

ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

The reception of Pablo Picasso's work in postwar Germany was determined by two periods: The Nazi era, and the Cold War.

The Nazis put a brusque end to any engagement with Picasso's art; after 1945, modernist art underwent a tedious review. But the Cold War forced Capitalist and Socialist Germany to arrive at their own individual interpretations. In the West, Picasso was lauded for his formal diversity and his productivity. The East, by contrast, celebrated his commitment, because from 1944 on Picasso was a member of the French Communist Party.

The question of how to assess the Nazi period also met with different responses. Had the Nazis usurped art? Meaning that art now has to be exempted from political aspirations? That was the conclusion in the West. Or should art now be all the more involved in the political struggle? That was the thinking in the East, and also how Picasso thought.

On this tour through all that Picasso encountered in the West and East, we constantly meet up with this contrast. There is no lack of surprises, either: Picasso was also banned in the West. And although his work was hardly ever seen in the GDR, the debate about him was livelier there than in the FRG. Apart from which, the state borders were frequently traveled across—which is also part of the history of Museum Ludwig.

THE HOUSE

CHARNEL

Picasso created his painting *The Charnel House* around 1945, thus addressing the crimes of the SS and the Wehrmacht at a remarkably early date. One source for the work may have been an article in the newspaper *L'Humanité* from Christmas 1944. It reported on the atrocities in the by then liberated Natzweiler-Struthof concentration camp, and showed a photograph of the culprits beside a mass grave containing executed partisans. Picasso donated the painting, which was exhibited at the 1946 *Art and Resistance* exhibition in Paris, to the Association of Résistance Fighters, who sold it in 1954. Today it belongs to the Museum of Modern Art in New York. While *The Charnel House* was sacralized in the FRG as a "requiem," but scarcely otherwise noticed, it was interpreted politically in the GDR as a representation of fascist terror.

□ Wilhelm Boeck. *Picasso*. Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1955.

Ultimately the memory of *Guernica* is kept alive when faced with *The Charnel House*, which was painted in 1944 in the shadowy colors of the older painting, and was meant as a harrowing—more realistic than symbolic—requiem for the silent victims of a degenerate violence.

□ Erhard Frommhold, ed. *Kunst im Widerstand* (Art in Resistance). Dresden: Verlag der Kunst, and Frankfurt am Main: Röderberg Verlag, 1968.

That is why Picasso's painting *The Charnel House*, which he created at the end of the war when he became aware of the atrocities of the concentration camps, depicts simply the situation. As he created *Guernica*, fascism was a system that could still be described, whose negation could be captured in a symbol, but it revealed itself in full in the ghettos and concentration camps, and with that was beyond description. The painting shows horror without hope; bound, mutilated people, as were found in Belsen, Auschwitz, and Buchenwald, are lying beside a table set with bread and water. Penrose was right when he called the picture the most despairing of all Picasso's works.

THE ARTIST IN THE WORLD

Like many fellow French intellectuals, Picasso joined the Communist Party in 1944. Yet unlike most of them, he never resigned from it.

He put his signature to party appeals, designed posters, donated generously, toasted Stalin on his birthday or portrayed him as a young man (which sparked indignation), and above all he drew countless doves, the Communist symbol of peace. Although he did not like traveling, he went abroad to take part in the meetings of the peace movement.

Yet he never came to Germany. The Communist Party was banned in the Federal Republic in 1956. While Picasso's engagement was regarded there as a fad, he for his own part stressed that politics and art belong together because the artist lives not in art but the world.

- “Es gibt nur einen Picasso” (There’s only one Picasso).
Bildende Kunst 5 (1955)

Ilya Ehrenburg recounted in his book *Dem Frieden*, published by Kultur und Fortschritt, that among the handful of delegates who, thanks to a mental lapse or whim on the part of Mr. Attlee, had managed to make it to England were the film director Pudovkin and the painter Pablo Picasso. An exhibition of Picasso’s paintings was scheduled to open in London to mark his arrival. It was under the patronage of a British ministry, and Picasso was supposed to take part in the opening ceremony. But when Picasso learned that Mr. Attlee had decided to ban the Peace Congress, he announced that he would not attend the opening. Whereupon, he was visited by an envoy who made it plain that one should not mix factual matters with politics, that one should let the congress be a congress and the exhibition an exhibition. After all, he added, the art enthusiasts were not addressing Picasso the member of the peace movement, but Picasso the artist. To which Picasso replied: “It may seem strange to you, but there are not two Picassos, there is only one!”

- Pablo Picasso. *Wort und Bekenntnis* (Word and Avowal). Frankfurt am Main, 1957. With Picasso’s statement “What is an Artist” [In Ellen C. Oppler, ed. *Picasso’s Guernica*. New York: WW Norton, 1988]

What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who has only eyes if he is a painter, only ears if he is a musician, or a lyre in every chamber of his heart if he is a poet, or only some muscles if he is a boxer? Far, far from it: at the same time he is also a political being who is constantly aware of the heartbreaking, passionate, and joyful things that happen in the world, shaping himself completely in their image. How could you fail to be interested in others and cut yourself off in ivory indifference from a life bestowed upon you in such abundance? No, painting is not done to decorate apartments. It is an instrument of war for attack and defense against the enemy.

BANS

AND PRETEXTS

During the postwar years, Picasso's art was censored in both the West and the East. In West Berlin, Joachim Tiburtius, the senator for national education, blocked an exhibition of prints in 1952 that toured many cities. Posters waiting to be printed with the dates of the Berlin venue became worthless overnight.

The cancellation was allegedly due to "transportation difficulties." But the correspondence between the curators shows that the real reason was because Picasso was "oriented toward the East."

The leadership in the East was not however oriented toward modern art. The Socialist Unity Party confiscated the GDR edition of a Picasso book put out by the collector and former war correspondent Lothar-Günther Buchheim because it contained only the "formalist works of this revolutionary Spanish artist." Officially, quite different reasons were given: the publication lacked an imprint, and it was too pricey.

□ Letter from Ludwig Grote to Adolf Jannasch,
December 18, 1951

I have begun negotiations for an exhibition of Picasso prints. My wish is to present the most beautiful pieces from every epoch of the painter's life, numbering between 200 and 250 in all. The exhibition would begin in Nuremberg and then travel on to Munich, Hanover, and Hamburg. It would be excellent if Berlin also took part in this tour. The expenses would not be very great. As you know, Picasso is eastern minded, but is not permitted to be shown there. So it might be amusing if West Berlin were to dedicate a large exhibition to the creator of the peace dove.

□ Letter from Adolf Jannasch to Ludwig Grote, May 12, 1952

Berlin is indeed a curious city where things come to pass that not even I would take to be possible.

First the crates with the Picassos failed to arrive, the date for the exhibition drew nearer, then Prof. Tiburtius expressed his political reservations during his discussions with journalists and writers at the Berlin Writers Conference. Tiburtius was happy that he could point to transportation problems in order to postpone the opening of the exhibition, and, after conferring with the Governing Mayor, who of course bears the ultimate responsibility in political affairs, to prevent the exhibition opening at some later date.

I am unable to overcome the sense of despondency that reigns in certain offices in Berlin. Of course, the declaration of loyalty that Picasso wrote to Thorez had an unfavorable effect, because Berlin is a place where political matters are hotter than elsewhere and no one dares to handle such hot matters. You can only help me if you treat the whole business, the details of which I must tell you once again in person on a suitable occasion, with complete confidentiality, and tell the world at large that the cancellation was due to transport difficulties. There is no point in stirring up even greater difficulties in this unfortunate business.

At the same time, 550 posters are still available that we have yet not had venue labels put on. It would of course greatly ease the situation if you could assist me in passing these stocks on to other offices.

□ Letter from Ludwig Grote to Adolf Jannasch, May 16, 1952

Your news about the fate of the PICASSO exhibition in Berlin did surprise me. I thought you had already settled the political reservations in advance. I would have found it quite cheeky if PICASSO were to be presented as a Communist in West Berlin while he remains persona non grata in the East. So, now that is over and done with. I shall handle the matter with the greatest confidentiality and have already responded evasively to questions from the arts page editors at the *Neue Zeitung* in Munich.

Unfortunately it is impossible for me to take back the posters now that they have already been ordered. The overall sums have been worked out in such a way that a cancellation would put me in the greatest difficulty.

□ Minutes of the meeting of the Deutsche Akademie der Künste (GDR) on May 23, 1952

As Herr Seitz reported, apparently the West Berlin administration has prints by Picasso in its keeping that have been deliberately kept aside and not put on exhibition. If possible, an open letter should be addressed to Mr. Tiburtius at the West Berlin Senate—Dept of Public Education, requesting the delivery of the works for the exhibition in the Democratic sector.

Showcase

□ Letter from the Central Committee of the GDR Social Unity Party to the Cultural Affairs Department, State Administration of Saxony-Anhalt, March 3, 1952

It is a wily selection of the most extreme formalist works by this revolutionary Spanish artist.

The illustrations are a clever compilation of the extreme formalist aberration that Picasso adhered to for a lengthy period. We cannot of course afford to “ban” Picasso in the GDR, but we will arrange for the brochure to be seized by the Office for Information, Berlin, for the following reasons:

1. There bears no imprint, merely the details: Poeschel und Trepte, Leipzig, III/18/200 10.51.1100, printed on the back of the dust jacket.
2. The price of 9.80 DM is inordinately high, although the edition of 1,100 probably could not have been made at a lower cost.
3. It is an offense against the progressive spirit of Picasso to suppress his active commitment to peace in 1951.

**THE
BECOMES
A**

**DOVE
SYMBOL**

Picasso's father, the art teacher José Ruiz Blasco, already loved to take doves as his motif. And the young Pablo likewise drew them while he was developing his speed drawing skills. The owl is the only other bird in his oeuvre to which he devoted so much attention.

Over the years, he built up a large number of dove paintings. In 1949, the writer Louis Aragon chose one for the poster of the World Peace Congress. Picasso took this opportunity to mention to Aragon that the dove was not necessarily the most peaceable of birds.

Once the dove had become the symbol of peace, reviewers went so far as to interpret the doves Picasso painted from his window as symbols. As he said in an interview with the US Marxist magazine *New Masses*, he painted "for the sake of painting" and was no more guided by meanings than a Communist shoemaker would be. Nevertheless, he confirmed that a connection could be made between art and politics, "but I don't try to myself, that's all."

□ Diether Schmidt. *Pablo Picasso*. East Berlin: Henschelverlag Kunst und Gesellschaft, 1976.

The history of the dove in Picasso's oeuvre has been mapped out by Konrad Farner. Picasso added a memory to it from his youth while being interviewed by *Ogonjok* on November 13, 1950: "My father, who was living in Barcelona, painted animals. [. . .] How delighted he would have been if he [. . .] had known that my two modest doves have fluttered all around the world. In this way I am participating with my every fiber and with the deepest convictions of an artist to the struggle for the most just and beautiful cause there is. [. . .] I am for peace, against war."

