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## GAGOSIAN GALLERY

### Picasso Show in London Is a Family Affair

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LONDON — Since it opened on June 4, nearly 1,000 people a day — a giant number for a gallery show here — have been going to the Gagosian Gallery at Britannia Street to see “Picasso: The Mediterranean Years (1945-1962).”



Estate of Pablo Picasso, Artists Rights Society, (ARS), via Marc Damage/Gagosian Gallery

“Toréador,” from the Picasso exhibit in London.



**Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society, (ARS), via Marc Damage/Gagosian Gallery**

“Masque,” from the Picasso exhibit in London.

The exhibition was organized by John Richardson, the Picasso biographer, and Bernard Ruiz-Picasso, the artist’s grandson, the same people behind a hit Picasso gallery show in New York last year. The London exhibition charts a period of the artist’s life that has rarely been explored: the years when he spent most of his time in the south of France surrounded by bullfighters, poets, master craftsmen and fellow artists like Matisse. And his children.

His children played a big part in his life in the 1950s. In addition to Paulo, his son by his first wife, Olga Khokhlova, and his daughter Maya, by his mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter, Picasso fathered two more children during those years — Claude and Paloma — with Françoise Gilot, his young art-student mistress.

Their images fill many of the walls in the exhibition, but not just as subjects of paintings and drawings. There are also light-hearted watercolor silhouettes and a bronze sculpture of a girl skipping rope.

“I wanted to show Picasso at home,” said Mr. Richardson, who works as a consultant to the Gagosian Gallery. And so there are many objects the artist made that offer an

unusually personal look at Picasso the family man. Most have never been seen before and have been lent by his family.

Picasso made toys for his children, including cutouts of birds. And he is said to have made dolls for Paloma, although she was never allowed to play with them.

He also made colorful masks decorated in pastel and charcoal. “The masks were mostly for him and the grownups and less for the children,” Mr. Richardson said. “They were so crucial to Picasso’s work. He felt a change of mask could signify a change in personality, whether it be sex or age. He was always interested in metamorphosis and playing around with identities.”

The show also includes a whimsically painted tie he made in 1956 that depicts a colorful toreador. “I don’t know who he made that particular tie for,” said Mr. Richardson, who was a friend of Picasso’s and got to know his bohemian circle during the 1950s, when Mr. Richardson lived in the south of France with the scholar and collector Douglas Cooper. “He often made them for friends. He once made me a tie and a crown, but they were stolen many years ago.”

Another unusual artifact in the show is a wooden door, “Anatomie Feminine,” dated June 13, 1946, on which Picasso drew a woman’s body in India ink, its keyhole intact. “During World War II there was an Argentinean ambassador in Paris who entertained all the artists — Matisse, Braque, Cocteau, Leger,” Mr. Richardson recalled. “His had one of the few households where you could get marvelous wines and cigars and great food, despite the rationing. And he wanted the artists to make him something. So he sent this door from his house over to Picasso to decorate. Picasso never did it at the time. Then one day, years later, he rediscovered it and painted it.”

Mr. Richardson and Mr. Ruiz-Picasso were responsible for “Mosqueteros,” the Picasso show held at one of Gagosian’s New York spaces last year, focused on the late paintings and prints. It drew about 100,000 visitors during its run. The London

exhibition, which runs through Aug. 28, will not be coming to New York, gallery officials said.