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Pablo Ruiz y Picasso, known as Pablo Picasso (Spanish: [ˈpaβlo piˈkaso]; 25 October 1881 – 8 April 1973) was a Spanish painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist, and stage designer who spent most of his adult life in France. As one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century, he is known for co-founding the Cubist movement, the invention of constructed sculpture,[2][3] the co-invention of collage, and for the wide variety of styles that he helped develop and explore. Among his most famous works are the proto-Cubist Les Demoiselles d’Avignon (1907), andGuernica (1937), a portrayal of the German bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War.

Picasso, Henri Matisse and Marcel Duchamp are regarded as the three artists who most defined the revolutionary developments in the plastic arts in the opening decades of the 20th century, responsible for significant developments in painting, sculpture, printmaking and ceramics.[4][5][6][7]

Picasso demonstrated extraordinary artistic talent in his early years, painting in a realistic manner through his childhood and adolescence. During the first decade of the 20th century, his style changed as he experimented with different theories, techniques, and ideas. His revolutionary artistic accomplishments brought him universal renown and immense fortune, making him one of the best-known figures in 20th-century art.

Art

Prolific as a draftsman, sculptor, and printmaker, Picasso’s primary medium was painting. He usually painted from imagination or memory, and worked in many different styles throughout his career. Although he used color as an expressive element, he relied on drawing rather than subtleties of color to create form and space. A nanoprobe of Picasso’s The Red Armchair (1931) by physicists at Argonne National Laboratory in 2012 confirmed art historians’ belief that Picasso used common house paint in many of his paintings.[9]

Picasso’s work is often categorized into periods. While the names of many of his later periods are debated, the most commonly accepted periods in his work are the Blue Period (1901–1904), theRose Period (1905–1907), the African-influenced Period (1908–1909), Analytic Cubism (1909–1912), and Synthetic Cubism (1912–1919).

In 1939–40 the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, under its director Alfred Barr, a Picasso enthusiast, held a major retrospective of Picasso’s principal works until that time. This exhibition lionized the artist, brought into full public view in America the scope of his artistry, and resulted in a reinterpretation of his work by contemporary art historians and scholars.[10]

Picasso was exceptionally prolific throughout his long lifetime. The total number of artworks he produced has been estimated at 50, 000, comprising 1, 885 paintings; 1, 228 sculptures; 2, 880 ceramics, roughly 12, 000 drawings, many thousands of prints, and numerous tapestries and rugs.

Life

Early life

Picasso was baptized Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Crispiniano de la Santísima Trinidad, a series of names honoring various saints and relatives.[23] Added to these were Ruiz and Picasso, for his father and mother, respectively, as per Spanish law. Born in the city ofMálaga in the Andalusian region of Spain, he was the first child of Don José Ruiz y Blasco (1838–1913) and María Picasso y López.[24] Despite being baptized Catholic, Picasso would later on become an atheist.[25] Picasso’s family was middle-class. His father was a painter who specialized in naturalistic depictions of birds and other game. For most of his life Ruiz was a professor of art at the School of Crafts and a curator of a local museum. Ruiz’s ancestors were minor aristocrats.

Career beginnings

Picasso made his first trip to Paris in 1900, then the art capital of Europe. There, he met his first Parisian friend, journalist and poet Max Jacob, who helped Picasso learn the language and its literature. Soon they shared an apartment; Max slept at night while Picasso slept during the day and worked at night. These were times of severe poverty, cold, and desperation. Much of his work was burned to keep the small room warm. During the first five months of 1901, Picasso lived in Madrid, where he and his anarchist friend Francisco de Asís Soler founded the magazine Arte Joven (Young Art), which published five issues. Soler solicited articles and Picasso illustrated the journal, mostly contributing grim cartoons depicting and sympathizing with the state of the poor. The first issue was published on 31 March 1901, by which time the artist had started to sign his work Picasso; before he had signed Pablo Ruiz y Picasso.[31]

By 1905, Picasso became a favorite of American art collectors Leo and Gertrude Stein. Their older brother Michael Stein and his wife Sarah also became collectors of his work. Picasso painted portraits of both Gertrude Stein and her nephew Allan Stein. Gertrude Stein became Picasso’s principal patron, acquiring his drawings and paintings and exhibiting them in her informal Salon at her home in Paris.[32] At one of her gatherings in 1905, he met Henri Matisse, who was to become a lifelong friend and rival. The Steins introduced him to Claribel Cone and her sister Etta who were American art collectors; they also began to acquire Picasso and Matisse’s paintings. Eventually Leo Stein moved to Italy. Michael and Sarah Stein became patrons of Matisse, while Gertrude Stein continued to collect Picasso.[33]

Death

Pablo Picasso died on 8 April 1973 in Mougins, France, while he and his wife Jacqueline entertained friends for dinner. His final words were “ Drink to me, drink to my health, you know I can’t drink any more.”[44] He was interred at the Chateau of Vauvenargues near Aix-en-Provence, a property he had acquired in 1958 and occupied with Jacqueline between 1959 and 1962. Jacqueline Roque prevented his children Claude and Paloma from attending the funeral.[45] Devastated and lonely after the death of Picasso, Jacqueline Roque killed herself by gunshot in 1986 when she was 59 years old.

Children

• Paulo (4 February 1921 – 5 June 1975) (Born Paul Joseph Picasso) – with Olga Khokhlova • Maya (5 September 1935 – ) (Born Maria de la Concepcion Picasso) – with Marie-Thérèse Walter • Claude (15 May 1947 –) (Born Claude Pierre Pablo Picasso) – with Françoise Gilot • Paloma (19 April 1949 – ) (Born Anne Paloma Picasso) – with Françoise Gilot