



RECENT ACQUISITION
of
FRENCH PAINTINGS

QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY
CENTENARY YEAR 1959

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QUEENSLAND ART GALLERY**

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This group of seven paintings was recently purchased in London by Mr. David Muir, Agent-General for Queensland, acting under instruction from the Queensland Government and the Trustees of the Queensland National Art Gallery, from a sale at Sotherby's of paintings from the collection of Major H. de Vahl Rubin.

The acquisition was made under rather unusual circumstances for the money was made available for this special purpose by a donor who, for the present, wishes to remain anonymous.

This magnificent gift not only made it possible for the Queensland Art Gallery to acquire seven important French paintings, including two modern masterpieces, but gave world-wide publicity to its existence.

The reputation of any gallery does not depend entirely on its collection but it is often known by its masterpieces.

La belle hollandaise by Picasso and the *Trois danseuses à la classe de danse* by Degas are paintings of this quality.

The Trustees of the Queensland Art Gallery are pleased to show these new acquisitions within the context of the Centenary Exhibition of French Art.

R.H.

Hilaire Germain Edgar DEGAS

1834-1917

Born in Paris of an ancient Breton family, de Gas. Liberally educated in the classics. He also studied law before entering the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in 1855, where he came under the influence of Ingres. Visited Italy, and on returning associated himself with the Impressionist movement, exhibiting with this group although never actually of it. His interest in the portrayal of movement led him to the racecourse and ballet which have inspired much of his work, particularly the unorthodox composition of dancers in action by which he is most generally known. He was a prolific worker, a painter of genre, studio portraits and the nude, and produced innumerable studies and sketches in oils and pastels. His sure draftsmanship and delicate balance of colour place him amongst the great painters of his period. Throughout his life he modelled figures of dancers and horses but only one of which was exhibited in his lifetime. At his death about one hundred and fifty sculptures were found in his studio but only seventy were sufficiently intact to cast.

1

TROIS DANSEUSES A LA CLASSE DE DANSE

c 1890

oil on board 20 x 24½ ins unsigned

From the collections of George Vian and H de Vahl Rubin

See: Georges Riviere, *Mr. Degas, bourgeois de Paris*, 1935, page 27, reproduced in colour.

See: P A Lemoisne, *Degas et son oeuvre*, 1946, vol. III, no. 1308 (reproduced) where the medium is erroneously given as pastel, and the date as 1898.

See: Lilian Browse, *Degas dancers*, 1949, page 401, no. 199, reproduced in colour.

Exhibited: Vienna, *Art Français*, 189—.

Exhibited: Dresden, Exposition Centennale, 1902.

This is a famous and well-known painting and three variants of this composition exist, all with a fourth figure on the right: these are now in the Collections of J. L. Brown (Lemoisne 1294), Hermann Heilbuth (Lemoisne 1307) and H. O. Havemeyer (Lemoisne 1368).



TROIS DANSEUSES A LA CLASSE DE DANSE

DEGAS

Pablo PICASSO

b 1881

Born in Malaga, Spain. His father, Jose Ruiz Blasco (Picasso later took his mother's surname) head of an art school in Barcelona, encouraged him to draw so that at the age of eleven he had found his first style. In 1900 went to Paris where for several years he painted life of the cafe and street somewhat in the manner of Toulouse-Lautrec. Echoes of El Greco and Van Gogh appear in his Blue Period (1902-5), which was followed by the Rose Period (1905-6), with the pathetic circus characters and occasional classical compositions. During these years of Picasso's career there is a tendency toward stylization of drawing, arbitrary colour and experiment with sentimental content at times humanitarian, but more often purely lyrical.

In 1907 he turned to the violent distortions and aesthetic power of negro sculpture which the Fauves had also discovered. The famous *Demoiselles d'Avignon* belongs to this period and heralds the advent of cubism. In the following year he and Braque together invented the first phase of cubism, which stemmed partly from negro sculpture and more especially Cezanne, which has continued in varying degree throughout his career.

Since 1917 Picasso has permitted himself to return to "nature" and has accompanied his abstract paintings with a dozen different styles of a more "realistic" character.

In 1920 Picasso began his next important phase, the so-called Classical Period. In this there are clear echoes of ancient Greece and Rome. His 1931 illustrations for the "Metamorphoses of Ovid" are pure classicism and one of the greatest triumphs of book illustration in our day.

With the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936 Picasso took an active role in repudiation of German and Italian armed intervention. In 1937 he engraved *Dreams and life of Franco* and painted the famous *Guernica*, a Surrealist-Cubist projection of the horrors inflicted on this town by the fascist bombers. By 1938 Picasso had moved in an Expressionist direction with his double-faced heads. He spent World War II years in France and afterwards continued to paint in an abstract manner. Since 1945 has engaged in ceramics, graphic arts and sculpture. There is perhaps no style in modern art that Picasso has not tried, often more effectively than those who first developed it. But his works always bear his own personal stamp, the authority of a great and genuine creativeness and originality. He is the most original creative genius in our time.

