

Picasso's Drawings

1890–1921

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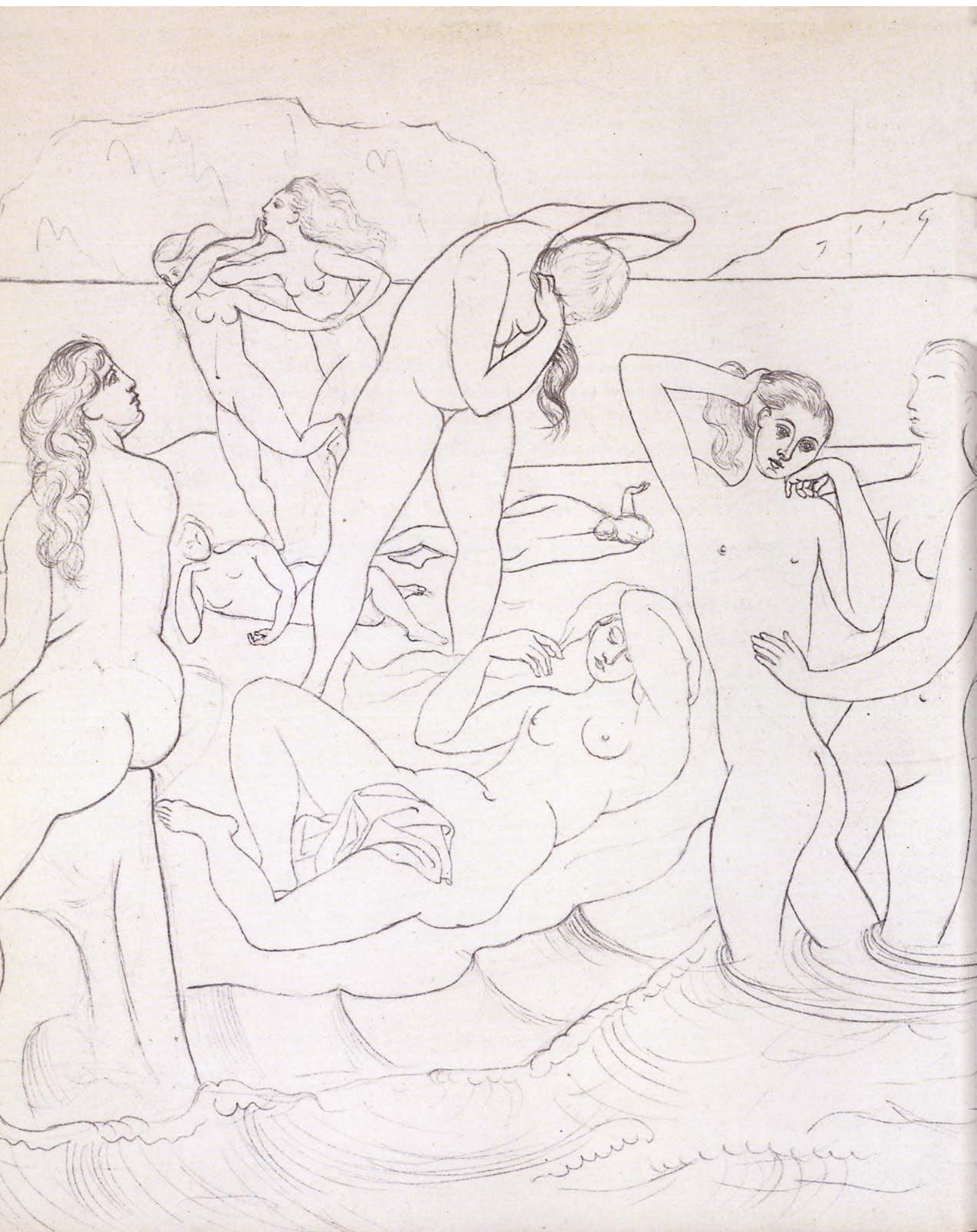
Reinventing Tradition

# Picasso's Drawings

1890–1921

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## Picasso's Drawing Journey: The First Thirty Years

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SUSAN GRACE GALASSI

PABLO PICASSO (1881–1973) WAS ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREATEST DRAFTSMEN. HIS ENORMOUS OEUVERE OF ORIGINAL WORKS ON PAPER SET THE BAR FOR FUTURE generations, yet few could follow his lead. His life's work spans two distinct eras: in the late nineteenth century, a system of training that had remained relatively unchanged since the Renaissance was still in place, while in the early decades of the twentieth century all assumptions underlying that system were challenged and overturned. Picasso was a beneficiary of the first and a prime mover in the second. During the first three crucial decades of his career, the focus of our show, Picasso accomplished many of the defining steps of his multifaceted body of work. These include his mastery of the conventions of classical representation and rapid assimilation of sources from Old Master, modern, and "primitive" art; his invention with Georges Braque of cubism and a new technique of *papier collé*; and his overturning of received ideas about style and representation in his postwar alternation between modes. Throughout these phases, drawing played a primary role as a form of thinking and problem solving, experimentation, the stocking of his imagination, and pure pleasure.

Represented in our exhibition are the many different types of sheets that make up Picasso's diverse drawing practice, including his early academic exercises and life drawings, preparatory drawings for works in another medium, portraits of family and friends, serial works, *papiers collés*, finished drawings made for sale, translations of the style of other artists, and drawings after photographs. Picasso drew in sketchbooks, on scraps of paper, on cardboard, and, when he could afford it, on fine Ingres paper. He employed all the standard materials of pen, pencil and brush, charcoal, chalk, sanguine, ink, wash, watercolor, and gouache. His prowess as a draftsman was at the core of his work as a painter, sculptor, printmaker, and designer.

Central to our exhibition's thesis is the primacy of drawing—a fundamental tenet of classicism—as the vital link that connects all aspects of Picasso's work. This selection of drawings



Fig. 3 Picasso, *Academic Study: Foot*, La Coruña, 1894. Charcoal and Conté crayon on paper, 13 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 19 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (33.2 × 49.7 cm). Museu Picasso, Barcelona, donated by the artist, 1970 (MPB 110.799)

Having perfected the means of classical drawing by using casts of the ideal body, Picasso was ready for the live model. His *Study from Life (Male Model)* of 1895–97 (see cat. 4) culminates a process begun tentatively with his silhouette of Hercules. His confident handling of the conventions of naturalistic drawing, and empathy with his subject, result in a convincing three-dimensional image of a living, breathing individual whose form stands out from the flat surface of the sheet. Through the step-by-step methods prescribed by the academy and constant practice, Picasso achieved the end goal of mimetic depiction.<sup>7</sup> In so doing, he entered into a long line of artists who learned to perfect formal means through the same methods and the same canon of idealized models handed down from their predecessors, and through studies from antique models and from life—the components of classical *disegno*. Yet, these student works bear Picasso's stamp from the beginning: his refusal to compromise liveliness, for example, for an academic sense of finish, as we see here. Note the contrast, for example, between the head and the foot.

