

Return Journeys: Documentary Threads of Art in the Lafuente Archive

Mela Dávila Freire

After the end of the Franco dictatorship, when Spain joined the contemporary world, its structure of institutional and private collections was encumbered by a host of deficits and shortages. In addition to the evident political, social and cultural precariousness fostered by the regime there were a series of complex circumstances, some of which went back through several centuries of history.¹ Because of them, when the time came to restore the democratic system there were hardly any spaces or resources for exhibiting and publicising modern and contemporary works, authors and movements, and research and analysis in those fields were virtually non-existent. In the eighties, this was the starting point for the launch of a web of institutions engaged with the art of the 20th century. Thanks to them, it was hoped to catch up with the “normalised” situation of neighbouring countries as quickly as possible. Unfortunately, in this process, spurred on by the urge to overcome what was seen as backwardness and by the long period of economic boom, long-term planning and the optimisation of resources were relegated to the background.

Three decades later, the result is that we have gone from nothing to abundance in terms of the number of public institutions engaged with modern and contemporary art, dependent on various branches of the administration and distributed all around the country. However, in this transformation “the construction of infrastructures and exhibition policies have been given priority over other actions which could have enabled contemporary art to take deeper root in society, such as the consolidation of stable structures and *permanent collections*, the training of professionals, educational intervention or *the promotion of communities of interest and knowledge*”.² In other words: at the same time that museums were being built and ambitious exhibition programmes launched, the compilation of collections with a sound historiographic framework and the practices of criticism and research were barely to be found among the priority goals. A side effect of this was the scant attention generally paid – with honourable exceptions –³ to the consolidation of document centres, libraries and institutional archives designed to identify, preserve and publicise the documentary traces generated by the progress of art in the 20th century.

In the case of the private collections specialising in bibliographic or documentary heritage, an analysis of the Spanish scene yields results that also reflect a serious imbalance: collections of this kind, which are relatively frequent in other European and American countries, hardly exist here. Other indicators of the interest aroused by the cultural and bibliographic heritage such as public-private partnerships for the conservation and management of personal papers and fonds, the number of specialist booksellers or fairs devoted to 20th century books and documents turn out to be equally unfavourable for the Spanish context.⁴ Lastly, the institutional consideration given to the preservation of personal archives, libraries and collections of documents gathered by creators, art critics, gallery owners and other leading figures on the art scene has been meagre until quite recently. This has led to the irretrievable loss of large numbers of personal papers. In short: although the bibliographic or documentary heritage linked to modern and contemporary art in Spain is indispensable to the advance of historiographic analyses and interpretations, as well as possessing significant aesthetic qualities, it is only now beginning to be cautiously appreciated.

Of course, this lack of interest in documentary or bibliographic collections is striking if we bear in mind that for the most part the artistic output of the last century can hardly be

analysed in its entirety when it is disconnected from its documentary aspect. Over the last hundred years the boundary between the classic categories “work of art” and “document” has been so blurred that it has virtually disappeared, since what had previously been understood by “artistic output” has become inextricably mingled with its corresponding “documentary output”.

In this process of identification between artistic output and documentary output, many circumstances have played an important part. Among them, the leading role acquired by the printed document as a medium and support for the public transmission of messages takes a preeminent place. Through the 20th century there were many artists who placed their creative capacity at the service of the successive movements – political, social or artistic or all three at once – which came in waves to shake the rhythm of European and American history. That was a time when the spread of messages and their nearest relative, political propaganda, gave the impression of a veritable avalanche of books, posters, pamphlets, journals and ephemeral documents of all kinds designed to convey urgent communications with political, social or artistic content. Although the ultimate aim of these documents, unlike the works of art created by the artists themselves, was not aesthetic, in many cases their formal characteristics, often defined by identical artistic principles, were. This phenomenon would recur over decades and generations of artists, from Futurism and its radical aspirations to social transformation to Mail Art, by way of the corrosive and ironic social criticism of the Dadaist movement, the spread of the rationalist ideas of the Bauhaus, the application of graphic resources such as photomontage to political propaganda or the Poster Art of the war and the post-war period. At the same time, the turning of creative talent towards the applied arts which took place in the first half of the 20th century, as a consequence of factors such as the advances made in printing techniques and the last gasps of the 19th century Arts and Crafts Movement, brought a spectacular creative development of typography and typographic composition in general. These would be applied in printed formats of all kinds related to a large number of disciplines: not only art, but also literature, architecture, or industrial design. In this context it was no accident that the experiments spread to writing as well, the links between the letters and their visual, semantic and acoustic aspects were reviewed in depth, redefined and aesthetically exploited.

When the first third of the century had gone by, the successive diasporas caused by historical upheavals, starting with world and civil wars and continuing through the long periods of dictatorship that followed one another in a number of European and Latin American countries, only speeded up the international spread of artistic schools, tendencies and attitudes. They consigned the “national” perspectives of art historiography to obsolescence, while thickening the webs of communication and collaboration the artists had woven from their personal or professional contact and which had been crossing national borders since the beginning. From the 1950s, for many artists the epistolary exchanges of Mail Art meant an opening of spaces of the mind for creative and political freedom. At the same time, the so-called “conceptual turn” and the consequent process of dematerialisation of the work Conceptual Art brought with it promoted the definitive consolidation of the artist’s book as an artistic genre in its own right. Simultaneously, new movements – think of Land Art – , new formats – such as performance or site-specific works – and new artistic perspectives – among them the one that places the process of creation of the work at the true core of its value to the detriment of the resulting art object – , in the framework of which the importance of documents, as sole material trace of the creative activity, could only grow.

And there is no question that the lack of public or private collections documenting all these circumstances has had a major impact by hindering the historiographic research designed to integrate these kinds of artistic output into the ruling historiographic canon. In other words, the absence of archives and libraries duly equipped with quality papers has prevented the due recognition of numerous artistic practices so far labelled as secondary, which have lived in the shadow of the dominant perspectives of the history of art.

Such was the panorama at the dawn of the new millennium: despite the evidence of the inextricable relation between work and document in the artistic output of the 20th century, in Spain – and in Latin America for that matter – there were hardly any important bibliographic collections for documenting it. Among other effects, that gave rise to the systematic neglect of many Spanish and Latin American artistic practices in the construction of the Western artistic-historical canon. At the beginning of the 2000s the Santander industrialist José María Lafuente, who was fully aware of this, promoted the transformation of his art collection into a top class bibliographic and documentary one, a decision that marked the birth of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE.

The LAFUENTE ARCHIVE is an extensive collection of documents specialising in the history of 20th century art in Europe, Latin America and the United States, with particular emphasis on Spain. It was created in 2002 by José María Lafuente to draw and disseminate a documentary map that would enable the development of new historiographic interpretations, original perspectives and, in general, investigation and the production of knowledge in the field of modern and contemporary art.

The seed of the archive is to be found back in the eighties, a time when Lafuente started an art collection that would grow with the inclusion of works by Spanish painters and sculptors, which were gradually joined by pieces by international artists. In the practice of his activity as art collector, he immediately realised that there were no private or institutional archives in Spain that would provide access to the original documentary sources, the “primary information” on which the developments in art over the last century are based. Around 2002, his attitude and interests as a collector underwent a major change of perspective, thanks to which the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE would discover its true founding impulse. In that transformation the acquisition of the documentary legacies of two important figures on the Spanish cultural scene in the second half of the 20th century was decisive.

Miguel Logroño (Zaragoza, 1937 - Madrid, 2009) was art critic and founder of the Salon of the Sixteen, first director of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía library and friend of many artists. In addition to a large number of works of art, mostly by Spanish artists from the second half of the century, Logroño’s library and personal archive, acquired by Lafuente in July 2003, included many books and catalogues, ephemeral material and plentiful printed documents of quite different kinds. Among them were many publications either relatively little known or difficult to find. As a whole, they provided a faithful, detailed record of the developments of the contemporary Spanish art scene throughout the century.

