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CULTURAL INFORMATION
OF CATALAN SPEAKING LANDS

1993

VISUAL ARTS

1993 will be remembered by many as the *Joan Miró* year. The country's various institutions joined their forces together to celebrate the centennial of the artist's birth. The coincidence of this anniversary (20th April) and the period which is generally the most active with regard to shows caused the first six months of the year to be extremely dense, in a way that we have not seen for quite a long while.

The objective of the celebration, none other than to review Joan Miró's work and get beyond some of the stereotypes which have often surrounded him, was fully achieved. The accusation which the general public has often made at his work as being ingenuous, lacking reflection, in a word infantile, was left behind. In this demythification there collaborated decisively the show *Joan Miró 1893-1993*, which was organized by the Miró Foundation in Barcelona. The retrospective show, the most important ever organized, opened on April 20th. Done in a didactic manner, it combined the presence of the main works of the painter's career, among which were «La masia», «Terra llaurada» or «Paisatge català», with preparatory sketches and drawings, which allowed analyzing the creative process carried out by Miró.

Palma de Mallorca, where Joan Miró lived the final 30 years of his life, could also not go without taking an active part in this event. It organized in the recently inaugurated Joan and Pilar Miró Foundation a showing of its collection. However, it should be remembered that Miró was not only a genius painter of recognized international stature, but also that he worked and experimented with different artistic media. With the assistance of excellent professionals, he cultivated ceramics, sculpture, engraving, and tapestry. These other facets of his personality were also present in the Miró Year.

Miró himself had once confessed his preference for ceramics over painting. In keeping with this affirmation, Barcelona's Museum of Ceramics organized the show *Miró Ceramista* (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona). It gave an interesting narration of his trajectory in the world of ceramics. His collaboration in the Gallifa workshop with Josep Llorens Artigas and later on with Joan Gardy Artigas, son of the former, brought about the creation of a wide array of pieces: anti-plates, pitchers, masks, steles, stones, sculptured pieces.

Hommage was also wanted to be rendered to two men who had offered Miró their support at the beginning of his career. These men were the critic Sebastià Gasch, who was the first person to defend his work, and his first galleryman and dealer Josep Dalmau. The show, entitled *Gasch-Miró-Dalmau i els orígens de l'Avantguarda a Catalunya* (Centre d'Art Santa

Mònica, Barcelona) took advantage of the occasion to offer a vision of the early Miró, his production and his friendships.

Perhaps the show with less instructive pretensions but which was on the other hand more entertaining was *Mirar Miró. El Joan Miró de Català-Roca* (La Caixa Foundation, Barcelona). It was a personal and previously unknown vision of Miró's world seen through the photography of Francesc Català Roca.

Before concluding this remembrance of the Miró centennial, let us just note that there were more than 300 different shows organized, a fact which makes the success of this homage rather obvious.

However, cultural events of interest do not end here. This year also saw the second edition of *Primavera del Disseny*, this year with the theme *Disseny, eina de futur*. It brought together an important number of shows, of which we will discuss three. First, there was one centered on the figure of Ettore Sottsass, winner of the prize for the best designer in the previous edition, grouped under the title *Ettore Sottsass. La darrera oportunitat d'ésser avantguarda* (Centre d'Art Mònica, Barcelona). Second, the carefully laid out *Delicte i somni. Viena 1900-1930. Interiors, mobles i objectes* (Sala Catalunya, Barcelona) which recreated the creations in decorative art in the city of Vienna at a key moment in its history. Finally, there was an amusing show dubbed *Per què no funciona?* (Palau de la Virreina, Barcelona), consisting of a collection of badly designed apparatuses, objects, and drawings. It showed commonly used objects standing out for their lack of common sense, a fact which converted them into pieces of junk.

With regard to shows dedicated to foreign artists we mention the two on Wilfredo Lam and Malèvich. Lam was the object of two simultaneous shows, *Wilfredo Lam* at the Miró Foundation, a collection of oil works, and *Wilfredo Lam. Obra sobre paper* (Palau Macaya, Barcelona). The Cuban artist, whose father was Chinese and mother was of African descent, is considered as one of the most important Iberoamerican artists of this century. A friend of Picasso and Breton, his work is a synthesis of surrealist and cubist influences which over the years led him to create an art of his own, dominated by primitivist roots. On the other hand, viewing the creations by Malèvich (Museu Picasso, Barcelona) was made possible through loans from the collections of the Russian State Museum in Saint Petersburg. Kazimir Malèvich brought to 20th century plastic arts the elimination of all reference to reality and the deepening of the value of color. This innovation is known by the name of «suprematism». Later on, the show travelled to the País Valencià to be exhibited at the Valencian Institute of Modern Art.

Among the shows dedicated to Catalan painting, we mention two. First, one titled *Fortuny i Sans Cabot a la batalla de Tetuan. Dues pintures*

d'història del segle XIX en les col·leccions del MNAC (National Museum of Art of Catalonia, Barcelona) which brought together two very different styles of 19th century painting. On the one hand there was the academicist vision of Francesc Sans Cabot and on the other, the more naturalist, orientalist angle of Marià Fortuny. Another show was dedicated to landscape painting and was presented under the title *L'Escola d'Olot* (Museu Comarcal de la Garrotxa, Olot). It brought together works by Joaquim Vayreda, Marià Vayreda and Josep Berga. It may be considered as an approach to this school which influenced decisively all of the painting which came afterwards in our country.

If we opened our review by recalling the Joan Miró centennial, we must also note that 1993 also marked the centennial of the founding of the *Cercle Artístic de Sant Lluc, 1893-1993* (Pia Almoïna, Barcelona). The show, organized by the Department of Culture of the Generalitat de Catalunya, analyzed the creation and development of this guild of painters and sculptors who held the Catholic religion and the fatherland as their ideology.

In the Balearic Islands, the La Caixa Foundation has now begun its activities. The foundation's headquarters in Palma is a modernist building, the work of Domènech i Montaner. The remodelled rooms were inaugurated with the show *Anglada-Camarasa al Gran Hotel* which brought together the collection that the institution bought from the painter's family in 1988.

