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SPIC CHIC: THE ADVENTURES OF THE LAST NUYORICAN
AUTHOR'S BIO: LUIS CHALUISAN AKA "EL EXTREME"

In late 2008, Fly by Night Press (a subsidiary of A Gathering of the Tribes, NYC) opted to publish a compendium of poetry, photos, artwork, comedic essays and short stories dating back to 1975 under the title of Spic Chic (*The Adventures of the Last Nuyorican*), written by Luis Chaluisan (aka El Extreme). The term "Spic Chic" caused controversy in 1974 when it was used on the Bill Boggs mid-day talk show - then aired on Metromedia Channel 5 in NYC (now Fox Television). The offhand remark was offered by Latin NY magazine editors to describe the infusion of vivid colors by Latino clothes designers then making their mark on NY's fashion world. The latter part of the promotional title (*The Adventures of the Last Nuyorican*) is based on a humorous quip in 2005 from Nuyorican poet Papoleta Melendez that "El Extreme represents the torn page" from the canon of previously published Nuyorican writers who flourished in the 1970's and '80's. Meanwhile, writer David Henderson ('Scuse Me While I Kiss The Sky: Jimi Hendrix Voodoo Child) is a bit more serious stating, "I think Spic Chic is strong stuff, right in the Nuyorican tradition. Poems and then stories back into poems that are often emotionally moving. A self exploration in a non-chronological history consistent in language and point of view, it is clearly a highly personalized work that is successful in the Nuyorican free-style genre and successful in the broader sense as well." Both observations are welcomed by Bronx bred author Chaluisan - now residing in Brownsville, Brooklyn - who states, "I could have chased a traditional path in developing my work but I was having too much manic fun being off-beat and, besides, God had other plans for my creative life." With the publication of "Narrative of a Hybrid" in the Polemic Anthology (1976, Straight Ahead Press - Amherst, Massachusetts) Luis Chaluisan joined the ranks of period Nuyorican writers that included Pedro Pietri ("Puerto Rican Obituary" 1973), Miguel Pinero (Short Eyes 1973) and Lefty Barretto (Nobody's Hero 1976). Mentored by Black Panther cultural minister Ed Bullins and later by Young Lord Eddie Figueroa (founder of the "New Rican Village" on the Lower East Side of New York) Chaluisan was invited to join the NY Public Theater's emerging playwright unit headed by Crispin Larengreira in the summer of 1977. A chance meeting with magazine editor-in-chief Soledad Santiago paved the way for Chaluisan to land a job at Latin NY magazine - the nation's first successful long term English language monthly publication focusing on Latino (primarily Puerto Rican vis-a-vis Nuyorican) arts and culture. The nineteen year old Chaluisan rose up the ranks from reporter to music editor between 1977-79 under the tutelage of Latin NY publisher Izzy Sanabria which led to his being hired by WCBS network affiliate WFSB (Channel 3) in Hartford, Connecticut in June of 1979. For the next seventeen years he worked as a TV investigative reporter, producer, writer and marketing executive for PBS (Bowling Green, Ohio), Telemundo (Tucson, Arizona/Yakima, Washington), WCBS Channel 2 (New York), and News 12 Long Island, along with stints at radio station WGB in Albany among other mainstream media outlets in the US. Upon leaving the news business in 1997 and resettling in Hartford, CT, Chaluisan (once again performing fulltime as "El Extreme") began to disseminate work he had developed as a musical composer and poet/essayist with his own indie rock groups dating back to 1982 (*Little Otis and The Upsetters, The Blankets of Doom, La Gran Orquesta El Extreme, Gang Bang Bang, and El Extreme's Electric Cabaret.*). The effort led to his inclusion in the National Slam Poetry movement as a State Slam Champion for CT. (1998/1999 in Austin, Texas and Chicago, Illinois.) His semi-final performance was captured on film by CBS' Sixty Minutes and featured in the news magazine's report on the tenth anniversary of the Slam movement. In 2000 he returned to NYC and set to work on organizing his written work and professional notes describing his media/educational experience which resulted in the off-Broadway play Spic Chic: S.panish P.eople I.n C.ontrol (initially a 2001 workshop at the Nuyorican Café in Manhattan with later runs at the Chelsea Playhouse and Spanish Repertory Theater). The performance at El Repertorio Espanol garnered the attention of producers for the 2004 Biennale Festival in Bonn, Germany where Spic Chic had its European premiere at the Bonn Opera House Theater. In the meantime, Chaluisan was approached by film director Henry Chalfant ("Style Wars") to contribute both content and interview source material to the award winning documentary "From Mambo to Hip Hop" which aired on PBS in 2006. In 2007, Chaluisan moved to Puerto Rico after the death of his father Federico Chaluisan to spend a year in mourning and soaking in the poetry/writer's scene at the University of Puerto Rico in Mayaguez, PR. With the help of University students and Professor Linda Rodriguez, El Extreme reemerged writing in both English and Spanish.