



## A Cultural Publication for Puerto Ricans

From the editor . . .

This issue is dedicated to Dr Ricardo Alegría, a true Puerto Rican, who loved his country and his heritage. Under his guidance Old San Juan went from a run-down dilapidated area to what it is today, the beautiful Colonial historic district that we are so proud of today, and the ‘heart’ of Puerto Rico. In 1983, the area became a National Historic Site and was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization).

*“When I started the restoration of Old San Juan, people said everything should be torn down and that we should make it a ‘little New York.’ But that was because of their ignorance about the historic importance of the city to both Puerto Rico and the U.S.”*

We at EL BORICUA continue to be inspired by Don Ricardo Alegría, by his work, by his example, and by his numerous accomplishments. Few others have had as great an impact on the island in its recent history as Don Alegría.

During his growing up years it was not acceptable to be a proud, flag waving Puerto Rican. Professing pride in our culture meant being Nationalistic or Independentista, and was considered un-American. Schools taught children in English only, not in Spanish – regardless of the fact that the children did not understand it. Puerto Rican history was non-existent in schools. People could end up unemployable.

In the middle of all this Dr Ricardo Alegría became the great defender of our identity. We will miss his vision.

*“If we know ourselves better, then we will be prouder of who we are, what we have, and what we want to preserve.”*

*Siempre Boricua, Ivonne Figueroa*

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### Riqueño you should know . . .

**Dr. Ricardo Alegría** (April 14, 1921- July 7, 2011) was a Puerto Rican scholar, cultural anthropologist and archeologist known as the "Father of Modern Puerto Rican Archaeology".

Alegría was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where he received his primary and secondary education. He was motivated by his father, the writer and one of the leaders of the Puerto Rican Nationalist Party, Jose Alegría, who taught him to love Puerto Rico and to be proud of its history and culture. In 1942, Alegría earned his Bachelors of Science degree in archeology from the University of Puerto Rico. He continued his academic education in the University of Chicago where in 1947 he earned his Master's in Antropology and History. In 1954, Alegría earned his PhD. (doctorate) in Antropology from the University of Harvard.

Alegría was named the first director of the "Institute of Puerto Rican Culture". He was responsible for the creation of the "Archaeological Center of Investigation of the University of Puerto Rico". Alegría also created the "Center of Popular Arts of the Puerto Rican Cultural Institute."

Alegría was responsible of the renovation and restoration of Historical "Old San Juan" under the leadership of then San Juan mayor Felisa Rincón de Gautier. As a result of his work "Old San Juan" was declared a "Historical World Treasure". In 1976, Alegría opened the "Center of Advanced Studies of Puerto Rico and the Caribbean". In 1992, he established the "Museum of the Americas".

Alegría is credited with being a pioneer in the anthropolic studies of the Taino culture and the African heritage in Puerto Rico. His extensive studies have helped historians to understand how the Tainos lived and suffered, before and after the Spanish Conquistadores arrived in the island. Alegría estimated that about one third of all Puerto Ricans (2 million out of 6 million) have Taino blood and therefore the Tainos where not completely extinct and some had to survive. Recently, the results of recent DNA studies have proved him right.

Nobel laureate Mario Vargas Llosa became inspired by Alegría's work and incorporated a fictional character based on him, named Ricardo Santurce, in his play "El loco de los balcones". "I admire him a lot; his work was extraordinary. Not only did he resuscitate a barrio, Old San Juan, which is very beautiful, but he did it without allowing it to be turned into a museum. He gave it a great vitality and integrated it to current life, showing in a quite concrete way that the past can be a very rich and stimulating element for the present. I wish all Latin American countries had a Ricardo Alegría."

Ricardo Alegría lived in San Juan in his later years, until his death on July 7, 2011 of heart failure.

*\*Tony (The Marine) Santiago is a writer, historian, Editor of the Military History Channel for [elboricua.com](http://elboricua.com), a Staff writer in "Somos Primos" an internet magazine dedicated to "Hispanic Heritage and Diversity Issues," Official Historian of the Association of Naval Service Officers, and a writer for Wikipedia.*

## C R E D I T S

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There are three Puerto Rico's you need to learn about; the old, the new and the natural. Learn about our little terruño. Subscribe to EL BORICUA, a monthly cultural publication for Puerto Ricans.

