

# Ugly Duckling Presse

## *The History of Violets* Marosa di Giorgio

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### About the Book

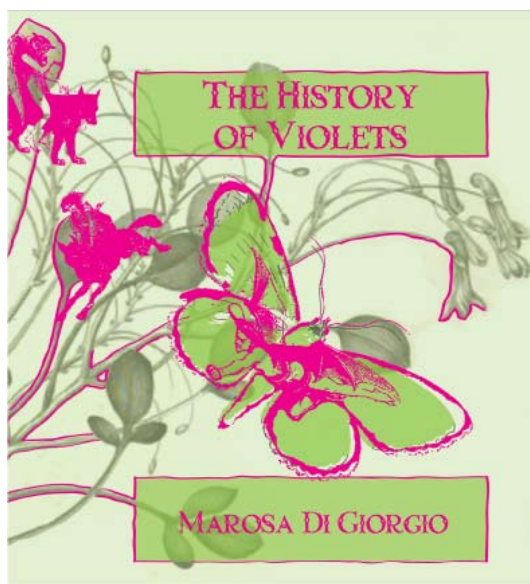
Originally published in 1965, *The History of Violets* (*Historial de las violetas*) twists the familiar face of a family farm, populating the fields and grounds with gods, monsters, and a whole “foamy army” of extras. Di Giorgio—whom Kent Johnson hails as “one of the most spectacular and strange Latin American poets of the past fifty years”—locks the natural and supernatural in a perilous dance, balancing humor and violence, beauty and danger, simple childhood memory and complex domestic drama. With disarming grace, these poems leave the reader swirling about, among the flowers, where no one is safe.

### About the Author

Born in Salto, Uruguay and raised on her family’s farm, Marosa di Giorgio (1932-2004) is one of the most prominent Uruguayan poets of the twentieth century. Di Giorgio published her first book of poems at the age of twenty-two. She went on to publish a total of fourteen books of poetry, three collections of short stories, and one novel. Her unusual style, which attempts to recapture the magic of childhood while creating a new world populated by gods, angels, monsters, and the sublime presence of nature, has attracted much critical attention in Latin America. Although she was relatively unknown outside the Southern Cone during her lifetime, she is now becoming more and more widely read throughout Latin America and Europe.

### About the Translator

Jeannine Marie Pitas is a teacher, translator and writer from Buffalo, NY. She has translated three of Marosa Di Giorgio’s books into English: *The History of Violets*, *Magnolia*, and *The Native Garden is in Flames*. She is currently pursuing an M.A. in Comparative Literature at the University of Toronto.



### IX

Last night again I saw the chest of drawers,  
the oldest, from my grandmother’s wedding,  
my mother and her sisters’ youth, my child-  
hood. There it stood with its high mirror, its  
baskets of paper roses.

And then the white chick- almost a dove –  
flew from the trees to eat rice from my hands.  
She was so lovely that I was going to kiss her.

But then, everything burst into flames and  
disappeared.

God keeps his belongings well guarded.

### ABOUT UGLY DUCKLING PRESSE

Ugly Duckling Presse is a nonprofit art and publishing collective producing small to mid-size editions of new poetry, translations, lost works and artist books. For more about UDP, visit [www.uglyducklingpresse.org](http://www.uglyducklingpresse.org).

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