

Howling at the Moon at Santa Ana College

A nighttime walk in the neighborhood

By **Kat Avila, Contributing Writer** | Published on LatinoLA: November 14, 2011



Tonight in the sky above [Santa Ana College \(SAC\)](#) is a hazy November moon. It looks like a small round hole in a dark wall that someone forgot to plug up. The weekend forecast is rain.

My first stop is Nealley Library to look for a restroom. I browse the entire library before I discover it on my way out. The restroom was right there at the entrance tucked away in a corner.

Surprisingly this library doesn't have many books. Or maybe there was another dark corner I missed, where they stuffed the rest of the collection. I stand in the aisles with my nose deep in books on immigration and U.S. history.

Don't you find it ridiculous that indigenous peoples have lived on this continent for thousands and thousands of years, and all they get is one measly month, i.e., November, dedicated to their American values, culture, and history? And let's not forget about the native Alaskans and Hawaiians.

The languages the indigenous spoke are now "foreign" languages or extinct. Indigenous peoples south of the border are collectively swept under the label "LATINOS," which linguistically removes them further from any hereditary claims to their ancestral lands. But they're not "foreigners" or "aliens." In Hawaii, there are some natives who believe U.S. laws do not apply to them since their sovereignty was forcibly, therefore illegally, taken away from them.

I am shaken from my reverie by students heading for the doors. The library closes at 8 p.m. tonight, so I will make my way to the Johnson Center. An employee is locking the doors to the cafeteria area, but the outside tables are under bright lights. A trio of girls seat themselves a few tables away. One of them starts talking about Jack the Ripper.

Is the art gallery in Fine Arts open tonight? It's not. But there are still things to see. A pair of sculptures, which from a distance I had mistaken for actual students, look down from the second floor railing. "California Republic" is painted on the male half; on the female are "Who will I become?" and "You decide."

On the wall behind them are strange digital art images of superheroes. Alongside the stairway is a huge 1990 railcar photo collage "Blue Line Meets Red Car" by Mayde Herberg and Nancy Webber.

In the Cesar Chavez Building is [Emigdio Vasquez's 1997 mural "The Legacy of Cesar Chavez"](#) (pictured). Vasquez also helped paint "The MEChA Mural" (1974) at Nealley Library when he was a student at SAC. Though Vasquez is best known as a muralist, he ironically no longer paints them.

Not far from Vasquez's mural stands a tall, gray-toned 1998 advanced ceramics class project of clay, sand, and cement. The professor for the class was Patrick Crabb (www.patrickshiacrabb.com), who still teaches there. I remember taking a mixed-media art

HOT STORIES IN LATINOLA

Mystery Movies, Best-Sellers, and Latinos Go Together

Finding Holiday Spirit Wherever You Are

Giving It Up for the Silver and Black

TOP 10 Reasons the Grammys Dropped Best Tejano Album Category

¡LATINOLA RECOMMENDS!

Coca-Cola Tour: Adelante, a Free Forum to Empower Latinas

Saturday, December 3

Women in Entertainment Symposium

Saturday, December 3

Self Help Graphics' 2011 Holiday Craft and Art Fair

Saturday, December 3

to Sunday, December 4

Spanish American Institute (SAI) ArtFest for Education

Saturday, December 3

to Sunday, December 4

ALL LATINOLA CONTENT IS CONTRIBUTED BY OUR COMMUNITY OF AMIGOS.

To submit your stories and events, go to <http://latinola.com>

class from him. He'll be leading an art and ecology tour to Costa Rica in January 2012.

By 9:30 p.m., I'm at the Administration Building waiting for a ride home. A cherry coke from the vending machine rests in my daypack. The moon has disappeared.

A writer who is often mistaken for homeless as she kicks up dust around the Southland looking for a good story.

Find this story online at latinola.com/story.php?story=10115

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Commercial distribution without prior written authorization is strictly prohibited.
© 2000-2008. LatinoCities Inc.