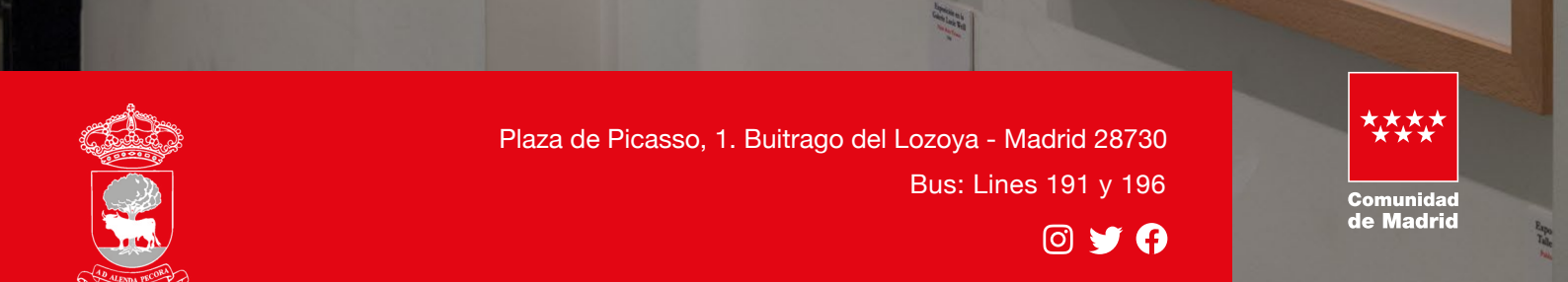


Museo Picasso

Colección Eugenio Arias

→ Buitrago del Lozoya

Museum view. Foto: Amador Toril. © Sucesión Picasso / VEGAP Madrid



Plaza de Picasso, 1. Buitrago del Lozoya - Madrid 28730

Bus: Lines 191 y 196



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A museum dedicated to art and friendship in the mountains of Madrid

“Nothing is more valuable in this world than that which cannot be bought: respect, friendship, trust and loyalty,” said Eugenio Arias, Picasso’s barber.

The Museo Picasso Colección Eugenio Arias, “the only museum dedicated to art and friendship”, was the first museum created and inaugurated by the Regional Government of Madrid, in 1985.

It houses the collection that Pablo Picasso gifted to Eugenio Arias when they both lived in France. Arias had always wanted his collection, which is unique due to its significance, to remain in Buitrago del Lozoya, his home town. Just as both of them dreamed that the mural painting *Guernica* would one day return to Spain, Arias felt that his duty was to see this collection remaining in Buitrago.

The artist and his barber met in 1945 in Toulouse, thanks to Dolores Ibarruri, the Spanish left-wing freedom fighter known as *La Pasionaria*, at a homage to the Spanish Republican supporters who had fought in the French underground movement against the Nazi invasion. Arias would always remember the strong impression Picasso’s eyes produced on him. Later on, Picasso settled in Vallauris, a small town in the south of France where Eugenio Arias also lived and rapidly became the artist’s barber (he is the

only person whom the incredibly superstitious Picasso allowed to cut his hair).

Initially, Picasso would go to Arias’s barber’s shop, but the recurring phrase “After you”, said by the other customers when they saw him, annoyed him because he did not want any special treatment, and he arranged to have the barber visit him in his own house to cut his hair. Arias then became his friend and confidant. For Picasso he represented the most genuine expression of Spain. And for Arias, Picasso was “my second father”, as he proudly used to say.

The two were united by their ethical and political ideas, their shared passions, their nostalgia and their love for Spain. And by respect and trust.

The friendship between Arias and Picasso would last until Picasso’s death. As Picasso was never able to see his wish to return to Spain fulfilled, Arias and Jacqueline, Picasso’s last wife, shrouded him with a black Spanish cape from the famous Capes Seseña shop in Madrid. Arias was the only presence at the wake of Picasso’s body in Mougins.

Picasso’s barber died at the age of 98 in Vallauris, on the 28th of April 2008, a week after the Regional Government of Madrid awarding him its Silver Medal.