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### Visit Puerto Rico

Joe Roman Santos, Editor

*How to be a tourist in your own Paradise.* Head to colonial Old San Juan and the heart of Puerto Rico. Over five hundred years old, *el Viejo San Juan* is a small, breathtaking city, bounded by 'murallas' walls and by the ocean. Cobblestone streets (and the oldest paved street in the New World and the most photograph pavement), wrought-iron balconies, and buildings painted in tropical colors greet you as you walk.

Start your first morning in Puerto Rico with a local staple for breakfast at an island institution. Head to La Bombonera, on San Francisco Street, and try out a delicious mallorca.

Visit La Casa Blanca, the family home of Ponce de León, 1 San Sebastián Street, built in 1521, and one of the oldest remaining monuments in San Juan. Contrary to popular belief, Juan Ponce de León never lived here, but his family occupied the house for 250 years. La Casa Blanca also served as the first military structure on the island; built of stone, it was used as a fort during Puerto Rico's infancy. Today, it is a museum that chronicles the life of modern Puerto Rico's founding family. A guided tour takes visitors through the main rooms of the house, where original and recreated period furniture help to capture the spirit of life on the island during the 16th Century. Expect a rustic rather than a lavish home; this is one of the most charming aspects of the museum. Definitely take the guided tour to get a better understanding of what life was like at La Casa Blanca. Check out the Throne Room, the grandest of the rooms at the museum.

Don't miss the cool, lush gardens that surround the house and the views of both San Juan Bay and the Atlantic Ocean.

The home of Ponce de León was also the island's first stone-built fort. Indicative of the rough-and-tough times in which it was built, the home was often tested in battle and served as the island's stoutest defense until El Morro was built. See photo on this page.

Then head to the Catedral de San Juan Bautista, in Old San Juan where Juan Ponce de León's remains are kept in a crypt.

*Joe is a schoolteacher in Houston and spends most of his holidays and summers in Puerto Rico.*

Juan Ponce de León was born in San Servas, Spain into a noble family. He joined Cristobal Colón on his second voyage to the New World and was there for the 'discovery' of Puerto Rico. In 1508 he returned and founded the island's first villa, Caparra. The next year he became the island's first governor. Ponce de León's influence on Puerto Rican history was not limited to slavery and bloodshed. For instance, he established the first experimental farm in the New World, testing the ability of European plants to grow in a new habitat. He also kept journals and wrote letters which have provided historians with an invaluable glimpse of life in the new colony. In 1509, he sent a request for priests and funds to build the island's first church.

### Speaking Puerto Rican . . .

CHICHON----- Elevated cranial protrusion usually caused by the fall after a 'Patatu'. Can also be caused by the sudden or unexpected encounter of the 'cocotazo'. A bump.



[http://www.elboricua.com/CCNOW\\_Calderos.html](http://www.elboricua.com/CCNOW_Calderos.html)

**BORICUA . . .**  
**is a powerful word.**  
**It is our history,**  
**it is our cultural affirmation,**  
**it is a declaration,**  
**it is a term of endearment,**  
**it is poetic . . .**  
**. . . . . it is us.**

# Taínos

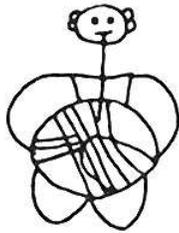
Centuries ago, man left his imprint on caves and rocks during his travels through his natural habitat. These imprints depicted his beliefs, religious rituals, social and political organizations, tools from everyday life, and even extinct plants and animal species. Fortunately, some have lasted until today. Thanks to the Taíno heritage of art, we have insight into our past.

There are two classifications of cave art:

**Pictography:** cave art represented with painted on colors.

**Petrography:** cave art engraved or carved on rocks.

The aboriginal Taínos, using plants such as bixa (a concoction of seeds of this plant and vermilion used by the indigenes to daub their bodies), genipap, natural charcoal, animal fat, stone axes, conchs, and yautia juice demonstrated their ability to express their cosmic, mythological beliefs and culture.



