



CREATIVITY IN *TITIRIMUNDI*: THE INTERNATIONAL PUPPET THEATRE FESTIVAL IN SEGOVIA FROM THE CITY TO THE PRODUCTIONS AND POSTERS

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the role of the Titirimundi Festival in promoting creativity within the field of puppetry. Titirimundi is an international puppet theatre festival held annually in Segovia, Spain each May. Renowned for its global prestige, the festival is distinguished by the originality and creativity of its productions, encompassing both the puppet theatre performances and the visual communication of the event through its promotional posters. This article presents an analysis of the posters from the past five years.

Each year, Titirimundi affirms its creative character not only through performances conceived and produced specifically for the festival, but also through the imaginative and evocative design of its posters. The festival breaks the mould by expressing itself through fresh, original, and visually striking approaches that exemplify a high level of artistic and creative expression.

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1. Introduction

This article seeks to explain the significance of the international puppet theatre festival held in Segovia, Spain: The *Titirimundi* Festival. This event is distinguished by its creativity, as one would expect from a festival centred around puppet theatre. Celebrated annually in the province of Segovia each May, this article examines the concept of creativity within the festival, the key elements of puppet theatre performances, and how the festival is specifically developed through its productions and publicity over recent years.

Our analysis includes a content review as well as an in-depth interview with the festival director, Marian Palma, to better understand the festival's importance, the organisational principles behind it, and the reasons for its success. We aim to present data that illustrate the scale of the event by covering puppeteers, newly created plays, posters, and the number of attendees each year.

Ultimately, *Titirimundi* contributes to Segovia's reputation as a creative city through its cultural events, in which creativity is the central protagonist.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To present Segovia as a creative city through its celebration of the *Titirimundi* Puppet Theatre Festival.
- To explore the concept of creativity and its key principles.
- To examine the puppet as a theatrical element.
- To investigate the origins of the *Titirimundi* Festival, its general organisation, the selection of its creative works, and the defining features of its identity and image.
- To assess the significance of *Titirimundi* for the city of Segovia and its audience.
- To analyse the festival's posters, focusing on their concepts, conveyed messages, and creative components.

3. Defining Creativity: Concepts and Perspectives

In this first section, we will explore the concept of creativity, starting from the premise that the *Titirimundi* Festival is a creative event held in a city that itself is considered creative due to its inclusion of such innovative cultural activities.

But what do we mean when we say something is creative? What distinguishes creativity from non-creativity? To address these questions, we will review key definitions that help clarify the concept and enable us to characterise the festival as a creative event.

The concept of creativity is often regarded as complex to define and measure, and perhaps rightly so. However, it is possible to identify the qualities that constitute creativity. To understand its empirical foundations, we must look back to the 1950s. According to Arroyo (2005), this decade established the criteria that an individual must meet to be considered creative, including factors that influence both intelligence and creative aptitudes, which in turn shape the creative personality. Thus, those who generate creative ideas possess minds capable of producing something new and original. The *Titirimundi* Festival serves as an example of a platform showcasing such creativity, featuring works and artists who realise their vision through their inventive minds.

MacKinnon (1962) proposes three necessary conditions for creativity: first, an idea or response must be produced. This can be understood as the outcome of an intention to achieve something, such as a story to be told. Second, the idea must effectively solve a problem or fulfil the creator's goal. Without this, it cannot be considered creative. Third, the original knowledge must be preserved and developed over time, meaning that creativity is sustained rather than being merely momentary (Whittaker, 1977). In other words, a creative work is recognised not only at a

specific moment but also historically. It remains unique and outstanding as the first piece to excel in its form, even if it is no longer novel. This expectation applies to the works presented at the festival as well as to the posters created to promote it. However, this definition alone does not fully capture why the festival itself is regarded as a creative event.

Authors such as Barron understand creativity as a personal disposition, specifically a “disposition to originality” (Hernández, 1999, p. 27).

Following this, Guilford (1977) proposed the idea that intelligence and creativity are inseparable: without creativity, there is no intelligence. Guilford argued that all intelligent behaviour can be defined by the intellectual “operations” an individual can perform based on different types of “information content”, which together produce mental “products”. His model consists of three dimensions, each subdivided into classes: operations (such as cognition, memory, convergent and divergent production, and evaluation); information content (figurative, symbolic, semantic, and behavioural); and products (units, classes, relations, systems, transformations, and implications). The combination of these classes generates 120 possible categories (5 operations × 4 contents × 6 products) (Hernández, 1999, p. 50).

More recent studies, from the 1990s to the present, shift focus from the intellect alone to viewing the creative individual as a social subject. Creativity is seen as an attitude used to adapt to one’s environment, expressed through individuality and combined with other abilities to solve problems (Martín-Casado, 2010). Thus, intelligence remains a necessary foundation for creativity, a point Guilford emphasised in his 1950 conference to the American Psychological Association entitled *Creativity*.

