

Enriching Lives



## **Los Angeles County's Civic Art Collection Discovery, Revitalization, and Growth**

**April 2009**



**<http://www.lacountyarts.org/civicart.htm>**

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Cover photo: *Hugo Ballin, Fresco at former County General Hospital, 1932*

## Overview

In December 2004, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors passed a Civic Art Policy mandating that 1% of eligible costs for new County capital projects and renovations over \$500,000 be used to create public artworks. An additional mandate of the policy was to create a comprehensive survey of the civic artworks the County already possesses, to assess the condition of those works, to repair them if needed, and to provide the public with information about them.



*Paul Botello, Inner Resources, City Terrace Park Gym, 2000*

This is the first report from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission to begin the documentation of County artworks across districts and departments. Research began in 2006 and is ongoing. The report includes information on 68 historic artworks found to date. These artworks have been documented in hard and electronic files and are summarized on the Arts Commission's website: [http://www.lacountyarts.org/civicart\\_countyscollection.htm](http://www.lacountyarts.org/civicart_countyscollection.htm). Each work is photographed and documented to be more easily maintained, conserved, and possibly restored. Artworks in this report are organized by County Departments.

## Background

Incorporated in 1850, Los Angeles County has the largest population of any county in the United States and covers a geographical area which is roughly three times the state of Rhode Island.

In its more than 150 year history the County has accumulated an extensive array of artworks, but has never cataloged these objects.

The County's Civic Art Collection is not like a museum's; its artworks are spread throughout the County's 4,700+ square miles, in its hundreds of buildings and sites, and in its dozens of departments. County Civic artworks range from traditional sculptures, such as the bronze *George Washington* statue in the Los Angeles Civic Center, to Joseph Young's sculptural wall for the Leland R. Weaver Public Library in South Gate.

Given how scattered and occasionally hidden the County's collection of civic artworks is, it is important to create a permanent and fixed location where information about them can be found.

The Civic Art section of the Arts Commission's web site, located at

[http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart\\_countyscollection.htm](http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart_countyscollection.htm), functions as a depository where

County staff and the public can see each work the County owns with a click of a mouse. The hard and electronic files housed at the Arts Commission provide more thorough records for researchers, County staff, and the public.

Gathering information about the County's Collection helps fulfill the County's goal of "enriching lives" by making the public aware of artworks in their midst and enhancing their enjoyment of them. The County Collection project does this by:

1. Providing easy access to detailed information about Civic Artworks for the public and County staff;
2. Offering a window into the County's history; and
3. Promoting preservation of artworks the County owns.

## **A place to learn about County civic artworks**

Another crucial benefit of the Collection documentation is that it provides an easy-to-find place for anyone, County staff, art researchers, and residents, who want to learn more about County civic artwork. Public artwork information is housed in one location with a standardized form of record keeping.

At the Arts Commission's website ([http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart\\_countyscollection.htm](http://www.lacountyarts.org/civcart_countyscollection.htm)) all works found to date are listed. Not only does this make information widely available, it also gives, for the first time, a true sense of the extent and range of the County's Collection of public artworks.

## **A window into County history**

The civic artworks owned by Los Angeles County which have been documented thus far represent 100 years of County history. Although these works were created at different times and for different locations, when presented together they offer a singular perspective of Los Angeles County history: the intersection of art and public life, a story which is largely untold.

For example, while researching P. Takuma Tono's carefully designed pocket Zen garden at the Gardena Mayme Dear Library, it was discovered that the garden and Tono's services were donated by the Gardena Valley Gardener's Association (GVGA) in 1964. This group formed after the local Gardena Japanese Community was devastated by the forced internments



during World War II. Beginning in the 1950s, the GVGA fought against unfavorable stereotypes of Japanese Americans by becoming involved in charitable community work.

Like the Gardena Library's garden, the majority of the public artworks in the County's Collection relate to the social and political stories taking place in the County at the time of their creation. Each artwork's story illuminates a chapter of County history. Civic artworks, given their public locations and roots in local communities, become a visual record of local events. Documenting these stories and informing the public about them is one of the benefits of this research.

### **Preserving County artworks**

The County's Collection documentation includes information on the conditions of County-owned artworks. Unfortunately throughout the County's history, many artworks have been neglected. This is primarily for two reasons: lack of funding to care for the works and a lack of knowledge of how to treat them.

Often these artworks are not recognized within their departments as works of art, and are cleaned and maintained as though they are infrastructure or landscape. Many of the works of art are at least several decades old and are simply suffering from old age.

By placing works into the County's Collection they are now visibly recognized as works of art



and are made known as such to their departments. Photographing and cataloging them lets the departments responsible for them know which works are most in need of repair. This is the first step towards a long-term maintenance plan that preserves the County's artworks.

*Moving Louis Aimé Lejeune's Je N'Oublierai Pas sculpture by crane to its new Los Angeles County Arboretum location after restoration.*

# Methods of Research and Documentation

## Locating artworks

Since 2006, 68 artworks which were created before the Civic Art program began have been accessioned into (added to) the Collection. Locating these works has often been difficult. Two previous surveys were extremely helpful in the inventory's first stages:

- The Public Library Department's comprehensive art inventory; and
- The S.O.S. (Save Outdoor Sculpture) survey of the Los Angeles area conducted in the 1990s by Heritage Preservation.



*Ruben Guajardo, La Verne Library  
Doors, 1987*

Working from these two lists, the documentation process began. The library inventory was used to determine which libraries had civic artworks and the S.O.S. report provided valuable information about sculptures throughout the County. Staff researched and visited the works listed in these inventories to determine if they were owned by the County. Other routes used to gather information included:

- Contacting each department's Public Information Officer;
- Field discoveries by staff;
- Calling and visiting departments and facilities; and
- Contacts in a department who possess detailed information about buildings and facilities.

Los Angeles County and its departments are often so vast that it can be difficult to find the person within a department who has information about works of art. Civic Art staff was able to

find helpful individuals in some departments, such as Marta Sheffield in Health Services and Kerry Silverstrom in Beaches and Harbors, who assisted by finding contacts at buildings and sites throughout the County. Thank you to all County staff who assisted in this process.

## **Researching artists and artworks**

Once a work is discovered and photographed, Civic Art staff researches both the artwork and its artist. Occasionally, the artist's identity is unclear and research is needed to determine who created the work. Tools used to discover artist and artwork information include:

- Speaking with knowledgeable department staff and searching through available records;
- Internet searches;
- Electronic archives such as ProQuest's *Los Angeles Times* database;
- Online tools, including the California Searchable file on the Los Angeles Public Library's website;
- University archives at USC and UCLA;
- Research tools such as Robin Dunitz's *Street Murals*, *Who's Who in American Art*, and websites such as Public Art in LA; and
- Local Los Angeles public art researchers Michael Several and Ruth Wallach.

Also, the Los Angeles County Public Library generously conducts searches if staff is able to give them an artist or artwork's name. County research librarians such as Frank Harris have been successful in finding information about County artworks.

Another important source of information is contacting and interviewing the artists themselves. Nearly all the artists we have contacted have been eager to tell their stories. Artists with whom



contact was initiated include: Malcolm Leland, Josefina Quezada, John Cody, Frank Matranga, Dora De Larios, Armando Campero, Tony Sheets, Daniel Dodd, Lee Whitten, Ruben Guajardo, and Michael Amescua.



