



LA ARCADE DE LOS ESCRIBAS

The
ARCADE
of the
SCRIBES

A Summer Solstice Day
Spectacle Of
WILLFULLY POETIC
Endeavors
2023 Anthology

INSIDE
COVER

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS):
A Summer Solstice Day Spectacle Of Willfully Poetic Endeavors

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LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS



A Summer Solstice Day
Spectacle Of
WILLFULLY POETIC
Endeavors
2023 Anthology



Rogue Scholars Press
In Partnership With Slap Dash Productions

This book, for the
shatterers of virtuous theories
who question everything, especially that
which they hold to be true.

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

CONTENTS

Introduction	XIII
Acknowledgments	XV
Epigraph	XVII
<i>Pow Ahimsa</i>	
Eulogy For Lou Reed	1
Pledge Of Allegiance	2
<i>Austin Alexis</i>	
Rest	3
While In Tompkins Square Park	3
<i>Amina Susi Ali</i>	
Life, Suffering And Death	5
My Formica Home	6
<i>Madeline Artenberg</i>	
At Ellis Island	7
<i>Dorothy Friedman August</i>	
At The Shooting Gallery	9
Found Object: Father	10
<i>Liz Axelrod</i>	
To The Lead Guitar	11
We Used to Walk Through The Door Without Trepidation	12
<i>Oliver Baer</i>	
Untitled #98	13
Untitled #58	14
<i>Burton Baroff</i>	
A School Day	15

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Amy Barone

Mater Matuta..... **17**
Ambrosia **18**

BIG FUCKIN' MIKE

" CURSE GOD & DIE " **19**
" KILLING JOKE " **20**

Linda Black

Still Carrying Lipstick..... **22**

Mark Blickley

Screaming Mime **23**
[Image: "Head Shots" by Miss Unity] **24**

Creighton Blinn

Shortly After Midnight **25**
A Lot Less Than This **26**

R. Bremner

BLT Radio..... **29**
I Spy For The FBI..... **30**

V. J. Calone

Neighborhood Pride..... **31**

Patricia Carragon

Angel..... **33**
First..... **34**

Alex Carrigan

Jang Man-wol Crosses The Samdo River..... **35**
Color Of Choice **37**

Rosemary Carroll

On Retreat In The Pacific Northwest **39**
Guru Style Soapbox Diatribe On Psilocybin Laced Mescal **40**

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

Jan Garden Castro
Marking The Graves Of Women Who Were Abused43
When We're All Dead44

Didi Champagne
V11.....45

Tina Chan
Agree Or Disagree47
The Labyrinth.....48

Deborah Clapp
Grace.....49
Grounding.....50

William Considine
Monumental51
Bridges To The Future52

Mitch Corber
Gun-Shy Kisses.....55

Lydia Cortés
Black Suedes57

Philip Frank De Pinto
In My Dreams59
B And B60

Jesse deMares
The Monster Under The Bed REMONSTRATES RESTRAINT61

Pete Dolack
The Seagulls Are Still Allowed To Sit63
[Image: "Fire escape"].....65

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Viviana Duncan

LIPS67
Dark Side Of The Moon.....68

David M. Elsasser

Blue.....69
O.K. Boomer70

Bill Evans

Not Sonnet71
Not Sonnet73

Davidson Garrett

Mrs. Reductions Final Instructions.....75
The Tilt-A-Whirl76

Lily Georgick

Frolicking Flappers Follow Greek Ferries77
Papa’s Ghost Finds Peace.....78

Phillip Giambri

Grimm’s Fairytale 202079
Empty Pages.....80

Robert Anthony Gibbons

Liberty Gives Me The Language Of The Gods To Tell Them
That I Am Free.....81
And Must I Shoot A Gun For You To Hear Me?.....83

Shelda Emmick Hale

Confession To my Dead Ex-Mother-In-Law.....85
Crow Mother.....86

John S. Hall

Uncharacteristic Confidence.....89
Near Success.....91

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

Patrick Hammer, Jr.

Boot Camp.....**93**
The Eyes Of Charles Sand**94**

Bob Heman

Distance**95**
Blueprint.....**95**

Judith Lee Herbert

My Mother In Wonderland.....**97**
We've Got To Stop Meeting Like This**98**

Ann W Herendeen

Contentment.....**99**
Beloved Disciple**101**

Robert Hieger

Frivolity.....**103**
What Darkness Now Descends.....**104**

Randi Hoffman

Card Store Portal**107**

Roxanne Hoffman

Transit Track Trespass, NJ PATH, 9th St. Station, 2/5/22.....**111**
Little Red Riding Hood.....**112**

David Huberman

The Woman Who Sells Black Garlic**113**

Chris Iconicide

TBT**115**

Evie Ivy

Scene Today**117**
Celebrating the Word.....**118**

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

C. D. Johnson

A Prolegomenon For *HIS* Gospel 119
Angry Souls 121

Ice Gayle Johnson

Bucha- Ukraine..... 125
In Memory 126

Stanley Mark Johnson

Poem For My Father..... 127
Poem For My Mother 128

Larry Jones

This Then The Day 131

Meg Kaizu

Juniper..... 133
Pigment..... 134

Anna Kang

The Resurrection Lily..... 135
The Wisdom Of Spring 136

Linda Kleinbub

In The Backyard 137
Rites Of Passage 138

Ron Kolm

Park Dwelling Homeless Men 139
Size Matters..... 140

Ptr Kozlowski

Juggling Suns 141

Wayne Kral

Long Distance, Please..... 143
[Image: Indigenous Doorman Alibi Witness] 144

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

<i>Mindy Levokove</i>	
So Not Sonnet: A Rap, 3/4/23.....	145
In The Ring.....	146
<i>Karen Levy-Guillén</i>	
The Pink Bike.....	147
<i>David R. Lincoln</i>	
The Observing Stars.....	151
Ozark :: Red Star	152
<i>Tsaurah Litzky</i>	
Desire.....	153
<i>Ellen Aug Lytle</i>	
Breakable / August, 2022.....	155
September / 1976.....	156
<i>Mindy Matijasevic</i>	
Fantasy Rape-Squad	157
How We Lose Our Way	158
<i>Nancy Mercado</i>	
History Lesson.....	159
My Black Family	160
<i>C.O. Moed</i>	
The Day I Thought You'd Leave Me.....	161
Postcards From Egypt.....	162
<i>KB Nemcosky</i>	
Pulse.....	165
<i>Maureen Kelly Nolan</i>	
Full Up	167
In Memoriam 2022: What A Drag	168

