FROM ANCIENT GREECE TO SURREALISM: THE CHANGING FACES OF THE MINOTAUR

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by

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Introduction

Mythology in Surrealism

The canon of Greek mythology makes a frequent appearance in twentieth-century art, particularly the Greek myth of the Minotaur. According to the myth, the half-man and half-bull creature was sentenced to a tormented life in a labyrinth on the island of Crete by King Minos. Surrealism (1924-1939) comes at a time directly between two great wars when people felt uneasy about their daily lives. Pablo Picasso, though not a Surrealist member, and André Masson were two artists that devoted a significant amount of drawings, etchings, and paintings to the Minotaur. The purpose of this thesis is to provide an analytical observation as to why the Minotaur was so prevalent to Masson and Picasso as well as provide a detailed look at the covers for the journal *Minotaure* that included adaptations of the Minotaur by many Surrealists. The differences between Masson and Picasso's life experiences as well as personal relationships with Breton and other Surrealists resonated with their distinctive approaches to the subject of the Minotaur. Of the Greek myths, it was the saga of the Minotaur that best connected the Surrealists with current events.

The Minotaur is the one character from Greek mythology that appeared the most in Surrealist art. The Surrealists had a vested interest in Greek mythology and it was the Minotaur that had a distinctive place in the minds of Surrealists during the 1930s. Until this paper, there had been no scholarship that directly juxtaposed Minotaur works by Masson and Picasso, two artists who routinely employed the Minotaur. However it was not exclusively these two artists. The Minotaur had pervaded the minds of Surrealists enough that many artists were

commissioned to create covers based on the character for the Surrealist journal *Minotaure*. The idea of the Minotaur was so strong that it caught the attention of numerous artists.

These artists could have felt that they related to such an outcasted character at a time when European societies are becoming gravely disconnected during the tumultuous interwar period. The tale of the Cretan beast involved horror, rescue, along with a constant struggle to survive. With the world turning into a seemingly downward spiral, artists resorted back to stories from the Greek myths to help better understand their own circumstances. Europe was well on its way to the beginning of World War II. In 1922, two years before the start of Surrealism, Benito Mussolini brought fascism to Italy after organizing a march in Rome.[1] In 1933, the same year the Minotaur truly arrived in Surrealism, Adolf Hitler came to power in Germany.[2] Two years later, Hitler rearmed Germany, despite the Versailles treaty.[3]

In Judith E. Bernstock's article, "Classical Mythology in Twentieth-Century Art: A Humanistic Approach," she wrote extensively on the Surrealists' connection of myth and war. During the era of Surrealism we find an influx of artworks based on characters from Greek mythology.[4] Artists created works featuring mythic figures such as Apollo, Dionysos, Oedipus, Narcissus, and the Minotaur just to name a few. The Surrealists saw myths "as metaphors for the

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[1] Marvin Perry, Matthew Berg, and James Krukones, *Sources of Twentieth-Century Europe* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2000), 146.

[2] Ibid, 163.

[3] Robin W. Winks, and R.J.Q. Adams, *Europe 1890-1945: Crisis and Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 216.

[4] In 1924 Max Ernst created *The Labyrinth*. Although the center contains two birds in a cage, the frame is labyrinthian. He also created the *Oedipus Rex* in 1922, two years before Surrealism officially began. In 1936 Salvador Dalí painted *Metamorphhosis of Narcissus.*

primordial grief, fear, and violence of mankind."[5] Specifically regarding the Minotaur, its embodiment of death, violence, and despair are what correlated the Minotaur to the ominous situation in Europe.[6] Artists were not as concerned with direct depictions of the motifs but instead how they correlated with their personal lives or the behaviors of society.

Whitney Chadwick's *Myth in Surrealist Painting, 1929-1939* touches extensively on the Minotaur in Surrealism as well as the journals *Minotaure* and *Acéphale*.[7] Chadwick's book pertains more to the Minotaur and Masson's work rather than the more general books on the artist. Clark V. Poling's *André Masson and the Surrealist Self ,*[8] which specifically covers the decades from right before joining the Surrealist group until he leaves for America, is one of the more comprehensive studies of Masson. This is the exact period covered in this paper; Poling's scholarship was built upon by his utilization of text about images from *Acéphale* to show how different Masson's Minotaur is from Picasso's.

The most authoritative book regarding Picasso and the Minotaur was Mary Mathews Gedo's *Picasso: Art as Autobiography*.[9] Considering the often autobiographical nature of Picasso's work, Gedo's research was helpful for discussing how Picasso's relationships and

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[5] Judith E. Bernstock, "Classical Mythology in Twentieth-Century Art: An Overview of a Humanistic Approach," *Artibus et Historiae* 14, no. 27 (1993):156, http://www.jstor.org/stable/1483450.

[6] Ibid., 176.

[7] Whitney Chadwick, *Myth in Surrealist Painting 1929-1939* (Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1980).

[8] Clark V. Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

[9] Mary Mathews Gedo, *Picasso: Art as Autobiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

experiences played into his Minotaur works. Gloria K. Fiero's "Picasso's Minotaur" published in *Art International*, was an essential resource for how important the Minotaur was for Picasso. Fiero detailed how the experience as a youth of *la corrida*, or bullfighting, impacted his use of the Minotaur decades later. The combination of Gedo and Fiero's resources give an ideal sense of understanding that the Minotaur was autobiographical for Picasso as they detail how the Minotaur changes coincide with the altering relationships in his life.

The Minotaur Myth

In Greek mythology, the Minotaur was depicted as a muscular male body with the head of a bull, forever contained in the center of an intricate labyrinth. The story begins on the island of Crete with King Minos having spoken to Poseidon to send him a pure white bull to display his support for the god. Minos was directed by Poseidon to sacrifice the bull. However, once the king saw the animal he was overtaken by its beauty and decided to save it, sacrificing another of his bulls for Poseidon instead. As part of Minos' punishment for saving the animal, Aphrodite coaxed his wife Pasiphaë to fall in love with the white bull. Pasiphaë then had the architect Daedalus create a hollow wooden cow so that she could mate with the bull. Her offspring was the Minotaur. After raising the Minotaur through the early part of her life, Pasiphaë was forced to give up the half-man half-bull because it became too aggressive. Daedalus thus created the labyrinth to house the Minotaur.

While the Minotaur was in the labyrinth, it became tradition every nine years for the Athenians to send it seven youths and seven maidens to be devoured. Theseus decided to end this

tradition by sailing to Crete with the children and killing the Minotaur.[10] As he told his plan to Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, she showed her love for him by handing him a ball of thread to help guide him through the labyrinth. When he made his way to Crete he encountered the Minotaur, killed it, and then proceeded to follow the thread out of the labyrinth.[11]

The illustrated journal, *Minotaure*, appeared in Paris between the years 1933 and 1939. Artists such as Pablo Picasso, Jacques Lipchitz, André Masson, Salvador Dalì, René Magritte, and Man Ray each illustrated original compositions of the mythological monster for its covers. These covers are vital to the understanding of the Minotaur's position in Surrealist art because, at this point, it is no longer an interest just for Masson or Picasso but rather for many artists as a group.

What distinguishes Masson's and Picasso's covers is that they are the only ones that include symbolism connecting to the myth. The covers by artists other than Masson and Picasso mostly featured the Minotaur's head with the occasional symbolism that relates only to the artist; this was the case with Dalì's cover. In addition, the Minotaur most frequently appeared in these two artists' collections of works. Picasso's depictions of the Minotaur were more romanticized as opposed to Masson's aggressive images. Picasso's Minotaur took on autobiographical dimensions as he faced his own self-created romantic and marital problems. In contrast, Masson's wielding of the Minotaur stemmed from a combination of Surrealist techniques, principles, and his adoration of the works of Friedrich Nietzsche.

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[10] Guy Hedreen, "BILD, MYTHOS, AND RITUAL: Choral Dance in Theseus' Cretan Adventure on François Vase," *The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 80, no. 3 (July-September 2011), 492, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2972/hesperia.80.3.0491.

[11] Elinor W. Gadon, "Picasso and the Minotaur," *India International Centre Quarterly* 30, no. 1 (Summer 2003), 22, http://www.jstor.org/stable/23005839.

The Minotaur in Art History

In order to fully understand the Minotaurs from Masson, Picasso, and the Surrealists, Greek works depicting the Minotaur must be presented beforehand. The Minotaur has been featured in compositions ranging from Greek vases to sculptures created during the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries. The following five works were chosen because they represent different depictions of the myth of the Minotaur. Meanwhile the earliest example displays the more rarely shown moment where Theseus confronts Ariadne after the death of the Minotaur. Their dates of creation span centuries, depicting an evolution of the image over time. While the Greek works shown here tell the story in a larger format, the depictions thousands of years later focus solely on a singular moment.

From the Etruscan period is the *François Vase* (570 BCE) (Fig. 1) where in the frieze at the lip of the krater is the story of Theseus and Ariadne. The *François Vase* is another work of black-figure pottery that was popular between the 7th to 5th century BCE. The vase is shown here because it displays the preparations Theseus conducted before traveling to the Labyrinth, not often shown in contemporary work. In fact the vase does not feature the Minotaur at all, instead the plan the defeat it. At the far-left of the frieze, the ship and crew that carried Theseus, the youths, and maidens had landed (detail) (Fig.2). Subsequently from left to right, are the seven youths and seven maidens dancing hand-in-hand. Preceding the final maiden is Theseus playing the lyre. Although his head is missing, it was originally bent closer to the instrument so as to

better hear the music. At the far right is Ariadne with her arm out and the ball of thread in hand. Between them is Ariadne's nurse Throphos.[12]

A black-figure Attic cup featuring *Theseus Fighting the Minotaur* (540 BCE) (Fig. 3 & 4) shows Theseus with his hand on the Minotaur's horn, ready to thrust the sword into its side. Behind the Minotaur is Ariadne with her outstretched hand holding the ball of thread upward. Throphos is seen again excitedly dancing behind Ariadne. To the left behind Theseus is the goddess Athena, the patron saint of Athens who represented wisdom as well as courage. Athena is now shown holding Theseus' lyre so to free his hands for killing the beast. Surrounding the central scene are fourteen Athenian youths and maidens.

Moving from Greek art to the Proto-Renaissance, in Dante Alighieri's epic poem *The Divine Comedy* he wrote about an experience with a Minotaur in the seventh circle of hell. The encounter that he and Virgil had was illustrated in the lower margin (14th Century) (Fig. 5). Dante's drawing features him and Virgil on the left, with their names above them, meanwhile the Minotaur stands above them on the rocky slope. Although this image is not from the Greek myth, Dante has appropriated the the figure to help tell the story. Dante's Minotaur is much different from others seen in this paper; that is because it is indeed a Centaur. Yet Dante still declares it a Minotaur, with the name above its head and the passage, "there lay outstretched the infamy of Crete, conceived within the counterfeited cow; and, catching sight of us he bit himself like one

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[12] Luca Giuliani, *Image and Myth: A History of Pictorial Narration in Greek Art* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 125.

whom fury devastates within."[13] In this quote Dante recalls the conception of the Minotaur in Greek mythology.

Next are two sculptural works that display moments from the battle of Theseus and the Minotaur. The first work is by the Italian Antonio Canova created *Theseus and the Minotaur* (1782) (Fig. 6). The marble statue portrays the dead Minotaur lying on a rock with its hips up in the air, his head low on the ground. Sitting atop him is Theseus, draped in cloth, with the club that he had used to kill the Minotaur still in hand. While the Minotaur's limp head looks up and to the side, Theseus is still looking straight at the monster's head as though admiring his achievement while also tired from the struggle.

Antoine-Louis Barye's *Theseus Combatting the Minotaur* (modeled 1843, cast 1850-55) (Fig. 7) displays the Minotaur in a defensive position just before Theseus forces his sword into the monster's skull. Barye was a French sculptor who became popular for depicting animals in his work, which is evident with the level of definition of the Minotaur's head. With the Minotaur off balance, he is only able to stabilize himself by wrapping his left leg around Theseus' while still holding onto his shoulders. Meanwhile, Theseus is shown standing tall with both feet firmly planted in the ground, still holding onto the Minotaur's horn.

These five works present different parts of the Minotaur myth, or in Dante's case, how the figure was adapted to tell his story. The Attic cup as well as Canova and Barye's sculptures depict the action-filled moment when Theseus is about to kill the Minotaur or after it has already

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[13] Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy*, trans. by Allen Mandelbaum (New York: Everyman's Library, 1995), 106.

been killed. As depicted in the *François Vase* however, Theseus's decision to save the youth and maidens of Athens from the beast is also an integral part of the story.

Chapter 1

Masson's Entry into Surrealism

Born in Balagny, France in 1896, artist André Masson was a key player in Surrealism. The themes of Masson's art will develop over the next fifteen years into one that exclusively relates to the Cretan saga. Masson returned to Paris in 1922 after spending three years in the south of France, he rented a studio at 45 rue Blomet next door to Joan Miró. Through writer Max Jacob along with Masson's friends, his studio became a gathering space frequented by the likes of writers Michel Leiris, Georges Limbour, Ernest Hemingway, artist Jean Dubuffet, actor Antonin Artaud, and art collector Gertrude Stein. Masson expressed a great appreciation for Jacob during this time. "He helped me his best to survive. His generosity was without limit and his character skittish."[14] These creatives who met in Masson's studio became known as the Rue Blomet group. Their conversations focused on Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, de Sade, poets, and other philosophers. This was coupled with drinking, dancing, and playing cards.[15]

At the beginning of his involvement with Surrealism, Masson created *Automatic Drawing* (1924) (Fig. 8). The ambiguous, curvilinear drawing has no central focus with no discernible shapes or objects. Art historian William Rubin once described automatism as "the craftsmanly counterpart of verbal free association," meaning with automatism, the artist drew whatever came

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[14] "Il m'aida de son mieux à survive. Sa générosité était sans limite et son caractère ombrageux" Translated by author. Ibid.

[15] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 9,17.

to their mind which led to thoughts from the subconscious.[16] Two years later Masson created another *Automatic* Drawing (1926) (Fig. 9), which has a similar composition to the one two years earlier. Any discernible hands in the image from two years earlier have now become almost amoeba-like while indistinguishable from the rest of the drawing. As had been the case since 1924, Masson's pen flew rapidly over the paper not giving him a chance to draw consciously.

Masson carried with him the post-traumatic stress of trench warfare from World War I. He created numerous automatic drawings from 1923 to 1926, and most were simply titled *Automatic Drawing*. Automatism, originally established by Jean Arp during the Dada period, was a technique that combined art or words with the unconscious. Artists would make automatist works in an attempt to reveal truths behind their subconscious. In Breton's 1924 Surrealist manifesto, he reflected on four points as to why dreams contribute very little to furthering the "ordinary observer's" understanding of placing more emphasis on dreams than waking events. It is in his fourth point that he wrote, "I believe in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seemingly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a *surreality*, if one may so speak."[17] In other words, Breton emphasized the significance of bringing together the dream world and waking life, and turning them into art, film, poetry, or any other medium.

Beginning in 1926 Masson's automatic drawings evolved into violent depictions of animals, yet still staying true to the automatic style. He suffered a chest wound during the Battle of Chemin des Dames in 1917, which forced him to lie in a trench for days looking at the starry

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[16] William S. Rubin, *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1968), 64.

[17] André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. by Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1969), 14.

sky before receiving aid. Masson's subject matter did not become violent until after he was a part of the Surrealist movement. *Battle of Fishes* (1926) (Fig. 10) demonstrates this with its portrayal of fish of various sizes divided by lines of sand. In a display of survival of the fittest, the largest fish is not necessarily the fittest fish as both the large and small are wounded amongst blazing fires. The doom-laden fish scenario continues with *The Great Battle of Fish* (1928) (Fig. 11) in addition to *Fish Disemboweling Another* (1929) (Fig. 12). In both scenes the fish are holding knives. They are threatening each other with their mouths open wide and visibly sharp teeth.

These brutal scenes partially stemmed from the artist's earlier traumatic childhood experiences. He would regularly witness his grandparents butchering at their home, pulling out rabbits' eyes; the butcher shop next door would kill a pig before his eyes every fortnight. For the four to five years he lived next to his grandparents, Masson was exposed to other brutal acts such as his uncle cruelly beating his horse. One day the horse turned on his uncle. The animal bit him in the chest which sent him to the hospital.[18] His violent experiences from his family, as well as the war, carried on to his animal drawings. Masson's images with animal fatalities also included horses, birds, and humans with grisly depictions. In the early 1930s, this ruthless violence would shift to the Minotaur.

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[18] Jean-Paul Clébert, André Masson, *Mythologie d'André Masson* (Geneva: Pierre Cailler, 1971), 10-11.

The Splintering of Surrealism

In 1929, Breton began the *Second Manifesto of Surrealism* with, "… Surrealism attempted to provoke, from the intellectual and moral point of view, *an attack of conscience*, of the most general and serious kind, …"[19] In the manifesto Breton named those whom he felt were "cowards, impostors, arrivistes, lying witnesses, and informers" which included Masson.[20] Afterwards, Masson broke away from Surrealism as his imagery was no longer related to the dream world but instead related to Greek myth. To illustrate the degree to which Breton and Masson did not get along, Masson recounted the first disagreement he had with Breton in 1929. The two had been discussing the geniuses of the world. They had mutually agreed on Arthur Rimbaud, Stéphane Mallarmé, L*es Chants de Maldoror* by Le Comte de Lautréamont as well as Jarry and Raymond Roussel. Masson then went on to name Nietzsche and Fiodor Dostoïevsky, to which Breton replied, "I hate the most!"[21]

Divisiveness in the Surrealist group came in December 1929. It was during the splintering of the Surrealist group that Masson united with his true friend, French literary figure Georges Bataille. Masson's relationship with the writer would last for decades, as the two would work on numerous projects together. At this time Breton had joined the French Communist Party. He pledged the Surrealists as fellow travelers of Communism. However, most Surrealists grew to distrust the French Communist Party which in turn was dubious of the Surrealists' commitment

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[19] Breton, *Manifestos of Surrealism*, 123.

[20] Gérard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press) 2002, 190.

[21] André Masson, *Vagabond du surrealismé* (Paris: editions saint-germain-des-pres) 1975, 41.

to the cause. The political party criticized their art for "blatant sexuality and dream symbols."[22] Breton's focus on the French Communist Party was another reason for Masson to break away from the group.

Bataille would soon become the leader of those who had rejected Breton's second manifesto. Earlier, in February of 1929, Bataille became the secretary general of a publication titled *Documents* on which he and Masson had collaborated with other Surrealists. Bataille never cared for Breton or the Surrealist movement. Fascinated with eroticism, anthropology, Nietzscheism, and the *abattoir* (slaughterhouse), Bataille never consented to Breton's vision of Surrealism. According to Breton in the *Second Surrealist Manifesto*, "M. Bataille professes to wish only to consider in the world that which is vilest, most discouraging, and most corrupted…"[23] Breton continued by claiming that Bataille rounded up the dissidents by writing, "M. Bataille is preparing to gather them together, and what happens will be interesting."[24] It was Masson's contentious relationship with Breton that spurred his progressively more sinister works. Bataille's distaste for Breton was a bond that he shared with Masson. The collaborations of Bataille and Masson helped to create numerous projects for the Surrealist movement.

With Masson and Bataille's appreciation for Nietzsche came the influence of Greek mythology apparent in Surrealist works. Masson's first foray into the subject of the Minotaur came in the painting *Les Jeunes Filles* (1930) (Fig. 13). The Minotaur's head, with its disjointed

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[22] Helena Lewis, "Surrealists, Stalinists, and Trotskyists: Theories of Art and Revolution in France between the Wars," *Art Journal* 52, no. 1 (1993): 64, accessed December 27, 2014, http://www.jstor.org/stable/777303.

[23] Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, 181.

[24] Georges Bataille, "Notes on the Publication of 'Un Cadaver'," *Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, trans. Michael Richardson (London: Verso) 1994, 30.

visage, is in the forefront with his snout located in a patch of black paint in the center. His pointy ears extend out while a fluffy tuft of hair hangs down past his eyes. There is no distinct background, nor any indication of other body parts, including whether it even has a human torso. According to Masson, in the Greek myth the Minotaur was killed, but in his account, the Minotaur was the winner because he killed whoever entered.[25]

La Corrida

Picasso also had a relationship with Breton, whom he met in the mid-1920s. Breton wrote extensively about Picasso in both the first issue of *Minotaure* as well as his earlier book *Surréalisme et la peinture* (1928). Although Picasso did take an interest in Greek mythology, he never thought of himself as Surrealist because he considered himself as a painter of realism than dreamscapes.[26] Breton stated that Picasso's work "held the most rewarding answers to the problems involved in the creation of a truly Surrealist visual idiom." He went on to say "we proudly claim him as one of ourselves, even though it would be impossible and would besides be impudent to bring to bear on his means the critical standards we propose to apply elsewhere."[27] In other words, because of Picasso's popularity in Paris at the time, it would be presumptuous for Breton to impose his Surrealist standards on Picasso. According to writer Michel Leiris, "in most of the works by Picasso it will be noticed that the 'subject' (if it is permissible to use such an

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[25] Masson, *Mythologies d'André Masson*, 36.

[26] Ibid, 49-50.

[27] John Golding, "Picasso and Surrealism,' in *Picasso in Retrospect*, ed. Sir Roland Penrose and Dr. John Golding (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 49.

expression) is almost always quite down-to-earth, in any case never borrowed in the hazy world of the dream, nor immediately susceptible to being converted into a symbol, — that is to say in no way 'surrealiste.'"[28]

Picasso was born 1881 in Málaga, Spain. He spent his childhood learning about *la corrida*. This skirmish between bull, matador, and the crew of picadors had a deep-seated effect on Picasso. Picadors are lance-carrying bullfighters whose job is to prick the bull in order to weaken it. The love for the bullfight stemmed from his father who began taking him to the corrida as soon as soon as he could walk.[29] From 1900 through 1901, Picasso created numerous paintings in addition to drawings of the corrida such as *Bullfighting Scene (The Victims)* (Spring, 1901) (Fig. 14). A gored horse is immediately recognizable in the foreground. In the background is a crowded audience surrounding the matador and his assistants along with the bull.

Picasso's first attempt at the Minotaur arrived in *Minotaure Courant* (1928) (Fig. 15), or *Running Minotaur*, differs from Masson's. Masson and Picasso had very different intentions behind *Les Jeunes Filles* and *Minotaure Courant*, in that Picasso was not initially interested in even drawing the Minotaur. The head in *Minotaure Courant* resembles more that of a horse rather than a bull. This is similar to Dante's Minotaur from *The Divine Comedy*. In *Minotaure Courant*, the figure most notably has no arms and is prancing around on human legs like an

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[28] "dans la plupart des tableaux de Picasso on remarquera que le "sujet" (s'il est permis d'employer une telle expression) est presque toujours tout à fait *terre à terre*, en tous cas jamais emprunté au monde fumeux du rêve, ni susceptible immédiatement d'être converti en symbole, — c'est~à~dire aucunement "surréaliste." Translated by author. Michel Leiris, "Toiles Récentes de Picasso," *Documents* 2 (1930): 64.

[29] John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso: Vol. 1 1881-1906*, (New York: Random House, 1991), 29.

exquisite corpse.[30] The horse head looks up with his eyes looking nowhere, mouth wide open. In *Les Jeunes Filles*, by contrast, the figure has a tuft of hair atop its head. Its ears point outwards while in the center the Minotaur's eyes gaze helplessly outward. By definition, Picasso's earliest image of a Minotaur has more the likeness of a Centaur (half-horse and half-man) whereas with the outward pointing ears along with the tuft of hair, *Les Jeunes Filles* has a strong resemblance to a bull. Thus, despite the titles, it is perhaps Masson who depicted the first Minotaur. Fiero states, "although *Minotaure Courant* is not the direct prototype of the heroic Minotaur of the 1930s, it illustrates Picasso's interest in the combination and deliberate confusion of animal characteristics, and anticipates his later experiments with hybrid creatures under the influence of the French Surrealists."[31]

Picasso's life-long passion for the bullfight is repeatedly seen in his work from the *Vollard Suite* (1930-1937). Picasso's life experiences encompassing the bull came to the forefront with a one hundred engravings known today as the *Vollard Suite*, a commission for the collector and gallery dealer Ambroise Vollard, [32] The collection was organized into five themes: Battle of Love, The Sculptor's Studio, Rembrandt, The Minotaur, The Blind Minotaur, and then three portraits of Vollard. The emotions of seeing the corridas as a child with his father endured for

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[30] *Exquisite corpse* was a collaborative technique in which a piece of paper would be folded once or multiple times and then artists, without seeing what their comrades have drawn, would take turn contributing something on each fold of the paper. Afterwards the paper would be straightened out, revealing the overall image.

[31] Gloria K. Fiero, "Picasso's Minotaur," *Art International* 26 (November-December 1983): 21.

[32] Not only was Vollard a champion of Picasso but he also supported Cézanne, Renoir, Gauguin, and Van Gogh, just to name a few. He purchased many works from varying artists throughout his life however he regularly purchased works by Picasso until he was represented by Henry Kahnweiler from December 1912 until 1914. Milton S. Fox, ed., *Picasso for Vollard* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1956), IX.

decades. It was not until the section Battle of Love that Picasso returned to the struggle between bull and matador. It is in this section that a man can be seen trying in vain to gain the love and attention of a lady. Later in the sections of The Minotaur and The Blind Minotaur, Picasso expanded on the idea of the beaten and subdued bull. Seventy-three of the one hundred engravings consist of a depiction of the Minotaur, which will be discussed in detail below. The remaining twenty-seven images are of various themes consisting of figure studies, bulls, bullfighting, and musicians. It was with this collection of images that Picasso developed his interpretation of the Minotaur as a self-portrait.

Chapter 2

The Beginnings of Minotaure

After the demise of a periodical titled *Le Surréalisme au service de la Révolution* (1930-1933), issued by the Surrealist group in Paris headed by André Breton, a journal entitled *Minotaure* began what would become the longest run of a periodical from the Surrealist movement, stretching from 1933 until 1939. The periodical was started by Albert Skira, a Swiss publisher who opened an office in Paris during the 1930s. Skira helped to professionalize the publishing for Breton and the Surrealists.[33] It was Skira's idea to start this opulent magazine, but he sought out Breton's assistance since the sales and financial backing of Breton's *Le Surréalisme* were woeful. The only catch would be that Breton could not use *Minotaure* as a platform for his social and political views. Breton gave in to Skira's offer; in the final issue of his *Le Surréalisme* he announced the inaugural issue of *Minotaure*.[34] Remarkably, Breton was now working side by side with those whom he called dissidents and removed from the Surrealist group just a few years prior.

Minotaure published articles that reflected the diverse interests of Surrealism such as the plastic arts, poetry, architecture, and ethnography. The deluxe magazine was a collection where

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[33] Christopher Green, *Art in France: 1900-1940* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 52.

[34] Irene E. Hofmann, "Documents of Dada and Surrealism: Dada and Surrealist Journals in the Mary Reynolds Collection," *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 22, no. 2 (1996): 146, http://www.jstor.org/stable/4104318.

journalists, artists, poets, and doctors could write about their explorations in arts and literature. In addition, there were several Surrealist magazines, but *Minotaure* was the only one with covers exclusively designed for the publication by major artists. These were not previously created works appropriated as covers. They were done by artists who would later become well-known as part of the Surrealist movement.

Skira was able to put together a venerable group of Dada and Surrealist personalities as board members of *Minotaure*. These members included Tristan Tzara, Salvador Dali, Paul Éluard, René Crevel, Leiris, Bataille, Breton, and Masson. The magazine was a luxurious production with large format pages, an elegant design layout, and lavish color reproductions. These features had been absent from previous Surrealist periodicals. According to Masson, it was he and Bataille who came up with the title for the magazine. Masson noted that the conception of *Minotaure* began when he showed art dealer Jeanne Bucher a series of Minotaur drawings. Bataille and Masson had been discussing the genesis of the journal amongst themselves. The other dissidents, the poet Desnos, Surrealist playwright and poet Vitrac, and Bataille had been wanting to call the journal *l'Age d'Or* after Luis Buñuel's 1930 film of the same name. However Bataille and Masson had been investigating tragic Greek myths, particularly those of Dionysos and the labyrinth of Crete. It is not implausible that these two would work together as Bataille was married to French actress Sylvia Maklès from 1928-1946, while Masson married her sister Rose in 1934, making them related by marriage.[35]

The premiere issue of *Minotaure* was released on February 15, 1933, as a magazine of "plastic arts, poetry, music, architecture, ethnography, and mythology with special studies in

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[35] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 128.

psychoanalytic observations."[36] This first issue consisted of articles on French contemporary photography, painting, and sculpture. The cover of the first issue of *Minotaure* was designed by Picasso. As Skira was the publisher of *Minotaure*, he decided who was to create the issue cover. Masson was originally intended to do the first cover but Skira later withdrew the offer, giving it to Picasso.[37] Skira gave Picasso the first cover because he illustrated the publisher's first venture *Metamorphoses*, about the Roman poet Ovid.[38] Masson was unhappy about the decision, stating that Picasso never depicted Minotaurs before. Picasso had only made a Centaur.[39] Masson said that it was he and Bataille who made the Greek myths, including that of Dionysos and the labyrinth of Crète, darker.[40]

The annotation inside the magazine for the first cover lists the image as an etching, however the work as a whole is a collage (1933) (Fig. 16). The foreground is Picasso's rendition of the Minotaur seated with the butt of a dagger resting on his upright knee. Picasso's Minotaur is seen holding the dagger with which it was killed. The dagger is the only reference in Picasso's cover to the actual myth. He made little reference to the myth in all of his works of the Minotaur, as his intent was not to supply literal depictions of myth-telling but rather he utilized the Minotaur as an autobiographical substitute for frustrations with his relationships.[41] The curly-

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[36] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 1 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1933), inside cover.

