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Jordi Puntí



Jordi Puntí or Daring

Jordi Galves

Jordi Puntí (Manlleu, 1967) has translated Paul Auster, Amélie Nothomb and Daniel Pennac, among others. He is currently the editor of the literary supplement, *Quadern*,

published by the newspaper *El País*. Jordi Puntí has received public and critical acclaim and is considered one of the most promising new voices of contemporary Catalan literature.

The main feature of the character of Jordi Puntí (Manlleu, 1967) is restlessness. He is possessed of a fidgetiness that has led him, since he was very young, into a lively and intense intellectual activity that has enabled him to become not only a leading young Catalan fiction writer with a bright future but also an outstanding figure in the cultural life of the country, in different spheres and with resounding public success. Since obtaining his degree in Romance Philology in 1991, he has worked in major Barcelona publishing houses ([Edicions 62](#), *Quaderns Crema* and *Columna*), has co-directed the collection of medieval poetry "*La flor inversa (The Inverse Flower)*" along with professors Jordi Cerdà and Eduard Vilella, and has produced a great number of literary translations, notable among which are texts by Daniel Pennac, Amélie Nothomb, Paul Auster and even the well-known comic books of *Asterix*. Jordi Puntí, who is now working on his first novel, writes articles for the Barcelona edition of *El País* on cultural and sporting matters (especially football, one of his great passions) and is a regular speaker on the radio station RAC-1. He is part of the facetious literary group *Germans Miranda*; with whom he has published *Aaaaaahhh* (1998), *El Barça o la vida (Barça or Life)* (1999), *Tocats d'amor (Touched by Love)* (2000), *Contes per a nenes dolentes (Stories for Naughty Girls)*, (2001), *La vida sexual dels Germans Miranda (The Sex Life of the Miranda Brothers)* (2002) and *Adéu, Pujol (Goodbye Pujol)* (2003). However, the most outstanding feature of his professional biography consists, without a doubt, of two collections of stories that have been very well received indeed, by critics and public alike. These are *Pell d'armadillo* (Proa, 1998), winner of the 1995 *Fundació Enciclopèdia Catalana Prize* and *Serra d'Or Critics Prize*, and *Animals tristos* (Empúries, 2002), three stories from which have served as the basis of a screenplay for a film by Ventura Pons entitled "*Animals Ferits*". To all this must be added the publication in 2005 of the novella *Set dies al vaixell de l'amor (Seven Days on the Love Boat)* (Mobil Books).

It should be said that Jordi Puntí forcefully represents a plausible and reasonable way of understanding the professional harvest of Catalan literature at the threshold of the twenty-first century. This literature intentionally distances itself both from the transcendentalist vacuum inspired by Romanticism and from the well-known political instrumentalisation of Catalan resistance-style writing. His is literature that asserts itself in practice rather than in theory, showing its autonomous identity in managing to consolidate the territory that is proper and exclusive to it, that of human stories, called into being by working with everyday language without forgetting that of books. This is writing understood as a craft, like any other, ancient in its roots and of infinite possibilities, a profession that demands, more than anything else, constant work and practical reiteration and to be convincing through its results. It is a craft that, in this case, accepts and continues the rich tradition of literary engagement in the mainstream mass media, one that goes from [Jacint Verdaguer](#) to [Quim Monzó](#) via names such as [Josep Pla](#), for example; a tradition that also reveals a fully contemporary conception

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of literature, which is more open than ever to permanent communication and dialogue with the literatures of other traditions, which end up mingling with that of the author in a natural way. To be specific, in the case of Jordi Puntí, this is the Anglo-Saxon tradition in particular. His literature has been able to set up connections with all sorts of creative and artistic innovations, in particular in the audiovisual sphere. Its focus goes beyond the cultural and academic mores because it is through aesthetics, which has the etymological meaning of "keen or sensitive perception", that one can discover the emotional experience of the human being.

