

JOAN MIRÓ

(Barcelona, 1893- Palma de Mallorca, 1983)

Courtesy: Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró, Mallorca

1893

- Joan Miró i Ferrà is born in Barcelona on April 20th into a family of artisans.

1897

- Four years later, his sister, Dolors Miró i Ferrà, is also born in Barcelona.

1900

- He starts primary school. Miró describes himself as a bad student who only felt any sense of motivation in classes given by his drawing teacher, Mr Civil.

1901

- His earliest surviving drawings date back to this year.

1906

- He starts his earliest surviving sketch book, drawing landscapes during stays in Cornudella and Mallorca.

1907

- On his father's indications, he enrolls at the Barcelona School of Commerce, while simultaneously attending La Lonja School of Fine Art.

1910

- He starts work at Droguería Dalmau Oliveres, a Barcelona cleaning store.
- Barcelona City Council organizes an exhibition where his work is shown for the first time.

1911

- He catches typhoid and convalesces at Mont-roig. As a result, his family comes to accept his decision to concentrate solely on painting.

1912

- He registers at Francesc Galí School of Art, where he attends classes until 1915.

1913

- He joins Sant Lluç Art Circle, where he takes drawing classes.

1914

- The First World War breaks out and Barcelona becomes a haven for exiled European artists, given Spain's neutrality in the war.

1915

- He starts his military service in Barcelona.
- He becomes friends with Josep Llorens i Artigas.

1916

- During the year, he frequents the gallery of art dealer Josep Dalmau, a meeting point for wartime artist refugees.

1917

- He shows an interest in poetry and avant-garde Catalan and French magazines.
- He meets Francis Picabia.

1918

- The First World War comes to an end.
- He forms part of the Courbet Group, together with Josep Llorens i Artigas, Josep Francesc Ràfols and Enric Cristòfol Ricart, among others.
- The first solo exhibition of his work is held at Galeria Dalmau in Barcelona.

1920

- He travels to Paris for the first time, where he and E.C. Ricart visit Pablo Picasso's studio.
- He spends his time visiting museums and exhibitions.
- In the middle of the year, he returns to Catalonia and goes to live in Mont-roig.
- He paints a series of *still lifes* where Cubism's influences can be noted.

1921

- His second trip to Paris.
- He meets André Masson, Pierre Reverdy, Max Jacob, Tristan Tzara, and Antonin Artaud, among others.
- The first solo exhibition of his work in Paris is held, entitled "Exposition de Peintures et Dessins de Joan Miró", at Galerie La Licorne.

1923

- He mixes with North-American writers Ernest Hemingway, Henry Miller and Evan Shipman and French writers Jacques Prévert and Benjamin Péret.
- The Primo de Rivera coup d'état in Spain.

1924

- He meets André Breton, who months later publishes *Manifest du Surréalisme*, together with Louis Aragon and Paul Éluard.
- Due to his links with poets and his reading of work by writers like Apollinaire, Jarry, Lautréamont and Rimbaud, he gradually moves from realism to a more imaginary style of painting. This brings him increasingly closer to the Surrealist movement.

1925

- He begins to paint the canvases that will become known as his *Oneiric paintings*.
- A solo exhibition of his work is held at Galerie Pierre in Paris.

1926

- He works with Max Ernst on the preparation of the stage sets and costumes of the ballet *Romeo and Juliette*, produced by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.
- The Surrealist group, headed by Breton and Aragon, organize a protest at the theatre since they object to Ernst and Miró cooperating with bourgeois interests.
- His first joint exhibition in the United States, entitled "An International Exhibition of Modern Art". Organized by Marcel Duchamp and Katherine J. Dreier at Brooklyn Museum in New York.

1927

- The first documented reference to Miró's desire to *murder painting*.
- He meets James Johnson Sweeney.

1928

- He travels to Belgium and Holland and, on his return, paints the *Dutch Interiors* series, based on reproductions of works by 17th century Dutch masters.
- His first trip to Madrid.
- He meets Alexander Calder, with whom he becomes close friends.
- He creates his first *painting-objects* and *collages*, the *Spanish Dancer* series.

1929

- He marries Mallorcan Pilar Juncosa in Palma de Mallorca.
- He creates his *Imaginary Portraits* and first lithographs to illustrate Tristan Tzara's book *L'Arbre de voyageurs*.

