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MUSÉE MATISSE



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Matisse et Picasso, la comédie du modèle

Matisse and Picasso, the comedy of the model

23 June - 29 September 2018

Musée Matisse - Nice (France)

Curator: Claudine Grammont, Director of the Musée Matisse



Héléne Adant

Matisse dessine Lydia, Le Régina, Nice, v. 1952, print from a digital document

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Matisse et Picasso, la comédie du modèle is the leading exhibition in an impressive cultural line-up organized by the city of Nice in 2018, proof of the artistic dynamism out in place by Christian Estrosi, the Mayor of Nice, President of the Nice Côte d'Azur metropolitan area and Vice President of the Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur region. Thanks to its ambitious cultural policies, Nice offers an array of cultural activities all year round, including large-scale exhibitions, thereby establishing itself as a major arts centre, of national and international standing.

This exhibition, **Matisse et Picasso, la comédie du modèle**, has received the prestigious 'National Exhibition of Interest' label for 2018, awarded by the Minister of Culture, Françoise Nyssen. Created by the Ministry of Culture, this label showcases and supports important and/or outstanding exhibitions organized by museums in France. It rewards an innovative museum offer and a previously unexplored theme, as well as the exhibition's scenography and educational events and activities, thereby providing a wide public with the keys to new readings or interpretations of the material and artworks on display.

The exhibition at the Musée Matisse in Nice is part of the Picasso-Méditerranée international cultural programme whose aim is to strengthen the links between institutions on all sides of the Mediterranean. For this occasion, the Museum benefits from the exceptional loan of forty artworks from the Musée national Picasso-Paris, along with one hundred and twenty prestigious loans of artworks by both Matisse and Picasso, coming from public institutions and private collections.

These two giants of twentieth-century art have not been presented together since 2002 as part of the Matisse-Picasso exhibition that travelled to London, New York and Paris. The Musée Matisse was eager to return to the extraordinary dialogue that exists between these two artists. Moreover, it was in Nice and its surroundings, in places like Vallauris and Vence that the two men regularly rubbed shoulders from the 1940s onwards, both finding their inspiration in this Mediterranean setting.

Stemming from the notion of the «comedy of the model» referred to by Aragon in Henri Matisse, a novel, the Musée Matisse seeks to re-examine what was probably one of the most successful examples of mutual artistic rivalry and inspiration in the twentieth century. Between dialogue and competitiveness, the relationship between Matisse and Picasso was the subject of a permanent exchange. Subtle but captivating resonances exist in the work of both artists, which should be examined in light of the relationship enjoyed between each painter and his model: one of the main driving forces of the reflection carried out by both artists on the question of the representation of the body and the creative act.

The exhibition is structured around four thematic sections, presenting in addition to the Museum's collection, one hundred and fifty odd paintings, sculptures and graphic works by Matisse and Picasso. A photographic section compares the two artists at work in their respective studios, highlighting the differences and similarities between them. The exhibition is complemented by a presentation of archival documents: letters, exhibition catalogues, reviews and films, illustrating the history of their relationship.

The exhibition **Matisse et Picasso, la comédie du modèle** is accompanied by an illustrated 160-page catalogue, featuring contributions by Claudine Grammont, Emmanuel Pernoud and Colline Zellal, and is published by Éditions Lienart, Paris

This exhibition is part of the **Picasso-Méditerranée programme, an initiative of the Musée national Picasso-Paris** and produced with the support of the Musée national Picasso-Paris. From spring 2017 to autumn 2019, more than seventy institutions have together developed a programme around the 'resolutely Mediterranean' work of Pablo Picasso.



www.picasso-mediterranee.org

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This exhibition is recognized as being of national interest by the Ministry of Culture /
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