

A VIEW OF MADRID AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS THROUGH THE DOCUMENTARY *LA CIUDAD ES NUESTRA* BY TINO CALABUIG*

ELENA BLÁZQUEZ

I. AN IMAGINARY OF MADRID DURING THE LATE FRANCOIST PERIOD AND THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY

Film productions are valuable sources for the configuration of imaginaries: of possible individual or collective ways of representing time and space (García Canclini, 1997). As in every period, in the 1970s various filmmakers captured their particular vision of Madrid in images (Sánchez Noriega, 2014: 207-226). Each of these visions began to give life to an imaginary of a city, which was changing rapidly due to the social and political changes taking place during the last years of the Franco regime. It was an imaginary conditioned by the symbolic construction that the dictatorship urgently sought to achieve, with the aim of turning the city into “the imperial capital of the New State”.¹ This desire would soon be expressed in a concentration of power through symbols of domination designed to undermine the idea of Madrid

as a bastion of Republican resistance during the Spanish Civil War.² However, in opposition to the grandeur of this image of the capital as the nucleus of Francoist power, there was inevitably a counterweight, a Madrid of the resistance. This opposition was being expressed in public protests that were gaining force and becoming increasingly visible in different contexts of confrontation in the 1970s. Similarly, in contrast to the official efforts to promote an image of Madrid as prosperous and free of violence, audiovisual productions that could offer a counter-narrative began to appear, such as those made by Tino Calabuig.

Born in 1939, the Madrid filmmaker Tino Calabuig began his career as a painter in the 1960s. After studying in the United States, on his return to Spain in 1968 he joined the painters’ group of the Spanish Communist Party. At the end of 1975, he joined a film group known as Colectivo de Cine de Madrid (Madrid Film Collective), which sought to make *counter-informational* films with a clear

political commitment.³ It was precisely this counter-informational quality that made Calabuig one of the most prominent witnesses to the changes taking place in that Madrid of the resistance in the last years of the Franco regime and the first years of Spain's transition to democracy. Calabuig approached the city as both a foundation and a subject. It was not merely a pretext for telling a story, nor was it a set; rather, it was itself the object of study. In his projects, looking at Madrid involved analysing the profound social and political transformations that were taking place in the city. For Calabuig, the Spanish capital, immersed in a dynamic of constant changes during the late Francoist period and the transition to democracy, could hardly be represented in static or unambiguous terms. It is therefore unsurprising that he found painting inadequate to capture all its complexity. For this reason, the projects he conceived in relation to the city were characterised by two basic ideas that gave rise to a complex way of conceiving of the urban environment: using film as a tool for counter-information; and advocating collective authorship. Notable among these projects was the film he made before joining the Colectivo de Cine de Madrid: *La ciudad es nuestra* [The City Is Ours] (1975), a documentary with a collaborative approach whose main objective was to portray the grassroots movements in three neighbourhoods on the outskirts of Madrid: Pozo del Tío Raimundo, Barrio del Pilar and Orcasitas.

2. BACKGROUND TO LA CIUDAD ES NUESTRA

In the early 1970s, Calabuig began moving away from painting in favour of the so-called *environments*, multimedia installations that in his case were marked by a clear interest in reflecting on urban space.⁴ An example of this was *Un recorrido cotidiano* [An Everyday Journey] (1971), which he described as a work that aimed to reflect "the conditions [...] of everyday urban life, the repressions

and clashes suffered daily in [...] a city, in transit" (1971a). The proposal's introductory statement described the comings and goings of a worker on his obligatory, unchanging journey from home to work and back again. His day began at half past six in the morning in Vallecas and ended at half past nine in the evening in the same place (Calabuig, 1971b). The purpose of *Un recorrido cotidiano* was to offer a critical view of the alienation experienced by workers in the city. To this end, Calabuig created a dark, labyrinthine route that the installation's visitors would have to follow. Along the route were displayed a series of objects and projections, all accompanied by a soundtrack comprised of raucous city noises. The alarming effect of the experience was intended to trigger a reflection on the relations of oppression and inequality created in the urban environment. Due to the capacity of this *journey* to agitate the visitor, it is unsurprising that Calabuig presented the installation as a "total spectacle" (1971b).

