

Pablo picasso: 20th century genius essay sample

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Pablo Picasso- 20th Century GeniusThe author's nomination for the 20th Century Genius Award proudly goes to Pablo Picasso. Pablo Picasso was probably the most famous artist of the twentieth century. An Unknown author stated that, " Picasso changed the meaning of art in so many ways, while showing that he had enormous skill, dedication and a little bit of craziness. His life spans many different perspectives in art, and his artistic timeline stretches, bends, twists, and even breaks in some points. From the Blue period, to sketches, to pure abstraction, this master of art was always able to get his point across; and quite wonderfully too." Born in Málaga on October 25, 1881, Picasso was the son of José Ruiz Blasco, an art teacher, and María Picasso y Lopez. Until 1898 he always used his father's name, Ruiz, and his mother's maiden name, Picasso, to sign his pictures. After about 1901 he dropped " Ruiz" and used his mother's maiden name to sign his pictures. Picasso was given an unusual name, Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Martyr Patricio Clito Ruiz y Picasso.

First famous for his role in Cubism, Picasso continued to develop his art with a pace and vitality comparable to the fast moving technological and cultural changes of the twentieth century. Each change Picasso embarked on was a radical new idea.

Picasso, a Spanish artist and sculptor, was generally considered the greatest artist of the 20th century. Picasso's genius manifested itself early: at the age of 10 he made his first paintings, and at 15 he performed brilliantly on the entrance examinations to Barcelona's School of Fine Arts.

In 1904 Picasso moved to Paris. He found the city's bohemian street life fascinating, and his pictures of people in dance halls and cafés show how he assimilated the postimpressionism of Paul Gauguin and the symbolist painters called the Nabis. The themes of Edgar Degas and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, as well as the style of the latter, exerted the strongest influence. Picasso's Blue Room reflects the work of both these painters and, at the same time, shows him evolving toward the Blue Period, so called because various shades of blue was used in his work. Picasso expressed human misery; the paintings portrayed blind figures, beggars, alcoholics, and prostitutes, their somewhat elongated bodies.

Shortly after settling in Paris, Picasso met Fernande Olivier, whom was one of many to influence the theme, style, and mood of his work. With him making a new friend Picasso changed his palette to pinks and reds; the years 1904 and 1905 were called the Rose Period.

In the summer of 1906, during Picasso's holiday in Gosol, Spain, his work entered a new phase, marked by the influence of Greek, Iberian, and African art. Destroyed were spatial depth and the ideal form of the female nude, which Picasso restructured into harsh, angular planes.

Inspired by the volumetric treatment of form by the French postimpressionist artist Paul Cezanne, Picasso and the French artist Georges Braque painted landscapes in 1908 in a style later described by a critic as being made of "little cubes," thus leading to the term cubism. Some of their paintings are so similar that it is difficult to tell them apart. Working together between 1908 and 1911, they were concerned with breaking down and analyzing form, and

together they developed the first phase of cubism, known as analytic cubism. Monochromatic color schemes were favored in their depictions of radically fragmented motifs, whose several sides were shown simultaneously. Picasso's favorite subjects were musical instruments, still-life objects, and his friends.

In 1912, pasting paper and a piece of oilcloth to the canvas and combining these with painted areas; Picasso created his first collage, *Still Life with Chair Caning*. This technique marked a transition to synthetic cubism. This second phase of cubism is more decorative, and color plays a major role, although shapes remain fragmented and flat. Picasso was to practice synthetic cubism throughout his career, but by no means exclusively.

Picasso created cubist sculptures as well as paintings. He also made constructions-such as *Mandolin and Clarinet* from odds and ends of wood, metal, paper, and nonartistic materials, in which he explored the spatial hypotheses of cubist painting. His *Glass of Absinthe*, combining a silver sugar strainer with a painted bronze sculpture, anticipates his much later "found object" creations, such as *Baboon and Young*, as well as pop art objects of the 1960s.

During World War I (1914-1918), Picasso went to Rome, working as a designer with Sergey Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes. He met and married the dancer Olga Koklova. In a realist style, Picasso made several portraits of her around 1917, of their son, and of numerous friends. In the early 1920s he did tranquil, neoclassical pictures of heavy, sculpturesque figures, an example being *Three Women at the Spring*, and works inspired by

mythology, such as *The Pipes of Pan*. At the same time, Picasso also created strange pictures of small-headed bathers and violent convulsive portraits of women, which are often taken to indicate the tension he experienced in his marriage. Although he stated he was not a surrealist, many of his pictures have a surreal and disturbing quality, as in *Sleeping Woman in Armchair* and *Seated Bather*.

Several cubist paintings of the early 1930s, stressing harmonious, curvilinear lines and expressing an underlying eroticism, reflect Picasso's pleasure with his newest love, Marie Thérèse Walter, who gave birth to their daughter Maïa in 1935. Marie Thérèse, frequently portrayed sleeping, also was the model for the famous *Girl Before a Mirror*. In 1935 Picasso made the etching *Minotauromachy*, a major work combining his minotaur and bullfight themes; in it the disemboweled horse, as well as the bull, prefigure the imagery of *Guernica*, a mural often called the most important single work of the 20th century.

Picasso was moved to paint the huge mural *Guernica* shortly after German planes, acting on orders from Spain's authoritarian leader Francisco Franco, bombarded the Basque town of Guernica on April 26, 1937, during the Spanish civil war. Completed in less than two months, *Guernica* was hung in the Spanish Pavilion of the Paris International Exposition of 1937. The painting does not portray the event; rather, Picasso expressed his outrage by employing such imagery as the bull, the dying horse, a fallen warrior, a mother and dead child, a woman trapped in a burning building, another rushing into the scene, and a figure leaning from a window and

holding out a lamp. Despite the complexity of its symbolism, and the impossibility of definitive interpretation, Guernica makes an overwhelming impact in its portrayal of the horrors of war.

Picasso's palette grew somber with the onset of World War II (1939-1945), and death is the subject of numerous works, such as *Still Life with Steer's Skull* and *The Charnel House*. He formed a new liaison during the 1940s with the painter Françoise Gilot who bore him two children, Claude and Paloma; they appear in many works that recapitulate his earlier styles. The last of Picasso's companions to be portrayed was Jacqueline Roque, whom he met in 1953 and married in 1961. He then spent much of his time in southern France.

Many of Picasso's later pictures were based on works by great masters of the past-Diego Velazquez, Gustave Courbet, Eugene Delacroix, and Edouard Manet. In addition to painting, Picasso worked in various media, making hundreds of lithographs in the renowned Paris graphics workshop, Atelier Mourlot. Ceramics also engaged his interest, and in 1947, in Vallauris, he produced nearly 2000 pieces.

Throughout Picasso's lifetime, his work was exhibited on countless occasions. Most unusual, however, was the 1971 exhibition at the Louvre, in Paris, honoring him on his 90th birthday; until then, living artists had not been shown there. In 1980 a major retrospective showing of his work was held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City. Picasso died in his villa Notre-Dame-de-Vie near Mougins on April 8, 1973.

Because of his many innovations, Picasso is widely considered to be the most influential artist of the 20th century. The cubist movement, which he and Braque inspired, had a number of followers. Its innovations gave rise to a host of other 20th-century art movements, including futurism in Italy, suprematism and constructivism in Russia, de Stijl in the Netherlands, and vorticism in England. Cubism also influenced German expressionism, dada, and other movements as well as early work of the surrealist and abstract expressionists. In addition, collage and construction became key aspects of 20th-century art.

References

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