

WHITNEY

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Press Release

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PICASSO AND AMERICAN ART DEBUTS AT THE WHITNEY THIS FALL

Exhibition places Picasso masterworks alongside art by Stuart Davis, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, John Graham, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Jackson Pollock, David Smith, Max Weber, and others

On view September 28, 2006 through January 28, 2007



Pablo Picasso
Seated Woman with Wrist Watch, 1932



Roy Lichtenstein
Girl with Beach Ball III, 1977

A landmark exhibition, ten years in the planning, *Picasso and American Art* celebrates Picasso's dramatic impact on the course of 20th-century American art. Although Picasso never set foot in America, many of this country's most important artists saw him as the central figure of modern art and defined their own achievements through their absorption or critique of his example.

Picasso and American Art focuses on the nine American artists who have been most deeply engaged with Picasso's work and who, in turn, have made the most significant contributions to the art of their time: Stuart Davis, Willem de Kooning, Arshile Gorky, John Graham, Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, Jackson Pollock, David Smith, and Max Weber. Picasso played a central role in the artistic development of each of these nine artists. In addition to these key figures, the exhibition includes works by other American artists inspired by Picasso, among them Louise Bourgeois, Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, Lee Krasner, Claes Oldenburg, Man Ray, Andy Warhol, and Tom Wesselmann.

"*Picasso and American Art* investigates Picasso's powerful pull on many of this country's artists," said Adam D. Weinberg, the Whitney's Alice Pratt Brown Director. "Clearly, Picasso was seen as a force to be reckoned with. Our exhibition illuminates the extremely varied effect his art and reputation had on a range of American artists who created their own innovative, challenging, and enduring works."

Picasso and American Art is organized by the Whitney Museum of American Art, where it runs from September 28, 2006, through January 28, 2007. It then travels to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Walker Art Center. The exhibition is guest curated by Michael FitzGerald, Associate Professor in the Department of Fine Arts at Trinity College, Connecticut, in association with Dana Miller, Associate Curator at the Whitney. A 368-page catalog, co-published with Yale University Press, accompanies the exhibition. The lead sponsor of the exhibition is CIT.

"CIT is pleased to be the lead sponsor of *Picasso and American Art*, which will undoubtedly become one of the most notable exhibitions in the Whitney Museum's 75-year history," said Jeffrey M. Peek, Chairman and CEO of CIT. "CIT's sponsorship of the Whitney Museum exemplifies our longstanding support of the arts and is reflective of our commitment to the communities in which our employees live and work. We wish the Whitney great success with *Picasso and American Art* and look forward to further collaborations."

The exhibition gathers together specific Picasso works that were studied by the nine American artists whose works are featured alongside Picasso's, illustrating how American artists used Picasso's example to push the boundaries of their own work. It is the precise juxtapositions of these works—often the very first pairing of significantly related objects—that reveal Picasso's far-reaching effect on American art.

"The intense involvement of American artists with Picasso's work was at the center of a fundamental transformation in American art during the 20th century," said guest curator Michael FitzGerald. "Picasso, more than any other artist, became the chief figure against whom Americans measured their achievements."

Picasso and American Art has historical links with the Whitney's own past, going back to the years before the museum was established. In 1923, the Whitney Studio Club, a predecessor to the Whitney Museum and an important venue for the presentation of both European and American art, held one of the earliest Picasso exhibitions in the United States, *Recent Paintings by Pablo Picasso and Negro Sculpture*. *Picasso and American Art* reassembles many of the Picasso works from the 1923 show. The origins of *Picasso and American Art* lie in a 1995 Lobby Gallery exhibition at the Whitney. Entitled *Picassoid*, this drawing exhibition was co-organized by Michael FitzGerald and Adam D. Weinberg, then curator of the Whitney's permanent collection, and now the Museum's director.

The majority of the approximately 165 objects in the Whitney presentation of the exhibition will be paintings and drawings. A small number of sculptures, prints, and photographs will also be featured. The exhibition includes nearly 40 works by Picasso. The selection of American artists was determined in part by the decision to focus only on artists who took up Picasso's art before his death in 1973.

