

ALURISTA  
seven poems

tremble  
purple



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# about the poet

**Alurista** is one of the most significant and widely acclaimed Chicano poets. He has published six collections of poetry: *floricanto en aztlan* (1971, reprinted in 1976), *nationchild plumaroja* (1971, reprinted in 1982), *timespace huracan* (1976),  *aunque* (1979), *spik in glyph?* (1981), and *return* (1982). He has recited his poetry throughout the United States, Mexico, Germany, Holland and France.

Alurista has also edited 24 books to date, as well as the journal *MAIZE*. He is presently West Coast Editor for three literary and academic journals: *Confluencia*, *Imagine*, and *ViAztlán*. The most recent videotape about Alurista, "Torn in Two," was aired nationally on PBS television and received an Emmy Award. His work is being collected in the "Mexican-American Archives at the Benson Collection: A Guide for Users," University of Texas, Austin.

Alurista is a professor and scholar, having obtained his Ph.D. in Spanish and Latin American literature, and he was awarded the Jr. MacArthur Chair in Spanish by Colorado College in 1984 for his teaching excellence. He is an Assistant Professor of Spanish at Cal Poly U. in San Luis Obispo, California.

Alurista also has a long history in the Chicano Movement going back to the 1960s. He helped organize the first national Chicano Moratorium Against the Vietnam War, was a founding member of MEChA in San Diego, and founded the first Chicano Studies program in the country at San Diego State University. He helped initiate *La Verdad*, the first Chicano newspaper in San Diego, and was an author of *El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán*.

yes



yes, four nipple rocking  
to the songdance whisper  
the sea, the sand,  
the wind whooshing  
flute fountain whistle  
yes, it is raining  
and the morning mist  
beckons the sun  
dawn's veil hovers  
columns of hunger  
columns of drought  
long for quiet death  
peacefully, dusk  
vultures sit  
trading guns  
it continues to  
not let be, yes  
to be naught  
no tender touch  
no kiss, this here  
bombing, no, no  
not playing nipples  
be uprooting wombs  
it is not powdered death  
that people seek  
the glory of "progress"  
be nightmare  
peace remains  
a dream, a child  
yes, a smile  
a rainbow  
a flower and a song

# lastango views



ALFREDO ZALCE

## QUESTION:

secretary of agriculture, sir  
given the present technologicindustreal state  
. . . is it feasible for the United States of America  
to end hunger, to feed the world?

## NEWS:

millions of gallons of milk will b emptied into  
the sea this year, this year thousands of agri-  
farms will receive subsidies in order **not** to  
farm, this year meagatons of cheese will end up  
in the caves, this year the number of tractors  
assembled shall be curtailed, this year the pro-  
duction of canned food will be reduced, this  
year more weapons will be sold than food.

## SECRETARY:

WELL, WELL, WELL . . .  
the problem is rooted in the proliferation  
of third world people, it is necessary to  
sterilize poor nations such as those in Asia,  
Africa, and Latin America.

## A HINDI:

our children are our zebus and our tractors.  
a large family allows us to till more land.  
even so we lack good seed and organic fertilizers.  
our children are our **tele** vision.

QUESTION:

can the United States end world hunger?

SECRETARY:

WELL, WELL, WELL . . .

we must end communism, put an end to overproduction,  
we must definitely end with "idleness", we must terminate guerrillas, sex must be abolished.

NEWS:

millions die of hunger in the third world.  
agrarian reform suffers, still, from paralysis.  
the corn fed northamerican cows could nourish the entire planet. dogs eat better in the U.S. of A.  
than any citizen in the third world. the cost of a nuclear warhead would land a tractor within the reach and use of every Asian, African, and Latin American small farm . . . diesel and all.

QUESTION:

without beating around the bush this time, secretary, sir, please answer the question.

SECRETARY:

WELL, WELL, WELL . . .

the problem is rooted in corruption.  
we must terminate corruption!  
we must terminate drug trafficking!  
we must terminate insurgency!  
we must terminate natality!  
we must terminate, terminate, terminate!

QUESTION:

once and for all! answer **yes** or **no**!  
can the United States end world hunger?!