Later authors, including researchers of creativity and professionals working in advertising, define creativity as “a set of aptitudes linked to human personality that enable an individual, starting from prior information and through internal cognitive processes that transform this information, to solve problems with originality and efficiency” (Hernández, 1999, pp. 66–67).

According to Corbalán et al. (2015, pp. 13–14), creativity is understood as the integration of several dimensions, contingent upon specific conditions and interrelationships. These dimensions can be located, for example, on a cognitive, socio-emotional, educational, or skill mastery level, among other aspects. For their part, de la Piñera and Trigo (2000) consider that creativity has to be seen as a potential that can be developed and that must be integrated with other thinking skills (Araya, 2005). Creativity is thus inherent to the individual and is related to his or her experience. We cannot create from nothing, but we can create by making original combinations in our brain through our knowledge.

Ricarte (2003) defines creativity as “the thinking process that helps us to generate ideas”. Drawing on the physicist Erwin Schrödinger, Nobel Prize winner and creator of wave mechanics theory, Ricarte adds that “productive thinking is not so much seeing what nobody has yet seen, as thinking what nobody has yet thought about what everybody else sees” (p. 49). In other words, creativity arises when an individual can generate different ideas using the same resources available to everyone else. It is the capacity to imagine and combine familiar elements in novel and diverse ways.

From the perspective of advertising, creativity is considered effective if it fulfils its objectives with the audience. As Martín-Casado and Vázquez (2024, p. 147) state, “Advertising creativity is such if it achieves its effects with the consumer and interacts with them”. In this context, when the goal is to engage and satisfy the audience, it is ultimately the audience who determines whether what they have experienced is creative. The *Titirimundi* public has indeed regarded the festival as creative, a view shared by its director and organisers, who actively strive to make creativity a central objective (data from the interview conducted for this study).

Creativity is defined by offering something new and original (Hernández, 1999; Martín-Casado and Vázquez, 2024; Navarro, 2014). Therefore, *Titirimundi* is a festival rich in creativity, as its works are perceived as far from conventional by its audience, who respond with pleasant surprise

and positive appreciation. The performances are widely considered novel and striking (Cebrián, 2024).

4. Puppetry

“To speak of puppets is to speak, simultaneously and among many existing definitions, of joy and fantasy, of play and illusion, of magic and dreams, of enchantment and ease; of imagination, seduction and mystery, but above all, of creativity” (Campos, 2006, introduction). This succinct definition clearly links to the first and second points of this study, emphasising that when referring to puppet theatre, one is fundamentally referring to a creative spectacle. If defining creativity is no simple task, defining the puppet is equally complex. Each author tends to offer a different interpretation, yet all share the common ground that puppet theatre is essentially an expression of ideas through performance.

Considering the puppet itself, Morales (2011, p. 4) describes it as “a plastic image able to act and represent”, a physical entity constructed and imagined to enact and convey ideas, moving in order to perform a role designed for it. The earliest definitions of puppetry focus on analysing its origins and emergence, while more contemporary perspectives examine “the function of the puppet and how it has acquired and modified its function during social development”. Thus, the puppet is intrinsically linked to all forms of staged performance (Cebrián, 2024, p. 17).

Nowadays, the focus shifts towards how the use of “the created figure” evolves in its representation, a progression observable throughout the history of puppetry in each festival. Such performances require the presence of an audience. Typically, the puppet has only a head and hands, with fabric acting as the body, which the puppeteer fits like a glove. Marionette puppets, on the other hand, are equipped with arms, a body, and movable legs activated by the puppeteer, who is positioned above or behind the figure (García del Toro, 2004), usually manipulating these limbs by means of threads tied to each movable part.

Historical records suggest puppets were used in village shows during the Middle Ages, whereas more sophisticated marionettes were reserved for performances intended for the nobility, according to Hernández Sagrado (1995), as cited in Cebrián (2024). In modern puppet theatre, puppets and marionettes are found indistinctly, which implies that what matters today is the story they tell, conveyed through the individual who gives them life. It is the puppeteer who moves and animates the puppet.

Reflecting on the origins of puppetry, the Argentinian puppeteer Javier Villafañe states,

The puppet was born when man, the first man, lowered his head for the first time, in the dazzle of the first dawn, and saw his shadow cast on the ground, when rivers and lands had no name yet. And the day he modelled the first doll he had to think of his shadow. He made it in his own likeness, and the puppet was born, without a life of its own, like the shadow of man, which needs him to move and live. (Rioseco, 2010, p. 5)

This act of giving life to objects leads us directly to puppets, which, as Villena (2001, p. 24) defines, are “inanimate objects that, through the action and will of an individual, acquire an appearance of life”.

Yet the most significant aspect of a puppet show is the response it evokes in its audience, both young and old. The show is art, feeling, and interpretation. As Rioseco (2010, p. 6) observes

As an artistic activity, the puppet show generates absolute involvement in children. During a performance, whatever is happening on stage is, for them, the most important and transcendental thing, and the notions of what is fiction and what is reality become blurred. Children have been observed being unable to control their impulses, approaching the stage mid-performance to attack the villain when he appears. This has even been seen with pre-adolescents (12 or 13 years old), who allow themselves to be carried away by the charm of the puppets, even knowing that a familiar adult is animating them. (p. 6)

Let us now consider the types of puppets typically found at a puppet theatre festival.

