

Press kit

10.10.2025 – 22.02.2026

# Miró and the United States



**Fundació Joan Miró**

Parc de Montjuïc  
Barcelona

Centre d'Estudis  
d'Art Contemporani [press@fmirobcn.org](mailto:press@fmirobcn.org)

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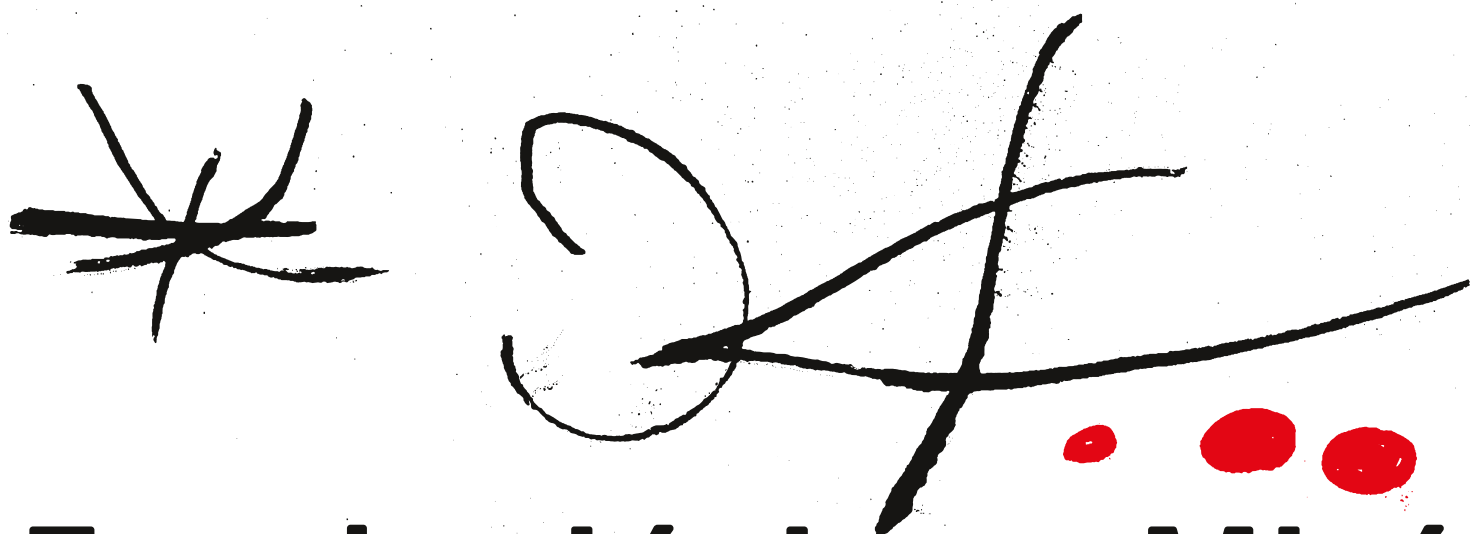
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# Fundació Joan Miró

# 1. General information

## ***Miró and the United States***

**Dates:** 10.10.2025 – 22.2.2026

**Exhibition organised by:** Fundació Joan Miró (Barcelona) and The Phillips Collection (Washington DC)

**Public opening:** Fundació Joan Miró (Barcelona) from 10 October 2025 to 22 February 2026. The Phillips Collection (Washington DC) from 21 March to 5 July 2026

**Curatorship:** Marko Daniel, Matthew Gale and Dolors Rodríguez Roig from the Fundació Joan Miró, in collaboration with Elsa Smithgall from The Phillips Collection

Is supported by the **main sponsorship of Fundació BBVA** and the collaboration of **Puig** and **Abertis Foundation**.

### **Total number of works:**

The Fundació Joan Miró exhibition brings together a total of 138 works, including those by the following key artists of 20th-century art: William Baziotes, Thomas Bouchard, Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, John Chamberlain, Minna Wright Citron, Salvador Dalí, Elaine de Kooning, Maya Deren, Herbert Ferber, Perle Fine, Sam Francis, Helen Frankenthaler, José Guerrero, Arshile Gorky, Adolph Gottlieb, Sarah Grilo, Grace Hartigan, Stanley William Hayter, Franz Kline, Lee Krasner, Norman Lewis, Len Lye, Roberto Matta, Joan Miró, Peter Miller, Joan Mitchell, Robert Motherwell, Louise Nevelson, Barnett Newman, Isamu Noguchi, Alfonso Ossorio, Jackson Pollock, Robert Rauschenberg, Jeanne Reynal, Mark Rothko, Josep Royo, Anne Ryan, Sonja Sekula, Janet Sobel, Theodoros Stamos, Rufino Tamayo, Dorothea Tanning, Alice Trumbull Mason, Esteban Vicente and Michael Corinne West.

### **Lending museums and collections:**

The works come from the holdings of the Fundació Joan Miró and from various American and European collections: Arte Collectum, The British Museum, The Easton Foundation c/o Louise Bourgeois Studio, Eric Firestone Gallery, European Art AG, Fondation Gandur pour l'Art, The Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center – Vassar College, Fundació Gala-Salvador Dalí, Fundació

Miró Mallorca, Galería Maisterravalbuena, Gratz Gallery / Morton Contemporary, Harvard Art Museums / Fogg Art Museum, The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum, Kunstmuseum Luzern, Len Lye Foundation, Light Cone, Munson, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Musée de Mougins (Christian Levett Collection), Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Esteban Vicente, Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, The Museum of Modern Art, Nahmad Collection, The National Gallery of Art (Washington), The Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Philadelphia Museum of Art, The Phillips Collection, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Successió Miró, Tate, Whitney Museum of American Art and Yale University Art Gallery, as well as from other private lenders and collections.

