

## The MAPFRE Foundation and its commitment to photography

*Nadia Arroyo Arce*

[Nadia Arroyo Arce](#)

31/03/2022

### Abstract

#### 1. The beginning of the MAPFRE Foundation in the field of photography

It was in 2006 (because I think I have to go back to that year) that Pablo Jiménez Burillo, director of cultural activities at the founding field of MAPFRE since the 1990s, considered it appropriate to contemplate a new line of exhibitions focused on photography. It was the moment when it had been decided to move the entity's headquarters and the exhibition hall to the Palacete located on the number 23 of Recoletos Promenade in Madrid, which freed the traditional room located in the Moda Shopping shopping center in the Azca quarter. That April (it must be said) I joined the Foundation's Culture team as an exhibition coordinator. In order to carry out this project, Jiménez Burillo contacted Carlos Gollonet —an independent commissioner of wide national and international recognition already— to request his advice for setting up a program to form a collection and the regular programming of photography exhibitions with demanding objectives in both cases. According to that initial design, Gollonet, who years later would become our curator in charge of photography, would also have to deal with the curation of several scheduled projects.

From this initial episode, the MAPFRE Foundation began its activity in the field of photography in 2009 with a stable international program of individual retrospective exhibitions designed to present for the first time in the city (or at least with a minimum distance of two decades from the previous exhibition) the work of great masters or photographers who are world-renowned but less well-known in our country, and who have not had a great retrospective so far. Originally, there was also a desire to emphasize the relevance of photography not only as an image that tells a story, that challenges or questions us, but as a work of art itself. For this reason, the value of the copy was (and is) very important to us, and whenever there was one, we would bring vintage copies and present them, so that visitors could not only value and read an image or a story, but also appreciate a work that preserved through time (from my point of view and sensation) that magical aura that art contains and that according to Walter Benjamin was absent in “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction.”

From the outset, we opted for internationality, both for the choice of authors and curators and because from the first steps organizing each exhibition we worked so that all exhibitions had a later life in other venues in Spain, Europe or America.

Between 2009 and 2015, retrospectives by Walker Evans, Fazal Sheikh, Graciela Iturbide, Lisette Model, Dayanita

Singh, Anna Malagrida, John Gutmann, Adam Fuss, Eugène Atget, Gotthard Schuh, Lewis Hine, Hoppé, Jithka Hanzlová, Imogen Cunningham, Manuel Álvarez Bravo, Emmet Gowin, William Christenberry, Lynne Cohen, Vanessa Winship, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Stephen Shore, Alvin Lagdon Coburn, Garry Winogrand, Paul Strand, Joseph Koudelka, and Paz Errázuriz were organized. And we had curators such as Jeff L. Rosenheim, Marta Dahò, Cristina Zelich, Peter Pfrunder, Cheryl Brutvan, Alison Nordström, Laura González Flórez, Gerardo Mosquera, Leo Rubinfien, Peter Barberie, and Matthiew S. Witkovsky, among others.

At the same time, the itinerant program mentioned in the exhibitions allowed us to establish and, above all, progressively strengthen close links of cooperation with some of the most prestigious institutions on an international scale in the field of photography. Thus, in the abovementioned period (2009-2015) we had the opportunity to share our exhibitions (chronologically) with the Fotomuseum of Winterthur, the MASP in São Paulo, Coin and bill Production Museum of Bogota, the Sala Rekalde in Bilbao, the Huis Marseille in Amsterdam, the Pinacoteca do Brasil in São Paulo, the Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City, the Casal Solleric in Palma de Mallorca, the Jeu de Paume in Paris, the Museum of Modern Art in Bogotá, the Musée Carnavalet in Paris, the Fotomuseum in Rotterdam, the Fondation Cartier Bresson in Paris, the George Eastman House in Rochester (USA), the Amparo Museum in Puebla (Mexico), the Institute Center Jovellanos in Gijón, the José Guerrero Center of Granada, the FOAM in Amsterdam, the CO/Berlin, the Tomie Ohtake Institute, and the Museum of the Palace of Fine Arts in Mexico City, among others.

