

Modigliani



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ABOUT THIS BOOK

THE TEXT FOR this volume is a perceptive and colorful reminiscence of Amedeo Modigliani by his close friend, the world-famous sculptor Jacques Lipchitz. The thirty pages of full color plates include portraits of notable artists and poets, swan-necked women, delicately drawn nudes, and wistful, dreamy-eyed children. The black-and-white illustrations present a rich selection of Modigliani's drawings and sculpture, some never before reproduced.

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Plate 1. AMEDEO MODIGLIANI

Photograph courtesy William S. Lieberman

AMEDEO

MODIGLIANI

(1884-1920)

text by

JACQUES LIPCHITZ

THE HILLA VON REBAY FOUNDATION
77 MORNINGSIDE DRIVE
GREENS FARMS, CONNECTICUT 06436



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On the cover
detail of GIRL WITH BRAIDS (plate 22)

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MILTON S. FOX, Editor



Plate 2. NUDE. 1917. Oil. The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, N. Y.

Modigliani

For some strange reason, when I think of Modigliani now, I always associate him with poetry. Is it because it was the poet Max Jacob who introduced me to him? Or is it because when Max introduced us—it was in the Luxembourg Gardens in Paris, in 1913—Modigliani suddenly began to recite by heart the *Divine Comedy* at the top of his voice?

I remember that, without understanding a word of Italian, I was fascinated by his melodious outburst

and his handsome appearance: he looked aristocratic even in his worn-out corduroys. But even after I had known him a long time, Modigliani would surprise us often with his love and knowledge of poetry—sometimes at the most awkward moments.

I recall a scene, one night (it must have been in 1917) very late, maybe three o'clock in the morning. We were suddenly aroused from our sleep by a terrific pounding on the door. I opened. It was Modigliani, obviously quite drunk. In a shaky voice he tried to tell me he remembered seeing on my shelf a volume of poetry by François Villon and he said he would like to have it. I lighted my kerosene lamp to find the book, hoping that he would leave so that I could go back to sleep. But no; he settled down in an armchair and began to recite in a loud voice.

I was living at that time at 54 rue du Montparnasse in a house occupied by working people, and soon my neighbors began to knock on the walls, on the ceiling, on the floor of my room, shouting, "Stop that noise!" This scene is still vivid in my mind: the small room, the darkness of the middle of the night interrupted only by the flickering, mysterious light of the kerosene lamp, Modigliani, drunk, sitting like a phantom in the armchair, completely undisturbed, reciting Villon, his voice growing louder and louder, accompanied by an orchestra of knocking sounds from all around our little cell. Not until he exhausted himself, hours later, did he stop.

We often discussed poetry—Baudelaire, Mallarmé,



*Plate 3. THE BEGGAR OF LEFHORN. 1909. Oil
Collection Dr. Paul Alexandre, Paris*

Rimbaud—and more often than not he would recite by heart some of their verses. His love for poetry touched me, but I admired even more his obviously remarkable memory.

But now, when I think back to the time when I first met Modigliani, in the Luxembourg Gardens, I cannot dissociate that glorious scene—the Parisian sunshine, the beautiful greenness around us—from the tragic end of Max Jacob, marvelous poet and delicate friend. When I heard about Max's sufferings in the concentration camp of Drancy early in the German occupation of France, when I read about him lying among other martyrs on the dirty floor, dying slowly and painfully, immediately the scene in the Luxembourg Gardens came vividly to mind.

The *Divine Comedy* recited by Modigliani and the hell suffered by Max Jacob together make a pathetic image worthy of Modigliani's memory. He knew what it was to suffer, too. He was sick with tuberculosis which killed him; he was hungry and poor. But he was at the same time a *riche nature*—so lovable, so gifted with talent, with sensitivity, with intelligence, with courage. And he was generous—promiscuous, even—with his gifts, which he scattered recklessly to the winds in all the hells and all the artificial paradises.

Before I was introduced to him, I had frequently seen Modigliani in cafés and on the streets of Montparnasse. A friend of mine, Cesare Sofianopulo, painter and poet from Trieste who was one of my



*Plate 4. DR. PAUL ALEXANDRE. 1911. Oil
Collection Dr. Paul Alexandre, Paris*

fellow students at the Académie Julian in 1911 and whose portrait I made at this time, reminded me in a letter just before the Second World War that Modigliani went to school with us, too. I don't remember that at all. The first time we met was when Max Jacob introduced me to him, and Modigliani invited me to his studio at the Cité Falguière. At that time he was making sculpture, and of course I was especially interested to see what he was doing.

When I came to his studio—it was spring or summer—I found him working outdoors. A few heads in stone—maybe five—were standing on the cement floor of the court in front of the studio. He was adjusting them one to the other.

I see him as if it were today, stooping over those heads, while he explained to me that he had conceived all of them as an ensemble. It seems to me that these heads were exhibited later the same year in the Salon d'Automne, arranged in stepwise fashion like tubes of an organ to produce the special music he wanted.