### **Publication accompanying the exhibition:**

*Miró and the United States*, featuring texts by Dawn Ades, Beatriz Cordero, Marko Daniel, Matthew Gale, Patricia Juncosa, Robert Lubar, Messeri, Dolors Rodríguez Roig, Élisabeth Sclaunick, Elsa Smithgall, Teresa Montaner and Anne Umland. Available in Catalan, Spanish and English.

**Celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Fundació Joan Miró:** The exhibition *Miró and the United States* is part of the events celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Fundació Joan Miró.

## 2. Press release

### *Miró and the United States*

10 October 2025 – 22 February 2026

Curatorship: Marko Daniel, Matthew Gale and Dolors Rodríguez Roig from the Fundació Joan Miró, in collaboration with Elsa Smithgall from The Phillips Collection

## THE FUNDACIÓ JOAN MIRÓ REVEALS MIRÓ'S AMERICAN DREAM

The Fundació Joan Miró presents *Miró and the United States*, an exhibition that recounts a little-known story: the pivotal role that the USA played in Joan Miró's career and in establishing his position in the history of 20th-century art.

As part of the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Fundació Joan Miró, the show will be open to the public in Barcelona from 10 October 2025 to 22 February 2026, is supported by the main sponsorship of Fundación BBVA and the collaboration of Puig and Abertis Foundation.

*Miró and the United States* brings together an outstanding selection of paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, films and archival material from American and European collections.

The show is accompanied by a 296-page publication containing 260 illustrations, as well as new contributions from renowned scholars on the subject of Miró's artistic evolution.

*Barcelona, 9 October 2025.* The Fundació Joan Miró, in collaboration with The Phillips Collection in Washington, presents a new and revealing exhibition entitled *Miró and the United States*, which highlights the intense, bidirectional and intergenerational relationship between Joan Miró and his contemporaries in North America. While it is well known that many North American artists were inspired by Miró, it is less well known that he was also inspired by North American art, particularly

gestural, action and large format painting. This exchange and creative flow spanned continents and generations and is one of the central themes of the exhibition, which is part of the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Fundació Joan Miró. Coming from a Spain devastated by the Franco dictatorship, the United States represented for Miró not only art, but also a country of large open horizons, hope, democracy, future and endless possibilities.

*Miró and the United States* will be open to the public in Barcelona from 10 October 2025 to 22 February 2026, is supported by the main sponsorship of Fundación BBVA and the collaboration of Puig and Fundació Abertis, as well as by the support of the Ministry of Culture and the Barcelona City Council within the framework of Barcelona's Cultural Capital initiative, and with the involvement of Acción Cultural Española (AC/E) and the Institut Ramon Llull.

This exhibition, held to mark the 50th anniversary of the Fundació Joan Miró, also has the support of the Government of Catalonia, the Barcelona Provincial Council, and the Barcelona City Council.

It brings together an outstanding selection of paintings, drawings, sculptures, prints, films and archival documents from American and European collections, as well as new studies by renowned specialists on Miró's artistic evolution.

### A decisive artistic dialogue

*Miró and the United States* is a unique exhibition because it offers a fresh look at Miró's place in modern art, a reading that places the North American context at its heart. In other words, rather than focusing

on the French context, which is essential for understanding his work from the 1920s and 1930s onwards, the show situates the United States as a pivotal territory in the evolution of Joan Miró's artistic language, his international recognition and his connections with other artists. The United States enabled Joan Miró to undertake large-scale public projects – such as the sculpture *Moon, Sun and One Star*, made for Chicago – that would have been unfeasible in Spain at the time. The open and experimental environment of the United States helped Miró to consolidate his creative freedom and international recognition.

The exhibition therefore showcases key moments in Miró's career in the USA: his two retrospectives in New York (in 1941 and 1959), his seven visits between 1947 and 1968, and also the pivotal role played by his dealer, Pierre Matisse, as well as the support of various American institutions and collectors.

The exhibition is a unique event as it displays 138 works from American and European collections as well as those from the Fundació Joan Miró's own holdings, including both works by Miró and approximately forty other artists. The selection is based on known connections and intergenerational relationships of admiration, including the likes of Louise Bourgeois, Alexander Calder, Helen Frankenthaler, Arshile Gorky, Lee Krasner, Alice Trumbull Mason, Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko, among many others. This artistic conversation will demonstrate how Miró's legacy continues to live on.

Based on years of research, the exhibition re-examines the established narratives about Miró's position in the history of art through the selection of artists who feature in it. The different sections of *Miró and the United States* explore this relationship between Miró and forty-nine contemporary artists from different generations. The exhibition also includes many artists who, despite not being originally from the country, moved or went there temporarily to develop part of their artistic careers. Driven by immigration, exile, the search for opportunities or cultural exchange, these creators played a decisive role in shaping the diverse and international North American art scene.

Although it has become commonplace, the fact that the centre of the art world shifted from

Paris to New York is historically grounded. The global upheaval of the Second World War led to many European artists and intellectuals being exiled to the United States, fostering the emergence of North American Abstract Expressionism. This geopolitical and cultural shift was examined in a pioneering manner by Serge Guilbaut in *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art* (1985), in which he argues how New York appropriated the symbolic leadership of modern art.

Miró witnessed and participated in the shift of artistic capital from Paris to New York in the period immediately following the turbulent years of the Second World War. This geopolitical and cultural reconfiguration, which may have once seemed distant, now resonates with an urgency and topicality that would have seemed unimaginable just a few years ago.

One of the major attractions of *Miró and the United States* is the curatorial proposal, which brings together works and artists that reveal connections between Miró and the North American art scene that have never been seen before. The exhibition also offers the public an exceptional opportunity to view works that have never previously been exhibited in Spain, including Lee Krasner's *The Seasons*, which is on loan from the Whitney Museum for the first time.

