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Cultural Information from Catalan-Speaking Lands 1997 (II):

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Catalan Review, Vol. XII, number 1 (1998), p. 123 - 149

CULTURAL INFORMATION
FROM CATALAN-SPEAKING LANDS

1997 (II)

A significant number of works dedicated to the research and study of Catalan history have been published in the second half of 1997, studies that cover from the medieval to the modern period. This is a period that embraces a thousand years, from the 9th to the 18th century, and comprises of the beginnings, fullness and continuity of a living culture and language which extend from Salses (Rosellon) to Guardamar (Baix Vinalopó). These publications have achieved a degree of scholarly quality whose value should be emphasized. They are the fruit of research based on painstaking methodology and I will note the importance of the contribution of literary and documentary sources.

I would like to draw attention to three books dealing with bibliographical and documentary information which fall within the medieval and modern period. The first is by Marta Vives i Sabaté, *L'Arxiu de Protocols del districte d'Igualada*, Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 1997. This is an inventory of documents held in the archive, Igualada, covering the period from the end of the 13th century to the 19th century and includes not only the town of Igualada (Anoia) but also villages from the same county. The second publication is a collection of documents from the 14th to 19th centuries prepared by Jaume Codina, *Contractes de matrimoni al Delta de Llobregat*, Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 1997. In this publication the author contributes useful information concerning one of the most important archives of Barcelona and its surrounding districts. It is an inventory of notarial documents of great interest for studying the social structures of this region. The third work is a compendium of monasteries with brief bibliographical and historical notes compiled by Ernest Zaragoza Pascual, *Catàleg dels monestirs catalans*, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997. In this book he has compiled an inventory of monasteries but excluded convents. It is an informative work of great interest, but the lack of thematic and toponym indices make its consultation a complicated task.

The importance traditionally given to the study of medieval history is made evident by the publication of two works. The first by Ramon Martí, *Col·lecció diplomàtica de la Seu de Girona (817-1100)*, Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 1997, brings together a collection of a corpus of 489 documents. 150 of these documents date before the year 1000, a fact that reveals the wealth of documents dating from the high middle ages held in Catalan archives. The second book is a publication of the earliest documents held in the archive of Tàrraga by G. Gonzalvo, J. Hernando, F. Sabaté, M. Turull and P. Verdés, *Els llibres de privilegis de Tàrraga (1058-1473)*, Barcelona: Fundació Noguera, 1997. The authors have edited 314 documents that open up the door for studying the institutions of the town of Tàrraga and other towns of the counties of Urgell and Segarra. Two other books deal with the study of very specific aspects of medieval history. In the first by Flocel Sabaté i Curull, *El territori de la Catalunya medieval. Percepció de l'espai i divisió territorial al llarg de l'Edat Mitjana*, Barcelona: Fundació Salvador Vives i Casajuana, 1997. Here the author has collected a wide range of information on Catalan administration at a local level. This undoubtedly opens the way for an evaluation of the activities of second level of institutions and reveals the complexity of the different types of

municipal governments and their continuing evolution throughout the entire low middle ages. The second book is by Lluís To Figueres, *Família i hereu a la Catalunya nord-oriental (segles X-XII)*, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997. This study is the fruit of painstaking research into the evolution of a social and familial institution so important for Catalonia, the "hereu" (the first born or primogenitor who inherited the family estate in its entirety). The study centers on the counties of Catalunya Vella that comprised of the bishoprics of Elna (Rosellon) and Girona.

I would like to make mention of two works that focus on the kingdom of the "conte-rei" Ferdinand the Catholic (1479-1516) a period which was a turning point in the history of Catalonia. I would not say that it is a period which has been forgotten, but recently it has certainly received little scholarly attention. The first of these works is a collection of documents edited by Eulàlia Duran and Joan Requesens titled, *Texts profètics catalans favorables a Ferran el Catòlic*, València: Edicions 3 i 4, 1997. This collection is complemented by the work of Pere Miquel Carbonell, *Cròniques d'Espanya*, Barcelona: Els Nostres Clàssics, 1997. Whilst the former is a collection of documents that latter is an interpretation of the history of Catalonia and the Iberian peninsula by the historian and archivist Pere Miquel Carbonell (1434-1517). The work of this Catalan humanist has so often been undervalued by modern historiographers.

The wealth of modern historiography has been enriched by the publication of *Discurso sobre la agricultura, comercio e industria del Principado (1780)*. The book was the product of several authors, and an institutional undertaking by the Real Junta Particular de Comercio de Cataluña. This institution attempted to assume control of the economy of Catalonia during the late 18th century and undertook a painstaking study of the real situation based on the sources of natural wealth existing in Catalonia at that time. This is an essential study in order to understand the development of Catalonia during the 18th century and the contribution of Catalonia to the industrial revolution at the beginning of the contemporary period. This work represents one of those contributions to history that one cannot understand why it has remained unpublished for so many years and, to some degree, forgotten. It is an essential reference book for any historian, not only those specializing in the modern period or other later historical periods, but also for the study of earlier periods including the middle ages.

Two monographs complete this contribution to publications on medieval and modern history. The first is the book by Maria Adela Fargas Peñarrocha, *Família i poder a Catalunya 1516-1626. Les estratègies de consolidació de la classe dirigent*, Barcelona: Fundació Salvador Vives i Casajuana, 1997. The second is the work by Assumpta Muset i Pons, *Catalunya i el mercat espanyol al segle XVIII; els traginers de Calaf i Copons*, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997.

By way of conclusion, one could say that the history of Catalonia has moved forward opening new areas of historical study as much in the field of editions of documentary sources as in new research topics. One could say that this year, 1997, marks an important historical milestone for those who working on Catalan history.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY

The last half of 1997 has seen a wide and interesting range of publications on contemporary Catalan history. First on the list is a book which strictly speaking is not historical but of great value for its reflection and conclusions concerning the study of Catalan nationalism, an issue of primary importance when considering contemporary Catalan history. The book in question is a collection of articles under the title of *Nacionalisme i ciències socials. Col·loqui internacional Barcelona 7-8-9 novembre 1996*, Barcelona: Fundació Jaume Bofill/Editorial Mediterrània, 1997. The book contains many reflections on the ways nationalisms have been analyzed, in particular recent historical and sociological analysis of Catalan nationalism, as well as other issues such as the case of the Spanish state and foreign points of reference.

Returning to a stricter definition of contemporary history studies, a number of publications have appeared concerning various aspects of the 19th century. In the sphere of cultural history is *El Segle Romàntic. Actes del Col·loqui sobre el Romanticisme celebrat a Vilanova i la Geltrú (2-4/II1995)*, Biblioteca Museu Víctor Balaguer, 1997. This collection of colloquium proceedings offers a panorama by various authors of issues regarding the influence of Romanticism on Catalan culture. Another study on the same area is by professor Pere Anguera, *El català al segle XIX. De la llengua del poble a la llengua nacional*, Barcelona: Empúries, 1997. This study focuses on the importance of the working class in maintaining the Catalan language. With regard to the economy, particularly industrialization, one important study is by Roser Solà, *L'Institut Industrial de Catalunya i l'associacionisme industrial des de 1820 a 1854*, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997. The stormy process of defining the liberal Spanish state is taken up with a new publication on this area, fruit of the conference, I Congrès de la Coordinadora de Centres d'Estudi de Parla Catalana. The book, edited by Ramon Abad, is titled *Moviments de protesta i resistència a la fi de l'Antic règim*, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997, and contains various monographic studies with an excellently written introduction. Concluding this section on the dawn of *catalanisme*, there are two interesting books concerning two people from the conservative arena. The first is a polished edition annotated and prologue by Isidre Molas, *Escrits polítics de Jaume Collell*, Vic: Eumo/Institut Universitari d'Història Jaume Vicens Vives, 1997. The second is a well documented book by Lluís Costa, *Josep Pella i Forgas i el catalanisme*, Rafael Dalmau, 1997, which is in effect a political biography giving many clues to understanding the various affiliations of this historical figure.

One example of the study of 20th century Catalan history and Catalan intellectuals is the case of the publication by Francesc Vilanova, *Ramon d'Abadal: entre la biografia i la política*, Lleida: Pagès, 1997. This is a biography of the medieval historian Ramon d'Abadal and is equally interesting for historians interested in Catalan cultural/political issues discussed from a conservative point of view, as well as for those interested in studies of Catalan medieval history.

The Franco era continues to produce a harvest of new research by

contemporary historians and in particular I would like to point out two biographical studies. The first is by Joan Maria Thomàs, *José M. Fontana Tarrats. Biografia política d'un franquista català*, Reus: Centre de Lectura de Reus, 1997. This biography looks at the intellectual and political universe of one of the few pro Franco Catalans who justified his own political affiliation. Fontana was a somewhat peculiar supporter of the Franco regime, an entrenched defender of the Falange and the role of the Catalan Falangists in the Franco Spanish state. The second covers the trajectory of one of the major figures of the democratic opposition to the Franco regime, the moderate socialist, Josep Pallach. The book in question is Pere Moreño, *Josep Pallach (1920-1977). Història d'un líder*, Barcelona: Edicions 62, 1997. Another publication on the same period, although not strictly speaking a historical approach, is Josep Maria Huertas, *Cada taula, un Vietnam*, Barcelona: La Magrana, 1997. The book contains the author's experiences and memoirs with reference to the sphere of writing in Catalonia in the 60's and 70's and the connections between Huertas and the opposition movements to the Franco regime.