After this first experience with multimedia installations (or *environments*), Calabuig began to see audiovisual media as more effective for capturing the urban environment. He was interested not only in the cinematographic representation of the city, but also in the capacity of cinema to generate possible ways of "city-making".⁵ Thus, in the early 1970s, he made an audiovisual production that documented everyday life, under the title *La edad del ocio y la herramienta* [The Age of Leisure and Work] (1974).⁶ As Calabuig himself explained, this short film arose out of his interest in filming urban space and exposing the living conditions of workers (quoted in Benito, 1976: 59). In the film, the claws of a bulldozer loom threateningly over the people: in the Metro, in the streets and in the workplaces (Figure 1). This menacing representation was intended to unmask the reality of the so-called "age of leisure", which was not for everyone but would only be enjoyed by those of a certain social class. As Calabuig said about this film: "The 'world of leisure', associated with the life of people

who get up at six in the morning to go to work and come back tired eight, ten or twelve hours later, is a lie" (quoted in Benito, 1976: 59). *La edad del ocio y la herramienta* was thus presented as a critical continuation of the argument introduced in *Un recorrido cotidiano*, as well as the first explicit demonstration of Calabuig's use of film as a tool for counter-information and protest.⁷

After this short film, in the spring of the following year Calabuig shot his first medium-length documentary, *La ciudad es nuestra*, another counter-informational protest film, in this case related to the lack of services in the working-class neighbourhoods of Madrid. This film not only showed Calabuig's interest in exposing the living conditions of the workers, but also his constant concern with establishing partnerships with the residents of neighbourhoods on the city outskirts. As researcher Alberto Berzosa points out, "Calabuig always maintained a great interest in collaborating [...] with the neighbourhoods, residents' associations and youth organisations that energised the political life of Madrid's periphery; this was the seed that gave rise to the project" (2015). The film depicts the important grassroots movements that had developed in Madrid's hardest-hit neighbourhoods before Franco's death. Calabuig chose three areas—Pozo del Tío Raimundo, Barrio del Pilar and Orcasitas—as examples of these grassroots processes that were developing in the same way in other neighbourhoods of the city, and also around other urban centres of the country.⁸ This documentary was constructed on the premises that conditioned all of Calabuig's work: to seek a new form of expression, in this case in the audio-



Figure 1. Tino Calabuig, *La edad del ocio y la herramienta*, 1974. Courtesy of Tino Calabuig

visual medium, and to document it collectively. This article thus explores how *La ciudad es nuestra* was filmed, how that filming was the product of a group dynamic, and how Calabuig conceived of the film's exhibition in a way that could encourage debate about the possibility of social change.

3. A TOUR OF THE OUTSKIRTS OF MADRID

The film begins with a journey, a drive in a car from the centre to the periphery, as if we, the viewers, were taking our own trip from a central location to the outer suburbs of Madrid. The story previously constructed in *Un recorrido cotidiano* now seems to take to the streets to show the lives of many other people who, like the worker in that earlier production, start their day in Vallecas at half past six in the morning. After the opening credits, the documentary's journey begins with a city map of Madrid that shows the location of the three aforementioned neighbourhoods. A fade to black then takes the viewer inside a tunnel that leads along the A6 motorway to the Arco

de la Victoria ("Victory Arch") in the city's Moncloa district, a symbol of Franco's power built as an "imposed memory" to honour the regime and commemorate the Battle of Ciudad Universitaria.⁹ It is not surprising that Calabuig should choose to begin his documentary in this provocative way, with an example of symbolic appropriation by the Franco regime that contrasts with a title (*The City Is Ours*) expressing a desire for the appropriation by the people of the places in which they live. The shot of the Arco de la Victoria is followed by different shots of the Plaza de Cibeles, the Gran Vía, the Puerta de Alcalá and other places in the city centre that could not logically form part of an actual route through the city, a fact that reveals Calabuig's interest in showing emblematic places associated with the popularised image of a modern and prosperous Madrid promoted in other parts of the country and abroad. Shortly afterwards, in the context of these scenes of the centre of Madrid, the Arco de la Victoria reappears. But a fade to black and another tunnel lead the viewer to a new, very different destination: Pozo del Tío Raimundo, an impoverished neighbourhood in the south of the capital that the viewer recognises from the city map shown in the film for informational purposes.¹⁰

Although it would not be logical to take the Moncloa road to get from the centre of Madrid to Pozo del Tío Raimundo, Calabuig decided to juxtapose these two spaces of the city in order to emphasise the contrast between them. This juxtaposition reflects the "centre-periphery" conflict, or more precisely, the conflict between the Francoist government and the resistance of those who fought to improve their living conditions.¹¹ The contrast is further accentuated by the comparison of the asphalt of the streets in the centre with the dirt roads that still muddied some neighbourhoods on the periphery. However, the images of the centre take up only a few brief minutes of screen time, as the documentary quickly moves on to the neighbourhoods to show these

three areas of Madrid in detail, from the inside. Challenging the traditional definition of the city based on its limits, which favours the perception of a periphery defined by the centre, in Calabuig's documentary the outskirts have as much to say as the central areas of the city. For this reason, these spaces are presented from the inside, as territories that create an environment of collective learning about the conception and construction of the spaces in which their residents live.¹²

The film is also enhanced by a collaborative approach to filmmaking itself, with a form of narration that gives leading roles to the locals who take part in the film. This approach was the reason why Calabuig created his documentary using the testimonies of residents who belonged to the residents' associations that he believed were playing a fundamental role in the demand for services to improve their living conditions (quoted in Benito, 1976: 59). *La ciudad es nuestra* was intended to reflect what the people in the streets were calling for: to this end, Calabuig embraced a form of direct cinema that would allow people to express their opinions spontaneously. The voices of several residents lead us through the streets of the neighbourhood, describing the various hardships they have been suffering for years, while others take advantage of their participation in the film to argue for counter-information, pointing out the need to use other media that are not "at the service of the administration, but of the people".