\*\*\*

So far, I have focused briefly on the work carried out in the field of exhibitions, but I can not fail to collect and recognize in these pages also another beautiful, relevant but brief role that we played for a few years in our auditorium in Madrid presenting, between 2013 and 2015, five interesting cycles of conferences that we called “Encounters with the history of photography”, which offered a complete updated overview of this discipline with the participation of relevant historians, critics, curators and photographers such as Anne Cartier-Bresson, Michel Frizot, Malcolm Daniels, Juan Naranjo, Rafael Levenfeld and Valentín Vallhonrat, Sarah Greenough, Peter Barberie, Guillaume Le Gall, Kirsten Stremmel, Sergio Mah, Alejandro Castellote, Isabel Ortega García, Chema González, David Company, Clément Chéroux, Emmet Gowin, Gilles Mora, Leo Rubinfien, Richard Learoyd, Carlos Martín, Duane Michals, David Jiménez, Graciela Iturbide, Marta Gili, Nicolas Nixon, Boris Mikailov, Urs Stahel, B leda and Rosa, Valentin Roma, Josef Koudelka or Ute Eskildsen.

Fortunately, we have them all hosted on our YouTube channel ready to be enjoyed.

## **2. A new room—more prominence of photography**

In October 2015 the MAPFRE Foundation took a significant step forward in its cultural activities with the opening of a permanent exhibition hall in Barcelona. The chosen space (the Casa Garriga Nogués, an emblematic space of Modernism in L’Eixample) allowed us to continue the two lines of exhibition programming that defined our activity—visual arts and photography. From the very beginning, it was planned to give more prominence to the latter, taking into account the importance and development of the photographic tradition in the city. During the four years of activity at the venue, seven different exhibitions were presented: Hiroshi Sugimoto, Bruce Davidson, Peter Hugar, Duane Michals, Brassai, Shomei Tomatsy, and Carlos Pérez Siquier.

We also intensified our work over the years to strengthen our collaboration with international publishing houses to reach agreements to co-edit and distribute some of our exhibition catalogs. It is a task that started with the Stephen Shore project in 2014. Since then, we have worked further and indiscriminately, adapting to each project with publishers such as Aperture, DAP, Thames and Hudson, Xavier Barral, Flammarion, Kerher, or RM Edicione, among others.

This first period of activity in the Catalan capital was very important to base our relationship with the dynamic ensemble of Catalan cultural institutions in general, and particularly with those most directly linked to photography, such as Foto Colectània, the Institute of Photographic Studies of Catalonia, Elisava, Grisart, IDEP, or Photographic Social Vision, among others. With them, established links that extend to the present day, and where we have always found encouragement and enrichment of our work. Ignacio González Casasnovas was in charge of our institutional activity during those first years (2015-2019).

### **3. The viability of a dream**

It was during 2019, just after i took over the direction of the area of Culture, when the idea of taking a step further and creating a center dedicated to photography was gaining more and more adepts. We thought it made perfect sense following the trail we had been tracing. It was a commitment, an opportunity, and the culmination of a more than a decade of commitment by the MAPFRE Foundation to this discipline. And Barcelona was the ideal setting for the network of Catalan institutions that, for so long, and with such good results, were totally or partially dedicated to disseminating this medium. The excellence of the photographic creation and the attention of the society towards this art seemed to us one of the signs of cultural identity of Barcelona, and we wanted our center to could contribute to it.

#### **3.1. A space**

The opportunity arose when a space owned by the MAPFRE Foundation in the city became vacant. Located at the foot of one of the most representative buildings in contemporary Barcelona, the MAPFRE Tower, this new venue projected curvilinear shapes around the Olympic Port between Avinguda del Litoral and the seafront promenade with a total of 1,400 m<sup>2</sup> distributed over two floors. In total, two exhibition halls, a space for educational activities, an auditorium, and a bookstore were drawn. MxC Studio was in charge of conditioning the museological space, and our assembly manager, Pedro Benito, of following the plans and making the most of the initial project, as always.

