ART and LA RAZA

August 13, 1974

No. 11
ANNOUNCEMENTS

This newsletter sincerely solicits any material for publication for our readers. If you have any announcements, articles, or news for publication, please bring them to the Chicano Advocate's office. In addition, any "Letters to the MECHA Newsletter" will be published, too.

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There will be a MECHA meeting Monday, August 12, 1974 at 7 pm in the Conference Room of the Advocate's Office. This will be a very important meeting to choose a screening committee for the Advocate's position.

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To all students, wives, and husbands: There is a minority placement center which has been almost invisible and underutilized by Chicanos. For all those interested in non-academic placement, please contact Clyde V. Briggs, 4044 Administration Bldg., 764-0239 after Aug. 15, 1974. He has expressed an interest in helping as many "qualified" Chicanos as possible.

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Farmworkers ask you to put direct pressure on the growers by boycotting California-Arizona head lettuce and grapes unless you are sure that they bear the UFW Aztec eagle label. Right now, there are few union grapes on the market. The boycott also includes all Gallo wines, such as Boone's Farm, Tyrolia, Spanada, Ripple, Thunderbird, Andre, Carlo Rossi, Paisano, Wolfe & Sons, Madria Sangria, and all wines that say "Modesto, California" on the label.

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Softball Game: Sundays at 4 p.m. at the Fuller Road ball parks. Everybody is welcome, bring gloves or bats or softballs or just bring yourself and family and friends.

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Additional radio programs: Sundays, 8:30, KMBZ, FM 103; Latino Program
Thursdays, 6:10-7:00 p.m., UCBN; Chicano Program

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Although it is summer with its subsequent drop in enrollment, there are many worthwhile projects coming out of the Advocate's office. Minds and bodies are needed. Any assistance you can provide will be greatly appreciated. The Advocate's office is always open.

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Congratulations to Trabajadores de la Raza for its successful hosting this weekend of the National Chicano Projects Council Conference.

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OPEN LETTER

This is to formally announce my resignation as Chicano Advocate effective August 31, 1974.

I have been admitted to the U-M Law School for some time, but withheld this action because of negotiations which were to stabilize the position. When I assumed the position, funding was to be for one year only at full time. June 30, 1974 marked the end of the fiscal year and the beginning of the reorganization plan which put the position under the new Department of Community Services.

Thomas Moorehead, Director of Community Services, became my supervisor. His actions will decide many of the policies in the future. One of the primary powers he has is the inclusion or exclusion of the budget as a line item on the overall budget of Community Services.

Numerous discussions were held with him concerning the position. Culmination of the negotiations came on August 12, 1974. I sought to receive a written agreement to the verbal ones we had agreed upon. Along with me were Arturo Rangel and Jesse Gonzales. I felt their presence was needed so that there would be no backtracking.

First, the position of Chicano Advocate will be incorporated as a line item in the Community Services budget. Salary will be $10,100.

Second, Moorehead will negotiate an upgrading of the 07 classification to a possible 08.

These two moves will more than likely insure that the position will not be phased out in the immediate future.

Third, the program account will be reduced from $5,000 to $4,375. All the advocates faced a similar budget reduction. I believe this is a small price to pay for the stabilization of the position. Still, when you consider the thousands of dollars which come from other sources, we will still be able to carry on with numerous projects.

Fourth, Moorehead that the screening committee should have autonomy. But he advised that NEW Affirmative Action guidelines must be observed.

Prompt action by everyone will insure an easier situation than the one which I was faced with last year.
J.T. Canales, Class of 1899, U-M Law School

When we consider the Chicano presence at the University of Michigan we usually think of the years 1968–1974. Although the Opportunity Program dates to 1964, no Chicanos were recruited until 1968 and after. What of la raza who studied in Ann Arbor previous to this time?

In 1899, Jose Tomas Canales of Brownsville, Texas, graduated from the U-M Law School. Judge Canales is famous for his 1919 investigation of the Texas Rangers. Representative Canales' unprecedented act resulted in the partial purging of the more sinister elements in the organization.

Canales was the founder of the League of Latin American Citizens, which later evolved into the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

Among his other achievements include those of state representative, 1904–1910, 1916–1920; superintendent of Brownsville schools, 1912–1914; and author of the Irrigation and Actionable Fraud Statute, "Canales Act", which helped eradicate fraudulent land corporations in the Valley. While a state representative he supported more-than-adequate funding bills for public and higher education.

He was born in Nueces County on March 7, 1877. Much of his life was spent in civic affairs. An elementary school in Brownsville bears his name. Canales is retired today.

