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# THE WINDOW





Robert Doisneau,  
*Pablo Picasso*  
*Behind a window*,  
1952

# What is special about a window?

Close your eyes and imagine that you are in a totally empty space. Suddenly, a window appears in front of you and it is closed. You approach it and open it... What can you see from the window? Is it a real or imaginary world?

Do you feel like going out and exploring what is happening on the other side?



Pablo Picasso,  
*Window with  
a Curtain from  
the Inside*,  
Barcelona, 1899

# An artist for each window

Surely everyone has imagined a very different window and setting. A window, an opening to the outside, provides us with an infinite world of possibilities and a major source of inspiration.

Its shape is already a good starting point for working perspective and, given its functionality, it has been used throughout the history of painting as an intermediate element between indoors and outdoors, between the real and imaginary fact.



Caspar David  
Friedrich, *Woman at  
a Window*, 1822



Marc Chagall, *Paris through  
the Window*, 1913

# Looking from inside, looking from outside

Inner window: introspective look, towards an intimate world, towards a secret, private world (voyeurism).

Outer window: access to an outside world, endless possibilities, a world to dream about, to discover...



**Can you see any relation between these two paintings?**





You're right, a window appears in both! We also know that both works are by Picasso and are painted at the same place: a studio he had in the no-longer Carrer de la Riera de Sant Joan in Barcelona.



In the first work, we can see that Picasso painted the frame of the window and the street from above. I can almost imagine him leaning back!

Pablo Picasso, *The Street of Riera de Sant Joan from the Artist's Studio*, 1900



In the second, the window remains open and allows us to see what is outside the studio: glimpses of the city's rooftops on a very bright day, and especially in contrast to the darkness inside the studio. Oh, and you must be wondering: who was this girl in the picture? Lola, his sister!

Pablo Picasso, *Lola, the Artist's Sister, in the Studio in Riera de Sant Joan*, 1900

# Picasso and the window

The window was a recurring theme in Picasso's work throughout his career.

He liked to portray what was closest to him, where his life took place: indoor enclosures, open to the outside through large windows that communicated his privacy with large and well-lit spaces.

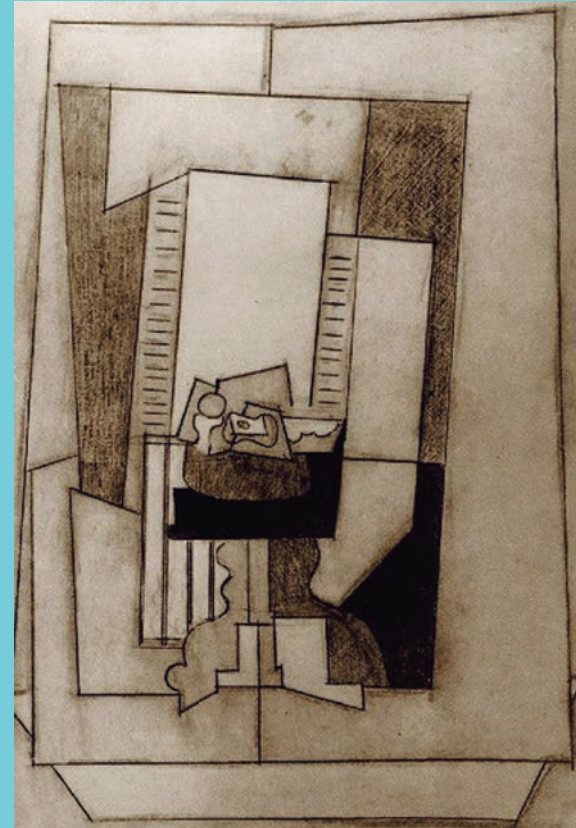


Pablo Picasso, *Balcony*, 1898



The window was the meeting point between the artist and the world, and through its representation fundamental artistic questions were raised:

- Do we paint what we see with our eyes or with imagination?
- Is the painting a window to the world?



Pablo Picasso, *Still Life on a Pedestal in front of an Open Window*, 1919



1



2



3



4



5



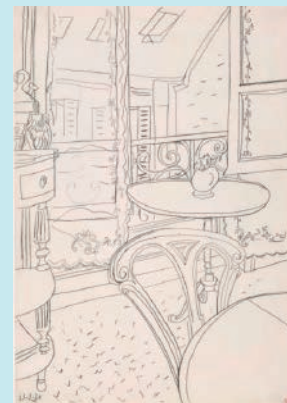
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8



9



# Infiltrated work

Which of the previous works is not by Picasso?

