

New
Catalan
Fiction 2018



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Foreword

This is an outstanding moment for Catalan literature. An exceptionally fine tradition, the seductiveness of modernity and a curiosity about other literatures are all to be found amongst its current strengths, which are further bolstered by a well-established and vibrant publishing industry and the efficient work of literary agents.

One of the goals of the Institut Ramon Llull, as the public institution responsible for broadening the reach of Catalan language and culture, is to support authors, translators, publishers and literary agents with the aim of ensuring that Catalan literature is translated, published and read abroad.

This booklet presents a selection of new voices of Catalan Fiction that touch on a range of different subjects, realities, and imagined worlds and reflect the richness and the power of Catalan literature today.

Eva Baltasar

Permafrost

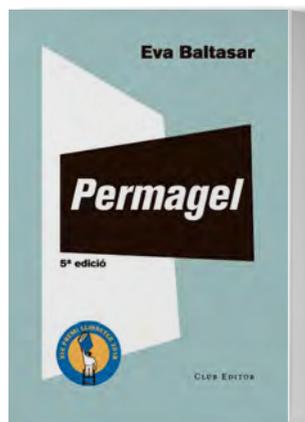
Permagemel

Suicide as the ever-ready plan B for life's ever-present conundrums

Winner of the 2018 Catalan Booksellers Award

A forty-year-old lesbian, still living the untethered life, returns time and again to her flirtations with the void. In her first-person stream of consciousness she revisits episodes from her past within her family, other places she's lived, the many women she's loved and made love to—and their own suicidal tendencies—while juxtaposing her sister's more conventional life against her own.

The confidential tone of this poet's first novel—and the first installment of a trilogy—sucks readers into the narrator's life on the limits, the only place where she feels truly alive. Our heroine claims to zealously maintain a place of permafrost inside her, an inner sanctum she never allows to melt, yet by the novel's devastating denouement, we are privy to the many cracks that reveal her sensuous light.



Club Editor, 2018
192 pages

RIGHTS SOLD

Spanish (Random House Mondadori)
French (Verdier)

FOREIGN RIGHTS CONTACT

SalmaiaLit
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“I think a lot about sex, but I also think about heights, train tracks, razor blades, Swiss army knives and carving knives, about barbiturates, pools and bathtubs, about acid, psychopaths, muggers, red flags and red lights. I think about highways, cars traveling the wrong way, high bridges, falling flowerpots, rabid dogs, rattlesnakes.”



Eva Baltasar (Barcelona, 1978) is the author of nine volumes of poetry, which have earned her numerous awards including the 2008 Miquel de Palol, the 2010 Benet Ribas, and the 2015 Gabriel Ferrater. *Permafrost* is her first novel.

SELECTED WORKS

Invertida [Inverted]
(Lleonard Muntaner, 2017)

Neutre [Neutral]
(Bromera, 2017)

Animals d'hivern [Winter Animals]
(Edicions 62, 2016)

Vida limitada [Limited Life] (Món de Llibres, 2013)

Poemes d'una embarassada [Poems from a pregnant] (Pagès, 2012)

Medi acuàtic [Aquatic Medium] (Pagès, 2011)

Dotze treballs [Twelve Works] (Pagès, 2011)

Reclam [Claim] (Institut d'Estudis Ilerdencs, 2010)

Atàviques feres [Atavistic Beasts] (Cossetània, 2009)

Laia [Laia] (Columna, 2008)

Blanca Busquets

Woman In Flight

La fugitiva

The secrets of a bitter, villainous nonagenarian are revealed and, with them, a ray of light in the darkness

When the novel opens, we find Mireia living alone in her apartment in uptown Barcelona, spending her days spying on her neighbors and making her caretakers miserable. She hasn't spoken to her son in years and her relationship to her daughter isn't much better; the only person who seems to like her is her granddaughter Sònia. As Mireia looks back on her long life from the final chapter, we learn of the events that shaped her, and how her marriage ended with a prison sentence.

The well-paced narration constantly jumps between the present and the past, from the city to her small-town upbringing and other settings that Mireia's desire to flee led her to, as details—a bottle of wine, a beauty mark, many scents—evoke her memories of a life marked by societal pressures, love, violence, and the limited roles available to women. Arranged in three parts that move from the shadows to a garden in the sun, Mireia ultimately finds she no longer needs to keep running.



