

## Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983) – Artist Resources



Miró, 1936  
Photograph: Man Ray

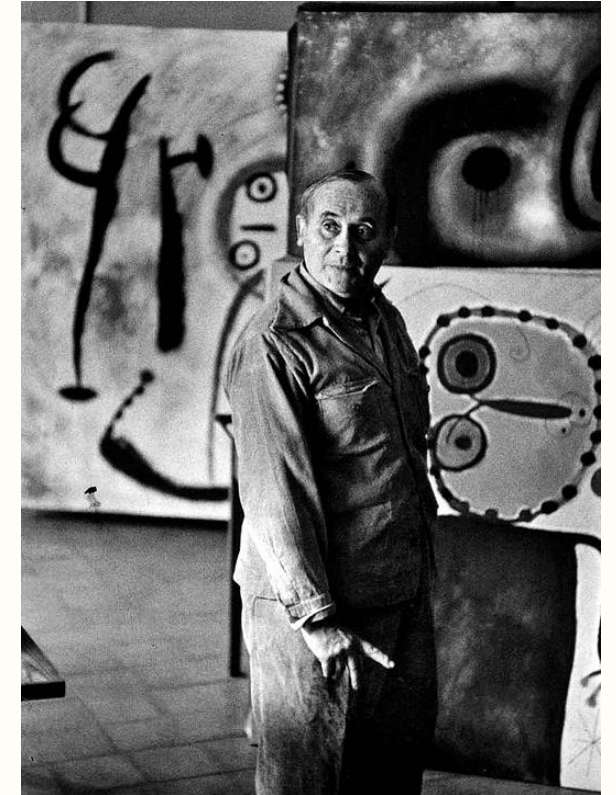
[Fundació Joan Miró](#), the Joan Miro Foundation, Barcelona: center for study, art collection; biography, artwork, publications.

In 1994, MoMA produced the most comprehensive retrospective yet seen in the U.S. [Joan Miró](#) honored the artist's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday with over 400 works exploring the chronological development and myriad of mediums in which the artist worked. The monumental exhibition was hosted in conjunction with [Miró Prints and Books from New York Collections](#), which celebrates Miró's innovation in print, avant-garde publications, and illustration.

The Tate Modern hosted the first major display of Miró's oeuvre in Britain in over 50 years, exhibiting key works from the artist's oeuvre and tracing his political engagement in [Miró: The Ladder of Escape](#).

In 2016, the Schirn Gallery explored Miró's infamous goal "to assassinate painting" in [Miró: Painting Walls, Painting Worlds](#).

Miró returned to MoMA in 2019 for [The Birth of the World](#), titled after the artist's seminal [1925 painting](#), which explored his burgeoning interest in the relationship between poetry and visual art.



Miró in his atelier, ca. 1980  
Photograph: Henri Cartier-Bresson

Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983)

**Le Père Ubu**, 1974

Bronze, dark brown patina

Private Collection; L2025:45.3

Joan Miró was a Catalan Spanish artist who made major contributions to Surrealism, Fauvism, and other modern art movements throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Though he became interested in sculpture as a student in Barcelona, Miró did not pursue the medium until the 1940s, when he started casting hand-molded clay in bronze. **Le Père Ubu (Father Ubu)** is a homage to *Ubu Roi* (King Ubu), a play by Alfred Jarry (1896-1907) that was infamous for its crass obscenity and baffling humor. Though the play was only performed once in public, it was widely influential for later modernist movements of Dada, Surrealism, and the Theatre of the Absurd.

*On view May 28 – September 28, 2025*





Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983)

**Femme Chien**, 1969

Bronze

Private Collection; L2020:59.1

Joan Miró's interest in sculpture was sparked at the age of nineteen during his studies in Barcelona, but he did not return to the medium until the 1940s, when he began casting hand-molded clay in bronze. Late in his career, between 1966 and his death in 1983, Miró created over three hundred casts. In these last works, which he called *personnages*, Miró introduced found objects such as rocks, paint cans, cobbler's shoe molds, and wooden crates. These sculptures embody the Surrealist principle of releasing the creative forces of the unconscious mind from the shackles of reason and logic, reflecting Miró's lifelong delight in working outside the traditional constraints of artistic mediums. The ambiguous forms of **Femme Chien** (Dog Woman) demonstrate the artist's affinity for merging the real and fantastic, transforming flights of whimsy into tangible objects. As he reflected, "it is in sculpture that I will create a truly phantasmagoric world of living monsters."

*On view June 17 – September 20, 2020*



Joan Miró (Spanish, 1893-1983)

**Hommage à Nusch Eluard, 1937**

Oil on board, metal coat hook with painted wooden knob, painted wooden mallet

Private Collection; L2019:156.1

Joan Miró's playful yet meticulous compositions evolved from a tension between his poetic impulses and his sensitivity toward the ruthless realities of war-torn Europe. Though he found affinity with Surrealism's devotion to the subconscious, and is considered a critical member of the broader avant garde inter-war movement, Miró resisted labels throughout his experimental, multi-media career. Typical for the Catalan artist, the initial impression of abstraction in **Hommage à Nusch Eluard** quickly fades to reveal fanciful human and natural forms. The two figures on the left are poet Paul Éluard, one of the founders of Surrealism, and his wife, Nusch Éluard. Nusch was also an artist, and frequently modeled for her husband's friends. The backdrop of celestial symbols and the avian creature flying beside the couple are recurring motifs in Miró's oeuvre. Many artists associated with Surrealism embraced birds as symbolic transitory beings with the ability to move between the earthly and heavenly realms, the real and the fantastic. The intriguing addition of a grafted metal coat hook with wooden knob and mallet exemplifies Miró's delight in working beyond the expected norms of artistic medium.

*On view February 5 – May 10, 2020*

### Extra Resources

[The Guardian](#) reviewed the 2010 publication of Chantal Vieuille's biography of Nusch Eluard, [Portrait d'une muse du Surréalisme](#).

2015 [Vogue profile](#) of Nusch Eluard with archival photographs.

