

## Forum: Modern Art History

### *The Bull and the Horse: Looking at Two of Guernica's Figures in the Context of Picasso's Art*

by Alexandra Cassar

Given the international familiarity and recognition received by Pablo Picasso's grayscale masterpiece of wartime violence, *Guernica* has been studied in detail since its creation as both a political emblem rife with symbolism, and as a pictorial representation of human suffering. This paper argues that two primary animals of the *Guernica* canvas—the bull and the horse—despite varied and admirable attempts to decrypt the meaning of their inclusion in the painting, do not lend themselves to static interpretation. Rather, they are best understood as carefully-crafted parties to the tragedy of wartime violence when considered in light of Picasso's artistic history. They are characters in the *mise-en-scène*, included in the painting by virtue of their significance in the artist's mind, as well as their import as recognizable figures of the Spanish *corrida*.<sup>1</sup>

When the airplanes of the German Condor Legion screamed through the skies above Guernica in the Bilbao province of Spain on the afternoon of April 26, 1937, the destruction they wrought was, up until that time, unparalleled. For three and a half hours, the planes dropped incendiary bombs on the Basque capital, with no regard for the civilian population of the town, and with no apparent militaristic objective. Later documents suggest that the bombing of Guernica was a trial run by which the Condor Legion sought to test two things: the functionality of some of newer German aircrafts and the impact of the *blitzkrieg* method of attack on national morale by way of assessing civilian and military moods after the

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<sup>1</sup> *Corrida* is a bullfighting.—Ed.

destruction, and, perhaps most importantly, the corresponding impact on international parties that were uninvolved in the burgeoning war as of yet.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, the bombing of Guernica did provoke a reaction, both within the country of Spain and outside of it. Spain's democratically-elected, Republican government was, for the first time, forced to admit that it could not stand against an enemy so well-supplied and well-manned as Franco's Nationalist army had become since joining forces with Fascist leaders Benito Mussolini of Italy and Adolf Hitler of Germany. The international community reacted with disbelief and anger. Though there was ongoing dialogue regarding who had committed the atrocity, the internationally-resonant outcry against the indiscriminate massacre of civilians was resounding and condemnatory.<sup>3</sup>

Living in France at the time, Pablo Picasso reacted to the news as well. In January of 1937, he accepted a commission from the Republican government of Spain to paint a mural-sized painting for the Spanish pavilion at the World Fair of 1937 in Paris. On May 1, 1937, after the first images of Guernica had been published in French newspapers, Picasso began to sketch compositional studies for the grayscale masterpiece that would become *Guernica*.

The first published book on *Guernica*, written by Juan Larrea and published in 1947, set the tone for much of the analysis that would follow in the coming years. Larrea discusses the preparatory stages of the painting, as well the development of the painting's primary characters, with special attention paid to the figures of the horse and the bull. These two animals in *Guernica* have received more analytical attention than any of its other figures. Larrea, for example, "sees the bull as representing 'the symbol of the people of Spain,' thus the Loyalist cause," while the horse represents Nationalist forces. Vincente Marrero-Suárez, in another of the first and most oft-cited treatments of the painting, concludes that the bull is "a threatening bull, hence the Fascist cause," and the horse represents the people of Spain.

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<sup>2</sup> For a detailed description of the bombing of Guernica as well-documented evidence (by way of military correspondence) for the *blitzkrieg* trial run, see Ellen C. Oppler, ed., *Picasso's Guernica: Norton Critical Studies in Art History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988).

<sup>3</sup> "Surprised by outraged reaction in Western Europe and America—countries that were committed to staying out of the conflict—Berlin and Franco's headquarters tried to escape responsibility for the raid. The latter devised the unlikely explanation that the Basques themselves, before evacuating Guernica, had destroyed their historic town as a propaganda move to gain international support." *Ibid.*, 57.

Other critics have rejected these diametrically-opposed interpretations and offered their own.<sup>4</sup>

While the horse is, with the exception of Larrea's interpretation, consistently recognized as a victim, the polyvalence of *Guernica's* figures has led to a wide variety of interpretations. Given the prevalence of both animals in Picasso's previous artworks, as well as his documented and continuous fascination with the Spanish *corrida* (the bullfight) throughout his lifetime, there can be no doubt that the inclusion of these animals is relevant. The presence of the horse and bull in this work of great political import, however, does not necessitate a definitive interpretation of their symbolic function.

