Guest Lecture
Translation as Communion
“Heroin” and other poems by Panero

with Zachary Payne

Octavio Paz once stated that for a poem to be poetry there must be a connection between the poem and the reader; only after this connection is made, do the words on the page become poetry. In my translations, this is the first and most important step in the process. Once I, as a reader, have connected to the text, then and only then, does the desire to translate arise. A model for this process for me is seen in Jack Spicer’s After Lorca. It is from this shared experience with the poets and their poetry where the communion begins. My effort as a translator is to render into the other language the strangeness of the original—so that the new readers can experience the conversion of words into poetry.

Zachary Payne recently finished his Ph.D. studies at the Complutense University in Madrid, where the topic of his dissertation was the relationship between poetry and philosophy seen in Post Spanish Civil War Poetry, focusing on the existentialist thought of the poet Jose Luis Hidalgo. His research interests are Transatlantic Poetry and Comparative Studies of counter cultural literary movements. His most recent publications have been the translation of beat poet Bob Kaufman into Spanish and Leopoldo Maria Panero (Cardboard House Press, 2014) into English and his own poetry book Sombras, Setas & Sombras (Huerga y Fierro, 2014).