MASSACRE IN KOREA

In 1955, shortly before the large Picasso retrospective in Munich, Cologne, and Hamburg, the Foreign Office advised the exhibition management to refrain from showing political works. That included the painting *Massacre in Korea* (1953), which denounced the part the US Army had played in the Korean War (1950–1953). The painting was nevertheless shown, but did not prompt any great discussion.

At the same time, a struggle raged over Picasso in the GDR. The trade journal *Bildende Kunst* leveled the accusation that works like *Massacre in Korea* were like caricatures and insulted the victims. The artist, according to the journal, tended toward “formalism.” Picasso’s defenders pointed out that, among other things, the changes in people’s perceptions in the modern age also necessitated a change in form.

□ Foreign Office, to the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Bonn, February 8, 1954

Although home affairs in the Federal Republic differ fundamentally from those in Italy, and there is presumably no reason to fear serious incidents from the Communist quarter, it may as circumstances dictate be recommendable to exercise a certain caution with this event, and when selecting the individual works to leave out those that are of a political nature ("peace dove") and might give rise to political manifestations.

□ General Director of the Bavarian State Picture Collections Prof. Dr. Ernst Buchner to the Bavarian State Ministry of Education and Culture, Munich, March 19, 1954

A number of works of a provocative nature were in fact put on show at the Milan exhibition shortly before the end (the painting *Korea*). Should the exhibition be realized in Munich, everything will be done to exclude any politically provocative elements.

□ Heinz Lüdecke. "Phänomen und Problem Picasso" (Phenomenon and Problem of Picasso). *Bildende Kunst* 3 (1955)

If one has followed the painter this far, the left-hand side of the picture is bound to disappoint and torment. The people of Korea defended themselves with great and enduring heroism against the invaders, and put them in their place. Nothing of that can be sensed in the group standing before the murderers. Picasso shows naked, defenseless victims. For him, it seems, the war in Korea was simply a massacre—and not a hymn to the invincible power of a heroic people. But we cannot even feel sympathy for these people, as we do with those in Eugène Delacroix's *Massacre at Chios*, which is similar in theme and sentiment. Delacroix's crushed and butchered figures are people—indeed, beautiful and noble people, which makes the crimes against them all the more wanton. Picasso's Korean women, on the other hand, have split masks in place of human faces, in which the pain and grief have twisted into a grimace. Apart from the still relatively human looking children, it is hard to regret the destruction of these shapeless figures. As such, the painting does not speak of the Koreans' struggle for independence, nor does it awaken real sympathy with the objects of imperialist colonial oppression.

- Konrad Farner. "Picasso und die Grenzen des kritischen Realismus" (Picasso and the Bounds of Critical Realism). *Bildende Kunst* 1 (1956)

The *Korea* painting does not depict soldiers in American uniforms, nor Korean women and children, but simply the landscape, divided into flat terrain with the shooting band of soldiers (South Korea) and the hilly region with dying people (North Korea). Nothing, absolutely nothing is depicted naturalistically—and yet the Italian government banned the painting from being exhibited in Rome because everyone, absolutely everyone saw at once who and what the artist had captured, the truth that was being shown here.

- Johann Muschik. "Picasso: Ein Hexenkessel von Problemen" (Picasso: A Cauldron of Problems). *Bildende Kunst* 3 (1956)

It is unfair to demand that a painting that wishes to depict the *Massacre of Korea* show the heroic struggles of the Koreans. The barbaric aerial attacks by the American pilots on defenseless women and children in abandoned villages was constantly covered in the progressive newspapers for weeks and months on end. Picasso was outraged by this aerial massacre, and wanted to depict its barbarity. The magnitude of the Korean resistance to the American aggressors is a subject for a completely different painting. I believe Picasso must also be allowed the right to choose the massacre as his topic. And if one agrees with the expressionistic, broadsheet style on the right-hand side of the picture (in the depiction of the aggressors), then the left side (the depiction of the victims) must also be meet and proper. The argument pointing to Delacroix's *Massacre at Chios* (which incidentally also makes no show of heroic resistance) is wide of the mark because in that work, not only the victims but also the murderers are attractive people. One must observe the principle of unity in an artwork. The ugliness of the victims by Picasso can be justified inasmuch as we see that it is not their own, innate ugliness we see, but that of the horror, the dread into which they have been driven. Distress and calamity are ugly, can make one ugly. Which is precisely what Picasso shows. Not ugly-right-from-the-outset, but becoming disfigured is the subject of the *Korea* painting. In this the artist also distinguishes between levels of awareness.

The child playing at the feet of the group of women is, as Lüdecke rightly points out, beautiful by traditional standards. It does not understand the horror of what is going on. As is partly true at least of the adolescent girl and the young woman beside her. The mothers are just beginning to grasp the terrible dimensions of what is happening, which is why their faces and bodies are contorted into veritable furies of horror.

□ Peter Palitzsch. "Realismus verändert sich mit der Realität" (Realism Changes with Reality). *Bildende Kunst* 4 (1956)

Anyone who wishes to understand "realism" or wants to understand it correctly will ask themselves why Mexican painting and graphic art, like that of Mucchi and Kulisiewicz before, or like Chinese fine art and Picasso, has an impact that prompts such heated discussions, while compared to them, the works of our artists "leave us cold." It is time to examine the means by which works that all have the right content have, in the one case, an impact and lead to partisanship, and in the other lead to scarcely a thing.

Today's artist is confronted with new, formidable themes. Any attempt to paint them in the style of an idyll or in some other bourgeois style is not only futile but harmful if taken as the key to realism. The first car looked like a mail coach, but for us a car is beautiful—if it is sensible. And it is best not to take the Benz of 1906 in order to prove that sensible cars must not look like sharks. And I think one puts oneself and not Pablo Picasso in the wrong if one measures the painting *Massacre in Korea* (1951) up against Delacroix's *Massacre at Chios* (1834), as in Heinz Lüdecke's article "Phenomenon and Problem Picasso." The number of victims and the combat weapons that are shown refute this. "Realism" comes from "reality" and changes with the reality. Of course, it is important to analyze the works of our friends and brothers for formalist elements and consider that aspect, but the critique must take a different point of departure if the critic does not want to make the very error he sets out to fight: formalism."

BERLINER ENSEMBLE

In 1949, Bertolt Brecht had the “militant peace dove of my brother Picasso” painted on a curtain at the Berliner Ensemble. It could be seen in the East Berlin theater until the fall of the Wall.

The scarf design Picasso created for the French delegation to the East Berlin World Youth Games in 1951 was used by Brecht on a theater poster in 1954. It shows people from all parts of the world united under the sign of the dove.

The poster was not allowed to be pasted up in the Western zones of Berlin. But it led to “stormy discussions” in the East, which Helene Weigel, artistic director of the Berliner Ensemble, called “fruitful” and printed in a program.

Brecht, who was impressed by the elegance of Picasso’s depiction, hung the poster in his living room. A painted version was hung outside the theater on special occasions.

- Bertolt Brecht. "The Curtains". 1951
[from: *Poems on the Theatre*, trans. John Berger and
Anna Bostock. Northwood: Scorpion Press, 1961]

Paint
On the great front Curtain
The peace dove militant
Of my brother Picasso.
Stretch the cord of wire behind
And there hang
The screen that gently flutters
With its two overlapping waves of gauze:
The screen that lets
The working woman disappear
Handing out her leaflets,
And Galileo disappear
Recanting.
The screen may be
Of coarse linen or of silk
Of white leather or of red
Don't ask me
That depends on the play.
Only do not make the screen too dark
For you must project thereon
The captions of the event to come
Thus to create suspense
And proper expectation.
Make my screen half high,
Don't shut off the stage!
Leaning back the spectator
Should see
How cunningly you prepare for him
Should see
The tin moon come swaying down
And the cottage roof brought in.
Do not disclose over much
Yet disclose something to him.
Friends
Let him discover
You are not conjuring
But working.

- Letter from Bertolt Brecht to Picasso, December 9, 1953

Dear Comrade Picasso,
As the director of a theater in East Berlin, the "Berliner Ensemble," I kindly
request your permission to use your marvelous scarf designed for the World
Youth Festival 1951 for advertisement, especially at the University of West
Berlin. Allow me also to confess here and now that we have used your dove
as a symbol on our stage curtain ever since the theater was launched.

With respect for your beautiful and useful works, socialist greetings, B.B.

□ Letter from Helene Weigel to Picasso, May 15, 1954

Dear Pablo Picasso,

We are taking the opportunity to send you the poster for which you allowed us to use your motif.

The poster has unleashed turbulent discussions here in Berlin, which we believe have been fruitful.

With all our thanks and best wishes, Helene Weigel

□ *Bertolt Brecht im Gespräch*. East Berlin: Henschelverlag, 1977. With an excerpt from "On the Work of the Berliner Ensemble, 1954" (discussion between Brecht and others with students of the University of Greifswald)

STUDENT: The Picasso poster left us with a strange feeling. We fundamentally dislike it. It's so expressionless, too simple and primitive.

BRECHT: The masks showing all the races and the dove. Really lovely colors and elegant lines, the whole thing is meaningful and very beautiful.

STUDENT: But the blobs all around it?

BRECHT: They give it color. It's also a strange process when a man yodels. What does he actually want to achieve?

STUDENT: The purpose of a poster is to have an effect on the public and draw it into the theater. It makes you think about it (the races and the peace dove), but only if you're already interested. But it doesn't stimulate any interest.

KÜCHENMEISTER: It must have an effect: it's been banned in West Berlin.

MARKWARDT: Poster art has its own style, it doesn't have to catch your eye in a meaningful sort of way. One can demand quite a lot, but people must also come up with something of their own, these are not paintings.

BRECHT: Masks in a building already suffice to indicate a theater.

STUDENT: They don't appear to me to be masks, they're more like faces severed in half.

BECHT: I can envisage it prompting a kind of amazement. That's why we chose it. It does not fail to leave an impression, people talk about it. We are not on some lofty plane in our conceptions of art. Certain advances toward more daring forms are bound to create a certain feeling of alienation. Not everything that alienates is good, but you must remember that there are standards for good and bad. Here, for instance, is a really great artist. You can't always demonstrate to everyone why something is good. Sometimes teaching is simply done by saying: "This is good." If you hear something again and again, it gradually becomes a concept. I hope that you will get to see a poster like this often enough. Picasso is one of the greatest living artists. That's the point. I am simply saying that to you. I'm not going to ask any of you whether you agree with me.

STUDENT: In a lot of cases, only the top half has been hung up. The top half could just as easily be a poster for a peace congress, nothing to do with theater. So it doesn't fulfill its purpose after all.

BRECHT: It's nevertheless a beautiful poster.

- Berliner Ensemble's program for Brecht's play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, 1954, with reader's letters about the poster "Welcome to the Berliner Ensemble on Schiffbauerdamm"

Picasso Poster in the Clash of Opinions

Theater Abend, April 3, 1954

Poster for the opening of the BERLINER ENSEMBLE on Schiffbauerdamm with a motif by Picasso and the words "Peace for all Nations" in the leading international languages. The poster was not allowed to be displayed on S-Bahn railway stations in the Western Sector because it depicts a peace dove. That is the meaning of freedom in the "free world"!