As a writer who deals with everyday matters and the feelings that organise and give dynamism to human life, Jordi Puntí is concerned to testify to the complexity and tension of interpersonal relations without dissimulating his desire to understand and to make comprehensible the behaviour of his characters. In more than one regard, his stories have adopted a literary stance that is very similar to that upheld by [Gabriel Ferrater](#) for his poetry, especially in the sense of proposing to offer "a description, moving from moment to moment, of the moral life of an ordinary man", as he stated in his well-known definition. It is not surprising, then, to find Puntí's proximity to not a few poets in the Ferrater tradition, for example, [Francesc Parcerisas](#) or, even more, to Jordi Cornudella or Jaume Subirana. The literary discourse is established, therefore, as a way of finding out about reality, enabling a good dose of common sense that conjures up the fragility of illusions and shelters them from brutal reality. Discourse, and hence language, is not an innocuous way of approaching the contingency to which the human being finds that he or she is submitted but, on the contrary, language is part of this contingency, of the possibility or otherwise of making sense of reality. It is at once solution and problem, the grandeur and the wretchedness into which both narrator and reader are equally immersed. Introspection and the telling of private experiences, are thus very much in the limelight.

Jordi Puntí's stories are full of couples in crisis, of lonely people who watch television and eat pizzas, of intuitive young girls who seek fulfilment in an amorous adventure, of people who shop in Ikea, of impersonal settings like motorway service areas, camp sites, airport duty-free shops or the cold interior of planes on the trans-Atlantic run. These soulless places of social congregation, without memory or any singularity, are constructed as a metaphor for the impossibility, which is the case with the vast majority of people in our society, of creating a personality that is distinct and very different from all the rest, and of bringing to fruition an accumulation of desires that do not stimulate or help in any way with one's personal growth but end up becoming an obstacle. The stories we are told with great precision bring us closer to a vulgar and crude world that is perilously like the one the reader knows, frequently without the protective screen of irony or sarcasm, without any cultured notes or displays of intelligence by the narrator that might comfort us. Absurdity and vulgarity besiege sentimental relations and also appear in the discourse, whether thought or spoken, of these relations. Unlike the characters of Romantic novels, which vindicate a hero, Jordi Puntí's characters cannot withstand the inertia of society and they do not know how, and are unable to go beyond the scepticism of conformity, or beyond their impotence. They speak, moreover, in a language that is twitchy, edgy, full of clichés and banalities that, like parasites, colonise their minds and prevent them from thinking independently or in any way that might be liberating. In the opulent and boring society that is portrayed for us, sentimentalism and vulgarity freely gush forth, much like the barbarism and horror that so easily take over the shipwrecked children on the deserted island of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.

Jordi Puntí's stories, written in polished, genuine and very elegant language, which is full of stylistic surprises and great adroitness in describing events, are reminiscent in many ways of the classical model represented by [Quim Monzó](#) and other authors of the same ilk, for example, Sergi Pàmies,

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[Empar Moliner](#), [Toni Sala](#) and Josep Maria Fonalleras. They also evoke the American-style locally-focused model established by Ernest Hemingway and subsequently associated with John Cheever, John Updike and Henry Roth. However, unlike them, Puntí situates the experience that dissolves the sentimentalism right at the heart of his stories, in a gesture that is disturbing, uncomfortable and anxiety-provoking. He is convinced that, while good moralising literature or that of manners and mores, contemplates sentimental personalities from a position of superiority and discrepancy, most readers and television watchers consume great quantities of fiction of the worst quality, bland and cheap stories that stir up the most childish and ingenuous passions, and with alienated antiheroes that are complacent about their own resignation and their non-existent sentimental education, who, unlike the main characters of harsher and crueller stories, never enjoy the consoling, cathartic and corrective power of tragedy. Puntí's treatment of stupidity and sentimentalism has nothing to do with the caustic and critical approach of a Flaubert. The question is, can a writer really, in all justice, situate himself outside the real world, above it, as if he had nothing to do with it? Has he never been tarnished by cheapness and vulgarity? A writer as aristocratic as Nabokov thought it was possible. Perhaps after the literary experience of evil, as presented by Dostoyevsky, Baudelaire and Bataille, today's taboo territory is that of unabashed sentimentalism, that of the person who does not know how to be an outsider and does not want to be one either.