At this point I would like to mention a few diverse and interesting works that fall more into the category of miscellaneous. On the one hand there is the collection of articles *El catalanisme d'esquerres*, Girona: Cercle d'Estudis Històrics i Socials de Girona, 1997. This publication continues the tradition begun by a cooperative of editors at the beginning of the 90's that offers a wide range of reflections on Catalan contemporary history, focusing mainly on Girona but also contains broader approaches. Another book of interest for its originality is by Xavier Pujadas and Carles Santacana, *L'esport és notícia. Història de la premsa esportiva a Catalunya (1880-1992)*, Barcelona: Col·legi de Periodistes/Diputació de Barcelona, 1997. Shifting the focus away from Catalonia, another book worth noting is by professor Antoni Marimon (ed.), *Verguisme, anarquisme i espanyolisme. Noves recerques sobre el segle XX a Mallorca*, Palma de Mallorca: Fundació Emili Darder, 1997. This collection of articles is, in my opinion, a demonstration of the high level of historical research being carried out in the Balearic Isles. Another book, a little outside a strict definition of reviews of publications on contemporary Catalan history, is Antoni Segura, *El món àrab actual*, Vic: Eumo/Universitat de Girona, 1997. It is important because it is one of the rare examples of works published in Catalan by Catalan historians on topics beyond the frontiers of Catalonia.

Finally, I would like to mention one of the fundamental activities for scholarly progress, the conferences, their findings, exchange of experiences and points of view that they generate. Of those I would like to mention, the first was the IV Congrés Internacional d'Història Local de Catalunya, organized by the historical journal *L'Avenç* held in Barcelona in December. The conference carried the thematic subtitle of "El cor urbà dels conflictes: identitat local, consciència nacional i presència estatal", and attempted to classify empirical approaches within this three level perspective of local and national consciousness and the presence of the state. The second conference of importance was the II Congrés de la Coordinadora de Centres d'Estudis de Parla Catalana. It was held in Palma de Mallorca in October under the theme of "Franquisme i transició democràtica a les terres de parla catalana: cultura i societat", where some 60 papers were read by participants mainly from

Catalonia and the Balearic Isles. Finally, in December was the V Congr s d'Hist ria de Barcelona, organized by the Institut Municipal d'Hist ria de Barcelona. This time the central theme was the anniversary of the inclusion of the surrounding towns from the Pla de Barcelona within the municipality of Barcelona. The conference also hosted the presentation of a new collection of books on the history of the city of Barcelona.

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LINGUISTICS

As noted in the last issue, I was not able to faithfully reflect the distribution of publications on Catalan linguistics for the corresponding six month period. In fact I reviewed almost the entire production of books but did not include journal publications. Therefore, in this issue I shall complete the panorama of publications for 1997 making reference to the miscellaneous issues and a selection of noteworthy articles on linguistics in specialized journals.

MISCELLANEOUS, CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS, AND IN "HONOR OF" PUBLICATIONS

The following articles on various aspects of linguistics appear in the publication *Estudis de llengua i literatura catalanes/XXXIV. Miscel nia Germ  Col n*, 7, Barcelona: Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, 1997: Josep M. Escol  i Tuset, "Documents medievals llatins de Poblet. Dades per a la hist ria de la llengua catalana"; Ces reo Calvo Rigual, "La selecci  l xica del catal  i de l'itali : el *Tirant* i la seua traducci  italiana cara a cara"; Adolf Piquer Vidal, "Utilitzaci  de la llengua en la narrativa del Pa  Valenci "; Francesc Feliu Torrent, "Contribuci  a l'estudi d'Alfons Par. Epistolari amb Ramon Miquel I Planas"; Josep Martines, "El sufix *-aire* al Pa  Valenci "; Joan Ivars Cervera, "Uns Top nims dianencs del segle xv"; Enric Climent i Mart , "Les formes i els usos de l'article en dos escriptors del primer Quinke Libri de la parroquia d'Alboraia (1595-1612)"; and Joan-Antoni Mesquida i Cantallops, "El Full Lexicogr fic de la comissi  coordinadora lexicogr fica de ci ncies (1978-1982)".

The second volume of the collection by the Secci  de Ling stica Catalana at the Universitat de Barcelona has been published, M. Rosa Lloret, Emili Boix, Merc  Lorente, Llu s Payrat  and M. Pilar Perea (eds.), *An lisi de la variaci  ling stica. Actes de la 2  Jornada sobre la variaci  ling stica i del 3r Colloqui Ling stic de la Universitat de Barcelona (CLUB-3)*, Barcelona: Departament de Filologia Catalana de la Universitat de Barcelona-PPU, Collecci  Ling stica Catalana, 2, 1997. This deals with the topic of linguistic

diversity and gathers together contributions from the research activities carried out through the Xarxa Temàtica de Variació. The first part brings together three lectures presented at the conference on linguistic variation by Joan A. Argente, M. Teresa Turell and Max Wheeler. The second part includes the papers prepared by CLUB-3 which focus on the theme of "Anàlisi de la variació en el català actual", under the supervision of M. Rosa Lloret and Joaquim Viaplana, Mercè Lorente, M. Teresa Cabré and Lluís de Yzaguirre, Joan Julià, Gemma Rigau and Vicent Salvador.

The Institut d'Estudis Catalans has published *Documents normatius 1962-1996 (amb les novetats del diccionari)*, Barcelona: IEC, Biblioteca Filològica XXXII, 1997. The purpose of this publication is to bring together in a single volume the various documents on linguistic guidelines and the changes in guidelines referring to lexical questions established between the Diccionari General de la Llengua Catalana (1932) and the new Diccionari de la Llengua Catalana (1995).

SPECIALIZED JOURNALS

Volume 20 of *Caplletra. Revista Internacional de Filologia*, Valencia and Barcelona: Institut Interuniversitari de Filologia Valenciana i Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat, is a single theme issue on "Romance Philology" edited by Emili Casanova and Joaquim Martí. It brings together articles on the phenomenon of linguistic change from a diachronic and comparatist perspective. Contributors include: Mar Batlle, Joseph Gulsoy, Manuel Pérez Saldanya, Josep Lluís Martos, Vicent Cabanes Fitor, Curtis Braylock, Germà Colón, Carme Barceló, Joaquim Martí Mestre and Ricard Cierbide. In volume 21 of the same journal we find ten articles by the following authors: Josep M. Baldaquí and M. Antònia Cano, Joan Melià, Joan J. Ponsoda and Carles Segura, Santiago Perera, Arantza de Valle, Pilar Monreal and Ignasi Vila, Brauli Montoya, Carem Miquel, Tudi Turró, Guillem Calaforra, Ernest Querol and Lluís Vicent Aracil. Together these authors have given form to a single theme issue dedicated to "Sociolinguistics and Teaching" edited by Joan Josep Ponsoda.

In recent issues of *Els Marges. Revista de llengua i literatura*, Barcelona: Curial Edicions Catalanes, published during 1997, there are two studies on linguistics. The first by Jordi Cerdà and Víctor Martínez-Gil, "L'utopisme lingüístic a la Catalunya de la Il·lustració i del primer Romanticisme" (volume 55, May 1996). The second by Francesc Reina González, "Tres qüestions filosòfiques de la teoria lingüística. A propòsit de la gramàtica universal, la probresa de l'estímul, i altres elements del debat filosòfic i lingüístic".

The journal *Sintagma*, published by the Universitat de Lleida, is the source of further contributions to Catalan linguistics. Amadeu Viana, "Senyals i espills" (volume 8, 1996) deals with the theory of the linguistic sign. Other articles include: Glòria Vázquez, "El clític 'es' i la contrucció anticausativa" and Imma Creus Bellet, "Aspectes metodològics del treball empíric en morfologia verbal".

Volume 26 (December 1996) of the *Revista de Llengua i Dret*, Barcelona: Generalitat de Catalunya, Escola d'Administració Pública de Catalunya,

includes the following articles: Josep M. Mestres, "La problemàtica de les abreviacions i els diccionaris" Fco. Javier Casinos Mora, "Vocabulari bàsic per a dret romà", Joan Ramon Solé i Durany, "El concepte de llengua pròpia en el dret i en la normalització de l'idioma a Catalunya". Volume 27 (July 1997) begins with a biographical sketch of the late Joan Corominas by Carles Duarte i Montserrat and includes the following articles: Laura Santamaria "La traducció jurídica, paraula de traductor?" F. Xavier Vila i Moreno, "La noció de l'ús en la planificació lingüística de l'ensenyament"; and Imma Tubella i Casadevall, "Llengua i noves tecnologies de la comunicació". Volume 28 (December 1997) contains two articles on linguistic policies that are worth noting: Albert Turull, "Aspectes legals i institucionals de la política i la planificació lingüística a les universitats en què és oficial la llengua catalana"; and Andreu Bosch i Rodoreda, "El català a l'Alguer, el nou marc legal i l'escola".