[37] Chadwick, *Myth in Surrealist Painting*, 41.

[38] Lisa Florman, *Myth and Metamorphosis: Picasso's Classical Prints of the 1930s* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2000), 15.

[39] Masson, *Mythologie d'André Masson*, 37.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Gadon, "Picasso and the Minotaur," 22.

haired bull's head is placed atop the muscular, though not idealized male body. Underneath the apparently torn-out page corner of the sketch of the Minotaur, Picasso placed leaves, a paper doily, ribbons of reddish brown and green, metal foil, and printed paper. Picasso used corrugated cardboard as the background which, based on the border of the image, was then likely tacked onto wood. Unlike Picasso's *Minotaure Courant* which placed the horse head atop the male anatomy, his *Minotaure* cover has the bison head fully fused with the body. Not only is there a short tail above the creature's backside but the curly hair continues down the back of the male and can be seen on his chest as well. The differences between these two images recalls the quote from Fiero that the figure in *Minotaure Courant* was not a precursor to the *Minotaure* cover.

Much attention was devoted to Picasso in the first issue because Breton had been a fervent supporter of Picasso for several years. The relationship between the two began when Picasso completed a drypoint portrait of Breton in 1923. In the premier issue of *Minotaure* Breton wrote the article "Picasso dans son élément," featuring candid photographs taken by Brassaï which captured the artist in his studio. With Breton on the board of *Minotaure*, the position gave him the opportunity to bring to the forefront someone whom he had been fascinated with for a long time. Breton's involvement was a big reason for Picasso's inclusion in the first issue. Although the exiled Surrealists felt a general scorn for Breton long after the *Second Surrealist Manifesto*, the rift had subsided enough for Breton to contribute to the magazine.

Masson only objected that he was not selected to create the cover for the opening issue, not to Picasso's prominence. Masson never seemed to have held a grudge against Picasso nor those who ran *Minotaure*, as he would contribute occasionally. Despite not being awarded the cover of the premiere issue of *Minotaure*, Masson's *Massacres* series was published in the first issue

(1933) (Fig. 17). These automatic pen and ink drawings contained an ultraviolent subject matter such as nude men raping, beating, and knifing men and women. The victims are usually portrayed as trying to escape the men who are standing over them. Poling relates the violence in *Massacres* to that of human sacrifice and Nietzsche's writing on "ethnographic studies of tribal societies."[42]

The Remaining Editions of Minotaure

Each artist created only one cover for the periodical, including some Joan Miró, Marcel Duchamp, and Salvador Dalí. The journal also included Picasso, André Derain, Francisco Borés and Henri Matisse. Working for *Minotaure* is the first and only time that these artists committed to illustrating the Minotaur.[43] It was the Minotaur myth that united these artists to come together. According to Bernstock, "these [covers] showed the Minotaur as a monster which, like the Freudian id, threatened to violate social and psychic norms; it symbolized the psychic underworld to which Freud attributed man's most potent impulses."[44]

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[42] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 72-73.

[43] This was concluded after plugging in all the names of the cover artists into journal and artwork databases.

[44] Bernstock, "Classical Mythology in Twentieth-Century Art: An Overview of a Humanistic Approach," 176.

While the second issue of *Minotaure* did not feature a Minotaur on the cover, the next *Minotaure* release was a double issue consisting of issues three and four.[45] Its cover was designed by André Derain (1933) (Fig. 18), whose focus in the cover image was mysticism. In this cover image, clockwise from the top left, Derain depicted tarot cards: The Magician, Strength, The Hanged Man, and The Fool. While the cards are shown in mixtures of red, blue, green, and yellow, Derain painted the head of the Minotaur, centered and over top all four tarot cards, in a black calligraphic style. When we compare the Minotaur to Derain's tarot cards, which resemble a medieval era manuscript style or woodcut of the 1400s with their oddly-shaped eyes and long spider-like fingers. The drawing of the Minotaur contains large amounts of negative space to aid in seeing the cards behind it. Derain's Minotaur has feminine features, with long eyelashes and a voluptuous tuft of hair between its horns.[46] This is significant because this cover displays the Minotaur with feminine qualities.

Inside the double issue, Derain wrote "*Criterium des As*," or Race of the Aces, an article that functions as a rallying cry for the Ace of Wands, Ace of Coins, Ace of Swords, and Ace of Cups: the four aces from a tarot card deck. For the Ace of Swords Derain wrote, "The flame traverses the night. In the splendor of the day, the solar ray sword of the world pierces the thick

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[45] The second issue exhibited the ethnographic tendencies of Surrealism and featured entirely the Mission Dakar-Djibouti, which lasted from May 1931 until February 1933. This was a collaborative assignment contributed by the Institute of Ethnology at the University of Paris and by the National Museum of Natural History. Authors on this trip included Michel Leiris and Gaston-Louis Roux.

[46] Any sources combining tarot cards and Minotaur and Greek mythology have been hard to find, if nonexistent. There is also a scarcity of sources that extensively analyze the Minotaur covers, let alone the meaning behind Derain's. All searches for the meaning behind Derain's tarot reading for the Minotaur have come up empty-handed.

clouds. Instrument of anger and hatred it generates the murder and the suffering."[47] This quote describes the sword that Theseus used to slay the Minotaur. Derain also created a sense of compassion for the Minotaur's suffering by the knife signifying the harm that it caused. These aces provide a similar theme to the cards on the cover. There are notions of pioneering, staying the course, as well as beginning new enterprises and journeys. The cover created connections between Surrealism, the Minotaur, and the journey that lies between them. The Minotaur's head is drawn on top of the cards as though it is his reading or as though it is the Minotaur's journey and adventure that lies ahead.[48]

The cover for the fifth issue was created by the artist Francisco Borés (1934) (Fig. 19). At the base of the cover is a hand held out and cupped open. Integrated into the hand, a nude woman can be seen lying helplessly as though rescued from death. Her head and arms lie backwards to the left of the thumb. Her breasts are painted into the palm of the hand while her legs dangle off the end. Meanwhile, above the hand to the left, the silhouette of a bull appears to eat out of the hand holding the woman. The horns of the bull form the "M" in the title. To add dimension to the cover, a large black shadow of the hand can be seen behind it.

Borés' cover is much different from the two previously-discussed covers. The most obvious difference is that there is no clear image of the Minotaur compared to Picasso and

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[47] "La flame traverse la nuit. Dans la splendeur du jour, le rayon solaire epée du mode transperce les nuées. Instrument de colère et de haine elle engendre le meurtre et la souffrance." Translated by author. Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 3-4 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1933), 8.

[48] The game currently called tarot was called the Marseille Game by the Surrealists. The game was based on the Marseille tradition of chance with standard playing cards. Marseille Game had nothing to do with the occult, meaning that, in all likelihood, this is not a tarot reading. Tessel M. Bauduin, *Surrealism and the Occult: Occultism and Western Eroticism in the Work and Movement of André Breton* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 139.

Derain. The animal on the left of Borés' cover resembles a goat more than a Minotaur. The roundness in the palm of the hand becomes the curvature of the woman's breasts. Around the silhouette of the hand, the sections of black and white loosely resemble the Minotaur. The creature's tuft of hair follows from the thumb to the pinky. Above the pinky is a curvilinear section that rises up towards the title that could resemble the Minotaur's horn. This shadowy figure continues where just below the last letter in the title is a small white section which could be the end of Minotaur's tail. The black, white, and red color scheme will appear in later covers.

The magazine continued into its second year with a cover by Marcel Duchamp (Fig. 20). While Duchamp formally never joined fellow Surrealists, he had a collaborative relationship with the Surrealist artist Man Ray. His two-tone *Minotaure* image was a precursor to his *Rotoreliefs* (1935) (Fig. 21) that were created the following year. Duchamp's inclusion as a cover artist is more of an anomaly. The moon-shaped circles appear to be horns or the concentric circles as an eye. In these years Duchamp was deeply involved with the Surrealists. In 1936 he was collaborated with Breton on his book *Au lavoir noir*, exhibited his readymades as Surrealist objects, served on the editorial board of *Minotaure*, and in 1937 designed a glass door for Breton's Gradiva Gallery.[49] Meanwhile he had been trying to gather financial backing for selling an edition of his *Rotoreliefs* by exhibiting them at a 1935 Paris inventors show.[50] These *Rotoreliefs* would exhibit a very different image when placed on 78 rpm turntables. The

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[49] Lewis Kachur, *Displaying the Marvelous: Marcel Duchampp, Salvador Dalí, and Surrealist Exhibition Installations* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2001), 217.

[50] Ibid., 219.

animation would pulsate with looped repetition as the image would spin. These practical works would play with the viewer's body and space.[51]

Joan Miró's cover for issue seven is filled with the nationalist colors of France and littered with delicate line work and biomorphic shapes (1935) (Fig. 22). We see Miró's rendition of the Minotaur surrounded by white, which is similar to Derain's tarot card drawing. Both Minotaurs are drawn with a curvilinear line, but Miró's borders on cartoonish. Interestingly, both appear non-aggressive, seeming sleepy instead. Miró's beast possesses an asymmetrical head that glares at the viewer, cock-eyed. Surrounding the first four letters of the title is the round head of a man with a beard. As giant as this head is, the triangular body that is attached towards the back is rather small. The masculine head contrasts with the feminine appearance of the body. There appear to be two breasts with a small teardrop below likely representing pubic hair. Meanwhile below the body are two floppy blue feet.

The Spaniard Dalí's eighth cover would appear amid the commencement year of the Spanish Civil War (1936) (Fig. 23). The eighth installment was published in June of 1936, one month before the Spanish Civil War began on July 17. The female figure is clearly a variation of *Venus de Milo* that occupied many of his works. Dalí has taken the body (with imagined arms) of the *Venus de Milo* and place atop it the head of the Minotaur. The dead bull's head with tongue dangling is secured to the sculpture with nails punctured through the overlapping fur. He constructed exceptionally skinny arms that lead into splayed out spider-like fingers. In place of her breasts, there is a drawer with fabric hanging out. According to Nathalia Brodkaia, Dalí was

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[51] Robert Morris, "Solecisms of Sight: Specular Speculations," *October* 103 (Winter, 2003), 33. http://www.jstor.org/stable/3397607.

combining furniture with the human form, making the ideal female figure more utilitarian.[52] Down the statue's right leg, she has a glass with a spoon in an alcove, a key, the "o" of *Minotaure*, and a drawer that is pulled out of the ankle. The figure's fake leg has a bottle in an alcove and further down the letter "u."

Although Henri Matisse was not a Surrealist, he was called upon for the ninth cover (1936) (Fig. 25). The first article in the issue, titled "Constance du Fauvisme" by Tériade, detailed a handful of works by Matisse created in 1936. Although the article does not mention that Matisse was awarded the cover, it makes no attempt to title him as a Surrealist. In fact, the article embraced him as a Fauve; Matisse is quoted at length talking about his process and bold use of blues, reds, and yellows.[53]It was arguably the simplest cover to date. For Matisse's vision of the Minotaur he left the background white and used black paint to create simple facial features. These features however appear quite feminine with contour of the lips and the dainty nose. The creature has two eyes, a nose, and a mouth, with a tuft of hair at the top of its head. Matisse wrote the letters for the title scattered, but sequential, around the composition and the Minotaur's face.

René Magritte was invited to create the tenth issue of *Minotaure* (1937) (Fig. 26). A bull's skull sits atop a human skeleton that is draped in a black robe. However, there lacks a hood, which would have hid the bull's horns. Behind him clockwise is a tuba on fire, a pair of boots that morph into feet. Lastly there is a woman whose body is illustrated like that of a Russian matryoshka doll.

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[52] Nathalia Brodskaïa, *Surrealism: Genesis of a Revolution* (New York: Parkstone Press International, 2009), 226.

[53] Tériade, "Constance du Fauvisme," *Minotaure*, no. 9 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1936), 1.

Max Ernst illustrated the penultimate cover for *Minotaure* (1938) (Fig. 27). The bottom half of this two-sided image is a bull's head in green and white. The upside-down top half is some kind of creature with elephant ears and puffy eyes. In its large V-shaped mouth is the word "*cherchez*" upside-down. Above the underside of *cherchez* is the "o" from "Minotaure". The "o" is searching like an eye; for what, it is unclear. At the very top, the title *Minotaure* is also shown right-side-up in simple red font.

This particular issue contains an article by Pierre Mabille titled "Miroirs" that may have influenced the composition of Ernst's cover. Mabille begins, "Mirrors, in the mystery of their folded surfaces similar to solid calm waters, evoke fundamental problems: the identity of self, the characters of reality."[54] The Minotaur at the bottom of Ernst's cover is reflected at the top much like a mirror or folded piece of paper. However, the unidentifiable figure at the top would be Mabaille's "identity of self." Since the figure is unfamiliar, it is a suggestion towards a mixed identity of the Minotaur.

The last issue of *Minotaure* would not come out until May, 1939. The political landscape at this time was in turmoil because Hitler invaded Austria and Czechoslovakia and was four months away from the start of World War II (when England and France declared war on Germany after it entered Poland). At a time of war, the magazine was heading towards bankruptcy, therefore making this the last issue.[55] So since coming up with the title of the magazine and a few mentions here and there, Masson's moment finally came in 1939. He was honored with the cover

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[54] "Les miroirs, dans le mystère de leurs surfaces polies semblables à des eaux calmes solides, évoquent des problèmes fondamentaux: l'identité du moi, les caractères de la réalité." Translated by author. Pierre Mabille, "Mirrors," *Minotaure*, no. 11 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1938), 14.

[55] Albert Skira *Minotaure* no. 12-13 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1939), 1.

of the double and final issue of *Minotaure* (1939) (Fig. 28). It was Masson and Picasso who utilized details of the myth for their *Minotaure* covers, the first and final ones. A portal in the center left of his image formed the bull's eye. The bull's horns appear up top, with the left in yellow and the white on the right is detached with the core visible. The yellow at the top of the head permeates through the otherwise dim color palette. The large white head sits on a solid black background with a floor of red which matches the title at the top. The shape in the bottom-right of the head with a hole in the top is representative of the back part of the jaw bone. The lack of any straight lines gives the impression that these fragments of the Minotaur's world are bone-like and hardened into its being.

The design of Masson's Minotaur head is a look at what makes up the mind of the animal. He used an aspect of the Minotaur myth to abstractly create the beast's visage. At the base are a series of three brick walls that represent the labyrinth walls which housed the Minotaur. These walls add to the maze-like appearance of the drawing. There are stairs by the mouth that lead to a portal, as well as stairs toward the back of the mandible. Another portal is located in the region of the eye. Masson has drawn the visage of the Minotaur as a labyrinthian landscape.

Most artists through the span of *Minotaure* were the subject of a biographical article within the edition that featured their cover. Masson's turn came in the final issue, in an article by his one-time rival André Breton. It was titled "Prestige d'André Masson." Breton wrote "it is astonishing to point out that the art in France, in the beginning of 1939, appears especially worried of throwing a carpet of flowers on a mined world."[56] Here Breton set up the reader up

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[56] "il est confondant d'observer que l'art en France, au début de 1939, paraît surtout soucieux de jeter un tapis de fleurs sur un monde miné." Translated by author. Ibid., 13.

for a discussion on his non-beautified, brutally honest work. In "Prestige d'André Masson," Breton spends an entire word-packed, large-format page complimenting Masson and his work, which is a far cry from his attitude towards Masson as a Surrealist ten years prior. According to Rubin, when Masson returned from a period in Spain in December 1936, it caused a reconciliation of their issues.[57]

One last image of the Minotaur, by Diego Rivera, was located in the middle of the last issue as the frontispiece (1939) (Fig. 29). Unlike Masson's cover, Rivera's frontispiece lays out the Minotaur and the labyrinth in a top-down perspective. Rivera placed the bleeding Minotaur in the center of a maze of brick walls surrounded by the bones of his victims. The Minotaur is seen with blood spurting out his neck and spun in all different directions as though he had just suffered from Theseus's sword, yet the victor is absent. The bones, up to this point, have not been a typical element in works of the Minotaur. Rivera drew a white line that represents Ariadne's thread to the labyrinth. In this image, Rivera composed the last image of the Minotaur in the final issue of *Minotaure*.

Over the six-year span of *Minotaure,* its covers were illustrated by some of the most well-known artists of the early twentieth century, whether they were Surrealists or not. Each artist created their own representation of the Minotaur in their typical art style, such as Dalí's cover which in which every inch is covered in symbolism. As the Minotaur is obviously half-man and half-beast, interestingly, the only cover to show the Minotaur's (male) human body was Picasso's introductory cover. Dalí's was the only other exception, having placed the head on a slender

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[57] William Rubin, "André Masson and Twentieth Century Painting," in *André Masson*, ed. William Rubin and Carolyn Lanchner (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1976), 43.

female figure. Every other artist depicted only its head in some form or another. The only two that are slightly similar are Picasso and Derain's and that is simply because of the large tufts of hair on top of their heads. For most of these artists, it was the only time the Minotaur appeared in their work. Picasso however, created an entire suite of images that feature the Minotaur in many different scenes.

Chapter 3

Picasso's Minotaur

As has been noted in previous chapters, Picasso was never considered a member of Surrealism nor did he want to be a member despite Breton's avid attempts to have Picasso join the movement. His art was spurred on by an experience he had in the physical world, meanwhile the Surrealists' art works were based more on dreams and the unconscious.[58] He took part in numerous Surrealist activities including exhibitions and automatic poetry and showed compassion for the Communist aims of Surrealism.[59] According to John Golding, Picasso was more interested in Surrealist writers and their literature than the art, which he held with a certain level of mistrust.[60]

There are many different facets to Picasso's Minotaur that are all personal; some of them relate to relationships with the women in his life at the time. This is what sets Picasso's Minotaurs apart from Masson's and the *Minotaure* covers. According to Gedo, in the *Vollard Suite* Picasso utilized the Minotaur as his alter-ego which placed him in scenes that reflected how he felt emotionally and sexually.[61] According to Roland Penrose, what piqued Picasso's interest in the bull was its duality of man and beast and as a contentious demigod in the ring of the

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[58] William S. Rubin, *Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage*, 124.

[59] Ibid.

[60] Golding, "Picasso and Surrealsm," *Picasso in Retrospect*, 69.

[61] Gedo, *Picasso: Art as Autobiography*, 146-153.

corrida.[62] When the Minotaur regularly appeared in Picasso's work, the bacchanal scenes were full of the beast surrounded by scantily-clad women. As Fiero pointed out, even though the role of the bull was as a sacrifice, the Spaniards viewed it as a noble animal associated with fertility and power.[63]

Adhering to Gedo's theory, *Minotaur Caressing Girl* (May 18, 1933) (Fig. 30) displays the Spaniard as a Minotaur cradling a woman on a bed while a young male plays the flute and a girl presides over fruits and a pitcher. The Minotaur is caressing a young girl who is hiding her face. On the same day Picasso also produced *Drinking Minotaur with Sculptor and Two Models* (May 18, 1933) (Fig. 31). Continuing the orgiastic bacchanalia, the Minotaur is now with an older man and two curvaceous women. With wine glasses out, their bodies are tangled in erotic joy in front of the open window. The women's faces are Greek-inspired and are similar to the sculpture in *Minotaur Caressing Girl*.

In just one month the image transformed from the bacchanal orgy into something more private and intimate. The figures fill up more of the composition, with less environment, and we are left with the Minotaur and the woman. In *Minotaur Caressing a Sleeping Woman* (June 18, 1933) (Fig. 32) the beast is kneeling over a sleeping woman. With his eyes closed, he seems to be trying to connect with her emotionally and physically while she sleeps. This minotaur eagerly wants to be united with this woman who is asleep and unable to reciprocate.

Gedo connects Picasso's use of the Minotaur with his bestial instincts and sexuality. According to her, the artist's strong sexual appetite led to an animal-like behavior. She continues

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[62] Roland Penrose, "Beauty and the Monster," *Picasso in Retrospect*, ed. Sir Roland Penrose and Dr. John Golding (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), 170.

[63] Gloria K. Fiero, "Picasso's Minotaur," 22.

that Picasso's sexual animalistic tendencies and his love for the bull is what led to this amalgamation.[64] In her book *Life with Picasso*, his mistress for ten years François Gilot gave a detailed experience of being shown the Minotaur prints from the *Vollard Suite*. He told Gilot, "He's studying her, trying to read her thoughts, trying to decide whether she loves him *because* he's a monster."[65] Picasso also stated, "a minotaur can't be loved for himself, at least he doesn't think he can. It just doesn't seem reasonable to him, somehow. Perhaps that's why he goes in for orgies."[66] The intimacy represented, which is a running theme for a part of the *Vollard Suite*. In Picasso's quote it is clear that his strong sexual appetite is all that he felt he could offer.

Barely one week after completing *Minotaur Caressing Girl*, Picasso began the drawing *Dying Minotaur in Arena.* (1933) (Fig. 33). The beast was stabbed in his chest with the dagger that is lying by his side. The adversary is absent as a woman from the stands of the arena attempts to console the dying animal. The women in the stands are repeated portraits of Marie-Thérèse.[67] The tale that Picasso included in the *Vollard Suite* etchings journeys from sensual pleasure to despair rather quickly. It is perfectly feasible that these images represent the frustration and emotions that were felt during his relationship with Marie-Thérèse.

Picasso had taken the Minotaur out of the labyrinth and into the bullring. The experiences Picasso had at the bullring had an everlasting effect on himself. Vincente Marrero wrote that "in the work of Picasso, the bull is like one of those Spanish rivers, turbulent and agitated, which

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[64] Ibid.

[65] Françoise Gilot, *Life with Picasso* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964), 50.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Gloria K. Fiero, "Picasso's Minotaur," 22.

lose themselves among brambles, rocks, and reeds, only to reappear later at some other place further on, in plain sight."[68] Therefore it is no surprise that within the *Vollard Suite*, the bullring and the Minotaur should meet, as it was a location that better correlated with Picasso's life than the labyrinth. The tight rope that Picasso walked between his life with his wife, Olga Khokhlova, and Marie-Thérèse was taxing on him. He surely felt like the Minotaur that was suffering in the labyrinth. The bullring was a place where the animal would vainly try to survive the torment of his human enemies to no avail. The Minotaur was not tormented in the labyrinth ritualistically like in the bullring; however, he was caged and died there in the end.

Picasso's earlier versions of the Minotaur were not, in the words of Valérie-Anne Sircoulomb-Müller, a "symbol of darkness and disorder."[69] However, as his intimate relationships became less tranquil, from 1934 on, the bacchanal scenes disappeared and Picasso's jubilant Minotaur was no more. All that remained was "darkness and disorder." Picasso wore the mask of the Minotaur as one of his own personal symbols. Creating these images was a series of metaphors for Picasso. He had taken the Minotaur, scrapping almost any kind of mythology that accompanied it, and used it as a portrayal of his alter ego.

In 1934 his marriage to Olga was deteriorating and leading toward separation. Early in 1935 Marie-Thérèse became pregnant and Maya de la Concepción, their only child together, was born September 5. His relationship troubles become more evident in the drawing *Blind Minotaur on Seashore Being Led by Girl* (1934) (Fig. 34). Picasso depicted himself as a gigantic, blind

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[68] Vincente Marrero, *Picasso and the Bull* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1956), 83.

[69] Valérie-Anne Sircoulomb-Müller, "The Minotaur and Minotauromachy or In Search of an Alter ego in Picasso's Imaginary Labyrinth," in *Pablo Picasso and Marie-Thérèse Walter: Between Classicism and Surrealism*, ed. Markus Müller (Bielefeld, Germany: Kerber Verlag), 21.

Minotaur holding the head and hand of a little girl in Greek attire grasping flowers in her free hand. Behind them is a small Greek boat full of onlookers working to lay a net in the water. The Minotaur is walking with his hands on the leading girl and his face towards the sky. The girl, a depiction of Marie-Thérèse, is portrayed as calm, collected, and leading the monster who cannot see to a place likely more peaceful than from where it came. As Picasso's personal life deteriorated, gored horses, wounded toreros, and the blinded Minotaur appeared regularly. With Marie-Thérèse as his muse, his collapsing marriage to Olga brought the rise of Picasso's blind Minotaur: a beast in the darkness that was looking for a way out.

According to Valérie-Anne Sircoulomb-Müller, the blind Minotaur motif could be linked to the Greek myth of Oedipus who was so torn by his actions with his self that he blinded himself. He was then led in hand by his faithful daughter Antigone, "the personification of filial love."[70] Walter-Thérèse would be Picasso's equivalent for Antigone. Sircoulomb-Müller goes on that the little girl could also be a depiction of Ariadne, whose father put her in charge of the labyrinth and the sacrifices for the Minotaur. Ariadne would grow tired of her disgusting role and helped Theseus kill the beast with a dagger.

The *Oedipus complex* plays an important role in the relationship between Picasso and Marie-Thérèse. In psychoanalytic theory, this is when a child develops strong emotions for the parent of the opposite sex, such as a daughter and her father or a son and his mother.[71] Marie-Thérèse can be seen as Antigone who is leading a blind and confused man along an easier path.

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[70] Ibid., 48.

[71] Bruce Bower, "Oedipus Wrecked," *Science News* 140, no. 16 (Oct 19, 1991): 248-250, http://www.jstor.com'stable/3975708.

Picasso plainly found a connection in Greek myth that related to his real life situation: using Marie-Thérèse as a crutch as his relationship with Olga fell apart.

However, the story of Oedipus is not the only way to try to understand the relationship between Marie-Thérèse and Picasso. Gedo presents that the little girl may indeed be a reflection of a young Picasso with his father, since the girl is typically shown clutching a dove. Picasso's father was José Ruiz y Blasco and he passed away in 1913, around the time when Picasso was thirty-two. His father, who was also a painter and encouraged Picasso to do the same, painted numerous works featuring pigeons and other birds. Picasso's sense of self was delicate and damaged and he needed his father again to put him on the right path. She also claims that his father was a maternal and gentle figure. Gedo reasons her idea as "his nostalgia for his tender childhood relationship with his father, represented by the dove."[72]

Picasso was a very complicated man. I believe in Gedo's theory that Picasso saw Thérèse-Walter as a father figure to himself. He was a father to lead him through the trials of life, as was quoted earlier telling Gilot about how his autobiographical character was a monster. The loss of a father can be detrimental to a son, especially because Picasso was so close to his father. The closeness they shared is again evidenced by the frequent reappearance of the dove. The impact his father had on him never left even twenty to twenty-three years later. The only thing he had at the time was Marie-Thérèse and he placed her on a pedestal.

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[72] Gedo, *Picasso: Art as Autobiography*, 158.

Minotauromachy

The etching *Minotauromachy* (1935) (Fig. 35), is the culmination of Picasso's Minotaur imagery because he encapsulated within it many of the *Vollard Suite* themes. However, a year after Picasso's "Blind Minotaur" collection from the *Vollard Suite*, the Minotaur is no longer blind and as Gedo writes, "he appears most fierce and savage."[73] In 1935, the artist's family situation was in tumultuous, making it clear why he took a hiatus from art making from May 1935 until February 1936. Olga left Picasso to live with her son Paulo during Marie-Thérèse's pregnancy with Maya. In *Minotauromachy* the Minotaur stumbles towards a lit candle held by the familiar representation of Marie-Thérèse. This girl is now slightly more grown up and etched with more detail than in *Blind Minotaur Before the Sea Guided by a Little Girl*.

Between the girl and the Minotaur is a bare-breasted female bullfighter hanging over the back of a horse. The bullfighter is also modeled after Marie-Thérèse.[74] This motif was depicted earlier in his *Bullfight: Death of the Torero* (1933) (Fig. 36) in which the torero, or matador, is flung upside-down over the bull's back while tangled in the cape, creating a river of red around the bull and injured horse. The motif visited again the following year in *Female Torero II* (1934) (Fig. 37). The horse has been gored again and is turned away from the bull. The female matador is again laid over the back of the bull without her cape, though she continues to wear the elaborately decorated jacket. The fragile and graceful woman is caught in the middle of a tornado of force between the two animals. One commonality between *Bullfight: Death of the Torero* and

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[73] Ibid., 161.

[74] Ibid.

Female Torero II is that the horse and the torero always fall victim to the bull. As Gedo has noted, if the torero is meant to be Marie-Thérèse then it is likely that the horse resembles Olga.[75]

Above the main scene there are two women watching from a balcony, while a loin-clothed and bearded man is on a ladder to the left side. There is no indication if the man is running away or coming to aide as he looks back to the Minotaur. Gedo wrote that the man may be either Picasso or his father.[76] Elinor W. Gadon posits a second perspective, she believes that the man on the ladder is a representation of Christ and is a sign that Picasso had found transcendence, being that *Minotauromachy* represented his final resolution with his relationship with Marie-Thérèse.[77] Picasso began to lose interest in her after *Minotauromachy*. His relationship with Marie-Thérèse began to slowly deteriorate as she became less and less attractive in his works.[78] At the foot of the ladder there is plenty of turmoil but this man seems to be stuck in the middle with no sense of inclination to climb further. Meanwhile the two onlooking women in the balcony are greeted by a dove. The dove, placed high above the scene, is a usual symbol for peace, but could be another representation of Picasso's father.

Characteristics varied greatly between Picasso's Minotaur in *Minotauromachy* and the creature that graced the premier *Minotaure* cover. The figure on Picasso's *Minotaure* cover is straightforward and uncomplicated. The Minotaur is sitting on his one leg, holding the symbolic dagger up, and looking out at the viewer. Artistically though, the figure in *Minotauromachy* is

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[75] Ibid., 154. Gedo wrote "It seems likely that the horse in these pictures represents Olga, so often symbolized in Picasso's art by this creature."