Another exhibition highlight is the presence of Miró's *Mural Painting, 20 March 1961* (1961), a monumental work that was exhibited several times in the 1960s: in 1961 at the Galerie Maeght in Paris and the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York, and in 1964 in London and Zurich as part of the Miró retrospective organised by Roland Penrose. Since then, once Josep Lluís Sert had donated the mural to the Harvard Art Museums, this is the first time they have authorised its loan for an exhibition in Europe, a fact that makes its presence in the *Miró and the United States* exhibition a truly exceptional event.

Moreover, in an unprecedented move, the first two works that Miró exhibited in the United States will be reunited for the first time: *Le Renversement* (1924) and *Painting* (1926), which were originally presented at the Brooklyn Museum.

## Never-before-seen works, exchanges and connections

As part of *Miró and the United States*, the Fundació Joan Miró is presenting 22 *pochoirs* on paper of *Constellations*, dated 1959. Like the original *Constellations* of 1940-1941,, they were conceived by Miró so that they could be viewed from both sides. While these pieces have been previously exhibited in other settings, this is the first time they have been displayed according to this original, double-sided design, exactly as the artist had intended. This unprecedented curatorial commitment recovers his original vision, offering the public a fresh look at the formal freedom and experimental spirit that define his work.

Alongside important works admired by Miró, such as Jackson Pollock's *Number 14*, are more surprising dialogues, such as that with Janet Sobel, whose *Illusion of Solidity* (1945) shows her to be the precursor of the dripping technique. One of the exhibition's crowning works is Lee Krasner's *The Seasons*, a piece of imposing dimensions and sublime visual and emotional impact that is travelling to Spain for the first time. The exhibition also sheds light on female artists who had to use male pseudonyms to gain recognition, such as Henrietta Myers (Peter Miller) and Corinne Michelle West (Michael West).

## Expanded horizons

The *Miró and the United States* exhibition arrives at a particularly opportune moment, filling a clear need in Miró's artistic story. It transports us to another time and place – full of light, curiosity and risk – when art was a bold commitment to a better future. Amidst a 20th century marked by repression and instability, contact with the United States represented a source of creative energy and openness for Joan Miró, a democratic and dynamic horizon full of artistic opportunities.

Miró actively engaged in dialogue with the North American artistic community, which became a place of inspiration and transformation. This fruitful exchange not only renewed his career, but also reinforced his ability to connect with a world in motion, full of contrasts and possibilities. The exhibition

therefore invites us to look back and move forward with hope, to continue taking risks and to believe in the power of art as a tool for change and expanding horizons.

The *Miró and the United States* exhibition, co-organised with The Phillips Collection in Washington, will also be on show there from 21 March to 5 July 2026.



### 3. Chronology

#### 1926

Two works by Joan Miró are exhibited for the first time in the United States, in New York: *Le Renversement* (1924) and *Painting* (1926). They are included in the *International Exhibition of Modern Art*, organised by Katherine S. Dreier and Marcel Duchamp.

#### 1928

In Paris, Alexander Calder writes to introduce himself to Miró. He will become his lifelong friend and a link to the United States.

#### 1929

In Paris, the collector A. E. Gallatin purchases *Dog Barking at the Moon* for his Gallery of Living Art installed at New York University.

Miró's Parisian gallerist, Pierre Loeb, gives a work by the artist to Pierre Matisse, the New York-based gallerist and son of Henri Matisse. Matisse will represent Miró from 1931 until the artist's death in 1983.

#### 1930

Miró's first solo exhibition in the United States, organised by Pierre Matisse, takes place at the Valentine Gallery in New York.

#### 1932

Miró's first solo exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.

#### 1935

*Drawings and Pastels by Miró* is Miró's first solo exhibition in a North American museum, at the San Francisco Museum of Art.

#### 1936

The solo exhibition *Miró* (Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York) precedes *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (MoMA, New York), the most important exhibition of Surrealism in the United States up to that point, featuring fifteen works by Miró.

#### 1939-1945

The Second World War makes it very difficult for Miró to send works to be exhibited. His work is nevertheless included in major exhibitions in New York, such as *Art of This Century* and *First Papers of Surrealism*, both of which open in 1942.



Joan Miró in Carl Holty's studio, in front of the mural painting for the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.

Photo: Arnold Newman © Arnold Newman / Getty Images



## 1941-1942

The first major Miró retrospective takes place at MoMA in New York, curated by James Johnson Sweeney. In 1942, the Miró exhibition travels to Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts; Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York; the Portland Art Museum in 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*, which takes place at the Pierre Matisse Gallery. This set of works is the first to leave Europe during the war.

## 1946

Miró is commissioned to paint a large mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel restaurant in Cincinnati.

LeRoy Makepeace, the US vice-consul in Barcelona, visits Miró in Mont-roig del Camp and arranges to obtain visas so that he and his family (his wife, Pilar Juncosa, and his daughter, Dolors) can travel to New York. The Makepeace and Miró families will become lifelong friends.

## 1947: first trip to the United States

Joan Miró and his family arrive in New York on 12 February.

In March, he begins working with Stanley William Hayter at Atelier 17. There, he is reunited with Louise Bourgeois, Ruthven Todd and others, and is introduced to 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 third volume of Tristan Tzara's *L'Antitête*.

From 1 April to 4 May, the exhibition *Large-Scale Modern Paintings* takes place at MoMA. *Animated Landscape* (1927) by Miró is exhibited alongside Jackson Pollock's *Mural* (1943).

Miró finishes sketching the mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel restaurant. Miró and Pierre Matisse travel to Cincinnati.

At Atelier 17, Hayter, Todd and Miró rediscover William Blake's technique of soft-ground etching. Bourgeois collaborates with Miró.

