

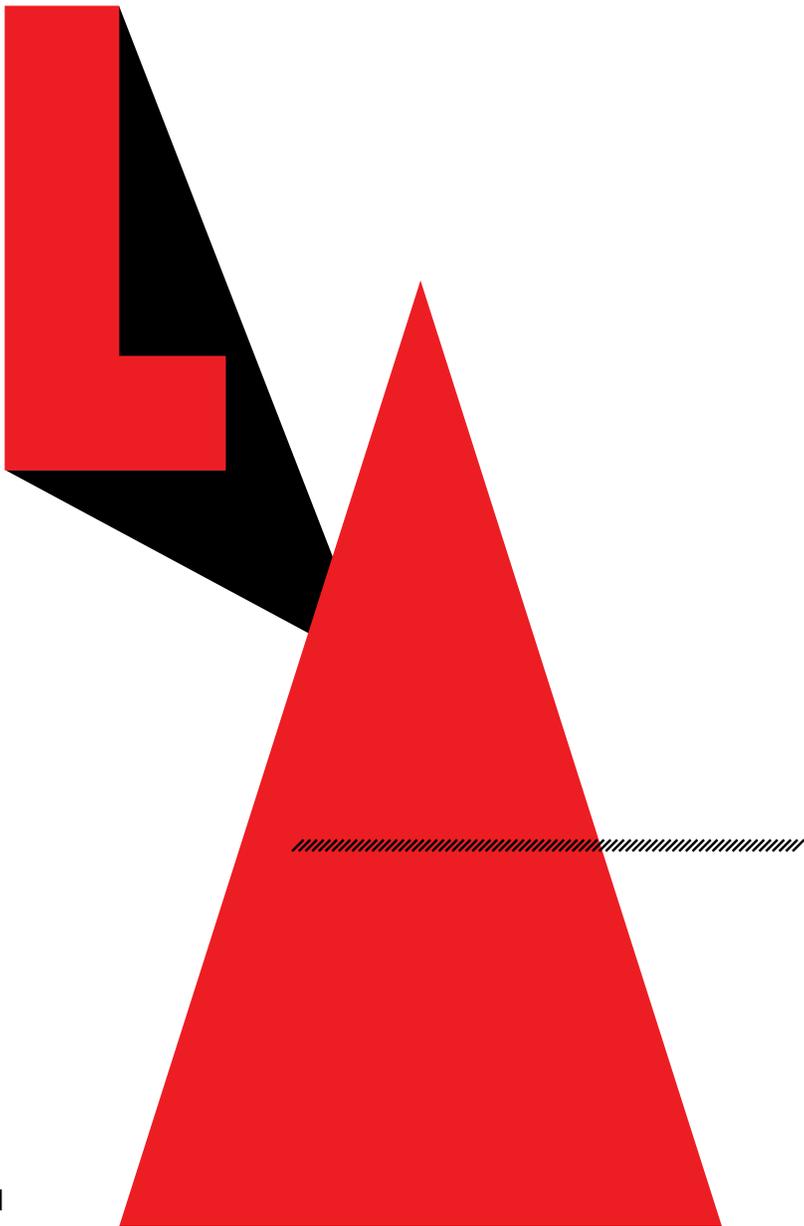
**CITIZEN JOURNALISM
PROJECT** //



**AUTRY
MUSEUM**
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

TheAutry.org/LaRaza | #AutryLaRaza #PSTLALA
citizenjournalism@theautry.org

Vol. 1, Issue 2, Winter/Spring 2017/2018



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The Autry is proud to support the work of the Citizen Journalism Project. To encourage the free flow of expression and dialogue, we have avoided a heavy-handed editorial approach. All of the views and opinions contained within this publication solely reflect those of the individual contributors.

FOREWORD

We created this zine in order to celebrate the work of the women and men who, in the late 1960s and 1970s, contributed to the pages of *La Raza*. Also, we wanted to recognize the continuing need for citizen journalism, and we hoped to engage with the Los Angeles community in a new way. We invited residents from across Los Angeles County from various backgrounds to participate in our project by serving as citizen journalists for their communities. We asked them to share their community's challenges, successes, issues, and stories with us. We left the definition of "community" to the discretion of each participant, and they defined the concept in many ways, including community as gender, ethnicity, religion, neighborhood, and even basketball teammates.

Their submissions overwhelmed us. In truth, we were unsure what we would receive, but we were not prepared for the sheer number of submissions, their incredible artistic quality, or the richness of their storytelling. We received almost 400 photographs, essays, poems, and artworks—far too many to easily share with the public. Using a rubric that evaluated each piece on newsworthiness, artistic quality, and originality, we reduced the number of entries considerably. Even after narrowing the number of submissions, we had too many for one publication, so we decided to create two volumes for our inaugural publication run. We organized the volumes based on patterns in the content. What remained consistent throughout each volume was that the stories of Los Angeles's residents reveal a struggle with issues that are at once historical and contemporary, and which often mirror larger challenges facing the country.