Continued research will bring to light more relevant information about Chicanos at the U-M.
Borinquen: A Culture under Siege

In 1934 the Puerto Rican essayist Antonio S. Pedreira demanded of himself and his countrymen: "What are we and where are we going?" Forty years later this question remains sadly unanswered. We know we are something—the Daily News and Broadway have confirmed our existence. We have something to do with muggings and welfare and populations growing. A U.S. senator once described us as "...a heterogeneous mass of mongrels (Senator Bate (Tennessee) April 2, 1900. Congressional Record, p. 3612), thereby giving sufficient cause for members of our growing middle class to hide beneath the ambiguity of "spanishism". Convinced we are what they tell us, we bow before the myth of el americano. We trample each other in a frantic attempt to shed our language, our names, and the damning tinta de arroz y habichuelas.

The emerging Puerto Rican middle class is winning the battle for economic advancement and is buying for himself the pitiable position of being a nowhere man. A jibaro in fancy clothes and anglicized name, he scurries like a rat in the night to el barrio for the food which is the only link with his past. He is convinced of his own non-worth and for him the future holds only a denial of his past. He trades in his dignity for a smile—a pat on the head from the proprietor of the local store whose only claim to culture is a mass-produced cardboard bearing the words "se habla espanol" and his ability to consistently murder our language.

The plastic throne upon which el americano sits must be brought down. We must open our books, our schools, our museums, and discover what we have been, in order that we may determine what we shall become. If Puerto Rico is to be spared from becoming a bland reflection of assimilation and if we are to arise from the puppet-like existence which results from economic dependence, we must wrest our culture from those who smother it. With knowledge of and confidence in ourselves, we can flatly reject the relegation of our art to the level of the folkloric and quaint.
A study of our past must be joined to the support of our present artists and musicians, for they are intrinsic to the establishment of a lasting new order. The arts are not to be considered an extraneous element which can be included or deleted from budgets and programs at will. It is through our art that we shall come to know what we truly are as a people and where our future lies.

The achievement of our self-determination will not be accomplished however, through the scattered efforts of individuals. Those of us who are at the University are bound by responsibility to work together for the actualization of our culture. Removed as we are from our people, it is easy for us to follow our own paths—paths which often lead us into total isolation from the latino community. A reconciliation of our personal and group goals must be arrived at individually and in so doing we must remember that complete immersion in ourselves will only result in anonymity for us all. Together we can end the pathetic position which led Pablo Neruda to lament, "Oh, poor Puerto Rico, Puerto Pobre..." There shall be no more Puerto Pobre:

The great are great only because we are on our knees. Let us arise. (Betances)

Anna Cardona

Patronage: Chicano Art and its Consumption

One of the measures of freedom in a society is the extent of freedom in which an individual has to express himself. If the mechanisms for self-expression are not evident, then we must assume a less-than-ideal state of freedom. Art is expression. As in all endeavors there is a Chicano presence but its legitimacy is doubted by gavacho institutions.

Institutionally, the Chicano artist is under-represented. There are few,
if any, viable institutions to protect his/her right to pursue the artistic disciplines. Art museums and universities have yet to create documenta which deal specifically and exclusively with the development and evolution of the arts of the Chicano people. Nor is there any indication, to my knowledge, that they have any intention of correcting this situation.

Art has been essentially the province of the wealthy. It still is. Patronage plays an important part in the development, if not the survival of Chicano art.

If Chicanos must rely on gavacho patrons, it will severely undermine the ability of the Chicano artist to remain free and to speak out against the injustices to which all Chicanos are subjected.

In addition, patronage reinforces preservation of our art. Ownership and purchase of Chicano art by Chicanos is an encouragement for the production of more works of art. Values will increase. If the role, influence, or impact is great enough, then, the Chicano makes his culture visible in the evolution of civilization.

On the other hand, I am not implying that we only need to dole out a few dollars and Chicano art is saved.

But unless art has a real function in our society, the possibilities of viable institutions that deal with the study and preservation of our culture will suffer. If we are not to become a society devoid of culture, we must not only do everything in our power to ensure continuing art but we must also do more for the artist.

If Chicano art is subsidized by non-Chicanos, it will be a sad testament to our ability to sustain our own culture. Already seen is their propensity to undermine Chicano art, thus proclaiming it non-existent, through their racist policies.

Felipe Reyes
Is there any relationship between ethnicity and art?

In being a minority you have been treated differently. You look at things differently. You feel excluded. Being Boricua does have a bearing on my art. That's what made me a photographer, I have roots in my family, not in my country. I do live an image.

