

COLUMBIA STUDIOS

(MGM)

Historically, MGM Studios (now Columbia Studios) was of major social and economic importance in the development of Culver City as a significant employer and income producer for the early City. Historically, much of the economy of the City was based on the movie/entertainment industry and this studio was not only the first, but also the largest and the one with the longest history in a single ownership. Similarly, the studio has state-wide significance since the movie industry was also highly important to the growth and development of the State. On a national and international basis, the films made at this studio and the stars, directors and producers who were a part of that effort have national and international reknown and influence.

Columbia Studios

Recognize site and the following buildings:

- 1) Landmark
 - a) Thalberg Building
 - b) Colonnade (entrance)

- 2) Significant
 - a) Schoolhouse (Crawford Building)
 - b) Sound Stages 3, 4, 5, 6
 - c) Jean Harlow (wardrobe) building, buildings 43, Garland Building; 39, Tracy Building; 34, Hepburg Building; 35, Gable Building; 48, Myrna Loy Building
 - d) Commissary
 - e) Water Tower

ADDRESS:
10202 #38
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
STREAMLINE MODERNE

SOURCE: RATING:

HPAC RANKING:
LANDMARK

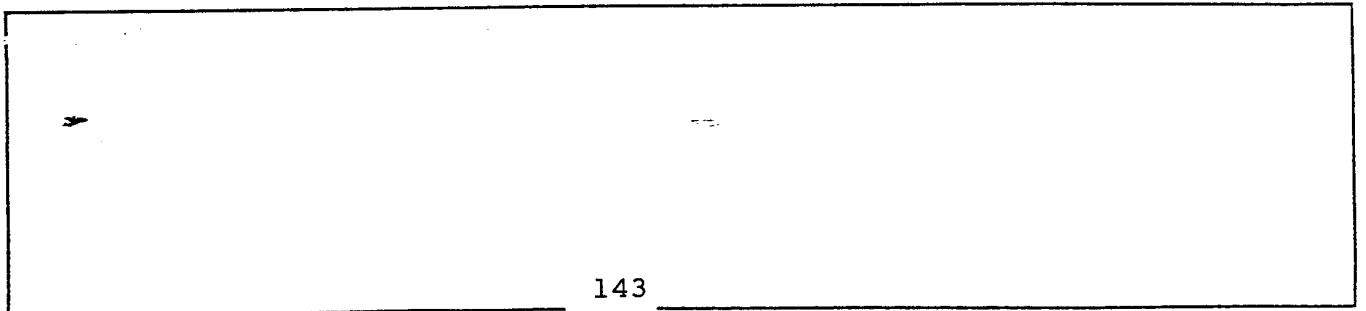


COLUMBIA STUDIOS

DESCRIPTION:

The Irving Thalberg Building is one of the most impressive Moderne structures in Southern California. Its symmetrical classic design and fine detailing make it a good example of the Moderne style. Set on an angle at the entrance to the studio, the building can be easily seen from all directions. Its three-story high wings extend in both directions, across each end of the main core. The square four-story flat-roofed entrance tower rises above the rest of the building and is crowned with a set-back ridge and a row of pleated trim across the top of the main parapet. The plain frieze below is dotted with large round rosettes. Five sets of three-story high windows, separated with square stucco-clad columns, create a strong vertical pattern above the main entrance. A rounded metal canopy shelters the doors. Square bays, with flat roofs and a row of luted banding, wrap around each corner of the tower and continue to the north and south to form wings. The wings are T-shaped and feature two-story high recessed metal-framed windows. The fluted edge forms a band around the entire building. Each window is topped with an elaborate cornice. The windows along the first floor match the location of those above and are also recessed, multi-paned, and metal-framed. Two huge lanterns, on elaborate pedestals, flank the wide concrete steps which lead to the main entrance. The rear of the building matched the front and is just as beautifully finished.

SIGNIFICANCE:

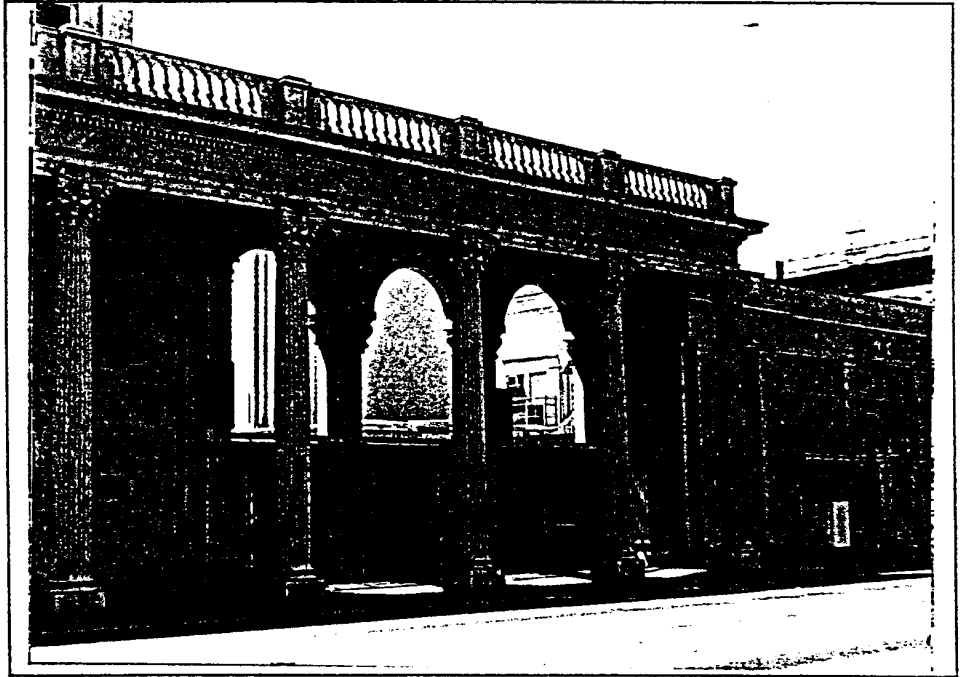


ADDRESS:
10202 EN.
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1917

STYLE:
BEAUX ARTS

HPAC RANKING:
LANDMARK

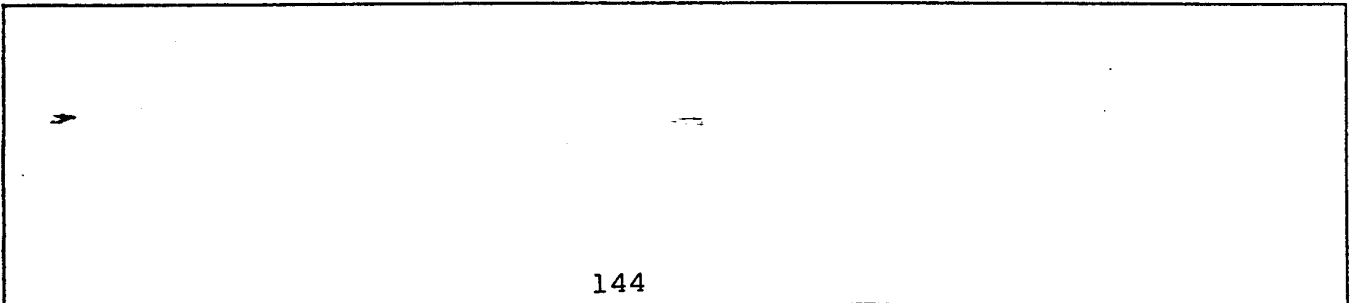


COLUMBIA STUDIOS

DESCRIPTION:

The grand entrance to the MGM-Lorimar Studios is a superior example of Beaux Arts architecture and retains most of its original integrity. A balustrade inset with elaborate cast concrete balusters, runs across the top. Large brick piers, edged in molding, separate the sections. A heavy cornice, lined with closely-set brackets, runs below the balustrade. Dentil trim defines the top of the frieze and molding trims the bottom. Two sets of 2-story high fluted columns, crowned with Corinthian capitals, frame the entrance. Two arches, one for entry and one for exit, define the entrance. The elaborate wrought iron gates are now permanently closed. A small security building, made of cast concrete in a Moderne style, is located between the sets of gates on the interior of the lot. Elaborate brackets are attached to the side walls of the entrance. Even though this is no longer the major entry through which the stars came into the studio, it is still significant for its original architecture and because it was sometimes seen in the movies, on television, or in the newspapers, featuring the studio's stars.

SIGNIFICANCE:



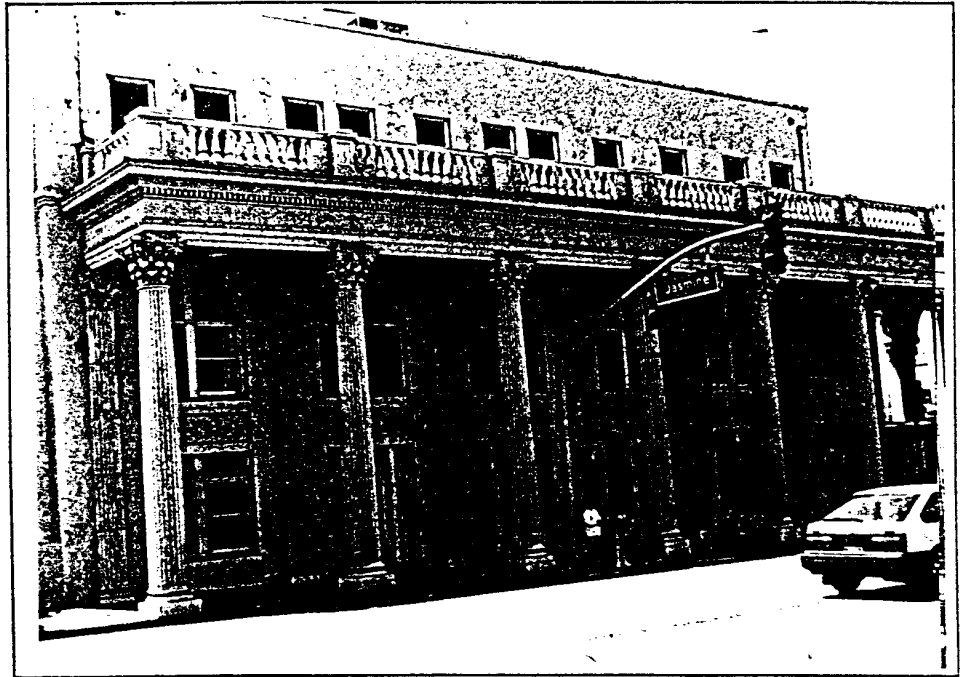
ADDRESS:
10202 #2
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1916

STYLE:
BEAU ARTS

HPAC RANKING:
LANDMARK

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION:

The elaborate Beaux Arts building shown here was constructed just before the studio opened in 1916. Contrasting with the factory-like appearance of the inside of the studio, the entrance building is illustrative of the grandiose style and imagination often seen in early motion pictures. A balustrade, inset with elaborate cast concrete balusters, runs across the top of the three-story building that forms the eastern quarter of the 600+ foot long front facade. A wide cornice, accented by closely-spaced brackets and a row of dentil trim, fronts the flat-roofed building behind. A row of massive fluted columns, crowned with Corinthian capitals, supports the balcony. Rows of multi-paned windows look out from the front facade on the east side of the former main entrance. A blank facade, with a cornice accented in two places with pedimented gables, occupies the remainder of the front footage. The blank facade has no windows, but does exhibit Neo-classical character through the use of rounded pilaster, molded trim, and inset panels. The dressing rooms are located on the other side and the building is only 15 feet wide.

SIGNIFICANCE:

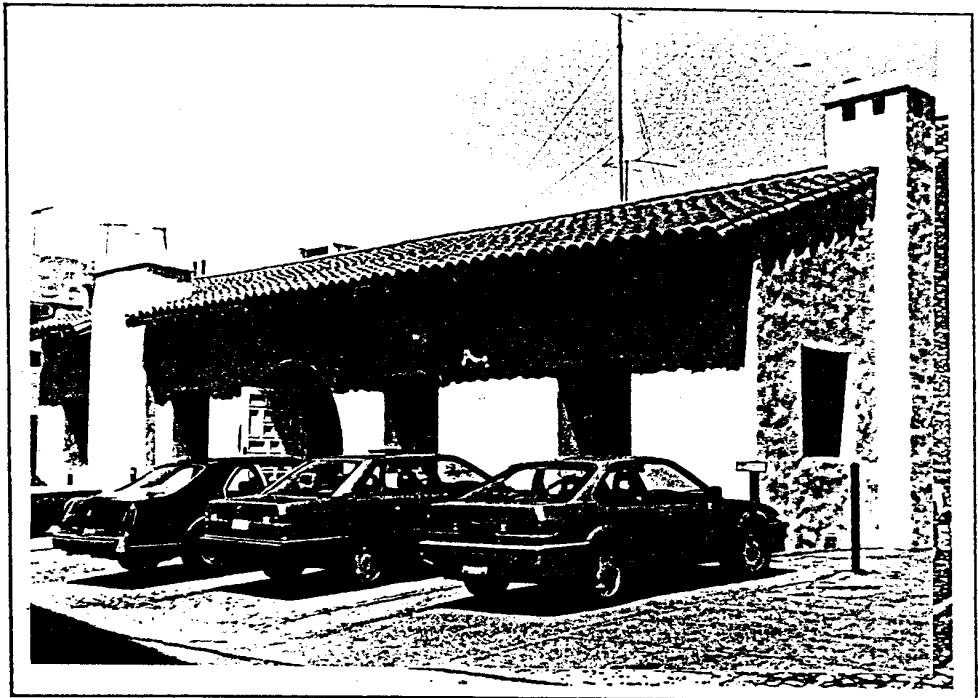
ADDRESS:
10202 #46
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1927

STYLE:
SPANISH ECLECTIC

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Crawford Building

Designed in the Spanish style, the single-storied school building in the center of the lot is now used for offices. The low-pitched side-facing gabled roof was clad in red clay tiles and the walls were clad in stucco. The eaves were edged in exposed rafter tails. A large stucco-clad chimney dominates the front facade. The 6-light casement windows are deeply-recessed into the facade. The paneled wood door is set in a recessed arch. This was where Judy Garland, Mickey Rooney, Roddy McDowell and other famous child stars attended school when they were making a film.