On 13 May, the exhibition *Joan Miró: An Exhibition of Paintings, Gouaches, Pastels and Bronzes from 1942 to 1946* opens at the Pierre Matisse Gallery. The exhibition receives much attention.

On 15 May, the artist Len Lye creates shadowgraphs of Miró.

In late May, Miró begins working on the mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati in a studio lent to him by Carl Holty for a few months. It is located in Spanish Harlem, where Alice Trumbull Mason and André Racz also have their studios. Meetings are regularly held at Racz's studio. Miró meets Holty, the Chilean mezzo-soprano Teresa Orrego and the filmmaker Thomas Bouchard there.

Lillard McCloud, the artistic director of the United Art Workshops of the Brooklyn Neighborhood Houses, invites Miró to join the organisation's advisory board. Miró accepts. On 9 June, *Laurels Portfolio Number 1* is launched, featuring the graphic works of Miró, Ryan and Hayter, among others.

Bouchard films *Miró Makes a Color Print* at Atelier 17, documenting the process of creating some of the *Series II* print editions. He also begins filming *Around and About Miró* (1955).

On 30 June, Francis Lee interviews Miró for the magazine *Possibilities*.

From 7 July to 30 September, the *Surrealism in 1947* exhibition takes place at the Galerie Maeght in Paris, for which Miró produces a cloth canvas mural from New York.

In September, Arnold Newman photographs Miró with the Cincinnati mural almost finished.

On 15 October, Miró and his family set sail for Barcelona.

During their time in the United States, the family stays in the homes of various friends and colleagues: first in Kay Sage and Yves Tanguy's apartment, then in filmmaker Richard de Rochemont's home (where they are visited by Bourgeois), later in the Matisse family's apartment, and finally in the apartment of Moncha and the Sert family.

## 1948

In March, Miró's *Mural Painting* is exhibited at MoMA, and in July it is inaugurated in the circular restaurant of the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.

At the 24th Venice Biennale, Peggy Guggenheim exhibits her collection, including two works by Miró.

A monograph on Miró written by Clement Greenberg is published.

## 1951

In June, Miró's *Mural Painting* (1950-1951), commissioned by Walter Gropius, is installed in the Graduate Centre dining room at Harvard University.

## 1952

*The Red Sun* (1948) is included in the exhibition *Painters of Expressionistic Abstraction* at The Phillips Gallery in Washington, alongside works by Willem de Kooning, Robert Motherwell, Jackson Pollock, Alfonso Ossorio and Theodoros Stamos, among others.

Miró visits the *Jackson Pollock* exhibition at the Studio Paul Facchetti in Paris, an experience that will have a lasting effect on him. A possible commission arises for a mural at the new United Nations building in New York.

## June 1952: second trip to the United States

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

While in New York, he visits the *15 Americans* exhibition at MoMA, which features recent works by William Baziotés, Herbert Ferber, Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.

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

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

On 17 June, Miró leaves the United States, having made several sketches with Sert for the United Nations. But the project never comes to fruition.

## 1955

On 9 December, Thomas Bouchard's film *Around and About Miró*, mainly filmed in Catalonia and Mallorca in 1953, premieres at Harvard University.

As part of the 3rd Hispano-American Biennial of Art, the art and architecture exhibitions *El arte moderno en los Estados Unidos* (Modern Art in the United States) take place in Barcelona (Palau de la Virreina and Palacio de Arte Moderno), with works by William Baziotés, Arshile Gorky, Franz Kline, Wifredo Lam, Roberto Matta, Robert Motherwell and Jackson Pollock, among others.

## 1956

Miró moves into his large studio in Palma, designed by Josep Lluís Sert. As a token of gratitude, he paints a large mural for Sert's house in Cambridge, completing it in March 1961.

## 1958

The ceramic murals by Miró and Josep Llorens Artigas are inaugurated in November at the UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

## 1959

An exhibition of the *pochoirs* (facsimiles) of *Constellations* takes place in Paris. Miró has the opportunity to see *The New American Painting* at the Musée National d'Art Moderne.

Pierre Matisse exhibits the *Constellations* facsimiles alongside some originals.

Miró's second retrospective takes place at MoMA, curated by William S. Lieberman and with James Thrall Soby in charge of the publication.

## April-May 1959: third trip to the United States

On 21 April, Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to the United States.

On 27 April, Pierre Matisse organises a party in honour of the Mirós, attended by friends, art critics, curators and collectors.

Miró visits his retrospective at MoMA, where he sees *The Farm* (1921-1922) again, owned by Ernest Hemingway since 1925.

Robert Motherwell publishes 'The Significance of Miró' in the magazine *Art News*.  
On 18 May, Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to Washington to receive the Guggenheim Prize from President Eisenhower.

Miró travels to Harvard, where he sees that his mural painting is in poor condition. He proposes replacing it with a ceramic mural.

Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to Philadelphia, where they visit the Barnes Foundation and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Miró attends the artists' pre-opening of MoMA's *The New American Painting as Shown in Eight European Countries*.

## 1961

Columbia Records releases the Dave Brubeck Quartet compilation *Time Further Out: Miró Reflections*.

### November-December 1961: fourth trip to the United States

On 17 November, Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to the United States from Paris.

They visit the *Miró: 1959-1961* exhibition at the Pierre Matisse Gallery, which opened on 31 October. It features his *Mural Painting* for Moncha and Josep Lluís Sert and triptych *Blue I, II, III*.

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

Miró and Pilar Juncosa attend a luncheon in his honour at the Academy of Arts, after which they enjoy a twist show alongside Patricia and Pierre Matisse and the journalist Leonard Lyons.

The couple meet 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 reduce his activity.

Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to Cambridge to see his new ceramic mural installed at Harvard. They stay at the home of the Serts.

### October-December 1965: fifth trip to the United States

Miró travels to the United States from 25 October to 3 December. He is accompanied by Pilar Juncosa and Joan Gardy Artigas.

