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< <http://lletra.uoc.edu/en/author/joan-margarit> >

Joan Margarit



From a Felicitous Point

Francesc Parcerisas

Throughout its long and supple existence, Joan Margarit's poetry has kept acquiring more and more readers so that he has now become one of the most widely read Catalan

poets in Catalonia and also in the rest of the Peninsula. His early works were written in Spanish but he would eventually switch to Catalan. His poetry is realist with a strong presence of autobiographical elements, a well-tempered use of metaphor, and reflections of a moral nature that move from the individual to the collective. In Margarit's work, anonymous individuals and jazz musicians might be the protagonists of a poem.

Joan Margarit (Sanaüja, 1938) has reached the felicitous point that now enables him to harvest the fruit of many years of work, of what ` to paraphrase him ` he has done, rather than what he thought he ought to do. Margarit's literary engagement, moreover, has markedly increased in recent years thanks to his intensified focus on writing, his study and translations of the work of other poets (Hardy, Bishop), translations and diffusion of his own work and, with all this, achieving a register of truth, which, while it has been present in all his books, has acquired the transparency of knowledge and pain. *Càlcul d'estructures (Calculus of Structures)*, 2005 and *Joana*, 2002 ` and I believe that, they should be presented in this order because the former of the two titles was left dormant as a result of the urgency of the latter ` very effectively advance this calm, uncompromising accrual, the poet always comfortable in the structure of his verse, and revealing a good dose of moral firmness that has no time for deceit, especially deceit fuelled with false illusions that mask the sense of life, which is nothing other than the *Casa de Misericòrdia (House of Mercy)*. Poems like "La merla" (The Blackbird) or "Refugis" (Refuges) are constructed in order to accompany readers and the poet, from his full understanding of having saved very few things. He now repeats in this new book, "There remained what lay behind tenderness" and we understand that not even tenderness ` not to mention blinding passion ` can be any life-saving plank to which we might cling.

Cast adrift, inevitably, on the sense of life, we waver between the black mask that blocks out the light, enabling us to long for some kind of rose-tinted patch of life, and the deep, inexorable knowledge of the insignificant certainty of our own end. The only possible way to contemplate past life, for Margarit, is the ability to "manage one's own desire and one's own failure". Such stoicism, in the end, has to be cruel "like a good poem", or cruel like the hair-raising reality of the theme that runs through the architecture of the writing that gives its name to the collection: in the years just after the Civil War, children were put into the House of Mercy by mothers who were reduced to conditions of the most abject poverty. "True charity is frightening", reflects the poet. Margarit's work, from *L'ombra de l'alta mar (The Shadow of the High Sea ` Edicions 62, 1981)* and *Cants d'Hekatònim de Tifundis (Songs of Hecatonimus of Tifundis ` La Gaya Ciència, 1982)*, which surprised Catalan readers (although Margarit had already published four volumes of poetry in Spanish, among them *Crònica (Chronicle ` 1975)*, in the prestigious Ocnos collection of Barral Editores), has become more singular and intense, very personal, with a world that, even while often non-transferable, states very clearly what lies behind the emotions of today's citizens. The private haven affords us with moments of passion that, with luck, become moments of knowledge. And knowledge itself warns us that neither passion nor

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knowledge can last, however hard we try to make them. Against this nihilistic perspective, the only struggle, in Margarit's case, is the saving grace of writing itself: feelings, memories, the experiences of different moments, music, reading ? Behind his comprehensible and homely images there yearns an old-style humanism, without uninhibited tragedies but closer to humble mystery and the sense of fragility that accelerates as time devours us. "Tramvia" (Tram), "Crematori" (Crematorium) and "L'últim joc" (The Last Game) are examples of this way of working, which manages to shun deceit and proceed with firm step on foundations that the poet knows his readers will work out for themselves, if not in the reading, then in the memory of the poem. The slippers of an old man, the oily sea at the foot of the cemetery, the old tractors in the countryside, the dignity of the old man who knows he's nearing death ? are notes, images for a single idea: navigating with dignity the buffetings of life.

