

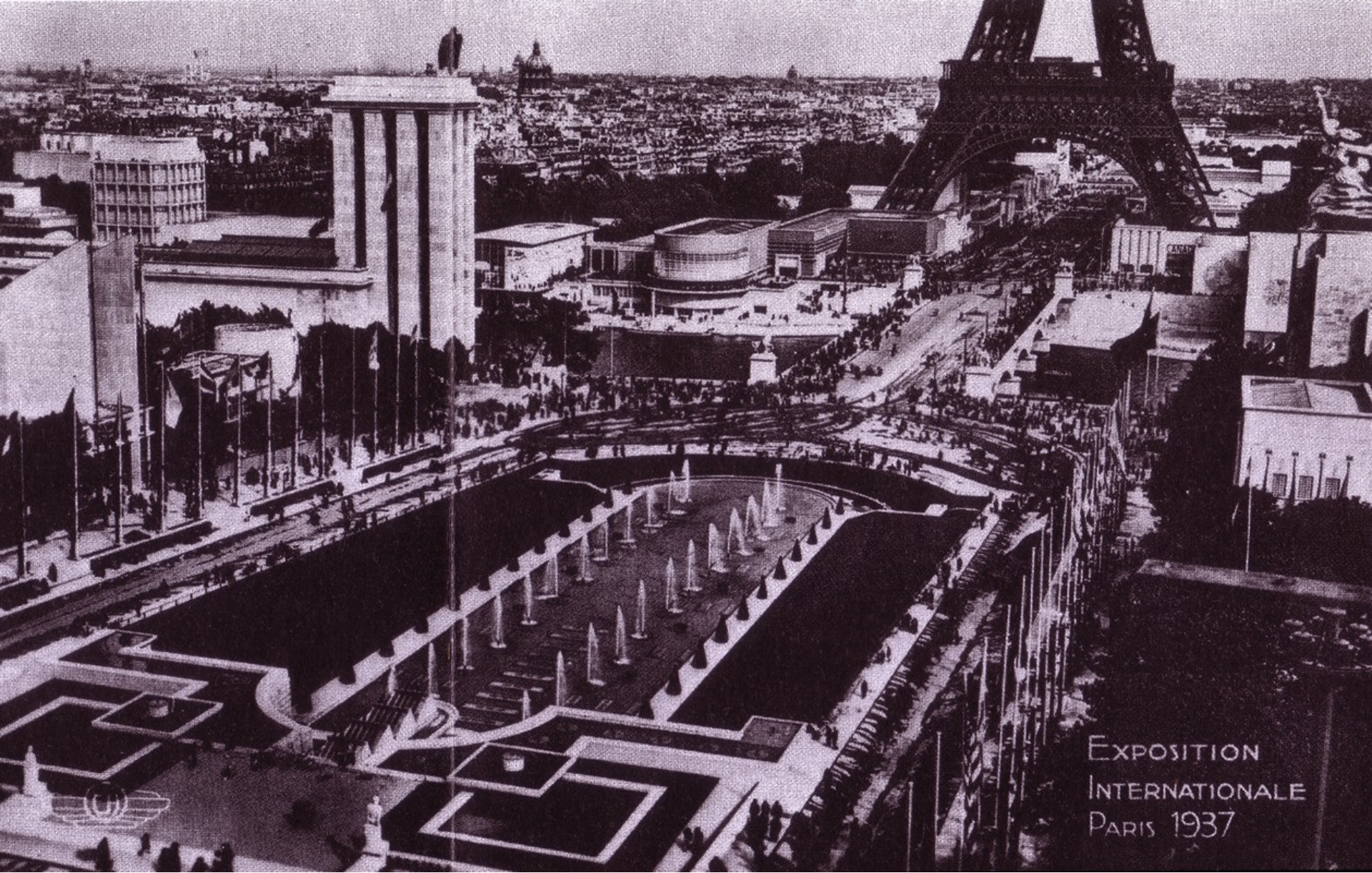
Picasso's "Guernica"

Kenneth G. Hay

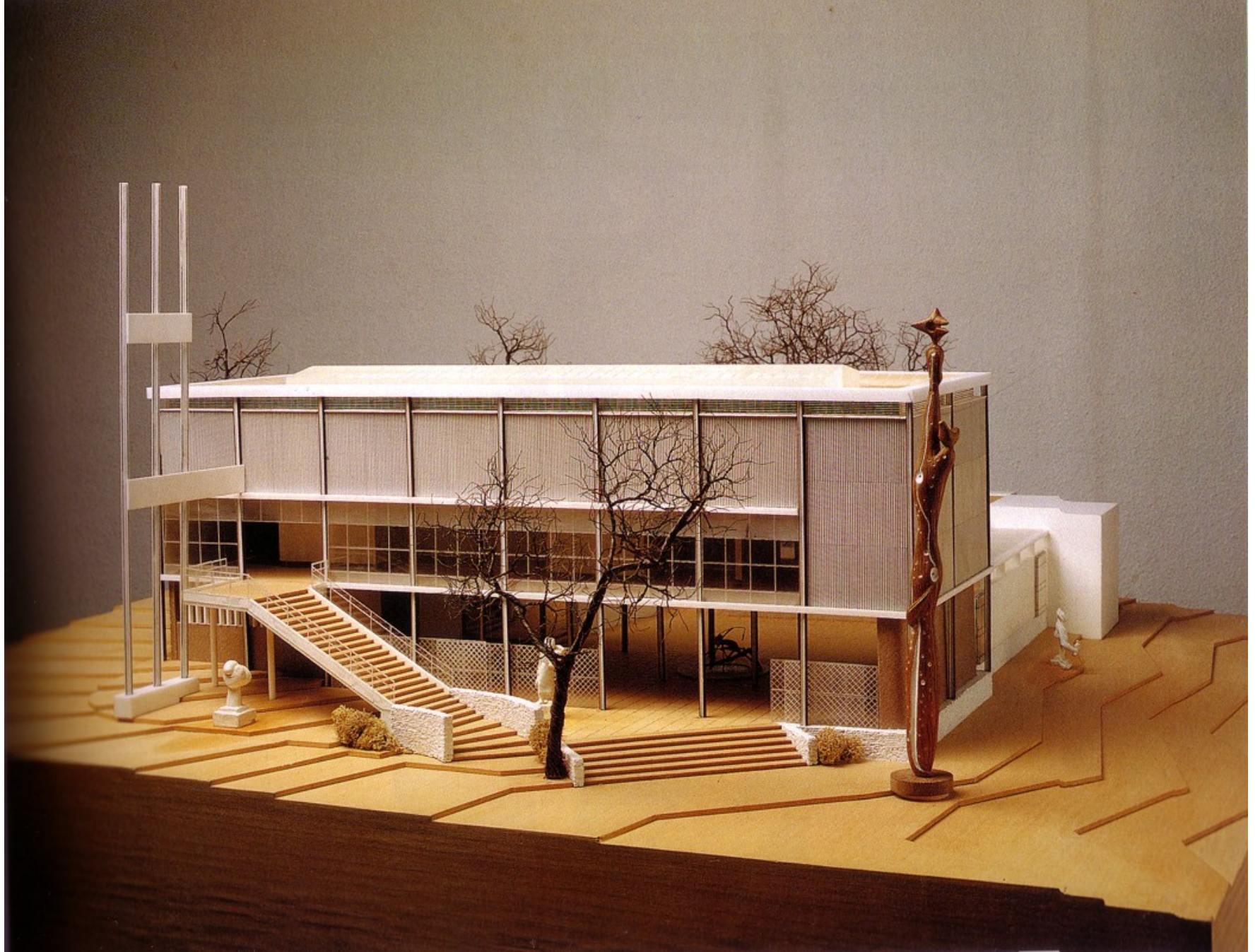
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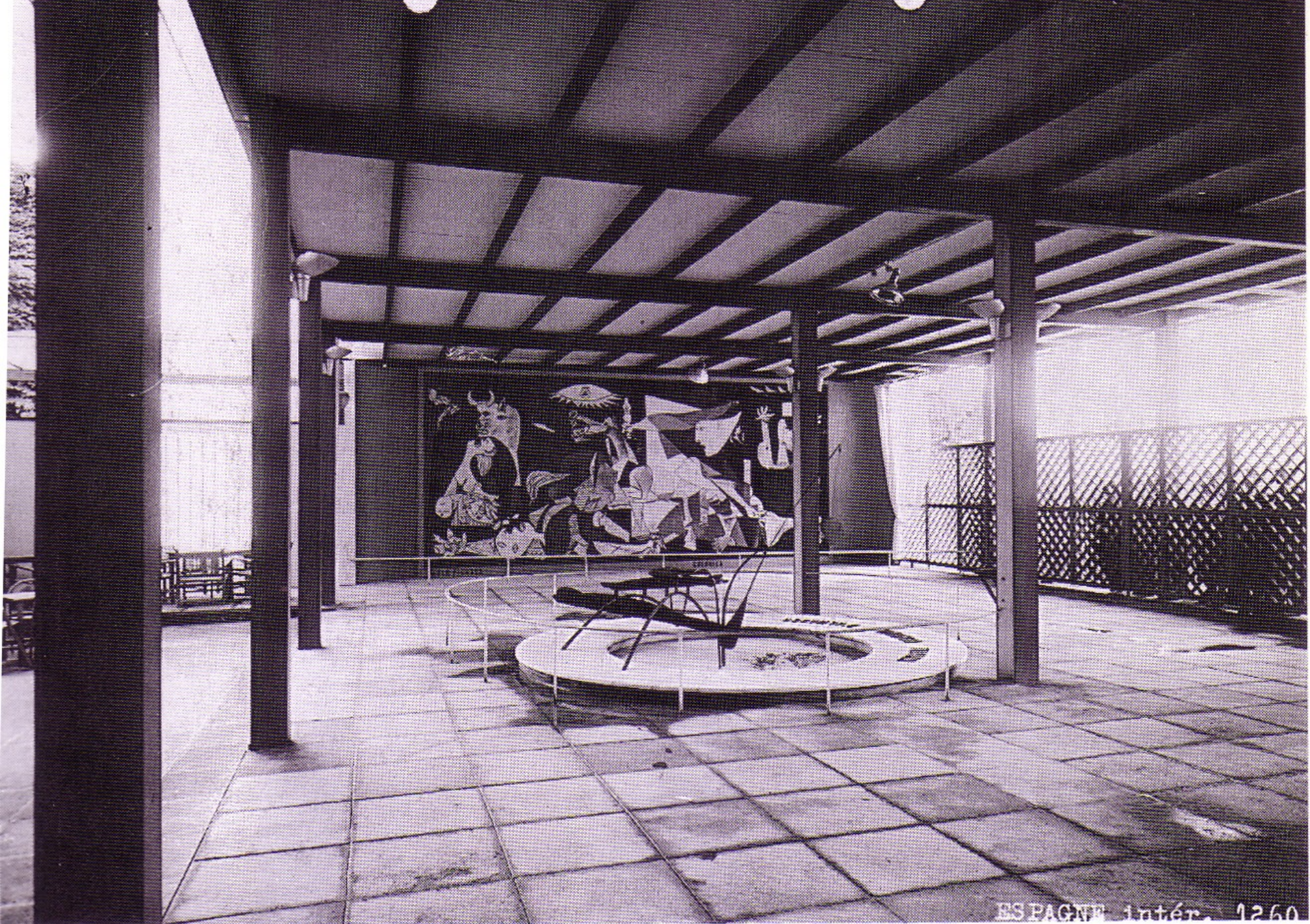
“Guernica”, 1937: Spanish Pavilion, Paris World Fair
Oil on Canvas, 394 x 776 cm; Reina Sofia Museum, Madrid.



