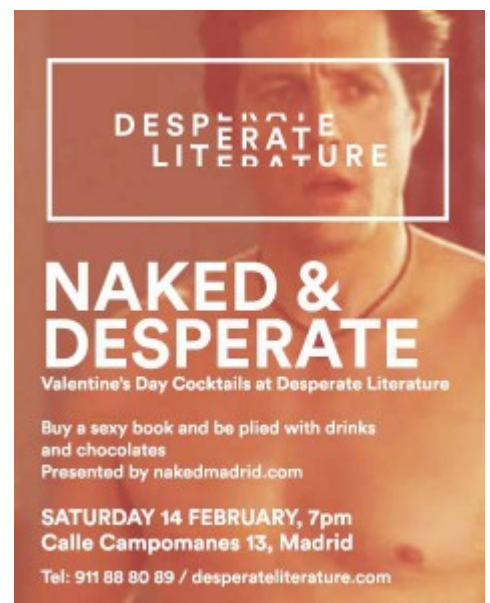


Desperate Literature, so much more than a bookshop

Four years ago I stumbled upon a newly opened gem, [Desperate Literature](#). I immediately went in, spoke to the staff (who were practically still building the place), and wrote an article about it: [Desperate Literature, for book lovers in Brooklyn, Santorini and now Madrid.](#)

Something about it felt so homey to me. Perhaps it was the English-speaking staff, the familiar titles on the shelves, or the fact that they were playing my brother's kind of music. It just felt like I was stepping into an avid reader's living room in New York rather than a bookshop in Madrid.



I haven't stopped going back since. Many of the times I've gone in with friends and family, we've either been offered a cup of green tea or a glass of whiskey. Naked Madrid even co-hosted a Valentine's event there in 2015. I remember there being lots of mulled wine, chocolate, and a discount in the erotica section.

So much has changed since then, yet the same wonderful vibe and essence remains. The staff is still rotating,

international and friendly as ever. The book selection of both new and old titles in English, French and Spanish keeps on growing. With so many great additions, it was time for a new article, with updated pics too.

First some background info

For anyone who hasn't been yet, Desperate Literature sells by far the best selection of English books in the city, from art and philosophy to history and sociology. Plus a nice "boozy books" section where you get a shot of free whiskey with every purchase. You can also find titles in other languages, as well as handpicked rare editions, signed copies, tote bags, postcards, maps, and more. There's even a kids' section!

Desperate Literature was founded by hardcore book fanatics: Craig Walzer (UK), Corey Eastwood (US), Charlotte Delattre (France) and Terry Craven (UK). Between them, they also own [Atlantis Books](#) in Santorini, Greece, and [Book Thug Nation](#) and [Human Relations](#) in Brooklyn, New York.

Charlotte and Terry are currently running the shop (and living upstairs). Before coming to Madrid, they both worked for several years at the world-famous Paris bookshop [Shakespeare and Company](#). Lucky for us, they're bringing the same philosophy to Desperate Literature, making it much more than a bookshop – it's also a community, event space, publishing house, and a home. According to Terry:

"Desperate Literature's aim is to create a place where people meet for and through literature and to that end we're developing not only our stock, focusing on having the best literature in English, Spanish and French, but a whole array of literary events, a literary magazine and all types of literary collaborations."



Great events: readings, concerts, and more

Desperate Literature has truly blossomed into an international haven for literature and art. It collaborates with local and expat writers, poets, musicians, and artists on a regular basis. They constantly put on cozy concerts, trivia nights, chess events, readings, and talks, as well as fun holiday-themed events like Bloomsday and Christmas sing-alongs. All these intimate events are healthily booze-infused, and usually cost just €3 entry including a drink.

Children's corner

In the back you'll find a very sweet children's corner full of class titles that will make you feel nostalgic, from Dr. Seuss to Roald Dahl. There's also a cute little couch where you can curl up with a good read.



First literary prize

Desperate Literature launched its very own short fiction [prize](#) this year, receiving over 450 entries. They offered a €1000 prize, a stay at the beautiful Civitella Ranieri foundation, and publication in various literary magazines, as well as events at Desperate Literature and Shakespeare and Company.

We'll be launching again in December 2018 and (hopefully) every year to come, with the aim of putting our small bookshop on the international scene for excellent experimental fiction written today.

And first magazine and book!

