



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

## Three years since the declaration of Ordino as a Biosphere Reserve

The parish starts a program where respect for heritage and the ecosystem is valued.

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Ordino is celebrating. It has been three years since its declaration as a Biosphere Reserve and to commemorate this, a series of activities have been launched by the parish council which will focus on the topic of sound heritage. «It is a program for all audiences and that everyone can enjoy», emphasized the junior consul, Eva Choy, under the intention «to thank those who have made this milestone possible and continue to spread the values of the reserve».

The president took advantage of her intervention to also make a positive assessment of these three years, emphasizing that the declaration of the reserve «has changed the way we do politics». According to Choy, throughout this time the ODS and the sustainability plan have been incorporated, two measures that have led «to a greater social awareness of the residents of Ordino, who have had a respect for the natural and landscape heritage» from the previous preparation of the dossier.

In addition, in these three years there have also been «initiatives such as stamps for local companies and producers», although for the moment only one has been given to the company L'ànima del bosc, which stands out for its salts and infusions with aromatic herbs. «At a time when issues such as climate change or sustainable management are on the agenda, it is more important than ever to be able to count on this recognition», remarked the junior consul.

Choy also touched on the review of the town planning plan that is currently being carried out, stressing that «respect for the ecosystem and heritage will prevail, since if we want to preserve it we must to carry out actions in



ANA/M.F.

this sense». The representative did not advance further details, postponing the announcement of these until the town meeting that will be held in mid-November.

**FOUR PODCASTS, THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE PROGRAM**// The start of the poster will take place on October 28th, at 09.00, with a guided tour that will aim to discover the songs of the birds. At 10:30 a.m., the «most theoretical block» will be held, where the Department of the Environment will present the research and transfer projects of the reserve's sound heritage, exposing «both the actions that they want to promote in 2024 and the results of those that are already underway». Then, the presentation of the study Rutes Inclusives Natura Sonora (RINS), by Andorra Research + Innovation, Sound Earth Legacy and Es far cultural, will take center stage, and which has led to the creation of four podcasts about the territory.



► Above, Ordino's junior consul, Eva Choy, and AR+I technician, Montse Brugal, during the press conference to present Ordino's third anniversary as a Biosphere Reserve. On the left, the program poster to commemorate the celebration.

As AR+I technician Montse Brugal explained, during the month of March «a co-creation seminar was started to assess the basis of these podcasts», which will deal with «four different ecosystems from the point of view of various biologists, geologists, experts in sound creation and forestry engineers, among others.» Rocks and screes, as well as human activity linked to dry stone, will be the main focus of the first of the episodes, which

the forest life and forestry practices will be the focus of the second. The third podcast will focus on the aquatic environment and the importance of water, with the fourth episode covering the ecosystem of pastures, livestock activity and the most emblematic species.

All the podcasts, as well as those created in Menorca and Barcelona, can be consulted on the AR+I website: «These documents will make known and allow travel to cer-



**EVA CHOY**  
JUNIOR CONSUL

«The balance is positive, since the declaration of the biosphere reserve has changed the way we do politics»

**MONTSE BRUGAL**  
AR+I TECHNIQUE

«The podcasts will deal with four different ecosystems through the eyes of several biologists or geologists»

tain habitats», remarked Brugal, referring to the fact of «disseminating the characteristics and raise awareness about the awareness of ecosystems». Finally, two more proposals will be scheduled in the afternoon: an active listening and sound experimentation workshop, at 4:00 p.m., and the musical and visual art show Exploration, by Alex Aller, Blanca Budiño and Irene Sáenz.

**CHOY RULES OUT GOING TO THE LISTS**// Asked about the possibility of appearing on the lists for the December elections after leaving the membership of the Liberals of Andorra «due to disagreements with the current executive», Choy stated that for the moment «it is over political activity, although in the future we will see», thereby ruling out «making a list with my name». A fact that the consul justified by assuring that there are only two weeks until the closing of the lists, a situation that «makes it quite unlikely that this situation will occur, but I cannot say a resounding no». ≡

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Culture ▶ We talk to David Castillo, who releases the novel 'As de Corazones'



# «I highlight many of the endemic evils that continue to exist in 2023»

**DAVID CASTILLO** Writer and tax consultant

ALEX MONTERO  
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Andorra's FNAC will host this Thursday, at 6.30 p.m., the literary debut of David Castillo, tax consultant and debutant in the sector with the thriller *As de Corazones*. Through a main character «made to be hated» and a handful of cities around the world, Castillo immerses himself in a choral story in which the search for a serial killer is the driving force.