Paris World Fair, 1937. Spanish Pavilion, top centre-right



Josep Lluís Sert & Luis LaCasa, Spanish Pavilion, (1937)



ESPAGNE Intér. 1260

Paris World Fair: Spanish Pavilion, 1937

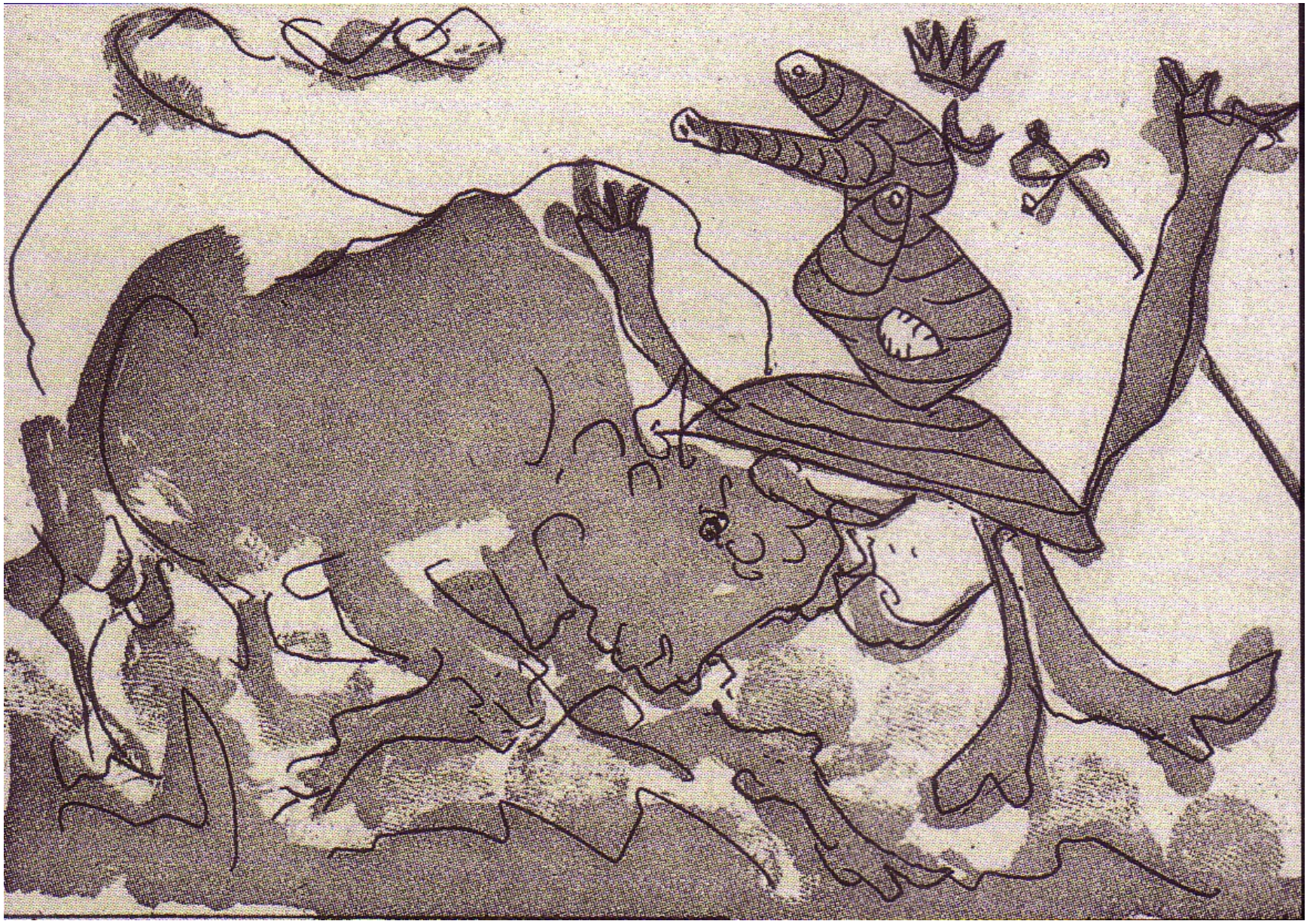


Spanish Pavilion, 1937 “New Woman” Photo Panel

- The Spanish Pavilion used its space to demonstrate the modernity of the social changes it was inaugurating in Spain, a country steeped in traditional methods and mind-sets.
- Here, the emancipation of women is being celebrated.

Bombing of Guernica, 26 April 1936





“The Dream and Lie of Franco”, Plate 1, 1937

Guernica, Preliminary Drawing,



Dora Maar, “Picasso painting Guernica”



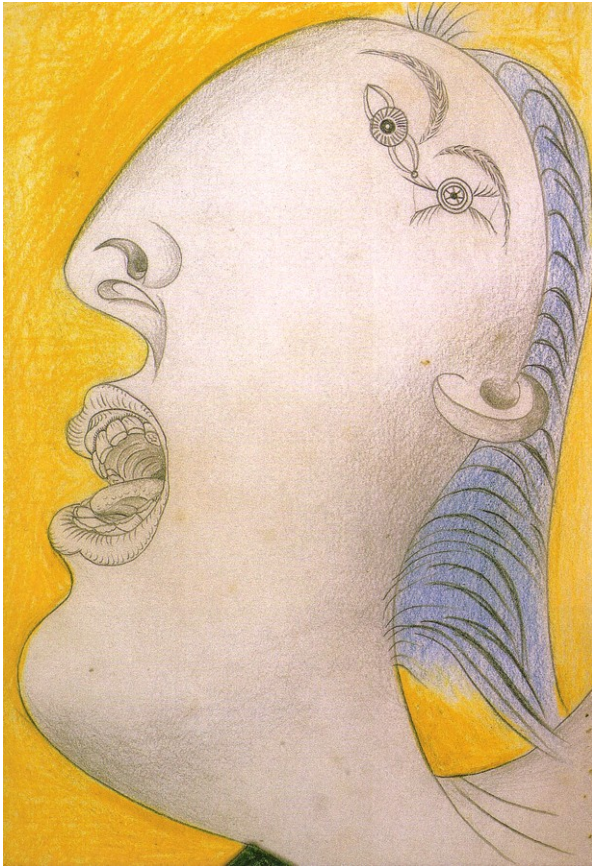
- Picasso at work on Guernica in Paris.
- There is no colour in Guernica - Picasso has chosen to limit himself to black, grey and white, with various half-tones provided by areas of stippling and all-over pattern.
- Here, he is using a feather duster to soften the charcoal lines, so as to prevent smudging when he comes to paint with liquid oil colours.



Portrait of Dora Maar, 1937

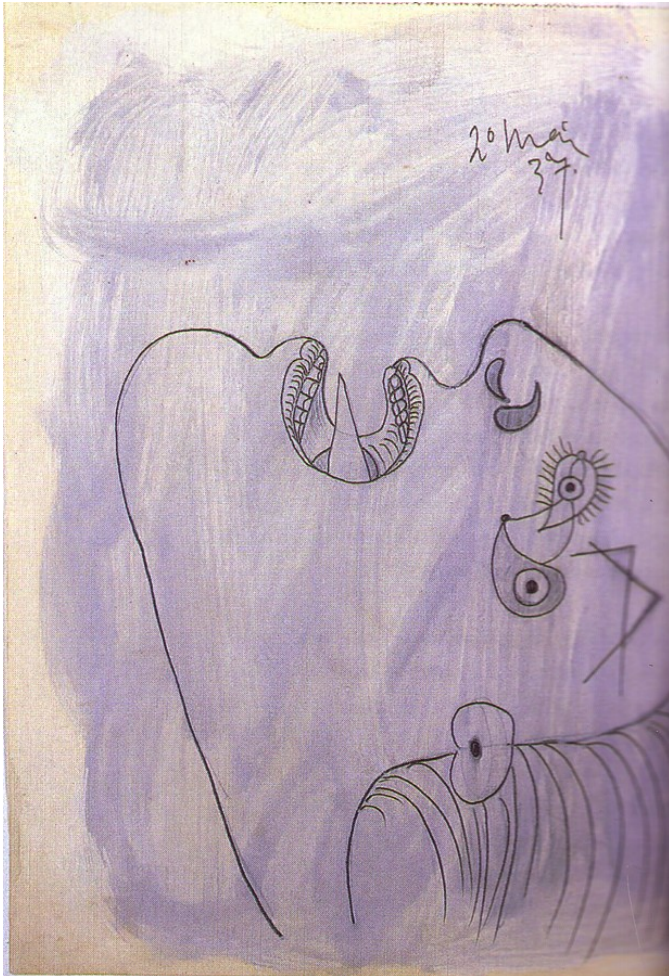


Wailing Woman, Study 23 for Guernica, 13 May 1937



- The clustering of the eyes at the top left renders the expanse of face and particularly the mouth more in evidence. It is the mouth, wailing, that Picasso wants to emphasise here. Where, previously such apparent 'distortions' might have seemed arbitrary or decorative, here they are put to dramatic use.

