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Càtedra Miró

Press Dossier



1. Press release

The Fundació Joan Miró and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya present the Càtedra Miró.

The Càtedra Miró, a joint initiative between the Fundació Joan Miró and the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (Catalan Open University), is dedicated to the study and diffusion of the work of Joan Miró. It comprises two main activities: the Joan Miró International Research Group and the postgraduate course Miró Studies Fundació Joan Miró – UOC.

Robert Lubar, Associate Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University, is the director of the Càtedra. Lubar, a specialist in the French and Spanish avant-garde, has centred his doctorate thesis and most of his research on the work of Joan Miró.

The **Joan Miró International Research Group** will open new lines of study on the work of Miró and the world around him. It is formed by internationally recognised Miró academicians, with the support of New York University (NYU), through their research support programme, the NYU Global Initiative.

The International Research Group will be articulated on two levels with different degrees of participation: first, the scientific director, Robert Lubar, and the Executive Committee will evaluate which studies on Miró need to be developed and prioritised; second, the Scientific Committee, formed by specialist teams from the Research Group and external members, will work on the agreed contents. The subjects selected and developed by the Group will be published or explored in seminars and exhibitions at the Fundació Joan Miró.

The other Càtedra activity is the postgraduate course **Miró Studies**, also a product of the collaboration between the Fundació Joan Miró and the UOC. The course, beginning in 2014–15, will be run by established Miró academicians, who are members of the Research Group, and will be structured in six high-level subjects specifically created for the course.

The desire to promote the study of Miró at an international level has led the Fundació and the UOC to programme these studies online. The official language for this course is English, although students can also present their work in Spanish.

2. Profile of Robert Lubar, Director of the Càtedra Miró

Robert S. Lubar (Brooklyn, New York, 1958), director of the Càtedra Miró, has been Professor of Fine Arts at the Institute of Fine Arts, New York University (NYU), since 1996, and was Associate Professor since 1990. He has been a Trustee of the Fundació Joan Miró since November 2013.

After graduating in Art History at Stony Brook, The State University of New York, Lubar submitted his doctoral thesis on Joan Miró's early work at New York University, under the title *Joan Miró Before The Farm, 1915–1922: Catalan Nationalism and the Avant-Garde*. In his own words: 'I had no doubt that I would write about Miró, whose work I had studied as a postgraduate.'



A specialist in the French and Spanish avant-garde, Lubar has centred most of his research on the work of Miró. He has been a guest lecturer at the Universities of Manchester, Essex, Delaware, Princeton, The State University of New York, the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the Universitat de Girona, among others. He is the author of around fifty books, articles and essays; has published over a dozen catalogues, editorials and short essays; has curated exhibitions at The Spanish Institute, New York; has lectured in numerous museums and some of the most prestigious universities in the world; and has directed over thirty doctoral theses. He is a member of several committees and professional organisations.

Lubar was born 'in a humble but educated family'. As a child, he often visited the Brooklyn Museum with his mother. His mother's family is of Sephardic origin (his grandparents came from Izmir, Turkey), and for that reason he speaks Ladino, the Hebrew-Castilian language spoken by the Jews who were expelled from Spain in 1492. This made it easier for him to learn Spanish and Catalan, although he is more fluent in Catalan.

While preparing his doctoral thesis Lubar already spoke French, but he decided to learn Catalan and Spanish. With Catalan he considers himself 'lucky', because in the early eighties the NYU introduced a course in Catalan language and culture. He studied with Mary Ann Newman, Jordi Llovet and Pep Subirós.

Lubar fell in love with Miró's work through the MoMA Collection, one of the most important on the artist, together with the collections of the Fundació Joan Miró and the Centre Pompidou. He believes that the impact of Miró's work in the United States is due to the fact that the artist was represented there by Pierre Matisse, son of the painter, hence his reputation on the other side of the Atlantic. Lubar is convinced that 'this recognition would not have been possible in Franco's Spain'.

He visited Barcelona for the first time in 1984 and has maintained a relationship with the city ever since. He remembers that 'it was a city in transition: grey, slightly sad after thirty-five years of Francoism, but with enormous potential. Change was in full swing thanks to a new generation of young people wanting to leave the recent past behind and find new inroads in Europe and the United States, while also claiming their own Catalan language and traditions. It was an incredibly lively and exciting moment.'

