
Miró and the United States: A Chronology (1926-1985)

Initial interactions

1926

Two works by Joan Miró are shown in the United States for the first time: *Le Renversement* (The Somersault, 1924) and *Painting* (1926). They are included in the *International Exhibition of Modern Art* organized by Katherine S. Dreier and Marcel Duchamp on behalf of the Société Anonyme at the Brooklyn Museum (New York, November 19, 1926 – January 10, 1927).



Cover and inside page (p. 81) of the catalogue of the *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, Brooklyn Museum, New York, 1926

1928

On December 10, Alexander Calder, in Paris, writes a letter introducing himself to Miró. He was to remain a lifelong friend and a connection with the United States.

1929

In March, in Paris, the collector A. E. Gallatin purchases *Chien aboyant à la lune* (Dog Barking at the Moon) for his Gallery of Living Art at New York University.

Pierre Loeb, Miró's dealer in Paris, gives one of the artist's works to the gallerist Pierre Matisse (son of Henri Matisse), based in New York. Matisse would be Miró's dealer from 1931 until the artist's death in 1983.

1930

Miró's first solo show in the United States, October 20 – November 8, organized by Pierre Matisse at Valentine Gallery in New York.

1932

Miró's first exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York, November 1–25.

1935

Drawings and Pastels by Miró (San Francisco Museum of Art, June 30 – August 12), Miró's first solo exhibition in an American museum.

1936

The solo exhibition *Miró* (Pierre Matisse Gallery, November 30 – December 26, 1936) opens before *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (The Museum of Modern Art, New York, December 7, 1936 – January 17, 1937), the most prominent Surrealism exhibition held in the United States until then, which included fifteen pieces by Miró.

1936-1939

After the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, given the control and censorship of all correspondence, Pierre Matisse

suggests to Miró that they use a coded term to refer to payments: “1 catalog” is the equivalent of \$100.

1939-1945

The outbreak of World War II makes it very difficult for Miró to ship his pieces to New York, especially after his return to Spain in 1940. His solo shows at the Pierre Matisse Gallery are scaled down to one a year. Nevertheless, Miró’s work is included in major New York exhibitions: *Art of This Century*, in Peggy Guggenheim’s gallery of the same name at 30 West 57th Street, and *First Papers of Surrealism*, in Reid Manson at 451 Madison Avenue, both of which open in 1942.

1941

The first major retrospective of Miró’s work is held at MoMA in New York, curated by James Johnson Sweeney. A Salvador Dalí retrospective is on view at the same time (November 18, 1941 – January 11, 1942). On December 7, the attack on Pearl Harbor prompts the United States to join World War II.

In 1942, the Miró exhibition travels to Smith College, Northampton (Massachusetts); Vassar College, Poughkeepsie (New York); the Portland Art Museum (Oregon); and the San Francisco Museum of Art.

1945

The Constellations series is included in the exhibition *Joan Miró. Ceramics 1944, Tempera Paintings 1940–1941, Lithographs 1944* at the Pierre Matisse Gallery (January 9 – February 3). These pieces are the first to leave Europe during the war.

1946

Miró's desire to experience the United States firsthand is reinforced by a commission to paint a large mural for the restaurant at the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.

LeRoy Makepeace, US Vice Consul in Barcelona, visits Miró in Mont-roig del Camp, Tarragona (Odette and Joaquim

Gomis, Joan Prats, and Pilar Juncosa are also present). Makepeace manages to obtain visas for Miró, Pilar, and Dolors to travel to New York. The two men and their families would become lifelong friends.



Group photo on the occasion of the visit of the United States vice consul in Barcelona to Joan Miró, Mont-roig del Camp, November 1946. From left to right: Joan Prats, Alfred Gilks, LeRoy Makepeace, Harris Williams, Odette Cherbonnier, Pilar Juncosa, and Joan Miró. Photo: Joaquim Gomis. © Hereus de Joaquim Gomis. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, 2025. Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya

First Visit to the United States: February–October 1947

On February 12, Joan Miró, Pilar Juncosa, and Dolors Miró arrive in New York. The family stays in Kay Sage and Yves Tanguy's apartment.

That same month, Arshile Gorky hosts a dinner in honor of Miró at 36 Union Square, attended by Peggy Osborne, Jeanne Reynal, and Urban Neining, among others.

On March 3, the exhibition *Bloodflames*, curated by Nicolas Calas and designed by Frederick Kiesler, opens at Hugo Gallery. It includes works by Arshile Gorky, David Hare, Gerome Kamrowski, Wifredo Lam, Roberto Matta, Isamu Noguchi, Helen Phillips, and Jeanne Reynal.

