
SANDRA MARIA ESTEVES

It Is Raining Today

Each droplet contains a message
Soaks my clothing
The earth is crying
Or is it the sky washing down the clouds?
In the puddles lie reflections
Difficult to see thru oil film staining
Rainbow luminescence
Concentric circles expanding

La lluvia contains our history
In the space of each tear Cacique valleys and hills
Taíno, Arawak, Carib, Ife, Congo, Angola, Mesa
Mandinko, Dahome, Amer, African priests tribes
Of the past
Murdered ancestors
Today, voices in the mist

Where is our history?

What are the names washed down the sewer
In the septic flood?

I pray to the rain
Give me back my rituals
Give back truth
Return the remnants of my identity

Bathe me in self-discovered knowledge
Identify my ancestors who have existed suppressed
Invoke their spirits with power
Recreate the circle of the Ayreto
Reunite the family in a universal joining
A shower and penetrating waterfall
Rekindle the folklore
Candles of wisdom with never ending flames

Speak to me of rain.

JESUS COLON

How to Know the Puerto Ricans

One of the questions that we are most frequently asked is: "How can I get to the Puerto Ricans?" This is not a strange question to ask in a city like greater New York with more than 600,000 Puerto Ricans living, working, and struggling along with the rest of our city's inhabitants. This is a question that is crying for a correct answer, not only in our city, but in many other great cities throughout the nation where the Puerto Ricans have gone to live.

We have to admit from the start that we have no complete answer to open the door to the Puerto Ricans' houses, minds, and hearts. We have to confess that every day we are adding to that answer by our personal experience, by our going around with our American friends or by listening to what others have done—or have failed to do—in winning entrance to a Puerto Rican home and from there, to their confidence, friendship, and love. This, of course, is something that cannot be gotten in one day or in a number of weeks. Sometimes it takes months. Sometimes it takes years.

So, please excuse us if, in presenting what we have learned ourselves or added to our knowledge from the experience of others, we