[76] Ibid., 162.

[77] Gadon, "Picasso and the Minotaur," 28.

[78] Gedo, *Picasso: Art as Autobiography*, 164-166.

much more detailed in the face with a high degree of shading around his horns and arms. The figure on the cover was simple with an almost complete lack of chiaroscuro.

Chapter 4

Masson and the Minotaur

In 1934 Masson picked up his belongings and moved from Paris to Spain. He considered this move to Spain an escape from France as he was feeling unsympathetic toward the political crisis in 1934.[79] The atmosphere in Paris became intense surrounding street demonstrations on February 6th by multiple far-right political groups including Action Française and the Jeunesses Patriotes.[80] His personal life had become more tranquil since the early thirties as he moved to Spain with his soon-to-be wife Rose Maklès.[81] Ironically, his experience in Spain was undoubtedly more unfavorable. He left Spain with Rose in November of 1936, six months after the beginning of the Spanish Civil War. This was the beginning of Masson's second Surrealist period rather than violence and animals, Masson focused on Nietzsche and spirituality alongside the Minotaur.

While Masson was in Spain, his work on the Cretan myth commenced with *The Secret of the Labyrinth* (1935) (Fig. 38). The Minotaur is shown standing rigidly tall with a comparatively tiny Ariadne in his clutches. Masson alludes to the Minotaur with the horns lingering over the large figure's head. With the fatal sword in his right hand, a fire rises up in his chest with a red

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[79] Masson, *Mythologies d'André Masson*, 45.

[80] Both Action Française and Jeunesses Patriotes were two right-wing groups whose beliefs bordered on fascism. On this night they and other groups rebelled against the current occupying government. Robin W. Winks, and R.J.Q. Adams, *Europe 1890-1945: Crisis and Conflict,* 185.

[81] William S. Rubin and Carolyn Lancner, *André Masson* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1976) 138.

sun with spiraling tentacles. The spirals in his chest and the structure to the right of Ariadne certainly allude to the labyrinth that Ariadne helped Theseus to navigate. These brick spirals in his chest presage the same ones from his *Minotaure* cover that would appear four years later.

Acéphale

On June 24, 1936, Masson and Bataille created and released the first issue of *Acéphale*, a magazine of current social and philosophical ideas. This first issue was released just three years after the start of *Minotaur* and three years before the final *Minotaure* cover illustrated by Masson. Masson's figure for the cover eventually morphed into his later iterations of the Minotaur. *Acéphale* combined articles about art, Nietzsche, and Greek mythology. With it, Masson became obsessive about myth and Nietzschean theory. In 1936 Georges Bataille visited his brother-in-law Masson in Spain. After Bataille returned to Paris, Masson and he continued their correspondence to create a publication directed at "unmasking the religious behind the political."[82] Due to the turbulent times that were rapidly approaching in Europe, Masson vented to Bataille in a letter from October 1935, in which he states:

> "Stupidity of Marx when he tried to create a society without myths.
> Result in Russia:
> — We stuffed Lenin.
> (and we mocked their relics; the obsession!)
> — We laugh of religious fanaticism.

[82] Chadwick, *Myth in Surrealist Painting*, 57.

(but we kneel before St. Dynamo, I scarcely exaggerate).[83]

As this letter suggests, myth proved to be more important at this time to Masson and Bataille than it was for them around 1929 and in 1933 when *Minotaure* began.

Nietzsche's influence on Masson's work would continue for years. Nietzsche's works, including *The Birth of Tragedy,* were widely read by the Surrealists and were an influence far beyond the beginning stages of Surrealism. It was in a letter to Bataille in June 1936 that Masson wrote:

> "Last night rereading 'The Birth of Tragedy' I realized that I had always forgot to cut the pages from the end… The remarks on Heraclitus are so dazzling that I could not resist the pleasure of transcribing for you: this is a dignified conclusion to our conversations (unforgotten) of April."[84]

The philosopher wrote extensively on the Apollonian and Dionysian dichotomy. It was the Dionysian that fascinated Masson. Later the artist would combine Dionysos with his images of the Minotaur.

In the first issue of *Acéphale*, at a mere six pages, Bataille's article "La conjuration sacrée (The Sacred Conspiracy)" made up a majority of the content. He expressed the ideals of

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[83] "P.S. Stupidité de Marx quand il veut créer une Société sans mythes.
Résultat en Russie :
— On empaille Lénine
(Et on se moque des reliques ; du fétichisme !)
— On rit du fanatisme religieux.
(Mais on se met à genoux devant Sainte-Dynamo, j'exagère à peine)."
Translated by author. André Masson, *Les années surréalistes: Correspondance 1916-1942* (Paris: la manufacture, 1990), 282.

[84] "Hier soir en relisant « L'origine de la Tragédie » je me suis aperçu que j'avais toujours oublié de couper les pages de la fin… Ces remarques sur Héraclite sont si éblouissantes que je ne peux résister au plaisir de te les transcrire : c'est une digne conclusion à nos conversations (inoubliées) du mois d'Avril." Translated by author. Masson, *Les années surréalistes: Correspondance 1916-1942*, 331.

Acéphale with the statement, "what we have undertaken should not be confused with anything else, cannot be limited to the expression of a thought and even less to that which is precisely conceded as art."[85] Bataille ended his introduction with the phrase, "What we are undertaking is a war." He attempted to develop something fresh, to make a change and did not want to be restricted by any moniker, especially art. Bataille possibly used the word 'war' to represent how fiercely he believed in this project and wanted it to work.

The first issue also contained an article by Marxist critic Max Raphael about the reconstruction of the Archaic Corfu pediment. Raphael claimed Nietzsche "as the first to recognize the place of 'Archaic' or pre Classical Greece," ending the article, saying "the current renaissance of Greek culture reveals the previous neglect of the most fundamental characteristic of Greek thought."[86] This quote gives an idea to the degree to which Nietzsche along with Greek mythology had pervaded Surrealist thought by the mid 1930s. The Nietzschian objectives of Bataille and Pierre Klossowski, among the other writers, were apparent, with titles ranging from "Nietzsche and the Fascists," "Héraclite," "Nietzsche and the Death of God," and "Dionysos."

It was Masson who created the imagery for *Acéphale*. The cover for *Acéphale* (June 24, 1936) (Fig. 39) features a muscular male body standing face-forward with his legs parted and arms outstretched — reminiscent of Leonardo da Vinci's *Vitruvian Man*. The figure is formidable in design as it takes up almost the entire cover. In his right hand he holds a flaming heart while in his other hand is the ever-familiar dagger. Both objects are symbols of sacrifice or self-

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[85] "Ce que nous avons entrepris ne doit être confondu avec rien d'autre, ne peut pas être limité à l'expression d'une pensée et encore moins à ce qui est justement condiéré comme art." Translated by author. Georges Bataille, "La conjuration sacrée," *Acéphale*, 1 (24 June 1936), n.p., 1.

[86] Chadwick, *Myth in Surrealist Painting*, 15.

sacrifice.[87] His intestines resemble the labyrinth, which, along with the dagger, hint at the Cretan myth.[88] The stars over the nipples give a cosmic aspect to the figure. His interest in the infinite universe was spurred from his time in Spain where Rose and he would stand atop the Montserrat mountains and watch the night sky.[89] Masson also took the head off the Acéphale figure and placed a skull over its genitals. Author Clark V. Poling describes the relocation as "a skull takes the place of his genitals, identifying sexuality with both birth and death."[90] This is a reference to the importance of sexuality that Nietzsche attributed to human needs.

The Return to the Minotaur

The double and final issue of *Acéphale* was released in July 1937. It began with a section on Dionysos which included a drawing by Masson of the same name (Fig. 40). The work acted as a frontispiece. With *Dionysos*, Masson's *Acéphale* images became quite aggressive with harsh contrasts of black and white. The overly muscular Dionysos, now with flames ballooning out of his collar, is still illustrated with the skull over his genitals but it has now become Medusa-like. Dionysos is drawn in a very active pose, appearing to dance wildly. The dagger remains in the figure's right hand, yet in the other hand is now a bunch of grapes still attached to the vine and leaves, a clear indication to the god of the grape harvest and wine. Wrapped around Dionysos's

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[87] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 91.

[88] Ibid.

[89] Masson, *Mythologies d'Andre Masson*, 49.

[90] Ibid.

left leg is a snake extending up to the grapes. In the horizon is a temple with a pediment supported by columns likely as a reference to Greek architecture. Meanwhile, above the temple, the sky is bursting with rolling clouds and splayed out sunshine. With the inclusion of the Greek temple, the Medusa-like skull, and the representation of Dionysos, Masson's drawing is inundated with Greek cultural and mythological references. It is with *Dionysos* that Masson has fully embraced the Greek myth in his artwork.

In this issue of *Acéphale*, on the reverse side of *Dionysos,* is a table of contents that features a plethora of article titles referencing Nietzsche and Dionysos; this includes a nine-page article by Bataille labeled "Chronique Nietzschéenne." Along with *Dionysos*, the beginning of the issue contains two more drawings by Masson that bring the Minotaur back into the fold. In the first drawing, *La Grèce tragique* (Fig. 41), the *Acéphale* figure now has the head of a bull with humanizing eyes that are directed right at the viewer. Gone are the stars on his chest referencing the cosmos. He is now running towards the viewer clenching the dagger with his left hand. His right arm disappears around a woman with open legs while a man tries to abduct her; a man spears a soldier on the opposite side. The temple is brought more prominently to the foreground, as the composition of *La Grèce tragique* is more compact than *Dionysos.*

The next image, *L'univers dionysiaque* (Fig. 42), assumed its title from a quote from Nietzsche's *Will to Power* located three pages prior in the issue. The quote begins, "Here is my Dionysian universe, which eternally creates and destroys itself, this mysterious world of double voluptuous pleasures, here is my 'beyond good and evil,'…"[91] As the figure traverses the apocalyptic landscape he comes out holding his flaming heart and dagger, while out of his left

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[91] *Acéphale*, 3-4, 4.

leg grows the grape branch still referencing Dionysian ways of self-intoxication and disharmony. The temple still resides in the background, however the land between that and the figure has become absolutely desolate.

These three images are more tied into Greek myth and culture, meaning the inclusion of the Greek architecture and battle armor, as well as Nietzschean theory than anything Masson had done thus far. Rather than the simpleness of *Acéphale*'s cover, *Dionysos* and *La Grèce tragique* include very dark shading with rich, black areas. All the while, *L'univers dionysiaque* is so littered with landscape details that it would be impossible to see the figure had Masson not left him pure white. These drawings provide a starting point for Masson's immersion into Greek mythology surrounding the Minotaur.

Masson's Second Surrealist Period

> "I say to you: one must still have chaos in oneself in order to give birth to a dancing star. I say to you: you still have chaos in you. Beware! The time approaches when human beings will no longer give birth to a dancing star. Beware! The time of the most contemptible human is coming, the one who can no longer have contempt for himself."[92]

In Zarathustra's speech to the village residents, he refers to the chaos that is in everyone as a positive entity. Masson was familiar with *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* dating back to the age of

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92 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* ed. by Adrian del Caro and Robert B. Pippin, trans. by Adrian del Caro (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 9.

sixteen.[93] At this point in Masson's life, he had fully immersed himself in the Minotaur myth, to the extent which all the work he was putting out was related to it.[94]

In 1938 it was with the help of Bataille that Masson reconciled with Breton, stating that "this period could be defined as my second Surrealist period. My works reach a climax so expressive that they surpass the standard Surrrealist set rather on the marvelous than on the horrible. There is a whole series on the myth of the labyrinth and the Minotaur."[95] Until 1938, Masson's work had not focused on the Minotaur, though it made appearances. With Masson having immersed himself in the myth, he created elaborate works that were stuffed with as much symbolism as a painting from Dalì.

One of the first images in Masson's second period, other than those in *Acéphale,* was *Story of Theseus* (1938) (Fig. 43). Masson revisited his early technique of combining sand and oil paint. This is likely a portrayal of Theseus and Ariadne while the Minotaur's silhouette that encircles them is a reminder of whom had to die for them to attain their love. The center of the image displays Theseus and Ariadne in a sweet embrace while the his left hand reaches out to the viewer. The couple is bordered by the outline of the Minotaur's head, similar to the one that would grace the cover of *Minotaure* the following year. In the upper-right corner Masson has continued to include the same spiral star from previous works of the Minotaur.

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[93] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 9.

[94] This quote from Zarathustra could easily pertain to Picasso and the suffocation he must have felt surrounding his Minotaur.

[95] "Cette époque peut se définir comme seconde époque surréaliste. Mes tableaux atteignent un paroxysme si expressif qu'ils dépassent la norme surréaliste fixée plutôt sur le merveilleux que sur l'horrible. Il y a toute la série sur le mythe du labyrinthe et du Minotaure." Translated by author. Masson, *Mythologie d'André Masson*, 53.

One of Masson's most recognizable paintings from this time is *The Labyrinth* (1938) (Fig. 44). Masson has managed to squeeze symbolic elements into every inch of the canvas. The figure stands tall against a dark, indescribable background. He has dissected the Minotaur's head in half, almost duplicating it a year later for his *Minotaure* cover. In the top of the Minotaur's chest lies the familiar, chaotic, tentacle-laden red sun that sits above labyrinth walls that lie in the Minotaur's core. Masson returns to his early years of depicting animals such as the bat in the upper-left and the technicolor bird in the lower-left. The Minotaur's left arm harkens to the cave-littered mountainside that Zarathustra descended to reach the public. Masson has included labyrinthian curves as the mountain descends down his arm.

From background to foreground the composition is organic and curvilinear. Every aspect of symbolism in the figure of the Minotaur gives a labyrinth of clues to the essence of self. The monumental size of the Minotaur is flanked by rolling seas and turbulent winds. His left foot emerges out of the ground while a waterfall, giving a sense of scale to the figure, pours out onto a flowing river. *The Labyrinth* would end up being one of Masson's last works to be published before moving to America due to the changing political landscape in Europe.

On the first of September in 1939, Adolf Hitler invaded Poland effectively commencing World War II. The Nazis invaded France in June 1940. At the time Masson and Rose were living in northern France in Lyon-la-Forêt., but by the end of 1940 the couple moved to Marseille, a southern port town in France.[96] The fact that Rose was Jewish played a large part in their quick departure.[97] Masson, who had already turned down offers to leave with Yves Tanguy and later

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[96] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 149.

[97] Ibid., 188.

Hemingway, would leave France with Rose in March 1941, stopping in Martinique. They would arrive in the United States the following month. Masson and and his family would live in Connecticut beginning in the summer of 1941 until they returned to France in October 1945.[98]

Masson's depictions of the Minotaur were finished. Having to flee Paris and live in solitude in America took a toll on Masson. As Poling wrote, "most of Masson's American works remained Surrealist in their visionary character, using juxtapositions of elusive symbols and mythic references." He continued, "in his thinking about art while in America, he expressed ambivalence toward Surrealist theory, as for example in his challenge to the primate of automatism and the unconscious."[99] Masson departed from Surrealism by 1945.

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[98] Ibid., 149-150.

[99] Ibid., 151.

Conclusion

In conclusion, Masson and Picasso's distinctive approaches to depicting the Minotaur varied greatly due to their personal relationships, such as with Breton, as well as their life experiences. The Surrealists had a vested interest in the Minotaur and were able to relate to the Greek myth because of the circumstances at the time in Europe. For Picasso, the bull was a deep-seated fascination because as he grew up in Spain, he and his father often went to the bullrings for entertainment. Although he was never a Surrealist, he exhibited with the group and had compassion for their collective aims. He was expressly promoted by Breton in "Picasso dans son élément." His use of the Minotaur was a means of coping with his complicated situation of having a wife, with whom he had a child, and a young girlfriend with whom he also had a child. The series of drawings made for the *Vollard Suite* almost reads as journal entries to the disintegration of his personal relationships and mental state; the Minotaur became blind the more Picasso did not know what to do. He was distraught with the women in his life pulling him either way. The half man half bull became a form of self-projection for the artist

The Minotaur fulfilled other roles for Masson. His development of the Minotaur began in 1930 with *Les Jeunes Filles*. As an avid reader of Nietzsche, Masson was heavily influenced by the philosopher's discussion on Apollonian and Dionysian dichotomy. Masson was deeply fascinated with the latter, which he thought aptly correlated to the Minotaur. In 1933, his brother-in-law Bataille and he had the idea for the title of *Minotaure*. It was not until until three years later with *Acéphale* that the Minotaur regularly appeared in Masson's work. It was in *Acéphale* that Masson drew his idea of Dionysos, an inspiration of Zarathustra, but the Greek god later

acquired physical traits of the Minotaur. In 1939, another three years after *Acéphale*, Masson finally had the opportunity to illustrate the final *Minotaure* cover. It came at time when he was creating Minotaur paintings for himself that were not tied to a journal or magazine.

The Cretan myth of the Minotaur had an important place in Surrealism, having been illustrated by a handful of other artists such as Dalí, Matisse, and Ernst. The journal as a whole, though, was a cultural endeavor that was focused on the arts, poetry, music, architecture, and ethnography as well as mythology. Although Masson and Picasso were the major players of the time period who focused solely on the Minotaur for a lengthy period of time, with *Minotaure*, the beast became a team effort by numerous artists, writers, and poets who were not all technically members of the Surrealist group. From being a vanquished beast in Greek art, these modern artists changed the face of the Minotaur to one more vulnerable, human, and more relatable to a world on the brink of war.

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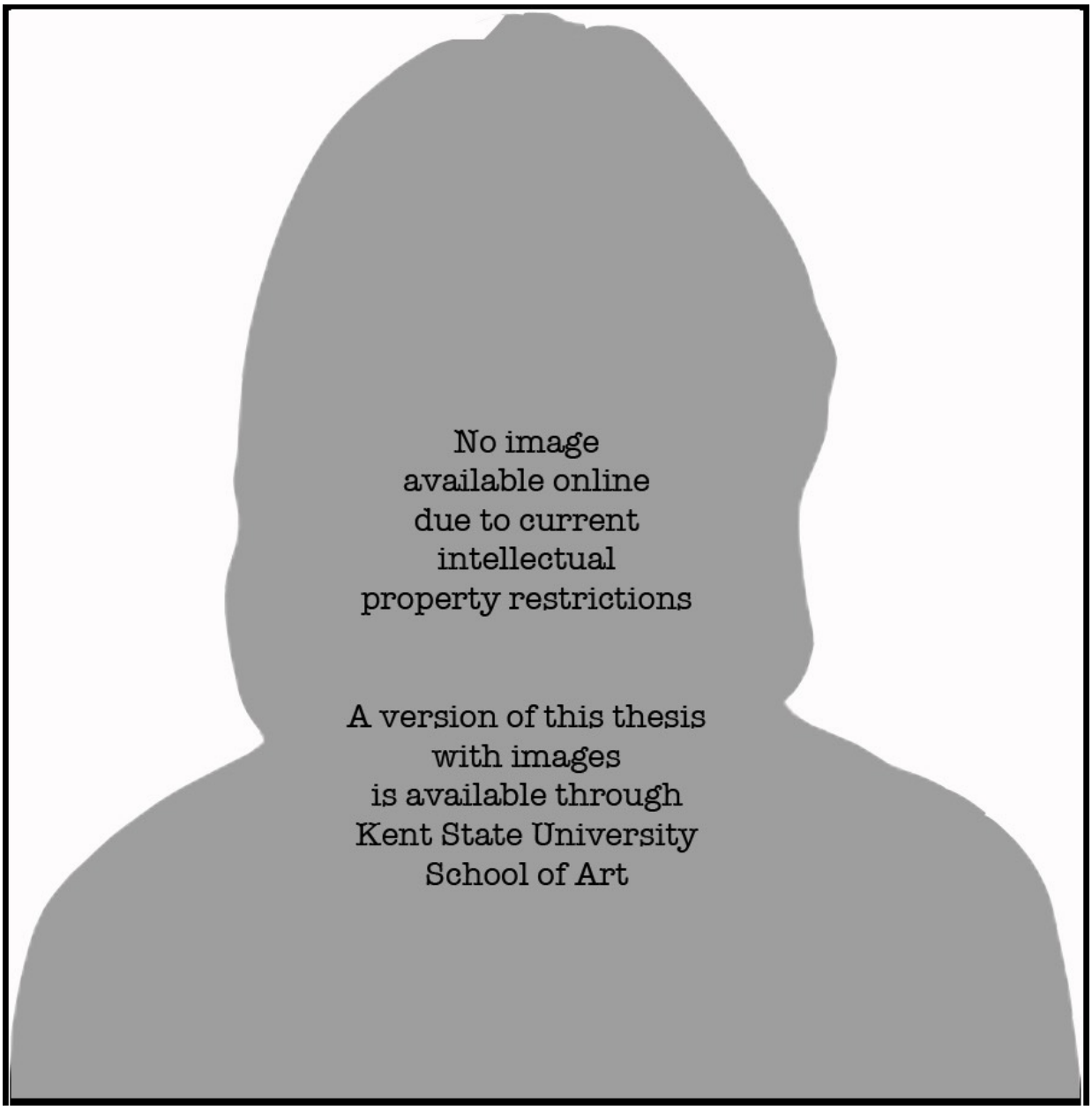

Fig. 1 Kleitias and Ergotimos, François vase, 570 BCE. Museo Archeologico, Florence.[1]

[1] Guy Hedreen, "BILD, MYTHOS, AND RITUAL: Choral Dance in Theseus' Cretan Adventure on François Vase," *The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens* 80, no. 3 (July-September 2011), 492.

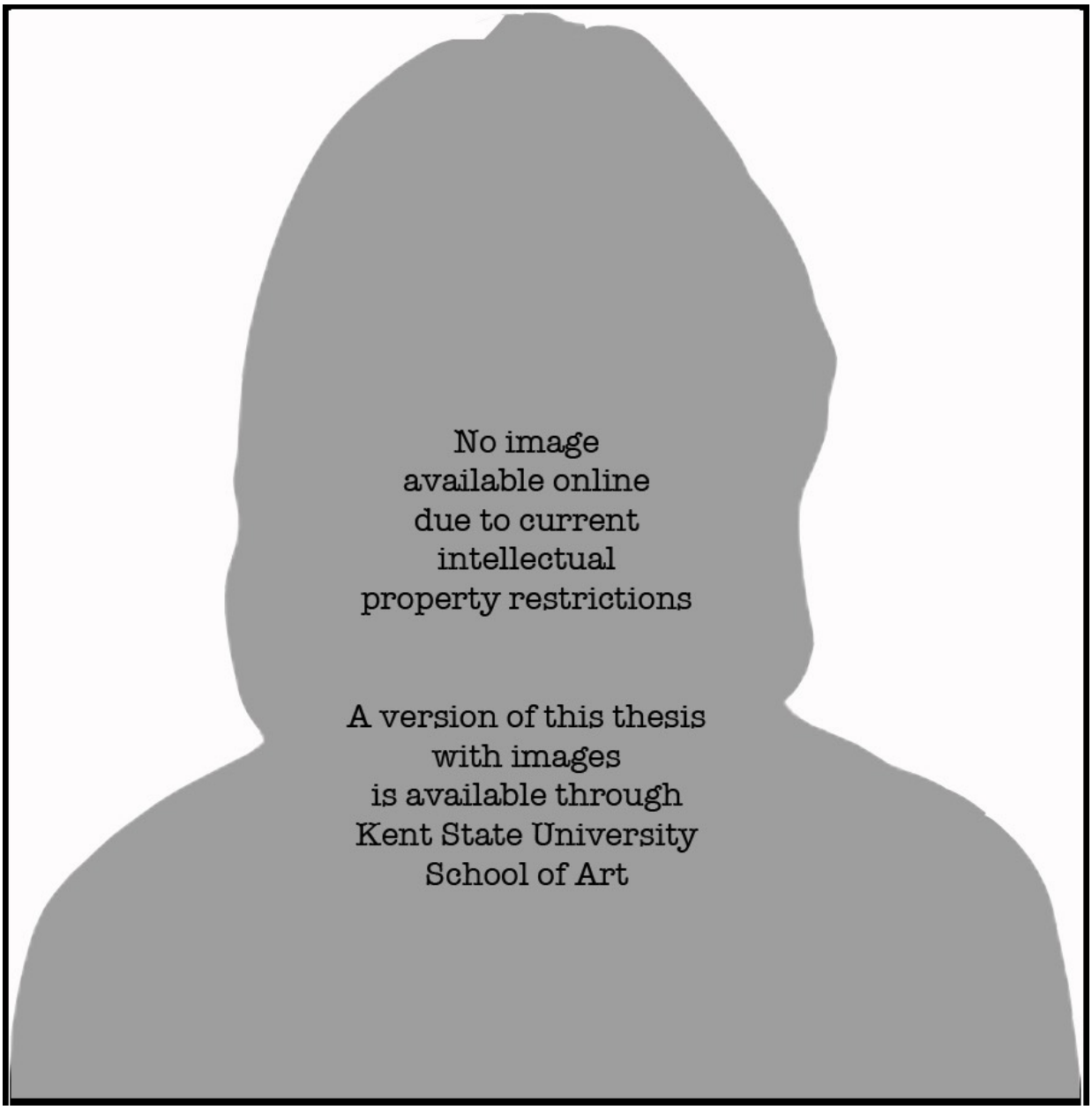

Fig. 2 Detail of François vase featuring Theseus and Ariadne.[2]

[2] Guy Hedreen, "BILD, MYTHOS, AND RITUAL: Choral Dance in Theseus' Cretan Adventure on François Vase," 492.

Fig. 3 Archikles and Glaukytes, *Theseus Fighting the Minotaur*, Attic, 540 BCE. Antikensammlungen, Munich.[3]

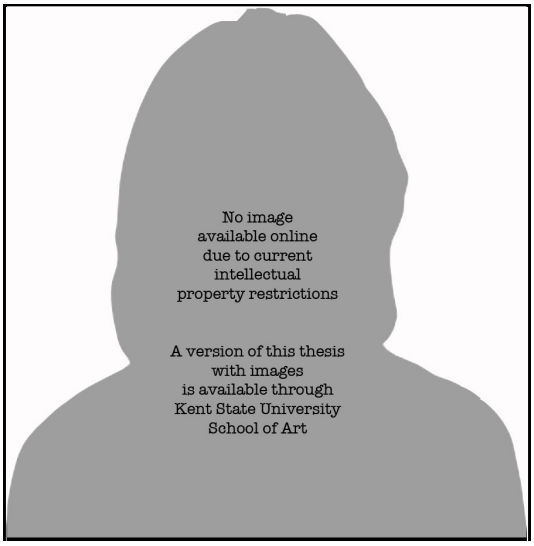

Fig 4. Detail of *Theseus Fighting the Minotaur*, Attic, 540 BCE.[4]

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[3] Guy Hedreen, "BILD, MYTHOS, AND RITUAL: Choral Dance in Theseus' Cretan Adventure on François Vase," 504.

[4] Vessel (band cup; black-figure). 550-530 B.C. ARTstor. New York: New York. http://library.artstor.org/library/secure/ViewImages?id=8CdEdFUgJjg1QEI8dzF8KBUrWHcgd1N4&userId=gjBEdzMh&zoomparams=&fs=true [accessed August 17, 2016].