How would you describe yourself, a Boricua artist or an artist who is Boricua?

I'm first an artist. My art is connected to me more than my culture. My culture has been diluted by America. My art is part of me. I was cultivated and conditioned here. I can only grab ahold of my art.

I would like to be something. Chicano and Boricua artists do have some roots in Mexico and Puerto Rico. But they have a right to create new works. We are different peoples because of our living in the United States.

What is your concept of art?

Art is basically the inside feeling of a person. In art you can express yourself graphically. You see. My concept of seeing is, as a photographer, the ability to photograph and write at the same time. My camera does my writing. I can show people socially and culturally.

But here I'm an arty photographer. I deal in an ephemeral form and shape. Art is beauty. It's an impact—a shock and a reality. Generally, it's something new.

How do you think photography expresses the movimento of Boricuas and Chicanos?

The struggle of every artist, Chicano and Boricua, is to define one's self. It's a constant discovery. It's creativity.

We have to try to make ourselves known. Minorities are just beginning to make an impact. Art is the grassroots of what and who the people are.

The artist has a goal to reach just as do politicians, educators, and students.

How does politics, Boricua and Chicano, affect your photography and art?

I think for myself. At times it doesn't affect me as it should. For all intents and purposes, I've cut myself off from politics.

I try to promote a positivism of simple beauty. Occasionally, I've been called a photographer of bizarre things. But I do photograph what I see. I don't try to make political statements in my work.

We're all prejudiced about Boricua and Chicano art. Knowing this, it's difficult not to be judgmental.

I've worked with a lot of blacks in Detroit. I like to record the events of minorities. It's been overdone by whites. As a minority, I might go in deeper. I can deal with the situation.

What do you think is your creativity?

My motivation. I want to be good, to be great, possibly. That feeds my creativity. It might seem selfish. Knowing the oppression that we have suffered, I feel as though some people have to pop up.

We have to push; we're minorities.

I want to change images: to show, to expose the life-styles of minorities.
What do you see in the future?

I am optimistic. I've never downgraded myself as to abilities. I want more penetration of all media by Chicanos and Boricuas. Because of the extra survival factor, we will endure. You know what both sides think and want. We know what we want. Artistically, there's going to be great Latino and black artists. I feel it. I want to be part of it. I want to change stereotypes. I'd like to see more browns, yellows—a real rainbow.

Jesse Gonzales

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Announcement of Chicano Courses

During the Fall Term-1974 two Chicano courses will be offered at the School of Social Work:

1) Div. 795, S. W. 716, Sec. 001. Historical and Cultural Perspectives on the Chicano Experience.

2) Div. 786, S. W. 724, Sec. 001. Development of Intervention Strategies Applicable to the Chicano Population.

The first course (S.W. 716) is a pro-seminar graduate course and will be taught by Arturo Rangel. This course is based on the premise that the formulation of policies and programs for the Chicano community depends upon both the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the life-style, culture, and history of the Chicanos, and the development of a critical consciousness with respect to the roots of the problems which presently confront the Chicano community. The utility of various approaches to the Chicano community will be analyzed from a critical perspective. Social structures and processes (socialization, function of the family, church, etc.) will be studied. The implications of leadership patterns and political behavior of Chicanos will be analyzed for policies and programs. Finally, specific policy issues (administration of justice, mental health, land-grant conflict, rural policy, etc.) will be examined for possible effects, constraining conditions, and facilitating possibilities for achieving policy and program objectives.

The second course (S.W. 786) will be taught by Eliseo Navarro. The general objective of this course is to develop relevant designs for social work practice with the Chicano population. A basic knowledge of the history and culture of the Chicano population will be assumed in order that the student can focus on the utilization of knowledge for planning and implementing of interventional strategies at both the macro- and micro-levels. Specific course objectives include: 1) to compare and analyze cultural values as these relate to social work practice; 2) to relate unique Chicano institutions and the concepts inherent in the Chicano culture (i.e. curanderismo, compadrazco); 3) to develop cognitive familiarity with the nature and consequences of the minority experience on growth and development; 4) to examine the relevance for social work practice to the interaction of Chicanos with various institutions; and 5) to sensitize all future social work professionals to the need for differential approaches when working with Chicanos.

As these two courses will not be listed in the regular course announcement, potential students should note the appropriate course, division, and section number.
Let's not talk about "immortal art works" until one of them has lived one hundredth as long as the 70 million years this reptile survived before becoming extinct.