During this period, Picasso was already taking in not only the means to replicate three-dimensional forms of the human figure on paper and to create complex compositions, but also the system itself with its counterintuitive process. David Rosand has noted parallels





Fig. 7 Picasso, *Three Women*, 1907–8. Oil on canvas, 78  $\frac{1}{4}$  x 70  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches (200 x 178 cm).  
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg

*Nudes in a Forest* (see cat. 34), he breaks up the bodies of five bathers into light and dark sculptural forms, integrating them with fragments of the dark trees in a *sous-bois* filled with vivid blue water. His method of working out the relation of the figures to the surface of the work reflects Cézanne's manner of constructing space in flat colored planes. It recalls as well the type

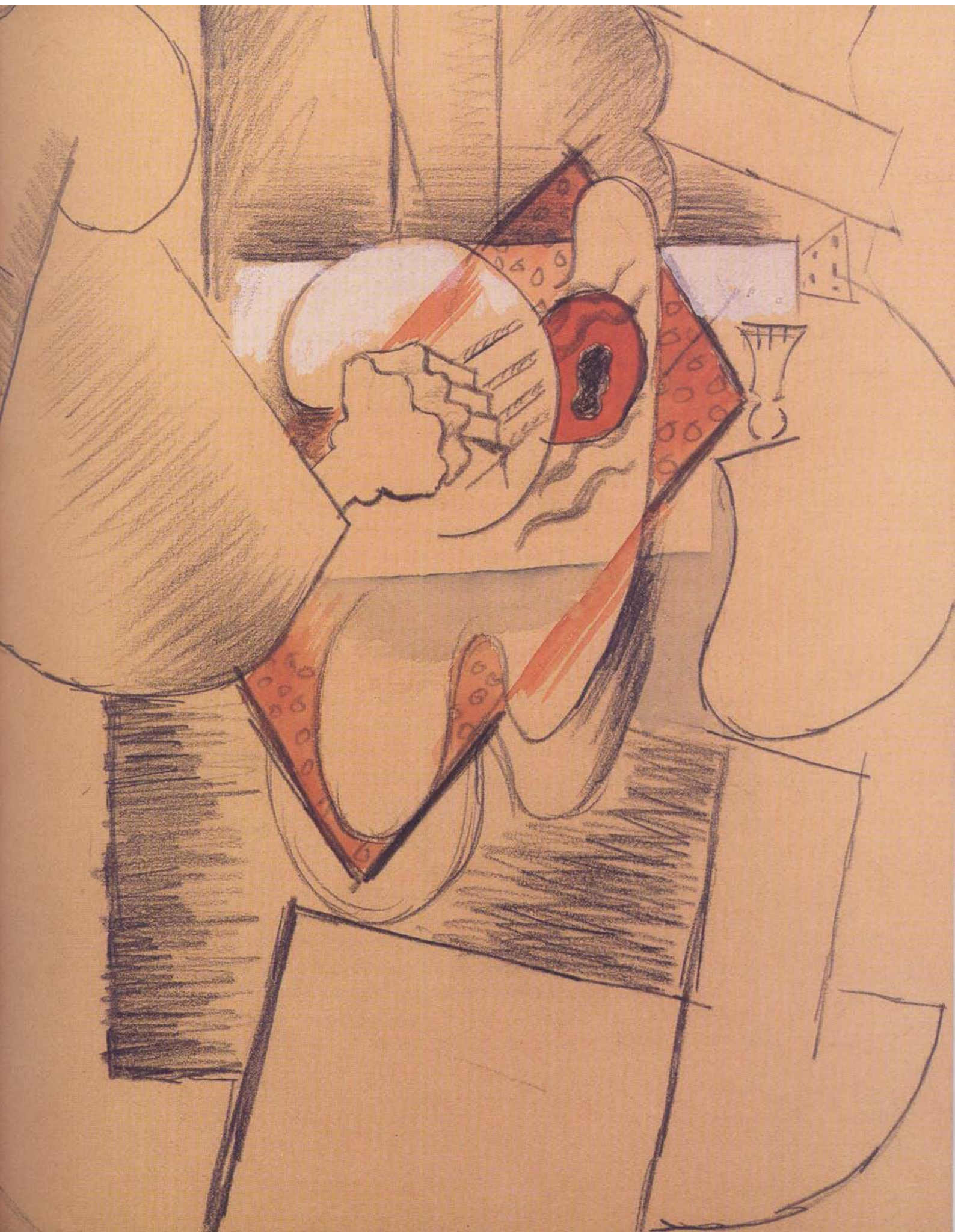
show serves as “a double lesson in energy and beauty to today’s young artists, who are quite capable of understanding it if they have the patience to listen to it all. . . .”<sup>54</sup> At the Louvre, Ingres’s drawings continued to be collected, with another twenty added over the next eighteen years to the thirty in the collection in 1903.<sup>55</sup> The refinement of many of Picasso’s cubist pen and ink and pencil sketches shows that he drilled down deeply into Ingres’s drawings and absorbed his “double lesson of energy and beauty.”

The trend of making Old Masters and nineteenth-century drawings available through reproduction accelerated during this period. In 1911 Louis Lumet and Yvanhoë Rambosson launched a three-volume publication in Paris, *Le Dessin par les grands maîtres*, appearing between 1911 and 1913. From the collection of some 40,000 sheets in the Louvre, the editors selected 140 drawings spanning five centuries and covering all the schools.<sup>56</sup> Apollinaire was quick to promote the enterprise in a review in *L’Intransigeant* and praise the editors’ efforts to familiarize the public with the holdings of the Louvre, emphasizing the educational value of drawings.<sup>57</sup> Over the first decades of the twentieth century, drawing spanning centuries and national schools became part of the artistic landscape and was promoted as the fundamental language of art. The overwhelming evidence of past achievement in drawing provided both inspiration and a burden for those who followed.

