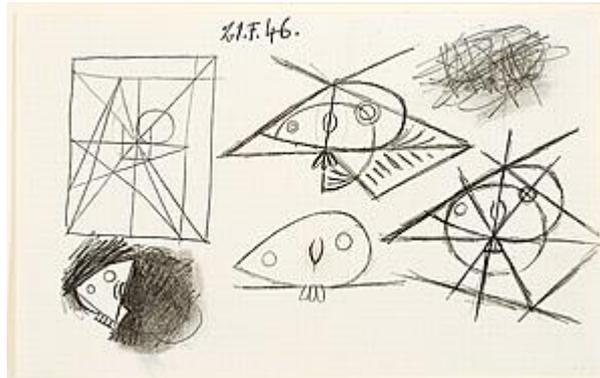


RONNY VAN DE VELDE



Pablo Picasso (Malaga 1881 - Mougins 1973)

Four Studies, 1946

Four drawings, pencil on graph paper, each 21,6 x 34,3 cm
Each dated: 21.F.46

The still lifes made by Picasso at the end of the World War II, and shortly thereafter, are thematically and formally akin to the large memento mori works from the same period. Only then did the nightmare become clear in all its horror. In 1943 Picasso modelled a skull in plaster and, when cast in bronze, it became a permanent fixture in his studio. It also featured in many drawings and paintings where, together with other objects - here, jug and book - it takes on a dramatic persona. As these studies show, the conflict plays out between life and death (the jug as dynamic figure) in a neo-cubistic segmented space, with a clearly organized incidence of light. The symbolism of this conflict, the suggestion of closed, rastered space (legs of the table, spindles of the chair) goes beyond the unequivocal. Picasso himself spoke of 'visual rhyme', where latent relationships within a work are established by force of form and symbolic content, the purpose being to liberate the viewer from his or her usual ways of seeing. Thus no vanitas preaching resignation. Here, too: the grandiose ambition of the artist to create a universal image-language that replaces representation with expressive ideograms, signs that refer to underlying significances; a language that can express all phenomena (including feelings and thoughts), and that has incorporated within itself the history of art in its entirety.

Provenance:

Marie-Thérèse Walter, Paris
Private collection, Switzerland
Pace Gallery, New York
Richard Gray Gallery, Chicago
Private collection, USA

Exhibitions

Geneva, Galerie Jan Krugier, Une collection Picasso : oeuvres 1937 à 1946, 1973, nos. 99, 100
(Zervos 153, 158)
Chicago, Carrie Secrist Gallery, Plotting : A Survey Exhibition of Artists' Studies, 2002 (Zervos 156, 157)

Literature:

Christian Zervos, Pablo Picasso. Oeuvres de 1944 à 1946, (vol. 14), Paris, 1963, nos. 152, 156, 157, 158, ill. p.66-67

The Picasso Project, Picasso's Paintings, Watercolors, Drawings and Sculpture :Liberation and Post-War Years 1944-1949, San Francisco, 2000, nos. 42-023, 46-025, 46-027, 46-029, illustrated p.64-65

Artist description:

Pablo Picasso (October 25, 1881 to April 8, 1973) was a Spanish expatriate painter, sculptor, printmaker, ceramicist and stage designer considered one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century and the co-creator, along with Georges Braque, of Cubism. Considered radical in his work, Picasso continues to garner reverence for his technical mastery, visionary creativity and profound empathy. Together, these qualities have distinguished the "disquieting" Spaniard with the "sombrepiercing" eyes as a revolutionary artist. For nearly 80 of his 91 years, Picasso devoted himself to an artistic production that he superstitiously believed would keep him alive, contributing significantly to — and paralleling the entire development of — modern art in the 20th century.