4.1. Types of Puppets

To understand the types of characters a creative individual can develop, it is first essential to recognise the existing categories. From these, through various forms of movement, an infinite array of characters and narratives can be created.

According to Rioseco's *Puppets Manual* (2010), and in agreement with other authors on both contemporary and historical puppetry (Cebrián, 2024; Villena, 2001), the figures identifiable within puppetry include:

Marionette: A figure created and manipulated primarily by strings attached to its upper parts. The strings are fixed to the sections intended for movement, and it is the puppeteer who designs the character's movements in order to convey the intended interpretation. These are often unique, creative pieces invented by the performer.

Figure 1. Image of a marionette puppet



Source: Acero y magia, n.d.

Hand puppet: Unlike the marionette, this type of puppet is manipulated from below by inserting the hand inside the figure. It typically has a static head but can move its arms, often incorporating the puppeteer's fingers to animate them. The movement of the character is achieved through the fingers positioned within the head and arms, bringing the puppet to life.

Figure 2: Image of a hand puppet



Source: Títeres Taller Albaida, n.d.

Glove puppet: This puppet is the figure from which the term 'puppets' is derived. It is the simplest to create and is manipulated primarily by the hand inserted inside the figure, much like a glove. It is characterised by its ability to move the mouth. Typically, the thumb controls the lower jaw, while the other fingers control the upper jaw. This puppet is commonly sold in toy shops, facilitating wider access to puppet culture within households.

Figure 3. Image of a glove puppet



Source: Educacionhios.es, n.d.

4.2. Elements that Bring the Puppet to Life

According to the manuals on puppetry (Rioseco, 2010), the thesis on puppetry (Cebrián, 2024), and educational manuals on puppets (Rogozinsky, 2001; Villena, 2001), the following elements are fundamental in giving life to and creating the characters of puppet theatre.

Once the puppet figure is created, which is always expressive depending on its shape, materials, intended character, and colours, the next crucial element to consider, according to these authors, is its voice. Depending on the character to be portrayed, the voice will differ. It must align with the puppet's appearance. For instance, a witch should have a voice befitting a witch, while a child's voice should sound childlike. It is important to adapt the voice as closely as possible to the expected voice of each character.

This involves careful attention to:

Timbre, which refers to the quality of the voice or the sound that we hear. For example, a dashing hero will have a confident, firm voice, whereas a clumsy character may have an insecure, timid tone. A spoiled, flirtatious princess might sound shrill, while a kindly peasant girl may have a sweet voice.

Vocabulary is also key. The choice of words says much about a character's personality. A young character may use youthful idioms, whereas a scientist might employ deliberately complex language (Rioseco, 2010, p. 10).

Movement is the second essential element to consider, as it shapes the personality of the character. Therefore, it is important to explore the range of movements that one wishes to convey. According to these authors, characters often embody either positive or negative attitudes, commonly representing protagonists and antagonists.

Characters with a positive disposition are typically portrayed with brighter colours and more pleasing shapes, complemented by sweeter voices. They tend to be presented with upright postures and lively, joyful movements. In contrast, those with negative or malevolent traits usually feature darker, colder colours, deeper voices, and more abrupt, jerky motions.

Depressed characters, by comparison, are characterised by languid, slow voices and equally unhurried movements.

Age is also expressed through movement. Younger characters tend to move faster and with greater energy, whereas older characters display slower, more measured motions.

Equally important is the staging itself, including the design and elements that constitute the performance space. These must be carefully integrated with characterisation and movement to bring the script to life. Typically, the script is an original story created by each puppet theatre group for their audience.

In this way, the narrative is shaped not only by the story and script, but also by the stage design, the physical creation of the puppets, their movements, and their voices. This collaborative process is undoubtedly creative, aiming to captivate the audience with originality and novelty while maintaining their engagement throughout the performance.

While there is much more to say about the creation of a puppet theatre spectacle, the intention here is to introduce the fundamental elements involved. Ultimately, only by experiencing this art form as a spectator can one truly appreciate the complexity and artistry behind its creation.

5. Methodology

Having outlined an approach to creativity as the fundamental focus of this study, as well as the key elements that constitute and enable the creative works of puppet theatre, we will now examine the *Titirimundi* Festival in Segovia. In particular, we aim to understand the nature of this festival and the processes involved in creating the posters for each of its festivals.

The empirical objective of this article is to explore the functioning of this international puppet festival in Segovia. Through an in-depth interview with its director, we will uncover the key aspects and scope of the festival. Additionally, we will analyse the creativity of its advertising posters from the last five editions, spanning from the 2020 festival to the present day.

