

# NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

## Picasso's "Le Tricorne"

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Selected PR Images



Picasso's curtain for the ballet *Le Tricorne* set the scene for the Ballets Russes production of 1919 with a quintessentially Spanish vignette: a bullfight (*corrida*). His bullring, with spectators gathered in a classical arcade, recalls one of his favorite arenas for bullfights, the Roman amphitheater at Nîmes, France, and stays true to the traditional colors of the *plaza de toros*: ochre yellow and reddish orange. It hung like a tapestry from 1959 in the iconic Four Seasons Restaurant in the Seagram Building in New York City.

Pablo Picasso, *Curtain for the Ballet "Le Tricorne,"* 1919. Tempera on canvas, ca. 20 x 19 feet. New-York Historical Society, Gift of New York Landmarks Conservancy, Courtesy of Vivendi Universal, 2015.22. © 2015 Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS) New York



This design is the cartoon for the famous *Peony* stained-glass lamp produced by Tiffany Studios. The black outlines framing where the brilliant glass pieces of this bold pattern would be placed reflect an aesthetic akin to contemporary theatrical posters and to Picasso's curtain for *Le Tricorne*. Clara Driscoll was the design force behind some of the most celebrated lamp designs of Tiffany Studios, including this one. She was director of its Women's Glass Cutting Department, known as the "Tiffany Girls."

Clara Driscoll, designing for Tiffany Studios, Cartoon for *Peony* shade (model 1505), 1900–04. Ink and graphite on linen, 37 ½ x 34 inches. New-York Historical Society, Gift of Fred and Nancy Lee Dikeman, 2007.4.8



Like Picasso, Elie Nadelman harnessed classical forms to forge his modernist art. Although none of Nadelman's sculptures have their traditional attributes, each is true to its respective season: Spring twists her hair (like classical representations of Venus, born from the sea in Spring), while Winter is swathed in heavy fabric, Summer removes her drapery, and Autumn gathers her cloak to warm herself. In 1908 the two artists met in Paris, introduced by Gertrude Stein's brother, Leo.

Elie Nadelman, *The Four Seasons*, ca. 1912. Terracotta, 31 ½ inches (tallest). New-York Historical Society, 2001.223a-d



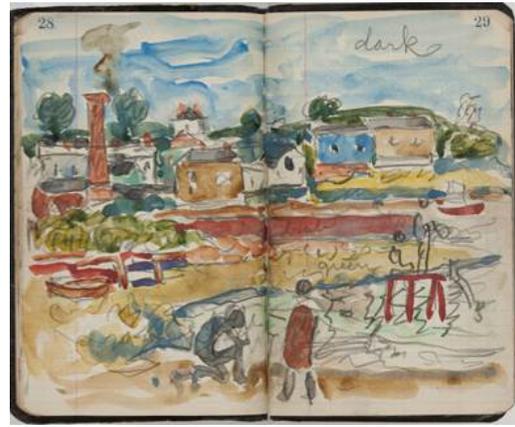
During the 1890s, *Harper's Magazine* began to feature poster-like covers that embraced fashionable European trends influenced by Art Nouveau and in vogue French painters. Drawing from the same influences, Picasso's *Le Tricorne* curtain resembles theatrical posters.

Edward Penfield, Cover: *Harper's Magazine* (March, 1896); Cover: *Harper's Magazine* (August, 1896). New-York Historical Society, Prints, Photographs, and Architectural Collections, Art Poster File, ca. 1890–1910



