

Around

**INTERNATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM**

Picasso





Pablo Picasso *Man with fruit bowl*

Barcelona, June-November 1917, Oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm

Museu Picasso, Barcelona, Gift of Pablo Picasso, 1970

MPB 110.006, Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Photograph, Gasull Fotografia

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Around

An insight into the
relationship between material choices
and failure mechanisms

Picasso

The international symposium «Around Picasso: an insight into the relationship between material choices and failure mechanisms», which will be held on Thursday 29th November in the Museu Picasso de Barcelona, was born with the spirit of being a multi-disciplinary forum. As a monographic museum devoted to Pablo Picasso it is our responsibility to build bridges that connect rigorous research and dissemination of the artist's work.

Transgression and tradition are two constants in the creative process of Picasso. The need to know and prevent the deterioration of the materials is the great challenge we face in the 21st century. Since his production –with the exception of his early works still subject to the academic canvas– characterizes by the use of different materials which interact with each other generations complex, dynamic structure, in perpetual change.

The level of precision provided by current technology allows to study Picasso's work with a scientific vision and to better understand the techniques of his paintings, as well as the behaviour of materials over time.

The symposium «Around Picasso: an insight into the relationship between material choices and failure mechanisms», organized jointly by the Universitat Politècnica de València (UPV) and the Museu Picasso de Barcelona, presents the first conclusions of the R&D project ProMeSA.¹

The development of this ambitious project has also been possible thanks to the involvement of specialists from different museums, universities and research institutions, who, with their generous complicity, share today, in our museum, their most recent scientific studies. We would also like to thank Marion F. Mecklenburg, Michal Łukomski and Emanuela Bosco who are with us in this international event to share their knowledge.

This symposium is an excellent opportunity to exchange knowledge and a unique occasion to share the latest research in conservation and restoration, as well as to make progress in the study of mechanical changes in paintings.

· Emmanuel Guigon, *director of the Museu Picasso, Barcelona*

· Reyes Jiménez Garnica, *Head of the Restoration and Preventive Conservation, Museu Picasso, Barcelona*

¹ R&D ProMeSA: Study of the mechanical and dimensional properties of commercially manufactured paint films. Influence in the physical and chemical degradation of modern and contemporary paintings. (HAR2016-75131-P).



8.30 – 9.00

Registration

9.00 – 9.15

Institutional Welcome

- Emmanuel Guigon, *Director of the Museu Picasso, Barcelona*
- Reyes Jiménez Garnica, *Head of the Restoration and Preventive Conservation, Museu Picasso, Barcelona*

9.15 – 9.30

Presentation of ProMeSA Project

- Laura Fuster López, *Instituto Universitario de Restauración del Patrimonio, Universitat Politècnica de València.*

Presentation of ProMeSA Project - Study of the mechanical and dimensional properties of commercially manufactured paint films. Influence in the physical and chemical degradation of modern and contemporary paintings. (HAR2016-75131-P).

9.30 – 10.00

Methods, materials and the durability of paintings.

- Marion F. Mecklenburg, *Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C*

10.00 – 10.30

Micromechanics of historic and modern paints.

- Michal Lukomski, *Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, CA*

10.30 – 11.00

Predicting metal soap formation and mechanical damage in historical oil paintings: a multi-physics chemo-mechanical model.

- Emanuela Bosco, Gijs J.A.M. Eumelen and Akke S.J. Suiker, *Department of the Built Environment, Eindhoven University of Technology – Eindhoven*

11.00 – 11.40

Coffee Break

Case Studies

11.40 – 12.00

Case study 1.

Failure mechanisms in four of Picasso's works of 1917.

- Cecil K. Andersen, *School of Conservation, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation, Copenhagen.*
- Anna Vila, *Centres Científics i Tecnològics (CCiTUB), Universitat de Barcelona.*

Four paintings painted by Picasso in Barcelona in 1917 show similarities in their canvas, paints, palette and execution technique. However, structural changes and slight differences observed on the material's chemical composition might help understand the synergy between the failure mechanisms which determine the considerably different conditions that each work present today.

12.00 – 12.20

Case study 2.