The shortlist from the fiction prize even led to the publishing of Desperate Literature's first book "[Eleven Stories](#)" in April. And they put out their first magazine last year, [La Errante](#).



While all these additions are undeniably impressive (and there's certainly more in store), what speaks to me most is that the shop continues to feel as warm and cozy as ever, almost as if you were walking into a friend's personal library. Plus the music is great, the signs are quirky, and you're likely to make a friend or get offered a drink if you stick around awhile.

If you're interested in getting to know more about Desperate Literature, definitely stop in and say hello. For more info, here's an insightful article written by Katie Dycus: [Portrait of a Bookstore: Desperate Literature \(Madrid\)](#).

Desperate Literature

- [Facebook](#), [Website](#) & [Instagram](#)

Address: Calle Campomanes, 13

Metro: Santo Domingo, Opera, and Callao

April Fool's Mate: The March Chess Event

Although this month's chess event is not technically happening within the month of March, it is sure to be full of laughter, drinks, and of course endless games of chess! Bring your friends to [Desperate Literature on April Fool's Day](#) for a night full of good times... just make sure not to fall for any April Fool's Day trickery!

Sonia Bueno: The Monthly Poetry Event

This month Desperate Literature is proud to present contemporary Spanish poet [Sonia Bueno](#)! Sonia Bueno studied right here in Madrid at the Universidad Complutense and still lives and writes in Madrid. She has published two collections: *Retales* (2011, winner of the 1st International Poetry Prize from the Fundación Centro de Poesía José Hierro), and *Aral* (2016). Gather your friends and come spend a night listening to Sonia Bueno reading some of her poetry in the quaint and cozy location of Desperate Literature.

I'll Be Back: The Monthly Chess Event

Get ready for another monthly chess event brought to you by Desperate Literature. This month's theme: [I'll be back!](#) Practice your best impression of the Terminator and enjoy playing a game of chess with friends.

Harry Potter Book Night

Calling all wizards, witches and muggles alike... On Thursday February 4th at 8pm, Desperate Literature will be hosting a [Harry Potter Book Night](#)! Join in on the quizzes to win prizes

such as Dobby's last place socks or Hagrid's rock cakes.

"Weird Folk" Music Concert at Desperate Literature

[Desperate Literature](#) is hosting yet another cool event on Friday night at 9pm. Expect drinks, dancing and fine literature, accompanied by live music played by [The Mañana People](#). According to the guys at Desperate Literature, "They're bloomin' brilliant so we got them in again: join us once more for the blue-grass, weird folk fantasmagoria that is [The Mañana People](#)!"

Poetry Reading at Desperate Literature (with vodka!)

Head over to [Desperate Literature](#) on Friday night at 8pm for an evening of poetry with James and Marian Womack, reading from James's newest translations of the great Vladimir Mayakovsky. Thanks go out to [Carcenet Press](#) for giving Desperate Literature the rights to print a limited edition pamphlet of the poems to accompany the evening.

Not only will there be poetry, but we'll also be swilling Vodka like there's no tomorrow!

Christmas Party at Desperate Literature – “the more eggnog, the better”

Join the guys at [Desperate Literature](#) for carols and eggnog to see the year out with a bit of tipsy class. Songs will be led by Elena Christina Novak, and remember, the singing gets better the more eggnog you drink – it’s magic like that.

If you fancy practicing a little, the following classics will be represented: Jingle Bells; Deck the Halls; God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen; O Holy Night; Joy to the World; Silent Night; We Wish You a Merry Christmas.

Here’s the [FB event page](#)

The Orange Dogs of Halloween – Party at Desperate Literature

Want to do something different this **halloween in Madrid**? Then head over to [Desperate Literature](#), a charming little bookstore near Opera, and wear your best costume. Marian Womack, editor of Ediciones Nevsky, translator and sci-fi legend, will be ushering in the halloween festivities with a reading of her most recent work, ‘Orange Dogs’. There be all the usual

tricks and treats, meaning **booze**.

Dress code: cosmic horror.

Pawn Sacrifice – a night of chess & drinking at Desperate Literature bookstore

Our favorite bookstore in Madrid is holding yet another fun event on **Sept. 16 at 8pm** to say goodbye to summer. What's the pretext? The launch of Bobby Fischer bio-thriller, 'Pawn Sacrifice'. So expect chess, drinks and laughs – all on the house! Here's the [event page](#).