

MIRÓ

Fundació Joan Miró
* *J.M.* Barcelona



20 OCTOBER 2023-
25 FEBRUARY 2024

PICASSO

Exhibition organized by the Museu Picasso Barcelona and the Fundació Joan Miró with the support of the Spanish National Commission for the Commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the death of Pablo Picasso and the Musée national Picasso-Paris.



Picasso Celebration 1973 - 2023:
50 exhibitions and activities to celebrate Picasso:



With the support in Spain:



PRESS KIT

INDEX

1. Institutional introduction
2. *Picasso Celebration 1973 – 2023*
3. General information
4. Presentation of the exhibition
5. Areas of the exhibition
6. The publication
7. Credits

1. Institutional Introduction

On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of Pablo Picasso's death and the fortieth of Joan Miró's, we are pleased to present *Miró-Picasso*, an exceptional exhibition organised as part of the *Picasso Celebration 1973–2023*. It is the first time that the Fundació Joan Miró and the Museu Picasso in Barcelona – which also happens to be celebrating its sixtieth anniversary – are jointly producing and holding an exhibition in their respective venues. We are immensely proud as directors of these two institutions which are, each in its own right, clear manifestations of the intense relationship that both Miró and Picasso had with the city of Barcelona and of the will to preserve their legacy.

The exhibition is built around two main themes: on the one hand, the friendship Joan Miró and Pablo Picasso shared throughout their lives, reflected in artworks and documents that bear witness to their encounters, their affinities and their divergences in the realm of art and in their shared friendships; on the other hand, their respective ties to Barcelona, which resulted in the legacy they left to the city in the form of monographic museums. The two shared a wish to create their own museum for Barcelona, leaving unquestionable proof of their love for the city.

The Museu Picasso in Barcelona opened its doors in 1963, on Carrer de Montcada, at the artist's request and thanks to the determination and support of his friends and his circle in the city: first of all, his secretary and the museum's founder Jaume Sabartés, but also the Gaspar and Gili families, as well as the notary Raimon Noguera ('maître Noguera' or 'my friend Raymundo Noguera', as Picasso used to call him). The same actors were present in the early days of the Fundació Joan Miró, jointly with the architect Josep Lluís Sert, the gallerist and friend Joan Prats, Joaquim Gomis and Miró's wife Pilar Juncosa. The foundation opened its doors to the public in 1975.



Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró in Mougins, 1967
Photograph by Jacqueline Roque
© Successió Miró, 2023
© Jacqueline Picasso, VEGAP, Barcelona, 2023
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023

Both institutions benefited from the support of the political authorities of the Barcelona City Council, and especially of Mayor Josep Maria de Porcioles – with the notary Noguera acting as an intermediary – who proceeded with the necessary determination for Picasso’s and Miró’s wishes to come true.

The year 1968 was a critical time in both artists’ trajectories and for the city of Barcelona. For Pablo Picasso, it was the year he lost his friend and personal secretary Jaume Sabartés. As a tribute to his memory, just three months later Picasso donated the fifty-eight pieces from the *Las Meninas* series to his museum in Barcelona. On 8 November of that same year, Joan Miró opened a major retrospective, organised by the Barcelona City Council, of his work at the old Hospital de la Santa Creu, the core of which eventually became the seed of the collection for his foundation in Barcelona.

The *Miró-Picasso* exhibition is not intended as a retrospective overview; instead, it aims to highlight the contemporaneity of both artists and showcase the outstanding collections held at the Fundació Joan Miró and the Museu Picasso in Barcelona, with exceptional pieces by both artists. In turn, these holdings are complemented with salient pieces from international museums and private collections. We would like to thank all the institutions and collectors who have loaned us their works, and especially the Successió Miró, the Picasso Administration, the Fondation Marie Anne Poniatowski-Krugier, Catherine Hutin and the rest of private collections.

If Barcelona is the city that hosts the two museums, Catalonia is the place that shelters the two artists in their process of artistic growth and maturation, and the territory that nourishes and inspires them at different points in their careers. In the case of Miró, the natural setting of Mont-Roig serves as the primary and inexhaustible source of inspiration for his entire artistic output. In the case of Picasso, Horta de Sant Joan, Gósol, and Cadaqués are entwined with artistic accomplishments that have shaped a prior and subsequent period in the history of 20th-century painting. For this reason, we would like to express our gratitude to the Government of Catalonia for its enthusiasm and support in the creation of this exhibition, as well as for its invaluable contribution to the realization of this project, which has now become a reality.

We are delighted to have built a relationship of collaboration and mutual support between institutions in pursuit of a project that involves exchanging exceptional pieces selected from our collections; the main piece from the *Las Meninas* series, for example, will leave the Museu Picasso to be on view at the Fundació Joan Miró for the duration of the exhibition. *Morning Star*, a key piece in Miró's artistic career and most personal history, will be leaving the Fundació. This example of reciprocity will undoubtedly enrich our visitors' experience and open up new opportunities for studying both artists.

We wish to thank all the authors who have written for the catalogue and developed aspects that only reaffirm the connection between Joan Miró and Pablo Picasso: challenging the boundaries of painting, the fascination for Alfred Jarry, anti-Francoism or ceramics. Their reflections about the two artists and their respective legacies are far-reaching and immensely valuable.

The exhibition and the publication would not have been possible without the expertise of the curatorial team: from the Fundació Joan Miró, Teresa Montaner and Sònia Villegas, and from the Museu Picasso, Margarida Cortadella and Elena Llorens. We truly appreciate their commitment to making this fascinating and complex exhibition possible. We also wish to thank the staff of both museums for carrying out a unique project that pays homage to two of the leading artists of the twentieth century, and we are convinced that it will live on in our visitors' memories.

Marko Daniel
Director of the Fundació Joan Miró

Emmanuel Guigon
Director of the Museu Picasso

2. Picasso Celebration 1973 – 2023

April 8, 2023 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the death of Spanish artist Pablo Picasso and thus the year will represent a celebration of his work and his artistic legacy in France, Spain and internationally.

The French and Spanish governments wished to mark this transnational event through a bi-national commission, bringing together the cultural and diplomatic administrations of both countries.

The Picasso Celebration 1973-2023 revolves around some fifty exhibitions and events to be held at renowned cultural institutions in Europe and North America that, together, address a historiographical analysis of Picasso's work. The commemoration, accompanied by official celebrations in France and Spain, will make it possible to take stock of the research and interpretations of the artist's work, especially during an important international symposium in autumn 2023, which also coincides with the opening of the Center for Picasso Studies in Paris. The Musée national Picasso-Paris and the Spanish National Commission for the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the death of Pablo Picasso are pleased to support this exceptional program.

3. General Information

EXHIBITION SPACE

Fundació Joan Miró Barcelona
Parc de Montjuïc
08038 Barcelona
T +34 934 439 470
info@fmirobcn.org
www.fmirobcn.org

Museu Picasso
Montcada, 15 - 23
08003 Barcelona
Tel. 932 563 000
museupicasso@bcn.cat
www.museupicasso.bcn.cat

OPENING TO THE PUBLIC

From October 20th, 2023 to February 25th, 2024

INSTITUTIONAL OPENING

Wednesday 18th at 6 p.m. at the Museu Picasso and
at 8 p.m. at the Fundació Joan Miró

GENERAL OPENING

Thursday 19th at both museums
Friday 20th: doors open to the public at both
museums

COMBINED ENTRY TO THE TWO MUSEUMS

General: €22
Reduced: €15

Reductions:

Students under 30, people over 65 and
Consorti Biblioteques card

Free enter:

Under 18s and people with disabilities

Museu Picasso Barcelona: The first Sunday of each
month and Thursdays from 5 p.m.

CELEBRATION PICASSO 1973-2023:

The exhibition is part of the official program of the
Picasso Celebration 1973-2023
<https://celebracionpicasso.es>

THE EXPOSITION IN NUMBERS

DISPLAY SURFACE:

Joan Miró Foundation: 1,300m2
Picasso Museum: 1,144 m2

NUMBER OF WORKS IN THE EXHIBITION:

338

OBRAS DE LA EXPOSICIÓN

FUNDACIÓ JOAN MIRÓ	Miró	Picasso
Paintings	27	27
Sculptures	7	7
Objects	3	3
Drawings and collages	25	6
Graphic work	9 (8 from the <i>Black and Red Series</i>)	17 (14 from <i>Poèmes et lithographies</i> and 2 from <i>Dream and Lie of Franco</i>)
Illustrated books	6	6 (1 con Miró et al.)
Preparatory drawings and artist notes	4	

MUSEU PICASSO BARCELONA	Miró	Picasso
Paintings	36	26
Sculptures	7	7
Ceramics	9	8
Graphic work	42 (41 from the <i>Barcelona Series</i>)	3
Drawings	25	11
Illustrated books	8	7
Pyrography		1
Cliché verre		1

LIST OF LENDERS

Centre Pompidou. Musée national d'art moderne -
Centre de création industrielle
Chancellerie des universités de Paris – Bibliothèque littéraire
Jacques Doucet
Col·lecció EL CONVENTET, Barcelona
Col·lecció JHL, New York
Collection Adrien Maeght, Saint-Paul-de-Vence
Collection Isabelle Maeght, Paris
Collection Jules Maeght, Paris
Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio
Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, Beyeler Collection
Fondation Marie Anne Poniowski Krugier
Fundação Serralves – Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Porto
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
Fundació Suñol, Barcelona
Kunsthaus Zürich
Kunstmuseum Basel
Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen, Düsseldorf
Lyon, musée des Beaux-Arts
Minneapolis Institute of Art
Moderna Museet, Stockholm
Musée Cantini, Marseille
Musée national Picasso-Paris
Musée Zervos, Vézelay – Conseil départemental de l'Yonne
Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, Brussels
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid
Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Barcelona
Museu Picasso, Barcelona
Nahmad Collection
Philadelphia Museum of Art
Tate, London
The Art Institute of Chicago
The Israel Museum, Jerusalem
The Museum of Modern Art, New York
The National Gallery of Art, Washington

There are some lenders who preferred to remain anonymous

4. Presentation of the exhibition

This outstanding exhibition presents Joan Miró (1893-1983) and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) together for the first time in Barcelona. These two artists central to twentieth-century art had a long and fruitful friendship and both chose to bequeath to Barcelona a major part of their legacy in the form of single-artist museums. The Fundació Joan Miró and the Museu Picasso Barcelona have combined their efforts to jointly organise a single exhibition open to the public simultaneously in both institutions.

Miró-Picasso charts the key moments when their lives converged and it explores their artistic affinities. Their closeness to the circles of the Surrealists, their political commitment during the Spanish Civil War and the dark years of the Second World War are three of these important moments, while their shared interest in poetry and writing, their discovery of ceramic as a new form of expression and their intervention in the architectural and public space are three of the paths they both followed. Despite the dissimilarities between them, Miró and Picasso shared the same spirit of freedom and transgression that led them to explore the limits of painting.



