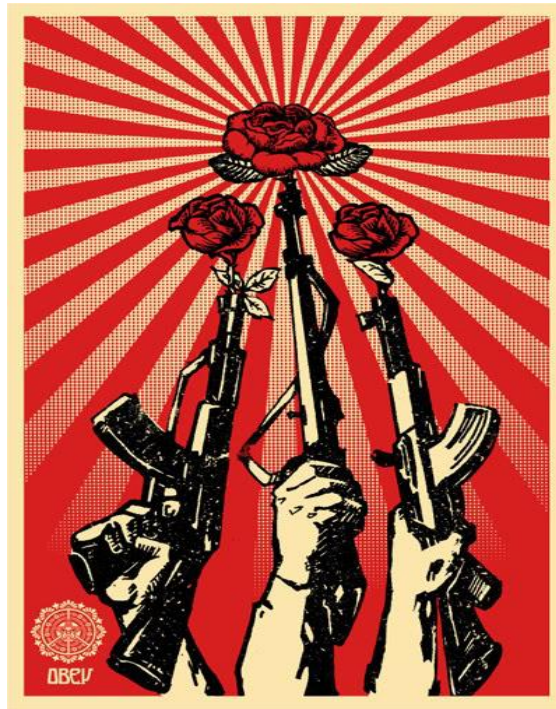


Poets for Peace

Wednesday, December 1, 12:30-1:20pm

Thursday, December 2, 11:30-1pm

Building 3, Room 424



Take a stand against the recent acts of violence in our community

by reading a poem or rap that calls for

PEACE!

- ❖ **READ** an original **POEM/RAP**, or a piece written by your favorite writer, that addresses acts of violence and/or promotes social harmony.
- ❖ The poem may be written in **ANY LANGUAGE** and can be read by **ANYONE**.
- ❖ **LISTEN** to the lyrical flow of **ASKIA TOURE**, an internationally acclaimed poet, scholar, and activist, who will close the event by reading some of his works as well as discuss how poetry and rap music have been used to stir political activism.
- ❖ **SIGN-UP to Participate:** To sign up to read a poem/rap, go to the bulletin board next to Prof. Gray's office, 3-332. You can also sign up to read a poem at the event.

For More Information: Contact Prof. Rhonda Gray at rgray@rcc.mass.edu or JoJo Jacobson in the Writing Center at jjacobson@rcc.mass.edu.

Martín Espada

Poet, Essayist, Editor & Translator

Imagine the Angels of Bread (Read by the poet at RCC on 11/12/10)

This is the year that squatters evict landlords,

gazing like admirals from the rail

of the roofdeck

or levitating hands in praise

of steam in the shower;

this is the year

that shawled refugees deport judges

who stare at the floor

and their swollen feet

as files are stamped

with their destination;

this is the year that police revolvers,

stove-hot, blister the fingers

of raging cops,

and nightsticks splinter

in their palms;

this is the year

that darkskinned men

lynched a century ago

return to sip coffee quietly

with the apologizing descendants

of their executioners.

This is the year that those

who swim the border's undertow

and shiver in boxcars
are greeted with trumpets and drums
at the first railroad crossing
on the other side;
this is the year that the hands
pulling tomatoes from the vine
uproot the deed to the earth that sprouts the vine,
the hands canning tomatoes
are named in the will
that owns the bedlam of the cannery;
this is the year that the eyes
stinging from the poison that purifies toilets
awaken at last to the sight
of a rooster-loud hillside,
pilgrimage of immigrant birth;
this is the year that cockroaches
become extinct, that no doctor
finds a roach embedded
in the ear of an infant;
this is the year that the food stamps
of adolescent mothers
are auctioned like gold doubloons,
and no coin is given to buy machetes
for the next bouquet of severed heads
in coffee plantation country.

If the abolition of slave-manacles

began as a vision of hands without manacles,
then this is the year;
if the shutdown of extermination camps
began as imagination of a land
without barbed wire or the crematorium,
then this is the year;
if every rebellion begins with the idea
that conquerors on horseback
are not many-legged gods, that they too drown
if plunged in the river,
then this is the year.

So may every humiliated mouth,
teeth like desecrated headstones,
fill with the angels of bread.