édit de Nantes* (1959), and *Le Souffleur* (1960).

For further information, please contact Ariel Hudes
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New York gallery hours: Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 6pm
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday - Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 12pm - 6pm