



Joan Miró, *Personnage à bras ouverts / Personage with Open Arms* 1971 | Barry Flanagan, *Moon Gold Hare* 2008 | Joan Miró, *La Servante / The Servant* 1969

TWO PATAPHYSICIANS FLANAGAN MIRÓ

8TH OCTOBER – 8TH NOVEMBER 2014

Waddington Custot Galleries is pleased to present the first exhibition to consider the relationship between the Spanish artist Joan Miró and Barry Flanagan. Opening on 8 October 2014, *Two Pataphysicians* will offer a unique opportunity to explore the inventiveness and versatility of their work and their shared interest in the idea of 'Pataphysics.

Created by the French writer Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), 'Pataphysics was defined by him as a 'science of imaginary solutions'. Properly denoted with an apostrophe before the 'p', as if to close a previous speech mark, the ideology is founded on principles of metaphorical circularity and alchemical processes. Often exploring a juxtaposition between paradox and the absurd, 'Pataphysics shaped twentieth century movements including Dada and Surrealism.

For this exhibition, Waddington Custot Galleries has selected sculptures by both artists demonstrating the influence that Jarry's ideology exerted on their work and highlighting the inspiration that Flanagan took from the work of the Catalan master.

Reflecting the pataphysical emphasis on mutable forms, Miró's sculptures imbue discarded objects such as tools, wheels, contraptions and bits of furniture with human-like associations. Transformed through the casting process, the patina of the bronze accentuates the found nature of the objects and emphasises their organic qualities. Often resembling artefacts from an ancient site, these items are curiously familiar and simultaneously alien.

The morphological principle of 'Pataphysics is also evident throughout Flanagan's oeuvre and can be seen here in the unicorn rearing up on its hind legs, the colourful hessian wall hangings and his trademark bronze hares that leap and dance through the exhibition. The artist's fascination with the hare began with his sighting of the creature leaping through a snowy field. The animal's energy and grace

captured the artist's imagination, and in 1979 he made his first cast of a leaping hare. In an interview in 2006, Flanagan stated that he found in the hare a rich and expressive subject that could carry the conventions of the cartoon and the attributions of the human into the animal form.

Bringing these artists together for the first time, *Two Pataphysicians* presents a dynamic exchange on a pivotal twentieth-century ideology.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Joan Miró

Joan Miró was born in Barcelona on 20 April 1893 and trained as an artist at the Galí Academy from 1912-15. From 1923, he spent part of each year in Paris and became a key figure in the Surrealist movement. With his young family he remained in France during the Spanish Civil War, but returned to Spain when the Germans invaded in 1940. Miró settled in Majorca and remained based there for much of the rest of his life, travelling for major commissions and exhibitions around the world. He died at home on 25 December 1983.

Barry Flanagan

British sculptor Barry Flanagan was born in Prestatyn, North Wales, in 1941. He studied architecture at Birmingham College of Art and Crafts and Sculpture at St. Martin's School of Art in London in 1964. After graduating in 1966 he exhibited at landmark exhibitions Op Losse Schroeven (Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam) and When Attitudes Become Form (ICA, London) in 1969. In 1982 he represented Britain at the Venice Biennale and Documenta. His sculptures have been shown internationally, including commissions for Park Avenue, New York (1995-6) and Grant Park, Chicago (1996). Flanagan travelled extensively, living between Dublin and Ibiza in his later life. He was elected a Royal Academician in 1991, the same year he was appointed OBE. He died in Ibiza in 2009.

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