**-You have been writing since the age of seven, but you are now making the professional leap.**

-I've always written on an amateur level, for example as an opinion columnist in EL PERIÒDIC, but the jump was purely by chance. I had a manuscript saved for years and I gave submit it to a contest promoted by Grup Planeta, and they liked it so much that they gave me the chance to take it forward. It was nothing premeditated, but it came at a time when I was busy and I only had six months to deliver it.

**-How does a tax consultant end up in this mess of a dark novel?**

-I am a regular consumer of the genre, both in terms of reading and cinema. I'm not a person who watches fantasy or romantic movies, I watch one at most once a year. What I like is the thriller and it was clear to me that if I were to write something professionally it would be about a story of this genre.

**-I imagine that the writing process was not an easy task.**

-The torture process could be divided into several phases [laughs]. The first is when you have to focus on matters of writing, proofreading, proofreading... until you deliver the manuscript to the publisher. It may seem to you that from here on all the work is done, but no. Then the editorial committee meetings start, changing something that doesn't fit commercially, all the style and spelling correction, the cover design... This second and third phase takes more work than the first [laughs].

**-And finally all the promotion and marketing begins.**

-Exactly, once the book goes on sale you have to deal with the whole process of promotion, presentation, signatures, interviews... When it's all over, the feeling of satisfaction is enormous and the affection you receive from people is incredible, but there is a point of fatigue because we remember that I am not a professional author. I make a living from consulting, so you have to add to all the regular work of the office the fact of being aware of people, of social networks, of going to various cities to present the book, etc. It is a double job that requires a

commitment and a gigantic effort, but which ends up being done with great pleasure.

**-Some parts are always enjoyed more than others.**

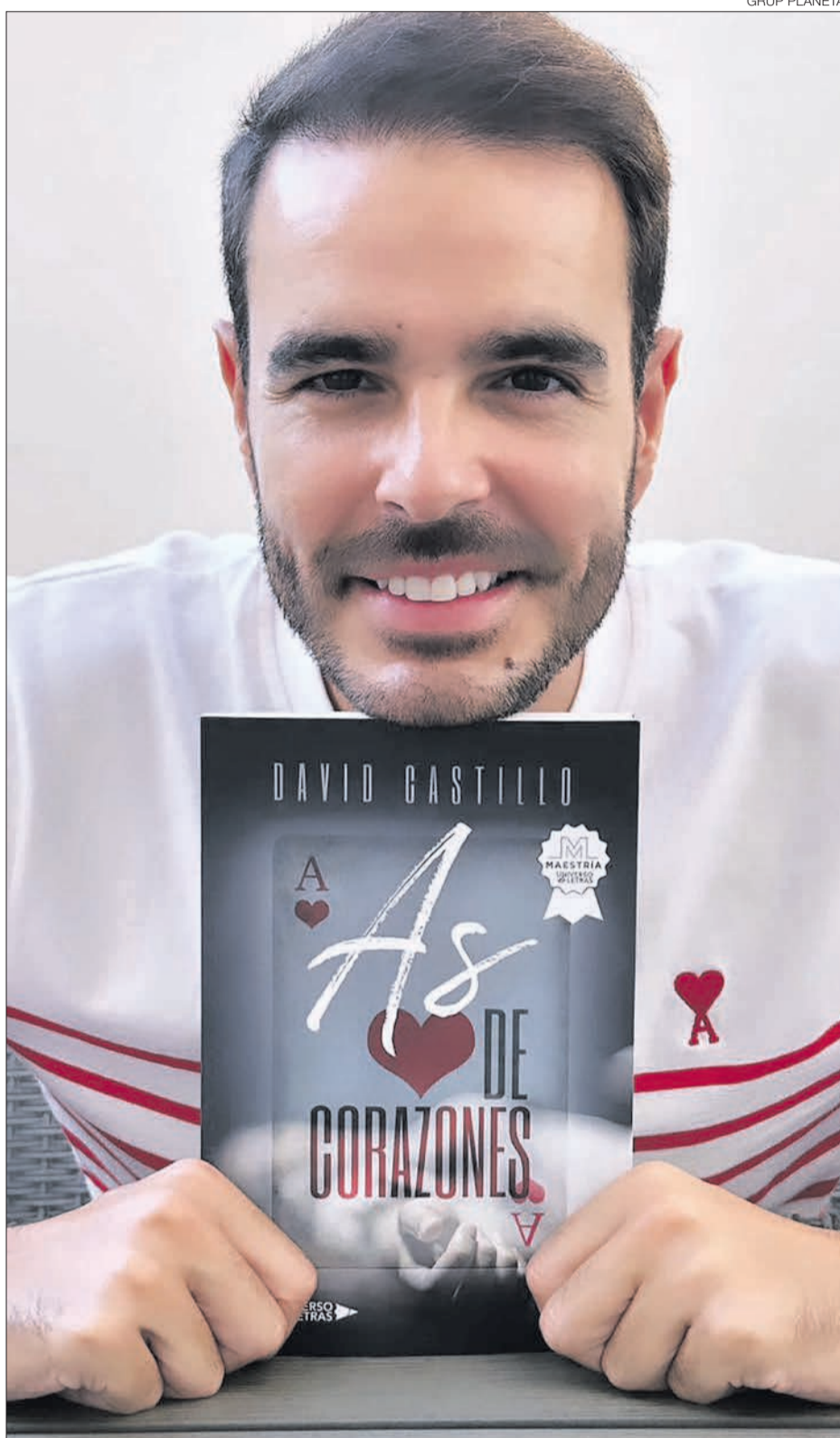
-I think I enjoyed all the phases. Each in their own way, of course. There are days when you wake up, go to the computer to write and you went blank. A novel has that, it's fiction and if there's no inspiration, it won't work no matter how much you want it to. This situation gives you a lot of anxiety and frustration, and maybe it's the part I like least. But the opposite can also happen, there are days when you are exhausted and after a two-hour plane ride you find that you have the need to write. You also have to take into account that the wait from when you hand in the manuscript until the novel comes out is a very long process, in which it seems that the time will never come when it will come out on the market.