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Eve Packer

What You Think..... **171**
5.9.23: Consider The..... **173**

Matthew Paris

The Ballad Of George Santos **175**
The Kidneystone Rag..... **176**

Puma Perl

The Last December Day..... **177**
The River And The Moon..... **178**

Robert Perron

The Key To The Crossing..... **179**

Howard Pflanzner

Human Or AI..... **181**
To Change The World..... **182**

John Pietaro

The Firefly..... **183**
5:03AM..... **184**

Begonya Plaza-Rosenbluth

Guardian Angel..... **187**
[Image: Begoñita, 1964]..... **189**

Su Polo

Sunset..... **191**
[Image: Little Park on 17th Street]..... **192**

Leslie Prosterman

Exodus / Influx: Ukraine And Afghanistan And Ethiopia, Yemen
And Syria And Turkey And **193**
Bio / Sphere..... **194**

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

<i>Vincent Quatroche</i>	
Instructions For Understanding This Poem.....	195
[Image: Vincent Quatroche].....	197
<i>Carrie Magness Radna</i>	
Zahara.....	199
Why I Feel Alone At Conferences.....	200
<i>Janet Restino</i>	
Bouquet.....	203
Horse & Rider.....	204
<i>Eugene Ring</i>	
Compensation.....	205
Your Wish.....	206
<i>Stephanie Denise Rogers</i>	
Royal Perceptions.....	207
Reporting For Duty.....	208
<i>Barbara Rosenthal</i>	
[Image: "Surreal to Conceptual Breakthrough BW Diptych with Figure" (Left)].....	210
[Image: "Surreal to Conceptual Breakthrough BW Diptych with Figure" (Right)].....	211
<i>Robert Roth</i>	
The Marching Of The Days.....	212
<i>Michael Ruby</i>	
Small Green Leaves.....	213
<i>Thaddeus Rutkowski</i>	
Frogs' Legs.....	215
Looking For A Poem.....	216

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Sarah Sarai

Another Way Of Looking 217
Boris Johnson At The Comedy Cellar 218

Lynne Shapiro

Homage To The Square, Rynek Glowny, Krakow 221
Drone Poem 222

Susan Sherman

The Tears Of Things 223
Albuquerque Summer 224

Danny Shot

Luck 227
Noel 228

John Lance Silver

Near The Hudson 229
[Image: John Silver] 230

Joanna Sit

Five Haikus 231
In Which The Body Contemplates The Mystery Of A Bruise 232

Megha Sood

Trails Of Kindness 235
Permanence 236

Sparrow

[Image: "My Career"] 237
[Image: "I Studied"] 238

Miriam Stanley

Women In Cages 239

JM Theisen de González

"Nevermind" 241

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

<i>Tim Tomlinson</i>	
Blood Bank, New Orleans, 1975	243
Afternoon Rain, New Orleans, 1987	244
<i>Zev Torres</i>	
Treading Lessons.....	245
Outage	246
<i>John Theodore Trigonis</i>	
Emerge.....	249
Revisiting Corso.....	250
<i>J R Turek</i>	
Cayenne.....	253
Casual Kiss	255
<i>Gerald Wagoner</i>	
It's Mine	257
Storage And Distribution.....	258
<i>Margarette A. Wahl</i>	
Reel & Response	261
Being "Extra"	262
<i>Bruce Weber</i>	
In Poem.....	264
<i>Susan Weiman</i>	
Trader Vic's	265
Allie.....	266
<i>Bruce E Whitacre</i>	
If I Could Have Anything In Ten Years, What Would It Be?.....	267
Am I Doing The Most With What I've Got?	268
<i>Jeffrey Cyphers Wright</i>	
Calling The Tune.....	269
[Image: "Four Armed is Forewarned"].....	270

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Linda Wulkan

[Image: "Water color and pencil on paper" (One)] 271
[Image: "Water color and pencil on paper" (Two)]..... 272

Allan Yashin

I'm Still Here..... 273
Two Left Feet..... 275

Susan L. Yung

Mother's Day, Today 277
Matriarchal Lineage..... 278

Rhonda Zangwill

Blintzes: A Fantasy Meditation..... 279
Sidney..... 281

Joanie HF Zosike

Praise Song To The Bullet 283
Dear Magical Beings..... 284

Postscript: This Concludes The Great Work
Colophon: Rogue Scholars Press

APPENDIX

Alphabetical Index Of Poems..... a-I
Anthology Bibliography..... a-IX

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

INTRODUCTION

In the quiet embrace of a newborn dawn, as the old year faded into whispers of memories, a tapestry of souls converged upon the sacred realm of verse. Gathered under the benevolent gaze of the sun's tender glow, a poetry event unfolded, igniting the air with an ethereal symphony of words and emotions.

On that fateful New Year's Day, the boundaries of reality blurred, and the ephemeral boundaries of the heart were traversed. A collective of diverse voices, each resonating with unique hues, intertwined like celestial constellations, breathing life into a sacred dance of ink and parchment. Dreams flaunted their secrets, and passions coursed through the veins of those who dared to seek solace in syllables.

Immersed in the ambiance of a time suspended, poets bared their souls, exhaled their wills, and summoned the veiled realms of imagination. They became the alchemists of language, the Arcade of the Scribes, forging metaphors from ancient stardust and intertwining narratives with the essence of life's mysteries. In their hands, the mundane transformed into the extraordinary, the mundane into the profound, and the mundane into the sublime.

Verse upon verse, the air shimmered with an intoxicating melange of vulnerability, strength, joy, and melancholy. The pulse of every heart resonated through the sacred space, painting invisible strokes upon the canvas of collective consciousness. And as the final syllable slipped into the ever-changing tapestry of time, a hushed awe descended upon the audience who had witnessed this exquisite unveiling of the human spirit.

This anthology is a testament to that luminous moment, a vessel harboring the essence of that ephemeral gathering. Within these pages, you shall encounter fragments of ideas woven with silken threads of longing, lines that unravel the mysteries of love and loss, and tones of the infinite contained within the finite. It is an invitation to embark on a journey where words dance, muses sing, and the boundaries of the known yield to the enigmatic world of the unsaid.

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

May this book guide you through the labyrinthine corridors of existence, illuminating the hidden corners of your mind and sharing truths only poetry can unveil. Open your heart, dear reader, and embark on this odyssey into the ocean of bliss woven on that New Year's Day, where poetry reigns as the eternal language of all humankind.

- C. D. Johnson, Editor-In-Chief

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ONCE again, we have to give thanks to those who offered up their blood, sweat, tears, and verse in order to make such a culturally enlightening event happen in a time in which it seems the light of the arts tends to fade more often than shine. They keep the fires burning at the temple, holding back the demons of mediocrity and insouciance.

