



Obra Social "la Caixa"

**Fundació Joan Miró**  
\* JF... Barcelona

***Miró and the Object***

10 February – 22 May 2016

Opening: 9 February 2016, 7 pm

Curator: William Jeffett and Fundació Joan Miró

**CaixaForum Madrid**

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**Press Release**

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**Fundació Joan Miró and Obra Social "la Caixa" present the exhibition *Miró and the Object* at CaixaForum Madrid.**

**Curated by William Jeffett, *Miró and the Object* is the first exhibition to specifically explore the role of the object in the work of Joan Miró. It shows how Miró began with pictorial representation of objects, moved onto physically incorporating them in his works by means of collage and assemblage, and ended up exploring new techniques such as ceramics and sculpture.**

**The exhibition, organised jointly by the Fundació Joan Miró and Obra Social "la Caixa" presents over a hundred works including paintings, ceramics and sculptures from major public and private collections in Europe and America, as well as a selection of original objects that Miró collected throughout his life.**

**To coincide with the exhibition, CaixaForum Madrid will host an international symposium focusing on Joan Miró and 20th century sculpture. The event is organised by the Càtedra Miró (Fundació Joan Miró / Universitat Oberta de Catalunya) and New York University Madrid, with the collaboration of Obra Social "la Caixa".**

**Barcelona, 9 February 2016.** *"To make use of things found by divine chance: pieces of iron, stones, etc., just as I make use of a schematic sign drawn on paper by chance, or an accident that also takes place by chance. That magical spark is the only thing that matters in art."* (Joan Miró. Anotacions de treball (Working Notes), 1941-42, Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona).

The creative process of Joan Miró (Barcelona, 1893) throughout his career can be read through his relationship with objects, from his earliest paintings to his bronze sculptures, by way of his collages and assemblages. *Miró and the Object* allows visitors to discover the artist who defied painting and – precisely through his dialogue with the object – helped to bringing about a major change in the conception of art.



The project is curated by renowned Miró expert and Chief Curator of Exhibitions of the Dalí Museum in St Petersburg (Florida), William Jeffett, with the support of the Conservation Department at the Fundació Joan Miró, which is co-organising the exhibition with Obra Social "la Caixa".

The exhibition is based on Miró's enduring fascination with objects, which led him to find and collect elements of the most diverse nature in order to generate a particular creative atmosphere in his studio. Like the Dadaists and the Surrealists, Miró was open to the unexpected, and his intrinsic poetic sensibility led him to find a source of inspiration in these chance discoveries.



*"I feel myself attracted by a magnetic force to an object, and then I feel myself being drawn towards another object which is added to the first, and their combination creates a poetic shock – which makes the poetry truly moving, and without which it would have no effect."*  
(Letter from Joan Miró to Pierre Matisse, 1936)

**Joan Miró**

*L'Horloge du vent*, 1967

Wind clock

Bronze

50.5 x 30.2 x 16.3 cm

Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona

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*Miró and the Object* is structured into six themed areas that explore the artist's initial evolution from the pictorial representation of the object to its physical incorporation in the painting through techniques such as collage and assemblage, a process that was in many respects a direct challenge to the visual arts in the late twenties.

The exhibition shows how Miró gradually introduced more heterodox and anti-artistic materials into his work over the following decade, to the point of approaching the painting itself as an object. It was a transformation that reflected his profound crisis in relation to conventional painting, and placed the object at the very centre of a new poetic approach. This tendency culminated with Miró's foray into ceramics and sculpture after the Spanish Civil War and World War II.



In this regard, Jeffett says: "Miró first explored the idea of anti-painting in 1930, in a series of paintings in which he carefully calculated a composition and then cancelled it out by crossing out the image. [...] In 1974 Miró did a series of burnt paintings for his great retrospective at the Grand Palais in Paris. At the same time, he proposed a series of bronze sculptures, also made out of assemblages of objects, ceramics, and tapestries, as poetic modes beyond painting." It was new, radical, and challenging work that confirmed Miró's status as a dynamic, innovative creator. He was 81 years old.

The exhibition is rounded off with two series of photographs taken in the sixties by Claude Gaspari and Planas Montaña that document Miró's working process with objects. Visitors will also be able to view two supporting film documents: a 1939 excerpt of Bizet's ballet *Jeux d'enfants*, and a documentary on Miró's burnt paintings by Francesc Català-Roca. Lastly, a video explaining the main theses behind the exhibition project has been produced for the occasion, with the participation of the curator William Jeffett, Miró's grandson Joan Punyet Miró, ceramicist Josep Llorens Artigas, and Rosa Maria Malet, Director of the Fundació Joan Miró. The video can be viewed in the third section of the exhibition.

The selection includes the painting *The toys* (1924), from the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, *Still life I (The Stalk of wheat)* and *Still life II (The carbide lamp)*, two paintings from 1922-1923 belonging to MoMA, and the assembled objects from the small, delicate series that Miró produced in 1931. Notable works from his mature period include *Cadre-objet* [Painting-Object, 1972] and *Les oiseaux de proie foncent sur nos ombres* [The birds of prey swoop down on our shadows, 1970], an oil on cowhide.

The project is complemented by a publication that includes testimonial, interpretative and critical texts by the curator William Jeffett, the artist Perejaume, Miró's grandson Joan Punyet Miró, and Didier Ottinger, Chief Curator at the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

As part of the exhibition project, on 15 and 16 April CaixaForum Madrid will host the international symposium "Miró and 20th Century Sculpture", which will analyse Miró's sculptural work through a series of dialogues with other artists. The programme is coordinated by Robert Lubar Messeri, Director of New York University Madrid and of Càtedra Miró (Fundació Joan Miró / Universitat Oberta de Catalunya). The symposium is organised by the Càtedra Miró and New York University Madrid, with the collaboration of Obra Social "la Caixa".

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