OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

1. Name of Pro	perty		
historic name	Ponce Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) Building	
other names/site	number		
2. Location			
street & number	7843 Calle Nazaret Urbanización Santa Ma	ría	not for publication
city or town P	once		x vicinity
state Puerto		code 113	
3. State/Federa	Agency Certification		
requirements so In my opinion, t		lational Register Criteria.	
State Historic Pres	ervation Officer		ate Historic Preservation Office ency/bureau or Tribal Government
In my opinion, the	roperty meets does not meet the National Register of the Nation	criteria. Date	
F. 1.30 TO F. 100 L. 100	AND VINE		Table 10
Title		State or Federal ag	ency/bureau or Tribal Government

Name of Property	County and State
7. Description	
Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)	Materials (Enter categories from instructions)
Modern	foundation: Concrete
	walls: Concrete
	roof: Concrete
	other: wood

Ponce, PR

Narrative Description

Ponce YMCA Building

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The Ponce Young Male's Christian Association (YMCA) Building is a 1955, reinforce concrete, one story, Modern style building, located in the urban residential area known as Santa Maria in the Municipality of Ponce. Designed by architect Pedro A. de Castro y Gayá in 1953, the building became the second seat in the island for the Young Men's Christian Association (Fig. 1). In 1955, as part of the building's inauguration, a mural was donated to the facility. Located at the same location and untouched since 1955, the mural was painted by Rafael Ríos Rey specifically for the building and the institution, capturing in canvas the YMCA philosophical postures. Rafael Ríos Rey is considered by many the most important Puerto Rican muralist. This artwork is precisely the most significant feature of the building.

Narrative Description

The Ponce Young Male's Christian Association Building it's located at 7843 Calle Nazaret Urbanización Santa Maria. The building sits in a 6,349 square meters lot. The main façade faces south towards Calle Nazaret. The most significant features of the building's main façade is the asymmetrical ensemble of a reinforced concrete, entrance canopy - which consists of a segmented vault slab supported by a pair of catenary arches - and also a native stone-faced rectangular volume (Fig. 2). This ensemble breaks the extreme horizontality of the building's elevation.

The building's layout responds directly to his function. It consists of a main rectangular volume divided by a lobby. West of the main lobby, the space is distributed among a club room, director's office, administration office, receiving area facing the lobby, and three rooms that originally were reserved for boys, men and women. These last three side by side rooms, which are separated from the administrative area by a secondary lobby running east to west, are no longer divided by gender. Today, they are used as classrooms and day-care center.

Ponce YMCA Building	
Name of Property	

Ponce, PR	
County and State	

Pass the entrance facing east, the lobby opens up into an open room that serves as the lounge and game room, still following the 1953 design. The lounge's eastern wall is made out of the originals perforated clay blocks, allowing for natural light and crossed ventilation. Originally, the southern wall of the lounge room, facing Calle Nazaret, had glass louvered windows. These were removed during the early 1980s and replaced with perforated clay blocks. The lounge/game room is used for activities when large numbers of participants are expected. The floor in the lounge/game room, as in the rest of the main volume, retains the original 1955 native tiles (Fig. 3).

Rafael Ríos Rey's mural *El Hombre* is located in the western wall passed the building's main entrance (**Fig. 4**). The mural, approximately 0.12 m x 0.13 m, is oil painted in cloth adhered into the wall. It has Ríos Rey's signature in the lower left hand corner (facing the mural), along with the name of the mural, a dedication to Antonio Ferré Bacallao and the date October 55. The piece is surrounded by a three-foot high removable metal fence to protect it from the YMCA young visitors.

Pass the reception area, the lobby turns into a corridor that runs northerly towards the second volume of the building. This section has an L-shaped asymmetrical layout. The section contains the exercise room, a gymnasium, a small lounge room, showers, locker rooms and storage rooms. The building has several exits to access the outside patio, where many athletics activities are conducted in a daily basis. There is a 1960s swimming pool at the northwest corner of the lot and a 1953 hipped metal roof basketball court, built by the YMCA before the building was completed. The **Ponce YMCA Building** retains a high level of integrity.

