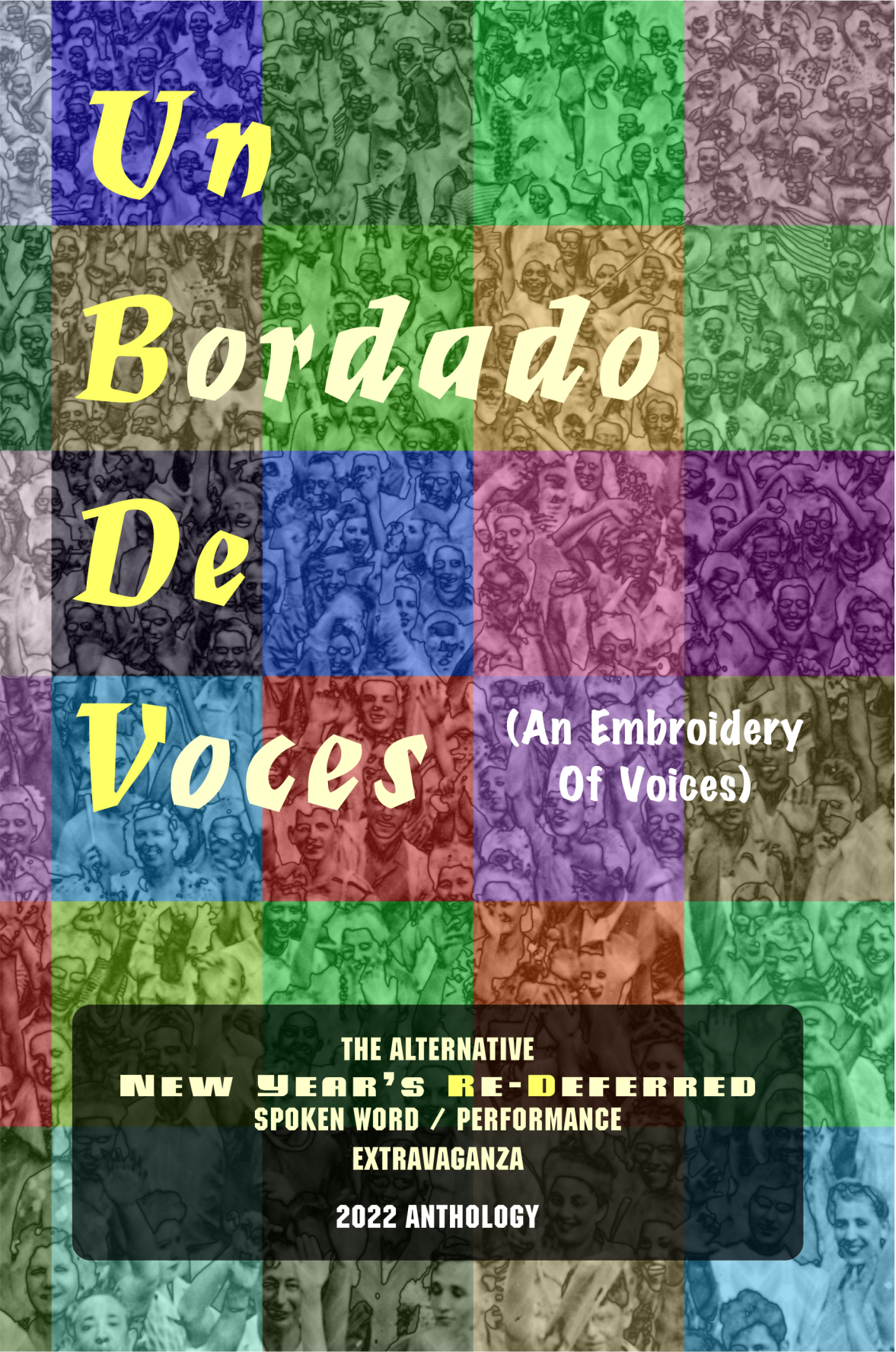
Un Bordado De Voces
(An Embroidery Of Voices)
THE ALTERNATIVE
NEW YEAR'S RE-DEFERRED
SPOKEN WORD / PERFORMANCE
EXTRAVAGANZA
2022 ANTHOLOGY

Front Cover

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2022 ANTHOLOGY

www.AlternativeNYD.org

Dedicated to the writers, poets, and artists who are still surviving in this quasi-post-apocalyptic world. We didn't get the zombies we needed, just the ignorance we could have done without.