The first volume, "Signs of the Times," focused on two topics: women's rights and immigrants' rights. Perhaps these themes struck a chord with our participants because of our current political climate (we recruited our participants in January and February 2017), but visitors to the Autry's *LA RAZA* exhibition will see that these were also pressing issues during the Chicano Movement. Just as in the 1960s and 1970s, Angelenos' responses to these topics prove varied: they exhibit a fear of what may happen to friends and family, pride in community, doubts about our public institutions, and a general sense of frustration. Throughout these pieces, there was a consistent desire for recognition and respect. Clearly many of the issues that animated *El Movimiento* remain unresolved.

The second volume, "LA: LA," provides a nuanced vision of life in Los Angeles. Borrowed from the name of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time project, the volume's title refers to the complex stories of Los Angeles's residents. They are not all transplants from back East—many are third-, fourth-, and even fifth-generation Angelenos. And they are not all searching for that fabled fifteen minutes of fame—many are more concerned about the lasting health and welfare of our communities. This volume documents the struggles and joys of being a resident of the City of Angels, from income inequality and gentrification to the beauty of local murals and graffiti, and from pollution and poverty to communal activities and religious celebrations.



Due to the overwhelming response and interest in this project and exhibition, we will initiate another call for submissions in January 2018. If you are or if someone you know is interested in participating in the Citizen Journalism Project, please contact us at citizenjournalism@theautry.org. In the meantime, enjoy this edition and the *LA RAZA* exhibition. //

This project would not be possible without the collaboration of numerous individuals and organizations. The Autry Museum would like to thank the Las Fotos Project, Santa Monica Alternative Schoolhouse, the Social Justice Humanitas Academy, and WriteGirl for their assistance in connecting young journalists and photographers with the museum.

The Citizen Journalism Project is supported by a grant from

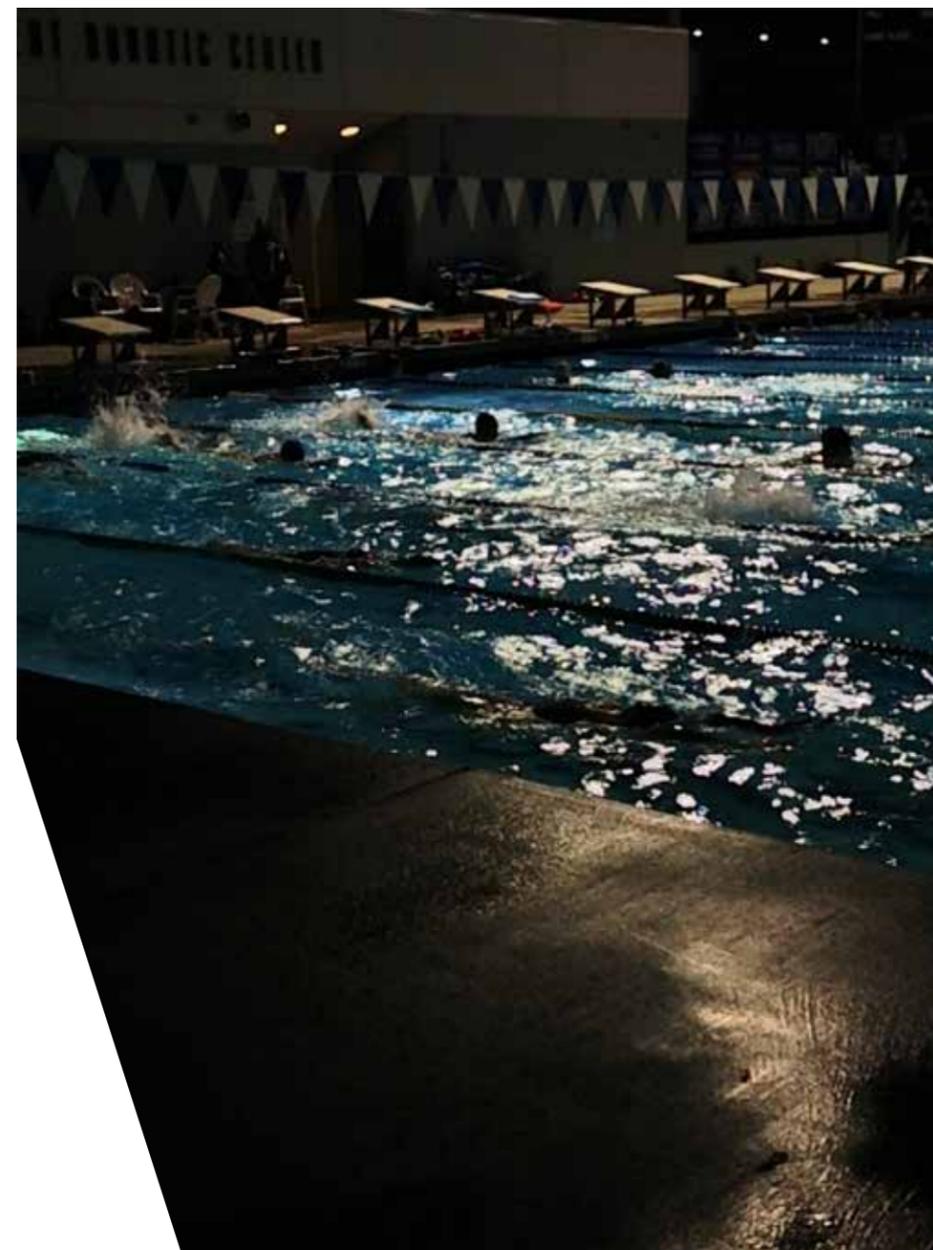
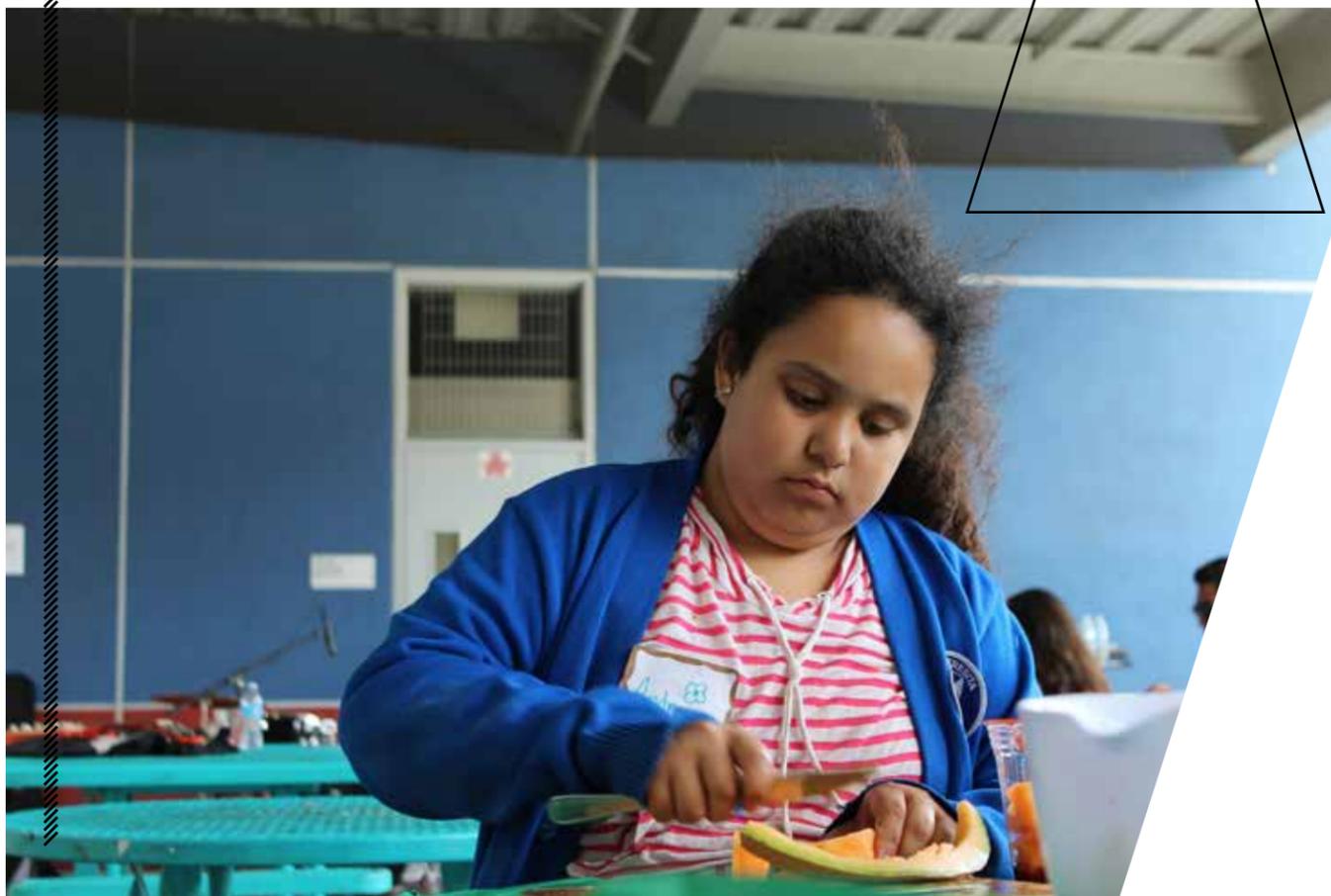
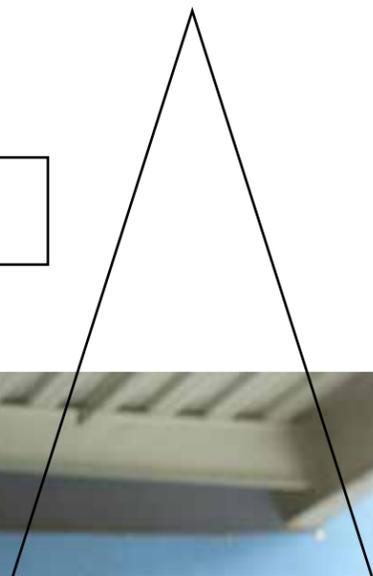