1930

- His daughter Maria Dolores is born in Barcelona.
- He meets Pierre Matisse.
- He seeks new alternatives to conventional painting: collage, drawing, objects, bas-reliefs, etc. He creates his first *constructions*.

1931

- King Alfonso XIII of Spain abandons the country and the Second Spanish Republic is proclaimed.
- Miró begins a series of paintings on Ingres paper and objects.
- Dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine commissions him with the stage sets and costumes for the ballet *Jeux d'enfants*.

1932

- He settles in Barcelona but continues to travel regularly to Paris.
- His first solo exhibition of work on paper at Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.
- From this moment on, Pierre Matisse becomes his art dealer in the United States.

1933

- He creates the series of 18 *Paintings Based on Collages*.
- The ballet *Jeux d'enfants* is presented at Barcelona's Gran Teatre del Liceo.

1934

- He meets Wassily Kandinsky.
- He creates paintings on sandpaper and a series of large pastels that signal the period of his *Wild Paintings*.

1935

- In 1935, he travels to Brussels, Prague and Berlin.
- At the end of the year, his family moves to Paris, settling there until 1940.

1936

- He creates a series of paintings on *masonite*, where he combines oils with tar, casein and sand.
- The Spanish Civil War breaks out and he decides to live in Paris with his family.

1937

- The Spanish government commissions him with a large mural painting for the Pavilion of the Spanish Republic at the Paris Exposition, designed by Josep Lluís Sert. Other collaborating artists include Picasso (*Guernica*), Calder (*Mercury Fountain*) and Julio González (*La Montserrat*). Miró's work, *The Reaper*, disappears when the pavilion is taken down.
- Miró creates the "pochoir" *Aidez l'Espagne*, originally conceived as a stamp to raise money for Republican Spain, and a series of paintings on *celotex*.
- He takes part in the Surrealist exhibition at Tokyo's Nippon Salon. Shuzo Takiguchi and Tiroux Yamanaka write the text for the catalogue.

1938

- He works on etchings and drypoint with Marcoussis, Roger Lacourière and Stanley Hayter.
- He spends his first summer in Varengeville-sur-Mer in Normandy, where he meets Georges Braque and Georges Duthuit, among others.
- He takes part in the "International Exhibition of Surrealism" organized by André Breton and Paul Éluard.

1939

- The Spanish Civil War ends and the Franco dictatorship begins, lasting for 36 years.
- He starts work on the *Barcelona* series of 50 lithographs.
- The Second World War breaks out.

1940

- He begins the *Constellations* series of 23 gouaches, which he continues in Palma de Mallorca and finishes in Mont-roig in 1941.

- He decides to return to Spain and finally settles in Palma de Mallorca.
- The first monographic work on Joan Miró is published, by Shuzo Takiguchi, in Japanese.

1941

- He lives in Palma de Mallorca in total anonymity. He starts to spend his summers in Mont-roig again, where a studio is built in 1948.
- The first big retrospective at New York Museum of Modern Art, organized by James Johnson Sweeney.

1942

- He leaves his home in Palma de Mallorca and returns to Barcelona.
- He works exclusively on paper.

1944

- He goes back to painting on canvas.
- He makes his first clay sculptures and ceramics. This is the beginning of the first stage of collaborative work with Artigas.

1945

- The Second World War comes to an end.
- He exhibits his *Constellations* series for the first time at Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.

1946

- He makes his first bronze sculptures at Gimeno Foundry in Barcelona.

1947

- He travels for the first time to the United States, where he spends nine months.
- At the initiative of Philip Adams (the Curator of Cincinnati Art Museum), he is commissioned with a mural for the restaurant of the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati.
- He meets Jackson Pollock and Adolph Gottlieb.
- During his stay in the United States, he comes into contact with modern North-American painting and demonstrates a keen interest in it.
- He takes part in the "Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme 1947", organized by André Breton and Marcel Duchamp at Galerie Maeght in Paris.

1948

- He travels to Geneva. Once he has settled in Barcelona, he makes several trips to Paris.
- From 1948 on, Aimé Maeght becomes his European representative.
- The mural for the Terrace Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati is exhibited at New York Museum of Modern Art.
- The first solo exhibition of his work at the Galerie Maeght in Paris.

