

THE FLESH PICASSO AND MIRO THE SPIRIT

FUNDACIÓN MAPFRE COLLECTIONS

April-June 2018
Grandmasters Palace
Valletta, Malta



JOAN MIRÓ
Tête, oiseau
[Head, Bird]
February 18, 1976
Oil on canvas
65 x 54 cm
Private Collection on temporary loan
© Successió Miró 2017

Throughout the spring of 2018 the Grand Master's Palace in Valletta, which will then be the European Capital City of Culture, will open its doors to a remarkable collection confronting the work of two major Spanish artists of the 20th century: Pablo Picasso and Joan Miró. This exhibition will be part of a major international project "Picasso-Méditerranée", an initiative from Musée national Picasso-Paris, which is an international cultural event held from Spring 2017 to Spring 2019. Over sixty cultural institutions have come together to conjure up a programme around the Mediterranean work of Pablo Picasso. Initiated by the Musée national Picasso-Paris, this journey into the creation of the artist and across the places which inspired him, aims at strengthening ties between all the shores.

Picasso and Joan Miró are two of the 20th-century's most important artists. While the first founded Cubism the second was active in the emergence of Surrealism. Furthermore, both constructed their own universes aside from the major avant-garde movements and trends, making them unique personalities within the history of art and locating them at the epicentre of the avant-garde as independent creators. It is precisely through that independence and uniqueness that Picasso and Miró became reference points for other artists and key figures in the renewal of art. In simplified terms it could be said that Picasso essentially renewed art through line and drawing while Miró's most important contribution was his use of colour and its intensity.

These two aspects characterise the works selected for this encounter. With regard to prints, in his *Suite Vollard* Picasso did not use colour but this is nonetheless a key work within his very extensive oeuvre and one that allowed him to consolidate his return to a more classical type of drawing and a more reflexive universe. In turn, the Fundación's collection of paintings by Miró, which centres on the years