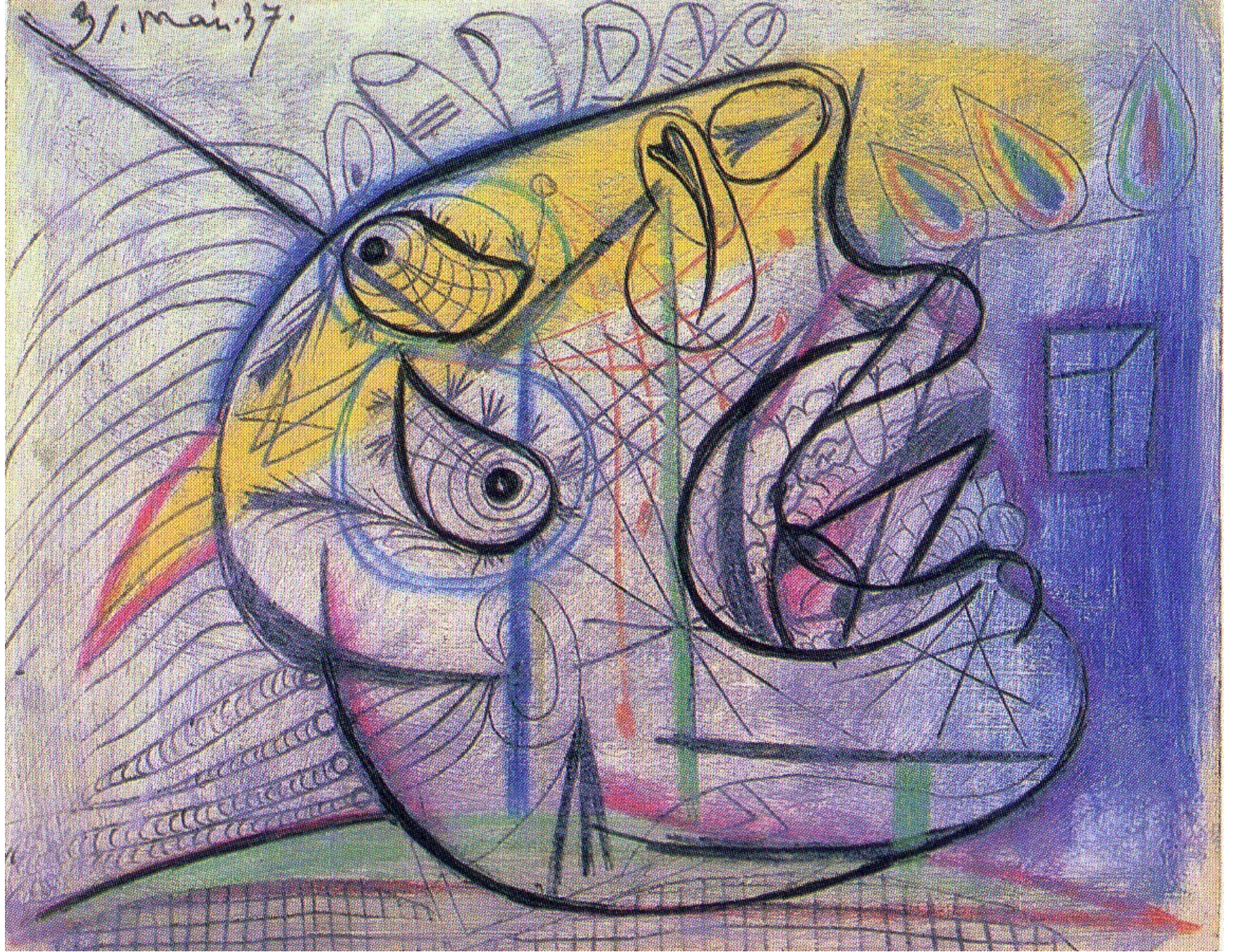
Wailing Woman, Study 30 for Guernica, 20 May 1937



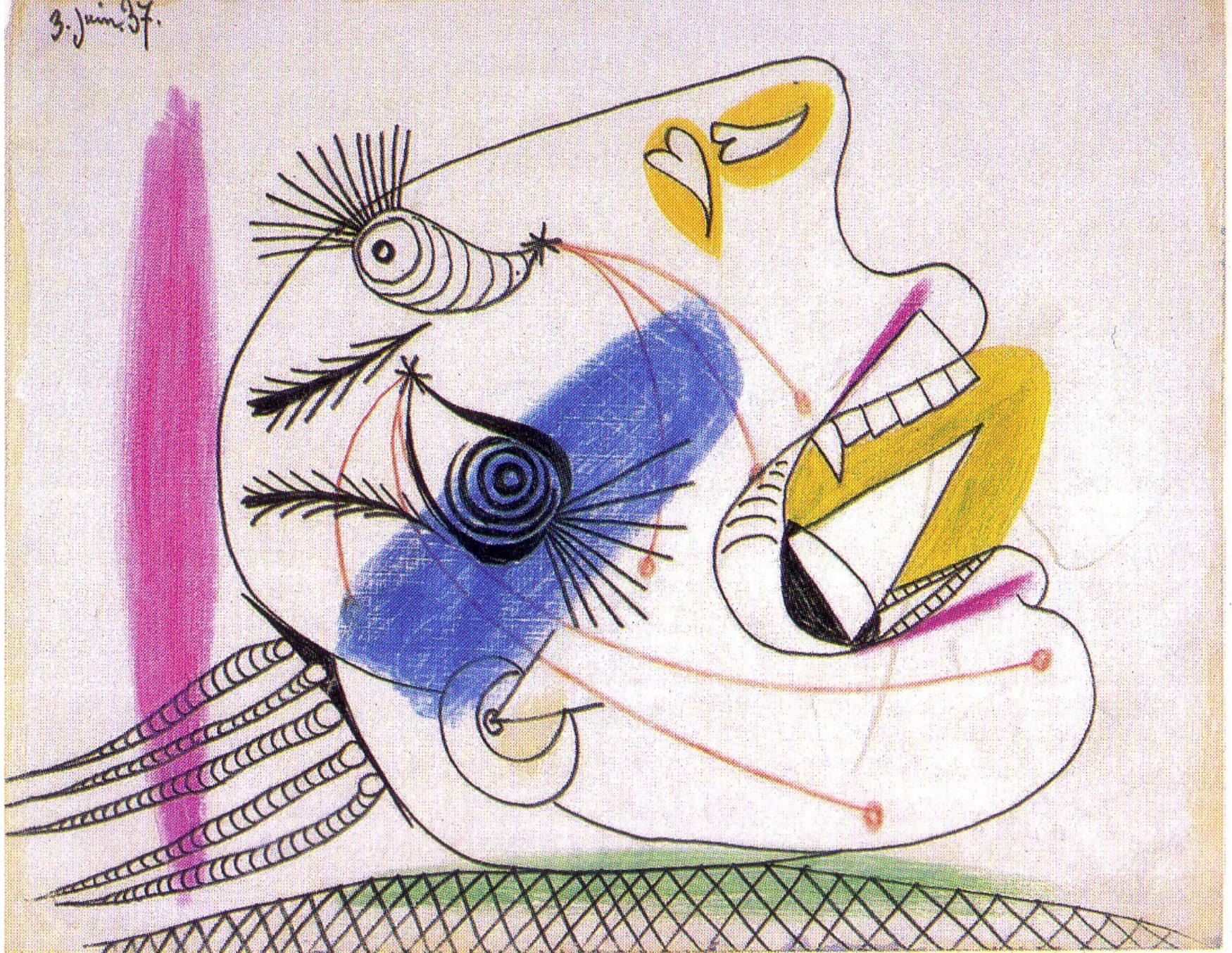
- For four days, tales of the terrible human suffering dominated the news reports coming out of Spain of the Bombing of Guernica,.
- As Picasso was hearing them, he began a series of drawings on paper with coloured crayons, depicting the heads of women, wounded, dying or cradling their dead infants on their knees.
- We can follow the development of his ideas literally day by day, as he has signed and dated each work in sequence.