The vital political facet of Pablo Beltrán de Heredia’s activity (Gran Canaria, 1917 - Santander, 2009) was marked by his close connection with José María Gil Robles, whose work he published, and his support for the monarchic cause of Don Juan de Borbón. In his cultural interests, the publisher and university lecturer Beltrán de Heredia stood out as a partner and active contributor to Imprenta Bedia, a publishing house that was decisive in the dissemination

of 20th century Spanish poetry and famous for the exquisite formal quality of its publications. In the last years of his life, Beltrán de Heredia became a close friend of José María Lafuente, and remained so until his death in August 2009. He bequeathed to him his personal archive, which provided a detailed illustration of his active work as academic and publisher. Earlier, in May 2002, the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE had already acquired a small but significant section of that personal archive, linked to the encounters and activities of the Altamira School; Beltrán de Heredia had played a fundamental part in its organisation.⁵ Held in 1949 and 1950, the encounters had set out to promote exchange between Spanish and foreign artists in order to rediscover and give new life to the country's artistic avantgarde. The documentary record included works of art and with them exchanges of letters, ephemeral printed works, manuscripts and documents and catalogues of all kinds about the artists and intellectuals taking part.

The inclusion of both in Lafuente's collection had a definitive impact on his activity as collector, awarding the documents a preeminent place. From that change of direction, the growth of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has been based on two premises:

First, the twofold condition of the document – whether book, sketch, manuscript or any other format – as informative and contextualising material while also being a creative work in its own right occupies the foreground of the interest of the archive. In consequence, disciplines and genres that have been traditionally considered secondary or minor, such as graphic design, typography, the artist's book or experimental writing, are placed on the same level as painting or sculpture. Avoiding the centuries-old separation between works and documents, the stress is now no longer on their differences, but on the points they share and the close relations that bind them.

Second, the geographical areas whose activity is illustrated in the archive go far beyond the main centres of development of the various movements and tendencies in an effort to document the history of art in sectors traditionally regarded as marginal or peripheral, whose activity, therefore, has not been studied with due seriousness. And so, although the axis of interest lies clearly in Europe and Latin America, in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE a panoramic perspective prevails and is not strictly subject to geographical borders, art movements or mere chronological order. The intention is rather for the very texture of the links between the different documents that make up the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE to literally reproduce the dense web of relationships of affinity, influence, collaboration, competition or even conflict that binds the output of many artists through the 20th century. For that reason, in the archive as a whole special emphasis is placed on movements, currents and tendencies that involve artistic collaboration and personal contact between artists and creators over a geography as wide as it is interconnected, not only in the field of art but also in spheres as diverse as literature, typography and graphic design, political propaganda, advertising and the media, architecture and photography.

Today, the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE consists of approximately 120,000 documents, as well as some 2,000 works of art including paintings, sculptures and graphics. Books, magazines, posters and other ephemeral printed works, drawings, manuscripts, sketches, collages, correspondence, photographs, artist's books and, to a lesser extent, audiovisual material are the most frequent formats in the archive. According to its provenance, this wide and varied legacy of documents and works is organised in fonds, collections and occasional acquisitions. The fonds are a

compilation of all, or almost all, the documents generated by the activity of a single producer, whether an individual, a group, an organisation or an entity. The document collections, often smaller than the fonds, span categories whose elements may have quite different provenances, but are related to one another according to their subject matter, their producers or other criteria of interest.

Both the documents included in fonds and collections and the numerous occasional acquisitions that make up the archive are, in turn, ordered in large collections by topics. Sustaining many of these, one of the great general motifs of the archive is experimentation with writing in all its aspects: visual poetry, Mail Art and alternative communications networks, literature, typography, artist's books, a certain kind of peripheral publication aside from the political mainstream. The enormous importance given in the archive to the transformations in the visual materiality of language through the 20th century springs from the conviction that art not only entails a process of search on the aesthetic plane, but is also a form of knowledge and communication in its own right.

The intensity of the interrelations between many of the documentary materials of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE is indeed the greatest obstacle to structuring its contents in the shape of a linear, one-way narration. Broadly speaking, however, in order to present its legacy intelligibly those materials can be grouped in two broad periods: the one between the turn of the century and the Second World War and the years between the beginning of the post-war and the middle of the eighties.

1900-1945. Avantgarde and renewal in art and writing

Coinciding with a series of technical advances that followed rapidly on one another, in the first years of the 20th century the publication of numerous volumes on typography triggered an intense and enormously creative process of renewal, which would go on for several decades in many countries. The LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has compiled an exhaustive collection of materials, mostly printed, which document that change and have the peculiarity of including the first editions of the manuals and essays that provided the thrust for that transforming movement. Technically, it started with a search for industrial printing models that would meet criteria of modernity and productivity, along with an aspiration to the simplification of the typefaces, readability and the semantic transparency of the signs. Simultaneous with that thrust, between 1909 and 1915 the Futurist doctrine of "plastic dynamism" broke the traditional moulds of visual communication by introducing asymmetrical compositions, the simultaneity of planes and the juxtaposition of words, images, graphic elements and resources of all kinds that would bring dynamism to the printed page to produce sensations of speed and evoke the world of machines. And so, in his famous theoretical manifesto in 1913, *L'immaginazione senza fili e le Parole in Libertà*,⁶ Marinetti proposed the solution to all those questions with the explicit concept of "typographical revolution".

Around 1920, the Russian and Dutch Constructivists were concentrating on an analysis of the technical structure and functionality of the elements of the printed page, basing their compositions on geometrical rigour and using not only typographical elements but also photographs and photomontages, whilst in Germany two treatises, *Topographie der Typographie* by El Lissitzky,⁷ and the special number of the magazine *Elementare Typographie*, written and designed by Jan Tschichold,⁸ were two of the most significant theoretical and practical contributions of the decade. Around the same time Paul Renner was making a similar

impact, in this case in the field of typographical design, by designing and publishing his Futura typeface, created between 1925 and 1927 and inspired by the purity of geometrical shapes. In the broad collection by topics devoted to the typographical revolution in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, as well as the titles by El Lissitzky and Jan Tschichold we have *An Essay on Typography* by Eric Gill; *Unterricht in ornamentaler Schrift* by Rudolf von Larisch; *First Principles of Typography* by Stanley Morison; *20 alfabeti brevemente illustrati* by Raffaello Bertieri; *Catalog Design* by Ladislav Sutnar and Knud Lonbergh-Holm,⁹ and many others. In this collection Renner's Futura also occupies a notable place, illustrated by an excellent selection of publications by its creator and other typographers of the time.

Between 1927 and 1930, in both Europe and America there was a wave of experiments and initiatives in typographical review similar to the German ones, especially in the world of advertising, a field where the figure of the Italian Fortunato Depero soon stood out. By completely subverting the traditional principles of typographical composition and the conventional format of the book, his publication *Depero Futurista*¹⁰ has become one of the bibliographical milestones of the 20th century. In the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, the collection of Fortunato Depero documents includes all the books published by him in his lifetime and a number of posters, handwritten cards and period photographs.

