



COMPARATIVE CHRONOLOGY

1905-1980

by Véronique Dupas

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Henri Matisse
Le Cateau-Cambrésis, 31 December 1869 –
Nice, 3 November 1954

Joan Miró
Barcelona, 20 April 1893 –
Palma de Mallorca, 25 December 1983

1905
From May to September, on the advice of his wife, Amélie Parayre, a native of Beauzelle, near Toulouse, Matisse takes up residence in Collioure, a small port in French Catalonia, some twenty kilometres from the Spanish border. He is full of enthusiasm for the region and its people, and returns for long stays in 1906, 1907, 1911 and 1914. The paintings he brings back to Paris in 1905, which he exhibited at the Salon d’Automne in October, are at the origins of Fauvism.

1917
At the gallery belonging to art dealer Josep Dalmau in Barcelona, Miró frequents European artists and intellectuals who are either passing through or have moved to the Catalan capital to escape the war. He reads the magazine *Nord-Sud*, founded by poet Pierre Reverdy and financed by Jacques Doucet, which was published from March 1917 to October 1918, and pays tribute to it in a painting [p. 36].
From 23 April to 5 July, Ambroise Vollard organises a major exhibition of French art at the Palau de les Belles Arts. Matisse is included, as one of the painters of the Salon d’Automne, and exhibits a single canvas, *Still Life with Gourds* of 1916 [p. 29], which immediately attracts attention amongst the artistic avant-garde. This is probably the first painting by Matisse that Miró saw. The painter Albert Marquet, who is close to Matisse, travels to Barcelona for the occasion and a banquet is organised in his honour.
At the end of December, Matisse makes his first visit to Nice, where he settles for a longer period from 1918 onwards.

1918
Miró frequents the noucentista painter Joaquim Sunyer, a native of Sitges who knew Matisse in Paris at the turn of the century. Sunyer shares his recollections with Miró, including a recipe used by Matisse to make paint with eggs.
Miró’s first solo exhibition is held at Galeries Dalmau, from 16 February to 3 March. With the exception of a few supporters, such as the painter Santiago Rusiñol, reactions are very negative.

1919
In October–November, the critic Joan Sacs (alias Feliu Elias) devotes two major articles to Matisse, including an interview with the artist dating back to 1910, in the Catalan magazine *Vell i Nou*. Many of Matisse’s major works are reproduced, including the sculpture *La Vie*, on the cover of issue No. 100 on 1 October.

1920
At the end of February, Miró makes his first trip to Paris. He is captivated by the city and its museums but considers the French tradition ‘interrupted’ and criticises the recent work of Matisse and Marquet. Nevertheless, he counts Matisse among the few painters he ‘venerates’, along with Picasso, Derain and Braque.
From 26 October to 15 November, an exhibition of French avant-garde art is held at Galeries Dalmau. Matisse exhibits *The Young Sailor II* [p. 31], a painting produced in Collioure in 1906, and Miró three recent canvases, *Horse, Pipe and Red Flower, Still Life and Still Life with Grapes* [p. 30], produced during the summer in Mont-roig. This is the first time the two artists have been brought together in the same exhibition. The introduction to the catalogue is written by critic Maurice Raynal, who is close to Cubism and whose wife, composer Germaine Raynal, was painted by Matisse in 1914. In his review, critic Rafael Benet considers Matisse and Miró to be the two strongest artists in the exhibition.

1921
In March, Miró rents a studio in Paris, at 45 Rue Blomet, from the sculptor Pau Gargallo. He spends each winter and spring there until early 1926. He meets the painter and writer friends of his neighbour André Masson, forming what would later become known as the Rue Blomet circle.
Miró’s first solo exhibition in Paris, organised by Josep Dalmau and with an introductory text by Maurice Raynal, takes place at Galerie La Licorne from 29th April to 14th May. Critic André Salmon, in a review published in *L’Europe nouvelle* on

4 June, writes: ‘Might this disciple of Picasso find favour with Matisse?’

1925
In February, Breton visits Miró for the first time in his studio in Rue Blomet. Miró’s entry into the Surrealist group is marked by his solo exhibition organised by Jacques Viot in art dealer Pierre Loeb’s gallery, Galerie Pierre, from 12 to 27 June. The invitation card comprises the signatures of all the group’s members. The exhibition was a great social success.
In July, the first instalment of André Breton’s *Surrealisme et la Peinture*, which would be published in book form in 1928, appears in *La Révolution surréaliste*. In it, Breton is harshly critical of Matisse’s recent evolution, whilst praising Miró as the Surrealist painter par excellence.

