



DREAMLAND

A FRANK ROMERO RETROSPECTIVE

FEBRUARY 12 - MAY 21, 2017

Frank Romero is a Chicano artist who was born, grew up, and still works in Los Angeles. His paintings, murals, neon and ceramic sculptures explore the local landscape and give us insight into the events that defined his experience growing up Mexican American in East L.A.

THE L.A. LANDSCAPE



Detail from *Le Monde*, 2006, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Target Corporation

FRANK ROMERO was born in 1941 and grew up in Boyle Heights, a community on the East side of Los Angeles. Frank watched his environment transform as the population grew. Victorian homes were replaced with tract housing and skyscrapers, while stacked freeways with winding interchanges sprang up where parks used to be. Today, the Boyle Heights neighborhood is bordered by no less than five freeways. His **landscapes** illustrate a changing Los Angeles, shown through the lens of personal experiences and **political** events that affected him as a **Chicano** artist.

Frank's paintings are full of **symbols** that represent his feelings, or the people and places he has seen. Some **symbols** are easy to figure out, while others are very personal. Like most people, Frank uses hearts to show love. He also uses women making tortillas and streetcars to represent his childhood. These **symbols** relate to stories about his parents.

TRY THIS: Challenge a friend to *Dreamland Lotería!* As you walk through the galleries, identify the symbols below and talk about what they may mean.

DREAMLAND LOTERÍA



THE CHICANO MOVEMENT

The **Chicano Movement** grew out of the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. Like their African American peers, young **Chicanos** organized marches and walkouts to protest inequality in schools and services. Many teachers did not allow Mexican American students to speak Spanish at school and counselors often encouraged minority students to seek vocational training instead of pursuing higher education. In the late 1960s, Frank and three other artists formed a group called **Los Four**. They made art about the **political** events they had witnessed and their work came to define the **Chicano Art Movement**.

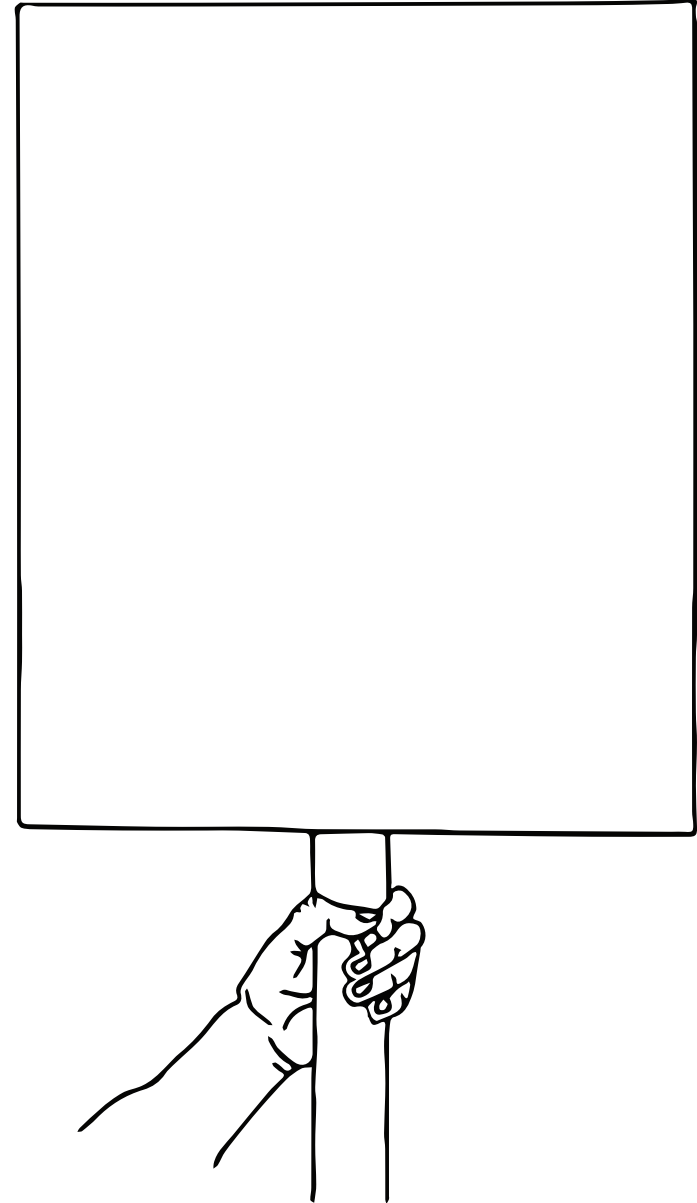


Detail from *A History of the Chicano Movimiento*, 1998, acrylic & graphite on canvas, Carnegie Art Museum Collection



To learn more about the history of Mexican Americans in the United States, scan the code or visit: <http://bit.ly/2giEZ3Q>

TRY THIS: Protesters often use signs that include slogans and **symbols** to express their message. Create your own protest sign below. It can talk about unfair situations at home, school, or in the larger **political** environment!



MURALS



Going to the Olympics, 2011, oil on canvas, Collection of James and Rachel Garrison

Artists of the **Chicano Movement** used **murals** to reach out to their communities. Because they are painted on outdoor walls, **murals** can be seen by anyone who passes them. Artists decorated their neighborhoods with **symbols** and images that celebrated their cultural traditions or showed Mexican and Mexican American heroes. Frank Romero has produced more than a dozen **murals** in Los Angeles, some in collaboration with the artists of **Los Four**. *Going to the Olympics* was painted in 1984. Its many **symbols** tell the story of individuals and families traveling from throughout Los Angeles to watch the Olympic Games. **What familiar symbols do you see?**

DID YOU KNOW?

You are surrounded by murals!

Use the links below to find a **mural** near you.



To find **murals** in Long Beach, scan this code or go to <http://bit.ly/29BJpNT>



To find **murals** in Los Angeles, scan this code or go to <http://bit.ly/2fsDuie>

KEY TERMS

CHICANO/A: a label used by some people of Mexican heritage who live in the U.S. to describe their identity. The term is considered **political** and emerged in the 1960's as an alternative to the government imposed "Hispanic".

CHICANO/A ART: the art that was created to support the larger civil rights movement. *Chicano/a* art is often political in nature, discusses the Mexican American experience, and uses culturally specific symbols or images.

LANDSCAPE: an image (painting, drawing or photograph) of outdoor scenery.

LOS FOUR: a group of **Chicano** artists who worked together from approximately the late 1960s to the early 1980s. The original **Los Four** included Frank Romero, Carlos Almaraz, Roberto de la Rocha, and Gilbert Magu Luján.

MOVEMENT: a coordinated set of group actions or events. In art, a **movement** refers to a group of artists that follow one style or share a common attitude.

MURAL: a work of art, usually a painting, that is made directly on a wall.

POLITICAL: related to or concerned with **politics**, current events, and social issues.

RETROSPECTIVE: an art exhibition that shows a collection of art created over the span of an artist's career.

SYMBOL: a picture, color or object that suggests or stands for an idea, belief or another object. For example, a ♥ is recognized as a **symbol** for love.

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