

Seattle City Council

Finance and Culture Committee Meeting

2 p.m. Wednesday, July 9th, 2014

Words' Worth

The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Judith Roche** (presenter: Sibyl James)

Today's poet is **Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs**

Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs is a Chicana poet, cultural worker, and Professor at Seattle University in Modern languages and Women and Gender Studies. She is the author of a book of interviews with Chilean and Chicana writers and poets, *Communal Feminisms: Chicanas, Chilenas, and Cultural Exile* (2007); a poetry collection, *A Most Improbable Life* (2003); First editor of *Presumed Incompetent: The Intersections of Race and Class for Women in Academia* (2012); and the editor of *Rebozos de Palabras: An Helena María Viramontes Critical Reader* (2013). She is currently finalizing her debut novel, *Fresh as a Lettuce: Malgré Tout*. In 2011, she represented the United States in India as one of the featured poets at the Kritya International Poetry Festival.

Filial Encounter

By Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs

As I gave him a dollar
I touched him, purposefully, my car driving
off – the light had turned –
Our only encounter
would be that of a mother
remembering her son
and loving the man on the corner with a sign
because he had a mother – somewhere
who reminded her
of her self
-In pain- In love.

The New Chain (Interactive poem, with audience)

By Gabriella Gutiérrez y Muhs

Someone inspires someone,

inspires you (repeated by audience)

You build a tree house,
not for you children, but for the world

Someone inspires someone,
inspires you

You sit in meetings not for your son
But for the children of others

Someone inspires someone,
inspires you

You make a bed, not for your brother
But for the ailing man

Someone inspires someone,
inspires you

You cook, not for your husband,
but for the hungry woman, waiting for a bus that never comes
There is no schedule
in which she fits

Someone inspires someone,
inspires you

You pay your taxes for someone else's mental health
You buy a book, for someone else's ear
You are the someone inspired by someone, some day

--end—