

bilingual newspaper





Drensa POBRE, fundada en 1996, pasa por dificultades económicas. POOR Magazine, founded in 1996, finds itself struggling financially.

Vol. 40 No. 15



Campo de disc golf en Parque McLaren es motivo de desacuerdo entre residentes. Disc-golf course at McLaren Park becomes a point of contention among residents.



Conferencia 'Socialismo 2010' atrae a más de 1.600 asistentes. 'Socialism 2010' conference attracts more than 1,600 attendees.

www.eltecolote.org



*Alamar": bella película mexicana tiene olor a salitre y sabe a pescado. "Alamar" proves itself a beautiful Mexican film reminiscent of the sea.



Crganización local promueve talleres de poesía en El Salvador. Local organization fundraises for child literacy and youth poetry workshops in El Salvador.

Julio 28-Agosto 10, 2010



REVISTA LITERARIA DE EL TECOLOTE



2958 24th Street San Francisco, CA 94110 Tel: (415) 648-1045 Fax: (415) 648-1046 www.eltecolote.org

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @elteco Member SF Neighborhood Newspaper

Association and New California Media Founding Editor Juan Gonzáles

Managing Editor

Roberto Daza

Multimedia Editor Suzy Salazar

Production, Layout & Design Ryan Flores

Spanish Copy Editor Iñaki Fdez. de Retana; Emilio Ramón

> English Copy Editor Roberto Daza

Proofreaders Roberto Daza; lñaki Fdez. de Retana: John Nuño Jr.

Web Editors Roberto Daza; Martha Dueñas; Suzy Salazar

Calendario & Literario Editors Alfonso Texidor

Translators Francisco X. Alarcón; Emilio Ramón

> Photo Archivist **Linda Wilson**

Advertising Manager Francisco Barradas advertising@accionlatina.org

El Tecolote is published by Acción Latina, a San Francisco non-profit organization dedicated to creating positive social change among Latinos and building bridges with other communities around common causes.

Revista Literaria

Editorial Board Francisco X. Alarcon; Lorna Dee Cervantes; Estela de la Cruz; Eva Martinez; Nina Serrano; Alfonso Texidor

Artists Adrian Arias; Jerry Astorga; Judy Baca; Calvin Barajas Tondre; Miranda Bergman; Graciela Carillo; Amalio Diaz; Chris Faltis; Juan R. Fuentes; Luchita Hurtado Garcia; Sue Martinez Chavez; Emmanuel Montoya; Francisco Orrego; Patricia Rodriguez

EVA MARTÍNEZ DIRECTORA EJECUTIVA DE ACCIÓN LATINA

El Tecolote called and they came. That's the genesis of how this wonderful special literary edition came to be.

To be honest, I only remember mentioning to a few people that *El Tecolote* wanted to do a special poetry edition and all of a sudden an editorial board appeared and went to work. The worker bees were Nina Serrano, Francisco X. Alarcon, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Estela de la Cruz and El Tecolote's ubiquitous fedora-and-cane-carrying Calendario Editor, Alfonso Texidor.

They would blow into *El Tecolote's* office carrying folders, food and wine. I began to warn my staff before each meeting that "the crazy people are coming today." Not nutty crazy, but crazy as in wonderfully, energetically creative, inspiring, opinionated, noisy, and — above all — extremely efficient. Their knowledge of and love for *El Tecolote* was palpable in all of their decisions.

The result of their hard work is now in your hands and will become a special part of *El Tecolote's* 40-year archive. I hope that you will enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed working with the amazing group of people who put it together.

The Original Revista Literaria de

One of the literary supplements

that became an original and

groundbreaking sprout of the

Chicano/Latino literary, poetic,

and artistic boom of the past three

on Cinco de Mayo in 1980, with

The co-founders of this literary

magazine were playwright Carlos

poet/writer/muralist José Antonio

from the beginning reflects an all-

inclusive, eclectic and progressive

Mestizo/a aesthetic and praxis a

and artistic currents are welcome!

Each issue was a celebration of

literary diversity that included

poems, short stories, critical essays,

interviews, book, film, and theater

Spanish, *caló*, and code-switching

Writers, poets, artists, and readers

took part in this project that was a

true open circle, willingly, without

attached, but with tremendous good

appeared with the same fluidity

and facility as texts in English.

remuneration, without strings

will and respect for each other.

Among the contributing poets

literary luminaries like Juan Felipe

Herrera, José Antonio Burciaga, José

and writers are many current

reviews. Even linguistically, texts in

Chale with sectarian and dogmatic

la Gloria Anzaldúa: "All poetic

Burciaga, and poet Francisco X.

Alarcón, whose collective goal

Morton, graphic artist Sue Martínez,

1983.

exclusion!"

quarterly issues following (more or

less) until the last issue of December

decades was La Revista Literaria de El

Tecolote. The first issue was published

El Tecolote (1980-1983)

El Tecolote los llamó y ellos llegaron. Ésta es la génesis de cómo esta maravillosa edición literaria especial se llevó a cabo.

Para ser honesta, sólo recuerdo haber mencionado a unas pocas personas que *El Tecolote* quería hacer una edición especial sobre poesía y, de repente, apareció una junta editorial y nos pusimos a trabajar. Las abejas obreras fueron Nina Serrano, Francisco X. Alarcón, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Estela de la Cruz y el ubicuo editor del calendario, Alfonso Teixidor, con su sombrero y bastón.

Invadirían la oficina de *El Tecolote* trayendo carpetas, comida y vino. Comencé a prevenir a mi personal antes de cada reunión que "los locos llegan hoy". No locos de remate, sino locos en un sentido maravilloso, enérgicamente creativo, inspirador, porfiado, ruidoso, y —por encima de todo— extremadamente eficientes. Su conocimiento y amor por *El Tecolote* fue palpable en todas sus decisiones.

El resultado de un duro trabajo está ahora en sus manos y se convertirá en una parte especial del archivo de los 40 años de *El Tecolote.* Confío que disfruten leyéndolo tanto como yo he disfrutado trabajando con el increíble grupo de personas que lo confeccionó.

FRANCISCO X. ALARCÓN

La Revista Literaria de El Tecolote original (1980-1983)

Uno de los suplementos literarios que se convirtió en un retoño original, germinal e innovador del auge literario, poético y artístico chicano/latino de las pasadas tres décadas fue *La Revista Literaria de El Tecolote.* El primer ejemplar fue publicado el 5 de mayo en 1980, con números trimestrales publicados (más o menos regularmente) hasta

diciembre de 1983.