Appreciation to:

Slap Dash Productions,
Big Mike Logan, Linda Kleinbub, Madeline Artenberg.

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Westbeth Home To The Arts.

And a very special thanks to our intellectual predecessors who lit the first match for us, Bruce Weber and Joanne Pagano Weber.

Most of all, great appreciation and admiration for all the poets, writers, musicians, and artists without whom there would be no contributions to fill up these otherwise empty pages. The Muze loves her all children unconditionally, as do we here at Rogue Scholars Press!

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

EPIGRAPH

From *LOVE IN THE TIME OF CHOLERA*:

Fermina Daza shared with her schoolmates the singular idea that the Arcade of the Scribes was a place of perdition that was forbidden, of course, to decent young ladies. It was an arcaded gallery across from a little plaza where carriages and freight carts drawn by donkeys were for hire, where popular commerce became noisier and more dense.

The name dated from colonial times, when the taciturn scribes in their vests and false cuffs first began to sit there, waiting for a poor man's fee to write all kinds of documents: memoranda of complaints or petition, legal testimony, cards of congratulation or condolence, love letters appropriate to any stage in an affair. They, of course, were not the ones who had given that thundering market its bad reputation but more recent peddlers who made illegal sales of all kinds of questionable merchandise smuggled in on European ships, from obscene postcards and aphrodisiac ointments to the famous Catalonian condoms with iguana crests that fluttered when circumstances required or with flowers at the tip that would open their petals at the will of the user.

Fermina Daza, somewhat unskilled in the customs of the street, went through the Arcade without noticing where she was going as she searched for a shady refuge from the fierce eleven o'clock sun. She sank into the hot clamor of the shoeshine boys and the bird sellers, the hawkers of cheap books and the witch doctors and the sellers of sweets who shouted over the din of the crowd: pineapple sweets for your sweetie, coconut candy is dandy, brown-sugar loaf for your sugar.

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

But, indifferent to the uproar, she was captivated on the spot by a paper seller who was demonstrating magic inks, red inks with an ambience of blood, inks of sad aspect for messages of condolence, phosphorescent inks for reading in the dark, invisible inks that revealed themselves in the light. She wanted all of them so she could amuse Florentino Ariza and astound him with her wit, but after several trials she decided on a bottle of gold ink.

Then she went to the candy sellers sitting behind their big round jars and she bought six of each kind, pointing at the glass because she could not make herself heard over all the shouting: six angel hair, six tinned milk, six sesame seed bars, six cassava pastries, six chocolate bars, six blancmanges, six tidbits of the queen, six of this and six of that, six of everything, and she tossed them into the maid's baskets with an irresistible grace and a complete detachment from the stormclouds of flies on the syrup, from the continual hullabaloo and the vapor of rancid sweat that reverberated in the deadly heat.

She was awakened from the spell by a good-natured black woman with a colored cloth around her head who was round and handsome and offered her a triangle of pineapple speared on the tip of a butcher's knife. She took it, she put it whole into her mouth, she tasted it, and was chewing it as her eyes wandered over the crowd, when a sudden shock rooted her on the spot. Behind her, so close to her ear that only she could hear it in the tumult, she heard his voice:

"This is not the place for a crowned goddess."

- **Gabriel García Márquez**

The ARCADE of the SCRIBES

*Notation: Ln.Brk = stanza line break

Pow Ahimsa

Pow Ahimsa — A human being living in Brooklyn, working at a school on The LES. Plays music without words, other times writes words without music. Favorite musician-Eric Dolphy. Favorite poet-Rumi with Rilke a close second. Favorite food-homefries with the perfect char on the potatoes and onions and perfect amounts of salt, grease and smoked paprika.

Eulogy For Lou Reed

Get thee on that A train and get as far as you possibly can from your
time bound backwater
where no one's truly free. There's nothin goin down at all-that's what
you screamed to me from a
tiny red transistor radio many years ago and something about the
resistance
inside me
subsided.
You said it was alright and for some reason
I believed.
Thanks be which gave you a barren home and restlessness to seek.
There's
a certain grace in the desperation of anything but this, anywhere but
here so
just get yourself down to The Village or The LES and you take your
chances there
with the punks, poets, junkies-the ones who were tossed, complete
in the incompleteness, ones who seek to seek, not needing to find.
Only the truly lost ever find anything in this life anyway. You found
your salvation then

like a bell of clarity
some trash chorus
of tattered halfway angels
rang out

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It Was Alriiiiiiiiiight

So it was.
I finally believed
in something.



Pledge Of Allegiance

I pledge allegiance to the vibe
of the primal OM of the Universe
and to each human manifestation
all seeming to converge
on this one G train
underground
seemingly invisible
with an immensity
of reverence
for cats.



Austin Alexis

Austin Alexis was a finalist for the *Kenyon Review* Short Nonfiction Prize.

Rest

I “forgot” how to set
my digital alarm clock
because I wanted to sleep
forever.
But I woke up anyway —
damn it to hell —
and the long-ass day
charged me with life again,
like Michelangelo’s God
rattling Adam.
Mike, you over-active darling,
unfortunately, you’ve given Reality ideas.
I liked the void just fine.
More of it would’ve done nicely.



While In Tompkins Square Park

Somehow, I expect to spot
Henry James or Ruby Dee or Neruda
or other paragons, dead, yet breathing,
their individual spirit too vital to die.
Here in this park where thuds
resound from the tops of bongos,
I anticipate the heroic sounds
of the voices I’ve just listed:
intricate Jamesian sentences, lacing the air;
the inimitable heartfelt drawl of Ruby Dee.

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

cont...

In this urban green doling out drumbeats
and the pounding of basketballs
and the animal roars of peripheral buses,
I await not overly aggressive squirrels
nor loud-mouthed slovenly chess players
but an electric charge from Neruda
while Dee and James part the clouds.



Amina Susi Ali

Amina Susi Ali is a poet and writer located in New York City. She is currently writing short stories and a biography. Follow her on Instagram @aminasusi for upcoming appearances and open mikes etc.

Life, Suffering And Death

Life, suffering and death,
the eternal pattern.
Already I know too much
about numbers two and three
and am still trying to figure out
what life really is.
Is it the routine
and plodding of our days,
the bittersweet bread
earned by the salt sweat of our brows?
If so, I want nothing
of that life.
It shackles me.
I have no need
for daily chains.
I want air, sun, grass and
mud below my feet,
not pretty distraction
and consecutive chapters.
Freedom, I await you
however you choose to come.



