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EL PaPeR Magazine

The Line Issue

abril - mayo 2016 | SCL NYC

Magazine
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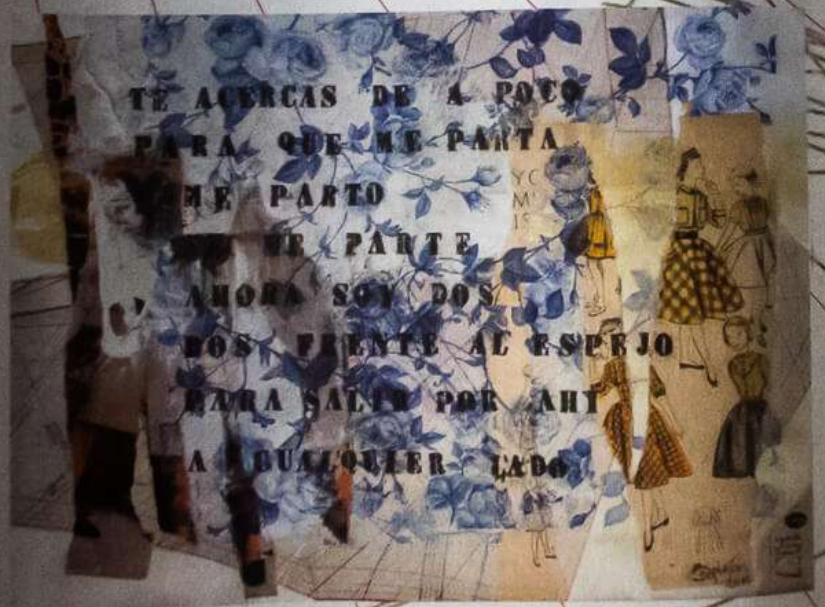


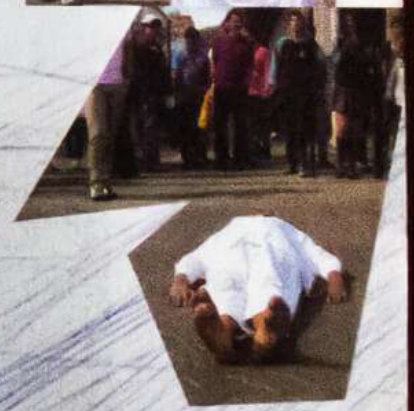
LORETO SAPAÍN, "SOMOS DOS," COLLAGE AND LETTERPRESS, 2015

Ya está claro: morir en una yola no es la solución. El allá, el aquí, el mundo, la maleta de sueños con perico ripiao' incluido, los boletos para subirse en un tren ima¬ginario y mirar¬morir por la ventana. La isla se sigue hundiendo en medio de las olas que vienen por todos lados; —usted se salva si trae oro escondido en la carte¬ra, usted se salva solo si habla inglés y paga con dólares en este Nueva York chiquito, usted se salva si tiene las rodillas blanquitas, usted se salva si quiere salvarse y por eso lee la biblia, usted se salva, usted está salvo en este espejo de país de la mierda, en este Caribe que se ahoga en las palmeras y los motoconchos, ¿Y qué?— en el Norte: corren; en el Sur: la tierra arde; en el Este: los hoyos de las calles son cráteres y; en el Oeste: no se es¬cuchan voces. Seguimos siendo isla, isla donde ser ar¬tista es ser el diablo, un dato geográfico en algún lugar, demografía atestada de palmeras y de costas. Una lla¬ma de tres colores con un escudo católico en el centro. Horas santas, comida, todo lo que se pueda escon¬der en el bote que estamos armando para irnos. Ganamos un torneo donde el premio era una pe¬lota de medias y un diccionario con tres palabras que no estaban incluidas en el diccionario anterior Antenas y todo lo que te puedas imaginar en un techo, todo eso haciendo juego con un sol que parece volverse otra cosa. Flores que salen de la tierra y se pierden en los brazos de los espantapájaros formando un universo personal donde la música de fondo es un gagá, donde los morenos que han quedado vivos van bailando al ritmo de un-do-tré con sus brazos hinchados de tanto darle al son del pico a la calle y el sudor en la frente. Bajando, subiendo, dividiendo el pedazo de tierra en dos. ¿No caben dos? Sí. Da pa' lo do', para tres, para todo el que quiera morirse (pero no ahora), porque al final de la historia saldremos volando en un cometa y justamente en este tiempo es donde vemos ángeles y señoras rezando y señores que se van despertando los domingos. Arroz con pollo, arroz con habichuelas, arroz con huevo, todo en una misma habitación, al ritmo de un-do-tré mariposita linda e'. Yo particularmente, que he visto aviones aterrizando y edificios muy largos puedo dar fe que el Estadio Quisqueya un día cogerá candela por aquello de Duarte, Sánchez y Mella. Mamá Tingó dejó su corazón en la tierra y su sangre dio fruto a esta generación con el Caribe entre ceja y ceja.