**Atabey or Atabeyra:** Mother of the clear spring water, also protector of women in labor. Represents the eternal, invisible, and supreme creator of everything. She is the Mother of Yucahu Vagua Maorocoti, which means white yuca, as powerful as the sea and the mountains.

## Boricua Calendar

- August 8, U.S. grants Puerto Rico the right to elect own Governor. 1948
- August 8, Ponce de León founds Caparra, Puerto Rico. 1505
- August 8, Spanish American War ends. 1898
- August 12, Ponce de León begins colonization of Puerto Rico. 1508
- August 13, 1889 b. Lidio Cruz Monclova, lawyer, educator, and historian is born. His works include La Gran Historia de Puerto Rico.
- August 15, 1934 b. Roberto Clemente, Major League baseball player, and humanitarian is born in Carolina. He died in 1972 while attempting to aid victims of a disaster.
- August 21, 1929 b. Herman Badillo, Caguas born Bronx politician. Became the first native born Boricua to serve in Congress, 1971-77
- August 26 b. Mercedes Negrón Muñoz (seudonim Clara Lair) poet was born to a family of poets and writers. Niece of Luis Muñoz Rivera and José A. Negrón. Her poetry won awards from the Instituto de Literatura Puertorriqueña.
- August 31, 1936 Sixto Escobar wins World Bantamweight Boxing Championship.



**Don Guillo, the gardener . . . .**

Can't find recao in your area? Visit your local Asian store and ask for **Ngo Gai**.



Hola, my name is Pepita Ponce. I live in Jersey City with my new family. I am very happy now that I have a place to live, lots of food, and a new mother Tere, who is only 8 years old but loves me very much. I get to sleep on her bed and she takes me for walks and rubs my belly. I am very scared of other barking dogs, because once that meant danger. I am also scared of loud noises and the camera flash. But I sat still for this picture, even though I knew what was coming.

I have other friends in PR that also need to find a home.  
<http://www.saveasato.org>

## Frivolidad

Clara Lair

Y así dije al amado "Marcharemos unidos.  
Será tu nombre el eco de todos los sonidos.  
Me trazará el camino la huella de tus pasos.  
Me abrirá el horizonte la curva de tus brazos.

Le gritaré a la vida: ¡rompe, destroza, dañá!  
Yo tengo mi refugio: ¡su pecho es la montaña!  
Le gritaré a la vida: ¡hunde, flota al azar!  
Yo tengo mi oleaje: ¡sus ojos son el mar!

Y lo seguí al afán y a la ilusión del puerto.  
Y lo seguí al vacío y al tedio del desierto.  
Lo seguí sola y siempre, horas malas y buenas,  
en la luz, en las sombras, en flores, en cadenas...

Y lo creí tan fuerte que le fui mansa y suave...  
¡Él, el roble potente y yo, la pobre ave!  
Y lo creí tan bravo que le fui fiel, sencilla...  
¡Él, el mar tumultuoso y yo la quieta orilla!

¡Ay, uní lo infundible, y estreché lo disperso,  
y quise hacer del cieno un lago limpio y terso...!  
Mis ojos hechos llanto, mis labios hechos trizas...  
¡Y su voz implacable pidiendo más sonrisas!

Mi cuerpo en el cilicio sangrando su querella...  
Y su voz implacable diciendo: ¡sé más bella!  
Mi alma en el infierno aullando su condena...  
y su voz implacable diciendo: ¡sé más buena!

¡Carne fácil y blanda a todos los arrimos!  
¡Carne blanda y traidora con uñas en los mimos!  
Para todas los mismos rápidos arrebatos  
Lúbrico cual los perros...falso como los gatos...

Y ahora digo al amante: óyeme, pasajero,  
no me preguntes nunca hasta cuándo te quiero.  
Si una noche de luna o una copa de vino  
nos reúne en la misma revuelta del camino...

