

Lisbon Revisited

POETRY DAYS



CASA FERNANDO PESSOA
JUNE 14TH AND 15TH 2018



PESSOA 130 ANOS



Portuguese and foreign poets, some of them already well-known, others yet to be translated: encounters at Casa Fernando Pessoa between those who write and those who read poetry.

Once more I see you — Lisbon, the Tagus and the rest

With:

ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI *Poland*

AMALIA BAUTISTA *Spain*

ANA LUÍSA AMARAL *Portugal*

HARRYETTE MULLEN *USA*

JORGE SOUSA BRAGA *Portugal*

LUÍS QUINTAIS *Portugal*

MARGARIDA VALE DE GATO *Portugal*

With Álvaro de Campos poem in mind, we are resuming our international poetry encounters and will now present the first edition of *Lisbon Revisited — Poetry Days*, a programme of conversations and readings with poets from different places.

The 14 and 15 June are dates to mark in your agenda: poetry days to celebrate the 130th Pessoa's birthday.

At 6.30 pm and 9.30 pm.

PESSOA **130** ANOS

Adam Zagajewski

*and now in a hurry just
pack, always, each day,
and go breathless, go to Lvov, after all
it exists, quiet and pure as
a peach. It is everywhere.*

Translated by Renata Gorczynski

This poet will be returning to Portugal 30 years after the International Literary Conference at Queluz Palace, promoted by the Wheatland Foundation.

Born in 1945, in Lvov, which at that time was in Polish territory, he grew up in Gliwice, in Silesia, and studied Philosophy and Psychology at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. Since he was a member of the "Generation of 68" opposed to the communist regime, some of his books were banned by the authorities. After going into exile in Paris, he taught at the University of Texas and returned to Krakow in 2002. He is currently a visiting professor at the University of Chicago.

His work has been widely translated, not only his poetry, but also his essays and memoirs. Frequently named on the lists of favourites for the Nobel Prize, he has been awarded various other distinctions, including the Neustadt International Prize for Literature, the Griffin Poetry Prize and, in 2017, the year when he was first published in Portugal, the Princess of Asturias Award for Literature.

Sombra de Sombras, from 2017, is his only book published in Portugal. It contains poems selected from seven works, and was translated from the original Polish by Marco Bruno, revised by Jorge Sousa Braga and published in the Tinta-da-China collection of poetry, edited by Pedro Mexia.

VERMEER'S LITTLE GIRL

*Vermeer's little girl, now famous,
watches me. A pearl watches me.
The lips of Vermeer's little girl
are red, moist, and shining.*

*Oh Vermeer's little girl, oh pearl,
blue turban: you are all light
and I am made of shadow.
Light looks down on shadow
with forbearance, perhaps pity.*

Translated by Clare Cavanagh



*«One of the most
captivating living poets
in any language.»*

Diogo Vaz Pinto, Sol

*«Zagajewski discovered
in the "beauty of
others" an escape and
a contagious element
that reaches far beyond
the field of aesthetics.
Beauty is the lens
that enhances the
transmutation of the
gaze and, in the terms
that the poet uses,
eases the passage from
solitude to solidarity.»*

António Cabrita, Hoje Macau

*«Scorn, hatred,
loathing for
totalitarianism is
everywhere in his work;
but so is a distrust of
anti-totalitarianism,
the other seal that
disfigures the wax
of reality.»*

Adam Kirsch, Introdução

**Lisbon
Revisited**

POETRY DAYS

Amalia Bautista

*We grope our way forwards and wonder
if what appears to be happiness
is merely a sure indication
that we are, yet again, mistaken.*

This is her third visit to Portugal: in 1998 and 2013, she read some of her poems in Lisbon, at the National Library and the Paralelo W bookshop.

Born in Madrid in 1962, she studied Information Science at the Complutense University of Madrid. She began publishing poems in 1988. Her texts have been translated into Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Arabic. She was responsible for editing, selecting the texts and writing the prologue for *Juegos de Inteligencia*, an anthology of poems by the Mexican writer Rosario Castellanos, who is a symbol of Latin American feminism.

Her work was published for the first time in Portuguese, in 1997, in the book entitled *Poesia Espanhola de Agora*, translated by Joaquim Manuel Magalhães and published by Relógio de Água, as well as later in *Tríptico Espanhol*, published by the same company in 2005, where she is accompanied by Pablo García Casado and Luis Muñoz.