Modigliani, like some others at the time, was very taken with the notion that sculpture was sick, that it had become very sick with Rodin and his influence. There was too much modeling in clay, "too much mud." The only way to save sculpture was to start carving again, direct carving in stone. We had many very heated discussions about this, for I did not for one moment believe that sculpture was sick, nor did I believe that direct carving was by itself a solution to anything. But Modigliani could not be budged; he



*Pl. 5. FRANK BURTY HAVILAND. About 1914. Oil
Collection Gianni Mattioli, Milan*



*Plate 6. HEAD. 1914-15. Limestone
The Museum of Modern Art, New York*



Plate 7. HEAD. 1915. Limestone

Collection Mrs. Orswell Dailey, Pomfret, Conn.



*Plate 8. CARYATID. About 1914. Limestone
The Museum of Modern Art, New York*



*Plate 9. ROSE CARYATID. About 1914. Gouache, pencil, and crayon
Norton Gallery and School of Art, West Palm Beach, Florida*



*Plate 10. BEATRICE HASTINGS. About 1915. Pencil and crayon
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York*

held firmly to his deep conviction. He had been seeing a good deal of Brancusi, who lived nearby, and he had come under his influence. When we talked of different kinds of stone—hard stones and soft stones—Modigliani said that the stone itself made very little difference; the important thing was to give the carved stone the feeling of hardness, and that came from within the sculptor himself: regardless of what stone they use, some sculptors make their work look soft, but others can use even the softest of stones and give their sculpture hardness. Indeed, his own sculpture shows how he used this idea.

It was characteristic of Modigliani to talk like this. His own art was an art of personal feeling. He worked furiously, dashing off drawing after drawing without stopping to correct or ponder. He worked, it seemed, entirely by instinct—which, however, was extremely fine and sensitive, perhaps owing much to his Italian inheritance and his love of the painting of the early Renaissance masters. He could never forget his interest in people, and he painted them, so to say, with abandon, urged on by the intensity of his feeling and vision. This is why Modigliani, though he admired African Negro and other primitive arts as much as any of us, was never profoundly influenced by them—any more than he was by Cubism. He took from them certain stylistic traits, but he was hardly affected by their spirit. His was an immediate satisfaction in their strange and novel forms. But he could not permit abstraction to interfere with feeling, to

get between him and his subjects. And that is why his portraits are such remarkable characterizations and why his nudes are so sexually frank. Incidentally, I would like to mention two other artists whose work influenced Modigliani's style, and who are not often mentioned in this connection: Toulouse-Lautrec and —Boldini, who years ago enjoyed the reputation of being one of Europe's most prominent and most fashionable society portraitists.

If Modigliani's convictions were strong, so were



*Plate 11. MAUD ABRANTES WRITING IN BED. 1908. Pencil
Collection Dr. Paul Alexandre, Paris*



COLOR PLATE (12). THE CELLIST (*study*). 1909
Oil, 29 x 23½". Collection Dr. Paul Alexandre, Paris

also his pride and his courage, which bordered almost on recklessness. I want to recall here one well-known incident which illuminates these traits in his character. Modigliani was not a physically strong man, yet one day in a café he attacked all by himself a gang of royalists, who in France are known for their soldierly courage. He wanted to fight them because he had heard them speaking against the Jews in a dirty way. Modigliani was naturally conscious of his Jewishness and could not bear any unfair criticism of a whole people. He was not urged on by political or



Plate 13

FIGURE

1914-15. *Limestone*

Curt Valentin Gallery

New York



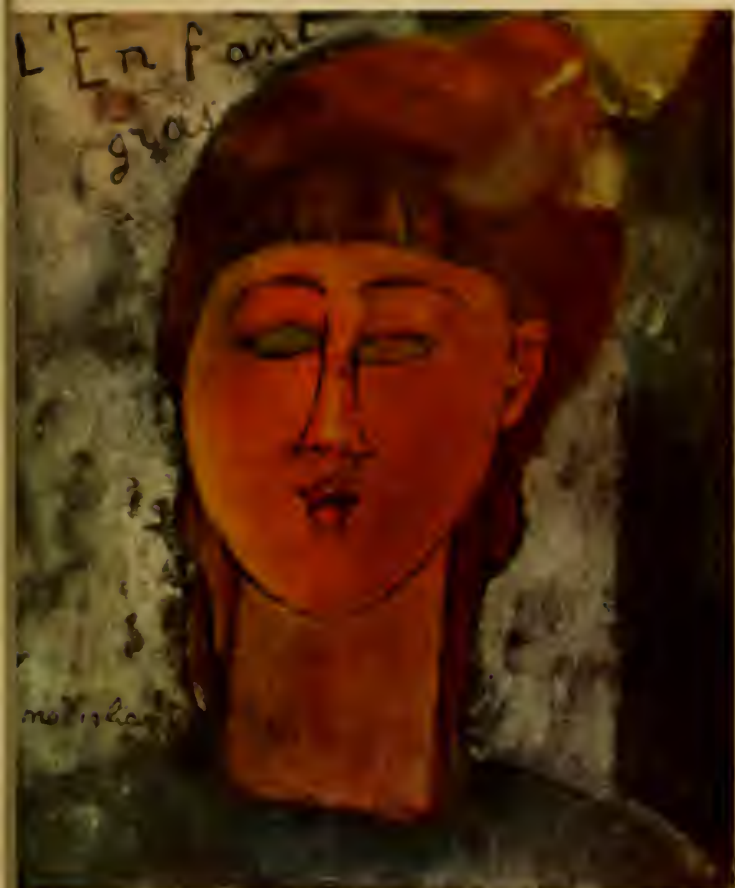
COLOR PLATE (14). CARYATID. 1912. Oil, 32 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 18"
Collection *Az. Verdirame*, Milan

other motives; it was just an inborn part of his personality. This was a very characteristic trend of his nature, understandable because he came from a very old Italian-Jewish family. His mother was a descendant of the great philosopher Spinoza; I heard him speak often about his mother, whom he adored and respected.

His judgment of the plastic arts was very good. It



Plate 15. "MADAM POMPADOUR." 1915. Oil
The Art Institute of Chicago (Winterbotham Coll.)



COLOR PLATE (14). FAT CHILD. 1915. Oil, 18½ x 15"
Private collection, Milan

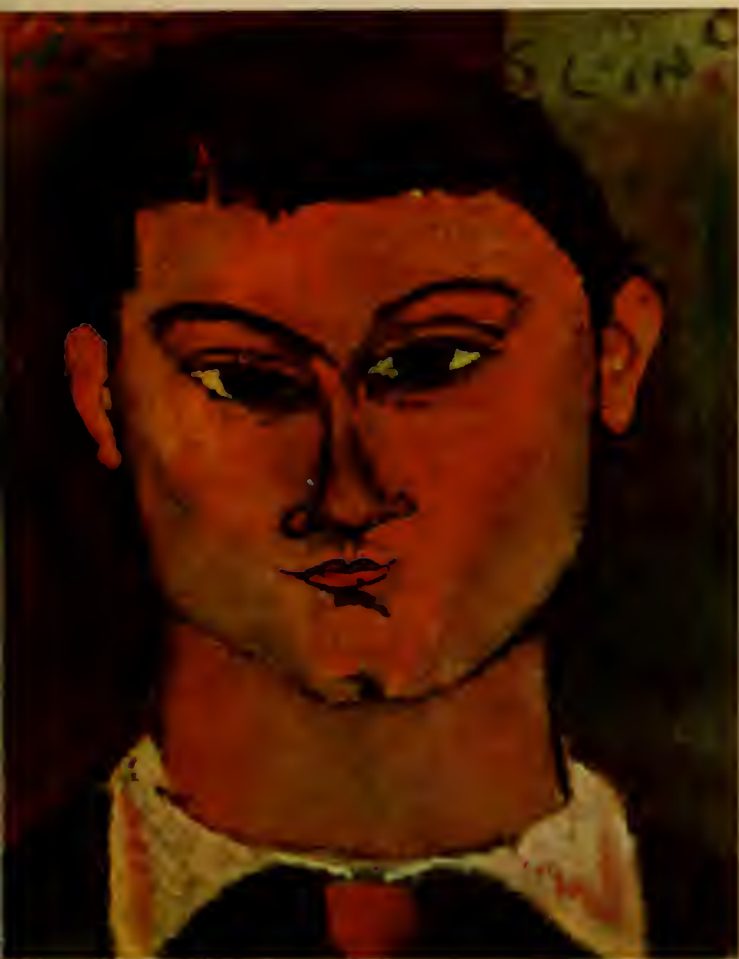


Plate 17. KISLING. 1916. Crayon

Collection Mr. and Mrs. Ira Herbert, New York

was he who helped Chaim Soutine, the painter, who at that time was known to only a few of us. And it was also he who induced Leopold Zborowski, his own dealer, to take an interest in Soutine's painting. Shortly before his death, a very sick man, Modigliani said to Zborowski, "Don't worry, in Soutine I am leaving you a man of genius." To understand this sentence better, one has to know more about the relationship between Modigliani and his dealer.

Leopold Zborowski, a Polish poet, poor but with a



COLOR PLATE (18). KISSING, 1915. Oil, $14\frac{1}{2} \times 10\frac{3}{4}$ "
Collection Jesi, Milan

great love for art, was trying hard to make a living in the hungry Montparnasse at the beginning of the First World War. He bought and sold books, and with the little he made on those operations he acquired paintings—first from his neighbor and friend, Kisling, and later, on Kisling's advice, he began to deal with Modigliani. Kisling was always a very good friend to Modigliani. I saw Modigliani frequently working in Kisling's studio, using the latter's models



Plate 19. BEATRICE HASTINGS. 1916. Oil
Private collection, U. S.



COLOR PLATE (20). PAUL GUILLAUME. 1915. Oil, $31\frac{1}{2} \times 21\frac{1}{4}$ "

Museum of Modern Art, Milan

and also his materials, and meeting the many people who came to see Kisling, a warm and generous comrade.

Little by little Zborowski became successful with his painters; he became known as the dealer of Modigliani, whose work in later years turned out to be a good source of income for him. That is why Modigliani, feeling his untimely end approaching, told Zborowski not to worry since he was leaving him Chaim Soutine, a painter of genius.

