

# NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

FOURTH STREET AT CONSTITUTION AVENUE NW WASHINGTON DC 20565 • 737-4215/842-6353

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## NATIONAL GALLERY ACQUIRES FIRST COMPLETE SET OF PICASSO'S BULL PRINTS IN U.S.

WASHINGTON, D.C. September 8, 1982. One of the greatest monuments of twentieth-century printmaking, a set of eleven lithographs entitled Le Taureau (The Bull) by Pablo Picasso, has been acquired by the National Gallery of Art, it was announced today by J. Carter Brown, Director. The first complete set to come to the United States, this recent acquisition will be on view from September 11 through October 10 in the East Building with twelve other Picasso prints on the same theme from the Gallery's collection.

Picasso became intrigued by lithography in the winter of 1945-1946, experimenting for long hours to achieve various effects. He was fascinated by the flexibility of the medium--that he could alter the image of the stone again and again without damaging the basic matrix. This versatility allowed his imagination to rework and refine different geometric shapes. The result, The Bull, is the first and most famous series to be completed.

( m o r e )

The different states of The Bull reflect Picasso's own development and can be seen as a parallel of the history of modern art. Thus, images characteristic of Picasso's expressionism, surrealism, and even cubism can be traced in them.

While the bull and the bullfight are closely associated with Picasso, it was not until after 1930 that the animal appears frequently in his prints. The bull takes on many meanings and is eventually joined by the mythological Minotaur. The symbolic bull themes culminate in the great 1935 print The Minotauromachy, a powerful statement about human violence and culture. This rich history of symbolism--including similar themes in his paintings and drawings--lies behind Picasso's return to the bull, after the Second World War, in these lithographs of 1945-1946.

END

---

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or photographs contact Katherine Warwick, Assistant to the Director (Information Officer), or Carolyn Engel, Information Office, National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. 20565, (202) 842-6353.