

# PICASSO

## AND SPANISH MODERNITY

WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE MUSEO  
NACIONAL CENTRO DE ARTE REINA SOFÍA

**FLORENCE**  
**PALAZZO STROZZI**  
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curated by  
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Texts  
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Using a selection of works from the collections in the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, *Picasso and Spanish Modernity* sets out to explore different approaches to the concrete foundations and the styles that formed the crucial contribution made by Picasso and by other Spanish artists to the development of modern art.

In addition to illustrating Picasso's influence on modern Spanish art, this exhibition seeks to examine the most original and significant new developments that Picasso and the Spanish masters contributed to the international art scene as a whole.

To achieve this, we propose to explore Picasso's fate both as a legend and as an artist, offering the notion of "variation" as a differentiating element in his conception of modernity, and tracking the way in which Picasso addressed the transfer of meanings, figures and symbols in the depiction of the Monster and of the Tragedy, right up to the creation of *Guernica*.

Taking our cue from Picasso, or rather from Picasso's relationship with Gris, Miró, Dalí, Domínguez and Tàpies, we also endeavour to assess Spain's singular (and hitherto little-known) contribution to the art of built, concrete and analytical form on the one hand, and to the "new lyricism" defined by sign and surface painting and by the sculpture of drawing in space on the other. At the same time, we explore the unique dialogue between reality and super-reality in Spanish art, delving with a different creative register into the crucial relationship between nature and culture as an expression of identity either developed by vernacular artists or rooted in their origins.

The exhibition concludes with an overview of the ways in which Spanish artists handled the change of direction towards a different notion of modernity in the chronological and aesthetic openness of the present. Some of these approaches to interpreting and linking the contributions made by concrete Spanish modernity, presented here for the very first time in an exhibition, are the result of the considerable progress made in the understanding and rediscovery of Spanish modernity in recent decades.

*The curator*

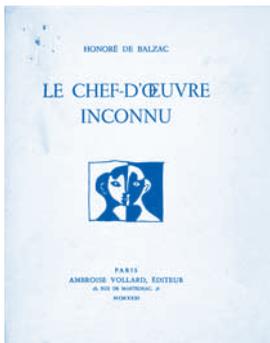
# REFERENCES



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*The Painter and the Model*  
27 March–7 May 1963  
oil on canvas

This picture, painted in Mougins, is part of a very large series of works Picasso produced on the theme of *The Painter and the Model* in 1963. A metaphor of the creative process and an emblem of creativity inspired by women, the series opens and closes the cycle of Picasso's supremacy in modern art, which is why two different versions have been used to open and close the exhibition.



Honoré de Balzac, *Le Chef-d'œuvre inconnu* (*The Unknown Masterpiece*) original etchings and drawings by Pablo Picasso  
Paris, A. Vollard, 1931  
Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

This book and the illustrations from it (projected onto the walls around you) are part of a collection of art and artists' books that belonged to Tuscan collector Loriano Bertini. In 2000 the collection was acquired by the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale in Florence.

Ambroise Vollard used thirteen etchings and sixty-six drawings by Picasso to illustrate Balzac's work published a hundred years earlier. The themes addressed - the artist seeking to create the perfect work of art, or the relationship between the artist and the work of art and between art and reality - were favourites with Picasso, with the painter or sculptor portrayed in the act of creation.



## The Unknown Masterpiece

Maestro Frenhofer is a character invented by Honoré de Balzac in 1831. Frenhofer tries to create an absolute masterpiece, but disenchanted by people's failure to understand his work and by the results of his ambition, he burns his painting and commits suicide. The founders of modern art were very familiar with the "spectre" of Frenhofer. In the late 1920s Ambroise Vollard wished to produce a luxury edition of Balzac's tale with illustrations by Picasso. The book was published in 1931. Picasso always denied that he had explicitly produced illustrations for *The Unknown Masterpiece*. He claimed that Vollard had sought his illustrations among Picasso's existing drawings and prints. Regardless of what the artist claimed, though, the book does offer an open dialogue between the text and the illustrations. Also, in the prints and drawings, Picasso speaks for the first time about the artist's studio, about the psychological and symbolic relationship between the artist and his model, and about the significance of creation divorced from the modern desire for transformation or the historic memory of art. Another crucial theme in Picasso's engravings is the relationship between the bull and the horse, which was subsequently to inspire the content of *Guernica*. In fact it is common knowledge that Picasso painted *Guernica* in a studio in the Rue des Grands-Augustins in Paris, where Balzac set Frenhofer's atelier and the main scenes in his story. Frenhofer's death is not found in Picasso's drawings and prints. With his life and with his work, Picasso inverted the story's ending and paved the way for every modern artist wishing to create their own work to first ask themselves just what art really is.

# PICASSO: VARIATIONS

Picasso abandons stylistic unity and adopts versatility and iconographic and artistic “variations” as a working system, producing drawings in different styles at the same time. When asked the reason for this, he replied that his different styles were “the same thing”. For Picasso this simultaneous diversity of styles was the rule rather than the exception; in fact it was to become an increasingly important feature of his vast output in the course of his long career. Picasso could develop the same theme or figure using different styles, ranging from the rediscovery of classicism to Surrealism via Expressionism or Cubism, either at different moments or at the same time. A single image can take on different meanings according to its context. Picasso proceeded by “variations” in a musical sense, strengthening, transforming and embellishing his theme, or merging it with others. A major work by Picasso is rarely a single product without replica, reiteration or variation.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Woman's Head (Fernande)*  
1910  
oil on canvas

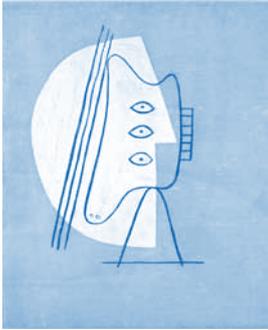
After a summer holiday in Horta de Ebro in 1909, Picasso explored how to render three-dimensional subjects on the two-dimensional surface of a painting, using as the prototype for his compositions the *Woman's Head* which, at that time, was the head of Fernande Olivier, his partner and model from 1904 to 1912. The areas comprising the face, defined by sharply geometric lines, form a grid which covers and breathes life into the painted surface. The painting's limited palette draws the observer's attention to the formal structure of the painted space, built by superimposing different levels.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Bust and Palette*  
25 February 1925  
oil on canvas

