Culture secretary Susana Labrador and Melba Levick held a press conference today to announce the famed graphic professional's gift to the Formentera Council of a collection of images of the island taken between 1968 and 1992. The pair also spoke about the photographer's latest show, an exhibition settling into the gallery of the Ajuntament Vell this Tuesday.

Labrador enthused that the endowment of graphic material was “priceless in terms of historical and artistic value” and a welcome complement to Formentera's body of documentary images. The secretary cited multiple chats over the current legislative session between her and Levick, contact she said ultimately translated into Levick's donation of three hundred colour slides from between 1978 and 1992, plus digital copies of prints made over the four years after 1968—sixty digital colour prints and 26 black and white ones. The Council pledges to study, digitise and disseminate the material.

Dovetailing with Levick's gift is the opening, tomorrow, of ***Formentera per sempre***, a selection of shots the photographer culled from among her collection of images. The show, a joint project of the Formentera Council and Levick, will be on view until August 4 in the exhibition space of the old town hall.

'Formentera forever'

Formentera per sempre. Fotografies de Melba Levick, 1972-1992 is an anthology of work about Formentera fifty years after the photographer's first visit. The island was the focus of Levick's first book and at the centre of a monographic that came a decade later.

The Sala d'Exposicions housed a considerable portion of Levick's previously unpublished black and white work in 2011. Today, the images showcased in ***Formentera per sempre*** stand as a sort of shorthand for the collective memory of the place Levick discovered years ago. They are photos which today are also closely entwined with the memories of islanders. Formentera, the birthplace of Levick's professional career, will now be home to a collection of roughly three hundred images she produced here over the years.

The photos that make up the exhibition, handpicked by Levick from among her most celebrated, are interspersed with additional images illustrating the multifaceted process of documenting the island. Levick's unique style of portraiture, often a product of a particular phase in her professional career, is reflected in her eye as a photographer.

Often in her black and white prints, Levick frames shots that are self-contained —reflections, restated silhouettes, windows from which to gaze—, whereas her early colour work showcased the atmosphere of a particular setting.

Melba Levick
Levick set up shop as a photographer in Paris in the early nineteen-seventies. For the first fifteen years of her career, she focused on artistic photos in black and white, images which frequently popped up in shows in Paris, Barcelona and New York and accompanying books. Her work has been published in reviews around the world and her photos can be found in Paris' Bibliothèque Nationale.

Melba has turned out more than sixty books about travel, design, architecture and gardens in Europe, Asia and America. Her first, *Formentera* (1982), was among the first photographical explorations of the island. She followed it up in subsequent years with
Eivissa
(1983),
Mallorca
(1984) and
Menorca
(1985). In 1993 Levick revisited
Formentera
, this time including text by Nicolas Schmid. In 1996 she put out
Vivir en las Baleares
(Chronicle Books), a publication that came with an exhibition, in 1997, at Sa Nostra's cultural space on Formentera. Her most recent work was featured in July 2011's
Moments llunyans
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