

New Catalan Fiction 2016-2017

El Llibre
de les Bèsties



New Catalan Fiction 2016-2017

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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 the dissemination of Catalan language and culture abroad, 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 is intended to arouse the curiosity of publishers and open the doors to **Catalan literature** for readers in other languages. The booklets we produce periodically include selections from new contemporary publications in fiction. We encourage readers in many countries to take this opportunity to enjoy our literature.

Lolita Bosch

Rage

La ràbia



A brave tribute to bullied teens: I hear you and it does get better

It's estimated that 6 percent of children suffer extreme bullying. In this gut-wrenchingly honest account, the author lays bare her own pain at the hands of her peers, after decades of silence. To that she adds the words of teenagers of today, bearing witness and revealing that not much has changed: the wanting to fade into the woodwork, entering school as if entering a slaughterhouse, the hardening inside, the suicide attempts.

With an effective use of layered repetition, Lolita Bosch creates a sense of déjà vu as she brings her literary talents to bear in her exploration of her past and her sincere exercise in being an adult who actually listens, instead of downplaying what's going on, in a remarkable display of the empathy so often sorely lacking in these cases.

Lolita Bosch (Barcelona, 1970) has lived in several places, including a decade in Mexico. She writes adult, children's and YA novels, in both Catalan and Spanish. She is founding editor of the blog "Nuestra Aparente Rendición" [Our Apparent Surrender], which has become an important forum for discussion and reflection on the violence in Mexico. *Rage* is the winner of the 2016 Roc Boronat Prize.

“He is one of the few torturers who had the courage to speak to me. Although I have to say it’s not just that they have trouble talking about it, it’s hard for me to listen to them as well. In his still cocky bearing, maybe out of habit, I see Eu, Mo, Ca and his friend Ga. The four teenagers who made my life impossible. That’s the word: impossible. Because bullying is always done in a group, always. They couldn’t have done it alone.”

SELECTED WORKS

- La ràbia* (Ara llibres, 2016)
Camps abans de tot això (Empúries, 2011)
La família del meu pare (Empúries, 2008)
Insòlit somni, insòlita veritat (Empúries, 2007)
Qui vam ser (Empúries, 2006)
Elisa Kiseljak (La Campana, 2005)
Això que veus és un rostre (Curbet Edicions, 2004)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SPANISH

- *Campos de amapola antes de esto* [Camps abans de tot això]. Barcelona: Mondadori, 2011.
- *Esto que ves es un rostro* [Això que veus és un rostre]. México: Sexto Piso, 2009.
- *La familia de mi padre* [La familia del meu pare]. Barcelona: Mondadori, 2008.
- *Insólita ilusión, insólita certeza* [Insòlit somni, insòlita veritat]. Barcelona: Mondadori, 2007.
- *La persona que fuimos* [Qui vam ser]. Barcelona: Mondadori, 2006.
- *Elisa Kiseljak*. Madrid: Caballo de Troya, 2005.



Ara Llibres, 2016
129 pages

Rights

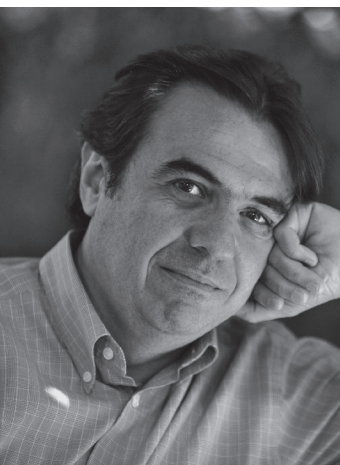
Pontas Literary and Film Agency

Marina Penalva / Maria Cardona
marina@pontas-agency.com
maria@pontas-agency.com

Martí Domínguez

The Harvest

La sega



A vivid and original story of a family forced to survive amid the fallout from the Civil War

Goriet, a ten-year-old boy growing up in a town in the Valencian mountains in the late 1940s, tells the story of his family, tenant farmers caught in the crossfire between the *maqui* guerrilla fighters and Franco's Civil Guard that continued in the post-war period. Goriet's father, who fought in the war on the Republican side, is murdered by the Civil Guard, leaving his mother wary of both sides. Yet one of his sisters gets swept up in supporting those fighting for freedom against the regime, and the boy must come of age in a context where it is difficult to tell who one's enemies are.

