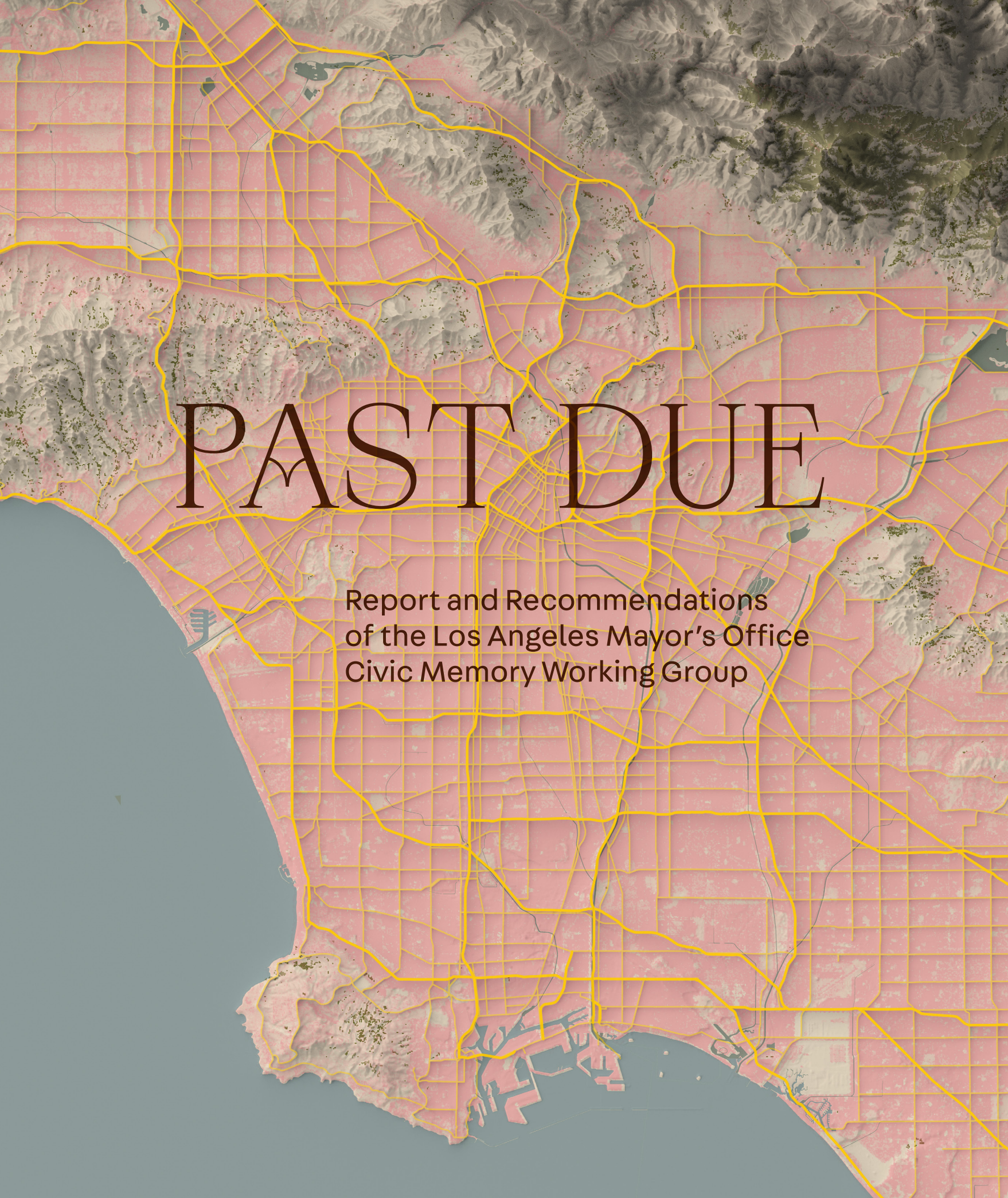

PAST DUE

Report and Recommendations
of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office
Civic Memory Working Group


KOREANS
THEIR LIVES
BEGIN TO END THE
DAY WE BECOME
SILENT ABOUT WHAT
MATTERS!!!
FTP


DOCS Spine Orthopedics
SMOKE
Quit the FORCE
SILENCE COMPLICIT
I'm not black,
BUT I SEE YOU!
I'm not black
BUT I HEAR YOU!
I'm not black,
BUT I MOURN W YOU!
I'm not black,
BUT I WILL FIGHT 4 YOU
I'M NOT BLACK BUT
I WILL STAND 4 YOU!

Previous spread: Not long after the Civic Memory Working Group completed its second full meeting in City Hall in February of 2020 and broke into subcommittees, the world changed. First, in March and April, came the rise of the COVID-19 pandemic and citywide lockdowns. Then, after George Floyd was killed by police officer Derek Chauvin in Minneapolis on May 25, protests led by Black Lives Matter and other groups began filling the streets of Los Angeles. In both cases, it became impossible to ignore the extent to which present-day suffering was exacerbated by failures to adequately understand and confront historic patterns of inequity. As a result, these events underscored the urgency of our work on this report. Here, marchers in support of the Black Lives Matter movement gather on La Cienega Boulevard on May 30, 2020, less than a week after Floyd's death.

Photograph by Gary Leonard.

This 1932 photograph depicts ethnic Mexican Southern California residents preparing to board trains headed to Mexico from Central Station at 5th Street and Central Avenue in downtown Los Angeles. The "Mexican repatriation," which aimed to remove Mexicans from social welfare and indigent care during the Depression, deported anywhere from 400,000 to 2,000,000 Mexicans and Mexican Americans between 1929 and 1936. Los Angeles was the effort's epicenter. According to the 2006 book Decade of Betrayal: Mexican Repatriation in the 1930s by Francisco Balderrama and Raymond Rodríguez, as many as 60 percent of the deportees were birthright citizens of the United States. This mass deportation presaged the forceable removal and internment of more than 100,000 ethnic Japanese (most of them U.S. citizens) on the West Coast a decade later. Because both forced movements were based on ethnicity and blatantly disregarded citizenship, scholars persuasively argue that they meet the legal definition of ethnic cleansing.

Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.


MENS WRITING ROOM
SHOE SHINE HERE
UNION PACIFIC
TELEPHONES

The past depends less on "what happened then" than on the desires and discontents of the present.

—*Saidiya Hartman*

We in the developed world are like homeowners who inherited a house on a piece of land that is beautiful on the outside, but whose soil is unstable loam and rock, heaving and contracting over generations, cracks patched but the deeper ruptures waved away for decades, centuries even. Many people may rightly say, "I had nothing to do with how this all started. I have nothing to do with the sins of the past. My ancestors never attacked indigenous people, never owned slaves." And, yes. Not one of us was here when this house was built. Our immediate ancestors may have had nothing to do with it, but here we are, the current occupants of a property with stress cracks and bowed walls and fissures built into the foundation. We are the heirs to whatever is right or wrong with it. We did not erect the uneven pillars or joists, but they are ours to deal with now. And any further deterioration is, in fact, on our hands.

—*Isabel Wilkerson*

The only way to avoid Hollywood is to live there.

—*Igor Stravinsky*

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PAST DUE

Report and Recommendations
of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office
Civic Memory Working Group

City of Los Angeles

ERIC GARCETTI
MAYOR

Dear readers of *Past Due*,

Near the end of 2019, when I welcomed the first meeting of the Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group to City Hall, none of us had any idea what lay in store for Los Angeles and the world the following year. And yet the COVID-19 pandemic, the calls for racial justice that filled the streets of Los Angeles, and other upheavals to daily life, taken together, have made the necessity of an initiative like this one all the clearer.

Los Angeles has long been proud of its reputation as a city that looks confidently to the future. And justifiably so: it's crucial that we continue to support innovation across a range of industries here. Yet, as 2020 made evident, fully grappling with many of our most challenging obstacles, whether the subject is housing affordability, public health, or racial equity, requires looking backward as well as forward – and not being afraid to discuss honestly and frankly what we discover there.

We have for too long in Los Angeles accepted a comfortable amnesia when it comes to reckoning with some of the most fraught aspects of our history. This report has its roots in conversations I had with Christopher Hawthorne, soon after he began working with us, about the 1871 Anti-Chinese Massacre. That bloody event, a stain on Los Angeles from 150 years ago, and our failure to commemorate its victims as fully as we might, is a reminder of the work still ahead of us. I'm heartened to see Eugene W. Moy's entry on that event in this volume.

We have already begun working to implement some of the important recommendations contained in these pages. I thank the members of the Working Group for their contributions. And I look forward to continuing to collaborate with them to explore the crucial questions they have raised in this report, which I believe will itself become an important milestone in the evolving story of our civic identity.

Sincerely,

ERIC GARCETTI
Mayor

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The River, the Freeway, and the Garden

Christopher Hawthorne

Dr. Bartlett handed me a paper to-day, desiring me to subscribe for a statue to Horace Mann. I declined, and said that I thought a man ought not any more to take up room in the world after he was dead. We shall lose one advantage of a man's dying if we are to have a statue of him forthwith.

—Henry David Thoreau

Most of the messages sent west to east get jumbled at the Rockies.

—Esther McCoy

This is not a report about monuments and memorials.

Not strictly speaking, anyway. It is true that the Mayor's Office Civic Memory Working Group, which gathered for the first time at City Hall in November of 2019 and then, in person as well on Zoom, across most of 2020, was inspired by debates happening around the country about Confederate statues and other fraught examples of American commemoration. Yet the goals of this Working Group were always distinct from those conversations in at least two important ways.

First, we set out to ground the larger debate firmly and unmistakably in Los Angeles, a city whose relationship with the past and the broader notion of civic memory has long been particular, even peculiar. As the headquarters of the Hollywood dream factory, as a city long in thrall to its reputation as a city of the future, and as a place heavily reliant on boosterism and mythmaking in building its civic identity, Los Angeles has never been particularly interested in pursuing a thorough, warts-and-all investigation of its evolution. As other sections of this report point out, L.A. has been arguably more aggressive in its campaigns of erasure or strategic amnesia than other big American cities. In a city that, as historian and Working Group member David Torres-Rouff puts it, was "born global," we also have perhaps had more layers of non-white history to erase.

Second, the chief lesson offered by other cities that have re-examined their approach to the production of monuments and memorials over the last five years or so is that careful attention to process and equity is paramount. It pays more dividends to focus on the *how* and *why* instead of the *what* or *where*, at least to begin with. Proposals to create, remove,

or rename statues, buildings, or streets have a greater chance of success if they are preceded by broad-based discussions about memorialization and commemoration. We have been guided by the idea that Los Angeles has not yet engaged in that conversation to the degree it needs to, especially when it comes to initiatives launched from City Hall.

So you will not find, in the pages that follow, a definitive list of ten statues that should be removed from the public realm in Los Angeles, twenty Angelenos who deserve to be memorialized over the coming decade, or fifty library branches soon to be renamed. Instead the focus has been more on raising the questions and thematic concerns that should guide any effort to reconsider civic memory, whether the topic is monuments, fraught anniversaries, or historic preservation.

Take the uprising and unrest that roiled Los Angeles in 1992 as an example. The events that followed the acquittal by a Simi Valley jury of the police officers who beat Rodney King will mark their 30th anniversary next year. We hope this report will be a useful guide in helping shape any commemoration of those events the City decides to take on—but not, importantly, in terms of what material any monument should be made of or where events marking the milestone should be held. Instead we offer this report to suggest strategies to help any City-led commemorations of 1992 or similar anniversaries—whatever form they take—feel authentic, equitable, and productive to the citizens of Los Angeles, while also ceding pride of place to community-directed events and remembrances.

This report begins by listing 18 key policy recommendations. Other recommendations pop up throughout the rest of the report. These are meant to begin, not end, the conversation: The next step will be to discuss these ideas with a broad-based set of communities in Los Angeles. We also felt it was important to complement those recommendations in a range of ways meant to reflect the full complexity of Los Angeles and its formal and informal histories. And so alongside (and in between) reports from the Working Group's various subcommittees, whose members were asked to focus on specific topics including labor, process, and historic preservation, among others, you will find in the pages that follow a number of other editorial features. These include roundtable discussions on topics including the complex legacy of Junípero Serra and constructions of whiteness across Los Angeles history; case studies of effective and creative means of supporting civic memory in public and institutional spaces; excerpts from longer essays as well as newly commissioned pieces of writing; and photographs and photo essays on related topics, including ad hoc memorials and what might be charitably called unresolved episodes in the civic history of Los Angeles.

Our central aim has been to support and explore ways of telling the story of Los Angeles history on its own terms while connecting this effort to the broader national conversation on reckoning and commemoration, drawing from it the most useful and relevant lessons we can. We have leaned heavily on historians—the Working Group from its first meeting has included many of the leading scholars on Los Angeles, Southern California, and the American West—and engaged Indigenous leaders and community members, visual and performing artists, architects, designers, curators, musicians, journalists, and others.

A Moment to Ask Ourselves Key Questions

We decided early on that our report shouldn't aim for a kind of illusory consensus. If you read the various subcommittee reports carefully, for example, you'll find that they sometimes disagree with one another or take issue with policies crafted by the City or that other members of the group have developed or worked on. We feel that this diversity of opinion reflects not division or weakness but strength.

It is also true that the timing of the Working Group's investigations, which continued across one of the most tumultuous years in Los Angeles, American, and world

history, hardly lent itself to a genial consistency of purpose. In our first meeting at City Hall, Mayor Garcetti referred to the sense that a groundswell was building as cities around the country began to critically examine their approach to commemoration, memorialization, and civic memory. "This is a moment for us to ask ourselves what we want to say, who we want to be, and whose histories we want to tell," he told the group. But we had no idea how much, and in how many different ways, the world was about to change.

When we reconvened for our second full meeting at City Hall in early February of 2020, stories about an opportunistic and deadly virus stalking the Chinese city of Wuhan were already beginning to appear in the American press. Within a few weeks, as we began to make plans for the first meetings of our various subcommittees, the mayor who had spoken to us about the potential of the moment was issuing a lockdown order for the residents of Los Angeles, requiring that they stay home save for the most necessary trips. By May, the press room where our group had twice gathered was becoming the familiar backdrop for that same mayor's daily coronavirus briefings. Our Civic Memory subcommittees, for their part, proceeded to gather virtually, as the world was learning to do.

It was in this fragile context, hearing daily updates about the spread of the virus and trying nonetheless to keep to our regular daily family and professional tasks, that we learned about and then, horrified, watched the video of the Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kneeling on one shoulder and the neck of George Floyd as he lay in the parking lane along Chicago Avenue for more than eight minutes. The marches of protest that followed, reacting not only to Floyd's death but those of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and others, filled the streets of Los Angeles for several weeks. Many of us joined them. I can't speak for the other members of this group, but for me our discussions on L.A.'s relationship to the most fraught aspects of our past began to seem inchoate compared to the highly focused energy pulsing down the city's boulevards.

Three Unifying Themes

And yet when the chairs of those subcommittees began sending me summaries of their discussions, in late summer of 2020, certain patterns were almost instantly recognizable, as were paths toward progress. This was less true of specific policy ideas, sites or historical figures—although commonalities emerged there too—than of guiding metaphors and themes. Three stood out, emerging, disappearing, and reappearing in several of those emailed summaries like buoys. It is to those three that I would like to turn for the rest of this essay, for they seem equally capable of marking the ways in which Los Angeles has systematically obliterated difficult aspects of its history and suggesting a productive, if tentative, way forward.

From left, Wendy Cheng, Julia Bogany, and Leila Hamidi, with Mark Wild seated behind, at the second full meeting of the Civic Memory Working Group at City Hall, February 3, 2020. Photograph by Gary Leonard.

The first is the Los Angeles River. It is fair to say that our city owes its existence and much of its physical shape to the river that shares its name. Downtown Los Angeles is located in the somewhat odd spot it occupies in the larger geography of Southern California, a full 15 miles in from the ocean, because of the river: because Indigenous communities organized themselves near it and, in the late 18th century, Spanish colonists established their central plaza a short walk from its banks. The river then served as the primary source of drinking water in the growing city until 1913, when the Los Angeles Aqueduct was completed. Life in Los Angeles until that year was organized in nearly every way around proximity to the river.

But the river in this period—in addition to being seasonal, going largely dry in the summer and into the fall—was also mobile, even fickle. The built form and scale of Los Angeles developed in response to the river and existed at the river's mercy. When heavy rains caused it to overflow its banks or even drastically change its course, the young city around it was forced to rebuild or otherwise adapt. As those floods became deadlier and more destructive across the 1920s

and 1930s, the city responded in a way typical of the era: by relying on the expertise of engineers and on a kind of technocratic optimism about the ability of giant public-works projects to tame, or at least bring under some kind of control, the natural world. The result was a channelized river from the upper reaches of the northwestern San Fernando Valley to the ocean in Long Beach: 51 miles of concrete wrestling the unpredictable river into something like submission.

There have been encouraging efforts to revitalize or even "re-green" that engineered river organized at the community, city, and county levels, and with the help of the state and federal governments. These are ongoing, and several members of our Working Group have contributed to them in one way or another. And yet when the river came up in the discussions of the larger group and its subcommittees, the focus was not for the most part on these contemporary projects. It was instead on what the concretized river has to say about this city's relationship to buried truths or unruly histories. For too long we have responded to that kind of uncertainty or fraught material in the civic conversation by keeping it fully and sometimes aggressively contained and out of sight, in much the same way we shoehorned miles of river into a form that is frequently compared to a concrete straitjacket, leaving many Angelenos unaware of its existence. It is no coincidence that the river came up in this regard in so many disparate conversations conducted as part of the Civic Memory effort. It is a kind of infrastructural map, written at macro scale across the city's landscape, of the ways in which the efficient march of growth and progress has manhandled the more nuanced or unpredictable elements of civic culture in Los Angeles.

Something similar might be said of another network of concretized ambition—the Los Angeles freeway system—that emerged as the second major theme in the subcommittee reports.

David Brodlsy, in his remarkable 1981 book *L.A. Freeway: An Appreciative Essay*, sums up the symbolic role of this landscape. "The freeway system supplies Los Angeles with one of its principal metaphors," he writes. "Employed to represent the totality of metropolitan Los Angeles, it is the city's great synecdoche, one of the few parts capable of standing for the whole." Meanwhile it is UCLA's Eric Avila, a member of our Working Group, who has best chronicled the impact that synecdoche has had at ground level. His 2014 book *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* considers the role freeways have played in both dividing and galvanizing the L.A. communities through which they have been constructed (or, in some cases, rammed).

What the freeway means now, nearly eight decades after its debut in Los Angeles, remains ripe for examination. Is it a symbol, like the concretized river, of the ways in which the growth machine in Los Angeles has run roughshod over community history, devaluing the particular and local at the expense of the expansive and new? It is an eyesore whose external sound walls communities have remade in their own image, covering them with murals and even religious shrines, as a protest against its dehumanizing force? Is it something that we can now, realistically, begin planning to remove or reimagine, at least in certain corridors, as part of a larger effort to dismantle the overreach of 20th-century L.A. urbanism and chip away at the dominance of the car?

The material that follows in this report suggests it may well be all three of those things. The freeway has disfigured not just neighborhoods like Sugar Hill, the Black community bisected by the construction of the Santa Monica Freeway (also known as Interstate 10) in the 1960s, but many examples of community history in Los Angeles and for decades the notion of shared local culture. Any movement to recover civic memory at a fine-grained level will need to confront the freeway system—perhaps even as an occupying force, and one that gained its foothold through a kind of violence at that. If you have glided over freeway overpasses or sat in traffic on freeways but never spent significant time in communities split, fractured, or otherwise pummeled by their construction—or abused by their noise and pollution on an ongoing basis—it may come as a surprise to hear Avila and Torres-Rouff, in one of the roundtable discussions in these pages, describe the Los Angeles freeway as a monument to whiteness and the prerogatives of wealth and power. If you have spent time in those neighborhoods, it may not.

Moving Past a Top-Down Approach

So how can Los Angeles move past the ways in which its infrastructural ambition, mirroring its civic one, tended to seek the regional, macro scale at the expense of the local? How can the city that so often trampled on community memory reconnect with histories of Los Angeles that are smaller, less predictable, and less subject to top-down or official control?

One possible answer can be found in the third theme that emerged as a connecting thread in the reflections of the full Civic Memory Working Group and its subcommittees: the garden. For all of L.A.'s reputation for lushness—and even as a kind of paradise that, as the British architectural historian and critic Reyner Banham put it, "will carry almost any kind of vegetation that horticultural fantasy might conceive," as long as it's given enough water—the city's most

impressive and most meaningful gardens have tended to occupy private space, mostly residential enclaves of all scales, complementing and often lending privacy to residential architecture of all types.

The idea of public gardens in every corner of the city—and memorial gardens, in particular—has gained less traction here, at least in official circles. Yet several of the Civic Memory subcommittees raised it to one degree or another. There are proposals in these pages for a garden dedicated to the workers of Los Angeles and, more specifically, to the "essential workers" who have faced the gravest challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. Elsewhere in our discussions we raised the potential of expanded or reimagined gardens ringing public library branches and public schools. As a way to reimagine the idea of a memorial or strengthen the links between civic memory and community life, these proposals strike me as having tremendous potential.

Because gardens evolve significantly over time and require thoughtful and regular upkeep—neither of which is true for a traditional statue on a pedestal—they also point to the ways, both literally and symbolically, that we might reconnect civic memory with notions of maintenance, fidelity, and care. They are the opposite of the channelized river or the freeway system, whose effectiveness and power rely on their dominance over wide swaths of the city. Those two landscapes are able to operate only at the macro level, and indeed they repel neighborhood scale as a result.

The garden is different. It is changeable. It is local. It depends on human contact. The garden might be an ideal spot, in other words, from which to watch the emergence of new forms of civic memory in Los Angeles—and watch the old ones die. When it's time to produce a new generation of memorials and monuments appropriate to 21st-century Los Angeles and its communities, maybe we shouldn't aim to build them at all. Maybe we should plant them instead. Something similar is true for the report as a whole. What follows is not a stack of blueprints but a packet of seeds.

In Search of New Metaphors

These are the twin questions facing us as we move to a re-conception of commemoration and civic memory in Los Angeles: how to approach the task of producing a new batch of memorials and what to do with the existing ones, especially if they remind some of us not of triumph but of pain. We should not be naive enough to think that any of our new monuments will be impervious to the flaws that always attend memorial design, beginning with a tendency to reflect our present when we think we are mining or celebrating our past. Better to seek meaning in the absence left behind when statues come down and the openness and freedom opened up by new ways of thinking about memory and civic life.

I like what Paul B. Preciado wrote in the Dec. 2020 issue of *Artforum*, in a remarkable essay on monuments translated from the Spanish by Michele Faguet: "We do not suffer from a forgetting of normative history but from a systematic erasure of the history of oppression and resistance. We do not need any more statues. Let's not ask for marble or metal to fill those pedestals. Let's climb up on them and tell our own stories of survival and liberation."

There is book on a shelf in my home office, published in 1960 and written by the architectural historian Harold Kirker, called *California's Architectural Frontier*. It opens with a quote from the *Las Sergas de Esplandian*, a best-selling Spanish novel from 1510 by Garci Ordóñez Rodríguez de Montalvo, describing California as a paradise, a land where "there was no metal but gold." A couple of paragraphs later, Kirker defines the state as "the outermost edge of a more rooted culture."

More than six decades after that book appeared, California and Los Angeles in particular are still struggling to shake off the destructive power of this trope, which has its benign forms to be sure but so often tends toward the exploitative. In my own work as the architecture critic for the *Los Angeles Times*, a post I held from 2004 to 2018, I did what I could, which in the scheme of things was not much, to undermine it. I wrote a kind of biography of Sunset Boulevard that began at the ocean and traveled east, back in time, across the Los Angeles River and into Boyle Heights, reversing the typical journey along Sunset Boulevard that seems so often and so automatically to recreate a Manifest Destiny trajectory, moving inexorably west toward the edge of the continent and the setting sun. I quoted Mayor Garcetti's observation that Los Angeles, instead of solely occupying the western edge of the American continent, is "arguably the northern capital of Latin America and the eastern capital of the Pacific Rim." Still the metaphor persists.

The truth, of course, is that Los Angeles is neither a frontier—ask any of the many Indigenous leaders who contributed to this volume how that metaphor strikes them—nor, these days, a place that could be accurately called unrooted. Population growth has fully leveled off here and even begun to reverse itself, in part because of sky-high housing prices. Immigration to Los Angeles County peaked a full three decades ago. Angelenos move less often now than they have for most of the city's modern history, and they live in an aging housing stock. In fact, by some measures, Los Angeles and its built form are changing less quickly than at any point since the 1880s.

That, paradoxically enough, means that the change that does come to any particular neighborhood is more noticeable and all the more deeply felt. At the same time, the impact of larger forces separate from architecture or demography threatens to make that local stability irrelevant. COVID-19 and climate change are only the two most obvious examples.

Those facts complicate the efforts of the Civic Memory Working Group in some fascinating and significant ways, none of which we should ignore or gloss over. For all the attention we pay in the following pages to the importance of reconnecting with community and neighborhood history and guarding against displacement, this volume should not be understood as an implicit endorsement of the offensive idea that Los Angeles was somehow better or more itself *back then*, whatever period "then" might refer to.

There remains a risk in some parts of the city of stagnation or self-satisfaction, particularly as populations in some of the city's wealthier single-family neighborhoods stop growing or even shrink. We are also aware of the extent to which support for historic preservation or paeans to "neighborhood character" can be weaponized to protect wealth and (typically white) prerogative. We want to stress that the various efforts in these pages to reconnect with buried histories of Los Angeles and set the stage for confronting difficult episodes in the city's past should not be understood as endorsements of the idea that Los Angeles should stop changing, or even, necessarily, that it is changing too fast.

But change and whitewashing are two different things. So are evolution and erasure. Supporting civic memory is in our view a creative act, not a conservative and certainly not a reactionary one. Commemoration should lead to conversation and even reckoning—to action, not embalming. We can encourage Los Angeles to hold on to its reputation as a place where innovation, even flux, are prized while also insisting that the skeletons in many of our closets, official and otherwise, have been left undisturbed for too long. The Los Angeles most worth celebrating will figure out how to keep both horizon and wake in view, and in some kind of symbolic balance, at the same time. It will abandon the frontier rhetoric for good and invite new conceptions of the city that build on what we have in place, what we prize, what we need to dispense with, what we need to recover, and perhaps most important of all what might allow us to treat one another with more compassion and consideration. ●

The second full meeting of the Civic Memory Working Group at City Hall, with William Deverell foreground left and Taj Frazier foreground right, February 3, 2020. Photograph by Gary Leonard.

Key Recommendations

Though readers will find specific policy recommendations threaded throughout this report, the list below features those that attracted the broadest and most energetic support from the members of the Civic Memory Working Group over the course of our collaboration. Together they offer a sort of road map suggesting where the work begun here should turn next.

Continue and Expand the Conversation

1. Spend the second half of 2021, virtually or in person as the COVID-19 pandemic allows, discussing these recommendations and other materials in this report with a range of Los Angeles communities. These listening sessions should explore, among other subjects, how the City can shift its focus in stewarding civic memory from acting as a *gatekeeper* to a *facilitator*, giving fuller voice to community memory and bottom-up representation. Use these sessions to begin to turn the recommendations on this list into policy or built markers of civic memory.
2. Develop programs to train all city employees in civic history and Indigeneity, as they are hired and on an ongoing basis.

Increase Access and Share Information

3. Create a new City Historian position, or a three-person council of historians and community elders, on a rotating two-year basis, looking to the City's Poet Laureate position as a model and potentially drawing from the ranks of college and university history departments and independent scholars.
4. Organize a task force of museum professionals, working artists, historians, Indigenous and other community leaders, and others to explore the creation of a Museum of the City of Los Angeles, with the understanding that this group may recommend instead supporting similar work inside museums and other cultural institutions already established.
5. Complete and publish an audit of the monuments and memorials in Los Angeles on public and publicly accessible land.
6. Broaden the accessibility and impact of the Los Angeles City Archives and Records Center as a basis for new civic memory initiatives.
7. Create a room or other space inside City Hall, open to the public, to celebrate civic memory and the Indigenous history of the site and its surroundings. This room should include both historical records and archives and rotating exhibits and displays related to civic architecture and the history of Los Angeles.

Recognize Indigenous History

8. Begin the process of adopting an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Policy for the Mayor's Office and for the City, in close collaboration with the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (NAIC), as outlined in the summary appearing later in this volume from the Indigenous Land Acknowledgement subcommittee.

9. Create a new, full-time staff position within the Mayor's Office to serve as official liaison to the NAIC and the broader Indigenous community.

10. Embed historians and Indigenous leaders on a compensated basis in City-led planning efforts, for example the Taylor Yard/G2 Equity Plan for a site along the Los Angeles River.

Preserve or Acknowledge the Various Histories Embedded in the Built Environment

11. Take steps to protect the architecture and civic memory of the *recent past*, beginning with an effort to extend the Department of City Planning's SurveyLA initiative from 1980 to the year 2000.

12. Strengthen financial and other penalties for the prohibited demolition of significant architecture, particularly residential architecture.

13. Pursue the expansion of Historic-Cultural Monument status to include thematic or non-contiguous designations, for example the Bungalow Court, and to protect the body of work of a single prominent firm or social or cultural movement.

14. Consider a City-led effort to mark and make visible the boundaries of racially exclusive zoning and lending practices in housing, e.g. redlining, or the communities displaced or disfigured by freeway construction.

Reconsider Memorials and Difficult Histories

15. Create a garden or series of gardens dedicated to the essential workers of Los Angeles.

16. Arrange specific community-engagement sessions during the remainder of 2021, guided by the recommendations in this report, to solicit ideas for commemorating the 30th anniversary, in 2022, of the 1992 civic unrest in Los Angeles. The goal should be a range of commemorative approaches, rather than a single event or memorial.

17. Work with the leadership of the Chinese American Museum and a range of community groups to develop citywide commemorations, considering both ephemeral and permanent forms, to mark the 150th anniversary of the 1871 Anti-Chinese Massacre on October 24, 2021.

18. Develop strategies to recontextualize outdated or fraught memorials as an alternative to removal—although removal will, in certain cases, remain the best option.

Subcommittee 1

Introductory Considerations

Los Angeles has long been celebrated—and caricatured—as a "city of the future." Does it follow that this sensibility invites or even requires minimal attention to the past? Given recent and ongoing upheavals across the United States regarding commemorative monuments, statues, and the like—underpinned by increasingly widespread and resonant cries for social justice—the conclusions of the Civic Memory Working Group and its subcommittees collected in this report may act as a corrective to metropolitan amnesia and a guide for public memorialization efforts moving forward. This report is a mere starting point in what the Mayor's Office genuinely hopes will be a deeper, wider, and ongoing public conversation.

It begins with a simple provocation in the form of a question: What might it mean if the city of the future could simultaneously be lauded for its regard for the past? The many stages of a regionwide growth juggernaut of industrial, metropolitan, and suburban development in Southern California, from the 1880s forward, were accompanied at every step by campaigns and reflexes to elide and even destroy signs of the past. Relatively recent initiatives, including the SurveyLA work produced by the Department of City Planning's Office of Historic Resources,[1] suggest an encouraging turn toward cataloging and protecting architectural and cultural heritage. Nonetheless, it is fair to say that the City of Los Angeles has traditionally given insufficient thought to the protection of older buildings and neighborhoods and the memories they embody.[2]

What has been lost in the top-down drive toward progress and modernity that accelerated in the middle decades of the last century? To begin with, a long list of sites and places and all that they meant to the people who knew and loved them. Interstate 10 bulldozed the historic Sugar Hill neighborhood. Dodger Stadium rises above what used to be the neighborhoods of Chavez Ravine. The Bunker Hill of novelists John Fante and Raymond Chandler is now a banking, residential, and high-culture enclave of elite Angelenos and formidable institutions.

A rush to the future seems also to have narrowed possibilities for commemorative reckoning. Triumphalism, leached of any acknowledgment of history's crimes and wounds, has been a powerful tool and motivator of commemoration. But it is a blunt, insensitive instrument of historic acknowledgment. Grief and rage, along with attempts at atonement—as dozens of galvanizing nationwide actions in 2020 clearly demonstrated—have roles to play in how views of present and past intermingle. Erasing monuments might temper triumphalism, but could the acts also erase the memory of conflicts that the monuments themselves deliberately rendered flat, simple, or fathomable? What if Los Angeles acknowledged both regret *and* triumph in its past and, in so doing, in its present?

Modern Los Angeles has a record of efforts, many of them violent or otherwise brutal, to establish Anglo or European-American prerogatives by directly whitewashing not

[1] *SurveyLA, the most comprehensive survey ever completed by an American city, identifies and evaluates L.A.'s rich historic resources. According to the Los Angeles Conservancy, before SurveyLA, only 15 percent of the city had been surveyed to identify historic resources. Starting in 2009 under the auspices of the Department of City Planning in cooperation with the J. Paul Getty Trust, SurveyLA took eight years to complete its work, which covered 880,000 land parcels and 500 square miles. See "SurveyLA: The Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey," Los Angeles Conservancy website, undated, https://www.laconservancy.org/surveyla-los-angeles-historic-resources-survey; and "SurveyLA: Los Angeles Historic Resources Survey—Field Survey Results Master Report," Office of Historic Resources, Department of City Planning, Aug. 2016, https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/c118f301-cc39-4ede-af5a-3e5ec901e7be/SurveyLA_Master_Report.pdf.*

[2] *A material case in point: brick versus adobe buildings. The urban growth machine in the 50 years between 1880 and 1930 remade Los Angeles by way of brick. This recasting supplanted (and assured the destruction of) adobe, seen by the ascendant elite Protestant culture as backward, Catholic, primitive, and Mexican. Only when the 1933 Long Beach earthquake knocked the brick industry to its knees did the fervent attachment to brick dissipate.*

just Indigenous, African American, Asian, Latinx, and other communities but also successive periods of Spanish and Mexican rule. Los Angeles has been more resolute in its successive erasures—and perhaps had more historical layers of non-Anglo history to erase—than other major cities. In confronting this fact, as many members of this working group have pointed out, "amnesia" may be too passive a word, inadequate in grappling with these intentional, systematic, and sometimes violent acts of removal and displacement.

Acts of forgetting and erasure, meanwhile, have a counterpart in the reworked past so prevalent in Southern California: that imagined past epitomized by, for instance, public understanding of the missions, Olvera Street, adobes, even the "star tours" of Hollywood and Beverly Hills. That effacing impulse might be tempered or more broadly contemplated by renewed attention to civic memory and its power, starting with honest attempts to confront what the writer and urban theorist Mike Davis, quoted elsewhere in this volume, calls "bad history" and to remember those who have resisted it.

There is an important caveat or coda that we should add to that set of observations about erasure. In certain ways, it is precisely this amnesia—or freedom from the weight of history or community expectation—that has made Los Angeles so attractive to successive waves of newcomers from around the country and the world, especially those working in creative fields like Hollywood but also architecture, literature, music, and art. One unifying strand of Los Angeles history—which is perhaps even central to the city's sense of itself—is the degree to which it has been an attractive destination exactly because it represents, for many, the idea of leaving behind, forgetting, and creating anew.

National upheavals and conversations over the last five years or so about the fate of Confederate monuments and memorials, and increasingly about others (the Junípero Serra statues and other commemorations are fundamental regional case examples) have prompted a painful, overdue reckoning with the ways in which American cities have chosen to mark and commemorate their own histories, and with what stories have been rendered invisible or buried in the process. This Working Group recognizes an opportunity to articulate some essential qualities that make Los Angeles what it is, and in turn to distinguish its history and culture from those of other places.

When viewed alongside such protests as those launched by Black Lives Matter activists, it becomes clear that history—and various attempts to bury or distort it—lies at the heart of much that is happening. Voices of protest and anger are right to say that this is not new but systematic: how we have had to live (and die) for far too long. In other words, whether rage is focused on the name of a U.S. military base or patterns of racialized killings, this historical moment is linked organically—and inseparably—to the past. Any attempt at energizing civic memory must listen to those voices that have been repeating the same chord for years: that our shared past is grim. A city's healthy regard for civic memory cannot assume that such memory must soothe.

Civic memory is a slippery construction; it is tricky enough to define each word fully on its own before we expect "civic" to modify "memory."[3] Our aim in this report is to encourage the public installation of structures, performances, or other creative or material works that address this region's past in ways and forms that actively challenge not just myths and languid triumphalism but also the mere comfort of forgetting.

[3] *Political theorist Richard Dagger defines civic memory as "a shared recollection of a city's past, of its accomplishments and failures, which both reflects and generates a sense of civic identity." Richard Dagger, "Metropolis, Memory, and Citizenship,"* American Journal of Political Science *25, no. 4 (1981): 729. Essayist Margaret Renkl offers a concise observation on at least some of the inherent challenges: "The problem with civic memory is that it is both true and deeply false. Some layer of reality inevitably undergirds a public fairy tale. A myth always contains enough truth to make it seem like the final word. But there is no such thing as the final word—any history is a narrative construction, one that files off the roughest edges of the story. The past itself is shaggy, troubled, unruly." Margaret Renkl, "Looking Our Racist History in the Eye,"* New York Times, *Sept. 10, 2018.*

The moment is now. Los Angeles has an opportunity to broaden and enrich a national discussion by confronting its own peculiar and fraught relationship with civic memory. Our city finds itself with both significant anniversaries at hand (150 years since the Anti-Chinese Massacre of 1871, 30 since the civil unrest of 1992) and major civic events (the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games) on the horizon. The process of marking these milestones will be more equitable, more inclusive, and ultimately more productive if it is part of broader, unified efforts to grapple forthrightly with the city's forgotten or erased histories.

One of the many challenges we face is in finding, through collective dialogue, a balance between immediate policy recommendations and broader reflections on how to enrich and encourage a culture of civic memory in Los Angeles. That process will entail engagement with both remembering and forgetting, all the while acknowledging that the two are inextricable.

The pitfalls and obstacles are many. To begin with, any commemorative effort can pose a trap. The danger of memorialization is its seductive and false clarity: it pretends to be only about the past, but the act of fixing memory in civic or personal form is undoubtedly also—perhaps primarily—a reflection or confirmation of the present moment. That is why, as we now recognize, statues and memorials are less about the person or event they commemorate than the moment in which a particular commemoration took or takes place.

Our city must guard against hubris, against any assumption that our moment's perspective on the past is immutable, or that we have gained clarity or wisdom about history that earlier generations lacked. There are many reasons to be wary of any act of memorialization that seeks to give any one perspective some eternal power, that surrounds any given memorial with an aura of imagined permanence. The future deserves to find our era's monuments—if they find them at all—malleable or elastic, able to be reimagined and rethought as perspectives on the past inevitably evolve.

Might we embrace or invite or encourage ephemeral commemorations that do not have the "fixed" problem built in and that do not unduly fetishize permanence? Can our design of new commemorative installations reach across multiple and dynamic scales and meanings, functioning beyond any singular and didactic narrative? We think that such an approach might be particularly well-suited to Los Angeles, a polycentric, dynamic, and unfinished city that has been ill-served by tidy narratives about its origins or its contemporary meanings.

Public commemorations are political, and politics always change as the imagined future becomes the lived present. What we commemorate now will grow irrelevant or even offensive, sometimes quickly and sometimes gradually, as we have seen so clearly in 2020. In deeply divided moments like our own, the politics are going to be fraught. We must recognize this and understand that we cannot expect otherwise.

While there is no escaping these dilemmas, we might be able to mitigate them. Who speaks for any given community is not at all clear. We need to be careful not to have the City anoint one part of a community over another. So too, people might commemorate what is important to them or what they have been told ought to be important to them. All proposals should be open to some form of critique.

From the start, this working group has been careful to focus not on conclusions about what new monuments or memorials should look like, where they should be placed, or whom they should honor, but instead on underscoring the importance of thoughtful,

equitable, and community-based processes for developing a broader civic base of historically minded initiatives. If there is one idea we have tried to knit into each section of our report, it is this one.

There has been a noticeable civic price to pay for our ongoing lack of attention in Los Angeles to some of these questions and themes. Certain institutions make that toll clear even as they represent an opportunity for new approaches. Consider the Los Angeles City Archives, a less-than-well-known trove of civic memory in the form of documents and images. Professionally curated and archived, its vast collections ought to be better known. How can the archives staff and holdings play a larger role in encouraging and supporting civic memory efforts and programs, and how might we assist in this process? How can the holdings and the expertise of those who care for them be imagined in more distributive ways across neighborhoods and communities? Creative engagement with artists drawn from multiple communities, for instance, could highlight the City Archives as a locus through which to enhance civic memory while paying dividends by developing new collection acquisitions. This rich archive is itself a kind of monument to Los Angeles history. Its importance to both scholars and a wider public could be amplified in a range of creative ways.[4]

In a related fashion, Los Angeles civic memory is served by continual and widespread encouragement to archive and otherwise collect (and interpret and distribute) stories and memories. Finding ways for the City to interact with grassroots efforts that celebrate individual narratives may lead to progress here, as might weaving together institutional partnerships with libraries, archive outposts, churches, and community centers. Perhaps efforts to enhance the Los Angeles content of the region's K–12 education could be a larger (if ambitious) arc of a renewed commitment to civic memory. To be sure, a deep and diverse network of historical engagement can encourage the region's residents to engage civic histories beyond statues and built memorials.

Not all civic memory enhancements need be new creations. Part of what this report intends is to determine what memorials and commemorative installations are already out there, why they came to be, and where they reside—or, for that matter, when and under what circumstances they disappeared. Cataloging and publicizing them might be followed by efforts to understand them anew. Might we refresh some or most of them, and in so doing ask them to teach us about matters that are not decided, about interpretations that have changed or must be challenged?

Sometimes it will be right to make something new. Sometimes it will be right to change, remove, or add to something old. Sometimes it will be right to foster partnerships between the City and community members or institutions. Sometimes it will be right for the City to do nothing, or to make a point of moving out of the way.

As to this last point, the "get out of the way" approach, this report questions in a number of ways how well the City and its structures of power and policy balance listening with action. Is the City of Los Angeles listening long and deeply enough to the needs coming from its communities, and understanding well enough the way those communities make use of civic memory? What good is accomplished if policy fights spontaneity or if centralized memorialization inhibits eruptions of grassroots emotion and power? Policies and procedures for initiating, revisiting, and taking down memorials are important. But so too is knowing that memorialization with no municipal oversight must always be encouraged. The recent and remarkable memorializations of Kobe Bryant and Nipsey Hussle offer powerful cases in point. We believe that it would

[4] *A regional example is the /five initiative at the Huntington Library, Art Museum, and Botanical Gardens. Launched in 2016, /five is a contemporary art initiative through which the Huntington collaborates with a variety of arts and cultural organizations. The program engages the institution's rich historical, botanical, and art collections in new and thought-provoking ways by supporting artists in their encounters with the materials and in subsequent installations provoked by them.*

be a mistake to overly bureaucratize memorialization protocols and approvals to the extent that the passion, spontaneity, grief, and ephemerality of a moment in history is lost, avoided, or otherwise diluted. Better to encourage or at least not stand in the way of such moments, and, once they have been enacted, to find ways to mark, remember, call attention to, and learn from them.[5]

Our approach to memorials, new and older, might also include a broader embrace of places (plazas, parks, and open space) that invite reflection and may more subtly acknowledge people or moments from the past. As sites of gathering, such spaces can be embraced and engaged in the present, support everyday life in an ongoing manner, and intertwine with and scaffold the future while simultaneously inviting thoughts on the past. Similarly, marches, festivals, and performances and storytelling (or spontaneous displays of citywide grief) can also be valid markers of a historical event, person, or place. The cycle of rituals can tease out different aspects of memorialization over time. Protests, as noted above, are key moments of remembering—every bit as much as parades and festivals—and deserve to be recognized as such.

One way to escape the presentist tendencies of memorialization would be to layer memorialization across time in a single space. For each set of acknowledged community memories in a given Los Angeles neighborhood, for example, a second set of simple markers or a text could note the people who lived or worked there before the present community became established, reaching back to include Indigenous communities. As a palimpsest, then, it would be fairly straightforward to acknowledge the Native American past all across the Los Angeles Basin.[6]

But the recognition can go deeper in time and demography. The diversity of community in Los Angeles invites us to consider additional layers (the east side and Boyle Heights, for example). Consider the Breed Street Shul in Boyle Heights. After decades of abandonment, there is now a movement to rehabilitate the structure to preserve the memory of the largely and mostly forgotten Boyle Heights Jewish community. What one generation seeks to forget and leave behind, another is trying to rescue from amnesia's oblivion. How can memorials be powerful reminders of the past and interpreters of it at once? To underscore an earlier point, Los Angeles is unusual among American cities in its embrace—a civic paradox, to be sure—of a certain tradition of productive forgetting, of a refusal to be weighed down by tradition or restricted by traditional ideas about patronage, lineage, influence, and the like. All of this relates to another challenge: how do we remember events that may have no constituency in the present?

At the level of policy and staffing, could we imagine historical context and perspective being required at municipal, policy-level discussions, and factored into subsequent policy creation? What about at municipal speeches? Might the City have a municipal officer serving as historian, or some sort of term rotation for this role? Might we consider partnerships with local educational and cultural institutions (in part to sidestep possible politicization of the position) so that this position might be taken up in turn by curators, archivists, community leaders, artists, and historians?

Finally, the Civic Memory Working Group believes strongly that Los Angeles should create mechanisms for retiring as well as establishing sites of memory and memorialization. Creating memorials is a political act, as is taking them down. How might we retire monuments that have, for one reason or another, stood beyond their meaning, purpose, or appropriateness? We need a way to make sure that such decommissioning does not become a contest of force, a competition in defacement.

[5] *The community response following rapper and activist Nipsey Hussle's 2019 murder, which included a memorial at Staples Center and a 26-mile funeral procession through Los Angeles, and the similar memorial at Staples Center for Kobe Bryant in 2020, where thousands of fans grieved the basketball legend's loss for days, are both compelling examples of spontaneous, noninstitutional, and ephemeral public memorials.*

[6] *Indeed, any Indigenous land acknowledgement policy of the type being considered by one of this working group's subcommittees might be strengthened by an insistence that we recognize Native histories and placemaking not merely as part of public ceremonies but in the framing of public spaces and public and private landscapes.*

On a related note, when decisions are made to remove a certain monument or memorial, should the City consider, for a variety of reasons, allowing for partial removal? Might memorial ruins become sites for a kind of contemplation distinct from the moment when this or that commemorative piece was erected or enacted?

Anything approved as a result or in the name of this effort will be analyzed and judged. We should hope as much. We ought to lay ourselves bare in our proposals and obligations, while at the same time giving room for our ideas and claims to evolve. The aim should be that this report, and the commemorations that follow, are discussed and debated widely: a new beginning to an ongoing dialogue in a city that has sometimes seemed to love its imagined future more than its complex present or contested past.

This subcommittee was chaired by William Deverell, professor of history at the University of Southern California, director of the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West, and author of numerous books, including *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past* (University of California Press, 2004); and Sharon Johnston, architect, partner and co-founder at Johnston Marklee, and professor in practice of Architecture, Harvard University. Its other members were Eric Avila, professor of history, Chicana/o studies, and urban planning at UCLA and author, among other books, of *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014); Christopher Hawthorne, chief design officer for the City of Los Angeles; Marissa López, professor of English and Chicana/o studies at UCLA and author, most recently, of *Racial Immanence: Chicanx Bodies Beyond Representation* (NYU Press, 2019); Kelly Lytle Hernández, professor of history, African American studies, and urban planning at UCLA and author of *City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965* (University of North Carolina Press, 2017); and Richard White, emeritus professor of history at Stanford University and author, most recently, of *California Exposures: Envisioning Myth and History* (W. W. Norton, 2020).


¡QUE VIVA
el MORATORIO
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On August 29, 1970, as many as 30,000 Chicano anti-war activists marched in East Los Angeles to protest the Vietnam War. The march, organized by the grassroots coalition the Chicano Moratorium (formally known as the National Chicano Moratorium Committee Against the Vietnam War), was the biggest anti-war demonstration undertaken by any ethnic group in the nation. Gathering in Laguna Park, marchers headed down Whittier Boulevard as L.A. County sheriff's deputies, declaring the rally an unlawful assembly, attempted to break it up with tear gas and batons. Storefronts burned in the ensuing violence and four people were killed, among them the award-winning *Los Angeles Times* journalist Rubén Salazar. Salazar and others had sought refuge from the chaos in a local bar, the Silver Dollar Bar and Café. A sheriff's deputy fired a tear gas canister into the establishment, which struck and killed Salazar. No charges were filed. The former Laguna Park is now Ruben F. Salazar Park. ●

Ken Papaleo, Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library

Subcommittee 2

Labor

Several hundred replica mission bells decorate portions of U.S. Highway 101 from San Diego to San Francisco. Inspired by the rise of automobile tourism and the coincident fervor to reimagine California's Spanish past in the early twentieth century, Pasadena resident Anna Pitcher in 1892 first championed the "restoration" of El Camino Real, a highway that connected Alta California's missions, presidios, and nascent pueblos (and whose name means "the royal road" in Spanish). A highly dubious act of geographical invention, Pitcher's movement won the support of the California Federation of Women's Clubs and other organizations. Enthusiasts founded the El Camino Real Association in 1904, and over the next 10 years set more than 400 cast iron replica mission bells on stylized shepherd's staffs at one-to-two-mile intervals to mark the route. After that group disbanded, maintenance of the bells fell first to the Automobile Club of Southern California and more recently to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), which has maintained and replaced the bells since 1974.[1]

While the markers may enliven a drive on 101 and evoke nostalgia for the region's past, the very symbol chosen to summon such emotions had a very different meaning for thousands of California Indians. Mission bells organized daily life, from their perches embedded in the physical structures of missions where Native people were held, frequently against their will. The bells set times to wake, to sleep, to eat, to worship, and to work. For Indigenous Californians, the bells were not symbols—they were the implements by which Spanish missionaries imposed a regime of involuntary labor. These seemingly innocent El Camino Real road markers thus offer one example of the ways that civic memory and labor intersect: the events, people, and spaces we commemorate are products of physical, social, and emotional labor. They also demonstrate one way that traditional monuments can erase people's labor—especially unfree, uncompensated, or unrecognized labor. Public monuments that erase labor and the circumstances under which people toiled risk reenacting the initial injustice that imposed unfree labor to begin with. The El Camino Real markers reenact multiple facets of the original colonial project by erasing Native peoples' past and present from the region's history, whitewashing the missions' histories of violence, and transforming a tool of forced labor into a commemorative decoration. If the purpose of civic memory is to highlight the process of building relationships among different kinds of communities, then we need to develop new ways to recognize and commemorate histories of labor. These must be sensitive, site-specific, and productive of new conversations.

[1] *"Mission Bells Along El Camino Real,"* Los Angeles Almanac *(online), undated, http://www.laalmanac.com/transport/tr32.php.*

Questioning Monumentality

As monuments worldwide are toppled and we recognize the ways that even forgotten monuments and markers exert symbolic power and convey racial subordination, the assumptions behind these forms of commemoration must also be called into question. Accordingly, we must challenge traditional conceptions of monuments as static—permanent features of steel and stone that are fixed in meaning, assumed to express universal beliefs—and heroic in scale, often emphasizing singular individuals as drivers of historical change.[2] In response, the Civic Memory Working Group has emphasized in our discussions a multilayered, multi-scalar approach to memorialization, grounded in research and dialogic processes of engagement, discussion, and consent, especially by community members implicated in and affected by the histories and memories represented. Instead of thinking of a monument as an *end point*, we see it as a *continuum*, marking, in the words of Monument Lab's Paul Farber and Ken Lum, "a site of struggle but also of possibility … [and] as part of a broader reckoning with how the body politic operates and how we can live with one another."[3]

If, as we have noted, the labor of working people, exploited people, and marginalized people is persistently erased or rendered invisible in the public realm and in traditional monuments, then we need to do more than recover and put in place these missing narratives. We need repair—to build relationships and community in varied ways that might not always take physical shape. How do we give back to subjects and spaces of subjugation, state violence, and racial terror, and alter traditional power relations in so doing? Memorial projects that reinvest in working-class communities and are produced from the bottom up are first steps toward reconciling and repairing past harms, including those that ostensibly "civic" markers (such as the El Camino Real bells and statuary of colonists, explorers, and missionaries) re-inflict.

Our subcommittee ranged in our spatial considerations of monuments and memorials, from the creation of gardens to using infrastructure as memorial space to recognizing individual sites—for example, Downey Block in downtown L.A., where we can parse the deep history of overlapping uses and change over time, rendering visible what is otherwise impossible to discern solely by the naked eye. (See the Histories of Free and Unfree Labor: Downey Block section below.) We have also considered how temporary interventions (such as alternative signage), educational materials (including curricula), an expanded SurveyLA historic context, digital mapping, and media can be powerful tools for strengthening the memory of labor in the city.