On 5 November, Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa are interviewed for the March issue of *Vogue* magazine.

On 6 November, Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa travel to Roxbury to visit the Calder family. They also meet the gallerist Klaus G. Perls.

Joan Miró meets with Thomas M. Messer and Harry F. Guggenheim – the director and president of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, respectively – to finalise the commission for a ceramic mural.

Joan Miró, Pilar Juncosa and Gardy Artigas travel to Chicago for the future monumental sculpture *Moon, Sun and One Star*, which will be inaugurated in 1981. Meanwhile, a mould of the sculpture is renamed *Study for a Monument Offered to the City of Barcelona*. Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa also visit the Art Institute of Chicago and jazz clubs.

## May 1967: sixth trip to the United States

Joan Miró and Pilar Juncosa take a week-long trip to the United States.

On 18 May, Miró attends the inauguration of his ceramic mural *Alicia* (1965-1967), created in collaboration with Josep Llorens Artigas and installed by Joan Gardy Artigas at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

Joan Miró, Pilar Juncosa and the Matisse family are reunited with Leonard Lyons, who takes them to Arthur's Tavern, a jazz nightclub.

On 26 October, Miró wins the Carnegie International Prize for Painting.

## June 1968: seventh trip to the United States

Miró takes a week-long trip to the United States. He almost cancels the trip, which takes place just after the assassination of Robert F. Kennedy on 6 June.

On 13 June, Miró receives an honorary degree from Harvard University.

From Cambridge, he returns to New York, where he visits MoMA for the last time.

## 1976

On 18 June 1976, seven months after the end of the Franco dictatorship, the Fundació Joan Miró – Centre for Contemporary Art Studies is officially inaugurated in Barcelona. Alexander Calder donates his *Mercury Fountain* (1937) and sculpture *4 Wings* (1973), while Pierre Matisse donates his model for *Moon, Sun and One Star* (1968).

## 1983

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

## 1985

Work begins on creating the Homage to Miró Collection, consisting of donated works by Sam Francis, José Guerrero, Robert Motherwell, Robert Rauschenberg and Dorothea Tanning, among others.

## 4. Exhibition sections

### Introduction: *Miró and the United States*

Joan Miró's international prestige was consolidated thanks to the enthusiasm of American artists, beginning in the 1920s and reinforced by his time in New York in 1947. During his subsequent six visits, he forged new artistic paths through exchanges with North American artists and friends.

Through different rooms, the exhibition *Miró and the United States* narrates this relationship between Miró and forty-nine contemporary artists from various generations. The show also includes many artists who, despite not being originally from the country, developed part of their artistic careers there. Driven by immigration, exile, the search for opportunities or cultural exchange, these creators played a decisive role in shaping the diverse and international North American art scene.

Despite the fact that Miró's work was initially controversial, support from his dealer, Pierre Matisse (the youngest son of Henri Matisse), and retrospectives at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) established Miró as a key figure. Artists such as Jackson Pollock considered Miró to be on a par with Picasso, naming them as 'the two artists I admire most'. Miró himself also acknowledged the influence that North American painting had on his work.

*Miró and the United States* focuses primarily on the 1940s and 1950s, a period of great innovation and major public commissions. Miró shared with his contemporaries the ideals of creating art that was personal and at the same time universal.

### 1. Early Exchanges

In 1929, a New York art critic described Joan Miró as the 'latest sensation' among young Parisian artists. He highlighted his inventiveness. Three years earlier, Katherine S. Dreier and Marcel Duchamp had included two of his works, *Le Renversement* (1924) and

*Painting* (1926), in the *International Exhibition of Modern Art* at the Brooklyn Museum in 1926. And A. E. Gallatin included *Painting (Fratellini)* in his Gallery of Living Art. This marked the beginning of Miró's public presence in the United States.

In 1930, Pierre Matisse organised Miró's first solo exhibition in New York, and later, when he opened his own gallery, Matisse continued to promote the Catalan artist's work. MoMA also recognised Miró's talent by acquiring works such as *Person Throwing a Stone at a Bird* in 1937, enabling local artists to discover his imaginative style.

### 2. Calder Miró Sert

Miró and Alexander Calder had been close friends ever since they met in Paris in 1928. 'We're like brothers,' said Joan Miró. Calder made an ingenious wire portrait of Miró, after which they began to exchange works. In 1947, Miró arrived in the United States with his wife, Pilar Juncosa, and his daughter, Dolors Miró, and they were met at the airport by Calder and his wife, Louisa James. The exchanges continued during this period, with Calder swapping his piece *Black Polygons* (1947) for Miró's *Women and Bird in the Night* (1947).

Josep Lluís Sert, an architect and friend of both Miró and Calder who eventually became Dean of Architecture at Harvard, was a vital contact for Miró in the United States. Miró's murals for the university (1951 and 1961) were followed by one that he made for the Serts themselves. Josep Lluís Sert was one of the architects of the Pavilion of the Spanish Republic in Paris (1937), where he collaborated with Miró, the creator of the mural *The Reaper* (now lost), and Calder, who installed his iconic *Mercury Fountain* there. This was the first of four major collaborations between Miró and Sert: the 1937 pavilion, the design of Miró's studio in Palma, the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul-de-Vence, and finally the Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona, which closed a circle of artistic support and collaboration.





Joan Miró *Message d'ami*, [Message from a Friend] 1964. Oil on canvas. 262 × 275,5 cm  
Tate. Purchased with assistance from funds bequeathed by Miss H. M. Arbuthnot through the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1983

### 3. Sculptural Materials, Choreographed Form

Miró was drawn to the 'energy and vitality' of the American artistic scene. As he explored mural painting and printing, his interest in sculpture grew.

