

David Ebony's Top 10 New York Gallery Shows for October



Installation view of “Riopelle | Miró: Color” Courtesy Acquavella Galleries

Jean-Paul Riopelle and Joan Miró at Acquavella, through December 11

This two-person show, “Color,” featuring works by Canada's best known post-war painter, Jean-Paul Riopelle, and the Surrealist pioneer Joan Miró, at first seems like a strange pairing. Riopelle's highly textured abstract canvases, marrying American Abstract Expressionism with European Tachisme, might appear to be incompatible with Miró's playful personages in 3D. In fact, there is surprising thematic cohesiveness in works by the duo, and this unique fusion—the first show of its kind—contains a great deal of energy as well as historical depth.

When Riopelle (1923-2002) left Montreal and relocated to Paris in 1946, he quickly fell in with the Surrealist group, just then reconvening in the aftermath of the war. Thirty years his senior, Miró (1893-1983) befriended the young Canadian, and became for him a kind of father figure and mentor. Later, the two shared a studio in the south of France, and when Miró decided to focus on sculpture, in the 1960s, he worked in a foundry outside of Paris that was partly owned by Riopelle at the time, where the bronzes in this show were produced. Miró's large-scale, brightly hued works, such as *Personage* (1967), and *Monsieur et Madame* (1969), made of cast found objects, like bar stools and drain pipes, are humorous figures. In Miró's Surrealist visual language, they might be regarded as attentive gallery goers, viewing Riopelle's large paintings of the same period, such as *Dans le jardin* (1962), and *Festin* (1968), whose hyper-energetic surfaces suggest an infinite space.