

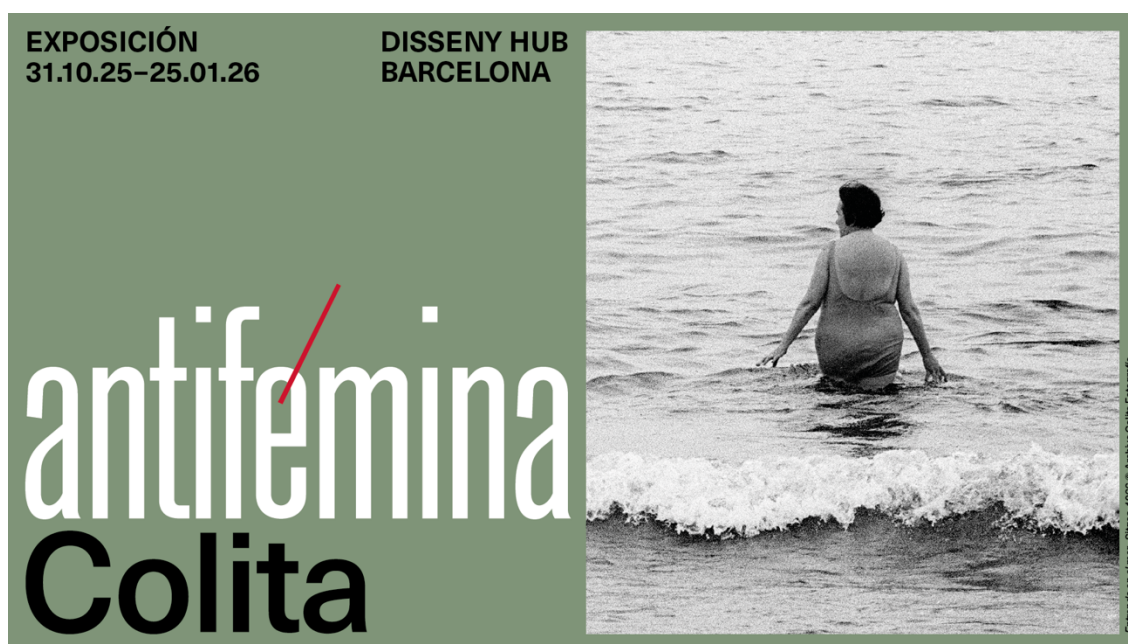
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30 October 2025

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

Colita. Antifémína

From 31 October 2025 to 25 January 2026 – Disseny Hub Barcelona



Colita. Antifémína

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INTRODUCTION:

From **31 October 2025 to 25 January 2026**, Disseny Hub Barcelona (DHub) will be holding the exhibition **Colita. Antifémína**, an exhibition of the photographs contributed by Isabel Steva Hernández, better known as **Colita**, to a joint project with the writer **Maria Aurèlia Capmany**, which led to the publication of **the first feminist photography book of the Spanish transition to democracy**. The Barcelona-born photographer's images paint a **striking portrait of women's reality** at the time. Rather than just providing a look at the past, the exhibition offers **reflections on issues that remain highly relevant, including the persistence of the patriarchy, the objectification of women, prostitution and ageing for women**.



Grandmother and granddaughter. Barcelona, 1976. From the 'The Marginalised Woman in Society' series © Archivo Colita Fotografía

Antifémína was created by Colita and Capmany in 1976. Together, they dived into the photographer's vast archive, full of pictures of **women of all ages, origins and social classes**. From there, they selected the themes and issues they wanted to **speak out about in the book**. And Colita went out with her camera to portray the themes they wanted to address that were under-represented in her archive. Her images, a reflection of her humanistic, sensitive gaze, and Capmany's profound, intelligent, subversive and funny words came together in a book that the two women designed themselves by hand.