Born in the Andalusian city of Málaga, the "ancient home of the *corrida*," it is reasonable to assume that by virtue of the prevalence of the ceremonial bullfight in his home province, Picasso was familiar with the traditions of the *corrida* from an early age.<sup>5</sup> Scenes from the bullfight found their way into Picasso's art as early as his eighth year.<sup>6</sup> His first oil painting, done at age eight, was of a mounted *picador* waiting for the charge of the bull.<sup>7</sup> Another early drawing, dated to about 1890 and found in an early sketchbook of the artist's, depicts a small, hard-edged drawing in which a wounded horse, shown mid-gallop, raises its head in a frantic cry as a bull charges toward it. Around 1902, Picasso drew a variety of *corrida* scenes, "all of them from the point of view of an onlooker enjoying the entire spectacle."<sup>8</sup> Though not all of these drawings include both animals in the same space, one or the other is always shown. These early drawings mark the beginning of Picasso's creative career, and, however great his digression from the subject matter of the *corrida* in subsequent work, biographical information suggests that the artist was well-known to be a "constant and ardent aficionado of the bullfight" for all of his life.<sup>9</sup>

Once Picasso's artistic *oeuvre* had developed more fully, and after the artist's development of and exploration within the parameters of Analytic Cubism, he returned to a more generally pictorial methodology of

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<sup>4</sup> William Darr, "Images of Eros and Thanatos in Picasso's *Guernica*," *Art Journal* 25, no. 4 (Summer 1966): 338.

<sup>5</sup> Herschel Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica: History, Transformations, Meanings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 47.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>7</sup> Herschel B. Chipp, "*Guernica*: Love, War, and the Bullfight," *Art Journal* 33, no. 2 (Winter 1973-1974): 103.

<sup>8</sup> Chipp, *Picasso's Guernica*, 48.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 45.

painting and drawing.<sup>10</sup> One of the first subjects to which Picasso turns his attention in the late 'teens is the *corrida*, which so fascinated him in his youth. Drawings and etchings on the subject during the period from approximately 1917 to 1934 depict both animals in a variety of postures. Sometimes they are in close combat, with the bull the clear victor in the engagement, as in one sketch from 1917 in which the horse writhes on its side with one leg stiffly extended, after having been gored by the bull. Other drawings show a fallen *picador*, usually flailing and mid-fall, on the back of the bull, as the bull charges into the horse. Etchings from later in this period explore still more facets of the bull-horse interaction, by varying the proximity and involvement of one animal with the other. It seems clear that even in the earliest return to depictions of the two animals, the artist, though well aware of the typical procession of the *corrida*, did not favor one consistent method of exploring the conflict.

In the summer of 1934, most critics note a sharp change in Picasso's representation of the bull and the horse as well as the emergence of the minotaur as a recurring subject in the artist's work. The interaction between the two animals becomes violent. In a number of the summer's drawings and etchings, the bull, shown with features more humanized and stylistic than in the preceding period, viciously gores the horse to the extent that the horse's entrails begin spilling out of the gaping wound created by the bull's horns. In works from this summer, the conflict retains its violence—complete with gaping wounds—but without the innards of the horse depicted. In all of the bull-horse pieces from this period, the inherent tension between the two animals returns to the forefront of Picasso's work as a subject of artistic consideration. The animals remain the primary actors in the depicted drama; even in those pieces in which a *torero* is also shown, his or her presence is marginalized, both in placement and treatment.<sup>11</sup>

The minotaur, apart from the animalistic bull, is also a common subject during this period. At times, the minotaur is shown as a Bacchic reveler or in repose with a female figure, and many critics have argued that this provides autobiographical evidence for the association of the man-bull with Picasso himself. This contention is furthered by the fact that, of the women depicted with the minotaur, one nearly always bears a classical profile identified by Picasso as that of Marie-Thérèse Walter, his young mistress at the time of these works.<sup>12</sup> For purposes of establishing the

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<sup>10</sup> *Oeuvre* is an artistic style.—Ed.

<sup>11</sup> *Torero* is a bullfighter.—Ed.

