

From Bayeux to Guernica:

The Depiction of Power, Destruction, and
Suffering in War Art

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18 August, 2023

What are we looking at?



Questions to ask ourselves:

- What do you see in this picture?
- How big is it?
- Why is it this size?
- What is it depicting / telling us?
- Who is telling us about what is being depicted?
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- Who was the intended audience?
- Is it “art” or is it “propaganda”?
- How should we interpret it?
- What do they have in common?
- How are they different?
- So what?



35 "events"



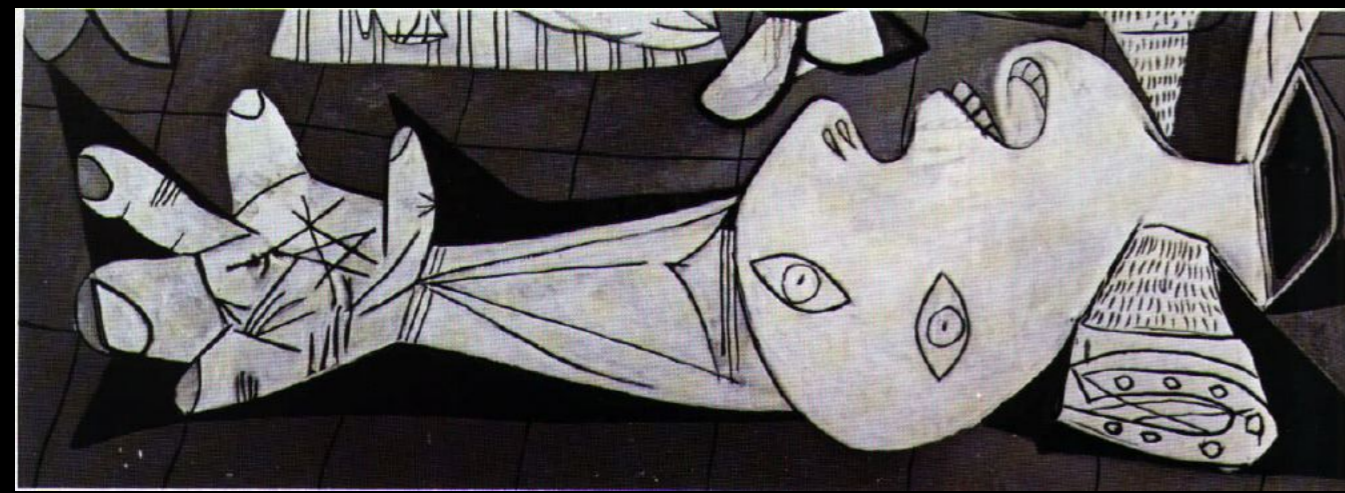
Panel 53

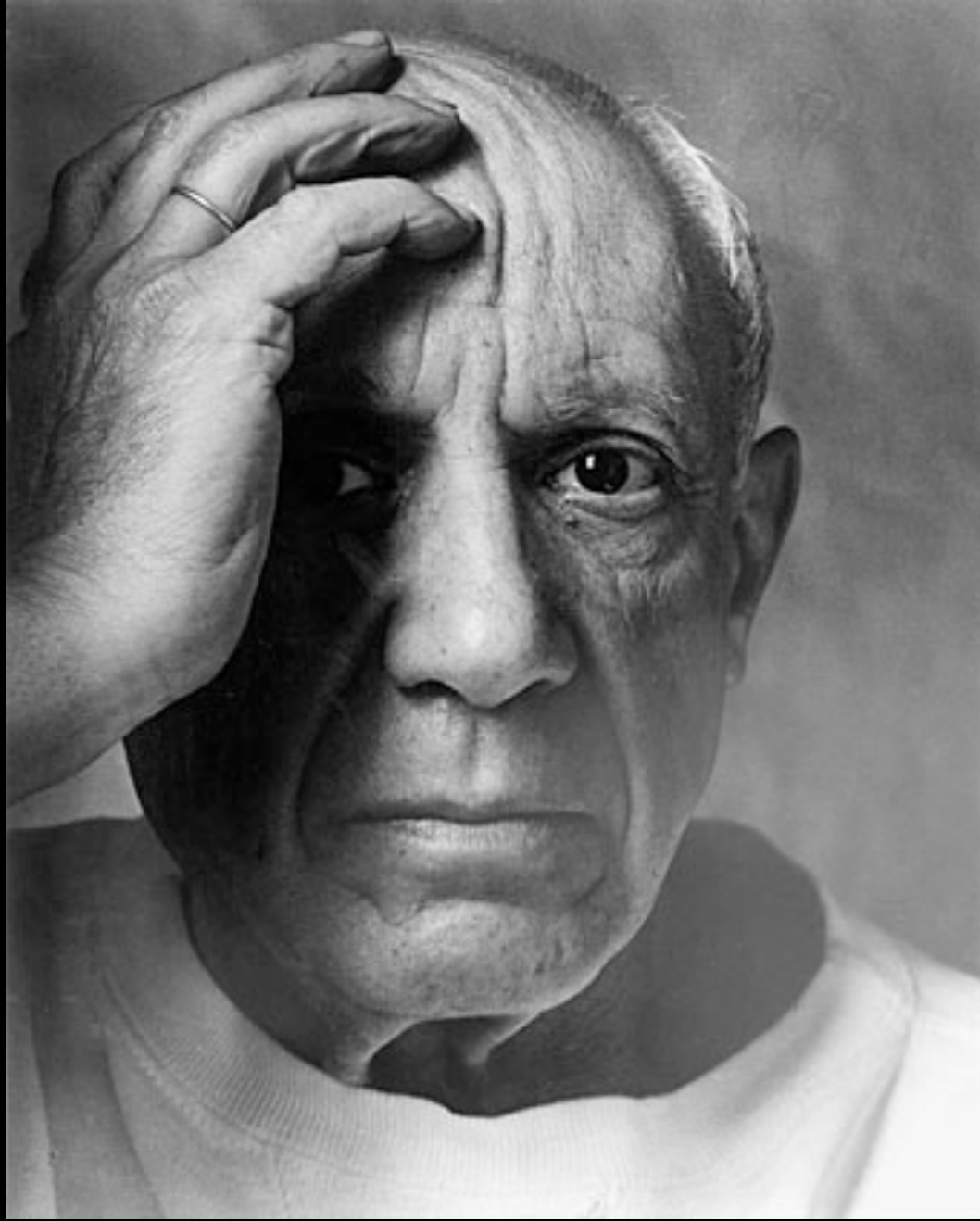
“Bayeux Tapestry or Canterbury Embroidery”