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My Formica Home

The black counter glistens,
its surface illuminated by waning sun.
A blue and white takeout cup
rests in my neighbor's hand.
He is one of the multitude
of teachers, bus drivers,
and travelers, like me.

Home on 39th Street
with no mother other than
this eternal coffee pot,
this stool, today's foundation.
The small window booth
my occasional refuge.
Every story in existence
is lived and told
within these brick and orange walls.

Donuts are lined up on their racks,
daily creations of all hues:
sprinkled pink, chocolate, caramel,
pineapple and flaky coconut.
Just like Sunset Park,
where you can find an avocado
on every corner,
and sometimes
mercy.



Madeline Artenberg

Madeline Artenberg was a photojournalist and street-theatre performer before falling for poetry. Her work appears in such publications as *Rattle*. She was a finalist in *Mudfish* 2020 contest. A poem was nominated as *Best of the Net* 2020 by *Poets Wear Prada*. Her poetry book, *Naming a Hurricane*, from *Pink Trees Press*, is available on Amazon Books.

At Ellis Island

Father leaves his Sephardic
last name in the hay wagon
he escaped in. Blends with
the Eastern European Jews
at Ellis Island.

He settles family in a Brooklyn project.
When father smells one whiff
of cumin-laced lamb, he closes
windows, piles on his plate
brisket and boiled potato.

When he comes upon neighbors, he brushes
past their *Komo estash*, mutters
under his breath, "I'm fine, I'm fine."

When his daughter asks where
he was born, he points far
across ocean. She collects photos
of faces like his: long and narrow, high-
cheek bones, sharp chin, dark eyes.

Ln.Brk

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

In school, she slips easily into *Me llamo*.
Señoritas in red beckon
from grammar books. When she decides
to teach Spanish, father yells,
"You're throwing away your education."

Now, he's lost the way
to temple, can't find the next
prayer page.

Every day, she shows him photos
of faces like his. He's forgotten
who she is, forgotten his name.
Every day, he prays,
"Dío, por favor,
take me
to mi padre."



Joanie HF Zosike

After graduating from NYU, Joanie HF Zosike acted with The Living Theatre for 30 years. She received an Edward Albee fellowship, a grant from Foundation for Jewish Culture, a NYSCA DCA regrant, and a Sara Patton poetry stipend from The Writers Hotel. Her work appears in *Maintenant, Have a NYC Vol. 3, Light on the Walls of Life* (Ferlinghetti tribute anthology), *Women in American Theatre; Ides—a Collection of Poetry Chapbooks*, and *Alien Buddha Gets a Real Job; as well as The New Guard, Home Planet News, Jewish Forward, Syndic, Silver Birch, and BANG!*

Praise Song To The Bullet

Praise Song to the Bullet
 Praise the bullet — the point that is the bullet
 Praise the maze of careless language that
 permits a "bullet" to represent punctuation

Praise the punctuation, the puncture
 of the bullet that laces grammar with
 the blood of innocents...of innocence

Praise the flight of the spotless deer
 as she flees the hunter's dispassionate aim
 Praise the hunters, for they, too, are prey

Praise the bear, praise a woman's wildness
 that lives in her trunk of deviant urges
 Praise the bear's great tenderness as he
 embraces his bear-child with tender paws

Praise the woman who says:
You just have to bite the bullet

Ln.Brk

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Praise the woman who replies:
I will never bite the bullet
I will bite the pubis of the blood orange
Nibble gently at sweet pink flowers
But I will not praise the shooter,
and I will not bite the bullet —
unless it flies into my mouth

Praise the bullet caught between the teeth
of stillness like a nervous carrion bird



Dear Magical Beings

(For Amber, forever Amber)

Friday the 13th in its rare unicorn incarnation
is an heirloom in the basket of our tomatoes
13 is a reminder of the rawness of us
We walk through the coals of this hellhole earth
with blistered senses, herding our fears as if they were spooked cattle

So much time, so much spine — *Peace peace peace!*
I listened to Kendrick Lamar's new album today*,
eavesdropping on the passion and total abandon of his generation,
the nonstop hip-hop thoughts he be handing down from a mindset
that with all my good intentions, I can never understand —
I haven't been there

Yet we're living on a platter a clatter of celestial matter
that shatters expectations like a splattered miscalculation
If you be a brother or a sister, if you be Jew or Asian
Latinx, First Nation, Islander, LGBTQ, do you find you're inside
any of the lies they tell about you? Who's the Frankenstein? Who?
Who's Batman? *Nu?* Let's hear it for Fat Lady and Fat Man!
You're raging against statistics like any normal person do

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

cont...

So despite all my gasping at the earnest fierceness and incessant use of the N-word, I dig how he preaches and teaches despite what might be considered crude

Peace peace peace! I can't bear to watch the news
but to ignore is to refuse to engage
The way to mesh is not to wish away
It is to be positive like all of you, my friends,
and thank you for reminding me of all the times to come
and when to go...home
Watch your sperm, watch your eggs
Watch the hours and your offspring ideas
Remember baby tears are same as grown-up tears
The laughter of magical beings
is the medicine that will bring our lips
to the cup of truth

(*Kendrick Lamar's fifth album, *Mr. Morale & the Big Steppers*, was recorded in studio on July 31, 2022, produced by PGLang, Top Dawg Entertainment (TDE), Aftermath Entertainment, and Interscope Records.)



POSTSCRIPT

Gabriel García Márquez wrote of one of his characters, "Without intending to, without even knowing it, he demonstrated with his life that his father had been right when he repeated until his dying day that there was no one with more common sense, no stonemason more obstinate, no manager more lucid or dangerous, than a poet."

- The same goes for book editors.

And with that...I am done.

•
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APPENDIX

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

LIST OF IMAGES

- [Image: "Head Shots" by Miss Unity] — Mark Blickley — **24**
[Image: "Fire escape"] — Pete Dolack — **65**
[Image: Indigenous Doorman Alibi Witness] —
Wayne Kral — **144**
[Image: Begoñita, 1964] — Begonya Plaza-Rosenbluth — **189**
[Image: Little Park on 17th Street] — Su Polo — **192**
[Image: Vincent Quatroche] — Vincent Quatroche — **197**
[Image: "Surreal to Conceptual Breakthrough BW Diptych with Figure"
(Left)] — Barbara Rosenthal — **210**
[Image: "Surreal to Conceptual Breakthrough BW Diptych with Figure"
(Right)] — Barbara Rosenthal — **211**
[Image: John Silver] — John Lance Silver — **230**
[Image: "My Career"] — Sparrow — **237**
[Image: "I Studied"] — Sparrow — **238**
[Image: "Four Armed is Forewarned"] —
Jeffrey Cyphers Wright — **270**
[Image: "Water color and pencil on paper" (One)] —
Linda Wulkan — **271**
[Image: "Water color and pencil on paper" (Two)] —
Linda Wulkan — **272**

