La(identidad): A Celebration of 10 Afro-Latinx Artists

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

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Abstract

My Creative Project titled *Afro-La(identidad): A Celebration of 10 Afro-Latinx Artists* is a picture-book style biographical report in both English and Spanish on Celia Cruz (assumed she/her), Miguel (he/him), Pop Smoke (he/him), Rico Nasty (she/her), Clotilde Jiménez (he/him), Nicolás Guillén (assumed he/him), Felipe Luciano (he/him), Ariana Brown (she/they), Elizabeth Acevedo (she/her) and Reinaldo Marcus-Green (he/him). This project includes information about these various kinds of artists as well as explanations on how their Afro-Latinx identity factors into their work, how they have impacted their communities and how their art has impacted the world. These decorated pages will include images of the artists, a short biography with the artists’ impact, and a visual representation of their art and personhood. This project seeks to bring representation to Afro-Latinx artists, showcase unique perspectives and art, as well as fight back against oppressive constructions of race, gender and sexuality.
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Process Analysis Statement

My Creative Project titled *Afro-La(identidad): A Celebration of 10 Afro-Latinx Artists* is a picture-book style biographical report in both English and Spanish on Celia Cruz (assumed she/her), Miguel (he/him), Pop Smoke (he/him), Rico Nasty (she/her), Clotilde Jiménez (he/him), Nicolás Guillén (assumed he/him), Felipe Luciano (he/him), Ariana Brown (she/they), Elizabeth Acevedo (she/her) and Reinaldo Marcus-Green (he/him). This project includes information about these various kinds of artists as well as explanations on how their Afro-Latinx identity factors into their work, how they have impacted their communities and how their art has impacted the world. These decorated pages will include images of the artists, a short biography with the artists’ impact, and a visual representation of their art and personhood. This project seeks to bring representation to Afro-Latinx artists, showcase unique perspectives and art, as well as fight back against oppressive constructions of race, gender and sexuality.

In both the US and in the entirety of Latin America, Afro-Latinx identities have always existed, since as far back as the 1520s (Forbes 27). However, because of White supremacy and colonialism, oppressive racial classifications emerged. Latin America was primarily colonized by the Spanish conquistadors whereas the US was colonized mainly by the British. In Latin America, there was a much more specific and detailed racial caste system that included more levels and separation than in the US which both categorized people based on ethnic ancestry. The specific category labels that were used will not be included in this essay as they are now considered slurs. However, the categories were defined as (in hierarchical order): European, European and Indigenous, European and African, Indigenous, then African. The extent of one’s access to jobs, education, food and other crucial resources was dependent on one’s proximity to
European ancestry (Cruz-Jan ez 285). While African and Indigenous ancestry is intrinsically tied to Latinidad, the colonial legacy of preference for Whiteness frequently renders this reality invisible and maintains the discourses of anti-Blackness that continue to harm Afro-Latinx people. Meanwhile in the US, a Black-White binary emerged (Perea 129). In the US, ones’ proximity to Whiteness also affected access to resources, however the US used oppressive structures like the “one-drop rule”, which meant that even if someone didn’t phenotypically present as Black, if they had even minimal amounts of African ancestry, they were considered Black legally, even if they had non-African ancestry as well (Miller 40). While there are, of course, other races and ethnicities in the US, ideologies and laws like this were put into place to alienate and oppress Black individuals specifically to the benefit White individuals, thus creating the racial binary (Miller 129).

These historical racial dynamics in both Latin America and in the US still continue to be seen today. Systemic racism still affects the lives of Black and Indigenous people of color across the globe, including Latin America and the US. Due to the racial caste system in Latin America, there is a common belief/practice called “mejorar la raza” or “better the race” which is the practice of intentionally marrying people of lighter skin tones or White Latinx individuals to make their descendants White (Gomez 96). Hyper focus on African ancestry caused Black people in the US, even of mixed ancestry, to be socially seen as Black. It wasn’t until 2000 that one could identify with more than one race in the US Census (Miller 40). Both are examples of erasure and systemic racism that disproportionately affect Afro-Latinx individuals as they belong to more than one racial/ethnic group. This kind of erasure is a fixture of White supremacy and is
intentional as White supremacy doesn’t allow reconciliation of multiple identities at once, which also comes with systemic barriers like access to resources (Cruz-Janez 283).

Intersectionality (the understanding and analysis of multiple identities at once) is an essential framework that must be applied when understanding the experiences of Afro-Latinx people in both the US and Latin America. Being forced to downplay parts of one’s identity, like someone’s Indigeneity or Latinidad, in order to highlight another part, like someone’s Blackness, serves as a tool of erasure and forces Afro-Latinx people into boxes to continue their oppression. An intersectional framework is also needed when analyzing social constructions of gender and sexuality to determine how race influences them. Similar to how Afro-Latinx people are forced to choose between their Latinidad or their Blackness, Afro-Latina women and femmes are denied their femininity or forced to choose between it and their race because of both racism and sexism at the same time, a practice which is called misogynoir. Afro-Latina women and femmes are also faced with the “lessons of ‘undesirability’” that are learned in the home and in society because of rampant anti-Blackness (Jiménez Román 268), which means that they experience hatred, are oftentimes not seen as women, or are not wanted in most spaces in society because of their Afro-Latinx identity. This project hopes to fall in line with the combination of 1970’s feminist rhetoric of the importance of race analysis in all structures like gender, pioneered by Black women, while also incorporating how American rejection of cultural differences contributes to one’s oppression, pioneered by Latina women. These dynamics come together to create the very nuanced experience of Afro-Latinas and femmes (Jiménez Román 267), who in the US are fighting a new kind of misogynoir that is combined with an added layer of xenophobia. Afro-Latinas are often described as a minority within a minority, which becomes especially
complicated as Afro-Latinas move throughout different parts of the US and globally. It is for this reason that I have included women/femmes in this project because their identities and artwork deserve representation which they are often denied.

Furthermore, Queer identities fusing with dynamics of race, especially across different countries’ cultural lines, negotiate their own set of intersecting oppressions and it is important to validate these identities and to give them space to exist. Queer identities within Blackness, and vice versa, affect Afro-Latinx queer individuals because of the racism they experience in queer spaces and the homophobia they can experience in Black spaces. This is due to the inability to belong to multiple identities at the same time under White supremacy, meaning there are very few spaces for queer Afro-Latinx individuals (Moore 305).