Lubar has witnessed great changes in the last thirty years: 'Barcelona is now a fully international, technological and cultural city. There is an extensive network of cultural organisations that did not exist in the past, and an entire generation that has grown up speaking and feeling Catalan.' Nonetheless, he considers that 'the city has lost the ability to work risky and with secrecy, the sense of solidarity perhaps, that it had in Franco's days. Barcelona is now a tourist destination and the most typical things (like the Barceloneta of the eighties) have been sacrificed to financial capitalism and global tourism. But the heart of Barcelona remains the same, it is lively and open.'

3. Organisation of the International Research Group

Scientific Director:

Robert Lubar (Institute of Fine Arts, New York University)

Executive Committee:

Pepa Balsach (Art History Department, Universitat de Girona)

Fèlix Fanés (Professor of Art History, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Christopher Green (Emeritus Professor of Art History, The Courtauld Institute of Art)

Rémi Labrusse (Professor of Contemporary Art History, Université de Paris Ouest)

Rosa Maria Malet (Director, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona)

Jordana Mendelson (Department of Spanish and Portuguese, New York University)

Joan M. Minguet (Professor of Contemporary Art History and History of the Cinema, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona)

Teresa Montaner (Chief Curator, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona)

Joan Punyet Miró (Art historian, Successió Miró)

Scientific Committee:

Miriam Basilio (Department of Art History, New York University)

Agnès de la Beaumelle (Curator, Centre Pompidou, Paris)

Jim Coddington (Head of Painting Conservation, Museum of Modern Art, New York)

William Jeffett (Chief Curator, Salvador Dalí Museum, St. Petersburg, Florida)

Juanjo Lahuerta (Chief Curator, Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya)

Carolyn Lanchner (Senior Curator [retired], Museum of Modern Art, New York)

David Lomas (Professor of Art History, University of Manchester)

Adele Nelson (Professor of Art History, Tyler School of Art, Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)

Charles Palermo (Associate Professor of Art and Art History, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia)

Javier Pérez Segura (Professor of Art History, Universidad Complutense de Madrid)

Anne Umland (Senior Curator, Museum of Modern Art, New York)

Group coordination:

Muriel Gómez (Universitat Oberta de Catalunya)

Aleix Villatoro (Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona)

4. Postgraduate course in Miró Studies

General information:

Registration dates: from 18 June 2014

Course begins: 15 October 2014

Dates of the course: October 2014 – July 2015

Fee: 85 € / credit

Credits: 30 ECTS

Official language: English (dissertations may be presented in Spanish)



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An online postgraduate course designed and taught by international lecturers, with the aim of promoting new perspectives on the study of the work of Joan Miró. It will examine the various aspects of Miró's production, within the context of his own cultural environment.

Subjects

Miró and Twentieth Century Art

The course's academic director, Robert Lubar, will teach *Miró and Twentieth Century Art*, an introduction to the work of Joan Miró and his contribution to the development of painting and sculpture in the twentieth century.

Joan Miró: Itineraries and Geographies

Pepa Balsach, from the Universitat de Girona and Teresa Montaner, from the Fundació Joan Miró, will analyse the creative activity of Miró within his own physical and cultural environment. Real places (Barcelona, Paris, Palma de Mallorca, etc.) or symbolic, in which Miró established links with the most advanced cultural and artistic movements of his time and which contributed to the evolution of a style in his art.

Miró and Surrealism

Christopher Green, from The Courtauld Institute of Art, London, and Rémi Labrusse, from the Université de Paris Ouest, will analyse Miró's relation to Surrealism from a cultural, biographical and aesthetic perspective.

Artists, Poets and Writers

Directed by Joan M. Minguet Batllori, from the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, this subject explores the idea that poetry played a central part in Miró's artistic practice. It will analyse the artist's relation to poetry and literature, as well as his own literary production as a poet.

The Reception of Miró

Fèlix Fanés, Professor at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, will introduce with this subject the changes that took place over the years in the reception of Miró's artistic creation from a critical point of view; the evaluation, classification and interpretation of his entire artistic career. In this sense, the concept of *reception* includes the artist's own responses to the cultural products created by mass culture.

Postgraduate Final Project

The Postgraduate Final Project (PFP), designed by Muriel Gómez from the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya, may take two possible directions: a research project in which students will work with the Fundació Joan Miró's digital archives, or a creative project such as a virtual exhibition or a mobile phone application.

For more information

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