

# CATALAN WRITING

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**Printed by:** Insòlit

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winter 2007

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## EDITORIAL

Retaining its former title, but with a different layout and tone, *Catalan Writing* expresses our continuing desire to show that we are still very much alive and kicking. For centuries, our writers, and their work have played their part in the creation of Europe's cultural heritage and through our Catalan language we consider ourselves to be the heirs of those foundational narratives which have contributed to the development of the European imagination. The three great Catalan chronicles of the medieval era guarantee our status as a nation after the period of the Carolingian Empire, and the personal story of King Jaume I is testimony to an already highly sophisticated subjective voice which reflects our history and the durability of a specific way of life. Like Dante in Italy, Ramon Llull was the inspired

spirit who founded a Catalan language which was both literary and eloquently colloquial. He also managed to construct a literary space within the Western Roman Empire which has produced poetical, narrative, legal and social texts, all providing documentary evidence of the existence of a specific history which forms part of European history.

Today, Catalan is a language which is still alive and well in Catalonia, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, Andorra and also, to a lesser extent, in the Rosellon region of France and in Alguer in Italy. We therefore cover a wide linguistic domain and possess a language which goes far beyond states and their political interests. Despite its different forms and the varied names attributed to it by interested parties, our language offers an arena where our spirit can manifest itself and express our essential being, using a specific code and differential relations.

The aim of this paper is thus to be a channel for the literary manifestation of this spirit. However, although our tradition and vocation inevitably make us aware of our written heritage, this revised publication also responds to a specific contemporary need: the need to communicate, to become well-known, to publicise the work of the literary system within Catalonia, the society on which it is based and the individuals who work within it, while also establishing links with other voices and other rooms of the global and international literary system. We would like this new *Catalan Writing* to become a source of reference and information which is flexible, consistent and thought-provoking, with a sound critical approach but also a sense of humour and an awareness of the intrinsic relative nature of all aesthetic phenomena.

The two institutions promoting and supporting this initiative, Pen Català and the Ramon Llull Institute, trust that this new edition will be well received, and look forward to a period of long-term collaboration. They are confident that the active participation of all those involved in our literary system will guarantee the production both of the content and of the conditions needed to guarantee the continuing success of *Catalan Writing*.

D. OLLER