Proa, 2018
288 pages

FOREIGN RIGHTS CONTACT

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“I was little, and I was happy, or so I thought. Seen now from a distance, and from this idyllic apartment in Barcelona, it can't really be said that we were very happy. If we consider comfort the basis of happiness, then no, we weren't happy. But, in those days, we didn't realize any of that, we were unaware and we truly believed that that was life, and that our town was the best, and that everything around us was marvelous.”



Blanca Busquets (Barcelona, 1961) is a journalist and the author of nine novels, for which she has won the 2011 Catalan Booksellers' Prize and the 2015 Alghero Donna Award in Italy. She's worked for Catalunya Ràdio since 1986.

SELECTED WORKS

La casa del silenci
[The House of Silence]
(Rosa dels Vents, 2013)

La nevada del cucut
[The Last Snow] (Rosa dels Vents, 2010)

Vés a saber on és el cel
[Heaven Knows where the Sky is] (Rosa dels Vents, 2009)

Tren a Puigcerdà [Train to Puigcerdà] (Rosa dels Vents, 2007)

Presó de Neu [Prison of Snow] (Proa, 2003)

Najat El-Hachmi

Mother of Milk and Honey

Mare de llet i mel

Most mothers provide the milk of
sustenance, but some also sweeten it with
the honey of pleasure

The third installment of a trilogy of one family's immigration from Morocco to a foggy city in central Catalonia, El-Hachmi dedicates this novel to her mother "who without knowing how to read, taught me to write." It begins with seven sisters in the Rif, sitting around a pot of tea and asking to hear the story of Fatima's exodus, alone with her daughter into the vast unknown of Europe.

Alternating between the first person and the third, and between Morocco and Catalonia, Fatima agrees to tell them her tale: one of many obstacles overcome and roots new and old; of her daughter, Sara Sqali, who will excel in school and fail at arranged marriage, and become very much a Catalan; of patriarchy and the female Muslim perspective on immigration. Complete with an Amazigh glossary, this novel pays tribute to Fatima's oral tradition, and the powerful yet fraught ties both between mother and daughter and between country of origin and country of adoption.



Edicions 62, 2018
400 pages

RIGHTS SOLD
French (Verdier)

FOREIGN RIGHTS CONTACT
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“When I had you, you were such a tiny little thing, and from then on I couldn't think of anything else but you, my dearest Sara. (...) I forgot about myself. Otherwise why would I have set off for such a faraway place with no idea where I was going? That's why your pregnancy filled me with hope (...) Who could have known you'd end up leaving like that?”



Najat El Hachmi (Nador, Morocco, 1979) holds a degree in Arabic Studies from the University of Barcelona. She is the author of a personal essay on her bicultural identity, and three previous novels, the first of which earned her the 2008 Ramon Llull Prize, the 2009 Prix Ulysse, and was a finalist for the 2009 Prix Méditerranée Étranger.

SELECTED WORKS

La filla estrangera
[The Foreign Daughter]
(Edicions 62, 2015)

La caçadora de cossos
[The Body Hunter]
(Planeta, 2011)

L'últim patriarca [The Last Patriarch] (Planeta, 2008)

Jo també soc catalana
[I am also Catalan]
(Columna, 2004)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

BASQUE
Azken patriarka (L'últim patriarca), tr. Jexuxmari Zalakain. Tafalla: Txalaparta, 2016.

DUTCH

De laatste patriarch
(L'últim patriarca), tr. Elli Bovée & Helena Overkleef. Utrecht: Orlando Uitgevers, 2011.

ENGLISH

The body hunter (La caçadora de cossos), tr. Peter Bush. London: Serpent's Tail, 2013.

The Last Patriarch (L'últim patriarca), tr. Peter Bush. London: Serpent's Tail, 2010.

FRENCH

Le dernier patriarche
(L'últim patriarca), tr. Anne Charlon. Arles: Actes Sud, 2009.

GERMAN

Der letzte Patriarch
(L'últim patriarca), tr. Isabel Muller. Berlin: Klaus Wagenbach, 2011.

ITALIAN

La città degli amori infedeli (L'últim patriarca), tr. Sara Cavarero. Roma: Newton Compton, 2012.

PORTUGUESE

A filha estrangeira (La filla estrangera), tr. Alex Tarradellas & Rita Custódio. Lisboa: Bertrand Editora, 2017.

SPANISH

La hija extranjera (La filla estrangera), tr. Rosa Mª Prats de la Iglesia. Barcelona: Destino, 2015.