In Valencia, there were two interesting expositions. The IVAM put on the show *L'Art en l'Avantguarda de Txecoslovàquia 1918-1938* and the Museu Sant Pius V one on *Pintura Espanyola del Segle XIX. Del Neoclassicisme al Modernisme*.

ANNA BUTÍ

Translated by Albert M. Muth

HISTORY

The latter part of 1992 and early 1993 were not a very fruitful moment for medieval historiography. Few works were published, though the ones that were are of an excellent scientific quality. On the other hand, the history of the modern age, a period which investigators had marginalized for years and one which shows obvious gaps in what has been studied, has undergone lately a renewed impetus and seen its bibliography expand by leaps and bounds with new titles, as will be shown by this review.

Two Cistercian monasteries Poblet and Santes Creus, which in the late Middle Ages had a certain importance due to their political relations with the institutions of sovereign power and served as tombs for the Catalan count-kings, have enriched their bibliography with Agustí Altisent's publishing the *Diplomatari de Santa Maria de Poblet. I. Anys 960-1177* [*Diplomatory of Santa Maria de Poblet. I. Years 960-1177*] (Abadia de Poblet, 1993) which gathers the documentation regarding the founding of the monastery. Antoni Carreras i Casanovas: *El monestir de Santes Creus. 1150-1200* (Institut d'Estudis Vallencs. Valls, 1992, 2 vols.) carefully researches the socio-economic origins of this monastery. These two investigators have brought forth historiographical information that is of interest not only for the monasteries but specially for regional history in New Catalonia where the actions of their abbots and monks irradiated politically and culturally. Rounding out this bibliographical review is the monograph by Núria de Dalmasas: *Orfebreria medieval: Barcelona 1300-1500 (Aproximació a l'estudi)* [*Medieval Goldsmithry: Barcelona 1300-1500 (Approach to Its Study)*] (Institute of Catalan Studies, Barcelona, 1992, 2 vols.). The author not only carried out a laborious task of document research but also gathered information about the pieces that have been preserved. These volumes allow us to know more about the work of our craftsmen and the wealth which goldsmithry may have represented for Catalan society of this period.

A string of studies enrich our knowledge of Modern Catalan historiography, both source materials and monographs alike. Henry Ettinghausen: *La guerra dels Segadors a través de la premsa de l'època* [*The War of the Reapers Seen Through the Press of the Period*] (Curial, Barcelona, 1993, 4 vols.) has made a facsimile edition of an ample collection of brochures. Published between 1640 and 1659, these brochures had as their motive that period of revolts and war. These volumes permit the researcher to have all in one place materials which are located dispersely in several different libraries. Completing this information is the edition of Francisco Pasqual de Panno's work: *Motines de Catalunya* [*Uprisings in Catalonia*] (Curial, Barcelona, 1993) which offers the viewpoint of a small noble who lived through the revolutionary process of 1640 and found himself obliged to go into exile and live the rest of his life away from Catalonia. For this reason, he wrote the memoirs in Castilian. An important contribution is Antoni Simon i Tarrés's personal memoirs and recollections from a later period (1666-1851): *Memòries i diaris personals de la Catalunya moderna. Pagesos, capellans i industrials de la Marina de la Selva* [*Memoirs and Personal Diaries in Modern Catalonia. Farmers, Clergymen, and Industrialists from Marina de la Selva*] (Curial, Barcelona, 1993). Most of the texts center their account on the 18th century.

We mention two research works which open up new topics for study and which are noteworthy contributions to current historiography. Although Manuel Ardit makes no direct reference to Catalonia in his *Els homes i la terra del País Valencià (segles XVI-XVIII)* [«Men and Land in the Valencian Land (16th-18th Centuries)»] (Curial. Barcelona, 1993), he provides information and possible parallelisms which should act as a guide for similar research carried out in Catalonia. In *La família moderna a la Conca de Barberà* [«The Modern Family in Conca de Barberà»] (Institut d'Estudis Tarraconenses Ramon Berenguer IV. Tarragona, 1993) Valentí Gual studies demographic evolution from the 16th to 18th centuries on the basis of birth, marriage, and death records. This Tarragonese district has retained the greater part of its parish archives, a documentation which allows this kind of study to be undertaken.

Political, social, and economic problems related to banditry and highwaymen typical in the peninsular Mediterranean zones have been evaluated in two works, one more general and the other more specific. Xavier Torres: *Nyerros i cadells: bàndols i bandolerisme a la Catalunya moderna (1590-1640)* [«Nyerros” and “Cadells”: Banditry and Bandits in Modern Catalonia (1590-1640)»] (Quaderns Crema. Barcelona, 1993) and Jaume Codina: *Bàndols i bandolers al Baix Llobregat (1580-1630)* [«Banditry and Bandits in the Baix Llobregat (1580-1630)»] (Publications of Montserrat Abbey. Barcelona, 1993) have gone back to research a topic which is so important in Catalonia's history. Completing this vision of 17th century Catalonia is a study by Antoni Jordà i Fernández: *Església i poder a la Catalunya del segle XVII. La Seu de Tarragona* [«Church and Power in 17th Century Catalonia. The Cathedral of Tarragona»] (Publications of Montserrat Abbey. Barcelona, 1993). He sheds light on the importance of the ecclesiastical estate in Baroque Catalonia.

Josep M. Torras Ribé has shown us once again with *La comarca d'Anoia a finals del segle XVIII. Els «qüestionaris» de Francisco Zamora i altres descripcions (1776-1797)* [«The Anoia District at the End of the 18th Century: Francisco Zamora's “Questionnaires” and Other Descriptions (1776-1797)»] (Publications of Montserrat Abbey. Barcelona, 1993) the documental importance of these «questionnaires». It would nice if the corresponding ones from all of the Principality could be published. Josep M. Pons i Guri: *Estudi dels pilots* [«Study of the Pilots»] (Curial. Barcelona, 1993) reissues this piece of research which lets us examine the human and scientific contributions of the navigators along the Atlantic route between 1779 and 1850 who were prepared at the school in Arenys de Mar. These pilots made up the technical base of the prosperous commerce linking America and Catalonia at the turn of the 18th-19th centuries, which ended with the

implanting of steam navigation. A new volume of the *Història de Barcelona*. 5. *El desplegament de la ciutat manufacturera (1714-1833)* [«History of Barcelona. 5. The Opening of the Manufacturing City (1714-1833)»] (Fundació Enciclopèdia Catalana, Barcelona, 1993) allows us to evaluate very concrete and influential issues in different Catalan locales and towns. Barcelona continues on as the *cap i casal* of Catalonia.

