

# Texas poets in translation

WASHING THE COW'S SKULL/  
LAVANDO LA CALAVERA DE VACA

*Texas Poetry in Translation.*

*Edited by David Oliphant and Luis Ramos-Garcia.*

*Prickly Pear Press/Studia Hispanica Editors.*

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WHAT A magnificent idea this book is for a collection of poetry! Texas is a multicultural state with the oldest and one of the largest of these traditions being Hispanic. The idea is simple. Take two dozen or so contemporary Texas poets. Have them select some of their best poetry. Get a group of poet-translators from around the world to render into Spanish the most translatable of the poems of each of these poets. The result is a big fat book that has some of the best Texas poetry in English on the left hand page and its translation on the right. The poetry of two dozen Texas poets is now accessible to a larger audience in Latin America, Texas and around the world.

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There is an overall introduction to the volume and a brief (one page) biographical sketch of each poet just preceding his or her poetry. Both follow the same format of English-Spanish facing pages. At the end there are brief (2-4 lines) sketches of each translator (in English only). The printing, the paperbinding and the graphics are good. Even without the added dimension of translation, the book is worthwhile as a survey of Texas poetry and a brief introduction to the artists. Publication of the book was made possible by grants from the Texas Commission on the Arts and the National Endowment for the Arts. This was public money well spent.

THOMAS R. DeGREGORI