



MADE IN CATALUNYA

Laurie Anderson,
Lou Reed, and Patti Smith
reading Catalan poetry

March 23-24, 2007
Baryshnikov Arts Center
Howard Gilman Performance Space

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Catalan language and culture

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March 23–24, 2007

**LAURIE ANDERSON,
LOU REED,
AND PATTI SMITH**
reading Catalan poetry

Poems by **Perejaume, Pere Gimferrer, Blai Bonet, Joan Brossa, Maria-Mercè Marçal, Maria Antònia Salvà, Vicent Andrés Estellès, Narcís Comadira, Josep Palau i Fabre, Joan Margarit, Francesc Parcerisas, Miquel Martí i Pol, Enric Casasses, Salvador Dalí, Sebastià Gasch, Lluís Montanyà, J. V. Foix, Gabriel Ferrater, Salvador Espriu, Josep Carner, Carles Riba, and Miquel Barceló**

Artistic Coordination **Xavier Albertí**
Selection of poems **Jaume Subirana** and **Xavier Albertí**



THE PAPER KNIFE

For those of us who love literature, the world can be contained in a study with a few shelves packed with books, a comfortable armchair, a desk to write on and a couple of windows through which the daylight filters in. Our world, the study, is full of sounds and smells and colors and objects, full of stimuli, each with its own story and relevance. But now let's focus on one of them, just one, as Gabriel Ferrater, the poet, does:

Among the objects of the world, among the few
objects I have clung to, there is a paperknife:
a short ivory blade,
naked to my hand, which turns brown or pale
according to the light of days and places.
El lector (The Reader)

We are here today to propose to you that, among all the objects that fill the study of world literature, you let your eyes light for a few moments on this paper knife. Pick it up in your fingers; weigh it in your hand. It is not the largest object in the room, nor perhaps the first to catch your eye, nor perhaps the most valuable one, but its blade bears the memory of the gentle weight of centuries: the first treatise on verse in a Romance language; the first essays written in Europe in a language other than Latin by Blessed Ramon Llull, one of "God's fools" who used words to try to convert infidels; the memory of the first translation in verse of the Divine Comedy; of Pope Alexander VI's letters to his daughter Lucretia; of Tirant lo Blanc, the "finest novel in the world", according to Miguel de Cervantes; of Catalan folk songs compiled in the Romantic period; of the first translation of Nietzsche in Spain; of Salvador Dalí's postcards to his friends; of the many pages written, first from the trenches of the Spanish Civil War, and then later from exile. It is old, this paper knife. It is small, and sometimes gets lost among the great literatures stacked up on the desk in the study, or buried under canonical tomes but, somehow, it always finds its way back to our hand, settles in, and once again is of use to us. It is shaped like a knife, but what it tears open and pours into our hands are words: words in a language which, after eight long centuries, speaks of the world and all it contains, whether close up or far away. In his prologue to the poems of Gabriel Ferrater, Seamus Heaney suggests – in words applicable to Catalan poetry as a whole – that it is a poetry "in love with its own materiality but not altogether fulfilled by it. It is poetry convinced of its historical contingency but still insistent on its subjective rights".



Let's listen, just for a moment, to the paper knife. It will speak to us of painters and writers like Narcís Comadira, Perejaume and Miquel Barceló; of avant-garde pastry chefs like J.V. Foix or radicals like Joan Brossa; of Hellenists like Carles Riba; of contemporary troubadours like Enric Casasses; of exiled diplomats like Josep Carner; of unabashed Valencians like Vicent Andrés Estellés and visionary poets from the Balearic Islands like Blai Bonet. It speaks to us in the name of the prolific procession of Catalan poets over the last hundred years, of the multitude of Catalan writers today, of the stones on the peaks of the Pyrenees and the crystalline waters in the coves of Menorca; it speaks to us in the name of the sinuous shapes of Antoni Gaudí's works and the vivid red in the paintings of Joan Miró; in the name of the ripening fruit on the trees in the Segrià region and of the first baby tooth lost by the young son of the latest Ecuadorian immigrant to arrive in Barcelona. The paper knife, all this poetry, is now in our hands, waiting to be heard. It beats in our ears with the ancient blood of verse. We don't know exactly what it is trying to tell us, but we do know that it has something to say. Then we will turn back to the light of the days and the places and the other objects in the study, now with a small, yet palpable, new imprint of literature in the palm of our hand. Of Catalan literature, of literature belonging to all.

Jaume Subirana



Program

- **Laurie Anderson** reads *The People of the Villages* and *Look at the Name*, by **Perejaume**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Systems*, by **Pere Gimferrer**
- **Lou Reed** reads *All Brow*, by **Blai Bonet**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Defeat*, by **Joan Brossa**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Motto*, *Two Teeth*, and *Like the Murderer Returning to the Scene of the Crime*, by **Maria Mercè Marçal**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Of a Cactus*, by **Maria Antònia Salvà**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Poking About in the Joins and Cracks*, by **Maria-Mercè Marçal**
- **Lou Reed** reads *Nights That Make the Night*, by **Vicent Andrés Estellés**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Hawking*, by **Narcís Comadira**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Spiritual Canticle*, by **Josep Palau i Fabre**
- **Lou Reed** reads *First Love*, by **Joan Margarit**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Insolent Youth*, by **Francesc Parcerisas**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Words*, by **Miquel Martí i Pol**
- **Lou Reed** reads *Amèrica*, by **Enric Casasses**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Yellow Manifesto*, by **Salvador Dalí**, **Sebastià Gasch**, and **Lluís Montanyà**
- **Patti Smith** reads *When I Sleep, Then I See Clearly*, and *We Were Three...*, by **J. V. Foix**
- **Lou Reed** reads *Time Was*, *Autumn Room*, and *At Ease*, by **Gabriel Ferrater**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *People are Many*, *Trial Hymn in the Temple*, and *Beginning of Canticle in the Temple*, by **Salvador Espriu**
- **Patti Smith** reads *Faithful Heart*, and *If I'm Let*, by **Josep Carner**
- **Lou Reed** reads *Happy the Man*, by **Carles Riba**
- **Laurie Anderson** reads *Painterly Art*, and *Ideas*, by **Miquel Barceló**



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PEREJAUME (1957)
read by Laurie Anderson

La gent dels pobles...

La gent dels pobles veïns asseguren que, prop d'allà, hi ha una cova farcida de pigments que són els que afiguren tot allò on viuen, i que, cas que hi entrés algú i arribés a veure aquells pigments, veuria tots aquells verals i ell mateix tornar-se pintura.

Mireu el nom

Mireu el nom
posat en boca d'un que hi passa.
Mireu el lloc
en boca d'un que hi viu.
Té quasi d'herba la paraula
i l'aire va daurant-se i daurant-se
com un marc gegantí.

Si provàveu de parlar-li
amb paraules de les seves
veurieu l'aire que us entra als ulls
i com un arbre
la vista que us tremola.



The People of the Villages...

Translation by Graham Thomson

The people of the neighbouring villages insist that, nearby, there's a cave full of pigments that are what configures all there is where they live, and that if anyone was to go in there and managed to set eyes on those pigments, he would see the whole place for miles around and he himself turn into paint.

Look at the Name

Translation by Graham Thomson

Look at the name
in the mouth of one passing through.
Look at the place
in the mouth of one who lives there.
It's almost herb-like, the word,
and the air keeps on gilding and gilding
like a gigantic frame.

If you tried to speak to him
with his own words
you would see the air enter your eyes
and like a tree
your vision tremble.



PERE GIMFERRER (1945)
read by Patti Smith

Sistemes

La poesia és
un sistema de miralls
giratoris, lliscant amb l'harmonia,
desplaçant llums i ombres a l'emprovador: per què
el vidre esmerilat? Com parlant –de conversa
amb les tovalles i música suau– jo diria, estimada,
que aquest reflex, o l'altre, és el poema,
o n'és un dels aspectes: hi ha un poema possible
sobre la duquessa morta a Ekaterinenburg,
i quan es mou el sol vermell a les finestres, jo recordo
els seus ulls blaus... No ho sé, n'he passat tantes d'hores,
als trens de nit, tot llegint novel·les policíiques
(sols a la casa buida, obríem els armaris),
i una nit, anant cap a Berna, dos homes es besaren al meu departament
perquè era buit, o jo dormia, o era fosc
(una mà cerca l'altra, un cos l'altre)
i ara gira el cristall
i amaga aquest aspecte: el real i el fictici,
la convenció, és a dir, i les coses viscudes
l'experiència de la llum als boscos hivernals,
la dificultat de posar coherència –és un joc de miralls–,
els actes que es dissolen en la irrealitat,
els àcids que envaeixen velles fotografies,
el groc, la lepra, el rovell i la molsa que esborren les imatges,
el quitrà que empastifa les cares dels nois amb canotier,
tot allò que una tarda morí amb les bicicletes,
cromats vermells colgats a les cisternes,
a càmera lenta els cossos (a l'espai, com al temps) sota les aigües.
(Enfosquit com el fons d'un mirall esberlat, l'emprovador
és l'eix d'aquest poema.)



BLAI BONET (1926-1997)
read by Lou Reed

All Brow

– Què seria de l'home sense les bèsties?
– Si, en un moment, se n'anessin de la terra
totes les bèsties de la terra,
l'home cauria en una gran depressió...
– Recordo el dia en què ell ho digué
però recordant-ho. Semblava
que feia la cita d'un gran autor..
No existia res que el tragués
tant del clot i que l'encengués tant
com el fet de sentir anomenar
les bèsties com a éssers inferiors. L'enutjava
sentir parlar de bestialitat
en fets i accions que atenyen la persona,
sobretot persones que tenien la pegada
contudent, com els cops del campió de boxa
All Brow. Quan en parlava
el seu comentari sovint era
que en la literatura i en la boxa
s'empra el mateix llenguatge: l'estil.
N'All Brow es veia en claror amb abril
que el caràcter de l'art era la mentida,
una raça d'amor mesclat amb l'horror
perquè ser boxejador, negre i homoeròtic,
és una situació en la qual
el pitjor que hom pot fer és penedir-se...
Això més o menys devia bronzir
dins el cap i els sentiments d'All Brow,
quan Jean Cocteau s'enamorà apassionadament
d'ell i sense aturall va fer passes
fins que aconseguí que Cocó Xanel
els arreglés una cita a l'Hotel de Castilla,
on Cocteau no aconseguí res perquè n'All
era un dandy, enviava les camises
a planxar a Londres, li agradava
col·leccionar cavalls pura sang,
però volia que l'amor fos amb la bèstia
d'un garrut jovenet de barriada.
Si hagués quedat sense les bèsties, n'All Brown
també haguera caigut en una gran depressió
molt, molt, molt semblant a la cultura....

