

The new gallery El Quadern Robat recovers the work of photographer Martí Gasull i Coral, who masterfully captured the atmosphere of Barcelona in the 40s and 50s

Light in post-war

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Martí Gasull i Coral had a large photographic studio specializing in portraits in the Portal de l'Àngel in Barcelona and was well known among the great post-war photographers for being a great laboratory technician. But before opening the store, especially in the period between Pilar Day and All Saints' Day, Gasull would go for a walk around Barcelona early in the morning, between eight and ten. At that time of year and day, he said he found the right light to take photographs of the city. Light that gradually illuminated the sea, light reflecting on the asphalt of the streets or light poetically filtering through the steel beams of the France Station. A light that shaped the very particular atmosphere of post-war Barcelona, and that today would be very difficult to recreate.

Like so many other professional photographers who dedicated their lives to their studios and photo shops, these photographs, which Gasull himself would have considered "amateur", were not shown in exhibitions. Gasull, who died in 1994, only participated once in a collective exhibition at the Písciolabís hall in Barcelona in 1987. Now, and thanks to the archive kept



'Palau de la Música' (years 52-54) and 'Filtered light' (from the late forties), taken at the France station ■ MARTÍ GASULL I CORAL



Gasull's photos had only been seen in a group exhibition in 1987

by his son of the same name also a well-known art and artists photographer, the new Barcelona gallery El Quadern Robat is recovering in an exhibition a good set of Barcelona urban landscapes by Martí Gasull that highlight the photographer's mastery.

The gallery owner of El Quadern Robat, Anna Belsa, indicates that Martí Gasull is one of the most forgotten Catalan photogra-

phers of the post-war period and that his work deserves a recovery. With an evident love for the city landscape, Gasull had a special interest in the treatment of light. One of the most outstanding images in the exhibition captures the Sant Pere més Alt street, with the facade of the Palau de la Música, on a very rainy morning. Gasull perfectly captured the light of a gray autumn day

in Barcelona that is reflected in the asphalt of the practically flooded street. In other cases Gasull achieves beautiful effects by filtering sunlight through the architecture of the France station. The photographer also approached abstraction with images of architectural details or distorting the images thanks to the effect of a transparent uralite in front of the scene.

The photographs by Martí Gasull included in this exhibition are all unique examples of the period, as the negatives are not preserved. In addition, a video at the entrance to the exhibition projects 200 more images by the photographer in genres such as landscape, portrait, advertising and abstract research.

Gallery on Còrsega Street

Martí Gasull's exhibition is the first of historical photography to take place at the El Quadern Robat gallery, which opened last year on a main floor on Còrsega Street, very close to Enric Granados Street. Anna Belsa, who for many years was a programmer at the Artgràfic-Joan Prats gallery, decided to take advantage of her long experience in the gallery world to exhibit artists of interest to her on her own. The gallery, which takes its name from a novel that Belsa wrote when she was a student and also from a blog where she shares her experience with art, will do about four exhibition a year; the next one, in mid-October, will be by David Yimbernon. ■

*Martí Gasull i Coral.

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