In 2013, Averno published *Estou Ausente*. Recognised as one of the books of the year in Portugal in 2013, it was translated by Inês Dias. Writing about these poems, the journalist Carlos Vaz Marques said that they display a "deceptive simplicity because there is not the slightest trace of commonplaces in them."

THE BRIDGE

*If they tell me you're on the other side
of a bridge, however strange it may seem
that you are on the other side and are waiting for me,
I will cross that bridge.
Tell me which bridge it is that separates
your life from mine,
in what dark hour, in what rainy city,
in what lightless world I can find that bridge,
and I will cross it.*

Translation Margaret Jull Costa



**Lisbon
Revisited**

POETRY DAYS

Ana Luísa Amaral

*I wanted a tensely breathing,
immodest poem
with all the curvaceous elegance of baroque women
and with, on its reverse side, a slender plant.*

In an interview that she gave to Anabela Mota Ribeiro, in 2011, she said that “the idea of disorder can be found in all my books”.

Born in Lisbon, in 1956, she has lived in Leça da Palmeira since the age of nine. An Associate Professor at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Porto, she is currently undertaking research into Comparative Poetics, Feminist Studies and Queer Studies. She has written a PhD on the poetry of Emily Dickinson and her own books of poetry have been published in various countries, such as France, Brazil, Sweden, Holland, Venezuela, Italy and Colombia, as well as briefly in Mexico and Germany. In 2007, she was awarded the Casino da Póvoa/Correntes d’Escritas Prize for Literature for her book *A Génese do Amor*, which was also selected for the Portugal Telecom Prize. In the same year, she was awarded the Giuseppe Acerbi Prize for Poetry in Italy. In 2008, her book *Entre Dois Rios e Outras Noites*, was awarded the Portuguese Writers’ Association Grand Prize for Poetry, and, in 2012, her book *Vozes* won the António Gedeão Prize for Poetry. This year, she has already won the Premio Internazionale Fondazione Roma: Ritratti di Poesia 2018, for her poetic work as a whole.

MEDITERRANEAN

*the seas of Homer ceased
to bring their slender ships*

*in the name of the nameless, it goes on.
across sandy deserts, meaningless
deserts, it goes on. in faces in the desert,
shapeless, nameless faces, it goes on.
in the depths of the desert, drops
of blood, grains of sand, the sphinx
within the desert, it goes on, in the
name of the dense, seemingly vital
fluid, measured out in tons, still it goes on.*

*the divine mills slowly grinding
fine flour, futile seas of dust*

Translated by Margaret Jull Costa



Photo by Onomatopéia

*«These words celebrate
the hidden potentiality
inside every woman
— and the spontaneity
of life itself, even in
its contemplation
of sudden death»*

Lee Yew Leong, *The Guardian*

Harryette Mullen

*Retiring to the canopy of the bedroom, turning on the bedside light,
taking the big dictionary to bed, clutching the unabridged bulk,
heavy with the weight of all the meanings between these covers,
smoothing the thin sheets, thick with accented syllables.*

This will be her first visit to Lisbon, and her poems have yet to be published in Portugal.

Harryette Mullen was born in Alabama (1953) and grew up in Texas. She teaches American Poetry, Afro-American Literature and Creative Writing at UCLA (University of California, Los Angeles), and writes poems, short stories and essays. She began publishing her writings when still at secondary school.

Her work has been included in various anthologies and she has won such awards as the Jackson Poetry Prize, the Katherine Newman Award for the best essay on multi-ethnic literature in the United States and the Gertrude Stein Prize for Innovative Poetry.

Her poems have been translated into Spanish, French, German, Brazilian Portuguese, Polish, Swedish, Danish, Turkish and Bulgarian. She has published seven books of poems, including *Recyclopedia* (2006), the winner of the PEN Beyond Margins Award; *Sleeping with the Dictionary* (2002), a finalist in the contests for the National Book Award, the National Book Critics Circle Award and the Los Angeles Times Book Prize; *The Cracks Between What We Are and What We Are Supposed to Be* (2012), a collection of essays and interviews and *Urban Tumbleweed: Notes from a Tanka Diary* (2013).

The first translations of poems by Harryette Mullen into European Portuguese were made by Margarida Vale de Gato for the *Lisbon Revisited* — *Poetry Days* encounter, organised by Casa Fernando Pessoa in 2018.