## The First World War

The onset of World War I in August 1914 brought to an end a period of unfettered experimentation. As a non-French citizen, Picasso remained in Paris during the war. Cubism was by then becoming the lingua franca of the avant-garde, and Picasso chose to distance himself from any semblance of a “school.” He worked instead in a variety of manners, often in a single work. Picasso’s *Bearded Man Playing a Guitar* (1914) (see cat. 58) is primarily cubist in style, but the masklike face has naturalistic features, and to the guitar, Picasso added touches of gouache that simulate the look of the *faux-marbre* paper he used in his collages.<sup>58</sup> The figure in *Seated Man* (see cat. 60)—a watercolor study for his large oil painting (see fig. 60.1)—is made up of large, overlapping, flat geometric planes in solid colors or in patterns, and placed in an empty interior. In this manifestation of cubism, order and the clarity of parts replace the smaller facets and atmospheric effects of his earlier phase. In the postwar years, Picasso also made occasional drawings in pencil and graphite in a meticulous neoclassical mode inspired by Ingres, as seen in his *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard* (1915) (see cat. 59) and his *Portrait of Madame Georges Wildenstein* (1918) (see cat. 62). In them, Picasso appropriates not only Ingres’s manner, but his most recognizable and admired type of drawing—his graphite portraits—while substituting his own contemporary sitters. He flaunts his hubris and his desire to shock by dropping naturalistic







## 2

# Early Critical Responses to Picasso's Drawings

MARILYN McCULLY

PICASSO MADE HIS PROFESSIONAL DEBUT AS AN ARTIST IN BARCELONA IN 1900. HIS FIRST INDIVIDUAL EXHIBITION, WHICH WAS HELD AT THE TAVERN ELs QUATRE Gats and ran for approximately a month in February, consisted of three paintings, including *Last Moments* (the canvas he would show at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in the spring) and a large group of works on paper, featuring mostly portraits of the different members of the circle of bohemians who gathered at the tavern.<sup>1</sup> The response to the show in the Catalan press was limited to just a handful of reviews, in which attention was drawn both to the facility of the young Andalusian's graphic techniques and to the subject matter. Some reviewers, in fact, questioned the merit of devoting portraits to the youthful Quatre Gats group in the first place.

In the collection of . . . portraits . . . several stand out for the confidence of drawing, but it is only necessary to glance at them as a whole to recognize that this is a gallery of melancholy, taciturn and bored characters that produces in the spectator an impression of sadness and compassion for their unsympathetic portrayal.<sup>2</sup>

The plan to show the drawings at the tavern rather than at a gallery, according to Picasso's great friend (and one of the organizers of the exhibition) Jaime Sabartés, was undertaken as a kind of publicity stunt, with the intention of challenging the reputation and work of the established Barcelona artist Ramon Casas. The widely admired Catalan had just a few months before, in October 1899, exhibited charcoal portraits of well-known local figures at the respectable Sala Parés. Sabartés remembered that

the walls of the exhibition hall of Els 4 Gats were bare, devoid of anything capable of serving as a background for the sheets of paper which were to be hung without frames. No matter. . . . What we wanted was that people should become aware of the fact that there was somebody else who sketched, that not everybody was sketched by Casas, and that there were exhibitions other than his.

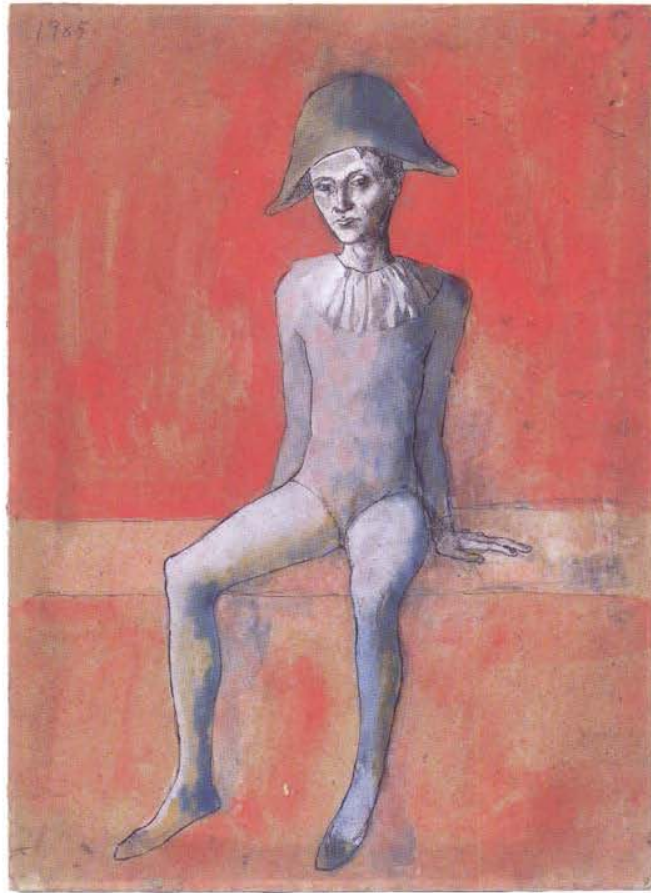


Fig. 12 Picasso, *Seated Harlequin with Red Background*, Paris, 1905.  
Watercolor and ink on cardboard, 22  $\frac{1}{2}$   $\times$  16  $\frac{1}{4}$  inches (57.2  $\times$  41.2 cm).  
Nationalgalerie, Museum Berggruen, Staatliche Museen, Berlin

Apollinaire's first article, "Picasso, peintre et dessinateur," appeared in *La Revue immoraliste* in April 1905 and while, as the title of the review implies, both paintings and drawings were under consideration, for the most part Apollinaire does not distinguish among the artist's approaches to the different media. In this short piece, he describes the "naturalism" and "exactitude" of Picasso's portrayals only in general terms: "His mothers clench their thin hands just as young mothers of the common people have often done and his nude women are granted the escutcheon of fleece which traditional painters scorn, and which is the shield of Western modesty."<sup>18</sup>





Fig. 15 Picasso, *Portrait of Renoir (after a photograph)*, 1919–20.  
Graphite on paper, 24 × 19 3/8 inches (61 × 49.3 cm).  
Musée Picasso, Paris (MP913)

