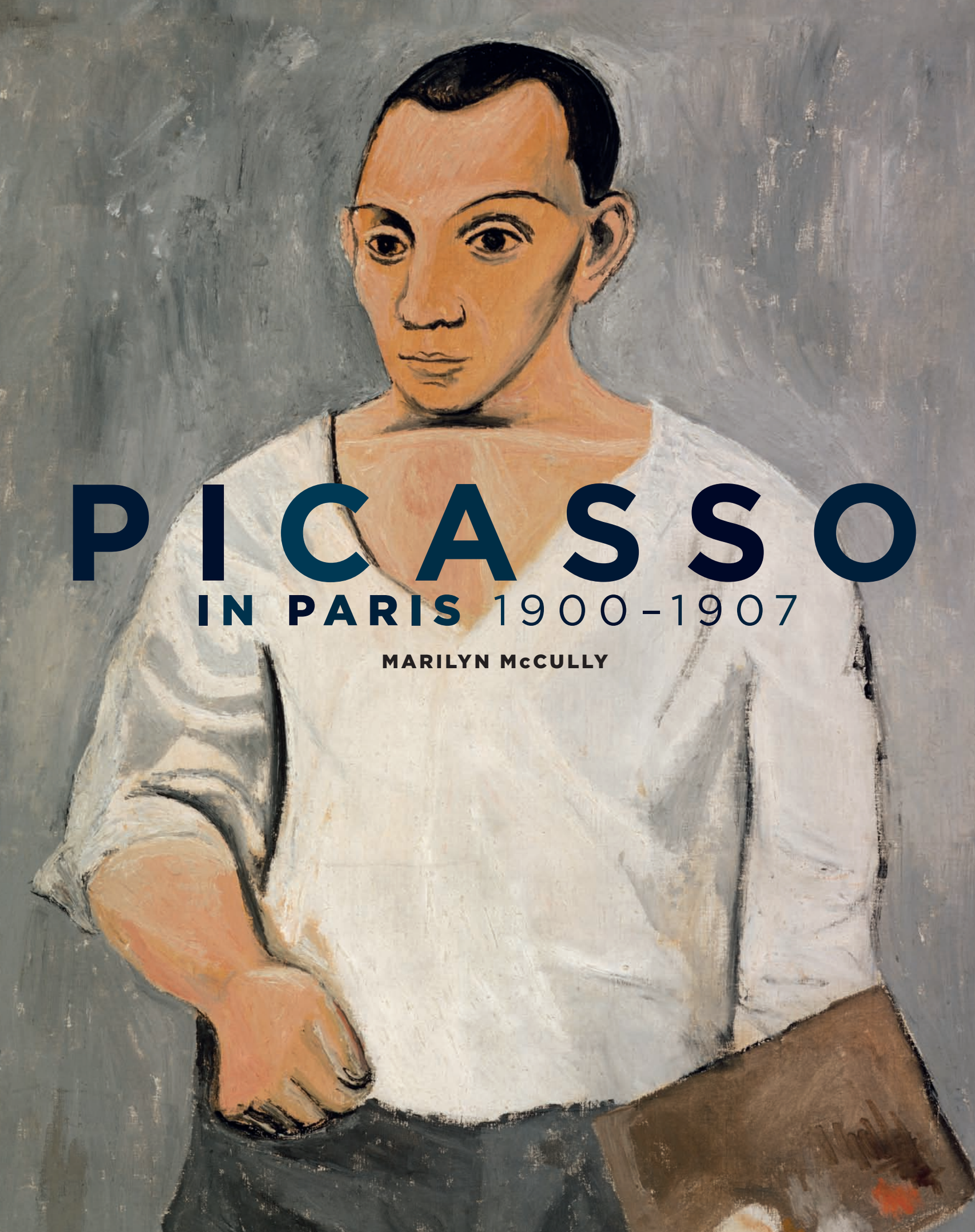
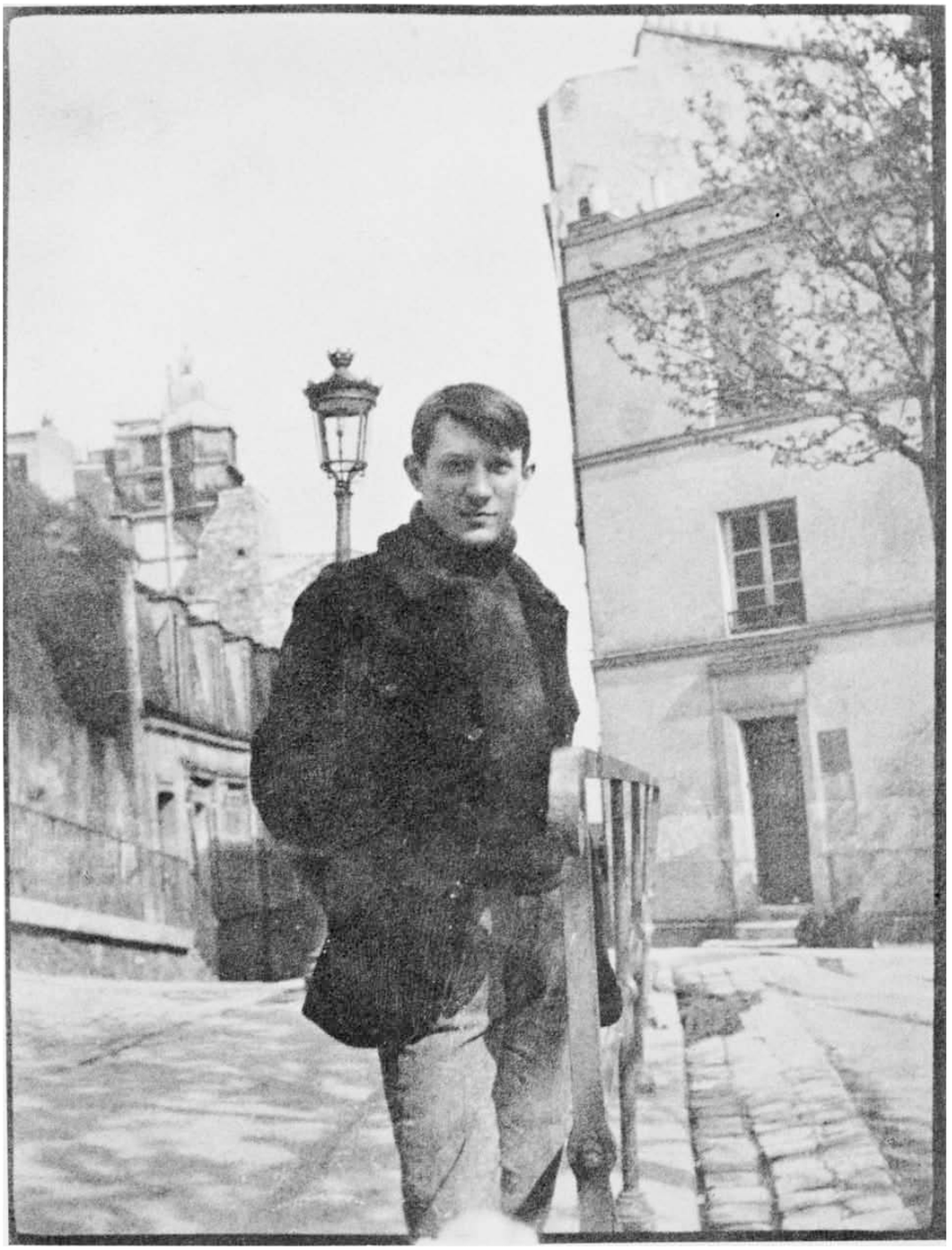


