In a Time Of Discord, A Gift of Art

A huge event finds hope in a mixture of Los Angeles and Latin America.

LOS ANGELES — I guess there’s a God. During one of the meanest passages in American national politics within living memory, we’re getting a huge, historically corrective, morale-raising cultural event, one that lasts four months and hits on many of the major social topics of the day: racism, sexism, aggressive nationalism. True, the hugeness of the thing is a problem, and the contents are uneven. But it’s a gift, worth a trip to puzzle over and savor.

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA
Through January at more than 70 institutions in Southern California; pacificstandardtime.org

And if the timing is right, that’s semi-accidental. The event, called “Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA,” is the latest of three successive multi-venue extravaganzas in and around this city, spaced several years apart, and bankrolled by the Getty Foundation. The first was an overview of art in Southern California from 1945 to 1980; the second was devoted to architecture and design. The current edition is more tightly focused: on the long, mutually formative cultural exchange between Latin America and the Los Angeles region, considered through exhibitions at some 70 institutions, large and small.

The theme is inherently loaded. Latin American art has had shamefully little museum attention in a county that is, statistically, nearly 40 percent Spanish-speaking. So “LA/LA” is definitely a catch-up gesture. And when research began on the project several years ago, few participants could have anticipated the anti-immigrant, and specifically anti-Mexican sentiment of the next administration, summed up by the recent suspension of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program by President Trump and in the persistently circulated “Build the Wall” meme of his election campaign.

One “LA/LA” exhibition, “The U.S.-Mexico...continued on page C18

A detail from a mural by the Oaxacan artist collective Tlacolulokos, at the main branch of the Los Angeles Public Library.
In a Turbulent Time, a Gift of Art in Los Angeles

HOLLAND COTTER | ART REVIEW

LA has a habit of stirring up matters, and in so doing it has always been a place of artistic expression. In 1980, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), which had been founded in 1938, opened its doors to a new audience. This was a time of turbulent change in the city, with the rise of Chicano art and the emergence of a new wave of cultural expression.

Today, LACMA is once again a hub of artistic activity, with a new wing dedicated to Latin American and Brazilian art. The museum’s collection includes works by some of the most influential artists of the 20th and 21st centuries, including Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and Rufino Tamayo. The new wing, which opened in 2006, is a testament to the city’s commitment to cultural diversity.

The exhibition “The Americas: A Cultural History” is a fitting companion to the new wing, as it explores the rich cultural history of the Americas from pre-Columbian times to the present day. The exhibition includes works from all over the Americas, from the Aztec and Inca civilizations to the modern-day cultures of Mexico, Peru, and Brazil.

Among the highlights of the exhibition are works by some of the most important artists of the 20th century, including Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera, and Rufino Tamayo. These works are displayed alongside a range of other objects, including textiles, ceramics, and works on paper, which provide a comprehensive view of the artistic and cultural history of the Americas.

The exhibition is a must-see for anyone interested in Latin American art, and it provides a unique opportunity to explore the rich cultural history of the Americas. Whether you are a seasoned collector or a first-time visitor, you will find something to enjoy in this fascinating exhibition.