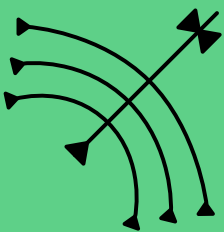


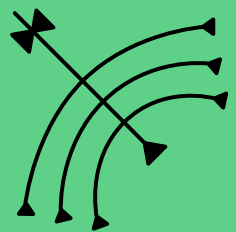
November 8, 2025  
—April 19, 2026



**A Hole in the Real  
Dora García,  
Pablo Picasso,  
and the Legacy  
of Mining**



Kin Museum  
of Contemporary Art



## **A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining**

Sixty years ago, a remarkable art outreach project took place in Kiruna: more than one hundred works by the most celebrated artist of the twentieth century were exhibited in the town hall under the title *Picasso in Kiruna*. The artist was then eighty-four-year-old Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), and the artworks were on loan from the Moderna Museet, the Nationalmuseum, the Gothenburg Museum of Art, and private collectors. The reason for this initiative was the seventy-fifth anniversary of the mining company LKAB. What could be more fitting than to pair the state-owned company—regarded as a spearhead of modern society and, then as now, dominant in Kiruna—with the most renowned figure of the artistic avant-garde?

Kin has borrowed sixteen of the artworks that the Moderna Museet lent for the exhibition in 1965, making the journey from Stockholm to Sweden's northernmost municipality for the second time. The museum has also invited Dora García, who was born in Valladolid, grew up in different places in Spain and is currently based in Oslo, where she is a professor at the Academy of Fine Art—to create a new work from today's perspective, taking the 1965 Picasso exhibition in Kiruna as her point of departure. Her perspective on Picasso's work and the anniversary exhibition is distinctly contemporary, engaging with questions of the artist's political commitment, natural resources, land rights, and the role of art in the 2020s. The exhibition's title—*A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining*—is borrowed from one of García's works, which references the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan's (1901–1981) concept of a point in reality where language and meaning collapse.

*Picasso i Kiruna* ran from September 4 to September 12, 1965, and was made possible through financial support from LKAB and the Municipality of Kiruna. Without the mining company's guarantee covering the substantial insurance value, the exhibition would not have been possible. It was organized by the Nationalmuseum in close collaboration with the Moderna Museet and the Norrbotten Museum. The Moderna Museet sent its curator—and legendary art educator—Carlo Derkert to Kiruna, where he, among other things, gave lectures to mine workers during their lunch breaks. The exhibition was an ambitious art outreach initiative in the spirit of the time—culture was to be disseminated across all levels of society throughout the country, and various types of infrastructure were established, including centers for photography and crafts.

Sixty years later, views on Picasso have shifted, yet the questions surrounding the role of culture, the geography of power, and the possibilities of art remain just as urgent. Through Dora García's work, *A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining* becomes not only a springboard for reflecting on our shared future but also a means of illuminating a singular event in Swedish art history.

Maria Lind

## Artists' presentations

Pablo Diego José Francisco de Paula Juan Nepomuceno María de los Remedios Cipriano de la Santísima Trinidad Ruiz y Picasso—known as **Pablo Picasso**—became the most talked-about artist of the twentieth century. He came to embody the archetype of the rule-breaking modern artist—an icon whose name entered everyday language. Alongside his fame and the cult of genius, he has been criticized for his objectification and sexualization of female models as well as for his uncompromising self-centeredness. Many contemporary artists—particularly women—feel alienated from the artistic ideal he represents.

Together with fellow artist Georges Braque (1882–1963), Picasso developed the Cubist style in Paris in the early twentieth century. They regarded painting as a kind of laboratory and sought to recreate the experience of seeing rather than simply reproduce what the eye perceives. Partly inspired by African masks and sculptures, they fragmented their subjects and depicted them from multiple perspectives simultaneously. This approach, in its first phase—known as Analytical Cubism (1907–1913)—resulted in paintings where the three-dimensionality of objects was rendered as a series of facets on a two-dimensional surface. The subsequent phase—Synthetic Cubism (1913–1923)—placed even greater emphasis on the picture plane, with paintings consisting of fewer but larger surface areas.

Born in 1881 in Málaga, Picasso moved around Spain as a child with his middle-class family, following his father—an artist—who took various teaching and museum jobs. Picasso received formal art training in Barcelona and Madrid, before moving to Paris at the turn of the century, where he became part of the bohemian avant-garde circles. In addition to “inventing” Cubism, he was among the first to introduce collage as an art form, incorporating everyday

materials into his work—such as pieces of newspaper, wood veneer, and cane chair seats. He also worked innovatively with scenography and costume design, notably for the groundbreaking Ballets Russes under Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929), and with sculpture, often incorporating found objects. Throughout his trajectory, he was extraordinarily prolific, and his work has been associated with both Neoclassicism in the 1920s and Surrealism in the 1930s, even though he was never formally a part of the latter movement. Picasso also explored photography, poetry, and ceramics. Having spent most of his life in France, he died in Mougins, Provence, in 1973.

One of his most famous works is the black-and-white monumental painting *Guernica* (1937), which depicts the infamous terror bombings of the town of Guernica in the Basque Country. The attacks were carried out by the German Luftwaffe in support of the Spanish Nationalists—who had staged a military coup against the democratically elected Popular Front government—and served as an experiment in how to destroy an entire city from the air and demoralize its population. *Guernica* was created specifically for the Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 World's Fair in Paris, after which it toured many locations. In Sweden, it was shown at Liljevalchs Konsthall in Stockholm in 1938, and again in 1956 at the Exercishallen on Skeppsholmen, a space that later became Moderna Museet. The monumental painting is a dramatic composition and is considered one of the greatest anti-war images in art history. After many years at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the painting was transferred to Madrid and the Museo Reina Sofía in the 1980s following the fall of the Franco regime.

Picasso also worked with printmaking throughout his life, and his graphic works often reflect what he was simultaneously exploring in painting. It seems he turned to printmaking whenever he wanted to tackle a specific problem—such as in the 1920s when he focused

on classical, idealized depictions of the human body. He had learned the basics of etching in Barcelona as early as the late 1800s. During his early years in Paris, he created three series of etchings. Though he bought his first printing press in 1907, it wasn't until 1919 that he tried lithography. Between 1927 and 1931, he produced etchings for several books, including Honoré de Balzac's (1799–1850) *The Unknown Masterpiece* and Ovid's (43 BCE–18 CE) *Metamorphoses*. When the young publishers Albert Skira (1904–1973) and Tériade (1897–1983) launched the new surrealist-linked magazine *Minotaure* in 1933, it was Picasso who designed the cover of the first issue. He later created about a dozen etchings featuring Minotaur motifs, and the recurring theme of bullfighting also found its way into his graphic work.

Around the same time that Picasso was experimenting with new media—including photography and poetry—he also began using new printmaking techniques. The period from 1927 to 1937 was his most productive in terms of graphic work, with nearly 250 prints created. He began working in 1933 with the Montmartre printer Roger Lacourière (1892–1966), who taught him the sugar-lift technique, which allowed him to use brushstrokes and draw in black ink directly without building up the image from light to dark. The 1930s also saw several ambitious illustration projects, such as *Histoire Naturelle* by Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788), where Picasso humorously highlighted the characteristic traits of animals. After 1945, following an invitation from the printer Fernand Mourlot, he produced a large number of lithographs.

**Dora García** is an artist and professor who lives and works in Oslo. She sculpts and organizes knowledge as a material in itself. Through exhaustive documentary research, she delves into complex topics such as the history of the irrational and the subconscious, establishing links with great names in literature such as Robert Walser, Antonin Artaud, and James Joyce. Dora García's work encompasses writing, film, installation, and performance, focusing on stories that she herself organizes and stages, creating situations designed to engage the visitor and provoke unique and introspective experiences.

She has participated in major international exhibitions such as Manifesta 2 in Luxembourg (1998), Istanbul Biennial (2003), Münster Sculpture Projects (2007), Biennale of Sydney (2008), Documenta, Kassel (2012), and the 12th Gwangju Biennale (2016), among others. She represented Spain in the 2011 Venice Biennale and was part of *All the World's Futures International Exhibition Venice Biennale 2015*. She has held individual exhibitions in museums such as MACBA, Barcelona (2003), Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2005, 2018), MUSAC, León (2005), SMAK, Ghent (2006), GfZK, Leipzig (2007), Centro Galego de Arte Contemporáneo, Santiago de Compostela (2009), Toronto Power Plant (2015), Tensta Konsthall (2016), IVAM, Valencia (2018), and M HKA Antwerp (2023), among others.

## List of works by Dora García

1. *Picasso and Miners*  
Photograph, 1965

This photograph presents Bengt Dahlbäck, curator at Nationalmuseum born in Porjus, and Carlo Derkert, educator and curator at Moderna Museet, showing a reproduction of *Guernica* to the LKAB miners during their lunch break.

2. *Picasso Exhibition in Kiruna's Municipality*, reportage by Christian Hedlund for Swedish Television (SVT)  
Video, 1 minute 48 seconds, 1965

On the day of the opening of *Picasso in Kiruna*, Swedish Television journalist Christian Hedlund went on air to report on an outstanding cultural event taking place in the northern mining town. The camera panned across Picasso's paintings, bronze sculptures, and graphic works, which the journalist described as truly resonating with "the dramatic surroundings" of Kiruna. Hedlund's brief introduction to the program began with the question: "Why Kiruna?" The uniqueness of this event—so tangible in 1965—is now thoughtfully revisited in the text by Annika Öhrner, included in this folder.

3. *Annotated Stockholm Guernica*  
Catalogue, 2025

A catalogue from the *Guernica* exhibition in Stockholm (1956), dismembered, augmented, and annotated. The catalogue was published on the occasion of *Guernica* being shown in Stockholm during its second visit (the first time as at Liljvalchs konsthall in 1938). The monumental painting was shown in what would later

become the premises of Moderna Museet on Skeppsholmen. The catalogue was the new museum's first publication, and it caused a diplomatic dispute with the Spanish embassy, whose diplomats protested its explicit statement that the Basque town had indeed been bombed by German and Italian air forces on behalf of the Francoists.

4. Letters from the Spanish ambassador to Leif Belfrage, the Under-Secretary of State Foreign Affairs, forwarded in 1956 to the then Director General of Nationalmuseum, Otte Sköld
5. *There is a Hole in the Real*  
Gold leaf on wall, 2014

This work is part of a series of textual works that García has been producing since 2002. The text is a paraphrase of a paragraph from *Seminar XXIII, Joyce Le Sinthome*, by psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901–1981). In psychoanalytic terms, it refers to the fact that language transforms what cannot be said (the real) into the symbolic, and thus devours it, creating a hole. But in everyday language, this sentence can signify the threat of the unknown, the frightening possibility of the world's disappearance. Lacan was Picasso's personal physician for a time, serving as his therapist during the 1940s and also as the psychoanalyst of Picasso's lover Dora Maar (1907–1997), who played a significant role in the creation of *Guernica*. The work belongs to the collection of FRAC Lorraine.

## 6. *Landscape (End series)*

Video, 13 minutes 20 seconds, 2025

The film shows the LKAB mine in the Kiirunavaara mountain in Kiruna as seen from above. The hole in the ground which can be seen is the open pit that was in use until 1962 when the mining activities went underground. Footage by Hans-Olof Utsi, soundtrack by Jan Mech and Fridtjof Wesseltoft, film and sound edit by Dora García.

## 7. *Timeline Picasso/Kiruna (The Bug series)*

Free hand drawing (pencil, oil, paint) on wallpaper, 2025

A freehand drawing that represents a timeline—with comments and notes—mapping intersections among the histories of Picasso, the Spanish Civil War, *Guernica*, World War II, Kiruna, Kiruna's iron production, settlements in northern Sweden, Sámi history, and world history. The drawing is a subjective, personal diagram from the perspective of the artist, yet despite its subjectivity, it offers a compelling visualization of time in historical, cultural, and geological terms.

## List of works by Pablo Picasso

### 8. *The Two Acrobats (Les deux saltimbanques)*

Etching on paper, 1905

The etching depicts two young and slender acrobats, a woman and a man, and is part of a series with a circus theme titled *La suite de saltimbanques*. The fine lines play with the soft tonalities that the artist uses for the shadows cast beside the figures. The image breathes melancholy and introspection, much like many other

works from the so-called *Pink Period* that last from 1904 to 1906, which begins when Picasso moves permanently from Barcelona to Paris. At that time, the palette shifts from the cooler colors of the earlier *Blue Period* to warmer pink hues. The subject matter also changes: the emaciated beggars are replaced by traveling acrobats and other figures connected to the world of the circus. This often poor but still independent group was socially marginalized, just like Picasso and his fellow artists of the same era.

