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Canadian poet and classicist Anne Carson delivers the Poetry Society's Annual Lecture 2013 at the British Museum and at Liverpool University



Anne Carson

'STAMMERING, STOPS, SILENCE: ON THE METHOD AND USES OF UNTRANSLATION' – Anne Carson presents an illustrated exploration of the untranslatable.

London

Friday 27th September, 7pm
The BP Lecture Theatre, British Museum,
Great Russell St, London, WC1B 3DG.

Tickets £10 (£8 Poetry Society members and concessions). Book at www.poetrysociety.org.uk or tel: 020 7420 9886.
All welcome.

Liverpool

Monday 30th September, 6.30pm
University of Liverpool's Kenneth Allott Lecture,
Victoria Gallery & Museum (Leggate Theatre),
Ashton St, Liverpool, L69 3DR.

Tickets free but must be reserved in advance.
Tel: Filomena Saltao: 0151 795 3129
or email: alfredo@liverpool.ac.uk

In a rare UK appearance, poet and classicist Anne Carson gives the Poetry Society's Annual Lecture in which she will discuss gaps between languages, the airy, haunted space where ancient and modern come together, and words that go silent in transit. She will explore Homer, Joan of Arc, Francis Bacon, Hölderlin, Rembrandt, Paul Celan and Ibykos, as well as referencing her own poetry.

"The most instantly penetrating of contemporary poets... she has great intellectual and emotional knowledge, a vast habitat, to every bit of which she brings powerful perception and a freshness as startling as a loud knock at the door." – *New York Times Book Review*

Born in Toronto, Canada in 1950 Carson is a Classics professor, as well as a celebrated poet, essayist and translator. She has translated writers including Sappho, Euripides and Sophokles, and won the T.S. Eliot Prize with her poetry collection *The Beauty of the Husband*, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Lannan Award, the Pushcart Prize, a MacArthur Fellowship and the Griffin Prize for Poetry.

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For further information
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Her many poetry collections include *Short Talks* (Brick Books, 1992), *Glass, Irony and God* (1998), *Autobiography of Red* (1999), *Men In The Off Hours* (2000) *Decreation: Poetry, Essays, Opera* (2006) and *Red Doc>* (2013) – all published by Cape.

Poet and critic Katy Evans Bush recently interviewed Carson for *Poetry News*, published by the Poetry Society – excerpt below:

...What about the timeframe her lecture alludes to, I wanted to know. Carson is a Classics professor as well as a Modernist poet. In *The Autobiography of Red*, she writes that the Greek poet Stesichorus “came after Homer and before Gertrude Stein, a difficult period for a poet”. She clearly has no problem in seeing such a lengthy “difficult period” as a continuum. “In fact, it operates as a continuum, this is a good word,” she replied. “Ancient and modern things seem different parts of the same head (mine, yours). I like the airy haunted space where they come together.”

Her latest book *Red Doc>* is a sequel to, but very different from, *The Autobiography of Red*. It uses anachronism, non-sequitur, a break with place, time, persona. Even the title seems a fragment, something unfinished or part-lost. As the poet writes: “This one sails out and out / and out”. Is there a way in which it too works as an interrogation, enacting a process of “untranslation”?

“When I was writing *Autobiography of Red* I liked the mother a lot but did not know where she came from (she’s not my mother). Anyway, she seemed worth continuing and I thought she might have her own book one day. This still hasn’t quite happened but I have come to like her even more (maybe she is my mother).” As for the title – “*Red Doc>* was the title given to this MS by my computer the first time I ‘saved’ it. A concise title I thought.”

Carson’s London venue (her lecture will also be presented in Liverpool) is the British Museum. Has she a favourite object in the collection? “Perhaps predictably the empty places where the limbs on the Parthenon frieze break off,” she responded.

As a parting question, and aware that *Poetry News* readers are also keen writers, I asked Ms. Carson for one absolutely crucial piece of advice for a poet. Her reply enacts itself so perfectly that it made me laugh: “Of any project, start in the middle.” (Interview published in *Poetry News*, June 2013)

– ENDS –

**To find out more or to arrange an interview with Anne Carson, please contact
Robyn Donaldson on 020 7420 9886, or email marketing@poetrysociety.org.uk**

Notes to Editors:

• **Anne Carson** was born in Toronto, Canada, in 1950 and is a Classics professor, as well as a celebrated poet, essayist and translator. Her first book-length collection, *Short Talks* (Brick Books, 1992), was followed by works that have always pushed at the borders of form and genre. These include *Glass, Irony and God* (1998), *Autobiography of Red* (1999), *Men In The Off Hours* (2000) and *Decreation: Poetry, Essays, Opera* (2006). All are published by Cape Poetry; her latest book, *Red Doc>*, was published by Cape in July. She became the first woman to win the T.S. Eliot Prize, with *The Beauty of the Husband: A Fictional Essay in 29 Tangos* (2001). Other prizes and honours include a Guggenheim Fellowship, a Lannan Award, the Pushcart Prize, a MacArthur Fellowship and the Griffin Prize for Poetry. She has also published many translations: *If Not, Winter: Fragments of Sappho* (Virago, 2001); *Grief Lessons: Four Plays by Euripides* (New York Review Books, 2006); *An Oresteia* (Faber, 2009); and *Antigonick* (Bloodaxe, 2012). Among the most beautiful of her works is *Nox* (New Directions, 2009), an illustrated, accordion-fold, facsimile of a handmade book Carson wrote and created after the death of her brother.

• **The Poetry Society** was founded in 1909 to promote a “more general recognition and appreciation of poetry”. Since then, it has grown into one of Britain’s most dynamic arts organisations, representing British poetry both nationally and internationally. With innovative education and commissioning programmes and a packed calendar of performances, readings and competitions, the Poetry Society champions poetry for all ages. It publishes the magazine *Poetry Review*, runs the National Poetry Competition, the Foyle Young Poets of the Year Award and the youth performance poetry championship SLAMBassadors UK. www.poetrysociety.org.uk

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