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# THE Armando Rascon MULTICULTURAL READING ROOM: CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND INFORMATION

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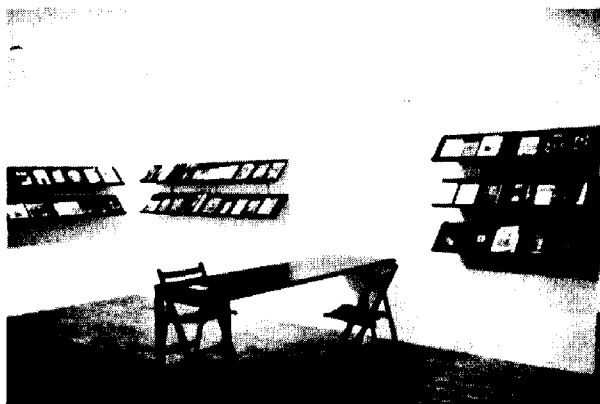
y immediate interest in organizing *The Multicultural Reading Room: Center for Research and Information* grew from a desire to form a functioning information center, the contents of which would develop from contributions of specific selected books and materials by a diverse group of individuals from throughout the United States. Participants in this project were invited to contribute one or more books from their personal libraries, in order to create a matrix of sources and influences specific to the development of said contributor's *identities*. By utilizing the library format as the means for the presentation of the multiple viewpoints and perspectives of a complex

and culturally diverse group of individuals, my intention was to draw attention to the field of information that we sometimes refer to as "Multiculturalism." If the Library, with its function as repository of knowledge—cultural or otherwise—has been able to persevere through time and stand fast throughout its history against untoward elements during periods of anti-intellectualism, censorship, et cetera (periods that have influenced public sentiment now and again), then what better *model* to emulate than one whose innate workings serve to preserve and archive the meta-

narratives of the immediate constituency that maintains it as well as the micro-narratives and concerns of those just outside the framework of the institution itself. In an ideal world, this construct should be all-inclusive with regard to representation, and multiple viewpoints introduced into the program as a matter of course, thereby ensuring a steady flow of information respecting the constituencies that the institution would seek to serve. But situations are not always ideal, and certain communities have tended to be under-represented within the frameworks of certain institutions, if not completely excluded. The multicultural initiative began as a means to investigate and reconcile this fact. This is the crucial moment of any discussion surrounding the multicultural initiative: identity, drawn in as generalized or as specific terms as we choose within serious discourse, only exists as a latticework of socially contrived vectors that intersect at any given moment, forming a cultural and political axis for the individual, a base that is only further distinguished by economic means or the relative lack thereof. In a sense, this is the only real truth that obtains for the individual seeking to conjoin him- or herself to a larger whole. The map is readymade, and options few at this late phase of the post-industrial era. The one thing that these times have taught us is how different we all are, and discourse built upon serious discussion that seeks not so much to eliminate difference as to accept and build upon it is at the heart of this very American debate. Certainly for some there isn't potential for change, and perhaps there never will be. *The Multicultural Reading Room: Center for Research and Information* proposes an alternative site for the reception and distribution of information specific to these questions, to this polemic. The individual collaborators, in their role as multicultural architects of our time, agreed to

participate in this project—and by extension, in this discourse—by contributing elements to a larger social thesis: the legacy of multiple personal trajectories upon the formation of a living library of expanding cultural parameters.

*The Multicultural Reading Room: Center for Research and Information* has been exhibited at New Langton Arts in San Francisco, California, and at Randolph Street Gallery, Chicago, Illinois. The following is a list of the contributors to it and the books they submitted:



Installation view, Randolph Street Gallery

**Steve Abbott**

*View Askew/Postmodern Investigations.* Steve Abbott, Androgynous Books, San Francisco: 1989.

*Women on Women: An Anthology of Lesbian Short Fiction.* Joan Nestle and Naomi Holoch, eds. Penguin Books, New York: 1990.

*A Gift of Tongues: Contemporary American Poetry.* Marie Harris and Kathleen Aguero, eds. The University of Georgia Press, Athens and London: 1987.