All Brow

Translation by Christopher Whyte

– What would become of us without the animals?
– If, at a certain point, every animal
that lives were to abandon the earth,
mankind would fall into a deep depression...
– I remember the day he said it,
like something he remembered,
as if quoting from a great writer.
Nothing got him quite so worked up
or made him so furious as when animals
were spoken of as inferior beings.
He hated it when a person got compared
to an animal because of something they did
or that happened, especially if,
like boxing champion All Brow,
they could knock you out in a one-er.
Talking about him, he often said
that literature and boxing use
exactly the same language: style.
All Brow was the living proof
that what matters in art is lying
because being a boxer, black and gay
means the very worst thing you can do
is say you're sorry...
So what was going on in his head
must have resembled what All Brow felt
when Jean Cocteau fell passionately
in love with him and couldn't stop
trying to get off with him until at last
he convinced Coco Chanel
to arrange a meeting at the Castille Hotel
where he got absolutely nowhere
because All was a dandy, he sent
his shirts to London to be ironed,
collecting purebred horses was his hobby
but when he made love, it had to be
with an animal, a young guy from the slums,
the kind you'd die for. If he'd been left
without any animals, All Brown too
would have fallen into a deep depression
practically indistinguishable from culture...



JOAN BROSSA (1919-1998)
read by Laurie Anderson

Derrota

El timó
dóna la direcció de la nau.
La muntanya és la ruïna d'una
pàtria capgirada: els edificis
van quedar a sota i els fonaments
enlaire.

A les ruïnes
jeu un poble
enterrat. Si escolteu
amb atenció arriba
de dintre la muntanya
una veu profunda
i apagada que
pregunta, que
pregunta
sempre.

Defeat

Translation by David H. Rosenthal

The rudder
gives direction to the ship.
The mountain is the ruin of a
country turned upside-down; the buildings
are underneath and their foundations
stick up.

 In the ruins
lies a buried people. If you listen
carefully you can hear
inside the mountain
a deep and
muffled voice
asking, always
asking.



MARIA-MERCÈ MARÇAL (1952-1998)
read by Patti Smith

Divisa

A l'atzar agraeixo tres dons: haver nascut dona,
de classe baixa i nació oprimida.

I el tèrbol atzar de ser tres voltes rebel.

Dues dents

Dues dents han deixat
un rastre de magrana
al meu pit, quan encara
tu no en tens per clavar-les
en allò que se't fon.

Com l'assassí que torna al lloc del crim

Com l'assassí que torna al lloc del crim
havent perdut memòria i oblit
i en el llindar troba qui creia mort
i se'n fa esclau sense saber per què
i es torna gos, i li vetlla el casal
contra la mort, contra aquest lladre absent
que pot robar-li el preu del seu rescat,
així tornava jo al lloc de l'amor.



Motto

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

I am grateful to fate for three gifts: to have been born a woman,
from the working class and an oppressed nation.

And the turbid azure of being three times a rebel.

Two Teeth

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

Two teeth have left
a trace of pomegranate
on my breast, when you still
have none to sink
into what is melting away.

Like the Murderer Returning to the Scene of the Crime

Translation by Christopher Whyte

Like the murderer returning to the scene of the crime,
having lost the memory and forgotten its loss,
who finds at the door the one he had thought dead
and, not knowing why, enslaved to him,
becomes the dog that guards his home
from death, the absent thief
that can steal the ransom,
that is how I returned to the love scene.



MARIA ANTÒNIA SALVÀ (1869-1958)
read by Laurie Anderson

D'un cactus

Com rèptil monstruós de pell clapada,
d'entranya llefiscosa, era ajocat
al seu racó bevent la sovellada.
De sobte, sa malícia desvetllada,
enrevisclant-se va esquerdar el test.
Enllà de l'hort, que se'n perdés el quest,
dalt una paret seca fou llançat,
i al cap de temps, damunt les pedres dures,
furgant per les llivanyes i juntures,
trobi el vell drac encara aferrissat.



Of a Cactus

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

Like a monstrous reptile with spotted skin,
with slimy entrails, it lay
in its corner drinking in the sunlight.
All at once, its malice awakened,
reviving, it cracked the flowerpot.
Beyond the orchard, to be lost track of,
it was hurled over an arid wall,
and after a time, upon the rugged stones,
poking among the crevices and seams,
I found the old dragon still raging and clinging.



MARIA-MERCÈ MARÇAL (1952-1998)
read by Patti Smith

Furgant per les llivanyes i juntures

Furgant per les llivanyes i juntures
d'aquesta paret seca, entre mac
i mac d'oblit, entre les pedres dures
de cega desmemòria que endures,
et sé. I em sé, en el mirall fidel
del teu poema, aferrissadament
clivellar pedra de silenci opac
dona rèptil, dona monstre, dona drac,
com el cactus, com tu, supervivent.



Poking About in the Joins and Cracks

Translation by Anna Crowe

Poking about in the joins and cracks
of this dry wall, between stone
and stone of oblivion, between the hard rocks
of blind forgetfulness that you endure,
I know you. And know myself, in the faithful mirror
of your poem, furiously
to split stone of opaque silence
reptile woman, monster woman, dragon woman,
like a cactus, like you, a survivor.



VICENT ANDRÉS ESTELLÉS (1924-1993)

read by Lou Reed

Les nits que van fent la nit

Voldria escriure, ara, un amable poema
parlant de certes coses que encara hi ha d'amables,
segons crec o m'han dit el veí del costat.
Vull ser amable, avui vull dir coses amables:
aniria per tota la casa a genollons
buscant coses amables, preguntant que avui em siguin
donades certes coses que siguin ben amables.
He perdut el costum de les coses amables;
ja se sap el que són les coses d'aquest món...
He perdut el costum, no sé on les he deixades,
és possible al cafè, és possible en un banc
d'un passeig qualsevol, és possible, és possible...
Vaja vosté a saber. Ara, però, és de nit
i francament no són hores d'anar buscant
coses amables, coses tendres, coses amables,
exactament: està tancat ara el cafè,
hi ha foscor al passeig, s'hi troben certes dones
que volen certes coses, estic cansat, no tinc
ganes de res de res, serà millor que em gite,
demà serà altre dia i ja se'm passarà
aquest desig, aquesta mania fulgurant
de les coses amables que m'ha vingut de sobte.
Que m'ha vingut de sobte. Vull dir: que m'ha vingut.

Nights that Make the Night

Translation by David H. Rosenthal

Now I'd like to write a nice poem
 and talk about certain things you still can find that are nice
 in my opinion, or according to the neighbour next door.
 I want to be nice, today I want to say nice things.
 I'd go through the whole house on my knees
 looking for nice things, praying that today I'd be given
 certain things that were really nice.
 I've gotten out of the habit of nice things;
 everyone knows what the things of this world are...
 I've lost the habit, I don't know where I left them,
 maybe at the café, maybe on a bench
 by some promenade, it's possible, it's possible...
 How can I know? But now it's night
 and frankly it's no time to go out searching
 for nice things, gentle things, nice things
 precisely. The café's closed now,
 the promenade is dark, you can find certain women
 who want certain things, I'm tired, I'm not in the mood
 to do anything, it's better to go to bed,
 tomorrow'll be another day and by then I'll be over
 this desire, this flaming mania
 for nice things that's suddenly come over me.
 That's suddenly come over me. I mean: that's come to me.



NARCÍS COMADIRA (1942)
read by Laurie Anderson

Falconeria

Ara sóc un falcó i sobre la mà m'aferro
del meu senyor. Respiro l'aire net del matí
i l'olor del vellut i les martes, la suor dels cavalls,
el fenc petjat, els vapors
que pugen de la terra.

Herbes i flors menudes, tapís gemat que veuré
des de dalt, quan en cercles, magníficent,
observi els meus dominis, la prada, els arbrissons,
el rierol, la llebre esmunyedissa.

I els cavalls, els gossos i el senyor,
amb els seus cavallers i el falconer major,
patges i servidors, tots iguals de petits,
repartits sobre el prat...

Ara el senyor m'ha dit: vull una llebre grossa,
flairosa de llentiscle (el meu senyor és poeta),
mentre m'acaronava el plomatge amb el dit.
Jo em sento emperador, enfilat a la mà del senyor,
amb la meva caputxa de cuir plena de cintes.

Hi ha moviment, xivarri, renills i piafar,
i els mossos de canilla que deslliguen i aquissen els gossos.

Ja s'acosta el moment, el senyor m'amilyaga,
vol una llebre grossa, flairosa de llentiscle
(jo també sóc poeta). El cor em bat amb força.

I ara, en aquests moments, jo sóc l'amo i senyor
del món i de la gent. Tots a dins del meu cercle,
pendents de mi, esperant com em perdo i retorno,
com el meu vol es va cenyint, calcula,
veu la llebre temorenca.

Els ulls són com sagetes, les urpes s'aguditzen
i un vertigen dolcíssim m'aclapara.

Cel i terra són u, arbres i núvols, l'herba i la pell
esquerpa de la llebre. No veig res, una força
se m'endú cap avall, cap al pou del no-res,
i baixo com un llamp. Per quina
voluntat em regeixo?

.../...

Hawking

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

Now I am a falcon and I clutch
my master's fist. I breathe in the fresh morning air
and the smell of velvet and sable, the sweat of horses,
the trampled hay, the steam
rising from the ground.

