

Elocuencias de un tartamudo

The Eloquence of a Stutterer



UK panel's choice AUTUMN 2012

Author: [Eduardo Halfon](#) [1]

Publisher: [EDITORIAL PRE-TEXTOS](#) [2]

Language: Spanish

Year of Publication: 2012

Pages: 72

Number of editions: 1

Spanish Retail price: 10.00€

ISBN: 978-84-15297-66-6

Genre: Others

AUTUMN

2012

Season: AUTUMN 2012

Years ago I heard about a programme Paul Auster had on the American public radio station NPR called 'The National Short Story Project'. Auster came on air the first night and asked American listeners to send in their stories. The only two conditions, he said, were that the stories should be true and short. What he was most interested in, he told them, were 'real life stories that sounded like fiction'. A variation on that idea occurred to me then: to make myself into a teller of other people's stories. And that's what I did throughout 2009: seeking out and telling other people's stories, stories I collected in Guatemala, Mexico, Iowa City, la Rioja and Geneva.

UK panellists opinion:

Eduardo Halfón's collection of short stories *Elocuencias de un tartamudo* (A Stutterer's Eloquence) immediately caught the eye of the panellists. Although realising the challenges that the short story genre generally encounters in the UK, the quality of Halfón's writing, and indeed the acceptance he already has among UK readers, convinced the panel to short-list *Elocuencias*. In fact, Halfón's *El boxeador polaco* (Pre-Textos, 2008) is being published in English by Pushkin Press this autumn, co-translated by long-time NSB collaborators Daniel Hahn, Tom Bunsted and Ollie Brock, among others. His 2010 short novel *La Pirueta*, which won him the XIV José María de Pereda Short Novel Prize, will be included in the above mentioned edition of *The Polish Boxer*.

"Eduardo Halfon is the prolific author of slim and subtle books, many of which have been published by the elegant Valencian press PreTextos (and a couple of which – La pirueta and Mañana nunca lo hablamos – have been very favourably reviewed in previous issues of New Spanish Books)."

"The Guatemalan author was interested in the concept: short and true stories, so true they resembled fiction, and the idea that everybody has a story to tell, but took the telling upon himself, making the project perhaps less democratic than its model but much more literary."

"Eduardo Halfon is an excellent, eloquent writer with lots of thought-provoking stories to tell."

(From the reader report by [Anne McLean](#) [3])

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Address: C/LUIS SANTÁNGEL 10, 1ºC, 46005 VALENCIA, SPAIN

Contact: SILVIA PRATDESABA

Phone: 0034 963333226

E-mail: spratdesaba@pre-textos.com [4]

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