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Introduction

The pandemic has taken a toll on so much of normal life, and the ***Alternative New Year's Day Spoken Word and Performance Extravaganza*** has not been an exception. It was with profound sadness that we were unable to present the event for the second consecutive New Year's Day.

It just didn't seem like New Year's Day. Every January 1st since I arrived in New York City had been spent at the ***Alternative***. I have participated in each since the second, in 1996, when the event was held in a loft above the **Pyramid Club** on Avenue A. The event was the brainchild of Bruce Weber and caught on from the start. After outgrowing the loft, we've appeared at the **Knitting Factory**, **CBGB**, the **Bowery Poetry Club**, the **Nuyorican Poets Cafe** and **St. John's Lutheran Church**. Wherever we have appeared, the event has never lost its popularity. Nor has the quality of the work presented ever eroded — and that is a testament to the amount of talent given that more than 150 people appear each year.

It's been a long two years since the first reports of Covid-19 appeared, and none of us could have imagined how long the pandemic would last. May 2022 be the year when the crisis has passed and normal social life can return. We all look forward to seeing, reading and hearing in person, and for the return of the ***Alternative*** on New Year's Day 2023 and all the other cultural events that fill our calendars throughout the year.

Although it was not possible to have the ***Alternative*** in person, the annual anthology, as was the case last year, went forward. Publisher C. D. Johnson and **Rogue Scholars Press** have generously produced an anthology to accompany the event for the past several years. With the continuation of that tradition for 2022, the result is the book you are holding in your hands. The work of more than 100 poets are featured here, allowing us a sample of what we missed on January 1st. We have every hope of seeing everybody on the next New Year's Day, when the ***Alternative*** will again present a breathtaking range of talent to New York and the world.

Enjoy the book, and may 2022 be a healthy and productive year for you all.

— Pete Dolack

Acknowledgments

An event of such magnitude couldn't happen without a dedicated staff of volunteers, so it is only appropriate to offer a shout-out to the dedicated people who make the event happen. A big thank you to this year's staff:

Pete Dolack, Madeline Artenberg,
Lydia Cortés, C. D. Johnson,
Linda Kleinbub, Ptr Kozlowski,
Tsaurah Litzky, Ellen Aug Lytle, Su Polo,
Robert Roth and Thad Rutkowski.

Also, special thanks to Merissa Anderson who stepped in last minute to help with some of the editing duties and corrections for this anthology. Her contribution was greatly appreciated.

And thanks to Bruce Weber and Joanne Pagano Weber for keeping the event going for so many years.