As may be appreciated here, medieval and modern Catalan historiography continues along its trajectory of thematic enrichment. At the same time, we see a continuing effort to improve our knowledge of source materials which will permit greater possibilities for research and study.

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Translated by Albert M. Muth

The contemporary history information which corresponds to the first part of 1993 will be included in the next issue of CATALAN REVIEW.

LINGUISTICS

From the publication point of view, the first part of 1993 was a bit meager. There were few novelities, excepting those works which had been previously initiated. With regard to journal publications, there was such a great backlog in publishing that none of the more regular journals came out on time with an issue. We hope the that panorama will come around in the second half of the year.

We would give special prominence from out of all the publications to the release of two of Pompeu Fabra's works bearing preliminary studies by Sebastià Bonet: *Ensayo de gramática de catalán moderno (1891)*; *Contribució a la gramàtica de la llengua catalana (1898)* (Barcelona, 1993, Ed. Altafulla, Documents de Filologia Catalana, 8).

In the sociolinguistics section we have selected three quite different works. First, a study on codeswitching and the norms for language use among Barcelona youths during the '80's, which makes up the core of professor Emili Boix's doctoral thesis: *Triar no és traïr. Identitat i llengua en els joves de Barcelona* [«Choosing is not Betraying. Identity and Language among Barcelona's Youth»] (Barcelona, 1993, Edicions 62, Llibres a l'abast,

272). Second, the translation into Catalan of a recent work by Georg Kremnitz: *Multilingüisme social* [«Social Multilingualism»] (Barcelona, 1993, Edicions 62, Llibres a l'abast, 270). Translated by Ulrich Malsch, it is an essay about the linguistic map of presentday Europe. Finally, a work in applied sociolinguistics on the presence of Catalan in one aspect of the working world, namely, advertising: Judit Freixa and M. Goretti Freixa, *L'exigència de català a les demandes de treball* [«The Requiring of Catalan in Job Advertising»] (Barcelona, 1993, Catalan Language Service, University of Barcelona).

To close our list of monographs, we will cite a work in applied psycholinguistics by Encarna Laguna which makes up part of her doctoral thesis: *El discurs de la malaltia mental* [«The Discourse of Mental Illness»] (Barcelona, 1993, Ed. Empúries, Biblioteca Universal Empúries, 64).

Our section on lexicography opens with the third expanded and updated version of the *Diccionari de la llengua catalana* (Barcelona, 1992, Enciclopèdia Catalana). Furthermore, Columna publishers has undertaken the publication of Sebastià Farners's 1913 work, *Paremiologia catalana comparada* [«Comparative Catalan Paroemiology»] which, other than the first volume, had remained unpublished (Barcelona, 1992, Columna). For the moment, a first volume has come out, corresponding to the letter A. Jaume Corbera Pou, using new data, has brought up to date his vocabulary of Mallorcan barbarisms and has completed it with a series of commentaries on certain interferences: *Nou vocabulari de barbarismes del català de Mallorca* [«New Vocabulary of Barbarisms in the Catalan of Mallorca»] (Palma de Mallorca, 1993, El Tall Ed, El calaix del Tall, 8).

In the terminology section, we find an introduction to scientific terminology and four vocabularies from the University of Barcelona's Catalan Language Service. Lluís Marquet i Ferigle's book, *El llenguatge científic i tècnic* [«Scientific and Technical Language»] (Barcelona, 1993, Associació d'Enginyers Industrials de Catalunya, Cultura, Tècnica i Societat) is an introduction to the world of scientific and technical terminology from a historicist point of view. It deals with problems of lexic, terminology fixing, neologisms, dictionaries, translation, and other problems of scientific Catalan.

In the series of vocabularies for the University of Barcelona's service personnel, the Catalan Language Service has presented four new items this semester: *Vocabulari de reprografia* [«Vocabulary of Photoreproduction»], *Vocabulari de la previsió social* [«Vocabulary of Social Security»], *Vocabulari de la gestió documental* [«Vocabulary of Document Management»], and *Vocabulari de la matriculació* [«Vocabulary of Registration»] (Barcelona, 1993, University of Barcelona, Vocabularis del PAS).

Even though we do not usually describe language manuals or learning

texts, we would like to make an exception this time with four texts, due to the high quality of their content. Daniel Cassany has written both a correction and a writing manual, *Reparar l'escriptura. Didàctica de la correcció de l'escrit* [«Repairing Writing. Method for Correcting Texts»] (Barcelona, 1993, Institut de Ciències de l'Educació and Ed. Graó, Materials per a la innovació educativa, 2) and *La cuina de l'escriptura* [«The Cuisine of Writing»] (Barcelona, 1993, Ed. Empúries, Les Naus d'Empúries). Next, three volumes of vocabulary exercises have come out: Salvador Comelles and Anna Cros, *Lèxic (1,2,3). Exercicis autocorrectius d'ampliació de vocabulari* [«Lexic. Self-Corrective Exercises for Vocabulary Expansion»] (Vic, 1993, Eumo Ed.). Finally, to round up, we mention Josep-Anton Castellanos, *Manual de pronunciació* [«Manual of Pronunciation»] (Vic, 1993, Eumo Ed.).

To close out this semester's brief summary I would like to allude to a study which, most certainly is well-known among this journal's readers. It is August Bover i Font's *Manual de catalanística* [«Manual of Catalan Studies»] (Barcelona, 1993, Publicacions de l'Abadia de Montserrat and Diputació de Tarragona, Biblioteca Serra d'Or, 124), a catalog gathering information on all areas of Catalan culture, science, language, and literature. It is just as interesting for Catalan readers as it is for foreign ones.

