

PUBLISHING NEWS



Najat El Hachmi

L'últim patriarca (The Last Patriarch)

Serpent's Tail

Translated into English by Peter Bush

'L'últim patriarca' (Ramon Llull Prize 2008, published by Planeta) by the Catalan, of Moroccan origin, Najat El Hachmi has begun to take off internationally. Having received the Ulysse Prize, a prize awarded in Corsica, for her first novel in the French version, a few months ago Serpent's Tail published it in English. The book has also been translated into Spanish and Romanian (Curtea Veche) and the rights have been sold for its publication in Germany (Wagenbach), Holland (Orlando), Italy (Rizzoli), Portugal (Planeta Manuscrito), the Arab world (Tatany Book Services) and Turkey (Sey Yayinlari).

Najat El Hachmi (Nador, Morocco, 1979) came to Vic when she was eight years old, to rejoin her family. She studied Arab Studies at the University of Barcelona and is a cultural mediator. In 'L'últim patriarca' she lays out the story of a Moroccan immigrant who establishes himself in central Catalonia, an omnipotent patriarch, at times a despot, who finds himself confronted with the cultural changes adopted by his daughter, that break with his traditions of origin, as she adapts to the values of the new society where she lives. The authoress, despite taking autobiographical elements as her point of departure, has always underlined that it is a fictional story.



Xavier Benguerel

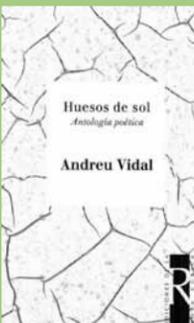
Els vençuts (The defeated)

Autrement Editions

Translated into French by Maria Bohigas

Xavier Benguerel was born in 1905 in Barcelona and lived through the civil war from the first to the last day. He had to head for the border with the avalanche of fugitives, on their way to France. From Barcelona to Gerona, Gerona to Agullana, from Agullana to les Illes, by way of the Manrella pass. Then he went from les Illes to Le Boulou, Perpignan to Toulouse, Roissy-en-Brie, Saint Cyr-sur-Morin and finally to Marseille. After ten months of exile in France he headed for America, Argentina and Chile... He lived in exile for sixteen years. Benguerel himself explains regarding "Els vençuts": "In this book, that is at the same time history, a chronicle and a novel, I have only stopped to narrate the first tragic, interminable adventure

of the defeated, of the few, the "lucky" ones, who were able to escape the French concentration camps and the many unfortunate ones, who ended up there." In 1988 Benguerel received the Honorary Prize of Lletres Catalanes (Catalan Letters) and in 1990, died in Barcelona.



Andreu Vidal

Huesos al sol (Bones in the sun)

Rosa Cúbica Editions

Translated into Spanish by Juan Bofill and Karen Müller

The year 2008 marked a decade since the death of the poet Andreu Vidal (Palma, 1959-1998). He was thirty-nine years old. He was a cult poet and an important figure in the avant-garde of the last decades of the 20th Century. But for a while now it had been difficult to find his poetry, until Edicions el Salobre decided to publish the 'Obra poètica i altres escrits' (Poetic works and other writings) thanks to Karen Müller and Margalida Pons. They started with a project that the poet when alive had already had in mind: to gather together all his poetry books. Andreu Vidal wanted to compile all his poetic work into one volume, excluding the first three books that he considered his books of apprenticeship. This anthological project was to have begun with the 'Llibre de les virtuts' (The book of virtues) (1980),

which he considered his first mature work. The Edicions del Salobre volume also includes the books published from then on: 'Necròpsia' (Necropsy) (1984), 'Els dies tranquils' (The tranquil days) (1988), 'L'animal que no existeix' (The animal that doesn't exist) (1993) and 'Ad vivum' (1999). It also includes the short poems that he published in different magazines, about twenty unpublished poems, and a series of previously unpublished notes and aphorisms, titled 'Für Zamme' (For Zamme), and the 'Poems' of Paul Celan, which he translated together with Karen Müller. From this basic anthology of the poetry of Andreu Vidal, the same Karen Müller and the critic Juan Bofill have translated into Spanish and elaborated a bilingual edition, in Catalan/Spanish, of the anthology of poems 'Huesos al sol' (Bones in the sun).



Albert Sánchez Piñol

Pandora al Congo (Pandora in the Congo)

Colibri

Translated into Bulgarian by Mariana Gueorguieva Kitipova

Following in the steps but at a distance of 'La pell freda' (Cold Skin)", the most translated novel in Catalan literature, 'Pandora al Congo', (Pandora in the Congo) the second instalment of the trilogy by Albert Sánchez Piñol, is now being translated. Both novels share common elements: a territory of extreme conditions, a feminine protagonist who embodies love and desire, and an element of fantasy, the monsters. But 'Pandora al Congo' is a more extensive (almost six hundred pages) and more complex novel, with more protagonists, overlapping scenarios and situations. The synopsis: a lawyer proposes to an anonymous writer that he writes on commission the history of Marcus Garvey, who is imprisoned in London, in the hope of saving him from death. They have accused him of assassinating two English aristocratic brothers during an expedition, looking for diamonds or ivory, in the rainforests of the Congo.