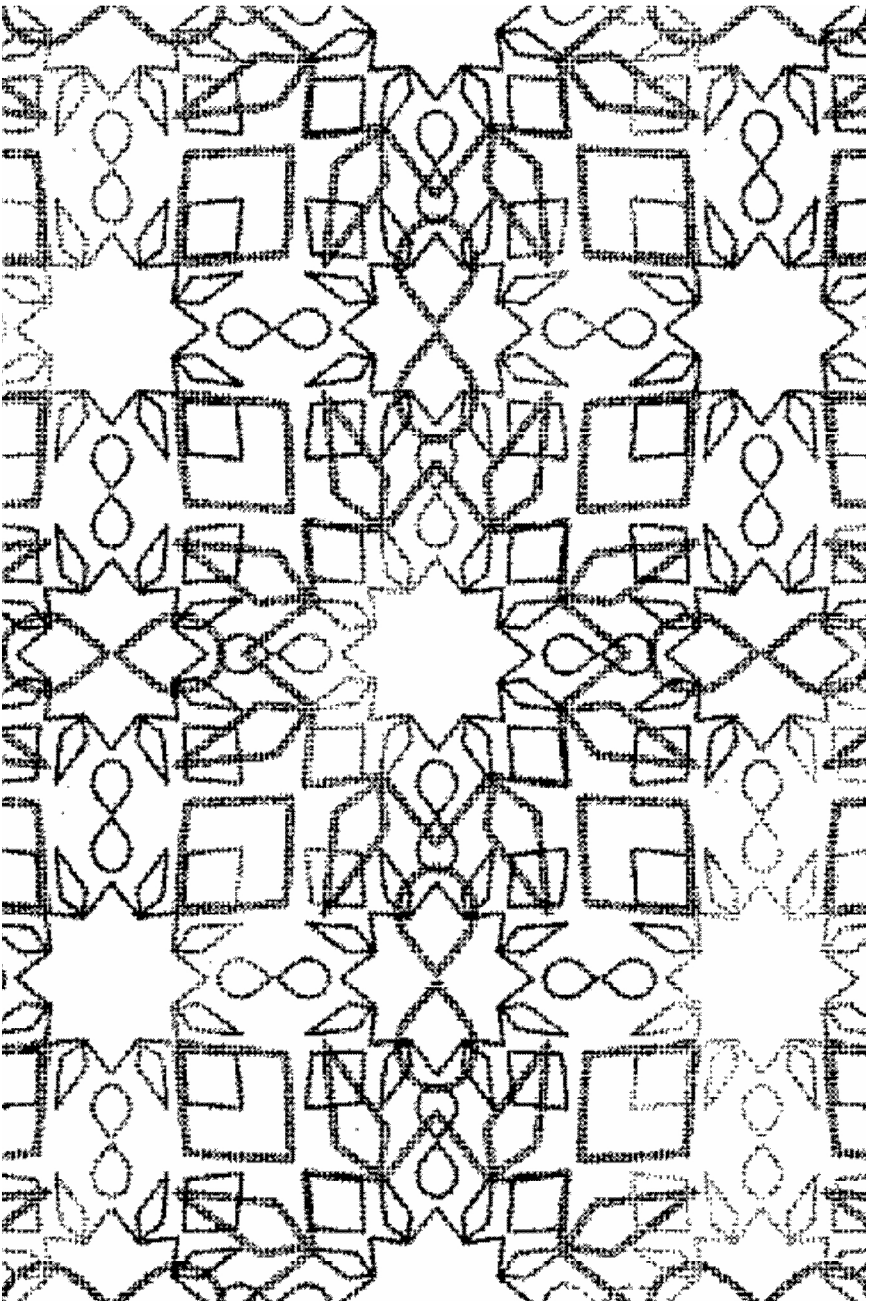
And of course, once again thanks to all of the contributors whose work fill the pages of yet another thick volume of poetic verse. Without you, there isn't a project to be had.

Epigraph

OF EMBROIDERY.

«The technicalities of Embroidery are very simple and its tools few — practically consisting of a needle, and nothing else. The work can be wrought loose in the hand, or stretched in a frame, which latter mode is often advisable, always when smooth and minute work is aimed at. There are no mysteries of method beyond a few elementary rules that can be quickly learnt; no way to perfection except that of care and patience and love of the work itself. This being so, the more is demanded from design and execution: we look for complete triumph over the limitations of process and material, and, what is equally important, a certain judgment and self-restraint; and, in short, those mental qualities that distinguish mechanical from intelligent work. The latitude allowed to the worker; the lavishness and ingenuity displayed in the stitches employed; in short, the vivid expression of the worker's individuality, form a great part of the success of needlework.»

May Morris, from the anthology, "Arts and Crafts Essays" by Members of the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, London, Rivington, Percival, & Co., 1893.



Austin Alexis

Austin Alexis has poetry in "Red Wheelbarrow," "Spillwords," "First Literary Review—East," "Maintenant," "Brevitas," "Twin Towers" (anthology), "Paper Teller Diorama" (Great Weather for Media anthology), Brownstone Poets Anthology, fiction forthcoming in "Home Planet News Online," book review in "Boog City," drama performed in "Boog City Theater Festival." Chapbooks: Poets Wear Prada. Full-length poetry collection from Broadside Lotus Press, 2014.

Protesters

We sat on granite benches
sporting metal concave hand-rests.
From our spots we watched
the sign-carrying people
as they chanted and bellowed.
We beamed grins at the marchers,
like meteors with extra sparks
available to throw around,
as summer-clad people protested.

Whether they suffered ecoanxiety
or rallied against corruption
or cared about a neck crushed by a knee,
the crowd crowded certain avenues,
plastered plazas with their collective presence,
clustered into a collage in Union Square Park.
Intergenerational, they treaded asphalt,
cobblestones, tar streets that took their scuffs,
concrete cooking in July heat.
They were a mosaic—rainbowed, unclassifiable.
They held their credos in their arms:
makeshift posters, do-it-yourself banners.
And we who were spectators
craved credit for being there.
We, enthroned on the sidelines,
were intimate with the marching—
as the eighth planet is close
in relation to the sun.

