

Torn between his obligation towards Olga as a husband and father of Paul, and his passion for Marie-Thérèse Walter, Picasso described his personal experience inspired by mythology. In the early 1930s, identifying with the figure of the minotaur, he portrayed himself as the monster with the body of a man and the head and tail of a bull to symbolise the complexity and ambivalence of his relations with women. As recurrent themes in his works of this period, crucifixions and bullfights were closely linked to the painful experience of his married life. The *corrida* reflects the violence of the combat, sometimes reduced to the fight between bull and horse, which could be interpreted as the confrontation between masculine and feminine.

This closes the circle in which Picasso's personal needs and desires crystallised as pieces in a complex pictorial legacy that has revealed his artistic personality in greater depth.



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Olga pensive, Paris, [winter 1923]
Pastel and black pencil on sanded wove paper, 105 x 74 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP993

OPENING HOURS

November-February: open daily 10 am to 6 pm
March-June: open daily 10 am to 7 pm
July-August: open daily 10 am to 8 pm
September-October: open daily 10 am to 7 pm

Easter: open daily 10 am to 8 pm
Christmas: 24th and 31st December, 5th January: 10 am to 3 pm
From 26th to 30th December and from 2nd to 4th January: 10 am to 7 pm. The museum will be closed on 1st and 6th January and 25th December

Visitors will be asked to begin leaving the galleries 10 minutes before closing time. Tickets are on sale up to 30 minutes before

ADVANCED TICKET SALES

Access through control without waiting in the queue by showing your printed tickets upon your arrival at the museum

Guided visits in Spanish to the exhibition *Olga Picasso*.
Every Saturday at 12 pm.
For other guided visits: reservas@mpicassom.org

Audio guides available in Spanish and English

Cover (detail):

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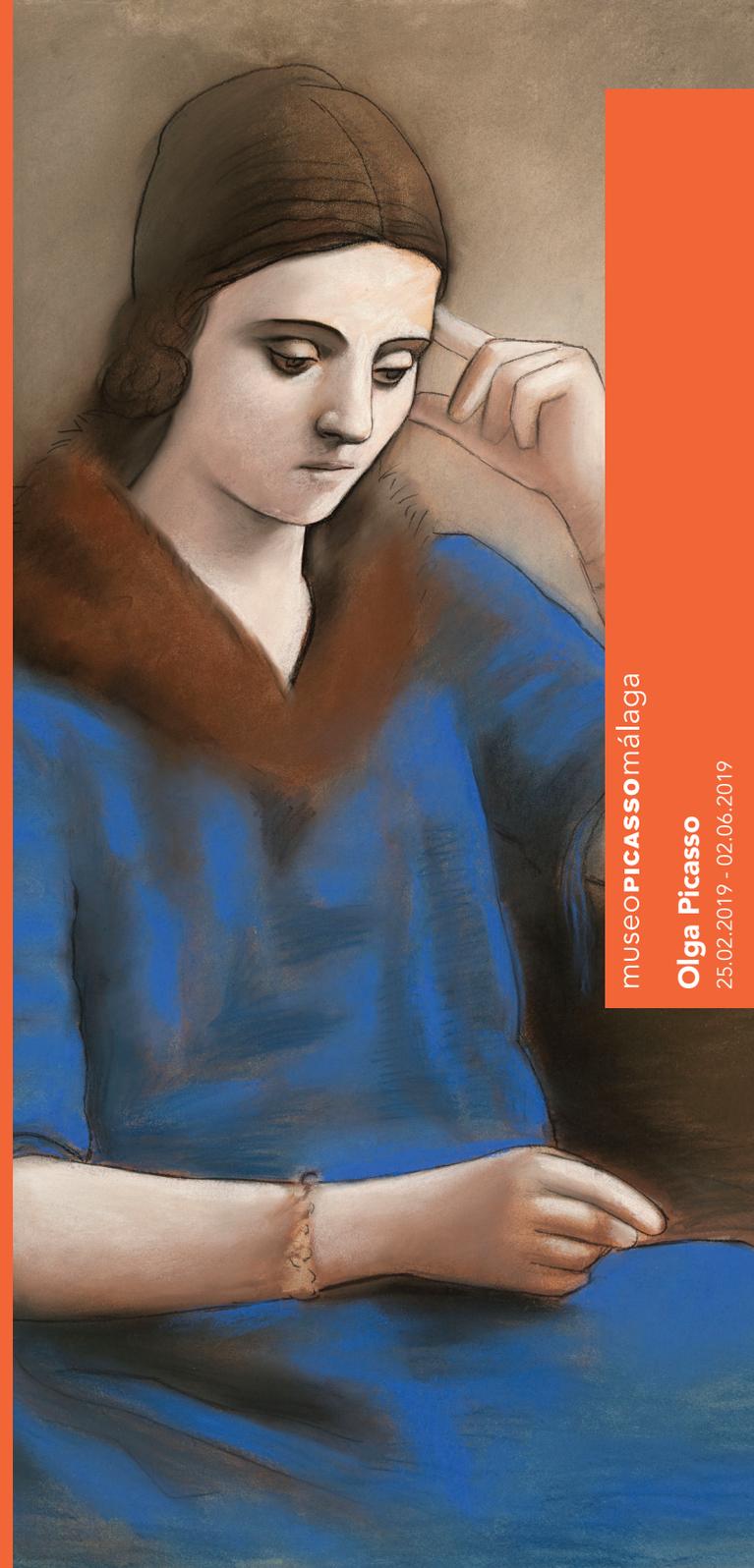
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museo **PICASSO** Málaga



