

**PICASSO: MASTERPIECES FROM THE MUSÉE NATIONAL PICASSO, PARIS**

October 8, 2010 – January 17, 2011

*Picasso and SAM's Permanent Collection*

Picasso took an eclectic path through art history and made an incredible mark on it. During the exhibition *Picasso: Masterpieces from the Musée National Picasso, Paris*, visitors will be invited to consider the art that inspired him and the works he inspired in others. Throughout SAM's permanent collection, certain works will be designated with a special symbol, with in-gallery descriptions of how that work relates to Picasso.

**Reliquary Figure**, 20th century

Brass, wood

24 5/8 x 10 5/8 x 2 13/16 in.

*Kota*

Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection

Both love and hate for his wife Olga were expressed with features Picasso conceived from two Kota figures he owned. When newlywed in 1918, he adapted the diamond shape to suggest her angular dancer's body in an elegant lozenge. By 1930, he cast her head with a concave face and sharp metal hair, endowing her with the surreal bite of a predatory monster.

**Marionette Head of an Antelope**

Wood

30 1/2 x 8 3/8 x 10 1/8 in.

*Bozo, Malian*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

Conceptual structure is unmistakable in this antelope head. Square eyes, a round nose and faceted planes join together in a graceful arc. Picasso collected several marionette heads from Mali, and was known to analyze their geometry as a guide when he was inventing new forms for both his paintings and sculptures.

**Doll**, 20th century

Wood

7 1/2 x 1 11/16 x 2 3/8 in.

*Burkina Faso, Mossi*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

Five dolls stand as a reminder of the five women in Picasso's masterpiece, *Les Femmes d'Alger*. Their stark abstraction recalls the visual jolt in African art that encouraged Picasso to find new ways to depict nudity. His results led the critic Robert Rosenblum to proclaim, "Like an active volcano, Picasso's art could erupt at unexpected moments with a violence so savage that painted flesh can seem torn before our eyes."

**Doll**, 20th century

Wood

7 x 1 1/4 x 1 1/8 in.

*Burkina Faso, Mossi*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

**Doll**, 20th century

Wood

6 1/2 x 1 1/4 x 1 13/16 in.

*Burkina Faso, Mossi*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

**Doll**, 20th century

Wood

9 1/4 x 1 5/8 x 2 in.

*Burkina Faso, Mossi*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

**Doll**, 20th century

Wood

10 7/16 x 2 7/16 x 2 15/16 in.

*Burkina Faso, Mossi*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

**Mask (Banda)**, Late 19th - early 20th century

Wood, pigment

52 1/8 x 11 13/16 x 10 1/4 in.

*Nalu*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

Masks were a large part of Picasso's collection and one similar to this hung in his home. While he was known to savor such visual hybrid creatures, he also responded to their purpose, saying, "For me the masks were not just sculptures. They were magical objects-intercessors against everything-against unknown, threatening spirits. They were weapons to help free themselves. If we give form to these spirits, we become free."

**Mask (Goli Gulin), 20th century**

Wood, metal, and pigment  
29 1/2 x 12 5/8 x 14 3/16 in.

*Baule*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

Artistic fusions were a hallmark of Picasso's vision. He owned a mask of this type and was inspired to draw an animal head with elongated features, which evolved into a horse's head in his sketches. It was eventually realized as a head for the manager in the ballet *Parade*—Picasso's version combines elements from architecture, machinery and a Baule mask.

**Marionette Head of a Bird, 20th century**

Wood, pigment  
21 in.

*Bamana, Malian*

Gift of Mark Groudine and Cynthia Putnam, in honor of the 75th Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum

Playful paper constructions of masks and birds often appeared in Picasso's studio. He constantly experimented with exaggeration and metamorphosis, and studied Bamana examples that he owned. When speaking about his collection in 1923, he remarked, "The African sculptures that hang around almost everywhere in my studio are more witnesses than models."

**D'mba Headdress, Late 19<sup>th</sup>-Early 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Wood, raffia  
51 1/2 x 18 1/8 x 26 1/8 in.