≈

Crunch

Eight minutes and forty-six seconds
or is it nine minutes and forty-six seconds? —
a long time,
a protracted month of time,
four centuries of time—compounded.
Crawl across the seconds
though they are a Calvary,
though the bones beneath your knee
crack and splinter and crack—
losing their strength and firmness—
though something delicate surrenders
to gray asphalt, to gravity,
to grave earth—
as the boulders of a shore
sacrifice themselves to a weighty ocean.

Tense seagulls will squawk and wail
while they hover and watch.
Only the moon will remain silent,
a massive eye
blind and dumb as homicide.

≈

Joel Allegretti

Joel Allegretti is the author of, most recently, Platypus (NYQ Books, 2017), a collection of poems, prose, and performance texts, and Our Dolphin (Thrice Publishing, 2016), a novella. He is the editor of Rabbit Ears: TV Poems (NYQ Books, 2015). The Boston Globe called Rabbit Ears "cleverly edited" and "a smart exploration of the many, many meanings of TV."

Rounds To Be Sung At Dusk

After "Come Wander with Me,"
a 1964 episode of *The Twilight Zone*

Mary Rachel, Mary Rachel,
At her loom, at her loom,
White thread for the wedding,
White thread for the wedding,
Black for the tomb, black for the tomb.[1]
•
Poor fair girl, in your prime,
False young men from far away
Will make you cry.[2]
•
Steeple bells are ringing loud,
Ringing loud, ringing loud,
Steeple bells are ringing loud,
Burney slew Billy.[3]
•
Oh, the willow tree is weeping,
Tree is weeping, tree is weeping,
While the little babes are sleeping,
My love's dead, my love's dead.[4]
•
Sing, sing, sing this round
Gaily with your mate,
Banjo, fiddle, mandolin,
Burney met his fate.[5]
•

Wolf is howling, wolf is howling,
Owl is hooting, owl is hooting,
Crow is cawing, crow is cawing,
Let's go round again, let's go round again.[6]
•
Mary Rachel, Mary Rachel,
At her loom, at her loom…

[1] To the tune of "*Frère Jacques*"
[2] To the tune of "Ah, Poor Bird"
[3] To the tune of "London Bridge Is Falling Down"
[4] To the tune of "Oh, How Lovely Is the Evening"
[5] To the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat"
[6] To the tune of "London's Burning"

≈

After-Hours Clark Kent

He hasn't aged. The '40s changed
into the '50s changed into the '60s
changed into the '70s, and he still
looks thirty. Lois Lane got tired of
waiting and married Jimmy Olsen.

He uses one more alias now.
Two nights a week, after filing
his stories, he swaps the horn-
rims and gray suit for denim
and a leather vest, and Cody

heads to a members-only club,
where in the private rooms
he doesn't need the red cape
and blue tights to show what
it means to be the Man of Steel.

≈

Madeline Artenberg

Before falling for poetry, Madeline Artenberg was a photojournalist and street theatre performer. Her work has appeared in many publications, such as Rattle and The POET. She was semi-finalist in Margie, The American Journal of Poetry contest, and finalist in the Mudfish 2020 contest. One of her poems was nominated as Best of the Net 2020 by Poets Wear Prada. "Lot's Wife" was previously published in Wormwood Press, Revenge, 2012.

Afternoon Whispers

Sun's glare
readies for silence
after a long afternoon.
Bells swell, young girls
scatter with time.

I dream colors,
as shadows twist
on palettes. Twilight
drifts toward completion.

POSTSCRIPT

This concludes the Great Work, the most laborious by far of the ANYDSWPE series; but we of Rogue Scholars Press managed to see it through to the end despite the universe putting us through all kinds of trials and tribulations. But we were resolute! Now the weary editor shall sojourn for one more year. Maybe we'll do it all again. The future is too many shades of gray to tell for certain.