BZ am Abend, April 3, 1954

The BERLINER ENSEMBLE under Helene Weigel has for all of us become a byword for the best in acting. But looking at its new poster one can only shake one's head and say: "I don't know what that's supposed to be." The four half faces in a bright jumble of colors have, in my view, nothing to do with the Ensemble's work. What do other readers think, and what above all does Helene Weigel have to say? Horst Jacob, Lichtenberg

The meaning of the controversial poster: The four half faces are the four races of people that live on earth. Picasso's peace dove is intended to unite all the peoples in peace. That is the meaning and goal of the work of the BERLINER ENSEMBLE. That's how I see it. And I believe I'm right. Willy Klauke, C2

To the *Berliner Zeitung*

A few days ago, while taking my daily journey into town, I saw a very formalistic poster at my local S-Bahn station, which made me wonder about the developments among our artists in the German Democratic Republic, who have led a hard but successful battle for a new, healthy, realistic line of design. I myself studied at art school from 1947 to 1950 and have given a lot of thought and attention to these matters. You cannot imagine, little Berlin Bear, how astonished I was yesterday when I was forced to realize that this poster was not, as I assumed, a Western product but the symbol of the BERLINER ENSEMBLE, and designed by the famous French painter Picasso. I know that the painter Picasso is a progressive individual and I value him as a fighter for peace. But I do not approve of his in many instances highly formalistic taste, and fail to understand how a poster like this can be used to present a progressive theater. Or are you of a different opinion? Inge Schmidt-Tewes, Young Pioneers Center

BZ am Abend, April 22, 1954

"Peace for all Nations" is the Motto for the New Home of the BERLINER ENSEMBLE. Who can fail to understand that?

The opponents of the peace movement who have stopped this poster from being hung up in S-Bahn stations in the Western sectors were very quick to grasp the meaning of the peace dove with the four masks. I am astonished that there are so many among us who lack the brains to understand the language it speaks. Our youth at any rate responded differently at the World Festival of Youth and Students, when the young French came to Berlin wearing neck and head scarves printed with the same symbol. Everyone wanted to have one of these bright, cheery scarves, which Picasso had designed

especially for the Festival. Shouldn't we be glad when Helene Weigel and her actors invite us to their theater with this radiant symbol of peace and friendship? Easter 1954, Gustav Seitz

In my view it is a very good poster. The simple geometric motif can be found among prehistoric and contemporary peoples around the world, as decoration for their tools and cultural utensils. Picasso turns it into a head with the faces of four people from different races and shows a dove flying in the center. Peace—the central thought of humanity.

One could also make it simpler, with four cheerful people arm in arm, and the dove of peace flying overhead. I can take that in as I walk past. But with Picasso I have to stop and think for moment—and that's the thing! Let's not make it too easy for ourselves. I have to chew longer on wholemeal bread than I would on a roll, but it does more for me.

Don't speak too soon about formalism—when form and content correspond the way they do here: take a long, unbiased look, think about it, and then judge. Martin Flörchinger, Deutsches Theater

The dove of peace amid four different colored faces which, done as masks, actually combine the peace idea very nicely with the actor's art. A red, a white, a black, and a yellow face—that is simple and every child can grasp it. O. Friede

Letter to *Neues Deutschland* and Berliner Ensemble

I am a West Berliner, born and bred in the Wedding district. One day I passed through the democratic sector, took a look at the display in the shop fronts, which are produced with a great deal of effort on the people's own initiatives, and beheld the new era, the developments in the German Democratic Republic. As I turned away from the windows, I came face to face with an advertising column. Not anything special, really. But I rubbed my eyes at first and thought, I'm not seeing straight. A look back to the windows—yes, I was in the democratic zone and not the Western sector. But the poster on the column was—Western—transporting me back in time to twenty-five years ago. The poster for the BERLINER ENSEMBLE is sheer formalism—and that in 1954, after so many discussions about Socialist Realism. Karl Winkel

BZ am Abend, 28 April

The poster for the BERLINER ENSEMBLE is in my opinion utterly radiant. Its clear, optimistic colors cheer you up. Picasso has symbolized the world's four races in an elegant and decorative manner by masks that frame the dove of peace, the central figure of all culture.

I have heard that the form of this poster has sparked protest in Berlin. The German Democratic Republic should be happy. This poster would also have raised protests in Denmark, but on account of the content and not the form. Hopefully it won't be too long before the theaters in the NATO countries also dare to use the peace dove as a symbol for their art. Herluf Bidstrup

We have taken pains to ask the opinions of a large cross-section of people about how comprehensible and beautiful our Picasso poster is: the artist, the stage crew, the secretaries in our offices, etc., and then we also did a survey among a number of children.

It turns out that the children found the poster perfectly obvious and easy to understand. The poster that the great painter Picasso designed in wonderful hues for the Festival of Youth, for young people from around the world, shows the four races united by the peace dove. The children said: It's clear, those are yellow, red, black and white people, and they are all united by the peace dove. --

And those are not four half-faces but four masks, and theater has been represented from time immemorial by masks. April 22, 1954 Helene Weigel.

Vi-Kvinder

Dear colleagues at the Berliner Ensemble!

Do you have enough of your lovely Picasso posters? If you could, please put a few aside for us, we could sell them for ten krone each and make some money for our peace work. With best regards and thanks for the great theater evenings that our delegation to the Peace Council attended at the Berliner Ensemble. Erna Watson, editor "Wir Frauen".

SONG OF THE GREAT RIVERS

In 1954, Joris Ivens made the propaganda film *Song of the Great Rivers* on behalf of the World Federation of Trade Unions. The film sings of the lives of workers the world over. Among the contributors were Bertolt Brecht, Ernst Busch, Paul Robeson, and Dmitri Shostakovich.

Picasso designed the cover of the accompanying book. The writer Vladimir Pozner, who had penned the script of *Song of the Great Rivers*, kept in touch with the artist. As Pozner tells it, Picasso created twenty-one designs, one after the other, before deciding on the last and most sparing of them all.

It was also thanks to Pozner's intercession with Picasso that the documentary film festival in Leipzig was allowed to use the dove as its emblem. This privilege was relinquished some years ago.

□ Letter from Vladimir Pozner to Picasso, June 25, 1955

Dear Comrade,

I know that if you only read all the letters you receive you would not have time to work. I know that everyone who writes to you is asking for something. And I don't know what else to do but to write to you and ask you for something.

It's an old story. You remember the film I made with Joris Ivens, "The Song of the Rivers," which you couldn't see because you had the flu. You were unwisely kind enough to promise to make a poster for this film. In the meantime, "The Song" has had an adventurous life throughout the world, banned in France, butchered in England, shown in Haiphong on the very evening of the Liberation, and in Peking for the anniversary of the Communist Party of China, illegally introduced into colonial countries, where it was screened in small, discreet meetings, and dubbed in 16 languages from Spanish and Arabic to Japanese.

To help it become better known, an album will soon be published, with the participation of those who collaborated on the film, Ivens, Shostakovich, Brecht, Robeson and me, about 300 photos and the commentary text. So, here it is: We are asking you all to agree to make a drawing, a sketch, whatever you want, for this album, to be placed on the cover. The cover will be made of unbleached canvas. As few or as many colors as you like. No title, as your sketch will be used for different language editions (there will be at least three: French, English, German). Approximate size: 22 × 25 cms.

I'm sending you some pictures of the film I have at hand: to give you a *poor* idea. You know what it is about: the life, misery, and struggles of workers all over the world at mid-century. And the rivers that flow through the film are the Mississippi, the Ganges, the Nile, the Yangtze, the Volga, and the Amazon. It's a very great work: you would honor us by being associated with it.

Please let me know what you decide.

Fraternally yours,
Vlad Pozner

□ Advertising pamphlet for *Lied der Ströme* with an excerpt from Pozner's text "Wie Picasso arbeitet" (The Way Picasso Works)

... Picasso calls me at eleven. He is in the small sitting room on the left, in front of the very table on which he has spread out five sheets, numbered I to V. The four hands are drawn on them as a flower, joined together at the wrists so as to represent their four symmetrical petals. The drawings are in black, but colors have been tried out on a couple of the studies. . . .

It is eleven thirty. I hear his voice: "Come here!" He now has three new drawings there. The one with the number VIII shows a flower made of half a dozen hands growing in a circle on a green stem; the pistil red, brown, and yellow.

"Now you get it," he says. "You can see that this is a flower, and that those are hands. And if you can't get that, you never will. Right. Off with you, I must carry on."

... At twelve twenty he calls me again. He has reached number XIV. The hands are becoming increasingly beautiful, and thus the flower as well. The colors symbolizing the races have been dropped: now the whole thing is in green and red and yellow and blue.

... When he calls me back again it is fifteen forty: so all in all he's been drawing for about six hours. He has used different paper: the sheets are larger, thicker, and the drawings themselves more finished. Picasso picks them up one by one and props them up on a chair. He looks at them, not without curiosity.

... I'm waiting for the drawing at which Picasso's guardian angel said, "Enough!" as he finished it.

It bears the number XXI; of the twenty-one drawings he has attempted today, it is the sparsest. Picasso studies it attentively, as if trying to make out what could have prompted the guardian angel to intervene. Because even angels make mistakes, and it is so easy and tempting to spend one's life drawing flowers and hands. "I hadn't even noticed," he says, "that there are six hands in this flower, like the six streams in the film. Now I'll sign it for you."

He dips a quill into the Chinese ink, writes "Picasso," asks, "What's the date?"

"The 20th of September 1955"

He writes under his name: "20.9.55"

HERMLIN

CONTRA

DYMSCHITZ

The writer Stephan Hermlin dedicated a short film to Picasso to celebrate his sixtieth birthday, but the film was never shown in the GDR—allegedly because of a running scratch on the celluloid.

Hermlin argues in his film that although Picasso's art is play, it is not without commitment. And also that it is not abstract, because it is always bound to reality.

In this way, he answered the critics who accused Picasso of "formalism", a term where formal means are said to cover up or erase reality. In 1948, after an influential broadside against formalism by Stalin's confidant Andrei Zhdanov, the functionary Alexander Dymshitz attacked Picasso's art in the *Tägliche Rundschau* as "unnatural," even as he praised Picasso's political commitment. This campaign colored cultural policies in the GDR for years to come.

□ Alexander Dymshitz. "Über die formalistische Richtung in der deutschen Malerei" (On Formalism in German Painting). *Tägliche Rundschau*, November 19/24, 1948

We can distinguish various types of artists among the representatives of formalism. [. . .] We know the difference between the surrealist Dalí, the lauder of Hitler and Franco, and the militant anti-fascist Pablo Picasso, who for years has paid rich tribute to the most effusive formalism. [. . .]

But it is precisely because we see and grasp this difference that we must, in the interests of democracy and of art itself, direct a serious critique at those who have taken the wrong path, even though they have the prerequisites for correct creative development. We are obliged to criticize them in a principled and comradely manner. We must confront them in order to lead them back to the path of truth, to the path of a democratic and realistic art. [. . .]

