

THE CULTURAL OLYMPIAD, A FOUR-YEAR PROJECT



MUSEU EPISCOPAL DE VIC

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OVER AND ABOVE THE PROJECTION OF BARCELONA FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF SPORT AND ORGANISATION OR ARCHITECTURE AND TOWN-PLANNING, THE “OLIMPIADA CULTURAL” MUST PROJECT BARCELONA SO THAT SHE TAKES HER PLACE ON THE LARGE INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL CIRCUITS.

MANUEL CUYÀS OLIMPIADA CULTURAL

Back in the days of Ancient Greece, it was inconceivable that the Olympic Games should not be accompanied by other games, very often also competitive, which made culture the centre of their activities. This urge to combine sport and culture found its most famous formulation in the sentence that the Romans, in so many ways heirs to the classical Greeks, introduced and made applicable at all

times: the one that sums up in five words the advantages to health of keeping mind and body fit.

With the restoration of the Games of the modern era, Pierre de Coubertain once more put the accent on sport and culture as inseparable elements. The Olympics are sport and they are culture. If one of the two elements is lacking, the Olympic spirit wavers.

This is why the city hosting the Games

has always programmed a series of cultural events, with a twofold objective: on one hand, to invite the countries taking part in the Games to be present in the city with a local cultural offer transcending strictly sporting activities. It is true, however, that the cultural programme has very often been left in the background, overshadowed by virtue of having to go hand in hand with the great spectacle of the Games. Barcelona



realizes that, as always, the sporting side of the Olympic Games will be the most prominent feature. However, Barcelona is staking a lot on the cultural element, to avoid its becoming simply a filling for the Games and to come as close as possible to the Olympic spirit. This is how *Olimpiada Cultural* was born.

As its name indicates –Olympiad: the period of four years from one Games to the next–, the activities of *Olimpiada Cultural* are not limited only to the period when the sports events are being held. *Olimpiada Cultural* was born in 1988, when Barcelona took over from Seoul as the seat of the Olympics. Its activities will end on 9 August 1992, when the lights go out in the Stadium and the torch is handed over to Atlanta. *Olimpiada Cultural*, therefore, is not just the entity that will organise, coordinate and promote the activities held in 1992 in the fields of drama, music, dance and exhibitions, coinciding with the celebration of the Games, although, of course, this is one of its most important jobs. Since 1988, we have been organising and promoting other, varied events of a cultural nature, taking advantage of the expectation the city of Barcelona has aroused in the world. To mention just a few: the *Festival de Tardor*, or Autumn Festival, a series of live performances to launch Barcelona's theatre and music season; the large exhibitions like the *Planeta Esport* series or those on Catalan Modernism and the "Quadrat d'Or", covered in this magazine at the time; the exhibition "Casa Barcelona", which is being prepared for this year and will offer objects for the home, specially designed by the moment's great creators in Catalonia and Spain; the Historic Buildings campaign, which involves attaching a plaque to those buildings in the city that are important from the architectural point of view or on account of the people who lived or worked in them. *Olimpiada Cultural* has also given active support to activities arising from the initiatives of important cultural organisations in Barcelona.

Olimpiada Cultural wasn't born in a vacuum. Its promoters knew that a project of such scope was feasible in Barcelona because the city has a well-structured club and cultural network and contains a historico-cultural wealth of the

first magnitude. The club network, Barcelona's cultural organisations, public and private, have taken part in the organisation of the *Olimpiada Cultural* programme –as in the case of the Autumn Festival, the sum of various initiatives– and has lent its support so that this historical treasure could be presented, very often rescuing it from oblivion, as in the case of Catalan Modernism and the "Quadrat d'Or". The Games will make Barcelona known in the world from the point of view of sport, organisation, infrastructure and large architectural and town-planning projects. *Olimpiada Cultural*, with the support of the Games and the Barcelona organisations and with the city's artistic and historic capital, will project Barcelona so that she takes her place on the large international cultural circuits. In addition, since at these 1992 Games the so-called Olympic subsites –a total of 13, distributed all over the country– will, for the first time, be playing a very important part, and because *Olimpiada Cultural* is also collaborating with them in the preparation of an artistic programme parallel to the sports events, we are not dealing only with the sporting and cul-

tural projection of the city of Barcelona, but of the whole country.