Mother and Dead Child, Study 36 for Guernica, 28 May 1937



Wailing Woman, Study 39 for Guernica, 31 May 1937



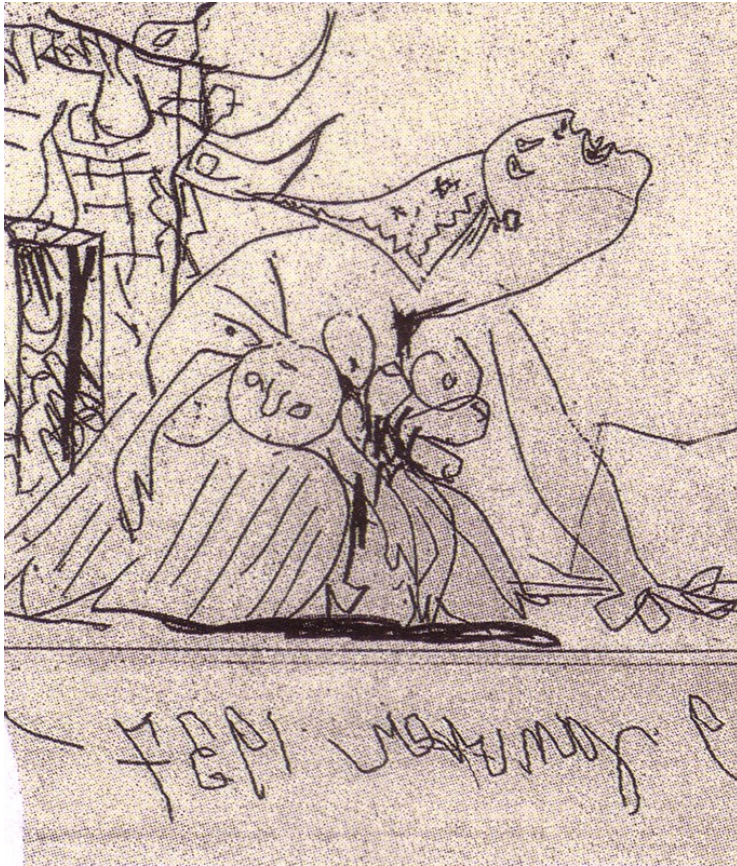
Wailing Woman, Study 40 for Guernica, 3 June, 1937



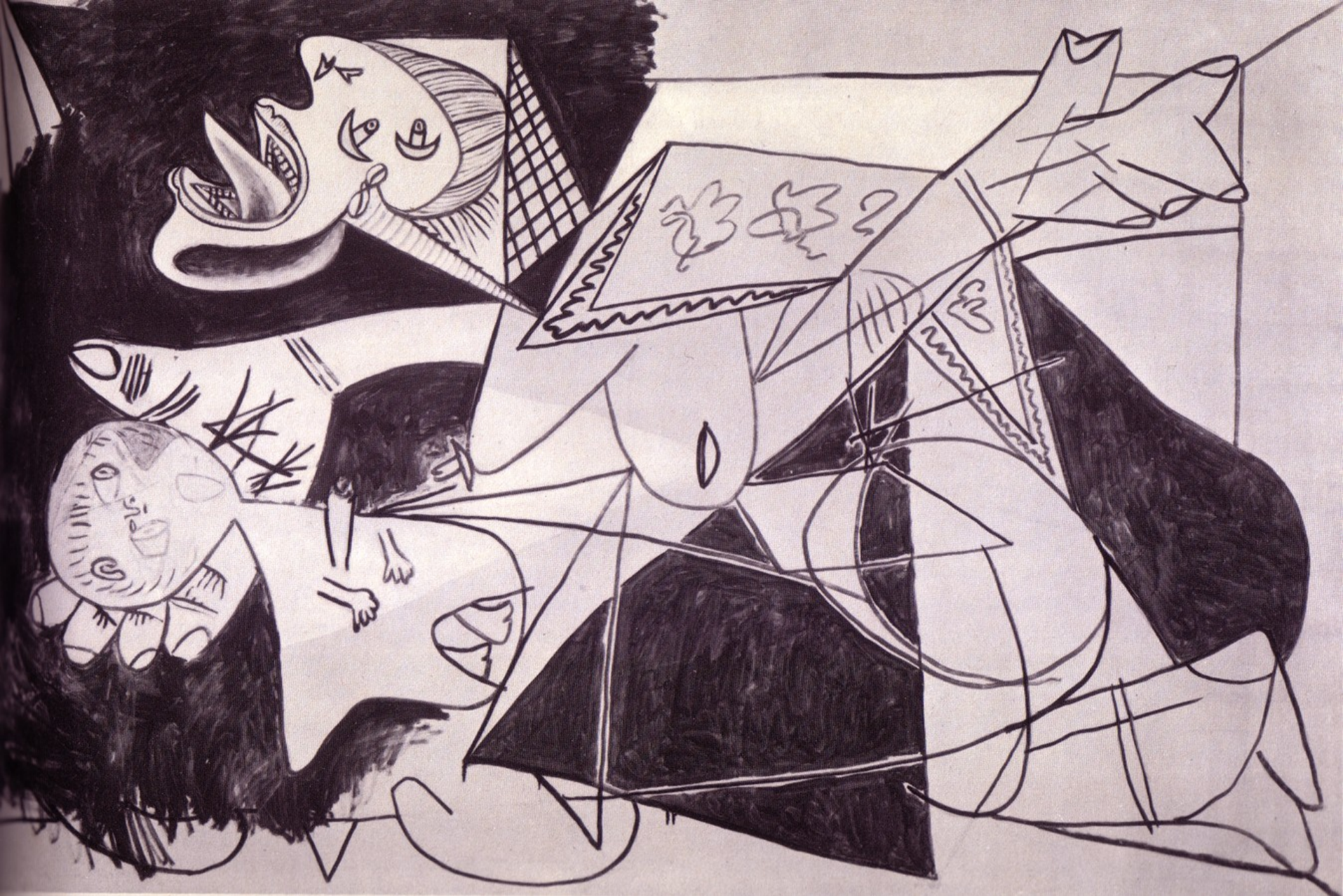
The “Mater Dolorosa” (Virgin of Sorrows) by Pedro de Mena, (1670-5) reveals an intense preoccupation with veracity typical of the Spanish Baroque.

- Real hairs for her eyelashes were inserted into the eyelids, and ivory teeth and glass eyes were glued into position behind her delicately modelled and beautifully carved and painted wooden face. Even the paths of her tears are visible, made from a glue or resin painted over the skin colour, and the tears themselves were moulded in glass to catch the light, and glued on to the cheeks.
- The paint colours in the polychromy around her eyes acutely renders the way in which her tears alter the tone of her skin between the eyesockets and the nose.

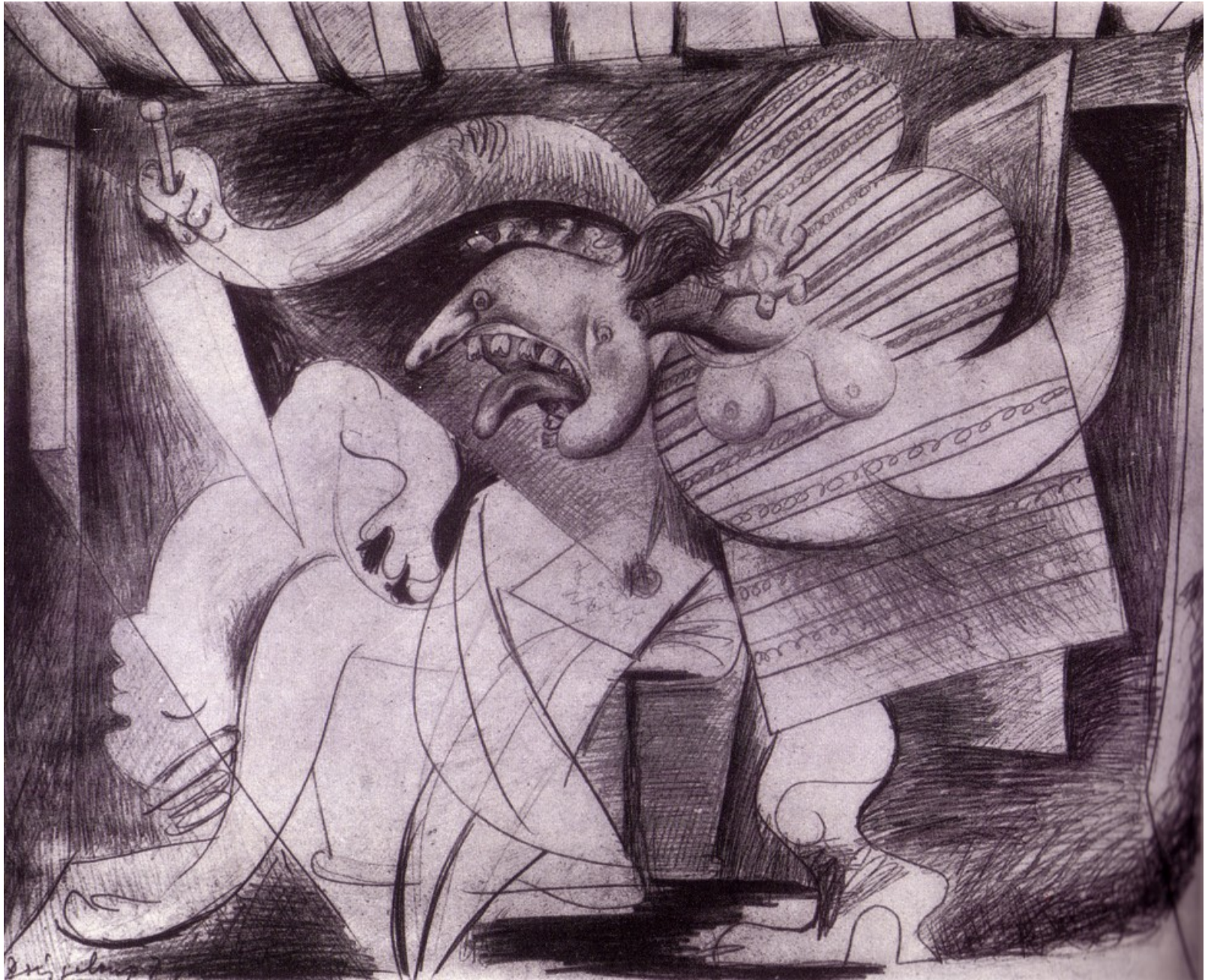
Wailing Woman and Dead Child, Plate 16 from “The Dream & Lie of Franco”, 9 January 1937



- The theme of the wailing woman, head uplifted in grief, in profile, with her dead infant on her knees appears already in “The Dream and Lie of Franco”
- Even the burning building is there, prophetically in January 1937.
- Picasso recognised early on the implications of Franco’s rule.