1949

- In 1949 and 1950 he produces two types of paintings: a profound, contemplative kind and another in a more gestural impulsive style.

1950

- He creates a mural painting for the refectory of Harvard University's Harkness Graduate Center, commissioned by Walter Gropius.

1952

- He travels to Paris, where he visits an exhibition of work by Jackson Pollock, and to Italy (Venice, Verona and Turin).

1953

- The second stage of collaborative work with Artigas begins in Gallifa, lasting until 1956.

1954

- He makes the 7 *Projet pour un monument* sculptures, based on *assemblages* of different materials and objects.
- He takes part in the 27th Venice Biennial where he is awarded the International Grand Prix in the printmaking section.

1955

- He makes a series of paintings on cardboard and then stops painting until 1959, although he continues to work in the fields of printmaking and ceramics.
- He exhibits his work at Documenta I in Kassel.

1956

- He settles once and for all in Palma de Mallorca in Son Abrines, where his friend Josep Lluís Sert has designed a studio for him.
- He begins to work with Artigas on two murals commissioned for the UNESCO building in Paris.
- Thomas Bouchard produces and directs the film *Around and about Miró*, with Miró's active collaboration.
- The exhibition "Miró-Artigas. Terres de Grand feu" is held at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.

1957

- He goes to see the Altamira cave paintings in Santander with Josep Llorens Artigas and his son Joan Gardy Artigas as inspiration in the preparation of the UNESCO murals, commissioned in 1955.
- Jacques Dupin starts work on what will be a major monographic work on Miró published in 1961.

1958

- The two murals for the UNESCO are inaugurated. The project is chosen to receive the Guggenheim International Award.
- The exhibition "Peintures sauvages.1934 to 1953" at the Pierre Matisse Gallery in New York.

1959

- He goes back to painting.
- He travels to the United States for the third time and attends a reception at the White House, where President Eisenhower presents him with the 1958 Guggenheim International Award.
- He buys Son Boter, a Mallorcan country house built in the eighteenth century next to Son Abrines. Initially it is used as a sculpture studio, second painting studio and retreat. He also sets up an engraving and lithography studio there.
- A retrospective exhibition at New York Museum of Modern Art and Los Angeles County Museum of Art, organized by W. S. Lieberman.

1961

- He works on increasingly large formats. He makes the first triptychs, managing to relinquish much of the superfluous.
- He travels for the fourth time to the United States.

1962

- Retrospective exhibition at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris.

1963

- He makes monumental sculptures made of concrete, iron and bronze, and clay with Artigas for the "Labyrinth" of the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul de Vence.
- A solo exhibition of his work is held at Galleria del Naviglio in Milan.

1964

- The inauguration of the Fondation Maeght, designed by architect Josep Lluís Sert, and the "Labyrinth" with sculptures by Miró and Artigas at Saint-Paul de Vence.

- He makes a ceramic mural for the École Supérieure de Sciences Économiques, Commerce et Administration Publique at Sankt Gallen in Switzerland with Artigas.
- He takes part in Documenta III in Kassel.
- A retrospective exhibition of his work at the Tate Gallery in London.

1965

- He travels to New York and Chicago.

1966

- He works on bronze sculptures at the foundries of Parellada in Barcelona, Susse, Clementi, Scuderi and Valsuani in Paris, and Bonvicini in Verona.
- He makes his first monumental bronze sculptures, *Solar Bird* and *Lunar Bird*, cast at the Susse Foundry in Paris.
- He makes a large ceramic sculpture with the aid of Artigas, *The Sea Goddess*, which is submerged in the Mediterranean Sea in 1968 in a place known as the *Cathédrale de la Fourmigue*.
- He travels to Japan for the first time, where he is fascinated by Japanese calligraphy, which exerts an influence on his working methods.
- A retrospective exhibition of his work is held at Tokyo's National Museum of Modern Art.

1967

- He is awarded the Carnegie International Grand Prize for Painting.
- A ceramic mural, made with Artigas, is mounted at New York's Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum.
- He makes his first painted bronze sculptures.