Los co-fundadores de esta revista literaria fueron el dramaturgo Carlos Morton, la artista gráfica Sue Martínez, el poeta/escritor/ muralista José Antonio Burciaga y el poeta Francisco X. Alarcón. Su meta colectiva desde el inicio refleja una estética y práctica inclusiva, eclética y progresiva a la Gloria Anzaldúa: *¡Todas las corrientes poéticas y artísticas son bienvenidas! ¡Chale con la exclusión sectaria y dogmática!*

THE HORCHATA PROGRESSIVE PEOPLE'S PARTY

(TEN POINT PLAN)

Montoya, Víctor Martínez, Wilfredo

Castaño. Alejandro Murguía, Lorna

Margarita Robles, Orlando Ramírez,

Dee Cervantes, Lucha Corpi,

Alma Luz Villanueva, Gloria

Herbert Sigüenza, Rodrigo

Velásquez, Roberto Vargas, Nina

Serrano, Yvonne Yarbo-Bejarano,

Reyes, Juan Pablo Gutiérrez, Jack

Hirschman, Francisco Santana, Pedro

See ORIGINAL, penultimate page

- 1. US in Afghanistan & Pakistan ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 2. US in Iraq & Global Militarization ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 3. BP Corporate Oil Gangsters ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 4. Homophobic Prop # 8's ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 5. Alienization of the Américas ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 6. Surveillance Socio-Cultural Orders ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 7. Gun Gangrenes & Rape Scenes ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- 8. Boeing-Lockheed & Nuke Kooks ;No! El Tecolote ;Si!
- 9. US Secret World Prisons ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí!
- Border Patrols & Border dead tolls ¡No! El Tecolote ¡Sí; & Tamarindo & Jamaica & Horchata & all the news by la gente & for the people!

;Sí! ;Sí! ;Sí!

Juan Felipe Herrera

Cada número era una celebración de diversidad literaria que incluía poemas, cuentos, ensayos críticos, entrevistas, reseñas de libros y obras teatrales. Hasta linguísticamente, los textos en español, caló y alternación de códigos aparecían con la misma fluidez y facilidad como los textos en inglés. Escritores, poetas, artistas y lectores participaron en este proyecto —que era un círculo en verdad abierto— de una manera voluntaria, sin remuneración, sin motivos ocultos, pero con tremenda buena voluntad y respeto mutuo.

Entre los poetas y escritores contribuyentes se hallan muchas luminarias literarias del presente como Juan Felipe Herrera, José Antonio Burciaga, José Montoya, Víctor Martínez, Wilfredo Castaño. Alejandro Murguía, Lorna Dee Cervantes, Lucha Corpi, Margarita Robles, Orlando Ramírez, Alma Luz Villanueva, Gloria Velásquez, Roberto Vargas, Nina Serrano, Yvonne Yarbo-Bejarano, Herbert Sigüenza, Rodrigo Reyes, Juan Pablo Gutiérrez, Jack Hirschman,

Photographer Daniel del Solar

Cover Art Juan R. Fuentes

Sueno de la Sirena, Linocut/ silkscreen 2008; Pama, linocut 2007; Zapata y Yo, silkscreen 1994; La Comadre, linocut/woodcut 2006; Pensando en la Revolucion, reductive linocut 2008; Hermanita, linocut/woodcut 2005; Tia Luz; Luis de las flores; Tres Hermanos

CARLOS MORTON PROFESSOR OF THEATER AND DANCE, UC SANTA BARBARA

NIGHT VISION OF A TECOLOTE EMPLUMADO

It was 1980 and we were young Latinos (I was 33 and working as a playwright with the San Francisco Mime Troupe). We were on a mission to spread culture in the Mission District. It was a time of *Renacimiento*, with *arte*, *teatro*, *música*, *poesía*, and political organizing. I lived on Precita Street, just down the road from "Ceasar's Palace." My roommate was Juan Gonzalez, editor of *El Tecolote* —a totally bilingual Bay Area free newspaper.

We wanted to publish an insert in the monthly newspaper, "La Revista Literaria de El Tecolote," featuring myself, Francisco X. Alarcón, Tony Burciaga, Juan Cruz, Sue Martinez, Orlando Ramirez, Pedro Ramírez. It was our time, our moment, our movement. If we didn't do it — who would?

And we put it together! Poetry reigned, *teatro* staged, music played, artists exhibited on the pages of *El Tecolote* including *gente de la calle como* mi Tía Hortensia Cortez who submitted her poems in Spanish. It was the flowering of the Chicano Movement, the *Flor y Canto*, the night vision of a Tecolote Emplumado.

HISTORY

This August, *El Tecolote* celebrates its 40th anniversary making it the longest
running Spanish/English bilingual newspaper serving the southwest.approximat
Since its incThe newspaper was born in the Raza Studies department at San Francisco
State when Prof. Juan Gonzales created a class as a way to channel Latino
students into journalism careers. Latinos and other people of color were
virtually invisible in the major newsrooms at the time.support
supplement
writers and

As a final project, the class produced a bilingual newspaper called *El Tecolote*, which hit the streets on August 24, 1970. It soon moved to the Mission and became a training ground for the community to learn advocacy journalism. *El Tecolote* began as a volunteer effort and continues in that vein with

approximately 90 percent of the staff dedicated volunteers. Since its inception, *El Tecolote* has had an open door policy that invites community members to join the volunteer staff, bringing a vast array of experiences and skills. The newspaper has also published several special supplements, including a literary section edited by renowned local Latino writers and a youth publication called Fuerza Joven, which provided training for neighborhood teens.

In addition, through bilingual news coverage and free calendario listings, *El Tecolote* has provided crucial support to local agencies, cultural organization and other resources that serve the community.



Poetry

CACOPHONY

by Timothy M. Perez

Men get away with everything. We do the least and get all the credit. When our children are born we are congratulated with hand shakes and pats on the back. We are bought rounds, given cigars to gnaw on while our women sit at home or in hospital beds nursing sore ribs and itchy stitches in their asses. We get to gloat at our achievements, sleep regular hours. We get to keep our day jobs. Yes, we'll play with the kids, throw out garbage, load the dishwasher, throw in a pile of laundry, and maybe, just maybe change a diaper, but we still get to be us. Because nothing was pulled from us. Because nothing was taken from us. Because nothing will ever come dripping, steaming with life from us. We give only as much as we can take. We are selfish. We are men.

My friend sits at a great oak table; in front of her is a place setting for one. She pours her future in a tall glass, but it doesn't fill, and when she looks at its thick bottom she finds only her own blurred reflection. She is vibrant, radiant, optimistic. She may have forgotten the reasons why her husband married her. She tells me she likes crows feet and can't wait to earn them. She will age gracefully like whiskey or scotch. Any time now she will be walking through green corn fields or along a beach or through the badlands addressing the cacophony of unrealized genius. She'd be Kerouac, a Dharma bum, a Moriarty. I think of my friend and the storm that awaits her, and I think of her howling, and I think of Jack whom I never read, and I think of all the bums before me, and I think of all the men who will come after me, and I think of all the women, and I think of Ginsberg resting in her chest silently weeping for her.

