

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

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MUSEUM ACQUIRES PICASSO SCULPTURE OF SHE-GOAT

Picasso's bronze She-Goat, considered one of his greatest sculptures, has been acquired by the Museum of Modern Art through the Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund, it was announced today. The sculpture is on view in the newly re-opened Sculpture Galleries on the third floor of the Museum at 11 West 53 Street. Exhibited with the She-Goat, to celebrate its acquisition, are the six other sculptures by Picasso in the Museum's Collection, one of the sculpture galleries having been temporarily set aside for this purpose.

This is the first time the She-Goat has ever been shown in the United States. Only two casts are in existence, the other one remaining in the artist's possession. The Museum's cast was first shown in Paris in 1952, Picasso having finished the sculpture in plaster at Vallauris in 1950. For her ribs he used a wicker hamper, for her udder two earthenware jugs, for her spine the stalk of a palm leaf. These and odds and ends of metal and wood he put together and filled out with plaster. The head was modeled in plaster, too. Then the whole was sent up to Paris to be cast in bronze.

Picasso had used the technique of sculpture by accretion since his cubist constructions of 1912. Other famous examples shown in the same gallery are the baboon's head made of two toy automobiles, the candle flame of nails, the goat's horns of bicycle handlebars.

"Superficially, these are amusing tricks or technical stunts," Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum Collections, points out in the wall label. "But on a deeper level they are magic metamorphoses, poetic similes and metaphors.

"Picasso loves animals and uses them as forms and symbols in his art. Since his return to the French Riviera in 1945 the goat has appeared again and again in his work. Especially during Picasso's happy Antibes period of 1946 his goats caper with nymphs and fauns in compositions which bring to life the ancient tradition of Arcadian joy. Sometimes Picasso has painted the goat in majestic repose, and often its skull has appeared like a memento mori in still lifes. But Picasso rarely if ever sees the goat as evil in spite of its having lent the devil his horns and cloven hoof.

"The She-Goat on the contrary is a symbol of good not evil, of life not death. She is a monument to fecundity at its earthiest and if, when you look at her, Picasso's marvelously grotesque and loving humor makes you laugh, ponder Baudelaire's remark that 'laughter caused by the grotesque has about it something profound, primitive... which is much closer to the innocent life and to absolute joy than is the laughter caused by the comic in man's behavior.' "

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