**Larry Andrews**

*Invisible Man.* Ralph Ellison, Vintage Books, New York: 1989.

*Lyric and Dramatic Poetry 1946-82.* Aimé Césaire, The University Press of Virginia, Charlottesville: 1990.

*Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language.* The World Publishing Company, Cleveland and New York: 1968.

**Karen Atkinson**

*The Graywolf Annual Five: Multi-Cultural Literacy.* Rick Simonson and Scott Walker, eds., Graywolf Press, St. Paul: 1988.

*Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness.* Sander L. Gilman, Cornell University Press, Ithaca and London: 1985.

*Unequal Sisters: A Multicultural Report in Women's History.* Ellen Carol DuBois & Vicki L. Ruiz, eds., Routledge, New York and London: 1990.

**Julie Ault**

*Talking Back: thinking feminist, thinking black.* bell hooks, South End Press, Boston: 1989.

*if life is a bowl of cherries, what am i doing in the pits?* Erma Bombeck, McGraw Hill Book Company, San Francisco: 1971.

*Cinderella.* Walt Disney—A Golden Book, Western Publishing Company, Inc., New York and Racine, WI: 1986.

**David Avalos**

*California Mission Daze.* Deborah Small & David Avalos (with James Luna & William E. Weeks), independent publication by the authors, San Diego: 1990.

*1492.* Deborah Small (w/ Maggie Jaffe), independent publication by the author, San Diego: 1990.

**Roberto Bedoya**

*The Conquest of America.* Tzvetan Todorov (translated by Richard Howard), Harper & Row Publishers, San Francisco: 1984.

*The Labyrinth of Solitude.* Octavio Paz, Grove Press, New York: 1985.

**Barbara Carrasco**

*Bosch.* Text by Joseph-Emile Muller, Leon Amiel, Pub., New York: no date.

*Goya: The Origins of the Modern Temper in Art.* Fred Licht, Universe Books, New York: 1979.

*The Fabulous Life of Diego Rivera.* Bertram D. Wolfe, Stein and Day, New York: 1963.

**Whitney Chadwick**

*Women Art and Society.* Whitney Chadwick, Thames and Hudson, London: 1990.

*Caribbean Festival Arts.* John W. Nunley and Judith Bettelheim, St. Louis Art Museum with University of Washington Press, Seattle and London: 1988.

**John Coplans**

*Andy Warhol.* John Coplans (untranslated Japanese text), Ashahi Shibun, Pub., Bijutsu Shuppan Design Center., Tokyo: 1974.

**Moyo Coyatzin**

*The Tiger Rider and Other Chinese Epigrams.* Translated by C. H. Kwok. The Lipo Society of America, San Francisco: 1986.

*Ukelele.* Stefan Baciu, Cenizas, San Francisco: 1980.

*Cenizas 18.* Geoffrey Cook, Romax, San Francisco: 1982.

*Poemas Sencillos del Viejo Soldado.* Tristan Marof, Cenizas, San Francisco: 1980.

*Twelve Little Writings for Jean Paulhan.* Francis Ponge (translated by Charlie Shere), Cenizas, San Francisco: 1970.

**David Deltcher**

*Lost Illusions.* Honore de Balzac, Penguin Books, New York: 1988.

*Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison.* Michel Foucault, Vintage Books, New York: 1979.

*Cruising the Movies: A Sexual Guide to 'Oldies' on TV.* Boyd McDonald, Gay Presses of New York, New York: 1985.

**Harry Gamboa, Jr.**

*Three Plays.* August Strindberg, Penguin Classics, New York: 1983.

*Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety.* Sigmund Freud, W.W. Norton & Co., New York: 1959.

*The Psychology of Fear and Stress.* Jeffrey Gray, McGraw Hill, New York: 1974.

**Shifra Goldman**

*Arte Chicano: A Comprehensive Annotated Bibliography of Chicano Art, 1965-1981.* Shifra Goldman & Tomas Ybarra-Frausto, Chicano Studies Library Publication Unit, Berkeley: 1985.

