

COVER: Joan Miró, *The Farm* (detail), 1921–1922, National Gallery of Art, Washington, Gift of Mary Hemingway

National Gallery of Art **Public Symposium**

Joan Miró

June 1 12:00–5:00 / **June 2** 11:00–3:00

East Building Auditorium



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June 1

12:00–12:10

Opening Remarks

Faya Causey, head of academic programs, National Gallery of Art

12:10–12:15

Introduction

Felix Monguilot Benzal, graduate curatorial fellow, National Gallery of Art

12:15–1:00

Carob Link: A Promenade with Miró

Benet Rossell, artist

In his lecture, Rossell will discuss how he met Miró and the influence that Miró had on his work and on other Catalan artists today. Rossell's video *1000 a Miró*, which was dedicated to the artist in 1993, will also be screened.

Born in Catalonia in 1937, Rossell is one of the most exhibited Catalan artists of his generation. In 2011, a major exhibition of his work was held at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Barcelona. Drawing upon Miró for inspiration, Rossell creates work that spans many media, from drawing, painting, tapestry, and ceramics to poetry, performance, experimental film, and theater. He lives in Barcelona.

1:00–1:45

Perspective, Position, and Politics: Joan Miró

Charles Palermo, Alumni Memorial Term Distinguished Associate Professor of Art History, The College of William & Mary

Palermo's first book, *Fixed Ecstasy: Joan Miró in the 1920s*, appeared in Penn State University Press' *Refiguring Modernism* series. He has published on Miró, Michel Leiris, Peter Henry Emerson, and Pablo Picasso, among others. His most recent projects have addressed the early work of Picasso and the artist's friend, poet Guillaume Apollinaire, and James Agee and Walker Evans' *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. He is an editor of a peer-reviewed open-access online scholarly journal of the humanities, *nonsite.org*.

This lecture entertains the thesis that the position a work of art offers a spectator determines and reveals something about the work's politics. The mode of perspective a work uses tells us much about how or whether it proposes a fixed point for its beholder and whether multiple beholders can obtain equally privileged views of it simultaneously—in short, what kind of subject and what kind of community it can address itself to.

Ultimately, we will want to know what kind of perspective Miró's works of the late 1910s through the early 1930s afford their beholder, and what kind of subject position they project for that beholder.

1:45–2:00 BREAK

2:00–2:30

Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape

Narrated by Ed Harris and produced by the Gallery, this film examines the impact of the Spanish Civil War, the fascism of the Franco regime, and the events of World War II on Miró's career. *Made possible by the HRH Foundation.*

2:30–3:00

Remarks

Felix Monguilot Benzal, graduate curatorial fellow, National Gallery of Art

3:00

Q & A Session

June 2

11:00–11:15

Introduction

Felix Monguilot Benzal, graduate curatorial fellow, National Gallery of Art

11:15–12:00

"The Farm": Primitivism and Transfiguration

Maria-Josep Balsach, professor of contemporary art, University of Girona, Catalonia, Spain

This lecture presents an iconographic interpretation of *The Farm* (1921–1922), based on the formal context of that calligraphic period and the symbolic and alchemical elements that Miró incorporated after meeting surrealist painter André Masson and the other members of the "groupe de la Rue Blomet." The hidden meaning of this painting sheds light on the radical experimentation of paintings of the 1920s and their abstract mutation of reality.

Professor Balsach teaches contemporary art at the University of Girona. She has written extensively on art and aesthetics of the twentieth century. Her research on Joan Miró's work began in 1996 when she was awarded a Joan Miró Grant to complete the study *The Gold of the Azure*. In 2007 she published *Joan Miró: Cosmogonies of an Original World (1918–1939)*, which won the Barcelona City Essay Award. One of the chapters of this book, "Dog Barking at the Moon," is dedicated to the motif of the ladder of escape in Miró's work.

12:00–12:45

Miró's Studios: Reflecting His Roots, His References, and His Memories

Maria Luisa Lax, curator and head of collections, Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca

This lecture explores the role of Miró's studios in Palma as an essential instrument in his artistic practice from the time he moved to Mallorca in 1956. These work spaces have a documentary value and, in conjunction with correspondence, statements, notes, and photographs, reveal information beyond the artist's methods and materials.

Maria Luisa Lax received a degree in museum studies from Leicester University. Since 2001 she has worked for the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca, and has been curator and head of the collections since 2004. She was general editor of the 2005 catalogue *Miró*, featuring a selection of the paintings, sculptures, and drawings in the foundation's collection. She has organized and curated multiple Miró-related exhibitions, including *Joan Miró: Topographies* (2005), *Joan Miró: Landscapes* (2006), *Miró: Evoking the Female Figure* (2008), and *Miró: Poetry and Light* (2010). She most recently contributed the essay "The Civic Responsibility of the Artist" to the catalogue of the exhibition *Joan Miró: The Ladder of Escape*, which opened at Tate Modern in 2011 and is on display at the National Gallery of Art through August 12, 2012.

12:45–1:45 BREAK

1:45–2:30

L'Oeuvre de guerre of Miró: Constellation Series, Série Barcelona, and Ceramics, 1940–1945

Jaume Reus, art historian and curator

The aim of this lecture is to consider Miró's personal escape from the context of war and dictatorship and the internal exile he felt during the first half of the 1940s. Reus will explain that the reason Miró needed to exhibit this work in New York and Paris was to show his commitment to freedom. As the artist himself explained, it is more than work of aesthetic interest; it also has a personal and human importance.

Jaume Reus received his PhD from the University of the Balearic Islands, Spain, in 2004, where he was a lecturer for seven years. He has written extensively on conceptual art, emerging art, Latin American art, and Joan Miró. He has worked at the Fundació Pilar i Joan Miró a Mallorca and the Es Baluard Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Palma de Mallorca, Spain.

2:30

Q & A Session

This program is coordinated with and supported by the Institut Ramon Llull.