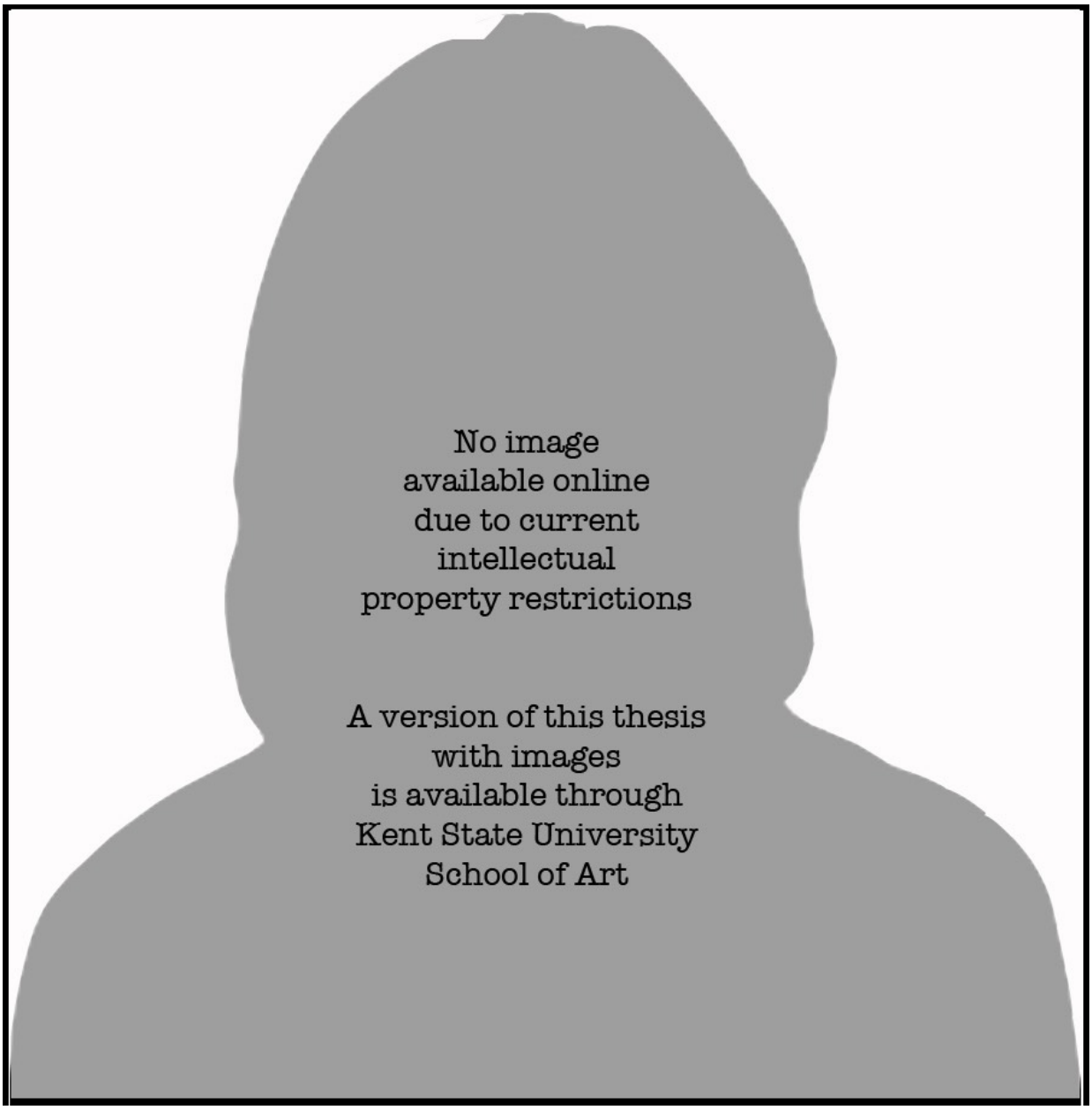

Fig. 5 Dante Alighieri, 14th Century, Paper. Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.[5]

[5] Divine Comedy. Dante. 14th Century. ARTstor. New York, New York. http://library.artstor.org/#/asset/BODLEIAN_10310773800

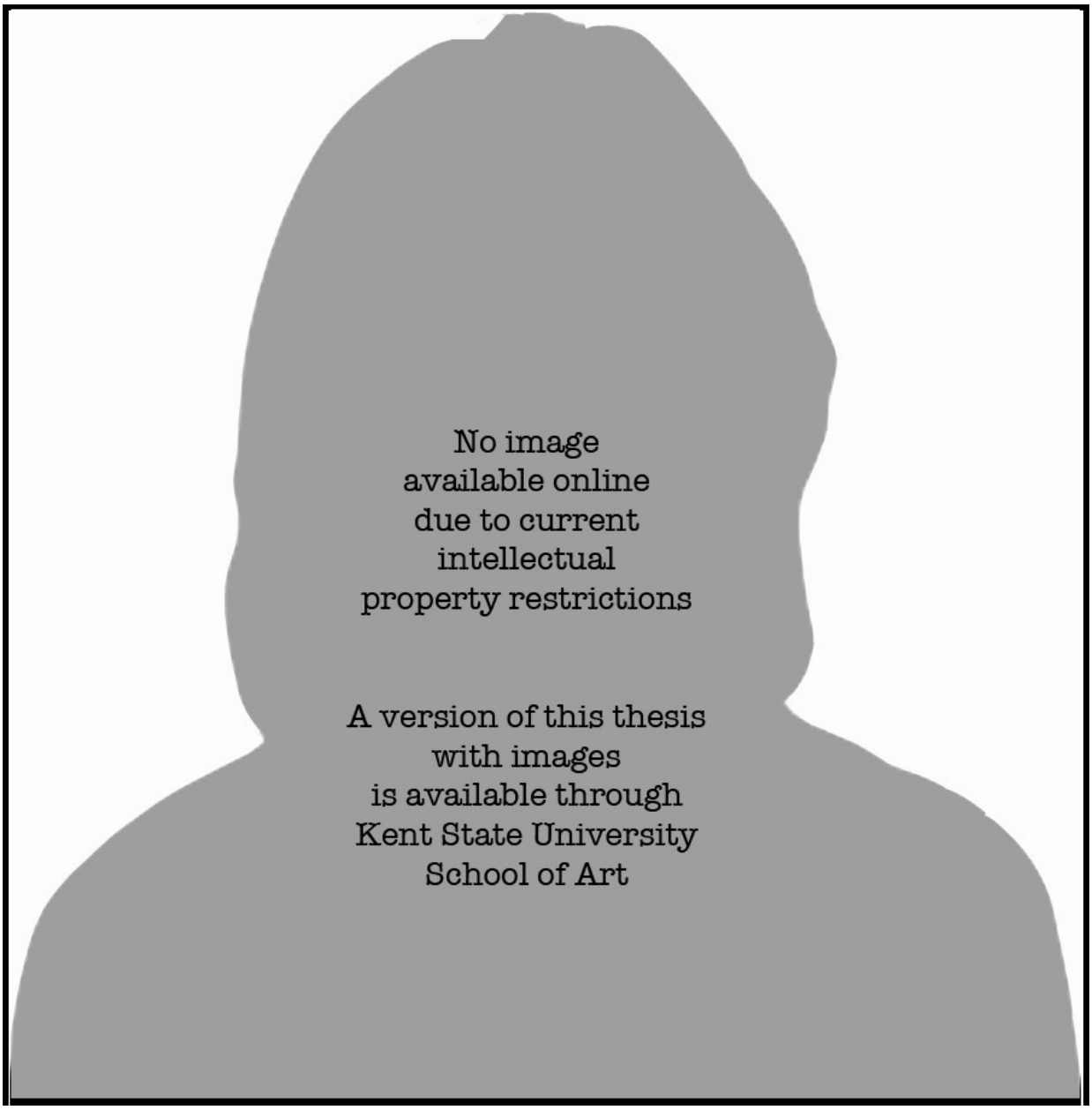

Fig. 6 Antonio Canova, *Theseus and the Minotaur*, 1782. Marble. V&A Museum, London.[6]

[6] Theseus and the Minotaur. Antonio Canova. 1782. ARTstor. New York: New York. http://library.artstor.org/library/secure/ViewImages?id=8CJGczI9NzldLS1WEDhzTnkrX3kuelx8fSA%3D&userId=gjBEdzMh&zoomparams=&fs=true [accessed August 17, 2016].

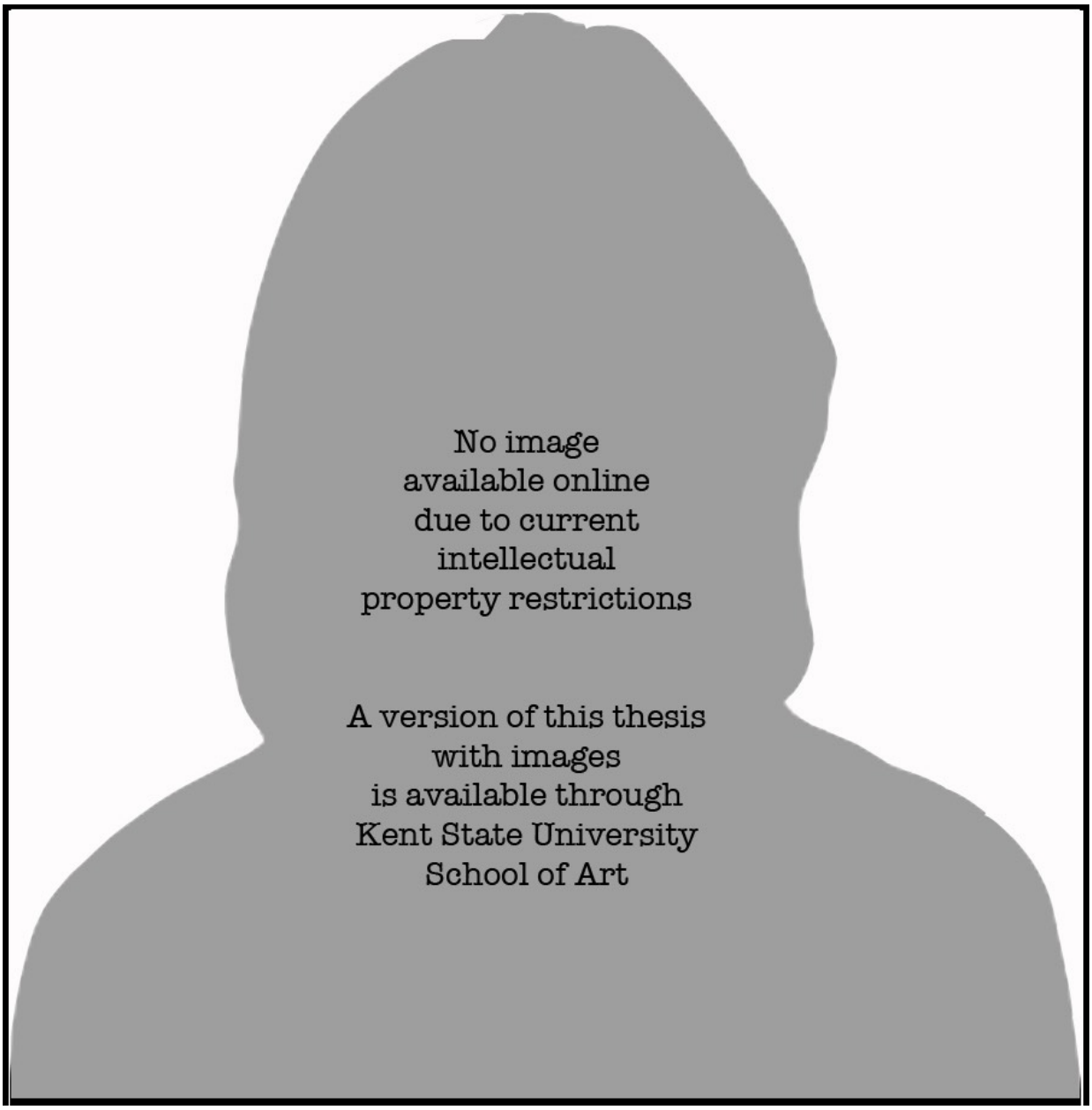

Fig. 7 Antoine-Louis Barye, *Theseus Combatting the Minotaur*, modeled in 1843 and cast in 1850-55. Bronze. V&A Museum, London.[7]

[7] Theseus Combatting the Minotaur. Antoine-Louis Barye. 1843. V&A Museum. London, England, UK. http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O111239/theseus-combating-the-minotaur-statuette-barye-antoine-louis/ [accessed August 17, 2016].

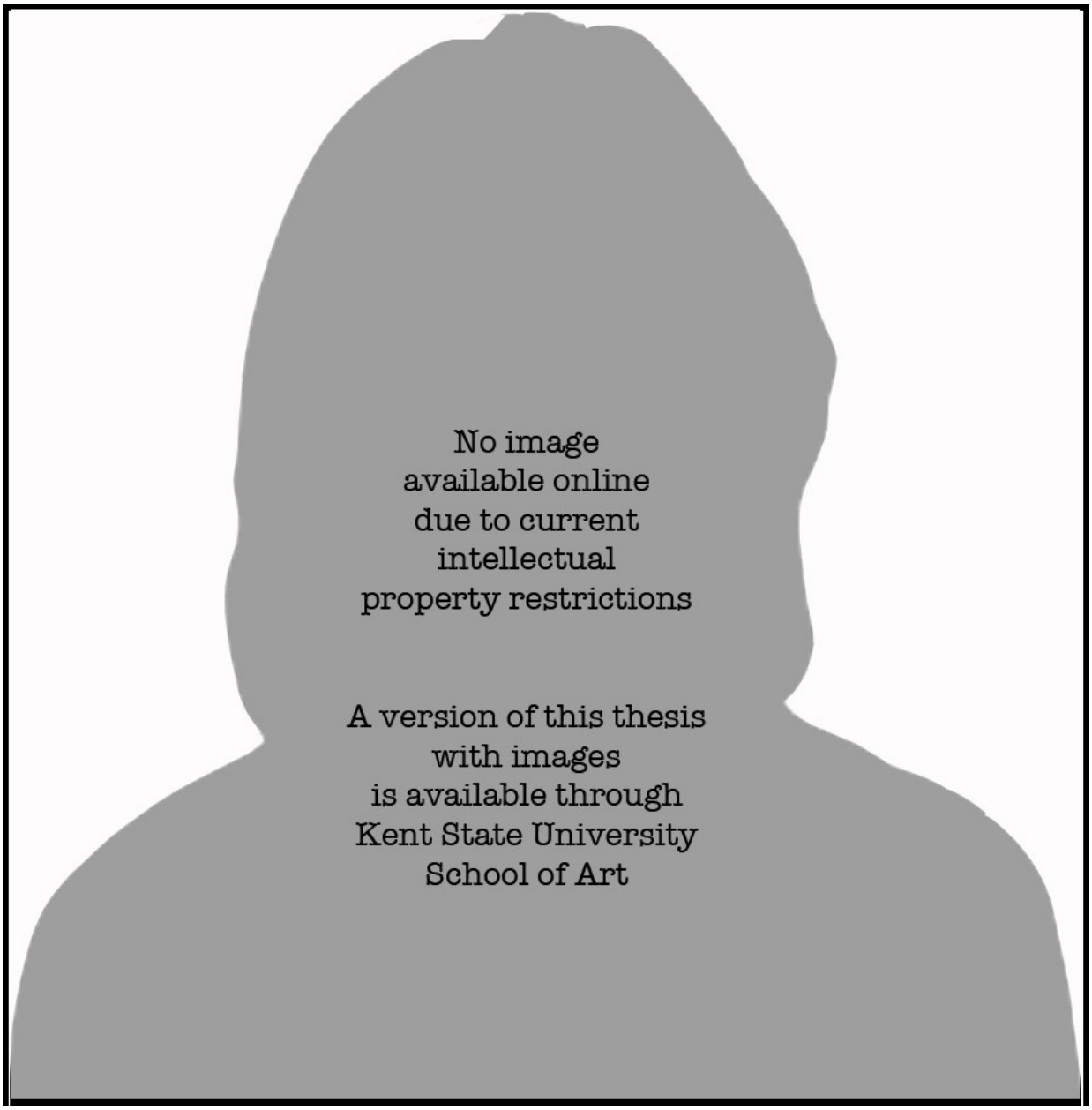

Fig. 8 André Masson, *Automatic Drawing*, 1924. Ink on paper. Museum of Modern Art, New York.[8]

[8] Clark V. Poling, *André Masson and The Surrealist Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 47.

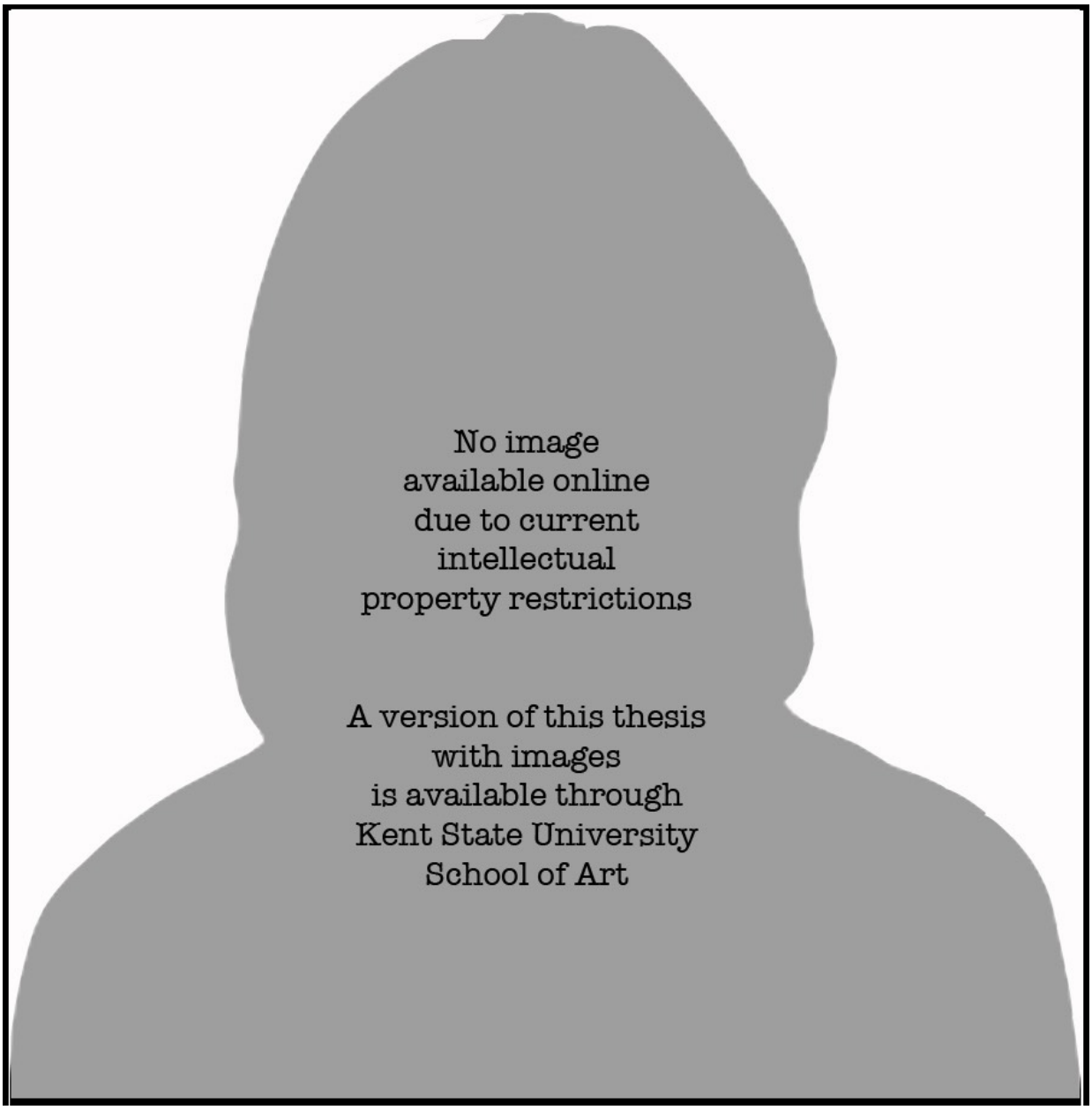

Fig. 9 André Masson, *Automatic Drawing*, 1926. India ink. Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

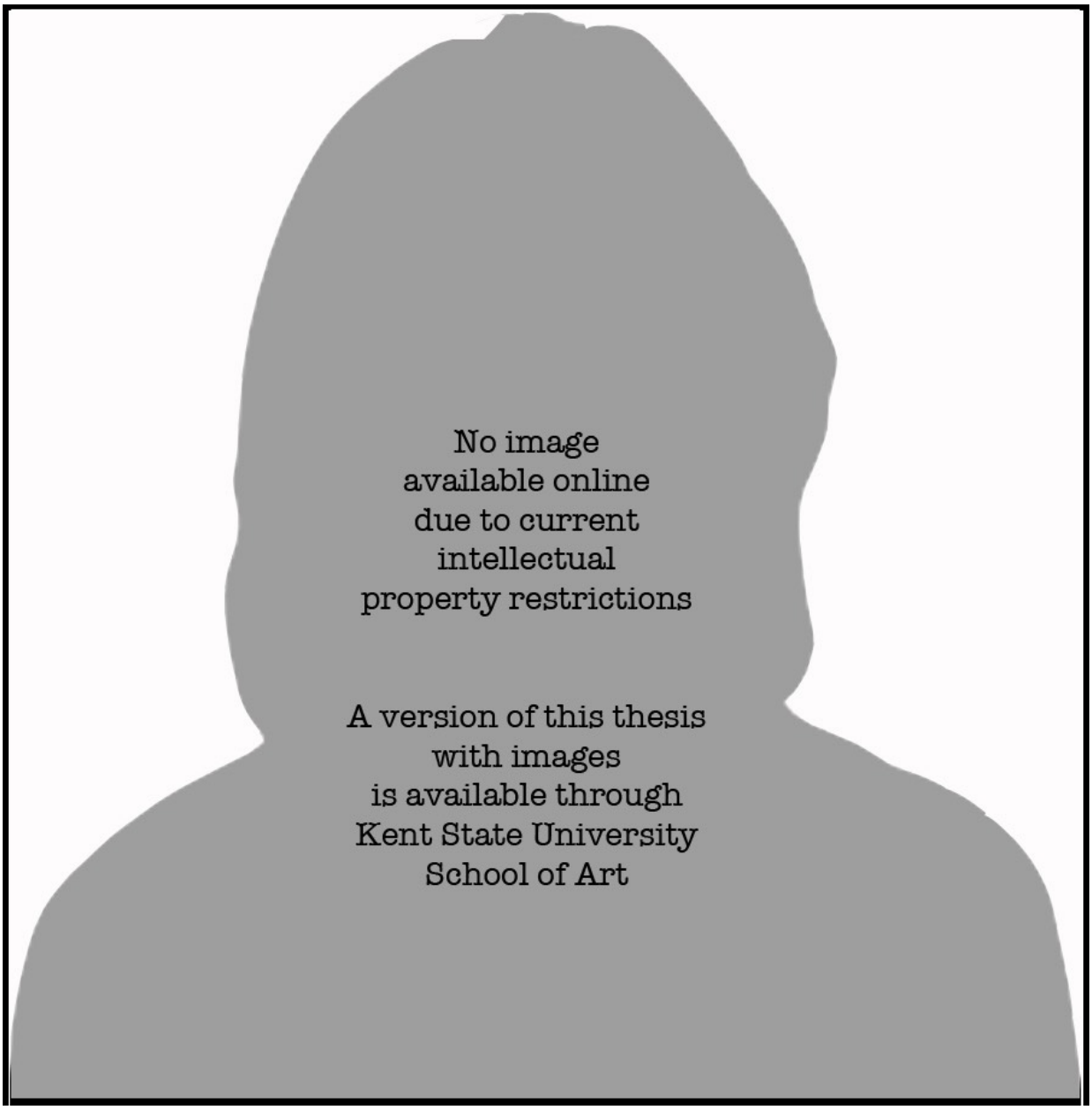

Fig. 10 André Masson, *Battle of Fishes (Bataille de poissons)*, 1926.
Sand, gesso, oil, pencil, and charcoal on canvas. The Museum of Modern Art, New York.[9]

[9] Clark V. Poling, *André Masson and The Surrealist Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 64.

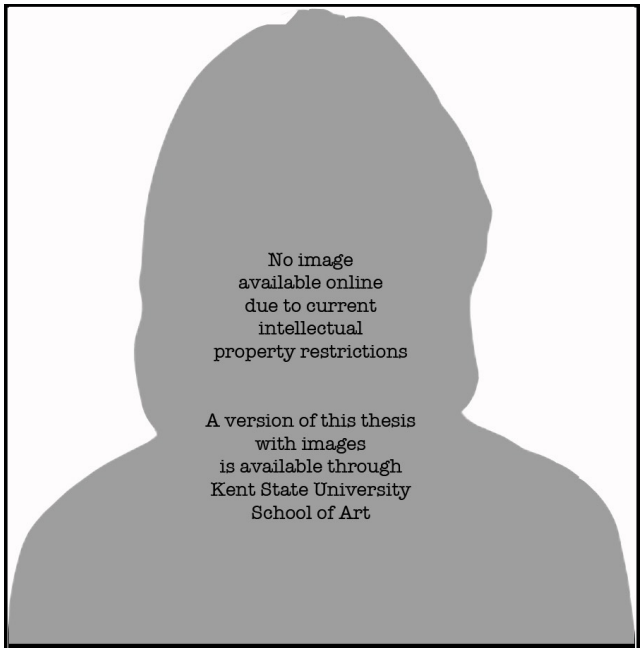

Fig. 11 André Masson, *The Great Battle of Fish*, 1928. Oil on canvas. Private collection.[10]

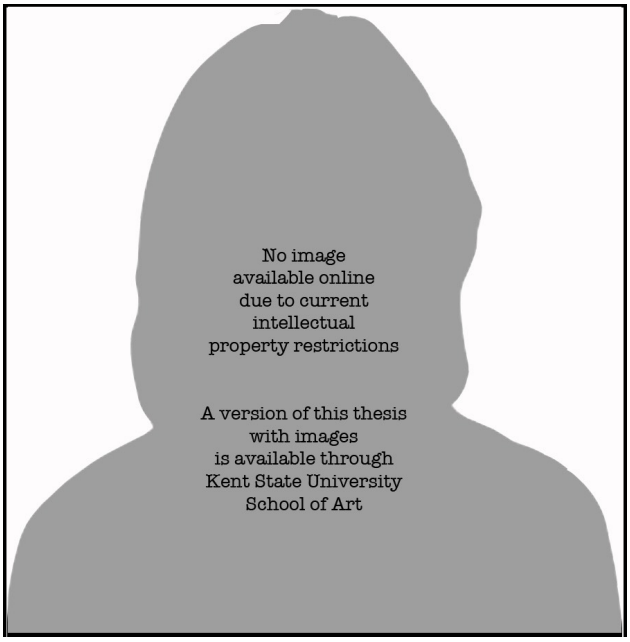

Fig. 12 André Masson, *Fish Disemboweling Another*, 1929. Oil on canvas. Private collection.[11]

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[10] Clark V. Poling, *André Masson and The Surrealist Self* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 65.

[11] *Ibid*.

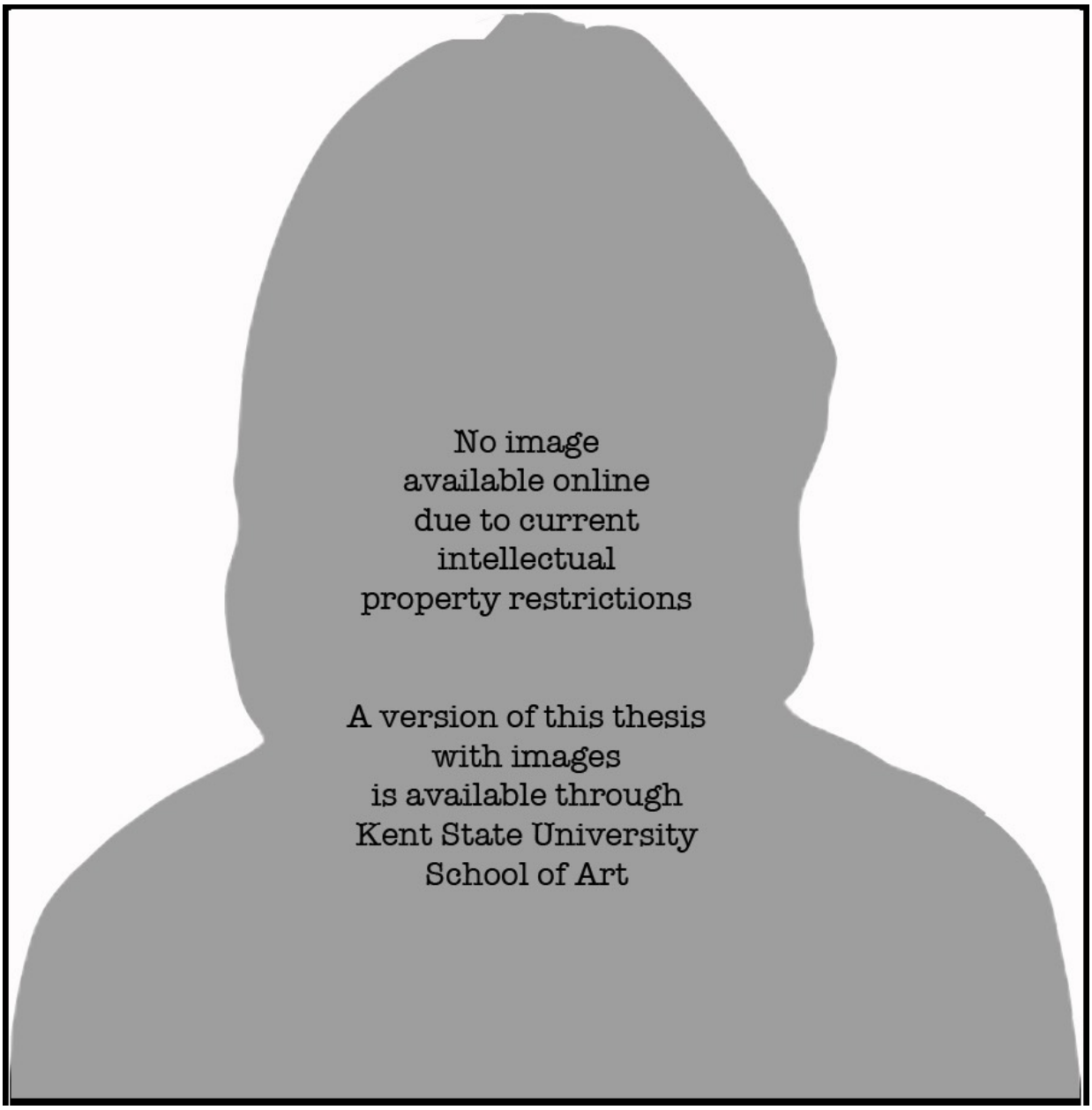

Fig. 13 André Masson, *Les Jeunes Filles*, 1930. Oil on canvas.[12]

[12] Brigitte Léal, Christine Piot and Marie-Laure Bernadac, *The Ultimate Picasso* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003), 305.