Grass and tiny flowers, a luxuriant tapestry I shall see
from aloft, when in circles, magnificent,
I view my dominions, the grassland, the dwarf trees,
the brook, the elusive hare.

And the horses, the spaniels, and my Lordship
with his knights and the great falconer,
the pages, the attendants, all equally dwarfish,
scattered throughout the meadow...

My Lord says to me: I want a large hare,
smelling of lentiscus (my Lord is a poet),
as he strokes my feathers with his fingers.
I feel an emperor, perched on my Lordship's fist,
in my leather hood fringed with streamers.

There is movement, the sound of strident voices, neighing and prancing
while the kennel-grooms unleash and urge on the dogs.

The moment is near, my Lord caresses me,
he wants a large hare, smelling of lentiscus
(I am a poet as well). My heart is pounding.
And now, at this point, I am the lord and master
of the world and the people. Everyone within my circle,
paying me undivided attention, expectant while I am lost
to sight and return, as my flight spirals, assesses,
spies the frightened hare.

My eyes are like arrows, my talons grow sharp
and a sweet giddiness overwhelms me.
Sky and earth are one, the trees and clouds, the grass and fur
of the skittish hare. I see nothing, a power
pulls me down, toward the pit of nothingness,
and I strike like lightning. By whose
will am I ruled?

.../...



.../...

¿Quina és la força obscura que se m'endú, quins fils
mouen les meves ales, quin foc
pot escalfar
tant la sang del meu cos?

Ara, a les urpes, ja hi tinc la llebre morta,
olorosa de terra i de llentiscle.
Tot s'ha acabat, ja s'ha ensorrat l'imperi.
El falconer major
em deixarà esquinçar un tros de fetge càlid...
Riurà el senyor amb els seus amics, després,
i amb el meu caputxot tot ple de cintes,
em sentiré ridícul.

Allò que fa oblidar-nos, dura sempre tan poc!



.../...

What dark power pulls me down, what strings
move my wings, what fire
is so able
to heat my body's blood?

Now, in my talons, I hold the dead hare,
smelling of earth and lentiscus.
It's all over, my empire has fallen.
The great falconer
will allow me to tear a piece of warm liver...
My Lord will laugh with his friends, afterwards,
in my hood fringed with streamers,
I shall feel ridiculous.

That which makes us forget ourselves, always lasts so little!



JOSEP PALAU I FABRE (1917)
read by Patti Smith

Cant Espiritual

No crec en tu, Senyor, però tinc tanta necessitat
de creure en tu, que sovint parlo i t'imploro
com si existissis.

Tinc tanta necessitat de tu, Senyor, i que siguis,
que arribo a creure en tu –i crec que crec en tu
quan no crec en ningú.

Però després em desperto, o penso que em
desperto, i m'avergonyeixo de la meva feblesa i et
detesto. I parlo contra tu que no ets ningú. I parlo
mal de tu com si fossis algú.

¿Quan, Senyor, estic despert, i quan sóc adormit?
¿Quan estic més despert i quan més adormit?
¿No serà tot un son i, despert i adormit, somni la
vida? ¿Despertaré algun dia d'aquest doble son i
viuré, lluny d'aquí, la veritable vida, on la vetlla i el
son siguin una mentida?

No crec en tu, Senyor, però si ets, no puc
donar-te el millor de mi si no és així: sinó dient-te
que no crec en tu. Quina forma d'amor més
estranya i més dura! Quin mal em fa no poder dir-te: crec.

No crec en tu, Senyor, però si ets, treu-me
d'aquest engany d'una vegada; fes-me veure ben
bé la teva cara! No em vulguis mal pel meu amor
mesquí. Fes que sens fi, i sense paraules, tot el meu
ésser pugui dir-te: Ets.



Spiritual Canticle

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

I do not believe in you, Lord, but I have such a need of believing in you that I often speak and plead with you as if you existed.

I have such a need of you, Lord, a need of your existing, that I come to believe in you – and believe that I believe in you when I believe in no one.

Yet afterwards I awaken, or think that I awaken, and I feel ashamed of my weakness and detest you. And I speak out against you who are no one. And I speak poorly of you as if you were someone.

When, Lord, am I awake, and when am I asleep? When am I most awake and when most asleep? Is it not all sleep and life, whether awake or asleep, a dream? Will I awaken some day from this double sleep and, far from here, lead the real life where sleeplessness and sleep are but a lie?

I do not believe in you, Lord, but if you exist, I cannot give you the best of me if it is not in this fashion: by telling you I do not believe in you. What a strange and harsh form of love! How it hurts me not to be able to tell you: I believe.

I do not believe in you, Lord, but if you exist, lead me away from this delusion once and for all; make me see your face clearly! Do not bear malice against me for my small-minded love. Enable my whole being, endlessly and wordlessly, to say to you: You exist.



JOAN MARGARIT (1938)
read by Lou Reed

Primer amor

A José Agustín Goytisolo

En la Girona trista dels set anys,
on els aparadors de la postguerra
tenien un color gris de penúria,
la ganiveteria era un esclat
de llum en els petits miralls d'acer.
Amb el front descansant damunt del vidre,
mirava una navalla llarga i fina,
bella com una estàtua de marbre.
Com que els de casa no volien armes,
vaig comprar-la en secret i, en caminar,
la sentia, pesant, dins la butxaca.
A vegades l'obria a poc a poc,
i sorgia la fulla, recta i prima,
amb la conventual fredor de l'arma.
Presència callada del perill:
vaig amagar-la, els trenta primers anys,
rere llibres de versos i, després,
dins un calaix, entre les teves calces
i entre les teves mitges.
Ara, a prop de complir els cinquanta-quatre,
torno a mirar-la, oberta al meu palmell,
tan perillosa com a la infantesa.
Sensual, freda. Més a prop del coll.

First Love

To José Agustín Goytisolo
Translation by Anna Crowe

In the dreary Girona of my seven-year-old self,
where post-war shop-windows
wore the greyish hue of scarcity,
the knife-shop was a glitter
of light in those small steel mirrors.
Pressing my forehead against the glass,
I gazed at a long, slender clasp-knife,
beautiful as a marble statue.
Since no one at home approved of weapons,
I bought it secretly, and as I walked along,
I felt the heavy weight of it, inside my pocket.
From time to time I would open it gradually,
and the blade would spring out, slim and straight,
with the convent chill that a weapon has.
Hushed presence of risk:
I hid it, those first sixty years,
behind books of poetry and, later,
inside a drawer, in amongst your knickers
and amongst your stockings.
Now, almost fifty-four,
I look at it again, lying open in my palm,
just as dangerous as when I was a child.
Sensual, cold. Nearer my neck.



FRANCESC PARCERISAS (1944)
read by Laurie Anderson

Joventut proçaç

Ara els veus com surten de les classes,
espurnejants els ulls amb crits d'eufòria,
entresuats ells, les noies amb descarats pits com llimones,
i t'atures a mirar-te'ls, meravelladament confós,
tot pensant què és el que t'atreu, encara,
d'aquesta ostentació, boja i proçaç, de joventut.
Ja ho saps, tu seguiràs el teu camí
i ells passaran d'una revolada, sense veure't,
ràfega de llavis molsuts i cossos bruns,
per sempre irrecuperables, riallers i exultants,
deixant-te sols el teu desig, la sempre inútil enveja.
¿És la luxúria de la ment que amanyaga
la dels cossos, o saber que encara esperen
l'agredolça revelació de l'experiència?
¿O és comprendre, justament, que no hi ha res
per evitar que també ells caiguin, lentament,
al vell parany d'anar-se resignant al bo i dolent
mentre creuen, enganyats, que es comencen a conèixer?



Insolent Youth

Translation by D. Sam Abrams

Now that you see them leaving the classrooms,
their eyes sparkling with cries of euphoria,
the boys in mild sweat, girls with blatant lemon-shaped breasts,
you stop to behold them, wonderingly bewildered,
as you think of what it is about this wild and brazen
show of youth that still calls your attention.
You already know, you'll continue down the road you've taken
while they pass by, in a flash, without seeing you,
a gust of fleshy lips and tan bodies,
forever unredeemable, smiling and triumphant,
leaving you only your desire and unavailing envy.
Is it the lust of the mind that fondles
their lustful bodies, or knowing they have yet to grasp
the bittersweet revelation of experience?
Or is it understanding, precisely, that there is nothing
to prevent them from falling slowly, the same as you,
into the age-old trap of resigning themselves to good and evil
while they think, though misled, they're getting to know themselves.



MIQUEL MARTÍ I POL (1929-2003)
read by Patti Smith

Les paraules

Les paraules no sempre volen dir el mateix.

La distància d'un lloc a un altre és variable.

Tu i jo no podem seure a la mateixa cadira.

I ara, de genolls en terra,
que tothom demani perdó.

Només l'ordre garanteix la justícia.

La moral és la salvaguarda de la llibertat.

Tu i jo –no te n'adones?–
no podem seure a la mateixa cadira.



Words

Translation by David H. Rosenthal

Words don't always mean the same thing.

The distance from one place to another is variable.

You and I can't sit in the same chair.
And now, on their knees,
let everyone beg forgiveness.

Only order guarantees justice.

Morality is the safeguard of freedom.

You and I – hadn't you heard? –
can't sit in the same chair.



ENRIC CASASSES (1951)
read by Lou Reed

Amèrica

Amèrica és al poble del costat,
qualsevol poble petit de Catalunya:
xiquets tiren pedrades als gitanos,
la gent fa mala cara als forasters,
els negres són...són negres,
els pobres s'hi fan rics,
els joves fan fortuna
i a l'aire de les últimes casetes
comença el paradís
que val per tots.

Allà hi pots estar sol i en companyia,
pots fer cremar pebrots i l'albergínia,
canten els grills,
les races van mesclant-se,
s'hi pot plorar,
puc posar-te els mitjons,
recollirem, recollirem, recollirem
i els pobles es barregen per amor.

