



leisure times

Bronx author, *Black Artemis*, celebrates release at art gallery

Bronx Author Sofia Quintero, whose pen name is Black Artemis, celebrates the release of her third novel, *Burn*, with a free book signing party at the Longwood Art Gallery at Hostos Community College at 5:30pm on August 2nd. Ms. Quintero, a writer, activist, educator, speaker, comedienne, and self-proclaimed "Ivy League homegirl," will read from her novel, give a brief Q&A, and sign copies of her book. The party will continue at 7:30pm at the Downtown Bronx Bar & Café with an additional reading by Ms. Quintero after the Downtown Bronx's featured poet George Tait.

Ms. Quintero earned a BA in history-sociology from Columbia University in 1990 and her MPA from the university's School of International and Public Affairs in 1992. After years of working on a range of policy issues from multicultural education to HIV/AIDS, she decided to heed the muse and pursue a career in entertainment. She co-founded the nonprofit Chica Luna Productions (www.chicaluna.com) to support other young women of color who wish to create socially conscious entertainment and recently co-created Sister Outsider Entertainment (www.sisteroutsider.biz), a multimedia production company that

develops quality urban entertainment for stage, screen and more.

Determined to write edgy, yet intelligent novels for women who love hip hop even when hip hop fails to love them in return, Sofia wrote her debut novel *Explicit Content* – the first work of fiction about female MCs in the hip hop industry. It was published by the New American Library/Penguin in August 2004. Booklist said of the novel *Explicit Content*, "Fans of Sister Souljah's *The Coldest Winter Ever* (1999) will find this debut novel just as tantalizing. . ."

Her second Black Artemis novel, *Picture Me Rollin'*, hit bookstores in June 2005. Bringing a fresh twist to the home-from-prison tale, *Picture Me Rollin'* tells of the story of a young Latina whose obsession with Tupac Shakur leads her on a quest to find self-love. Black Beat wrote of *Picture Me Rollin'*, "Black Artemis has penned yet another piece of hip hop fiction that'll have you at the edge of your seat 'til the very last page."

In *Burn*, her third Black Artemis hip hop novel, Ms. Quintero explores a critical, yet underappreciated element of hip hop subculture – graffiti. *Burn* is also a novel about the risks and consequences of pursuing alternatives when ordinary



Sofia Quintero

means fail. Through the eyes of her compelling anti-heroine, Jasmine Reyes, and her most diverse cast of characters yet, she continues to tackle relevant social issues including immigration and public health.

Of Black Artemis' main character: Jasmine has been one hustle after another for Jasmine Reyes. After her parents abandoned her and her twin brother Ja-

son, they often took to the streets in their quest to survive. When a violent episode results in her brother's arrest and suicide, Jasmine vows to find another way. She literally hustles to quit the game and eventually opens her own bail bond agency, leaving behind street life but holding onto her street smarts.

Burn will hit the book stores on August 1st with its book release party on August 2nd and an additional book signing at the Bronx's Barnes & Noble in Co-op City on August 5th. The Longwood Art Gallery @ Hostos book signing party and the literary readings at the Downtown Bronx Bar & Café are both sponsored by the Bronx Council on the Arts (BCA) and are segments of BCA's Bronx Culture Trolley. The book signing party is co-sponsored by Chica Luna Productions. Ms. Quintero has generously donated a portion of the evening's book sale proceeds to support the Bronx Council on the Arts in its mission to support Bronx artists and cultural institutions.

Hostos Community College is located at 450 Grand Concourse at 149th Street and the Downtown Bronx Bar & Café is located at 141 East 149th Street at Walton Avenue. For additional information call (718) 931-9500, ext. 33.