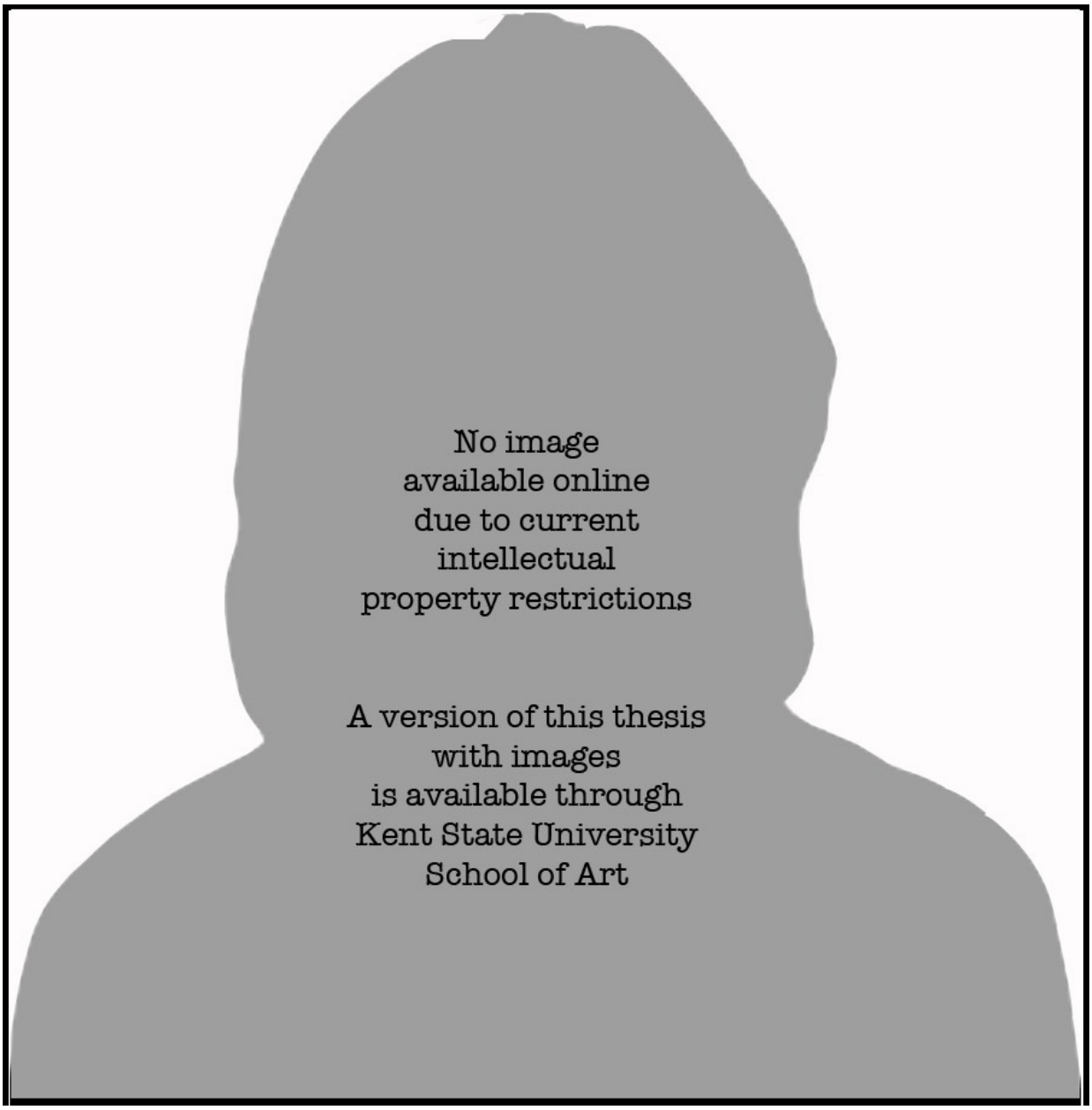

Fig. 14 Pablo Picasso, *Bullfighting Scene (The Victims)*, Spring 1901. Oil on cardboard mounted on wood panel. Private collection.[13]

[13] Brigitte Léal, Christine Piot and Marie-Laure Bernadac, *The Ultimate Picasso* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2003), 42.

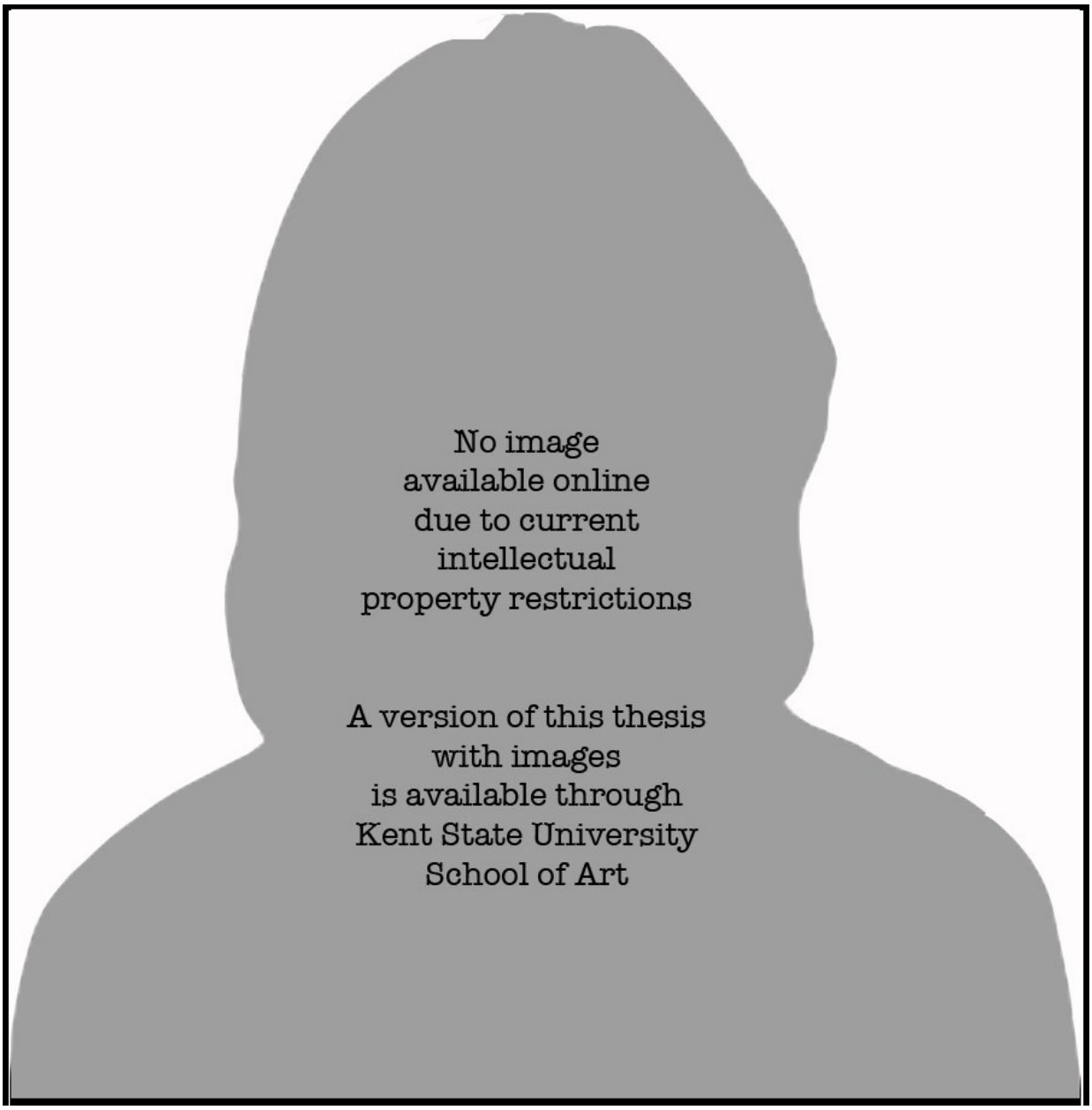

Fig. 15 Pablo Picasso, *Minotaure Courant*, April 1928. Oil on canvas.[14]

[14] Christian Zervos *Pablo Picasso.* Volume 7. (Paris: Éditions "Cahiers d'Art") 1955.

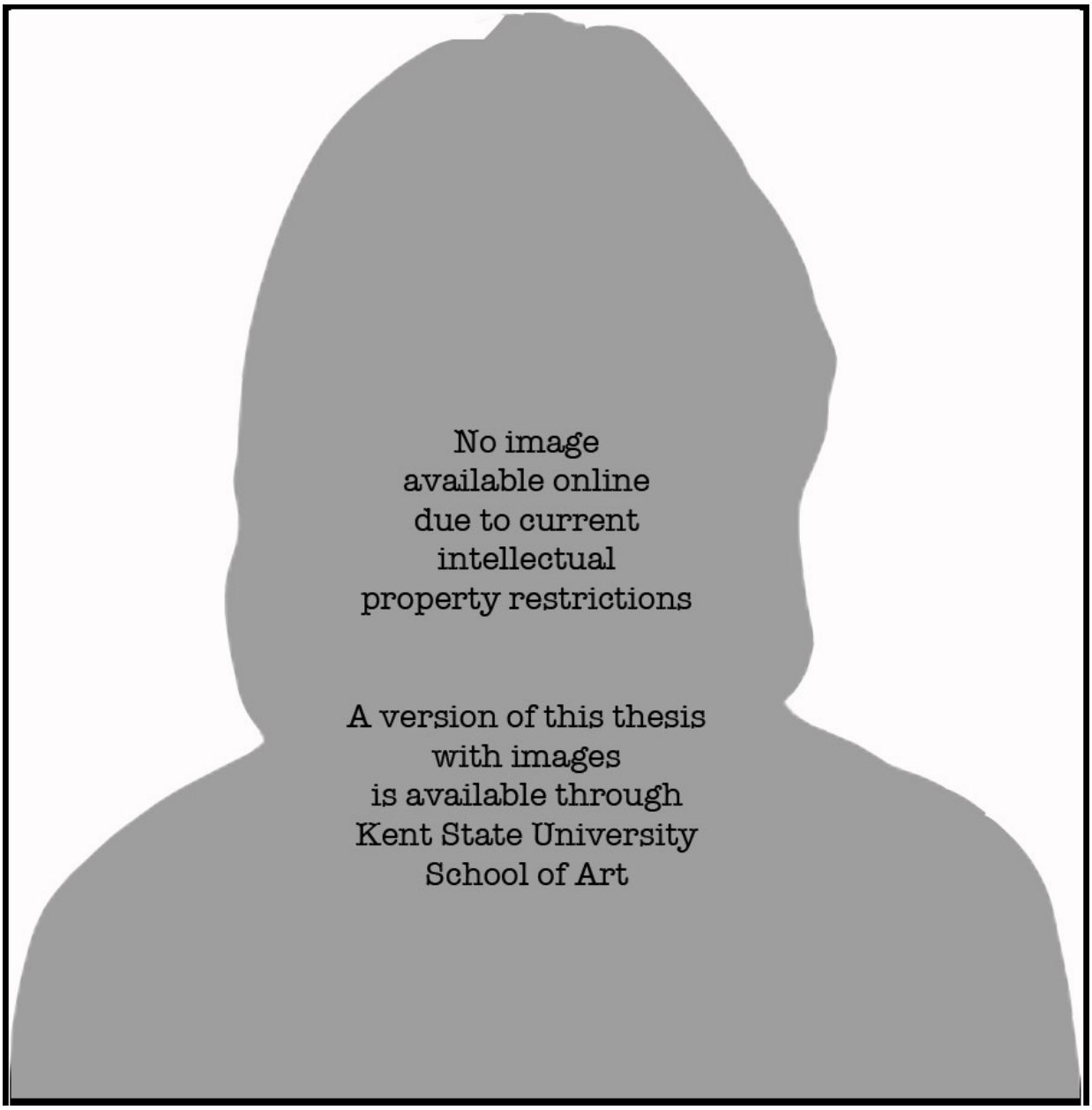

Fig. 16 Pablo Picasso, *Minotaure 1,* 1933. Etching.[15]

[15]Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 1 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1933), cover.

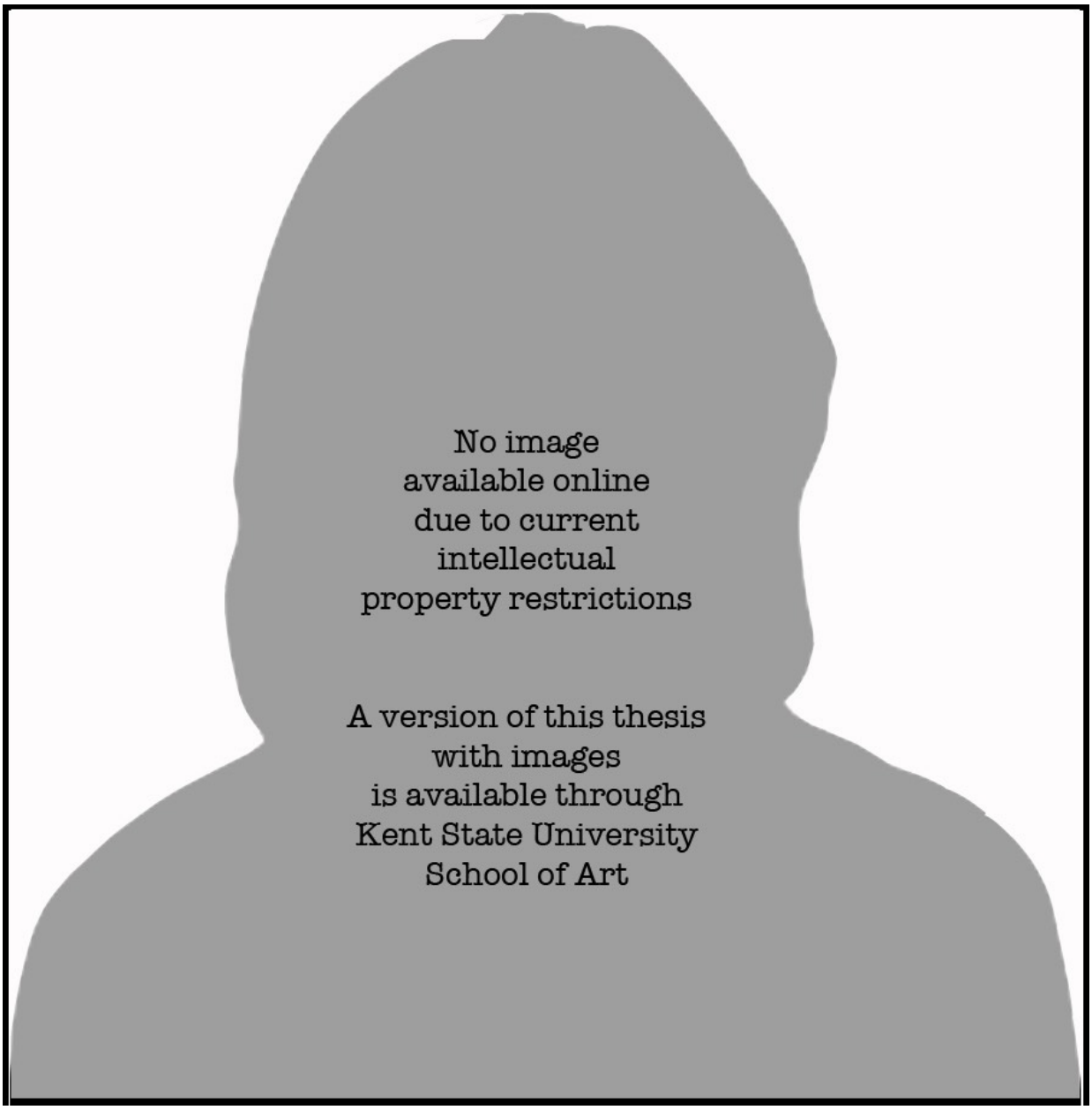

Fig. 17 André Masson, *Massacre,* 1933. Pen and ink.[16]

[16] *Minotaure* no. 1 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1933), 59.

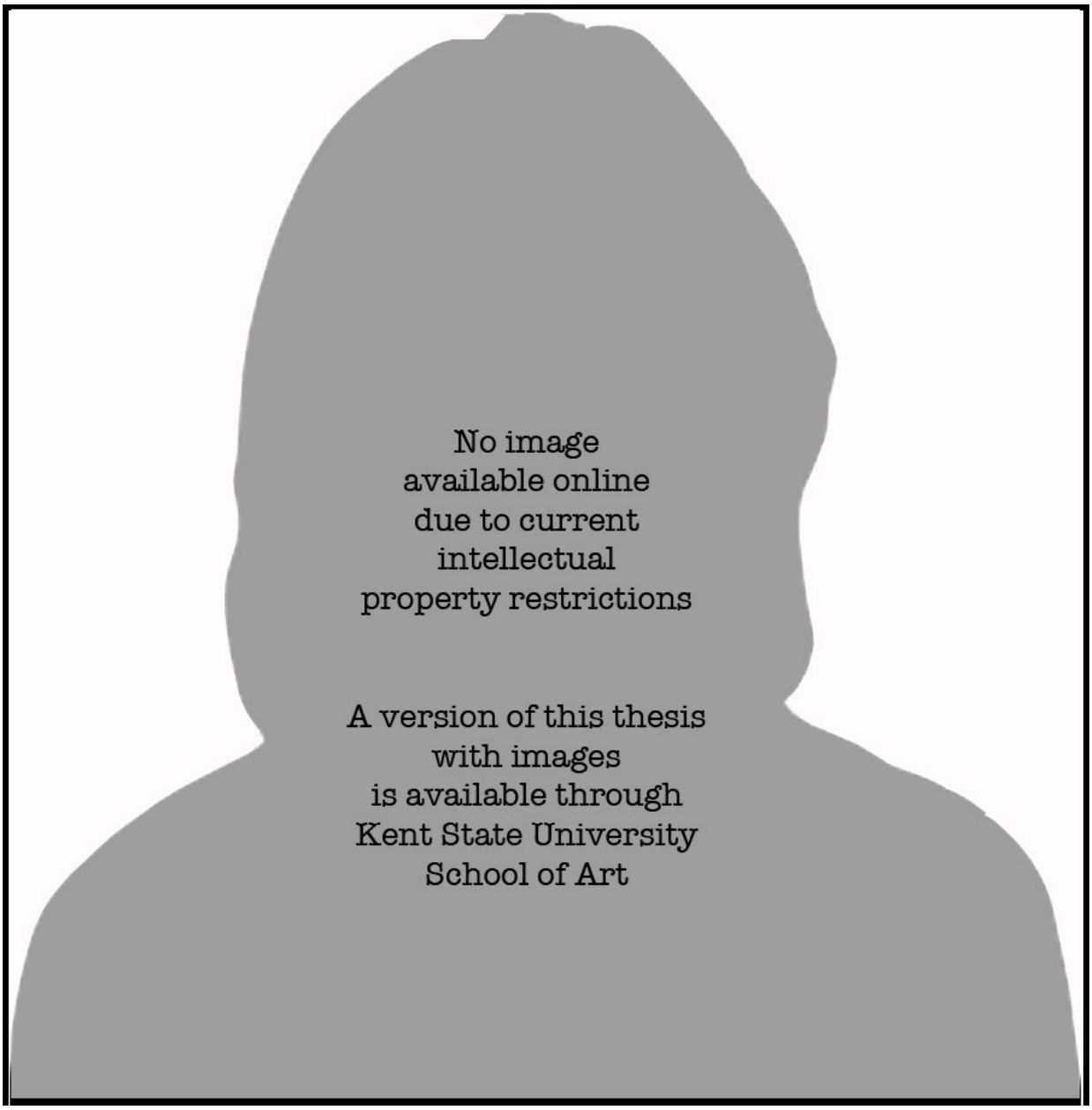

Fig. 18 André Derain, *Minotaure 3-4,* 1933. Print.[17]

[17] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 3-4 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1933), cover.

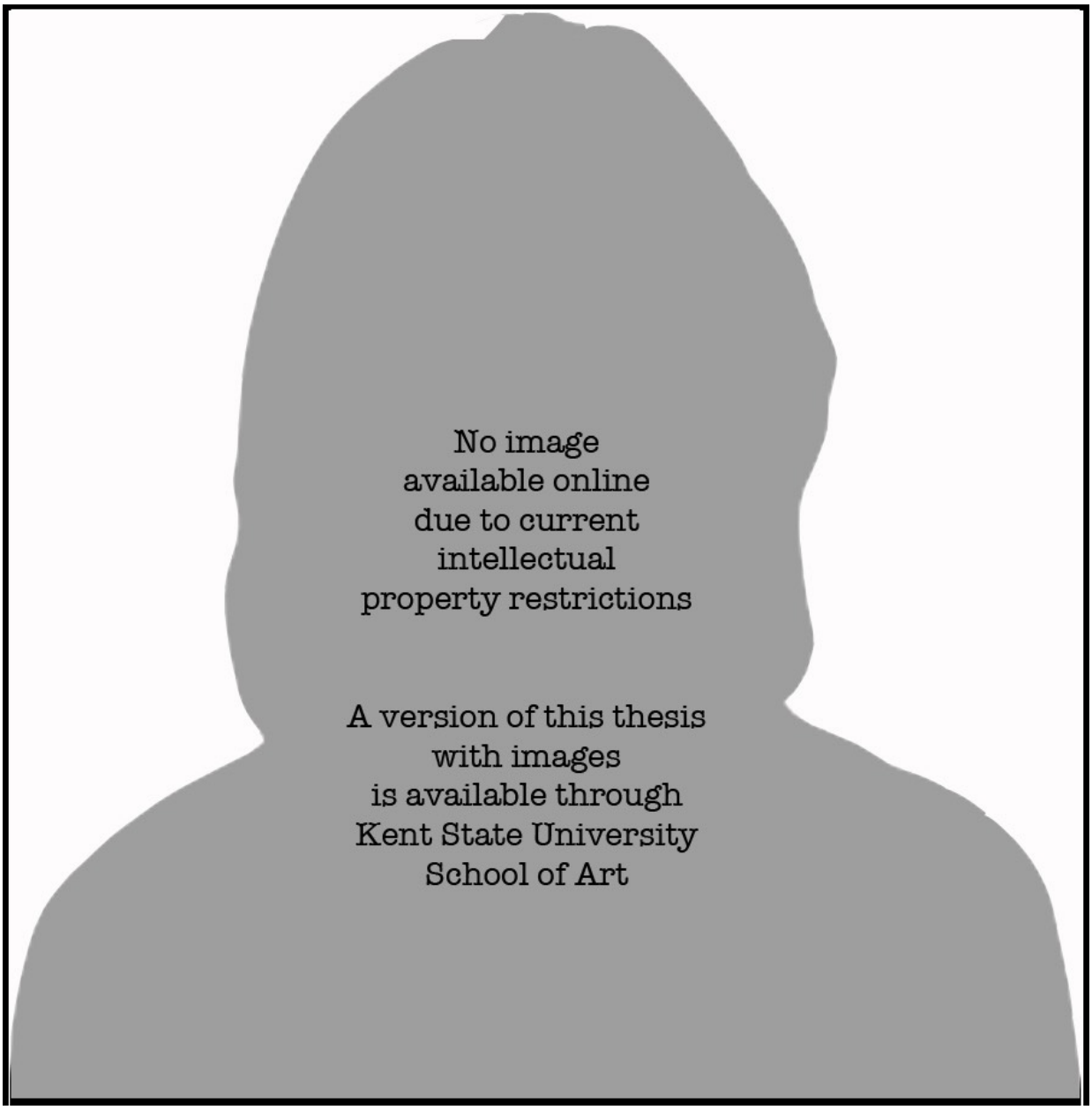

Fig. 19 Francisco Borés, *Minotaure 5,* 1934.[18]

[18] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 5 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1934), cover.

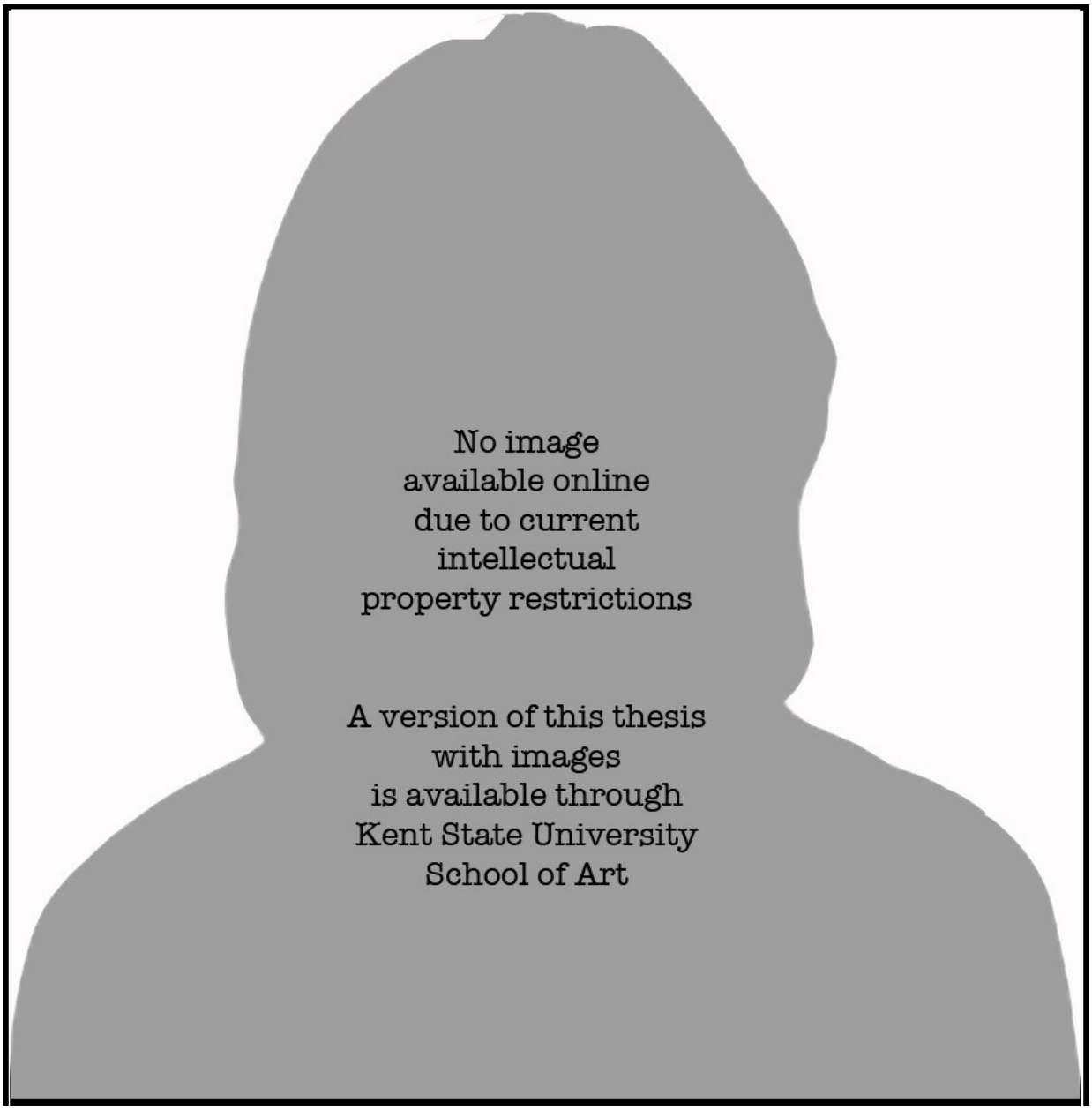

Fig. 20 Marcel Duchamp, *Minotaure 6,* 1934.[19]

[19] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 6 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1934), cover.

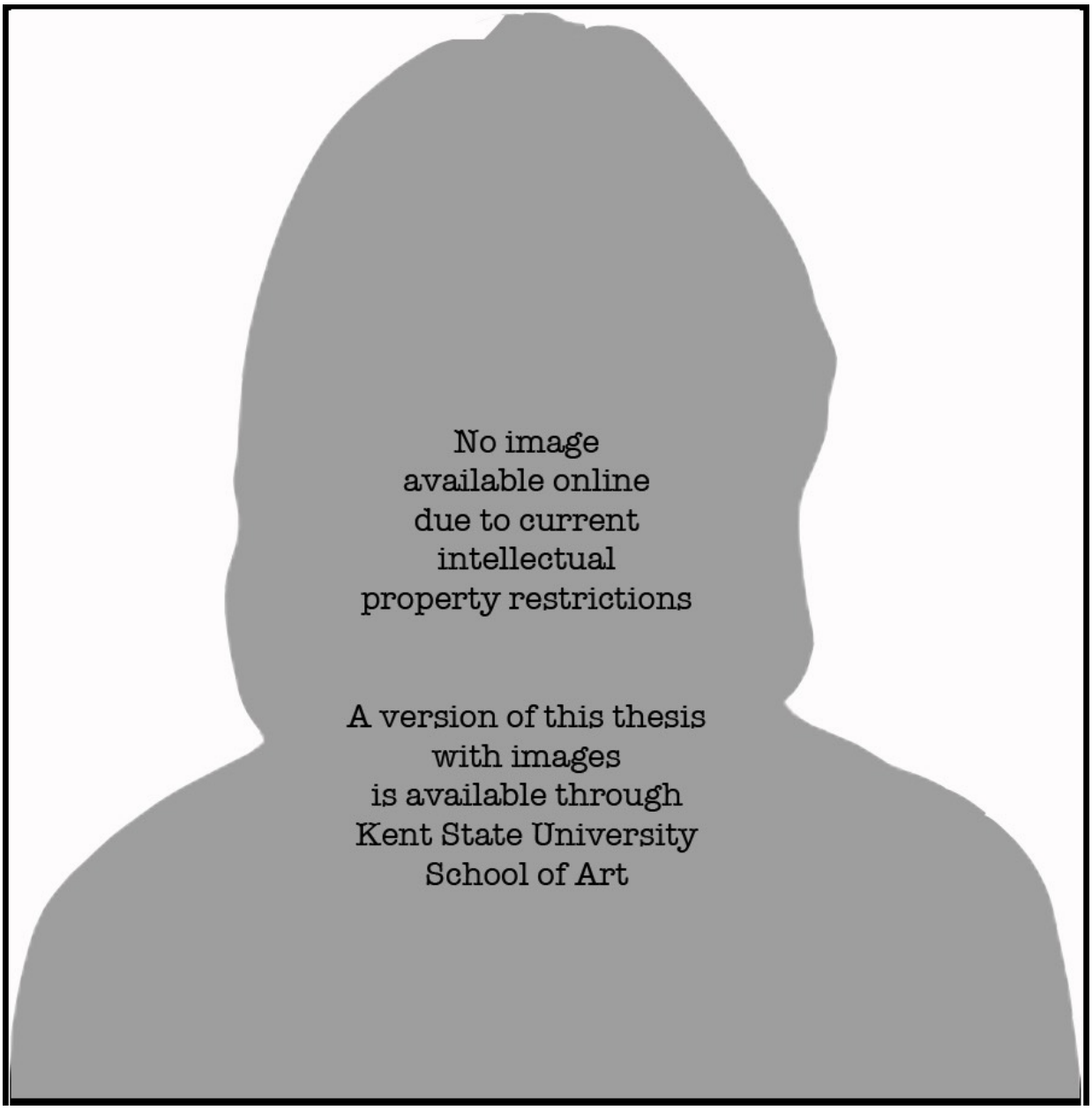

Fig. 21 Marcel Duchamp, *Rotoreliefs,* 1935.[20]

[20] Rebecca Clark, "Marcel Duchamp's Rotoreliefs," *Guggenheim Blog* (blog), January 26, 2015, http://blogs.guggenheim.org/findings/marcel-duchamps-rotoreliefs/.

