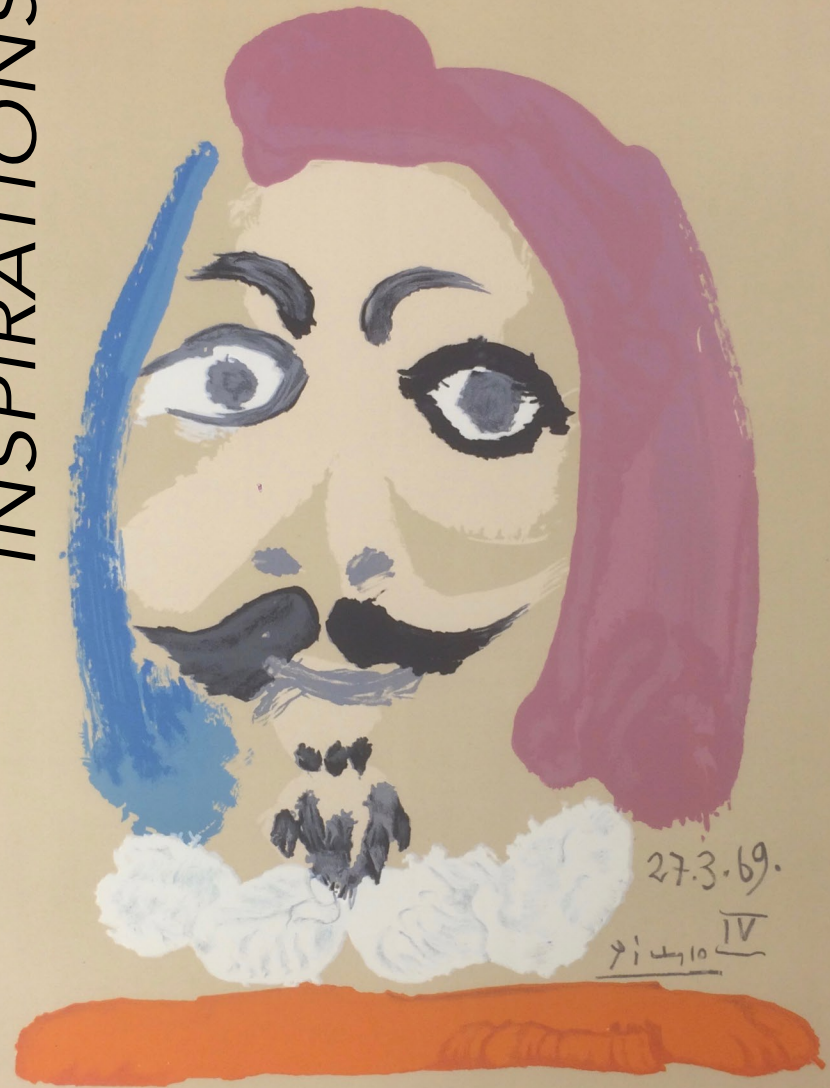




Modern connections can be made when looking at these portraits. Here, we compared some pop culture figures to Picasso's *Imaginary Portraits*. Our own imaginations made these connections, rather than Picasso's.

Use your imagination to find your own connections. What other pop culture resemblances can you make?

IMAGINARY PORTRAITS: INSPIRATIONS



Possible painting of Balzac



**"Are we to paint what's on the face,
what's inside the face, or what's
behind it?" --Picasso**

Honoré de Balzac (1799-1850) was a French author and playwright. His imaginative attention to detail, controversial representation of society, and complex characters were influential to many writers, filmmakers, and philosophers throughout history.



Picasso was significantly inspired by the main character from Balzac's short story, *The Unknown Masterpiece*. The character is an artist who paints abstract pieces much like Picasso. Later on, Picasso illustrated the book and stayed in the apartment alleged to be the novel's setting.

Other than the character in *The Unknown Masterpiece*, it appears that Picasso also found inspiration in Balzac's appearance.

Look at the portrait dated 27.3.69. This face shares features with Balzac's likeness such as the round face, facial hair, and eyes.

Spooky fact: Picasso claimed he was haunted by Balzac's ghost.



Look at the portraits dated 6.4.69. and 22.2.69.

What aspects of Henry the III do you see in the portraits?



Olga Khokhlova (1891-1955), a Russian ballet dancer, was married to Picasso from 1918 to her death in 1955. She served as his inspiration for over 160 portraits including the one above. Picasso's mother was initially upset that he was going to marry a foreigner; to appease her, he painted a portrait depicting her wearing a traditional Spanish wedding headscarf, the *Mantilla*.

One of the portraits in this portfolio is theorized to be a reworking of his painting of Olga Khokhlova In Mantilla. Look at the portrait dated 19.3.69. The *Imaginary Portrait* figure appears to be wearing a similar headdress to one depicted in the portrait of Olga Khokhlova.

Are there any other similarities you can see between these two images?

Henry III was the king of England during the 13th century. Picasso appears to be influenced by the idea of royalty, incorporating elements of regality into his portraits.