Commissioned by Odo Earl of Kent and Bishop of Bayeux, William's maternal half-brother:
created in Canterbury, England probably by monks (1070s) to celebrate the invasion and conquest of England in Sept. 1066
It is 50 cms high and 70 metres long



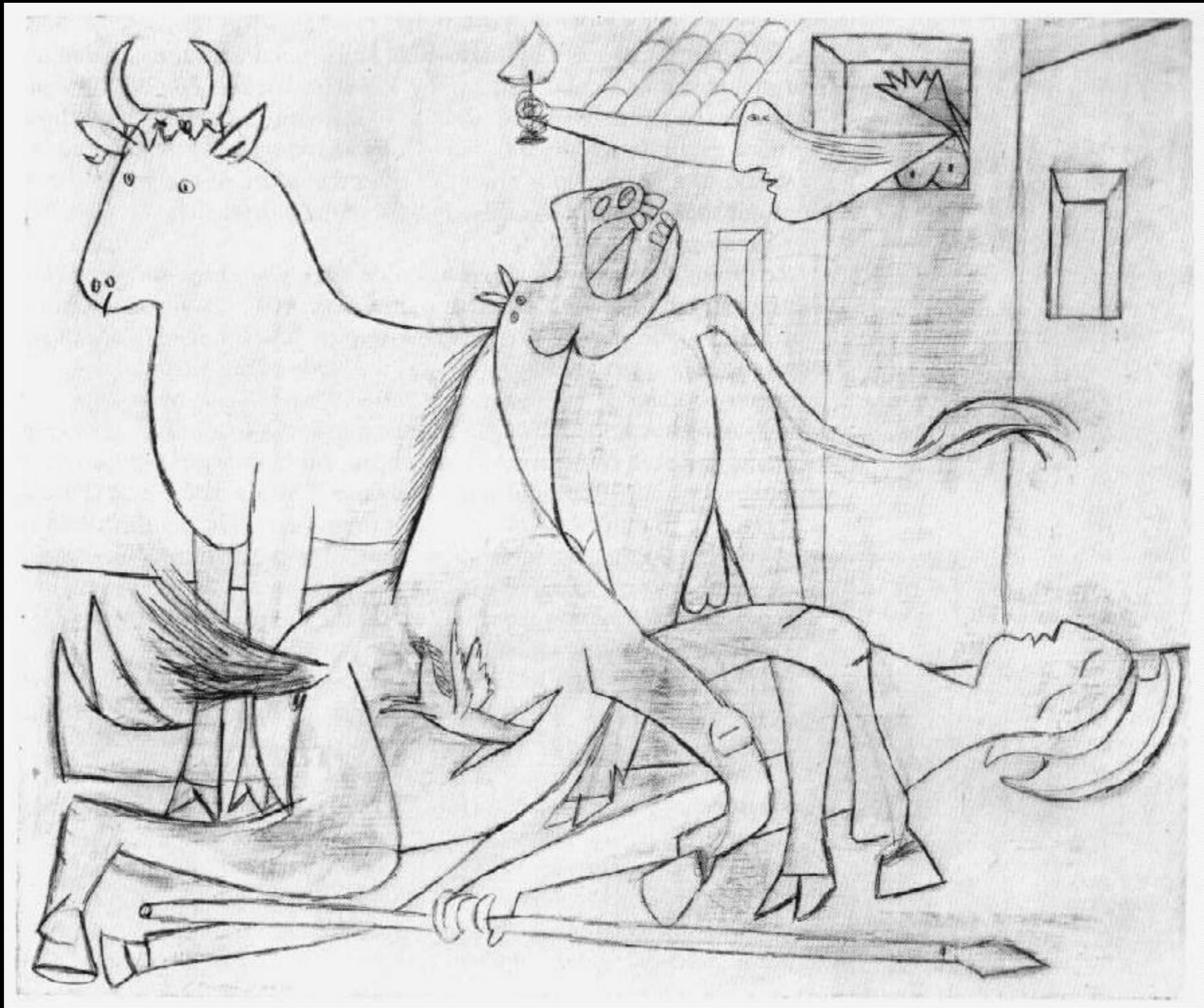
“Guernica” - a mural commissioned by the Spanish republican government for the International Exposition in Paris, 1937 to protest the Nazi bombing of the Basque town of Guernica on 26 April 1937 to aid Franco during the Spanish Civil War
It is 3.49 metres high and 7.76 metres wide



