

Pablo Picasso

Theatre Picasso

Sep 17, 2025 — Apr 12, 2026 | Tate Modern, London, UK

Tate Modern invites visitors to enter *Theatre Picasso*, a major exhibition marking the centenary of Picasso's iconic painting *The Three Dancers* 1925. The exhibition brings together over 50 works by one of the most influential figures of the 20th century, exploring aspects of performance in Picasso's work. Coinciding with Tate Modern's 25th anniversary year, *Theatre Picasso* continues the gallery's history of presenting foundational figures from art history in fresh ways.

The exhibition is 'staged' by celebrated contemporary artist Wu Tsang and writer and curator Enrique Fuenteblanca, who explore the meaning of performance through Picasso's work. *The Three Dancers* sits at the heart of the exhibition, alongside famous paintings such as *Weeping Woman* 1937 and *Nude Woman in a Red Armchair* 1932. The exhibition also showcases prints, drawings, sculptures, textile works and collages, interwoven with key loans from leading Picasso museums in France. Tsang and Fuenteblanca will invite artists, dancers and choreographers to respond to Theatre Picasso in an accompanying performance programme of dance and flamenco.

Picasso was fascinated by performers and their boundless capacity for transformation, and he approached painting as a dramatic act in itself. Central to this was the construction of his own public persona or brand – Picasso 'the artist' – a mythologised version of Picasso which portrayed him as both a celebrated creative genius and an outsider. This figure accompanied Picasso throughout his life and continues to shape how we imagine the role of the artist today.

In Picasso's own work, this persona was often expressed through fantastical and striking imagery, such as in the wool and silk tapestry *Minotaur* 1935, which will be publicly displayed in the UK for the first time, on loan from Musée Picasso, Antibes. Henri-George Clouzot's 1956 film *The Mystery of Picasso* also features in the exhibition, following Picasso in his studio as he creates works in real-time, a study of his vigorous creative process in which we see him throw his body into the act of painting.

Picasso not only used drama and theatricality as a theme but also looked consistently towards popular entertainers and those pushed to the margins for inspiration, choosing to depict artists working in the circus world, bullfighters and flamenco dancers as well as artists' models. Such figures appear throughout the exhibition in works such as *Girl in a Chemise* c.1905, *Horse with a Youth in Blue* 1905-6 and *Bullfight Scene* 1960 from Tate's collection, alongside *Acrobat* 1930 lent by Musée national Picasso-Paris. Tsang and Fuenteblanca reflect on the status of these figures as they are represented in the work of Picasso, and within the context of the art museum. The exhibition recognises both the continued relevance of Picasso and the fascinating contradictions that run throughout his life and work.