



EXHIBITION

Picasso & Abstraction

Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

14 October 2022 > 12 February 2023



The Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, in close collaboration with the Musée national Picasso-Paris, are devoting a unique exhibition to Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) next fall. The two institutions are decrypting a theme that has never been explored before: for the very first time, Picasso's relationship with abstraction will be brought to light, through more than one hundred and twenty exceptional works.

Even though Picasso was an assiduous detractor of abstract art, and despite the fact that his work was entirely his own, he was nonetheless perceived by many of his contemporaries as one of the precursors of this history. This

paradox is partly due to the fact that the artist himself had an ambiguous relationship with the principle of abstraction, constantly returning to it throughout his life. Many of the artists who fully embraced non-figurative painting, from the Russian avant-gardes to the American Abstract Expressionists, claimed his legacy.

The exhibition will address the major stages that marked the links between Picasso's work and the history of abstract art, from the first Cubist experiments of 1907, carried out on the fringes of *Les Femmes d'Alger*, to his later work, which is sometimes situated on the borders of action painting. This surprising relationship, made up of small advances, retreats and backward steps, will be presented in the subtle chronological and thematic course of the exhibition, revealing the artist's pendulum movement between abstraction and the figurative over the decades.

This back-and-forth dynamic also demonstrates the deconstruction of modern and contemporary art history. It is no longer a question of identifying a decisive moment that would set in motion a new and unprecedented process, but of revealing how the birth of an artistic movement is more a phenomenon of visual culture - no development in any artist's work has been hermetic to the outside world - than to a particular work.

Another major theme of the exhibition will be the artist's studio, a true formal laboratory, and will show Picasso's creative process through various series [drawings and prints], allowing the viewer to understand how he works and reflects on the representation of the chosen motifs. The studio, which is both a place of creation and a setting for the work, is also the space where



the painter's imagination is realised, allowing a glimpse of the ambiguity between reality and fiction.

The exhibition, with its sharp and innovative theme, will show how Pablo Picasso works tirelessly, and will reveal his legendary curiosity and his application to understand the functioning of the things around him. The viewer will not only be invited to appreciate Pablo Picasso's extraordinary creativity and his ability to constantly reinvent himself, but also to measure, through his work, how impulses towards the unknown remain an excellent way of getting to know oneself better and of freeing oneself from the limiting labels.

PICASSO, *Violon et feuille de musique*, 1912. Oil on canvas, Musée national Picasso–Paris. Photo: Adrien Didierjean.

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Pablo PICASSO, *L'Arbre*, 1907. Oil on canvas, Musée national Picasso–Paris. Photo: Adrien Didierjean; Pablo PICASSO, *La Cuisine*, 1948. Oil on canvas, Musée national Picasso–Paris. Photo: Mathieu Rabeau; Pablo PICASSO, *Guitare*, 1913. Oil on canvas glued on a wood panel, Musée national Picasso–Paris. Photo: Mathieu Rabeau

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www.fine-arts-belgium.be

#expopicasso

€17 full rate

€15 early bird rate (from 01.09.2022 > 13.10.2022)

[Presse images](#)

SAVE THE DATE! The press conference will be held on 13 October at 10.45 AM

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