*Signs from the Heart: California Chicano Murals.* Eva Sperling Cockroft and Holly Barnet-Sanchez, eds., Social and Public Art Resource Center, Venice: 1990.

*Pintura Mexicana Contemporanea en Tiempos de Cambio.* Shifra M. Goldman, Editorial Domes, S.A., Mexico City: 1989.

**Felix Gonzalez-Torres**

*Cuentos Completos.* Alejo Carpentier, ed. Bruguero Libro Amigo, S.A., Barcelona: 1979.

*Montesquieu, Rousseau, Marx: Politics and History.* Louis Althusser (translated by Ben Brewster), Presses Universitaires de France, Paris: 1970.

*Fodor's 90 Paris.* Thomas Cussans, ed., Fodor's Travel Publications, New York, 1990.

**Alfredo Jaar**

*Why This New World Map?* (world map in equal area presentation—Peters Projection). Arno Peters, United Nations Development Programme and Friendship Press, New York: 1983. (from *The New Cartography*, Arno Peters, Carinthia University Press, Klagenfurt, Austria and Friendship Press, New York: 1983.)

**Lucy Lippard**

*Reimaging America.* Mark O'Brien and Craig Little, eds. New Society, Philadelphia: 1990.

**Hung Liu**

*Chinese Painting History.* Wang Bo Min, Shanghai People's Fine Art Publishing House, Shanghai, People's Republic of China: 1982.

*Call To Arms.* Lu Xun, Foreign Languages Press, Beijing: 1981.

*I Myself Am A Woman: Selected Writings by Ding Ling.* Tani E. Barlow and Gary J. Borge, eds., Beacon Press, Boston: 1989.

**Nathaniel Mackey**

*The Arrivants.* Edward Brathwaite, Oxford University Press, London: 1967.

*Stolen Legacy.* George G. M. James, Julian Richardson Associates, San Francisco: 1954.

*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl: Written by Herself.* Harriet A. Jacobs, Harvard University Press, Cambridge: 1987.

**Amalia Mesa-Bains**

*Four New World and Yoruba Rituals*. John Mason, Yoruba Theological Archministry, Brooklyn: 1985.

*Black Gods: Orisa Studies in the New World*. Gary Edwards and John Mason, eds., Yoruba Theological Archministry, Brooklyn: 1985.

*Race, Writing, and Difference*. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., ed., University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London: 1986.

**Trinh T. Minh-ha**

*Woman Native Other*. Trinh T. Minh-ha, Indiana University Press, Bloomington and Indianapolis: 1989.

*Griever: An American Monkey King in China*. Gerald Vizenor, Fiction Collective, New York and Boulder: 1987.

*Making Face, Making Soul—Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color*. Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., Aunt Lute Foundation Books, San Francisco: 1990.

**Celia Muñoz**

*Man and His Symbols*. Carl G. Jung, Dell Publishing Co., New York: 1964.

**Antonio Muntadas**

*Brevísima Relación de la Destrucción de las Indias*. Bartolomé de las Casas, Editorial Catedra, Madrid: 1987.

*How to Read Donald Duck*. Ariel Dorfman and Armand Mattelart (translated by David Kunzle), International General, New York: 1971.

**Salim Muwakkil**

*Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy*. Robert Farris Thompson, Vintage Books, New York: 1984.

*Philadelphia Fire*. John Edgar Wideman, Henry Holt and Company, New York: 1990.

**Achy Obejas**

*The Lesbian Body*. Monique Wittig, Beacon Press, Cambridge, MA: 1973.

*La Edad de Oro*. José Martí, Editora Corripio, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: 1983.

**Howardena Pindell**

*Impacts of Racism on White Americans*. Benjamin Bowser and Raymond Hunt, eds., Sage Publications, Newbury Park, California: 1990.

*Black Robes White Justice: Why Our Legal System Doesn't Work for Blacks*. Bruce Wright, A Lyle Stuart Book, New York: 1987.