4. COLLECTIVE AUTHORSHIP

The documentary arose out of a group exhibition on seven Madrid neighbourhoods: Puerto Chico, Orcasitas, Palomeras Altas, Palomeras Bajas, Barrio del Pilar, Moratalaz and San Blas. The exhibition was held in early 1975 at the Colegio Oficial de Arquitectos de Madrid (COAM) under the title *Madrid en sus barrios: aproximación a la problemática socio-urbanística* ("Madrid in Its Neighbourhoods: An Approach to the Social Urban Planning Issue").

As indicated in the exhibition catalogue, these locations were chosen because the neighbourhoods—as enclaves with a distinct physical and sociological existence—were key to understanding the larger entity of the city (Various Authors, 1975). The intention of the exhibition was to analyse the urban reality through residents' associations that had played an essential role in calling for improvements to the urban environment. The exhibition was supported by research based on documentation provided by the different associations. As a complement to the display, Calabuig proposed the creation of what would later become *La ciudad es nuestra*. To this end, he wrote a document addressed to COAM titled *Sobre los barrios y las asociaciones de vecinos de Madrid* ("On the neighbourhoods and residents' associations of Madrid"), in which he explained that his intention with the film was to "study and disseminate the activities of residents' associations, [...] their form and operation, [and] how and why many of them have become truly democratic organisations" (1975). In the same document, he also detailed questions concerning the work method, such as his intention to

carry out "surveys" in order to "get directly to the sources [...] by personally meeting the [...] witnesses to these processes" (1975). Once the proposal had been examined, according to Calabuig, the COAM's Culture Commission agreed to co-finance the project, with Calabuig himself covering the rest of the cost (quoted in Blázquez, 2014).¹³

Regarding the participatory nature of *La ciudad es nuestra* and the collective construction of the story by its contributors, researcher Alfonso García Cañadas points out that "the residents of the neighbourhoods actively participated in the filming of the work, providing contacts and explaining what they wanted to be shown in the film about their living conditions" (2021: 317). Moreover, this collective creation is explicitly promoted in the documentary's opening credits, with a caption stating that "the authors and protagonists of this work are the residents' associations of Madrid: Pozo del Tío Raimundo, Orcasitas, and Barrio del Pilar, with the support of Federación de Asociaciones de Vecinos de Madrid [Federation of Residents' Associations of Madrid]." After this initial note declaring beforehand the collec-

Figure 2. Shooting of *La ciudad es nuestra*, 1975. Photography by María Miró. Courtesy of Tino Calabuig



tive nature of the documentary, a second caption specifies the names of those who have carried out the different tasks, including "direction, direct sound or still photography". In a way, these credit titles distinguish between an authorship associated with the social struggle and a more technical authorship, which, although differentiated, would form part of a collectively authored project, as Calabuig himself defined the film as a "collective work" in which the roles of one and the other were advantageously vague and interchangeable (quoted in Benito, 1976: 60) (Figure 2).

5. SHOWING LA CIUDAD ES NUESTRA

Although *La ciudad es nuestra* was not a clandestine film, due to its counter-informational nature it was exhibited discreetly. Calabuig even initially changed its title when he registered it for editing, calling it *La estética urbana* [Urban Aesthetics], a neutral title with no apparent social or political overtones. According to Calabuig himself, *La ciudad es nuestra* was a title that contained a public call in defence of the commons and was inspired by Salvador Allende's last speech, which the filmmaker explained he had heard at a documentary screening (quoted in Blázquez, 2014). In that speech, Allende proclaimed: "They have strength and will be able to dominate us, but social processes can be arrested neither by crime nor by force. History is ours, and people make history." Calabuig took up this last idea, a message that he decided to use as the documentary's title and declaration of intent: as a plea for the participation of the people in the construction of history and the places in which they live. With this same idea in mind, he wanted *La ciudad es nuestra* to be screened in many more places than those where it was filmed. For him, it was essential to exhibit it in locations where the living conditions were similar but where the residents had not yet reached the level of awareness of those in the neighbourhoods featured in the documentary, not so that they would be able to see the problems they already knew about, but so they could be shown a possible solution. In this regard, Calabuig himself explained in an interview:

You can't go to a suburb, photograph the mud and show it to its residents, because they are seeing it every day. What you have to show them is the alternatives to the mud they are stepping in, and these possibilities and options are just what we are seeing in the film from beginning to end. The management and control of the self-government of the city and its own living conditions not only transcend the realm of urban planning but extend

to areas such as society, culture, health, and education; in short, all the activities and services that a neighbourhood needs. (Quoted in Benito, 1976: 60)

The documentary was exhibited in other contexts through its distribution via alternative channels, such as the Federación de Cine-Clubs. As researcher Xosé Prieto Souto points out, the film was rented "in the early 1980s by residents' associations, trade unions, public agencies and political organisations, particularly but not exclusively those associated with the Spanish Communist Party" for screening in different parts of the country (2015: 385). The exhibition of the film in other places acted as a stimulus for the conception of other urban imaginaries, while also fostering the replication of the kind of mutual support between residents' associations shown in the documentary. In addition to informal contexts, the film was also screened in more specialist contexts. As Calabuig explained in the aforementioned document *Sobre los barrios y las asociaciones de vecinos de Madrid*, his aim in showing the film was to reach "a wide audience", as the documentary was intended for "both specialist and non-specialist audiences" (1975).

The film was shown at various cultural centres in Madrid, such as the headquarters of the German Institute, where it was screened on the initiative of the COAM's subcommittee for urban planning advice. It was also shown at national film festivals, including its selection for inclusion in Almería's first independent film festival in 1975, an event for which Calabuig, together with a group of independent filmmakers, wrote a manifesto advocating the creation of networks for the production, distribution and exhibition of alternative cinema (CCA, 1975: 56-57). At this festival, Calabuig met Josep Miquel Martí Rom, who worked for the Central del Curt, the biggest distributor of independent films in the country. As a result of this meeting, in addition to its inclusion in the catalogue of films distributed by his own group, the Colectivo de Cine de Madrid (1976:

CALABUIG WAS ONE OF A NUMBER OF FILMMAKERS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO THE DISSEMINATION OF COUNTER-INFORMATION DURING THE LAST YEARS OF THE FRANCO REGIME AND THE FIRST YEARS OF THE TRANSITION TO DEMOCRACY, OFFERING IMAGES OF THE MADRID OF THE TIME THAT SERVE TODAY AS A COUNTERWEIGHT TO THE IMAGES BROADCAST BY OFFICIAL MEDIA OUTLETS

3), *La ciudad es nuestra* was added to the Central del Curt's catalogue (1976: 10). Martí Rom recalls that the documentary was one of its most widely distributed films (1980: 106; 2014), and was even screened internationally, specifically at the Mostra Internacional de Cinema de Intervenção in Estoril, Portugal, organised by the Centro de Intervenção Cultural in 1976 (Mateo Leivas, 2018: 118-119).

The presence of this documentary at independent film forums, both in Spain and abroad, served as inspiration for other audiovisual projects by Calabuig, as well as by other documentary filmmakers who were also interested in the power of community association networks. It is also worth noting that Calabuig, like other filmmakers who are encouraged to make a sequel to their films in order to track the evolution of what was previously documented,¹⁴ made a follow-up piece in 1986 showing the transformation of the neighbourhoods in *La ciudad es nuestra*, although this footage remains unedited in his personal archives (quoted in Blázquez, 2023). In any case, with or without a sequel, Calabuig's interest in the neighbourhoods did not wane and its latent presence is evident in all of his subsequent productions. It is thus unsurprising that some participants in *La ciudad es nuestra* would take part in other documentaries by Colectivo de Cine de Madrid, such

as the then-president of the Orcasitas residents' association, Félix López Rey, who reappears in the collective's film *Amnistía y Libertad* [Amnesty and Freedom] (1976). But it is equally unsurprising that many of the images from *La ciudad es nuestra* would be reused in Calabuig's later work, such as his documentary *Tiempos de transición* [Times of Transition] (2003), or that other filmmakers such as the collective Terrorismo de Autor would recycle excerpts from the documentary for their film *La memoria es nuestra* [Memory is Ours] (2020), a film about the history of Barrio del Pilar through the collective memory of its residents. In this way, by integrating footage from *La ciudad es nuestra* into later works, these images recall and at the same time rewrite—from the perspective of the present—those moments of political and social upheaval experienced in the 1970s in the neighbourhoods on the outskirts of Madrid, as key pieces not only in the context of the neighbourhood's causes of that time, but also those of today.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The documentary analysed in this article illustrates Calabuig's interest in denouncing the living conditions of urban residents. He was one of a number of filmmakers who contributed to the dissemination of counter-information during the last years of the Franco regime and the first years of the transition to democracy, offering images of the Madrid of the time that serve today as a counterweight to the images broadcast by official media outlets. Herein lies the vital importance of his work, which provides a new perspective on the emergence of a different imaginary of that time and place. This article also reveals how he embraced the audiovisual medium early on as a tool that could operate on social and political levels. With his interest in grassroots processes that favoured cooperative dynamics aimed at pursuing social and political transformations, Calabuig applied these principles in many of his projects. His

creative strategy—characterised by the use of film as a tool for political intervention and by its aim of collective authorship—inspired reflection on the power relations established in the city while at the same time proposing new ways of inhabiting it.

