

PST: LA/LA: IT'S ABOUT TIME (//WWW.PAINTHISDESERT.COM/FIELD-NOTES/PST-LALA-ITS-ABOUT-TIME)

9/18/2017

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Artists and curators featured in Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA stand as a group at the Getty Center on Tuesday. Photo Ed Fuentes

In a time of strategic hostility by an administration that is creating a cultural climate change, a pass through PST: LA/LA shows the entry point of Latino art as truth is represented by, of all things, walls.

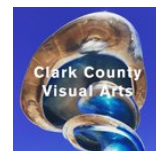
The weeklong scurry of storytellers shuffled onto shuttles began last Tuesday: a massive speed date with

ABOVE: A border patrol agent stands in front of a wall that fronts JR's installation ([http://www.paintthisdesert.com/field-notes/baby-at-the-border-jr-raises-questions-about-immigration-and-walls](#)) at the U.S-Mexico border. September 6, 2017. Photo by Scott Bennett.

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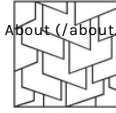
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SANTA FE DESERT
want to decree that American art history has a Latino legacy waiting to be chronicled and analyzed, with more to come.

About (/about.html)



BARRICK
MUSEUM
OF ART

(<https://www.unlv.edu/barrickmuseum/>)

On day one, after the world was welcomed to PST: LA/LA at the Getty Center, vans were power rides of art writers, reporters, and scholars. The one I was on had writers who assigned themselves to be transported to the Los Angeles River in the San Fernando Valley, a site where muralist Judy Baca would narrate her masterpiece, The Great Wall of Los Angeles, the mural that converted a concrete channel into monumental art object. Baca is herself a vanguard storyteller, driven by finding memories prompted by the land to unearth stories. Baca, and SPARC (<http://sparcinla.org/>), plan to add decades of history to the 2,754 foot mural by evolving the traditional process of directly painting on substrate to creating final images in-house, then affixing them to the concrete banks.



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Judy Baca gives a tour of the Great Wall of Los Angeles. Photo Ed Fuentes

On that tour, before the visit to The Great Wall, there was a stop at the Skirball Cultural Center to be introduced to "Another Promised Land: Anita Brenner's Mexico." As a reporter and anthropologist, the Jewish-Mexican Brenner documented Mexican art and artists of the 1920s and 1930s before they were known in the U.S. Befriending this art elite, including Los Tres Grandes (José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, and David Alfaro Siqueiros), the iconic Frida Kahlo, the influential Jean Charlot and Tina Modotti, and with the help of a young photographer by the name of Edward Weston, Brenner chronicled art from Mexico and identified it as an indigenous Renaissance.



Skirball Cultural Center graphic for "Another Promised Land: Anita Brenner's Mexico" with 1926 photo of Anita Brenner by Tina Modotti. Photo Ed Fuentes

It was fitting that the final stop on the same shuttle was at the Autry Museum of the American West for "La Raza," named after the newspaper, which later expanded into a magazine, that was alternative press with low-budget graphics and powerful photojournalism that documented and empowered the Chicano movement. The exhibition is anchored by an interactive viewing station that allows black and white photographs to be studied and reviewed with the touch of a finger. It gives the space a fellowship between low- and high-tech use of document-as-art medium and activism.

The centerpiece may very well be the enlarged frame of shots taken in front of the Silver Dollar Cafe, during the moments that, it was later learned, occurred before and after Los Angeles Times reporter Ruben Salazar was slain by an L.A. County Sheriff's deputy. Patches of overexposure in the photographs almost eradicate frames of time, a sequence that if lost shows the fragility of truth.



"The Killing of Ruben Salazar" wall at "La Raza" exhibition in the Autry Museum of the American West. Photo Ed Fuentes

Shows with artifacts risk having no context, but that certainly isn't the case in the "La Raza" exhibit's homage to the Chicano movement and alternative media. The context and symbolism deepens when it's seen in the same afternoon as learning of Anita Brenner's contributions as a cultural liaison and the Great

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TAGS

(V) PST: LA/LA is not only about fierce politics pulled from archives; there is elegant contemporary abstraction to be seen as well. Another day of shuttles introduced writers to Guadalajara-based artist Jose Dávila's "Sense of Place," a concrete cube that will be taken apart and the pieces dispatched to selected spots in Los Angeles. The pieces will later return from their street-side residency as-is and be restored as a cube.

At Pomona College, "Prometheus 2017: Four Artists from Mexico Revisit Orozco" has Isa Carrillo, Adela Goldbard, Rita Ponce de León, and Naomi Rincón-Gallardo use Orozco's 1930 mural, "Prometheus," still in Fray Hall, as a prompt for installation, video, and, of course, illustrations on walls inside the Pomona Museum of Art

That is another power of art exhibitions that PST: LA/LA has shepherded through: that it is not enough to be introduced to works that define Chicano art, or Latino art in California, but to exchange ideas from different institutions, some outside Los Angeles County, so larger connections can be made. Clearly, visitors will see Latino art is more than just murals: it's boundless contemporary ideas that cross borders of mediums freely with no restriction of protocol.



Ernesto de la Loza in front of a photo of his mural, "Resurrection of the Green Planet," at La Plaza de Cultura y Artes. Photo: Ed

Fuentes

Since Mexican muralism lives by metaphors, one can look at "¡Murales Rebeldes! LA Chicana/o Murals under Siege" at LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes as an exhibition that demonstrates a broad goal of PST:LA/LA. These collected stories of lost murals, saved fragments, sketches, photos, and testimony are on display across the street from a piece lost to cultural censorship: David Alfaro Siqueiros' "America Tropical."

As one of many choices of PST/LALA, "¡Murales Rebeldes!" shouts that although Latino art and artists may be whitewashed, destroyed, or hidden, the Latinx art movement is far from needing restoration. It is active, and not just within this generation, but decades prior, and is declaring it will move ahead without fear.

Another Promised Land: Anita Brenner's Mexico.

Skirball Cultural Center (<https://www.skirball.org/exhibitions/another-promised-land-anita-brenners-mexico>)

Through February 25, 2018

The Great Wall of Los Angeles: Judith F. Baca's Experimentations in Collaboration and Concrete

October 14, 2017 to December 16, 2017

LA Raza

Through February 10, 2019

Autry Museum of the American West (<https://theautry.org/exhibitions/la-raza>)

Sense of Place

LAND (<http://nomadicdivision.org/exhibition/jose-davila/>)

Through May 18, 2017

Prometheus 2017: Four Artists from Mexico Revisit Orozco

Pomona College of Art (<https://www.pomona.edu/museum/exhibitions/2017/prometheus-2017>)

Through December 16, 2017

¡Murales Rebeldes! L.A. Chicana/o Murals under Siege

LA Plaza De Cultura y Artes (<https://muralesrebeldes.org/>)

Opens September 23, 2017. Runs through February 27, 2018.



For a full list of events and exhibitions:

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA

September 2017 - January 2018 (<http://www.pacificstandardtime.org/>)

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"LA RAZA" examines the photography and the alternative press of the Chicano Movement —currently on view @TheAutry bit.ly/2gjShPi



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