

# Intertwined Destinies

Dora Maar Pablo Picasso Joan Miró Salvador Dalí

Immerse yourself into the story of four key figures of XXth century art: Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, Salvador Dalí and Dora Maar. Their lives and works intertwined throughout the century, between hazard, encounters, influences and sometimes oppositions. They all left a profound mark on modern art history. Their singular paths present a fascinating constellation of matches. The itinerary of this exhibition, from the Consuls' Hall to the works exhibited at the Blue Penitents Chapel, recount their intertwined destinies. Between admiration, mutual inspiration, artistic or political rivalries, the four figures had complex relations. This exhibition allude to their places of creation, commitments, friendship or disagreements along with the topics they shared. You will thus get acquainted with their common paths.

The exhibition also brings to light various aspects of their work: Paris as a crucial hub of artistic creation, the woman's status, the symbolic and cultural richness of their Spanish roots, their passion for a wide range of techniques (printmaking, ceramic, photography...), their commitment in the surrealist movement, their approach to portrait and, in addition, simplicity at the core of their artistic gesture.

The focus on Paris is significant since the capital city was the centre of the artistic avant-garde during the interwar period. The fates of each artist met in the bubbling and creative city. Picasso was already the master of cubism whereas Miró who had just arrived, attended surrealist milieus even if he was asserting his own independence.

Dali with his odd visions seduced Breton's circle. He was excluded from it in 1939 (too much surrealistic, not communist enough). Dora Maar was then a photographer of the surrealistic avant-garde. She oscillated between her personal artistic research and her position as Picasso's muse with whom she experienced a passionate and painful relationship.

The relations between the artists were also characterized by tensions and, sometimes, they were also nourished with admirations or conflicts. Miró met Picasso in Paris in 1920. He considered him as a tutelary figure. They both shared a taste for popular art, Spanish tradition and committed against Francoism, particularly during the universal exhibition of 1937. Picasso presented his *Guernica* during the event. Its long creation process was documented by Dora Maar, whereas Miró created 'the Reaper'. However, their artistic paths went on different ways: Picasso kept working in a figurative way, Miró explored abstraction and fantasy. Miró also introduced Dalí to renowned gallery owners in Paris, such as Pierre Loeb in 1929. Dalí met Picasso in 1926. Initially, his admiration for him knew no bounds and he was much inspired by his work. However, they soon diverged because of their different political views. Picasso was a zealous communist whereas Dalí was an anti-communist and a provoker. Dalí gradually supported Francoism as a result to the Spanish anarchists' exactions. Indeed, there were acts of civil violence perpetrated in his own village. War changed it all. Everyone took a different direction. Picasso stayed in France continuing his committed and intense work. Miró made the decision to live an isolated life in Spain in order to nourish his oneiric and poetical universe. Dalí crossed the Atlantic and settled in the United States where he developed a more mystical and baroque style.

In the 1950s, even ridiculed Picasso: “Picasso is a painter, so am I, Picasso is a Spaniard, so am I, Picasso is a communist, neither am I’. Dora Maar retreated from the artistic world. She was marked by her tragic relation with Picasso; nonetheless she kept painting and creating for the rest of her life.

In order to understand those intertwined destinies, it is also crucial to lay emphasis on the artists’ roots in Spanish culture. In spite of their stylistic differences, Picasso, Miró and Dalí were deeply influenced by the traditions, the spirituality and the contrasts of Spanish history. The elder Picasso went through all avant-gardes and was still a prevailing figure. Miró was profoundly attached to Catalonia; he was keen on lyric and poetic abstraction, a kind of representative search of freedom. Dalí who was also a Catalan chose exuberance, virtuoso technique, hallucinated imagery. He was to become one of the most celebrated figures of surrealism. This exhibition tells us more about the artists’ stories. It brings to life a period of art history through the connections which unite and oppose Picasso, Miró, Dalí and Dora Maar in the same time. It draws a scenery of encounters, influences and splits. Everyone contributed to shape Modern Art by leaving a personal, powerful and unforgettable mark.