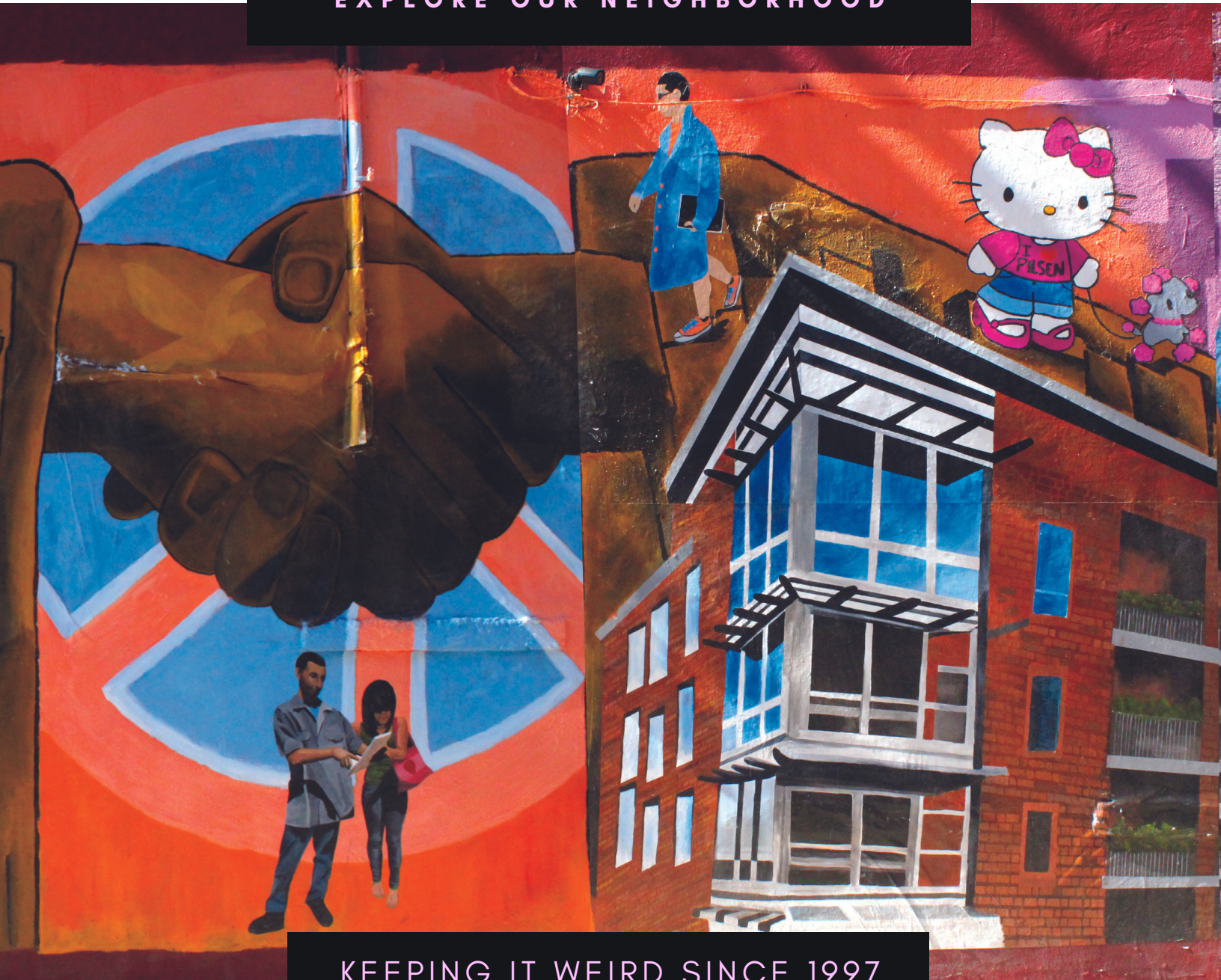


*The National Museum of Mexican Art presents:*

# A GUIDE TO YOLLOCALLI'S MURALS IN PILSEN

EXPLORE OUR NEIGHBORHOOD



KEEPING IT WEIRD SINCE 1997



# WHAT IS YOLLOCALLI?

Yollocalli Arts Reach is the Youth Initiative of the National Museum of Mexican Art (NMMA). Yollocalli has been offering free after school art programming for Chicago teens and young adults between the ages of 13-24 since 1997!

Yollocalli offers classes related to all types of art making, including but not limited to:

- Experimental Photography
- Street Art
- Journalism
- Audio & Radio Production
- Music
- Graffiti
- Mural Making

They also host community events like art exhibitions, parties, and public workshops at their homebase in Little Village, their community garden, Jardin Mallinali, and at Yollo Lab based in Barrett Park. The NMMA hosts a yearly exhibition showcasing artwork created by youth in these workshops, and Yollocalli hosts events at the museum, like Chill Set and Anti-Valentine's Day Sexual Health Party.

