

PRESS RELEASE

‘The Death of Children’ ~ Poetry Across Borders

We have some exciting news about the distinguished Cambridge poet, Richard Berengarten. This information is available for preview now.

On March 14th 2026, the Poetry Archive is delighted to launch a very special poetry collection in partnership with him. ‘The Death of Children’ features 40 versions of Richard's original poem, written in English, and now translated into 37 languages.

Thanks to Richard Berengarten and his many interpreters, the result is this amazing collection of translations of one single poem. The collection spans communities around the globe and languages large and small, dominant and at risk, local and extraterritorial. And just as this poem itself pleads for mourning for the death of any and every child – anytime, and anywhere on earth – so each translation carries both a universality and the unique, delicately nuanced meanings of the language or languages personal to each translator-poet.

‘The Death of Children’ Collection can be explored here:

<https://poetryarchive.org/collections/richard-berengartens-the-death-of-children/>

From ‘The Death of Children’ and its multiple versions, visitors to the Poetry Archive can now explore this poem in an extraordinarily wide variety of contexts. Each translation brings an intimately personal light and an entirely new set of nuanced cultural resonances to the poem’s core meanings. The entire collection is searchable, and the downloadable APPENDIX includes key information about each of the translators, as well as valuable notes on their translations and, in many cases, on their languages.

Dr Tracey Guiry, Director of the Poetry Archive says “This project has been fascinating for our team to work on and we are proud to host the collection which Richard has brought together. In our 25th birthday year we want everyone to have free access to poetry of the highest quality. This project demonstrates poetry’s power to cross borders at a time when a sense of shared humanity and community is so desperately important.”

Richard Berengarten says “Every tragedy is specific, particular, unique. But while we recognise that this poem may fit – and even benefit / behave one tragedy – sadly it will in no way belong to one tragedy alone.”

Editor's Notes

Richard Berengarten (b. London 1943) is an English poet with multicultural perspectives. He has received multiple international awards. This anthology consists of an array of translations of Richard's 'The Death of Children'.

"In 1987/88, I was living in Belgrade," Richard tells us. "This poem composed itself through me in response to the sudden death of three teenagers in Split, one of them, the daughter of a friend. Then, much to my surprise, I realised that this poem resonated with the death of any child, regardless of cause. So the poem transposed itself into *The Blue Butterfly* (Wingate-Jewish Quarterly Prize 1992), which draws on a Nazi massacre in Kragujevac, Serbia, in October 1941. More than 200 local schoolchildren perished. 2017, the poem appeared in the commemorative anthology for the Grenfell Tower tragedy in London. By 2022, versions existed in seven or eight languages. In October 2023, a fortnight after the outbreak of the Gaza/Israel conflict, my work began on this anthology."

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The Poetry Archive is the only UK charity wholly dedicated to the production, acquisition and preservation of a unique digital collection of recordings of poets reading their own work. When a poet dies without being recorded a unique voice and slice of social history is lost forever, and that loss is felt more keenly as time passes. We make recordings of poets reading their own poems, which we keep safe, long-term, so that contemporary and future generations can continue to hear poems which might otherwise be lost.

We believe profound insights come from *hearing* a poet's own reading of their work. The Archive celebrates the relationship between the poem and the listener to provide a rewarding experience of poetry for audiences of all ages, stages and circumstances. Each individual poet in our collection is surrounded by contextual information to inspire and encourage a deeper exploration of the work – but we love people to listen for pure enjoyment too. Our strength lies in the range of our extraordinary poets and the high quality of our recordings, which we treat as valuable artefacts in their own right.

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We thank all the translators for their contributions to this collection. Fuller details about this project and its translators are included in the online APPENDIX in the Collection.

- **'The Death of Children' Collection** is published by the Poetry Archive at this link: <https://poetryarchive.org/collections/richard-berengartens-the-death-of-children/>
- To contact Richard Berengarten for an interview or info: rb402@cam.ac.uk or **07732-414-078**.
- To contact Dr Tracey Guiry, Director of the Poetry Archive for an interview or info: tg@poetryarchive.org. For general info contact admin@poetryarchive.org

www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive.