

# MASSIMO CAMPIGLI

## The Archaic Roots of the Contemporary

**October 1st – November 16th, 2025**  
**208, boulevard Saint-Germain – 75007 Paris**



The Galleria d'Arte Maggiore g.a.m. presents, in its Parisian space, the exhibition **"Massimo Campigli. The Archaic Roots of the Contemporary"**, curated by **Alessia Calarota**. The exhibition brings together works created between 1930 and 1962, in a journey where Campigli's unique style of painting combines an archaic feel imbued with Mediterranean influences with results that are surprisingly contemporary. Featured in the permanent collections of the world's greatest museums, from MoMA to the Metropolitan, from the Centre Pompidou to the Pinacoteca di Brera, Campigli's architectures - well known to Gio Ponti - are often populated by abstract female figures, servants of a past that paves the way for the future by becoming totems of a contemporary universe.

The uniqueness of Massimo Campigli's art - which has captivated audiences everywhere, earning him no fewer than fourteen appearances at the Venice Biennale - lies in his ability to combine the lessons of the past with imagery that never loses its relevance. In Campigli's work, ancient resonances are translated into utterly contemporary, sober, and essential images against a sunny and luminous pictorial background. His earthy palette, the pictorial density reminiscent of frescoes, his primitivism, and the essential forms inspired by ancient civilizations - particularly the Etruscan civilization - coexist with an image construction that yields thoroughly contemporary results. His approach has always been the search for an archetype, an ancestral form, rigor and symmetry, harmony and balance, but also an inner tranquility that emanates from his canvases.



The works on display retrace some of the artist's most cherished subjects, such as his architectural designs inspired by the creations of Gio Ponti, a close friend with whom Campigli collaborated on several occasions, notably for the headquarters of the University of Padua and the large painting created for the Ferrania building in Milan. A study for this project, titled *La Spiaggia* (1937, below left), can be admired in the exhibition. But architecture is always present, sometimes in a realistic way - as in the scene of the painting *Theatre / La Scala / Teatro* (1951, below right) - and sometimes in elementary forms of squares and circles as in the canvas *Medaglioni* (1962, immediately above), two works that evoke a collective and timeless dimension. Another favored theme is the female figure, an archetype never reduced to a simple naturalistic representation, but reminiscent of the images and postures of idols, caryatids and totems. In works such as *Donna con anfora*, (1930, above) or *Idole au Corsage rouge* (1962), solemn and hieratic figures, captured in ritualistic postures and punctuated by rhythmic lines and geometric structures, appear suspended in time and space, in an eternity that consecrates their metamorphosis from the human to the divine state. Also present in the exhibition is the theme of play with the canvas *Pallavolo* (1931).



The decision to host this exhibition in Paris pays tribute to the crucial role that the city played in Campigli's development from 1919 onwards, when the artist frequented the intellectual and artistic circles dominated by primitivism. Holding an exhibition in the city that had such a decisive influence on his career is therefore not only symbolic but also historical, an ideal return to the places that helped forge his most authentic voice. The exhibition is part of a long-standing effort by the gallery to explore the artist's work in greater depth, one of the most recent chapters of which was the exhibition "*Massimo Campigli and the Etruscans. Una pagana felicità / A Pagan Happiness*", organized thanks to the Fondazione Calarota - established by Franco and Roberta Calarota, founders of the Galleria d'Arte Maggiore g.a.m. - in its central space ACP - Palazzo Franchetti in Venice in 2021/2022, in collaboration with the Italian Ministry of Culture/Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts, and Landscape for the province of Viterbo and southern Etruria.

The works carefully selected for the exhibition highlight, in all its originality, Campigli's ability to create a bridge between past and future, developing a vision that reinvents the ancient in a contemporary key, making his art unique in the European panorama.