One final consideration: the wide diffusion of Joan Margarit's work is an example of his personal tenacity. The appearance of his most recent books, translated by himself, in well-distributed collections of Spanish poetry, and his contacts with writers in Spain who appreciate his work and have accorded him recognition that is evident, for example, in the bilingual volume of *Letras Hispánicas (Hispanic Letters` edited by J. L. Morante and published by Catedra)*. And the support he has received from the poet Anna Crowe, and his close collaboration with her in the English edition of *Tugs in the Fog* have been important factors in the book's being this autumn's recommended translation by the English Poetry Society. Paraphrasing some lines of the poem "Últims combats" (Final Battles), we could say that we should believe, for once and for all, that from the patched-up mesh of our culture it is still possible to extract such a beautifully effective desire for communication as Margarit's.

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A selection of texts

Text



WEB: Selecció de Poesia Catalana

Hi trobareu 7 poemes de l'autor.

<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/especials/folch/margarit.htm>



WEB: Al Daltabaix Poètic!

Dos poemes de l'autor en aquest web independent de poesia que acull poetes de tendències ben diferents.

<http://www.sant-cugat.net/daltabaix/margar.htm>



WEB: Un viatge literari

Breu recorregut per l'obra de Margarit amb poemes en castellà i català.

<http://www.cabodegata.net/esecocap.html>



WEB: "Guerra civil"

Un poema de l'autor al web *Viu la poesia*.

http://www.viulapoesia.com/pagina_2.php?itinerari=14&tipus=1&subtipus=2&idpoema=204

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WEB: Margarit a EPdLP

Nota biogràfica en castellà amb dos poemes a El Poder de la Palabra.
<http://www.epdlp.com/escritor.php?id=1995>



WEB: Selection of Catalan Poetry

This site offers seven poems by Joan Margarit.
<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/especials/folch/margarit.htm>



WEB: Joan Margarit in Daltabaix Poètic!

Two poems by Joan Margarit offered by this independent poetry website.
<http://www.sant-cugat.net/daltabaix/margar.htm>



WEB: A Literary Journey

A brief survey of Margarit's work with poems in Spanish and Catalan.
<http://www.cabodegata.net/esecocap.html>



WEB: Els estudiants i professors de català de la universitat de Birmingham llegeixen 'El pare', de Joan Margarit

<http://soundcloud.com/lletra/el-pare-joan-margarit>



AUDIO: Tina Font llegeix 'Venedor de roses', de Joan Margarit

<http://soundcloud.com/lletra/venedor-de-roses-joan-margarit>

Bio-bibliography

Biography



WEB: A la Hiperenciclopèdia

http://www.enciclopedia.cat/fitxa_v2.jsp?NDCHEC=0040200



WEB: Fitxa al "Qui és qui a les lletres catalanes"

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc/qq/FitxaAutors.asp?nom1=mar&nom2=&cerca=Cerca&quiform=form1&NRegistre=15&idregistre=2112>



WEB: The author in the Catalan Encyclopaedia

<http://www.grec.cat/cgibin/hecangcl2.pgm?&USUARI=&SESSIO=&NDCHEC=0040200&PGMORI=E>



WEB: A la Viquipèdia

Biografia, obra i enllaços sobre l'autor al web de l'enciclopèdia lliure.
http://ca.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Margarit

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WEB: Joan Margarit a l'Institut Ramon Llull

Nota biobibliogràfica dins l'espai dedicat a la Fira Internacional del Llibre de Guadalajara 2004.
http://fil04.llull.cat/cat/02protagonistes/margarit_joan.shtm



WEB: The author in the Who's Who of Catalan Literature

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc/qeq/fitxaAutorsuk.asp?nom1=Margarit&cercauk2=Search&quinform=form1&NRegistre=1&idregistre=2112>



WEB: In Wikipedia

Biography, works and links on the author in the free encyclopaedia.
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joan_Margarit



WEB: Joan Margarit in the Ramon Llull Institute

Biobibliographical note on this author on a page devoted to the Guadalajara International Book Fair.
http://fil04.llull.cat/eng/02protagonistes/margarit_joan.shtm

Bibliography



WEB: Què hi ha a la Biblioteca de Catalunya

http://cataleg.bnc.cat/search*cat/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Margarit+Joan&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D



WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques universitàries catalanes (CCUC)

http://ccuc.cbuc.cat/search*cat/a?SEARCH=Margarit+Joan+1938&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=23



WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques públiques

<http://argus.biblioteques.gencat.cat/iii/encore/search/C|SMargarit+Joan|Orightresult|U1?lang=cat&suite=pearl>



WEB: Per comprar-ne llibres

<http://www.llibres.cat/ca/detall-autor/margarit-joan>



WEB: Articles de l'autor (Traces)

<http://traces.uab.cat/search?f=author&p=Margarit%20Joan&sc=1&ln=ca>



WEB: Articles sobre l'autor (Traces)

http://traces.uab.cat/search?ln=ca&p=Margarit%2C+Joan&f=keyword&action_search=Cerca&c=Traces+%3A+base+de+dades+de+llengua+i+literatura+catalanes&sf=&so=d&rm=&rg=10&sc=1&of=hb



WEB: Works in the Biblioteca de Catalunya

http://cataleg.bnc.cat/search*eng/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Margarit+Joan&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D

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WEB: The author in The European Library

<http://search.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/en/search/%28%22creator%22+all+%22margarit+joan%22%29.query>



WEB: The author in the Congress Library (US)

<http://catalog.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=First>



WEB: The author in the COPAC Catalogue (UK)

<http://copac.ac.uk/search?&au=Joan+Margarit>

Comments on the author

Criticism



WEB: Pàgina oficial de Joan Margarit

Web molt complet amb poemes, un àlbum fotogràfic, la biografia del poeta i bibliografia. En català, castellà i anglès.

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



WEB: L'autor al Corpus Literari Ciutat de Barcelona

Biografia, enllaços i transcripció d'articles sobre Margarit.

http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=1494



WEB: Entrevista a Joan Margarit

Vídeos del poeta a la Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes.

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaObra.html?portal=0&Ref=8584&video=1>



WEB: Joan Margarit's Official Web Page

A wealth of information at this website, with poems, a photo album, the poet's biography and bibliography. In Catalan, Spanish and English.

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



WEB: Joan Margarit in the City of Barcelona Literary Corpus

Biography, links and a transcription of articles on this author.

http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=1494



WEB: Interview with Joan Margarit

Videos of the poet at the Biblioteca Virtual Miguel de Cervantes (Miguel de Cervantes Virtual Library).

<http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/FichaObra.html?portal=0&Ref=8584&video=1>

Miscellaneous

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WEB: Bibliografia del poeta

A la revista basca de poesia *Zurgai*.

<http://www.zurgai.com/Colaborador.asp?IdColaborador=788>



WEB: Xavier Ribalta canta Joan Margarit

Ressenya sobre els poemes musicats de Joan Margarit. A *La Vanguardia* (15/12/2006).

<http://blogs.lavanguardia.com/lalibreta/ribalta-canta-a-margarit/>



WEB: Bibliography of the Poet

In the Basque poetry review *Zurgai*.

<http://www.zurgai.com/Colaborador.asp?IdColaborador=788>



WEB: Xavier Ribalta sings Joan Margarit

Review of poems by Joan Margarit set to music. In *La Vanguardia* (15/12/2006).

<http://www.lavanguardia.es/lv24h/20061215/51296729410.html>

Comments



WEB: "Joan Margarit y los trucos del oficio"

Article en castellà sobre el poeta i arquitecte. A lne.es.

<http://www.lne.es/secciones/noticia.jsp?pldNoticia=364900&pldSeccion=66&pNumEjemplar=1157>



WEB: "Joan Margarit y los trucos del oficio" (Joan Margarit and the Tricks of the Trade)

Article in Spanish on the poet and architect. At lne.es.

<http://www.lne.es/secciones/noticia.jsp?pldNoticia=364900&pldSeccion=66&pNumEjemplar=1157>



WEB: Activitats per treballar poemes

Tres poemes amb propostes al web *Viu la poesia*.

http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/jmargarit_index_props.html



WEB: Interacció multimèdia de "Guerra Civil"

El web *Viu la poesia* presenta una activitat interactiva d'aquest poema.

http://viulapoesia.com/pagina_interaccio.php?tipus=1&subtipus=2&itinerari=14&idpoema=204&ind=1

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