



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 17, 2022

Contact: Sylvana Uribe - sylvanau@rancholoscerritos.org - (562) 380-0775

New Exhibition at Rancho Los Cerritos *Roots in California: Concepts of Home* Explores Notions of “Home” through Mexican and Mexican American Voices

MARCH 27, 2022 - MARCH 12, 2023

(MEDIA PREVIEW OF THE EXHIBITION: THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 8AM – 12PM)

LONG BEACH, CALIF. — The Rancho Los Cerritos Museum will open its newest exhibition *Roots in California: Concepts of Home (Raíces de California: Conceptos de Hogar)* to the public on Sunday, March 27. The exhibition will focus on the complex idea of home by contrasting the oral histories of Mexican and Mexican American tenants of Rancho Los Cerritos between 1890-1930 with five stories of Mexicans and Mexican Americans living across California today. The merging of past and present narratives explores how home can be found not only in physical locations, but also through people, memories, and even within oneself.

“We’re excited to reopen our Visitor Center for guests to experience an exhibition created alongside community that explores the meaning of home through personal stories and through the histories of Mexicans and Mexican Americans who lived at Rancho Los Cerritos a century ago,” said Alison Bruesehoff, executive director of the Rancho Los Cerritos Museum.

Roots in California: Concepts of Home is the first Latinx exhibition at the Rancho Los Cerritos Museum and the first exhibition curated by [Carlos Ortega](#) since joining the historic site last summer. The exhibition will feature artifacts and photographs that provide insight into the daily lives of Mexicans and Mexican Americans who once lived in the Rancho Los Cerritos adobe home. Through recounting their memories and concepts of home, the stories also offer a look at the Ranchos’ role in the vast expansion of California.

“The personal stories from participants in the exhibition and the events that Mexican and Mexican American tenants at the Rancho experienced are key to understanding California’s history,” said curator Carlos Ortega. “By centering historically silenced voices, we can better understand how present day California came to be and challenge our previous assumptions.”

Contemporary stories will play throughout the gallery in video interviews where Mexicans and Mexican Americans living across California share what home means to them. Participants were found through a questionnaire sent to over 200 nonprofits in Los Angeles County. Over 30 applications were submitted and five individuals were selected.

A preview of what participants featured in the exhibition consider “home” today includes:

- **Carmen** spent her early childhood on a ranch in Mexico. She was sent to Los Angeles to escape poverty but defines “Home” based on her experiences in Mexico.
- **Daniel** grew up in Echo Park. Gentrification forced him to move to South Gate where he opened a Latino coffee shop, his new “Home,” where he builds and helps his community.

-more-

- **cindy** suffered childhood abuse and used art and therapy to overcome her trauma. Now she finds Home through creating safe spaces and sharing with others.
- **Santos** moved to Long Beach from Acapulco, Mexico and had a hard time adapting to the new culture. He found “Home” by building a good relationship with his daughters.
- **Anna Lisa** lost her father at an early age. Family hardships caused her to lose all the objects that brought memories of her dad. She realized that for her, “Home” was within her, in memories of her father, not objects.

The year-long exhibition will be on display in-person and digitally. As additional components to the exhibition, Xicana-Filipina artist [Gloria Gem Sanchez](#) designed an installation that will greet visitors entering the gallery. Characteristic of her previous works, Sanchez will incorporate everyday materials into creating a space where visitors can share how their pasts shape their perceptions of home. The museum will also offer seed packets of plants native to California and Mexico for visitors to take with them and plant or gift in the places and with the people they associate with home.

Roots in California: Concepts of Home opens to the public on March 27 at 3 p.m. The "Roots in California" Opening Day Festival will include children’s activities, food and beverages available for sale, and the historic adobe home will be open for tours. Rancho Los Cerritos is honored to offer this free event to the community thanks to the generous support for the opening day festival from the Port of Long Beach and the Arts Council of Long Beach. For more information and to RSVP, visit www.rancholoscerritos.org/roots-exhibit

###

Roots in California: Concepts of Home (Raices de California: Conceptos de Hogar) was made possible through funding from the “A More Perfect Union” initiative by the [National Endowment for the Humanities](#), which funds American history projects with an emphasis on inclusivity, racial justice, and gender equality. Rancho Los Cerritos was the only funding recipient of this initiative in Long Beach.

About the Rancho Los Cerritos Museum and Historic Site

Rancho Los Cerritos (RLC) is a 5 acre historic landmark and museum run by the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation staff and volunteers in a public/private partnership with the City of Long Beach. The Rancho Los Cerritos Museum is open to the public for free and the site includes an adobe home, historic gardens, rotating exhibitions, research library, and archival collections. For decades, this public museum has preserved and educated people about the history of the Rancho and those who shaped Southern California. The site shares a rich history of Indigenous, Spanish, Mexican, Black, Asian, and American California individuals and families. Rancho Los Cerritos is also available to the community through a range of programming that include public tours, storytimes, lectures and panel discussions, student education, and private events. For more information, call (562) 206-2040 or visit www.rancholoscerritos.org, and follow the Rancho on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

About Rancho Los Cerritos Curator, Carlos Ortega

Carlos Ortega is an award-winning exhibition curator and creator of meaningful educational experiences for the public. His professional experience transcends the parameters of the traditional museum model. He is an advocate of the visitor experience, proposing avant-garde concepts that bring innovation, inspiration and education to new levels of public accessibility. Carlos’ exhibitions at Rancho Los Cerritos will center the voices of underrepresented communities and bring history to life through themes and topics that excite visitors of all ages.