

Press release
New exhibition
From May 30 to September 8, 2019

Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit



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mnbaq.org

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Québec City, Wednesday, May 29, 2019 ✕ The Spanish sun will shine on Québec all summer, since Joan Miró (1893-1983), the internationally renowned Spanish painter and sculptor who created a body of work that is emblematic of 20th century art, will have a place of honour from **May 30 to September 8, 2019** at the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec (MNBAQ). This is the only North American venue for the *Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit* exhibition, presented by Desjardins. It proposes an outstanding array of nearly 200 paintings, sculptures and works on paper, including numerous large canvases. The selection of works, drawn from the collections of the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (Spain) and the Successió Miró, covers the artist's mature period (1956-1981), when he settled in Mallorca and pursued his research in a spirit of great freedom.

Présentée par



Musée national
des beaux-arts
du Québec

cherished environment where he was especially prolific for 25 years, guided by his remarkable talent for experimentation.

*“I work in a state of passion and escalating emotion.
When I start a painting, I obey a physical impulse,
the need to propel myself.”*

— Joan Miró, 1959

A unique pictorial language

Miró gave himself up to the suggestive nature of materials and the expressive power of gestures and produced paintings bursting with creativity. His eminently suggestive work has universal appeal. The artist was deeply attached to the art and nature of his country. He elaborated a unique pictorial language in which rudimentary shapes assume symbolic value. Miró’s works celebrates women, birds or the starry night in astonishing ideograms that display an unrestrained imagination. His spectacular compositions, which draw inspiration, in particular, from American action painting, display his insatiable need to explore and reveal a resolutely young, non-conformist artist whose modernity is still topical.

Miró, the perpetual explorer

This first major exhibition devoted to Miró in Québec for more than 30 years hinges on four main themes that offer as many interpretations of the body of work of an artist who was already an acknowledged 20th century icon, an artist of universal charm regarded as a key figure of surrealism.

The first zone shows the artist’s Catalan roots and his attachment to the art, nature and landscapes of his country, through prehistoric rock paintings or the work of architect Antoni Gaudí, which are among his main sources of inspiration.

The second zone examines abstract impressionism and oriental calligraphy, which were the key influences on the artist during this period. Miró greatly admired the spontaneity of American painters and



the delicate balance that Japanese artists achieved, as several spectacular large canvases reveal.

The third zone presents the array of original shapes that Miró created and reveals singular imagery inspired by his favourite themes in astonishing sculptures and superb ideograms that display unbridled imagination.

Lastly, the fourth zone of the exhibition is devoted to major compositions from the artist's mature period, characterized by bold gestures and a great variety of techniques and materials. It concludes with a vast series of monumental paintings in black and white, an especially daring technique, in which the landscape assumes a genuinely cosmic dimension.

“Prehistoric cave art had a great impact on me since it is the purest, most primitive expression of mankind.”

– Joan Miró, 1978



Essential examples from an outstanding body of work

Among the seminal works of Joan Miró assembled in Québec City, mention should be made of *Painting* (circa 1977). The caricatural character with bulging eyes and a disproportionately stretched nose seeks to pay tribute to primitive art and to prehistoric rock paintings.

Mention should also be made of the strength of *Painting* (circa 1973), which proposes a spectacular composition that admirably combines abstract expressionism and oriental calligraphy, two major influences on the artist's work.

Among the sculptures that are representative of the Spanish artist's work, *Maternity* (1969) embodies one of his favourite themes, which he emphasized in numerous sculptures and paintings throughout his career.



Lastly, a large triptych produced in the Mallorca studio, three remarkable landscapes painted around 1973, are among the major works in the exhibition. Aside from the impressive size of the work overall, the canvases display a remarkable refinement of the artist's visual arts language. His increasingly restrained palette reflects Miró's quest for

absolute simplification: “I feel the need to attain the utmost intensity with the fewest means, which has led me to adopt an increasingly uncluttered style in my painting.”



“I dream of a big studio.”

— Miró

The studio where anything was possible

In 1954, architect Josep Lluís Sert designed a dream studio for his friend Miró. In 1956, the artist permanently settled in this space open to nature bathed in the light of Palma de Majorque. This marked a return to his roots since his mother was Majorcan and his wife was a native of the Spanish island. Moreover, 50 objects drawn from the studio will be presented in the MNBAQ exhibition, including folk art, ceramics and shells, to throw light on the artist’s approach and the context in which he worked.