The connection between Modigliani and Zborow-



Plate 21

NUDE WOMAN

1917. Pen and wash

Coll. Jacques Sarlie

New York

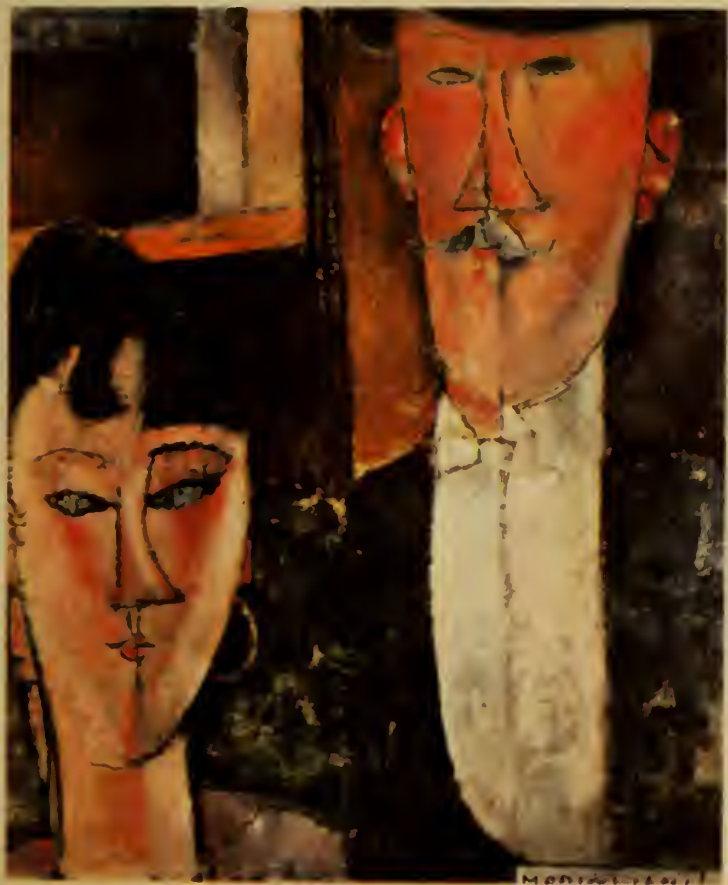


COLOR PLATE (22). GIRL WITH BRAIDS (THE PINK BLOUSE). 1917
Oil, 23½ x 17½". Collection Mrs. Sam A. Lewisohn, New York

ski is a remarkable example of the almost family relationship that existed between many artists and their dealers at that time in Paris. Not all the dealers were exploiters and slave drivers. And the same was true for some collectors who were not thinking at all about investments when they bought a painting or sculpture. Some were real art lovers, like the charming M. Dutilleul whose portrait was done beautifully by Modigliani, or Alphonse Kann who was trembling when he came to see my studio. So attracted was he when he discovered some new sculptures which he had not seen before that he would not leave my studio without taking them with him to his wonderful home. And there were many more like these two, with a genuine love for art.

In 1916, having just signed a contract with Léonce Rosenberg, the dealer, I had a little money. I was also newly married, and my wife and I decided to ask Modigliani to make our portrait (plates 45 & 46). "My price is ten francs a sitting and a little alcohol, you know," he replied when I asked him to do it. He came the next day and made a lot of preliminary drawings, one right after the other, with tremendous speed and precision, as I have already stated. Two of these drawings, one of my wife and one of myself, are reproduced in this book (plates 44 & 54). Finally a pose was decided upon—a pose inspired by our wedding photograph.

The following day at one o'clock, Modigliani came with an old canvas and his box of painting materials,



COLOR PLATES (23 & 24). BRIDE AND GROOM, 1915
Oil, 13 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, New York

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← LIFT FOLD FOR DETAIL.

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and we began to pose. I see him so clearly even now—sitting in front of his canvas which he had put on a chair, working quietly, interrupting only now and then to take a gulp of alcohol from the bottle standing nearby. From time to time he would get up and glance critically over his work and look at his models. By the end of the day he said, "Well, I guess it's finished." We looked at our double portrait which, in effect, was finished. But then I felt some scruples at having the painting at the modest price of ten francs;

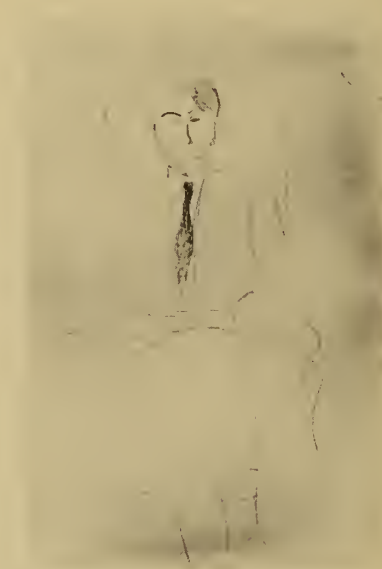


Plate 25. LEOPOLD ZBOROWSKI. 1917. Pencil

Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence



COLOR PLATE (26). LEOPOLD ZBOROWSKI. 1917. Oil, 42 x 26"
Museu de Arte, São Paulo, Brazil

it had not occurred to me that he could do two portraits on one canvas in a single session. So I asked him if he could not continue to work a bit more on the canvas, inventing excuses for additional sittings. "You know," I said, "we sculptors like more substance." "Well," he answered, "if you want me to spoil it, I can continue."

As I recall it, it took him almost two weeks to finish our portrait, probably the longest time he ever devoted to working on one painting.



