



**GULF COAST POETS CHAPTER
OF THE
POETRY SOCIETY OF TEXAS
PRESENTS**

Lupe Mendez
April 8, 2017

Originally from Galveston, TX, Lupe (Poet//Educator//Activist) works with **Nuestra Palabra: Latino Writers Having Their Say** and the **Brazilian Arts Foundation** to promote poetry events, advocate for literacy/literature and organize creative writing workshops that are open to the public. He is the founder of **Tintero Projects** and works with emerging Latinx writers within the Texas Gulf Coast Region, with Houston as its hub.

Mendez has over fifteen years of experience as a performance poet - having opened up for such notable writers as Dagoberto Gilb, Oscar Casarez, Esmeralda Santiago and the late Raul Salinas. He has hosted several workshop series throughout Texas and shared his poetry across the country in places like the Holocaust Museum, the Jung Center, MECA (Houston, TX), the Mission Cultural Center For Latino Arts (San Francisco, CA), the National Hispanic Cultural Center (Albuquerque, NM) and the Mexican American Cultural Center (Austin, TX). Lupe has served as a keynote speaker/poetry performer at colleges and universities such as Sam Houston State University, the University of Houston, Lone Star College, the University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio Community College and Lee College in Baytown, TX.

Lupe is an internationally published poet, in book and online formats, including Norton's [*Sudden Fiction Latino: Short-Short Stories From The United States and Latin America*](#), [*The Bayou Review*](#) (University of Houston-Downtown), [*Flash*](#) (University of Chester, England)- the international forum for flash fiction, [*Huizache*](#), the magazine of Latino literature, [*Luna Luna Magazine*](#), [*La Noria*](#), [*Glassworks*](#), [*Revista Síncopa*](#) (D.F., México), [*Ostrich Review*](#), [*New Sound Journal*](#), [*Pilgrimage*](#), [*Gulf Coast Journal*](#) and the [*Los Angeles Review of Books*](#)' newest channel, [*Valuable*](#) (forthcoming).

In 2012 Lupe was honored as one "*Houston Press' Creative 100s*" - a annual spotlight on the Houston Press blog site where 100 artists & arts supporters are featured throughout the year. Lupe, along with the rest of the Librotraficante organizers, was also awarded the **2012 Downs Intellectual Freedom Award** for the defense of Mexican American Studies and literature across the Southwest United States. Lupe also served as Fiction and Poetry editor for the online literary journal - *Drunken Boat* - on the Librotraficante Portfolio for their 18th issue. As of 2014, Lupe was selected as a [*CantoMundo Fellow*](#) and continues to work on submissions, creating more writing workshop opportunities and continues to share his poetry with local high schools, colleges and community/arts centers.

Lupe's work reflects not only his roots in Texas and the Mexican state of Jalisco (specifically, Atotonilco El Alto, San Jose del Valle, San Juan de los Lagos, Guadalajara, Los Cuates, La Pareja), it is also a comment on commonplace issues, struggles, moments and relevant ideas and images he is humbled to witness. Lupe remarks on issues from the political to the emotional in a way that intends to connect with both the novice reader to the pro poetic writer.

I Teach

I wrote until
the chalkboard
became
clear and white,
until
textbooks
became laptops,
lockers unfolded
out of cabinets,
no *tiza* dust,
but erasable markers,
shiny boards that I
close my eyes in front of.
I hold my breathe right
before the first bell rings,
and every morning
I run all sorts of thoughts

and I know.

I teach because the money
is a hot meal, nothing more,
I teach because I can see
myself
in their faces,
desperate,
I teach because they want to be here,
I teach because they hate being here
and there's no place else.
I teach because I let them feel
at home
and sometimes the kids,
they ask if they can spend
the night in the classroom.

I smile.

I provide cots for the ones
that can't sleep at home; with
a pillow and matching sheets.
I'm a taxi service when it gets too late.
I'm a social worker when the school nurse
forgets the hearing aid paperwork . . .

I teach because the world
does not provide for an
A,B,C,D bubble life.
I teach because I hated teachers
and I am sick of hating them.
I teach to be humble.
I teach because I want them
to remember their own fathers
and quit slipping and calling me "Apa".
Sometimes they hug me afterwards.
I teach for the laughter. I see the tears
and I can recognize
the hearts of children,
at least today.

Today is the only thing I control.