I've never read Jack,

but I have read Howl. I've never knew hunger, but my wife has. She spent holidays elbow to elbow with transients and addicts. She never knew the difference. I've never been willing to sacrifice-enough. I once stole from a deli I worked at. Payday was at the end of the month it was the third. I took two loaves of bread a three pound turkey breast and a five pound ham. I lived off both for weeks. I still eat ham and turkey and I feel lucky if both are heavily stuffed between thick slices of sourdough. I never knew hunger. We take for granted the turning of a faucet. We don't respect the process of water's resurrection, the ascension it makes through the sky via the sun that beckons it towards clouds that will shelter it and haul it off in soft pillow-y hands carting it over mountains only to litter the earth again and again and again. Along coastlines, moorings bob with the rhythm of the tide,

NI DE AQUÍ, NI DE ALLÁ, NI DE ALLÁ

by Beatriz Herrera

Bicultural Bilingual Bicoastal

I am a proud Chicana-Riqueña Que habla inglés y español Y si no me entiendes pues Too bad for you.

Aprende. El espanglish es su propio idioma Con sus propias reglas

Por ejemplo: Mami, adónde dejé mis glasses? No se diría: Mami, where did I dejar my lentes? You laugh too. That's ridiculous.

> Every year I hop on a plane And travel across this Realizing the distance Between my two worlds

> Tacos on the West Coast Tostones on the East Coast Timba on the California Salsa-on-2 on the New York

La Mission San Francisco El Barrio, Manhattan Califas Pueblayork Chicana Nuvorican. Hella vs. mad. Ancestral wisdom versus street smarts Child of the corn Daughter of concrete.

"Ni de aquí. Ni de allá. Ni de allá." Jaja, que chiste mi gente A curious existence to them Sometimes painful, to me.

> I live in the in-between. Built for oscellation. Movement. Never free. But always alive. Always me.

CHANTLOVE by Juan Felipe Herrera

for my brothers & sister, R.I.P.



Alfred Arteaga in a Siqueiros speckled Cubano white suit dancing & singing & smiling solar making words collapse into mysterious ciphers you said you dreamed me I was the boatman that took you to that other side

Lin Romero in Tepic Nayarit 1970 on a trek to El Colorín, Huichol country Wixárika First Peoples you take fotos women & children busted maíz our lives woven forever raulrsalinas strolls 24th & Mission St. like always apachucado tataujeado dibujado with chains hanging down your tramos I am still in your apartment Seattle days of the 70's when you cried said that you had given your life away to words & hard times but your children you lost you said that & took a breath Trini Sánchez Jr. with that Detroit Motown beret you welcomed me made a bed for me you drove me to the reading blacks & browns Africa & Mexico & Latin America came together at last Angela de Hoyos thank you for your kindnesses for your front yard of Chican@ Hall of Famers so you asked me to press my hands on a slab of wet concrete Ray Gonzalez too Don Luis Leal after my reading gone comedy at UCSB you said "I thought you were a serious man" years later you gave me your chapbook on Fernández de Lizardi & walked to the podium Omar Salinas last time I saw you here in Riverside I noticed how you could mesmerize whoever faced you easy that's how the powers flowed from you it wasn't the poetry it wasn't the book or the statements it was what a Tibetan brother said after a puja cleansing for Daniela battling cancer in Fresno "God-is-life ' breath thru paper chantlove

CORAZÓN BILINGÜE by Brenda N. Riojas

Sin palabras, and without translation

perhaps I prefer the tangled tongue I negotiate.

Sometimes in English, sometimes in Spanish,

y a veces no tengo las palabras para lo que pienso no puedo expresar para que otros me entiendan.

I keep silent, some words caught between worlds lost in the currents of El Río Bravo we call the Río Grande

that connect, divide.

I open my mouth, and my words hesitate pulled in opposite directions.

;Cómo se dice? How do you say what can't be said without altering meaning, without changing the song?

Las Mañanitas que cantaba el Rey David no suenan igual in King David's tongue.

Always I apologize for the pauses and the lost in the lacuna. Dispénseme.

Even the rhythm changes.

My pace interrupted

I pause listen to the heart it beats to more than one language, translates all.

El Corazón late en todos lenguajes.

THREE-TEN TO TULE

by Octaviano Merecias-Cuevas

(Mixtek, Spanish, English)

Ni'n ch'aa cha'aa ja coto nuu'dee Ni akanti'de in, u, uni, te ni skunu'de. In one minute the man reveals his uniform The minuteman is now a ku klux clan Two minutes took him to discharge his rage The Third minute looks at him with accusation. Yes, the third minutes have eyes and ears in the desert. When nobody but Mrs. Conscience pays attention.

Four minutes, like a doll in the sand lays Alejandro. Escarchas de tristezas se derraman en el cactus Y aquel pobre hombre blanco ríe por dentro Y la rabia le hierve el alma y le derrite el espíritu Con la conciencia en su mano y con su dignidad. Alejandro por los suelos queda plasmado como estatua, en cinco minutos, en cinco minutos.

Alejandro, Roberto whatever his name is, They are all the same, greasy, dirty, poo Brown, short, illegal and they steal my jobs. Nte'nu kiroo' cha' luli, nte nu kiro vey, Seis minutos su rencor se levanta en vuelo Y se vuelve boomerang de culpa y remordiendo Siete minutos pasaron y siete veces se culpó.

Ocho minutos, the cholesterol rising like one thousand Volcanoes waiting to explode in rhythmic contractions

The arteries start pumping lava rivers flowing from his chest to the brain, from his brain to the mind.

Slowly death kisses his rifle and his hands, With an open chest, a big heart, a great guilt It falls to the sand in minute nine.

U cha' chaku de ichi nuu'a One shot by the guilty The other, guiltiness shot him. One soul flies over the cloud's people The other to the Aryan land—no man's land.

Two humans from the dust of society become one cloud of dust lost in time.

Cosmology

JAGUAR AT HEART by Manuel Lozano

You know me quite well, I'm a jaguar at heart, Destined to rebel Right from the start. Who ever said The wild were dead? I put out my art Through the sounds in my head.

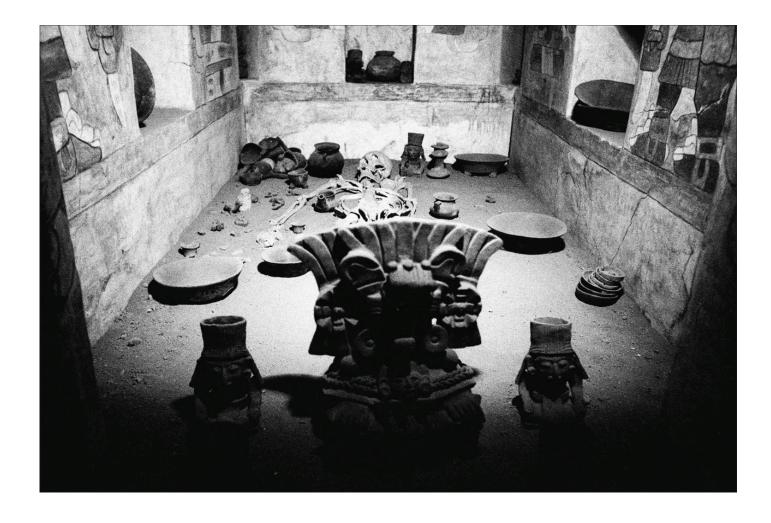
The echo is loud, With a thunderous roar, We pierce the cloud Through the hole on the floor. In twisted nightmares We found the spiral stairs That would let us soar Out where nothing compares.