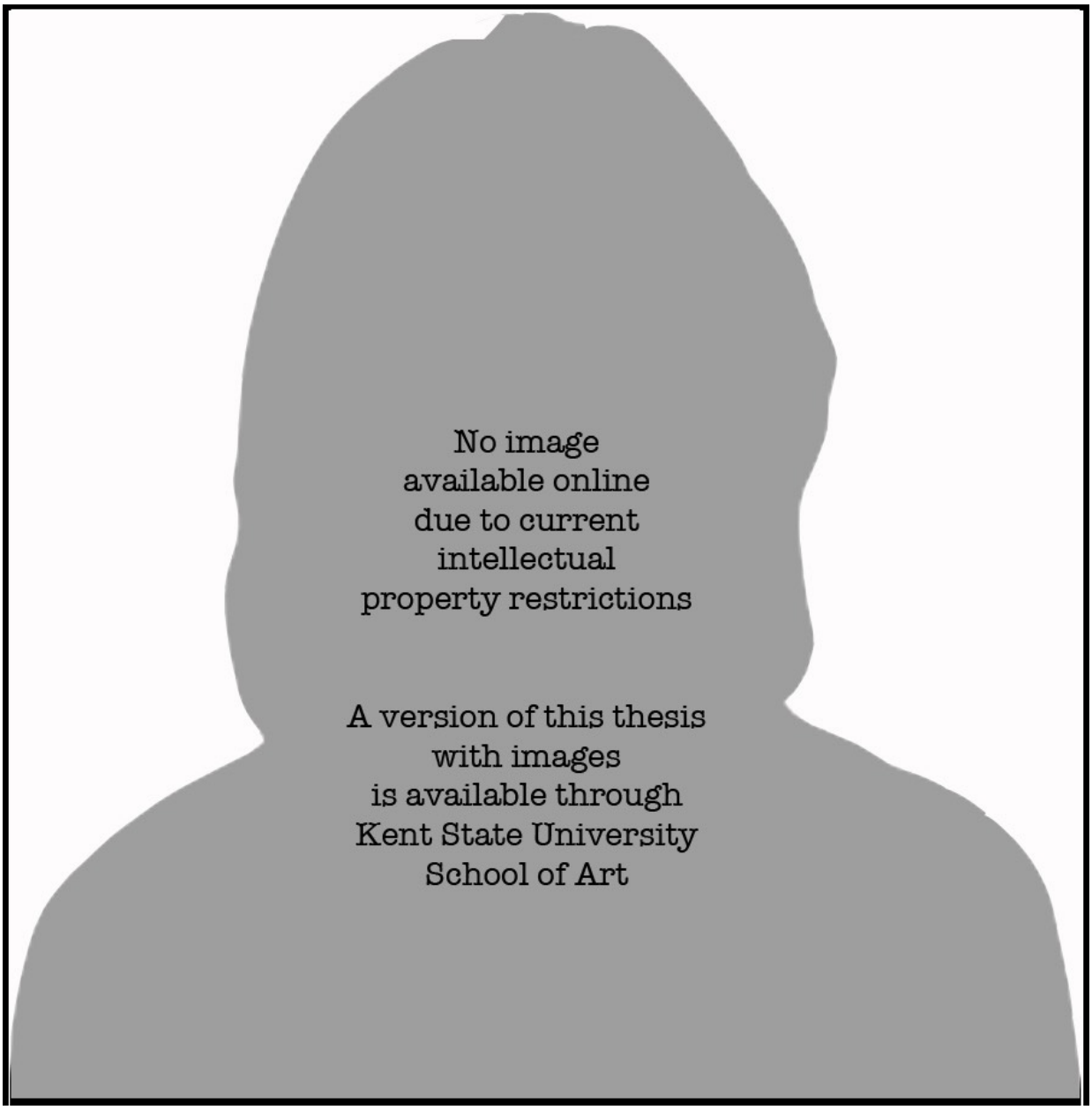

Fig. 22 Joan Miró, *Minotaure 7,* 1935.[21]

[21] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 7 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1935), cover.

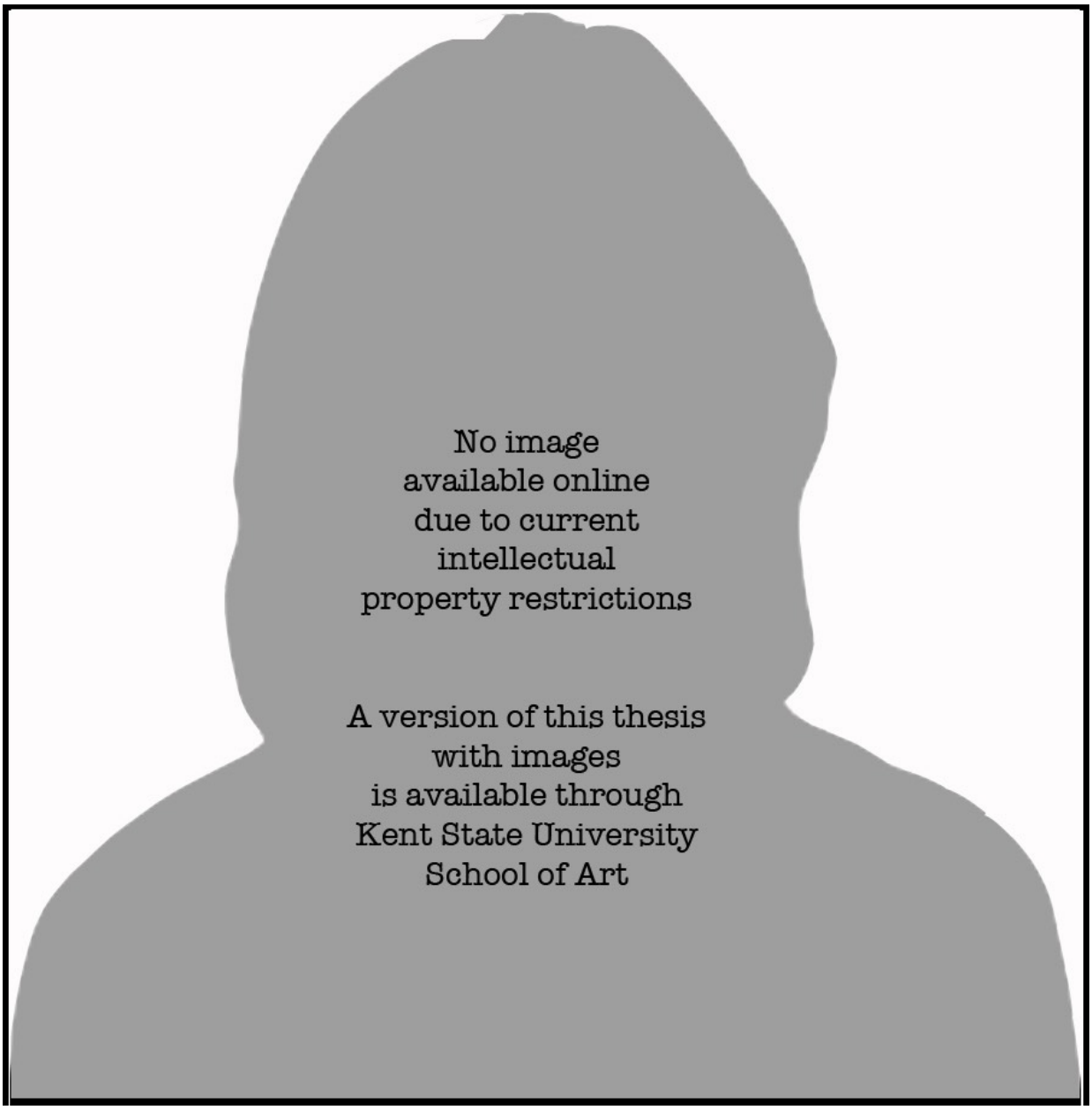

Fig. 23 Salvador Dalí, *Minotaure 8,* 1936.[22]

[22] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 8 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1936), cover.

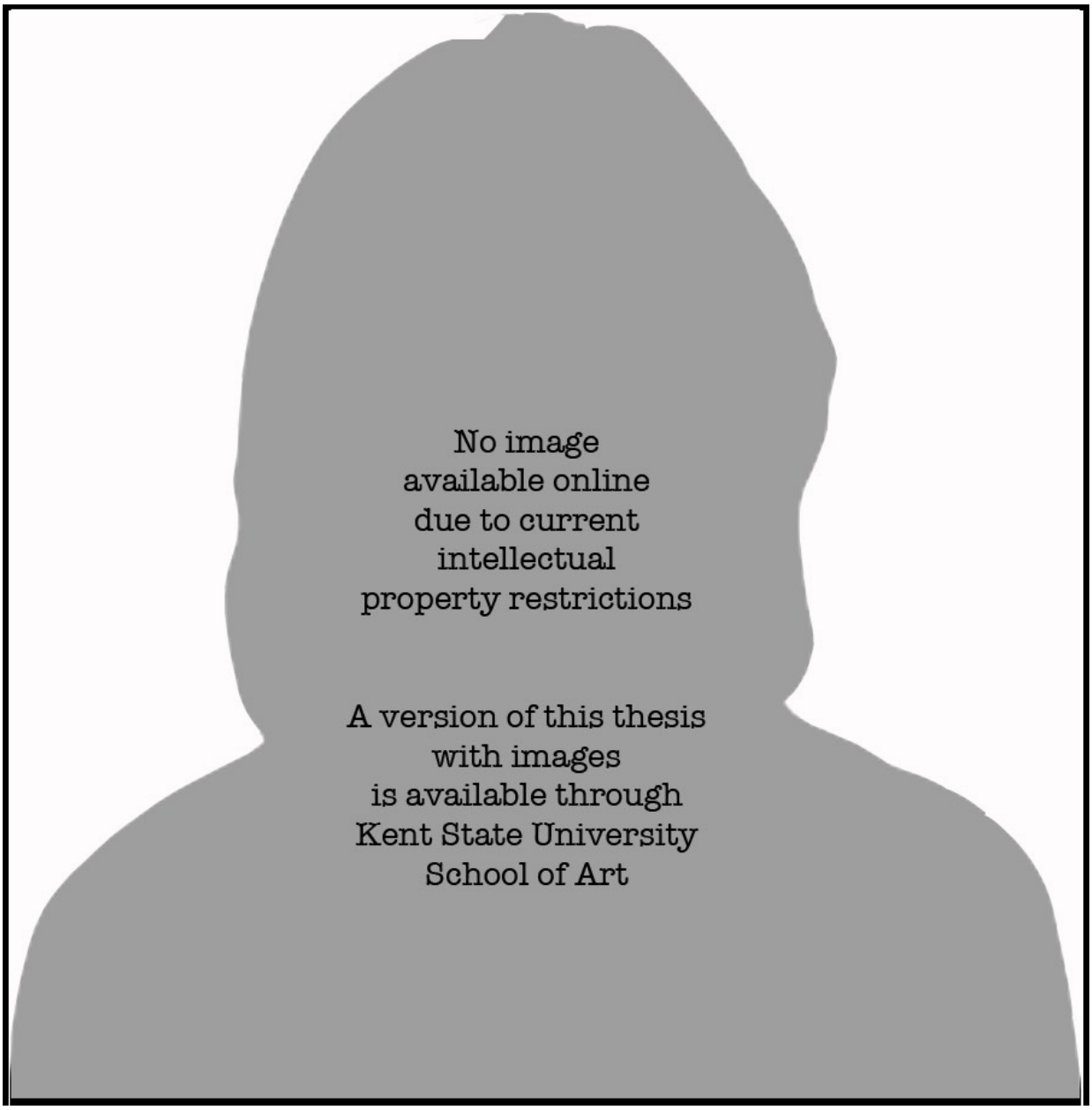

Fig. 25 Henri Matisse, *Minotaure 9,* 1936.[23]

[23] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 9 (Paris: Editions Albert Skira, 1936), cover.

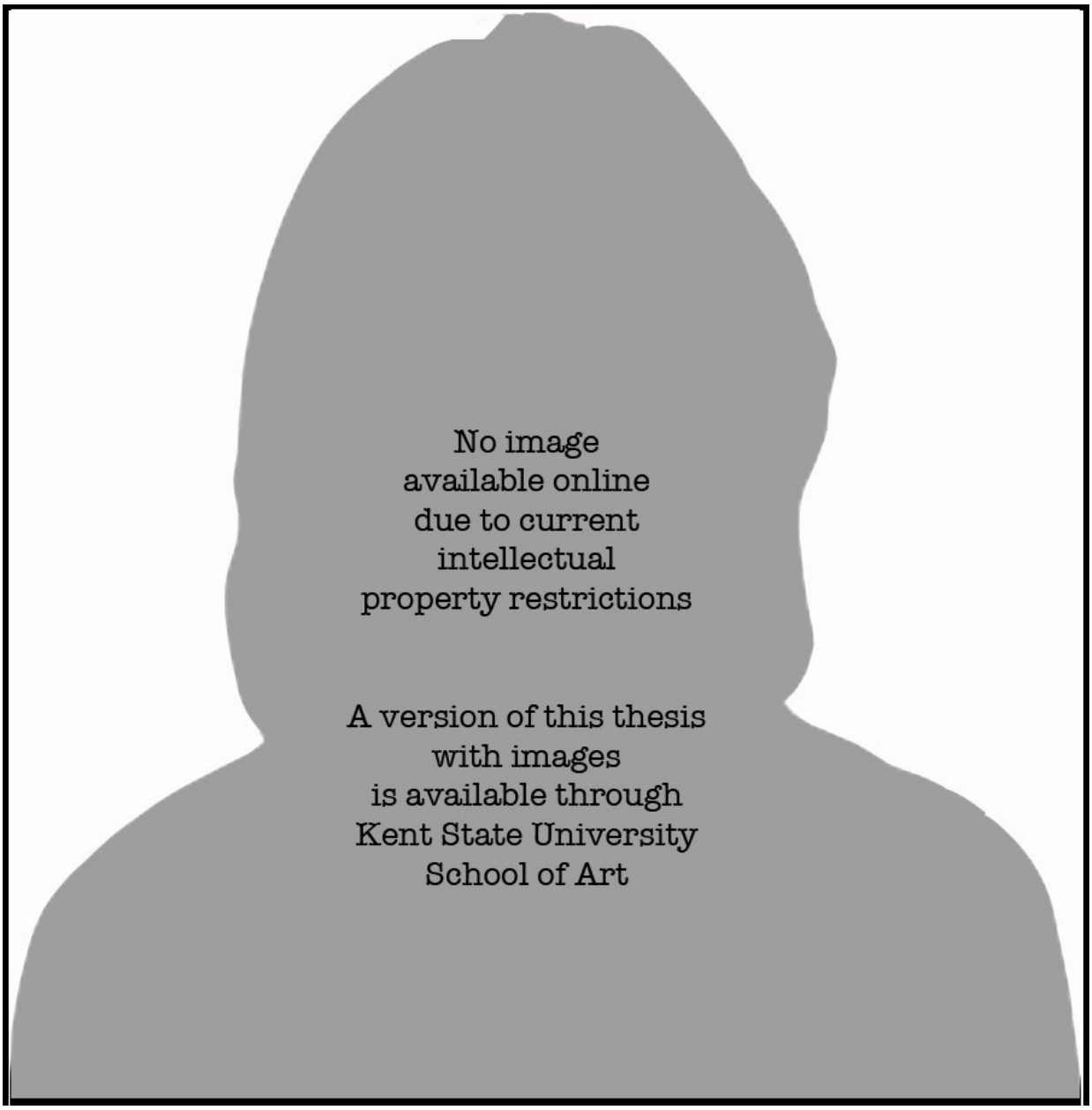

Fig. 26 René Magritte, *Minotaure 10*, 1937.[24]

[24] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 10 (Paris: Editions Alber Skira, 1937), cover.

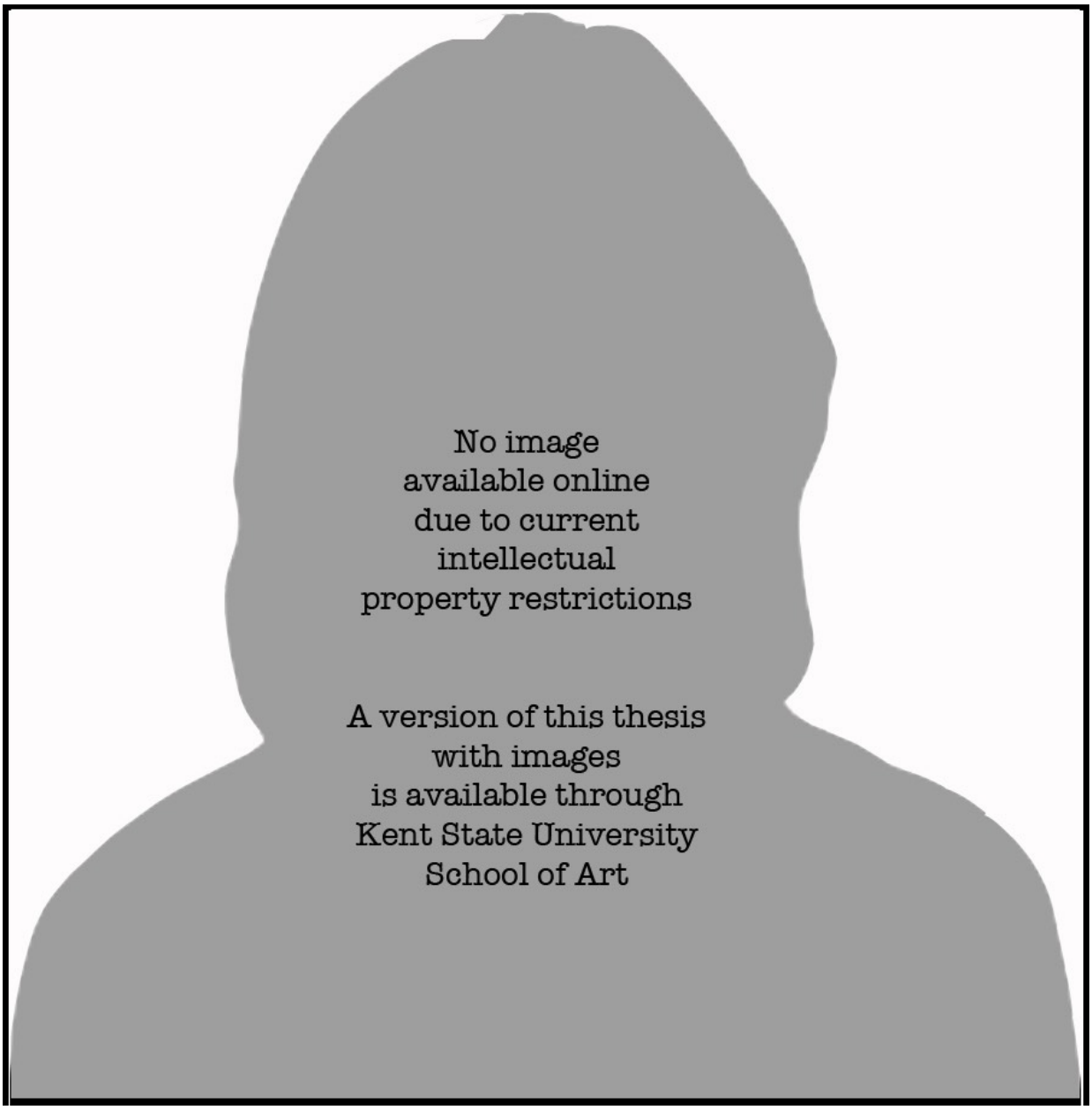

Fig. 27 Max Ernst, *Minotaure 11*, 1938.[25]

[25] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 11 (Paris: Editions Alber Skira, 1938), cover.

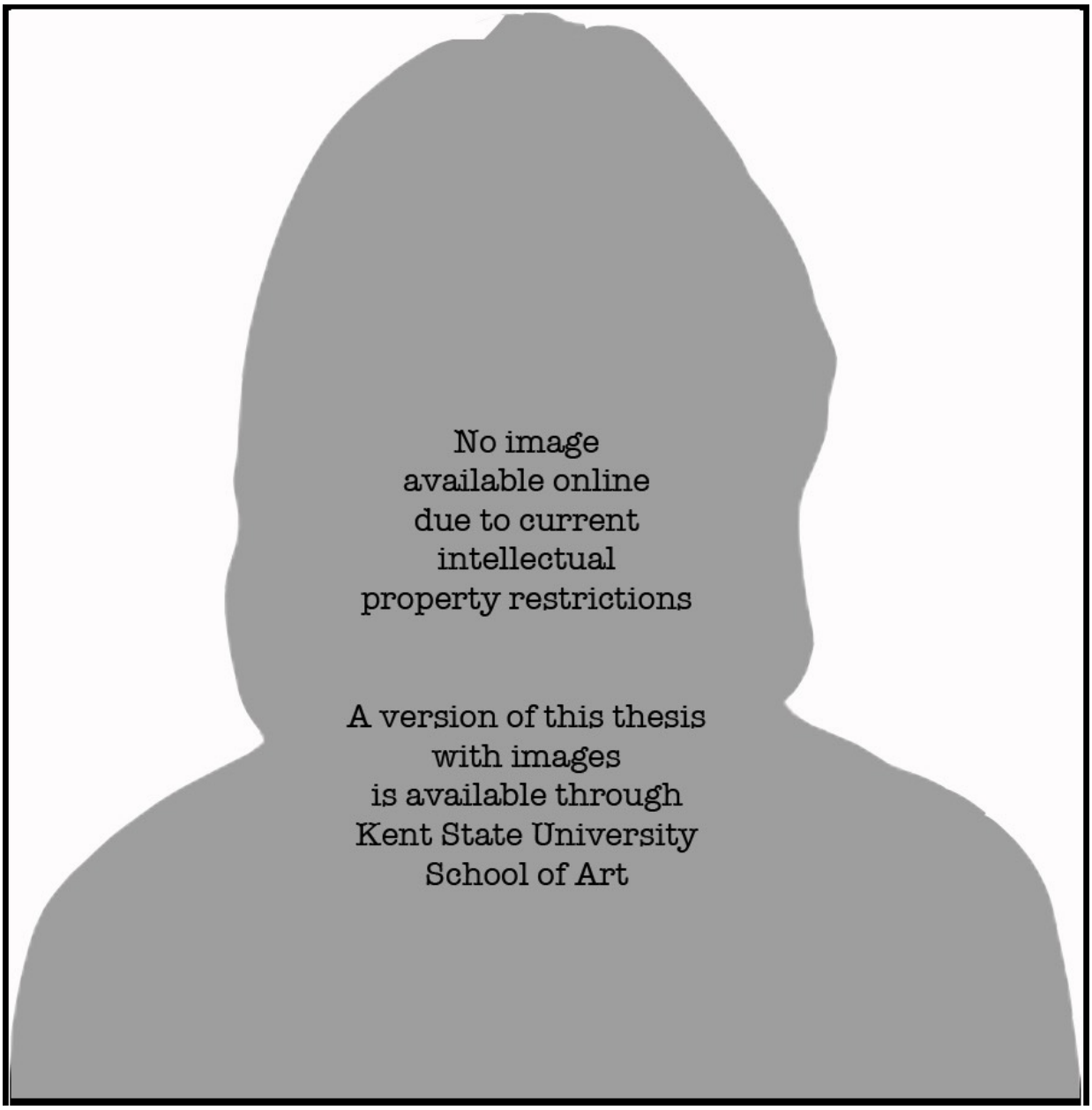

Fig. 28 André Masson, *Minotaure 12-13*, 1939.[26]

[26] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 12-13 (Paris: Editions Alber Skira, 1939), cover.

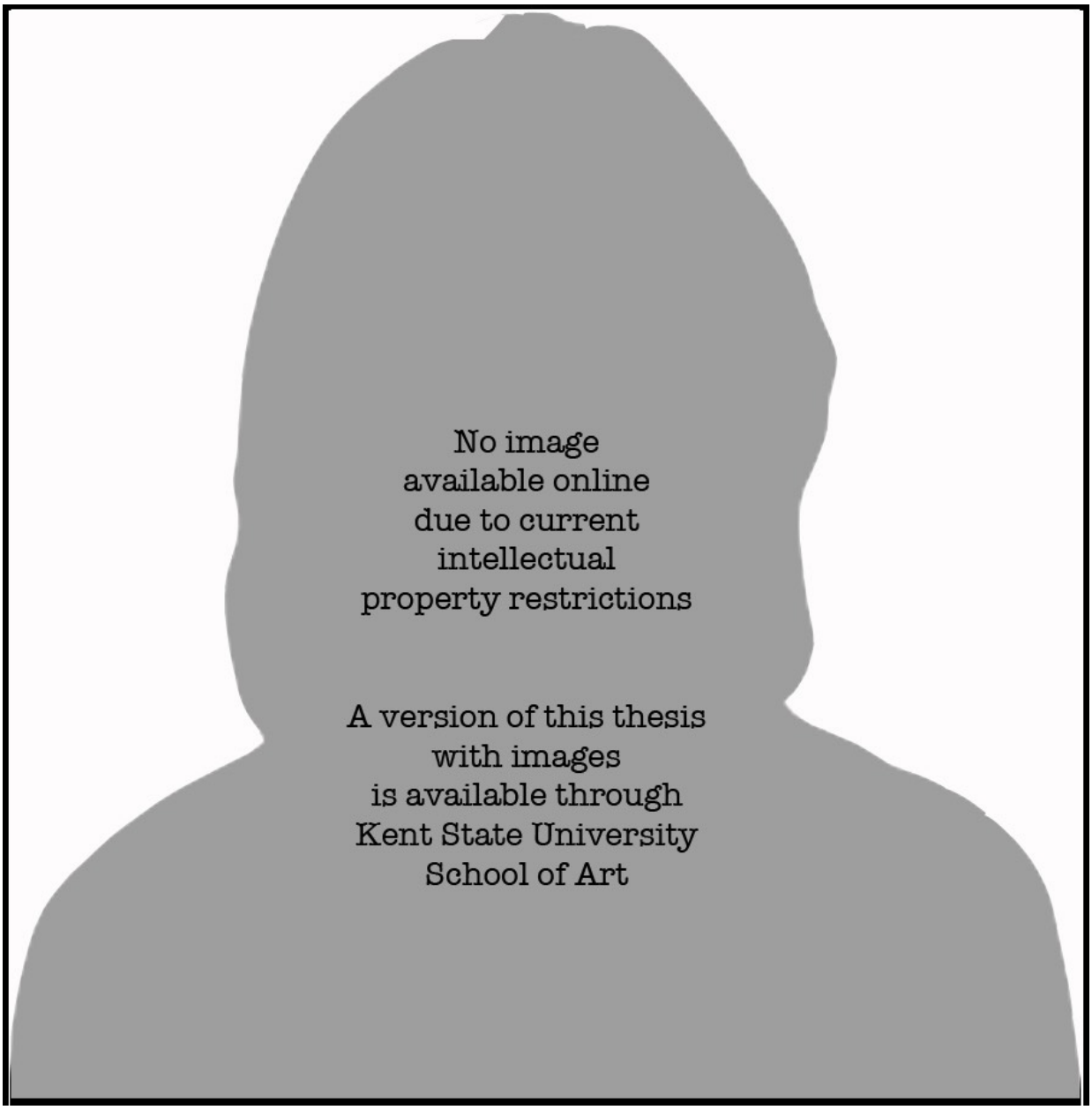

Fig. 29 Diego Rivera, Frontispiece of *Minotaure 12-13*, 1939.[27]

[27] Albert Skira, *Minotaure* no. 12-13 (Paris: Editions Alber Skira, 1934), frontispiece.

