

East Palo Alto will be celebrating its 40th anniversary as a city this week, and you're not alone if that sounds strange to you. The San Mateo County community of East Palo Alto came into being about a century ago... [I]t remained unincorporated until July 1, 1983 ... Divided by Highway 101, East Palo Alto has had a diverse population for decades — partly due to abhorrent redlining policies and gentrification — and is now largely Latino. But the 2.5-square mile city has undergone startling physical change in the past quarter-century, too. Whiskey Gulch was developed into University Circle with the Four Seasons Hotel as its sparkling gem.
—*The Mercury News*, June 28, 2023

If you stick a knife in my back nine inches and pull it out six inches, there's no progress —Malcolm X, 1964 Interview

Parting the Red Me by Antonio López

we're nearing 40 years

wandering this silicon desert.

Sing about me, I'm dying

of hearse. O sweet thirst

of boys I lost in the heat

of teens, who showed up to court

in Levi's. It is said all the prophets

met their wives by a well. Well,

Jose, interpret these dreams of a city:

no clean water gushes from faucets.

Your mother in midtown carries five

gallon jugs every day to Safeway.

Was all of it scripture?

Or just script? I exit the U.S.

101, the same way that split,

east from west, mom & pop

businesses. Who needs God

when you got the government?

James said it like this: *And the Court*

shall scatter you among many school districts.

PALY, for those who felt lucky,

Eastside Prep—I applied 3 times.

Carlmont like my sis. Woodside like

my cousins. Where we headed now,

gang? A place where la navaja

never knew our backs.

Sing about us, I'm eying

the Pacific, this ocean

to be my brow.

And I'm as quiet

as they are now. I sea 'em,

clear as dead. Wading

in search

of promised band