8. Statement of Significance	
Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)	Criteria Considerations
A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.	(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply) Property is:
B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.	owed by a religious institution or used for religious A purposes.
C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.	B removed from its original location. C a birthplace or grave. D a cemetery.
Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	E a reconstructed building, object, or structure. F a commemorative property.
	G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Ponce YMCA Building	Ponce, PR
Name of Property	County and State
Areas of Significance	7 TO 10 TO 1
(Enter categories from instructions)	Significant Person
Art	(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)
	Cultural Affiliation
	Architect/Builder
Period of Significance 1955	Architect/Builder Ríos Rey, Rafael (muralist)

Period of Significance (justification)

As the significance of the property resides in its historic association with the muralist production of Rafael Ríos Rey, the year corresponding to the timeframe the mural was painted (1955) is the period of significance

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph

The **Ponce Young Male's Christian Association (YMCA) Building** is of statewide significance under Criterion C as the property is the depository of an extremely important piece of art, Rafael Ríos Rey's mural *El Hombre* (The Man). The mural was painted in 1955, especially designed for the Ponce YMCA Building. Rafael Ríos Rey is considered by many the most influential and important Puerto Rican muralist, whose work reflected better than any other plastic artist, the crucial economic, political and social changes that transformed the island by mid-20th century.

Narrative Statement of Significance

The building1

The YMCA Building is a 1955, reinforce concrete, one story, Modern style building, located in the urban residential area known as Santa Maria in the Municipality of Ponce. Designed by architect Pedro A. De Castro y Gayá in 1953, the building became the second seat in the island for the Young Men's Christian Association. The building reflects an important period of transition between styles in the local architectural language. During the early 1950s, promoted by the State and the private interests, the Art Deco, the Spanish Revival and the Neoclassic lost ground to the Modern and International Style.

The YMCA Chapter in Ponce was established during the late 1940s. Before the construction of the building, the meetings and activities of the Board of Directors were conducted on a room made available to them in City Hall. Early in the 1950s the YMCA began a campaign to collect funds in order to build two new facilities, one in Ponce and the other in the city of Mayaguez. Among the members of the Board was Luis A. Ferré, member of a distinguished local family, an already well known Captain of Industry and future pro-statehood governor of Puerto Rico, whose brother, Jose A. Ferré, also a member of the YMCA, had already a close working relationship with muralist Rafael Ríos Rey. It was assigned to Luis A. Ferré to head the committee responsible to find the proper site for the new building.

In 1951, the National Council of the YMCA, with headquarters in New York City, assigned architect Samuel Nock to assist the local chapter in the search for the right place and the proper design of the future building in Ponce. The National Council indicated the necessity that the building had to be planned in a way that could house different groups together, such as adults, boys and girls under suitable conditions for each separate group. Nock made a sketch plan of the preliminary organization of the building that included the layout for the equipment in the food service facility, the gymnasium, swimming pool, and special fixtures such as urinals, bath floors and the furniture of the building. The local architect selected would make the actual plans and drawings, based on the recommendations of the National Council.

In 1952, after considerable difficulty in locating a site, due mainly to the high prices requested by the sellers, the YMCA Ponce Chapter secured a lot of 6,349 square meters in the then growing residential area of Santa María. The lot belonged to the American Railroad Company who agreed to sell it for \$12,720.91. Once again, with the lot secured, Luis A. Ferré was assigned to find an engineer to make the topographic plan of the grounds and to hire the architect to design the building. For this last task, architect Pedro A. de Castro y Gayá was chosen. The actual construction was given, on competitive bid, to Lopez & Pérez, Builders.

The groundbreaking ceremony for the **Ponce YMCA Building** took place on September 10, 1953. After an uphill battle to maintain the construction funds through membership quotas, corporate donations and personal contributions, the new building was completed at a cost of \$113,378.00 and inaugurated on February 22, 1955. A few months later during the same year, to celebrate the opening of the facility, Antonio Luis Ferré Bacallao, father of Luis A. Ferré and founder and president of the family's industrial complex, donated the mural "El Hombre", commissioned to Rafael Ríos Rey precisely for this occasion. At a special activity, Ferré Bacallao unveiled himself the mural, while his son, Luis, presented the work and the artist to the public (**Fig 5**).

¹ The information pertaining the Ponce YMCA Building was extracted from 1950s original memos and letters kept at the facility. Digital copies of these documents are maintained at the PRSHPO.

The mural

The mural *El Hombre* is located in the western wall passed the building's main entrance (**Fig. 6**). Its size and images capture the visitor as soon it reaches the main lobby. The mural painting technique is oil in cloth adhered directly into the wall. Its size is approximately twelve feet in height and thirty-two feet in length.