On 30 May, Maria Sequeira Mendes will be giving a special talk on this poet in the Poetry in the Museum 2018 cycle, at the Museu da Música.



Photo by Judy Natal

*«These relationships
among femininity,
clothes and language
are beautifully
orchestrated in word-
play that dramatizes
complex issues about
gender and culture
without offering easy or
predictable answers.»*

Elizabeth A. Frost, *Women's Review of Books*

ONCE EVER AFTER

There was this princess who wet the bed through many mattresses, she was so attuned. She neither conversed with magical beasts nor watched her mother turn into a stairwell or a stoop. Her lips were. Her hair was. Her complexion was. Her beauty or her just appearance. What she wore. She was born on a chessboard, with parents and siblings, all royal. Was there a witch? Was she enchanted, or drugged? When did she decide to sleep? Dreaming a knight in armor, she thought it meant jousting. His kind attack with streamers. A frog would croak. A heart would cough after only one bite. Something was red. There was wet and there was weather. She couldn't make it gold without his name. Her night shifts in the textile mill. She forgot she was a changeling peasant girl. Spinning, she got pricked. That's where roses fell and all but one fairy wept. It remains that she be buried alive, knowing that a kiss is smaller than a delayed hunger.

Jorge Sousa Braga

2.
*When you reach the top of the mountain
keep climbing*

In 2015, he told the journalist Raquel Marinho (writing in the *O Poema Ensina a Cair* section of the *Expresso Online* newspaper) that, for him, poetry «is an art of living».

Jorge Sousa Braga was born in Cervães, Vila Verde, in 1957, later moving to Porto, where he has lived for several years, working as a doctor.

He has published various books of poetry, as well as translating and compiling anthologies of such authors as Jorge Luis Borges, Matsuo Bashô and Apollinaire, among others.

Many of his poems are included in the anthology *O Poeta Nu*, published for the first time by Fenda in 1991 and re-published by Assírio e Alvim in 2014. His poems can also be found written in graffiti on the walls of Lisbon, and he generously shares his own translations of poets previously unpublished in Portugal on social media.

AN ANGEL IN OPORTO

*I saw him one day hovering
over the Torre dos Clérigos*

*or walking down the Avenida dos
Aliados in the late afternoon*

*His wings ill-concealed
beneath his raincoat*

*and having relinquished his halo. You
may not believe me, but I did*

*see him. The last time he was cross-
ing the river on foot*

Translated Margaret Jull Costa



Photo by Raquel Marinho

«JSB's poetry is as attentive to the most intimate movements of the inner world as it is to the restrained contemplation of the outer world (especially the world of nature and animals), acquiring an unmistakable lyrical dimension and a powerful inventiveness fuelled by his great ability to join things together.»

Teresa Carvalho, i

Luís Quintais

*When Hector was slain by Achilles
And, in a terminal release of rage,
his corpse hauled round Ilium's city walls.*

*the whole world was struck dumb.
The gods shuddered at the atrocity,
and words, once armed with wings,
ceased to roost in our blood.*

«Contemporary Portuguese poets, each in their own way, refer to a space ruined by life, but Luís Quintais provides a more anthropological indication of this existence next to the precipice.»
Ida Alves from the Fluminense Federal University.

Luís Quintais was born in 1968. A poet, essayist, anthropologist and teacher at the University of Coimbra, he has published thirteen books of poetry: *A imprecisa melancolia* (1995), *Lamento* (1999), *Umbria* (1999), *Verso antigo* (2001), *Angst* (2002), *Duelo* (2004), *Canto onde* (2006), *Mais espesso que a água* (2008), *Riscava a palavra dor no quadro negro* (2010), *Depois da música* (2013), *O vidro* (2014), *Arrancar penas a um canto de cisne. Poesia 2015-1995* (2015), and *A noite imóvel* (2017). He is also the winner of the following awards: Aula de Poesia de Barcelona Prize, PEN Clube Português Award, Luís Miguel Nava Foundation Prize, Inês de Castro Foundation Prize, António Ramos Rosa Prize, and the Portuguese Writers' Association (Teixeira de Pascoaes) Prize.

His personal webpage can be found at:
luisquintaisweb.wordpress.com



«a singular voice, with a sense of lyricism developed in constant dialogue with various poetic traditions and clarified by a subtle irony that runs through all his poems.»