SECRETARY:

WELL, WELL, WELL . . .

well, of course, as they say in Latin America  
si senior! **if the price is right!**

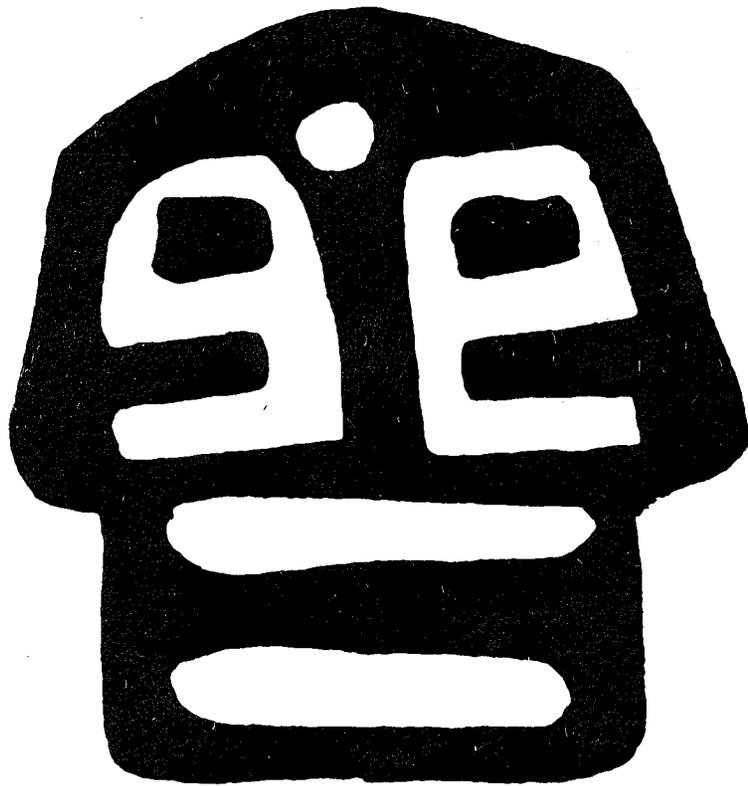
SLOGANS:

PRODUCE WEAPONS NOT FOOD  
WAR ON SALE EXTINGUISH SEX  
FEED THEM BULLETS THERE WILL BE NO  
BREAD

MEDITATION:

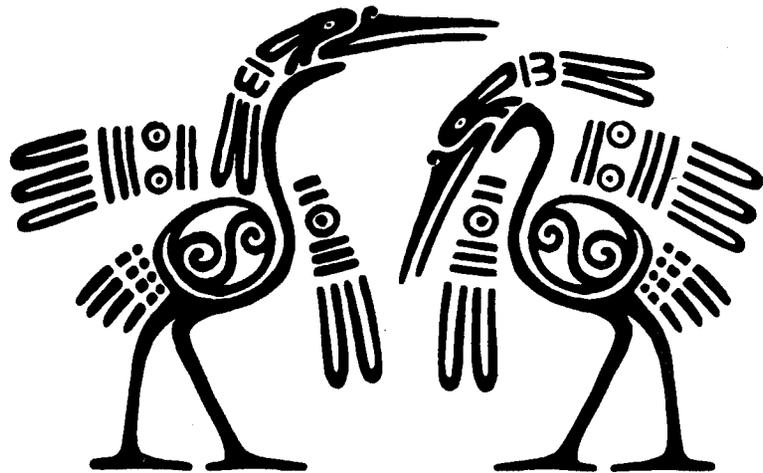
end hunger or terminate man?  
liberty, community, and bread or bombs?  
just us or justice?

