

Spring 5-1-2016

## Alameda Park

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### Recommended Citation

Tolman Flannery, Maureen (2016) "Alameda Park," *The Prairie Light Review*: Vol. 38: No. 2, Article 61.  
Available at: <http://dc.cod.edu/plr/vol38/iss2/61>

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Mexico City

Diego Rivera painted three inquisition victims  
into his depiction of Alameda Park.

Today lovers, too Catholic to take each other home,  
caress with reckless ardor on stone benches  
beneath leafy eucalyptus trees. Pirated CDs blare  
into jacaranda air as families stroll down pathways  
where the stench of burning flesh once disturbed  
the flight trajectory of jungle birds.

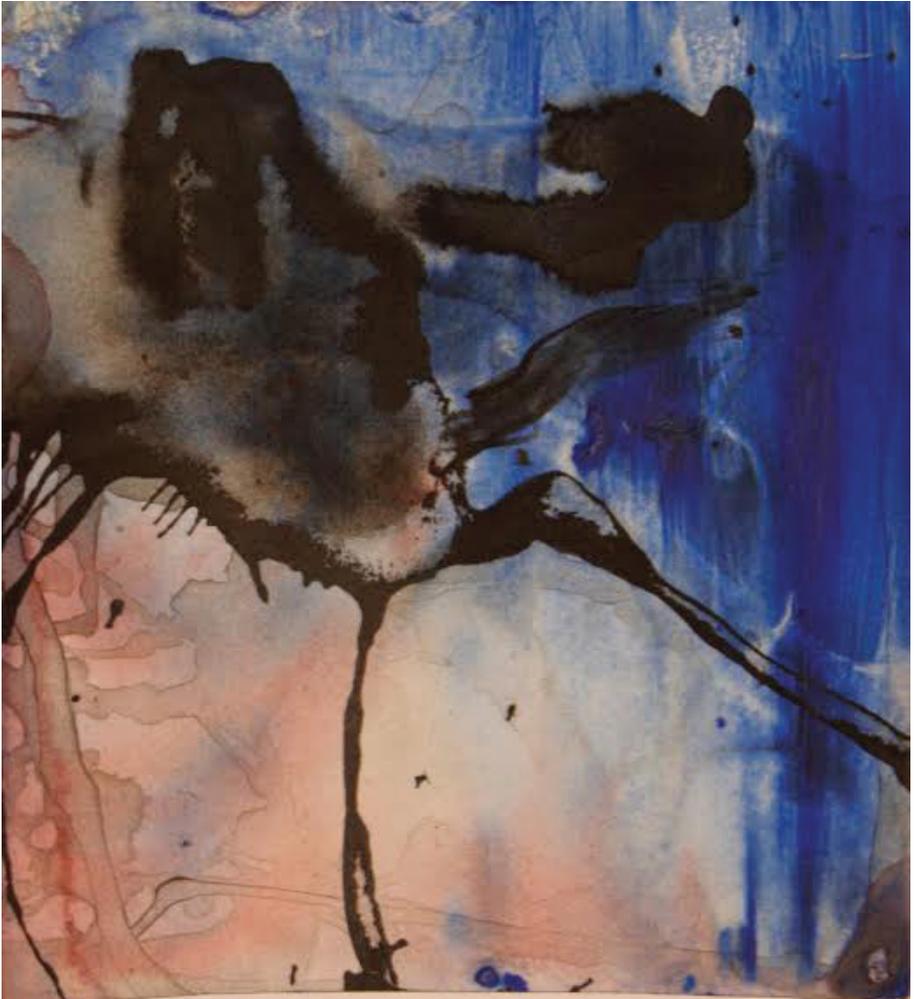
Hernando Alonzo was first.  
The pyre that consumed him  
set ablaze five centuries of hatred  
that spread throughout the land being evangelized—  
being told of a loving and merciful God.

Jews were unwelcome in a Spain  
recently wrenched from its Moorish yoke.  
Yet braving waves of unknown oceans could not save them.  
Hernando Alonzo, a close companion of Cortez,  
married Beatriz Ordaz, sister of Cortez' captain.  
Should such a couple not have been safe in the New World?

Yet who could be at ease when guilt was assumed of anyone accused  
and anyone well-positioned could expect to be accused?  
Hernando's success made people uneasy.  
Nor could devout professions of Christian faith keep them safe  
for conversion was required, but always suspect.  
All Conversos were soon banned from Spain's newly-pilfered lands.

Nezahualcoyotl's grandson was next to become burnt offering  
to the Spaniards' God of forgiveness, compassion,  
next to serve as fuel to the wildfires of their zealotry.

Dona Mariana Violante de Carvajal would be among  
the many women destroyed for being other,  
reduced to firewood for adherence to her truth.  
She was a crypto-Jew, so accused  
and thus set ablaze in the very place  
where we now buy grilled elotes  
and absorb the gentle warmth of sub-tropic sun.



Iris  
Acrylic and ink painting  
Candy Melara