*Les deux saltimbanques* is part of a series of fifteen etchings made for the poetry collection *Poèmes* (1905) by the artist's close friend André Salmon (1881–1969). At that time, both lived together with other well-known artists, writers, theater workers, and gallery owners in the legendary Bateau-Lavoir, an occupied, dilapidated house in the 18th arrondissement of Paris that also functioned as a club. The etching was printed in 1913 by Louis Fort and published by Ambroise Vollard (1866–1939), another of Picasso's close friends and the gallerist who gave him his first exhibition in Paris in 1901. Salmon was also a critic and one of the first to write about the early avant-garde in France.

### 9. *Nude Woman (Femme nue)*

Etching, drypoint on paper, 1913–1914

This black-and-white etching made with drypoint depicts a naked woman and is created in Picasso's analytical cubist style. From around 1907, the artist experimented closely with his colleague Georges Braque (1882–1963) with a new kind of image-making, which came to be called Cubism. They broke up the flat picture surface and could thereby depict three-dimensionality without the naturalistic method of realism. Instead, volumes are built up using facets, often in paintings, drawings, and—as here—in graphic prints with only one or a few colors. The difference between the depicted subject and the image itself is emphasized, in contrast to how art

since the Renaissance, when linear perspective was introduced, has sought to create an illusion—in that tradition, image and subject are expected to resemble each other as closely as possible.

*Femme nue* was made especially for the play *The Siege of Jerusalem: The Great Heavenly Temptation of Saint Matorel (Le Siège de Jérusalem: grande tentation céleste de Saint Matorel)* in three acts by Picasso's close friend Max Jacob (1876–1944), which was published in book form in 1905 by Picasso's then-gallerist Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1884–1979). The two friends sometimes lived together in Paris, and Jacob introduced Picasso to, among others, the poet Guillaume Apollinaire (1880–1918), who had a profound influence on the artist. Against the background of the Roman siege of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the play symbolically depicts the author's spiritual journey from Judaism to Christianity and his conversion to Catholicism. Jacob is considered a link between Symbolism and Surrealism. He was arrested by the Gestapo in 1944 and died in a concentration camp.

This print once belonged to Nell Walden (1887–1975), organizer, publisher, writer, exhibition producer, artist, and art collector, born in Karlskrona, who donated the work to the Moderna Museet in 1958. Together with her husband Herwarth Walden, she ran a magazine and a gallery in Berlin in the 1910s, both called *Der Sturm*, focusing on German Expressionism and Italian Futurism.

10. *Painter with Knitting Model (Peintre et modèle tricotante)*  
Etching on paper, 1927

With elegant lines, Picasso here depicts an artist wearing only underwear in front of an easel with a canvas, in the process of creating an abstract image. To the left of the image sits a clothed female model with her head lowered toward the knitting she is working on. The theme of the artist and the model in the studio

is a recurring subject in his work. This work is one of thirteen illustrations for Honoré de Balzac's (1799–1850) 1831 novella *The Unknown Masterpiece*, which centers on a fictional seventeenth-century painter's attempt to capture life itself on canvas, using female beauty as his point of departure. Picasso was fascinated by the story and returned to it in several works. In 1931, Ambroise Vollard (1867–1939) published the novella with Picasso's illustrations in an edition of 340 copies, printed at Studio Louis Fort in Paris.

11. *Blind Minotaur Guided by a Young Girl at Night, I (Minotaure aveugle guidé par une fillette, I)*  
Etching on paper, 1934

Picasso created a series of etchings featuring the blind Minotaur, a recurring and important motif throughout the 1930s. In Greek mythology, the Minotaur—half man, half bull—lived in a labyrinth beneath King Minos's palace in Crete and was eventually slain by Theseus with the help of Ariadne's red thread.

For Picasso, the Minotaur is a powerful yet vulnerable figure embodying both human and animal instincts—an image that some suggest represents the artist's alter ego. In the etching, the blind monster is led to the left by a girl carrying flowers, toward a young sailor shown in profile with his legs and arms crossed. In the background, two older sailors are seen on a sailboat near a shore.

To the left of the main scene is a “picture within a picture” resembling an illustration Picasso did for a book by poet Benjamin Péret (1899–1959). That image was inspired by Jacques-Louis David's famous *Death of Marat* (1793), which depicted the revolutionary Marat murdered in his bath. Picasso's version inverts David's composition and adds a woman with an open mouth and a knife. The etching plate was altered no fewer than twelve times before this final print.

12. *Figure (Figure)*  
Lithograph on paper, 1929

*Figure* is a lithograph featuring a white, heavily stylized and deconstructed female body in the foreground on the right. In the dark, diagonally behind it, is a so-called cabane—a beach hut that could be rented and which held strong erotic significance for the artist. Throughout the 1920s, people on beaches were a central motif for Picasso, with references to both classicism and modernism; the beach became a stage where different scenes played out. This image exemplifies how the forms of the female body were reduced during this period, and the size and proportion of body parts became surreal: here, the head is the size of a pinhead and the breasts resemble peas. Human anatomy is reshaped, and the figure becomes both human and sculpture—both recognizable and strange. Picasso never officially joined the Surrealists but socialized with several of them, especially poets Louis Aragon (1897–1982) and Paul Éluard (1895–1952), as well as ethnologist and writer Michel Leiris (1901–1990).

In the summer of 1929, Picasso spent time at the seaside resort of Dinard on the Atlantic coast with his wife Olga Khokhlova (1891–1955) and their eight-year-old son Paulo. Also present—though in secret—was his mistress, Marie-Thérèse Walter (1909–1977), who modeled for a number of beach scenes depicting bathing and playful figures. The lithograph was printed by Studio Mourlot in an edition of three hundred copies.

13. *The Ostrich (L'autruche)*  
Etching, aquatint, hard ground, 1936

The image depicts an ostrich in motion and is part of a series of prints the artist created for a new edition of the book *Histoire Naturelle* by Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon (1707–1788).

The book is one of the major scientific studies of nature from the eighteenth century and was posthumously republished in 1942 by the art dealer and publisher Ambroise Vollard (1867–1939). The original thirty-six volumes—which by the time Picasso made his prints were scientifically outdated—cover the realms of animals and minerals. Picasso's graphic series, however, focuses only on animals. His aquatint etchings are rendered in a more naturalistic style than usual, though with a light touch, flowing lines, and a humorous tone. The series was printed at the Atelier Lacourrière-Félaut in Montmartre.

14. *The Portrait of Ambroise Vollard (Portrait de Vollard, I)*  
Etching, aquatint, 1937

This is one of four portraits of Ambroise Vollard (1867–1939) that Picasso made in 1937. Vollard was one of the most celebrated art dealers and publishers of the early Parisian avant-garde. Early in his career, he worked with artists such as Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890), Auguste Renoir (1841–1919), Paul Gauguin (1848–1903), and Paul Cézanne (1839–1906). He supported Picasso during the so-called *Blue* and *Rose Periods* at the beginning of the century, and it was Vollard who organized Picasso's very first exhibition in Paris in 1901. As early as 1910, Picasso painted a Cubist portrait of the art dealer, even though Vollard was skeptical of Cubism and stopped exhibiting Picasso during that period. Nevertheless, they continued to collaborate on projects such as the publication of graphic works.

The portrait depicts Vollard with a lowered gaze and a worried expression. The aquatint technique gives the image a painterly impression with soft, loose contours. This is the final print in the so-called *Vollard Suite*, which consists of one hundred etchings, most in a neoclassical style. The series was commissioned and published by Vollard himself. Several of the prints in the suite reference Honoré

de Balzac's (1799–1850) novella *The Unknown Masterpiece* from 1831, which tells the story of an artist attempting to capture life itself in a painting, inspired by female beauty. The story fascinated Picasso, who received paintings by Renoir and Cézanne in exchange for the series. It was printed in an edition of 300 copies by the Paris printer Roger Lacourière (1892–1966) and was completed in 1937. Two years later, Vollard died in a car accident.

15. *The Dream and Lie of Franco, Etching I and Etching II*  
(*Sueno y Mentira de Franco, Planche I y Planche II*)  
Etching, hard ground, aquatint on paper, 1937

*Franco's The Dream and Lie* is a satire of General Franco and his desire to save Spain from “atheistic socialism” during the Spanish Civil War. The civil war began in 1936 with a military coup by the nationalist forces led by Franco against the democratically elected Popular Front government. From having been completely uninterested in politics, Picasso here took a passionate stand for the Popular Front government. The work consists of two sheets with nine images each, arranged like a comic strip, where the sadistic monster Franco is ridiculed; he is portrayed, among other things, with a gigantic penis, riding a pig, destroying a sculpture, and fighting a bull that represents Spain. The sheets are to be read from right to left, because they were made on plates that become mirrored when printed. The visual language is simplified and has elements reminiscent of children's drawings.

The aquatint technique is based on intaglio printing, which allows for gray tones to be produced in the image. An aquatint is made from a copper plate that has been dusted with a layer of resin or asphalt powder. The plate is then heated so that the grains melt onto the surface and is then left to cool. The actual etching occurs when the motif is painted on with a brush dipped in acid, which creates

soft tonal values. In this work, it is worth noting that fourteen of the “comic panels” contain gray tones, while four are based solely on line drawing.

The first fourteen “comic panels” were made in January 1937, in support of the Republican government and the many Spanish refugees who had fled to France, where Picasso had lived since the beginning of the century. The last four “panels” were added at the beginning of June that same year, after the much-discussed bombings of the small town of Guernica in the Basque Country. The terror bombings were carried out by the German Luftwaffe in support of the Nationalists, serving both to test how an entire city could be destroyed from the air and to study methods of demoralizing the population. The massacre in Guernica later became the subject of Picasso's famous monumental painting titled *Guernica*, which was created specifically for the Spanish Pavilion at the World's Fair in Paris in 1937. In the later images, satire is replaced by suffering, and several of the motifs can be recognized from the monumental painting—for example, burning houses and despairing women and children. The work also includes a sheet with a poem by Picasso. The three sheets were sold together in an edition of one thousand copies at the Spanish Pavilion.

16. *The Dove in Flight (La colombe en vol)*  
Lithography, 1950

The dove is a recurring motif in Picasso's art, dating back to his childhood, when his father—an artist who specialized in painting doves—taught him the technique. This image of a dove is a lithograph in which the artist drew with crayon and ink pen on a zinc plate. It is one of four versions of flying doves that he created for *the Second World Congress of the Defenders of Peace* in Sheffield in November 1950, where it adorned the official poster. In addition, an edition

of fifty copies and five artists' proofs were printed, consisting only of the dove motif itself. However, this was not his first peace dove made in the name of the peace movement—he had already created one in 1949 for the *World Peace Congress* in Paris.

Picasso's political awakening came during the Spanish Civil War (1937–1939). After the Second World War, he also joined the French Communist Party. He had been a pacifist since his youth and participated in several peace congresses during the period 1948 to 1951—for example, he traveled personally to the congress in Sheffield, where he specifically requested to give a speech. The congress was organized by the *World Peace Council*, which was dominated by communists, supported by the Soviet Union, and engaged peace activists from all over the world. It condemned the atomic bomb and the U.S. invasion of Korea. In connection with the *Stockholm Peace Appeal*, which was decided upon in Stockholm in March 1950, the congress demanded a total ban on nuclear weapons and strict international monitoring of compliance. Within two weeks, one and a half million signatures were collected, and just over three months later, the number had reached two hundred million.

17. *Youth (Jeunesse)*  
Lithography, 1950

As a committed pacifist, Picasso was invited to create the poster for the *International Youth Conference to Ban Atomic Weapons*, which took place in Vienna in 1950. This detailed lithograph in a neoclassical style served as the poster's illustration. A young man and a young woman are depicted in profile, their faces turned toward each other. The woman's hair is braided, and she wears a wreath of flowers. They hold a white dove in their hands—a symbol of peace—along with a palm leaf in the background. The contrast between the white areas and the dark background is strong.