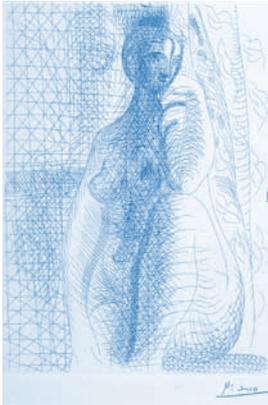
In a style inherited from Cubism, this painting's genre alludes to classical art and to still-life while also creating an almost surreal atmosphere. The large skull-shaped palette with what appear to be jaws contrasts with the plaster bust evoking teaching. Picasso may be hinting at the contrast between painting and sculpture, or between the two-dimensional and the three-dimensional. The idea of duality is heightened by the black and white of the bust.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Figure*  
1928  
oil on canvas

As in *Bust* and *Palette*, here too we have a profile in shadow and a monstrous, threatening figure, a combination of shapes transformed through their interaction into a three-faced ideogram containing the profile in shadow, the monstrous figure, and the sum of the two. The picture illustrates Picasso's use of the dual face not only as a formal element but also to express a new kind of emotional tension.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Nude Woman with Bent Leg*  
(from the Vollard Suite 8)  
9 July 1931  
etching on paper

This illustration is taken from one of the first plates that Picasso engraved between 1931 and 1937 prior to selling them to Ambroise Vollard. Vollard collected and published them in the *Suite* named after him. Picasso addresses a variety of themes, forty-six plates being set in the sculptor's studio as though they were an ideal continuation of *The Unknown Masterpiece*. Once again we see the profile in shadow, reminiscent of Picasso himself studying a real figure with its voluptuous forms.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Seated Nude Woman with  
her Head Resting on her Hand*  
(from the Vollard Suite 21)  
9 May 1934  
etching on paper

In this female figure and in the figure alongside it, Picasso reflects on beauty, illustrating aspects of sensual beauty in the former and of intellectual beauty in the latter. He displays his fondness for duality through concrete shapes which appear to evoke sensuality within the figure's geometry.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Seated Woman Resting on Elbows*  
(*Marie-Thérèse*)  
8 January 1939  
oil on canvas

In 1939, a pivotal year marking the end of the Spanish Civil War and the start of World War II, Picasso took his cue from both Marie-Thérèse Walter and Dora Maar (his current lovers) to explore the female bust. A mere two months separate the two portraits on display, in which Picasso combines different styles (from Cubism to his take on Surrealism) to construct a new approach to figurative art. There is a strong contrast between the figure's face (complete in every part despite the deliberate distortion) and the summary treatment of her body.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Portrait of Dora Maar*  
27 March 1939  
oil on panel

When Theodora Markovitch, known as Dora Maar (Paris 1907–97), met Picasso in 1935 (later becoming his muse and lover), she was already a well-known photographer and a familiar face in Surrealist circles. While Picasso used some of Dora's facial features in 1937 to depict the "weeping woman" in the drawings that make up the galaxy of works associated with *Guernica*, by 1939, in his variations on the likenesses of Marie-Thérèse and Dora, it is as though he were attempting to convey crucial aspects of the personality of his sitters, to capture their very essence.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Conger Eels*  
1940  
oil on canvas

This painting bolsters the notion of variation in Picasso's work as the flat fish with its gaping mouth is one of Picasso's iconotypes, an image he used on several occasions to depict horror and anguish, foreshadowed in his *Figure* of 1928. The fact that Picasso resorted to this icon with its monstrous figure in different contexts and with different aims suggests that it was deeply-rooted in his psyche and that he used it to depict an intense anguish similar to that of an animal torn from its natural environment and struggling between life and death.



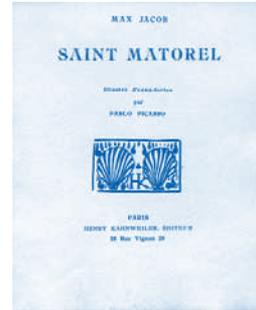
## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*The Painter and the Model*  
3–8 April 1963  
oil on canvas

The painter portrayed is not the now eighty-year-old Picasso but a bearded man in his prime. This scene is a mirror-image revisit of an engraving made by Dürer in 1525 for his treatise on perspective entitled *Underweysung der Messung* in which an artist is drawing a nude woman, looking at her through a wire grid. Picasso, however, transformed the grid into an easel. On one side we have artistic tradition, on the other the model as the metaphor of a wish identified with the act of creation itself.

# IDEA AND FORM

Spanish art is generally perceived as an expressive, dramatic form of art dominated by pathos and by an almost Baroque spirit. It is rarely if ever identified with rational, logical construction. This room, on the other hand, explores Spain's contribution to analytical, constructive art and the formal construction of the art work through rational order. The works on display, whether abstract or figurative, are constructive in nature, ranging from Cubism to Concrete Art covering the years 1910 to 1959. This approach took its cue from Picasso's Cubism in 1910, but it was with Juan Gris's Cubism that it adopted the constructive vocabulary of painting as a specific feature, ultimately forging a bond with Joaquín Torres-García's Constructive Universalism. The intention is not simply to present a set of linked milestones in the history of this art form, but to use various moments of the Spanish artistic experience to illustrate the key elements of the style called "concrete form" as it developed and adapted to changing historical, social, economic and political circumstances.



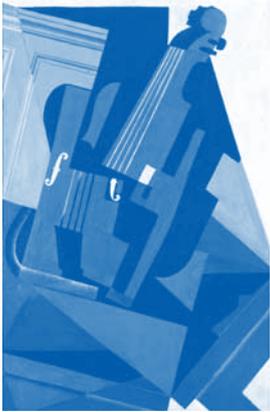
Max Jacob, *Saint Matorel*,  
etchings by Pablo Picasso  
Paris, H. Kahnweiler, 1910, print 1911  
Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

This book and the one on display next to it come from the Bertini Collection in the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale. It contains a mystic text in poetic prose which is the first part of a trilogy on Saint Matorel. In it, author Max Jacob (1876–1944), Picasso's good friend, recounts his life after experiencing a vision in 1909 which prompted him to convert from Judaism to Christianity. To illustrate the work, publisher and dealer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler used four drawings that Picasso had produced in Cadaquès in the summer of 1910.



Max Jacob, *Le Siège de Jérusalem: grande tentation céleste de Saint Matorel*,  
etchings by Pablo Picasso  
Paris, H. Kahnweiler, Autumn-Winter  
1913, print 1914  
Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale

Written by Max Jacob in his beloved home town of Quimper and completed on 8 November 1911, this play in three acts expresses the author's search for mysticism. Picasso agreed to illustrate the text in June 1913 on being asked to do so by Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler. The etchings (one per act) appear to have no relation to the text to which they claim to refer, as none of the characters or scenes are recognisable, but Picasso plays with signs which seem to point in the direction of the symbols that Jacob develops in the play.



