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Monumental Printmaking

In the final decade of his life, Joan Miró (1893-1983) devoted himself primarily to the art of printmaking, producing some of the most dynamic and ground-breaking prints of his time. Throughout the 1970s, Miró created several series of prints using a combination of etching and aquatint in a wide variety of formats, as well as experimenting with the innovative addition of carborundum. Many of these works are on a larger scale than anything Miró had ever created before, highlighting the artist's exceptional command of printmaking techniques. These works were not only monumental in size, but also in the strength of their compositional design. The rich, sooty black of his fluid lines immerses the viewer, enhancing the overwhelming presence of each print and creating a raw, striking visual effect. The works in this collection represent the culmination of Miró's printmaking career and his unparalleled ability to evolve as an artist.

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Joan Miró: Monumental Printmaking

94 New Bond Street
London W1S 1SJ
+44 (0)20 3693 2197
modern@shapero.com
shaperomodern.com



1. La Femme Arborescente

Created in 1974, this print is part of a series of 60 that Miró made between 1974 and 1975 using a combination of etching and aquatint. The title translates to 'The Tree-like Woman' and depicts an abstracted figure, inviting viewers to further interpret the image. At the centre of the sheet, a small face with red and blue eyes emerges, while thick, black lines branch out from her form. The fluidity of her figure is further enhanced by splashes of blue and green, along with delicate scribbles and symbols that weave throughout the composition. These elements give the print both a dynamic energy and mythical quality, showcasing Miró's ability to transform the human form into something both organic and otherworldly.

Etching and aquatint printed in colours, 1974, signed in pencil, numbered 43 from the edition of 50, on Arches wave paper, printed by Morsang, published by Maeght, Paris, Sheet: 1102 x 726 mm (43³/₈ x 28⁵/₈ in). Dupin 649.

[ref: 115291]



2. La Femme Toupie

'La Femme Toupie' bursts with vibrant splashes of bright green, yellow, and orange. Created in 1975, this print is part of a series of 60 that Miró made between 1974 and 1975 using a combination of etching and aquatint. Central to the composition is the figure of a woman, outlined in thick black lines. While abstracted in Miró's signature style, her large black eyes, nose, and red mouth emerge distinctly. She raises her arms high and kicks one leg out, spinning with joyful motion. Stars crown her head, while swirling grey and orange washes behind her head enhance the print's sense of dynamic movement. A playful and evocative print, it conveys both spontaneity and a deep emotional resonance.

Etching and aquatint in colours, 1974, on Arches wove paper, signed in pencil and numbered 49 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, sheet: 1392 x 960 mm (54 7/8 x 37 7/8 in). Dupin 652.

[ref: 115286]



3. Le Pitre Rose

The title of this work translates to 'The Pink Clown' and portrays a captivating abstract figure, centred in the composition and brought to life through bold, black lines. The figure is playful and full of movement, reaching out towards the edges of the sheet. Crowned with a whimsical hat, the figure is formed of vigorous linework that conveys its energetic and spirited nature. Unlike Miró's typical vibrant colour palette, this print is dominated by a soft pink wash, lending it a dreamlike atmosphere. Surrounding the central figure are unexpected stars and spontaneous scribbles, heightening the image's sense of dreamlike fantasy. A work full of energy, 'Le Pitre Rose' captures Miró's distinctive ability to evoke emotion and whimsy through simple, yet dynamic forms and colours.

Etching with aquatint in colours, 1974, on Arches paper, signed in pencil and numbered 48 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1378 x 965 mm (54¼ x 38 in). Dupin 653.

[ref: 115290]



4. Le Somnambule

'Somnambule' is a whimsical and energetic portrayal of Miró's signature symbols and motifs. The title suggests being in a dreamlike state, hinting at the artist's fascination with exploring and expressing the subconscious mind in his art. Depicted in the composition is a dynamic combination of floating visual elements, layered to create a sense of depth and movement. Subtle colour accents, along with vigorous linework, give the piece a playful spontaneity. Unexpected bursts of red, orange, and blue spots surround the central abstracted form, hinting at a startled mask with wide eyes. Dominated by dark hues, the print allows subtle areas of white to shine through the background, enhancing the image's overall dreamlike quality.

