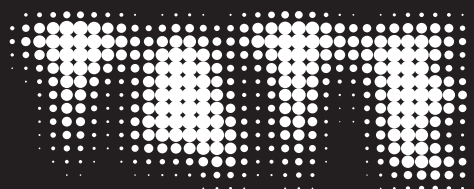


THEATRE PICASSO

17 SEP – 12 APR 2026

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



CONTENTS

Concourse 3

Room 1 9

Room 2 17

Room 3 27

Room 4 31

Room 5 55

CONCOURSE

THEATRE PICASSO

17 september – 2 april 2026

Performance Programme

Dance and performance by international artists and choreographers including Moved by the Motion presenting an excerpt from **Carmen** and a site-specific work by Yinka Esi Graves. See website for details.

17–18 October 2025 & 6–7 March 2026 The Tanks, 7pm

Presented in The George Economou Gallery

In partnership with

WHITE & CASE

Also supported by

the
HUO FAMILY
FOUNDATION

With additional support from the Theatre Picasso Exhibition Supporters Circle:

François-Xavier and Natasha de Mallmann
Lydia and Manfred Gorvy

Tate Americas Foundation and Tate Members.

Theatre Picasso is conceived and curated by artists Wu Tsang and Enrique Fuenteblanca, with Rosalie Doubal, Senior Curator, International Art (Performance & Participation); Natalia Sidlina, Curator, International Art, and Andrew de Brún, Assistant Curator, International Art.

White & Case has a longstanding commitment of supporting the arts globally, recognising their power to inspire and challenge perspectives. This year, we are delighted to partner with Tate to support **Theatre Picasso** and celebrate the centenary of *The Three Dancers*. This groundbreaking exhibition reframes Picasso's work, highlighting his deep connection with theatre and performance.

At White & Case, our work spans cultures and continents, driven by a shared commitment to innovation and collaboration. We are honoured to support art that embodies these same values, and proud to partner with Tate on an exhibition that encourages fresh thinking, fosters cross-cultural dialogue, and sheds new light on one of the twentieth century's most influential artists.

Heather McDevitt

Chair, White & Case LLP

Archive

Victoria Jenkins

Art Handling

Lilian Baldwin, Jim Cross, William Cunningham, Paul Duncan, Alfred Golding, Victoria Grenier, Patrick Higgs, Nathan Jones, Tim Offredi, Marine One, Konstantine Pettas, Jack Severn, Sarah Shalan, Jesse R Tennant, Joao Trindade

AV

Tate AV Team, ADi Audiovisual

Collection Registrars, Displays

Giulia Caverni

Concept

Enrique Fuenteblanca, Wu Tsang

Conservation Science & Preventive Conservation

Kate Perks

Curatorial Team

Manuela Buttiglione, Andrew de Brún, Rosalie Doubal, Stephanie Hadfield, Joseph Morgan Schofield, Natalia Sidlina, Demelza Watts

Exhibition Design

Roll, Lucie Rebeyrol

Exhibition Registrars

Máté Hegedus, Travis Miles

Graphic Design

Bethan Bowers, Chiara Garcia Melchiorri, Leonardo Santana

Installation

Hannah Crowley, Gemma Geraghty, Yaakov Gueta, Adam Wozniak

Interpretation

Giulia Calvi, Tom Emery, Kirsteen McSwein

Paintings Conservation

Mine Diri, Madeleine Ewing, Jane McCree

Paper & Photograph Conservation

Charity Fox, David Schroeter, Elsa Money, Michal Sofer

Visitor Experience

Ewa Bielecka, Sandra McLean, Renata Smialek
and Visitor Experience Officers

Exhibition Build

Sam Foster

Graphics Printing and Installation
Albemarle Graphics

Lenders

With the exceptional support of the Musée national Picasso-
Paris

Musée Picasso Antibes

The National Gallery, London

The Penrose Collection, East Sussex, England

Lighting

ZNA

With additional thanks to Frames Conservation and
Conservation Workshop, Photography and Imaging,
Sculpture & Installation
Art Conservation

ROOM 1

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM ROOM ENTRANCE

[WALL TEXT]

INTRODUCTION

Pablo Ruiz Picasso (born Malaga, Spain, 1881–1973) is one of the best-known painters of the twentieth century. Over the course of his long career, he produced works in many different styles such as cubism and neoclassicism, which have come to mark turning points in modern art. Because of his importance, Picasso's work and public persona continue to generate vigorous debate, with artists and art historians returning to his work time and time again.

One of the most famous works in the Tate collection – Picasso's **The Three Dancers** 1925 – was created 100 years ago. To celebrate this centenary, Tate has invited contemporary artists Wu Tsang and Enrique Fuenteblanca to make an exhibition that responds to it. Rather than take a conventional historical approach, they look at exhibition-making as a performance itself, by 'staging' Tate's entire Picasso collection. We are invited to step onto the stage with these works and to consider the meaning of performance through Picasso: how he created a public persona and transformed the way we look at art, profoundly influencing how artworks are collected and encountered today. Acknowledging both his innovations and their complexities, this exhibition looks beyond the myth of Picasso as a solitary

genius, examining his practice within wider contexts and communities: artistic exchanges, acts of borrowing and the historical conditions that shaped it.