1926
The first issue of the magazine *Cahiers d’art*, founded by Christian Zervos, is published in April with a recent lithograph by Matisse on the cover. The magazine is to become the most enduring and important avant-garde art journal of the interwar period. Miró and Matisse are both subscribers. Although Zervos is above all an advocate of the work of Picasso, he also accords an important position to Matisse. His attitude to Miró, and towards all Surrealist painting, is initially hostile but becomes favourable from 1931 onwards.

1927
In January, Pierre Matisse, the painter’s youngest son, organises a Henri Matisse exhibition at Valentine Dudensing Gallery in New York, marking the start of his career as an art dealer in the United States.
In his *Anthologie de la peinture en France de 1906 à nos jours*, Maurice Raynal includes Miró and for the first time mentions his idea of ‘assassinating painting’.

1928
In August, from Mont-roig, Miró tells his dealer, Pierre Loeb, of his ‘greatest respect’ and ‘boundless admiration’ for Matisse’s past, but also of his ‘contempt’ for his present work.

1929
On 12 October, Miró marries Pilar Juncosa in Palma de Mallorca.
Georges Duthuit publishes the first in a series of articles on ‘Fauvism’ in issue No. 5 of *Cahiers d’art*. Published up until 1931, the articles include reproductions of many of Matisse’s works. The text is a vitalist interpretation, with Bergsonian overtones, of decorative aesthetics according to Matisse.

1930
Miró meets art dealer Pierre Matisse for the first time.

Finding it difficult to paint, and faced with some negative criticism of his work’s evolution since 1918, Matisse spends most of the year travelling, first to Tahiti and the Marquesas islands, then to the United States and the West Indies, and then back to the United States on two further occasions. He hardly paints at all. During his final trip, he travels to Philadelphia to see Albert Barnes, in preparation for a large mural which will be entitled *Dance* [pp. 50–51].
From 15 to 22 March, Miró presents a series of collages, made in Mont-roig during the summer of 1929, at Galerie Pierre. The idea of assassinating painting is at the heart of these works. Some of his collages were shown again, from 28 March to 12 April, in the exhibition *La Peinture au défi*, organised by André Breton and Louis Aragon at Galerie Goemans in Paris [p. 118 top].
In June and July, Pierre Loeb organises an exhibition of Matisse’s sculptures.
On 17 July, Maria Dolors, the only daughter of Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa, is born in Barcelona.
From 20 October to 8 November, Pierre Matisse organises Miró’s first exhibition in the United States, in association with the New York dealer Valentine Dudensing.

1931
On 14 April, the Second Spanish Republic is proclaimed.
Cahiers d’art devotes a special double issue (nos. 5–6) to Henri Matisse, with numerous reproductions and texts in French, English and German.
After his business partnership with Valentine Dudensing comes to an end, Pierre Matisse opens his own gallery in New York.

1932
From 1 to 25 November, Miró has his first exhibition (of works on paper) at Pierre Matisse Gallery.
At the end of the year, Lydia Delectorskaya, recently arrived from Russia, is hired by Henri and Amélie Matisse as an assistant for the production of *Dance* and as Madame Matisse’s companion. From February 1935, she becomes Matisse’s favourite model, up to the early 1940s, and his secretary until the end of his life.

