

Book Launch

Bolfek-Radovani, Jasmina, *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues*
(Tears in the Fence: Dorset, 2022)

Morocco Bound Bookshop, Thursday 23 February, 7 pm



Tears in the Fence are delighted to announce that the book launch of Jasmina Bolfek-Radovani's *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues* will take place at [Morocco Bound bookshop](#), 1A Morocco Street, Bermondsey, London SE1 3HB, on Thursday, 23rd February, from 7.00 pm.

The event will start at 7pm with an introduction by the Tears in the Fence editor David Caddy, followed by the reading from the book by the poet and the reader Bridget Knapper, a conversation with Prof Debra Kelly, and mingling and a chance for book signing after 8pm.

Tickets for the event can be purchased [here](#).

The story of Morocco Bound

Firstly, the name reflects the shop's location: Morocco Street. The area used to be famous for both its tanneries and its printing industry. Moroccan leather was some of the finest quality out there, so it was used for binding books back in the day.

It is also a pun which comes from the film *The Road to Morocco* in which Bing Crosby and Bob Hope travelling on a camel, Morocco bound!

Knitting Drum Machines for Exiled Tongues

Jasmina Bolfek-Radovani's ground-breaking poetry collection *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues* presents the reader with thirty-five multilingual poems in English, French and Croatian structurally interwoven with thirteen visual-textual fragments and three poems-tattoos or "tattooed" drawings through the narrative device of "enchâssement" (embedding). Using the universal languages of the heart/love/ music/rhythm the author seamlessly transgresses borders and provides us with a poignant, evocative, and fully inclusive, immersive experience. The recurring tropes of falling, absence, and loss, and the evocation of a fourth "shadow language" signify the narrator's displacement from 'home' and language, whilst at the same time questioning the identity discourses of nostalgia, belonging and exile. Here, the central image of the "knitting drum machines for exiled tongues" can be interpreted both as an innovative artistic practice allowing the revival of lost and / or exiled languages, and as an enabling device for the (re-)coding of multilingual language patterns in which "poetry of the mind breaks free".

A QR code included in the book invites the reader to access additional content related to the *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues* collection such as a glossary, visual, and audio sources.

“For this half-Croatian, half-Algerian poet, belonging is an improvisation, a remix of a mix from an uncertain original master, something glimpsed through the multilingual fluttering of phonemes, or the compelling particularities of a musical form or a dance. Shaped from three very different languages and cultures the poems of *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues* shimmer with the interwoven colours of saying and the fragile materialities of silence and of loss.” (Lyndon Davies, Aquifer Press)

“In *Knitting Drum Machines for Exiled Tongues*, ‘harmonies’ are ‘sounding out’ spectrums of sonic frequencies, attempting to connect self/others. Jasmina Bolfek-Radovani brilliantly raises the old sword of the bard battling both the silences within herself and which plague us all – the ‘mutisms’ at the ‘edges’, our own wilderness being contained. The poet stretches through the unhearable, unsayable, claims ‘je capte’ ‘kapetan bez broda’ – but then leaves us a blank void to be filled in.” (Jennifer K. Dick, author of, most recently, *That Which I Touch Has No Name*, 2022).

Artist’s Biography

Jasmina Bolfek-Radovani is a London-based poet, arts practitioner and researcher of Croatian/Algerian heritage born in Zagreb. Her multilingual poems in English, French and Croatian have appeared in various UK magazines including *Molly Bloom*, *Pamenar Press*, *Tears in the Fence* and *The Fortnightly Review*, and in literary journals and magazines in Canada and Croatia. She is the founder of the collaborative poetry project “Unbound” that received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded Language Acts and Worldmaking Small grants programme in 2018 and 2019. Jasmina has (co-)directed several multilingual poetry recitals and performances in London between 2019 and 2022 and has given talks and published essays on multilingual poetry practice, both nationally and internationally. Jasmina’s first multilingual poetry collection *Reveries about language* was published in 2019 (printed for *Language Acts and Worldmaking* of the Faculty of Arts & Humanities, King’s College London) and her second collection *Knitting drum machines for exiled tongues* in 2022 (Dorset: *Tears in the Fence*). Her multilingual poetry performance “Heart Monologues” was premiered in London in March 2022; it will be repeated in Paris and Pula (21 March 2023, Paris, France & 13 April 2023, Pula, Croatia).

Special Guests’ Biographies

David Caddy is a writer, critic, editor, and poetry mentor. He has published books of poetry, essays, and travel writing. He has edited the independent, international literary journal, *Tears in the Fence* since 1984. His most recent books include *The Bunny Poems* (Shearsman Books), *So Here We Are: Essays on English Poetry* (Shearsman Books) and *Cycling After Thomas and The English* (Spout Hill Press, USA). His next book of poetry, *Interiors and Other Poems*, will be published by Shearsman Books in 2023. He was the co-author of *London: City of Words* (Blue Island) with Westrow Cooper and has worked as a literary and editorial advisor for various organisations.

Debra Kelly is Professor Emerita in Modern Languages, School of Humanities, University of Westminster, and Visiting Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Language Acts and Worldmaking, King’s College London. She has published widely in French and Francophone literary and cultural studies, including *Pierre Albert-Birot. A Poetics in Movement, A Poetics of Movement* (1997) and *Autobiography and Independence. Selfhood and Creativity in North African Postcolonial Writing in French* (2003). In 2005 she was made a Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques by the French Government in recognition of her services to French language, literature, and culture.

Bridget Knapper works for the international movement Economy for the Common Good which seeks a society where the goal is a good life for all. She has an MA in French and Francophone Studies. Bridget speaks French and German and enjoys collaborating on a range of creative projects.

How to obtain a copy of the book

Copies of the book can be purchased through the registration link above if purchasing a ticket for the book launch, or separately at the launch. Those unable to attend the book launch can purchase a copy by going to *Tears in the Fence* [Pay / Subscribe / Donate](#) website page & following instructions for UK / international orders on the page.