



Astrid Velasco Montante\*  
Illustrated by Gina Fuentes\*\*

# Roberto López Moreno

Was born in 1942 in Huixtla, Chiapas. With a bachelor's in journalism and as a poet, narrator, and essayist, he is considered one of the writers who is most representative of Mexican artistic avant-gardes of the second half of the twentieth century. He is even recognized as the creator of a current: poemuralism.<sup>1</sup> He has been a contributor to important daily papers, a professor at the Carlos Septién García School and the Acatlán campus of the UNAM National School of Professional Studies (ENEP), and has participated in different radio programs. His impressive body of work consists of more than 30 works published by different publishers. He has written children's books, film and television scripts, essays, short stories, and poetry. Some of his most outstanding books are *Décimas lezámicas* (Decimas in the Lezama Mode) (UNAM); *De saurios, itinerarios y adioses* (Of Sauria, Itineraries, and Farewells) (Autonomous University of Chiapas); *Verbario de varia hoguera* (Verbs of Different Infernos) (Chiapas Institute of Culture); *Sinfonía de los salmos* (Symphony of Psalms) (UNAM); *Ya se lo dije al presidente* (I Already Told the President) (Fondo de Cultura Económica); *Las mariposas de la Tía Nati* (Aunt Nati's Butterflies) (CNCA); *La curva de la espiral en la editorial* (The Curve of the Spiral in the Publishing House) (Claves Latinoamericanas); and *Cuentos en el recuento* (Stories in the Recounting) (UNAM), among many others.

He has been given almost a dozen awards for his work and received national honors. Among them are the Rodolfo Figueroa Prize for Poetry (1969), the Tomás Martínez Prize for Short Story (1969), the Efraín Huer-

ta National Poetry Competition (second place, 1978), and the Rosario Castellanos Chiapas Prize for the Arts (2001).



I met Roberto López Moreno a couple of years ago because he authored an essay about poemuralism and literary magazines over the last 50 years for a book I was editing. I soon discovered his incredible prose and generous wisdom, and later, that he was a prolific writer of poetry, narrative, and essays. When reading him, you discover that there are few like him who play and make their own the different literary forms, the rhythms, and the word in its entirety. What are his themes, his interests? It is difficult to say in such a brief exposition. His work is full of beauty, spaces, persons, feelings, and all human experience.

López Moreno is not only one of the most important living poets of Chiapas, but he has been one of those who has most experimented with genres, ranging from composing in verse, with strict, classical metric stanzas—sonnets, for example—to very free composition, or even using supports that are not paper, plus his work in prose, narrative, essays, and journalism. It is an honor to have him in *Voices of Mexico*.



## Notes

<sup>1</sup> "A 'poemural' . . . develops a theme through a long strip [of support material] in which different kinds of symbologies and verbal procedures, which does not mean—and this is, in the end, its main characteristic—that it is not fully integrated." Its mechanism is the play and use of all expressive possibilities. Roberto López Moreno, "Poemurales: un acto ético," [https://www.robertolopezmoreno.com/poemuralismo/poemurales\\_un\\_acto\\_etico.html](https://www.robertolopezmoreno.com/poemuralismo/poemurales_un_acto_etico.html).

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Poems by  
**Roberto López Moreno**

## *Palenque*

### *At the Doors of the Jungle*

The threshold of the overflowing jungle  
holds a book of stone containing,  
in glittering lineage,  
chapters of wise flame.

In it throbbed the beloved blood,  
the herbal chisel that holds it,  
blade that wounds, marks, engraves, is  
the color of cacao and the dawn.

The ant and the galaxy inhabit the book,  
the stone turns pink and turns into wind  
into which red and green plunge.

The fire grows since its coming,  
the herbal mane that quivers  
in this mineral tearing.

# *Images of the Fifth Sun*

## **Part One: Toltec Images**

Maker of destiny,  
look at your children empty of all blood  
growing the twists and turns  
of the infinite shadow;  
give them renewed movement,  
the strength needed to light the day.  
Travel to the dumb mansion of the absent,  
where the ancestors' sacred bones lie;  
with them you will build us again.  
Overcome, O Lord, the opposition of the master of shadows,  
exterminate his animosity with your ray of light,  
rip from him the "precious bones"  
and give them to us, Giver, launch us once again into life  
to venerate you, the greatest power of our dream world.  
I see your enterprise crowned by success.  
The male of the shadows writhes  
among the clouds of his empire.  
Now, may the gods aid you in this huge endeavor.  
Bleed your skin and muscle, our strength,  
form us out of the divine torrent of your vital sap  
to stop being this nebula of anxiety  
that floats without bodily pain.  
Put the kernel of corn on our lips.

## Part Two: Aztec Images

I was chosen to satiate the thirst of the god  
that will gulp as from the Lerma River in the bubbling of my chest.

Fulfilled the 365 beats of that time,  
the sky will be an immense reddened griddle;  
that my blood will shelter the permanence of the lineage  
that will rise up, vertical, the day when the flowers bloom;  
it will be a red flower of an invincible stalk  
because it will burn with the force of generations.

That day should burst the dance corolla  
that builds everything from its pollen, dust  
of compliant flint.

In the center of the flower  
the tiger and ocelot knights, the eagle knights,  
should fight

to bequeath their energy to the cosmos.

The 365 night howls have been heard,

The 365 shrieks of the day.

I go up the stairs on the arms of the priests,

I give myself over,

the stone hummingbird bursts the flesh of my chest,

a boom of log drums sprays the air,

out of my chest emerges the red flower, beating

like a rising flame,

growing, recognizing its origin, accepting it,

taking its place.

The Sun burns us.

The poems in *Quinto Sol* (Fifth Sun) were previously published in the book *Sinfonía de los salmos* (Symphony of Psalms), Mexico City: UNAM, 1996.