

“When I read these lines, and find these variations in tone between the intimate lyric voice and the direct political statement, I am tempted to think it is Anna Akhmatova’s form and tone that Mariela Griffor aspires most to resemble. Anna Akhmatova, one of the 20th century’s most important authors, certainly was able to bring the intimate and public utterings together in the work of poetry that is dazzling and instantly memorable. And, Mariela Griffor? Born in Chile, an involuntary exile first in Sweden and then in the United States, the author of this collection does have a life story that is also both tragic and amazing by turns. Yet it is not just her lyrical voice and not her biography that attracts me to Griffor’s work it is her ability to write about love in the time of war, attempting to make of memory’s violent imprint into language an art. Reading this book, I am most interested in Griffor’s constant pursuit of both tenderness and truth.”

– Ilya Kaminsky, author of *Dancing in Odessa*

“An incredibly powerful and complex journey beyond the window of exile into the depths of the experience, *Exiliana* is brilliant and maddening in its uncensored truth about love and death, war and life – brilliant in the richness and detail that can only come from a mind rare enough to focus on both, the war-torn graves of Latin America and the politics of thrown away pink sofas on the streets of Detroit, maddening in the way it forces us to continuously question the reality of our own lives. This is a significant work by any standard.”

– Rainelle Burton, author of *The Root Worker*

“The poetry of Mariela Griffor, a Chilean poet by way of both Sweden and the United States, refreshes itself at every turn: at once vivacious and soulful, candid and lyrical, fraught with the exigencies of exile, but perfumed by memory.”

– Molly Peacock, author of *Cornucopia*

“Like the knight of *La Mancha*, Mariela Griffor’s poetic motto is a defiant, ‘Never die! Never die!’ She writes, ‘It is the motto I carry on my chest, / that I hang up on the fence / outside my house / at the beginning / of each night.’ In poems that are both tenderhearted and tenaciously brave, Griffor reclaims from death, she postpones death, she wrestles and wrenches free from death’s grip, poems that take Rilke’s credo to ‘Speak and bear witness’ to heart. If, as Rilke claimed, it’s true that, ‘More than ever / the Things that we might experience are vanishing, for / what crowds them out and replaces them is an imageless act,’ Griffor’s *Exiliana* is her response to restore images, both horrific and beautiful, to acts both remembered and re-lived.”

– Peter Markus, author of *The Singing Fish*



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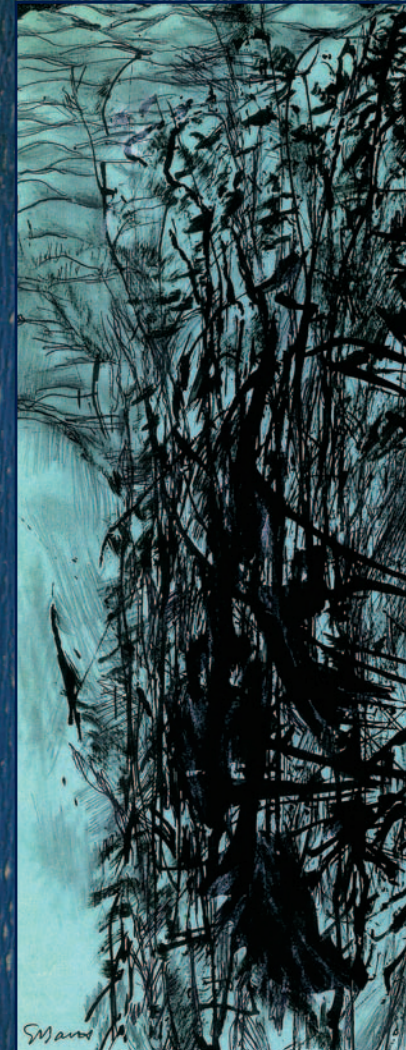
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MARIELA GRIFFOR

EXILIANA

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poems

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