

Anonymous Street Art as Decolonial Praxis in Puerto Rico

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La Bandera: A Visual Beacon



A Colonized Flag

- **Law 53 of 1948:** Puerto Rico's legislature ratifies this act in order to suppress and kill the independence movement in Puerto Rico
 - Criminalized owning or displaying a Puerto Rican flag, singing patriotic songs, speaking or writing of independence, and meeting with anyone or holding any assembly in favor of independence
 - Repealed in 1957 after it was found unconstitutional (both in P.R. and the U.S.)

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

San José Street, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico (2012)



Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Summer 2016 in Context

- Pulse Nightclub shooting in Orlando (23 of the 50 victims were Puerto Rican)
- Governor announces plan to fumigate island with Naled after Zika virus outbreak
- Ratification and implementation of Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA) Act

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

San José Street, Old San Juan, Puerto Rico (July 4, 2016)



RESPONSES & PROLIFERATION (2016)

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Meme-ification of La Puerta as a Response



Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Responses (Within the week)



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Responses (Puerto Rico)



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Responses (non-muralist)



Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Responses (Diaspora in Florida)



FORMS OF PROTEST

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

(Wall Street, NYC)



Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

#BlackLivesMatter

“Just as my Puerto Rico is in mourning over the unjustified deaths; inequality and injustice; and government abuses, we remain with our fists raised high (as a symbol of solidarity and unity) connecting our hearts with the Black community in the United States and our brothers and sisters of Black Lives Matter.”



Puerto Rico

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

(Colectivo Moriviví & Vaimoana in NYC)

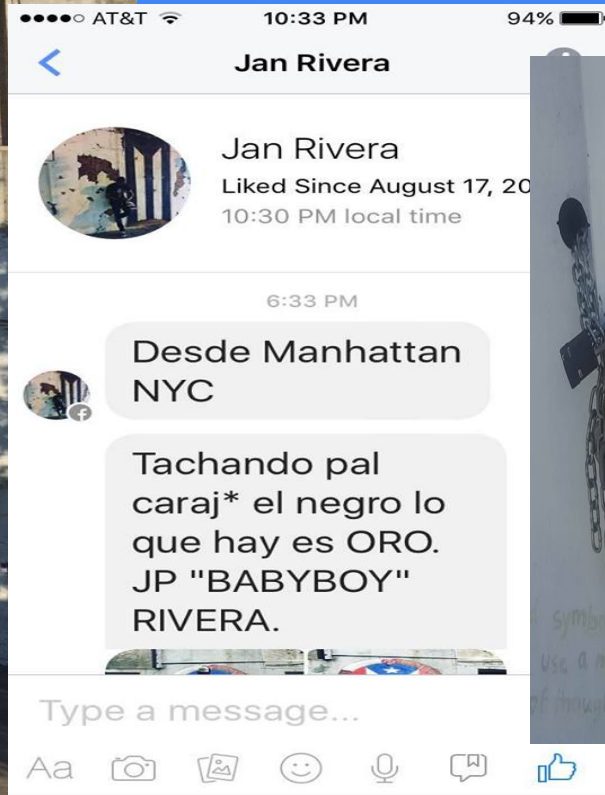
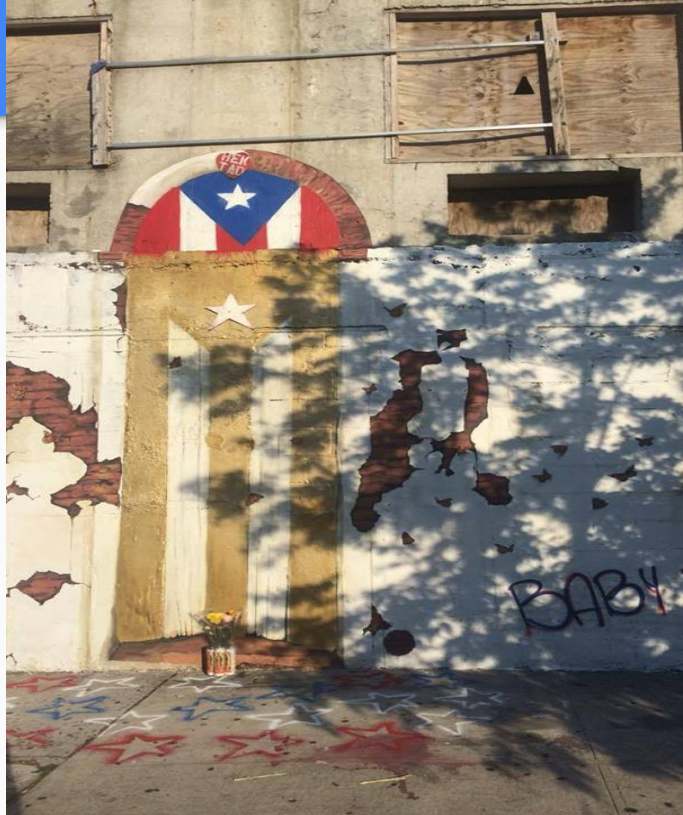


“As part of that decolonization process, essential to the surge of a new national consciousness, we must break free of the old symbols that represent our terrible condition...we shall use a new symbol to represent a new Boricua line of thought..”