PICASSO

IN PARIS 1900–1907

MARILYN McCULLY

PICASSO IN PARIS
1900-1907



PICASSO

IN PARIS 1900–1907

Marilyn McCully

With contributions by
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FOREWORDS

The Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam and the Museu Picasso in Barcelona are specialized centres, each devoted to the work of a single artist who has become part of the world's collective imagination: two essential figures in art history who have provided a visual reference for many generations.

In 2007 the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam presented the major exhibition *Barcelona 1900*, a tribute to the city and its art scene at the turn of the century, and invited the Museu Picasso to take part through the loan of key works. The two museums were struck by their evident similarities, the correspondence in their approaches to research and the wish to forge partnerships with other institutions. This realization led almost immediately to the joint organization of an ambitious exhibition tracing the development of Pablo Picasso following his arrival in Paris and immersion in the artistic life of the city. For the Van Gogh Museum the appeal lay in the fact that this period of Picasso's work relates so closely to the museum's collection, which contains works by Van Gogh and many other artists who were working in Montmartre towards the end of the nineteenth century and who inspired Picasso. In Barcelona the exhibition will also trace the parallels between Picasso and Van Gogh, whose sojourn in Paris profoundly influenced his artistic development. Right from the start we felt it was essential that Marilyn McCully, a leading expert on Picasso with a profound knowledge of the young artist's development, should be the person to curate the exhibition.

