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Pablo Picasso

(Málaga 1881 – 1973 Mougins)

*Taureau, Marli Aux Feuilles (Bull,
Rim with Leaves)*

Ceramic Plate

9 ¼ in. (diameter)

Stamped, marked, and numbered
Madoura Plein Feu/ Empreinte/ Edition
Picasso Gallery.

Exhibited

"Fired by Imagination: Picasso Ceramics from New Orleans Collections", New Orleans Museum of Art, New Orleans, LA, 1998 and "Picasso Ceramics", Lauren Rogers Museum, Laurel, MS, 2013. Ref.: Ramié, Alain. Catalogue of the Edited Ceramic Works 1947-1971, No. 394.

Literature

Alain Ramié, "Picasso: Catalogue of the Edited Ceramic Works 1947-1971," 1988 #no. A.119 1962

Edition: 84/500

Very good condition without flaws.

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Diverse and colossal, Pablo Picasso's body of work is full of recurring motifs rendered in distinctive manners and media. While he enjoyed studying a wide array of natural figures, exploring both humans and animals, one of the most dominant subjects in his entire oeuvre is the bull. Symbolic to his art, the bull served Picasso as the perfect form to examine, both through abstraction and a more figurative approach, emphasizing its power and intelligence, but also its masculinity and endurance. Perhaps he recognized a bull-like nature within himself because no other animal has been as glorified in his work.

From sketches, drawings, to ceramics and sculpture, the bull is present in all the media Picasso worked in, while some of these representations have gained the status of a masterpiece. During the long Madoura period, the genius artist

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conceived and created a large number of ceramic pieces embellished with different variations of the bull figure.

The present ceramic plate entitled “Taureau, marli aux feuilles (Bull, Rim with Leaves)” marks a part of this 25-year long period, representing its golden years. Black engobes make out the bull in the middle and the black leaves surrounding the rim of the plate. There is an inextricably Hellenic nature to the work; the schematic shadow of the bull alludes to the Minoan culture, stressing the strength and virility of the beast. Still, the simple decoration of the vessel, unburdened by colour other than the black against natural terracotta, possesses a purely modern quality. In essence, this work is timeless and one of the finest examples of bull plates of Picasso’s Madoura spell.

As a revered museum piece, “Taureau, marli aux feuilles (Bull, Rim with Leaves)” has a rich museum history. It was displayed in New Orleans Museum of Art in 1998 and in Lauren Rogers Museum, Laurel, in 2013, securing its position as one of the most desired collector’s items of its kind.

A man of unparalleled talent, Pablo Picasso was the most influential figure in 20th century art. With an unequivocal sense of invention, he was devoted to creating art throughout his life, crossing media with utter ease and elegance, always following his limitless imagination as the ultimate indicator of truth. Together with Georges Braque, Picasso fathered one of the most progressive art movements - Cubism, radically rethinking the representation of three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface. Inspired by the art of Africa and the Iberian peninsula, his ideas and works left a deep mark on other modernist movements, including Expressionism and Surrealism. His most famous work, the powerful “Guernica” (1937), was created in reaction to the Spanish Civil War, today celebrated as the supreme example of anti-war art. Resolute and vital throughout his life, Picasso left behind a colossal body of work of paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, ceramics, costumes and stage set designs.

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After the French Liberation, Picasso gradually spent more time in the south of France. There, he reconnected with his Mediterranean roots and surrounded himself with famous artists of the time. He visited Henri Matisse in Nice. The French Riviera became his home when, in the summer of 1946, he went to a pottery exhibition in Vallauris, near Cannes. It was there that he discovered and marvelled at the work of Georges and Suzanne Ramié, owners of the Madoura pottery workshop. A proposal followed the three artists' meeting: to create together three unique pieces in terracotta, at Madoura. Picasso accepted the invitation and rediscovered the sensations of working with clay. Indeed, his initiation to modelling clay with Francisco Durrieu dated back to the 1900s. The following year, finally settled in the South of France, the Cubist visited his ceramicist friends again. At the Vallauris workshop, he discovered the spectacular rendering of the pieces he had sent to the firing months before; it was love at first sight. Over the next two decades, Picasso explored ceramics, drawing inspiration from the sublime Mediterranean light and natural splendour. With an overflowing portfolio of sketches, Picasso reworked his drawings and modelled piece after piece. This almost industrial-scale production is emblematic of his prolificacy as an artist. Several of his ceramics are the direct result of Picasso's creative impulse during his twenty-five years at Madoura. Vallauris allowed him to reclaim the art of clay. After the horrors of the war, the pottery studio opened a field of possibilities for the artist.

The artist drew original shapes and painted on more traditional pieces. The residents of the workshop accompanied the artist in his creative process and paid particular attention to his personal fulfilment. They advised and assisted him in the creation of his pieces. This close collaboration has resulted in a collection of limited edition pots and plates.

The goal for the group was to produce exceptional pieces at affordable prices. Picasso believed that ceramics should be considered as part of the fine arts. At the same time, it had to break with the tradition of utilitarian objects. According to Éric Moinet, the artist's ceramics constitute "a very important part of his work that must be re-evaluated". Long in the hands of the Picasso family, "these were pieces that were rarely seen," especially since the French public tended to

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equate ceramics with a decorative art, which is no longer the case, and these ceramic works are now highly sought after.

Pablo Picasso was born in Málaga, Spain, in 1881. He lived in Paris and Mougins, France, where he died in 1973.