



**II International Symposium of Contemporary Art,  
Torrecilla en Cameros/ La Rioja/ Spain. July 24-August 1, 2009**

## Presentation

**Torrefactum: The Cultural Reality of La Rioja.**

During the presentation of last year's TORREFACTUM we said that La Rioja, Los Cameros and Torrecilla were about to live important moments that would create new expectations on their historical horizon. By taking on the ambitious task of creating an artistic and cultural space which would serve as a national and international reference, they were at once facing a great opportunity and a difficult challenge. Almost everyone thought and expressed that what we were talking about was little less than a utopian dream.

Against this backdrop, TORREFACTUM'08 was a great surprise to everyone, including us. We couldn't believe what we were seeing was real, and it seemed as though our dreams had come true. The first edition of TORREFACTUM surpassed its goals in ways we had never imagined and even made a name for itself. This knowledge helps us understand the significance of the Symposium, which in its 2009 edition will take another important step forward in the BEATRIZ ARBELO FOUNDATION's strategy to create a center of excellence which will transform La Rioja into an artistic and cultural space of international renown.

In step with this noble and altruistic goal, this year the Foundation welcomes many new sponsors such as the Würth Museum and Dinastía Vivanco, whose generous gifts will help us give an impulse to the art and culture of La Rioja. It's an honor for our Foundation to be joined by such noble institutions, transforming TORREFACTUM into a common dream for the entire region of La Rioja. We are most grateful to both of these amazing companies, and we hope to continue to working together in future editions of TORREFACTUM.

As you can see in the schedule of activities, the Symposium is made up of an extensive program of artistic and cultural activities and promotion of the region, all of which go way beyond what the name Symposium would seem to suggest. The pictorial facet of the Symposium alone offers the participation of 21 artists of national and international prestige, several of which are from La Rioja. This is a significant step toward bringing prestige to painters from La Rioja, as two of

the hottest young talents in La Rioja, Carlos Corres and Carlos López Garrido, will once again be directing the event. One of the main goals of this symposium is to be a meeting place for artists to live together and share experiences and techniques, including special “master class” sessions directed by specialists of the highest calibre, such as Juan Díaz and David Rodríguez Caballero. This type of symposium is entirely new to Spain, and TORREFACTUM’s new and innovative style is quickly turning into a model for success.

A second pictorial manifestation of the Symposium comes from the attention given to the link between Art and Letters, with the celebration of two round table discussions on this topic in the presence of prestigious participants from a wide variety of fields. In this sense, we would like to highlight the exposition “Images and Words” for its interest and innovation. This exposition contains works, some of which are being displayed for the first time, from artists and writers who painted and wrote simultaneously. In this way, TORREFACTUM calls us to reflect on the communion between visual art and the written word, with the aim of revealing the roots of sensitivity and beauty in the soul of an artist.

It is clear that the cultural atmosphere generated by painting and the presence of such a distinguished group of artists will be taken advantage of in many diverse cultural manifestations, including musical acts. This year’s program includes four concerts over the course of nine days, covering a wide range of musical genres, from classical to jazz to the always vibrant and popular *zarzuela*. There is no doubt in my mind that TORREFACTUM will once again take an important step toward bringing people closer to the artistic and cultural world, with a simple and practical formula which can be easily understood by society. The traditional week of painting workshops which follows the Symposium is a perfect complement to this objective.

TORREFACTUM’s goal of becoming a showcase for the natural beauty of our Cameros and our Rioja, of the hospitality of our neighbors and the furthering of our society will also be met. 2009 will be a great year for achieving this goal, as we have planned an amazing route through La Rioja, beginning with la Baja and Agoncillo where we will visit the Würth Museum, continuing through la Alta and Briones where the Dinastía Vivanco Museum will be our host and ending with the Cameros and Torecilla, headquarters of the BEATRIZ ARBELO FOUNDATION. Last but not least, the Camero Viejo will also be present in this Symposium in all of the activities that will take place in San Román.

As you can see, the BEATRIZ ARBELO FOUNDATION remains steadfast in its goal of promoting art and culture in La Rioja and in the further development of the region of the Cameros. Every day we have new and better partners in these objectives. We have already made reference to the Würth and Dinastía Vivanco museums, which have been a great encouragement to for us to persevere. The cooperation of the Arteaga Gallery has been of great value, as well as the help of our main sponsors, none of which abandoned the generous cooperation they initiated one year ago. We are, therefore, extremely grateful to the Government of La Rioja, and to the altruism and philanthropy of Laura Ashley, HDI, Bruzon & Miller and La Caixa, four businesses which continue to be an example to us all.

Last but not least, we want to express our remembrance and deep gratitude to Beatriz Arbelo, our “Artist of Love and Beauty”. As we always say, she is our reason for existing, the source of our inspiration and energy. Thanks to her guidance and impulse, which we have never stopped

perceiving, TORREFACTUM keeps moving forward in its unstoppable mission to improve the culture of our region. Although her work will not be displayed this year, for which we will not have the privilege of enjoying her paintings, the presence of Beatriz will most certainly be felt by all throughout these marvellous days, as she enjoys with us and helps us to enjoy the great cultural reality of TORREFACTUM in La Rioja, this great last gift she has given us. Thank you Bea. Thank you so much for your generosity.

José Antonio Carro  
President of the Beatriz Arbelo Foundation