28 Years Of Love, Passion, And Poetry!

The Alternative New Year's Day
Spoken Word / Performance Extravaganza

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•

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Before The Dawn - 2019
Rogue Scholars Press
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Pa'lante A La Luz (Charge Into The Light) - 2018
Rogue Scholars Press
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Rogue Scholars Press
ISBN-13: 978-0-9840982-4-8

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Rogue Scholars Press
ISBN-13: 978-0-9840982-3-1

Shadow Of The Geode (Sombra Del Geode) - 2015
Bonsai Publishers
ISBN-13: 978-1-9424630-0-9 (1st Edition)

Estrellas En El Fuego (Stars In The Fire) - 2014
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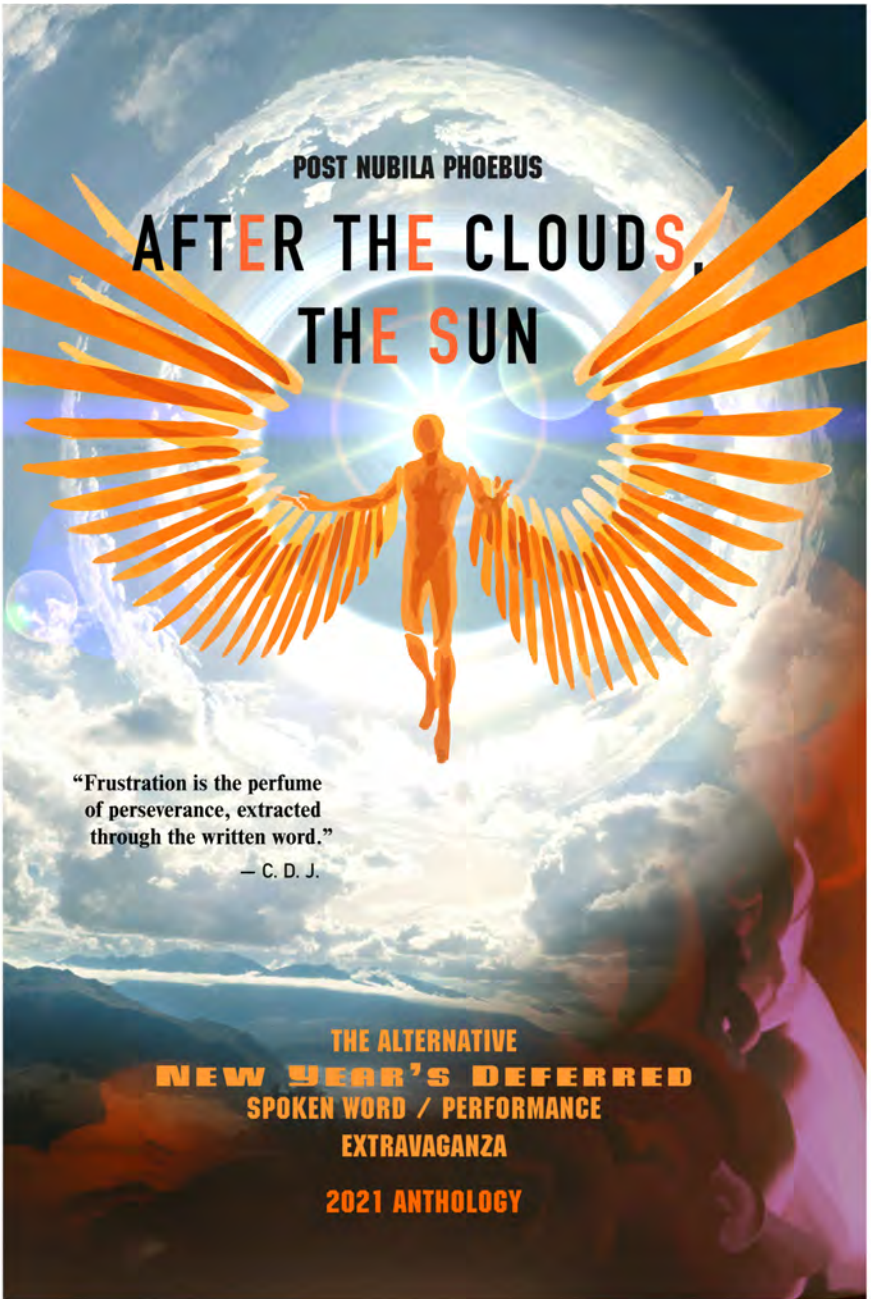
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AFTER THE CLOUDS,
THE SUN
"Frustration is the perfume
of perseverance, extracted
through the written word."
— C. D. J.
THE ALTERNATIVE
NEW YEAR'S DEFERRED
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EXTRAVAGANZA
2021 ANTHOLOGY