Joan-Lluís Lluís

The Mariner

El navegant

Fleeting glimpses onto modern lives,
churning with desolation and urges just
beneath the surface

Winner of the 2016 Serra d'Or Award

Young Assicle Xatot, born in 1852 in Perpignan, discovers he is able to speak and understand any language just by hearing a single word of it, when he miraculously picks up Caló from his only friend. Assicle's life—and opportunities for language acquisition—improves when Barnabé Bonnefin shows up in an enormous hot-air balloon. Together they travel to the capital in the midst of the Franco-Prussian War and are accused of taking part in the Paris Commune insurrection.

Assicle is condemned to exile and sent to New Caledonia on a prison ship, where his remarkable linguistic talents allow him insights into many different cultures on board and lead to his adoption by the Kanak people, who believe his spirit was mistakenly born into the wrong body. A rollicking novel of adventures that is also a highly personal reflection on language and its role in defining people and cultures, as well as a declaration of equal dignity for all tongues.



Proa, 2016
352 pages

RIGHTS SOLD
Spanish (Navona Editorial)

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“His parents are as bewildered as I am. Bonnefin's brother—like me—can speak any language once he knows the meaning of a single one of its words. Like me, initially he would vomit and faint, and, like me, those side effects had subsided over the course of his teen years. Like me, he doesn't know what to do with his gift, which he tries to put to use teaching at the prestigious Institute of Oriental Languages in Paris, where Barnabé Bonnefin suggests I study.”



Joan-Lluís Lluís (Perpignan, 1963) has brought his unique perspective to a wide range of subjects and genres, publishing more than a dozen books that have been honored with many prestigious awards, including the 2004 Crexells, the 2017 Sant Jordi, and the Serra d'Or Prize (both in 2009 and again in 2017 for this novel).

SELECTED WORKS

Jo soc aquell que va matar Franco [I am the one who killed Franco] (Proa, 2018)

Les cròniques del déu coix [Chronicles of a Lame God] (Proa, 2013)

Xocolata desfeta [Drinking chocolate] (La Magrana, 2010)

Aiguafang [Studge] (La Magrana, 2008)

El dia de l'ós [The Day of the Bear] (La Magrana, 2004)

Vagons robats [Stolen Railway Wagons] (La Magrana, 1995)

Els ulls de sorra [Eyes of Sand] (La Magrana, 1993)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

FRENCH

Dictionnaire enthousiaste de la Catalogne et des Catalans (Diccionari entusiasta de Catalunya i dels catalans), tr. Cathy Ytak. Cabestany : Éditions Temple d'Or, 2007.

Le jour de l'ours (El dia de l'ós), tr. Cathy Ytak. Saint-Maurice-es-Allier : Tinta Blava, 2006.

Vagons volés (Vagons robats), tr. Patricia Narach. Baixas : Balzac Éditeur, 2003.

Raül Garrigasait

Strange Strangers

Els estranys

A translator's research leads him to a beguiling first-hand account of the Carlist War

Winner of the 2017 Catalan Bookseller's Award
Winner of the 2017 Òmnium Award

In the year 1837, a young Prussian man—Catholic and Traditionalist—named Rudolf von Wielemann crosses the Pyrenees on a vague mission to gain military experience and aid the royalists in the First Carlist War, with a letter of introduction from his uncle and his father's admonitions ringing in his head. However, when he arrives in Solsona to fight for Don Carlos' cause, he finds it in ruins, and instead of the perfect embodiment of order and tradition he had been sent from Berlin to bolster, he encounters almost the opposite: Solsona and its citizens are baffling and nigh incomprehensible.

By royal order Wielemann is to stay there awaiting his next royal orders, and the young Prussian is trapped in Solsona for more than a year, with much time for rumination on his role in that contradictory war and his disconcert at the constant culture shock. Nimble juxtaposing the past and the present, Garrigasait, the author/narrator, brings to life all the mind-blowing absurdity of the Carlist period—whose growing pains birthed modern Spain—while brilliantly highlighting our own strangeness and pursuit of meaning in our strange existences.



Edicions de 1984, 2017
185 pages

RIGHTS SOLD
Spanish (Entreambos)

FOREIGN RIGHTS CONTACT
Edicions de 1984
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“It’s unfathomable. Why would he go there, and why on earth would he stay? This story you’re telling me about his arrival—you have to admit—makes no sense at all, and his encounter with Don Carlos is one of the most grotesque and implausible things I’ve ever heard about that implausible war.”

