

ABOUT MARINA ORTIZ

Born and raised in East Harlem/El Barrio and the South Bronx, Marina Ortiz has drawn from her personal background and experience to craft an innovative, versatile body of work that includes prose and spoken word; broadcast, print and web-based journalism; digital photography; video production; civic and community activism; and other forms of cultural and political expression to highlight her experience as a stateside Puerto Rican woman in support of social justice.

ADVOCACY JOURNALISM / PHOTOGRAPHY

Marina is an avid documentarian of cultural and political activities and other daily aspects of the East Harlem and Nuyorican universe. Since 2004, she has maintained an extensive online photographic catalogue heralding significant arts and cultural events, and honoring community leaders and local artists. Her photography is regularly featured on popular websites and frequently published in promotional flyers, brochures, newsletters, journals, and annual reports. Her work has also been published in such newspapers as *Siempre*, *Tiempo NY*, *Latin Week NY*, and the *New York Daily News*.

From 1992 to 2000, Marina served as an associate producer and co-host of Pacifica-WBAI Radio's "Latino Journal," "Friday Talkback!" and other news and arts programming. From 1993 to 1994, she was the station's publicist and the editor of its bi-monthly program guide, *The WBAI Folio*. Her opinion columns have been published in *Liberator*, *El Pitirre*, *The Daily Challenge*, *The Shadow*, *The New York Planet*, *IndyMedia*, and *Tiempo NY*. She is also the founder and editor of popular websites and social networks such as www.eastharlempreservation.org and www.virtualboricua.org.

In 2007, Marina co-authored a video and research paper, "East Harlem Focus: A Community Facing Transition," documenting the neighborhood's rapid and transformative change. The video was screened locally and initiated community forums and a panel discussion that was aired over Manhattan Neighborhood Network.

Since 2008, Marina has produced eight short videos on the impact of neighborhood gentrification that are regularly published on social networking sites such as "East Harlem Voices" and occasionally screened at neighborhood meetings.

COMMUNITY ACTIVISM

Marina is the founder and president of East Harlem Preservation, Inc., a volunteer advocacy organization that seeks to preserve and promote the neighborhood's rich cultural, architectural and environmental diversity. In such capacity, she works with local residents and advocates on such issues as the closure of local houses of worship, environmental and healthy food inequities, anti-warehousing and predatory equity campaigns led by affordable housing advocates, neighborhood opposition to large-scale commercial developments, the cultural and historical significance of street / outdoor public art in East Harlem.

In 2008, Ms. Ortiz was the plaintiff in a lawsuit that successfully challenged the privatization of public parkland on Randall's Island. In 2009, she and other plaintiffs again stopped the City of New York from proceeding with yet another plan to gain unequal access to public parkland. Marina continues to monitor and challenge the city's attempt to circumvent ULURP and other legal requirements in order to provide out-of-district private schools with long-term control over public parkland during prime-time, after-school hours. She regularly presents testimony on environmental issues at NYC Council

hearings and has recently partnered with local environmental advocates to address the health risks of artificial turf in public parks.

EDUCATION

Marina holds a bachelor's degree in media communications from Hunter College/CUNY. She graduated Cum Laude in 1986 with minors in both Urban Affairs and Black & Puerto Rican Studies. Marina has continued to supplement her education with non-credit courses at The New School, New York University, the Fashion Institute of Technology, the School of Visual Arts, the Community News Production Institute, and the East Harlem Business Capital Corporation.

AWARDS

Marina Ortiz was a recipient of the 2010 "Mujeres Destacadas Award" a recognition given annually by El Diario La Prensa to the most outstanding women in the Latino community. In 2009, she was awarded an East Harlem Individual Artist grant from the Association for Hispanic Arts and a New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods award from the Citizen's Committee for NYC. In 2007, Marina received a community service award from Las Mujeres del Barrio/Women of El Barrio and a diversity scholarship from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

CIVIC / VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Ms. Ortiz regularly lectures on environmental issues and East Harlem history, and conducts walking tours showcasing local artwork and historical landmarks for visiting students and educators. She has been featured in dozens of newspaper articles and radio, film and video reports on East Harlem.

Ms. Ortiz also provides low-cost and pro bono communications training and support to a number of East Harlem-based organizations, and often partners with such local agencies to produce neighborhood events, street dedications, community art installations, and public memorials for community leaders.

Since 2004, she has lent e-media support to community-based arts and advocacy organizations such as Art for Change, Community Voices Heard, NYC Park Advocates, and Picture the Homeless, and the East Harlem/El Barrio Anti-Displacement Task Force. Marina has collaborated with the Historic Districts Council, the Municipal Arts Society's Community-Based Planning Task Force, the East Harlem Historical Organization, and the Puerto Rican Photographic Society's NYC Collective.

Ms. Ortiz also serves/d on the Board of Trustees of the Ministry Trust, Manhattan Community Board 11, the Harlem African Burial Ground Task Force, the Communities IMPACT Diabetes Center Task Force's Cultural Trails and Photo Voices Subcommittees, Harlem Community Partnerships to Reduce Cancer Disparities CAB, Union Settlement Home Care Services' Quality Assurance and Improvement Advisory Committee, El Museo del Barrio's Annual Three Kings Day Parade Advisory Committee, and the Harlem River Park Task Force.