The Mirós attend a performance of *Cirque Calder* in Roxbury, Connecticut, with Henri Seyrig, director of the French

Institute of Archaeology in Beirut, and the Brazilian architect Henrique Mindlin and his wife Helena. They also visit Sage and Tanguy in Woodbury, Connecticut, where they are joined by Eleanor Howland and James Thrall Soby, and Pierre and Alexina “Teeny” Matisse.

In March, Miró starts working with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17. There he reenounters Louise Bourgeois and Ruthven Todd, among others, and meets Anne Ryan, Alice Trumbull Mason, Perle Fine, Jean Morrison Becker, and Fannie Hillsmith.

At Atelier 17, Miró works on the plates for *Le Désespéranto* (The Despairing One), the third volume of Tristan Tzara’s *L’Antitête* (The Anti-Head).

From April 1 to May 4, the exhibition *Large-Scale Modern Paintings* is on view at MoMA. Miro’s *Paysage animé* (Animated Landscape, 1927) is shown alongside Jackson Pollock’s Mural (1943), commissioned by Peggy Guggenheim.



Room views of the *Large-Scale Modern Paintings* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1947. © The Museum of Modern Art, New York / Scala, Florence

Before April 10, Miró finishes his sketch of the mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel restaurant. Miró and Pierre Matisse travel to Cincinnati.

At Atelier 17, Hayter, Todd, and Miró apply William Blake's soft-ground etching technique. Bourgeois collaborates with Miró, offering him technical assistance, and the Catalan artist gives her an artist's proof of one of his works.

In May, the Miró family moves into filmmaker Richard de Rochemont's home at 235 East 46th Street. Bourgeois visits them there.



Joan Miró, his wife Pilar Juncosa, and their daughter Maria Dolors, with Louise Bourgeois, on the roof of the apartment of the filmmaker Richard de Rochemont, in New York, holding the canvas that Miro created for the Surrealism exhibition at the Galerie Maeght in Paris, 1947. Arxiu Successió Miró © Louise Bourgeois

On May 13, after the pieces reach New York with some delays, *Joan Miró: An*

Exhibition of Paintings, Gouaches, Pastels and Bronzes from 1942 to 1946 opens at the Pierre Matisse Gallery. The show, on view until July 7, is very well received.

On May 15, the artist Len Lye makes shadowgraphs of Miró in his apartment at 278 West 4th Street.

In late May, Miró starts working on the mural in the studio that Carl Holty lends him for several months. It is located in Spanish Harlem, on Lexington Avenue and 119th Street, where Alice Trumbull Mason and André Racz also have their studios. Gatherings are often held in Racz's studio; there Miró sees Holty, the Chilean mezzo-soprano Teresa Orrego—Racz's future wife—and the filmmaker Thomas Bouchard.

Lillard McCloud, director of the United Art-Workshops of Brooklyn Neighborhood Houses, asks Miró (through Bouchard) to

join their advisory board. Miró agrees to do so. Adolph Gottlieb and Jacob Lawrence are also board members.

In early June, while the Matisses are in Europe, the Miró family moves into their apartment at 320 East 72nd Street.

On June 9, the *Laurels Portfolio Number 1* exhibition opens, featuring works by Miró, Ryan, and Hayter, among others.

Bouchard films *Miró Makes a Color Print* at Atelier 17, documenting the process of producing some of the prints in *Series II*. He also begins to shoot the film *Around and About Miró* (1955).

On June 30, Francis Lee interviews Miró for the magazine *Possibilities*. He takes photographs of the artist with Romare Bearden and Carl Holty.

From July 7 to September 30, the *Surréalisme en 1947* exhibition is on view at Galerie Maeght in Paris. Working

in New York, Miró produces a scroll on a piece of fabric for the Salle des Superstitions.

The Miró family joins Joan Teixidor and Pilar de Ventós, Juan Larrea, Marguerite Aubry, and their daughter Lucienne Larrea at a gathering with Moncha and Josep Lluís Sert on Long Island.

In August, the Miró family moves into Moncha and Josep Lluís Sert's apartment at 15 East 59th Street while the Serts are traveling in Europe.

In September, Arnold Newman takes photographs of Miró with the Cincinnati mural painting close to completion.

On October 15, the Miró family sails from New York on the *SS Habana* and arrives in Barcelona on November 5.

1948

In March, the mural is shown at MoMA, and in July the opening is held at the

circular restaurant in the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.

Peggy Guggenheim shows her collection at the 24th Venice Biennale, with two pieces by Miró and works by William Baziotes, Arshile Gorky, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Janet Sobel, and Hedda Sterne, among others.