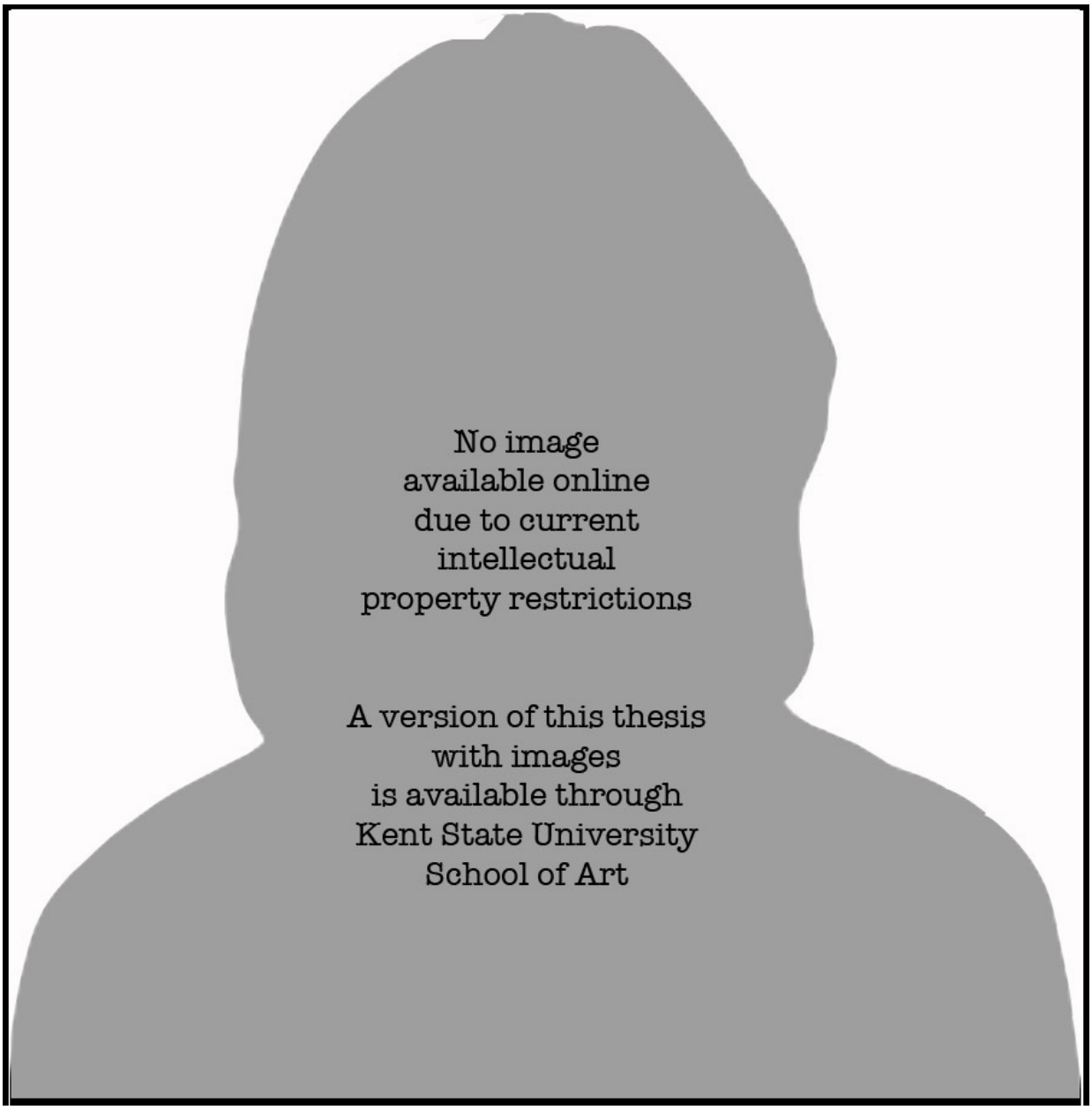

Fig. 30 Pablo Picasso, *Minotaur Caressing Girl,* May 18, 1933. Combined technique.[28]

[28] Milton S. Fox, ed., *Picasso for Vollard* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1956), plate 84.

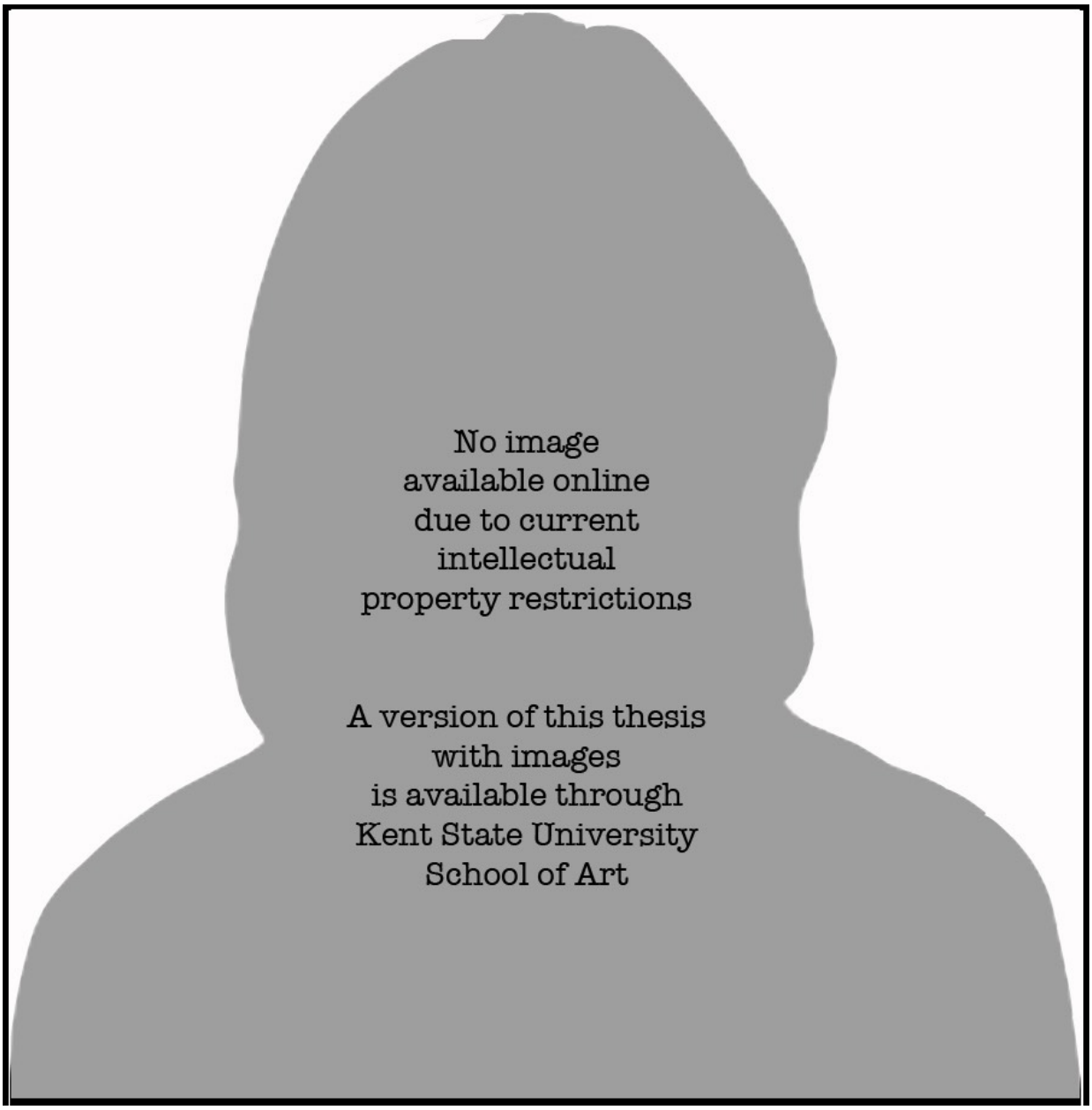

Fig. 31 Pablo Picasso, *Drinking Minotaur and Sculptor with Two Models,* May 18, 1933. Combined technique. Graphikmuseum Pablo Picasso Münster.[29]

[29] Markus Müller, ed., *Pablo Picasso and Marie-Thérèse Walter: Between Classicism and Surrealism* (Berlin: Kerber Verlag, 2004), 186.

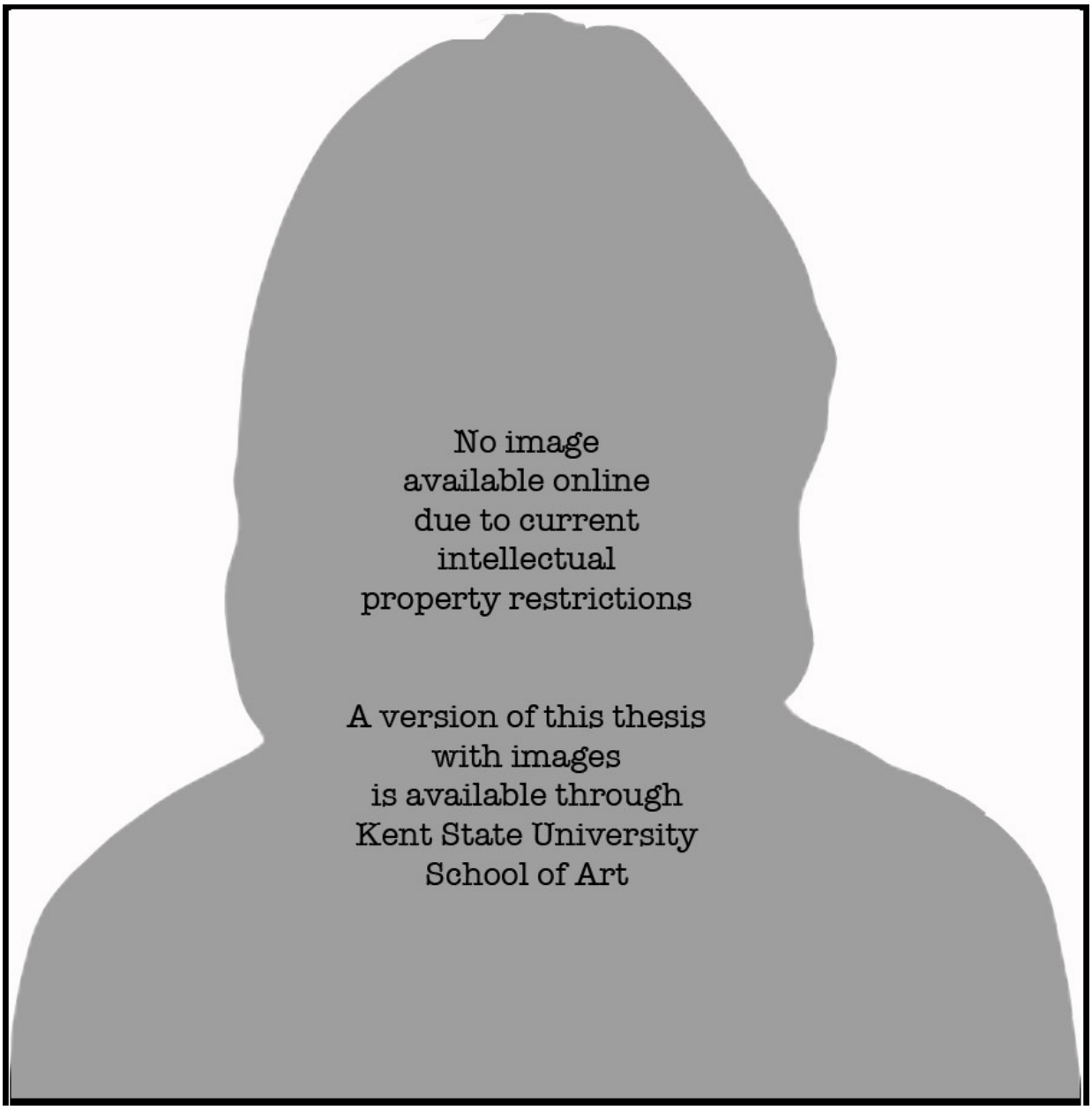

Fig. 32 Pablo Picasso, *Minotaur Caressing a Sleeping Woman,* June 18, 1933. Drypoint.[30]

[30] Janie Cohen, ed., *Picasso: Inside the Image* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 82.

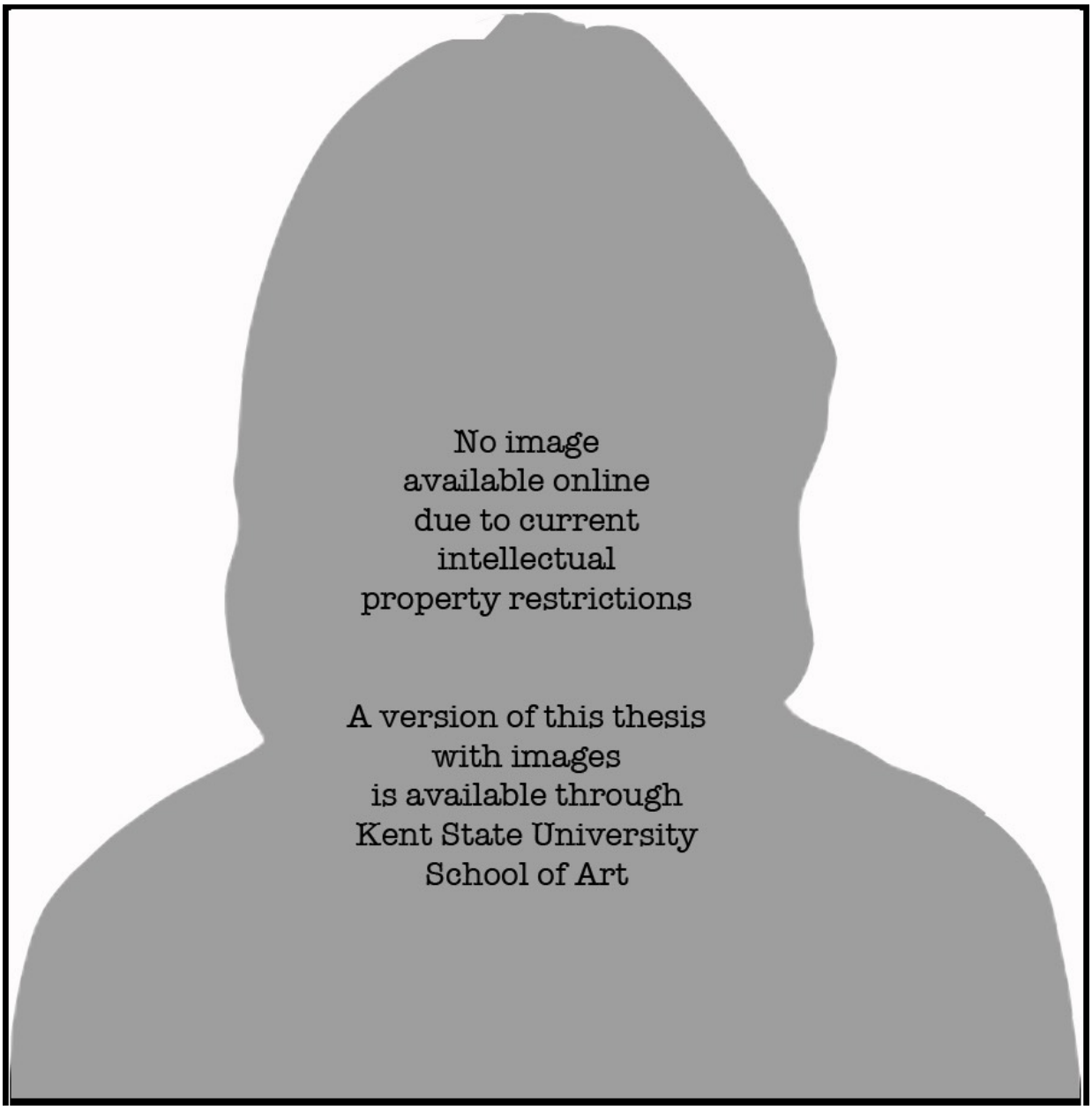

Fig. 33 Pablo Picasso, *Dying Minotaur in Arena*. May 26, 1933. Etching.[31]

[31] Janie Cohen, ed., *Picasso: Inside the Image* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1995), 81.

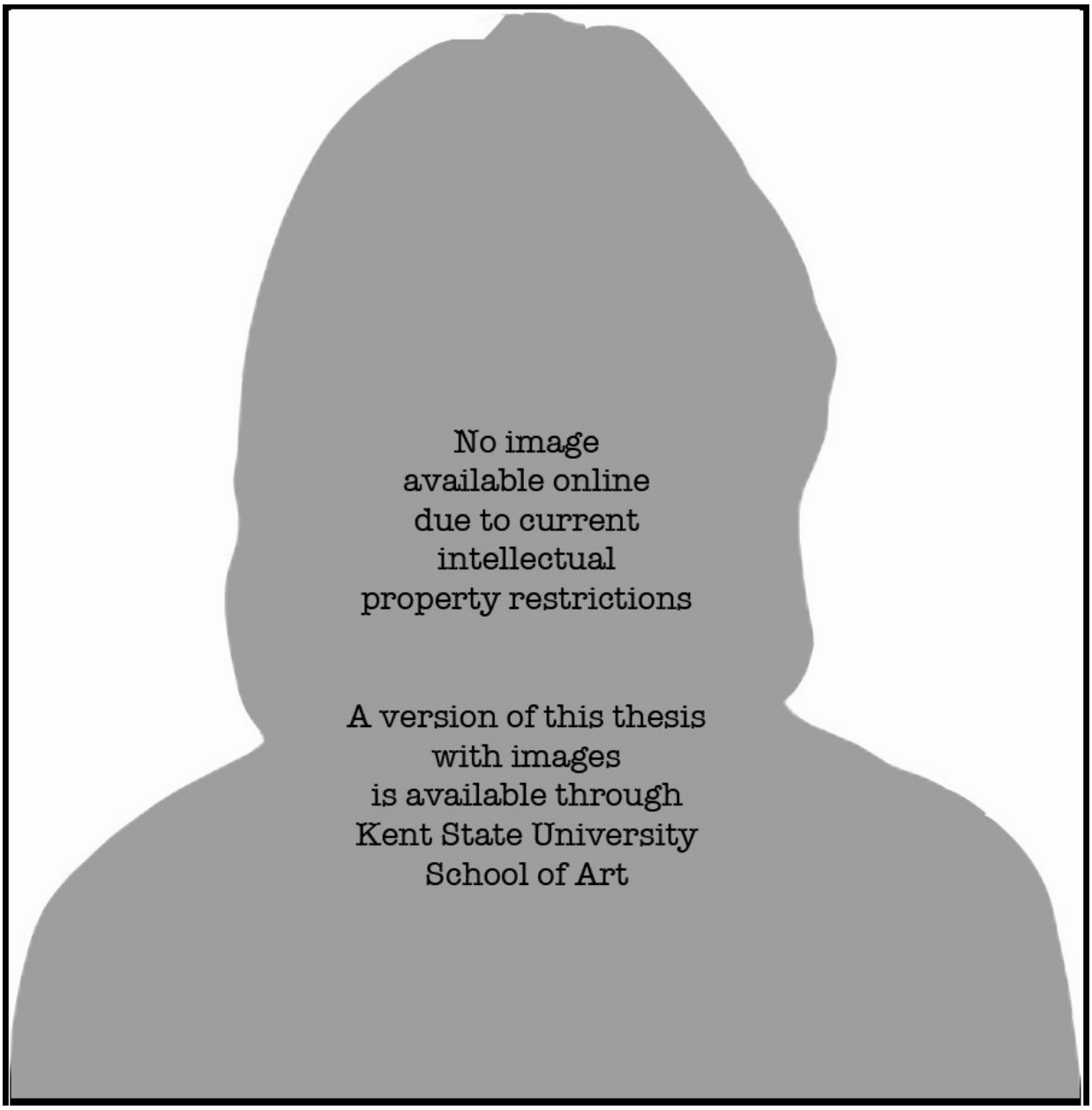

Fig. 34 Pablo Picasso, *Blind Minotaur Before the Sea Guided by a Little Girl*, 1934. Pencil. Musée Picasso, Paris.[32]

[32] Kyriakos Koutsomallis, Polina Kosmadaki, Carolina Doriti, eds. *Pablo Picasso and Greece* (Torino: Umberto Allemandi & C., 2004), plate 56.

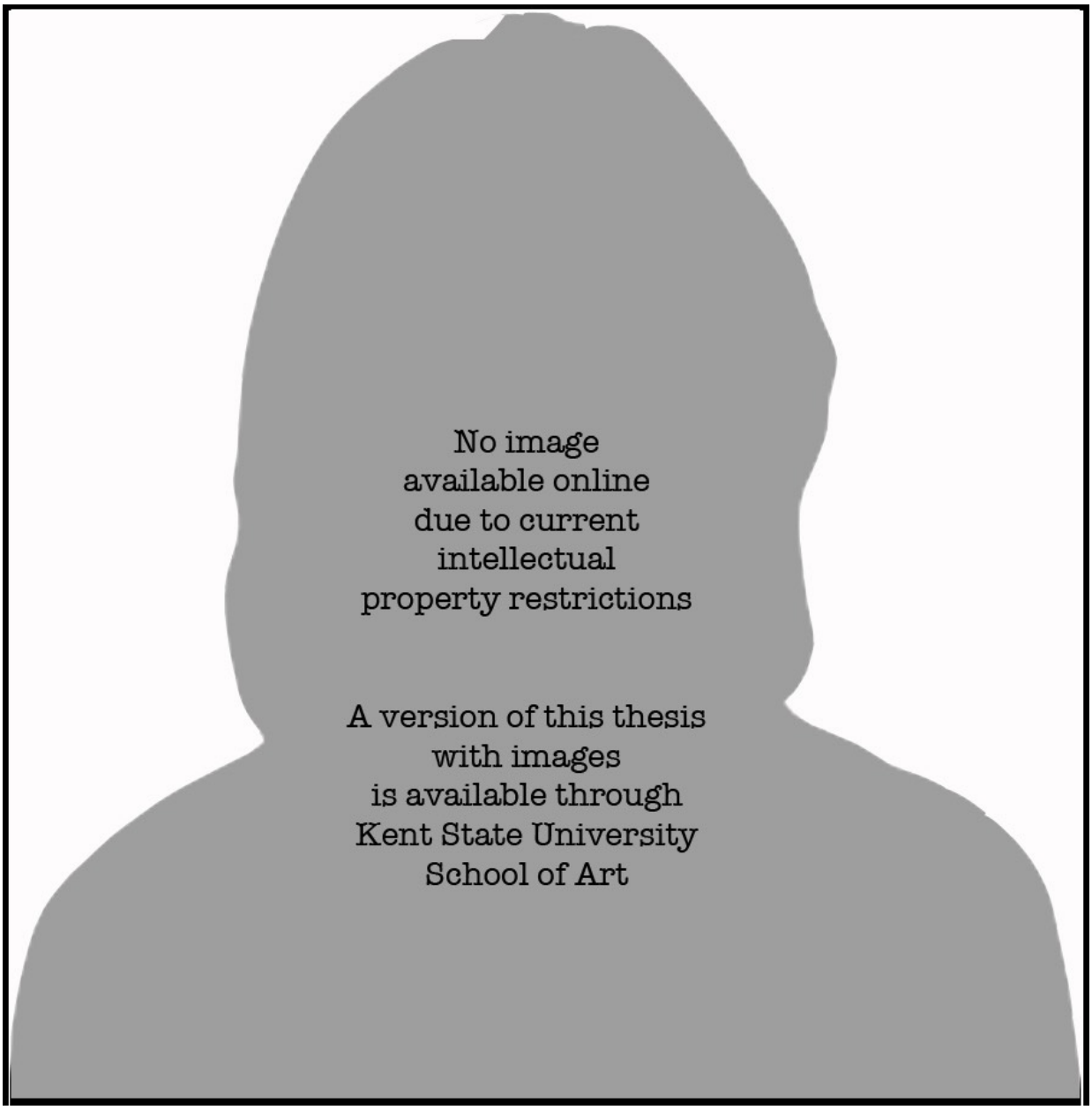

Fig. 35 Pablo Picasso, *Minotauromachy*, 1935. Etching and engraving. Sixth state. Musée Picasso, Paris.[33]

[33] Kyriakos Koutsomallis, Polina Kosmadaki, Carolina Doriti, eds. *Pablo Picasso and Greece* (Torino: Umberto Allemandi & C., 2004), plate 60.

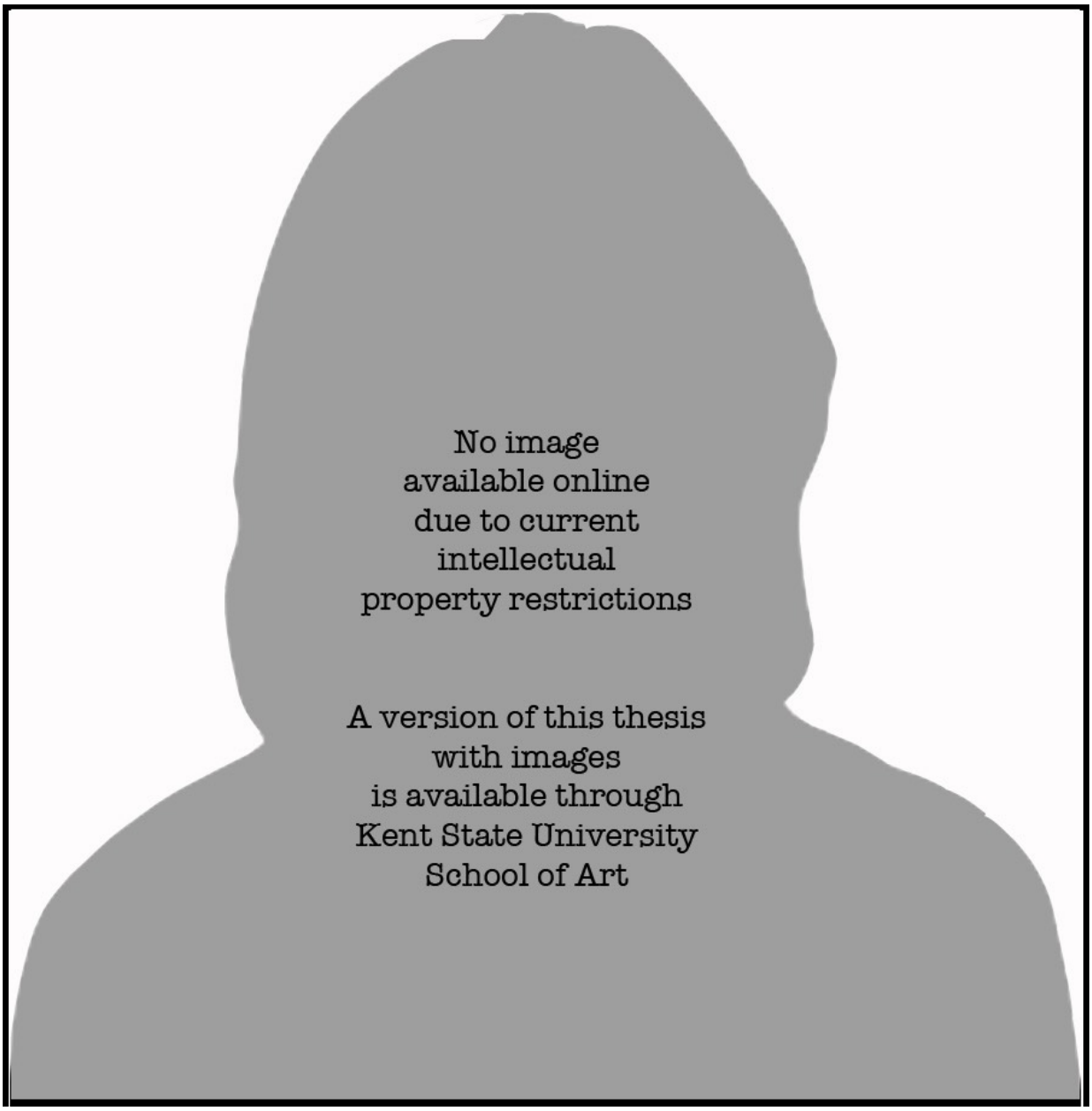

Fig. 36 Pablo Picasso, *Bullfight: Death of the Torero*, 1933. Oil on wood. Musée Picasso, Paris.[34]

[34] Elizabeth Cowling, *Picasso: Style and Meaning* (London: Phaidon Press Limited, 2002), 558.

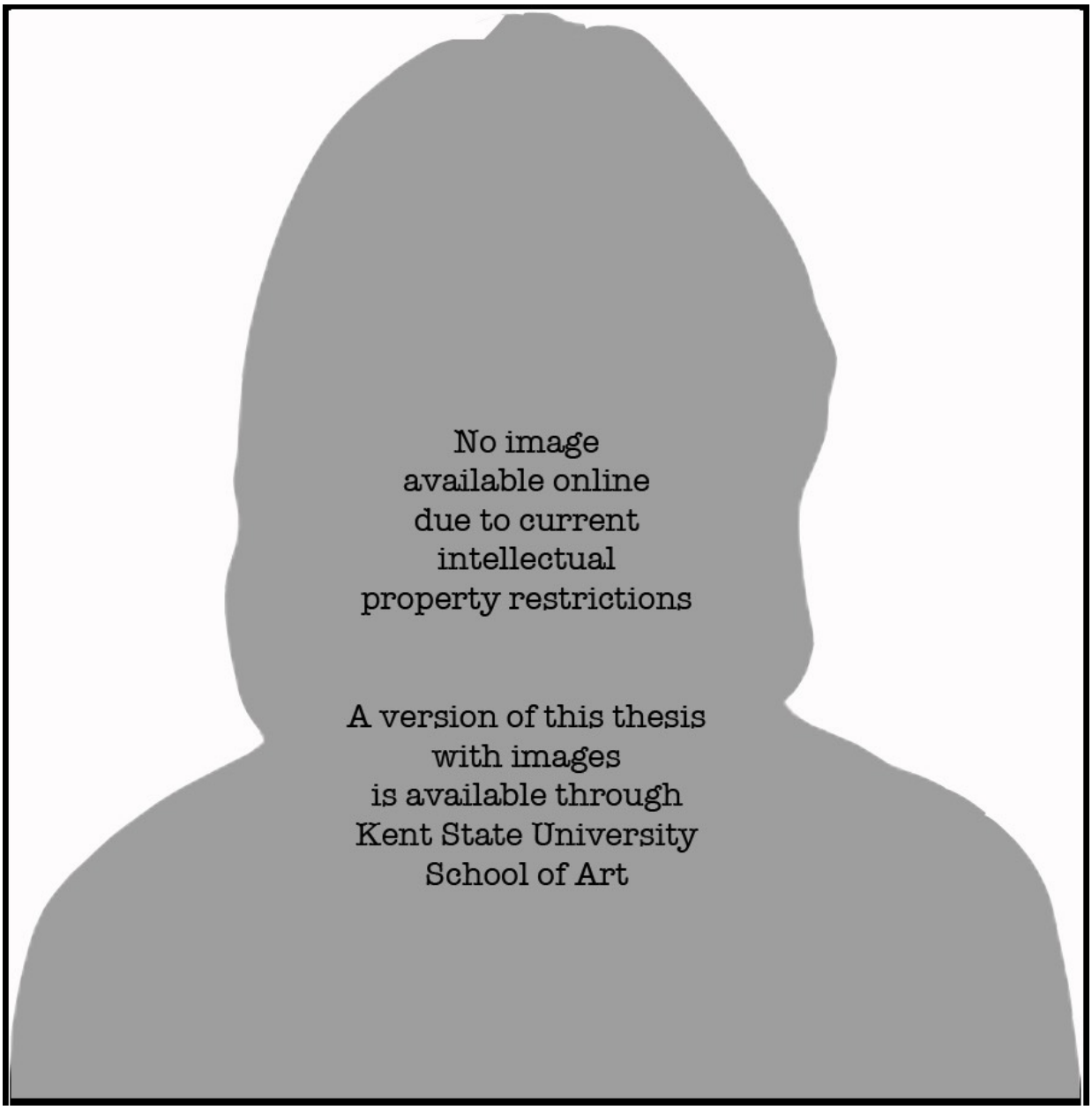

Fig. 37 Pablo Picasso, *Female Torero II*, 1934. Etching.
Graphikmuseum Pablo Picasso Münster.[35]

[35] Markus Müller, ed., *Pablo Picasso and Marie-Thérèse Walter: Between Classicism and Surrealism* (Berlin: Kerber Verlag, 2004), 205.

