

Guadalupe Arbona Abascal

She is a writer and professor of Spanish Literature and Creative Writing at the Complutense University of Madrid. To date, she has published three diaries: *Puerta principal* (Encuentro, 2017), *Enredada en azul* (Encuentro, 2020) y *Piel de gallina* (Encuentro, 2026); a novel *El papiro de Miray* (JDB, 2022, with an Italian translation, Persiani, 2025) and a collection of short stories *Cuando ellas* (Pre-Textos, 2025). Among her academic publications include the edited volume *Correspondencia (1967-1972), de Américo Castro y José Jiménez Lozano* (Trotta, 2020), *El acontecimiento como categoría del cuento contemporáneo* (Arco Libros, 2008) y *La perplejidad del héroe* (Fragua, 2000). She has edited the works of Flannery O'Connor and José Jiménez Lozano.





Puerta principal
(Encuentro, 2017)



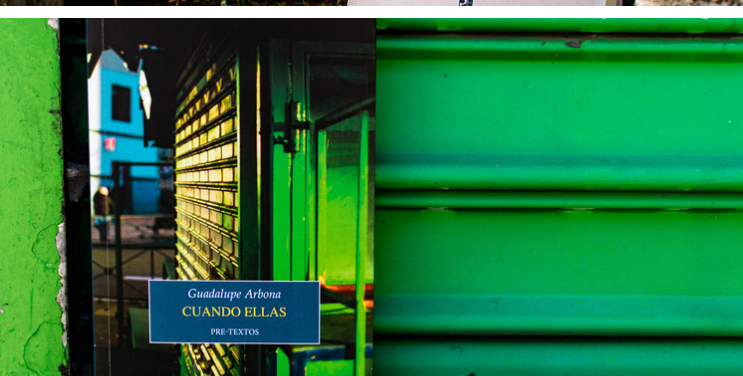
Enredada en azul
(Encuentro, 2020)



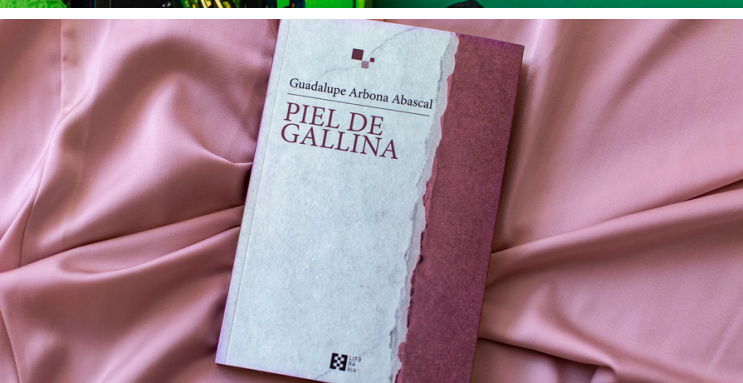
El papiro de Miray
(JDB, 2022)



Il papiro di Miray
(Persiani Editore, 2025)



Cuando ellas
(Pre-Textos, 2025)



Piel de gallina
(Encuentro, 2026)

This is the diary of a woman suspended in an uncertain and painful time, with moments lived with intensity. Preceded by a quote from Raymond Carver: "Today my heart, like the front door, is open for the first time in months", *Puerta principal* is an invitation to enter the world of a deeply felt and carefully considered experience. Nothing more than that: the raw essence of life captured in words. Arbona's writing is characterised by its transparency; without pretence or concealment, it explores the struggles and questions of a woman who is driven by a desire to understand the meaning of her existence. This opens the door for readers too, who, through descriptions, poems, stories, reflections and conversations, can gain insight into the marks and scars that life has left on the woman at the heart of the story.



Puerta principal (Encuentro, 2017)

"Reading a book and feeling as though it was written just for you is something that rarely happens in a reader's life. I feel as though Puerta principal was written just for me", **Jesús Carrasco, writer.**

"Puerta principal opens a bond of brotherhood with people and things",
J.A. González Sainz, writer and director of the Centro Internacional Antonio Machado.