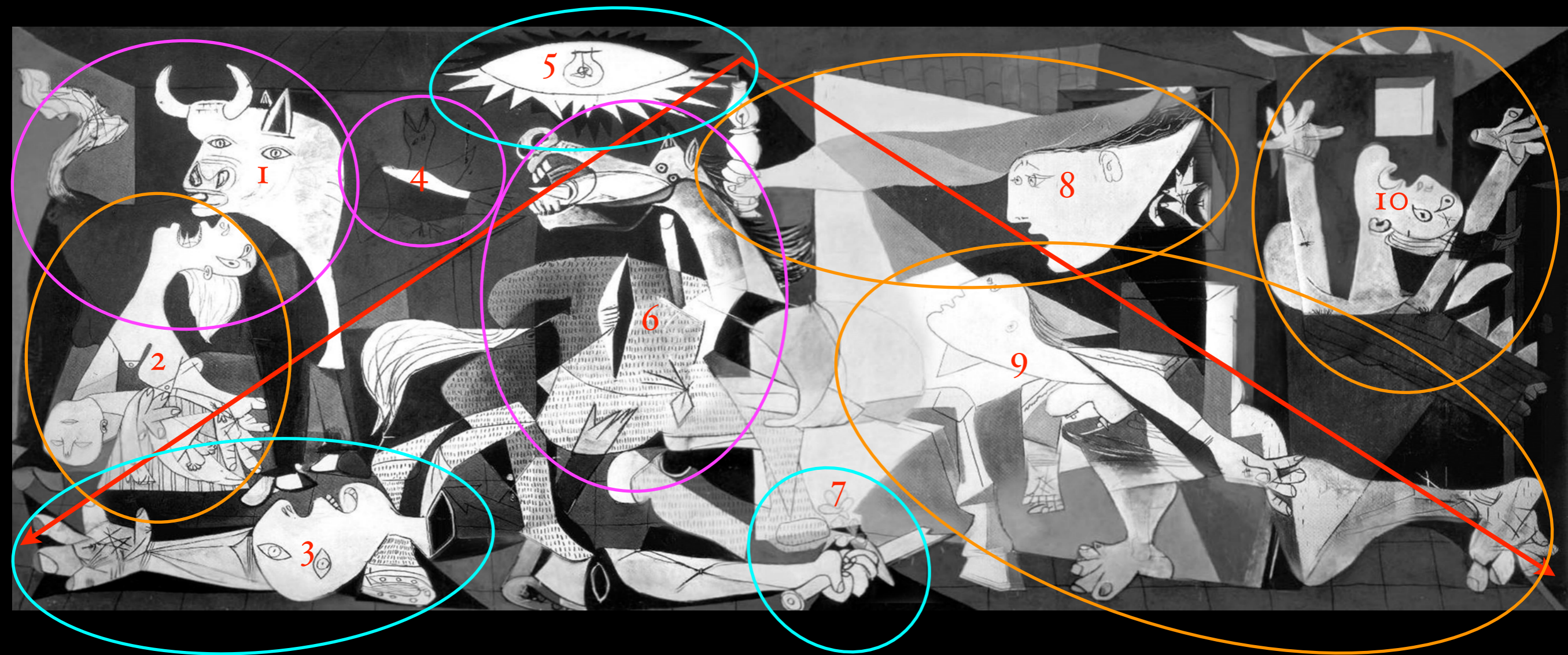


Pablo Picasso (1881-1973)