The Three Dancers, 1925 by Picasso: seeing through the layers and conservation measures to stabilize the painting for loan and display.

- Annette King, *Tate Gallery, London*
- Joyce H. Townsend, *Tate Gallery, London*

The Three Dancers is a multi-layered oil painting, possibly painted and repainted by Picasso three times over two years. It is always in demand for exhibition internationally and this presentation will talk about the painting's history and the need to create a balance between ensuring that it is robust enough for display and loan and safeguarding its fragile authenticity.

12.20 – 12.40

Case study 3.

New insights into Pablo Picasso's *La Miséreuse accroupie* (Barcelona, 1902) using *in-situ* infrared reflectance and x-ray fluorescence imaging spectroscopy combined with micro-analyses of samples.

- Emeline Pouyet, *Center for Scientific Studies in the Arts at the University of Northwestern, Chicago*
- Kenneth Brummel, *Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*
- Sandra Webster-Cook, *Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*
- Catherine Dejoie, *Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*
- John Delaney, *National Gallery of Art Washington*
- Marc Walton, *Northwestern University / Art Institute of Chicago*

Faced with the evidence of underlying structures in *La Miséreuse accroupie* (1902) a technical study was carried out so as to understand the creative process. Using a methodology based on macroscopic 2D data, with infrared reflectance and macro-X-ray fluorescence imaging spectroscopy, the presence of a previous composition was confirmed, a landscape possibly the work of an artist from Barcelona at the turn of the century. The study also revealed an additional stratum between the hidden landscape and the final work: an earlier version of the woman painted by Picasso.

This study is an example of the high level of integration of the research in conservation. The involvement of two different groups of scientific experts, leads the interdisciplinary research beyond the limits of a single discipline or institution. This study greatly improves our knowledge of Picasso's Blue Period paintings, by the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO), and its relationship with other paintings and drawings from that same period, turning to a global network of experts.

12.40 – 13.00

Case study 4.

Femme et enfant au bord de la mer, Barcelona 1902.

- Keiko Imai, *Pola Museum of Art, Hakone, Japan*
- John Delaney, *National Gallery of Art Washington*
- Sandra Webster-Cook, *Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto*
- Reyes Jiménez Garnica, *Museu Picasso, Barcelona*

The spectroscopy of hyperspectral infrared reflectance imaging from the Pola Museum, *Femme et enfant au bord de la mer* (1902), revealed two important findings. The first is the identification of a text from the newspaper *Le Journal* of January 18, 1902 and not visible on the surface of the painting. The second finding are the new compositional characteristics that are related to the painting of a seated woman with a glass of absinthe, already known thanks to the radiographic image. Hyperspectral image processing show new details such as information about the woman's face, hair and shoulders. These recently discovered findings provide additional information about the place where the previous composition was painted and also on the final painting, and have allowed this work to be connected with two other works from the same period; one of them is *Jaume Sabartés con quevedos* belonging to the collection of the Museu Picasso de Barcelona.

13.00 – 13.20

Case study 5.

Scenes from the life of Picasso's *Still Life* (1922): history, materials, and conservation.

- Allison Langley, Kimberley Muir and Ken Sutherland, *The Art Institute of Chicago*

The Art Institute of Chicago presents unpublished research on Picasso's painting materials and techniques. To better understand the creation of the work *Still Life*, the painting was examined using a range of technical images that include X-rays, IRR and transmitted light. The material analysis was carried out using XRF, FTIR, SEM / EDX and GC-MS. Although obscured by the upper layers of paint, the contours of a more classical still life, oriented perpendicularly to the final horizontal format, remain partially visible on the back of the canvas. Picasso applied a thin white background over the previous composition before beginning the still life. The receipts from the 1920s indicate that Picasso bought paintings from the supplier Ripolin during this period, as well as siccative from Harlem; a resinous material. The research on the Ripolin painting of the Art Institute indicates that Picasso did not use this brand of paint here and that the applications of fluid painting were probably achieved by modifying the tube oil paint by adding solvent.

13.30 – 15.00

Lunch

15.00 – 15.20

Case study 6.