“My imagination is innocent.”

“I believe you, I believe you. And don’t misunderstand me. It’s all so absurd that it’s fascinating, at least to my twisted mind. While the war is covering the fields in blood, while the Carlists are backing themselves into a cul-de-sac, Wielemann is playing the piano, conversing, fornicating, meditating, walking, getting bored, and getting depressed.”

“A normal life, relegated to a distinctly abnormal place and time.”



Raül Garrigasait (Solsona, 1979) is a translator from Greek and German. His first book was an essay that established his formidable style of insight and classical erudition, also on display here in his first novel, winner of the 2017 Catalan Booksellers’ Prize and the 2017 Òmnium Award.

SELECTED WORKS
El gos cosmopolita i dos espècimens més
[The Cosmopolitan Dog and Two Other Specimens] (Editorial A Contra Vent, 2012)

La tendra mà de cada arrel
[The tender hand of each root] (Viena Edicions, 2005)

Joan Jordi Miralles

Agglutination

Aglutinació

Burdened by grief, a man flees his life in search of anonymity, prurience, and pain

Winner of the 2017 Joanot Martorell Award

Down and out in London, a Catalan man takes on a series of low-level jobs, working in a hamburger joint and then settling as a night concierge at a hotel, living hand to mouth, meeting a series of colorful characters, both immigrants and British alike, and letting himself be carried along through the lower depths—squalid kitchens, sordid sex, trying roommates, and bedbugs—all the while haunted by a recurring death wish.

Written in a powerful, accusatory second-person narrative, these seemingly futile adventures in self-flagellation gradually reveal the tragic circumstances that led the nameless protagonist to try to lose himself in the English capital, and he comes to accept how his life has been forever changed. Along with that, he ultimately recognizes the miracle that is being alive, which may afford him the possibility of a new start.



Edicions 62, 2018
176 pages

RIGHTS

Edicions 62
Pilar Lafuente
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“While you savor a thigh, chopped bits of breast, or the skin off a wing, the night buses cross Upper Woburn silently and the cleaning crews wipe the gloom from façades with dancing, pumpkin-colored lights, like ghostly dervishes. The entire city seems to curl up like a sleeping baby during an armistice. Tomorrow doesn’t exist in an urbs that can’t see past its own nightmares. London, merciless metropolis even in repose, where the only link between people and things—so easily confused for each other—is the struggle to survive.”



Joan Jordi Miralles (Osca, 1977) is a novelist, playwright, and screenwriter. His first novel won the 2004 Andròmina Prize and this most recent one was awarded the 2017 Joanot Martorell Prize.

SELECTED WORKS

Els nens feliços
[Happy Children] (Males Herbes, 2016)

Una dona meravellosa
[A Marvelous Woman] (LaBreu, 2014)

Això és Àustria
[This is Austria] (Lleonard Muntaner, 2012)

L'úter de la balena
[The Whale's Uterus] (Editorial Moll, 2010)

L'Altíssim [The Most High] (Tres i quatre, 2005)

Vicenç Pagès Jordà

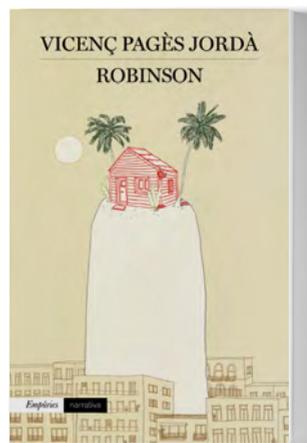
Robinson

Robinson

A compulsively readable novel set in an idiosyncratic world governed by one man's rules

“You shall love the bed above all things” is Article 1 of H.'s own personal Constitution. Following his mother's accidental death and his father's subsequent withdrawal from the world, our protagonist H. —also known as Goldilocks, and Robinson—drops out of school and becomes a mailman. He gets his own apartment and begins to live according to his quirks, including drinking his morning coffee before bed and reading the first few pages of a different novel each night as inspiration for the travels he makes in his “floating bed.” H. is desperate to cling to the refuge of his imagination as he struggles with his own sense of justice and attempts to comprehend a romantic setback.

