

# Presentation

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Pasqual Maragall

President of the COOB '92



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## PROLOGUE

*Barcelona is the city of sport. And of culture. And of civility. And of much more that we have been able to bring to the foreground thanks to the impulse of the 1992 Olympic Games, the engine of the transformation that the city has undergone. For this reason, it is for me a great satisfaction to be able to write the prologue of a book dedicated to a reflection on some of the most significant aspects of the Games that everyone called the best in history.*

*Three years later, when we are at the doors of Atlanta '96, it is a great satisfaction to see that all of the facilities that we built for the Games are now in use, that 50,000 citizens are regular users of these new facilities, and that last year 300, 000 people participated in public sports activities in the streets of Barcelona. The citizens of Barcelona participate in the sports of the city, just as they have turned into the continuation of the Olympic spirit.*

*The reader will find in this book the key to the success of the 1992 Barcelona Games: cooperation. Cooperation that existed between citizens and their Town Council. Between the Town Council and the other institutions (those of the Metropolitan Area, the Diputaci6 (or Provincial Government), the Generalitat, the State, as well as the trade unions, entrepreneurs, sports federations, the IOC, and others). Only in this way can we understand the practical unanimity that existed around the Barcelona Olympic project, both in the city as well as around Catalonia and all of Spain. This is the «Barcelona model» that everyone has admired and without which the final result would not have been possible: the resurgence and reconstruction of a great European city, which we have placed on the map as one of the great cities of the world and whose citizens have seen a notable increase in their quality of life.*

*Now, when Barcelona is preparing for its second great transformation, this publication lets us take a look backwards to evaluate the principal urban, economic, social and communicational effects of the Games with the perspective of time. With this collection of articles I believe that we have available the first rigorous and multidisciplinary look at an event that greatly affected the configuration, the image and the character of Barcelona.*

*The fact that in our day there is a number of sufficiently interesting studies to justify the publication of this volume, is also a consequence of the institutional legacy that the Games have left. The Barcelona Olympic Foundation and the Centre for Olympic and Sports Studies of the Autonomous University of Barcelona, entities that together with the Olympic Museum of Lausanne and the Banca Catalana have made this volume possible, are now solid realities carrying out an important task. In keeping the memory of the Barcelona Games alive as well as the initiative to research Olympic themes.*

*In celebrating the third anniversary of a year that we have now mysticised, the idea that 1992 was the year of a happy culmination of an era still predominates, though I would like to add that it was the beginning of another era that is even better. We are entering into a new stage where we hope for a wave of transformations of a more technological and cultural nature directed in turn towards the change of urban behaviour, which will turn Barcelona into the capital of southern Europe.*

PASQUAL MARAGALL

President of the COOB '92  
Mayor of Barcelona