



Tomas Rivera: The Complete Works

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"I tell you, God could care less about the poor. Tell me, why must we live here like this? What have we done to deserve this? You're so good and yet you suffer so much," a young boy tells his mother in Tomas Rivera's classic novel about the migrant worker experience, *...y no se lo trago la tierra / ...And the Earth Did Not Devour Him*. Outside the chicken coop that is their home, his father wails in pain from the unbearable cramps brought on by sunstroke from working in the hot fields. The young boy can't understand his parents' faith in a god that would impose such horrible suffering, poverty, and injustice on innocent people.

Adapted into the award-winning film *...and the earth did not swallow him* and recipient of the first award for Chicano literature, the Premio Quinto Sol, in 1970, Rivera's masterpiece recounts the experiences of a Mexican-American community through the eyes of a young boy. Forced to leave their home in search of work, they are exploited by farmers, shopkeepers, even other Mexican Americans, and the boy must forge his self identity in the face of exploitation, death and disease, constant moving, and conflicts with school officials.

In Tomas Rivera: The Complete Works, editor Julian Olivares brings together the late author's entire literary production: Rivera's classic novel, translated by poet Evangelina Vigil-Pinon; his short fiction collection, *The Harvest / La cosecha*; and his poetry collection, *The Searchers: Collected Poetry*. In addition to his creative work, this volume collects Rivera's influential critical essays, including "Into the Labyrinth: The Chicano in Literature," "Chicano Literature: Fiesta of the Living," "The Great Plains as Refuge in Chicano Literature," and the previously unpublished "Critical Approaches to Chicano Literature and its Dynamic Intimacy."

In his poetry and his short fiction, Rivera hauntingly writes about alienation, love and betrayal, man and nature, death and resurrection, and the search for community.

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