

FACUNDO DE ZUVIRÍA



From February 11 to May 7, 2023

Fundación **MAPFRE**



For Facundo de Zuviría (born Buenos Aires, 1954), photographing Buenos Aires is a way of life. The exhibition's title, *Facundo de Zuviría. Images of Buenos Aires*, refers to one of the artist's best known series and to a book published in 1996. More than that, however, it constitutes the essence of his entire career and a body of work which he continues to develop today. Following Zuviría's decision in 1983 to focus on photography as a professional, one of his first aims was that of putting together a visual archive of Buenos Aires. The project never came into being but from that date onwards the artist has repeatedly photographed the city's streets, the façades of its houses, interior courtyards, shop windows and slightly out of date signage. Another subject is that of superimposed layers of tattered posters from a previous era or one about to become obsolete; motifs which together evoke nostalgia for an earlier city in the process of transformation, places that will never be the same again.

Zuviría's gaze is nourished by American Pop Art, the paintings of Edward Hopper and the work of the Argentinian artist Rómulo Macció. It is also inspired by literature, above all his favourite author, Jorge Luis Borges. He emulates the latter's urban wanderings, his "appropriation" of the city and what Borges termed "Buenos Aires's modest

Tabaré, Bartolomé Mitre al 1500, Buenos Aires, 1985

Private collection, Paris

Previous page:

Peñados Permanentes Rosita, Monserrat, 1985

Private collection, Paris



9 de julio, 1986
Private collection, Paris

differences". In his early years Zuviría was attracted to the Russian artist Alexander Rodchenko, particularly his photographic output, admiring his formal complexity with its use of shadows, low-angled viewpoints, reflections and superimposed planes, which inspired some of Zuviría's images such as *El ciudadano*, *Alem y Viamonte* of 1988. However, the most significant influence on the artist is Walker Evans. He first encountered the American photographer's work after he had already started his series on Buenos Aires, but Evans nonetheless inspired his frenetic collecting habit and his interest in the vernacular, as well as suggesting the idea of allowing the images to speak for themselves.

The structure of the exhibition aims to reveal the two axes along which Zuviría has proceeded over the course of his career. Firstly, the agility, immediacy and even luminosity of his images of Buenos Aires;



secondly, the austerity and distance evident in the two series which are the subject of special attention in the exhibition: "Siesta argentina" and "Frontalismo". The first, created between 2001 and 2003, offers an eloquent record of the effects of the economic crisis known as the *corralito* which affected all of Argentinian society, obliging most businesses to close and people to lose much of their buying power. Considered Zuviría's most political work, it comprises black and white photographs of empty buildings, closed shops, shop windows and lowered shutters, all photographed from a directly frontal viewpoint and devoid of human presence. The second series, "Frontalismo", was started in 2010 and is still ongoing. It continues the typological intent evident in "Siesta argentina" but now in colour. In his wanderings around the city Zuviría once again photographs façades, shutters and grilles, elements that indirectly refer to the violence present on the streets from which residents must protect themselves. This concern is concealed by the colour of these austere but warm images, which are characterised by their quest for synthesis and abstraction rather than for their realist or documentary values.

Elvira, San Telmo, 1984

Collection of the artist, courtesy Toluca Fine Art

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Curator

Alexis Fabry

Dates

From February 11 to May 7, 2023

Opening times

Mondays (except public holidays): 2 pm to 8 pm
Tuesdays to Saturdays: 11 am to 8 pm
Sundays and public holidays: 11 am to 7 pm
(Last access: 30 minutes before closing time)
Visitors must leave the galleries 10 minutes before closing time)

Ticket prices

Standard: 5 €
Reduced: 3 €
Free entry: Mondays (except public holidays)

Commented Tour

A short tour that explains the key concepts of the exhibition, facilitating a greater appreciation and enjoyment of the works on display.

Hours:

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 5 pm to 8 pm
Fridays and Saturdays: 12 am to 2 pm and 5 pm to 8 pm
Sundays and holidays: 12 am to 2 pm
No additional cost upon entry.
Information at reception desk

Educational visits for schools

Hours and reservations: [at this website](#)

Audio guide

4 €. Spanish and English

Bookshop

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