Before The Dawn
"Hail, gentle Dawn!
Mild blushing goddess,
hail!"
- William Somervile
OUR 25TH
ANNIVERSARY
The Alternative
New Year's Day
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PaLanTe A LA LuZ
Charge Into The Light
The Alternative
New Year's Day
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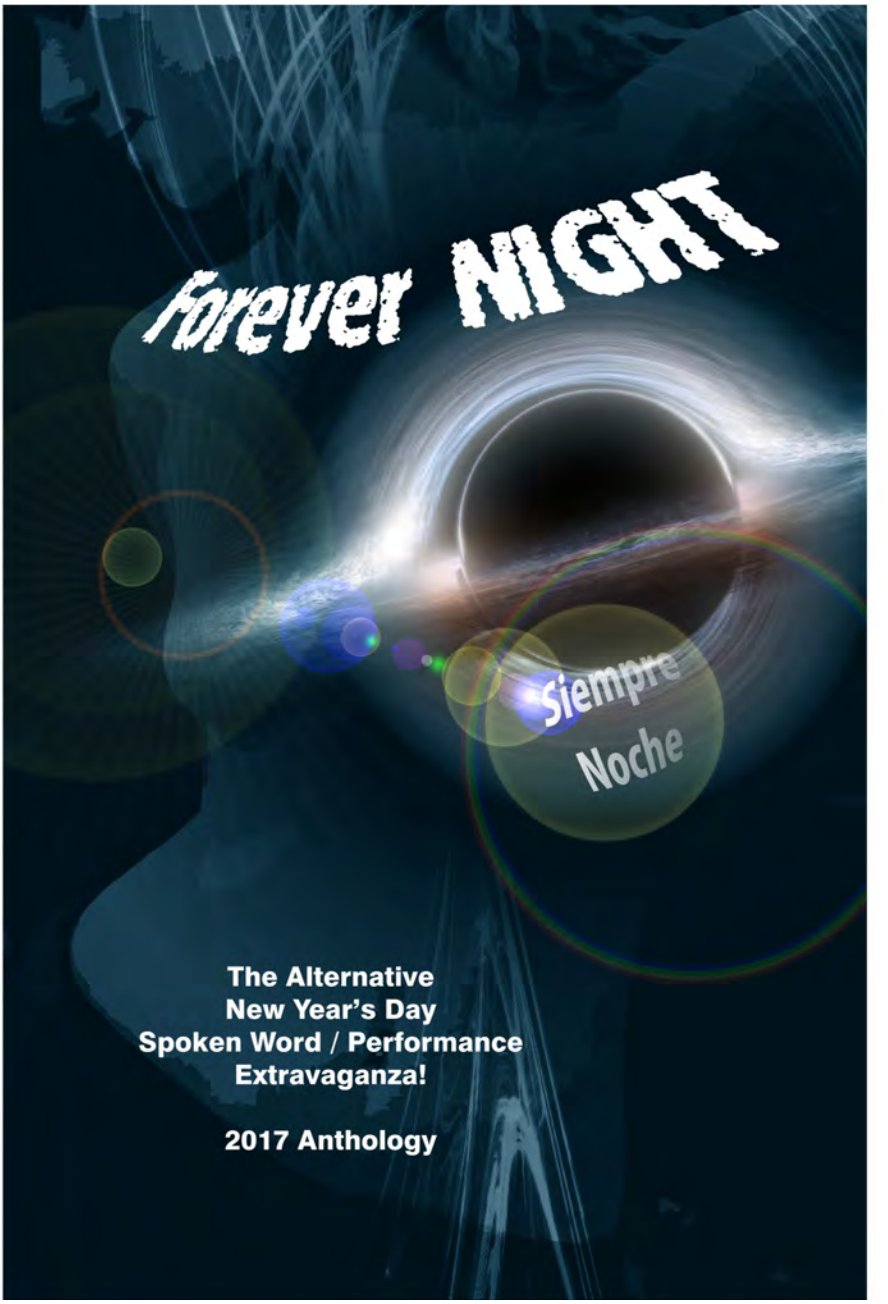
2018 Anthology


