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< <http://lletra.uoc.edu/en/author/narcis-comadira> >

## Narcís Comadira



### Narcís Comadira

(Nou diccionari 62 de la literatura catalana)

Narcís Comadira studied Humanities and Philosophy at the Seminary of his home city of Girona and at the Monastery of Montserrat, after which he began to study Architecture and Romance Philology, to end up with a degree in History of Art. From 1971 to 1973 he was a language tutor at the University of London. Apart from poetry and painting, he has also worked in other disciplines, for example as a playwright, translator, newspaper commentator, literary critic and author of studies in the fields of art, architecture and advertising. Some of his articles that have appeared in the "Quadern" – culture supplement of the newspaper El País – have been collected in the book *Sense escut* (With No Shield - 1998).

Girona, 1942. A multi-faceted artist (poet, playwright, translator, publicist and music lover), Narcís Comadira studied at the Girona Seminary, the Monastery of [Montserrat](#) and the Architecture and Arts faculties of the University of Barcelona.

He published his first poetic ventures (*La febre freda* (Cold Fever) and *Papers privats* (Private Papers)) in the 1960s. Then, with the title *La llibertat i el terror. Poesia 1970-1980* (Freedom and Terror. Poetry 1970 ` 1980), which was published in 1981, he brought together the seven books he had written in the decade of the 1970s: *Amich de plor...* (Weeping's Friend ` 1970), *El verd jardí* (The Green Garden ` 1972), *Les ciutats* (Cities ` 1976), *Un passeig pels bulevards ardents* (A Walk Down Burning Boulevards ` 1974), *Desdesig* (Undesire ` 1976), *Terra natal* (Land of My Birth ` 1978), *Àlbum de família* (Family Album ` 1980), in which some of the constant themes of his poetry appear: the decadence of an ideal of the country (the Catalonia of the [noucentista](#) movement) transformed into a metaphor for human loss in general (almost all the poems of *Terra natal* and other texts devoted to Girona, for example); the self-portraits in which, playing with the name-myth "Narcís" (Narcissus), Comadira confronts his subject with social and family morals (especially in *Àlbum de família*, whose starting point is a set of family photos, but also in *Amich de plor...*); the passing of time (seasons and months, with "Meditació de novembre" (November Meditation) in *El verd jardí*) and nostalgia (especially in *El verd jardí* and the poem "Roma" (Rome) in *Les ciutats*); the complementary relationship between life and death (death feeding life, as in "Serra de cavalls" (Sierra of Horses) and "Iris blaus" (Blue Irises) in *Terra natal*); the role of art in individual and collective life; the relationship between death and art (the poem-poetics "Les ciutats") and the awesome terror of beauty in relation with love ("Desdesig") and art.

With *Enigma* (1985) ` his great symphony ` Comadira makes a qualitative leap in writing a book of powerful metaphysical tension. *En quarantena* (In Quarantine ` 1990) is a dense, bitter sonata that is structured into two parts, the first consisting of 26 often very short independent poems, and the second of the long poem "En quarantena", which gives overall sense to the book, condensing all the poet's doubts about his vital space (Catalonia, Girona), time, love, sex, flesh and physical beauty, words, God and poetry. In *Usdefruit* (Usufruit ` 1995), a series of impromptu poems of enigmatic density, syntactic freedom and a music that resembles the first part of *En quarantena*, he probes the memory of different moments shared by humankind.

