

Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park

They Call the Mountain Carlos

They call the mountain Carlos because
it is brown, though its purple slopes
at dusk suggest other names.

Those who name it have to brand
the earth with something they know—

a name, a face, even the heat that says
“I know Carlos and he is the mountain.
I am going to cover his eyes in light.”

They call its peak Carlos because
it is the sharpest feature on the face
that stares south, watching people
cross the border, pausing to catch
their breath and meet the cliffs of
Carlos because he is there.

When they ascend the canyons inside
the face, Carlos shifts and the climbers
discover what he has done.

The moving earth changes everything
and they are forced to stop playing
the game of naming a mountain
that keeps touching the sun.

Ray Gonzalez

*Spring for Poetry in Takoma Park, an urban poetry walk, is sponsored by the Friends of the Takoma Park Maryland Library.
Poster designs are by students at the School of Art and Design, Visual and Performing Arts, Montgomery College, Takoma Park.*

Bomina Park, designer