forever NIGHT
Siempre
Noche
The Alternative
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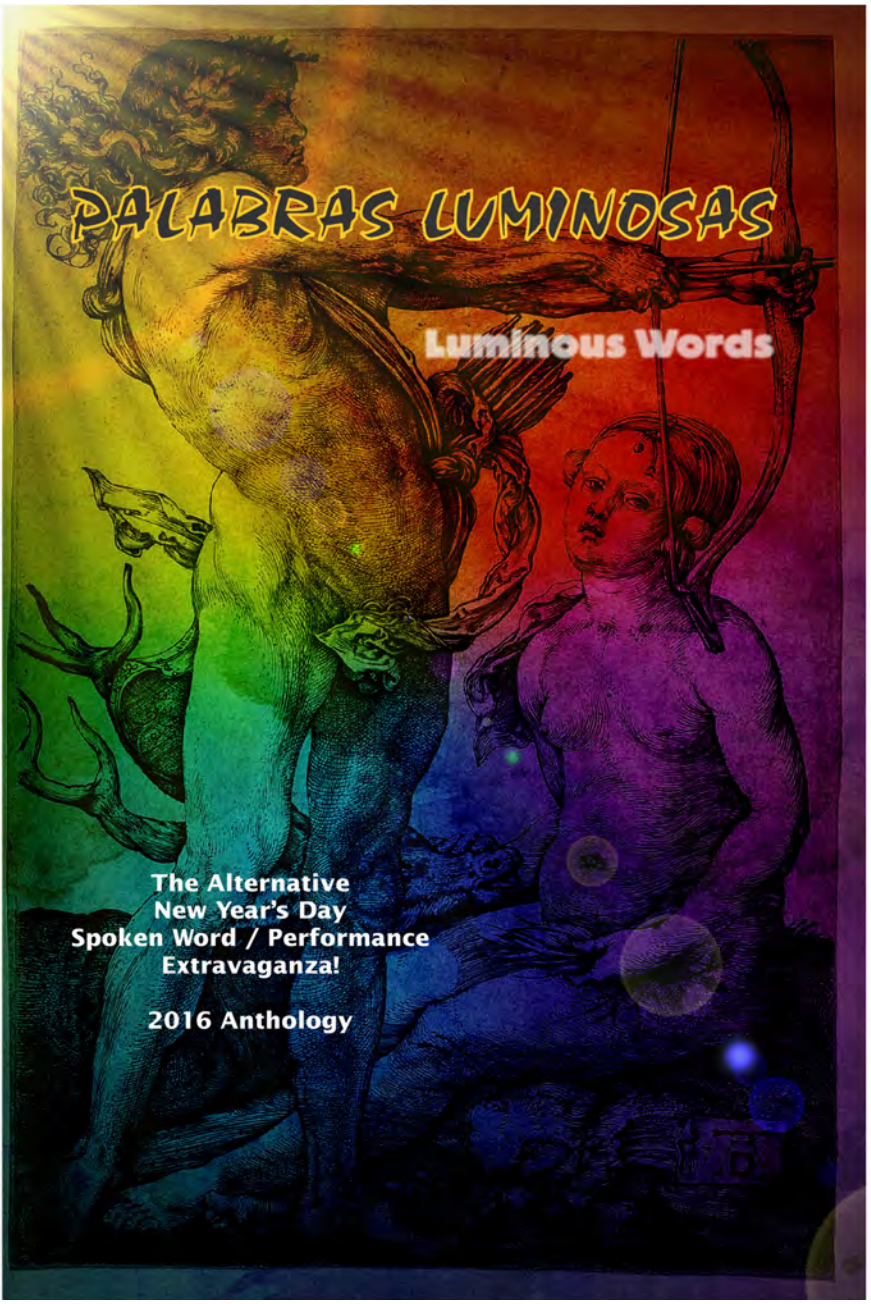
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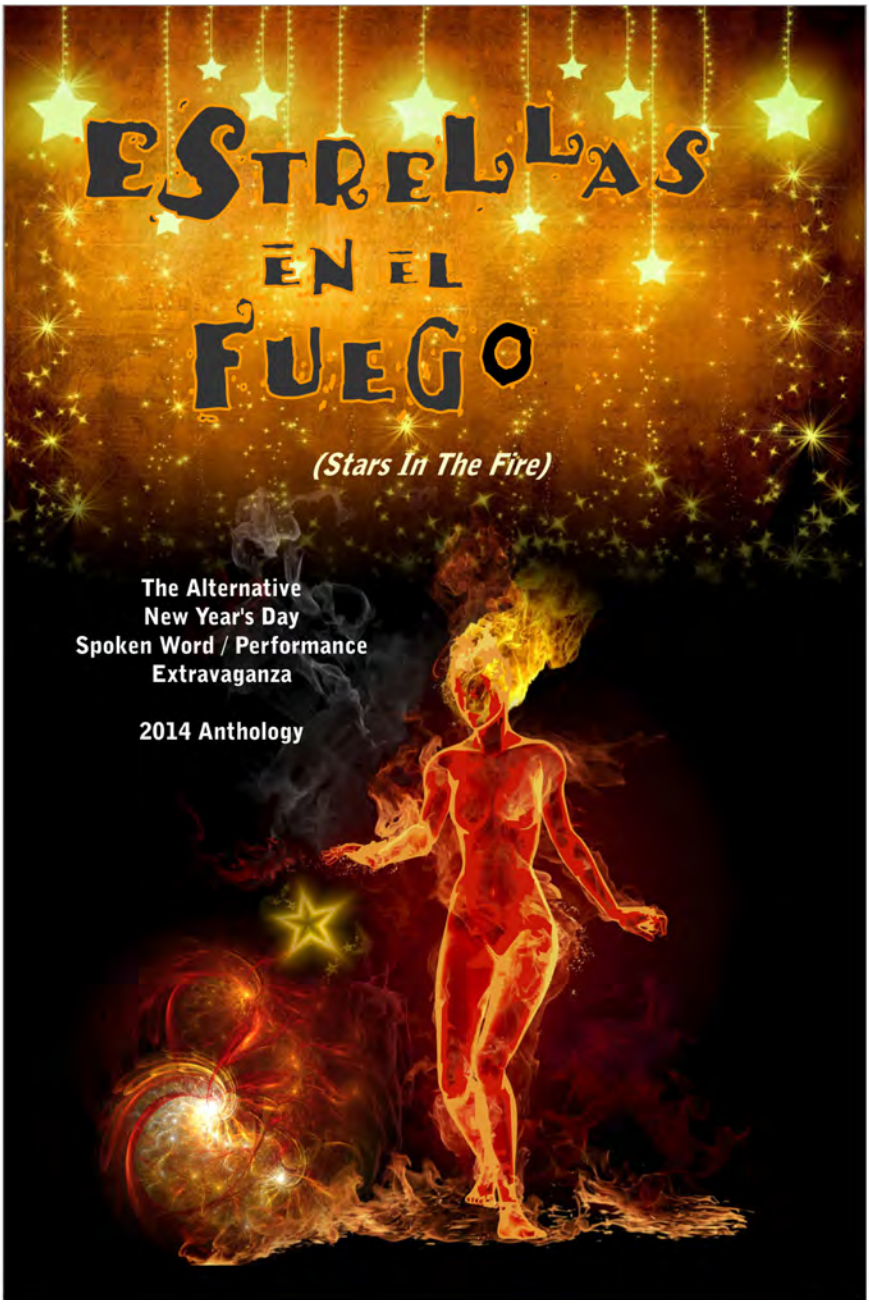
New Year's Day
Spoken Word / Performance
Extravaganza!
2016 Anthology

SHADOW OF THE GEODE
Sombra del Geode
The Alternative
New Year's Day
Spoken Word / Performance
Extravaganza
2015 Anthology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EN EL
FUEGO
(Stars In The Fire)
The Alternative
New Year's Day
Spoken Word / Performance
Extravaganza
2014 Anthology

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This is the 8th volume in a series of anthologies. Over the years, this series, and its parent event, has featured hundreds of poets and hundreds of written works, for the enjoyment of thousands of people who have gathered in the Village year after year on January 1st, New Year's Day, to hear these words spoken in person. But this is sadly the second year in a row in which Covid-19 has interrupted the historic live-reading event, the Alternative New Year's Day Spoken Word / Performance Extravaganza! But those voices aren't silent. In their assemblage, aggregation, and diversity, they still scream loud from the empty stages of the The Village in New York City — and beyond — to let us know:

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— Un Bordado De Voces.

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