

Caliza (limestone)

Several years ago, a member of my family found an old box full of negatives. They were made in the 1920s-30s by my great-grandmother's brother, and documented life in the south of Spain. I was particularly amazed by a number of portraits made of strong women with powerful poses and gazes.

As an artist who is interested in gender roles and cultural traditions, I have created a series of photographs inspired by the archive. I highlight women's strengths, their control over repressive symbols and their self-determination, with the main intention of representing women through their own identity. The project is located in Carcabuey – the small village where the archive was found – with the aesthetic of this still very traditional place serving as an improvisational stage for my imagination. In a sense, I am creating a temporary and symbolic experience that shows the present, but at the same time makes reference to the past.

Caliza – the project's title – references the characteristic limestone that is found in the Subbetic Sierras of southern Spain, where these works have been photographed. Caliza is a strong and permeable stone, which is often considered organic as well since it is composed of skeletal fragments of marine organisms. To walk through these limestone mountains and villages is to read, almost on each stone, both a living and symbolic history – one that is tough, resistant, resilient and layered.

*“Feminism isn't about making women stronger.
Women are already strong.
It is about changing the way the world perceives that strength.”*
G.D Anderson