Enric Casasses

Who I Am and Why I Write ...

Enric Casasses

A poet who has taken his inspiration from traditional sources, Enric Casassas blends elements of folklore and present-day pop culture in his work (with clear sympathies for the underground and counterculture movements). His poetry reveals very heterogeneous influences (from medieval, Renaissance, Baroque through to avant-garde poetry), while experimenting with new forms or satirically reworking traditional genres.

Catalan poet, rapsode, essayist and translator. National Literature Prize 2012

This is a two-edged question: who am I and why do I write? The answer is easy. I write because I don’t know who I am. Groping in the dark I find another two-edged question: what am I and because of whom do I write? It doesn’t ask for whom but because of whom, which is like asking whose fault it is but, as we shall see below, the because-of-whom and the for-whom have the same answer in this case. Let’s get to the point: what am I? I am something that is left of the soul of the old miller’s wife, which on her death remained stuck as a tatter on an oleander twig, that scrap of white cloth, which, borne by the wind, blew into my face to blind me just as I went by on that crock of a motorbike that young Espinac had lent me and at first I was about to skid on the dirt track in the bare hills and then I was about to set the bike aright again and in the end I did indeed skid and gave myself a hell of a whack that didn’t turn out to be anything either but nobody can ever get that fright out of me and that’s why I write. The one who was most upset was Espinac because I don’t know how or why but he loved that old wreck of a bike as if it was a little nanny-goat that would come running when it was called to be milked and, trying to avoid meeting up with him because he was looking right through me, I started staying at home and devoted myself to exploring the bare hills of writing, though not as a way of amusing myself but as an inquiry into ignorance because I am the wolf-man who leaps every time something unknown comes within reach of his claws. I am the goal-man on weekdays when he’s not playing football, who gets strange ideas with magnetic forces that send the ball out: always the same damned nightmare. Alone in front of the goal, I kick straight and, just when it’s about to go in, the ball goes off at a right angle into the high grass of the wide path, at least, or off to the chemist shop ? and, okay, so off we go to get it. I am the micro-psychologist who, if you get an attack of madness in a millionth of a second, fixes it up before it’s over and you can spend the rest of the millionth of a second thinking calmly about shrews, which is one of the forms of mental health that are still permitted. I am the stranger who goes along the street when everyone knows each other, or it seems to him that they all know each other, everyone except for him. I am the parrot that they always have on the balcony opening onto the little square below and it’s called Darwin (the parrot I mean). I am the foreign goatherd who takes the country’s goats out to pasture and who longingly confides in them. And what if I am the only stone that by some chance will survive this civilisation? And if I am the left eyebrow of the esparto-eyebrowed man, the sandwich man of Rodoreda’s war?

To sum up, I am one of those who are lost in a sea of chestnuts, one of the lost and that’s it, and
since the lost are perhaps the only ones who have the slightest notion of what this festival of stars among the branches is all about, we write about it for those who know where they are because we are generous and when we have doubts we like to share them. In order to write these things we make ourselves very small. First I make myself very small and then, without wanting to, I almost always remember that Espinac boy and then I think about a multipathic friend of mine and I only write phrases or things that he can understand, which is a system that almost never fails, but that was before because my friend died of lots of things, and I can aver and assure you that everything I had written until then I had written for him and that everything I have written since I have written for him. Having got to here I can answer the first question (who am I?) with a little more self-assurance. I am the familiar voice that seems to call you in the empty house, I am one of the many on the promenade of the forsaken, I am one of those who organises the intergalactic voyage of the poor, the despair of the rich, the consolation of the old. As for the second question (why do I write?), I don't know.

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A selection of texts

WEB: Cançó
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.
http://www.lyrikline.org/en/poems/canco-1027#.UpTgV40hdXM

WEB: La poesia
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: La senyora i el senyor
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: La casa entre les flors
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: Les cases del meu carrer
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: Sextina
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.
WEB: Europa
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: Cançó (Dolor terrible)
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: La manera més salvatge
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: En la nit artificial
Poem of Enric Casasses readed by the author and translated into different languages, in the virtual place Lyrikline.

