



NATIONAL POETRY MONTH



Poem Me

Stretching my limbs,
waking slowly,
I mumble,
“Sure could use
a good poeming.”

I have waited all winter—
months of flannel shirts,
grey skies, gas heat.
A good spring poeming
would thrum, rattle.

Perhaps I will draw into myself
(subtly, intuitively)
a wild poem.

Or, sweaty pen in hand,
I will claw and labor
to help the poem come.

Sunrise Service; or, Easter 2017

A woman has placed candles
north-eastward along the sidewalk
from the church steps to the monument
in the center of Travis Park.
Our Via Dolorosa.

As police keep watch, we huddle
at the foot of the statue.
In a grill, the pastor lights a fire,
careful not to violate code.

A man strums a guitar.
Someone hands out lyrics.
With voices that are thin, shrill
after weeks of Lenten silence,
we sing hallelujahs, but why?
The grey soldier hangs still.

Someone might at least
have asked the city for guidance
on bringing the man down.

Mounted, encased in granite,
the body has become
its own sepulchre.

Delightful, too,
to be the muse,
who rouses others
to perform,
or the reader,
guest voyeur,
an honored guest.

Maybe I'll try all roles,
invite friends.
A group poeming.

April: poetry month.
How good.

—Rachel Jennings

Each December
the city strings lights
in parallel lines
from the tip
of his pointed finger
to the pedestal,
creating a conical tree
without boughs
or needles.



Now it is Easter,
but the Christmas tree
has not been put away.
The soldier blocks our view
from every angle.

In the East, still,
the sun rises.

—Rachel Jennings

Photo Credit: San Antonio Express
News. http://bit.ly/confed_statue

National Poetry Month

has taken place each April
since 1996 when it was
organized by the *Academy of
American Poets* as a way to

increase awareness
and appreciation of
poetry in the U.S.

In recent years, *La Voz* has
observed this month with
a selection of poetry each
year. Often, it is the poets
who have led the way of
resistance. ¡Adelante!

The Flowers Laughed; or, Easter 2018

I was there! I saw it!
I shared the good news.
That night in September,
a crane lifted
the grey harlequin
skyward.

Even now, months later,
can I believe my eyes?

Where the Confederate
soldier stood, boots
pinioned to granite,
petunias bloom in rich soil.
Easter is April Fools' Day.
Southern grey has given birth
to a comedic motley
of yellow, pink, purple.

I see it. I believe my eyes.
Still, what dunces,
we good white Christians,
little imagining that Black lives
could whisk the scarecrow away
while for generations
our kind did nothing
but meet each Easter
early to fumble
with matches, mourn
the crucifixion, tsk, tsk.

This morning no statue
blocks my view
of the gilt hotel,
the serious bank.
I see passing joggers,
patient bus riders.

Outside the stone church,
as always,
people who sleep
on the street
line up for breakfast.

Roll away the stone.
See them.

—Rachel Jennings



The removal of a Confederate
Memorial in San Antonio's Travis Park
took place in the wee hours of the
morning Friday, September 1, 2017.