Later, Capmany convinced her friend **Ángel Sánchez-Gijón** – the then-director of the publishing house **Editora Nacional** – to **publish the book in 1977**, with a print run of 3,000 copies. A few years later,

after Sánchez-Gijón was dismissed, the book was **pulled from the market** and the **remaining copies were destroyed**. Only the copies that had already been distributed survived. Over four decades later, in 2021, **Barcelona City Council, the publisher Terranova and the Archivo Colita rescued it from oblivion** and produced a new edition, with Francesc Polop as the editor and designer. It was a resounding success and all 2,000 copies printed were sold. That's why Barcelona City Council and Disseny Hub have now released a second edition for this exhibition.

Curated by the director of the Archivo Colita, **Francesc Polop**, the exhibition showcases photographs from the book, many of which had never previously been on display. The exhibition was already held in 2024 in Madrid, but now it is arriving in Barcelona thanks to **Disseny Hub, La Fábrica** and the **Círculo de Bellas Artes**, expanded to include **25 new photos that add greater depth and consistency** to the 10 sections of the exhibition, which reflect the 10 chapters in the book. In total, Disseny Hub is displaying **120 of the 172 photos in the original publication**.



Factory Workers. Barcelona, 1976. © Archivo Colita Fotografía

Social and photographic value

Women were a central theme in Colita's work. Her archive is full of portrayals of women in different situations. Polop says this is because **Colita always 'looked at [women] and saw them'**. And she did so with an **intimate, intelligent, intentional gaze, with plenty of humour**. For her, it was a way of **celebrating the importance of women's presence and image in society**.

Like the book on which it is based, this exhibition provides a **critical perspective on society before the end of Francoism** and a **representation of women's worlds and the prevailing patriarchal system**. Through ten chapters or sections, it presents defining aspects of women's reality at the time:

ageing, marriage, work, religion, prostitution, objectification, the double marginalisation experienced by some women, models, cat calls and costume.

Colita. Antifémina sheds light on what has often been hidden: women's lives, their wishes, their desires, what oppresses them and what worries them. It is a profoundly realistic portrait, because according to Capmany herself, 'there is nothing more stimulating, more corrosive, more revolutionary than reality'. The exhibition is a feminist demonstration without banners, without photos of protests or political slogans.



Women on El Paral·lel. Barcelona, 1965. © Archivo Colita Fotografia

Even so, it is not just a look at the past; it also **connects with the present**. Colita's images and Capmany's words **invite the visitor to reflect on themes that remain highly relevant today, including beauty standards, the objectification of women, the persistence of the patriarchy, prostitution and the invisibility of women in old age.**

Beyond its social value, the exhibition **introduces visitors to Colita**, focusing on her role as one of the most renowned Catalan photojournalists, and to many of her works in this field. The careful, modern, unembellished printing process **highlights the power of her images and speaks directly to the viewer.**



Study session for Consol Tura. Barcelona, 1976.
From the 'The Art of Becoming Something' series © Archivo Colita Fotografía

Colita and Capmany: Artists, intellectuals, feminists

The exhibition is also a **tribute to two outstanding figures in Catalan culture** from the 20th and 21st centuries. They were two modern, empowered artists and intellectuals who held similar political beliefs and were part of a group of women who **dared to break their silence and start to talk about feminism as Franco's dictatorship came to an end**. Colita and Capmany worked together on *Vindicación Feminista*, a magazine published in Barcelona that explored and spoke up about issues in women's lives. They also took part in countless demonstrations for equality and freedoms. Over the course of their artistic careers, they championed feminism through their books and photography.

EXHIBITION CONTENT:

‘The following images are no more, no less than the reflection in the camera’s eye of what is there.

Reflection in the camera’s eye because this is not a previously tidied-up reality, but nor is it what the distracted eye of the passer-by generally sees.

The eyes of the camera exist as a function of those of the photographer. I would even say that the photographer sees and the camera reveals. Reality is there, largely unchanged.

So just what does the photographer, that powerful being loaded with bags, bring to the street?

Well, that which lies in the substrate underlying reality, that which makes it possible as a reality, that which is there for us to see but we do not see, because we are distracted by movement, both our own and that of things, by emergencies, by the decision to see what is not there but we have decided it is.

The pictures speak for themselves.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 1: History of a Solitude



Woman behind Window Bars. Sanlúcar de Barrameda, 1969. From the 'History of a Solitude' series © Archivo Colita Fotografía

'How can one age without becoming stuck behind a barred window?'