It is pertinent to conclude this article with a brief reflection that can situate Calabuig's filmmaking practice in relation to the present day: an epilogue that considers the recent appearance of his audiovisual work in various film screenings and exhibitions at different institutions.¹⁵ From a critical perspective, the last ten years has seen a resurgence of counter-informational filmmaking practices that have moved from the alternative sphere to find their way into general programming at various cultural institutions. In this way, they have begun to form part of the framework of historical and cultural narratives related to the late Francoist period and the transition to democracy, opening up new avenues of study that include social actors different from those who have been the protagonists of the official narratives for decades.¹⁶ The inclusion of *La ciudad es nuestra* as part of this compendium of counter-narratives is particularly valuable as it is one of the few audiovisual testimonies to the neighbourhood movements in Madrid in the mid-1970s.

Moreover, since the image plays a fundamental role in the emergence of new imaginaries, the institutional recovery of projects of this kind about Madrid also serves to enrich debate on how to conceive of the city in the present. The early 1970s was a time for the development of proposals for community living. The possibility not only of their conception but also of their imminent realisation in light of the progressive weakening of the regime led to the intensification of many calls in support of the basic rights of the people. Calabuig's work during those years documents this mobilisation of a society which, in contrast to the alienation present in *La edad del ocio y la herramienta*, sought to create a strong social fabric

that would enable them to demand better living conditions, as is shown in *La ciudad es nuestra*. Conceiving of Madrid during the late Francoist period and the transition to democracy through Calabuig's work as a filmmaker, and inserting it into the framework of existing narratives, not only contributes to the development of a different imaginary, but also—once it is incorporated into that collection of histories—facilitates a dialogue with the different visions of Madrid that were constructed in the 1970s, making this collection of stories about that historical moment a key tool for understanding and conceiving of the city in the present. ■

NOTES

* This research has been carried out as part of the research project: "Fotoperiodismo y Transición española (1975-1982): la fijación y circulación de los acontecimientos a través de la prensa gráfica y su relectura memorística" (PID2020-113419RB-I00), funded by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation.

1. This desire was soon made manifest: as early as 30 March 1939, at the first session of the Madrid City Council, the new mayor, Alberto Alcocer, called upon the people of Madrid not to rest for a moment until the city was "a capital worthy of the new Spain, One, Great and Free, of the imperial Spain forged by the Generalissimo, by the Army, by the Militias and by the rearguard by dint of steel, by dint of blood and sacrifice." In: "Actas de la sesión municipal del 30 de marzo de 1939", Archivo de la Villa del Ayuntamiento de Madrid. For more information about this desire to symbolically recover Madrid during the dictatorship, see Box (2010).
2. In his article "Du Madrid du franquisme au Madrid de la Movida", Bernard Bessière discusses the suspicious relationship that Franco always maintained with the Madrid associated with the Republican resistance. He also explains how the Franco regime sought to break up that association with sweeping changes to the urban landscape of Madrid. Some notable examples