Rich in evocative details of the customs, superstitions and language of the region, this novel is loosely based on first-person accounts from the Maestrat area, and tells an important story you'd be hard pressed to find in any history book. Through Goriet's eyes, readers not only discover the harsh realities of a violent world, but also the rays of hope that culture and tradition can provide us.

“All of a sudden silence fell over us, as if we were marked, or stigmatized, in some very strange way. As if we’d fallen into a well. No one visited us, everyone avoided us, my mother couldn’t figure out why. But the wheat Teresa had planted started to come up, with intense green shoots, and we were crestfallen that she wouldn’t see it.”

Martí Domínguez (Madrid, 1966) is a journalism professor at the University of Valencia and the director of the science magazine *Mètode*. Among his numerous awards are the National Journalism Prize, the Josep Pla Prize for *El retorn de Voltaire*, and the Catalan Critics’ Award for this latest novel.

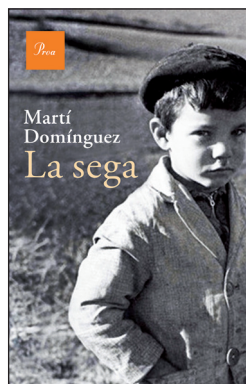
SELECTED WORKS

- La sega* [‘The harvest’] (Proa, 2016)
El retorn de Voltaire [‘Voltaire’s Return’] (Destino, 2007)
El secret de Goethe [‘Goethe’s Secret’] (Edicions 62, 1999)
Les confidències del comte de Buffon [‘The Confidences of the Count of Buffon’] (Eliseu Climent / 3i4, 1997)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SPANISH

- *El regreso de Voltaire* [El retorn de Voltaire], tr. M. Domínguez. Barcelona: Destino, 2007.
- *Las confidencias del conde de Buffon* [Les confidències del comte de Buffon: una època de la natura], tr. A. Cardona. Barcelona: Península, 1999.



Proa, 2016
352 pages

Rights

Grup62/Planeta

Pilar Lafuente
plafuente@planeta.es

Najat El Hachmi

The Foreign Daughter

La filla estrangera



A young woman straddling two languages and bound by two divergent sets of roots

The Foreign Daughter is the intimate tale of a first-generation Catalan immigrant who finds herself, at eighteen, having to choose between an arranged marriage with her Moroccan cousin and moving to Barcelona to develop her talents. Not exactly at home in either country, she feels indebted to her mother, who represents everything she has left behind, everything she can never truly be. The protagonist struggles with her own personal rebellion and strong ties to her family while wading through the many facets of immigrant life and integration.

The powerful, nameless first-person voice of this novel explores language as an emotionally laden symbol of cultural and generational clashes, and how impossible certain things are to communicate. Her mother's Amazigh world is one of oral traditions she feels unable to capture on paper.

Najat El Hachmi (Nador, Morocco, 1979) moved to Vic at the age of eight. She holds a degree in Arab Studies from the University of Barcelona. Her first novel, *The Last Patriarch*, is a long bestseller that was translated into ten languages and was shortlisted for the 2009 Prix Méditerranée

“The main difference between me and the women who get used to their allotted fate, who don’t complain except in hushed voices with their girlfriends, who feel comfortable in their married life, the main difference is that they aren’t readers and I am, and lying beside the sleeping body of my cousin/husband I see that, despite my efforts to leave my previous life behind, I am still unable to think like an illiterate.”

étranger. *The Foreign Daughter* was recently awarded the 2015 BBVA Sant Joan Prize and the 2015 Ciutat de Barcelona Prize for the best work of Catalan fiction.