No me digas de sueños ni de sombras macabras  
háblame solamente palabras, y palabras...  
Júrame por la arena que acoge todo paso,  
y lo graba o lo borra al azar, al acaso...

Júrame por la espuma que chispea y que brilla,  
y que dura un instante de una orilla o otra orilla...  
¡Ah, gato sin escrúpulos que a otras faldas se enreda  
cuando ya todo es dado, cuando ya nada queda!

No me brindes los mimos de tus uñas, que ahora  
sólo quiere collares de esta gata de Angora...!  
Tú frívolo, yo frívola...Soy tu igual, camarada.  
¡No has de quitarme todo para dejarme nada!

Mercedes Negrón Muñoz, better known by her pseudonym, Clara Lair, was one of the most important Puerto Rican poets of the 20th century. She was part of *Generación del Treinta* (1930's generation). Her lyric was of intimate style and the topics she worked with were love, eroticism, women, and death. Lair was born in 1895 in Barranquitas, to a family of writers, poets, and politicians. She is the daughter of the poet Quintín Negrón and niece of Luis Muñoz Rivera, prominent Puerto Rican poet and politician.



Camuy's Coctel de Guayaba Punch

5 cups white Puerto Rican Rum  
8 cups Guava Juice  
2 cups Sparkling water (club soda, etc)  
½ cup lime juice  
12 wedges Lime  
Mint leaves

Combine over ice into a punch bowl and stir well. Serve in tall slim glasses and add 2 lime wedges in each cup. Decorate with mint leaves.



\* Diego Matos Dupree, born in Bayamón, is a bartender (tavernero) for a popular cruise line. He lives on board most of the year and gets to travel the world.

# PRIMOS

Our PRIMOS section journeys through Latin America celebrating our cousins.



## Chivito (Uruguay)

A steak sandwich or torta

This fabulous torta has many variations. Our version here includes thin steak (or use filet mignon or churrascos), bread (either a hard roll or hamburger style bread), bacon and or ham, fresh tomatoes, lettuce, thinly sliced onions, thinly sliced red bell peppers, thin slices of Mozzarella, sliced pickles and mayo to taste. In Uruguay this would also include sliced hard-boiled eggs or a fried egg.

First things first, you want to cut your bread in half so it will be ready to house your meat and veggies. Second take a frying pan and start to cook the bacon adding other meats meat(s), sliced onions and chopped red peppers.

If the peppers or onions need more time you should be able to remove the meat and continue cooking the rest in the remaining grease. Once everything is cooked add meat back to the pan (if you had removed it). Salt meat and veggies and place mozzarella on top so it can start melting.

Prepare the bread by slicing it and adding mayo to your liking. Stuff it with the meat, cheese and vegetables. Add lettuce, tomatoes, pickles, and add the egg on top. If you fried the egg, break up the yolk and sort of smear it around the rest of the egg. If you are using boiled eggs, just distribute them evenly.

This delicious sandwich is most often served with either fried plantains or French fries.



**Elena Cintrón Colón**

Primos Editor

\* Elena, born and raised in Puerto Rico to Brazilian and Peruvian parents, lives in Buenos Aires most of the year. She works for a large South American firm and travels throughout Latin America.



Iglesia Matriz (1680), the oldest church in Uruguay



### Cocina Criolla – Cooking Hints

By: Anna María Vélez de Blas

Have you heard about El Churry's, a food truck in Puerto Rico? El Churry, in Río Piedras, is one of the most popular food trucks in Puerto Rico. It stations itself in the evenings by the metro campus of the Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico and stays open until 3 or 4 a.m. with lines that stretch almost a full city block. It's even been featured in American TV.



Although El Churry serves burgers and chicken sandwiches, it's most popular item is the Tripleta. A tripleta is a Puerto Rican sandwich, comparable in fame and popularity to a Media Noche or a Reuben. Unlike those two sandwiches though, there are dozens of variations depending on what part of the island you're on. The sandwich's name just refers to the fact that it contains three kinds of meat.

