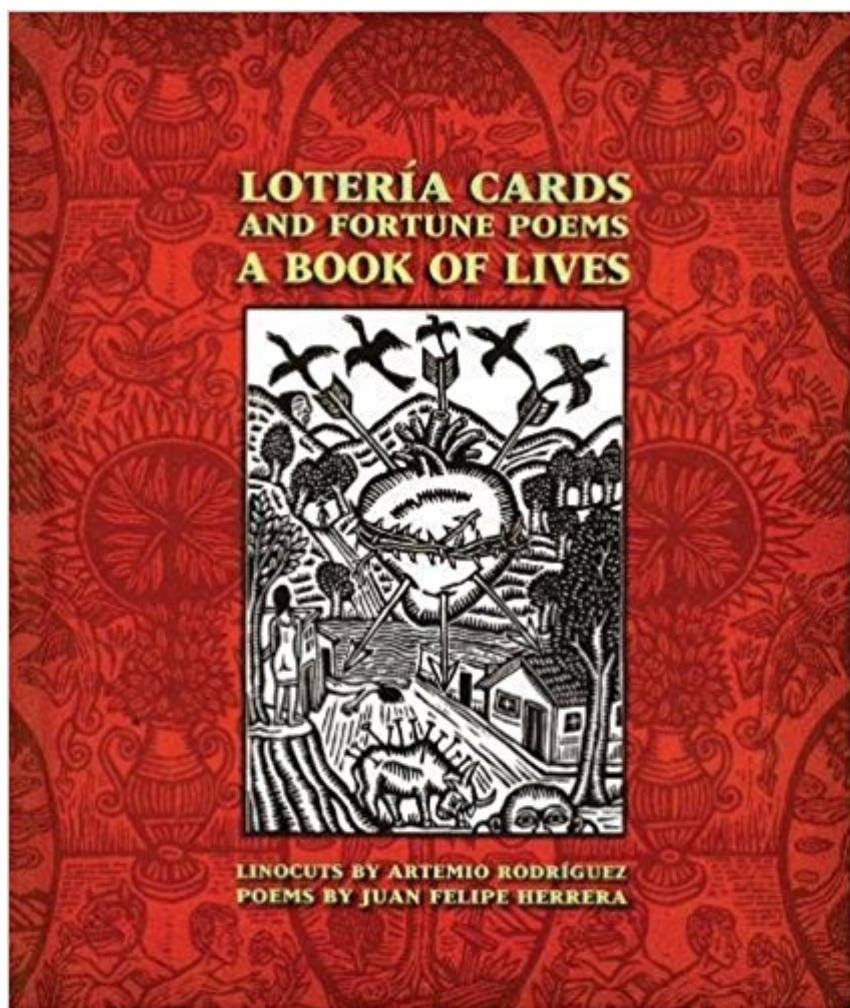


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LoterÃ-a Cards And Fortune Poems: A Book Of Lives



Synopsis

Congratulations to Juan Felipe Herrera, who was appointed U.S. Poet Laureate for 2015-2016, the first Latino poet to receive this honor!*LoterÃ- a Cards and Fortune Poems* pairs the masterful artwork of Mexican artist Artemio Rodriguez with the poetry of Juan Felipe Herrera, one of America's finest Chicano writers. Here is a collection of linoleum cuts and poetry based on the imagery of *la loterÃ- a*, a popular folkloric game of chance that originated in 18th-century colonial Mexico and is still quite popular today. Rodriguez's prints are haunting and exquisite, and Herrera's hallucinatory, sometimes poignant poems were written in direct response to them. Together, they map the modern heart of this richly symbolic popular tradition. *LoterÃ- a* is a unique collaboration, a seamless union of word and image, and of Mexican and Chicano sensibilities. A commonly shared tradition has engendered a brilliant and inspiring leap across borders into a game of life with many ways to win. "The gorgeous black and white line art inside this hefty little book instantly caught my eye. These linocut drawings were not the regular loteria images. They were modern adaptations, made with painstaking detail (think of a turn-of-the-millennium, wired Posada) and showing a distinctive sense of humor and pathos. The poetry, commissioned especially for the drawings, also showed a fresh and modern take on the icons of Mexicanismo and Chicanismo." — *Frontera Magazine* "Narratives, the stories we tell as we propel through our own lives, are fundamental and inextricable from existence. This is why people, I include myself, fight in the name of civil rights, of all kinds. Juan Felipe Herrera is a cosmic warrior for us all, the closest kin to Walt Whitman walking." — David Tomas Martinez, *Los Angeles Review of Books* Juan Felipe Herrera is a performance artist and activist on behalf of migrant and indigenous communities and at-risk youth. His creative work often crosses genres, including poetry, opera, and dance theater. His childrenâ™s book, *The Upside Down Boy* (2000), was adapted into a musical. His books for young people have won several awards, including *Calling the Doves* (2001), winner of the Ezra Jack Keats Award, and *CrashBoomLove* (1999), a novel-in-verse for young adults, which won the Americas Award. His poetry collection *Half of the World in Light* was a finalist for the National Book Critics Circle prize in 2009. Herrera lives in Fresno, CA. Artemio Rodriguez is an artist from MichoacÃän, Mexico, born in 1972. He came to the United States in 1994 and lived for a time in Los Angeles, where he began the work that would ultimately become the *LoterÃ- a* series. He has been living in the Bay Area since 1996, and his work is shown in galleries and museums throughout Mexico and the U.S.