A notable sculptural breakthrough was Louise Bourgeois' *Personages*, which turned people into totems. She had met Miró in Paris, and they became friends when he and his family arrived in New York in 1947. Miró also shared similar interests with the sculptor Louise Nevelson, who, like him, used found materials, as well as with Herbert Ferber's three-dimensional mural structures, which evoked Mironian atmospheres.

The experimental films of Maya Deren and Len Lye also reflected a preoccupation with the creative process.

#### 3.1. Surrealism

Surrealism arrived in the United States in the 1930s through exhibitions in galleries such as Julien Levy's and Pierre Matisse's, culminating in the *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* show at MoMA in 1936. Salvador Dalí was the best-known artist, although Joan Miró was an equally prominent presence. The two Catalan artists had simultaneous retrospectives at

the museum in 1941, at a time when many Surrealist artists were arriving in New York as refugees from the war in Europe. When Miró arrived in 1947, he reunited with old friends and made new contacts.

The dealer Pierre Matisse, the curator James Johnson Sweeney and the critic Clement Greenberg distanced Miró from Surrealism, because they viewed it as a literary movement that was too closely associated with Dalí.

#### 3.2. Prints and Atelier 17

In 1940, the printmaker Stanley William Hayter moved his Atelier 17 studio from Paris to New York, creating a space for printmaking experimentation. Miró worked there for a few months in 1947, surrounded by international artists such as Louise Bourgeois, Minna Citron and Alice Trumbull Mason. He created prints for Tristan Tzara's book *L'Antitête* and explored new techniques with great enthusiasm. This process was filmed by Thomas Bouchard, who also recorded Miró working in Carl Holty's studio, where he was preparing his large mural for Cincinnati.



Atelier 17, meeting point for European and American artists in New York. Martin Harris (SFAM)  
Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Foto: © Martin Harris



## 4. Constellations, 1940-1959

The painting *Still Life with Old Shoe*, which Miró considered essential, was acquired in 1938 by the painter Peter Miller, influencing artists such as Arshile Gorky after he saw it at the 1941 MoMA retrospective.

Shortly before this, Miró had completed his series of gouaches entitled *Constellations*, which Pierre Matisse exhibited in New York in 1945 to great acclaim. Matisse later promoted a limited edition of stencil prints (*pochoirs*) with accompanying texts by André Breton, printed by Daniel Jacomet under Miró's supervision. These prints were presented in Paris, New York and Los Angeles in 1959. The front and back of the originals can be seen, as Miró intended.

## 5. Possibilities I

In 1945, Barnett Newman stated that Miró had initiated a new artistic movement with a language that would transform art for years to come. This was the result of the impact of *Constellations*, and it anticipated the reception Miró would have in New York, where several artists were already moving towards subjective abstraction.

In 1947, Clement Greenberg emphasised that no innovative painting could ignore Miró and that the artist was as important as Matisse or Picasso. Other critics valued his work for its freshness and renewal. The magazine *Possibilities*, edited by Robert Motherwell and Harold Rosenberg, showcased the work and thoughts of artists who responded to Miró, including William Baziotes, Jackson Pollock and Mark Rothko.

## 6. Possibilities II

Interviewed by Francis Lee in June 1947 for *Possibilities*, Miró identified the postwar moment as a 'period of transition'. When asked what he thought of American painters, he responded: 'I especially like their enthusiasm and freshness,' and added that their 'force and vitality' were potential influences. The original notes of the interview show that Lee had specifically asked about the artists shown at Samuel Kootz's gallery, citing William Baziotes,

Mark Rothko and Robert Motherwell (editor of *Possibilities*). Miró acknowledged that he knew their work.

A transatlantic exchange soon gathered pace. Peggy Guggenheim caused a sensation when she showed her collection of European and American art at the 1948 Venice Biennale, and two years later she mounted a solo exhibition of Jackson Pollock's work in Venice. The calligraphy and encrustation incorporated in *The Red Sun* in 1948 demonstrates Miró's response to the energy that he admired among his New York colleagues. When the Washington collector Duncan Phillips acquired the painting in 1952, he immediately included it in *Painters of Expressionistic Abstraction*, alongside works by Pollock, Adolph Gottlieb, Alfonso Ossorio, Theodoros Stamos and others, thereby acknowledging Miró's central role within current developments.

## 7. Flying Lines, 1951-1953

The paintings of many New York artists were characterised by energetic brushstrokes and large formats. Jackson Pollock set the trend with works such as those from 1949, which Elaine de Kooning described as 'flying lines [...] spattered on in intense, unmixed colors to create wiry, sculptural constructions'. In that same year, the popular magazine *Life* asked whether Pollock was the greatest living painter in the United States.

The circle of artists that defined Abstract Expressionism was expanding. The *Ninth Street Show* exhibition in 1951 encompassed a new generation of artists who were working with abstraction. After completing a mural for Harvard, Joan Miró returned to the USA in 1952 to see its installation. He also subscribed to North American art magazines and probably took the opportunity to view the *15 Americans* exhibition at MoMA, which featured works by Baziotes, Ferber, Pollock and Rothko.

## 8. The New American Painting

Lee Krasner painted *The Seasons* in 1957 shortly after Jackson Pollock died in a car accident. While grieving, Krasner helped to organise Pollock's posthumous exhibition and returned to painting in the studio that

he had left. This work, which she described as the result of a 'life-and-death moment', is striking above all for its richness of form. In 1958, a critic praised her ability to control composition.

Nonetheless, she was unjustly excluded from Abstract Expressionism as disseminated internationally by MoMA through *The New American Painting* exhibition, which toured Europe in 1958-1959. Miró attended the opening of this exhibition in 1959 during his third visit to New York, thereby confirming his interest in North American painting.