At the El Churry truck, the tripleta is made with chicken breast, steak, and pork. In other places a tripleta could be made with ham, chicken, and steak, or pork, steak, and ham, and so on. El Churry's tripleta was good and tastes somewhat like a Philly chicken and steak sub. The best thing about it though was that the sandwich is made using Puerto Rican bread.

*\*Anna is a Recipe Tester for EL BORICUA and is also a professional Chef, she lives in California with her husband, Joe and their three children.*



### Jaime in the Kitchen

*A Food Blog*

Then I was brazen and foolish enough to cook my own dish for a cover dish party.

One of Puerto Rico's favorite dishes is arroz con pollo. I watched Mami prepare this dish along with my sisters, over and over again, as a child when her sister visited us from Río Piedras, we lived in Mayagüez. I did not like the fact that I had to 'catch' a hen for sacrifice. But, hey, I was not traumatized and confused about all this, I loved arroz con pollo.

When I started cooking for my family, after the divorce, I foolishly volunteered to make arroz con pollo for a cover dish party. It was close to being a disaster in my eyes, but it was awesome for my poker buddies who never had it before.

What I did then was to prepare rice using canned chicken broth, Sazón and sofrito. I boiled skinned chicken breasts and chopped them and mixed them in with the rice (after everything was cooked) and added some chopped cilantro on top. I could tell it was a bit mushy, over cooked and kinda funny looking compared to Mami's rice. Now that might have tasted good to the untrained, non-Puerto Rican palate, but not for me.

After so many years trying and perfecting my method this is what I have come up with. First I buy chicken breasts with skin and bone. I wash and boil them in water seasoned with salt, pepper, chopped onion and mashed garlic. When done I throw out the skin and bones, (the skin and bone gives the broth even better flavor), debone and chop, and save the broth.

I use a large caldero, cook a few slices of bacon, roughly chopped, add sliced onions and sliced bell peppers, then sofrito, cook that for a bit, add sliced olives, capers, red pimientos, the sometimes I throw in a bit of diced ham, and the deboned and chopped up chicken. Then add the rice, cook that for a couple of minutes turning it often, then add the broth that I have brought back to a boil. Make sure the broth covers the rice about 1½ inches above the rice line. Then whatever you do, only stir once – or twice. If you stir it too much it can get amogollao, the same thing for too much water. Bring to a boil and once it dries out continue to cook **covered** over **LOW** heat for another 25 minutes – más o menos.

The rice should be grainy and glossy (these are Mami's words). What to serve with arroz con pollo? In my mind nothing else goes better than tostones and a salad.

Now that I have an empty nest I get together with my macho single friends and each of us brings his own dish. We watch boxing or baseball, guzzle tons of beer and have a meal – somewhere in between we play poker – no females telling us to keep it clean. Sometimes we even exchange recipes – 'how do you make this stuff?' This is the good life!

Hasta la próxima!

*Jaime Garibay Rivera, Ph.D. is a retired college professor (Aerophysics), now living in Miami. He has three children and his family roots are in Mayagüez.*

## Nuestra Cocina Criolla



**Escabeche De Guineos y Mollejas**

5 lbs green bananas  
 2 lbs chicken gizzards  
 2 large Spanish onions  
 1 head of garlic  
 ½ cup green olives with red peppers  
 ½ cup olive oil and vinegar salad dressing  
 1 envelope Sazón  
 Salt and pepper to taste

Boil the bananas in salt water until cooked, about 20 minutes.

Boil the chicken gizzards in salt water, add 1 chicken bouillon, onion powder, and garlic powder (1 spoon of each), until chicken is very tender, about 2 hours.

Drain the chicken gizzards and cut into small pieces. Cut onions into thin slices.

Peel garlic and puree in food chopper or blender add oil and vinegar salad dressing, Sazón, and salt and pepper to taste.

Cut bananas into 1/2 inch circles. Mix all ingredients in a baking dish and mix well.

Bake for 20-30 minutes at 325F. Remove and serve warm, this dish can be served with rice, meat, or alone.



**Bacalao Frito con cebollas**

Process bacalao by boiling and desalting as usual.

Place the bacalao in a metal strainer to let drain and dry off. I let this sit for about 30 minutes in the sink. The bacalao needs to be fairly dry since it will be fried.