ABOVE: Photograph by Jaquelin Rosas. *Hard Worker*. Pictured here is my dad in his beloved truck. My father is an immigrant and he works as a produce seller along with his brothers in the North Hollywood/Burbank area. He has been doing this since 1995 and truly works hard to provide my siblings and me with all that we need. My father is an inspiration to me and someday in the future, I hope to give back for all that he's done.



99%
of L



OPPOSITE PAGE: Photograph by Metztli Garcia. Young girl, cutting a melon for a food demo at an event for healthy living. **ABOVE:** Photograph by Theadora Leimone. A pool filled with swimmers late in the evening as the pool becomes cold. These swimmers will be here for a while, swimming late day-after-day training for their goal in swimming.

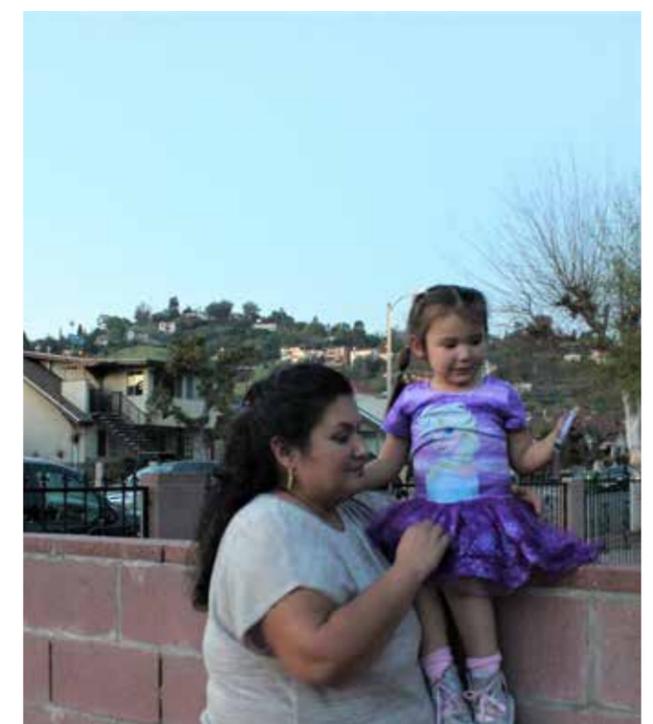
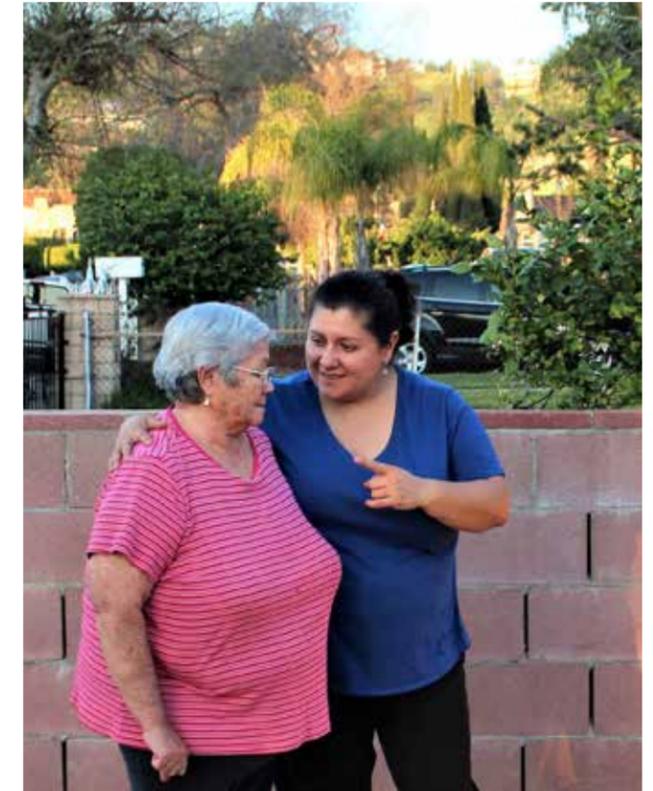
My story, my life—40 years in Los Angeles.

