

## **Project of preventive conservation *in situ* of the *Tapestry of the Foundation***

18 February – 4 March 2019: preparation of the space and separation of the *Tapestry*

4 March – 25 March 2019: conservation works *in situ*

26 March – 12 May 2019: exhibition of the back of the *Tapestry*

With the collaboration of Majestic Hotel & Spa Barcelona

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## **Press release**

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### ***The Tapestry of the Fundació Joan Miró changes its iconic presentation***

**For the first time in forty years, visitors will be able to observe the back of the *Tapestry* and, in so doing, discover the material dimension of the work, as well as relevant details of its creation process.**

**From 26 March – 12 May, the *Tapestry* will be hung at a distance of two metres from the wall, creating a corridor that will allow the fulfilment of one of Joan Miró's wishes for this work: to go beyond mere contemplation by circling around it as if it were a sculptural object.**

**This unique opportunity will mark the end of the preventive conservation tasks carried out by the Foundation's Restoration Department in the same space where the *Tapestry* is exhibited and which were performed in public during February and March.**

**Conducted as a specific project of the Foundation team in collaboration with Majestic Hotel & Spa Barcelona, the operation is part of the institution's mission to enhance the relationship between art and its presentation by inviting the public to participate in the daily life of the museum.**

**Barcelona, 20 March 2019.** The *Tapestry of the Fundació Joan Miró* is one of the most outstanding works of the Collection. It is one of the six monumental tapestries that Miró produced during the 1970s in one of his last expressive adventures in collaboration with the textile craftsman Josep Royo.

Experimentation is an intrinsic part of Miró's work. His innate curiosity led him beyond painting into new territories such as collage, bronze sculpture, engraving and even

textiles. Far from being a reproduction in tapestry of his existent works, the artist pursued the idea of finding the textile equivalent to his own language. The technical knowledge of the Tarragona craftsman was decisive, allowing Miró to express himself with the radicality he craved, thus creating one of the most unusual examples of textile art.

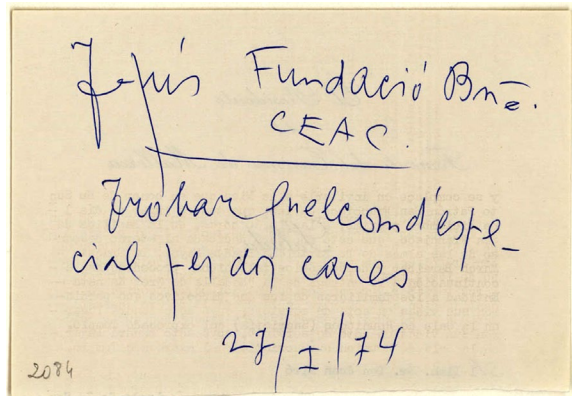


Joan Miró: Model of the *Tapestry of the World Trade Center*, 1972. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona

In collaboration with Royo, in 1970 Miró created his first textile work, the *Tapestry of Tarragona*, to which in 1972 were added his so-called 'sobreteixims', halfway between painting, collage and tapestry. A few years later, following the commissioning of monumental tapestries for New York and Washington – the *Tapestry of the World Trade Center* (1974) and the *Tapestry of the National Gallery, Washington* (1977) – Miró conceived the one for the Foundation. The *Tapestry of the Fundació "la Caixa"* (1980) and the *Tapestry of the Fondation Maeght* (1980) were also woven in the Farinera workshops in Tarragona, completing this series of six monumental tapestries.



Joan Miró. Model of the *Tapestry of the Foundation*, 1979. Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Donation of Josep Royo Peña



Joan Miró. *Annotations*, 1974. Biro on paper.  
Inscribed: *Tapís Fundació Bna. / CEAC / Trobar  
quelcom d'especial per dos cares / 27/I/74.*  
Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona

Joan Miró. *Tapestry of the Foundation*, 1974.  
Photo: Pep Herrero

In 1979, the *Tapestry* was installed at the Fundació Joan Miró. This large work was conceived as a giant mural, measuring 7.5 x 5 m and weighing about one ton. The front, created with jute, cotton and coloured wool, displays a formal refinement characteristic of the artist's unmistakable style. The back, invisible to visitors until now, shows the strength and vitality of the Miró-Royo teamwork process. Since its extraordinary proportions demand a very specific location, the work has never been moved from its bespoke space, crowned by a balcony that encourages contemplation from different viewpoints. Since its installation, the *Tapestry* has been on display continuously and has become an iconic work of the Collection.

Over this time, the Restoration Department of the Fundació Joan Miró has worked regularly on its conservation. But until now, the work had only been carried out on the front due, among other considerations, to the difficulties of accessing the back. After forty years, it is necessary to act on the back of the *Tapestry of the Foundation*. Apart from being an exceptional operation requiring a specific project from the Foundation's team, this action allows the fulfilment of one of Miró's express wishes regarding the work: that visitors can temporarily observe the back, circulating around as if it were a sculptural object, connecting with its material dimension and taking it *beyond the experience of painting*.

