Pablo Picasso

Art
Picasso’s work is often categorized into periods. While the names of many of his later periods are debated, the most commonly accepted periods in his work are the Blue Period (1901–1904), the Rose Period (1905–1907), the African-influenced Period (1908–1909), Analytic Cubism (1909–1912), and Synthetic Cubism (1912–1919).

In 1939–40 the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, under its director Alfred Barr, a Picasso enthusiast, held a major and highly successful retrospective of his principal works up until that time. This exhibition lionized the artist, brought into full public view in America the scope of his artistry, and resulted in a reinterpretation of his work by contemporary art historians and scholars.

Before 1901
Picasso’s training under his father began before 1890. His progress can be traced in the collection of early works now held by the Museu Picasso in Barcelona, which provides one of the most comprehensive records extant of any major artist’s beginnings. During 1893 the juvenile quality of his earliest work falls away, and by 1894 his career as a painter can be said to have begun. The academic realism apparent in the works of the mid-1890s is well displayed in The First Communion (1896), a large composition that depicts his sister, Lola. In the same year, at the age of 14, he painted Portrait of Aunt Pepa, a vigorous and dramatic portrait that Juan-Eduardo Cirlot has called “without a doubt one of the greatest in the whole history of Spanish painting.”

In 1897 his realism became tinged with Symbolist influence, in a series of landscape paintings rendered in non naturalistic violet and green tones. What some call his Modernist period (1899–1900) followed. His exposure to the work of Rossetti, Steinlen, Toulouse-Lautrec and Edvard Munch, combined with his admiration for favorite old
masters such as El Greco, led Picasso to a personal version of modernism in his works of this period.

**Blue Period**

Picasso’s Blue Period (1901–1904) consists of somber paintings rendered in shades of blue and blue-green, only occasionally warmed by other colors. This period's starting point is uncertain; it may have begun in Spain in the spring of 1901, or in Paris in the second half of the year. Many paintings of gaunt mothers with children date from this period. In his austere use of color and sometimes doleful subject matter—prostitutes and beggars are frequent subjects—Picasso was influenced by a trip through Spain and by the suicide of his friend Carlos Casagemas. Starting in autumn of 1901 he painted several posthumous portraits of Casagemas, culminating in the gloomy allegorical painting *La Vie* (1903), now in the Cleveland Museum of Art.

The same mood pervades the well-known etching *The Frugal Repast* (1904), which depicts a blind man and a sighted woman, both emaciated, seated at a nearly bare table. Blindness is a recurrent theme in Picasso’s works of this period, also represented in *The Blindman’s Meal* (1903), and in the portrait of *Celestina* (1903). Other works include *Portrait of Soler* and *Portrait of Suzanne Bloch*.

**Rose Period**

The Rose Period (1904–1906) is characterized by a more cheery style with orange and pink colors, and featuring many circus people, acrobats and harlequins known in France as saltimbanques. The harlequin, a comedic character usually depicted in checkered patterned clothing, became a personal symbol for Picasso. Picasso met Fernande Olivier, a model for sculptors and artists, in Paris in 1904, and many of these paintings are influenced by his warm relationship with her, in addition to his increased exposure to French painting. The generally upbeat and optimistic mood of paintings in
this period is reminiscent of the 1899–1901 period (i.e. just prior to the Blue Period) and 1904 can be considered a transition year between the two periods.

**African-influenced Period**

Picasso’s African-influenced Period (1907–1909) begins with the two figures on the right in his painting, Les Demoiselles d’Avignon, which were inspired by African artifacts. Formal ideas developed during this period lead directly into the Cubist period that follows.

**Cubism**

Analytic cubism (1909–1912) is a style of painting Picasso developed along with Georges Braque using monochrome brownish and neutral colours. Both artists took apart objects and “analyzed” them in terms of their shapes. Picasso and Braque’s paintings at this time have many similarities. Synthetic cubism (1912–1919) was a further development of the genre, in which cut paper fragments—often wallpaper or portions of newspaper pages—were pasted into compositions, marking the first use of collage in fine art.

**Classicism and Surrealism**

In the period following the upheaval of World War I, Picasso produced work in a neoclassical style. This “return to order” is evident in the work of many European artists in the 1920s, including André Derain, Giorgio de Chirico, and the artists of the New Objectivity movement. Picasso’s paintings and drawings from this period frequently recall the work of Ingres.

During the 1930s, the minotaur replaced the harlequin as a common motif in his work. His use of the minotaur came partly from his contact with the surrealists, who often used it
as their symbol, and it appears in Picasso's Guernica.

Arguably Picasso's most famous work is his depiction of the German bombing of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War — Guernica. This large canvas embodies for many the inhumanity, brutality and hopelessness of war. Asked to explain its symbolism, Picasso said, "It isn't up to the painter to define the symbols. Otherwise it would be better if he wrote them out in so many words! The public who look at the picture must interpret the symbols as they understand them."