1934
In April, Pierre Matisse signs a first contract with Miró, taking three quarters of his output for distribution in the United States,

while Pierre Loeb retains a quarter for Paris. Miró is delighted by this and describes his collaboration with Pierre Matisse as being in the spirit of his friendship with Henri Matisse’s daughter Marguerite and her husband, the critic Georges Duthuit, as well as that of his ‘admiration’ for Henri Matisse himself. From 29 December 1933 to 18 January 1934, Pierre Matisse organises a major solo exhibition of Miró’s work in his gallery.
Cahiers d’art devotes a special issue (No. 1-4) to Miró’s work from 1917 to 1933, with numerous reproductions and texts in French, English, German, Catalan and Spanish. At the same time, Zervos and his wife Yvonne organise a Miró exhibition on the magazine’s premises.
In August, Matisse sees Miró’s recent work at Pierre Loeb’s home and immediately tells Miró of his ‘interest’.
On 6 December, Matisse again sees the works Miró had brought back from his summer in Mont-roig: pastels, gouaches and collages on sandpaper. He writes to his son Pierre that these works mark ‘great progress’ and hopes they will ‘please him’. At the same time, he also tells his son about his ‘anguish’, ‘anxiety’ and even ‘panic’: ‘I wear out my mind struggling like a drowning man, and I can’t see myself being able to work like this.’

1935
On 4 January, Matisse again mentions to Miró his visit to Loeb’s house and his ‘great interest’ in his work.
On 27 January, Pierre Matisse tells his parents of his financial difficulties, but announces that he has sold eight Mirós at the solo exhibition still in progress (he will have sold nine by the end of the exhibition and twelve by the end of the spring). On 12 February, his father replies that, even if he hasn’t recouped his expenses, it is ‘a success that will astonish Paris’.
In June, Miró designs the cover of issue No. 7 of the magazine *Minotaure* [p. 119], edited by the critic Tériade, first in collaboration with Georges Bataille and then with Breton. Tériade is close to both Matisse and Miró.

On 6 June, Miró sends Matisse, from Barcelona, a copy of the magazine *Mirador* [p. 98] containing the Catalan translation of Matisse’s theoretical text ‘*Modernisme et Tradition*’, first published in English in London (the French original is lost). In it, Matisse insists on the founding character of Fauvism, whilst criticising the reductive nature of the word when it is used to mean merely a movement. In his letter, Miró imagines Matisse ‘still working and doing wonderful things’.

On 11 July, in a long letter to his son, Matisse expresses hesitations and concerns about the evolution of his painting after the Barnes *Dance*, and asks him to show his paintings to Miró. ‘I am the way I am, after having tried to develop myself in all directions. I’m not trying to protect myself. That’s what Picasso does. And thereby leaves himself open to criticism.’
On 7 August, he asks Pierre Matisse to send him two paintings by Miró ‘because what he does interests me as a manifestation of the generation after me. Just give them to the express service. I will, of course, pay for the packaging and postage.’ On 24 August, Matisse insists: ‘I’m waiting for your Mirós, which you must have forgotten about.’
On 16 September, Matisse receives the Miró works: ‘Your mother finds them very excessive. I am very interested in them from the point of view of colour and material relationships – I’m very happy to have them so that I can look at them from time to time.’
He is concerned to know when he should send them back. One of them, *Three Women*, [p. 21 top], remains in his possession until 1945.

1936
From 14 January to 8 February, Pierre Matisse exhibits Matisse and Miró alongside de Chirico, Gleizes, Léger, Masson, Modigliani and Picasso, in an exhibition entitled *Large Paintings: Eight Moderns*.
On 20 June, Matisse mentions a visit from Miró in his diary.
On 17 July, civil war breaks out in Spain, whilst Miró is in Mont-roig.
On 9 August, Matisse visits Pierre Loeb to check the framing of Miró’s works.
In October, Matisse creates the cover for issue No. 9 of the magazine *Minotaure* [p. 119] for Tériade.

Forced to stay in Paris because of the civil war, Miró pays another visit to Matisse on 16 October. Matisse undertakes to attend the distribution between Pierre Loeb and Pierre Matisse of Miró’s recent works, which are to be sent to Paris by the Catalan government (the series of paintings on Masonite [pp. 106–107]). However, due to delays in shipping, Matisse has to leave Paris before the works arrived and so entrusts the job of overseeing the distribution to his daughter Marguerite.
On 12 November, Marguerite Duthuit attends the distribution and the presentation evening held the following day, 13 November, at Galerie Pierre, which was a great success. She immediately relates both events to her father.
From 30 November to 26 December, a Miró retrospective is held at Pierre

Matisse Gallery. Pierre Matisse sends the catalogue to his father, who finds it ‘very original’, as he writes on two separate occasions [p. 96].

