4-15-1998

On "Looking" Ethnic

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.13023/DISCLOSURE.07.14

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Recommended Citation


DOI: https://doi.org/10.13023/DISCLOSURE.07.14

Available at: https://uknowledge.uky.edu/disclosure/vol7/iss1/14

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On “looking” ethnic poem

I became ethnic the day I left my fruit filled “exotic” island of yellows, greens, and red rainbows and arrived at the continent made of cement paved skies of dark shadows and pale faces with piercing bright “un-ethnic” eyes where my brown skin became the bullet that penetrated the beasts blue heart my ethnicity is the proof of my demise and sometimes my existence I am ethnic, I act ethnic, I eat rice and beans with platanos, I wear hot pink and orange outfits in the coldest day of the winter season I dress my taina face with bright red lipstick accentuating my overly enlarged African lips the scent of my ethnic perfume of the ripe island fruits I left behind somewhere in the Caribbean ocean I shake my ethnic hips to the rhythm of conga beats and dance to the rituals of my ancestors I cannot hide the burning fire in my warrior speech which yells to the world my “ethnicity!”

Hilda Llorens is a graduate student in anthropology at the University of Connecticut. © 1998 disClosure, No. 7, Committee on Social Theory, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY. p. 181.