

EVENTS

A Tribute to LA's Once-Major Trolley Network

Performers respond to Sandra de la Loza's installation at LACE, which examines bygone layers of Los Angeles, looking at how waves of development have destroyed and obscured what came before them.

Matt Stromberg August 20, 2019



Sandra de la Loza, "To Oblivion: The Speculator's Eden" installation view (photo by Chris Wormald, courtesy LACE)

Before Los Angeles became synonymous with the automobile, over 1,000 miles of streetcar lines crisscrossed the city, providing a vital public transit infrastructure. By the 1920s, the city laid claim to the [largest trolley network in the world](#), and at its peak boasted a per-capita ridership greater than present day San Francisco's. The rising dominance of the auto industry spurred by postwar development and single-family housing sprawl led to the end of the once ubiquitous streetcars, which

officially stopped running in 1963. Wandering around the city, you can still find old sections of track peeking out beneath layers of asphalt.



Sandra de la Loza, "To Oblivion: The Speculator's Eden" installation view (photo by Chris Wormald, courtesy LACE)

Sandra de la Loza excavates this buried history in her current show, *To Oblivion: The Speculator's Eden* at Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE). Taking its title from a banner draped across the front of a discontinued streetcar on its final journey in 1955, the show examines bygone layers of Los Angeles, looking at how waves of development have destroyed and obscured what came before them. Focusing on the Cahuenga Pass — now the 101 Freeway which connects Hollywood to the Valley — de la Loza uncovers its history as a streetcar line, a passage for Spanish settlers and Indigenous communities before them, an animal path, and a waterway. Her installation features stereoscopic viewers, a video room, and overhead projectors onto which visitors can layer images and text to create their own ghostly composites of LA's past, present, and future.

This Saturday, LACE will host a performance where several collaborators will engage with de la Loza's work to create "Archival Poems." Olivia Chumacero will honor the flora and fauna of the region through song, while Jess Gudiel, Jen Hofer, and Arturo Romo will utilize analog animations, shadow puppets, movement, liquid light, and poetry to bring de la Loza's archives to life. El Rio, a "sextet expressing resistance, love and revolution through a fusion of Latin American folk rhythms," will provide a soundtrack for the evening.

When: Saturday, August 24, 8–10pm

Where: Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions (LACE) (6522 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood, Los Angeles)

More info at [LACE](#).

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