

Spanish bookstore pops up in Chelsea neighborhood in New York City

Artist Pablo Helguera opens Spanish-language bookstore due to high number of Spanish-speakers in the city.

BY [MONIKA FABIAN](#) / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2013, 1:00 PM



To get his bookstore started, Pablo Helguera held book and fundraising campaigns for the tomes in Mexico. He also gifted his art to friends and family in exchange for their book donations.

In a city where one in four citizens speaks Spanish, it both surprised and saddened artist Pablo Helguera to watch New York's Spanish-language bookstores close over the years.

The number of Spanish-speakers in the city "is an astonishing figure-it's like the entire city of Puebla in Mexico, two million people," says Helguera, a Mexico City native who's called New York home for 15 years.

So Helguera did something about it. Last month, he "opened" Librería Donceles, the city's only Spanish-language used bookstore, at the Chelsea gallery Kent Fine Art through Nov. 8.

Bibliófilos -- book-lovers in Spanish -- can browse and buy the rare finds, most of which would never be found in local stores, Helguera says.

"It's always the same stuff: a couple of famous writers, a cookbook, a New Age, and a self-help book-that's about it.

"It doesn't show the diversity of what the publishing industry in Spanish has produced over decades."

To get his bookstore started, Helguera held book and fundraising campaigns for the tomes in Mexico. He also gifted his art to friends and family in exchange for their book donations, but soon realized he'd never collect enough.

Helguera then contacted a newspaper reporter who ended up writing about the project.

"That was like the beginning of a huge cascade of books from all over the country," he says.

Helguera raised enough money to bring about half of 27,000 books he amassed. He intends on donating the proceeds from his "itinerant bookstore" to Mano A Mano, a local organization dedicated to the celebration of Mexican culture.

<http://www.nydailynews.com/latino/spanish-bookstore-pops-chelsea-neighborhood-nyc-article-1.1484140>