**-Mixes classic elements of the genre with a more contemporary approach. Is it the differentiating feature compared to other novels of the same style?**

-When my editor read the book and wrote the relevant report, he mentioned a sentence that I think is key to understanding *As de Corazones*: what stands out most is that it is not the typical thriller. Apart from a murder with an investigation process that makes the reader doubt, which is still the common thread as in all the novels of the genre, there are in each of the eight chapters a handful of characters who cover almost a leading role. It's a very choral story, in which you can't remove two characters and have everything stay the same. This would happen in a regular thriller, but here there are a series of relationships that make them become parallel novels.

**-You place the characters in different world settings.**

-This has a bit of my stamp, as I am a person who travels a lot for work and I have lived in different countries around the world. This fact allows the reader to leave the usual context of a single scenario and be able to move to different spaces. Many people write to me and say: «I'm from Madrid and I felt very identified with this character because I also go to eat at this restaurant». All the scenarios are real and the reader can even take a tour through them. Even more, many of the episodes are written in a specific moment, since if I tell you that a character is in front of the Louvre Museum it is because I was there at that very moment with my computer. I think the reader ends up appreciating this, as it gives the story an added touch of reality.



GRUP PLANETA

▶ The writer David Castillo, with his novel 'As de Corazones'.

tions that are on the agenda such as sexist or homophobic violence.

-Unfortunately, it is still necessary to talk about issues like these. We can see it on the news practically every day and it seems incredible to me that in fully developed countries like Andorra, Spain or France we have to keep talking about this. It is very sad and through the characters in the book I wanted to denounce it. The main character of *As de Corazones* is made to be hated and what it does is highlight many of the endemic evils that still exist in the middle of 2023. It is meant to make people who suffer abuse or mistreatment and who may have normalized, be aware that it is not normal. If just one person realizes this and manages to change it, I'm satisfied.

**-I imagine that it is not easy to put yourself in the shoes of a character like this.**

-I remember a person who had to do a review with whom I had a difference of opinion, as he told me that I was apologizing for gender violence. I told him that he had not understood the novel at any point and he ended up confessing to me that he had not read it in its entirety. You cannot affirm such a serious fact in this way, because it is absolute barbarity. It takes a lot for people to understand this at first, but at the moment he is the only person who has said something similar to me. I pray for it to stay that way.

**-Is there an intention to continue with another novel?**

-Right now, I am about to deliver my second book. It will be a non-fiction story that talks about the war in Russia and Ukraine, told in the first person by people who are living this whole situation.

**-You are not answering me...**

-[He laughs]. Yes, there will be a second part of *As de Corazones*. The idea is for it to come out around the summer or fall of 2024.

**-What is left for David Castillo to do?**

-Retire me [laughs]. I would like at some point to be able to devote myself professionally to writing, which is what I have always liked since I was a child. The thing is that nowadays it is quite complicated to make a living from this, as well as from music or cinema. ≡



«If with my novel just one person becomes aware of a situation of abuse, I consider myself satisfied»

**-You continue to talk about the «dark secrets that lie beneath the surface of people». Do we really hide as much as it seems?**

-Everyone keeps secrets, it's an inherent human issue. The problem is when these secrets are used to harm someone or to achieve a goal. Unfortunately, there are professions in which certain red lines are crossed due to commercial, political, economic issues, etc., and in which the need to provide information is not differentiated from these other areas. It's a bit of a tricky line to discern. For example, you journalists know a lot about keeping secrets because in the end it's part of your job and your effort, but it can't be denied that the whole society practically lives on this.

-You also denounce other situa-