

PUBLISHING NEWS



Joan Sales

Incerta glòria (Uncertain Glory)

Tinta Bava
Translated into French by Maria Bohigas and Bernard Lesfargues

For some critics, this is the great 20th-century Catalan novel, while others go still further and say it is one of the best Catalan novels of all time. The writer and publisher, Joan Sales, spent twenty years writing this lengthy book, his life's work. It is about the Spanish Civil War of 1936 to 1939 and also the memory of Republican Catalonia which was smashed and eradicated by the fascist victory. Many obstacles were placed in the way of the publication of *Incerta glòria*. For years it was impossible to publish the whole text due to the regime's censorship. Now, this universal novel is once again coming to the attention of readers, both within and beyond Catalonia. The French version was highly praised in *Le Monde*. This edition has a prologue written by Juan Goytisolo.



Albert Sánchez Piñol

Pandora al Congo
(Pandora in the Congo)

World of Books
Translated into Russian by Nina Avrova

After the international success of *La pell freda* (Cold Skin), Albert Sánchez Piñol has published the second part of a trilogy marked by three common elements – a setting of hardship conditions, a female character who incarnates love and desire and a fantastic element: monsters. *Pandora al Congo*, unlike *La pell freda*, is a long novel, at almost 600 pages, and also is more complex, with a wider range of characters, settings and superimposed situations. We start with an anonymous writer who is commissioned to write the life story of Marcus Garvey, in hopes of saving him from dying in a London prison. Garvey is accused of murdering two aristocratic English brothers during an expedition in search of diamonds, gold and ivory in the Congo jungle.

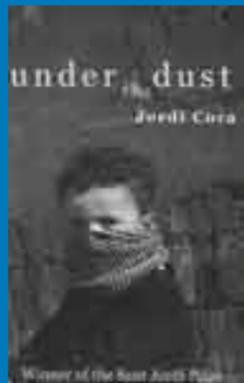


Quim Monzó

100 contes (100 Stories)

Frankfurter Verlag
Translated into German by Monika Lübcke

Many readers discovered Quim Monzó thanks to his surprising speech at the opening ceremony of the 2007 Frankfurt Book Fair, at which Catalan culture was guest of honour. However, his work has long been translated and praised by international critics. An article in *The Independent* described Monzó as “one of the world's great short-story writers”. Monzó excels in his genre. He has been writing short stories for three decades now, as a chronicler of his times, always ingenious, caustic, lucid and essential. Now, the publishing house Frankfurter has brought together in a single volume all the stories that Monzó published up to 2001. Newly revised by the author, it includes a hundred short stories from the collections *Uf va dir ell* (Oof, He Said, 1978), *Olivetti, Moulinex, Chaffoteaux et Maury* (1980), *L'illa de Maians* (The Island of Maians, 1985), *El perquè de tot plegat* (What It's All About, 1993), *Guadalajara* (1996) and *El millor dels mons* (The Best of Worlds, 2001).



Jordi Coca

Sota la pols (Under the Dust)

Parthian Books
Translated into English by Richard Thomson

A writer of the 70s generation, Jordi Coca has received some of the most prestigious prizes in Catalan literature. *Sota la pols* was awarded the 2000 Sant Jordi Prize. The novel starts out as an autobiographical work. It describes how the early years of a boy's life are marked by his father's violence and authority, and also by the appearance of his first literary stimuli. We are taken back to the 1940s and early 1950s, to the grey, oppressive atmosphere of the harshest decades of the Franco dictatorship. “Books will be my salvation”, the boy says. *Sota la pols* is part of a broader literary project linked with the novels *Dies meravellosos* (Wonderful Days, 1996), *La noia del ball* (The Girl at the Dance, 2007) and the forthcoming title *Moure la nit* (To Move the Night).



Carles Porta

Tor. Tretze cases i tres morts
(Tor: Thirteen Houses and Three Deaths)

Berlin Verlag
Translated into German by Charlotte Frei

Somewhere between reportage and the novel, *Tor* follows in the wake of Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood*. This is the disturbing true story of a mountain in the Pyrenees, the disputes between two of the mountain's thirteen co-owners and, finally, the death of one of the region's two leading men after a judge awards him solo ownership of Tor Mountain. The story, related in first person, emerges from a report the author produced for Catalan television. Carles Porta subsequently spent eight years investigating this story that is full of hate, disputes, smugglers, local despots, blood, fear and unsolved murder.



