



City of Arts & Innovation

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“Pretty Lady” Gives Glimpse Into Ancient Mexican Culture

*Riverside Metropolitan Museum exhibit of 3,000-year-old artifacts opens at Riverside Art Museum
Feb. 3*

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – A new Riverside Metropolitan Museum exhibit showcasing ancient Meso-American artifacts is opening Feb. 3 at the Riverside Art Museum, but the public is getting an early preview courtesy of a nine-foot sculpture made from 1,100 crushed tomato paste cans.

The new exhibition, *Uncovering Ancient Mexico: The Mystery of Tlatilco*, includes 34 objects that are 3,000 years old and reflect the culture of an early Mexican people who lived in the Valley of Mexico near what is present-day Mexico City. The exhibition provides insight into the lives of some of the ancestors of Mexican-Americans today.

In advance of the exhibition’s opening, an artistic ambassador will travel around Riverside. “Pretty Lady,” a nine-foot sculpture by Riverside artist Martin Sanchez, was inspired by a five-inch figurine in the museum’s Tlatilco collection.

The sculpture will likely be recognized by fans of Sanchez’s work, which has gradually overtaken the grounds of his restaurant, Tio’s Tacos. Pretty Lady’s first stop is at City Hall, 3900 Main Street, where she will remain through Jan. 26 before moving throughout the city during the exhibition’s run, which is scheduled to end Dec. 30. (The five-inch figurine will remain in the museum.)

“The Tlatilco items date back centuries and provide a cultural connection for Mexican-Americans living in Riverside today,” City Councilman Andy Melendrez said. “We’re very fortunate to have a local artist like Martin Sanchez who can create a piece in his own inimitable style that draws people into the exhibition.”

Loans from the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of the American Indian and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art have allowed the Riverside Metropolitan Museum to feature a larger number of Tlatilco objects for visitors.

The exhibit is designed to transport patrons back to one of the earliest complex societies of Central Mexico that flourished about 3,000 years ago. The exhibit will explore Tlatilco culture and show how archaeologists piece together clues to better understand an ancient society. Associated programming includes a free all-day conference on Feb. 3 at the Riverside Public Library and a gallery talk and tour at RAM with RMM guest curator Catharina E. Santasilia.

A special curriculum for Riverside students, funded by a private donation, has been developed in association with this exhibition. The educational programs will allow students throughout the City of Riverside to learn about this aspect of Mexican heritage.

“Our Metropolitan Museum is most effective when it brings history, culture and the sciences alive and connects them to our current-day lives,” Mayor Rusty Bailey said.

Since the Riverside Metropolitan Museum’s downtown site is temporarily closed, *Uncovering Ancient Mexico: The Mystery of Tlatilco* exhibition is travelling down the street to the Riverside Art Museum for its showing.

“RAM is thrilled to host the Tlatilco artifacts on behalf of the Metropolitan Museum and offer a window into the past for residents of Inland Southern California,” said Drew Oberjuerge, RAM’s executive director. “We welcome this partnership with the Metropolitan Museum and look forward to working together more in the future.”

The exhibition opens Feb. 3 and will close on December 30, 2018. For hours, visit the Riverside Art Museum’s website at www.riversideartmuseum.org.

Pretty Lady can be viewed at the following locations; dates are proposed and subject to change.

1/18 -1/26	City Hall
1/26 -2/16	Riverside Art Museum
2/16 -3/2	Bobby Bonds Park/Cesar Chavez Community Center
3/2 - 3/16	Casa Blanca Library
3/16 -3/30	La Sierra Park
3/30 -4/13	Andulka Park
4/13 -4/27	Arlington Library
4/27 – 5/11	Main Library
5/11 – 5/25	Orange Terrace Park/Library
5/25 -6/8	Fairmont Park



Tlatilco female figurine from Riverside Metropolitan Museum Collection, which inspired Riverside artist Martin Sánchez to create his sculpture.



Artist Martin Sánchez recycled 1,100 cans to create a sculpture inspired by a clay figurine from the Riverside Metropolitan Museum's Tlatilco Collection.