The 10 artists I chose are in no way a complete representation of all Afro-Latinx artists, nor a complete list of all Afro-Latinx styles of art. Rather, they comprise an initial representation of the range of art that attempts to push back against the forced categorization that occurs in both the US and in Latin America. These artists are iconic and while many frequently discuss their Afro-Latinidad, for many of them their intersecting identities are forced to the side and they are expected to identify exclusively as Black or Latinx. I wanted to incorporate artists that were widely known, along with some who are lesser known, in order to potentially introduce my audience to new art that they might enjoy, as well as to highlight that there are many artists whom we celebrate, particularly here in the US, that we only think of as Black, but are also Latinx. By choosing artists across different times, this project proves Blackness and Latinidad have been intertwined for centuries and rejects the notions that Afro-Latinidad is new, only of the past or non-existent. I also want the consumer of this book to begin to understand what Afro-
Latinidad means, and critically think on how race as a social construct (as it changes across different cultures) and its classifications function as an oppressive structure. Part of the goal of this book is for the audience to digest how illogical and damaging race classifications can be because of the cultural and personal erasure through forced categorization and to help the audience see these artists for their entirety of who they are: Afro-Latinx. This book seeks to reclaim Blackness as valid within Latinidad and reclaim Latinidad within Blackness within the US and Latin America.

Through a combination of digital and traditional art, this picture book uses images of the artists, in decorated pages in the style of the artist, while including elements and symbols that represent the artist and their work. This kind of artistic recreation is what are called “process pages”. The purpose of process pages is to showcase one’s knowledge of the artist and their style through unique recreations of their work alongside one’s research on the artist and their work. These pages help bridge the gap between critical artistic analysis and the piece(s) in question. By using more than just photographs of the pieces alongside text, the reader is able experience the art and digest its meaning in conjunction with the writer’s perspective. After brainstorming ideas for each artist and their two-page spread, I created the pages traditionally on paper in a sketchbook. After the renditions were finished, I scanned them in, digitally recreated them in order to create cleaner lines, and superimposed images of the authors as well as their biographies.

It is important to note that a general decision made in this project was to use the artist/stage names of the artists I am discussing if they differ from their given name. This was done in order to ensure recognizability for the audience, but more importantly to emphasize that
the focus is these people as artists and creators. While these people use their given legal names, the focus of this project is their art, how their identities affect their art, and how their work has affected the world.

The first artist in this project is Celia Cruz. She is one of the most iconic Latina musicians in history and she is recognized across the globe. For decades her music has shaped genres and continues to be a cultural influence. She is also extremely important because she never once compromised her Blackness to fit into Latina spaces. Celia Cruz highlighted her Blackness in her music and celebrated Afro-Cuban identities. She represents an era of Cuban music that both predates the Cuban revolution and continues in the diaspora that follows. Her stage presence was unmatched, even in her later years while battling health problems. She was a bold, bright and proud Afro-Cuban who forever changed the music industry and paved the way for so many artists, which is why she is not only included in this project but is the first artist presented. The background of her pages are circle-like motions to represent the fluidity of music and the circular motions of salsa dance as she is known as the “Queen of salsa”. Blue and green are used because she typically goes for monochromatic or two tone bright looks for her stage performances, and blue and green was a common combination she wore. The bubble lettering in her name matches the circular motions of the background and also creates another layer of fluidity and dynamicity that matched both the style of dance associated with the genres of music she creates and the music itself.

Celia Cruz’s inclusion in this project is extremely important because not only was she breaking boundaries as a Black-Cuban artist, but more specifically as an Afro-Latina.
Afro-Latinas face multiple layers of discrimination particularly in the United States. Since race is a socially constructed aspect of our society, it operates differently in different countries. Celia Cruz fought through all of the discrimination she faced not only from White Americans, but from Black Americans and White Cubans. She wasn’t taken seriously because she was a woman in the male dominated music industry, nor was she taken seriously because the music she was making wasn’t seen as truly “Latina” because of its Black roots. On top of all of this, many Black Americans didn’t see her as truly Black because she was Cuban, which was a common trend in the US (Grillo 109).

Miguel is an artist that represents the complexities of Mexican American relationships and how Blackness, and even anti-Blackness, weaves itself into Latinidad. Miguel has stated in interviews that his name is Miguel for a reason, and it is because he wants to honor his Mexican heritage. However, many times he has been told to pick one racial/ethnic identity, Miguel keeping his stage name a Spanish name is an act of rebellion against this kind of erasure, because he is both Black and Latino. As a part of his efforts to try to connect with his Blackness and Latinidad at the same time, he travelled to Mexico to meet his father’s side of the family. This reconciliation is due in no small part to childhood feelings of being “too Black for the Mexican kids and too Mexican for the Black kids” (Herrera). This trip was important for his reflection on what historically it meant for him to exist as a Black Mexican American but also what that means socially and emotionally for himself and his family. It is important to him to see his efforts to incorporate his Latinidad into his art as a way to connect fully with his community and with himself. It means more to him to connect to every part of his community at the same time as opposed to just his Black audience or just his Mexican audience.
Miguel is another artist that has broken barriers in terms of pioneering genres and creating new meaning. He is a very successful singer who has paved the way for what R&B is today with brighter musical elements of electric and pop music. He has been open about his own discovery of what it means to be Afro-Latino specifically growing up in the United States, where people aren’t often receptive of more than one identity at the same time. Part of this journey was his musical work on the movie *Coco* in 2017, which is why I have included what’s called “papel picado” as a border on his pages. This aesthetic choice not only pays respect to Miguel’s Mexican heritage, but also connects to the cultural significance of his music for the film. “Papel picado” is directly translated to chopped or cut up paper, and is a common form of decoration for the Day of the Dead celebration in Mexico. The purple and pink watercolor background was chosen as a way to incorporate common lighting colors used in his performances and colors that are often associated with R&B. I used watercolor to emulate on my process pages how the lighting might appear on the musical stage. The name title on Miguel’s pages is the font used on many of his albums. Miguel not only stands out in R&B, but in the music industry as a whole, as he is part of the reason for the genre being at the forefront of mainstream music.

Rico Nasty was included in this project because she represents an entire alternative subculture within the Black community. She consistently shows her creativity and edginess through her music and through her fashion and makeup. She is one of the most famous alt-Black rappers today and is also proud of her Latina identity, having written songs in Spanish and partnered with several Spanish-speaking artists. She redefines for the mainstream media what it means to be Black and has openly created a space for alt-Black female artists and people specifically. Black women are already shunned from the music industry due to misogynoir, but
particularly from predominantly White alternative spaces. This can be seen in her most recent tour with Playboi Carti. When she opened for Carti, she was often booed off the stage or had things thrown at her because his fans simply did not respect her as a Black woman coming into the alt-rap scene. In a continuation of misogynoir dynamics within the alt-rap scene, Playboi Carti did nothing to defend her. These spaces are White-male dominated, so women already have a hard time fitting in/being accepted without being looked down upon or objectified. Rico Nasty has made history in reclaiming alternative styles for Black people, as Black people are the original creators of rock music (Inman).