A esta generación que se ha puesto la isla de sombrero y de escudo ante la guerra. A esta generación que inició al mismo tiempo que el cosmos nombraba a todos bajo el signo de Aries, sin importar que era diciembre u otro mes fuera del círculo y, no importa, porque lo que estamos haciendo es gritándole a todos estos hijos de la gran puta que nos escupen hacia un mundo de otredades, que el Caribe lo estamos reflexionando, limpiando, coordinando, transformando, viviendo, sintiendo, gozando, pensando, bailando, sufriendo, llorando, bañando el amor por esta media isla perdida. Esta media isla con una energía que nos harta al grado de querer salir de ella, pero cuando estamos allá ese mismo son nos hala como si fuera el imán de una metrópolis salida de la selva con un martillo en la mano y con un cuchillo en la boca se transforma todo en nada, en olor, en sabor, en cadencia, en humo y comenzamos a flotar, porque ya no hay fuerza para caminar, incluso algunos han perdido las piernas y otros han ganado más piernas: tienen de dos y de tres organizadas como filas. Dime ¿Cómo hemos podido (sobre) vivir aquí? Si no es declarándonos ser la isla y haciendo trucos de magia con el agua de coco, para mover montañas y guardar toda la caña en una caja o en un tubo donde ya nadie la vea, donde ya nadie nos haga esclavos, donde ya nadie nos venga a cambiar-comprar por oro.

I declare myself island

JOHAN MIJAIL
THANKS KEEP BY MARLENA GITTELMAN



JOHAN MIJAIL, "STAND OUT"