The journal *Articles de Didàctica de la Llengua i de la Literatura*, Barcelona: Graó, has prepared two volumes for the year 1997, each one on aspects of linguistics. The first (volume 11), edited by Anna Camps and Marta Milian, is titled "Reflexionar sobre la llengua" and includes articles by: Anna Camps, Liliana Tolchinsky, M. Lluïsa Hernanz, Jaume Macià and Joan V. Sempere. The second (volume 12), edited by Joaquim Dolz and Montserrat Vila, is titled "L'oral formal" and includes contributions by specialists from outside Catalonia and the editors themselves. There is also an article on the topic of teaching rhetoric by Marcel Ortín and a study of Catalan and Spanish terminologies of verb morphology by Josep M. Brucart and Gemma Rigau. Finally, the theme "Textos acadèmics", dited by Daniel Cassany and Montserrat Castelló, which includes articles from the editors and various studies compiled by teams working on essay writing and writing practices by university students. This section also includes an article by Marta Albaladejo on dictionaries and teaching.

In its attempts to remain up to date in the arena of publications, the journal *Llengua & Literatura. Revista anual de la Societat Catalana de Llengua i Literatura*, Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalana, has published volume 7 (contributions from 1996) and volume 8 (contributions from 1997). In the first of these volumes we find the following articles on linguistics: Joseph Gulsoy, "Quer, 'roca, penyal' i la seva família en la toponímia catalana"; Xavier Villalba, "Sobre la dislocació a la dreta" and M. Teresa Ynglès, "El temps no 'passa' en va: correlació forma-significat en les expressions temporals". Volume 8 is dedicated to the theme of "Adquisició del llenguatge" with six articles by: Anna Bartra, Aurora Bel, Montserrat Capdevila, Mireia Llinàs, Anna Gavarró and Joana Rosselló. The same volume also includes contributions by Lluís Cifuentes on the translation of medieval medical texts, Antoni Peris on "mots fantasmes", Philip Rasico on the philological edition and linguistic commentary of a "capbreu" (specification of rights and privileges, especially religious, set out in a contract) and a study on the 18th century linguistics thinking of Jesús Tuson.

LITERATURE

During the second half of 1997 there has been an abundance of new and most interesting publications in the field of the narrative fiction of which the following works are worth mentioning. Maria de la Pau Janer's *Orient, Occident* (1997) presents two parallel stories of a Catalan and Palestinian couple who meet and whose stories follow a similar path. Although at first their worlds are seen in contrast, as time passes then end up confirming those things they have in common. Miquel de Palol was awarded the literary prize, Josep Pla 1997, for his novel *El legislador* (Destino, 1997). This is a unique work of fiction bordering on science fiction which attempts to make us reflect on our society and culture in the broadest meaning of these terms. Faced with the situation of a comet approaching Earth and its inevitable destruction, a group of people deliberate on what is necessary to furnish a space station with all that is necessary to survive the destruction of the planet. A most engaging story! Vicenç Villatoro won the literary prize, Ciutat de Palma 1996, for his *La claror de Juliol* (Edicions 62, 1997). The author presents us with a story set in the 1930's of three teenagers that together experience a series of discoveries and intense emotions which contrast to a Europe in turmoil.

Returning to more well trodden terrains, the Joan Rendé situates his novel *El barber violador* (Edicions 62, 1997) between Barcelona and a town on the outskirts of the city. Rendé offers the reader a portrait of a dreamer obsessed by women who experiences multiple vicissitudes during two weeks he sets aside for recreation and adventure. Baltasar Porcel was awarded the literary prize, Prudenci Bertrana, for his novel *Ulisses a alta mar* (Edicions 62, 1997). It narrates the story of Lluís Arrom, a writer linked to the circles of power of politics and finance in Catalonia who at the age of 60 sets out on a series of new adventures. In the company of a much younger woman, he begins a voyage across the same seas that were the setting for Homer's classic. The voyage becomes the means to explaining the central features of his life, from his early childhood to those literary references that have left a mark on his life. The novel serves as a device through which the protagonist (a transcription/ copy of the author) can present his point of view concerning either matters of burning concern to him, or of a more general nature. Xulio Ricaro Trigo has published *La mort Salobre* (Edicions 3 i 4, 1997) a novel somewhere between police novel and thriller but a cross-genre recipe with a love story as the prime ingredient. The plot embraces two murdered philology professors at the Universitat de Compostela and the detective Xurxo el Fondo takes up the case. In this book the author takes up again the universe of Ligàcia which he developed in his previous novels. By way of conclusion to this first section on the novel, I would like to mention two works by Valencian authors. The first is *Mela* (Edicions 62, 1997) by Ignasi Mora, a unique work of fiction that is set around the slippery character Mela, the central character, evoked by her brother in an intense review which captures the most substantial moments in the protagonist's life, moments guided by encounters and mis-encounters. The second is the novel *Guerres perdudes* (Edicions 62, 1997) by Francesc J. Bodí. This work earned him the literary prize "Joanot Martorell" de Gandia, and is a

splendid portrait of Clàudia and an entire era of a rural community in the Valencian mountains.

In the field of the short novel worthy of mention is the collection by Sergi Pàmies, *La gran novel·la sobre Barcelona* (Quaderns Crema, 1997). In spite of its title it comprises of 15 short stories filled with humor, sharp observations and an ever present sense of reality of present times. Another incursion into the same genre is the publication by Josep Maria Espinàs, *Un racó de paraigua* (La Campana, 1997). This collection of short stories furnishes the reader with a refreshing view of a number of aspects of our environment. The everyday world is viewed with warmth even though at times bordering on the absurd. Espinàs obliges the reader to see the routine world, described sincerely and directly, as a pleasant place to live.

In the field of poetry the poetic work of Miquel Martí i Pol in his *Llibre de les solituds* (Edicions 62, 1997) is worth pointing out. The author situates himself outside the aesthetic and tones of mystical invocation peculiar to his earlier books. Here the poet appears to return to social spheres and the world of memory where, at times, he lets loose a thread of irony. Sam Abrams offers the reader a blend of poetry in his *Calculations* (Proa, 1997). It is full of intertextual resonances of British and Catalan poets alike. He achieves a dense weave that expresses the miracle of life, the sense of time and the fight for knowledge thrashed out in the shadows. Turning to the third collection of poems we have Joan-Elies Adell with *A curt termini* (Edicions 3 i 4, 1997). Adell presents the reader with a world where sincerity and love form the principle existential axes. It deals with a poetry expressed directly that reveals an impulsive and dynamic mind.

In the field of the essay the edition of Gaziel's *Quina mena de gent* (La Magrana, 1997) should be made note of. This is a gathering of meditations about the history and social character of the catalans. It deals with questions of identity and enduring national identity and the heroic and antiheroic air of the catalans. Professor Joaquim Molas offers the reader his memoirs which review episodes in his individual and social life in *Fragments de la memòria* (Pagès, 1997). Worth noting are his observations on important persons that he has known and had dealings with during his life.

Moving to the essay genre, I would like to mention the book by Xavier Pericay and Ferran Toutain, *El malentès del noucentisme. Tradició i plagis a la prosa catalana moderna* (Proa, 1996). This is a documented and suggestive work that proposes a revision of the history of Catalan prose during the 20th century. The authors attempt to undo "misunderstandings" and "prejudices" regarding the model of prose adopted by the majority of writers. The book is loaded with ideas (some very good ideas I might mention) and very sharp observations. To offer but one example, the use of direct prose, colloquial language, and natural expression has been obstructed by a series of prejudices and obsolete models.

Damià Ferrà-Pons' *Escrips sobre Llorenç Villalonga* (P.A.M., 1997) is an assembling of texts by one of the most outstanding scholars of the Majorcan novel. The works are grouped into two blocks: "Aspectes biogràfics i ideològics" and "Idees estètiques i influències literàries i obres". These constitute one of the most solid contributions to the learning of the author of *Bearn*. Xavier Pla offers us *Josep Pla. Ficcio autobiogràfica i veritat literària*

(Quaderns Crema, 1997). This is a monumental study of one of the central figures of Catalan history in the 20th century. Xavier Pla combines an agreeable reading with an exhaustively and rigorously researched study. The result is a work that can be read as an essay or scholarly study that leaves innumerable trails of interesting and suggestive ideas. Pilar Garcia-Sedas in *Joaquim Torres-Garcia. Epistolari català: 1909-1936* (Curial P.A.M. 1997) offers the reader an interesting collection of documents concerning the age and the intellectual world of Catalan writers who knew and had dealing with this painter.

Jordi Castellanos' *Literatura, vides, ciutats* (Edicions 62, 1997) offers the reader a collection of texts on various themes that tackle questions related to the mentality of an era and the evolution of a sensitivity throughout the century. This scholar tackles questions such as the role of the classics in literature and offers changing viewpoints about cities such as Barcelona and Girona.