The Revelation of What Lies Beneath: The Link Between Picasso's *Rue de Montmartre* (1900) and *Le Moulin de la Galette* (1900).

· Will Shank, *Independent Conservator and Curator*

In this research, the technical examination of *Rue de Montmartre*, (Paris, autumn 1900), allowed an underlying composition to be found. The author, in collaboration with other conservators and digital technicians, was able to recreate the hidden image in an approach to the original palette of Picasso and taking other references such as *Le Moulin de la Galette*, which allowed the image in colour to be recreated.

15.20 – 15.40

Case study 7.

Picasso's *Acrobat Family* (1905) in focus: an investigation of materials and techniques of an iconic work in the collection of the Gothenburg Museum of Art.

- Mariateresa Pullano, *Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Göteborg*
- David Buti, *Centre for Arte Technological Studies and Conservation, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen*
- Eleonora Papa, *Moderna Museet, Stockholm*
- Eva Nygårds, *Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Göteborg*
- Loa Ludvigsen, *Centre for Art Technological Studies and Conservation, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen*
- Jørgen Wadum, *Centre for Art Technological Studies and Conservation, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen*
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This is one of the iconic works of the Gothenburg Museum of Art, and, due to the fragility and sensitivity to light of its materials, the museum has always been restrictive in terms of its loan.

The materials used for this work are described in the catalogues as a mixture of gouache, pastel, watercolour and Indian ink.

However, this information is often contradictory and inaccurate.

The scientific research carried out allowed some of the uncertainties about the technique used by Picasso to be revealed, as well as to shed light on its state of conservation.

The spectroscopic analysis documented the use of different techniques, possibly based on water in the layers of matte and oil-based paint, in the brightest ones. Both visual and spectroscopic analyses ruled out the use of pastels or other dry and powdery graphic techniques. From the pigment point of view, interesting results have been achieved in the discoloured blue area where ultramarine appears to be the main colouring material.

Finally, the examinations revealed a hitherto unknown Picasso drawing on the back of the cardboard.

15.40 – 16.00

Case study 8.

**A Picasso paper collage of 1913–14:
assessment of fragility and sensitivity to light.**

- Charity Fox, Conservation Department, *Tate Britain, London*
- Joyce H. Townsend, Conservation Department, *Tate Britain, London*
- Betty Sacher, Conservation Department, *Tate Britain, London*

When in 1961 the Tate Britain acquired *Bottle of Vieux Marc, glass, guitar and newspaper* (Ceret, 1913), slight modifications were observed with respect to the previous black and white photographs. To gain a deeper understanding of the materiality of the work and the work processes of Picasso, a research project has been set in motion based on models and using historical materials that will provide a deeper understanding both of the materials used in the work as well as the creative process of Picasso.

The better understanding of the mechanisms of collage deterioration will allow its future visualization protocol to be determined and it will be incorporated into the lighting policy for the Tate's works of paper, currently under review.

16.00 – 16.20

Case study 9.

**Pablo Picasso in La Coruña:
painting technique and links to 19th century procedures.
*The Portrait of a Bearded Man (1895).***

- Clara Bondía, Lorenzo Hortal, Adelina Illán and Rafael Romero, *Icono I&R, Madrid*

The period of La Coruña, from 1891 to 1895, was a crucial moment in the early artistic formation of the young Picasso. The painting *The Portrait of a Bearded Man* (1895) reveals the debt with the specific materials, processes and pictorial devices of the 19th century. The recent analyses of this painting allow us to explore the “prehistory” of Picasso's formative process, and help us understand the keys to his early instructions.

16.20 – 16.50

Coffee break

16.50 – 17.10

Case study 10.

From the movement of works to the movement of materials.

· Claire Guérin, *Painting conservator*

Given the growing number of temporary exhibitions dedicated to Picasso, the specifications of the transport crate have become crucial. Nowadays, the features of the crates allow the thermo-hygrometric changes, the absorption of vibrations and the resistance to shocks to be controlled, in order to preserve as much as possible the works painted on different supports during transport. However, it is still very difficult to assess the real state of the works at the time of transport. In fact, the fatigue of the materials that causes the breakage of the pictorial layer is still different to appreciate at a glance.

