

‘If the progress of 20th-century art was to be defined by the achievements of a single individual, that individual would indisputably be Picasso.’ Edmund Capon

PICASSO

**Masterpieces from the
Musée National Picasso, Paris**

SYDNEY ONLY

12 November 2011 – 25 March 2012

ART
GALLERY
NSW



1922

1904

‘I paint the way some people write their autobiography. The paintings, finished or not, are the pages from my diary...’

Pablo Picasso

1932

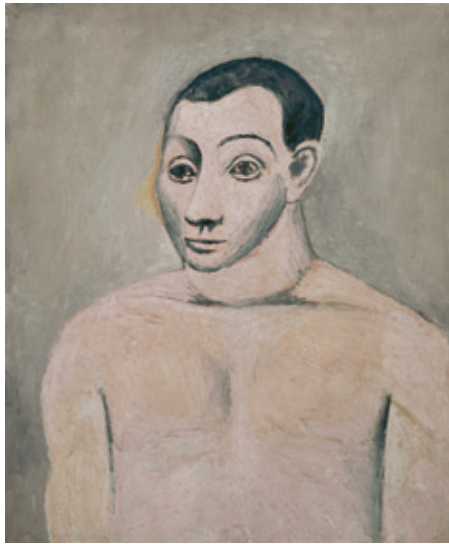


clockwise from top left:
La Célestine (La Femme à la taie) (La Celestina) (The woman with a cataract) 1904
Deux femmes courant sur la plage (La course) (Two women running on the beach (The race) 1922
Femmes à la toilette (Women at their toilette) 1956
La lecture (The reader) 1932

1956



1937



1906



1950



1969

clockwise from top left:
Portrait de Dora Maar (Portrait of Dora Maar) 1937
Autoportrait (Self-portrait) 1906
La chèvre (The goat) 1950
Le baiser (The kiss) 1969

PICASSO

Masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris



Picasso in front of *Portrait de femme* by Henri Rousseau 1932, photo by Brassai

‘This is the great Picasso show to which we have often aspired but not yet achieved in Australia. Make the most of it because we will never have such a show again. Seven decades of Picasso’s relentless work, capturing every phase of his extraordinary career, including masterpieces from his Blue, Rose, Expressionist, Cubist, Neoclassical and Surrealist periods. This is by far the greatest survey of Picasso’s work most dear to him.’

EDMUND CAPON, director, Art Gallery of New South Wales

‘This exceptional exhibition covering every aspect of Picasso’s multifaceted output and all the artistic media in which he exercised his extraordinary creativity, constitutes the foundation stone for a groundbreaking partnership between the Musée National Picasso and the Art Gallery of New South Wales.’

ANNE BALDASSARI, curator, general commissioner and president, Musée National Picasso

The Art Gallery of New South Wales will host the most significant exhibition of Picasso’s art ever held in Australia. 150 important paintings, sculptures, prints and drawings created by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) have come from the artist’s personal collection – works he was determined never to relinquish.

Picasso: masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris is the most ambitious exhibition ever undertaken by the Gallery. Jointly organised by Musée National Picasso, the Art Gallery of NSW and Art Exhibitions Australia (AEA), the exhibition is part of the Sydney International Arts Series, bringing the world’s outstanding exhibitions to Australia. The exhibition was conceived, curated and mounted by Anne Baldassari, general commissioner and president of the Musée National Picasso and one of the world’s leading experts on the artist’s work.

The international tour was initiated and created by the Musée National Picasso, the largest and most significant repository of the artist’s work in the world. Since 2008 works have travelled to cities including Madrid, Tokyo, Moscow, Seattle and San Francisco. This unprecedented

opportunity to bring this exhibition to Sydney is possible because the Musée is closed for renovations. The tour extends the Musée National Picasso’s highly valued collaboration with AEA, Australia’s leading manager of exhibition tours, which over the past six years has organised tours of two of their previous exhibitions.

The exhibition will fill most of the Gallery’s ground floor and include works ranging from informal sketchbooks to finished masterpieces. This magnificent survey of ‘Picasso’s Picassos’ proves the artist’s assertion that ‘I am the greatest collector of Picassos in the world’.

Picasso transformed the very definition of art. He is best known for co-founding the Cubist movement and for the astonishing variety of styles he employed in his work. He demonstrated uncanny artistic talent in his early years, painting in a realistic manner throughout his childhood and adolescence. During the first decade of the 20th century Picasso’s approach changed fundamentally and his revolutionary accomplishments brought universal renown and immense fortune, making him the most radical as well as the most influential figure in 20th-century art.

1956



Les baigneurs (The bathers) 1956

The Musée National Picasso's collection preserves the highly personal works that Pablo Picasso kept for himself with the intention of shaping his legacy.