Amphora 1963. Photo Andrés de Gabriel © Pablo Picasso - Sucesión Picasso / VEGAP Madrid

The museum. The collection

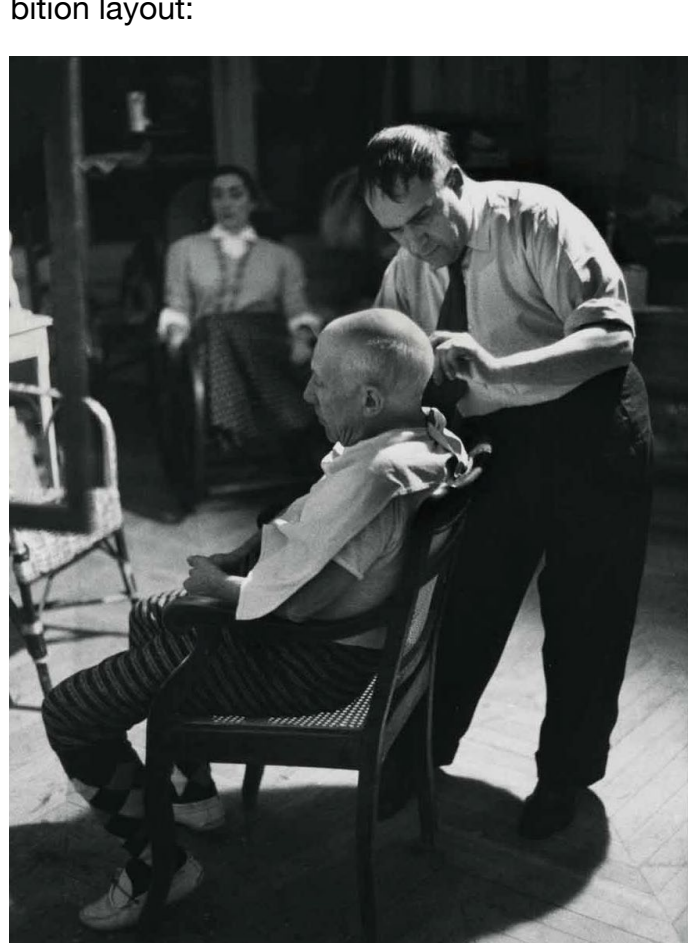
The significance of this museum transcends the purely artistic aspect because it allows us to discover two men who never lost touch with their roots: an intimate Picasso, but also a generous man, his barber.

Arias cut his hair and Picasso gave him works as gifts, as rewards for his disinterested relationship, gifts which the barber looked after with care and devotion. This gave rise to a collection made up of books with dedications by Picasso (*For my friend Arias*), graphic works, posters, ceramics and other works. The subject matter is varied, but there are key themes: a passion for bullfighting and *lo español* (things Spanish), their political ideas, their commitment to peace and freedom, references to Arias’s profession, and other Picassian subjects such as mythology, the animal kingdom and portraits.

There are several graphic testimonies to this friendship. The French photographer André Villers portrayed and documented the period in black and white: Picasso and Jacqueline strolling around Cannes with the barber or frequenting the bullrings in Arles and Nîmes. Arias was not only liked by Jacqueline but by many other members of Picasso’s intimate circle of friends and collaborators, such as Jean Cocteau. The museum owns some of these photographs, along with others by the great American photographer and war correspondent David Douglas Duncan, who immortalised Picasso in his bath

at the artist’s home in Cannes (*La Californie*) and was a witness to Picasso’s most intimate and personal life.

The Regional Government of Madrid carried out a complete overhaul of the museum design in 2008, during which it created the current exhibition layout:

