

Pablo PICASSO
(1881 – 1973)

Tête d'Homme Barbu, 1963
Colored pencils on paper
36,8 x 27,6 cm

Signed, dedicated and inscribed :
« *Pour Dominique Bertrand, Picasso Le 12.8.63* »

Provenance

Dominique Bertrand (acquired as a gift from the artist)
Ruth Harf Associates, New York
Private Collection, Boston (acquired from the above in February 1996)
Acquired by descent from the above by the present owner
Sotheby's Modern Day Auction, New York, November 19th 2024, lot 614

1. PABLO PICASSO

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), born in Málaga, Spain, and residing in France for most of his life, is considered one of the foremost figures of 20th-century art. As a co-founder of Cubism alongside Georges Braque, he transformed the principles of perspective and reimaged the forms and structures of artistic expression.

His oeuvre, extraordinary in its breadth and diversity, encompasses painting, sculpture, drawing, ceramics, and printmaking, demonstrating an unceasing quest for innovation. Picasso's prolific output, estimated at nearly 50,000 works, is marked by distinct stylistic periods, including the Blue Period, the Rose Period, and Synthetic Cubism, each reflecting profound inquiries into material, form, and light.

Politically engaged, he created *Guernica* in 1937, a monumental masterpiece condemning the atrocities of the Spanish Civil War. The work has since become a powerful symbol of resistance and a poignant meditation on the human condition. His collaborations with intellectuals such as Henri Matisse and Jean Cocteau enriched his artistic journey through dynamic exchanges of ideas.

Picasso's influence on generations of artists is immeasurable, and his legacy is firmly entrenched in the history of art. His groundbreaking approaches to composition, his daring exploration of materials, and his boundless creative genius make him a universal and timeless icon. Today, his works, housed in the most prestigious public and private collections, continue to embody the spirit of a modern artistic revolution.

2. TÊTE D'HOMME BARBU

Throughout Pablo Picasso's artistic journey, the motif of the bearded man appears across different periods, embodying various symbolic and aesthetic themes depending on the artist's evolving style.

The bearded man transcends mere representation to become a universal symbol: creator, thinker, mythical figure, and witness to the passage of time. Through this motif, Picasso explores the human soul in all its complexity.

This work, titled *Tête d'Homme Barbu*, created by Pablo Picasso on August 12, 1963, brilliantly reflects the creative freedom characteristic of his late period. His bold use of colored pencils infuses the composition with playful vitality, showcasing the experimental and uninhibited spirit that defines this phase of his career.

With a stroke both spontaneous and precise, Picasso captures not only the distinctive features of a bearded man but also the vibrant and dynamic essence of his personality. The relaxed arrangement of forms, combined with a vivid color palette, reflects Picasso's unique mastery, where innovation harmoniously merges with tradition to create an image that is both simple and profoundly expressive.

3. PROVENANCE

Dominique Bertrand

Dominique Bertrand (1925–2015) was a French painter born in Paris. He trained at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière under the guidance of Othon Friesz, an artist associated with Fauvism. Bertrand's work, primarily figurative and intimate with an expressionist tendency, reflects a distinct personal universe often inspired by the poetry of everyday life.

After illustrating *Les Fleurs du Mal* by Charles Baudelaire, Bertrand worked as a layout designer for the magazine *Le Jardin des Modes* from 1946 until its closure in 1971. He then dedicated himself fully to painting, participating in numerous exhibitions, including the *Salon des Artistes Français* and the *Salon d'Automne*, as well as presenting his work in several solo exhibitions.

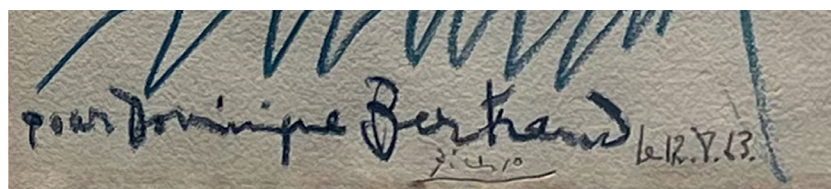
Ruth Harf Associates

Ruth Harf, an influential art collector based in New York, distinguished herself through her passion for modern and contemporary art. While she and her husband Rolf were known for their interest in primitive art and antiquities, she directed a significant part of her collection toward avant-garde and iconic works of the 20th century. Notable pieces include *Untitled (Murder of Olofernes)* by Cy Twombly, *Male Head* by Roy Lichtenstein, and *Tête d'Homme Barbu* by Pablo Picasso, reflecting her affinity for artists who redefined the aesthetic codes of their time.

Tête d'Homme Barbu, a late work by Picasso, highlights great stylistic freedom and a reimagining of classical archetypes, themes that strongly resonate with the Harfs' appreciation for the forms and influences of primitive art. This dialogue between modern art and ancestral traditions illustrates an aesthetic continuity that Ruth Harf skillfully integrated into her collector's vision, building a unique bridge between the past and contemporary visual languages.

4. AUTHENTICATION FEATURES

This drawing is dedicated in colored pencil « *pour Dominique Bertrand* » and signed in pencil on its lower part « Picasso Le 12.8.63 ».



Tête d'Homme Barbu has been authenticated by the Picasso Committee within the Picasso Administration on September 12th 2024.

The certificate of authenticity has been registered in the archives of the Picasso Foundation under reference 0151.