

Picasso through the eyes of Lee Miller and Roland Penrose

It began as the casual encounter of two artists on a Provence beach and developed into one of the most powerful synergistic forces in Picasso's life. Roland Penrose, then a Surrealist artist met Picasso in 1936. A year later he introduced Picasso to the love of his life, the American photographer Lee Miller.

Penrose brought Picasso's work to the incredulous and sometimes hostile British public in his International Surrealist Exhibition in 1936. His biography 1958 Picasso His Life and Work was regarded as the definitive work and is still in print, and his Picasso retrospective at the Tate in 1960 was considered to be 'the show of that century'.

Picasso celebrated Lee Miller's beauty by painting six portraits of her as l'Arlesienne, and she reciprocated by photographing him more than 1,000 times. The images are well known for their warmth and intimacy and attest to an intense and enduring friendship.

Antony Penrose is the son of Lee Miller and Roland Penrose and this talk draws on the material held in the Lee Miller Archives and The Penrose Collection of which he is the director.