

## **Joan Miró. Ceramic Works in the Collection**

13/09/2016 – 25/09/2016

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### Press release

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**The Fundació Joan Miró is highlighting the ceramic work of the artist for public spaces to coincide with the IAC Ceramics Congress in Barcelona.**

**From 13 to 25 September, the Fundació Joan Miró offers a route through the Collection with the focus on the artist's interest in ceramics and the creation of works for public spaces.**

**During this period, the Foundation will show the film by Francesc Català-Roca *El mural de l'Aeroport, 1969*, and *Natura morta amb passos*, the recording of the activity conducted by the artist Isabel Banal to mark the presentation of the renewed Collection.**



Joan Miró. Model of the ceramic mural at Barcelona Airport, 1970  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Photograph: Jaume Blassi

**Barcelona, 12 September 2016.** “It’s always the last one, the one coming out of the kiln that I find the most exciting. Some of these new ceramic pieces are very big. I worked in a monumental spirit, thinking of a possible association with architecture. It would be a way of ennobling large residential buildings and no longer treating the men who live there like unfeeling robots” (Joan Miró to Rosabond Bernier, 1956).

Miró's interest in popular culture and art is a key factor in the process of constantly redefining his work. The incursions he made into sculpture, engraving, printing and ceramics stemmed from a need for physical contact with the materials and a love of simple things and artisan work.

For Miró, ceramics represented a return to the essence of contact with clay and fire, two elements with cosmogonic connotations. In the famous interview with Georges Raillard, Miró observed: "Through ceramics I have been able to discover new possibilities of expression and new horizons to enrich my work with new materials."

# Fundació Joan Miró Barcelona

His avowed desire to work directly with earth was fulfilled from the 1940s onwards through his close collaboration with one of the finest ceramicists in Europe at that time: Josep Llorens Artigas. Although their works were co-signed by the two artists, Miró declared that "the master craftsman is, in the final instance, fire."

After a period of trial and error working with the remains of failed firings, in the mid-1950s Miró and Artigas collaborated on a vast and ambitious production of ceramic works under the name of *Firestones*, including plates, vases, objects, and projects for monuments and figures.

In parallel with this, Miró's interest in integrating his work into public spaces led the pair to open up new paths in the application of mural ceramics to architecture, notably in exterior projects for the headquarters of UNESCO in Paris (1956) and the maze at the Maeght Foundation in Saint-Paul-de-Vence (1963-1968). These initiatives culminated in the works designed to welcome travellers to Barcelona by air (*Airport Mural*, 1976, with an area of 500 m<sup>2</sup>); by land (a monumental sculpture for the Parc de Cervantes, not eventually built, but of which a model has been conserved in the North Patio of the Fundació); and by sea (*Mosaic at the Pla de l'Os* on la Rambla, 1976). Finally, there is the monumental sculpture *Woman and Bird*, 1981-1982, 22 metres high, erected in the Parc de l'Escorxador.

From 13 to 25 September, to coincide with the 47th Congress of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC), the Fundació Joan Miró offers a special route through the renewed Collection with the focus on the artist's interest in ceramics and how this culminated in the creation of works for public spaces. During this period, the Foundation will show the film by Francesc Català-Roca *El mural de l'Aeroport*, 1969, and *Natura morta amb passos*, the recording of the activity conducted at the Foundation by the artist Isabel Banal in spring 2016. Inspired by Miró's public works, this activity was organised to celebrate the presentation of the renewed Collection.

The Congress of the International Academy of Ceramics will attract 300 experts from all over the world to Barcelona under the main theme of *Ceramics in architecture and public spaces*. More than thirty institutions and some twenty art galleries will stage exhibitions and special activities for this event, which is organised by the IAC, the Catalan Ceramicists Association and the Design Museum of Barcelona.

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