*Plate 27. BLAISE CENDRARS, 1917. Oil
Private collection, Connecticut*



COLOR PLATE (28). DR. DEVARAIGNE. 1917. Oil, 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 18"
Collection Mrs. John W. Garrett, Baltimore

This portrait had been hanging on my wall for a long time until one day I wanted my dealer to return to me some sculptures in stone which I no longer felt were representative. He asked me more money than I could afford, and the only thing I could do was to offer as an exchange the portrait by Modigliani—who by that time was already dead. My dealer accepted, and as soon as I had my stones back I destroyed them. And that's how it happens that this portrait came



Plate 29
CHAIM SOUTINE
1918. Oil
Private collection
Paris



COLOR PLATE (30). JEAN COCTEAU. 1917. Oil, 39½ x 32"
Collection Henry Pearlman, New York



Plate 31

BEATRICE HASTINGS

1915. Oil

Coll. Mr. & Mrs. Leon Brillouin

New York

finally to be in the collection of The Art Institute of Chicago.

It was two years later, in 1922, that the great American collector, Dr. Albert C. Barnes, discovered Modigliani as well as Soutine. (A year or so ago I was saddened to learn of the frightful death of this remarkable man, in an automobile accident.) In the apartment of Zborowski, 3 rue Joseph-Bara, Dr. Barnes bought a great many of their paintings. I remember the day very well, this day which caused a lot of noise on Montparnasse and will remain forever



COLOR PLATE (32). PORTRAIT OF MARGUERITE. 1917. 18 x 20"
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Harry N. Abrams, New York

in the annals of art history. It was at this point that the two friends, Modigliani and Soutine, began to win international recognition. It was very appropriate for the Cleveland Museum of Art to reunite them in 1951 in a splendid joint exhibition.

In the last years of his life Modigliani became increasingly devoted to Soutine, who had only a small studio but was always ready to share what he had with his friend. Modigliani's health was now completely undermined, his fits of coughing kept him from getting rest, and he drank more and more. Zborowski had scraped together some money to send him to Nice during the winter of 1919 for his health, but this did not help him. He was living at this time with Jeanne Hebuterne and their little girl in a small apartment. Little by little Modigliani's pictures were beginning to be sold, and we all hoped that a more ordered existence and better luck might yet be his. And then, in January of 1920, Kisling brought us the shocking news of his death.

Modigliani had been taken to the hospital one day, and the next day he was gone. We were told that on the way to the hospital he kept repeating "*Italia! Cara Italia!*" and that in his last moments of consciousness he fought wildly to hold on to life, babbling verses in his delirium.

And then came the tragic news of Jeanne Hebuterne's suicide. She was about nine months pregnant with another child by Modigliani, and when she arrived at the hospital morgue, she threw herself upon



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COLOR PLATES (33 & 34). NUDE ON A CUSHION. 1917-18
Oil, 23½ x 36¼". Collection Gianni Mattioli, Milan

Modigliani and covered his face with kisses. She fought with the officials who pulled her away because they knew how dangerous it was for her—pregnant as she was—to touch the open sores that covered his face. She was a strange girl, slender, with a long oval face which seemed almost white rather than flesh color, and her blond hair was fixed in long braids; she always struck me as looking very Gothic. Jeanne Hebuterne went to her father's house—she had been disowned for living with Modigliani—and she threw



Plate 35

BOY WITH RED HAIR

About 1919. Oil

Coll. Ralph M. Coe

Cleveland



COLOR PLATE (16). YOUNG GIRL WITH BROWN HAIR. 1918

Oil, 26 x 18". Collection Jesi, Milan



*Plate 37. GIRL IN CHEMISE (LA PETITE LAITIERE)
1918. Oil. Paul Rosenberg & Co., New York*

herself from its rooftop. Her family forbade that she be buried beside Modigliani, but I believe they were afterwards brought together.

Looking at his handsome likeness it is not difficult to understand that women were so crazy about him: Beatrice Hastings, Jeanne Hebuterne, and others whose names we did not even know—including the little student girl who died of tuberculosis not long after Modigliani's death.



COLOR PLATE (38). SEATED NUDE. 1918. Oil, $32\frac{1}{2} \times 26\frac{3}{8}$ "
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Leigh B. Block, Chicago

I will never forget Modigliani's funeral. So many friends, so many flowers, the sidewalks crowded with people bowing their heads in grief and respect. Everyone felt deeply that Montparnasse had lost something precious, something very essential.

Kisling and Moricand, a friend, tried to make Modigliani's death mask. But they did it very badly and came to me for help with a lot of broken pieces of plaster full of adhering bits of skin and hair. Patiently, I put the fragments together, and since many



Plate 39. LUNIA CZECHOWSKA (THE WHITE BLOUSE). 1917-18. Oil
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Sydney M. Shoenberg, Jr., St. Louis



COLOR PLATE (1st). LUNIA CZECHOWSKA. 1919. Oil, 18½ x 13"
Collection Carlo Frua de Angeli, Milan



Plate 41
ELVIRA
1919. Oil
Private collection
Switzerland

pieces were missing, I had to restore these missing parts as well as I could. Altogether I made twelve plaster molds, which were distributed among Modigliani's family and friends.