SELECTED WORKS

La filla estrangera (Edicions 62, 2015)

La caçadora de cossos (Planeta, 2011)

L'últim patriarca (Planeta, 2008)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

DUTCH

· *De laatste patriarch* [L'últim patriarca], tr. E. Bovée; H. Overkleef. Utrecht: Bruna/Signatuur, 2011.

GERMAN

· *Der letzte Patriarch* [L'últim patriarca], tr. I. Müller. Berlin: Verlag Klaus Wagenbach, 2011.

ENGLISH

· *The Body Hunter* [L'últim patriarca], tr. P. Bush. Londres: Serpent's Tail, 2013.

ITALIAN

· *La città degli amori infedeli* [L'últim patriarca], tr. S. Cavarero. Roma: Newton Compton, 2012

SPANISH

· *La cazadora de cuerpos* [La caçadora de cossos], tr. A. R. Da Costa. Barcelona: Planeta, 2011.



Edicions 62, 2015
216 pages

Rights

MB Agencia Literaria

Txell Torrent

txell@mbagencialiteraria.es

Albert Forns

Jambalaya

Jambalaia



A salmagundi of literature, onanism and literary onanism

A patchwork book about second novel syndrome, a fictional autobiography of a jaded, acerbic and hilarious young writer who heads to a writers' colony in Montauk, New York, and the resulting book is a survival guide to America's obesity, chain stores and gentrification, a mordant send-up of the literary scene, a paean to masturbation and its fictional alter-ego, the autobiographical novel, among many other things.

Agile, lively prose with a rabidly contemporary attention span that reads like a mockumentary—complete with cameo appearances by Edward Albee—and skewers everyone in the room, the protagonist included. Forns, and his first-person narrator, end their journey convinced that more than architecture, writing is closer to archeology.

Albert Forns (Granollers, Barcelona, 1982) has quickly made a name for himself among the youngest generation of Catalan authors. In 2013 he won the Documenta Prize for his first novel *Albert Serra (la novel·la, no el cineasta)* and that same year published the poetry collection *Ultracolors*. *Jambalaia* is the winner of the debut Anagrama Prize for Catalan Literature.

“New novel. NEW NOVEL. NEW NOVEL. It’s the first time I’ve said it out loud. Up until now I hadn’t even dared to imagine it, I was living with that void left inside you after giving birth to the previous novel. It’s quite a peculiar sensation, that ludicrous period you fall into when you finish a book, when you’ve finally released what’s kept you busy and lent meaning to your life for years. More than giving birth to a child, finishing a novel is when your kid leaves home.”

SELECTED WORKS

Jambalaya (Anagrama, 2016)

Albert Serra (*la novel·la, no el cineasta*) (Empúries, 2013)

Ultracolors (LaBreu Edicions, 2013)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SPANISH

· *Jambalaya*. Barcelona: Anagrama, 2016



Anagrama, 2016

303 pages

Rights

Indent Literary Agency

Paula Canal

paula@indentagency.com

Víctor García Tur

The Birds

Els ocells



What's behind the vultures' sudden disappearance?

Dafne is a recently separated literary translator from Barcelona who shows up in Sant Salvador, a fictitious small Catalan town with many real, 21st-century problems: a corrupt, glad-handing municipal government that caters to tourism, disaffected youth, dwindling local business, and an uncertain future. Sant Salvador is also experiencing a more unusual phenomenon: its bird population is vanishing, under enigmatic circumstances, and Virginia, a biologist who works at the local vulture reserve, is determined to find out what's behind it. Dafne takes up residence at a family-run hostel, striking up a sexual relationship with the son, and finding punk solidarity with his rebellious niece, sixteen-year-old Judit.

In this remake of the eponymous Hitchcock film, García Tur creates his own version of the Freudian family and the imminent avian threat, with a captivating cast of characters and told in precise, comic language from three female points of view. Suspense builds over the week leading up to the local pagan St. Anthony festivities, as the book explores what has become of rural life and romantic love, and it isn't until Dafne is back in Barcelona that we find out what was scaring off the birds.

