

PRESS RELEASE

“THE PHOTOGRAPHIC FACT. Photographic collection of the City Council of Vigo 1984-2000”

DATES: 23rd of January- 21st of March 2004

VENUE: First floor exhibition rooms of the MARCO

OPENING TIMES: Tuesday to Sunday (holidays included): from 11:00 to 21:00.

CURATORS: Manuel Sendón and Xosé Luís Suárez Canal

COORDINATOR: Iñaki Martínez Antelo

PRODUCED BY: MARCO - Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

ARTISTS EXHIBITED: 107

Xosé Abad (Galicia)	Pere Formiguera (Spain)	Roberto Ribao (Galicia)
Xosé Luis Abalo (Galicia)	Anna Fox (U.K.)	Mar R. Caldas (Galicia)
Michael Ackerman (USA)	J. François Joly (France)	Wojcieh Prazmowski (Poland)
Delmi Álvarez (Galicia)	Xosé Gago (Galicia)	Lalo R. Villar (Galicia)
Manuel Álvarez Bravo (Mexico)	Pepe Galovart (Galicia)	Pierre Radisic (Belgium)
Arquivo Llanos (Galicia)	Isabel García (Galicia)	Cristina Rodríguez (Galicia)
Arquivo Panateca (El Salvador)	Antonio García Pereira (Galicia)	Rubén Rguez. Torres (Galicia)
Aziz+Cucher (USA)	Flor Garduño (Mexico)	Arthur Rothstein (USA)
Olivo Barbieri (Italy)	Julian Germain (UK)	America Sánchez (Spain)
Adolfo Barcia (Galicia)	Mario Giacomelli (Italy)	Pablo Sánchez Corral (Galicia)
José Ramón Bas (Spain)	Claudia Gordillo (Nicaragua)	Schmid/Fricke (Germany)
Gabriele Basilico (Italy)	Rob Grierson (U.K.)	Dagmar Sippel (Germany)
John Benton-Harris (U.K.)	Luis González Palma (Guatemala)	Manuel Sonseca (Spain)
Nancy Burson (USA)	Guido Guidi (Italy)	Javier Teniente (Galicia)
Ramón Caamaño (Galicia)	Amanda Harman (U.K.)	Ricard Terré (Galicia)
Daniel Canogar (Spain)	Iavicoli (Italy)	Michel Thersiquel (France)
Vari Caramés (Galicia)	Javier Iglesias (Galicia)	Ruth Thorne-Thomsen (USA)
Vincenzo Castella (Italy)	Graciela Iturbide (Mexico)	David Townend (U.K.)
Toni Catany (Spain)	William Klein (USA)	Van Dendere (Holland)
Andrea Cavazzuti	Les Krims (USA)	Vítor Vaqueiro (Galicia)
Salvador Cidrás (Galicia)	Dorothea Lange (USA)	Raúl Vázquez (Galicia)
Carole Conde+Karl Beveridge (Canada)	Eric Larrayadiou (France)	Virxilio Vieitez (Galicia)
Raúl Corrales (Cuba)	Russell Lee (USA)	Marcos Vilariño (Galicia)
Xulio Correa (Galicia)	Jorge Lens (Galicia)	Manuel Vilariño (Galicia)
Andrea Costas (Galicia)	Enrique Lista (Galicia)	Xulio Vilariño (Galicia)
John Chater (U.K.)	Belén Liste (Galicia)	Krystina Ziach (Holland)
Antoine d'Agata (France)	Xurxo Lobato (Galicia)	
John Davies (UK)	Ramón Loureiro (Galicia)	
Jack Delano (USA)	Zoraida Marqués (Galicia)	
Hugues De Wurstemberger (Belgium)	Ruth Massó (Galicia)	
William Eggleston (USA)	Piti Mayáns (Argentina)	
Sandra Eleta (Panama)	Joel Meyerowitz (USA)	
Manel Esclusa (Spain)	Manel Miranda (Portugal)	
Suso Fandiño (Galicia)	Carmen Nogueira (Galicia)	
Bernard Faucon (France)	Ana Teresa Ortega (Spain)	
Federico Fernández (Venezuela)	Sue Packer (UK)	
Maruxa Fernández (Galicia)	Alfonso Palmeiro (Galicia)	
Manuel Ferrol (Galicia)	Max Pan (Australia)	
Elena Fernández Prada (Galicia)	Martin Parr (UK)	
	María Piñeiro (Galicia)	
	Carlos Pérez Siquier (Spain)	
	Bernard Plossu (France)	

NUMBER OF PHOTOGRAPHS EXHIBITED:

The exhibition comprises a selection of approximately 300 photographs – out of a total of 560 in the collection– accompanied by graphic and documentary work: posters, catalogues, magazines, press articles and a documentary about the history of the *Fotobienales* (biennial photographic exhibitions).

