Build Your Own Tour: Transcript

Joan Miró
Moonbird* (Oiseau lunaire), also called *The Lunar Bird
1944-46 (enlargement 1966, cast 1967)
Bronze, 90 x 80 1/2 x 57 3/4 in. (228.6 x 204.5 x 146.7 cm.)
Raymond and Patsy Nasher Collection, Nasher Sculpture Center, Dallas, Texas

Hi! My name is Lynda. I am an art educator at the Nasher Sculpture Center.

Do you dream at night? Spanish artist Joan Miró said he was inspired by dreams and created this work called *Moonbird*. It was initially made in 1946, cast in bronze and enlarged to this size twenty years later.

As you look at this sculpture, do you see his inspiration of the night? The moon! How many moon shapes you see and count?

As this sculpture's name, *Moonbird* implies, Miró has captured the moon in its many forms – crescent moons for the bird's tail, wings, head, a half-moon for its torso, and full moons in rounded orbits for its eyes. The crescent-moon-shaped plumage that tops *Moonbird's* head could be interpreted as bull horns, a symbol of Miró's homeland of Spain.

Miró created hybrid characters like *Moonbird*, by combining elements from the earth and sky to create whimsical, abstract beings. He loved the child-like nature of the creatures he created.

Miro's ideas were not limited by logic, they followed the ideas that the Surrealist movement was expressing at the time - art that tapped into people's subconscious thoughts, memories and dreams. The subjects of many of his works were things associated with the night and imaginary hybrid creatures he dreamed up.

Now here's something for you to try:

On a sheet of paper, doodle some things you see in the sky at night—a constellation with stars and planets, the moon, or clouds. Now draw animals that roam or fly at night. How can you combine the curved and straight line elements of these two things to make a hybrid being?

After you have created your character, decide what color or pattern of colors and shapes its body and features will have. Think about where your animal would live and draw your creature in its habitat. What will you call your hybrid? Share your unique creation with your family.

You can find additional images and resources related to this artwork in the description of this video. See you at the next artwork!