

Pablo Picasso

(1881 - 1973)



Tête d'Homme Barbu, 1963

Colored pencils on paper

36,8 x 27,6 cm

Dedicated, signed, and inscribed :
« Pour Dominique Bertrand, Picasso Le 12.8.63 »

This drawing by Pablo Picasso has been authenticated by the Picasso Committee on September 12, 2024

This work titled *Tête d'Homme Barbu* created by Pablo Picasso on August 12, 1963, brilliantly embodies the creative freedom characteristic of his late period. The bold use of colored pencils infuses the composition with playful vitality, reflecting the experimental and uninhibited spirit that defines this phase of his career.

With a line both spontaneous and precise, Picasso captures not only the distinctive features of a bearded man but also the vibrant and dynamic essence of his personality. The relaxed arrangement of forms, combined with a vivid color palette, highlights his unique mastery, where innovation harmoniously merges with tradition to create an image that is both simple and profoundly expressive.

Throughout Picasso's artistic journey, the motif of the bearded man frequently appears, taking on various symbolic and aesthetic meanings depending on the artist's evolving styles.

The bearded man transcends mere representation to become a universal symbol: creator, thinker, mythical figure, and witness to the passage of time. Through this recurring motif, the artist delves into the complexities of the human soul.

The motif of the bearded man Picasso's work

The motif of the bearded man appears at various stages of Pablo Picasso's work, embodying different facets of his artistic style and symbolic concerns. At times a mythological figure, sometimes a grotesque character, or even an introspective portrait, it becomes a recurring theme filled with multiple layers of meaning.



Introspection

During the Blue Period (1901-1904), Picasso depicted figures marked by melancholy and inner turmoil. The bearded man often takes the form of elderly individuals with distant, sorrowful gazes, embodying wisdom, solitude, and introspection. Their deeply lined faces, framed by thick beards, express a fragile humanity searching for redemption, comfort, or faint hope.

This portrayal of the bearded man aligns with a universal vision of the human condition, where suffering and dignity are intimately intertwined. Cool tones and elongated contours intensify the atmosphere of silent despair permeating these figures. Through them, Picasso explores not only material hardship but also a spiritual quest—a meditation on mortality and isolation.

These characters thus transcend individual identity to become timeless archetypes, bearing witness to a vulnerable yet resilient humanity confronting adversity with quiet strength.

« Autoportrait », 1901, Huile sur toile, 81 x 61 cm, MP4, Musée national Picasso-Paris
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Deconstruction

During the Cubist Period (1907-1917), the motif of the bearded man in Picasso's work underwent a radical transformation. Deconstructed into geometric facets, the figure shed its introspective and melancholic aura, becoming a fragmented, almost architectural presence. The beard, once a symbol of wisdom or suffering, evolved into a graphic element—a play of angular and dynamic forms.

This approach is particularly evident in Portrait of Vollard (1910), where the art dealer's beard becomes a sculptural feature central to the composition. Far from being a mere physiological detail, it actively contributes to the construction of volumes and the interplay of light and shadow. Through broken lines and overlapping planes, the beard structures the face, reinforcing the solidity and dislocation that define the piece.

In this Cubist treatment, the bearded man transcends human representation to become a field of artistic experimentation. No longer confined to realistic portraiture, he embodies Picasso's quest to depict reality through a multidimensional lens, challenging conventional visual perspectives.

Portrait d'Ambroise Vollard, 1910 (huile sur toile)



Power and Duality

During the 1930s and 1940s, Picasso's portrayal of the bearded man absorbed mythological and classical references, drawing from the rich heritage of Mediterranean culture. Inspired by Greek gods, ancient heroes, and satyrs, he created imposing masculine figures often adorned with luxuriant beards. These representations celebrate virility, creative force, and untamed vitality. The beard emerges as a symbol of both desire and brutality, embodying an indomitable life force.

In works such as *Blind Minotaur Guided by Marie-Thérèse with a Pigeon in a Starry Night* (1934-1935), the bearded Minotaur exemplifies this duality: a blend of beastly strength and human vulnerability. The beard, primitive and organic, amplifies his mythical aura, shifting between domination and submission to higher forces.

Through this motif, Picasso delves into universal tensions between power and helplessness, desire and surrender. The bearded man becomes a timeless figure where opposing forces coexist, reflecting the complexities of human existence and the eternal struggle between control and fate.

