

Poetry Review:

"Unexpected Hopes" by Eng. Héctor Hernando Díaz

Reseña Poemas

"Esperanzas Inesperadas"

del Ingeniero Héctor Hernando Díaz

By Consuelo Moreno (Editor)

I. THE AUTHOR

As Cristina Díaz mentions in the prologue, as well as on the back cover, of the book "Esperanzas Inesperadas" [Unexpected Hopes] published by Sic Editorial La Casa del Libro Total in 2014, the author is an "engineer by profession and a writer by vocation". The book provides the reader with the opportunity to read his poet voice. This dichotomy is reflected in the first poem titled "To write and remain silent":

*Ladies and Gentlemen:
When will you start to call me a poet?
Is there any hope
that one day it will happen?
Or should I abandon such a pretense?*

The engineer, Héctor Díaz, has worked as a civil engineer for 25 years and has recently ventured into the academic realm as a mathematics professor and professor of other engineering subjects. His experience in this new educator role is reflected in this verse of the second poem in the book called "Life is a notebook":

*Life is a notebook
filled with white pages
that turn over and over
as time takes its course...*

As with all poetic work, the engineer-poet Héctor Díaz, expresses his feelings related to this blended life of 'being' an engineer and 'being' a poet. He invites us to reflect on this in its own words:

Being an engineer means having studied and then exercised the profession, while *being* a poet is to have been *born* a poet and then one writes poetry as a response to this "genetic

conditioning". While one applies engineering, to be a poet is to attain redemption through writing verse. Poets cannot live without writing. We write to survive; it's an action that becomes a hope that we cannot guess at and that we don't know whether it will arrive or not. *An unexpected hope...*

II. THE TITLE

As mentioned in the above testimony, and as is confirmed in the words on the back cover, the author reveals a constructive spirit in his professional activities but hides a creative spirit in his written verse which he has "been composing for years but has not dared to reveal until now".

The book "*Unexpected Hopes*" becomes a printed revelation of the thoughts, feelings, passions, anxieties and fears of the poet-engineer with respect to life and death; the first being a symbol of hope and the second carrying the connotation of the unexpected.

III. THE WORK

It is obvious in the work that the author is searching for texts that truthfully reflect his thoughts and feelings, but above all his fears imbedded in Life's great challenges: the most resounding of which is Death, along with the female and love which are one and the same, that is Ortega.

In the words of the author, "love and a woman are the reason for being in life; and at the same time, the woman is a wonderful companion and accomplice in facing Death. How can we bear life without writing about death?" The author's response to this question is found in his poems "Immortal Desire, Impossible Longing", "Flowers and Fruit", "Verse-N", "Lies to Life", "No One Knows", "Change Changes Life", "The role of paper", "The Mirror", "What is More True", "Brother Sun, Sister Moon", "The Plant", "I'm Going to Start...to Die", "Dies Illa", "A Place for Everything", "The Devil", "The Here and Now", "Oh, Yes, Yes!", "Changing House", "Holding Hands with

Time”, “Doubt is Young”, “Adult Children, Child Adults”, “In their Own Words”, “Presence”, “What’s Cheesy About Love?”, “Smiles, Laughter and Life” and “I Am Much Happier”:

Living holds within it the fear of death
If we are true to ourselves, it is the equivalent
of the perennial desire for immortality

Do you see her? What do you think?
She’s like a moon covered in leaves and weighed down by
flowers and fruit

...loneliness is a kind of remembering
and absence is presence
and living is loving.
Love every moment
live, love and move
We have to lie to life
trick the silence
plot the landscape
so that the wind can take it.

No one knows if they know or not
Nobody knows if they love or not
Nobody knows if in loving they are loved
No one knows
if they know what they have a right to know.

Change changes life
when willingly embraced
but if Life forces change,
and with lack of style,
then that is another story.

“Paper can hold everything”
the popular saying goes
because that is its destiny
and there is no escaping it

A mirror for my other me
that I should be.

It is more true
that what I believe defines the way,
than what I know.

The sun shines
the moon accompanies it.

The seeds are the children
that perpetuate our acts
into posterity
when all has come to an end.

I am going to start dying from now on
So that nothing takes me by surprise
Let’s celebrate life, toast it,
Set a feast, serve the table.

Thanks to his vanity, in his attempt
to rise above others
man manages to rise above himself.

But if you put money in your pockets
they’ll get bigger and bigger
and they will always feel empty
Nobody puts anything in its place.

In case the Devil exists and is listening
I want to tell him that he does not exist.

The best moment of life is the present
And the only one at that.

If I do what I want
I earn what I can
and I only spend what I have
I live at ease
without “limitations”
enjoying immensely
and making others happy.

Changing house means to believe that it is not true that
“the past was better”.

Without a time limit
without any limit.
Until death (or tedium) separates us.

Adults are right in the advice they give youth
[...]
it’s good advice because it’s old advice.

We admire children that are grown up
And they ask us grown-ups to “be like children”.

There are words that let us look at them while they look the
other way,
this makes them female:
there are words that live off of contemplating others
there are words that nobody looks at.

Add it all up and you will know how much you have enjoyed
Add it all up and you will know how much you have suffered
Add it all up and you will know how much you have loved
Add it all up and you will know how much you have lived.

What’s cheesy about love?
Everything is in the eyes of others
Everything seems false, silly
A total “fool”.

I love a smile
A smile seduces me
To laugh is to love life
The smile means to love the other

Laughter is for me
A smile is for everyone else.

What I don't know is how or why
Because looking at my scene
All I find are reasons to cry.

IV. THE END

After reading about love and women as the two pillars that hold up the life of the author, and paradoxically also his death, the poet argues that “each is the consequence of the other”, and adds, “We can only write about death while we are alive, and this turns into relief and a momentary victory over death. We write about death to show that we are alive. Well, writing is life for a poet ...”. To conclude this review, a verse from the poem “Earth and Sky” is reproduced in homage to the 100 years of Eduardo Carranza, which remind us of the engineer-poet nature of Héctor Díaz and the significant result of his existential exploration:

Life is an eternal searching without hope
Nourished by each discovery that was not pursued...

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