The vision is yours, And bright if you want, The night sky is the source Of the diamonds we flaunt. The black velvet adorns As the music now warns That the wolf on the hunt Gets pierced by the thorns.

We are souls in transit, Hitching a ride with the thumb, You can either dance it, Or aim your stinger and hum. Either way, it ís flowing, And never easy going, So beat your hand painted drum With the wild wind now blowing.

Change is adrift, Lost in the sea, Like a sparrow so swift That can never be free. Well manipulated, Even fabricated, A consumer on a spree With liberty devastated.

Oh heart of mine, Without hesitation commits, To the rhythm and rhyme Of the pieces and bits. You know us quite well, It was always easy to foretell How this group of misfits Was destined to rebel.



DOGS OF MEXICO

by Devreaux Baker

What was it about it the dust That carved its way into my heart That spoken the unspeakable words of the night Endless tears that cause the air to stop That break the stones That whisper your name In every bar That never sleep That dances the dance of the newly dead Who do not yet realize they must cross over They must leave the taste of dust behind Forsake this land of eyes and hands The heat that twists its way into my hair Has your face This dream of rain A flood that gathers me into its arms These are the dogs of Mexico This endless roaming pack That stampedes my heart Leaves echoes of A thousand unnamed nights In your Arms.



by Estela de la Cruz

Oigo el viento chillando.

Me hiela la sangre.

Eres tú, mamá, eres tú.

Mataste a mi hermano. Mataste a mi hermana.

Los ahogaste en el río ese día que hacía tanto frío.

Y ahora, quieres matarme a mí.

Pero, no me dejo. ¡Corro, corro, corro! ¡De aprisa, corro!

Me sigues, volando por el aire, llorando, gritando, "¡Hija de tu padre, ven aquí!"

Maldita madre, nunca dejaré que me mates.



¡Vete, vete, vete! ¡Lárgate de aquí!



www.eltecolote.org

MYTH OF THE BOOGEY MAN

by Juliana Aragon Fatula

The Maya and Inca dreamed of the monster, the demon named Pusillanimous. The Mayan warrior went into the quag to quell the noise of the deep. He became raw had a rapt fever for feeding on the dead. He began to rack and ravish their bones. He sucked and sapped their piquant blood to quaff his thirst for blood. Ate a sapid brew of meat and skin to sate his depravity. He devoured their children. He became el Cui Cui.

ANOTHER MOMENT IN PARRADISE

by John Landry

No one need say a thing; the earth has said enough —

> the shaking hands unable to fasten a sash to pin down change

hands complicit in the ritual

but one gobbledygook serves as well as another when devising one's own ground rules for sanity

Who can pin the tail on the latest donkey? and does the latest donkey have a powerful kick?

the earth and sea offer both challenge and inquiry.



LIGHTNING'S SON

by Miguel Robles

There was a time when a Jaguar was not just a cat but a god fed by the lava of the volcano godchild of meteor's rage lightning's son

Heart of rock obsidian claws skin of serpentine jade

He did not hide in the thicket he walked proudly through the centuries lord and chief of all mortals revealing to his subjects the secrets of war and sacrifice

Owner of the night

FLOR Y CANTO by Xico González C/S

Flor y canto Flower and song Palabras de revolución Songs of freedom Freedom-libertad-liberación Sol y luna luna y sol-alma-soul-soledad 100 años, muchos más de masacres y silencios pero como Ricardo Sánchez canto y grito mi liberación My words are bullets mi boca el cuete Caute ponte "Al alba, trucha y abusado" dice el profe Montoya Hueytlatoani del in xóchitl in cuicatl Flor y Canto Flower and song Quetzalcoatl God of wisdom, poetry and the wind... lleva al cielo palabras proféticas que se extienden to the four corners of the world white, red, black and blue is the sky where the black eagle flies ¿Qué queremos? Justicia! ¿Cuándo? ¡Ahora!... Es el tiempo de levantarte y gritar Basta! Basta! Bastaaaaaa! Screams Phil Goldvarg

Zapatista warrior de Sacras... Soy yo y tú – Inlakex-Pensamiento serpentino maya Escribió Luis Valdez During the Chicano Movement Ollín that has come full circle and we are fighting the same battles todavía —opresión, racismo, clasismo y todos los -ismos que te llevan al abismo... vas que corres con gobernantes como Bush y el terminator wants to terminate programs like EOP ¡Chingao!

Flor y canto Flower and song Huitzilopochtli God of war dame las palabras para luchar Paz y revolución Ometeotl dualidad divina of justice and truth Justicia y verdad palabras de igualdad Equality should not be a noun sino un verbo en acción

he was the terror of the unfaithful a quick whip an executioner of cowards incorruptible creator of all the ordeals that befell the villages for lack of loyalty

Kings and princesses gave tribute to his lineage to his empire of shadows and punishment

There were days in which the wind dared to speak but was silenced by a roar from the possessor of sound

His dark sight undermined any chance of rebellion adversaries he exterminated with just a whistle

Until the day came when he was erased from our school books and now we only see him at the zoo in a cage Flor y canto Flower and song In xóchitl in cuicatl Poeta = profeta Flor y canto Flower and song Con safos y ¿qué?





A LETTER FOR YELLOWJACKET ROAD by Yezmin Villarreal

ROOTS

Waking up to the day, frigid, fresh prickly pear on my chest, There's poetry in each word that you struggle to speak. Your hands crossed 'cross you as if you lay dead at the crest

Of mountains that were your blanket of salvation in a nest. The 911 emergency was you running to find meaning in a shriek, waking up to the day, frigid, fresh prickly pear on my chest.

T-shirt torn above the brow of your nipple but lest not forget that you won't remember this hand all meek. Your hands crossed 'cross you as if you lay dead at the crest

of our Sinai top. A place where spirits speak in tongue to test ghost women who witness the roaming testimony reeking. Waking up to the day, frigid, fresh prickly pear on my chest.

The goat herder and the Israelite with fig breasts told stories of snakes who opened a man's chest in a week. your hands crossed 'cross you as if you lay dead at the crest.

Sinner man breathe out fear by loving the sinners best, shipwrecked rock stacking carcasses atop widow's peak. Waking up to the day, frigid, fresh prickly pear on my chest, Your hands crossed 'cross you as if you lay dead at the crest.

CACRI IN CARACAS

by Jack Hircshman

In the guaicaipuro shanty-down-town in the Sarria district bang in the shadow of high-rise Caracas,

Cacri jazz!

Mongrel jazz for that's what cacri means: mongrels who go from dumpster to dumpster scavenging. That's what they call themselves: Pablo, Jose, Irvin, Max Lenin, the who Armandos, Dario and Jesus-this band of banditos in a room just big enough to hold them and their instruments blaring, destining and flowering out a rapture of mouths and drum-hands, flapping guitars and thunder-plucked bass.