5.1. The In-Depth Interview as a Method

As Benney and Hughes (1970) point out, the interview is sociologists' favourite "digging tool". To gain insight into social life, social scientists rely heavily on verbal accounts. In this case, the interview will serve to understand the functioning of a festival, its impact on the public, and the selection of its theatrical works and posters.

In-depth interviews are modelled on a conversation between peers, rather than a formal exchange of questions and answers. Far from resembling a data-collecting robot, the researcher is the instrument of the research, rather than merely following an interview protocol or form. This role involves not only eliciting answers but also learning what questions to ask and how to ask them. (Taylor and Bogdan, 2008, p. 195)

In this instance, the interview will be conducted to study events that cannot be fully understood through other means. This applies particularly to *Titirimundi*, whose operation, history, and success are only accessible through its internal organisation. Therefore, this study will draw on the perspective of Marian Palma, the director of the *Titirimundi* Festival since 2017.

The in-depth interview is the central research technique employed in most qualitative sociology studies, where direct observation is often marginal and insufficient (López, 2023). As Taylor and Bogdan (2008) note, "The purpose of the in-depth interview is to provide a broad picture of a range of settings, situations, or persons" (p 197).

In an in-depth interview, the interviewer prepares a series of questions or topics to be addressed and must skilfully manage the conversation to obtain relevant information at appropriate moments.

For the specific case of this study, the in-depth interview with the director of the *Titirimundi* Festival will focus on the following topics:

- Her own definition of the festival
- Demographic data such as age and origin
- The scale of the festival in terms of number of groups and performers
- The festival audience
- Creativity and originality of the works submitted
- The selection process for participating works
- What makes the festival a space for creativity and ideas
- The management of creativity and creation of advertising posters
- Feedback and participation from the audience
- Other relevant issues that may arise

The responses to these questions will be analysed and presented in the results section.

5.2 Content Analysis as a Method for Analysing the Posters

Content analysis emerged, according to Smith, in Switzerland during the 18th century, "when a group of clergy and academics jointly analysed ninety hymns entitled *Song of Zion*. At the end of the 19th century, it began to be used in the United States for the content analysis of some newspapers" (Smith, 1988, in Martín-Casado, 2010, p. 268). Since then, it has been applied extensively in the study of journalistic, advertising, and cinematographic messages in numerous investigations and by various authors (Martín-Casado, 2010; Pérez-Ugena et al., 2011; Tur-Viñes y Núñez, 2018; etc.).

Content analysis is a systematic and objectified methodology, as it uses procedures, variables, and categories that correspond to clearly defined and explicit study designs and analysis criteria (Bernete, 2013, p. 745). In this study, content analysis will be employed to examine the advertising posters of the *Titirimundi* Festival from 2020 to 2024, applying specific variables to the posters' content.

The variables to be used in analysing the *Titirimundi* advertising posters include:

- Poster/image

- Year
- Author
- Concept/topic
- Integral elements:
 - o Human face
 - o Realistic photography
 - o Abstract figure
 - o Fantasy figure
 - o Concrete figure
 - o Numbers as an image
 - o Letters as an image
- Typography:
 - o By design
 - o Standard
- Background colour of the poster:
 - o Cool
 - o Warm
 - o Light
 - o Dark
 - o Colour
- Poster colours:
 - o Other predominant colours
 - o Number of colours

Information related to these variables will be collected and presented in the results section.

6. Results

In this section, the results from the in-depth interview and the content analysis of the advertising posters are presented and discussed.

6.1. Findings from the In-Depth Interview: A Comprehensive Overview of the *Titirimundi* Festival

The interview with the director of the *Titirimundi* Festival offers an insightful perspective into the festival's operations, as she is widely recognised as the driving force and soul behind the event. Marian Palma Castillo has served as the director of *Titirimundi* since 2017, succeeding its founder, Julio Michel. Palma has worked closely with Michel since 2000, when she joined the festival as his "right hand". Since then, she has taken on the roles of director, manager, and coordinator of the festival in Segovia.

Our discussion began with her passion for puppetry and her extensive experience, which has been closely linked with Julio Michel, who she regards as her teacher and mentor.

Palma discovered *Titirimundi* through a friend who believed the festival would suit her personality. Following an interview in 2000, she began working alongside Julio Michel Villacorta.

Regarding the festival's origins, she explained that it was conceived as an annual gathering in a small city that could accommodate both artists and the public. The goal was to create a space for cultural exchange and to showcase the latest developments in the world of puppet theatre. This vision was that of Julio Michel, and it is a principle that Palma has sought to uphold ever since.

Since 2023, *Titirimundi* has been established as a foundation under the name *Fundación Titirimundi –Julio Michel Villacorta*. Julio Michel Villacorta, the creator, founder, ideologist, and puppeteer of the company Libélula, arrived in Spain in 1972. Together with his partner, Lola Atance, he presented highly innovative works. A full discussion of his career would merit a separate article. After years of working in Madrid and near Segovia, and maintaining close ties with artists such as Amancio Prada and Lola Atance, he fell in love with Segovia and set about

creating the festival he had long envisioned. In his later years, he remarked that he could “die of success”, as demand for the festival consistently exceeded its capacity.

