

The poet Marta Pessarrodona wins the 3rd Fundació Jesús Serra Special Poetry Prize.

The announcement coincides with the closure of the 15th Poetry Competition of the Fundació Jesús Serra (Grupo Catalana Occidente), which received high participation in all its categories.

Marta Pessarrodona has been recognised with the 3rd Fundació Jesús Serra Special Poetry Award, which honours the career of a renowned author or writer, with a prize of €5,000. The winners of the two previous editions, preceding Pesarrodona, were the poets Feliu Formosa (2020) and Antonio Colinas (2021). The panel of judges that selected the poet was formed of the writers Elena Medel and Andrea Valbuena, Carlos Zanón, David Castillo and Ricardo Fernández Aguilá, highlighting "Hers is a clear poetry, with resounding language, in which the music of conversation is elevated to art and beauty; her narrative is about observing reality, which is full of insight and deep reflection, always traversed by feminist consciousness and political commitment."

Marta Pessarrodona (Terrassa, 1941) is a poet, narrator and translator. She has also cultivated the essay writing and biographical genre. Moreover, she has also translated works by some of the greatest 20th century authors and has been a columnist in various publications. Throughout her career she has been recognised with some very prestigious awards: The Cruz de San Jordi de la Generalitat de Catalunya (1997), the Enric Prat de la Riba Award (2006), the National Literature Award (2011), the Medal of Honour of the City of Terrassa (2013), and the Premi d'Honor de las Lletres Catalanes (2019). In the poetry genre, she has published books such as *Berlin suite* (1985), *Homenatge a Walter Benjamin* (1988), *Tria de Poemes* (1994), *Animals i Plantes* (2010) and *Variacions profanes* (2019), the anthology of *Poems 1969-2007* (2007) and *A Favor Nostre* (prologue by Àngels Gregori, 2019), and the complete volume of poetry *Tot m'admira* (2021).

The Special Prize was created within the framework of the Fundació Jesús Serra Poetry Competition, a competition whose aim is to promote the poetic genre in all age groups, and which this year is celebrating its 15th edition.

The 15th Fundació Jesús Serra Poetry Competition, ended its call for entries with high participation

The 15th edition of the Poetry Competition has concluded with high participation, with a total of 1,263 works presented, thus exceeding the entries of previous years. This consolidates this competition, of an international character and unique in its category, which works to promote the poetic genre. The competition featured works from around the world, including entries from several Latin American countries, such as Venezuela, Peru, Uruguay, the Dominican Republic and Paraguay, as well as from Europe, with authors from Romania, Portugal and Russia taking part. Also worthy of note is the participation in category A (over 18s, with a prize of €2,500) as the most popular, as well as the progressive increase in category B (14 to 17 years, with a prize of €1,500). Last but not least was the category C aimed at children aged between 10 and 13, with a prize of €800.

About Fundació Jesús Serra

Fundación Jesús Serra is a non-profit organization created in memory of Jesús Serra Santamans, a well-known businessman and sponsor and founder of Grupo Catalana Occidente. The foundation develops and supports projects in the areas of research, education, business, social action, sports, and promotion of the arts, with the common goal of a responsible commitment to society.

The names of the winners of the three categories for each of the two languages are announced at the following link <https://www.fundacionjesusserra.org/concurso-poesia/ganadores>, and the award ceremony will take place Torre Bellesguard in Barcelona on 1 July.

Following the legacy of Grupo Catalana Occidente's founder, Jesús Serra, the foundation of the insurance group works, among other areas of action, to promote the genre of poetry and culture in general. In addition to the Poetry Competition and the Special Poetry Prize, it is worth highlighting the project "Poetitzat. Poesia a l'escola" (Poetry in school), the result of an agreement signed with the ACEC (Catalonia Writers' Association) and with the collaboration of more than 30 schools. This year, and with the aim of expanding the project, the Foundation has programmed the same project in

educational centres in the Community of Madrid under the name "Poetízate. Poesía en las aulas." (Poetry in the classrooms). The programme presents poetry as a further tool of expression for primary and secondary students, bringing literary gender closer to youngsters and adolescents. It consists of hosting novel poetry recitals in schools and institutes by the poets Josep Pedals and David Castillo. The workshops cover different styles of poetic expression, from classical to trap and its characteristic musicality.

Competition judges

The judging panel of the 15th Fundació Jesús Serra Poetry Competition and the Special Poetry Prize is formed of renowned writers and professionals from the world of culture, such as Elena Medel, Andrea Valbuena, Carlos Zanón, David Castillo and Ricardo Fernández Aguilà.