In addition to the exhibition, visitors can also watch Cesc Mulet’s film *Je rêve d’un grand atelier*, which proposes a visit to the Atelier Sert, the magnificent space where the artist worked for more than 25 years. The 12-minute film produced in 2018 and shown continuously provides a remarkable introduction to Miró’s universe and reveals his works in their original context.

A unique presentation for the MNBAQ

The MNBAQ’s presentation of an exhibition of *Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit*’s scope makes the museum part of a prestigious international circuit. The exhibition affords a unique perspective of Joan Miró, an artist of universal charm, and his playful, extravagant, poetic work that is as powerful as the Spanish sun.

The Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca in a nutshell



Miró
mallorca
fundació

The Miró Mallorca Fundació (Spain), created in 1981, stemmed from the desire of Miró and his wife to bequeath to the city of Palma the collection from the artist's studio. The foundation was established in the artist's studio, an 18th-century house in the country and a magnificent studio designed in 1956 by Catalan architect Josep Lluís Sert. The 6 000 works, drawings, objects and documents that it possesses make up one of the biggest collections of Miró's works. One of the foundation's buildings is a big museum, inaugurated in 1992, which comprises beautiful exhibition spaces, a library and educational spaces and services.

A catalogue that is vibrant and timeless like Miró's work

To enrich the experience of a visit to the *Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit* exhibition, the eponymous catalogue, coproduced with 5 Continents Éditions, is a powerful work that reflects Miró's timeless iconography and is essential reading. It highlights the artist's rich and diverse body of work produced between 1956 and 1981, featured on this very rare occasion in a French-language publication. A number of essential paintings but also sculptures, collages, sketches and rough sketches enliven the catalogue and evoke for readers the emotions that a visit to the exhibition arouses. The generously illustrated publication includes a very personal foreword by Joan Punyet Miró, the artist's grandson, and informative essays by Patricia Juncosa and Pilar Baos (Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca), André Gilbert (Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec), and a chronology of the two decades that Miró spent in Mallorca.

Distributed by Dimedia, *Miró à Majorque. Un esprit libre* is a French-language publication available in Canada, at the MNBAQ bookstore-boutique and in bookstores for \$49.95. 5 Continents Éditions will distribute the publication in French-speaking countries through its official distributors, Les Belles Lettres. ISBN: 978-2-551-26393-6





Credits

The *Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit* exhibition, presented by Desjardins from May 30 to September 8, 2019, has been organized by the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca and the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec. It has received financial support from the Québec government and Québec City under the *Agreement on Cultural*.

Curator and Coordinator

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Head of the Collections
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Fundació Miró Mallorca

Pilar Baos Rodríguez
Exhibition Coordinator,
Fundació Miró Mallorca

André Gilbert
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**FOR THE FUNDACIÓ PILAR I
JOAN MIRÓ A MALLORCA**

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Gouvernement du Québec.*

Québec 

**Miró
mallorca**

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Miró in Mallorca. A Free Spirit
Pierre Lassonde Pavilion of the MNBAQ
May 30 to September 8, 2019

INFORMATION: 418 643-2150 or 1 866 220-2150 / mnbaq.org

Page 1 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, 1978. Oil on canvas, 92 x 73 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-50) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 2 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, undated. Oil and acrylic on canvas, 129.5 x 97 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-88) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019) // Joan Miró, *Le lézard aux plumes d'or*, 1971. Lithograph on paper, 33 x 48 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-LI-005) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 3 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, about 1977. Oil and charcoal on canvas, 100 x 80.5 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-31) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019) // Joan Miró, *Painting*, about 1973. Oil, acrylic and string on canvas, 265.5 x 185.5 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-85) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 4 – Joan Miró, *Maternité*, 1969. Bronze, 88 x 44 x 40 cm. Edition made at Parellada Foundry, Barcelona, 1991. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca in 1991 Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-413) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019) Joan Miró, *Painting*, about 1973. Acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 216 x 173.8 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a -Mallorca (FPJM-106) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 5 – Photo : Courtesy of the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca

Page 6 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, about 1973. Oil, acrylic and chalk on canvas, 270.5 x 355 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-53) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 7 – Joan Miró, Sketch for *Gaudí XII*, about 1975. Gouache, ink, pencil, pastel and collage on paper, 31.3 x 19.7 cm. Gift of Joan Barbarà and the Successió Miró, 1998 Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-609) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 8 – Joan Miró, *Painting* (verso), 1908. Oil on canvas, 22.3 x 17.5 cm. Gift of Lluís Juncosa, 1995 Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-116.1a) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 9 – *Miró in Son Boter*, 1973. Photograph by Francesc Català-Roca.