The exhibition includes:

- One of his earliest Paris works: *The death of Casagemas* (1901)
- The Blue period: *La Célestine* (1904)
- The Rose period: *The two brothers* (1906)
- African-inspired proto-Cubist work: studies for *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O)* (1907) and *Three figures under a tree* (1907)
- Analytic Cubism: *Man with a guitar* (1911)
- Synthetic Cubism: *Violin* (1915)
- The Neoclassical period: *Two women running on the beach* (1922)
- Surrealism: *The kiss* (1925)
- The war years: *The weeping woman* (1937), and the sculptures *Bull's head* (1942) and *Death's head* (1943)
- Late period: reinterpretations of old masters including Velasquez, Goya and Rembrandt, and large nude self-portraits such as *The matador* (1970)

Picasso changed his formal vocabulary for each new woman entering his life, and remarked, 'How awful for a woman to realise from my work that she is being supplanted.' The exhibition chronicles his relationships with the six principal women in his life and demonstrates how his art was affected by each relationship.

His mistress Fernande Olivier was the muse of the Rose period and of early Cubism. His first wife, Olga Khokhlova, is realistically depicted in *Portrait of Olga in an armchair* (1918). Mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter, who met Picasso when she was 17, is portrayed in *Reclining nude* (1932) and in a series of five bronze busts created in 1931 that range from recognisable representations to the nearly abstract. Mistress Dora Maar, the photographer who had

a passionate and emotionally charged relationship with Picasso, is represented in works characterised by hard-edged, jagged lines, angular forms and acidic colours, such as *Portrait of Dora Maar* (1937). *The shadow* (1953) was painted in memory of Françoise Gilot, the mother of Claude and Paloma Picasso. *Jacqueline with crossed hands* (1954) is the first portrait of Jacqueline Roque, Picasso's second wife and last muse.

Sculpture plays an important part in the exhibition, demonstrating Picasso's versatility and inventiveness, including an early bust, *The jester* (1905); *Figure* (1907), a roughly hewn wooden piece inspired by Picasso's fascination with African tribal art; *Head of a woman* (1909), which is considered to be the first Cubist sculpture; the relief construction *Guitar and bottle of Bass* (1913); an assemblage, *The violin* (1915); *Bull's head* (1942), constructed from a cast-off bicycle seat and handlebars; the iconic bronze *The goat* (1950); and the life-sized, six-piece figurative work created during a summer in Cannes, *The bathers* (1956).

'Like God, I haven't got a style,' Picasso claimed, but over the course of his long and prolific career he created revolutionary works that laid the foundations of modern art. His lengthy career spanned both world wars, the Spanish Civil War and the Korean War, and these troubled times are mirrored in some of his darkest and most poignant images.

About the Musée National Picasso

The Musée National Picasso, which opened in 1985 in the 17th-century Hôtel Salé in the Marais District of Paris, serves as the repository for nearly 5000 works from the artist's personal collection that passed to the French government following his death in 1973 and Jacqueline Picasso's death in 1990.

PICASSO

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ART
EXHIBITIONS
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The exhibition is co-organised by the
Musée National Picasso, Paris, the
Art Gallery of New South Wales and
Art Exhibitions Australia

Part of the Sydney International Art Series

SYDNEY ONLY
12 November 2011 –
25 March 2012

Art Gallery of
New South Wales
Art Gallery Road,
Sydney NSW 2000

Hours

- Monday to Friday:
10am–5pm
- Art After Hours,
Wednesdays until 10pm
- Saturday & Sunday:
9am–5pm
- Saturdays (Jan–Mar):
open until 7pm

Admission

Adult \$25
Member \$15
Concession \$18
Family \$65

Timed entry ticket

bookings available online:
ticketek.com.au/picasso
Tickets go on sale
9am Wednesday 31 August

MEDIA INFORMATION

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Cultural partner

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La Célestine (La Femme à la taie)
(La Celestina (The woman with a
cataract)) 1904

Gift of Fredrik Roos, 1989,
MP1989-5 © Paris, RMN/Right
reserved

Autoportrait (Self-portrait) 1906
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP8 © Paris, RMN/René-Gabriel
Ojeda

Deux femmes courant sur la plage
(La course) (Two women running
on the beach (The race)) 1922

Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP78 © Paris, RMN/Jean-Gilles
Berizzi

La lecture (The reader) 1932
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP137 © Paris, RMN/René-
Gabriel Ojeda

Portrait de Dora Maar (Portrait of
Dora Maar) 1937
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP158 © Paris, RMN/Jean-Gilles
Berizzi

La chèvre (The goat) 1950
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP340 © Paris, RMN/Béatrice
Hatala

Les baigneurs (The bathers) 1956
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP352–357 © Paris, RMN/Thierry
Le Mage

Femmes à la toilette (Women at
their toilette) 1956
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP 210 © Paris, RMN/Jean-Gilles
Berizzi

Le baiser (The kiss) 1969
Pablo Picasso Bequest, 1979,
MP220 © Paris, RMN/Jean-Gilles
Berizzi

Picasso in front of *Portrait de
femme* by Henri Rousseau 1932,
photo by Brassai
Musée National Picasso, Paris,
MP1986-10 © Estate Brassai-RMN

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Picasso: Masterpieces from the Musée Picasso, Paris is supported by the Australian Government International Exhibitions Insurance (AGIE) Program, an Australian Government program which provides funding for the purchase of insurance for significant cultural exhibitions. The exhibition also has the support of the NSW Government.