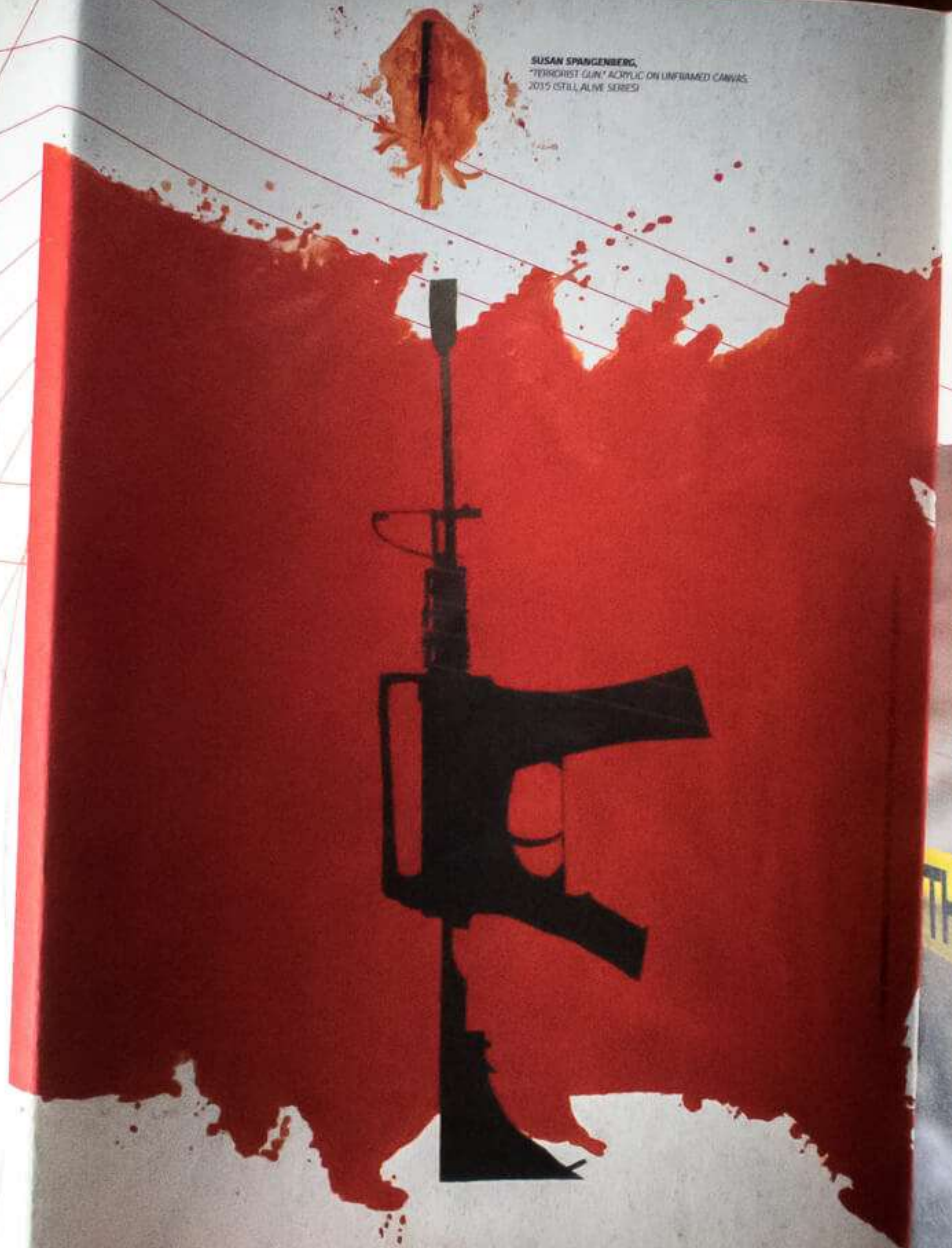
Me declaro ser isla

ROMAN MIGEL
TRANSLATED BY MARLENE GOTTLIEBMAN

It's already clear: dying in a yola is not the solution. The beyond, the here, the world, the suitcase of dreams with perico ripiao included, the tickets to board an imaginary train and look-die through the window. The island keeps sinking in the middle of the waves that come from all sides; —you save yourself if you carry gold hidden in your wallet, you save yourself only if you speak English and pay with dollars in this little New York, you save yourself if you have white-white knees, you save yourself if you want to save yourself and for that reason read the bible, you save yourself, you are saved in this mirror of a shitty country, in this Caribbean drowning in palm trees and motoconchos. And what?— in the North: they run; in the South: the earth burns; in the East: the streets' holes are craters and; in the West: you don't hear voices. We continue to be island, island where to be an artist is to be the devil, a geographic datum somewhere, demography crowded with palm trees and coasts. A tricolor flame with a Catholic shield in the center. Holy hours, food, everything you can hide in the boat we're building to leave in. We won a tournament where the prize was a ball of socks and a dictionary with three words not included in the previous Antenas dictionary and everything you could imagine on a roof, all of that paired with a sun that seems to become something else. Flowers that come out of the ground and get lost in the arms of scarecrows forming a personal universe where the background music is a gagá, where the dark-skinned people who are still alive keep dancing to the rhythm of un-do-tré with their arms swollen from hitting the streets to the sound of the pickaxe and the sweat on their foreheads. Lowering, raising, dividing the piece of earth in two. Two don't fit? They do. It's enough for two, for three, for everyone who wants to die (but not now), because at the end of history we'll fly out on a comet and