ALPHABETICAL LIST OF POEMS

#

- 5:03AM — John Pietaro — **184**
5.9.23: Consider The — Eve Packer — **173**

Afternoon Rain, New Orleans, 1987 — Tim Tomlinson — **244**

A

- Agree Or Disagree — Tina Chan — **47**
Albuquerque Summer — Susan Sherman — **224**

a-l

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

- Allie — Susan Weiman — **266**
Am I Doing The Most With What I've Got? — Bruce E Whitacre — **268**
Ambrosia — Amy Barone — **18**
And Must I Shoot A Gun For You To Hear Me? —
 Robert Anthony Gibbons — **83**
Angel — Patricia Carragon — **33**
Angry Souls — C. D. Johnson — **121**
Another Way Of Looking — Sarah Sarai — **217**
At Ellis Island — Madeline Artenberg — **7**
At The Shooting Gallery — Dorothy Friedman August — **9**

B

- B And B — Philip Frank De Pinto — **60**
The Ballad Of George Santos — Matthew Paris — **175**
Being "Extra" — Margarett A. Wahl — **262**
Beloved Disciple — Ann W Herendeen — **101**
Bio / Sphere — Leslie Prosterman — **194**
Black Suedes — Lydia Cortés — **57**
Blintzes: A Fantasy Meditation — Rhonda Zangwill — **279**
Blood Bank, New Orleans, 1975 — Tim Tomlinson — **243**
BLT Radio — R. Bremner — **29**
Blue — David M. Elsasser — **69**
Blueprint — Bob Heman — **95**
Boot Camp — Patrick Hammer, Jr. — **93**
Boris Johnson At The Comedy Cellar — Sarah Sarai — **218**
Bouquet — Janet Restino — **203**
Breakable / August, 2022 — Ellen Aug Lytle — **155**
Bridges To The Future — William Considine — **52**
Bucha- Ukraine — Ice Gayle Johnson — **125**

C

- Calling The Tune — Jeffrey Cyphers Wright — **269**
Card Store Portal — Randi Hoffman — **107**
Casual Kiss — J R Turek — **255**
Cayenne — J R Turek — **253**
Celebrating the Word — Evie Ivy — **118**
Color Of Choice — Alex Carrigan — **37**
Compensation — Eugene Ring — **205**

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

Confession To my Dead Ex-Mother-In-Law — Shelda Emmick Hale — **85**
Contentment — Ann W Herendeen — **99**
Crow Mother — Shelda Emmick Hale — **86**
" CURSE GOD & DIE " — BIG FUCKIN' MIKE — **19**

D

Dark Side Of The Moon — Viviana Duncan — **68**
The Day I Thought You'd Leave Me — C.O. Moed — **161**
Dear Magical Beings — Joanie HF Zosike — **284**
Desire — Tsaurah Litzky — **153**
Distance — Bob Heman — **95**
Drone Poem — Lynne Shapiro — **222**

E

Emerge — John Theodore Trigonis — **249**
Empty Pages — Phillip Giambri — **80**
Eulogy For Lou Reed — Pow Ahimsa — **1**
Exodus / Influx: Ukraine And Afghanistan And Ethiopia, Yemen And Syria
And Turkey And — Leslie Prosterman — **193**
The Eyes Of Charles Sand — Patrick Hammer, Jr. — **94**

F

Fantasy Rape-Squad — Mindy Matijasevic — **157**
The Firefly — John Pietaro — **183**
First — Patricia Carragon — **34**
Five Haikus — Joanna Sit — **231**
Found Object: Father — Dorothy Friedman August — **10**
Frivolity — Robert Hieger — **103**
Frogs' Legs — Thaddeus Rutkowski — **215**
Frolicking Flappers Follow Greek Ferries — Lily Georgick — **77**
Full Up — Maureen Kelly Nolan — **167**

G

Grace — Deborah Clapp — **49**
Grimm's Fairytale 2020 — Phillip Giambri — **79**
Grounding — Deborah Clapp — **50**

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

Guardian Angel — Begonya Plaza-Rosenbluth — **187**
Gun-Shy Kisses — Mitch Corber — **55**
Guru Style Soapbox Diatribe On Psilocybin Laced Mescal —
Rosemary Carroll — **40**

H

History Lesson — Nancy Mercado — **159**
Homage To The Square, Rynek Glowny, Krakow — Lynne Shapiro — **221**
Horse & Rider — Janet Restino — **204**
How We Lose Our Way — Mindy Matijasevic — **158**
Human Or AI — Howard Pflanzner — **181**

I

I Spy For The FBI — R. Bremner — **30**
I'm Still Here — Allan Yashin — **273**
If I Could Have Anything In Ten Years, What Would It Be? —
Bruce E Whitacre — **267**
In Memory — Ice Gayle Johnson — **126**
In Poem — Bruce Weber — **264**
In Memoriam 2022: What A Drag — Maureen Kelly Nolan — **168**
In The Backyard — Linda Kleinbub — **137**
In My Dreams — Philip Frank De Pinto — **59**
In The Ring — Mindy Levokove — **146**
In Which The Body Contemplates The Mystery Of A Bruise —
Joanna Sit — **232**
Instructions For Understanding This Poem — Vincent Quatroche — **195**
It's Mine — Gerald Wagoner — **257**

J

Jang Man-wol Crosses The Samdo River — Alex Carrigan — **35**
Juggling Suns — Ptr Kozlowski — **141**
Juniper — Meg Kaizu — **133**

K

The Key To The Crossing — Robert Perron — **179**
The Kidneystone Rag — Matthew Paris — **176**
" KILLING JOKE " — BIG FUCKIN' MIKE — **20**

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

L

- The Labyrinth — Tina Chan — **48**
The Last December Day — Puma Perl — **177**
Liberty Gives Me The Language Of The Gods To Tell Them That I Am Free
— Robert Anthony Gibbons — **81**
Life, Suffering And Death — Amina Susi Ali — **5**
LIPS — Viviana Duncan — **67**
Little Red Riding Hood — Roxanne Hoffman — **112**
Long Distance, Please — Wayne Kral — **143**
Looking For A Poem — Thaddeus Rutkowski — **216**
A Lot Less Than This — Creighton Blinn — **26**
Luck — Danny Shot — **227**