From its foundation in 1919, the Staatliches Bauhaus in Dessau collection to work to remake the Constructivist tradition in its graphic ideas. To the academic cloister of the Bauhaus, founded by Walter Gropius, belonged many figures of the avantgarde movements, such as Paul Klee, Vasily Kandinsky, Lyonel Feininger, Herbert Bayer, Josef Albers, Theo van Doesburg and László Moholy-Nagy. In the matter of typography, as in many other spheres, the Bauhaus would be the space for reflection and production that had the greatest influence on the definitive step towards modernity. Unfortunately, the experiment in avantgarde radicalism that was the Bauhaus was brief: the coming of Nazism led to the closing of the school in July 1933, whilst in the whole of Germany, Austria, Holland and France there were waves of repression of artistic and literary activity. From that time the principles of the Bauhaus began to spread throughout the West, while teachers and students at the school took the road to exile or escape. The LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has abundant documents on this process through its books, magazines and the plentiful material published by the school.

Whilst this was going on in Germany, between 1925 and 1940 many figures from other European countries did outstanding work in typography and typographical composition. In Spain, plunged in the Civil War at that time, the quality of the works of the illustrator and poster maker José Renau and some other typographers stood out, whilst Holland could boast Piet Zwart, Hendrik Nicolaas Werkman and Paul Schuitema; in Czechoslovakia, Karel Teige and Ladislav Sutnar; in Russia, Varvara Stepanova and El Lissitzky himself; in Poland, Wladyslaw Strzemiski... The works of all these authors are represented in the great collection devoted to typography in the archive, which has particularly extensive selections of materials in the case of the German Constructivist artist and typographer Walter Dexel (Munich, 1890 - Braunschweig, 1973), with publications from the twenties and thirties in particular, among them his now classic invitations, cards, calendars and advertising material; the Dutch designer Paul Schuitema (Groningen, 1897 - Wasenaar, 1973), whose works – both in books and magazines and in industrial design – are distinguished by their original way of using photomontage and colour; and Piet Zwart, also Dutch (Zaandijk, 1885 - Wasenaar, 1977), represented in the archive by more than fifty works that include the ones done for the Dutch Cable Company, the Dutch Postal Service, cover designs for the magazine *Filmkunst* (Rotterdam, 1931-1933), etc.

In the field of art, three more significant collections by topics of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE recount the transformations that ran parallel to the typographical renewal in Europe. These collections are grouped around the three great art movements that lived side by side in the first half of the century: Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism. As is the case with the collection devoted to typographical experimentation, these three pay special attention to the treatises that defined their theoretical bases. Moreover, the perspective from which the bibliographic and documentary output of these three movements is approached by the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE denotes a marked transversal bias by singling out the nexus that linked those movements and that were often the result of the personal relations between their leading figures.¹¹

Here, the landmark publication of the first half of the century may well be the Futurist manifesto *Parole in libertà* (Marinetti, 1913), insofar as it captures the spirit of radicalism and breaking with the past that characterised the efforts for typographical renewal and the attitude with which Futurists, Dadaists and Surrealists all tackled the regeneration of conventional language, writing and formats of publication. The archive echoes the important printed legacy of Futurism in the collection by topics devoted to it, which includes manifestos, magazines, books and printed documents of all kinds. Close to the world of advertising from the outset, the Futurist movement used the manifestos to set out their artistic ideas and to attack the academic world and the more conservative factions of art. The LAFUENTE ARCHIVE contains a large number of Futurist manifestos, magazines and the most important books of the movement. In Italy we can pick out titles such as *Pittura Scultura Futuriste. Dinamismo Plastico*, the only book on plastic theory written by the painter Umberto Boccioni; the warlike declaration *Guerrapittura* by Carlo Carrà; *BIF&ZF + 18. Simultaneità e Chimismi lirici* by Ardengo Soffici, whose cover, with a typographical collage by the author, seems to herald the Dadaist collages; and *L'Arte dei rumori* by Luigi Russolo, a manifesto that preached for the sphere of music the same principles as the literary *parole in libertà*.¹² In Russia, where the book was regarded by the Futurists as an art object rather than a propaganda element, the breaking of the classic moulds of typographical composition began with the first Futurist group led by the Burliuk Brothers, to which the poet Mayakovsky was closely linked, and continued with Natalia Goncharova's collage-illustrations for books of an extreme material precariousness which, nevertheless, show an enormous delicacy in their workmanship. The Zaum language, an invention by Velimir Khlebnikov and Aleksei Kruchenykh by way of an experimental poetic language of indeterminate meaning, shares with Surrealist poetry a wish to strip language of its conventional meanings, but also formal features with Marinetti's onomatopoeic compositions, of which *Zang Tumb Tumb*¹³ is undoubtedly the best known. And lastly there are more than evident similarities between the Russian Futurist evenings, to which Goncharova and Lorionov turned up with their faces daubed to defend the fusion of art and life, and the Dadaist evenings which spread through the countries of Central Europe in the years between the wars. Their documentary traces consist, in this case, of hundreds of pamphlets, posters, small manifestos and invitations, often designed by artists such as Kurt Schwitters and Theo van Doesburg, who were active in the typographical renewal which followed its course simultaneously with the Futurist and Dadaist developments.

These and other examples, such as the Constructivist drift of Alexander Rodchenko and El Lissitzky, who evolved towards Constructivist positions when they moved to Berlin, or the links between Natalia Goncharova, David Burliuk and Vasily Kandinsky and the German Expressionist movement "Der blaue Reiter", as well as Kandinsky's later relation with the Bauhaus, are abundantly documented in the various collections of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, and show to what extent, in the first quarter of the 20th century, the main art movements of the

time were bound by many crossovers and ties, often of a personal nature.

On 5 March 1916 in Zurich the first evening at the Cabaret Voltaire was held. It provided the setting for the creation and development of the Dadaist movement, documented in a large collection in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE. Founded by Hugo Ball, the Cabaret Voltaire was the setting where the Dadaists, among them Ball himself, Richard Huelsenbeck, also German, the Rumanian Tristan Tzara and the Franco-German Hans Arp, among many others, put into practice the fusion between different art genres which was one of the features of the movement. In the same year, the members of the group published the first and only number of the magazine *Cabaret Voltaire*, which included contributions from Expressionist, Cubist and Futurist creators, as well as the Dadaists themselves. *Dada*, which appeared between 1917 and 1921, followed *Cabaret Voltaire* as the journal of the movement; published first in Zurich and then in Paris, its editor was Tristan Tzara. The French magazine *Maintenant*, edited and written by the Swiss poet and boxer Arthur Cravan in Paris between 1912 and 1915, may be said to be one of the clear literary precedents of the Dadaist magazines, with their mixture of reviews and literary eccentricities. Also in Paris, between 1920 and 1921 the six numbers of *Proverbe* appeared. It was a monthly publication edited by Paul Éluard, still linked at the time to Dadaism but an intimate friend of André Breton, and very interested in the Surrealist aesthetic positions. The magazine gave a full account of Éluard's position at the time, halfway between Dadaism and Surrealism. The complete series of those three titles, together with a substantial collection of magazines of the period, can also be consulted in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE.