The narrow alleway just outside's got its ear to the door.

YOU CALL by Nellie Wong

You call my name, Neh-leeeee, Neh-leeeee, your voice subdued as mellow wine and I jump from the kangaroo's pocket To be your walking cane.

I, a glutinous riceball, stick to you for if I sour, you will latch on to the moon in your night flight.

In your bath you turn from me not because your beasts are tiny buttons not because your dresses fit the fat lady at the circus, but because you wear your modesty a necklace of jade.

What do I say when your neighbors ask about you? Why do they ask me when they live next door? Have they abandoned you like a little bitch whose urine is dark as beets?

But there are angels (or are angels Chinese?) who cook your rice gruel as they too wade in heated streams.

Ah, but do they not need you as you need them and have you not hooked up in space, brushstrokes filling the skies, waiting for your own inkwells to be filled?

(This poem was published in THE DEATH OF LONG STEAM LADY, Nellie Wong, West End Press, 1986).



LA CONSAGRACIÓN DEL CAFÉ by Rafael Jesús González

a monseñor Óscar A. Romero

Un día de dios en mi patio tomando café nada es normal o ni el alcatraz con su pene dorado ni el iris como lava morada que derrama un volcán. Encuentro en el fondo de la taza casullas bordadas de mariposas negras y guindas manchas o el sol dispara centellas de balas plateadas y de cirios ahogados o hay sangre en su brillar. Pongo la burda taza en su platillo con un tierno cuidado como si fuera cáliz y digo la letanía: Guatemala Nicaragua El Salvador. Y un lado del corazón me sabe blanco y dulce como la caña y el otro,

como el café, negro y amargo.

CONSECRATION OF COFFEE

* * * * * * * * *

by Rafael Jesús González

to monsignor Oscar A. Romero

One day of god drinking coffee in my patio nothing is normal ó not the calla with its penis of gold nor the iris like purple lava a volcano spills. I find in the depths of the cup chasubles embroidered with black moths & red stains ó the sun fires a scintillation of silver bullets & of candles drowned ó there is blood in its shine. I place the cup on its saucer with a most tender care as if it were a chalice & say the litany: Guatemala Nicaragua El Salvador & one side of my heart tastes white & sweet like cane sugar & the other, like coffee, bitter & black.

The guys swinging for Jalagi Allison and me from the states; they on their feet, we asquat on the floor, all of us at home in a homeless world racing to and from that point where all contact and harmony and whirlawind sounds begins.

They start and they go! We go, you go too, Hugo! In the rain of cats and cacri, with hardly room, and all that space! With hardly food, and all that funky fishsoup in the drum-tureen, sassafrass in the saxes.

The people by sound united by rhythms of hope, from Pythagorean to Coltraen to Bolivarian free-form poetry will never be defeated!.

Cacri! Cacri! Cacri! Cacri! What a mix, what minx-mastered licks, what chaps to feed the belly of sweet poverty's heart!



THE OCEAN BRINGS GREAT THINGS

by Tomás Huitzilcohuátl Lucero

The Mexican immigrants from whom I've come to collect rent stand in a dark house in the winter surrounding René, their patriarch, who halts our conversation about seaports in Los Angeles, and Tampico, where he has worked, to announce:

"The ocean brings great things for those who bathe and frolic in it. Each wave is a tale from overseas."

René is a wave-spirit from Veracruz turning to salt, and breeze, and foam in the underground of our country, where he works in the shadows.

Tonight his dining table is an ocean unto itself breaking on the beach of my muddy conscience.

"I live happily," he continues. "There is no need to pity me. Look on to me! Look on the people that surround me!"

The way in which his embattled, teenage daughters love him, his wife stands by him, his fellow refugees support him, touches me.

He hasn't been to our beaches yet. But I'll take him, on the balmiest day this summer. And then I'll ask, "What have the shores told you?"

The murmur of the beach is not in vain. It is a constant cry, a hell-bent howl, an echo from the open mouth of the serpentine world. Listen to the waves! Listen to China, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Palestine, Honduras, North Korea! Listen to the fertile land of your own heart.

ESPERANZA MUERE EN LOS ÁNGELES

by Jorge Tetl Argueta

a mi prima Esperanza muerta en Los Ángeles el 26 de mayo de 1990

Tengo una prima que salió huyendo de la guerra una prima que pasó corriendo de la migra por los cerros de Tijuana una prima que llegó a Los Ángeles escondida en el baúl de un carro una prima que hoy se muere se muere lejos de El Salvador Pobre mi prima Esperanza no la mató la guerra la mató la explotación \$50 miserables dólares a la semana 40 horas a la semana Pobre mi prima Esperanza se está muriendo en Los Ángeles muerta la van a enviar a El Salvador Pobre mi prima Esperanza dicen que sufrió un derrame y que su hija piensa que su madre sueña sueña que está en El Salvador Pobre mi prima Esperanza ya se murió ya la mataron En un cajón negro se va hoy para su patria Pobre mi prima Esperanza salió huvendo de la guerra y muerta la envían a la guerra Pobre mi prima Esperanza hoy se va a su tierra a descansar con sus hermanos todos los muertos de la misma guerra



NIÑEZ CIEGA by Sabine Huynh

Soy de una niñez sin nieve. Todos los días trenes huían cruzando campos de hierba seca. Una niña de rincón, niña jugando en el corazón de una ciudad gris y grave. ¿Por qué la llamaron "Mis Ojos"? El miedo de piedras malvadas brillaba en los de perros sucios.

Una niñez de polvo de lana. Siempre flotaba en nuestra casa. Se callaba la calle cuando volvíamos mis hermanos y yo. Silencios como gritos subían las escaleras que crujían tristemente hasta mi cuarto.

Podía ver el jardín soñando de flores, imaginando que mis hermanos llegarían a las cerezas verdes y duras antes de los pájaros negros.

Nunca gastaba mi dinero de bolsillo en bagatelas alegres. Con ésto intenté comprar el amor de mi madre enferma apagada loca. Cumpleaños, día de las madres, navidad, le ofrecía jabón de rosa para que cuidase de la suavidad de su piel que nunca me dejó tocar.

Barcelona, el 18 de febrero 2007.

THE ONE DAY CAFÉ by Mary Rudge

Someday (Maybe today) you may be in a café the menu will say "Meattreatsweeteat" But you see two eggs as eyes socketless in El Salvador, the cream with these screams. Colombian coffee, the bean detached at its thick red, detached hand bled. Unfolding the napkin the belly distended, starvation, the drought in Africa, the dead along the road, the dried riverbed, their meatless ribs lay ... "barbecue, fillet, hearty, tender...." skin flayed, the tortured prisoner. "Something more?" the waitress will say. "Eat," your friend will say, "my treat. Eat." The waitress will say "Do you want change?" The waitress will say "come back soon." The menu will say, complete dinner complete. Tears salt in your spoon.