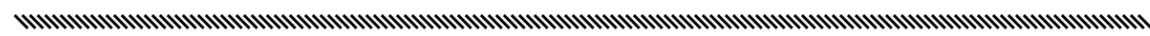
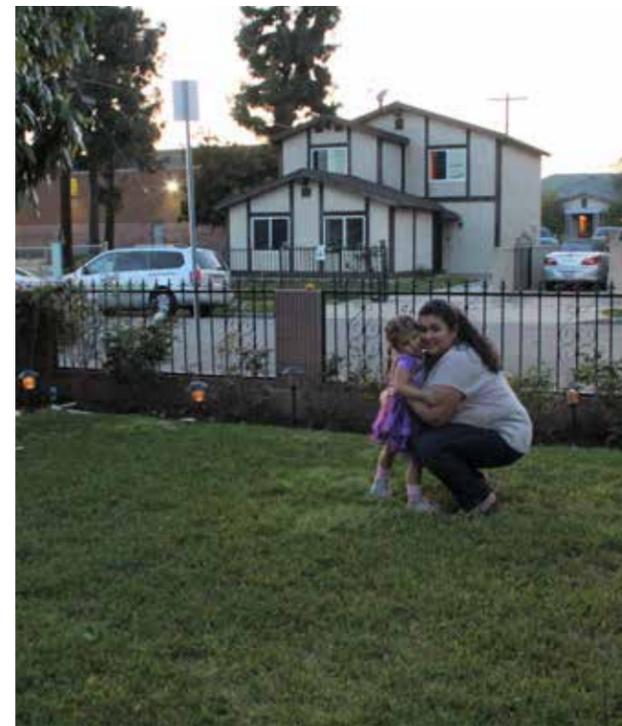
My name is Nora Gutierrez, and I have lived in Los Angeles for over 40 years. My parents originally moved to the Cypress Park Neighborhood when they first emigrated from Zacatecas, Mexico, in 1965. Over the course of the first ten years of their marriage they came to purchase their first home on the quiet street of Roseview Avenue. Within those first years they also saw family and friends move into the area. To date, I still have over 25 family members that live in the Cypress Park community and well over 30 family friends who are either from Zacatecas, Mexico, or descend from family that emigrated from that region. The community is close to public transportation and three major freeways; this made it an ideal location for new families that were looking to find jobs as most did not own vehicles at that time. Based on feedback from my parents, the community transitioned from an Italian community to a predominantly Latino community between 1975 and 1985.

I have personally seen several changes in my community over the years. New buildings have been constructed; a state park now stands where trains were housed at Taylor Yard, and just adjacent to the new FEDEX building stands the new high school complex of Sotomayor. In addition to fast-food restaurants popping up on North Figueroa Street, I have also come to see small businesses flourish with the recent gentrification of the area that became more noticeable in 2015. Coffee shops, antique furniture stores, and specialty bike shops now line the small arteries that feed the Cypress Park community.

My parent's, my sister's, and my home has now seen three generations of family flourish. The small house where I grew up in is also where I currently live with my three sons and my husband. My sister has two children of her own, and she also lives in the Cypress Park community. Our home will hopefully continue to see the growth and development of our children's children and far beyond. How this community will continue to change and develop is yet to be seen. However, with gentrification knocking at our door, I shudder to think that this will soon be a place that I do not recognize, but may it be a better place for my grandchildren one day.

I have included a few pictures of the front view of my home documenting some of the changes in the landscape that I have seen over the last 40 years. //







ABOVE: Photograph by Theadora Leimone. A sign on the PCH with graffiti saying BE LOVE recently put up. It is unlike most graffiti because it's meant to be kind and to convey a message of love.

G.R.A.F.F.I.T.I

Written Work of Samantha Campbell

I thought it was a plague
 Cast upon the face of my town
 I got a bitter taste on my tongue
 Each time initials stained my house

I thought it was a curse
 Sent from the heavens to haunt me
 I got a horrible feeling on my mind
 Each time paint came back to taunt me

I looked once
 I looked twice
 I looked a third time and realized
 Maybe it's not a crime

I looked beyond the initials
 Mirroring my cousins' scribbles
 I thought maybe this wasn't some mess
 Turned into an enormous wreck

I looked once
 I looked twice
 I looked a third time and realized
 It wasn't just a crime

Sure there were faults
 Nonsensical phrases
 But beyond that
 I found colorful mosaics

Homage to the history of my urban nation
 Spray painted to make a great statement
 In a community of so many faces
 Taking part in all of the changes

I thought it was trouble
 Meant to be turned away
 It felt like such a problem
 Coming to my dismay

I've looked once
 I've looked twice
 I've looked three times and realized
 It's not just a crime

There's guts
 There's glory
 Ultimately they tell a story
 In the language of graffiti



ABOVE: Photograph by Maya Rosado. Emiliano Rosado runs around the murals that Ricardo Estrada and Victor Rosado created at Plaza de la Raza in Lincoln Heights. Photo taken on February 25, 2017.



