ALMINE RECH

Pablo Picasso
Picasso Through the Eyes of Paul Smith

Dec 22, 2025 — May 3, 2026 | Museum of Art Pudong (MAP), Shanghai, China

On 22 December 2025, the Museum of Art Pudong (MAP) proudly unveils the year-end international blockbuster exhibition 'Picasso Through the Eyes of Paul Smith'. As the first stop of the global tour and the sole venue in China, the exhibition is co-organized by MAP and the Musée national Picasso-Paris. The exhibition adopts a contemporary perspective and presents seminal works spanning Pablo Picasso's entire career. The presentation constitutes the most complete and comprehensive survey of Picasso's art ever staged in China, offering Chinese audiences an unparalleled artistic feast.

A Century-Defining Master Who Redefined Modern Art

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) transcended the conventional role of "artist" to stand as one of the defining figures of twentieth-century cultural thought and visual revolution. Widely acknowledged as a founder of modern art, a pioneer of Cubism and a central presence within Surrealist currents, Picasso assimilated and transformed influences from Impressionism, Symbolism, Neoclassicism and Surrealism. Through relentless and bold experiment, he forged artistic paths previously unimagined. His works continue to prompt present-day viewers to reconsider image, emotion and reality.

A Panorama of Picasso's Core Creative Phases Spanning Half a Century Lands in Shanghai

'Picasso Through the Eyes of Paul Smith' showcases, with rare breadth, the full spectrum of the artist's iconic creative phases: from the melancholic gaze of the Blue Period and the tender narratives of the Pink Period, to the revolutionary reconstruction of Cubism; from the return to form of Neoclassicism and the psychological tension of the Surrealist period, to the emotional expression of anti-war works, the renewed dialogue with Western masters, and onward to experiments with mixed media, and the unrestrained visual language of his late years. It comprehensively reproduces the stylistic variations throughout the life of this most creative and influential genius of the 20th century. The 80 exhibited works include oil paintings, charcoal drawings, pencil drawings, sculptures, watercolors, relief paintings, prints, ceramics, and over a dozen other mediums, leading audiences into an in-depth conversation with the most subversive legacy of artistic revolution from the twentieth century.

From Paris to Shanghai: The Re-presentation of Picasso's Miraculous Life through the Contemporary Sensibility of Sir Paul Smith

As an iconic figure in contemporary fashion, Sir Paul Smith with his broad vision spanning fashion, art, industrial design, and lifestyle, is regarded as a major driving force in today's creative culture. His acute insight into colour, materials, and visual language positions him as an ideal collaborator, offering fresh interpretative pathways for Picasso. Invited to serve as Artistic Director of this exhibition, he infuses it with a new way of seeing within a contemporary context, drawing from his cross‐disciplinary perspective and keen visual sensibility.

This exhibition develops from 'Picasso Celebration: The Collection in a New Light', organized by the Musée national Picasso‐Paris in 2023 on the fiftieth anniversary of the artist's death. Now making its much‐anticipated appearance in Shanghai, the two museums have jointly selected 80 works and, while preserving the core spirit of the exhibition, have specially redesigned the display for the open, unique architecture of the Museum of Art Pudong. Rejecting the so‐called "white cube" fashion that has dominated recent decades, Sir Paul constructs an immersive scenography using colour, patterns, stripes, and objects to create a rhythmic resonance between artworks and space. Visitors can truly "walk into" Picasso's world and encounter the artist's creative universe as fellow travelers.

The Convergence of Tradition and Contemporaneity: Picasso's Renewed Presence in Shanghai

'Picasso Through the Eyes of Paul Smith' is a meeting of budding vitality and accumulated depth. The Musée national Picasso-Paris is located in the historic heart of Le Marais, while MAP stands as a contemporary landmark in Lujiazui. Their collaboration is not only a geographical connection but also a profound echo between tradition and contemporaneity, historical texture and urban future—much like the interdisciplinary dialogue between Picasso and Sir Paul Smith, both sparking new brilliance in different cultural contexts.

As the world's largest collection of Picasso's works, the Musée national Picasso-Paris is also the only institution encompassing all of Picasso's paintings, sculptures, engravings, and drawings. Its holdings include over 5,000 original works by Picasso and approximately 200,000 archive items, comprehensively presenting the artist's creative process from his early to late years through sketches, studies, notebooks, print series, photographs, illustrated books, films, and documents.

In this exhibition, Picasso's works are no longer fixed in a single context but acquire a fresh, contemporary mode of presentation within MAP's open, modern spaces, allowing the ideas and creativity of this master of the century to retain their sharpness today. Through deep collaboration with the Musée national Picasso-Paris, MAP extends its international curatorial reach and builds an urban cultural bridge connecting global artistic classics with contemporary cultural experiences.