Maria Àngels Anglada

El violí d'Auschwitz (The violin of Auschwitz)

Muza

Translated into Polish by Anna Sawicka

Maria Àngels Anglada (Vic 1930 - Figueres 1999) was a storyteller, poet and translator. She was trained in the classics and went on to combine teaching with writing. In 1994 she published "El violí d'Auschwitz" (The violin of Auschwitz). The novel narrates the story of a Jewish luthier imprisoned in the extermination camp of Auschwitz during the last years of the Second World War. A Nazi commander who loved music sets him a terrible challenge: in order to save his life and that of a violinist, also imprisoned, he has to construct a violin with perfect pitch in a limited time. It is undoubtedly her most famous book along with "El quadern d'Aram" (Aram's notebook). During the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2008 there was a

surge of international interest in this author and these titles. As a matter of fact this year "El violí d'Auschwitz" has been published in the renowned 'Le Livre de Poche' collection, the most popular French paperback collection. It is the first time that a Catalan has been published in this collection.

MONTSERRAT SERRA

LITERARY SOCIETY

Festivals everywhere

To state that literary festivals are thriving in Catalonia and the rest of the Catalan speaking territories and that they have managed to survive the economic crisis is not, by any means, an exaggeration, quite the contrary. In the last few years there has been a proliferation – and also diversification – of festivals, literary series, gatherings and other competitions that make the spoken word – poetry or in other forms – and the diffusion of literature, their central focus. This was established at the first gathering of promoters of literary festivals held at the Institució de les Lletres Catalanes (Institute of Catalan Letters, ILC) in the autumn of 2009 in Vic (Osona): where an analysis of the panorama of literary events certified the important growth that had occurred in the last six years. Another sign of how they are thriving is the Festival of Literary Spectacles, Litterarum, in Móra d'Ebre, which first took place in 2008, with the aim of connecting companies with programme coordinators. From the second meeting of festival promoters a literary map was created – housed in Google maps – where it is possible to find the basic details of each event (at the moment there are around seventy). The range in types of festivals and events is extremely varied, as much for their duration as for their literary content: from the larger festivals dedicated to poetry (for example, la Setmana de la Poesia de Barcelona (Barcelona's Poetry Week); el Festival de Poesia de Sant Cugat (Sant Cugat Poetry Festival) the Mahalta of Lleida or the Festival de la Poesia de la Mediterrània (Mediterranean Poetry Festival) in Palma) to more extensive programmes (el Poesia i + at the Fundació Palau, in Caldes d'Estrac; or the series at the Jacint Verdaguer Foundation, in Folgueroles).

The address of the literary map

<http://maps.google.es/maps/ms?hl=ca&ie=UTF8&msa=0&msid=117627402329942557471.000485b2077d82b5ad3ab&z=7>

ANNA BALLBONA

ON LINE Literature & images

Pa negre (Black bread)

<http://cineuropa.org/film.aspx?documentID=150807>

The Majorcan director Agustí Villaronga has adapted in *Pa negre* (Conxa de Plata at the 58th Festival de San Sebastián) two novels by Emili Teixidor: *Pa negre* (2003), awarded the Lletra d'Or prize, Crexells prize and National Literature prize, and *Retrat d'un assassí d'ocells* (Portrait of a bird killer) (1988).

Elisa K <http://www.elisaklapelicula.com/>

Judith Colell and Jordi Cadena codirected *Elisa K.*, a film based on the book with the same title by the writer Lolita Bosch. The film obtained the Special Jury Prize at the 58th Festival de San Sebastian.

Poetàrium <http://www.llull.tv/POETARIUM/>

LlullTV, the digital channel of the Ramon Llull Institute, has provided free access on the Internet to the contents of the DVD *Poetàrium*, a splendid anthology of contemporary Catalan poetry with readings, interviews and documentation of thirty creators from different generations. In Catalan, Spanish, English, French and Italian.

L'hora del lector (Reader's hour) <http://www.tv3.cat/lhoradellector>

"L'hora del lector" is a programme on Catalan public television, which since 2007 has been dedicated to books and literature. It is directed and presented by Emilio Manzano. On the website it is possible to consult many videos of interviews with writers who have been invited to the programme.

The interviews of Soler Serrano

The journalist Joaquín Soler Serrano died, in September 2010, in Barcelona. He was responsible during the latter half of the seventies for a famous series of television interviews, "A fondo" (In depth), many of which were with great writers. On the Internet it is possible to retrieve three of these interviews with Catalan writers:

With Salvador Espriu (1976)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-4982670297783500864#>

With Josep Pla (1976)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=5397429802588120914#>

With Mercè Rodoreda (1980)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=6005494089185723481#>

JAUME SUBIRANA