puerto pican discovery number 40, poem for evelina antonetty

to build a house
begin with mud
soft, cold, pliable to the touch
not too wet, nor dry
a smooth consistency
for shaping whole and solid

offer it to the sun
for strength and durability
wait until it is returned
hardened like the mountains

find the land that is close to your heart
measure the size of your plan
from it’s most extreme dimensions and depths of perception

draw a circle on the ground
pray there for one complete day
study the weather closely

build your foundations in exact proportions
engineering the details
of space, weight and balance

be careful to follow the path of the sun
draw your water from the moon

flatten the edges by a perfect plane
slowly laying in the walls, centuries of inheritance
each generation a floor
let the cornerstones be monuments to grandmothers
let the flower beds be celebrations to grandfathers
let the rooms divided up be tributes to brothers, sisters,
cousins, uncles, step-sons, daughters-in-law, parents and grandchildren

keep half of the closets–only half
get rid of pushers, dealers, wheelers, cheaters,
greedy landlords, and other social diseases
get rid of abuse, molestation and incest–get rid of it!
get rid of crime, nuclear war, attitudes that kill and destroy

just keep those places where tender memories are stored
that teach histories unwritten:
like chango chasing yemayá while oyá prays in the cemetery
somewhere in the heart of mozambique where obatalá is king

leave lots of space for windows, trees and sunsets
with a wide red door chiming songs of hope
opening easily to the touch,
yet strong enough to block out the flood
listen to the birds
watch the leaves falling and the new buds emerging
walk through the snow
be cleansed by the morning
bless yourself in the ocean
pray

and most important:
love the children—
love the children
love
the children.

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