De nit al bar individus estranys
vinguts d'enlloc, que no saben on són,
marquen la llei del món que ara s'inventa,
americans de Santander, de Barna
i els catalans, els sioux i els de Mèxic
posseiran una altra forma de petroli
que encara no té nom ni en tindrà mai
per molt que tu, pastora, em neguis
la gasolina santa.

Amèrica és el poble del costat
a Granollers, l'Ametlla, les Borges Blanques,
a Mataró, a Morella, a Cadaqués
i a Montuïri menjant xocolata.

America

Translation by Anna Crowe

America is the neighbouring village,
any small village in Catalonia:
youngsters throw stones at gypsies,
people scowl at strangers,
the blacks are...are blacks,
the poor become rich there,
the young make their fortune
and in the fresh air beside the last few huts
there begins a heaven
which is open to everyone.

There you can be alone and with others,
you can roast green peppers and the aubergine,
crickets sing,
races mingle,
weeping is permitted there,
I can help you on with your socks,
we will gather, we will gather, we will gather
and the villages come together in their love.

Evenings in the bar strange individuals
come from nowhere, who don't know where they are,
lay down the law for the world now being invented,
Americans from Santander, from Barcelona
and the Catalans, Sioux and Mexicans
will own a new kind of petroleum
that has as yet no name nor will have ever
however often, shepherdess, you refuse
to serve me with the sacred gas.

America is the neighbouring village
in Granollers, Ametlla, Borges Blanques,
in Mataró, Morella, Cadaqués,
and in Montuiri eating chocolate.



**SALVADOR DALÍ (1904-1989), SEBASTIÀ GASCH (1897-1980),
LLUÍS MONTANYÀ (1903-1985)** read by Laurie Anderson

Manifest Groc

Del present **MANIFEST** hem eliminat tota cortesia en la nostra actitud. Inútil qualsevol discussió amb els representants de l'actual cultura catalana, negativa artísticament per bé que eficaç en d'altres ordres. La transigència o la correcció condueixen als delinqüents i lamentables confusionismes de totes les valors, a les més irrespirables atmosferes espirituals, a la més perniciosa de les influències. Exemple: "La Nova Revista". La violenta hostilitat, per contra, situa netament les valors i les posicions i crea un estat d'esperit higiènic.

HEM ELIMINAT	tota argumentació	} Existeix una enorme bibliografia i tot l'esforç dels artistes d'avui per a suplir tot això.
HEM ELIMINAT	tota literatura	
HEM ELIMINAT	tota lírica	
HEM ELIMINAT	tota filosofia a favor de les nostres idees	
ENS LIMITEM	a la més objectiva enumeració de fets	
ENS LIMITEM	a assenyalar el grotesc i tristíssim espectacle de la intel·lectualitat catalana d'avui, tancada en un ambient resclosit i putrefacte.	
PREVENIM	de la infecció als encara no contagiats. Afer d'estricta asèpsia espiritual.	
SABEM	que res de nou anem a dir. Ens consta, però, que és la base de tot el nou que avui hi ha i de tot el nou que tingui possibilitats de crear-se.	
VIVIM	una època nova, d'una intensitat poètica imprevista.	
EL MAQUINISME	ha revolucionat el món.	
EL MAQUINISME	–antítesi del circumstancialment indispensable futurisme– ha verificat el canvi més profund que ha conegut la humanitat.	
UNA MULTITUD	anònima – antiartística – col·labora amb el seu esforç quotidià en l'afirmació de la nova època, tot i vivint d'acord amb el seu temps.	

.../...



Yellow Manifesto

Translation by Andrew Langdon-Davies

In the present MANIFESTO we have eliminated all courtesy from our attitude. Any discussion with representatives of today's Catalan culture is pointless, as they are negative artistically though efficient in other orders. Compromise or politeness lead to the regrettable, deliquescent confusion of all values, to quite unbreathable spiritual atmospheres and to the most pernicious of influences. Example: 'La Nova Revista'. Violent hostility, on the other hand, clearly establishes values and standpoints and creates a hygienic state of spirit.

WE HAVE ELIMINATED	all arguments	} an enormous bibliography as well as all the efforts of today's artists take the place of all of this.
WE HAVE ELIMINATED	all literature	
WE HAVE ELIMINATED	all lyricism	
WE HAVE ELIMINATED	all philosophy	
	In favour of our ideas	

WE MERELY	make the most objective enumeration of facts
WE MERELY	point out the grotesque and sorry spectacle of today's Catalan intellectuals, enclosed as they are in a stifling putrid atmosphere.

WE WARN	those who are not yet infected against contagion. A matter of strict spiritual asepsis.
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WE KNOW	that we are not going to say anything new. We realise, though, that this it is the basis for everything newthere is today and everything new that may possibly be created.
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WE LIVE	in a new age, of an unforeseen poetic intensity.
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MACHINISM	has revolutionized the world
MACHINISM	– the antithesis of circumstantially indispensable futurism – has verified the most profound change humanity has ever seen.

A MULTITUDE	– anonymous and anti-artistic – is collaborating with its daily effort in the affirmation of the new age, by living in consonance with its age.
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.../...



.../...

**UN ESTAT D'ESPERIT POST-MAQUINISTA
HA ESTAT FORMAT**

ELS ARTISTES d'avui han creat un art nou d'acord amb aquest estat d'esperit. D'acord amb llur època.

**ACÍ, PERÒ, ES CONTINUA
PASTURANT IDÍL·LICAMENT**

LA CULTURA actual de Catalunya és inservible per a l'alegria de la nostra època. Res de més perillós, més fals i més adúlterador.

**PREGUNTEM
ALS INTEL·LECTUALS CATALANS:**

– De què us ha servit la Fundació Bernat Metge, si després heveu de confondre la Grècia antiga amb les ballarines pseudoclàssiques?

AFIRMEM que els sportsmen estan més a prop de l'esperit de Grècia que els nostres intel·lectuals.

AFIGIREM que un sportsman verge de nocions artístiques i de tota erudició està més a la vora i és més apte per a sentir l'art d'avui i la poesia d'avui, que no els intel·lectuals, miops i carregats d'una preparació negativa.

PER NOSALTRES Grècia es continua en l'acabat numèric d'un motor d'avió, en el teixit antiartístic d'anònima manufactura anglesa destinat al golf, en el nu en el music-hall americà.

ANOTEM que el teatre ha deixat d'existir per a uns quant i gairebé per tothom.

ANOTEM que els concerts, conferències i espectacles corrents avui entre nosaltres, acostumen a ésser sinònims de llocs irrespirables i avorridíssims.

PER CONTRA nous fets d'intensa alegria i jovialitat reclamen l'atenció dels joves d'avui.

.../...

.../...

A POST-MACHINIST STATE OF SPIRIT HAS BEEN FORMED

ARTISTS today have created a new art in keeping with this state of spirit. In keeping with their age.

HERE, THOUGH, PEOPLE CONTINUE TO GRAZE IDYLICALLY

CULTURE in Catalonia today is of does no service to the happiness of our age. Nothing could be falsier or more adulterating.

WE ASK CATALAN INTELLECTUALS

'Of what use is the Fundació Bernat Metge to you, if you then confuse ancient Greece with pseudo-classical dancers?'

WE STATE that sportsmen come closer to spirit of Greece than our intellectuals.

WE WOULD ADD that a sportsman free of artistic notions and all erudition is closer to and more suited to feeling today's art and today's poetry than short-sighted intellectuals with their burden of negative training.

FOR US Greece lives on in the numerical results of an aeroplane engine, in the anti-artistic, anonymously manufactured English cloth destined for golf, in the nude and in the American music-hall.

WE NOTE that the theatre has ceased to exist for some and for almost everyone.

WE NOTE that the concerts, talks and shows common amongst us nowadays are usually bywords for stifling places that are as boring as can be.

OPPOSING THIS new events on intense joy and joviality demand the attention of today's youth.

.../...



.../...

HI HA el cinema
HI HA l'estadi, la boxa, el rugby, el tennis i els mil esports
HI HA la música popular d'avui: el jazz i la dansa actual
HI HA el saló de l'automòbil i de l'aeronàutica
HI HA els jocs a les platges
HI HA els concursos de bellesa a l'aire lliure
HI HA la desfilada de maniquins
HI HA el nu sota l'electricitat del music-hall
HI HA la música moderna
HI HA l'autòdrom
HI HA les exposicions d'art dels artistes moderns
HI HA encara, una gran enginyeria i uns magnífics
transatlàntics
HI HA una arquitectura d'avui
HI HA útils, objectes, mobles d'època actual
HI HA la literatura moderna
HI HA els poetes moderns
HI HA el teatre modern
HI HA el gramòfon, que és una petita màquina
HI HA l'aparell de fotografiar, que és una altra petita
màquina
HI HA diaris de rapidíssima i vastíssima informació
HI HA enciclopèdies d'una erudició extraordinària
HI HA la ciència en una gran activitat
HI HA la crítica, documentada i orientadora
HI HA etc., etc., etc.
HI HA finalment, una orella immòbil sobre un petit fum dret.

DENUNCIEM la influència sentimental dels llocs comuns racials
de Guimerà

DENUNCIEM la sensibleria malaltissa servida per l'Orfeó Català,
amb el seu repertori tronat de cançons popular
adaptades i adulterades per la gent més
absolutament negada per a la música, i àdhuc, de
composicions original. (Pensem amb l'optimisme del
cor dels Revelers americans).

.../...

.../...

THERE IS the cinema
THERE IS the stadium, boxing, rugby, tennis and thousand sports
THERE IS today's popular music: jazz and modern dancing
THERE ARE motor shows and aeronautic shows
THERE ARE games on the beach
THERE ARE open-air beauty contests
THERE ARE fashion parades
THERE IS the nude beneath the electricity in the music-hall
THERE IS modern music
THERE IS the motor racing track
THERE ARE exhibitions of art by modern artists
THERE ARE also, great engineering and magnificent ocean liners
THERE IS an architecture today
THERE ARE appliances, objects, furniture of the present age
THERE IS modern literature
THERE ARE modern poets
THERE IS modern theatre
THERE IS the gramophone, which is a small machine
THERE IS the photographic apparatus, which is another small machine
THERE ARE newspapers with the quickest and most enormous amounts of information
THERE ARE encyclopaedias of extraordinary erudition
THERE IS science in great activity
THERE ARE informed and guiding critics
THERE IS etc., etc., etc.
THERE IS finally, an ear, motionless, on a small upright smoke

WE DENOUNCE the sentimental influence of Guimerà's racial commonplaces
WE DENOUNCE the unhealthy sentimentality served up by the Orfeo Català, with its worn-out repertory of popular songs adapted and adulterated by the people with the least feeling for music or even for original compositions. (We are thinking of the optimism of the singing of the American 'Revellers').