Guinean

*Baga*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

Passion seems to be pressed into the clay when Picasso modeled busts of Marie Thérèse Walter. In her portraits, he adapted the full shapes, projecting nose and prominent breasts seen in this headdress. Picasso bought two Baga headdresses from Gertrude Stein in 1918. By 1931, their features merged with those of his mistress? As William Rubin wrote, "Picasso translated the image of a woman he loved to a virtually mythic level."

**Mask, late 19<sup>th</sup>–early 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Two examples of this rare type of Kru mask were kept on hand in Picasso's studio. He credited them with helping to define his approach to sculpting a cardboard *Guitar* in 1912. As Kru artists made features out of building blocks, so he made a guitar's sound hole out of a projecting cylinder. Many inspired collage constructions were to follow.

**Bird Mask (*Man na Gle*), 20<sup>th</sup> century**

Wood, metal  
13 3/8 x 5 1/4 x 7 in.

Liberian, Guinean, Ivorian

*Dan*

Gift of Katherine White and the Boeing Company

The crossbreeding of creatures and humans were a source of fascination for Picasso. He searched out the hybrids of antiquity—centaurs, fauns, satyrs, the Minotaur and Pan—but also looked carefully at the human-animal symbiosis of African masks like this one.

**Standing Male (*Nkisi*), 20th century**

Picasso collected several small Nkisi figures similar to this one, often with cavities to hold medicines. In Fernande Olivier's memoirs, she writes about his studio where they lived from 1909-12: "...Picasso became fanatical, and accumulated statuettes, masks, and fetishes of all African regions. The pursuit of African works became a real pleasure for him."

**Untitled #2, 1985**

Oil on canvas  
72 x 72 in.

*Agnes Martin*, American, 1912 - 2004

Gift of The American Art Foundation

Agnes Martin painted stripes with exacting consistency as she aspired to "see the ideal in one's mind." Picasso also painted striped accents in his work, but is better known for the striped shirts he frequently wore. Even when flush with success, he often preferred to dress in the stripes of a French sailor, or pirate, or gondolier, reinforcing his choice to forego convention.

**The Bride, 1936**

Terracotta on wood base  
34 1/4 x 6 11/16 x 4 3/4 in.

*Alexander Archipenko*, American, born Ukraine,  
1887-1964

Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection

Picasso and...The Bride. Archipenko-like Picasso was a radical innovator in sculpture. Working in Paris from 1908 to 1920, he developed alongside Picasso and exerted his own influence upon the Cubists as they re-interpreted forms in space. The galleries of the Louvre, however, were just as fertile ground for Archipenko's imagination as the artists' studios and the cafés of Paris. Classical Greek and Roman sculpture, as we can see in this example, provided Archipenko with models of proportion and grace as he conceived and created modern sculpture that had timeless qualities.

**Pottery and Haniwa, 1952**

Woodblock print

Image: 29 3/4 x 18 1/8 in.

Sheet: 33 x 21 3/4 in.

*Saito Kiyoshi*, Japanese, 1907 - 1997

Eugene Fuller Memorial Collection

Picasso and ... Pottery and Haniwa. Japan's 20th-century "creative prints" (sosaku hanga) owe as much to Western influences as to their traditional woodblock predecessors. In this print, Saito explores the formal, abstract characteristics of a clay vessel and an ancient Japanese burial figure called haniwa. Saito recalls Picasso and his admiration for Iberian sculpture and African masks-both artists represented objects as geometric volumes flattened against the picture plane.

**Banquet Still Life, ca. 1653 - 55**

Oil on canvas

42 1/8 x 45 1/2 in.

*Abraham van Beyeren*, Dutch, ca. 1620/21-1690

Samuel H. Kress Collection

Picasso and... Still Life. The still life was a staple of Picasso's repertoire throughout his career-the arrangement of ordinary objects on a table offered him endless opportunities to create a painterly or sculptural equivalent of what he observed. As convincingly "real" as this splendid arrangement by Van Beyeren appears, it is a fantasy concocted in the painter's imagination, incorporating separate studies of individual objects that never shared the same space. No matter how conventional the subject matter, all art depends on invention, as Picasso recognized when he said, "We all know that Art is not truth. Art is a lie that makes us realize the truth."

**Female figure**

Marble

22 x 5 1/4 x 3 1/4 in.

ca. 2500 B.C.