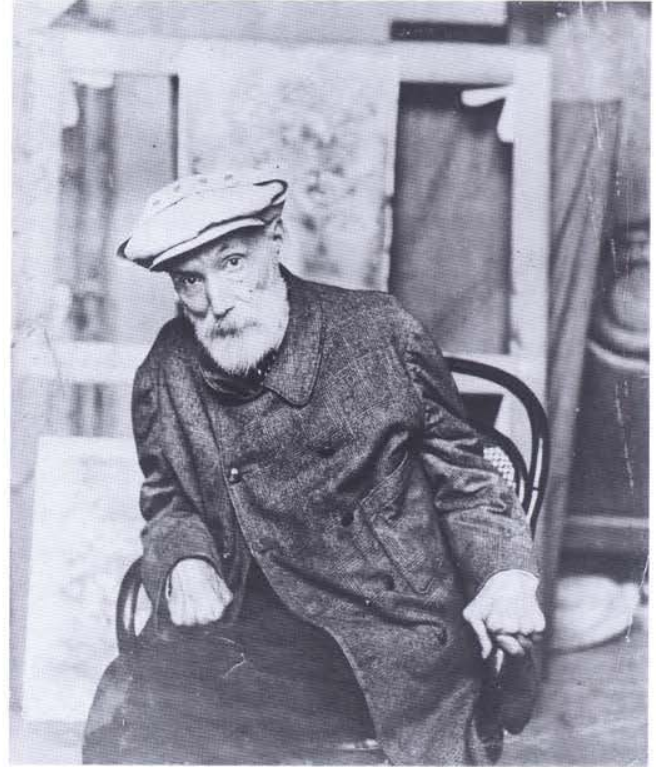


Fig. 16 Ambroise Vollard (1868–1939), *Pierre-Auguste Renoir*.  
Photograph taken at Renoir's studio in Venice, 1913,  
11 1/2 × 9 1/4 inches (29. × 23.5 cm). Musée Picasso, Paris (DP48)

For Rosenberg's next Picasso show, which was held at the rue la Boétie gallery in 1921, the dealer chose to exhibit thirty-nine works,<sup>58</sup> but among the paintings listed in the catalogue no distinction is made between oils and gouaches or watercolors.<sup>59</sup> The exhibition prompted numerous reviews by respected writers and critics, including Maurice Raynal in *L'Esprit nouveau*: "Picasso never takes an idea as his point of departure, but an object created by his imagination. So no allusion, no suggestion but simply creation."<sup>60</sup> In his monograph on Picasso, which appeared (first in German) in the same year as the show,<sup>61</sup> Raynal also argues that it would be a mistake to interpret cubism in traditional terms, especially as a return to order.<sup>62</sup> "It should not be forgotten that cubism derived from a quite particular aesthetic, that it even has its own aesthetic; it is a serious mistake to try to associate cubist works with any kind of traditional aesthetic."<sup>63</sup>



An abstract painting featuring large, overlapping geometric shapes in shades of blue, red, and green. The brushstrokes are visible, giving the work a textured, expressive quality. The word "CATALOGUE" is centered in the upper half of the image, underlined.

# CATALOGUE



*Bullfight and Six Studies of Doves*

La Coruña, 1892

Pencil on paper with touches of brown wash

5 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 8 inches (13 × 20.2 cm)

Museu Picasso, Barcelona, donated by the artist, 1970 (MPB 110.869)

Not in Zervos

PROVENANCE

Given by the artist to the Museu Picasso, Barcelona, in 1970.

EXHIBITIONS

Barcelona 1997a, no. 3a. Paris 1993, no. 3. La Coruña 2002, no. 1.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cirlot 1972a, no. 6, pp. 12–13, illus. New York 1980, illus. p. 17. Palau i Fabre 1981, no. 5, p. 518, illus. p. 36. Barrachina 1985, illus. p. 43. Richardson 1991, pp. 29–31, illus. Washington, D.C. 1997, illus. p. 22. Staller 2001, pp. 30–31, illus. Paris 2005, illus. p. 13. Málaga 2005, p. 44, fig. 1, p. 74, fig. 5.

This drawing made by Picasso at La Coruña at age ten or eleven combines two of his lifelong themes—the bullfight and doves (here the pigeon, or rock dove, variety)—in different spatial orientations and styles on the same sheet. In the bullfight, the young artist captures a sense of life and action through his almost caricatural figures, while he depicts the pigeons with a convincing sense of form achieved through shading.

In the lively bullfight scene, presumably the first sketch he drew on the sheet, he focuses on the bull, the matador in midair, and the two balletic toreadors swinging their capes and deftly captures the split-second timing of the scene. He conveys the tumult of the crowd above the fence with scribbles, picking out a few individuals.<sup>1</sup> As a young boy in Málaga Picasso had begun attending the corrida with his father, a passionate aficionado, and this quintessential Spanish subject would remain a mainstay throughout Picasso's career. It is not known whether this sketch was done from memory or imagination or if it was, perhaps, based on a print or illustration, but the drawing suggests the boy's familiarity with Goya, the master of the bullfight. Picasso uses a scheme familiar in Goya's painted and etched bullfights, which he may have known through reproductions: a concentration on a charging bull and a few well-defined figures in the center of the ring, a vaguely defined interior wall of the arena, and a few spectators picked out from the crowd looking over the fence.<sup>2</sup> It would be several years later, in autumn 1897 in Madrid,





7\*\*

# *Young Man with Arms Crossed*

Barcelona, 1899–1900

Charcoal and oil wash on paper

21 1/4 × 10 7/8 inches (54 × 27.5 cm)

Private collection. Courtesy Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte

Z.VI.303

## PROVENANCE

The artist's estate.

## EXHIBITIONS

Barcelona 1900. Málaga 2004c, no. 13.

Vienna 2000, no. 2.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Palau i Fabre 1981, no. 395, illus. p. 185.

Fontbona 1995, p. 17.

*Young Man with Arms Crossed* is a portrait drawing of a Barcelona acquaintance of Picasso's, who has tentatively been identified as the publisher Jaume Aymà i Ayala.<sup>1</sup> The tears at the upper right-hand corner and at the bottom may indicate that the name of the model, as well as Picasso's signature, originally appeared on the sheet but were subsequently removed. The charcoal and oil wash portrait is undoubtedly one of the drawings that featured in Picasso's first major exhibition, which was held in February 1900 at the tavern Els Quatre Gats (see "Early Critical Responses to Picasso's Drawings" in this volume). Pinholes at the top (above the man's head) and at the lower left suggest that like the other works in the show, the sheet was simply tacked to the wall. An unidentified visitor observed that these portraits provided not only good likenesses but also a telling record of the new generation of Barcelona artists and writers: "[Picasso's] portraits can be rated as masterpieces; they are all true embodiments of those pipe-smoking characters we have seen walking down the Ramblas, but this collection presents more than personalities, it is a portrait of the present age."<sup>2</sup>

Another of the young artists and writers who was featured in the show was the writer (and much later Picasso's secretary) Jaime Sabartés. He reported that he had posed in the artist's little studio for the two portraits that Picasso did of him. The sharp characterization of this man, with his somewhat stooped shoulders and angular face, suggests that he, too, actually modeled for his portrait. Another similarity with one of the drawings of Sabartés (see fig. 9) is the