For Rico’s pages I chose a very sharp font, with bright electric green to mirror the edginess that she has in her music and aesthetic. The pink electricity is to contrast the green on the color wheel to make it all pop, and also to make an implicit reference to one of her albums, **Nightmare Vacation**, where lighting lines the right side. Her genre of “sugar trap” plays with Black femininity and takes these male-dominated genres to make them her own without compromising what it means to be femme. The eyes at the bottom of the page are to bring black onto the page because her most recent album was a black and white cover. This also highlight that her punk aesthetic, seen specifically her makeup, which is a huge part of her stage presence.

The next artist presented in the project is Pop Smoke. I chose Pop Smoke because he is a cultural icon for people in Gen Z. He popularized Brooklyn drill, which is influenced by UK drill and early 2000’s gangster rap. His career only really took off in 2019 and he was tragically murdered in 2020, however in the short time that he was on this earth and was in the music industry, he has forever changed rap and hip hop, particularly in Brooklyn. Pop Smoke was a huge success. He created a new kind of rap, created new vernacular, popularized what now can
be known as ‘pop smoke braids’ and is still honored today. His death was violent and reignited conversations about gun violence and gun control in the US, which also continued conversations about violence against Black people in the US. An element that was missing from many of these conversations online was the intersectionality of him being Afro-Latino. Not only was he a Black man being gunned down, but an Afro-Latino man who experienced extensive level of oppression linguistically and culturally. Pop Smoke celebrated his Latinidad and allowed it to be a part of his life publicly, however many media outlets did not celebrate it with him. This kind of cultural mixing, particularly in places like New York where many different groups of Latinos came to the US during various migration periods, is common and should be celebrated. I picked Pop Smoke not only because he is Afro-Latino, but also because, given that he is such an icon for people in Gen Z, he represents an opportunity to introduce Afro-Latinidad in a way that might already be familiar to the reader. I also wanted to honor his memory and include one of the best rappers of our generation in this project that is meant to show a range of Afro-Latinx identities and art.

Pop Smoke wore a lot of black and consistently wore big gold and silver chains. His most common metal was gold, hence the gold accents on the page. The font used in his name on the pages is the font on Pop Smoke’s chain that had his stage name on it. I chose to incorporate this as opposed to a more rigid/sharp font to fit the nature of his music better, but this felt like a way to honor and represent him in a way in which he himself already chose to do so while he was alive. The New York skyline at the bottom of the page is to pay homage to where he’s from. The chain on the right page is meant to be a Cuban link, which was the kind chain he most often wore.
Clotilde Jiménez is a visual artist based in Mexico City who uses collage as a form of autobiographical story telling. He is a successful contemporary visual artist who has made his intersecting identities of being Latino, queer, and Black the driving muse of his work. He intentionally calls into question how masculinity specifically interacts with his Blackness and his sexuality. His work is extremely influential and doesn’t shy away from complex topics. With collage as his main media, I decided to incorporate the patchwork pattern in the right page. Jiménez also consistently uses images of fruit and boxing with elements of his upbringing, which is why I have included the boxing gloves with the similar color scheme that Jiménez uses in his work. His name title on the left-hand page mimics his signature displayed on his website. Another common image in his work is the patchwork pattern he uses for the matts in the pieces that depict the boxers.

His artwork is an essential aspect of this project not only because he is the only traditional visual artist, but because of the topics he chooses to explore in his work. Analyzing how his Blackness interacts with his sexuality and perceptions of masculinity are all important in exploring the nuances and diversity of Afro-Latinidad. His touch of intimacy in his work is what teases out his personal reflections on what it means to be a man, what it means to be queer and, finally, what it means to be a queer Afro-Latino. By using literal materials that have ties to his Mexican heritage along with images from his childhood that are uniquely Afro-Latino, he discusses what boxing means to him and how he can be authentically himself in the face of the expectations associated with Black masculinity (Clotilde Jiménez).

Nicolás Guillén is a famous poet who has greatly impacted the way the Cuban identity is seen both in the US and in Cuba. By pioneering a new style of writing with one of his books
called *Songoro Cosongo* which centered the voices of Black Cubans specifically and onomatopoetically reference the sound of drums which connects to Afro-Cuban music and expresses Afro-Cuban experiences. His emphasis on Blackness and what it means to be a Black Cuban empowered people for generations and formed part of a larger call to action for equity for Afro-Cubans. Cuba was important to Guillén, which is why I have included the flag across the top of the page in his name because not only was this his homeland but a huge part of his identity. I also intentionally centered the African drum on the page, as the drum was an inspiration to him with its sound and the rhythm of African drumbeats. It was the focal point for him in centering his Blackness and Afro-Cuban identity. It was through the drum which he connected his ancestry to his writing, and his connections to his Blackness that he shared with Black people abroad.

Guillén represents a unique group of writers who were alive for the many political changes that happened between the 1930’s-70’s. Guillén was writing in direct opposition of the Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. He also spoke out about issues of economic and racial oppression that was occurring in Cuba and sought to advocate for his community. He was part of the literary movement of “negriста” writing which centered Afro-Cuban identities and perspectives during this time period. He did this by, as previously stated, modeling his poetry after the sounds and rhythms of the African drum, as well as the sounds and rhythms of Afro-Cuban speech. However, he was not the only artist to be doing this, and many poets have written about the rebellious nature of the African drum and how its sounds have been revolutionary because of what they inspire. African drum lines are the parent to many music genres today including rap, hip-hop, cumbia and salsa (Castro 63), reflecting their ability to inspire both social
and cultural movements. The entire negrista movement was about reconnecting with people’s African ancestry and connecting it with their Latinidad, and the African drum as an extremely common way of making those parallels. It is clear that across the African diaspora music has its roots in the African drum and its beats. The relationship between Guillén and American author and activist Langston Hughes is representative of the community building across borders that has been happening for decades. While it is often that Afro-Latinos are denied a voice in Black spaces and Latino spaces, Guillén and Hughes worked together to unpack racial dynamics, White supremacy and capitalism with one another and how these systems operate differently cross-culturally (Negassa).