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LITERATURE

As on other occasions, we begin with the necrologies. Two poetic voices passed away, V. Andrés Estellés from the País Valencià and, in Fall'92, Josep Maria Llompart from the Balearic Islands. They exerted a fundamental influence, not only in their respective regions, but in Catalan culture and literature as a whole. Both were poets having a decisive work and an exemplary national commitment.

With regard to prose, we give prominence to Quim Monzó's work, *El perquè de tot plegat* (Quaderns Crelma). Monzó, now one of Catalan literature's most vigorous narrators, offers us up a collection of stories in the line of his solid narrative universe, populated by urban characters and daily predicaments. Monzó's skill at drawing a penetrating and hilarious exercise out of trivial anecdotes is once again revalidated quite successfully. His

collection gives sharp, sometimes cruel, portrayals of human relations and the forms of presentday life. Antoni Dalmaes with *L'última primavera* (Ed. Tres i Quatre) offers as a mature work with a well constructed plot. One character, in his dying days, recreates everything that has been his world, marked by the experience of the war and postwar era. The human element rises over the facile environmental or documentary resources of the period. The work profiles for us a first rate human testimony. Maria Mercè Roca, in *Cames de seda* (Ed. Columna), offers us some brilliant psychological portraits and a reflection on a couple's emotional ups and downs. She nimbly narrates characters' emotions and states of mind that are quite in keeping with our time. The work registers the difficulty of controlling human feelings, the multiplicity of dilemmas that we confront in our daily lives (love, guilt, jealousy...). She accomplishes all this with minuciosity and acumen.

Josep Piera, in *Act s'acaba tot* (Ed. 62), offers us a different and quite stimulating narrative proposal. Midway between a diary, a travel narrative, and fiction on daily surroundings, he combines anecdotes with literary and philosophical observations. The book is set in that magma of memorialist literature, genre among genres where anything and everything may fit. He combines images of a trip to Sicily with a hospital stay, with sights such as those seen along train rails: rich and diverse landscapes, experiences and encounters-always suggestive and penetrating.

One of the season's literary surprises was Xavier Roca-Ferrer's story collection *El cap de Penteu* (1993 «Premi Josep Pla», Ed. Destino). The stories have as their frame personalities from the world literature of all times. The narrations are surprising for the keenness of their observations on topics that are difficult to explore literarily. This notwithstanding, Roca-Ferrer's stories startle us by casting light on hidden aspects of reality or by revealing undreamed of situations. It is a literature inspired by one of brilliant artistic efficiency.

Víctor Mora, a veteran drawer and narrator, presents in *La dona dels ulls de pluja* (Ed. 62) a motley and quite real portrait of today's Barcelona. Víctor Mora, who has always shown a predilection for realist story-writing and social decrrial, gives us a critical view of the moment: we live in a society marked by mercantile values and corruption. He expresses all of this in a supple prose, full of irony and humor.

Lluís Roda, whom we have heretofore known as a poet, offers us in *El temps passarà* (Ed. Columna) a defiant incursion into the world of novels. His novel presents a story as funny as it is penetrating, with a fully modern action (sometimes vibrating) where points of absolute meditation keep showing up: the passage of time, love relationships, the border between

reality and dreams, between memory and the present. It is an agile novel that reads quickly, though you do have to backstep to catch the multiple twists deployed by the story.

A different proposal is offered to us by Teresa Pàmies in *Coses de la vida, a ritme de bolero* (Ed. Empúries), a collection of texts she read on the radio when she comments on daily happenings. They are timely notes on the day's events from which she draws a brilliant meditation, a sharp comparison or a fresh reflection. The text comes with an anthology of *boleros* with which she makes her daily commentary more pleasant. Reading *boleros* is like reviewing the sentimental history of our century. Far from forming part of the underside of culture—as some scholars would have us believe—, some compositions in this genre show us explicitly a peculiar concept of life; they elaborate a whole discourse on sentimental relations and transmit to us their emotional force very efficiently.

In the field of poetry, we have the reissuing of Homer's *L'Odissea* in Carles Riba's translation (Ed. La Magrana). This splendid edition brings us a classic of all times in a well thought out language and with the suggestive poetic strength of the author of the *Estances*.

Joan Margarit offers us in *Els motius del llop* (Ed. Columna) a new poetic installment of his trilogy begun with *Llum de pluja* (1987). Margarit, to a certain extent, is a realist poet with a rather personal expression. Joan Margarit's poetry addresses topics such as the passing of time, love, poetry itself, from a stance that reminds us of Gabriel Ferrater's moral pose, of a poetry of experience. There are also a number of sultry poems on jazz, conveying the more or less pathetic emotions that are the vehicle for this kind of music.

Joan Vicent Clar, *Infinitud de paisatge* (Ed. Amós Belinchon), is a gathering of a complete volume of works by the late Valencian poet who passed away three years ago. The work, carefully edited by Lluís Roda, is of considerable interest. It is marked by the poet's rigorous commitment to himself and a constant desire for experimentation. Clar was one of the most innovative and promising voices of Catalan poetry in the '80's.

Vicent Salvador, in *Mercat de la sal* («Vicent Andrés Estellés Prize», Ed. Tres i Quatre), presents an attractive life itinerary marked by an intensity of emotions. Expressed nitidly, rigorously designed, Vicent Salvador's poetic world is marked by remorseful inflections of love's abandon and of the loss of loved ones; they end up marking a path toward personal rebirth.

To end this succinct report, I would like to mention some recent translations of foreign works into Catalan, such as Edith Warton's *Edat de la innocència*, Rudyard Kipling's *L'home que volia ser rei i altres contes*,

Isaac B. Singer's *A la llar d'un rabí*, Günter Grass's *El timbal de llauna*, and Jean Genet's *Diari d'un lladre*, all to be found in the MOLU series of Ed. 62 and «La Caixa».