*Malcolm Leland, ceramic screen at LA County Hall of Records, 1962*

### **Accessioning and filing**

The County's Collection inventory currently only includes permanent artworks designed by an artist and located on County property. "Permanent artwork" is defined as statues or busts on pedestals or bases, sculptural bas-reliefs, painted or ceramic murals on building interior or exterior spaces, stained and decorative glasswork, and mobiles or hanging sculptures.

Decorative building elements such as grillwork, fencing, et cetera, are not accessioned ("added") into the Collection unless created by an artist.

Framed and easily movable works such as paintings, pottery, and small sculptures have not yet been identified and documented due to the sheer volume of these works and the hundreds of locations that would need to be searched. An inventory of these objects will be undertaken in the future.

When visiting a potential County Collection artwork, staff photographs it and determines if it meets the current criteria for accessioning into the County's Collection. Once the work is deemed to fit collection criteria, the accessioning process begins. Each work is first assigned a Collection record identification based on a format which uses the department name, the name of the County facility where the work resides, and the artist's full last name. (e.g., Parks.Arboretum.Lejeune)

This record identification is consistently tied to an artwork throughout the filing system, which is comprised of three areas: the first is the County Collections Access Database. This database holds a detailed overview of each artwork. Staff also creates electronic and hard folders (held at the Arts Commission's offices) for each artwork on the Arts Commission's server.

As the inventory has progressed, staff has also gathered information on works which were once part of the County's Collection, such as Armando Campero's East Los Angeles Library mural and his City Terrace Park mural, both of which have been removed in recent years, prior to the establishment of the Civic Art Program. These works are not part of the Collection but their records are retained for our files and for public information.



*Ben Mayer, Norwalk Library mural, detail*

## **Future Steps for Inventorying the Collection**

There are still many avenues to pursue in the search for civic artworks owned by Los Angeles County. Many departments already surveyed are likely to have additional artworks. The most probable of these include the Department of Public Social Services, Community Development Commission, Internal Services Department, Department of Community and Senior Services, Beaches and Harbors, Health Services, and Parks and Recreation. Although Civic Art staff has had contact with several employees at each of these departments and received information about artworks in the department's possession, these departments are vast and likely to contain more works not yet found.

Immediate next steps for the County Collection inventory involve in-depth surveys of areas not yet surveyed: the Superior Court of California, Los Angeles County and the County Watershed within the Department of Public Works.

The Arts Commission wants to make the County's artwork inventory as useful as possible to County staff and the public. Steps to achieve this include:

- Conducting oral interviews with civic artists that could be heard on the Arts Commission's website, including artists creating today and those who have created County projects in the past;
- Building a comprehensive visual map on the Civic Art website that will allow people to easily locate artworks and learn more about them;
- Creating a cell phone audio tour for works in the County's Collection that can be accessed by people in the field as they view artworks; and
- Soliciting public and County staff feedback and information via the website.

As the project continues, information gathered will be deeper, broader, and more complete. Los Angeles County has a rich art history and its works are an important addition to civic art in our region.

# Summary Descriptions of Collection Artworks by Department

## Beaches and Harbors



**Artist:** Rip Cronk  
**Title:** *Alphabet Block Construction*  
**Date:** 1997  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Mother's Beach, Marina del Rey

Rip Cronk's sculpture at Mother's Beach is modeled on a lifeguard station. It was installed in 1997 and has evidence of chipped paint, metal joint rusting, and color fading. Its proximity to the ocean and use of materials that are vulnerable to environmental factors suggest that it could benefit from conservation.



**Title:** *The Helmsman*  
**Artist:** Carlo Romanelli  
**Date:** ca. 1940s  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Burton W. Chace Park, Marina del Rey

*The Helmsman* dates from the 1940s when it was created to stand in front of the Helms Bakery in Culver City. It does not appear to have been restored. Based on a S.O.S. survey from 1995, which found numerous cracks and scratched graffiti, an initial assessment indicates it could benefit from conservation.

## Community Development Commission



**Artist:** David Lopez

**Title:** *Our Lady of Guadalupe*

**Date:** 1973

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Housing Authority Building  
4800 Cesar E. Chavez Avenue, Los Angeles

Created in 1973 for the Casa Maravilla housing project in East Los Angeles, these diptych murals by David Lopez

were salvaged by the local community when the housing project was torn down in 1975. The wall was detached from its original building and moved to Mednik Avenue and Cesar Chavez. Each mural measures 13' by 25' and was designed by Lopez with teenage assistants from the community. One mural features an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe surrounded by colorful light while the other includes a cross overlaid with poetry by Sam Zepeda. Over the years the paint faded, and in the 1980s or 90s the murals were restored by the community with good intentions, but unfortunately the original artist was not consulted and a new painter drastically changed the murals' appearance. In 2008, David Lopez received funding from the Community Development Commission to restore the murals to their original brilliance and detail. They are currently in excellent condition.

## Community and Senior Services



**Artist:** Goez Art Studio

**Title:** *The Short Life of John Doe*  
(*La Vida Breve de Alfonso Fulano*)

**Date:** 1975

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Centro Maravilla Service Center, Los Angeles

*The Short Life of John Doe* (*La Vida Breve de Alfonso Fulano*) measures 8' by 60' and is positioned on an exterior wall of the Centro Maravilla Service Center facing Cesar Chavez Avenue. Its long length is divided into three panels which portray different historical scenes of life along Cesar Chavez Avenue (or Brooklyn Avenue as it was called in the past). The mural is somewhat faded and has been tagged with graffiti. It would benefit from cleaning and restoration.

## Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)

DPSS, an extremely large department, has not been completely surveyed. The three artworks which have been found show a range of dates, locations, and artistic processes.



**Artist:** Daniel Dodd and Art Share LA

**Date:** 2002 - current

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** DPSS Building, 813 East 4th Place, Los Angeles

In the Arts District near downtown Los Angeles, artist Daniel Dodd and the nonprofit Art Share LA worked extensively with high school students to create an ongoing mural project for DPSS's parking garage. This project began in 2002 and since that time three murals have been created. The murals follow a theme of multiculturalism and each is 9' in diameter. A fourth mural based on Japanese motifs is planned. These artworks appear to be in good condition at present.



**Artist:** Jacqueline Dreager

**Title:** *Tall Tails*

**Date:** 2005

**District:** Third Supervisorial District

**Location:** Van Nuys Civic Center, Van Nuys

For *Tall Tails* at the Van Nuys Child Development Center, Jacqueline Dreager created large steel plate cut-outs of animals such as dragonflies, lemurs, and squid painted with colorful acrylics. Installed in 2005, they create a playful atmosphere for the children who visit the center. They are not in need of restoration currently.





**Artist:** Goez Art Studio

**Title** *Exposition Park Welcomes the World - Bienvenidos a La Ciudad de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Ángeles de Porciuncula*

**Date:** 1984

**District:** Second Supervisorial District

**Location:** 3965 South Vermont Ave, Los Angeles

The earliest work discovered in this department is this one near Exposition Park on the exterior of a building which formerly housed DPSS offices.