Wu Tsang is an award-winning visual artist and director of film and theatre. Her film installation *A day in the life of bliss* 2014 is on long term loan to Tate collection.

Enrique Fuenteblanca is a writer, artist and curator. He regularly contributes dramaturgical texts for contemporary dance and flamenco. He is an ongoing collaborator for Wu Tsang.

Look out for our special QR codes labels throughout the exhibition. These offer further information about Picasso's work, highlighting interesting topics and the ongoing research Tate does into the collection.

Who is Pablo Picasso?

Who is Pablo Picasso? For an accessible introduction to the artist, read our Tate Kids article:



tate.org.uk/kids/explore/who-is/who-pablo-picasso

[FILM]

Man Ray 1890–1976

Pablo Picasso performing as Carmen

Extract from 'La Garoupe'

1937

Duration: 29 secs

© 2025 Man Ray 2015 Trust / DACS, London. Distribution:

Cinédoc Paris Films Coop

X101507

[WALL TEXT]

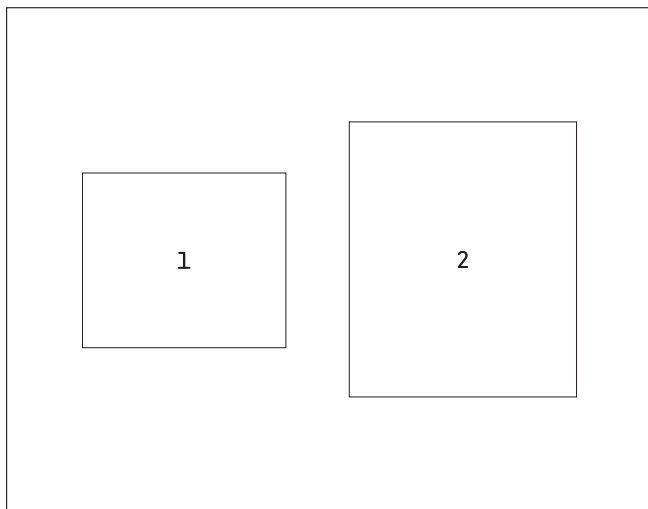
PERFORMING PICASSO

Picasso cultivated and performed a public persona that was part 'genius' and part 'outsider.' This persona helped to shape our idea of the 'Artist' as a solo creative, a prolific master and a mysterious marginal figure in society.

Tsang and Fuenteblanca see theatrical techniques incorporated into Picasso's persona. It is evident in the way he performed his dramatic brush strokes for the camera, and in the way he crafted his own image through appearances in magazines and films. Picasso's understanding of performance was informed by his fascination with theatre, dance and popular forms such as circus and flamenco. He borrowed from these forms and applied them as tools in his own work.

To grasp Picasso beyond his mythology, it is important to understand how he used these tools from performance. We can also understand how he related to the world around him, placing his work in dialogue with the fundamental questions of our time.

[VITRINE]



From left to right:

1. **Manuscript of poems**

January 1936

Facsimile

English transcription available upon request

2. **Gjon Mili 1904-1984**

**Pablo Picasso dressed as a minotaur on the beach
at Golfe-Juan**

1968

Photograph, Exhibition print

The LIFE Picture Collection/Shutterstock, X101513;
GrandPalaisRmn (Musée national Picasso-Paris), X102377

[AUDIO]

Poems by Pablo Picasso

Written from 24-28 November 1935,
read by Jaime Sabartés and broadcast
by Ràdio Barcelona on 13 January 1936
as 'La Literatura de Picasso'