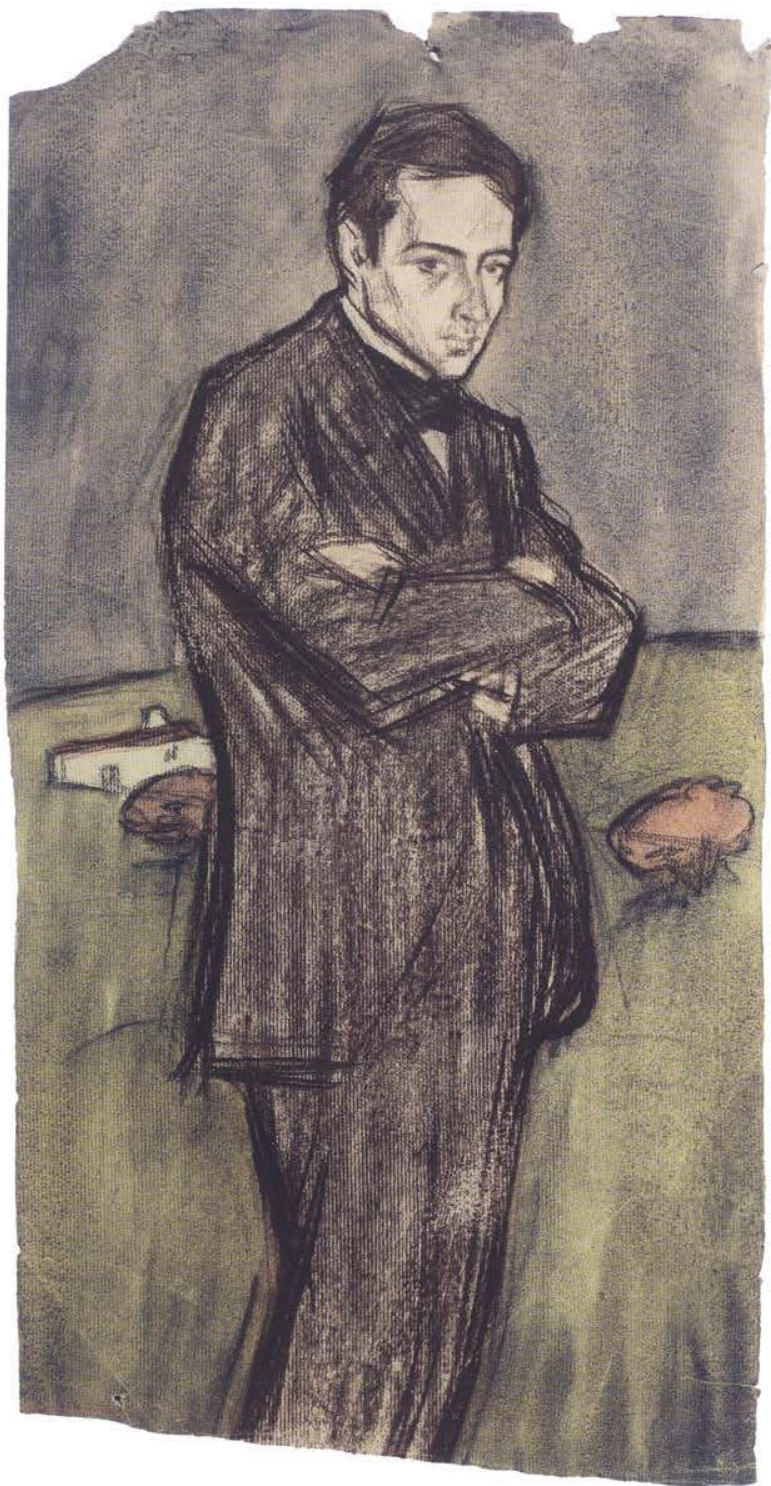
invented outdoor setting. A rural house and a couple of trees appear in the distance set against the yellow fields of the landscape. This setting, however, does not provide any particular clue to the occupations of either model.

In the present drawing Picasso worked principally in charcoal, using broad, confident marks to outline the body and to define the man's clothing, and diagonal lines to mark with subtlety the edge of the open jacket. Picasso also left certain areas untouched, so that the paper itself serves as the white of the flesh, collar, and house behind the figure. A simple line marks the horizon, and contrasting colors of wash are used to distinguish the sky and earth below. Here, as in many of the drawings in the Quatre Gats show, Picasso used oil wash for the colored areas surrounding the figure.

M.M.

## NOTES

- 1 The evidence for this identification is the presence of Jaume Aymà in a group photograph that appeared in *La Il·lustració Llevantina* (1 October 1901). However, based on the photograph in which Aymà appears with short hair and a mustache, the resemblance to the man in the drawing is only slight. See Fontbona 1995, p. 19, note 20.
- 2 Manuscript in Museu Picasso, Barcelona (MPB 110.286-286r); cited in McCully 1982, p. 25.



Cat. 7



*Acrobat in Blue*

Paris, autumn 1905

Gouache on cardboard

39 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 21 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (99.5 × 55.4 cm)

Private collection, courtesy of Richard Gray Gallery

Z.I.271

SIGNED LOWER LEFT

*Picasso*

## PROVENANCE

Purchased from the artist by Alfred Flechtheim, Berlin, 1910; Countess Mechtilde Lichnowsky, Kuchelna, 1913; German embassy in London, 1914; on loan to the Kronprinzen Palais, Berlin (1914–30); Curt Valentin, New York; Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. M. Warburg, New York; present collection.

## EXHIBITIONS

Munich 1913, no. 21. Paris 1932, no. 8. Hartford 1934b, no. 14. New York 1934, no. 123. New York 1936, no. 19. New York 1938. Boston 1938, no. 6. New York 1939a, no. 30. New York 1939b, no. 30. New York 1955, no. 106. Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo, 1957. Richmond 1958. Barcelona 1992a.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

New York 1939b, illus. p. 40. Daix, Boudaille, and Rosselet 1966, no. XIII.21, illus. p. 280. Palau i Fabre 1981, no. 1169, p. 548, pp. 428–30, illus. p. 429.

Throughout his career, Picasso played with the boundary between drawing and painting. For this large work—one of many images of solitary young men that Picasso drew or painted in the fall of 1905, following the completion of his masterwork, *Family of Saltimbanques*—the artist selected a tan upright cardboard support more than three feet tall.<sup>1</sup> He drew the outline of the figure in blue gouache with the tip of his brush, reinforcing it in places with black—around the face and neck, hand, and over the left sleeve. He then went over the costume in dry strokes of the brush in blue and quickly laid in hatch marks in black under the arm and on the jacket, which serve as shading while also paradoxically reinforcing the flatness of the surface. Picasso drew the languid features of the boy in fine black lines, applied a creamy white with a broader brush on the lower part of the face and neck and a warmer pink on the forehead, and added strokes of white to the hand, modeling both head and hand in three dimensions. The body, in contrast, is represented as a silhouette. Picasso sets off the boy in an empty, warm yellow atmospheric space, with touches of blue, allowing the cardboard to show through and lend its texture to the surface. In scale, format, and finish, this work is a painting; in technique, a drawing.

