This walking tour, “Public Art as Resistance in San José,” highlights the history of resistance and public art in downtown San José. These 12 works of public art are among the many in this area. However, this particular walking tour considers how San José’s communities actively challenge narrow and exclusionary interpretations of local history through public art creation and utilize public art as a space of resistance, resisting both colonialist histories and recent narratives of urban demise through the beautification of urban space via art that showcases diversity in the city. These monuments ask the viewer to question their perspectives on history and be open to broadening it.

We invite you to contribute to our #SJResistArt Instagram campaign. While at any of the 12 public artworks, take a selfie or image with the artwork to reflect this idea of art as resistance and post to Instagram with the hashtag, #SJResistArt.

Scan this QR code to take the walking tour using the MyGPsCity app or the print version with Linktree.

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1. The Arch of Dignity, Equality, and Justice (Cesar Chavez Monument), Judith Baca, 2008
2. Olympic Black Power Statue (Tommie Smith and John Carlos), Rigo 23, 2005
3. Alebrijes, Francisco Franco, 2019
4. Celebration Under the Water, Harumo Sato, 2018
5. We Are Muwekma Ohlone, Alfonso Salazar, 2021
6. Sophie Holding the World Together, El Mac, 2018
7. SoFA Pocket Park Murals, John Barrick, Ryan Carrington, Yolanda Guerra, Sheng Lor, Paige Mason, Maylea Saito, Evelyn Salguero, Sidy, 2021
8. Urban Rooms, Estudio Teddy Cruz + Forman, 2017
9. Commemoration of the Founding of the Pueblo San José de Guadalupe, East Los Streetscapers, 1997
10. 100 Block Mural, Multiple artists, 2020

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Approximate Tour Time: 2 Hours
Distance: 3.1 Miles