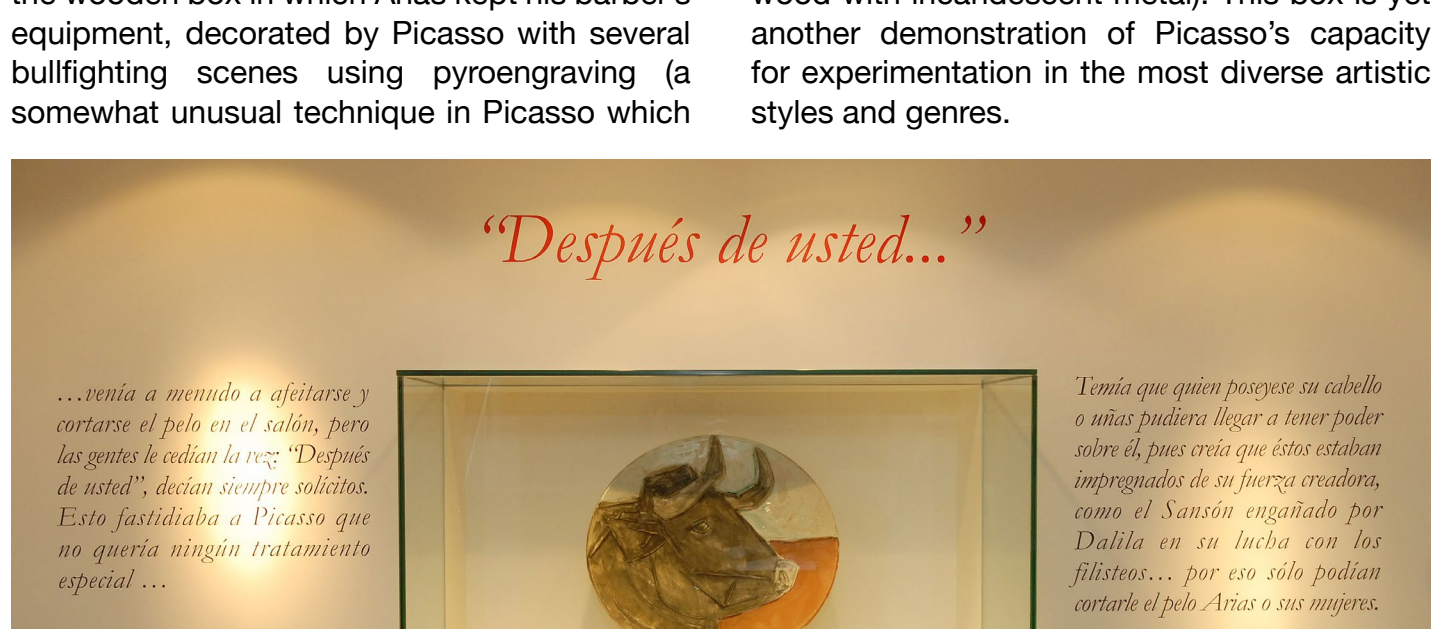


Arias cutting Picasso’s hair, 1957. Photo: David Douglas Duncan © Sucesión Picasso / VEGAP Madrid

Reception Area

This highlights one of the museum’s treasures: the wooden box in which Arias kept his barber’s equipment, decorated by Picasso with several bullfighting scenes using pyroengraving (a somewhat unusual technique in Picasso which

consists in engraving on the surface of the wood with incandescent metal). This box is yet another demonstration of Picasso’s capacity for experimentation in the most diverse artistic styles and genres.