*Exposition Park Welcomes the World...* is a large mural (43' by 132') and once covered the entire north side of 3965 South Vermont Avenue. It was created in 1984 by Goez Art Studios, along with 20 high school student helpers, for the Los Angeles Olympic Games as part of the Olympic Arts Festival. The mural depicts "the Queen of Angels" embracing the flags of all the countries of the world. The mural suffered severe damage during the civil unrest of 1992 and today is partially obscured by ivy and by a newer building constructed immediately adjacent to it. This structure precludes the possibility of restoration at this time.

## Fire Department



**Artist:** John Cody

**Title:** *The Aviator*

**Date:** 2000

**District:** Third Supervisorial District

**Location:** Pacoima Facility, 12605 Osborne Street, Pacoima

Created as a monument for firefighter paramedic Jeffrey Langley

who lost his life in a helicopter accident, John Cody's *The Aviator*

stands in front of the helicopter training tower in the Fire Department's Pacoima facility. It is carved out of green serpentine stone and was completed in 2000. Given its location on non-publicly accessible County property, and its durable material, its condition is stable.

## Health Services



**Artist:** Hugo Ballin

**Date:** 1932

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** LAC+USC Medical Center General Hospital, Los Angeles

When the old County General Hospital, now known as LAC+USC, was built in the early 1930s, the County commissioned two artists, Hugo Ballin and Salvatore Scarpitta, to add artwork to the building. Hugo Ballin, a well-known and prominent Los Angeles muralist, created a fresco for the entrance's ceiling.

This is his only known authentic fresco-style painting and it depicts Greek mythological medical heroes as well as modern day medical pioneers.

LAC+USC has ceased to operate as a hospital and its operations have been moved to a new facility on the same medical campus. Consequently, it is unclear what the next steps should be for restoration. Ballin's fresco, according to Health Services, has not been restored and based on its appearance it needs substantial improvements to its surface as much of its gold leaf has flaked off. The condition of the structure of the fresco is unknown.



**Artist:** Annemarie Rawlinson

**Title:** *Labyrinth*

**Date:** 2003

**District:** Second Supervisorial District

**Location:** Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Torrance

At Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, artist Annemarie Rawlinson created an outdoor labyrinth inspired by Hopi and Cretan

labyrinth designs. Intended for use by patients and visitors, the artist also painted several nearby benches. It was designed in 2003 and recently repainted.



**Artist:** Salvatore C. Scarpitta

**Date:** 1934

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** LAC+USC Medical Center General Hospital, Los Angeles

Salvatore Scarpitta, an Italian sculptor, created numerous sculptures carved in high relief above the hospital's main entrance, some of which depict prominent figures in medical history. The condition of the structure of the sculptures is unknown.

## Internal Service Department (ISD)

The Internal Service Department (ISD) administers facility operations throughout the County. Its numerous buildings, facilities, and open sites contain many artworks.



**Artist:** Frank Ackerman

**Title:** *Vietnam Memorial*

**Date:** 1973

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Civic Center Mall, between Hill and Broadway, First and Temple Streets

The *Vietnam Memorial* by Frank Ackerman was originally composed of a bronze soldier's helmet placed on a granite pedestal. The helmet was replaced after a theft in the 1990s and then was stolen again. Given the tendency for this work to disappear, it is questionable whether it should be restored in its present location where it is so vulnerable to theft. A possible solution is to move it to an appropriate public County facility such as Bob Hope Patriotic Hall.



**Artist:** José Antonio Aguirre, Eva Cristina Pérez and Alfredo Calderon

**Title:** *Dreams of Past, Present, Future*

**Date:** 1996

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** East Los Angeles County Hall, Los Angeles

In 1996, Martin Flores and the Rogelio Flores Foundation partnered with Self Help Graphics and First District Supervisor Gloria Molina to sponsor a mural to honor the life of Martin's brother, Rogelio Flores, who was the victim of a drive-by shooting. Artists José Antonio Aguirre, Eva Cristina Pérez, and Alfredo Calderon led a group of eight high school students through design and execution of this mural. In the finished work, the students' design shows past events as well as future hopes. The mural, facing Third Street, is made of hand-painted ceramic tile and measures 12' by 15'. It is in good condition.



**Artist:** Jean-Antoine Houdon

**Title:** Copy after *George Washington* (original, 1796)

**Date:** 1933

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Civic Center Mall between Grand and Hill, First and Temple Streets

The bronze copy of Jean Antoine Houdon's *George Washington* statue stands opposite *Christopher Columbus* in the Civic Center.

The copy was created in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and given to the County by the Women's Community Service in 1933. Like *Christopher Columbus*, it also rests on a granite base which was recently discovered to be from the old County Courthouse demolished in 1933 after being damaged in a severe earthquake. Although it has not been restored in recent memory, it appears to be in good condition.



**Artists:** Henry Kreis and Albert Stewart

**Title:** *Ft. Moore Pioneer Monument*

**Date:** 1957

**District:** First supervisorial district

**Location:** Hill Street, between Temple and Cesar Chavez, Los Angeles

Two blocks northeast of the Hall of Records on Hill Street stands the *Ft. Moore Pioneer Monument*, a towering large-scale monument made of terra cotta and concrete created by Henry Kreis and Albert Stewart. The monument has an 80' brick façade which contains a terra cotta bas-relief panel of scenes of life at the fort, which stood from 1847 to 1853 and was built by a Mormon battalion which fought in the Mexican-American War. This monument originally had fountain elements and a large reflecting pool but the water was stopped at an unknown date. In 2002, the County explored the possibility of restoring the monument, but the assessment cost of over \$3 million was deemed prohibitive. A detailed report of the cost and steps needed for restoration remains in the County Collection files.



**Artist:** Malcolm Leland  
**Date:** 1962  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Hall of Records, Los Angeles

Wedded to the architecture of the Hall of Records is this work by Malcolm Leland. In 1957 ceramicist Leland approached architect Richard Neutra as he was designing the Hall of Records and offered him his idea of large scale ceramic screens. Leland designed an extruded ceramic form which could be repeated hundreds of times and, since these forms were anchored to the building by metal hooks, they could be positioned in various ways, creating interplays of texture and light. The resulting 8-story screen concealed Neutra's ventilation ducts while at the same time allowing air to flow freely. Today, while the work still functions as a ventilation screen and appears to be stable, it is hard to determine the condition given its size. The white terra cotta forms are in need of brightening and cleaning.



**Artist:** Francesco Perotti  
**Title:** *Christopher Columbus*  
**Date:** 1973  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Civic Center Mall, between Grand and Hill, First and Temple Streets

The bronze statue of Christopher Columbus by Francesco Perotti stands in the Los Angeles Civic Center and was donated to the County in 1973 by the Southern California Lodges of the Order of the Sons of Italy in America. It is slightly smaller than life-size and rests on a red granite base. In 2000 it was cleaned and restored by conservator Donna Williams and appears to be in good condition.





**Artist:** Carl Romanelli and Cataldo Papaleo  
**Title:** *Joseph Scott*  
**Date:** 1967  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Los Angeles

This bronze figurative sculpture was cleaned and conserved by art conservator Donna Williams in 2000. However, given its highly trafficked location on Grand Avenue, it could benefit from a new

assessment.