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Among his plays are *Neva: un te* (It's Snowing: A Cup of Tea ` 1992), *La vida perdurable: un dinar* (Perdurable Life: a Lunch ` 1992), *L'hora dels adéus* (1996), which have generally drawn on the world of *Àlbum de família*, along with a work devoted to Josep Pla, *El dia dels morts. Un oratori per a Josep Pla* (All Souls' Day. An Oratorio for Josep Pla ` 1997). His prose writings also signal his many intellectual interests: *Girona. Matèria i memòria* (Girona. Material and Memory ` 1992) and *Girona. Retrat sentimental d'una ciutat* (Girona. Sentimental Portrait of a City ` 1998), where he stresses the great importance of the theme of the city of his birth in his poetry; the cookery book *Fórmules magistrals* (Formulas of the Masters ` 1997); *Sense escut* (With No Shield ` 1998), a core collection of quite controversial and highly lucid articles; and *Guia de l'arquitectura dels segles XIX i XX* (A Guide to 19th and 20th Century Architecture ` 1978) and *Rafael Masó, arquitecte noucentista* (Rafael Masó, Architect of the "Noucentist" Movement ` 1996).

Noteworthy among his translations are his versions of authors ranging from Auden, Pavese, Bassani, Leopardi, Lowell to Montale, and an anthology of Italian poetry, all of which testify to his extraordinary abilities.

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The Artist Who Signs as Narcís Comadira

### **Jaume Subirana**

These times of having mobile phones for saying nothing and of big banking alliances for dismissing people and saying there'll be more to come, would not seem to be a very propitious backdrop for utopias. One period of utopia was, for example, the [Renaixement](#) and from this (after Greece, of course) we have learned that the individual endowed himself with the most ambitious frontiers: it was in these times that being an artist meant being musician, poet and painter, and having submitted the Fathers of the Church to critical reading, understanding geometry and being able to recite the classics, all at once.

Narcís Comadira was born in Girona in 1942, spent some time in the seminary and the monastery of [Montserrat](#), started to study Architecture, got a degree on History of Art, went to London to teach and ended up living in a steep Barcelona street ? But, for a number of reasons, one might have the impression that when he entered the world he was mistaken in the place of his arrival and, in particular, the century: a painter and poet and traveller and gastronome, he paints Morandi-like objects of suspended spirit, writes verses with the ear and skill of a Provençal troubadour, produces the plays of an intelligent member of the bourgeoisie and tastes dishes and looks at places with a palate and eyes that may not very sociable but that are much more amorous than those of [Pla](#). Now tell me if he wasn't wrong in landing in this country of romantics in these times of theme parks. But the fact is that in his mistakenness, throughout this rather long erring, Narcís Comadira has written and published a dozen books of poems that have made him one of the unquestionable names in whatever journey one cares to take through the best Catalan poetry of today: from the very early *La febre freda* (1966) to the last book *Usdefruit* (1995), by way of *Enigma* (1985) and *En quarantena* (1990), two essential titles that were awarded several prizes, or by way of an early collection of the complete works (*La llibertat i el terror*, 1981) and an anthology (*Somni i runa* (Dream and Rubble ` 1992), edited by Rossend Arqués). In his erring he has also translated quite a lot, especially from Italian and especially poetry, and some of us have been waiting quite a long time for his promised version of Leopardi's *Cants* (Songs). In his erring he wrote a magnificent text on the city of his birth, *Girona. Matèria i memòria* (1989). And in his erring he began relatively late to write for the theatre with the

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result that *La vida perdurable* (1992) received the critics' prize for the best play of the season.

Comadira, who has sometimes described himself as lazy, continues to construct, tirelessly and without much public fanfare, a complex and coherent *oeuvre* where, as the years go by, one can see how the different parts of his writing articulate and enrich each other. If his poetry is impressive when one sees it as a whole in its continual process of refinement and enrichment, it also happens that his translations of anthologies of Italian poetry for MOLU or of ancient Christian hymns from the Latin resound magnificently in their contemporary renderings, and that his pictorial work of recent years cries out for an exhibition that is sufficiently representative to show to what point, far from this being the hobby of a dilettante, his plastic art shares with his verses the power of contrasts and the beauty of the mental equilibrium of a Mediterranean utopia illuminated with basic colours, just as it happens that the collection of articles that he has contributed in different areas of the mass media on Catalan culture and what we could come to be as a country, now published under the title *Sense escut* (1998), has turned out to be one of the most suggestive books of essays we have seen in recent years. It cannot be a coincidence that this book that has been so discretely despatched to the listless life of bibliographies should have been started precisely under the first of the arches of the Loggia dei Lanzi in Florence and evoking the shades of Michelangelo and Cellini. I have already hinted enough: I see Narcís Comadira more as a knight of the [Renaixement](#) than as a "Catalan poet", this greatly-loved label with so much pedigree and so little exchange value.

