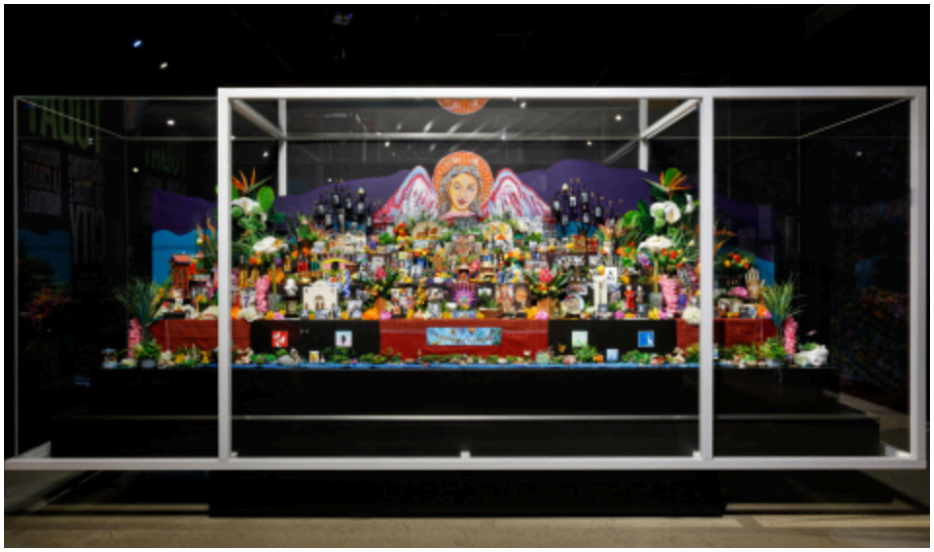
NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Release Summary

Becoming Los Angeles exhibition reopens at Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County June 1, 2018

Becoming Los Angeles -- L.A.'s Story, Reimagined at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County



Altar to el Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles (the Town of Our Lady the Queen of Angels), 2018. Created by Ofelia Esparza and Rosanna Esparza Ahrens. Courtesy of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County.

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LOS ANGELES--(BUSINESS WIRE)--*Becoming Los Angeles*, one of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County's (NHMLA) permanent exhibitions, tells the story of how Los Angeles transformed, over 500 years, from a tiny pueblo to a sprawling metropolis. It's the story of how L.A. evolved from cowboys to cars, the battles that were raged, and how an aqueduct changed everything.

NHMLA's reworking of *Becoming Los Angeles* has made it an even more colorful destination for Angelenos and far-flung travelers to discover. The newly imagined exhibition, which opened on June 1, showcases more of the Museum's collection and illuminates the experiences of diverse groups of people who have made the Los Angeles area their home and who interact with an environment that presents alluring opportunities and daunting challenges. Visitors will discover the ways Native people have shaped Los Angeles, past and present, through newly commissioned portraits of Native Americans living in Los Angeles County as well as a video in which community leaders share what it means to be an Indigenous Californian living in L.A. today.

NHMLA President Lori Bettison-Varga said, “In the last several years, the Museum has become increasingly focused on community and our goal with these changes is to help people see themselves, and their communities, within the complicated intersections of nature and culture in L.A. This exhibition has always looked back at LA’s Native Americans, at settlers, rancheros, captains of industry, boosters, radicals, and inventors, but we wanted it to do more. We wanted to look around Los Angeles today.” Eight new artworks inspired by the city now appear throughout the exhibition to further showcase those urban-nature entanglements. These murals explore how people’s actions have made an impact on the natural world and how environmental changes have spiraled back to affect human society. Artists include Judithe Hernández, Linda Vallejo, Daniel González, Elena Dorfman, Rob Reynolds, Ernesto Yerena Montejano and Philip Lumbang.

One of the most striking additions to the exhibition is an *ofrenda* (altar) — titled *Altar to el Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles* (the Town of Our Lady the Queen of Angels), an homage to L.A.

Ofelia Esparza, a master *altarista* (altar maker), and her daughter, artist Rosanna Esparza Ahrens, constructed this exuberant tribute in their East L.A. studio. The altar celebrates the diversity and cultural richness of LA, featuring objects that celebrate local neighborhoods, photos of iconic city figures and musicians, a woven L.A. river, and many bouquets of flowers.

In the final gallery of this L.A. story, the Museum invites visitors to share their own L.A. stories in their own voices in special audio booths where they may hear the audio offerings of Museumgoers who came before them talking about what Los Angeles is to them.

Full details at nhm.org.

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