

Wifredo Lam and Pablo Picasso

23 April – End of June 2026

Galerie Gmurzynska

Fuller Building, Sixth Floor · 595 Madison Avenue at the corner of 57th Street, New York

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- **Scope:** Approximately 50 works (spanning from 1918 to 1978) including paintings, frescos, works on paper, collage, and ceramics.
- **Timing:** Following the finissage of Museum of Modern Art's highly lauded solo retrospective "Wifredo Lam: When I Don't Sleep, I Dream", the Galerie Gmurzynska exhibition will include some important Lam works previously exhibited at the MoMA.
- **Publication:** The exhibition will be accompanied by a 350-page scholarly volume with previously unpublished archival materials and new research by Jérôme Neutres, Jacques Leenhardt, Fabrice Flahutez and Dorota Dolega-Ritter. This is the first publication to take on the subject of their relationship.
- **Historical Significance:** Lam and Picasso first met in Paris in May 1938. The encounter proved foundational for both artists', which subsequently developed into a deep lifelong friendship of mutual respect.
- Picasso lauded Lam, saying "Lam, I think that you have my blood in you, you must be one of my relations, a primo, a cousin." (1938) and "My friend Lam. I've seen your things. They're very good! And I'm so glad I saw them. You know how much I love you" (1945).
- Between 1940 and 1946, Picasso and Lam regularly exhibited together at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York in the Fuller Building, the same premises now occupied by Galerie Gmurzynska where the Lam / Picasso exhibition will take place.
- The last dedicated exclusive two-man exhibition related to Lam and Picasso dates back to 1939 at the Perls Gallery in New York. It was Lam's first showing in America.
- Picasso personally brought his friends Chagall, Giacometti, Le Corbusier, Léger, and Miró to Lam's foundational solo show at Galerie Pierre (Pierre Loeb) in Paris in 1939. Picasso introduced Lam to André Breton, the Surrealist circle, and Michel Leiris. Picasso and Dora Maar held Lam's entire oeuvre for safe-keeping during World War 2 when Lam returned to his native Cuba.
- The exhibition includes from Lam a rare *Étude pour La Jungle* (1943) as well as other masterpieces from Lam's estate including part of his indigenous art collection. From Picasso, two rare frescos from his 1918 honeymoon in Biarritz are exhibited as well as works engaging in his lifelong interest in African art such as *Animaux naturels (Arts Primitifs)* from 1943, a total of six oil on canvas paintings.

"Picasso found in Lam the only kind of confirmation he could care about — that of a man who had realized himself by taking, in relation to Picasso, the very opposite path: who, starting from the primitive myth he bore within him, and assimilating on his way the most learned disciplines of European art, had attained the highest point of consciousness."

André Breton, 1941