.../...



.../...

DENUNCIEM la manca absoluta de joventut dels nostres joves
DENUNCIEM la manca absoluta de decisió i d'audàcia
DENUNCIEM la por als nous fets, a les paraules, al risc del ridícul
DENUNCIEM el soporisme de l'ambient podrit de les penyes i personalismes barrejats a l'art.
DENUNCIEM l'absoluta indocumentació dels crítics respecte l'art d'avui i d'ahir
DENUNCIEM els joves que pretenen repetir l'antiga pintura
DENUNCIEM els joves que pretenen imitar l'antiga literatura
DENUNCIEM l'arquitectura d'estil
DENUNCIEM l'art decoratiu que no sigui l'estandaritzat
DENUNCIEM els pintors d'arbres torts
DENUNCIEM la poesia catalana actual, feta dels més rebregats tòpics maragallians
DENUNCIEM les metzines artístiques per a ús infantil, tipus: *Jordi* (Per a l'alegria i comprensió dels nois, res més adequat que Rousseau, Picasso, Chagall...)
DENUNCIEM la psicologia de les noies que canten: *Rosó, Rosó...*
DENUNCIEM la psicologia de les nois que canten: *Rosó, Rosó...*

FINALMENT ENS RECLAMEM DELS GRANS ARTISTES D'AVUI, dins les més diverses tendències i categories:

PICASSO, GRIS, OZENFANT, CHIRICO, JOAN MIRÓ, LIPCHITZ, BRANCUSI, ARP, LE CORBUSIER, REVERDY, TRISTAN TZARA, PAUL ELUARD, LOUIS ARAGON, ROBERT DESNOS, JEAN COCTEAU, GARCÍA LORCA, STRAWINSKY, MARITAIN, RAYNAL, ZERVOS, ANDRÉ BRETON. ETC., ETC.

SALVADOR DALÍ

SEBASTIÀ GASCH

LLUÍS MONTANYÀ

Barcelona, març 1928

.../...

WE DENOUNCE the absolute lack of youth of our young people
WE DENOUNCE the absolute lack of decision and daring
WE DENOUNCE the fear of new facts, of words, of the risk of
ridicule
WE DENOUNCE the lethargy of the rotten atmosphere of the
cliques and personality cults mixed up with art
WE DENOUNCE the critics' absolute lack of information on the
art of today and the art of yesterday
WE DENOUNCE young people who try to repeat old painting
WE DENOUNCE young people who try to imitate old literature
WE DENOUNCE style architecture
WE DENOUNCE decorative art that is not standardized
WE DENOUNCE painters of crooked trees
WE DENOUNCE the Catalan poetry of today, made up of the most
time-worn clichés from Maragall
WE DENOUNCE artistic poison for use by children, such as 'Jordi'.
(For the happiness and comprehension of boys
and girls, nothing is more suitable than
Rousseau, Picasso, Chagall...)
WE DENOUNCE the psychology of girls who sing: 'Rosó, Rosó...'.
WE DENOUNCE the psychology of boys who sing: 'Rosó, Rosó...'.
WE DENOUNCE

FINALLY WE ACCLAIM THE GREAT ARTISTS OF TODAY, in
the most diverse trends and categories:

PICASSO, GRIS, OZENFANT, CHIRICO, JOAN MIRÓ, LIPCHITZ, BRAN-
CUSI, ARP, LE CORBUSSIER, REVERDY, TRISTAN TZARA, PAUL
ELUARD, LOUIS ARAGON, ROBERT DESNOS, JEAN COCTEAU,
GARCÍA LORCA, STRAVINSKY, MARITAIN, RAYNAL, ZERVOS, ANDRÉ
BRETON, ETC., ETC.

SALVADOR DALÍ

SEBASTIÀ GASCH

LLUÍS MONTANYÀ

Barcelona, March 1928



J.V. FOIX (1893-1987)
read by Patti Smith

És quan dormo que hi veig clar

A Joana Givanel

És quan plou que ballo sol
Vestit d'algues, or i escata,
Hi ha un pany de mar al revolt
I un tros de cel escarlata,
Un ocell fa un giravolt
I treu branques una mata,
El casalot del pirata
És un ample gira-sol.
És quan plou que ballo sol
Vestit d'algues, or i escata.

És quan ric que em veig gepic
Al bassal de sota l'era,
Em vesteixo d'home antic
I empaito la masovera,
I entre pineda i garric
Planto la meva bandera;
Amb una agulla saquera
Mato el monstre que no dic.
És quan ric que em veig gepic
Al bassal de sota l'era.

És quan dormo que hi veig clar
Foll d'una dolça metzina,
Amb perles a cada mà
Visc al cor d'una petxina,
Só la font del comellar
I el jaç de la salvatgina,
– O la lluna que s'afina
En morir carena enllà.
Es quan dormo que hi veig clar
Foll d'una dolça metzina.

When I Sleep, Then I See Clearly

Translation by David H. Rosenthal

To Joana Givanel

When it rains I dance alone
Dressed in algae, gold, and fishscales.
There's a stretch of sea at the turning
And a piece of scarlet sky.
A bird whirls in flight
And a bush brings forth branches,
The pirate's old mansion
Is a broad sunflower.
When it rains I dance alone
Dressed in algae, gold, and fishscales.

When I laugh I look hunchbacked
In the pool beneath the threshing floor.
I dress like an old gentleman,
I chase the custodian's wife,
And between pine grove and oak
I plant my flag;
With a sack-needle I kill
The monster I never name.
When I laugh I look hunchbacked
In the pool beneath the threshing floor.

When I sleep, then I see clearly
Maddened by sweet poison
With pearls in both hands
I live in a shellfish's heart,
I'm a fountain on the canyon floor
And a wild beast's bed,
– Or the waning moon
As it dies beyond the ridge.
When I sleep, then I see clearly
Maddened by sweet poison.



Érem tres, érem dos, era jo sol, érem ningú

A Rosa Leveroni

Érem tres, jups, al foc de les veremes,
amb mar als ulls i vinassa a les mans,
quan fuma el rec a la sal de les selves
i un plor d'infant espurneja al serrat.

Érem dos, drets, al rec de les estrelles,
el cor sagnós, sense fona ni dards,
quan crema l'erm i sangloten les breees
als clots latents a les feixes dels fars.

Era jo sol, ombrós entre ombres velles
figuratiu d'una altra ombra a l'escar
on amarina, entre xarxes esteses,
el son de tots en febrejants foscants.

Érem ningú, fullats per les tenebres
quan plou la por en els pètals dels aigualls
i l'altre, el pur, llibert d'arjau i veles
salpa, vident, cap al clarós Instant.



J.V. FOIX read by Patti Smith

We Were Three, We Were Two, It Was Me Alone, We Were None...

Translation by David H. Rosenthal.

To Rosa Leveroni

We were three, our heads down, in the darkness of vintages,
With the sea in our eyes and wine-dregs on our hands,
When the canal starts smoking in the forest's salt
And a child's cry sparkles upon the mountain.

We were two, standing on the rock of stars,
Our hearts bloody, without darts or sling,
When the wasteland starts burning and the tar begins to sob
In the latent deeps of lighthouse furrows.

It was me alone, a shade among old shadows,
Representing another shadow, on the beach
Where, among spread nets, the sleep of all
Signs on in the feverish darkness.

We were none, robed in leaves of darkness
When fear rains on the petals of marshes
And the other, the Pure, freed from rudder and sails
Sets out, watchfully, towards the brilliant Instant.



GABRIEL FERRATER (1922-1972)

read by Lou Reed

Temps enrera

Deixa'm fugir d'aquí, i tornar al seu temps.
Trobem-nos altre cop al lloc de sempre.
Veig el cel blanc, la negra passarel·la
de ferros prims, i l'herba humil en terra
de carbó, i sento el xiscle de l'exprès.
L'enorme tremolor ens passa a la vora
i ens hem de parlar a crits. Ho deixem córrer
i em fa riure que rius i que no et sento.
Et veig la brusa gris de cel, el blau
marí de la faldilla curta i ampla
i el gran foulard vermell que duus al coll.
La bandera del teu país. Ja t'ho vaig dir.
Tot és com aquell dia. Van tornant
les paraules que ens dèiem. I ara, veus,
torna aquell mal moment. Sense raó,
callem. La teva mà sofreix, i fa
com aleshores: un vol vacil·lant
i l'abandó, i el joc amb el so trist
del timbre de la bicicleta. Sort
que ara, com aquell dia, uns passos ferris
se'ns tiren al damunt, i l'excessiva
cançó dels homes verds, cascats d'acer,
ens encercla, i un crit imperiós,
com l'or maligne d'una serp, se'ns dreça
inesperat, i ens força a amagar el cap
a la falda profunda de la por
fins que s'allunyen. Ja ens hem oblidat
de nosaltres. Tornem a ser feliços
perquè s'allunyen. Aquest moviment
sense record, ens porta a retrobar-nos,
i som feliços de ser aquí, tots dos,
i és igual si callem. Podem besar-nos.
Som joves. No sentim cap pietat
pels silencis passats, i tenim pors
dels altres, que ens distreuen de les nostres.
Baixem per l'avinguda, i a cada arbre
que ens cobreix d'ombra espessa, tenim fred,
i anem de fred en fred, sense pensar-hi.

