

# Where are the snows of yesteryear?

From 2 November 2025 to 15 February 2026

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**Artistic and documentary materials sourced from:**

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**Curatorship:** Alberto Ruiz de Samaniego y Equipo FCAYC

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# I. Beginning and End of Snow

**“I have been walking north  
for a long time, among burnt  
brambles and snowbirds.”**

JULIO LLAMAZARES

The first snowfall is a spell: a magical event. You go to bed in one world and wake up to find yourself in a different one. Snow intensifies sensations, absorbs the nuances of the atmosphere, changes texture, sparkles with reflections. It gives rise to a whole range of affects, projections, resonances, symbolisms, polarities. In the snow, the gaze arrives at its most enigmatic condition. Snow miraculously and ambiguously traverses the most recognizable and the most hidden or obscure reality, that of our ghosts, our obsessions, our mind.

“Even the briefest walk in the mountains dissolves time, dilates space, draws the spirit into the depths of the self. In the snow, the glare suppresses consciousness. All that matters is to move forward. Effort erases everything: memories and sorrows, desires and regrets.” (SYLVAIN TESSON)

## II. In the White Silence

**“I have heard the snow bell,  
I have seen the mushroom of  
purity, I have created oblivion.”**

ANTONIO GAMONEDA

With the snow, even the sky disappears: the world is (a) white, a blank territory abandoned by signs. Like a thought without form or motive that turns all reason into vapour. Floating thought, covering, immense, nebulous: slowly unfolding, muffled. Snow, too, as a promise of liberation, detachment: satori. Landscape for haikus.

“Nothing. The whiteness was perhaps thicker. It was horrible to stand and stare into that pot of whiteness. The path went on. And now to the side of us there was a ghastlier white, spreading and swallowing even the grey-brown earth our minds had stood on. We had come to the snow. A white as of non-life.”

(NAN SHEPHERD)

The contemplation of a snowy space may respond not, now, to the desire to know but rather to the mere pleasure of seeing. All reference and precise meaning are annulled. Whiteness is the plastic equivalent of silence.

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# III. Dialectic of Snow

**“Snow dictates to Earth the  
thought of heaven.”**

SYLVAIN TESSON

Snow as a transformative element: a great operator of mnemonic, daimonic, poetic exchanges and projections: symbolic. The essential mettle of snow extends to very diverse spheres. It forms harmonics of the smooth, the maternal, the homely, the white, the immaculate, the soft, which often refers to a safe and joyful body. But it also announces the obsessive, the piercing cold, the besieging, the wild or the rugged that needs skin or fat. The difficult survival. That sometimes drags on interminably. Or the hostile obstacle that checks and surprises the machine, the body. Snow provides an experience that seems intimate and at the same time cosmic.

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## IV. Snow Crystals

**“How she longed for winter then!  
Scrupulously austere in its order  
Of white and black  
Ice and rock;  
each sentiment within border,  
And heart’s frosty discipline  
Exact as a snowflake.”**

SYLVIA PLATH

The contradiction of snow, which affirms itself, inescapable, in the very act of its disappearing. The snowflake as a random instantiation of the event that comes from the sky. The movement of the snowflake is equivalent to the energy of the sense, an eternal appearing and vanishing, hurrying after itself toward a completeness that is always lacking, because it could not find it other than by immobilizing itself, petrifying itself in a frozen reality.

To study flakes of snow is to focus not on their matter but on their amplitude. The power of snow to nullify substance is no longer of interest, in comparison to the revelation of its particles.

In the 1880s, an American photographer named Wilson Bentley (1865-1931), from the little town of Jericho, in Vermont, began capturing the first images of snow crystals with photographic plates, obtaining his first photograph of a snowflake at the age of twenty, after many attempts. He took more than 5,000 photographs, and shortly before his death, from pneumonia, published a book with more than two thousand microphotographs of snowflakes (although he had twice as many in his archive).

“Under the microscope I found that snowflakes were miracles of beauty and it seemed a shame that this beauty should not be seen and appreciated by others. Every crystal was a masterpiece of design, and no design was ever repeated. When a snowflake melted, that design was forever lost. Just that much beauty was gone, without leaving any record behind.”

WILSON BENTLEY

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## V. Childish Snow

**“I knew the message of the winter,  
The darted hail, the childish snow.”**

DYLAN THOMAS

Snow constitutes a child's celebration and often reveals itself as nostalgia for childhood or for the mythical virginity of a particular territory; it is also a sign of fleeting presence and grace, those ideals of silent film. In its contact with snow, the mind is able to engender countless creatures and apparitions, figures with a strange paternal projection, guardians of the place and the ludic dimension of the first years of life. The snowman: an image of the eternal human being and the reflection, perhaps, of our own face. A protective effigy, an object to play with. A magical or nostalgic or playful or traumatic, even mocking thing. The snowman: representation or disfigurement?

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## VI. Anthropologies of Snow

**“Things that gladden the heart:  
watching the snow fall in the  
morning, when all is silent.”**

SEI SHŌNAGON

Eduardo Marco Miranda’s work speaks of the pressure that tourism exerts on snowy areas. It exposes the acute contemporary tension between accessibility and mass use in these territories: the more difficult they are to access, the less human pressure on the landscape.

“At least a relative solitude and silence are, then, the most precious conditions of alpine pleasure, and the presence of the masses is fatal. The place is littered with greasy paper, and the gods depart forever.” (SAMIVEL)

In a symbolic realm close to myth, in his piece on the Amur tiger hunters Álvaro Laiz speaks to us of the extinction of the snow animals.

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## VII. Bibliography

## VIII. Awaiting the hand of snow

“How nobly he has chosen his grave! He lies amid splendid green fir trees, covered by snow. Greet the dear and silent dead beneath the earth, and do not burn too much in the eternal flames of nonexistence.”

ROBERT WALSER

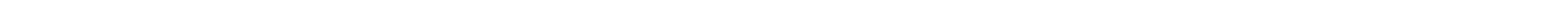
Burying death in the shroud of beauty. Snow, in its erasure of all forms, also reminds or warns us of our own mortality, perhaps because the dead, like the earth beneath the white mantle, are faceless.

The white space takes on an aspect of eternity. There is a sepulchral silence in the snow; it undoes all noise or voice, it undoes even life, to the extent that this silence becomes emblematic of mortuary repose. Shroud or white of snow “for death even a ball gown” (YVES BONNEFOY).

# IX.

“If snow no longer falls from  
the clouds, may it continue to  
snow inside me.”

PETER HANDKE



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**Where are the snows  
of yesteryear?**

**Opening:**

Sunday 2 November at 12:00 p.m.

**Dates:**

From 2 November 2025  
to 15 February 2026

**Opening times:**

From 12 to 2 p.m. and from 4 to 7 p.m.  
Tuesday to Sunday. Closed Mondays.

**Organised by:**

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**In partnership with:** Mirabaud

**Curatorship:**

Alberto Ruiz de Samaniego  
y Equipo FCAYC

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**Curator:** Alfredo Puente

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**Exhibition set-up:** Fernando Robles,  
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Juan José Valderrey

**Maintenance:** Inmaculada López and  
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**Photo Archive:**  
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