



## DE AMOR OSCURO / OF DARK LOVE

Poems by Francisco X. Alarcón  
Drawings by Ray Rice  
Translation by Francisco Aragon

Bilingual edition: Spanish/English

Trade edition  
5 1/2" x 8 1/4"  
72 pages  
Paper, ISBN 0-939952-08-4 temporarily out-of-print  
Cloth, ISBN 0-939952-23-8 \$10.95

Limited edition of 70  
7 7/8" x 14 1/2"  
44 pages  
Cloth over boards with slipcase. ISBN 0-939952-09-2 \$560

"Francisco Alarcón is a generous poet DE AMOR OSCURO leaves it an open question whether *oscuridad* can really prevail over *amor*." Don Bellm, *Village Voice*

### About the book

DE AMOR OSCURO / OF DARK LOVE is a bilingual collection of fourteen homoerotic sonnets whose "heightened sense of the erotic and passionate fixation on the lover..." reinterprets the traditional Hispanic sonnet in contemporary terms. In the sixteenth century, the Spanish mystic poet, San Juan de la Cruz, used the sonnet form to speak of his love of God. In the twentieth century, the Hispanic love sonnet has been reinterpreted by two giants, Pablo Neruda and Federico García Lorca. Pablo Neruda claimed love as one of his main themes with his first book, *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada / Twenty Love Poems and a Song of Despair*, when he was just nineteen. In 1959 he published *Cien sonetos de amor / One Hundred Love Sonnets*. This book was unprecedented in its spontaneous exploration of the traditional sonnet form. Lorca's 1935 collection, *Sonetos del amor oscuro*, celebrated homoerotic love. Although Neruda read and admired Lorca's stylistically formal *Sonnets of Dark Love* at the time, the work was suppressed after Lorca's tragic death in 1936 until quite recently.

### About the author

Francisco X. Alarcón, Chicano poet, critic and editor, was born in Los Angeles, grew up in Guadalajara, Mexico, and now lives in Davis, where he teaches at the University of California. Alarcón began writing DE AMOR OSCURO / OF DARK LOVE before learning of Lorca's collection with the similar title. It was Lorca translator, Francisco Aragon, at that time co-editor of *The Berkeley Poetry Review*, who first showed Alarcón the Lorca sonnets. In 1989 poet Adrienne Rich translated some early versions of Alarcón's poems and encouraged him to complete his manuscript. Alarcón went on to work closely with translator Aragon to complete this bilingual collection of love sonnets presenting the universal and various aspects of love.

**About the artist**

Ray Rice has illustrated DE AMOR OSCURO / OF DARK LOVE with forty pen and ink drawings, which are at once figurative and abstract. Rice has spent over fifty years on the modern American art scene as painter, mosaicist and animator of experimental films. His list of awards, exhibitions and commissions in the Bay Area extends back to the early 50s. This is his second collaboration with his daughter, Felicia Rice, of Moving Parts Press.

**Awards**

In 1992 the limited edition of DE AMOR OSCURO / OF DARK LOVE was selected as one of the fifty best designed books in the U.S. by the AIGA. In 1993 the book received one of eighteen international design awards from among the "600 Best Designed Books in the World" exhibit mounted by Stiftung Buchkunst at the Leipzig Book Fair. The original publication of DE AMOR OSCURO was supported by the California Arts Council.

**from the LITERATURA CHICANA/LATINA SERIES Artists' Books**

This series explores the intersection of cultures, disciplines and book structures. This series of contemporary Chicano/Latino artists and writers in translation is issued in both limited and trade editions. Each book is the result of a close collaboration between writer, artist and book artist, Felicia Rice.