Finally, in the field of translation I would like to point out the translations of Gunter Grass by Manuel Rivas: *Què vols de mi, amor?* (Proa, 1997) and *Una llarga història* (Edicions 62, 1997).

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THEATER

1 The Festival "Grec '97"

The proposals behind the programming of the 1997 edition of the festival, Grec '97, were founded on the wish to transform this Barcelona summer festival into a platform for new creative works. The diversity of proposals, criss-crossing of aesthetics, artistic disciplines and the intentions to give force to original poetics were the guidelines laid out by the director of the festival, Xavier Albertí. The extraordinary range of staged spectacles, dance and music transformed Barcelona and its metropolitan area into a veritable universe of theater. There were three outstanding productions in the international sphere. The presentation of *Oresteia*, based on the trilogy by Èsquil, performed Societas Raffaello Sanzio company under the direction of Romeo Castellucci. The continued interest in the works of Shakespeare was confirmed by the staging of *The Tempest*, directed by Calixto Bieito. It was one of the most complex and successful stagings, performed in the Spanish version of the work by Moquel Desclot and shown at the Teatre Grec, and which opened the season in its Catalan version at the Mercat de les Flors. But, above all, the production of *Non sempre splende la luna, Milva canta un nuovo Brecht* by Giorgio Strehler. In the sphere of Catalan drama one could also see in the billing at the Grec theater of three plays by Josep Maria Benet i Jornet: *Désir*, directed by Pierre Chabert (Adrià Gual), one of his best works first shown in the French version at the Festival Estivales de Perpinyà (and later in Paris); *Testament*, directed by Sergi Belbel (Romea), which closes the cycle begun

with *Desig; Fugaç* (1994); and *Precisament avui* as part of the *Hotel de mala mort* experiment. The limelight enjoyed by Benet i Jornet was shared with the following productions: the opening of *El dia dels morts* by Narcís Comadira, directed by Xavier Albertí, in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of the writer Josep Pla (Mercat de les Flors); *La venda*, by Lluïsa Cunillé under the direction of Ivette Vigatà (Adrià Gual); *Mandíbula afilada*, first shown in SIT '97, by Carles Alberola (Villaroel); and *Klowns*, idea and script by Joan Montanyès (also director) and Josep M. Mestres, a show about the circus that was a continuation of *Clàssics* presented at the previous year's festival, Grec '96 (Lliure). The music genre was represented by two quite different offerings: *Soc llejta*, by Sergi Belbel (also director) and Jordi Sánchez (Condal), which exploited the commercial aspect of this genre employing parody; and *Culpido* by Adrià Puntí and Cristina Cervià, directed by Josep Domènec, a combination of rock and theater dealing with the theme of couples and romantic relationships (Artenbrut). Changing tracks the recovery of García Lorca was the motivation behind two stage productions in celebration of the centenary of the poet's birth: *Camino de Nueva York* script and direction by Ramon Simó, a journey through the poetry of García Lorca (Sala Muntaner); and *Amor de don Perlimplín con Belisa en su jardín*, directed by Antonio Simón Rodríguez (Nou Tantarantana). On the other hand the continued reception of Thomas Bernhard was in evidence with *El malaguanyat*, stage adaptation and direction by Carlota Subirós (Lliure), and *A l'altre banda*, based on *La nit just abans dels boscos*, by Jordi Collet (Convent de Sant Agustí). Following its trajectory of public diffusion, the genre of dance was amply represented by international companies (*Nuevas Cruces, Bound to Please, 7 for a Secret Never to Be Told*) and on the Catalan front (*Lucrecia Stop*, by Cesc Gelabert; *La japonesa*, by Danat Dansa; *W.C.* by Búbulus; and *Sota la neu a l'agost*, by Roberto G. Alonso.)

One of the more interesting initiatives in the style of Alternativa Brossa and Tardor Pinter was the offering of *Hotel de mala mort* promoted in the alternative venues (Artenbrut, Beckett, Malic, Nou Tantarantana and Versus). Five authors wrote five short pieces for five different rooms all of which were linked by the common thread of the apparent murder of an encyclopedia salesman. All five works opened simultaneously at the Grec without divulging the identity of the authors later returning to their respective venues to begin the new season. These five pieces were: *Precisament avui*, by Benet i Jornet directed by Ferran Madico; *Pat's Room*, by Núria Amat directed by Carme Portacelli; *Bunyols de Quaresma*, by Mercedes Abad directed by Joan Anton Sánchez; *Boig per si de cas*, by Andreu Martín directed by Pere Sagristà; and *Estranyament estrany*, by Joan Cavallé directed by Ever Martín Blanchet. The result was a unique experience that embraced the entire range of the creative process giving shape to the ingenuity of the authors, some of whom had begun writing for the theater coming from the background of novel writing, complicity with the public, the network of alternative theater and the with the need to search out new markets/publics. Finally, the continuation of the festival, Mostra "Theater and University", in its third consecutive year reaffirmed the revival of university theater groups employing high quality experimental staging. Their productions ranged from Sophocles or Marivaux to J. Offenbach and

L. Havelly or Brossa whilst along the way staging collective creations or dramatizations of the texts of Marquis de Sade or James Finn Garner.

2 The Festival "Teatre al Carrer de Tàrrrega"

The record attendance of the public, artists and programmers transformed the 17th edition of the Tàrrrega Fair into one of the most dynamic poles of cultural attraction in the Catalan speaking world. The distinctive character of the Fair's program was mainly based around a nucleus of artists and renowned theater companies capable of capturing the interest of programmers and public alike (Comediants, La Fura dels Baus, Sèmola, Carles Santos). One of the distinctive features was the organization of thematic spaces that favored an easy circulation of an interested public either professional or those looking for recreation; another feature was the Tàrrrega fringe theater that brought together emerging innovative theater companies prepared to take risks. The fact that the organizers opted for a modern and interdisciplinary approach lent itself towards the creation of a contemporary aesthetics and acted as a launching pad for the less conventional representations of theater. As regards the creators and well known theater companies, the Comediants (the founders of the festival) opened this new edition with *Anthologia*, an anthological macro-spectacle of the best scenes and theatrical language culled from the 25 years of the company's stage productions. The group, La Fura dels Baus, offered the second season of *Work in Progress*; Sèmola Teatre plunged into the imaginary of death with *Esperanto*, a poetic spectacle constructed from visual metaphors; and Carles Santos renewed his spiritual compromise with Bach with his second reworking of *La pantera imperial*, one of the best stagings of Tàrrrega '97 which was staged again when the Lliure opened its new season. Street theater was represented by both national and international theater groups. On the international scene were the following: the French company Salamandra (*Le feu, Gong* and the musical procession *Noirs et Jaunes*); the English Scarabeus Theater (*Fata Morgan-Vision of the Skywalkers*); and the Austrian Irrwisch (*Wegenstreits guests/Fire on Decayed Walls*). Two Catalan street theater groups premiered two new productions: *H₂O* by Sarruga, a trip to the bottom of the sea, and the imaginative *Pleniluni*, by Artristras. In a more intimate light, and within the recent explosion of dramatized readings, was the highly successful *El silenci és or*, based on the texts of the writer and sketch artist Apel·les Mestres, directed by Frederic Roda. Dance also enjoyed certain protagonism at the festival. In addition to Mal Pelo and Las Malqueridas, who presented fragments of their pieces in the city's streets, were the following dance groups: Sol Picó (*Del Planeta Basura*); Rosa Muñoz (*De lirios y otras flores*); and Andres Corchero (*En el camino silencioso* and *Elegía*). At the Carpa Euskadi four Basque companies offered the public productions and in particular worth mentioning was the controversy surrounding the staging of *Ubú rei*, by Alfred Jarry (Lealeón Teatro) and *Todo Shakespeare o casi* by Tanttaka Teatroa. Other offerings from this well attended festival were: the opera style musical *Annus horribilis* by the Galician group Chêvere, one of last year's revelations; the circus style staging of *Les Acrostiches*, by Monti & Cia.; the comical production, *Picnic*, by the company Pretèrit Perfecte; and *Muac*,

by Grappa Teatre. This year's festival, with the highest attendance figures yet, came to a close in an atmosphere of total success. There have already been suggestions about the need to improve the festival's program and infrastructures in an attempt to increase the festival's prestige as a creative venue that would result in a greater international projection. The objective is to consolidate the position of the festival in the international scene of stagecraft arts.