Mercè Rodoreda

Mirall trencat (A Broken Mirror)

Confluence
Translated into Hindi by Vijaya Venkataraman

Mercè Rodoreda is one of Catalan literature's all-time great writers and has been recognised as such in many parts of the world. Her works have been translated into some thirty languages. The 100th anniversary of her birth is to be celebrated in 2008, with a series of academic and cultural events under the title of the Rodoreda Year (www.anyrodoreda.cat). *Mirall trencat* is her significant novel, finished in 1974. It uses several voices to weave together the stories of three generations of a well-to-do family. In Rodoreda's own words, “What really interests me about the characters of *Mirall trencat* is that they enable me to take on the weight of the nostalgia that contains everything that I have lived intensely and that has now come to an end. They are neither good nor bad [...]. And they have secrets. It is a novel where everyone falls in love with the wrong person, and the ones who need love go out to get it, in whatever way it comes: in the space of an hour or in the space of a moment.”

MONTSERRAT SERRA

ON STAGE

FROM GRÖNHOLM TO GALCERAN

I was present at the final rehearsal before the premiere of *El mètode Grönholm* (The Grönholm Method) by Jordi Galceran at the Teatre Nacional de Catalunya (National Theatre of Catalonia). The atmosphere was one of defeat: the author unhappy; the actors disoriented; the director, perplexed. The play opened and the audience continued to laugh and applaud enthusiastically at the end, the whole theatre in a standing ovation. Since that May of 2003, *El mètode Grönholm* has been staged in 22 countries. More than two million people around the world have seen it, more than any other play in the history of Catalan theatre.

The story follows four candidates for an executive position in the waiting room of a multinational company and action (the hiring test) grounds us in real time. This is a brilliant *contemporary, classical comedy*. It is radically “contemporary” in the way it presents the disasters that arise from inventing identities. And it is a “classical” comedy in that it uses the mechanisms of the *pièce bien faite* and because it is the work of a critical moralist. Like Molière, Goldoni, Sheridan, Beaumarchais, Wilde and Shaw, Jordi Galceran (1964) is a lucid revealer of society's moral confusions. In *El mètode Grönholm*, he does this on two different levels. First, he condemns the use of *deception* as an instrument of power, and second – both more cruelly and compassionately – he shows the completeness of the damage caused by *self-deception*. Galceran writes thinking of each member of the audience as an individual. This and his talent make him a truly great playwright. *El mètode Grönholm* is a fine introduction to the author of *Dakota*, *Paraules encadenades* (Chained Words) and his most recent play, *Cancun*.

ESTEVE MIRALLES

ON LINE

Six recommended websites for Catalan poetry

La Il·lustració Poètica Metropolitana i Continental (Continental and Metropolitan Poetic Enlightenment)

<http://perso.wanadoo.es/lipmic/>

This website maintained by the Valencian poet Eduard J. Verger includes a multilingual anthology of Catalan poetry, a good selection of poetry from around the world translated into Catalan, the digital edition of the magazine *Cairell* (1979-1981) and a presentation of Verger's own work.

Els entra-i-surts de Brossa (The Ins-and-Outs of Brossa)

<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/especial/brossa/>

This is the best on-line presentation of the poet Joan Brossa, who produced his work in the confluence between the avant-garde, theatrical, provocative and the plastic arts. Anyone who is interested in Brossa can also consult the website of the Joan Brossa Foundation at www.fundacio-joan-brossa.org (in Catalan, Spanish and English).

Viu la poesia (Poetry Lives)

<http://www.viulapoesia.com/>

An innovative selection of Catalan, Spanish and world poetry with search tools providing information by author, readership (adults, young people, children) and genre. Besides poems, it includes didactic proposals, audio and video and, in some cases, interactive material.

Música de poetes (Music of Poets)

<http://www.musicadepoetes.cat/>

This is a virtual space where music and literature flow together and where one can listen to a wide array of songs that many Catalan musicians have composed from the work of the best poets. The site is a co-production of the Open University of Catalonia, the Government of Catalonia and the Spanish Society of Authors, Composers and Publishers (SGAE).

Mag Poesia (Mag Poetry)

<http://www.mallorcaweb.com/magteatre/>

Over the last ten years, this Mallorca-produced website has been bringing together a wide-ranging anthology of Catalan poets and poems, Catalan versions of world poetry, rock and songs in Catalan, along with stage versions of poetry by the Magisteri Teatre group.

Barcelona Poesia (Barcelona Poetry)

<http://www.bcn.cat/cultura/barcelonapoesia1/>

This is the website of Poetry Week, which is held in May every year in the capital of Catalonia. Other notable events during the year are the Sant Cugat Festival of Poetry, the Mediterranean Poetry Festival in Mallorca, and the *Quinzena Poètica* in Vilafranca del Penedès.

JAUME SUBIRANA