Guernica Sketches: 6 May 1937



The 10 Components of the Painting

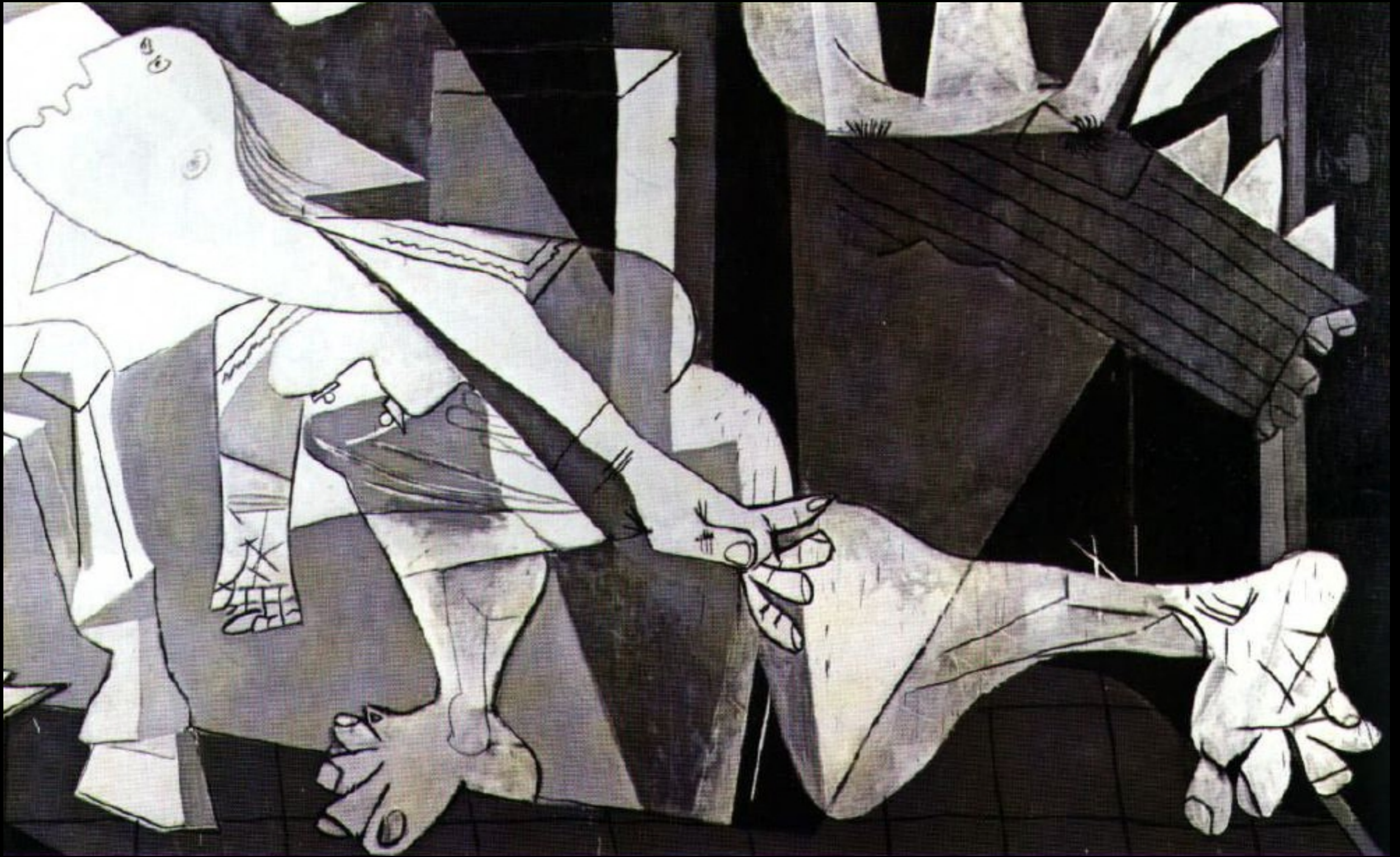
1. the bull
2. the grieving woman with child
3. the fallen statue of the warrior
4. the bird flying from the horse's wound
5. the sun/electric light

6. the wounded horse
7. the sprouting flower
8. the woman with the lamp
9. the fleeing woman
10. the woman falling from the burning building