Andrea Valbuena holds a degree in English Studies from the Complutense University of Madrid. She began writing poetry and shared her first poems by creating a still-active blog, called Brevedad. Through social media, Andrea began to earn her place within literature and managed to self-edit two poetry collections. In 2016, she wrote *Magoa* and won the 1st Valparaíso Poetry Prize, which allowed her to publish her work for the first time. In 2018, she published her second poetry collection, *Si el silencio tomara la palabra*. In March 2020, she published her latest poetry collection, *Lagrimacer o el acto de derramarse*, this time with *Verso y Cuento* (Penguin Random House).

She has also collaborated in publications such as the *Maremágnum* magazine or *Con Pluma y Plomo*, by the Complutense University of Madrid, and in numerous events at national and international universities. With Elvira Sastre, she has taken poetry to classrooms throughout Spain, and has performed on several occasions in Latin America.

Carlos Zanón is the author of several poetry books, of the novels *Nadie ama a un hombre bueno*, *Tarde, mal y nunca*, Brigada 21 prize for the Best First Novel of the Year, and finalist for the Silverio Cañada Memorial, Giallo e dell Noir (Italy), and Violeta Negra (France) awards; *No llames a casa* won the Valencia Negra prize for the Best Noir Novel of the Year, and *Yo fui Johnny Thunders*, won the Salamanca Negra, Novelpol and Dashiell Hammett prize, as well as the book of short stories *Marley estaba muerto*. With *Taxi* he was established as one of the most important authors in the Spanish literature landscape. In 2019, he published

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Problemas de Identidad, a continuation of the Carvalho series by Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. He has just published the novel *Love Song* in 2022. His narrative work has been translated in the United States, Germany, France, Holland and Italy. He collaborates as a columnist and literary and musical critic in newspapers, magazines and cultural supplements.

Elena Medel is a writer from Cordoba particularly dedicated to the field of poetry. She has published the collections of poems *Mi primer bikini* (2002), which received the 2001 Andalusian Youth prize, awarded by the Andalusian Youth Institute; *Tara* (2006) and *Chatterton* (2014), which won the Loewe prize in their Young Creation category. She is also the author of the books *Vacaciones* (2004) and *Un soplo en el corazón* (2007). Her poems have been translated into German, Arabic, Armenian, Slovenian, Basque, French, English, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Swedish and Swahili. Her work appears in numerous recent poetry books. As a storyteller, her stories have also been published in various anthologies. In 2016, she received the Princess of Girona Foundation Arts and Letters Award.

David Castillo is a Catalan poet, founder in 1989 of the cultural supplement of the newspaper El Punt-Avui, after collaborating in major national newspapers and magazines during the eighties. He was director of the magazine *Lletra de canvi* for eight years and served as a professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona for five years. He has organized different poetry cycles and was founder and director of the Barcelona Poetry Week in 1997. In September 2017, he took over as chairman of the ACEC (Catalan Writers' Association). He has the highest distinctions in Catalan literature, from the Sant Jordi prize for novels, the Carles Riba for poetry, the Crexells for the best novel of the year and different Atlántida awards as a literary writer. Some of his most noteworthy works include *Game over*, *El cielo de infierno*, *Espalda desnuda*, *Sin mirar atrás*, *Downtown*, *Poesía*, *Contracultura*, *Barcelona* and *El túnel del tiempo*.

Ricardo Fernández Aguilà, born in Barcelona, has been a professor and writer. A graduate of Hispanic Philology, he is the author of *Un Fernandes entre banderas* (2014), *Un profesor se despide* (2017) and online stories *Un entender no entendiendo* (2012-2013). He has also done introductory studies and translations on the books *El diálogo como el inconsciente: Antonio Machado* by Antoni Pascual Piqué (2009) and *32 poemas* by Màrius Torres. His project *El despertar de la conciencia a través de la poesía* (The awakening of the consciousness through poetry) has travelled to cities such as Barcelona and Madrid in search of the inspiration of poetry for the different stages of life. For more than forty years, he has been a secondary school and baccalaureate teacher, as well as a translator, especially of children's literature.

You can follow the latest news about the Competition on the Fundación Jesús Serra social media profiles with the hashtag #ConcursoPoesíaFJS or on the website <https://www.fundacionjesusserra.org/concurso-poesia>

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