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MUSIC

The opera year began in Barcelona with a Rossini title as famous for the number of times that excerpts have been played from it as for how seldom it has ever been performed in its entirety at the Liceu: *La Gazza Ladra*. The outcome did honor to the opera in question, especially with regard to the Romanian soprano Leontina Vaduva who performed at the Liceu for the first time.

We draw attention to the innovative show-recital *Ai Malvina!*, by soprano Dame Gwyneth Jones, Geoffrey Parsons, piano, and Constantino Romero as narrator within the opera season. It represented a veritable triumph for the singer, interpreting the role of Malvina Schnorr von Carolsfeld, the first Isolda.

During the month of March the Liceu programmed one of the stellar operas in the traditional repertory: Bizet's *Carmen*. It had an equally stellar cast, due primarily to the unusual circumstance of there being an unheard of number of performances: a total of eight. Thus, from the interpretative point of view, there were many «Carmens» and not only referring via this name to the character protagonizing the opera but also considering the opera's final balance. Interpreting the main role were Maria Ewing, Kathleen Kulmann, and Victòria Vergara.

Carmen's presentation was not free of polemic, first due to the abandonment of the work midway through rehearsals by Uwe Mund, director of the house orchestra, and singer Kathleen Kulmann's decline to perform, who had to be substituted for the occasion by Maria Ewing. Furthermore, the great furor that Núria Espert's stage decorations had raised in the show's 1991 London premiere laid the ground for a high expectation. Perhaps this was the reason that so many performances were scheduled. The results were quite uneven, depending on each day's performers. Surely, the production was saved by the work's being precisely one of the most habitual ones in the repertory guaranteeing it an almost automatic public success.

On April 25 Verdi's *Il Trovatore* was put on at the Liceu. It was a Verdi that was as anticipated just as all of his works always are, but in the end it let down the public just a bit. The production, put on by the Teatro de la Zarzuela, the Asturian Association of Friends of Opera and the Valencian Institute of Scenic Arts, Cinematography and Music, left quite a bit to be desired. Unfortunately, the interpretations by Aprile Millo, Nina Terentieva, and Denis O'Neill in the main roles did not stand out as being among the best of this Verdian opera.

One of the most awaited titles in the season was without a doubt the production directed by Jordi Savall of Monteverdi's *L'Orfeo*, which was put on during the month of May. La Capella Reial de Catalunya and Le Concert des Nations offered a show which the Liceu audience is not overly used to, but thanks to shows like this one, the work is working its way into the operatic public's taste, albeit it hanging onto the coattails of Jordi Savall.

The Liceu season was brought to a close with a noteworthy house production of Mozart's *Così fan tutte*. It was put on during the month of June.

Now, if there is one opera event that we must showcase above all others, it is without a doubt the recovery of Enric Morera's opera *La Fada*. With a text by Jaume Massó i Torrents, it premiered in Sitges in the context of the Modernist Festival held in 1897 in that city. It was a significant event, since the reconsideration of the musical production of Catalan musicians who have been unjustly forgotten ought to be a duty of music promoters and authorities and even more so when it comes to works of the worth of Morera's. The production was part of the «Opera in Catalonia» series, put on by the Friends of Opera of Sabadell. The reprémère took place in Sitges and then later in Sabadell and the remaining theaters making up the «Opera in Catalonia» series (Reus, Mataró).

Valencia, though having no stable opera season, saw the performance of a concert version of Verdi's *Falstaff*, with Giuseppe Taddei heading a cast of voices of considerable renown. There was also a performance of Stravinsky's opera-oratorio *Oedipus Rex* by Jacque Trussell, Lucia Valentini-Terrari, Esa Ruutinen, Stafford Dean; with the Chorus and Orchestra of Valencia conducted by Manuel Galduf. The event took place at Valencia's Palau de la Música on the 7th of May and was presented as the main attraction of the Ensemms-9. The project came off with a great effort made by all.

Also worthy of mention is the world premiere of the opera *El Mar de las Sirenas* by Valencian composer Bàguena Soler, in a concert version on May 21st at the Palau de la Música in Valencia. The work dates from 1940-41 and it took more than half a century for it to be played in its entirety.

The soloists were Marina Rodríguez, Itxaro Mentxaca, Ismael Pons, Patricia Llorens; and the Chorus and Orchestra of Valencia were directed by Manuel Galduf.

Other cities in the País Valencià were more fortunate from the point of view of opera performances. Though not intending to put together a stable season nor justify its absence, they were able to experience a number of quite interesting opera events. In the city of Alacant, opera returned to the Teatre Principal during the month of March, this time at the hands of the Polish State Opera, a company that carried under its wing the scores of Bizet's *Carmen* and Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, conducted by Alexander Tracz. They brought the city to life, operatically speaking. At Castelló, within the concerts programmed by the Philharmonic Society, we mention the Minsk Opera Company performance of Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, a certainly memorable show.

In the concert section, we mention the recitals by Renata Scotto, accompanied by Edelmiro Arnaltes, piano, at the Palau de la Música Catalana on the 18th January; and the one by Dimitri Hvorostovsky with Mikhail Arkadiev, piano, at the Liceu on the 30th. Along these lines, we also note the recital given by soprano Victòria dels Àngels and the Teatre Lliure Chamber Orchestra, conducted by Josep Pons, with Lluís Vidal, clavi-chord, at the La Caixa Foundation's Cultural Center, performing the *Concert per a Clave* and other pieces by Manuel de Falla, on the 14th of March.

As is now traditional, the La Caixa Foundation offered the Holy Week concert with Bach's *Saint Matthew Passion* on March 29th. It was performed by the Chamber Orchestra of the Halle Philharmonic, the Dresden Kreuzchor with Ute Selbig, soprano, Elisabeth Wilke, mezzosoprano, Martin Petrold, tenor, Siegfried Lorenz, baritone, and Siegfried Vogel, bass, conducted by Gothart Stier. They offered a disputable though interesting version of Bach's work.