**Artist:** Emil Seletz  
**Title:** *Lincoln*  
**Date:** 1958  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles

Emil Seletz's *Lincoln* statue resides within the County's Hall of Administration. Seletz, a professor of Neurological Surgery at the USC

School of Medicine, had a great interest in Lincoln and created several busts of him. The large bronze work is in good condition.



**Artist:** Albert Stewart  
**Title:** *The Law Givers*  
**Date:** 1960  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Los Angeles

*The Law Givers* is composed of glazed terra cotta bas-relief figures attached to the exterior of the Hall of Administration. In 2000, conservator Donna

Williams cleaned and repaired the figures. They appear to be in stable condition today.





**Artist:** Harold L. Williams and Gerald Gladstone

**Title:** *King Memorial*

**Date:** 1978

**District:** Second Supervisorial District

**Location:** Compton Civic Center, Compton

In addition to Los Angeles' main Civic Center, ISD manages Civic Centers in other parts of the County as well. At the Compton Civic Center the department is responsible for the *King Memorial* by Gerald Gladstone and

Harold L. Williams. This memorial was designed and executed in the late 1970s as a tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. It is composed of multiple white panels which rise up at varying angles and meet at a central circle to create a mountain-like form, evocative of Dr. King's statement that he had "been to the mountain top." The memorial appears to be in good condition; however it does have fountain elements which add to the uncertainty of its future condition.



**Artist:** Joseph Young

**Title:** *Topographical Map*

**Date:** 1962

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Hall of Records, Los Angeles

Across the street from the Hall of Administration lies the County's Hall of Records. Built in the 50s and 60s and designed by Richard Neutra, the building has two

incorporated artworks, Joseph Young's *Topographical Map* and Malcolm Leland's large architectural ceramic screen.

*Topographical Map* is a 20' by 80' high-relief mosaic and granite mural located on the northern face of the Hall of Records. It depicts the geographical features and water resources in Los Angeles County and incorporates fountain elements. Water falls from five points in the mosaic, depicting County reservoirs and natural water sources. In the 1980s, the fountain was turned off and for two decades the water was stopped. When the Civic Art Program was established,

one of its first tasks was to restore *Topographical Map*. Conservator Donna Williams cleaned and restored the piece while ISD managed the restoration of the reflecting pool and the fountain elements. In 2008 all work was completed. Although the fountain is functional once again, the mosaic's surface should be monitored for chlorine and mineral deposits.



**Artist:** Michael Amescua  
**Date:** 2007  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** East Los Angeles Civic Center, Los Angeles

ISD also manages many of the artworks in the new East Los Angeles Civic Center at Mednik Avenue and Third Street. Michael Amescua's entrance markers stand at both the Mednik and the Third Street entrances to the

center. Completed in 2007 the four markers are comprised of metal and concrete and are 20' high. Each has nine metal designs intended to represent the Center's governmental and community activities. The designs are made of cut-out metal and resemble the traditional *papel picado* (cut paper) style. Because of their recent installation and durable materials, these entrance markers are in good and stable condition at this time.



**Artist:** Linda Arreola  
**Date:** 2007  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** East Los Angeles Civic Center, Los Angeles

Los Angeles native Linda Arreola created twelve stone pyramid forms for the main plaza of the East Los Angeles Civic Center.

Each form is a stepped pyramid made of travertine stone with a 3' by 5' base with heights varying between twenty to thirty inches. Carved into the pieces are symbolic designs which represent natural elements as well as important life guiding principals. They are in good condition at this time.



**Artist:** Jose Rude Calderon  
**Title:** *Leaping Fish, Nature's Cycles*  
**Date:** 2004  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** East Los Angeles Civic Center, Los Angeles

In the center of Belvedere Park Lake at the East Los Angeles Civic

Center stands Jose Rude Calderon's *Leaping Fish, Nature's Cycles*. This work is composed of two leaping fish sculptures and several accompanying fountains and lighting pieces. Both fish, which appear to leap out of the lake, are made of travertine stone. The southern fish is six feet in length, while the northern fish is seven feet long. Water shooting out from small fountains at the sides of the fish further implies the splashing of movement. The fish and the fountains appear to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Roberto Delgado  
**Date:** 2007  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** East Los Angeles Civic Center, Los Angeles

Scattered throughout the East Los Angeles Civic Center are Roberto

Delgado's one foot square ceramic tile and limestone pavers. These

works, which combine local historic photographic images with Meso-American designs, were inspired by imagery given to the artist by residents of East Los Angeles. In addition to the pavers, the artist created two ceramic tile murals for the Center's Transit Plaza entrance facing Third Street. These murals depict *papalotls*, or Aztec butterflies. Each mural contains 121 tiles and measures 74 square feet. Both the pavers and the murals were created in 2007 and are in good condition.



**Artist:** Ricardo Duffy

**Title:** Meso Ridge and Conversion Ridge

**Date:** 2005

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** East Los Angeles Civic Center, Los Angeles

Also in the East Los Angeles Civic Center complex are two works designed by Ricardo Duffy for the seating benches which

surround the Civic Center's two playgrounds. *Meso Ridge*, which partially encloses the north playground, is a continuous glazed ceramic mosaic filled with handcrafted and broken tiles, geometric shapes, and playful imagery such as Pre-Columbian figures riding skateboards. *Conversion Ridge* enlivens the bench seating near the south playground and is a series of square ceramic tiles and Pre-Columbian Mesoamerican designs stained onto the concrete. Both *Meso Ridge* and *Conversion Ridge* include cast aluminum Mayan figures placed on top of the benches which function as skateboard stoppers. The works are currently in good condition.

## Parks and Recreation

The Department of Parks and Recreation contains many works of public art at locations throughout the County. Many of the Civic Art Program's new projects are also located at County parks.



**Artist:** Paul Botello  
**Title:** *Inner Resources*  
**Date:** 2000  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** City Terrace Park, Los Angeles

At City Terrace Park, Paul Botello, through support from the Los Angeles County Probation Department, painted a monumental mural entitled *Inner Resources* for the exterior of the City Terrace Park gymnasium. Botello worked with at-risk youth to create this mural which spans almost 30' by 50'. *Inner Resources* revolves around the central figure of a Mexican Indian goddess from whom life and bounty flows. She is surrounded by people planting, harvesting, and celebrating. The overall condition appears good.



**Artist:** Paul Botello  
**Title:** *The Wall That Speaks, Sings, and Shouts*  
**Date:** 2001  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Ruben F. Salazar Park, Los Angeles

Located on the exterior wall of the Ruben F. Salazar Park recreation center, Paul Botello's mural *The Wall That Speaks, Sings, and Shouts* is an energetic expression of movement and emotion in brilliant ranges of color. The 25' by 50' mural was commissioned by Los Tigres del Norte, a well-known Nortena band whose portrait is featured on the left side of the wall. Amidst a variety of complex symbols, the artist depicts groups of marching men, women, and children. The park's namesake, journalist Ruben F. Salazar, is included in a small blue portrait on the right side of the mural.

There is minor peeling in the center of the mural as well as slight streaking along its top portion. The overall condition appears good however.



