



Young Adult Literature from Latin America

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Introduction

The following document is the result of funding from Arts Council England which provided me with a grant as part of their **Developing Your Creative Practice** initiative.

This project has enabled me to research **YA Literature from Latin America** and to produce the following presentations and samples of some of the books I discovered during the project. I have also received advice and feedback on these samples and presentations from well-established colleagues. These conversations have been hugely enriching.

Each of the books selected for this project has been written by an **award-winning** Latin American author and has achieved **recognition** in its own right.

For each book there are **potential grants** available to contribute towards the translation costs involved in publishing the books in English. Further information can be found at the end of this document.

Many thanks to the following people for their advice and support: Lawrence Schimel, Dnaiel Hahn, Rosalind Harvey, Ruth Ahmedzai Kemp, Lisa Davis, Jackie Friedman Mighdoll, Ellen Worrell, Johanna McCalmont, Sarah Rimmington and Neus Ferrer.

About me

I am a **literary translator** working from Spanish and German into English. I translate for adults and children, but I have a particular interest in YA and MG. I am co-editor of **World Kid Lit**, highlighting the importance of books in translation for young readers.



My debut full-length translation of YA novel **Me, In Between** by Austrian author Julia Rabinowich was published by Andersen Press in January 2022.

I was shortlisted for the 2019 Goethe Institut New Translation Prize and the 2020 Austrian Cultural Forum London Translation Prize (category B). My translations have also been published in several international literary journals, including Latin American Literature Today and No Man's Land.



Why Latin America?

According to data taken from the World Kid Lit Website, in the last five years there has been **just one young adult novel published in English from Spanish-speaking Latin America**. By including Portuguese-speaking Brazil in that count, it increases to three. If we focus solely on the UK publishing scene, none of those books were originally acquired by a UK-based publisher, having been published in the US first. This would suggest that this **vast region of the world remains unrepresented** on our Young Adult shelves. This is detrimental to our understanding of this rich, vibrant region as well as doing a **disservice to those young people** who identify as having Latin American heritage. They too deserve to see themselves depicted in the stories they read.

While we often hear of a desire for a story about Latin American identity, what do we mean by this? People from Latin American should not be defined by their struggles or "otherness". I believe it is possible to simply enjoy a great read that just happens to have been written elsewhere and therefore the books I have chosen **showcase a variety** of the genres available. It is important to mention that this is just a selection and further exploration of what this region has to offer would be very exciting.

What has previously been published?

In the last five years:

The Immortal Boy by Francisco Montaña Ibañez, translated by David Bowles, published by Levine Querido - Originally in Spanish from Colombia - 2021 - Shortlisted for the GLLI Translated YA Book Prize 2022

Where We Go From Here by Lucas Rocha, illustrated by Marina Esmeraldo, translated by Larissa Helena, published by Scholastic USA/ David Fickling Books UK - Originally in Portuguese from Brazil - 2020 - Joint winner of the GLLI Translated YA Book Prize 2021

Here the Whole Time by Vitor Martins, translated by Larissa Helena, published by Scholastic USA - Originally in Portuguese from Brazil - 2020 - Joint winner of the GLLI Translated YA Book Prize 2021

Forthcoming in 2022:

Amazona by Canizales, Graphic novel translated by Sofía Huitrón Martínez, published by Lerner Publishing Group - Originally in Spanish from Colombia - Starred review from Kirkus

Recommended books

All of the authors represented here have received awards and recognition across the Spanish-speaking world; however none of them have had any of their full-length works translated and published in English... yet.

In selecting these books, I was looking for four very different stories told from different perspectives. As well as an opportunity to present these books, the project is a chance to challenge myself with different text types and to showcase what I can do as a translator.

I also wanted to push the boundaries around some of our preconceived ideas about Young Adult Literature from Latin America; some of these books may not be exactly what we expect either in style or content

The Wild Ones (*Salvajes*) by Antonio Ramos Revillas - Mexico

A coming-of-age novel about trying to fight against poverty in northern Mexico amidst societal prejudice and lawless gangs.

The Darkness of Colours (*La oscuridad de los colores*) by Martín Blasco - Argentina

A historical thriller based on a chilling social experiment, set in turn-of-the-century Buenos Aires.

Never Tell Anyone Your Name (*Nunca digas tu nombre*) by Federico Ivanier - Uruguay

A novel about a boy who finds himself in an unfamiliar city with eight hours to kill, with an unusual second-person narrative and an unexpected fantasy twist.

Glazes (*Veladuras*) by María Teresa Anduretto - Argentina

A short literary novel about a young Indigenous woman who recounts the tragic events in her life, her struggles with her mental health and how she has learnt to heal.