Page 10 – Joan Miró. *Personnage, oiseaux*, 1976. Oil, wood and nails on sandpaper, 171.5 x 125 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-146) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 11 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, undated. Oil, acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 162.5 x 131 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca (FPJM-101) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)

Page 12 – Joan Miró, *Painting*, about 1973. Acrylic and charcoal on canvas, 216 x 173.8 cm. Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a -Mallorca (FPJM-106) © Successió Miró / SOCAN, Montreal / ADAGP, Paris (2019)



Biographical information on Joan Miró

1893

Joan Miró was born in Barcelona on April 20, the first child of Miquel Miró i Adzerias and Dolorès Ferrà i Oromi.

1907

Miró registered at the La Llotja School of Fine Arts.

1918-1919

First solo exhibition at the Dalmau Galleries in Barcelona.

1920

First trip to Paris, where he met Picasso, with whom he developed bonds of friendship and mutual admiration.

1921

First solo exhibition in Paris, at the Galerie La Licorne.

1924

Publication of André Breton's first *Manifeste du surréalisme*. Miró joined the group.

1929

Married Pilar Juncosa in Palma de Majorque.

1930

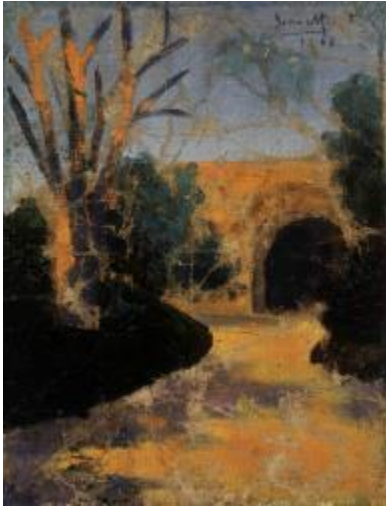
Birth of his daughter Maria Dolors in Barcelona.

1932

The Pierre Matisse Gallery regularly exhibited the artist's work in New York and represented him in the United States. Presentation of the first exhibition in New York.

1936

Civil war broke out in Spain. Miró took refuge in Paris. That year, he participated in the historic *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.



1937

Exhibited his work at the Zwemmer Gallery in London, the Nippon Salon in Tokyo, and the Galerie Pierre in Paris.

1939

Outbreak of World War II. Franco's victory over the Republicans marked the beginning of a 36-year dictatorship.

Miró rented a house in Varengeville, France, where he lived until May 1940.

1940

Publication in Tokyo of the first book devoted to Miró, by Shuzo Takiguchi.

1941

Miró settled in Palma. In New York, J. J. Sweeney organized the artist's first retrospective exhibition and published an important monograph, thereby contributing to his visibility in the United States.

1942-1943

Returned to Barcelona. Exhibitions in Havana (Lyceum), New York (Pierre Matisse Gallery), Chicago (Arts Club) and Paris (Galerie Jeanne Bucher).

1945-1946

Exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, the first show by a contemporary European painter in the post-war United States, which was a resounding success.

1948

Returned to Paris after an eight-year absence. First exhibition at the Galerie Maeght. The catalogue included texts by Raynal, Éluard, Kahnweiler, Zervos, Queneau, Hugnet, Duthuit, Artigas, and others.

1954-1955

Grand Prize for Engraving at the Venice Biennale. Exhibitions in museums in Krefeld, Stuttgart and Berlin.



1952

Impressed by Jackson Pollock's exhibition in Paris, he painted freer, large-scale canvases including a big painting for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

1956

Miró settled in the Villa Son Abrines, near Palma, where he had built a big studio designed by his friend the architect Josep Lluís Sert.

1958

Inauguration of two murals made of ceramics, *The Wall of the Sun* and *The Wall of the Moon*, produced in collaboration with the ceramic artist Llorens Artigas for UNESCO's headquarters in Paris.

1959

After a four-year hiatus, Miró resumed painting and produced more than 100 paintings that are noteworthy for the importance that the artist attached to gestures.

The artist visited the United States in conjunction with a retrospective at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. President Eisenhower presented him with the Guggenheim International Award.

Miró purchased Son Boter, an 18th-century house in the country, contiguous with Son Abrines. He set up a second studio there devoted to large-scale canvases, sculpture, engraving and lithography.

1961

Miró launched a series of large-scale triptychs, including *Bleu I-II-III*, now in the Musée national d'art moderne in Paris.

Flammarion published Jacques Dupin's *Miró*, a monograph accompanied by a descriptive catalogue of the paintings. The work was immediately translated into English and German.

1962

The first major retrospective in France, organized by Musée national d'art moderne at the Palais de Tokyo, presented 200 works.



1964

Inauguration of the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, whose garden includes a *Labyrinthe* of monumental sculptures produced by Miró and Artigas.

1966

The artist produced *Sun Bird* and *Lunar Bird*, his first monumental bronze sculptures. He developed this medium in subsequent years and worked in turn with the Parellada (Barcelona), Susse, Clementi and Scuderi (Paris), Valsuani (Bagneux) and Fratelli Bonvicini (Verona) foundries.

Miró visited Japan for the first time in conjunction with a retrospective presented at the National Museum of Modern Art in Tokyo and the National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto.

1968

On the occasion of his 75th birthday, a first major retrospective in Spain devoted to Miró was presented at the Old Hospital de la Santa Creu in Barcelona.

1969

The *Miró otro* exhibition was presented at the Barcelona College of Architects. In November, Miró returned to Japan at the invitation of the *Compagnie japonaise du gaz* to participate in the Osaka World Fair, which opened the following year.

1970

Miró devoted a significant part of his activity to the production of public and monumental works. In collaboration with the fibre artist Josep Royo, he produced a tapestry that was installed in the Hospital de la Cruz Roja in Tarragona. He also produced a ceramic mural for the Barcelona airport.

1972

With Josep Royo, Miró created *Sobreteixims*, an initial series of textile works made of tapestry, collage and painting.

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York presented the *Joan Miró: Magnetic Fields* exhibition.



1973

Miró started to paint on slashed or perforated canvases. In December, he produced a series of *Burned Canvases*.

1974

A major retrospective was presented at the Grand Palais in Paris encompassing 100 works spanning more than 60 years in the artist's career, and 100 recent works.

At the same time, the Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris presented a retrospective of the artist's graphic work.

1975

Opening of the Fundació Joan Miró – Centre d'Estudis d'Art Contemporani, designed by architect Josep Lluís Sert, in Montjuïc Park in Barcelona.

Death of General Franco, who ruled Spain for nearly 40 years. Beginning of the country's democratic transition.

1976

Official inauguration of the Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, to which the artist bequeathed nearly 5 000 drawings, sketches and notebooks. A circular ground mosaic was created for the City of Barcelona and installed on the pavement in Ramblas.

1977

Publication by Les Éditions du Seuil of *Ceci est la couleur de mes rêves*, a book of interviews produced with Georges Raillard.

1979

Establishment by the Municipality of Palma of the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca.

1980

King Juan Carlos I of Spain presented Miró with the Gold Medal for Merit in the Fine Arts.



1981

Miró and his wife Pilar Juncosa transferred to the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca the two Palma studios and their entire contents. A new building designed by architect Rafael Moneo, including exhibition spaces and a living arts centre, was inaugurated in 1992.

1983

On the occasion of the artist's 90th birthday, exhibitions were held the world over, in particular in New York, Tokyo, Barcelona, Palma and Paris.

Miró died in Mallorca on December 25. His funeral was held in Barcelona on December 29, where he was subsequently interred at the Montjuïc cemetery.

General Information

OPENING
HOURS OF THE
MUSEUM COMPLEX

June 1 to September 2, 2019

Monday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Wednesday till 9 p.m.

September 3, 2019 to May 31, 2020

Tuesday to Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Wednesday till 9 p.m.
Closed Mondays

ADMISSION

Adults: 22 \$
Seniors (65 and Over): 20 \$
Ages 18 to 30: 12 \$
Ages 13 to 17: 7 \$
Families (2 adults and 3 children
13 to 17): 48 \$
Families (1 adult and 3 children
13 to 17): 26 \$
Children 12 and under: free
Members: free
Wednesdays from, 5 p.m. to
9 p.m.: half-price
Reduced rates for groups

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Parking, Librairie-Boutique,
café, restaurant, free Wi-Fi and
Cloakroom

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