A monograph on Miró, written by Clement Greenberg, is published.

1951

In June, Miró's *Mural Painting* (1950–51), commissioned by Walter Gropius, is installed in the Harvard University graduate dining hall.



Joan Miró's *Peinture murale* (Mural Painting) installed in the Harvard University dining hall, 1951. © Harvard Art Museums

1952

Le Soleil rouge (The Red Sun, 1948) is included in the *Painters of Expressionistic Abstractions* show at the Phillips Gallery (Washington, DC, March 16 – April 29) along with pieces by Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, Alfonso Ossorio, and Theodoros Stamos, among others.

Miró visits the *Jackson Pollock* exhibition at Studio Paul Facchetti (Paris, March 8 – 31), which makes a lasting impression on him. A potential commission arises for a mural in the new United Nations building in New York.

Second Visit to the United States: June 1952

On June 7, Miró arrives in the United States on a ten-day trip to visit the United Nations building.

In New York, he also has a chance to visit the exhibition *15 Americans* at MoMA (April 9 – July 27), which includes recent works by William Baziotes, Herbert Ferber, Jackson Pollock, and Mark Rothko.

On June 10, Miró goes to Cincinnati, where he sees the Terrace Plaza Hotel mural for the first time. He also visits Harvard to see his *Mural Painting*.

Miró, Thomas Bouchard, and Moncha and Josep Lluís Sert view Bouchard's film *Miró Makes a Color Print* (1947).

On June 17, Miró leaves the United States after making several sketches for the United Nations commission with Sert. The project, however, would never materialize.

1955

On December 9, at Harvard University, Thomas Bouchard's film *Around and About Miró*, shot primarily in Catalonia and Mallorca in 1953, is shown.

From September 24 to October 24, two exhibitions are on view in Barcelona: the *III Bienal Hispanoamericana de Arte* (La Virreina) and *Modern Art in the USA* (Museu d'Art Modern), with pieces by William Baziotes, Arshile Gorky, Franz Kline, Wifredo Lam, Roberto Matta, Robert Motherwell, and Jackson Pollock, among others.

1956

After two years of construction, toward the end of 1956 Miró moves into his large new studio in Palma de Mallorca, designed by Josep Lluís Sert. As a gesture of gratitude, Miró produces a large mural painting for Sert's home in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which he completes in March 1961.

1958

After three years' work, the ceramic murals by Miró and Josep Llorens Artigas are unveiled in November at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

1959

From January 17 to 24, an exhibition featuring the pochoirs (facsimile prints) of the *Constellations* is held in Paris. Miró has the opportunity to visit the exhibition *The New American Painting* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne (January 16 – February 15).

From March 17 to April 11, Pierre Matisse shows the facsimile edition of the *Constellations* along with several originals.

Miró's second retrospective is held at MoMA (March 18 – May 10), curated by William S. Lieberman and with a monograph written by James Thrall Soby.

Third Visit to the United States: April–May 1959

On April 21, Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to the United States. They stay briefly at the Sherry Netherland Hotel, on 59th Street and Fifth Avenue, and then at the Gladstone Hotel, 114–122 East 52nd Street.

On April 27, Pierre Matisse gives a party for the Mirós, gathering friends, art critics, curators, and collectors, including Dorothy Miller, Armand and

Celeste Bartos, James Johnson Sweeney, James Thrall Soby, Margaret Scolari Barr, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., William S. Lieberman, Clement Greenberg, Thomas Bouchard, I. M. Pei, Loren MacIver, Leo Castelli, and Theodore Roszak.

Miró visits his retrospective at MoMA and is able to view *La Ferme* (The Farm), owned by Ernest Hemingway since 1925.

Robert Motherwell publishes “The Significance of Miró” in *Art News*.

On May 18, Miró and Pilar travel to Washington to receive the Guggenheim Award from President Eisenhower, in the presence of Harry Guggenheim, president of the Guggenheim Foundation; James Johnson Sweeney, director of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; and the Spanish Ambassador to the United States, José María de Areilza.



Joan Miró receives the Guggenheim Prize from President Dwight D. Eisenhower in Washington, 1959. Arxiu Successió Miró

Visting Harvard, Miró sees the poor condition of his mural painting and suggests replacing it with a ceramic mural.

Next, he travels to Philadelphia and visits the Barnes Foundation and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Miró attends the artists' preview before the opening of *The New American Painting as Shown in Eight European Countries* at MoMA (May 28 – September 8).

On May 29, Miró and Pilar leave the United States aboard the *Liberté*, jointly with their dear friend Joan Prats and Rose and Morton C. Neuman (major collectors of Miró's work). They reach Le Havre on June 4.