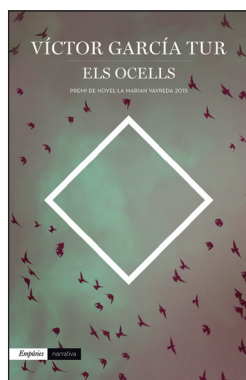
“It would have been easier to accept that the birds, rabbits, rats, etc., were all fleeing an earthquake or whatever it was that was looming... But no: the subtle threat was only affecting the birds. It just didn’t hold water: a shipwreck in which only the birds abandon ship makes no sense.”

Víctor García Tur (Barcelona, 1981) is an ornithologist who also trained as a graphic designer. Along with Emily McBride, he is the publisher of New Niu Press. Winner of the 2008 Documenta Prize for his first collection of stories, this novel earned him the 2015 Marian Vayreda Award.

SELECTED WORKS

Els ocells (Empúries, 2016)

Twistanschauung (Empúries, 2009)



Empúries, 2016
392 pages

Rights

Grup62/Planeta

Pilar Lafuente

plafuente@planeta.es

Andreu Martín

Fair Violence

La violència justa



In a violent world, is institutional violence ever justified?

Two narrators alternate chapters as their stories become increasingly intertwined. Teresa is trying to remake her life after an abusive marriage, and Alexis is a former cop stripped of his badge for excessive use of force against the killer of a little girl. Teresa seeks out Alexis because his reputation precedes him, and she is looking for someone to help her deal a reckoning to her ex. However, she finds him just as he is setting on the trail of a child prostitution ring. Along the way, they fall in love.

Veteran crime novelist Andreu Martín is back with this tale of sadism and revenge in two voices, in which Teresa and Alexis must face up to their hidden fears and their unfinished business, rapidly reaching a boiling point where their beliefs are challenged. Readers too must ask themselves hard questions in this take on the complexities and limits of a policeman's job.

Andreu Martín (Barcelona, 1949) is best known as one of the pioneers of Spanish noir fiction, although he has written in many other genres, including science fiction, erotic, historical novel, young adult, and for the stage and screen. Among his many awards are the 1992 Deutsche Krimi

“It was worth the effort to get to this point. Today I’m surer of that than ever. I suffered years of humiliation, fear and crying, and today I’m sure that it’s my turn to humiliate, strike fear and bring on tears. That will put me on the same level as the son of a bitch I want to punish, yes, that’s true, I couldn’t have said it better. On exactly the same level. I don’t know if I’ll succeed, but that’s my intention. To be on the same level. And if possible, even slightly above.”

Preis International, the Dashiell Hammett Prize for best noir novel written in Spanish in 1989, 1993, 2000, and the 2011 Pepe Carvalho Award given by Barcelona’s City Hall for his lifetime writing achievements.

SELECTED WORKS

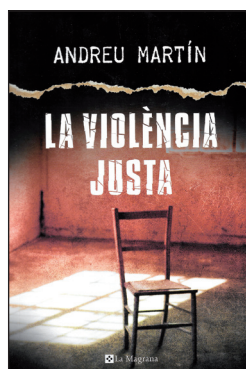
- La violència justa* (RBA, 2015)
- Les escapinades dels escarbats* (Bromera, 2014).
- Societat negra* (RBA, 2013).
- Dos dies de maig* (Rosa dels vents, 2013)
- Cabaret Pompeia* (Edicions 62, 2011)
- Barcelona tràgica* (Ara llibres, 2009)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

SPANISH

- *Barcelona tràgica*, tr. A. Martin. Barcelona: Ediciones B, 2009.
- *Cabaret Pompeya*, tr. A. Martin. Madrid: Alevosía, 2012.
- *Dos días de mayo*, tr. A. Martin. Madrid: Plaza & Janés, 2013.

French rights of *Societat Negra* sold to Asphalte Éditions.