ABOVE: Photograph by Maya Rosado. Christina Gallegos dances *danza azteca* in Lincoln Heights in memory of Cuauhtemoc. Photo taken on February 25, 2017.



ABOVE: Photograph by Jaquelin Rosas. *Ethnic Studies at Roosevelt.* At Roosevelt High, we are the few that have Ethnic Studies as a required course. This is inside one of the teacher's classrooms, where Mr. Lopez (the teacher) also has a lot of stencils, stickers and posters all around the room. It is very powerful.



ABOVE: Photograph by Metzli Garcia. On 1st Street in Boyle Heights, a man stands in front of a 99 Cents store scratching a lottery ticket.



ABOVE: Photograph by Brandy Mendoza.
To the Moon and Back.



ABOVE: Photograph by Natalia Angeles.
LA Virgin Mary and Christmas. The lights that have been on your grandma's window even though Christmas was 6 months ago the Virgin Mary's your mom has all over the house. You'll see and will do when you grow up.

D.E.V.E.L.O.P.M.E.N.T

Written Work of Samantha Campbell

Some dispute the development
Since they can't keep up
Rent gets too expensive
The minimum doesn't pay enough

Sons of mothers protest
They dislike the changes
Saying hipsters are the problem
They're ruining their community

Granddaughters of grandmothers sit back
Watching the chaos unfold
People complain they have to move
All because yuppies live next door

Blame seems to be placed
Every time on new tenants
I've read a thousand words
Protesting the art world's presence

However we're not looking at the full picture
People can only afford what's cheaper
Then developers step in
Ruining the prices for everyone

Some blame the white kids
Who couldn't afford more in the first place
Sometimes it's the teenage kids
Who're unable to look past that aspect

Somehow hipsters make our town worthy
In the eyes of developers made out of money
Which is the main reason things get expensive
When once they were the cheapest



ABOVE: Photograph by Aracely Adono. *Homelessness in the Park*. I would never in my life have thought to see some tent in the park along with other things surrounding it, until I understood the reason, which was homelessness. This park in San Fernando Mission is very popular with photographers who come by and take pictures for special events like weddings, quinceañeras, etc. What I wanted to capture was how close one can be to homelessness by not knowing what the surroundings mean. In the image it shows how this individual has survived. Along with them is a bike and guitar, which can hold many sentimental feelings. At the end everyone has a different life, but it doesn't mean that they might be happy or depressed about their situation.

Gentrification in Los Angeles

By Kayla Veloz

2/3/17

The life of a Hispanic in the U.S. is one of ups and downs. We come to this country for a better life and a better future for our children and our childrens' children. Echo Park was once a Hispanic-populated area. You see, growing up here was difficult, and there were times of envy when someone else had a white-picket fence home while I never got that kind of opportunity. Both sides of my family immigrated here from Mexico; they worked hard for everything in life and never complained about what they didn't have. I won't say growing up here was fun or safe but it was home. Now the cost of home has increased by a thousand dollars and my family is struggling to have a place to sleep.

This is gentrification. Gentrification to me is an invasion. An invasion of a life we once had, of a community we grew from. It's a process of kicking people like me out of our lives.

I have heard the argument that because of gentrification the streets are safer for people. Well, what people are you speaking about? You are not speaking about my people. I'll clarify it, the streets are only safer for those taking them. Where shall we go? The streets are safer but now more expensive, and we can't afford it because this system doesn't provide the help lower-class and minority citizens need.

Mariana is my Tia, I grew up with all five kids of hers, side by side, and now she experiences what others in my area do as well. She once paid \$500 a month for an apartment when her family was only that of four. It was a one-bedroom home. Now she pays \$1,700 for a two bedroom with a family of seven. I asked her what she thought about and experienced with gentrification. She expressed her worries that it was no longer feeling like a community. The parks are no longer for children, and the once family-visited stores are now organic coffee shops. The diversity is practically nonexistent and their community now feels like a tourist site. The clubs are open all night and parties are every week. With all these changes occurring, lifelong friends could be moving or have already left and it's possible we may be next.



We live in a world where not all of us are accepted. If we can't even be accepted in our own lives, then where are we to go? This is the place where my family grew up and I want to preserve every memory. Every taco truck on every street, every *panaderia* with the people we have seen for years, and every step on every sidewalk. All of it is ours, and it shouldn't be changed.