In the "Nota de l'autor" (Author's Note) to *La llibertat i el terror*, a text that is repeatedly cited because of its significance, Comadira wrote, "The only thing that matters to me is life, and a certain life that is increasingly difficult to achieve. The happiness that comes from one's own identity with oneself and with this life is the only thing I seek". A few lines below he adds, "Between freedom and terror runs my poetry, almost always helped by the inspiration or by the endeavour itself. Hardly ever by a willed decision." The years have gone by and the passage along the chasm separating (or joining, depending how we see it) freedom and terror has been lengthening: the fragile, the small possible happiness, the utterly human shudder at the sense, the mirage of cities and the bramble of the emotions are all present here (as they were before) in these unpublished poems that Comadira has offered us: the verses maintain the lucidity of the old principles but also incorporate ` as his recent books have also done ` some element of the will that at once gives them density and fine-tunes them. The writer becomes an artist and advances backwards through the fields of time.

Published in *Revista d'Igualada* (Nº. 4, April 2000). Reproduced with permission.

## A selection of texts

### Text



**WEB: "Fait divers"**

Lectura d'aquest poema per part de l'autor i traducció a l'alemany.

<http://www.lyrikline.org/index.php?id=162&L=1&show=Poems&author=nc00&cHash=ef16626cbc>



**WEB: Magisteri Teatre-Mag Poesia**

Conté dos poemes de Comadira i diverses versions seves de l'italià.

<http://www.mallorcaweb.com/mag-teatre/poemes-solts/comadira.html>

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**WEB: Comadira a la Biblioteca Joan Lluís Vives**

Selecció de textos dins el Portal de Poesia Catalana Contemporània de la Biblioteca virtual Joan Lluís Vives.

<http://www.lluisvives.com/FichaObra.html?Ref=23338&portal=190>



**WEB: Un dels "Dotze sentits"**

Comadira és un dels dotze poetes antologats al CD-ROM *Dotze sentits. Poesia catalana d'avui*.

[http://www.iua.upf.edu/dotze\\_sentits/entrada.html](http://www.iua.upf.edu/dotze_sentits/entrada.html)



**WEB: Selecció de Poesia Catalana**

L'antologia d'Albert Folch conté sis poemes de diferents llibres de Comadira.

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



**WEB: Selecció de poemes**

Dos poemes de l'autor al web *Viu la poesia*.

[http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira\\_index\\_poemes.html](http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira_index_poemes.html)



**WEB: Obres traduïdes**

Pàgina de Comadira al Pen Català, amb nota biogràfica i fragments de les seves obres que s'han traduït a d'altres llengües.

[http://www.visat.cat/traduuccions\\_literatura\\_catalana/fitxa-autor.php?id\\_autor=24&idioma=cat](http://www.visat.cat/traduuccions_literatura_catalana/fitxa-autor.php?id_autor=24&idioma=cat)



**WEB: Comadira a EPdLP**

Nota biogràfica amb un poema a El Poder de la Palabra.

<http://www.epdip.com/escritor.php?id=1597>



**WEB: Translated works**

Comadira's page at the Catalan PEN, with biographical note and fragments of his works that have been translated into other languages. In French.

[http://www.visat.cat/traduuccions\\_literatura\\_catalana/fitxa-autor.php?id\\_autor=24&idioma=fra](http://www.visat.cat/traduuccions_literatura_catalana/fitxa-autor.php?id_autor=24&idioma=fra)



**WEB: Selection of Catalan Poetry**

Albert Folch's anthology includes six poems from different books by Comadira.

