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## Press Release

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**The Fundació Joan Miró, the Fundación Abertis and the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation present *Miró Universe* in Washington, D.C., in the United States**

**Between 3 May and 27 June 2023, the Residence of the Spanish Ambassador in Washington, D.C., in the United States will house four paintings and a sculpture by Joan Miró, as well as a selection of photographs by Joaquim Gomis, a friend of the artist and the first president of the Fundació Joan Miró.**

**The selection of paintings and sculptures from Miró's later years is notable for its signic nature. This initiative is a response to the Fundació Joan Miró's commitment to disseminate the artist's work internationally.**

***Miró Universe* arrives in the United States of America after being presented between 2019 and 2023 at Spain's diplomatic representations in Rome, Berlin, Dublin, Brussels, Paris and New Delhi, as well as at the Centro Cultural de España in Mexico and the Museo de Arte de Puerto Rico, thanks to collaboration between the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation, Abertis and its foundation, and the Fundació Joan Miró.**

**Abertis, through its foundation and subsidiaries in the United States of America, has helped to take this project to the country in order to promote Spanish culture and to raise awareness of this selection of works in one of the regions where it has a presence.**

**Barcelona, 3 May 2023.** Joan Miró regarded art as an intrinsic aspect of life, with magical attributes that had to be revived. To achieve this goal, he had no hesitation in flouting the academic conventions of painting. Like other artists connected with the world of Surrealism, he looked for inspiration in early artistic expressions, which are formally simple yet full of sacred connotations.



Taking the art of prehistoric times, medieval masters and popular culture as his references, Miró sought to go beyond the mimetic depiction of reality and gradually simplified his forms to the extent that he retained solely their essence. This practice gave rise to a singular language of signs that began to emerge in the 1920s at Mont-roig del Camp, in the province of Tarragona, and crystallised in the forties, resulting in a vocabulary that he never abandoned thereafter. In Miró's work, the night, constellations, the figure of the woman – as a symbolic representation of fertility, reproduction and sexuality – and the bird were transformed forever into expressions of a universe of creation and renewal.

*'For me a form is never something abstract; it is always a sign of something.  
It is always a man, a bird, or something else.'*

Joan Miró in an interview with James Johnson Sweeney

*Miró Universe* immerses us in Joan Miró's unique and personal creative process and gives us insights into the mind and ways of working of one of the most important artists of the twentieth century. The show explores the artist's language of signs by means of a carefully-chosen concise selection of paintings and sculptures from his final period held in the collection of the Fundació Joan Miró.

This group of works includes the paintings *Woman in the Night*, *Woman, Figures and Birds with a Dog* and *Figures and Birds in a Nocturnal Landscape*, all from 1978. In addition to revealing the artist's signic language, they present another of the central elements of his universe: the use of bright colours. In the words of Dolors Rodríguez Roig, the curator of the project and the author of the essay in the publication that accompanies the exhibition, 'pure colours responded not only to Miró's desire to bring his works as close as possible to people, but also to a shift towards pop art. They also served to emphasise his language and the symbolism of his representations, whatever artistic medium he used.' The selection also includes the sculpture *Sir, Madam* (1969), which, as Rodríguez Roig states, exemplifies how Miró 'changed the traditional perception of sculpture with his visual and poetic games'.

*Miró Universe* features photographs of the artist's personal library and of the collection of objects he kept in his studio. These were taken by Joaquim Gomis (Barcelona, 1902-1991), Miró's artistic promoter and great friend, who photographed the artist's work and creative environment throughout his career. Gomis was the first president of the board of the Fundació Joan Miró, which, at the wishes of his heirs, manages and disseminates his photographic archive, held on long-term loan at the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya.



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### **About the Fundació Joan Miró**

The Fundació Joan Miró was founded by the artist himself and opened its doors to the public in 1975. It holds a unique collection of works by Miró, his personal library and an archive containing all of his preparatory drawings, making it a centre of excellence in the research, dissemination and promotion of the artist's oeuvre and his legacy.

Ever since it opened as the first museum in Barcelona specialising in modern and contemporary art, the Fundació Joan Miró has shared the artist's work and legacy with the world. With the support of public and private institutions, the foundation has promoted and developed international projects and numerous temporary exhibitions. It is also the driving force behind Espai 13, one of the first galleries given over to emerging artists and curators and an active educational space that fosters creativity and a greater understanding of modern and contemporary artistic practices.

