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## Prelude and Chorus to Rainbow Shoes: A Poet-Opera

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### Cover Page Footnote

This article is from an earlier iteration of *Diálogo* which had the subtitle "A Bilingual Journal." The publication is now titled "Diálogo: An Interdisciplinary Studies Journal."





Photos by Marixsa Alicea

Born in Chicago in 1970, Eduardo Arocho has been writing and teaching poetry since 1992. During this time he has performed at many venues throughout the Chicago area, especially with The Guild Complex. He has been a poet in residence for The Poetry Center of Chicago (Hands on Stanzas Program) and Gallery 37. His publishing credits include: *OPEN FIST: Anthology of Young Illinois Poets*, by Tia Chucha Press, 1993; *POWER LINES Anthology*, by Tia Chucha Press, 2000; *EL CENTRO JOURNAL* Center for Puerto Rican Studies, Hunter College New York, NY, 2001. His first self published chapbook *Poems Behind The Máscara*, was released in October of 2002. Eduardo recently appeared in a cameo role in the feature film *URBAN POET*, by New Film Productions, 2003. He is currently working on a new collection of poems to be completed in the summer of 2004. Contact him at [chivejigante@hotmail.com](mailto:chivejigante@hotmail.com)



# Prelude and Chorus to Rainbow Shoes: A Poet-Opera

I don't want to be seen dead  
on Division Street.

I want to be seen alive  
Walking with pride  
On *Paseo Boricua*.

I want to be rainbow  
From shoes to *máscara*  
Full of horns - rainbow  
Under *bandera*

I'm waiting for *la parada*  
I'm waiting for *la marcha*  
I'm waiting for *la protesta y fiesta*  
Under *bandera*

The skyline has changed  
*La Division* is not the same  
I'm louder than ever  
Under *bandera*

I want to look up at *bandera*  
and count the many times  
my soles have walked back and fourth  
many times higher than The Sears Tower

On this street, were I was born  
On this street, where I went to high school  
On this, my old and new neighborhood  
Where I dine and dance - celebrate the past

Chicago! I know what lies  
East of the Western Avenue border  
The gentrified lots  
My memories - erasing

You didn't let me live  
in Cabrini O'Green.  
You didn't let me live  
in Lincoln Park.  
You treat me like a stranger  
in Wicker Park.  
But I was born in Humboldt Park.

Here we clean the street, and cook a feast  
For Chicago will visit this piece of *Paseo*  
as we sing to tourists and commuters:

*Paseo Boricua* is Renaissance  
It took fifty years to become  
New San Juan

And now that *bandera* is metal  
And pointing to the stars  
United in rebirth - no more - divisions

*Paseo Boricua* is Renaissance  
the cameras, the buildings  
are filling up with art  
And now the poets  
Have joined the *bomba* drums  
Reviving spirits in Humboldt Park

Potawatomi, I know you were here  
German, Jewish, Polish, Russians  
Norwegians Ice-skated here. Today  
when I march in pride - Mexico is at my side  
*Paseo Boricua* is Renaissance.

We have five hundred years  
Before the flags come down  
Until then, I'll sing with the crowd:

Nunca para la parada  
When they sing a poet-opera

I want to be rainbow  
From shoes to *máscara*  
Full of horns - rainbow  
Under *bandera*

Nunca para la parada  
When they sing a poet-opera

I'm waiting for *la parada*  
I'm waiting for *la marcha*  
I'm waiting for *la protesta y fiesta*  
Under *bandera*

Nunca para la parada  
When they sing a poet-opera

The skyline has changed  
*La Division* is not the same  
We're louder than ever  
Under *bandera*

by Eduardo Arocho  
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