

## Galerie Gmurzynska Uncovers Joan Miró the Rebel in Zurich

BY NICHOLAS FORREST | OCTOBER 06, 2015



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Galerie Gmurzynska has marked the end of its 50th anniversary celebrations with the launch of a major exhibition showcasing the work of (</artists/joan-miro-516>) (</artists/joan-miro-516>) [Joan Miro](#) (</artists/joan-miro-516>), in particular the radical, multifaceted body of work produced by the artist in Paris, Barcelona, and Majorca during the 1920s and 1930s.

Highlights of the exhibition include examples of Miro's rarely seen mixed-media "Collage-Drawings" from the 1930s, a suite of large drawings depicting biomorphic interpretations on the female figure, as well as a group of Miró's anthropomorphic bronze sculptures from the 1960s to 1970s.

"As we celebrate the gallery's 50th anniversary, and with it our program of in depth presentations of the artists that have defined the twentieth century, who better to represent than Joan Miró," says Mathias Rastorfer, CEO + Co-Owner, Galerie Gmurzynska.

"Miró and Picasso have always been considered the quintessential Modern Masters of the 20th century. What can we therefore offer as a discovery? Unlike Picasso, the perception of Miró has always been of an artist more conservative and tame in comparison to Picasso,"

Rastorfer explains.

"Our exhibition will show Miró the rebel, the unconventional, and the inventor. Especially in the 1920s and 1930s, Miró created work that was way ahead of its time, and later inspired the Surrealist and American Pop Art."

"(</artists/joan-miro-516>) (</artists/joan-miro-516>) [Joan Miro](#) (</artists/joan-miro-516>)" at Galerie Gmurzynska is co-curated by Miro's grandson, Joan Punyet Miro, who honoured the legacy of his grandfather at the opening exhibition with the presentation of a large-scale, explosive performance featuring dance, music, and pyrotechnics.

To find out more about the exhibition and his opening night performance (***click the slideshow to see images of the performance and the exhibition*** (<http://enfr.blouinartinfo.com/photo-galleries/joan-miro-at-galerie-gmurzynska-in-zurich>)), BLOUIN ARTINFO got in touch with Joan Punyet Miro and asked him a few questions.

## What is the focus of the Miro exhibition at Galerie Gmurzynska and what does it reveal about Miro and his practice?

The focus of the Miró exhibition at Galerie Gmurzynska is to explain the evolution of his oeuvre over the years. It is a remarkable exhibition that gathers an exquisite selection of works, beginning by an outstanding Dream-painting from 1925, created at the rue Blomet under the influence of Surrealism. As we continue the visit, we can appreciate the collages from the 30's where accident, chance, intuition and poetry play a significant role. Miró also used collage to enhance the visual clash between the painted image with the illustrations from newspapers. Paintings, drawings, sculptures and tapestries establish the vertebration of the exhibition, allowing the visitor to grasp the evolution of Miró's calligraphy and plastic vocabulary during all the decades until the late 70's. This exhibition reveals that Miró never fell under the spell of conformism. Furthermore, it shows how the influence of Dada and Surrealism was always there, together with the influence from Primitive civilizations and Eastern cultures, especially the Japanese. Miró visited Japan in 1966 and 1969, and was very impressed, among other things, with the Sumi-e calligraphy of the Buddhist monks. This exhibition reveals as well that Miró's practice pushed him far beyond the plastic limitations of "peinture-peinture", taking the spectators towards a new dimension, a new realm where the unknown meets the fantastic to swim in the mysterious timelessness of our subconscious.

## **What did you learn and discover about Miro and his work during the experience of curating the exhibition at Galerie Gmurzynska?**

What I learned while working in this exhibition is that Miró went beyond figuration to enter fully into abstraction, in order to provide to his body of work a mystical and cosmic sensation of timelessness and contemporaneity that makes it completely vanguardist and shocking. As Mallarmé said: “Don’t paint things, paint sensations created in your mind by things.” Or as also said the greek ancient philosopher Plinius: “Painting is poetry expressed plastically.” And what I learned as well is that Miró was able to have access to unknown dimensions that the rest of mortals did not have. This is the reason why, as Breton used to say, Miró would bring us nearer to “certain objects which one can only have access to through dreams.” The exhibition at Gallery Gmurzynska showed me Miró’s transgressive and non-conformist impulse which, at the same time, forced him to impose new challenges on himself to escape repetition, banality, in short, what was known.

## **How would you describe your relationship and connection with the life and work of (/artists/joan-miro-516) (/artists/joan-miro-516)Joan Miro (/artists/joan-miro-516)?**

My relationship with the life and work of Joan Miró is based on the deepest respect and admiration for what he has achieved throughout his life, professing a strong influence on me as a person as well. I work to protect his legacy worldwide, especially the three Foundations in Barcelona, Palma de Mallorca and Mont-roig. I am constantly investigating and publishing articles and books on his life and work, and also I try to explain his complexity as a man. The connection with my grandfather’s life and work is very particular since I was able to spend many days with him at his house and studios. Therefore, the relationship was built around shared experiences and magic moments that I will never forget. For example, the total dedication, conviction and perseverance in his work, while being a man of great tenderness and cosmic spirituality.

## **What was the inspiration and motivation behind the performance for the exhibition at Galerie Gmurzynska and what does it entail?**

The inspiration and motivation behind the performance at Galerie Gmurzynska was to express the contemporaneity and wit of Dada and Surrealism. These two artistic movements have influenced plenty of artists, painters, poets, writers, theater directors, musicians and philosophers throughout decades, and still do it today. Since on the 5th of February 2016 we will celebrate the centenary of Dada, that was created at the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich, I wanted people to be aware of the bravery, courage, savage instinct of provocation and irrational violence that the Dadaist had. Furthermore, we ought to remember as well how the poetical, literary and artistic legacy of Surrealism has changed the world in which we live today. Since I have been myself always a person very influenced by Dada and Surrealism, I found enough motivation to recreate the wild and savage emotions derived from a “Soirée Dada,” and I believe that we succeeded. The audience was extremely impressed and, once the performance was over, many people came to see me to tell me that they discovered what Dada and Surrealism was all about through the revolutionary spiritual tension that was created over the night. The performance entails that Dada and Surrealism never die, and that we feel and experience them every day in our own lives. This is why I called the performance: “Surrealism and Dada: The Awakening.”

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