[UNTITLED] by John Ross

The moon Plump as a guayava, Plays peekaboo With the cornices Of the old convent Across Isabel la Católica street Where once gargoyles leered down At unsuspecting pedestrians Until the earthquake Toppled them from their perch Instantly crushing Those who never had time To look up At the shattering sky.

A full generation After that terrible day, The fat moon Washes the broken street In lemon-colored light And picks up the pieces

MUJER SALVADOREÑA by Jacqueline Méndez

Eres mujer salvadoreña Con orgulloso y malicioso caminar, Frente en alto, mirada firme

Eres como el maíz, la harina de arroz, El chicharrón, el frijol, El queso y el loroco. Eres ingrediente indispensable de tu tierra

Eres poderosa como el sol Resistente como el palo de amate, Y tu corriente es más fuerte que la de Comalapa

Eres mestiza, de piel: Morena, canela, bronceada, y blanca

De cabelleras: Negras como el carbón Castañas como el barro Y amarillas como el maíz.

Mujer de baja estatura, pero de alta gracia Eres el acento guanaco al hablar

Coces el maíz Mueles el arroz, Y revuelves el queso con el chicharrón Tus manos palmean la masa, Aplaudiendo tu descendencia indígena pipil-Sobreviviente de la cultura Maya.

Coces mis memorias en el comal Y revuelves mi conciencia en tu realidad Las pupusas, Regalo exquisito de tu ser. Mujer querida amada y aplaudida, Por esta hermana que te admira, Y en la distancia, Te obsequia estos humildes y sinceros versos, Inspirados por tu espíritu de mujer salvadoreña

La Misión

THE OLD MISSION'S BELL by Melinda Palacio

Me llamo Santa Barbara. I am a discarded bell, too old to ring the days away. I carry my city's name. Me llamo Santa Barbara.

Santa Barbara, discarded bell. Santa Barbara, dethroned saint, calendars say. Santa Barbara, city of the Old Mission, Santa Barbara, twin bell towers, red.

Red to mimic near mountains and sky, setting in sun shimmering gloria.

From my round capped home, see the ocean, a holy shade of blue, beyond San Nicolas, once home to another lost woman, christened Juana Maria.

Saint Barbara, imprisoned in a single tower with a trinity of windows, discarded, discalced, but revered.

Your bare feet never walked on smooth adobe floors. Your robes never soaked in spouting water from a bear totem, our Chumash lavanderia.

No worries for red skies or red roses. Your name remains. This old Mission holds your head true, namesake of sword and palm. Me llamo Santa Barbara.

Excerpt from **CONJURE** by Tomas Riley

four cholos walk to the foot of the bridge their bald heads glisten in the sun

with eyes ablaze the music of the waves breaks at their feet like an unrepentant marching song of doves locked in a row

the aggregate of old regret the cypress wind becoming unbecoming cypress bent break beats break beach and send sand sliding down the hillside

master of fact all sliding now on crows feet (*drop that beat one time*)

this beachscape exodus familiar

(if these sands could talk)

LOS CHINGADOS

by Gerardo Pacheco

called them *chingados*, wretched brothers sitting under dark bridges;

drinking *un chingo de* beer, smoking some *chingadera*, living one more *chingada* night;

chingones living the cold streets, penniless, sons of *la chingada*, in a city full of *chingaderas*;

chingados with nothing to *chingar*, but with the whole *chingado* world for them alone;

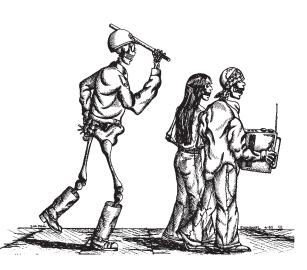
they are our *chingados* forgotten in the indifference of the capital; a society full of *chingados*, who know *una chingada*;

they are our *chingonsisimos* erudites; fearless *chingones* sleeping con la *chingada*;

professors of *una chingada*; philosophers with un *chingo* of knowledge and dreams;

chingones chingandose in those chingados alleys; un chingo of chingaderas chingando those chingados;

chingados living one more day; their bellies roar as *la chingada vida* eats them within;



BRISAS DE SAN FRANCISCO by Melanie Gonzalez

Pasitos despacitos y tranquilitos pasitos del baile girando como un tsunami pa'fuera con los carritos de tacos mezclando con la noticias y mango podrido

IF YOU CAN'T ON MISSION STREET by Cathy Arellano

if no one asks you for money the time, a 'date' if no one asks you to buy a late night, late night fast pass passport

if the savvy entrepreneur doesn't stop you when you pass the paperback books of his crack mart spread on a tarp between the falafel place and roxie theater

cholitas with cleopatra eyes don't maddog you homies parked on 19th or 24th don't ask what you claim?

the tamale lady doesn't nod to her cooler when you rise from the bart cave the flores lady doesn't wave a bouquet when you're ordering at la taquería

if a little boy on a swing at mission playground doesn't ask you to push him higher! higher! than the palm trees a little girl on the merry-go-round at dolores park doesn't ask you to spin it! spin it! til she screams stop! stop!

if the cristianos don't alleluia you invite you to their storefront for salvation hand you a free Watchtower or awake magazine

the viejo selling yerbas para los hombres doesn't nod'n'wink at you the hombres huddled round the old hunt's on 20th don't say, oye mija

the palatero doesn't ring his bell when he passes you the fruit lady doesn't offer elote, mango when you pass her

if the cd sellers don't let you look through their cases and blast a sample on their boom boxes the dvd vendors don't sell yesterday's new release at today's special price

if a señora doesn't accept your offer of help with her bolsas of food or the lady with a baby doesn't take your seat on the 14

the young multilingual latina doesn't stop folding clothes the asian or palestinian store owners don't watch you when you walk in

the man with the red painted face doesn't smile at you the woman with baby powdered eyelashes doesn't blink at you

the filipino man who smokes invisible cigarettes doesn't salute you as he marches up and down the coolest street in town

if somebody passes by and doesn't speak to you in english mexican puerto rican cuban or south american spanish spanglish caló a dialect of mayan quiché quechua tagalog vietnamese cantonese mandarin samoan

it's over pack it up



we body rocked this spot ancestrally

freestyled on this horizon with a flow so hot it sparked the rising sun

(the dawn becomes you)

and though nothing remains

we have been here before

we must be here again en las cunetas de la Misión.

Tu piel, la masa suave de maíz de las pupusas más ricas, tu calor es lo del comal que calienta tortillas, quisiera comerte como un elote de la calle

Eres

mi café con leche y pan dulce de cada mañana el aire del barrio llena con el olor a azucar y canela flotando volando por los cerros recuerdos de La Boheme y la Radio Havana Social Club y noches en la galería donde los lobos poetas aullaron a la luna llena

chupo mis dedos y pienso en ti

throw in the towel what's the point? why are you here?

get yourself to 16th or 24th take the steps two at a time feed the machine a couple bucks punch yourself a one-way ticket

and don't ever think of coming back be gone bye-bye

but if one of these things has happened to you the next time you're on mission street don't be so stuck up say hi

www.eltecolote.org



MEMORIES OF A PEACEFUL WARRIOR

by Roberto Ariel Vargas

Pops always had a pistol in his waistband Since before my birthday

I remember him pissed when I worked with gangsters in the Mission (for peace) And not packing a pistol, just in case

I explained: these are different times Not sure he was convinced

I remember training for war Karate classes at Mission Cultural Center KIIAAIII!!! We were ALL in training... Mama, sisters, primos...

