

Picasso – Bacon

What It Feels Like to Be Human

18.9.2026 – 31.1.2027

This major show undertakes an exciting juxtaposition of the 20th century's two most important figurative painters: Pablo Picasso and Francis Bacon.

Bacon was inspired to become a painter by Picasso's works. Throughout his life, he would compete with him, eventually striving to surpass him. Bacon wanted to be the late 20th-century version of what Picasso was to its first half: a chronicler of being human in all of its tornness.

Both of these seminal artists placed human existence at the core of their pictorial worlds. The subject they shared was the human figure – pulled apart, thrown back together, and reinvented with an unprecedented savagery. In their distorted portrayals, they elucidated pain, desire, and vulnerability, holding up a merciless mirror to the modern soul. To both, themes such as crucifixions, screams, bullfights, nudes, and the *Tears of Eros* revealed the drama of life itself. Although Picasso for his part was never influenced by Bacon, he followed his career very closely.

Although Picasso himself was not influenced by Bacon, he closely followed his career. About 70 key works from international museums and private collections – from Chicago to Mexico City to London, Paris, and Stockholm – illustrate in an impressive confrontation the similarities in the oeuvre of the two masters and Picasso's significance for the subsequent generation of artists.

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