#### **3.2. The project—an international center dedicated to photography**

The new space offered us the opportunity to expand our exhibition line, because we could double our activity per season. Thus, in addition to maintaining the usual programming with individual samples of a retrospective nature—in Space 1—, now we could also offer another medium-sized exhibition in Space 2.

After reflecting and analyzing in what sense we could try to enrich our cultural offer, we defined the new lines of exhibitions. First of all, given the long and solid tradition of this discipline particularly in Barcelona and in the whole Catalonia in general, it seemed natural for us to work with Catalan institutions that have rich and extensive not well known photographic collections, with the purpose of being able to present once a year an exhibition organized with one or more of these collections.

Secondly, we saw the opportunity to open ourselves to the gaze of the youngest, a field where we were still virgins after more than a decade. That's why we approached four schools of photography in Barcelona (Grisart, IDEP, IEFEC, and Elisava) to organize an annual exhibition with students, following our mutual interest of being able to offer an environment of visibility and opportunity to the new generations of photographers.

After all, we wanted to offer our own heritage—the MAPFRE Foundation had been forming a large collection over the years that accommodated those who had written the history of artistic photography since the beginning of the last century: Eugène Atget, Paul Strand, Lisette Model, Walker Evans, Robert Frank, Diane Arbus, and more. Alongside these undisputed masters, our collection also includes the work of active artists already considered as “classics” of our time, such as Graciela Iturbide, Lee Friedlander and Nicholas Nixon, among others, as well as the work of others who, with more recent trajectories, have already achieved international recognition for the maturity and uniqueness of their proposals, such as Fazal Sheikh, Dayanita Singh, Anna Malagrida, Richard Learoyd, Bleda y Rosa, and so on. More than thirty authors whose work is underrepresented in Spanish collections.

The starting point of the collection was the purchase in 2007 of the well-known series by Nicholas Nixon “The Brown Sisters,” which is without a doubt one of the most forceful reflections on the passage of time in contemporary art. This acquisition, which was followed by other important ones, such as those of some of the work of Graciela Iturbide, Paul Strand, Paz Errázuriz or, more recently, a set of more than three hundred works by Paolo Gasparini, states in some way how we intend to mark the path of the future of a collection that aims to gather, whenever possible, a heritage of photographs to better understand the work of each photographer. In these cases, it is possible to make a complete tour of the entire work of these artists through our collection.

It currently exceeds 1,500 works and continues to be nurtured by both acquisitions and commissions from artists who are present in our exhibition program, and whom we invite to work in Spain: Jitka Hanzlová, Emmet Gowin, Vanessa Winship, Richard Learoyd, Eamonn Doyle, and Tomoko Yoneda, who was the last one.

We believe that it is appropriate to show our collection regularly at our venue in the KBr Center, and thus provide visitors with the opportunity to enjoy works that are usually stored.

But our original idea was to go beyond the showroom; and this space allowed us to. Thus, we think about the feasibility of scheduling conferences or congresses that address photography from different points of view. The experience we had in our years organizing in Madrid encouraged us to resume and strengthen this line of action.

We also consider the need to develop an educational project linked to the new project’s set of goals. The idea of forming an educational program aimed at the knowledge of the photographic language in general, and of artistic photography in particular, was immediately consolidated as the axis around which to build a range of educational activities aimed at schools and families.

To lead this new center in Barcelona, María de Pfaff Puigmartí joined our team with a solid and versatile career in the field of cultural management on her back.

### **3.3. A name: KBr MAPFRE Foundation. Barcelona Photo Center**

When the project was taking shape, we thought that we had to find a name for it, a name that would express from the very beginning the essence that we wanted to convey.

KBr is the chemical symbol for potassium bromide, a salt used in the process of developing analog photography. Its main function is to slow down or delay the action of the developing agent in order to prevent the formation of the so-called “chemical fog,” which allows a greater purity of whites in the image.