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



**WEB: Magisteri Teatre-Mag Poesia**

Offers two poems by Comadira and different writings about Italy.

<http://www.mallorcaweb.com/mag-teatre/poemes-solts/comadira.html>



**AUDIO: "Himne de les dones de casa", interpretat per Guillermina Motta**

<http://www.musicadepoetes.cat/app/musicadepoetes/servlet/org.uoc.lletra.musicaDePoetes.Titol?autor=78&titol=476>

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< <http://lletra.uoc.edu/en/author/narcis-comadira> >



**AUDIO: L'autor recita dos poemes**

"Ponentada gran" i "Cisterna"

[http://lletra.uoc.edu/anterior/noms/ncomadira/html\\_especials/narciscomadirarecita1.html](http://lletra.uoc.edu/anterior/noms/ncomadira/html_especials/narciscomadirarecita1.html)

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video



**VIDEO: "Jo"**

El web *Viu la poesia* edita aquest poema amb l'autor.

[http://www.viulapoesia.com/pagina\\_4.php?tipus=1&subtipus=2&itinerari=11&idpoema=263](http://www.viulapoesia.com/pagina_4.php?tipus=1&subtipus=2&itinerari=11&idpoema=263)



**VIDEO: Explicació de "Jo"**

L'autor parla d'aquest poema al web *Viu la poesia*.

[http://www.viulapoesia.com/pagina\\_8.php?tipus=1&subtipus=2&itinerari=11&idpoema=263](http://www.viulapoesia.com/pagina_8.php?tipus=1&subtipus=2&itinerari=11&idpoema=263)

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## Bio-bibliography

### Biography



**WEB: A la Hiperenciclopèdia**

[http://www.enciclopedia.cat/fitxa\\_v2.jsp?NDCHEC=0018922](http://www.enciclopedia.cat/fitxa_v2.jsp?NDCHEC=0018922)



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

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ilc/peq/FitxaAutors.asp?nom1=com&nom2=&cerca=Cerca&quiform=form1&NRegistre=5&idregistre=5040>



**WEB: The author in the Catalan Encyclopaedia**

<http://www.grec.cat/cgibin/hecangcl2.pgm?&USUARI=&SESSIO=&NDCHEC=0018922&PGMORI=E>



**WEB: Narcís Comadira 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/comadira\\_narcis.shtm](http://fil04.llull.cat/cat/02protagonistes/comadira_narcis.shtm)



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

<http://cultura.gencat.net/ILC/peq/fitxaAutorsuk.asp?nom1=Comadira&cercauk2=Search&quiform=form1&NRegistre=1&idregistre=5040>



**WEB: Narcís Comadira 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/comadira\\_narcis.shtm](http://fil04.llull.cat/eng/02protagonistes/comadira_narcis.shtm)

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**WEB: Què hi ha a la Biblioteca de Catalunya**

[http://catalog.bnc.cat/search\\*cat/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdo wn=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D](http://catalog.bnc.cat/search*cat/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdo wn=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D)



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

[http://ccuc.cbuc.cat/search\\*cat/a?SEARCH=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdown=-&searchsco pe=23](http://ccuc.cbuc.cat/search*cat/a?SEARCH=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdown=-&searchsco pe=23)



**WEB: Què hi ha a les biblioteques públiques**

<http://argus.biblioteques.gencat.cat/iii/encore/search/C|SComadira+Narc%C3%ADs|Orightresult|U1? lang=cat&suite=pearl>