Exhibition organized by Musée national Picasso-Paris in association with Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte in collaboration with The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, 19 November 2018 – 4 February 2019; Museo Picasso Málaga, 25 February – 2 June 2019 and Caixa Forum, Madrid, 18 June – 22 September 2019.



museo **PICASSO** Málaga

Olga Picasso

25.02.2019 - 02.06.2019



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Paul on a Donkey, Paris, 15 April 1923
 Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm
 Fundación Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte, Madrid

The passionate and complex love story between Pablo Picasso and Olga Khokhlova, and the valuable artistic testimonies the Andalusian painter produced of his first wife, are the leitmotif of this unique exhibition. The show highlights the influence that the dancer had on the artist's life and work over an important period of time.

The exhibition stems from the letters and photographs found by Bernard Ruiz-Picasso—the couple's grandson—in the Russian ballerina's portmanteau, and focuses on the years they spent together as a couple. It puts some of Picasso's masterpieces into perspective, and reconstructs the process of their creation in the framework of their personal relationship, which runs parallel to the political and social history of the period. Painter and dancer were very different. Coming from different family circumstances and aesthetic circles, they met, married and eventually separated in the cultural maelstrom of Paris, which at the time was the artistic capital of the world. The contents of the trunk—the only personal item Olga preserved after separating from Picasso—have enabled us to contextualise some of the aspects of Picasso's work during their life together.

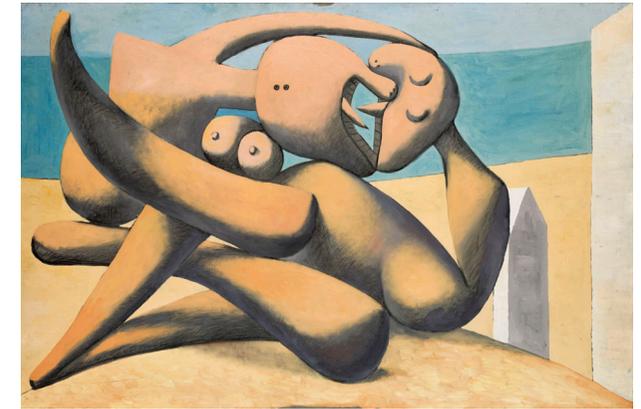
In 1912 Olga Khokhlova (Nizhyn, Ukraine, 1891 – Cannes, France, 1955), the daughter of a colonel in the Imperial Russian Army,



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Large Nude on a Red Armchair, Paris, 5 May 1929
 Oil on canvas, 195 x 129 cm
 Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Picasso, 1979. MP113

joined the Ballets Russes, the innovative and prestigious dance troupe directed by Sergei Diaghilev which enjoyed enormous success in Europe in the early twentieth century. She met Pablo Picasso in Rome in the spring of 1917, when the artist was working on the décor and costumes for the ballet entitled *Parade*. They married in Paris on 12 July 1918 and on 4 February 1921 they had their first and only child, Paul. The couple separated in 1935, although they remained married until Olga passed away in Cannes in 1955.

Soon after they first met, Olga became the painter's favourite sitter. By the end of the 1910s she was the most prominently displayed female figure in his work, and she continued to enjoy a privileged position in his output of the early 1920s. In the numerous classical portraits Picasso made of his wife she appears pensive and melancholy. Her family, whom she had last seen in Russia in 1915, witnessed the historical events of the February Revolution, the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II, the Bolshevik Revolution and the subsequent Russian Civil War. Olga was first depicted in fine elegant lines, characterised by the influence of Ingres. In his return to figuration, Picasso often portrayed her seated in domestic environments, either reading or writing, no doubt as an allusion to the correspondence she maintained with her family, seriously affected by the tragic circumstances besetting



Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Figures on the Seashore, 12 January 1931
 Oil on canvas, 130 x 195 cm
 Musée national Picasso-Paris. Dation Pablo Picasso, 1979. MP131

Russia. Meanwhile, as the artist's reputation steadily grew, the young couple began to climb socially. New friends joined their circle as they frequented receptions, sojourned on the French Riviera and generally increased their standard of living, their wealth and their family with the birth of Paul in 1921. Olga inspired numerous maternity scenes, rendered with a tenderness and serenity previously unknown in Picasso's oeuvre at a time when his interest in Antiquity and the Renaissance was revived.

From 1924 onwards, in the turbulent Europe of the interwar years that saw the birth of the Surrealist movement, the development of Freudian psychoanalysis and a growing interest in overseas art, Olga's imaginary figure slowly began to metamorphose as the bonds between the couple started to deteriorate. Nevertheless, she continued to imbue Picasso's oeuvre until their separation and beyond. The artist's encounter with Marie-Thérèse Walter in 1927 deepened the marital crisis and the couple eventually split up in 1935. In Picasso's portrayals of the time Olga appears as a troubled, distorted and even brutal figure, and the violence in these works expresses both the wrath of her jealousy and the pain of the artist, whose new muse burst into his oeuvre with the energy of youth and the eroticism she inspired in him.