La Magrana, 2016
448 pages

Rights

Andreu Martin

Andreu Martin
andreum9@gmail.com

Imma Monsó

The Anniversary

L'aniversari



A riveting novel about the power of the stories we tell ourselves

A couple that has been married for twenty-five years find themselves at an impasse. Their twins are grown and she finds that she once again has time for herself, leading her to recover her old habit of translating poems in her mind. With this time comes a marital crisis. Is she suddenly allergic to him? Or has she just heard all of his stories? They decide to try silence, and three weeks pass without even a letter exchanged between them, when their anniversary arrives. How far will her husband go with his perverse surprise gift?

Meanwhile, a parallel plot is told in alternating chapters, of a housekeeper who homeschools her son in her employer's library, and how the bookish young man, once he finds a friend, acts out *Moby Dick* in the woods with him, over and over again. As the two stories come together deftly, the couple dissects the possibility of ever falling in love with each other again, and the differences between fiction and lies.

Imma Monsó (Lleida, 1959) began her literary career in 1996, immediately garnering the praise of readers and critics. One of Catalonia's most bestselling authors, she has won numerous awards including the Ramon Llull Prize and in 2013 the National Culture Award.

“I want to be with you forever too,’ she says,
resting her head on his shoulder.

‘Me more,’ he says.

She doesn’t quite understand what he means,
whether it’s that he wants to be with her for more
time, with more intensity, or if he wants it more than
her, but those three weeks of silence had made her
realize that when you miss out on
some nuance it’s much better not
to ask unless you want to end up
fighting like cats and dogs.”

SELECTED WORKS

L'aniversari (Columna, 2016)

La dona veloç (Planeta, 2012)

Una tempesta (La Magrana, 2009)

Un home de paraula (RBA, 2006)

LATEST WORKS IN TRANSLATION

DUTCH

· *Een man, een woord* [Un home de paraula], tr. E. Bovée.
Leiden: Menken Kasander & Wigman Uitgevers, 2007.

ENGLISH

· *A Man of his Word* [Un home de paraula], tr. M.
Tennent/M. Relaño. Madrid: Hispabooks, 2014.

FRENCH

· *Un sacré caractère* [Tot un caràcter], tr. M. Vila Casas.
Arles: Éditions Jacqueline Chambon, 2014.

· *La femme pressée* [La dona veloç], tr. M. Vila Casas.
Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 2013.

HUNGARIAN

· *Sosem lehet tudni* [No se sap mai], tr. K. Nemes.
Budapest: Typotex, 2014.

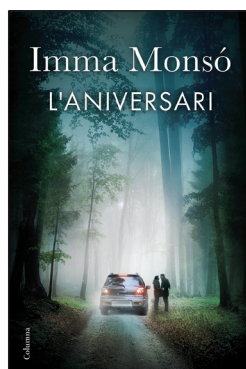
ITALIAN

· *Un uomo di parola* [Un home de paraula], tr. B. Parisi.
Milan: Neri Pozza, 2008.

SPANISH

· *La dona veloç* [La mujer veloç]. Barcelona: Planeta, 2012.

· *Una tormenta* [Una tempesta]. Barcelona: La Magrana, 2009.



Proa, 2016
304 pages

Rights

Agencia Literaria Carmen
Balcells

Glòria Gutiérrez
g.gutierrez@ag-balcells.com

Bel Olid

Winds Most Wild

Vents més salvatges



Sixteen succinct stories that focus on fleeting moments and typically anonymous characters

Bel Olid's stories depict glimpses of a world that is off the radar of much fiction, touching—sometimes obliquely—on such subjects as difference, femininity, relationships, the abuse of power, individual freedom, institutionalized violence, life on the margins of society, and the small acts of solidarity that contribute to making the world a more livable place.

In an economical yet enveloping prose style, this collection creates an overall sensation of warmth and compassion, not by shying away from the rougher edges of our personal and political lives, but by shining a light on them.

Bel Olid (Mataró, Barcelona, 1977) is a translator, writer, and president of the Association of Catalan-Language Authors. She won the Rovelló Prize in 2010 for her essay on postmodern heroines, the Documenta Prize that same year for her first novel, *Una terra solitària*, and the 2009 Qwerty Award for best children's book, *Crida ben fort, Estela!* This is her second collection of short stories.