Elizabeth Acevedo is a young contemporary poet who has written several best-selling books. Her work primarily focuses on young Afro-Latina girls and their experiences navigating the world and the hardships that come with being Afro-Latina. Her writing provides the representation that young Afro-Latina girls deserve, which is something she did not have for herself growing up, particularly in the poetry circles to which she was attracted. Being the representation she didn’t have as a child is extremely important to her and is what drives most of her work. This is why the background of her pages is the Dominican flag with a Black girl in the center. Being Dominican is a huge part of her identity and the central theme in one of her books *Clap When You Land*, which details the emotional turmoil after a plane crash felt by two young Dominican girls, one living in the Dominican and the other living in the US. Her Dominican identity, being raised in the US and her Blackness are all equally important parts of her and her work. I chose to put the Black girl in the center of the pages where the emblem in the flag is
located to emphasize the importance of her Black identity and the centrality of African heritage to her own identity and to the Dominican Republic as a whole.

Acevedo’s work is an essential part of our contemporary American literature because she targets an audience that is often forgotten about – young Afro-Latina girls. Her work is unique in its dedication to discussing Afro-Latina experiences in the US. She highlights the developmental years of these young girls and how these lines of race and ethnicity and these systems of oppression are affecting them, speaking from her own personal experiences. Through her characters, Acevedo raises questions about what it means to be Black in the US and how the Black-White racial binary affects these girls. She is included in this project because she is a famous contemporary writer who centers her Afro-Latinidad in her work and strives to provide visibility for her community (Acevedo).

Felipe Luciano is a poet and community activist who was part of The Young Lords Party and The Last Poets. Through his activism in both of these organizations, he was able to better his local community with the New York Chapter of The Young Lords Party that he helped co-found which centralized Black Puerto Rican identities and perspectives. His work includes “Jíbaro, My Pretty N****,” which centers the Black Puerto Rican perspective and encourages self-acceptance and self-love of African and Latino heritage together at the same time, not just as separate identities. His work with The Last Poets brought together Black poets and performers to explore through poetry readings and performances how Black identities co-exist with others and how systems of oppression operate on a systemic level and on an interpersonal level. The color scheme of Luciano’s pages is modeled after The Young Lords Party Logo, which forms the ‘F’ in Luciano’s first name on the left page. I made the outline of Puerto Rico bigger on the bottom
of the right page to reemphasize how important his relationship with Puerto Rico is to his work and his personhood. The image in the top right corner of the right page is a drawing of the Jíbaro statue in Puerto Rico. The statue has been redrawn black to parallel Luciano’s poem in which he describes the jíbaro as African.

Luciano’s work with The Young Lords Party was influential as he fought for the unique needs of his community. The Young Lords Party in New York wanted to emphasize access to health care, education and safety for its community, which had its own unique needs that differed from others. With his organizations, he was able to bridge gaps between Black Americans and Afro-Latinos, more specifically Black Puerto Ricans. His work emphasizes the Black identity in Puerto Rico which often gets erased because people don’t want to acknowledge Black ancestry because of White supremacy and the concept of “mejorar la raza”. There is a myth specifically in Puerto Rico that racial mixing has led to a racial democracy, in other words, a racially pluralistic society in which racial hierarchies no longer exist. Various scholars and activists have challenged this mythology, demonstrating the ways in Afro-Puerto Ricans experience systemic racism, and revealing the hypocrisy of a Puerto Rican national identity “that celebrated a whitened, Spanish heritage even as it propagated the image of Puerto Ricans as racially mixed.” (Rivera-Rideau 7-8). Luciano’s activism worked to combat this pernicious form of anti-Blackness within the New York cityscape, in which White neighborhoods were getting better treatment, better healthcare, and better education. Finding connections across the diaspora, particularly in music was an essential part of bringing together Black Puerto Ricans and Black Americans. Finding this artistic common ground, in poetry or the African drum beat for example, was a way to build community ties and to celebrate similarities and differences (Cruz-Janez 286).
Ariana Brown is a Black Mexican American poet and writer from Texas who centers her Blackness in her work. Their work is crucial in how she understands her own identity being both Black and Latine at the same time. She discusses the violent anti-Blackness within Latinidad while also connecting these concepts and structures of oppression with who she is as a person, and how they have affected her internally. They try to reason with her heritage and how that heritage came to be historically and with her ancestors and how that has shaped who she is and where she is today. Their poetry and work are spiritual in nature as she connects with herself and with her ancestors and what it means to her to be Black and Latine. For her pages I decided to mimic the book cover of her most recent publication *We Are Owed*, which is a collection of poems about her upbringing in Texas, her trip to Mexico as an adult and how all of this interacts with one another. The book cover includes the black background with white lettering, as well as the light blue arches. Since this set of pages is meant to be an overall summation of her work, it felt right to mimic the cover of their recently published work which functions as a poetry collection.

Brown’s relationship with her identity is an extremely complex one. Growing up in Texas was a challenge for her, and much of her work today focuses on healing those traumatic events and wounds that were caused by the racism they experienced. Being a very spiritual person, they choose to make sense of their heritage through history and through ancestral connection. Her work is extremely important to the project as her work brings a new perspective to the table. While she celebrates her heritage, she also grapples with the historical knowledge of how she came to be who she is, and how those generational wounds have affected them mentally. Her work also focuses on truly unpacking anti-Blackness and how it is intertwined with Latinidad,
not only in a systemic way but in an interpersonal way. Her work is very raw as it combines elements of childhood and tenderness with a violent remembrance of heritage (Rivera 377).

Reinaldo Marcus Green is a newer film director who has earned renown for creating films about Black people for Black people. He incorporates a range of diasporic perspectives in his work. His films have difficult conversations about race relations on an interpersonal level, and how different systemic issues affect the everyday lives of the people involved. He makes a point to include a range of perspectives because he believes that modern day diversity in film and media often just replaces a White character with a Black character. What Green wants from the film industry is stories that are written for Black audiences, not White stories that have Black people in them. His biggest success was *King Richard*, which tells the story of Serena and Venus Williams and the role of their father in their success. The film stars Will Smith and details the relationship he had with his daughters in shaping their success as tennis stars. His name is written on film reels to represent him being a director, and the tennis ball in the bottom left corner is meant to represent *King Richard*’s success as a feature film. The background is the vibrant yellow that was used in the movie poster for the film *Stone Cars*. This film he did with his brother was crucial to his success, so it felt right to include both the beginnings and current successes of his career in his pages.