Most formalist artists love to pose as "revolutionizers of form" and accuse the realist masters of "traditionalism" and "formal conservatism." They lay claim to being innovators and justify this by asserting that through their work, they have renewed and perfected the form of painting.

The entire experimentation by Picasso, this idol of Western European formalism, can serve as a striking example of "innovation" viewed in formalist terms. The case of Picasso is by no means one of the easy problems of modern painting. His work cannot simply be attributed in full to formalism, for we know and appreciate the many realistic paintings and drawings he has done. Yet evidently Picasso himself is unsatisfied with his own realism because he keenly senses that this kind of painting doesn't make any new contribution to the development of art, that his realism is not an art of renewal but of tradition, sometimes emphatically "classical." It is the realism of a perfecter and not that of a destroyer and renewer of tradition, and thus not the realism of someone who creates a new realistic style. But in his efforts to overcome the limitations of his realism, in his search for new paths, Picasso took a wrong turning—onto the supposedly new path of formalist experimentation. That is how Picasso's unnaturally schematic "portraits" from the years 1909 to 1913 came into being, and likewise his very latest works in which the human figure is treated so savagely, it is as if all these figures with their chopped-up faces and squinty eyes, with their broken arms and dislocated legs had come from the torture chamber of a medieval inquisitor. Thus Pablo Picasso, lured onto the path of formalism by a misled desire to innovate, came to an apparent anti-humanism in his painting, to depict man as a "geometric creature," to ignore the most crucial and telling thing in man: his spiritual being. Thus Picasso the artist came into sharp contrast with Picasso the convinced fighter for liberty and humanism.

GUERNICA

Picasso painted *Guernica* (1937) in direct response to the destruction of the Basque city of Gernika by the air force of the Nazi Condor Legion on April 26, 1937.

Although it was shown at the West German retrospective in 1955–56, its content was said to relate to unspecified “events” during the Spanish Civil War.

Initially the GDR showed aesthetic reservations toward *Guernica*. Yet not one description of it failed to mention the Nazis’ involvement in this war crime. Defenders of Picasso’s art stressed that the style of painting also “had a social impact. It is not incomprehensible, perhaps one just has to get used to it, like a new shoe.”

- Catalogue of the Picasso retrospective in Munich, Cologne, and Hamburg, 1955–56. With a preface by Alfred Hentzen, director of the Hamburger Kunsthalle

Art shall move deeply. In 1937, he created for the Paris World's Fair the foremost work of our time, the enormous painting *Guernica*. Made after countless studies under the impact of the appalling news that the Basque town had been destroyed by aerial bombs in the Spanish Civil War, the horror of the coming war has been captured here in indelible and unforgettable symbols.

- Press release for the Picasso retrospective at Haus der Kunst, Munich, 1955

The fact that *Guernica* can be shown is also thanks to the New York Museum. This composition, which, as generally known, goes back to the events of the Spanish Civil War, can truly be called the most famous painting of our times.

- Article by Hermann Müller marking Picasso's 75th birthday, *Neues Deutschland* (GDR), October 20/21, 1956

If we look not at the contradictions but at the new, at what captivates us, we hit first and foremost upon his *Guernica* painting, a response to the destruction of the Spanish town by Hitler's bombers. The theme is senseless destruction. It could have been painted in the manner of Manet, or Delacroix. Picasso turned reality into formulae, symbols, stirred them together with the horror, and a lot of people were more transfixed and impressed by the result, forced to consider, than any normal painting could have achieved. When the work was displayed at the Paris Expo during the Spanish War, as a contribution to the struggle against Franco fascism, it met with a storm of interest. Since then, Spain–*Guernica* and Picasso have become a clear concept in people's minds. Here also lies the problem of Picasso and of modern painting. There is no arguing that his painting was comprehended and had a social impact. It is not incomprehensible, maybe one just has to get used to it, like a new shoe.

In the mid-1970s, the Left in West Germany shifted *Guernica* back into its historical context and used the image in a variety of campaigns. The Neue Gesellschaft für Bildende Kunst in West Berlin devised a didactic exhibition that toured West German art associations and schools. Peter Weiss also included the painting in his novel *The Aesthetics of Resistance* in 1975. Yet it was still possible for the Bundeswehr to use *Guernica* in its own advertising in 1990.

□ Bundeswehr advert in the magazine *Stern*, September 6, 1990.

Enemy Images are the Fathers of War.

Which is why we don't have any. Because that is the hoary old trick that every totalitarian regime uses. They paint the picture of the evil foe in order to justify the sacrifices they constantly demand from the people.

Enemy images create fear and distrust, hate and aggression. They are the seed from which longstanding enmity grows, which harms peaceful co-existence between peoples. And which often enough turns into war.

The Bundeswehr has never justified its mission by enemy images. Not "Against what?" but "What for!" is the question to ask about the purpose of its actions. Because there is much to be defended. Freedom and citizens' rights, self-determination and independence from outside pressure. And peace . . .

The Bundeswehr stands for that. It is our insurance against the vicissitudes of life, which no one can predict. We must be able to rely on this protection if we wish to remain lord over our own decisions. Today—and tomorrow.

The Bundeswehr.

□ Günter Grass. "Das geschändete Bild" (The Desecrated Image). *Die Zeit*, March 22, 1991.

At the end of September 1990, a technically flawless reproduction of the picture, combined with an advertising text, circulated in a number of widely read magazines (*Gong, Stern, Der Spiegel*). That was a few days before the Day of German Reunification, before the bells began to chime. The words "Enemy Images are the Fathers of War" were printed in bold letters as a banner under the right half of the picture, spread over four lines. The narrow column of text on the right advertised the Bundeswehr and, in semi-bold type, pointed to the Bundeswehr as the signatory author. And the Bundeswehr once again showed that it was responsible for the advertisement, paid with taxpayers' money, by a discreetly placed emblem, the Iron Cross, surrounded by a legend in the shape of a bowl.

But nothing, not a single line, tells the reader of the advert why Picasso's *Guernica* is an example of an enemy image. The reason why the painting was created is passed over in silence. The text ignores the fact that the image shows not the enemy but its screaming victims. The silence makes a lie of the fact that German pilots, airplanes, bombs and machine-gun bullets destroyed the Basque town of Guernica and murdered 1,654 of its citizens. There is no footnote to reveal the name of the criminal organization, the Condor Legion. The text is shameless, done according to an evil model. By desecrating Picasso's *Guernica*, the Bundeswehr's text with its ring of harmlessness becomes the opposite: it constructs an image of the enemy and avails itself of the methods exercised under the boot of fascism and Stalinism.

The Federal Minister of Defense is responsible for an advertisement for the Bundeswehr that goes a long way to discrediting service in its units. Precisely because the Bundeswehr was involved in a war whose disastrous consequences are incalculable and victims uncounted, the damage caused by this advertisement can hardly be recompensed. It is utterly unacceptable. By requesting that Richard von Weizsäcker ask the Federal Minister of Defense to apologize to the citizens of Guernica, I do not expect much—not his resignation, for who on earth resigns?—merely that the highest representative of the Federal Republic of Germany does his duty.

SPAIN

The Spanish Civil War first appears in Picasso's work in his *Minotauremarchy* and the portfolio *The Dream and Lie of Franco*. The portfolio was sold in 1937 in the Spanish Pavilion at the Paris World's Fair in aid of the Republic. After World War II, Picasso continued to support solidarity and amnesty campaigns for the victims of Francoism. For one such campaign he drew Nicolasa Arias, the mother of his friend and hair-dresser Eugenio Arias from Spain.

While the Federal Republic was engaged in a lively commodities trade with Franco's Spain, the West German Left was especially interested in Picasso's anti-Franco works.

WAR AND PEACE

In 1950, Picasso was offered a room that had once been used as a chapel in his hometown of Vallauris. He pictured turning it into a “pagan site for a unique cult” that would “unite all the people and be dedicated to peace.” Initially, he envisioned an annual youth festival.

War and Peace, which he created for Vallauris in 1952, were sent to Milan for his retrospective, along with other major political works—*Guernica*, *The Charnel House*, and *Massacre in Korea*. Only afterwards were the panels installed in Vallauris.

The Academy of Arts in the GDR used these two paintings as illustrations in its obituary to Picasso in 1973. Preliminary drawings for them also appeared in peace posters.

□ Picasso obituaries in the *Mitteilungen des Verbandes Bildender Künstler der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik* (Communications of the Association of Visual Artists of the German Democratic Republic), May 1973

Comrade Picasso's participation in the struggles of the World Peace Movement culminated in the paintings *War* and *Peace* which he created for the "Temple of Peace" in Vallauris. This summation of all his artistic and human endeavors distinguishes itself by an enlightened pathos that deflates and denounces the raw power of war in all its grotesqueness, while celebrating peace as a free and humane activity under a harvest sun.

Picasso's paintings, even *War* and *Peace*, do not describe the struggle they actively support. Instead they give us symbols. And the most powerful of these is undoubtedly the dove of peace. Its haunting purity and classical naturalness have the same persuasive power and simplicity we find in the portraits he drew of his friends and comrades-in-arms.

Picasso's avowal and artistic advocacy of the forces of peace and progress won him the sympathy of the working people in the German Democratic Republic and in the lands of Socialism. In 1962 he was awarded the Lenin Peace Prize; since 1955 he was a corresponding member of the Academy of Arts in the GDR.

PICASSO IN VALLAURIS

Peter Nestler made a film about Picasso's *War and Peace* especially for our exhibition. In it he links the work with motifs of resistance, handicraft, children, and war. The film begins with an etching dedicated to Paul Éluard. Éluard was a member of the Resistance and was regarded as its foremost poet. Picasso visited Auschwitz with this close friend in 1948. The film ends with scenes of children painting in Vallauris. Their intuitive grasp of art recalls Picasso's aesthetic and Nestler's early masterpiece *Essays* (1963).

A longer version of the film can be watched on the website www.picasso-shared.de

GERMAN AUDIENCES

Picasso's work divided audiences in both West and East Germany. In the GDR, Picasso was presented in 1955 in the gallery run by the *Berliner Zeitung* newspaper. On view were reproductions of the series *Painter and Model*, which fostered a lively debate. Some visitors felt offended by the erotic aspects of the series.

The first purchase of a Picasso painting in Cologne, in 1953, was largely met with disapproval in the readers' letters to the newspapers ("botched," "kitsch," "shoddy caricatures"). A restoration note from the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum stated that the picture's surface had received "wilfully inflicted scratches."

The widespread resentment toward modernism that was still felt after 1945 had been stirred up by the Nazi exhibitions that had railed against the Expressionists: *November Spirit* (1933) and *Degenerate Art* (1937).

- “Die Stadt kaufte einen Picasso” (The City Has Acquired a Picasso), readers’ letter to the editor regarding the acquisition of the painting *Head of a Reading Woman*, *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, August 22, 1953

[...] As for the painting itself, it is not in my opinion possible for a normal person, with however much imagination they have been gifted, to recognize this as a woman reading. As I first took a fleeting look at it, I thought the painting was an unhappy attempt at a caricature about the reunification of the new Germany: the two deformed sides of the face, pressed together to create a contrived whole, with a drop of bitterness on the left nostril. The whole borne by indefinable hands with grimy fingernails.