Pablo Picasso, « Etude pour "L'homme au mouton" », 13 Février 1943



Creativity

In his later years, Picasso explored the motif of the bearded man with renewed intensity, particularly through his Musketeer series (1968-1970). Inspired by Old Masters such as Velázquez and Rembrandt, these characters are depicted with thick beards and imposing mustaches, symbols of virility, bravery, and authority. The musketeers embody powerful and timeless masculine archetypes, blending historical grandeur with personal introspection.

The beard becomes a defining feature, marking these figures with a mixture of nobility and irony. At times rendered with precise detail, at others sketched with bold, sweeping brushstrokes, it conveys an untamed creative vitality. These proud, martial musketeers seem to perform roles, oscillating between heroic might and playful caricature.

Aware of his advancing age, Picasso projected himself onto these characters, using their beards as symbols of experience, resilience, and creative power in the face of time's inevitable passage. Through them, he reaffirmed his artistic mastery, transforming a historical reference into a deeply personal and dynamic expression of identity, memory, and creative immortality.

Mousquetaire à la pipe, 1968

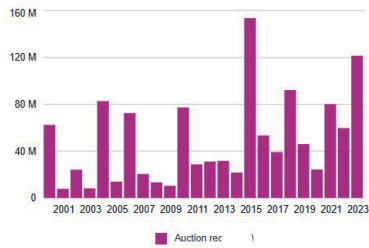
The use of the bearded man motif in Picasso's work goes far beyond a mere aesthetic choice—it becomes a symbolic mirror of the human experience. From the melancholy of the elderly figures in the Blue Period to the Cubist fragmentation, from the mythological power of the Minotaur to the theatrical authority of the Musketeers, this bearded face transcends eras and styles, continually charged with new meanings.

As a symbol of wisdom, desire, struggle, and introspection, it reflects the artist's personal concerns while resonating universally. By shaping and deconstructing this figure, Picasso probes the mysteries of life, time, and creation, leaving behind a timeless archetype that conveys a deeply human and infinitely rich artistic vision.

Pablo Picasso's metrics

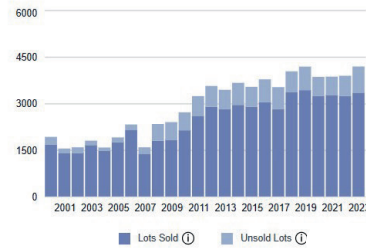
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Auction record



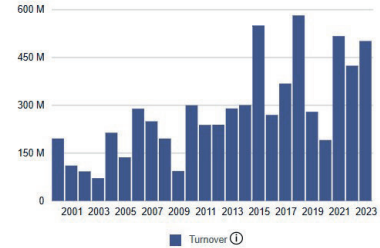
3360

Lots Sold 2023



\$ 501,574,431

Turnover 2023



Comparative results of the artwork



Portrait De Femme (Françoise), 1946
65.7 x 50.5 cm

Christie's 2020
Auction Result

600 000 \$

Excluding Commissions



Faune, Joueur De Diauli, 1946
65.4 x 50.9 cm

Christie's 2008
Auction Result

617 085 \$

Excluding Commissions



La Colombe, 1958
41.9 x 27.3 cm

Sotheby's 2013
Auction Result

653 000 \$

Excluding Commissions

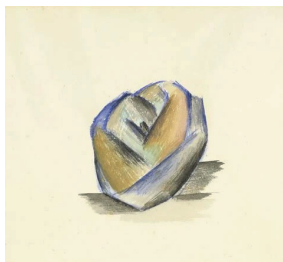


Portrait De Françoise, 1946
65.4 x 50.2 cm

Christie's 2012
Auction Result

670 000 \$

Excluding Commissions



Pomme, 1909
25 x 28.5 cm

Sotheby's 2019
Auction Result

1005 793 \$

Excluding Commissions



Tête D'Homme, 1969
66.5 x 50 cm

Sotheby's 2019
Auction Result

492 550 \$

Excluding Commissions



Tête De Femme, 1907
63 x 48,5 cm

Sotheby's 2020
Auction Result

1169 291 \$

Excluding Commissions



Tête D'Homme À La Cigarette, 1964
66 x 22.5 cm.

Sotheby's 2008
Auction Result

493 000 \$

Excluding Commissions