Many characters in Jordi Puntí's stories do not live. They act. It is as if life, thanks to the omnipresence of the mass media, had become a constant show, a masked ball without hindrances or limits, in a systematic apotheosis of narcissistic personalities who always want a mirror that will justify them. It is the uprooting power of self-deception. It is living without much sincerity for fear of, and lack of confidence in, oneself. In the story "No estem sols" (We Are Not Alone), to give just one example, we can see the ambiguity that dominates the existence of people. "The scene had the feeling of being in a movie but it isn't clear whether Helmut was sending himself up or whether he really believed it." It is disturbing precisely because it isn't clear.

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A selection of texts

Text



VIDEO: Jordi Puntí, convidat de l'Anatomia 2005/2006

Jordi Puntí fou un dels convidats de la tercera sessió d'Anatomia. Balanç i profecia de la literatura catalana.

<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/anatomia2005/>



WEB: Fragment

Fragment of the story "Bungalow onze (Bungalow Eleven)", from *Animals tristos (Sad Animals)*. At Vilaweb Lletres.

<http://www.vilaweb.cat/www/lletres/lilibre?llibre=633905>



WEB: Déjà vu

Transcription of a story from the book *Pell d'armadillo (Armadillo Skin)*.

http://www.barcelonareview.com/22/c_jp.htm

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Text



WEB: "Déjà vu"

Transcripció d'un conte del seu llibre *Pell d'armadillo*.

http://www.barcelonareview.com/22/c_jp.htm



WEB: "Bungalow onze"

Fragment del conte "Bungalow onze", d'*Animals tristos*. A Vilaweb Lletres.

<http://www.vilaweb.cat/www/lletres/lilibre?llibre=633905>



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<http://www.vilaweb.cat/www/lletres/lilibre?llibre=633905>

Bio-bibliography

Biography



WEB: A la Hiperenciclopèdia

http://www.enciclopedia.cat/fitxa_v2.jsp?NDCHEC=0254690



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

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc/peq/fitxaAutors.asp?nom1=punt%ED&cerca2=Cercar&quiform=form1&NRegistre=&idregistre=8972>



WEB: Jordi Puntí 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/punti_jordi.shtm



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

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc/peq/fitxaAutorsuk.asp?nom1=punti&cercauk2=Search&quiform=form1&NRegistre=&idregistre=8972>



WEB: Jordi Puntí 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/punti_jordi.shtm

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Bibliography



WEB: Què hi ha a la Biblioteca de Catalunya

http://catalag.bnc.cat/search*cat/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Punt%C3%AD+Jordi&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=Punt%C3%AD+Jordi&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=23



WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques públiques

<http://argus.biblioteques.gencat.cat/iii/encore/search/C|SPunt%C3%AD+Jordi|Orighresult|U1?lang=cat&suite=pearl>



WEB: Per comprar-ne llibres

<http://www.llibres.cat/ca/detall-autor/punti-jordi>



WEB: Jordi Puntí a L'Escriny

Complet recull bibliogràfic dins de l'edició digital de *L'Escriny*.

<http://escriny.blogspot.com/2009/02/punti-i-garriga-jordi.html>



WEB: Articles de l'autor (Traces)

<http://traces.uab.cat/search?f=author&p=Punt%C3%AD%20Jordi&sc=1&ln=ca>



WEB: Articles sobre l'autor (Traces)

http://traces.uab.cat/search?ln=ca&p=Punt%C3%AD%2C+Jordi&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://catalag.bnc.cat/search*eng/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Punt%C3%AD+Jordi&sortdropdown=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D



WEB: Jordi Puntí in L'Escriny

Complete bibliographic collection in the *L'Escriny* digital collection.