Wailing Woman with Dead Child, Study for "Guernica", 1937



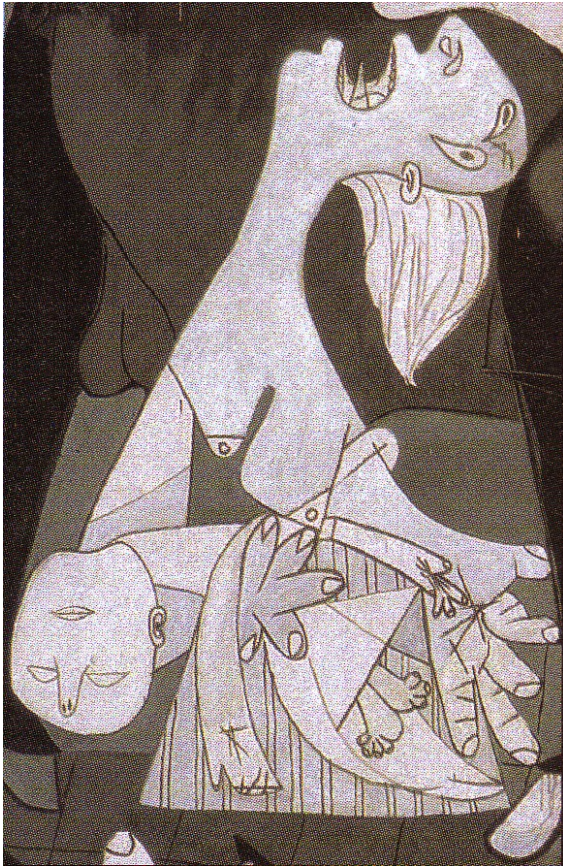
“Composition, Death of Marat”, 1934

Wailing Woman with Dead Child, Study 21 for Guernica, 10 May 1937

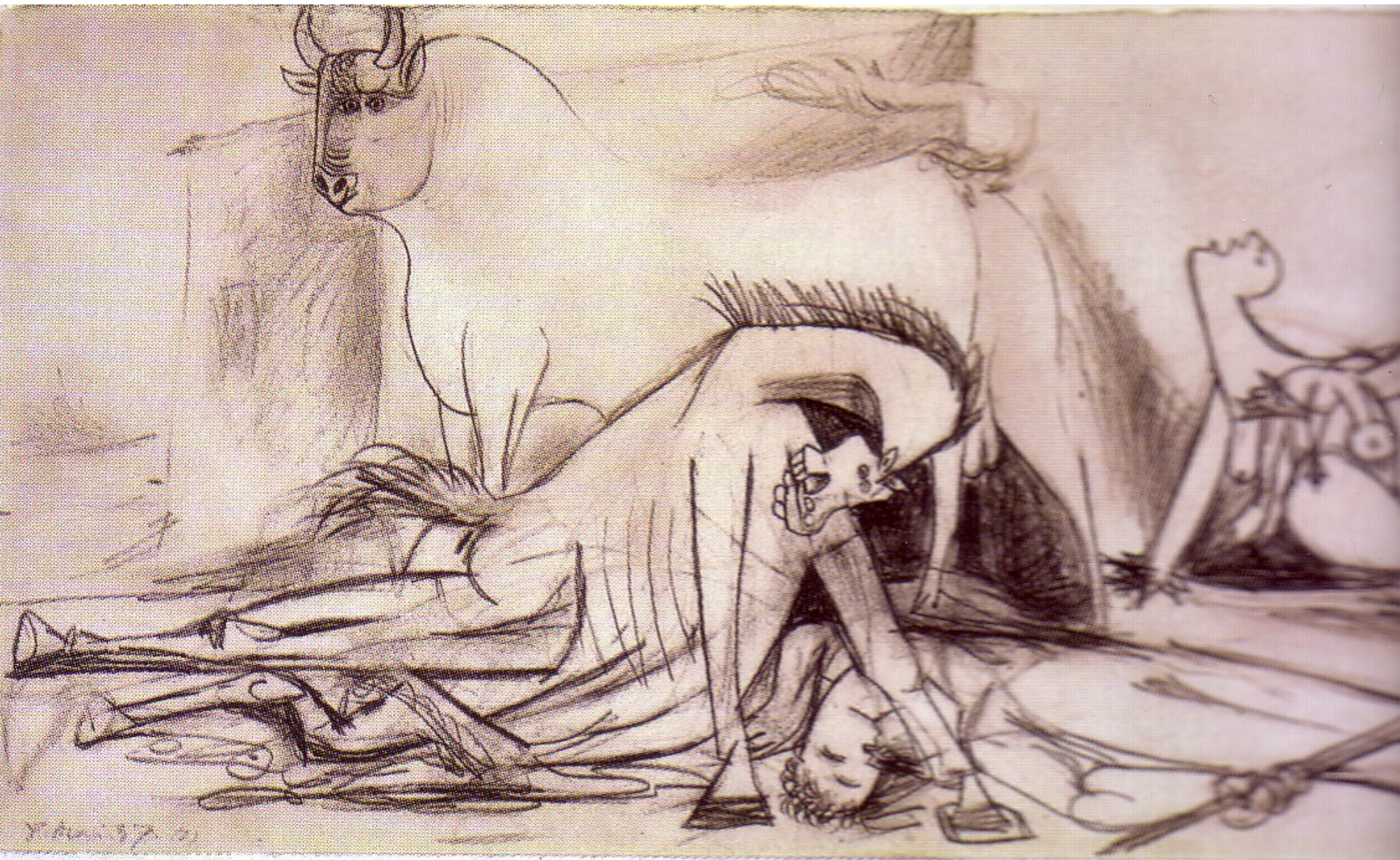


- Four out of five of the adults figured in 'Guernica' are women. Initial reports of the attack remarked on how the women and children tried to flee the bombing to the countryside, thus exposing themselves to further attacks, dangers and hunger.

“Guernica”, Wailing Woman with Dead Child, 1937



- This image, deriving from Christian imagery of the Virgin Mary with the dead Christ (the Pietà) is a constant in European religious art. (Michelangelo's sculpture is the best example)
- Picasso has transformed it, via Cubism into a timeless image of grief and suffering. The absence of colour makes it even more stark.



Study 12 for Guernica: Bull, Wounded Horse and Fallen Warrior, 8 May 1937

Crying Horse, Study for Guernica, 2 May 1937



- Picasso began sketching the head of the wounded horse in early May and worked through several versions before producing a fully worked out oil study, for which this is a sketch.

Boceto 8. Cabeza de caballo.
2 de mayo de 1937 (II)

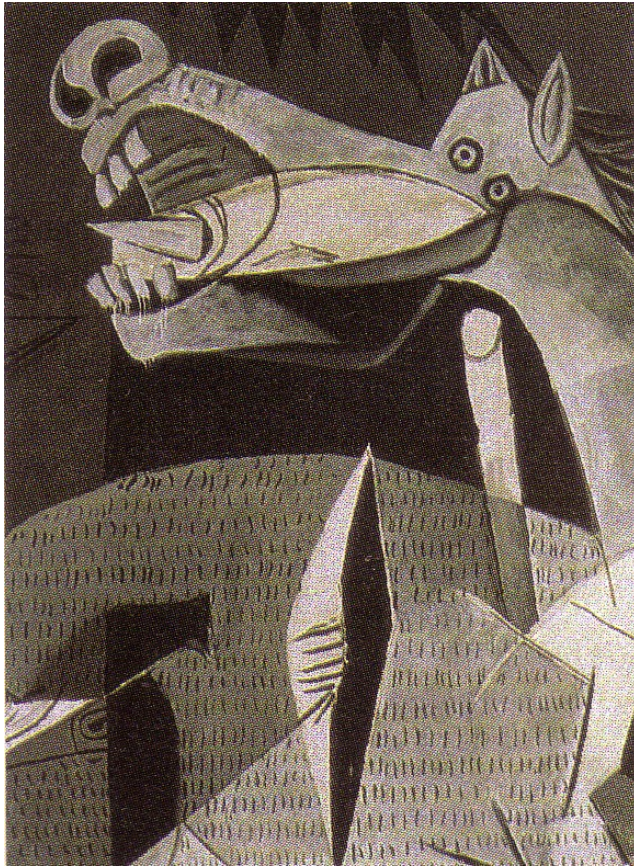


- The image of the horse being wounded by the bull recurs in Picasso's art as a symbol of elemental suffering.

- In “Guernica”, the wounded horse is taken out of the Corrida and inserted into the centre of the mural as yet another victim of the atrocity.

“Wounded Horse”, oil on canvas, 2 May 1937.

Guernica, Horse, 1937



- In the final version, the Horse's head has been turned backwards and horizontal.
- The head-uplifted, mouth-open, screaming pose has been reserved for the Woman with dead infant to the right.



