

*Pablo Picasso "Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)" 1911-12  
Museum of Modern Art, New York*

"Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J.)," which is principally a crucifixion composition, is another of Picasso's most celebrated paintings, which was created from Picasso's memory of Barcelona prostitutes standing in the entrance to a brothel on the Carrer d'Alger and was met with shock and discomfort by his contemporaries. Picasso was heavily influenced by an exhibition of African art shown at the Trocadero and repainted the faces of the outer forms.

Like many of the other artworks, it shows how Picasso was preoccupied throughout his life with reworking the same handful of structures, themes and motifs.

In this case, the central figures of each picture are suggestive of crucifixion in addition the right hand figures in each emerge or appear to have emerged from behind a curtain.

This is a very brave painting as Picasso had become relatively successful, yet he abandoned this to adopt a style, which was a style that was a more powerful expression of the emotions, which troubled him. It is a shockingly brutal destruction of the human figure, which is quite unparalleled in western art and marked a turning point for both Picasso and for 20th century art in general.

The geometric nature of cubism is evident in the construction of the women who seem to stare viciously at the viewer.