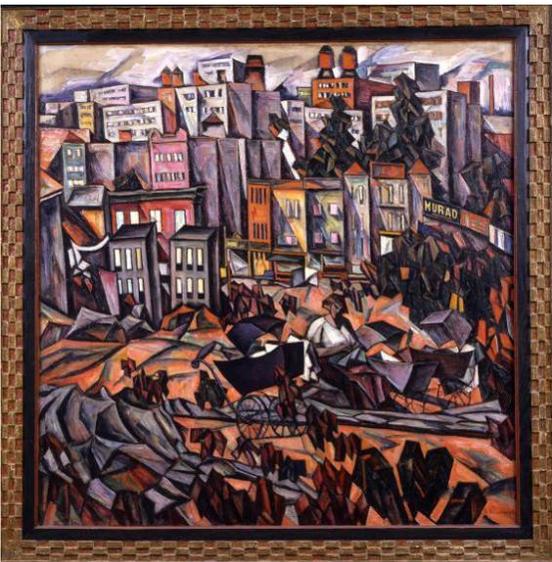
Hassam's "Flag Series" communicates the patriotic fervor of World War I. Through a distorted perspective, it represents an Impressionistic bird's-eye view of Fifty-seventh Street and Sixth Avenue as seen from the artist's studio. Like Nadelman, Picasso, Prendergast, and other artists in the exhibition, Hassam exhibited at the seminal Armory Show in 1913.

Childe Hassam, *Flags on 57th Street, Winter 1918*, 1918. Oil on canvas, 35 ¾ x 23 ¾ inches. New-York Historical Society, Bequest of Julia B. Engel, 1984.68



Maurice Prendergast, known as the first American Post-Impressionist, spent every moment sketching. Twelve two-page spreads with luminous, jewel-like watercolors and four drawings in graphite and wax crayons punctuate its 152 pages. Prendergast made many annotations, most about color, that he could consult when composing his paintings. Most of the sketches portray scenes of seaside locales bathed sunlight with sailboats and people engaged in leisurely pursuits. It reveals the basis for the artist's reputation as an early modernist.

Maurice Brazil Prendergast, *Sketchbook*, 1922. Watercolor, graphite, and crayon on lined paper bound as a "Record" book, 6 3/4 x 4 1/4 inches. New-York Historical Society, Gift of Miriam Schapiro Grosopf, in memory of a friendship, 2013.11



This painting is reminiscent of the abstract and folkloric paintings of Manievich's native Russia. During the 1920s, the Bronx became a haven for Jewish artists, musicians, and writers, including Manievich, who fled his homeland to escape the pogroms. Members of the Ballets Russes and other Russian dancers performed in New York and a number settled in the City, forming ballet companies.

Abraham Manievich, *The Bronx*, 1924. Oil on canvas, 51 ½ x 49 inches. New-York Historical Society, 2001.50



In this comic vision of the stock market, bears symbolize "bearish" negative investors, whereas the bulls represent "bullish" positive investors, here struggling for superiority. Like Picasso used the bullfight arena to indicate Spain as the setting of *Le Tricorne*, Beard shows these animals in combat surging past the epicenter of the American financial markets, the New York Stock Exchange.

William Holbrook Beard, *The Bulls and Bears in the Market*, 1879. Oil on linen, 39 x 61 inches. New-York Historical Society, Thomas Jefferson Bryan Fund, 1971.104



According to Picasso biographer John Richardson, the rapturous reception of the ballet *Le Tricorne* in London in 1919 launched “a fashion for things Iberian: a fringed shawl on the piano, a beribboned guitar on the wall, kiss curls on the cheek and fans and Gypsy earrings. London was soon full of Spanish dancing schools.” In his *Le Tricorne* curtain Picasso painted women (*majas*) wearing mantillas and lace-trimmed shawls and carrying fans similar to this one.

Unidentified maker, Fan, 1825–50. Tortoise shell, lace, linen, cardboard, other textile. New-York Historical Society, Gift of the Estate of Ethel Frank, 1973.45ab



This amusing dancing figures toy was made for the English, German, French, and Italian markets. Changing the block faces and combining them produced humorous hybrid images and challenged children to match the physiques.

Unidentified Italian Maker, *Comic Ballet Metamorphoses* (dancing figures toy), 1850–1900. Wood, paper, paint, 1 5/8 x 2 1/8 inch (each block). New-York Historical Society, INV.5248a-xx



Anna Pavlova, the legendary St. Petersburg dancer known for her portrayal of the dying swan in *Swan Lake*, was Hoffman’s muse, friend, and most-studied subject. The sculptor captured Pavlova, who danced in New York and elsewhere in the United States, in the classicizing style of Italian Renaissance sculptor Francesco Laurana. The work is one of three modernist portraits of dancers in the exhibition.