# solicit



solicit fun. without a kind word. blow no kisses. fund the fund. there b no caress no whisper in any one's ear. sol,i,sol hug me life or give me . . . no crosses pOlease. thy snow flurries won't do. neither will your vikings' fun. fun? what is IT? and HE? and SHE? WE? know not, care not. will not search or inquire. will not require or question. saw a semi-truck jack-knife before my path and crow cried out its awesome wail. the multiwheeled beast banked on a soft shoulder. i, we slit skidded and breezed through. no warmth, no human touch refreshed his forehead. the fifth wheel is indeed roulette. snow hugs death and death has no quiver. cats meow and moan. sheeba wails at dawn and blinks her ancient emerald eyes like only siamese can. políticos and unsundry persons watch, stare and think not much of the oil or the waste. in their lives no watercolor only haste. pencil writs figure the world's demise. **jesus saves, moses invests in southafrica** wouldn't make good bumper sticker or holy tablet.

# tremble purple



trembling torsos  
seeking peace  
b thrown about  
spinal columns  
snapping drop

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

jugulars confess  
to prescribed deeds  
linoleums b stained  
precious body fluids  
drained while naked

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

groins torn  
electrified, plucked  
labia devoured  
while rats bloat  
celebrating demoncrazy

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

tendrils splinter  
as investments  
b secured  
all carry  
precinct cards

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

pious mandrils  
bearing guns  
gorillas totting  
ripped membranes  
on their teeth

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

chaos serums  
pumped, injected  
way down South  
contras trapeze  
apartheid addiction

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

mercenaries abound  
n bodies prowl  
zombi uniforms  
meantime, /time b mean  
men & women  
struggle to b born

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

ya basta!, ya basta!  
penitentes we b not  
there b no self flagellation  
in this house, in this house  
we b ones to do  
whatever need b done

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

¿que se rinda tu madre!

... Oyes!?

que se rinda tu madre!  
aquí, no effigies to mammon stand  
aquí, no sanctity of banks prevails  
aquí, all food is for all people  
aquí, all people are armed  
aquí, we live or die in struggle

... NO PASARÁN!

... NO PASARÁN!

the age of the new man is here  
aquí, the age of the new woman  
bears a gun to defend the new  
born child: NICARAGUA... Y KÉ!

# morada tetúrica



R

SANDINO

RODRIGUEZ

OSCAR RODRIGUEZ—MENDEZ

costados temblorosos  
que buscan paz  
son azotados  
sus espinas dorsales  
se quiebran, caen

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

las yugulares confiesan  
a hechos pre-escritos  
los linóleos se manchan  
con preciosos líquidos humanos  
vaciados en la desnudez, sangrados

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

las ingles desgarradas  
electrificadas, acapadas  
labias mayores devoradas  
por las ratas que empanzonan  
celebrando la demoniocracia

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

los tendones hechos astillas  
mientras, las inversiones  
son aseguradas, hipotecadas  
y todo mundo porta targetitas de identificación

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

los mandriles piadosos  
portan armas en los dientes  
los gorilas gatillean  
membranas arrancadas  
con sus mandíbulas sangrientas

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

los menjurges del chaos  
son forzados, inyectados  
en las venas del Sur  
mientras "contras" trapezean  
su adicción esclavista

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

los mercenarios abundan  
sus cuerpos merodean  
uniformados los zombies  
entretanto, entretanto  
hombres y mujeres luchan  
por el amanecer de un nuevo día

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

ya basta!, ya basta!  
penitentes no somos  
en esta morada no nos latigemos  
en esta morada  
somos los que preparados estamos  
para realizar las tareas necesarias

SAY UNCLE!

SAY UNCLE!

... SAY SAMMY B GOOD TO U

... SAY TÍO SAMMY B GOOD TO U

¿¡que se rinda tu madre!

... OYES!?

que se rinda tu madre!  
aquí, no esfinges para el dios mammon  
aquí, no existe la santidad de los bancos  
aquí, la comida es para todos  
aquí, todo el pueblo está armado  
aquí, morimos o prevalecemos en la lucha

... NO PASARÁN

... NO PASARÁN

la época, la hora del hombre nuevo  
de la nueva mujer *aquí* impera, reina  
y porta armas para defender  
al recién nacido pueblo  
a la nueva NICARAGUA ... Y KÉ!