## JUAN GRIS

(Madrid 1887–Boulogne-  
Billancourt 1927)

*The Violin*

1916

oil on plywood

A painter and a theoretician, Gris moved to Paris in 1906, spending most of the rest of his life there in the company of Picasso, Matisse, Modigliani, Léger, Braque, Apollinaire and Max Jacob. Unlike Picasso, Gris never betrayed Cubism, a Cubism based on the pre-eminence of coloured shapes. He began with abstract forms, which in this painting take on concrete shape in the white wall, the table and the violin. These shapes form a dynamic surface thanks to the intersection of two primary diagonal lines and the insertion of triangles pointing in various directions.



## JUAN GRIS

(Madrid 1887–Boulogne  
Billancourt 1927)

*Harlequin with Violin*

1919

oil on canvas

Gris returned to freer geometric forms in a series of *Harlequins* in 1919. The feeling that one is looking at a dynamic, constructed abstract work is very strong, although Gris has devised a rigid system of triangles and rectangles linked by proportional references from which he causes references to objects to emerge. The regularity of the checkerboard pattern is emblematic of the interaction of a geometric model: from the rhomboid there emerges the idea of a face which, out of context, it would be impossible to identify.



## MARÍA BLANCHARD

(Santander 1881–Paris 1932)

*Woman with Guitar*

1917

oil on canvas

A “magical yet suffering” figure disabled from birth, like a Spanish Frida Kahlo, María Blanchard moved to Paris in 1909. She felt the need for abstraction, the sensation of dynamism and loyalty to the tenets of Cubism even more strongly than most of her Cubist friends, and her need for purity in painting had a negative impact on her ties both with potential clients and with dealer Léonce Rosenberg. In her *Woman with Guitar*, painted in 1917, she defined one of the paradigms of a renewed Cubist experience.



## JOAN MIRÓ

(Barcelona 1893–Palma de Mallorca  
1983)

*Siurana, the Path*

1917

oil on canvas

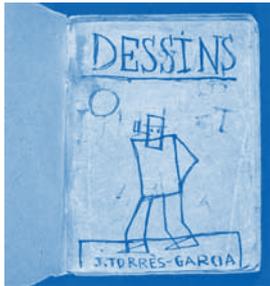
In *Siurana* Miró sought to reconcile his own vision of a primitive Catalonia with the artistic vocabulary of the Avant-garde movements, thus demonstrating that acceptance of one's own cultural and anthropological origin is perfectly compatible with modern art. In this painting, one of Miró's most important youthful works when he was painting Catalan landscapes in search of new plastic solutions, he combines intense colours reminiscent of Fauvism and Expressionism with the echo of Cézanne and the lessons of Cubism.



## PABLO GARGALLO

(Maella 1881–Reus 1934)  
*Resting Woman with Concave Forms*  
1922  
bronze

Gargallo's pole stars included the craftsmanship associated with Catalan Modernism, the sculpture of Maillol, Noucentisme's classicising, the Mediterranean approach, Cubism and the new classicism – none of which he considered to be at odds with one another, indeed he sought to reconcile them. He responded to Cubism by inventing the empty form, the equivalent of the prismatic form in Cubism, while *Resting Woman with Concave Forms* also maintains the sinuous lines of Modernism and echoes the volumes of ancient Greek statuary.



## JOAQUÍN TORRES-GARCÍA

(Montevideo 1874–1949)  
*Drawings*  
1922  
notebook consisting of 14 pages  
indian ink, pen on kraft paper

Born in Uruguay to a Catalan father, the artist condensed his first strong link between signs and built form in this notebook (which he completed in Paris). Torres-García wrote and drew to convey the message that a picture contains shapes rather than objects – shapes arranged on a surface in a set pattern to convey the notion of an industrial society – a society that still needs to remember its ethnographic character, aiming for a style echoing Cézanne and Cubism yet open to order, balance and perfect unity.



## RAFAEL BARRADAS

(Montevideo 1890–1929)  
*Man in the Café (Atocha)*  
1923  
oil on canvas

Born to Spanish parents in Uruguay, Barradas launched his own aesthetic vision, Vibrationism, in 1918, reinterpreting the Cubist style and Futurist dynamism. He moved to the Atocha station neighbourhood in Madrid that same year, hobnobbing with poets, writers and artists, illustrating books and preparing sketches and set designs for the Teatro del Arte.



## MANUEL ÁNGELES ORTIZ

(Jaén 1895–Paris 1984)  
*Still Life*  
1926  
oil on canvas

Manuel Ángeles Ortiz was not simply Picasso's friend, he was also the only pupil the master ever wanted to have. Born in Andalucía, he studied in Madrid before moving to Paris in 1922, where he fell under Picasso's influence and adopted his master's alternating styles. He subscribed to Cubism, combined that with Abstract Art and Surrealism, and then embraced the "return to order" espoused by "Cahiers d'Art". This *Still Life*, painted during his time in Paris, reveals his significant cooperation with such musicians as composer Manuel de Falla in Spain and Eric Satie and Francis Poulenc in France.



## JULIO GONZÁLEZ

(Barcelona 1876–Arcueil 1942)  
*Peasant Woman Mask*  
c. 1927–9  
iron sheet

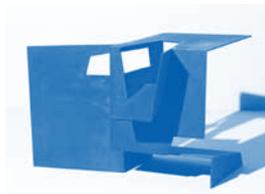
*Peasant Woman Mask* combines the stylistic features of Modernism with the Noucentist approach, which González developed with synthetic skill in his painting and his first sculptures. It is by no means paradoxical that, working in conjunction with Picasso, González – a constructive sculptor yet one who, like Torres-García, never totally abandoned figurative art – should have been the inventor of the essential lyricism of drawing in space. The two artists frequently worked together.



## SALVADOR DALÍ

(Figueres 1904–89)  
*Harlequin*  
1927 [1926]  
oil on canvas

Yellow and Red: everything in this figure, starting with the two colours, is dualism, polarity. The painting recalls the work of the same name that Picasso painted in 1915 but it develops it in a psychological vein which is not yet Surrealist in the strict sense, yet which does not fully toe the line of Freudian orthodoxy either. In fact it echoes both approaches. Dalí also takes on board Picasso's split faces. Cubism is perceptible in the linear and geometric definition of the Harlequin's body, but its forms are starting to become furrowed and soft.