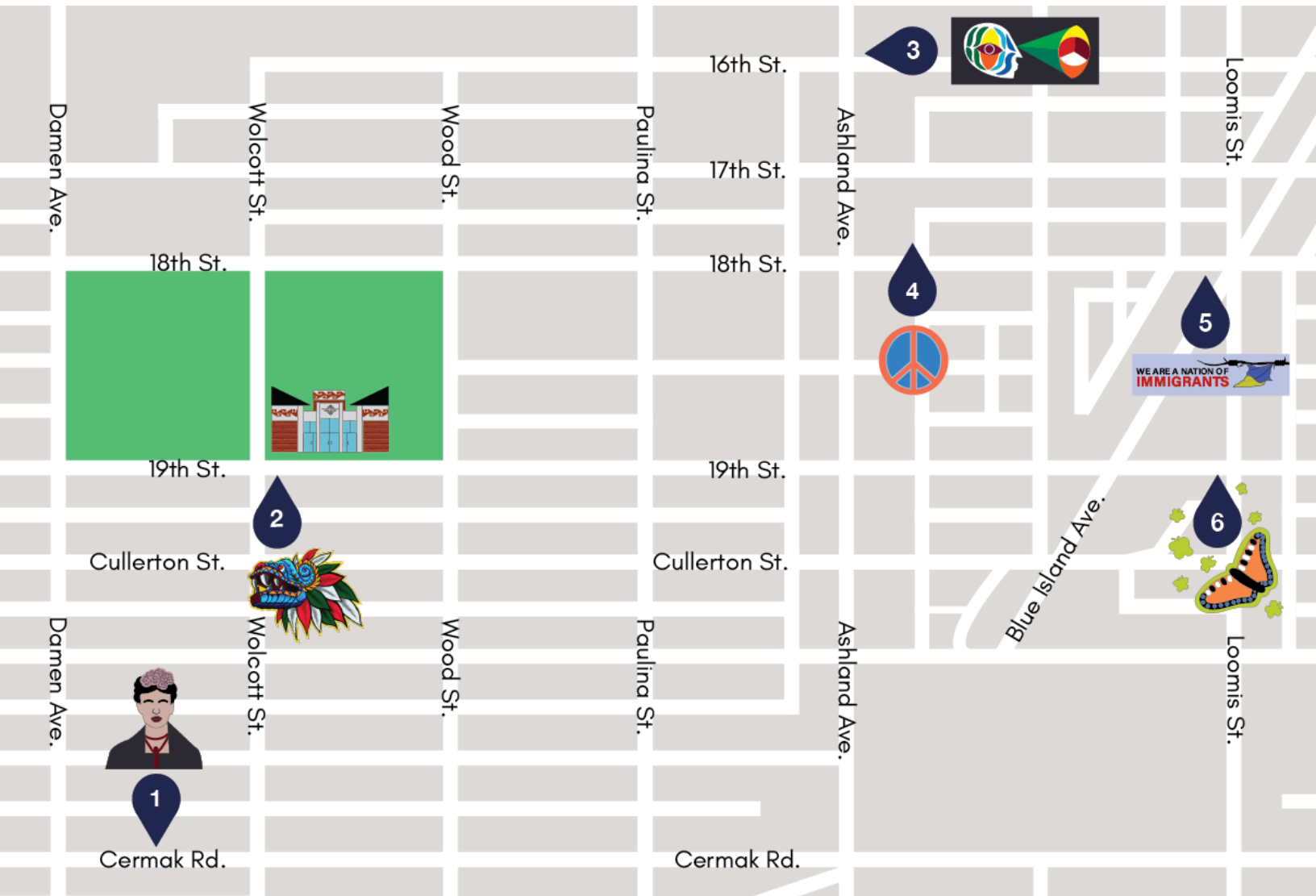
For more information, visit: [www.yollocalli.org](http://www.yollocalli.org) or follow on Instagram @yollocalli

## YOLLOCALLI'S MURALS

Yollocalli has worked with over 40 lead artists and 1,000 youth artists to create almost 50 murals around Chicago. They have worked with artists such as: Sentrock, Chris Silva, CHema Skandal!, Arturo Fresan, REMED, GLOE, BEL, and Lunar New Year. These murals can be found in school, parks, hospitals, libraries, laundromats, train stations, alleys, and bridges from Wrigleyville to Gage Park and from downtown to the suburbs.



# TOUR MAP



01 **Jesus "Chucho" Rodriguez and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *Libertad*, 2008**  
2022 W. Cermak Rd.

02 **Mario Mena and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *La Estampida de Valientes*, 2023**  
1859 W. 19th St.

03 **REMED and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *Pájaro Cósmico*, 2013**  
W. 16th St. & S. Ashland Ave.

04 **Jesus "Chucho" Rodriguez and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *Reach for Peace*, 2011**  
1544 W. 18th St.

05 **Salvador Jimenez-Flores and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *Declaration of Immigration*, 2009**  
1401 W. 18th St.

06 **Jesus "Chucho" Rodriguez and Yollocalli Arts Reach, *Wall of Hope*, 2010**  
1856 S. Loomis St.