2 LA BELLE HOLLANDAISE 1905

blue chalk, gouache and oil on board laid down on panel 30½ x 26½ ins
signed, inscribed and dated 'A mi querido amigo Paco Durio' Picasso 1905 Schoorl
From the collections of J K Thannhauser; Stang; J W Freshfield; Oliver Gollancz;
H de Vahl Rubin

See: Christian Zervcs, *Pablo Picasso*, vol. I, no. and plate 260, page 114 (full plate).

See: R H Wilenski, *Modern French painters*, 1940, page 200.

(continued over)



LA BELLE HOLLANDAISE

PICASSO

See: Alfred H Barr, Jr, *Picasso, fifty years of his art*, 1946, Museum of Modern Art Publication, page 37, reproduced: 'A trip to Holland in the summer of 1905 seems to have increased his interest in material weight and substance.'

See: Jack Bilbo, *Famous nudes by famous artists*, 1946, page 44, reproduced in colour.

See: Jacques Lassaigue, *Picasso*, Paris, 1949, plate 22.

See: Wilhelm Boeck and Jaime Sabartes, *Picasso*, 1955, page 459, no. 27 (reproduced) and page 489, no. 58.

See Roland Penrose, *Picasso, his life and work*, 1958, page 113.

The portrait was painted during a visit to Schoorlдам, Holland, in the summer of 1905, when Picasso visited the writer Schilpercort. Nothing is known of the identity of the model except that her name is allegedly Wilhelmintje. During his stay in Holland Picasso was amazed at the flatness of the landscape and the cplulent forms of the Dutch girls of whom he painted several paintings. Of these paintings *La belle hollandaise* is the most important. Painted in a limited palette of grey and pink it heralded the period of Picasso's work known as the Rose Period and was the forerunner of the later monumental nudes.

3 TETE D'HOMME 1909

watercolour 12½ x 9½ ins signed *Picasso* lower right

From the collections of Douglas Cooper and H de Vahl Rubin

See: Christian Zervos, *Pablo Picasso*, vol. II, pt. II, no. and plate 716, page 313.

Picasso was intrigued by African sculpture and the influence of simple blocked-out features of negro masks is apparent in his work of this period. The simple basic shapes created by the circle and the straight line are used with extraordinary aptitude and the vitality that radiates from negro art brought a new breadth of inspiration to Picasso.

4 FEMME AU PARASOL COUCHEE SUR LA PLAGES

pen and Indian ink, coloured wash and gouache 15½ x 19½ ins

signed *Picasso* and inscribed 'Cannes 13 juillet XXXIII'

From the collection of H de Vahl Rubin

This drawing will be reproduced in the second volume of M. Christian Zervos' Supplement to the Catalogue of Picasso, at present being prepared.

At Cannes Picasso began to draw fantastic reconstructions of the human form giving it monumental qualities. The bathers he saw on the beach were transformed into elephantine sculptural shapes and the anatomy of these women is extraordinarily droll. Their swollen forms have no real resemblance to anything in nature, but they are most convincingly organic and bear out Picasso's remark that: "Nature and art are two different things. Through art we express our conception of what nature is not."

The liberties that Picasso has taken with the human form disturb many people. As early as 1913 he had described the human form from more than one point of view at the same time, but now this idea is carried further. Nothing was too fantastic, but it remains extraordinary that this sign language is so powerful that we are able to discover in these vestiges of resemblance, in such complete and improbable distortion, a powerful and fascinating reconstruction of our own image.