right at this time is when we see angels and ladies praying and men starting to wake up on Sundays. Arroz con pollo, arroz con habichuelas, arroz con huevo, all in the same room, to the rhythm of un-do-tré mariposita linda e' I, personally, who have seen planes landing and very big buildings, can attest that the Quisqueya Stadium one day will catch fire because of that the Duarte, Sánchez, and Mella thing. Mamá Tingó left her heart in the ground and her blood bore fruit to this generation with the Caribbean between its eyebrows. To this generation who has put on the island like a hat and a shield against war. To this generation that began at the same time that the cosmos named everyone under the sign of Aries, without caring if it was December or another month outside the circle, and it doesn't matter, because what we are doing is shouting at all these sons of bitches who spit us to a world of othernesses, that we are reflecting, cleaning, coordinating, transforming, living, feeling, enjoying, thinking, dancing, suffering, crying the Caribbean, bathing the love for this lost half-island. This half-island with an energy that fills us to the point of wanting to leave it, but when we're there that same sound pulls us as if it were the magnet of a metropolis that emerged from the jungle with a hammer in its hand and with a knife in its mouth it transforms everything into nothing, into smell, into taste, into cadence, into smoke, and we start to float, because there's no more strength to walk, some have even have lost their legs and others have won more: they are organized in twos and threes like ranks. Tell me: How have we been able to survive here? If it isn't by declaring ourselves to be the island and doing magic tricks with coconut water, to move mountains and save all the sugar cane in a box or in a tube where no one would see it again, where no one would make us slaves again, where no one would come to trade-buy us for gold again.

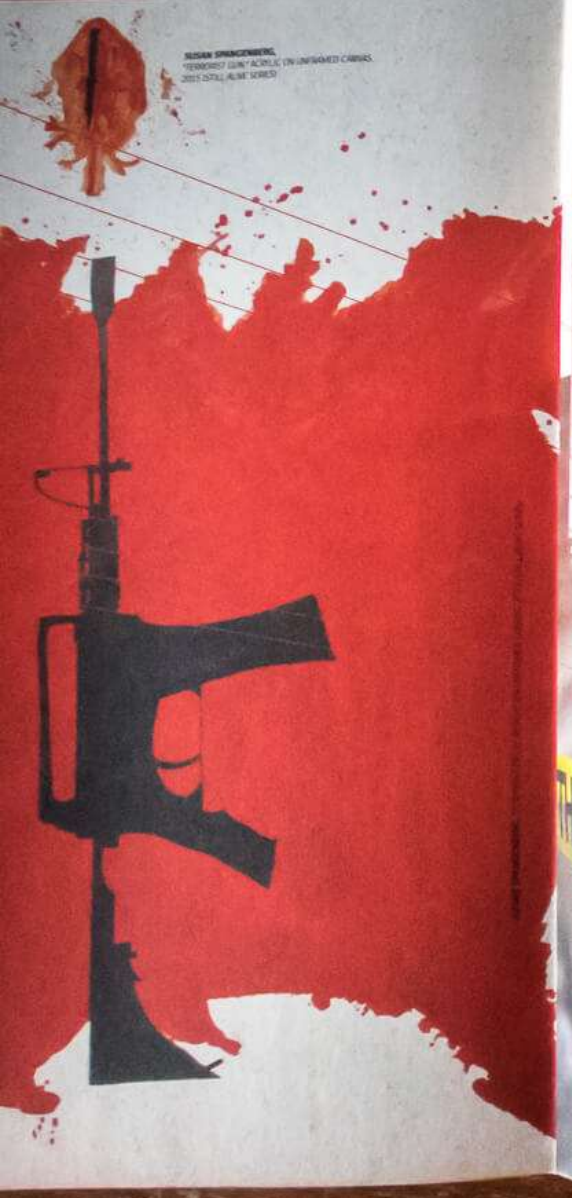
AMANDA THACKRAY, "UNTITLED" (PENCIL ON PAPER, 2014)

