

Pablo Picasso. *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O)*. 1907.

*Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O)* (The Young Ladies of Avignon) is a large oil painting 8' x 7' 8" (243.9 x 233.7 cm). of 1907 by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) which portrays five nude female prostitutes in a brothel on Avinyo street in Barcelona. Two of the women are rendered with African mask-like faces, giving them a savage and mysterious aura.



His violent treatment of the female body and masklike painting of the faces (influenced by a study of African art) have made this work controversial. In creating *Les Femmes d'Alger*, Picasso turns his back on middle-class society and the traditional values of the time, opting for the sexual freedom depicted in a brothel. He also rejects popular current movements in painting by choosing line drawing rather than the color- and light-defined forms of Impressionism