Duration: 1 min, 41 secs

English transcription is available on request

Museu Picasso Barcelona
X102378

ROOM 2

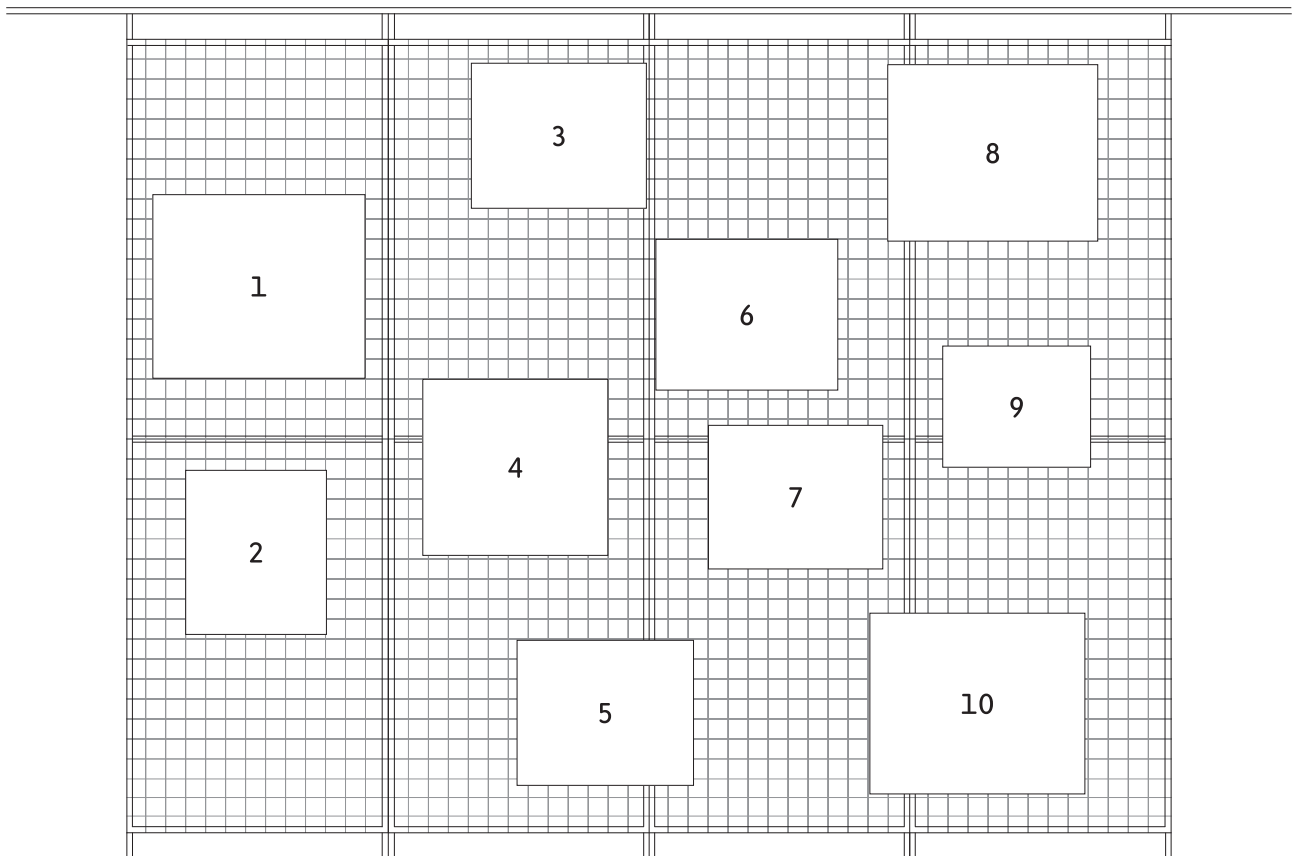
ART STAGE

CLOCKWISE FROM ROOM ENTRANCE

[WALL TEXT]

A TERRIBLE THEATRE: SCENE, OBSCENE

Through acts of transgression, the use of 'obscenity' in theatre is as ancient as the artform itself. Performance has traditionally given us permission to play with topics and behaviours otherwise considered taboo, as a way to reflect on society. Picasso frequently worked with the obscene in both intimate and overtly political ways. Within his sketches of the theatre and brothels seen here, we see him use architectural stages to frame obscene imagery. In this way, Picasso performed the role of a tragicomic artist by bringing onto the stage things that some may not wish to see.



From top to bottom, left to right:

1. **Dance of the Banderillas**
1954
Lithograph on paper
2. **Etching 24 March 1968 II (L.6)**
1968
Etching on paper
3. **Etching: 1, 5 March 1972 (L.155)**
1972
Etching, drypoint and aquatint on paper