"Here, everything is about stillness and the passage of time, calm and orderly, and it is named by the person who wrote all this down on paper, and we relive it", **José Jiménez Lozano, writer, 2002 Cervantes Award Winner.**

"Puerta principal is not a novel, it is not a play, it is not a poem; it has no name; it is a new genre that fosters human trust through writing", **María del Carmen Bobes Naves, full professor at the Universidad de Oviedo.**

"Puerta principal is literature because it has depth and quality and form and, yes, above all because it has soul", **Milagros Arizmendi, full professor at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid.**

"This is not a diary of solitude; it is not a monologue or a soliloquy, but rather an ongoing dialogue about all the events of the day, like a golden thread that links the entire book, from beginning to end, and weaves together beautiful confidences", **Pilar Vega, Arbor.**

"Puerta principal is much more than a notebook or a diary about an illness; it is a literary work about the beauty and mystery of life", **Antonio Ayuso, Tonos Digital.**

"Reading this book is one of those unexpected moments that lift the crushing weight of everyday life and allow us to "see, smell and feel everything anew", **Juan Francisco Comendador, Librería Ars, Zaragoza.**

"For those unfamiliar with Arbona—a professor, literary critic and editor—the rigour and calibre of these cultural essays may come as a surprise. Equally surprising is the recurring presence of a key figure, José Jiménez Lozano; it is a dialogue between the gifted pupil and her mentor". **Reseñas de Troa.**

In the second volume of Guadalupe Arbona's diaries, life returns. A life made up of events, readings, stories, conversations and journeys. And, through them, one senses that there are times when melancholy and contentment meet, that solitude can hint at a profound companionship, or even that weakness can be the beginning of the discovery of a loving presence. And so even choosing the title of the diary is part of life: 'Yesterday I asked A. – though I think I'd asked him before – to translate the title of Bob Dylan's song for me. He confirmed what I'd thought: "Tangled in Blue". And yet, all the Spanish versions translate it as "Tangled in Sadness". In reality, it's a colloquial expression that associates blue with sadness. And that's how I live, entangled in a blue sadness. A sadness cloaked in the colour that brings me the most joy. Blue».



Enredada en azul **(Encuentro, 2020)**

"Pavese showed us just how painful and bitter *Il mestiere di vivere* can be. Through Arbona's writing, the reader recognises the fragility and fragility of our social foundations, yet also joyfully embraces the signs of a path which, precisely because it is so deeply personal and testimonial, becomes, without fanfare, authentically human",

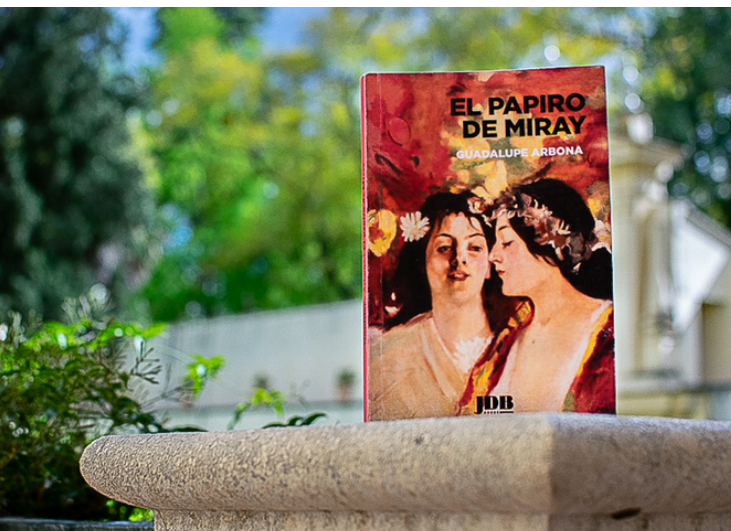
Antonio Dueñas, *Microtextualidades*.

"Writing a diary is like drawing up a notarised record of one's experiences",
Rocío Solís, *El Debate de Hoy*.