Running laps around Bernal Heights, montaña sagrada Chato and Lucha, the German Shepards Pop in his combat boots would take off running up the mountain, as if racing to freedom ...he never stopped running ...he never reached freedom even after we won(?) the war...

I remember sessions of Win Chun lasted for hours... sweat glistening wherever skin showed the intensity of their focus Chombo, Saul, Gato, Armando, El Poeta Toño El Gringo who never came back from the war to die on the streets of East Los

I remember the women crying as they watched film of the guerrilla in the mountains, they knew who the faces were, behind the red and black panuelos They knew which ones were dead

I remember rifles in the closet And learning how to shoot, but I can't remember which time was the first I won't even let my kids play with toy guns But I will never be without one

I remember the first time I had a cop's gun to my head And the first time I was beaten by a cop for speaking out against someone else's beating I remember the last time a cop beat me while I wore handcuffs —I decided it would be the last time, for the first time

And the first time I tried to kill someone Which was the last time I carried a knife

I remember the first time I knew my friend killed someone But I forget the first time my friend was killed (who was last?)

I can't remember the first brown boy I tried to help Who I later had to bury Or the last But I remember a few in between

I remember when I thought it was time for me to go to the mountains Because that's what I had been trained to do

To never speak over the phone about pop's location Or who was home Never put my back to the door watch the eyes of those who approach don't go into the dark unarmed stand your ground

But mama taught me unconditional love Even though she was an ass kicking woman

I remember the first time she learned I would kill for her She taught me that life is precious even though she grabbed the knife first...

I struggle to define my approach With the newest hearts my genetics offer to history **DESPIERTA** by Leticia Hernández-Linares

Mission street yawns wide under the canopy of breaking day out of breath footsteps tax rickety ladder rungs chase streams of light unveiling the horizon Sleepy hands burning sage on tar rooftop the day just barely born into my desert dusted arms wanting to hold a neighborhood hostage from itself

What a perfect mission these streets have become shoveling out plots for graves, lots for sale A concentric circle of conquest carving itself into a ground overcrowded with the whispering of ghosts

If I charge the children with painting poems sobre las paredes, will you learn to love yourself, curl up from the crouching towards death stance you slag around the streets in, cease the fire that barrels holes through the heads of young men guilty of nothing but brown skin and being on foot no car to speed past the candle lit processing of their own untimely deaths

But down la calle Valencia, la piedra del sol bounces off the hands of a Chicana architect, shines over the open doors of a community space for learning Comedores baring plates steaming with home country recuerdos, cast shadows in just lit enough hallways, connecting writers to their next verse, lovers to inevitable missteps Little girl footsteps walk me back through yearly visits to this place where a Salvadoran Buddhist found a stray, and sent him south to lick the wounds of a family

talking in broken sentences, the uncle who fell me in love with the grassy hill bright buildings poked by cold edges, below

> Prayers printed on the feet of danzantes resound through each block where I have learned how to make crying count, counted murals counting wars cried close to corners where someone keeps dying for nothing, nodded while the whispering of poets sings truth into sense calling each day to attention with the promise of sunrise and sanctuary

KNOW THE NAMES OF THINGS by Lorna Dee Cervantes

for immigrants everywhere anytime

Know the names of things. How 3+1 equals nada in a barrio flat. How many unknowns there are in a single bottle of pills. How much it costs to breath through the nicotine, the anxiety, the three times a million lost nickels in the foreign exchange, in a bushel of sterile seed.

Know the names of things. How to live. How to love the you in all. How to call will come. Be the strings that hold up this house of time held by the wisdom of the abuelas with words holding taut the strands. In the beginning was an absence. Name that, too.

Know the names of things. How to tell the singer from the song. How to swear on a star, become the jury of one. How to tell over the cacophony of a thieving crow. How to chant the mastery of who enslaves whom, who orders the gun, the bomb, the shock and awesome truth. Name this, too.

Know the names of things:

My babies struggle to reconcile our self-defensive home with their pacifist school

Just as I work to be a warrior for peace ready for war A peace activist Prepared for violence Too strong to be passive Too peaceful to be violent Non-violent but armed Armed but not dangerous Dangerous because I want peace Doing battle Against war Fighting for Community Policing Against Police Brutality (Fuck the Police)

Self Critical If hypocritical

Driven by my own worse violence To work for the best peace out to the impoverished ancestors. How to feed a future. Call it what you will. Call power in a name. Name the world to own it. Learn hammer and sickle. Learn the many names for drought. Name the expedient past, the succumbing future. Name what you will. Will what you name. The power of the tsunami in the syllables of truth, the reconstruction of the hurricane in the uplifting vowels. Learn the names of all the treaties never honored by our government. Name the dead, too.

Know the names of things. How to count. Count the many ways life changes life and death changes nothing and never gives. There is a way if you name it. If you follow it the road

auricle from ventricle, aorta from vena cavae, arteries from aurioles; all matters of the heart. Save with the words for it. Then be it, a savior with your words. We, the named, we, knowers know the power, the power to name, to see, to know, belongs to the perceiver, the receiver of knowledge ~ all in a name: our name, your name, the stolen names, the original names, the slaughtered names, the slaughtering names, names for The People for people who need no names, who need food, who need the crystal water because 3+1 in a barrio flat equals nada. Name this, too.

Know the names of things. and heal.

FOR THE "CAPITOL NINE"

by Francisco X. Alarcón

To the nine students who were arrested on April 20, 2010 at the Arizona State Capitol for protesting SB 1070

carnalitos y carnalitas brothers and sisters:

from afar we can hear your heart beats

they are the drums of the Earth

our people follow closely your steps

as warriors of justice and peace

you take on the Beast of hatred

the unlawful police enforcement of discrimination

chain yourselves to the doors of the State Capitol

so that terror will not leak out to our streets

your voices your actions your courage

can't be taken way from us and put in jail

you are nine young warriors like nine sky stars

you are the hope the best dreams of our nation

your faces are radiant as the Sun

they will break this dark night for a new day

yes, carnalitas and carnalitos: all our sisters all our brothers

need no papers to prove once and for all

STRANGE FRUTA by Mamacoatl

"Southern trees bares a strange fruit Blood at the leaves and blood at the root..."