1961

In November, Columbia Records releases an album by the Dave Brubeck Quartet, *Time Further Out: Miró Reflections*.

Fourth Visit to the United States: November–December 1961

On November 17, Miró and Pilar travel from Paris to the United States and again stay at the Gladstone Hotel in New York.

They visit the exhibition *Miró: 1959–1961* at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, which had opened on October 31. It includes the *Mural Painting* for Moncha and Josep Lluís Sert and the triptych *Bleu I, II, III*, all four completed in March of that year.



Josep Lluís Sert next to the *Peinture murale* (Mural Painting) (1961) made by Miró in gratitude for Sert's development of the project of Miró's workshop in Palma de Mallorca. Arxiu Fundació Joan Miró

Miró meets the botanist, poet, artist, linguist, and collector Dwight Ripley.

Miró and Pilar are invited to a lunch in the artist's honor at the American Academy of Arts and Letters. They attend a twist dance show with Patricia and Pierre Matisse and the journalist Leonard Lyons.

The Mirós socialise with Nina and Gordon Bunshaft, Mary B. and Edward Matthews,

Georgia T. and Ralf F. Colin, Patricia and Pierre Matisse, Celeste G. and Armand Bartos, Laura Harden and James Johnson Sweeney, and Helen N. and Seymour H. Knox. Miró falls ill and has to restrict his activities.

The Mirós go to Cambridge to view the new ceramic mural in Harvard and stay with the Serts.



***Céramique murale* (Mural Ceramics, 1960), by Joan Miró and Josep Llorens Artigas, replacing the *Peinture murale* (Mural Painting) (1951) in the dining room of Harvard University.**

© Harvard Art Museums

On December 14, the Mirós fly back from the United States via Lisbon.

Fifth Visit to the United States: October–December 1965

Miró visits the United States from October 25 to December 3, jointly with Pilar Juncosa and Joan Gardy Artigas.

On November 5, Miró and Pilar are interviewed by the journalist Ninette Lyon and photographed by Cecil Beaton for the March issue of *Vogue*.



Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa photographed by Cecil Beaton for the March 1966 issue of *Vogue*, 1965. © Condé Nast - Vogue Archives

On November 6, the Mirós go to Roxbury to visit the Calders. There they also meet

the gallerist Klaus G. Perls, Calder's dealer at the time.

Miró meets with Thomas M. Messer and Harry F. Guggenheim, respectively the director and the president of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, to formalize a commission for a ceramic mural in memory of Harry's late wife Alicia Patterson Guggenheim.

The Mirós and Gardy Artigas go to Chicago to plan the future monumental sculpture *Moon, Sun, and One Star*, eventually unveiled in 1981. Meanwhile, a model for the sculpture would be named *Projecte per a un monument ofert a la ciutat de Barcelona* (Project for a Monument for the City of Barcelona and donated to the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona).

They also visit the Art Institute of Chicago and several jazz clubs.

Sixth Visit to the United States: May 1967

Miró and Pilar spend a week in the United States from May 17 to 24, approximately. They stay at the Gotham Hotel, at 16 East 46th Street.

On May 18, Miró attends the inauguration of the ceramic mural *Alicia* (1965–67), produced in collaboration with Josep Llorens Artigas and installed by Joan Gardy Artigas in the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

The Mirós and the Matisses get together with Leonard Lyons, who takes them to Arthur's Tavern, a jazz club in Greenwich Village.

On October 26, Miró is awarded the Painting Prize at the Carnegie International

Seventh Visit to the United States: June 1968

Miró visits the United States from June 12 to 19, approximately. He almost cancels this last trip, scheduled right after the tragic assassination of presidential candidate Robert F. Kennedy on June 6.

On June 13, Miró is awarded an honorary doctorate by Harvard University.



**Miro is awarded an honorary doctorate by
Harvard University, 1968. Arxiu Successió Miró**

Miró travels from Cambridge to New York, where he visits MoMA for the last time.

1975

On June 10, an unofficial opening is held for the Fundació Joan Miró – Centre d'Estudis d'Art Contemporani in Barcelona, officially inaugurated on June 18, 1976, seven months after the end of the Franco dictatorship. Calder donates his *Mercury Fountain* (1937) and the stabile sculpture *4 Wings* (1973) to the Fundació; Pierre Matisse donates the model for *Moon, Sun, and One Star*, 1968.

1983

On 25 December, aged 90, Joan Miró died in Palma de Mallorca.

1985

The Homage to Joan Miró collection is established, consisting of pieces donated by Sam Francis, José Guerrero, Robert Motherwell, Robert Rauschenberg, and Dorothea Tanning, among other artists.