The collection by topics devoted to Surrealism in the archive, dated between 1925 and 1965, allows us, through books and catalogues, invitations, cards and posters, to travel the winding road followed by that artistic current as it spread through European and Latin American countries. An outstanding item in the collection is the selection of materials related to André Breton himself. It spans all the books he published and all the magazines he promoted – *La Révolution Surréaliste* (1924-1929), *Le Surréalisme au Service de la Révolution* (1930-1933), *Minotaure* (1933-1939) – and the many documents generated by the dissemination of the Surrealist exhibitions which Breton organised in France and other countries, among them Spain, Italy, Denmark, Mexico and England. The exhibition “Surrealismo antes del surrealismo”, which was on at the March Foundation in Madrid in 2013, showed a large selection of materials from this collection.¹⁴

As far as its provenance is concerned, the collection by topics devoted to Surrealism is largely made up of documents from the Westerdahl-Domínguez collection, incorporated into the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE in 2006 and constructed around the personal archive of the Canary painter, art critic and writer Eduardo Westerdahl (Santa Cruz de Tenerife, 1902-1983). The collection includes not only the documents relating to his work as writer, photographer, editor of *Gaceta de arte* and promoter of various cultural initiatives, but also the documentary traces of his friendship with the painter Óscar Domínguez (Tenerife, 1906 - Paris, 1957). As well as a complete collection of *Gaceta de arte* (Tenerife, 1932-1936) – and all the editions published with the label of the magazine –, it includes part of Westerdahl's library and original work and graphic work by Domínguez, all the books he illustrated – in two cases, the layouts with the original drawings –, photographs by Westerdahl himself and other authors, and a repertory of correspondence by both Domínguez and Westerdahl. Recently, decalcomanias and books from this collection were to be seen in the exhibition “Óscar Domínguez: Decalcomanías y objetos” at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía.¹⁵

The collection around Surrealism is also complemented with the materials relating to the Surrealist Eugenio Granell, a collection partly made up thanks to the documentary fruits of the friendship which bound Agustín Lafuente – José María's father – with the Galician artist. The collection includes all the books by Granell, a selection of his work, correspondence between him and Agustín Lafuente and ephemeral material of various kinds.

In relation to Futurism, Dadaism and Surrealism, separate mention should be made of the collection of European magazines associated with one (or more) of those movements conserved in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE. Between 1900 and 1945, they were a fertile ground for cooperation between artists and intellectuals linked to all the avantgarde movements, which were developing almost simultaneously. That may be why they are where we can most clearly appreciate the close interrelation between the leading members of those three movements. The collection of magazines in the archive includes periodical publications from many countries: as well as those we have already mentioned, *Maintenant* in Paris and *Cabaret Voltaire* and *Dada* in Zurich, we find *Portugal Futurista* (Lisbon, 1917), *Noi* (Rome, 1923-1924), *75 HP* (Bucharest, 1924) *H2SO4* (Tiflis, 1924), *Pásmo* (Brno-Prague, 1924-1926), *Blok* (Warsaw, 1924-1926), as well as many titles published in different countries of Latin America, many of which appear in clear connection with the movements we have commented on. And so, for example, among the Surrealist magazines of the archive we find a selection of numbers of *Mandrágora* (Chile, 1938-1943), and the complete series of the Argentinian *Ciclo* (1948-1949), *A partir de cero* (1952-1956), and *Boa* (1958).

Concerning the Spanish situation in the first half of the 20th century, it is well known that it was marked by an exceptional calendar of historical events in relation to the rest of the continent, which brought about its disconnection from the rhythm of evolution of the European art currents. In relation to this specific feature, the period of the Republic and the Republican exile provide the central subject of another large collection by topics in the Lafuente Archive, a selection of whose materials was shown recently at the rooms devoted to the Spanish Republic Pavilion (1937) at the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, as part of the presentation of the section of its collection devoted to the thirties.¹⁶ The documentary materials in this collection by topics are very varied. Some bear witness to the Spanish art scene under the Republic, with outstanding groups which were very active and linked to the international scene, such as ADLAN, whose publications are to be found in the archive. When the Civil War broke out, among the notable denunciations published by the Republican side, or in its favour, are Spanish magazines such as *Nueva cultura. Información crítica y orientación intelectual* (Valencia, 1935-1937), but also numerous books and essays published abroad in favour of the Republican cause. The archive also conserves a prolific group of photomontages by John Heartfield, either published in leftwing magazines of the time such as *Die Volks-Illustrierte* or in series like *Fremdenlegionäre fern vom Schuss*, a collection in which Heartfield made an acerbic criticism of the role of the international press in the Spanish conflict. The Cubist figuration albums by the illustrator and typographer Helios Gómez, such as the famous *Días de ira*,¹⁷ are also part of this group. From exile there are a large number of documents in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, whether books or complete series of magazines linked to the Republican diaspora, such as *Nuestra España* (Havana, 1939-1941) or *España peregrina* (Mexico, 1940).

Inside our borders, during the post-war period the stifling economic and cultural autarky had the effect of almost completely closing down the channels of communication with the outside, including in the field of art. Nevertheless, there were some attempts to overcome that problem, among them the encounters promoted in Cantabria 1948 by the German painter

Mathias Goeritz, the writer Ricardo Gullón Ricardo Gullón, the sculptor Ángel Ferrant and Beltrán de Heredia Pablo Beltrán de Heredia. His personal papers contain abundant documentary references to the activities and exhibitions held in relation to the encounters, whose programmed periodicity would be interrupted by Goeritz' definitive departure for Mexico even before the first one was held. In the autumn of 1948, in Barcelona, it was a magazine – *Dau al Set*, edited by Joan Josep Tharrats in association with the painters Antoni Tàpies, Modest Cuixart and Joan Ponç, the philosopher Arnau Puig, the poet and dramaturge Joan Brossa and the critic Eduardo Cirlot – that managed to open a modest but reliable path for the dissemination of international art issues in the country. The complete collection of *Dau al Set*, which was published until 1956, is conserved in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE.

Whilst the first half of the 20th century in Spain was marked by political and social upheaval, followed by the desolation of the war and several decades of isolation, some Latin American countries lived the period of the avantgardes with particular intensity. This would give rise to flourishing movements and groups of their own, often with close ties to their European contemporaries.

In Argentina, the fortnightly *Martín Fierro*, published in Buenos Aires between 1924 and 1927, stepped in to maintain the thrust of two earlier magazines, *Prisma* and *Proa*, whose activity had crystallised in the Florida literary group, promoted by Evar Méndez and Oliverio Girondo. The group became a platform for young Argentinian writers and thinkers and, at one time, a space for participation by international authors and critics. From the manifesto “Martín Fierro”, written by Girondo and published in 1924 – on two supports: a small format poster and the magazine itself –¹⁸ come the ideas that predominated in the Argentinian artistic and literary avantgarde in the twenties. In the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, the Martín Fierro collection is a compilation of more than two thousand, among them, in addition to a complete collection of the magazine *Martín Fierro* and abundant correspondence from the publishers of the magazine, manifestos, cards and photographs and the complete collections of Buenos Aires literary magazines of the day. These reveal the split between the Florida group, whose members were followers of the Ultraist current, and the Boedo group, whose socialist thinking and aesthetics were close to social realism: the first and second period of *Proa* (1922-1923 and 1924-1925), *Extrema izquierda* (1924), *La Campana de palo* (1925-1926), *Argentina* (1931) and *Contra* (1933). We should also mention the compilation devoted to the La Brasa group, as well as the different collections of literati linked to those groups, among them the ones devoted to Jorge Luis Borges, Girondo, Adolfo Bioy Casares, Jacobo Fijman, Ricardo Molinari and Antonio Porchia.