When asked to define the festival, Marian Palma describes *Titirimundi* as an international puppet theatre festival held every May in the city of Segovia. She characterises it as “a celebration”, both for Segovia and for the wider world of puppetry. It is a theatre event in which the art of puppetry is fully valued and explored. Everything is created: glove puppets, marionettes, shadow theatre, and musical elements. It is a spectacle that breaks conventional boundaries, “a world of dreams”. In this world, anything is possible and, as she says, “feet are not on the ground as in everyday theatre”.

Regarding its origins, it was noted that the thirty-ninth edition of the festival will be celebrated on 3 May 2025. The festival began in 1985 and was held for three consecutive years, however, the withdrawal of funding led to its suspension in 1988 and 1989. It resumed in 1990 with the support of the Segovia City Council and has since taken place annually and uninterrupted in the month of May, except during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the 2020 and 2021 editions were held in September.

A particularly significant moment occurred in 1987. Despite having fully prepared the event, funding was suddenly withdrawn. Remarkably, the festival was not cancelled. Instead, the participating companies offered their support, and the citizens of Segovia extended hospitality by opening their homes, sharing meals, and welcoming puppeteers into their daily lives. This act of collective solidarity marked the beginning of a profound and enduring bond between the festival and the city, a bond characterised by both intimacy and mutual commitment.

The number of groups invited to the festival varies each year, typically ranging between 32 and 38 in recent editions. Each group is selected based on the creativity, originality, and quality of their performance. The selection process is carried out in advance by the festival’s management team, usually led by Marian Palma Castillo herself.

Marian attends between eight and ten national and international festivals annually in search of potential participants. In fact, she plans to attend the Lutke Festival in Slovenia this September. She often travels to European festivals in her campervan, a practical choice that allows her to keep travel costs low. She emphasises that no company is invited without having been seen performing live. While groups may initially submit video recordings of their work, a live performance is always required before any final decision is made. Once a performance has been observed, she approaches and speaks directly with the companies.

In selecting performances, Marian seeks virtuosity. She looks for originality, innovation, and technical excellence, but most importantly, the piece must move the audience emotionally. A work should evoke feeling, be it joy or sadness, but never indifference. Some performances are trialled in Segovia before being included in the official programme. The Segovian public is known for its discernment, and the programming must be meticulously curated. Certain companies with consistently outstanding creative output are invited to return each year, serving as a benchmark for quality in this unique genre of performance.

Many of the invited companies tend to bring glove puppet performances. One example is *El circo de las pulgas*, a company that has participated in the festival for over twenty years. It continues to attract audiences and, as Marian notes, the intention is to invite them for as long as possible.

Given the international nature of the festival and the diversity of languages represented, performances typically rely very little on spoken text. Instead, they focus on sound and gesture, with any short phrases used translated easily and without issue. The primary aim is to evoke emotion. While aesthetics are important, what truly matters is that the performance communicates something meaningful. Key elements such as music and movement play a central role in storytelling.

During the festival, creativity is not limited to the stage. The city of Segovia itself undergoes a transformation. It ceases to be an ordinary urban space and becomes an expansive theatrical

stage. Spaces that are not typically used, such as gardens, public squares, and various buildings, are opened up and repurposed. Segovia becomes a stage for puppet theatre.

The size and composition of the performing groups vary depending on the nature of their productions. Larger companies, particularly those from Eastern Europe such as the Czech Republic, Slovenia or Bosnia, often represent official theatres and may consist of ten to twelve members. In contrast, smaller “van companies” may consist of just one puppeteer who travels and performs alone.

Marian remarks that the festival enjoys a strong international reputation. When she approaches companies to invite them, she is often met with warm smiles as many puppeteers refer to *Titirimundi* as “the best festival of its kind”. A familial atmosphere is cultivated between performers and organisers. They share all their meals together, breakfast, lunch and dinner, which fosters a unique cultural richness as people from different backgrounds connect, share experiences, and build mutual understanding. A sense of community emerges, and participants feel genuinely cared for throughout. Among professionals in the puppetry world, *Titirimundi* is recognised not only for its artistic standards, but also for the warmth and humanity with which it treats its guests.

The number of performances at the festival is not fixed and it varies depending on the annual programme. Some companies present short-format shows and are capable of performing up to ten times per day, regardless of audience size. Others may only perform once daily, resulting in considerable variation in the overall number of performances from one edition to another. These performances are not limited to the city of Segovia but extend to the wider province. In 2024, for example, over forty performances were held in various towns across the province.

This decentralised model reflects the collaboration between the *Titirimundi* Festival and the Provincial Council of Segovia, which plays an active role in bringing the festival’s programming to municipalities throughout the region. Although the exact number of performances changes from year to year, the total typically ranges between 180 and 200 throughout the festival week.

In terms of attendance, the festival is estimated to attract approximately 40,000 people each year. This figure is based on aerial images and other photographic estimates, although actual numbers may vary depending on the available venues and public spaces.

