

## Boricua Passport

by J. L. Torres

NUYORICAN WORLD SERIES



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J.L. Torres

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BORICUA PASSPORT evokes the complex in-betweeness that represents the contemporary Puerto Rican condition as filtered through the prism of poet J.L. Torres' life experience. For many Puerto Ricans the sense of being unhomed—having a homeland but not really feeling at home anywhere—is a real lived experience determined by a persisting and unsettled colonial condition. In BORICUA PASSPORT, Torres, screams, shouts, rejoices, celebrates, tickles and challenges with a poetry sprinkled with Spanish/Spanglish that is immediate and urgent. His is a testimony to the indefatigable Puerto Rican spirit which, although burdened by this colonial condition, still strives to cobble a hybrid world full of love, passion and hope. BORICUA PASSPORT will transport any reader into this limbo world with all its fascinating incongruities and descriptive vistas. It's your passport into a world simultaneously real and imaginary, one most people don't even know exists. A must read!

"Against Disneyfied caricatures of Boricua mobility, J.L. Torres proposes a mobilization of memory, a mapping of his/our varied turfs: the "asphalt borderlands" of the South Bronx, the "home(is)land" of Puerto Rico, far upstate and its "Carajo counties," and most of all the unincorporated territories of the soul and body. This is not your abuelita's poetry, except that it is—*tú sabes?* In the spirit of Rev. Pedro Pietri, Torres seeks out the "location of this nothingness" where we all scrawl our own passports in in(di)visible ink. Watch /here/ and /there/ blur! This /Boricua Passport/ has your name."

—Urayoán Noel, Poet, Professor and Scholar

"If you are a Boricua from the Bronx, you will delight a multi-sensory landscape that takes back a beauty often obscured by the hard times, and denied by those who know the Bronx only as an ugly rumor. You will recognize the sights and aromas; you will know the people. Some poems might make you angry, others will make you recall your own experiences. Those who fear and revile our beautiful and complex Bronx, might want to hop a train after reading this collection."

—Magdalena Gómez  
Performance Poet, Playwright, Arts Educator, Columnist

"JL Torres' poems draw a line in the sand from the blue green crystal clear agua buenas of Puerto Rico to the blue salsa funk of the Boogie Down. He takes us Salsa dancing through the rhythms of his words, their rich, visceral, viscous texture and specificity to the deep down soulscapes of each image-driven memory of what it means to be a Rican constructing a reality from the belly of that which devours dreams. You don't need a passport to be transported to the world(s) in the words of Torres' verse—just your heart and head and an imagination scopic and distended as the universe."

—Tony Medina, Poet and Activist, author of *Broke Baroque*

### About the Author

J. L. TORRES is Professor of English at SUNY Plattsburgh, where he teaches both American literature, Latina/o Literatures, and Creative Writing. He has published poetry in numerous journals, and he is the author of *The Family Terrorist and Other Stories* (Arte Público, 2008), and the novel, *The Accidental Native* (Arte Público, 2013). Torres also serves as Editor of the *Saranac Review*; and along with Carmen Haydee Rivera, is co-editor of *Writing Off the Hyphen: New Perspectives on the Literature of the Puerto Rican Diaspora*. Visit him at [www.JLTorres.net/wp](http://www.JLTorres.net/wp) or on Facebook.

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