Guernica, “Wounded Horse”, Centre

Guernica, Explosion and torch, Centre top



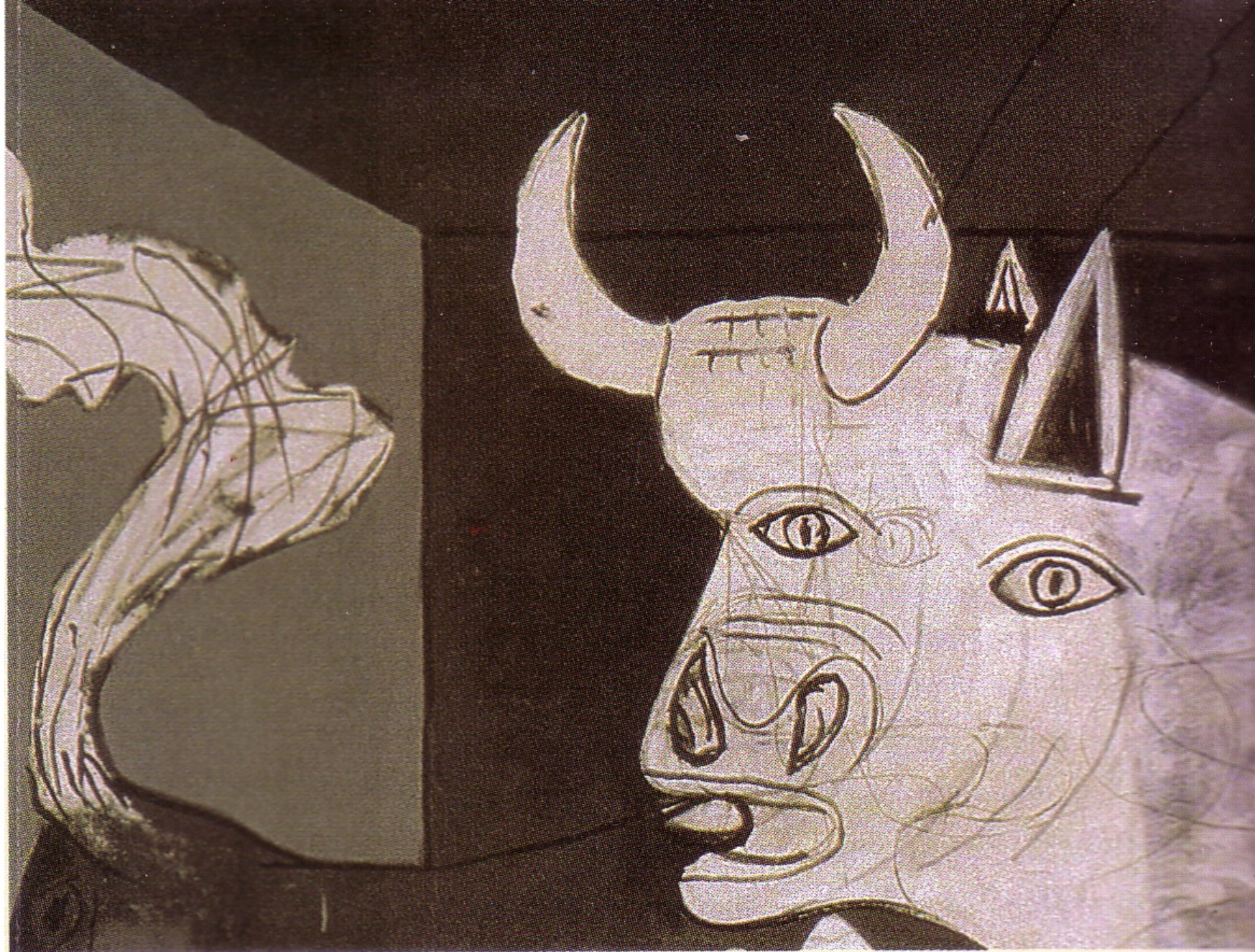
Horse & Bull, Study 11 for Guernica, 1937



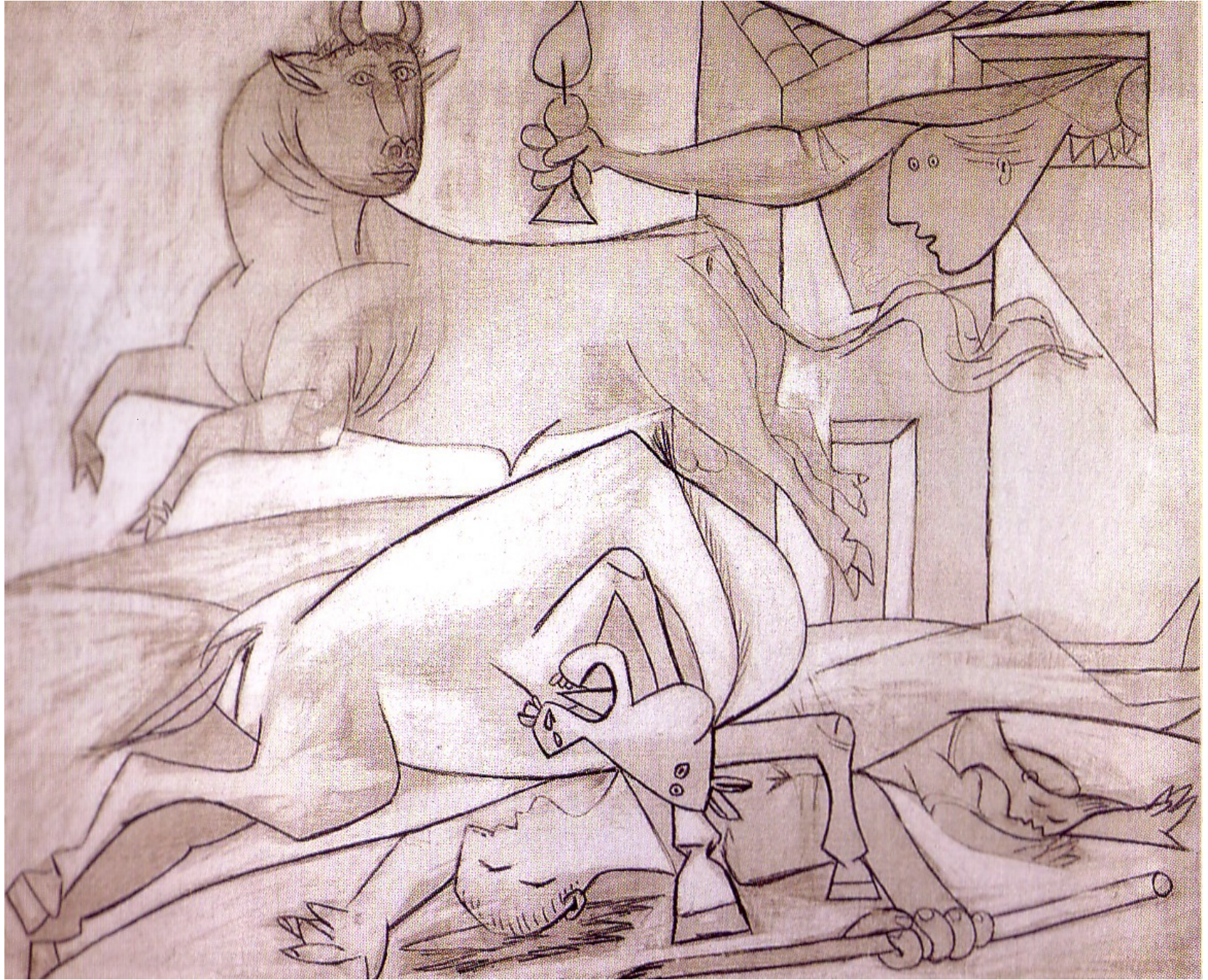
- While the theme of the suffering horse and the triumphant bull appears in the sketches for “Guernica”, in the final painting the animals do not directly confront each other.
- The Horse’s expression of terror is not caused by the bull but by the explosion above him, and whilst frightened, the horse nevertheless appears still to have the strength to continue and resist.



“Minotauromachia”, Etching, 1936



Bull, Detail of "Guernica", 1937



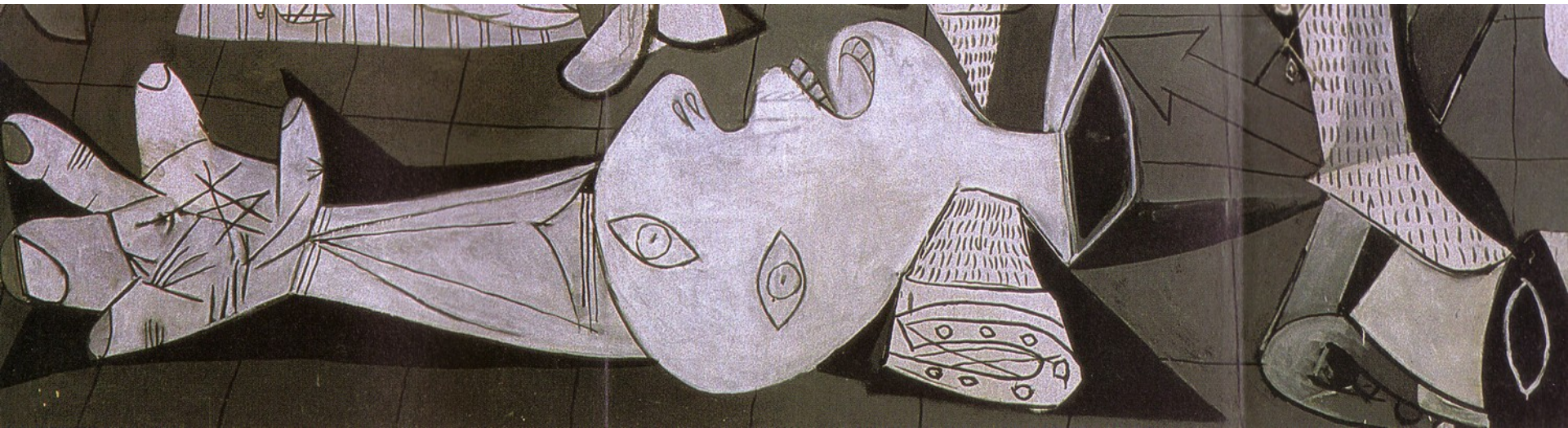
Study 10 for Guernica, 2 May 1937



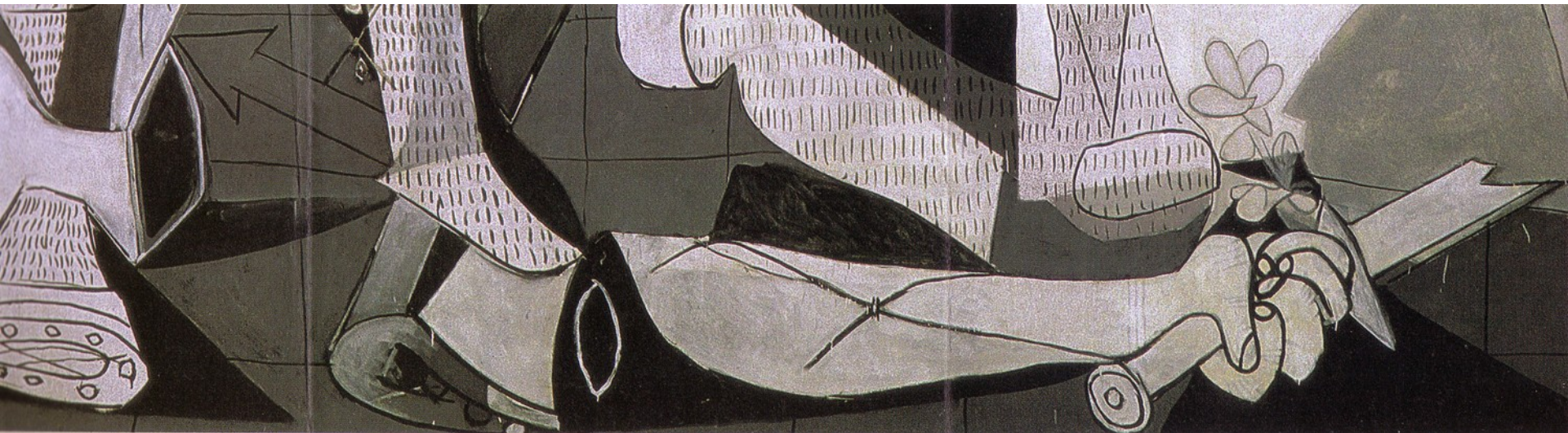
Plate 8 from "The Dream and Lie of Franco", 1937.