The impact on the city of Segovia is considered significant. Although exact economic figures are unavailable, Marian Palma refers to a thesis from the National University of Distance Education (UNED), which suggests that the festival generates four times the expenditure it incurs. During the festival week, hotel operators, restaurant owners, and even local shopkeepers report full occupancy and increased business activity, underscoring the economic importance of the event for the local community.

Regarding financial support, the festival’s main sources of funding include not only the Segovia City Council but also the Provincial Council, the Junta de Castilla y León, and the Ministry of Culture.

Regarding the creativity of the festival posters, this has typically been managed in two ways: either through design competitions involving local design schools, such as the Picos de Segovia School of Art, or via direct commissions to established artists. In the following section, we will present an analysis of the posters from the last five years, covering the period from 2020 to 2024.

With this, the interview has addressed the core topics identified at the outset of the research:

- The director’s own definition of the festival
- Information on its history and origin
- Volume of the festival in terms of participating groups and performers
- Festival audience
- Creativity and originality of the works presented
- Selection process for participating works
- The festival’s positioning as a platform for creativity and ideas
- Management of the poster design and visual identity
- Public engagement and audience participation

- Additional relevant insights

6.2. Findings from the In-Depth Interview: The Titirimundi Poster

At this point, we present the poster data according to the variables outlined in the methodological framework, analysing the festival posters from 2020 to 2024.

6.2.1 2020 poster

During the years under study, the 2020 poster was created by a group of students from the Quintanar Palace in Segovia, under the guidance of the artist Emilio Gil. *Titirimundi*, the International Puppet Festival of Segovia, presented the image for its 34th edition in collaboration with the Quintanar Palace, which is an innovation and development centre for design and culture under the Regional Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and with designer Emilio Gil, recipient of the Gold Medal for Merit in Fine Arts (2015). The festival took place in September 2020 due to the pandemic.

The students were provided only with basic information about the festival, including its history and objectives, as communicated on the festival's website. Their only requirements were to include the festival's name, edition, specific dates, and logos of participating institutions where applicable. The director also notes the concept conveyed by each poster, based on the statements of the respective artists.

Image 4. 2020 *Titirimundi* poster



Source: Acueducto2.com, 2020.

The concept behind this poster was to convey the irruption of the marvellous into everyday life, a breath of fresh air during a dark period such as the pandemic. The design features a specific figure, part of a puppet, set against a predominantly cold and dark colour palette. The poster comprises four colours, with red and white tones providing the light and warmth. Overall, it conveys a sense of light emerging from darkness.

6.2.2. 2021 Poster

The 2021 poster was the result of a competition won by a group of artists from Casa de los Pisos, a design school led by artist Cristina Padilla. The poster seeks to represent the arrival of the swifts as a herald of the *Titirimundi* Festival, set against a blue, expansive sky in the province of Segovia, where birds and puppets share the same space.

Figure 5. 2021 *Titirimundi* poster



Source: El día de Segovia, 2021.