Green has an important role in this project, because he is the only director and because of his sense of responsibility to write stories for Black people about Black people. Green talks about the tokenization of Black characters in the film industry and in media in general, which happens to both Black Americans and to Afro-Latinos, and sees an explicit need for Black stories to be centered. Moving through the world as an Afro-Latino, he has faced discrimination within the
industry and uses his work to combat that by bringing Black experiences and perspectives to the forefront. He is directly combating the cultural erasure that happens to Black culture and Afro-Latino cultures by making these voices heard. However, representation is not the only reason his work is essential; he also makes a point in his work to have difficult conversations about the effects of Anti-Blackness on race relations in the US and across the globe. He uses multifaceted approaches to tackle these topics and to break down barriers between groups of people (Conde).

In conclusion, the goal of this project is so the audience can understand that Afro-Latinidad is not new, nor is it something to be brushed to the side. Afro-Latinidad is just as valid as any other identity and deserves space and recognition. Even though there is violent anti-Blackness in the US and in Latin America that emerged through colonial racial hierarchies, this project shows the beauty of intersectionality and how Afro-Latinidad should be celebrated. I want consumers to engage with my project and use it as a starting point to think about how race works as a social construct and how it has very real consequences on people’s lives. This project is not just about centering Afro-Latinx voices and perspectives, but about educating people on Afro-Latinidad’s history and the numerous cultures that live within it. Part of combating White supremacy and anti-Blackness within Latinidad is to make space for, and center, Blackness and Black perspectives in Latinx spaces. Through engaging with the artists and their work I want people to be able to open their mind to be able to accept a multitude of truths at once about someone’s identity to combat White supremacy. While this project is not a comprehensive list, I believe that everyone should start somewhere in their journey on educating themselves and this project could be a place to start that ties in the critical race theory with practice and see real examples of how these race dynamics play out across different cultures.
Works Cited


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La identidad
A Celebration of 10 Afro-Latinx Artists
Ella Zumbaugh
This book is a collection of visual, artistic interpretations and biographies of 10 Afro-Latinx (individuals with both African and Latin American descent) artists: Celia Cruz, Miguel, Rico Nasty, Pop Smoke, Clotilde Jiménez, Nicolás Guillén, Elizabeth Acevedo, Felipe Luciano, Ariana Brown, and Reinaldo Marcus Green. This book is intended to introduce you to different artists, or maybe shed a new light on the artists you already do know.

Afro-Latinx artists rarely get the recognition they deserve because of cultural erasure. Written in both English and Spanish, this picture book aims to reach as many people as possible and share the work of these amazing individuals. This book also wants to combat the systems of oppression like White supremacy, capitalism, patriarchy and misogynoir – racism and sexism against Black women because they are Black and women – that forcibly suppress and erase the presence and perspectives of Afro-Latinx individuals.

A note on gendered terms: this book uses a variety of terms like Latinx and Latine. For this book, Latinx will be used to refer to people of Latin American descent of all genders. Latine will be used to specifically refer to gender non-conforming people, people who strictly use they/them pronouns or individuals who use they/them pronouns in addition to other gendered pronouns.
prólogo

Este libro es una colección de interpretaciones artísticas visuales y biografías de 10 artistas afrolatinxs (individuos con ascendencia africana y latinoamericana): Celia Cruz, Miguel, Rico Nasty, Pop Smoke, Clotilde Jiménez, Nicolás Guillén, Elizabeth Acevedo, Felipe Luciano, Ariana Brown y Reinaldo Marcus Green. Este libro quiere presentar a diferentes artistas al público lector y/o añadir nuevas perspectivas sobre artistas ya conocidos. Artistas afro-latinxs pocas veces reciben el reconocimiento que merecen por la invisibilización de su cultura. Escrito en inglés y en español, este libro ilustrado tiene como objetivo difundirse a la mayor cantidad de gente posible y compartir las obras de estos individuos asombrosos. El libro también quiere combatir varios sistemas de opresión como la supremacía blanca, el capitalismo, el patriarcado y “misogynoir” – racismo y sexismo contra mujeres negras porque son negras y mujeres – que, a la fuerza, suprime y borra las presencias y perspectivas de los afro-latinxs.

Una nota sobre la terminología y el género: este libro usa una variedad de términos como latinx y latine. En el texto que sigue, el término “latinx” se refiere a gente de cualquier género de ascendencia latinoamericana. “Latine” se usa para referirse a personas de género no conforme, personas que solamente usan los pronombres “elle/elles” o gente que incluye elle/elles en conjunto con otros pronombres que tienen género.
Úrsula Hilaria Celia de la Caridad Cruz Alfonso (AKA Celia Cruz) is an Afro-Latina Cuban-American singer, and arguably one of the most famous Latin American singers of the 20th century. Born on October 21st, 1925, in Havana, Cuba, the “Queen of Salsa” had both Catholic and Santería influences in her early life. Cruz was in the music industry from the 1950s all the way to the early 2000s. As such, her music career both precedes and follows the Cuban Revolution (1959), after which Fidel Castro gained power in Cuba and the music industry was nationalized. Controls of the revolutionary government limited the capacity of artists to travel and sell their music abroad and, in order to continue her international music career, Cruz was forced into exile.

With 37 studio albums and numerous telenovela roles, Cruz is one of the most influential Afro-Latina artists in modern history, creating songs that uplifted and empowered her community. One song in particular that stands out is “La negra tiene tumbao” [CG1] meaning the Black woman has swagger/coolness ("tumbao" is a colloquial/regional term). This song is all about empowering Black women with lines like “Anda derechito no camina de lao/ Diosa de la noche, dulce como el melao/ Otra como ella yo nunca he encontrado” [“She walks straight, not to the side/ Goddess of the night, sweet like molasses/ I haven’t found another like her.”]
Úrsula Hilaria Celia de la Caridad Cruz Alfonso (conocida también como Celia Cruz) es una cantante cubana-americana y afrolatina, y discutiblemente una de las cantantes más famosas del siglo 20. Nacida en el 21 de Octubre en 1925 en Havana, Cuba, la “Reina de Salsa” fue influida por el catolicismo y la santería en su juventud. Cruz estaba en la industria musical desde 1950 hasta los primeros años del Siglo 21. Su carrera antecede las Revolución Cubana (1959), después de la cual Castro ganó poder en Cuba y la industria musical se nacionalizó. Los nuevos controles del gobierno revolucionario limitaban la capacidad de los artistas de viajar y vender su música en el extranjero y, debido a su deseo de continuar su carrera internacional, Cruz tuvo que exiliarse.

