

Italian cowmen and the Scottish beatniks in the last episode, where the confusion killed a promising fantasy. But in general it had a visual style which was memorable enough in itself and which fused perfectly with the language and the incident – Joe, in his diary extracts talking the language of contemporary idealisms, in the incidents desperately and undefeately trying to live them. It left a taste, not of honey, but not of wormwood either, and it left in one's memory a character and a number of scenes which can be recalled at will – Joe and 'the girl called Fred' arguing suicide and the meaning of life, joined agonizingly by their gripping hands, he on the embankment, she in the Thames: dawn and the marchers' freedom song drawing nearer along the skyline – scenes which one may even find oneself remembering without conscious effort. *Diary of a Young Man* certainly was memorable.

2 Miró at the Tate by Peregrine Walker

The comparison, of course, is with Picasso, but Spanish origins and a superficial likeness of evolution are not enough to make Miró fit into any category other than that of his own profoundly personal vision. The recent retrospective exhibition of his work at the Tate Gallery was evidence enough of the sheer achievement of fifty years of painting – and latterly of sculpture as well. From the careful and loving detail of his early pictures, such as *The Farm*, which Ernest Hemingway owned and preferred to any painting that exists, to the slender calligraphs that seem to eliminate all but the essential line and basic colour of things, Miró's art has retained a wonderful integrity: he can protest or charm, be as gay as the summer sky or as sad as the aftermath of a storm, but always he is ready to be surprised by the sheer infinity of created good.

That is why his pictures seem so perfectly displayed when, as in the house of his friend José Luis Sert at Harvard, they are balanced with Catalan primitive paintings. However unlike they may seem at first – the blobs of arbitrary colour revolving in an airborne geometry and the grave scenes of saints in a rustic and settled calm – yet they alike reveal, at many centuries' distance in time, an acceptance, and indeed an interpretation, of reality that is sane and very salutary. The world of stars and of birds as they fly, of the lines and masses that map the structure of all that is made, is not only observed but somehow conveyed at a universal level of intelligibility. He is not at all bound by the idioms he uses; indeed he can seem to mock them lest they should assume too great a power. He has himself said that his aim is 'to come closer through my painting to the great public who have always been in my thoughts'. And his constant awareness of the basic realities – even when in his surrealist period he seems to spurn them – evokes a response that is instinctive and loving. He is close to the pattern of things all the time. His mythology is eternal.