When he died, Modigliani was far from being unknown. Paris was filled with strange and striking people, many with talent and some with genius, but he always stood out. And among us his reputation as a painter was established, although, as I have said, it was not until 1922, when Dr. Barnes discovered

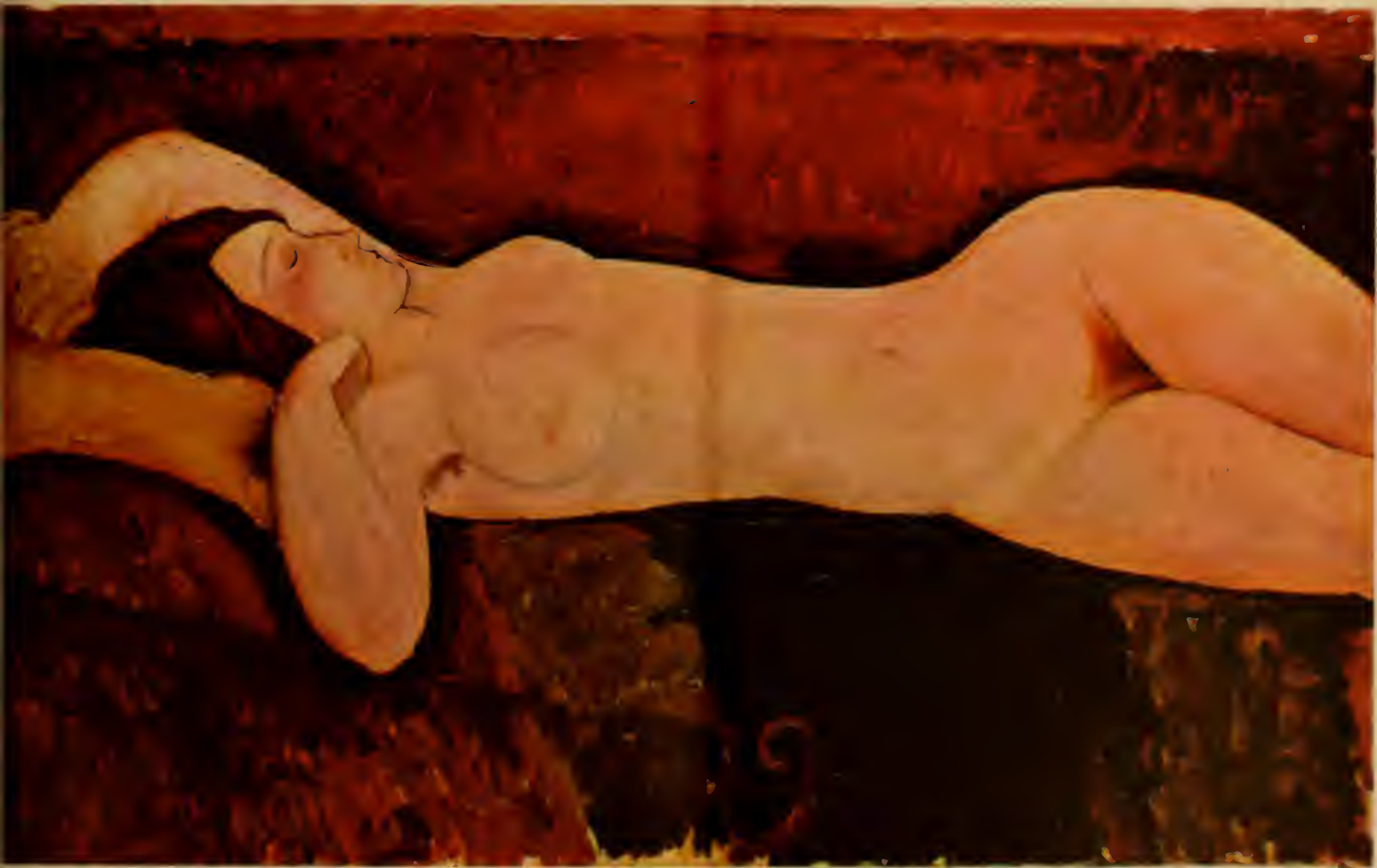




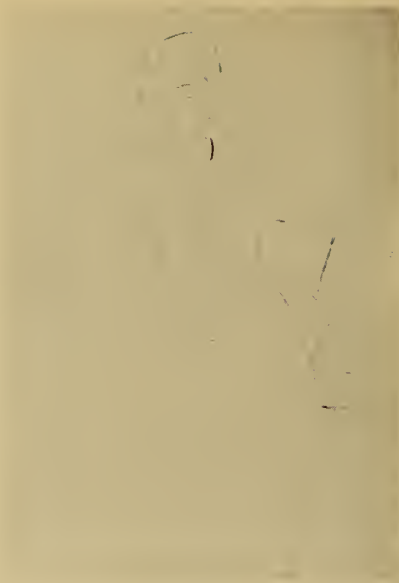
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COLOR PLATES (32 & 33). THE GREAT NUDE. About 1919
Oil, 28 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 45 $\frac{3}{4}$ ". The Museum of Modern Art, New York



*Plate 44. BERTHE LIPCHITZ. 1916. Pencil
Collection Jacques Lipchitz, New York*

his work, that he began to be known internationally.

