

# El complot de los Románticos

Dante hits the road



**Author:** [Carmen Boullosa](#) [1]

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The Parnassus is an annual literary festival with the peculiarity that all participants are master writers...already dead. During decades, The Parnassus has been celebrated in New York, and now they want to choose a new venue: so Dante Alighieri, guided by other two (alive) writers, a young in fashion American poet and a middle-aged Mexican novelist travel to Mexico DF, on the back of three talkative rats... Between carnival and essay, between ghosts novel and road novel, between intellectuality and pop, Dante hits the road is a unique, creative novel of its own genre, and the confirmation of the place that the authoress occupies in our Hispanic letters. A brilliant celebration of the vigorous literary Latin-American tradition where, as one of the main characters says, the prints of Dante and other classics of different languages and continents are more alive than ever

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**Additional information Awards:**

On September 18, Carmen Boullosa was awarded the 2008 Café Gijón Prize, one of Spain most distinguished literary awards, for her forthcoming novel *El complot de los románticos*. The prize, given for not-yet-published novels, is one of Spain oldest. It was created in 1949, to compete with the Nadal Prize of Barcelona, by Fernando Fernán Gómez (the most famous film actor of his time), along with the poet Gerardo Diego and author Enrique Jardiel Poncela, among others.

It was named in honor of the Café Gijón, Madrid historic literary café founded in 1888, where artists and writers long gathered to hold "tertulias" (literary gatherings). The prize was originally administered by the Café Gijón itself, and paid out of Fernán Gómez's pocket. Since 1989 it has been managed by the municipality of Gijón, in Asturias, Spain. Among former awardees are Ana María Matute (who also won the Nadal Prize, National Literature Prize, and Critics Prize), Carmen Martín Gaité (who won the Nadal and the Prince of Asturias Prize), Leonardo Padura, and Eduardo Mendicutti, among many others.

For the 2008 contest, 596 manuscripts were submitted to the jury, roughly half from authors in Spain, the rest from novelists in 23 different countries. Carmen is the first Mexican ever to receive the prize.

The jury this year was headed by Rosa Regás (winner of the Nadal Prize, former director of the Casa de América, former director of the National Library of Spain), and included: Antonio Colinas (one of Spain's most eminent poets), Mercedes Monmanny (a leading literary critic), José María Guelbenzu (novelist and critic) and Marcos Giralt Torrente (winner of the Herralde Prize). The prize carries with it an award of 18,000 Euros.

For Alma Guillermoprieto, "Carmen Boullosa writes with a heart-stopping command of language", *El País* "a cross between W. G. Sebald and Gabriel García Márquez", and Roberto Bolaño wrote "the best Mexican woman author", and "If I were to choose a literary kitchen to stay for a week, I would go for that of a woman writer... I would feel very happy in Silvina Ocampo's, Alejandra Pizarnik's, Mexican novelist and poet Carmen Boullosa's, Simone de Beauvoir's."

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