WEB: Selection of Catalan Poetry
28 poems taken from Començament dels començaments... (Beginning of Beginnings), Calç (Lime) No hi érem (We Were Not There), La cosa aquella (That Thing) and D'equivocar-se així (On Getting it Wrong Like That).
http://www.uoc.edu/lletra/especials/folch/casassas.htm

WEB: Magisteri Teatre-Mag Poetry
Poems from ten different books by Casasses and an anthology for schools.
http://www.mallorcaweb.com/Mag-Teatre/casassas/index.html

WEB: "Cant viu" (Live Song) and "Alguns dimonis..." (Some Demons...)
Two unpublished poems in the poetry website Daltabaix Poètic!.
http://www.sant-cugat.net/daltabaix/cas.htm

WEB: Casasses and Comelade
The poet Enric Casasses recites the poem "Les cases del meu carrer" with Pascal Comelade.
http://es.youtube.com/watch?v=lGSpa3SFGAI&feature=related

WEB: "Tal Tipus" (Such a Sort)
Read this poem in Catalan and English in The Barcelona Review, Nº. 14 (August - October 1999).
http://www.barcelonareview.com/14/c_encas.htm

WEB: "A crits" (Shouting Aloud)
http://www.barcelonareview.com/12/c._ec.htm

Audio

AUDIO: The author recites three poems
The author recites three poems
https://lletra.uoc.edu/anterior/homs/ecasasses/html_especials/enriccasassesrecita1.html
Comments on the author

Criticism

WEB: Website of the Association of Catalan Language Writers
Biography, publications and other materials.
http://www.escriptors.cat/autors/casasses/e/pagina.php?id_sec=3821

WEB: Enric Casasses in the City of Barcelona Literary Corpus
Biography, work, links and transcription of articles on this author.

WEB: One of the Dotze sentits (Twelve Senses)
Casasses is one of the twelve poets in the CD-ROM anthology Dotze sentits. Poesia catalana d'avui (Twelve Senses. Catalan Poetry Today).
http://www.iua.upf.es/dotze_sentits/entrada.html

Miscellaneous

WEB: "Monòleg del perdó" (Monologue of Forgiveness)
Information on a new theatrical work by Casasses.
http://www.ciutatoci.com/teatre/docs/d05/teatre_monoleg_050110.htm

WEB: Interview, Poems and Audio
Interview by Melcion Mateu, three poems and an audio version of another in The Barcelona Review. In Spanish.
http://www.barcelonareview.com/cas/ec1s.htm

WEB: "Bob Dylan i Jacint Verdaguer són idèntics" (Bob Dylan and Jacint Verdaguer Are Identical)
Interview with Casasses by Victor Colomer (29/1/99).
http://www.drac.com/cac/199901/19990129.html

Bio-bibliography

Biography

WEB: Enric Casasses in the Ramon Llull Institute
Biobiobibliographical note on this author on a page devoted to the Guadalajara International Book Fair.
http://www.llull.cat/monografics/fil04/eng/02protagonistes/CasassesEnric.shtml

WEB: Catalan Poets Today
Exhibition with bio-bibliographic references and Internet links, produced by the Humanities Library of the Autonomous University of Barcelona.

Bibliography
If you want to cite this page...
Literary news about Enric Casasses on Lletra, the UOC's virtual space devoted to Catalan literature
< https://lletra.uoc.edu/en/author/enric-casasses >

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WEB: The author in The European Library
http://search.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/en/search/%28%22creator%22+all+%22casasses+enric%22%29.query

WEB: The author in the Congress Library (US)
http://catalog.loc.gov/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?DB=local&PAGE=First

Didactic proposals

Resources

WEB: Work with the poems
Two poems by the author with didactic proposals. In Viu la poesia website.
http://www.viulapoesia.com/membrespocio/arxius/lletra/ecasasses_index_props.html

The author 2.0

In the social network

WEB: Casasses, in Facebook