

## ***Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie***

“Miró Documents”, Volume IV

July 2020

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### **Press release**

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**The Càtedra Miró presents *Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie*, the fourth volume of the “Miró Documents” collection.**

**The publication delves into the important contribution the painter has made to contemporary art with his signature fusion of painting and poetry. The ten articles that appear in the publication explore the intense and fruitful relationship Miró established with the French and Catalan poetic traditions.**

***Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie* follows from the research of the Joan Miró: Painting – Poetry symposium coordinated by Rémi Labrusse and Robert Lubar Messeri on behalf of the Joan Miró International Research Group. The symposium took place on 9 and 10 November 2018 at NYU Paris, coinciding with the major Joan Miró retrospective at the Grand Palais.**

**Barcelona, 17 July 2020.** Joan Miró drew no distinction between a literary poem and a visual poem and considered himself a “painter-poet”. In a perpetual process of synaesthesia and hybridization, Miró claimed to “apply colours like words that shape poems, like notes that shape music”.

Over the course of his life, poetry (and also music) was a source of inspiration and a form of experimenting to take poetry beyond its conventional framework. An enthusiastic reader, especially of poetry, Miró befriended and collaborated creatively with many of the best poets of the 20th century, from Paul Eluard and René Char to Robert Desnos and Tristan Tzara, as well as J.V. Foix, Salvador Espriu, Joan Brossa and Salvat-Papasseit. In his words, “I spent a lot of time with poets because I felt it necessary to transcend the ‘plastic’ to arrive at poetry”.

Edited by Rémi Labrusse and Robert Lubar Messeri, *Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie* is a specialized volume, published in English and French, studying Joan Miró’s important contribution to contemporary art in reviving the path of fusion between painting and poetry and transcending the dualism that separated the image from his discursive thought. The ten articles that appear in the publication explore the influence of the French and Catalan poetic traditions on Miró and his

contemporaries. Some of the texts included address topics specific to Miró's work while others focus on the artist's relationship with other artists like Junoy, Breton and Brossa, among others.

The book opens with the essay "Miró and Poetry: A Retrospective Glance" by Margit Rowell, art historian, critic and curator, who exhaustively describes the poetic dimension spanning across Joan Miró's oeuvre as one of the most important contributions to 20th century art.

Christine Poggi, Judy and Michael Steinhardt Director of the Institute of Fine Arts of New York University, has authored the essay titled "La couleur de mes rêves: Miró's Peinture-Poésie and the Art of False Resemblances", a thorough examination of this 1925 pictorial poem considered a paradigm of the artist's poetic painting and one of his most enigmatic works.

Rémi Labrusse, professor of contemporary art history at Université Paris-Nanterre and a member of the Joan Miró International Research Group, examines the connections between Miró's work and different mystical traditions in "Miró, Pascal, la mystique, la poésie".

Alfred Jarry, the legendary creator of the character Ubu, was a referent for Joan Miró and truly a leitmotif in his work. María González Menéndez, curator and head of exhibitions at Musée de Montmartre & Caverne du Pont d'Arc, has written a piece on this topic entitled "Miró et Jarry : de la poésie à la peinture".

"Peinture-Poésie: Miró, Junoy, and the Catalan Literary Avant-Garde" is the fifth essay in the volume, a detailed overview of Catalan avant-garde poetry and its creative impact on Miró's work, written by Robert Lubar Messeri, professor at the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University and director of the Càtedra Miró and the Joan Miró International Research Group.

Miró said that nature was the starting point for his work, and he ascribed to it "a powerful extra-pictorial poetic reality". The poetics of nature and ecological thought in Miró's work are the focus of the text "Un poète de la terre" by Julia Drost, research director of the Centre allemand d'histoire de l'art de Paris.

"Joan Miró et Jacques Dupin : les yeux de la poésie" by Élisabeth Sclaunick, who holds a doctorat ès lettres from Université Paris-Diderot (CERILAC), is the following essay in the book, an exploration of the ties of deep admiration and creative exchange between the artist and poet Jacques Dupin, a friend and expert on his work.

Ainize González García, a researcher with the Collections Department of the Museu Etnològic i de Cultures del Món de Barcelona, has authored the paper "Miró and

Brossa: Objects, Poetry, Collages” on the poetic function performed by the objectual world in the work of these two artists.

In “Un carnet pour l'évasion ? Mots, images, musique (1936-1939)”, Fèlix Fanès, professor of art history at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, analyses this portfolio of sketches and poetic texts held in the foundation’s archive which Miró produced in Paris during the Spanish Civil War as the dummy for a book that was never published.

The volume concludes with the article “Miró and the Empire of Signs: Beyond Japanese Calligraphy” by Pilar Cabañas, professor of art history at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, which explores the essential role played by the ideogram and Eastern calligraphy in the development of Miró’s language of signs, his mastery of the gestural expressiveness of the line and the structure of his visual poetry.

All of the academic contributions included in *Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie* were presented at the Joan Miró: Painting – Poetry symposium which took place on 9 and 10 November 2018 at NYU Paris, coinciding with the major Joan Miró retrospective at the Grand Palais. The symposium was organized by the [Càtedra Miró](#) (Fundació Joan Miró – Universitat Oberta de Catalunya), NYU Paris and Université Paris-Nanterre, with the support of the Provost’s Global Research Initiatives (NYU) and the collaboration of the Institut Ramon Llull.

*Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie* is the fourth volume of “Miró Documents”, a series of scientific publications launched in 2014 that brings together the research conducted by the Càtedra Miró. These contributions are presented every two years, alternating between exhibitions and symposia, and they use the Fundació Joan Miró Archives and their book collection for source material.



## **Joan Miró Personal Library**

The Fundació Joan Miró has a large collection of drawings, books, exhibition catalogues, journals, correspondence and other documentation donated by Joan Miró that is currently stored in its [Archives](#) and [Library](#).

In 1976 Joan Miró donated part of his personal library to the library of the Fundació. This collection, in the main centred on art, is made up of numerous monographs, exhibition catalogues and journals. The collection primarily holds publications, from 1918 to 1976, covering his work and which are fundamental to understanding his art career.

In addition, Joan Miró donated his book collection on artists and art movements that had been the object of his interest and which he had acquired at different times.

In 2007 Joan Miró's family deposited another part of the artist's personal library which Miró had preferred to retain during his lifetime with the Fundació, and this has been added to the donation Joan Miró made in 1976. This loan offers the scholar the opportunity to delve deeper into Joan Miró's poetic world through a book collection primarily made up of works of world literature in Catalan, French and Spanish. Of special note within this collection are the readings suggested by the young intellectuals and writers of the French avant-garde whom Miró often met over his early years in Paris, and the books recommended by Breton and Aragon, pioneers of the Surrealist movement. Literary works make up the bulk of the library's holdings, but there are also works on art theory, philosophy and psychoanalysis.

The significance of this library for researchers of Miró's work lies in the possibility of discovering Joan Miró's interests and influences over the course of his art career by retracing his steps, an invaluable resource as illustrated in this latest volume of "Miró Documents": *Painting, Poetry / Peinture, Poésie*.

### **For further information:**

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