On Campus

Sonnets on the Barrio

Fall 2012



This photo of poet Jack Agüeros, taken in the 1960s, is part of his collection given to Columbia.

Columbia’s libraries have acquired the papers of Jack Agüeros, a seventy-eight-year-old Latino poet, playwright, and political activist. The author of five books, Agüeros is best known for his sonnets about the struggles of Puerto Rican immigrants in the city. He directed El Museo del Barrio, a visual-arts center in his native East Harlem, from 1977 to 1986.

Today, Agüeros suffers from Alzheimer’s disease and can no longer write. His papers were donated by his children, who include Marcel Agüeros ’96CC, an assistant professor of astronomy at Columbia, and Natalia Agüeros-Macario ’12GSAS, who earned her master’s degree here in sustainability management. The materials

include unfinished manuscripts; newspaper clippings documenting Agüeros’s community activism; and videos of interviews and readings.

The acquisition marks the beginning of an initiative by the libraries and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race to collect the papers of Latino artists and activists.



Guide to school abbreviations

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