



**SALVEM  
LES FOTOS**

LABORATORIO  
**UPV**









In the infamous hours when the mud tide fiercely struck the ground floors of so many Valencian municipalities—especially in the Ribera, L'Horta Sud, and Requena-Utiel—clouds of objects stripped of their contexts, swirling in the mud, invaded the streets, avenues, and parks, weightless. Among canes, vehicles, rubble, and other inert volumes—not a few of them heavy—set sail, much more fragile and fleeting, infinite memories. Shipwrecked scraps of the lives of many affected people; photographs, paper objects, and other documentary items floated adrift

in a chaotic quagmire that engulfed everything, that flooded everything. The same mud swipe that had violently torn away from the neighbors the most valuable possessions of their homes also threatened to strip them—so irremediably and impunely—of their identity and memory: photographs (always unrepeatable); black-and-white or color memories, fleeting paper moments, postcards, or even whole family albums, the mere idea of their loss weighing as heavily as the countless damages to the other material goods.







It is at the genesis of the catastrophe, that very day, at the exact minute zero, when, in the helpless, tearful gaze of an entire country that is determined to help the people of Valencia, an initiative was born. This initiative, led by the students of Conservation and Restoration at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the UPV, aimed to mitigate the damage to these personal items be-

longing to the affected population. While, in the immediate aftermath, the urgent need for help was of a different nature, as the first hours and days passed, students from the Conservation and Restoration programs offered to help with a series of preventive safeguarding actions to rescue this heritage and prevent the mud from consigning so many memories to oblivion.