“When I was fifteen, I would have paid good money to not exist. I would’ve gulped down all of my mom’s pills, if I’d known where she kept them hidden. I would have blown out my brains with dad’s revolver, if he’d had one. I would have drowned myself in the bathtub, if I weren’t so good at holding my breath. And the more I existed, the more not existing eluded me, the more I ate. Almost without wanting to, I was eating to spite life.”

SELECTED WORKS

Vents més salvatges (Empúries, 2016) [‘Winds most wild’].

La mala reputació (Proa, 2012) [‘Bad reputation’].

Una terra solitària (Empúries, 2011) [‘Lonely Land’].



Proa, 2016
144 pages

Rights

Asterisc Agency

Carlota Torrents

carlota@asteriscagents.com

Voices Out in the Open

Veus al ras



Silences made up of words spoken by no one

A man shows up each week in front of a house that he left ten years earlier and where his former wife still lives. The nameless man now seems to wander lost, unable to speak intelligibly, expressing himself with expressions, body language and actions that no one can decipher. The nameless woman inside the house diligently records all that the man does not say, interspersing his present madness with the memories of the life they shared.

Her lyrical monologue captures, along with his incomprehensible messages, the voices of those present and those absent, and reflections on both the past and the present deadlock in which she finds herself. The result is an asphyxiating, circular text that speaks of the silences we share, and serves as a wake-up call to reexamine aspects of our stagnant relationships and society.

Sebastià Perelló (Costitx, Majorca, 1963) is a writer and a high school teacher of Catalan language and literature. He has published poetry, short-story collections, novels, and works of literary criticism.

“For a while it was as calm as the sea at rest. Those are your words. They’re almost always yours. Because you and I are verbal animals. And that was also something you used to say. Sometimes I think that we are here, and I write as if you were present, in the room, sitting at the chair, in front of the computer, as if I were in your place. Just to hear you. Because you’ve gotten lost and no longer hear yourself, like the world’s engine, which has a voice and no one hears it.”

SELECTED WORKS

Veus al ras (Club Editor, 2016)

Talls d'ombra (Lleonard Muntaner, 2012)

Percaceries (Lleonard Muntaner, 2010)

Pèls i senyals (Empúries, 2008)

La set (El gall, 2007)



Club Editor, 2016
224 pages

Rights

SalmaiaLit

Bernat Fiol

bernat@salmaialit.com

Pep Puig

Life Without Sara Amat

La vida sense la Sara Amat



The summer days that mark the end of boyhood

It is August, 1981, and eleven-year-old Pep is spending a few weeks in the small town of Ullastrell, Catalonia, at his paternal grandmother's house, which is also the town's shoe store and barbershop. One evening while he is playing hide and seek with his group of friends, the girl Pep has a crush on—Sara Amat—disappears. She soon reappears, in Pep's bedroom. He hides her there while the town searches and conjectures on what has happened to precocious Sara, who never did seem to fit in in Ullastrell. She is rebellious, intellectually gifted, and jaded. He is innocent, trusting, and head over heels in love. Together, over twelve intense days, they come to grips with what it means to leave childhood behind and enter adolescence.

A rich backdrop of home-cooked meals and olive groves and chirping crickets, of small town cinema night and farmers' haircuts, bolsters the deceptively spare prose and juxtaposes against the bedroom realm of Sara and Pep's conversations. Together they create a luminous, sensual, sentimental world—the reconstruction of lost childhood—for this captivating novel that hovers between the seemingly autobiographical and the territory of fable.

“For Sara, there must have been more life pulsing through that book than the entire town or, in any case, she must have felt very far away from Ullastrell when she was inside *War and Peace*. Much more than my room, that book was Sara’s true secret hideout, and almost without meaning to, through sheer force of intensity and intelligence, she must have been turning into another of the novel’s characters, the girl who had run away from her small town and was reading *War and Peace* so she’d never, ever, have to go back.”