[2] *See* Paper Monuments Final Report: Imagine New Monuments for New Orleans *(New Orleans, LA: Colloqate Design/Issuu, Inc., 2019), 14.*

[3] *Paul Farber and Ken Lum, "Monument Lab," interview by Tausif Noor,* Artforum, *June 23, 2020.*

[4] *Dolores Hayden,* The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History *(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 15. The book represents and contextualizes the work of the nonprofit organization Hayden founded in 1984, The Power of Place, which undertook research and public art projects in Little Tokyo and downtown's historic core to commemorate "forgotten sites" and "to situate women's history and ethnic history in downtown, in public places, through experimental, collaborative projects by historians, designers, and artists" (xi). She highlights how "the power of ordinary urban landscapes to nurture citizens' public memory … remains untapped for most working people's neighborhoods," and how even sites that have been bulldozed or retain few material connections to the past can be "marked to restore some shared public meaning" (9).*

The Significance of Place

All our discussions of labor have also been discussions of place; we see the two as inseparable and all-encompassing. The labor lens can be used to represent the vantage point of those who, over time, have constructed and maintained buildings and landscapes. We take to heart what Dolores Hayden wrote in *Power of Place:* "Indigenous residents as well as colonizers, ditch diggers as well as architects, migrant workers as well as mayors, housewives as well as housing inspectors, are all active in shaping the urban landscape."[4] Hayden included those who crafted policies of labor,

land use, and immigration along with those who were coerced, made vulnerable, and otherwise affected by such policies. The Power of Place project also took care to establish an itinerary of sites to enable the telling of the city's economic and social history in a new way through multiple locations. Each site also required multiple forms of outreach, including workers, retirees, family members, and partner organizations. This process of building community connections goes hand in hand with creating new knowledge and public art to interpret it.

We also need to pose this central issue: how might we remember and contend with these interconnected histories as we shape policy today? This is a particular challenge when we consider that landscapes and sites of labor include sites of production (agricultural and manufacturing, for example), distribution (infrastructure such as ports, harbors, and warehouses), and social reproduction (like homes, schools, and community centers). Sites of labor activism, where individuals and groups have pressed for restructuring social, economic, and political relations, also offer rich possibilities to connect past and present as contested terrain.[5] Sites of deindustrialized labor similarly offer fertile grounds for interpreting changing modes of production, shifts to globalization, racial segregation in the workplace, and working-class community organization. The ruins of industry are written upon the landscape. Offering opportunities through memorialization processes to read and speak back can begin an important civic discourse toward both addressing and redressing social and economic inequities. Finally, a focus on labor begs the question of how to recognize the work required to create and maintain monuments and the spaces they occupy.

One way to frame the multilayered histories and memories of labor located in place is through the metaphor of the *palimpsest*—akin to partially erased markings on a chalkboard that are written over with new text. Palimpsests are distinguished from static monuments in the ways that they may serve as catalysts for engagement, interaction, and recognition of change over time.[6] Signs of refusal and opposition—the graffiti that alters visible surfaces (as with the recent Black Lives Matter graffiti)—also express such shifts in meaning and deserve to be preserved. Ephemeral practices—orality, music, foodways, literary depictions, protests, and parades—can help get at these layers of time while also contributing to spaces where such practices can continue to flourish.[7]

[5] *Andrew Hurley,* Beyond Preservation: Using Public History to Revitalize Inner Cities *(Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2010), 39; Rachel Donaldson, "Placing Labor History" (master's thesis, University of Maryland, College Park, 2015), 16; and Hayden,* Power of Place, *100.*

[6] *On defining "palimpsest" for memorial practice, see for instance Andreas Huyssen,* Present Pasts: Urban Palimpsests and the Politics of Memory *(Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2003); and Kevin Healey, "Palimpsests of Memory?,"* Kritik *(Unit for Criticism and Interpretive Theory blog, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), June 23, 2008.*

[7] *Social ethnography and critical cartography are among the various means to chart these uses of space. See Annette Kim, "Critical Cartography 2.0: From 'Participatory Mapping' to Authored Visualizations of Power and People,"* Landscape and Urban Planning *142 (Oct. 2015): 215–25. Scholars including Gaye Therese Johnson, Josh Kun, Jorge Leal, Steven Osuna, and Oliver Wang are among those who remap the city by considering music and sound. The New Orleans civic memory project, Paper Monuments, focused on working-class communities of color in considering how to create new forms of counter-monuments/ counter-narratives. See* Paper Monuments Final Report, *14; and the project website, https://www.papermonuments.org.*

Roads, Railways, and Ports

"Want to tear down insidious monuments to racism and segregation? Bulldoze L.A. freeways," read the headline of a June 2020 *Los Angeles Times* opinion piece,[8] offering an idea that media sources across the country picked up. The articles joined others, including several that Christopher Hawthorne penned for the same paper in 2015 and 2016,[9] acknowledging how freeways built with federal interstate funding served, along with redlining,[10] racial covenants, "slum" clearance, and urban renewal, as tools to tear apart neighborhoods. Some examples include the bisection by Interstate 10 of the storied African American Sugar Hill neighborhood in 1963; the destruction of thousands of homes, shops, and community landmarks in the working-class, immigrant neighborhoods of East Los Angeles and Boyle Heights from the 1940s through the 1960s, culminating in the 135-acre East Los Angeles Interchange (dubbed "the Spaghetti Bowl" by planners) connecting the "biggest tangle of freeways in the country"; and the Latinx communities along what is called today the "diesel death zone" of the Interstate 710

[8] *Matthew Fleischer, "Want to Tear Down Insidious Monuments to Racism and Segregation? Bulldoze L.A. Freeways,"* Los Angeles Times, *June 24, 2020.*

[9] *Christopher Hawthorne, "Transforming the End of the 2 Freeway Could Be the Beginning of a New L.A.,"* Los Angeles Times, *Dec. 31, 2015; Christopher Hawthorne, "Why the Time Is Right to Re-examine the L.A. Freeway,"* Los Angeles Times, *Aug. 7, 2015; Christopher Hawthorne, "Imagine if the 2 Freeway Ended in a Brilliantly Colored, Eco-smart Park,"* Los Angeles Times, *July 16, 2016.*

and the eight (or so) intersecting freeways near and around the ports.[11] By calling these wide swathes of concrete and steel our city's version of the Confederate monument writ large, the *Times* flipped the script on places of commemoration and how they function. Importantly, it made explicit the links between commemoration and structures of power: that monuments are the physical evidence of power—in this case, of local, state, and federal political and economic power to fortify white supremacy, maintain segregation, and privatize the public space of transportation by investing in automobility rather than mass transit. The miles of concrete highways built in the mid-twentieth century not only sliced through communities of color that Caltrans might have imagined would pose the least resistance, but exaggerated, in Eric Avila's words, "the increasingly separate and unequal geography of race in postwar America."[12]

Freeways are not the only monuments to infrastructural racism disproportionately affecting Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) and landscapes of labor. We can add to the list the Los Angeles River (until recently treated by the Army Corp of Engineers as a big, paved storm drain/flood control channel); City of Los Angeles holdings in Payahüünadü/Owens Valley (the now-arid source of the infamous Los Angeles Aqueduct); and the history of annexation forming the "Shoestring Strip" of Harbor Gateway, acquired by Los Angeles in 1906 to connect the city to the ports—all of which narrate histories of colonization and extraction of resources and labor. Railroads—including the Alameda Corridor and its metaphorical predecessor, the Alameda Wall (dividing Black Watts and South L.A. from white southeast cities to the east of the Alameda); intermodal rail yards; and the port itself, where community-based organizations and public interest groups have been agitating for several generations for environmental and economic justice—are also crucial to consider.[13] These infrastructural monuments to racism do not just divide and segregate, they impose life sentences on those who live along their corridors, where high rates of asthma, cancer, and stunted lung development are among the public health impacts. Importantly, they are all sites of both industry and damage to working-class communities.

Toppling these monuments may take nothing short of an act of God and the demise of capitalism. Nonetheless, they warrant acknowledgment as the city's biggest monuments issuing disproportionate harm to historically marginalized communities, ripe for reckoning with in more than symbolic ways. If we are to take reparation seriously, strategies for doing so might include the following:

+ Converting and decommissioning freeways (especially freeway "stubs" that abruptly end) and transforming land around them, as Christopher Hawthorne has recommended, with projects that capture stormwater, create gardens, and mark histories of erasure and harm.
+ Expanding on what Eric Avila has described as "a resurgent memory culture, often built from the wreckage of the past," including "murals, festivals, autobiographies, and oral histories, and archival efforts."[14] This could include archives of displacement that identify the history of place and people—from Indigenous villages buried beneath feet of concrete to multiracial working-class communities once populating Terminal Island to those removed by multiple waves of downtown urban renewal. The creation of archives of displacement could serve as commemorative acts unto themselves as well as generate other forms of public art and educational opportunities. Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) and its Skid Row History Museum and Archive offer a case in point, as their community-based collections (oral histories, photographs, videos,

[10] *Redlining is the name given to the practice of denying federally and privately backed mortgages to properties in neighborhoods deemed "risky" on the basis of their ethnic and racial composition, among other factors. The term originates with maps made of 239 cities by the Homeowners' Loan Corporations (HOLC) in 1935, which graded neighborhoods according to the security of real estate investments as an aid to mortgage underwriting decisions made by the Federal Home Loan Bank Board and ultimately the Federal Housing Administation. For each surveyed city, HOLC produced a color-coded map with four grades of real estate. The lowest, "Grade D" properties, were outlined in red on the maps, and corresponded in general to older neighborhoods and those inhabited by people of color, especially Black residents, and ethnic minorities including Irish and Jews. Banks resisted backing mortgages to individual purchasers in Grade D neighborhoods, limiting Black, Mexican, and ethnic homeownership in urban centers. Private banks used these and similar maps for decades, even after they were rendered illegal by the Fair Housing Act of 1968, further complicating pathways to homeownership for people of color. See Amy E. Hillier, "Redlining and the Homeowners' Loan Corporation," Journal of Urban History 29, no. 4 (2003): 394–420; and Richard Rothstein,* The Color of Law: A Forgottten History of How Our Govenrment Segregated America *(New York: Liveright, 2017).*

[11] *Gilbert Estrada, "If You Build It, They Will Move: The Los Angeles Freeway System and the Displacement of Mexican East Los Angeles, 1944–1972,"* Southern California Quarterly *87, no. 3 (Fall 2005): 290–91, 301–3; Hadley Meares, "The Thrill of Sugar Hill,"* Curbed Los Angeles, *Feb. 22, 2018; Hadley Meares, "Why L.A.'s Freeways Are Symbolic Sites of Protest,"* Curbed Los Angeles, *June 11, 2020; Laura J. Nelson, "710 Freeway Is a 'Diesel Death Zone' to Neighbors—Can Vital Commerce Route Be Fixed?,"* Los Angeles Times, *Mar. 1, 2018.*

[12] *Eric Avila,* The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City *(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), 39.*

and other materials related to redevelopment) and creative projects (performances, arts festivals, parades, and exhibitions) document efforts to remove impoverished and unhoused people.[15] Such projects also serve as a bulwark against further displacement.[16] Thinking creatively about underpasses, walls, concrete embankments, and soundproofing barriers as metaphors and as physical sites will help us tell more inclusive histories. The displacement archives could be used to generate community-driven public art and educational efforts, perhaps borrowing concepts from Walter Hood's *Witness Walls* in Nashville, Tennessee, and expanding on Judy Baca's *Great Wall* and the mural projects alongside freeways from the 1970s and as part of the 1984 Olympics. The Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles has already documented and preserved numerous such murals.[17]

+ Utilizing streets, medians, and sidewalks to express multilayered histories. For instance, the 1996 sidewalk installation *Omoide No Shotokyo (Remembering Old Little Tokyo)* includes a timeline of business occupants for historic blocks of Little Tokyo, inlaid with bronze and stainless steel text, images, and written memories.[18] *Omoide No Shotokyo* still resonates, and offers a promising model that could be adopted elsewhere to explore histories of place and patterns of redlining or to call attention to legacy businesses (long-standing, community-serving small businesses that add to a neighborhood's cultural vitality). Another project worthy of emulating is Kim Abeles's *Walk a Mile in My Shoes*, which transformed two traffic islands with green space and art, and traces a path between them with cast bronze shoes of civil rights march participants and photographic tiles of shoes belonging to present-day L.A. artists and other social justice crusaders.[19]

Smaller interventions in other cities have borrowed from the *Stolpersteine* (or "stumbling stones") project, which German artist Gunter Demnig initiated in 1992. The *Stolpersteine* are small conrete cubes with small brass plaques commemorating victims of the Nazi persecution or extermination, installed in the sidewalk in front of a person's last known address of choice, home or work.[20] The notion that "a person is only forgotten when his or her name is forgotten" has also been used for witness stones in the United States (both in the Northeast and the South) to commemorate enslaved men and women. Related, but in chalk, is the annual commemoration of the 1911 Triangle Shirtwaist Company factory fire in New York City: participants write the names and ages of the 146 workers who died on sidewalks in front of the workers' former homes.[21] Such strategies could be used to commemorate the names of chain gang laborers, among others.

For infrastructure and other sites of erasures and displacements, media-based projects might be another way (and less expensive than installations) to bring people now lost to history back into view. In Berlin in the 1990s, Los Angeles-born artist Shimon Attie projected images of the Jewish past onto otherwise "forgetful sites."[22] Polish artist Krzysztof Wodiczko has done similar work with public projections onto architectural facades since the 1980s.[23] Other models for media include the histories of displacement expressed through Walking Cinema studio's *Museum of the Hidden City* story and source-based app tours, which look at urban renewal in San Francisco.[24] At different stops, you can listen to audio, including primary sources, and look at augmented reality. All of these can shift the habitual ways that we navigate the city and draw attention to those who have labored to enable our mobility.

[13] *Mike Davis and Jon Wiener,* Set the Night on Fire: L.A. in the Sixties *(Brooklyn, NY: Verso Books, 2020), 94–104; Greg Hise, "Industry and Imaginative Geographies," Becky M. Nicolaides, "The Quest for Independence: Workers in the Suburbs," and Mike Davis, "Sunshine and the Open Shop: Ford and Darwin in 1920s Los Angeles," in Tom Sitton and William Deverell, eds.,* Metropolis in the Making: Los Angeles in the 1920s *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 21–45, 71–108; Laura Pulido, "Rethinking Environmental Racism: White Privilege and Urban Development in Southern California,"* Annals of the Association of American Geographers *90, no. 1 (March 2000): 12–40. Groups include East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice, Communities for a Better Environment, and Mothers of East L.A., among others.*

[14] *Avila,* Folklore of the Freeway, *116–17. Examples include Inland Mexican Heritage's Living on the Dime project oral histories, events, and films featuring predominantly Latinx families living in the shadow of Interstate 10 from Bloomington to Blythe. See the Living on the Dime project website, http://mexicanheritage.yolasite.com/living-on-the-dime, and the California Revealed online archive of documentary materials, https://californiarevealed.org.*

[15] *Founded in 1985, LAPD is comprised principally of people who live and work in Skid Row. The first performance group in the United States for unhoused people, and the first arts program of any kind in Skid Row, the group's multidisciplinary artworks include oral histories, an annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists, performances, and biennial* Walk the Talk *parades. Materials related to these projects narrate how Skid Row has been encroached upon by development and market-rate housing in recent decades and how activists have vied to retain the very-low-income housing that was left standing after tenements and rooming houses in Bunker Hill, the central business district, and elsewhere throughout downtown were removed in the name of slum clearance and urban redevelopment. In this sense, LAPD's work both documents displacement and, through public art and other creative means, resists it. See the LAPD website, http://www.lapovertydept.org, and the digital* Walk the Talk *archive, https://app.reduct.video/lapd/walk-the-talk/#.*

[16] *John Malpede, "Opening Remarks,"* Walk the Talk 2020 *(Los Angeles Poverty Department and Skid Row History Museum and Archive, 2021), 9.*

Histories of Free and Unfree Labor: Downey Block

Long histories of labor, both free and unfree, have been etched onto prominent parcels of Los Angeles land. As the city grows and changes, the structures in which these stories unfold are razed, with new buildings erected in their place. But the memory and history remain—layers in a spatial palimpsest that sometimes surge anew to the surface. One need not look far beyond City Hall for an especially poignant example: just across the street, at 312 N. Spring Street, sits the Los Angeles federal courthouse. Built under the auspices of the Public Works Administration during the Great Depression, the 17-story art deco edifice is a monument to labor's central place in the New Deal, and to the ways that New Deal work transformed urban landscapes across the country. More than 100 years earlier, Jonathan Temple, an immigrant from Massachusetts who became a naturalized citizen of Mexico and married Rafaela Cota, opened the pueblo's first store on the same piece of ground. The corral at the back became the site of a weekly Indian slave market. Of course, slavery was illegal in Alta California under the flags of both Mexico and the United States. Nevertheless, local authorities operating under Spanish, then Mexican, and then U.S. regimes passed strict vagrancy laws, and every Sunday evening for decades herded California Indians alleged to be vagrants into the corral at the back of Temple's store. On Monday mornings, municipal officials auctioned off the incarcerated Indians to local cattle ranchers for one-week labor terms. Usually, the ranchers paid the Indians their weekly wages in strong liquor, ensuring that they would again be found vagrant the following Sunday. In the mid-1850s, Temple sold his store and corral to John G. Downey, an Irish immigrant to Los Angeles and later the governor of California, and the practice persisted. Downey built a handsome brick business block on the site but retained the corral and continued to facilitate the dubiously legal trade in Indian slaves into the 1870s.[25] Downey's block also housed several local businesses, the post office, and meeting rooms occupied nightly by various fraternal organizations including the masons. Between 1904 and 1906, Downey's block was razed to make way for the second federal building in Los Angeles, which housed the U.S. District Court and other federal agencies until being razed in 1937.

When the new federal courthouse opened in 1940, it carried potent reminders of the city's Indigenous past and the violence of Spanish, Mexican, and U.S. colonialism. Adorning the Spring Street lobby are two murals by Lucien Labaudt. One of them—*Life on the Old Spanish and American Ranchos*—features an old map prominently at the center, and Indigenous Californians kneeling at the feet of Spaniards, physically humbled by the legal and religious regimes that imposed their subjugation. The painting shows two Indians holding a water vessel as two Spaniards look down on them, a male with a disparaging, impatient gaze as he holds a bull by a rope, and a female mixing disdain with pity, her head covered in a white cloth demonstrating religious piety. Another mural, Edward Biberman's *Los Angeles: Prehistorical and Spanish Colonial,* is starker still, with scenes of "prehistorical" wildlife on the left, a montage of Spanish colonialism on the right, and the first U.S. survey map of the city (completed in 1849 by Edward Ord) holding the middle.[26] A single Indian, shown naked from behind, sits low just right of center at the bottom of the painting. He stares sidelong at a Spanish soldier mounted on white horse, flanked by two armed foot soldiers marching away supporting a royal Spanish standard. Facing the viewer, a Spanish friar glares down at the Indian with a mix of pity and resolve, hands posed in proselytization.

[17] *"Witness Walls," Metro Nashville Arts Commission website, undated, https://www.metroartsnashville.com/witness-walls; "The Great Wall of Los Angeles," Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC) website, undated, https://sparcinla.org/programs/the-great-wall-mural-los-angeles/#; Gina Pollack, "Metro Admits to Painting over Historic LA Mural," LAist, April 23, 2019; Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles website, undated, https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/the-mural-conservancy-of-los-angeles.*

[18] *Sheila Levrant de Bretteville with Sonya Ishii, Nobuho Nagasawa, and Susan Sztaray,* Omoide No Shotokyo (Remembering Old Little Tokyo)*, 1996, concrete inlaid with bronze and stainless steel, Historic Little Tokyo, Los Angeles.*

[19] *Robert Garcia, "'Walk a Mile in My Shoes': Public Art Park Celebrates the Civil Rights Revolution," KCET website, July 2, 2014.*

20 Stolpersteine *project website, undated, http://www.stolpersteine.eu/en/home.*

[21] *Ruth Sergel,* See You in the Streets: Art, Action, and Remembering the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire *(Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2016).*

[22] *James E. Young, "Sites Unseen: Shimon Attie's Acts of Remembrance, 1991–1996,"* At Memory's Edge: After-Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture *(New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), 62–89.*

[23] *"Krzysztof Wodiczko," Art21 website, undated, https://art21.org/artist/krzysztof-wodiczko.*

[24] *"Walking Cinema: Museum of the Hidden City" website, undated, http://www.seehidden.city.*

[25] *Mexican and U.S. laws made this "other slavery" possible. See Kelly Lytle Hernández,* City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles, 1771–1965 *(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017); and Stacey L. Smith,* Freedom's Frontier: California and the Struggle over Unfree Labor, Emancipation, and Reconstruction *(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013). See also An Act for the Government and Protection of Indians, April 22, 1850, Chapter 133, Statutes of California, undated, http://faculty.humanities.uci.edu/tcthorne/notablecaliforniaindians/actforprotection1850.htm.*

Striking in their parallels (including the central place of maps that crystallized European spatial practices, U.S. notions of private property, and the role of law in making these abstract ideas concrete), these images do just enough to summon the city's Spanish and Indigenous past to memory, and they deal in sufficient stereotypes of Indians as naked, backwards, and defeated to silence deeper stories. But they also summon the ghosts of colonialism and spectral Native peoples, inviting them to tell tales of their struggle against those who used the law as one of many tools to control Indian labor and Indian bodies, deracinate Indigenous culture, and in so doing make way for European-style nation-states—first New Spain, then Mexico, and finally the United States. Their obeisantly positioned bodies, the artists' slanted reckoning of a historical past, also serve as a warning to how the law too frequently serves to perpetuate the subjugation of Brown bodies to the power of the carceral state. Even as the courthouse's black-robed denizens have sworn to uphold laws and advocate justice, they labored on grounds stained by the sweat of slave labor. No memorial to Gabrielino-Tongva labor,[27] or the shame of the slave market, or the connections between dehumanizing laws and the space of legal decision-making invites present-day visitors to reflect on this troubled, complicated history; potentially rich conversations linking the city's Indigenous past, labor and civic memory never commence.

To engage the site's past and its existing function as a place of demonstration—to name a few: the July 2020 Black Lives Matter protests, the 1979 Native American protest, the 1962 protests against House Un-American Activities Committee, which met at the site starting in 1947—a number of strategies might be used to mobilize public dialogue and find means of commemorating its layered histories:

- Engaging with contemporary Indigenous groups to consider what ceremonial practices might be appropriate in relationship to its history, bearing in mind that in 1979, Native American protestors conducting a religious ceremony were arrested at the site. Are there other suggestions that Native community members might have, or ways to add their histories?
- Identifying artists to work in tandem with Native groups and historians to create contemporary murals on-site that address the layers of the space's history, including the corralling and slave auctions, protests, and other actions. The existing courthouse murals offer a narrow set of historical representations from the time of the building's opening in 1940. Commissioning artists to work with Native and activist groups who represent some of the histories of struggle embodied at the site to create alternative representations or revisions—similar to the Getty's Pacific Standard Time mural project at the L.A. Public Library[28]—is a way to bring to the fore and memorialize its deeper, unrecognized history. The Pacific Standard Time murals and accompanying digital kiosks of interpretive material offered an alternative Indigenous history to that depicted in the library's 1933 murals, which, like the courthouse's, use the trope of kneeling Native Americans and standing European colonists as part of the Spanish Colonial frontier narrative.
- Establishing Downey Block as part of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, with its goal of turning "memory into action."[29] Adopting the coalition's efforts to "connect past struggles to today's movements for human rights" with strategies for public art and other modes of engaging dialogue about incarceration, subjugation, and dehumanization is another way to bring unrepresented histories into public view. There are also opportunities to connect Downey Block to other Sites of Conscience downtown: the former Parker Center police department headquarters;[30] the Chinese massacre and other lynching sites around El Pueblo and Union Station; sites of forced

[26] *On Ord's Survey, see "E.O.C. Ord's first map of the city of Los Angeles, drawn in August 29, 1849," California Historical Society Collection, 1860–1960, USC Digital Library, undated, http://digitallibrary.usc.edu/cdm/ref/collection/p15799coll65/id/12770.*

[27] *Four different names are associated with the original Native peoples of Los Angeles: Gabrieleño, Gabrielino, Tongva, and Kizh. According to the* Los Angeles Almanac, *"Tongva" is most often encountered (although arguably the least historic). For more details, see "What Are the Original People of Los Angeles County Called?,"* Los Angeles Almanac, *undated, http://www.laalmanac.com/history/hi05a.php.Relying on the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission Tribal Consultation List, we have generally in this report used the spelling "Gabrielino," with the exception of references to the Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians and the Kizh Nation - Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians, in which case we have honored their preferred spellings.*

[28] *In 2017, the Oaxacan artist collective Tlacolulokos created eight murals for the downtown L.A. Public Library, called "For the Pride of Your Hometown, the Way of the Elders, and in Memory of the Forgotten," as part of the Getty Foundation's Pacific Standard Time: Latin America/Los Angeles (LA/LA) initiative. See Deborah Vankin, "Oaxacalifornia Dreaming: L.A. Library Mural Project Looks at a Visual Language that Transcends Borders,"* Los Angeles Times, *Sept. 20, 2017.*

[29] *International Coalition of Sites of Conscious website, undated, https://www.sitesofconscience.org/en/home.*

removal in Little Tokyo and at the Japanese American National Museum (a participant in the Sites of Conscience coalition); locations of jails, prisons, and chain gang–constructed streets that mark the historical production of Los Angeles as a carceral space;[31] the site of the Brother Africa killing by police in Skid Row;[32] and others.

+ Using the site to explicitly address the ways that unfree, forced, and poorly paid labor built the city, and labor movements' role in agitating for workers' rights.

Gardens as Sites for Honoring Labor History

Gardens afford us an opportunity to discuss many facets of history, including settler colonialism, race, gender, migration, structural inequality, and more. Gardens express cultural values and relationships to land. They also often obfuscate the labor needed to create and maintain them.[33] Herein lies an opportunity to highlight labor in the present as well as in the past. For example, as authors Laura Pulido, Laura R. Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng wrote in *A People's Guide to Los Angeles,*

> Restricted from owning property by California's Alien Land Laws of 1913 and 1920, many Japanese immigrants in Los Angeles, even those with college degrees and skilled trades, turned to gardening. Gardening allowed immigrants to start their own businesses with relatively little capital, offered some autonomy, and paid well compared to the few other occupations open to Japanese workers at the time. … By 1934, one-third of the Japanese labor force consisted of gardeners. They performed basic lawn care but also created more elaborate garden designs for wealthy white homeowners in some of the city's most elite areas.[34]

Japanese American flower growers made up over half the total number of flower growers in the L.A. area and produced over half of the products sold per year prior to World War II. They imported and developed unique varieties of flowers, such as camellias and ranunculus, and provided vital expertise. Despite the mass dispossession and devastation they suffered during internment, many flower growers were able to reestablish themselves after the war. The Southern California Flower Market downtown, which was founded by Japanese immigrants in 1912, is still in operation today.[35]

We might consider one site or a multi-sited project where the garden can serve as a window into who has access to the space (allowing discussions of redlining, for example), labor, etc. Episodes in history that gardens can illuminate include the following:

+ Indigenous relationships to land transformed by Spanish and Anglo-American settler colonialism.
+ Japanese American history (farming, flower growing, cut-flower stands, gardening, and wartime incarceration/internment). Descendants of flower growing families as well as the related organizations (Southern California Flower Growers, Southern California Gardeners' Federation) could be involved in the creation of garden(s).
+ Latinx immigration to Los Angeles and their role in gardening and as gardeners (with and then succeeding Japanese growers and gardeners, in the Flower Mart, and as part of the South Central Community Garden, for example).[36]

[30] *Parker Center (constructed in 1955 and razed in 2019) is an apt site of conscience based on the histories of the building's construction, which demolished a robust block of Little Tokyo including the Olympic Hotel, a Filipino church and community center, and other properties taken through eminent domain in 1949 shortly after neighborhood residents returned from wartime incarceration. The site's notoriety also connects to the racial violence and consolidation of police power and authority affiliated with the tenure of the building's namesake, Chief William Parker, as well as his successor, Chief Daryl Gates, culminating in the 1992 Rodney King uprising, when Parker Center was ground zero for protests. "Rightly or Wrongly: Parker Center's Dark History Appears to Have Paved the Way for Its Demise,"* Los Angeles Times, *Feb. 17, 2017; Max Felker-Kantor,* Policing Los Angeles: Race, Resistance, and the Rise of the LAPD *(Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018).*

[31] *See Lytle Hernández,* City of Inmates.

[32] *Gale Holland, Sarah Parvini, and Angel Jennings, "On Skid Row, Grief and Anger after Fatal LAPD Shooting of Homeless Man,"* Los Angeles Times, *Mar. 2, 2015.*

[33] *The work of artist Ramiro Gomez brings labor into view, especially in relationship to wealthy landscapes. Lawrence Weschler, "Ramiro Gomez's Domestic Disturbances,"* New York Times Magazine, *Aug. 14, 2015.*

[34] *Laura Pulido, Laura R. Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng,* A People's Guide to Los Angeles *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 53–54.*

[35] *See for instance Naomi Hirahara,* A Scent of Flowers: The History of the Southern California Flower Market, 1912–2004 *(Pasadena: Midori Books, 2004); and Naomi Hirahara,* Green Makers: Japanese Gardeners of Southern California *(Los Angeles: Southern California Gardeners' Federation, 2000).*

+ Gardens as migration projects, through shared knowledge (Padres Pioneros in San Fernando Valley, for example), multiethnic collaborations (such as the San Pedro Community Garden, begun by Filipino seafarers 45 years ago, joined by Croatian, Indonesian, Italian, Laotian, and Mexican gardeners).[37]

We might also consider a garden dedicated to farm workers, perhaps located at or near City Hall. An example of such a site is the Farm Workers Garden at Pitzer College in Claremont (so named by a carpenter and farmworker working at Pitzer), which commemorates an ongoing relationship and dedication to working together for social change between students and farmworker communities in La Paz (Keene), California, and also conveys historical and present-day recognition of farm workers and the United Farm Workers of American union (UFW). This community garden is a welcoming space with many benches to pause and rest. Pitzer College is also home to a space focused on restoring and respecting Indigenous relationships to land, the Robert Redford Conservancy for Southern California Sustainability. Its director, Brinda Sarathy, works collaboratively with Tongva educators and elders to recreate a native plant ecological landscape as well as ceremonial spaces for Tongva communities.[38]

[36] *See for instance the documentary films* The Garden, *directed by Scott Hamilton Kennedy (Silverlake, CA: Black Valley Films, 2008); and* Can You Dig This, *directed by John Legend (Los Angeles: Delirio Films, 2015), which also features the Ron Finley Project (South Los Angeles street median gardens).*

[37] *See Pierrette Hondagneu-Sotelo,* Paradise Transplanted: Migration and the Making of California Gardens *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014). The artwork and audio tours of Jenny Yurshansky in such projects as* Blacklisted: A Planted Allegory *use plants to address sociopolitical constructs of borders and belonging (for example, classification of plants as "native," "non-native," or "invasive"), global trade in plants and bodies, and immigration policy. See Jenny Yurchansky website, undated, http://jennyyurshansky.com/Jenny_Yurshansky/Current.html.*

Los Angeles River

The Los Angeles River is central to the history of Los Angeles, and it can narrate multiple erasures and restore to understanding many forces that have shaped Los Angeles and its problems. Indeed, the invisibility of the very natural resource that sustained the region is not just a metaphor for the invisibility of so much of the city's population of builders; it is really part of the tale of the larger erasure of peoples—especially Indigenous, working-class, and impoverished peoples—who have long lived by the river.

In 1781, El Pueblo de la Reina de Los Angeles (the Town of the Queen of Angels) was founded on the river, the main artery of the city's major watershed—where Gabrielino-Tongva, Ventureño-Chumash, and Fernandeño-Tataviam sustained themselves for thousands of years. L.A. relied on the river and its aquifers as the sole source of water. Only after the City drained and polluted the river, in the early 1900s, did L.A. begin to import water. Then, in the 1940s and 1950s, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers built a deep, 51-mile-long concrete channel to control significant floods, replacing the river's banks and most of its bottom with 3.5 million barrels of cement. This channelized system was designed to do one thing and one thing only: funnel stormwater into the river and then, efficiently, to the ocean.

Los Angeles forgot about its river. It became illegal even to go to this major public space. Encased in concrete, padlocked from wholesale public use, and crisscrossed with infrastructure (railroads, freeways, petroleum tanks, and refineries), when remembered at all it was from film, where it was most often cast as an abandoned, industrial, liminal space—a film noir–fueled racialized imaginary. In the 1980s, inspired by poet Lewis MacAdams—who restored the word "river" to describe what the Army Corps of Engineers insisted was a flood-control channel—artists and activists began to take the representational lead, giving words and imagery to the L.A. River, helping to make it visible again. In the last decade, grand-scale, ambitious projects have begun to revitalize L.A.'s notorious concrete river.

Although the L.A. River runs down an enormous channel through the heart of the city, and a huge cast of public, private, and nonprofit players is deploying increasingly large

[38] *Additional sources include José Z. Calderón, "Transformative Community Engagement," in* The Cambridge Handbook of Service Learning and Community Engagement, *edited by Corey Dolgon, Tania D. Mitchell, and Timothy K. Eatman (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2017), 500–10; and William Cronon,* Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England *(New York: Hill and Wang, [1983] 2003). Sandra de la Loza's current work on Sleepy Lagoon with East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice suggests another model. See Carolina A. Miranda, "Goodbye, Guy on a Horse: A New Wave of Monument Design Is Changing How We Honor History,"* Los Angeles Times, *July 23, 2020.*

sums to make this revival happen, the river still remains stubbornly invisible to most Angelenos. Memorialization should achieve more than merely making what has been rendered invisible visible. Instead, the L.A. River can be a site where we highlight the ways that erasures have enabled the city's uneven development. We ignored the river and its significance in providing water; we ignored climate and the larger ecology; we erased Indigenous presence and the ways that policies like zoning and de jure and de facto racism pushed poor people and communities of color to the flood-prone riverbanks, while whites fled the area—which, when paved, demarcated "further ethnic boundaries," as William Deverell put it in *Whitewashed Adobe*.[39] The river offers opportunities for all these issues to be represented. Specific recommendations include the following:

- Historians should be included in planning efforts. (This has not typically been the case in City and County initiatives to rethink the river and its place in civic life.)[40]
- Funds related to planning and environmental reviews, among others, should be devoted to identifying tangible and intangible historic cultural resources, community-based knowledge, oral histories, asset mapping, etc., and could also go toward SurveyLA inclusion of more riverside sites.
- An advocacy plan for an L.A. River cultural corridor for all 51 miles and 18 cities should be put into place.[41]

Historical themes ripe for representation include the following:

- ***Water and waste.*** We should mark the different historical uses of the river, and those who labor(ed) on behalf of them, from zanjeros to the contemporary Tillman wastewater treatment operators and landscapers of its Van Nuys Japanese Garden, as well as the toxic industrial sites and those who work, live, and organize around them. Ed P. Reyes River Greenway in Lincoln Heights, a former brownfield site and storm drain operated by the L.A. Bureau of Sanitation, is an obvious location. Artworks that address historical water conveyance, such as Lauren Bon and Metabolic Studio's multipart public sculpture *Bending the River Back Into the City* (2012–present), offer rich interpretive opportunities.[42]
- ***The carceral city.*** Riverside thoroughfares (like Spring Street and Broadway) were built by Indigenous and other "vagrant" laborers. Forced labor cleared fields, cultivated vineyards, and built zanjas. The first jails were located next to the river. Reliance on criminalization to hide the unhoused, including police sweeps during the 1984 Olympics, for example, and the 1987 Skid Row sweeps, drove many to the river. The 4th Street Bridge, adjacent to which 2,600 unhoused people (including children) lived on City-owned property at the "Urban Campground" in 1987, and the 1927-built Lincoln Heights jail (which held people arrested in the Zoot Suit and Watts riots, and had a separate wing for queer men) are among possible sites.[43]
- ***The river itself.*** Controlling nature through technocracy is the central hallmark of how the river has been addressed since the first decades of the twentieth century. Yet how might we acknowledge that which has been beyond administrative and technological control, including the way the river changed shape (over centuries) and the impact of its concrete straitjacket? In prior centuries, the river was "unsettled" in terms of the waterway changing shape. Are there ways to mark this in the landscape or through critical cartography projects? Can indigenous uses (of tule reed, willow, medicinal plants, and food sources) serve as living memorial practices to reanimate conceptions of the river as a lifeway with ancestral spirit to be respected for the gifts it offers?[44]

[39] *William Deverell,* Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 130, and chapter 3, "Remembering a River"; Jenny Price, "Thirteen Ways of Seeing Nature in LA, Part II,"* The Believer, *May 1, 2006; André Naffis-Sahely, "Shall We Gather at the River?,"* Poetry Foundation, *Dec. 14, 2020, https://www.poetryfoundation.org/articles/154948/shall-we-gather-at-the-river. Other sources include Karen Piper,* Left in the Dust: How Race and Politics Created a Human and Environmental Tragedy in L.A. *(New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); and Blake Gumprecht,* The Los Angeles River: Its Life, Death, and Possible Rebirth *(Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).*

[40] *Historian Catherine Gudis, this subcommittee's chairperson, served on the Los Angeles River Master Plan Steering Committee as an alternate to Peter Sellars of UCLA's World Arts and Cultures Department.*

[41] *The County's L.A. River Master Plan acknowledges the need for more research and cultural asset mapping along the length of the river. SurveyLA included the Northeast L.A. River Revitalization Area and other river-adjacent areas in the valley and downtown, but intangible, socially significant, and labor history sites remain underrepresented, in our view.*

42 Lauren Bon and Metabolic Studio's Bending the River Back Into the City *"pierces the concrete straitjacket of the river" to divert water via a below-ground tunnel to a giant water wheel (mimicking nineteenth-century movement of the water around the same site) that will bring the water to bioremediation gardens before being redistributed to people in downtown L.A. See "Bending the River Back into the City,"* Metabolic Studio Newsletter *1, May 2020, https://www.metabolicstudio.org/454.*

[43] *Lytle Hernández,* City of Inmates; *D. J. Waldie, "A River Still Runs through L.A.," in Michael Kolster,* L.A. River *(Staunton, VA: George F. Thomas Publishing, 2019), 125–44;* Lost Angeles: The Story of Tent City, directed by Tom Seidman *(Berkeley: University of California Extension Media Center, 1988).*

Might acknowledging various cultural meanings of nature also enable creative approaches to pressing issues of watershed health and access to clean water and food?

+ ***Histories of displacement (people, water, ecosystem).*** Working-class communities of color, the impoverished, and those forced out of other neighborhoods (like Chavez Ravine) were pushed to floodplains and industrial corridors. Public discussions with community-based groups and public artists have addressed some of these connections to current land speculation and gentrification.
+ ***Infrastructural corridors***. For nearly a century, the river has been used as infrastructure rather than a natural resource that sustains and connects communities. Clockshop's Bowtie Project at Rio de Los Angeles State Park, including work by Rafa Esparza and Rosten Woo, is a model for activating historical and industrial sites. Ephemeral projects—performances, festivals, and temporary public art projects—have activated spaces of infrastructure to draw attention to them as elements of urban nature and to galvanize different publics in reenvisioning their potential as clean, green, public spaces. Such projects, including multiple engagements by the Los Angeles Urban Rangers, the Project 51 collective's Play the LA River project, Sandra de la Loza's *Where the Rivers Join*, and others suggest ways to shift cultural attitudes through public education and creative engagement. More investment on a regular basis in multiple modes of such forms of civic dialogue are needed.[45]
+ ***Concrete.*** Where did the 3.5 million barrels it took to erase the river come from? Who made it? How was it designed and fashioned into sewers, viaducts, and riverbeds? How have people used these sites, and how might they be repurposed for expressive means where the concrete cannot be removed? ●

This subcommittee was chaired by Catherine Gudis, director of the Public History Program at UC Riverside, cofounder of the public humanities collective Play the LA River, and senior ranger with the Los Angeles Urban Rangers; and David Torres-Rouff, chair, Department of History & Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Merced and author of *Before L.A.: Race, Space, and Municipal Power in Los Angeles, 1781–1894* (Yale University Press, 2013). Its other members were Wendy Cheng, associate professor of American Studies at Scripps College and author of *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013); Nora Chin, deputy chief design officer for the City of Los Angeles in the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti; and Natalia Molina, professor of American Studies and Ethnicity at USC and author of *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (University of California Press, 2014). In addition, this subcommittee was advised by Monica M. Martinez, associate professor of history at the University of Texas at Austin, and Dolores Hayden, emerita professor of architecture and American Studies at Yale University and author of *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (MIT Press, 1995).

[44] *See* Native Traditions: Tongva Traditions, *video, 11 min., 2020, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ty2U3pg4jI0; and Native Traditions, video, 10 min., 2020, produced by Friends of the L.A. River;* LA River Native Community Discussion, *recording of an event held at the Autry Museum on June 1, 2019, sponsored by the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission as part of community outreach for the County's revisions to the L.A. River Master Plan.*

[45] *Examples include the Los Angeles Urban Rangers' guided hikes, campfire talks, field kits, and other interpretive tools, http://www.laurbanrangers.org; Clockshop's "Frogtown Futuro" series of tours and talks in 2014, https://clockshop.org/project/frogtown-futuro; projects by LA Más, a design office with deep experience in community engagement, https://www.mas.la/projects; Play the LA River's 2014–15 events and educational workshops, https://playthelariver.com; and Sandra de la Loza's* Where the Rivers Join: Archival Hydromancy and Other Ghosts *exhibition, 2017, https://www.hijadela.net/works/rivers-join-archival-hydromancy-ghosts.*

Bad History

Mike Davis

Shortly before the fall of the Wall, I gave a lecture at the Free University of Berlin. Walking out of the hall, I noticed a plaque above the entrance that said something to the effect that "Dr. Mengele had conducted infamous experiments on human beings here." One of my hosts, a veteran of the German New Left, proudly explained that hundreds of students and faculty had been tear-gassed and arrested during the long campaign to erect the plaque. I was impressed.

Remembering "bad history," as well as commemorating those who resisted it, should be priorities in civic art as well as primary education. The 1943 Zoot Suit Riots would be a future candidate (a proud bronze zoot suiter in front of the Million Dollar Theater?), as would be a major memorial in front of the Department of Water & Power to the victims of the Mulholland Flood, when criminally bad design led to the failure of the St. Francis Dam in 1928, killing 500 people, mostly Mexican harvest workers in the Santa Clara River Valley. Or at Union Station and Santa Anita Racetrack, to commemorate the internment of the city's Japanese population. Or the Black Panther headquarters, bombed and shot to pieces by the LAPD in 1969.

From an interview with Sterling Ruby in the journal Kaleiodoscope, *2016.*

Case Study

Tokio Florist

Catherine Gudis, Kristen Hayashi, and M. Rosalind Sagara

For more than a century, a substantial Japanese American population has helped shape Los Angeles as flower growers, gardeners, and proprietors of cut-flower businesses and nurseries. Yet the city's built environment offers few visible reminders of this history. So in 2019, when the Little Tokyo Historical Society, with the support of the Los Angeles Conservancy, nominated the Sakai-Kozawa residence/Tokio Florist and its street-facing signpost at 2718 Hyperion Avenue as a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM)—the ninth to represent Japanese Angelenos and one of the few documenting entrepreneurship by women of color—it did more than commemorate the site where Yuki Sakai, her daughter, and her son-in-law had lived and operated their florist shop in the Silver Lake neighborhood from 1960 to 2006.[1] The acknowledgment offered a means of reckoning with long histories of racism and restrictions on citizenship, land use, and ownership while reinscribing the contributions of Japanese Americans onto the L.A. landscape.

In 1929, the recently widowed Yuki (Kawakami) Sakai, with five young children to support, opened the Tokio Florist on Los Feliz Boulevard. (Tokio was the usual transliteration of the Japanese name until the 1920s.) It was one of the many flower farms, stands, and nurseries operated by Japanese immigrants that once dominated the landscape of northeastern Los Angeles's Los Feliz and Atwater neighborhoods. In starting her flower stand on five acres that included a small house she leased, Yuki Sakai succeeded with help from her family, who operated a flower farm nearby and another in Sun Valley, and the Kuromi family, who in 1917 had started Flower View Gardens across the street.

They all flourished against the odds. Excluded from citizenship, Japanese immigrants were also prohibited from purchasing property under California's 1913 Alien Land Law. When the law was revised in 1920 to bar leasing land as well, many Issei and Nisei instead went into gardening, while others operated small businesses precariously with month-to-month leases.[2] Yuki's status as a single woman with children surely added to a layer of pressure, although all the children helped with daily operations, cultivating poinsettias, carnations, gladiolas, and ranunculus, pulling bulbs, and keeping the store open seven days a week. Forced removal and incarceration of West Coast residents of Japanese descent during World War II meant that the Sakai family, along with other Japanese Angelenos, had to quickly sort out their business and personal affairs. For many, that meant their life's work plundered and lost. The Sakais eventually reopened Tokio Florist, and it remained open until 1960, when they received one month's notice to leave, displaced by an apartment tower development on Los Feliz Boulevard.

Yuki Sakai, with her daughter Sumi (Sakai) Kozawa, son-in-law Frank Kozawa, and granddaughter Susie Kozawa relocated nearby, to 2718 Hyperion Boulevard, where they constructed a greenhouse, converted a garage to a potting shed, and reinstalled shop equipment under the port cochere and on the porch of their new home, a stately 1911 Tudor Craftsman. Customers could now meander up the long driveway and through the Japanese garden designed by Sumi and Frank. A flat expanse in the rear grew Iceland poppies, sweet peas, coxcombs, and seasonal flowers, and all available space was used for plantings. Despite an increasingly globalized cut-flower industry and the growing dominance of chain florists and supermarkets, the multigenerational, female-headed family business thrived for another 46 years.

Tokio Florist closed in 2006, a dozen years after Yuki died at 100 years old. In 2016, Sumi passed away, also at 100 years old. Sumi and Frank never expected their daughter Susie, a sound artist based in Seattle, to take over the family business. Susie did, however, take on legacy-building—with fervor—as a means of both mourning and creation. As people visited the estate sale in 2018, she recorded their connections to the family and the business, whether they were family friends, classmates of Sumi's from John Marshall High School, or longtime customers. She donated key artifacts to the collections of the Japanese American National Museum and the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, while photographs and papers went to the Huntington Library (where the Kuromis' Flower View Gardens business records also reside). Susie also teamed up with filmmakers and radio producers to make art from the site, "playing" the house through musical instruments crafted from the artifacts of her family's business, recording a historical soundscape and score.[3]

In addition to Susie's efforts to capture the essence of her family's longtime residence and business, neighbors and former customers shared fond memories in support of the HCM designation. Ernest and Elaine Nagamatsu, residents of Silver Lake since 1975, described the significance of the Sakai/Kozawa property and Tokio Florist as more than a mere physical site, but rather an "emotional, historical talisman for the generations."[4]

The structural additions that the Sakai-Kozawa family made to the property at 2718 Hyperion Boulevard to support the operations of Tokio Florist, along with their preserved home and the various other forms of memorialization remain as touchstones to a time when flowers blanketed the nearby fields and Yuki and Sumi honed their floral artistry. They also signify the economic contributions of Japanese Americans over multiple generations, as well as the entrepreneurial might of women—two groups that have significantly shaped the Los Angeles landscape and inspired subsequent generations. ●

[1] *In December 2018, the property was listed for sale, leaving the future of the buildings, sign, and landscaping uncertain. In June 2019, the Little Tokyo Historical Society, with support from the Los Angeles Conservancy, nominated the site for local HCM recognition, which was also met with approval by Silver Lake Heritage Trust, the Silver Lake Neighborhood Council's Urban Design and Preservation Committee, and other community stakeholders. Documentation of this process, including the HCM nomination form, Statement of Significance, and historical source citations on which this case study is based, is available through the Department of City Planning, case number CHC-2019-3774-HCM, and is available online at https://planning.lacity.org/odocument/bcd1b881-4756-469d-be52-0a8eb68d6a7c/CHC-2019-3774-HCM_%232.pdf.*

[2] *The term Issei refers to a first-generation Japanese immigrant to America; Nisei refers to a child of Issei parents who was U.S.-born and educated.*

[3] *See, for instance, Yuka Murakami, Tokio Story, video, 8 min., 2018, https://vimeo.com/283074021; and Giovanni Jance,* On a Visit to Tokio Florist, *27 min., 1999–2019, https://www.giovannijance.org/6114387-2019-i#1.*

[4] *This letter and others were submitted to the Cultural Heritage Commission Review held on June 18, 2020. They are available online at https://tinyurl.com/CHCMeeting06-18-20. The new owner, Redcar Properties, has sought to address these community concerns and to balance a variety of competing interests in preserving remaining buildings, abiding by municipal codes, and ensuring that the site is viable for adaptive reuse.*

Sumi Sakai arranging flowers at Tokio Florist in 1999. Photograph by Giovanni Jance.

Roundtable

Whiteness and Civic Memory in Los Angeles

Members of this Roundtable:

Natalia Molina (facilitator) is a professor of American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California and author of *How Race Is Made in America: Immigration, Citizenship, and the Historical Power of Racial Scripts* (University of California Press, 2014) and *Fit to Be Citizens? Public Health and Race in Los Angeles*, 1879–1940 (University of California Press, 2006).

Eric Avila is a professor of history, Chicana/o studies, and urban planning at UCLA and author of *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (University of California Press, 2004) and *The Folklore of the Freeway: Race and Revolt in the Modernist City* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014).

Wendy Cheng is an associate professor of American studies at Scripps College in Claremont, California, author of *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013), and coauthor of *A People's Guide to Los Angeles* (University of California Press, 2012).

Jessica Kim is an associate professor of history at California State University, Northridge, and author of *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865–1941* (University of North Carolina Press, 2019).

Brenda E. Stevenson is the Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History at the University of Oxford, and author, among other books, of *The Contested Murder of Latasha Harlins: Justice, Gender, and the Origins of the LA Riots* (Oxford University Press, 2013).

David Torres-Rouff is chair of History & Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Merced and author of *Before L.A.: Race, Space, and Municipal Power in Los Angeles, 1781–1894* (Yale University Press, 2013).

This roundtable discussion took up a topic fundamental to L.A.'s understanding of its own history yet in many ways underscrutinized outside the academy: the ways that whiteness as a racial category and as a mark of privilege or elite status has been constructed, defined, reshaped, taken advantage of, and elided in Southern California as the region has grown. Multiracial since its founding in 1781, Los Angeles is a city where categories of racial privilege and oppression have arguably been more fluid than in other parts of the country, and where whiteness, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, was sometimes one of several racial or ethnic categories that could confer status or privilege. This panel, featuring scholars who have devoted much of their careers to work in this area, sought to explore precisely this kind of complexity in defining the relationship between whiteness and civic memory in Los Angeles.

Natalia Molina: The first question is about how we see the constructions and meanings of whiteness and how they've played out in L.A. history. Can you tell us a little bit about how whiteness has played out in your work specifically, and how these issues continue to reverberate into the present? And please note that while this panel is about whiteness, we invite you to discuss in your answers the people and places in Los Angeles that contest whiteness and white supremacy, both historically and in the present.

Eric Avila: I'll jump in by laying out a ground rule for discussing whiteness in Los Angeles. I think we all know from our work that L.A. has always been multiracial, multicultural, and multiethnic. Whenever whiteness comes into the conversation, I think there's always the danger of taking it as a thing for granted, as if it's this kind of ahistorical, a-geographical construct. I want to make sure that I avoid that trap. And for me, that means thinking about the many different groups from different parts of the world who have sought inclusion into this paradigm of whiteness. What is it about L.A., about the timing of L.A.'s development, about the spatial and geographic character of Southern California, that enabled certain groups to access privileges, spaces, and identities of whiteness, and at the same time excluded others? In my opinion, this puts African Americans in the typical position of being the other of all others—the group by which or against which other racial and ethnic groups have sought to define their whiteness.

Jessica Kim: We think a lot about race, and the construction of race, in Los Angeles in terms of the city's immense diversity, created by many immigrant streams. And that's incredibly important. But there's also a need to think about the construction of whiteness as it relates to L.A.'s position in the Pacific world. Many L.A. historians talk a lot about boosters.[1] They were key in the city's growth, and they really thought of themselves as positioned within this broader Pacific world and within American imperial projects in Latin America and Asia. So these immigrant streams into Los Angeles make, in some ways, the construction of race and whiteness in L.A. unique. But the ways in which Angelenos constructed whiteness was also positioned in the broader Pacific world and in the relationship between American imperial exploits and race. Race-making was outward-looking and transnational.