The two red lines show the central pyramid structure within the painting



Guernica details: 8. woman with the lamp



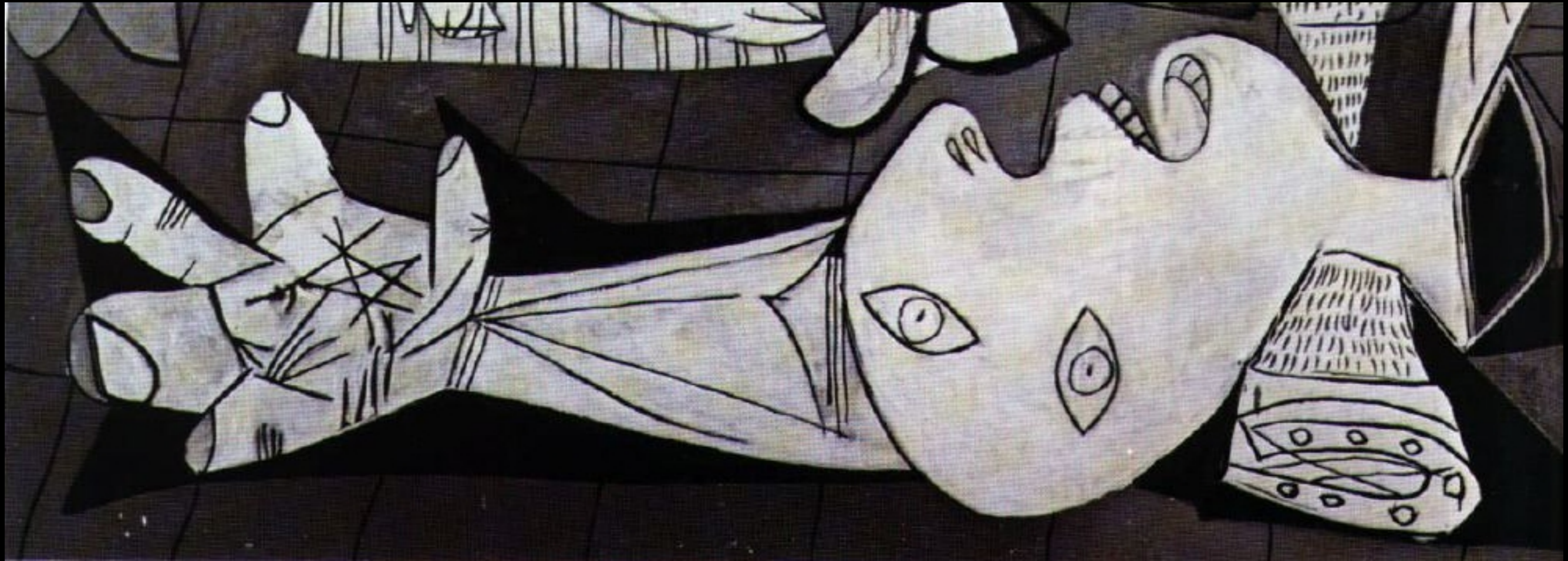
Guernica details: 9. fleeing woman



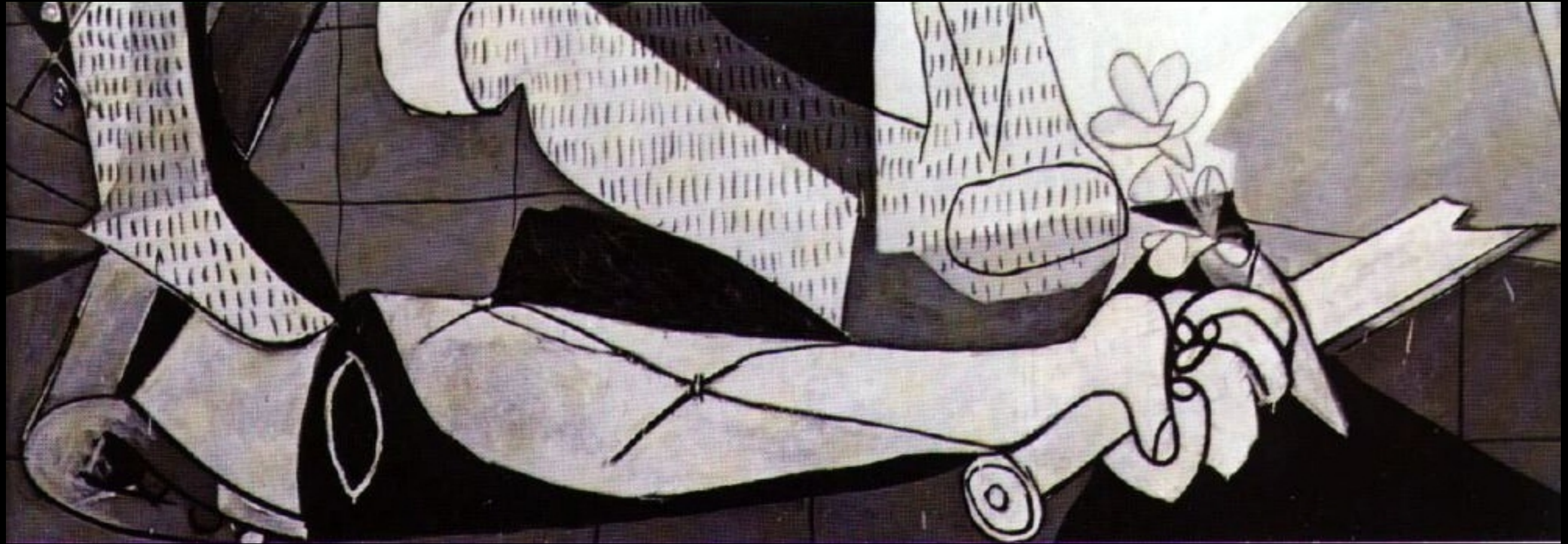
Guernica details: 6. wounded horse



Guernica details: 4. bird escaping from wound



Guernica details: 3. fallen statue of a warrior



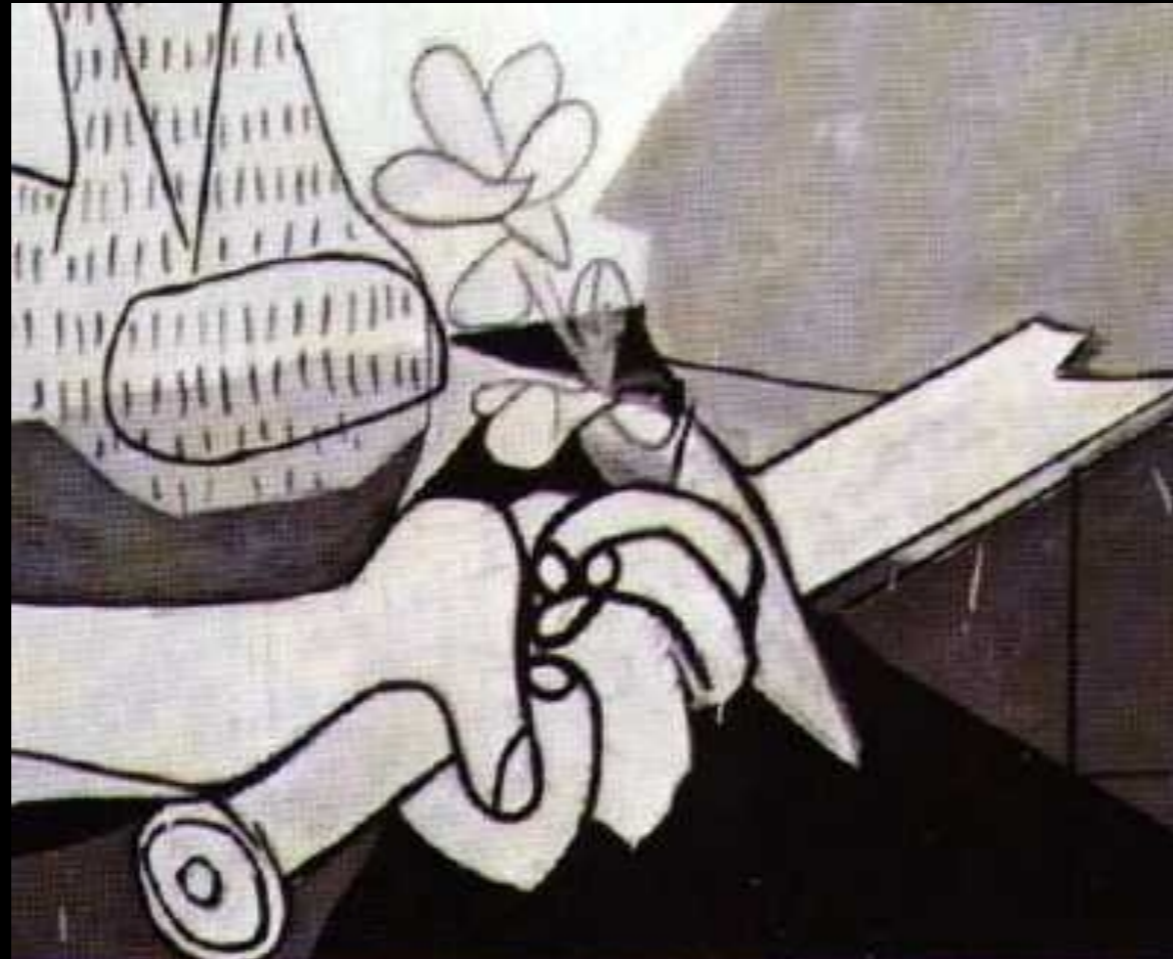
Guernica details: 7. Flower and fallen statue of a warrior