The work represents the historic development of the western civilization. From left to right, as the observer faces the mural, Ríos Rey produced images that could be read as a history book: our prehistoric ancestors stamping their pictorials signatures in the dark corner of a cave; the Sphinx and the great pyramids of Giza, the Mayan calendar and sculptures of the Assyrian period. The Greek civilization comes alive in the three classic capitals and in the Jupiter's temple column. Near the Acropolis, just below Myron Eleuthero's Discus Thrower and the Winged Victory of Samothrace, Ríos Rey placed the busts of some of the greatest thinkers of the Ancient World: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Hippocrates and others. Towards the center Ríos Rey brought the ancient Rome of the Caesars, with the mythological she-wolf Lupercus, that fed Romulus and Remus, located between the Coliseum and a viaduct.

The cathedrals bring the middle Ages. Dante marks the transition towards the Italian Renaissance. No better representative from this period that the figure of Leonardo da Vinci trying his flying machines. The democratization of the human knowledge is represented through the figure of Johannes Gutenberg and his movable type printing machine. This side of the mural brings the images of historic figures associated to crucial historic events: Christopher Columbus, the Wright Brothers, Washington Carver, Thomas Alva Edison, Alexander Fleming and Albert Einstein. Science shares this stage with the strength of the written word represented in the figures of William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes. The extreme left ends with the arrival of the modern times with its cities and its skyscrapers, the heavy industrial production and a set of iron beams that seems to extend into the future.

All these characters loose preeminence when compare with the center figures in the mural. These center figures are highlighted through a more intensive use of colors and shades. The image of Christ dominates the stage. Rios Rey brought into the canvas the Augustinian conception of Christ as the center of history. Every great human action and product depicted in Rios Rey's mural is obscured by the projected strength of the theological figure. Christ's disproportionally huge hands are a particular strong philosophical discourse. Those hands are protecting the other center figures in the mural: a group of Puerto Rican children that are about to start a simple baseball game. It's precisely in this segment of the mural, where Rios Rey's social project unveils: the coming together as a team of youngsters that obviously come from different social and racial backgrounds, speaks of the author involvement with the populist movement spread through the island during those crucial years. Four of the multicolor racial children, Rios Rey's brilliant and subtle way to emphasize the complexity of the Puerto Rican ethnicity, have each one a sequence of letters in their shirts spelling YMCA. In a wider scope, Rios Rey captured the essence that has sustained the western civilization: art and science, industry and religion, knowledge and faith.

Located at the same original spot and untouched since 1955, Rafael Rios Rey's mural has been the perfect background and the silent partner of all the athletic, educational and social activities conducted at the **Ponce YMCA Building (Fig. 7)**. The work represents a significant piece of art from the most significant Puerto Rican muralist. The artwork is historically integrated into the building, making the **Ponce YMCA Building** a property of statewide significance under Criterion C.

Northing

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

Archivo de Arquitectura y Construcción de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (AACUPR). Plans for the Ponce YMCA Building. De Castro & Hardesty Inc. 1953.

Documents and Photographs from the Ponce YMCA Building Archives.

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form Cover Document. Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980. 2011

Previous	documentation on file	(NPS):	Pr	imary location of addi	tional data:	
prelin Requ previo previo desig recorr	ninary determination of ested) ously listed in the Nation ously determined eligible nated a National Histori ded by Historic America	individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been nal Register e by the National Register c Landmark	<u> </u>	C State Historic Preser Other State agency Federal agency Local government University C Other		
		Number (if assigned):				
10. Ged	graphical Data					
(Do not i	include previously l	57 acres isted resource acreage) on a continuation sheet)				
1 19	752251	1992570	3			
Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing	
2			4			

Zone

Easting

Verbal Boundary Description (describe the boundaries of the property)

Northing

Zone

Easting

Lot of six thousand three hundred and forty nine (6349) square meters, as recorded at the Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM), under number 389-072-807-03.

Boundary Justification (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The nominated property includes the entire lot historically associated with the building.

Ponce,	PR	
County ar	nd State	

name/title	Juan Llanes Santos / Historian	
organization	Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office	date April 17, 2012
street & num	nber PO Box 9023935	telephone 787-721-3737
city or town	San Juan	state PR
e-mail	jllanes@prshpo.gobierno.pr	

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

• Maps: A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- Continuation Sheets
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Building's main façade; looking northwest; 0001

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Building's main façade; looking northeast; 0002

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Lounge; looking northeast; 0003

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Mural "El Hombre"; looking west; 0004

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Mural "El Hombre"; looking southwest; 0005

1 of 6.