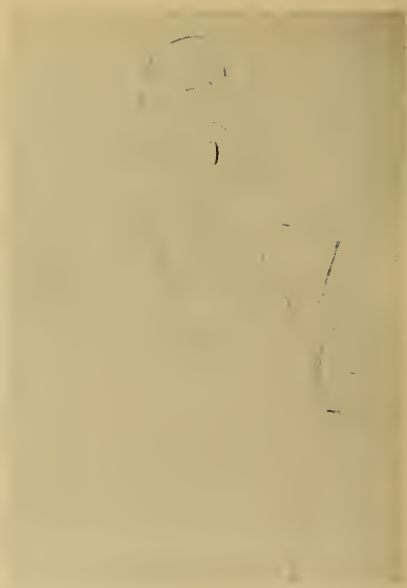
Up to that time Zborowski had worked hard and faced many difficulties in bringing his friend's work to the public. I remember two shows which Zborowski arranged in 1915 or '16. One of them was in a small store near the Tuileries, and in it were several portraits of Zborowski done with the heavy impasto which Modigliani later abandoned. But Zborowski's most ambitious attempt during Modigliani's lifetime was a show he arranged in 1917 at the Berthe Weill

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COLOR PLATES (35 & 36). JACQUES LIPCHITZ AND HIS WIFE. 1916-17,
Oil, $31\frac{1}{2} \times 21$ ". The Art Institute of Chicago



*Plate 44. BERTHE LIPCHITZ. 1916. Pencil
Collection Jacques Lipchitz, New York*

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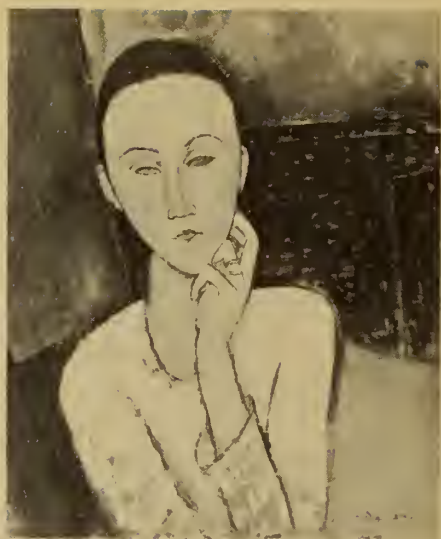
gallery in the rue Laffitte. To catch the eye of the public he had placed in the window four of Modigliani's nudes. Unfortunately it was the police who saw them first, and they made Zborowski take them out of the window. He came to me heartbroken. He had placed all his hopes in that show and now he was afraid that there would be nothing to draw people off the street into the gallery. He offered to sell the four nudes to me for five hundred francs, but what could I do with four nudes on my walls?



*Plate 47. GYPSY WOMAN WITH BABY. 1919. Oil
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
(Chester Dale Collection, Loan)*



COLOR PLATE (48). JEANNE HÉBUTERNE. 1919. Oil, 51 x 32"
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Sidney F. Brody, Beverly Hills, Calif.



*Plate 49. GIRL IN THE WHITE BLOUSE. 1918. Oil
Collection Walter Maitland, Drake, Colorado*

Some years later a nude by Modigliani—perhaps one of the four—was bought for close to a million francs by a French collector. Within a few years after his death Modigliani's paintings were eagerly sought for and collected, and their value is still increasing.

Compared with the life of a Titian or a Michelangelo, Modigliani's life was a brief flash of brilliance. Would he have painted as well if he had lived a different kind of life, less dissipated and more disciplined? I do not know. He was aware of his gifts, but the way he lived was in no way an accident. It was



COLOR PLATE (50). FLVIRA. 1919. Oil. 36 x 23 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, Jr., St. Louis

his choice. One night during dinner I saw how ill he looked. He was eating in a strange way, almost covering his food with salt and pepper before even tasting it. But when I began to urge him to be less self-destructive and to put some kind of order into his life, he became as angry as I had ever seen him.

As I come to the end of this brief account I would like to say that although Modigliani died so young, he accomplished what he had always wanted. He said to me time and again that he wanted a short but intense life—"*une vie brève mais intense.*"



Plate 51. PORTRAIT OF MARIO, 1920. Oil
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Francisco M. Sobrinho
São Paulo, Brazil



COLOR PLATE (52). SELF-PORTRAIT. 1919. Oil, 33½ x 23½"
Collection Mr. and Mrs. Francisco M. Sobrinho, São Paulo, Brazil



*Plate 53. ROSA PORPRINA. 1915. Colored pencil and oil
Collection Dr. Riccardo Jucker, Milan*



*Plate 54. JACQUES LIPCHITZ. 1916. Pencil
Collection Jacques Lipchitz, New York*



*Plate 55. CHARLES-ALBERT CINGRIA. About 1918
Ink and pencil. Brooklyn Museum, New York*



Plate 56. PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN. 1919. Pencil
The Museum of Modern Art, New York



Plate 57. ANNA ZBOROWSKA. 1917. Pencil

Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence



Plate 58. ANNA ZBOROWSKA. 1917. Oil

The Museum of Modern Art, New York (Lillie P. Bliss Coll.)



