

New Mexico Quarterly

Volume 35 | Issue 4

Article 4

1965

Poems

Ricardo Molina

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq>

Recommended Citation

Molina, Ricardo. "Poems." *New Mexico Quarterly* 35, 4 (1965). <https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol35/iss4/4>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the University of New Mexico Press at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in *New Mexico Quarterly* by an authorized editor of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.

POEMS BY RICARDO MOLINA

Translated by Edwin Honig

NAME AND NAMELESSNESS

What no one can remember, has it died?
It may still thrive, withdrawn upon itself
somewhere outside of time, in perfect life,
where disremembrance carried it away.
Not yesterday, tomorrow, or today
comes trampling down upon it, living forever
exactly at the highest point of noon.

Like an olive branch caught up in
the brutal beak of times, sometimes a name
is saved upon the quiet waves: only
a bubble will be telltale of the man
who like a rose had flourished yesterday.

And then his name is lost. The dust returns
to dust, the wind winds home to nest again
in space, the crystal fountain pours its conch
into the sea, the name, a silent pearl,
drifts down to sleep forever in the deep.

Sun-up, noon, and evening. Night, sun-up,
and noon: the silvery round, relentless wheel,
the distances where yesterday is blurred
and turns, as though it meant to be today.

Only tomorrow can flow leisurely.
The sluggish heart spills over hopefully
on all that's yet to be. Yet what was lived
is still the only thing alive: withdrawn
upon itself, and fused upon its zenith.

ELEGY IX

In the patio yesterday goes sighing through the archways.
On dank walls ivy trembles; in warm air
lilacs, jasmines, celandines lightheaded
stir beneath the zigzag kisses of the honey bees.
But celandine and jasmine, lilac,
golden ivy and the flaking archways
know nothing of that day when we made love.

The fountain's brimming clarity
drips sky-touched waters cold and pure
beneath the slender shadows of the night-blooms
trailing perfume in the dark
And yet this solitary fountain
trickling through the darkness
never mirrored our delight
across its sweetly placid waters,
and never knew that we made love.

The long veranda still is swathed in dreams
of ancient gilt-framed portraits
and the landscapes of those winter hunts
where a soft-eyed stag cries out against
a snarling hound, teeth sunken in its sweating flank.
But the long veranda sleeping
since those days of hunting in the high sierras
never knew that we made love.

The dining room is suddenly aglow
with grapevine tendrils
scaling up the balconies outside.
Baskets full of apples, pears and strawberries
exhale one perfume while the old carved sideboard
stiffens with centenary rectitude.
Still, this room, this sideboard,
full of autumn's muskiness,
never knew that we made love.

When we laughed our way upstairs
to the high white pigeon house,
the patio below seemed wistful.
Sunlight swirled on vagrant honeysuckle
like a swarm of surly bees,
and winter's lingering must rose heavy
from the empty corridors.
In the hollow dining room
leafy shadows stirred the covered furniture.

While up above, beneath the blue spring sky,
inside the whitest pigeon house that day,
we two, amid the fluttering and cooing,
lightheaded, lying in the sun,
we two made love.

ARABIC POET

The men who celebrated
jasmynes and the moon
left me their pain, their love,
their wishful flame,

the meteoric passion
that consumes the lips,
and their addiction to
the frailest beauty,

the eternal melancholy
craving for a pleasure
whose essence is to last
a single moment.

LOVE'S HOUR

Now, at love's hour, what god is this,
poisoning my heart with lips that smile
and green eyes, while night's garden burns,
tightening around me,
scorching me with birds?

My footsteps lead me where?
On what green paths?
Towards what lolling corners, grief sites?
Hour of searing languor,
when daylight's dying swan
sings this glad, never-recurring light.
Hour of love, so darkly sweet,
release me, I must escape myself,
become this air, this earth, this plant,
heartless and insensible,
become this kiss, this tenderness,
this puff that stirs a branch,
its one green leaf in air.

The earth's no part of me. I am outraged fire,
useless as a shooting star,
brilliantly expending its solitary light.
I am the fantasy of water
no one sees at night,
forgotten as a dream on wakening
but lovely in its lingering on face and lips.
This is the hidden love that surges
through all the calices of June.

A burning self-devouring flame,
raindrops stippling pools,
beads of perfume fringing
lightning suckled in the clouds—
love, such are all your shapes inside me,
shifting, sighing for their lover.

OLD WINE

This mad pedantic heart of mine
drums up a dream of towering waves,
cascading praise on this glad land
in Andalusian wine.

Here glittering lips have opened on
the gardens' shifting gold, the trill
of burning nightingales that fades
in drowsing Eastern skies.

While gardens drink I feel such eyes
slip past, go down the waves of joy
into forgetfulness,

As lovers feel in pounding blood
when sip by sip on glittering lips
they empty paradise.

Born in Puente Genil, Córdoba, in 1917, RICARDO MOLINA took his degree in philosophy and letters and is now professor of secondary education in Córdoba, where he usually resides. He has edited the poetry magazine *Cantigo*, since he founded it some years ago. He won the Adonais prize for poetry in 1947 with his book *Corimbo*. As of 1958, his separate publications include *The River of Angels* (1945), *Three Poems* (1948), *Corimbo* (1949), and *The Elegy of Medina Azaliara* (1957). A selection from his work appeared in *The Anthology of New Spanish Poetry*, edited by José Luis Cano in 1958.