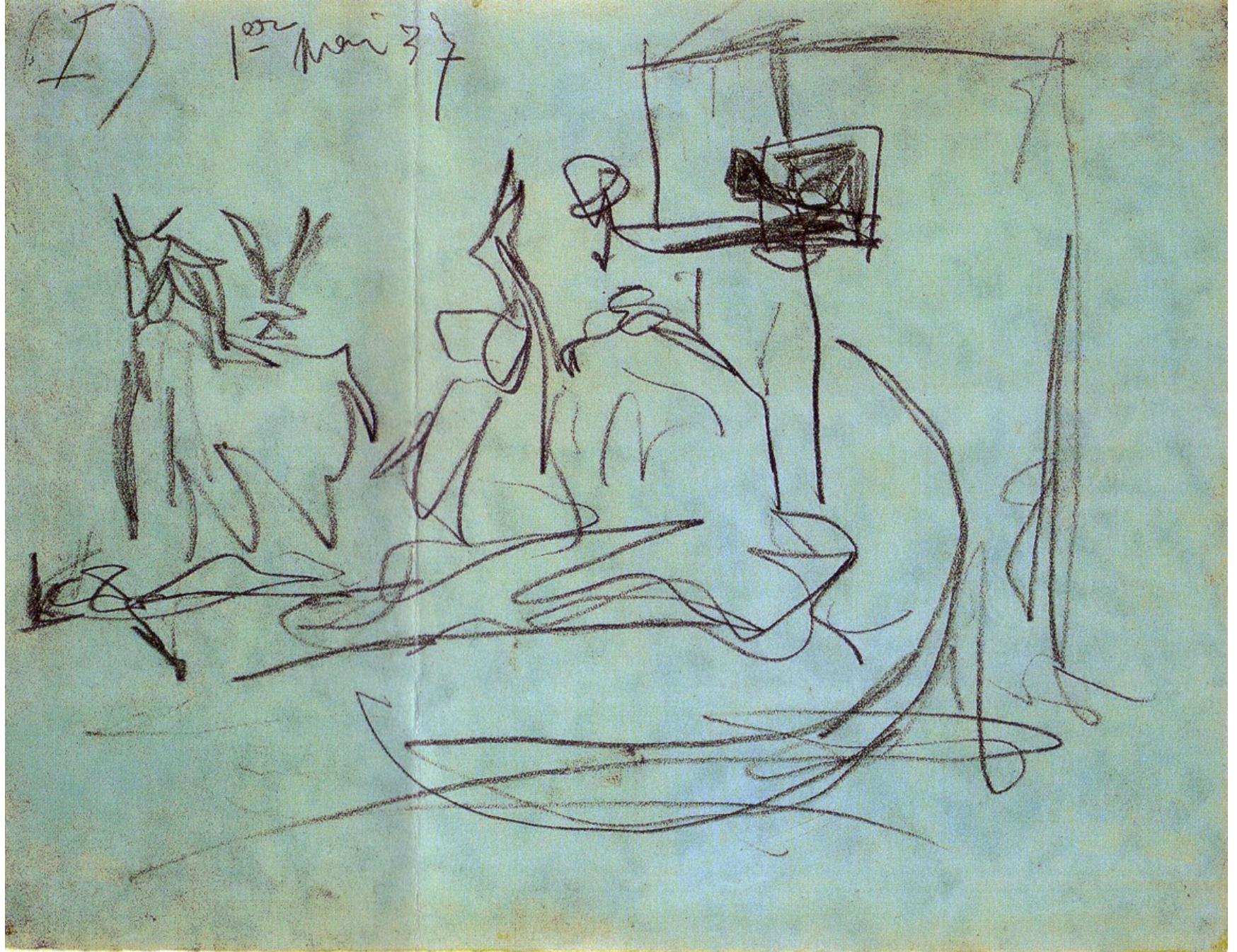
Guernica, Fallen Warrior

Bottom Left

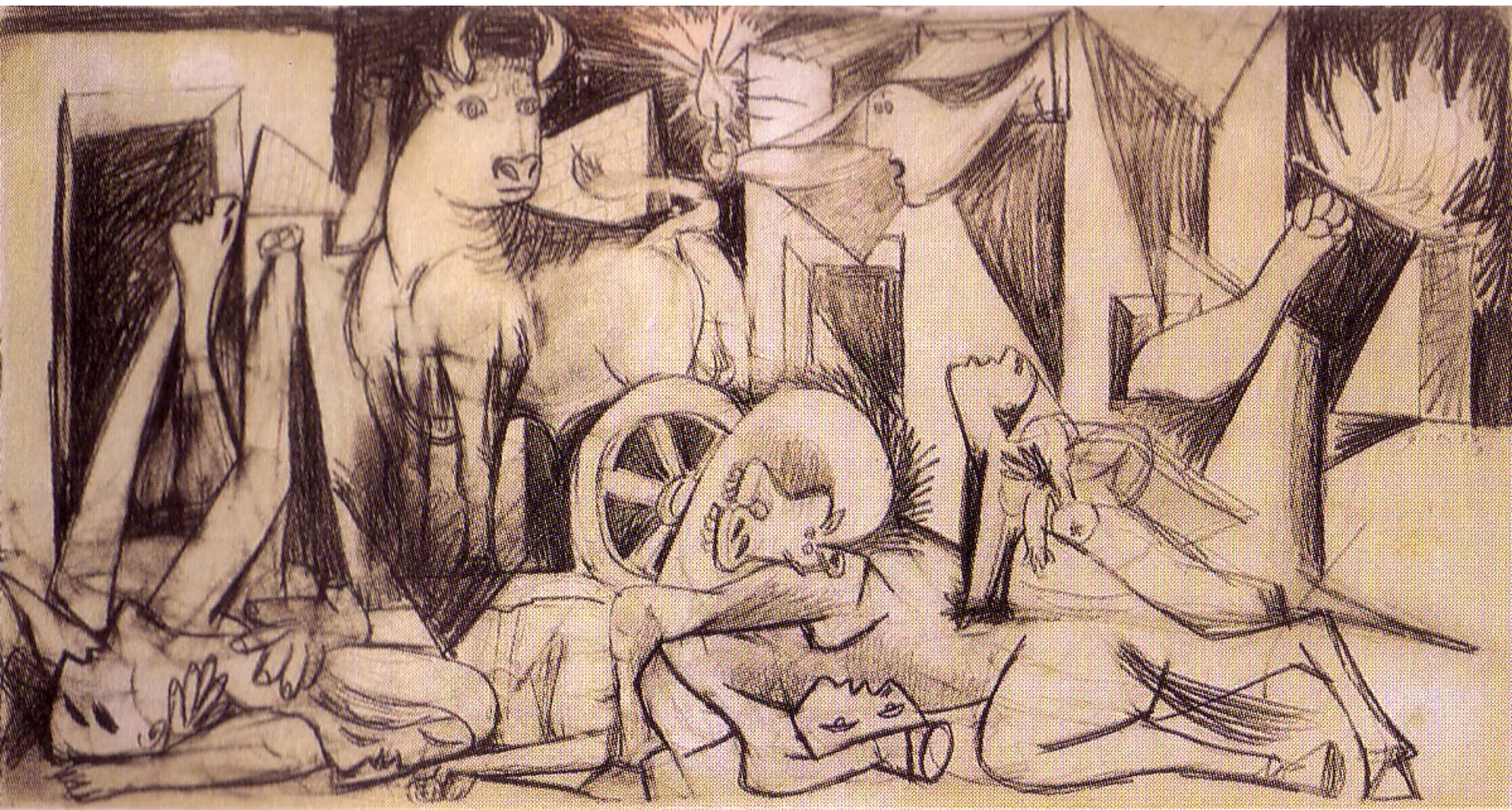


Guernica, Fallen Warrior, Bottom right





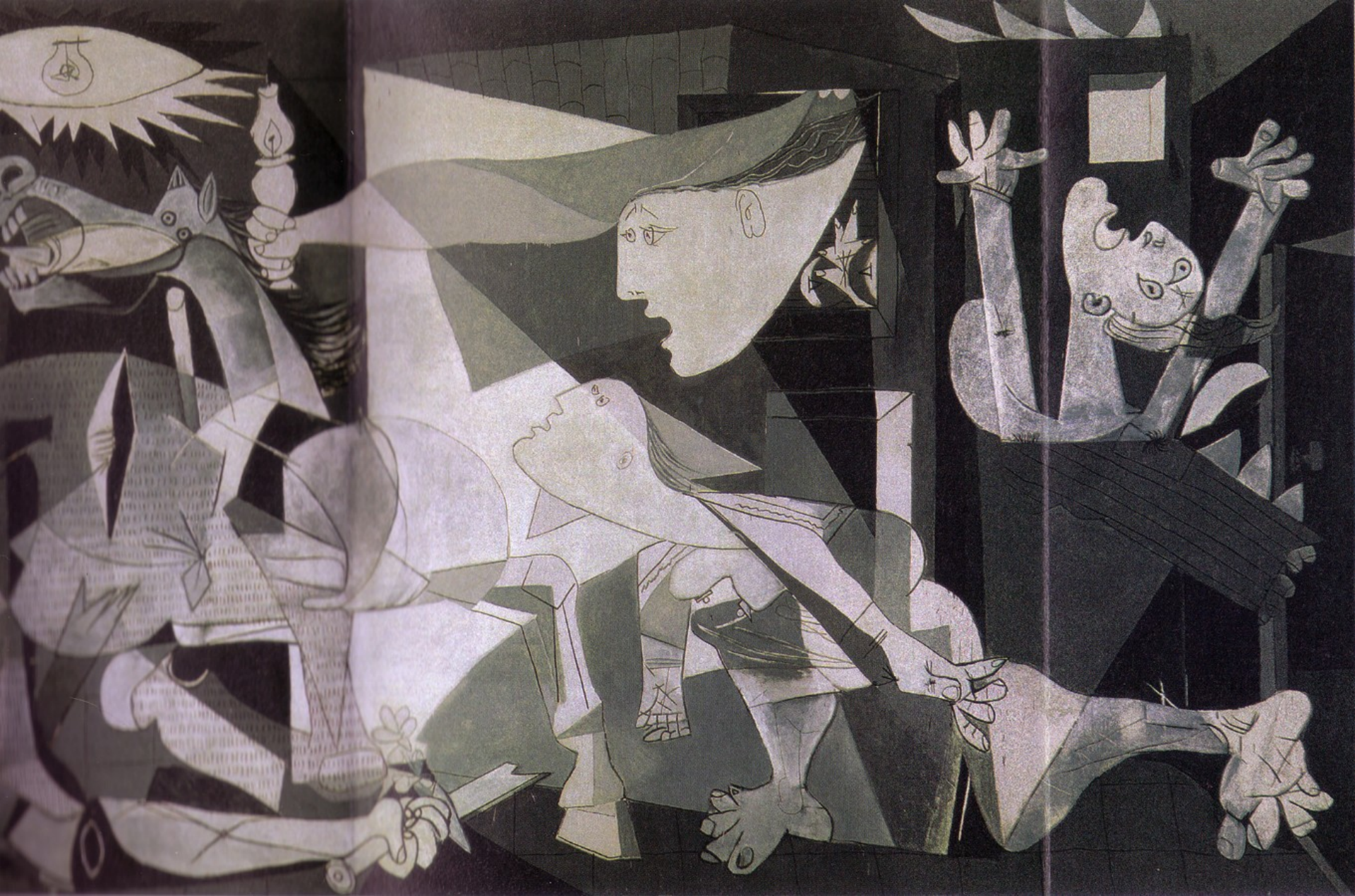
Sketch for "Guernica", 1 May, 1937



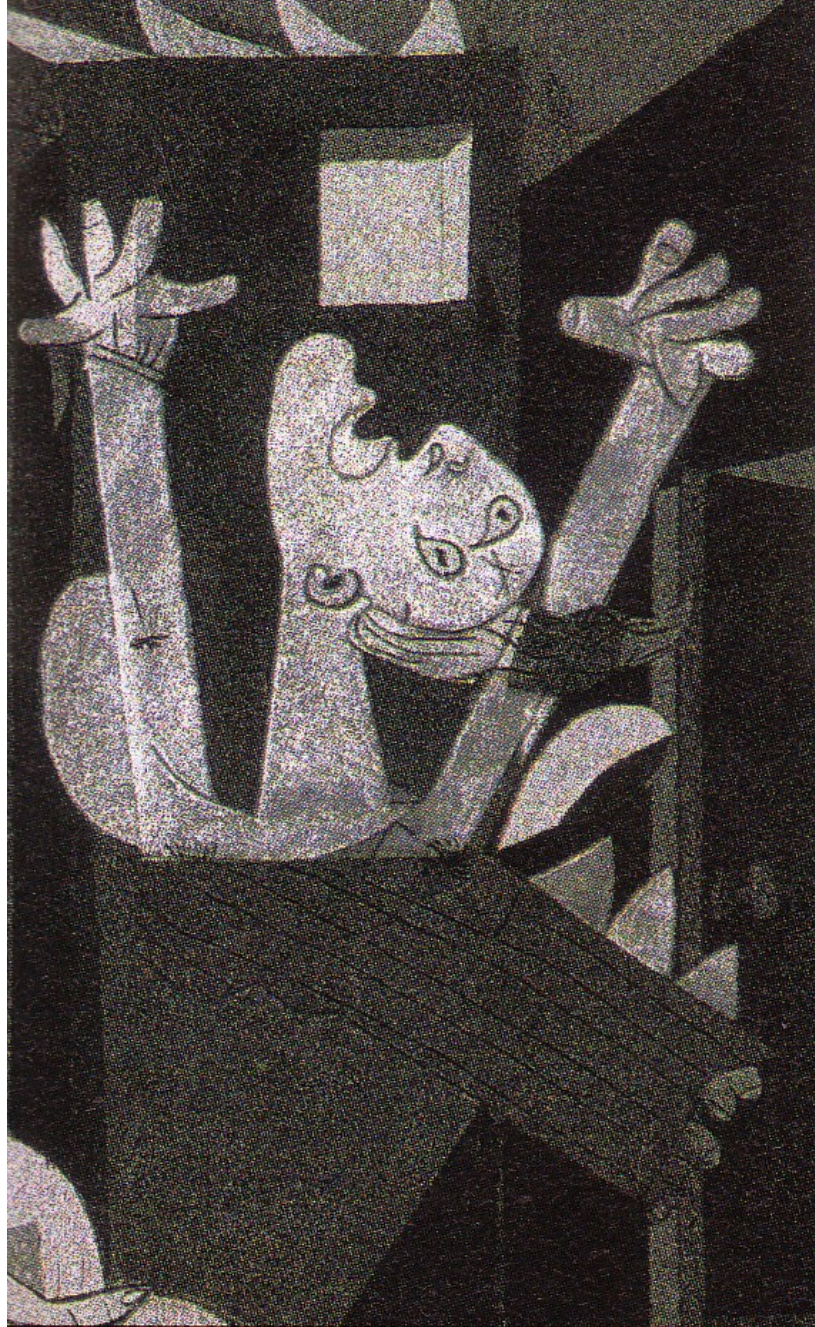
Study 15 for "Guernica", 9 May 1937



