

LA CALLE DE PEDRO PIETRI



James De la Vega, 2004, Commissioned by Hope Community, Inc.
Photo: Jesus Papoleto Melendez

AROUND THE BLOCK FROM EL MUSEO

ENTERATE

The Reverend Pedro Pietri (1944 - 2004) was born in Puerto Rico. His family moved to New York during “Operation Bootstrap,” where he grew up in Harlem. Upon his return from serving in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, Pietri’s writing pointed to the struggles of Puerto Ricans and the impact of U.S. policies on their lives and country. In late 1969, as the Young Lords occupied the Methodist Church in East Harlem, Pietri performed his Puerto Rican Obituary in its basement. Along with Jorge Brandon and other writers and poets, in the 1970s Pietri co-founded the legendary Nuyorican Poets Cafe located in the Lower East Side. In addition to publishing over 20 volumes of verse and plays, he was also considered the “Poet Laureate” of the Young Lord’s Party due to his celebrated Puerto Rican Obituary. In 2004, HOPE Community, Inc. commissioned local artist James de la Vega to paint the Pedro Pietri Mural located on 104th Street and Lexington Avenue.

Reverend Pedro Pietri (1944 - 2004) nació en Puerto Rico. Su familia se mudó a Nueva York durante “Operation Bootstrap”, y creció en Harlem. Después de regresar de servir en el ejército norteamericano durante la guerra de Vietnam, las obras de Pietri se dirigieron a la resistencia de los puertorriqueños y el impacto de las políticas norteamericanas en sus vidas y su país. A finales de 1969, cuando los Young Lords ocuparon la Iglesia Metodista en East Harlem, Pietri interpretó su Puerto Rican Obituary en el sótano de la iglesia. Durante la década de los setenta, Pietri, junto con Jorge Brandon y otros escritores y poetas, cofundó el legendario Nuyorican Poets Café, ubicado en el Lower East Side. Además de publicar más de 20 volúmenes en verso y obras teatrales también fue considerado “Poeta Laureado” de Young Lord’s Party a raíz de su célebre obra Puerto Rican Obituary. En 2004, HOPE Community, Inc. comisionó al artista local James de la Vega para pintar el Mural Pedro Pietri ubicado en 104th Street y Lexington Avenue.

James de la Vega (b. 1972) was born in East Harlem and earned a B.A. at Cornell University before returning to the neighborhood to teach art. He founded the Esperanza Latino Youth Organization at Central Park East Secondary School and was the President of El Barrio Renaissance Project Inc. De la Vega is primarily known for the murals and chalk drawings he creates on public surfaces such as sidewalks or on the walls of other public spaces. His murals and chalk drawings can be found all over the city, including El Barrio, often accompanied by a message such as, “Become your Dream.”

James de la Vega (n. 1972) nació en East Harlem y obtuvo su licenciatura en Cornell University antes de regresar a su vecindario para enseñar arte. Fundó Esperanza Latino Youth Organization en Central Park East Secondary School y fue el Presidente de El Barrio Renaissance Project Inc. De la Vega es conocido principalmente por los murales y dibujos con tiza que crea en superficies públicas, tales como aceras o en las paredes de otros espacios públicos. Sus murales y dibujos con tiza pueden encontrarse por toda la ciudad, incluyendo El Barrio y a menudo son acompañados de un mensaje, tal como “Conviértete en tu propio sueño”.

MIRA

This mural portrays an influential person in this neighborhood, and is located across from another mural that depicts many people from the neighborhood, the Spirit of East Harlem Mural. How do these two murals interact to tell the stories of El Barrio’s residents?

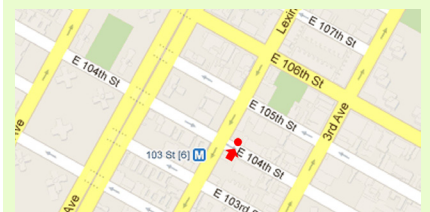
Este mural representa a una persona influyente en este vecindario y está ubicado al otro lado de la calle de otro mural, The Spirit of East Harlem, que representa a muchas personas del vecindario. ¿Cómo interactúan estos dos murales para contar las historias de los residentes de El Barrio?

The final lines of Pietri’s Puerto Rican Obituary read: *Las últimas líneas de la obra de Pietri, Puerto Rican Obituary, dicen:*

Aqui se habla espanol all the time
Aqui you salute your flag first
Aqui there are no dial soap commercials
Aqui everybody smells good
Aqui t.v. dinners do not have a future
Aqui wigs are not necessary
Aqui the men admire desires
And never gets tired of his women
Aqui Que Pasa Power is what’s happening
Aqui to be called negrito means to be called LOVE

How would you describe what it is like aquí in El Barrio today?
¿De qué forma describirías el ambiente aquí en El Barrio hoy?

Describe what it means to live in your neighborhood. *Describe lo que significa vivir en tu vecindario.*



104th Street and Lexington Ave
New York, NY 10029