Con 37 álbumes y varios roles en telenovelas, Cruz es una de las artistas afrolatinas más influyentes en nuestra historia moderna, escribiendo canciones que apoyan y empoderan a su comunidad. Una canción sobresaliente es “La negra tiene tumbao” (“tumbao” es un término coloquial como “swag”/estilo). Esta canción se trata del empoderamiento de las mujeres negras con versos como “Anda derechito no camina de lao/ Diosa de la noche, dulce como el melao/ Otra como ella yo nunca he encontrado”.

a. Billboard
Miguel Jontel Pimentel, better known by his stage name Miguel, was born October 23, 1985 to a Mexican American father and Black American mother. Gaining popularity in the early 2010’s with the release of his first album *All I Want is You*, Miguel had a huge impact on the music industry’s definition of R&B. He was part of the new wave of artists like The Weeknd and Frank Ocean that were creating R&B that infused funk, hip-hop, rock and electronic elements.

He has always been intentional in his inclusion of his Mexican heritage in his artistry. He has also faced a lot of pushback for this decision, the lack of racial understanding in the United States allows little space for the complexity of multiracial identities. People would either shove that part of him to the side or erase his Latinidad completely. He explains that there is a reason his name is Miguel, and it is because he is Afro-Latino. He chooses to embrace both sides of his identities in his music and in his life because he wants to connect to as many people in his community as possible.

His work on the movie Coco released in 2017 demonstrates his passion for his Mexican heritage. Miguel also explains that after his first trip to Mexico, where he finally met his father’s side of the family, it fully hit him that he was a culmination of culture, and that his grandmother’s decisions to live with his aunt in Inglewood, California are what led to his understanding of himself and personhood today.
Miguel Jontel Pimentel, mejor conocido por su nombre artístico Miguel, nació el 23 de octubre, 1985 a un papá mexicano-americano y una mamá afroamericana. Después de hacerse popular en los primeros años de la década de 2010 con el lanzamiento de su primer álbum, titulado *All I Want is You* (Lo único que quiero eres tú), Miguel tuvo un gran impacto en la definición de R&B. Formó parte de una nueva ola de artistas como The Weeknd y Frank Ocean, quienes creaban R&B que mezclaba elementos de funk, hip-hop y música electrónica.

Miguel siempre ha sido intencional en su inclusión de su herencia mexicana en su arte y, por eso, experimentó mucho rechazo por gente que quería minimizar su latinidad o borrarla completamente. Explica que hay una sola razón detrás de su nombre Miguel: el hecho de que es afrolatino. Elige acoger los dos partes de su identidad en su música y en su vida porque quiere conectarse con la mayor cantidad posible de gente en su comunidad.

Su trabajo en la película Coco, lanzado en 2017, evidencia su pasión por su herencia mexicana. Además, Miguel explica que después de su primer viaje a México, donde finalmente conoció a la familia de su papá, se enteró de que él mismo es una culminación de cultura y que la decisión de su abuela de vivir con su tía en Inglewood, California fue lo que formó su entendimiento de sí mismo como persona.
Bashar Barakah Jackson was born on July 20th, 1999, in Canarsie, Brooklyn to a Jamaican Mother and Panamanian Father where he played the drums at his local church as a child. He broke into the rap scene in 2019 with songs like “Dior” and quickly rose to fame across the country, popularizing Brooklyn Drill (a subcategory of rap). “Meet the Woo” was the artist’s first Mixtape, released in July 2019, and “Meet the Woo 2” was released February 2020. Just two weeks after the release of the second mixtape, Pop Smoke was tragically gunned down during a home invasion on February 19, 2020. This loss was felt across the country as young people grieved his premature death at 20. Rapper 50 Cent helped get Pop Smoke’s official first album released posthumously in July of 2020. Pop Smoke popularized trends like “Woo Wednesday” and a particular style of cornrows braided straight down that are often now referred to as “Pop Smoke braids.”

People continue to honor his legacy and, although his music career was short, his influence on Black culture particularly in New York was immense. While he allowed his Latinidad to be a public part of his identity and celebrate it, the media sometimes didn’t showcase it. There are few interviews where he is asked questions about his Latinidad because people simply saw him as a Black American man instead of an Afro-Latino.
Bashar Barakah Jackson nació en el 20 de Julio en 1999 en Canarsie, Brooklyn a una mamá jamaicana y un papá panameño donde, como niño, tocaba los tambores en su iglesia. Entró a la escena de rap en 2019 con su canción “Dior” y alcanzó la fama rápidamente en Los Estados Unidos, popularizando Brooklyn Drill (una categoría de rap). “Meet the Woo” era su primer mixtape, lanzado en Julio de 2019, que fue seguido por “Meet the Woo 2” en febrero de 2020. Dos semanas después del lanzamiento del segundo mixtape, Pop Smoke fue baleado durante una invasión de hogar en el 19 de Febrero 2020. Los jóvenes tras los EE. UU. sentían la tragedia de su muerte prematura a la edad de 20 años. El artista 50 Cent ayudó con el lanzamiento póstumo del primer álbum de Pop Smoke en Julio de 2020. Pop Smoke popularizó términos como “Woo Wednesday” y un estilo particular de trenzas africanas que hoy día se conocen como “trenzas de Pop Smoke”.

La gente continúa a honrar su legado hoy día y, aunque su carrera musical fue corta, su influencia en la cultura de la gente negra en Nueva York en particular era inmensa. Aunque él mismo reconoció su ascendencia latina en su identidad pública y la celebró, a veces los medios no la exhibieron. Hay pocas entrevistas en que recibe preguntas sobre su latinidad porque la gente simplemente lo veía como un americano negro en vez de un afrolatino.
Maria-Cecilia Simone Kelly, also known as Rico Nasty, was born in 1997 to a Puerto Rican mother and a Black American father in Washington, D.C. Growing up an only child and moving around the country, her music career blossomed in high school as she began releasing her own mixtapes. After gaining local popularity on SoundCloud, she was later signed to Atlantic records. Rico gave birth to her son Cameron at 18, continued to release music, and later amounted to be one of the most influential rappers of our time.

She popularized new rock/punk rap and created a safe space for alt-Black culture. Not only is she a music icon that has been cited as an inspiration for rappers like Flo Milli, she has also become a fashion and makeup icon as well. Her maximalist style fuses streetwear and the punk rock aesthetic to create a unique look. She also centers her Blackness and Latinidad in her music by singing/rapping in English and in Spanish about her lived experiences, while partnering with other Black and Latinx artists.
Maria-Cecilia Simone Kelly, también conocida como Rico Nasty, nació en 1997 a una mamá puertorriqueña y un papá afroamericano en Washington, D.C. Creció como hija única y se mudó a varios lugares en los EE. UU. antes de que su carrera musical empezara a florecer durante su tiempo en la escuela secundaria con el lanzamiento de varios de sus mixtapes. Rico Nasty firmó con Atlantic Records después de su éxito en SoundCloud. Ella dio a luz a su hijo Cameron cuando tenía 18 años y continuaba a lanzar música nueva hasta convertirse en una de las raperas más influyentes de nuestra época.