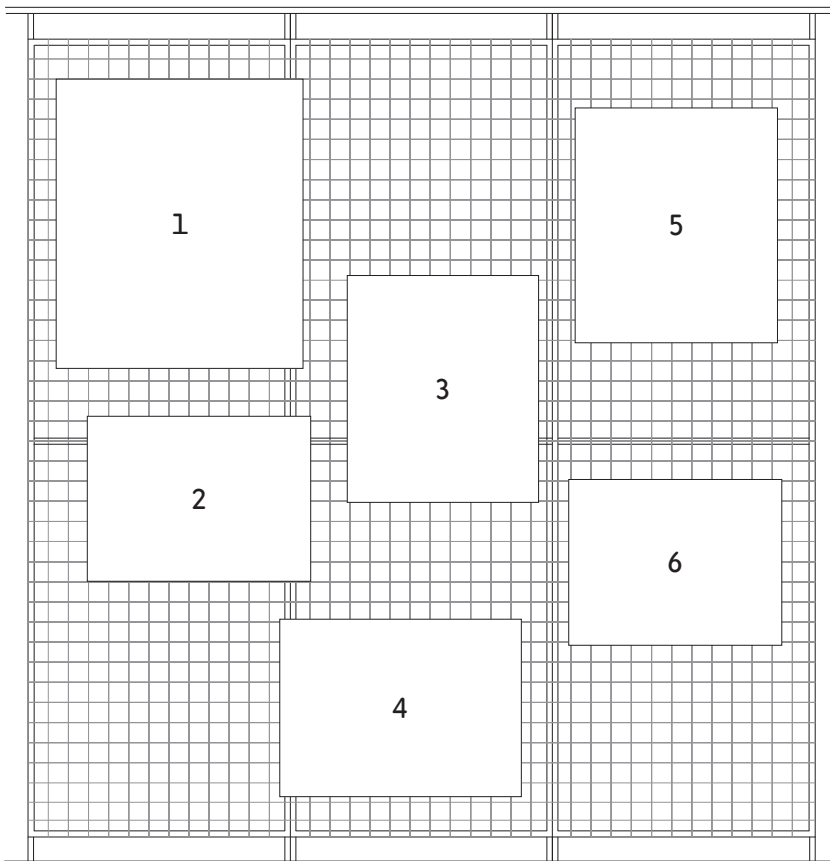
4. **Etching: (12 March 1970 II) 31 March 1970, 2 April 1970 (L.21)**
1970
Aquatint and drypoint on paper
5. **Etching: 22, 26 May 1971, 2 June 1971 (L.133)**
1971
Aquatint and drypoint on paper
6. **Etching: 19, 21, 23, 24, 26,30, 31 May 1971, 2 June 1971 (L.130)**
1971
Aquatint and drypoint on paper
7. **Etching: 10 April 1971 (L.112)**
1971
Etching on paper
8. **Etching: 11, 28 February 1970, 3, 16, 30 March 1970 (L.13)**
1970
Etching on paper
9. **Etching 20 August 1968 I (L.289)**
1968
Etching on paper

10. Etching: 19 February 1970 (L.16)

1970

Etching on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Elly Kahnweiler 1991 to form part of the gift of Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler, accessioned 1994 P11367; Purchased 1992 P77579; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77590; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77586; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77589; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77588; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77587; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77584; Tate. Purchased 1991 P77510; Tate. Purchased 1993 P77585.



From top to bottom, left to right:

1. **Seated Woman in a Chemise**
1923
Oil paint on canvas
2. **Dish of Pears**
1936
Oil paint on canvas
3. **Flowers**
1901
Oil paint on canvas

4. **Composition**

1948

Lithograph on paper

5. **Girl in a Chemise**

c.1905

Oil paint on canvas

6. **Neo-Classical Painter in his Studio**

1963

Etching on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by C. Frank Stoop 1933 N04719; Tate. Bequeathed by Mrs A.F. Kessler 1983 T03572; Tate. Purchased with assistance from the Contemporary Art Society 1933 N04683; Tate. Presented by Patrick Seale Prints 1975 P01718; Tate. Bequeathed by C. Frank Stoop 1933 N04720; Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974, accessioned 1994 P11363.

Girl in a Chemise

c.1905

Oil paint on canvas

This painting originally began as an image of a young boy before it was transformed by Picasso into a female figure. For an in-depth examination of how he did this, read our article:



tate.org.uk/research/tate-papers/28/picasso-girl-chemise

Tate. Presented by Patrick Seale Prints

1975 P01718

The Kiss

1967

Graphite on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Joanna Drew 2003, accessioned 2006

T12203

Weeping Woman

1937

Graphite and crayon on paper

Tate. Accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax and allocated to the Tate Gallery 1995

T06929

[WALL TEXT]

COLLECTING PICASSO

Picasso's presence in museums around the world attests to his central role in shaping modern and contemporary art. Tsang and Fuenteblanca have staged this exhibition showcasing Tate's collection of Picasso artworks. In doing so, they invite us to consider how and why museums collect what they collect. What is shown and what is not? If we look at Tate's Picasso collection in its entirety, what does it reveal?

Museums themselves, including Tate, are increasingly reevaluating the logic of their own collections. To exhibit Picasso today is also to confront his legacy, including its contradictions. Picasso's work draws out complex questions about borrowing from other cultures, for example, or about invention and originality. These questions, in turn give us valuable tools to think about ourselves and how we organise contemporary institutions.

ROOM 3

BACKSTAGE

CLOCKWISE FROM ROOM ENTRANCE

Horse with a Youth in Blue

1905-6

Watercolour and gouache on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by C. Frank Stoop 1933

N04721

[WALL TEXT]

PERFORMATIVITY: DOING THINGS WITH ART

Theatre Picasso invites us to look beyond the pictures on the walls and consider what the artist does with his art and actions. Here the concept of 'performativity' is useful.

Performativity has different meanings, but an important one is the way in which words and actions can effect change, transform, or undo states of being. An example from philosopher JL Austin, is the utterance 'I do' when it is performed in the act of marriage. Performativity also plays a role in understanding a range of identities including gender and class.