I am probably not “degenerate” enough to recognize the “art” in this painting, not even in an induced state of trance. [...] J. H., Köln-Riehl

- “Picasso und sein Publikum” (Picasso and his Audience). *Perspektiven*, February 1956

Picasso—the artist of the century, whose incomparably varied oeuvre has exerted a lasting influence on art for a good fifty years—is regarded with suspicion by a wide audience. He is taken as a paradigm in clashes of opinion. Shock, aversion and smug opposition are the typical results. Despite numerous publications on Picasso [. . .] a lot of people who are badly informed, or most often not informed at all, and who are otherwise inclined to give unreserved applause to every technical advance, cling to the past in matters of artistic expression. The aged art historian Wilhelm Worringer is doubtless correct when he says that the great public is happy to allow any form of iconoclasm in modern galleries, just as long as it can return to strolling reverently around in the House of German Art, and inspect the accumulated products of staid respectability.

- “Picasso Kauf—‘durchaus gerechtfertigt’” (Picasso Purchase—‘fully justified’), reader’s letter, *Kölnische Rundschau*, August 15, 1953

Whether one admits it or not, this art has in fact an educational value: it can make us see ourselves and reflect! In addition to which, it has a documentary value, for in times to come it will convey a picture of our intellectual situation, such as can scarcely be imagined in a more concise and valid form. Few artists vouch for this art as Picasso does, so this acquisition for the modern section of the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum seems perfectly justified to me.

- “Die Stadt kaufte einen Picasso” (The City Has Acquired a Picasso), reader’s letter, *Kölnische Rundschau*, August 11, 1953

“That’s what calls itself modern art.” Ham-fisted is what the man in the street would say. But that of course is dismissed with a supercilious air. What does the man in the street know about art?

- “Als guter Steuerzahler bin ich empört” (As a good taxpayer I am outraged), reader’s letter, *Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger*, August 15, 1953

[...] As an upstanding taxpayer I am incensed that a no doubt quite substantial sum has been spent on a painting like this, which the very largest section of the population would dismiss as kitsch.

- “Picasso in the Clash of Opinions.” *Berliner Zeitung*, June 16, 1955

“There are symphony concerts and there are evenings of chamber music. Here you have a chamber music recital. It is one of the most sensitive, blissful, and perfect things that have been put to paper in the middle of our century.” (Arnold Zweig on the opening of the Picasso exhibition)

Rarely has one of our art exhibitions met with such interest and so many visitors. Originally scheduled for four weeks, in the end the exhibition was open for almost two months.

A few weeks ago, we wrote on what led us to mount this exhibition. We had never expected the “storms of protest,” the “ruckus” and “uproar” that was predicted, and which had been sparked by almost every Picasso exhibition in the Western Hemisphere, because these vital and tender graphic works from Picasso’s late period were by no means that kind of explosive material. But to be honest, we did expect more astonished, appalled, or enraptured letters than we did, for instance, when we showed Jean Effel’s “Creation of the World.” Nothing like that happened. And the reason became easy to identify from all the many conversations and discussions this writer had about the exhibition over the last few weeks. For all the pros and cons in the opinions and judgments, there was always one thing in common: joy, and an endorsement of the exhibition in general, and because it wages war against our deadly boredom, it is a start in making Berlin once again a lively, cosmopolitan city of art. That these positive remarks were by no means uncritical is also shown by a lot of the entries in the guest book.

While guest books at exhibitions are often something of a problem, because they really don’t always give a cross-section of the visitors’ opinions—indeed, their pages are open to arrogant and uncomprehending stupidity and often sheer nastiness—essentially the guest book at the Picasso exhibition is a refreshing exception.

Chinese characters stand next to sentences by Lucienne Boyer, next to lines by foreign and West German visitors:

“For a West German visitor, the accent of this exhibition, which incidentally only conveys one characteristic side of the artist, lies in the fact that Picasso is being shown.” (Lucien de Valroi, Düsseldorf)

Serious discussions took place. The writer stood next to the worker and student, the clerk next to the scientist and artist. People spoke their minds, openly and honestly. Alongside enthusiastic shouts of approval, one heard voices that would have preferred to issue bans in the name of public morals.

We have taken the trouble to examine the content of the entries. Fourteen percent negative compared to eighty-six percent positive statements.

“Here, beauty passes judgment not only on the artist who seeks to restrict, but also on the visitor whose eyeglasses are still blurred. Blurred and covered in smudges. These pictures by Picasso are among the richest, clearest, and serenest works by this titan, this universal figure. These sheets breathe the light and grace of the Mediterranean—transparency, inner buoyancy, and youthful freshness. Incomprehension can only occur when the eye has not yet become an organ of life, of vivacity and beauty.” (Erich Arendt)

What Arendt touches on here and puts in the right light is actually the main problem of the exhibition. There are voices that think:

“There’s no point in looking at the erotic fantasies of an old man whose pencil starts to shake the moment he sees a naked woman.” (Gute?)
“Even in the past, artists—even greater ones—have had fits like this of senile eroticism when they grew old. There’s no shame in that. Yet in those days things of that kind were reserved for a small circle. Whereas for those with healthy feelings, these exhibitions are—if not immoral—then certainly embarrassing.” (Julius Grau)

These and the like were the objections. Numerous other entries in the guest book confirmed for us the philistine morality that is conveyed here. The philistine respects only what he thinks he can permit himself in public. Anything that seems to hold a mirror up to him through honesty, self-evident humanity, and carefree naïvety, is “unhealthy” in his eyes. This goes hand in hand with a misunderstood and hypocritical concept of beauty, which smooths the way for naturalism and kitsch. The guest book clearly shows how deeply this legacy of false petty-bourgeois morality is still lodged in many people’s minds. But let us follow this with one of the most thoughtful entries on the problem, which in some ways sums it up completely:

“The conflicting judgments corresponded to the topic that Picasso obviously had set himself: expressing the complex and conflicting relationships that exist between painter and model, between artistic mastery of reality and reality itself, and between art and life. And how is one to convey that? Obviously not in a ‘direct statement,’ but by Picasso—much like Thomas Mann—employing the ideal artistic means of comedy, satire, and irony to then enable the deeper meaning, namely the idea of humanity, love, beauty, and the spirit, and thus of man, to emerge as the highest expression of the unity of sensuality and spirit, of matter and consciousness. This, with all due respect, has not been recognized by those who myopically attribute these drawings by Picasso to secret sorrows about physical decline. And this, because Picasso indicates with a few powerful strokes just what goes to make female sensual charm. What has been overlooked in this is the ideal content, which alone distinguishes art from low obscenity, from so-called ribaldry. But this ideal content and its particular feeling in the clear atmosphere of southern France, which has always embraced the sensual in a more uninhibited way than we do, has also been overlooked by those critics who try, one way or the other, to pit Picasso against our endeavors with Socialist Realism. Nothing does less justice to these witty and pithy drawings than gloating over certain deficiencies we still have in our artistic development. Nothing is further from these works than subjectivist and aesthetical arrogance. This exhibition awakens the desire to be able to subject Picasso’s entire oeuvre to a thorough

examination, even if it is at times questionable." (Dr. Taut, Humboldt University)

This brings us to the point that seems to us to be the most important result of this small exhibition—a demand that the Academy of Arts and the Ministry cannot ignore—the wish for a large Picasso exhibition, as expressed in eighty-six percent of the entries. Perhaps the small exhibition by the *BZ* could also be shown in the GDR, as was often requested, so that this beginning does not mark the end.

FeliEick

FROM ENFANT TERRIBLE TO MIDDLE CLASS DARLING

The glossies in West Germany reported on Picasso's women, his wealth, his villas, and his quirks. *Der Spiegel* even dedicated a cover to him, and compared the number of visitors to his retrospective to that of a football match. His politics, on the other hand, were ridiculed as naïve.

When the first museum café in Germany was installed at the Kassel documenta in 1955, its walls were decorated with Picasso prints. Advertising billboards for the large retrospective in Munich, Cologne, and Hamburg were emblazoned simply with Picasso's name, without any visuals. At Hamburg, both a museum café and a bookshop were set up. Long before his name was used in 1999 to dignify a multipurpose van made by a French car company, "Picasso" had become a commercial brand. In this way, the artist transformed from enfant terrible into a middle class darling.

□ *Kölner Leben*, January 20 (cover) and February 10, 1956

The Final Result of a Major Exhibition.

Finally, on the last day, [February 29 (despite frequent demands, the exhibition was not extended)], the highest ever attendance figure was achieved for an exhibition in Cologne in the form of 85,000 paying visitors. If one adds to that that an edition of 16,000 catalogues at no small price that sold out completely—apart from a handful of archive copies—it can be said that this exhibition was also a financial success and not solely an idealistic one. Because the latter stands in the foreground.

Table

□ Max Bense in *Das Kunstwerk*, 1950

Picasso's Coastline . . .

Antibes, Picasso's coastline, aerodrome of the troubadours, singers of the *Cantos* and peinture of the *Young Woman*: the streets directly on the water, the brightly colored cars and the white blocks, the triangular sail behind a corral of tents and the plane tree plazas inside the yellow walls, the heights above reed curtains and the olive groves amid lavender fields, the whole country has a penchant for posters, expends itself with ideas and chuckles down the copper cables.

He, Picasso, l'homme au mouton—that is his sign, a symbol of the Provence, Giono's subject—he is lauded like an aperitif, shown off like the choicest ware . . . with his plates, his prints, his women, his bullfights, *Toros in Vallauris*; hands, brushes, faces or studios, it is all to be had, on a postcard for 30fr. or in pottery chez Madoura; everywhere the famous signature, descending, phallic, fast and unbefuddled, a profound portent of a new and powerful if abstract bucolics, sans Virgil, sans seasons, no bush no shrubs, bright and between antique remains such as in Musée Grimaldi, a trace of light which, to speak with Kahnweiler, links naïvety with wisdom.

So the sex, the force, the proof of the flesh is there, the longing for the soft hills, resting with back propped up, the soft blue shepherd's song, the water and Pan . . . Pan, lavender lean, with wiry outlines through which his will flows, into the network of desires and the field of signs on to the frazzled slashes of his imaginings. . . .

Table

□ Anonymous, "Das Unvollendete" (The Unfinished).
Der Spiegel, December 26, 1956

Pablo Picasso is the most famous painter alive, and without doubt the one who commands the highest prices on the international art market. A large number of serious critics regard him as the greatest master of our times. The motifs he devises can be seen on the bathing costumes of richly tanned girls on the sands of Long Beach, and on the banners waved above the heads of pale Communist demonstrators.