'But an old man is still a man, even if he's old; an old woman is nothing. She has to be an appetising body, a fertilisable body; she has ceased to be gendered in the way that has been accepted as the essence of Femininity. The woman has become an anti-woman. She is neither woman nor man; she is something else.'

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 2: A woman's Career with Old-Age Insurance



The Bride's Preparations. Barcelona, 1963. From the 'A woman's Career with Old-Age Insurance' series © Archivo Colita Fotografia

'Get married and you'll see! Get married and your life will be solved: money, bed and social standing.'

'Here you have it, woman: the ritual, the show is yours. A meticulous ritual with vestments, painting and music.'

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 3: Work or Chore



Harvesters. Castile, 1963. ©Archivo Colita Fotografía

‘Whenever the symbol of work is depicted, it usually shows a man. This means in theory that women don’t work.’

‘The hands of women who work are exactly the same as the hands of men who work.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 4: Religion as Refuge



Father Peyton's Rosary. Barcelona, 1965. ©Archivo Colita Fotografía

‘But the vast majority of nuns enter the convent not to do something but to avoid the risk of life.’

‘And precisely because it is a refuge, a convent is nothing other than solitude in company.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 5: A Risky Profession



Prostitutes in Chinatown. Barcelona, 1969. From the 'A Risky Profession' series © Archivo Colita Fotografía

'Men look, observe, choose. Not without risk. Risk magnifies the wilfully debased virile heart.'

'Prostitution has to be on the street because it is the anti-home.'

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 6: Dismembering a Body



Showgirl's Mouth. Barcelona, 1965. From the 'Dismembering a Body' series © Archivo Colita Fotografia

'So we went outside and were astonished to see so many bare thighs, so many enlarged breasts, so many calves stuck to the walls and the lampposts. We didn't see women, you know, but parts of women.'

'A human being is a whole. It's a matter of separating from the whole each of the parts that can be used as a driver of desire.'

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 7: The Marginalised Woman in Society



Gypsy Girl on Montjuïc. Barcelona, 1963. ©Archivo Colita Fotografía

‘How is the life of a woman, a marginalised being, going to be realised within a marginalised society?’

‘Being a person means doing away with the gender-specific to realise oneself as an individual. The Gypsy reality is manifested collectively; the Gypsy community is the self.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 8: The Art of Becoming Something



Model Session at Park Güell. Barcelona, 1967. From the 'The Art of Becoming Something' series © Archivo Colita Fotografía

‘Like in magic, the model knows what parts of her face are sacred; what parts of her face express what she is: an image of non-existent perfection.’

‘It’s striking how luxury goes hand in hand with hunger. The measure must be exact, not a millimetre more.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 9: The Catcall



The Catcall. Barcelona, 1963. © Archivo Colita Fotografia

‘Catcalls assume that the woman has to feel flattered and bewildered at the same time: flattered because it is important that an individual of the male sex deigns to pay attention to her, and bewildered because the right thing is to feel cornered, pursued, harassed, without any weapon other than silence and a blush. Women were born to listen and keep quiet.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

Chapter 10: The Disguise



Majorettes. Granollers, Barcelona, 1975. © Archivo Colita Fotografía

‘Nobody should confuse the bold gesture of majorettes with the bold gesture of the woman inside; the woman seems huddled behind that parodic image of men.’

‘But let’s not deceive ourselves. It wasn’t her that decided this masquerade. Leg in, leg out, let’s see whether we can wake up our distracted clients.’

Maria Aurèlia Capmany

THE AUTHORS:

COLITA:



Colita at La Pedrera. Barcelona, 1978 © Archivo Colita Fotografía

Isabel Steva Hernández was born in Barcelona in 1940. She is better known as Colita, a nickname her father gave her because he would tell her she was born under a cabbage (col in Spanish and Catalan).

Together with her mentors and friends Oriol Maspons, Xavier Miserachs, Francesc Català-Roca and Leopoldo Pomés, she walked the streets of Barcelona, portraying the Romani world in El Somorrostro and Montjuïc, as well as flamenco, the Barri Xino, La Rambla... That is, she depicted the life of her city and its people.