In those same years, in Mexico the Stridentist movement saw the light of day. It was an inheritor of Italian Futurism and Spanish Ultraism, and possibly one of the least and worst known historical avantgardes, especially as regards their plastic derivations. Among other documents, the collection on Stridentism in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE conserves a large number of copies of the magazines *Horizonte* (Jalapa, 1926) and *Contemporáneos* (Mexico City, 1928), as well as some of the main books of the movement, such as *Urbe* (1924) and *Poemas interdictos* (1927) by Manuel Maples Arce; *El movimiento estridentista* (1927), *Esquina* (1923) and *Plebe* (1925) by Germán List de Azurbide; *Avión* (1923) and *Radio* (1924) by Kyn Taniya.¹⁹

At the same time, in Brazil the modern movement was spreading. It aspired to renew the literary and artistic traditions, freeing them from the restraints marked by Europe and revaluing the native heritage. The collection in the archive devoted to Brazilian modernity

Mela Dávila, “Viajes de ida y vuelta: urdimbres documentales del arte en el Archivo Lafuente”. En José María Lafuente (Hg.), *La idea del arte*. Santander: Ediciones La Bahía, 2014, pp. 17-50.

includes the most important publications of the movement, among them the *Revista de antropofagia* (Sao Paulo, 1928-1929), in whose first number the “Manifesto antropófago” by Oswald de Andrade appeared; *Klaxon* (Sao Paulo, 1922) and *Verde* (Minas Gerais, 1927-1928), as well as books as singular as *Paulicea Desvairada* (1922) by Mario de Andrade; *Pau Brasil* (1925) by Oswald de Andrade, whose cover was by Tarsila do Amaral, and *Cobra norato* (1931) by Raul Bopp.²⁰

In Chile, the reference figure in the avantgarde artistic practices was Vicente Huidobro (Santiago de Chile, 1893 - Cartagena, 1948). He began his career in the milieu of literary modernism, but soon, at the age of twenty, began to write calligrams. Shortly afterwards he founded the so-called “Creationist Movement”, whose principles were disseminated by the magazine *Creación* (Madrid-Paris, 1921-1924). In 1916, he lived for a time in Paris, where he came into contact with many avantgarde artists, from Picasso to Tristan Tzara. With Sonia Delaunay-Terk, whom he met in Madrid, he worked on a number of joint projects in which he wrote the text and she illustrated it with her well-known quasi geometrical abstractions. From his time in Europe, he made frequent contributions to many avantgarde magazines and lived an intense relation with Dadaism. The first editions of all his works, as well as some sections of his personal correspondence and a number of manuscripts, make up the Vicente Huidobro document collection, and show how his peregrinations between Chile, Madrid, Paris and Chile again served as a vehicle for communication between artistic positions on either side of the Atlantic.

From the forties, back in Argentina, the publication of the first and only number of the magazine *Arturo* (Buenos Aires, 1944) marked the starting point for a new Buenos Aires art circle that revolved around Carmelo Arden Quin, Rhod Rothfuss, Gyula Kosice and Edgar Bayley. A year later, with Raúl Lozza, Tomás Maldonado, Lidy Prati and other artists, they formed the Asociación Arte Concreto - Invención, which set out to look for a way towards an art that was non-figurative, though not strictly concrete or abstract in the traditional sense either. That was the origin of the concept of “Madí Art”, which sought for invention and creation in an absolute, integral and multidisciplinary sense in which art, literature, theatre, music, architecture and design went hand in hand, which tackled all the dimensions of matter, space and time, and which also had an emancipating class spirit, as affirmed by Gyula Kosice in the group’s founding manifesto, published in 1946.²¹ The Madí - Perceptismo collection in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE revolves around part of Raúl Lozza’s personal archive which, with a group of his manuscripts and original drawings, includes the Buenos Aires magazines *Invención* (1945), *Arte Concreto Invención* (1946), *Arte Madí Universal* (1947-1954), *Contemporánea* (1948), *Perceptismo* (1950-1953) and *Arte Nuevo* (1956-1958), as well as *Nueva Visión* (1951-1957) and the quarterly publication *A* (1956-1958) – both edited by Tomás Maldonado – , a series of books with contributions by Maldonado himself, Quin, Rothfuss and Kosice, as well as period photographs, original work and catalogues of those authors.

Among the many other materials that document Latin American avantgarde art in the context of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, the compendium of publications by the Uruguayan Joaquín Torres-García stands out for its rarity, its abundance and because it is one of the few complete bibliographies of the artist. It contains each and every one of the books he published in his lifetime, as well as letters, drawings, manuscripts, photographs, catalogues, and the collections of the magazines he published in Europe and Uruguay: *Cercle et Carré*, *Círculo y cuadrado*, *Guiones* and *Removedor*. As a Latin American exile in Europe during one period of his life, Torres-García literally embodies the profile of the link-artist, or nexus-artist, whose constant comings and goings between Barcelona, Paris, Madrid and Montevideo left behind a trail of

mutual influences, artistic exchanges, personal friendships and even professional relations that would be so typical of many intellectuals of the time.

1945 – 1985. From the post-war avantgardes to Conceptual Art

Between Europe, devastated by the two world wars, and Latin America, which was facing a period of enormous political tension and violent dictatorial repression, the flow of influences, collaborations and affections continued to circulate in the second half of the 20th century, adapting to various artistic currents in which poetic experiments were to play an even more significant role than in the earlier period.

The Second World War had barely ended when in France the Lettrist movement saw the light of day. It was the heir to the typographical experiments of the first half of the century, Russian and Italian Futurisms and Dadaism. On 8 January 1946, Isidore Isou and Gabriel Pomerand presented *Introduction à une nouvelle poésie et à une nouvelle musique* in public. A year later, published by Gallimard, it would become the theoretical manifesto of that new poetry, which came into being determined to ignore the semantic component of language.²² In that same month in 1946 what was to be the only number of the magazine *La Dictature Lettriste* appeared in Paris. It was subtitled “Notebooks of a new artistic regime” and was destined to be the first printed reference to Lettrism. From then authors such as François Dufrêne, Jean-Louis Brau and Maurice Lemaître would join the movement. Also, for a brief period, Guy Debord. In 1952, a year after meeting Isou and shortly before becoming the leading ideologue of the Internationale Situationiste (1952-1972), he founded, in the company of Jean-Louis Brau and Gil Wolman, a breakaway from Isou’s Lettrism, the so-called Internationale Lettriste (1952-1957). In the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, this course of events can be followed through the books, manifestos, magazines, posters, cards and works which illustrated the work of their protagonists.

In those same years the Cobra group, founded in Paris in 1948 by Asger Jorn and Christian Dotremont and dissolved barely three years later, turned the magazine of the same name into the main instrument for disseminating their point of view, which defended primitivism and expressive violence, heir to Expressionism and enemy of the coldness of geometrical abstraction. When the sixties came in, the international movement Fluxus, with active members in Europe, the United States and Japan and interesting ramifications in Latin America, consolidated the edition and the multiple as artistic formats, as well as giving rise to publications of all kinds, many of which are to be found in the collection by topics of the same name in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE.

A notable platform for the developments of experimental writing, continued after the post-war period by a wide range of movements and groups, was the magazine *Ou*, published in Paris by Henri Chopin from 1958 to 1974. It became a space for collaboration and dissemination for the experimental compositions of a host of poets and visual artists from all over Europe. The LAFUENTE ARCHIVE conserves a magnificent collection about the magazine, including all the published numbers, correspondence between the editor and two of his dealers and more original documents. The list of contributors to *Ou*, over the almost two decades of its existence, is a roll call of writers and visual artists, among whom special mention should be made of Chopin himself and figures like Bernard Heidsieck, Paul de Vree, Robert Altman and Gianni Bertini.

In the specific field of experimental poetry, different developments of writing are well represented in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE through three large groups: the collections by topics on concrete poetry from Eastern Europe, Italian *Poesia visiva* and the collection of concrete poetry by Mathias Goeritz. Through over a hundred works and preparatory sketches dating from the period 1957-1977, this last collection illustrates the important work done by Goeritz in this field.

In Latin America, experimentation was moving forward simultaneously along other paths, among which the Mail Art movement, represented in many Latin American and European countries, is worthy of special mention insofar as it managed to construct a broad network of collaboration on both sides of the Atlantic. Significantly, one of its main promoters, Ulises Carrión, split his life between Mexico and Holland, in the heart of Europe.

