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Three Poems - "For The Blood Of A Poet, Octavio Paz"; "A Fiesta On The International Bridge"; "Esta Noche Bailamos"

By: **Allan Scherlen**

Abstract

Azahares is the University of Arkansas, Fort Smith's award-winning, Spanish-language literary magazine. The azahar, or orange blossoms, is "a flower of special meaning." Scherlen recounts three stories (as poems): his meeting with the great Octavio Paz, a visit to a remote electric-free village in Latin America, and being stranded in Mexico on the international bridge.

Scherlen, Allan (2024, April). For the Blood of a Poet, Octavio Paz; A Fiesta on the International Bridge; Esta Noche Bailamos, (three poems). p. 9, 19, 78. Azahares; a Spanish Language Magazine, University of Arkansas, Fort Smith. NC Docks permission to re-print granted by author. Open Access: https://issuu.com/ua_fort_smith/docs/01fullmagazaharespagemasterspread05readeronline_2

Azahares



2024

Spanish Literary Magazine



Amanda Hubbard – El sabor de la tentación

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Azahares 2024

Azahares is University of Arkansas-Fort Smith's award-winning Spanish-language literary magazine. The primary purpose of this magazine is to provide students and community members with an arena for creative expression in the Spanish language, as well as a literary space for writing that presents the themes of the Latino experience. The azahar, or orange blossom, is a flower of special meaning. Representative of new life and purity, azahares form part of the iconic tradition of the Spanish-speaking world, embodying a freshness of spirit and perspective captured with this publication. *Azahares* highlights student work, as well as the creative endeavors of the greater Fort Smith community and beyond.

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Special thanks to the following:

Dr. Terisa Riley, chancellor; Dr. Shadow Robinson, provost and vice chancellor for academic affairs; Dr. Paul Hankins, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences; Dr. Paulette Meikle, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, and Dr. Linus Yu, associate dean of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The views and opinions expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of the University of Arkansas – Fort Smith or the *Azahares* Editorial Board.

This project is supported in part by a grant from the Arkansas Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the Humanities.



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For the Blood of a Poet. Octavio Paz

by Allan G. Scherlen

The Mexican poet, Octavio Paz, read his poems,
in San Antonio, touching politics to poetry, poems
in Spanish, well-advertised and popular with fans;

Paz encountered his loud crowd after his speech,
As he stood with the forward marching fans,
seeking a famous Paz signature;

some offered the poet a rolled ad poster to sign;
I waited, slightly back from this pulsating crowd,
As they pushed so hard, a guy in front jabbed

his pen into Paz's finger, drawing blood.
I saw its red dripping off the distinguished
Mexican poet's hand. Octavio Paz

pulled away to look at his hand, "¡Espere!"
he commanded, stopping the mayhem
of the crowd. They looked at the poet in silence,

and Paz seeing the ads waiting to be signed.
The poet spied me, holding his book,
"El Arco y La Lira," a treatise, and he pointed

at the book, signaling me to come
and step through the fans; Paz asked,
"What's your name?" and he wrote with

his injured hand; Paz and I held this short time
in the love of his poetry and his spilled blood;
both holding El Arco for a moment.



A Fiesta on the International Bridge

by Allan G. Scherlen

That night the international bridge
from El Paso to Juarez was closed because
of an election dispute leading
to Mexican protestors taking over the bridge.

I was in Juarez that day and had the honor
of being sealed on the Mexican side of the bridge,
standing with them in solidarity. A small TV,

propped on a car hood, played the dramatic US
news about a bridge takeover; at the center
of the bridge, beyond the car with the TV,
were multiple barbecues and music boxes playing;

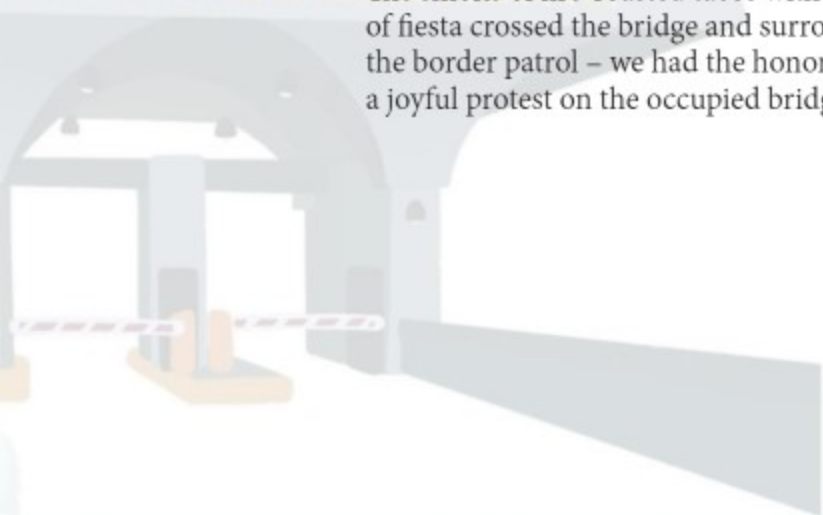
US border patrol stood sternly guard,
over an international boundary, shoulder to shoulder;
for one night, I was a man locked out of the US,
but experiencing the joy of resisting tyranny.

The protestors just sat and waiting in their lawn chairs
or lounged on their cars, some chanting political slogans,
others dancing to music of the crowded bridge.

“Helicopters are overhead,” I remember the newscaster
reporting in English with gravity; but she ignored
the upbeat mood of this night of protestors.

The smoke of fire-roasted tacos with the sounds
of fiesta crossed the bridge and surrounded
the border patrol – we had the honor of
a joyful protest on the occupied bridge.

INTERNATIONAL PASO DEL



Esta noche bailamos

by Allan G. Scherlen

A long strand of cable tied with rope
to poles, brought free power
from a neighboring town. By sunset,
electricity was flowing - colored bulbs

and raucous music cascaded across
the village, brightly energizing the town
for a fiesta; music from houses blended
with songs from the plaza. In the park,

families' laughter echoed through trees,
and children chased one another,
as grandparents smiled indulgently.
And around the plaza, everyone

enjoyed the fiesta - couples sang along,
"esta noche bailamos," and danced
to salsa playing on the radio,
powered by borrowed energy.

Allan G. Scherlen spent his early life in San Antonio, Texas and Mexico and is now a librarian at Appalachian State. He discovered the courage to share his work after a stroke. Published in Vermilion and Progenitor.

Madeleine (Maddie) Silva is a bi-racial writer who currently works in the motion picture industry. Maddie's poems have been featured in Altadena Poetry Review, Block Party Magazine, and various art galleries across Los Angeles. Maddie tried to escape the Inland Empire but only got as far as the San Gabriel Valley.

Jocelyn Soriano is from Fort Smith, Arkansas and is a Spanish major with a minor in creative writing. She enjoys writing and reading in her free time.

Diane Waite is an English/ESL teacher originally from Fresno, California with an M.A. in Linguistics. She currently lives in the Bay Area where she practices language learning and xenophilia.