

CRUEDA meeting
September 13, 2016
Featured Poet: Jim Cantú

Xicago March 2015



Mounting stairs to a train in Xicago's Pilsen
Magnificent mural stares me square in the face.
End of an era, knights, Mixteca Eagle and Spaniard,
Locked in death's embrace.
Two civilizations struggle for dominance
And as their blood mingles, so do their cultures,
Lines blurred as vanquished hides traditions in that of victor.

And what is vanquished, when does the victor win?

Is it that last major battle? The last city lost?

Is it the Campaign of Terror, where native mothers are hung from trees
with their children hung from their ankles?

Does a struggle continue, past the memory of one generation,
to the legacy of 10 generations, 20 generations?

Nahautal and other indigenous languages are still spoken in our mountain villages.

The 2,500 year old Mayan calendar is still used for planting in Guatemala and elsewhere in our
lands.

The usurper still seeks to keep down dissent, like the 43 disappeared ones from
Collegio Ayotzinapa (Ah-yot-zee-nah-pah), Iguala, Guerrerro.

The struggle continues until there is no one left who remembers the old ways.

Where is my home?

-- Poetry on Buses- selection 2015

Is 'home' where I was born,

Or where I leave for work at morn?

Is my home the place that I fled,

Fearing I would end up dead?

Or the place I long to be,

With a dream of destiny?

Jim Cantú has penned poems, prose, short stories and non-fiction. He has worked in broadcasting, banking, local government, and software program implementation around the US and Canada. In 2015 his poem "Where is My Home" was included in the 4Culture and King County Metro "Poetry on the Buses" project. His poem "Birthday" appeared in the February 2016 issue of Whirlwind Magazine (online). In August 2016 he was the 'Writer In Residence' for the La Cocina an Pop-Up Latina/o/x Artists' Salon in Pioneer Square.