## JORGE OTEIZA

(Orio 1908–San Sebastián 2003)  
*Homage to Mallarmé*  
1958–9  
iron sheet

After producing this work, Oteiza ceased all activity as a sculptor. In his experimentation the artist sought, in sculpture, to trade the concept of hollowness for that of the void: the material of the sculpture is no longer the sculpture itself so much as the element which, in defining the void, generates the “shape” of the void. The sculptural entity proper is the empty space that the material allows the observer to perceive. Oteiza sought to achieve the emptying of space in sculpture through the juxtaposition of light, dynamic and open formal units



## EQUIPO 57

*Composition*  
1959  
oil on canvas

The *Collectivo* was set up in May 1957 in Paris and Cordoba by Spanish artists who shared a desire to pursue a form of art rooted in society, an art form capable of transcending the romantic notion of the artist as an individual endowed with a special talent distinguishing him from the rest of the community, and the determination to transform people's perception of art and the visual space. This redefinition of the concept of pure plasticity was prompted by the awareness that form, colour, line and mass do not exist as independent elements but only in the dynamic interaction that they create.



## PABLO PALAZUELO

(Madrid 1915–Galapagar 2007)

*White Weather*

1959

oil on canvas

Palazuelo knew Klee's work, explored the work of Kandinsky and was aware of the geometric and concrete abstract trend in postwar Paris, where he moved in 1948. But paintings like *White Weather* show that Palazuelo's mature work is impossible to fit into any kind of classification of Abstract Art, whether constructive or objective, in the postwar era. This, among other reasons, because he also took on board the physical and cosmological implications of his reading of Gaston Bachelard and Mircea Eliade and his knowledge of oriental philosophy.

# LYRICISM: SIGN AND SURFACE

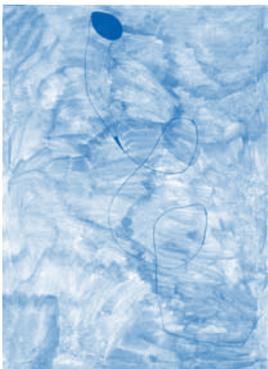
Sensitivity in modern art had been gradually changing since 1923. Many artists, particularly from Spain, were attempting to blend modern art with intuition, instinct and a desire to allow painting and sculpture to trigger the same feelings as those aroused by poetry, yet all the while promoting a flowing joy of living which contrasted with sentimentalism. For these artists, focussing on essential elements, thus alluding only in part to real life, meant fostering a "lyrical" awareness of reality. Their marks were freely applied to surfaces prepared in random fashion, or else found their place thanks to new sculptural techniques. Surrealism and machine writing helped to develop this new "plastic lyricism". Picasso developed it through the use of arabesques and rhymes or through relationships between his figures. Miró always sought a parallel with poetry in his "dream paintings". Bores invented "fruit-painting" and, with Cossío, developed the "lyrical figuration" that was to appeal also to Togores, while Julio González, with his use of autogenous soldering, is considered the founding father of modern iron sculpture. His "drawing in space" was to influence Gargallo and the whole of 20<sup>th</sup>-century sculpture, right up to the postwar era in Spain when it was revived in the work of Angel Ferrant.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Musical Instruments on a Table*  
c. 1924–6  
oil on canvas

Between 1923 and 1926 Picasso paved the way for a new sensitivity. His forms recovered their plastic aspect, becoming softer and setting aside the split lines of his Cubist, analytical and synthetic period. He also dispensed with the classicism with which he appeared to have subscribed to the widespread “return to order” called for after 1919 when he turned his back on the Avant-garde movements, accusing them of being a factor in the disorder that triggered the Great War. His work in this period may best be described as “plastic-poetic”.



## JOAN MIRÓ

(Barcelona 1893–Palma de Mallorca 1983)  
*Painting*  
1925  
oil on canvas

*Painting* belongs to what is known as Miró’s “dream-like painting” period, although the word “painting” is used for a creative phase in which he was inclined to question painting itself, and the term “dream-like” is too Freudian for an artist who was far removed from the principles of psychoanalytical literature. This *Painting* is a work in which the enigma-sign bears the least resemblance to anything familiar, yet this rejection of immediate significance only boosts the picture’s poetic quality.



## FRANCISCO BORES

(Madrid 1898–Paris 1972)  
*Still Life on the Wall*  
1927  
oil on canvas

Bores had been in Paris for two years when he completed this work. In the city he met up again with Pancho Cossío, met Picasso and Gris and joined the Escuela de Paris, a group of Spanish artists in the French capital which the magazine “Cahiers d’Art” had been tracking since its was founded in 1926. The new art movement gave priority to intuition and spontaneity, its members being encouraged to let themselves be transported by the flow of life. Bores was later to call their work “fruit paint”, though today we know it as “lyrical figuration”.



## PANCHO COSSÍO

(San Diego de Baños, Cuba 1894–Alicante 1970)  
*Three Figures*  
1927  
oil on canvas

In 1925 Cossío (who had moved to Paris in 1923) joined the group of Christian Zervos, the man behind the magazine “Cahiers d’Art” who was to play a crucial role in his artistic career. Works such as *Three Figures* encapsulate the very best of the new plastic style, yet Cossío always maintained a more decisive expressionist approach than Bores, clinging much longer to the “Spanish palette” comprising a range of ochres, burnt Siena, reds and blacks contrasting with white.



## JOSEP DE TOGORES

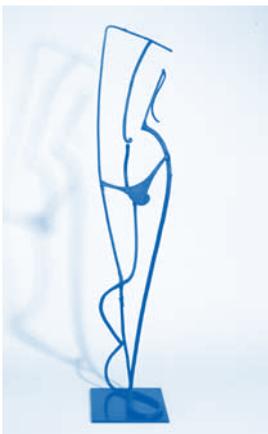
(Cerdanyola del Vallès 1893  
–Barcelona 1970)

*Forms*

1930

oil on canvas

Between 1928 and 1931, Togores, who was one of the European founders of Magical Realism, focused on spontaneous writing and the potential of new plastic lyricism. *Forms* shows this change at maturity. Togores called his new painting “abstract” even though, with his spontaneous and direct graphics, he developed a series of references to the human body. In any event, he ended up considering this transition through sign and surface painting, which never achieved critical acclaim, as a moment of madness and confusion.