AMANDA THACKRAY, "UNTITLED" (COLOR PENCIL ON PAPER, 2013)



SUSAN SPANGENBERG,
"TERRORIST GUN," ACRYLIC ON UNFRAMED CANVAS,
2015 (STILL ALIVE SERIES)

ELIZABETH NEGRÍA,



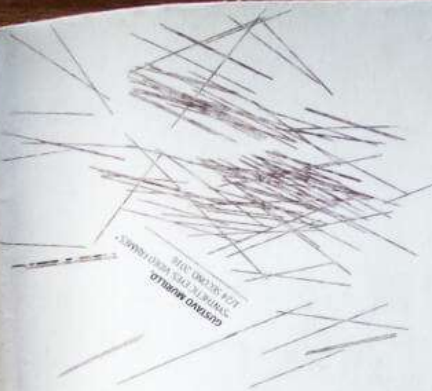
SUSAN SPANGENBERG,
"FEMINIST GUN," ACRYLIC ON UNFRAMED CANVAS,
2015 (STILL ALIVE SERIES)

THE PERFORMANCE IN ME, OR THE SHIT AND THE SIGN SCATOLOGICAL MINI-MANIFESTO

ELI NEIRA

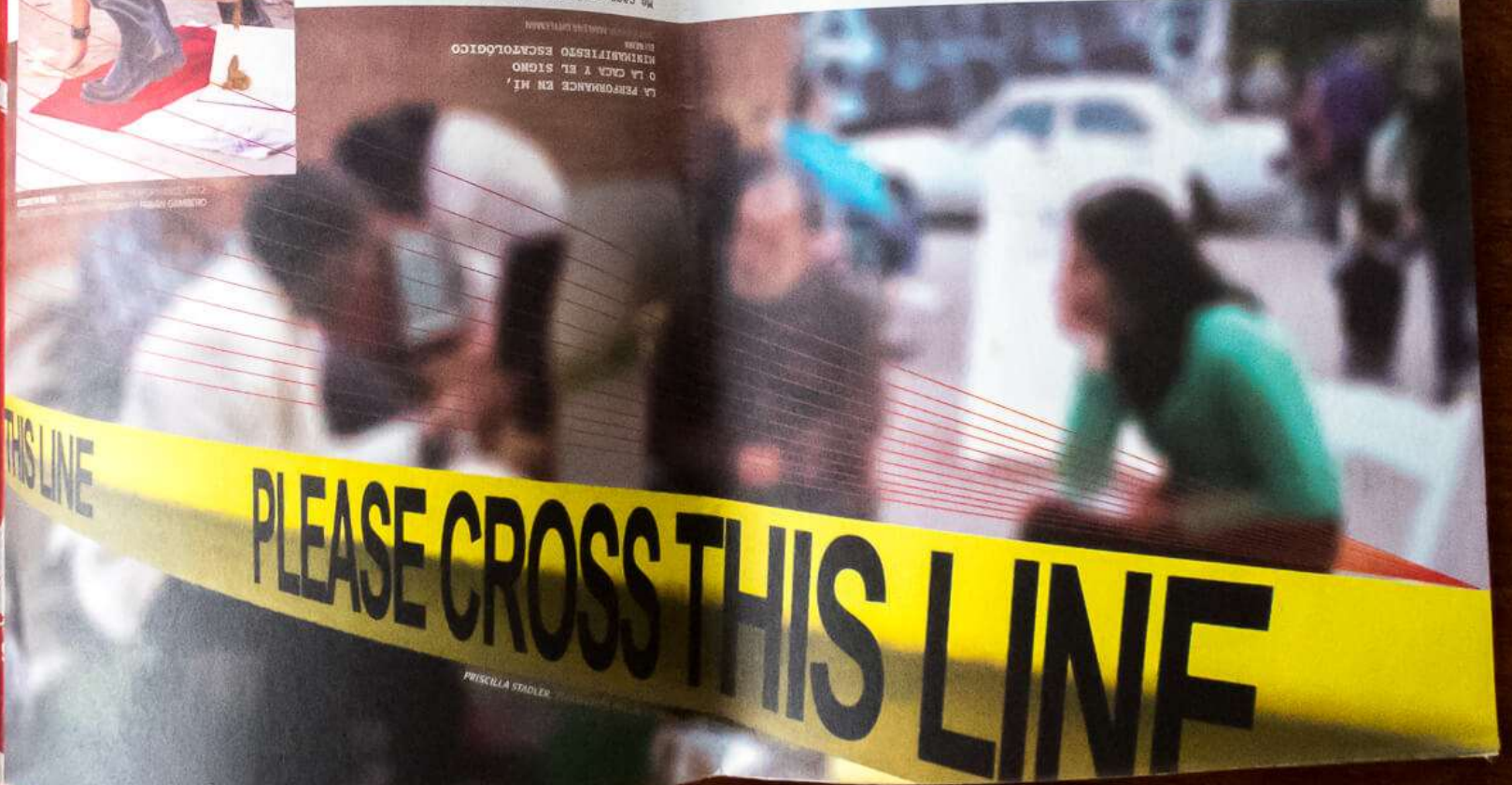
TRANSLATED BY MARLENA GITTLEMAN

I shit on Chile's Political Constitution because Chile's Political Constitution shit on me first. And not only did it shit on me, but on all of us. I super-shit on the Constitution, appealing to my legitimate right to complain, although this is nothing but an illusion.



GUSTAVO MORALES,
"THERE IS THIS BODY I LOVE,"
LEAD WELDING RODS, 2018

Aleksandr Rekin, "Tennis player,"
bronze, 2017-2018, 2018



PRISCILLA STADLER

CHEPINA HERNÁNDEZ.

CHEPINA HERNÁNDEZ.

141/86 — 139/100 — 139/84

Turns Out I Don't Know Shit

DAVID BROMLEY
TRANSLATED BY ELISA CLARK

There is a new coffee shop in Spanish Harlem. The tenement building that Uptown Roasters lives in is flaking paint all over. This is 110th and Lex, a place memorialized for pimps and hustlers by Bobby Womack and "Across 110th Street" Across from Uptown Roasters are the DeWitt Clinton housing projects. Other storefronts further down in the same building are basically like shells with groups of men in chalky Timberland boots moving in and out of darkened spaces. Occasionally on my way home from the subway I will see Latino men squatting in lawn chairs outside these shells and chewing on food from the to-go containers on their laps. I have been living in Spanish Harlem – East Harlem – SpaHa for 6 plus years and in marginalized areas of NYC for going on 20 years.

I walked into Uptown Roasters for the first time this morning, after months of sort of boycotting in my mind because this signified bad change as it was now deeply rooted in my marginalized neighborhood, which I also know is a highly flawed narrative (I am as much Spanish Harlem as the college kids from Michigan who live next door to us and just arrived in the big city at the beginning of summer). So as I crossed over from the street and entered the door of Uptown Roasters, the music of one of my favorite musicians, Elliot Smith, was playing in the coffee shop. Probably my bodega self was expecting bachata. Elliot Smith was such an expressive, soulful songwriter, but his music seemed specific to people from a certain demographic and socioeconomic class. In the back, two young white kids were at a table and I could see a David Lynch-looking guy typing on his computer. The coffee bar was unattended when I stepped in so one of the white kids, a tall boy in his twenties with a cap, sprung into action like a frat boy during pledge week.