1937

In May, *Cahiers d’art* (Nos. 8-10 of 1936) publishes an interview with Miró by Georges Duthuit entitled *Où allez-vous Miró?* It is the first major theoretical text on Miró in French.

On 28 May, Matisse goes to Pierre Loeb’s house to see the Mirós he had not been able to view the previous autumn, as well as new works produced in Paris, including *Still life with old shoe* [p. 99].

From 1 to 29 June, an exhibition of recent works by Matisse is held at Galerie Paul Rosenberg in Paris.

On 12 July, the pavilion of the Spanish Republic is inaugurated at the *Exposition internationale des arts et techniques dans la vie moderne*, featuring Picasso’s *Guernica*, Calder’s *Fountain of Mercury*, *Montserrat* by Julio González and Miró’s monumental painting *The Reaper*. At the same time, Miró published the famous stencil *Aidez l’Espagne*, for the Republican cause, in the magazine *Cahiers d’art* (issues 4-5).

December sees the publication of the first issue of the review *Verve*, founded by Tériade, who had been ousted from *Minotaure* by Breton. The cover is by Matisse [p. 120] and the issue contains a lithograph by Miró, *Air* [p. 121].

1938

From 4 to 29 January, Pierre Matisse organises an exhibition at his New York gallery entitled *From Matisse to Miró*. The exhibition features two major works in particular: Matisse’s *Large Reclining Nude* [p. 95], on loan from Etta Cone, and Miró’s *Still Life with Old Shoe*. On 22 January, Matisse receives the catalogue [p. 97] and congratulates his son.

On 21 July, Matisse mentions in his diary a meeting with Miró. This may be the occasion on which Pierre Matisse photographs them together on the terrace of the café Les Deux Magots, in Saint-Germain-des-Prés [p. 19].

1939

On 26 January, Franco’s troops invade Barcelona. On 1 April, the Civil War ends and Franco’s dictatorship is established.

In August, the Miró family rents a villa, ‘Le Clos des Sansonnets’, in Varengeville-sur-Mer. Photographs of Miró and his wife with Marguerite Duthuit in Varengeville may date from this period.

On 24 November, Matisse writes to Paul Rosenberg: ‘When you tell me that I am a great artist, I cannot really believe

it, because my strength comes from my almost constant doubt.’

1940

In January, in Varengeville, Miró begins *Constellations* [p. 89], a series of twenty-three gouaches on paper that he continues until 1941, in Palma, Barcelona and Mont-roig. He writes to Pierre Matisse: ‘I now produce very detailed paintings and I think I have achieved a high degree of poetry, the fruit of this life of concentration that you can experience here.’

At the end of May, fleeing the bombings, Miró and his family leave Varengeville and return to Spain via Paris, stopping off in Perpignan before finally settling in Palma de Mallorca.

After debating whether to leave for Brazil, Matisse decides to stay in France and settles in Nice.

The eighth issue of *Verve* appears in the summer, with a spectacular cover by Matisse, *Chromatic Symphony*, based on a composition of gouache cut-outs. The issue concludes with a reproduction of a gouache by Miró, *The Cockereel*.

1941

In January 1941, Matisse undergoes major surgery on his duodenum. The nursing staff at the Clinique du Parc in Lyon consider him to have ‘resuscitated’, and he regards his remaining years as an unhoped-for gift.

On his return to Barcelona, Miró finds a sketchbook he started in 1934 and uses it again to draw projects and jot down thoughts [p. 47]. On several occasions, he expresses his desire to take inspiration from Matisse’s ‘good canvases’ and to rediscover a ‘fauvist spirit’, adding poetry and brutality.

From 18 November to 11 January, the first Joan Miró retrospective is held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, curated by James Johnson Sweeney.

