

## **Xicanx (after Zoe Leonard)**

**By Litia Perta**

Yo quiero unx \_\_\_\_\_ for president. Yo quiero unx Xicanx for president. Xicanx por lo que Amy Sanchez-Arteaga me ha dicho, que "Xicana is the radical indigenous version of Chicana. BUT! Xicanx is the radical indigenous/gender inclusive version." Por eso y mucho más: Yo quiero unx Xicanx for president. Yo quiero unx anti-racista, feminista, Black Lives Matter, colectivx trabajadorix, bruja radical for president and someone quién aprendió inglés como segundo, tercer, cuarto idioma for vice president so we can finally have someone in that office quien entienda bien que el inglés isn't the only language of "America"—and how intimately tangled up language can be in history's horrors: colonial, neocolonial. (Recuerda bien lo que dice M. NourbeSe Philip que "English is a foreign anguish.") Yo quiero lo que Gloria Anzaldúa ha descrito as: "a composite, amalgama de culturas y de lenguas—a woman who loves women" for president. Someone who might say, as she does, "Call me de las otras. Call me loquita, jotita, marimacha, pajuelona, lambiscona, culera" and also "una puta mala, a tejana tortillera"—words nearer to "dyke" like Zoe Leonard uses in the piece that gives this piece its breath. I want all them for president too. Yo quiero una presidente que nunca haya estado on the right side of the border and so knows at the level of the flesh que las fronteras de todas partes tienen una sola intención y es la de dividirnos, conquistarnos. Yo quiero alguien que necesite refugio for president, someone whose body has huddled long hours in cold, crowded boats with hundreds of other bodies buscando un modicum de paz, only to find gates, barbed wire fences, and the racism of diplomatic stalemates. Yo quiero una presidente criada sin agua potable, someone crisped by the sun or the wind from standing outside hardware stores or nightclubs esperando trabajo, someone who came here from somewhere else para escapar war, famine, drought, violence to their bodies, violence to their minds, and found instead "America." Yo quiero someone who understands que ni la tierra ni el medio ambiente tiene borders y mientras estamos protegiendo lxs borders, people of the earth are suffering, dying because of la mentira de fronteras y todo lo que protegen—y todo lo que no pueden proteger. Yo quiero alguien que entienda lo profundo que es lo que dice Douglas Kearny that I read in that essay by Dawn Lundy Martin that made me get on my knees and weep for skin: "GOD we cry / because nobody do us like the

body." Yo quiero alguien whose desire is unruly, whose body has never fit, who feels outside even with outsiders, alguien como Jess Arndt describe que tiene—que es—"a body that is an antitoxin, a counteragent to every shade of sex abuse slinking back for generations," "with two dicks and five pouches and three holes...that no one can kick out of bathrooms"—"a body that spurts fountains," a body that feels deeply that we are these fleshthings together and that "compartmentalizing and alienating each other" like "Tepunk, el nepantlero espectral" said is just another kind of border, and so another kind of lie. Yo quiero alguien así for president. Y quiero también una persona who has defaulted on their student loans, hospital bills, their mortgage payments, credit cards, someone who drank the water in Flint and knows what all these forms of intentional government poisoning taste like. And I want someone who has been in jail, who is not allowed to vote, who has been in the hold and who has been in the hold too long—I want them all for president too. Y quiero alguien que pueda tejer entre nosotros un superpower de crear "refugios de placer ante el desastre" como nos dice lx colectivx feminista Invasorix. And twenty-four years after Zoe wrote what she did, I want someone for president who unmakes what "president" even is, who messes it up so bad they tear it down, because what is a president anyway but someone who presides over and who sits before? Y lo que yo quiero en este momento no es alguien que pueda sentarse ante nosotros but someone who instead is finally ready to stand up with us, to fall with us, to get down with us, to march with us and move with us, and dance with us and sing with us and laugh with us and change...And if there is any sitting to be done, let it be done together and among and not before.