Brenda Stevenson: Being a person from the American South, what I'm always struck by with regard to Los Angeles and Los Angeles history is the way in which whiteness has been framed by the American South. While I look at L.A. as being part of the international world and part of the Pacific too, it is also a place that is parochially white. By that I mean, when I look at the ways in which whiteness is presented in the American South, particularly historically, it's also presented that way in Los Angeles. Once the quote-unquote Americans gained control of California, African Americans who were migrating to Los Angeles and the American West at the end of the

[1] *The "booster" era of L.A. spanned roughly 40 years (1885–1925), during which "rough-hewn and optimistic pioneering city leaders worked with creative writers, real estate barons, and artists to bring new settlers and new businesses" to town, creating a narrative that "often rewrote the city's history and present situation to suit their idealized, European-American values." See Hadley Meares, "'Sunkist Skies of Glory': How City Leaders and Real Estate Barons Used Sunshine and Oranges to Sell Los Angeles,"* Curbed Los Angeles, *May 24, 2018.*

nineteenth and into the twentieth centuries were quite aware of that—that this was the way whiteness was defined. As a more recent migrant to Los Angeles, I came at a moment when Los Angeles was being promoted nationally and around the world as "the most diverse city in the United States." And that, to me, it really hid whiteness, hid the social and political and economic problems associated with whiteness vis-à-vis other groups of people. People would talk about how *diverse* L.A. was, as if that meant *equitable*, as if that meant *inclusive*. And it didn't mean that. It absolutely did not mean that.

David Torres-Rouff: As a person who studies early Los Angeles history, one interesting thing is that unlike other places in the United States, whiteness is one of many categories of racial supremacy in the early history of Los Angeles. For maybe 70 years, whiteness was not the most important racial category in Los Angeles. Being "an Español" or a "gente de razón" during the Spanish era, or Californio/Californiana during the Mexican period and into the 1870s, meant far more than being white. And one of the interesting things about Los Angeles is that whiteness as an idea was an immigrant, brought west across the United States. This gives slightly different contours to the history of whiteness in Los Angeles.

Wendy Cheng: In terms of the past and the identity of the city, I've been thinking a lot about the "narrativization" of Los Angeles history. One ongoing narrative is of white racial *innocence*. This idea of multiculturalism that Brenda raised has been part of this idea of inclusion: that if we include more stories, therefore we will somehow have a better or fuller or more accurate understanding of the history of Los Angeles. But actually, we have to change the entire framework of that narrative to attack and deconstruct this idea of white racial innocence, or neutrality. That's been something that's on my mind a lot, because that's often the surface that is not scratched. Those narratives of white racial innocence continue to be selected over and over.

As a geographer, I've also been thinking a lot about how whiteness has been and continues to be spatialized in Los Angeles, and what effects that has. In the work my coauthors Laura Pulido and Laura Barraclough and I did for *A People's Guide to Los Angeles*,[2] we learned how thoroughly white-dominated spaces continue to stand in for L.A. as a whole: gentrified downtown, Hollywood, the west side. There is careful and nuanced work that historians have done, of course, but in the popular representations of L.A., it's still downtown to the west side standing in for Los Angeles as a whole. And maps literally stopping right before they get to South L.A. or East L.A. or any other part of what many of us would understand as greater L.A.—the *real* L.A. And yes, we understand L.A. in the present as a multicultural city, but the dominant narrative of L.A. history is still a blank slate, as a city with no history. And I think the violence of that as a settler-colonial narrative, as a white settler-colonial narrative—one that erases Mexican and Indigenous histories, spaces, and communities—still has yet to be really dealt with in any kind of mainstream way.

[2] *Laura Pulido, Laura R. Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng,* A People's Guide to Los Angeles *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012).*

BS: I just want to add that when we think about whiteness in Los Angeles, we also have to think about Hollywood. Because Hollywood really establishes for the world, and for the country as well, what whiteness is. It's really interesting to be talking about whiteness in the place where the major image-maker of whiteness exists. Los Angeles has always come off globally as a kind of sparkling, celebrity-driven white society where everyone's rich, where everyone's golden, where everyone's blonde. That has framed whiteness in Los Angeles in a particular way. Los Angeles produces the images of whiteness that persist throughout the world.

EA: Whenever you talk about race—ideas about race, this race or that race—in my mind you are fundamentally talking about a cultural construct. You're talking about an ideology. You're not talking about something that can be measured and mapped empirically. So you have to adjust your thinking to grapple with that. When you're talking about L.A.'s identity, you are talking about urban identity and how urban identity was racialized. The next question is how

that identity is then put into practice—how it's mapped onto space, grafted onto space, and whatnot. L.A.'s development as a modern, white, American city in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries coincided with a revolution—a revolution in communications, a revolution in transportation—that enabled these representations of a white L.A. It began with lithographs. It began with postcards. It began with magazines and catalogs in the late nineteenth century. And Hollywood was the culmination of that cultural process that began earlier, through earlier modes of technological mass reproduction of images and texts. To me, *Birth of a Nation* is kind of the beginning of Hollywood's intervention of constructing a regional variant of whiteness.[3]

[3] The Birth of a Nation *(original title:* The Clansman*), directed by D. W. Griffith (Hollywood, CA: David W. Griffith Corp., 1915).*

The way I've thought about whiteness is as a balance between cultural ideologies, representations, images, texts, and narratives on the one hand, and then structural practices and policies and political economy on the other hand. And the relationship between the two. That's how David Roediger talks about whiteness. That's how George Lipsitz and Matthew Jacobson write about whiteness. I think in talking about urban identity, you have to kind of keep those factors in play always, in framing discussions of whiteness.

JK: When we discuss more recent and contemporary identifications of Los Angeles as this multicultural place, that can completely erase people's lived material realities. We're still one of the most economically divided cities in the country, and the gap between the rich and the poor is absolutely related to race and racial construction and racial relations. That often gets erased by a celebratory rhetoric of Los Angeles being a multicultural place. Of course it is, and the city's multicultural past and present are remarkable, but we have to pair celebrations of multiculturalism with critical discussions of the ways in which people of color have historically faced structural and institutionalized inequality.

BS: What Hollywood does is really underscore this notion that if you can't make it in the United States, it's your fault. Because look how glittering and wonderful and beautiful all these people are and look at this enormous wealth. Look at all these stories of small-town actresses coming to L.A. and really making it and now living in these glorious mansions. And look at people on basketball teams who become enormously wealthy. So this image of Los Angeles as this place where dreams come true—come true multiracially, not just white dreams but dreams for other people too—it really does deepen the sense of L.A. as a place of adventure, of promise and prosperity. And if you and your racial group don't find that, then that's something that's innately wrong with you and your racial group, because look how it plays out elsewhere in this landscape.

EA: The other critical element is suburbanization, the abundance of undeveloped land to create enclaves of wealth—and enclaves of whiteness—across the class spectrum. And I think that's where the structure really comes into play, because suburbanization afforded a space to create communities based on the fiction, purported by Hollywood and other agents, of that narrative.

DTR: I have thought a lot about this external image of Los Angeles as a diverse and cosmopolitan space, and maybe even a Brown space. What is served, and what interests are served, by marketing it as such? And what are the ways in which that ideal of Los Angeles doesn't filter back down? Just like the old version of the Spanish fantasy past never filtered down to the lives of Mexican people, this notion of Los Angeles as a global, shining example of cosmopolitanism and diversity is so much more surface than substance. It's one more neoliberal fantasy. The disconnect between the image and the reality is borne out in the buildings where people live and work and spatialized in suburbia, in the spaces of inner-city Los Angeles, and behind the scenes in Hollywood. Think about all the people who work in craft services and the thousands of names you see rolling by in the credits, people who make $18 an hour or less and have no profit stake. If we want to think about Hollywood, it conceals a great deal of class and color differentiation even in the production of the movies that give us the Hollywood image.

WC: Absolutely. The two words I just wrote down as you were talking were "power" and "labor." If you take a step back from those Hollywood productions, you see who's working on those sets, who's doing the heavy lifting, who's doing the service work, who's bringing the food. Whiteness, even though it is a cultural construct like any other racial idea, can be mapped. And you can see how extremely segregated white people are in Los Angeles. The director of my kids' preschool, who was a longtime organizer for the Bus Riders Union, she taught me something important this summer: she said that anti-racism is not enough, because people will never fight for something or somebody until they learn to love it first. What that extreme ongoing segregation does is it allows people—particularly white people—to not see people of color. So, yes, L.A. is multicultural, but it's also hierarchical, it's also extremely sort of caste-driven. And so it's not that there are not people of color in those spaces, it's just that they're in a particular hierarchy that allows them to not be seen by people in the dominant class. That's an important way of thinking about how segregation and the specialization of race feed into these geographies, these dominating geographies of whiteness in Los Angeles that are exemplified by Hollywood.

JK: I think Eric mentioned the Spanish fantasy past, and David as well. That's exactly what was happening in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when Los Angeles was being sold as this idyllic place where racial tensions didn't exist and where, according to the advertising, it was a white space. But all that was based on the work of nonwhite peoples, whether it was Chinese and Japanese immigrants or Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. That tension is centuries-long in California.

BS: This erasure, when you look at Indigenous peoples, that's also something that we can map or look at with regard to other imperial forces, as David said. And so when we think about California coming into being, or Los Angeles coming into being, we think about the Spanish Empire. We think about the Mexican Empire. We think about the United States. But there still tends to be, more than anything else, erasure of Indigenous peoples. I think that's the most invisible group we have in our society. And so when we think about whiteness, and even multiculturalism, there seems to be very little place for these groups of people.

NM: I just want to pause here to recap some of the important issues that you've brought up. We've talked about whiteness as a social construction, and how it's been mapped and grafted onto space. And the ways in which these categories were exported to the world by Hollywood. I know for me, in terms of thinking about race as something that is a social construction but also structural, with the growth of the federal government in the 1930s (which could come in with so much money), there is an effort to institutionalize these categories of difference through mapping, through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation maps, through redlining. And through that we can see that the cultural is structural. And that continues to play out today.

DTR: I just wanted to emphasize—not that it's been deemphasized—the connection between race and space and the spatialization of racial identity. Brenda talks about the Spanish choosing to plop Los Angeles—as an idea, formed on paper—right into the middle of a Gabrielino-Tongva village. And we can think about all the ways in which the idea of white supremacy only takes on real meaning when it gets built into and mapped onto space. We can think about this in a really basic way. What would Jim Crow be without the segregated spaces it created, without colored restrooms, without separate drinking fountains and beaches, without the threat of violence along the color line? These ideas don't actually take on meaning until they come to shape spaces that sort people—in this example, by color.

And I would just point out that we can also look to more recent events to illustrate the ways that we still see the spatial disparities in the city. When the Ballona Creek overflowed in the 1998 El Niño, there was a massive lawsuit about the damage done. And one of the things the City had to

do was create a map of all the sewer and storm drain lines in the whole city and grade them. And in this survey, what you can also see is that if you follow the D- and F-graded sewer and storm drain lines and the ones that emit noxious chemicals, they also trace the outlines of every poor Black and Mexican and Southeast Asian neighborhood in the city. And all the ones that have been recently updated and that function well and don't emit chemicals that risk the public health of the people who live on the ground above them trace really neatly to white neighborhoods in the San Fernando Valley, on the west side and in Santa Monica.

These are not only phenomena of the past. They are so literally, physically deep in the infrastructure of the city that getting away from them is not as simple as believing in anti-racism. It actually involves an excavation of the physical space and an effort to make change.

EA: That's a great point, David. L.A. freeways are monuments to whiteness. Urban renewal, Chavez Ravine—these were federal policies. They had armies of planners and transportation engineers working on this, but you can identify ideological or cultural underpinnings of these practices as they took shape during the post–World War II period. I'm also thinking about Genevieve Carpio's work and the way that she looks at mobility. Mobility, particularly in a decentralized urban region like Los Angeles, is another venue for the construction of racial identity and racial hierarchy. Her work on police arrests of Mexican drivers, the research I've done on highway construction in Boyle Heights, the role of the automobile in shaping this—this brings in not just questions of infrastructure but questions of technology and mobility as well.

WC: The people who get to be considered the public in L.A., it's still mentally a white public. I found this a lot in the San Gabriel Valley. You have the city of San Gabriel, with the mission there and this deep attachment to the mission by white San Gabriel Valley residents, and also some Mexican American, Californio, and Tongva/Gabrielino residents as well. But overwhelmingly, that attachment to the mission and the Spanish fantasy past is claimed by white people. In a city that is 60 percent Asian American.

EA: We should also acknowledge the role of the Spanish fantasy past in the regional construction of whiteness. When I teach the Spanish fantasy past in my courses, I often compare it to the minstrel show. I compare it to a regional version of racial appropriation, racial disguise, not necessarily on the stage of a theater but in architecture, in the built environment, in landscape design. As a cultural historian, I come back to questions of performance, of narrative. I think Wendy's point is an excellent one about creating publics, creating audiences, creating readership. The *L.A. Times*—great example of white racial formation by creating a readership. I think you can talk about the Spanish fantasy past very much in a similar way.

NM: I feel like we've touched on the main historical topics. I'm going to ask that we move on to thinking about what this means in terms of civic memory. Clearly, it ties in very neatly; it does more than just dovetail. But let's talk about that more explicitly. How does whiteness shape civic memory? What has its role been in the past? What will it be in the future? What is gained or lost by how we remember whiteness specifically when it comes to civic memory? And do civic memory projects provide a vehicle for unspooling whiteness and its central role in ways that other projects do not?

EA: In my own work on whiteness, there's always been this tension between the people who have said, "Why are you studying this? Don't you realize that this a concept that needs to be abandoned and forgotten?" And, on the other hand, there are the scholars who say, "We need to explore the construction of—the active making of—whiteness so that we don't take it for granted." So when it comes to the issue of civic memory, the question is how is whiteness supposed to be remembered? Or is it supposed to be forgotten? Or is there a way of remembering whiteness that can remind us of its destructive power in American history? This has been an ongoing tension in the scholarly work on whiteness.

DTR: One thing that's interestingly embedded in the question "How does whiteness shape civic memory?" is the degree to which whiteness and the civic have been largely synonymous in a popular understanding of Los Angeles for a really long period of time. Before the 1960s or '70s, whiteness and civic memory were probably really closely aligned. And what the city would choose to remember would be these moments that could validate a narrative of the succession from Spain to the United States, and white supremacy in the United States, without acknowledging Indigenous or other Brown people, or Black people, who lived in the city and worked in the city. We have to dig into how we can untangle whiteness and white supremacy from the understanding of what civic is, and what the representation of Los Angeles is. And how do we smash through this barrier of both the commoditized diversity of L.A. that never really gets down to ordinary people, and the sheen and veneer of Hollywood, writ large, that we've talked about at length already.

BS: When we talk about civic memory, we have to focus on public school education, or education in general—the curriculums that talk about Los Angeles history, California history, the history of the American West. As long as we continue to have the fourth-graders doing the mission project, and all these other kinds of things, it's going to be very difficult to unmask whiteness—the privilege of whiteness.

JK: We need to think really creatively about memorials that are maybe not lasting but that represent how Angelenos think about civic memory and the history and significance of Los Angeles in the moment. We can create things that may not be there in 10 years. Or even 10 months.

EA: I think there's a real paradox in this question of civic memory and whiteness. In my reading, whiteness has so much to do with forgetting: forgetting who you are, forgetting where you came from. Letting go of traditions and heritage and language, and perhaps even religion, to fit in or assimilate into this mainstream of whiteness and all the privileges that come with it. So, how do you memorialize the practice and processes of forgetting? I really like what Wendy and Jessica and Brenda have been saying. I also was really struck by the Kobe Bryant example as a kind of civic memorialization from the bottom up. Usually, the whole project of civic memory is driven by elites, by people in charge. So that memorial is something that just really kind of stuck with me.

NM: This conversation is so interesting. It's very different from the first half of our conversation, which seemed to be about trying to really make visible what has been invisible and show the way that it's played out structurally, culturally—the way that it's been mapped onto space. I'm interested in this idea about how we might think about alternate ways of producing civic memory, expanding publics, and anything else that you wanted to touch on that maybe has a different tenor.

BS: Even though we're looking at new ways of doing it, some of the old ways are good as well. I think people were able to reinvent the Staples Center as this memorial for Kobe Bryant—as Alicia Keys said, "This is the house that Kobe built"—because of what we see has been happening at the Smithsonian Institution and now this push toward a women's museum. And the new slavery museums that have come up in the American South and the lynching memorial [the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama], and all of that. We're at a time in which other voices are being supported, even nationally, in some ways after very long, long campaigns by everyday Americans to make this happen. In terms of civic memory, this is a moment where we can also charge those institutions that come out of taxpayers' dollars to listen to the voices of the people who want to be represented, who *should* be represented, in these kinds of institutions. And I think that we have to see that some of these institutions like the Southwest Museum [of the American Indian in Los Angeles] for example, like CAAM [the California African American Museum] for example, have been starved in terms of receiving taxpayer monies to develop programming and exhibitions that broaden our sense of what our communities are. I'm

glad to see that Tyree Boyd-Pates is at the Autry [Museum of the American West in L.A.]—he left CAAM and went to the Autry—and he's doing some really interesting stuff on collecting around COVID-19 and also collecting around Black Lives Matter. [See the related essay in this volume by Boyd-Pates, "Glorifying the Lion: Telling the Other Side of L.A.'s History."] We really do have to continue to push for supporting the institutions that historically have given access to other stories, to other histories, to defining our city in different kinds of ways outside of whiteness—not just creating new things but supporting and allowing those institutions to evolve.

NM: Maybe on that note, in terms of not just shaping new things but allowing what's already there to evolve, what about memorials in L.A. that already exist? What about those memorials that enshrine and tell the story of whiteness? Are there ways to start a conversation about existing memorials with the work we've been doing in the Civic Memory Working Group?

JK: In wrapping up my book project, which was about Los Angeles investors in Mexico in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, I started looking at how many landmarks and places that tourists—and even Angelenos—like to visit because they're considered beautiful, iconic parts of Los Angeles, and realizing just how many of those had material roots in extractive and imperial projects in Mexico. And so I started thinking about creative ways that we could contextualize Griffith Park, for example, and the fact that Griffith J. Griffith made his money in Mexico. The fact that we have this large urban green space is directly related to taking resources out of Mexico and centering them in Los Angeles. Are there creative ways that we can reflect on the infrastructure and design of early Los Angeles and provide context? Rather than just taking for granted that the city looks the way it does, are there ways to think about how whiteness and race created the spaces we live in?

DTR: One axis in this conversation is about greater inclusivity—that is what Wendy and Brenda talked at length about. The other axis is about entities like the City of Los Angeles being willing to come to terms with the ravages of white supremacy, and to think about how to interrogate existing memorials or to create new memorials that actually begin to unspool these violent, supremacist legacies. Some things should be torn down, but I think there are ways we might productively leave old monuments in the landscape and consider ways to augment them to provoke education in another way. We can use old monument as objects that make us ask questions as opposed to just telling us prepackaged stories. One way is to think about how to start a conversation about existing things, opening up our understanding of civic memory. To go back to what Eric said earlier, if we think about the freeways as a monument to racial capitalism, to white supremacy, to the destruction of countless neighborhoods of people of color, then let's think about how we can intervene in that. What can we put on every freeway on-ramp, where people sit while it's metered in the morning on their commutes? People will read it. There are all kinds of opportunities for thinking about that as a new landscape for provoking questions.

EA: It's not like there isn't existing signage on the road, but when you look at that signage, it reminds you who has the power to convey their messages and who doesn't.

NM: I agree with David about some of these interventions, and about augmenting memorials that already exist. I think about the Huntington Library, since I've been working with them. You could have signage at the Huntington where you include the history of its workers. I love Jessica's point about Griffith Park—even when there isn't a specific memorial, just exploring the questions of how this land came to be. I moved back to Los Angeles two years ago and decided to explore the city by hiking it—the

Santa Monica Mountains, Griffith Park. And yes, there are still plaques everywhere within the parks explaining who donated the land. But where did they get the capital to do it? Racial capitalism, that's where! So I just love these different ideas about really making all that a part of the landscape.

WC: I was thinking about the Mulholland Memorial Fountain. It's a giant, phallic water fountain dedicated to William Mulholland.[4] It's such a great opportunity for thinking about technocratic whiteness, white male masculinity, and urban planning. There's a great documentary that came out recently on the L.A. Aqueduct.[5] It talks about how this water comes from Paiute land. And Paiute people are still feeling the ramifications of their water being taken from them. And then thinking about the relationship of L.A. to the Owens Valley—that this is L.A. City–owned land, on which Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II and put to work trying to make that land productive. I think that memorial fountain, that space, would make for a really interesting opportunity to try to articulate or enact different ideas about how the memorial is presenting history, versus this fuller and more accurate picture of L.A. history.

BS: One of the things that I've thought about is how we can reclaim prison spaces. There's been a lot of discussion about the prison population in Los Angeles and in California. But how has this land been transitioned over time? Thinking about the transition of Indigenous land to a space where Indigenous people and other people of color are overly represented as prisoners would be something that needs to be part of the civic memory conversation.

WC: I think the memorials are important, but they're actually just the tip of the iceberg, or whatever phrase we want to use. Any large parcel of land in Los Angeles, any powerful institution, has a history that goes back through those different colonial regimes, with connection between land and power. Think about Dodger Stadium and civic power. Are there ways to build awareness so that people understand how these large parcels of land came to be, and how they've been handed down to the elite power holders in each era?

NM: I'll just add that a lot of this work has been done, it just isn't prominently displayed. The narratives that we have of Chavez Ravine, the photos have been collected—put those on the freeway off-ramps! Or Rosten Woo's work on Dodger Stadium and how that land continues to collect money through parking revenue. It goes back to Eric's point about who has the power to put that story out there.

EA: This is an old theme in L.A. history. L.A. is so fragmented by its own communities that the problem is how to get people on board to support implementing the memories of a *different* group of people. That's the challenge in a city like L.A. that is so segmented and so enclaved, and so disparate in the geography of wealth and power. The history of civic memory has been each group in it for itself. And that means that doing really tough groundwork to build cross-community consensus. Okay, these groups have been remembered in some ways; these groups have not. How do you build those bridges to make sure that everyone is on board? That's a unique challenge when you have a city shaped the way L.A. is shaped.

DTR: The other piece of this puzzle has to do with radically shifting the way that the City goes about recognizing places and the process for memorialization. The way it's set up now, the City is a gatekeeper, a force that sometimes resists the efforts of people to have their spaces recognized. To have the kind of transformation that we have been talking about, the City really has to become a facilitator.

NM: That's a very powerful note to end on. Thank you so much. Let's do it again next Friday. ●

[4] *Mulholland is credited with creating the infrastructure—in the form of the hugely controversial Los Angeles Aqueduct—that enabled L.A. to become the sprawling metropolis that is did, while rendering the Owens Valley a virtual desert.*

[5] The Longest Straw, *directed by Samantha Bode (Los Angeles: Rainbow Escalator, 2017).*

Wrestling with Memory and History

William Deverell

Yet a future foretold is not a future come true. Optimistic forecasts about ethnic and racial common ground, about a common future for the city of destiny, evince worthy aims. But as a historian, I am obliged to suggest that the city of the past deserves concentrated study before that leap to the city of the future is possible. It is imperative to continue digging into the soil of the Los Angeles past. What we find is a city that, even in its expressions of institutional and infrastructural growth, adhered to patterns of racial privilege and ethnocentrism. Pronouncements about a multicultural future that works may only be so many naive words and empty phrases. Or they may be lies, deliberate ones at that. We should be suspicious of the elasticity of language to defy the concrete reality of social problems. In other words, it was not at all that long ago that similar language and optimism promised a very different Los Angeles of the future. Los Angeles was once to be the world's urban beacon because racial supremacy *worked* here, because Anglo Saxons in charge worked so diligently to maintain particular lines of racial and ethnic privilege. If latter-day suggestions of racial and ethnic harmony in the future are to prove at all feasible, it seems to me important that we better understand the former expression of racial singularity and supremacist triumphalism. Wrestling with memory and history in this way just might be socially therapeutic. It certainly is overdue. ●

From Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of Its Mexican Past *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).*

Kobe Bryant (1978–2020)

Photographs by Alex Welsh


1978-2020
REST IN PEACE

After Kobe Bryant was killed in a helicopter crash in the Santa Monica Mountains on January 26, 2020, along with his 13-year-old daughter, Gianna, and seven others, memorials to the retired Lakers star emerged across Los Angeles. The largest was located in the plaza around Staples Center, the arena where the Lakers (along with several other professional sports franchises) have played since 1999; it included heaps of flowers, balloons, handwritten notes, signed basketballs, framed posters of Bryant taken from mourners' walls and left in the plaza, photographs, and other mementos and ephemera, much of it in the Laker colors of purple and gold. The result was the largest organic and ad hoc memorial in Los Angeles in recent memory, a genuinely spontaneous spectacle that overwhelmed even diehard Laker fans with its sheer scale. Bryant, who was 41 when he died, was a complicated figure. In 2003, a 19-year-old hotel employee in Eagle, Colorado, accused him of rape; the charges were dropped when the accuser chose not to testify in court, and Bryant subsequently settled a related civil lawsuit. This case will always be part of his legacy alongside the five championships he won as a Laker. The memorial, for its part, came up as a subject in several full meetings and subcommittee sessions of the Civic Memory Working Group, with members discussing it as an ephemeral and populist monument to Bryant's career; marveling at the informal economy of vendors selling T-shirts, flowers, and food that materialized to serve its crowds; and noting the precise extent to which the mourners who came to Staples Center to see or contribute to it seemed to reflect the demographics of Los Angeles and Southern California.


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Subcommittee 3

Process

Throughout the United States and Europe, historical landmarks and monuments are being torn down; defaced and remade with graffiti, street art, and public performance; and identified as vestiges and public reminders of state violence, white supremacy, and Euro-American empire. These monuments were shaped to reflect the achievements of predominantly white, middle- to upper-class, landholding men. Through such places, landmarks, and symbols, the state and segments of the public perpetuate a very particular relationship to the past, present, and future.

We are currently living through a worldwide movement, or collection of movements, seeking to confront such legacies of power and historical erasure. Popular demands for change and a massive redistribution of power represent a powerful inflection point—a radical shift in collective mood and expression, a significant modulation in the pitch of calls and demands for sweeping changes to the existing economic, racial, political, and cultural status quo.

Reconstituting civic memory and civic imagination is an integral part of this growing effort. The collective demand for structural transformation will not be fully answered without a process of revisiting and reimagining city, state, and national histories, objects, narratives, and places. None of these should be perceived as fixed, static sites of history and memorial. Instead, they represent an opportunity to understand and reveal the dynamics and multifaceted strategies of power, as well as strategies of resistance, survival, and resilience. An effort to embrace civic memory will be most effective if it grows carefully from processes with the capacity to activate serious and frank discussion, truth-telling, and reconciliation.

The process of reconstituting civic memory should begin with an acknowledgement that there is no singular or agreed-upon past. We can accomplish this by bringing people together and facilitating practices and encounters where they are able to freely express their stories, as well as listen to and learn from the stories and memories of other groups—especially those whose experiences and stories have been systematically ignored, erased, and marginalized. Doing so means rethinking and troubling dominant histories, landmarks, names, events, and more.

Activating people's civic imaginations—that is, their ideas, perspectives, and practices of civic engagement, action, and hope—is key. Sites, practices, and activations of civic memory should not be premised merely on offering a succinct, top-down narrative of what has transpired, but on new spaces to position different historical people, groups, and events alongside (that is to say, in relation to) one another, in order to critically consider differences as well as intersections and ways forward.

Reframing the City's Role from Gatekeeper to Resource

To better serve residents, the City should consider a change in perspective and approach in identifying and establishing monuments. The process governing Historic-Cultural Monument designation (hereafter HCMD, covered by 22.171, Article 1, Chapter 9, Division 22 and amended most recently under Ordinance 185472) is one example. Currently, the City operates as a gatekeeper: private citizens, community groups, or City Council members must first invest considerable time, expertise, and financial resources to make an HCMD application, which then faces a gauntlet of four different municipal bodies (the Office of Historic Resources, the Cultural Heritage Commission, the Planning and Use Management Committee, and finally the full City Council) over a period of several months.

To the average citizen, this process may seem at the very least not worth the effort, and at worst adversarial; it may discourage individuals and communities from working to commemorate their histories, their struggles, and their successes. Moreover, these barriers are especially acute for communities that are underrepresented, either in existing monuments to civic memory or by way of contemporary political, economic, or social status. Communities are usually underrepresented because they lack financial resources, political capital, and, frankly, time. The current process, in our view, requires an excess of all three.

We see an opportunity for the City to reimagine its role in granting HCMD status as part of a larger reframing of what it means to commemorate significant historical-cultural elements in the fabric of Los Angeles. Specifically, we encourage the City to transform itself from being a gatekeeper to being a proactive, resident-friendly facilitator. Rather than establishing checkpoints, the City has an opportunity to help communities navigate municipal systems. A parallel shift to a workflow modeled on best practices in civic engagement and community-based research would have the City actively reaching out to communities and asking how they would like to be supported, empowering individuals and communities to take leading roles in pursuing an HCMD and opening the city more generally to be shaped by its citizens. This new approach would also de-emphasize the ultimate designation as the singular goal of the HCMD process and privilege instead dialogue, conversation, and creativity around remembering the past, commemorating place, or recognizing achievements.

A Few Lessons from Here and Elsewhere

As a group, our subcommittee looked at and discussed models from Los Angeles and elsewhere, including Biddy Mason Memorial Park, the Sei Fujii Memorial Lantern, the Bracero Monument, Pan Pacific Park, Manilatown in San Francisco, the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, the Equal Justice Initiative, commemorations of the 1871 Anti-Chinese Massacre, and Monument Lab. Some lessons we drew from those investigations include the following:

+ Most physical markers in L.A. happen because of interest or permission from a private developer (or, in earlier decades, a municipal arm like the Community Redevelopment

Agency). Although this sometimes has fine results, it is not a good model for ensuring that representative or difficult stories are told.

- Truly successful civic memory projects and monuments emerge from longer processes and engagements and happen in concert with other work, like legal restitution, community development, and cultural programming.
- Considerable power over creation and naming of public markers rests with elected city officials in a way that can make the process seem capricious or unfair.
- In some cases, routine maintenance of parks (for example, after recent Black Lives Matter actions) can result in lost assets. This situation could be avoided with expanded staff training.

Improving Existing City Processes That Address Civic Memory

Los Angeles has several existing programs intended to commemorate, celebrate, and honor events, people, and places found to be of importance to the city. These programs include:

- The Historic-Cultural Monument designation program, under the City Planning Department's Office of Historic Resources
- The Citywide Mural Program, administered by the Department of Cultural Affairs
- SurveyLA, Citywide Historic Context Statements, and HistoricPlacesLA, administered by the Office of Historic Resources
- Neighborhood identification/naming signs through the Office of the City Clerk
- Park-naming through Department of Recreation and Parks sponsorship
- Public art commissioned by the Department of Cultural Affairs as part of the Percent for Art Programs

Each of these programs evolved in a particular period of L.A.'s history and addresses the concept of civic memory in varying formats. Each of their processes could be more transparent: at the very least, the average citizen should be able to easily learn what each program entails and how its works are initiated. At best, these programs could all be reconfigured to be generative, inclusive, and even joyful. Programs like HCMD should explore ways to further prioritize nominations for underrepresented property types and neighborhoods, as well as properties with significant cultural or ethnic association. These programs should also create grant programs to help communities with on-site plaques, markers, or other interpretive displays at designated Historic-Cultural Monuments, prioritizing properties associated with underrepresented groups, stories, or themes. They should also create online educational resources that allow members of the general public to see the designations that do exist. And the City should better use its existing platforms to promote public participation.

Further, the designation process should be redesigned to collect and store the testimony and research that it produces so that others can easily access it. The naming of streets, squares, and parks, too, should be more transparent and broader based. The City should establish a standard accession period for public art (this subcommittee suggests 30 years), after which a work is reevaluated or deaccessioned—especially works that are "gifted" to the city.

Civic memory is also negotiated in many spaces beyond formal cultural recognition. Thoughtful recognition of history should be incorporated into staff trainings, land

use permits, and legal restitution; it should not be confined to a cultural sphere or naming. The City should create cultural competency and racial bias trainings to better prepare staff to recognize significant assets when they encounter them. Civic memory work should be introduced into land use review processes and community benefits agreements (beyond archeological reports). Land acknowledgement should be added to official city title and land-use structures, not just in official events.

New Modes and New Models

More significant than creating additional pathways for naming, signage, and building markers, we recommend that the City also explore alternate models of fostering civic memory. The guiding principles behind all such models should be to challenge conventional notions of monumentality; to counter dominant traditions that fortify white supremacy and condone misrepresentation and cultural erasure; and to avoid top-down interpretations that are "fixed and fearful" (a phrase used by historians to describe how national parks have often watered down interpretation and been reluctant to change narratives once in place). Among the challenges is to question what constitutes the heroic—the typical motif of monuments—in order to defy the idea that historical change is brought about by the heroics of individuals; and to recognize that quotidian as well as ephemeral cultural practices (such as music and sound, oral history, movement and performance, and parade, among others) are also significant means of recall, memory marking, and placemaking.

Cultural asset mapping—identifying cultural resources that are living as well as those that are markers of the past—is one way to begin to meet the abovementioned challenges. Such studies need to be extremely localized, on the ground, and community-based in order to identify layers of memory embedded in practices and in place (from parades, rallies, and cruising to legacy businesses, ethnically specific markets, and restaurants to informal or quasi-private places of congregation like cafes, front yards, barbershops, etc.). Such places can be fixed in memory based on a cartography of pain or violence (for instance, photos and memories of the intersection of Florence and Normandie, a key site in the 1992 unrest in Los Angeles). They can even be considered means of fostering civic memory unto themselves. The Pico-Union project of the Alliance for California Traditional Arts and other asset mappings expand the definition of living treasures and living traditions. The social and cultural ethnography and critical cartography involved in such projects can contribute to planning efforts as well as public art and other means of expressing findings in other public settings, materials, and forms.

It is also important to embed processes of community archiving into every project. By this, we mean ensuring that oral histories and community collections are both process and end product—a means of discovering a "people's history" and also archiving it. Again, the goal should be both to foster civic memory and to activate community-based processes, not as boxes to check off in planning a project but always as a starting point. Importantly, such collecting might restore voices typically unheard or underrepresented in traditional archives. For instance, a recent *Los Angeles Times* op-ed calling out freeways as the most racist of California monuments begs the question of what to do with this and other similarly massive works of infrastructure.[1] Short of literally bringing down freeways, we might be resolute in collecting stories of displacement and containment, and then create markers and memorial spaces—

[1] *Matthew Fleischer, "Want to Tear Down Insidious Monuments to Racism and Segregation? Bulldoze L.A. Freeways,"* Los Angeles Times, *June 24, 2020; Steve Chiotakis, "LA Freeways: The Infrastructure of Racism,"* Greater LA podcast, *KCRW, June 30, 2020, https://www.kcrw.com/news/shows/greater-la/robert-fuller-freeways-urbanism-race/la-freeways.*

including the spaces beneath, alongside, or above freeways, as with Chicano Park in San Diego and Underpass Park in Toronto—to repair rifts and seek other forms of reparation.

The truth and reconciliation model advocated by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience might inform such measures. At the Tenement Museum in New York City, immigrant stories are tools to connect past and present. That and other Sites of Conscience suggest actionable ways to define civic memory in our city so that it is useful and equitable.

The Equal Justice Initiative's iterative approach also offers lessons: one is to partner with nonprofit organizations that take human rights as a fundamental objective; another is to validate new data collection that enriches knowledge production, and then use it to put counter-narratives in place with otherwise traditional plaques, followed by monuments that foster a retaking of space and history—museum exhibitions, archives, and public art, to name a few. The Community Remembrance Project in Alabama, through which communities collect soil from lynching sites for display in exhibits bearing lynching victims' names, is one of many Equal Justice Initiatives worthy of emulation.

Modeling both Monument Lab in Philadelphia and its offshoot in New Orleans, Paper Monuments, the City should look to incorporate a range of grassroots and public-private collaborations that can be intensely working-class and multiracial in focus. Such was a central goal of Paper Monuments, which in one phase collected 1,500 proposals from people of all ages, then distilled the themes and site suggestions, and finally brought artists in to create a selected few. A lesson from Monument Lab is to embrace temporary installations as a way to spur conversations and let the ideas that gain a constituency pursue permanence.

Recommendations

Civic memory is more than statues and commemoration. It is most powerful when connected to other systems—mechanisms of redress and restitution, institutions of community and culture, and present-day conversations. The City should shift its role from that of gatekeeper to facilitator and focus on developing capacity and resources to serve the ends of civic engagement and civic memory. The City should look at ways to proactively engage communities in identifying assets, interpreting them, and using them as resources. A city is likely always to be risk-averse—a position that does not serve marginalized communities in their pursuit of honest stories about past injustice. The City should partner with other groups that may have a freer hand and deeper community connections.

"Historic designation" should not be seen as the end goal; it leaves much of what is valuable about civic memory to the side. The process of formal recognition can feel like a series of barriers to the average person. Communities without access to power and political sway will always be under-resourced and therefore underrepresented in clearing a "standard" set of hurdles to official designation. The City should work to facilitate more civic memory, not less.

Existing processes for designation, naming, and public marking should be made more transparent. The City should shift resources, navigating them toward underrepresented communities; help underrepresented groups organize and develop nominations; and find ways to collect, preserve, and share the material generated in

these processes. The naming of sites and commissioning of monuments should not fall to individual elected officials.

The City should also look for ways to partner with NGOs, educational organizations and specialists, and community-based organizations to create longer-term engagements with history, asset mapping, and education that will build genuine engagements with the past and real constituencies for monuments and markers.

Finally, this subcommittee has a recommendation for the larger Civic Memory Working Group of which it is a part: the Working Group should work to incorporate the kinds of stakeholders named above into the process of evaluating, shaping, and discussing the proposals and ideas of this initiative. Doing so will create new insights, generate greater legitimacy around the eventual findings of the work, and perhaps most importantly, generate public momentum around this work such that the report's recommendations have a better chance of being implemented. We imagine this as a series of public discussions, talks, and listening sessions hosted by small and large institutions and community-based organizations across greater Los Angeles.

This subcommittee was chaired by Danielle Brazell, general manager of the Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, and Rosten Woo, an artist and cofounder and former executive director of the Center for Urban Pedagogy in Brooklyn, New York. Its other members were Nora Chin, former deputy chief design officer in the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti; AP Diaz, executive officer and chief of staff for the Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks; Laura Dominguez, a doctoral candidate in history at USC; Taj Frazier, professor of communication and director of the Institute for Diversity and Empowerment at USC's Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism; Catherine Gudis, director of the Public History Program at UC Riverside; Leslie Ito, executive director of the Armory Center for the Arts in Pasadena; Shannon Ryan, senior city planner with the Los Angeles Department of City Planning; and David Torres-Rouff, chair of history in the Department of History & Critical Race and Ethnic Studies at UC Merced.

First Person

Glorifying the Lion: Telling the Other Side of L.A.'s History

Tyree Boyd-Pates

"Until the lion tells his side of the story, the hunt will always glorify the hunter."

This African proverb, which I first encountered in the work of the esteemed Nigerian novelist, poet, professor, and critic Chinua Achebe, is central to my approach as a historian and museum curator. I particularly try to keep it in mind whenever I am excavating, reclaiming, and recentering the local community's perspectives and narratives about the history of Los Angeles and the American West.

As a public historian and scholar, I have spent a great deal of time spotlighting historical examples of the "lion" narrative. This is especially true when it comes to the methodological approach known as community curation. There are two notable examples from my own curatorial career. The first is "No Justice, No Peace: L.A. 1992," a 2017 exhibition at the California African American Museum marking the 25th anniversary of the 1992 uprising. More recent is the "Collecting Community History Initiative: The West During COVID-19," or CCHI, an effort I led in 2020 at the Autry Museum of the American West.

The "No Justice, No Peace" exhibition looked not just at 1992 but revisited crucial episodes in Los Angeles and American history stretching back a full century. These pivotal moments included the Zoot Suit Riots of 1943 as well as the Civil Rights Movement's legislative achievements, which shaped African American expectations for equality in the 1960s only to be blunted by the reality of unequal housing practices and discrimination in the post-war decades. The exhibition also highlighted the unjust treatment and oppressive conditions created by law enforcement's overwhelming presence in Black communities. These conditions set the stage for the tectonic Watts Rebellion of 1965.

The exhibition looked closely at the legacy of Tom Bradley, who served from 1973 to 1993 as L.A.'s first Black mayor. During the middle years of Bradley's tenure, communities of color in Los Angeles negotiated a tense relationship with law enforcement during the so-called War on Drugs overseen by the Reagan Administration. That tension, over time, became a compounding animosity towards law enforcement that seeped into the 1990s. The ultimate result, following the acquittal of the four officers who brutalized Rodney King, was the 1992 uprising.

"No Justice No Peace: LA 1992" (exhibition view). California African American Museum, March 8 – August 27, 2017. Photograph by Brian Forrest.

Photograph of homemade masks by Tori Tingley Ryan submitted to the Autry's "Collecting Community History Initiative: The West During COVID-19."

Photograph by Sally Ryan submitted to the Autry's "Collecting Community History Initiative: The West During COVID-19."

Also displayed were powerful photographs, videos, historical documents, posters, flyers, and other ephemera. The most significant of these materials, rich in context and educational value, were drawn from the collections of the Los Angeles Public Library, the library at Cal State University Dominguez Hills, and the City Archives and Records Center in downtown Los Angeles.

Most important of all, the exhibition grew from consultation with community members alive during many of the historical periods in question, incorporating their oral histories and artifacts. We heard from the Reverend Chip Murray of First African Methodist Episcopal Church and the families of Latasha Harlins and Rodney King, among many others. This approach was specifically designed to reclaim the valuable historical narratives of African American community history in Los Angeles.

This is the kind of exhibition-making that we are referring to when we talk about community curation, a methodological approach that attempts to make museums and their collections more responsive to and inclusive of the diverse communities that surround them. It begins with the participation of communities of color seldom involved in the decision-making process in museums. It also works to center voices and perspectives that are traditionally not heard because of historical erasure.

In 2020, after joining the Autry Museum of the American West as the Associate Curator of Western History, I applied a similarly community-centered approach in working preserve a record of the COVID-19 pandemic, in what became the CCHI. Early in the pandemic, my Autry colleagues and I noticed how quickly, and profoundly, COVID-19 was changing the daily lives of American citizens. Along with isolation came newfound resilience: we noted that despite being physically apart, communities persisted and flourished through creative forms of sharing, from oral histories online to family recipes and the creation of masks designed not just to keep their wearers safe but to reflect individual and community culture.

Since launching the CCHI, we have digitally collected hundreds of submissions spanning communities across the American West. We also broadened the initiative to include the Black Lives Matter Protests and electoral campaigns as they played out across the region in 2020. This allowed us to capture the momentum of the racial justice movement of the past year—led by activists on the ground after the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and others—and the historical significance of California's first Black Senator, Kamala Harris, joining Joseph R. Biden's ticket and ultimately becoming the nation's first female, and first Black and South Asian, vice president. Incorporating these materials has allowed us to tell a more diverse and inclusive story of the American West.

These efforts have reminded me of one important lesson above all: that centering community history is a way of revealing the breadth of our democracy—and the glory of our community's resilience and survival. Thus the lion may live to hear the story told from his point of view after all.

Roundtable

Monument Lab

Members of this Roundtable:

Christopher Hawthorne (facilitator) is chief design officer for the City of Los Angeles and a member of the Civic Memory Working Group.

Alliyah Allen is assistant curator for Monument Lab.

Laurie Allen is director of research for Monument Lab.

Paul M. Farber is director of Monument Lab.

Leila Hamidi (facilitator) is an arts organizer and writer and a member of the Civic Memory Working Group.

Ken Lum is senior curatorial advisor for Monument Lab.

Rosten Woo (facilitator) is an artist and designer and a member of the Civic Memory Working Group.

Monument Lab is a public art and history studio based in Philadelphia. Founded by Paul M. Farber and Ken Lum in 2012, it has been a leading voice in cultivating and facilitating critical conversations related to the past, present, and future of monuments. In October 2020, Monument Lab announced that it had been awarded a $4 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The grant, titled "Beyond the Pedestal: Tracing and Transforming America's Monuments," will support the production of a definitive audit of the nation's monuments; the opening of 10 Monument Lab field research offices through subgrants totaling $1 million in 2021; and the hiring of Monument Lab's first full-time staff, which will develop significant art and justice initiatives. The grant is the first from the Mellon Foundation's new $250 million Monuments Project, created to "transform the way our country's histories are told in public spaces."[1]

[1] *"Monument Lab Awarded $4M Grant from the Mellon Foundation to Develop Art and Justice Initiatives Across the Nation,"* Monument Lab Bulletin, *Oct. 5, 2020; "The Monuments Project: Our Commemorative Landscape," Mellon Foundation website, undated, https://mellon.org/initiatives/monuments.*

Christopher Hawthorne: Maybe we could start with a question about Monument Lab's origins, particularly for those readers who may not be familiar with the organization—how it began and how it's evolved since then?

Paul M. Farber: Monument Lab is a public art and history studio. We started as a series of classroom conversations. I was teaching in urban studies at the University of Pennsylvania—a class on memory, monuments, and urban space. I was really inspired by some questions left over from my dissertation. I'd moved home to Philadelphia after being away for the better part of a decade and [in 2013] met Ken. I didn't know it at the time, but Ken was a new Philadelphian, having moved from Vancouver, and was teaching classes in fine arts. When we connected that academic year, we realized that we were asking very similar questions in our classes: about the monuments that we've inherited, about gaps in representation, and about the ways that artists, activists, students, and educators could engage public spaces in ways that are transformative. From that point, we began to talk about how we could spill outward as an experiment. We utilized our backgrounds in contemporary art and public history, but we really wanted to have this work live outside. We thought that it might lead to a scholarly or museum-based project, but we wanted it to be organic—to theorize public space *in* public space. And so we applied for a grant from a local funder in Philadelphia, the Pew Center for Arts and Heritage, to do an exhibition in the courtyard of City Hall, which occurred in the spring of 2015. [It consisted of an outdoor classroom and public sessions asking the question, "What is an appropriate monument for the current city of Philadelphia?"] Working in that particular space made a lot of the projects that we did after that possible, because it was very clear even at that point, in 2015, that a conversation about monuments was a conversation about the past, present, and future *together*. It was a conversation about civic identity, how people find belonging, and also the moments of trauma that have not been resolved in the city's past.

Leila Hamidi: I saw in a recent talk, Paul, that you said you thought you started that work on monuments late. Now that it's a red-hot urgent subject, it seems that you actually had a head start when it comes to the national conversation about monuments and memorials. But as far back as 2012, you already felt that it was a late start. Was it 200 years late? Was it five years late?

PMF: I think it is important to register that any time you see a monument takedown in the headlines, there are always years of organizing, of activism, of art-making that have made that moment possible. And long after the cameras leave, those groups and those people continue to be the stewards of memory. So I think back to a few things. One, and Ken can speak to this in his

own body of work, is the way that contemporary artists and activists for more than a generation had been pushing this connection between symbols and systems. I think about Occupy Wall Street as really important to this conversation. And, later, the Black Lives Matter movement and other ecological, critical feminist, and queer protests, which pointed out not just the monuments that existed as points of struggle, but also used the spaces around them as places to organize and amplify.

I think of one moment in particular. This was after we decided to do this project. We got the [Pew] grant, but we were kind of walking around the city in Philadelphia, and this was right after the murder of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri. And there was a group of recent Philadelphia artist-activists—Lee Edward Colston and Keith Wallace, among others—who performed "die-ins" next to the LOVE statue.[2] And while tourists came to pose with them, one of the members of this group held up a sign that said "CALL US BY OUR NAMES." It just really struck us, watching young people, especially young Black organizers in Philadelphia, go to the monumental core of the city to point out systemic racism and other systems of violence. It was another reminder that the conversation we were having, it would not break new ground. It had to respond to the tensions, the pressures, and the points of view that were already happening.

Ken Lum: We didn't feel that we were prescient or gifted with some preternatural ability to see things in advance. We tried to see things from the neighborhood level of the poor and disenfranchised. They have long recognized the truth about their relationship to the systems of representation that subjugate them. From that perspective, we were the opposite of prescient, but late in recognizing the relationship between monuments and subjugation. Where we were not late, as it turned out, was in our formalizing of an entity called Monument Lab, whose central purpose is to address these issues of monuments, memory, and social justice. We put it into a kind of discursive regime, if you will, that was very open-ended and allowed for the projection of these concerns. But certainly, in terms of the kind of observations that were at play in the urban environment, we thought we were late.

[2] *The BBC reported on "die-ins" as a form of protest in 2014. See Micah Luxen, "When Did 'Die-ins' Become a Form of Protest?,"* BBC News Magazine, *Dec. 9, 2014. The LOVE statue refers to the iconic installation just northwest of Philadelphia City Hall. Robert Indiana,* LOVE, *1976, sculpture, painted aluminum on stainless steel base, city of Philadelphia.*

Rosten Woo: Obviously, Monument Lab has a topic, a thing that you're focused on. But would you say that there's a kind of a working method or perspective that is specific to this organization—as opposed to, say, how Dolores Hayden might do this kind of work? Is there a Monument Lab way of working?

Alliyah Allen: The first thing that comes to mind is something that Paul always says when we do a project: you can't hide in public. What distinguishes Monument Lab is the engagement process, the activation of these spaces through something as simple as a research form on a clipboard and a Sharpie marker to ask people what they think. Just thinking about my positionality as a young Black girl from an urban area—Newark, New Jersey—and then doing a project like Monument Lab, I was like, "OK, hold on, I can't hide. I can't hide. I am here. I'm not from Philly, but I can look like I can be from certain parts of Philly. And people are going to come up to me and ask me what's going on, because we are in public." But the rewards from that are really beautiful because we're able to continue the conversation. It's building relationships with strangers.

LH: Ken, you were saying that you've developed this discursive regime. And our working group has also been very interested in questions of process. I know that Monument Lab has developed a five-step process, so maybe you can share some details of that process. The deeper question is, what was the trial and error—how did you decide that step number two wasn't step number four?

PMF: We have now come to language that we utilize to move across our projects. This process includes five steps. Number one is to *question*: to start by digging into research about a statue, site, or public space. Two is *connect*: to organize and exchange ideas with stakeholders invested

in places of memory. Three is *unfix*: to redefine the conversation about the past, present, and future of monuments. Four is to *prototype*: to build experimental platforms for contemporary art and participatory research. And number five is to *report*: to share findings, reflections, and new directions. So that's where we are now. But the process of getting there, of course, *was* trial and error. We wanted to occupy the space of being a connector, to have one foot inside institutions and one foot out, to have our process matter as much as outcome, and to be very clear about what we could and could not accomplish. Part of what we are ultimately trying to do is to recognize that the questions that we ask each other may hold more value than coming up with a so-called single fix or best practice. Those are concepts that don't really work for us.

KL: We see ourselves fundamentally as a democracy project, a democracy-generating project. We're very much invested in expanding public space and how we define public spaces, and in fomenting dialogue about space. We are very difficult to define. For example, I write quite a bit, including in scholarly journals, and yet I'm also an artist. Whereas Paul is an academic who thinks like an artist. That fluidity, I think, is our strength.

Laurie Allen: There is a certain kind of social science research methodology that Monument Lab is both drawing from and resisting. There are ways in which that methodology is extractive. It is good at asking questions and not always good at reimagining where the decisions are made. As Alliyah and Ken have said, we aren't forcing ourselves on anyone, but we're also being open. We're not hiding. The idea is that this is an exchange and not an extraction. I think that our work is always trying to help our communities imagine ways of making decisions that can operate radically differently. It's trying to reimagine decision-making, but in a way that recognizes the tremendous brilliance that exists in communities in all kinds of ways. Just hearing what people keep saying and being like, "Well, maybe that's the thing. Maybe we don't need a new thing. We just need to do the thing people say." This approach—I think monuments require it because they make such a claim about objectivity.

CH: Do you think of the projects you're working on as having specific lifespans? How do you know how many projects you can take on at any given point? How do you think about that in terms of your capacity?

PMF: The words "Monument" and "Lab" are very heavy and sound official, but as of October 1, 2020, we just hired our first full-time employee. Thanks to generous support from the Mellon Foundation, we've been able to add capacity. In our very early stages, Monument Lab went quickly from being a classroom experiment to being a passion project to being a studio. What that's meant over time is that we've gone from project to project with a group of people who were bonded together by a shared set of values and questions before there was ever an official organization. And so those things happened organically. There are a number of ways that people have tried to tackle the monument question, and a lot of times I think it comes down to, "Let's fix this one monument. Let's find this one monument that is a problem and we'll get rid of it." I almost think of it as like the *Where's Waldo?* approach: "Let's look in the crowd and find that racist, sexist monument, and let's get rid of it." It's like, "No, no, no. It's the whole crowd, actually, that we have to address—the whole picture, the whole scene." What we believe is that relationships—especially with people who have been doing the work before there was a spotlight, before there was a formal structure—build an ecosystem. Cities, museums, universities can be part of that ecosystem, but they have to be careful and be wary of the role that they play, because they can gaslight the very people who have been pushing for change. For us, by having a relationship model and coming up with elements like our fellows program, we're looking for ways to balance local knowledge and expertise with strategy and tactic that can be built across locations to create coalitions.

