

1. In Victor Hernández Cruz's poem "Two Guitars," published in 2001, the speaker imagines that two guitars are alive and engaging in conversation about their musical experiences. Read the poem carefully. Then, in a well-written essay, analyze how Hernández Cruz uses literary elements and techniques to convey a complex portrayal of the guitars' musical world.

In your response you should do the following:

- Respond to the prompt with a thesis that presents a defensible interpretation.
- Select and use evidence to support your line of reasoning.
- Explain how the evidence supports your line of reasoning.
- Use appropriate grammar and punctuation in communicating your argument.

### Two Guitars

Two guitars were left in a room all alone  
They sat on different corners of the parlor  
In this solitude they started talking to each other

My strings are tight and full of tears

Line 5 The man who plays me has no heart

I have seen it leave out of his mouth

I have seen it melt out of his eyes

It dives into the pores of the earth

When they squeeze me tight I bring

10 Down the angels who live off the chorus

The trios singing loosen organs

With melodious screwdrivers

Sentiment comes off the hinges

Because a song is a mountain put into

15 Words and landscape is the feeling that

Enters something so big in the harmony

We are always in danger of blowing up

With passion

The other guitar:

- 20 In 1944 New York  
When the Trio Los Panchos<sup>1</sup> started  
With Mexican & Puerto Rican birds<sup>2</sup>  
I am the one that one of them held  
Tight like a woman
- 25 Their throats gardenia<sup>3</sup> gardens  
An airport for dreams  
I've been in theaters and cabarets  
I played in an apartment on 102nd street  
After a baptism pregnant with women
- 30 The men flirted and were offered  
Chicken soup  
Echoes came out of hallways as if from caves  
*Someone is opening the door now*  
The two guitars hushed and there was a
- 35 Resonance in the air like what is left by  
The last chord of a bolero.<sup>4</sup>

Victor Hernández Cruz, "Two Guitars" from *Maraca: New and Selected Poems, 1965-2000*. Copyright © 2001 by Victor Hernández Cruz. Reprinted with the permission of Coffee House Press. [www.coffeehousepress.org](http://www.coffeehousepress.org).

**1:** a musical group that specializes in boleros and other romantic ballads

**2:** guitars

**3:** a type of plant known for its striking flowers

**4:** a genre of romantic music that originated in Cuba and has been popular throughout the Americas; common themes include unrequited love, betrayal, and abandonment