



LOS ANGELES PUBLIC LIBRARY

LIBRARY NEWS

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Historic Maps and the Stories They Tell Featured in Exhibit,
“L.A. Unfolded: Maps from the Los Angeles Public Library”
Oct. 15, 2008 – Mar. 29, 2009, at Central Library Getty Gallery

Special Programs, Guided Tours and Family Events Accompany exhibit

Historical maps largely unseen for 100 years, classroom maps from the early 1900s and maps representing a wide range of styles and periods will be on display in the exhibit “L.A. Unfolded: Maps from the Los Angeles Public Library” at Central Library’s Getty Gallery, 630 W. Fifth St., downtown Los Angeles, from Oct. 15, 2008 through Mar. 29, 2009.

The exhibition focuses on Los Angeles and California and features topographic surveys, tourist guides, real estate maps, pictorials, illustrations and more. Highlights include a 1791 Spanish explorers’ California coast map; a 1975 Goetz Guide to the Murals of East Los Angeles; and Artist-Historian Jo Mora’s masterly illustrated 1942 city map. The exhibition draws exclusively from the Los Angeles Public Library’s own map collection, one of the largest collections owned by a public library in the U.S.

“As powerful technical and imaginative constructs, maps straddle the line between art and science,” said exhibition co-curator Glen Creason, the Library’s subject specialist in maps. “For the first time in 100 years, most of them will get their chance to see the world, just as the world has been ‘seen’ on their surface over many eventful decades in the City of the Angels.”

“L.A. Unfolded” will also present a group of maps that transcend local or regional themes. These items range from the 1919 classroom map “The New Europe” to the Louise E. Jefferson 1945 pictorial “Uprooted People of the USA.”

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“These maps, regardless of their type or intent, have remarkable stories to tell about our city, whether it’s learning the original name for Grand Avenue or the location of a 1940’s blimp landing field,” said Gloria Gerace, co-curator and director of exhibitions.

The exhibition will also display the winning entries of neighborhood maps created by student participants in the Los Angeles Public Library’s 2008 teen summer reading program. Along with the exhibition, free ALOUD lectures called the “Ground Truth” series will take place on three Sundays this fall in Central Library’s Mark Taper Auditorium. The series takes its name from the practice of checking the accuracy of a map or aerial image by visiting the actual location.

The ALOUD programs include “From Above, From Below” with author Trevor Paglen in conversation with Lize Mogel, series curator, Oct. 26; “Mapping the Invisible Landscape” with Amy Balkin and Kim Stringfellow in conversation with Matthew Coolidge from the Center for Land Use Interpretation, Nov. 9; and “How We Talk About Los Angeles and Why This Matters” with Greg Hise, USC associate professor of urban history in conversation with author D.J. Waldie, Nov. 16. For more information, visit www.aloudla.org.

Also, in collaboration with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), family festivals are scheduled for Nov. 2 and Jan. 18, 2009. Families can view the exhibition and then join LACMA artists to create their own maps in the Central Library’s second floor Rotunda. For information, call (213) 228-7500.

“L.A. Unfolded: Maps from the Los Angeles Public Library” is presented by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles for the Los Angeles Public Library. Exhibits at the Central Library are made possible in part through a grant from The James Irvine Foundation. For more information on the exhibition, visit www.lapl.org/events/unfolded. To support the Los Angeles Public Library, call the Foundation at (213) 228-7500 or visit www.lfla.org.

The Los Angeles Public Library serves the largest urban population of any library in the country. Its Central Library, 71 branch libraries, more than six million books and state-of-the-art technology provide everyone with free and easy access to information and the opportunity for life-long learning.

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The Central Library is located in Council District 9, represented by Councilmember Jan Perry.

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