We are delighted to say that the prestige of the curator, who first suggested the idea for this exhibition, and the solid premises of the project developed by our respective Exhibitions departments, have secured the loan of major works from institutions and private collectors around the world, enabling us to bring together an exceptional selection of pieces. Meanwhile, the desirability of our joint venture has made itself all the more evident by the presence of important works from our respective collections, with the Van Gogh Museum contributing a number of works by other artists who were active in Montmartre around 1900.

The exhibition takes as its starting point the attendance of the nineteen-year-old Picasso at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris, the city where he first showed his paintings outside Spain. To begin with he took his inspiration from the subjects and styles he saw in the work of other artists, but even then he always succeeded in transmuting these innumerable influences into an individual style of his own. In a very few years he was at the forefront of the avant garde and was breaking new ground, having absorbed everything that the French capital and the foreign artists who had been drawn to it – Van Gogh among them – could offer. The aim of this book is to chart Picasso's development step by step during those crucial years in Paris (1900-1907).

The presentation at the Van Gogh Museum places a special emphasis on works by Picasso, since this is the first major exhibition devoted to the artist's early years in Paris to be held in Amsterdam, while the show in Barcelona focuses more on the context of Picasso in Paris and aims to enrich the line of research and exhibition production that the Barcelona museum has been pursuing for a number of years.

We must begin by expressing our immense gratitude to Marilyn McCully, guest curator and the main author of this book, for creating this unique exhibition and for devoting her great knowledge and expertise to obtaining

loans and making this project a success. Her essays on Picasso explore and illuminate this crucial period of the artist's career. McCully's ideas for the exhibition proposal and the accompanying publication were developed in conjunction with her husband, Michael Raeburn, who has edited this book with extraordinary dedication. Co-authors Peter Read and Nienke Bakker respectively, provide fascinating insights into the literary aspects and the link between Van Gogh and Picasso, and Isabel Cendoya completes the volume with a valuable chronology.

Special thanks also go to colleagues in the two museums: the Van Gogh Museum's Head of Exhibitions, Edwin Becker, and former curator Benno Tempel, and the two project managers, Geeta Bruin at the Van Gogh Museum and Isabel Cendoya at the Museu Picasso, who initiated and coordinated the exhibition with great tenacity and commitment, and to Lluís Bagunyà and Fouad Kanaan, for their tremendous contribution to its realization.

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For an exhibition of this kind financial support is also of crucial importance. We are grateful for the backing of SEACEX (Sociedad Estatal para la Acción Cultural Exterior), who acted as guarantor for part of the insurance and transportation costs, and in Amsterdam our immense gratitude goes to our sponsor, Citroën, who provided substantial assistance to this unique project.

We hope that the readers of this book and the visitors to the exhibition in both venues will come to appreciate Picasso not as the isolated genius he is sometimes thought to be, but as an artist who in his early years was receptive to other artists, and who was always seeking new and surprising paths.

PEPE SERRA
Director
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

AXEL RÜGER
Director
Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam







PL. 1 ***Picasso and Manuel Pallarès in Paris***
Paris, 1900
Pen and ink on paper, 8.8 x 11.1 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

PICASSO'S DISCOVERY OF PARIS

MARILYN McCULLY

Fresh from the critical success of his debut exhibition in Barcelona earlier in the year, the nineteen-year-old Pablo Ruiz Picasso, imbued both with confidence and with great expectations about his artistic future, set off for Paris in late October 1900. He travelled with his friend, the writer Carles Casagemas; both of them had been named as correspondents for the Barcelona journal *Catalunya artística,* to cover events at the Exposition Universelle, which was due to close on 12 November.[1] The occasion of the exhibition, with its ambitious building and cultural programmes, had over the course of the past months changed Paris, with the city becoming a destination for artists, performers, writers, curiosity seekers, and enthusiasts for all manner of artistic and ethnic manifestations, scientific demonstrations and the latest inventions, which could be discovered at the fair. The fact that the whole of the exhibition was illuminated with electricity confirmed Paris's status as *la ville lumière* and, symbolically, announced the dawn of a new century. Moreover, for the aspiring young men and women who came to Paris in 1900, the new Mecca represented opportunity: what was possible – both technologically and artistically – was about to change.