M

- The Marching Of The Days — Robert Roth — **212**
Marking The Graves Of Women Who Were Abused —
Jan Garden Castro — **43**
Mater Matuta — Amy Barone — **17**
Matriarchal Lineage — Susan L. Yung — **278**
Monumental — William Considine — **51**
The Monster Under The Bed REMONSTRATES RESTRAINT —
Jesse deMares — **61**
Mother's Day, Today — Susan L. Yung — **277**
Mrs. Reductions Final Instructions — Davidson Garrett — **75**
My Black Family — Nancy Mercado — **160**
My Formica Home — Amina Susi Ali — **6**
My Mother In Wonderland — Judith Lee Herbert — **97**

N

- Near Success — John S. Hall — **91**
Near The Hudson — John Lance Silver — **229**
Neighborhood Pride — V. J. Calone — **31**
" Nevermind" — JM Theisen de González — **241**
Noel — Danny Shot — **228**
Not Sonnet — Bill Evans — **71**
Not Sonnet — Bill Evans — **73**

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

O

- O.K. Boomer — David M. Elsasser — **70**
The Observing Stars — David R. Lincoln — **151**
On Retreat In The Pacific Northwest — Rosemary Carroll — **39**
Outage — Zev Torres — **246**
Ozark :: Red Star — David R. Lincoln — **152**

P

- Papa's Ghost Finds Peace — Lily Georgick — **78**
Park Dwelling Homeless Men — Ron Kolm — **139**
Permanence — Megha Sood — **236**
Pigment — Meg Kaizu — **134**
The Pink Bike — Karen Levy-Guillén — **147**
Pledge Of Allegiance — Pow Ahimsa — **2**
Poem For My Father — Stanley Mark Johnson — **127**
Poem For My Mother — Stanley Mark Johnson — **128**
Postcards From Egypt — C.O. Moed — **162**
Praise Song To The Bullet — Joanie HF Zosike — **283**
A Prolegomenon For HIS Gospel — C. D. Johnson — **119**
Pulse — KB Nemcosky — **165**

R

- Reel & Response — Margarete A. Wahl — **261**
Reporting For Duty — Stephanie Denise Rogers — **208**
Rest — Austin Alexis — **3**
The Resurrection Lily — Anna Kang — **135**
Revisiting Corso — John Theodore Trigonis — **250**
Rites Of Passage — Linda Kleinbub — **138**
The River And The Moon — Puma Perl — **178**
Royal Perceptions — Stephanie Denise Rogers — **207**

S

- Scene Today — Evie Ivy — **117**
A School Day — Burton Baroff — **15**
Screaming Mime — Mark Blickley — **23**
The Seagulls Are Still Allowed To Sit — Pete Dolack — **63**

THE ARCADE OF THE SCRIBES (LA ARCADA DE LOS ESCRIBAS)

- September / 1976 — Ellen Aug Lytle — **156**
Shortly After Midnight — Creighton Blinn — **25**
Sidney — Rhonda Zangwill — **281**
Size Matters — Ron Kolm — **140**
Small Green Leaves — Michael Ruby — **213**
So Not Sonnet: A Rap, 3/4/23 — Mindy Levokove — **145**
Still Carrying Lipstick — Linda Black — **22**
Storage And Distribution — Gerald Wagoner — **258**
Sunset — Su Polo — **191**

T

- TBT — Chris Iconicide — **115**
The Tears Of Things — Susan Sherman — **223**
This Then The Day — Larry Jones — **131**
The Tilt-A-Whirl — Davidson Garrett — **76**
To The Lead Guitar — Liz Axelrod — **11**
To Change The World — Howard Pfanzer — **182**
Trader Vic's — Susan Weiman — **265**
Trails Of Kindness — Megha Sood — **235**
Transit Track Trespass, NJ PATH, 9th St. Station, 2/5/22 —
Roxanne Hoffman — **111**
Treading Lessons — Zev Torres — **245**
Two Left Feet — Allan Yashin — **275**

U

- Uncharacteristic Confidence — John S. Hall — **89**
Untitled #98 — Oliver Baer — **13**
Untitled #58 — Oliver Baer — **14**

V

- V11 — Didi Champagne — **45**

W

- We Used to Walk Through The Door Without Trepidation —
Liz Axelrod — **12**
We've Got To Stop Meeting Like This — Judith Lee Herbert — **98**

ASSDSWPE 2023 Anthology

- What Darkness Now Descends — Robert Hieger — **104**
What You Think — Eve Packer — **171**
When We're All Dead — Jan Garden Castro — **44**
While In Tompkins Square Park — Austin Alexis — **3**
Why I Feel Alone At Conferences — Carrie Magness Radna — **200**
The Wisdom Of Spring — Anna Kang — **136**
Women In Cages — Miriam Stanley — **239**
The Woman Who Sells Black Garlic — David Huberman — **113**