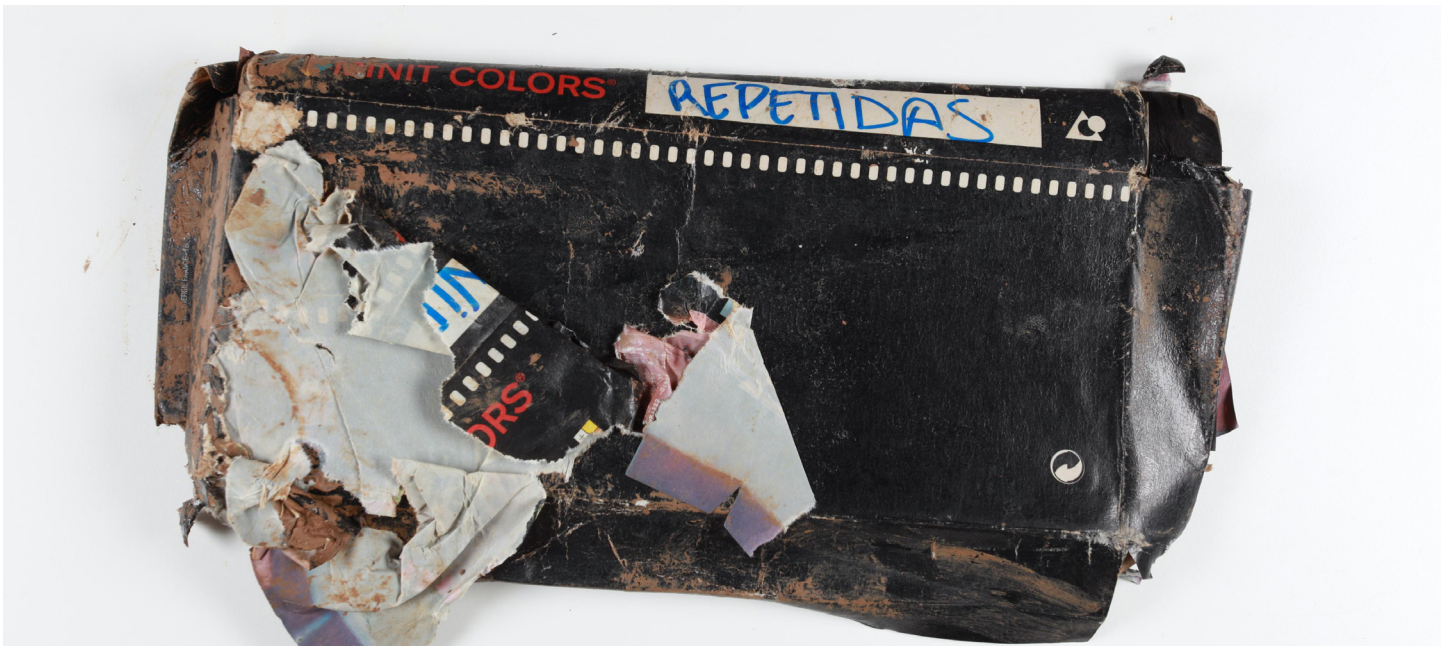


The Fine Arts Faculty has an interdisciplinary team directing the project, including Pilar Soriano, Deputy Director of the Conservation and Restoration Department and professor of the Photography Conservation course; Esther Nebot, professor of the same course; Ana Carreres, a master's student with international training and a specialist in photography conservation; and Pilar Bosch, a biologist from the same department, responsible for biochemical measurements and environmental safety. The photographic registry is being managed by the Department of Drawing, in collaboration with other departments in the Faculty and under the coordination of Professor Pedro Vicente. Nearly a hundred students from our programs are actively participating in the conservation and documentation of the photographs. Record sheets are being created with all the relevant data about the origin of the material, whether it is recognized property or anonymous material. There is no direct intervention on the photographs themselves; rather, the focus is on safeguarding actions to prevent further deterioration or total ruin of the documents. The care and dedication with which our Conservation and Restoration students work, as well as numerous alumni specialists from our Faculty, attends to the smallest detail, as the material being worked on is reassembled and returned to its owner, if possible, in the same order in which it arrived.

However, despite the effort and commitment of all the professionals involved, not all photographs or the supports containing them can always be recovered. Some have suffered such devastating damage that they have almost completely disappeared, and all attempts to salvage them physically have failed. The tremendous helplessness this entails has driven the need to digitize all the photographs, so that families can have access to the images in their original format, but also in a digital copy. Furthermore, a group of experts in photo retouching is digitally restoring the photographs, a slow and laborious process but an essential one for the families to recover their photographs and memories as faithfully as possible to how they were before the disaster.