In this context, the importance of the courier qualification is essential because in order to ensure its correct handling, it is necessary to have knowledge of the work: the risks related to the materials used, its state of preservation, the history of loans and the specifications of the transport crate.

17.10 – 17.30

Case study 11.

A study on the impact of cleaning processes by swab rolling and combination of a Liquid-Dispensing and Micro-Aspiration Device for the Sensitive Painted Surfaces as Picasso's.

· Pierre Antoine Héritier, *Atelier Héritier Sàrl, Genève*

Observation of Picasso's works allows us to find surfaces that have never been cleaned, where the velvety and complex appearance remains intact, especially when the artist uses Ripolin paint and oil paint, on supports that are sometimes absorbent or unusual.

These surfaces should be kept as integral as possible, avoiding unnecessary or traumatic varnish removal.

The proposal offers the chance to study the real impact of cleaning using the cotton roller method compared to the technique that combines liquid dispensing with a micro-aspiration device.

17.30 – 17.50

Case study 12.

Stratums as Representation:

Picasso's Interest in the Painting Layers from 1907 to the 1920s.

· Chikako Takaoka, *Ohara Museum of Art*

At the beginning of the 1920s, Picasso painted *Études*, a work where styles such as cubism and classicism coexist and in which some images are arranged like a collage. In 1984, the X-ray analysis carried out by the Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France discovered that *Études* concealed a completely different image: a copy of the engraving, *The Resurrection of Lazarus* by Rembrandt van Rijn; Picasso built the surface image by drawing some lines of the lower image.

Picasso was interested in the material and stratified structure, often using the underlying stratum as part of the final work and emphasising some tactile properties such as *grattage* (scratched or scraped).

The presentation analyses Picasso's interest in the strata, focusing on his paintings from 1907 to the early 1920s and considering his desire to make visible the invisible in the historical context of art and science in the period from the late 19th century until the beginning of the 20th century.

17.50 – 18.10

Case study 13.

A new insight into *Ciencia y Caridad* (1897).

· Reyes Jiménez Garnica, *Museu Picasso, Barcelona*

From the moment that *Ciencia y Caridad* left Picasso's studio in 1897, the work has repeatedly been exposed to extreme mechanical stress: the fabric was removed from the frame and rolled up on several occasions, in addition to it being exhibited in adverse conditions of conservation. In 1970, it was subjected to the humidity, temperature and pressure characteristic of the traditional re-coating process, prior gluing the pictorial layer. These dramatical changes, combined with a complex pictorial technique due to the accumulation of successive layers of paint, caused the loss of cohesion between the pictorial strata and the consequent degradation of the work.

The recent scientific study has revealed unknown aspects of internal structure and has been the definitive documentation for undertaking the recent restoration.

18.10 – 18.30

Closing

Access:

Museu Picasso, Barcelona

Lecture Hall

Pl. Jaume Sabartés, 1

08003 Barcelona

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Admission

· For security reasons accreditation badges must be worn visibly during the Symposium.

Simultaneous translation:

· Simultaneous translation will be provided in all the sessions: Catalan, Spanish and English.

Reminder: Card or Passport must be handed in to receive a simultaneous translation device.

Other questions

· Access to the sessions and spaces of the symposium: the registrations to each of the events are limited.

· No drinks or food allowed in the lecture hall.

· The enrolment for the symposium includes one admission ticket to visit the Museu Picasso from Tuesday 27th November to Sunday 2nd December 2018, by presenting your registration in the preferential ticket office of carrer Montcada, 23.

How to get there**Bus**

- V15 / V17 / 45 / 120 Via Laietana
- 39 / 51 / H14 Passeig de Picasso
- 51 / 59 / 120 / D20 / V13 Pla de Palau

Underground

- L4 Jaume I
- L1 Arc de Triomf

Car

- The Museu Picasso does not have its own parking.
- The nearest car parks are located on Passeig del Born, Avinguda de la Catedral, Avinguda de Francesc Cambó and Via Laietana.

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