## PABLO GARGALLO

(Maella 1881–Reus 1934)

*Silhouette of Young Man*

c. 1933–4

iron

Gargallo, whose iron period began in 1929 and continued until his death in 1934, adopted the autogenous (filler-less) welding technique developed by González and embraced the style of drawing in space, creating a sculpture in the air. In his last years he accentuated the feeling of dynamism, strengthened the qualities associated with the dematerialisation of the sculptural block, and consolidated his ability to enhance transparency and to reduce the whole to the mere lines defining it.



## JULIO GONZÁLEZ

(Barcelona 1876–Arcueil 1942)

*Reclining Figure II*

c. 1936

iron

González pioneered iron sculpture and the use of autogenous welding in art. His *Monument to Guillaume Apollinaire* in wrought iron marks the start, in 1928, of a period of intense cooperation with Picasso. Between 1930 and 1931, in his *Picasso et les cathédrales* González invented a formula embodying an entire poetic based on drawing in space. In this drawing, space plays a lead role alongside the sign set in it, while the void around the work is as important as its mass.



## JULIO GONZÁLEZ

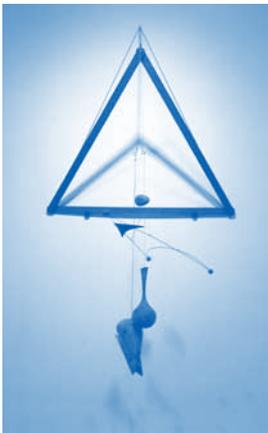
(Barcelona 1876–Arcueil 1942)

*Large Venus*

c. 1936–7

bronze

González pioneered a new art form indicating a way forward for modern sculpture, a new way of filling and modelling space by welding pieces of iron together to build three-dimensional collages. Around the mid-1930s, in works in which he tackled the depiction of volume and gravity, González produced regular volumes with a series of metal faces and empty interiors. In his work the figure is revealed through the sign that takes its place.



## ÁNGEL FERRANT

(Madrid 1890–1961)

*Industrious Woman*

1948

wire, wood, rope

Ferrant's *mobiles* mark the link between two historical periods, ferrying the principles of new plastic lyricism of between 1924 and 1936 into the postwar era. They clearly reflect Calder's influence, yet they follow in the tradition of Julio González and the poetics of sign, surface and space. Ferrant was the first artist after González to talk about drawing in space. His interest lay in developing a poetics of air in relation to sculpture.

# REALITY AND SUPER-REALITY

Spanish experimentation with modernity led to the early and rapid development of what has been called Magical Realism. But Spanish modern art also established a unique dialogue between the real and the super-real. The realistic approach to art headed in the direction of Surrealism, and Surrealism offered a new take on reality. Picasso reflected this echo in his engravings and drawings, while Dalí used this shift to forge the principle of his theory on the "paranoiac-critical method". The artists of Spanish *Noucentisme* – Sunyer, Arteta and Vázquez Díaz – moved towards realism, but by way of the dramatic, the mysterious and the dreamlike. The work of José Gutiérrez Solana – who painted *España Negra*, though he was not himself an innovator – held a certain fascination for those taking a new look at Spanish art on account of its realism directed towards the horrific and the sinister. In a different moment in history Antonio López, the founder of postwar Spanish Realism, introduced the simultaneous presence of the real and the unreal into his first paintings.



## JOSÉ GUTIÉRREZ SOLANA

(Madrid 1886–1945)  
Clowns  
1920  
oil on canvas

Solana, with a background in late Symbolism, was a traditional painter who fell into step with modern art and was welcomed in Arte Nuevo circles. Leaning towards excess, his private life marked by madness in the family, he owed a debt to the so-called *España Negra*, taking its dramatic, “tremendista” content to its extreme consequences. His realist painting displays a sense of the macabre bordering on the surreal, an artistic imagery closely reflecting Spanish sensitivity.



## DANIEL VÁZQUEZ DÍAZ

(Nerva 1882–Madrid 1969)  
*The Blind Musicians*  
1921  
oil on canvas

In 1921 Vázquez Díaz was torn between the Avant-garde and neo-classical movements to the point where he was indicated as the leading Spanish exponent of the “return to order”. His Noucentist élan led him to purge his painting and to adopt a simplicity he almost appears to have borrowed from Cubism. Thus while continuing to subscribe to, and to update, the canons of traditional painting, he developed the so-called *Estilo 1925*, a kind of realism toughened by geometric form with something of a mysterious air to it.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Model and Surrealist Sculpture* (from the Volland Suite 74)  
4 May 1933  
etching on paper

Picasso used to say that this painting, dated 1933, was his only genuinely Surrealist work. A female figure looks dreamily at a sculpture comprising various elements, including human limbs, and touches it. The model and the sculpture are icons crafted by design, yet we perceive the model as belonging to reality and the sculpture to the sphere of the imagination even though they are in fact both imaginary. Our perception of reality becomes confused with our perception of the “Super-reality”.



## SALVADOR DALÍ

(Figueres 1904–89)  
*Sketch for "The invisible Man"*

c. 1930  
graphite, coloured pencils, ink on laid paper

This preparatory sketch, almost more revealing than the painting itself (which he left unfinished) is Dalí's first work to contain a dual image, a combination of figures making up a single human being. Dalí here translates into concrete form what were to become two of his key ideas: the "dual image" and the "paranoiac-critical" method. What our physical eye sees is not objective because the eye, as it moves between the conscious and subconscious spheres, superimposes its own vision on reality.



## JOAQUIM SUNYER

(Sitges 1875–1956)  
*María Dolores*

1932  
oil on canvas

An unreal feeling can also be detected in the work of Sunyer, a Noucentist painter much admired by Spain's innovative artists. His painting, which foreshadows the Catalan school, is permeated with a Mediterranean idealism that addresses the themes of unfolding daily life, as in this *María Dolores*, a young woman lost in an intense daydream. The works of Basque artist Aurelio Arteta and of Andalusian painter Daniel Vázquez Díaz, on display alongside it, share a feeling of estrangement on a level stretching beyond reality.



## AURELIO ARTETA

(Bilbao 1879–Mexico City 1940)  
*Shipwrecked Men*

c. 1930–1  
oil on canvas

Arteta – who in the early 1920s was still bound to the myths of the Basque homeland and the working class – was prompted by his encounter with modern Realism to adopt the models of the Italian Novecento, endowing his figures with a monumental and sculptural quality that give them an arcane feeling. He was never to return to the idealisation of his Basque vernacular Arcadia, choosing instead to allow tragedy and despair, melancholy and drama to permeate his poetics.