For us, KBr also encompasses the trajectory that the MAPFRE Foundation has developed in the field of photography—it reflects the commitment that we acquire and maintain with historical photography, with the great masters of all time, with the importance of copy. But it also hosts the work of other contemporary photographers who sometimes look to the past to question it, to broaden its perspectives, its ways of expression.

### **3.4. A bookshop— Llibreria KBr by Juan Naranjo**



Llibreria KBr by Juan Naranjo

We also wanted to provide our project with a specialized bookshop space, which is why we got in touch with Juan Naranjo, with whom we had collaborated in the past and who has an art gallery in Barcelona where photography holds a relevant place.

We also wanted to create a cozy, differentiated space in the lobby of the center, and we commissioned the project to the architect Jorge Vidal. Juan Naranjo, [\(1\)](#) set up a project that sought to become a landmark in the city, where our publications would be found along with books and exhibition catalogs published by museums, institutions, and national and international publishers. It would also offer portfolios, special editions, signed books, out-of-print books, photobooks, international specialist magazines, and more. Naranjo told us that he would “make this selection taking into account both the artistic value and the content of books, from a contemporary and wide understanding of the editorial production related to photography, creating a dynamic and reflective space.” He would also include some objects made by contemporary designers in the bookstore.

## 4. The dizzying launch of a diversified unitary project

### 4.1. The exhibition program—from classics to emerging talent

The opening of the KBr was one of many hopes and projects that the outbreak of the pandemic caused by covid-19 left on hold. Our idea was to open the new center in June 2020, but the launch had to be delayed until October and we could not do so without being able to celebrate and share everything that it meant to us. Despite this inevitable sobriety, always respecting the necessary security measures, we decided to keep the center running so as not to further delay the path of the ambitious project that we were so excited to share with society.

And, although the celebration of its birth is still pending, a year and a half after its opening we are very pleased with the reception that the project is having among institutions, professionals and the general public. We are convinced of the suitability and value of the cultural proposal that represents.

In its still short history (October 2020-February 2022), and with the support of a dizzying activity by the whole team, the KBr has been able to deploy all the programmatic lines of action with which it was designed, and in such a short time it achieved, according to our opinion, a more than satisfactory balance of results. The following lines provide a brief summary of these achievements.

The central theme of our program (**great retrospectives of classical masters and internationally acclaimed artists**) was reflected in four proposals that clearly express these criteria:

In the field of authors that can be considered contemporary classics, two exhibitions were presented—the inaugural exhibition dedicated to Bill Brandt (Hamburg 1904-London 1983) and the wide panorama of the work of Garry Winogrand (New York 1928-Tijuana 1984).

Curated by Ramón Esparza and in close collaboration with the Edwynn Houk Gallery in New York, the exhibition dedicated to Brandt (October 2020-January 2021) was this author’s first retrospective held in Spain. The uniqueness of his style, which covered all genres of the discipline and exerted an intense influence, could be seen through 186 photographs corresponding to five decades of experience, all of them developed by the artist himself. On the other hand, the exhibition on Garry Winogrand (June-September 2021), another essential name in the history of contemporary photography, was curated by Drew Sawyer (Brooklyn Museum) and enjoyed the support and participation of the Center for Creative Photography at the University of Arizona, where Garry Winogrand’s archive is preserved. The exhibition offered a complete tour of a trajectory that expressed like very few have the bright aspects, the contradictions and the uncertainties of American society from the 50s to the 70s of the last century, and showed for the first time in Europe a wide tour of his work on color through more than 150 slides.

Yet two more proposals focused on **active artists with a trajectory of undisputed international recognition**. Showcases dedicated to two other European authors whose personal and professional trajectory is entirely and intensely linked to Latin America responded to this intention—the Brazilian (of Swiss origin) Claudia Andujar and the Italian-Venezuelan Paolo Gasparini.