<sup>12</sup> Anthony Blunt, *Picasso's Guernica* (New York, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1969), 18.

importance of the bull and horse in Picasso's artistic vocabulary, potential connections to the artist's personal affairs are largely irrelevant. What is of note, however, is the fact that in most of Picasso's depictions of the minotaur, the ancient creature is directly associated with the modern *corrida* by the presence of the gored horse and, at times, a *torero*. The continued juxtaposition of the two animals is evidence of the artist's continued association of the bull with the Spanish *corrida*, even when the bull changes form and takes on potentially autobiographical details. The two animals remain inseparable, even in scenes which defy consideration as pictorial representations of the bullfight itself.

Much attention has been given to Picasso's 1935 *Minotauromachia* in comparison to the final state of *Guernica*. The etching depicts an outdoor scene with the central characters of the *corrida* as well as four others. From the right, a minotaur advances toward a young girl, who holds a candle aloft, as though to illuminate the scene. Between the girl and the mythical beast, the gored horse appears with a female *torero*, breasts bared, on its back. Two women are pictured in the upper window of the only building in the scene, calmly surveying the ground level. On the extreme right, a bearded man clad in a loincloth climbs (or descends) a ladder, the top of which is obfuscated and lies outside of the etching.

The structural parallels between the two works are obvious, when one views the mirror image of *Minotauromachia*. As critic Robert Weisberg notes, "[s]ince *Minotauromachy* is an etching, it was printed from a drawing made by Picasso on a printing plate. The scene Picasso drew was actually reversed from left to right in comparison with the print shown."<sup>13</sup> With this reversal of perspective, the viewer sees the minotaur on the left, which is the location of the bull in *Guernica*. The horse, injured with its neck raised, continues to occupy the central portion of the etching, as in the later mural. There is a figure on the far right of the etching pictured with a ladder; from preparatory sketches for *Guernica*, critics have determined that the woman in the burning building at the right of the scene was, at times, conceived of as descending, or having been perched upon, a ladder. There is a source of illumination in the form of a lamp in both pieces as well as a female figure who surveys the scene from a top-story window.

It is Weisberg's conviction that *Minotauromachia* may have served as a source for *Guernica*, and he views the two works as born from the same "kernel idea."<sup>14</sup> Others have devoted whole essays and case studies to

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<sup>13</sup> Robert W. Weisberg, "On Structure in the Creative Process: A Quantitative Case-Study of the Creation of Picasso's *Guernica*," *Empirical Studies of the Arts* 22, no. 1 (2004): 46.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

proving the relationship between the two works.<sup>15</sup> While it does appear likely that the structure and content of *Minotauromachia* served as a template of sorts for Picasso as he began to compose *Guernica*, at least so far as concerns the cast of characters and structure of both works, this is not a conjecture which, in the absence of the artist's confirmation or denial of the fact, can be ascertained.<sup>16</sup> As this is the case, *Minotauromachia* can be viewed, at minimum, as continued evidence for the prevalence of bull-horse imagery in Picasso's work, up until the artist began compositional sketches for the *Guernica* canvas on May 1, 1937—four days after the bombing of Guernica occurred.

The first compositional study for *Guernica* shows a sketchily-rendered character group, which remain central to the scene from this point until the painting is finished—the bull, the horse, and the woman with the lamp. The bull is drawn at the left of the sketch, standing squarely, with a small winged creature on its back. Still central to the composition, the horse is rendered on its back with its hind leg raised, in a clear indication of corporeal distress. The choreography of the horse's action in this sketch, though rarely seen in Picasso's depictions of the animal, had been seen before in his 1936 drawing of the minotaur drawing a cart in which the horse lies, dead. In this sketch for *Guernica*, however, its head is raised, and the line of the horse's neck echoes a curious semi-circle the artist has drawn at the bottom of the composition.

The second compositional study shows the artist toying with the placement of the figures; in the upper portion, the bull faces the woman with the lamp, while in the lower portion, the bull stands calmly, bridled with a small Pegasus on its back, as the horse writhes, neck stretched upward, near the bottom left corner. The woman with the lamp does not appear. By the end of his first day of work, Picasso had established his desired placement of the primary figures, as well as added a new one—the fallen warrior. In the next composition study, dated to May 2, 1937, the artist includes the bull, the horse, and the lamp-bearer, all placed spatially above the warrior and another figure, who lie on the ground, presumably dead. Of the central character group from the painting's genesis, the most attention and variation in placement has been given to the horse and the bull; the lamp-bearing

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<sup>15</sup> For a recent and thorough treatment of this subject by way of quantitative analysis, see Rodica Ioana Damian and Dean Keith Simonton, "From Past to Future Art: The Creative Impact of Picasso's 1935 *Minotauromachy* on His 1937 *Guernica*," *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 5, no. 4 (2011): 360-369.

