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PHOTOS: GAYLE ANDERSON

Artist Leo Limón at the Gol Mural. The mural features a portrait of the late Artie Hernandez, popular soccer coach and driving force behind the Cypress Park soccer league.

Division 3 Mural Pays Tribute to Cypress Park Recreation Center and Popular Soccer Coach

By GAYLE ANDERSON

(Sept. 23, 2003) In the shade of a row of Cypress trees that lines the wall between the Cypress Park Recreation Center and the North Los Angeles Division bus yard, friends and neighbors came together, Saturday, for the dedication of the Gol Mural, a 70-foot long mural by artist Leo Limón.

The 540-square-foot mural is an extension of "Vista de Harmony," a 200-foot mural completed by Limón in 1997. Depicting education and sportsmanship within the context of everyday life in the community of Cypress Park, the mural has transformed a graffiti-scarred wall into a community landmark.

The vibrant mural celebrates the successful athletic programs of Cypress Park Recreation Center, including the award-winning youth soccer program, a senior women's basketball team and a youth baseball league. Notably, the mural features a portrait of the late Artie Hernandez, popular soccer coach and driving force behind the Cypress Park soccer league.

Friends and Neighbors> Community members raised funds for paint and supplies at car washes staged in Cypress Park; MTA contributed wall preparation services and an anti-graffiti coating.



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A resident of Cypress Park, Limón has been a local treasure for the past three decades, producing whimsically colorful murals, paintings and sculpture that reflect urban realities in the context of ancient cultures.

Limón's work has been featured in "Chicano Visions: American Painters on the Verge" and "Contemporary Chicana" and "Chicano Art: Artists, Works, Culture and Education." His works are also being displayed at the Smithsonian Museum in Washington D.C. and in an exhibit at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, N.M.

Limón was recently recognized by the Los Angeles City Council for outstanding achievement in the community.

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MTA team, background, from left, Community Affairs officer Helen Ortiz, Division 3 Manager Dan Frawley and Metro Art officer Alan Nakagawa, help celebrate Limón's achievement at dedication Sept. 20.