

The Museum of Modern Art

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PICASSO AT THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

The most complete and important public collection of Picasso's work unsurpassed in range and number of key works, including a number of his unique and unrivaled masterpieces and many not shown before as part of the collection, will be on view at The Museum of Modern Art from February 3 through April 2. All the 84 paintings and sculptures, the 23 drawings and the selection of prints are from the Museum's own collection or are promised as future gifts. In addition the famous mural Guernica, on loan from the artist since 1939, is on view in the Museum's third floor galleries.

The Picasso collection, assembled by the Museum over the past four decades, now includes more than 40 important works promised as future gifts but seldom on public view. Among those promised works, usually out of public view in private homes but generously lent for this exhibition, are one of the first painted self-portraits (1901) owned by John Hay Whitney, William A. M. Burden's "Rose Period" Two Acrobats with a Dog (early 1905) and six important Cubist works (last seen publicly in the exhibition at the Museum of works formerly owned by Gertrude Stein) promised as future gifts by David Rockefeller, Nelson Rockefeller and William S. Paley. Other promised or future gifts in the show are Vase of Flowers promised by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph F. Colin, Moonlight at Vallauris promised by Mr. and Mrs. Werner E. Josten, The Striped Bodice promised by Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller and Woman Dressing Her Hair promised by Mrs. Bertram Smith.

The sculptures include a group of Picasso's extraordinary work of the 1950s such as the She-Goat and Baboon and Young. The drawings date from late 1904 to 1968, while the prints and illustrated books in the exhibition are drawn from the Museum's unique graphic collection which comprises some 400 single prints, besides hundreds in 75 illustrated books, and 30 posters.

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William S. Rubin, Chief Curator of the Painting and Sculpture Collection who directed the show and is the author of the accompanying catalog* points out that the formation of the collection is the fruit of the efforts of many curators and of the generosity of many trustees and friends of the Museum. "But above all, it is a testimony to the connoisseurship, devotion and persuasiveness of Alfred H. Barr, Jr., first Director of the Museum and later, Director of Museum Collections, until his retirement in 1967."

Among the recently acquired works brought together for the first time in the context of the Museum's present and future Picasso collection are the Charnel House (1944-45) and Repose (1908), both acquired by exchange, and the construction-sculpture Guitar of early 1912 given to the Museum by the artist last year. Other recent additions are two important collages of 1913 and paintings from 1914, 1926 and 1928 from the Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection gift.

While the works cover 65 years of his art, the exhibition also offers a virtually step-by-step revelation of the development of Picasso's Cubism. Mr. Rubin notes that "if the quality, range and depth of the Museum's Picasso collection is a fitting tribute to Mr. Barr's efforts, the fact that even this large group of work still leaves a number of significant aspects of the artist's explorations unrepresented is an equal tribute to Picasso's astonishing variety."

The exhibition is the third large show presented at the Museum during the past six months drawn entirely from its own resources including remainder-interest and promised gifts. It is the first of a projected series of such shows to be accompanied by a scholarly critical catalog devoted to an analysis of each of the works and including illustrations and comments on related material from other public and private collections around the world.

PICASSO IN THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART by William Rubin. 248 pages; 126 illustrations (49 in color); 181 reference illustrations; clothbound \$15.00; paperbound \$7.95. Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Clothbound edition distributed to the trade by New York Graphic Society Ltd. in the United States and Canada; Transatlantic Book Service Ltd. in the United Kingdom; and Feffer and Simons internationally.

Key works on view, many of which are among the Museum's most important paintings by any artist, include four crucial paintings: Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, which initiated Cubism (acquired by the Museum by trading a small Degas); Three Musicians, the greatest of his late Cubist compositions; Girl Before a Mirror, his most brilliant work of the early 1930s; and Night Fishing at Antibes, which brought that decade to a grand conclusion just as World War II began.

Presented as a birthday tribute, Picasso in the Collection of The Museum of Modern Art is the 30th show prepared by the Museum since its founding either devoted entirely to Picasso or in which a significant number of his works were shown.

In 1930, for its first showing of 20th-century European paintings a few months after the Museum was founded, Mr. Barr borrowed 15 paintings by Picasso, at a time when no other museum in this country had held a major Picasso exhibition. In 1940 the Museum presented the most comprehensive exhibition of his work up to that time. Picasso: Forty Years of His Art included more than 360 works; the largest lender was the artist himself who sent 91. The Museum collection was represented by 10 works. Alfred H. Barr's still standard reference book on the artist was first published at that time, updated 10 years later. The show broke attendance records in New York and later toured the country.

Thirteen years later in 1953 a second great retrospective was presented at the Museum to honor Picasso's 75th birthday and another generation was introduced to his work. That exhibition also included the first major showing in this country of Picasso's sculpture as well as many paintings never seen here before even by close students and scholars.

More recently the Museum presented The Sculpture of Picasso, the first showing of its kind in this country, and last year presented the largest show ever held anywhere of Picasso's prints.

Among the many other publications published by the Museum are The Sculptor's Studio:

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Etchings by Picasso and Picasso: His Graphic Art, both with introductions by William S. Lieberman, who was responsible for most of the Picasso print shows. Last fall the Museum re-issued Portrait of Picasso by Roland Penrose.

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53 St., New York, NY 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7501, -7504.