18. *David and Bathsheba (David et Bethsabée)*  
Lithography, 1947

This lithograph from 1947 is a paraphrase of Lucas Cranach the Elder's (1472–1553) painting from 1526 titled *David and Bathsheba*. Picasso created thirteen different versions of the same subject; this edition was printed in particular by Fernand Mourlot (1895–1988) in Paris in an edition of fifty copies. The subject is taken from the Old Testament and tells the story of how King David sees the beautiful Bathsheba, the wife of one of his generals, bathing—whereupon he falls in love with her and seduces her. They eventually marry and have a son, Solomon, whose temple becomes the first in Jerusalem. In medieval literature, David is considered a prefiguration of Jesus and Bathsheba of the Church. In the image, David—with a large head and harp in hand—is seen gazing down at Bathsheba and her attendants from a balcony. Only the feet and ankles of the bathing woman are visible.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, Picasso created a series of graphic prints, drawings, and paintings based on specific historical artworks, mainly by Cranach, Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669), and Francisco Goya (1746–1828). It was both an attempt to measure himself against “the old masters” and an expression of his ambition to add something new. The lines in this lithograph are fluid, almost sketch-like, and remain in black and white—just like the image he was working from. He had, in fact, received a catalogue from a Cranach exhibition in Berlin in 1937 containing black-and-white reproductions, from his then-gallerist Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler (1884–1979).

That same year, Picasso's paintings—along with works by over a hundred other avant-garde artists—were included in the Nazis' infamous traveling exhibition *Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art)*, which condemned modern art as diseased and depraved.

19. *The Departure (Le depart)*  
Lithography, 1950–1951

The subject of *The Departure* is likely drawn from Walter Scott's (1771–1832) romantic novel *Ivanhoe* (1819), which is set in medieval England. In this lithograph—considered one of Picasso's most complex prints—a masked knight in armor rides from left to right across the image. He is accompanied by a page, and from a window above them appears a woman with loose hair and outstretched arms. She is the only figure who seems to belong to the artist's own time. A child sits on the ground in the lower right corner, at the feet of a standing man who occupies nearly the full height of the image. His counterpart on the left side is a woman.

Together with his printer Fernand Mourlot (1895–1988) in Paris, Picasso worked for over two months on a total of eleven different versions of this lithograph. He used pen, brush, scraper, and transfer printing. Transfer printing involves transferring a printed image from one medium to another—for example, from paper or film to fabric or ceramics. Worth noting is how the color ochre has been used to highlight certain parts of the image—including the knight's armor and the horse's caparison, the woman in the window, and the other windows in the background. While there are sketch-like sections in the image, the artist also worked with large, unified color fields that help create a sense of spatial depth.

20. *Bullfighting (Farol)*  
Linocut, 1959

“Farol” means “lighthouse” or “lantern” in Spanish. Picasso's work titled *Farol* is a linocut print issued in an edition of fifty copies by Galerie Louise Leiris in 1959. It was printed by Hidalgo Arnéra (1922–2007) using the so-called reduction technique, where a single

woodblock is used for all the colors instead of having separate blocks for each color. The outermost layer of the block is then cut away so the next color can be applied, and so forth. This means each color is printed over the previous one, creating layers that give the image complexity.

The subject is a stylized bullfighting scene with the matador on the left, the cape in the middle, and the attacking bull on the right. While the schematic black figures are surrounded by white outlines, the background is red ochre. Picasso had a lifelong interest in bullfighting and took every opportunity to attend events in both France and Spain. Bullfighting is a recurring motif for the artist, alternating focus between the bull, the matador, the arena, and the audience in works that explore themes of life, death, ritual, violence, and sacrifice.

21. *Standing Woman (Femme debout)*  
Bronze sculpture, 1948

After Paris was liberated from the German troops in 1944, Picasso was for the first time in several years able to travel south, which resonated in his work. This sculpture is part of a group that schematically depicts the female body and is said to be inspired by Mediterranean antiquity statues and cult objects, especially small terracotta figurines. It is a standing woman with slender semicircular arms held in front of the torso. The breasts are marked as two engraved circles, and the nose is long and prominent. Cast in bronze, it gives the impression of having been modeled in a soft material. After World War II, which Picasso spent in the French capital, it was once again possible to work with bronze, which he did in various formats. This particular sculpture was cast in an edition of ten.

During his lifetime, he created around seven hundred sculptures, approximately four thousand five hundred paintings, and many thousands of drawings. In addition, there are graphics, ceramics, jewelry, and more. His relationship to sculpture was more that of a self-taught artist, and he liked to surround himself with his sculptural works, while the paintings were often sent directly to exhibitions and galleries. It was only in connection with his major retrospective exhibition *Hommage à Picasso* in Paris in 1966 that the public had the opportunity to become familiar with this part of his artistic output.

22. *Woman with Arms Crossed (Femme aux bras croisés)*  
Bronze sculpture, 1948

This bronze sculpture depicts a woman using highly simplified forms. Thin arms are crossed in front of the body, and the face shows no features. The overall impression is phallic. Like its “sister sculpture,” *Femme debout*, it is part of a series in which the artist drew inspiration from ancient sculptures, especially terracotta figurines. Around the same time, after the end of World War II, he also began working with ceramics in the village of Vallauris, in the heart of the Côte d’Azur. These small bronze sculptures resemble the ceramic figures he created there.

## **Kiruna is Picasso: On the Exhibition *Picasso in Kiruna 1965***

### **Annika Öhrner**

*“[...] the graphic suite from thirty-seven, Franco’s Dream and Lie. It still affirms, from every angle, Picasso’s position as a revolutionary, and like most of what is in this exhibition, it has a vitality that truly resonates with the dramatic surroundings.”<sup>1</sup>*

*Christian Hedlund, segment on Swedish Television,  
September 4, 1965*

The exhibition *Picasso in Kiruna* opened on September 4, 1965. That same evening, Swedish Television aired a segment in which Artur von Schmalensee’s new town hall (1963) served as the opening vignette. The camera then moved to the clock tower and the ore heaps before, in the next shot, approaching works from the Picasso exhibition in the town hall atrium. The narrator suggested that Picasso’s vitality and position as a revolutionary found resonance in this place, and described a major event which, even by international standards, had successfully attracted important representatives of cultural policy and the art world, including from various corners of Europe.

The town hall had just been named “Sweden’s most beautiful public building” by the Kasper Salin Prize committee in 1964. The building was demolished in 2018, and its clock tower now stands beside the

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Hedlund, announcer for the segment on the Picasso exhibition on Sveriges Television, September 4, 1965.

new town hall, which houses the Kin Museum of Contemporary Art. Now, as Kiruna once again finds itself in the media spotlight—most recently through the widely broadcast slow-TV segment covering the relocation of Kiruna Church in August 2025—there is reason to revisit *Picasso in Kiruna*. The exhibition took place in a moment when Picasso's person and work were able to mobilize a wide range of actors locally, nationally, and internationally. At this juncture, the cultural-political currents of the time converged with artistic visions, partly mediated through the newly inaugurated Moderna Museet in Stockholm, where Picasso already held a central role. In this sense, *Picasso in Kiruna* can be seen as a stage where contemporary questions of art, cultural policy, and industrial society intersected. Here, I have sought to follow several threads found in the archives and contemporary media coverage in order to trace the various intentions at play.

### I. Traces of Picasso

The commitment of the city and LKAB as financial guarantors of the exhibition was in keeping with managing director Hjalmar Lundbohm's vision of integrating art and culture into the model community he had founded to extract the riches of the mountain.<sup>2</sup> The Swedish state had taken over as sole owner of LKAB a few years earlier (1957), and the exhibition formed part of the company's 75th anniversary celebrations, where employees and their families were also treated to bonuses, dinners, and performances featuring classical concerts and revues. A few years later, however, the Great

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<sup>2</sup> The planned budget for the exhibition was 40 000 SEK (Statens konstsamlingar & Moderna Museet, "Preliminary table of costs for the Picasso exhibition and the associated art study days," 20 August 1964, copy). LKAB and the town of Kiruna each contributed 16 000 SEK ("Excerpt from the minutes of the Kiruna municipal council meeting, 5 February 1965," archival documents, *Picasso 1965*, Norrbottens Museum Archive, Arkivcentrum Norrbotten, Luleå. See also *Kiruna: The City as Artwork*, Stockholm: Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde, 1993, and on the advent of industrialization in Norrland, Sverker Sörlin, *Framtidslandet*, Luleå: Teg Publishing, 2023).

Mine Strike would break out, initiated by the very core of the target group that the exhibition had sought to address—namely, the miners.<sup>3</sup>

Picasso in Kiruna also took place at a time when a new cultural policy was beginning to take shape, following earlier initiatives such as the state-run National Association for Fine Arts (*Riksförbundet för bildande konst*, 1930), the Popular Movements' Art Promotion (*Konstfrämjandet*), and the association Art in Schools (*föreningen Konst i skolan*, 1947). The inquiry *Art Education in Sweden: Proposals for Measures to Promote Swedish Aesthetic Training (Konstbildning i Sverige: Förslag till åtgärder för att främja svensk estetisk fostran)* was published in 1957 and recommended that the wider public should gain access to culture through information about and distribution of art. In the field of visual art, this involved networks of traveling exhibitions with artworks—sometimes originals, sometimes replicas—mounted on mobile panels and transported to schools, libraries, and community centers across the country. Distribution was a key concept here: culture was to be evenly spread across the vast land. These cultural-political and pedagogical initiatives of the period would eventually culminate in the new state approach to cultural policy, presented in the report *New Cultural Policy (Ny kulturpolitik, 1972)*, which the parliament adopted in 1974. In other words, the exhibition in Kiruna attracted considerable attention.

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<sup>3</sup> The Great Mine Strike (*Stora gruvstrejken*) was a wildcat strike at LKAB involving 4 500 miners from Kiruna, Luleå, Malmberget, and Svappavaara, taking place between 9 December 1969 and 4 February 1970..

The exhibition was organized by the Nationalmuseum and the Norrbotten Museum. Curators from the Nationalmuseum and the Norrbotten Museum in Luleå—including museum director Harald Hvarfner and curator Claes-Göran Forsberg—were among the many driving forces behind the project. Hvarfner served as county antiquarian of Norrbotten from 1962 to 1971 and, on behalf of the National Heritage Board (*Riksantikvarieämbetet*), had participated in surveying Sámi cultural areas in preparation for the establishment of hydroelectric power plants.<sup>4</sup> The commissioner of the Picasso exhibition, Nationalmuseum's museum lecturer Bengt Dahlbäck, was born and raised in Porjus and emerges, alongside Hvarfner, as one of the exhibition's key enthusiasts. Carlo Derkert, also a museum lecturer but affiliated with both the Nationalmuseum and the Moderna Museet, contributed to the local mediation of *Picasso in Kiruna*. Already in the 1950s, Derkert toured as an art educator, accompanying traveling exhibitions of modern art across the country, and taught art on Swedish Radio. He was likely a familiar figure in Kiruna, and below we trace his collaboration with the Gruvtolvan miners' union as early as the late 1950s.

Another institution, Moderna Museet, was in fact a decisive actor in this context. The museum's director, Pontus Hultén, had long been interested in Picasso. He was behind the presentation of the monumental painting *Guernica* in 1956 in the premises that would later become Moderna Museet, and in the early 1960s, together with

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4 From *Norrland's rivers and mountain lakes. The National Heritage Board's cultural-historical investigations in connection with power plant construction and water regulation (Från Norrlandsälvar och fjällsjöar. Riksantikvarieämbetets kulturhistoriska undersökningar i samband med kraftverksbyggen och sjöregleringar)*. National Heritage Board, 1960. The study was financed by the Vattenfall Board. The year after the Picasso exhibition, he also organized *Sami Handicraft—Tradition and Innovation (Sameslöjd—tradition och nydaning)*, an inter-Nordic symposium on Sami handicraft at the Jokkmokk Museum, May 23–15, 1966, Luleå: Norrbottens Museum 1967, and edited the anthology of the same name.

the Louisiana Museum of Modern Art outside Copenhagen and the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam, he appears to have sought to persuade Picasso to agree to a major exhibition in Northern Europe. For Hultén, who at this time was engaged in several projects in Europe and in New York, NY; Kiruna seems to have become yet another outpost for new art and for placing both Sweden and Moderna Museet on the map.<sup>5</sup> Although the Moderna Museet was still subordinate to the Director General of the Nationalmuseum—which in collaboration with the Norrbotten Museum in Luleå produced the exhibition—Hultén nonetheless had a clear presence in the project. Several of the Picasso works, for instance, came to Kiruna a year after having first been shown in *The Museum of Wishes*, the exhibition of borrowed works that he had staged to demonstrate how a collection worthy of Moderna Museet's stature ought to be assembled.<sup>6</sup>

The documents preserved from *Picasso in Kiruna* are thus dispersed among a wide range of archives and can be found at the Norrbotten Museum, Kiruna Municipality, LKAB, Nationalmuseum, Moderna Museet, and the Gruvtolvan union. They are also held in Picasso's personal archive in Paris and among Carlo Derkert's papers at the National Library of Sweden (*Kungliga biblioteket*). Testimonies of a never-realized Picasso monument in Kiruna appear in the sketches of the Norwegian architect Erland Viksjø, preserved at the National Museum in Oslo. Much information can also be gleaned from

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5 Other actors in the art field also perceived Kiruna as a platform for innovative art. Architect Ralph Erskine's urban plans for Arctic cities and the presentation of Olle Bonniér's *Minos Palace* at Kiruna's space base Esrange in 1966. See, for example, Ann Maudsley, "The Architect Who Made the Arctic His Own," in D. Golling & C. Minguez Carrasco (eds.), *Kiruna Forever*, Stockholm: ArkDes and Arkitektur Förlag, 2020, as well as *Healing the Earth. Olle Bonniér*, Norrköping Art Museum, 2025.

