

How did Miró come to make this painting?

Joan Miró was born, educated, and trained as an artist in Barcelona, Spain. During his youth he spent summers at his family's farm in Montroig, a nearby village. These summers became an important touchstone for Miró's artistic identity.

In 1920 at the age of twenty-seven, he moved to Paris. There he was inspired by Cubist art, with its fragmented objects and abstract forms. He was also influenced by the Surrealist poets and painters, who aimed to release the creative power of the subconscious mind by making images in which the familiar met the fantastical.

While living and learning in Paris, Miró remained deeply attached to his native home in Catalonia. He returned to the family farm and began creating this painting in the summer of 1921. He continued working on it in Barcelona and then, when he moved back to Paris, he had herbs sent from the farm to remind him of the shapes of the leaves growing there. It took him a full nine months to finish this painting.

This early painting is an example of how Miró made the ordinary extraordinary. The scene is both real and unreal – familiar, yet unfamiliar. Each element in the farmyard is carefully observed and precisely described, yet the overall effect is strangely dreamlike. Miró's style creates a kind of magical realism.

The artist came to regard *The Farm* as one of his key works. Describing it, he said, "This picture represents all that was closest to me at home, even the footprints on the path by the house.... I am very much attached to the landscape of my country. That picture made it live for me."