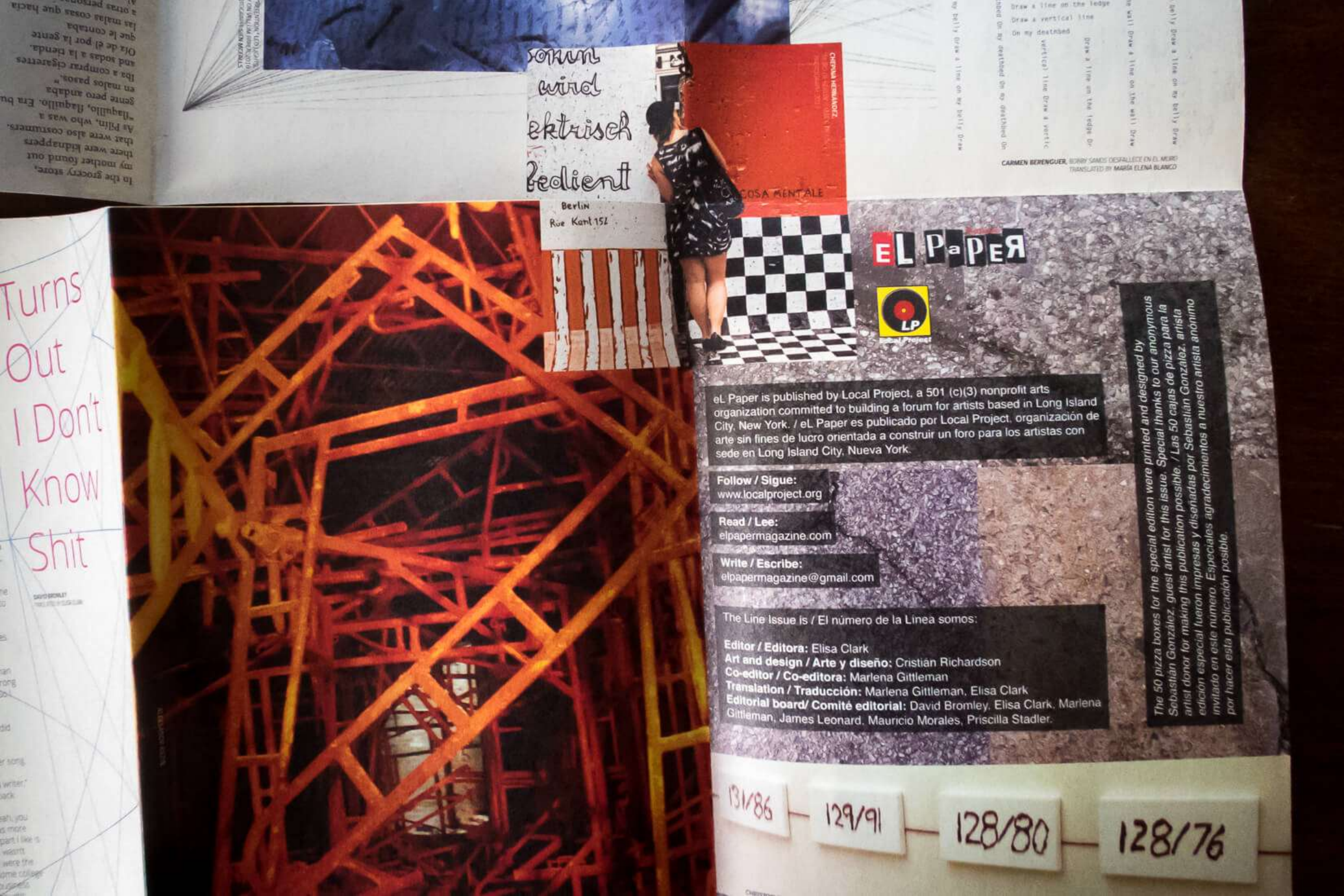
"Do you have iced coffee?" I asked. Tall white boy said yes. What the fuck was this?, I thought to myself. The best, whitest, whiniest Elliot Smith song was on the speaker ("Miss Misery"). You couldn't get more white-entitled than that. I couldn't take it. Everything that gentrifiers do wrong is being done wrong at this moment in East Harlem. So I said something borderline stupid but yet kind and representative of my Midwestern upbringing.