If we look at Picasso's work through the lens of performativity, we find many interesting examples of how the artist plays with the power of words, actions and images, and how they impact our perception of art. We might also ask, as his audience, how do we play our role?

Picasso organised his first retrospective himself in 1932 at Galeries Georges Petit in Paris. He took personal control of arranging the artworks, choosing to mix styles and periods. Tate collection work **Head of a Woman** 1924 can be seen resting on a chair in the photograph shown here documenting this retrospective.

Picasso's installation of works at the Galerie Georges Petit, Paris, 1932. Photograph with annotations by Alfred H. Barr, Jr. Featuring 'Head of a Woman' 1924 by Pablo Picasso T06928 (bottom row, second from the right)

1932

Photograph, exhibition print

Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence

X102772

Ecce Homo after Rembrandt IV State V 03-02-1970

1970

Etching and aquatint on paper

Tate. Purchased 1993

P77583

Faun Revealing a Sleeping Woman (Jupiter and Antiope, after Rembrandt)

1936

Etching and aquatint on paper

Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974,
accessioned 1994

P11360

ROOM 4

STAGE

TURN RIGHT FROM ROOM ENTRANCE

[WALL TEXT]

THE PAINTER AND THE MODEL

Among the most significant themes addressed by Picasso is that of the painter and the model. For him, the impossibility of truly capturing the model becomes a dramatic impulse, relentlessly driving his work. Picasso's numerous portraits of his various lovers and models reflect the constant stylistic transformation throughout his life. However, his paintings of the model reveal something else: how this obsession intertwined with his possessive relationship with women and his unsettling view of them. Picasso does not conceal this idea: the eyes of the portrayed model often return the viewer's gaze, confronting us in the act of looking.

Nude Woman with Necklace

1968

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1983

T03670

PARTITION WALL

Seated Nude

1909-10

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1949

N05904

Nude Woman in a Red Armchair

1932

Oil paint on canvas

Marie-Thérèse Walter was a model for this painting which Picasso supposedly completed in just one day. Watch this video from Tate's conservation team to see if this is really possible:



tate.org.uk/art/artists/pablo-picasso-1767/did-picasso-paint-nude-woman-red-armchair-one-day

Tate. Purchased 1953

N06205

Bust of a Woman

1909

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1949

N05915

Portrait of a Woman after Cranach the Younger

1958

Linocut on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Elly Kahnweiler 1991 to form part of the gift of Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler, accessioned 1994

P11368

LARGE FREE-STANDING WALL

Woman at the Window

1952

Aquatint and drypoint on paper

Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974, accessioned 1994

P11362

Dora Maar Seated

1938

Ink, gouache and oil paint on paper on canvas

Tate. x 1960

T00341

Woman in an Armchair No.1 (The Polish Cloak)

1949

Lithograph on paper

Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974,
accessioned 1994

P11361

Goat's Skull, Bottle and Candle

1952

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1957

T00145

Dove

1949

Lithograph on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Elly Kahnweiler 1991 to form part of the gift of Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler, accessioned 1994

P11366

[WALL TEXT]

ANIMALS, WAR AND VIOLENCE

Animals held important symbolic value in Picasso's work. Following the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, his Dove 1949 became a symbol for the peace movement. Picasso also used animals to represent moments of suffering and violence. In his prints, **The Dream and Lie of Franco** 1937, he critiques and mocks General Francisco Franco, dictator of Spain from 1939 to 1973, who led the fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War. These works include images of horses in extreme distress, something Picasso would famously use again in his anti-war masterpiece **Guernica** 1937, which can be seen today on display in Madrid.

Violence could also be exciting to Picasso, particularly in the form of bullfighting. It was a frequent theme in his work – a theatrical, hyper-masculine triumph of humans over death, represented in the primal form of the bull.

MEDIUM FREE-STANDING WALL

The Dream and Lie of Franco I and II

1937

Etching and aquatint on paper

The Penrose Collection, East Sussex, England

X101088

X101089



Bullfight Scene

1960

Ink on paper

Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974,
accessioned 1994

T06803

Head of a Young Boy

1945

Lithograph on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Elly Kahnweiler 1991 to form part of the gift of Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler, accessioned 1994

P11364

Black Jug and Skull

1946

Lithograph on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Elly Kahnweiler 1991 to form part of the gift of Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler, accessioned 1994

P11365

Fruit Dish, Bottle and Violin

1914

Oil paint on canvas

The National Gallery, London, bought 1979

X101888

Bottle of Vieux Marc, Glass, Guitar and Newspaper

1913

Printed papers and ink on paper

Tate. Purchased 1961

T00414

CLOCKWISE TOWARDS SMALL FREE-STANDING WALL

The Studio

1955

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Presented by Gustav and Elly Kahnweiler 1974,
accessioned 1994

T06802

[WALL TEXT]

THE ARTIST'S STUDIO

Still life and studio subjects provided Picasso with a space for formal experimentation. He described his painting as 'a sum of destructions'. His words have often been interpreted as an attempt to destroy traditional forms of representation. His

drift from cubism to neoclassicism, or his use of techniques such as collage, were ways of breaking into an artistic field in which the supremacy of some styles and movements was disputed. At the same time, the studio is the artist's intimate space. That is why his paintings of still lifes and studios reveal emotional states: war and darkness through still lifes dominated by skulls and painted in dark colours, or the emptiness of the artist's studio in exhibited work **The Studio** 1955 made shortly after the death of his great friend and rival Henri Matisse in 1954.

