

Centro Looks Ahead

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After Its 40th Anniversary Celebration

As Centro comes off the year-long celebration of its milestone 40th anniversary in February, at age 41 we look forward to growing bigger and even better, continuing to work hard to affirm our commitment to promoting the understanding, preserving and sharing of the history of Puerto Rican migration.

Centro was born on February 26, 1973 into a world of social turmoil in the U.S. Established by a coalition of CUNY students, community activists and academics from the fledgling Puerto Rican Studies Departments of colleges and universities, Centro was designed, its founders wrote, to promote the emergent field of Puerto Rican studies as a “crucial nexus for the study of economic, political and cultural processes of import ranging far beyond the social problems of a single minority concentrated in one United States city.”

Centro’s origins were rooted in the largely black and Puerto Rican student-based efforts to secure both open admissions access to public higher education and the creation of ethnic studies academic programs. Particularly in the earlier decades Centro filled a void in scholarly resources and critical research studies.

Over the years Centro has augmented its scope and introduced many new projects, particularly those using technologies that allow us to do what was only dreamed of 40 years ago. So starting at 41, we now look forward. Already in the works are initiatives for reaching more and more of our community online, including live streaming many of our events and engaging wider audiences through our various social media platforms; expanding our publishing potential of books, art and our important in-house research, with the recent opening of the online [Centro Store](#) [2]; increasing our presence nationwide in tune with the resettlement of Puerto Ricans from the New York area to the South, Midwest and West; and digitizing the Library and Archives so Centro’s collections are more easily accesible and useful to researchers, students and faculty and general public.

Make sure to stay connected with Centro. This spring semester we are planning a series of events

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including a panel in March on Pura Belpré, which will focus on her role as an activist as well as a storyteller, stressing how she helped form political ideology in children, In April, Centro will also present the new book, *The AmeRícan Poet: Essays of the Work of Tato Laviera* and a research panel titled Puerto Ricans at the Dawn of the New Millennium, which will cover new research on social, economic, political and health conditions of the Puerto Rican population in the United States. A Meet the Author event in May will feature the book about the contemporary artist *Pepón Osorio*, by Jennifer González. Both González and the artist will be presenting. All events are open to the public.

To learn more about Centro, visit our website at <http://centropr.hunter.cuny.edu> [3].

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