*When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. Paula Giddings, Bantam Books, New York: 1984.

**Adrian Piper**

*The Critique of Pure Reason*. Immanuel Kant (translated by Norman Kemp Smith), St. Martin's Press, New York: 1958.

*Alice in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass*. Lewis Carroll, illustrated by John Tenniel, Modern Library, London: no date.

**Ishmael Reed**

*Breaking Ice: Anthology of Black American Poets*. Terry MacMillen, ed., Viking Penguin Books, New York: 1990.

*Stranger from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans*. Ronald Takaki, Penguin Books, New York: 1989.

*And We Sold the Rain: Contemporary Fiction from Central America*. Rosario Santos, ed., Four Wall Eight Windows, New York: 1988.

**Luis J. Rodriguez**

*Roof Top Hyper*. David Hernandez, Tia Chucha Press, Chicago: 1991.

*Poems Across the Pavement*. Luis J. Rodriguez, Tia Chucha Press, Chicago: 1989.

*Life According to Motown*. Patricia Smith, Tia Chucha Press, Chicago: 1991.

*We Are All the Black Boy*. Michael Warr, Tia Chucha Press, Chicago: 1991.

**Molra Roth**

*Making Waves: An Anthology Of, By and About Asian American Women*. Asian Women United of California, ed., Beacon Press, Boston: 1989.

*Unequal Sisters*. Carol DuBois and Vicki L. Ruiz, eds., Routledge, New York: 1990.

*Making Face, Making Soul—Haciendo Caras: Creative and Critical Perspectives by Women of Color*. Gloria Anzaldúa, ed., Aunt Lute Foundation Books, San Francisco: 1990.

**Peter Selz**

*Art in a Turbulent Era*. Peter Selz, UMI Research Press, Ann Arbor: 1985.

*Rupert Garcia*. Exhibition Catalog, Harcourt Gallery, San Francisco: 1985.

**Andres Serrano**

*The Great Gatsby*. F. Scott Fitzgerald, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York: 1925.

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. As told to Alex Haley, Ballantine Books, New York: 1964.

**Maureen Sherlock**

*Count Julian*. Juan Goytisolo (translated by Helen Lane), Serpent's Tail Press, London: 1974.

*The Wretched of the Earth*. Frantz Fanon (translated by Constance Farrington), Grove Weidenfeld, New York: 1968.

*Civil War in France: The Paris Commune*. Karl Marx and V. I. Lenin, International Publishers, New York: 1940.

*Women on the Edge of Time*. Marge Piercy, Knopf, New York: 1976.

**Hilda Shum**

*The Forbidden Stitch: An Asian American Women's Anthology*. Shirley Geok-lin Lim and Margarita Donnelly, eds., CALYX, Corvallis, OR: 1989.

*Making Waves: An Anthology Of, By and About Asian American Women*. Asian Women United of California, ed., Beacon Press, Boston: 1989.

**Victor Alejandro Sorell**

*This Is Not a Pipe*. Michel Foucault (translated by James Harkness), University of California Press, Berkeley: 1983.

*Images of Conscience: The Art of Bill Walker*. Victor Alejandro Sorell, ed., University Galleries, Chicago State University, Chicago: 1987.

*Body/Culture: Chicano Figuration*. Elizabeth Partch, ed., University Art Gallery, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, CA: 1990.

**Carlos Villa**

*Mixed Blessings*. Lucy Lippard, Pantheon Books, New York: 1990.

*Bilingual Catalogs from INTAR*. Various exhibition catalogs from INTAR Gallery, New York: 1987-90.

**Peter Wright**

*Everybody's Political What's What*. George Bernard Shaw, Dodd Mead & Co., New York: 1944.

*Book of Words*. Ivor Brown, Jonathan Cape, London: 1942.

*Apologia pro Vita Sua*. Cardinal John Henry Newman, Longman's Green & Co., London: 1945 (first published in 1865).

*Armando Rascon is an artist, curator, and co-director of TERRAIN, an art space in San Francisco.*