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[Mapping Another L.A. – “In Southern California, All Freeways Lead to Los Angeles”](#)

April 15, 2012 emrose21



“Mapping Another L.A.” Fowler Museum at UCLA. 26 Mar. 2012

“In Europe, all Roads lead to Rome, in Southern California all Freeways lead to Los Angeles.” This quotation drew me into *The Goetz Map Guide to the Murals of East Los Angeles*. The comparison of the Los Angeles urban freeway system to historical European roads really starts to open eyes to the monstrous significance of California’s epicenter. It suggests that Los Angeles has as much grip over the entire state as Rome had over Europe.

From the quotation, I realized that there was actually quite a bit of emotional weight the map I was looking at. It was designed by John D. Gonzalez and illustrated by David Botello, glorifying Chicano culture and its importance to our city’s past, present, and future. Clarity and functionality are juxtaposed with beautiful illustrated borders depicting the lives of Mexicans and South Americans, who make up much of the Southern Californian Population today. John D. Gonzalez was one of the men who wanted to remind us of how much Chicano culture is embedded into the city itself. The focus of the map is unusual; all of the locations listed are murals throughout Los Angeles. Usually we only see murals when on our way to some place to get our car fixed, or to a gallery, a restaurant, or a business meeting, but the Goetz Map points out the fact that these works are to be seen and absorbed just as a painting in the Getty would be. This declaration of murals as a legitimate art form, something that people can go see as important cultural pieces, really raises Chicano street art to a monumental level. The formality and presentation of the map is something that catches viewers off-

guard, because many of us think of Chicano murals and street art as spontaneous personal work, rather than something to be organized and mapped for the public.

I find the research that went into this map interesting, because Goetz went all over Los Angeles looking for Murals, there are well over a hundred listed, and probably many more unlisted. This dedication and work is something that doesn't actually show through when initially looking at it. We view maps as "tools," something that helps us find our way around, and we place it on lower importance compared to a traditionally composed art piece in a gallery. The Goetz map is a work of art in itself, merging our idea of functionality and the Chicano Art Movement.

Fowler Museum at UCLA,

Monday and Tuesday: closed

Wednesday: noon – 5 pm

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- Yefim Kligerman | April 24th, 2012 at 12:33 pm [Reply](#)

Really well written, yea I also really enjoyed the Rome comparison quote. It'd be interesting to see if it's actually true or if there are any other places in the world with an equal sort of impact as Los Angeles to California



- David Botello | April 18th, 2012 at 3:32 pm [Reply](#)

Thank you for those wonderful words. The Map actually documents 271 murals in East Los Angeles alone. I traveled the streets in 1975 to photograph and address them for the map. Of course many are now gone, but I do have some original copies of the map left. Please help Save The First Street Store, our tile mural and all.