In parallel to her work on the street, Colita produced a vast gallery of portraits, photographing figures ranging from Ocaña to Miró, from Mompou to García Márquez, from Tàpies to Orson Welles. Personally involved and engaged in the world around her, she was active in cultural movements such as the Gauche Divine, the Escola de Barcelona and the Nova Cançó, both participating and taking photographs.

She understood that the transition to democracy was a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence, so she took to the streets with her camera. She took photos of the Montserrat sit-in, the death of Franco, the first gay rights protest in 1977 and political demonstrations in favour of amnesty and abortion and against women being punished for adultery, among other causes.

Staunchly committed to the fight for freedoms and democratic rights (especially women's), she worked as a graphic editor for Vindicación Feminista magazine (1976).

She took photographs tirelessly for five decades, contributing to publications such as *Interviú* and *Fotogramas*, among many others. As well as holding more than 40 exhibitions, she published over 70 photography books. Her work features in collections as prestigious as those of the Catalan National Art Museum and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, and she has been honoured with accolades including the Barcelona City Council Artistic Merit Medal, an honorary doctorate from the Autonomous University of Barcelona, the Bartolomé Ros (PHotoESPAÑA) Award, the Creu de Sant Jordi, the 2014 National Photography Prize and the Gold Medal for Merit in the Fine Arts in 2021.

Colita died in Barcelona on 31 December 2023.

MARIA AURÈLIA CAPMANY:



M^a Aurèlia Capmany. Barcelona, 1978 © Archivo Colita Fotografia

Maria Aurèlia Capmany i Farnés – a multifaceted woman, writer, educator and politician – was born in Barcelona in 1918. Her father was the publisher and folklore expert Aureli Capmany, and her grandfather, the lawyer and intellectual Sebastià Farnés.

She studied philosophy and literature and took part in underground cultural activities. A writer from an early age, she won the Joanot Martorell Prize with *El cel no és transparent*, one of her first novels, and the Sant Jordi Prize in 1968 with *Un lloc entre els morts*, which would later be adapted for the stage.

The theatre world shaped her career, first in her work as a playwright and later as an actress; she even featured in three films. With Ricard Salvat, she founded the Escola d'Art Dramàtic Adrià Gual, where she taught classes in dramatic literature. She was also active in the world of socially engaged cabaret theatre, in collaboration with the writer Jaume Vidal Alcover, her partner.

Feminism quickly emerged as a key element of her public presence, opinions and comments, as evidenced by novels such as *Feliçment jo sóc una dona* (1969) and essays such as *De profesión mujer* (1971) and *Carta abierta al macho ibérico* (1973), clear forerunners to *Antifemina*. She also wrote for *Vindicación Feminista* magazine and participated in several events, including the historic *Jornades Catalanes de la Dona* in 1976.

As a politically engaged woman, in 1976, she participated in the Freedom Rally and the process to set up the Catalan Socialist Party (PSC). Upon the arrival of democracy in Spain, Capmany started to play an active role in her city's politics. She was appointed Councillor for Culture at Barcelona City Council during the PSC's first term – leading the restoration of the Palau de la Virreina and the Mercat de les Flors – and from 1987 onwards, she took on the role of City Councillor for Editions and Publications.

Alongside her work in city government, she was a member of the Barcelona Provincial Council from 1983 until her death, on 2 October 1991 in Barcelona.

THE CURATOR:

FRANCESC POLOP (Bolbaite, València, 1961)

A sculptor and designer trained at the Massana School and the Sant Jordi Fine Arts Faculty in Barcelona, the city where he has lived since he was little. During his formative years, he worked for TVE (on Juego de Niños, among other programmes), while also starting a career in theatre as a wardrobe designer, stage designer and director's assistant (Companyia Enric Majó, Companyia Flotats).

As a sculptor, as well as teaching classes, he has held solo and group exhibitions, as well as producing public works such as the Carmen Amaya statue in Plaça Forgas, Begur.