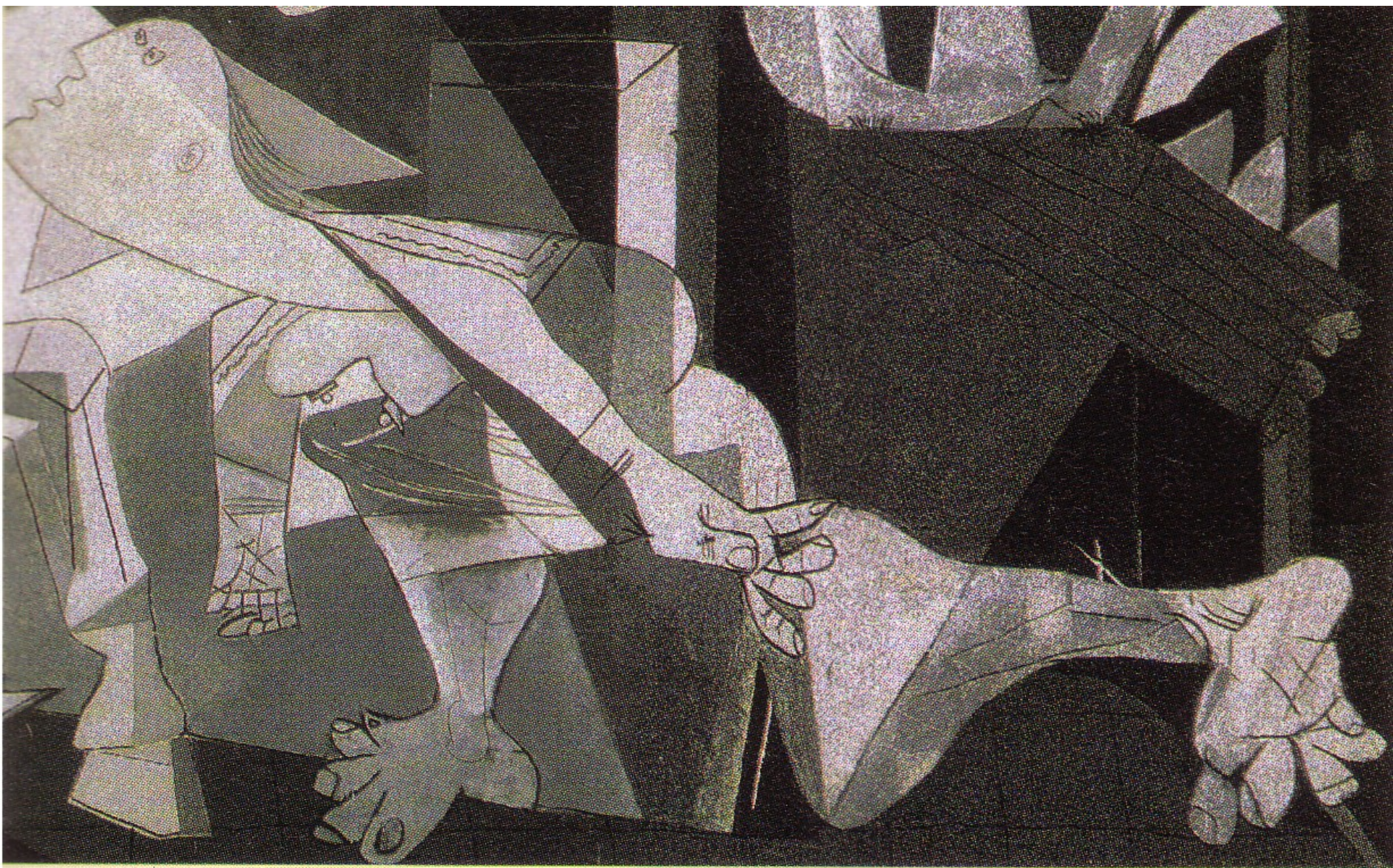
Guernica, Left section



“Guernica”, Right side



Guernica, Woman in a burning building, far right



“Guernica”, Woman, Left, centre, 1937



“Guernica”, 1937: Spanish Pavilion, Paris World Fair



“Guernica Tapestry”, Jacqueline de la Baume Dürrbach, UN Head Quarters NY (1985-2009); Whitechapel Gallery London (2009)