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PABLO PICASSO

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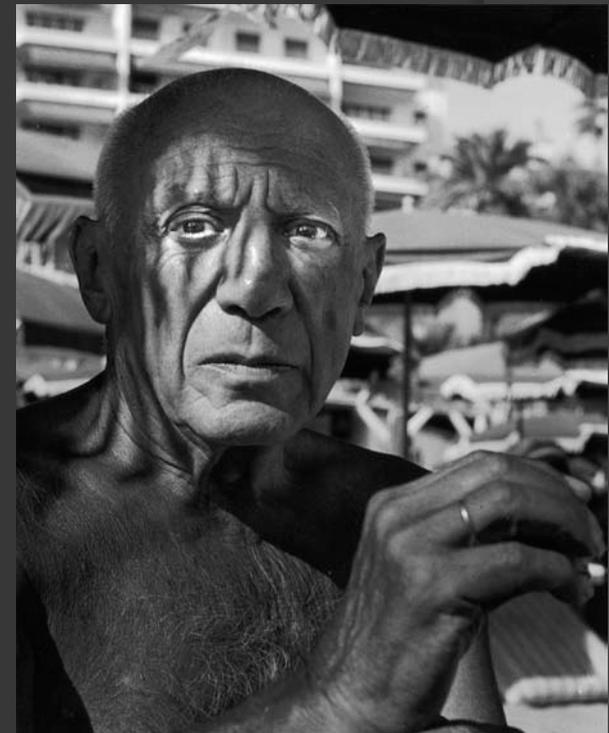
Pablo Picasso

- Spanish expatriate Pablo Picasso was one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century, as well as the co-creator of Cubism.



Synopsis

- Born in Málaga, Spain, in 1881, Pablo Picasso, became one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century and the creator (with Georges Braque) of Cubism.
- A Spanish expatriate painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist and stage designer, Picasso was considered radical in his work.
- The enormous body of Picasso's work remains, however, and the legend lives on - a tribute to the vitality of the "disquieting" Spaniard with the "sombrepiercing" eyes who superstitiously believed that work would keep him alive.
- For nearly 80 of his 91 years, Picasso devoted himself to an artistic production that contributed significantly to - and paralleled the entire development of - modern art in the 20th century.



Early Life and Education

- Picasso showed a passion and a skill for drawing from an early age. According to his mother, his first words were "piz, piz", a shortening of *lápiz*, the Spanish word for "pencil".
- From the age of seven, Picasso received formal artistic training from his father, Don José Ruiz y Blasco, in figure drawing and oil painting. In 1895, Picasso was traumatized when his seven-year-old sister, Conchita, died of diphtheria. After her death, the family moved to Barcelona. Picasso thrived in the city, regarding it in times of sadness or nostalgia as his true home.
- Ruiz persuaded the officials at the academy to allow his son to take an entrance exam for the advanced class. This process often took students a month, but Picasso completed it in a week, and the jury admitted him, at just 13.
- The student lacked discipline but made friendships that would affect him in later life. His father rented a small room for him close to home so he could work alone, yet he checked up on him numerous times a day, judging his drawings. The two argued frequently.

Career beginnings



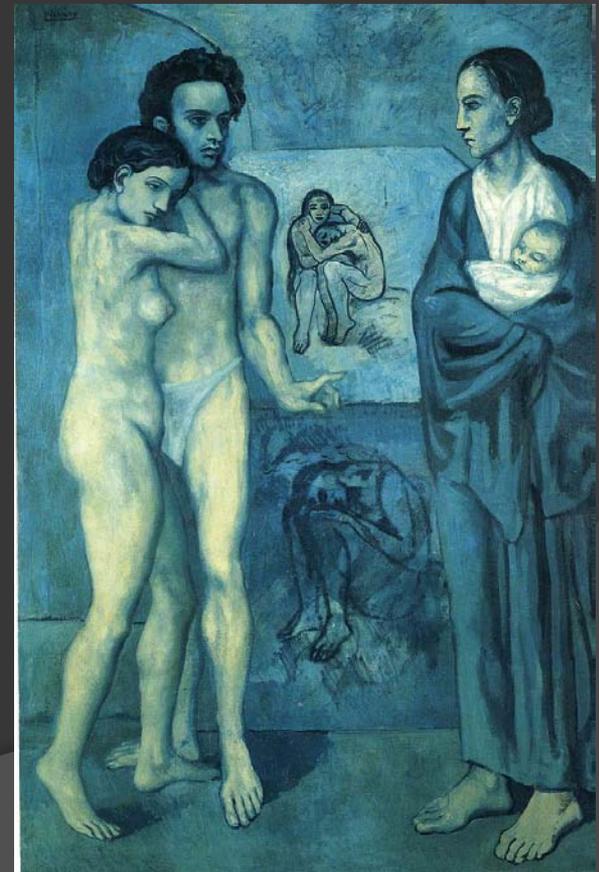
Portrait of Aunt Pepa

- Picasso's training under his father began before 1890. His progress can be traced in the collection of early works now held by the Museu Picasso in Barcelona, which provides one of the most comprehensive records extant of any major artist's beginnings.
- During 1893 the juvenile quality of his earliest work falls away, and by 1894 his career as a painter can be said to have begun.
- The academic realism apparent in the works of the mid-1890s is well displayed in *The First Communion* (1896), a large composition that depicts his sister, Lola.
- In the same year, at the age of 14, he painted *Portrait of Aunt Pepa*, a vigorous and dramatic portrait that Juan-Eduardo Cirlot has called "without a doubt one of the greatest in the whole history of Spanish painting."