Pablo Picasso with his paintings and a work of his private collection by Joan Miró
Mougins, Notre-Dame-de-Vie, 1962
Photograph by Edward Quinn
© edwardquinn.com
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023

5. Areas of the exhibition

1. THE MEETING

Barcelona 1917: Picasso at the Gran Teatre del Liceu (FJM)

The première of the ballet *Parade* by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes at the Gran Teatre del Liceu opera house in Barcelona on 10 November 1917, with costumes, curtain and set designs by Picasso, was the starting point of the friendship between Picasso and Miró and also of the current exhibition. Picasso's set design work, combining synthetic Cubism with figuration in the classical style in keeping with the 'return to order', was a crucial moment for the young Miró. His visit two years later to Picasso's mother's apartment, where he was able to view the works that Picasso had done during his stay in Barcelona in 1917, served to reaffirm his idea that he needed to move towards modern classicism and this could only be achieved through Cubism.

Taking Picasso as a referent, but Eastern art and Gothic painting too, Miró gave up his eclectic style and in 1918 took refuge in Mont-roig, where he began to work on a new language characterised by its emphasis on detail that gave rise to a series of portraits, landscapes and still lifes such as *Horse, Pipe and Red Flower* (1920) and *Portrait of a Spanish Dancer* (1921).



Pablo Picasso
Harlequin [Léonide Massine]
June-July 1917
Oil painting
138 x 110.5 cm
Museu Picasso Barcelona
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023

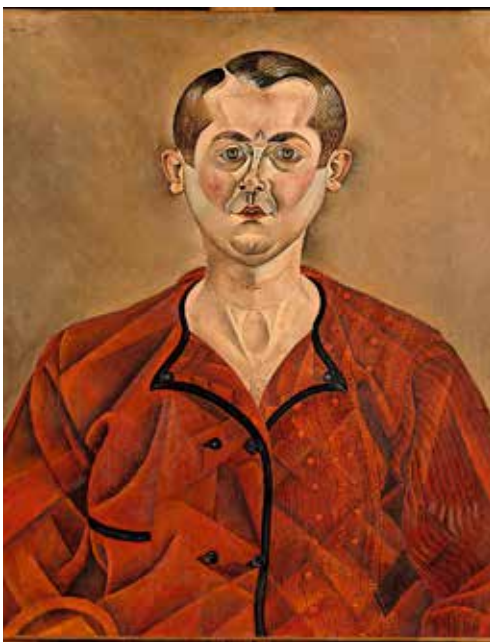


Joan Miró
Horse, Pipe and Red Flower
1920
Oil on canvas
82.5 x 75 cm
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. C. Earle Miller, 1986
Courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art
© Successió Miró, 2023

Paris 1921: Miró at La Licorne gallery (MPB)

Miró set foot in Paris for the first time on 1 March 1920. He arrived in the city full of hope and expectation, with the idea of holding his first solo show there and with a package given to him by Picasso's mother to deliver to her son. It was this parcel that marked the start of the story of the friendship between Picasso and Miró, with Miró visiting Picasso on several occasions that spring in his home on Rue La Boétie. 'That morning, we went with Ricart to Picasso's home. He welcomed us warmly into his studio; we saw everything he was doing and he showed us a lot of Black art sculptures and two canvases by [Le Douanier] Rousseau.'

Picasso immediately showed a keen interest in the work of the young Catalan, as demonstrated by the fact that when Miró opened his long-awaited exhibition at La Licorne gallery in April 1921, one of the canvases on display, his *Self-portrait* depicting himself in a Garibaldi shirt was already shown as owned by Picasso. Picasso was also generous with his advice ('Believe me, if you want to be a painter, do not leave Paris') and support, recommending Miró, among others, to his dealer of the time, Paul Rosenberg.



Joan Miró
Self-portrait
1919
Oil on canvas
73 x 60 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris
© Successió Miró, 2023



Joan Miró
The Farm
1921 - 1922
Oil on canvas
132.8 x 141.3 cm
National Gallery of Art, Washington
Gift of Mary Hemingway
© Successió Miró, 2023

'You were the first artist I met on my arrival in Paris in 1919 [sic], it was to you that I showed [...] my first paintings that no-one else had yet seen.'

Letter from Joan Miró to Pablo Picasso, Paris, 6 May 1954

2. THE PARIS OF SURREALISM

The impact of the *Mercure* ballet (MPB)

On 15 June 1924, the Théâtre La Cigale in Paris hosted the première of the avant-garde ballet *Mercure*, which reunited the memorable trio of *Parade* (1917): the composer Erik Satie, the dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine and Picasso, who designed the sets, wardrobe and curtain for the ballet. This strikingly visual work combining images, signs and lettering marked the public debut of a new Picasso, one far removed from the Cubist and neoclassical styles of his art in recent years and which filled with enthusiasm the young people that we now term 'Surrealists', who quickly claimed him as one of their own.

Miró attended the première of *Mercure* on the night before he returned to Catalonia for the summer, as he did every year, and he wanted to leave a written record for Picasso of the impact the ballet had had on him. Undoubtedly *Mercure* confirmed the direction he had just begun to take in his own painting, centred on the linearity of the drawing with which he set out, using minimal artistic resources, a universe made by dint of free associations that were not without irony or eroticism.



Pablo Picasso
Stage Curtain for the ballet "Mercure"
1924
Painting
394 x 501 cm
Center Pompidou, Paris
National Museum of Modern Art - Center for Industrial Creation
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Painting (The Catalan)
1925
Oil and pencil on canvas
100 x 81 cm
Center Pompidou, Paris.
National Museum of Modern Art - Center for Industrial Creation
© Successió Miró, 2023

'It was a fine goodbye in Paris on the night of *Mercure*! Those monsters and your canvas *Woman with a Shirt* ([...] that canvas we all spoke of the day we said our goodbyes; the one my friends and I loved so much), two strong impressions of my life!'

Letter from Joan Miró to Pablo Picasso, Mont-roig, 15 November 1924

An Unprecedented Picasso (FJM)

Miró came into contact with the Surrealists through André Masson and his poet friends, with whom he learned to dispense with the pictorial conventions that had governed Western painting for centuries. Even so, Picasso, with his immense capacity for reinventing himself, was always a referent for Miró and the Surrealists. A paradigmatic example is Picasso's painting *The Three Dancers* (1925), with which he announced the end of his classicism and the start of a new style.

The violence that emanates from this work through the distortion of the forms and the colours is in contrast with the work Miró was producing during those same years, characterised by extreme synthesis in which the figuration is practically reduced to a few simple lines and blots of colour, but which nevertheless contains an eroticism that Miró recognised in Picasso's art. The female figure went on to become a testing ground for both artists, above all in the themes of dancers and bathers. In the case of Miró, he was to use dancers to launch a forthright attack on traditional pictorial structures.



Pablo Picasso
The Three Dancers
1925
Oil on canvas
215.3 × 142.2 cm
Tate Gallery, London
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Portrait of a Dancer
1928
Cork, feather and pin fixed on
wood panel with Ripolin
100 × 80 cm
Centre Pompidou, Paris
Musée national d'art moderne-
Centre de création industrielle
Gift of Mrs. Aube Breton-Elléouët
© Successió Miró, 2023

Forms of desire (MPB)

In 1922, Miró moved into the studio rented to him by the sculptor Pablo Gargallo at number 45 on Rue Blomet. There Miró made friends with his neighbour, the painter André Masson, and soon joined his circle, which included poets and writers such as Michel Leiris. It was thanks to Masson's friends that Miró came into contact with the Surrealist group, led by André Breton. While poetry was a decisive factor in Miró's rejection of all pictorial conventions, it was being a part of the cluster of creative figures on Rue Blomet that brought him closer to the Surrealists, though he was never officially a member of the group.

Nor was Picasso, despite the fact that he forged close connections with some of its leading members. A renewed, often disturbing figuration and a brutal pictorial style that Picasso embarked on in 1925 in works such as *The Kiss* set him, until well into the 1930s, on a clearly defined path for exploring the visual limits of art. Disjointed, overtly sexual or metamorphosed bodies were some of the formal strategies with which Picasso shocked and bewildered the spectator expecting to see Surrealism.



Pablo Picasso
Large nude in a Red armchair
1929
Oil on canvas
195 x 129 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Flame in Space and Nude woman
1932
Oil on cardboard
41 x 32 cm
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023

The Challenge of Painting (FJM)

In 1927, the critic Maurice Raynal compiled a number of statements made by Miró in which the artist expressed a desire to 'murder painting'. Picasso had done just that a year earlier with his *Guitars*, which proved a surprise due to their formal daring, their manifest aggressiveness and their in-depth exploration of the principle of collage, which he himself and Georges Braque had introduced in 1912, Miró took aim this time by using materials and procedures alien to art.

In this context, the group exhibition of collages held in March 1930 at the Galerie Goemans in Paris, entitled *La Peinture au défi* and which included work by Miró and Picasso, was extremely important. Miró showed two *Spanish Dancers* (1928) and a collage (1929), while Picasso showed six collages, among them one of his *Guitars* (1926), made using hessian and nails. Louis Aragon's preface in the catalogue proved fundamental to Surrealism as a programme, since it established a new way of conceiving art in which, thanks to collage, individual authorship of the work was abolished, to be replaced by a new collective objectivity.



Pablo Picasso
La Demoiselle (Head)
1929
Oil on canvas
Moderna Museet, Stockholm
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Object of Sunset
1935-36
Assemblage. Painted carob tree trunk,
spring mattress, gas burner, chain,
shackle and string
68 × 44 × 26 cm
Centre Pompidou, Paris
Musée national d'art moderne-Centre de création industrielle
Acquisition, 1975
© Successió Miró, 2023

3. PAINTING AND POETRY

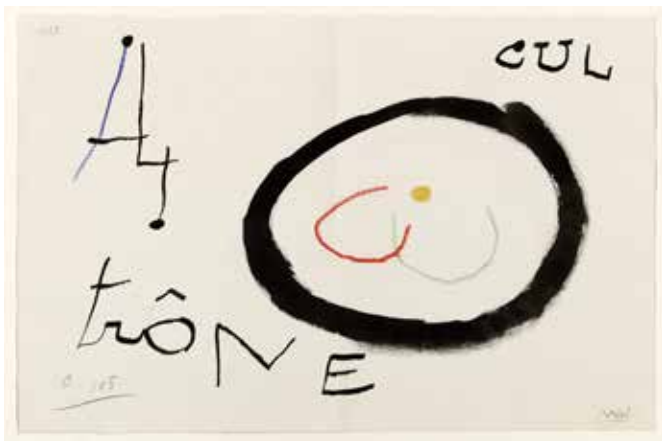
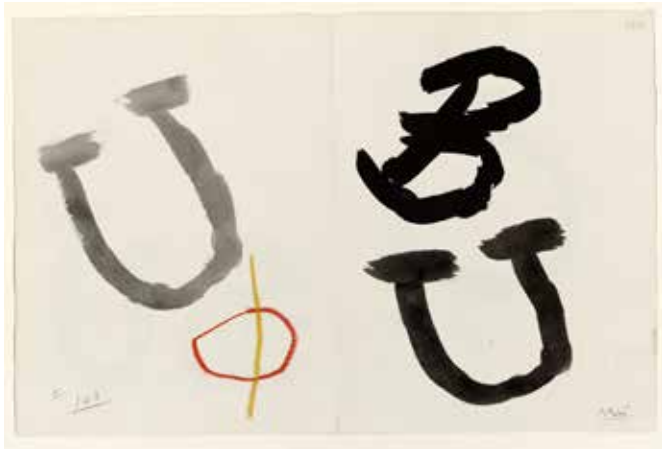
Jarry universe (MPB)

