

Interview with Agustín Casas, *relator* of *Pensaments* included in the first volume *Desde mi habitación* (page 29)

"RELAT-Hos is a calm, supportive platform; in a certain way, it is a project of love"

- What did you think when you had your first contact with the RELATO-Hos project? How did you discover it?

- I found out about RELAT-Hos from the cover sheet that was in my hospital room. It had arrived in the morning and in the afternoon I began to browse through it - I'm quite curious. It caught my interest and I asked for more information. They told me that by chance the person in charge of the project was working on my floor and that she would come around midnight. It seemed like a strange schedule to me, until I understood that the night shift nurses work very different hours from the rest. That night I met Antonia, who explained things to me that were not on the cover sheet and that sounded like fun to me. I was in the hospital only for a couple of days, but that was enough time to start outlining what I wanted to write. I finished it at home and mailed it to Antonia a week later. I clearly knew from the beginning that I wanted to participate. I wanted to do something fresh, an approach to the entry into the operating room, so I didn't want to do it right there in the very hotspot. That is why I preferred to finish it at home.

- What were your feelings when you saw your story in the book?

- Going through the experience of a surgery and a hospitalisation helps you realise that we are all equal before certain situations. I immediately realised the magnitude of going through the operating room and that it was not only a very beautiful, very natural and very fresh act, as I have reflected in my story, but it also has a very powerful component of dignity, which is above anything else. So, reading my story in the book, I even felt a little bad because I had made a more or less simple rhyme about an experience that is in fact very complex and serious, an experience some people don't survive.

- Do you write regularly?

- I am a university professor and writing is part of my usual work. However, I tend to write rather academic texts. Besides that, due to my age I am one of those who would send letters to their girlfriend. The other day, while removing files I even found some of them. This would not make sense today. Anyway, I do write regularly. I have ongoing projects that involve continuous reading and writing.

- According to your experience, do you think writing is a powerful therapeutic tool?

- It definitely is, but the youngsters want everything now. You search for anything on the Internet and, if in 2 or 3 seconds you don't get an answer, you go on to something else. They are not reflective, but rather intuitive and this goes a bit against experiences like RELAT-Hos. Culturally we are giving up on reading and writing because we want everything to be easier and, if possible in a video form! We tend towards the zero effort and since reading takes effort ... Either way, reading will stay among us because we will take two steps forward and one backward, as in a tango, and everything will come back sooner or later. We are going too fast and RELAT-Hos is a calm, supportive platform; in a certain way, it is a love project. Something similar happens with music, despite the storage of thousands of songs on digital media, it seems now that vinyl and even cassettes are back! Moreover, there is this fake-news effect, the information overdose... Before, newspapers were one-way, except for the letters to the editor. Now there is the opportunity to answer, to comment on the articles on the web and say embarrassing things to the author. That, honestly, makes me nervous.

- Finally, can you recommend a book to us?

- Lately, I have been focussing on local history. I am from El Prat and I have read four or five books of this type in the last months. One of them is *Pagesos i pageses del Prat*, by Nuria Abelló, in which she shows through a series of interviews how simple the town's life was. Another entitled *Records de quan fórem mainada*, by Pedro Rodríguez, which tells the story of El Prat based on four of its neighbourhoods. Now, I am also reviewing the history of the El Prat's market because I want to write something about it, since at the end of the day, it is a legacy for your children and grandchildren. Besides this local topic, I am a great follower of Yuval Noah Harari, a philosopher who has written books on the present, the past and the future. I love all of his books: *Sapiens*, *Homo Deus* and *21 lessons for the 21st century*. He is my bedside philosopher and I'm already looking forward to his next book!