Pep Puig (Terrassa, Barcelona, 1969), is the author of two previous novels, the first of which won him the FNAC Young Talent Award. He recently published *The Love Of My Life For The Moment*, a book of short stories. *Life Without Sara Amat* is this year’s Sant Jordi Prize winner, one of the most important prizes on Catalan Literature.

SELECTED WORKS

La vida sense la Sara Amat (Proa, 2016)

L’amor de la meva vida de moment (L’altra, 2015)

Veus (Empúries, 2010)

Les llàgrimes de la senyoreta Marta (Empúries, 2007)

L’home que torna (Empúries, 2005)

Italian rights of *La vida sense la Sara Amat* sold to Marsilio Editore



Proa, 2016
296 pages

Rights

Grup62/Planeta

Pilar Lafuente
plafuente@planeta.es

Institut Ramon Llull

Literature Grants

The Institut Ramon Llull is a public consortium established in 2002 with the aim of promoting the Catalan language and culture abroad. This mission is accomplished by providing broad international exposure to writers and artists, encouraging artistic and cultural exchanges, and supporting Catalan language and literature studies in universities. Currently, the consortium is formed by the Government of Catalonia and the Barcelona City Council.

» Translation Grants

Grants for the translation of Catalan fiction, non-fiction and scholarly works into other languages, to assist publishers of those works in covering translation costs.
Recipients: Publishers.

» Promotion Grants

Grants for activities promoting Catalan fiction, non-fiction and scholarly works abroad, including: participation in international literary festivals; literary activities within the framework of cultural events; presentations and promotional plans for new works in translation; monographic pieces in cultural journals; and providing information on authors.
Recipients: Institutions, Publishers, Literary Agencies.

» Residence for Literary Translators

Grants for translators with commissioned translations in progress of Catalan literary works, for working stays in Catalonia lasting between two and six weeks.
Recipients: Translators.

» Grants for Children's and Youth Literature

Grants for the publication abroad of works illustrated by Catalan artists.
Recipients: Publishers.

The IRL also provides information about Catalan literature: if you would like to know which works of Catalan literature have been translated into other languages you are welcome to visit our database TRAC at our website www.llull.cat/trac. You can also find information and contacts on literary translators from Catalan at TRALICAT, www.llull.cat/tralicat.

The IRL attends the following book fairs: Frankfurt, London, Paris, Warsaw and Bologna, providing information about its services.

Catalan Culture was Guest of Honour at Turin (2003), Guadalajara (2004), Frankfurt (2007) and Göteborg (2014). The city of Barcelona was Guest of Honour in Paris (2013) and Warsaw (2016).

English translations of works by the selected authors are available upon request.

Please contact us for further information:

Misia Sert (mser@llull.cat)

Julià Florit (jflorit@llull.cat)

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Institut Ramon Llull

Texts

Mara Faye Lethem

Editorial Coordination

Literature and the Humanities Department,
Institut Ramon Llull
Bonalletra Alcompas, S.L.

Translated by

Mara Faye Lethem

Design and Layout

Elisenda Nogué (www.metagrafica.com)

Proofreading

Ita Roberts

Cover photo

Work: El llibre de les bèsties
Artist: David Ballespí Villagrasa
www.davidballespi.net

Photographs by

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INSTITUT RAMON LLULL

Headquarters

CATALONIA
Avinguda Diagonal, 373
08008 Barcelona
+34 934 678 000
info@llull.cat

Foreign Offices

BERLIN
Charlottenstr. 18
D-10117 Berlin, Germany
+49 (0) 30 208 86 43 24

LONDON
17 Fleet Street
EC4Y 1AA London, United Kingdom
+44 (0) 2078420852

NEW YORK
360 Lexington Avenue, 18th Floor.
Suite 1801
10017 New York
+12127823334

PARIS
50, rue Saint-Ferdinand
75017 Paris, France
+33 (0) 1 42 66 02 45

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