**Artist:** Richard Haro  
**Title:** *God Blesses Everyone That Tries*  
**Date:** 2000  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Ruben F. Salazar Park, Los Angeles

At the Senior Center in Ruben F. Salazar Park a mural by Richard Haro covers a large triangular wall. Composed of the faces of dozens of famous Latino people, it measures 20' by 30' at its tallest and widest points. At the top of the mural two cupped hands release colorful orbs that float throughout the mural, unifying the work. The mural appears to be in excellent condition.



**Artist:** Theo Alice Ruggles Kitson  
**Title:** *Spanish American War Memorial*  
**Date:** 1941  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Arcadia Park, Arcadia

At Arcadia Park stands the sculpture *The Spanish American War Memorial* (also known as *The Hiker*). This bronze by Theo Alice Ruggles Kitson is one of 52 casts made between 1921 and 1956 to commemorate the 1898 Spanish American War. Los Angeles County dedicated this artwork to the United Spanish War Veterans of Southern California in 1940. The six-foot sculpture stands on a concrete and granite base measuring 5'2" by 8' by 8'. The statue has bright green streaking on its patina and would benefit from a conservator's assessment.





**Artist:** Louis Aimé Lejeune

**Title:** *Je N'Oublierai Pas*

**Date:** 1930

**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District

**Location:** Los Angeles County Arboretum and Botanic Garden, Arcadia

*Je N'Oublierai Pas* ("I Will Never Forget"), a white marble sculpture by French artist Louis Aimé Lejeune, was commissioned in 1930 by heiress Anita

Baldwin. Measuring 7' by 4.5' by 2.5', it depicts a female figure standing beside a low column and cradling an urn. When the sculpture was donated to the County in 1991 it was placed in a shady area near the Arboretum's waterfall. This location accelerated the accumulation of dirt and mold on the marble's surface. In 2008, the Arts Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Fifth Supervisorial District, hired Rosa Lowinger to relocate and conserve this work. It was moved to a sunnier location in the Korean Garden and mold and dirt were then removed. The project is further detailed in the section on recent conservation projects.



**Artist:** George Stanley

**Title:** *Muse of Music, Dance, Drama*

**Date:** 1940

**District:** Third Supervisorial District

**Location:** Hollywood Bowl, Los Angeles

A prominent feature of the Hollywood Bowl, this Art Deco-inspired monument was constructed between 1938 and 1940 as part of the Public

Works of Art Project and is the largest Work Projects Administration sculpture created in southern California. The 22' by 200' monument is composed of a large fountain and multi-tiered sculptural base. The crowning feature of the fountain is the Muse of Music, a 15' kneeling figure playing a harp. On either side of the fountain are two smaller 10' figures set back in ziggurat-shaped niches; these figures represent the muses of dance and drama respectively. The entire piece is made of concrete and covered with decorative granite slabs. An extensive restoration of the monument by the Los Angeles Philharmonic occurred in 2006.

## Public Library

The Public Library has the most extensive collection of civic artworks within the County.

Throughout its history, the Public Library has placed a high importance on how public art builds pride in a community. It is also the only County department that has a complete inventory of its own artworks.



**Artist:** José Antonio Aguirre

**Title:** *Our Legacy: Forever Presente...*

**Date:** 2004

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** East Los Angeles Public Library, Los Angeles

José Antonio Aguirre's monumental mural *Our Legacy:*

*Forever Presente...* was commissioned by First District County Supervisor Molina for the new East Los Angeles Library in 2004. Aguirre's vibrant four-part mural covers more than 2,000 square feet of wall space on the interior and exterior of the library's main entrance. It is composed of Byzantine and Venetian glass mosaic as well as carved limestone. The mural is in good condition.



**Artist:** Dora De Larios

**Date:** 1973

**District:** Second Supervisorial District

**Location:** Compton Public Library, Compton

In 1973 Dora De Larios created a colorful, architecturally integrated ceramic tile mural for Compton Library. It stretches from an exterior wall near the Library's entrance to two interior walls in the main lobby. In 2008 as part of the Compton Public Library's renovation, Silverlake Conservation cleaned and repaired the mural. Small cracks and scratches were corrected in order to reveal the mural's original vibrant colors. This project is described in detail in the following section about recent conservation projects.





**Artist:** Dora De Larios  
**Date:** 1977  
**District:** Second Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Lynwood Library, Lynwood

At the Lynwood Library, De Larios created a ribbon of tiles that runs along the library's entire interior eastern wall. It is composed of two rows of square tiles each featuring a different geometric design and glazed in four colors: red, orange, yellow, and black. This work appears to be in good condition structurally, although there is evidence of scratched graffiti, scuff marks, and tape marks. It would benefit from conservation.



**Artist:** Dora De Larios  
**Date:** 1977  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Norwood Library, El Monte

Dora De Larios was a frequent artistic contributor to County Libraries built in the 1970s. At the Norwood Library, constructed in 1977, she created a ceramic tile mural for the exterior wall next to the Library's entrance. The mural measures 8' by 16'. Each tile is part of one overall abstract composition which is bisected by a band of brick-colored tiles. The entire artwork is reminiscent of Pre-Columbian condor and eagle motifs. At an unknown time, a gate which bisects the mural was built at the Library's entrance. There is evidence of drawn graffiti and also several instances of incised graffiti. The mural should be cleaned and restored.



**Artist:** Dora De Larios  
**Date:** 1978  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Rowland Heights Library, Rowland Heights

De Larios' last mural commissioned by the County was a plaster veneer bas-relief for the Rowland Heights Library.

Created in 1978, the mural measures 10' by 30' and covers an entire wall in the library's foyer with an abstract composition of geometric shapes that seem to rise from the floor and descend from the ceiling. De Larios cut all of the mural's plaster forms and then attached them by galvanizing their edges. A master plasterer finished the texture of the surface shapes with a steel trowel and used a brush broom for the mural's background. The mural has been treated as a regular wall with boards and posters attached to it and would benefit from conservation or restoration.



**Artist:** Robert Freeman  
**Title:** *San Gabriel Library Mural*  
**Date:** 1984  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** San Gabriel Public Library, San Gabriel

In 1982, the Friends of the San Gabriel Library determined that the large blank wall over the children's section would be the perfect spot for a mural illustrating San Gabriel's early history. Funds were raised through book sales and community donations and artist Robert Freeman was commissioned to create and paint the mural. When the artwork was completed it measured 7 1/2' by 45' and depicted life at the Mission San Gabriel Archángel in the late eighteenth century. The earth tones in the acrylic mural are intended to create a restful and pastoral atmosphere. The mural underwent restoration in 2008 and that process is described in the restoration section.



**Artist:** Goez Art Studio  
**Title:** *Ofrenda Maya I*  
**Date:** 1978  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** City Terrace Library, Los Angeles

At City Terrace Library in East Los Angeles, *Ofrenda Maya I* (Mayan Offering), a glazed ceramic mural consisting of 432

earthenware clay tiles, is set into the exterior wall next to the library's entrance. It measures 9' by 12' and depicts two Mayan warriors kneeling on either side of a third warrior who stands above them with his arms outstretched, grasping a chalice and rattle. The artwork is done in a Pre-Columbian Mayan style and the overall composition is detailed, intricate, and colorful. The mural underwent restoration in 2009. More information can be found in the section on recent conservation projects.



