

LE CLAIRE

KUNST

SEIT 1982



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PABLO PICASSO

1881 Málaga – Mougins 1973

Femme au fauteuil no. 1 (Le manteau polonais)

Lithograph on wove paper; 16 January 1949.

Signed *Picasso* lower right, numbered 45/50 lower left, inscribed on the reverse by another hand: 148, *Pablo Picasso, Femme au Fauteuil I.*

75.5 x 56.6 cm

PROVENANCE: Zürcher Kunstgesellschaft, Kunsthaus Zürich – Private collection, Switzerland
(acquired in 1954 as part of the exhibition *Pablo Picasso. Das graphische Werk*, at the Kunsthaus Zürich) –
Private collection (by inheritance)

LITERATURE: Mourlot 134/III (of IV) – Bloch 586

EXHIBITION: *Pablo Picasso. Das graphische Werk*, Kunsthaus Zürich, May to June 1954

Picasso's most intense creative period in lithography took place between November 1945 and the spring of 1949. His relationship with the young painter Françoise Gilot coincided with his return to lithography at the end of 1945, having abstained from the medium for a long period of time. Inspired by his new love, Picasso plunged into an intense period of experimentation, radically adapting traditional lithographic methods and inventing new ones.

Picasso's best-known, most extensive and probably most technically sophisticated series is *Femme au fauteuil*. It depicts Françoise Gilot, who at the time owned a jacket that Picasso had brought back for her from a two-week visit to Poland. He had been invited there to attend a peace congress, in which he also spoke out in support of the persecuted Chilean poet Pablo Neruda.

The development of *Femme au fauteuil* is more complex than almost any other work in Picasso's lithographic oeuvre. As early as 1947, Picasso designed a lithograph of a woman sitting in an armchair. This antique piece of furniture had long been a favourite of the artist.

Mourlot counts no fewer than thirty versions between November 1948 and April 1949 alone. It all began with the artist's desire to draw a five-colour lithograph with a portrait of a woman. The entire group of eleven sheets in black and white and colour is entitled *Femme au fauteuil no. 1* [Two sheets from the series: Fig. 1 and 2].

Throughout the variations of the differing printing plates, Picasso, starting from a five-part representation, produced extremely different characteristic portraits of a woman who resembles Françoise Gilot, sometimes more and sometimes less. From highly stylised to naturalistic features or even noticeable echoes of Art Nouveau, very different styles can be recognised, as is typical of Picasso's entire oeuvre.¹

¹ Andreas Stolzenburg, „Ich mache ein Bild und zerstöre es“. *Picasso und die Lithographie*, pp. 56-57.

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Fig.1: *Femme au fauteuil no. 1*, 1948
Lithograph
69.2 x 51.4 cm



Fig.2: *Femme au fauteuil no. 1 (d'après le rouge)*, 1948
Lithograph
76.7 x 56.5 cm