In the meantime slice a large onion and set aside.

Heat ½ cup olive oil in a frying pan, add a few sprinkles of Sazón to give color it red. Add the bacalao and let this fry without turning for a few minutes until the fish is crispy. Turn over the fish carefully. Throw the sliced onions in there next. After the fish is crispy on the other side, turn it over once more until the onions are fairly done. Sprinkle this with black pepper and garlic powder.



**Old Fashioned Guarapo de Piña**

- 1 pineapple
- 2 quarts drinking water
- 1 cup sugar or equivalent sweetener

1. Wash the pineapple in running water scrubbing the peel clean.
2. Peel the pineapple (reserve the pineapple for other uses), rinse the peel again.
3. Put the pineapple in a pitcher big enough to fit the water and pineapple peels.
4. Cover and leave outside until you notice some froth on the surface.
5. Refrigerate for 3 to 4 days, or until you notice bubbles stuck to the sides of the pitcher.
6. Strain and pour the liquid into another clean pitcher. Add sugar to taste, ice and frozen pineapple cubes (optional).

## Nuestra Cocina Criolla



### Tortilla Española

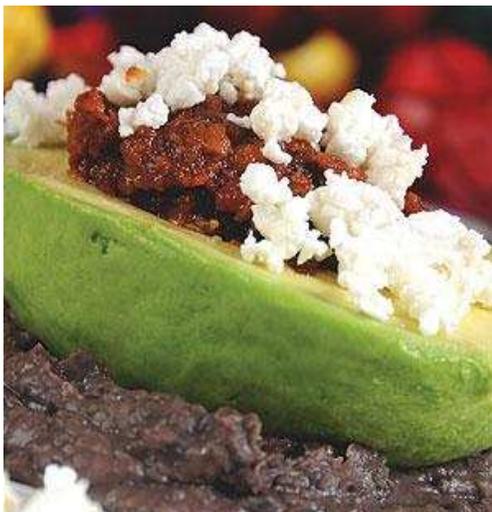
... con Jamón Serrano y Cebollas  
Appetizer

2 cans diced cooked potatoes, well drained  
1 medium onion, thinly sliced  
1 cup chopped Serrano Ham  
½ medium bell pepper, thinly sliced  
½ cup sliced olives with red peppers  
8 eggs  
1 dash Cayenne pepper (optional)  
Salt and Pepper to taste  
½ cup olive oil

Fry the onion in a large pan, add the potatoes, stir and let this cook turning over carefully to toast both sides of the potatoes a bit. Add chopped ham and peppers and cook another few minutes. Stir in olives.

Whisk eggs, salt and pepper and Cayenne pepper together. Carefully pour over potatoes. Let this cook on low until eggs are done on the bottom. Use a large spatula to carefully turn over. Cook on the other side until done.

Slice into squares and serve warm.



### Caribbean Crab Salad ...

Perfect for the hot summer months

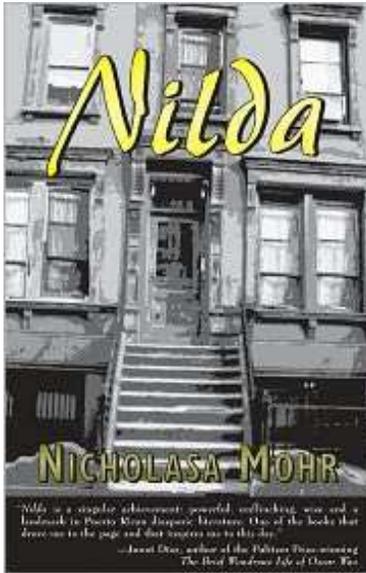
3 tablespoons olive oil  
1/2 cup finely chopped onion  
1/2 cup finely diced celery  
1/2 cup diced green bell pepper  
1/2 cup diced red bell pepper  
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic  
1 pound fresh lump crabmeat, drained and separated  
2/3 cup mayonnaise  
1/2 teaspoon Adobo with Cumin  
1/4 teaspoon salt  
1 dash Cayenne pepper or pique

Mix all ingredients together. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serve on a bed of lettuce.