RW: I would love to get into some details. Could you lay out some concrete details of two or three specific projects, initiatives, or places you've worked?

PMF: I can share two: St. Louis and Newark. In St. Louis, we were asked by the Pulitzer Arts Foundation to do a research residency. They had an exhibition up about iconoclasm in monuments,[3] and they wanted a public engagement project. So we would not be for that phase of the work producing a public artwork; instead, we were meant to do the thing that we really like to do, which is meet people where they are, theorize public space while in public space, and enter into official and unofficial conversations about civic memory. We went to 46 locations around the city to collect forms that asked a question: How would you map the monuments of St. Louis? And that project was framed as a research discovery phase that would end with a publication of a map and a data set.[4] That led to a conversation with the Missouri History Museum to initiate a new historic marker program that was inspired by conversations our team was having. It was really a collaborative effort, but it lent itself to a number of outcomes that didn't have to be simply, "Are we building a monument or not?" It instead responded to and helped build on a set of relationships and networks that Monument Lab and our collaborators will continue to utilize for years.

[3] Striking Power: Iconoclasm in Ancient Egypt, *Pew Arts Foundation exhibition, Mar. 22–Aug. 11, 2019, https://pulitzerarts.org/exhibition/striking-power.*

[4] Monument Lab: Public Iconographies, *2019–2020, series, joint collaboration between Monument Lab and Pew Arts Foundation, https://pulitzerarts.org/program/monument-lab.*

Similarly, in the city of Newark, with New Arts Justice, where Alliyah is based and our colleague Salamishah Tillet is the director, we co-curated a project in Newark's Military Park. It featured four prototype artworks by Chakaia Booker, Jamel Shabazz, Manuel Acevedo, and Sonya Clark. Half of the members of that artist's cohort were from Newark and half were invited from outside to give fresh eyes and perspectives. And it was centered around a monument ["Wars of America"] that's part of a long-standing conversation.[5] It's by Gutzon Borglum, who is best known for Mount Rushmore and Stone Mountain [and was associated with the Ku Klux Klan]. He braids together white supremacy and Americana. We staged conversations around it. After that exhibition, titled "A Call to Peace," the conversation has continued. A member of our curatorial team, fayemi shakur, is now the head of public art in Newark, and I'm going to sit on a committee that she's convening. There's this ongoing dynamic. The exhibition itself is done, but it's constantly referenced as if it's active. And I think that that is where that kind of art and research come together. We've seen it in Philadelphia, we've seen it in Newark, and we've seen it occasionally in other cities that we work in, where even though it's a "temporary" installation, it's an ongoing reference point for organizing and pushing the local status quo.

[5] *Gutzon Borglum,* Wars of America, *1924, bronze on granite base, city of Newark.*

LA: I want to jump in on the research data part, for just a moment, to draw that out. In both of those cities, as we did in Philadelphia, we relied on a paper form. They were different, though, in each city. In Newark, the paper form asked, "What is a timely monument for the city of Newark?" In St. Louis, the question was, "How would you *map* the monuments of St. Louis?" And the reason that we switched to "map" was because of the geography of St. Louis and the importance of geography to St. Louis.

CH: Can you explain a little more what you mean by that, the importance of geography and mapping in St. Louis?

LA: Lines, in St. Louis, are overwhelming. I mean, every city is shaped by segregation and white supremacy, but in St. Louis, it just screams from the landscape. And then the confluence of the [Missouri and Mississippi] rivers, and the ways that St. Louis has a role in westward expansion, with this giant arch calling attention to that. We invited people to map St. Louis. We gathered 750 hand-drawn maps. We had conversations about how people would map the monuments. Not just the ones that do exist, but where are the places where monuments *should* be? And the number of people who included the Gateway Arch—it was less than half. I completely agree with Paul, that absolutely the most important part is the conversations and connections, but also

there is now a kind of rendering of the city landscape that includes the perspectives of people across the city—in tourist places and in places tourists would never go. It is designed to bring out the places that are underseen. So we made sure to include the places that people identified that have been erased from the landscape, the places that have been demolished. Or this is the place where there should be a monument to this thing that is gone. And then also things that should exist: there should be a monument to this important person, or there should be a monument to the riots in 1917. So we mapped a kind of imagined landscape, to help bring that landscape into being.

AA: I wanted to add something about Newark, about the engagement and the activation, and what "A Call to Peace" and having Monument Lab in that park did for the city. The conversation that it sparked in the space is beautiful to see happen. Manuel Acevedo, who also is from Newark, he did this interactive piece where he covered the monument "Wars of America" that Paul mentioned. He used all these different materials. We were outside with him in the park all day as he was trying on different materials. And you had kids running and kids trying to climb it. We were like, "Let's be safe!" But we had all different generations of people who are from Newark, who love Newark, who have this long history with Newark, and we were bringing them into this space. And now they're kind of reconsidering how they fit in it. And just me personally, being from Newark, I would go to Military Park all the time. But now I'm occupying this park in a different way. And that's not just because this monument is here, but it's because of the research practice that is activating the space. Along with the relationships that are built, we're telling stories, we're inviting people in, we're listening to people. We're showing them, "Hey, this is your space, too."

LH: I have a question about materiality and how you deal with things that don't have material form, let's say like redlining. What is your experience with materiality in the constellation of cities that you work with? That might help us think about where Los Angeles fits in and where we might take this conversation. Los Angeles doesn't have a history of Confederate monuments the way other cities do, but it still has a lot to reckon with, to reconcile.

KL: I think L.A. is unique. Its vast horizontal scale makes it unique, but also because it's a model for all kinds of urban development all over the world. So I think it can function and serve as a kind of an exemplar for future thinking about civic spaces. Now, in terms of the question of materiality, you cited redlining, and I'd say that *does* take the form of materiality. The color of people's skins is materiality. The conditions of the housing and the live experiences attached to houses is also materiality. You can go across a street and all of a sudden, the housing stock is better or worse. I note that certain L.A. narratives are changing or have changed to the point of altogether disappearing. Blue-collar L.A., for example, is minuscule compared to what it once was. There are no longer broad strata of the solidly blue-collar. Today, it is much more of a high-salary/low-wage environment. That also pertains to materiality. Brown-skinned people work the fields that deliver to high-end supermarkets. A huge section of downtown is occupied by the homeless. All that can be mapped as different tiers of social space.

AA: I also wanted to bring up movements, forms of resistance. In terms of Black Lives Matter, and before that Rodney King and the L.A. riots, L.A. is a central space for so much of Black resistance and Black life. And that plays out in sound, in music. That's the incredible thing when you think about monuments, they're not just limited to the physical form. Hip-hop culture and Black culture are very much grounded in L.A., that West Coast sound and how that's resonated. The Nipsey Hussle procession—when Nipsey Hussle passed, it was monumental in the way that, nationwide, people responded to it. [For more on the Nipsey Hussle memorial procession, see the essay by Sahra Sulaiman elsewhere in this report.]

PMF: Those are all brilliant points. We just put out a publication in which we wrote that "the past is the most contested public space in America."[6] It's a provocation. But I think it gets to one part of your question, Leila, which is that Confederate "Lost Cause" memorials, I think, have been revealed to us as somewhat of a red herring, because they didn't have to necessarily correspond to any local sites or histories. They were built as a propaganda campaign by the United Daughters of the Confederacy and Sons of Confederate Veterans in places honoring figures who may or may not have ever set foot there, as a part of a Gilded Age initiative to reinforce white terror against Black citizens seeking freedom and civil rights. The scholar Mabel Wilson says they're not Confederate monuments—they're *American* monuments. They were built by Americans, in American public spaces. Or in Richmond, Virginia, in Marcus-David Peters Circle, which is on Monument Avenue. This is the reclaimed space around what had been known as the circle surrounding the Robert E. Lee's statue. It has become an intersectional, intergenerational space. It's also an example of a landmark that was part of a white real estate development that was punctuated by monuments. The perspective to see that panoramically might be an entry point to a really powerful part of your question, which is how might we make a monument to segregation or to redlining. I think that question that you asked us, I would love for that same question to be asked in the City of L.A., both in practice, by people who are constituents of their own spaces, and by artists, scholars, thinkers in and outside formal institutions—people who've already been mapping new networks of knowledge about the city that don't have to happen on a pedestal.

[6] *Paul M. Farber and Laurie Allen,* Reflecting Authority, *zine, Monument Lab in collaboration with the High Line Network Joint Art Initiative's New Monuments for New Cities, Fall 2020.*

LA: That's what I was going to say: that this question—I so want you to ask it of the people of L.A.

PMF: One thing we know is that history does not happen because some dude rolls into town on a horse and looks off into the distance. We know how complex our histories are, but we've settled on that approach so often. I mean, imagine if someone said to you: "Pick one photograph of your life to represent you." That's not what we do. We take a lot of pictures of ourselves because we know that we contain multitudes. Part of Monument Lab's vision is that we actually need periods of prolonged questioning, experimentation, and prototyping in order to produce a next generation of monuments that won't circle back to some of the same issues of power.

RW: It seems like when you read about monuments, often you hear about controversy—some ham-fisted controversy, something easily avoidable, some really unfortunate series of events that have unfolded. That is not what I associate with Monument Lab. How do you feel about controversy, which is so often tied up with discussion about monuments these days? Do you try to avoid it?

PF: I've been thinking a lot about the word "controversy." I think about Dr. King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail,"[7] where he says the biggest hurdle, the biggest obstacle in his work is not the Ku Klux Klan or the White Citizens' Councils. It's the white moderate who says that peace is the "absence of tension," versus the positive production of justice. I'm thinking about the way the word "controversy" is utilized. If controversy means scandal or problem or cause for alarm, look, these monuments have been deeply controversial from the very get-go. Forget what they even depict individually. We have more monuments to enslavers than abolitionists. We have more monuments to Confederate generals than freedom fighters in many cities.

[7] *Martin Luther King Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," Apr. 16, 1963.*

KL: I would only add that controversy is often exploited by those in power to maintain order. We don't seek controversy. What we seek is to be listeners to the voices of subjugated peoples, the oppressed, the people who have been unacknowledged for so long. But even in the act of listening, we recognize that what we do might be controversial because we are giving heed to voices that, in the normal course of things, society normally never gives heed to.

CH: Our report is coming out of a mayor's office, which makes it somewhat unusual. You've worked with a number of cities and city governments. What advice do you have for us?

PMF: I think it is important to start with the internal work, even as you're imagining the ways to make a public imprint. What is it that you want to accomplish? A lot of cities don't have a commemorative policy for who deserves a street name, a school name, let alone the monuments you've inherited and you're trying to make sense of. That's something that you might work toward. We have found that when we are working with a municipal agency, we're thinking really closely with them. We're in cahoots. But the *difference* between us and them is also really important. We can propose ideas and processes and even model things through art, through performative measures, that the city then can decide to incorporate in other ways. For example, we're currently working with a state arts council, a historical commission, collaboratively on a lead-up to the American Revolution commemoration in 2026. It started with a conversation between the immediate decision-makers from those entities and has turned into an artist's residency to shape what the project will be. That's a brain trust. That's not an RFP. That's not an end point. And it's been really meaningful to have that. I do think that there are ways, especially if you've built platforms for experimental work, where you don't have to worry about whether it is going to make or break a mayor's term. Like, is failure an option? In art, failure has to be an option. In community work, you don't have that luxury.

The last thing I'll say is about community engagement and exchange. Do you have a question that you would like help answering? Start there. Ask that in a public forum. You may not ask the public directly to design a monument, but you could ask the public, "What are the stories that are meaningful to you?" You don't promise them that you'll build on every single idea that comes in. But you say, "We're going to share with you as we go, and this is what we're going to do first." I think this report is a great example of that. Because it can lead to other things. We've talked to some municipalities that have said, "Look, we *have* to do a community engagement step." And I say, "You *have* to? What is it that you're trying to find out? What do you want to know?" And at times, they don't have an answer. That's empty effort. Instead, think about how you meet people at a point not just where it's good for them, but it's actually also good for you, so it can accomplish something or answer some key questions for you. Then you can have these moments of sincere exchange, moments that build not just different outcomes but stronger relationships over time. ●

First Person

Collective Healing

Guadalupe Rosales

Hashtags don't start movements. People do.

– *Alicia Garza (Black Lives Matter cofounder)*

When I started doing the archival work known as Veteranas and Rucas in 2015,[1] the idea that the words "marginalized" and "underrepresented" would be used to describe a community and neighborhood I grew up in was strange to me. I felt pride in Los Angeles, where Latinx communities are heavily represented. This was obvious in my home, out on the streets, and in my intimate circle of friends. It was in the air, in the way we spoke, and in our swag. The thought of being underrepresented never crossed my mind. My memories of growing up in L.A. form a spectrum. Or: I had multidimensional experiences living here (and continue to do so). I love this city even though it has its rough moments.

A stack of wallet-size photos from the 1990s. Courtesy of Guadalupe Rosales.

I left Los Angeles very abruptly in 2000 when I was about 19 years old. Since the age of 16, I had lost friends and family to gang and state violence. Violence was at its peak in the 1990s. And since violence had been around me since I was little, I normalized it. But when Ever Sanchez, my cousin, was murdered in 1996, two days before Christmas, something in me awakened, pain I had never felt before. Because I was only a teenager when he was murdered, I knew nothing about grief, nor had resources that could help me heal. Luckily, I had family and friends who gathered in my home every day. We sat quietly in the living room or on my porch and reminisced and shared stories about my cousin. When I think back about these gatherings, I realize that this was my first collective healing experience, although there were also many sleepless and drunken nights involved. If I slept at all, I'd wake up exhausted from crying most of the night.

So in 2000, I moved far away from home, family, and community. As I grew older, I began to feel the distance of time and place. When I left Los Angeles, I also stopped all communication with friends and family. It wasn't until the mid-2000s, when I reached out to my sister (who is a year older than me) for the first time since leaving L.A., that I started to reconnect. I asked her questions about childhood friends and parties we went to as teenagers. I asked her about family as well. There were friends who were doing well (although doing "well" can be subjective), who had become professional artists, who now had office jobs, who had kids and families. There were also those who ended up in prison or dead, and some who were caught between those two worlds. I was also using the internet to stay "up-to-date" with L.A., to have a sense of what was going on there.

Sometimes I didn't know what to type into Google search. All I had were my own memories. I typed street names into Google Maps and searched for people I grew up with. Occasionally I came across articles about those who had passed away.

[1] *The archive is on Instagram as @veteranas_and_rucas, https://www.instagram.com/veteranas_and_rucas/?hl=en. See also the Project Statement on Guadalupe Rosales's website, undated, http://www.veteranasandrucas.com/about*

One example was a high school friend named Anthony.[2] I was shocked when I read his story in the *L.A. Times*.[3] Another was Javier Quezada Jr.[4] My friends were being killed by the police. And if it wasn't dehumanization of people of color, it was either criminalization or stereotypical clichés about growing up in Los Angeles.

My time in New York is a big part of my story. I spent 15 years there and it's where I became an adult. It's where I found a new community of friends, mentors, lovers, and artists. It's also where I came out as queer and was able to embrace myself in this way. But while I was living there, I felt like another part of me was missing. When I moved to New York, I brought a stack of letters and photos with me—of friends, boyfriends, siblings, and relatives. I held on to these photos and letters as something sacred. I kept looking at them and wondering how we can tell our own story. And I knew that I wasn't alone in this desire to tell a story—not just my own, but a collective story of community and interrelated experiential bonds and pain and love and growth. I wanted to connect with people who were like me and to create a community-generated archive; I wanted it to be authentic and self-generating, embodying a shared experience where one story could amplify another. So in 2015, I started Veteranas and Rucas on Instagram, and then, in 2016, Map Pointz.[5] I began to connect and share stories with strangers and with friends whom I hadn't seen or spoken to since high school.

The work and the sharing of those stories also encouraged me to come back home, so I moved back to Los Angeles in 2016. In the last few years, I have dedicated my life to preserving this communal history, from tracking down people (strangers, friends, and family) to acquiring Chicano/Latinx ephemera (like photos, flyers, letters, and clothing) and taking on the responsibility of preserving them as part of this story. Veteranas and Rucas began as an open invitation to various communities to share personal images and memories that create visual narratives celebrating identities and historicizing subcultures.

What has grown out of it, and now Map Pointz too, is a collaborative archive through which we can explore ideas about how history and culture are framed—and who does the framing. This work celebrates, humanizes, and reflects our shared culture's positive and honest attributes. It creates space for collective healing and storytelling and finds ways for a new dialogue to emerge about youth culture in Southern California that would not exist otherwise. I knew that it was important to preserve these materials and stories—not just my own but those belonging to hundreds of others—to counteract what I now understood to be the underrepresentation, misrepresentation, and historical erasure of Latinx communities in Southern California.

It all manifested through grief, memories, and urgency because of the ways in which my community and I were seen from an outsider's perspective. The more engaged and serious this work became, the more I discovered. My aim was also to find potent revivals of my culture as well as generate unexpected connections between seemingly irreconcilable institutions and communities. These projects provide a reflective surface to see oneself—not through an act of vanity but through affirmation and validation.

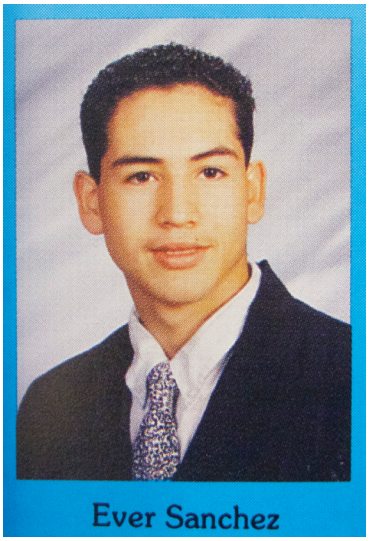
Collectively, we have cracked a code. We've figured out a new approach to representation and memory through this sharing and sifting of images. My culture is so beautiful and complex that it's almost impossible to share stories in a linear way. ●

[2] *Instagram, @veteranas_and_rucas, https://www.instagram.com/p/CBiijeGJ1C3/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link.*

[3] *Times Staff Writer, "Claims Filed Against Police in Shooting Death of Boy, 17,"* Los Angeles Times, *Feb. 10, 1998.*

[4] *Daniel Hernandez, "Claim Filed in Fatal Shooting by Officer,"* Los Angeles Times, *Feb. 22, 2003.*

[5] *Instagram, @map_pointz, https://www.instagram.com/map_pointz/?hl=en.*



Top: Ever Sanchez's yearbook photo, 1994. Courtesy of Guadalupe Rosales.

Above: Lupe and Miros at a backyard party in East Los Angeles, 1995. Courtesy of Guadalupe Rosales.

Case Study

The 1871 Anti-Chinese Massacre

Eugene W. Moy

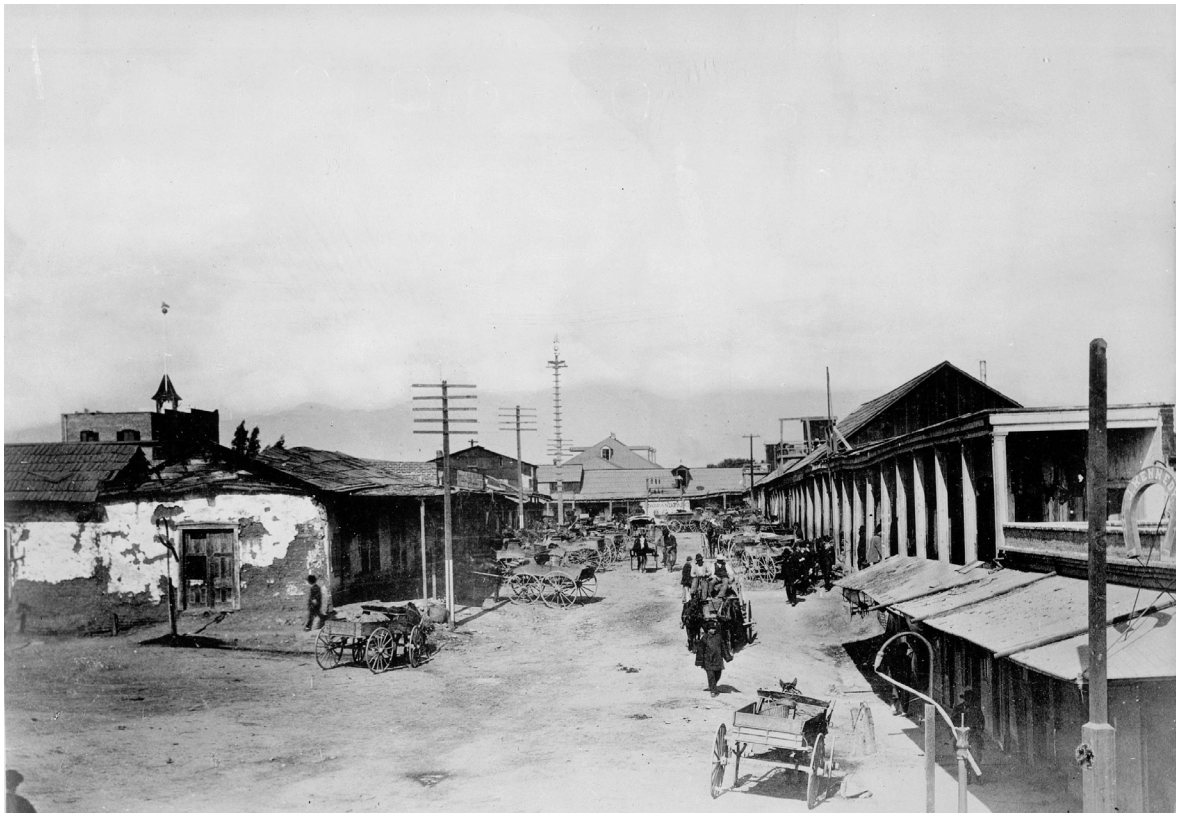
Los Angeles today is having many community discussions related to race, conflict, and social justice. Tonight marks the 149th anniversary of one of the most significant events in our city's history.

During the 1850s and 1860s, many families in Los Angeles had Chinese household help: people who worked as cooks, servants, and gardeners. Some Chinese residents started their own businesses in the growing downtown of Los Angeles, such as Chun Chick, who opened a store in 1861, and Dr. Chee Long (or Gene) Tong, who started advertising in the local newspaper in 1870. Dr. Tong was a respected herbalist, providing remedies and therapies to support the health of local Americans.

The United States Census of 1870 placed 171 Chinese people living in the City of Los Angeles. Most lived in the "Chinese quarter" south and east of the Old Plaza. Los Angeles in 1871 was in transition, economically, socially, and politically. Local government was in place but not well disciplined. Gambling, drinking, fighting, and shootings were common. Vigilante groups would mete out mob "justice," sometimes breaking into the city jail and hauling off hapless victims—innocent or guilty—to be hanged or beaten. Internal conflicts within and among groups were sometimes settled peacefully, and frequently not. The Chinese were harassed for being labor competitors, for their race and culture, and for being "different."

On the afternoon of October 24, 1871, a shootout between two groups of Chinese residents just south of the plaza drew the attention of the small Los Angeles police force. Officer Jesus Bilderrain was wounded in the crossfire. A local rancher and former saloon owner, Robert Thompson, attempted to intervene, even though he was told to stay away. He shot into a Chinese store in which there was an active shooting scene, got hit by return fire, and died an hour later. In the two hours that followed, an angry mob killed a total of 18 Chinese people who were pulled from the Chinese quarter and shot, beaten, or hanged. One of the victims was Dr. Tong; one was a teenage boy. Other victims included cooks, a storekeeper, and a laundryman. None were involved in the earlier shooting.

Excerpted from remarks made by Eugene W. Moy at the Chinese American Museum in Los Angeles on October 24, 2020. Moy is a native of L.A.'s Chinatown and a fourth-generation Californian and has been an active member of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, the Chinese American Museum, and other organizations. October of 2021 will mark 150 years since the massacre.



This event of terror hit newspapers across the nation. Los Angeles dutifully called a coroner's inquest. Indictments followed, and then a trial by jury, and nine men were convicted of manslaughter. All were sentenced—for terms of two to six years—and sent to San Quentin State Prison. A year later, all were released due to an alleged technical flaw in the indictments.

Tonight, 149 years later, we ask if justice was served. Our city continues to grapple with how to resolve race and class conflicts and social imbalances. Obviously, a lot of public dialogue and negotiation is needed. We must honor the people, the early Angelenos, who lived and worked in our community, and whose names should not—and must not—be forgotten.

Looking east down Calle de los Negros toward the plaza, Los Angeles, 1882. Security Pacific National Bank Photo Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.

Massacre Victims (list may be incomplete)

- *Johnny Burrow*, shot to death in Coronel Building
- *Wing Chee*, cook, shot and hanged from a wagon on Commercial Street
- *Wong Chin*, storekeeper, hanged from a wagon on Commercial Street
- *Ah Cut*, liquor maker, shot to death on Calle de Los Negros
- *Wan Foo*, cook, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Lo Hey*, cook, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Ho Hing*, cook, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Day Kee*, cook, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Ah Long*, cigar maker, hanged at Tomlinson's Corral
- *Ah Loo*, teenager, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Leong Quai*, laundryman, hanged at Tomlinson's Corral
- *Wa Sin Quai*, shot to death in Coronel Building
- *Dr. Chee Long Tong*, herbalist and physician, shot and hanged at Tomlinson's Corral, body mutilated
- *Ah Waa*, cook, hanged at Goller's wagon shop
- *Chang Wan*, housemate of Dr. Chee Long Tong, hanged at Tomlinson's Corral
- *Tong Wan*, cook and musician, beaten, hanged, and shot at Goller's wagon shop
- *Ah Wing*, worked in Pico House Hotel, beaten and hanged at Tomlinson's Corral
- *Ah Won*, cook, hanged from a wagon on Commercial Street

Anti-Chinese Massacre Trial Results and Timeline

February 14, 1872

Quong Wong, Ah Ying

Acquitted of murder of Ah Choy, San Francisco tong fighter

February 17, 1872

L. F. "Curly" Crenshaw

Convicted of manslaughter

March 27, 1872

Adolfo Celis, Dan W. Moody

Acquitted of manslaughter

March 27, 1872

Esteban A. Alvarado, Charles Austin, Refugio Botello, A. R. Johnston, Jesus Martinez, Patrick M. McDonald, Louis Mendel

Convicted of manslaughter

May 21, 1872

California Supreme Court reverses convictions, killers released from San Quentin State Prison

Reversal order signed by Judge Robert Widney June 10, 1873

November 1872

Sam Yuen

Acquitted in death of Robert Thompson

Fatalities and trial results compiled from Scott Zesch, *The Chinatown War: Chinese Los Angeles and the Massacre of 1871* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

Subcommittee 4

Inventories of Sites and History

What follows is largely an exemplary rather than a comprehensive approach to cataloging and mapping existing memorials. For several reasons, this group thought it would be worthwhile to focus on potentially problematic memorials, or that can represent the various ways memorials have been created. We also recommend reframing the concept of monuments and memorials more broadly, expanding the definition beyond mere statues and other art works to include place names beyond parks and plazas (streets, buildings, etc.) and living objects like trees.

This group spent considerable time discussing what exactly constitutes a civic memorial. Some members preferred a narrow definition that would limit the scope of our inquiry to statues, sculptures, murals, and other art works. Others favored a more expansive definition that would include place names, arguing that meaning is often embedded in the names of streets and structures, even if that meaning is not always obvious. For instance, several familiar street names (like Figueroa and Alvarado) were intended to honor Mexican-era political officials. Other place names (such as Cahuenga, Tujunga, and Topanga) are Indigenous in origin, remnants of the city's precolonial past. In the end, we reached a consensus to adopt a more inclusive definition.

The City's Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) program recognizes 1,206 historic sites across Los Angeles. Two of our members are deeply involved in that program—one as a city administrator and another as a citizen commissioner—and they argued that the HCM registry would not be germane to a review of civic memorials. They contended that the word "monument" is misleading, as most of the HCMs are buildings recognized for their architectural significance, not commemorative structures or art works. Furthermore, they noted, the HCM program is built on a robust process that includes community engagement and input from stakeholders.

Others favored incorporating the HCM registry into our inventory. They argued that the concept of architectural significance might not be as politically neutral as it seems. The design of individual buildings or even entire architectural styles—Spanish Colonial Revival, for example—are often embedded with political meaning. Furthermore, they noted, scrutiny of the HCM recognition process could yield insights relevant to other types of memorials.

Existing Inventories

Our subcommittee identified several datasets that could inform a master inventory of memorials. SurveyLA was a systematic effort to catalog the city's historic resources; Los Angeles has never before undertaken a wholesale review of its civic memorials (although the City has—with varying degrees of success—tried to inventory its statues, murals, and other public art works, inasmuch as they are municipal property).

Michael Holland, the city archivist, located several incomplete inventories in the City Archives, dated 1933, 1944, and 1956. In 1960, the Municipal Arts Department (now the Department of Cultural Affairs) was charged with maintaining a comprehensive inventory of statues, but work did not begin until the 1970 hiring of a curator, Virginia Kazor. Starting with the department's existing documentation—a loose-leaf binder filled with incomplete and haphazardly collected information—Kazor pieced together an inventory from archived minutes of the Municipal Arts Department. Today, her work forms the basis of the City Art Collection inventory, which catalogs more than 1,000 works of art, including many statues and monuments. The inventory provides data on each work's creator and location, as well as a replacement cost and fair market value. (The now-toppled Junípero Serra statue, for instance, was valued at $80,000 in 2005.)

Other datasets document other kinds of memorials. Bernice Kimball's hand-annotated *Street Names of Los Angeles*, though not definitive, explains the origin of nearly every street name in the city.[1] A reference copy is available at the Los Angeles Central Library's History and Genealogy Department. Donald R. Hodel's *Exceptional Trees of Los Angeles* maps and describes dozens of trees notable for their historical association.[2] Subcommittee member Wendy Cheng also recommended consulting artist Ken Gonzales-Day, whose work has featured "hanging trees," the sites of Mexican American lynchings.

[1] *Bernice Kimball,* Street Names of Los Angeles *(Los Angeles: Bureau of Engineering, 1988).*

[2] *Donald R. Hodel,* Exceptional Trees of Los Angeles *(Arcadia, CA: California Arboretum Foundation, 1988).*

Review of Previous Memorial Programs

As our group discussed previous efforts to memorialize L.A.'s past, at least one major conclusion emerged: there is no precedent for the type of civic project now being undertaken by the Civic Memory Working Group. Through piecemeal efforts and ad hoc processes, the City has accrued a large body of civic memorials, but it has yet to undertake a wholesale review of them. (Our subcommittee did not discuss the question of whether Los Angeles is under-memorialized relative to other cities, but that is a worthy topic for further study.) Furthermore, civic memorialization has usually happened within a process vacuum. Typically, statues and monuments have been offered to the City by private organizations and approved on a case-by-case basis. In the absence of a process to evaluate existing memorials and propose new ones, the City effectively cedes power to the best-funded and most ardent groups, which tend to be white, wealthy, and conservative.

The toppled statue of Junípero Serra, erected in 1932, offers an example. A replica of the bronze figure placed in the U.S. Capitol's Statuary Hall in 1931 (and, incidentally, still standing there today), the statue was offered by the Los Angeles County chapter of the Knights of Columbus. That organization's application triggered a cascade of reviews by municipal boards, including the Municipal Arts Department, the Parks Commission, the Board of Public Works, and the City Council. The City's response was entirely reactive: it merely evaluated the merits of the specific proposal rather than surveying the existing landscape of monuments and determining that a Serra statue was lacking.

The process brought to light several objections to the proposed Serra statue, although there is no record of anyone opposing the idea of honoring Serra itself. A group named the Lincoln Heights Brotherhood objected to the design of the statue, which featured

the priest holding a Christian cross aloft. The Brotherhood favored replicating the Serra statue near the San Fernando Mission, which depicts the priest in a paternalistic pose with an Indigenous child. The location was also contested. Van Griffith, the parks commissioner (and son of Griffith Park founder Griffith J. Griffith), recalled a recent trip to Mexico City, where he had seen devout worshippers crowd around religious statues in prayer. Griffith fretted that L.A.'s Latino population would gather in the same manner and block traffic.

This reactive, ad hoc approach to civic memorialization has been repeated time and again, even as Los Angeles began to adopt more inclusive memorials. Consider the relatively recent process of designating official "squares" with buff-colored signs atop street intersections. In contrast to the rigorous scrutiny that a proposed site must undergo to become an official HCM, the process for naming a square is quite simple: a City Council member proposes the designation and the full council approves. Often, citizen advocates present the proposal to a council member.

This process seems to have yielded an incoherent body of memorials. In Hollywood alone, official squares memorialize several celebrity entertainers (including comedian Bob Hope, television host Larry King, and singer Celia Cruz), the Famous Amos brand of cookies, gay rights activist Morris Kight, and slain LAPD officer Ian Campbell. "I Love Lucy Square" (at Melrose and Plymouth) honors both comedian Lucille Ball and Lucy Casado, owner of the landmark Lucy's El Adobe Café on Melrose. Several subcommittee members described these squares as feeble gestures toward civic memorialization; in most cases, only a few descriptive words accompany the name on the sign, with nothing visible at street level to provide context.

Nevertheless, these extemporary memorials often tend toward inclusiveness. The trend started in 1980 with the designation of Edgar F. Magnin Square—a one-block stretch of Wilshire in front of the Wilshire Boulevard Temple, where Magnin was rabbi. More recently, the intersection of Slauson and Crenshaw was renamed Nipsey Hussle Square in memory of the slain rapper, who opened a clothing shop at the intersection in 2017 and was fatally shot there two years later. Other examples include Dosan Ahn Chang Ho Square, which honors the Korean American activist; Dolores Huerta Square, which honors the labor activist and civil rights leader; and Armenian Genocide Memorial Square.

In many instances, the act and process of choosing who or what to acknowledge, recognize, or preserve creates a civic memory itself. A more inclusive and rigorous process would only lend more credibility to the City's memorializations and create greater and more likely community support. Examples might include the Clara Shortridge Foltz Criminal Justice Center, named for the first female attorney in California; the Hyde Park Miriam Matthews Branch Library, named for the first African American librarian at the Los Angeles Public Library; and the Octavia Lab makerspace at Central Library, named for Octavia Butler, a pioneer among both African American and women science fiction writers.

Past Controversies

In the past, civic memorials have generated controversy for a variety of reasons:

- In 1925, a proposed monument to Robert E. Lee in Pershing Square apparently withered in the face of public opposition. The Daughters of the American Revolution filed an

official protest with the mayor and the Parks Commission, and a letter to the editor in the *Times* declared it "incongruous, illogical and un-American to glorify overmuch those who sought to make us a divided nation."

- After Rudolph Valentino's death in 1926, the actor's fans raised funds for a memorial. In 1930, the City approved a monument in Hollywood's De Longpre Park, but apparently did not consult with the local community. After the City approved the statue of Valentino, residents of De Longpre Avenue registered an official protest with the mayor and the Municipal Arts Department. "There is room for only one statue in Delongpre Park," one protester wrote, "and that is for Mr. De Longpre, an artist and gentleman."
- Street name memorials have almost always generated controversy. When the City renamed Santa Barbara Avenue in 1983 to honor Martin Luther King Jr., the owner of an event ticket business complained that he would have to reprint his company's brochures at great expense. Another opponent bemoaned in a letter to the *L.A. Times* that the change would insult Saint Barbara, a Christian martyr who (legend has it) was put to death by her own father. A proponent, the civil rights activist Celes King III, also described "phantom opposition" from residents of Leimert Park. "I couldn't understand," he told the *Times* in 1983. "They didn't come out against it in a visible way, but I got no support from them."

Beyond the controversial examples noted, it would also be worthwhile to examine civic memorials that no longer exist. The Nelly Roth Memorial Fountains in Pershing Square, dedicated in 1954, were removed in an early 1990s renovation of the park. Another example is the Mickey Bishop bird baths installed in city parks in honor of a canary that lived with residents of the Ambassador Hotel.

Our subcommittee also discussed the possibility of another kind of inventory: an inventory of memorial opportunities. Some members thought that it would be helpful to catalog parts of the urban infrastructure over which the City has authority. One example mentioned was the City's collection of concrete bridges, most of which bear utilitarian names, like First Street Bridge, Glendale-Hyperion Bridge, and Elysian Park 110 Freeway Bridge. For a relatively modest cost, the City could rename the bridges as memorials. Some group members were not ready to embrace this idea fully, arguing that simply affixing a name to a bridge would not explain the significance of the memorial or the relevance of the honored individual to that site. Others responded that the City could always add interpretive features for pedestrians to add context to the named memorial. ●

This subcommittee was chaired by Nathan Masters, host of *Lost L.A.*, KCET's public television program on Los Angeles history, and manager of academic events and programming communications, USC Libraries; and John F. Szabo, city librarian, Los Angeles Public Library. Its other members were Ken Bernstein, principal city planner and manager of the Office of Historic Resources for the Los Angeles Department of City Planning, where he also oversees the Urban Design Studio; Wendy Cheng, associate professor of American Studies at Scripps College and author of *The Changs Next Door to the Díazes: Remapping Race in Suburban California* (University of Minnesota Press, 2013); Frederick Fisher, principal at Frederick Fisher and Partners architects; Michael Holland, city archivist for the Los Angeles City Archives; Gail Kennard, president of Kennard Design Group (KDG) and a commissioner on the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission; and Andrew Kovacs, architectural designer and founder of Office Kovacs design studio in Los Angeles.

A Feeling for History

D.J. Waldie

California has too often been misplaced within the "too wonderful" of El Dorado (triumph, health, liberation) and the "too terrible" of Donner Pass (displacement, loss, defilement).[1] The abstraction of these narratives—extravagant sales pitch on one side of the coin, dread on the other—leaves little room for local knowledges generated by the rhythms of daily life and the patterns in habit and ritual. Local knowledges are never more than tentative but never less than charged with barely contained intensities, pluripotent in effect, and lived. They are filtered, refined, and repurposed dialogically through generational narratives and communal remembrances (not without risk of inherited biases and phobias). In their attunements, textures, and atmospheres, local knowledges resist erasure. In place of the frictionless efficiency of the world's regime of speed, local knowledges substitute rumination and speculation, particularity and partiality, fusions and confusions.

"To remain in touch with the past requires a love of memory," wrote Gaston Bachelard, the philosopher of recollection. "To remain in touch with the past requires a constant imaginative effort."[2] Worlds unfold there for the subjective observer-participant, always felt but not apprehended uncritically. This sensibility is a kind of intelligence, emergent in interleavings, immanent in specifics, and poetic in expression. In its reluctance to give the obvious interpretation to events, it seeks to drag things into view that actually feel like something.[3] Ordinary practices, so embodied, aim to activate a moral imagination—one capable of dwelling in someone else's experience—that is in "constant contact and interchange between the local scene and the wide world that lies beyond it."[4]

The much-handled things of the ordinary are touched and return a touch. Being touched and touching should have outcomes that are political (a sympathetic bond between neighbors) and cultural (a sense of place that maps an inner landscape of recollection on the external contours of the familiar). Californians—inheritors of El Dorado and Donner Pass—have to fall in love with their place at the same time they have to struggle to endure it. To quicken their desire, they "must awaken the stories that sleep in the streets and that sometimes lie within a simple name."[5] To become native to their place, Californians need new stories and habits of being. They need a feeling for history and vulnerability to it. They need signposts that point them to habitats of memory. These waymarks will reveal themselves in the sharing of local knowledges and in handing them on to neighbors and to the future, where new Californians, in their myriad identities, wait to receive them. ●

Adapted by the author from the introduction to California Continuum, Volume 1: Migrations and Amalgamations, *by Grant Hier and John Brantingham (Claremont, CA: Pelekinesis, 2019).*

[1] *To be Californian has always required belief in a myth of blind luck. But the myth has a monstrous alternative: it is the story of the snowbound Donner Party and the cannibalism that followed. There have been times when just surviving California is a kind of success in its own right.*

[2] *Gaston Bachelard, "A Retrospective Glance at the Lifework of a Maker of Books,"* Fragments of a Poetics of Fire, *translated by Kenneth Haltman (Dallas, TX: Dallas Institute of Humanities and Culture, 1990).*

[3] *"Worlds of all kinds that catch people up in some thing that feels like something." Kathleen Stewart,* Ordinary Affects *(Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).*

[4] *Lewis Mumford,* The South in Architecture: The Dancy Lectures Alabama College 1941 *(New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1941; repr., 2007).*

[5] *"Living is narrativizing. Stirring up or restoring this narrativizing is thus among the tasks of any renovation. One must awaken the stories that sleep in the streets." Michel de Certeau, Luce Giard, and Pierre Mayol,* The Practice of Everyday Life, Vol. 2: Living and Cooking, *translated by Timothy J. Tomasik (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).*

Subcommittee 5

Monuments, Markers, and Layers of Space

Our subcommittee's charge was to provide guidance of two types: about the most effective ways to imagine, commission, and produce monuments and memorials appropriate to contemporary Los Angeles, and about issues for artists, architects, and designers to keep in mind when taking on work of this kind. While another subcommittee focused specifically on issues of process, we view process as inexorably linked to our work as well, insofar as for many new art forms since the 1960s the process is often the greater part of the work. Likewise, we believe that certain components of projects, such as materiality and tone, should develop as part of a working process between artists, the public, and civic leaders, and are therefore beyond the specific purview of our subcommittee and its recommendations.

We typically think of the built form of civic memory in terms of statues, cannons, mausoleums, plaques, and the like, but what exists today covers a much wider set of artistic practices. The list that follows is a first pass at gesturing toward all the ways that we experience civic memory in our urban landscape, providing a more expansive definition for memory at a civic scale. The categories included are meant not as finite or conclusive but as openings to further investigation.

Government and Institutional Projects

Government and institutional projects comprise a wide range of mostly familiar forms of memorialization and commemoration. The first category we considered—gestures and acts—entails actions that do not result in a physical object, such as the following:

+ **Land acknowledgements.** According to the Native American Inclusion Initiative at Northwestern University, "a Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories." The Minneapolis-based Native Governance Center frames the importance of Indigenous land acknowledgment like this: "It is important to understand the longstanding history that has brought you to reside on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. Land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation."[1] See also the summary of Civic Memory Working Group subcommittee on Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and the Work of Decolonization, as well as the Q&A with Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy, elsewhere in this volume.

[1] *Northwestern University Native American and Indigenous Initiatives website, undated, https://www.northwestern.edu/native-american-and-indigenous-peoples/about/Land%20Acknowledgement.html; Native Governance Center website, undated, https://nativegov.org/a-guide-to-indigenous-land-acknowledgment.*

+ **Civic apologies.** On September 8, 2000, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Kevin Gover apologized on behalf of the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs for the agency's policies and actions over its 175-year history—in particular "for its devastating impact on American Indian nations, whether federally recognized, unrecognized, or extinct." Eight years later, on June 11, 2008, the prime minister of Canada made a formal statement of apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools on behalf of the Canadian government.[2] At the time of this report's writing, the Canadian parliament was considering proposed legislation to designate September 30 as a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

+ **Reparations.** A March 2020 NPR story told the story of an 81-year-old Angeleno named John Tateishi, who was interned at the Manzanar internment camp with his family, and decades later helped form the Los Angeles chapter of the Japanese American Citizens' League, which, in 1988—a decade after the campaign began and four decades after the internment camps closed—saw President Ronald Reagan sign the Civil Liberties Act, which paid $20,000 in reparations to each survivor and offered a formal apology.[3]

+ **National holidays.** In June of 2020, the *New York Times* reported on a 93-year-old Fort Worth, Texas, great-grandmother named Opal Lee on her fourth annual walk to promote Juneteenth as a national holiday.[4] The name "Juneteenth" derives from "June" and "19th"—the day in 1865 that Union Army troops arrived in the westernmost Confederate state of Texas and informed the more than 250,000 enslaved people there that the Civil War was over and that slavery had been abolished.

Examples of renaming streets, parks, and buildings, another category that our group discussed, include L.A.'s renaming of Rodeo Road to President Barack Obama Boulevard in 2019, with a ceremony held at the street's intersection with Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in one of the city's historic Black neighborhoods. Also in 2019, the state of Wisconsin declared October 14 Indigenous Peoples' Day, and city and county leaders in Milwaukee honored the day by changing the name of the city's Columbus Park to Indigenous Peoples' Park.[5]

Civic markers and plaques are also common ways that cities and citizens partner to create and honor civic memory. The Community Remembrance Project of the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI) "collaborates with communities to memorialize documented victims of racial violence and foster meaningful dialogue about race and justice." Closer to home, Los Angeles artist Sheila Levrant de Bretteville's *Omoide No Shotokyo (Remembering Old Little Tokyo)* markers commemorate prewar Japanese American businesses and community on 1st Street. London's famous blue plaques and Berlin's *Stolpersteine* are among numerous other examples of this form of memorialization.[6]

Preserved ruins are another mode of remembrance. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome) was the only structure left standing in the area where the first atomic bomb exploded in Hiroshima, Japan, and it is preserved exactly as it stood immediately after the blast. In Virginia, the nonprofit Menokin Foundation's Glass House Project has engaged Boston-based architecture firm Machado Silvetti to preserve a 1769 house owned by Declaration of Independence signer Francis Lightfoot Lee. The retrofit will feature structural glass to serve "as a window for peering into the layered pasts of the people who built, worked, and lived on the property," including Black slaves.[7] A similar project of the Getty Conservation Institute in partnership with the City of Los Angeles,

[2] *Christopher Buck, "'Never Again': Kevin Gover's Apology for the Bureau of Indian Affairs,"* Wicazo Sa Review *21, no. 1 (Spring 2006): 97–126; "Prime Minister Stephen Harper's Statement of Apology," CBC News, June 11, 2008, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/prime-minister-stephen-harper-s-statement-of-apology-1.734250.*

[3] *Isabella Rosario, "The Unlikely Story Behind Japanese Americans' Campaign for Reparations," NPR, Mar. 24, 2020.*

[4] *Julia Carmel, "Opal Lee's Juneteenth Vision Is Becoming Reality,"* New York Times, *June 18, 2020; "The Historical Legacy of Juneteenth," National Museum of African American History and Culture website, undated, https://nmaahc.si.edu/blog-post/historical-legacy-juneteenth.*

[5] *Alexa Díaz, "Street Officially Renamed Obama Boulevard in Baldwin Hills/Crenshaw Ceremony,"* Los Angeles Times, *May 4, 2019; Lauren Winfrey, "Columbus Park in Milwaukee renamed 'Indigenous Peoples' Park,'" WTMJ, Oct. 14, 2019.*

[6] *Community Remembrance Project, Equal Justice Initiative website, undated, https://eji.org/projects/community-remembrance-project; Sheila Levrant de Bretteville with Sonya Ishii, Nobuho Nagasawa, and Susan Sztaray,* Omoide No Shotokyo (Remembering Old Little Tokyo)*, 1996, concrete inlaid with bronze and stainless steel, Historic Little Tokyo, Los Angeles; "London's Blue Plaques," English Heritage website, undated, https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us;* Stolpersteine *project website, undated, http://www.stolpersteine.eu/en/home.*

[7] *Nick Kirkpatrick, "69 Years after Hiroshima, a Look at the Dome that Survived,"* Washington Post, *Aug. 6, 2014; Nancy Kenney, "Menokin Preservation Project Offers a Literal Window onto Layers of Virginia History,"* Art Newspaper, *June 22, 2020.*

completed in 2012, preserved the previously whitewashed 1932 David Alfaro Siqueiros mural *América Tropical*, located in the center of El Pueblo de Los Angeles Historical Monument in downtown Los Angeles.[8] Such public-private collaborations are powerful modes of restoring erased histories.

The Public as Author

Governments and institutions like Getty and the City are not the only actors who recognize the power of murals to reimagine public spaces. In February of 2012, as part of Latino Heritage Month, a group of artists paid homage to Siqueiros with *Siqueiros: La Voz de la Gente!* in an alley off La Cienega Boulevard in Culver City. The public, too, often acts to create informal monuments, sometimes spontaneously. Take for example the impromptu Kobe Bryant Memorial at Staples Center in February of 2020, or the George Floyd signs and portraits that covered and reimagined boarded-up businesses across the country in late spring and summer of the same tumultuous year.

The public also engages in semiformal and organized action. In what has become known as the "Say Their Names" memorial, people wove strips of fabric into chain-link fences surrounding L.A.'s Silver Lake reservoirs in the summer of 2020, paying tribute to some of those who have died while in police custody or in confrontations with officers across the country.[9] Also in the informal, public category, temporary counter-monuments—like the Monuments and Murals of Erased and Invisible Histories series by L.A. artist Sandra de la Loza's Pochx Research Society of Erased and Invisible History—raise challenges to official monuments and markers.[10]

New Territories of Authorship

Sometimes, city governments function as the activist in creating civic memory space. In a recent example of such a role reversal, Washington, DC, Mayor Muriel Bowser in June of 2020 commissioned a Black Lives Matter mural that spans two blocks of 16th Street, NW, leading to the White House. Bowser announced that the portion of the thoroughfare between H and K Streets would be renamed Black Lives Matter Plaza on June 5—and the DC Council voted unanimously in October to make the name change permanent.[11]

Other private monuments on a civic scale include the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama, a project spearheaded by the EJI. And the University of Virginia completed construction of its Memorial to Enslaved Laborers in 2020, the culmination of a 10-year, student-conceived project honoring the estimated 4,000 enslaved people who built the campus. In the absence of an opening ceremony due to the pandemic, the memorial has served as an informal "town square" in which people gather; on June 5, 2020, a crowd came together "to honor George Floyd, calling for justice at a site remembering years of injustice."[12] Architect and scholar Mabel O. Wilson, who presented the project to the Civic Memory Working Group at its November 2019 meeting, was (with Boston-based architecture firm Höweler + Yoon) a member of the team that produced the memorial.

Private land and private money can also go toward creating monuments and engaging civic memory. In the late 1960s, the city of Houston received a grant to help purchase a contemporary work of sculpture for the city. In 1969, philanthropists John and Dominique de Menil offered to match the grant and chose Barnett Newman's *Broken Obelisk*, specifying that it be placed near City Hall and dedicated to the recently slain Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The city accepted the choice of sculpture but rejected the dedication. The de Menils ultimately withdrew their offer and purchased the sculpture outright; it now resides in front of Houston's historic Rothko Chapel.[13]

[8] *Leslie Rainer, "The Conservation of* América Tropical*: Historical Context and Project Overview," Getty Conservation Institute report, October 2012, http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/historical_context.pdf.*

[9] *"Say-Their-Names Memorial Takes Shape in Silver Lake,"* The Eastsider, *June 6, 2020.*

[10] *Sandra de la Loza,* The Pocho Research Society Field Guide to L.A.: Monuments and Murals of Erased and Invisible Histories *(Los Angeles: UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center, 2011).*

[11] *A. J. Willingham, "Washington, DC Paints a Giant 'Black Lives Matter' Message on the Road to the White House," CNN, June 5, 2020, https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/05/us/black-lives-matter-dc-street-white-house-trnd/index.html; Sam Ford, "D.C. Council Votes to Permanently Keep Name 'Black Lives Matter Plaza,'" WJLA, Oct. 19, 2020, https://wjla.com/news/local/dc-council-vote-tuesday-permanently-keep-name-black-lives-matter-plaza.*

[12] *Sanjay Suchak, "The Bigger Picture: Honoring George Floyd at UVA's Memorial to Enslaved Laborers,"* UVA Today, *June 5, 2020.*

[13] *Barnett Newman,* Broken Obelisk, *1963–67, sculpture, steel, Rothko Chapel, Houston, TX; Lisa Gray, "The MLK Tribute That Houston's Power Brokers Couldn't Abide,"* Houston Chronicle, *Apr. 4, 2018.*

Another example in Texas of private space used for art in public view—which in this case was also used as an impromptu (if illegal) monument—is Tony Tasset's *Eye* sculpture in Dallas, which was vandalized in May of 2020 in connection with George Floyd's murder. Dallas artist lauren woods, who is among those who think the graffiti should be left on the sculpture, described the significance of both the giant eyeball and its defacement: "[It] wasn't just expressing protest solidarity—it acknowledges the symbolic power of the eyeball plopped down in the heart of downtown. How could a massive, larger than life, all 'seeing' bluest eye not be also read as symbolic of the surveillance state and white supremacy?"[14]

Nature and Art as Spaces for Civic Memory

Cases of public and private actors using nature as an anchor to engage civic memory abound. In Cleveland, Ohio, the Cleveland Cultural Gardens in the city's Rockefeller Park is a 276-acre public space for individual public gardens celebrating different ethnic and cultural groups' contributions to U.S. and local heritage. A range of foundations conceive, develop, and maintain the individual gardens.[15] The program celebrated its centennial in 2016 and continues breaking new ground today.