## LIBERTAD, 2008



Libertad is a mural located in Barrett Park, painted in 2008 with Jesus “Chucho” Rodriguez as the lead artist with youth from Yolocalli who had taken a mural making class called “Paint it Back”. The work was designed to liven up the park, and highlight inspiring political and cultural figures chosen by the teens, including: Cesar Chavez, Mahatma Gandhi, Frida Kahlo, Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, Rosa Parks, and Emiliano Zapata. The title of the work, the Spanish word for freedom, is spray painted at the center of the mural, serving as an inspirational message to the community and also includes portraits of teens who assisted in painting the mural. Yolocalli currently hosts monthly Yollo Lab: Open Studio sessions in the park, where Chicago youth are encouraged to create art with random materials provided. For more details about Yollo Lab, visit: [www.yolocalli.org/classes](http://www.yolocalli.org/classes).

**Think about the political and cultural figures featured in this work. Why do you think they were chosen? How are these figures tied to the idea of freedom?**

**Consider the placement of the mural near the playground in Barrett Park. How can this message continue to inspire the youth of the community?**



## LA ESTAMPIDA DE VALIENTES, 2023



1859 W 19TH ST.

Created on the Museum's Casita with Mario Mena as the lead artist, the Yollocalli youth in the Street Art Studio class designed and executed this mural showing bulls running through Chicago. This 2023 summer project was the culmination of a partnership with the Chicago Bulls. The running bulls morph into a nahual, or spiritual version of an animal - a winged bull. This connects to the Quetzalcoatl image on the north side of the building, an iconic feathered serpent deity from Aztec culture. Throughout the mural you can find a fusion of basketball imagery with culturally significant Mexican imagery - like the basketballs embedded within cempasúchil flowers, which are used during Day of the Dead celebrations to light the path for returning souls of deceased loved ones. Altogether, this mural beautifully blends community, sports, and Mexican culture.

**What other iconography can you find that blends basketball with Mexican culture? What is the importance of blending imagery for a community partnership?**



## PÁJARO CÓSMICO, 2013



W. 16TH ST. & S. ASHLAND AVE.

This mural was painted by Yollocalli youth & lead artist REMED in the summer of 2013 through Pilsen's Art in Public Places Initiative. The work represents a mutation from one state of being to another, as the figure on the right is still human, but becomes less so as your eye moves towards the left, becoming more abstracted. The use of geometric shapes helps create this illusion and the mural is especially vibrant set on a black background. REMED states that most of the patterns and symbols in the work are inspired by Mexican Folk Art, Islamic Art, and cymatics, which is the study of wave phenomena and their visual representation.

**The artist summarizes this work as being an “abstract body traveler surrounded by constellations of stars and planets, also moving somewhere.” What are some visual elements (color, form, line, shape, etc.) that help create this image? How does the title, which translates to “Cosmic Bird”, relate to this?**



## REACH FOR PEACE, 2011



1544 W. 18TH ST.

Created by Yollocalli teens with lead artist Jesus “Chucho” Rodriguez in the summer of 2011, the Reach for Peace mural promotes peace and solidarity in Pilsen and surrounding communities. The importance of human connection is visualized through physical touch – hands touching, handshakes, the hand of a young child holding the hand of an older person. Surrounding these scenes are images of buildings, some Pilsen landmarks, and images from pop culture.

**What are some symbols in the mural that promote the idea of peace?**



**Consider the high visibility of this mural on the side of a popular local taquería. How does this enhance the mural's message of solidarity within the community? How might the perception of the message differ for viewers who aren't from the area?**

# DECLARATION OF IMMIGRATION, 2009



1401 W. 18TH ST.

Created on Yollocalli's original building with artist Salvador Jimenez-Flores, this mural is a visual dedication to all immigrants and allies who have stood strong in the face of anti-immigrant rhetoric. In 2008 the NMMA created a contemporary exhibit, also named Declaration of Immigration, that depicted the experiences and viewpoints within U.S. immigrant communities. The exhibition was meant to bring awareness to the idea that artists and community-based institutions play a critical role in civic dialogue and the struggle for social justice.

**Monarch butterflies have been used to represent the souls of deceased loved ones in Mexican culture. They can also be interpreted as symbols of change, transformation, and hope. How does this relate to the mural's message?**

**What are some barriers that immigrants face within the U.S.? How are these barriers reflected in the mural?**



## WALL OF HOPE, 2010



1856 S. LOOMIS ST.

Yollocalli students, along with Jesus "Chucho" Rodriguez created this powerful mural titled, *Wall of Hope* in 2010 for the local Pilsen organization, San Jose Obrero Mission. The Mission is an Interim Housing Program that provides support services for individuals and families who are homeless in Latino communities. While the Mission is no longer based in this building, the mural continues to further support spreading awareness and commitment to the community. The wall is covered in images of people who founded the Mission along with images of homelessness.

**This work is an example of how murals can be used as tools to promote social justice issues. Do you think this mural would be as impactful if it were located elsewhere? Why do you think it was important for this message to be painted on the original shelter?**

**How does the text featured on the mural further support its overall message? How are the ideals of hope, respect, jobs, and dignity reflected through other visual elements or symbols?**