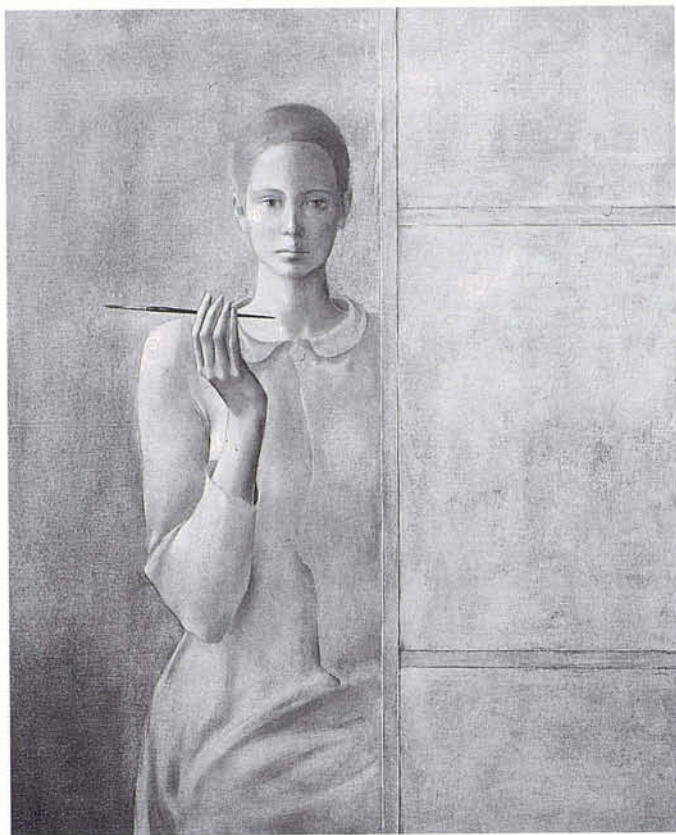
If we at *Olimpiada Cultural* speak of projecting, of finding a role in the world for Barcelona and for the country, it should be understood that what we want is for the developments of the last few years to continue after 1992, when the organisation created to promote these developments ceases to exist. The Autumn Festivals, the Historic Buildings campaign, the commercialization of the 'Casa Barcelona' objects, the rediscovery of the cultural heritage, the rigorous, modern presentation of exhibitions, the collaboration of organisations in common projects, creation in general –all have received the boost of a city astir with the celebration of the Olympic Games. This boost must be a real boost, so that all the activities that have got under way during these years continue and consolidate during the coming years.

Olimpiada Cultural constitutes a unique experience. Its work must therefore be taken advantage of by all the cities that organise Olympic Games in the future and are conscious of the meaning of the Olympic spirit.



MARTYRDOM AND DEATH OF SAINT VINCENT, XIVth C.

MUSEU D'ART DE CATALUNYA



DONA AMB PINZELL [WOMAN WITH PAINTBRUSH], 1989 BY MONTSERRAT GUDIOL

PRIVATE COLLECTION

Olimpíada Cultural. The programme for 1992. Basic outline

Before and during the Games, Olimpíada Cultural is preparing an extensive programme of performances, exhibitions and varied events aimed at the people of Barcelona and at all those people from our country or abroad who are in the city at that time.

1. Exhibitions and itineraries:

Some of the exhibitions, those of a historico-artistic nature, will add up to offer a view of Catalan art over two thousand years of history. Others will feature sport and art:

- Barcino: an itinerary through the Barcelona known to Lucius Minicius Natal, an Olympic champion of ancient times.
- Treasures of medieval Catalan art: a view of the reflection in Catalonia of the European art of the Medieval period: Romanesque and Gothic.
- Barcelona and the avant-gardes of the twentieth century.
- Sculptures in public spaces: itineraries taking in the sculptures erected in Barcelona since the eighties and others which will be installed until 1992.
- The Barcelona of the future: a look at

Barcelona's transformation in recent years and her future projection.

- Guided tours around different places of interest in the city: (the Roman city, the medieval city, the "Eixample", etc.)
- Olympilex: exhibition of coins and stamps with sporting themes from all over the world.
- Art and Sport Biennial: art collection of the Higher Council for Sport.
- Athletes in Art Biennial: exhibition/competition of works of art by athletes.
- Art and Sport in the Ancient World: exhibition of works related to sport in the classical period from 47 European museums.
- Catalan Artists and Sport: a look at the way in which Catalan artists of all periods have treated sport.

2. Olympic Festival of the Arts

A festival of live performances: theatre, opera and music for the stage, dance, music, street acting, circus, etc., presenting the best acts of each type to be found in the world and in the country at that moment.

3. Other programmes:

- Barcelona 92 International Awards,

set up to honour the most outstanding contributions to the world of Culture and the Arts during the period of the XXVth Olympiad (Antoni Gaudí Prize for Architecture and Town-Planning, Pau Casals Prize for Music, Joan Miró Prize for Art, Narcís Monturiol Prize for Technological Innovation, "El Brusi" Prize for Journalism and Communication, Joan Antoni Samaranch Prize for Sport and Olympics.

- Festival of Local Sports: an exhibition of the various kinds of traditional sport in the different Autonomous Communities of Spain.

- Exhibition on the Environment: a look at the characteristics of the world's different ecological habitats and the relation between man and the natural environment.

In addition, there will be exhibitions of gastronomy and of the wines of Spain, competitions for schoolchildren and an extensive programme directed at the athletes concentrated in the Olympic Village.

As regards the subsites, some of the activities in preparation are:

- Badalona: "Blues & Ritmes" programme of music.
- Banyoles: The "Cobla" and the Sardana. Banyoles Dansa. Programme "Rowing, work, adventure, sport".
- Castelldefels: Dance, production and exhibition. Art Workshop.
- Granollers: International Festival of Music. Tardoral. Exhibition: "Granollers and Sport".
- L'Hospitalet: Theatre, music, exhibitions.
- Mollet: Theatre, music.
- Sant Sadurn d'Anoia: 'Brindis' music programme.
- Sabadell: Street theatre.
- Reus: Sculptures in public spaces.
- Vic: Music 92. Roman Temple Restoration. Museum guide.
- Viladecans: Festival of the Environment. Historic buildings. Music and theatre.
- La Seu d'Urgell: "Joan Brudieu" International Music Festival. Medievalists Congress. "La Maravilla" exhibition.
- Terrassa: International Jazz Festival. Complementary programme.
- Valencia and Saragossa: the two subsites outside Catalonia are preparing programmes of the performing arts to coincide with the Games. ■