# Fundació Joan Miró ✱ J... Barcelona

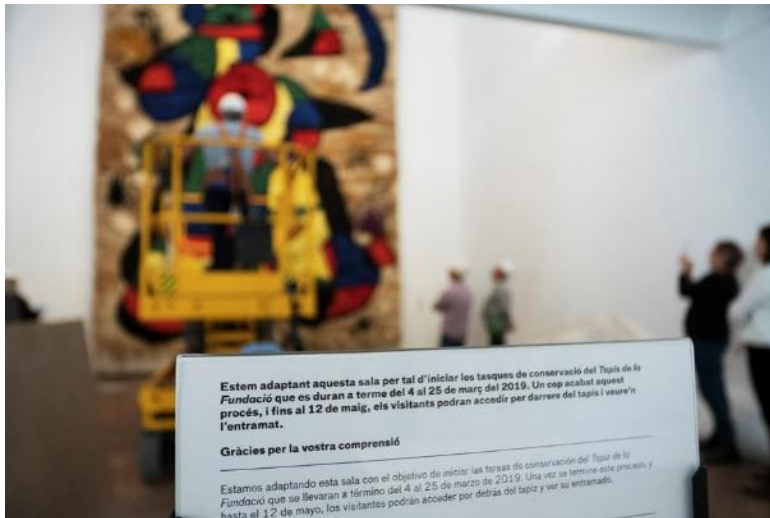
The restoration process to the back of the *Tapestry* has meant moving the two works displayed on either side: *Hands flying off toward the constellations* (1974), a large painting also conceived as a mural that will now be displayed just in front of it; while *Sobreteixim with eight umbrellas* (1973), another textile collaboration with Royo, whose predominant image, unlike ordinary tapestries, does not come from the textile background but from the objects that stand proud of the surface, has been moved to Room 9 of the Collection where it is exhibited next to two burned canvases that share its anti-pictorial character and the expressive radicality of the artist's late works.



*Sobreteixim with eight umbrellas* 1973, and *Hands flying off toward the constellations* (1974), next to the *Tapestry of the Fundació Joan Miró*, 1979. Presentation before the work on the *Tapestry*. © Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona. Photo: Hisao Suzuki



After protecting the *Tapestry*, the installation of two beams on the ceiling of the room have allowed the frontal displacement of the work, together with the structure and pulleys that have supported it during the action. The *Tapestry* has been moved forward about two metres and the back has also been protected, so work can be carried out on the wall. Despite this displacement, throughout the restoration work the *Tapestry* has always remained visible, both from the room and the balcony.



Frontal displacement of the *Tapestry*. 21 February 2019. © Fundació Joan Miró. Photos: Oriol Clavera

The intervention on the *Tapestry* lasted approximately twenty days and consisted of examining the state of the lining that covers the back of the work, unpicking and lifting the lower third to analyse and clean the fibres. Elisabet Serrat, restorer of the Foundation, has coordinated the tasks of preventive conservation. The Foundation's restoration team took the opportunity to study in depth the original materials and to gather relevant information about the techniques and the creation process of the *Tapestry*. All these works have been performed during public opening hours and have been shared with visitors through a screen installed next to the *Tapestry*, giving live coverage of the intervention.



Preventive conservation tasks to the *Tapestry of the Foundation*. 8–11 March 2019. © Fundació Joan Miró. Photos: Oriol Clavera



Preventive conservation tasks to the *Tapestry of the Foundation*. 8–11 March 2019. © Fundació Joan Miró. Photos: Oriol Clavera

This exceptional operation has required a specific project of the Fundació Joan Miró team covering many fields. In terms of patronage, and with the support of Majestic Hotel & Spa Barcelona, in September 2018 the Foundation hosted a philanthropic dinner in the North Patio to raise money for the works.



*Miró dinner*. Fundació Joan Miró and the Majestic Hotel & Spa Barcelona. Philanthropic act in support of the preventive conservation work on the *Tapestry*. 27 September 2018. Photo: Carlos Galarraga. Courtesy: Majestic Hotel & Spa Barcelona

# Fundació Joan Miró Barcelona

To mark the end of the project, once the preventive conservation works have been completed, between 26 March – 12 May there will be open access to the back of the *Tapestry*: for the first time, visitors will be able to move around behind the work and experience it as an object and not just as an image. Equally, following Miró's wishes, visitors will have the opportunity to observe the strength of the materials and admire the technique in detail.

To this end, on Saturdays 6 and 27 April, at 17:00 h, there will be a guided visit to the *Tapestry of the Foundation*, which will include a workshop to experience first-hand the tapestry technique. With a handful of threads and a simple structure, participants will weave a small piece that can be taken home. Queralt Illa will conduct the workshop, titled *Through the Tapestry*.

The project of preventive conservation *in situ* of the *Tapestry of the Foundation* is part of the mission of the Fundació Joan Miró to enhance the relationship between art and its presentation in the Museum by inviting the public to participate in the daily life of the institution.

**Photographs** for the press and a digital **kit** from our virtual press room are available at [www.fmirobcn.org/press](http://www.fmirobcn.org/press) and at the link <http://bit.ly/Tapis2019>  
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