THE CATALOGUE:

The Contemporary Art Museum of Vigo will publish a bilingual catalogue including: texts by salient public figures, an introduction written by the curators; critical texts by the photographers Ricard Terré, Joan Fontcuberta and de Rui Prata; a catalogue of the works exhibited, including their technical descriptions; and a reasoned catalogue of all the photographs in the collection.

THE CURATORS:

Manuel Sendón (A Coruña, 1951), a graduate in Mathematics and a doctor in Fine Arts, he is currently a Professor at the Pontevedra Faculty of Fine Arts and the Director of the *Grupo de Investigacións Fotográficas* of Vigo University. Xosé Luis Suárez Canal (Allariz, Ourense, 1946), a graduate in Humanities (French Studies), a secondary school teacher and an assistant lecturer of photography at the Faculty of Journalism, Santiago de Compostela.

As regards their joint activities, in 1984 they created the *Centro de Estudos Fotográficos* (Institute of Photographic Studies, CEF), institution which coordinated the *Sala dos Peiraos* (Docklands Exhibition Room) from 1985 to 1991, and directed the *Fotobienal de Vigo* (Biennial Exhibition of Photography) from 1984 to 2000. They have written monographs on historical Galician photographers such as *Ramón Caamaño*, *the Pacheco Archive*, *Ksado*, *Luis Rueda*, *José Suárez*, *the Sarabia Archive*, *Raniero Fernández* and *Virxilio Vieitez*, and the *José María Massó Archive*. Moreover, they published the collections entitled *Álbum* and *O Trínque*.

SYNTHETIC VIEW OF THE EXHIBITION PROJECT:

Furthering its commitment to offering the public an overview of the multiple aspects of contemporary artistic reality, MARCO (Museum of contemporary Art of Vigo) commences the year 2004 with various activities connected with 20th century photography. During the next three months, two exhibitions (on the first floor and the ground floor of the museum) and various parallel and supplementary activities (conferences, round tables, didactic programmes and specific workshops) will pivot on photography and its artistic and cultural dimension.

O Feito Fotográfico is an approach to the photographic activity developed in the city of Vigo during the period 1984-2000, through the *Fotobienal* (biennial exhibition of photography) and the exhibitions displayed at the *Sala dos Peiraos* (1985-1991) and *Casa das Artes* (1991-1992) exhibition centres, organised by the City Council of Vigo in co-operation with the *Centro de Estudos Fotográficos* (Center of Photographic Studies), whose curators were Manuel Sendón and Xosé Luís Suárez Canal.

The programming made during that period, which gave rise to the collection of photographs of Vigo's City Council, had several aims: the recovery, study and diffusion of Galician historical photography; the promotion of contemporary photography in Galicia, and the participation in the debates taking place in worldwide contemporary photography.

These three aims underpin this exhibition, an attempt to recover historical memory and reveal to the public an excellent collection that has been taking shape during the past two decades, comprising a series of 1,185 photographs. Now that the task of registering and cataloguing the pieces has been completed by MARCO (Museum of Contemporary Art of Vigo), it is an ideal moment to show them and to foster reflection on contemporary photography both locally and abroad.

O Feito Fotográfico is the second part of a project started last year by the museum, which resulted in the exhibition and catalogue entitled *Vigovisións*, which showed the acquisitions made by the City Council of Vigo through an original "cultural exchange scheme by which foreign photographers were invited to take snapshots of our city". Overall, 625 photographers resulted from it, which were included in the catalogue of that exhibition.

This new exhibition is a selection of the photographs taken throughout the biennial shows of photography and through the programmes of Scholarships and New Creations, focused on the work of our Galician photographers, comprising a total number of 560 pieces. With it, the cataloguing of the photographs in the collection of the City Council of Vigo has come to its conclusion, a collection that, together with the Pacheco Archive, has become one of the most important ones in Spain

The works of these Galician, Spanish and foreign photographers, alongside the publications released and other supplementary documentation place us before the *photographic fact* and give us the chance to review our recent past, analyse our present and give rise to future initiatives.

TEXT BY THE CURATORS:

After the intense activity shown by the photographic associations of the main Galician cities during the 1950s and the early 1960s, the dynamism of non-professional photography wanes remarkably and practically disappears in the latter decade. Galician photography, but for very few exceptions, remains on the margin of the movement which emerged during the sixties around the *Nueva Lente* journal and entailed the renewal of the scene of photography in Spain.

During the early eighties, non-professional photography found expression in sporadic exhibitions which took place in the most important towns, in such a way that one started to see photographs that responded to a reality which was very different from that of the photographic groups of earlier decades. We must also bear in mind that, socially speaking, photography drew very little interest from the spheres of culture, and none whatsoever from the world of art. The art scene of the time was practically dominated by sculpture and painting, and there was no room in it at all for photography.

In this context emerged the *Fotobienal de Vigo*, and hence the proclamation in its first edition that "*The motives inspiring it are the recognition of photography as a cultural phenomenon*" thus attempting to "*leave behind the ghetto it is secluded in within the world of Galician culture*".

