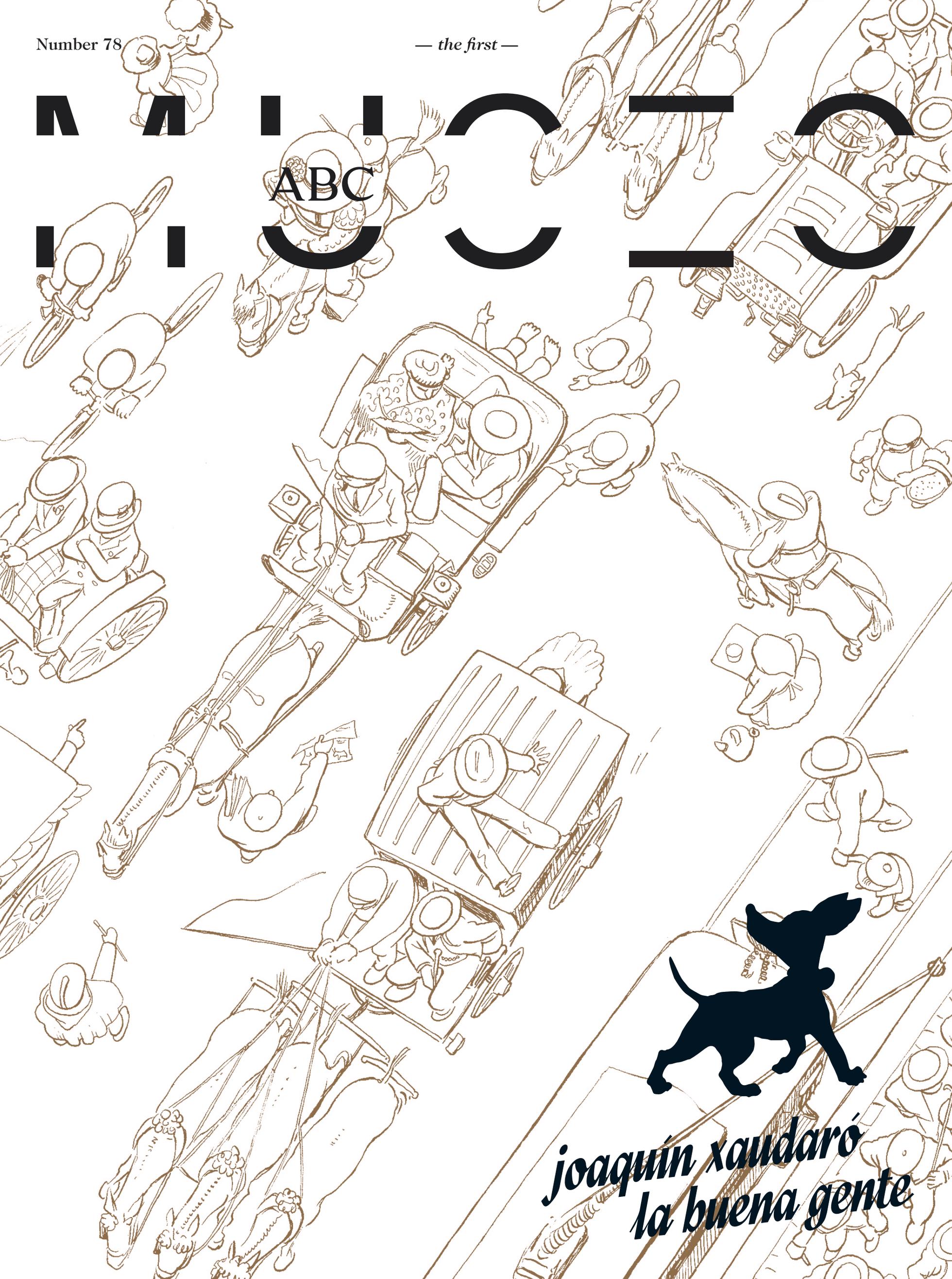


NARRACIONES

ABC



joaquin xaudaró
la buena gente

Throughout the history of humour in Spain, there may not have been a single cartoonist who enjoyed more popularity in life than Joaquín Xaudaró (Vigan, Philippines, 1872 — Madrid, 1933). Because of his close relationship with the company *Prensa Española*, the Museo ABC conserves 6,042 original illustrations signed by him.

The son of a military engineer stationed in the then Spanish colony, Xaudaró lived in Vigan, on the island of Luzon, until he was eleven, when the family moved to Barcelona, where he began to study drawing and painting at various academies. He rejected a military career as his father, who died young, would have liked.

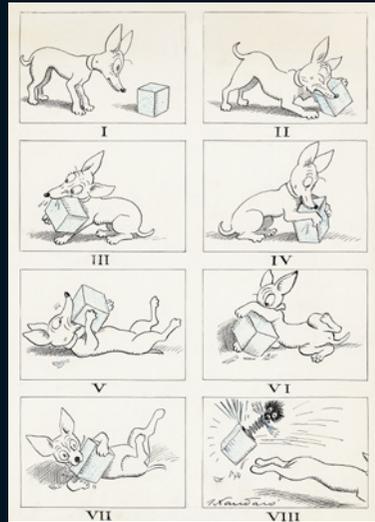
Thus, after finishing his obligatory military service, he began to work for the best Catalan magazines, such as *Barcelona Cómica*, *La Hormiga de Oro*, *The Monigoty* (he was the co-creator), and *La Saeta*. He did humour strips for them, as well as illustrations and comics (a genre in which he is one of the most distinguished pioneers in Spain).