[FILM]

Henri-Georges Clouzot 1907–1977

The Mystery of Picasso

1956

Duration: 1 hour, 18 mins

Gaumont

X101508

SMALL FREE-STANDING WALL

The Three Dancers

1925

Oil paint on canvas

The Tate team have been investigating the history of this well-known painting, uncovering forgotten details and challenging the historical interpretation. For the full story, read curator Natalia Sidlina's new essay for Tate Etc.:



tate.org.uk/tate-etc/issue-67-autumn-2025/picasso-three-dancers

Tate. Purchased with a special Grant-in-Aid and the Florence Fox Bequest with assistance from the Friends of the Tate Gallery and the Contemporary Art Society 1965
T00729

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM WALL TEXT

[WALL TEXT]

'HIGH' AND 'LOW' CULTURE

It is impossible to say exactly what the figures in **The Three Dancers** are dancing. What is clear is that the dancers evoke both joy and deep longing. At the time of painting, Picasso was grieving the death of his friend, the painter Ramón Pichot. The painting is often read as an allegory of a tragic love triangle entangling friends and lovers of Picasso's youth.

In Spanish, there are two words for dance: **baile**, meaning social or spontaneous dancing, and **danza**, which is formal and professional. Both types of movements appear in *The Three Dancers*. Picasso seamlessly moves between popular and formalised modern gestures, uniting high and low culture, perhaps in articulation of his own condition as a bohemian artist in Paris. In doing so he connects a personal tragedy to an archive of longing implicit in popular forms such as flamenco, which is often associated with marginalised and diasporic communities.

Still Life

1914

Painted wood and upholstery fringe

Tate. Purchased 1969

T01136

Circus Artist and Child

1905

Ink and watercolour on paper

Tate. Bequeathed by Mrs A.F. Kessler 1983

T03571

[PLINTH]

Cock

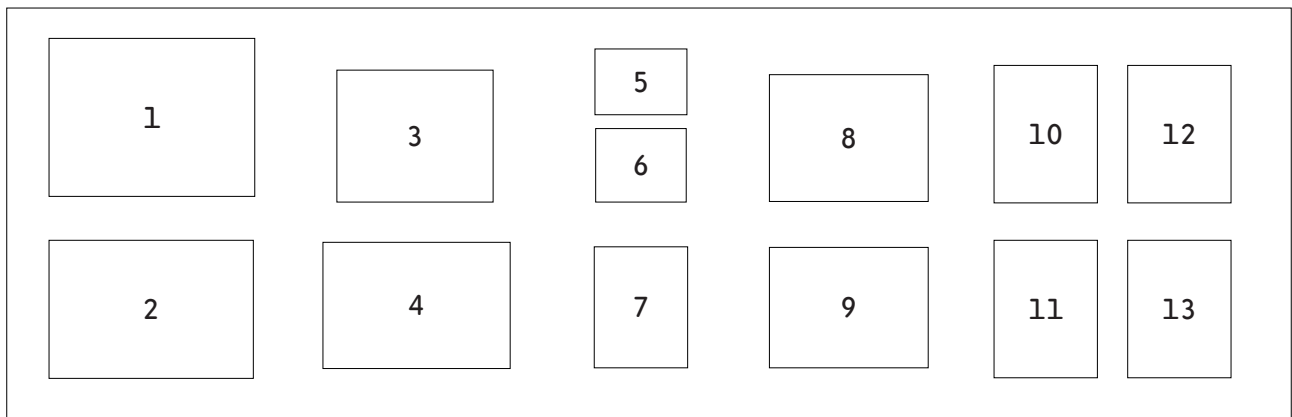
1932, cast 1952

Bronze

Tate. Purchased 1953

N06023

[VITRINE]



From top to bottom, left to right:

1. **Set design sketch for the ballet Pulcinella**
1920
Facsimile
2. **Set design sketch for Cuadro Flamenco**
1921
Facsimile
3. **Set design sketch for the ballet Pulcinella**
1920
Facsimile
4. Vera Tenschert b.1936
Berliner Ensemble with stage curtain design based on Picasso's Dove 1949
1949
Photograph, Exhibition print