“Claudia Andujar” (February-May 2021) was the most extensive exhibition ever dedicated to this photographer, whose work unites commitment (the defense of the Amazonian people of the Yanomami and their lifestyle occupies almost all of her work) with a constant desire for experimentation and artistic contribution to the photographic language. With more than 200 pieces and an impressive museographic design, the exhibition was organized in collaboration with the Moreira Salles Institute in Brazil and the support of the Hutukara Associação Yanomami and the Brazilian Socio-Environmental Institute. Its curator was the coordinator of Contemporary Photography at the mentioned institute, Thyago Nogueira. On the other hand, “Paolo Gasparini. Field of Images” (October 2021-January 2022), under the curation of Maria Wills, offered another complete overview (with more than 300 photographs) of the six decades of career of he who is considered the great visual chronicler of the South American continent’s reality, of their problems and contradictions in the second half of the twentieth century. All the works on display belonged to the Foundation's collection.

\*\*\*

The other three strategic lines of KBr programming have also been present during this year and a half. With great satisfaction we have launched the **regular collaboration with Catalan institutions holding photographic archives**, with which we want to contribute to the conservation and dissemination of the extensive photographic historical heritage of Catalonia. This line of action was inaugurated with “The Captive Gaze”, an anthology representing the important collection of daguerreotypes of the Center for Research and Dissemination of the Image (CDRI) of the Girona City Council, curated by Joan Boadas Raset and David Iglésias Franch. When these pages come to light, the KBr will show the second sample of this nature “Adolf Mas. The Eyes of Barcelona”, which reveals one of the largest and most unique heritage photography collections in Europe—the Mas Archive, deposited in the Amatller Institute Foundation of Hispanic art.

In this period we started exhibitions around the photography collection of the MAPFRE Foundation to disseminate our pieces little by little, in proposals that will generally have an external curator. Thus, in the inaugural program of the center, the abovementioned exhibition of Bill Brandt was accompanied by the presentation, for the first time and under the curation of Juan Naranjo, of 110 of the 131 photographs of Paul Strand conserved by the Foundation, the most complete collection of the author kept in by an European institution. Along the same lines, alongside Garry Winogrand's exhibition, the full series (1975-2020) of Nicholas Nixon's “The Brown Sisters” could be seen. This series, one of the most exciting reflections of contemporary art around the passage of time, is without a doubt one of the most remarkable pieces in our collection.

Among this intense exhibition activity, another of the projects destined to be part of the hallmarks of the KBr also got the chance to start—the **regular collaboration with four of the main photography schools in Barcelona**: Grisart, IDEP, IEFC, and Elisava. This is the goal of FLAMA, a project inaugurated in the autumn of 2021 that shapes our desire to support emerging creations and the new generations of photographers who begin their careers after going through these schools. In this first edition, the work of four photographers was presented: Laura Gálvez-Rhein (Frankfurt, 1998), Blanca Munt (Barcelona, 1997), Gael del Río (Barcelona, 1990), and Gunnlöð Jóna Rúnarsdóttir (Reykjavík, 1992). Their projects were chosen through a process of viewing works by students from schools carried out by the professionals linked to photography Marta Gili, Sergio Mah, Ramón Reverté, and Arianna Rinaldo.

## 4.2. KBr, international connection

As it has been said, since the beginning of the activity in photography, the external projection of our projects has been an indispensable goal in each annual program. In the case of KBr, this orientation should have played an even more prominent role, because it is a specifically photographic space and moreover because we conceive this international dynamism of our programming as a contribution to strengthening the international projection of the cultural dimension of Barcelona, and especially its photographic dimension.

So, the balance of this period is equally satisfactory: After passing through the KBr, “Bill Brandt” was seen at the Kunstfoyer Versicherungskammer Kulturstiftung in Munich, at our headquarters in Madrid (Sala Recoletos), and at the FOAM in Amsterdam. On the other hand, “Claudia Andujar” was part of a long European tour—after her start in the halls of the Moreira Sales Institute in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, she landed at the Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain in Paris and the Milan Triennale, where it could barely be seen due to the suspension of cultural activity in Italy during the autumn of 2020. From there, the exhibition reached the KBr, and then continued at the Barbican Center in London and will finish this complete tour at Fotomuseum (Winterthur, Switzerland).