Time Was

Translation by Arthur Terry

Let me escape into your old domain.
Our ghosts still drift about the usual place.
I see the winter sky, the metal footbridge
with its blackened struts, the scurf of grass
along the burnt-up track. I hear the express whistle.
Its gathering thunder rocks the ground we stand on
till we have to shout. We watch it pass.
Your soundless laughter sets me laughing too.
I see your dove-grey blouse, the blue
of your short flared skirt, the red scarf bunched
around your neck, the one I used to call
your country's flag.
All's as it was that day. The words we said
come back, and now, the one bad moment.
Something has silenced us. You've hurt your hand.
Remember how it fluttered and hung limp,
nervously fingering your cycle bell.
It's just as well we're interrupted.
Now, as before, the tramp of metal heels,
the outsize chant of men in battle dress,
steel-helmeted, surrounds us. A command
darts out like the savage glitter of a snake,
and we hide our faces in the lap of fear
till they have passed. Now we've forgotten
how we were: their unreflecting movement
restores us to ourselves, and we are glad
to be together in this place, not caring if we speak.
So we may kiss. We're young: those distant silences
have no authority;
the fear of others kills our private fears.
Freewheeling down the avenue, we feel the cold
as each tree spreads its heavy mass of shade.
We glide from chill to chill, unconsciously.



Cambra de la tardor

La persiana, no del tot tancada, com
un esglai que es reté de caure a terra,
no ens separa de l'aire. Mira, s'obren
trenta-set horitzons rectes i prims,
però el cor els oblida. Sense enyor
se'ns va morint la llum, que era color
de mel, i ara és color d'olor de poma.
Que lent el món, que lent el món, que lenta
la pena per les hores que se'n van
de pressa. Diques, te'n recordaràs
d'aquesta cambra?

“Me l'estimo molt.

Aquelles veus d'obriers – Què són?”

Paletes

manca una casa a la mançana.

“Canten,

i avui no els sento. Criden, riuen,
i avui que callen em fa estrany.”

Que lentes

les fulles roges de les veus, que incertes
quan vénen a colgar-nos. Adormides,
les fulles dels meus besos van colgant
els recers del teu cos, i mentre oblides
les fulles altes de l'estiu, els dies
oberts i sense besos, ben al fons
el cos recorda: encara
tens la pell mig del sol, mig de la lluna.

Autumn Room

Translation by Arthur Terry

The blind not fully closed, like a sudden fear
held back from falling, does not separate
us from the open air. Look, there are
thirty-seven neatly ruled horizons,
yet the heart dismisses them. Without regret
the light recedes, the honey-coloured light
is now the colour of the scent of apples.
How slow the world, how slow the world, how slow
one's grief for the hours that quickly slip away.
Will you recall this room? "I'm fond of it.
What are those workmen's voices?"

Builder's men.

The block still lacks one house.

"They sing,
but today I hear no sound. They shout and laugh,
and now they're silent it seems strange."

How slow

the red leaves of the voices, how uncertainly
they come to cover us. As if in sleep,
the leaves of my kisses cover by degrees
your body's secret hiding places and,
while you forget the tall midsummer leaves,
the expanse of days we didn't kiss, deep down
the body recollects: your skin
retains one half of sun, one half of moon.



Oci

Ella dorm. L'hora que els homes
ja s'han despertat, i poca llum
entra encara a ferir-los.
Amb ben poc en tenim prou. Només
el sentiment de dues coses:
la terra gira, i les dones dormen.
Conciliats, fem via
cap a la fi del món. No ens cal
fer res per ajudar-lo.



At Ease

Translation by Arthur Terry

She is asleep. At this hour
men are already awake, though as yet
only a little light strikes in to them.
A little suffices: the awareness
merely, of two things:
the earth revolves, and women sleep.
Assenting, we travel on
to end of the world. We need
do nothing to assist it.



SALVADOR ESPRIU (1913-1985)
read by Laurie Anderson

Diversos són els homes...

Diversos són els homes i diverses les parles,
i han convingut molts noms a un sol amor.

La vella i fràgil plata esdevé tarda
parada en la claror damunt els camps.
La terra, amb paranyes de mil fines orelles,
ha captivat els ocells de les cançons de l'aire.

Sí, comprèn-la i fes-la teva, també,
des de les oliveres,
l'alta i senzilla veritat de la presa veu del vent:
"Diverses són les parles i diversos els homes,
i convindran molts noms a un sol amor."



People are Many...

Translation by Magda Bogin

People are many and many are their tongues,
and many names have run into a single love.

The old fragile silver becomes an afternoon
suspended in the glow above the fields.
In snares of a thousand gentle ears
the earth has caught the birds of the air's song.

Yes, understand and make yours
from the olive groves
the high, simple truth of the wind's trapped voice:
"People are many and many are their tongues,
and many names are needed for a single love."



Assaig de càntic en el temple

Oh, que cansat estic de la meva
covarda, vella, tan salvatge terra,
i com m'agradaria d'allunyar-me'n,
nord enllà,
on diuen que la gent és neta
i noble, culta, rica, lliure,
desvetllada i feliç!
Aleshores, a la congregació, els germans dirien
desaprovant: "Com l'ocell que deixa el niu,
així l'home que se'n va del seu indret",
mentre jo, ja ben lluny, em riuria
de la llei i de l'antiga saviesa
d'aquest meu àrid poble.
Però no he de seguir mai el meu somni
i em quedaré aquí fins a la mort.
Car sóc també molt covard i salvatge
i estimo a més amb un
desesperat dolor
aquesta meva pobra,
bruta, trista, dissortada pàtria.

Trial Hymn in the Temple

Translation by Magda Bogin

Oh, how tired I am of my
craven old brutish land,
and how I'd like to get away from it
to the north,
where they say people are clean
and noble, learned, rich, free
wide-awake and happy.
Then, in the congregation, the brothers would say
disapprovingly: "Like a bird who leaves the nest
is that man who forsakes his place,"
while I, now far away, would laugh
at the law and ancient wisdom
of this, my arid people.
But I must never follow my dream
and I'll stay here till I die.
For I'm craven and brutish too.
And what's more I love, with a
desperate grief,
this my poor,
dirty, sad, unlucky homeland.



Inici de càntic en el temple

A Raimon, amb el meu agraït aplaudiment.

Homenatge a Salvat-Papasseit.

Ara digueu: “La ginesta floreix,
arreu als camps hi ha vermell de roselles.
Amb nova falç comencem a segar
el blat madur i, amb ell, les males herbes.”
Ah, joves llavis desclosos després
de la foscor, si sabíeu com l'alba
ens ha trigat, com és llarg d'esperar
un alçament de llum en la tenebra!
Però hem viscut per salvar-vos els mots,
per retornar-vos el nom de cada cosa,
perquè seguíssiu el recte camí
d'accés al ple domini de la terra.
Vàrem mirar ben al lluny del desert,
davallàvem al fons del nostre somni.
Cisternes seques esdevenen cims
pujats per esglaons de lentes hores.
Ara digueu: “Nosaltres escoltem
les veus del vent per l'alta mar d'espigues.”
Ara digueu: “Ens mantindrem fidels
per sempre més al servei d'aquest poble.”



Beginning of Canticle in the Temple

Translation by Magda Bogin

To Raimon, with my grateful applause.

Homage to Salvat-Papasseit.

Now say: "The broom tree blooms,
everywhere the fields are red with poppies.
With new scythes we'll thresh
the ripened wheat and weeds."
Ah, young lips parting after dark,
if you only knew how dawn
delayed us, how long we had to wait
for light to rise in the gloom!
But we have lived to save your words,
to return you the name of every thing,
so that you'd stay on the straight path
that leads to the mastery of earth.
We looked beyond the desert,
plumbed the depth of our dreams,
turned dry cisterns into peaks
scaled by the long steps of time.
Now say: "We hear the voices
of the wind on the high sea of crested grain."
Now say: "We shall be ever faithful
to the people of this land."



JOSEP CARNER (1884-1970)
read by Patti Smith

Cor fidel

A una dolor que va al delà del seny
fa només l'Impossible cara tendra.-
El pur palau esdevingué pedreny:
els murs són aire, el teginat és cendra.

I, lladre d'aquest lloc desposseït,
palpant, caient, a poc a poc alçant-se,
el descoratjament roda en la nit,
rapisser del record i la frisança.

Jo sé d'on ve l'inesgotable foc
que animarà la morta polseguera.-
Veig l'últim monument en l'enderroc.

Jo pujaré, sense replans d'espera,
cap al camí de l'alba fugissera
pel tros d'escala que no mena enlloc.

Si em vaga...

Viuré, si em vaga encar de viure,
supervivent d'un cant remot.

Viuré amb la cella corrugada
contra les ires, contra el llot.

Viuré dreçant-me com un jutge,
només mirant, sense dir mot,

com la paret en el seu sòtol,
com una pedra en el seu clot.



Faithful Heart

Translation by Pearse Hutchinson

To a grief that goes beyond sense
only the Impossible turns a gentle face.
The pure palace became a heap of stones,
the walls air, the panels ash.

Marauder in that place of dispossession,
groping, stumbling, slowly straightening up,
discouragement roams the night,
plundering excitement and memory.

I know from where the inexhaustible fire
will come to animate the lifeless dust.
I see the final monument in ruins.

And I shall climb, with no resting-stages,
up to the highroad of runaway dawn
by what's left of the stair that leads nowhere.

If I'm Let...

Translation by Pearse Hutchinson

I'll go on living, if I'm let,
as one surviving a distant song.

I'll go on living, with brows frowning
against anger and mud.

I'll live straight-backed as a judge,
merely looking, not speaking,

like a wall in its patten,
like a stone in its rut.



CARLES RIBA (1893-1959)

read by Lou Reed

“Feliç qui ha viscut...”

“Uns wiegen lassen, wie Auf schwankem Kahne der See.”

Holderlin

Feliç qui ha viscut dessota un cel estrany
i la seva pau no es mudava;
i qui d'uns ulls d'amor sotjant la gorga brava
no hi ha vist terrejar l'engany.

