

Medal for Jaime Sabines

The Mexican Senate has awarded the Belisario Domínguez Medal to the Chiapas poet Jaime Sabines Gutiérrez.

Sabines was born in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, Chiapas on March 25, 1926. He studied medicine for three years, received a B.A. in Spanish language and literature, and carried out post-graduate studies at UNAM. He was a fellow at the Mexican Writers' Center and served as federal representative for Chiapas from 1976 to 1979 and Mexico City from 1988 to 1991.

The author of numerous books, among his outstanding works are *Horal*, *La señal* (The Signal), *Adán y Eva* (Adam and Eve), *Tarumba* (Mix-Up) and *Algo*

sobre la muerte del mayor Sabines (Something About the Death of Major Sabines).

Awards he has received include the Chiapas (1959), Souraski Letters (1962), Juchimán de la Plata Arts and Letters (1966), National Linguistics and Literature (1983) and Mexico City (1991) prizes.

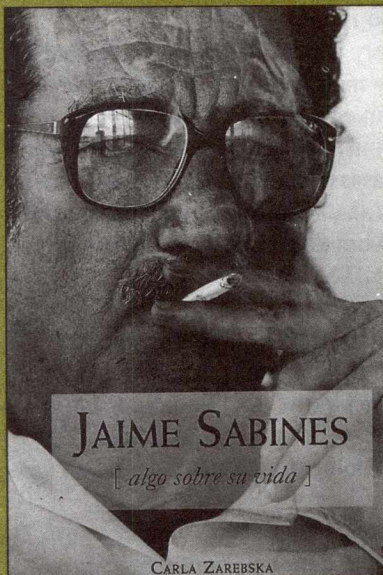
The Belisario Domínguez Medal was created on January 3, 1953, by then-President Adolfo Ruiz Cortines, in homage to the Chiapas hero Belisario Domínguez, who from the Senate floor put the dictatorship of Victoriano Huerta on trial.

The much-valued award has been bestowed on 41 Mexicans, from renowned artists such as the painter



Angeles Torrejón / Imagenlatina.

Jaime Sabines receives the Belisario Domínguez Medal from Carlos Salinas.



Jaime Sabines. Algo sobre su vida

(Jaime Sabines. Something About His Life)

Carla Zarebska

Mexico City: Secretaría de Comunicaciones y Transporte,
1994, 355 pp.

"Thank you, Jaime Sabines, for teaching us what poetry is for. It is as you said: to create flowers from ashes."

These are the final words of the prologue by José Emilio Pacheco to a new book on Jaime Sabines, based on the research coordinated by Carla Zarebska.

Sabines recently received the Belisario Domínguez Award. This deluxe edition, divided into six chapters on the Chiapas poet's life and work, accompanies this recognition.

In Mexico, recognition has begun to be given to the importance of documenting artists' lives and work, the best example being the case of Sabines himself.

What should a book about a poet be like? *Jaime Sabines, Algo sobre su vida* is a very intimate book. It narrates the story of his life, his solitude, love, death. We find letters, photos, invitations, signatures of friends and family (such as that of another great Chiapas writer, Rosario Castellanos), book covers, drawings, loose copies of original newspaper clippings attached to the pages—but more than anything else, his poetry.

There is a poetic sampler from some of his books: *Horas* (1950); *La señal* (The Signal, 1951), *Tarumba* (Mix-Up, 1954) and *Yuria* (1967). Sabines himself relates vicissitudes and anecdotes, sometimes reflecting on the origins of titles or the *raison d'être* of one or another poem.

Jaime Sabines is the only Mexican poet who can boast of being widely read. Those who don't own all his books have most likely copied parts or received one as a gift.

"Mexico is a country of poets, not of poetry readers," comments the writer José Emilio Pacheco. With regard to the book, Pacheco tells Sabines: "Forgive us, Jaime, but this book is not for you. It is a gift for your readers, and we will treasure it along with what is most yours—that is, side by side with your poetry."

Mónica Ching
Assistant Editor.

Gerardo Murillo (Dr. Atl) to trade-union leaders such as Fidel Velázquez.

The sea is measured by waves,
the sky by wings,
we by tears.
The air rests on the leaves,
water in the eyes,
we on nothing.

It seems like salts and suns,
we and nothing...

(Taken from *Horas*, one of his most celebrated collections of poems, published in 1950 by the Chiapas State Government.) ❧

Raquel Villanueva
Staff Writer.