

SAN MATEO COUNTY POET LAUREATE



Poetry Reading
by San Mateo County Poet Laureate
Jorge Tetl Argueta
Tuesday, February 27, 2024

About the poet:

Jorge Tetl Argueta is a prizewinning poet and author of more than twenty children's picture books, including *Una película en mi almohada / A Movie in My Pillow* (Children's Book Press, 2001); *Guacamole: Un poema para cocinar / A Cooking Poem* (Groundwood Books, 2016); *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water* (Piñata Books, 2017); *Fuego, Fueguito / Fire, Little Fire* (Piñata Books, 2019); and *Somos como las nubes / We Are Like the Clouds* (Groundwood Books, 2016), which won the Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award and was named to USBBY's Outstanding International Book List, the ALA Notable Children's Books and the Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices. The California Association for Bilingual Education honored him with its Courage to Act Award and his trilingual picture book, *Agua, Agüita / Water, Little Water / At Achichipiga At*, won the inaugural CampoyAda Award in Children's Poetry given by the Academia Norteamericana de la Lengua Española. A Pipil Nahua Indian, Jorge is also the founder of The Library of Dreams, a nonprofit organization that promotes reading in both rural and metropolitan areas in his native country through an annual Poetry Festival called "Manyula." Since January 2023, he has the honor of serving as San Mateo County Poet Laureate. He divides his time between the Bay Area, California, and El Salvador.

20 - Canción de Amor

Amor que estás en las alturas
Y por todas partes de esta hermosa Madre Tierra
Amor que siento en mi pecho cuando al despertar en las mañanas
Tun tun mi corazón tun tun me dice que estoy vivo,
Y que soy tan bonito como el mismo amanecer

Amor que ama como ama mi madre a sus 96
Yo conozco ese amor, yo que sé de ese amor
Madre que a tus 96 años tiembles y dices disparates y olvidas todo y a todos
Menos que soy tu hijo y me amas y me das tu amor sin olvido, sin tristezas,
Me das tu amor con vivienda y sin vivienda, me das tu amor desde un asilo
Me das tu amor sin asilo, me das tu amor que cruzó fronteras para dar amor

Amor y madre mía que estás en todas partes
Quien degolla una gallina a cualquier hora del día, quien hecha tortillas desde el amanecer
Quien se desvela y corre y vende en el mercado y cocina y limpia todo el día
Madre que se alegra con la radio y le ruedan las lágrimas al escuchar una ranchera
Madre que lava y plancha y va a misa y su rezo es el rezo más sincero y lo escucha Dios

Amor que va por las calles y es amor de anochecer, amor ilegal y amor el más legal de los amores
Amor de pájaro amor de las nubes amor en vuelo, amor de agua y amor de estrellas, amor de árbol
Amor en llamas amor de puro fuego, amor silencioso, amor a gritos amor de viento de mares
Ayyy amor de amor, amor que entras por las venas amor a besos y amor de abrazos, ayyy cuanto amor,
Amor encachimbado, amor que va empujando un carretón, amor que vive en las calles
amor de todo amor a todo, amor indescriptible solo amor, shhhh, solo amor, shhh, amor, solo amor...

20 - Love Song

Love in the highest heights
And all over this lovely Mother Earth
Love I feel in my chest when I wake in the mornings
Tun tun tun my heart tun tun tun tells me I'm alive,
And that I'm perfect as the dawn itself

Love that loves like my mama loves at 96
I know this love, what do I know of this love
Mother who at 96 years old trembles, speaks nonsense and forgets everything and everyone
Except that I am your son and you love me you give me your love without forgetting, without sadness,
You give me your love with home and with no home, you give me your love at a shelter
You give me your love without shelter, you give me your love that crossed borders to give love

Love, mother who is everywhere
Who chops a chicken's head off any time of day, who makes tortillas at dawn
Who stays awake and runs off to sell at the market and cooks and cleans all day long
Mother who's happy listening to the radio, tearful when you hear a ranchera
Mother who washes and irons and goes to Mass and whose prayer is the sincerest prayer God hears

Love that wanders the streets, nightfall love, illegal love and the most legal love there is
Bird love, cloud love, love in flight, water love, star love, tree love
Love in flames, love pure fire, silent love, screaming love, wind and ocean love
Ayyy love, love, love that goes into the veins, kissing love, hugging love, ayyy so much love,
Raging love, love pushing a shopping cart, love living in the streets
Everything love, love of everything, indescribable love, just love, shhhh, just love, shhhh, just love, just love...