I qui els seus dies l'un per la vàlua de l'altre
estima, com les parts iguals
d'un tresor mesurat: i qui no va a l'encalç
del record que fugí per un altre.

Feliç és qui no mira enrera, on el passat,
insaciable que és, ens lleva
fins l'esperança, casta penyora de la treva
que la Mort havia atorgat.

Qui tampoc endavant el seu desig no mena:
que deixa els remes i, ajagut
dins la frèvola barca, de cara als núvols, mut,
s'abandona a una aigua serena.

“Happy the Man...”

Translation by J.L. Gili

“Uns wiegen lassen, wie Auf schwankem Kahne der See.”

Holderlin

Happy the man who has lived under an alien sky
and whose peace has not been disturbed;
and happy who on searching into the rugged gorge of eyes
in love finds no falsehood lying there.

And he who appreciates his days, the one as much
as the other, like the equal parts
of a measured treasure; and does not pursue
the runaway memory of another.

Happy the man who does not look back, where the past,
ever insatiable, takes away from us
even hope, chaste pawn of the truce
which death had granted.

Happy he who does not urge his desire onward;
who drops the oars and, stretching himself
in the frail boat, towards the clouds, silent,
surrenders himself to untroubled waters.



MIQUEL BARCELÓ (1957)
read by Laurie Anderson

Art Pictorique

De la présence avant toute chose
et pour cela préfère la toile
peaux de bêtes, tentes aux déserts
voiles de bateaux, robes de fille

Prends les images et encules-les
fait des choses et point d'images
des choses qui ne passeront jamais par internet

Que ton tableau soit une chauve souris anfibienne
qui mange mangues et calamars
qui le matin mord des seins blancs
et les nuits délire avec Verlaine...
et le reste, ci inclus, des conneries.

Ne te soucie point des murs ni des plafonds
souviens toi que les architectes ne sont que des mauvais maçons
et qu'on ne se nourrit que de soi-même,
ouvre donc tes narines devant Velázquez
et remplit tes yeux chez Virgile
aux marches d'Afrique
aux bordels d'Asie.
Tes pigments sont les cendres de ta vie.,
tâche donc qu'elles gardent un soupçon
du feu qui te brûle

Ne gâche pas un fragment d'un instant
Avec critiques ni revues spécialisées.
Nourrie, si nécessaire, ta vanité
avec des arêtes de poisson et pelures d'orange.
Comme on nourrit les poules ou, mieux,
-souris de la cave de ton palais-
laisse-la se débrouiller
grignoter des vieux journaux.

Painterly Art

Translation by Graham Thomson

Presence first of all
and that's why the canvas prefers
animal skins, tents in the deserts
ships' sails, women's clothes

You catch the images and fuck them
make things and not more images
things that will never go on the Internet

Let your picture be an amphibious bat
that eats mangos and squids
that in the morning bites white breasts
and at nights hallucinates with Verlaine...
and the rest, this included, nonsense.

Stop fussing about walls and ceilings
remember that architects are nothing but bad bricklayers
and that we are nourished only by ourselves,
so open your nostrils to Velázquez
and fill your eyes with Virgil
in the markets of Africa
in the brothels of Asia.
Your pigments are the ashes of your life.
See to it, then, that they retain a shadow
of the fire that burns you.

Don't waste a fragment of an instant
on reviews or specialized magazines.
Feed, if necessary, your vanity
on fish bones and orange peel,
like we feed the chickens, or better still
– mouse in the cellar of your palace –
leave it to take care of itself,
let it gnaw old newspapers.



Les idées...

Les idées ne produisent pas
des tableaux. Viceversa.
Et puis, ces idées ne servent point
pour en faire
de nouveaux mais pour ne pas en faire.

(Autrement ce serait comme une bouillabaisse
avec des crabes et poissons vivants
retortillant dans la soupe)
La peinture, donc, fabrique et détruit
des idées –comme des images, des métaphores,
théories, sensations, émotions.

Ce qui reste ensuite : Voilà l'affaire
(et c'est pourtant simple, comme c'est
simple l'amour et la faim).



Ideas

Translation by Graham Thomson

Ideas do not produce
pictures. Vice versa.
And besides, those ideas serve
not to make
new pictures, but not to make them.

(Otherwise it would be like a bouillabaisse
with crabs and fish
writhing in the soup)
So painting fabricates and destroys
ideas – and images, metaphors,
theories, sensations, emotions.

What's left: that's the question,
(and yet it's simple, as
simple as love and hunger).

Perejaume (1957) is one of the most difficult artists of recent decades to classify. Interested in both poetry and the visual arts, in the work of the avant-gardes and local traditions, his is a genuine voice, rich not only with practice but with intellectual theory as well. Creating both visual arts and literature, it is somehow unclear whether the visual arts illustrate the writings or the writings illustrate his visual images. No media are beyond his reach, and he is equally at ease with objects, oil painting, photography... all of them different ways to express his passion for landscapes. His literary works include *Ludwig-Jujol* (1989), and *El paisatge és rodó* (1995).

Pere Gimferrer (1945) studied Arts and Law at the University of Barcelona and was involved with such key figures of the Catalan avant-garde as Joan Brossa and J.V. Foix. In 1966 he received Spain's National Literature Prize for *Arde el mar* (*The Sea Is Burning*). Since 1985, he has been a member of the Royal Spanish Academy. In 1998 he was awarded the National Prize of Spanish Letters. Apart from his poetry in both Catalan and Spanish, he has written on art, cinema and literature. Outstanding among his works are *L'espai desert* (*Deserted Space*), which reveals clear affinities with T.S. Eliot, and *Masquerade*, a long amorous poem in which eroticism becomes transgression in the best surrealist tradition.

Blai Bonet (1926–1997) was born into a humble family and, at the age of ten, he entered the Catholic seminary of Palma, where he became acquainted with the Classics, Philosophy, and the Humanities. A lung illness caused him to abandon his ecclesiastical career and marked all his subsequent work. His novel *The Sea* (1958) had a deep impact when it appeared. Bonet's work is a meditation on God and human life, and offers a certain prophetic vision within the current of Christian existentialism. His poems and novels are associated with light – as a metaphor of God – and colour, – as the passions of light. He died in his home town of Santanyí in December 1997, after some years of isolation from literary circles.

Joan Brossa (1919–1998) was seventeen when the Spanish Civil War broke out: he was drafted into the Republican army and went into combat. After the war, he came into contact with the leading representatives of the Catalan avant-garde, J.V. Foix and Joan Miró. In 1948, together with Cuixart and Tàpies, among other artists, he founded the magazine *Dau al Set* (*Dice on Seven*). He took it upon himself to seek the limits of artistic expression. His poetry and his plays (which are sometimes difficult to distinguish from each other) are completely anti-academic, seeking interaction with the reader or spectator. His experiments in the field of poetry are notably innovative, especially in what are now considered his emblematic ‘visual poems’. His works include *Em va fer Joan Brossa* (1950), and *Rua de llibres* (1980).

Maria-Mercè Marçal (1952–1998) translated into Catalan works by Colette, Yourcenar and Leonor Fini and, together with Monika Zgustová, the Russian poets Anna Akhmatova and Marina Tsvetayeva. Besides being an active participant in Catalan literary life, she was also engaged in politics. Marçal’s poetry is notable for its high degree of formal rigour and its revival of medieval models. In this regard she was indebted to other twentieth-century poets like J.V. Foix and Joan Brossa. A taste for oniric images, the offspring of surrealism, comes together in her work with her rebellious stand against the establishment and her explicit defence of women’s rights, homosexuality and oppressed cultures. Her poetry is collected in the volume *Abolished Tongue* (1973–1988).

Maria Antònia Salvà (1869–1958) is reputed as being the first woman in modern times to write poems in Catalan. She was the author of a work deeply rooted in a rural world, of bucolic poems depicting a Majorca inhabited by peasants, a country safe, simple, unchanged since ancestral times. That focus was soon to change when she encountered the poets of a younger generation and became known in Barcelona’s most advanced circles. She continued drawing inspiration from nature, swimming in an introspective world, subtle, intimate... but her language was now akin to that of poets venturing onto the path of modernity. Author of prose and translator as well as poet, her poetic works include *Espigues en flor* (1926), and *Lluneta del pagès* (1952).



Vicent Andrés Estellés (1924–1993) studied Journalism and worked at a newspaper, of which he became Editor-in-Chief in 1958, a position he was forced to leave rather arbitrarily in 1978. This early retirement meant more time to devote to his poetry and the literary awards soon started to arrive. The poetic work of Estellés is prolific and original. His subjects, are those of life itself: love, death, sex, fear, the city, the country, womanhood, and so on. As Joan Fuster very lucidly expressed it, “The subjects of Vicent Andrés Estellés, when reduced to their very essence, have the elemental nakedness of everyday life: hunger, sex and death” His works include *Donzell amarg* (1956), and *Cant temporal* (1980).

Narcís Comadira (1942) studied Humanities and Philosophy at the Seminary of Girona and at the Monastery of Montserrat, and later on Architecture, Romance Philology and History of Art. Apart from poetry and painting, he has also worked in other disciplines: playwright, translator, newspaper commentator, literary critic and author of studies in the fields of art, architecture and advertising. This extensive and wide-ranging work has earned him considerable recognition. As a translator he has published Catalan editions of authors like Leopardi and W.H. Auden. Some of his poems have a markedly romantic air while others are more impersonal or ironic. His works include *La llibertat i el terror* (1970–1980), *En quarentena* (1990), and *Formes de l'ombra. Poesia 1966–2002* (2003).

Josep Palau i Fabre (1917) is one of the last representatives of a generation that includes such writers as Joan Brossa and Joan Perucho. After fighting with the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War he lived in Paris for sixteen years, during which time he was in frequent contact with Antonin Artaud, Octavio Paz, and Pablo Picasso. Besides his work as a poet, translator and essayist, Palau has also written theater. His work is rooted both in the Catalan tradition and the European avant-garde. He is considered to be one of the world's leading experts on Picasso. Among other prizes, Palau has received the 1999 Prize of Honour in Catalan Letters. His works include *Balades amargues* (1942), *Poemes de l'alquimista* (1952), and *Estimat Picasso* (1997).

