

Carmen Laforet Correspondence
A Finding Aid to the Collection in the Library of Congress



Latin American, Caribbean, and European Division, Library of Congress
Washington, D.C.
2022

Contact information: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.hisp/hispanic.contact>

Catalog Record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2024761600>

Additional search options available at: <https://hdl.loc.gov/loc.hisp/eadhisp.hi024001>

Prepared by Manuscript Division staff

Finding aid encoded by Manuscript Division staff, 2024

Collection Summary

Title: Carmen Laforet Correspondence

Inclusive Dates: 1951-1985

ID No.: HISP61600

Creator: Laforet, Carmen

Extent: 182 items

Extent: 1 container

Extent: 0.4 linear feet

Language: Collection material in Spanish

Location: Latin American, Caribbean, and European Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

LC Catalog record: <https://lccn.loc.gov/2024761600>

Summary: Author. Correspondence from Laforet to Spanish literature teacher Marion Ament, political activist Linka Babecka, artist and actress Paquita Mesa, and Antonella Bodini, widow of the poet Vittorio Bodini. Laforet's letters describe her writing process and creative struggles as well as her private life and relationships.

Acquisition Information

The correspondence of Carmen Laforet was acquired by the Library of Congress in 2023 from Israel Rolón-Barada, Laforet's biographer.

Processing History

The correspondence of Carmen Laforet was arranged and described by Manuscript Division archivist Emilia Schrier in 2024.

Related Material

The PALABRA Archive at the Library of Congress (see <https://guides.loc.gov/palabra-archive>) contains two recordings of Carmen Laforet reading from her work, one from 1981 (see <https://lccn.loc.gov/93842611>) and another from 1985 (see <https://lccn.loc.gov/93842395>). These recordings can be accessed from the Hispanic Reading Room at the Library of Congress.

Copyright Status

The status of copyright in the unpublished writings of Carmen Laforet is governed by the Copyright Law of the United States (Title 17, U.S.C.).

Access and Restrictions

The correspondence of Carmen Laforet is open to research. Many collections are stored off-site and advance notice is needed to retrieve these items for research use. Researchers are advised to contact the Hispanic Reading Room prior to visiting.

Preferred Citation

Researchers wishing to cite this collection should include the following information: Container number, Carmen Laforet Correspondence, Latin American, Caribbean, and European Division, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Biographical Note

Date	Event
1921, Sept. 6	Born, Barcelona, Spain
1923	Moved to Las Palmas, Gran Canaria, Spain, with family
1939-1942	Studied philosophy, Universidad de Barcelona
1942-1944	Studied law, Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain
1944	Published <i>Nada</i> . Barcelona: Ediciones Destino Awarded Premio Nadal literary award for <i>Nada</i>
1946	Married Manuel Cerezales (died 2007) Birth of daughter, Marta Cerezales Laforet
1948	Birth of daughter, Cristina Cerezales Laforet
1950	Birth of daughter, Silvia Cerezales Laforet
1952	Published <i>La isla y los demonios</i> . Barcelona: Ediciones Destino Birth of son, Manuel Cerezales Laforet
1955	Published <i>La mujer nueva</i> . Barcelona: Ediciones Destino Awarded Premio Menorca de Novela for <i>La mujer nueva</i>
1956	Awarded Premio Nacional de Literatura for <i>La mujer nueva</i>
1957	Birth of son, Agustín Cerezales Laforet
1963	Published <i>La insolancia</i> . Barcelona: Planeta
1967	Published <i>Paralelo 35</i> . Barcelona: Planeta
1970	Separated from Manuel Cerezales
1972-1977	Lived in Rome, Italy
2003	Publication of <i>Puedo contar contigo: correspondencia</i> . Barcelona: Ediciones Destino
2004, Feb. 28	Died, Madrid, Spain
2004	Publication of <i>Al volver la esquina</i> . Barcelona: Ediciones Destino

Scope and Content Note

The correspondence of Carmen Laforet (1921-2004) spans the years 1951-1985 and consists of outgoing letters from Laforet to friends Marion Ament, Linka Babecka, Antonella Bodini, and Paquita Mesa. Her correspondence with each of these women is lengthy, introspective, and reflective, spanning decades of friendship and revealing much of Laforet's writing process, internal struggles with faith and purpose, and family life. The correspondence is written entirely in Spanish and is mostly handwritten with some typed material.

All the letters are written after the publication of Laforet's first novel, *Nada*, and a common thread throughout the letters is her dislike of the fame and pressure resulting from that early success; she consistently doubts the strengths of her more recent publications. Another recurring theme is the difficulty of writing, both from the challenge of balancing her professional pursuits with the demands of family life, and from writer's block, which she refers to as "la enfermedad de no escribir"—the illness of not writing. Her letters to Mesa provide insight into the entire process of writing and publishing *La isla y los demonios* and other works, like "La Muerta." Similarly, Laforet's letters to Ament from the late 1960s describe Laforet's trip to America that would become the source of inspiration for *Paralelo 35*, the writing of which is described in her 1970s letters to Ament. More generally, the letters document Laforet's deeply impactful female friendships, particularly with the correspondents but also with tennis player and author Lili Álvarez and other Spanish authors, such as Rosa María Cajal, Elena Fortún, Consuelo Burell Mata, and Elena Quiroga.

Arrangement of the Collection

This collection is arranged alphabetically by last name of correspondent.

Selected Search Terms

The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the LC Catalog. They are grouped by name of person or organization, by subject or location, and by occupation and listed alphabetically.

People

Ament, Marion--Correspondence.
Babecka, Linka--Correspondence.
Bodini, Antonella--Correspondence.
Burell, Consuelo.
Cajal, Rosa María.
Fortún, Elena.
Laforet family.
Laforet, Carmen Paralelo 35.
Laforet, Carmen--Correspondence.
Laforet, Carmen--Friends and associates.
Laforet, Carmen.
Mesa, Paquita--Correspondence.
Quiroga, Elena.
Álvarez, Lili.

Organizations

PALABRA Archive (Library of Congress)

Subjects

Authors, Spanish--Correspondence.
Authorship--Psychological aspects.
Existentialism in literature.
Existentialism.
Faith.
Fame--Psychological aspects.
Female friendship.
Literature.
Meaning (Philosophy)
Religion.
Spanish literature.
Spiritual life.
Women authors, Spanish--Correspondence.
Writer's block.

Places

United States--Description and travel.

Titles

Carmen Laforet papers

Occupations

Authors.

Container List

Container	Contents
BOX 1	Ament, Marion, 1965-1973, 1982-1985
BOX 1	Babecka, Linka, 1970-1981
BOX 1	Bodini, Antonella, 1977-1985 (2 folders)
BOX 1	Mesa, Paquita, 1951-1953, 1958 (3 folders)