For a party, set this salad on a small bowl, on a larger platter surrounded by fancy crackers.

Stuffed aguacates for lunch? Choose the smooth and shiny, large Caribbean avocados. These are creamy and buttery. Stuff them with leftover diced meats, chicken or seafood salads, or just bacon and cheese. Serve them on a bed of lettuce. Very Puerto Rican.

## Book Reviews



**Nilda**  
by: Nicholasa Mohr

**Reading level:** Young Adult

**Publisher:** Arte Publico Press;  
University of Houston, 2011

**Language:** English  
**ISBN-10:** 0934770611  
**ISBN-13:** 978-0934770613

**Paperback:** 292 pages

Originally published in 1973 'Nilda' is the story of a young Puerto Rican girl growing up in a barrio of New York during the 1940's.

When this title was first released the New York Times named it as an 'Outstanding Book of the Year' and the American Library Association named it one of the 'Best Books of the Year.

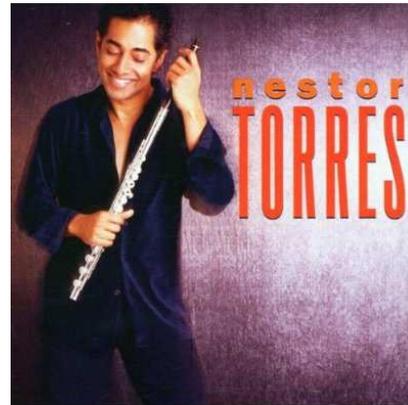
'Nilda' is a simple, to the point, and very captivating story as seen thru the eyes of a young girl. Nilda talks about her everyday life, her family, their struggles with poverty and finances, discrimination, love, difficult relatives, death, and more. It is very well written, rich in details, easy to read and although the story is written in a low-key style, it allures the reader to continue reading and learn what happens next.

Children raised in poverty will often see themselves in this book and would be able to relate to the character. Mainstream children will learn about life and struggles and understand the difficulties some children their own age live with. Most children will be able to relate to Nilda at one point or another, we all have difficult people to deal with, we all have similar situations now and then.

**Nicholasa Mohr** (born November 1, 1938) is one of the best known Nuyoric writers. Her works tell of growing up in the Puerto Rican communities of the Bronx and El Barrio and of the difficulties Puerto Rican women face in the United States. Mohr is an award winning novelist she was raised in the Bronx. From 1988 through 1991, she taught at Queens College, City University of New York. From 1994 through 1995, she was Writer-in-Residence at Richmond College, the American University in London.

Arte Público Press is the nation's largest and most established publishers of contemporary and recovered literary by US Hispanic authors.

## Nuestra Música



Néstor Torres  
"Treasures of the Heart" (1999)

There are many Puerto Rican musicians in the Latin Jazz world, who expose with them the name of Puerto Rico around the world. Such is the case of flute player Néstor Torres, from Mayagüez, P.R., who for a couple of decades has delighted Jazz fans with his magical flute, interpreting a variety of songs from slow tempo melodies to upbeat Caribbean rhythms to more traditional Jazz styles. In addition to be a talented flute soloist, Néstor is also a skilled composer who has authored most of his songs. He has participated in plenty of Jazz music festivals, from his home-city Miami, FL, to many other countries.

Following the popular saying "Quien lo hereda, no lo hurta", the artistic talent was already running in Nestor's family for a couple of generations. His aunt-grandmother is the popular bolero singer and ex-senator, "El alma de Puerto Rico hecha canción", Mrs. Ruth Fernández.

Basically any of Nestor's productions can be picked without hesitation or double thoughts, like Morning Ride (1989), Dance of the Phoenix (1991), Burning Whispers (1994), Talk to me (1996), Treasures of the Heart (1999), and others, being "Treasures of the Heart" one of the best overall recordings. A good variety of rhythms and styles are always present, such as the fusion of Jazz with Latin and Pop, as well as Straight-forward Jazz, all with a fair amount of electronic music sound, by the using of sequencers as part of the recording process.

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