## 4.3. Tuesdays at KBr, a space for exchange

Due to its multifaceted vocation, the KBr could not leave the field of theoretical reflection and historical research on photography aside. And there is an answer to that—a program of a series of conferences and talks. Each year this program will regularly offer proposals directly related to the ongoing exhibitions alongside others of a general theoretical nature. With the coordination of a specialist, these series also bring together renowned curators, photographers, critics, historians, and other national and international specialists.

To the extent that health measures allowed it, these sessions were held at the KBr itself. However, the talks are designed with a clear will to disseminate, so they are always offered in online broadcast. All sessions are always held on Tuesdays, in an attempt to turn the proposal into a rite, so that photography lovers know that they can enjoy a good speech by an international specialist either in person or from home. Interventions are recorded and hosted on our [website](#).

Directed by Marta Dahó, the first series called “Photography and exhibition. Crossing Knowledges” proposed an interdisciplinary reflection (from a historical, theoretical, and curatorial perspective) on the complex articulation of photography as an exhibition object and an artistic value. Entirely developed online between March and April 2021, it featured Olivier Lugon, Anne Wilkes Tucker, Jordana Mendelson, Jorge Ribalta, Florian Ebner, Laura González Flores, Nicoletta Leonardi, and Elvira Dyangani Ose.

Two sessions around the exhibitions “Claudia Andujar” and “The Captive Gaze” were held by its curators; a conversation between Drew Sawyer and young photographers Sasha Phyers-Burguess and Joseph Rodríguez was held around “Garry Winogrand”; and finally, coinciding with the presentation of “The Brown Sisters,” a conversation was offered between Nicholas Nixon and photography historian Laura Terré.

In September 2021 we were able to organize these meetings in person. We held a conversation between Paolo Gasparini, the curator of his exhibition Maria Wills, and photography historian Horacio Fernández. Behind them, and also linked to Gasparini's exhibition, there was an extensive (eleven sessions) and interesting series called [“Photography speaks of revolutions.”](#) Directed by Laura Terré, it reviewed the different roles (testimony, complaint, a tool for agitation, propaganda, an instrument of analysis, and so on) that photography has exerted in paramount revolutionary conjunctures, from the Paris Commune to the Arab Spring. Its participants were Andrés Antebi, Samuel Aranda, Pilar Aymerich, Pepe Baeza, Paul F. Goldsmith, Mathilde Larrère, Nicolas Liucci-Goutnikov, Susan Meiselas, Robert Pledge, Judith Prat, Leigh Raiford, Isabel Segura, Anna Surinyach, and Cristina Vives.

In addition, alongside these thematic cycles we started a collection of books that will contain texts in Spanish from each one of these activities. We considered that by doing this we would contribute to a greater diffusion of knowledge.

Along with these cycles, which are part of the KBr's own programming, the center also collaborated with the Granollers Panoramic Visual Festival by participating in organizing its conferences directed by Joan Fontcuberta on the theoretical aspects of photography. In 2020, the “[Extimitat](#)” series, an interesting reflection on one of the hallmarks of our time: the externalization of intimacy. In 2021 we were able to host in person the “[Photography and Chance](#)” series around the presence of luck, uncertainty and randomness in our personal and collective history and the way in which artistic creation has approached to this question.