### **About Abertis**

Abertis is one of the world's leading high-capacity, high-quality toll road operators, with some 8,000 kilometres of highways in fifteen countries across Europe, the Americas and Asia. The group is committed to research and innovation and incorporates advances in high-capacity infrastructure with the latest technologies to achieve innovative solutions to meet the challenges of mobility of the future. In addition, Abertis constantly invests in smart technology and engineering to guarantee that people who choose its roads enjoy safer, more comfortable, quicker and easier travel.

Abertis maintains a presence in the United States through its subsidiary Elizabeth River Crossings, in the region of Hampton Roads (Virginia), which operates four tunnels and a freeway in the Norfolk area, used over 100,000 times a day, and through Abertis Mobility Services, the group's technology subsidiary that specialises in implementing cutting-edge technology platforms and operation services for smart mobility in urban and interurban environments, which operates in the country through its subsidiary Emovis US Inc.

## About the Fundació Abertis

The Fundació Abertis was set up in 1999 as a not-for-profit organisation with the goal of contributing to the sustainable development of the various regions and countries where the Grupo Abertis has a presence. In recent years, the Fundació Abertis has succeeded in disseminating culture in the regions where it operates by giving the public in countries like France, Italy, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Chile and India the opportunity to view the work of great Spanish artists such as Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, Diego Velázquez and Antoni Gaudí.

Its other areas of action are the development of projects to improve road safety; social initiatives for the benefit of vulnerable groups; environmental protection thanks to its agreement with UNESCO to manage the Category II International Centre on Mediterranean Biosphere Reserves (UNESCOMED); and education through an International Network of Abertis Chairs that includes universities in some of the countries where the group has a presence, among them Spain, France, Puerto Rico, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Italy and Mexico, and which enables universities and the group to join forces in a search for innovation in sustainable mobility.

## Selection of images of the works for media

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Images of the works and the room available at <http://bit.ly/UniversMiró>

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Joan Miró. *Femme* (Woman), 1978  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona  
© Successió Miró 2023





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Joan Miró. *Personnages et oiseaux avec un chien*  
(Figures and Birds with a Dog), 1978  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona  
© Successió Miró 2023



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Joan Miró. *Personnages et oiseaux dans un paysage nocturne* (Figures and Birds in a Nocturnal Landscape), 1978  
Oil on canvas  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona  
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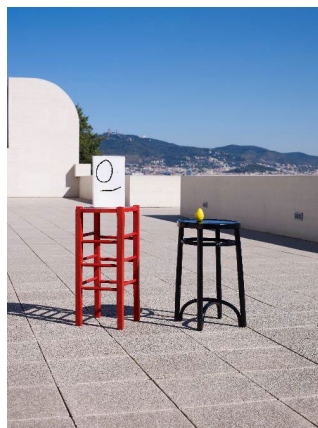
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Joan Miró. *Femme dans la nuit* (Woman in the Night), 1978  
Acrylic and oil on canvas  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona  
© Successió Miró 2023



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Joan Miró. *Monsieur, Madame* (Sir, Madam), 1969  
Painted bronze  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona  
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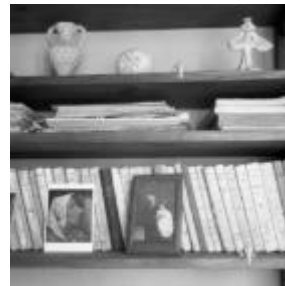
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Joaquim Gomis. *Portrait of Joan Miró*, 1944  
Joaquim Gomis Fonds, on long-term loan to the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya  
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Joaquim Gomis. *Joan Miró's Personal Library*, 1944  
Joaquim Gomis Fonds, on long-term loan to the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya  
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Joaquim Gomis. *The Artist's Collection of Objects*, 1944  
Joaquim Gomis Fonds, on long-term loan to the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya  
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Joaquim Gomis. *Joan Miró's Studio in Palma de Mallorca*, 1956  
Joaquim Gomis Fonds, on long-term loan to the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya  
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Joaquim Gomis. *Joan Miró in His Studio in Palma de Mallorca*, 1956  
Joaquim Gomis Fonds, on long-term loan to the Arxiu Nacional de Catalunya  
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