"I love this song, but in the context of East Harlem I did not expect."

And the tall boy looked back at his girl and said, "Yeah this is a weird mix," and he rattled off another song. "This is the Elliot Smith Pandora station?" I asked "Yes, we like to change over to jazz for Phil, he is a writer," motioning with his head to the guy typing in the back.

And then, because I liked the repartee, I said, "Yeah, you don't need words fighting with words." There was more conversation and more friendly banter but the part I like is when I start asking him about the business. He wasn't white like me. He was Peruvian. He and his girl were the owners of this establishment. They were not some college kids working the coffee bar. They were small business owners that knew about coffee. Holy crap, I thought.

Turns out I don't know shit. This is a beautiful place.


Turns
Out
I Don't
Know
Shit
Berlin
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COSA MENTALE
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131/86
129/91
128/80
128/76

The Grocery Store Across the Tex-Mex Border *(Poem No.11)*

EDGAR ULLOA

In the grocery store,
my mother found out
there were kidnappers
that were also costumers.
As Pilín, who was a
"flaquillo, flaquillo. Era buena
gente pero andaba
en malos pasos."
Iba a comprar cigarettes
and sodas a la tienda.
Oía de él por la gente
que le contaba
las malas cosas que hacía
a otras personas inocentes.
Algunos querían
prevenirla de él,
y le recomendaban que
cerrara la tienda cuando
él viniera en grupo.
Al final, dice mi madre,
"Pueblo chico,
infierno grande". La tienda
de abarrotes, empezaba
a convertirse
en una escuela pa
conocer
el
ser
humano.

The Grocery Store Across the Tex-Mex Border
(*Poem No.11*)

EDGAR ULLOA

In the grocery store,
my mother found out
there were kidnappers
and were also costumers.
Yo Pilin, who was a
"flaquillo, flaquillo. Era buena
gente pero andaba
en malos pasos."
Iba a comprar cigarettes
and salias a la tienda.
Ibas de él por la gente
que le contaba
las malas cosas que hacia
a otras personas inocentes.
Algunos querian
venganda de él,
y le recomendaban que
cerrara la tienda cuando
ellos entraran en grupo.
Al final dice mi madre,
"Pablo chico,
cierra grande". La tienda
grandemente, empezaba
a convertirse
en una escuela pa
remover
el
de
huesitos.

SUSANA SANCHEZ-ARCE, "UNA LÍNEA EN EL MURO" (A LINE ON THE WALL), 2016
PASTEL ON PAPER, 50 × 38 IN. (127 × 96.5 CM)

Resulta Que no sé un carajo

DAVID BROMLEY
TRANSLATED BY ELISA CLARK

REBECCA SUTTON, "SATELLITE"
LINOCUT PRINT ON PAPER, 2014

MARCIA HAFIF MARX, "BROTHERS," 1978
INK AND EMULSION ON WALNUT WOOD
PRIVATE COLLECTION, MEDELLÍN

Haz una raya en mi ombligo Haz una raya en mi ombligo
Haz una raya en la pared Haz una raya en la pared
Haz una línea en el muro Haz una línea en el muro
Haz una línea vertical Haz una línea vertical
Haz una raya en mi ombligo
Haz una raya en la pared
Haz una línea en el muro
Haz una línea vertical
sobre el lecho de muerte
sobre el lecho de muerte sobre el lecho de muerte
Haz una raya en mi ombligo Haz una raya en mi ombligo