<http://escriny.blogspot.com/2009/02/punti-i-garriga-jordi.html>



WEB: The author in The European Library

<http://search.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/en/search/%28%22creator%22+all+%22punt%C3%AD+jordi%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)

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<http://copac.ac.uk/search?&au=Jordi+Punt%C3%AD&sort-order=ti%2C-date>

Comments on the author

Criticism



PDF: **Ada Castells conversa amb Jordi Puntí**

Amb motiu de la publicació de la seva primera novel·la, *Maletes robades*. A l'*Avui* (25/02/10).
http://www.traces.uab.es/tracesbd/avui/2010/avui_a2010m2d25p3scultura.pdf



PDF: **Un inici encomiable**

Ressenya de *Pell d'armadillo*, a la revista valenciana *Caràcters* (octubre 1998).
<http://www.traces.uab.es/tracesbd/caracters/ca005.pdf>



WEB: **L'autor al Corpus Literari Ciutat de Barcelona**

Biografia, enllaços i transcripció d'articles sobre Puntí.
http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=2343



PDF: **Animals ferits**

Ventura Pons comenta el guió de la pel·lícula basada en tres relats d'*Animals tristos*.
<http://www.venturapons.com/Mirada%20Libre/animalsferits.doc>



WEB: **Jordi Puntí, Guest Speaker at "Anatomia" 2005/2006**

Jordi Puntí was one of the guest speakers at the third session of "Anatomy. Balance and Prophecy of Catalan Literature".
<http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/anatomia2005/>



WEB: **Jordi Puntí in the City of Barcelona Literary Corpus**

Biography, works, links and a transcription of articles on Puntí.
http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=2343

Comments



WEB: **Les seves obres**

Biografia i ressenyes sobre els llibres de Jordi Puntí publicats en castellà: *Piel de armadillo* i *Animales tristes*. Al web de l'editorial Salamandra.
http://www.salamandra.info/ficha_autor.php?codi=62



WEB: **Vademecum**

Pàgina de literatura i enigmística elaborada per Jordi Puntí, Màrius Serra, Carles Capdevila i Pau Vidal. En anglès, català, espanyol i italià.
<http://www.partal.com/vademecum/>



WEB: **Sobre la immigració castellana**

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< <http://lletra.uoc.edu/en/author/jordi-punti> >

Article informatiu sobre Puntí i els seus projectes literaris. A lamalla.net. 21/9/2005
http://www.lamalla.net/canal/actualitat_cultural/literatura/article.asp?id=177750



PDF: Ada Castells interview Jordi Puntí

For the publication of his first novel, *Maletes robades*. *Avui*, 25/02/10.
http://www.traces.uab.es/tracesbd/avui/2010/avui_a2010m2d25p3scultura.pdf



PDF: "Un inici encomiable" (A Commendable Beginning)

Review of *Pell d'armadillo*, in the Valencian review *Caràcters* (October 1998).
<http://www.traces.uab.es/tracesbd/caracters/ca005.pdf>



WEB: An interview

A brief conversation with Jordi Puntí in the *World Literature Today* (January-February 2006).
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_hb5270/is_200601/ai_n20497473



PDF: *Animals ferits* [Wounded Animals]

Ventura Pons discusses the script of the film based on three stories from *Animals tristos*.
<http://www.venturapons.com/Mirada%20Libre/animalsferits.doc>



WEB: His Works

Biography and reviews of the books of Jordi Puntí that have been published in Spanish: *Piel de armadillo* and *Animales tristes*. On the web page of the publisher Salamandra.
http://www.salamandra.info/ficha_autor.php?codi=62



WEB: Vademecum

Web page on literature and enigmistics prepared by Jordi Puntí, Màrius Serra, Carles Capdevila and Pau Vidal. In English, Catalan, Spanish and Italian.
<http://www.partal.com/vademecum/>