

## Artist Statement- Long Version

My poetry, short stories, and novel draw upon being a Spaniard in California yet not having any family members who were conquistadors or friars.

Throughout my work, I am interested in how time is at once pendular, and unforgiving. I am interested in the ways Spanish culture has been in a state of continuous civil war, with a history of the marginalized that has often been forgotten as a way to remember.

Though I like to write about wounds that heal but never close, I believe in the endurance of the human spirit. In my story, “The Flamenco Moon And Fourth Of July In North Hollywood,” the narrator wonders what the ancient art form of *flamenco* means to a flamenco guitarist who is always forgetting his guitar and lives in a recessed urban environment. In the story, “The Ghosts Of Alvarado Street,” the narrator has an imaginary conversation about the constructs of identity with the ghosts of Juan Bautista Alvarado, the last governor of Alta California, and her recently murdered god-brother, the great-grandson of Cannery Row’s *patrón*. In my essay, “The Shadows Of The Cathedral,” I write about sitting with the gypsies in front of the Cathedral of Seville and trying to find a link between fortune telling and poetic inspiration, amid the heat and ridiculous of the world.

I am have recently finished a novel of anti-historical fiction, *Six Cans A Minute: Times Does Not Pardon*. Part one of the novel is a story cycle about the borderland community of Monterey’s Cannery Row in 1934. The stories focus largely upon the experiences of an immigrant family from Andalusia (the south of Spain). These stories reveal perspectives that have been invisible within Spanish culture- that of women and the working class- as well as the

invisibility of Spanish immigrants within the United States. The experiences of this family are set against the experiences of a poet, a writer, and a bohemian school teacher on the Monterey Peninsula during the 1930's who each struggle to understand the role of the artist in the political turbulence of their age.

Part two of the novel is about the grand-daughter of the Andalusian immigrant family from Part I, a high school English teacher, who finds her voice as the poet "Aurelia Lorca" in post 9-11 San Francisco by embracing the ghosts of her heritage and passionate but fleeting romance with a Hollywood flamenco guitarist.

I am a poet, I am a storyteller, and I am a dreamer. Writing as Aurelia Lorca I honor ghosts; those who have been lost to history, those who are invisible, and those who are in exile, even from time itself. As Aurelia Lorca I reflect how the experience of not belonging gives a freedom into achieving wholeness. Though the past is never dead, the present is a place of exile from the past. However, it is ultimately our imagination that determines our perceptions.