The "Mystery of Picasso" dazzles in many ways: Two cities share between them many of his most celebrated paintings, New York and Moscow. For Paris, the city in which he lives, Picasso has the status of a monument, a landmark—a fact that rests, according to the American journalist Charles C. Wertenbaker, on the following reasons that he gave in *Life* magazine:

- He is the person who is talked about the most.
- Picasso is sounder than the Bank of France, a painting by him is the most stable currency there is.
- More people try to wheedle their way to Picasso than to anyone else.
- Picasso seems at every moment to be embroiled in a dramatic love affair

Be that as it may, this century is not made in such a way that it grants some painter or other the leisure to labor away solely at still lifes and animals and women, at formal problems and experiments in style. Politics has tried to harness the painter Picasso—admittedly in his own way, with all his artistic potency, all the prominence his name carries, and all his naïvety.

Picasso's political creed is roughly that one must support the good and fight the bad—no less, but also not more: "No, painting was not invented to decorate apartments," Picasso declared emphatically. "It is an offensive and defensive weapon against the enemy." Another time he lectured an interview partner: "What we and youth are lacking is enthusiasm." As banal and mundane as Picasso's spoken avowals sound, they are equally unusual and unequivocal when he formulates them on the canvas—so that his verdict becomes a sensation for audiences the world over. At the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in 1936, the Republicans named him director of the Prado, the foremost Spanish painting collection in Madrid. Franco's victory prevented Picasso from assuming the post, but the attack by a number of Junkers bombers of the German "Condor Legion" on the Spanish coastal town of Guernica inspired him to create a grisly, visionary painting of monumental dimensions, which, as art critic Carl Linfert put it, "preserved the town's name longer than its misfortune would have done."

Picasso exhibited his *Guernica*—it is about 3½ meters tall by 8 meters long—in the Spanish pavilion at the Paris Worlds' Fair: a giant accusation in which dying animals, a slain warrior, and screaming women are all jumbled together.

Another occasion on which Picasso got involved in politics was when he took part in the meetings of the Communist "World Peace Council," which has been held every year since 1948 in Wrocław, Warsaw, Paris, London, and Rome. In 1949, he gave the peripatetic congress its symbol—the animal he had learned to paint since the age of six: a realistic white peace dove, which has since become the trademark of Eastern peace demonstrations. This by no means makes him a hot-blooded Communist: he joined the party in 1944 because he thought the Communists were "the good guys" in the Spanish Civil War.

The condemnation of his art by Moscow—as for instance of a Stalin head he drew in 1953—bother him just as little as the chaffing of that run-of-the-mill French author Jean Cocteau, who scolded Picasso, by now a millionaire several times over, saying that as a "one-man capitalist system" he scarcely belonged with the reds.

In fact, Picasso's verdict is far less complicated than the doctrine of a political party—it says: peace is good, war is bad. Already in *Guernica* it is far from recognizable where in the world the cruel scene is occurring and who had caused it. Picasso, as art critic Boeck put it, "did not create a painting of an individual battle, but of the horror of war with the weapons of technology per se."

During World War II—most of which he spent in German-occupied Paris—he wrote a short play which he titled *Desire Caught by the Tail* and which lacks any sense except that the characters—a tart or an onion, for instance—constantly remind the audience of pleasures they were denied in the lean years of war.

It is more astonishing when we hear that some time later, in 1950, the play, whose dialogue consists solely of "Gua, gua" or "Bow, wow, wow"

or “Aye, aye, aye, aye”—in one act the players all speak just two words: “My chilblains”—met with an unusual success: it ran to sold-out audiences for months on end at the small Watergate Theatre in London. But like every riddle, this one has a solution: the lead role in London was played by an extraordinarily well-shaped negress, Louise Toummavoh, who presented herself to the audience almost naked. Recently, a small theater in Bern has also made an attempt to repeat this success, but without the attractive lady.

The naïvety that is so abundantly clear when Picasso turns from art and picks up the pen is still recognizable though in all the countless works he produces—paintings, sculptures, drawings. Picasso steers clear of any kind of theory, of all intellectual experiment, and almost clear of civilization.

Picasso communicates himself to the world in many ways, in almost every conceivable way. But he remains a mystery to the public, and also remains somewhat so to the experts.

Nor will Clouzot’s film *The Mystery of Picasso* give the answer to the puzzle: the art of the twentieth century has yet to see its aesthetics set down in a binding book of rules. The artists have proclaimed an autonomous republic in which they alone rule, in which only they decide whether a picture is “right” or not.

□ Werner Spies on Picasso’s painting *Les Femmes d’Alger*, July 1980

Kahnweiler, Picasso’s friend and dealer, has imparted to us the unimaginable solitude in which Picasso worked at that time. [One might say that with his call for an utterly new kind of empathy, he justified all his later rejections of aesthetic norms, however radical.]

The question of just how influential Iberian bronzes and African sculptures were here remains secondary. Because these references to prehistoric and ethnological art could at most have helped the viewer back then to overcome this isolation, which Picasso imposed on any kind of connoisseurship, by a few rational clues. [How did this rejection come about? The answer almost amounts to a paradox. I first referred to the unexpected source for the *Femmes d’Alger* in 1971: Ingres’s *Turkish Bath*, which was exhibited at the Paris Autumn Salon in 1905. The literature on Picasso has meanwhile adopted this reference (Rosenblum, 1973; Daix/Rosselet, 1979). A series of drawings and paintings show how Picasso varied this pile of nude figures—Claudel called Ingres’s painting a “cake full of maggots.” I think that adopting the theme itself assumed importance.] What is unique here is that Picasso performs his unheard-of transgression of Western painting on a subject that initially was nothing but a view into a shop window full of prostitutes in the Calle d’Avinyó in Barcelona: a projection of his lust and his anxiety.

The moralistic motif becomes a new ethic of seeing. Picasso turns this representation into a visual assassination.

Up until the last years of his life, Picasso bound his painting and drawing to the representation of sexuality. There can be no better subject for a man who undermined taboo and convention. Picasso’s voraciousness, his possessiveness are expressed in the “showcase” of the *Femmes d’Alger*. But even if he sets out from Ingres’s erotic tondo, in his work the subject becomes the occasion for a philosophically founded insatiability. The desire to possess is sublimated into an expansion of experience. For what is Cubism but the attempt to possess things over and beyond their ordinary presence? A repetition of desire and insight.

GENIUS AS TOP PERFORMANCE

Henri-Georges Clouzot's film *Picasso*, which hit the West German cinema screens in 1956, shows the artist as an optimally tuned machine that churns out one idea after another. In an age in which performance is the prime virtue, genius is equated with phenomenal productivity.

In the East, where the heroes of labor also paid homage to the ideal of achievement, yet cooperation was placed above the work of the individual, Carl Andrießen wrote that Picasso's alleged "secret" in this film was merely a "sensational arabesque."

□ Carl Andrießen's review of Clouzot's film in the GDR weekly *Die Weltbühne*, February 27, 1957

Picasso and Fast Motion

Henri-Georges Clouzot, who is certainly not short of experience, as it is said, in shocking people in the cinema, thinks it is definitely possible that people torture themselves in order to discover the creative secret of geniuses such as Mozart and Picasso, or of a partial genius like Rimbaud. Clouzot, who does himself proud with what he deems possible, arrives at such a realization at the beginning of his film *LE MYSTÈRE PICASSO* when he combines Mozart & Rimbaud & Picasso. How on earth did these geniuses manage it, how do they manage it? A puzzle—a mystery! And the puzzle is solved, the secret revealed. And where? On the silver screen.

[...] People who already like Picasso will be enchanted by Clouzot's film, and as such the film is really valuable. However, the film may create new misunderstandings among those who have been dumbfounded till now by Picasso's art. The "mystery" the film purports to unveil is merely a sensational arabesque, particularly since there is absolutely nothing that has to be unveiled.

EXHIBITING PICASSO: DÜSSELDORF

While the GDR had only a modest budget for art purchases and none for Picasso's enormously expensive works, he was widely collected in the West.

Werner Schmalenbach bought ten paintings while director of the Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen. Unusual were the educational claims he presented with these acquisitions in Düsseldorf in 1976. Each work was accompanied by a board bearing seemingly associative information, which on second glance was, however, to the point. For him, the aim was to meet the viewer's new "need for information." For all their objectivity, the texts were nevertheless evaluative: Picasso, we read, is a revolutionary of form, but "his work is non-political." Political statements were "exceptions" in his art, which was only influenced by the "changing historical atmosphere" between 1933 and 1945.

- *10 × Picasso*, exhibition catalogue, Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf, 1976. With texts by director Werner Schmalenbach

No doubt the fact that the originals fade into the background behind this wealth of information could be viewed as questionable. But this is only being done for a brief quarter of a year. During this period, information and didactics will have pride of place, which means: Originals will on no account be treated in the normal, appropriate manner. For the duration of the exhibition the prime concern is not, as in other months, aesthetic experience, but understanding, recognizing, and actually learning. During this period, viewing the paintings will go hand in hand with reading, which clearly means: It will not only be encouraged, but also hindered. Obviously art is a question of seeing, and always of seeing, and not of some kind of knowledge. But nowadays there is such a mounting need for information that it must be taken into account, if only by means of temporary exhibitions. When someone, such as the person writing these lines, forwards the opinion that the viewer should actually forget all they know as they stand before a painting, it can safely be said that one can only forget what one already knows. So paradoxically we can say: knowledge is being imparted here in the hope that ultimately the individual will manage to do without it as a crutch to understanding art. Perhaps the path to seeing follows that of learning.

□ Picasso and Historical Events

The basic subject
of Picasso's art
is: art

Art for art's sake?

"L'art-pour-l'art" is a much abused catchword

Picasso spent his entire life
making art for art's sake

But:

art that changed art
art that altered consciousness
art that manifested liberty
and consequently:
art that championed liberty

He rarely took a stand
in his art

on historical events:

1937 *Guernica*

The Dream and Lie of Franco

1949 Peace Dove for the poster of the
Communist World Peace Congress in Paris

1951 *Massacre in Korea*

1951 *War and Peace*

These direct statements
are the exceptions in Picasso's oeuvre
His work is non-political
Only in the decade of 1935–1945
—Spanish Civil War, World War II—
did the historical atmosphere
effect a change in Picasso's art
his art became
“a weapon to attack and defend”

□ Woman before the Mirror, 1937

A Taciturn Dialogue
between a woman sitting cross-legged
a drawing on the floor
a vase of flowers
a mirror on the wall
before an open French window

Calm—relaxation—contemplative quiet

The horrors of the times
are far away
yet that same year
Picasso painted *Guernica*

So the range extends
from meditative to apocalyptic

A fleeting sketch
reveals the formal layout
of verticals and diagonals
explains the apparent eccentricity of the mirror

An apparent eccentricity toward nature
is an artistic necessity:
the misshapen mirror
the misshapen and discolored hand
two eyes even though a profile

The head
recurs in paintings and sculptures

☒
Seated Woman, 1937

☒
Woman's Head, 1937

Picasso
has circled this theme
in numerous variations since 1935

Since 1934: Life

- 1934 Journey around Spain. Bull fight motifs
- 1935 Separation from his wife Olga Khokhlova
Birth of his daughter Maja; the mother is Marie-Thérèse Walter
Etching *Minotauromachy*
Surrealist poems
- 1936 Friendship with Dora Maar, whose features can often be found in his paintings until 1944
Touring exhibition of his work in Spain
The Republican Spanish government appoints him director of the Prado in Madrid.
- 1937 Bombardment of the Basque town Guernica
Paints *Guernica* for the Spanish pavilion at the Paris World's Fair
Etching *Dream and Lie of Franco*

1933–37: Art

The historical unrest during the 1930s
affected Picasso's life
affected Picasso's art

Picasso viewed his art
"as a weapon to attack and to defend"

His art
assumed an offensive and defensive character

Directly influenced by
historical events:



Dream and Lie of Franco, 1937



Guernica, 1937

Indirectly influenced by
historical events:
increased expressiveness



Weeping Woman, 1937

EXHIBITING PICASSO: DRESDEN

Compared to the FRG, there was little of Picasso to be seen in the GDR. One milestone was the print exhibition at the Albertinum in Dresden in 1966, which was put up by the State Youth Club. The show featured works lent by the Parisian art dealer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler. A year later, he donated twenty prints to the Dresden Kupferstich-Kabinett, thus creating the largest Picasso collection in the GDR.