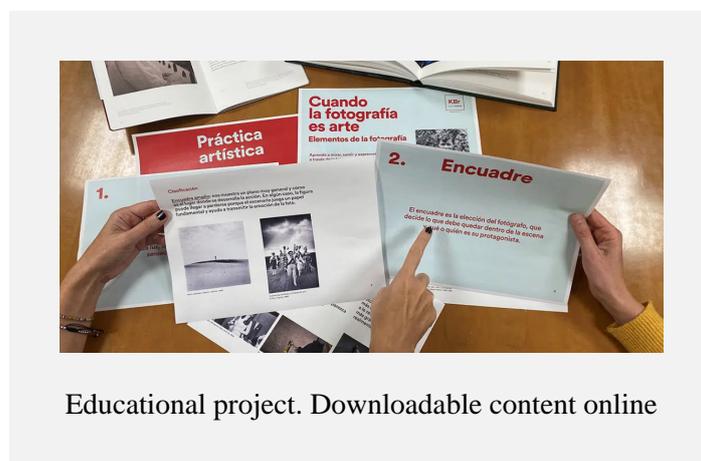
#### 4.4. KBr Photo Award—the first edition

With the opening of the KBr, we wanted to reaffirm our support for artistic creation, and so we proposed to create an international, biennial award open to national and international artists who planned to carry out a new or unfinished, still unpublished photographic project. The endowment of the prize that would facilitate the completion of the selected project is to be complemented with an exhibition produced and organized by the foundation that would be accompanied by the corresponding catalog. Thus, in June 2021 the first edition of the KBr Photo Award was launched with more than 400 nominations submitted. Jurors were artist, art critic and independent curator Carles Guerra; curator of the Michael Schmidt Archive and exhibitions curator Thomas Weski; executive director of Aperture Sarah Meister; and writer, curator, independent advisor and curator of MAST (Manifattura di Arti, Sperimentazione e Tecnologia) in Bologna Urs Stahel; as well as Carlos Gollonet, chief curator of the MAPFRE Foundation.

The awarded artist, unanimously selected by the jury, was Anastasia Samoylova, and her project “Image Cities” was chosen for its quality and originality. Her work, carried out in multiple locations, studies the integration of photography and image in the urban environment, a phenomenon that is increasingly present today. She started the project in 2021 in Moscow and New York, and thanks to this award it will be completed in other European cities throughout 2022 to be presented in February 2023 at the KBr.

#### 4.5. An educational project—when photography is art

With the birth of the photography center, an idea to generate an educational project that would help us teach new generations to understand and value photography arose. We wanted to create a simple but solid program, based on our own collection but also on the retrospective exhibitions that were presented at the KBr MAPFRE Foundation. This is how “When Photography is Art” came to life. It is aimed to navigating a set of ideas that helps recognizing the multiple nature of the photographic image (as a work of art but at the same time as a documentary evidence or a personal memory), to assimilate the basics in order to identify and appreciate its artistic values, and to recognize and use photography as a tool to express and share emotions and ideas. The program, launched in October 2021, includes visits with workshops for families and schools at different educational levels, and at the same time offers downloadable content online



with which anyone can easily become familiar with the concepts that allow to understand and enjoy photography.

## 5. A few conclusions

While writing these lines, the KBr is sixteen months old. It hosted eight exhibitions and published nineteen editions of catalogs, a book with conference texts, and an educational program. More than 100,000 people have enjoyed its activities. The reception that it has come upon from authorities as well as from public and private institutions, the media and the general public could not have been better, and for this we can only be grateful. I don't know whether opening this center of photography far from the context of a pandemic would have translated into yet a better reception, but I doubt it. It has taken a lot of effort and work on the part of all the people who make up the team of the Culture area of the MAPFRE Foundation—eighteen people thinking for the project from different points of view. And also the exquisite dedication of the other departments of the Foundation. Undoubtedly, this project is the result of all their individual and collective work, either coordinated or sometimes uncoordinated too. Now we want to keep growing, because we believe we can do it. But we want to do it in a calm, thoughtful and solid way in the years to come. We have a long way to go, to keep rolling, to polish, to correct and to improve, but this is almost what excites us the most. From here, I want to thank most sincerely all the people who have helped me in the project's definition, construction and inauguration throughout these three short and intense years of my direction. Without each of them, this project for the city of Barcelona would have been different.

## Notes

1. <https://juannaranjo.eu/libreria/>.