Malvina Hoffman, *Anna Pavlova*, 1924. Patinated plaster on a wooden base, 25 3/4 inches in height. New-York Historical Society, Gift of the artist, 1952.45



A member of the New York City Ballet from 1970–1995, Heather Watts autographed this pair of pointe shoes that she wore for her farewell performance as a principal dancer of the New York City Ballet. She danced *Bugaku* by George Balanchine—the esteemed, Russian-born choreographer, who worked with Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, and founder of the New York City Ballet—on January 15, 1995.

Freed of London, *Pointe shoes worn by Heather Watts*, 1994–95. Satin, hessian, paper, glue, leather. New-York Historical Society, Gift of the New York City Ballet, Inc., 1995.1ab



Adriaen van Utrecht was a celebrated Flemish Baroque painter who specialized in lush monumental still lifes painted in a dark palette. This huge canvas warns about the transitory nature of life and the decay beneath its opulent, sensuous surfaces. Picasso placed a small still life at the lower left of his *Le Tricorne* curtain as a bridge between the viewer's space and that of his scene. Still lifes were a favorite subject of Picasso during his Analytical Cubist and Synthetic Cubist phases.

Adriaen van Utrecht, *Still Life with Game, Fish, Fruit, Vegetables, Animals and Figures*, ca. 1645. Oil on canvas, 59 x 77 inches. New-York Historical Society, Gift of T.W. C. Moore, 1857.7



In Paris, Picasso encountered the works of Gérôme, revered for his minutely detailed and luminous canvases, and during his academic training used a drawing manual by Gérôme. *The Runners of the Pasha* captures the vigorous strides of colorfully attired runners leading the procession of a high-ranking military commander known as a Pasha, and demonstrates why Gérôme was one of the leading Orientalist painters of the 19th century.

Jean-Léon Gérôme, *The Runners of the Pasha*, 1867. Oil on wood panel, 22 x 17 1/8 inches. New-York Historical Society, The Robert L. Stuart Collection, the gift of his widow Mrs. Mary Stuart, S-146



Floris Jaspers was commissioned to design five tapestries celebrating Belgian history for the 1939 New York World's Fair. One of them was this masterpiece, with a bold, flat Art Deco style that harmonizes with Picasso's *Le Tricorne* painted curtain. The Belgians, who founded New York, are depicted in several scenes including: the arrival of Henry Hudson and the *Half Moon* (1609); the 1624 arrival of the eight Walloons (French-speaking Belgians) on the *Nieu Nederlandt* who founded the city of "Novum Belgium," seen at the upper left with its windmill and fort; and the 1626 purchase by Peter Minuit of Manhattan Island for \$24.

Floris Jaspers for Bracquenié, *Belgian Settlers Landing on Manhattan Island in 1623*, 1939. Wool, cotton, silk, ca. 16 x 19 feet. New-York Historical Society, Gift of the Belgian Government through Foreign Minister Paul van Zeeland and New York City's 300th Anniversary Committee, 1953.190



*The Triumph of Apollo* depicts the Greco-Roman god Apollo wearing a laurel wreath and holding his lyre. Under the trees is a banquet table with Jupiter and other divinities. The nine muses wear rococo costumes and coiffures of the time of King Louis XIV of France, and draperies at both sides suggest the influence of court theatricals on the imagery. Tapestries are luxury items that were very popular with the European aristocracy because they were portable and could decorate large areas. Unlike paintings, they could be rolled up and moved from residence to residence, also providing good insulation in vast, drafty rooms.

Judocus de Vos, first woven by Albert Auwercx, based on designs of Jan van and Augustin Coppens, *The Triumph of Apollo*, ca. 1715. Wool, silk, metallic threads, ca. 13 1/4 x 20 1/4 feet. New-York Historical Society, The Robert L. Stuart Collection, the gift of his widow Mrs. Mary Stuart, S-191