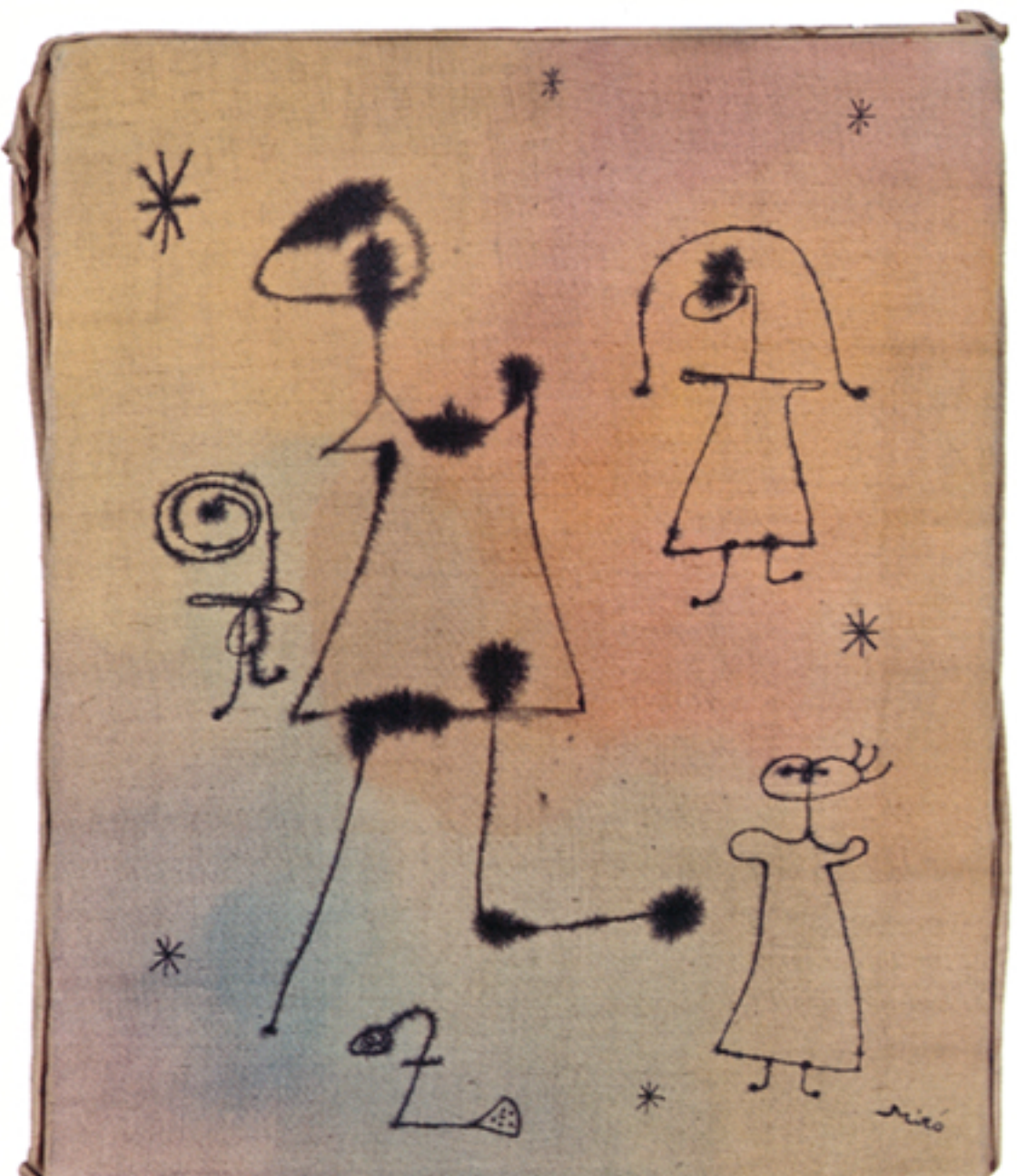


PABLO PICASSO
Femme nue se couronnant de Fleurs
[Seated Nude Crowning Herself with Flowers]
September 16, 1930
Etching/ Montval laid paper
314 x 223 mm / 445 x 340 mm
Fundación MAPFRE's Collections

mature but also and above all reveals his passion for colour as an expressive element and as the true basis and material of painting.

Despite conceptual and chronological differences, the selected works bring the two artists together in various ways. In Picasso's case the *Suite Vollard* is not only one of his most important works from the 1930s but also - and even though nothing in Picasso's universe is made entirely explicit - the one in which he reveals his interest and reflection on the artist, a theme that he had recently introduced into his work. The artist, the work and the model are the principal characters in a print series that offers multiple readings. For Miró the decade of the 1960s also marked a moment of introspection and reflection on his own painting. It was as if Miró analysed Miró, which allowed him to return to themes and motifs that had been central throughout his career and to reinterpret them and give them a fuller meaning in the manner of a reflection on his artistic activities, his career and his oeuvre.

The present exhibition will thus allow for an appreciation of two of the great creators of the 20th century as they reflect on their work from their standpoint as artists. This is of particular interest, not just because it offers one of the best ways to gain an understanding of the meaning of each artist and the keys to interpreting them, but also because reflecting on art and artistic creation is one of the principal concerns and key themes of 20th-century art. The exhibition is presented as a double journey: from black and white to colour and from violence to the celebration of life, from carnality to spirituality. As such, it is not just about significant and important works within the careers of the two artists as the works on display also allow us to question our own way of understanding art and enjoying painting.



JOAN MIRÓ
Femmes, fillette sautant à la corde, oiseau, étoiles
[Women, Little Girl Skipping, Bird, Stars]
1944
China ink and watercolor on canvas
46 x 38 cm
Private Collection on temporary loan
© Successió Miró 2017



PABLO PICASSO
Femme nue assise, la Tête appuyée sur la Main [Seated nude]
March 9, 1934
Burin/ Montval laid paper
278 x 198 mm / 445 x 340 mm
Fundación MAPFRE's Collections

7th April to 30th June 2018
Grandmasters Palace, Valletta, Malta
Free entrance

Picasso-Mediterranée, an initiative
from Musée national Picasso-Paris

Exhibition organized by Fundación MAPFRE
in collaboration with The Office
of the President of Malta
and Fondazzjoni Patrimonju Malti

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