

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