



Emigdio Vasquez (1939-2014, American). Detail: *El Proletariado de Aztlán*, 1979, acrylic on plaster, 8' x 40'. Chapman University Art Collections, © Emigdio Vasquez Art. Photo: Jessica Bocinski.

Chapman University Art Collections' Participation in Getty Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA Initiative

## ***My Barrio: Emigdio Vasquez and Chicana/o Identity in Orange County***

SEPTEMBER 13, 2017 - JANUARY 5, 2018

**Opening Celebration September 13, 2017**

4:00 p.m. – El Proletariado de Aztlán mural, 442 Cypress St.

5:00 p.m. – Guggenheim Gallery, refreshments and music

### **What is Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA?**

Pacific Standard Time: LA/LA is a far-reaching and ambitious exploration of Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles. Supported by the Getty Foundation, PST: LA/LA takes place from September 2017 through January 2018 at more than 70 cultural institutions across Southern California. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty.

### **How is Chapman Participating?**

The Art Collections Department will present a multi-faceted exploration of Chicana/o art in Orange County. The springboard for Chapman's project is a 1979 mural, *El Proletariado de Aztlán*, by Emigdio Vasquez.

The project will comprise five distinct components, launching in Fall 2017 (see reverse for more details):

1. An exhibition of Vasquez' paintings at the Guggenheim Gallery
2. An exhibition of documentary material in the Henley Galleria, Argyros Forum
3. A downloadable app providing an interactive map of historic mural sites in Orange County
4. A symposium on Chicana/o murals
5. A new mural centered on Chapman University history, painted on campus by Higgy Vasquez

### **Who is Emigdio Vasquez?**

Vasquez (1939-2014) was a prolific artist who painted over 30 public murals in Orange County between 1976 and 2006. His murals celebrated the Chicana/o cultural movement, depicting local people and places alongside imagery from Mexican and Mexican-American history. His 1979 mural, *El Proletariado de Aztlán*, is located on a Chapman University-owned triplex on North Cypress Street, Orange, and was restored by the artist's son in 2014.

1. **Guggenheim Gallery Exhibition - exploring Emigdio Vasquez and contemporary Chicana/o artists**

In addition to his work as a muralist, community leader, and advocate for youth, Vasquez produced a large body of oil paintings which document Chicana/o community life. The Guggenheim Gallery brings together a group of these works alongside contemporary artists. Identifying Vasquez's mural and related paintings as a bridge shared by the Orange community and Chapman University, the exhibition will nourish dialogues concerning the emergence of Chicana/o politics, identity, and artistic sensibilities in the North Orange County region.

Contemporary artists include Ken Gonzales-Day, Cynthia Herrera, Dulce Soledad Ibarra, Patrick Martinez, Shizu Saldamando, Alejandro Sanchez, and Ana Serrano.

2. **Argyros Forum Exhibition – placing Emigdio Vasquez in historical and regional context**

The Argyros Forum Henley Galleria outlines critical events and movements of Mexican and Chicana/o history. The ancient Aztec homeland of Aztlán, The Mexican Mural Movement (1920s-1970s), California school segregation, zoot suit and pachuco culture, *bracero* programs in the US and the rise of the United Farm Workers of America, and the development of MEChA are all important touchstones; a timeline of Vasquez's career and a detailed look at *El Proletariado de Aztlán* round out the exhibition.

This portion of the exhibition is student-curated: initial research began during Interterm 2017 with a course on the Chicano Art Movement led by Art History faculty member Denise Johnson. This work was continued through student internships, work-study, and research grants with the Art Collections Department.

3. **Downloadable App – locating Vasquez murals throughout Orange County**

A free downloadable app will map the locations of Vasquez' 30+ murals in Orange County, delivering information on their history and subject matter. Computer Science students built the app during a Spring 2017 course led by faculty member Ryan Burns, in association with Andrew Mosier, Director of Interdisciplinary Initiatives for Chapman.

4. **Symposium – the mural tradition in Orange County and greater Los Angeles**

A symposium on Chicana/o murals in the region is being organized for Fall 2017. Artists, community advocates and museum professionals will come together in an afternoon session to discuss the aesthetics, politics, and on-going history of this art form in southern California.

5. **New Mural on Campus – celebrating Chapman University history, teaching the mural process to students**

Launching in conjunction with this project will be a new mural on Chapman's main campus that will permanently connect the communities of Orange and Chapman University in a shared commitment to visual culture. The mural is to be executed by Higgy Vasquez, assisted by Rosemary Vasquez, Chapman University art students, and Orange High School students. This mural will celebrate Chapman University's history and identity, and draw on the university's archives in Leatherby Libraries, as well as ideas from students, faculty and staff about its present identity and future goals.

The process of creating the mural will be documented by a short three-minute video produced by Katherine Bowers, who previously directed and produced the Cypress St. Mural Documentary for Chapman.

We are very grateful to the Ellingson Family for funding this new mural.

Research assistance and guidance kindly provided by the Orange Barrio Historical Society and the Orange Public Library.



For more information about this project, contact [artcollections@chapman.edu](mailto:artcollections@chapman.edu) or Natalie Lawler, curator of art collections, [nlawler@chapman.edu](mailto:nlawler@chapman.edu)