Narrated in an archly subjective third person, Pagès Jordà achieves a startling and effective tone that masterfully plunges the reader into the protagonist's highly subjective world, his *sancta sanctorum*, a lonely oasis where he can fix memories of failed interactions, carry out his purification rituals, and blur the boundaries between reality and his illusory, augmented world.



Empúries, 2017
192 pages

RIGHTS SOLD
Italian (Exorma)

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“Anything is possible during those moments while his body is waking up: being married, living alone, having children, being an orphan, a lunatic, a doctor, an artist. Horizontally luxuriant, H. tries to expand that sea of hypotheses, until gradually the present imposes itself, the circle closes, the truths begin to hurt, so many missed opportunities, everything he could have been and never was.”



Vicenç Pagès Jordà (Figueres, 1963) is a writer and literary critic. He has published more than a dozen books, including novels, story collections, and essays. Among his many awards are the 1999 Documenta, the 2003 Sant Joan, the 2009 Crexells, the 2013 Sant Jordi, and the 2014 Catalan National Cultural Prize.

SELECTED WORKS

El món d'Horaci [Horaci's World] (Empúries, 1995, 2016)

Dies de frontera [Border Days] (Proa, 2014)

Els jugadors de whist [The Whist Players] (Empúries, 2009)

De Robinson Crusoe a Peter Pan: Un cànon de literatura juvenil [From Robinson Crusoe to Peter Pan. A Canon of Children's Literature] (Proa, 2006)

El Poeta i altres contes [The Poet and Other Stories] (Proa, 2005)

La felicitat no és completa [Happiness is Never Complete] (Edicions 62, 2003)

Carta a la reina d'Anglaterra [Letter to the Queen of England] (Empúries, 1997)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SLOVENIAN

Pismo angleski kraljici (Carta a la reina d'Anglaterra), tr. Veronika Rot. Ljbljana: Sodobnost International, 2015.

Sreča ni popolna (La felicitat no és completa), tr. Veronika Rot. Ljbljana: Sodobnost International, 2014.

SPANISH

Carta a la reina de Inglaterra (Carta a la reina d'Anglaterra), tr. Rubén Luzón Díaz. Alzira: Algar Editorial, 2017.

Los jugadores de whist (Els jugadors de whist), tr. Flavia Company. Barcelona: JP Libros, 2010.

De Robinson Crusoe a Peter Pan: un cànon de literatura juvenil (De Robinson Crusoe a Peter Pan: un cànon de literatura juvenil), tr. Felip Tobar. Barcelona: Ariel, 2009.

La dicha no es completa (La felicitat no es completa), tr. Vicenç Pagès Jordà. Barcelona: El Aleph, 2004.

Jordi Puntí

This is not America

Això no és Amèrica

What happens when you reach midlife without ever figuring out what you want to be when you grow up?

A man in mourning walks the streets of Barcelona spelling out his lover's name, a routine hitchhiker imagines himself an urban legend, an estranged brother asks his sibling for a kidney, an addict who wants to move to Las Vegas to quit gambling, a man hoping to rekindle a spark with his best friend's mother... these are some of the lonely characters who populate these nine stories. They seem to be searching for their place in the world, moving through space but too often looking back in time, nostalgic for a missed opportunity or the way a song once made them feel.

The story that closes the volume plays on the idea of the borders between fiction and non-fiction, and it's protagonist, named Jordi Puntí, speaks of two types of narrators: the hunter and the fisherman. Hunters head out to find their literary subject matter, like medieval knights, while fishermen just describe the riverbank and wait for a tug on their line. Puntí employs both techniques at the same time, setting his forlorn men into motion, while basking in a profusion of subtle, perceptive details.



Empúries, 2017
224 pages

RIGHTS
Spanish (Anagrama)

RIGHTS
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“And while I search for her—because I know she’ll be there, I know it—I pray that over those two decades we haven’t changed much, either of us, and a smile will be enough for her to steal me away the way she did back then, that one and only time, in another, more intimate place.”



Jordi Puntí (Manlleu, 1967) has published three story collections, one of which was the inspiration for Ventura Pons’ film *Wounded Animals*. His first novel *Lost Luggage* came out in 2010, earning him the Catalan Booksellers’ Prize, the Premi Amat-Piniella, the Lletra d’Or and the National Critics’ Award.