"Her previous diary was about illness. Now it's about everyday life, punctuated by traces of it, yet cheerful, though that doesn't mean the blue of sadness doesn't creep in, counterbalanced by the blue of the sky", **Ángel Pérez Ruiz, *F. O'Connor en español*.**

"For the author, diaries offer the chance to relive past events with greater intensity",
Adolfo Torrecilla, *Libros, y... ¿por qué no?*

The novel tells, in first person, the story of Miray who, having been raised in Herod's palace, witnesses the moment when Salome asks, in exchange for a dance, for the head of a righteous man to be brought to her. The plot, based on a famous biblical episode, traces the childhood, adulthood and old age of Miray and Salome, and will keep the reader in suspense until they discover what that bloody episode unleashed in them. The novel is told through a series of female voices who, teetering on the brink, feel the need to live up to their own desires.



El papiro de Miray **(JDB, 2022)**

"How on earth did you manage to blend these three such disparate voices and make them feel so close? Miray's story is *captivating*", **Fernando Rodríguez, literary critic.**

"There is much more implied between the lines than the plot explicitly reveals. And I believe that is where this novel's strength lies—the timeless quality that will ensure its lasting appeal",
María Caballero, full professor at the Universidad de Sevilla.

"The power of the prophet's gaze changes the way Miray sees the world. Through her protagonist, Arbona changes the way we see it too. She teaches us to appreciate the sunset, and her story becomes a new dawn. As Angels rightly notes in her blue notebook, "through Miray's voice, life begins anew"',
Isabella García-Ramos Herrera, Fronterad.

"There is a deep wound within Miray that will not heal, a wound echoed, two thousand years later, by Angels, who is unable to recover from her husband's death. And the text leads us to understand a bold proposition which, in simple terms, we might put as follows: "One must encounter Good in order to overcome the wound of Evil."",
Juan José Gómez Cadenas, Mercurio.

"Retelling the biblical story puts the narrator to the test. And it is here that Guadalupe proves herself sublime, and this is what makes her work sublime", **Ignacio Carbajosa, Huellas.**

"All the unfortunate characters in this book – a widow, a teacher with no zest for life, Salomé and Miray herself – are captivated by a beauty which, very cleverly, Arbona does not describe in the story", **Pepe Bernardo, Madrid actual.**

"El papiro de Miray is a novel that seems to be told in a soft voice, with a harmonious simplicity",
Entrevista de I. García-Ramos, J. Pérez y Vincent Segarra, Mercurio.

"Arbona has created a world of women—I would say of mothers who experience motherhood in a dramatic way (...)—intertwined with violence and bloodshed"
Sergio Cristaldi, Professore Ordinario della Università di Catania.

The novel tells the story of Miray, Salome's servant in Herod's palace and a witness to the moment when the princess, after dancing before the king, asks for the head of John the Baptist as a reward for her performance. Miray recounts the journey that has led her, now in her twilight years, to tell her story, which includes a fateful encounter with Jesus some time after the Baptist's death.

The papyrus on which Miray's story is written was discovered in the 1950s by Caroline Angels, an English researcher who began translating it, becoming increasingly engrossed in the process. The plot traces the childhood, adulthood and old age of Miray and Salome, keeping the reader in suspense until they discover the meaning of that dance and the reason behind Salome's cruel request.

At the same time, Caroline is surprised to see how Miray's story is gradually reshaping her present, which is marked by the pain of losing her partner. She will discover that the link between the past and the present is closer than she ever imagined.



Il papiro di Miray (Persiani Editore, 2025)

"A novel by the Spanish writer Guadalupe Arbona Abascal, *Il papiro di Miray*, has recently been published. In it, in a completely unexpected way and through the evocative, fast-paced prose of an author who knows how to bring moving and thought-provoking stories to life before the reader's eyes, we encounter the very same story of Naim's poor widow",

Emilia Smurro, *Il Sussidiario*.

"Arbona Abascal tells her story through an imagination that has the ability to see the world through Miray's eyes and to grasp the 'pattern of women's discourse', as she puts it at one point. For Mircea Eliade, 'to have imagination is to see the world in its entirety'. The novel is all about this adventure of gazes: eyes that weep, eyes that penetrate, women exchanging 'knowing glances'",

Ubaldo Casotto, *Il Foglio*.