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, artist Sara Daleiden, a consultant to the Creative Placemaking Committee of the Greater Milwaukee Committee whose work focuses on "produc[ing] community," worked with Oakland, California, landscape architect Walter Hood to restore an unused walking path between a redlined district and neighboring properties. The project, funded through grants from the Kresge Foundation and ArtPlace America, sought "to reimagine how Milwaukeeans move through their city."[16] In Southern California, the Sleepy Lagoon memorial proposed for Riverfront Park in Maywood seeks to commemorate the 1942 arrest and mass trial of 22 Mexican youths on murder charges, which led to the anti-Mexican Zoot Suit Riots the following year. L.A. artists Sandra de la Loza and Arturo Ernesto Romo are working with the East Yard Communities for Environmental Justice to bring the Sleepy Lagoon project to fruition.[17]

Artist-run spaces and other decentralized sites are also powerful territories of civic authorship. Project Row Houses began in Houston's third ward in 1993 as a way to explore "how art might be an engine for social transformation." A group of seven Black artists working and living in the ward purchased 22 historic shotgun-style row houses on two blocks in a disinvested neighborhood and began using the houses as spaces for thematic art interventions. A 2018 book, *Collective Creative Actions: Project Row Houses at 25*, showcases the project's first quarter-century as a catalyst for transforming community through the celebration of art and African American history and culture.[18] The initiative continues today. Chicago's Rebuild Foundation, founded by artist Theaster Gates in 2009, is a similar platform for art, cultural development, and neighborhood transformation. The foundation takes abandoned buildings on Gates's native South Side and repurposes them, "using art, culture and craft to bring investment and purpose back into the buildings and into the wider community as a whole."[19]

Artist Mark Bradford, social activist Allan DiCastro, and philanthropist Eileen Harris Norton created Art + Practice in south Los Angeles's Leimert Park to support local foster youth and provide the community with free access to museum-curated contemporary art that celebrates artists of color.[20] And in central L.A.'s Arlington Heights neighborhood, artists Noah Davis and Karon Davis created the Underground Museum in 2012 to "bring museum quality art to a community that had no access to it."[21] Also in L.A., artist and activist Lauren Halsey launched the Summaeverythang

[14] *Tony Tasset,* Eye, *2007, sculpture, fiberglass, steel, and resin, Joule Hotel sculpture garden, Dallas, TX; Jeremy Hallock, "Dallas' Giant Eyeball Sculpture Was Vandalized with a Message,"* Dallas Morning News, *May 31, 2020.*

[15] *Cleveland Cultural Gardens website, undated, http://www.culturalgardens.org/garden.*

[16] *Jacqueline White, "Milwaukee Moves: In Creational Trails, Sara Daleiden's Role as Artist Involves Curating and Crafting Conversations,"* Public Art Review, *Feb. 29, 2016, 78–83.*

[17] *Carolina A. Miranda, "Goodbye, Guy on Horse: A New Wave of Monument Design Is Changing How We Honor History,"* Los Angeles Times, *July 23, 2020.*

[18] *Sandra Jackson-Dumont,* Collective Creative Actions: Project Row Houses at 25, *edited by Ryan N. Dennis (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2018).*

[19] *"Theaster Gates and the Rebuild Foundation,"* the modernist, *Aug. 14, 2020.*

[20] *Paige Katherine Bradley, "The Trio Creating an L.A. Mecca for Celebrating Artists of Color,"* Garage, *Feb. 8, 2019. This effort is not without controversy; see Catherine Wagley, "Who's in Control of Leimert Park's Future? It's Hard to Tell,"* L.A. Weekly, *April 23, 2015*

Community Center in April of 2020 as an extension of her art practice to serve south-central L.A. and the Watts neighborhood in particular, where her family has lived since the 1920s. The center, influenced by the Black Panthers' free breakfast program, donates 600 boxes of organic produce weekly to address food insecurity.[22]

[22] *Catherine Wagley, "Lauren Halsey's Summaeverythang Community Center Adds to the Social Fabric of L.A.,"* ARTnews, *Dec. 21, 2020.*

The Humanities and Civic Imagination

Film, theater, and the written word are other vehicles capable of reconciling civic memory and creating intangible monuments. *The Act of Killing*, a 2012 film by Joshua Oppenheimer on the 1965–66 genocide in Indonesia, and *Who Killed Malcolm X?*, a 2020 documentary that prompted a reopening of the murder case in New York, are two examples that our group discussed.[23] Isabel Wilkerson's 2010 study *The Warmth of Other Suns* tells the story of three Black Americans who left the South, tracing their routes to New York, Chicago, and L.A. The book integrates information from more than 1,000 interviews conducted by the Pulitzer Prize–winning author. *Zoot Suit*, a play by Luis Valdez that debuted in 1979, is based on the Sleepy Lagoon murder trial and the Zoot Suit Riots that followed. It was adapted into a film in 1981.[24]

[23] The Act of Killing, *directed by Joshua Oppenheimer (Copenhagen: Final Cut for Real, 2012);* Who Killed Malcolm X?, *directed by Phil Bertelsen and Rachel Dretzin (Doral, FL: Fusion, 2020).*

[24] *Isabel Wilkerson,* The Warmth of Other Suns: The Epic Story of America's Great Migration *(New York: Random House, 2010);* Zoot Suit, *directed by Luis Valdez, music by Daniel Valdez and Lalo Guerrero, lyrics by Lalo Guerrero, Winter Garden Theater, New York, NY, Mar. 25, 1979.*

These types of commemorations present opportunities to reach large audiences and speak to civic histories in uniquely and widely accessible ways. The Los Angeles Poet Laureate Program presents another such opportunity. A partnership between the City's Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) and the Los Angeles Public Library, the program seeks to "bring the literary arts to people in Los Angeles who have limited access to poetry or have few opportunities for exposure to expressive writing," and to "create a new body of literary works that commemorate the diversity and vibrancy of the L.A. region." The City can harness this avenue to, in the program's own words, "create a focal point for the expression of Los Angeles culture."[25]

[25] *"Los Angeles Poet Laureate Program," undated, https://culturela.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/LA-Poet-Laureate-Guidelines-2016-revised.pdf.*

Other Engagement Opportunities

The Getty's Pacific Standard Time initiative is a collaborative program among Southern California museums and arts organizations that creates thematically linked exhibitions every few years. Past themes have included *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*, which "celebrate[d] the birth of the Los Angeles art scene"; *Pacific Standard Time: L.A./L.A.*, which explored "Latin American and Latino art in dialogue with Los Angeles"; and *Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A.*, which "examined the built heritage of our region." Its recently announced next theme, *Pacific Standard Time: Art x Science x LA*, coming in 2024, will explore "the many connections between the visual arts and science, from prehistoric times to the present day and across different cultures worldwide." Future themes could build on and add to this rich discourse around any number of civic topics.[26] The Los Angeles Conservancy also runs a docent-led walking tour program that allows individuals to see and learn about architectural styles, the history of downtown and its diverse communities, and preservation efforts related to Los Angeles civic history.

[26] *Pacific Standard Time website, the Getty, undated, http://www.getty.edu/pacificstandardtime.*

Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) projects offer further civic engagement opportunities. Founded in 1985 as the first arts program for L.A.'s homeless population, LAPD works to create "performances and multidisciplinary artworks that connect the experiences of people living in poverty to the social forces that shape their lives and communities." LAPD's *Walk the Talk* project is a biennial performance parade to honor people who live and work on Skid Row, and its Skid Row Art History Museum and Archives document "the culture that developed on Skid Row—an activist culture, artistic culture and recovery culture—that offers a useful model for other communities navigating gentrification pressures."

Alternate Site Types for Engagement

The understanding of Los Angeles in terms of civic memory and civic engagement has tended to return repeatedly to examinations and reconsiderations of particular spaces and infrastructures. For example, Eric Avila, a member of the Civic Memory Working Group, has written two books on the L.A. freeways. Meanwhile, the L.A. River has been a site not just of historical reclamation but also of ecological and environmental activities tied to the watershed's deep history. As we create a broadened definition for civic memory, we should also think expansively as we identify potential sites for new projects. This work, however, must be done in dialogue with communities as part of a collaborative asset mapping process, so that any potential new project becomes an integrated part of its neighborhood. The following are potential site types to consider, with community input:

+ The Los Angeles River drew settlement throughout human history in the region. In 1986, Poet Lewis MacAdams, artist Pat Patterson, and gallerist Roger Wong started the nonprofit *Friends of the L.A. River* to reimagine the river from a concrete drainage channel back to a natural river.
+ Our group discussed on a few occasions the problematic history of the L.A. freeway system as one that systematically divided neighborhoods of color.
+ The committee was interested in expanding on the idea of the garden as a "living" memorial space, which would also address environmental issues (such as water percolation, microclimate, and phytoremediation). We also discussed gardens as food production sites to address agricultural histories; the broad range of cultural and ethnic produce in L.A.; and, most importantly, issues around food insecurity. Unused or underused parking lots could be used for this.

A Road Map to Engage the Public, Artists, and Leaders with the City Fabric

Although our subcommittee is making recommendations to the City of Los Angeles on how to engage the important work of civic memory, some of this work will inherently overlap with other governmental structures as well as private activities; it also has the potential to engage with sister cities. We traditionally think of civic memory as represented by a series of big objects, but it can also be processes, partnerships, actions, networks, and other types of civic activity. In a number of important ways, the full scope of what is considered civic memory will be beyond the City's control. Nonetheless, the City has an opportunity to reach beyond the programs and processes it does control to acknowledge, validate, and give a framework to all of these other activities that comprise the city's civic memory.

Our subcommittee's recommendation is that the City engage a pluralistic approach in working with artists, community-based organizations, and other city stakeholders. In lieu of using the same selection and working process for each project, Los Angeles could become a "civic memory laboratory" that tests various working methods tailored to each specific project and the context of its site. The following are questions to consider when engaging this work:

1. What selection processes should be considered? Besides using formal requests for proposals (RFPs) and committees to select new works in the public realm, are there other selection processes that might at times be better suited to elevate new artists

who might not otherwise have access to work on projects of a particular scale? For example, Maya Lin's memorial in Washington, DC, was selected in a blind competition; she was not known at the time. Are there other times when a closed nomination process might be appropriate, or should work in the public realm always have an open selection process? Are there times when the public alone should decide?

2. Does the role of a selection committee need to be rethought? In other words, rather than a panel comprised primarily of arts professionals, should committees encompass other professional backgrounds as well as other demographics to support more diverse selections?
3. The proposal and selection processed can be biased against groups that have rarely taken part. Acknowledging that the work of people of color and women has historically been devalued, how can the selection process be adjusted to bolster participation from historically underrepresented groups, and also to minimize or eliminate expectations of free labor—both from the artists as they prepare proposals and from selection committees? A precedent to consider is Creative Capital's process,[27] which provides up-front support for applicants, selection panels that compensate participants, and architecture competitions that provide honoraria to shortlisted firms for their concept design schemes.
4. If we hope to build a process with more public input in the selection process, would an arts, cultural, and political education approach help to foreground discussions of aesthetics to ensure that public input does not favor by default or seek to emulate Western European art standards?
5. In trying to find a balance between the voice of the general public and a process with input from "experts" from the arts, the following questions should be addressed to establish a clear decision-making hierarchy for artist selection:
    a. When a memorial is planned for a cultural figure who has living relatives or an estate, and they are part of a selection committee, do they get a "super vote" or veto right?
    b. If a selection committee is used for a public memorial and the public disagrees with its selection, does the public get a veto right?
    c. What other stakeholders historically affect the selection process (for example, funders or elected officials)? How can those roles be made more transparent, and the hierarchy of their impact on the decision process more ethical and just?
6. Are restorative justice process guidelines necessary when selections are challenged or overturned (as happened when the city of San Francisco reversed a committee's selection of Lava Thomas's proposed Maya Angelou memorial)?[28]
7. Who gets to represent whose pain? If a memorial is proposed to commemorate a particularly sensitive or fraught topic, should it be a requirement that members of the public with experience or knowledge of the events in question participate in the selection and/or working process?
8. When an artist is selected for a new work, who within or alongside the City should safeguard that process and the artist from other potential pitfalls?
9. What systems of accountability should be in place to ensure that the City takes on this work in good faith from beginning to end without enacting harm?
10. When removing an old sculpture or memorial that is recognized as a symbol of oppression, what guidelines should be in place so that new traumas are not enacted?

[27] *Creative Capital Foundation website, undated, https://creative-capital.org.*

[28] *Heather Knight, "Artist's Vision for Maya Angelou Statue Crushed by City Hall's Dysfunction,"* San Francisco Chronicle, *Oct. 19, 2019.*

(For example, the city of Dallas removed a Robert E. Lee memorial, then auctioned it to the highest bidder—a golf course overlooking the U.S.-Mexico border, where the statue was installed.)[29]

11. What guidelines should be developed for a situation in which a particular monument that might otherwise be slated for removal is better suited for artist intervention or contextualization?

12. What are the ethics of private money used to create public space? What are the ethics of private land that functions as public space (such as Tony Tasset's *Eye* sculpture in Dallas)?[30]

13. What monuments and civic memorial projects should be designed with a multi-generational or permanent time frame in mind, and which might need shorter time frames in order to be of civic use?

14. Rather than working in isolation as a city to address these questions, are there ways to tap into the collective brainpower and resources of other civic bodies, nonprofits, and foundations already engaged in this work? As the EJI did before producing the National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, are there lessons to be learned from studying the history of peace and reconciliation efforts in other cities?

[29] *Demond Fernandez, "Controversial Robert E. Lee Statue Removed from Dallas Has New Home in Lajitas, TX," WFAA, Sept. 20, 2019.*

[30] *Hallock, "Dallas' Giant Eyeball Sculpture."*

Recommendations

1. **City advocate for the arts.** Create a new position or office within the City of Los Angeles (or alongside it) to advocate for the arts, artists, and programs designed to diversify and deepen engagements around civic memory. The position could be a "distributed model" (in other words, not subject to political hire). It could work alongside the DCA, the Department of Civil and Human Rights, and other relevant agencies, and should have a rotating, three-to-four-year appointment.
2. **Civic memory in Los Angeles.** Identify all city agencies and 501(c)(3) organizations that could be participants in this process. The rich network of cultural, community, and educational organizations across the city—large and small—should be tapped.
3. **A pluralistic approach.** Recognize that each project and its unique set of needs will be different. Rather than finding one approach for this process, Los Angeles could be an incubator to test out a series of working methods and become a lab for the future of civic memory–making.
4. **A global approach.** Create a civic memory project to collaborate with other cities, nonprofits, and foundations also engaged in this work, as a means of both mutual accountability and resource-sharing. The project could start as a website and series of public dialogues and branch out from there.
5. **Preparatory work.** Before starting any new projects, engage communities in their neighborhoods to map their current cultural assets as a way to engage the current layer of civic memory before projects are added.
6. **Advisory committee.** A committee of relevant partners—including artists, designers, creators across disciplines, community leaders, and City representatives—should be formed to help guide the process of civic memory outreach and action.
7. **Civic memory archive.** The work of civic memory–making has been active in L.A. in various forms before this Working Group and its subcommittees were formed. Acknowledging, researching, and archiving these contributions is an important project.

We recommend forming a diverse committee of artists, curators, historians, and other leaders adjacent to and outside of the arts to work both internally and in concert with communities to develop such an archive. For the archive to reflect the diverse authorship discussed above, it should engage a similarly diverse committee and process.

8. **Monuments' afterlife.** The meaning of a monument is neither singular nor static. Meaning changes as social, political, and financial contexts shift. As we trust artists to strategize and envision new monuments, so too should we invite them to intervene to reimagine existing ones. A monument is by nature didactic and presents an educational and artistic opportunity throughout its lifetime, including its potential removal. Perhaps a sunset clause or reevaluation milestone should be built into new commissions. A rigorous consideration around if, when, and how monuments are removed or "retired" should be included in any civic memory monument project.

Creating New Histories

The understanding of Los Angeles civic history will continue to shift and develop over time, and efforts on the part of the City will need to adapt accordingly. It is not realistic to assume that this report will be the final word on an issue of enormous complexity. It is likely that in the next generation, very different goals and processes will be necessary. As such, it is imperative that a process be developed that allows for continual adaption to changing circumstances, and that facilitates the inclusion of voices and groups long excluded from broader participation and integration within policy discussions of this kind. We see this subcommittee's work as the start of a discussion that must continue and broaden over time. ●

This subcommittee was chaired by Frank Escher, cofounder and principal at Escher GuneWardena Architecture in Los Angeles, and Leila Hamidi, arts organizer and writer and previously assistant project director for *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945–1980*. Its other members were Frederick Fisher, principal at Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects; Andrew Kovacs, architectural designer and founder of Office Kovacs in Los Angeles; Sharon Johnston, partner and cofounder of Johnston Marklee & Associates in Los Angeles; Marisa Kurtzman, partner at Frederick Fisher and Partners Architects; Kimberli Meyer, architect and curator and former director of the University Art Museum at California State University, Long Beach, and the MAK Center for Art and Architecture in L.A.; Chon Noriega, professor in the UCLA Department of Film, Television, and Digital Media and director of UCLA's Chicano Studies Research Center; and Megan Steinman, former director of the Underground Museum in Los Angeles.

In the 1870s, a thoroughfare running through the Boyle Heights neighborhood east of the Los Angeles River was named Brooklyn Avenue, in a nod to New Yorkers who were already in Southern California or who might arrive. The name stuck as Boyle Heights grew into one of the more racially and ethnically diverse neighborhoods in the state. By the Great Depression, for example, Boyle Heights was a center of Jewish life in the region and home to the largest concentration of Jewish Americans west of Chicago. In 1994, Brooklyn Avenue was renamed Cesar Chavez Avenue, in honor of the famed civil rights leader and in recognition of the expansion of the neighborhood's Latino populations. Brooklyn Avenue yet exists, if in the business names and signage calling up an earlier era. Photograph by Jesse White.

Case Study

"LO": The Birthplace of the Internet

On October 29, 1969, a group of UCLA researchers led by the young professor Leonard Kleinrock used a bulky machine called an Interface Message Processor, or IMP, to communicate with the Stanford Research Institute in Palo Alto. They sent the message via the Arpanet, a precursor of the internet. The researchers meant to begin by typing "LOGIN," but the system crashed before they could get to the third letter. So the very first Internet message turned out to be "LO," as in "Lo and behold." A few years ago, a graduate student in history at UCLA, Brad Fidler, suggested to the engineering department that it consider re-creating the room as it looked in 1969. The university gave him the go-ahead, and after landing contributions from Mark Cuban and Google's Eric Schmidt, among others, and consulting with Sebastian Clough, director of exhibitions at UCLA's Fowler Museum, Fidler restored a wall on one side of the room that had been taken down and decorated the space to match photographs from the 1960s. He set the IMP in one corner and, in another, placed a period desk topped by a rotary phone. UCLA now promotes the room as "the birthplace of the internet." In 2019, on the 50th anniversary of the communication with Palo Alto, Mayor Eric Garcetti presented Kleinrock with a key to the city. Kleinrock is shown at left during a visit to the room in early 2021. Photographs by Robert Park. ●


3420

Tennis with Schoenberg

Alex Ross

You can visit all the addresses in the course of a long day. Bertolt Brecht lived in a two-story clapboard house on 26th Street, in Santa Monica. The novelist Heinrich Mann resided a few blocks away, on Montana Avenue. The screenwriter Salka Viertel held gatherings on Mabery Road, near the Santa Monica beach. Alfred Döblin, the author of *Berlin Alexanderplatz*, had a place on Citrus Avenue, in Hollywood. His colleague Lion Feuchtwanger occupied the Villa Aurora, a Spanish-style mansion overlooking the Pacific; among its amusements was a Hitler dartboard. Vicki Baum, whose novel *Grand Hotel* brought her a screenwriting career, had a house on Amalfi Drive, near the leftist composer Hanns Eisler. Alma Mahler-Werfel, the widow of Gustav Mahler, lived with her third husband, the best-selling Austrian writer Franz Werfel, on North Bedford Drive, next door to the conductor Bruno Walter. Elisabeth Hauptmann, the co-author of The *Threepenny Opera*, lived in Mandeville Canyon, at the actor Peter Lorre's ranch. The philosopher Theodor W. Adorno rented a duplex apartment on Kenter Avenue, meeting with Max Horkheimer, who lived nearby, to write the post-Marxist jeremiad *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. At a suitably lofty remove, on San Remo Drive, was Thomas Mann, Heinrich's brother, the august author of *The Magic Mountain*.

In the 1940s, the West side of Los Angeles effectively became the capital of German literature in exile. It was as if the cafés of Berlin, Munich, and Vienna had disgorged their clientele onto Sunset Boulevard. The writers were at the core of a European émigré community that also included the film directors Fritz Lang, Max Ophuls, Otto Preminger, Jean Renoir, Robert Siodmak, Douglas Sirk, Billy Wilder, and William Wyler; the theatre directors Max Reinhardt and Leopold Jessner; the actors Marlene Dietrich and Hedy Lamarr; the architects Rudolph Schindler and Richard Neutra; and the composers Arnold Schoenberg, Igor Stravinsky, Erich Wolfgang Korngold, and Sergei Rachmaninoff. Seldom in human history has one city hosted such a staggering convocation of talent.

The standard myth of this great emigration pits the elevated mentality of Central Europe against the supposed "wasteland" or "cultural desert" of Southern California. Indeed, a number of exiles fell to scowling under the palms. Brecht wrote, "The town of Hollywood has taught me this / Paradise and hell / can be one city." The composer Eric Zeisl called California a "sunny blue grave." Adorno could have had Muscle Beach in mind when he identified a social condition called the Health unto Death: "The very people who burst with proofs of exuberant vitality could easily be taken for prepared corpses, from whom the news of their not-quite-successful decease has been withheld for reasons of population policy."

Anecdotes of dyspeptic aloofness belie the richness and the complexity of the émigrés' cultural role. As Ehrhard Bahr argues in his 2007 book, *Weimar on the Pacific*, many exiles were able to form bonds with progressive elements in mid-century L.A. Even before the refugees from Nazi Germany arrived, Schindler and Neutra had launched a wave of modernist residential architecture. When Schoenberg taught at USC and UCLA, he guided such native-born radical spirits as John Cage and Lou Harrison. Surprising alliances sprang up among the newcomers and adventurous members of the Hollywood set. Charlie Chaplin and George Gershwin played tennis with Schoenberg. Charles Laughton took the lead in a production of Brecht's *Galileo*.

By 1941, the full company of exiles had arrived in Los Angeles, blinking in the sun. Their daily routines were often absurd. Several writers, including Heinrich Mann and Döblin, were granted one-year contracts at Warner Bros. and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer. These offers had little to do with active

interest in their talent; rather, the motivation was to help them obtain visas. Required to play their part in this benevolent charade, Mann and Döblin reported for work each day, even though their English was poor and their ideas had no hope of being produced. Once the contracts ran out, the two struggled financially. Döblin wrote, "On the West Coast there are only two categories of writers: those who sit in clover and those who sit in dirt."

Such doleful tales raise the question of why so many writers fled to L.A. Why not go to New York, where exiled visual artists gathered in droves? Ehrhard Bahr answers that the "lack of a cultural infrastructure" in L.A. was attractive: it allowed refugees to reconstitute the ideals of the Weimar Republic instead of competing with an extant literary scene. In addition, film work was an undeniable draw. Brecht's anti-Hollywood invective hides the fact that he worked industriously to find a place as a screenwriter, and co-wrote Fritz Lang's *Hangmen Also Die!* Even Thomas Mann flirted with Hollywood; there was talk of a film adaptation of *The Magic Mountain*, with Montgomery Clift as Hans Castorp and Greta Garbo as Clavdia Chauchat.

The real explanation for the German literary migration to L.A., though, has to do with the steady growth of a network of friendly connections, and at its center was Salka Viertel. Donna Rifkind pays tribute to this irresistibly dynamic figure in *The Sun and Her Stars: Salka Viertel and Hitler's Exiles in the Golden Age of Hollywood* (Other Press), and New York Review Books recently reissued Viertel's addictive memoir, *The Kindness of Strangers*. Viertel worked tirelessly to obtain visas for endangered artists, and to help them find their footing when they arrived. Weimar on the Pacific might never have existed without her.

The array of personalities was formidable and eccentric. The Manns, scions of an old North German merchant family, were bourgeois to the core. Thomas had "the reserved politeness of a diplomat on official duty," Viertel wrote; Heinrich, the "manners of a nineteenth-century *grand seigneur*." Feuchtwanger was tan and fit, though he liked nothing more than to withdraw into his vast library and burrow into rare books. Döblin, of Pomeranian-Jewish background, had a cutting wit, which was often directed at Thomas Mann. Werfel, the son of German-speaking Jews in Prague, was the most politically conservative of the group, prone to outbursts against the Bolsheviks. Nonetheless, he was well liked—a mystic in a crowd of skeptics.

Thomas Mann, the uncrowned emperor of Germany in exile, lived in a spacious, white-walled aerie in Pacific Palisades, which the émigré architect J. R. Davidson had designed to his specifications. He saw *Bambi* at the Fox Theatre in Westwood; he ate Chinese food; he listened to Jack Benny on the radio; he furtively admired handsome men in uniform; he puzzled over the phenomenon of the "Baryton-Boy Frankie Sinatra," to quote his diaries. Like almost all the émigrés, he never attempted to write fiction about America. He was completing his own historical epic, the tetralogy *Joseph and His Brothers*, which is vastly more entertaining than its enormous length might suggest. The Biblical Joseph is reinvented as a wily, seductive youth who escapes spectacularly from predicaments of his own making, and eventually emerges, in the service of the Pharaoh, as a masterly bureaucrat of social reform. It's as if Tadzio from *Death in Venice* grew up to become Henry Wallace.

Mann's comfortable existence depended on a canny marketing plan devised by his publisher, Alfred A. Knopf, Sr. The scholar Tobias Boes, in *Thomas Mann's War* (Cornell), describes how Knopf remade a difficult, quizzical author as the "Greatest Living Man of Letters," an animate statue of European humanism. The supreme ironist became the

high dean of the Book-of-the-Month Club. The florid and error-strewn translations of Helen Lowe-Porter added to this ponderous impression. (John E. Woods's translations of the major novels, published between 1993 and 2005, are far superior.) Yet Knopf's positioning enabled Mann to assume a new public role: that of spokesperson for the anti-Nazi cause. Boes writes, "Because he so manifestly stood above the partisan fray, Mann was able to speak out against Hitler and be perceived as a voice of reason rather than be dismissed as an agitator."

Few obvious traces of the emigration persist in contemporary Los Angeles. A city that is flexing its power as an international arts capital ought to do more to honor this golden age of the not too distant past. But the evidence is there if you search for it. You can still hear stories about the principals from the composer Walter Arlen, aged one hundred, and the sublime actor and raconteur Norman Lloyd, aged a hundred and six. A modest tourist business has built up around the legacy of the émigré architects. The homes of Thomas Mann and Feuchtwanger are now under the purview of the German government, which offers residencies there to scholars and artists. The programmers at the Mann house, which has undergone a meticulous renovation, are soliciting video essays on the future of democracy—a topic as fraught today as it was when the author took it up in the nineteen-thirties.

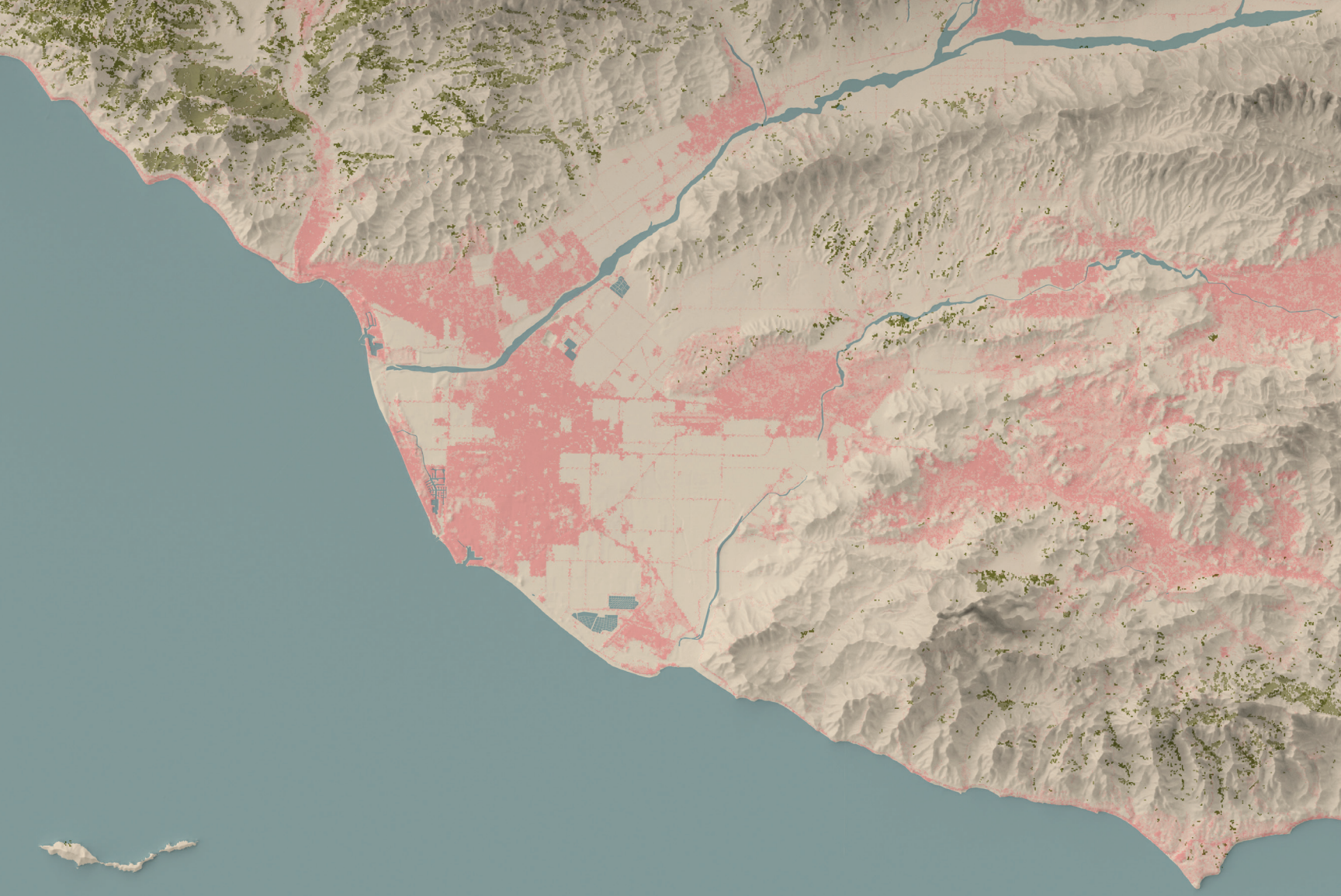
The improbable idyll of Weimar on the Pacific dissipated quickly. Werfel and Bruno Frank both died in 1945. Nelly Mann, Heinrich's wife, died the previous year, by suicide; Heinrich died in 1950. Döblin went to Germany to assist in the de-Nazification effort, meeting with considerable frustration. Those exiles who remained in America felt mounting insecurity as the Cold War took hold. McCarthyism made no exceptions for leftist writers who had been persecuted by the Nazis. Brecht left in 1947, the day after he appeared before the House Un-American Activities Committee, and later settled in East Germany. Feuchtwanger longed to return to Europe but, having never been granted U.S. citizenship, chose not to risk leaving.

Thomas Mann, who had become an American citizen in 1944, felt the dread of déjà vu. The likes of McCarthy, Hoover, and Nixon had crossed his line of sight before. In 1947, after the blacklisting of the Hollywood Ten, he recorded a broadcast in which he warned of incipient Fascist tendencies: "Spiritual intolerance, political inquisition, and declining legal security, and all this in the name of an alleged 'state of emergency': that is how it started in Germany." Two years later, he found his face featured in a *Life* magazine spread titled "Dupes and Fellow Travelers." In his diary, he commented that it looked like a *Steckbrief*: a "Wanted" poster.

To stand in Mann's study today, with editions of Goethe and Schiller on the shelves, is to feel pride in the country that took him in and shame for the country that drove him out. In this room, the erstwhile "Greatest Living Man of Letters" fell prey to the clammy fear of the hunted. Was the year 1933 about to repeat itself? Would he be detained, interrogated, even imprisoned? In 1952, Mann took a final walk through his house and made his exit. He died in Zurich, in 1955—no longer an émigré German but an American in exile. ●

Adapted from "Exodus," an essay published in the March 9, 2020, issue of The New Yorker, where Alex Ross, a member of the Civic Memory Working Group, is music critic.

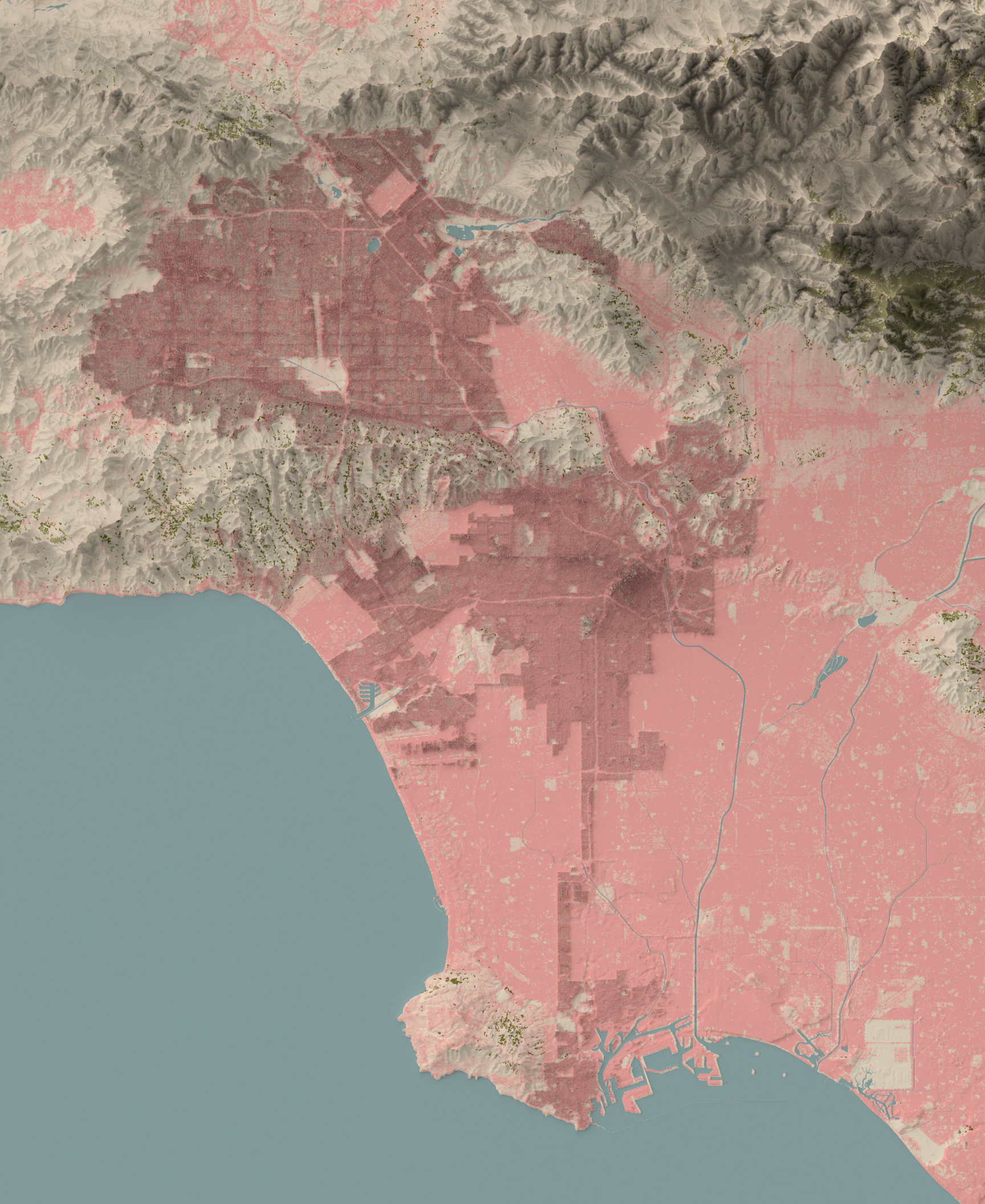
Thomas Mann in the garden of his house on San Remo Drive, 1946. Courtesy ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, Thomas-Mann-Archiv.



This map, created by Scott Reinhard with a publicly available data set featuring all the buildings and other structures in Los Angeles, provides an unusually clear view of the city's less-than-Cartesian shape. That shape, in turn, tells a story about how the city has grown in relation to topography, geography, and perhaps most of all the nexus of natural resources and economic opportunity.

The San Fernando Valley, annexed by the city in 1915, stretches north and west away from downtown to reach the landing point of the Los Angeles Aqueduct, carrying precious drinking water down from the Owens River. (The Aqueduct had first reached the San Fernando Valley two years earlier.) As Kevin Starr wrote in the Los Angeles Times in 1996, as the Valley was considering seceding from the larger city, that 1915 annexation "represents the Louisiana Purchase of Los Angeles history. It doubled the size of the city and raised Los Angeles to the level of a city-state possessed of its own agricultural region. This was an era of bold imperialism at home and abroad; and the oligarchy pushing the hyper-expansion of the city had profits in mind equal to anything envisioned by Cecil Rhodes."

South of downtown, meanwhile, the city proper stretches a thin arm in the direction of, and then closes a fist to embrace, the Port of Los Angeles, which became more fully connected to the rest of the city in 1909 when L.A. gobbled up San Pedro and Wilmington. Moving west from downtown, finally, the holes visible in the larger net represent separate cities, among them West Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Culver City, and Santa Monica, that have resisted the substantial gravitational and political pull of Los Angeles to remain independent.



Flow

Lynell George

We tell ourselves, from a young age, "don't get too attached"—not to the Pepto Bismol–pink bungalows, not to the wild, empty lots, not to poky amusement parks, not to lush shade trees, not to our friends, often struck by wanderlust (or beholden to their parent's whims). Everything keeps shifting, moving, blasting off. So really what made me a daughter of this place was a set of particular experiences: roads driven, neighborhoods claimed and cracked like a puzzle, slang acquired, recalled and embroidered stories that kept a feeling of home alive. "That used to be" and "That once was" became as much a part of daily discourse as grousing about traffic or home teams. Even if an absence stung, or seemed too abrupt, something inside of me prepared me for its departure. I was finally just beginning to understand what fluidity meant, and to study those who were better adapted to it.

"It's hard not to be nostalgic," an old high school friend mused recently upon hearing of another touchstone lost—another city block razed, in its entirety, "when they keep taking everything away." But I have to wonder if what we're feeling is really nostalgia, or rather if we're simply adrift, lost at home. This fluidity and change are inevitable (and difficult to fight) in a place where so many have come to change, and change again. And so we should find our place in it, ride the wave, find our flow.

Most longtime Angelenos will tell you that there are many Los Angeleses—both physical and locations of the mind. Some—of both varieties—might fit you better than others. Finding your L.A. means giving yourself over to the city, its contours, and its riddles. When you do, you'll feel it. There's an aspect of L.A. that slips under your skin. Less attitude than predilection or frame of mind. It seeps in. Like the soot that drifts in, that finds its way through tiny gaps in your windows, the grit that powders your floors after even the mildest Santa Anas. You don't see it drifting in, accumulating, but you note the traces later. Sometimes they startle you.

For all the blink-and-it's-gone sleights of hand, here in Los Angeles, the deep past can catch you unawares. Throw you for a loop. I hadn't seen my teen-years best friend Corrine in decades. She'd eased away in increments—first across town, then out of the country—Europe, the Middle East. Then who knew where. In the last stage, it was so sudden and complete, like an old-fashioned long-distance telephone line that went dead. She'd vanished in a way that's difficult for people to now, with all the ways that social media tethers us.

About three years ago, we found our way back to one another. By chance. She had slipped back into town, quietly, and was once more trying on L.A. for fit. After an hours-long phone conversation, we made in-person plans and fell into a familiar back-and-forth. Talking, walking, and then aimless driving. Same but different. We'd daydreamed and schemed about getting here, to this stage where we alone mapped the next moves. Sometimes I'd feel the presence of those long-winded girls still in the backseat.

On a couple of these outings, feeding a sense of curiosity that was akin to sentimental, we tried to revisit old haunts. Impossible. All of them were gone or severely altered. One special spot in Venice was so recently shuttered that lights still glowed in the further recesses of the dining room. We scrambled excitedly out of the car only to read the handwritten "Thank you for all your years of patronage!" sign taped to the windowpane. We were too late, again—by mere moments, it seemed.

Gone too were my side roads and secret parking spots. Vanished were the wide vistas with hints of the not-too-distant ocean.

Some weeks later, I slogged through the traffic congesting our old territories. An early departure had left me with a little time to kill before a dinner meeting. I circled the old neighborhood in a stretch of Culver City that imperceptibly gives out into Venice. An invisible border, but when you grew up there, you knew instinctively when you went from one to the other. A feeling. Some scent on the breeze.

On a whim, I considered doing something I hadn't done even since reconnecting with Corrine. I pulled a U-turn and headed, from memory, to her parents' old house, the site of so much of our future dreaming. Closing in, I made the familiar right turn off the busy boulevard. Counted off the lots to my destination. The house was gone. What stood in its place was a construction site in limbo, wrapped in fencing. Perhaps contested. The skeleton of a condo unit was on its way up, its footprint bulging over its limit-lines, a hulking "You-Could-Be-Home-Now" cookie-cutter ad like all over Los Angeles.

This street once had a little bit of this and that. Spanish stucco, bungalow, cottage. Kit house. It was an L.A. story—around-the-world tales. Now you could see just a smattering of evidence of what had been there. In fact, next to the condo sprouting from Corrine's dad's old lawn, a weathered postwar cottage still stood tough, though I was sure for not much longer.

What would it be to be the last man standing? The line in the sand? To hold what was left of the memory of a place? I wondered what stories of the old neighborhood remained behind that door.

"Neighborhoods aren't supposed to be museums," I'd read in a recent news story. Words from a developer defending the necessary evolution of place: how foolish it was, essentially, to try to trap neighborhoods in amber. Yes. But shouldn't these places we call home, out of which we grow, harbor some sense of the story that came before—some acknowledgment of what is unique, sui generis?

More and more now, I understand and make peace with the fact that Los Angeles exists within us, vividly in fact: in those memories we made, those new thresholds we crossed, the chain-link we cut through, the different worlds we stepped into. That's where I suppose it will exist for those who follow us; who mindfully create a sense of home; who invest in neighborhoods and deep friendships across so many lines that could divide; who insist that Los Angeles is more than just a backdrop.

As much as I want to keep pressing rewind, *just one more time,* this is a fast-forward city. It always has been. I know better. I tell myself, "Keep moving." ●

Adapted from an essay in After/Image: Los Angeles Outside the Frame *(Santa Monica, CA: Angel City Press, 2017).*

Subcommittee 6

Sites and Themes

This group considered the ways in which civic memory might be cultivated and brought to material life in Los Angeles. Through synergistic and wide-ranging discussions, we came up with a set of key themes, modes of commemoration, and three "sites/histories" as case studies. The committee agreed that this is an especially potent moment for elevating the stories of both displaced and ordinary Angelenos to send the message that their histories matter in the city today—and will matter tomorrow. It is important to acknowledge and commemorate places that may look or seem ordinary and to take an expansive, inclusive view of historical significance. Commemoration reminds us that history is not a closed chapter, but a living dimension of our social fabric: it reflects our vision of the city's future. We see this as an auspicious moment to ensure that an ethos of inclusion and social justice is embraced in that vision.

In the text that follows, we summarize the three main areas of our discussion: key historical themes, our ideas on modes of commemoration, and case studies of three sites—or more accurately, "histories," since they were not all tied to place—that flesh out how these commemorations might take shape. The case studies are meant to serve not only as templates for other sites and stories, but also as conceptual jumping-off points.

Enduring and Defining Themes

Our group compiled a list of themes in L.A. history that are enduring, defining forces and have shaped Los Angeles. These themes can help create a larger conceptual framework for thinking through the City's commemoration strategy. The criteria used in identifying them included chronological and geographical breadth and the inclusion of diverse sets of communities. Our list of themes included displacement and removal, migration and immigration, resistance and collective transformation, racial violence, social justice, labor and the people who built L.A., culture and cultural production, caretaking during crisis, Los Angeles as "born global," and Indigeneity.

Displacement emerged as a particularly resonant theme. The displacement of people from neighborhoods, from land, and from privilege has been a constant throughout Los Angeles history, at least since the arrival of Europeans in the eighteenth century. Community displacement has reflected shifting power and racial hierarchies that could and did lead to racial turnover of spaces across Los Angeles—from ethnic enclaves like Chinatown to residential neighborhoods bulldozed for redevelopment and freeway construction. Displacement is an especially powerful theme because it lives on in the people who carry memories of displacement and who live out lives of resilience. They are part of our social fabric, and honoring their experience, memory, and acts of resilience should be a primary objective of commemoration.

Immigration and migration is a related theme, which can represent displacements not only from home countries but also in the community experiences that both groups confronted in Los Angeles. Immigrant neighborhoods were often targeted for redevelopment, gentrification, or punitive state policies (such as the repatriation of Mexicans during the 1930s or the internment of Japanese during World War II). The myriad ways that displacement appears and reappears throughout L.A. history pose challenges for place-based commemoration, because these are histories of movement, departures, and spatial erasures. They are often sites that no longer exist on the landscape. They comprise what UCLA cityLAB director Dana Cuff has termed "provisional spaces," where once-vibrant sites might now be parking lots or vacant lots. These provisional sites compel innovative and creative ways of thinking about commemoration.[1]

[1] *Dana Cuff,* The Provisional City: Los Angeles Stories of Architecture and Urbanism *(Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002).*

Another theme our discussions foregrounded was resistance and collective transformation. Countless stories of struggle by marginalized groups to resist oppression and claim their right to the city recur throughout L.A.'s past (and present). This theme captures both the nature of that marginalization and how various groups have challenged the forces that marginalized them—racism, class exploitation, sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and so on. This resistance can be collective or individual. L.A. history is replete with narratives of people challenging structures of oppression and creating alternative forms of power. These efforts have been waged by people of color, the poor, workers, immigrants, women, LGBTQ individuals, political radicals, environmental justice activists, and other marginalized groups. Their stories have often played out in everyday places—in people's homes, in the streets, in nondescript buildings. As the writers of *A People's Guide to Los Angeles* put it, these histories require "an appreciation for vernacular landscapes—landscapes of the ordinary and everyday" since those were often the spatial contexts of these efforts.[2]

[2] *Laura Pulido, Laura R. Barraclough, and Wendy Cheng,* A People's Guide to Los Angeles *(Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 7.*

These two themes—displacement and resistance—resonated with our group, and we used them as launch points for discussing how the City might imagine commemoration around their frameworks.

Modes and Memory

Our group also brainstormed ideas about modes of commemoration—how the City might recruit people's interest in civic memory. These modes fell roughly into three categories: permanent installations, internet tools, and ephemeral installations and activities. The conceptual framework of a theme like displacement, for example, demands flexible, creative thinking about how to capture something that no longer exists in space. While our site examples flesh out these modes in more detail, we wanted to convey the substance of our discussion on modes since it touched on several ideas that might be deployed beyond our examples.

Permanent markers might include statues, murals, plaques along a sidewalk or in front of a building, patterned markings in a sidewalk to trace the trail of a historic space or event (such as a protest march), or other fixed markers. New statues could be commissioned that would bring to light important, little-known figures in L.A. history, or an unknown figure to stand in for a significant movement or moment. We also

discussed existing statues that might be creatively recontextualized. The group agreed that permanent statues can be problematic, as we have witnessed in the tearing down of controversial statues (most recently Junípero Serra's). Contextualization offers an alternative to removal.

One compelling example comes from the Bayreuth Festspielhaus in Germany. Outside that opera house sits a bust of Richard Wagner, created by the pro-Nazi sculptor Arno Breker in the 1950s. After years of discussion about whether to take down that sculpture, in 2012 an exhibition was installed surrounding the bust, consisting of panels that profiled the Jewish musicians who were forbidden to perform at the Festspielhaus during the Nazi regime (many of whom fled Germany or were killed in the death camps). What began as an almost accidental, temporary solution to the problem of the Wagner bust ended up creating a moving, powerful space for reflecting on these layers of history.[3] A similar approach might lend itself to contextualizing controversial monuments in Los Angeles.

Internet tools are powerful instruments for working flexibly across L.A.'s vast geographic spaces and for their ability to create an augmented reality to help people experience their city in new ways. Apps offer the pragmatic advantage of circumventing property owners who might otherwise be reluctant to affix something permanent to their property. One idea that we discussed is a navigation-based "L.A. sites of memory" driving app: as the user drives around the city, a narrator could tell histories of the places being passed. Driving apps could also be structured as thematic tours, guiding users from one site to the next. Tours could be devised around topics like labor history, African American activism or culture, LGBTQ history in L.A., or environmental justice (the tours in *A People's Guide to Los Angeles* are an excellent starting point).

There might also be an "LA sites of memory" app linked to light rail lines, where stories of places along the line routes would come up on a rider's phone. Schools and community colleges along these routes might be recruited to help write these stories and provide content and ideas. Likewise, walking tour apps could focus on particular neighborhoods, protest march routes (such as the Chicano Moratorium or the 1994 marches protesting Prop 187), or other areas significant to L.A. history. An app could also act as a central hub, showing where all civic memory activities are located throughout Los Angeles—driving tours, light rail apps, walking tours to schedules of events, and so forth. In line with these tours, a "pilgrimage menu" might be developed for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games, to guide visitors to L.A. to explore the hidden spaces and histories of the city. Community members might be enlisted to help identify these places and develop these histories, and tours could be created out of this work.

Models for these types of interactive app experiences exist. The Cleveland Historical app, for example, was developed collectively by historians, students, and community members through the Center for Public History + Digital Humanities at Cleveland State University. The app, which is available on both the Apple and Android platforms, links places to archival images, oral histories, audio clips, and documents. Other examples abound, from Google Earth virtual tours to GyPSy Guide's audio tour guides and more.[4]

Ephemeral modes of commemoration are another medium. These might include temporary installations, performances, projections, bus tours, or other events. Intangible modes lend themselves well to themes like displacement, where physical structures no longer exist. "Intangible heritage" is, in fact, one of the most

[3] *See Vincent Vargas, "2012 Bayreuth exhibition: 'Silenced Voices,' YouTube, June 6, 2013, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dMsRG44uvuE.*

[4] Cleveland Historical *app website, undated, https://clevelandhistorical.org; Shianne Edelmayer, "Google Earth Tour Guide: 14 Virtual Tours You'll Want to Check Out,"* MakeUseOf, *May 18, 2020; GyPSy Guide Audio Tour Guides website, undated, https://gypsyguide.com.*

controversial, critical debates in heritage conservation at the moment, as practitioners debate whether the imperative is to preserve extant buildings that looked the way they did during their moment of historical significance, or to emphasize how people interacted with those places beyond the four walls of a building.[5] San Antonio and San Francisco have been experimenting with "intangible heritage," and this may be an auspicious moment for Los Angeles to consider doing the same. In San Francisco, for example, communities created cultural districts as "special use" districts to protect legacy businesses, nonprofits, and other cultural institutions in existence 30 years or more.[6] These efforts protect the uses of these neighborhoods and their historic memory, while combatting displacement and gentrification.

Modes such as intangible commemoration and heritage can push us to find innovative ways to cultivate civic memory for Los Angeles. For instance, projections of images on a building create an augmented reality, prompting passersby to question their environment and its layered history. Bus tours allow people to experience history in a collective way—and without monuments. And of course digital apps, as discussed, could be a way to harness already ubiquitous mobile devices to serve these aims in our city.

[5] *Works that capture the debate on "intangible heritage" include Laurajane Smith and Natsuko Akagawa, eds.,* Intangible Heritage *(London: Routledge, 2008); Mike Buhler, Desiree Smith, and Laura Dominguez, "Sustaining San Francisco's Living History: Strategies for Conserving Cultural Heritage Assets," San Francisco Heritage, September 2014, https://www.sfheritage.org/Cultural-Heritage-Assets-Final.pdf; Donna Graves, James Michael Buckley, and Gail Dubrow, "Emerging Strategies for Sustaining San Francisco's Diverse Heritage,"* Change Over Time *8, no. 2 (Fall 2018): 164–85. On intangible cultural heritage, see also the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) website, https://ich.unesco.org.*

Sites/Histories: Case Studies of Commemoration

Our group chose case study sites to explore how commemoration might materialize to move forward some of the abovementioned themes and ideas. We chose sites related to displacement and social justice, and sites/histories that would allow us to explore different modes of commemoration. They are meant to serve as examples or templates as well as potential sites for consideration. Our three case studies are Chavez Ravine, the German émigrés of Los Angeles, and Black activism.