Kahnweiler gave a lecture at the exhibition in which he emphasized the creation of signs in Picasso's art. Art is "a script that serves to communicate, or indeed to share." The picture only emerges "in the viewer's mind."

This concept lent itself to a form of social mediation, as was generally desired in the GDR. The women's magazine *Für Dich* requested information that would enable its readers to ascertain the artist's "position in political life."

□ Letter from the GDR women's magazine *Für Dich* (For You) to Werner Schmidt, director of the Kupferstich-Kabinett in Dresden

Dear Mr. Schmidt!

We are writing to you with a big request. On October 25 Picasso will be 85 years old. We would like to make the most of this red letter day and give our readers some key facts and insights. May we ask you to send us around 3 typed pages with things worth knowing about the artist's life and work, his position in political life, and about some of his works?

Please remember that ours is a mass publication read by women with different educational backgrounds. We would be very grateful if you would also select some graphic works for our readers to peruse.

Please let us know as soon as possible whether you are willing to accept our commission. The reproductions could certainly be done by the Deutsche Fotothek.

With kind regards
Editorial office *FÜR DICH*
Cultural Dept.
Ursula Hafranke

□ Pages from the Kupferstich-Kabinett's journal *Dresdener Kunstblätter* (Dresden Pages on Art), 1966

In order to make it easier for exhibition-goers to gain an insight into Picasso's art, we have brought together a number of his own statements on his work. Like his paintings, they are truly children of his mind—keenly directed, vigorous, gripping, and vividly expressive. At the same time, they testify to how, within a stable concept of art, he emphasizes different aspects at different times: For instance, while in 1935 he warned against misinterpreting his works, in 1945 he emphasized art's social function.

Picasso's achievement with his Peace Dove consists not only in having forged a symbol for the Peace Movement that all the world can understand, but also in that, time and again, this symbol has been invested with a new expressive charge that keeps it alive.

□ Talk by Daniel Henry Kahnweiler, given on July 2, 1966, in the Tapestry Room of the Staatliche Museen Dresden. Excerpts (4 min. and 3 min.)

Synthetic Cubism no longer imitated things, but instead found signs for them. This created an unheard-of freedom for painting with a great range of possibilities. Even today, a face by Picasso is often depicted simultaneously from the front and in profile, simply in order to present it in its entirety. Cubism opposed every imitation of the outside world, wishing rather to create the external world of humanity as if from scratch. I believe that only man sees pictorially, and that this is thanks to artists. A dog, on the other hand, sees flatly. It can of course distinguish a car coming towards it, and recognizes its master, but that too is probably more by smell than with its eyes, and it does not perceive things pictorially. Because painting, like all visual art,

is a script that serves to communicate, or indeed to share. We share in the excitement experienced by the artist. He creates signs that signify for us the outside world. The picture, however, first comes into being in the mind, in the conceptions of the beholder; because if read correctly, it is created by the beholder in cooperation with the artist who creates it.

Of course, you must not assume that the Communism espoused by a person like Picasso is scientific, or that he has read Marx. On the contrary, his Communism is totally instinctive. The paintings of his youth, the paintings from the Blue Period, depict the lumpenproletariat of Barcelona, the poor, but also the halt and the blind. For it is always compassion that Picasso feels, and compassion for the suffering is also the root of his Communism. But contrary to the claims of some bourgeois newspapers, he has always taken his affiliation to the Communist Party seriously and has always professed it.

LUDWIG'S PICASSO IN THE GDR

In 1977, the husband and wife collectors Irene and Peter Ludwig placed parts of their art collection at the disposal of the National Gallery of the GDR, including a number of works by Picasso. They were to remain on display in the Altes Museum in East Berlin until 1990.

The works were presented in the series "The Studio" by the Berlin State Museums. With the help of Renato Guttuso's Picasso homage, *Funeral Banquet with Picasso* (1973), which was also on loan from the Ludwigs, together with a number of reproductions, the public received an introduction to Picasso's complete works.

- Catalogue *Annäherung an Picasso* (Approaches to Picasso), 1979, published by the Nationalgalerie, Staatliche Museen, GDR, to accompany the exhibition of Picasso works from the Ludwig Collection

The experiences and insights gained from almost two years of art mediation at the Ludwig Collection have consolidated into the aim of finding means to help visitors arrive at their own approaches to the collection and its salient aspects. Picasso was chosen not only because he made a fundamental contribution to the development and shaping of twentieth-century art, but also because we want to examine his significance for us. As we talked with visitors about Picasso during the preparations for our project, as for instance with a specifically chosen brigade from the VEB IFA engineering company in Berlin-Adlershof, it very quickly became apparent that the usual form of museum presentation for visual artworks falls short of the public's wishes and demands.

In Picasso's case, the situation is aggravated by the fact that our public has only a patchy knowledge of the extent and contradictory diversity of his artistic work, and that the broad and, please note: *nonacademic*, public is often perplexed when faced with his formal language, or often rejecting it or responding with a haughty smile. Picasso created the dove as the symbol of the World Peace movement! Is everything else he did art as well? A lot looks as though their own children could have done it. That is exactly where our project "Approaches to Picasso" comes in. For these very reasons, it is not a customary exhibition but an orientation guide, an approach to Picasso's personality and work.

Apart from paintings, Irene and Peter Ludwig also loaned out prints to the GDR, including the voluminous *Suite Vollard* and *Suite 156*, the *Minotauremarchy*, and the portfolio *The Dream and Lie of Franco*. In this way, the couple multiplied the number of Picasso originals that could be seen in the GDR in one fell swoop.

Suite 156 was exhibited in Dresden and Leipzig. In 1980, it was shown in a *mise-en-scène* at the gallery of the Leipzig Art Academy with photos of Picasso as a “worker” and “working artist.” Although this fitted the image of Picasso in the GDR, the gallery director, Christine Rink, risked the question of whether the artist had now become a classic, and thus no longer served as a stimulus to others. The categories of stimulation and appropriation, use and usefulness remained decisive for art judgment, even in the latter years of the GDR.

- Exhibition catalogue *Pablo Picasso. Letzte graphische Blätter*, Leipzig, 1980. With a preface by Christine Rink, director of the gallery of the Academy of Fine Arts, Leipzig

His work is still little known here. Our museums have scarcely any pictures by him, the number of publications we have on his paintings is small. Yet unexpectedly he has become a classic, and no one can still doubt his importance. Nonetheless, whether or not he still acts today as a productive stimulus, or could do so once again, remains to be seen.

In 1977, Peter Ludwig stated that for many years he had been doing “good business with the GDR.” This included the production of Trink fix, an instant cocoa beverage that his company had been making in the GDR since the year before.

Although Ludwig emphasized that he kept his patronage activities separate from business, his close relationship with the GDR meant he could acquire art from the country on a grand scale. In 1983 he founded the dedicated Ludwig Institute for the Art of the German Democratic Republic for this collection.

The Ludwigs wanted to donate their permanent loans to the Altes Museum, but negotiations floundered over the question of the merging of the East and West holdings of the National Gallery after 1989. The works by Picasso were distributed around the various Ludwig museums, with the lion’s share ending up in Cologne.

□ Letter from Peter Ludwig to Willi Sitte, September 13, 1976

Dear Mr. Sitte,

please allow me to briefly introduce myself. In my main profession, I am chairman of the Board of Directors at the Leonard Monheim Concern, one of the largest chocolate companies in the world. The brands TRUMPF, LINDT, VAN HOUTEN and MAUXION are all produced in our factories, and for years we have maintained thriving business relations with the relevant authorities in the GDR. As a result of a cooperation agreement, a TRUMPF and VAN HOUTEN instant cocoa beverage has been in production in Bergwitz for over a year, and at the last Leipzig Fair I signed a second cooperation agreement, which—as both sides hope—will be followed by further stages in the collaboration. As a result of this business connection, for some years now I have been a frequent traveler to the GDR.

By way of a sideline, as it were, I am an art collector.

I would have loved to visit you in your studio and get to know one of the foremost artists of our time, to see new works of yours and to discuss whether there might be possibilities of a cooperation with, for instance, the Gemäldegalerie Neuer Meister in Dresden. It would be an honor and a matter close to my heart if I could contribute by arranging a number of permanent loans to fill the gaps that I sense in the magnificent holdings.

□ Letter from Willi Sitte to Peter Ludwig, October 29, 1976

It is both an honor and a delight for me to make your acquaintance, initially by letter. I have acquainted myself with much attention, esteem, and growing admiration with your lasting and substantial achievements for art history, your outstanding services in art collection, and the unselfish manner in which you grant public access to the results. I am thus all the more delighted when an art connoisseur and humanist like yourself, dear Dr. Ludwig, aspires to and cultivates relations with our German Democratic Republic in so many ways.

You will doubtless understand that it is far beyond my powers to give a final word on your generous, far-reaching offers concerning the Dresden art collection. For which reason I have informed the Minister of Culture of the German Democratic Republic, Mr. Hans-Joachim Hoffmann, of your proposals.

I have met with a positive echo.

□ Transcript commissioned by Peter Ludwig of a radio interview he gave on Deutschlandfunk, September 7, 1977

Siegrid Nebelung, DLF: “What does the loan agreement look like in detail? What, as it were, do you get in return for your loan?”

PL: “Although it is the fashion to regard everything from a business viewpoint, that is not always how it is. As in this case. In return, my art property will be looked after properly, as is usual with loans all over the world.”

DLF: “Does that mean, to put it pointedly: consecration of products of Western decadence in the temple of Socialism, or introduction of a freer art policy in the GDR?”

PL: "It is not my responsibility to meddle in the conditions inside the GDR. When you say consecration of decadent art in the temple of Socialism, I can only reply that I, personally, am rather proud that these examples of Western art are being shown in the richly traditional institution of the National Gallery in East Berlin. The second part of your question is quite beyond my power to answer. I believe the fact that it has come to this presentation in the National Gallery proves that the GDR is making efforts towards a more liberal art policy. The GDR wants to present examples of Western art, and that should be applauded."