**Artist:** Ruben Guajardo  
**Date:** 1987  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** La Verne Library, La Verne

Visitors to the La Verne Library immediately see Ruben Guajardo's artwork – intricate carved wooden doors which took three years for the artist to complete. Funded by Guajardo, SOLVE (Save Old La

Verne Environment Committee) and Friends of the La Verne Library, the doors are constructed of oak and tempered glass. The wood for this project came from a 500-year old landmark oak tree at La Verne Heights School, which was removed by city authorities because it had become a safety hazard. The doors appear to be in good condition, but given their vulnerable location and constant use by the public, a conservator's assessment is needed.



**Artist:** Denise Jones  
**Title:** *The Meadow*  
**Date:** 2001  
**District:** Third Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Agoura Hills Library, Agoura Hills

Artist Denise Jones painted a full wall mural for the children's section at the Agoura Hills Library soon after it built in 2001. *The Meadow*, done in acrylic paint, depicts a sunlit grassy meadow in which deer and other California wildlife appear. The mural is

reminiscent of both Hudson River School landscapes and illustrations from early 20th century children's books. The mural measures 15' by 22' and is in good condition.



**Artist:** Elaine Katzer  
**Title:** *Ben's Promise* and *Robin, Jenny, Eric, Ralph, and Lynne*  
**Date:** 1975  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Clifton M. Brakensiek Library, Bellflower

Above the north and south entrances at the Clifton

M. Brakensiek Library in Bellflower are two stoneware ceramic bas-relief murals by Elaine Katzer. The north wall mural, *Ben's Promise*, and the south wall mural entitled *Robin, Jenny, Eric, Ralph, and Lynne* are named after and dedicated to Katzer's children. The fluid and natural shapes in both murals reflect themes of birth and life. The murals each measure 5' by 20 1/2' and were installed when the library was completed in 1975. They are out of reach of the public and appear to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga  
**Date:** 1977  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Diamond Bar Library, Diamond Bar

At Diamond Bar Library, Frank Matranga created a ceramic tile mural for the library's exterior entrance. It measures 9' by 8.5' and was

installed when the library was built in 1977. The mural's forms are

organic and rounded and undulate throughout the work. Inscribed in small letters on the mural's proper right side are words which comment on a library's purpose: "An educated people are a free people." The mural appears to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga  
**Date:** 1971  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** La Cañada Flintridge Library, La Cañada Flintridge

At La Cañada Flintridge Library, Frank Matranga created a large ceramic tile mural located on the right side of the exterior entryway to the library. The mural measures approximately 15' by 15' and features abstract forms that gracefully interlock. This was one of the artist's first large-scale tile murals and, like many of his other works, is inspired by the movement of the wind and sea. It appears to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga  
**Date:** 1985  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** La Verne Library, La Verne

Frank Matranga's final mural for the County was created in 1985 when the La Verne library was being built. Matranga was commissioned to create a mural with a historical theme and the resulting work is more pictorial than his other County works. Composed of glazed ceramic tiles, this mural in the library's foyer features motifs and local area landmarks such as the Church of the Brethren, the Lordsburg Hotel, and the Lordsburg Depot with citrus trees and mountains in the background. It measures 10' by 16' and is in good condition.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga  
**Date:** 1974  
**District:** Second Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Masao W. Satow Library, Gardena

At the Masao W. Satow Library, Frank Matranga created a 10' by 9' ceramic tile mural in 1974. He conceived, designed, and fabricated the



mural in his studio and then delivered the tiles to the Satow Library's site (then known as the West Gardena Library). They were installed by a professional tile setter under Matranga's supervision. Although the work is placed near the exterior entrance, it appears to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga

**Date:** 1976

**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District

**Location:** Lloyd Taber Marina del Rey Library, Marina del Rey

In a departure from Frank Matranga's previous Los Angeles

County Public Library murals, his artwork at the Lloyd Taber

Marina del Rey Library forms part of the outer brick wall. Matranga worked with the library's brick masons and sculpted his design into the wet bricks before they were fired. When Matranga was commissioned by the library in 1976, he was asked to incorporate sail boats from the Marina in the artwork. The final design shows several boats sailing under a sunny sky. The brick bas-relief appears to be in good condition, although the proximity of the work to the ocean suggests that it would be a good candidate for a conservator's assessment.



**Artist:** Frank Matranga

**Date:** 1976

**District:** Second Supervisorial District

**Location:** View Park Library, Los Angeles

Frank Matranga's ceramic tile mural at the View Park Library graces the exterior entryway to the library. Composed in muted earth tones in ceramic and glass tile, the piece features a variety of curvilinear forms.

The bulbous shapes evoke the forms of sea creatures like clams, mussels and jellyfish. A metal gate now divides the mural.



**Artist:** Ben Mayer  
**Date:** 1969  
**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Norwalk Library, Norwalk

At the Norwalk Library Ben Mayer created three mosaics, one for the children's section inside the library, and two that flank the exterior entrance. The children's section mosaic encircles a large light fixture and is composed of 21 colorful images such as a bluebird, Viking ship, castle, and airplane. The entire work resembles a children's picture book. The exterior mosaics depict California's history and use maps to exemplify changes that have occurred over several hundred years. Both outdoor murals measure 10' by 19.75'. All three murals appear to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Livio Napolitani  
**Date:** 1964  
**District:** Second Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Gardena Mayme Dear Library, Gardena

The Gardena Mayme Dear Library, completed in 1964, contains two works of art. The first, a ceramic tile mosaic mural by Livio Napolitani is set into seven slabs of black stone and hung above the library's main entrance. The mural presents the western evolution of communication through forms of writing. A quote from the Roman philosopher Pliny runs below the mural's images, stating, "Were it not for books human culture would pass into oblivion as quickly as man himself." This mural was conserved and restored in 2008 and further information can be found in the section on conservation projects.



**Artist:** Livio Napolitani  
**Date:** 1966  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Montebello Library, Montebello

At the Montebello Library two Italian glass mosaic murals flank either side of its entrance. Designed by Livio Napolitani and executed by Casavan-Saivo Industries, these artworks were installed in 1966. The mural to the entrance's left represents science and the mural to the right, the humanities. The murals would benefit from cleaning, but they appear to be structurally sound.



**Artist:** Traci C. Petro  
**Title:** *Imagination Tree*  
**Date:** 2003  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Canyon Country JoAnne Darcy Library, Santa Clarita

Local artist Traci Petro created this large 10' by 20' mural for the children's section at the Canyon Country JoAnne Darcy Library. It depicts a tree with sturdy branches that seem to be growing from the bookshelves. Two children and a wide range of creatures such as squirrels, an owl, birds, a monkey, and bees occupy the branches of this "tree of knowledge." The mural is in good condition.



**Artist:** Josefina Quezada and Teresa Chacon  
**Title:** *Tree of Knowledge*  
**Date:** 1978  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Anthony Quinn Library, Los Angeles

Outside of the Anthony Quinn Library in East Los Angeles the artwork *Tree of Knowledge*, also known as the 'Read' mural, faces Cesar Chavez Avenue. It was designed by Teresa Chacon and executed in 1978 by artists from the Chicana Action Service Center under direction from Josefina Quezada. The acrylic painted mural is 10' by 40'. In 2004, a mural conservation effort was supervised by Josefina Quezada and a few elements



in the mural were altered, such as an open book added on the proper left which now lists the names of the mural conservators. The mural was restored in 2004 by the Public Library due to the amount of damage and graffiti the mural had sustained. The mural remains in good condition.