In this year of commemorations there took place the homage to Mompou. Of the many that were held, we mention as the most notable ones one that was given by Victòria dels Àngels with Albert Guinovart and Joaquín Achúcarro, piano, on April 13th at the Palau de la Música Catalana and another by Carme Bustamante and Josep Colom, piano, in the «Euroconcert» season at the Palau de la Música Catalana on April 14th.

Monteverdi was also rendered homage this season for the 350th anniversary of his death. We feature here the concert given by the Coral Sant Jordi, with Virginia Parramon, Francesc Garrigosa, Josep Pieres, and the Nice Baroque Ensemble, conducted by Gilbert Bezzina. The concert took place at the Palau de la Música Catalana, also as part of the «Euroconcert» series, on May 19th.

Another concert in this period we mention for its importance in the «Euroconcert» season was one that the grup I Musici gave at the Palau de la Música Catalana on April 28th with a program comprising Vivaldi works: concertos from the RV catalog numbered 158, 564, 552, and the *Four Seasons*.

In the season of the Barcelona City Orchestra, conducted by Franz-Paul Decker, we note the final concert of the season in which it interpreted Mahler's *Symphony number 9* on May 14th, 15th and 16th.

The Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra together with the Orfeó Català protagonized a concert conducted by Kazimierz Kord in the «Palaucen» series held on May 18th at the Palau de la Música Catalana. They performed works by Liszt, Stravinsky and Beethoven. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra conducted by Daniel Barenboim performed Bruckner's *Symphony number 5* on the 9th of June, an excellent interpretation of Bruckner's difficult work.

In the «Ibercàmera» series we must highlight the concert by Rafael Orozco, piano, playing the *Suite Ibèria* by Isaac Albéniz. It took place at the Palau de la Música Catalana on the 9th of February. The Andalusian pianist, one of the best interpreters ever of Albéniz, has also recorded an album of the suite.

We mention also the recital of Barbara Hendricks, soprano, with a voice of admirable timbre, accompanied by Staffan Scheja at the piano. She sang works by Schubert, Wolf, Fauré, Chaussou, Gounod, and Bizet on April 16th at the Palau de la Música Catalana.

Musical life in Valencia was marked by the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Valencia Orchestra by the city's administration in spring 1943. To celebrate the anniversary, a series of events were scheduled, among which must be mentioned the concerts given by the orchestra dedicated to Berlioz on February 5th, conducted by Manuel Galduf.

During the month of March there took place a performance of the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields and the Orchestra of the Age of the Enlightenment. They performed works by Boccherini at the Palau de la Música in Valencia. We also mention the performance by the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra, with Zubin Mehta at its head, performing Berlioz's *Symphonie fantastique*. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Daniel Barenboim, performed at the Palau de la Música in Valencia on June 8th, also as part of the commemorative events of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Valencia Orchestra.

On March 9th the Symphony Orchestra of Alacant's Conservatori Superior de Música was presented to the public, under the direction of Joan Garcia Ivorra and Joan Iznardo Colom in a performance of works by

Mozart, Vivaldi and Haydn. On the other hand, the concert society continued its season scheduling the presence of high quality soloists such as Gustav Leonhard, Dezso Ranki or Radu Aldulescu. During the month of May, there were performances by the Artís Quartet from Vienna, the Baden-Baden Radio Symphony Orchestra, and closing the season was Alacant's own Enric Igual Blasco in a bassoon recital.

Following on the Olympic euphoria, this is a period which has seen the consolidation in Barcelona of the great commercial or private concert series, continuing along with the pattern of earlier scheduling. It has seen in other cities where the offer is not as diversified how less ambitious but efficient series have also survived. In the field of opera we continue lamenting the lack of interest on the part of Valencian authorities to deal with the challenge of maintaining a stable season.

JAUME CARBONELL I GUBERNA

Translated by Albert M. Muth

THEATRE

Since the «revival» of the dramatic text over a good part of Europe in the second half of the eighties, the regular appearance of new theater texts in Catalan has stopped being the exception to the rule. With regard to this point, we are living through a period of milk and honey. Indeed, while noting the productive continuity of a few authors who were promoted in the sixties and seventies, we see the consolidation of those dramatists who, up to now and approximately since 1986, have been called —perhaps in an over generic way— «young authors» or «new authors».¹ Among the authors

¹ The most productive: Sergi Belbel, Josep Pere Peyró, Lluís-Anton Baulenas, Lluïsa Cunillé, Joan Casas, Francesc Luchetti. And more sporadically (with relation to the diffusion of their work): Joan Barbero, Toni Cabré, Raimon Àvila, Pablo Ley, Francesc R. Pereira, Miquel M. Gibert, Joan Cavallé...

The matter does not end here, however. Gradually we are noting the continuous drip-down of what, aside from the age issue, I would dare to call a new generation of dramatists: Jordi Sánchez, Xavier Albertí, Núria Furió...

Dividing into generations is not exactly to my taste. What allows me to make a distinction is a strictly chronological criterion: basically, the fact of being connected or not to the breakout of drama in the second half of the '80's. In a general sense and bundling all the active dramatists into the same sack, I would dare to set up a single differen-

who began in the sixties and seventies, one cannot but remark the importance obtained by Josep M. Benet i Jornet. During the month of March, the Institution of Catalan Letters named him «Writer of the Month». The choice is quite significant: for years and years, before the present sprouting of drama, Benet's was almost the only voice that raised up among us to defend the theater of the text and of the theater author. That is, of the literary consideration of the dramatic text and the revaluing of the word on stage.

The case of Jordi Teixidor is rather different. In fact, he is a representative example of the marginalization (or oblivion) in which are found the greater part of the authors who appeared more than 20 years ago and who are still active today. On paper, Teixidor is a dramatist with a high degree of public presence;² in practice, though, his is a name which is represented less and less and as a result he is becoming lesser known. With regard to the consolidation of the «new authors», we must thank the Dramatic Center of the Generalitat for finally putting on *Nus* by Joan Casas (winner of the 1990 «Ignasi Iglésias Prize»). The work also received the 1993 «Serra d'Or Critics' Prize» for the best work of Catalan theater which had been premiered or published. For Joan Casas, then, if we keep in mind the «City of Alcoi Prize» which he obtained for *Al restaurant*, this has been a year for prize-winning. In a different fashion, Josep-Pere Peyró also stands out. After winning an honorable mention in the «Ignasi Iglésias» competition with *La trobada*, during the first months of the year, he premiered another piece (*La parella és...*) and published a brief theater text entitled *La mirada* in the journal *Pausa*. Furthermore, he adapted Juan Marsé's novel *L'amant bilingüe* and premiered it at Teatreneu.