So, I will:

ice a few busted lips,
glue a shoe sole,
fix a spiral notebook,
contain a seizure,
collect twelve love notes
and correct the spelling,
organize three games of
kickball, soccer and
red light/green light,
make the boys shake
after a fair fight,
dig in the closet for extra
clothes after someone's accident,
make a rainbow and speak of magical
refractions and sunlight,
and the kids, yeah, they
will only hear me say
rainbow, blah, blah, blah
magical blah, blah, blah, light,
use diplomacy while playing UNO,
introduce deodorant,
provide at least four lunches,
repair two sets of glasses,
burn all the paperwork,
defend a child from a drunk parent,
stop a bus with a single hand,
control the weather with
my imagination,
bridge a nose bleed,
wish, then, shake the shit
out of that hooker/momma
when I need her Gustavo
in my Math tutorials,
make all the kids live to read,
convince eight pairs of parents
from Lantern Village that "camping"
is good for their *hijitos*
and
combat a system that wants
to swallow my kids whole.
I save children everyday,
every time I open my door.
So tell me,
just what the hell do you do?

As published in the 2012 Fall Edition of Huizache

In Honor of Magnolia Homes

In Honor of Mr. Michelletti and his lazy eye, who could never point to the right price on the back wall of the meat market and ring you up for the ham you desperately needed to make a sandwich on a brazen sandy Sunday,

In Honor of Doña Maria, with her arthritic knuckles, that were cold to the touch; she would actually say she loved the green make-up on the wicked witch of the west – both *cabronas* scared the hell out of my 7 year old ass,

In Honor of *El Novio*, the self proclaimed ladies man, who would take me by the hand and walk up and down the beach, yelling out that “we should play, Frisbee, *mijito*” in front of the young girls he wanted to talk to,

In Honor of Dominic Streater and his bigoted voice, as he constantly yelled from his window for us to turn down the *Vicente Fernandez*, because he couldn’t drink his Shlitz in peace,

In Honor of all the neighborhood public schools that thought I was mentally retarded, and didn’t click to the idea that I only spoke a bold Spanish and lost me to an all *negrito* Southern Baptists school that labeled everything in the building so I could finally learn to say *tank jews* out of gratitude,

In honor of my mother who worked too hard and still had time to tell me a story, and yet I could never tell her mine,

In Honor of Marcus, with his sling shots and bruising rocks that managed to get us a slick switch to our *nalgitas* from everyone in the neighborhood, until someone hit him with a bullet in his lung,

In Honor of Gladys the bus driver who always gave me a free lift to the library, because she could see how much a bloody nose or a knot on my head never took my determination to hide in a book or ten,

In Honor of Fr. Frank and his funny accent in Spanish, it just provided him with a new congregation that didn’t care about the rumors of him and little white girls, *acabo, no era nada nuevo en este barrio*,

In honor of Carmona, who used to buy me and Marcus orange, sticky, push-up pops with money from her push-up bra that she wore like a badge, as she patrolled the corners from 6pm to midnight,

In honor of Ira, our neighbor in 3B, who taught me how to pack her Winston cigarettes with a 1,2,3, tap on the meaty-flesh of my palm; I would steal about three packs in my underwear and only have to pay for 1, and she liked that trick and needed her smokes- a lot,

In honor of my Tio Reymundo who showed me how to treat a lady - *like the dog that she is, you can beat her, you can rub her face in shit, mijo and she’ll still come back to you* – it didn’t get him very far,

In honor of my Father, and his abundance of Miller Lite, Old Milwaukee, Blue Ribbon, Ramon Ayala, gold chains, *futbol*, and his lack of memory, direction, determination and the ability to teach me that even adults lie and that independence is getting left outside when he’s had too much to drink,

In honor of Streater’s Tavern with its funny fights and clumsy nights that always brought a few holes to my wall and got me interested in collecting revolver shells and new cuss words,

In honor of that old barrio; always defined by old orange brick; speckled by bickering *blanquitos* and blacks that finally made me want to come back to the spot I remember Marcus’ last words – *get my mom, she’ll know what to do*.

As published in the 2011 Edition of Bay-ou Review (25th Anniversary Issue)

Sunday Shoes On A Monday

She loves the color reclusé.
She eats her split ends,
has subtle ten-year-old smiles.
But she never talks;

preferring to whisper
through her fingers,
afraid of the sounds
she'll make – this girl fears

the world might grow legs
walk all over everything
she loves, like dad for instance.
Loves dad.