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JF Herrera has received numerous awards and fellowships. The author of 21 books, including fourteen collections of poetry, prose, short stories, young adult novels and children's book, he is also a community arts leader, working with at-risk youth and migrant communities. He is also a dynamic performer and actor who has appeared on stage and in film.

"A book about innovation and tradition" is how Rupert Garcia describes this book in the useful introduction. I recommend that this is read first, because it helps one to understand the history of Loteria Cards in Mexico and the traditional iconography associated with them. They are actually the fusion of two games, Patolli a game of chance the Aztecs played, and Loteria a European Version of Bingo. In the game the name of the Loteria card is called out rather than the number. It may be a type person, an element or feature of nature, or something else, and it is often accompanied by a phrase or poem by the caller to further identify the picture on the card. This is origin of the cards, a fusion like so many things in Mexico, has been put into a contemporary setting in this book. Artemio Rodriguez uses a mixture of traditional iconography and modern images to produce beautiful Linocuts for the images of the Loteria Cards. They look both traditional Mexican and old (they remind me of woodcuts by Dürer), yet contemporary and modern at the same time. Each is distinct and unique. The poems by Juan Felipe Herrera go very well with the Linocuts, and they too are a mixture of traditional Mexican, Chicano and modern subject-matter. They show that beliefs, feelings, and emotions carry over in time, space, language and culture. Some remain the same, while others change. The mix they create is in a constant state of metamorphosis, becoming undefinable, yet staying distinct. The presentation of the book is beautiful, the cover, binding, paper, and printing are all well-done. Each page has a Loteria Cards and a poem that accompanies it. I really recommend this book. It is a thoughtful and beautiful present to give to someone who appreciates the combination of tradition, modernism, art, poetry...

A beautifully made book and inspiring collaboration between artist and poet.

Beautiful book.

Evocative and wonderful book with its matched woodcuts and poems.

Beautiful little book for my beautiful book collection.

My university had Mr. Herrera here for its annual writer's conference, and I picked this book out to read before the events, as I loved the strange, even psychedelic art it contained, which itself is worth the price of the book. The poetry is even stranger. Describing the book as an experiment, Mr. Herrera goes off in a thousand Ginsberg-esque directions, some long, some only five or six lines. Just as Rodriguez twisted traditional Lotaria images with his art, Herrera twisted traditional Lotaria

descriptions. It doesn't hurt that Mr. Herrera himself turned out to be down to earth, encouraging, and just plain sweet! Overall, if you like art, Beat poetry, or Mexican-American literature, pick this book up!

Cutting edge Chicano poet Juan Felipe Herrera and young master print maker Artemio Rodriguez of Michoacan Mexico combine as a dynamic duo to produce a book that is more than the sum of its gifts. The two share an obvious affinity of irrepressible hilarity in their work, a Mexican aesthetic of living with and laughing at death present in the darkest issues, the grittiest subjects, simultaneously celebrating in florid imagery in both picture and word the sometimes desperate, sometimes exhilarating vivacity of Mexican American immigrants. At the same time there's enough aesthetic difference between Herrera's hip Bay Area surrealism and Rodriguez's more folkloric technique to exercise friction between the gritty and the sublime, between the dreamlike and the quotidian that depicts well the sometimes dangerous, often moving human drama of exile, immigration and resettlement. Out of the maelstrom of the experience of millions flies this piercing poetry combined, each poem, with a striking print.

This is a brilliant collaboration between Herrera and Rodriguez. Herrera's poems, as always, are thought provoking and innovative, linguistically and intellectually, and they are a perfect match for Rodriguez's linocuts, which are also innovative and thought provoking. This is a book that you'll want to read over and over again for years to come. WOW!

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