Jury of the Teixeira de Pascoes Grand Prize for Poetry, 2018

AMPHITHEATRE

*All forms of violence are unforgivable,
he said, and the shadows fell across the table.*

*Also unforgivable is the silence that battens down faces.
A sound emerged, preempting meaning. History hallucinates,*

*he said, and something gave way among the fallen shadows.
I made a note, and the stare, my stare, skidded on the glass*

*of the amphitheatre, groped for transparency. But it was winter,
winter there as well, winter forever, and the plane trees*

*on the other side, just standing there, so aloof,
in their ashen beauty, an anathema,*

a redacted gaze.

Translated by Lesley Saunders

Margarida Vale de Gato

*For me it makes little difference: poet, poetess –
depends on the measure, and the stress –
I prefer translator, but admit
that I sometimes can't be plied, I'm a narcissist.*

Translated by Martin Earl

One of the qualities that is most evident in her poetry (and prior to it) is the skill with which Margarida Vale de Gato shapes the language, which is also invaluable for her translation work.

Her first book of poems has been printed in successive editions, to which she keeps adding new poems: the third version was published this year. She is a translator, as well as a teacher and researcher at the School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon, specialising in the areas of North American Studies and Literary Translation. She has published several essays and books within these fields, especially about Edgar Allan Poe — with the translation and publication of his complete poetic works — *Obra Poética Completa* (Tinta da China, 2009), also organising the book planned by Fernando Pessoa, *Principais Poemas de Edgar Allan Poe* (Babel, 2011) and co-editing the work entitled *Translated Poe* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014). She has been making literary translations from French and English since 1995, having published Portuguese versions of the works of the following authors, among others, Michaux, Nathalie Sarraute, Yeats, Mark Twain, Marianne Moore, Nabokov, Kerouac, Iris Murdoch, Alice Munro. Together with Rui Costa, she wrote the play *Desligar e Voltar a Ligar* (Culturgest, 2011). She has also published the books of poetry *Lançamento* (Douda Correria, 2016) and *Mulher ao Mar* (Mariposa Azul, 2010), this latter work having recently been augmented and published as *Mulher ao Mar e Grinalda* (Mariposa Azul, 2018).



Photo by Vitorino Coragem

*«A unique ear among
her generation, capable
of producing changes
in the physical state
within the language»*

Diogo Vaz Pinto, i

WOMAN OVERBOARD

*MAYDAY I break out: the hard war endures;
empty is the vessel from which I part –
it slacks in the deep, bored by the sway,
a leaking slit, a lack – not in the least
a cork pail with pores made to drift.
I specify: it's terracotta, it cracks
and I am sparse in dense fluidity.
Too late, I know, help will come, if ever
so feebly I flash in obscurity
and the writing does not stay on water;
here I lie: hardly an erasure, less
than a seam the wave will slowly stitch
a slumbering quilt over where I sink.*

Translated by Margarida Vale de Gato

Program

14 JUNE

6.30 pm

ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI
ANA LUÍSA AMARAL
JORGE SOUSA BRAGA

Moderation by Pedro Mexia

Session in Portuguese and English

9.30 pm

Readings with music
by Margarida Campelo

15 JUNE

6.30 pm

AMALIA BAUTISTA
HARRYETTE MULLEN
LUÍS QUINTAIS
MARGARIDA VALE DE GATO

Moderation
by Maria Sequeira Mendes

Session in Portuguese, English and Spanish

9.30 pm

Readings with music
by Sérgio Pelágio

Free Entrance
(subject to seat availability)

ABOUT THIS ENCOUNTER

«The poets were chosen with readers of Portuguese poetry in mind. At this first edition of the event, we will have a two-day programme divided equally between Portuguese and foreign poets.»

«I tried to choose poets of different genders and from several fields of writing, and, in the case of foreign poets, I was looking for a variety in their mother tongues. In future editions, we may make a choice based on affinities of language and origin, but this year I wanted diversity.»

Clara Riso

Director of Casa Fernando Pessoa

Lisbon Revisited — Poetry Days
is organised by Casa Fernando Pessoa,
with the support of the Antena 2 radio
station, the Spanish Embassy
and American Corners Portugal.

For more information please contact:
Margarida Ferra | margaridaferra@egeac.pt | 927 520 879 | 213 913 270

**Lisbon
Revisited**
DIAS DE POESIA



CASAFERNANDOPESSOA.PT