In the 1990s, he founded his own studio, Polop Disseny, where he works on branding, corporate image, editorial design and interior design for various institutions and private companies. In the field of editorial design, commissioned by Ana María Moix, he designed the new Editorial Bruguera imprint and its essay, fiction and poetry collections. With various architecture studios, he took part in the graphic design and catalogues of exhibitions such as *La Catalunya paisatge* at the Fundació Caixa Catalunya/La Pedrera and *Habitar el presente* at the Housing Ministry in Madrid. With the Escola Tècnica Superior d'Arquitectura de Barcelona (ETSAB), he has produced publications, books, magazines and other communication and graphic design materials.

He met Colita in 1983 and they quickly forged a friendship and professional bond, becoming crucial figures in each other's lives. For Colita, he designed books such as *Carmen Amaya 1963*, *Taranta*, *Agosto*, *Luto y Ausencia* and *La meva cançó*, catalogues such as *Colita Flamenco*, and the new edition of the book *Antifemina*, published recently. On top of that, he has curated various exhibitions for her: *Bestiario* at the Museu de Zoologia de Barcelona; *Ojo Colita* at the Fernández-Braso/PhotoEspaña Gallery in Madrid; *Colita Flamenco. El viaje sin fin*, at the Palacio de Carlos V in the Alhambra, Granada, and at the Teatro Español in Madrid.

In 2005, he designed the 'colitafotografia' website, which he has expanded over time with an abundance of visual and archive material, in order to help Colita's work reach as many people and institutions as possible.

He was honoured – and, at the same time, saddened – to curate the Antifemina exhibition for the Círculo de Bellas Artes de Madrid, in collaboration with La Fábrica. It opened in February 2024, two months after Colita's death on 31 December 2023, and is now coming to Colita's home town thanks to Disseny Hub Barcelona.

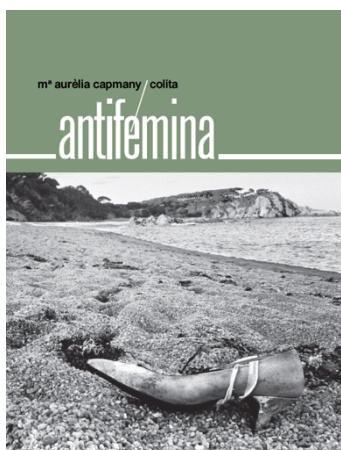
Thanks to these collaborations, this understanding and this deep friendship, his studio is currently home to the Archivo Colita Fotografía, which he directs and manages as the heir to the rights, with a view to sharing the work of the great photographer.



2021_COLITA I FRANCESC POLOP_ © Javi Fernández

BOOK:

On the occasion of the exhibition, Barcelona City Council and Disseny Hub have published a new edition of the book published in 1977 by Colita and Maria Aurèlia Capmany, *Antifèmina*. The presentation will take place at Disseny Hub on 27 November.



Creators: Maria Aurèlia Capmany, Mary Nash, Francesc Polop

Publishers: Barcelona City Council and Disseny Hub Barcelona

Year of publication: 2025

ISBN: 978-84-9156-640-3

Number of pages: 247 pp.

Size: 220 x 280.5 mm (closed)

Price: €30

RELATED ACTIVITIES:

Beyond the book presentation, the Disseny Hub Barcelona has organized other activities related to the exhibition that will take place in the coming months, such as a round table on feminism and several guided tours with the exhibition's curator, Francesc Polop. These activities will soon be available on the DHub website.

High-resolution images available for the press from:

<https://eicub.net/share/service/publicSite?node=workspace://SpacesStore/ff6ea240-03ae-4aa9-ae2b-acfbf160b265>

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Colita. Antifémina

From 31 October 2025 to 25 January 2026. Disseny Hub Barcelona

Official opening: 30 October at 6:30 pm

Prices

General admission: €6

Discounted admission: €4

Combined general admission for temporary exhibitions: €8

Combined discounted admission for temporary exhibitions: €5

Combined general admission: €9.20 (includes admission to the permanent exhibitions and temporary exhibitions)