Guernica details: 10. falling woman



Guernica details: 1. and 2. bull and weeping woman with child



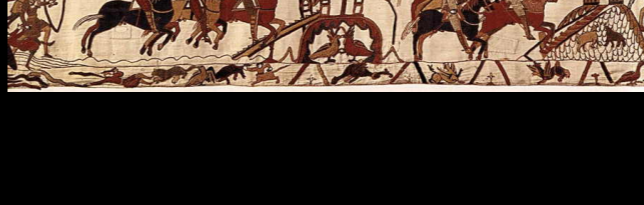
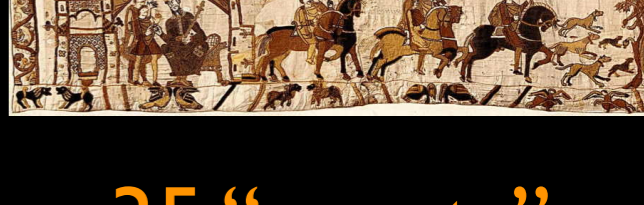
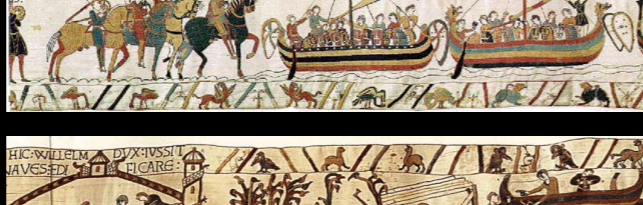
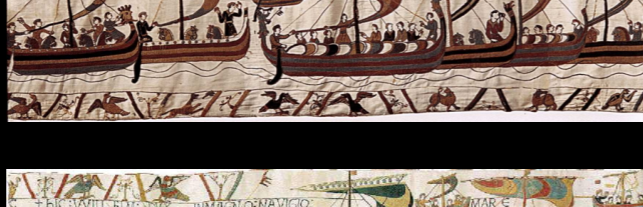
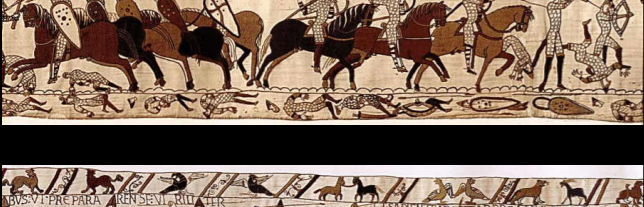
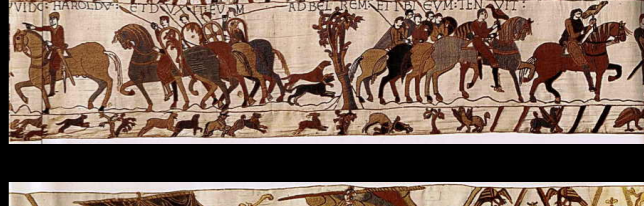
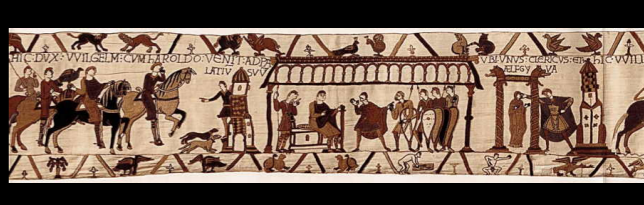
Guernica details: 7. sprouting flower