The influences in *Acrobat in Blue* are varied, as is usually the case in Picasso's work. In its mood of introspection and its stillness, it recalls portraits in pencil and oil that Cézanne made of his adolescent son, Paul, in the 1880s, such as a pencil drawing, *Portrait of a Boy Standing*, and the related

oil, *Boy with a Red Waistcoat* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.).<sup>2</sup> In both the Cézanne and Picasso drawings, the bent arms hover between two and three dimensions, and simple shapes, such as the spheroid of the head, are emphasized. Cézanne portrays an individual—his son—whereas Picasso's image is to some extent depersonalized, an arrangement of form and color. The large areas of color, and the empty atmospheric space, on the other hand, recall Manet's pastels, as does Picasso's use of contours in a way that appears in places emphatic, and in others casual, broken, or even messy.<sup>3</sup>

The abstract background and simplicity of shape of the *Acrobat* also bring to mind the work of fifteenth-century masters of northern and southern Europe. An artist of possible interest to Picasso at this time is Fra Angelico, whose work was admired by Manet for his purity of form and color.<sup>4</sup> Bernard Berenson's impressive treatises on the paintings and drawings of Florentine masters were published by 1903.<sup>5</sup> Leo Stein, a friend of Berenson's and an authority on Renaissance art—as well as, with his sister Gertrude, a patron of Picasso's—may have encouraged the artist's exploration of this field.<sup>6</sup> Picasso's pared-down vocabulary and emphasis on monumentality bring to mind Fra Angelico's series of saints for the high altarpiece of San Marco. In fact, the boy, standing in an abstract space, could perhaps be seen as Picasso's reinterpretation of the gold-ground panel painting by the Florentine master, with his self-absorbed teenager in chic workman's overalls replacing a saint and the gold ground



Cat. 17



*Yellow Nude (Study for  
Les Demoiselles d'Avignon)*

Paris, 1907

Watercolor, gouache, and India ink  
on paper

23 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> × 15 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (59.7 × 39.6 cm)

Gretchen and John Berggruen,  
San Francisco

Z.XXVI.281

SIGNED LOWER RIGHT

Picasso;

AND DATED ON THE REVERSE:

1907

PROVENANCE

Galerie Kahnweiler, Paris; third Kahnweiler  
sale, Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 4 July 1922,  
lot 19; purchased by André Lefèvre, Paris;  
sold, Galliera, Paris, 1 December 1964,  
lot 25; Knoedler & Co., Inc., New York;  
purchased by Josephine and Walter Buhl  
Ford II, 1965; their sale Sotheby's New York,  
2 November 2005, lot 4; Heinz Berggruen,  
Paris; present collection.

EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1964, no. 238. Paris 2006,  
unnumbered, p. 84. Williamstown, Mass.  
2010, no. 139.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Daix and Rosselet 1979, no. 39. Paris 1988,  
no. 59 [not exhibited].

Among the full-scale drawings that Picasso did in 1907 while he was at work on *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* is this powerful watercolor and gouache, known as *Yellow Nude*. Although the figure does not specifically relate to any of the women depicted in the painting, there are aspects of the form and, especially, the rendering of the face that are comparable, notably with the figure at the upper right in the *Demoiselles*.

In the present drawing, Picasso appears to have first sketched out the body and general shape of the head with ink, and then applied yellow watercolor for the face and torso, as well as the projecting leg at the right. He then used a brownish wash for the other leg and the shadows behind the figure. The touch of blue alongside the heavily marked face contrasts the red of the hair and also serves to heighten the color yellow. The radical way in which Picasso painted the figure, like the changes he made to the *Demoiselles*, can be traced to his experience at the Ethnographic Museum, which he visited in the summer of 1907:

When I went to the old Trocadéro . . .  
I was all alone. I wanted to get away.  
But I didn't leave. I stayed. I stayed.  
I understood that it was very important  
. . . The masks weren't just like any other  
pieces of sculpture. Not at all. They were  
magic things.<sup>1</sup>

The actual carving and decoration of the masks that Picasso studied at the Trocadéro affected his approach both in terms of the reduction of forms to the essential and, especially, in the way in which he used strokes of paint to mark the figure as a whole.<sup>2</sup> Picasso drew repeated lines to



Cat. 30



*Still Life with Chocolate Pot*

Paris, 1909

Watercolor (and gouache?) on paper

24 1/4 × 18 3/8 inches (61.6 × 47.4 cm)

Private collection

Z.II\*.131

## SIGNED UPPER RIGHT

Picasso

## PROVENANCE

Ambroise Vollard, acquired from the artist c. 1909, in his possession until 1939; Madame de Galéa, Paris, 1939–52; Reid & Lefevre Gallery, London; Douglas Cooper, acquired in 1953; Estate of Douglas Cooper (William A. McCarty-Cooper); present collection.

## EXHIBITIONS

Milan 1953, no. 16. London 1953, no. 7. London 1983, no. 159. Basel 1987, no. 53. New York 1989. Houston 1990. Boston 2005.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Richardson 1956, unnumbered, no. 12. Richardson 1964, p. 38, illus. p. 39. Daix and Rosselet 1979, no. 223. Richardson 1996, illus. p. 103.

During the winter of 1908–9, Picasso once more took up the theme of the still life in his paintings and works on paper. In part, the manner in which he organized these compositions—tipped-up tabletops, views into objects, and a close relationship between the space behind the table and the still life in the foreground—came about from his renewed study of Cézanne. The death of the Master of Aix in 1906 and the commemorative exhibitions that were held afterward (see cat. 36, note 2), had prompted Picasso to focus on still lifes and landscapes (see cat. 37) in which the close play of the different compositional elements resulted in a new sense of overall perspective and multiple light sources, conveyed through both graphic and painterly means.

In *Still Life with Chocolate Pot*, Picasso has grouped together a number of objects that share certain formal features: a pot with angular sides that might be a vessel for mate tea rather than chocolate,<sup>1</sup> a compote, filled with conical-shaped pears, and a cup and saucer. In each case, Picasso emphasizes their shapes primarily through their perceived angularity—because of light or viewpoint—even if the form is round. Note, for example, the treatment of the circular saucer: at the point where the cup rests on the saucer, the shifts of colors and the different strengths of markings create planes that intersect, as if the object were flat.

