



La Voz de Esperanza

November 2018
Vol. 31 Issue 9

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- We advocate for a wide variety of social, economic & environmental justice issues.
- Opinions expressed in La Voz are not necessarily those of the Esperanza Center.

La Voz de Esperanza

is a publication of

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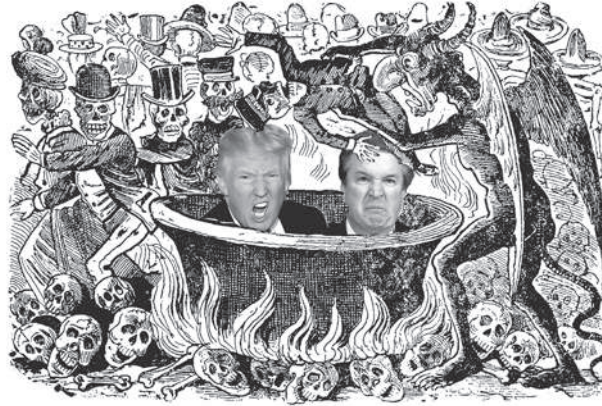
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Articles due by the 8th of each month

Policy Statements

* We ask that articles be visionary, progressive, instructive & thoughtful. Submissions must be literate & critical; not sexist, racist, homophobic, violent, or oppressive & may be edited for length.

* All letters in response to Esperanza activities or articles in La Voz will be considered for publication. Letters with intent to slander individuals or groups will not be published.



This year “pelos de elote” (corn hair) is the most popular calavera target with “el llorón” (Kavanaugh, the crybaby), a close second. Politically, writing calaveras offers us a great outlet, especially this year when any expression of dissent or protest is considered “mob rule” rather than one of our rights—freedom of speech.

Chief among the Calaveristas is Enrique Sánchez, who wrote all the calaveras in the first Calaveras issue in 2000 with translations in English by yours truly. I eventually dubbed him, Don Calaveras. This year another prominent calaverista celebrates her quinceañera of writing calaveras. Rita Urquijo-Ruiz began writing in 2004 after being inspired by Esperanza’s memorable open-air concert with Lila Downs at the Guadalupe Plaza on the Westside.

Since La Voz began this special issue, we have evolved to include literary ofrendas—written offerings to honor those who have passed with poems, stories, epitaphs and family histories including photographs and artwork. The literary ofrendas began gradually with Antonia Castañeda’s remembrance of Doña Chelo’s passing, “La Despedida” in 2005, followed by Ofrenda a Eva Garza, 1917-1966—From El Barrio to El Bolero by Deborah R. Vargas in 2006. In 2008, Day of the Dead tributes started appearing with folks like Brad Veloz submitting one for his mom. In 2009, 10 years after the first Calaveras issue appeared, Literary Ofrendas was added to the title of the issue with a beautiful cover by Lilliana Wilson. Since then, the November Voz has continued with the name, Calaveras and Literary Ofrendas.

While our first issue featured only Posada drawings for the Calaveras—now, we have a supply of artists both local and national contributing art. Chief among the local artists is Mary Agnes Rodríguez who garnered the front page of the Calaveras issue in 2005 with a painting and drawings inside the issue. In the same year, we introduced the broadsheet using the middle spread of La Voz to create a long page of calaveras reminiscent of the popular sheets published by José Guadalupe Posada with poems, illustrations and depictions of life endured by working-class Mexicanos at the turn of the century. His writings often depicted skulls and skeletons that eventually were called calaveras as were his piquant poems.

All this, to say that many turns have brought us to the now traditional issue of the November Voz with Calaveras and Literary Ofrendas. Many, many writers, artists and buena gente have made this Voz tradition possible. I am profoundly grateful to have been the editor of this community effort and hope to be here for our 20th anniversary issue in 2019. ¡Mil gracias a todos! ¡Posada, incluso!

In the meantime, be sure to join us at the annual celebration of Día de los muertos on November 1st at the Rinconcito and the annual Peace Market, November 23-26.

—Gloria A. Ramírez

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VOZ VISION STATEMENT: La Voz de Esperanza speaks for many individual, progressive voices who are gente-based, multi-visioned and milagro-bound. We are diverse survivors of materialism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, classism, violence, earth-damage, speciesism and cultural and political oppression. We are recapturing the powers of alliance, activism and healthy conflict in order to achieve interdependent economic/spiritual healing and fuerza. La Voz is a resource for peace, justice, and human rights, providing a forum for criticism, information, education, humor and other creative works. La Voz provokes bold actions in response to local and global problems, with the knowledge that the many risks we take for the earth, our body, and the dignity of all people will result in profound change for the seven generations to come.