# left just



i cain't do  
  what u can do  
let alone do better  
i can do  
  what i know  
how 2 do  
and u cain't wear  
  that feather  
a thigh  
  4 a thigh  
toe  
  4 a toe  
atom  
  4 atom  
nucleus  
  4 nucleus  
hoe  
  4  
  hoe  
eye for eye  
-no bombs please  
an i  
  4  
  an i  
hammer for hammer  
tooth 4 tooth  
-no bombas 4 pliz  
an i for an i  
  indeed b

a  
we  
wouldn't u say forthchild?  
u  
r  
probably right  
i probably wrong  
certain it is wong  
i am irrevocably left  
thong, tom  
and  
possibly correct  
not, naught, nut, knot  
right  
knot, nut, naught, not  
wrong  
just left  
2 do what has 2  
b done



# on the beach



CELIA CALDERÓN

on the beach chair i  
he, thinking across the peaks  
slushing, joshing i  
but, not really, the snow  
b as much his as the sun mine  
borge, said i  
and he thought, jorgeluís  
of course, the hummingbird  
sucks on  
and the willow weeps  
and dylan is bob  
even though thomas was  
and is  
a good poet, he lived off  
his agenda, while tomás  
has his hawk eye  
on the line  
the borderline, yes  
the grand littleman  
el comandante  
poeta de la sierra  
sandina tierra  
i listen  
"hablando se entiende  
la gente", true,  
so true. premise however  
lawned on talking which  
implies a two-way arrow  
shot  
put well, witty  
did anybody listen. well

english is now the "official"  
 language in california  
 mister, had to legislate it pal  
 a'nque the flow brook  
 cannot be adobed (from **adobe**  
 building blocks that  
 construct houses, applesheds  
 and ovens).  
 in the southern west  
 or the western south  
 as thee may play thy spool  
 weave cotton so  
 hermano, compadre  
 uniformed parodies politik  
 the world is at hand  
 like a harpsichord  
 only the melody waits  
 tom rhythms blues and crimsons  
 the light out the cave  
 b weaponless  
     i must tell this story  
 now. least the house of lead  
     and computers, pencil  
 ink this sunset well  
     bring the water up  
 worry not  
 suicide is no longer a personal  
     choice  
 transnational bargaining chips  
     chumps chump change  
 ... ¿y nosotros qué?, ¿nos otros qué?  
     pos nada, nadan adán  
 papier mache, papel, paper  
     pauper smashed

has only bridges to sleep  
     under  
 stated wealth and property  
     rights  
     white maidens writ  
     título  
 árbol que vuela vela  
     hamaca que conoce  
 el rock más antiguo  
     ¡mécese!  
 la democracia can only b  
     in a kellogs cereal  
 box prize  
     lotería  
 malcolm x was the first  
     víctima  
 kennedy and king got it  
     as well, ni modo  
 el facismo may have had  
     more tentacles than  
 any one ever imagined  
     in germany  
     in the u.s.a. it matured  
 since the hiroshima bomb  
     and its banking  
     pockets  
 this is not a critique  
     in glyph  
     or in spinach  
     of olive oil  
 or whaLE mEAT  
     future shock chooses  
 pesticides, agent orange  
 and, well

weALTH county  
here i sit on pismo  
    hills, libélulas  
frolic and he writes memos  
    funding cowards, no . . .  
    misguided, hungry  
lost militaristic egos, he goes  
    seeding death  
and they, unemployed  
    unschooled  
    contras follow powder  
    the smell sweet  
    the bullet swift  
rooster burning there b no dawn  
    fall choppin lettuce. let us  
col, cabbage, garbage haul out  
    winter nears and the  
    chinese masses will not starve  
    he, duck sits, plucking  
bleak  
    pimple heads, tinkerbell  
    b starwars  
yet i . . .  
    . . . high noon?  
pistoled high plains  
    drift, draft?  
. . . wish pop eye was here  
    in the harbor full  
moths hover  
    deceit and deception  
prevail as presidential prerogatives  
    ronny is really peter pan  
and nancy wendy  
    kadaffi captain cook

and the usa never, neverland  
    wonder how castro  
fits in this story  
    i personally think him  
an eewok  
    who needs fantasy,  
sci fi or horror when  
    the u.s. is enough?  
. . . i know! i got it! the ussr  
    anathema!