

# Picasso



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Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), is perhaps the outstanding figure in the history of art in the 20th century, known for his extraordinary virtuosity and variety of style, his vast oeuvre has been divided into distinct periods: Blue, Rose, Negro, Cubist, Neoclassical, and Surrealist, and for his admirers this range of styles is seen as the surest sign of his unfettered genius. But for his critics this stylistic inconsistency signals a lack of artistic sincerity. Looking specifically at Picasso's style, Elizabeth Cowling argues that Picasso came to equate stylistic inconsistency with sterility, and that in drawing freely upon the work of other artists, he sought to emulate the formal and emotional range of the actor who can adopt different personae at will. Whereas traditionally artists have tended to achieve variety and meaning through their subject matter, Picasso shared his contemporaries' suspicion of literary themes and gradually reduced his subject matter to a handful of standardized motifs, such as the woman seated in a chair, the artist and his model and the still life, using a vast array of different styles as the principal means of communicating ideas and feelings. In short, style is meaning in Picasso's art; his notoriously mercurial nature found expression in stylistic variety and experimentation. Elizabeth Cowling attempts to weave biography and analysis into a compelling narrative. The 600 illustrations include all of Picasso's major works up to the beginning of World War II, and these are juxtaposed with their sources - Old Masters,

contemporary artists, found objects, and Picasso's own drawings and sketches - to make a visually telling counterpoint to the arguments of the text.

作者介绍:

About the Author

Elizabeth Cowling teaches in the Department of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh and is the cocurator of the forthcoming Matisse/Picasso exhibition (2002-3). She also co-curated the exhibition Picasso: Sculptor-Painter held at the Tate, London, in 1994. Her previous publications include the Tate exhibition catalogue, On Classic Ground (1990). Author's Residence: Edinburgh

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