Make your proposal and explain the reason why it makes you think so.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9

# And the answer is...

1. Pablo Picasso, *The Studio*, 1955 (© Tate, London 2014 / Succceció Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014)
2. Pablo Picasso, *The Table in front of the Window*, 1920  
(© Estate of Pablo Picasso / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York)
3. Pablo Picasso, *Woman in the Studio III*, 1956
4. Pablo Picasso, *Passeig de Colom*, 1917
5. Pablo Picasso, *Lola, Picasso's Sister*, 1899
6. Henri Matisse, *Red Interior, Still Life on a Blue Table*, 1947
7. Pablo Picasso, *Still Life at the Window*, 1919
8. Pablo Picasso, *The Doves*, 1957
9. Pablo Picasso, *Artist's Dining Room in Rue La Boétie*, 1920

**It may not  
have been easy  
to find the answer to  
why Picasso used very  
different artistic languages  
and often shared themes  
and styles with other  
artists.**

# Windows of other artists



Dalí, *Le Voyeur*, 1921



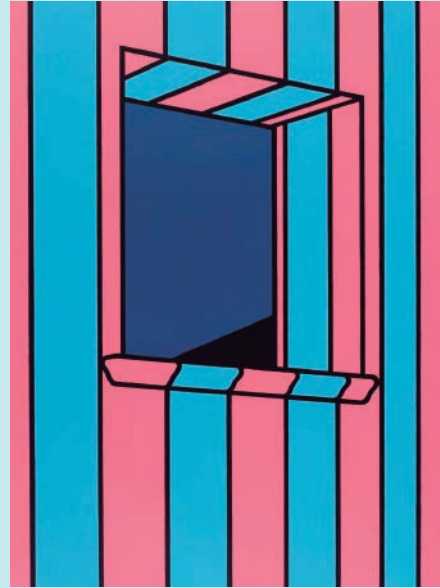
Edward Hopper, *Room in New York*, 1932



Shaun Downey, *In the Glass*, 2017



Lucian Freud, *The Painter's Room*, 1944



Patrick Caulfield, *Window at Night*, 1972



Consuelo Hernández, *Commercial Café*, 2015



# Challenge: the window as a canvas

We have already seen that a window can be used to connect indoor space and outdoor space. We suggest you use it as a canvas and you decide that you want to include there.

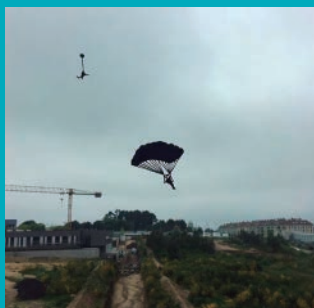
**Step 1:** Look for a window.

**Step 2:** Observe what we can see from the window: what elements are there? What would you like there to be or to see happen? You can imagine new elements that interact with space or you can change what you see, you choose!

**Step 3:** Pick up the paint and start drawing!



Pejac



Javier Padin



Lotte Keijzer

# Competence proposals

1. We make a model of a space, either indoors or outdoors, to talk about perspective.
2. We discuss in class together to decide what we would like to see from our windows and make a group drawing of it.
3. With the pop-up technique, we represent an element of what can be observed from the window.
4. Project Own Space carried out with IES Pau Claris:  
<http://www.blogmuseupicassobcn.org/2011/05/els-projectes-de-barri-com-treballem-amb-les-escoles-del-nostre-entorn/>

If you feel like sharing your ideas, send us an email to:  
[museupicasso\\_educacio@bcn.cat](mailto:museupicasso_educacio@bcn.cat)

# Bibliography

- *Picasso: Indoor and Outdoor Landscapes*. Catalogue of the exhibition at Barcelona's Museu Picasso from 26 October 1999 to 30 January 2000.
- The works *The Doves* in the blog of the Museu Picasso:  
<http://www.blogmuseupicassobcn.org/2015/08/la-cronologia-de-las-meninas-de-picasso/>
- Tate Gallery: window <https://www.tate.org.uk/search?q=window&type=artwork&page=70>
- From the Critical Window project, Palmadotze <https://www.palmadotze.com/desdelaventana>



**Visit our website if you want to know more  
about Picasso and the museum:  
[www.museupicasso.bcn.cat](http://www.museupicasso.bcn.cat)**

**Museu Picasso of Barcelona**



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