Alfred Jarry (Laval, 1873 – Paris, 1907), a versatile writer and eccentric man of letters, is best known for his two literary characters, Ubu and Dr. Faustroll, the founder of pataphysics, ‘the science of imaginary solutions’. Ubu is not just a pear-shaped character with a spiral on his belly drawn by Jarry himself, but also the emblem of satire against tyranny. The first performance of the play *Ubu roi* shook the Parisian scene at the close of the nineteenth century. With this play and *Ubu enchaîné* and *Ubu cocu*, Jarry laid the foundations for what came to be known as the ‘Theatre of the Absurd’.

Miró’s fascination with Jarry is evident throughout his oeuvre and took several different forms and expressions, such as the series of artist’s books *Ubu roi* (1966), *Ubu aux Baléares* (1971) and *L’Enfance d’Ubu* (1975), the last of which is constructed around popular blasphemous and obscene sayings used on the island of Mallorca. As for Picasso, Ubu appears for the first time in 1905 and thereafter in multiple versions such as *Head and Bather in a Cabin*, and is identified with the tyrant mounted on a pig that features in *The Dream and Lie of Franco*.



Pablo Picasso
Head
1936
Oil on canvas
61 x 50 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023

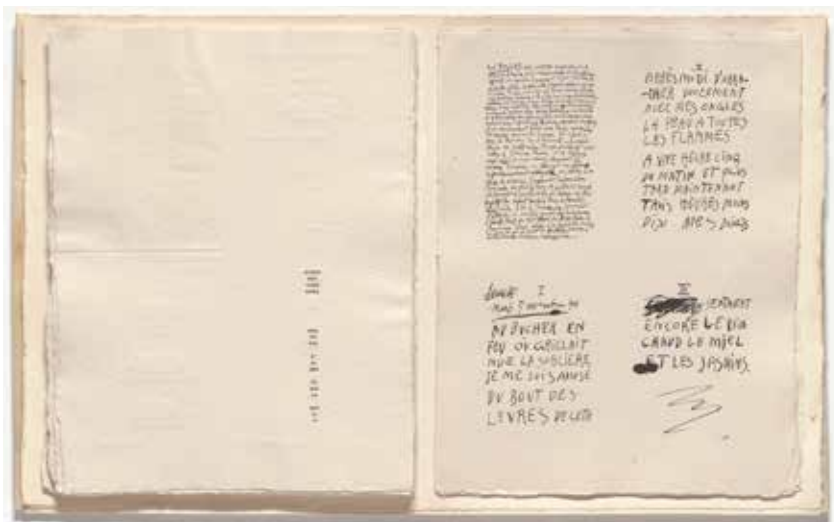


Joan Miró
Ubu Roi
c. 1953
Collage, India ink and wax crayon on paper
32.7 × 50.2 cm
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023

Poet friends (MPB)

A central chapter of Miró and Picasso's graphic work is their artist's books, the result of their interest in poetry and their close friendship with a number of poets, among them Georges Hugnet, Tristan Tzara and Paul Eluard. Poetry thus opened the doors to new creative adventures that once again flowed across the traditional boundaries between the arts.

Miró and Picasso each undertook numerous bibliophile projects and both did so with the great publishers of the day, Tériade, Pierre-André Benoit, Iliazd and Louis Broder. For example, the two artists followed Iliazd's guidance for illustrating Adrien de Monluc's books *La Maigre* (illustrated by Picasso) and *Le Courtisan grotesque* (illustrated by Miró), and they explored the small format in the 'Miroir du poète' collection of Louis Broder. They worked together on the edition of the *Solidarité* album, containing the poem *Novembre 1936* by Paul Eluard, to raise funds for the Republican cause. On other occasions, Miró and Picasso paid tribute to poet friends, as in the case of anthologies by Paul Eluard or worked together on a single text, such as *L'Antitête* by Tristan Tzara.



Pablo Picasso
Poésie des mots inconnus
Illustrated book
Paris, Le Degré Quarante et Un, 1949
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid,
2023



Joan Miró
Poésie des mots inconnus
Illustrated book
Paris, Le Degré Quarante et Un, 1949
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023

Poetic Art - Artistic Poetry (MPB)

Poetry and the presence of poets in Miró and Picasso's close circles were key aspects of the two artists' output, so much so that they both devoted a considerable part of their work to demonstrating the dialogue between the word and the pictorial line through their illustration of books.

In addition to this collaboration with literary figures, Picasso and Miró also pursued poetic activity of their own. Both took the step of representing words in their canvases, but in 1924, at the encouragement of a group of poet friends that he met up with on Rue Blomet in Paris, Miró began to use them with the aim of merging painting and poetry. Even so, it was not until 1936 that he began to write long poetic texts, possibly encouraged by Picasso's experience. The year before, Picasso had taken his first steps in this realm using Spanish, a language he would later alternate with French. Miró always did so in French. The two artists used similar literary devices typical of Dadaist and Surrealist poetry. They drew inspiration from the vulgar and crude sense of humour of Alfred Jarry, as well as popular language and objects from everyday life, which in the war years, became the main elements of their poetic and pictorial work.



Pablo Picasso
Poems and lithographs (fragments of Picasso text)
 12 June, 1949
 Lithography
 66.1 x 50.5 cm (sheet)
 Museu Picasso Barcelona
 © Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Painting ('escargot femme fleur étoile')
 1934
 Oil on canvas
 195 x 172 cm
 MNCARS. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia
 Gift of Pilar Juncosa
 © Successió Miró, 2023

4. WAR YEARS

The Spanish Civil War (FJM)

From the outbreak of the fighting, Picasso and Miró sided with the legitimate government of the Republic, which made the most of their international prestige and invited them to participate in the pavilion at the International Exposition in Paris in 1937. Picasso painted *Guernica* on a canvas more than 7 metres long, and Miró painted *The Reaper* on a Celotex wall almost 6 metres high. Miró's decision to paint directly on this wooden fibreboard used to cover the walls of the pavilion is evidence of his interest in exploring material and in mural painting. Miró's work was lost when the pavilion was dismantled, while *Guernica* was the only work that travelled around Europe and America to raise funds for the Republican cause.

During the Civil War, the photographer Dora Maar became one of Picasso's principal models in the portraits through which he channelled the tragedy of the times. In Miró's figuration, which had taken on a monstrous appearance at the outset, the artist gradually sought to escape from the reality of the day by creating a language of signs of his own.



Pablo Picasso
Weeping Woman
1937
Oil on canvas
55 x 46 cm
Fondation Beyeler, Riehen/Basel, Beyeler Collection
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Untitled (Head of a Man)
1937
Gouache on paper
65.4 x 50.5 cm
The Museum of Modern Art,
New York. Richard S. Zeisler Bequest, 2008
© Successió Miró, 2023

The Second World War (MPB)

The outbreak of war in Europe in September 1939 caught Miró by surprise in Varengeville-sur-Mer. He had been living in France for the previous three years due to the Spanish Civil War and it was only the bombing of Normandy prior to the German occupation of France that made him decide to return to Catalonia in June 1940. Picasso chose instead to move to Royan, alternating between his home there and Paris during the first year of the war. At the end of August 1940, however, despite the German occupation, he decided to install himself in the studio on Rue des Grands-Augustins.

While in Varengeville, Miró began his series of twenty-three *Constellations* – completed in Mont-roig in 1941 – with which he ushered in a new idiosyncratic language based on signs and symbols that made the act of painting poetic. Miró thus escaped from an oppressive and distressing reality, whereas Picasso looked at it full in the face and described it unflinchingly in his characteristic expressive style. A claustrophobic atmosphere pervaded his interiors, filled with still lifes featuring vegetables and human and animal skulls, denoting the lack of food during the occupation and serving as a vanitas, reminding us of the transience of life.



Pablo Picasso
Bull's Head
Spring of 1942
Sculpture Saddle and handlebars (leather and metal)
33.5 x 43.5 x 19 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Morning Star
1940
Gouache, oil and pastel on paper
38 x 46 cm
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023

5. FROM THE MURDER OF PAINTING TO CERAMICS (MPB)

Picasso presented his work as a ceramic artist publicly in the 1948 issue of *Cahiers d'art*, in which Miró also appeared, shown photographed alongside him on the page preceding the reproduction of 446 ceramic works made since 1946, a memento of his visit to Picasso's studio at Vallauris. Miró had suggested to Christian Zervos that the same issue should include his article 'De l'assassinat de la peinture à la céramique... comme la céramique de Picasso', a reflection on the elimination of the boundaries between the arts brought about by poetry.

Both Miró and Picasso had to deal with new challenges on entering the realm of ceramics, among them sharing their work with craftsmen and learning the basis of the craft in the workshop. Even so, this ancient practice, in which chance plays a part in the final finish of the piece, encouraged them to follow a new set of paths, encompassing the decoration and reinvention of traditional tableware to sculpture and, through ceramic murals, the possibility of making the leap to working on an architectural scale.



Pablo Picasso
Dove and owl
5 August, 1950
Manufactured pink grogged earthenware with interior lead glaze (alquifoux), decorated with black and white slips
18,5 x 28,5 cm
Museu Picasso Barcelona
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró, Josep Llorens Artigas
Woman
1945
Stoneware
31 x 28 x 21 cm
Private collection
© Successió Miró, 2023

6. THE PICASSO STYLE, THE MIRÓ LANGUAGE

Revisions (FJM)

Picasso and Miró both admired the work of many of the great masters of Western art, though they each had their own preferences and approached the tradition in different ways. Picasso, who had spent time copying works in the Prado while he was training, reinterpreted some of the great masters, especially from the late 1950s onwards, assimilating them into his own pictorial style. This is the case of the series of fifty-eight oil paintings he produced related to Velázquez's *Las Meninas*, in which he dissects and addresses the main questions that Velázquez undoubtedly asked himself about the art of painting.

In the late 1920s, Miró drew inspiration from the Flemish masters of the seventeenth century and from Raphael's work *Portrait of a Young Woman* (also known as *La Fornarina*). In his case, though, Miró's intention was not to revise painting but to call it into question. As his career progressed, he looked to humankind's most primitive manifestations of art and, at the close of the thirties, turned to prehistoric art as a referent for defining his own language of signs. Using this language, noted for its extreme simplicity, Miró revised the work that he had left unfinished during the time of the war.