Guernica details: 5. the sun / electric light



“Bayeux Tapestry” or
“Canterbury Embroidery”



35 "events"

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Recurring Themes

- 1.Kings and Lords in Discussion
- 2.Banquets before and after Battle
- 3.Travelling in Boats
- 4.Getting Ready for Battle
- 5.Battle
- 6.Animals and other curious images

I. KINGS AND LORDS IN DISCUSSION



Part I. Harold Godwinson confers with King Edward the Confessor and sets out on his journey.

I. KINGS AND LORDS IN DISCUSSION



Part 8. Harold and William return to Normandy, where William's daughter Aelfgifu is betrothed to Harold.

I. KINGS AND LORDS IN DISCUSSION



Part 12. During the victory celebration William knights Harold, and Harold takes a solemn oath to become the man of William.

I. KINGS AND LORDS IN DISCUSSION



Part 15. Harold is crowned King of England.
(Look for Haley's Comet.)

2. BANQUETS BEFORE AND AFTER BATTLE



Part 2. Harold and his men prepare for a sea voyage with a final prayer and meal. Then they board their ships, taking dogs and falcons with them.

2. BANQUETS BEFORE AND AFTER BATTLE



Part 23. William and his lords celebrate at a banquet.

3. TRAVELLING IN BOATS



Part 3. Their landing on the coast of France is met by the hostile Guy of Ponthieu.

3. TRAVELLING IN BOATS



Part 17. William orders the Normans to begin building a fleet.

3. TRAVELLING IN BOATS



Part 18. The ships take on their supplies.

3. TRAVELLING IN BOATS



Part 19. The horses board, and the ships set sail.

4. GETTING READY FOR BATTLE



Part 24. The Normans build their camp and prepare for battle.

4. GETTING READY FOR BATTLE



Part 25. The Norman army assembles.

5. BATTLE



Part 28. The Normans attack on horseback.

5. BATTLE



Part 29. The Anglo-Saxons meet their attack on foot.

5. BATTLE



Part 3 I. The battle rages.

5. BATTLE



Part 34. Harold is struck in the eye by an arrow and dies.

5. BATTLE



Part 35. The Normans are victorious.

6. ANIMALS AND OTHER CURIOUS IMAGES





Halley's Comet and the Coronation of King Harold



Mythical Beasts



Two Centaurs beneath the feet of Harold as he sets off to Normandy

Mythical Beasts



Guy takes Harold to William: vultures and camels above;
“Adam and Eve” and Wyverns below

Mythical Beasts



William takes Harold to his castle:
above: lions, Gryphons, and peacocks;
below: bowing vultures and pads; crucifixes interspersed

Medieval Technology



Farming

Medieval Technology



Armour and Weapons

Medieval Technology



Boat building

Injury and Death in Combat



Two Dead Soldiers

Injury and Death in Combat



Stripping Dead Soldiers of their Armor and Swords

Injury and Death in Combat



Dead and Injured Horses

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



5 classic fables in Panels 4-5

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



The Fox and the Crow: the fox tricks the vain crow into opening his beak and dropping the cheese

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



The Lamb and the Wolf: the wolf falsely accuses the lamb of insulting him, but even after she defends herself successfully, he eats her anyway

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



The Bitch and her Puppies: a bitch lends her lair to a pregnant friend who takes advantage of her generosity and refuses to let her have it back

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



The Wolf and the Crane: the wolf promises the crane a reward for removing a bone stuck in his throat, then reneges on his promise

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



The Lion and the Animals: the Lion King agrees not to eat meat
but devours all the animals anyway

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: undercutting the pro-monarchical narrative



Other Canonical Fables: The Lion refuses to share the hunt equally with those who helped him, but eats it all himself

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: animals who fight back



Other Canonical Fables: The Wolf and the Goat - a wolf catches a goat and allows her to prey before he kills her; she calls out for help, hunters hear her, and they and their dogs hunt down the wolf and kill him

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: animals who fight back



The armies of Williams and Harold are about to confront each other

Other Canonical Fables:
The Eagle, the Hare, and the Dung-Beetle and
The Old Man and the Donkey

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: animals who fight back



Other Canonical Fables: The Eagle, the Hare, and the Dung- Beetle

The hare took refuge with the dung beetle, whose hospitality the eagle violated by devouring his guest. The dung beetle then took his revenge on the eagle by smashing its eggs in the nest