Etching and aquatint in colours, 1974, on wove paper, watermark Maeght, signed in pencil, numbered from the edition of 50, with full margins, Sheet: 1149 x 749 mm (45 x 29 in). Dupin 656.

[ref: 115292]



5. Le Baignarde et sa Compagne

In 'Le Baignarde et sa Compagne' Miró contrasts bright red, blue, and yellow to create a whimsical figure instilled with a sense of liveliness. The sweeping curves and loops of thick, black linework bring energy and movement to the image. At the top left of the sheet, a large black circle is balanced by the negative space that surrounds it, while the lower left corner features black splatters. Along the upper border, Miró's signature symbols of the asterisk and arrow appear oversized, reinforcing the playful and spirited nature of the piece. These elements guide the viewer's eye across the composition, creating a lively visual rhythm that embodies the dynamic energy that Miró infused into his prints, ultimately revealing his exceptional command of printmaking techniques.

Etching and aquatint in colours, 1975, on Arches, signed in white pencil, numbered from the edition of 50, the full sheet, S. 1210 x 1600 mm (47 5/8 x 63 in). Dupin 749.

[ref: 115302]



6. La Contre-balancée

'La Contre Balancée' highlights Miró's continued departure from traditional artistic conventions in the final decades of his life and showcases the artist's mastery in creating layered, emotive artworks. In this print, Miró depicts the abstracted form of a figure, inviting viewers to interpret the image in their own unique way. The dynamic contrast between bold, black strokes and delicate, thin lines adds depth without using representational perspective. Miró's signature black forms blend seamlessly with vibrant blue and red geometric shapes, giving the image an overall compositional balance. This etching and aquatint print demonstrates Miró's remarkable ability to merge abstraction with figuration, capturing a playful simplicity in a visually captivating manner.

Etching and aquatint in colours, 1975, on Arches paper, with the Maeght watermark, signed in pencil and numbered 40 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1381 x 955 mm (54 3/8 x 37 3/4 in). Dupin 754.

[ref: 115285]



7. Le Rat des Sables

In 'Le Rat des Sables', Miró depicts a fantastical creature, 'the sand rat', animated by bold, fluid lines and contrasting primary colours. The creature faces to the right margin of the image, nearly dominating the entire composition. Its tail arches towards its head, while a bright red eye glances innocently at the viewer, adding a playful curiosity to the image. The etching blends abstraction with figuration as Miró pairs his signature black forms with vivid blue and red geometric shapes, creating a striking contrast. 'Le Rat des Sables' is a testament to Miró's ability to transform a simple creature into a captivating Modernist symbol.

Aquatint in colours, 1975, on Arches paper, with the Maeght watermark, signed in pencil and numbered 7 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 960 x 1388 mm (38 x 54¼ in). Dupin 755.

[ref: 115295]



8. Le Beluga

As the title 'Le Beluga' suggests, this monumental print depicts the abstracted form of a beluga whale, emerging through layers of vivid colours and fluid geometry. The dynamic contrast between bold, black strokes and delicate, thin lines representing the beluga's fins add depth and detail to the image. The artist's signature use of vibrant reds, blues, and greens present in this image further enhance its liveliness. Miró once famously stated that he tries to 'apply colours like words that shape poems, like notes that shape music.' Here, his poetic approach is clear, using *carborundum* to build depth while contrasting the rich, sooty black colour of the beluga against a soft, beige background splattered with gestural marks.

Etching and aquatint with carborundum in colours, 1975, on Arches paper, with the Maeght watermark, signed in pencil and numbered 27 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1197 x 1588 mm (47 1/8 x 62½ in). Dupin 756.