--Enrique de López, “On the Decolonization of Symbols” (2016)

Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Response (to Colectivo Moriviví post-Olympic gold medal)



Artistas Solidarixs y en Resistencia

Puerto Rico protests against PROMESA

August 31, 2016 (San Juan, Puerto Rico)



Protesting in Puerto Rico

University of Puerto Rico students go on strike to protest austerity measures, Summer 2017.



University of Puerto Rico, Río Piedras campus (July 2017). Students draped the black & white flag on the main gate.



"We are not missing resources. We have a surplus of thieves."

Post-Hurricane Irma & María



Anti-colonial action in Union Square (Manhattan, NYC; October 2017)



Artist's HECTORPR message of hope, post-hurricanes (Isabela, PR; October 2017)

Post-Hurricane Irma & María



Still from Adriana Santoni (Founder of the Plena Combativa collective) in her video for “Se Acabaron Las Promesas,” released November 12, 2017.

[Coro] (2x)

Consecuencia de estar hartos
Esta plena te lo expresa
Vestimos de negro y blanco
Se acabaron las promesas

[Verso 1]

Somos los rostros de un pueblo
Ay, de un pueblo en resistencia
Cara a cara con la armada
Que no nos pidan paciencia

[Coro] (2x)

[Verso 2]

Y es que nos quitaron tanto
No hay miedo que nos detenga
Salimos escudo en mano
En defensa 'e nuestra tierra

[Chorus] (3x)

[Chorus] (2x)

Consequence of being tired
This plena expresses it to you
We dress in black and white
Promises are over

[Verse 1]

We are the faces of a people
Oh, of a people in resistance
Face to face with armed forces
May they not ask us for patience

[Chorus] (2x)

[Verse 2]

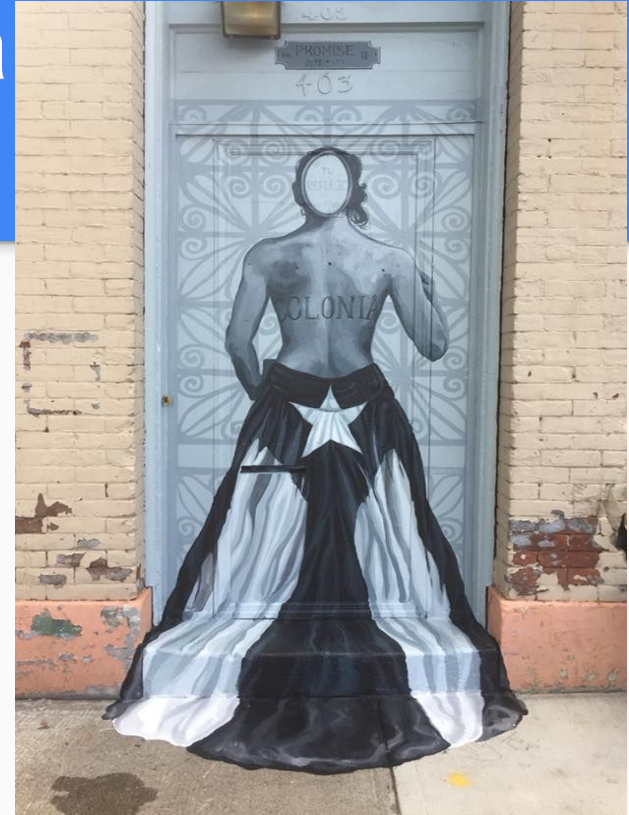
And it's that they took away so much from us
There is no fear that can stop us
We go out shield in hand
In defense of our land

[Chorus] (3x)

Post-Hurricane Irma & María



"The Disaster is the Colony" Colectivo Moriviví & community
(El Museo del Barrio, NYC, September 2018)



"The PROMISE" Colectivo Moriviví
(Holyoke, MA, August 2018)

COMMODIFICATION

Transactionalization



Sexualization



MV for “Egoísta” by Ozuna ft. Zion & Lennox (Oct 2017)

Thank you.