6 *Önskemuseet, The Museum of Our Wishes, Notre musée tel qu'il devrait être, Museum unserer Wünsche*, Moderna Museet, December 26, 1963–February 16, 1964.

the daily press of the time. The archives are at once revealing and elusive, containing surprising gaps that leave the story that's traced here still with missing certain links.<sup>7</sup>

In the archives, we glimpse the people identified as the intended recipients of the exhibition and the monument: at times the inhabitants of Kiruna, the workers in LKAB's mine, their wives and children, or politically active workers in the Gruvtolvan union. How the social transformation brought about by the large-scale mining industry affected the local population—particularly the Sámi—through complex processes has been described by scholars such as Elisa Maria López.<sup>8</sup> The social spaces available are clearly subordinated to the political and economic priorities of resource extraction. The production of meaning around *Picasso in Kiruna* in 1965 consequently did not include the Sámi, either as active participants or as recipients. Instead, as we shall see, they emerge in the archives as a compulsory, exotic projection surface.

## II. A Monument for Kiruna

There is much to suggest that the idea of a Picasso exhibition in Kiruna originally emerged to accompany a monument. The newly discovered artistic potential of concrete connects the planned Picasso monument for Kiruna to a period when the welfare state sought to improve citizens' living environments and invested in new housing.<sup>9</sup> In the early 1960s, Carl Nesjar produced several works

7 The most comprehensive documentation of *Picasso in Kiruna* can be found in the archive of the Norrbottens Museum. I would like to extend warm thanks to Karin Tjernström, archivist at the Norrbottens Museum, Arkivcentrum Norrbotten, for her generous support in locating and retrieving documents, as well as to the other archives mentioned here.

8 Elisa Maria López, *Transforming Kiruna. Producing Space, Society, and Legacy of Inequality in the Swedish Ore Fields* (diss.), Uppsala universitet, 2021; Sverker Sörlin, *Framtidslandet*, Luleå: Teg Publishing, 2023.

9 See Matthew Ashton & Erik Stenberg, "Material Networks—Art in Concrete and the Swedish Building Industry", i Th. Arrhenius, E. Braae, G. Ruud, *Architecture and Welfare. Scandinavian Perspectives*. Basel: Birkhäuser verlag, 2025, 175–192.

based on Picasso's cardboard models and drawings, with Picasso's blessing. In the winter of 1961–62, Nesjar was in contact with Moderna Museet and created the sculpture group *Déjeuner sur l'herbe / Breakfast in the Green* (1962) in the museum's garden. A few years later, in 1965, the sculpture *Jacqueline* was realized in Kristinehamn under Nesjar's direction. Siri Derkert worked on *Ristningar i betong / Engravings in Natural Concrete* between 1962 and 1965 at the Östermalmstorg subway station in Stockholm, consulting with Nesjar on the material. In the exhibition *Art in Concrete* at Moderna Museet in 1964, works by Siri Derkert, Picasso, Carl Nesjar, and Ingrid Sitter, among others, were displayed.<sup>10</sup>

The Norwegian architect Erik Viksjø, who together with Nesjar developed a proposal for a Picasso monument and a museum in Kiruna, had early on been inspired by his encounter with *Guernica* at Kunstnerens Hus in Oslo in 1938 and began a collaboration with Picasso in the summer of 1957, while working on the design of the new government complex in Oslo. Among other things, Picasso's drawing *The Fish* was transferred onto a wall in the so-called Y Block, a site-specific work that, incidentally, was subjected to severe damage during the 2011 Breivik bombing.<sup>11</sup>

The project for the Kiruna monument appears to have gained momentum in January 1964, as evidenced by a telegram from Pontus Hultén to Carl Nesjar, in which he writes that "Kiruna town and the ore" are very interested. He asks Nesjar to send cost estimates for both a ten-meter and a thirty-meter sculpture, as well

10 *Konst i betong (Art in Concrete)*, exhibition catalogue nr 40, Moderna Museet.

11 Espen Johnsen, "Viksjø og Picasso: Noen mindre kjente forbindelser" (Viksjø and Picasso: Some Lesser-Known Connections), in *Bevegelser i Betong. Arkitekten Erling Viksjø og kunsterne (Movements in Concrete: Architect Erling Viksjø and the Artists)*, Oslo: Nasjonalmuseet, 2020, 91–108.

as as much photographic material as possible.<sup>12</sup> Nesjar informed Picasso directly and promptly sent Hultén a number of photographs of his previous sculptures. He adds that “when it comes to costs it is difficult to give completely exact information” but offers a rough estimate of 100,000 SEK.<sup>13</sup> He urges Hultén to proceed quickly, as time is pressing: “Picasso is over 82 years old.” Calculations for a “35 m high monument” estimated to cost 600,000 SEK are found in LKAB’s archive, along with a quote from Svenska AB Naturbetong, as late as the following summer.<sup>14</sup> The estimated costs appear to have escalated over time.

Kiruna has an old “core” of communist miners. They are in the process of developing an idea for the town’s cultural life—a HOUSE OF CULTURE (like the Russian houses of culture)—and they are also very interested in the idea of a Picasso “sculpture tower” connected to a museum of modern art.<sup>15</sup>

Erling Viksjø’s collaborations with artists were the subject of an exhibition, *Movements in Concrete*, at Oslo’s National Museum in 2020. There, some drawings for a museum in Kiruna were shown, depicting a modern, elongated, low building placed next to a tall, vertical female sculpture. In the drawing illustrating the east-facing façade, the sculpture rises above the landscape, the mountain

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<sup>12</sup> Pontus Hultén to Carl Nesjar, Savigny-sur-org, a telegram, a copy, 1964-01-16, Moderna Museet’s archive.

<sup>13</sup> Carl Nesjar to Pontus Hultén, 1964-01-20, Moderna Museet’s archive. Carl Nesjar to Picasso, 1964-01-23, Picasso’s archive.

<sup>14</sup> Internal message “from BC to Tad/Man” regarding “the current monument proposal,” 6 October 1964; Quote from Svenska Naturbetong to LKAB, 28 July 1965. LKAB Archive.

<sup>15</sup> “Il y a, à Kiruna, un vieux ‘noyau’ de travailleurs – communistes de mines. Ils sont en train de réaliser une idée pour la vie culturelle de la ville, une MAISON DE CULTURE, (comme les Maisons de culture de Russie), et ils sont aussi très pour l’idée d’une ‘tour-sculpture’ Picasso lié avec un musée d’art moderne.” Carl Nesjar to Pablo Picasso. Picasso’s archive, Centre d’études Picasso.

contours, and the shaped heaps of excavated material from the mine. The sketch is both beautiful and visionary. The sculpture was designed based on Picasso’s motif *Seated Woman*, which he had executed as a small cardboard model in 1961.

The monument for Kiruna differs in an interesting respect from the other Picasso sculptures that Nesjar worked on, namely in that it includes an architecturally influenced addition. “The sculpture shall be integrated with an art gallery, so that the sculpture constitutes the entrance. It is originally Picasso’s idea, with a certain architectural use of his sculptures—so we hope the proposal will be approved,” Viksjø notes.<sup>16</sup> The drawing is titled *Draft for a Museum of Sámi Art and Culture in Kiruna*; in other words, this is no longer about a communist community center. However, there is a problem in this context: the title of the drawing has been uncritically used as evidence for a real project involving a Sámi cultural center. I have not been able to confirm such a project in other sources; it is not mentioned in any of the archives or press I have examined. As long as no further information emerges, I argue that the title should primarily be interpreted as part of the effort to convince the potential commissioners in Kiruna—and perhaps Picasso himself—of the value of a future Kiruna monument.

The Sámi reappear instead as a fantasy in the actors’ efforts to persuade stakeholders, and they also surface in a few letters preserved in Picasso’s archive. On July 7, 1964, Carl Nesjar wrote to Jacqueline Picasso, the artist’s wife:

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<sup>16</sup> Undated note by Erling Viksjø, family archive, cited in Birgitta Östling, “The Unknown Plan in Kiruna: Giant Picasso Sculpture,” *Norrländska Socialdemokraten* (NSD), November 5, 2020.

“Dear Jacqueline, it was a pleasure to see you and Pablo again. Thank you very much! I will try to find a Sámi outfit for Pablo. Could you send me his measurements? (Shoulders, size, etc.)”<sup>17</sup>

In September, Nesjar wrote again to Picasso, this time from Kiruna, where he was visiting with Viksjø and preparing the monument project in a town “surrounded by snow-covered mountain peaks and vast expanses in shades of bronze and leather.”<sup>18</sup> He attached a sheet on which postcard images of mountain landscapes, reindeer-herding Sámi, and a Sámi woman in Sámi regalia were pasted. Exactly how Picasso received this we do not know—and Picasso in Sámi regalia we are unlikely ever to see. As late as the summer of 1965, calculations for the construction of the monument were still ongoing, as documents in LKAB’s archive show. How and on what grounds it was ultimately rejected I have not been able to confirm in the archives—one guess is that it was considered too costly.

### III. An Ongoing Revolution

Since the 1980s, criticism has been directed at Picasso’s dominant position in art-historical writing, at a masculinized creativity and a female objectification.<sup>19</sup> Despite this, his artistic stature in the museum world remains strong, and Picasso is the subject of massive cultural tourism worldwide. However, Picasso’s role was different at the time of the Kiruna exhibition. Press reception in 1965 was enthusiastic, even though here and there one can discern a distancing from his art as an expression of a distorted or laughable perception of reality. It reflected a different Picasso.

<sup>17</sup> “Chère Jacqueline, it was a pleasure to see you and Pablo again. Merci beaucoup! Je vais essayer de trouver une costume de Lapon pour Pablo. Peux-tu m’envoyer ses mesures? (Epaules, taille, etc.)” Carl Nesjar to Jacqueline Picasso, 1964-09-15, Pablo Picasso’s personal archive, Centre d’Études Picasso, Paris.

<sup>18</sup> Carl Nesjar to Pablo Picasso, telegram 19641509, archive, see above.

<sup>19</sup> C.F.B. Miller, *Radical Picasso. The Use Value of a Genius*, University of California Press, 2021.

The political artist and creator of *Guernica*, his work depicting the consequences of Spanish fascism, dominated the image of Picasso in the media at the time of the Kiruna exhibition. *Guernica* had already been shown at Liljevalchs Art Gallery in Stockholm in 1938 and returned to Stockholm in 1956, when the large canvas was unrolled and displayed in the drill hall on Skeppsholmen, which was in the process of being converted into Moderna Museet. In the exhibition catalogue and the planning of *Picasso in Kiruna*, a dual radicalism in Picasso was highlighted, encompassing both the radical reformulation of visual language and his political stance. Picasso had been a member of the French Communist Party since 1944 and active in the international peace movement. Anti-war and peace motifs recurred in his art. These circumstances were known—certainly also in Kiruna—and likely played a role in the “matching” between the red town and Picasso.