These creations caught the eye of Torcuato Luca de Tena, founder and director of the magazine *Blanco y Negro*, who wanted Xaudaró to work for his publication. Thus, he moved to Madrid in 1898.



Joaquín Xaudaró. *Portada*, 1904
©Museo ABC

That is where our exhibition begins, showcasing his work for the aforementioned magazine, but also the work he did for the company's successive publications, like the newspaper *ABC*, the weekly satirical publication *Gedeón*, as well as the *Gente Menuda* children's supplement. At the same time, Xaudaró also undertook a noteworthy career as a set designer in Madrid.



Joaquín Xaudaró. *Historieta muda de espanto. Susto morrocotudo*, 1928
©Museo ABC

Described by *The Critic* as “frenchish and modernist”, Xaudaró shows a large versatility of styles, of which his aerial views of everyday scenes call attention, as well as his progressive ability to simplify things in his comics.

Ten years later, however, the artist decided to leave everything behind (a secure job, a wife, and a daughter) to try his luck in Paris and live amongst the mythical *Bohemia* of the city.

There, he did not reach the success that he had hoped, despite his many jobs as an illustrator for novels and stories. Thus, he maintained for a time his collaboration with *Prensa Española*, and this is what constitutes the second part of our exhibition. He especially paid attention to crowd scenes, and his ability to depict everyday life in his drawings can be seen in the works he did to accompany the texts by his friend, Bonnat.

When the First World War broke out, he decided to return to Spain, and he lived between Monzón (Huesca), where his wife and daughter resided, and Lleida, where he founded an academy of drawing and ran a small museum. He then turned to doing animated cartoons, another of his passions, and some longer comics. He would return for a few months to Paris when the conflict had finished.

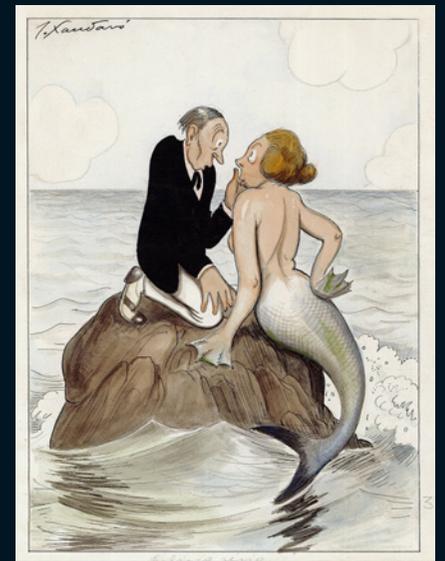
In 1921, he realised that he was starting to be forgotten and that, in addition, a new generation of humourists with more *avant-garde* styles was quickly beginning to emerge. Therefore, he decided to return to Madrid and start working once again for *Prensa Española*.

Thanks to those works, and especially his daily illustration for *ABC*, from that moment until his death —the period which makes up the third part of our exhibition— he reached a level of popularity that he could have never imagined.



Joaquín Xaudaró. *Las cuatro esquinas*, 1908
©Museo ABC

By this time, he finally had a uniquely personal style and had also sharpened his ability to capture, in just a few pencils, the idiosyncrasies of his contemporaries who belonged to all social classes —individuals who he treated with extreme warmth, without the slightest sign of bitterness: “The Good People”—.



Joaquín Xaudaró. *Peligro serio*, 1932
©Museo ABC

In addition, Torcuato Luca de Tena quickly realised that the little dog that Xaudaró often included in his *vignettes* was what made his work popular, and he asked the artist to ensure its presence in all of his drawings. The canine quickly acquired a notoriety that Xaudaró could not have imagined. Nonetheless, as payoff for that hard work, the dog became an important source of income due to its commercial launch in the form of jewellery, toys, cutouts, and as an advertising gimmick.

Meanwhile, the artist discovered his vocation for amateur radio and, likewise, shortly before his death, he co-founded a society dedicated to animated cartoons: S.E.D.A. (Spanish Society for Cartoons) along with his friends, also artists, K-Hito and Got.

His humour, which is generally very much based on wordplay and often weighed down with frequent misogynic allusions, has weathered badly over time, but his ability to depict the faces and the attitudes of “The Good People” make him a prodigious documentarian of those early decades of the 20th century. So, we believe, is evidenced by the 150 drawings we have selected to try and summarise the vast extension of his work.

— Felipe Hernández Cava

First page: Joaquín Xaudaró. *Madrid a vista de pájaro*. «De vuelta de los toros», 1908 ©Museo ABC

+INFORMATION

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From Tuesdays to Saturdays 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. - Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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