



# Stray Poems: San Francisco Poet Laureate Series

## No. 6

*Alejandro Murguía*

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*Stray Poems* opens with San Francisco Poet Laureate Alejandro Murguía's inaugural address, where he provides a brilliant and impassioned poetic account of San Francisco's Native and Latino literary history. What follows is a selection of Murguía's most recent work, composed over the past twelve years. These are poems of the twenty-first century, written in a combination of English and Spanish—the patois of contemporary America. Angry, rebellious, subversive, sentimental, hip, urban, local, global.

**Alejandro Murguía** is the author of *Southern Front* and *This War Called Love*, both winners of the American Book Award. He is San Francisco's first Latino Poet Laureate.

### Praise for Alejandro Murguía & *Stray Poems*:

"In the city of poets, Murguía has become the activist voice of refugees and exiles--as so many of us are, even as natives--at the center of the Americas. Disguised by its sensuous intimacy, soothing and ennobling, his is a poetry that arms the resistance."--Dagoberto Gilb, author of *The Magic of Blood*

"Poet, teacher, publisher, lover, literary guerrilla--Alejandro Murguía is a San Francisco treasure. And I'm not saying this because he knows where to find the best pozole. Although he does."--Jack Boulware, Litquake co-founder

"The powerful stream of rich, diverse Spanish spoken in the United States by millions of Latinos from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean, has rushed into the huge river of the English tongue in such a way that a language and a literature have been born from those troubled waters, exploring multiple alternatives and choosing many paths. These *Stray Poems* from Alejandro Murguía speak with all those voices, crossing linguistic borders and really going out of the way to deviate from the standard path and let the multiracial and multicultural, all-embracing Latino beat flow into the heart of English."--Daisy Zamora, *The Violent Foam*

"Murguía with a tango unleashed, a city on fire, a rendezvous of homage, manifesto, revenge and transcendence--he is alone, without a face, yet recognizable in every body that swims through the understreets of the City, of Paris, of Havana, of bombed-out-Here's-and-There's and the stripped down body of all of us. No stones are left unturned; hypnotic, alarming, 'melodramático,' 'rough-lovin', unkempt, 'dangerous,' and ready to battle at the center of the scorched core. 'I didn't cheat,' one poem admits. He is on trial—fire-spitter and disassembler of cultural falsifications, in 'strange' and romantic moods, the poems scatter truth and aim and blow and burn and rise unto the flagless sky--'. . . a country of oceans and mountains.' Murguía gets there. Alone, because few embark on that voyage. An astonishing, brutal nakedness. Love, that is. No book like it. An unimaginable heart of and for the peoplea ground--breaking prize."--Juan Felipe Herrera, Poet Laureate of California

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