

Promises of Gold

author: José Olivarez, David Ruano

2026-08

Synopsis

author	José Olivarez, David Ruano
readBy	José Olivarez
inLanguage	english

Longlisted, National Book Awards

"Listeners are privy to Olivarez framing each poem with rays of insight, to interspersed live recordings and selections recorded only for the audio....Olivarez gifts listeners gems of healing in this poetic affirmation of community and love."

Booklist

"A portion of the audiobook is performed in front of a live audience, which is such a smart choice for a collection of poetry. The audience's reactions lend a sense of community you can only get from a live reading, and Olivarez feeds off this energy."

BookPage

"José Olivarez's narration of his poetry collection offers listeners a connection with his love circle."

AudioFile

"Seemingly tailor-made for audio, this powerful book is a must-purchase. Olivarez's invitation to share moments of his history, culture, love, and joy is wholly affecting."

Library Journal

This program is read by the author, featuring elements of the live event recording, with commentary from the author about why he wrote the poems.

A groundbreaking collection of poems addressing how every kind of love—self, brotherly, romantic, familial, cultural—is birthed, shaped, and complicated by the invisible forces of gender, capitalism, religion, migration, and so on.

Love is at the heart of everything we do, and yet it is often mishandled, misrepresented, or narrowly defined. In the words of José Olivarez: "How many bad lovers have gotten poems? How many crushes? No disrespect to romantic love—but what about our friends? Those homies who show up when the romance ends to help you heal your heart. Those homies who are there all along—cheering for us and reminding us that love is abundant."

Written in English and combined with a Spanish translation by poet David Ruano, *Promises of Gold* explores many forms of love and how a promise made isn't always a promise kept.

as Olivarez grapples with the contradictions of the American Dream laying bare the ways in which love is complicated by forces larger than our hearts.”

He writes, “For those of us who are hyphenated Americans, where do we belong? *Promises of Gold* attempts to reckon with colonial legacy and the reality of what those promises have borne out for Mexican descendants. I wrote this audiobook to imagine and document an ongoing practice of healing—”healing that requires me to show up for myself, my community, my friends, my family, and my loves every day.”

Whether listeners enter this collection in English or Spanish, these extraordinary poems are sure to become beloved for their illuminations of life—and love.

A Macmillan Audio production from Henry Holt & Company.

Reader's comments

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