## ALFONSO PONCE DE LEÓN

(Malaga 1906–Madrid 1936)

*Young People and a Fisherman*

1936

oil on canvas

Alfonso Ponce de León was one of the first Spanish artists to subscribe to Magical Realism, a definition coined by German critic Franz Roh in 1925 for those European trends that espoused a realism capable of hinting at a second life in things beyond that which was simply visible. In *Young People and a Fisherman* the feeling of estrangement sets the work on a completely different level from the leisurely scene that it appears to depict. Having joined the Falange, Ponce de León was shot at the outbreak of the Civil War.



## MARUJA MALLO

(Viveiro 1902–Madrid 1995)

*Figures*

1937

oil on canvas

Mallo played an active role in the Avant-garde movements, attracting attention as a modern, emancipated woman in the Madrid of her time. This picture, painted after a visit to Paris where she met André Breton and the Surrealists, is also known by the alternative title of *Starfish*. With her synthetic and schematic painting, Mallo created her own style reflecting the various different expressions of the Avant-garde and fostering an encounter between the “reality and super-reality”.



## ANTONIO LÓPEZ

(Tomelloso 1936)

*The Bride and Groom*

1955

oil on canvas

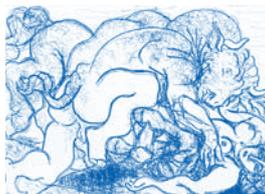
Antonio López – the Spanish Realist *par excellence* in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – began to forge his first conception of a potential contemporary Realism, turning his back on Verism before he reached the age of twenty. Figures play a more important role and a series of paintings, including *The Bride and Groom*, hint at the transformation of reality in a Surrealist direction.

# TOWARDS GUERNICA: THE MONSTER

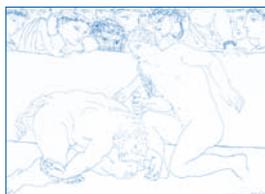
Art historians recognise the Minotaur as the *alter ego* of Picasso, who used the monster to talk about himself and about the psychic condition of art and the artist in the modern era. Picasso, who generally adopted a classical style in his drawing, created a creature midway between myth and reality, between man and beast. In 1933 Picasso explicitly identified the Minotaur with the artist, handling the legendary story of the Minotaur with great freedom and even merging it with bull-fighting. In 1934 he condemned the Minotaur to wander blindly about, led by a young girl. The symbolism of blindness and the Minotaur as inspiration are commonplace in Western culture, but Picasso added to them the ironic figure of the "female matador". All these strands of imaginative creativity on Picasso's part came together in 1935 in his *Minotauromachy*, in which he sought to free the monster through the light of truth. But in 1936 the lives of Picasso, and of every other Spaniard, were to change radically with the outbreak of the Civil War. The artist's interpretation of the Monster soon turned towards the looming tragedy.



**PABLO PICASSO**  
(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Bacchic Scene with Minotaur*  
(from the Volland Suite 85)  
18 May 1933  
etching on paper



**PABLO PICASSO**  
(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Minotaur Attacking an Amazon*  
(from the Volland Suite 87)  
23 May 1933  
etching on paper



**PABLO PICASSO**  
(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Vanquished Minotaur*  
(from the Volland Suite 89)  
29 May 1933  
etching on paper



**PABLO PICASSO**  
(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Dying Minotaur*  
(from the Volland Suite 90)  
30 May 1933  
etching on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Female Bullfighter, II*  
(from the Volland Suite 22)  
20 June 1934  
etching on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Blind Minotaur Led by a Little Girl, I*  
(from the Volland Suite 94)  
22 September 1934  
etching on paper



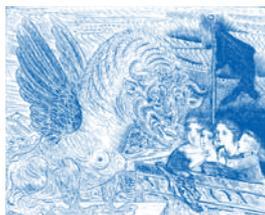
### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Blind Minotaur Led by a Little Girl, II*  
(from the Volland Suite 96)  
23 September 1934  
etching on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Blind Minotaur Led by a Little Girl, III*  
(from the Volland Suite 95)  
4 November 1934  
etching on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Four Children Watching a Winged Bull*  
(from the Volland Suite 13)  
December 1934  
etching on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Blind Minotaur Led by a Little Girl  
at Night* (from the Volland Suite 97)  
November–December 1934  
etching, aquatint on paper



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Minotauroromachy*  
March–May 1935  
etching and scraping on paper

# TOWARDS GUERNICA: THE TRAGEDY

In 1937, in the midst of the Civil War, the Republican government commissioned Picasso to produce a large painting for the Spanish pavilion at the Paris World Exposition. Picasso was at a loss for inspiration until the genocidal bombing of Guernica, a city that embodied Basque culture and legislative tradition, on 26 April that year. Picasso immediately turned to his personal mythology and the themes he had developed in the saga of the Minotaur and the female matador placing them in service of the Tragedy. In this monumental painting he portrayed myriad relationships, focusing in particular on the horse as symbol of the people of Guernica and thus at one with the woman suffering for her slain son. The bull in Picasso's art personifies brutality, but the artist (who, ironically, loved the bull) always imparted a human feel to it in his drawings. Even in the unfinished work, we find the iconography of the mother weeping and of the agonizing severed head. Picasso uses colour here as an expression of grief, but not defeat – an image of both suffering and defiance.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Horse Head. Sketch for 'Guernica'*  
2 May 1937  
oil on canvas  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Horse and Mother with Dead Child. Sketch for 'Guernica'*  
8 May 1937  
graphite on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Guernica Composition Study (VII)*  
9 May 1937  
graphite on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Mother with Dead Child (I). Sketch for 'Guernica'*  
9 May 1937  
graphite, ink on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Study for the Horse (I). Sketch for 'Guernica'*

10 May 1937  
graphite on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Study for the Horse. Sketch for 'Guernica'*

10 May 1937  
graphite, colour stick on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Bull with Human Face. Sketch for 'Guernica'*

11 May 1937  
graphite on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Horse Head (I). Sketch for 'Guernica'*

20 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Horse Head (II). Sketch for 'Guernica'*

20 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Bull's Head with Studies for Eyes. Sketch for 'Guernica'*

20 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Study for Weeping Head (II). Sketch for 'Guernica'*

24 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Head. Sketch for 'Guernica'*

24 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Weeping Head (I). Sketch for 'Guernica'*  
27 May 1937  
graphite, gouache on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Study for a Weeping Head (I).*  
*Sketch for 'Guernica'*  
3 June 1937  
graphite, gouache,  
colour stick on tracing cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Weeping Head (VI). Postscript for*  
*'Guernica'*  
13 June 1937  
graphite, gouache, colour stick on tracing  
cloth  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Weeping Woman*  
1 July 1937  
etching, drypoint, aquatint on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981



### PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*Weeping Head (VIII).*  
*Postscript for 'Guernica'*  
12 October 1937  
graphite, ink on paper  
Collection from Museo Reina Sofia,  
Madrid, Legacy Picasso, 1981

# NATURE AND CULTURE

In much of Picasso's work after 1927, the painter transforms his characters into something akin to the elements of nature, producing the *Metamorphoses*. Picasso's figures, like Ovid's, explore the kinship and similarities between things mineral, vegetable, animal and human, forging a deep bond. When we encounter this kinship and the aesthetic perception of the earth as a planet in modern art, what we are seeing is the "poetics of telluric", a mainstay of Miró's work and a starting point from which Dalí's Surrealism took its cue. It expresses the sense of Domínguez' "cosmic landscapes" and forms the backbone of the work of Benjamín Palencia and Alberto Sánchez in the Escuela de Vallecas. The interaction between nature and art also played a crucial role in Chillida and Chirino's approach to sculpture. Most of these artists echoed nature's creative force in a highly original, down-to-earth way, and their identification with primeval nature formed the basis of their cultural identity.



## SALVADOR DALÍ

(Figueres 1904–89)

*Abstract Composition*

c. 1928

oil and string collage on canvas

Around 1928 Dalí came under the influence of Miró and Arp but in his (generally large) works such as this *Abstract Composition* he developed a style of his own, only to set it aside the following year (after meeting Gala and discovering Surrealism in Paris), moving towards the figurative model we now associate with him. Nature, which plays a crucial role in all of Dalí's work, was to shape his obsession with Cadaqués.



## BENJAMÍN PALENCIA

(Barrax 1894–Madrid 1980)

*Stones Creating a Landscape*

1930

oil on canvas

In 1929 sculptor Alberto Sánchez and painter Benjamín Palencia began to mould the Spanish artistic tradition to modern sensitivity. The countryside of Castile became the focal point of their search for "pure art", leading to the creation of a native version of Surrealism known as the Escuela de Vallecas. In this picture Palencia turns the shape of the fields he identifies with Castile into sculptural signs.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)

*The Swimmer*

5 June 1934

black chalk on canvas

The swimmer in this picture, a combination of human and animal elements, merges the iconotype of Marie-Thérèse Walter with that of a monster portraying anguish. Living beings and objects seem to reflect the same principle whereby the mineral, vegetable, animal and human worlds are deeply interlinked. Picasso's *Swimmer* has tears for eyes just like the figures in the drawings and sketches associated three years later with *Guernica*, a work also echoed in the simple black and white palette.



## JOSÉ VAL DEL OMAR

(Granada 1904–Madrid 1982)

*Vibration of Granada*

1934-5

16 mm film, also transferred to video, 21'

Donated by the María José Val del Omar & Gonzalo Sáenz de Buruaga Archive, 2011

A film-maker, inventor, poet, graphic designer and artist who is almost impossible to classify, VDO, as he is known, was a tireless experimenter who combined technique with poetic lyricism. He gave the world a foretaste of some of his technical skills in 1928, designing and building such instruments as the Truca, an assemblage of projectors and filters that allowed him to project, alter and record "layered" images on a screen. He also patented innovations designed to renew narrative formulas and film effects and the ways they could be used. His life was one long investigation "without end", reflecting the words with which he always ended his films. His awareness of the telluric element and of the relationship between nature and culture underpins the *Vibration of Granada*, with which he invented the genre we know today as the "poetic documentary".



## ÓSCAR DOMÍNGUEZ

(La Laguna 1906–Paris 1957)  
*Peregrinations of Georges Hugnet*  
1935  
wood, iron, rubber, oil paint

Telluric poetics play a crucial role in the work of Canarian Óscar Domínguez, both in painting and in other art forms. In his *Peregrinations of Georges Hugnet* – a Surrealist poet and friend of Domínguez who was disowned by his family and made a living peddling toys at country fairs – Domínguez has applied small prefabricated objects to a base. In placing the figure of a horse on Hugnet's bicycle, he seeks to evoke the relationship between the unconscious, desire and nature.



## LEANDRE CRISTÒFOL

(Os de Balaguer 1908–Lleida 1998)  
*Imprisoned Forms*  
1936  
wood, porcelain  
Temporary loan from the Museo Nacional de Arte de Cataluña, Barcelona, 2003

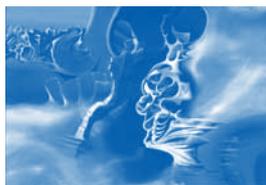
Taking his cue from formal simplification, Cristòfol embraced a non-figurative trend. Considered a pioneer of Catalan Surrealism, he produced works of hugely effective plasticity by assembling unconventional items both still in use and obsolete, decontextualising them with regard to their original function. Leandre Cristòfol's telluric poetics in *Imprisoned Forms*, which he produced in 1936, appears to be a metaphor of anguish, foreshadowing the events of the Civil War.



## ALBERTO SÁNCHEZ

(Toledo 1895–Moscow 1962)  
*There is a Way for the Spanish People that Leads to a Star*  
c. 1937  
cedar maquette  
Temporary loan from a private collection, 2009

This small model for a now lost piece of monumental sculpture stood outside the Spanish Republic's pavilion at the Paris International Exhibition of 1937 where *Guernica*, symbolising the struggle against Fascism, was also on display. Sánchez's sculpture, a huge man-shaped cactus, its surface fluted to resemble furrows in a field, seeks to extol the virtues of the agricultural landscape, also echoing debates on rural society's role in the modernisation of Spanish society. A copy of the sculpture now stands outside the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid.



## ÓSCAR DOMÍNGUEZ

(La Laguna 1906–Paris 1957)  
*Cosmic Composition*  
1938  
oil on canvas

*Cosmic Composition* evokes the natural environment and the volcanic character of Domínguez's native Canary Islands while at the same time universalising them in an imaginary cosmos – a paradox but also the construction of a dialectic of opposites. Painted in Paris in 1938, the picture echoes the dramatic events of the Spanish Civil war.



## JOAN MIRÓ

(Barcelona 1893–Palma de Mallorca 1983)

*Figure and Bird in the Night*

1945

oil on canvas

In 1939 Miró produced one of the final cycles of his work, the “Constellations”, where he remodelled telluric poetics to reflect a pantheistic vision. Returning to Catalonia then moving to Majorca during the war, Miró painted nothing for two years. When he resumed painting after the war, he revived both the sense of fullness he had synthesised a few years previously and painting as writing and as the calligraphy of signs. *Figure and Bird in the Night* is a product of this process of assimilation and transformation.