Pontus Hultén at Moderna Museet used the Kiruna exhibition in the young museum’s expansion; several internationally renowned figures, for example, were considered as potential speakers for the opening.<sup>20</sup> In *Picasso in Kiruna*, the museum was able to extend its network toward constructed cultural “centers” such as Paris and New York by bringing a European giant to the “periphery” of Kiruna. Picasso’s art dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, was among the first names on the wish list of potential opening speakers, but the choice ultimately fell to the British art historian Roland Penrose, a personal friend of the artist. He gave the main address at the vernissage during this first visit to Sweden. Penrose, an artist,

<sup>20</sup> K.G. [Pontus] Hultén suggested at an early stage that Picasso’s art dealer in Paris, the German-born Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler—“art dealer, collector, and theorist”—serve as a speaker at the planned Art Study Days in connection with the exhibition, as shown in a letter to Harald Hvarfner. Per-Olof Zennström, a well-known Marxist author, critic, and artist, was also considered for involvement. Letters from Bengt Dahlbäck and K.G. Hultén, Nationalmuseum, to Harald Hvarfner, County Antiquarian, Norrbotten Museum, August 20, 1964. Copy in Nationalmuseum Archive, F1A21.

historian, and poet, was a co-founder of the surrealist movement in Britain, as well as of the ICA, Institute of Contemporary Art, in London in 1947. He had organized the traveling exhibition featuring *Guernica* that also reached Sweden in 1938, to raise funds for the Spanish resistance, and had published a biography of Picasso in 1958. Penrose gave the project international legitimacy.

In a letter to Bengt Dahlbäck, the commissioner of the exhibition, Penrose suggested a theme for the opening speech:

“I would like to give the title ‘Picasso and the endless revolution’ to my talk unless you feel that that might have a Marxist significance which I do not intend, or if you prefer the title could be ‘The past—Picasso—the future’. I am not a clairvoyant but this explains perhaps the link I want to make between tradition and revolution in his work.”<sup>21</sup>

Although Penrose here seems to want to distance himself from a purely political interpretation, characteristically, the title *Picasso and the Endless Revolution* was judged to have the right symbolic value in Kiruna and was announced to invitees and the press ahead of the opening.

In the days before the vernissage, Dahlbäck had reason to write directly to Picasso to elaborate on the visitors the exhibition in Kiruna would meet. At the last minute, he had the idea for a larger poster on which the full exhibition title would appear in Spanish: *Picasso en Kiruna*, written in the artist’s handwriting, and needed his approval. To appeal to the artist’s sympathy, he emphasized that the town’s inhabitants were workers in Sweden’s largest iron ore mine, together with their wives and children:

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21 Letter from Penrose to Bengt Dahlbäck, Nationalmuseum, June 9, 1965. Copy in the Norrbottens Museum Archive, Arkivcentrum Norrbotten, Luleå.

When I ask you to write the exhibition title in your own handwriting, in Spanish, “Picasso en Kiruna,” it is because I know that the miners and their families will see it as a personal greeting from you. I, myself will do a little promotion for the exhibition in the mine’s underground dining halls, and I believe the workers will come. But if you add your autograph, I am certain they will come.”<sup>22</sup>

Two photographs taken by the LKAB’s photographer in the mine’s dining halls confirm the information campaign. Bengt Dahlbäck and Carlo Derkert stand in front of miners with a reproduction of *Guernica*, also prompted by Karl-Axel Hultström, the Nationalmuseum’s driver. The images appear to have been taken on different occasions. The workers seem to pause during their meals or coffee breaks and listen attentively to the presentation. The interventions were brief visits of about ten minutes, with the direct purpose of attracting the workers to the exhibition itself. According to LKAB’s staff magazine, around ten underground mine restaurants were visited.<sup>23</sup> This unusual approach attracted attention and was described in a note in *Aftonbladet* under the headline “Picasso Went Underground,” which summarized: “The art missionaries’ efforts were greatly appreciated.”<sup>24</sup>

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22 Translation from French: “Lorsque je vous prie d’écrire le titre de l’exposition de votre propre main, en espagnole, ‘Picasso en Kiruna’, c’est parce que je sais que les mineurs et leurs familles y verront comme une salutation personnelle de votre part. Je ferai moi-même de la propagande pour l’exposition dans les réfectoires de souterrains de la mine et je crois que les ouvriers viendront. Mais, si vous mettez votre autographe sur l’affiche, je suis sûr qu’ils viendront. /..” A letter from Bengt Dahlbäck, Nationalmuseum to Pablo Picasso 1965-08-15. Picasso’s personal archive, Centre d’Études de Picasso, Paris. Inget svar från Picasso har återfunnits, eller en motsvarande affisch. No response from Picasso has been found, nor any corresponding poster.

23 “One in four employees saw the Picasso exhibition for free” (Var fjärde anställd såg Picasso-expo gratis), LKAB’s staff magazine, Skip, no. 29.

24 “The art missionaries’ efforts were greatly appreciated” (Konstmissionärernas insats blev mycket uppskattat), *Aftonbladet*, September 7, 1965.

This approach in 1965 of working art-educationally through direct encounters with the miners in Kiruna has been perceived as innovative, but in reality, it had a prehistory. In the archives, a well-established art-educational component with Kiruna's miners can be traced, which may even have been at their request. A traveling exhibition of works by Vincent van Gogh arrived in Kiruna in 1958. The communist daily *Norrskensflamman* announced the exhibition and enticed the miners in the invitation to a regular club meeting at Norrmalm School with the promise that they would hear a lecture by Carlo Derkert about van Gogh. The artist's thematic universe was presented as an argument:

Take the opportunity to visit the Vincent van Gogh exhibition in the auditorium of Norrmalm School. [...] Engineer V. W. van Gogh, the artist's nephew, to whom we are primarily indebted for the current exhibition, has expressed his wish that the exhibition be shown in a mining town. The artist himself once worked for a time in the Belgian mining district of Le Borinage.<sup>25</sup>

In 1961, Carlo Derkert returned to Kiruna with the traveling exhibition *From Carl Larsson and Zorn to Isaac Grünewald* from Nationalmuseum, which he lectured on. Derkert's pedagogy was grounded in Herbert Read's ideas about humans'—and especially children's—innate creativity, which should not be subjected to formal or thematic constraints, an anti-authoritarian pedagogy aimed at creating people for an egalitarian society.<sup>26</sup> These ideas may have taken root among LKAB's workers: the ground was

<sup>25</sup> Advertisement, *Norrskensflamman*, January 10, 1958, p. 2. Later, *Norrskensflamman* reported that "Mr. Derkert, an artist himself, had the ability to capture the audience's interest," and that LKAB had financed two busloads of members from Division 4, who also received lunch at the railway hotel. *Norrskensflamman*, under *Fackligt*, January 13, 1958.

<sup>26</sup> See the themed issue on Carlo Derkert in *Biblis*, especially Göran Odbratt, "Carlo and the Horizon Line: Sketches for a Portrait of Carlo Derkert" (Carlo och horisontlinjen. Skisser till ett porträtt av Carlo Derkert), *Biblis* no. 57/2012, pp. 25–36.

prepared for Picasso a few years later. With his local knowledge and pedagogical vision, Derkert likely contributed to Kiruna being considered early on for the Picasso exhibition.

#### IV. *The Picasso Exhibition*

Kiruna's streets were decorated for the opening on September 3, 1965 with red posters bearing the artist's surname in black. Picasso works had been transported north in the Nationalmuseum's van, receiving them from private and public owners in Gothenburg, Malmö, and Stockholm. After unloading, they were supervised by LKAB's armed guards in the town hall's archive before being installed. Although the exhibition period, September 4–12, was short, the opening hours were generous, from 12:00 to 21:00 each day.

The municipal executive committee met in the town hall, and citizens could visit the town's officials for various matters. But the building was also originally intended as an art gallery. After passing through the town hall's doors, with handles made of wood and reindeer antler adorned with Northern Sámi ornamentation by Esaias Poggats, visitors entered the large atrium.

The installation of the exhibition was meticulously planned by Claes-Göran Forsberg, curator at the Norrbotten Museum. Picasso works of various sizes and materials were displayed on white, movable exhibition panels placed throughout the ground floor. Painting, sculpture, and early graphics were shown on the lower level, while older graphics were displayed one floor up.<sup>27</sup> Larger panels extended from the columns supporting the two-story galleries into the main hall. Works were also displayed along the

<sup>27</sup> Norrbotten Museum, Luleå, Claes-Göran Forsberg to Museum Lecturer Bengt Dahlbäck, Nationalmuseum, May 27, 1965, Norrbotten Museum Archive, Arkivcentrum Norrbotten, Luleå.

outer walls, where panels created small rooms. On one side, a folding wall accommodated the smaller works. When the floor space was cleared, small pedestals were placed in the center of the hall to present sculptures, and when the floor was needed—which occurred repeatedly during the exhibition period—they were simply moved aside. Decades of traveling exhibitions throughout Sweden and the county had cultivated expertise in creating mobility for exhibitions. The installation of *Picasso in Kiruna* was well suited to be mobile but also allowed for close-up study of the works.<sup>28</sup>

This was a major Picasso retrospective, featuring a range of central paintings, collages, drawings, and prints. Here, *Picasso in Top Hat / Picasso en haut-de-forme* (1901) could be viewed up close, as well as a painting from the artist's Rose Period, *Acrobat Family / Famille d'acrobates* (1905) from the Gothenburg Museum of Art, Moderna Museet's newly acquired large collage *Bottles, Glass, Violin / Bouteilles, verre, violon* (1907) and a substantial suite of watercolors and drawings were also presented. Circus motifs from around 1905 recurred in graphic sheets, as did the so-called Vollard Suite, a collection named after the commissioner, Picasso's art dealer Ambroise Vollard, representing his late, classicizing period. *La Demoiselle* (1929), recently acquired by Moderna Museet with funds from the so-called *Museum of Our Wishes* in 1964, displayed a more geometric, Cubist form and was also featured in color on the front cover of the catalogue. A few works had explicit political themes, such as *Weeping Woman / La femme qui pleure* (1937), a mixed-media piece directly linked to *Guernica*, as well as *Franco's Dream and Lie I & II / Sueño y mentira de Franco I & II* from the same year. Altogether, the exhibition offered visitors a broad presentation of continuous creativity and political commentary.

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<sup>28</sup> Norrbotten Museum, Luleå, Claes-Göran Forsberg to Museum Lecturer Bengt Dahlbäck, Nationalmuseum, May 27, 1965, Norrbotten Museum Archive, Arkivcentrum Norrbotten, Luleå.

The exhibition catalogue was of a modern, international style. One painting was particularly emblematic of the Picasso constructed throughout the exhibition project. On an extra inserted sheet, an illustration of *The Painter / Le Peintre* (1965) is reproduced, a recent painting transported directly from Picasso's studio to Arlanda for onward shipment to Kiruna. It was provided by the Konstsalongen Samlaren, founded by Agnes Widlund, another actor in the project. She had for several years continuously promoted Picasso, with whom she maintained personal contact. Samlaren also hosted experimental activities involving a younger generation such as Hultén and his colleagues.<sup>29</sup>

The self-portrait is painted with light brushstrokes and depicts the artist in profile. With brush in hand and eyes as large as a child's, the artist fixes his gaze between the painting beyond the image and the viewer. This interplay resonates with the catalogue's selection of texts by Picasso himself, such as this one from 1945:

What do You really think an artist is? A simpleton, who has only eyes if he is a painter, only ears if he is a musician, or a lyre in every chamber of his heart if he is a poet, or only a musician if he is a boxer? On the contrary! He is at the same time a political being, who constantly engages with the destructive, burning, or joyful events of the world and shapes himself completely in response to them. How could one fail to care about other people and, in lofty indifference,

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<sup>29</sup> Eva-Lena Bergström, *Utan konst kan jag inte leva: om Agnes Widlund och Konstsalongen Samlaren (Without Art I Cannot Live: On Agnes Widlund and the Konstsalongen Samlaren)*, Stockholm: Appell förlag, 2023. Shortly after Picasso in Kiruna, Widlund presented the exhibition *Picasso igår och idag. En komplimang till födelsedagen (Picasso Yesterday and Today. A Birthday Tribute)*, in Stockholm in connection with Picasso's 84th birthday.

isolate oneself from a life that offers itself so abundantly rich? –No, painting was not invented to adorn apartments. It is a weapon with which to attack and to defend oneself against the enemy.<sup>30</sup>

— *Picasso, 1945*

In this way, the exhibition and catalogue presented an image of an artist who continuously seeks new artistic expressions, a political being in close dialogue with world events.

#### *IV. Kiruna is Picasso*

It is not easy, using photographs and the daily press, to determine how the town's inhabitants perceived *Picasso in Kiruna*. Lundbohm's ideal town, where residents were to be provided with education, recreational activities, and advanced art, seems to have given Kiruna's inhabitants a particular sense of their hometown—something that still endures.<sup>31</sup>

When Prime Minister Tage Erlander visited the mining towns in connection with the 75th anniversary, to which the exhibition was linked, he gave a dinner speech following the inauguration of the mine in Svappavaara, in which he praised LKAB's initiatives and what they had meant for the lives of the people in the ore fields:

The contrast is striking between the people in the photographs by the old Kiruna photographer Borg Mesc [SIC] and today's inhabitants of the communities.

