

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Autry Museum of the American West Presents New Exhibition
Life, Liberty, and Los Angeles

May 30, 2026–January 31, 2027

A collection of stories and histories that examine how the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness have manifested in Los Angeles.



Robert Ginder. Palace [detail], 2022. Oil and gold leaf on wood. Museum purchase; 2024.18.1

(May 1, 2026—Los Angeles, CA) In Los Angeles, the promise of "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" isn't just a historical ideal—it's a living story that is a part of a conversation that has taken place over the past 250 years. *Life, Liberty, and Los Angeles* explores how the values enshrined in the Declaration of Independence have inspired generations of Angelenos to build brighter futures, overcome challenges, and create a vibrant, diverse community. From the city's early days to the present, the exhibition celebrates the power of hope, perseverance, and the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to live freely and pursue their dreams.

Los Angeles, from its beginnings, has been a place of competing claims to life, liberty, and happiness. By approaching American history from one of the most dynamic and diverse city in the nation, a multiracial metropolis founded on Indigenous land, visitors are invited to explore the stories of diverse Angelenos and how their ideas of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness have inspired the city's growth and amplified the opportunities and contradictions expressed in the nation's founding principles.

Historical artifacts, visual art, and creative performances shared through in-gallery video and audio will create multilayered stories from voices across Los Angeles, bringing this history to life. Highlights of the exhibition include:

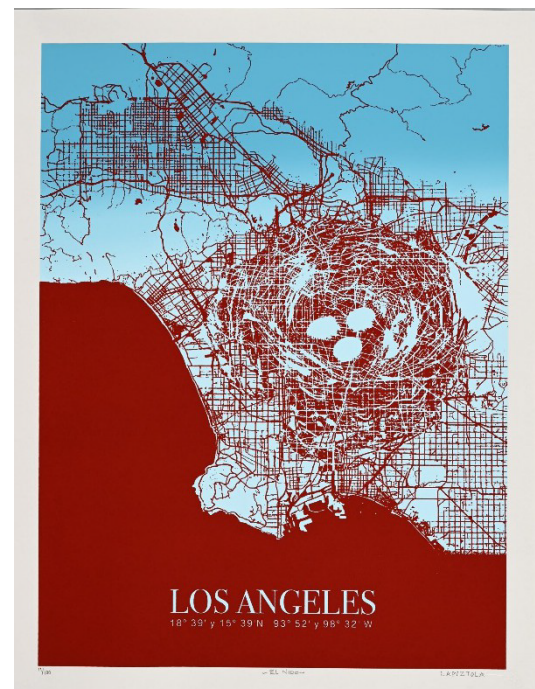
- A hand-painted Mexican flag used in early celebrations (c.1840s and 1850s) of Mexican Independence in LA
- Political memorabilia showing how LA voters made housing the center of debates about fairness and liberty, with national consequences

- A custom-made zoot suit fabricated by a family business that has preserved zoot suit culture for over 45 years
- Artworks by LA-based artists Catherine Opie, Frank Romero, River Garza, Lilliana Castro, Robert Ginder, Cara Romero, Ed Ruscha, Weshoyot Alvitre, John LeeWong, Reynaldo Rivera, and Carlos Almaraz
- In-gallery videos featuring contemporary LA storytellers created in partnership with the spoken word and storytelling collective Strong Words: Voices of the City
- A history of LA Protests, including over 60 hours of archival local news coverage of the 1992 LA Riots
- 3B Collective

The exhibition is more than a history of Los Angeles—it is a reflection of how the freedom struggles of LA and its diverse people have shaped our individual lives, the places we live, and the nation as a whole. *Life, Liberty, and Los Angeles* will run May 30, 2026 through January 31, 2027, in the Marilyn Calvin and Gross Gallery.



Mexican flag flown in Los Angeles as part of independence celebrations, 1823-1864; 1895.G.11



El Nido, silk screen print by 3B and LaPitzola Collective, 2024; 2024.30.1

About the Autry Museum of the American West:

The Autry Museum of the American West is dedicated to exploring and sharing the stories, experiences, and perceptions of the diverse peoples of the American West, connecting the past to the present to inspire our shared future. The museum presents a wide range of exhibitions and public programs—including lectures, film, theatre, festivals, family events, and music—in addition to scholarship, research, and educational outreach. The Autry's holdings comprise more than 600,000 artworks and cultural objects, including one of the largest and most significant collections of Native American materials in the United States. For more information, please visit <https://theautry.org>.

The Autry Museum of the American West acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles Basin and So. Channel Islands). We recognize that the Autry Museum and its campuses are located on the traditional lands of Gabrielino/Tongva peoples, and we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), ‘Ahihirom (Elders) and ‘Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present, and emerging.

Autry Museum of the American West 4700 Western Heritage Way Los Angeles, CA 90027-1462

Museum and Store Hours:

Tuesday–Friday 10 a.m.–4 p.m.

Saturday–Sunday 10 a.m.–5 p.m.

Closed Mondays

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