She's told me once:

*my daddy is being
eaten up
inside out.
He can't run as fast.
He doesn't tuck me
in bed.
He won't show me
the monsters
in my closet
that are
not really there.
I had to learn this
on my own.*

Two days later.
I hear the clank;
Sunday shoes on a Monday.
-How are you?

HE'S GONE

She puts head down,
the desk cries.
She pays homage
in big, quiet, crisp

one hundred dollar minutes,
only opening a jaw to yawn.
Then a drizzle,
turned rain, turned deluge,

I hear the giggles
and the wiggles of a heart;
a pencil in hand, writing,
writing about her dad.

*As published in the 2009 edition of
the Panhandler Quarterly*

UPCOMING EVENTS

Poetry at Round Top — April 21-23, 2017.
<http://poetryatroundtop.org/> (ride in style on
the Public Poetry Bus. Deadline to sign up —
March 20) For info go to [http://
www.publicpoetry.net/](http://www.publicpoetry.net/))

Inprint First Fridays — Readings begin at
8:30 pm, Inprint House, 1520 West Main
(two blocks south of The Menil Collection,
one block east of Mandell):

May 5, 2017—Anis Shivani

June 2, 2017—Lauren Berry

July 7, 2017—42nd Anniversary of First Fri-
day – Craig Butterworth

August 2, 2017—2016 Pushcart Prize Winner
Daniel Peña

September 8, 2017—John Pluecker

November 3, 2017—Michael Sofranko

December 1, 2017—Jeremy Eugene

Slam Events — [https://www.eventbrite.com/d/
tx--houston/poetry-slam/](https://www.eventbrite.com/d/tx--houston/poetry-slam/)

Readings and Poetry Nights — [https://
www.eventbrite.com/d/tx--houston/poetry/](https://www.eventbrite.com/d/tx--houston/poetry/)

CALLS FOR SUBMISSION

Weasel Press — Degenerates. Seeking submissions for themed volumes:

May 20, 2017 - Domestic Violence

Aug 20, 2017 - Bullying

Nov 20, 2017 - Homelessness

Call for Poetry Submissions: 100-Word Southwest Poems

Editors Scott Wiggerman and David Meischen are accepting submissions for the third book in the “Poetry of the American Southwest” series. This one has two requirements: 1) poems that demonstrate a connection to persons, places, geography, flora/fauna, and/or culture of the American Southwest, and 2) the poem must be exactly 100 words, no more, no less. Poetry is a language of precision, and the constriction of 100 words will put your mastery of language to the test. A variety of styles and topics is encouraged, including prose poems, haiku sequences, and haibun. Start counting, poets! **Submissions Window: March 21–July 4, 2017.**
<http://dosgatospress.org/how-to-submit>

Speculative Poetry (Paying) Market List: <http://fiendlover.blogspot.com/p/pro-paying-speculative-fiction-poetry.html>

More Calls for Submission Daily at https://www.facebook.com/groups/156020074604805/?multi_permalinks=642553865951421¬if_t=group_activity¬if_id=1484029471219249

Gulf Coast Poets Minutes 03/11/2017

10:49 Meeting called to order

Congratulations to the following GCP members who were selected for AIPF's diversity anthology: Glynn Monroe Irby, Terry Jude Miller, Dave Cowen, Laura Peña, John Milkreit

Poetry at Roundtop April 21-23rd/Public Poetry will have a chartered bus to take up on April 22nd. Registration deadline for the bus is March 21st. Houston Poet Laureate Robin Davidson will hold a writing workshop on the bus.

Valley Int'l Poetry Festival will be April 27-30, 2017; submissions are still open until March 25th.

Weasel Press is open for submissions

Luis Vasquez announces Galveston Poets Roundtable, Tuesday, March 14th

Ann Fogelman announces BAWL critique groups meet on Thursdays

Sandi Horton announces Waco Wordfest will be in October; submissions will open June through July for the anthology

Laura Peña announces Rockstar Gallery will have an ekphrastic poetry competition on March 23rd from 7-9pm

11:10 Featured poet is Stacy Nigliazzo reading from her debut book Scissored Moon by Press 53

Peri-Operative Suite

Divination

Relic

Aubade

Prophet

Cloud Burst
Plow Share
Harvesting Her Heart after the Accident
An Unlatched Square
The Last Santa Muerte by Katherine
Durham Oldmixon from Red Sky an-
thology

