

My video, titled “If I Were May,” was inspired by the text of the same title by Carlos Rigby. When I received the assignment for the creative project, I immediately tried to find poets from the Caribbean coast I might be able to find work from, and found that there were very few accessible through the internet, and even fewer accessible in English. Carlos Rigby was one of the few poets who had been praised who was from the Caribbean coast, and he has a very interesting relationship with language, one that’s very Nica—though his first language was Creole English, he wrote in Spanish because it was the language of poetry and academia in his mind. Therefore, few of his works are available in his native language.

This rather strange situation reminded me of a quote I read from a transcript from an SIT project in the center, I’m afraid I can’t remember which. It was from a youth on the Caribbean coast who complained that they were always taught about Ruben Dario and never “their own” poets. This really inspired me to want to make a video that helped highlight the voice of one of “their own” poets, and swayed me away from the idea of writing my own poem. Instead, to put my own perspective in with someone else’s words, I decided to make a video.

When collecting the footage for this project, I was very careful about what I wanted to collect. Much of what I filmed were simply things that otherwise I might have taken a photo of to look back upon fondly—a beautiful shoreline, or a statue in a park. Instead, I filmed these moments to try to capture more than just the visual of the moment, but some of the ambient sound and spirit of the Caribbean coast. I felt this would help further bring to life the words from Rigby’s poetry.

I very intentionally tried to avoid filming local people’s face for this project, though there are some shots of the backs of heads, my classmates, and one very quick and, for me, complex, shot of the children from Rama Cay. While I knew I wanted to represent the actual people who

lived on the Caribbean coast, I didn't want to exploit or dramatize the conditions they lived in, which, from a Western eye, can sometimes appear to be lesser than or unacceptable. Instead, I wanted to highlight the beauty and life that can be found on the coast, and added small human elements here in there to try to not present the coast as a human-less Lion-King-esque wild place. My exception to this, of course, were the Garifuna dancers, who I felt comfortable including because they had given permission for filming and were in the midst of a performance.

I hope this video preserves the memory of this trip and teaches people about an important poet in Nicaragua history, as well as an important part of the country. I learned a lot about video editing and enjoyed making it.