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<sup>30</sup> Quoted from *Picasso i Kiruna*, Stockholm: Nationalmuseum Exhibition Catalogue 298, 1965, unpaginated.

<sup>31</sup> Elisa Maria López, *Transforming Kiruna. Producing Space, Society, and Legacy of Inequality in the Swedish Ore Fields* (diss.), Uppsala universitet, 2021; Sverker Sörlin, *Framtidslandet*, Luleå: Teg Publishing, 2023, Hans Henrik Brummer (red.) *Kiruna. Staden som konstverk*. Stockholm: Prins Eugens Waldemarsudde, 1993.

Nowhere among Sweden's major industrial centers can such tremendous changes in people's living conditions be demonstrated as in the ore fields during this century.<sup>32</sup>

A few days later, he also stood in Kiruna Town Hall and spoke before a large audience, with the panels displaying Picasso works temporarily moved aside.

The dual radicalism—both creative and political—constructed in the project, in the effort to generate sympathy between the artist and the workers' collective, seems, judging by reactions in the daily press, to have landed well. An article in *Norrskensflamman* serves as a final example. Here, the analogy between Kiruna and Picasso is taken to a new level, as are two figures who have walked hand in hand for almost a century: Picasso was born in 1881 and the following year he moved with his family to Galicia, where he attended art school. The same year, writes the Soviet-loyal newspaper, LKAB was founded and around sixty members of parliament took a boat trip to Luleå to inspect several mines. At the same time as Picasso's Blue Period and his first exhibition in Paris in 1901, two hundred members of Parliament visited Kiruna for the inauguration of a new steam kitchen, among other events.

Kiruna's counterpart to Picasso's gradual artistic development is described with examples from the exhibited works, and director Hjalmar Lundbohm's earlier art exhibitions in the mining town are described as the occasion when “one of the first Swedish communities which engaged artists for decorative embellishment.” The writer emphasizes, drawing on the catalogue text, that art is not something to decorate apartments with, but a weapon with which to attack and defend oneself against the enemy. Picasso's

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<sup>32</sup> “Tage Praised LKAB for Bold Initiative,” *Göteborgstidningen*, September 9, 1965.

work on *Guernica* (1937) and *The Abduction of the Sabine Women* (1962), created in connection with the Cuban Missile Crisis, is discussed, as is Henri-Georges Clouzot's film *The Mystery of Picasso*, which the writer has seen and which helps him articulate ideas about artistic vitality.

In the text, the alignment established by the Picasso exhibition between the town's inhabitants and the artist develops into a full-fledged fusion: Picasso is not only in Kiruna—Kiruna is Picasso.

## **Where is the hole? A Conversation with Dora García and Manuel Borja-Villel**

*Maria Lind (ML):* Dora, as an artist from Spain, I believe that you have been confronted more with Picasso than many of your colleagues and peers from other countries. Can you describe your relationship to Picasso and his work overall?

*Dora García (DG):* In 2023, it was the fiftieth anniversary of Picasso's death and I was invited, together with many other female artists, to participate in different exhibitions about him. One of them was in the Casa Encendida in Madrid. I told them that I didn't have anything to say and I felt that the context was not so interesting. They wanted female artists to react to Picasso, and to debunk him because of his attitudes to women. Although I celebrate that this happened, I thought it was not serious research—I did not participate.

Nevertheless, now I am participating in this exhibition at Kin with Picasso because I think the context is more interesting. As a student and as an artist of my generation—particularly as a female-identifying artist—we felt a strong dislike for Picasso. To a certain extent, this was because he had been pushed onto us as the ideal example of what an artist should be, of how we should be as artists, yet there was nothing in this model with which we could identify. We did not identify with an enormous production, with glorification of the genius, and of course, we did not identify with this context of “the artist” and “the model.” So many of us tried to get as far away from Picasso as possible.

But in my trajectory as an artist, I have seen a lot of Picasso. I even remember seeing *Guernica* when it was at the Casón del Buen Retiro, and I was especially impressed by the preparatory drawings

for it. In 1981, I celebrated with my family when *Guernica* was returned from New York—where it had been at the Museum of Modern Art since 1939—to Spain. For us, it was a massive event.

The rejection was more about the idea of “the great artist.” In addition, there is this idea of “The Other Tradition”—as presented by the New York critic Gene Swenson in his 1966 essay which is an attempt to construct a different, non-formal art history, not jumping from Picasso to Pollock, and I would identify more with this.<sup>1</sup> A way of telling art history, which doesn’t go through this qualification of the productive male artist.

*ML:* Manolo, what does your relationship to Picasso look like?

*Manuel Borja-Villel (MBV):* It’s similar to Dorá’s. I have also systematically rejected the notion of the romantic artist and the idea of genius that Picasso embodied, which still seems to persist. During the pandemic we all insisted that we were at a turning point regarding the art system and that certain types of mass, touristic, celebratory exhibitions made no sense anymore. Next thing we know, once the pandemic was over, a big official international “Picasso Commission” was constituted with the objective to organize a series of events to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of “the death of the genius” and to help revive the tourist industry. Many Picasso-related events, both in Spain and in France, were tinted with nationalistic overtones. Nationalism, heteropatriarchy, (cultural) extractivism, spectacle, etc.—all went hand in hand.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Other Tradition: A Text to Accompany an Exhibition* is a 1966 publication by art critic Gene R. Swenson that served as the catalogue text for an exhibition of the same name at the Institute of Contemporary Art, University of Pennsylvania. In the text, Swenson argues for a critical and scholarly reevaluation of twentieth-century art—particularly Surrealism and Pop Art—and proposes that the “other tradition” of art, characterized by nonformalist tendencies and often associated with Dada, Surrealism, and Pop Art, is as valid as the traditional formalist approach.

I first worked in a monographic museum, the Tàpies Foundation in Barcelona, and then, after my tenure at MACBA, also in Barcelona, I went to the national Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, whose collections pivot around Picasso’s *Guernica*. When I arrived in Reina Sofía, the collection was quite structured as a pantheon of famous male artists where each one had one or two rooms devoted exclusively to their work; Juan Gris had one, Salvador Dalí and Joan Miró two, Antonio Saura one, Eduardo Arroyo two big ones... Needless to say, there was very little space left for women artists or collectives. The sequence was linear and focused mostly on painting and sculpture.

It was also at the time when some people considered Reina Sofía to be a continuation of Prado. Both institutions were supposed to be part of a historical continuum that started with Diego Velázquez, continued with Francisco de Goya and, of course, Pablo Picasso, and ended with the generation of artists, which developed their work during Franquism, including Eduardo Chillida, Antoni Tàpies, Equipo Crónica, and others. All of them had contributed substantially to conform the contemporary art system in Spain, and whose poetics mirrored the myth of a democratic transition.<sup>2</sup>

For many reasons, this was problematic for me. Some of them were ideological, some were historical in content. Picasso’s *Guernica* is the keystone of the Museo Reina Sofía. As we know, this painting was an icon of the Republic’s fight for freedom during the Civil War, a symbol of the resistance against fascism, and an emblem for the diaspora after the war, and of life in exile. To promote in the Museo Reina Sofía the idea of a continuum of gestures and forms in the

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<sup>2</sup> Together with Germán Labrador and Rosario Peyró, I curated an exhibition at Museum Reina Sofía, entitled *Poéticas de la democracia*, which dealt with that subject. It was a kind of advancement of the last complete rehanging of the collection.

context of Spain's tragic twentieth century history, which included a Civil War and several decades of Franquism, was contradictory and extremely cynical.

*ML:* How did you work with *Guernica*?

*MBV:* We understood that the path of Picasso to *Guernica* in fact began with a sense of failure or frustration that he was experiencing in the 1930s. When *Guernica* was painted in 1937, he was fifty-six, middle-aged, and already convinced that the twentieth century was the “Picasso Century.” But “his world”—“his century”—was shifting in ways he could not fully comprehend. All his previous life he considered himself an anti-bourgeois artist, part of the bohemia of Paris. To be anti-bourgeois kept him in an area of comfort, since the “anti” implied the existence of the bourgeoisie and a very specific frame of reference, in which there was a separation between the private and public, in which anything could eventually be possessed and grasped by the hand (it is interesting the amount of hands that Picasso painted during the first decades of the twentieth century). The artist's studio, which was so important to Picasso, was a clear example of a private space set apart from the public sphere. But this system was disrupted with the rise of fascism in the 1930s. The world of fascism was no longer that of the bourgeoisie.

During the late 1920s and early 1930s, the art world witnessed the emergence of a new generation of artists and poets, including Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró, Luis Buñuel, and Federico García Lorca—a shift that, in some ways, failed to reaffirm Picasso's position in the art world. It did not matter how much they admired him or the fact that Picasso made a great use of Surrealistic techniques and language. At the time of *Guernica*, Picasso was suffering a crisis that was both political and artistic, not to mention personal.

We know that he began approaching the commission he received from the Spanish Republic for the National Pavilion of the 1937 International Fair in Paris doing a big number of sketches dealing with the theme of the artist and his model. But we also know of his insecurity, of how he was looking at history painting (David, Goya...) and how he was trying to understand his role in society, in his time, the role of a painter in a new time in which moving image and black and white reproductions were becoming central. To be a “painter” it might have felt as almost anachronistic. In its structure, *Guernica* recalls nineteenth-century paintings—such as Goya's *El 3 de mayo de 1808*—but we should also remember that the work was executed in black and white and possesses an almost cinematographic focus, as some art historians have noted.

We started building the new collection display, with *Guernica*, out of this sense of “failure,” moving away from the “idea of the master artist” and to understand the work in relation to its context. Or I should say, “contexts” in plural. *Guernica*, like all works of art, did not live just in the period when it was created, but in many other periods of history. Every generation adds meaning to the works of art it inherits. The meaning of these works are not something that is given exclusively by the artist, but rather it refers to a history of reception, of how the works are received in every moment and how the meanings are like layers that a work of art carries in itself, reflecting the position of the artist, but also the position the painting carries with itself all along history and to understand that its different meanings are often disputed by antagonistic segments of society.

All this led us to situating *Guernica* in a series of historical contexts, which were adding meaning. Firstly, we contextualized the painting to its preparatory drawings and included the photographs that Dora Maar took of the process of realizing *Guernica*. From then, we move into the Pavilion and its political agenda. Then to the international reception of the work during the Spanish diaspora and the fact

that *Guernica* was an object of cultural wars during the 1950s. We concluded by discussing the role it plays in constructing the myth of the democratic transition in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

*ML:* Could you please explain the journey of *Guernica* after Paris 1937 and until it came to Reina Sofia in 1992?

*MBV:* *Guernica* became a symbol of exile. For a time, some people insisted on its return to Spain, but the painting had never actually been there until 1981, when it arrived from New York's Museum of Modern Art. The perception that it had "returned" to Spain was deeply tied to its association with exile itself. Its "return" symbolized the homecoming of all those who, once democratic freedoms were restored, could finally return to their homeland. This painting represents a repressed history—the story of those who had to flee their country to save their lives, those who ended up in concentration camps in France or Germany after leaving Spain, or those who had to rebuild their lives in exile, in countries that welcomed them, such as Mexico, France, or the Soviet Union.

It's no coincidence that this canvas quickly became a symbol of all forms of resistance and the struggle against oppression. It also serves as an example of how a work of art can maintain its artistic specificity while fulfilling a social function—without falling into either false autonomy or political determinism. It is not surprising that when Picasso decided, in the 1950s, that the painting should remain at MoMA until Spain's political situation changed and it could begin its final journey home, *Guernica* became a focal point in the cultural wars. Certain sectors of American art criticism attempted to depoliticize the work, treating the Spanish Civil War as a nearly incidental element of its story. In other cases, *Guernica* became the icon of precisely the opposite. In fact, many protests against MoMA's political stances—or those of the U.S. government—centered around this very painting.

*DG:* I agree with you, Manolo. To me, an important element in the exhibition at Kin is the catalogue of *Guernica*, when it was shown in Stockholm in 1956. It's a very interesting publication, especially because there is a text by Picasso's gallerist Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, where he explains things with humor. For example, before the Civil War, when he asked Picasso about his political leanings, he said, "well, I guess I am monarchic because there is a king in my country." Picasso was always Spanish, so if there was a king, he was a monarchist. Kahnweiler says that it was the Civil War that changed Picasso and made him a communist. Then he stayed a communist through thick and thin, even if he was very far off from agreeing with Stalinism. But he nevertheless agreed to make the famous portrait of Stalin, which was not particularly liked by the communists.