Name of Property: Ponce Young Male's Christian Association

City or Vicinity: Ponce

County: Ponce State: PR

Photographer: Juan Llanes Santos

Date Photographed: November 9, 2011

Description of Photograph(s) and number: Mural "El Hombre"; looking northwest; 0006

1 of 6.

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(Expires 5/31/2012)

United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980.

Section number 7

Figure 1. Ponce YMCA Building, 1955.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building	_
Ponce, Puerto Rico	
Rafael Ríos Rev. A Puerto Rican Muralist 1911-1980	

Section number 7

Figure 2. Ponce YMCA Building, 2011.



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Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

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Figure 3. Lounge/game room, 2011.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce, Pu	uerto Rico

Section number 7

Figure 4. Rafael Ríos Rey's mural, El Hombre.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

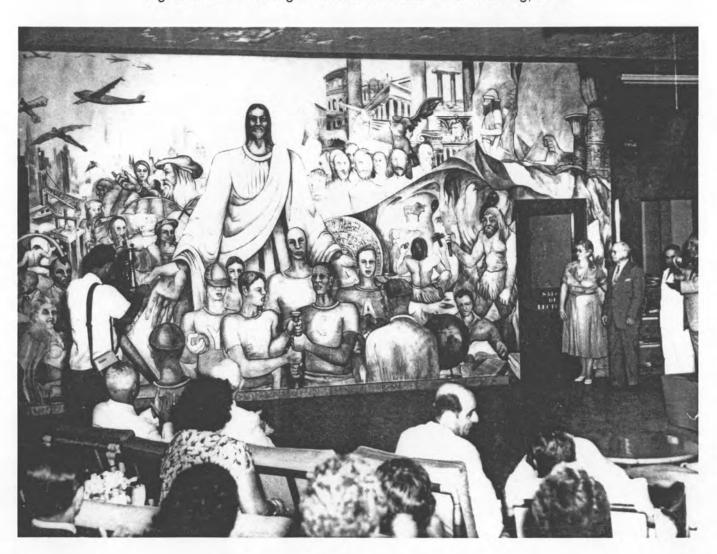
Ponce YMCA Building

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

Section number 8

Figure 5. The unveiling of El Hombre at the YMCA Building, 1955.

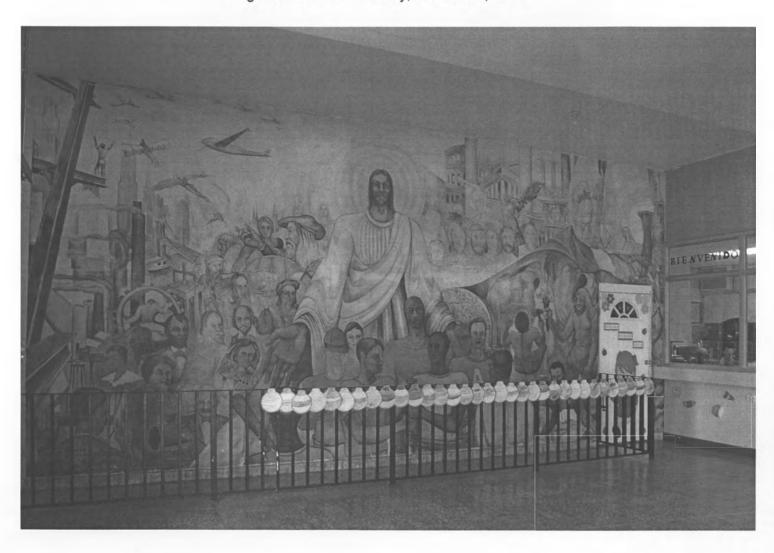


National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Ponce,	Puerto Ric	0	

Section number 8

Figure 6. Rafael Ríos Rey, El Hombre, 2011.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

Section number 8

Figure 7. The mural as the perfect bacground. (1960s photos)



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building	
Ponce, Puerto Rico	
Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980	

Section number 8

Figure 7. Continuation....(Photo, 1960s)