Ulises Carrión was born in the Mexican town of San Andrés de Tuxtla (Veracruz) in 1941 and, after studying in Mexico and England, in the early seventies he settled in Amsterdam, where he lived until his death in 1989. Before dying he spoke out against preserving the integrity of his archive, which was how, from 1989, it was scattered in different batches and groups of documents. In recent years the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has striven to put these sections back together again, at least in part. Today the Ulises Carrión papers in the archive keep a significant part of the first Other Books and So Archive: about 12,000 items which enable us to reconstruct his versatile career, first as writer, later as experimental poet and theoretician, manager, performer and, lastly, as project artist. To make access to the documents easier, in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE they have been structured in two large sections, which correspond to the two main aspects of his activity: his own artistic creation and the management of the Other Books and So (OBAS) space, an alternative bookshop, exhibition and events room which he later turned into the archive Other Books and So Archive (OBASA).

The first of those sections brings together the work of which Carrión was the author: theoretical writings, interviews, criticism, essays, notes, translations, poetry, narrative, “bookworks”, projects, drawings, language performances (which combined experimental poetry, sound art and conceptual theatre) and videos. It spans a period of 24 years of production, and documents his early experiences with writing, his beginnings in narrative, his turn towards experimental poetry, his invention of the “bookworks” concept (set out in his influential essay *The New Art of Making Books*, 1975), the publication of magazines, the materials he compiled while planning and drafting the projects conceived in the eighties and the videos he made about them. The second section consists of documents related to the management of the alternative spaces in which he took part when he arrived in Amsterdam: the In-Out Center (1972-1974), the OBAS bookshop (1975-1979) and the OBASA archive (1979-1982 / 1989). It also contains part of the collections he gradually included in his archive, the fruit of constant exchanges with artists and the activities of OBAS and OBASA: a collection of artist’s books and “bookworks”, numerous dispatches of Mail Art, multiples, magazines, and the correspondence accumulated during his years in charge of those spaces. It includes the catalogues and leaflets of the exhibitions curated by him, the ones mounted about OBAS and the ones that showed his own work, and a group of materials of Mail Art and Stamp Art from the Stempelplaats space (1978-1981), a project by his friend Aart van Barneveld, with whom he edited the magazine *Ephemera* (Amsterdam, 1977-1978) and thought up many other projects. The papers are completed with abundant bibliography on Mail Art, new editions of his books after his death and the exhibition catalogues devoted to him after 1989.

Various collections at the heart of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE complement the contents of the Ulises Carrión papers. The ones devoted to Edgardo Antonio Vigo, Clemente Padín, Guillermo Deisler, Felipe Ehrenberg, Raúl Marroquín, Dámaso Ogaz, the Di Tella Institute and the Art and Communication Centre in Argentina and the Poema/Proceso movement in Brazil stand out.

The Argentinian Edgardo Antonio Vigo (La Plata, 1928-1997) is taken to be the Latin American father of Mail Art, as well as a tireless editor of periodical publications – *Diagonal Cero* and *Hexágono* (La Plata, 1962-1968 and 1971-1975 respectively) – , quasi performer – with his “signals” – and visual poet – *Poemas (in)comestibles* – . All Vigo’s individual publications, a large number of the collective ones he took part in – among them those of the “relativuzgir’s” movement, published between 1955 and 1959 – and a significant set of letters which he exchanged with Guillermo Deisler make up the Edgardo Antonio Vigo collection in the archive. The Guillermo Deisler collection (Santiago de Chile, 1940 - Halle, Germany, 1995) complements the other and includes Deisler’s publications with the Ediciones Mimbres label, artist’s books he published in Chile and in his long exile in various European countries and a collection of Mail Art materials addressed to him, as well as original pieces of his own.

As part of his task disseminating Mail Art, Vigo programmed and curated many exhibitions, some of which were held at the Di Tella Institute, whose visual arts section was directed by Jorge Romero Brest. The entity, which operated between 1958 and 1970 when it was closed down by the government, drew together the members of the Latin American art avantgarde of the moment. The baton of the Di Tella Institute was taken up by the Art and Communication Centre in Buenos Aires, directed by Jorge Glusberg and the epicentre of important experimental art activities, not only in Argentina but internationally. The Di Tella Institute - CAYC collection in the archive, with more than four hundred printed items, provides abundant information about the activity of both entities, which played a crucial part in the consolidation of contacts and collaborations between many Latin American and European artists.

The magazine *Schmuck* (1974-1976), the publications of the Fluxshoes label and a large number of the editions that appeared at the Beau Geste Press, as well as letters and ephemeral material which Felipe Ehrenberg (Mexico City, 1943) published or wrote, first from Mexico and later from England, make up the Felipe Ehrenberg document collection . In Holland, the Colombian Raúl Marroquín (Bogotá, 1948) was the promoter of the periodical publication *Fandangos* (Maastricht, 1973-1978 and 1980-1982) with Ger van Dijck and Marjo Schumans, recently acquired by the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE with other related documents. Close to the ideas and publications of Fluxus, *Fandangos*, also entitled *Vandangos*, *Van Tango’s*, *Phandangos*, *Fandadangos* or *Fun-Dango’s*, was published at the Jan van Eyck Academy in Maastricht with different formats and layouts. Among other aspects its interest in performance and the possible relations between art and television was important. From Venezuela, Dámaso Ogaz (Santiago de Chile, 1924 - Caracas, 1990) published the magazine *C(a)rtas*. With original works by Ogaz, sections of correspondence and the documents emerging from the activity of the group gathered around the “El Techo de la Ballena” movement make up the Dámaso Ogaz collection in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE.

In Uruguay, Clemente Padín (Lascano, Uruguay, 1939) was the most important moving force on the Mail Art scene. He was responsible for the organisation of the “Festival de la postal creativa”,²³ one of the first major exhibitions of Mail Art in Latin America. The contents – over four hundred postcards sent from all over the world – are now conserved in the Clemente Padín collection. This includes the collections of his magazines *Los Huevos del Plata* (1965-1969), *Ovum 10* (1969-1971) and *Ovum* (1974-1975), all published in Montevideo, and a

Mela Dávila, “Viajes de ida y vuelta: urdimbres documentales del arte en el Archivo Lafuente”. En José María Lafuente (Hg.), *La idea del arte*. Santander: Ediciones La Bahía, 2014, pp. 17-50.

number of original works by him, among them almost a hundred collages and photomontages from which in the eighties he produced his (unpublished) book *Enciclopedia visual de la historia de Latinoamérica*. There are also letters, the layouts for the books *Signals* and *Happy Bicentennial*,²⁴ and abundant printed material disseminating his activities.

In Brazil, 1967 was the year of the birth of the Poema/Proceso group, heir to the theoretical and practical ideas of concrete poetry, which had emerged almost simultaneously in Europe and Latin America a decade earlier. One of its main promoters, the poet Wladimir Dias Pino, had taken part in the concrete poetry exhibitions held in Brazil in the fifties. It was his work that would start the Poema/Proceso tendency, promoted by Álvaro de Sá, Neide de Sá, Dias Pino himself and other poets from Río de Janeiro and Natal. The main organs of communication of the movement were the magazines *Ponto* and *Proceso* (1969 and 1979 respectively). Both have been included in the Poema/Proceso collection of the archive, together with a large number of publications that appeared in Brazil in the seventies. Concepts developed by this movement such as “process”, “version”, “counterstyle” and “reading” were crucial to their creation.

In Spain, the most intense period of renewal and production in the field of experimental writing ran from the early sixties until about 1983. Its main champion was undoubtedly the poet and theoretician Fernando Millán (Villarodrigo, Jaén, 1944).

