

# La nit de les papallones

The Night of the Butterflies



UK panel's choice SPRING 2010

**Author:** [Jordi Coca](#) [1]

**Publisher:** [Edicions 62 S.A.](#) [2]

**Year of Publication:** 2009

**Pages:** 208

**ISBN:** 978-84-2976-343-0

**Genre:** Literature

SPRING

2010

**Season:** SPRING 2010

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La nit de les papallones is a novel that portrays the colourful Barcelona nightlife of the 1970s, and at its centre is Carla, a burlesque dancer who turns heads with her aesthetically dazzling and emancipated performances. Written as a homage to the legendary stripper Christa Leem, and in part inspired by her personality, the novel shows us the slow development of a legend that would come to obsess a generation of intellectuals, avant-garde artists and political radicals. Brilliant, bold, intuitive, uninhibited and vital, Carla is a personality who symbolises the hunger for freedom of those years with the temptation of losing that liberty in the nocturnal labyrinth of the city. Despite her fame, the author shows us a woman who is full of doubts, who is becoming increasingly addicted to alcohol and drugs and who is getting involved with the wrong people. Yet, everything she does is always with an innate creative intuition. She represents a new world which, unfortunately, never manages to live up to its promise. In the end, almost everyone she meets ends up using her: some of them, because they believe in her, others because they want her or envy her. On the other hand, it soon becomes clear that Carla does not know how to manage the spiral of success and admiration that she generates, and in one episode in the book she admits to the narrator that the night has got "inside of her", which turns out to be a tragic premonition. It is not only the drugs and the alcohol that end up destroying Carla. It is also the men and women who surround her.

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