- were the changes to street names, the organisation of an increased number of parades with an ideological focus in public spaces, and the construction of monuments intended to honour the regime, such as the Arco de la Victoria in the Moncloa district (2008: 131-150).
3. Colectivo de Cine de Madrid was a group project with counter-informational aims, active from 1975 to 1978. In addition to Calabuig, Andrés Linares, Adolfo Garijo and a fluctuating number of other contributors also took part. This group sought to use filmmaking to document facts that were being ignored by official media outlets.
 4. In the words of the art theorist Simón Marchán Fiz: "The term *environment* [...] implies a space that envelops the man and through which he can move and develop [...] It is not a reproduction, but the establishment of a reality in a spatial situation" (2012 [1972]: 261).
 5. One could speak of "city-making" as the intention of improving the living conditions of the people in the urban environment. For anthropologist Michel Agier, the city is a "never-ending process" in which "city-making" becomes a "right to the city", in which the city is an environment and a way of life, and not just a defined place in a given area (2015: 210).
 6. This footage can be found in the compilation *Varios rodajes (Tino Calabuig)* belonging to the film collection of the Filmoteca Española. Some of these recordings of the city were screened at the Galería Vandrés and the Galería Buades in 1974 (APSA, 1974; Various Authors, 2008: 234).
 7. During his years in Madrid, filmmaker Iván Zulueta also recorded the movements of the people in the urban space. He did so from his flat in Edificio España, filming the city from his terrace with his Super-8 camera. Zulueta used this same overhead view as part of a collective initiative proposed by Eugeni Bonet and Miguel Gómez, the audiovisual project *En la ciudad* [In the City], an invitation to reflect on the urban environment. Zulueta chose to portray Madrid in 1976 through the repression of a protest in Plaza de España and to denounce police repression by following the final shot with the news that appeared the next day in the newspaper: "Two young people killed in the course of two demonstrations" (Bonet and Gómez, 1976; Molina Foix, 2010).
 8. Although the changes being called for in these neighbourhoods bore certain similarities, the problems they faced were different. Pozo del Tío Raimundo, in the southeast of the capital, and Orcasitas, in the southwest, were self-built neighbourhoods created in the context of the chaotic growth of Madrid's outer suburbs, characterised by inadequate educational, health and transport infrastructures. Barrio del Pilar, located in the north of the city, was a neighbourhood constructed by a private developer that suffered from the excesses of speculation and the difficulties inherent to a high population density.
 9. On the Arco de la Victoria as an imposed memory, see Fernández Delgado *et al.* (1982). The project to build this triumphal arch can also be considered a "place of memory", like those that the historian Pierre Nora calls "dominant", as "spectacular and triumphant, imposing and generally imposed, whether by a national authority or a constituted body" (1984).
 10. As researcher Xosé Prieto Souto points out: "There is a political intentionality adopted by the director in the fact that the architectural motif most frequently repeated in this sequence is that of the Arco de la Victoria, a monument commemorating Franco's victory in the Civil War. In fact, the introductory speech stops when the camera gets as close to the arch as the filming from a car allows. The filmmaker then plays with false visual continuity. Next, we exit through another arch, which in reality is that of a bridge, which shows us, through film images of Pozo del Tío Raimundo, the other face of that victory" (2015: 383).
 11. The book produced by the Orcasitas residents' association on the neighbourhood's community construction project contains images that expose this inequality between the centre and the periphery. One of these images features graffiti that reads "The parliament building never falls down, does it?" next to an image of propped-up single-family dwellings in Poblado Dirigido de Orcasitas (Martín Arnoriaga, 1986).

12. In fact, the residents' associations were actively organised to fulfil some of the neighbourhoods' demands, such as the creation of an electricity collective in Pozo del Tío Raimundo, or the collective negotiation of the design of new housing in Orcasitas through the creation of "natural" architectural models (Various Authors, 1986).
13. According to the then-president of the Orcasitas residents' association, Félix López Rey, they also contributed a limited amount of money to the production of the documentary (quoted in Blázquez, 2015).
14. For example, twenty-five years after *Numax presenta...* [Numax presents...] (1979), Joaquim Jordà filmed the documentary *Veinte años no es nada* [Twenty Years is Nothing] (2004), with the aim of portraying the evolution of those involved in the self-management of the Numax factory after they had left the social struggle.
15. Screenings in which the documentary has been seen in recent years include *La ciudad es nuestra* (CA2M, 2013), *40 años no es nada* (Sala Berlanga, 2014), *Aló aló mundo! Cines de invención en la generación del 68* (CA2M, 2015), *El poble desnonat* (La Virreina Centre de la Imatge, 2018) and *¿Pacífica y consensuada? La transición en el cine español y el cine español de la transición* (MUSAC, 2019). In addition, since 2011, the documentary has formed part of the MNCARS collection, and in recent years it has been shown in temporary exhibitions such as *Madrid activismos (1968-1982)* (La Casa Encendida, 2016), *Gelatina dura. Historias escamoteadas de los 80s* (MACBA, 2016-2017), *Poéticas de la democracia. Imágenes y contraimágenes de la transición* (MNCARS, 2018-2020) and *Cámara y ciudad. La vida urbana en la fotografía y el cine* (CaixaForum Barcelona, 2019-2020).
16. In the presentation of the seminar *Arte y Transición* at the MNCARS, it was explained that "[t]hese narratives present the transitional process as a seamless narrative, conducted with intelligence and responsibility by a group of politicians who determine (from above) the guidelines, stages and phases on the difficult road to democracy. This transition excludes from the political field other key agents of change (from below):

feminist and neighbourhood movements, workers' and students' struggles, and all those protests occurring and disseminated outside the channels of 'official culture'" (Various Authors, 2012).