[ref: 115287]



9. L'Aigrette Rouge

Created in 1976, this dynamic image is part of a series of prints that Miró created in collaboration with printmaker Robert Dutrou, using Henri Goetz's innovative *carborundum* printmaking technique. The title of the work translates to 'The Red Egret' and depicts the abstracted form of a bird in bold, contrasting colours. The deep blues and blacks of the lower half of the composition are balanced by the empty negative space towards the top, creating an intriguing visual tension. The sweeping curves and loops of thick, black linework bring energy and movement to the image. This print not only showcases Miró's mastery of compositional design but also highlights his technical brilliance. Through the combined use of aquatint for background colours, etching for the bird's outline, and carborundum to add texture and depth, Miró creates a striking visual effect.

Etching and aquatint with carborundum in colours, 1976, on Arches paper, signed in pencil and numbered 37 from the edition of 50 (there were also 12 Artist's Proofs), printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1378 x 956 mm (54 ½ x 38 in). Dupin 930.

[ref: 115277]

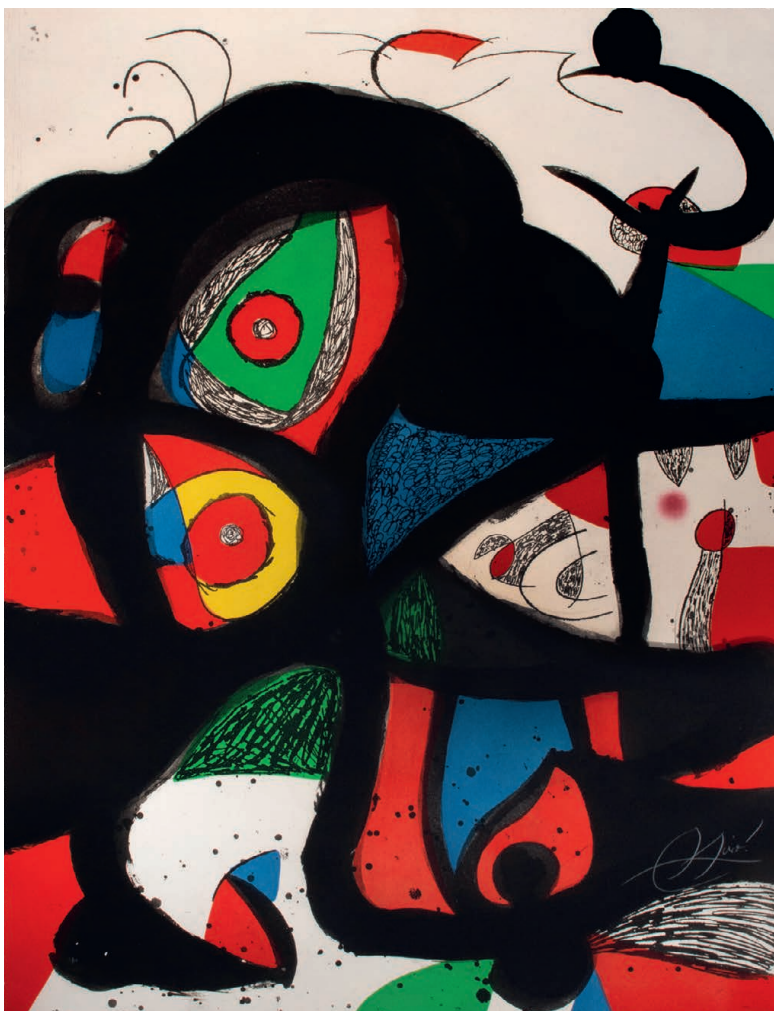


10. Galatée

'Galatée' is a sophisticated exploration of form and myth, inviting viewers to interpret the image in their own unique way. At the centre, a solid black circle outlined in red anchors the composition, while the larger circular shape and black teardrop form echo this central motif. Miró combines bold, black strokes with delicate lines to create a sense of depth without using representational perspective. Through the title of the work, Miró references the Greek legend of Pygmalion's ivory statue, which was brought to life by the goddess Aphrodite. This connection adds a mythological resonance to Miró's abstract elements, showcasing the artist's ability to evoke fantastical imagery through simple, yet dynamic forms and colours.