<sup>16</sup> Weisberg, *Creation of Picasso's Guernica*, 48. Weisberg notes that "[t]he correspondence between *Minotauromachy* and *Guernica* has several important implications...it enables us to understand the speed at which Picasso was able to produce the structure of *Guernica*."

woman remains in the place she occupied from the first. In this study, the horse's neck cranes downward; it withers creating a sharp apex that occupies the central position on the paper. The bull leaps away from the woman with the lamp, its head turned toward her with an ambivalent facial expression.

On May 8, 1937, one of the last compositional studies appears, this one with an additional figure which persists to the final state of the canvas—the grieving mother and child. The bull is massive and static, no longer leaping, its body and head both facing away from the lamp-bearer. The horse continues to struggle, its forelegs thrust out in front of it, as though it is trying to rise. The final and most detailed of Picasso's composition studies for *Guernica* is dated May 9, 1937. A cacophony of figures has been introduced, and the contrasts between background and foreground, black and white, are reminiscent of the forms seen in the final, grayscale mural. The mother and child appear at the right, the bull in its familiar place near the back of the space, and the horse still in the center; the horse appears to have crumpled further since the last study, and the bull has again turned to face the woman with the lamp.

In addition to the composition studies for *Guernica*, Picasso executed a series of additional character studies during the same time. Of these post-scripts, fifteen deal exclusively with the horse or the bull; the total number of character studies done is thirty-seven.<sup>17</sup> Given that the remaining twenty-two studies are split between five additional subjects, it is clear that Picasso viewed the bull and the horse, as well as the means by which they would be rendered, as central to the composition. The artist explores the horse, its stance, and its facial expressions in depth, executing hard-edged, deliberately child-like studies of the animal, as well as detailed, anatomical drawings. One of the only independent oil paintings executed during the creation of *Guernica*, in fact, is a study of the horse's head. The bull, too, is a subject of much independent study. He is treated as active and engaged, passive and serene, humanized and calm, and stolid and brutish. While the dates on these sketches and paintings may provide some clues as to which portrayals of the animals most influenced the artist's decisions with respect to the mural, the states of the canvas itself are much more revealing on this count. The choreography of the animals' bodies, though not their positions in the final work, were changed several times throughout the painting process.

In the mural's first state, the animals' places on the canvas are consistent with their placement in the preparatory sketches. The horse's

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<sup>17</sup> Weisberg, *Creation of Picasso's Guernica*, 35.

agonized facial expression remains consistent as well; the bull, again, faces away from the lamp-bearer. In the second and third state, the animals' positions remain unchanged. It is only in the fourth state of the mural that we begin to see the changes in attitude and placement that will characterize the complexity of the final *Guernica* canvas. The artist has moved the bull's hindquarters so that they occupy the far left of the painting; its tail is painted in light shades, which creates a visual congruity between the tail and the inflated foot of the running woman at the bottom right corner of the canvas. The horse's body becomes obscured in a jumble of shading, figures, and complex shapes. The lance, which has pierced its belly, is now discernible, but the most marked difference in this state of the canvas is the placement of the horse's head and neck. Upward it cranes, providing a vertical axis previously established by the quickly-abandoned raised arm of the warrior, which reinforces the triangular structure established by the auxiliary lines in contrasting shades to the right of the horse.<sup>18</sup> Its head turns, for the first time, in the direction of the bull that, by virtue of the artist's change in body placement, appears to be looking away from the scene of horror. The fifth, sixth, and seventh states of the canvas preserve these attitudes and placement, in a cacophony of flat blacks, whites, and grays. *Guernica* is finished in early June, and the journey of representation and rendition comes to an end.

