



Saudade: An Anthology of Fado Poetry

From Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

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"Saudade" - so difficult to translate the yearning soul of Fado music, Portugal's urban folk tradition. So what happens when you ask 18 of our finest poets - versed in the art of translation but mostly coming to the music for the first time - to create versions in English of the poetry on which Fado songs are based? George Szirtes, Elaine Feinstein, Don Paterson and others find themselves challenged, as Carol Rumens describes it, to perform 'a translation double-act', turning 'a poetic song in one language into a song-like poem in another'. Their approaches span the range from close equivalence to loose 'imitation', but all seek to convey some essence of the culture and music of Fado. The music has now taken its rightful place on the world stage, but Fado poetry is still little known outside Portugal. "Saudade" - the first ever anthology in English - offers poems from across the repertoire: peasant songs from Fado's earliest days, songs from the genre's greatest poets, exuberant evocations of the low-life Fado 'scene', metaphysical speculation, songs of resistance, and, above all, of love. With newly commissioned versions in English from the following poets: Moniza Alvi, Judith Barrington, David Constantine, Alfred Corn, Ruth Fainlight, Elaine Feinstein, Grey Gowrie, Marilyn Hacker, Philip Jenkins, Fady Joudah, Sarah Maguire, Eric Ormsby, Don Paterson, Pascale Petit, Carol Rumens, Fiona Sampson, Michael Schmidt, and George Szirtes.

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