TETE D'HOMME

PICASSO



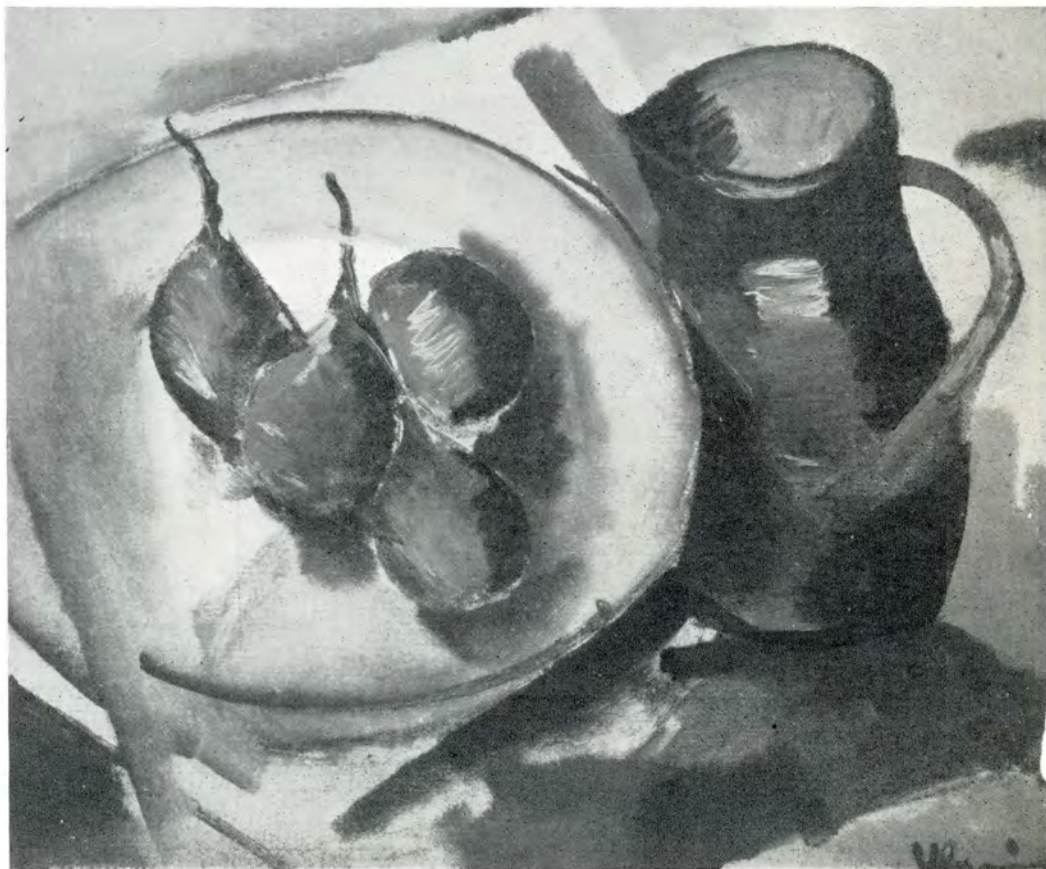
FEMME AU PARASOL
COUCHEE SUR LA PLAGES

PICASSO





COCO ET JEAN
RENOIR



NATURE MORTE
VLAMINCK

Auguste RENOIR

1841-1919

Born at Limoges. Began as a painter on porcelain. Studied at the Atelier Gleyre where he met Monet, Bazille and Sisley. Renoir was at first under the influence of Courbet, but following the example of Monet his work became more impressionistic. He joined in the famous exhibition of 1874 where Impressionism was born. In 1881 he went to Italy and there visited Venice and Rome, where he studied the frescoes of Raphael at the Villa Farnese. Thereafter under the influence of Raphael, Renoir adopted a smoother manner. Later abandoning this constraint and with a rediscovered unity of colour and line, volume and light, Renoir joined the line of artists who painted a kind of pagan and sensual celebration of the glory of woman.

5

COCO ET JEAN

oil on canvas 12½ x 16½ ins signed *Renoir* top right
From the collection of H de Vahl Rubin

Maurice de VLAMINCK

1876-1958

Born in Paris. His ancestors were Dutch seamen and his parents music teachers. Vlaminck was first of all a racing cyclist between Paris-Roubaix and Paris-Bordeaux. In 1900 he earned his living by playing the violin in the cafes-chantants of Montmartre. Self-taught, he only decided to earn his living from painting towards the age of 35. About 1900 Vlaminck and Derain, while working in the studio at Chatou, influenced Matisse, and the "Fauve" movement grew out of their common interests. Up to 1919 Vlaminck painted principally the banks of the Seine and the neighbouring heights, then in 1925 he retired to his estate at Rueil-la-Gadeliere near Verneuil-sur-Avre (Eure-et-Loire), where he divides his time between farming and painting the harsh and violent aspects of the countryside. In 1933 held a large retrospective exhibition at the Bernheim Gallery in Paris and at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. In 1950-51 held exhibitions at the Elysee and Modern Art Galleries.

3

NATURE MORTE

oil on canvas 12½ x 15½ ins signed *Vlaminck* lower right
From the collections of Gustave Coquirot and H de Vahl Rubin

Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC

1864-1901

Born at Albi, descendant of the Counts of Toulouse and the Viscounts of Lautrec. Began drawing at an early age. Two falls led to deformation of his legs and following the advice of the animal painter Rene Princeteau he began painting. In 1812 having received his family's permission he devoted himself entirely to painting. On coming to Paris he worked at first in the studio of Princeteau and later entered the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. There he met Emile Bernard, Anquetin and Van Gogh, who impressed him deeply. Toulouse-Lautrec belonged to no movements, abhorred artistic theories. He avoided old techniques and traditional recipes and gave a new vision of reality. While he admired Renoir and Monet he felt a closer affinity to Degas and Manet. For Lautrec only the human figure counted. He presented people with a kind of moral and psychological nakedness — dancers, singers, circus people and prostitutes were all depicted with pitiless drawing, and the few colours he employed were clear and applied boldly. Lautrec's work although of its time had a presentiment of the requirements of a new century at the dawn of which he died.



TETE DE FILLE

TOULOUSE-LAUTREC

7 TETE DE FILLE, 1894

oil on panel oval 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 ins unsigned

From the collections Pomaret and II de Vahl Rubin

See: Maurice Joycint, *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec*, 1926, pp. 158-162.

This is one of the sixteen panels painted for the decoration of a *maison close* in the Rue d'Amboise in 1894.

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