Chavez Ravine

Among the stories of displacement in L.A. history, Chavez Ravine looms large. It is the steep canyon northwest of downtown that in the early twentieth century became home to a cluster of three semirural Mexican American communities—Palo Verde, La Loma, and Bishop. The neighborhood had modest homes, a grocery, a church, and an elementary school. Some residents kept goats and chickens on the steep hillsides. These were poor yet cohesive communities. Many lived there because of residential exclusion from white neighborhoods. In the 1940s, the L.A. Planning Commission launched plans to build public housing throughout L.A. to deal with surging housing demand. Typical of urban redevelopment efforts of this era, it designated poor communities of color as "blighted" and targeted them for bulldozing to make way for redevelopment. Chavez Ravine was one of these communities. At first, the plan was to build a new, modernist public housing project designed by Richard Neutra and Robert Alexander. That plan was scrapped in the face of red-baiting by critics who charged creeping socialism.[7] Though some families sold their homes to the City, others refused. By the late 1950s, a climactic battle between the City and the remaining residents led to their removal. The City ultimately sold the emptied land to Walter O'Malley, who built Dodger Stadium on the site. The former Palo Verde neighborhood is now covered by parking lots surrounding Dodger Stadium.

Every year, the displaced families of Chavez Ravine hold an annual picnic reunion at the Elysian Park Recreation Center. The only permanent markers of their experience

[6] *"Process for Establishing Cultural Districts," San Francisco Planning Department, Executive Summary, Administrative Code Text Amendment, June 6, 2018.*

[7] *On the rise and fall of a public housing ethic in Los Angeles and its impact on the city's built environment, see Don Parson,* Making a Better World: Public Housing, the Red Scare, and the Direction of Modern Los Angeles *(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005).*

are a small plaque outside the building, marking where the picnic happens, and a ghostlike set of stairs leading to nowhere. In their interviews with Priscilla Leiva for the "Chavez Ravine: An Unfinished Story" project,[8] the families identify two priorities for commemoration: to convey this history to every individual who goes to a Dodger game, and to send the message that this should never happen again. Dr. Leiva shared that for some theirs is not a resentful narrative, but one that conveys "look at what we lost/sacrificed and look at what the city has because of us." It is an affirmation of a displaced community that paid the ultimate price for the city we have today.

To commemorate the displaced Chavez Ravine community, our group devised a set of ideas that included ephemeral, internet-based, and permanent elements. One idea was to use the massive exterior walls of Dodger Stadium as screens onto which images of the Chavez Ravine community and its people could be projected. Fans entering or exiting the stadium would see images of the old neighborhoods (the Chavez Ravine elders have never-before-seen home movies and photos that they might be willing to share). The imagery might even reach deeper into the past when the land was home solely to Indigenous people. We agreed that the scale and spectacle of these projections would create a powerful space of civic memory, evoking an alternative sense of place by illuminating this layer of history.

Another commemorative tack might be to rename the streets and intersections around the stadium after the displaced communities. A plaque or wall located prominently inside or outside Dodger Stadium could explain the history of Chavez Ravine and list the last names of the displaced families. And another idea was to visually outline the Palo Verde neighborhood on the parking lot where it once stood, perhaps through a two-dimensional public art display. An app could even weave these elements together: it could tell a brief history of Chavez Ravine, identify the elements of memorialization (including the stairs to nowhere at Elysian Park Recreation Center), map out where the displaced families ended up settling, and highlight routes into Dodger Stadium through surrounding Latinx neighborhoods, all as ways to evoke the area's Mexican American past. Fan sitting in the stands could open their phones and experience an augmented reality—a raised historical consciousness about the space around them.

The German Émigrés

Another case study on the theme of displacement and exile is the great influx of Central European émigrés in the 1930s and 1940s. Comprising Jews and leftists fleeing Nazi persecution, this group included important figures like Theodor W. Adorno, Vicki Baum, Bertolt Brecht, Alfred Döblin, Lion Feuchtwanger, Fritz Lang, Alma Mahler-Werfel, Heinrich Mann, Thomas Mann, Arnold Schoenberg, Salka Viertel, and Franz Werfel. When Germany invaded France in 1940, many non-German-speaking figures, like Igor Stravinsky, ended up in Los Angeles as well. They joined other German-speaking émigrés like the architect Richard Neutra. Later, some of the leftists found the atmosphere of the Cold War and McCarthyism intolerable and ended up going into exile once again. Thomas Mann, having become an American citizen, died in Switzerland. Their stories remind us of the fragility of democracy and the challenges of refugee life, even for celebrated authors and musicians. Commemorating their lives can bring those themes to the forefront at a fraught moment in American history and honor experiences that have receded from memory for many Angelenos.

Émigré life took place mostly in private homes on the west side, which puts potential sites of memory in private hands and makes creating public spaces impractical.

[8] *"Chavez Ravine: An Unfinished Story" website, undated, https://www.chavezravinela.com/home.*

The German government owns two important locales: the Thomas Mann house and Feuchtwanger's Villa Aurora, both in Pacific Palisades. Because of the surrounding residential neighborhoods and the lack of parking, neither is a public site, although they do hold small events. The Rudolph Schindler house in West Hollywood is open to the public (under the auspices of the MAK Center for Art and Architecture), as is the Neutra studio in Silver Lake. University campuses also house a couple of commemorative sites: the Feuchtwanger Library at USC and Schoenberg Hall at UCLA. The Schoenberg family still has a vigorous presence in L.A.: the composer's sons Ronald and Lawrence remain in the area, as does Ronald's son Randol, a lawyer who has been active in the restitution of artworks stolen by the Nazis. And the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), through Stephanie Barron, its senior curator and a major historian of the emigration, fosters a strong awareness of the émigré experience.

In our subcommittee's discussions about ways to commemorate the émigrés, the idea came up to install a small, permanent memorial at the Brentwood Country Mart, where many of them shopped. (A famous story tells of Arnold Schoenberg meeting Marta Feuchtwanger, Lion's wife, there after Thomas Mann published his novel *Doctor Faustus*—a work that caused a dispute between Mann and Schoenberg.) Names could be inscribed in the sidewalk, on a plaque, or in a small exhibit. A driving app with narration tied to location, as described above, could tell stories of the émigrés as users visited their former homes. A bus tour of the homes—à la "Émigré Home Tours" (a playful variation on the tourist-popular Star Homes Tours)—with an open-roofed bus decorated for the occasion, was another idea for either an occasional or regular event to bring attention to the émigré experience. We also imagined a festival put on by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, a collaboration with LACMA in terms of an exhibition, or a collaboration on a conference or lecture series with the Thomas Mann House or Villa Aurora and one of the universities augmenting the group's commemoration.

A final idea: there could be occasional displays of émigré faces, names, and quotations on billboards around the city, where one would expect to find a movie poster. This would have a certain ironic quality given the critiques of Hollywood commercialism that emanated from the likes of Brecht and Adorno. "The town of Hollywood has taught me this / Paradise and hell / can be one city. — Brecht." "The whole is the false. — Adorno." Such billboards would be mystifying to most people but could spark curiosity.

Black Activism

Black social justice activism has a deep, rich history in Los Angeles. To commemorate this history, we envisioned a multisite, multimode approach that would span the city, capturing the network of organizing. The Southern California Library could act as an anchor point for a series of explorations into this history. The library itself is rooted in the movement and could be woven into this commemorative project through exhibits, displays, and events. Murals could memorialize this history in a two-pronged approach—by commissioning new murals and by pointing people to existing murals. (An app like those mentioned above could facilitate this second goal.) One suggestion was to create murals on buildings located on former historic sites. For example, the site of the *California Eagle* newspaper is now an appliance and furniture store. A mural on that building might depict Charlotta Bass, the paper's editor and publisher, sitting at her desk, glimpsed through a "window" into the interior. The former site of the Black Panther building on Central Avenue might also be a space for commissioned murals, public art, or a visual projection, depicting an organizing meeting or some other dimension of that organization's history. People could also be directed to existing murals, such as the mosaic at Slauson and Crenshaw (now called Ermias "Nipsey Hussle" Asghedom Square) depicting Black history in L.A.

Another element of this commemoration could be reviving the Biddy Mason Park in downtown L.A. Born into slavery, Bridget "Biddy" Mason became a civic leader, entrepreneur, and philanthropist in the late nineteenth century. The park that commemorates her—which already features a timeline wall by artist Sheila de Bretteville and an assemblage by visual artist Betye Saar—might be updated to reflect new scholarship that more fully fleshes out Mason's role in philanthropy and institution building in the city.[9] Currently, the walk is not easy to find. This memorial is an example of an existing structure that could be updated and foregrounded more effectively—and ultimately woven into a larger Black history commemorative project.

Other ideas include walking tours in south L.A.; a plaque or other commemoration at the former Wrigley Field (42nd and Avalon), where Martin Luther King Jr. spoke and where the local War on Poverty program was headquartered; and a pattern of markers (such as plaques) marking other important sites. Once again, an app could identify and connect these various commemorations. ●

[9] *Sheila Levrant de Bretteville, Biddy Mason:* Time and Place, *1991, sculpture, concrete and other materials, Biddy Mason Park, Los Angeles; Betye Saar,* Biddy Mason's House of the Open Hand, *1990, multimedia, Biddy Mason Park, Los Angeles.*

This subcommittee was chaired by Becky Nicolaides, historian and author of *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in the Working-Class Suburbs of Los Angeles, 1920–1965* (University of Chicago Press, 2002), and Mark Wild, professor of history at California State University, Los Angeles, and author of *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth Century Los Angeles* (University of California Press, 2005). Its other members were William Deverell, professor of history at USC and director of the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West; Laura Dominguez, doctoral candidate in history at USC; Jessica Kim, associate professor of history at California State University, Northridge, and author of *Imperial Metropolis: Los Angeles, Mexico, and the Borderlands of American Empire, 1865–1941* (University of North Carolina Press, 2019); Caitlin Parker, a doctoral candidate in history at UCLA; Priscilla Leiva, assistant professor of Chicana/o and Latina/o studies at Loyola Marymount University; Alex Ross, music critic for the *New Yorker* and author, most recently, of *Wagnerism: Art and Politics in the Shadow of Music* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2020); and Yuval Sharon, artistic director at The Industry, an independent opera production company in Los Angeles.

Mike and Walt's declaration was one of many messages in the east abutment of the Spring Street Bridge expressing queer identity. Constructed in 1926, the bridge abutments under the Spring Street Bridge were left open and soon covered with writing in pencil, chalk, and charcoal—before being sealed sometime in the 1940s. Restructuring of the Spring Street Bridge in 2013 re-opened the abutments, revealing preserved writings and images, some of which were documented before contemporary graffiti writers wrote over them. Judging from the signatures on its interior, which date from the late 1920s and early 1930s, the eastern bridge abutment seems to have acted as part queer space and a safe haven for people with non-normative sexual identities. Text and photograph by Susan Phillips.

Portfolio

Architect Paul R. Williams

Janna Ireland

The Los Angeles artist Janna Ireland has in recent years produced a superb collection of photographs of the work of the prolific, pioneering, and supremely talented Southern California architect Paul Revere Williams (1894-1980), drawing renewed attention to the breadth of his residential and institutional designs while bringing certain details of his specific design and material approach into sharper focus. The images shared here suggest the continuing contradictions of historic preservation in Los Angeles: even as interest in Williams has surged recently, with the appearance of a documentary film on public television stations across the country and the announcement that the University of Southern California School of Architecture and Getty Research Institute had jointly acquired his archive, individual examples of his work, particularly his houses, continue to find themselves vulnerable to demolition. To accompany the recommendations from the Historic Preservation subcommittee of the Civic Memory Working Group that the City consider extending protection to whole bodies of work by significant architects, we present this look at buildings by Williams in states of both glory and distress. We are also grateful for the details provided later in this Portfolio by Laura Dominguez about the relationship between Williams and one of his most important clients, Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company. ●

Founder's Church of Religious Science (3281 West Sixth Street), built in 1960. Photographed in 2017.

First African Methodist Episcopal Church (2270 South Harvard Boulevard), built in 1965. Photographed in 2017.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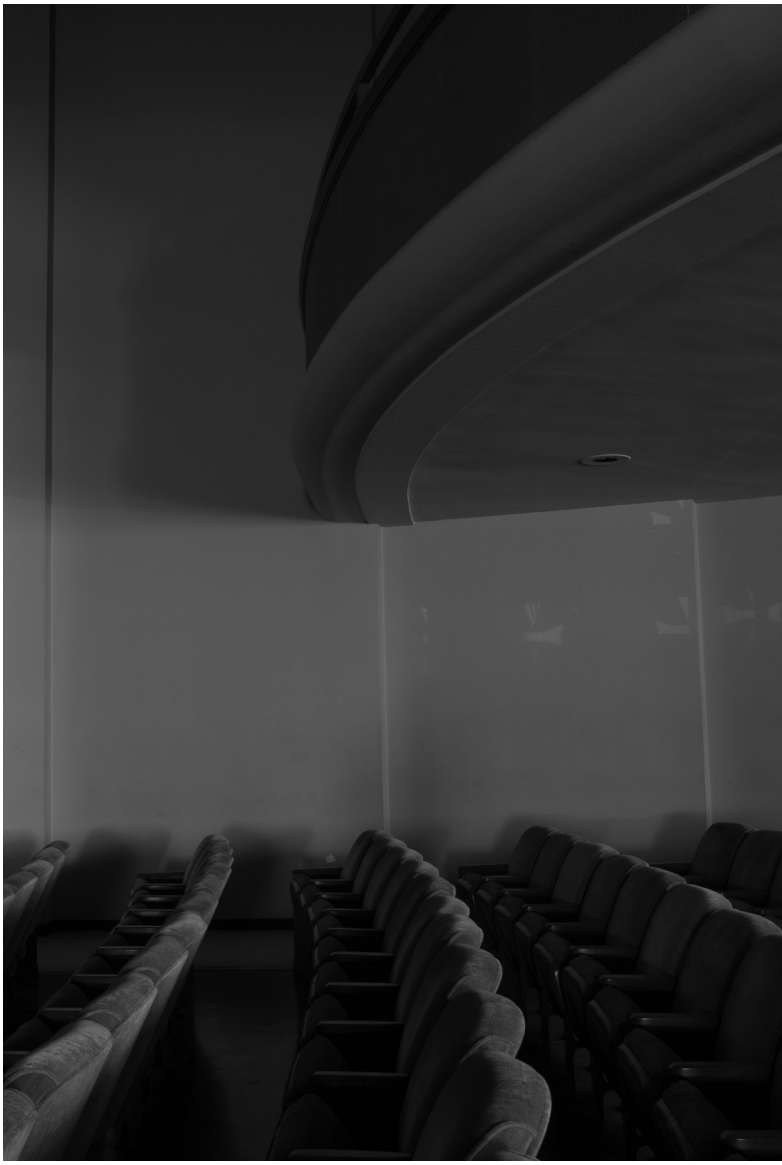


Left: First African Methodist Episcopal Church (2270 South Harvard Boulevard), built in 1965. Photographed in 2017.

Above: Founder's Church of Religious Science (3281 West Sixth Street), built in 1960. Photographed in 2017.

Founder's Church of Religious Science (3281 West Sixth Street), built in 1960. Photographed in 2017.

Born of the Great Migration, Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company transformed the social and economic fortunes of African Americans in 20th-century Los Angeles. In 1925, founders William H. Nickerson, Norman O. Houston, and George Beavers, Jr. opened their first home office on Central Avenue with a mission to provide equitable life insurance policies, small business and home loans, and professional employment to Black Angelenos.

Golden State Mutual (G.S.M.) exemplified the entrepreneurial spirit of westward Black settlers. The company advanced a long tradition of self-help and uplift as solutions to racial oppression. It harnessed the collective purchasing power of Black Angelenos to circulate capital among families, workers, and small business owners. It underwrote generational wealth.

By 1945, G.S.M. became the largest African American-owned company in the American West by investing in the revolutionary idea that Black lives mattered. For decades, white-owned insurance companies denied coverage or sold duplicitous policies to African Americans, crystalizing racist views about Black bodies, families, and mortality. G.S.M. rewrote the industry rules. By its book, African Americans were a boon—not a risk—to capital and community.

In 1928, the company relocated to a custom Spanish Colonial Revival headquarters at 4261 S. Central Avenue, designed by African American architect James Garrott (Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument, or H.C.M., #580). It remained in this location for two decades.

In 1947, G.S.M. commissioned master architect Paul R. Williams to design a new home office building at 1999 W. Adams Boulevard. By moving west from the historical heart of Black L.A., the company inaugurated a new era of dismantling racial boundaries, reimagining the people it served, and imprinting African American achievement on the urban landscape. Though firmly committed to its Black clientele, G.S.M. looked to integrate its services in the postwar period. Williams was a natural fit for conceiving a modern monument to Black excellence and the possibilities of racial cooperation.

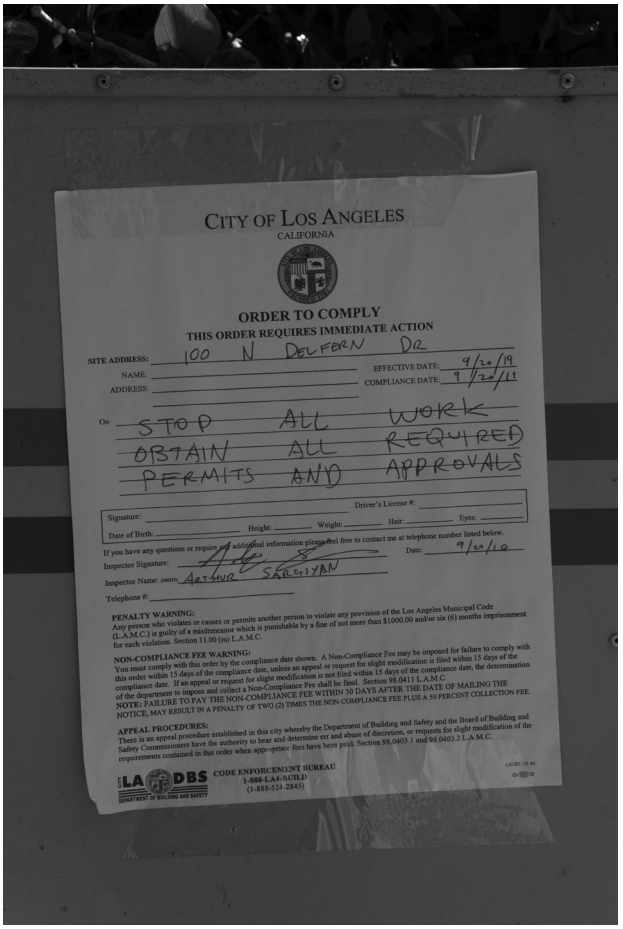
Williams believed that individual success would conquer racial animus. Many of his projects were residences for middle- and upper-class white clients in racially exclusive neighborhoods of Los Angeles. By the time he earned the G.S.M. commission, he had more than two decades of experience crossing racial barriers in residential, commercial, and civic settings.

To complement Williams's work, G.S.M. commissioned New York artists Charles Alston and Hale Woodruff to design a two-panel historical mural for the building's lobby. The artists undertook an extensive research tour of California's historic landmarks, archives, and museums. Historian Titus Alexander, librarian Miriam Matthews, and Williams guided their efforts. The artwork—*The Negro in California History*—unearthed stories about Black contributions to the state that had long been hidden from public view.

The building was completed in 1949. Williams's sleek Moderne design envisioned a prosperous future, while the murals by Alston and Woodruff rooted the company in an illustrious past. G.S.M. closed its doors in 2009, and the building is protected as H.C.M. #1000.

—Laura Dominguez

Above and left: Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building (1999 West Adams Boulevard), built in 1949. Photographed in 2017.



100 North Delfern Drive, built for Charles M. Weinberg in 1938, partially demolished in 2019. Photographed in 2019.

100 North Delfern Drive, built for Charles M. Weinberg in 1938, partially demolished in 2019. Photographed in 2019.
NOTE: Telephone number digitially removed.

Roundtable

Paul R. Williams and Beyond: Black Architects in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles

Members of this roundtable:

Christopher Hawthorne (facilitator) is the chief design officer for the City of Los Angeles and a member of the Civic Memory Working Group.

Dr. Wesley Henderson is an architect, educator, and historian and assistant professor at the Robert R. Taylor School of Architecture and Construction Science at Tuskegee University in Tuskegee, Alabama.

Gail Kennard is president of the Kennard Design Group and a commissioner on the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission.

Melvin Mitchell is a practicing architect and a fellow at the American Institute of Architects in Washington, DC, and the former director of the Institute (now School) of Architecture and Planning at Morgan State University in Baltimore.

Over the last decade, the work of Paul R. Williams (1894–1980), the most prominent Black architect in Los Angeles during much of the last century and a prolific designer of houses, churches, and public buildings covering a broad and inventive stylistic range, has seen a welcome and overdue revival of interest in Southern California and nationally. In 2017, Williams was named the posthumous winner of the Gold Medal from the American Institute of Architects, the group's highest honor. In 2020, the Getty Research Institute and the University of Southern California School of Architecture announced that it had jointly acquired the extensive Williams archive. Less broadly understood, especially by the general public but also among scholars and practicing architects, is the work and influence of the group of Black architects who emerged alongside and after Williams in twentieth-century Los Angeles. This roundtable discussion was organized to explore the work, influence, and legacy of some of those architects, including, most prominently, James Garrott, Robert Kennard, and Norma Sklarek. For more on Sklarek, see the excerpt from her oral history elsewhere in this report; it was prepared by a young Wesley Henderson, who joined us as a member of this roundtable.

Christopher Hawthorne: Welcome! And thank you for being here. Let me briefly ask each of you to introduce yourselves.

Dr. Wesley Henderson: Right now, I'm teaching at Tuskegee University in Alabama. Part of my background is that I did a dissertation on the architects Paul R. Williams and James Garrott while I was a student at UCLA in the early 1990s. I originally came to UCLA to do a doctorate on art deco architecture, and a faculty member just kind of steered me toward doing a biography of someone important. And the only Black architect I knew at the time who was someone important was Paul R. Williams. As I did research on Williams, though, I came to become interested in Garrott. I saw them as two interconnected people, two interconnected architects. Garrott was born in Alabama. He was a teenager when he came to Los Angeles. He was always, I guess, not in competition with, but certainly his practice was in reaction to Williams. As my work on the dissertation went on, I had to sacrifice Garrott just to finish. So it ended up being mostly about Paul R. Williams, because much of the information that was available was on Williams and not Garrott. I wish I had been able to do more work on Garrott and bring him to the fore.

CH: That's very helpful, because one of the goals of this conversation is to give young scholars, young architects, and young critics some other trails to follow, some other work to look at.

Gail Kennard: I'm the daughter of Robert Kennard, who was an architect, African American, and born, like Paul Williams, in Los Angeles. So my father spent his childhood hearing about Paul R. Williams—and because of that, when he was in high school, he decided that architecture was possibly a career that he could pursue. Had it not been for knowing that Paul R. Williams existed, I doubt that he would have had the inspiration to pursue architecture. I run the firm that my father started in 1957, so I'm also a practitioner. I also serve as a commissioner on the L.A. Cultural Heritage Commission. Dr. Henderson and I have a number of connections. I'm very grateful to him for doing an oral history of my father in the early 1990s. There was very little documentation of the history of African American architects in Los Angeles. So he kind of started it. And now others are starting to pick up on doing that research, which is very important.

Melvin Mitchell: I come to this situation in an interesting way. I'm a former Angeleno. I left the city at about the time when I was beginning to become interested in architecture and a career as an architect. At the beginning, the only person I really knew about was Paul R. Williams. Not too long out of high school, I was living over Western and Adams, and of course his signature work—the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building (1949)—is right there. There was something that attracted me to that building, and I used to always find an excuse to go in and out of it.

CH: We should note that the earlier Golden State building, from 1948, was designed by James Garrott.

WH: The old one, right, on Central Avenue. And why he got that commission rather than Paul Williams is that Golden State early on thought Paul Williams was too big a firm for them and wouldn't give them a really good hearing. So Garrott did that.

MM: Later, I wound up on the East Coast and I spent the first five years there in a building that Paul Williams designed [the Langston Terrace Dwellings (1936)], although I didn't know it at the time. Of course, not only did Paul Williams design the building, but I also came to find out that a Washington, DC, architect, Hilyard Robinson, was his partner and they had a bicoastal partnership. With all that said, I really didn't begin to truly appreciate the depth of the Los Angeles scene until after I was well away and into my career in Washington, DC, as an architect. As a young professor at Howard University, getting my hands on Wes Henderson's dissertation—oh, that was just a feast. It's a 600-page document. And I have it. And it's dog-eared. Over the more than 50 years since I left, I have always, every single year, found an excuse—sometimes as often as a dozen times a year—to be back in Los Angeles and to work with Los Angeles architects. And I came to have a great, great appreciation for Gail's father as well as for his young protégé and partner, Art Silvers [a partner at Kennard and Silvers Architects]. I'm still here doing all the things I like to do, practicing architecture, writing, and teaching in Washington, DC.

CH: Terrific. We're in good hands, clearly. I think that what you've all mentioned about documentation is quite important. I will say that for me, as a critic, and now working in City Hall, there is simply not enough of that documentation when it comes to work by L.A.'s Black architects. I was just looking through the best-known architecture guide in Los Angeles, the book by David Gebhard and Robert Winter.[1] Beyond Paul R. Williams, there is virtually nothing on the work of the architects we'll be talking about today.

Let me continue the discussion with a simple if fraught question: what did it mean to try to practice architecture as a Black professional in the twentieth century in Los Angeles? And if you'd like to distinguish among certain periods—prewar, postwar, perhaps the late twentieth century period—please do.

WH: The Black community is not monolithic, and so there are different, I guess I would say, subcommunities within it. And one of those subcommunities really involves politics. There were some conservative architects and then some more liberal and progressive architects. After World War II, that became a little bit more pronounced. During the war, Garrott went to USC, and at USC he met the progressive community. That changed his work completely. He was no longer a historicist. He came out of USC and out of World War II very much a modernist. The Black architects had relationships with white professionals, but it depended on the politics that they were practicing. Garrott, for example, had a really good relationship with [the architectural photographer] Julius Shulman. So did Paul Williams, for that matter. Shulman and Garrott saw themselves as progressive and I guess left-leaning. And so Shulman does have some photographs of Garrott's work. Garrott also had a wonderful professional partnership with the architect Gregory Ain based in part on shared politics. Mr. Garrott lived in Silver Lake, and Silver

[1] *Robert Winter and David Gebhard,* An Architectural Guidebook to Los Angeles *(1965; 6th ed., Santa Monica, CA: Angel City Press, 2018).*

Lake was a hotbed of progressive folks. I wish that somebody would purchase the house he designed for himself [at 653 Micheltorena Street] and preserve it. And Garrott also began a personal relationship with politicians like the county commissioner Kenneth Hahn. And so there came a time when, I believe, Garrott was blacklisted. And then once the blacklist ended, he got some commissions from the county of Los Angeles, and there are several of his buildings around that I wish got more recognition, including his library—the Los Angeles Public Library on Manchester Boulevard in Westchester.

MM: The politics of that time in architecture were fascinating.

GK: I can echo what Dr. Henderson's talking about. It was very different before World War II compared to after the war. My father was in World War II, serving in Europe. When he came back, he was very into the modernist thinking in architecture. He didn't want to have anything to do with traditionalists or any of the revivalist stuff. He actually interviewed for a job with Paul Williams, but Paul Williams was not at the top of his list. He really wanted to work for Richard Neutra because of the modernism thing. There was a move after the war to do something about the social problems we were facing—and an idea that architects could do things to help the lives of everyday folks. Remember, there was an influx of population coming into Los Angeles in the war years and the postwar years, so there was a demand for housing and all that. And so instead of designing for the elites, he was focused more on designing for middle-class folks. And so architects like Gregory Ain, A. Quincy Jones, and others—Victor Gruen was another one—they gave Black architects an opportunity. They were able to get jobs, which had not been the case previously, before the war. There was a big shift after that. Even firms like A. C. Martin, which were politically conservative, they were hiring. There was a different mood in terms of what architecture could do after World War II, which opened up opportunities.

CH: I suppose the next major figure in this chronology, after Williams and Garrott, is Ralph Vaughn.

GK: I actually, through another architect, found his son, Ron Vaughn. He became an architect also and lives in the Bay Area now. He was telling me that his father came to L.A. and worked for Paul Williams. I know through my commission work that two of his buildings—at least two—are designated historic cultural monuments. One is Chase Knolls [a garden apartment complex from 1948], which he designed with Heth Wharton, and the other one is Lincoln Place [built in 1951 in Venice, also by Vaughan and Wharton, financed under a historic mortgage insurance program administered by the Federal Housing Administration].

WH: I was able to interview Mr. Vaughn. I made a mistake and didn't keep my tape recording of that interview, however, so I don't know where it is. But he said that he met Paul Williams when Mr. Vaughn was still a college student at Howard, and Paul Williams invited him out to the West Coast. And he came out. And I think the first project that he worked on with Paul Williams was the MCA building in Beverly Hills [in 1938]. Also, what Mr. Vaughn told me is that he worked in the movie industry, doing set design.

GK: His son told me that he worked for MGM.

WH: Especially during the war, Vaughn worked for the movie companies and that's what kept him going.

CH: And then he broke off on his own, left Williams's office?

WH: Well, he did work in Williams's office for a while, but fairly early on he started working for himself. During World War II, Williams was kind of at a minimum. And I believe that he had to let some people go. And one of those was Ralph Vaughn, and so he had to fend for himself. And

one of the ways of doing it was working in the movie industry. After the war, Vaughn became progressive and radicalized. And so that's how we got involved in housing like Lincoln Place.

CH: We move next, I suppose, to Robert Kennard. Gail, he was born in 1920?

GK: Yes, 1920. My father was in the service, and he got the GI Bill so he was able to go to USC. And that opened up a network of folks that he met who were also students, and he was able to parlay into work with DMJM [Daniel, Mann, Johnson, and Mendenhall]. He decided in 1957 that he would start his own firm, starting with residential designs first. One of his early homes is in Beverly Hills—actually, the Somers home. And the city of Beverly Hills now lists him as a master architect, which is kind of cool. In the 1960s, he was doing homes, but because he had worked at DMJM, he realized that the public sector was really the best track for him. Unlike Paul Williams, he didn't have access to Hollywood celebrities, and that wasn't his inclination either. Remember, I'm telling you, he's more of a progressive. He wants to do public housing. He wants to do those kinds of projects. So he shifts to public work. And that's where he really made his mark—in public buildings. With Robert Alexander and another talented architect, Frank Sata, who's still living, he designed the Carson City Hall and the community center there. There's a list of things that he's done that are buildings that people would recognize, like the Van Nuys state office building that he did with Harold Williams, another Black architect.

He was able to do all that in large part because of two political situations. Number one, in 1965, was the Watts riots. After that, there was a push on the political side to hire Black professionals, Black architects, to do this work. So all of a sudden, he was doing planning work, redevelopment in Watts, and then school district work for L.A. Unified. Paul Williams had done work for L.A. Unified before, but it became much more open. And people like Carey Jenkins and other contemporaries of my father's who came out of USC in the late '40s, early '50s started to get into public work. They were on the coattails of Supervisor Kenny Hahn. So Carey Jenkins was able to get the contract to design the King Hospital. My father redesigned some elementary schools and then ultimately L.A. High School, the old high school that was damaged during the earthquake in the 1970s.

And then along comes Tom Bradley. And that was a boon too, because then suddenly, there's Tom Bradley and then there's three City Council members who are Black. So that facilitated a lot more work. There was the affirmative action program, but it was more perception than that. I think my father was able to get the work not just through the mechanics of the affirmative action stuff that came a little later, but because people perceived that Tom Bradley was somebody who was open to hiring diverse people. So it was Latino people, Asian people, Black architects, and other professionals. My father did a number of buildings. He was fortunate. He hit it at the right time. And he could get major projects as the prime [i.e., as the lead architect, not in a supporting role].

CH: On a more personal level, Gail, what was it like to grow up as the daughter of an architect?

GK: Oh, I had a ball. I'll just tell you one story. My parents would travel around a lot, ultimately internationally. But when I was a kid, we traveled in California, and my father would always take pictures of buildings. And I just grew up thinking that, you know, your father takes a picture of a building and you're in the corner, as a kid, just for scale. You weren't really getting a picture of *you*. It was just the *building* and then you were in the corner. And then I started going over to my friends' houses, and they had pictures of themselves. There was no building in the picture! I thought, that's different. But it was a great way to grow up.

CH: Gail, let me tell you, my kids can relate. Mr. Mitchell, thoughts on Robert Kennard?

MM: During my time in L.A., it was just Paul Williams. That's all I knew. I think I became conscious of Bob Kennard after I'd left and had started school and then practice in DC. One thing I would say, though, is that when your father, Gail, began to get prominent access and get work, the connection to Tom Bradley—that kind of thing was happening all across the country. It was the age of the Black mayor. Black architects were really invented by Black mayors. When Black mayors started taking over cities, that's when Black architects started getting work—every city where there was a Black mayor.

CH: Let's move to the work of Norma Sklarek, a really interesting figure who deserves to be better known and the first Black woman to be licensed as an architect by the state of California, in 1962.

GK: She was from New York, came here, worked for Victor Gruen. Gruen's office was really an incubator and a launching pad for a number of people, including James Silcott, an architect I think all of you know, and Frank Gehry. [Silcott went on to become the first Black project architect for Los Angeles County.] She was one of the few women in architecture of any race. But Gruen was very good in terms of giving opportunities to people of color and also women. To this day. Gruen was important to Norma Sklarek. She met her husband, Ralph Sklarek, at Gruen. She had been Norma Merrick. She stayed at Gruen until she went to work for John Jerde. I'm not sure if this was her ambition, but she got pigeonholed into doing construction documents and she was really known for doing the management part, the construction documents, director of production, and all of that. She was very good. She was a tough woman. I mean, she could really get work out of people. And she had to be because she had to, number one, assert that she could be taken seriously, and two, not be blown away by younger architects who just thought they were the bee's knees.

In the '80s, she partnered with Margot Siegel, who had her own practice, I believe, and Kate Diamond. And they started their own practice in the mid-1980s. I remember when this was afoot because they would come and visit my father. My father was helpful to them. He mentored them, encouraged them to do that. And when they started their practice, they were touted as the largest woman-owned firm in the United States. But much more research needs to be done on that and what they did. We lost Norma, but Kate is still with us and so is Margot. So there really needs to be more documentation on them—all three of them, but especially Norma and her contributions. Of course, she's most well-known for the design of the "Blue Whale"—the Pacific Design Center [in West Hollywood, on which she worked with César Pelli while at Gruen]. She did university work, too. There just needs to be more research on this.

MM: Norma Sklarek came to the West Coast with pretty solid credentials. In 1958, I'm in high school, and *Ebony* magazine drops this bombshell issue—one of the featured articles was 19 successful young Negro architects. Norma was one of those featured because she was already a designer at Skidmore [Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, or SOM] in New York. She was licensed. So she came to Los Angeles with some pretty heavy, heavy credentials. Now, about her stint with Jon Jerde, I have this one thing to add. The way that I intersect with this story is that my classmate and best friend also worked in that Jerde office, and the way he characterized it was that they were a bunch of, I don't know if "hippie" is the right word, but they were just designers. And Norma was really the person who pulled everything together. They were getting commissions from and working for some hard-nosed developers who, when it came to their work, wanted it right and tight and on time. And so she wasn't just doing the working drawings. She really filled the role of what had to happen after all the sketching and the fun was over and it had to be *delivered*, you know, so that people can get paid.

Oral History

Norma Merrick Sklarek

African American architect and educator who designed large-scale projects such as LAX Terminal One, San Bernardino City Hall, and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. First African American woman to become a licensed architect in the United States.

Interviewed by Wesley H. Henderson[1]

TAPE NUMBER: IV, SIDE ONE

June 11, 1990

HENDERSON: You had said you were working at SOM [the New York office of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill] and then had taken a vacation here in California. Was it just a normal vacation? I mean, you weren't out here for any business reasons?

SKLAREK: No, it was just a vacation.

HENDERSON: Any particular reason why you chose California?

SKLAREK: I had some friends out here in California, and California seemed like an exciting place to visit. My mother [Amy Willoughby Merrick] was always full of ideas and suggested to me, "Why don't you go to California for a week or two?" [laughter] And I guess she recognized the fact that I needed a vacation, which was very nice. She took care of my two kids while I came out on vacation.

HENDERSON: And you came out with your husband?

SKLAREK: No, I was divorced.

HENDERSON: Oh, from [Benjamin] Fairweather?

SKLAREK: Yes, Yes, from Fairweather. [laughter] Again. These marriages just didn't last. It seems as though they had something to do with the male ego. [laughter] The very sensitive, delicate male ego.

HENDERSON: This is sort of an aside, but do you think that your being an architect was contributing to their problem, or—? Let's say if you had been a schoolteacher—

[1] *The full oral history can be found here: http://digital2.library.ucla.edu/dlcontent/oralhistory/pdf/masters/21198-zz0008zn3x-1-master.pdf?_ga=2.113134532.1360365456.1609250292-701194632.1609250292*

SKLAREK: Oh, definitely. Definitely my being an architect and being in a more prestigious and a better-paying job than they were in somehow, even if it wasn't at that time— Yeah, it was better paid. That had a lot to do with it.

HENDERSON: You would need a very secure guy to be your husband at the time.

SKLAREK: That's right. So some friends of mine out here said to me—these friends with whom I was staying—"Do you like it out here?" I said, "Yes." And they said, "Well, why don't you move?" I said, "I never thought about that, but it sounds like a good idea. I'll move next year."

So I got the names of a couple of architectural firms and visited them. One was Welton Becket and Associates, and I got an appointment.

HENDERSON: Now, this is still while you're on vacation? Or this is the next year?

SKLAREK: Yes, while I was on vacation. The architect, Alan Rosen, said that they had never had a woman architect work there before. This was—

HENDERSON: Becket is a big office.

SKLAREK: It's a very large office, one of the largest. But, of course, they had no objection if one were qualified, you know. But they had just never had a woman architect working there before. They'd had one or two who'd worked in interiors, but no one in architecture. So, anyway, I went back home and made arrangements to move the next year.

HENDERSON: And you had been hired by Becket? That was firm in your mind?

SKLAREK: No, no.

HENDERSON: Oh, you were moving even without a firm job. You were ready to move.

SKLAREK: Yes.

HENDERSON: Wow.

SKLAREK: Architectural firms generally don't make commitments for six months or a year in advance because they usually don't know whether there's going to be a need to increase the staff at that time, you know, that far ahead. People at SOM were really surprised—because I had being doing so well there—surprised that I would be leaving. Many of them said to me, "Well, if you must move to California, San Francisco is the place." But I wasn't interested in San Francisco because I had friends in Los Angeles. And besides, I think that the weather in Los Angeles and Southern California was more attractive to me, because I had had enough of cold winters and this seemed more tropical down here.

When SOM realized that I was moving, they helped me by giving me letters of introduction to firms out here. And even the editor of Progressive Architecture [Thomas H. Creighton] visited in New York, and he gave me letters of introduction. [laughter]

HENDERSON: Okay. This was in 1960? About then?

SKLAREK: Yes. Nineteen sixty. So I had a great deal of credibility in architecture in New York, one, for having passed the licensing exam at a very tender age and, two, for getting things done efficiently and quickly by really sticking to my work and working conscientiously.

And then there was another trick that I had, which probably helped even in taking the design exam and in an office, which is that my drafting, lettering, and presentation of the work was done with an extremely bold hand, much more so than others. Anyone looking at it could not only read the drawing at a flash, but, psychologically,

I think it worked that anyone that draws like this, you know, is really— [laughter]

HENDERSON: I know what you're saying. [laughter]

SKLAREK: Yeah. [laughter] It's so bold that it's got to be right, you know. You've got so much confidence that they wouldn't dare question it, because it looked like I never intended to ever erase anything, not that that was so. [laughter] But it was done in a manner which seemed to exude confidence.

HENDERSON: Okay. That style had been something you just picked up naturally over time? Or that was the way you were from the beginning? It was a conscious effort to be bold?

SKLAREK: I learned from asking people and watching and observing, really from observing others and copying what I thought was good. In fact, the only firm that I interviewed with, even though I had all these letters of recommendation and letters of introduction to firms out here— The first one that I went to was Victor Gruen and Associates [Architects and Planners]. It was called Victor Gruen at that time. Later the name was changed to Gruen Associates. So I visited Victor Gruen's office, and I managed to negotiate a salary which was higher than others who had been hired that same month with essentially the same background as I. It wasn't until much later that I learned that that's why I had so much static in negotiating the salary, because he had just hired someone with exactly the same qualifications—a male, at that—and I was getting like 30 or 40 percent more.

HENDERSON: Ouch. [laughter] Now, were you negotiating for that salary because of your salary history in New York or what you thought you would need—?

SKLAREK: I was negotiating for that salary because I needed it. [laughter] By that time, I was supporting myself and two children [Gregory Ransom and David Fairweather] and my mother, the sole supporter of all of them.

Oh, just before moving to Los Angeles, I met a young man whom I fell madly in love with again. [laughter] And within a few months, we were married. His name was—"Harry" was his nickname. Francis Pena. He wanted to move to California to go to aeronautical school out here. He was very bright, intelligent, handsome. Even though he was intellectually bright, he never had had the opportunity to go to college before. So he and I drove out to California. Well, he did nearly all of the driving. And I had to find a place to live. I found a house to live in, and then I sent for my mother and the children, who flew out. But my mother didn't like it out here and moved back very quickly, after just a few months.

HENDERSON: Oh, a question, though, at this point: Now, your father [Walter Merrick] was he still on the scene? When your mother was moving out here, was she leaving your father?

SKLAREK: My parents, at that point, were divorced. They had become divorced after thirty-three years of marriage. But my mother missed her friends, and it was difficult for her because she did not drive.

HENDERSON: Yes. You have to drive in L.A.

SKLAREK: A different lifestyle completely. So she went back after a few months. But I got the job at Victor Gruen's, and I never used the other letters of recommendation or introduction. I remained at Gruen's for the next twenty years. ●

Excerpted from conversations completed under the auspices of the Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles, as part of the series "African-American Architects of Los Angeles."

Courtesy of the Center for Oral History Research, Library Special Collections, Charles E. Young Research Library, UCLA.

Norma Merrick Sklarek, pictured in the Gruen Associates offices in the 1960s. With her, from left to right: Sam Tolchinsky (mechanical engineering); Henry Walocha (structural engineering); Sid Brisker (project manager); and Rolf Sklarek (head of construction administration; Rolf and Norma married in 1967). Photographer unknown. Courtesy Gruen Associates.

WH: The UCLA oral history program recruited me to go and interview several architects, and Norma Sklarek was one of them. There should be eight, nine, ten hours of interview with her on tape. But I'm not certain if UCLA has gone forward with that interview; I'm not sure if it's been edited. She went into a lot of detail on her early life and early career. She was very talkative and I had a tape recorder running.[2]

[2] *After this roundtable was complete, Gail Kennard contacted UCLA and discovered that the oral history had in fact been completed. We are pleased to feature an excerpt from it in this report, as well as information about where to find it in full.*

CH: We've talked about James Garrott, Robert Kennard, and Norma Sklarek. Who else belongs in this conversation? Gail, you mentioned Arthur Silvers—do you want to talk a little bit more about him?

GK: He was also local. He came out of USC. He went to high school with Frank Gehry. He met my father and then they became partners. And their partnership lasted for about 10 years. My father said that Art Silvers was the most talented designer he'd ever worked with. There's not a huge body of his work, though, because after he left my father's firm, he did some work on his own, some residences, and then he went into teaching.

CH: Mr. Mitchell, what about Roy Sealey? What do you remember about Roy Sealey?

MM: He was one of the architects mentioned in the *Ebony* magazine article. I didn't know him. His specialty was restaurants. I don't know if you could attribute any of the Googie restaurants to him. He had quite a design flair.[3]

WH: He worked for Paul Williams. At one point, I think, Roy Sealey and one of Paul Williams's daughters had a romantic entanglement, and that didn't go well. And the *Ebony* article, I think, probably misquoted Roy Sealey, and the Paul Williams camp accused him of betraying some secrets. That was a very bitter breakup, and then Sealey just sort of became a hermit and he wouldn't talk to anyone. I tried to contact him to interview him; he wouldn't talk to me at all. I ended up talking to his one of his nieces. And that's how I got information on him. He was born in Panama, and then the family moved to Jamaica and then to Texas.

CH: I want to ask about Black architects and their decisions about how to navigate the profession in L.A. What were the benefits of joining a small firm that might be a really good match in terms of ideals or politics versus a larger or corporate firm, which might offer a larger breadth of opportunities, or at some point working on one's own or starting one's own firm?

WH: Garrott was a sole practitioner, very small firm, though he did do some things in combination with Gregory Ain. Legally, I think they were two separate firms because Ain had a larger firm and a different office. They shared an office building, and so they were working in tandem, but never legally partners.

GK: My father ultimately started his own firm in 1957, as I mentioned, but that was not his goal. He was very fortunate after the war to be hired by DMJM. And he left DMJM because he didn't feel like he would have an opportunity to advance. He then went to work for Victor Gruen. Same issue—he left because he didn't feel he'd have an opportunity to advance. That's why he started his own firm: because he felt that there was a ceiling and that he wasn't going to be able to overcome that ceiling. Or think of Norma Sklarek. She, like my father, wasn't really aspiring to start her own company initially. She was a working mom. She always told me, "I just needed a job. I just needed to work, you know?" And so she went to work for Gruen, and she went to work for Jon Jerde later on. And then she did ultimately start a firm with two other women. But, like my father, that was not the main thrust from the beginning, "Let me have my own thing." It was just circumstances.

[3] *The term "Googie" dates back to Googie's Coffee Shop on the Sunset Strip, designed in 1949 by architect John Lautner. It came to synonymize a quintessentially Southern California style of futurist/modernist design that became ubiquitous in the 1950s and 1960s. See Matt Novak, "Googie: Architecture of the Space Age,"* Smithsonian, *June 15, 2012, https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/googie-architecture-of-the-space-age-122837470.*

CH: That ceiling you're referring to, was it entirely racial? Or was it racial in addition to other things about the firm's culture?

GK: It was perceived as racial.

CH: I want to put L.A. in some broader context here. How would all three of you say that Los Angeles differed, or perhaps did not differ, from other American cities in terms of the opportunities available to Black architects? In what ways would you say it was more or less open, or more or less tolerant?

GK: Well, it was still America in the '50s, '60s, '70s. There was still racism. But I think that because L.A. grew so quickly and there was such a demand for building, there were opportunities.

The other issue, too, is that L.A. was made up of a lot of people who didn't come from here, who were kind of outsiders. The Hollywood crowd—you know, Lucille Ball, Desi Arnaz—they're not typical Anglo-Saxon folks. And so they hired Paul Williams. And that didn't seem to be a problem. Frank Sinatra, he's kind of a poor boy from Hoboken, New Jersey. So they're not coming from wealth and were less caught up in the prestige of hiring a quote-unquote name architect. I think that helped.

MM: And I would also, again, say that it would be hard to separate Los Angeles—and the development of Black architects in Los Angeles—from the politics that were also occurring in cities across the nation at the time, as long as you had a committed mayor who was determined to see to it that they were included.

WH: I want to amplify and agree with what Gail was saying about L.A. being a relatively open place, especially in terms of the Hollywood elite being "new money" and not being committed to an old-fashioned way of thinking. I also think that because Los Angeles physically was relatively new territory, because there wasn't much quote-unquote history here—at least obvious history—there was a feeling of doing new things in a new way. So clients here were a little more open to working with those who appeared to be the best architects available.

CH: In L.A., what about the reaction of, let's say, the media, critics, photographers, architectural historians, to the work of some of these figures?

WH: Let me go back to Julius Shulman, who photographed a number of projects by Garrott. Other photographers, Marvin Rand and Wayne Thom, I think they were less interested in this work. But Shulman was.

GK: Generally, these architects were not considered for coverage, not really on the radar a lot. Julius Shulman did photograph one of my father's buildings, Carson City Hall, in the 1980s. But in general, the historical record is not there, because it doesn't get written up in places like the *L.A. Times*. The *L.A. Times* didn't even have any Black reporters until after the riots in 1965.

CH: Could you talk about these architects' relationships with Paul Williams? I gather it was sometimes competitive, sometimes collaborative or collegial, sometimes supportive.

GK: As I said earlier, my father would not have had his career had he not known that Paul Williams existed. My father had a high school drafting teacher who showed him a picture of Paul Williams, told him about Paul Williams—and it just totally opened his world. So that was the significance. If Paul Williams could make it, there is an opportunity for me as a Negro, colored architect or whatever. So my father ultimately met Paul Williams. As coincidence would have it, my father's best friend married [Williams's] daughter, Marilyn. And so they became more connected socially with the Williams family. And then later, in the '80s, when Paul Williams was kind of at the end of his career, they did a project together that is still standing—the Jessie L. Terry Manor, which

is housing for seniors, on the corner of Jefferson and Vermont, right across from USC. So it was nice, kind of closing the loop.

MM: Paul Williams himself, some of you may have heard, was very much influenced in his choice of a career based on a picture he saw. He was a paperboy. And what was the picture that he saw in the paper? It was a picture of the Negro building [at the 1907 Jamestown Tercentennial Exposition in Norfolk, Virginia] by this Tuskegee-trained architect and instructor, William Pittman. So pictures are important. The only other thing about Williams that I want to make sure is on the record is that two of our subsequently most prolific Black architects in the country, Max Bond and Jay Johnson, came out to L.A. during the summer and worked with Paul Williams. I just think that had to have been meaningful interaction and impact.

WH: I saw a [film] on Sammy Davis Jr., I think the title was "I Gotta Be Me." And the context was that at one point in time, Sammy Davis Jr. was this Rat Pack figure, on the cutting edge, very much working within an integrated context. But then at the end of his career, the Black community saw him as a reactionary political person tied in with Nixon and various other things. And I want to say that Paul Williams had kind of a similar trajectory. That is, Paul Williams was a Republican in his politics and he was rather conservative. And so at some point in the, I don't know, '50s, '60s, he was seen as this champion of Black enterprise. But later on, as Martin Luther King and the mass movements began to take off and Paul Williams's politics remained rather conservative, then the younger architects began to look at him in a different kind of way.

GK: That's very true. My father had political differences with him.

CH: Final question for all of you. Given the themes in this report and this working group that we convened last November, what are some of the ways that we might better mark or commemorate these architects and their work?

MM: These architects we've been talking about were trailblazers—real trailblazers. And I can't think of anything more important to do than to give recognition to that in some really tangible, concrete ways that help really reach architects that are coming up today to be able to get more opportunity to work in their own communities. That means we need to reorganize and restructure policies and processes that will facilitate the substantive start-up and growth of the current corps of Black firms that seek to follow in the trailblazers' footsteps. And we need to recognize that Black architects are critical instruments of Black community wealth creation. We need to find innovative ways to promote Black-Brown-white joint ventures in Black-Brown L.A. space.

GK: I think it's also important that there be something done in the curriculums, starting with elementary school, secondary school, the colleges, so that if you see the name Paul Williams, you'll know who he was. If you see the name Robert Kennard, you'll know who he was. If you see the name James Garrott, you'll know who he was. I'm always astonished when I deal with architecture students at USC who have never heard of Paul Williams. Black students! It's astounding to me. It's gotten better, but I think we need to deal with the curriculum early on. Finally, to extend something that Mr. Mitchell said, if my father were alive today, I don't think he'd be as interested in a plaque as he would be interested in opportunities for Black architects who are alive today to get work. That's really the problem. I don't see newer Robert Kennards coming along who could amass the body of work that he did. ●

Summoning Other Moments

Richard White

We can think only in the present moment, but the present moment is always awash in memories and ideas produced by the past. At least professionally, historians try to discipline themselves and remember that because no moment is inherently more important than any other, no moment can give a complete view. Their sorcery is summoning other moments. History is looking into the tangled and devilishly complicated connections among an infinity of moments. The relationship of those moments is what matters.

From California Exposures: Envisioning Myth and History, ***with photographs by Jesse Amble White (New York: W. W. Norton, 2020)***

City of Night

John Rechy

Pershing Square in the 1950s. Photograph by Otto Rothschild, Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library.

I walk about the teeming park for the first time—past the statues of soldiers, one on each corner of the Hill Street side—past an ominous cannon on Olive, aimed defiantly at the slick wide-gleamingwindowed buildings across the streets: the banks, the travel agencies (representations of The Other World, to which I will flee recurrently in guilt and feel just as guilty for having abandoned, if never completely, the world of the parks, the streets)—past the statue of Beethoven with a stick, turning his back fiercely on the Pershing Square menagerie.