3 The 97-98 Season

The official opening of the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya (TNC), cloaked in controversy that has caused an uproar in those sectors interested in the panorama of present day stage production, was the spotlighted protagonist at the commencement of the season. The first productions put on by the TNC were: *L'auca del senyor Esteve*, by Santiago Rusiñol, directed by Adolfo Marsillach; and *La gavina*, by Anton Chekhov, directed by Josep Maria Flotats. Both were received with certain reserve by critics, albeit given a warm welcome by an inquisitive public. All said and done, interest, however, was generated by matters offstage. There was the unusual resolution to dedicate 35% of the programs to the private sector in an attempt to appease waves of criticism from that shore. Then there was the creation of a Mesa de Coordinació Teatral, conceived as an institution, with the intention of harmonizing relations between the private sector and outgoing director of the TNC, Josep Maria Flotats (director/founder of the TNC) who will stand down from this post when the season ends. These two items have considerably upset the Catalan theater ecosystem. The Flotats-Gate, which has even echoed on the international scene, has stirred up an intense and profound debate between actors and directors (AADPC), authors (made up of the collective AELC), theater companies (Adecta), independent companies (Ciatre) and political parties. The issues under debate concern: theater policies regulated by local and central government, the relations between public and private theater and theater management, defining the program for the TNC, and the legitimacy or not (as the case may be) of each of the interested parties. The public disclosures, marches, closing of ranks, rejoinders and denials, have opened up old wounds such as the need for a consensus concerning policies for the theater that embrace the entire profession. What has become evident are the errors made when the project was first created and the improvisation that took place regarding the founding proposals.

At the end of the day all this has demonstrated that the complex phenomenon of the theater is conditioned much more than was expected by the relentless market forces and by the interest that the theater generates as a cultural showcase in the arena of politics and power. But, this has also clearly revealed those sectors of the theater involved and their respective postures. These differing positions have periodically been the cause of sterile arguments and arbitrary decisions that make the necessary cooperation and consensus more difficult, and, all said and done, this could work to the detriment of the prestige earned in recent years by Catalan stage productions. Probably one of the most positive aspects that has emerged from all this tangle of dissent

concerning the theater, has been the common stance adopted by playwrights. This has taken the form of a new association that allows them their own public voice and to act in defense of their own interests as a sector within the theatrical profession. The association includes the following: Mercedes Abad, Núria Amat, Carles Batlle, Sergi Belbel, Josep Benet i Jornet, Albert Boadella, Toni Cabré, Joan Casas, Joan Cavallé, Narcís Comadira, Enric Cruz, Lluïsa Cunillé, Jordi Galceran, Ignasi Garcia, Miquel M. Gilbert, Ramon Gomis, Pablo Ley, Andreu Martín, Eduardo Mendoza, Josep M. Muñoz, Enric Nolla, Francesc Pereira, Josep Pere Peiró, David Plana, Sergi Pomper Mayer, Jordi Sánchez, Sanchis Sinisterra, Mercè Sarrias, Rodolf i Josep Lluís Sirera, Jordi Teixidor, Manuel Veiga, to name but a few.

This debate, in fact, has arisen at a time when the buoyancy of the Catalan stage is expressed in terms of continued increasing attendance figures and the reopening of former venues such as the historic Teatre Principal, the Club Capitol and for the alternative scene, the Espai Escènic Joan Brossa and the Auditori de les Corts. During this period of change the city's stage geography is undergoing substantial modifications. This is mainly due to the macro-projects put into effect by the TNC or the Ciutat de Teatre, but private enterprise has also contributed providing points of interest via malls and recreational areas that have focused public attention on venues in places such as Glòries, Rambles, Paral·lel and Montjuïc. In addition to this, there is a veritable plague of alternative theaters spreading throughout the city. Moving beyond the richness of the city scene, stage productions at a municipal level are evident in the form of wide circuits of diffusion that allow for the distribution of staging and props which has consequently provided a wider range of programs throughout most of Catalonia. Recently, the municipal theater network has expanded with the recovery of some former venues such as the Teatre Principal de Valls or the re-christened Teatre Municipal Josep Maria de Sagarra in Santa Coloma de Gramanet. This expanding network can also be measured in terms of some modest public financing and if all of this is followed up, it could be decisive in injecting energy into municipal and county theaters. Clearly, the next step here is to get all of the Catalan speaking regions to establish a communications network that would facilitate the exchange of staging, props and initiatives creating a common cultural communication channel.

The structural renovation of Catalan theater is therefore quite evident. The arena of Catalan theaters, and in particular what is shown in Barcelona, are tottering through a process of transformation and redefinition. Only when the TNC and the Ciutat de Teatre finally define their positions within the panorama of Catalan theater will we be able to begin to make pertinent evaluations and discern the content from among the bubbling lava. For the time being, the momentum gathered in some areas is quite significant. The Mercat de les Flors has taken the gamble of transforming itself into an international point of reference poles apart from the soon to be Ciutat de Teatre and the Romea that have taken the "radical" decision to provide programs based on the most contemporary Catalan playwrights. But there is more! The nomination of Domènec Reixach, presently the director of the Centre Dramàtic de la Generalitat de Catalunya (CDGC), to take over the helm of the TNC from Flotats means a radical change of direction in the

policies adopted by the Catalan government with regard to Catalan theater. To begin with, the CDGC will establish its base in the TNC and the Romea could end up in the hands of private enterprise. As regards the ideology of the Nacional, Reixach put forward proposals for ways of working based on the will to work together, including the collaboration of theatrical agents in the spirit of an open public service. The future director of the TNC has surrounded himself with a team of tried and tested collaborators: Carles Batlle, Josep M. Benet i Jornet, Sergi Belbel, Calixto Bieito, Toni Casares, Enric Gallén, Jordi Planas, Madga Puyo, Ramon Simó, and Antoni Tarrida. As an operating point of reference, a proposal has been put forward to expand the CDGC model applied to the TNC flagship. Among others, these proposals include: the creation of contemporary Catalan and international playwrighting, recovering the classics, focus on multi-disciplinary creation and the participation of university and amateur theater.

Parallel to the volcanic eruptions surrounding the TNC, in this quite unforgettable initiation of the 1997-1998 season, the compressed schedule of performances that made up the Barcelona theater billboards offered diversity. This led to contradictory logics and many and varied interests that clouded some of (what were until recently) the clear waters. The diversity of stage activity during the summer turned the Grec into a kind of preamble for the theater season given that the program of many theaters began with productions presented during this festival. From the point of view of artistic creation, this has unfortunately meant a tendency towards an uninformed theater lacking in culture, in awe of the spectacle of grandeur, self-satisfied snobism or commercialism. In spite of this, in the alternative circuits, or some out-of-place offerings, one can discern bold experimental and, often, more modest initiatives. The overall feeling is that Catalan theater is going through a period of transition and, according to some, a reform bringing change and new expectations. Some of the noteworthy aspects, albeit somewhat exhausting, of this turbulent new season could be classified under the following headings:

- *The reception of Catalan theater in the international circuits and realization beyond national boundaries.* On the one hand Catalan companies and writers are becoming more known as time goes by in the European and American circuits, sometimes even more than in Catalonia itself. On the other hand, international offerings that can be seen on the Catalan stage, excepting theater festivals and competitions, are rare and costly. *Las agujas y el opio*, by Robert Lepage (Teatre Municipal de Girona) and *Beckett Shorts*, by the Royal Shakespeare Company directed by Katie Mitchel (Mercat de les Flors) have been the only stage productions from the international circuit.
- *Taking a gamble with contemporary Catalan plays.* Some of this season's offerings gave clear indications of a certain vigor being experienced by Catalan theater such as the coincidence of two works at the beginning of the season by Josep M. Benet i Jornet, first shown at the Grec: *Testament* (Mercat de les Flors) and *Precisament avui* (Artenbut). The program at the Romea that included *La increïble història del Dr. Floit & Mr. Pla* by the Joglars theater company, directed and written by Albert Boadella, and

Fum fum fum by Jordi Sànchez directed by Josep Maria Mestres. Even the Teatre Lliure more often indifferent to present day Catalan playwrighting opted for the premiere of *Zowie*, directed by Lluís Homar and written by Sergi Pompermayer, a hitherto unpublished author who was awarded the XXV Premi Ciutat d'Alcoi. However, the boom of "teatre de text" and the abundant harvest of active Catalan authors is not matched by a proportional increase in possible outlets for their work under the minimum conditions necessary for quality productions. Among this group of authors names to watch out for are: Jordi Sànchez, Jordi Galceran, David Plana, Beth Escudé, Ignasi Garcia, Mercè Sarrias, Enric Rufas, Gerard Vázquez, Enric Nolla, Carles Batlle and Roger Bernat.