The influx of artists from all over the world, which had begun in the late nineteenth century, was unparalleled in the history of Paris and marked a period of cultural immigration that would redefine the direction and artistic developments of the avant garde. In the beginning, the national groups tended to keep to themselves, speaking their own languages and relying on their already established countrymen for contacts and work. This was certainly the case for Picasso and his friends when

they arrived. At the same time, some of the Catalans who had settled or spent significant time in Paris in the 1890s had made connections with certain French artistic circles, which also gave the new arrivals a ready entrée.

The older generation of Barcelona artists and writers, who had themselves gone to the capital to study and to attend previous world exhibitions, tended to settle in the rather rough, cheap district of Montmartre high above the city. Ramon Casas and Santiago Rusiñol had actually lived above the celebrated Moulin de la Galette (see pl. 2), beginning in 1890 and, with their compatriot Miquel Utrillo, had immersed themselves in the artistic world around them. While Utrillo had lived the life of a shadow puppet producer and cabaret *assidué* – and had become involved with the French model Suzanne Valadon, whose child (Maurice Utrillo) he recognized – Rusiñol and Casas moved in somewhat more conventional artistic circles, exhibiting at the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. Utrillo and Casas returned to Paris for the Exposition Universelle in 1900, and their presence is recorded in Casagemas's letters and in several drawings by Picasso.

Others, including Isidre Nonell and Ricard Canals, who were among the second wave of Catalan immigrants in the mid-1890s, also settled in Montmartre, and they built their professional careers in France primarily as painters of Spanish subjects. Their success depended to a large degree on their promotion by several Paris dealers, notably Le Barc de Boutteville, Ambroise Vollard, and later Durand-Ruel.[2] Another Catalan, Joaquim Sunyer, first established his reputation by collaborating with writers, for whom he produced illustrations, notably for Jehan Rictus's *Les Soliloques du pauvre* in 1897. His depictions of life on the margins followed the example of Théophile-Alexandre Steinlen in subject matter and, to some extent, in style (although Steinlen's own illustrations for Rictus came several years after those of Sunyer). Yet another painter who was already in Paris in 1900 and who would become close to Picasso over the years was Ramon Pichot, who originally came from Cadaquès. The well-to-do Pichot family eventually helped Ramon acquire the Maison Rose, a house in Montmartre, where he could set up a studio, and where his future wife Germaine would run a little bistrot on the ground floor.

In addition to the activities of the artists, the Catalan community also had the special political cachet of *fin-de-siècle* anarchism that set them apart from other national groups. The nineties had been a difficult time in Catalonia, and many anarchists or sympathizers who were suspected of fomenting anti-government activity had sought refuge in Paris. In comparison to the Germans, Russians or Italians, the Spanish community was relatively small, so the mixture of artists, writers and activists became a normal aspect of the 'exiled' group. Among them were also a number of Basques, and, like the Catalans, they held separatist views when it came to the political situation in Spain. As a general rule, they all tended to have as their headquarters certain cafés and cabarets, where they outspokenly professed their political views.[3] At the same time, the French police kept tabs on their movements, and even Picasso turns out to have had a police file.[4]

As soon as they had arrived, Picasso and Casagemas learned from the Catalan network that a studio in Montmartre was about to be vacated by their well known compatriot Nonell, whose show at Vollard's had closed in April. The place on rue Gabrielle was large enough



PL. 2 **RAMON CASAS**
Dance at the Moulin de la Galette
1890
Oil on canvas, 100 x 81.4 cm
Museu Cau Ferrat, Sitges



FIG. 1 **Study for *Last Moments***
Barcelona, 1899-1900
Charcoal, chalk and black pencil on paper,
30 x 39.8 cm
Museu Picasso, Barcelona

to set up studios – Casagemas also had ambitions to become a painter – even to sleep six! Another painter friend, Manuel Pallarès, arrived from Barcelona a few days later (pl. 1), and soon the three companions were joined by three artist's models, Germaine Gargallo (aka Laure Florentin), her sister Antoinette (later Fornerod), and another girl by the name of Odette (aka Louise Lenoir), who took up with Picasso. Casagemas wrote letters back to Barcelona describing their new, liberated arrangement: 'We've decided that we've been getting up too late and eating at improper hours and that everything was beginning to go wrong. On top of this [...] Odette was starting to become raucous because of [her] good habit of getting drunk every night. So we have arrived at the conclusion that neither [the women] nor we will go to bed later than midnight, and every day we'll finish lunch by one. After lunch we'll dedicate ourselves to our paintings and they'll do women's work – that is, sew, clean up, kiss us and let themselves be "fondled". Well, this is a kind of Eden or dirty Arcadia.'[5]