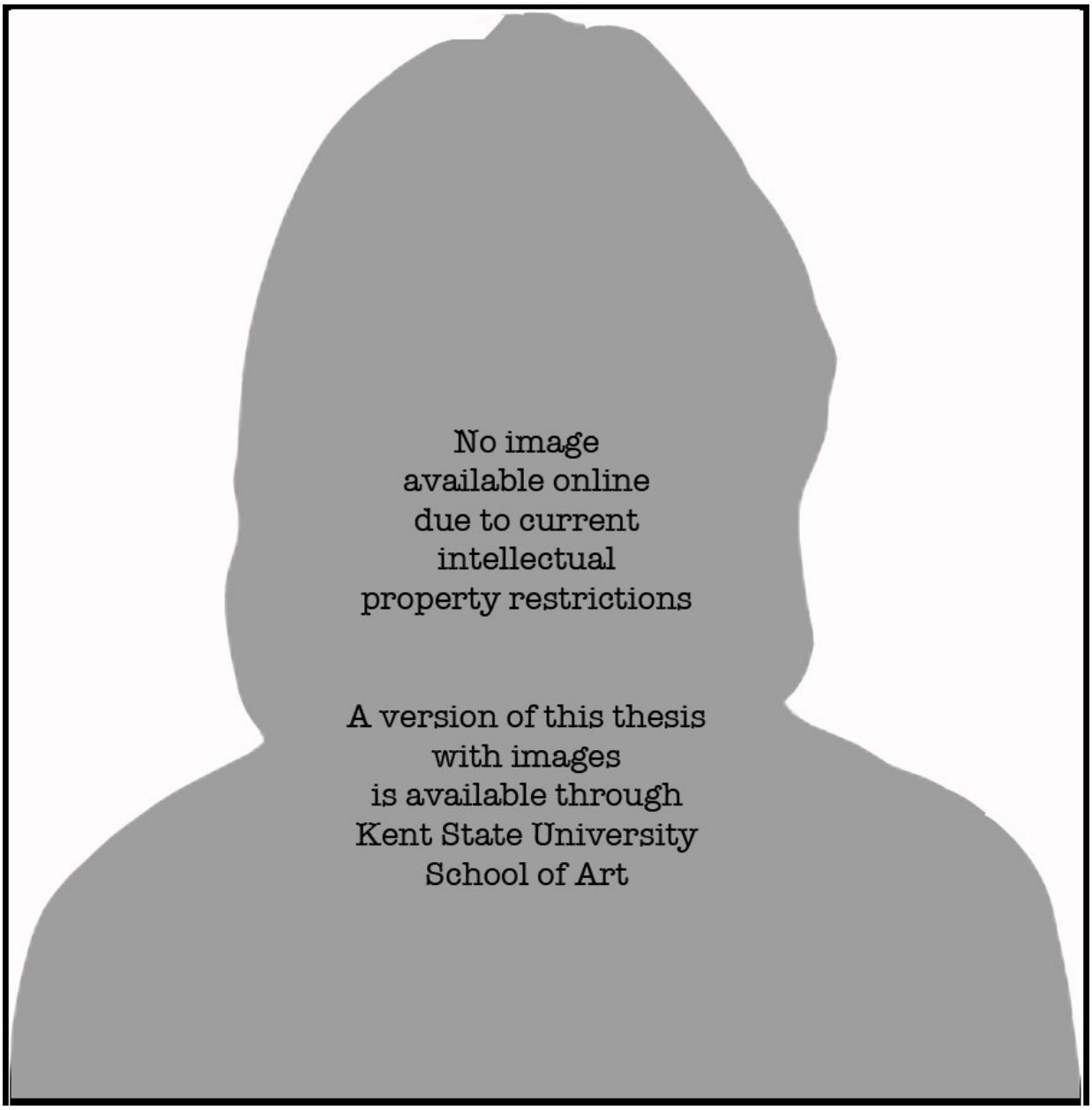

Fig. 38 André Masson, *Le Secret du Labyrinthe* (*The Secret of the Labyrinth*), 1935. Graphite and pastel. Musée National d'Art Moderne Musée. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.[36]

[36] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 99.

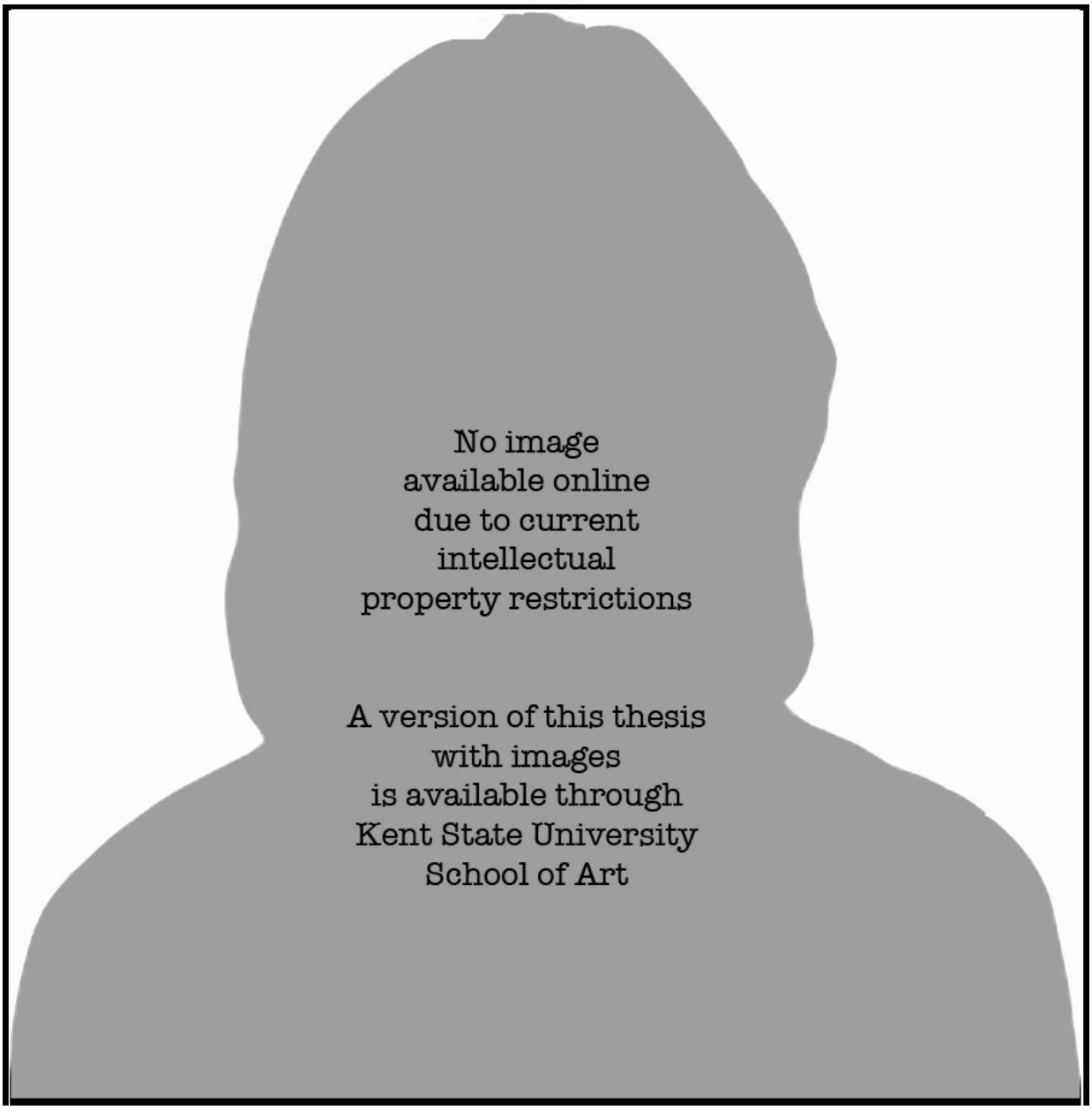

Fig. 39 André Masson, Cover, *Acéphale* 1, June 24, 1936.[37]

[37] *Acéphale*, 1. n.p. (24 June 1936).

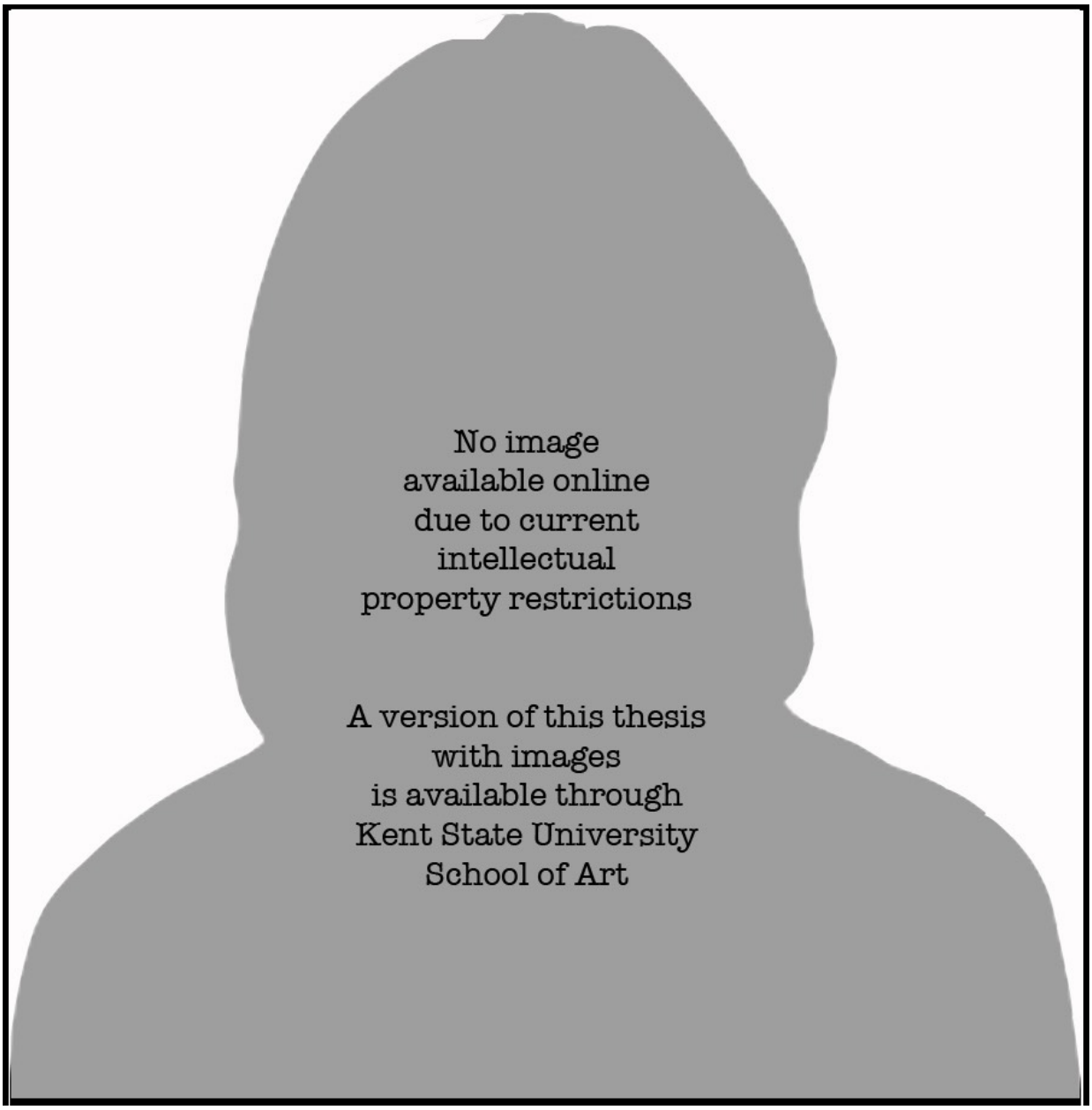

Fig. 40 André Masson, *Dionysos*, July 1937.[38]

[38] *Acéphale*, 3/4 n.p. (July 1937), 1.

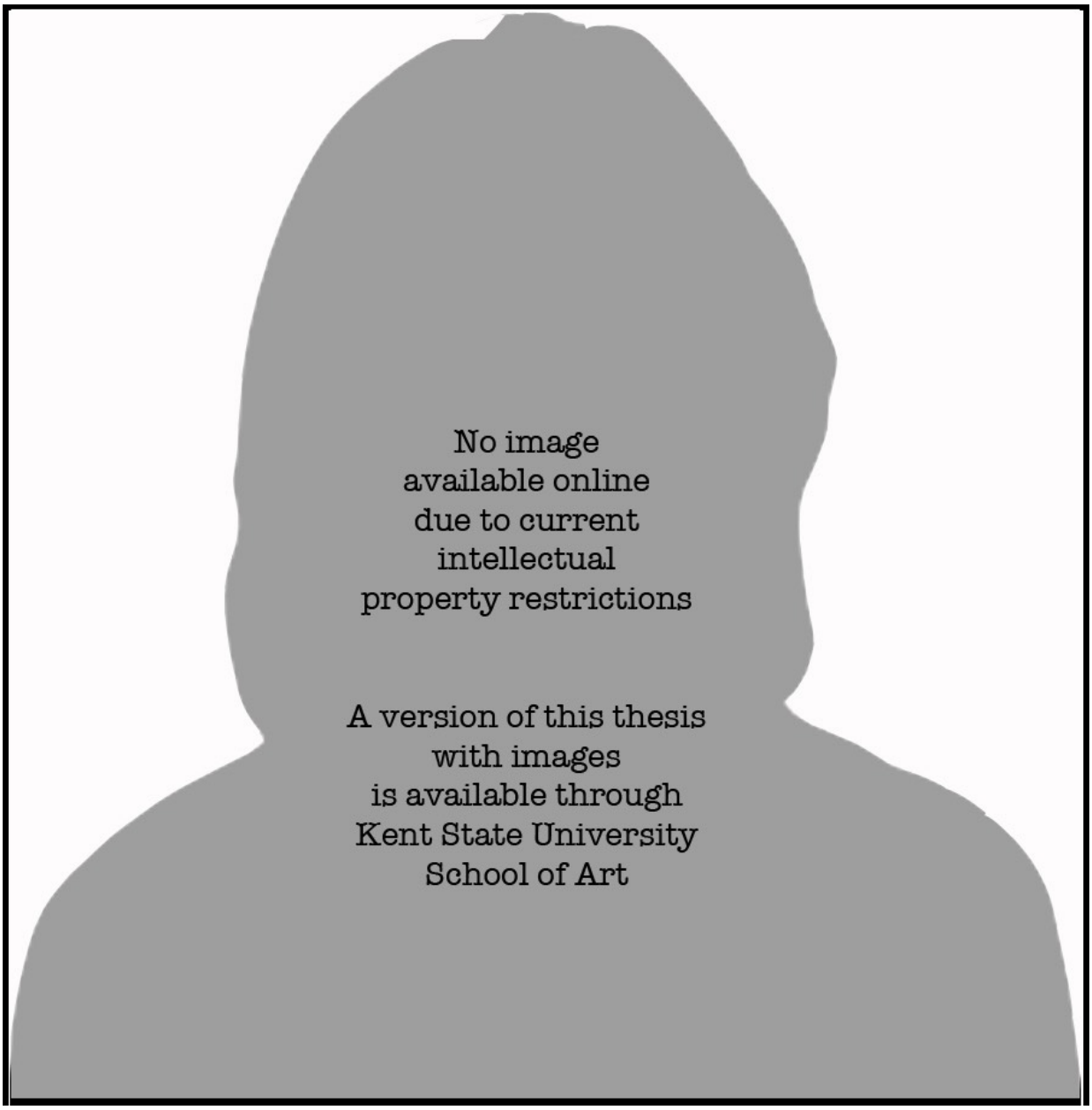

Fig. 41 André Masson, *La Grèce tragique* (*The Greek Tragedy*), July 1937.[39]

[39] *Acéphale*, 3/4 n.p. (July 1937), 5.

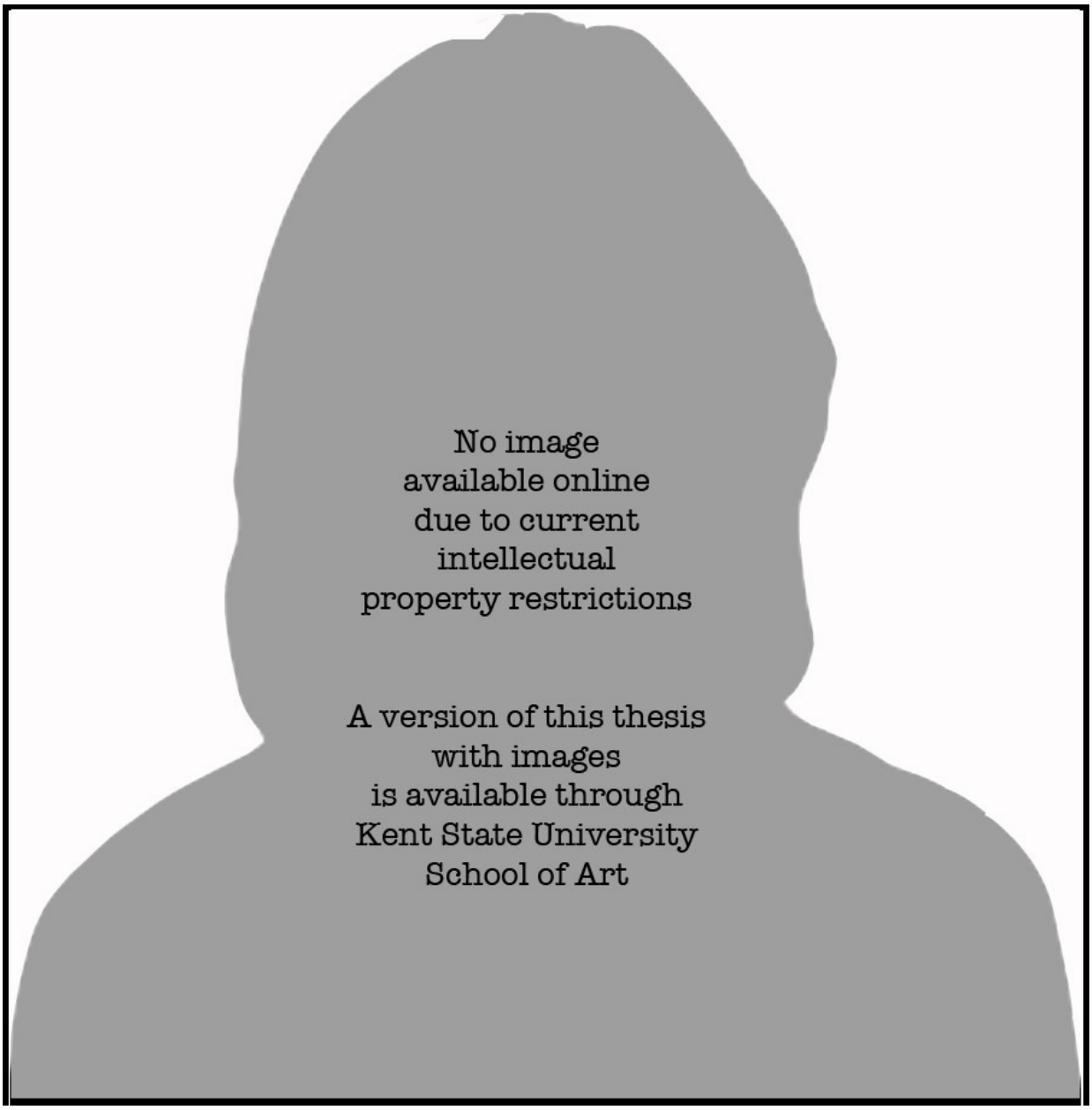

Fig. 42 André Masson, *L'univers dionysiaque* (The Dionysian Universe), July 1937.[40]

[40] *Acéphale*, 3/4 n.p. (July 1937), 7.

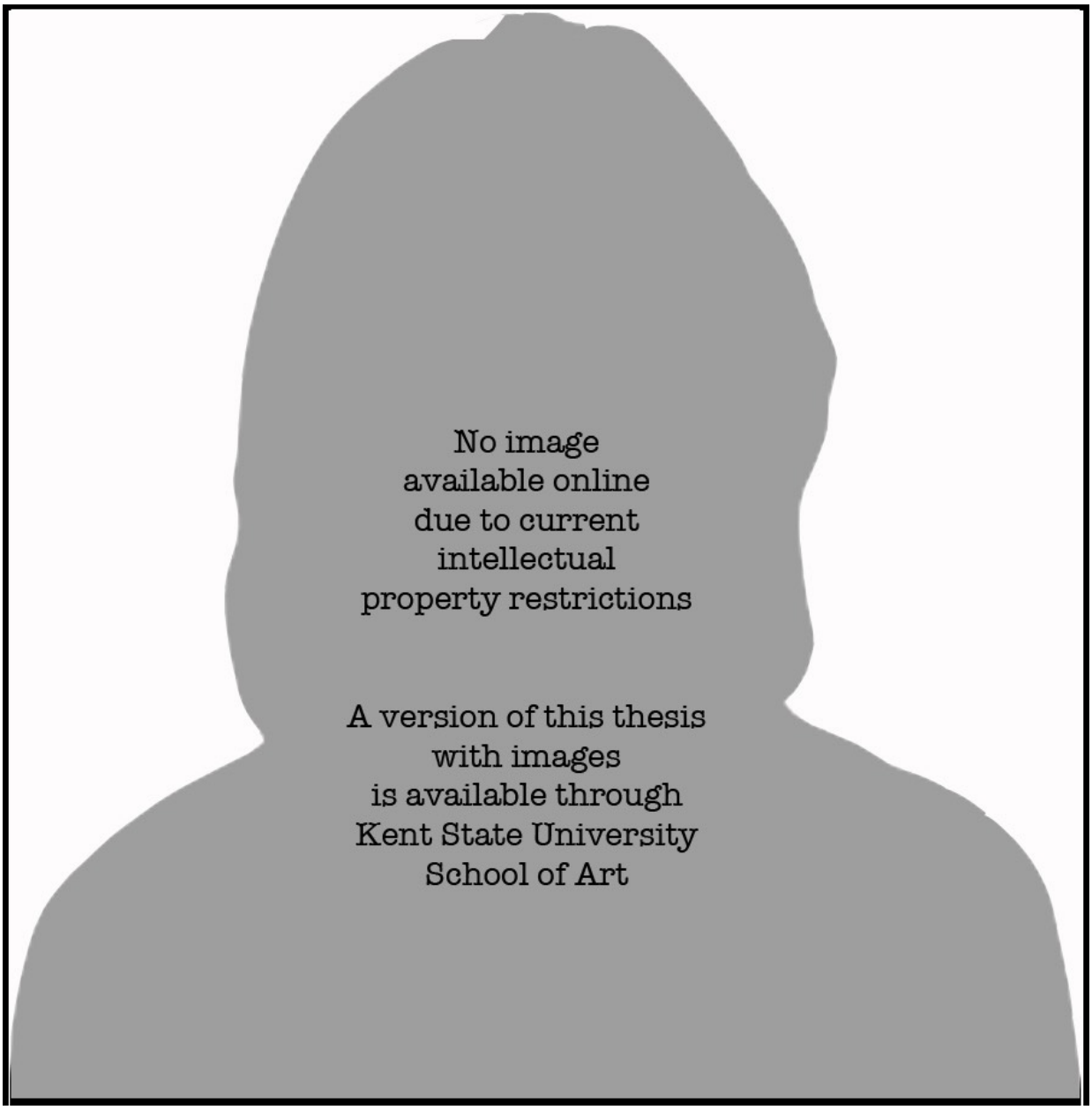

Fig. 43 André Masson, *Story of Theseus*, 1938. Oil and sand on wood. Galerie Leiris, Paris.[41]

[41] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 100.

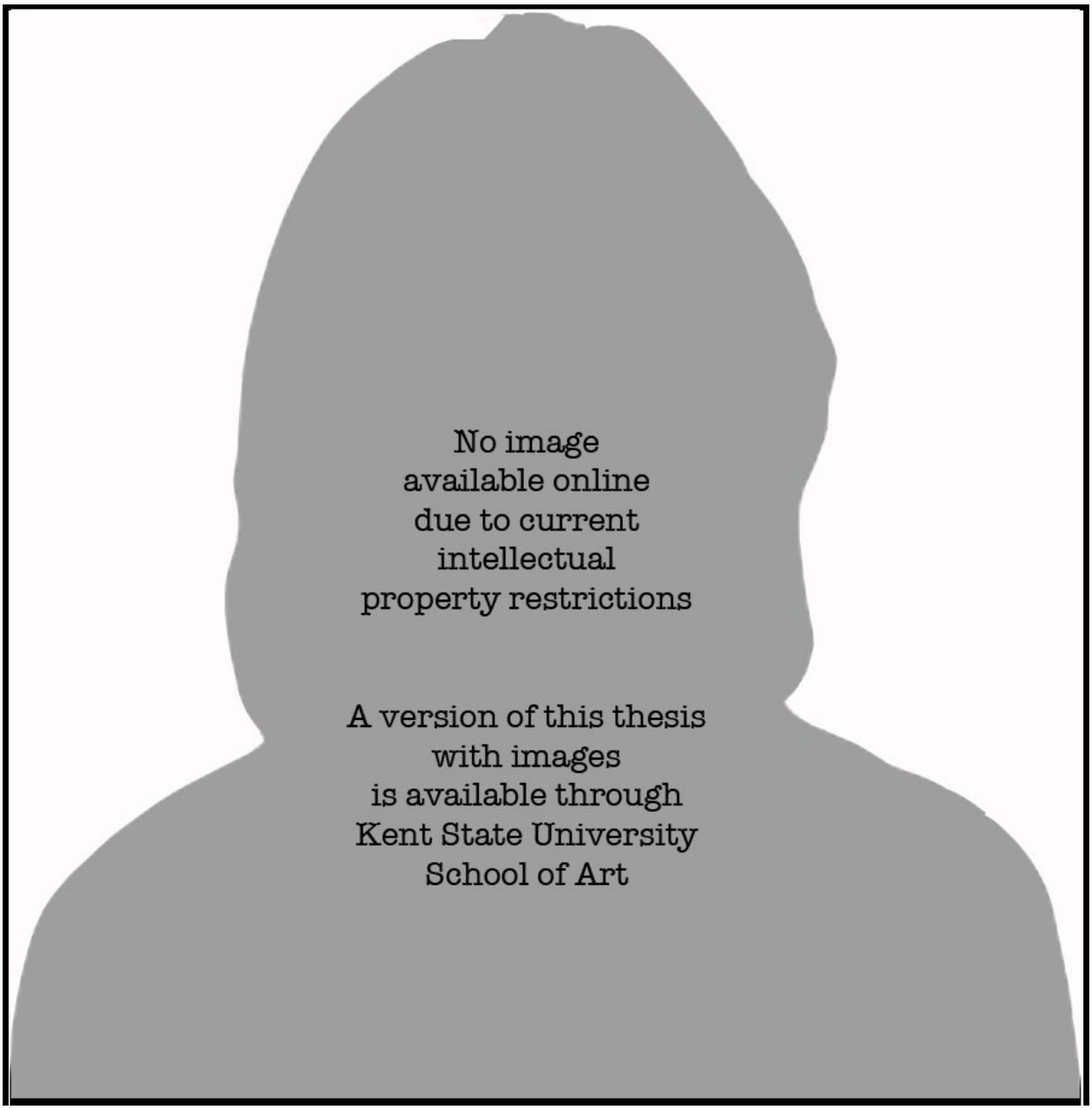

Fig. 44 André Masson, *The Labyrinth*, 1938. Oil on canvas. Musée National d'Art Moderne. Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.[42]

[42] Poling, *André Masson and the Surrealist Self*, 105.