Taken from another point of view, the revival of the dramatic text, in the case of Catalonia, is easily relatable to the growing interest to pass review over the native theater tradition. Thus, between 1992 and 1993 it is

tiation. That is, one which marks a determined dramatic tendency centering around the teaching of José Sanchis Sinisterra and of the influence of Sergi Belbel. The case of Sanchis is interesting. On the one hand, he is a controversial author inasmuch as he participates in the language polemic which blew up regarding the concept of «Catalan Literature». On the other hand, even though he writes in Castilian and from the obvious perspective of a *teatro hispano* [sic.], he has exercised a remarkable influence on quite a few contemporary Catalan dramatists; beginning with Sergi Belbel, Lluïsa Cunillé or Josep-Pere Peyró, and ending with Joan Casas or Josep M. Benet i Jornet. It should not be surprising, then, that throughout 1993, Sanchis premiered three works in Barcelona: *Misero Próspero*, *Dos tristes tigres* and *Benvingudes*.

² In November 1992 Teixidor published *El Patí*, the following month he won the 1992 «Ignasi Iglésias Prize» with a work entitled *Magnus*, and during March 1993, far away from the grand circuits, he premiered *La ceba*, a comic piece written in 1986.

worth mentioning two productions: *La filla del mar* by Àngel Guimerà, produced by the Dramatic Center of the Generalitat de Catalunya and directed by Sergi Belbel, and *Misteri de dolor* by Adrià Gual, produced by the Dramatic Center of the Vallès and directed by Feliu Formosa. The first case is the most important one; simply for the fact of not being produced isolatedly and ephemerally. It is an esthetic project integrated coherently and programmatically along a determinate institutional line. The review of the classics,³ in this way, opens a new front on the unbiased research into our collective identity while, at the same time, it provides tools for future drama creation. Thus, between 1992 and 1993 at the Romea Theater, seat of the Dramatic Center, we have been able to enjoy, in addition to Guimerà, texts by Víctor Català, Josep M. de Sagarra, Francesc Fontanella, Santiago Rusiñol and Carles Soldevila.

With regard to the appearance of new theater productions, more and more there is coming to be a certain tendency by professionals to organize themselves into small companies that usually are born and die with respect to a single show. Often, they are companies made up by young actors with few economic means who, in addition to having the impartial collaboration of a dramatist or a director, trust in the possibility of entering a small circuit, better and better defined, of halls we might term «alternative» ones. These halls usually have reduced seating and they specialize fundamentally in a type of theater which, in Catalonia, has ended up being called «small format» theater. The list continues to grow: Teatre Tantarantana, Sala Beckett, Teatre Malic, La Cuina, Sala Maria Plans (Terrassa), La Casona, Artenbrut (which opened toward the end of the year)... The debate, then, is out in the streets. First, the points of contact and the boundaries are to be established between concepts that are as close as alternate theater, small format theater, intimate theater or pocket theater. Second, we must see to what degree a scenic option of this sort responds to ideological criteria or to a series of external circumstances referring to chrematistic questions, to the requirements of production, and to the limitations of its distribution. To summarize: is it a fad or a necessity?⁴ With regard to this phenomenon it is only right to value positively the stimulation

³ «For me», says Benet i Jornet, «saying that a work is a classic is equivalent to saying that this work is still valid» (Benet is talking about «tradició viva»), «that it continues to intrigue us after the death of its author. Nothing more.» «Un local pels clàssics catalans», *Escena*, March 1993, p. 11.

⁴ Joaquim Vilà Folch: «El teatre de petit format, una moda o una necessitat?» *Serra d'Or*, issue 400, April 1993, p. 97. See also the monographic dossier, «Petit format», *Pau-sa*, issue 13, March 1993, pp. 14-50.

that the Tàrrrega Theater Festival has meant. Since the 1992 edition, under the direction of Frederic Roda Fàbregas, it has functioned as an effective platform, or if you prefer, as a «theater market» for the majority of «alternative proposals in the last few seasons. After the recovery of the genre which the tents of the Fall Festivals and the Olympic Arts Festival brought about, one must add on the increasing programming of late-night sessions.⁵

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the great showplaces, mostly linked to government, continue maintaining a frazzled and incoherent programming. Without putting into doubt the quality of the shows which were scheduled, we may find the clearest example of this claim by looking at the history of the Mercat de les Flors, exhibition hall of Barcelona City Hall, which celebrated its tenth anniversary this year. We must be thankful, though, for the coherence of several honorable exceptions. In fact, I have already mentioned the example of the Romea Theater which has arranged its programming (mostly shows produced right there) almost exclusively around Catalan theater (classic and contemporary). All in all, seasoned with an effective policy of publishing and grants for creation.

The year 1993 has also been one for new performance sites: the inauguration of the Espai B at the Mercat de les Flors, the Teatre Tantarantana, the reopening of the Teatre Condal, the recovery of the Teatre Borràs and the redefinition (in the direction of private management) of the SAT (Sant Andreu Theater) which, presently, under the direction of two companies (Teatre Urbà de Barcelona and Teatre de Barcelona) has taken on a new period of management with a positively risky programming which we might also tag as politically and socially «committed».⁶ All together, curiously, it contrasts with a marked climate of pessimism overall in the theater sector exacerbated by the delay in institutional economic assistance and by the lack of a overall clear and coherent policy by the various administrations.

⁵ Sessions which usually commence at around midnight. At the Teatre Victòria, the SAT in Sant Andreu, Teixidors-Teatreneu, Teatre Tantarantana, Teatre Condal, the recently recovered Teatre Borràs and, more sporadically, at Sala Maria Plans. For now, it cannot be guaranteed that this initiative will have the continuity that it deserves.