Pablo Picasso
Las Meninas
17 August, 1957
Oil on canvas
194 x 260 cm
Museu Picasso Barcelona
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
La Fornarina (After Raphael)
1929
Oil on canvas
146 x 114 cm
Portuguese State Contemporary Art Collection.
Long-term loan to the Fundação de Serralves -
Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Porto
© Successió Miró, 2023

Large and Public art (FJM)

After the Second World War, modern ideas about how to think about and build a city led to art being incorporated into public spaces. Making cities more human was a desire Picasso and Miró shared, as is evident in the projects undertaken by the two artists in Paris, Chicago and Barcelona.

In 1955, UNESCO selected eleven artists to decorate its new headquarters in Paris. Miró, in partnership with Josep Llorens Artigas, made the ceramic *Wall of the Sun* and *Wall of the Moon*. Picasso worked on *The Fall of Icarus*, a painting on forty wooden panels. In 1963, both Picasso and Miró were commissioned by Chicago to erect two sculptures in the public space in the city. Picasso's work was unveiled in 1967. In 1981 Miró presented his large version of his sculpture *The Sun, The Moon and One Star*, which had previously been intended to welcome visitors to Barcelona arriving by land. In addition to this work, Miró produced two other projects to welcome people travelling to Barcelona by air and by sea: his large ceramic mural at the airport and his *Pla de l'Os* set into the pavement. Picasso, for his part, designed the friezes on the outside of the building of the Col·legi Oficial d'Arquitectes de Catalunya, sgraffiti sandblasted into the concrete by Carl Nesjar.



Pablo Picasso
Maquette for Richard J. Daley Center Sculpture
1962-1964
Simulated and oxidised welded steel
104.8 × 69.9 × 48.3 cm
The Art Institute of Chicago
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Maquette for Moon, sun and a star,
Chicago, 1981,
Bronze, steel and concrete with red, green, blue, gold and black
ceramic inlays
1100 cm
Art in the Center, Chicago
© Successió Miró, 2023

The final revolt (MPB and FJM)

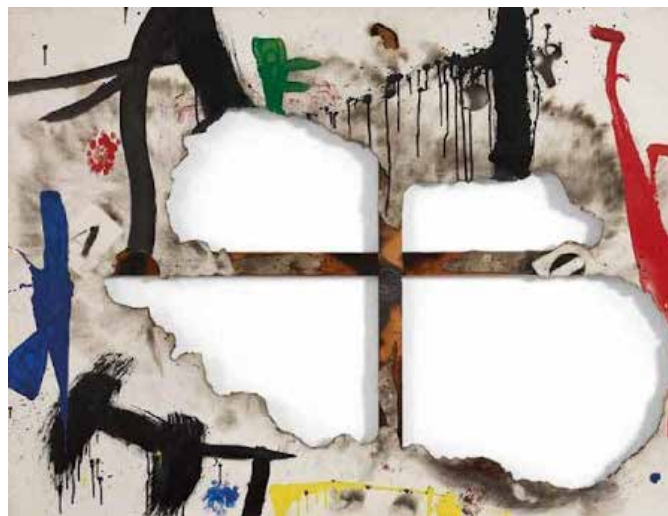
Picasso and Miró remained close friends throughout their lives. Their admiration for each other is made evident in numerous ways, among them dedications and tributes in the form of artworks.

In their final years, both artists championed their recent work, not just in the numerous exhibitions held in their respective dealers' galleries, but also in major survey and retrospective shows. In the case of Picasso, when he was in his nineties, two exhibitions were mounted in the Palais des Papes in Avignon, one in 1970 and the other in 1973, featuring a total of 400 recent works chosen especially by the artist. In the case of Miró, the Grand Palais in Paris organised a large retrospective in 1974, when he was eighty-one years old, in which he wanted his recent work to occupy a large part of the display space and for it to be placed in a prominent position in the exhibition.

Age proved to be no obstacle and did not hinder either artist from working right to the end with extraordinary vitality in an ongoing exercise in self-affirmation through dialogue with their material and the power of their pictorial gesture. Whereas Picasso always pushed painting to the limit without ever casting reality aside, Miró moved away from it in a radical manner, creating in his determined struggle to go beyond painting a language of his own that aimed to achieve his goal of universal expression, which it sought to connect with very early manifestations of art. Picasso always professed himself to be a painter, whereas Miró proclaimed himself to be a poet as well.



Pablo Picasso
The family
30 September 1970
Oil on canvas
162 x 130 cm
Musée national Picasso-Paris
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Burnt Canvas 1
1973
Acrylic on cut and burnt canvas
130 x 195 cm
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023



Pablo Picasso
The Painter and His Model
1963
Oil on canvas
130 x 195 cm
MNCARS. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía
© Succession Pablo Picasso, VEGAP, Madrid, 2023



Joan Miró
Poem III
1968
Acrylic on canvas
205 x 174 cm
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona
© Successió Miró, 2023

7. MIRÓ PAYS TRIBUTE TO PICASSO (MPB/FJM)

This section presents a succinct but eloquent account of Miró and Picasso's friendship and their mutual recognition and respect, told through a selection of iconic works and artistic documents.