## MARTÍN CHIRINO

(Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 1925)

*Village*

1952

Spanish fir, red lava

One of the core features of Chirino's style is his evocation of the forms of nature and the way in which primordial nature includes the work of farmers and craftsmen, and village life in general. But where Chirino showed a unique talent early on was in developing all of this in paintings imbued with abstract qualities inherited from the best in modern sculpture. *Village*, which includes such native elements as *pinsapo* (Spanish pine) wood and volcanic lava, is typical of his style.



## EDUARDO CHILLIDA

(San Sebastián 1924–2002)

*From the Dark Plan*

1956

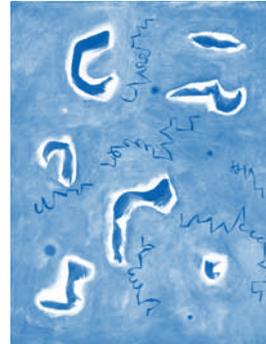
iron

Temporary loan from the ICO's collections, Madrid, 2013

*From the Dark Plan* marks the conclusion of a five-year project shown by Chillida at the Galerie Maeght in Paris. The word “dark” may refer to the light in the Basque city of San Sebastián, which the painter himself called dark, while the ideogram Chillida adds to the work consists, in turn, of a skilled game of sculptural irony in which curves contrast with sharp corners and a feeling of dynamism belies the points on which the sculpture rests: a drawing in space and, at the same time, a concrete depiction of the void as form.

# TOWARDS A NEW MODERNITY

By the 1950s Picasso had become a living legend while his work had ceased to arouse much interest in the new generation of artists born into postwar industrial society. Even though Picasso had been the first – in his collages and sculptures – to introduce an understanding of artistry that was different from the tradition of “fine arts”, his approach to art never lost touch with the concept of the museum, while contemporary art opposed that notion. The third version of *The Painter and the Model* brings the exhibition full circle, with Picasso reflecting on painting while Miró is busy expanding the field of painting and opening up to new visions. Vicente and Guerrero introduced the modern Spanish tradition into North American culture, while Saura captured the gestures of Picasso at his most dramatic and transferred them to a reflection on History. Millares merged his allusion to the vernacular with the interests of international art and Tàpies, working on the concepts of matter and of the wall, drew on his vast learning to found a new vision of aesthetics.



## JOAN MIRÓ

(Barcelona 1893–Palma de Mallorca 1983)  
*Birds in Space*  
1946  
oil on canvas

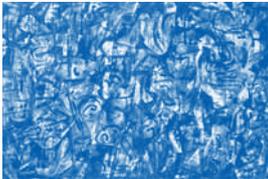
Miró and Picasso exchanged roles in the 1950s, Miró becoming the most influential of the Spanish innovators and a focal point for the new generations – as we can see from a significant work such as *Birds in Space* – while Picasso became a living legend, though his work began to be seen as a reflection of the whole of his glorious career to date.



## ESTEBAN VICENTE

(Turégano 1903–Bridgehampton, New York 2001)  
*Midwest*  
1953  
oil on canvas

Vicente, a Republican by conviction, moved to the United States with his American wife when the Civil War broke out, only showing his work in Spain again after Franco's death. In 1947 he became friends with most of the artists in the New York School – De Kooning, Pollock, Rothko – and set out on his “official” career as an artist bound to Abstract Expressionism in 1950. In *Midwest* he analyses the potential of line while simultaneously moving in the direction of superfluous decoration.



## ANTONIO SAURA

(Huesca 1930–Cuenca 1998)

*Painting*

1955

oil on canvas

Saura may be considered Picasso's heir, especially to the tragic paroxysm of *Guernica*, and therefore also the heir to the "black paintings" attributed to Goya. He was in Paris from 1953 to 1955, where he inclined towards Informal Art, to which Wols and Dubuffet had introduced him, and Action Painting. In Informal Art painting tends to be inward looking, focusing on the materials and gestures behind it as well as on the psychological energy it encloses.



## MANUEL MILLARES

(Las Palmas de Gran Canaria 1926–

Madrid 1972)

*Composition*

1956

mixed media on hessian

Millares associated contemporary art with his own interests in Canarian native culture. He produced his first pictographs by merging the tradition of the Guanches' rock carvings with Surrealist painting. Moving to Madrid in 1955, he began to take an interest in the texture of materials and produced paintings on hessian (burlap). Much has been written about the relationship between Millares's hessian sacks and the Guanches mummies, and their debt to (or similarity with) Burri's work.



## ANTONI TÀPIES

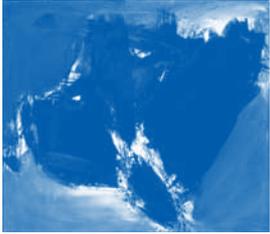
(Barcelona 1923–2012)

*Brown with Lateral Fingerprints No. LXIII*

1958

mixed media on canvas

Textural painting played a major role in the work of Tàpies, who argued for the importance of understanding the concept of matter also in the light of medieval mysticism, with magical and alchemical connotations. From the late 1950s his formats grew larger and he began to conceive his paintings as a kind of wall on which to leave a mark. His textural painting, and his *Comunicación sobre el muro*, prompted a crisis in the first cycle of modernity and marked the start of a new era.



## JOSÉ GUERRERO

(Granada 1914–Barcelona 1991)  
*Grey and Black*  
c. 1958  
oil on canvas

Despite their differences, Guerrero and Vicente are always mentioned in the same breath on account of their common US experience, yet Vicente left for the United States very early, in the 1930s, while Guerrero only did so in the early '50s. By the time Guerrero moved to New York, Abstract Expressionism had already peaked and was starting to degenerate into self-imitation and consumerism. Guerrero was smart enough to detect this trend and adapt it to his own sensitivity.



## PABLO PICASSO

(Malaga 1881–Mougins 1973)  
*The Painter and the Model*  
30 March–30 September 1963  
oil on canvas

In 1963, now aged 82, Picasso was still exploring the theme of the painter and his model, a theme he had first addressed in 1926 and then again in the context of the work assembled by Vollard for the *Unknown Masterpiece*. Picasso in his later years, using fluid, dense and enveloping forms alongside bright, shocking colours, still needed to create art about art and to probe the artist's identity. The mark left by Frenhofer, the painter who lost his life in an attempt to produce a masterpiece which no one could decipher, was to hound him for the whole of his life.

**Texts**

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