DLF: "You are an art collector, an art patron, but also an entrepreneur. Was the loan to the National Gallery in East Berlin strategic, should it be seen as a tactical move on the part of a businessman?"

PL: "I make every effort to keep my passion as an art collector separate from my activities as a responsible businessman. As was the case with the loans to the National Gallery. I already mentioned the example of my loans to Paris. Our company does a considerable amount of business with France. That is not made any better or easier by the loans in Paris. It will be the same with the GDR. For many years now we have run a thriving business in the GDR. In my opinion, this has in no way been influenced by the cooperation now being established between the National Gallery in East Berlin and me as a collector."

□ Letter from Peter and Irene Ludwig to the directorate of the State Museums in East Berlin, November 5, 1990

A year ago, we presented a carefully considered offer which, for various reasons, a lot of people failed to understand. This phase has now been overtaken by events. The National Museums and the Museums of the Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz are in the process of merging, and the published plans, which you played a key role in drawing up, have opened up meaningful perspectives. Given the magnificent wealth of Berlin's museum holdings and the wonderful future that is opening up for Berlin, especially with regard to the museums, there is no need for a Ludwig collection there.

Peter Ludwig had focused his attention on Picasso ever since he wrote his doctoral thesis in 1950 on the artist's "image of humankind." It fitted into the contemporary debate about the possibility of humanism after the war and the Holocaust.

Even in old age, he adhered to his humanist view that Picasso showed the "deformation" of "man" in modernity. Thus he placed the human side above history and politics. On the award in 1984 of an honorary doctorate by the Karl Marx University in Leipzig, he interpreted Picasso's *Woman with Artichoke* (1941) as a "human creature sacrificed in war." The war itself appeared to him to be a "force of nature," and he even wanted to see the Germans first and foremost as human beings. Picasso had likewise never found fault with "the individual German."

- Excerpts from Peter Ludwig's lecture "Ein Kriegsbild Pablo Picassos" (A War Picture by Pablo Picasso), published in *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität Leipzig* 1 (1986)

This ambiguity is characteristic of everything in the work: the woman becomes a bellicose fury and at the same time a victim in the form of a martyred person. The fury of war is cruel and relentless. Its features are dehumanized. Its victim, which this painting shows, is a ravaged sole individual. Forced to live in this world, she loses both her form and her composure. The individual becomes the martyr of war, and in this sense the artichoke, which could also be a morning star, recalls in a third such interpretation the palm of the martyrs, such as they held in early Byzantine images.

How did Picasso live during World War II? Despite strict housing regulations, he kept several apartments and studios in Paris, such as in rue la Boetie and rue des Grands-Augustins. Outside the city he owned the Château de Boisgeloup, which French troops—of all people—had raided, damaging some of the sculptures. German soldiers never destroyed Picasso's works.

It was not simply so that all Germans were Nazis, not even those in the occupied territories, nor all the officers in the military administrations. Everywhere were cells of resistance and everywhere there were brave people who gave assistance to the enemies of the fascist Reich. German officers, including Ernst Jünger, visited Picasso, and he never had anything against Germans as individuals.

In this picture he has turned the artist's model into a monument of the times. The individual is stylized into a memorial and presents the war as a superhuman event that descends on Europe like force of nature and literally dehumanizes humankind. No victor is to be seen, nor anyone who is triumphantly in the right—unless it is Suffering itself. The theme of the seated woman is the one who suffers patiently.

"PICASSO SAYS ..."

Françoise Gilot's biography *Life with Picasso*, which appeared in Germany in 1965, was an instant sensation with its intimate details about her former companion. The book, peppered with quotations from the artist, forged the image of the egoistic, money-grubbing macho-sadist. By contrast, Gilot played down Picasso's political convictions. This is recognizable in the way she portrays his participation in the 1948 Peace Congress in Wrocław (Breslau). Although she mentions that Picasso was attacked by a Soviet delegate on account of his "decadent" painting style, she gives no hint of the broader context.

A detailed account of the two-week trip can be found in the book *Picasso w Polsce* (1979), which describes Picasso's political activities and encounters. His visit to Auschwitz is also documented in the memorial's guest book.

□ Chronicle of Picasso's visit to Poland in Mieczysław Bibrowski.
Picasso w Polsce. Krakow, 1979

- 08/25/1948
morning Departure for Wrocław via special LOT flight from Paris Le Bourget Airport.
Arrival in Wrocław.
Attendance at session of Congress.
Picasso attends dinner given by Polish visual artists for their foreign colleagues.
- 08/26
evening Opening of exhibition of Picasso's ceramics in the vestibule of the Congress Hall of the Wrocław University of Science and Technology.
Dinner given for the French delegation.
- 08/27
8:00 pm Attendance at session of Congress. Picasso draws *Polish Girl*.
Screening of Wanda Jakubowska's film *Ostatni etap* (The last stage) at the Śląsk cinema.
Vernissage of contemporary French painting, held at the Wrocław University of Science and Technology.
- 08/28
5:00 pm evening Picasso gives speech in defense of Pablo Neruda at the morning plenary session of Congress.
Participates in a rally in the People's Hall (today Century Hall).
Picasso's departure for Warsaw by train.
Ceramic plates given in Wrocław as a gift to Poland.
- 08/29
2:45 to 5:00 pm Arrival in Warsaw. Stays at the Hotel Bristol.
Interview with Picasso published in *Głos Ludu* (The voice of the people).
At the hotel, Picasso draws a portrait of Ilya Ehrenburg.
While there, he also draws a portrait of Ewa Lipińska.
Reception at the National Museum in honor of the foreign Congress delegations. Attends the concert for the guests. Visits the Hall of Gothic Sculptures, the exhibition on the reconstruction of Warsaw, and the Hall of Polish Painting. Picasso signs the Book of Honor of the National Museum.
- 9:00 to 11:00 pm* Reception at the Presidium of the Council of Ministers.
- 08/30
9:00 to 11:00 pm Visits the ruins of Warsaw, the site of the former ghetto and the Old Town.
Meeting with Picasso at the Warsaw Municipal Council regarding medical assistance for Republican refugees from Spain.
Lunch with representatives of the Municipal Council.
Attends the ballet *Swantewit* (music by Piotr Perkowski) at the Roma Musical Theater.
- 08/31
morning Visits the Clinical Hospital on ulica Lindleya and the hospital of the Żoliborz district.

afternoon

Lunch in the canteen of the Warsaw branch of the Association of Polish Artists and Designers (ZPAP). Picasso and Paul Éluard are presented with the Polish translation of Éluard's book *À Pablo Picasso*, published by ZPAP.
Departure for Kraków with the French delegation.
First walk through the city.

09/01

Visit to Wawel. Views the altar by Veit Stoss in the conservation workshop.
Lunch with the Krakow Voivode Kazimierz Pasenkiewicz.

09/02

Picasso and Éluard visit Auschwitz. Return to Kraków. Visit to the Cloth Hall and the Czartoryski Museum. At a Kraków furrier's workshop, Picasso buys sheepskin jackets in the folk style of Zakopane for Françoise Gilot and their son Claude. Departure for Warsaw.

09/03

Picasso draws the Mermaid of Warsaw, with a hammer in her hand, on the wall of an empty apartment in a newly constructed building in the Koło district.

09/04

Picasso is awarded the Commander's Cross with Star of the Order of Polonia Restituta at the Belvedere Palace.
Visit to the Wilanów Palace.
Lunch with close friends at the home of then Mayor of Warsaw, Stanisław Tołwiński. In the family album, Picasso draws another Mermaid of Warsaw with a hammer in her hand.

09/05

In Serock Picasso draws a portrait of Mercedes Sanchez Arcas.

09/06

Departure from Warsaw to Paris.

morning

- Françoise Gilot and Carlton Lake. *Leben mit Picasso*. Munich: Kindler Verlag, 1965. [English original *Life with Picasso*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964 (reprint 2019).]

When I came out, he inquired very solicitously for Claude. He had brought me a coat from Poland. It was brown leather decorated with peasant embroidery in red, blue, and yellow and was lined with black sheep's wool. There was a similar one, lined with white wool, for Claude.

"There was just one incident, an embassy dinner, that was a catastrophe," he said. "The Poles have always been broad-minded and independent and it didn't occur to them that anyone would attempt to criticize my painting for political reasons. At the end of the dinner, when toasts were being proposed, one of the Russian delegation stood up and said he was pleased to see had come to the Congress but he went right on to say it was unfortunate that I continued to paint in such a decadent manner representative of the worst bourgeois culture of the West. He referred to my 'impressionist-surrealist style.' As soon as he sat down I stood up and told them I didn't care to be talked to like that by some party hack and that in any case his description of me as an 'impressionist-surrealist' painter was not very impressive. If he wanted to insult me, at least he should get the terminology straight and damn me for being the inventor of Cubism. I told him I had been reviled in Germany by the Nazis and in France during the German occupation as a Judeo-Marxist painter, and that that kind of talk, whatever the exact terms, always cropped up at bad moments in history and came from people nobody had much respect for. Then everybody began to get excited and protest in one direction or the other. The Poles tried to calm down the Soviets by agreeing that perhaps *some* of my painting was decadent, but in any case, they said, the Russians couldn't be allowed to insult their guests."

Picasso's friend Hélène Parmelin, a Communist author, also lets the artist speak in his own voice. One of her books is titled *Picasso Says* . . .

In her book *Bei Picasso (Picasso Plain)*, published in German in 1962, she portrays the comrade whom she recruited to anti-colonial campaigns, including the Djamilia Boupacha Committee for the Algerian independence fighter; Picasso contributed two drawings to a book on Boupacha. It was also Parmelin who persuaded Picasso to join the internal opposition to the party leadership during the 1956 Hungarian Uprising.

Parmelin's Picasso books were available in the Federal Republic, but, unlike Gilot's, they hardly influenced the artist's image. They were not published in the GDR, although her book on the deserter Henri Martin did get published there.

- Excerpt from Hélène Parmelin. *Bei Picasso*. West Berlin: Herbig, 1962. [English original *Picasso Plain: An Intimate Portrait*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1963.]

Whenever he finds himself in disagreement, whether about a minor or major matter, with the party to which he belongs, he says: We are Communists. There is only one Communist Party in France. Therefore we belong to that Communist Party.

Whenever he finds himself in disagreement with something which is happening or has its source in the U.S.S.R., he always says the same phrase, which I heard him repeat for years: All right. But the only thing that matters is to save the revolution.

Whenever he finds himself in disagreement with something taking place anywhere in the world, he says so.

In fact, he is always what he is, Picasso all the time, Picasso with or against his friends and his enemies, his admirers and his detractors, among whom he also has friends.

He is himself in all the circumstances of his life.

One remembers the story of the portrait of Stalin. The journalists were pursuing him. In the end, he told them that it is a well-known fact that one's own family always makes one suffer most. . . .

PICASSO, SHARED AND DIVIDED

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