Ella también popularizó nueva rock/punk rap y formó un espacio seguro para la cultura alt-negra. Además de ser un ícono musical citado como inspiración para raperas como Flo Milli, se ha convertido en un ícono de moda y maquillaje. Su estilo maximalista combina streetwear y la estética punk rock para desarrollar una apariencia nueva. Ella también coloca sus identidades de ser negra y latina al centro de su música, colaborando con artistas negrxs y latinxs y cantando en inglés y en español sobre sus experiencias vividas.
Born in 1990 in Honolulu, Hawaii, Clotilde Jiménez is a collage artist based in Mexico City who uses his work to express his struggles with identity being a bisexual Black Puerto Rican man. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Cleveland Institute of Art and his Master of Fine Arts from the Slade School of Fine Art in London. By using collage, he expresses the intricacies of identity and how the disparate pieces of his cultural heritage and experiences come together to create who he is. He explains that collage is a way for him to tell “several stories at the same time” (clotildejimenez.art).

Jiménez combines the many facets of who he is into his art by questioning what it means to be an Afro-Latino man and challenging ideas about masculinity and his own sexuality. Utilizing images of fighters, fruit, and single moments of childhood, he expresses how complex one’s identity can be and how it manifests in one’s physical body. His art is an important step in opening conversations about race, sexuality and gender in both the US and in Mexico, and further proves that highlighting marginalized voices is a crucial element of liberation from oppressive structures.
Nacido en 1990 en Honolulu, Hawái, Clotilde Jiménez es un artista de collage en la Ciudad de México. Jiménez usa sus obras para expresar sus luchas con su identidad, siendo un puertorriqueño negro bisexual. Recibió su Licenciatura en Arte del Instituto de Arte en Cleveland y su Maestría en Arte del Escuela Slade de Arte en Londres. Con su uso de collage, Jiménez expresa las complejidades de su identidad y cómo se unan para crearlo como persona. También explica que el collage es una manera de contar “varias historias al mismo tiempo” (clotildejimenez.art).  

Jiménez combina las multitudes de su identidad en su arte, cuestionando lo que significa ser un afrolatino y desafiando ideas sobre la masculinidad y su propia sexualidad. Al usar imágenes de luchadores, frutas y momentos de su juventud, expresa las complejidades de la identidad y cómo se manifiestan en el cuerpo físico. Su arte es un paso importante en expandir la conversación sobre la raza, la sexualidad y él género en los EE. UU. y México y demuestra que amplificar las voces marginadas es esencial para la liberación de estructuras opresivas.
Nicolás Guillén was an Afro-Cuban poet born July 10th, 1902 in Camagüey, Cuba. After studying law at the University of Havana, Guillén became a journalist and poet who later pivoted to political writing and fighting for social change and justice. After meeting Black American poet Langston Hughes, he truly started focusing his poetry on Black Cubans, Black Cuban culture and liberation for his community.

Guillén was jailed in 1936, shortly after the regime of Gerardo Machado y Morales in Cuba was overthrown, and joined the Communist party. He then travelled to Spain as a journalist to cover the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). His poetry and writing were extremely influential and caused him to be exiled from Cuba during military dictator Fulgencio Batista’s rule.

His poetry was also extremely powerful because of the form that it took. When read aloud, his poetry captures: the sounds of the Black Cuban Spanish dialect and mimics the sounds of African style drums. This, combined with the radical messages of liberation in his political poetry and journalism, empowered the Black community of Cuba until his death in 1989 of Parkinson’s Disease.
Nicholás Guillén era un poeta afro cubano nacido el 10 de Julio en 1902 en Camagüey, Cuba. Después de sus estudios en la Universidad de La Habana, Guillén volvió a ser una poeta y periodista que luego se dedicó a escribir sobre política, cambios sociales y justicia. Después de conocer al poeta afroamericano Langston Hughes, su poesía empezó a centrarse en la experiencia y la cultura de los cubanos negros y la liberación de su comunidad.

Guillén fue encarcelado en 1936, después de la caída del régimen de Gerardo Machado y Morales en Cuba, y se unió al partido comunista. Viajó a España como periodista para cubrir la Guerra Civil Española (1936-1939). Su poesía y escritura eran muy influyentes y por eso fue exiliado de Cuba durante el reinado del dictador militar Fulgencio Batista.

Su poesía era también poderosa por su forma. Cuando se lee en voz alta, su poesía captura los sonidos del dialecto afro cubano y de los tambores africanos. Este elemento, además de los mensajes radicales de liberación en su poesía y periodismo político, empoderó a la comunidad afro cubano hasta su muerte en 1989 de la enfermedad de Parkinson.
Felipe Luciano, born in 1947, is an Afro-Puerto Rican poet and activist involved in The Young Lords Party and The Last Poets, two organization that strove for social/political change in 1970s New York. Growing up in East Harlem in New York wasn’t easy, and to find safety and community Luciano joined a gang at 12 called the Canarsie Chaplain Division. At 16 Luciano got into a fight with a member of a rival gang which resulted in that members death, although not by Luciano’s doing. He was convicted of the crime and served 2 years in prison. Afterwards, he attended Queens College, and it was there that he founded The Last Poets and co-founded the New York chapter of The Young Lords Party. The Last Poets was a group of Black and Afro-Puerto Rican performers who highlighted the Black experience and contributed to the Nuyorican movement going on in the late 60’s and 70’s, thus linking these two movements together. This group unified the Black diaspora in New York during this era and used spoken word performances and poetry to do so. The Young Lords Party, inspired by the Black Panther Party, was a collective of people fighting for the liberation of Puerto Ricans, Latinxs and colonized people in general. They fought for better living conditions, social liberation of all oppressed people, and uplifted their communities with mutual aid and education programs.
Luciano