## 9. Colour Fields

Influenced by friends and artists, as well as his own paintings from the 1920s, which he revisited for the 1959 MoMA retrospective, Miró reinvented the relationship between sign and background. In works such as *May 1968*, which expressed his support for the student protests, his handprints and energy are clearly visible. In 1961, he acknowledged that he had influenced a generation of younger painters, while also recognising that he had been influenced by his time, a fact that demonstrated his ongoing engagement with contemporary art.

## 10. Projects for Monuments

New workspaces enabled Miró to expand his artistic ambitions and reach a wider audience.



Helen Frankenthaler – Canyon, 1965.  
Acrylic on canvas. 44 × 52 in. (111.8 × 132.1 cm)  
The Phillips Collection, Washington, DC. The Dreier Fund for  
Acquisitions and funds given by Gifford Phillips, 2001

His studio in Palma, which was designed by Sert, and the purchase of its adjacent 18th-century house, Son Boter, made it easier for him to create sculptures and 'projects for monuments', comprising everyday objects with a subversive tone.

Miró and Sert often discussed the harmonious interaction of art with architecture. This ability that Miró had of adapting to large spaces encouraged collaborations with promoters in the United States. Nonetheless, the processes were slow: *Personage and Bird* (1970) for Houston took five years. In 1965, he travelled to Chicago for a commission that did not materialise until 1981, although the bronze model *Moon, Sun and One Star* can be found in the Fundació Joan Miró.

## 11. Towards the Fundació Joan Miró

Miró regarded his 1959 retrospective in New York as an opportunity to conduct a 'rigorous self-criticism' of his work, a process he repeated in 1974 with his retrospective at the Grand Palais in Paris. According to the writer Jacques Dupin, the artist devoted all his attention and energy to it. He conceived the Fundació Joan Miró, which opened in 1975, with that same intensity. Some of his most ambitious works, such as *Sobreteixim with Eight Umbrellas* (1973) and *Hands Flying Off Toward the Constellations* (1974), were presented in Paris before being installed at the Fundació Joan Miró. Also on display in this gallery is the design for the tapestry intended for the World Trade Centre, which was lost in 2001. Calder's *Mercury Fountain*, made for the 1937 Republican Pavilion, recalls the initial collaboration with Sert and Miró.

## 12. Sculptural Objects

Miró was always concerned with the relationship between art and public spaces, with the desire to improve everyday life and reach everyone, as demonstrated by the Fundació Joan Miró itself. He reused everyday found objects to give them a new artistic life, thereby elevating their simplicity to a timeless dimension.

Miró shared this practice with artists from several generations, as reflected in *The Art of Assemblage* (1961) at MoMA. This exhibition featured Miró alongside young artists such as the sculptor John Chamberlain, who is renowned for repurposing the iconic symbol of the American dream: cars, crushed.

A different affinity can be found between Miró and Jeanne Reynal, with their totemic sculptures. In this case, both artists shared the pleasure of making art with a public purpose.

## 14. Around and About Miró

Thomas Bouchard began filming Miró in New York in 1947 and made two documentaries: *Miró Makes a Colour Print* and *Around and About Miró*. The latter was also filmed in Spain in 1953 and portrays Miró's roots in Catalan culture.

As early as 1920, Miró defined himself as an 'international Catalan', a combination of identity and openness that made him much loved by his colleagues. Many of his works reflect this internationalist spirit, coming from gifts made in homage to Miró upon his death from artists working in the United States, including Dorothea Tanning, José Guerrero, Robert Rauschenberg and Sam Francis. Robert Motherwell summed up his affection and enthusiasm for Miró thus: 'I like everything about Miró.'

## 5. Public and social programme

In its desire to amplify the story of the exhibition, the public and social programme of *Miró and the United States* offers a variety of resources and activities. These inclusive and accessible proposals cater for all ages and interests, with flexible, open formats. In this way, the Fundació Joan Miró reaffirms its commitment to active, inclusive artistic mediation. It recognises this not only as a didactic resource, but also as a means of promoting participation, critical reflection and the collective appropriation of Miró's legacy and contemporary artistic practices.

### Public programme

#### 1. Manual for Chasing Rainbows: Doing, Feeling and Thinking around *Miró and the United States*

Alongside the exhibition *Miró and the United States*, the Fundació Joan Miró is launching a series of mediation manuals so that visitors can navigate the exhibition from new angles. The manual includes a fold-out, a booklet with information about the exhibition and fifteen cards prepared by six invited artists and researchers who were asked to reinterpret the exhibition. It is available in Catalan, Spanish, English and French.

#### 2. Mediation elements in rooms

In order to ensure an enriching and accessible visit to the exhibition for all, there are various activation devices in the form of viewers throughout the exhibition. These expand on some of the issues present in the works and allow for a deeper observation of the gestures, colours and textures of the creations. The spaces and furniture are also designed to be accessible, and the communication elements are suitable for people with different abilities.

#### 3. Rereading project

The *Rereading* project comprises a range of inclusive and accessible proposals suitable for all ages and interests. Different artists and/or researchers from various fields have been invited to propose ways of engaging with the exhibition, so that everyone who visits the exhibition can relate with the show in a more open way. Two rereadings aimed at

family audiences and four more aimed at adult audiences are planned.

- Rereadings for family audiences:
  - Rereading by Meritxell Balada on 9 November and 14 December 2025
  - Rereading by Julia Pelletier on 11 January and 15 February 2026
- Rereadings for adult audiences:
  - Rereading by Júlia Lull Sanz on 18 October 2025
  - Rereading by Sandra March on 15 November 2025
  - Rereading by Itxaso Corral Arrieta on 17 January 2026
  - Rereading by Maria Freire Montané on 7 February 2026

#### 4. Barcelona Dibuixa: *Message d'ami* (19 October 2025)

Premised on the painting *Message from a Friend* (1961), which Joan Miró created in response to a letter from his friend Alexander Calder, this workshop involves a collective investigation into the essence of friendship. The story of a bond will lead to the creation of letters that are not written, but made of gestures, textures and materials. This activity is part of the Barcelona Dibuixa programme, the city of Barcelona's major drawing festival. The guest artists are Martí de la Malla and Rosa Llop.