Etching and aquatint with embossing, 1976, on Arches paper, signed in pencil and numbered 49 from the edition of 50 (there are also 12 Artist's Proofs), printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1381 x 960 mm (54 3/8 x 37 13/16 in). Dupin 931.

[ref: 115299]



11. Gargantua

Created in 1977, this monumental print was created by Miró in collaboration with printmaker Robert Dutrou, using Henri Goetz's innovative *carborundum* printmaking technique. The image draws inspiration from the 16th century pentology by François Rabelais, which humorously chronicles the adventures of the two giants, Gargantua and his son Pantagruel. The composition features a dynamic interplay of floating visual elements, layered to create a sense of depth and movement. Though abstracted in Miró's signature style, the giant's colourful eyes emerge distinctly. Dominated by broad, black forms, the image overwhelms the viewer with the enormity of its forms. The print's dynamic composition, combined with the artist's use of vibrant reds, blues, and yellows, merges literary reference with artistic style to bring this legendary figure to life.

Etching, aquatint and carborundum printed in colours, 1977, on Arches wove paper, signed in white crayon, 25 from the edition of 50 (there were also 14 hors commerce copies), published by Maeght, Paris, with their blindstamp, the full sheet, Sheet: 1595 x 1200 mm (62¾ x 47¼ in). Dupin 972.

[ref: 115305]



12. Pantagruel

Created in 1978, this image is among the prints that Miró created in collaboration with printmaker Robert Dutrou, using Henri Goetz's innovative *carborundum* printmaking technique. The image draws inspiration from the 16th century pentology by François Rabelais, which humorously chronicles the adventures of the two giants, Gargantua and his son Pantagruel. The broad, black form of the giant dominates the composition and engulfs the viewer. While abstracted in Miró's distinctive style, the giant's colourful eyes emerge distinctly. The print's dynamic composition, combined with the artist's signature use of vibrant reds, blues, and yellows, merges literary reference with artistic style to bring this legendary figure to life.

Etching and aquatint with carborundum and knife scrapes in colours, 1978, on Arches wove paper, with the Maeght watermark, signed in pencil and numbered 5 from the edition of 50, printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1375 mm x 965 mm (54 in x 38 in). Dupin 995.

[ref: 115297]



13. Mambo

'Mambo' is a vibrant celebration of movement and rhythm characterised by its bold and gestural composition. Created in 1978, the print depicts a figure formed through splatters, washes, and thick, black outlines that extend out to the edges of the sheet. The swirling lines, ranging from spirals to loops, evoke the fluid motion of the dancing figure. Miró enhances the visual impact with striking accents of red-orange, green, and yellow, creating an electrifying effect that mirrors the dynamic movement of the image. 'Mambo' is a prime example of Miró's ability to transform physical movement into a visual language, blending abstraction with subtle figurative suggestion to convey the pure vitality of dance.

Etching and aquatint in colours, 1978, on Arches wove paper, with the Maeght watermark, signed in pencil and numbered 22 from the edition of 50 (there are 12 Artists Proofs), printed by Morsang, Paris, published by Maeght, Paris, with full margins, sheet: 1378 x 960 mm (44 7/8 x 29 1/8 in). Dupin 1002.

[ref: 115296]

SHAPERO MODERN

41-43 Maddox Street

London W1S 2PD

+44 (0)20 3693 2197

modern@shapero.com

www.shaperomodern.com

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Curated by Tabitha Philpott-Kent and Helen Smith

Edited by Jeffrey Kerr

Photography by Natasha Marshall

Design by Roddy Newlands

+44 (0)20 3693 2197
modern@shapero.com

94 New Bond Street
London W1S 1SJ