When interviewed by Private Jerome Seckler in 1945, Picasso stated that the bull, though not representative of fascism, was the embodiment of "brutality and darkness" and that the horse was representative of "the people."<sup>19</sup> The artist insisted that *Guernica* alone was a symbolic work, and he denied the young man's contentions that he often used symbolic representation, stating that "[his] work is not symbolic."<sup>20</sup> In both support of and in contrast to his previous assertion to Seckler, in a later symposium on *Guernica* given by the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, Picasso told the audience that "the bull [was] a bull and [the] horse a horse," that it wasn't "up to the painter to create symbols" — this was the job of the public and the viewer — and that *Guernica's faena* are merely "animals, massacred animals... so far as [he was] concerned."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Rachel Wischnitzer, "'Guernica'. A Matter of Metaphor," *Artibus et Historiae* 6, no. 12 (1985): 154. Wischnitzer notes the presence of an "auxiliary line, reinforced by a stream of light which guides the eyes of the [running] woman to the top of the lamp" in the mural's final state.

<sup>19</sup> Jerome Seckler, "Picasso Explains," in *Picasso's Guernica: Norton Critical Studies in Art History*, ed. Ellen C. Oppler (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 145-151.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 148.

<sup>21</sup> Oppler, *Picasso's Guernica*, 102. [A *faena* is a series of final passes performed by the matador prior to killing the bull in a bullfight.-Ed.]

The artist's contradictory statements regarding the meaning of the bull and the horse of *Guernica* have contributed greatly to academic and critical responses to the painting. As mentioned earlier in this essay, Juan Larrea published *Guernica: Pablo Picasso* in 1947. This was the first treatise written on the painting, its thematic elements, and the inclusion of symbolic meanings. Larrea concludes that the bull is representative of the Spanish people, that the horse represents Franco's Nationalist cause, and that the victims in *Guernica* are both bystanders to and peripheral participants in the horror of the conflict between these two entities.

While Larrea's exploration of iconographic details in the painting is thorough, his conclusion directly contradicts Picasso's own assertions with respect to the painting. It is not difficult to see why Larrea might associate the bull with the Spanish people. For centuries, the bull has been regarded as a totemic animal for Spain, due in no small part to the prevalence of the *corrida* in the country's traditions. To assign the bull a singular interpretive meaning in the painting, however, is to do a disservice to the breadth and complexity of the artist's depictions of the bull throughout time. What of instances in which the artist clearly associated the bull (or minotaur) with forces of violence or the perpetration thereof, as in the sketches from the summer of 1934? Are viewers to assume that, in the midst of *Guernica*'s composition, the artist abandoned his previously-developed artistic vocabulary with respect to the bull, in favor of a single-purpose, symbolic use for the animal?

In the second book published on the topic, Vicente Marrero-Suárez contradicts Juan Larrea's interpretation by asserting the exact opposite—that the bull is the Nationalist cause, and the horse is the Spanish people.<sup>22</sup> Marrero-Suárez points to the seeming disinterest of the bull in the horrific violence of the painting as well as to the extreme fragmentation of the horse's body in support of his theory. While, on the whole, there seems to be more evidence to support Marrero's theory, again the critic's effort at the assignment of meaning falls short. There is no indication in Picasso's previous work (and in the face of the Museum of Modern Art symposium interview, there may have been little evidence from the artist himself) that the bull is clearly representative of the fascist cause—nor can one discern from Picasso's artistic history that the bull is always associated with, as the artist said, "brutality and darkness," or that the horse is always a victim, prey to the bull's horns and violence.

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<sup>22</sup> Marrero discusses the bull's iconography at length in *Picasso and the Bull* (Washington D.C.: H. Regnery Co, 1956); he devotes only a small portion of the book to *Guernica* itself, and to his interpretation of the horse's role in the painting.

Wilhelm Boeck, in his 1957 book titled *Picasso*, offers a solution that combines both Larrea's and Marrero-Suárez's conclusions—"the author identifies the bull in *Guernica* with the continuity of the Spanish nation (Larrea's bull) and the horse with the victim of innocent suffering (Marrero's horse)."<sup>23</sup> Boeck's assertion is bolstered by a number of conspicuous details. The bull's head, for example, is one of the only unbroken shapes on the canvas, portrayed in its entirety, and the animal's long-standing connection to the nation of Spain makes it a viable figure in which symbolism of this sort might be found. Rudolf Arnheim, in an oft-cited analysis of the painting published in 1962, further bolsters Boeck's case by asserting numerous additional reasons why the bull cannot be read as nationalist Spain.<sup>24</sup>

Further examination of the canvas, in light of the preparatory sketches and character studies and with consideration given to the development of the two figures throughout Picasso's art, does not support such an interpretation. The bull is never shown as a symbol of hope in the artist's work; it is either disengaged from combat entirely or it is the active aggressor, perpetrating violence against what, at this point in the painting's criticism, can be thought of as an undeserving victim—the horse. If symbolic of the continuity of the Spanish people, it seems unlikely that the artist would employ a figure so laden with aggressive overtones; it is especially relevant to note that there is no retributive function possible in this reading of the bull. In the *corrida*—the starting point for Picasso's depictions of bulls in his art—the bull drives its horns into the horse, not because of any ill perpetrated by the horse, but by virtue of the fact that the horse is an accessible victim, an apparent party to an assault unrelated to the animal itself.