After belonging for a short period to the Problemática 63 group, founded in Madrid by the Uruguayan poet Julio Campal, in 1968 Millán created Grupo N. O., in the company of the poets Jokin Díez, Juan Carlos Aberasturi, Enrique Uribe and Jesús García Sánchez, with the stated intention of disseminating avantgarde poetry and writing through lectures, exhibitions, publications and other formats. Years later, in 1975, Millán published, with García Sánchez, *La escritura en libertad*,²⁵ an international anthology of experimental poetry which in a way also marked the moment of maximum production within this genre. Later it gradually declined until fading away for a series of different circumstances around 1983. Between the two events, as poet, publisher and organiser of activities, for over a decade Millán was the main core of contact and an absolutely unavoidable reference in relation to experimental poetry and writing in Spain, Europe and Latin America. And so, thanks to his activities in this field and the centrality of his strategic position, during that period he was also able to accumulate most of his enormous personal archive. It was acquired in 2007 by the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE and turned into the Fernando Millán papers. It includes a complete reference library on visual poetry, original works, photographs, audiovisuals, and groups of correspondence with writers and artists during the period 1965-1982.

Among the materials that help enrich and contextualise this item in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, two are especially important. The José Luis Castillejo collection consists of thirty or so artist's books, of which ten are still unpublished, as well as originals, manuscripts, photographs and assorted bibliography related to literary activity in the last years of this writer and diplomat born in Seville in 1930, and a member of the Zaj group. The José Miguel Ullán papers (Villarino de los Aires, 1944 - Madrid, 2009), acquired by the archive in 2013, contains the originals of his books of experimental poetry, a score of visual poems by Ignacio Gómez de Liaño and other authors and the whole documentary legacy conserved by Ullán himself: artist's books, books of poetry, unpublished manuscripts and correspondence.

At the same time that the vigour of the experimental writing movement began to flag, a series of artistic practices called “conceptual”, or “alternative” acquired an unusual impetus in Spain.

Mela Dávila, “Viajes de ida y vuelta: urdimbres documentales del arte en el Archivo Lafuente”. En José María Lafuente (Hg.), *La idea del arte*. Santander: Ediciones La Bahía, 2014, pp. 17-50.

In the words of Simón Marchán Fiz, “the emphasis shifted from the traditional art object to the conception and the project, to the perceptive, interrogative or creative behaviour of the receiver”.²⁶ In the early eighties a historian and two artists agreed on the need to analyse the conceptual practices on the Spanish art scene in the period between 1964 and 1981, practices which had been the object of attention and interest during the seventies and which, now into the eighties, retained their vigour, even though in general painting – and not Conceptual Art – was the genre that drew the attention of the critics, the public and the market. This project was crystallised in the exhibition entitled “Fuera de formato”, which was held in February and March 1983 at the Villa de Madrid Cultural Centre, curated by the artists Concha Jerez and Nacho Criado. The historian Teresa Camps, who featured in the initial curator team, abandoned the project half way through because of differences of points of view with the other two curators. The Fuera de Formato fonds refers to the working archive of that exhibition, included in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE since 2013. As well as the preparatory correspondence with the artists who took part in the show and documents related to the technical organisation, these papers include a large series of photographs of the installation and many of the original projects as they were sent to the curators for them to take charge of their production. The artists who took part in that exhibition, as well as the Zaj group – as special guest – , are the senior figures of Spanish conceptual practices in the seventies and eighties: Francesc Abad, Ángel Bados, Eugènia Balcells, Nacho Criado, Leopoldo Emperador, Albert Girós, Eulàlia Grau, Concha Jerez, José Ramón Morquillas, Muntadas, David Nebreda, Pere Noguera, Carles Pazos, Joan Rabascall, Àngels Ribé, Francesc Torres, Isidoro Valcárcel Medina and Jaume Xifra.

Conceptual production in the international context is represented in the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE by the 1962-1978 papers, one of the most recent acquisitions which have helped complete its legacy. Included in the archive in the spring of 2014, this gigantic collection, gathered over four decades by the German collector Egidio Marzona, contains about twenty thousand printed documents: a thousand artist’s books, a thousand posters for individual and collective exhibitions, exhibition catalogues, magazines, invitations, leaflets and other publicity material, which illustrate the activity over fifteen years of two hundred European and American artists linked to the currents of Conceptual Art, Land Art, Minimalism and Arte Povera. The time frame of this collection is the key period in which the artist’s book ceases to be a totally marginal and often secondary practice and becomes an art support in its own right: the multiple boxes published by the Mönchengladbach Museum in the sixties, typographical artist’s books by Lawrence Weiner, Marcel Broodthaers’ catalogue-books, Gordon Matta-Clark’s project-books, Christian Boltanski’s archive-books, Hanna Darboven’s grid books... An exhaustive selection of printed material designed by the artists, sets of reference bibliography and the catalogues of the most significant exhibitions of the time round off an enormously rich collection of materials in terms of variety and quality. Their importance also lies in the fact that they enable the expansion of the sphere of interest of the Archive towards contemporaneity by bringing in a substantial selection of artist’s publications and exhibition catalogues that date from a crucial period in the history of 20th century art.

Since 2003 the collections and fonds that make up the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE have begun to be shown in Spain in a number of temporary exhibitions organised by public and private institutions.²⁷ In 2012, an agreement with the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía established the framework for consolidating close cooperation between the museum and the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, whilst the projects shared with the March Foundation also point to a stable association with that institution. So far, however, the activity of the archive has mostly been

Mela Dávila, “Viajes de ida y vuelta: urdimbres documentales del arte en el Archivo Lafuente”. En José María Lafuente (Hg.), *La idea del arte*. Santander: Ediciones La Bahía, 2014, pp. 17-50.

restricted to the private sphere. Now, in 2014, that situation is beginning to change: the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has undertaken a series of actions designed to ensure that in the medium term its legacy can be more widely seen and better known, as well as becoming gradually accessible for consultation by researchers. To that end the systematic cataloguing of its contents is under way, along with the distribution on line of a representative selection of its fonds and collections. The exhibition “La idea de arte” and this publication are one more step in this process of opening up, through which the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE needs to tackle the resolution of more than one challenge, not least the balance between its private condition and its more public aspect. In a context in which the model based on art and document collections sustained by publicly funded institutions, which until quite recently seemed almost unshakeable, is going through a phase of great difficulties, from which it may emerge completely transformed, from the perspective of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE we need to rethink the place a private documentary legacy can occupy in relation to the new heritage structures that are evolving from the present crisis.

Defining that place, so that public accessibility does not compromise its freedom to continue to grow and expand, is one of the tasks facing the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE at this time. This is undoubtedly an ambitious task, as is the goal the archive has set for its immediate future: to contribute, by providing easier access to its contents and undertaking research projects of its own, to the expansion of the angles of interpretation and reading of contemporary art, in order to light up a part of the history of art which has remained largely hidden beneath the shadow thrown by the narrations based on extraordinary individuals and great works. A history of art which runs along paths which are sometimes parallel to, sometimes divergent from, the canonical version, but which are the result of a similar creative impulse and hold an equal potential for transformation. The point, in short, is to constitute a documentary corpus which will make it possible to stretch the margins of art by incorporating new realities into the study, analysis and theorisation of the artistic output of the 20th century.

Throughout this process, the materials kept in the archive, whatever their format, will highlight, discover or perhaps entangle the threads that bind protagonists, media and artistic currents. Whatever the case may be, we must hope that they do not cease to offer unknown perspectives and unusual angles of observation from which to take a fresh look at reality, in order to provide more complex, and therefore richer, visions of the developments in art of the last century.

Notes

For the successful completion of the drafting of this text, the author is indebted to Mónica Carballas, José María Lafuente and Bruno Tonini for their invaluable contributions.

