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The Regions of Poetry

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We are pleased to present this special theme for Diálogo 17:2, created by two academic experts in Latin American and Latino/a poetics (who are also poetic creative writers), Drs. Juana Iris “Juanita” Goergen and Norma Elia Cantú. Their Call for original creative contributions and studies on 21st century poetry elicited a rich array of work, more than could have filled one issue, from which they carefully selected a beautiful arrangement for our reading, meditation, and understanding. As has become customary for Diálogo, about half our submissions are in English, half in Spanish. The issue before you provides much to learn about art and angst, life lived in diverse pockets of the American hemisphere, and the new directions and movements of poetry in the 21st century.

The 37 poets included in this special issue take us on a rich journey. From well-known poets to newer voices, they represent nearly every country and region of this hemisphere. The section opens with eminent Nicaraguan poet Ernesto Cardenal’s verses on language and life, Puerto Rican Javier Ávila’s verses on family, Argentinian Hugo Mujica’s celestial contemplations, and Alex Fleites’ Caribbean reflections. Zulema Moret takes us to Argentina, Eduardo Chirinos and Santiago Weksler to Perú, and Xánath Caraza to Mexico. We make the circuit again, to Perú with Ana Varela Tafur, to lyrical Guatemala with Carlos López, and back to Mexico with Emmanuel Ayala, Jeannette L. Clariond, and Gerardo Cárdenas. We head to Colombia with Juan Felipe Robledo, Chile with Mario Meléndez, Bolivia with Miguel Marzana, Costa Rica with Osvaldo Sauma, and return to Mexico with Juan Antonio González and Olivia Maciel. Through these verses we travel on buses, by foot, dancing, we stop and survey scenes, we soar to greater dimensions, and pause at cantinas, noises, sunsets and sunrises, short and long roads, good and bad memories. We are again in Perú with Paolo de Lima, move to the Indigenous world with Vickie Vértiz, Carmen Tafolla, Claudia Aburto Guzmán and others, to Chicana consciousness with Liliana Valenzuela, Rosemary Catacalcos, Emmy Pérez, Angelina Sáenz, Araceli Esparza, and to contemplations of the border and borders with Andrés Rodríguez and ire’ne lara silva. We arrive in the Dominican Republic with Rebeca Castellanos, Puerto Rico with Guillermo Rebollo-Gil, South America with Florencia Miltio, Mexico with Claire Joysmith and Alejandra Amezcua, and cherish the unique meditations of Sylvia Riojas Vaughn and Yaccaíra Salvatierra.

Poetry is an opportunity to discover other worlds while learning more about ourselves, and discerning new meanings in life. Poets reach out in a language of the heart and soul. We wish you buen viaje on your journey through these pages.

First, please begin this issue with the powerful introductions, in English and Spanish, by our Guest Thematic Editors, whose insights will delight and guide us to both the creative work and the intellectually stimulating articles of new research.

The authors of these articles evaluate the work of poets and poetry movements in Puerto Rico, Perú, Argentina and Chile, the South Texas borderlands, the Dominican Republic, U.S. and Chicana experiences. Subjects include Indigenous experience, diaspora, childbirth, domestic violence—poetic contexts at times subtle, at times overt, with emphasis on community voices and groups. In the recent era when critics finally begin to assess new creative works by Indigenous peoples, little attention has yet been devoted to women Indigenous poets. Two articles here identify and study a number of women poets, from Mapuche in the Southern Cone with Astrid Fugellie and Diana Bellessi’s work in Zulema Moret’s article, to poets in contemporary Mexico—Irma Pineda (Isthmus Zapotec), Enriqueta Lunez (Tzotzil), Mikeas Sánchez (Zoque) and Celerina Patricia Sánchez Santiago (Mixtec)—in Wendy Call’s article. Broader readership, new translations, and great publishing opportunities have made Indigenous-language poetry more accessible. New publishing outlets have also propelled a new movement of “Chicana/o” poetry along the U.S. Borderlands, as discussed by Christopher Carmona.

Roberta Hurtado’s article engages testimonio to show the socio-sexual racialization to which Latina women are exposed, through analysis of María Luisa Arroyo’s poems; Larissa Mercado-López’s article discusses maternal
consciousness through bodily and social experiences of *mestiza* identity in Laurie Ann Guerrero’s poetry; and Lauren Espinoza evaluates silences in the poetry of the Mexican diaspora through Guerrero’s work and that of two other poets, Eduardo Corral and Lorna Dee Cervantes. Rocio Ferreira studies the transgressions of avant garde work by Peruvian women poets Mariela Dreyfus, Mary Soto, and Dalmacia Ruiz-Rosas in the early 1980s *Movimiento Kloaka*, and provides the provocative covers of those chapbooks. Rey Andújar reviews the avant garde nature of a little-known narrative by the great Dominican poet Pedro Mir; María del Socorro Gutiérrez-Magallanes applies the critical term *nepantlear* to the work of Chicana poets Gloria Anzaldúa, Lucha Corpi and Cherrie Moraga. Finally, Jorge Ortega provides a philosophical assessment of poetry.

It is an honor to include interviews with three distinguished contemporary poets: Chicana Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs of the U.S. Pacific Northwest, creator of powerful imagery and named in honor of Gabriela Mistral; highly award-winning poet and activist-writer Rigoberto González, of California origins but influential on the East Coast; and Spaniard Tina Escaja, professor in Vermont, at times cyberpoet and fisherwoman. The interviewers, Rodrigo Joseph Rodríguez, Aldo Ulisses Reséndiz and Salvador Oropesa, expertly glean comments from these poets by engaging them in provocative self-assessment.

Chicago is a city that has for over a century accommodated new residents from a host of nations, beckoning to visitors and regional neighbors alike. While Mexican-heritage is the greater percentage, the city truly represents a multi-hemispheric Latin American population, rich and diverse communities hosting such events as the annual *Poesía en abril*: this extensive project is co-organized, in conjunction with community members, by our Co-Thematic Editor Juanita Goergen. Some of the poets included in this issue have participated annually in venues at DePaul and other universities. As you recognize their names and learn of new poets, we wish you a pleasurable and reflective experience.

The artists represented in this issue—one a retired professor with years of artistic production, the other a student, newer in the realm of art—each enhance the theme of this issue with their marvelous perspectives and otherworldly realms. Daniel Lopez relates the warmth of families, and the effect of destructive societal forces, while Alec Rudek’s digital images evoke dreamscapes and alternative visions of identity.

Three of our book reviews delve into the realm of poetry, and a film review discusses the newly released movie, *Bless me, Última*, based on Rudolfo Anaya's poetic novel of the same title. Other book reviews contemplate short sayings that are popular in both the Mexican society of yesteryear, and in contemporary society by an Argentine author. Another review assesses Cuba’s engagement with the African liberation struggle in Angola, an interdisciplinary examination of historical documents, to engage new perspectives.

Stay tuned for our fascinating themes next year: *Diálogo* 18:1 will pursue a unique and interesting angle, the *mestizaje* of food and what *Latinos eat*. In Fall of 2015, a special issue will consider the dialogue around a reframing of immigration in the 21st century, approached from a variety of disciplines.

We continue to accept submissions of creative work, book and film reviews, and research articles on Latin American/U.S. Latino topics and subjects, including outside the current themes being promoted. Soon *Diálogo* will celebrate 20 years of publishing; we appreciate your readership and support of our interdisciplinary, Latin American and U.S. Latino focused journal.

*Saludos cordiales*, cordial greetings from Chicago.