

ADRIANA LISBOA

Translated by Alison Entrekin

Adriana Lisboa is one of Brazil's foremost novelists and poets and the recipient of many awards, including the prestigious José Saramago Prize for her novel *Symphony in White*. I first came to her work in 2012, when I translated her novel *Crow-Blue* (the title of which comes from Marianne Moore's poem 'The Fish', itself a clue to Lisboa's fascination with poetry), and I have been translating her short stories and poems ever since.

As a migrant who has lived outside of her native Brazil for many years, in both the United States and New Zealand, Lisboa's use of language has undergone a gradual sea change due to the influence of English, which she considers more precise. While her novels deal intimately with issues of diaspora and belonging, her poetry takes a deep dive into what the poet describes as the 'unusual images ... surprises and wonders hidden in everyday words'. Indeed, she has an uncanny ability to bring the tiniest of everyday things into sharp focus in a surprisingly small number of words.

In poetry Lisboa's subject matter can be, literally, anything in the known universe, from a conversation between two old friends to reflections on Alexander the Great to instructions on how to wash the soul. As a vegan and an animal rights advocate, it is no wonder that she has chosen to shine a light on the critically endangered Panamanian golden frog for this issue of *Modern Poetry in Translation*.