1. The issue has been fully analysed and commented on in various publications. Among the most recent, see María Dolores JIMÉNEZ-BLANCO: *Cuadernos de Arte y Mecenazgo, n.º 2: El coleccionismo de arte en España. Una aproximación desde su historia y su contexto*. Barcelona: Fundación Arte y Mecenazgo, 2013. Available online. [Consulted in April 2014.]
2. Report on the conclusions of the encounters between professionals “Horizontes del arte en España”, which took place between November 2012 and

November 2013 at the Museo Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, and were organised by the Fundación Banco Santander, the Museo Centro de Arte Reina Sofía and YGBART. Available online. [Consulted in April 2014. The italics are mine.]

3. From 2000, many Spanish institutions had begun to pay more serious attention to artists' publications and documents in general. They made their presence in the context of their art collections the rule and integrated them into their acquisition programmes and devoted considerable efforts to studying and categorising them. La Panera de Lleida was the pioneering institution in this sphere when it began its own collection of artists' publications in 2004, directed by Glòria Picazo. At the end of 2007, the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA) opened the doors of its Study and Document Centre to house a collection of documents that spanned the years from the sixties to the present day. At the same time the Centro Cultural Montehermoso (Vitoria) and the Museo Patio Herreriano (Valladolid) established their own document centres whilst, also in Vitoria, the Museo Artium chose to specialise a section of its library in comics. At the end of the first decade of the new millennium, the library of the Museo Reina Sofía in Madrid was converted into the present Document Centre, equipped with an exhibition space devoted exclusively to its fonds and documentary collections.

4. One revealing detail is that María Dolores Jiménez-Blanco's report on collections in Spain makes hardly any mention of bibliographic fonds or collections of documents, and concentrates almost exclusively on commenting on the situation of collections of works of art.

5. The contact with Beltrán de Heredia, and the subsequent acquisition in 2002, were also the seed of the collection by topics devoted, in the context of the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE, to Cantabrian art, culture and society between 1900 and 2005. That collection, along with about five thousand original works, books, printed texts, letters, photographs and other documents by Cantabrian authors from the period mentioned, includes two highly significant groups of materials: the Julio Maruri collection, spanning the period 1940-2010, and the Rafael Gutiérrez-Colomer fonds, which covers 1955 to 2000. Both collections have been the object of exhibitions: "Julio Maruri", Museo de Bellas Artes de Santander and Mercado del Este, 18 December, 2003 to 28 February, 2004, and "Rafael Gutiérrez-Colomer y su época", Obra Social de la Caja de Ahorros de Santander y Cantabria, 27 March – 19 May, 2012.

6. Filippo Tommaso MARINETTI: *L'Immaginazione senza fili e le parole in libertà. Manifesto futurista*. Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1913.

7. El LISSITZKY: "Topographie der Typographie", *Merz* n.º 4, Hanover, 1923.

8. Jan TSCHICHOLD: "Elementare Typographie", 24 pp. insert in *Typographische Mitteilungen*, Leipzig, October 1925.

9. Eric GILL: *An Essay on Typography*, London: Messrs. Sheed & Ward, 1931; Rudolf von LARISCH: *Unterricht in ornamentaler Schrift*, Vienna: K. K. Hof- und Staatsdruckerei, 1905; Stanley MORISON: *First Principles of Typography*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936; Raffaello BERTIERI: *20 alfabeti brevemente illustrati*, Milan: Coi Tipi del Bertieri, 1933; Ladislav SUTNAR and Knud LONBERGH-HOLM: *Catalog Design*, New York: Sweet's Catalog Service, 1944.

10. Fortunato DEPERO: *Depero Futurista, 1913-1927*. Milan and Paris: Edizione della Dinamo [1927].

11. See Maurizio SCUDIERO: "Una lectura transversal de la tipografía y las vanguardias gráficas", in *La vanguardia aplicada (1890-1950)*. Madrid: Fundación Juan March and Editorial Arte y Ciencia, 2012, pp. 163 et seq.

12. Umberto BOCCIONI: *Pittura Scultura Futuriste. Dinamismo Plastico*, Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, Milan, 1914; Carlo CARRÀ: *Guerrapittura*, Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, Milan, 1915; Ardengo SOFFICI: *BIF&ZF + 18. Simultaneità e Chimismi lirici*, Edizioni della "Voce", Florence, 1915; Luigi RUSSOLO: *L'Arte dei rumori*, Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1916.
13. Filippo Tommaso MARINETTI: *Zang Tumb Tumb*. Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1914.
14. "Day Dreams, Night Thoughts: Fantasy and Surrealism in the Graphic Arts and Photography". Fundación Juan March, Madrid, from 4 October 2013 to 12 January 2014. Curated by Yasmin Doosry.
15. "Óscar Domínguez: Decalcomanías y objetos", Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, from 20 November 2012 to 2 September 2013. Curated by Paloma Esteban.
16. "Años treinta: Teatro de la crueldad, lugar del encuentro". Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid, from 2 October 2012 to 7 January 2013. Curated by Manuel Borja-Villel and Rosario Peiró.
17. Helios GÓMEZ: *Días de ira*. Album published by the International Labour Organisation, Berlin, 1930.
18. Oliverio GIRONDO: "El manifiesto de Martín Fierro", *Martín Fierro*, n.º 1. Buenos Aires, 1924, pp. 1-2.
19. Manuel MAPLES ARCE: *Urbe*, Mexico City: Andrés Botas e Hijo, 1924; *Poemas interdictos*, Jalapa: Ediciones de Horizonte, 1927. Germán LIST DE AZURBIDE: *Esquina*, Mexico City: Talleres Gráficos del Movimiento Estridentista, 1923; *Plebe*, Puebla: author's edition, 1925; and *El movimiento estridentista*, Jalapa: Ediciones de Horizonte, 1927. Kyn TANIYA: Mexico City: *Radio*, Editorial Cultura, 1924.
20. Mario de ANDRADE: *Paulicea Desvairada*, Sao Paulo: Casa Mayença, 1922; Oswald de ANDRADE: *Pau Brasil*, Paris: Sans Pareil, 1925; Raul BOPP: *Cobra norato*, Sao Paulo: Estabelecimento Gráfico Irmãos Ferraz, 1931.
21. Gyula KOSICE: *Del manifiesto de escuela 1946*, Buenos Aires, 1946.
22. Isidore ISOU: *Introduction à une nouvelle poésie et à une nouvelle musique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1947.
23. "Festival de la Postal Creativa", Galería U, Montevideo, 1974. Curated by Clemente Padín.
24. Clemente PADÍN: *Signals*, Montevideo: Caraballo and Padín, 1976; *Happy Bicentennial*, Amsterdam: Daylight Press, 1976.
25. Fernando Millán and Jesús García Sánchez (eds.), *La escritura en libertad. Antología de poesía experimental*. Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1975.
26. Simón MARCHÁN FIZ: *Del arte conceptual al arte de concepto* (1986), Madrid: Akal, pp. 251-252.
27. In addition to the exhibitions already mentioned, among the ones on which the LAFUENTE ARCHIVE has collaborated actively so far, the following stand out: in relation to typography, "The Avantgarde Applied (1890-1950)", curated by Merrill C. Berman, Richard Hollis, José María Lafuente, Maurizio Scudiero and Bruno Tonini and presented at the Fundación Juan March, Madrid, from 30 March to 1 July 2012. For the Latin American art, "Cold America: Geometric Abstraction in Latin America (1934-1973)", curated by Osbel Suárez, held at the Fundación Juan March in Madrid from 11 February to 15 May 2011. And in relation to experimental writing and the Fondo Fernando Millán, "Escrito está. Poesía experimental en España (1963-1984)", Artium. Centro-Museo Vasco de Arte Contemporáneo, Vitoria, 2009, and Museo Patio Herreriano de Valladolid, 2010 (curated by Fernando Millán), and "Escritura experimental española (1965-1983)", curated by Salvador

Carretero, José María Lafuente and Isabel Portilla and presented at the MAS - Museo de Arte Moderno de Santander, 2012.