- *Consolidating the position of the imported musical.* The company Dagoll Dagom and the tandem Gunyols-Reguant, continue with their presentations of musical spectacles. In the case of Dagoll Dagom there was *Els Pirates* (Pirates of Penzance) by Gilbert & Sullivan, directed by Joan Lluís Bozzo (Victoria). In the case of Gunyols-Reguant we had *Angels*, based on pieces by various US authors (Tivoli). The consolidation of the musical genre opens the way for a repertoire of Catalan musicals. This is something which seems to be more urgent each day even though it brings with it risks that none of the major companies are prepared to take. On the other hand, at the periphery of Catalan theater the semi-professional group, El Magatzem de Tarragona, premiered the musical *Happy End*, by Kurt Weill and Bertolt Brecht directed by Ramon Simó (Teatre Metropol).
- *The universal classics' dry season.* Goldoni, Shakespeare, Brecht, Ionesco and Kafka have been some of the authors selected for productions that have been presented in various alternative venues and theaters of the Institut del Teatre and done so with notorious mediocrity. These productions were: *Un cas curiós*, by Carlo Goldoni directed by Jordi Vilà, that managed to make it to Barcelona after its premiere in Terrassa in 1994 passing through the '95 Tàrrrega festival (Adrià Gual); *Macbeth o Macbetto*, script and direction by Xavier Albertí as part of the V Festival d'Opera de Butxaca de Barcelona (Artenbrut); *Parracs*, based on texts by Bertolt Brecht and J.R. Becher, directed by Joan Castells (La Cuina); *Hola Brecht*, based on songs and poems by Brecht alternated with political commentaries by the same author and dialogues from his plays, directed by Josep Maria Mestres (Artenbrut); *Contes de Ionesco*, by Talleret de Salt, directed by Pep Anton Gómez (part of the cycle of children's theater at Poliorama); and finally, *Kafka; el procés*, stage adaptation and direction by Àlex Rigola (Adrià Gual). Needless to say the presence of Brecht on the Catalan stage, through rereading and updating his works, has been for commemorative reasons. He has become a necessary point of reference if one takes note of the socio-political situation at a time when the left is sinking in a spirit of lack of unity and bewilderment. The renovated theater, Lliure, is attempting, not in vain, to start off its first season at the Palau de l'Agricultura (the 1999-2000 season that is) with the musical production *Mahogony*, by Bertholt Brecht and Kurt Weill.
- *Research and exchange.* New theater initiatives and the more experimental productions, some of which were premiered in Sitges, have found refuge in the small theaters and include: *Cèl·lules T i simpatia*, by

Michael Kearns, translated, written and directed by Josep Costa (Versus); *València*, by Paco Zarzoso, directed by Rafael Duran and *Històries mínimes*, by Javier Tomeo, directed by Alberto Bokos (both at Sala Beckett); *Suburbia*, by Eric Bogosian, directed by Pep Pla (Teatre de l'Eixample); and *El pas*, by Michel Axama, directed by Núria Inglada (La Cuina). In addition and as a result of relations maintained with the Royal Court Theater in London, the Sala Beckett offered a week of discussion sessions and dramatized lectures given by the British authors: Jex Buteworth, Jim Cartwright, Kevin Elyot, Phyllis Nagy, Stephen Jeffrey, Sarah Kane and Meredith Oakes.

- *Proliferation of dramatized readings of poetic texts "one-man" shows.* The cycle, *Nit de poetes*, (Mercat de les Flors), included a series of lectures on poetic texts under the charged of well known actors: *Tot el que miro m'exalta i parlo com un orat*, based on texts by Lluís Vinyoli, by Lluís Soler; *Dedicació*, based on writings by Josep Carnerm by Rosa Novell; and *Fil de memòria*, based on the writings of Gabriel Ferrater, by Pere Arquillué. The writings of the poet Salvador Espriu, on the other hand, formed the center of the production *A Sinera, prop del mar*, put on by Versus Teatre. Along other lines, two well established actors in Barcelona billings offered their one-man shows and were accompanied by their loyal followers: *Rubianes, solamente*, with Pepe Rubianes (Club Capitol); and *Pavlovsky, orgullosamente humilde*, by Àngel Pavlovsky (Teatreneu).
- *Attention to paratheater genres.* The new Espai Escènic Joan Brossa, was born from the idea of being dedicated to the paratheater arts (poetry, flamenco, magic, music hall, "transformisme"). The first shows to debut were: *Poemància*, a combination of magic and the poetry of Brossa, directed by Lluís Solà; and *Carrer Sebastià Gasch*, a homage to the critic and multifaceted writer, directed by Hermann Bonnin. Circ Crac i Tortell Poltrona returned to the Mercat de les Flors for the third consecutive year with *Miratges, mentides i misteris*, at the exact same moment that the circus is enjoying a certain revival. At the same time various commemorative acts have celebrated the centenary of the birth of Sebastià Guasch, a great lover of the circus.
- *The beginnings of financial logics.* The first season of the Teatre Principal is a clear indication of the eagerness and ability of the theater industry to capture low risk audiences. There was the production in the metropolis of: *Maria Rosa*, by Àngel Guimerà, adapted by Josep M. Benet i Jornet, directed by Rosa Novell; and for the child audience, *Muac!*, by Grappa Teatre, directed by Toni Albà. Alongside these, the program also included during the first quarter of 1998, several stage adaptations: *Misery*, by Stephen King; *Querido Diego* (from *Fresa y Chocolate*), by Senel Paz; *Frankenstein*, by Ananda Dansa, based on the "llibret" by Rodolf Sirera; the premiere of *Antes de que el milenio nos separe*, by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán; another premiere, *Fuita*, by Jordi Galceran; and to round things off a program covering various disciplines that included, among others, opera and music (rework this paragraph).

Last but not least, if Birnam Wood began to move upon the city, in País Valencià and the Balearic Isles the most noteworthy new items in theater came

mainly from the alternative movement lead by the independent companies. In País Valencià, where the official critical cultural has become an entelechy and where the conservative autonomous government is carrying out a *praxis* of genocide against the Catalan languages and cultures, the vocation for renewal and tenacity of companies such as Moma Teatre have made possible the inauguration of their own venue, L'Espai Moma. This new stage space attempts to unfurl an offer of culturally diverse and unsettling spectacles based on polyvalence, provocation and interdisciplinary shows (theater, music, dance, exhibitions, colloquiums and lectures). They offer a continued and open program that seeks to capture spectators genuinely engaged in theater and seek communication and complicity with them. For their first season they have prepared a cycle of works by Valencian authors under the title *Autors: ara i ací*. The program is a very clear declaration of intentions and proof indeed of the creativity of Valencian playwrighting. The cycle includes: *L'altre*, by Paco Zarzoso, directed by Carles Alfaro; *La puta enamorada*, by Xema Cardena, directed by Antoni Díaz Zamora; and *Mandibula afilada*, by Carles Alberola.

In the Balearic Isles independent theater is also providing innovative offerings. Worthy of mention is the production *Diàlegs socràtics*, by Llorenç Villalonga, put on by the Majorcan theater company Teatre de què, directed by Josep Ramon Cerdà and part of the centenary celebrations of the author. It only remains to note the hope that, beyond the constrictive administrative frontiers, all the energy put into theater here by all the Catalan speaking regions could find a common cultural space for sharing and exchange for research and cultural communication.

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VISUAL ARTS

The principal players in the visual arts this season have been the two cities, Madrid and Barcelona. Through the years both metropolis have maintained a fruitful relationship, not without its difficult moments when they have confronted each other in order to fight over jurisdiction. This duality, however, has been an important incentive to both cities becoming the two most important cultural focal points in 20th century Spain. The relations and cultural exchanges between these two cities have been the linking theme around which the exhibition, *Barcelona-Madrid 1898-1998*, was built (Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona). The exhibition carried the subtitle, *Sintonies i Distàncies*, which itself served to demonstrate that affinities and rivalry between these two capitals throughout this century has been a constant feature. The exhibition was divided into five sections under the following headings: *Espanya com a problema (1898-1814)*, *Europa com a solució (1914-1931)*, *La República i la guerra (1931-1939)*, *Cultura i dicatadura (1939-1975)* and *La capitalitat cultural: un match per punts (1975-1998)*.

As a complement to the aforementioned exhibition, albeit with a different focus, was the exhibition titled, *Madrid-Barcelona 1930-1936. La tradició d'allò que és nou* (Fundació "La Caixa", Barcelona). The exhibition was commissioned by José Francisco Yvars and on show were examples of artistic output in both Madrid and Barcelona during the Second Republic. Architecture and urban development played a particularly relevant role in the issued raised by the exhibition. In addition, there were some one hundred works on show including drawings, engravings, paintings, sculptures, posters and photographs from artists such as: Joan Miró, Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, Julio González and Pablo Gargallo. These, and others, verified the vitality of art encouraged by these two cities.

Although I began by speaking of the preeminent role played by the sum of two cultures, Madrid and Barcelona, I could not avoid mentioning the other main offering during the 1997 season, Catalan art. The anthology organized by the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, *Santiago Rusiñol* (Museu d'Art Modern, Barcelona), is a good example of one artist, a key figure in Catalan "modernisme" along with Ramon Casas. This exhibition of works by Rusiñol reestablishes the melancholy and solitary vision of the artist, a far call from the paintings of gardens which is the most well known aspect of his work and which formed part of his creative period in Paris from 1887-1900. The route through the exhibition was organized into six environments: his first landscapes when he was still influenced by Vayreda, his first stay in Paris and subsequent change of palette, his second stay in Paris when his attention focused on the area surrounding Moulin de la Galette, when he discovered Sitges, his third sojourn to Paris under the influence of Whistler and, finally, the "decadentisme" of his paintings embodied in his gardens.

Another important exhibition was put on by the Museu Picasso de Barcelona, faithful as ever to its project of bringing the public closer to those works by internationally acclaimed Spanish painters. The exhibition made use of its own collection of drawings and carried the title of, *Picasso. La fàbrica de dibuixos 1890-1904*. This exhibition allowed one to analyze the supreme importance of Picasso's father, José Luis, in his artistic trajectory. The drawings included those from his infancy to teens including up to the drawings he produced in Barcelona around the turn of the century.

Still on the subject of Catalan art, two exhibitions of contemporary art worth noting were: *Superfície i color* (Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona) and *I Biennial Leandre Cristòfol* in Lleida which brought together the works of ten artists, five of them from Catalonia and the other five from Valencia, Logroño, Madrid, Sevilla and Vitoria. Another exhibition, *La Pintura del Setanta a Barcelona*, served as an example of how the visual arts in Barcelona fluctuated between informalism and the neofiguration explosion during the 70s. The exhibition also went into some depth concerning this historic period of time, interest in the essential and renewed attention to color as vehicles for expression. The exhibition included, among others, the following artists: Joan Miró, Antoni Tàpies, Albert Ràfols Casamada, Joan Hernández Pijoan.

Catalan photography was also well represented, one of the important exhibitions was dedicated to Leopoldo Pomés entitled *Leopoldo Pomés. Imatges 1955-1997* (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona). Pomés, a native of Barcelona and restaurateur who also worked in advertising, became known as

a photographer in 1955 when he put on an exhibition of his work organized by the Laietanes galleries. The exhibition was based on his trajectory as photographer, defined by recurring themes in his work: portraits, bulls, women and the city of Barcelona. His work in the world of advertising was represented with various spots and advertising campaigns for different institutions such as the campaign to promote the candidacy of Barcelona as host for the Olympic Games in 1992.

The Photography Department at the Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, on the other hand, presented the exhibition, *Primer Acte. La fotografia al museu amb obres de Emili Godes, Otho Lloidy, Josep Massana i Joaquim Pla Janini*. Although these are four contemporary photographers working in the same time zone, they represent quite different aspects of photography. These photographers could be defined as follows: Pla Janini embodies pictorialism, Massana stands out because of his incursions into the advertising world, Lloidy rubs shoulders with the world of painting which was his source of inspiration, and Godes locates himself within the movement of the new objectivity.

The work of two other photographers whose work has been subject to review are: *Francesc Català-Roca* (Centre d'Art Santa Mònica, Barcelona), a review of Català's work celebrating his 75th birthday; and *Joaquim Gomís. Fotògraf (1925-1945)* (IVAM Centre Juli González, Valencia) that offered a universal view of the revival of Spanish photography during the period mentioned in the exhibition's title. The exhibition did not include the work of just photographers. There were also examples of photography by artists from other disciplines: painters such as Picasso, Dalí, Benjamín Palencia, Maruja Mallo, Remedios Varo, Nicolás de Lecuona and Gregorio Prieto; and architects such as José Manuel Aizpúrua, all of whom saw photography as a work tool.

By way of conclusion to this section of photography, I would like to mention the exhibition titled, *Roberto Capa* (Sala Cultural Caja de Madrid, Barcelona). This was organized by the Aperture Foundation, New York, and commissioned by Richard Whelan, Capa's biographer, and put on a show of creations of war.

This has been the year of the Catalan writer, Josep Pla, celebrating the centenary of the author's birth. By way of commemorating this noteworthy date, an exhibition was organized under the title, *Josep Pla i els homenots artistes* (Centre Cultural de la Fundació "la Caixa", Girona). The objective of this exhibition was to relate the writings of this author from the Empordà region with those artists that most interested him attracted by their high degree of realism. The exhibition included a selection of 29 works by Catalan sculptors and painters accompanied by texts written by Pla himself. The Museu de Ceret also contributed to the year of the Pla with the exhibition, *Pla i els homenots de la Catalunya Nord*, which demonstrated the relationship between Pla and the northern region of Catalonia. The nucleus of this exhibition was made up of works by two sculptors: Manolo Hugué and Aristides Maillol.

Another centenary celebrated during 1997 was the birth of Sebastià Gasch, precursor of 20th century art and a catalyst of the avant-garde movement. This important date was marked by the organization of various exhibitions: *Sebastià Gasch, crític d'art i de les arts de l'espectacle* (Fundació Miró,

Barcelona); and *ADLAN i el circ Frediani. Jocs Icaris* (Can Palauet, Mataró). Actually, Gasch was an authentic promoter of new and original art forms and indicative of this is the fact that he was the first to defend the work of Joan Miró and the first to write on the work of Antoni Tàpies. The Fundació Miró exhibition, mentioned earlier, pointed out the relationship between Gasch and various artists via his personal albums which contained letters, photographs and articles which the public were able to consult individually thanks to an ingenious system provided.

But, we must not forget the celebration of yet another centenary, this time the birth of Alexander Calder (1898-1976). In celebration of this event the Fundació Miró of Barcelona put together more than 100 works by this American sculptor whose central theme was movement. The friendship between Calder and Miró began in 1928 in Paris and from then on they kept in close contact. As an example of how involved they were with each other, the exhibition opened with a selection of works by Miró that belonged to Calder's personal collection along with a series of personal works by Calder owned by the Miró family. His mobiles dating from the 40s and 50s have often been linked to the "Constel·lacions" by Miró and were given a prominent position in the organization of the exhibition.

As regards exhibitions by Spanish artists I would like to make special note of two, one paintings, the other sculptures. The first was an anthology of the works of Gutiérrez Solana (1886-1945) entitled, *José Gutiérrez Solana* (Fundació Caixa de Catalunya, La Pedrera) made up of a selection of eighty works including paintings, drawings and engravings. The art of Gutiérrez Solana, influenced by the work of Goya, gave form to the most bitter, black and sordid aspects of Spain and the exhibition displayed a selection of representative pieces created between 1902 and 1943. The second exhibition was, *Chillida. Leku* (Caixa de Catalunya, Barcelona), a magnificent review of the trajectory of the sculptor Eduardo Chillida from the point of perspective of space and place ("leku" is the Basque word for space).

Another visual arts technique that has been the focus of an excellent exhibition is engraving. On loan from the Rembrandt Museum in Amsterdam was the exhibition, *Rembrandt: el paisatge natural i humà. Gravats* (Centre Cultural de la Fundació "la Caixa", Barcelona). The exhibition was made up of a collection of ninety engravings on themes as diverse as: self portraits, portraits, landscapes, everyday life scenes, biblical and religious scenes.

The subject of another comprehensive review was the corrosive art of Georges Grosz (Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona). Grosz (1893-1959) was one of the Berlin Dadaists and his Berlin period was the focus of the exhibition. His American period began in 1933, the year he emigrated to New York. The most striking aspect of his art is the politicizing and corrosive humor which take the form of caricature. The exhibition was made up of some twenty oil paintings, around one hundred paintings on paper and various notebooks and illustrations belonging to the artist.

Before moving on to a review of exhibitions outside the realm of Catalonia, I would like to end this section by mentioning two others staged very suggestively and dedicated to the world of music and cinema. The first was *Opera Licen. Una exposició en cinc actes* (Museu d'Història de Catalunya, Barcelona) which comprised of a historical review of the Liceu opera house

from its foundation to present day. The second was *El món secret de Buñuel* (Centre de Cultura Contemporània, Barcelona), a review of the various themes which obsessed this Aragonese film director, death, religion and eroticism to name but a few, expressed by means of objects, photographs, posters, documentation and previously unseen audiovisual material.

Beyond the limits of the Catalonia and those areas mentioned in previous paragraphs, I would like to mention two important exhibitions in Valencia and the Balearic Isles. IVAM, in Valencia, organized an important retrospective exhibition on the creators of the surrealist object. The first time the surrealist object was put on show was in 1936 in the Charles Ratton gallery. It was here that the object was demonstrated as something released from its usefulness and functionality. It acquired a new interpretation, not without humor, poetry or subtleties, in the hands of artists such as Duchamp, Breton, Dalí, Ernst, Picasso, Brauner, Man Ray and Miró.

The same center also organized an exhibition offering an artistic spectrum of the work of Joan Brossa titled, *Joan Brossa. Poesia visual*. It included works created with such diverse techniques as collage, lithography, silk screen printing, letter type designs or *calligrammes* (visual poems). Finally there was the exhibition at the Museu de Belles Arts, Valencia, that embraced the drawings of Miguel Angel, including outlines of his projects, on loan from the Florentine museum Casa Buonarroti.

ANNA BUTÍ

Translated by Roland Pearson

MUSIC

The music season was already well under way when the new year, 1997, following the Christmas break. With regard to the Ibercamera cycle, I would like to note some of the concerts that took place during 1997, concerts which for various reasons have attracted attention.

At the Palau de la Música Catalana, Thomas Quasthoff interpreted the lieder cycle *Winter Journey* by Schubert, January 13th. Continuing with the same venue, there were three other concerts worth mentioning. The first, by the pianist Maurizio Pollini on March 4th, and the second by the soprano Jessye Norman on March 11th, interpreting lieder by Brahms, Schubert, Poulenc and Carter. The third centered on the presence of another well known artist, the Portuguese pianist Maria Joao Pires, who played works by Chopin and Beethoven on May 14th. These three concerts reflected the policies of the company Ibercamera for 1997, a company that decided to gamble on internationally acclaimed soloists participating in small scale performances and fighting shy of large productions and grandiose orchestral performances.