As time passes, other interpretations of the two figures have been suggested. Carsten-Peter Warncke reads the horse as "the suffering people of Spain, the bull the triumphant people."<sup>25</sup> Pierre Daix believes the animals to be Spain personified, "the bull the shadow, the horse the sun."<sup>26</sup> Carla Gottlieb suggests that the "bull's ambiguity reflects the wavering policy of France" in the Spanish-Civil War.<sup>27</sup> Rachel Wischnitzer expounds upon Gottlieb's ideas and contends that the bull, as the embodiment of the neutral Western powers, reacts to the lamp-bearing figure, which is symbolic of the USSR. Still more interpretations and criticisms are bound to follow.

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<sup>23</sup> Carla Gottlieb, "The Meaning of Bull and Horse in *Guernica*." *Art Journal* 24, no. 2 (Winter 1964-1965): 107.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> John Corbin, "Images of War: Picasso's *Guernica*," *Visual Anthropology* 13 (1999): 3.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> Wischnitzer, "'*Guernica*.' A Matter of Metaphor," 165.

It is impossible to isolate the meaning of the bull and the horse with any certitude. Picasso himself seems to have acknowledged the ambiguity inherent in the depiction of the animals of *Guernica*. For the artist, both animals were at once emblematic of intangible forces (brutality, darkness, victimization) and simply “massacred animals—blank canvases onto which the viewer might project his/her own symbolic meaning. As Herschel Chipp notes, “[t]he meanings of the images first evoked on May 1, all of which had appeared earlier in [Picasso’s] art, lay deep within [his] personal experience. They also drew upon a kind of personal symbolism, which long ago had found an effective medium in the ritual conflict of bull and horse.”<sup>28</sup> In short, “[t]he iconography of *Guernica* is... built on the identity change of the bull and the horse.”<sup>29</sup> The viewer sees several different attitudes, states, positions, and renderings of each, throughout the preparatory process for the mural. Picasso’s history of experimentation with form and content by way of these two figures has a long and well-documented history.

In a painting as historically significant as *Guernica* has become, the desire to assign definitive meaning is understandable. Unfortunately, the dynamic horse and the enigmatic bull remain best understood as figures that are quite naturally included in the mural as an extension of Picasso’s work at the time, not as two animals especially selected for inclusion for symbolic purposes. The varied interpretations of their appearance are all equally true—or so the artist himself once said, “*Guernica* pictorializes neither a contest between fascism and communism nor the triumph of scientific warfare over familial innocence.”<sup>30</sup> As critic Rachel Wischnitzer once wrote of painting’s complex jumble of figures, “[n]one of Picasso’s protagonists is a messenger of hope, none a clear-cut symbol of survival.”<sup>31</sup> Meaning cannot be unilaterally assigned to either animal. Far from detracting from the work’s significance as a symbol of indiscriminate violence, the continued dialogue regarding the painting’s symbolic content achieves what, perhaps, can be thought of as one of Picasso’s goals in painting the mural—it keeps the possibility of such atrocities fresh in the minds of viewers, even as it immortalizes the sacrifice of innocent lives on the afternoon of April 26, 1937. *Guernica*’s status as a masterwork is not wholly dependent upon its historical connection to the bombing of the Basque capital. Its meaning, evasive and ever-changing, continues to engage viewers precisely because of the multidimensionality of its pictorial content.

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<sup>28</sup> Chipp, “*Guernica*: Love, War, and the Bullfight,” 114.

<sup>29</sup> Wischnitzer, 168.

<sup>30</sup> Eugene B. Cantelupe, “Picasso’s *Guernica*,” *Art Journal* 31, no. 1 (Autumn 1971): 21.

<sup>31</sup> Wischnitzer, 171.