

Exhibition: MARÍN. Fotografías 1908-1940
IVAM-Centre Julio González
22nd April – 29th June 2008

Organised by: Fundación Telefónica & Fundación Pablo Iglesias



Curated by: Rafael Levenfeld & Valentín Vallhonrat

The exhibition *MARÍN. Fotografías 1908-1940* (Marín. Photographs 1908-1940) consists in a visit to the work of this photographer from Madrid, a contemporary of other great 20th century Spanish photographers like Alfonso, Ramón Claret, Gaspar or Contreras y Vilaseca. The two hundred and nine photographs selected cover the thirty-six years of Marín's production and form part of an archive comprising almost 18,000 negatives, mostly glass, which have survived thanks to his family.

The same team from Fundación Telefónica that restored Telefónica's Historic Photographic Archive has carried out this task of recuperating the oeuvre of Marín, who was closely related to the Spanish National Telephone Company from 1924 to 1929, since he was the photographer who contributed the largest number of images to the project of documenting the advent of the telephone in our country.

This project has been developed by Fundación Telefónica in collaboration with Fundación Pablo Iglesias, where the archive is conserved today.

The catalogue of the exhibition reproduces the works displayed and includes texts by Consuelo Císcar, director of the IVAM, Rafael Levenfeld and Valentín Vallhonrat, curators of the exhibition, José Carlos Mainer, Professor of Spanish Literature at Zaragoza University, Francisco Jarauta, Professor of Philosophy at Murcia University, and Ricardo González, a historian and researcher.

One hundred and twenty-three years after his birth, this exhibition presents Luis Ramón Marín as a great author belonging to a generation of photographers, an essential part of the beginning of photojournalism in Spain, who started work at the dawn of the 20th century and disappeared after the Spanish Civil War. Many of them suffered reprisals or gave up photography and their work was often confiscated, destroyed or forgotten in their archives. However, some of these images, figuring as “anonymous”, have continued to illustrate stories of both sides without referring to their authors.

Marín is one of the first photographers who went out into the streets to record current affairs and news with his camera for the first magazines and illustrated newspapers that became enormously popular in the early decades of the century. On the other hand, he is the author of some of the first aerial photographs taken in our country, which he began to produce in 1913, barely ten years after the discovery of aviation.

Above all Marín was a graphic reporter (he published over one thousand photographs a year in newspapers). He was a correspondent for the Royal Family, whom he used to follow even during their holidays (so many of his photographs are published here for the first time). He recorded the main events of the political and cultural life of Spain and took pictures of its principal protagonists. He also trained his camera on all sorts of street scenes and anonymous faces of the people.

According to the curators of the exhibition, Rafael Levenfeld and Valentín Vallhonrat, “his work reveals the profile of a photographer who lived off what he did, whoever his client might be. The variety of contents reflects the enormous vitality he put into many different activities. We do not know whether it was photography and its contents that brought this joy to his life, or whether it was the other way around. We think it is his fabulous capacity to live life to the full that gave character to his great work. By car, motorcycle or aeroplane, Marín managed to photograph the greatest variety of events one after another.”