Throughout the park, preachers and prophets dash out *Damnation!* in a disharmony of sounds—like phonographs gone mad: locked in a block-square sunny asylum among the flowers and the palmtrees, fountains gushing gaily: Ollie, all wiry white hair, punctuating his pronouncements with threats of a citizen's arrest aimed at the hecklers … Holy Moses, his hair Christlike to his shoulders, singing soulfully … the bucktoothed spiritual-singing Jenny Lu howling she was

a jezebel-woman (woe-*uh!*) until she Seed The Light (praise the Lord-*uh!*) on the frontporch to Hell (holy holy Halleluj-*uh!*), grinding, bumping at each *uh!* in a frenzied kind of jazz; and a Negro woman, sweating, quivers in coming-Lord-type ecstasy: "Lawd, Ahs dribben out da Debil! Ah has cast him back to Hell! Lawd, fill me wid Yuh Presence!"—*uh!* -ing in a long religious orgasm.... Gone preachers wailing receiving God: Saint Tex, who got The Word in Beaumont scorched one wined-up morning on the white horizon: BRING THE WORD TO SINNING CALIFORNIA! ... And five young girls, all in white, the oldest about 16, stand like white candles waxing in the sun, all white satin (*forgive my uncommitted sins!*), holding in turn a picture of Christ Crucified, and where the blood was coming, it was wax, which caught the light and shimmered like thick ketchup; and the five white angelsisters stand while their old man preaches *Sinners! Sinners!! Sinners!!!* —and the cutest of the angelsisters, with paradoxically Alive freckles snapping orange in the sun, and alive red sparkling hair, is giggling in the warm Los Angeles smog afternoon among the palmtrees—but the oldest is quivering and wailing, and one day, oh, I think, the little angelsister will see theres nothing to giggle about, Truly—her old man having come across with the rough Message, and of course she'll start to quiver and wail where once she smiled, freckles popping in the sun.... And an epileptic youngman thanks God for his infirmity—his ponderous, beloved Cross To Bear....

Among the roses.

And while the preachers dash out their damning messages, the winos storm Heaven on cheap wine; hungry-eyed scores with money (or merely with a place to offer the homeless youngmen they desire) gather about the head hunting the malehustlers and wondering will they get robbed if—... Pickpockets station themselves strategically among the crowds as if listening in rapt attention to the Holy Messages. And malehustlers ("fruithustlers"/"studhustlers": the various names for the masculine young vagrants) like flitting birds move restlessly about the park—fugitive hustlers looking for lonely fruits to score from, anything from the legendary $20-up to a pad at night and breakfast in the morning and whatever you can clinch or clip.... And the heat in their holy cop uniforms, holy because of the Almighty Stick and the Almightier Vagrancy Law; the scattered junkies, the smalltime pushers, the teaheads, the sad panhandlers, the occasional lonely exiled nymphos haunting the entrance to the men's head; more fruits with hungry eyes—the young ones searching for a mutual, unpaid-for partner; the tough teenage girls making it with the lost hustlers.... And—but mostly later at night, youll find, when the shadows will shelter them—queens in colorful shirtblouses—dressed as much like women as The Law allows that particular moment—will dish each other like jealous bitchy women, commenting on the desirability or otherwise of the stray youngmen they may offer a place for the night. And they giggle constantly in pretended happiness.

And on the benches along the inside ledges, the pensioned old men and women sit serenely daily in the sun like retired judges separated now stoically from the world they once judged....

All!—all amid the incongruous music of the Welkian-Lombardian school of corn, piped periodically from somewhere along the ledges! All amid the flowers!—the twin fountains which will gush rainbowcolored verypretty at night. ... The world of Lonely-Outcast America squeezed into Pershing Square, of the Cities of Terrible Night, downtown now trapped in the City of Lost Angels....

And the trees hang over it all like some apathetic fate. ●

From City of Night *(1963). Courtesy Grove Atlantic.*

Subcommittee 7

Preservation, Maintenance, and Care

This subcommittee's deliberations began with some basic questions about the phrase "historic preservation." Is it too closely associated with architecture and built form, we asked, to complement the broad and small-c catholic scope of the larger Working Group and its recommendations? What, precisely, is meant to be preserved? By whom, for whom, and on what basis?

We also discussed some of the ways in which preservation has earned a complicated reputation—the extent to which it has been seen, fairly or not, as a force for obstruction. In what ways could the goals of preservation be brought more closely in line with a vision for Los Angeles that sees civic memory as something to be excavated, even actively confronted, rather than simply protected or cordoned off? Can the work of preservation help us ask key questions or surface difficult or buried histories in Los Angeles even as it protects individual or connected sites of importance?

It seemed fitting to seek a dynamic, evolving definition of these terms, one that the City should continually revisit and analyze anew. We talked about preservation as a platform or venue to tell stories and share histories, recognizing that those histories will not always be in harmony or alignment with one another. We imagined a structure that would allow preservation to look forward as well as back, helping us imagine a future Los Angeles where histories of many kinds, not just architectural, are given full voice.

We agreed that one way to open up these definitions and challenge old assumptions is to underscore the links between preservation and climate action. The embodied energy of existing buildings, the cost in dollars and in climate terms of new construction, the ways in which preservation might further the cause of sustainability and vice versa: these were among the subjects we touched on. Moreover, new strategies to adapt to warming temperatures in many parts of Los Angeles will be strengthened by detailed knowledge of earlier approaches, whether they are Indigenous, from the Spanish Colonial period, or more recent. This was long a city whose architecture was designed to provide extensive shade from the sun essentially as a matter of first principles. We can climate-proof Los Angeles in part by studying, debating, and adapting some of those strategies. Preservation can be as much about recovering knowledge as about keeping structures upright.

How the World Gets Put Back Together

Next we sought to define and discuss the second half of the subcommittee's charge: the work of maintenance and care. These terms and some important recent scholarship exploring them through the lens of architecture and preservation were familiar to some of us and less so to others. A superb overview[1] of the subject by Shannon Mattern, published in the online journal *Places* and entitled "Maintenance and Care: A working guide to the repair of rust, dust, cracks, and corrupted code in our cities, our homes, and our social relations," was shared with the full Working Group before its initial meeting in November of 2019.

"Values like *innovation* and *newness* hold mass appeal—or at least they did until *disruption* became a winning campaign platform and a normalized governance strategy," Mattern writes in that essay. "Now breakdown is our epistemic and experiential reality. What we really need to study is how the world gets put back together."

That last phrase is key. One answer to the questions posed at the beginning of this section might be to insist on a reparative, rather than a merely protective, kind of preservation. This perspective might allow us to avoid the more obstructionist impulses in the field's history and to wrap together preservation, maintenance, and care within a single set of values and, ultimately, policy choices.

The subcommittee spent time discussing and acknowledging the extensive work that the City, particularly its Department of City Planning, has done in recent decades to catalog, analyze, and safeguard historic resources and community assets that include, but are certainly not limited to, significant works of architecture. The SurveyLA initiative[2] from DCP is especially impressive in this regard, both detailed and wide-ranging. Described by the department as "the first-ever comprehensive program to identify significant historic resources throughout the City of Los Angeles," this collaboration with the J. Paul Getty Trust was a multiyear effort that covered nearly 900,000 parcels of land and 500 square miles. SurveyLA extended well beyond architecture, creating new frameworks for identifying and preserving resources associated with the city's diverse ethnic and cultural communities.

There is of course more work to be done. This subcommittee identified several strategies to pursue. One was for the City to seek to lower barriers to entry in this civic conversation, moving to dismantle procedural hurdles to participating in official discussions of historic preservation wherever possible. Other recommendations included looking for more extensive ways to digitize historic resources and make them available to the public; produce new oral histories; and pursue a variety of forms of engaging audiences, such as podcasts and more sophisticated use of social media.

We considered the range of ways in which the City might strengthen protections against prohibited demolition of significant works of architecture. This is a particularly pressing issue when it comes to residential architecture, given that such a high proportion of landmarks in Los Angeles, relative to other American cities, are in the form of houses in the private realm. We discussed a range of ways to stiffen penalties for unsanctioned modification and demolition, looking to case studies in other cities.

[1] *https://placesjournal.org/article/maintenance-and-care/?cn-reloaded=1*

[2] *https://planning.lacity.org/preservation-design/historic-resources-survey*

According to recent research prepared for the City Council by the Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety (LADBS), "The City of San Antonio levies a fine for unpermitted demolition in the amount of 90 percent of the fair market value of the cost of replacement or repair of such building, object or structure," while in New York City the penalties can extend "up to the fair market value of the improvement parcel, with or without the improvement."[3]

[3] *"Report on Penalties Imposed for Unpermitted Remodels, Additions, and Demolition of Buildings and Structures," CF 17-0226-S1*

The City of Los Angeles already has in place a so-called Scorched Earth Ordinance that allows LADBS to impose up to a five-year moratorium on permits for properties where unpermitted demolition has occurred. We support efforts to extend or complement these protections. One policy in the neighboring city of Glendale has been endorsed by a Los Angeles City Council committee as a possible model for L.A. It specifies, as a deterrent to illegal demolition, that the replacement project not exceed the size or footprint of the demolished structure.

We also discussed the possibility of the City extending Historic-Cultural Monument status to cover the body of work of an important architect or firm—Paul R. Williams, an architect discussed elsewhere at some length in this volume, was mentioned as one example worth considering for this kind of action. There is also the potential to protect a particular building type in this manner, or in connection with the City's Historic Protection Overlay Zone (HPOZ) program. Could the bungalow courts of Los Angeles, for instance, be better honored and protected if they were categorized collectively in this way?

Moving Past Clean-Slate Solutions

Our group discussed the importance of finding new ways to center Indigenous histories, voices, and building traditions in discussions about preservation in Los Angeles. Not unrelatedly, we also took up the question of the City's tendency to pursue tabula rasa design solutions—the way Los Angeles tends to prefer wiping the slate clean and building anew when faced with aging, fraught, or poorly maintained buildings and civic spaces.

Pershing Square, located in downtown Los Angeles and among the oldest and most important public spaces in the city, came up as an example of this latter habit. While many of us admire the design by the French landscape firm Agence Ter that prevailed in a 2016 design competition to reimagine the site, perhaps too little attention has been paid to the origins of the landscape scheme the new plan would replace. Completed in 1994 and designed by a team led by the Mexican architect Ricardo Legorreta and landscape architect Laurie Olin, it is undoubtedly an imperfect design. It exacerbated the Square's physical and visual separation from the sidewalks around it.

But have we been too quick to write it off completely? The Legorreta design when new was a brightly colored and deeply optimistic extension of Spanish Colonial and Latin American design traditions that go back more than two centuries in Southern California. It represented the first self-conscious decision by modern Los Angeles civic leadership to cloak an important public space in the design language of what is now, in a phrase popularized by James Rojas and others, known as Latino Urbanism. What's more, the decision to hire Legorreta, at that point the most prominent of Mexican architects, came just as Los Angeles was seeing immigration from Latin America, and from Mexico in particular, reach its peak.

It is of course also worth pointing out that Pershing Square has been through many such reinventions; the design competition won by Agence Ter is only the latest in a long list. For nearly a century, in fact, the park has been symbolic of the Los Angeles tendency to avoid doing the difficult but important work of fixing public spaces and important buildings in favor of seeking brand-new solutions, often before the funding to realize them is in place. We would welcome a broader public conversation on these issues, beginning with an examination of the best next steps at Pershing Square.

Protecting the Architecture of the Recent Past

The discussion of Pershing Square led to a broader consideration of the ways in which the architecture and landscape architecture of the recent past can be uniquely vulnerable to the kind of inattention, disdain, or misunderstanding that can set the stage for neglect and even demolition. We were especially interested in examining this question in relation to the rich collection of landmarks in Los Angeles from the 1980s and 1990s, which (in addition to Legorreta's designs) includes the early work of so-called L.A. School architects Frank Gehry, Craig Hodgetts and Ming Fung, Morphosis, Eric Owen Moss, Elyse Grinstein and Jeffrey Daniels, and others. Having fallen out of fashion with the broader public in recent years, this work may soon find itself in the crosshairs of demolition.[4] Already a building on the campus of the University of California at Irvine by Frank Gehry has been razed without any significant public debate or consternation.

What would it take to bring new awareness to this architecture and what the best examples of the period meant when they were new? Could we start by extending SurveyLA, which now ends at 1980, through the year 2000? In what ways can SurveyLA and other City programs along these lines reflect not just the rich architectural heritage of those decades but social and cultural movements as well? The 1980s and 1990s were a period, after all, of tremendous demographic and social change in Los Angeles.

This notion is connected to other themes that emerged during our sessions. Throughout, the focus was on finding ways to broaden the definitions of preservation, maintenance, and care that guide City policymaking to make them more flexible, more dynamic, more inclusive, and more responsive to contemporary understandings of equitable development, historic resources, the risks of climate change, and community self-determination. We share the sentiment expressed elsewhere in this report that our ideas and recommendations are offered as the basis for further community engagement and civic discussion, rather than the final answer on any topic. We are eager to discuss ways that the field of preservation, without abandoning its own protocols and forms of expertise, might act in concert with broader projects of reckoning. ●

[4] *This was a topic raised in an event at the Museum of Contemporary Art in March 2019 that was organized by Occidental College and Christopher Hawthorne's Third Los Angeles series and featured an introduction by Mayor Eric Garcetti. Entitled "Strange Beauty: Making Sense of the L.A. architecture of the 1980s and 1990s," it included Craig Hodgetts, Ming Fung, Eric Owen Moss, Jeffrey Inaba, and Charles Jencks (whose 1993 book* Heteropolis *remains one of the best studies of the L.A. architecture of this period). A recording of the event can be found here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TmIG8pdDrw.*

This subcommittee was chaired by Gerdo Aquino, chief executive and principal, SWA Group landscape architecture and planning, and Kelema Lee Moses, assistant professor of Art & Art History at Occidental College. Its other members were Ken Bernstein, principal city planner, Office of Historic Resources and Urban Design Studio, Los Angeles Department of City Planning; Linda Dishman, president and chief executive, Los Angeles Conservancy; Adrian Scott Fine, director of advocacy, Los Angeles Conservancy; Brenda Levin, president and principal, Levin & Associates Architects; Christina Morris, senior field director, National Trust for Historic Preservation; and Shannon Ryan, senior city planner, Los Angeles Department of City Planning.

6710 La Tijera Blvd.

Sam Sweet

Helen Liu Fong. Photograph by Larry Hirshowitz.

1.

She was raised by uncles and aunts in the back of Sunrise Laundry, 1220 W. 9th Street, between downtown and MacArthur Park. Each morning before school she and her four siblings ate warm congee and dumplings alongside four employees who shuttled dirty laundry to the big industrial washers near Old Chinatown. Clean clothes were returned to 9th Street to be pressed and folded. As kids, Helen Liu Fong and her siblings spent their afternoons turning socks.

When she was 12, the school counselor at Virgil Junior High asked what she wanted to be. "An architect," Helen said. After school, she had to ask her best friend, a Japanese girl named Mary, what an architect did. The year was 1939. "I think they design houses," she said. "Or homes."

Her grades got her into UCLA, and then UC Berkeley. A degree in city planning led to her hiring as a secretary in the firm of Eugene Choy, the first Chinese-American from Southern California to be licensed by AIA. When Choy downsized in 1951, Helen joined Louis Armet and Eldon Davis, a pair of USC architecture grads whose business was taking shape in the adjoining office. Both firms worked out of a small professional building at 1334 Wilshire, three blocks north of Sunrise Laundry.

2.

George and Rena Panagopoulos operated Yum Burger on Manchester Ave. and Holly's on Hawthorne Blvd., but they coveted a location that would capitalize on the exit traffic from LAX, which had grown following Pereira & Luckman's spectacular "space age" redesign. Prior to the opening of the 405 and the 105, cars leaving the airport took La Tijera north onto La Cienega, which channeled them through the hills of the Inglewood Oil Field and back down into central Los Angeles. When the triangular traffic island formed by La Tijera, La Cienega, and Centinela became available, the "Poulos" family jumped on it.

Pann's Restaurant. Photograph courtesy Armet Davis Newlove and Associates.

Like every Armet & Davis diner, Pann's was designed to seduce motorists from a passing glance. The exterior walls were glass curtains that revealed huge glowing triangular pendant lamps. It could have been a Cadillac showroom. From the outside, it looked as spacious as a church and as mesmeric as an aquarium. Helen said each coffee shop should always appear like the site of a special event, even if the only movement within was a transient sipping coffee on a swivel stool.

Norm's, Ship's, and Johnie's drew policemen and high schoolers, loners and laborers, retirees and double-daters. The plunging rooflines and totemic neon lured drivers off the road; the interiors had to deliver sensory pleasure on a much more intimate scale. Customers ate cheeseburgers and pie on chairs designed by Charles and Ray Eames; checked the time on George Nelson clocks; nestled between booth dividers by Van Keppel-Green. These were the touches of Helen Fong. She was their invisible curator, gifting modern design to people who would never step foot in a Case Study home.

3.

In the '60s, Denny's and Bob's Big Boy purchased franchise templates from Armet & Davis. As far-flung states imported the California Coffee Shop, Los Angeles began demolishing the originals. "During recent months, the trend in coffee shop design has been to more formality," Eldon Davis told the Los Angeles Times in 1964. "This means a more subdued décor, carpeted dining areas screened from the counter-and-booth sections, more formal appointments, and in some there will be a bar."

Before Pann's was set to open on March 6, 1958, Helen stopped by for a final inspection. Everything was perfect, down to the cast-resin screen that Hans Werner and Betsy Hancock had created for the foyer: an abstract map charting the journey of the Poulos family from Tripoli to Inglewood. "But this," Helen, stopping at the wall of one-inch square white tiles that fronted the cook's line, "just won't work." It exemplified the cold sameness that Pann's was designed to cure. Helen pulled a vial from her purse and used the bottle's tiny brush to coat several tiles.

The doors opened the next day and never closed. In decades to come, every other coffee shop that Armet & Davis built in the 1950s was demolished or remodeled beyond recognition. Only the one on La Tijera remained unchanged, protected by a few dabs of Helen Fong's ruby red nail polish. ●

Adapted from Volume Three of All Night Menu.

Subcommittee 8

Indigenous Land Acknowledgement and the Work of Decolonization

This subcommittee was asked to consider whether the City of Los Angeles should adopt an Indigenous Land Acknowledgement policy. We began investigating this question by organizing a series of listening sessions with Native American scholars, experts, community members, artists, and activists to gather input and perspectives for our recommendations regarding the implementation, application, and institutionalization of such a policy.

We held community forums, via Zoom, on July 7, 2020; July 20, 2020; and September 23, 2020. We compiled a list of contacts from the Indigenous people affiliated most closely with the City of Los Angeles, the Tongva/Gabrielino/Kizh and Fernandeño Tataviam peoples.[1] We contacted Indigenous scholars and community professionals to provide perspectives and input about land and territorial acknowledgements. We also collaborated closely with members of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission (NAIC). We would like to express our gratitude to those members and in particular to the executive director of the NAIC, Alexandra Valdes. The full list of the names of the individuals with whom we consulted can be found at the bottom of this summary.

Land acknowledgements have been increasingly adopted by institutions, primarily colleges and universities, in recent years. The number of cities, counties, and state governments adopting them has been somewhat smaller but is also growing. One working definition, published by UCLA's Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, notes that an Indigenous land or territorial acknowledgement "is a statement that recognizes the Indigenous peoples who have been dispossessed from the homelands and territories upon which an institution was built and currently occupies and operates in. For some, an Indigenous Land or Territorial Acknowledgement might be an unfamiliar practice, but it is a common protocol within Indigenous communities in the United States and is a standard practice in both Australia and Canada."

This is an important point. While institutions outside Indigenous communities may regard land acknowledgements as a relatively novel idea, they are well established

[1] *Relying on the State of California's Native American Heritage Commission Tribal Consultation List, we have generally in this report used the spelling "Gabrielino," with the exception of references to the Gabrieleno/Tongva San Gabriel Band of Mission Indians and the Kizh Nation – Gabrieleño Band of Mission Indians, in which case we have honored their preferred spellings.*

within those communities. They are also more common in countries that have done the difficult and extensive work required to create equitable national treaties or other formal arrangements regarding sovereignty with Indigenous groups, including Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The work that Los Angeles and other cities are now doing to consider the adoption of land acknowledgement policies therefore begins with an effort to understand how they are already operating within the Native context.

The UCLA definition continues by noting that "the terms 'land' and 'territorial' are not necessarily interchangeable, and the decision as to their use should be specific and local, pertaining to those Indigenous people who are being acknowledged as well as to those legacies and responsibilities of an institution that are also being acknowledged."

It also says: "Within cultural institutions, these statements can be adopted in various ways. However, it is vital that they be spoken as a verbal statement given at the beginning of programs or events. In addition, they can also be expressed through a text panel or plaque, and an acknowledgement on an institutional website."[2]

In recent years some Indigenous leaders and scholars have explored new or broader models of land acknowledgement. (See the accompanying interview in this section of the report with Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy for more on that subject.) These models have tended to emphasize an interest taking care to avoid land acknowledgements that are perfunctory or rote in favor of more dynamic and adaptable policies. Such approaches include calls to action whereby a Native leader not only delivers a land acknowledgement but also suggests ways that that audience members at an event can contribute financially or otherwise to Indigenous causes, including land return, or act as advocates for better treatment of Indigenous groups by institutions, non-Native governments, or other groups.

An important milestone in the development of land acknowledgements in the state of California was reached in January of 2020, when Assemblymember James Ramos, the first California Native American elected to the California State Legislature, introduced Assembly Bill 1968, the Tribal Land Acknowledgment Act of 2021. The proposed legislation, which has yet as of this writing to become law, would "authorize the owner or operator of any public school, state or local park, library, or museum, or other state or local government building in this state to adopt a land acknowledgment process by which Native American tribes are properly recognized as traditional stewards of the land on which the public school, state or local park, library, or museum, or other state or local government building is located."[3]

The language of the bill goes on to note: "The teachings of United States history in schools, museums, and the media have left out the voices of the original nations and peoples. California native people have endured colonial efforts to erase their existence, cultures, religions, languages, and connections to ancestral territories. Despite the importation of the mission system and genocidal action during California's statehood, native people have maintained their presence in, and stewardship of, their homelands. California is home to nearly 200 tribes. Had the 18 original treaties with California Indian tribes been honored by the state and federal government, California Indian tribes would possess over 7,500,000 acres of land. Today, California Indian tribes collectively possess about seven percent of their unratified treaty territory.

[2] *Los Angeles American Indian Children's Council, UCLA Ralph & Goldy Lewis Center for Regional Policy Studies, 2004; http://lewis.sppsr.ucla.edu/publications/policybriefs/AIANAdultReport1.pdF*

[3] *http://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=201920200AB1968*

Despite federal and state efforts to erode ownership, control, and visibility, California Native American people remain actively engaged in cultural revitalization, resource protection, and self-determination within every region of California. Systematic denial of Native American knowledge, cultural authority, and historical experiences perpetuates the colonial structure of oppression."

The bill also includes sample language for a land acknowledgement "that could be used within a museum setting." It concludes with this sentence: "This acknowledgment demonstrates a commitment to beginning the process of working to dismantle the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism."

There are some particular complications and layers of complexity when it comes to pursuing an indigenous land acknowledgement policy in and for Los Angeles. There are nearly 600 federally recognized tribal nations in the United States, including more than 100 in California. According to the NAIC, the state "is home to more people of Native heritage than any other state in the United States…The City of Los Angeles holds the second largest percentage of Native Americans in the United States, totaling around 54,236 people. Los Angeles County, home to more Native Americans/ Alaska Natives than any other county in the United States, totals around 140,764 people."[4] Yet there are no federally recognized tribes in Los Angeles County.

[4] *https://lanaic.lacounty.gov/resources/tribal-governments/*

As a land acknowledgement policy developed by Cal State Long Beach puts it: "The Gabrielino/Tongva/Kizh and Fernandeno/Tataviam people are the First Peoples of the region, their lands were unceded, they did not negotiate a treaty with Mexico or the US government. Today, the First Peoples of Los Angeles struggle every day for their sovereignty."[5]

[5] *https://www.csulb.edu/sites/default/files/u69781/csulb_land_and_territorial_acknowledgments_faq_002.pdf*

What is more, the particular history of Los Angeles and Southern California has led to not one but multiple erasures of Indigenous history and legacy, at the hands, variously, of Spanish, Mexican and American governments. The very name "Los Angeles" implies that the history of the city, and of the land it occupies, begins with the arrival of the Spanish. And yet, as other subcommittees of this Working Group have observed, these erasures by no means ceased and in certain ways accelerated when Spanish rule was replaced by Mexican and then U.S. governance. As Brenda E. Stevenson, the Hillary Rodham Clinton Chair of Women's History at the University of Oxford, observed in a discussion on constructions and meanings of whiteness in Los Angeles, selections from which are reprinted elsewhere in this volume, "When we think about California coming into being, or Los Angeles coming into being, we think about the Spanish Empire, we think about the Mexican Empire, we think about the United States. But there still tends to be more than anything else erasure of Indigenous peoples. I think that's the most invisible group we have in our society."

We are fortunate that the work of this subcommittee evolved alongside, and benefited from collaboration with, similar efforts at the Los Angeles County level. In June of 2020, the County Board of Supervisors adopted a Countywide Cultural Policy,[6] which includes a section "regarding the development and use of land acknowledgements at County public events and ceremonial functions."[7] In addition to our productive work with the NAIC, we are deeply grateful to Kristin Sakoda, director of the Los Angeles County's Department of Arts and Culture, for her collaboration. It is our hope not only

[6] *https://www.lacountyarts.org/article/los-angeles-county-adopts-first-its-kind-cultural-policy*

[7] *http://file.lacounty.gov/SDSInter/bos/supdocs/147732.pdf*

to develop City and County land acknowledgement policies in tandem over the year 2021 and beyond, working closely with the NAIC, but also to see that cooperation stand as a larger symbol of the power of City-County partnerships to reassess and grapple more forthrightly with the region's past. Such collaboration would also have the benefit, as a gesture of respect, of reducing the potential for redundant or overbearing requests for consultation with Native leaders.

From the start this subcommittee was careful to limit its considerations. We agreed early in our discussions that our goal should be to decide whether the City should adopt a land acknowledgement policy and examine successful models of such policies from elsewhere, rather than to prescribe specific language or other guidelines for the policy itself. It is well beyond the expertise and the authority of this subcommittee to dictate the specific details of any land acknowledgement. We leave that to Native leaders working in concert with the Mayor's Office, the City Council, and City departments in collaboration with the similar efforts at the County level we have already outlined. Nonetheless we think there is value in using this space to support a land acknowledgement policy for the Mayor's Office and the City of Los Angeles and its departments and offering our support in seeing it adopted.

At the same time, the subcommittee agreed that to have meaning and impact any land acknowledgement for the City of Los Angeles will need to go beyond language and address the issue of how the City might recognize and begin the process of making amends for historical mistreatment of Native peoples. As Alexandra Valdes put it in one of our discussions, "If you're acknowledging the land then you're acknowledging the history of what's been born out of that history: how Native peoples have been treated on this land, and displacement. Without any action to address that, it's going to fall flat." This point—that a land acknowledgement policy for the City of Los Angeles, to have genuine effectiveness, must be seen as a first step in a longer process of reckoning and reparation—was raised consistently in our discussions with tribal leaders and scholars. In addition, the group felt strongly that the Mayor's Office should add a Native staff liaison to the NAIC for Native peoples to have their concerns represented directly in City Hall. The tribal liaison would, thus, ensure that the process and practice to implement the Land Acknowledgement policy is institutionalized and not just memorialized in the City.

In our first two sessions, in addition to hearing from local Native leaders about their perspectives on land acknowledgements, we considered and analyzed examples from local and international institutions that are meaningful for the power of their language, the equitable process that was followed to create them, or both. Among the land acknowledgements that stand out, a few are worth noting here.

The first was adopted by UCLA in 2019 and includes three versions, any of which can be used. The most detailed reads as follows: "UCLA acknowledges the Gabrielino/Tongva peoples as the traditional land caretakers of Tovaangar (the Los Angeles basin and So. Channel Islands). As a land grant institution, we pay our respects to the Honuukvetam (Ancestors), 'Ahiihirom (Elders) and 'Eyoohiinkem (our relatives/relations) past, present and emerging." This statement is notable, among other reasons, for making a point of recognizing "emerging" members of the region's tribes. We heard throughout our

discussions about the importance of not consigning tribes or tribal culture to the past.

The process by which the UCLA land acknowledgement was developed is also worth studying. The language of the acknowledgement reflects decades of collaboration between the UCLA Fowler Museum's Curator of Archaeology, Wendy Teeter, "and local Indigenous peoples of Southern California, including the Tongva, Fernandeno/Tataviam, Chumash, Juaneno/Acjachamen, Serrano, Luiseno/Payómkawichum, Cahuilla, Chemehuevi, Paiute/Nuwu, and Kumeyaay. In the fall of 2018, UCLA Chancellor Gene Block created the position of Special Advisor to the Chancellor on Native American and Indigenous Affairs, appointing Mishuana Goeman (Tonawanda Band of Seneca) to the role. In 2019, professors Goeman and Teeter worked with the Tongva Community to develop this land acknowledgement, which recognizes that UCLA is built on unceded Tongva land."

We would emphasize the phrase "decades of collaboration." The process of maintaining a robust and collaborative relationship between the City and Indigenous leaders may include, but will not end with, the adoption of any land acknowledgement policy. A successful policy will instead reflect the health of the larger relationship and the steps the City and County are continuing to take to engage the larger issues related to reparation and supporting the contemporary vitality of Native peoples in the region.

Another model worth noting is the approach to land acknowledgement—and the broader work of decolonization and reconciliation with First Peoples—practiced in New Zealand, known in Māori as Aotearoa. Following the establishment of the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975, public events that begin with acknowledgement of Māori culture and land are not only expected but marked by an unusual level of specificity, shaped to accompany the specific events of which they are a part.

Finally, for the poetry of its language, we include the land acknowledgement adopted in 2019 by San Diego State University. It was written by Michael Connolly Miskwish (Kumeyaay), a Kumeyaay historian, researcher, and assistant professor of American Indian Studies at SDSU. It reads, in part, "We stand upon a land that carries the footsteps of millennia of Kumeyaay people. They are a people whose traditional lifeways intertwine with a worldview of earth and sky in a community of living beings. This land is part of a relationship that has nourished, healed, protected and embraced the Kumeyaay people to the present day. It is part of a worldview founded in the harmony of the cycles of the sky and balance in the forces of life."[8]

[8] *https://ais.sdsu.edu/articles/Land-Acknowledgement.htm*

After two sessions, this subcommittee produced a series of draft recommendations. We then convened a larger group of tribal elders and experts in land acknowledgement to consider those draft recommendations. This final session, on Sept. 23, 2020, included representatives from the NAIC, the County of Los Angeles, Tongva/Gabrielino leadership, and other Native leaders and scholars. In all 13 people joined this discussion, 9 of whom have tribal affiliation. This group helped us refine and extend our final recommendations, which are as follows:

1. We urge the City of Los Angeles to adopt a Land Acknowledgement Policy. The process of developing such a policy should begin by convening a committee made up of representatives from the Indigenous People of Los Angeles, perhaps with a consultant to facilitate discussions. This committee should be coordinated by or formed in close consultation with the NAIC.

Furthermore, we recommend that this work of this committee should:

- Acknowledge the history of erasure/genocide of the Indigenous People of Los Angeles.
- Recognize the contemporary vitality and struggles of the Indigenous People of Los Angeles, rather than treating the community as a historical artifact or vanished people.
- Include an apology, or statement of reconciliation, to the Indigenous People of Los Angeles, with clear steps and policies to ameliorate and/or decolonize practices of erasure and exclusion.
- Outline practices, identified by representatives of the Indigenous People of Los Angeles, about how to build lasting, mutually respectful, culturally sensitive, and beneficial relationships with this community.

2. We recommend, per the definition above, that the land acknowledgement should be delivered at events hosted by the Mayor, City Council, City departments and commissions, public meetings, groundbreakings for public and significant private buildings, grand openings, sporting events, events at public libraries, etc. Here is one suggested rule of thumb: consider using the land acknowledgement at any event that includes a performance of the National Anthem, flag salute, or recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. A written version of the acknowledgement should also be posted and made visible at culturally significant sites identified by the committee.
3. We recommend that the City work collaboratively and in tandem with the County of Los Angeles, specifically with the L.A. County Department of Arts and Culture and City/County Native American Indian Commission (NAIC), as they develop Land Acknowledgements policy guidance and protocols for the County as part of the Countywide Cultural Policy adopted by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on June 23, 2020. The Countywide Cultural Policy provides that the County will "identify ways to acknowledge Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land at County public events and ceremonial functions and celebrate the contributions of culture bearers and traditional arts practices of diverse communities." This will provide an opportunity to center cultural equity, utilize an arts and cultural lens, and build on aligned efforts for regional impact in both City and County of Los Angeles.
4. We recommend that the Land Acknowledgement should be delivered by the person chairing a given meeting, an event organizer, or an Indigenous person who is invited to deliver it; however, if an Indigenous person is asked to deliver the Land Acknowledgement, we further recommend that the selected person be incorporated in a substantial or constructive role in the agenda of the event and be compensated for this work.
5. We recommend the City provide regular orientation on decolonization and the history and culture of the Indigenous people of Los Angeles to City employees by funding curriculum development for employee orientation training about the history, experience, struggle, and resilience of the Indigenous People of Los Angeles.
6. We recommend that the committee, as part of its work, study effective and equitable models of land return, in the United States and elsewhere, and make

specific recommendations about progress toward land return to the Indigenous people of Los Angeles.

7. We recommend that the committee work with the City's newly established Racial Equity Task Force to study how City policies have adversely affected Indigenous people and how past harm can be ameliorated, such as an institutionalized permanent staff member in the Mayor's Office to recommend policy changes and coordinate the kinds of work specified above, i.e. a Tribal Liaison.
8. We recommend that the committee consider ways to incorporate this policy and larger attention to Indigenous culture and presence in the region into planning for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games; in prominent locations at Los Angeles International Airport; and in major cultural events held in and/or broadcast from the City or County of Los Angeles, such as the Academy Awards, Super Bowl LVI (2022), etc. ●

This subcommittee was chaired by Theresa Gregor (Iipai/Yaqui), assistant professor of American Indian Studies, Cal State Long Beach, and Gail Kennard, president, Kennard Design Group (KDG), and commissioner, Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission. Its other members were Julia Bogany (Tongva/Gabrielino), member and cultural consultant, Tongva Tribal Council, and Christopher Hawthorne, chief design officer for the City of Los Angeles in the Office of Mayor Eric Garcetti. In addition, the subcommittee was advised by Cindi Alvitre (Tongva/Gabrielino), lecturer, American Indian Studies, California State University, Long Beach; Theresa Ambo (San Luis Rey Band of Mission Indians, Tongva/Gabrielino, Tohono O'odham), assistant professor, Education Studies, University of California, San Diego; Yve Chavez (Tongva/Gabrielino), assistant professor, History of Art and Visual Culture, UC Santa Cruz; Bruce Durbin (Iipay Nation of Santa Ysabel), supervising regional planner, Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning; Elisapeta Heta, senior associate and Maori design leader, Jasmax, Auckland, New Zealand; Rudy Ortega (Fernandeño Tataviam), tribal president, Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians, and commissioner and former chairman, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission; Joely Proudfit (Luiseño), chair, professor of American Indian Studies and director, California Indian Culture and Sovereignty Center, California State University San Marcos; Kristin Sakoda, director, Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture; and Alexandra Valdes (Tlingit & Athabascan), executive director, Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission.

Q&A

Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy

Christopher Hawthorne: I was really struck by your talk at the Toppling Mission Monuments conference about various models of land acknowledgement—particularly those that include action items for the audience to take up and other strategies for moving past perfunctory or rote approaches to land acknowledgement.[1] And I wanted to talk with you a bit about those approaches, and how they might be relevant to our civic memory work. To begin, could you just tell me a little bit about yourself, your background, and the work that you do now?

Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy: I'm the department chair and associate professor of Native American studies at Humboldt State University. I'm Hupa, Yurok, and Karuk—those are three of the largest tribes in Northern California. I'm enrolled in the Hupa Valley Tribe but have ties to Yurok and Karuk peoples. I like doing work with people and in communities, but my research really focuses on decolonization and California Indian peoples, and especially California Indian politics and the ways in which we understand and enact sovereignty and self-determination. My passion is land return and decolonial futures.

[1] *"Toppling Mission Monuments and Mythologies: A Conference—California Indian Scholars and Allies Respond and Reflect" was an online event held via Zoom on July 15, 2020. It was organized by the UCLA Chicano Studies Research Center in collaboration with partners at UC Riverside, UC San Diego, and UC Santa Cruz.*

CH: Our working group has been interested in various approaches to decolonization. Can you talk a little bit more about the forms your work has taken in that area, or models of decolonization—particularly in public spaces and public design—that you might point us to?

CRB: For me, it's been a couple of different interventions that I've started to really focus on when I think about what decolonial space work looks like. One is renaming and using Indigenous languages a lot in spaces. I think we've been taught for far too long that our languages are very weird or foreign, and it actually spreads the message to our own people, our own youth, that somehow our languages are inaccessible. Because they're not seeing it every day or everywhere. And in part it's because, in order to reflect the way we speak with English letters, you have to use a lot of colons and accents and barred *Ls* and things like that, because our languages are very different from English. When you see it written out in this way, it can at first feel jarring. But when you start to refer to spaces by the Indigenous names, you begin to have a different relationship with them.

One of my colleagues, Dr. Kayla Begay, she's a linguist, and she talks about how in Hupa, for instance, when we talk about coming into a new space, we don't say, "I'm lost." We would never say, "I'm lost here" or "I don't know where I am." We actually say, "The land doesn't know me." There's something about introducing yourself and knowing the land and the relationship you're supposed to have to it. Our languages have a lot to say about that relationship. So in our own area, in Hupa, we often have signs, and we've named our roads in our language. We all know the name of our medical center is K'ima:w Medical Center. It means medicine—that's our word for medicine. In my own land acknowledgements, I always make sure that I don't just say wherever I traveled to. I don't just come to the place and say, "I'm here in this city and it's the land of these people." I try to find the name of the place in the Indigenous language and use it and say it, and

then have other people pronounce it and say it, to help people get more comfortable with everyday Indigenous language.

In our region, they just returned a sacred island to the tribe. It was taken more than 150 years ago because of a massacre that occurred there. And because of that massacre, the people had to leave. And then that island was taken over, but it is still considered the center of the world to the Wiyot peoples. Eventually it was returned—an unprecedented return. The city of Eureka said, "We'll give you this island back." In our area, that island is often referred to as Indian Island. And that's how people colloquially talk about it. I can't call it Indian Island, because it's only called that because that's where they went and killed a bunch of Indian people. But before that the village was called Tuluwat. [The island was called Duluwat.] And I think it's really important to start just calling it Tuluwat, so I try in my own practice. I try with my students. I try with people I know to be like, "That's Tuluwat. That's Tuluwat." More and more you hear people saying, "Oh, that's Tuluwat, that's where the Wiyot people are from."

I think that those sorts of moments are really important. I give my students extra credit in their papers if they refer to the areas they're writing about using the Indigenous words. A lot of them refer to Arcata, which is where Humboldt State is, as Kori [the name for the Wiyot settlement that existed on the site]. And that's how they talk about it. Same thing with Eureka, which is Jaroujiji [in Wiyot]—they just talk about it that way. There were so many attempts to divorce us from our language, knowing that our language held our culture and our beliefs and our reasons for being, knowing that our language tied us together and tied us to the land. Reclaiming that can become so important. Seeing it in public spaces is also important, and knowing that these languages are still living, that they're not dead languages or gone languages. And that all these places had names—that they were renamed through colonization, but they all had Indigenous names before that.

CH: That's really helpful. Before we get to land acknowledgements specifically, another question on decolonization. This report is coming out of a mayor's office, which makes it somewhat unusual. It's a bit of a hybrid. Many of our [Civic Memory Working Group] members are not city officials, of course. What would be your advice to a city like Los Angeles to expand the work of decolonization beyond some of what you were just talking about?

CRB: The most practical thing is land return. There's a great article called "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor."[2] It's by Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, and what they're basically saying is, when we talk about decolonization, we can't talk about it as a metaphor. It actually comes down to one very key thing, and that is the return of Indigenous land. That's what decolonization is. If land is stolen, it needs to be returned. So if that's the ultimate goal of decolonization, when you start talking about decolonization in your own practice, what you're really signing up for, ultimately, is land return. Now, there's multiple steps to get there. When I come into spaces and say, "We're all going to start working to give land back," everybody goes, "Uh, what?" And they get all scared about it. And then my job is to say, "There's multiple steps to get there." We as Indigenous peoples acknowledge that it's not going to happen overnight. Even though I think that'd be amazing and righteous, if tomorrow somebody was like, "Oh, you want it back? Here you go!" I have actually flirted with becoming a notary just because I go to all these spaces and I think, "You could give it back right now. I'm a notary"—

[2] *Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization Is Not a Metaphor," Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society 1, no. 1 (2012): 1–40.*

CH: I'll sign the document right now!

CRB: I'll fix it. And I know someday it's going to happen. But it's a longer process. In our area, with the Wiyot, they started that conversation over 25 years ago. It was Wiyot leaders saying, "We want the island back. That's what we want." And a lot of people at first told them that it was

impossible, that it's just not going to happen. But their leaders kept saying, "It's going to happen. Maybe it's not going to happen today, but it's going to happen, because that's what we're working for." It was constant education and outreach. They held vigil on the island every year for 20 years. They started to do their ceremonies again; they brought those back. They educated people. They did all these things. And through that developed a really important relationship with the city of Eureka, saying to them: "We are the Indigenous peoples of this area. We have to build a real relationship with you." So it was talking with them. It was visits. It was taking them to the island. It was retelling that story. It was making videos about what they wanted to do.

Ultimately, it was a grassroots movement. Cheryl Seidner, who was the tribal leader at the time that this started, she was so sure that this was what needed to happen—the return of this sacred space—that she started doing bake sales to raise money. She started selling T-shirts. They did a campaign around it. All told, it took about 25 years to get that to happen. And once you had a city council that was ready to truly move it forward, it moved forward, and the island was returned.

So land return is the ultimate thing. Los Angeles is in a very particular position because so many of their tribal peoples are unrecognized [by the federal government]. I think helping to show support for the return of land to unrecognized tribes is going to be something that puts a city on a map in a really good way. That's decolonization. It's saying, "We don't need the federal government to decide that these are our tribal peoples. We know who our tribal peoples are, and we're going to honor them in a really meaningful way. We're going to bring them into this conversation and we're going to talk with them about what land return looks like."

And in the city of Eureka's case—and this is really important—Tuluwat was not given back just because it was a sacred site and so important to the Wiyot people. It was considered surplus land by the city. The city wasn't using it or doing anything with it specifically, because it was a brownfield site. It was so contaminated through the work that had been done there by settlers throughout the whole period of time that they couldn't afford to fix it. It was unbuildable, unusable. So there's this other layer to it: it happened in part because the land was considered surplus land.

It did, however, open up, in the Indigenous imagination, "Hey, there's surplus land in cities that they're not doing anything with? And yet we haven't had this conversation about the fact that we want to do things with it?" And with the Wiyot tribe, they are now the ones doing the cleanup. They have shared several of the ways in which they have now cleaned up the island so that it's once again usable. When they showed up, there was so much trash there. Somebody had built a retaining wall of old car batteries on the island and they had to remove it. They had to remove several layers of soil that were contaminated. They had to rebuild buildings. This is what they signed up for, because this is their sacred space. And I think the partnership built between the city and the Wiyot was really important, because here was an island that was in disrepair, that the city was not using, but was also a sacred space to these Indigenous peoples.

To me, the land return part is the most important part—and actually makes the biggest impact, because when we're talking about climate change, climate justice, environmental justice, it's Indigenous peoples who want to come in and to be able to work with the land in a meaningful way so that it's good for everyone. So I think those kinds of opportunities are there under decolonization.

CH: It's so interesting that you note that 25-year timeframe. This has been a theme in many of our conversations: that things that can seem to outside observers—or to city governments, for that matter—as happening really quickly, like the toppling of monuments, are almost always the process of many years of activism and community advocacy. Part of what cities need to do is just recognize the amount

of work in communities that is ongoing, that has been ongoing, when it comes to these issues and this kind of change, and to begin to think in a different timeframe as well. Again, this report is coming out of a mayor's office, and there's so much connected to the idea of a fixed, finite term of office. And that can be in tension with the way these movements work, which is over many, many years.

CRB: Even the city of Eureka, though it's much smaller than a city like L.A., had to work out that the Wiyot relationship, the relationship with their tribal peoples, was structural to the mayor's office. No matter who came into office, they understood this as a structural part of it, that you work with the Wiyot tribe in this way. It's not dependent on one mayor to say, I value this. Instead, it's a structural part of our city government.

CH: Is there a designated staff position to be the liaison to the tribe in the city government of Eureka?

CRB: No, not yet. But I think certain people have taken on that role. They've been talking about making it official. And actually it was just a couple weeks ago that the city of Eureka finally adopted a land acknowledgement. They're moving forward with many related things in part because of the very positive response to their action to return this island. It went international. We were doing interviews with people from countries all over the world about this movement and this moment. And suddenly Eureka, which in our area doesn't have the best reputation, is known as being *the* place. It was the first city that we know of in the United States to return land to Indigenous peoples. And so this relationship actually built something really powerful that people are talking about all over the world. I think that inspired the next steps that they're taking now.

CH: Before we get to some of your thinking about new models of land acknowledgement, just a basic question: why from your point of view is it important for cities to adopt land acknowledgements?

CRB: I think the most important thing is that cities are some of the first relationship builders and responders to Indigenous peoples in their regions. The U.S. government's relationship with tribes is nation to nation, and that's really important to remember. But when we're talking about who tribes have to interact with and deal with every single day, a lot of that comes down to cities and counties. And I do think that that relationship is important because the cities are occupying Indigenous land, and because the decision-making that happens in a city is going to affect Indigenous lands. It's going to affect Indigenous peoples, because the Indigenous lands are right up against city lands, and oftentimes right there in the same spaces. And Indigenous peoples, having been here for thousands upon thousands of years—I mean our timeline of what it means to live here is very, very long. And then we're also always thinking long into the future. We're making decisions now, and we're thinking about how beneficial something is going to be seven generations in the future. It's that long-term process of, "We're always going to be here." I watched a really good documentary yesterday ["Dancing Salmon Home"] in which Chief Caleen Sisk—she's from the Winnemem Wintu—she tells a government agency, "At some point you're going to retire, but I am never going to retire. This is my place. This is the work that I do. I will always be this person."[3] City government to tribal government, you can do real things. There are some amazing impacts that you can have on a local level that can affect international conversations about what the world should look like next.

[3] *"Dancing Salmon Home," directed by Will Doolittle, Moving Image Productions, LLC (Eugene, OR), 2012.*

CH: I wanted to ask about models of land acknowledgement that you think cities like L.A. might consider. I'm particularly drawn to this idea of yours about using a land acknowledgement at a conference or public event to ask the audience to take up a particular action or make a donation, right then and there.

CRB: What it always comes down to for me is this: we don't want land acknowledgements to be prescriptive or rote. What I constantly ask people who come to me and say they need help in developing a land acknowledgement is, "Why are you doing it? Why?" Each person who is having this conversation needs to really reflect on what that means for them, because as we've discussed, land acknowledgement is supposed to be the first step toward signing up for land return. So if you are not willing to say, "Yes, I'm willing to work toward land return," then why are you doing it? Otherwise, it doesn't really amount to anything. It's a statement, and we don't need a statement. We don't need a statement that you know that we're alive. What we need are compelling actions and calls to action to remind people that we're always in the process of building toward a decolonized future. And it's going to look different in every city. It's going to look different in every town. Every land return is going to look different. This is what I always say to people: "I can't give you the answer of how should you do it, because it's always going to look different. And that's okay. But you do have to say that you're signing up for decolonization. And if you're not willing to say that, then don't do a land acknowledgement."

Hayden King is an Anishinaabe scholar from Canada, and what he says is, when you make a land acknowledgement a very prescriptive statement and you just read it or somebody else reads it, that's not building a relationship. You have to make this something active. And that to me can be so many things. Everywhere I go, I'll research not just the actual name of the Indigenous peoples for the region that I'm going to, but whether there are multiple tribes in that region. So for instance, in Los Angeles, the Tongva are the peoples, but there are multiple tribes within the region. So I would want to name every tribe in my land acknowledgement as well as the peoples. Then I try to find out the Indigenous name for the place that I'm in, so I can give them that language. And then I say, "Okay, I've said this to you, but what are we going to do? What's the action that we're going to take?"

Sometimes you hear amazing, beautiful, powerful things from members of the audience about what this means for their relationship to Indigenous peoples. I had one woman who said, "This compels me to teach my daughter about the strength of Native people, because I know she's not going to get that in school. So now what we do is, when she's going to talking about Native people in school, I give her these resources. We have these conversations. I take her to these events." And I was like, "That's a really good start." When it comes to larger organizations, I always say you're going to talk with action or you're going to talk with money. And I always educate people about land—specifically that close to 90 percent of land in the United States is owned by white people. And when you know that but you're not compelled to address it, then what you're saying is that you're okay with this disparity. So stop being okay with it and start saying what you're going to do.

In the case of organizations, I constantly try to get them to put in actions toward supporting what's already happening in their communities. I'll often look up nonprofits, or even tribal agencies or land trusts. In the case of the Toppling Mission Monuments discussion, I had asked them to donate directly to the Kumeyaay Trust because I previously taught at San Diego State, so I had been on Kumeyaay land. And I was saying here's a way you can actually support what land return and what land management looks like. And then I'll call attention to certain activist movements that are happening at the time, because I think it's important to just give people things that they can feel like they've done something to help. And maybe it inspires them to compel other people to action. You don't have to stand up and be like, "This compels me to demand the end of capitalism, at this very moment." I want to give people things they can do right now. And then I want to tell them that in doing that, they are starting to open up their imaginations so that we can see the end of settler colonialism, so that we can see past the system that has tried to teach us that there's nothing we can do.

CH: And I recall you saying that sometimes you will pause to give people time to act at a conference, or you will come back at the end to update the audience on their progress in taking up these actions, whether it's writing a letter to the president of San Diego State asking them to change their mascot from the Aztecs or making a donation to the Kumeyaay Trust.

CRB: All the time. The first time I did it, it was at Cal State East Bay. They asked me to do a land acknowledgement and I did it, and then at the end I said, "So there's actually a nonprofit that is a land trust that is trying to get land back in the Bay Area for tribes that you can give money to. You can actually pay land taxes, honor taxes to tribal nations." I do know that there have been some cities that have been able to put into their tax forms the option to say, "Yes, I will pay the honor tax." People can opt into paying a tax to tribes, as part of their property taxes. In the case of this land trust, they use the honor tax to start to buy back pieces of land in the Bay Area. Sometimes they're small pieces of land that are available. Sometimes they're larger pieces of land. So I asked people to donate and then I said, "Okay, I'll wait." And I just stood there and they were all kind of looking around. And I said, "Yeah, pull out your phones and start typing because you can pay now. You should do it *now*. It's not like I want to inspire you to do it later." And then they all very slowly started. And I said, "Keep going, and when you're done, send it to me and I'll post it up on the screen. I'll show people the work that you did today, the actual work that you did."

At the Missions conference, people tweeted at me when they donated and I retweeted it. I celebrated them. I don't want you to get into your car later, after you've heard me speak. and be like, "Wow, she gave me a lot to think about." I want you to *do* something. And sometimes it makes people uncomfortable. But I also think we *should* make people uncomfortable.

CH: Do you think there's value in having a short statement that can be used in certain circumstances, then paired with a more adaptable one that can be configured to match a particular event or context? What's your advice about how a city might take on that set of questions?

CRB: This is a good question. I think it's important to take time to do a land acknowledgement if you're going to do it. When people invite me to do land acknowledgements, I'll say, I will come into your land acknowledgement for your event, but my land acknowledgement takes ten to twelve minutes. And then they always say, "Ten to twelve minutes? Because we were thinking, you know, one minute, maybe two, because we don't have much time on the agenda." And then I say, "Then you don't really want a land acknowledgement. You want a statement." So call it a statement. I'm not going to show up to do a two-minute statement. If you're going to invite us into the space, you have to invite us in as partners, and at least give us the time to do a true acknowledgement of who we are, and our lands.

CH: What are the institutions or cities that have done this well, in your opinion?

CRB: San Diego State has a land acknowledgement that was written by a Kumeyaay who works for them, who's one of their instructors. His name is Mike Connelly. It doesn't compel action, but as a statement it is one of the most beautiful I've heard.[4] He's a writer and a poet, and the way he wrote it, it reconnects Kumeyaay people to the land in a way that I had not heard done in a long time. [It reads, in part, "We stand upon a land that carries the footsteps of millennia of Kumeyaay people. They are a people whose traditional lifeways intertwine with a worldview of earth and sky in a community of living beings. This land is part of a relationship that has nourished, healed, protected, and embraced the Kumeyaay people to the present day. It is part of a worldview founded in the harmony of the cycles of the sky and balance in the forces of life."] I have been blown away by that one.

