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PICASSO AND APPLIED ARTS

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GUIDE TO THE SESSIONS

Session 1: *Popular arts for the people? The shift in antagonism between high and low culture*

Picasso's strong interest in the popular arts undoubtedly reflects the fact that he was born within a culture, the Mediterranean, that has historically taken great pleasure in hands-on crafts and particularly in ceramics -- an important medium within Picasso's oeuvre.

The long-running question of the traditional debate between an elitist public sphere and a plebeian public sphere resulted in the breakdown of the cultural monopoly of the elites in the Western world. The forays of modern artists, such as Pablo Picasso, into the fields of jewellery, furniture, ceramics and fashion, among other art forms, signified, for some, the trivialisation of the arts. For most people, however, it also meant the possibility of gaining access to certain items that were restricted only a few decades ago.

The aim of this session is to re-examine, in the 21st century, the old debate between so-called 'high culture' and 'popular culture'. In order to explore whether its limits have been overcome or not, economic, taxonomic and historiographical aspects will be analysed to redefine the present and the future of an obsolete or, at least, confused form of categorisation in present-day history of art.

Topics

Utility versus autonomy of art
Economy: art for all?
Popular culture versus high culture.
Art and mass culture.
Art and Marxism.

Keywords

high culture
utility
applied arts

low culture
art economy
mass media

democratization of art
popular arts
sociology of art

Pictures



Pablo Picasso. *Corrida*, Cannes, 26 June 1957.

Marc Chagall. *Windows for the Metz cathedral*, 1958-68.

Alexander Calder. *Circus* (1927), 1955.

Egidio Costantini. Twenty-three glass sculptures after sketches by Picasso exhibited at MoMA in 1965.

Session 2: *Who made this? The one who thinks and the one who makes. The idea and the form*

Picasso's personality resounds through all of his work. At the same time, he took great pleasure in collaborating with other artists and artisans in mediums such as ceramics, weaving, jewelry, blacksmithing and printing.

The raison d'être of the applied arts is based on the artist's conception of objects that have been created for a specific use in people's everyday lives. For this reason, concepts come into play in their conception and production which may seem contradictory, but which are nevertheless dependent on one another: collaboration between artists and artisans or makers, the relationship between the idea or the project and execution or the technique, the physical space of the studio and the place of work, and the one-off piece and the multiple edition.

Arising from these concepts is the question of authorship. Shedding light on the working processes and contractual agreements between artists and workshops continues to raise concerns for many researchers. This session aims to explore themes related to the one-off pieces and serialised works created by Pablo Picasso and his collaborators.

Topics

Artist *versus* artisan.
Unique work *versus* multiple work.
Knowledge *versus* technique.
Studio *versus* factory.
Picasso collaborations with jewellers, architects, glassmakers, ceramicists, dressmakers, among others.

Keywords

authorship	originality	mass production
economy	projects	technique
collaborations	transversality	multiple work
unique work	art reproductions	maker
artisan	artist	

Pictures



Suzanne Ramié and Pablo Picasso in the Madoura workshop, 1956.
Jacqueline de la Baume in the atelier, Cavalaire-sur-mer, 1966.
The unveiling of the Chicago Picasso, 1967.
Andy Warhol and Gerard Malanga working on at The Factory, 1965.

Session 3: Applied arts in the twenty-first century?

Picasso's contributions to the applied arts are of particular interest in this historical moment, when contemporary art practices seek to recover and update traditional technics that underline the expressive power of materials as textiles and clay.

During the second half of the twentieth century, the limits of art expanded immensely, encompassing a large number of art forms traditionally regarded as 'objects' with a specific use, such as ceramic plates that were never used as plates, necklaces that were never worn around any necks, and chairs that no one ever sat on.

What do the applied arts mean in the twenty-first century? How do they interact with art to create one-off or multiple editions? Who are these items for? In this session we will learn about the experiences of international artists whose work has gone beyond the boundaries of the visual arts to encompass conceptual and process-based fields closely associated with the applied arts.

Topics Expanding the boundaries of art beyond painting and sculpture.
Applied arts for the twenty-first century?
Collective work.
How to create multiples.

Keywords artist studio company fashion collaborations factory materiality pop working processes business market creativity

Pictures



Jeff Koons studio in Chelsea, New York.
Moschino's spring/summer 2020 collection, designed by Jeremy Scott.
Grayson Perry in his studio.
Pangolin Editions at Gloucestershire.

Credit of the front image: David Douglas Duncan, *Worker welding La femme à la clef (La Taulière) in front of Picasso at La Californie, Cannes, 1957.* © RMN-Grand Palais (Musée national Picasso-Paris) / image RMN-GP © David Douglas Duncan © Succession Pablo Picasso, Vegap, Madrid, 2022.