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building

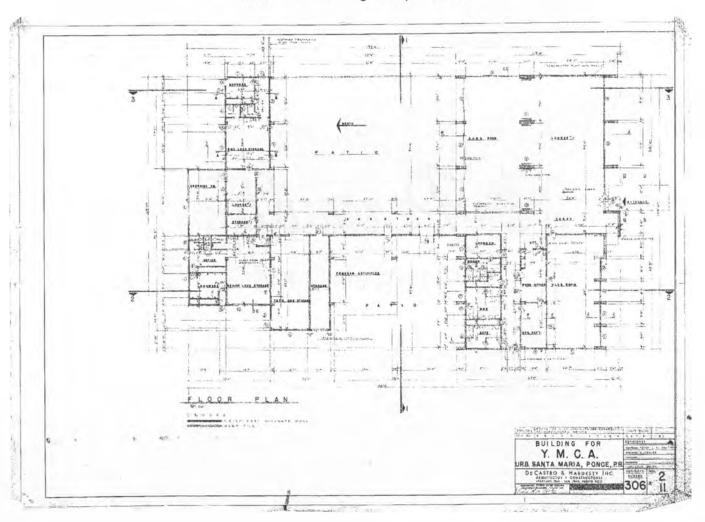
Ponce, Puerto Rico

Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

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Ponce YMCA Building floor plan, 1953.



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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

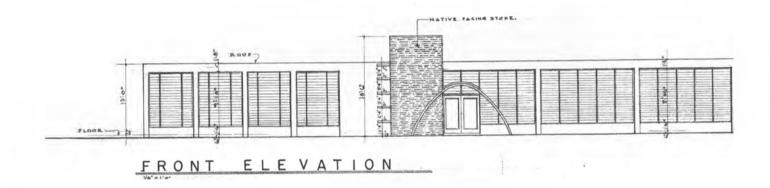
Ponce YMCA Building	
Ponce, Puerto Rico	
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Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

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Page 10

Ponce YMCA Building elevation, 1953.



National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Ponce YMCA Building

Ponce, Puerto Rico

Rafael Ríos Rey, A Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980

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Ponce YMCA Building site map (source: Centro de Recaudaciones de Ingresos Municipales (CRIM))



Ponce YMCA Building

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION				
PROPERTY Ponce YMCA Building NAME:				
MULTIPLE Rafael Rios Rey MPS NAME:				
STATE & COUNTY: PUERTO RICO, PO	nce			
DATE RECEIVED: 4/27/12 DATE OF 16TH DAY: 6/04/12 DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:	DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/18/12 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/13/12			
REFERENCE NUMBER: 12000331				
REASONS FOR REVIEW:				
APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LAN OTHER: N PDIL: N PER REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR	IOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N			
COMMENT WAIVER: N	. / /			
ACCEPT RETURN REJ	ECT <u>6/4/2012</u> DATE			
ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:	MPS			
AN expressive mural that Consines &	L. Di sevenne-t at the time.			
AN expressive mural that Consines the ethor of the YMCA and the Socral Justice Concerns of Riesto Rica government at the time. Excellent Modernest Blog (1955)				
Excellent Modernest Blog (195.	5)			
RECOM./CRITERIA Augt C				
REVIEWER Jim Embles	DISCIPLINE			
TELEPHONE	DATE			
DOCUMENTATION see attached comme	ents Y/N see attached SLR Y/N			
If a nomination is returned to to nomination is no longer under co				













OFICINA ESTATAL DE CONSERVACIÓN HISTÓRICA OFICINA DEL GOBERNADOR

STATE HISTORIC
PRESERVATION OFFICE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR





April 17, 2012

Ms. Carol Shull National Park Service National Register of Historic Places 1201 "I" Eye Street, N.W., 8th floor (MS 2280) Washington, D. C. 20005

MULTIPLE PROPERTY DOCUMENTATION FORM RAFAEL RÍOS REY, A PUERTO RICAN MURALIST, 1911-1980/NOMINATION PONCE YMCA BUILDING

Dear Ms. Shull:

We are pleased to submit for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places this multiple property submission consisting of the Multiple Property Documentation Form, Rafael Rios Rey, a Puerto Rican Muralist, 1911-1980 and the nomination Ponce YMCA Building, located in the Municipality of Ponce, Puerto Rico.

Should you have any questions on the nomination, please contact Arch. Berenice Sueiro, AIT, Deputy SHPO, at 787-721-3737 or at bsueiro@prshpo.gobierno.pr.

Sincerely,

Carlos A. Rubio Cancela

Carly anthr

State Historic Preservation Officer

CAR/BRS/JLS/img

Enclosure