But the southern fence

Bears an even stranger sight Dismembered human bodies Multiplying on both sides Thousands and thousands of migrants Funneled through the desert left to die The pears rotted in the orchard this year No hummingbirds arrived. They were hunted down by the Minute Men Another act of patriotism to save America the blessed From those dirty Mexicans, From those terrorists, from those jornaleros Over there pissing on the corner No shame, I tell you, no education Stealing the jobs, stealing the dreams of America

Typical scene of a border town No civil rights, no rights at all Neoliberal thinking and the NAFTA trade Unleashed an epidemic of femicidal rage Morenita linda, niña de Guatemala, Obrera en Cd Juárez, En Nogales o Tijuana Your sacred body gang raped and torn to pieces Scattered all around and consumed By everyone Your legs were recently found Buried in the desert sand Your heart and kidneys were flown to New York For a very pricey transplant Your spinal column ended up at an MD conference in Phoenix, Arizona Courtesy of UCLA, due to an overflow of body parts And don't nobody knows why The film of the brutal attack is sold in Europe and in the United States And business is doing great, letting us all live in disgrace....

..."Here is a fruit for the crows to pluck Here is a strange and bitter crop."

LA FRONTERA: AQUÍ SOÑAMOS DE MEZCLA by Ire'ne Lara Silva

"In recent years it has become fashionable to write and talk about borders and borderlands, often metaphorically. It is important that we remember that borders are also real, physical places... (with) very tangible consequences for those living along the border."

—Yolanda Chavez-Leyva

we dream of home and 'to belong' we dream of borders border crossings recrossings of differences

highways taking us 'to' not 'from' transformations and symbols born anew

we forget the riverbeds forget the desert childen, cocooned by stilled motherbodies traincars hot then cold with breath and suffocation bullets fired from anxious guns ignorant of nationality or life graves sunken ten bodies deep the gnarled branches and their rope black ringed scars the quiet(?) cages of malnutrition suspicion miseducation on the border there are bodies







TESOROS by Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs

They were born to be treasures raised to shine — Ponce de Leon's gold

Their mothers built tesoros to give of themselves wherever they went "to be useful" was their first prayer

They traversed the interstices of the mind leaving their loved ones with stored hugs and kisses f knowing the power of beauty is less than the power of

"we are humans just like you are– we are not criminals"

our plea comes to "No to criminalization! Yes to legalization!"

with these brown light/dark/medium bodies we dream

of mezcla and mestizaje melting braiding languages we dream of fusion combustion believe in the fertility of chispas the rolling inevitability of change this land this sun this sky these hands

but don't forget the border is littered with bodies laying at crossed angles a barbed wire fence of flesh and bone They left to come sell themselves for \$50 a day

¿What does it mean to be a stranger when you were a treasure? To sing when you work, to cry for friends when you leave and to allow others to cry for you to feel that you are a treasure of life — anywhere you

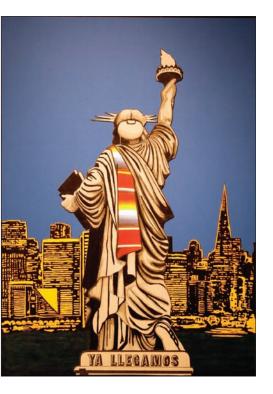
¿What does it mean to turn from being a guest and b

an alien by well-meaning mission volunteers who feed you when you were born to plant your feet on the ground of all those who meet you you were sentenced by your culture to package hospitality in your arms and teeth Instead, you have gone from guest to ghost from tesoro to velorio

a presence in the dark waiting to shine, como tesoro







I AIN'T NO IMMIGRANT by Christopher Carmona

While listening to a poet from Wisconsin tell me that she is just like us because she moved to this Mexican borderland and she feels like an immigrant too All I can think is, I ain't no immigrant, guera I have always been here. This river ain't no border This water flows freely I ain't no mojado, gringa I didn't come here from across the sea I have always been here. Before the Americans Before the Mexicanos Before the Spanish I tended this land I drank from this river I spoke a language I don't remember. I ain't illegal here. I don't need papers to tell me that I belong because I don't belong not to these United States. Not to your America. I have the blue passport but I ain't the right color. I ain't no immigrant, ese I didn't break into anyone's home kill everyone inside and claim God told me to. I ain't illegal here. I didn't build forts on your shores and tell you that you are now members of the Karankawas Nation. I AIN'T no immigrant aki. I have always been HERE.

THE IMMIGRANT by Genny Lim

In honor of the lives lost crossing the Border and Canal: Who is the immigrant? You or I? Asleep between the wings of day and night This bird caught in flight keeps singing her song though no one traps her echo I heard her lyric braided in the barbed wire around the hollow stems along the canal at dawn where I saw the shimmering flowers clothed in jeans and tee-shirts shaming the constellation Take me to myself?" they seemed to cry "I have no mother to birth me here! Take me to where the sun rises in my manhood! To where the moon fashions my lover's eyes! Take off my soaked collar, my shoes Take my backpack and banished suitcase I left for tomorrow! What need have I for sorrow on this journey? What need have I for dreams or love songs? Light passes between each breath but this river of stones will not deny the border between my hand and yours between life and death Love is the only branch to which I cling What need have I for

ON ISSUES OF ALIENS AND IMMIGRATION

by devorah major

truth be told we are all aliens now traveling in outer space are our rocky, blue sea planet

only a few of us stayed nestled in the belly of our ancestors' birthing on the lips our mother's womb

all of the rest of us have traveled to here where our heads now sleep to where our children grow and flourish or wither and perish

but once we all were natives

long before the ones whose names we have forgotten began their trek

we all were natives

before the ones who stayed stopped telling stories of we who had left

eons ago we had no questions about who was our kin

everyone was related

then we began to travel turned each the other into opposites becoming and creating aliens

we traverse this planet near the edge of our dark milky galaxy. rotate steadily circling one sun ghosted by one moon in concert with no less than eight planets

we revolve with and without each other some times meet meteors who whistle through star dust creating craters sand storms lake beds depositing minerals and fossilized ameoba

and as we travel comets sail by their tails shimmering hot smokey ice

and as we move past comets moving past us we see stars fall from the sky and marvel at being in the middle of all these galactic wonders

thus we are travel with and as aliens in outer space on this planet where we live

and everywhere we stay we are surrounded by other voyagers like and unlike us

i know i've always been an outsider amidst immigrants beside aliens next to strangers

orever, of love

aised to be a

go

ecome a ghost?

LA REGLA DE LADRONES

by Avotcja

La Frontera Grandísima fantasía Laberinto malvado Una monstruosidad increíble Una mentira mortal Hecho de alucinaciones santificadas La Frontera Una línea imaginaria Nacida de la muerte y una dieta de miseria Esta pesadilla venenosa Fortificada de un montón de codicia Solamente una soga moderna de hipocresía ilimitada Una ilusión cruel La Frontera Un cuchitril lleno de bobería desmoralizada Una casa grande creada de robo Y nadando

just like you

En bañeras calientes de lágrimas importadas La Frontera Una línea pá esconder un concepto artificial Alrededor de vallas invisibles Muros transparentes pá proteger tierras robadas La Frontera Dos palabras endiabladas Dos palabras malvadas Dos palabras sucias Reglas de Ladrones bestiales que no tienen derecho de existir En la tristeza indescriptible del corazón De esta vieja Poeta negra