According to the text of Kahnweiler, and I think this goes in the direction of what Manolo said, Picasso took a decision with the Spanish civil war, with the Republic already, on which side he was standing. I am sure that this also meant a reference to a younger generation of artists. I believe that he was certainly very aware of that, because he was a jealous man, in a professional sense. I remember in the memories of Alice Toklas, she mentioned that he was constantly worried about Juan Gris, and having serious doubts whether Gris was a better painter. In other words, he must have had many insecurities.

There is also the famous anecdote, I do not know whether it is apocryphal or not, of the Gestapo visiting Picasso in his studio in Paris during the occupation and asking if he might have made *Guernica*, and he answered, "no, it is *you* who made *Guernica*." He knew what side he was on. For me, that's a point of sympathy regarding Picasso, because not everybody made that decision. He was also very generous, he really wanted to raise money for the

Republic, and all his life he was generous with the Communist Party, representing them and giving them money. He put his wallet where his beliefs were, and this is something that also provokes sympathy.

The idea of exile, because for a long time *Guernica* was not in Spain, is interesting. I believe he even said that *Guernica* should only go back to Spain when it would be a Republic. But they interpreted this rather freely because it is still not a Republic. To me, it's deeply representative of the history of Spain—how democracy was achieved through enormous acts of collective amnesia—which makes it historically fascinating.

In the *Guernica* catalogue they mention how the previous tour of the painting, from 1937 to 1941, was made to gather money. Only few people liked the painting, so the tour was not successful, neither in terms of art criticism, nor in terms of money. This is also interesting, and yet another point of sympathy for me.

*MBV*: Dora, you point at several things, which are very interesting. One is this idea of Picasso as a myth that we together—maybe together with him—build. As complex a figure as he was, being the artist of modernity, he was also extremely superstitious. For example, he never wanted to make a will because he was convinced that the moment he told his lawyer everything, he would die. So, he preferred to leave a big mess behind.

Secondly, and connected to what you just mentioned, this relates to his communism. This is something that his family and certain critics—both avant-garde and conservative—have tried, so to speak, to erase, since it is uncomfortable to acknowledge that he once offered a toast to Stalin. There is a myth being built about the *Spanishness* of Picasso. The truth is that he applied for

French citizenship during the Second World War, and the French government did not accept his petition and later, he did not care anymore. He was really terrified during the war. He mentioned the airplanes and how they filled him with terror and if you see the paintings that he did before *Guernica* or after that, they are full of monsters. Monsters that seem to grab him. I think it is quite significant, as it adds meaning and contributes to a deeper understanding of his attitude.

Another comment: I think your title *There Is a Hole in the Real*—a quote from the psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan—is excellent here. At the Reina Sofía, one cannot help but construct a situated, contextualized reading of *Guernica*—one that operates on multiple levels: in relation to the pavilion, to its failures, and to many other factors, including the twofold act of remembering and forgetting. Can we make a hole, a symbolic hole in reality? By involving the mine in Kiruna and creating a timeline, something important is happening.

In the case of Reina Sofía, at the time of an exhibition we organized in 2017, and which was curated by T. J. Clark and Anne Wagner, entitled *Pity and Terror in Picasso: The Path to Guernica*, we decided to break the frame of discussion, which was then met with some criticism. We did some public activities in the museum in Madrid relating to different scholarly issues regarding the 1930s, the relation between Picasso and Lacan, etc. But the most important thing to us was to place the debate somewhere else and to understand that today the “geniality” of Picasso is also related to the fact that his figure and name are brands to be consumed. Thus, we decided to prepare a series of talks and actions not in Madrid, but in Málaga, the city where Picasso was born and that now appears to be haunted by his figure.

This was done together with collectives in Málaga who are fighting against a system of gentrification and real estate speculation that is based upon the omnipresent figure of the painter. Instead of working with the institutions that with their programs and exhibitions contribute to this “picassoization” of Málaga (Museo Picasso or Casa Natal), we collaborated with Casa Invisible, which is a squatted house, in which some of said collectives gather. We organized a seminar entitled, *Picasso and the Monster Institution*. By doing that not only the discussion was placed outside of the exclusive artistic realm, but also that the joint efforts of a National Museum and a squatted house meant a break within the cultural and political structure of the city, one that the officials proudly call the “the city of the museums.”

In that sense I always like to compare *Guernica* with the film about the life of Anna Magdalena Bach, *The Chronicle of Anna Magdalena Bach* (1968), by Jean-Marie Straub and Danièle Huillet. In that film, they deal with the life of Johann Sebastian Bach through his wife. According to the diary of Bach, his life is miserable, or that is how he perceived it. He is preoccupied with different things: how he will make ends meet, how the students and the children of the choir will behave, how he will complete the pieces commissioned by his patrons, among others. In that terrible life, in everyday work, there is a fissure, *un element de rupture*—which is music. Somehow the music makes a break. That is the element of hope in Straub and Huillet’s film.

But, what to do when music becomes a commodity, a merchandise, that is, when it does not have a liberating effect? In other words, what liberating power, what power of resistance has a painting like *Guernica*, when it becomes a brand name to attract tourists or gentrify areas. For me, the only way forward is to question the rules of the game—the norms themselves. We must not forget that

there is no revolution or resistance without a process of institution-building. There is no rupture without breaking the frame of reference, without self-questioning.

*ML:* It would be interesting, Dora, if you could speak about the context of Kiruna and your project in relation to Picasso. The exhibition in 1965 was certainly a spectacular event in the context of Sweden: one hundred works by Picasso coming to this mining town, as far north as you can go in Sweden. It was on view for only nine days in the City Hall, protected by armed guards from the mining company, whose seventy-fifth anniversary it was celebrating. People are still talking about this exhibition here, how they remember going to see the show as children with their school or with their parents. What is it that is interesting to you in all of this?

*DG:* Even today, Kiruna stands for eighty percent of all the iron produced in the EU. It is the biggest underground iron ore mine in the world. The Sámi people have always known that there was iron in the mountains. So, the success story of this mine is linked—from a certain perspective—to robbery and in a way slow extermination of an indigenous people, in fact the only recognized indigenous people in Europe.

On the other hand, from the early twentieth century the mining company produced a kind of capitalist paternalism: they wanted to create an ideal city. Thus, trying to get as far as possible away from the idea of the Western Frontier in the US—away from prostitution, alcohol, and harsh conditions faced by miners. They wanted to create a place for families, putting a lot of action in education and culture. This means that since the very beginning of the twentieth century, there was plenty of theater, cinema, exhibitions, and cultural activities for miners. The exhibition of Picasso should be seen in that context. It was partly funded by the mining company, LKAB, and I suppose it is connected to the Picasso revival which came in the 1950s and 1960s,

starting with the show of *Guernica* in Stockholm. *Guernica* was never in Kiruna, but I think that, at that time, it was the “image” of democracy, social democratic values, and confrontation with dictatorial regimes.

At that time, several dictatorial regimes were being established in South America, just a few years before the flow of refugees from the region began arriving in Sweden. An image of Sweden as a beacon of democracy and robust socialism was cultivated. Today, we would call this “art washing.” Nevertheless, I appreciate what I perceive as a genuine wish to bring culture to the working class. The Communist Party was big amongst the miners, and the unions were strong. The miners were highly politically aware, and an important part of my contribution to the exhibition at Kin is a photograph of Carlo Derkert and other members of the Nationalmuseum team from Stockholm giving a presentation and showing a reproduction of *Guernica* to the miners during their lunch break in the canteen. Apparently, they held twenty-minute sessions during lunch, speaking to the miners about Picasso and *Guernica* in preparation for the upcoming exhibition. In my understanding, this process reflected both the desire of the main sponsor, LKAB, to soften the image of extractivism and a sincere mission to provide access to culture, as envisioned by the educators at the Moderna Museet.

Another thing that is important in relation to *Guernica* is that from 1936 to 1945 Sweden provided Germany with almost sixty percent of its iron so the war would never have been possible without the iron coming from Kiruna.<sup>3</sup> Not that Sweden had a real possibility

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3 During WWII, Sweden provided Germany with roughly 3.5 to 4 million tons of iron ore annually from the Kiruna and Gällivare region—about half of the total 7 to 9 million tons exported by Sweden each year. This made Sweden's high-quality iron ore, particularly from the north, crucially important for Germany's war industry, especially after other sources were cut off by the Allied blockade. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish\\_iron-ore\\_industry\\_during\\_World\\_War\\_II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Swedish_iron-ore_industry_during_World_War_II)

to deny their iron to Germany, but maybe they could have been less enthusiastic about trading it. So, I assume that there was iron from Kiruna in the bombing of *Guernica*.

This brings us to the “big lie”: according to German and Franquist accounts at the time, it was not the Nazis who bombed *Guernica* but rather the inhabitants themselves, who, they claimed, set the town on fire to discredit the fascist army. Although there were witnesses, journalists, who would say that they literally saw German planes dropping the bombs. It was not until 1971 that the government of Germany formally apologized to the town of *Guernica* for what they had done. To me, at this moment in time, this carries echoes of Israel and Gaza.

This led to a significant diplomatic scandal in relation to the Franco regime, during the showing of *Guernica* in Stockholm in 1956. In the catalogue, it is clearly stated that it was Germany and Italy who bombed *Guernica* and that there were no military targets—the purpose was obviously to kill civilians. The Germans and Italians, of course, followed the orders of Franco.

*MBV*: It was, in fact, even more cynical. Not only Franco, but others too, stated that it was also an experiment with a different type of bombing: this was one of the first times when they were not killing the military but targeting the civilian population.

Here I would like to bring up something important and that is the relationship between art pedagogy and cultural wars. In the 1950s and 1960s, after the Second World War, during the Cold War, art and politics were totally integrated. As we said, there were cultural wars, and *Guernica* was in the middle of them.

*DG:* I want to mention the fact that Kiruna is sinking. The town is being relocated five kilometers from its original site because of ongoing underground mining. Old Kiruna is being torn down, some buildings are being moved, a process which is very painful for many inhabitants. If you go on a tour of the LKAB mine you will be told a different story, that people leave voluntarily and apparently to better houses. However, when I was there, I saw a graffiti on a very tall building that said “Kiruna is dying. Fight back.” I learned from a local artist that there were protests in the 1980s, and now some of that is back. After that, I noticed several signs of small acts of resistance.

But on the other hand, the official narrative is that Kiruna is the mine. Without the mine, there is no Kiruna—the mine is the second-largest employer, and therefore there is little choice but to comply with its needs, a situation that most people seem to accept. But you know—it’s hard to be happy when you cannot go back to the place where you grew up. An enormous hole is created in the town of Kiruna, in a Lacanian sense too. Conflicts arise because the mine refuses to pay more than it is strictly required to, reflecting a certain stinginess on its part. It seems to me that they want to cover up a tragedy, that builds on an even bigger tragedy, which is that the indigenous people had to change their way of life completely. They were forced to make a sort of pact with the devil by working in the mine to survive.

*MBV:* Colonial power is closely tied to mining, which by definition is destructive. Consider the silver mines of Potosí in Bolivia, one of the earliest sources of regional wealth accumulation for the Spanish crown. The mountain there is also sinking. We should do a debate about art and mines!

## Self-Presentations

**Annika Öhrner** is a curator, writer, and Associate Professor of Art History at Södertörn University.

**Manuel Borja-Villel** (Burriana, 1957) is an art historian and curator. He was Director at the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid from 2008 to 2023. During his tenure he carried out a radical remodeling of the collection and created the Museo en Red, a network of organizations, collectives, and institutions that question the museum and expand its boundaries from beyond. Prior to this, Borja-Villel was Director at MACBA in Barcelona (1998-2007) and at the Fundació Antoni Tàpies (1989-1998). As Director of these institutions, he developed an extensive body of work that has entailed a turning point in contemporary curatorial practice: resignifying narratives and exhibition devices and their role in the governance of the institution. Most recently he has been one of the curators at the 35th Sao Paulo Biennial.

**Opening weekend and public events as part of the exhibition *A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining***

**Free Guided Tours of the Exhibition  
November 8—April 19**

**Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays 12:00**

**Thursdays 17:00**

In 1965, approximately one hundred works by Picasso were exhibited in Kiruna's old town hall under the title *Picasso in Kiruna*. Taking this remarkable exhibition as its point of departure, the guided tour at Kin offers visitors insight into how the original project came about. Several of the works shown then have now returned to Kiruna and Kin—sixty years later. Dora García's contribution to the exhibition reflects on our shared future by revisiting a singular moment in Sweden's art history. Her work offers a fresh perspective on Picasso as both artist and individual, while also engaging with contemporary issues such as natural resources and land rights.