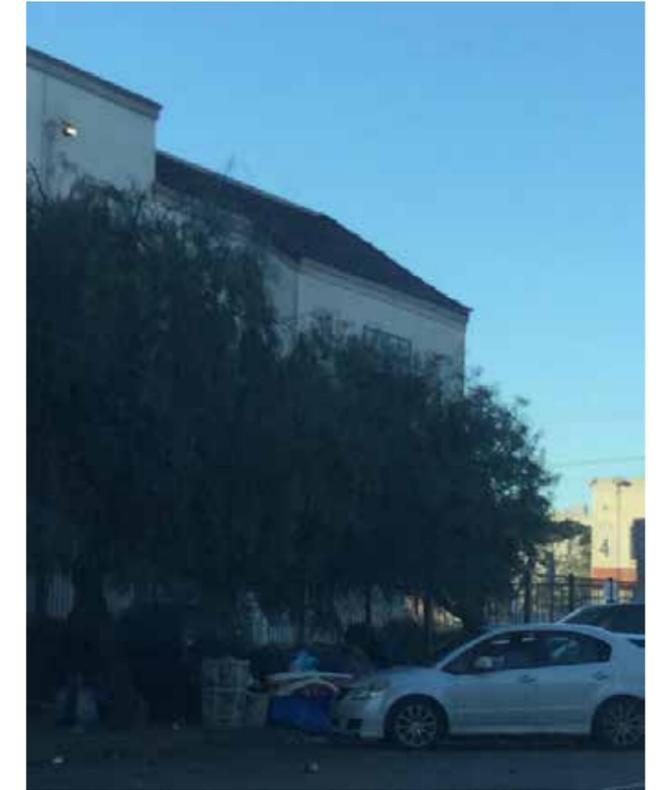
Bio: Kayla Veloz is fourteen years old, currently in ninth grade. She is Mexican American, as both sides of her family immigrated to the United States from Mexico. She cares passionately about the problems of the world and wants to use literature and photography to spread the word about important things in this world. //

ABOVE: Photograph by Steve Fine.

I'm Homeless Living in a Tent 'cause Minimum Wage Don't Pay the Rent!
Occupy LA City Hall encampment, Day One, October 1, 2011.



ABOVE: Photograph by Theadora Leimone. A homeless man sleeps on the sidewalk by a store with a sign asking for laundry money to clean all the clothes he is sleeping on to protect him from the hard ground.



Los Angeles: It's the city with the 2nd largest amount of homeless people in the United States. Approximately 82,000 people. That's about 2.5% of Los Angeles's population. Every morning on my way to school, I drive by a large homeless encampment on Rose Avenue. How are that many people homeless? I often wonder. And why can't our government help them? When I was younger, I used to be scared of homeless people, but the more I learned, the more sympathy I felt for them. It's heartbreaking to see these people every day who can't afford food or sometimes clean water, let alone a house or even a car to sleep in. Something needs to be done to help the 82,000 homeless in Los Angeles.

ABOVE: Photographs by Psipsina Haendel. Homelessness on Rose Avenue in Venice, CA.

Subconscious Anti-Semitism in Santa Monica

By Psipsina Haendel

“A historic Jewish cemetery in St. Louis was vandalized,” my mom, always up-to-date and ready to inform me on current events, said. I was shocked. I knew something would blow up once Trump became president, but I didn’t expect it to hit so close to home. Being Jewish, I was not only astonished, but furious and upset. These were my people! Why would someone do this? Some of these graves were over 200 years old. I thought anti-Semitism was far away from my community. But the story of the cemetery vandalization opened my eyes to a new and frightening thing: For the first time in my life, I realized that I could be the subject of indirect or subconscious anti-Semitism.

With over one million Jews living in California, you’d think that anti-Semitism would have burned down to a minimum here, or at least slowed down. But just the day after I learned of the cemetery vandalism, I was shocked when a classmate of mine called another one, a “stupid Jew.” Almost one-fifth of the United States’ Jewish population lives in California, and you’d think thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds in Santa Monica would know that saying “stupid Jew” could really insult and hurt many people. But apparently not. I was appalled when I heard this. Although the student said he intended it in a joking way, it was still rude, anti-Semitic, and eye-opening in the worst way. I thought to myself, “If this is occurring in Santa Monica, at a progressive school, I can’t imagine what’s going on elsewhere.” Our teacher stopped class and discussed with us why this isn’t okay, even if intended in a joking way. This got me thinking about all that’s going on in our country. The biases I always thought were surreal and far away, in fact exist in my own community.

