

Guernica

After studying sculpture and drawing at the Académie Julian, where she met her future husband René Dürrbach, Jacqueline de La Baume began a tapestry apprenticeship in 1949 with Beaudounet, a master craftsman from Aubusson in Paris. Devoting herself entirely to tapestry, Jacqueline Dürrbach made contact with contemporary painters including Gleizes, Herbin, Léger and Villon, as well as Delaunay and Van Doesburg through their widows. She had a great talent for drawing and produced perfect interpretations of the works of the great Cubist masters. She exhibited her first tapestries in Paris in 1950, then in 1951 at the Musée de l'Annonciade in Saint-Tropez, where her work was spotted by Picasso, who visited with Paul Éluard and was always on the lookout for new formats.

Picasso was won over by the artist's ability to reproduce a work without copying it, and suggested to his admirer, the collector Nelson A. Rockefeller, that he could commission her to make a tapestry based on his masterpiece Guernica, of which Picasso would authorise three examples.

In 1955, when the original painting was on display at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, Jacqueline de La Baume-Dürrbach drew the cartoon for her future tapestry in front of the work. The tapestry was presented to Picasso at the Antibes museum and bought by Nelson A. Rockefeller. This first version of the Guernica tapestry has been deposited on a long-term loan with the UN in New York, where it has been on display in the Security Council Chamber since 1985.

The second version of Guernica was made in 1976 and presented with other works from her workshop at the *Balcon des Arts* in Paris. The Musée Unterlinden hosted the exhibition in 1978 under the

title *Tapestries – Reflections of Modern Painting* and decided to purchase La Baume-Dürrbach's masterpiece. Exhibited on the ground floor of the former convent, it was surrounded by other works by Picasso, as well as panels reproducing Dora Maar's photographs of the artist painting Guernica, and accompanied by Paul Éluard's 1938 poem *La Victoire de Guernica* (The Victory of Guernica). The tapestry was then hung in the rooms devoted to modern art in the basement of the Musée Unterlinden until the late 1980s, when it was moved to the reserves for conservation reasons and only appeared in temporary exhibitions.

It is now on permanent display in the museum's new building under optimum conditions for its preservation. The third tapestry made in 1983 was purchased in 1996 by the Gunma Museum of Modern Art in the Japanese city of Takasaki. The three versions of Guernica used eleven shades of wool. At Picasso's request, the second and third versions have a coloured border.



Jacqueline de La Baume-Dürrbach, *Guernica* (after Picasso), 1976, tapestry

Picasso's Guernica in 1937

Painted in Paris for the Spanish pavilion at the Universal Exhibition of 1937, this politically committed work denounces the bombing of the town of Guernica, which was ordered by the Spanish Nationalists and carried out by Nazi German and Italian fascist forces (26 April 1937). It was

exhibited in many countries between 1937 and 1939 and played an important role in the propaganda generated by the bombing and the Spanish Civil War. Its international renown and political impact made Guernica a symbol of the denunciation of Francoist and fascist violence, before becoming a symbol of the horror of war in general. Having remained in the United States during the entirety of General Franco's dictatorship, Guernica was moved to Spain in 1981 at Picasso's request, and has since been held at the Reina Sofía in Madrid.