Rarely Seen Works

Among the works in *Picasso and American Art* that have never before been exhibited publicly in this country are Picasso's *Still Life* (1908); Louise Bourgeois's *Untitled* (1940) and *Untitled* (1941); Jasper Johns's painting *After Picasso* (1998), *Pyre* (2003), and *Pyre II* (2003), as well as several drawings that Johns is lending.

Many of the essential Picassos are coming from foreign collections and will give US audiences exposure to significant works that have not been seen in the US for decades. Among these are Picasso's *Bar-Table with Musical Instruments and Fruit Bowl* (c. 1913), *Still Life with Bunch of Grapes* (1914), *Landscape with Dead and Live Trees* (1919), and *Minotaur Moving* (1936).

Travel

Following its showing at the Whitney, *Picasso and American Art* travels to the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art from February 25 to May 28, 2007, and to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis from June 17 to September 9, 2007.

Catalogue

Co-published by the Whitney and Yale University Press, the 368-page exhibition catalogue includes a scholarly monograph by Michael FitzGerald and approximately 300 illustrations, as well as a thorough chronology that documents the accessibility of Picasso's work in the United States through exhibitions, collections, and publications. Based on extensive research, the catalogue provides valuable new insights into the ways that Picasso's art affected generations of American artists and the ways in which America helped shape Picasso's reputation.

Funding

Lead Sponsor



The exhibition and catalogue are made possible through a generous grant from the Terra Foundation for American Art.



75th Anniversary Sponsor DEBEVOISE & PLIMPTON LLP

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About The Whitney Museum

The Whitney Museum of American Art is the leading advocate of 20th- and 21st-century American art. Founded in 1930, the Museum is regarded as the preeminent collection of American art and includes major works and materials from the estate of Edward Hopper, the largest public collection of works by Alexander Calder, Louise Nevelson, Ed Ruscha, and Lucas Samaras, as well as significant works by Jasper Johns, Donald Judd, Agnes Martin, Bruce Nauman, Georgia O'Keeffe, Claes Oldenburg, Kiki Smith, and Andy Warhol, among other artists. With its history of exhibiting the most promising and influential American artists and provoking intense debate, the Whitney's signature show, the Biennial, has become the most important survey of the state of contemporary art in America today.

About CIT

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Image credits (l to r):

Pablo Picasso, *Seated Woman with Wrist Watch*, 1932. Oil on canvas; 33 3/16 x 51 3/16 in. (84.3 x 130.0 cm). Collection of Emily Fisher Landau. © 2006 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photograph by Jerry L. Thompson

Roy Lichtenstein, *Girl with Beach Ball III*, 1977. Oil and Magna on canvas. 80 x 66 in. (203.2 x 167.6 cm). Collection of Robert and Jane Meyerhoff Modern Art Foundation, Inc. © Estate of Roy Lichtenstein. Image © 2006 Board of Trustees, National Gallery of Art, Washington. Photograph by Edward Owen

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art:

Full House: The Whitney's Collection at 75	Through September 3, 2006*
<i>*Edward Hopper on view June 7-December 3, 2006</i>	
Mark Grotjahn	September 15, 2006-January 7, 2007
Picasso and American Art	September 28, 2006-January 28, 2007
Albers and Moholy-Nagy	November 2, 2006-January 21, 2007
Kiki Smith	November 16, 2006-February 11, 2007
Terence Koh	January 19 - May 2007
Gordon Matta-Clark	Opens February 2007
Lorna Simpson	March 1-May 6, 2007

The Whitney Museum is located at 945 Madison Avenue, New York City. Museum hours are: Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Friday from 1 p.m. to 9 p.m., closed Monday and Tuesday. For information, please call 1-800 WHITNEY or visit www.whitney.org

Current and Upcoming Exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria:

Trace	Through November 12, 2006
Burgeoning Geometries	December 7, 2006 – March 11, 2007

The Whitney Museum of American Art at Altria is located at 120 Park Avenue at 42nd Street. Gallery hours: Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Thursdays 11 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Sculpture Court Hours: Monday through Saturday from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m., Sundays and holidays 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Whitney Museum at Altria is funded by Altria Group, Inc. Admission is free. Free gallery talks are offered every Wednesday and Friday at 1:00 p.m. For further information, please call (917) 663-2453.