REFERENCES

- Agier, M. (2015). *Anthropologie de la ville*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- APSA (1974). *La ciudad. Galería Vandrés, Madrid, 1974*. Redor-Calabuig Archive, Documentation Centre, MNCARS.
- Benito, S. de (1976). Entrevista con Tino Calabuig. *Cinema 2002*, 11, 59-61.
- Berzosa, A. (2015, April 7). El movimiento ciudadano en *La ciudad es nuestra*. Rinconete. Retrieved from https://cvc.cervantes.es/el_rinconete/anteriores/abril_15/07042015_01.htm
- Bessière, B. (2008). Du Madrid du franquisme au Madrid de la Movida, *Cahiers d'études romanes*, 18, 131-150. <https://doi.org/10.4000/etudesromanes.2046>
- Blázquez, E. (2014). Unpublished interview with Tino Calabuig, Madrid, August 16.
- Blázquez, E. (2015). Unpublished interview with Félix López Rey, Madrid, March 2.
- Blázquez, E. (2023). Unpublished interview with Tino Calabuig, Madrid, April 11.
- Bonet, E., Gómez, M. (1976). *Instrucciones de En la ciudad...*, Research and Documentation Centre, MACBA.
- Box, Z. (2010). *España, año cero: la construcción simbólica del franquismo*. Madrid: Alianza.
- Calabuig, T. (1971a). *Un recorrido cotidiano*. Texto sobre la finalidad de la exposición y sus elementos. Redor-Calabuig Archive, Documentation Centre, MNCARS.
- Calabuig, T. (1971b). Hoja de mano de *Un recorrido cotidiano*, 1971. Redor-Calabuig Archive, Documentation Centre, MNCARS.
- Calabuig, T. (1975). *Sobre los barrios y las asociaciones de vecinos de Madrid*. Personal archive of Tino Calabuig.
- CCA (Cooperativa de Cine Alternativo) (1975). El "Manifiesto de Almería" como punto de partida. *Cinema 2002*, 10, pp. 58-59.

- CCM (Colectivo de Cine de Madrid) (1976). *Catálogo de films distribuidos por el Colectivo de Cine de Madrid*. Personal archive of Tino Calabuig.
- Central del Curt (1976). *Distribución*. Personal archive of Josep Miquel Martí Rom.
- Fernández Delgado, J., et al. (1982). *La memoria impuesta: Estudio y catálogo de los monumentos conmemorativos de Madrid (1939-1980)*. Madrid: Ayuntamiento de Madrid.
- García Canclini, N. (1997). *Imaginarios urbanos*. Buenos Aires: Eudeba.
- García Cañadas, A. (2021). La ciudad de Tino: Contrainformación en el Madrid del tardofranquismo y la transición. In F. Ramos Arenas (coord.), *Una cultura cinematográfica en transición: España 1970-1986* (pp. 303-326). Valencia: Tirant lo Blanch.
- Marchán Fiz, S. (2012 [1972]). *Del arte objetual al arte del concepto*. Madrid: Akal.
- Martí Rom, J. M. (1980). La crisis del cine marginal, *Cinema* 2002, 61-62, 101-107.
- Martí Rom, J. M. (2014). *C.D.C. (1974-1982): Relació amb d'altres grups*, December 19. Retrieved from: <https://martirom.cat/29-c-d-c-1974-1982-relacio-amb-dal-tres-grups/>
- Martín Arnoriaga, T. (1986). *Del barro al barrio. La meseta de Orcasitas*. Madrid: Asociación de vecinos de Orcasitas.
- Mateo Leivas, L. (2018). *Imágenes clandestinas y saber histórico. Una genealogía del cine clandestino del tardofranquismo y la transición*. PhD dissertation. Madrid: Universidad Autónoma de Madrid.
- Molina Foix, V. (2010, March 12). El Madrid de Iván. *El País*. Retrieved from: https://elpais.com/diario/2010/03/12/madrid/1268396657_850215.html
- Nora, P. (dir.). (1984). *Les lieux de mémoire* [T1]. Paris: Gallimard.
- Prieto Souto, X. (2015). *Prácticas fílmicas de transgresión en el estado español (tardofranquismo y transición democrática)*. PhD dissertation. Madrid: Universidad Carlos III de Madrid.
- Sánchez Noriega, J. L. (2014). Madrid: De la española desarrollista al cosmopolitismo de la movida. In F. García Gómez and G. M. Pavés (coords.), *Ciudades de cine* (pp. 207-226). Madrid: Cátedra.
- Various Authors. (1975). *Madrid en sus barrios: aproximación a la problemática socio-urbanística: Puerto Chico, Orcasitas, Palomeras Altas, Palomeras Bajas, Barrio del Pilar, Moratalaz, San Blas*. Madrid: COAM.
- Various Authors. (1986). *Llamarse barrio: El Pozo del Tío Raimundo*. Madrid: Asociación de vecinos del Pozo del Tío Raimundo.
- Various Authors. (2008). *Galería Buades: 30 años de arte contemporáneo*. Madrid: Sociedad estatal de conmemoraciones culturales.
- Various Authors. (2012). Dossier del seminario *Arte and Transición*. Retrieved from https://www.museoreinasofia.es/sites/default/files/notas-de-prensa/2012020-dossier-seminario_Arte_y_Transicion.pdf

A VIEW OF MADRID AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOODS THROUGH THE DOCUMENTARY *LA CIUDAD ES NUESTRA* BY TINO CALABUIG