5. Foulsham & Banfield
Set of Parade, for the Ballets Russes designed by Pablo Picasso, at the Empire, Leicester Square, London
c. 1919
Photograph, Exhibition print
6. **Model of the set for Parade for the Ballets Russes**
1917
Photograph, Exhibition print
7. Sasha 1892-1953
Vera Petrova as Venus and Boris Lissanevitch as Apollo in Mercure by the Ballet Russes at the Princes Theatre, London with set and costume design by Pablo Picasso
1927
Photograph, Exhibition print
8. Sasha 1892-1953
Mercure by the Ballet Russes at the Princes Theatre, London with set and costume design by Pablo Picasso
1927
Photograph, Exhibition print

9. Harry Lachman 1886 - 1975
Pablo Picasso and scenic artists sitting on the front cloth for Parade by the Ballet Russe during a break in painting at the Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris
1917
Photograph, Exhibition print
10. Harry Lachman 1886 - 1975
The Circus Managers, originally performed by Zygmund Novak and George Oumansky in Parade by the Ballet Russes with costume design by Pablo Picasso
1917
Photograph, Exhibition print
11. Harry Lachman 1886 - 1975
The French Manager in Parade, by the Ballet Russes with costume design by Pablo Picasso
1917
Photograph, Exhibition print
12. Harry Lachman 1886 - 1975
Nicholas Zverev as Acrobat in Parade by the Ballets Russes with costume design by Pablo Picasso
1917
Photograph, Exhibition print

13. Harry Lachman 1886 - 1975

The Circus Managers, originally performed by Zygmund Novak and George Oumansky in Parade by the Ballet Russes with costume design by Pablo Picasso

1917

Photograph, Exhibition print

GrandPalaisRmn (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau, X102365; GrandPalaisRmn (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Adrien Didierjean, X102367; GrandPalaisRmn (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Mathieu Rabeau, X102366; Bertolt-Brecht-Archiv, X102368; Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, S.522-2017, X102369; Album / Alamy, Musée national Picasso Paris, X102370; Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, X102371; Gabrielle Enthoven Collection, Victoria and Albert Museum, X102372; Victoria and Albert Museum, X102374; Victoria and Albert Museum, X100600; Victoria and Albert Museum, X100602; Victoria and Albert Museum, X100598; Victoria and Albert Museum, X100603.

[PLINTH]

Figure: project for a monument to Guillaume Apollinaire

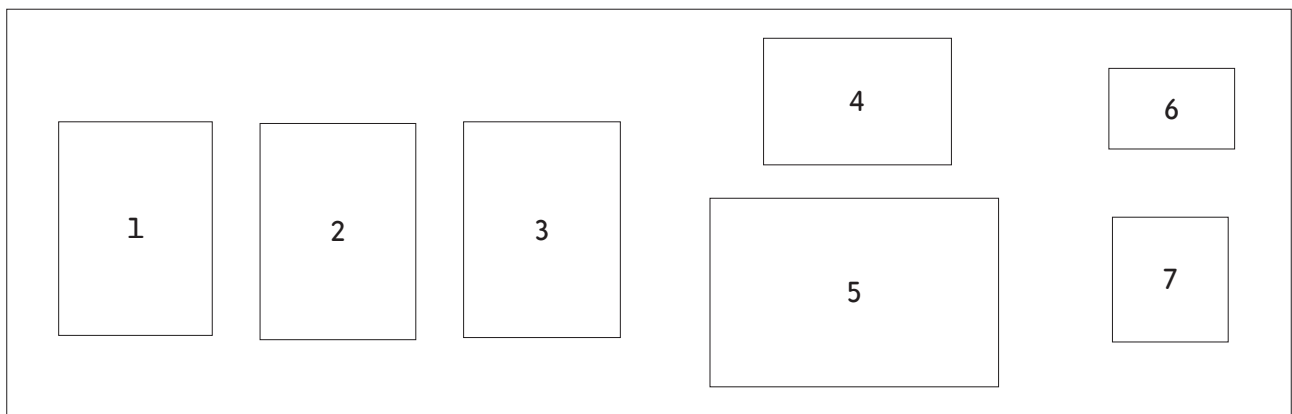
1928

Wire and sheet metal

Musée national Picasso-Paris MP265. Pablo Picasso gift in lieu, 1979.