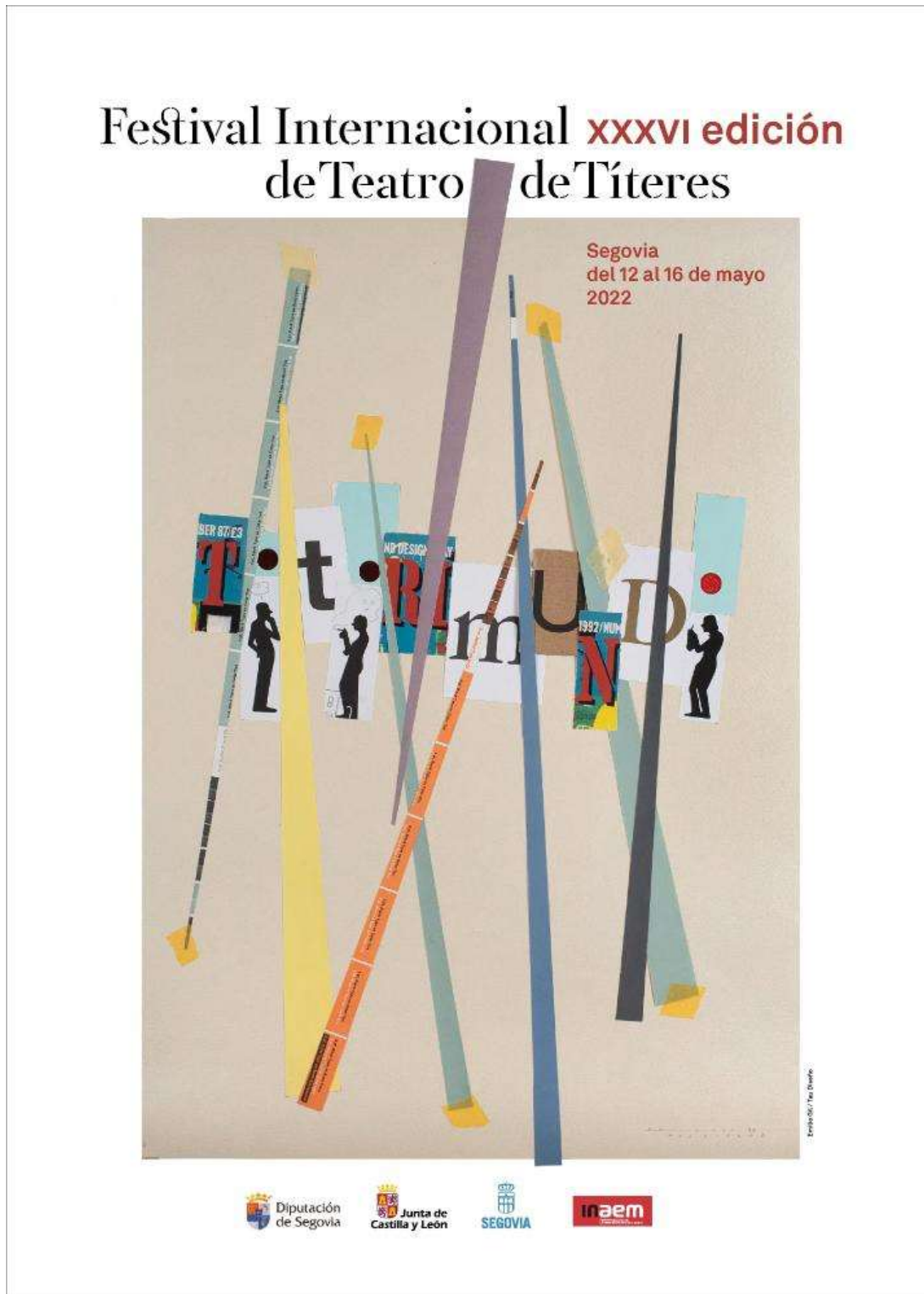
The poster incorporates both concrete and fantastical elements, featuring swifts, puppets, and theatrical sets as symbolic icons. The background is dominated by cool tones, with the swifts rendered in black, contrasted by light blue and soft hues as focal points, complemented by red as the warm accent colour. The typography is traditional, presented in red to echo the festival's identity. The overall aim is to convey light and colour during a significant moment in Segovia's life.

6.2.3. 2022 *Titirimundi* Poster

This poster, created by Emilio Gil, an artist renowned for his collage technique, draws inspiration from collage itself, simulating strips of paper as puppet strings. These strings serve as a metaphorical script for the character portrayed by the artist, evoking a *retablillo* (a small portable puppet theatre) of puppets and stories. It features human, concrete, and fantasy figures, simulating paper puppets with strings. The background is rendered in cool tones, complemented

primarily by light colours. The typography is designed in a collage style. Six colours are employed overall, with a predominance of subdued light tones rather than luminous ones.

Figure 6: 2022 *Titirimundi* poster



Source: Diputación de Segovia, 2022.

6.2.4. 2023 Titirimundi Poster

This poster, created by Emilio Gil, centres on the puppet and its expression as the dynamic axis, emphasising the importance of both the spectator and the puppeteer within the festival and, consequently, within the poster. It also evokes the city and its surrounding environment.

Figure 7: 2023 Titirimundi poster



Source: Restaurantejosemaria.com, n.d.

The integral elements of the image include abstract figures that simulate a puppet, featuring a blue face and other fantasy forms. Strips of paper are again employed as fantasy figures, inspired by puppet strings. The human figure reappears as a participant, represented by concrete figures

that possibly depict both the public and puppeteers, emphasising the importance of people in this event.

The lettering is integrated into the image, as is the numerical element. The background is predominantly white and dominated by cool colours with a light tone. The poster is luminous, yet the palette avoids cheerful or warm colours as the primary focus.

6.2.5. 2024 *Titirimundi* Poster

The 2024 poster was created by Pep Carrió and centres on the concept of consonants as puppets, with the letter 'I's depicted as individual puppets. The character formed by the dots of the 'I's provides the poster with its distinctive visual impact.



Source: Titirimundi.es, n.d.

In terms of constituent elements, the poster features a predominance of fantasy figures that are simultaneously concrete, notably represented by the dots of the 'I's as puppets. The text itself serves as the principal visual element. The typography is designed in brown tones, forming the foundation of the poster's aesthetic. The background is predominantly light and cool in colour, contrasting with the dark-toned lettering. While no warm colours are present, the brown tones used are muted rather than bright or cheerful.

6.3. Summary Tables of Results

The results of the poster analysis, based on the identified variables, are presented in the following summary tables.

Table 1: General data on posters

| Year | Integral elements of the image | | | | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Year | Human face | Realistic photography | Abstract figure | Fantasy figure | Concrete figure | No. as an image | Letters as an image |
| 2020 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2021 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 2022 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 2023 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 2024 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

It is evident that the artists' sources of inspiration are entirely diverse and unrestricted, resulting in posters that are unique creative works by artists of notable cultural and artistic significance.