"Weaving allows her to transform the enchantment she feels when gazing at the colours of the sunset, a ripe fruit cut in half, or the pigments Herodias uses for her make-up, into a gift for herself and for others; writing will allow her to share her story with future generations",

Silvia Guidi, *L'Osservatore Romano*.

Cuando ellas tells the story of four women. When they live, the world changes. Sol survives in a green kiosk and observes the life around her: a village square. Elsa Rodríguez, a strict and perfect judge, must come to terms with the collapse of her world. Greta flees death in Kenya and encounters illness in Uganda. Neela, raised as a Dalit in India, travels the world playing the piano. The protagonists, hailing from very different corners of the world, possess a rare strength or a strange tenderness; they are driven by a restlessness that brings warmth to each of their adventures. They come from different worlds, and yet they are united by the same desire to discover their true potential and the full scope of their lives.



Cuando ellas (Pre-Textos, 2025)

"This perspective, present in all four stories, views the world through the lens of deep compassion: sympathetic towards the vulnerable, critical of those in power, and attentive to the complexities of the human condition. It is a perspective that is gentle with the weak and unyielding with the powerful",

Fernando Ariza, *Zenda*.

"Arbona's complete works are permeated by an 'anthropology of wonder'",

José Bernardo San Juan, *Madrid Actual*.

"Arbona's boldness as a writer lies in presenting us with stories in which the cracks are not necessarily a wound, but the lattice through which light enters",

Isabella García-Ramos Herrera, *Fronterad*.

"The language is meticulously crafted, paying close attention to significant details and indelible memories", **Adolfo Torrecilla, *Acepresna*.**

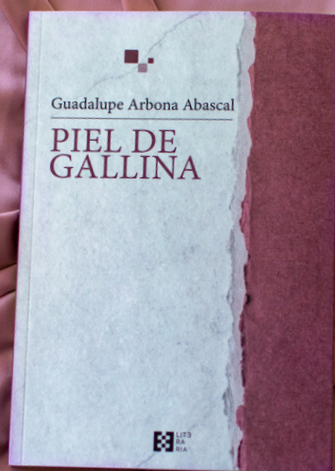
"The enigmatic title chosen by Guadalupe Arbona, a lecturer in Literature and Creative Writing at the Complutense University, is brought to life by the stories that follow. There are four stories in *Cuando ellas*, ... A living tableau of contemporary beatitudes and blessed ones is what this work, published by Pre-textos and introduced by a quote from María Zambrano, presents: 'The blessed attract us like a white abyss'", **Pilar Gómez**

Rodríguez, *Nueva Revista*.

"Her prose is as sharp as steel, a precise and patient scalpel (...)
Guadalupe's prose is like meticulous surgery, inviting us to see what we almost never see: the nuances of reality",

Alberto Vital, *El Universal*.

Piel de gallina is a diary of difficult times. It begins on the eve of the COVID pandemic and runs until 2025. The emotions and reflections are neither systematic nor arranged in any premeditated order; they are responses to things that have been seen and felt, and which, when they happened, demanded to be captured in words. Some are joyful, some are sad, and, as they remain on these pages, they bear witness to the fact that they were the lived experience of the person who wrote them.



Piel de gallina (Encuentro, 2026)

«Goosebumps are an involuntary reflex. Experts explain it as a reaction to danger and give it the scientific name 'piloerection', as well as describing the remarkable processes that take place in the skin—in every pore—and beneath it, in tiny muscles that contract. They explain it as the phenomenon that causes the sensation of a sudden chill and link it to animals' responses to fear and danger. And that's how it is: I get goosebumps when I'm scared, but it also happens when I'm moved and I shiver. It happens to me now when I suddenly realise that I'm alive and that there's someone sustaining my existence. I shiver inside and out at the thought that I might not exist, and yet I do. It is true that it is an involuntary reaction, but the reasons behind it can be understood and rationalised. Sometimes it is joy, sometimes surprise, sometimes shock, and sometimes fear. The Italians call it 'pelle d'oca' and the English call it 'goosebumps'.»

Guadalupe Arbona Abascal, *Piel de gallina*