Examination of the paper reveals that it is probably a sheet taken from a sketchpad rather than a fine, Ingres-type paper.<sup>2</sup> Picasso seems to have marked out the basic composition first and then brushed in the

areas of color with gouache and watercolor. In order to obtain brightness in the areas of white, which suggest a strong light source, he left the paper untouched. He then used the tip of a stiff brush to paint lines, which in some areas follow one direction, indicating a plane, and, in others, appear as cross-hatchings to distinguish shapes as well as shadows. In a related drypoint, *Still Life with Fruit Dish*,<sup>3</sup> also done in the winter of 1908–9, the different fruits and vessels that make up the still life are distinguished by the varying intensities and directions of the incised lines.

The choice of the particular colors for this drawing can be associated with the generally earthen palette that Picasso used for paintings of this period. In part, this again represents a nod to Cézanne, but these tones also relate to the work he had done the previous summer (1908) in La Rue des Bois, where he was struck by the greenness of the setting and the mushroom-like colors of the earth.

M.M.

## NOTES

- 1 The identification of the vessel's design as being for mate (the traditional tea made from dried holly in Argentina and Paraguay) was first made by John Richardson.
- 2 Information about the physical condition of the work has kindly been supplied by Emily Braun, Joanna Sheers, and Susan Galassi.
- 3 *Still Life with Fruit Dish*, 1909 (Baer 222.111).







*Violin*

Paris, winter 1912–13

Charcoal and pencil on paper

25 × 19 1/8 inches (63.5 × 48.5 cm)

Nationalgalerie, Museum Berggruen,  
Staatliche Museen, Berlin (MB 31/2000)

Not in Zervos

PROVENANCE

Galerie Kahnweiler, Paris (inv. no. 976);  
Tristan Tzara, Paris; Henriette and André  
Gomés, Paris; André Lefèvre, Heinz  
Berggruen; purchased by Staatliche  
Museen, Berlin in 2000.

EXHIBITIONS

London 1951, no. 19. Brussels 1956, no. 150.  
Paris 1956, no. 173. Arles 1957, no. 27.  
Antibes 1994, no. 28.

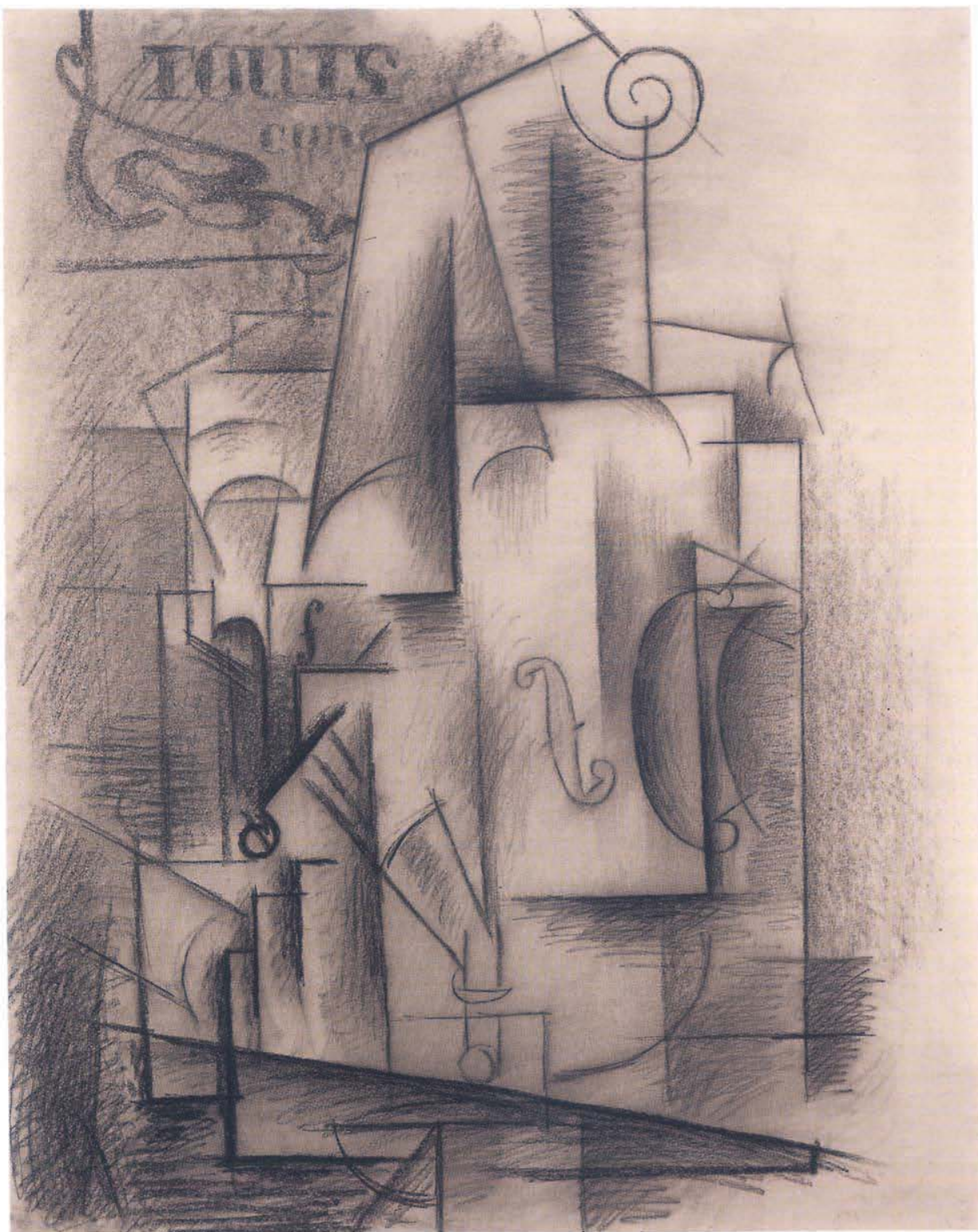
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Jardot 1959a, no. 34. Palau i Fabre 1990,  
no. 864, p. 511, illus. p. 304. Schneider  
2003, no. 19, p. 393, p. 80, illus. p. 81.

The familiarity of the technique in this tonal drawing made in charcoal and pencil contrasts with the radical nature of the form. A similar dissonance exists on the level of subject matter. The violin is frequently depicted in images of music-making, often with amorous significance, from the Renaissance onward, and, like drawing, playing the violin is often equated with virtuosity. Yet there is little precedence, if any, for a violin as a subject on its own—especially upright and filling the limits of the picture space—beyond the realm of illustration or *trompe-l'oeil* painting.<sup>1</sup> This “exploded drawing”<sup>2</sup> cannot be imaginatively re-created from its fragmented planes. Instead, the lines and planes open out into the surrounding space, like sound emitted from the instrument.