1968

- Tributes and exhibitions are held to mark his 75th birthday.
- He is awarded the title Doctor Honoris Causa by Harvard University, in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- He travels to the United States for the last time.
- A retrospective exhibition of his work is held at the Fondation Maeght in Saint-Paul de Vence.
- A retrospective exhibition of his work is held in Barcelona at the Antic Hospital de la Santa Creu, the first exhibition of this kind to be held in Spain.

1969

- He travels for the second time to Japan.
- A solo exhibition entitled "Miró otro" is held at the Barcelona Architects' Association, where Miró paints an ephemeral work on the glass windows of the building's façade.

1970

- From the 1970s, he devotes more and more time to monumental public works. He completes a big mural for the façade of Barcelona Airport and two big murals for the Japanese Gas Pavilion at the Osaka International Exposition.
- He begins to work on textiles with Josep Royo.
- At the end of the year, a solo exhibition is inaugurated entitled "Miró, sculpture" at Galleria Arte Borgogna in Milan.
- Together with other Catalan artists and intellectuals, he takes part in a protest at Montserrat Monastery against the Burgos trial, at which six members of ETA are sentenced, and against the general situation of the Spanish State.

1971

- Exhibition entitled "Miró Sculptures" at the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis.
- At the end of the year, he presents the poem and illustrations for *Le Lézard aux plumes d'or*.

1972

- The Fundació Joan Miró is incorporated.
- With Josep Royo, he starts work on his *sobreteixims*, an art form midway between a tapestry, collage and painting.
- The art magazine *XXe Siècle* devotes a special issue to him, *Hommage à Joan Miró*.

1973

- A solo exhibition entitled "Sèrie Mallorca" at the Sala Pelaires, Palma de Mallorca.

1974

- The inauguration of the monumental sculpture *Lunar Bird* in Place Robert Desnos in Paris.
- A retrospective exhibition at the Grand Palais in Paris.

1975

- The Fundació Joan Miró-Centre d'Estudis d'Art Contemporani opens its doors to the public in Barcelona.
- Franco dies and Juan Carlos is proclaimed King of Spain with a view to the restoration of democracy and for him to fulfil the role of King of all Spaniards, without exception.

1976

- The Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona is officially inaugurated.
- He makes two big ceramics in Barcelona: a paved mosaic for Pla de l'Ós in the Rambla, and a mural for the IBM building.
- The presentation of the book *Maravillas y variaciones acrósticas en el jardín de Miró* (1975) at Galleria Vetrina in Rome.

1977

- He creates a mural for Kansas University in Wichita.
- He creates a big tapestry for Washington D.C.'s National Gallery with the collaboration of Josep Royo.

1978

- The show *Mori el Merma* opens at Palma's Teatro Principal in Mallorca, performed by the theatre troupe La Claca, with puppets, masks and a stage set created by the artist. The play is later presented in Barcelona and travels to different European cities before ending at the Pompidou Centre in Paris.
- The Catalonia Regional Government awards him a Gold Medal.
- Exhibition entitled "Dessins de Miró" at the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

1979

- He is awarded the title Doctor Honoris Causa by Barcelona University.
- A retrospective exhibition of his work is held at the Orsanmichele in Florence, at the Palazzo Publico in Siena, and Palazzo Pretorio in Prato.

1980

- He creates a ceramic mural for the Madrid Convention & Exhibition Centre.
- King Juan Carlos awards him the Gold Medal for Fine Art.

1981

- The monumental sculpture known as *Miss Chicago* is inaugurated in Brunswick Plaza in Chicago, Illinois.
- The ballet *Miró L'Uccello Luce* opens at La Fenice Theatre in Venice with stage sets and costumes designed by Miró, a libretto by Jacques Dupin, music by Sylvano Bussotti and choreography by Joseph Russillo. In 1982 it is presented at Florence's Municipal Theatre.
- Seven exhibitions under the title "Miró Milano" are held simultaneously in Milan.

1982

- The monumental sculpture *Personage and Birds* is inaugurated in Houston and *Woman and Bird* at Joan Miró Park in Barcelona.

1983

- Miró is ninety years old.
- Barcelona City Council organizes a "Week of Tributes to Joan Miró".
- On December 25th, he dies in Palma de Mallorca and is buried in Barcelona's Montjuïc Cemetery.