



Matisse Picasso

Henri Matisse, Pablo Picasso, Anne Baldassari, Elizabeth Cowling, John Golding, Isabelle Monod-Fontaine

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Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso have long been seen as the twin giants of modern art, as polar opposites but also as complementary figures. Between them they are the originators of many of the most significant innovations of 20th-century painting and sculpture, but their relationship has rarely been explored in all of its closeness and complexity. In spite of their initial rivalry, the two masters eventually acknowledged one another as equals, becoming, in their old age, increasingly important to one another both artistically and personally. From the time of their initial encounters in 1906 in Gertrude and Leo Stein's Paris studio until 1917, they individually produced some of the greatest art of the 20th century and maintained an openly competitive relationship brimming with intense innovation. This period saw them create such works as Picasso's majestic "Woman with a Fan" of 1908 and Matisse's great portrait of his wife of 1913. Matisse responds to Synthetic Cubism in his "Piano Lesson" of 1916 and Picasso comes back in turn with a new, more decorative Cubism in "Three Musicians" of 1921. The 20s saw them grow apart, as Matisse moved from Paris to Nice and Picasso became involved with the Surrealists, but the 30s brought them together again, through their sheer fame and devotion to reality-based art. Their story continues until Matisse's death in 1954, when Picasso paid his friend and colleague tribute in his series *Women of Algiers*, of which he said, "When Matisse died, he left his odalisques to me as a legacy." *Matisse Picasso* presents the artists' oeuvres in groupings that reveal the affinities but also the extreme contrasts of their artistic visions. Published to accompany the landmark exhibition, a joint effort of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Tate Modern, London; the Réunion des musées nationaux/Musée Picasso and the Musée national d'art moderne/Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; *Matisse Picasso* is the first major examination of the fascinating relationships between their art, their careers, and their lives. Thirty-four essays, each by a member of the exhibition's curatorial team, focus on a particular moment in the artists' evolving relationship. The authors present in-depth analyses of specific aspects of the unique artistic dialogue between Matisse and Picasso as reflected in selected juxtapositions of each artist's works. These texts are accompanied by an introductory history, commentary on the public perception of important artistic relationships, and an extensive chronology.

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