Felipe Luciano, nacido en 1947, es un poeta y activista que fue miembro central de The Young Lords Party y The Last Poets, dos organizaciones que luchaban por el cambio social y político en Nueva York. Crecer en East Harlem en Nueva York no fue fácil, y para buscar seguridad y comunidad, a los 12 Luciano se juntó a una pandilla llamada el Canarsie Chaplain Division. A los 16, Luciano se metió en una pelea con un miembro de una pandilla rival que resultó en la muerte de ese miembro, pero no a causa de Luciano directamente. Fue condenado a 2 años en prisión por el crimen. Después, asistió a la universidad de Queens y fue ahí donde fundó The Last Poets y fue cofundador de la sección neoyorquina de The Young Lords Party. The Last Poets fue un grupo de artistas negros y afro-puertorriqueños que subrayaron la experiencia de la gente negra y contribuyeron al movimiento Nuyorican en los años 60 y 70, así juntando estos dos movimientos. Este grupo unificó la diáspora negra en Nueva York durante esta época tras representaciones de spoken word y poesía. The Young Lords Party, inspirado por el Black Panther Party, era un conjunto de gente que luchaba por la liberación de los puertorriqueños, los latinxs y la gente colonizada en general. Lucharon por mejores condiciones de alojamiento, la liberación social de todas las personas oprimidas y elevaron a sus comunidades con programas de asistencia recíproca y de educación.
From San Antonio Texas, this Latine poet was born May 11, 1993. With a B.A. in African Diaspora Studies and Mexican American Studies from UT Austin and an M.F.A. in Poetry from the University of Pittsburgh, Brown has had an extremely successful career. Brown has written several collections, such as *We Are Owed* and *Sana Sana*, which both explore Blackness in relation with Latinidad - the core of her identity and writing being Black and American.

They explore emotionally and historically what it means for Blackness to exist within Latinidad, and vice versa, in context of how the diversity in the US came to be. Within those conversations, they also have discussed her own girlhood and how femininity intersects with her racial and ethnic background. She has expressed that they feel compelled to talk about their intersecting identities in their work and to express both in her writing and in her performances in slam poetry.
De San Antonio Tejas, esta poeta latine nació en el 11 de mayo en 1993. Con una Licenciada en Estudios de la Diáspora Africana y Estudios Mexicanas Americanas de la Universidad de Tejas en Austin, y otra Licenciada en Poesía del Universidad de Pittsburgh, Brown ha tenido una carrera exitosa. Brown ha escrito varias colecciones, como We Are Owed and Sana Sana, que exploran las relaciones entre latinidad y identidades negras - el centro de su identidad y de sus obras.

Elle explora qué significa emocional y históricamente la existencia de la negritud dentro de la latinidad entre la negritud, y viceversa, en el contexto de la diversidad racial de los Estados Unidos. Entre esas conversaciones, elle también discute su juventud y la manera en que su feminidad cruza con sus identidades raciales y étnicas. Ella también ha expresado que siente obligada a discutir sus identidades y expresarse en sus obras y sus representaciones de la poesía slam.

h. @arianathepoet, Instagram
Elizabeth

Elizabeth Acevedo is a Dominican American poet born on February 15, 1988 in New York. In her youth she got into rapping and eventually moved to slam poetry performances. Here is where she found her passion for writing and poetry. With a BA in Performing Arts from The George Washington University and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Maryland, her career has skyrocketed in recent years.

With books such as *Clap When You Land*, which follows two girls dealing with a plane crash in the Dominican Republic shortly after 9/11, and *The Poet X*, a book about a young girl who finds herself and deals with familial trauma through poetry and performing spoken word. Her writing details unique experiences and emotions of young Afro-Latina girls, an intersection within American culture that isn’t often talked about. Acevedo is committed to telling her stories, providing a voice and representing her community because this type of recognition and visibility for her community was what she was missing in her youth.
Acevedo

Elizabeth Acevedo es una poeta dominicana-americana nacida en el 15 de febrero en 1988 en Nueva York. En su juventud exploró el rap y eventualmente descubrió la poesía slam. Con su Licenciado en las Artes Escénicas de la Universidad de George Washington y un Licenciado en Escritura Creativa de la Universidad de Maryland, su carrera ha sido exitosa en años recientes.

Con libros como Clap When You Land, que sigue a dos niñas lidiando con un accidente aéreo en la República Dominicana poco tiempo después del ataque del 11 de septiembre, y The Poet X, un libro sobre una chica que está encontrándose a sí misma y procesando traumas familiares tras la poesía y representaciones de spoken word. Sus obras detallan experiencias únicas de chicas afrolatinas, una intersección dentro de cultura americana de la que apenas se habla. Acevedo se compromete a contar sus experiencias, representando y dándole voz a su comunidad porque eso era lo que le faltó en su juventud.
Born in 1981 in the Bronx to a Black American father and Puerto Rican mother, Reinaldo Marcus Greene is a well-renowned contemporary film director and writer. His first works were short films done with his brother, including *Stone Cars*, about a girl in South Africa navigating the threat of sexual violence while figuring out her own sexuality. The success of these first projects laid the groundwork for his most famous film to date, *King Richard*, which is the story of the childhood of Venus and Serena Williams, their rise to tennis stardom, and how their dad helped them get there. Starring Will Smith, this film provides a deeper insight into who Richard Williams is as an individual and a father, a perspective never previously shown.

The films that Green produces are important because they actually tell the stories of Black people as opposed to merely filling stories with Black characters. To Green, there is a difference between stories written for Black audiences with Black characters and stories written for other audiences that just have Black characters in them. He is continuing to make change in the film industry and hopes to contribute more to the incoming wave of stories told for Black people by Black people.
Nacido en 1981 en el Bronx a un papá afroamericano y una mamá puertorriqueña, Reinaldo Marcus Green es un escritor y director contemporáneo bien conocido. Sus primeras películas fueron cortometrajes producidos con su hermano, entre los cuales se incluye Stone Cars, que narra la historia de una niña en Sudáfrica que está navegando el peligro de la violencia sexual a la vez que lidia con su propia sexualidad. El éxito de esta película sirvió como punto de partida para su película más famosa hoy día, King Richard, que cuenta la historia de la niñez de Venus y Serena Williams, su llegada a la fama en el tenis y cómo su papá las ayudó a llegar ahí. Con Will Smith, esta película muestra una perspectiva más profunda de Richard Williams como una persona individual y como un padre, una perspectiva que nunca se había demostrado antes.

Las películas que Green produce son importantes porque se adentran en las verdaderas historias de la gente negra, en vez de simplemente poblar sus producciones con personajes negros para así lograr una representación superficial. Para Green, hay una diferencia entre historias escritas con personajes negros para un público negro y historias escritas para otros públicos que simplemente tienen personajes negros. Él sigue cambiando la industria cinematográfica y espera contribuir más a la oleada nueva de historias para gente negra producidas por gente negra.
Photo Bibliography


Text Bibliography