**WEB: Per comprar-ne llibres**

<http://www.llibres.cat/ca/detall-autor/comadira-i-moragrega-narcis>



**WEB: Per llegir a internet (BVJLV)**

<http://www.lluisvives.com/FichaAutor.html?Ref=12442&portal=1>



**WEB: Articles de l'autor (Traces)**

<http://traces.uab.cat/search?f=author&p=Comadira%20Narc%C3%ADs&sc=1&ln=ca>



**WEB: Articles sobre l'autor (Traces)**

[http://traces.uab.cat/search?ln=ca&p=Comadira%2C+Narc%C3%ADs&f=keyword&action\\_search=C erca&c=Traces+%3A+base+de+dades+de+llengua+i+literatura+catalanes&sf=&so=d&rm=&rg=10&sc=1&of=hb](http://traces.uab.cat/search?ln=ca&p=Comadira%2C+Narc%C3%ADs&f=keyword&action_search=C erca&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://catalog.bnc.cat/search\\*eng/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdo wn=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D](http://catalog.bnc.cat/search*eng/?searchtype=a&searcharg=Comadira+Narc%C3%ADs&sortdropdo wn=-&searchscope=13&searchscope2=13&SORT=D)



**WEB: The author in The European Library**

<http://search.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/en/search/%28%22creator%22+all+%22comadira+narc% C3%ADs%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=Narc%C3%ADs+Comadira>

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## Comments on the author

### Criticism

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**WEB: Pàgina de l'AELC**

Biografia, publicacions i altres materials.  
<http://www.escriptors.com/autors/comadiran/>



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

Biografia, obra, enllaços i transcripció d'articles sobre Comadira.  
[http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show\\_news&news\\_id=504](http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=504)



**WEB: Narcís Comadira on the Lletra website in Catalan**

Including more resources and reading suggestions.  
<http://www.lletra.cat/noms/ncomadira/index.html>



**WEB: AELC Website**

Biography, information, publications at the Association of Catalan Language Writers website.  
[http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/comadiran/pagina.php?id\\_sec=1404](http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/comadiran/pagina.php?id_sec=1404)



**WEB: Narcís Comadira in the City of Barcelona Literary Corpus**

Biography, work, links and transcription of articles on this author.  
[http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show\\_news&news\\_id=504](http://www.ducros.biz/corpus/index.php?command=show_news&news_id=504)



**WEB: One of the "Dotze sentits" (Twelve Senses)**

Comadira is one of the twelve poets in the CD-ROM anthology *Dotze sentits. Poesia catalana d'avui* (Catalan Poetry Today).  
[http://www.iua.upf.es/dotze\\_sentits/entrada.html](http://www.iua.upf.es/dotze_sentits/entrada.html)

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## Miscellaneous



**WEB: "Estratègies per a la cultura"**

Taula rodona, organitzada per *Barcelona, metròpolis mediterrània* (núm. 44), en què Comadira participa al costat de Jordi Martí, Ferran Mascarell i Joan Rigol.  
[http://www.bcn.es/publicacions/bmm/44/ct\\_2x2.htm](http://www.bcn.es/publicacions/bmm/44/ct_2x2.htm)



**TXT: Col·loqui virtual amb l'autor**

<http://lletra.uoc.edu/articles/comadira1102.html>



**AUDIO: "Formes de l'ombra", un itinerari poètic**

A l'arxiu digital de l'Institut Cervantes.  
<http://archivodigital.cervantes.es/fichas/centros/napoles/poetas.htm>



**WEB: "Estratègies per a la cultura" (Strategies for Culture)**

Panel discussion organised by *Barcelona, metròpolis mediterrània* (Nº. 44), in which Comadira participates along with Jordi Martí, Ferran Mascarell and Joan Rigol.  
[http://www.bcn.es/publicacions/bmm/44/ct\\_2x2.htm](http://www.bcn.es/publicacions/bmm/44/ct_2x2.htm)

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**WEB: Activitats per treballar poemes**

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

[http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira\\_index\\_props.html](http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira_index_props.html)

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**WEB: Interaccions multimèdia**

El web *Viu la poesia* presenta activitats interactives de dos poemes.

[http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira\\_index\\_interac.html](http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ncomadira_index_interac.html)

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