Guernica hung in New York's Museum of Modern Art for many years. In 1981 Guernica was returned to Spain and exhibited at the Casón del Buen Retiro. In 1992 the painting hung in Madrid's Reina Sofía Museum when it opened.
Later works

Picasso was one of 250 sculptors who exhibited in the 3rd Sculpture International held at the Philadelphia Museum of Art in the summer of 1949. In the 1950s, Picasso’s style changed once again, as he took to producing reinterpretations of the art of the great masters. He made a series of works based on Velazquez’s painting of Las Meninas. He also based paintings on works by Goya, Poussin, Manet, Courbet and Delacroix.

He was commissioned to make a maquette for a huge 50-foot (15 m)-high public sculpture to be built in Chicago, known usually as the Chicago Picasso. He approached the project with a great deal of enthusiasm, designing a sculpture which was ambiguous and somewhat controversial. What the figure represents is not known; it could be a bird, a horse, a woman or a totally abstract shape. The sculpture, one of the most recognizable landmarks in downtown Chicago, was unveiled in 1967. Picasso refused to be paid $100,000 for it, donating it to the people of the city.

Picasso’s final works were a mixture of styles, his means of expression in constant flux until the end of his life. Devoting his full energies to his work, Picasso became more daring, his works more colourful and expressive, and from 1968 through 1971 he produced a torrent of paintings and hundreds of copperplate etchings. At the time these works were dismissed by most as pornographic fantasies of an impotent old man or the slapdash works of an artist who was past his prime. Only later, after Picasso’s death, when the rest of the art world had moved on from abstract expressionism, did the critical community come to see that Picasso had already discovered neo-expressionism and was, as so often before, ahead of his time.
Early Life
Picasso was baptized Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Clito, a series of names honouring various saints and relatives. Added to these were Ruiz and Picasso, for his father and mother, respectively, as per Spanish custom. Born in the city of Málaga in the Andalusian region of Spain, he was the first child of Don José Ruiz y Blasco (1838–1913) and María Picasso y López. Picasso’s family was middle-class; his father was also a painter who specialized in naturalistic depictions of birds and other game. For most of his life Ruiz was a professor of art at the School of Crafts and a curator of a local museum. Ruiz’s ancestors were minor aristocrats.

The young Picasso showed a passion and a skill for drawing from an early age; according to his mother, his first words were “piz, piz”, a shortening of lápiz, the Spanish word for ‘pencil’. From the age of seven, Picasso received formal artistic training from his father in figure drawing and oil painting. Ruiz was a traditional, academic artist and instructor who believed that proper training required disciplined copying of the masters, and drawing the human body from plaster casts and live models. His son became preoccupied with art to the detriment of his classwork.

The family moved to La Coruña in 1891 so his father could become a professor at the School of Fine Arts. They stayed almost four years. On one occasion the father found his son painting over his unfinished sketch of a pigeon. Observing the precision of his son’s technique, Ruiz felt that the thirteen-year-old Picasso had surpassed him, and vowed to give up painting.

In 1895, Picasso’s seven-year old sister, Conchita, died of diphtheria - a traumatic event in his life. After her death, the family moved to Barcelona, with Ruiz transferring to its School of Fine Arts. Picasso thrived in the city, regarding it in times of sadness or nostalgia as his true home. Ruiz persuaded the officials at the academy to allow his son to take an entrance exam for the advanced class. This process often took students a month, but Picasso completed it in a week, and the impressed jury admitted Picasso, who was still 13. The student lacked discipline but made friendships that would affect him in later life. His father rented him a small room close to home so Picasso could work alone, yet Ruiz checked up on him numerous times a day, judging his son’s drawings. The two argued frequently.
Picasso’s father and uncle decided to send the young artist to Madrid’s Royal Academy of San Fernando, the foremost art school in the country. In 1897, Picasso, age 16, set off for the first time on his own. Yet his difficulties accepting formal instruction led him to stop attending class soon after enrollment. Madrid, however, held many other attractions: the Prado housed paintings by the venerable Diego Velázquez, Francisco Goya, and Francisco Zurbarán. Picasso especially admired the works of El Greco; their elements, like elongated limbs, arresting colors, and mystical visages, are echoed in Picasso’s œuvre.

**Picasso Museums**
At the time of his death many of his paintings were in his possession, as he had kept off the art market what he didn’t need to sell. In addition, Picasso had a considerable collection of the work of other famous artists, some his contemporaries, such as Henri Matisse, with whom he had exchanged works. Since Picasso left no will, his death duties (estate tax) to the French state were paid in the form of his works and others from his collection. These works form the core of the immense and representative collection of the Musée Picasso in Paris. In 2003, relatives of Picasso inaugurated a museum dedicated to him in his birthplace, Málaga, Spain, the Museo Picasso Málaga.

The Museu Picasso in Barcelona features many of Picasso’s early works, created while he was living in Spain, including many rarely seen works which reveal Picasso’s firm grounding in classical techniques. The museum also holds many precise and detailed figure studies done in his youth under his father’s tutelage, as well as the extensive collection of Jaime Sabartés, Picasso’s close friend from his Barcelona days who, for many years, was Picasso’s personal secretary.

*Source: [www.Wikipedia.com](http://www.Wikipedia.com)*