[4] *"SDSU Senate Approves Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement Statement," news release, Department of American Indian Studies, San Diego State University, Sept. 11, 2019, https://ais.sdsu.edu/articles/land-acknowledgement.htm.*

CH: In the few minutes that we have left, is there anything that we haven't touched on that you'd like to mention or talk about?

CRB: Earlier you asked something about public spaces. We have a new mural in the lobby of our Native American Forum at Humboldt State. For a long time, the lobby was a very plain space where you would gather before heading into the auditorium. And we found funding and we redid the lobby with all Native art, and we put in a bunch of information about the tribes. We put in a bunch of information about the school and its ties to Indigenous peoples. And it's become a really important space on campus. People walk in and they recognize that it's an Indigenous space and we're being represented here. I do think that public art can be really important as a part of how we reclaim space.

The other thing I'll say is that people have started to give abandoned or empty buildings to Indigenous peoples in downtown areas. In Oregon, there was a nonprofit that actually donated their building to the Indigenous peoples to be able to open their own art and cultural center in downtown Portland. In Eureka, the Wiyot just worked with the city of Eureka to purchase a building. These downtown spaces are important because sometimes people think of Native peoples as, "Oh, they're out *there*, away from the city."

CH: Speaking of reclaimed space, one of the recommendations we've heard from a lot of our members is that the city consider some way, when we produce new monuments and memorials or when we recontextualize existing ones, to have a reference to Indigenous landscapes or to the longer history of the land. I'm wondering if you think there's value in that, or if there are examples of that happening already that you're aware of.

CRB: When we're talking about memorials, I always think about how I don't want to just memorialize the genocide or death of Native peoples. For so long, people have tended to say, "This is the statue of Junípero Serra. Look, he killed all these Indians." To me, that just talks about us as people who died. I like to talk about how we are people who are still alive, people who have survived and resisted. That has to be centered in terms of how we're talked about. Recontextualizing anything has to recenter us as living, vibrant peoples who are also resistors. Otherwise, people get so used to just talking about our deaths. When people write about us, the bestsellers tend to be books about our genocide, books about our death. And I don't want that to be what's centered at any type of public memorial or acknowledgement of us, because we are so much more than the attempted genocide of us. And it's the same thing that happened on Tuluwat: for a long time, people only talked about Tuluwat as a place of a massacre. And my point had always been, "This is not a place of massacre. This is a place of world renewal. And we need to talk about it not just in terms of what happened in 1850 or 1849, because of what was going on with settler colonialism. We need to talk about it in terms of what happened thousands of years before that—and 150 years later. It's our world renewal place, so let's think of it that way." People kept asking if we needed a big plaque that says, "This is the place of this giant massacre that was attempted by citizens of Humboldt County against the Wiyot." And I said, "I acknowledge that that's important, because we don't want people to forget that that happened. But when we center Wiyot death, let's not ignore Wiyot life and Wiyot revitalization and Wiyot resilience." That's what I want people to keep in mind.

CH: That's a perfect place to end it. This has been really fantastic. I can't thank you enough. ●

Roundtable

The Legacies of Junípero Serra

Members of this roundtable:

William Deverell (facilitator) is professor of history at the University of Southern California, director of the USC-Huntington Institute on California and the West, and a member of the Civic Memory Working Group.

Father Tom Elewaut is the pastor at Mission Basilica San Buenaventura Catholic parish in Ventura, California.

Joel Garcia (Huichol) is an artist, arts administrator, cultural organizer, and 2019 Monument Lab fellow.

Steven Hackel is a professor of history at UC Riverside and author of *Junípero Serra: California's Founding Father* (Hill and Wang, 2013).

Andrew Salas is chairperson of the Gabrieleño band of Mission Indians (Kizh Nation).

Ernestine Ygnacio-De Soto is an elder in the Barbareño band of Chumash Indians.

Donna Yocum is tribal chair of the San Fernando band of Mission Indians.

Junípero Serra was born Miquel Joseph Serra on November 24, 1713, in the village of Petra on the island of Mallorca in the western Mediterranean. The son of a farmer, Serra spent his early childhood working the family's land and attending a Franciscan school situated just down the street from his home. At an early age Serra moved to Palma, Mallorca's main city, and began studying for the priesthood. When he joined the Franciscan order, he took the name Junípero in honor of one of the early followers of Saint Francis of Assisi.

In 1749, Serra and several other Mallorcan Franciscans decided to answer what they believed was a divine call to go to Mexico as apostolic missionaries. Serra arrived in Mexico City on January 1, 1750, and soon thereafter was assigned to the Sierra Gorda region of northern Mexico, where for eight years he oversaw five missions and supervised the construction of more permanent mission structures. As part of his work in the Sierra Gorda, Serra served as a *comisario* (field agent) for the Spanish Inquisition.

Spanish officials soon became worried that Russians or other Europeans might attempt to settle the coastal region north of Baja California and thereby threaten Spain's interests in northern Mexico. The Crown therefore called on Serra to establish and oversee missions in San Diego, Monterey, and points in between. Serra, in the company of other Franciscans and dozens of soldiers, worked his way north from Baja California and established Mission San Diego in the summer of 1769. The following year, he established a mission in Monterey, and he and Gaspar de Portolá, the leader of the military in Baja California, took possession of Alta California for Spain.

Serra believed that Natives should accept Catholicism as the one true religion, adopt European agriculture to sustain themselves, and live their lives at the missions, "under the bell." Franciscans resorted to coercion and physical punishments to force Natives to follow Catholic precepts, remain in the missions, and provide the labor necessary to maintain them. While some Native peoples may have been taken by Serra's vision, others resisted, sparking rebellions of varying intensity at all of the missions. At the same time, however, there was a blending of cultures in colonial California. Natives brought their own cultural traditions of food, music, art, and basketry to the missions, elements of which made their way into mission diets and Catholic liturgical music, paintings, and decorative arts.

By the time Serra died in Mission San Carlos (modern-day Carmel) in 1784, he had stewarded the building of the first nine California missions. The padres could point to impressive Native baptism numbers, but the death registers told another story. Frighteningly high mortality stalked the missions, claiming thousands and thousands of newborns, children, and young adults. Women's fertility plummeted. The missions became so unhealthy that the populations were not self-sustaining, and it was only by recruiting Natives from greater distances that the missions' populations grew. By the time the missions were secularized in the early 1830s, more than 80,000 Indigenous Californians had been baptized between San Diego and just north of San Francisco, but almost 60,000 had been buried, nearly 25,000 of whom were children under the age of 10.

Despite this tragedy, by the late nineteenth century, Serra was widely commemorated across much of California with schools, monuments, buildings, and statues dedicated to his memory. He was lauded as a trailblazer for "civilization" and as having laid the foundation for California's future agricultural bounty and economic growth. In 1931, to much fanfare, the National Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol unveiled a statue honoring Serra, and shortly thereafter, a copy of that statue was placed in downtown Los Angeles. By the mid-twentieth century, however, when the Catholic Church began in earnest to promote Serra's canonization, scholars had begun to make known the demographic toll that the missions took on Native lives and communities, and different understandings of Serra and the missions began to emerge. Further, as more Native voices began to tell their stories about the missions and Serra's role in creating them, Serra became an increasingly controversial figure. His canonization in 2015 sparked outrage among his detractors, some of whom began to deface and destroy public monuments to him. With the

reemergence of social justice movements across the United States following a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017 and the killing of George Floyd by Minneapolis police in 2020, calls intensified for the removal of Serra's statues from public places. In the summer of 2020, many Serra statues were either removed from public places or torn down, as occurred in Los Angeles on June 20, 2020.

William Deverell: This roundtable addressing Father Serra in civic and public memory is not meant to make decisions. This is a dialogue and, like this entire report, is designed to open and encourage conversations across wider communities about the ways in which civic memory practices can be productive of community-building, cohesion, and healing. Could we begin by having you introduce your own engagement with or understanding of Father Serra?

Ernestine Ygnacio-De Soto: As far as Father Serra goes, well before canonization, I had worked at the mission about six years, part-time and full-time. When it was suggested that he may be canonized, people were falling over themselves apologizing, praying for us and for me. They asked for my opinion. I said that I had nothing negative to say except that canonization would end up justifying everything that happened to us. We have had trauma; we have seen the end of most of our cultural practices. But other than that, I had no complaints. And neither did my ancestors, going back to my great-great-grandmother, María Ignacio. One can consult the records, including those of [the American linguist and ethnologist] J. P. Harrington, and there are no negative comments to be found.

So when canonization occurred, I went along with the flow. Then my daughter fell sick. She was not expected to survive. But prayers to Father Serra—including a relic I rubbed on her—worked. She lived. Needless to say, that altered my view. I do not believe that everything that has gone on, all that has happened, could possibly be put on one man. Think of all the soldiers. Think of all the settlers. One man is to blame for all the actions of all these others? I am sure that there were some good Spaniards in there, but not all. No. Do people believe that we would have remained untouched? That the Russians would not have come into our lives and our villages? We received the Church from the mission era, from Saint Serra. That is *our* gold nugget.

Donna Yocum: In regard to our people being the first people of this area, we think back on our ancestors—our grandmothers and grandfathers, and all the many generations that have come and gone. The Catholic Church itself has played such a big part in the lives of so many families. As we look back at those that played the major parts, the major roles, in our history, our tribal history, our ancestral history, Father Serra was one of the major players. And for our tribe, our people, we have mixed feelings. We have mixed emotions when we discuss this subject.

From the standpoint of the Indigenous people, we look from the current time and see harm and harmful issues that bring us to today. History should be remembered for its truths. I feel that perhaps Father Serra's role in our lives, in our ancestral family, was not so wonderful, loving, or kind. I am not saying that there were not times or circumstances that were kind. But when we see the upheaval, the recent destruction of many of the statues, we have mixed emotions.

Andrew Salas: I can tell you, through our oral history, we have our doubts and concerns about the man. I speak of the history of mistreatment. I descend from a family of a prominent man. His name was Nicolás Joseph or Nicolás José. Through my father, we originate from a village near Whittier Narrows, near the first establishment site of Mission San Gabriel.

Through my grandfather, we were raised with history and stories passed down through generations. I come from lineal families that originate with both the Native people and the founding settlers of Los Angeles. My family is tied to great ranchos of vast land, and also the Indigenous villages of this region. It was fear and force that drove my Indigenous ancestors

into the missions and into the Catholic faith. They came not because they wanted to. They were forced into the culture and the religion. Of course, we learned the religion, the practices, through time. But there was always the threat of punishment for those who did not participate, who did not want to follow the ways of Serra and the padres. What we feel for and about Father Serra is not what many of you feel. We have a different regard, and, with all due respect, it is not a good feeling. Through memories and stories, we know a different history, a different truth.

Tom Elewaut: I am not an Indigenous person. I come from a Catholic tradition. One of the things that I am concerned about—and I come from a different cultural perspective—is that it appears that atrocities of multiple layers are being dumped on one man. I understand that he brought Christianity here. And like any parent who thinks something is good, they are going to give it to their children.

I understand (and I get criticized for saying this) that the Indigenous people got along just fine before the Spaniards came. They had their own religions and cultures. I also understand that Saint Serra brought what he felt was good for the salvation of souls. I am concerned about character assassination of Saint Serra, in that everything that had gone wrong with colonization and missionization from the Spaniards through [...] to the Gold Rush era, when the Indigenous people were so maltreated, is laid at his feet. It is in the American period when the governor [Philip Sheridan] insisted that the only good Indian was a dead Indian.

This is the opportunity for dialogue. I have maintained, for the ten years I have been at the mission, an open dialogue with the tribal leaders of Indigenous communities. We do not always agree, but we communicate openly and respectfully. When I first arrived, I would have dinner with the older generation. They would talk about their lives, but they never said the negative things that I have heard in the last four or five years about Saint Serra. I am not saying that they are not true. But I am concerned about the ways that truth is layered across history. Is it fair to put everything that happened on one person?

AS: I do not believe that we are putting it all on one person. As you say, after Serra, after the Spanish, there were those decades of mistreatment. There were three genocides in California: the Spanish period, the Mexican period, and the American period. I, too, was born Catholic and baptized. I come from people who were among the first to be baptized at Mission San Gabriel. Baptisms, marriages, and burials: we experienced all of these. But it is our belief that the impact of Father Serra on all our people was not a positive one. We are the living proof of those different opinions and different histories.

TE: I understand and appreciate what you are saying, Andy. I would only question the use of a term such as "genocide." I have to ask if you believe that the padres and the Spanish came to annihilate the Indigenous people? I fully appreciate that the Indigenous culture was upended and changed forever. But I do not believe that the aim was to exterminate the Native peoples.

Steven Hackel: I would like to address the issue of genocide, as it often comes up in discussions about Father Serra. When we think of genocide in the academic and wider worlds, we often think of places such as Rwanda or Nazi Germany. We think of planned campaigns to exterminate ethnic groups in a compressed period of time. We think of attempts to remove a certain group of people from the face of the earth often in very narrow ways and in legalist terms. What I would like to suggest is that if we were to apply a United Nations definition of genocide (which emerged out of the World War II experience) to places like mission-era California, I think we would find that this is not a good fit. This is not to ignore what the Spanish did, but Father Serra did not come to the New World with a desire to exterminate Native peoples.

But, if we were to look at how some Indigenous groups in Canada are reconceptualizing genocide, thinking of it not only as some kind of state-sponsored, industrialized killing campaign, then new

insights emerge. Look instead to the effects of generations of cultural oppression, of disease and dislocation, of poverty. We see then that the net effect of missionary policies led to an unmistakable and catastrophic attrition in Native population and culture that collectively, over generations, resembles genocide.

I think that people can talk past one another if they focus too narrowly on technical definitions of genocide. I think all can realize that the missions were very disruptive for Native peoples—for their populations, their beliefs, and their cultures. If we look seriously at what Native life was like in 1830, as opposed to what it was like in 1730, we see a tremendous change. I believe that most people would say it was not a positive change for Native peoples.

AS: I understand. What about the mass graves at the missions? What about another side of the story, how so many of these dead are the result of massacres? We have a different story. We Native people also believe in a divine creator. A creator who made the heavens and the earth and everything in it. We did not need the Spanish or Serra to teach us that. We did not need, we did not ask, to be forced into the missions to learn about the lovable God of Christianity. I do not want to point fingers. I want to explain our view, and I am pleased to be able to do that here today.

DY: I spoke to our elders, asking them for their thoughts on this subject. They have, as I have said, mixed feelings. We want this report to be as inclusive as possible. Our belief is that civic memory is all the stories, all the histories, that make up our lives and that honor our ancestors.

Joel Garcia: I believe that we are speaking now of generational trauma. Trauma from the past will manifest in the lives of the present. Trauma from my grandfather's time, from my great-grandfather's time. It keeps surfacing, it keeps coming up in our lived experience. I believe in healing. I have concentrated my work in recent years on the younger generations. I have learned from time spent in Berlin especially how people in Germany have worked so hard to reconcile with their past across the intersections of memorialization and public space. My own family is the product of many traumas. State-sponsored violence in Mexico drove us to Los Angeles. And now this concept of generational trauma is pulling me back to the mission system, the mission era. What are we to think of the implementation of the mission system, primarily at the hands of Father Serra? How are we to talk about it, to reconcile different stories and histories?

I learned in Berlin that we must create the space to have difficult conversations. We have to acknowledge the different views and the fact that we may not be able to understand one another's experiences or what people have gone through, generation to generation. I am not going to understand what Donna's family has experienced, for example. Or what Andy's family has gone through. But I can accept what they are saying, I can listen to their truths to try to learn and to be respectful. That is part of the work that needs to happen. Until we do that, we are going to continue to speak in binary terms: "Serra was not terrible." "Yes, he was."

With Serra, I believe that both sides have valid claims. I believe also that a brand, for lack of a better word, has been created around Serra. And thus, with that brand created, Serra has become a catchall for everything, for all that happened. He is a brand receiving praise, he is a brand receiving anger and pain. He is, I believe, credited for things he did not do, both the good and the bad.

We need, I believe, to move beyond legalistic, post–World War II understandings of the term "genocide," as Steve has suggested. We have different ways of looking at the term, the concept, and the trauma here in California. We have different timescales. History has worked differently here than, say, Nazi Germany or Rwanda. *Ethnocide* happened here—the erasure of a culture—and we need to acknowledge that more than we do. We must be more willing to have layered conversations that do justice to the histories of everyone. This is hard work. This mediation is made all the harder because of history's many layers.

AS: Thank you. You are right. Healing starts with truth. That is all we are asking. I would not pull a statue down, but I understand why people would do it. We drive by San Gabriel Mission, and I see the statue, and little kids ask me, "Whoa, who is that?" I say, "That's not a good story. We will tell you some other time." But that's not right. We should tell these stories to the young people. We can be stewards of a bigger conversation, like we are doing today. We can use conversations like this to have wider conversations about values: what is it that society values, and how can those values evolve and become more humanitarian?

TE: I would like to acknowledge that around 50,000 Indigenous people died up and down the state during the 60 years of the mission era. Following that, the number became tragically and exponentially larger.

JG: I am in favor of process in conversations, process in memorialization, process as a commitment to inclusivity.

DY: Yes, so much of this happened long, long ago. But the effects are real, they are still being felt by so many.

AS: A lot of loss. Loss of a territorial homeland, a place we can call home. We know where our villages were, but these lands no longer belong to us. How can we help but believe that things began with Father Serra?

DY: It was the beginning, for us. Generation through generation and now, to today. We are still trying to deal with the consequences passed down. And we, or the majority of our family, attend the Catholic Church. Many, many of them unto this day. They are torn about it. I talk with the elders and ask how can things be made right, be made better? This is not a monetary issue or concern. This is about healing. This is about a different kind of reparations. Some people say put up statues of our people, too. Others ask what good would that do? But I feel that it is a step toward honest conversation and a step for different histories. Of course it is about more than statues. But that would be a step toward a wider truth. Let us be able to speak of our history, let us remind so many people in Los Angeles that we were here. And that we still are here.

SH: As an educator, I would add that we need to do a much better job teaching California history. Father Serra is viewed as California's Columbus. To many, he is the person who has become the lightning rod for everything bad that has happened to Native people in this state before 1850 and after 1850. We need to do a better job educating people that the arrival of Serra and the missions was merely the beginning of a much longer, tragic period for Indigenous Californians. I believe that Father Serra never imagined a world without Native people in it. That was not his worldview. Yes, he wanted to convert the Indigenous people to Catholicism, to make them subjects of the Spanish King. He wanted them living in the missions as Spanish subjects under his God.

But when Anglo Americans came here during the Gold Rush, their vision was completely different. Theirs was a vision of obliteration. They could not imagine the world with Indians in it. And it was under their rule that genocide—as we understand state-sponsored massacres and mass killings—was practiced. By comparison, the Spanish had an inclusive worldview, even though it was not benign. The Protestant English did not; they had an exclusive worldview. We lose the distinctions, I think, in the accumulated generations of tragedy and loss. Making this better will require more voices, more histories, more care, and more listening.

AS: Thank you. This is what we need. We just want to remind everyone of what we have experienced, across time, across California, across the generations.

JG: We will have misunderstandings. We will have disagreements. But we can all commit to that aim to share an infrastructure or an ecosystem within the public realm where truth can flourish. That will help all of us in moving forward and making progress. And part of that will be a full reckoning of the pain of Indigenous people over the last half a millennium.

AS: After this conversation, I guarantee you, we feel good about ourselves because we are able to be the voice of our ancestors.

TE: You have invited a churchman to this conversation, and I will speak as a churchman. All this will take time. It will take many conversations like this one. We take to heart all that has been expressed here. Following the canonization of Saint Serra, the Catholic Church redirected its fourth-grade curriculum, its mission curriculum, with critical consultation from Indigenous people. It may not be a perfect curriculum, but it does a better job of telling the story and history of the Indigenous people of California. As with today's conversation, it begins with respect. Respect, for instance, for the Indigenous people, their ceremonies, opinions, and cultural practices.

I was recently appointed as the director of historic mission sites for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. This is a liaison position, and my obligation is to be in direct contact with Indigenous representatives about any changes being contemplated to mission lands or buildings. I am also committed to helping preserve Indigenous culture and cultural practices in all ways that I can. Slowly, little by little, we are making progress, and respect is our foundation. We have dialogues and discussions about ceremony, about Saint Serra. We all came to a respectful and I think correct decision to bring down the statue of Saint Serra. It was a painful matter for the Indigenous people of our region, and we wished the statue to be treated respectfully and not come down through violence.

EDS: I would not put Saint Serra in the public right now. He needs to be protected. I would put him in the churches, and maybe not even outside. Perhaps in a sacred garden within the walls of the church.

EDS: Children build their missions in school. But why not a Chumash village or dwelling? Isn't that history, too? We need Chumash village kits for fourth-graders. The mission gifts shops should tell our stories, too. And I would like to see Chumash statues. I would like to see a Chumash woman, an elder, standing next to a statue of a seven-foot bear, with her hand on its back. That would be important to our culture. But Serra, too. He can be there.

SH: We have been speaking of Father Serra in light of civic memory in Los Angeles, and it has been powerful and instructive to be part of these conversations. But the conversation is mainly around missions and Father Serra's relationship to them and Native peoples. Of course that is a major feature of the story. But I do want to offer what might be more of a historical footnote.

The pueblo of Los Angeles, as you all know, was founded in 1781. Serra died in 1784, and he was very much opposed to establishing Los Angeles as a civil entity, a civil municipality. He feared the impact of such a development as far as the Indigenous people were concerned. He thought that this would be a mistake, that it would compete with the Franciscan influence on Native peoples, and that the civil authorities and settlers would bring great harm to the Indigenous people by forcing them to work on their ranchos and in their homes, and by preying on their women. I think that makes the installation—generations ago—of his statue in downtown Los Angeles an out-of-place act, one not consistent with Serra's own views about the creation of the pueblo. His letters are full of concerns about what it would mean to establish a civil, settler presence in Los Angeles.

WD: I want to touch briefly on this obligation to teach California history in more inclusive ways, to open it up to more stories and other truths. I am an educator and endorse that, but I also believe that rendering this the obligation of the fourth-grade curriculum, teachers, and students is too big a burden. I think this should be accompanied by a revision of our public realms. It is in public spaces where people most often encounter these broader histories. Civic memory spaces and installations prime people to ask questions, to begin dialogues, and to take curiosity to their classrooms, their teachers, their parents and grandparents, and to one another. ●

You Are Now Entering Siutcanga

***Hamiinat* (Hello)**

You Are Now Entering Siutcanga

Siutcanga (Place of the Live Oak) is a Native village recognized as Encino, the name given by the Spanish settlers due to the presence of oak trees. The people of Siutcanga, known as Siutcavitam, are citizens of the Fernandeño Tataviam Band of Mission Indians.

This marker acknowledges that the LA River and its watershed are the traditional lands of the Fernandeño Tataviam, Gabrieleño Tongva, and Ventureño Chumash. We recognize that Indigenous Peoples have stewarded this land for thousands of years, many of whom still call it home today, and we give thanks for the opportunity to live, work, and learn on their traditional homeland. We recognize our responsibility to include these Tribal Nations in what we do for the river.

Paiko tan hiiv! (See you later)

In 2020, the National Park Service (NPS) granted the L.A. Department of City Planning funding to develop wayfinding signage along the Los Angeles River—an important capital improvement strategy identified in Los Angeles County's 1996 L.A. River Master Plan and 2007 L.A. River Revitalization Master Plan. The L.A. River trail system within the City of Los Angeles boundaries coincides with the NPS-designated Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail recreation route, which is named for the legendary explorer, military officer, and politician credited with helping to found Spanish California. Although some parks along the L.A. River feature Anza Trail markers, often missing from the trail's narrative is the fact that Juan Bautista de Anza and the settlers he led intersected with Indigenous communities along their journey. The L.A. River wayfinding signage initiative provides an important opportunity to acknowledge the land's history as well as the legacy and contributions of Indigenous communities along the river through place-based strategies and wayfinding.

In 2019, the L.A. City Planning Department coordinated with the Department of Transportation and Department of Recreation and Parks, as well as Mayor Eric Garcetti's L.A. Riverworks Team and L.A. River Task Force, to begin placing wayfinding signs along the first phase of the Los Angeles Riverway Capital Improvement Strategy. The area near Griffith Park (mile markers 28 to 29 of the Anza Trail) is a pilot location; the wayfinding program will then identify more key wayfinding opportunities in the second-, third-, and fourth-phase geographical areas from Glendale west to Canoga Park in the San Fernando Valley and in the section along downtown Los Angeles. The wayfinding initiative will better link the L.A. River pathway to nearby community amenities, raise historical awareness of the river and the surrounding lands, and better reflect the cultural connections that they represent.

As part of this work, the City has been in communication with the Fernandeño Tataviam tribe to develop the content of an interpretive sign at Etiwanda Avenue near Encino. Tribal leaders have suggested the text on this page for the sign. We include it here for the power of its connection to place and as a potential model for similar efforts to come.

The Marathon Continues

Text and Photographs by Sahra Sulaiman

Above: All along the procession route, hands unfailingly went up to show love and respect as Nipsey's family and day-ones moved through the crowd. But mourners also flashed signs in solidarity with each other, with the 'hoods they moved through, and with the Rollin 60s – something few would ever have imagined possible.

Jermaine Welch shows off the shoe he had custom painted in Nipsey Hussle's honor while waiting for Hussle's funeral procession to pass through the intersection at Crenshaw and Slauson on April 11, 2019.

Above right: Sitting across the street from The Marathon, Slauson Donuts is a fixture in the neighborhood. It figured prominently in both the video for Nipsey's 2008 breakout Hussle in the House and the California Love shoot he did for GQ with girlfriend Lauren London in 2019.

Below right: At Crenshaw and Slauson, Michael Robinson, then 19, in the green jacket, joined friends Justin, Joshua, Carter, Eugene, and Keioni.

Few communities love harder than South Central.

So when they lost one of their own—a young man who was just coming into his power and who had told them that, despite all that they had been denied and all that they had struggled through, they could do the same—they came out to testify in his honor.

From the moment the funeral procession for rapper, entrepreneur, and visionary Ermias "Nipsey Hussle" Asghedom moved into South Central along Vermont Avenue, people were jumping into the mix in their cars, on their bikes, on scooters, on motorcycles—or on foot, in the case of one determined runner—to accompany him along the 26-mile route. Or they celebrated in their own neighborhood before heading over to Crenshaw and Slauson to help his give him one last embrace.

It was a day unlike any residents could remember. "Historic," said many. "Beautiful," others said, in reference to the palpable sense of solidarity seen and felt across 'hoods that were often at odds—something that Hussle had spent half his life advocating for before being shot to death at Crenshaw and Slauson on March 31, 2019, at age 33.

But it was also, everyone agreed, a hard day. To most, it made no sense that someone whose message was so positive could be cut down so cruelly. That it happened in the parking lot that had been the epicenter of his life since he was fourteen and the place he was working to turn into an incubator of hope and prosperity for the community was almost incomprehensible.

"We always saw him here," said 19-year-old Michael Robinson, who had come to Crenshaw and Slauson to mourn with friends. When they were younger, they said, their daily after-school walks to the market would take them past the T-shirt shop Hussle and his brother, known as Blacc Sam, ran at the time.

Hussle's constant presence at the strip mall made it feel like he was within reach—that he was one of them. So had his music, which spoke to their experiences in a way they hadn't heard before. And while their elders might have balked at hearing Hussle regularly proclaim his gang affiliation in his lyrics and his interviews, the youth knew he understood why they found themselves making some of the choices they did.

They found nuance in the blueprints Hussle laid out for how to navigate contested streets, push back against the oppressive systems at work, remain true to themselves, and, ultimately, lift up their own 'hoods.

"He taught me the difference between being a gang banger and a gang member," said Robinson.

At Century and Main, aspiring rappers Kobey Cash and Gold Franko said Nipsey had shown them how to be men. And how to come together. They pointed to the Unity March that had drawn gangs from around South L.A., some of which had been mortal

enemies for decades, as evidence that Hussle's soul was still here. "He woke everybody up," they agreed, joining in the chorus of folks voicing hope that the positivity Hussle had sown and the unity he had forged would continue after his passing.

Around 5 p.m., the helicopters were still hovering over the edge of Inglewood and the crowd in front of The Marathon store was still growing. The procession that was estimated to take an hour and a half was now edging toward the three-hour mark, but no one was complaining. There was only anticipation, as people scrambled up light poles and signs, occupied every available roof, and clambered on top of patrol cars to catch a glimpse of the hearse as it traversed the intersection that has since been renamed in his honor.

Hussle had often spoken about his own mortality and the extent to which the future was not promised in his lyrics. Reflecting on the loss of a close friend of close friend and business partner Stephen "Fatts" Donelson in "Racks in the Middle," a track from his Grammy-nominated *Victory Lap* album, he says that if it he'd been the one to die, he'd have advised his friends to "Finish what we started, reach them heights, you know?"

But it was the closing lines of a 2018 essay he'd penned in The Players' Tribune[1] that hung in the air and reassured folks his spirit would live on. "Crenshaw made me," he wrote. "So I'll always be in Crenshaw. Always fighting. The work ain't done yet. The marathon continues." ●

[1] *"For the Culture," Oct. 25, 2018: https://www.theplayerstribune.com/articles/nipsey-hussle-for-the-culture*

Next spread: The memorial to Nipsey Hussle sat in front of The Marathon store in the strip mall where he spent much of his life and where he worked to uplift the community.


R I P

Carlos Diniz: A History of Drawing the Future

Edward Cella

Carlos Diniz, born of Brazilian parents, spent most of his childhood in Los Angeles making art in almost every medium available to him. Drafted into military service at 18 years old in 1946, he was posted overseas in Venice, Italy, where he began to marry a fascination with architecture and city scenes to his love of drawing. Once his service was over, Diniz earned his B.A. in specialized design at Art Center College in Los Angeles in 1951, undertaking a self-education in architecture along the way. He then joined the Viennese architect Victor Gruen's team developing promotional materials for Gruen's large-scale, pioneering shopping center schemes. In 1957, Diniz opened his own architectural illustration firm, Carlos Diniz Associates Visual Communications, first in the Granada Building and later in Chapman Plaza.

One of the last to master the tradition of the hand-drawn building perspective, Diniz became nationally known over his four-decade-long professional career as an architectural delineator who could translate architects' often very technical renderings of proposed buildings or entire new communities to a format easily understood by clients, developers, review agencies, and the public at large. Diniz called his work the "art of illusion," and he innately understood how to articulate, even choreograph, how these yet-unbuilt projects would be perceived. Focusing on the birds-eye view and on spaces, vistas, and movement between structures, his professional practice traces the development of Southern California and beyond in the postwar era. He made every drawing accessible, using his skill to seduce its viewer into embracing the architect's scheme.

Diniz's early clients included the prominent architects Welton Becket and César Pelli, and he collaborated with Frank Gehry under Gruen. Over time, his practice expanded nationally with his work for the giant firms of Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill (SOM) in San Francisco and HOK in St. Louis. He also was integral in helping design Minoru Yamasaki's World Trade Center in 1961 and the L.A. landmark Century Plaza Hotel in 1964. Diniz worked on thousands of projects around the globe for some of the world's best architects. Thanks to a gift from his family in 2016, the vast archive of work by Carlos Diniz Associates became part of the Architecture and Design Collection held by UC Santa Barbara's Art, Design & Architecture Museum.

This archive gains a particular meaning when considered in a volume, like this one, dedicated to reconsidering the civic memory of Los Angeles. Diniz's work is a reminder of just how many approaches to imagining the future (architectural, cultural, or otherwise) were pioneered or given room to roam in Southern California. (His had a painterly, hand-drawn aspect that helped leaven the futurism with craft and a particular, recognizable personal style.) That history of speculation in Los Angeles, even that anxiousness to move into the future, is a legacy worth understanding and preserving just as any significant work of architecture is. ●

Carlos Diniz (1928–2001)

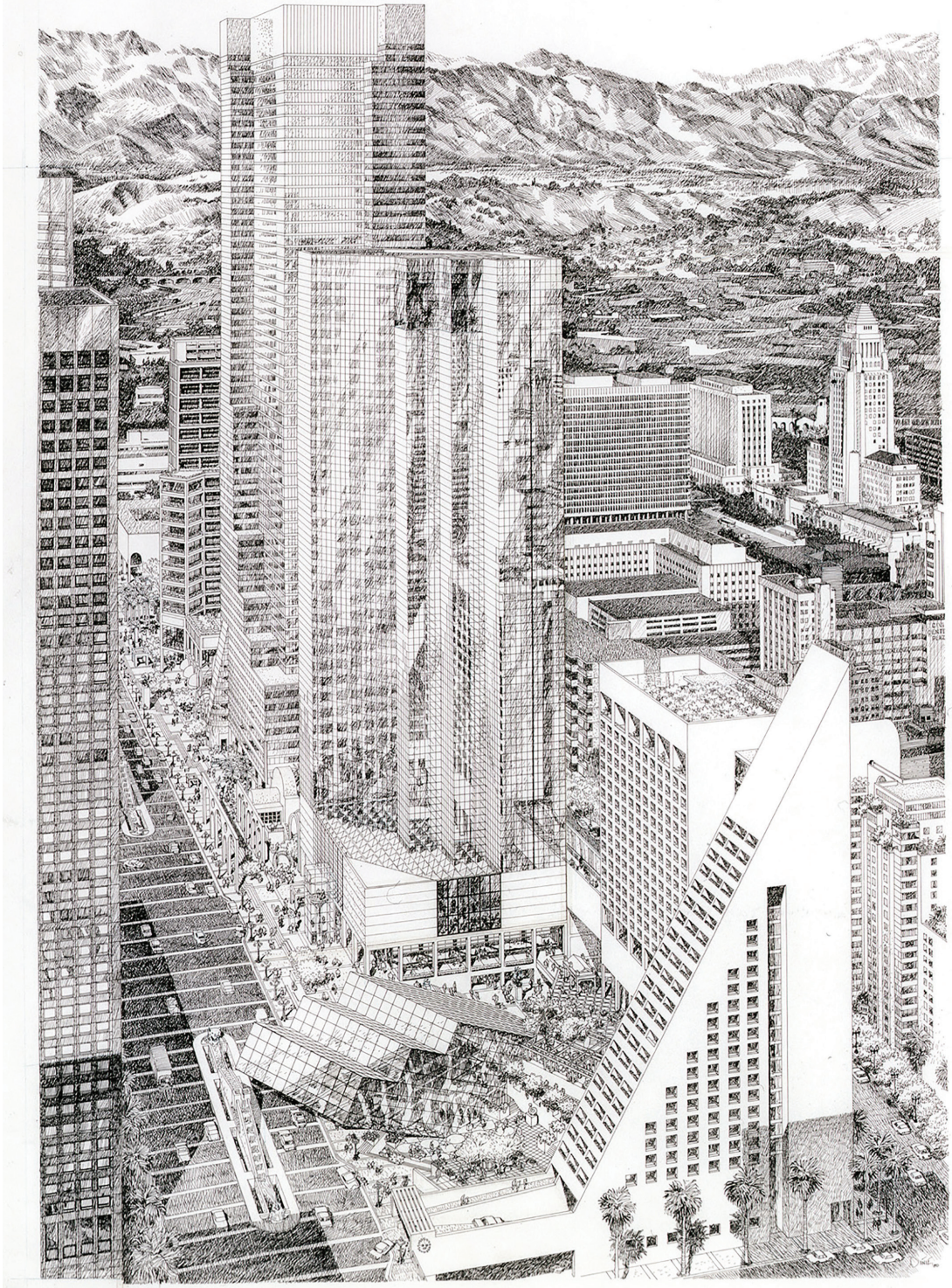
Grand Avenue Competition Overall View, 1980

Maguire Partners with Harry Perloff, Barton Myers, Edgardo Contini, Charles Moore, Lawrence Halprin, César Pelli, Hardy Holzman Pfeiffer, Ricardo Legoretta, Frank Gehry, Sussman Prejza, and Robert Kennard

Ink on tissue paper

45½ x 30 in.

Courtesy: Carlos Diniz Archive, Architecture and Design Collection, Art, Design & Architecture Museum, UC Santa Barbara.



A Space Shuttle Is Retired

Onlookers watch the space shuttle Endeavour as it moves east on Manchester Boulevard in Inglewood. (Wally Skalij / Courtesy Los Angeles Times*)*

Endeavour creeps down Manchester Boulevard toward a stop at the Forum on its way to the California Science Center. (Irfan Khan / Courtesy Los Angeles Times*)*

In October of 2012, the retired space shuttle Endeavour, which was largely built in Palmdale and during its active NASA service touched down regularly at Edwards Air Force Base in the Antelope Valley, moved in a boisterous, slow-motion parade through the streets of Los Angeles, on its way from Los Angeles International Airport to a new permanent home at the California Science Center in Exposition Park. Huge crowds gathered at every turn as the orbiter pushed east on Manchester Boulevard, north on Crenshaw Boulevard and east again on Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The parade, for all its novelty, seemed a natural expression of L.A. character and history. In a city that can seem most clearly legible when we are moving through it and where spectacle itself is often mobile—where we have always shown off on skateboards or in muscle cars—Endeavour seemed to fit right in.

Traymond Harris, left, and Ryan Hudge play basketball as the space shuttle Endeavour passes by on Crenshaw Avenue in Inglewood. (Wally Skalij / Courtesy Los Angeles Times*)*

Bike Tour

Daily Life in Early Los Angeles

Marissa López

E.O.C. Ord's first map of the city of Los Angeles, drawn in August 29, 1849. Courtesy of the California Historical Society collection at the University of Southern California.

"Daily Life in Early Los Angeles," a self-guided bicycle tour through nineteenth-century Mexican L.A., is a collaboration between Picturing Mexican America[1] (a digital, public humanities project managed by UCLA professor Marissa López) and the Los Angeles Explorers Club[2], which organizes bike tours of the city and was founded by Aimee Gilchrist and Brantlea Newbury.

Explorers Club arranges large, group events culminating at a local bar or restaurant where riders can unwind, refuel, and socialize. None of those things were possible in the spring of 2020 as Los Angeles was locked down in a series of COVID-19 quarantines. Cut off from the city, the Explorers Club reached out to Picturing Mexican America in an effort to think differently about Los Angeles. Our inability to go about *our* daily lives provoked thinking about *historic* daily life. What did those who moved through this cityscape long before us do for fun? How did early Angelenos entertain themselves, and what do nineteenth-century popular culture and daily life reveal about twenty-first century Los Angeles?

The coronavirus pandemic presented us with an opportunity to show cyclists the Los Angeles of the past—not the cartoon past of Olvera St. and imaginary Spaniards, but the past that's been built over and erased, that you have to slow down and make an effort to see. The key is to move through space differently than you normally would. You can read about history in books, see it in public monuments, or scroll through it on social media, but we were looking to catalyze physical interaction with city spaces.

Cycling defamiliarizes our sense of space by allowing us to move through the city at different speeds; it amplifies and makes possible what philosopher Henri Bergson refers to as "presence." To be "present" in space is to experience time as "duration," apart from chronology. This idea allows Bergson to distinguish between knowledge and sense experience and to develop his theory that an encounter with anything outside our self is a physical transformation that depends on presence and duration.[3]

Changing the way we move through the city can shift us away from a conception of time as spatial progression to time as sense, towards Bergson's duration, where the past can be sensed rather than known. Duration involves "dimensional" experience, according to Bergson, rather than "representational." He explains this as the difference between walking through a city versus looking at pictures or reading about it. Our tour replaces representation with dimension, offering a transformative experience of the history of Mexican Los Angeles. For us, transformation relies on bikes: specifically, in the case of this project, the bike-share program that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, or Metro, launched in 2016.

[1] *https://www.picturingmexicanamerica.com*

[2] *http://www.laexplorersclub.com*

[3] *Bergson, Henri.* Matter and Memory: Essay on the Relation between the Body and the Mind. *[1896] Trans. NM Paul and WS Palmer. New York: Zone Books, 1990;* Time and Free Will: An Essay on the Data of Immediate Consciousness. *[1889] Trans. FL Pogson. London: Dover Publications, 2001;* The Creative Mind: An Introduction to Metaphysics. *[1934] Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2012.*

Metro Bike Share has weathered its fair share of criticism, but our tour imagines bikes—the Metro bikes in particular—as the people's tool for empowered movement, for an active reclamation of our streets, the importance of which we all saw in summer 2020. We had initially planned to release this ride on June 5, 2020, but by then we had learned about the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. People in Los Angeles and cities around the country rose up to protest police brutality and anti-Black violence. When the National Guard was called to Los Angeles, we knew it wasn't the best time to send people out on their bikes. In the end we launched the ride in July; the physical danger had passed, and the ride seemed more important than ever.

The ride is based ion ideas of collective, embodied action, but we've designed it as a solitary activity that can be enjoyed alone or together with others. A route map and audio guide are available for download at both the Los Angeles Explorers Club's and Picturing Mexican America's websites, along with a GPS enabled ride guide that offers turn-by-turn audio directions.

Riders can listen on their devices (one earbud only, as per California state law!) while learning how nineteenth-century, Mexican Los Angeles was neither idyllic, egalitarian, or anti-racist; nevertheless, it's important to understand that it was here and that the version of California history you might have learned in grade school represents what scholars have described as either a "Fantasy Spanish Heritage" or a "Fantasy Anglo Past." Whatever you call it, it devalues people of color, depicts them as marginal outsiders, and justifies discrimination and racial violence. Our ride seeks to untangle some of those threads. ●

The Bella Union Hotel on N. Main Street, photographed in 1876. Photograph courtesy of the Los Angeles Public Library.

In a city that has always been short on postcard landmarks, there is arguably no more recognizable symbol of Los Angeles than the Hollywood sign. For many visitors, and even many Angelenos, it exists as a kind of platonic emblem—eternal, unchanging—of the city and the entertainment business: nine letters, each 45 feet tall and as white as an actor's teeth, perched at the top of Mount Lee.

In truth, as civic symbols go, the Hollywood Sign has lived a changeable and even tumultuous life—one that evokes many of the themes that undergird the various sections of this report and its recommendations. One such theme is the unusual number of landmarks and memorials that persist here despite being designed, long ago, to be temporary, or for some purpose far removed from history, memorialization, or garden-variety nostalgia. Another is the importance of maintenance and care—upkeep, rather than creation from whole cloth—to the work of civic and cultural memory.

Built in 1923 at a cost of $21,000, including its system of hidden bulbs to illuminate it at night, the sign originally read "HOLLYWOODLAND" and marked the opening of a high-end residential subdivision financed in part by *Los Angeles Times* publisher Harry Chandler. It was meant to stand for just a year and a half. The final four letters were removed in 1949 after the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce agreed to repair and rebuild it. This gave rise to a new period in which the sign began to stand in for the movie business and the larger relationship between Los Angeles and filmmaking.

By the 1970s, the sign had badly decayed and fallen into near ruin, a fate similar to that of Hollywood the literal civic district, the place on the map, as opposed to Hollywood the glamourous ideal. (By then every studio but Paramount had decamped from Hollywood proper to the San Fernando Valley or further afield.) That's the state the photographer Ken Papaleo, shooting for the *Herald-Examiner*, found it in when he captured this image in 1978. A campaign (led improbably enough by *Playboy* magazine founder Hugh Hefner, among others) was launched to raise money to bring the sign back to life. Donors were able to adopt a letter for a gift of just under $28,000 each, or $250,000 in all. By the end of 1978 it had been fully restored, its letters newly and securely anchored on new footings before being repainted.

That shine, too, faded over time, and in 2005 the Chamber launched another restoration effort, this one financed by Bay Cal Commercial Painting. The sign, however, is nearly big enough to require continual painting and upkeep, as bridges do. When you've finished touching up the letter D, in other words, it may be time to begin again with the H.

Ken Papaleo, Herald Examiner Collection, Los Angeles Public Library

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We thank Mayor Eric Garcetti for inspiring this effort, for convening the first meeting of the Working Group, and for lending his early support to many of the recommendations in these pages. We are extraordinarily grateful to the J. Paul Getty Trust for its generous and timely support of the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West and its work on this book; we thank James Cuno and Joan Weinstein in particular for their guidance and encouragement. William Deverell has been instrumental to this effort, as helpful in sketching out the scope and ambition of the work as in aiding the execution of its many parts and rallying its small army of contributors. We are also grateful to Taryn Haydostian, Elizabeth Logan, and Jessica Kim at the Huntington-USC Institute on California and the West. In the Mayor's Office, William Chun, Sumi Parekh, Skyler Gray, Norma Challita, Nora Chin, Robert Park, Jennifer McDowell, and Alejandro Gonzalez aided the initiative in a range of important ways. Alexandra Valdes, executive director of the Los Angeles City/County Native American Indian Commission, acted as a convener, editor, and guide; thanks also to Kristin Sakoda, director of the Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture, for turning the ideal of city-county collaboration into the nuts and bolts of actual, productive collaboration. Stephanie Sykes was a superb and creative editor, not only refining many of the texts but adding needed depth and detail. The designers at Polymode, Silas Munro, Brian Johnson, and Randa Hadi, were brilliant and patient, not to mention always ready with a playlist. They were throughout a pleasure to work with; the same can be said of Masato Nakada and Scott Reinhard, central contributors to the design work. At the Los Angeles Public Library, city librarian John F. Szabo, a key member of the Working Group, lent encouragement and support, and Christina Rice was gracious and expertly helpful in tracking down photographs and arranging permissions. We are grateful to others who lent photographs, writing, or permissions or otherwise accommodated us, including Ralph Drew at the *Los Angeles Times*, Prof. Leonard Kleinrock, and Eugene W. Moy. Finally, we owe a debt to every member of the Civic Memory Working Group, our advisors, and the other contributors to this volume. They took on a novel and shifting task across a choppy, sometimes disheartening, and always unpredictable 15 months. Together we dedicate this investigation of our city's past to the Angelenos of the future.

—Christopher Hawthorne, chief design officer, City of Los Angeles

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Design by Polymode: Randa Hadi, Brian Johnson, Silas Munro

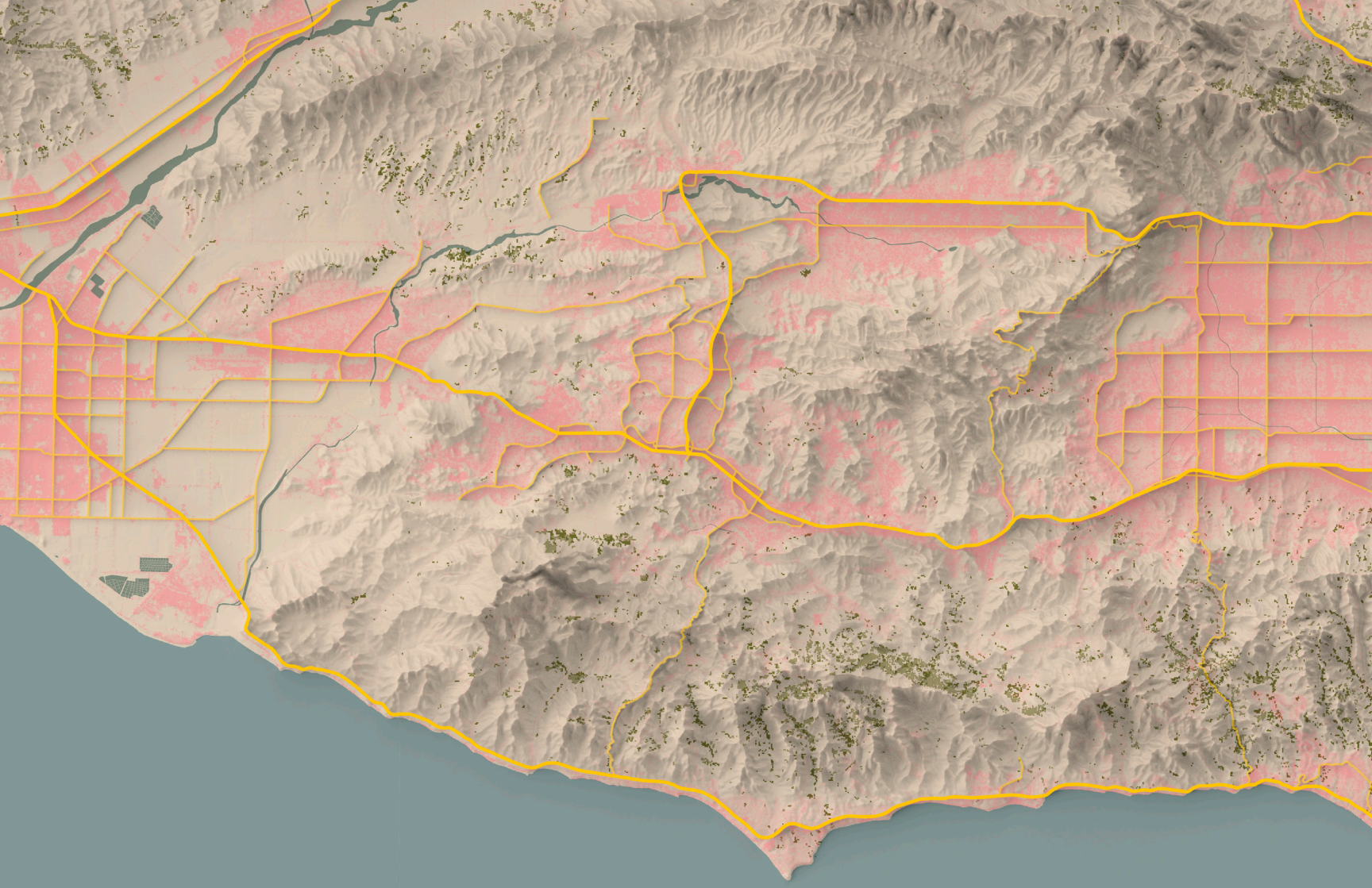
This book is typeset in three typefaces by two generations of Angeleno type designers. Headlines are set in Maria of Los Angeles (MOLA) by Roberto Rodriguez. Rodriquez took inspiration for MOLA from the ubiquitous murals of our Lady of Guadalupe in Los Angeles. Rodriguez began photographing sun-faded and graffiti-tagged murals across various neighborhoods, including Boyle Heights, Wellington Heights, and East Los Angles.

His research led him to lettering on the 1811 battle flag of Mexican Revolutionary Miguel Hidalgo Bandera whose inscriptional lettering references Catholic missions and Barrio walls in palimpsests of tagging. MOLA pays homage to murals that are honorable pieces with a cultural connection from the past to the present day LA.

Cahuenga and Fabriga, both designed by Greg Lindy of LuxTypo, are used for body and navigational type. As Rodrigeuz's mentor and teacher, Lindy is also interested in expressing LA's history through typography. Lindy chose Cahuenga, which carries an Indigenous name, as “emblematic of many who make their way via car through the Hollywood area of Los Angeles. As in many parts, the driving route is convoluted to get from point A to point B. However, it seems more often than not that when in the Hollywood area, one usually ends up on Cahuenga Boulevard at some point.” The type system is completed by Lindy's typeface Fabriga—a structured and warm typeface that uses a visual ensemble metaphor. According to Lindy, ”Fabriga sets out to take a supportive role as a font family, understanding that one of its great strengths is through its diversity in application and composition.” The integrated trio of typefaces speaks in a call and response to the layers of the historical and contemporary in Los Angeles.

Maps: Scott Reinhard

Printing: Schulman Group at Shapco Printing in Minneapolis, MN, on 100lb Finch Opaque Bright White Smooth Text, an acid-free paper.



This map shows the major boulevards and freeways that crisscross Los Angeles. The loose grid of boulevards has its roots in the 1924 Major Traffic Street Plan for Los Angeles, by Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., Harland Bartholomew, and Charles Cheney. The freeway network, for its part, began to emerge in 1940, with the opening of the Arroyo Seco Parkway to Pasadena, and then expanded rapidly thanks to post-war federal subsidy that was generous if not insistent. This more muscular network of concrete connections seemed a natural fit for a city beginning to take on a polycentric form, with many nodes of commerce and culture instead of a single downtown core. It soon became so dominant a symbol of Los Angeles that British architectural historian and critic Reyner Banham would argue, in his 1971 book *Los Angeles: The Architecture of Four Ecologies*, that "the freeway system in its totality is now a single comprehensible place, a coherent state of mind, a complete way of life."

Yet that point of view—blinkered to a large degree when it was new, unwilling to confront the extent to which constructing that "single comprehensible place" required bulldozing existing communities, many if not most occupied by Angelenos of color—looks entirely out of date now. What's more, a map of mobility networks that shows only routes for car travel obscures both past and present in this city. Los Angeles had the most extensive streetcar network in the nation a century ago. And the Metro subway and light-rail network is now expanding rapidly, with several additional lines under construction, including the long dreamed-of subway beneath Wilshire Boulevard. As several sections of this report indicate, there is growing interest in building support to remove or deck over one or more sections of freeway to improve air quality and stitch back together sections of the city severed by the growth of the network.

There was a time when a map like this one seemed to represent every crucial vein and artery keeping Los Angeles alive. Now it looks instead like a historical snapshot of a moment in time—a moment that was preceded by, and will be followed by, a very different kind of body politic.