At the end of the year, Aragon visits Matisse with a view to his contributing to the underground review *Poésie* 42. Matisse accepts. It is the start of a friendship that takes the form of numerous conversations and exchanges of letters, as well as Aragon’s writing of texts, including the preface to the collection of drawings *Themes and variations* [pp. 65 and 80], in 1943.

1943

In June, fearing Nice might be bombed, Matisse moves to Vence. He stays there until 1949, except from June 1946 to April 1947 and from June to October 1948, when he returns to Paris.

1944

In the spring, Amélie Matisse and Marguerite Duthuit are arrested by the Gestapo for their Resistance activities. Marguerite is liberated in August, whilst in the process of being deported.

During the summer, Miró devotes himself to sculpture. On 3 September, he writes to James Johnson Sweeney: ‘We must not forget the very important contribution of painters – Pablo, Matisse, Renoir – to sculpture.’

1945

In January, Miró’s *Constellations*, lithographs and ceramics are exhibited at Pierre Matisse Gallery. The exhibition is a major event and marks the return of European artists to the New York scene.

On 8 May, as soon as the Armistice is announced, Matisse writes to Miró: ‘At last! Let us rejoice together...’

1946

At the beginning of the year, the London textile designer and manufacturer Zika Ascher asks Matisse to design some scarves. In June, Matisse writes to Paul Rosenberg that he cannot commit to selling him any paintings as he would ‘be making paintings only exceptionally for a long time to come’, preferring to devote himself to ‘decorative works such as tapestries, frescoes, etc.’ During the summer, he covers the walls of his Paris flat on Boulevard du Montparnasse with cut-out paper shapes [p. 133]. In October, during a second stay in Paris, Zika Ascher and Matisse decide to produce two monumental stencil panels on linen canvas, which become *Oceania, the Sky* and *Oceania, the Sea* [p. 132]. These are Matisse’s first architectural compositions using paper cut-outs.

Between 21 June and 20 July, Teeny Matisse, Pierre’s Cincinnati-born wife, travels to Barcelona to re-establish friendship and business relations with Miró after the war years.

In October, Miró enthusiastically accepts Pierre Matisse’s offer to ‘decorate’ a wall in the restaurant of the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati: ‘I’m passionate about mural painting, and it’s a shame we can’t do a fresco! I’ll see what I can do when I get there, because in my opinion, any mural painting has to be done with the surroundings in mind and in close collaboration with the architect.’

1947

From February to October, Miró visits the United States for the first time to paint a mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.

During the winter, he is interviewed by Francis Lee: ‘Some painters are better because of the spirit that drives them and the force which they represent. Other painters we like because they are better painters. For myself, I think I like Odilon Redon, Paul Klee and Kandinsky for their ‘spirit’. From a purely pictorial point of view – from a plastic point of view – I like Picasso or Matisse. But both points of view are important.’

September sees the publication of *Jazz* [pp. 130-131], a book calligraphed and decorated by Matisse for Tériade, using gouache cut-out compositions.

1948

At the beginning of the year, Breton and his wife Elisa stay on the Côte d’Azur and pay several visits to Matisse, with the idea of preparing an issue of *Verve* with recent works by Matisse and poems by Breton. The project does not come to fruition due to Tériade’s hostility. These meetings nevertheless mark a reconciliation between Matisse and Breton, who confesses to the painter, on his return to Paris, the ‘sort of very spontaneous love’ he has felt for his painting since adolescence.

On 18 February, Miró returns to Paris after an absence of eight years. On 4 and 5 March, he visits Picasso in Antibes and Matisse in Vence.

Clement Greenberg publishes a monograph on Miró (*Joan Miró*, Quadrangle Press) in which he places Miró on a par with Matisse in terms of the constructive and decorative dimension of the surface, thanks to his treatment of colour. ‘He is becoming a great builder with colour, as well as a great decorator. Ultimately, his ability to use tones structurally – that is, to build the painting on pure colour oppositions and intervals independently of those of light and darkness – surpasses that of Picasso and perhaps any other painter of his time, with the exception, once again, of Matisse.’

1949

At the beginning of the year, Matisse moves from Vence to Nice, where he remains for the rest of his life.

In February, Pierre Matisse organises a major exhibition of his father’s recent works to mark his eightieth birthday.