**Artist:** P. Takuma Tono  
**Date:** 1964  
**District:** Second Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Gardena Mayme Dear Library, Gardena

In addition to Livio Napolitani's mosaic (described above), Gardena Mayme Dear contains a Japanese garden nestled in a central courtyard surrounded by the Library. It can be seen by library visitors from almost

any spot inside the building. Designed by the famous Japanese landscape architect, P. Takuma Tono, the garden was a gift to the library from the Gardena Valley Gardener's Association (GVGA). The GVGA not only donated the garden's materials and Tono's services, but also built the garden and maintained it. The garden is not physically accessible to the public and appears to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Tom Van Sant  
**Title:** *The Inventive Progress of Man*  
**Date:** 1960  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Bell Library, Bell

*The Inventive Progress of Man* wall mosaic by Tom Van Sant consists of four contiguous panels made of stone and inlaid cork and is situated directly behind the circulation desk. The mosaic contains images which represent 26 important inventions and discoveries in human history. The mural was installed in 1960. A printed key to the symbols is located on a nearby wall. Although the mural is nearly 50 years old, it remains in good condition due to its protected location.



**Artist:** Tom Van Sant

**Title:** *Flight*

**Date:** 1970

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Huntington Park Library, Huntington Park

*Flight*, a hanging sculpture, is a curved, asymmetrical aluminum work which resembles various flying figures depending on the angle from which it is viewed. The sculpture, measuring 10' by 10' by 2', was dedicated on July 20, 1970. It appears to be in excellent condition.



**Artist:** Tom Van Sant

**Title:** *Body of Knowledge*

**Date:** 1972

**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District

**Location:** Angelo M. Iacoboni Library, Lakewood

*Body of Knowledge* is composed of bricks and measures 14' by 10'.

The bricks jut out of the wall and also undulate in gentle curves. The brick pattern seems both random and at the same time reminiscent of

Braille writing or the symbols from a computer data print-out. The mural is placed high above the library's interior entrance and appears to be in good condition.



**Artist:** Lee Whitten

**Title:** *For Jack*

**Date:** 1975

**District:** Fourth Supervisorial District

**Location:** Manhattan Beach Library, Manhattan Beach

At the Manhattan Beach Library, Lee Whitten created a ceramic tile mural entitled *For Jack* in 1975. The mural depicts a sea and sand motif and measures approximately 10' by 14.5'. It is composed of high fire stoneware clay tiles which have been glazed in six different colors. The artwork, located at the main entrance, has 196 tiles and each

tile was handmade and fired by Whitten. It is dedicated in memory of Whitten's father. The mural has some dirt and cracking and would benefit from conservation.



**Artist:** Joseph Young

**Date:** 1973

**District:** First Supervisorial District

**Location:** Leland R. Weaver Library, South Gate

Forming part of the outer south wall of the Leland R. Weaver

Library in downtown South Gate is a cast concrete work by

Joseph Young. The piece is incorporated into the building's overall design and structurally supports the Library's roof. It is composed of interlocking and overlapping bas-relief shapes, divided into nine sections. It is difficult to assess the condition of the artwork because it is so tied to the building's overall structure.

## Sheriff



**Artist:** Harold Roach

**Date:** 1982

**District:** Third Supervisorial District

**Location:** West Hollywood Sheriff's Station, West Hollywood

Sculptor Harold Roach donated one of his Cor-ten steel sculptures to the West Hollywood Sheriff's Station in 1982 in appreciation of Los Angeles

County paramedics and emergency personnel who helped to save his

life during a medical crisis. Its base is 34" tall and the work itself measures 65" h by 60" w by

25"d. The work's patina might in fact be rust which is damaging the piece. It would benefit from

a conservator's assessment.

## Superior Court of California, Los Angeles County

While no longer a County department, the buildings and artworks in Los Angeles County courthouses still partially belong to the County.



**Artist:** Michael Amescua  
**Title:** *Tree of Life*  
**Date:** 2002  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Chatsworth Courthouse, Chatsworth

The Chatsworth Courthouse houses two recent public artworks created just before the County's Civic Art Program began. *Tree of Life* is a 20' tall stainless steel sculpture depicting local flora and fauna. It does not

need restoration at this time.



**Artist:** Michael Davis  
**Title:** *We The People*  
**Date:** 2002  
**District:** Fifth Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Chatsworth Courthouse, Chatsworth

Also created for the new Chatsworth Courthouse, *We The People* is a conceptual piece playing with the significance of the three words

'We The People.' It does not need restoration at this time.



**Artist:** Robert Merrell Gage  
**Title:** *Lincoln the Lawyer*  
**Date:** 1961  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Los Angeles

This bronze work which stands outside of the Mosk Courthouse was sculpted by Los Angeles artist Robert Gage and its last conservation treatment was completed by art conservator Donna Williams in 2000.

Given its placement in a heavily trafficked area with street pollution, it would benefit from a new assessment.



**Artist:** Donal Hord  
**Title:** *Justice*  
**Date:** 1956  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Los Angeles

This bas-relief sculpture adorns the Mosk Courthouse's façade. In 1995, the S.O.S. survey noted that *Justice* appeared to have some separation occurring between the terra cotta blocks of the bas-relief sculpture. It has not been conserved since and could benefit from a new assessment and treatment.



**Artist:** Albert Stewart  
**Title:** *Foundations of the Law*  
**Date:** 1956  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Stanley Mosk Courthouse, Los Angeles

*Foundations of the Law* is a bas-relief sculpture which decorates the exterior of the Mosk Courthouse. As one of the older works at the Mosk Courthouse it has not been assessed or treated in recent memory. It would benefit from a conservator's assessment.

## Deaccessioned Works



**Artist:** Armando Campero  
**Title:** *El Mexicano-Americano Ayer, Hoy, Mañana*  
**Date:** 1968  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** Former East Los Angeles Public Library (de-installed)

Included in the County's Collection database is the record for

Armando Campero's mural *El Mexicano-Americano Ayer, Hoy, Mañana*, was commissioned for the old East Los Angeles Public Library in 1968. The mural was removed in 2005 and returned to the artist in 2008.



**Artist:** Armando Campero  
**Title:** *Kennedy Saga II*  
**Date:** 1973  
**District:** First Supervisorial District  
**Location:** City Terrace Park Social Hall, Los Angeles (de-installed)

Also included in the County's Collection files is Armando Campero's mural which was formerly at the City Terrace Park Social Hall. Entitled *Kennedy*

*Saga II*, Campero created this acrylic mural in 1973 for the Social Hall's ceiling which measured 50' by 63'. It took the artist two years to complete as he painted it in long strips on the Hall's floor and then mounted it on the ceiling. The mural was removed in 1998 due to seismic upgrade renovations. It is now in the possession of the artist and is included in the Arts Commission's files as a work once commissioned by and belonging to the County.