The “Fabulous Animals” of Aesop and Phaedrus: animals who fight back

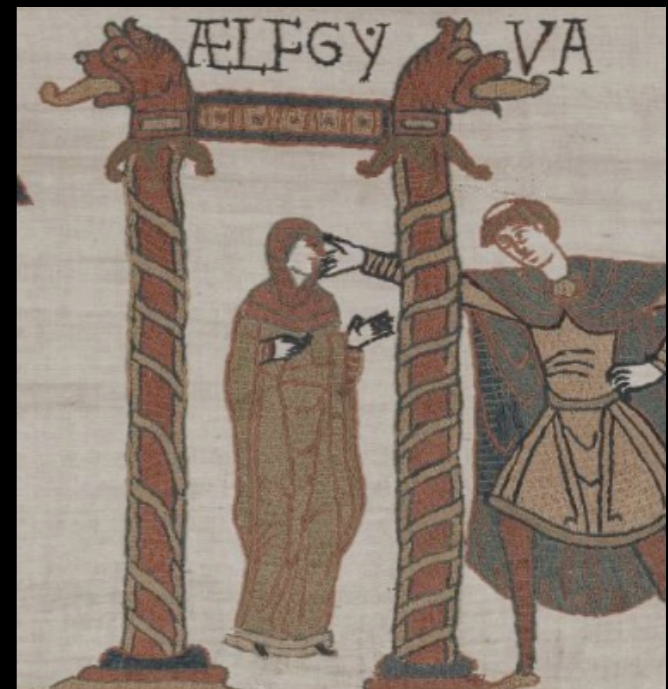
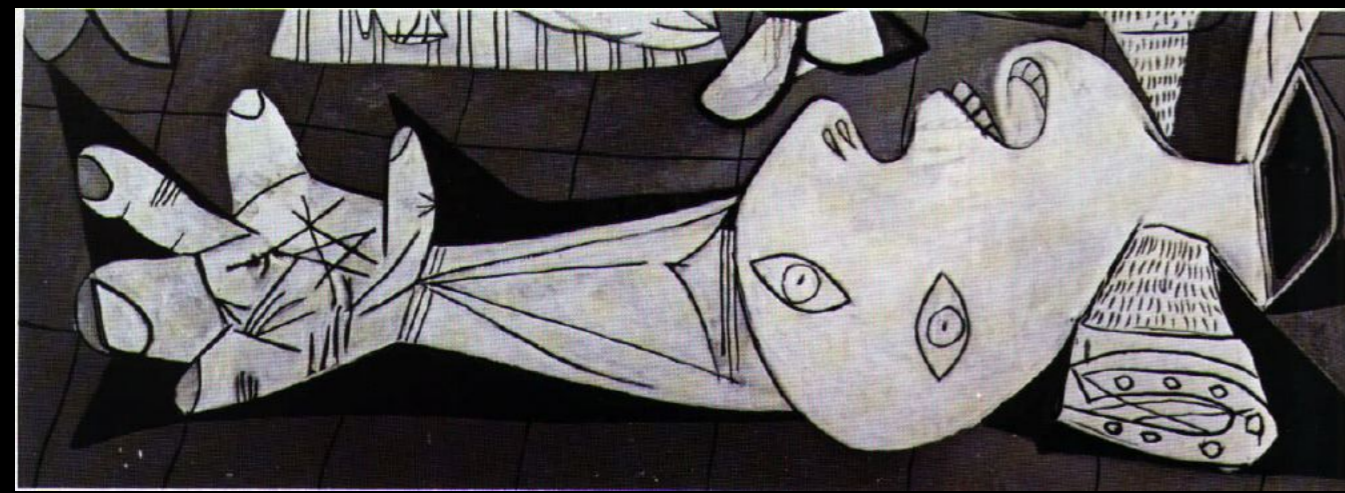


Other Canonical Fables: The Old Man and the Donkey

The donkey tells his owner, the old man, that he does not care who is his master, him or the soldiers of the invading army. They are all the same to him

Naked People







Odo in battle:

top: left vulture pointing, right vulture bowing head, middle two pards (not lions)

bottom: left and right fallen soldiers, middle large horse and soldier defending him with shield

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Further Exploring and Reading

The Bayeux Museum <<https://www.bayeuxmuseum.com/>>

At my website:

- “The Bayeux Tapestry (c. 1070) [Bayeux Museum Version]” <davidmhart.com/liberty/Art/WarArt/BayeuxTapestry/index.html>
- “The Bayeux Tapestry (c. 1070) [Carolyn Schriber Version]” <davidmhart.com/liberty/Art/WarArt/BayeuxTapestry/BayeuxMuseum/index.html>
- “Pablo Picasso (1881-1973): From the Spanish Civil War to Vietnam” <davidmhart.com/liberty/Art/WarArt/Picasso/Picasso.html>
- “Images of Liberty and Power: the Art of War and Peace” <davidmhart.com/liberty/Art/war.html>

At my blog “Reflections on Liberty and Power”:

- “Pablo Picasso’s “Guernica” (1937)” (25 June, 2015) <<http://davidmhart.com/wordpress/archives/378>>
- “Picasso and the Anti-Vietnam War Movement 1969” (12 July, 2015)