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photograph

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Photo by Charles O'Keefe

*Leopoldo María Panero (1948-) is a Spanish poet most commonly associated with the Novísimos, a reactionary, unconventional poetic group that began to question the basis of authority during Franco's dictatorial regime. Panero's voice is defiant yet resolute; his poetry deconstructs notions of identity by breaking traditional form. In *Así se fundó Carnaby Street* (1970), Panero creates a series of comic vignettes in poetic prose, distorting the reader's memories of childhood innocence and re-mystifying a popular culture that has governed both past and present.*

*Panero has spent much of his life in and out of psychiatric institutions, and consequently his representation of the aesthetic nightmare has evolved. *Poemas del Manicomio de Mondragón* (1999) reflects the shift in his poetry to a more twisted, obscure sense of futility and the nothingness that pervades human existence. Panero views translation not as a reproduction of the original work, but rather a "per-version" of the author's poetic voice.*

Panero currently resides in a mental hospital in the Canary Islands. He remains there at his own volition.

Daniel Persia

Blancanieves se despide de los siete enanos

Prometo escribiros, pañuelos que se pierden en el horizonte, risas que palidecen, rostros que caen sin peso sobre la hierba húmeda, donde las arañas tejen ahora sus azules telas. En la casa del bosque crujen, de noche, las viejas maderas, el viento agita ráídos cortinajes, entra sólo la luna a través de las grietas. Los espejos silenciosos, ahora, qué grotescos, envenenados peines, manzanas, maleficios, qué olor a cerrado, ahora, qué grotescos. Os echaré de menos, nunca os olvidaré. Pañuelos que se pierden en el horizonte. A lo lejos se oyen golpes secos, uno tras otro los árboles se derrumban. Está en venta el jardín de los cerezos.

Leopoldo María Panero

Así se fundó Carnaby Street, 1970

In Poesía Completa 1970-2000

Túa Blesa, Colección Visor de Poesía, 2006

Snow White Says Goodbye to the Seven Dwarfs

I promise to write you, handkerchiefs fading in the horizon, laughs turning pale, faces falling, weightless, on the damp grass, where the spiders weave their azure webs. In the cottage, at night, the timbers creak, wind shakes the tattered curtains, the moon enters through the cracks, alone. The silent mirrors, now how grotesque! The poisonous combs, the apples, the curses, what a musty smell, now how grotesque! I will miss you, I will never forget you. Handkerchiefs fading in the horizon. From afar the dry blows sound, one after the other, trees collapsing. The garden of cherries is for sale.

Leopoldo María Panero

Thus Carnaby Street Was Founded, 1970

Translated by Daniel Persia