



## **The thread of absurdity**

We have said, and heard it said so many times that the literary generation of the Civil War, which was the heir to *noucentisme*, experienced and saw its world and hopes collapse, that this generation must be given the benefit of the doubt when it is appraised, with the mitigating factor of not knowing what it would have been if this major upheaval had not taken place. An upheaval which, in fact, seems to have been the major impediment or excuse for failing to judge objectively the value, level, quality, or influence of the work of any of the members of this generation.

Calders is one of them. The first phase of his artistic (not just literary) career received the *coup de grâce* of a war, of an exile, of a more than discreet return and a belated, and most probably biased, recognition of his work.

However, beyond the conditioning (not mitigating) circumstances, Calders created a microcosm in his fiction, like Espriu, Perucho and others. A world showing the absurdity of the real, a set of mirrors which offer a fragmented and distorted vision of reality (whether personal, of the human condition, of his city, of Catalonia, of Mexico, of imaginary places, it doesn't matter). A vision which is not much more fragmented or distorted than those visions we consider objective or true to life.

Calders had a special knack for locating, identifying and stretching the thread of the comic, dramatic or tragic absurdity of any instant, place or situation in life. And he made a personal universe of it all, with its obsessions, its values and symbols and the special mechanisms which it used to function.

It is precisely this universe, this multiple and polyhedral reality, resulting from the application of the mirrors of fiction, which prompted the CCCB's interest in the proposal of professors Castellanos and Melcion, in this co-production with the Institució de les Lletres Catalanes. The world of Calders will live amongst us for a few months.