The violin's elegant combination of curves and straight lines and its shallow, hollow form made it eminently suitable to the cubist repertoire of abstract shapes, broken up and manipulated to express multiple or ambiguous meaning.<sup>3</sup> Between 1912 and 1913 the violin and guitar appeared often in Picasso's art in a variety of media, including cardboard constructions/assemblages, *papiers collés*, paintings, and drawings.

In this work, Picasso continues his exploration of the oppositions of representation and abstraction. The violin's form, traditionally seen as a “reflection of its inner purpose—music”<sup>4</sup>—is dismembered and spread across the sheet. The familiar equation of art as a fundamentally abstract form aspiring to the condition of music must have been part





*Seated Man*

Paris or Montrouge, 1915 or 1916  
 Watercolor and gouache on paper  
 11 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> × 8 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches (28.9 × 22.5 cm)  
 Private collection

Not in Zervos

SIGNED AND DATED UPPER RIGHT  
*Picasso / 1918*

## PROVENANCE

Horace Titus, New York; Princess Gourielli (Helena Rubinstein), London, Paris, and New York, acquired c. 1930; Mr. and Mrs. John Hay Whitney, acquired in 1960; present collection.

## EXHIBITIONS

London 1960, no. 43. Washington, D.C. 1983, no. 61. Boston 2005.

## SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Daix and Rosselet 1979, no. 875.  
 Richardson 1996, illus. p. 416.

This drawing of a seated man in an interior setting follows on a significant number of compositions, which culminate in Picasso's great wartime painting *Seated Man*, 1915–16 (fig. 60.1). The idea to do a male figure, rather than a seated woman, had begun to take hold in 1914. His drawings of that year suggest that he was thinking about the male figures in Cézanne's *Card Players*, and his works on paper reveal that, in some instances, he worked from a model or even photographs.<sup>1</sup> Over the coming months he returned over and over again to the subject of the seated man, exploring, especially, how he might reconcile naturalism with a cubist format.

If this drawing was begun in 1915, rather than 1918 (the date that appears incorrectly beneath the signature), this *Seated Man* was most likely realized in Picasso's wartime studio on the rue Schoelcher in Montparnasse. Certain details of the interior setting, however, suggest that it might have been done later in 1916, after he had moved out of Paris to Montrouge. Other drawings (of both men and women) of the same period show a similar interior setting, with wainscoting (a characteristic of the Montrouge villa) dividing the wall behind. Here, a panel of *faux marbre* appears at the left and probably refers to a decorator's painting on the edge of a fireplace.<sup>2</sup> In some drawings, a similar, marbled panel defines the man's body,<sup>3</sup> while in others the dotted plane that appears here in the center is given prominence.<sup>4</sup>

The man in this drawing is shown seated in a red armchair: his right arm rests on a red horizontal (at left), which refers to the arm of the chair, while the curved left arm

of the chair is lower and projects from the other side of the figure. The body of the man is painted principally in blue, with the spotted plane in the center suggesting a different texture. The legs at the bottom are painted blue and black, and the spotted plane behind them plays off the similarly painted plane above. An angular plane of red at the bottom, probably the foot of the chair, echoes the flat plane of red in the radically abbreviated head above. The eyes, which bring together the two sides of the face, appear simply as holes, as it were, drilled into the flat planes that go to make up the head.

Emily Braun has studied in detail this work and other drawings in the series and has connected their mannequin-like heads and the use of silhouettes and doubling effects to the work of Giorgio de Chirico. She argues that at this particular moment in Picasso's artistic development, when he was working without his normal entourage of friends—most of whom had gone off to war—he was especially susceptible to the example of the Italian. She describes De Chirico's art, which so often includes mannequins and silhouettes, as “an anomaly in prewar Paris with its dark swaths of black, melancholic mood, and classicizing motifs,” providing an “alternative modernism congenial to Picasso's conceptual and thematic shifts.”<sup>5</sup>

The delicacy with which Picasso described the various components in the present drawing is remarkable, with great care given to shifts of color and patterning through the application of wash and dabs of black in the center and below. These variations convey both aspects of the model





*Two Ballet Dancers*

London, May–June 1919

Graphite on cream laid paper

12 1/8 × 9 1/4 inches (31.1 × 23.3 cm)

Collection of Kate Ganz and Tony Ganz

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SIGNED UPPER LEFT

*Picasso*

PROVENANCE

Buchholz Gallery, New York (Curt Valentin); Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Ganz, New York; present collection.

EXHIBITIONS

Paris 1919(?)<sup>1</sup> New York 1937b, no. 21(?) New York 1955, (unnumbered checklist), illus. p. 51. Philadelphia 1958, no. 87. New York 1980, illus. p. 219. Cambridge, Mass. 1981, no. 61. New York 1995, no. 26. Frankfurt 2006.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Philadelphia 1958, no. 87, illus. Rubin 1980, p. 219, illus. Tinterow 1981, no. 61, p. 154. Little Rock 1988, illus. p. 24, fig. 5. New York 1995, no. 26, p. 18.

In this comic tour de force, Picasso hijacks the formal conventions of classical ballet and photography. He pokes good-humored fun at the preening of the dancers, whose elephantine proportions and ungainly poses defy the norms of classical beauty. One of a series of drawings of one or two dancers,<sup>2</sup> this work comes from the nine-week stretch the artist spent in London between the end of May and the beginning of August 1919, making designs for the sets, costumes, and drop curtain of Serge Diaghilev's new Spanish-themed ballet, *Le Tricorne* (*The Three-Cornered Hat*).<sup>3</sup>

While designing costumes, Picasso often watched the dancers during rehearsal, studying their movements. As one of the dancers recalled decades later, "He was very silent, very reserved, I would say. Always scribbling something. But there was that kind of smile on his face as if he sized everybody up, and I think mentally he liked to pull everybody's leg." When she asked how he was going to make her costume, she relates, "he said, 'I am going to make it round you.' And that's why he did it at the rehearsal, because he wanted to watch the dance, and know how the costume would move with the dance. You know that wonderful compelling line of his; he really knew movement."<sup>4</sup>

At other times, Picasso preferred to draw the ballerinas in still poses. For these he sometimes took as his starting points publicity photographs from past ballets, such as for *Seven Dancers*, featuring his wife, Olga, and other members of the troupe dressed for *Les Sylphides* (figs. 65.1 and 65.2).<sup>5</sup> As Anne Baldassari has noted in a broader discussion of Picasso's drawing