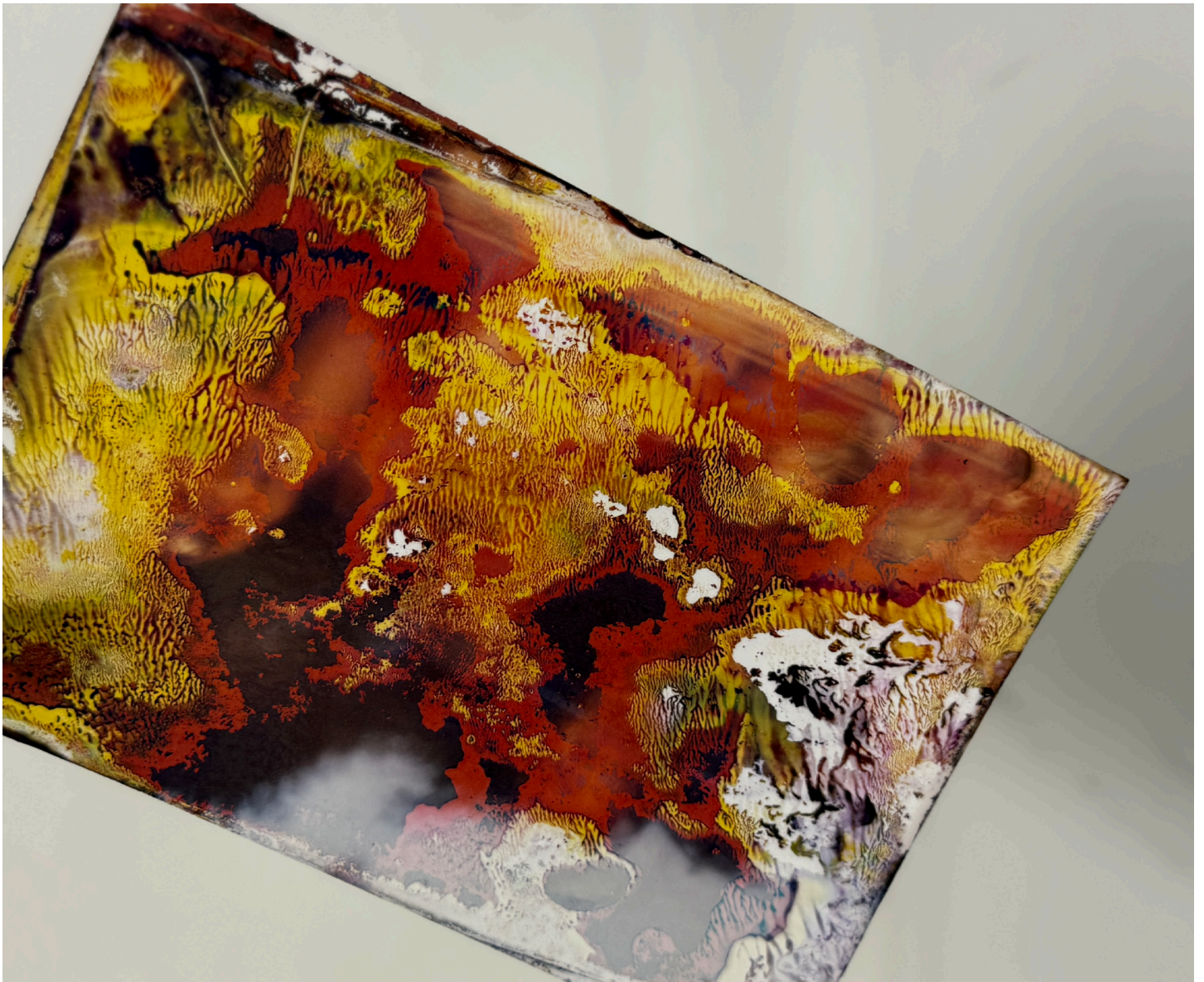








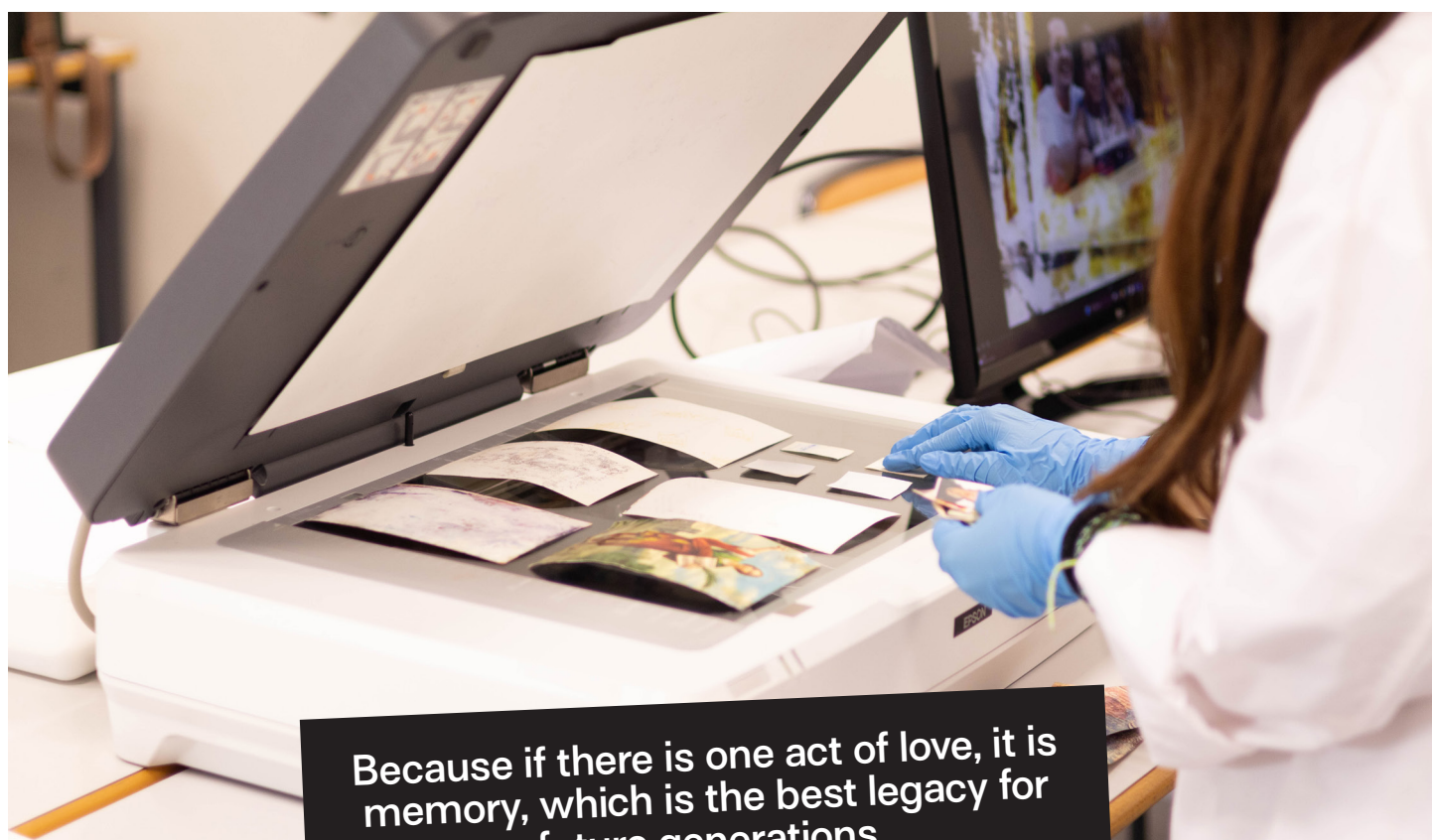
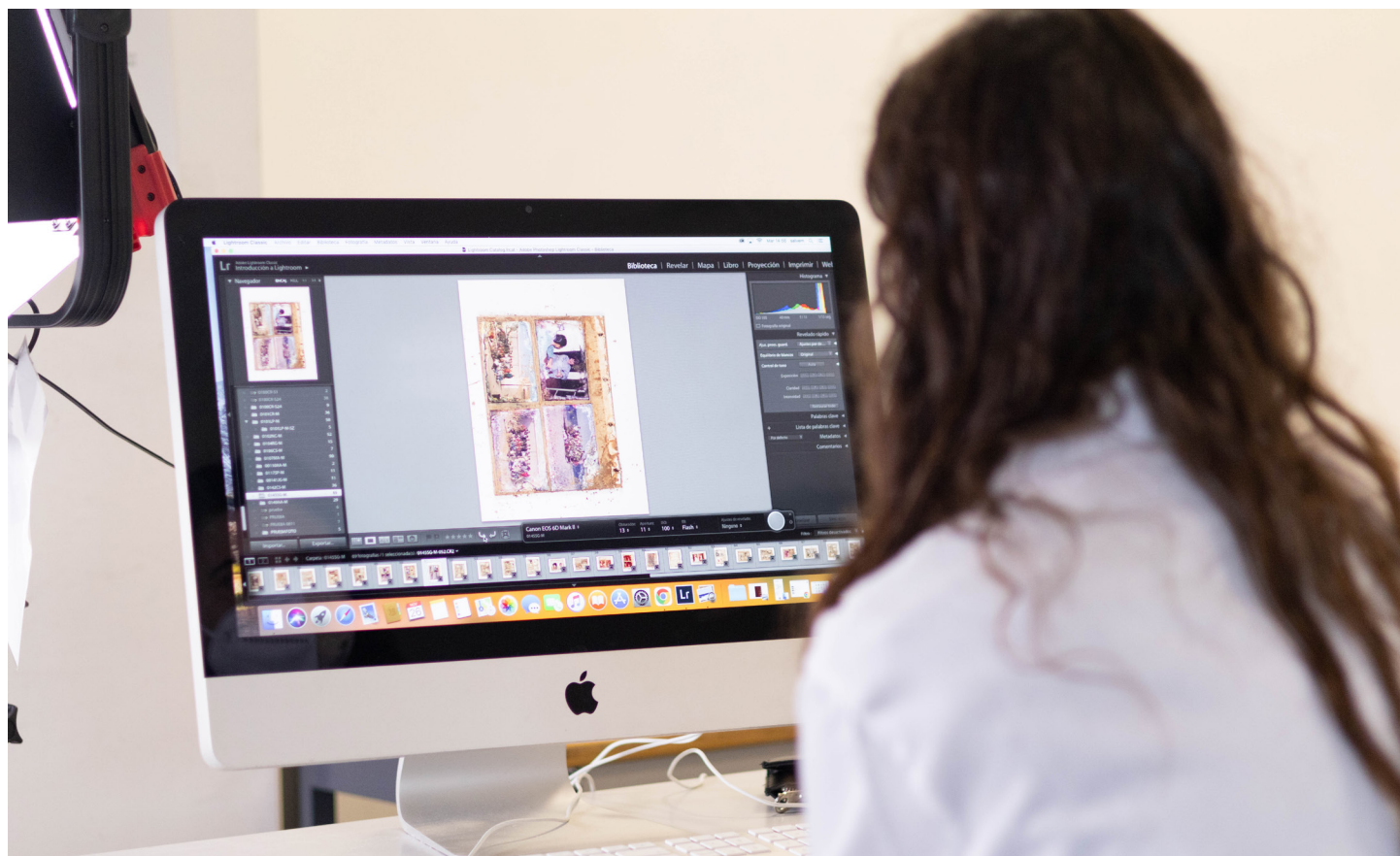






Our students have more than demonstrated their generosity, their unwavering solidarity, and their effective capacity for action in an emergency situation, working with the most sensitive and emotional material from thousands of affected people. The losses suffered and the mo-

ments lived will not be erased, but we are clear that this project, beyond photographic recovery, is fighting to rebuild memories and preserve the memory of anonymous people, which is, in essence, solidarity and love.



Because if there is one act of love, it is memory, which is the best legacy for future generations







**1.100**  
albums

**190.000**  
photographs

**11.000**  
photos intervened and  
digitalized

**130**  
different volunteers linked to the  
Faculty of Fine Arts took part

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