⁶ The objective that those responsible for this initiative have proposed passes through the consolidation of a «space for interdisciplinary exchange, polyvalent; a place where the audience and the artists come to speak the same language and where communication is possible». One must add on the supplementary risk which is inherent in the peripheral situation of this theater vis-à-vis Barcelona.

With regard to productions of texts by foreign authors, we note, once again, the presence of three names: Thomas Bernhard, David Mamet and Bernard-Marie Koltès.⁷ By the first, *El dinar* (Ritter, Dene, Voss), premiered by the La Infidel Company; by the second, *American Buffalo*, put on by La Gàbia from Vic and *Perversitat sexual a Xicago*, by Teatre a la Deriva. By the third, *La nit just abans dels boscos*, put on by the La d'Hac Company. Just after the summer, the Teatre Lliure put on *Roberto Zucco* at its future headquarters at the Palau de l'Agricultura on Montjuïc.

In the months of April and May, there was organized in Vic a «David Mamet Series» which started off from the real interest of Jordi Mesalles (director of the two aforementioned productions) for the genuinely American duality between the fascination for Beckett and the Stanislavskian tradition; between minimalism and hyperrealism; between the American Dream and *fin du siècle* pessimism. On the other hand, Sergi Belbel, with carte blanche from Barcelona's Institut Francès, organized some activities around the figure of the late Bernard-Marie Koltès during the month of March. Is there anything in common between the writing of these authors and that of contemporary Catalan authors? In general, yes, there is. When all is said and done, it deals mostly with a writing the claims the active and creative participation of the reader. It is a writing which often tries to create a deliberate play between realism and formalism. Behind an apparent «unnatural» disposition of language, occasionally amidst a play of «visibly» absurd rejoinders or with an irritating lack of stage directions, without hardly any indications for movement or intention, it invites us to conceive in our minds a credible situation where these «strange» dialogs might be possible, to transform into discourse an utterance which noone has guaranteed from the offset clear conditions for its usage.⁸ The proposal by an

⁷ It is worth mentioning, moreover, a few productions which, either for their quality, their success or for both things at the same time, stand out from the season as a whole: *Dansa d'agost* by Brian Friel (Teatre Lliure), *Tot assajant «Dom Juan»* by Louis Jouvet (Companyia Flotats), *Els germans Karamazov* by Dostoievski (Companyia Teatre Mosoviet from Moscow) and *Impressions de Pelleas*, based on the Maeterlinck/Debussy *Pelleas et Mélisande* which, directed by Peter Brook, commemorated the tenth anniversary of the Mercat de les Flors (a space inaugurated, precisely with the production of *Carmen* by the same director). Among the names which have been left behind in the sack I would like to bring up for mention the presence of Francis Xavier Kroetz (*Viatge a la felicitat*), Václav Havel (*Audiència* and *Vernissatge*), Lewis Carroll (*Cartes a nenes*), Landford Wilson (*El castell del cosmos*) and Raymond Queneau (*El vol d'Icar*).

⁸ In a few words, the dramatist invites us to become good theater readers, or good «virtual directors», as José Sanchis would say. Thus, while speaking of *Misero Próspero*, Sanchis nuances: «the relation between a deliberately open, ambiguous, polysemous tex-

author who demands an active and playful reader partakes of a criterion which, even though not new at all, slowly is taking shape as a distinctive mark for an important body of dramatists. It has been talked about rather a lot. It's a principle of sluggishness, delay and opacity of information, a principle, which served up in small doses, organizes the dramatic tension around a few unknown quantities and a small deceit or two. It is a principle which probably requires carefully foreseeing the mechanisms of reception and which, moreover, takes gleeful advantage of the situational ambiguity, providing false leads and meddling with our logic to the unnerving point in which every hypothesis must desperately seek its solution, also to the point where we must systematically doubt any action and any character.

With regard to the publication of theater texts, the outlook is not very encouraging, above all due to the reduced number of specialized series and the budgetary stranglehold on Institut del Teatre publications. On the one hand, it is worthwhile highlighting the drive of the series «Teatre» of the Valencian publisher Tres i Quatre which, in the month of October 1992, presented three volumes at once: one by Heiner Müller (*La missió* and *La màquina Hamlet*), one by George Tabori (*Mein Kampf*), and one of Sergi Belbel's first pieces (*Minim.mal show*). On the other hand, we must continue to praise the continuity of the Edicions 62 series «El Galliner» which presented during the first half of the year: *Els negres. Pallassada* by Jean Genet, *Al restaurant* by Joan Casas, and *Fedra o la inclemència del temps* by Miquel Maria Gibert. With regard to the Institut del Teatre publications, in spite of the precarious situation we referred to above, it did publish a few volumes in the first half of 1993. Worth mentioning are the books *Teatre-Dansa* by Susanne Schlicher and *Un teatre de situacions* by Jean-Paul Sartre. Finally, it is worth commenting on the appearance of a series of theater texts promoted by the Dramatic Center of the Generalitat de Catalunya which brought out its first volumes in October 1992: Sergi Belbel's *Tàlem* and Narcís Comadira's *La vida perdurable*.

To conclude, I will allude briefly to journals specializing in theater. First, we lament the disappearance of the journal *El Público* in winter 1992. Since 1983 it had been a very useful tool to familiarize oneself with the theater scene around Spain. Second, at the opposite extreme, we must be glad for the recovery of the journal *Escena* which more than two years ago had had to close up shop. This journal, in its new period, presents itself in format paying greater attention to detail and fortunately lays emphasis on publishing thea-

tuality and a theatricality which, in spite of the inevitable concretion of its meaningful elements, holds for the receiver a maximum of interpretative freedom (and perplexity)». Hand program of *Misero Próspero*, Sala Beckett, March 1993.

ter texts by contemporary authors. Finally, we might mention the effort by the journal *Pausa* («a magazine with ideas») to survive as an essay journal in a theater world which is little accustomed to reflection and debate.

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