X100159

[VITRINE]



From top to bottom, left to right:

1. **Woman with a Mantilla: Carmen**
2. **Bullfighter**
3. **Picador and Bull II**

**From the illustrated book Le Carmen des Carmen by
Prosper Mérimée**
1949, published 1964
Facsimiles

4. Robert Picault 1951 - 2004
**Bust of Lady Chandler with body paint by Pablo Picasso
during the filming of The Death of Charlotte Corday, the
film by Pablo Picasso and Frédéric Rossif**
1950
Photograph, Exhibition print
5. **Feature in issue 276 of 'L'Écran Français' from October
1950 on The Death of Charlotte Corday by Pablo
Picasso and Frédéric Rossif**
6. John Deakin 1912 - 1972
**Photograph of Pablo Picasso's Desire Caught
by the Tail (1941)rehearsed play-reading at Rudolf
Steiner Hall, London organised by Institute of
Contemporary Arts, London, the first English language
presentation of the play,16 February 1950**
Photograph

7. Programme for the play *Desire Caught by the Tail* by Pablo Picasso (1941), performed at The Watergate Theatre, London, 1950

Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, X102361; Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, X102362; Digital image, The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, X102363; Aureillan Anne and GrandPalaisRmn (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / Daniel Arnaudet, X102364; Tate Modern curatorial department, Z92066; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Tate Archive Z92019; Institute of Contemporary Arts, London, Tate Archive Z92064.

[FILM]

Robert Picault 1951–2004

Picasso's Bullfight

1951

Duration: 7 mins

Musée national Picasso-Paris MP1987-141

X101509

[WALL TEXT]

THEATRE

Picasso had a close relationship with the performing arts. He designed dance sets and costumes and even wrote and directed his own play **Desire Caught by the Tail** 1941. Picasso contributed to many stage productions, notably working with the famous dance company Ballet Russes. In two of his stage designs shown here, he played with the idea of perspective and illusion. **Pulcinella** 1920 used a trick-of-the-eye effect, while **Cuadro Flamenco** 1921 flipped that idea inside out. This approach turns theatre into an illusion within an illusion, highlighting the idea of performance itself.

This game of illusions was especially important to Picasso. It is possible to think that this is why he found Pulcinella to be a character particularly in tune with his philosophy. Pulcinella is a traditional character from *commedia dell'arte*, a form of tragicomic theatre popular in Europe between the sixteenth and eighteenth century, known for obscene humour.

Weeping Woman

1937

Oil paint on canvas

The artist Dora Maar was Picasso's model for this painting. Maar was a photographer and painter, read our article [Seven Things to Know: Dora Maar](#) to learn more about her and her work:



tate.org.uk/art/artists/dora-maar-15766/seven-thing-know-dora-maar

Tate. Accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax with additional payment (Grant-in-Aid) made with assistance from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1987

T05010

ROOM 5

GALLERY

ANTICLOCKWISE FROM ROOM THE ENTRANCE

Minotaur

Tapestry made after 'Le Minotaure'

1928 by Pablo Picasso

1935

Tapestry, wool and silk

Musée Picasso, Antibes MPA 1950.5.1 Gift of Marie Cuttoli in 1950

X100565

[WALL TEXT]

THE UNKNOWN MASTERPIECE

Despite cultivating a myth of his genius, for Picasso, the masterpiece became an obsession and its achievement an impossibility. Picasso was notably inspired by Honoré de Balzac's 1831 story **The Unknown Masterpiece** and he went on to illustrate a 1931 edition. The story is about an old painter who has been working for years on an unseen portrait of a woman that is finally revealed as a confusing mass of colours, with no recognisable figures for his viewers, driving the painter to despair. We can see in

Picasso's painting **Artist and His Model** 1926 how strongly he identified with the artist's creative struggle to capture the sitter.

The Painter and his Model

1926

Oil paint on canvas

Musée national Picasso-Paris 2025 MP96. Pablo Picasso gift in lieu, 1979

X100157

The Acrobat

1930

Oil paint on canvas

Musée national Picasso-Paris MP120. Pablo Picasso gift in lieu, 1979.

X100153

[WALL TEXT]

ACROBAT

The acrobat's bodily contortions are reminiscent of Picasso's own evolution as a painter. Just as the acrobat experiments with the forms adopted by their body, Picasso experimented with the way in which he presented himself and represented reality, playing with our expectations of societal norms. He was fascinated by circus performers, harlequins, jesters and other nonconforming bodies. He often depicted his subjects as hyper-masculine, androgynous, hyper-sexual or animalistic, exploring the limits of what it means to be human.

Aimé Césaire 1913–2008

Lost Body

1949

Collection of 10 poems by Aime Césaire with 32 etchings by Pablo Picasso.

Tate Modern curatorial department
X102548

[WALL TEXT]

A WHOLE LOT OF FORGOTTEN THINGS: LOST BODY

Early in Picasso's career he saw art from across Africa and the Pacific Islands at the Ethnographic Museum of the Trocadéro in Paris, and this became a strong influence on his practice. He had a complex relationship with these cultures and he freely appropriated from the artworks of colonised peoples, which some have interpreted as a form of theft.

He also celebrated this art and identified with oppressed peoples around the world. An example of this solidarity is Picasso's relationship with the poet and Martinique politician Aimé Césaire. Césaire was one of the founders of the Négritude movement, a group of Black writers in France in the 1930s, working to resist colonialism. In 1949 Picasso and Césaire worked together on the book **Lost Body**, exhibited here, with Picasso illustrating Césaire's poetry.

