

**February 26th –
May 24th 2026**

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Pérez Siquier

Fundación MAPFRE Collections





La Chanca, Almería, 1958

The KBr Fundación MAPFRE Barcelona Photo Center is reviving the retrospective it devoted to Carlos Pérez Siquier (Almería, 1930-2021) in 2020, which closed just three weeks after its opening due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Comprising a significant selection of works from the Fundación MAPFRE Collections, the exhibition pays tribute to a key figure in the renewal of 20th-century Spanish photography.

Spanning more than six decades, Carlos Pérez Siquier's career is characterised by an intuitive, committed and pioneering vision within the Spanish artistic avant-garde. Based in his native Almería, he produced a free and poetic body of work that was unconcerned with the trends imposed by the major centres of photographic production such as Barcelona and Madrid. In 1956 he embarked on what would become his first important series, *La Chanca*. Influenced by Neorealist cinema and imbued with humanism, it captures the daily life of this poor neighbourhood in the city of Almería with great sensitivity and dignity.

In 1950 Pérez Siquier co-founded the Almerian Photographic Association (AFAL) with José María Artero, followed a few years later by the magazine of the same name, a forum for Spain's most innovative photographers. Through these initiatives he promoted the modernisation of photography in a country isolated and stagnant after the Civil War and the subsequent dictatorship, while giving visibility to an entire generation of photographers who were only then beginning to be recognised as artists.



Playa Serena, 1974

In the early 1960s Pérez Siquier switched to colour at a time when his contemporaries were still using black and white. This change allowed him to explore new forms of expression and expand his visual repertoire by incorporating Pop Art influences, particularly in his use of vibrant colour and with some references to the Informalist trends emerging in Spanish painting at the time. His series *The Beach* is a notable example of this period, reflecting the transformation of the Spanish coastline through the arrival of mass tourism, due in part to the construction of Almería's airport. This new infrastructure ended the province's historic isolation and facilitated the boom in tourism as well as the arrival of film productions.

Pérez Siquier's next series, *Traps for the Unwary*, consists of colourful still lifes and close-up shots in which he employed a satirical tone to explore the most kitsch elements of mass society. The result is a Pop documentalism that reveals an aesthetic vision which still feels absolutely contemporary today; a critical reflection on consumption, banality and cultural transformation.

Encounters and *La Briseña*, the photographer's final series, portray landscapes and interiors that invite silence and contemplation. Increasingly intimist in nature, they function as a condensed inventory of the language that Pérez Siquier forged throughout his career. His serene gaze continues to find the profundity of the exceptional in the apparent simplicity of the everyday.



La Chanca, Almería, 1957

KEY THEMES IN THE EXHIBITION

La Chanca in black and white

When Carlos Pérez Siquier first became interested in the Almerian neighbourhood of La Chanca in 1956 during his walks round the Alcazaba, this impoverished area of the city had not attracted the interest of other artists. The series *La Chanca* remained largely unknown to both the public and critics until 2001 (only a few small groups of images from it had previously been reproduced) and it was thus more than fifty years after he took the photographs that they were presented at the Museo Reina Sofía, together with the book of the same name written by Juan Goytisolo in 1962.

Pérez Siquier did not approach this reportage from a social perspective but rather as a representation of life itself. Influenced by the aesthetics of Neorealist cinema, he felt himself profoundly drawn to the daily lives of the people who inhabited this impoverished, marginal part of his city with dignity, hope and joy; a place where time seemed to stand still. Women fetching water from the fountain due to lack of running water or washing clothes there; children running through the cobbled streets, dirty and muddy due to the absence of a drainage system; a wedding procession; the walls of small houses whitewashed by their inhabitants; the mouths of caves where the poorest of the poor lived: images that capture the identity of the inhabitants of a dispossessed Spain at the height of the dictatorship.



Marbella, 1983

AFAL

The above-mentioned Almerian Photographic Association (AFAL), co-founded by Carlos Pérez Siquier with José María Artero, very quickly became a paradigm of the Spanish photographic avant-garde during the years of the Franco dictatorship. Pérez Siquier was also the editor-in-chief of *AFAL*, a bi-monthly photography and cinematography magazine published by the group between 1956 and 1963. Remote from the prevailing pictorialism of the time, *AFAL* was founded with the aim of bringing together the work of any Spanish photographer with a modern approach and it attracted many of the country's most important names, including Ramon Masats, Oriol Maspons, Gabriel Cualladó, Joan Colom, Francisco Ontañón, Francesc Català-Roca, and Xavier Miserachs. It also allowed these artists to establish different dialogues with some of the most innovative trends on the international scene at a time when Spain was largely isolated.

The Colour

In the 1960s Pérez Siquier was one of the pioneers who definitively switched to colour - to the disapproval of many of his colleagues - which allowed him to explore new forms of expression and expand his visual repertoire with the remarkable break represented by the series *Informalisms*. In the 1970s his photographs of sunbathers haphazardly occupying the beaches of Almería as a result of the new tourism boom were so ahead of their time that it took years for the photography world to acknowledge their merit, although they eventually became the artist's most popular work. Pérez Siquier's colour photography not only documented a significant social shift but also demonstrated his ability to innovate and adapt to new trends, combining technical precision with poetic sensibility and subtle humour.

Dates

From February 26th
to May 24th, 2026

Curator

Eva M. Vives Jiménez

Opening hours

Until March 31st

Mondays: Closed
(except public holidays)
Tuesdays – Sundays
(and public holidays):
11 am–7 pm
Last entry: 6.30 pm

From April 1st

Mondays: Closed
Tuesdays – Sundays
(and public holidays):
11 am–8 pm
Last entry: 7.30 pm

Visitors must leave the galleries
10 minutes before closing time

KBr Fundación MAPFRE

Av. del Litoral, 30
08005 Barcelona
Tel. (+34) 932 723 180
infokbr@fundacionmapfre.org

Bookshop

Tel. +34 93 272 31 80

Admissions

Standard ticket: 5 €
Ticket with reduction: 3 €
Free standard ticket: Tuesdays
(except public holidays)
Groups: 3 € / per person

Guided tour

(cultural mediation service)

Until March 31st

Wednesdays & Thursdays: 4–7 pm
Fridays & Saturdays: 12–2 pm, 4–7 pm
Sundays & public holidays: 12–2 pm

From April 1st

Wednesdays & Thursdays: 5–8 pm
Fridays & Saturdays: 12–2 pm, 5–8 pm
Sundays & public holidays: 12–2 pm

Information at the reception

Audio guide

Included with the individual ticket.
Accessible via mobile.
More information on the website
(section “Tickets”).

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Tell us what you think about
the exhibition: #KBrPerezSiquier

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Cover
Marbella, 1974

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