Table 2. Data on the visual elements of the poster imagery

| | General data | |
|------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| year | author | concept |
| 2020 | Emilio Gil with group | irruption |
| 2021 | Cristina Padilla | swift, may |
| 2022 | Emilio Gil | collage |
| 2023 | Emilio Gil | dynamic puppet |
| 2024 | Pep Carrió | hand puppet and puppet |

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

It is evident that fantasy figures and concrete representations of human bodies are the principal features of the imagery, alongside the use of letters and numbers as visual elements. Realistic photography or depictions of the human face are not employed in any of the posters. These are artistic compositions rather than documentary images.

Table 3: Typography of the poster

| general data | Typography | |
|--------------|------------|----------|
| year | design | standard |
| 2020 | 1 | |
| 2021 | | 1 |
| 2022 | 1 | 0 |
| 2023 | 1 | 0 |
| 2024 | 1 | 0 |

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

Typography is consistently treated as a design element and at times incorporating collage, colours, and figures. Only in 2022 does the word *Titirimundi* appear in its original red festival typeface. Across all posters, the lettering plays a significant role in the overall visual composition. While it is required to convey essential information such as dates, it does so in a manner that integrates seamlessly into the design.

Table 4: Data on colour and shade

| | Background colour | | Tone | | Number of colours | Note | Background colour |
|------|-------------------|------|-------|------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Year | cool | warm | light | dark | | | |
| 2020 | 1 | | | 1 | 5 | dark | black |
| 2021 | 1 | | 1 | | 3 | luminous | blue |
| 2022 | 1 | | 1 | | 6 | not very bright | grey |
| 2023 | 1 | | 1 | | 6 | luminous | white |
| 2024 | 1 | | 1 | | 3 | not very bright | white |

Source: Own elaboration, 2025.

The predominant colours across the posters are consistently cool tones in the background, generally light in value, which allows the other visual elements to stand out. Although the festival’s identity is associated with the colour red, a warm and vivid hue, none of the posters foreground use warm or saturated colours. Only the 2021 poster clearly employs red in both its typography and imagery, making it the most cheerful and luminous of the set. The remaining posters are characterised by sober and cool tones, which convey a serious, yet creative and innovative visual language. Importantly, they avoid a childish aesthetic. One might argue that the posters reflect the gravity of a bold and dynamic event, while maintaining a professional and refined tone. The use of warm or vibrant colours is notably absent. Instead, the palette tends toward whites, greys, and other light hues and are visually subtle rather than exuberant. This is a striking feature, particularly given the festive and joyful spirit that the event seeks to evoke. However, this does not suggest that the posters are “sad” in tone; rather, they are restrained in their use of colour.

7. Conclusions

The main conclusions indicate that *Titirimundi* is a creative festival that situates the city and province of Segovia as a site of cultural innovation in multiple respects. Firstly, Segovia is transformed during the festival into a city-wide stage for puppet theatre, with performances taking place in its streets, squares, and buildings, including some venues opened specifically for the occasion. The festival exemplifies creativity in its truest sense, offering something both new

and original. Each edition presents a unique, unrepeatable programme, conceived exclusively for and experienced solely within the city of Segovia.

The pieces presented here are original works from each company, previously selected by their respective management teams for their virtuosity, high quality, and ability to evoke emotion in the spectator, avoiding anything that might “leave the audience indifferent”. Segovia regards itself as a culturally knowledgeable city with a “demanding public that seeks quality, innovation, and strong ideas”.

Segovia is highly regarded in this event, particularly by the puppeteers, who consider it one of, if not the best, festivals in which to participate, due to its cultural exchange, large audiences, sense of community, and excellent treatment of artists during the festival. It is their preferred venue to showcase their work. This creative festival plays a significant role in Segovia’s economy and its reputation as an international city recognised for creativity and innovation. It is a *fiesta* event, conceived with this identity and determined to maintain it.

The festival also takes great care with its image through the creation of its posters, which serve as a representative element of the event. These posters are commissioned directly from, or coordinated by, well-known artists. They consistently avoid realistic imagery, favouring instead fantasy figures and designed typography. Techniques such as collage simulation are particularly notable. Each poster is distinct from its predecessors and are entirely new and unpredictable. The artists are granted complete freedom in their creations; however, a noticeable feature is the predominance of cool and subdued colours rather than warm and vivid tones. While the colours provide a dynamic and varied visual identity, they do not draw attention through brightness or intensity. Instead, they are discreet yet “elegant”. This is especially striking given the festival’s aim to convey festivity. It suggests that the sense of celebration can be communicated effectively without relying on traditionally warm or lively colours, which are typically more eye-catching.

The *Titirimundi* Festival thus serves as a showcase of creativity, with the city itself becoming the stage. The works presented in the theatre and the communication conveyed through its posters are all meticulously curated. At the same time, the festival provides a platform for creativity to be expressed in all its forms across the various manifestations of the event.

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