Abstract

This article explores the filmmaking practice of the Madrid-based filmmaker Tino Calabuig in the 1970s, work that was based on his analysis of the city of Madrid and the living conditions of its residents. It examines one of Calabuig's most important projects of that period: the documentary *La ciudad es nuestra* [The City Is Ours] (1975), a protest film providing counter-information on the administrative neglect suffered by some of Madrid's outer suburbs, such as Pozo del Tío Raimundo, Barrio del Pilar, and Orcasitas. This article analyses the film to identify Calabuig's interest in revealing the situation in these neighbourhoods and highlighting the role played by grassroots associations in collective calls for social development. It looks at how *La ciudad es nuestra* was filmed, the importance of a group dynamic in its production, and how Calabuig conceived of its exhibition in a way that would encourage debate about the possibility of social change. It also shows how the documentary, as a testimony to the neighbourhood struggles during the period marked by the shift from the end of the Franco regime to Spain's transition to democracy, constitutes a key tool for understanding the historical narratives constructed around the grassroots movements of Madrid in the 1970s.

Key words

Tino Calabuig; *La Ciudad es Nuestra*; Madrid; Neighbourhoods; 1970s.

Author

Elena Blázquez is a lecturer in the Bachelor's and Master's Degree Programs in Audiovisual Communication at Universidad Complutense de Madrid. She previously formed part of the coordination team of the Master's in Performing Arts and Visual Culture based at the Reina Sofía Museum. She holds a PhD from Sorbonne Université, with a dissertation on the filmmaking practice of Helena Lumbreras and the Colectivo de Cine de Clase during the late Franco regime and the transition to democracy in Spain. She is a member of the research group "Cultura visual: imagen, información y discurso" and she is currently participating in the research project "Fotoperiodismo y transición española (1975-1982)", funded by the Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación. Contact: Elena.Blazquez@ucm.es

Article reference

Blázquez, E. (2023). A view of Madrid and its Neighbourhoods through the Documentary *La Ciudad es Nuestra* by Tino Calabuig. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 36, 95-106.

UNA VISIÓN DE MADRID Y SUS BARRIOS A TRAVÉS DEL DOCUMENTAL *LA CIUDAD ES NUESTRA* DE TINO CALABUIG

Resumen

Este artículo gira en torno a la obra audiovisual que llevó a cabo el cineasta madrileño Tino Calabuig en los años setenta, una obra basada en el estudio de la ciudad de Madrid y las condiciones de vida de sus habitantes. El análisis está centrado en uno de los proyectos de Calabuig más relevantes de esa época: el documental *La ciudad es nuestra* (1975), un film contrainformativo y de denuncia acerca de la situación de abandono administrativo en la que se encontraban algunos barrios del extrarradio madrileño, como el Pozo del Tío Raimundo, el Barrio del Pilar y Orcasitas. En este artículo, se analiza el film con el fin de constatar el interés de Calabuig por denunciar la situación en la que se encontraban estos barrios y destacar el papel ejercido por las asociaciones de vecinos en la demanda colectiva de mejoras sociales. En el texto, se muestra de qué modo se filmó *La ciudad es nuestra* (1975); cómo la filmación se llevó a cabo gracias a una dinámica grupal; y cómo Calabuig pensó la exhibición del film para que esta pudiera fomentar un debate en torno a un posible cambio social. A su vez, este artículo muestra cómo el documental, en cuanto que testimonio de las luchas vecinales durante el periodo en el que convergen el tardofranquismo y la transición, se constituye en una herramienta clave para pensar los relatos históricos contruidos en torno a los movimientos vecinales de Madrid en los setenta.

Palabras clave

Tino Calabuig; *La ciudad es nuestra*; Madrid; barrios; años setenta.

Autora

Elena Blázquez es profesora del Grado en Comunicación Audiovisual y del Máster en Comunicación Audiovisual para la Era Digital en la Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Con anterioridad, formó parte del equipo de coordinación académica del Máster en Práctica Escénica y Cultura Visual, con sede en el Museo Reina Sofía. Doctora por Sorbonne Université —su tesis aborda la práctica cinematográfica realizada por Helena Lumbreras y el Colectivo de Cine de Clase durante el tardofranquismo y la transición—, forma parte del grupo de investigación «Cultura visual: imagen, información y discurso» y, actualmente, participa en el proyecto de investigación «Fotoperiodismo y transición española (1975-1982)», financiado por el Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación. Contacto: Elena.Blazquez@ucm.es

Referencia de este artículo

Blázquez, E. (2023). Una visión de Madrid y sus barrios a través del documental *La ciudad es nuestra* de Tino Calabuig. *L'Atalante. Revista de estudios cinematográficos*, 36, 95-106.

recibido/received: 28.11.2022 | aceptado/accepted: 21.03.2023

Edita / Published by



Licencia / License



ISSN 1885-3730 (print) / 2340-6992 (digital) DL V-5340-2003 WEB www.revistaatalante.com MAIL info@revistaatalante.com