## Recent Conservation and Restoration Projects

Six works in the County's Collection were restored in 2008 and 2009.

### Hall of Records



The restoration and conservation treatment for Joseph Young's mosaic fountain *Topographical Map* at the Hall of Records (see page 23) began in early 2007 and was completed in October 2008. Funding was received from the County's Extraordinary Maintenance Fund.

The artwork was extensively treated:

- Tiles which lined the fountain's reflecting pool were removed (and later reinstalled) and a new pool lining was added;
- Mosaic pieces were cleaned and desalinated;
- Mosaic tiles that were fractured in the removal process were stabilized with epoxy and mortar;
- Areas of damage not repairable were filled in with replacement tiles and colored mortar;
- Cracks in the lower mosaic's plaster substrate were filled with mortar and grout painted to match the color of the surrounding tiles;
- Granite pieces were conserved and restored and pieces which were missing or too broken to be repaired were replaced with duplicate granite pieces;
- Areas with chipping stone were removed, cleaned, and then repaired with epoxy;
- The surface was cleaned;
- A wax coating was applied to all the polished granite sections of the mural and all loose grout was removed and regouted; and

- Water spouts on *Topographical Map* were adjusted and modified in order to direct the fountain's water into the troughs along the art wall.

While the flow of water was adjusted to prevent overflow, some water was still exiting several grouted joins and from behind granite pieces. The areas of water dripping at grouted joins were regouted, however some leaks and drips remain. *Topographical Map* and its reflecting pool are now fully operational, but ongoing maintenance is necessary to monitor and clean the surface of the polished granite due to mineral and chlorine deposits from the water leaks and overspray.

## Los Angeles County Arboretum

Before Louis Aimé Lejeune's sculpture, *Je N'Oublierai Pas* (see page 29), was treated by a



conservator, it was located in a deeply shady spot under several trees near the Los Angeles County Arboretum's waterfall. The 79 year old sculpture was exposed only to dappled sunlight, never to direct light.

Although it had no major structural damage, its location had made it vulnerable to both environmental damage (dampness, algae, moss, and lichen growth, bird droppings, dirt, etc.) and public damage (written and

incised graffiti as well as deliberate chipping). The statue was covered in dirt and fungal growth and had significant staining from these factors as well. In 2008, the Arts Commission, in conjunction with the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Fifth Supervisorial District, hired Rosa Lowinger of Sculpture Conservation Studio to relocate the statue and restore it.

Working with the Arboretum staff, a new location was found in the Arboretum's Korean Garden. The spot was open, sunny, easily accessible, and visible. To move the sculpture, it was carried by forklift and then by crane.

The treatment included:

- Removing dust, dirt, and old grout;
- Washing it in an antimicrobial biocide to loosen biological growths;
- Gently scrubbing sculpture with ammonia and sodium bicarbonate to reduce staining;
- Applying two poultices to the sculpture's surface to remove stains and fungal growths;
- Regrouting the joint between the plinth and the sculpture; and
- Applying a conservation-grade water repellent to the sculpture to prevent future damage.



The conservation process took several months and was completed in late September 2008. Although its new location will protect the sculpture from environmental damage, the conservator recommends ongoing cleaning and monitoring of its condition. It is advisable to have a conservator assess *Je N'Oublierai Pas* annually or biannually to ensure that damage from the environment or from the public does not worsen.

## City Terrace Library



After Goez Art Studio's ceramic tile mural *Ofrenda Maya I* at the City Terrace Library (see page 32) was damaged, the Public Library Department provided funds for its restoration and the Arts Commission managed the project. One of the original artists, José Luis Gonzalez, still operates Goez Art Studio and he was hired to create

replica tiles to replace the 116 damaged ones. Throughout 2008 he recreated replica glazes to duplicate the glazes from 1978 which were no longer available due to their original lead content. In early 2009 the tiles were installed at the library.

## **Compton Public Library**



Dora De Larios' mural at Compton Public Library (see page 30) was in good condition for a public artwork created in 1973; however, slight cracking and lifting of the glaze, dirt build-up, mineral deposits, incised graffiti, and graffiti residue on the mural's surface were all present.

Silverlake Conservation treated the mural in August of 2008, using funds from the library's renovation. The project was completed in time for the library's reopening in September 2008.

The conservation included:

- Dry-brushing and washing the mural;
- Using solvents to dissolve and reduce painted graffiti;
- Filling painting losses of the mural's glaze;
- Reducing the mural's previous anti-graffiti coating;
- Applying a new anti-graffiti coating; and
- Cleaning areas of incised graffiti and reducing these marks with the coating.

Silverlake Conservation recommends that the mural be inspected annually by a conservator, and the inspection could also include any necessary cleaning and a reapplication of the anti-graffiti coating.

## Gardena Mayme Dear Public Library

Livio Napolitani's mosaic mural at Gardena Mayme Dear Library (see page 37) was conserved in 2009 by Amy Green of Silverlake Conservation with funding derived from the library's renovation. The treatment included:

- Dry-brushing and stabilizing loose pieces of mosaic with epoxy;
- Assessing the mural's stability with a stone mason;
- Cleaning cracks in the stone and then injecting them with mortar;
- Cleaning entire surface of the mosaic and stone;
- Recreating missing mosaic tiles with an inpainted patching mortar; and
- Recaulking the mural's perimeter and the seams between stone slabs.



Although the overall structure of the mural appears good, there is a slight disparity in the level of one of the stone slabs. Silverlake's mason determined that it was most likely stable, but recommends that a structural engineer looks at it in the future. Silverlake also recommends that the work be inspected annually by a conservation professional and the seams around the mural be resealed as necessary.

## San Gabriel Library



Robert Freeman's mural at the San Gabriel Public Library (see page 32) was the civic art department's first completed restoration project. The

mural was assessed by conservator Aneta Zebala and then conserved and restored by Debra May in May and June of 2008. The restoration funding came from one percent of the construction costs for the library's renovation. The restoration included:

- Mending the mural's slight detachment from the wall around the perimeter;
- Repairing paint losses caused by detachment;
- Cleaning accumulated dirt and grime;
- Removing the mural's original varnish which had yellowed over the years; and
- Filling losses to the original paint.

## **Future restoration projects**

There are several works that could benefit from restoration, but funding for future restorations is uncertain. Hugo Ballin's ceiling fresco at the old County General Hospital, which is currently closed, is one of the County Collection's jewels; both its importance to the history of Los Angeles public art, as well its condition, makes it a prime candidate for conservation and restoration.

It would also be beneficial to have conservators conduct assessments of many of the works in the County's Collection. In this way, the County would know more accurately which artworks are in need of conservation or restoration.

Los Angeles County's vast and rich history ensures that there are many more artworks to find and more County art history to research and document. The new works created under the Civic Art Program also ensure that the County's Collection will continue to grow and change.

## Credits

This report was researched and written by Civic Art Associate Alice Schock. Oversight and editing were provided by: Rebecca Banyas, Interim Director of Civic Art; Linda Chiavaroli, Director of Communications; and Laura Zucker, Executive Director.

### For further information:

County's Collection on the web: [http://www.lacountyarts.org/civicart\\_countyscollection.htm](http://www.lacountyarts.org/civicart_countyscollection.htm)

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