Contact Kin to book a free guided tour outside the scheduled times:  
[info@kinmuseum.se](mailto:info@kinmuseum.se)

**Saturday, November 8**

**13:00 Opening of the exhibition. Floor 2**

- Opening ceremony *Markerna*, the work by Carola Grahn and Nils-Johan Labba
- Museum director Maria Lind welcomes everyone
- Dora García introduces her works in the exhibition

***Picasso in Kiruna 1965 and Today: An Afternoon of Lectures and Conversations. Floor 2***

In English.

In connection with the opening of *A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso and the Legacy of Mining*, Kin has invited one of the world's foremost experts on Picasso, Manuel Borja Vilel, former director of Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, to lecture on *Guernica* (1937), the artist's most famous work. Art historian Annika Öhrner has delved into the archives of Moderna Museet, Nationalmuseum, Norrbotten Museum and LKAB, where she has uncovered new stories about the unique art mediation initiative that the Picasso exhibition in Kiruna represented. The artist Dora García shares her reflections on mining, political art, and Picasso as a symbol of an outdated artistic ideal, which underpin her work in the exhibition.

**14:00 Annika Öhrner, Associate Professor of Art History:  
*An Ongoing Revolution: Picasso in Kiruna (1965)***

When the Picasso exhibition was created for Kiruna in 1965, several forces converged: local, national, and not least, international. Under the motto "*An Ongoing Revolution*" and with the help of parallels drawn between the city of Kiruna and Picasso himself, ideas about his art spread far down into the mine canteens, into schools, and to

the public. In this presentation, Annika Öhrner recounts how this grand project was prepared, realized, and received in Kiruna's brand-new town hall, within the time and space of Kiruna and Sweden in the mid-1960s.

**14:45 Manuel Borja-Villel, former director of Museo Reina Sofia: How can we understand *Guernica*?**

There is no painting in twentieth-century art history that has been interpreted in as many different ways as Picasso's *Guernica* (1937). Nor is there any painting that has become a symbol for so many causes: the Spanish Republic's struggle against fascism during the Civil War, the resistance of Spaniards in exile during the Franco regime's "long night," protests in the United States against the Vietnam War, and today's demonstrations against the war in Gaza, among others.

But what role do museums play in this context? What kinds of exhibitions can accommodate so many—and such conflicting—interpretations? How should one respond when an artwork that has come to symbolize numerous protests and uprisings risks turning into a consumer object?

**15:45 The artist Dora García introduces her works in the exhibition**

For *A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining*, Dora García wanted to work with polysemous words and paradoxical concepts, such as "mining," which can apply equally well to "a deep, often arduous and persistent effort to extract something valuable, such as information, knowledge, or understanding, from a vast, hidden, or complex source"; "hole," which mainly means an absence, but can also be a powerful point of attraction that devours everything (as in "black hole": even light cannot escape it),

or "timeline," something we imagine as unidirectional and finite, but which can be multidirectional and infinite, curved, crumpled, so that different points in time converge, coincide, and influence each other.

**16:30 Conversation with the Speakers**

The seminar is organized with the support of Kultura Kiruna.

**Thursday, December 11**

**18:00 Picasso and Me: Laxälv sculptor Lena Kriström in conversation with Bettina Pehrsson, Kin's deputy director. Floor 2**

Lena Kriström is a sculptor living and working in Laxforsen. The conversation will revolve around her relationship to Picasso and his sculptures. Since studying at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm (1978–84), she has focused on stone carving, especially granite, but also marble and alabaster. Her public works include *På axlarna* (On the Shoulders), granite, on the Karolinska area in Stockholm, *Tillit* (Trust), black concrete, in Uppsala, and *Evighet* (Eternity), black concrete, in Luleå. Kriström has exhibited at Gallery Final in Malmö and Kulturens Hus in Luleå. Her most recent exhibition took place at Gallery Cupido in Gamla Stan, Stockholm, summer 2025.

## December 30–31 and January 2–3

### **12:00–16:00 Art Camp during the Winter Break: What Makes a Portrait? Floor 1**

The 2025 christmas break art camp is all about making portraits. How does one consider drawing a face or creating emotion through different shapes and expressions? Together with art camp leader Milly Sundgren, participants will explore storytelling through portraits—where backgrounds, objects, or depictions of nature add depth and meaning to the images.

Milly Sundgren is from Kiruna and is in her first year of the art program at Öland Folk High School. Her artistic work is based on colorful portraits inspired by childhood, hometown, and identity. She often expresses emotions through objects and tells different stories with her images.

The art camp is free and open to all ages.  
No registration needed—drop-in.  
Kin provides fruit and drinks.

## Tuesday, January 13

### **Aurora Culture and Congress Picassos äventyr (The Adventures of Picasso): Film screening in collaboration with the Kiruna Film Club (time TBC)**

*Picassos äventyr (The Adventures of Picasso)* is a Swedish surrealist comedy directed by Tage Danielsson from 1978. The film stars Gösta Ekman, Hans Alfredson, Birgitta Andersson, and Lena Nyman.

“Picasso is tired in the head, heads to the Riviera”—Elsa Beskow narrates, Dalí’s fingers are five meters long, Ernest Hemingway knits, the art police dog Jacky sniffs out marine motifs, Hasse and Tage lie constantly, and no one speaks Swedish except Elsa in Tage Danielsson’s extraordinary film.

## Thursday, January 29

### **17:30 Lecture and discussion of the book *Gruvans makt* (The Power of the Mine) with Johan Sandström. Floor 5**

Johan Sandström will give a lecture at Kin, based on the book *Gruvans makt (The Power of the Mine)*. The lecture will be followed by a discussion and coffee. Participants TBC.

*Gruvans makt* from 2021 is written by Johan Sandström, Department of Business, Art and Society at Luleå University of Technology, and Tommy Jensen, Stockholm Business School. The book is based on the research project *Organizing Rocks*, which was conducted between 2015 and 2020.

### *About Gruvans makt*

Once upon a time, the mining industry and the town of Kiruna were closely intertwined—a mutual dependency that has changed over time. But what happens when the mining company no longer needs the people of Kiruna to the same extent? When the company increasingly relies on fly-in fly-out labor? When permanent employees can be replaced by contractors? When ever fewer hands are needed to extract the ore?

Johan Sandström is a professor of Business Administration at the Division of Industrial Economics at the Luleå University of Technology in Luleå. Sandström's research revolves around power, responsibility, and organization.

## **Torsdag 19 februari**

### **18:00 Theodor Ringborg on the project *Almost Picasso* in Vitsaniemi/Risudden. Floor 2**

In 1961, plans were made for a Picasso sculpture in Kiruna — a monumental work intended to stand 33.5 meters tall. The project was never realized, but when Konsthall Tornedalen conducted research, the model for the sculpture was unexpectedly found at the University of South Florida. In collaboration with the University, Konsthall Tornedalen created 3D scans to produce an AR version, allowing anyone with a phone to place their own almost-Picasso sculpture anywhere. Where did the idea for the sculpture originate? How did the model end up in Florida? And can an unrealized artwork be democratized digitally?

Theodor Ringborg lives in Vitsaniemi/Risudden, Övertorneå, and is the director of Konsthall Tornedalen.

## **Thursday, February 26**

### **18:00 Film screening: *Scars of Growth* (2025)**

Documentary, 90 minutes  
By Monica Grassl and Linda Osusky

Do we have to get dirty before becoming green? By pushing electric cars and renewables, the EU claims it can promote economic growth while protecting the planet. But is that even possible? To reduce dependencies of mainly China, EU-politicians are in favor of opening “green” mines in Europe. But people living in those areas are worried that their lives will be sacrificed for the energy transition.

While new mines are being opened in Europe in the name of the green transition and mining companies position themselves as climate allies, a Spanish farmer, Hector, and two Sámi reindeer herders in Sweden, Matti Blind Berg and Karin Niia Kvarfordt are fighting to preserve their way of life. While the mining industry is lobbying in Brussels, Peruvian resource expert Diego, from an environmental NGO, is traveling across Europe visiting affected communities, activists and mines to investigate whether mining can ever really be sustainable.

Production company: Dor Film and Dor Film West, in Co-Production with SWR, ARTE and ORD.

### *Directors*

**Monika Grassl** is a director and editor currently living in Paris. Born in Austria, she went on to studying documentary film making at the Filmakademie Baden-Württemberg. Her latest film *GIRLS DON'T FLY* was shown at several international festivals and garnered awards. She's also authored a thesis on dramaturgy within documentary film making.

**Linda Osusky** is a freelance investigative journalist and filmmaker whose work focuses on environmental topics. She holds an MA in Cultural and Social Anthropology from the University of Vienna. She's authored and directed three short documentaries and written a script for a feature length documentary about Slovakia's very own Robin Hood.

### **Tuesday, March 3—Friday, March 6**

#### **09:00–16:00 (every day) Artistic Marmalade: Kiruna Art Academy Continues! Floor 1, Art Workshop**

During the spring break art camp, participants will work with various materials and methods. In particular, students will experiment by acting as both their own class and their own professor. Participants are encouraged to bring an ongoing project from home, or they may begin a new one on-site. Soap sculptures, cooking of artistic marmalade, and the construction of the physical art academy are offered on location. During the art camp, participants also experience art at the Kristallen City Hall and at Kin. Observation and discussion will serve as means to practice art while simultaneously learning from it.

The door to the art camp is open Tuesday–Friday from 9:00 to 16:00. Drop in for a day or join for the whole week—whatever suits you! All ages and skill levels are welcome; we help and learn from each other. The week concludes with a presentation of the participants' work in the Art Workshop.

### **Thursday, March 12**

#### **18:00 Remembering the exhibition *Picasso i Kiruna*. Floor 2**

The memories from the Picasso exhibition at Kiruna City Hall in 1965, with over one hundred works, are many and varied. Some visited it with their students, another recalls how their father guarded it armed with a rifle, a third remembers how their older brother slipped in every day to admire the art. Come and share what you remember! Contact Kin's mediators if you want to participate and tell your story: [emma.pettersson.juntti@kinmuseum.se](mailto:emma.pettersson.juntti@kinmuseum.se)

### **Wednesday, April 8—Friday, April 10**

#### **12:00–16:00 Art Camp during the Easter Break—Stitches in Time: Weaving, Crocheting, and Embroidering. Floor 1, Art Workshop**

During the Easter break camp at Kin, participants will step into the world of threads and fabrics! The camp is inspired by ideas about how the past and present can be intertwined. Just like the famous artist Pablo Picasso—whose work will be featured in the current

exhibition at Kin—combined techniques and materials, participants will explore various forms of expression together, with a focus on textile crafts: weaving, sewing, embroidery, crocheting, or knitting—no technique is off limits! Through threads, colors, and textures, participants will try out traditional techniques but also challenge themselves with new ways of thinking and creating, leading to unexpected expressions and exciting discoveries.

The art camp is free and suitable for all ages.

No registration needed—simply drop-in!

Provided by Kin will be fresh fruits and drinks.

## Colophon

### *Address*

Kin Museum of Contemporary Art, Kristallen City Hall  
Stadshustorget 1, 98130 Kiruna

### *Staff*

Tova Ejeklint, coordinator  
Carola Kalla, assistant  
Alice Lampa, mediation  
Maria Lind, director  
Inur Mustafin, technician  
Christina Pestova Ejiksson, collections  
Bettina Pehrsson, deputy director  
Emma Pettersson Juntti, producer, coordinator, and mediator  
Paulina Sokolow, communication  
Museum hosts: Alla Belova, Lena Rydström, Maja Sjöström  
Graphics: Marina Sergeeva  
Installation: Jude O'Shaughnessy

*A Hole in the Real: Dora García, Pablo Picasso, and the Legacy of Mining*  
November 8, 2025—April 19, 2026

Special thanks to Moderna Museet and Kultura Kiruna.

Kin's visual dialect has been developed by the artists Inga-Wiktoria Påve and Fredrik Prost in collaboration with the designers Johanna Lewengard and Benedetta Crippa.

Kin Museum of Contemporary Art is the regional art museum of Norrbotten, founded in 2018 by the region and the Municipality of Kiruna.

Kin Museum för samtidskonst/dáládáidaga dávvirvuorká/  
nykyaijan taitheen myseymmi/Museum of Contemporary Art.

[kinmuseum.se](http://kinmuseum.se)