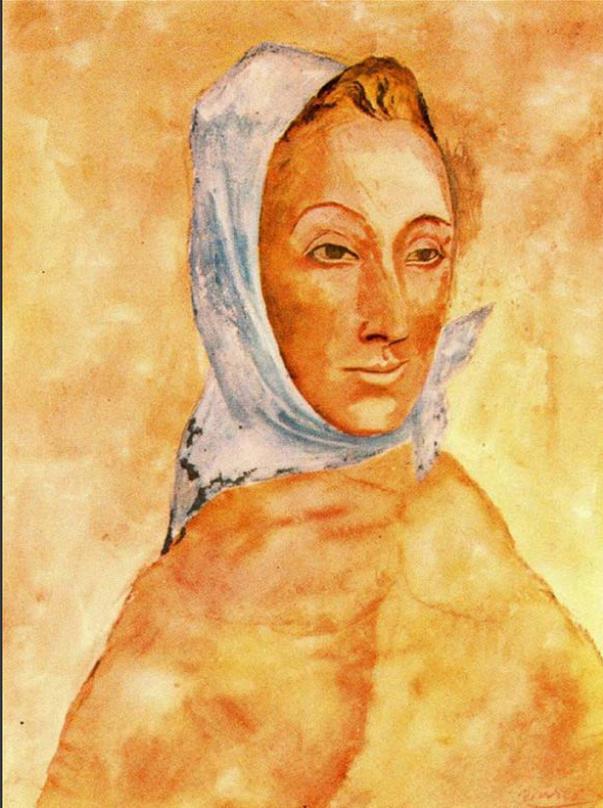


Blue Period

- Picasso's Blue Period (1901–1904), characterized by sombre paintings rendered in shades of blue and blue-green, only occasionally warmed by other colours, began either in Spain in early 1901, or in Paris in the second half of the year.
- Many paintings of gaunt mothers with children date from the Blue Period, during which Picasso divided his time between Barcelona and Paris.
- In his austere use of colour and sometimes doleful subject matter – prostitutes and beggars are frequent subjects – Picasso was influenced by a trip through Spain and by the suicide of his friend Carlos Casagemas. Starting in autumn of 1901 he painted several posthumous portraits of Casagemas, culminating in the gloomy allegorical painting *La Vie* (1903), now in the Cleveland Museum of Art.



Rose Period



Portrait of Fernande Olivier
By Pablo Picasso

- The Rose Period (1904–1906) is characterized by a more cheery style with orange and pink colours, and featuring many circus people, acrobats and harlequins known in France as saltimbanques.
- Picasso met Fernande Olivier, a bohemian artist who became his mistress, in Paris in 1904.
- Olivier appears in many of his Rose Period paintings, many of which are influenced by his warm relationship with her, in addition to his increased exposure to French painting.

Cubism

- In 1907, Pablo Picasso produced a painting unlike anything he or anyone else had ever painted before, a work that would profoundly influence the direction of art in the 20th century: "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O)", a chilling depiction of five nude prostitutes, abstracted and distorted with sharp geometric features and stark blotches of blues, greens and grays.
- In Cubist paintings, objects are broken apart and reassembled in an abstracted form, highlighting their composite geometric shapes and depicting them from multiple, simultaneous viewpoints in order to create physics-defying, collage-like effects. At once destructive and creative, Cubism shocked, appalled and fascinated the art world.



Classical Period



- The outbreak of World War I ushered in the next great change in Picasso's art. He grew more somber and, once again, became preoccupied with the depiction of reality. His works between 1918 and 1927 are categorized as part of his "Classical Period," a brief return to Realism in a career otherwise dominated by experimentation. His most interesting and important works from this period include "Three Women at the Spring" (1921), "Two Women Running on the Beach/The Race" (1922) and "The Pipes of Pan" (1923).

Surrealism

- Picasso's most well-known Surrealist painting, deemed one of the greatest paintings of all time, was completed in 1937, during the Spanish Civil War. After German bombers supporting Francisco Franco's Nationalist forces carried out a devastating aerial attack on the Basque town of Guernica on April 26, 1937, Picasso, outraged by the bombing and the inhumanity of war, painted "Guernica."



Death and Legacy

- Inarguably one of the most celebrated and influential painters of the 20th century, Picasso continues to garner reverence for his technical mastery, visionary creativity and profound empathy, and, together, these qualities have distinguished him as a revolutionary artist. Picasso also remains renowned for endlessly reinventing himself, switching between styles so radically different that his life's work seems to be the product of five or six great artists rather than just one.



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