Apart from his nominal reporting job, Picasso also had a personal reason for attending the Exposition: his painting *Last Moments* had been selected to hang in the Spanish section in the Grand Palais. This large canvas, showing the visit of a priest to a dying woman, had also been featured in Picasso's show in Barcelona in February. One French reviewer mentioned the painting among those that stood out, observing that 'there is a true sense of grief in Ruiz Picasso's *Derniers moments*.'[6] The fact that *Last Moments* had been chosen to represent the latest



PL. 3 ***Leaving the Exposition Universelle***
Paris, 1900
Charcoal, coloured crayons and pencil
on paper, 47.6 x 62 cm
Private collection. Courtesy of Galería Manuel Barbié, Barcelona
Odette, Picasso, Pichot, Utrillo, Casagemas and Germaine in front
of the main entrance to the Exposition.



FIG. 2 ***Group of Catalans in Montmartre: Pichot, Mañach, Casagemas, Brossa, Picasso and Gener***
Paris, 1900
Oil on panel, 24.1 x 18.7 cm
The Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pa.

Spanish painting over works by established Barcelona artists,[7] was significant in bringing the young Picasso's name to the forefront, at least in terms of his reputation in his native country. But that limited recognition, too, was about to change.

One of the initial contacts who helped Picasso in Paris was Pere Mañach, a Catalan who had already acquired a reputation both as something of a stylish dandy and also as a runner for some of the dealers in Montmartre.[8] The son of a Barcelona locksmith, Mañach had originally gone to Paris in the early 1890s to pursue the family trade,[9] but he gave up his course of study and, instead, set up a little shop where he bought and sold antiques. When the opportunity presented itself, he also promoted young, preferably Spanish, artists, including many of the Catalans who had arrived in the late 1890s.[10] Casagemas wrote about Mañach's first visit to their Montmartre studio on 19 November 1900 in a letter sent back to their friend Reventós in Barcelona: 'The man we were waiting for has just left. He has a junk shop nearby, where I've seen paintings, and it's certain that he is going to buy some from us. Now we are waiting for an answer and the money if he purchases any. This runner is a guy called Mañac and he takes *only* 20%.'[11]

In addition, Mañach is reported to have offered Picasso a contract, paying him 150 francs a month for his artistic output.[12] As Casagemas also says in his letter that they were scheming how to avoid paying the rent of the rue Gabrielle studio for lack of funds, the promise of some income must have given them a little security for the time



FIG. 3 ***Bullfight***
Barcelona, 1900
Pastel on paper, 28 x 28 cm
Private collection, Paris

being. Mañach appears in a drawing that Picasso did of his Spanish friends on the hillside in Montmartre (fig. 2): on the left is Pichot next to Mañach, with Casagemas and Picasso standing in front of the Barcelona writers Jaume Brossa and Pompeu Gener.[13]

Mañach was responsible for introducing Picasso to potential buyers, among whom were the Spanish consul Emmanuel Virenque, who bought *The Blue Dancer* (1900; Private collection), a cabaret performance at the Divan Japonais showing a Pierrot and a female dancer dressed in blue, and a bullfight composition entitled *Entrance to the Bullring* (1900; Museum of Modern Art, Toyama).[14] Another collector was the government official Olivier Sainsère, who reportedly acquired a painting of a child in white.[15] The dealer Berthe Weill, who, with Mañach's help, had just opened a little gallery at 25 rue Victor-Massé,[16] came to Picasso's studio and bought three bullfight pastels (fig. 3), which she immediately sold on to the drama critic and editor-in-chief of *Les Annales politiques et littéraires,* Adolphe Brisson.[17]

Picasso had begun to explore the medium of pastel back in Barcelona, but once in Paris he shifted from doing Spanish themes, like the ones Weill acquired, to Parisian ones, including some sketches of French fashion that he recorded in a tiny carnet. Among the larger pastel drawings that were not immediately sold are *The Embrace* (pl. 5)[18] and *In the Dressing Room* (pl. 7). These compositions provide a good idea of how he had changed from the vibrant, sun-lit bullfight scenes, with their dashes of different pastel tones to give movement