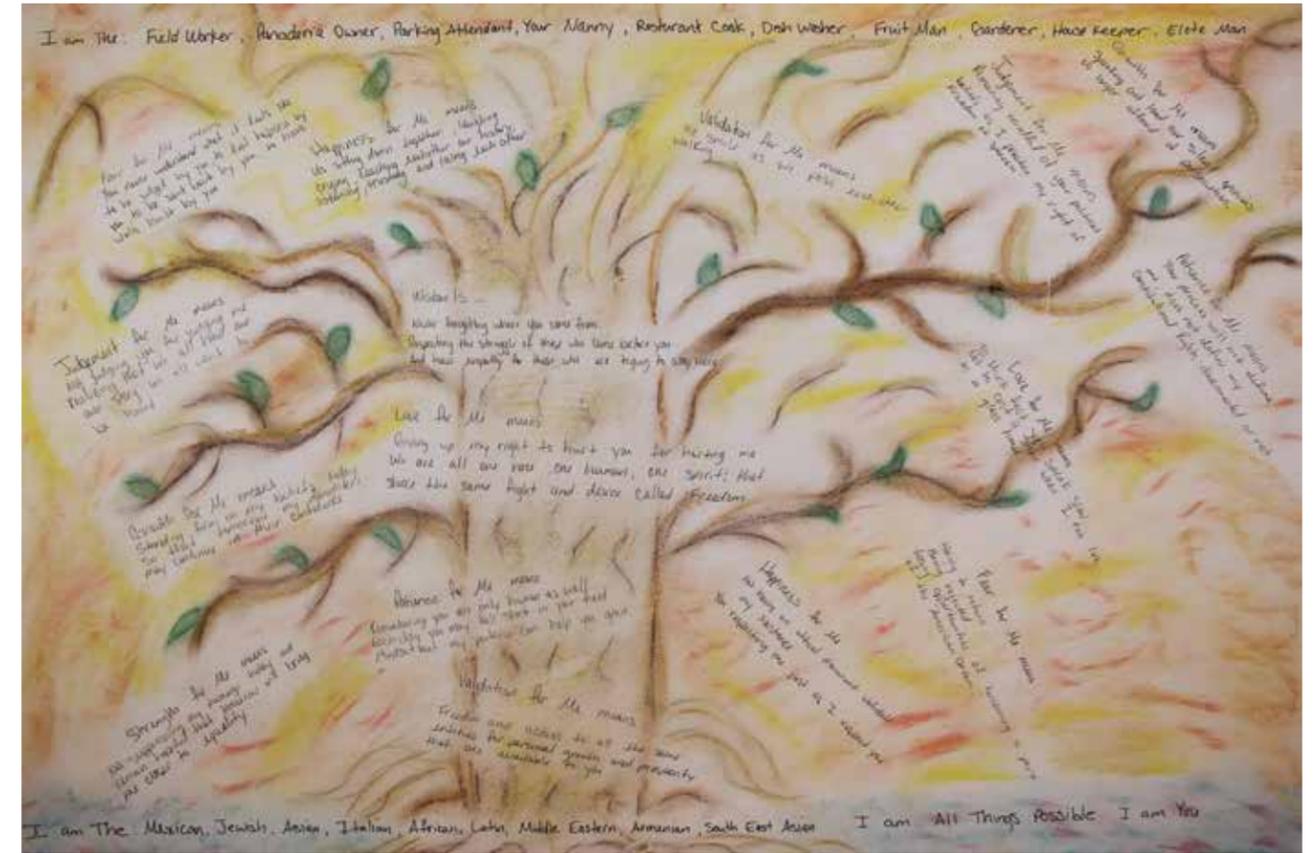


Of course, our school principal was notified and came to speak to my class about the incident. When she asked who knew about the cemetery vandalism in St. Louis, only about three people knew. I was astounded. We’re thirteen-years-old! How did the majority of my class not know about an incident this big? That’s when I realized a simple antidote to subconscious racism is simply being informed. If the boy who made the insensitive and racist remark was informed about the hostility towards Jews taking place today, maybe, just maybe, he would have thought before he spoke. He might have realized that during this time, during these next four years, any racist, sexist, or anti-Semitic remark will hurt a lot more because there really is danger that terrible things will happen to anyone who isn’t meeting our racist and sexist president’s rigid standards. I know in my classroom, we don’t learn what’s going on in the world, we study from our textbooks, and many kids are oblivious to the fact that there’s a world outside, and terrible things are happening. Staying informed won’t stop extreme racists from doing abhorrent things, but it can stop underlyingly biased things from being said and done. So I encourage everyone to watch the news, read the paper, do whatever you can to keep up-to-date on current events. Even if it’s not being taught in your school, it’s something you need to do on your own. Stand up for what’s right. Don’t let biases take over our country. //

ABOVE: Photograph by Brandy Mendoza.
Peace Will Win, Fear Will Lose.



ABOVE: Photograph by Emie Malanaphy.
Shoes on the Floor.



ABOVE: Artwork by Vanessa D. Rivera.
My Tree of Life.



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