New York wallpaper company Katzenbach & Warren publishes a catalogue of wall-panel designs, *Mural-Scrolls*, featuring four screen-printed projects by Matisse, Miró, Calder and Matta.

Georges Duthuit publishes *Les Fauves*, a much-revised version of his articles from 1929-1931, with an original cover

by Matisse, based on a composition of gouache cut-outs. He dedicates a copy to Miró and his wife.

1950

On 17 November, from Paris, Miró tells Pierre Matisse that he ‘telephoned [his] father yesterday’.

1951

On 6 May, Matisse expresses concern to his son that he has not yet received the catalogues for his Giacometti and Miró exhibitions.

On 25 June, the Dominican Chapel of the Rosary in Vence is inaugurated, the culmination of Matisse’s architectural decoration work.

1952

On 5 April, on a page in his diary, Miró sets himself the goal of ‘making big drawings like Matisse’. He is referring to the brush and ink drawings that Matisse has been developing since 1948.

On 16 May, an exhibition of recent drawings by Matisse opens at Galerie Maeght in Paris. Miró visits the exhibition and says he is ‘impressed’ in a postcard sent to Matisse from the United States on 17 June.

1953

On 1 April, André Breton thanks Miró for the cover of his collection of critical texts *La Clé des champs* [p. 118].

1954

On 3 November, Matisse dies in Nice.

1959

Pierre Matisse publishes a monumental book of reproductions of Miró’s *Constellations*, accompanied by a preface and previously unpublished poems by André Breton. The book follows the structure that Matisse and Breton had devised for an issue of *Verve* in 1948.

1970

On 22 May, Miró asks Pierre Matisse to ‘bring him the photo taken at Les Deux Magots a few years ago, with your father’ [p. 19].

1971

On 12 October, Miró thanks Pierre and Teeny Matisse for donating a drawing by Matisse for the tribute paid to his friend the critic Joan Prats, who died in 1970. The gesture was ‘very moving for all of us who, as well as loving the great friend, admire the great artist that was Matisse’.

Louis Aragon publishes the novel *Henri Matisse*, which includes an account

of a conversation with Matisse during the war: ‘We were talking about contemporary painters and I asked him who, apart from Picasso, he considered to be a true painter. He mentioned Bonnard... and then, without pausing, he added: ‘Miró... yes, Miró... because he may well put any old thing on his canvas... but if he has placed a red mark in a particular spot, you can be certain that it had be there and nowhere else... take it away, and the painting will fall apart.’

1972

On 26 March, Miró, referring to Aragon’s novel, writes to Pierre Matisse in Palma: ‘I was very moved and proud to read what Matisse had to say about me, which is a great stimulus for my work.’

1975

In November, in conversations with Georges Raillard, Miró speaks of his frustrated desire to visit Matisse in his last years: ‘I felt very clearly, towards the end of his life, that he always found excuses not to see me. He was either busy or tired. On the other hand, I know that he spoke very highly of me to Aragon, to whom he was very close.’

1977

When Georges Raillard’s interviews with Miró, entitled *Ceci est la couleur de mes rêves*, are published, Pierre Matisse reacts to comments made about Matisse: ‘He always liked your painting, and in particular the series of paintings on cardboard from 1935, which made a great impression on him. He asked me to lend him one [p. 21 top], which he kept until 1945. He was very fond of the early paintings from the period of *The Farmer’s Wife*, from 1922-1923. Of course, in his later years, when he was working on the large gouache cut-outs, he devoted all of his energy to his work and so, naturally, received guests very infrequently.’

1979

In October, Pierre Matisse and his new wife Maria-Gaetana present the Miró couple with a large brush and ink drawing by Matisse, similar to those Miró loved at the exhibition at Galerie Maeght in 1952 [p. 71].

1980

At the beginning of October, aged 87, Miró travels to Madrid to see the Matisse retrospective organised by Fundación Juan March. Those present include Pierre Matisse and Marguerite Duthuit, to whom Miró writes: ‘Pilar and I were so happy to spend these few days in Madrid with you and to see your family, in the moving setting of the Matisse exhibition’ [p. 143].