

Las Chicanas

of Chicano Park

Women played an outsized role in the creation of Chicano Park and for decades have been its most consequential leaders. They remain so today.



Chicanas are beautiful like *cempazuchitl* and tough as cactus in the arms of the iconic Chicano Park

BY YANELLI ZAVINA ROBLES

Spanish may be the loving tongue, but it can be a little tough on women. Words with masculine endings can squeeze women out of the picture.

This collection of pictures is called “Chicana Park” to honor the women who fought for the creation of the iconic space under the Coronado Bridge and who manage it today.

Chicano Park Day’s theme “55 and Still Alive” marked the April 1970 takeover of the area by members of the Logan Heights community and their supporters from across America.

Chicanas played an outsized role in the seizure of the land from the California Highway Patrol in 1970 and an effort to turn the land into a parking lot in the late 1990s. Josephine “Josie” Talamantez was there battling bulldozers in 1970,

CHICANAS / PG B3

WILDFLOWERS EVERY DAY—Like hillsides of *flor silvestre* in the spring, Chicanas embody many different forms and colors, many of which were on full display at the 2025 Chicano Park Day.

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CHICANAS GET THE JOB DONE—From the revolutionary takeover of Chicano Park in 1970 to the maintenance of the National Historical Site today, Chicanas have played an outsized role. Their leadership continues to shape *el parque* and surrounding neighborhoods.



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CHICANAS

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bureaucrats in the 1990s and led the effort to have Chicano Park designated a National Historic Landmark in 2016. She serves the chair of the Chicano Park Museum and Cultural Center.

Women like Talamantez were leaders in the Royal Chicano Airforce, the artists collective that painted some of the park's most famous murals. Rosalina Montez Palacios, Celia Rodriguez, Barbara Desmangles, Antonia Mendoza and Irma Lerma Barbosa created the masterpiece mural "*Mujer Inteligencia.*"

Berenice Badillo is badass. A gritty cancer survivor, she helped lead the all-female crew that restored the mural "Women Hold Up Half the Sky" in 1997. Her *aliadas* were Gloria Galindo Sanchez, Vera Sanchez, Celia Rodriguez, Rosalinda Montez Palacios and Irma Lerma Barbosa.

Chicana Power resonates throughout the revered park. "*No hay Chicano Park sin Chicanas.*"

Es Verdad.



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INFINITE FORMS OF BEAUTY— Chicanas are *constelaciones que se intelizan para elevar su grandeza.* (Starry interlaced constellations that elevate each other into greatness.)



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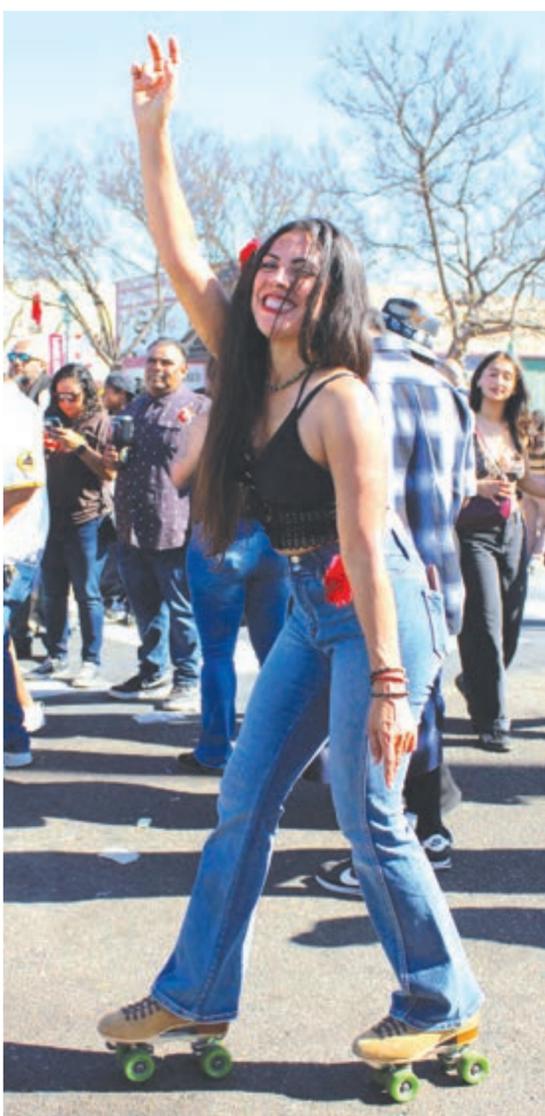


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CRISTIAN PIÑEDA / THE SWC SUN

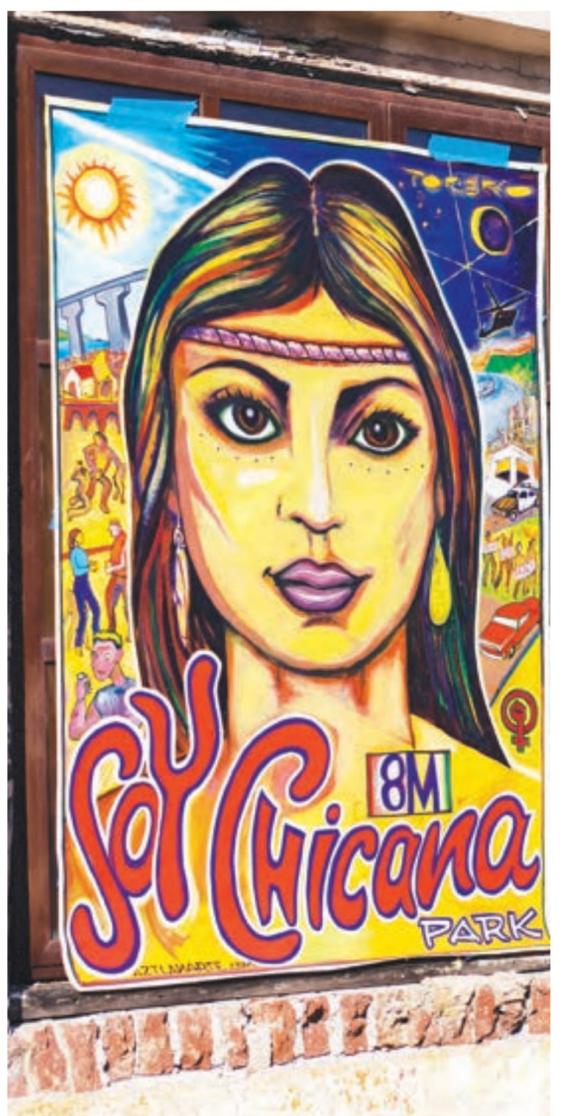
BEYOND MYSELF I WAIT FOR MY ARRIVAL—Mexican literary giant Octavio Paz wrote 'Love is not a desire for beauty, it is a yearning for completion.' Adina Angeles, 19, said she is eager to be a great mother and a great Chicana.



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