From the start, the *Fotobienal de Vigo* attempts to shatter the parochialism then in place. Another of the key aims of the first edition was Galician historical photography. The intention was for this 1st *Fotobienal* to be a call of attention on historical photography, and thus put an end to the process of destruction of our photographic heritage, highlighting the fact that its loss led to the extinction of our collective visual memory.

In its second edition, the *Fotobienal* takes on international dimensions by organising monographic exhibitions of photographers enjoying worldwide recognition, such as William Klein o Martin Parr, and starting the project known as *Vigovisións*. From that moment on the *Fotobienal* of Vigo, coordinated by the *Centro de Estudos Fotográficos*, set itself the following targets:

1. The recovery, study and diffusion of Galician historical photography. Monographic exhibitions were organised of artists such as Ksado, José Suárez, Pacheco, Llanos, Virxilio Vieitez, Archivo Massó... Sometimes, as was the case with Vieitez, they were totally unknown artists that far. The *Fotobienal* became the point of reference in the historical recovery of Galician photography.
2. The promotion, in the measure of our possibilities, of Galician contemporary photography. In the international project known as *Vigovisións*, a Galician photography was always included; the section *Bolsas* (scholarships) was created, which was exclusively dedicated to Galician photographers, and later the section *Novas Creacións*, also fully dedicated to contemporary Galician photography, besides including photographs taken by Galician authors in other exhibitions.
3. To make Galicia, and very specially the City of Vigo, participate in the debates of global contemporary photography. The central section of the exhibition, constantly present from the 3rd *Fotobienal*, shows the work of contemporary artists coming from different countries presenting innovative proposals on the international photographic scene. Common to these exhibitions was the presence of authors who, until that moment, had not had their work exhibited in Spain, and in some cases they did not do so until years later. Also memorable are the monographic exhibitions of some authors that, although enjoying widespread recognition as part of the story of world photography, had never been invited to exhibit their work in Spain. Eight editions of the *Vigovisións* project have already been carried out, turning the City of Vigo into a workshop for the most salient photographers in the international scene of the moment.

In January 1985, the Sala dos Peiraos was set up. It organised one exhibition a month and remained in operation during 6 years, co-ordinated by the *Centro de Estudos Fotográficos* and presenting a total of 56 exhibitions during that period. The agenda of the *Sala dos Peiraos* was based on a multiplicity of conceptions, at a time when a great part of photographic exhibition programmes suffered from conceptual uniformity. It exhibited the most salient photographers of those years, such as Joan Fontcuberta, Cristina García Rodero, Manel Esclusa, Gabriel Cualladó, Toni Catany, América Sánchez and Daniel Canogar. Foreign photographers such as Paul Graham, Max Pam, Joel Meyerowitz, Sebastião Salgado, Arno Fischer and Brian Griffin were also invited, as well as classical masters of world photography such as Manuel Álvarez Bravo and Bill Brandt.

As regards Galicia, fifteen joint exhibitions of Galician photographers were organised, apart from others where they took part alongside photographers from other countries. The importance that bringing new photographers to light had for the *Centro de Estudos Fotográficos*, led us to present every year, under the title of *Hoy mismo Mesmo* (this very day) the work of Galician photographers that had not been exhibited thus far. Let's also remember, as regards historical photography, exhibitions such as *En Vigo en los cincuenta* (in Vigo in the fifties), which displayed the work carried out by the members of the *Agrupación Fotográfica Galega* (Galician Photographic Association) during the 1950s or the work by Manuel Ferrol, Raniero Fernández and Ramón Caamaño.

As a result of the photographic activity carried out by the City Council of Vigo from 1984 to 2000, a photographic collection was compiled of which *Vigovisiones* is only a portion.

Another important part, as large as *Vigovisiones*, consists of several photographs which have been gradually acquired depending on the economic resources available for each exhibition. For that reason, we are not talking of a collection built according to set conceptions, but a set of photographs describing the relationship of the City of Vigo with photography and, specifically, with contemporary photography during the period mentioned above. Different circumstances and budgets caused purchases to fluctuate from one exhibition to the next. In spite of this, in our collection we find the work of photographers as renowned as Álvarez Bravo, William Klein, William Eggleston and Mario Giacomelli.

REQUEST FOR GRAPHIC MATERIAL

EXHIBITION

“THE PHOTOGRAPHIC FACT. Photographic collection of the City Council of Vigo 1984-2000”

GRAPHIC MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO THE PRESS:

CD including texts and photographs of the exhibition in different formats.

IF YOU WISH YO RECEIVE DOCUMENTATION, PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND SEND IT BY E-MAIL, FAX OR MAIL POST TO:

MARCO, Museo de Arte Contemporánea de Vigo

Rúa Príncipe 54

36202 Vigo (Pontevedra). Spain

Communication Department

Marta Viana Tomé

Pilar Souto Soto

Tel. +34 986 113908 / 113903

Fax +34 986 113901

marta.viana@marcovigo.com

pilar.souto@marcovigo.com

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