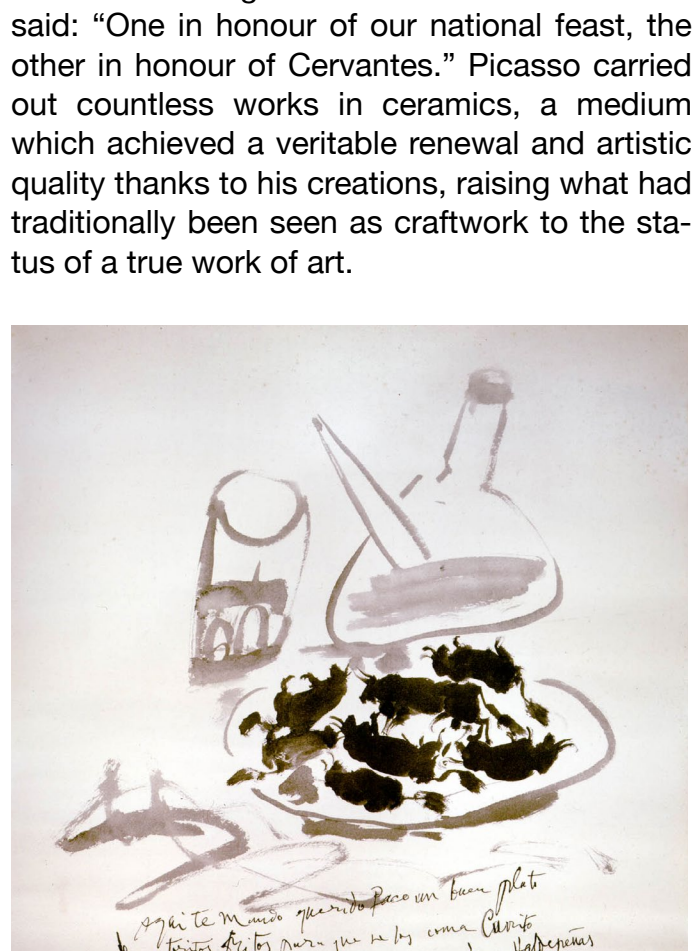


Dish with bull’s head and pyro-engraved box, 1956 y 1960. Photo Andrés de Gabriel © Pablo Picasso - Sucesión Picasso / VEGAP Madrid

Para mi amigo Arias

This area features the most personal works related to the profession of a barber, such as the ceramic bowls decorated with scenes of bulls and passages from *don Quixote*. Picasso and Arias shared a concept of their home country and culture in which the idealism of don Quixote and the ancestral myth of bullfighting are two sides of the same coin: Spain.

When Picasso gave these bowls to Arias he said: “One in honour of our national feast, the other in honour of Cervantes.” Picasso carried out countless works in ceramics, a medium which achieved a veritable renewal and artistic quality thanks to his creations, raising what had traditionally been seen as craftwork to the status of a true work of art.



Watercolour sketch Little Fried Bulls. Pablo Picasso, 1957. © Pablo Picasso - Sucesión Picasso / VEGAP Madrid

Doves and prisoners

This section is dedicated to the ideals they both shared: the struggle for peace and justice. One exhibit is *La española* [The Spanish Woman], a lithograph with the portrait of Nicolasa, Arias’s mother, made by Picasso to coincide with the petition for amnesty for the Spaniards imprisoned for their opposition to the Franco regime. In Arias’s mother, a shepherdess from Robedillo de la Jara, Picasso saw a clear exponent of Castilian austerity, with strong moral convictions.

Also of note is the engraving *Prisoner with the dove of peace*, a recurrent motif in Picasso, who felt it his duty to fight for it. Picasso’s identification with the peace movement, and with the dove of peace, is evident in other posters and works held by this museum.

Passion for bullfighting

The world of bullfighting is expressed in a variety of media and techniques: a tile with scenes of bullfighter’s barbs in dark strokes, drawings of bullfighters, plates with scenes from bullfights, plates with bulls’ heads... Of note is a water-colour sketch entitled *Torritos* [Little Fried Bulls], which is a humorous view of folk culture and Spanish cuisine, demonstrating the tight complicity Picasso felt with his compatriots exiled in France, such as Paco Muñoz, a bullfighting impresario who lived in Arles and with whom he quickly began to organise bullfights in improvised bullrings. These bullfights served as the pretext for popular feasts that ended in a great ball in which Picasso regularly acted as the chair and master of ceremonies.

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Friday: From 11 am to 1.45 pm and from 4 pm to 6 pm

Saturday: From 10 am to 2 pm and from 4 pm to 7 pm

Sunday and local holidays: From 10 am to 2 pm

Closed: Mondays, 1 and 6 January, Easter Sunday, 24, 25 and 31 December, and one local holiday.

Opening hours may change due to special activities taking place.

INFORMATION AND BOOKINGS

museopicasso@buitrago.org

www.comunidad.madrid/cultura

T: 918 68 00 56 (extensión 4) - 674 38 12 75



→ FREE ADMISSION/ ACCESIBLE MUSEUM

GROUPS

Group visits must be booked in advance by telephone or email, sending the following information: name and surname of the group leader, telephone, number of visitors, date and hour.

HOW TO GET THE MUSEUM

Bus: Lines 191 and 196 (departs from the station at Plaza de Castilla).

Photographs and video are allowed with mobile devices (no flash and tripods) for personal use only

