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# THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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FIFTY YEARS OF PICASSO'S GRAPHIC ART

TO BE EXHIBITED: FIRST SURVEY IN AMERICA

The first comprehensive exhibition in the United States of Picasso's graphic art, covering a period of a half century, will be on view from February 14 through April 20 at the Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, in the first floor galleries. The entire exhibition, consisting of 153 prints, posters and illustrated books, many never before exhibited, has been selected exclusively from the Museum's own collection of 350 prints and books, the largest body of Picasso's original graphic art in America. The exhibition as well as an illustrated catalog has been prepared by William S. Lieberman, Associate Curator in charge of prints. In the Museum's Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Print Room, Picasso is one of the two artists whose works are most in demand. The other is Odilon Redon, whose graphic work is also to be shown at the same time.

The foremost painter of our time, Picasso is also one of its most important printmakers. His work as a graphic artist has been prolific. In a half century he has made over 500 etchings and engravings and has drawn half as many lithographs. The wide range of subjects includes circus clowns and acrobats, still lifes, bullfights, pastoral scenes, nudes, a complete zoo, the painter and the sculptor at work, as well as illustrations for Aristophanes, Ovid, Balzac, and for his friends the French poets Paul Eluard and Tristan Tzara.

Before the turn of the century, Picasso had already learned the rudiments of etching in Barcelona, and his second etching, "The Frugal Repast" done in Paris in 1904, is still his most popular print. He has since exploited most of the other possible graphic media: aquatint, engraving, drypoint, lithography, woodcut and wood engraving. Between 1927 and 1936, the decade of his greatest activity as an etcher and engraver, he made over 250 prints many of which are devoted to a classic and idealized treatment of the human figure as well as favorite themes such as the life and death of the minotaur.

In an etched comic strip of 1937, Picasso attacked Franco. This preceded the Guernica mural and was sold as a broadside. Since 1945 he has devoted much of his creative energies to lithography. By 1949 he had completed more than 180 lithographs, often in as many as 12 to 18 different states.

Among the books in the exhibition are three of the most impressive illustrated volumes of the 20th century: Balzac's The Hidden Masterpiece and Ovid's Metamorphoses both published in 1931, and Buffon's Natural History, begun in 1936 but not published until 1942.

Mr. Lieberman comments on the exhibition as follows:

"Picasso's significance as a painter necessarily adds to his stature as a printmaker, but his graphic work alone would assure his importance in the history of contemporary art. His prints mirror closely the successive phases of his painting from the blue period and the researches of cubism to the great Guernica mural and the recent pastorals at Antibes. In addition, he has reserved for the intimacy of his graphic art a style frequently far more realistic than that of his painting.

"Picasso often turns to etching or lithography to explore some specific problem. Two of the most important of such series of prints were done in the 1930s. The first, a sequence of 40 etchings, shows the sculptor at work and at rest in his studio. The second, a development on the theme of the minotaur, culminates in the large etching, Minotaurumachy, one of his major works in any medium and perhaps the most important print of the 20th century.

"Picasso's professional competence as a printmaker matches his creative invention. Quick to understand and exploit the characteristics of any medium, he has mastered the possibilities of intaglio techniques: etching, drypoint, aquatint and engraving on metal. Not until 1945 at the age of 64, however, did he begin to experiment seriously with lithography. During the next 6 years his work on stone occupied much of his energy and time, and these lithographs, many of which are in color, rank among his most important achievements of the post-war years.

"Today, when painters and sculptors devote much of their efforts to the creation of original prints, Picasso is of them all the master printmaker."

# picasso

*his  
graphic  
art*

# odilon redon

*drawings  
and  
lithographs*

*the trustees of the museum of modern art  
request the honor of your presence  
at the private opening of two exhibitions  
wednesday evening, february 13, 1952  
from eight to eleven*

*11 west 53 street. this invitation admits two.  
exhibitions close april 20*