



Picasso Line Drawings and Prints (Dover Fine Art, History of Art)

By Pablo Picasso

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Picasso Line Drawings and Prints (Dover Fine Art, History of Art) By Pablo Picasso

Picasso may have the most uncanny line since Botticelli. Each medium or style he chose to master, no matter how solid or sculptural, can be seen as line disguised, metamorphic; as the labyrinth to which a single thread is the key. Theoretically, line is infinite; Picasso in his fertility nearly realized that theory in almost a century of ceaseless drawing, whether on paper, zinc, stone, or other media.

Here is a sampling, rather than a comprehensive selection, from that plenitude; while nothing could be comprehensive within a single volume, the genius of Picasso's line manifests itself so clearly that this culling from various periods reveals the line in most of its guises.

Beginning with a 1905 circus family in drypoint, 44 drawings cover Picasso's major themes, techniques, and styles. From the almost classic Ingresque clarity of the Diaghilev and Stravinsky portraits (1919, 1920) via cubist studies and "neo-classical" nudes, Picasso's restless hand remakes his world again and again with fresh energy, culminating here in six sketches of the artist/model dashed out in raging love/hate in the midst of personal crisis (1953–54). In between are times of serenity and introspection (*Seven Dancers* (1919), with the future Olga Picasso up front; many figures and bathers) and, particularity as book illustrations, many mythological studies; *Eurydice Stung by a Serpent* (1930 etching), *Dying Minotaur in the Arena* (1933), an etching for a 1934 edition of *Lysistrata*. Balzac is represented by a striking lithographic portrait (1952) and by etching for Vollard's edition of *Le Chef-d'oeuvre inconnu*. The sudden appearance of an earthy, hirsute Rembrandt (1934) seems to confirm Picasso's membership in the select group of art history's greatest draughtsmen.

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