SELECTED WORKS

Els Castellans
[The Castilians] (L’Avanç,
2011)

Maletes perdudes
[Lost Luggage] (Empúries,
2010)

Animals tristos [Wounded
Animals] (Empúries,
2002)

Pell d’armadillo
[Armadillo Skin]
(La Magrana, 1988)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

CROATIAN

Izgubljena prtljaga
(Maletes perdudes),

tr. Nikola Vuletić. Zagreb:
Franktura, 2017.

ENGLISH
Lost Luggage (Maletes
perdudes), tr. Julie Wark.
Londres: Short Books,
2013.

ESLOVENIAN
Izgubljeni kovčki (Maletes
perdudes), tr. Veronika
Rot. Ljubljana: Mladinska
knjiga, 2015.

FRENCH
Bagages perdus (Maletes
perdudes), tr. Edmond
Raillard. Paris : Éditions
Jean-Claude Lattès, 2013.

GERMAN
*Die irren Fahrten des
Gabriel Delacruz* (Maletes
perdudes),
tr. Michael Ebmeyer.
Köln: Kiepenheuer &
Witsch, 2013.

POLISH
Zagubione Bagaże
(Maletes perdudes),
tr. Witold Maciejewski.
Katowice: Wydawnictwo
Sonia Draga, 2015.

SPANISH
Los castellanos
(Els castellans), tr. Jordi
Puntí. Zaragoza: Xordica,
2013

Llucia Ramis

The Possessions

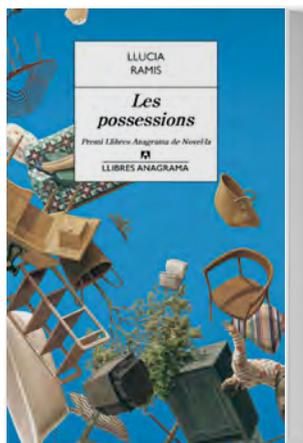
Les possessions

Does growing up mean not having anywhere to return to?

Winner of the 2018 Anagrama Award

“Possessions” is how homes are referred to in Majorca, and this novel—in which Llucia Ramis’ alter ego finds her mature voice—plays with this idea of obsession and nostalgia as forms of possession. The novel opens in 1993 with the news of the suicide of a ruined Madrid businessman after murdering his wife and son; his tragic end serves to epitomize the beginning of an era of corruption that has plagued contemporary Spain. As the narrator ponders if it wasn’t that perturbing and inscrutable homicide/suicide that led her to become a journalist, she is drawn back to her native island from Barcelona out of concern for her father’s mental health. There she also must face the loss of her grandparents’ house and with it, so many childhood memories, material and immaterial.

Ramis brings all her journalistic gifts to bear in this elegiac story that interweaves several threads to powerfully evoke all that is lost as one comes of age: not only possessions but also ideals and illusions. Her clear scrutiny illuminates relationships between adult children and their parents, romantic expectations, and aspects of our 21st century that are not easy to witness. It turns out that rummaging around in one’s family history to put a finger on that moment “when we were happy” can bring a different sort of wisdom, and acceptance, with the knowledge that houses always have and always will belong to the past, and to its ghosts.



Anagrama, 2018
240 pages

RIGHTS
Spanish (Libros del Asteroide)

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“The cicadas crackle like they did then, the sun filters through the holm oaks’ foliage. My heart hides among the fallen leaves, scared mouse. Perhaps it’s better to leave it here, leave it like this. The immutable memory. You don’t want to know what happened. On the other hand, curiosity and the morbid thirst to find out what became of us, us understood as the ghost of what we were, compels me to keep going. I draw in a deep breath and begin.”



Llucia Ramis (Palma, 1977) is a writer and a print and radio journalist working in Barcelona for over two decades. Her work was recognized with the 2010 Bartomeu Rosselló-Pòrcel Award, the same year she won the Josep Pla Prize for her second novel. In 2013, Time Out Barcelona named her Creator of the Year. This most recent book, her fourth, earned her the 2018 Anagrama Prize.

SELECTED WORKS

Tot allò que una tarda morí amb les bicicletes [All that Died One Afternoon with the Bicycles] (Columna, 2013)

Egosurfing [Egosurfing] (Destino, 2010)

Coses que et passen a Barcelona quan tens 30 anys [Things that Happen to you in Barcelona when you are Thirty] (Columna, 2018)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SLOVENIAN

Egosurfing, tr. Veronika Rot. Ljubljana: Učila International, 2012.

SPANISH

Cosas que te pasan en Barcelona cuando tienes 30 años (Coses que et passen a Barcelona quan tens 30 anys), tr. Jenn Díaz. Barcelona: Editorial Barret, 2018.

