

Martín Espada



The author of more than a dozen collections of poems, Martín Espada was born in Brooklyn to Puerto Rican parents. Before joining the faculty at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, he worked as a tenant lawyer for immigrants. Many of Espada's poems arise from man's inhumanity to man: racism against minorities of all kinds, civil liberties violations, and political persecution. One of poetry's qualities, he has said, is to humanize. In the aftermath of 9/11, he noted, "Poetry gives a human face to a time like this. Poetry gives eyes and a mouth and a voice to a time like this. Poetry records a time like this for future generations who want to know about a time like this in terms of the five senses, and in terms of the soul."