*Cycladic*

Norman and Amelia Davis Classical Collection

Picasso and...Cycladic art. Once accused of "artistic schizophrenia," Picasso was classically trained as a painter and draftsman, but drew influence from an ever-developing range of sources throughout his life. Early in his career, he encountered Cycladic funerary figures, whose flattened and elongated forms were one of the inspirations for the early iterations of *Les Femmes d'Alger*. Behind their African masks, the lines of the Greek Bronze Age can still be traced on the bodies of the *Femmes d'Alger*.

**Europa and the Bull, 1969**

Oil on canvas

73 1/2 x 100 in.

*Michael Spafford*, American, born 1935

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Herschel Roman

Picasso and...Europa and the Bull. Like Picasso, Michael Spafford frequently revisits the characters and stories of Greek legend-Zeus, the Minotaur, Trojans, Herakles and bulls all recur in both artists' work. They each employ imagery associated with the ancient gods and heroes to probe issues of masculinity, wildness, virility, and eroticism.

**Harlequin, ca. 1765**

Hard paste porcelain

3 3/8 x 1 3/4 in.

*German, Kloster Veilsdorf*

Gift of Martha and Henry Isaacson

Picasso and... Harlequin playing a musette. Somewhere between comical and threatening, exists Harlequin-the acrobatic trickster of Italian commedia dell'arte theater. His distinctive costume of diamond patches, topped with red or black mask and crowned with a tricornered hat, is so distinct that the character can be identified as easily in monochrome as he can in color. In his early works, Picasso adopted the harlequin as his alter ego and later depicted his eldest son Paulo in this same outfit.

**Wall Landscape, 1958**

Oil on canvas

61 1/2 x 49 in.

*Willem de Kooning*, American (born The Netherlands), 1904-1997

Gift of Bagley and Virginia Wright

Picasso and...Abstract Expressionism. Europe first encountered American Abstract Expressionist artists in a 1958 touring exhibition. Speaking on behalf of his peers in a *TIME* Magazine article, Willem de Kooning acknowledged the awesome legacy of Picasso and his contemporaries, and how the new American style defined itself in reaction to the dominance of Paris painting: "It's not that I'm against anything," says De Kooning, "but I'm more for myself. I don't know who I am, but I am not THEM anymore."

**Chernobyl Mask (Allusion to Bakwas), 1993**

Red cedar wood, paint, cedar bark  
28 x 14 x 8 in.

David Neel, Canadian, Kwagu'l, born 1960  
Margaret E. Fuller Purchase Fund

Picasso and...Chernobyl Mask. David Neel, photojournalist, painter and carver, acknowledged his admiration for Picasso, who incorporated actual newsprint stories into such iconic works as *Still Life with Chair Caning* (1912), and created *Guernica* (1937) as a direct and visceral response to the bombing of the Basque village during World War II. Neel based his mask concept upon a traditional Kwakwaka'wakw creature named Bukwis—a being associated with death and poisonous food—after news stories about the 1991 Soviet nuclear disaster reported that a radioactive cloud had killed thousands and rendered the landscape a wasteland. A pair of cracked cooling towers is painted on the brow of Bukwis.

**Soundsuit, 2006**

Human hair, fabricated fencing mask,  
thrift store sweaters

Approx. 6 feet tall, on mannequin  
Nick Cave, American, born 1961  
Gift of Josef Vascofritz, in honor of the 75th  
Anniversary of the Seattle Art Museum

Picasso and...Nick Cave. *Meet Me at the Center of the Earth*. If Pablo Picasso was the spine of twentieth-century art, is Nick Cave the biceps of our time? If Picasso explored the potential to collapse categories of high and low in art, is Nick Cave carrying on his intent? Here, two examples of Nick Cave's Soundsuits offer an initial glimpse of the way he lifts our eyes and expectations of what art can do. You're invited back next spring—from March 10th to June 5th, 2011, to experience the first national tour of Nick Cave's suits and performance, spectacle and provocation. Be prepared to witness what hair, socks, potholders, toys, sequins and Day-Glo fur can evoke. With a multitude of Soundsuits dramatizing perplexing interactions, Nick says, "You have to force yourself to accept the unknown."