Todo lo que una tarde murió con las bicicletas (Tot allò que una tarda morí amb les bicicletes), tr. Llucia Ramis. Barcelona: Libros del Asteroide, 2013.

Egosurfing, tr. Albert Vitó i Godina. Barcelona: Destino, 2010.

Irene Solà

Dikes

Els dics

A deftly crafted, lush exploration of the power of storytelling in the age of consent

Winner of the 2017 Documenta Award

This is the story of Ada, a twenty-something woman who's been living in London for three years and returns for the summer to her small town in rural Catalonia. Ada turns her cinematic eye to the world she left behind, filled with big moons, shooting stars, tractors, and peaches, as well as animals, violence, and death. Ada writes stories that are inset within the story of that summer, alongside memories of her brother's coming out, her parents' divorce, and the easy romance she resumes with a young man from a local farming family.

Solà's prose draws on randomness and instinct, juxtaposing tradition and experimentation. Ada's voice is gentle, languid, and wise beyond its years as it contemplates aspects of rural life in the 21st century, three generations of her family, and the power the storyteller has over the story, which she wields benevolently. Structured over four months, the last of which is composed of photographs that serve as supporting evidence, Solà plays with techniques of linguistic contention (hence the dikes of the title) that hold the bedlam of life in check until, inevitably, the banks overflow.



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256 pages

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“This is Ada.

These are the keys of Ada's computer, diligently awaiting her next charge.

These are Ada's fingers, writing... «Lluís woke up because he had a very highly developed sense of protection and responsibility toward the house and everything in it.»”



Irene Solà (Malla, 1990) is a writer and an artist. She has exhibited her work at the CCCB in Barcelona and the Whitechapel Gallery in London. Her first book of poems *Bèstia* won the 2012 Amadeu Oller Prize and this novel, the 2017 Documenta Prize. She is currently working on an artistic project entitled *Notes on a novel (that I am not going to write)*.

SELECTED WORKS

Bèstia [Beast]
(Galerada, 2012)

Grants, Fellowship and Other Services

Translation Grant

Grants for the translation of Catalan literature: fiction, non-fiction, children's and YA books, poetry, theater and graphic novels
Recipients: Publishers.

Promotion Grant

Grants to promote abroad Catalan literature (fiction, non-fiction, children's and YA books, poetry, theater and graphic novels), including participation in international literary festivals and presentations and promotional plans for works in translation.
Recipients: Publishers, Literary Events Organizers.

Children's Illustrated Books Grant

Grants for the publication abroad of illustrated books by illustrators settled in Catalonia or Balearic Islands.
Recipients: Publishers.

Translators in Residence Grant

Grants for translators working on translations from Catalan to stay from two to six weeks in Catalonia.
Recipients: Translators.

Travel Grants for Writers

Grants for writers to finance travel costs to carry out literary activities, to which they have been invited.
Recipients: Writers in Catalan.

Institut Ramon Llull Fellowship

Every year the Institut Ramon Llull (IRL) organises one fellowship targeted at international publishers and agents to take place in Barcelona.

The invited professionals have the chance to be on the ground in order to acquire firsthand an in-depth perspective on Catalan literature and to build networks with Catalan publishing houses and literary agencies.

Travel and accommodation expenses during the fellowship are covered by the IRL.

Presence at International Book Fairs

The IRL attends the following book fairs: London, Paris, Bologna, Warsaw, Beijing, Frankfurt, Sharjah, Istanbul and Guadalajara, informing about its services and activities.

The IRL manages and organises the presence of Catalan Culture as Guest of Honour at international book fairs. Catalan Culture was Guest of Honour at Turin Book Fair (2003), Feria del libro de Guadalajara (2004), Frankfurter Buchmesse (2007), Göteborg Book Fair (2014) and Bologna Children's Books Fair (2017). As well as that, the city of Barcelona was Guest of Honour in Paris (2013) and Warsaw (2016), and will be so at Buenos Aires Book Fair (2019).

Other Services

The IRL promotes networking between the international publishers and agents and the Catalan publishing sector. The members of the Literature and the Humanities department will be pleased to provide international publishing professionals with the contacts of Catalan authors, publishers or agents.

The IRL also offers information in its website about the translation and the translators of Catalan literature through the databases TRAC and TRADUCAT.

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