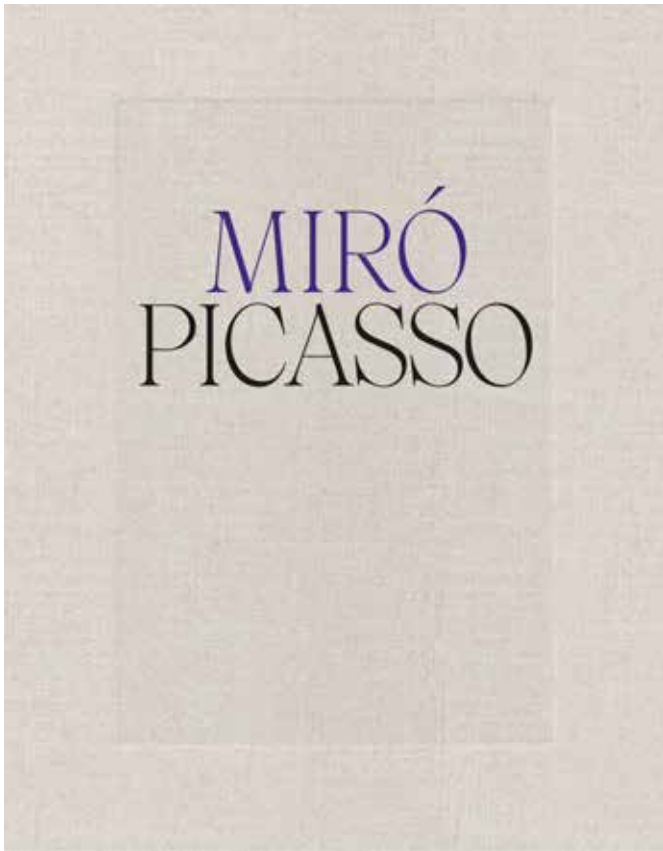
The canvas that Miró began in 1966 and deemed concluded on 8 April 1973, *Woman, Bird, Star (Homage to Pablo Picasso)*, is perhaps the clearest manifestation of this: on the back of the work, Miró wished to make it clear, in Catalan, that with this canvas he was paying tribute to Picasso on the day he died. A year and a half earlier, on 25 October 1971, Miró had no hesitation in accepting a commission from *La Vanguardia* newspaper to illustrate the cover celebrating Picasso's ninetieth birthday. Ten years later, Barcelona City Council and the Spanish Ministry of Culture organised a celebration to mark the centenary of Picasso's birth, for which Miró was not only a member of the Honorary Committee, but also designed its logo.

Other signs of this friendship that lasted for more than fifty years are to be found in the form of drawings and dedications, among them those that Picasso recorded in various of his illustrated books that he gave to Miró.



Joan Miró
Woman, Bird, Star (Homage to Pablo Picasso)
15 February 1966 – 3-8 April 1973
Oil on canvas
245 x 170 cm
MNCARS. Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía
© Successió Miró, 2023

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MIRÓ, PICASSO: THE BOUNDARIES OF PAINTING

Margarida Cortadella, Elena Llorens, Teresa Montaner and Sònia Villegas

1917—1936

MEETINGS BETWEEN PICASSO'S CUBISM (1910–1924) AND MIRÓ (1921–1927)

Christopher Green

THE STARRY NIGHT: PICASSO, MIRÓ AND THE SURREALISTS IN 1924

Georges Sebbag

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1936—1948

THIS IS THE COLOUR OF THEIR DREAMS: MIRÓ AND PICASSO, POETS GONE WRONG

Androula Michael

PICASSO AND MIRÓ IN THE 1930s: REVOLUTION, DESTRUCTION AND CONSERVATION AS ANTIDOTES TO WAR

Jordana Mendelson

THE PRESENCE OF JARRY AND UBU IN THE WORK OF MIRÓ AND PICASSO

Maria Gonzalez Menendez

PICASSO-MIRÓ, POST-WAR LIVES: 1939–1948

Victoria Combalía

'DE L'ASSASSINAT DE LA PEINTURE À LA CÉRAMIQUE': PICASSO, MIRÓ AND CERAMICS

Salvador Haro and Harald Theil

1948—1973

MIRÓ, PICASSO: A MONUMENTAL MYTHOLOGY

Thierry Dufrêne

PABLO PICASSO AND JOAN MIRÓ: THE 'SOVEREIGN FREEDOM' OF THE LATE WORK

Brigitte Leal

MIRÓ, PICASSO: THE BOUNDARIES OF PAINTING*

Much has been written about the role of the studio in an artist's creative universe. Cosmos, laboratory, factory, sanctuary and refuge are only some of the nouns with which the ultimate creative space has been compared, and the existing photographs of Pablo Picasso's various studios, just as the spaces frozen in time in Joan Miró's studios in Palma and Mont-roig, corroborate the pertinence of these comparisons. Like the universe, a studio is a complex, organised system in which nothing is superfluous and everything has its place, its purpose and its meaning, often intimate to the point of indecipherability. What was a portrait of Picasso from 9 August 1968 doing on the fireplace mantel in Miró's studio in Mont-roig (not far from the reproductions of the Man at Prayer from Sant Quirze de Pedret and the Dream of Saint Joseph from the altarpiece of Sant Andreu de Sagàs)? What was it that drove Miró to frame a second portrait of the artist and hang it at the top of the staircase leading up to the mezzanine? It's impossible not to see and look at Picasso, wide-eyed, when one goes up or down the stairs. And it's also impossible not to notice that Picasso (the same photograph of Picasso) is placed in a prominent position in the red room on the upper floor of the Son Boter studio in Palma, vying for attention with Miró's parents, portrayed in their respective oil paintings. And why is it that in Miró's Sert studio he also sought Picasso's presence, framing and hanging the portraits that Dora Maar made of the artist in Boisgeloup, next to Bob, his huge Saint Bernard, at the time of the Spanish Civil War?

* Extract from the text "Miró, Picasso: the limits of painting" written by the curators Margarida Cortadella, Elena Llorens, Teresa Montaner and Sònia Villegas published in the catalogue of the *Miró-Picasso* exhibition.



Portrait of Pablo Picasso in Joan Miró's studio in Son Boter, Palma
Photograph by Jean Marie del Moral

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