Y

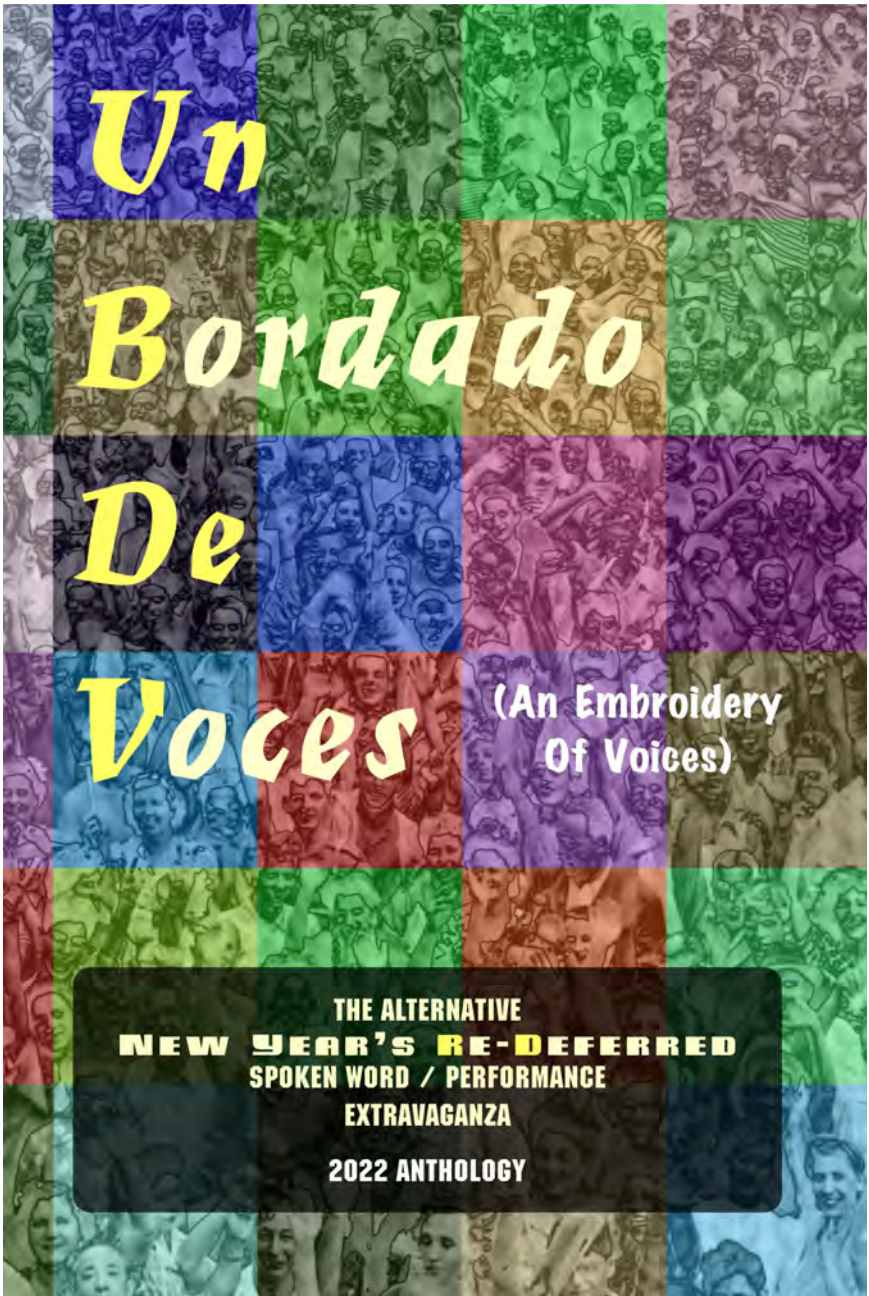
- Your Wish — Eugene Ring — **206**

Z

- Zahara — Carrie Magness Radna — **199**

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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AFTER THE CLOUDS, THE SUN

“Frustration is the perfume
of perseverance, extracted
through the written word.”

— C. D. J.

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Before The Dawn

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Mild blushing goddess,
hail!”**