11:50 Open Mic

Gary – It Was You by Pamela Graves
Sandi Horton – Clichés
Laura Peña – Everyone Wears a Different
Shade
L. A. Merrill – Ode to My Heart
Weasel – I Had an Existential Experience
at Denny’s
Dave Cowen – The Lawful Stories
Daniel Carrington – Hosting Duties
Jonathan Peckham – Acid Reign
Choonwha Moon – Deciding Deciduous
Deandra Newcomb – Hunger

12:30 Meeting adjourned –Lunch at Café
Express afterwards

Gulf Coast Poets

Treasurer Report for Apr 8, 2017 General Meeting

Report Period: Mar 1 – Mar 31, 2017 -- with 2017 totals

This report covers the one month period since last report plus the 2017 summary

Cash Flow: Mar 1 – Mar 31, 2017

2017

Contests.....		.00	-.00
Dues.....		110.00	165.00
Speaker Expense.....		-.00	-45.00
Honorarium	-.00		
Speaker Lunch/Dinners	-.00		
Donations.....		.00	30.00
Interest/Dividend.....		.09	.33
Officer Travel.....		-20.00	-30.00
PST Sponsor Contest.....		-	
Net Cash flow, Mar 1 – Mar 31		90.09	120.33
			Jan 1-Mar 31

Account Activity: Mar 1 – Mar 31, 2017 –

2017

Checking Ledger			Jan 1, 2017
<i>Beginning</i>		2303.38	2298.14
Checks written (0)	-.00		
Debit Card	-.00		
Deposits	115.00		
Dividend	.09		
<i>Ending</i>		2418.47	2418.47
Outstanding checks (5)	130.00	Bank chk bal=2548.47	
Cash (undeposited checks, cash)			
<i>Beginning</i>		110.00	85.00
Inflow	110.00		
Outflow	-135.00		
<i>Ending</i>		85.00	85.00
Savings (seldom changes)			
<i>Beginning</i>		10.33	10.33
<i>Ending</i>		10.33	10.33
All accounts			Jan 1/Mar 31
<i>Beginning</i>	3/1/2017	2423.71	2393.47
<i>Ending</i>	3/31/2017	2513.80	2513.80

Treasurer Reports will normally end on the last day of the month preceding the meeting and cover the month(s) since the previous report.

UPCOMING GCP FEATURED READERS

Date	Speaker
May 14, 2017	Carrie Kornacki
June 11, 2017	Bucky Rea
July 8, 2017	Mike Alexander
August 2017	NO MEETING
September 9, 2017	Weasel Press Presents
October 7, 2017	Poetry Out of Bounds
November 11, 2017	Michelle Hartman
December 9, 2017	Annual Holiday Luncheon – Featured Poet to be Announced

2017 Gulf Coast Poets Chapter Membership

<i>Honorary lifetime members</i>	<i>2017 Chapter Members</i>
2007 John Gorman	Anya Ezhevskaya
2008 Larry D. Thomas	Dede Fox
2009 Robert Clark	Priscilla Frake
2010 Alan Lee Birkelbach	Deandra Newcomb
2011 Ted O. Badger	Leila Merrill
2012 Erica Leherer	John Milkereit
2013 Dave Parsons	Jonathan Peckham
2014 Glynn Monroe Irby	Emily Seay
2015 Leo Waltz	Sandi Stromberg
2015 Karla Morton	William Turner
2016 Jan Seale	Richard Gamez
2017 Gwendolyn Zepeda	Michael Galko
<i>Lifetime members</i>	Gabrielle Langley
Ann Fogelman	Matthew Riley
Nancy Bertoncej	Choonwa Moon
Diana Dettling Buckley	Jean Mahavier
Mary Margaret Carlisle	Stephen Gros
Daniel Carrington	Stacey Nigliazzo
Jane Chance	Lupe Mendez
David Cowen	Tria Wood
Kay L. Cox	
Jane Creighton	
Winston Derden	
Susan Ellis	
Lauran Perry English	
Jerry Dean Frick	
Fulton Fry	
Mary Ann Goodwin	
Susan K. Musch	
Bernard Patten	
Richard Peake	
Oscar Peña	
Laura Peña	
Gary Rosin	
Lynne Streeter	
Martha M Tamez	
Sharman Speed	
Joyce Zongrone	
Luis Vázquez	
Adriana Babiak-Vázquez	
Carmen Erna Jacobsen	
Stella Brice	
Gary Borkowski	
Weasel Patterson	
	PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!
	<i>In Memoriam</i>
	<i>2006 Peggy Z. Lynch - 1st Member - Honorary Lifetime Member</i>
	<i>David Hicks - 2nd Member - Lifetime Member</i>