

# Lights in the Light

## **The *Canticle of the Creatures* in the photography of Sister Isaura Marcos**

In 1225, Francis of Assisi composed *the Canticle of the Creatures*, a song of gratitude to life and to all living beings, seen as reflections and mirrors of divine perfection. The work is a song of communion with nature that speaks to the spiritual clarity of a man approaching the end of his life.

“Lights in the Light” is Sister Isaura Marcos’s visual reinterpretation of the *Canticle of the Creatures*. Her unique photography is the result of observation and an intuitive approach based on reflections, overlapping images and colour.

Sister Isaura Marcos joined the community of Poor Clare nuns at Santa Maria de Pedralbes Monastery in 1976. Her work is an example of artistic creativity following in the cultural footsteps of the sisters who have lived at Pedralbes since 1326, a community of erudite nuns who have found their main source of inspiration at the monastery.

The *Canticle of the Creatures* is more relevant than ever: a celebration of contemplation and spirituality that contrasts with the frenzy of modern life. “Lights in the Light” not only marks the 800th anniversary of the *Canticle of the Creatures*, but also seeks to preserve the cultural legacy of the Poor Clare nuns at Pedralbes Monastery, a building that will celebrate its own major anniversary (700 years, in this case) in 2026.

Most High, all-powerful, good Lord,  
all praise is yours, all glory, all honour, and all blessing.  
To you, alone, Most High, do they belong.  
No mortal lips are worthy of pronouncing your name.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through all you have made,  
and first my Lord Brother Sun, who brings the day;  
and through whom you give us light.  
How beautiful is he, how radiant in all his splendour;  
Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Moon  
and the stars; in the heavens you have made them,  
bright, and precious, and fair.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brothers wind and air, and fair and stormy,  
all the weather’s moods,  
by which you cherish all that you have made.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Water,  
so useful, humble, precious and pure.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Brother Fire,  
through whom you brighten up the night.  
How beautiful is he, how cheerful!  
Full of power and strength.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through our Sister  
Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us,  
and produces various fruits with coloured flowers and herbs.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through those who grant pardon for love of you;  
through those who endure sickness and trial.  
Happy are those who endure in peace,  
By You, Most High, they will be crowned.

All praise be yours, my Lord, through Sister Death,  
From whose embrace no mortal can escape.  
Woe to those who die in mortal sin!  
Happy those she finds doing your will!  
The second death can do them no harm.

Praise and bless my Lord, and give him thanks  
And serve him with great humility.



The Almighty (I)



Creatures (II)



The Almighty (II)



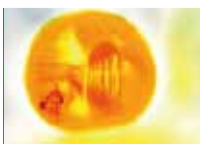
Creatures (III)



The Almighty (III)



Creatures (IV)



The Almighty (IV)



Creatures (I)



Sun (I)



Sun (II)



Moon



Stars (I)



Stars (II)



Stars (III)



Stars (IV)



Wind (I)



Wind (II)



Air



Cloud (I)



Cloud (II)



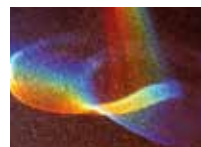
Serene



All weather (I)



All weather (II)



All weather (III)



All weather (IV)



Water (I)



Water (II)



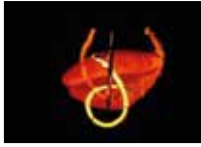
Water (III)



Water (IV)



Fire (I)



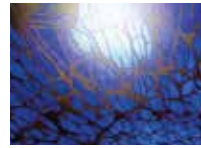
Fire (II)



Sickness (II)



Mother the Earth



Tribulation (I)



Nourishes



Tribulation (II)



Sustains



Reconciliation



Herbs (I)



Blessed (I)



Herbs (II)



Blessed (II)



Fruits



Peace



Crowned (I)



Flowers (I)



Crowned (II)



Flowers (II)



Sister Death (I)



Sickness (I)



Sister Death (II)



Humility (I)



Load (II)



Humility (II)



Load (III)



Load (I)



Cloisters

## OF CLOISTERS AND GALAXIES

Observatories are spaces for studying the origin of galaxies. Cloisters are spaces for celebrating a God who, well before the origin, dreamt of much more than galaxies: the existence of the world, the evolution of life, and the glory of knowledge and love. These are different kinds of fulfilment: the kind that comes from the mathematical beauty of the laws of the universe – in their formal elegance and celestial and microscopic consistency – and the kind that comes from the religious depth of the cosmic mystery – the contrast between the vastness and wisdom of the stars and the achingly finite nature of life and knowledge, the gap between love and the mind that created the universe and the malevolent arrogance of power on earth.

David Jou

### EXHIBITION CREDITS

**Idea and production:** Reial Monestir de Santa Maria de Pedralbes. Barcelona Institute of Culture. Barcelona City Council

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