Plate 59. LEON BAKST. *About 1915. Oil*
National Gallery of Art, Washington, D. C.
(Chester Dale Collection, Loan)



Plate 60. JUAN GRIS. 1916. Oil

Collection Miss Adelaide Milton de Groot, New York



Plate 61. RECLINING NUDE. 1919. Oil. Formerly collection Paul Gu



Paris



*Plate 62. TWO TREES, CAGNES. 1918. Oil
Formerly collection Paul Guillaume, Paris*



*Plate 63. HOUSE AT CAGNES. 1918. Oil
Private collection, Paris*



Plate 64. SEATED BOY. 1918. Oil

Formerly collection Paul Guillaume, Paris

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

- 1884 Amedeo Modigliani (pronounced *moe-deel-YAHN-ee*) born July 12, Leghorn, Italy.
- 1898 Illness interrupts formal schooling; begins painting, instructed by local artist Micheli.
- 1900-02 Recurrent illness. Convalesces in Capri. Later visits and receives intermittent academic training in Rome, Florence, and Venice.
- 1906 To Paris. Early work influenced by Beardsley, Gauguin, Lautrec. Lives in Montmartre.
- 1908 Exhibits at *Salon des Indépendants*.
- 1909 Interest in sculpture encouraged by Brancusi. Ill, spends winter in Italy.
- 1910-13 Few paintings, concentrates on limestone sculptures. Chief patron is Dr. Paul Alexandre.
- 1914-15 Severe alcoholism, begins use of drugs. Meets Beatrice Hastings and Leopold Zborowski, who becomes his friend and dealer. First sales to dealer Paul Guillaume. Abandons sculpture.
- 1917 Meets Jeanne Hebuterne. One-man exhibition organized by Zborowski at Berthe Weill's.
- 1918-19 Tuberculosis aggravated by hashish and alcohol. Winter in Nice and Cagnes.
- 1920 Dies in Paris charity hospital, January 25.

MODIGLIANI AS SEEN BY HIS FRIENDS

Ludwig Meidner: "Never before had I heard a painter speak of beauty with such fire. He showed me photographs of the work of early Florentine masters. Even more beautiful perhaps was what he had to say about them. Among more recent artists Toulouse-Lautrec and Gauguin fascinated him above all. But Modi was also interested in Whistler and his delicate tones."

Beatrice Hastings: "A complex character. A pig and a pearl. Met in 1914 at a *crémèrie*. I sat opposite him. Hashish and brandy. Not at all impressed. Didn't know who he was. He looked ugly, ferocious, greedy. Met again at the Café Rotonde. He was shaved and charming. Raised his cap with a pretty gesture, blushed to his eyes, and asked me to come and see his work. Went. Always a book in his pocket. Lautréamont's *Maldoror*. First oil painting was of Kisling. Despised everyone but Picasso and Max Jacob. Loathed Cocteau. Never did any good work under drug."

Nina Hamnett: "He wore a black hat and a brown corduroy suit. He had curly black hair and brown eyes and was very good looking. He came straight up to me and said, pointing to his chest, 'Je suis Modigliani, Juif, Jew.' Unrolled his newspaper and produced some drawings. He said, 'Cinq francs.' They were very curious and interesting, long heads with pupil-less eyes."

Jean Cocteau: "Handsome, serious, romantic. He represented, perhaps, the last period of elegance in Montparnasse. I posed for three hours in Kisling's studio for both painters. Modigliani's portrait has since traveled a lot. It has also earned a fortune. At the time, however, we did not know that these sessions of posing, these drawings sketched at café terraces, these masterpieces at five francs, would not last forever."

Leopold Zborowski: "When he wasn't drunk, he could be a charming companion, laugh like a child, and be lyrical in translating Dante, making one love and understand him. He was naturally erudite, a good debater on art and philosophy, amiable and courteous. That was his real nature, but nevertheless he was just as often crazily irritable, sensitive, and annoyed for some reason he didn't know. When he was drunk, he was off his head."

André Salmon: "In some horrid retreat, lacking essentials, yet refusing to open the door to those who would have brought him necessities, he'd work as best he could in cold and hunger. He loathed professional models. He preferred the little *bonne* of Rosalie's restaurant, where fed masons, elderly Englishwomen, and a giant Swede who perched over his plate like the Tower of Pisa."

Lascano Tegui: "One night in January, 1920 was the last time I saw Modi alive. He was very drunk, his eyes were wild, and he was in one of his worst cantankerous moods, quarrelsome, abusive, and terribly emaciated. His friends wanted to take him home to the rue de la Grande Chaumière, where Jeanne Hebuterne awaited him anxiously. But, as usual, he wouldn't listen to anybody. When he was like that, nobody on earth could do anything with him, neither Zborowski nor even his fiancée."

SOME OTHER BOOKS
ABOUT MODIGLIANI

- Maud Dale. *Modigliani*. New York: Knopf, 1929
Modigliani: Paintings, Drawings, Sculpture. New York:
The Museum of Modern Art, 1951 (Illustrated
catalog of an exhibition)
- Arthur Pfannstiel. *Modigliani*. Paris: Seheur, 1929
- André Salmon. *Modigliani, sa vie et son oeuvre*. Paris:
Editions des Quatre Chemins, 1926

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MODIGLIANI

TEXT BY JACQUES LIPCHITZ

MODIGLIANI was one of the most fascinating and romantic figures of modern art. Italian by birth, and a member of a very proper family which claimed Spinoza in its ancestry, he kicked over the traces at an early age to go to Paris. In the Bohemian Latin Quarter he soon became a legendary figure, as well known for his all-night carousing and the romantic cut of his clothes as he was for the delicacy and troubled beauty of his paintings. Strikingly handsome, irresistible to women of every walk of life, he was celebrated as "the prince of Bohemians." But only after his life had been tragically and prematurely snuffed out by tuberculosis, aggravated by reckless dissipations, was his genius appreciated beyond a small circle of artists and writers. Now his graceful and beautiful paintings are priceless art treasures which are displayed in the great museums of the world.

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