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Clara Janés [encyclopedia entry]

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Janés, Clara (1940–)

Born in Barcelona, Spain, to an artistic literary family (her mother was a musician, her father, an editor) Janés is best known as a poet, although she has also published novels, essays, short stories, biographies and a travelogue. Her work reflects an artistic beauty and transcendence of the word in her efforts to refine language and to purify form. From existentialism and essentialism she progresses toward an affirmation of life (*Vivir* [1983; *To Live*]), from the erotic and mythical to a mystical communion with the cosmos. Following the publication of *Las estrellas vencidas* (1964; *The Conquered Stars*), Janés has produced over 25 poetic works. The most important volumes include *Kampa* (1986), which depicts the spiritual and literary relationship she develops with Czech poet Vladimír Holan; *Crecente fértil* (1989; *Fertile Crescent*), wherein her expression of love becomes an erotic one; and *Rosas de fuego* (1996; *Roses of Fire*, 2004), in which love sentiments assume a mystical dimension. She recently published *La voz de Ofelia* (2005; *The Voice of Ophelia*), a poetic, autobiographical work structured around her relationship with Holan and how that relationship influenced her work.

Janés possesses fluent command of many languages and has translated the work of Holan and other Czech, Hindu, Persian, Turkish, and ancient mystic poets. Her work has garnered major translation and literary prizes and has been translated into 18 languages. Janés continues to write, translate, and lecture.

Anne M. Pasero