- William Somerville



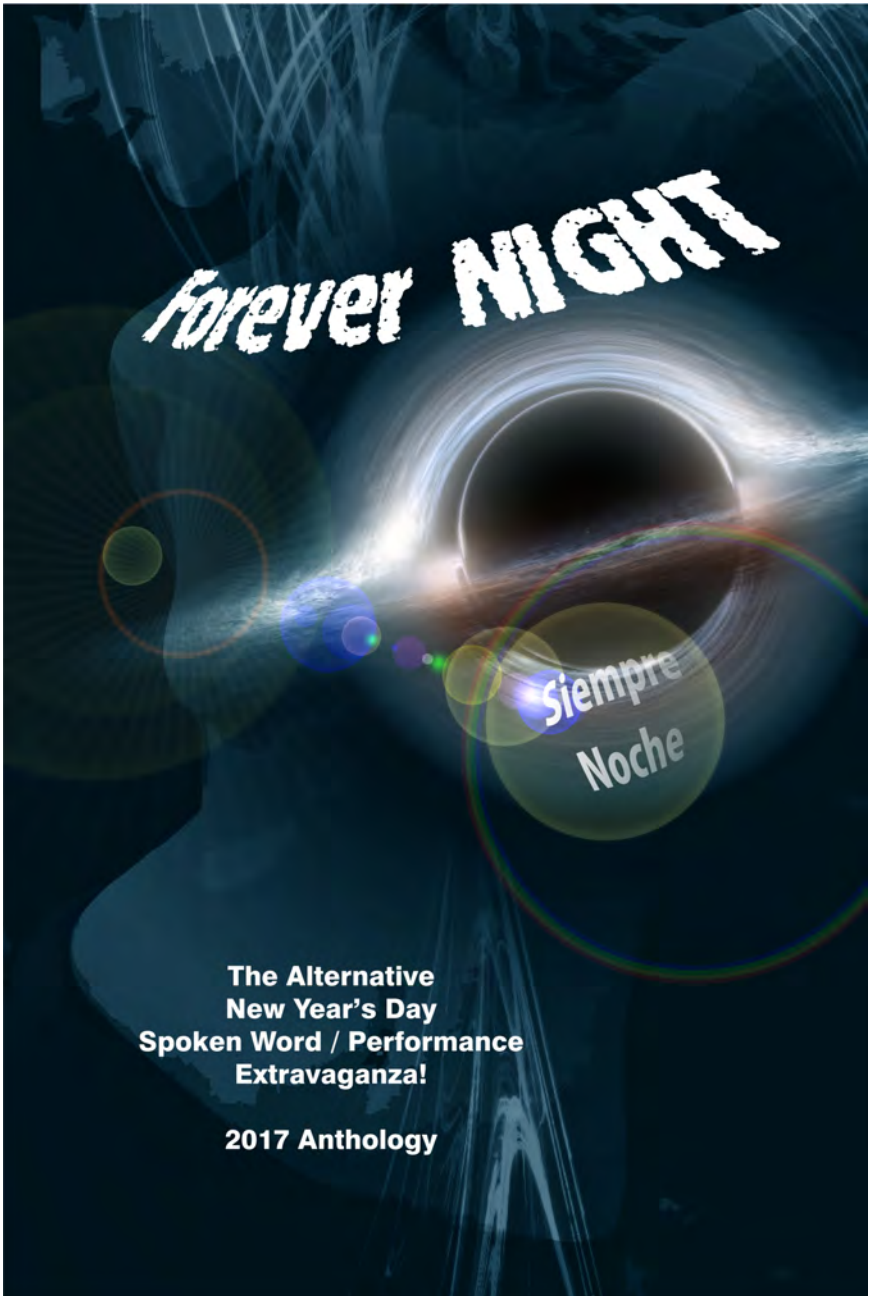
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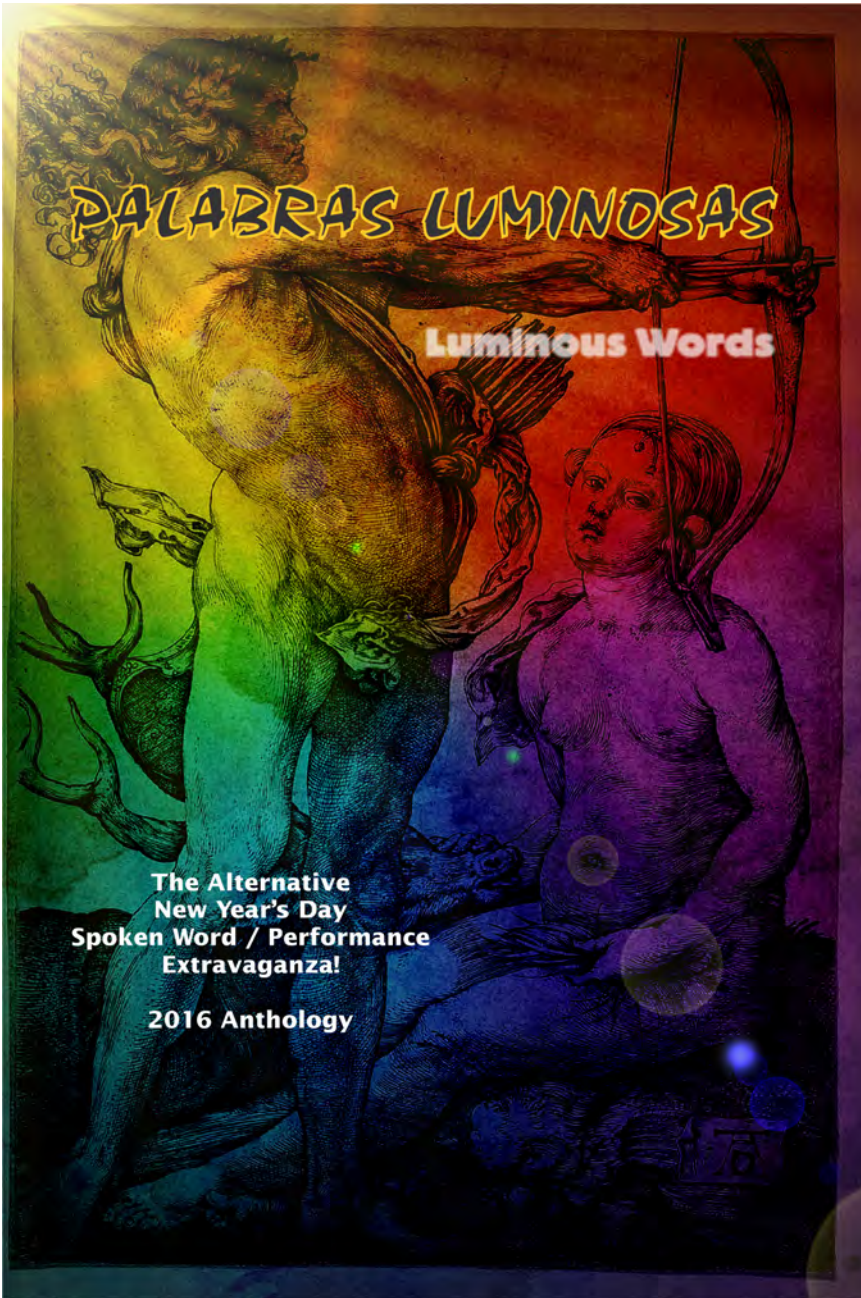
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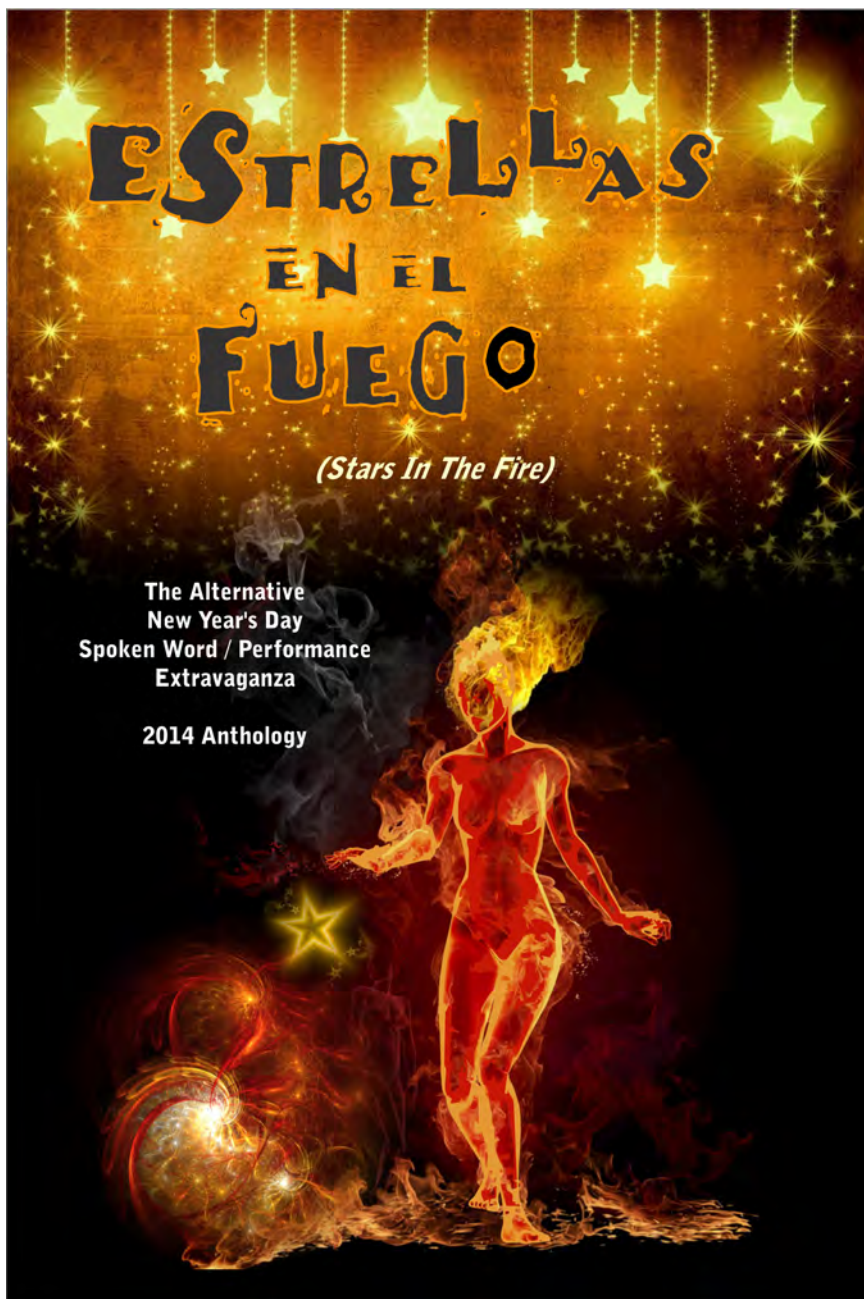
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