### Social programme

#### 1. Tour-workshop for schools

Given that the exhibition coincides with the period of greatest demand for school tours, the Fundació Joan Miró will develop an activity with the mediation of local artists so that pupils who visit the show can have a truly stimulating experience.

#### 2. *Atelier 18*: project with the Serra i Abella school of art (L'Hospitalet de Llobregat) and *Atelier 18: Getting Your Hands Dirty* (24 January 2026)

*Atelier 18* is an educational innovation community project co-created with third- and fourth-year graphic design degree students at the Serra i Abella school of art in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat, as well as with students on

photography training courses. It is an updated interpretation of the historic Atelier 17, with the aim of raising its profile. Atelier 17 was a Parisian workshop and printing school that Stanley William Hayter moved to New York following the Nazi occupation. It became a pioneer in printing experimentation and technical innovation, and at the same time it was a meeting point for many European and American artists of different generations. Miró worked there and found it very stimulating creatively.

Number 17 is replaced by 18 in this project, a continuation that does not attempt to replace the original, but rather to enhance it. Eighteen artists who were part of Atelier 17 are also given a voice, enabling their legacy to be recovered and disseminated.

*Atelier 18* consists of three phases (research, conceptualisation and execution) distributed over a period of one and a half years. It will culminate in a day of workshops entitled *Atelier 18: Getting Your Hands Dirty* (24 January 2026), where the research conducted will be displayed in photobook format and various workshops aimed at a variety of audiences will be held to promote creativity.

### **3. Dynamic tours aimed at social inclusion and mental health groups as well as people with sensory and cognitive disabilities**

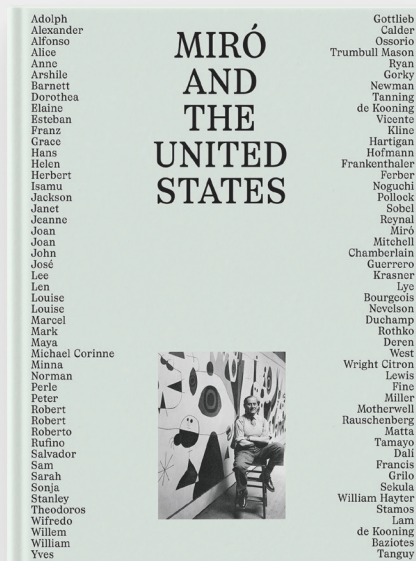
#### **4. Cultural inclusion project**

This is a medium-term project with the Cerebral Palsy and Multiple Disability Federation of Catalonia (FEPCCAT) that will culminate in an exhibition in the Fundació Joan Miró's Room 22.

## 6. Publication

The exhibition will be accompanied by the publication *Miró and the United States*, available in Catalan, Spanish and English. It will include texts by renowned Miró curators and specialists: Dawn Ades, Beatriz Cordero Martín, Marko Daniel, Matthew Gale, Patricia Juncosa, Robert Lubar Messeri, Teresa Montaner, Dolors Rodríguez Roig, Élisabeth Sclaunick, Elsa Smithgall and Anne Umland.

With 296 pages and a total of 260 illustrations, *Miró and the United States* will be published on 9 October 2025. The essays by academics and researchers place the artist's North American experience at the heart of his career. They therefore explain how Miró met the protagonists of Abstract Expressionism during his seven trips to the United States, and how they influenced each other's works and ways of working. The commissions he received in Cincinnati and at Harvard, his two monographic exhibitions at MoMA and the support of his dealer Pierre Matisse and his friend Josep Lluís Sert were also fundamental in promoting the wide recognition Miró received in the United States.

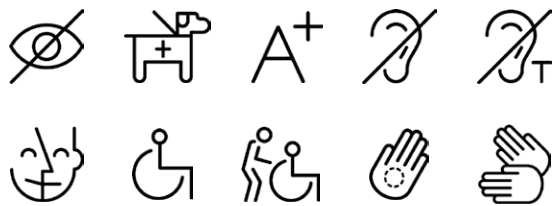




## General Information

Consult all the practical information for visiting the Fundació Joan Miró at the following link:  
[www.fmirobcn.org/en/visit-us/](http://www.fmirobcn.org/en/visit-us/).

### Accessibility



**Images** available for the press and digitised dossier in our virtual press room:  
[www.fmirobcn.org/en/foundation/press/](http://www.fmirobcn.org/en/foundation/press/).

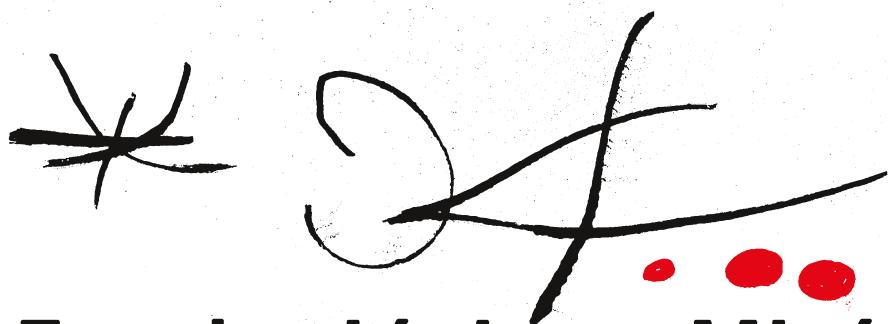
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### Press contact:

[laura.rigal@fmirobcn.org](mailto:laura.rigal@fmirobcn.org)  
+ 34 681 055 559







# Fundació Joan Miró

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