

## **Poets All Around**

Isabel Alonso Breto

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ALWAYS is a good time for poetry. For that reason, this year we are devoting our issue of *Blue Gum*, the most unruly child of CEAT, to poetic flight. After several issues which have touched on a variety of genres, from the academic essay to memoir to photographs, short stories and travelogues, including the occasional poem, we are presenting this time a pretty consistent collection of poetic voices. We expect that you, well-humoured and sensitive readers, will enjoy and appreciate not only their beauty and vitality, but also their diversity, eclecticism and wit.

You will notice that most of the contributors are related in one way or another to the University of Barcelona, and more particularly to the Faculty of Philology, either as teachers, students, alumni, or as friends and frequent visitors. We are a proudly poetic bunch around here.

As single editor of this year's issue, I am fully responsible of any shortcomings of the arrangement and presentation of the collection. I have made some decisions which may seem a bit frivolous, like respecting the language in which poets have sent their comments on poems and their bios. I have decided not to translate them in order to emphasize the multilingual and transcultural quality of the volume. I wish to emphatically boast of presenting a three-language collection which navigates English, Spanish and Catalan, that is, the three official languages of CEAT. To these adds a fourth language, Greek, present in the poems translated by undergraduate students Margarida Garí Barceló and Lucas Gonzalvo Valls. And we shouldn't forget that Rudramoorthy Cheran's poems were translated from Tamil before being translated into English, and only then into Spanish. Anyway, as it happens, and as Carmen G. Aragón, alias Jean Murdock, so graciously argues in the opening poem, "everything es traducción si te das cuenta." Everything is translation; You only need to look at the world closely, carefully enough.

I want to thank all the contributors in the volume. Besides those already mentioned, Javier Velaza and Salvador Faura Sabé contribute gorgeous poems in Spanish and Catalan, respectively. Sue Ballyn, Sabrina Brancato, Cornelis Martin Renes and Esther Pujolràs-Noguer do the same, but in English. Two poets have sent wonderful sets of poems and self-translations: UB-based doctoral candidate Claire Rosslyn Wilson, in English and (into) Spanish, and Zaira Pacheco, a UB alumna from Puerto Rico, in Spanish and (into) Catalan. On their part, August Bover, Gemma Gorga, Silvia Rins and Jordi Virallonga have, in turn, sent beautiful poems written in either Catalan or Spanish with their corresponding translations into English. We also need to acknowledge the invaluable work of their translators: Kristine Doll, Dominic Keown, Anna Argemí-Catllà Carson, Jacqueline Hurtley, Sharon Dolin, Alexandra Paramour, Emily MacBride, Marlon L. Fick, Francisca Esteve and Jordi Baltà Portolés.

This unusual ensemble results, to my mind, in a feast of languages and poetry. I hope that you see it, as I do, as an opportunity for further cross-cultural engagements, friendships and, how knows, translations.

Heartfelt thanks are due to Mercedes Padià, as always in charge of the technological part of *Blue Gum*.

And I leave you to the UB poets with three lines from “The Child Angel”, by Rabindranath Tagore, where I invite you to think of that child, that angel, as the poem...

*Let them see your face, my child, and thus know the meaning  
of all things; let them love you and thus love each other.  
Come and take your seat in the bosom of the limitless, my child.*

**Isabel Alonso Breto** is the Vicedirector of the [Centre for Australian and Transnational Studies](#) at the University of Barcelona as well as a member of [Ratnakara](#), a research group devoted to the study of the literatures and cultures of the Indian Ocean. She is a lecturer of literatures in English at the Department of Modern Languages and English Studies at UB. She was the founder and co-director of the creative writing courses “Escriure és creure és creure,” offered at UB, and besides having authored some published short stories and translations, she has written and lectured on the teaching of creative writing.