Entre donas
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Entre donas (Among Women)

Entre donas [Among Women] is a well-planned anthology of ten stories by ten women currently living, working, and writing in Galicia. Well-planned means the stories hold together exceptionally well in their length - the average length is eighteen pages - and intention - expressing what is sometimes left unsaid. That shared intention is even exquisitely illustrated

by the cover by Verónica Ramilo, which shows women pulling on ropes, a long distance from the spot on the globe to which they are attached. The observant reader will recognize that common connecting point is Galicia. The women pull together, sharing the ropes and their ability to perhaps move their world beyond its physical borders.

Entre donas is one of the best anthologies of contemporary literature in the Galician language. Some might argue that it is the best since the language became official after 1975. Not only are all the contributors recognized for their work, several of them are also poets and novelists, as well as playwrights. The stories are of high quality, with well-developed plots, strong narrative voices, and a purpose that might best be defined as endeavoring to show the level and diversity of what women writers are producing in their language. That is exactly what the cover image captures: strength and focus.

Nevertheless, the themes of the ten stories are diverse, as are the settings, and are testimony to Galician's right to a place in global literature. History, myth, the dry wit which is called retranca in Galician, and the revisioning - not revising - of attitudes and female figures - all create a strong grouping around this set of women's stories.

Over all, these ten stories of Entre donas are quite varied in technique, which has time to display itself in the lengthy texts. Dialogues are masterful, to the point where even the unnatural is rendered plausible, because whatever transpires in each narrative, each one aims to give expression to female characters. Not all the stories are optimistic, but many are, and some seem to laugh at the absurdity of gender inequality.

The range of styles and approaches to women's issues, the complexity of plots and sophistication of techniques are enough to satisfy any reader, regardless of place of residence. The number of contributors, as well as the current active status of all of them, make this anthology an essential title for all readers in Galician and, hopefully, in the future, for readers in other languages.

From the reader´s report by