



Picasso After Italy

A new exhibit marks a century since Pablo Picasso's momentous trip to Italy. **Tiffany Parks** takes a look.

Rome's exhibition season starts with a bang this year, as a big new show dedicated to **Pablo Picasso** opens at the Scuderie del Quirinale on the 21st of the month. The exhibit, *Picasso: From Cubism to Neoclassicism*, follows Picasso's visit to Italy in 1917 in the company of Jean Cocteau and Igor Stravinsky, during which the artist would meet and fall in love with his first wife, dancer Olga Kochlova. The exhibit examines Picasso's artistic output in the years following this transformative trip, with more than 100 of his works—spanning the following decade—which document the long-term impact of this journey on his artistic formation. From the ancient marble sculptures at the National Archeological Museum in Naples to Michelangelo's Medici Chapel in Florence, from the erotic wall frescoes of Pompeii to the Raphael Rooms in the Vatican, Italy's artistic patrimony seeped into Picasso's consciousness, influencing his art more than almost any other single experience. During his

brief 10 weeks in Rome, Picasso also came into contact with the Italian Futurist painters of the time, resulting in a lasting impact on his vision and style.

In addition to the works on display at the Scuderie, Picasso's masterpiece *Parade*, is showcased in the spectacular Grand Salon of Rome's National Gallery of Ancient Art at Palazzo Barberini for the duration of the exhibit. This astounding 17x10 meter work was painted directly onto a theater curtain on occasion of Picasso's set and costume design work for the eponymous ballet by Erik Satie.

The works on loan come from more than 50 public and private collections from around the world, from the United States to Japan, including the Centre Pompidou in Paris, Berlin's Museum Berggruen, the Fundació Museu Picasso in Barcelona, New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art, and Rome's own National Gallery of Modern Art.