Joan Margarit (1938) is a Professor of Calculus at the School of Architecture in Barcelona. In 1975 he made his debut as a poet in Spanish with *Crónica*. Changing his literary language from Spanish to Catalan in 1978 was the most significant step in Margarit's life as a poet and this was largely due to the thoughtful friendship with the poet Miquel Martí i Pol. The most intensive and successful part of his work has been written since 1987, and he has now become one of the most widely read Catalan poets in both Catalonia and Spain. His poetry is realist with a strong presence of autobiographical elements, a well-tempered use of metaphor, and reflections of a moral nature that move from the individual to the collective. His works include *Estació de França* (1999), and *Els primers freds* (1975–1995).

Francesc Parcerisas (1944) has translated from English, French and Italian into both Spanish and Catalan (Pavese, Tolkien, Rimbaud, Pound, Heaney...). He has been director of the Association of Catalan Language Writers, the Catalan-language representative in different European translators' associations, and the Institute of Catalan Letters (1998–2004). His poetry, mainly collected in the volume *Triumph of the Present: Poems 1965–1983*, has clear affinities with the Anglo-Saxon tradition. He was linked with the realism that was dominant in a good part of the poetic scene of the 1960s but, after testing the experimentalism of the 1970s with the work *Latitudes of Horses* (1974), he would start writing a more intimate kind of poetry with sober echoes of the classics and revealing deep moral concerns.

Miquel Martí i Pol (1929–2003) was confirmed, in 1973, as suffering from multiple sclerosis, an illness which forced him to give up his job as a clerk in a textile factory and which would influence the rest of his life. Though he wrote prose and worked in the field of translation, it is poetry what gave him a platform to develop his sensibility and reach a substantial audience. The key to his connection with the public rests on his ability to reveal his inner self, sharing a sense of calmness and well being which is all the more touching considering his poor health. Martí i Pol found in music the key that opened his work to a wide audience: when popular singer and song writer Lluís Llach turned to Martí i Pol's words for inspiration, the poet became known beyond the usual boundaries of poetry. His works include *La fàbrica* (1972), *Estimada Marta* (1978), and *Després de tot* (2002).

Enric Casasses (1951) first became known in alternative circles in the 1960s, mainly through recitals and publications of restricted circulation. As a rhapsode he has played an essential role in recovering the oral tradition and he is credited with making poetry recitals increasingly popular in Barcelona and elsewhere in the Catalan-speaking world. Casasses has lived in France, England and Germany and has worked as an editor and translator. He frequently collaborates with musicians and painters. A poet who has taken his inspiration from traditional sources, Enric Casasses blends elements of folklore and present-day pop culture in his work, experimenting with new forms and satirically reworking traditional genres. His works include *La cosa aquella* (1982), *Desfà els grumolls* (1994), and *Shall We Sleep?* (2002).

Salvador Dalí (1904–1989), one of the most iconic figures of twentieth-century art, was born in Figueres, north Catalonia. His first exhibition, which took place in Barcelona in 1925, reflected his quest for the Italian pictorial tradition and his rejection of the avant-gardes. Along with Lluís Montanyà and Sebastià Gasch he published, in 1928, the *Yellow Manifesto*, a fierce attack on conventional art. In Paris he met Picasso, Miró, and the group of surrealists headed by André Breton. By the beginning of the 1930s Dalí had found his own style, his private language and the form of expression that was to remain with him thereafter – a mixture of vanguard and tradition. He had become fully integrated into Surrealism, and began his consecration as a painter. From 1940 until 1948 he lived in the United States, working with the photographer Philippe Halsman, the Ballets Russes de Montecarlo, Alfred Hitchcock... In 1969 he purchased Púbol Castle, near Figueres. In 1984, following a fire at the Castle, he moved for good to nearby Torre Galatea, where he was to remain until his death on 23 January 1989. His literary works include *Mystical Manifesto* (1949), *Les cocus du vieil art moderne* (1956), and *Le mythe tragique de "L'Angélu"* de Millet (1963).

Sebastià Gasch (1897–1980), the son of a well-to-do family in Barcelona, friend of Miró and admirer of Picasso, studied for painter but, in view of the cold reception to his first work, decided to become a writer instead. The success which was denied to him as an artist arrived when he began writing as an art critic for different cultural magazines. At the end of the 1920s his name was firmly associated with the avant-gardes, especially so after the publication, in 1928, of the *Yellow Manifesto* with Salvador Dalí and Lluís Montanyà. Days before Franco's troops entered Barcelona he left the city and went into exile, to Paris, where he struggled to make ends meet. He decided to come back to Barcelona in 1942 and was imprisoned by the new regime. After being freed, he went back to art journalism, first for newspapers and magazines and later on for radio and TV stations.

Lluís Montanyà (1903–1985) wrote for some of the most important Catalan newspapers and magazines of the first third of the twentieth-century, among them *L'Amic de les Arts*, *La Publicitat*, *Mirador* and *Revista de Catalunya*. His reputation as one of the main names within the avant-garde circles was enhanced after he wrote the *Yellow Manifesto* (1928), together with Salvador Dalí and Sebastià Gasch. Following the fall of Barcelona to Franco's troops in 1939, he went into exile, living and working in Geneva as a translator for the United Nations. In 1977 he published *Notes sobre el Superrealisme i altres escrits*, an exhaustive compilation of his literary work. He did not return to Catalonia after the end of the dictatorship and died in Geneva in 1985.

J.V. Foix (1893–1987) started a degree in Law, but soon gave it up to work in the family patisserie. Subsequently, he began to read the Classics in great depth and also worked as a journalist, literary critic and writer. He maintained close links with the Catalonian avant-garde theoreticians, writers and artists of his day, and was a friend of Miró, Dalí, Elouard, García Lorca and others. After the Spanish Civil War, he kept a low profile and worked on the compilation and partial re-writing of his work. Popular acclaim came to him in the seventies, not long before the death of Franco. The poetry of Foix is, in his own words, that of “a researcher into poetry” and his verse is, as a consequence, highly experimental. Foix's work is a subtle combination of ancient and modern values, both from a conceptual and from a formal perspective. His works include *Krtu* (1932), *Les irrealis omegues* (1948), and *Desa aquests llibres al calaix de baix* (1972).



Gabriel Ferrater (1922–1972) was one of the most influential poets of his generation. His first poems, the result of a personal crisis, date from 1958. In 1963 and 1964 he lived in London and Hamburg and worked in the publishing industry, mainly as a report-writer. He was appointed to a lectureship in Linguistics at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona in 1968. Four years later, and just before his 50th birthday, he committed suicide. The work of Ferrater is the effort of a great intellectual. His considerable versatility (mathematician, linguist, literary critic, translator, university lecturer and writer) is responsible for the varied nature of his work, which ranges from articles on linguistics to major poetic compositions. His works include *Da nuces pueris* (1960), and *Les dones i els dies* (1968).

Salvador Espriu (1913–1985) was, due to a long illness suffered during his childhood, a rather timid and withdrawn person, much given to reading and study. After his studies in Law and Ancient History he began to publish short stories, novels and plays. Then came the Spanish Civil War, after which he worked as a lawyer, and later as a clerk in one of his brother's businesses. He rarely went out, and had hardly any social life, concentrating rather on his poetry. Both he and his literary work soon became a symbol of the peaceful resistance and the hopes of post-war Catalonia. The work of Espriu is a long meditation on death and on the passing of time that leads us to that end. His verse is baroque in content, but extraordinarily austere and precise in style. His works include *Ariadna al laberint grotesc* (1935), *Antígona* (1939), *Primera història d'Esther* (1948), and *La pell de brau* (1960).

Josep Carner (1884–1970) wrote his first poem at the age of twelve and received his first poetry prize at fourteen. In 1921 he joined the Spanish Diplomatic Corps, serving in Italy, Costa Rica, France, Lebanon and Belgium. As a supporter of the Spanish Republic he was forced to leave public service in 1938 and went into exile in Mexico. On his return to Europe he became a member of the Catalanian government in exile and taught at the Free University in Brussels, where he spent his last twenty-five years. Even though he dedicated himself in the main to poetry, he also wrote prose of outstanding quality, especially in short stories and plays, as well as in numerous translations. Carner supplies a hitherto-unknown flexibility to the Catalan language, and enriches it by incorporating into it widely different colloquial and cultivated linguistic registers. His works include *Els fruits saborosos* (1906), *La paraula en el vent* (1914), and *El cor quiet* (1925).

Carles Riba (1893–1959) read Law and Letters at the University of Barcelona, and soon resolved to devote himself completely to learning and culture, thus becoming one of Catalonia's leading intellectuals. After the Spanish Civil War, he took the path of exile, which led him to France. Following his return to the country in 1943, Riba devoted himself to writing and translating, so becoming one of the beacons of the Catalan cultural resistance and a formative influence on younger poets. His poetry derives fundamentally from two sources: Hellenic humanism, on the one hand, and verse of Germanic root – especially Goethe's – on the other. His work is highly conceptual, abstract, and at times hermetic and imbued with symbolic elements. An excellent translator, he has given Catalan letters the gift of an excellent and strikingly personal translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. His works include *Primer llibre d'Estances* (1919) *Del joc i del foc* (1946), and *Salvatge cor* (1952).

Miquel Barceló (1957) took the art market by storm back in the 1980s. His work looked fresh and different and his mysterious and bohemian personality drew many followers. Soon the country surrendered to the newcomer and transformed him into a star who exhibited his works in the best museums and sold them at astonishing prizes. Born in Majorca, Barceló studied in Barcelona. His first works, which created a stir when exhibited in Kassel's Documenta 7, in 1982, displayed the influences of both German neoexpressionism and the Italian Trans-Avant-Garde. The Mediterranean light and his several stays in Mali are two other powerful sources of inspiration. Africa is actually the driven force behind his literary work, much less known than his visual one but equally as intense and spiritual. His literary work includes *Quaderns d'Àfrica* (2004).



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