Among those performances offered at the Palau Cent for 1997 there were three concerts I would like to note. The first was the performance by Le Concert des Nations conducted by Jordi Savall on January 27th including works by Johann Sebastian Bach. The second was the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra with the soprano Joan Rodgers conducted by Esa

Pekka Salonen. The performance, on February 4th, included works by Debussy and Mahler. Last but not least, there was the concert by the Maggio Musicale Fiorentino Orchestra, conducted by Zubin Mehta on February 8th with pieces by Schubert and Stravinsky.

Turning to the season's offerings from the Euroconcert one of the outstanding performances was the on February 3rd with works by Schubert interpreted by Paul Badura Skoda (piano), Alban Gerhardt (cello), Daniel Pergamenshikov (violin), Tatiana Maseruko (viola), Xavier Pueras (double bass) and the soprano singer Chloe Waysfield. This was one of the most interesting concerts of the season with performances of lesser known works by the Viennese composer, and was a most polished performance in all senses of the term. I could not end my review of this venue's 1997 program without mentioning the performance which took place on February 13th by The Academy of Ancient Music, conducted by Christopher Hogwood with works by Vivaldi, Albinoni, Cavalli, Stradella, Corelli and Muffat.

The Gran Teatre del Liceu also made a noteworthy contributions to the 1997 music season despite the fact the theater itself is still under reconstruction and the various performances were scattered about the city of Barcelona. The first was a concert which took place on January 29th with Simon Estes and the Liceu Symphony Orchestra interpreting a program made up of fragments from operatic works by Verdi and Wagner.

Moving on to the Palau de la Música Catalana venue, one memorable performance was Verdi's *Macbeth*, February 27th with Renato Bruson, Dolora Zajick, Stefano Palatchi in the leading roles with the Liceu Symphony Orchestra conducted by Paolo Carigniani. Later, March 13th marked the performance of Richard Strauss' *Elektra* with Gwyneth Jones, Renate Behle, Reinhild Runkel, Arley Reece and Tom Fox conducted by Peter Schneider. The English soprano, Gwyneth Jones particularly gave an outstanding performance of her character and stood out above the rest making her the clear protagonist in this disquieting piece. *La sonnambula* by Bellini was another highpoint at the Palau de la Música Catalana performed April 8th, conducted by Friederich Haider.

Moving to another of the dispersed venues within the Liceu program, the Teatre Victòria, we had to wait a late as April 21st to see Puccini's *Tosca*, conducted by Marco Armiliato. Without doubt one of the most awaited performances at the Teatre Victòria began May 16th and included the operas *Le Pauvre Matelot* by Milhaud and *Pagliacci* by Leoncavallo, both interpreted by Claude Pia, Catherine Dubosc and Wolfgang Ranch. Programming these performances together was seen as risky venture and a break with a tradition associated with Liceu management. The traditional program companion to Leoncavallo's short opera had always been *Cavalleria rusticana*, by Pietro Mascagni, for aesthetic reasons since both belonged to the short opera genre and were from the same period. This time, and here lies the challenge taken up by the theater's artistic management, the famous work by the "verismo" composer was complemented by *Le Pauvre Matelot*, a work based on a Cocteau text by Darius Milhaud, a member of "Les Six" the French avant-garde movement. Both this, little known work by the average opera going public, and the classic piece by Leoncavallo, were outstanding performances in particular *Pagliacci* which according to critics was the talking point of the opera going public in

Barcelona. The opera offerings at the Teatre Victòria ended with Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, performed June 17th and conducted by Joan Pons.

By way of complementing the review of opera performances I would like mention the presentation by l'Aula d'Òpera del Conservatori del Liceu on April 14th of an orchestral version of Xavier Montsalvatge's *El gato con botas*, conducted by Francesc Guillén (Palau de la Música). The performance of this piece is certainly encouraging news, despite being an orchestral version, for various reasons. This is encouraging not only because it is a contemporary piece, but also because it was written by a Catalan composer which is a source of great satisfaction for us here.

The XX edition of the Festival de Música Antiga was held during the months of May and June 1997. This is one of the most anticipated festivals of music by the public due to its exceptional programs and especially because the growing concert going public that are interested in what is referred to as early music. There were two particularly noteworthy performances that I would like to make known here: the interpretation of works by Monteverdi conducted by Rinaldo Alessandrini on May 10th (Palau de la Música Catalana); and the interpretation of Medieval Christmas music by the Ensemble Micrologus, May 13th (Saló del Tinell). Away from the atmosphere of the festival, but following the same genre of music, there was the concert held at Lleida to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the municipal government there. The Capella Reial de Catalunya offered the public a performance of early music and was conducted by Jordi Savall.

The end of the music season does not mark the end of activity as each year the public and festivals are geared towards the summer festivals. One of the important festivals was the XI Festival Castell de Peralada, in particular the production of the Mozart opera *El rapte del Serall* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*), stage direction by Mario Gas. Leaving aside matters concerning the opera's production and translation into Catalan, there was an outstanding performance by the baritone Stefano Palatchi. Other protagonists such as Olga Makarina, Constanza and Roberto Sacca rose to similar standards leaving the public more than satisfied.

Another anticipated music festival was the representation of Richard Wagner's *The Flying Dutchman*. Simon Estes and Hildegard Behrens undoubtedly dominated the performance under the direction of Vello Pähm. Another performance worthy of mention was the interpretation of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, performed by the Cadaqués Orchestra with the Savonlinna Choir with soloists Francesc Garrigosa, Esas Ruttunen, Isabel Monar and Silvia Tro. I could not end my review of the Festival de Castell without mentioning the musical presentation of *La pantera imperial* by Carles Santos, inspired by the music of Bach.

Another summer music festival was the Festival de Torroella de Montgrí, this year celebrating its 17th successive year. Among the wide selection one noteworthy performance was that by the Cambra del Palau conducted by Jordi Casas interpreting works by Brahms with Jordi Soler and Josep Surinyach on piano. It is always a welcome and celebrated event when musical works are rediscovered, and even more the case for us when it concerns Catalan composers. On this occasion it was Ferran Sor's *Il Telemaco nell'Isola di Calipso*. The reason why it was possible to perform this work at this festival

is owed to the research carried out by a team of musicologists. Now, this piece is in circulation once again. It is a pity that this performance was not considered for recording and issue on CD as this would have assured its survival beyond the moment of the performance. The principal parts were sung by Rosa Mateu, Joan Cabero, Yolanda Auyanet and Àngel Odena, to name but some, played by the Monsalvat Simfonieta conducted by Joan Lluís Moraleda.

Another important concert was provided by the King's Consort and the counter-tenor, James Bowman, who served up a dish of English early, Renaissance and Baroque music. The Franz Liszt Orchestra from Budapest offered performances of works by Bartok, Haydn and Mendelssohn conducted by Janos Rolla and one of the much awaited performances at the Festival de Torroella de Montgrí was that given by Jean Pierre Rampal and Claudi Arimany, this time accompanied by Denis Evesque. To end on an exotic note, the festival also offered the public a performance by Ravi Shankar who with his sitar and group of musicians performed ragas with breathtaking levels of virtuosity.

The Grec festival in Barcelona was another focal point of noteworthy performances. One such performance was the recovery of the opera by Manuel Valls, *Cal 33-33 o el Bon Samarità* (Teatre Adrià Gual). Valls was one of the most outstanding figures of Catalan avant-garde music during the post Spanish Civil War period. Unfortunately, his work as critic and essayist in his later years meant that he set aside composing and today he would be forgotten for his contribution to music were it not for initiatives such as those taken on by the Grec festival. The principal singers were Marta Fiol, Emili Rosés, Josep Pieres, Biel Mesquida and Vol ad Libitum, conducted by Jordi Rossinyol and staging by Lluís Solà.

The new music season program was late in getting underway. The Euro-concert began the season with the suggestive proposal of medieval music by the group Sirinu at the Monestir de Pedralbes October 20th. The same cycle of concerts was repeated at the Palau de la Música Catalana with performances by King's Consort, conducted by Robert King with works by Gabrielli, Guami and Finetti.

The Palau Cent program on November 5th at the Palau de la Música Catalana offered a selection of Italian and French operatic works with Jaume Aragall and the Balearic Isles Orchestra conducted by Manuel Galduf. Another recital worth noting was the performance by Margaret Price accompanied by Thomas Dewey on piano who interpreted works by Schubert, Mendelssohn and Brahms November 27th. It was an intense and most interesting review of this Romantic German composer complemented by one of the finest and most attractive voices at the moment.

The year ended musically, as in previous years, with interpretations of the typical Christmas pieces. The Fundació "la Caixa" celebrated Christmas with a traditional rendering of Handel's Messiah on December 17th, December 21st the Sant Jordi Choir gave a Christmas concert whilst the Orfeo Català (infant and youth choir) put on their traditional St. Stephen's Day concert December 26th.