Revised per studio: Not built as school. May have been used as school from time to time.

SIGNIFICANCE:

ADDRESS:
10202 S-3-4
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT



COLUMBIA STUDIOS

DESCRIPTION: SOUND STAGES

Stucco covers the exterior of the sound stage buildings shown here. Twin arched parapets crown the front facade. Moderne-style pilasters feature a stepped design near the top. A 12-light metal-framed window is centered in the section between the two arched facades. Below is a walk-in door, flanked by large freight doors. The building gathers its significance because of all the well-loved movies and television shows made inside and the famous persons who have worked there.

SIGNIFICANCE:

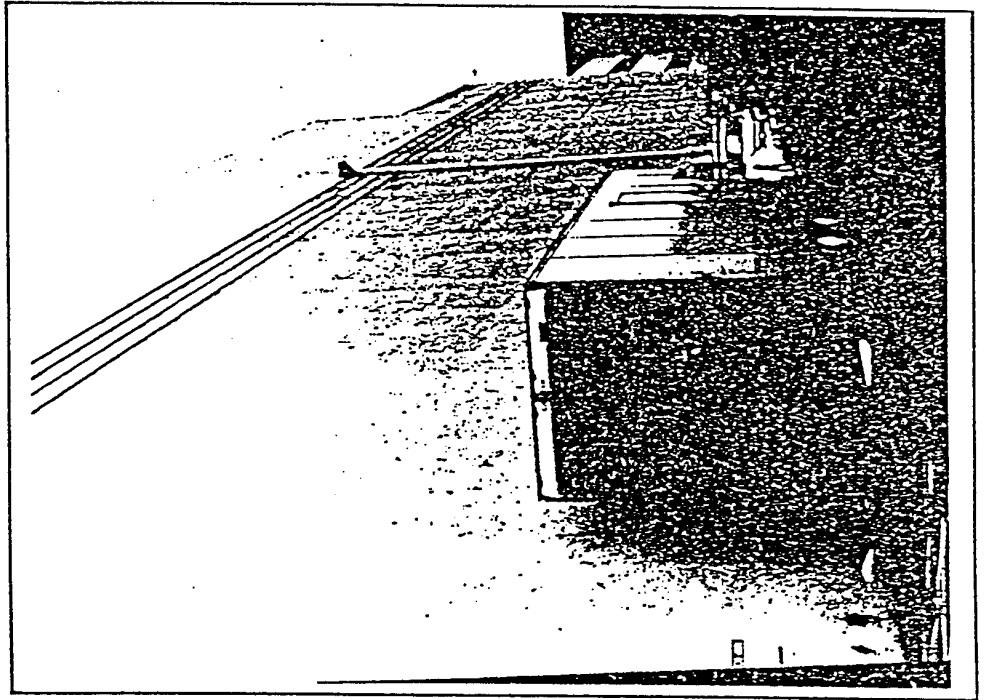
ADDRESS:
10202 S-5-6
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
ZIGZAG MODERNE

HAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: SOUND STAGES

The three-story high building shown here is one of the sound stages and illustrates the fact that most of the stages are very utilitarian in character and do not have a lot of openings to the exterior. Stucco-clad, with a flat roof and modified stepped shape, the building has a row of four Moderne stripes approximately one-quarter of the way down from the roof. The other side of the building contains two-story high freight doors which lead to the sound stages. Although this building has little architectural character, it has a significant history because of all the famous movie stars and directors who have worked here, the creative forces which put many talents together to produce a successful movie, and the economic support it gives to the citizens of Culver City.

SIGNIFICANCE:

ADDRESS:
10202 #32
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1928

STYLE:
STREAMLINE MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Sound Dept. Offices. Jean Harlow Wardrobe Building.

The stucco-clad building shown here is two-stories high, with a flat roof and unbroken parapet trimmed in a narrow band of metal. A narrow band of wood forms a ridge above the multi-paned metal-framed windows. Bands of the windows are used to accent the corners of the second story. The same windows are featured along the south side. A single door, topped with a metal canopy, leads to the interior from the east side.

SIGNIFICANCE:

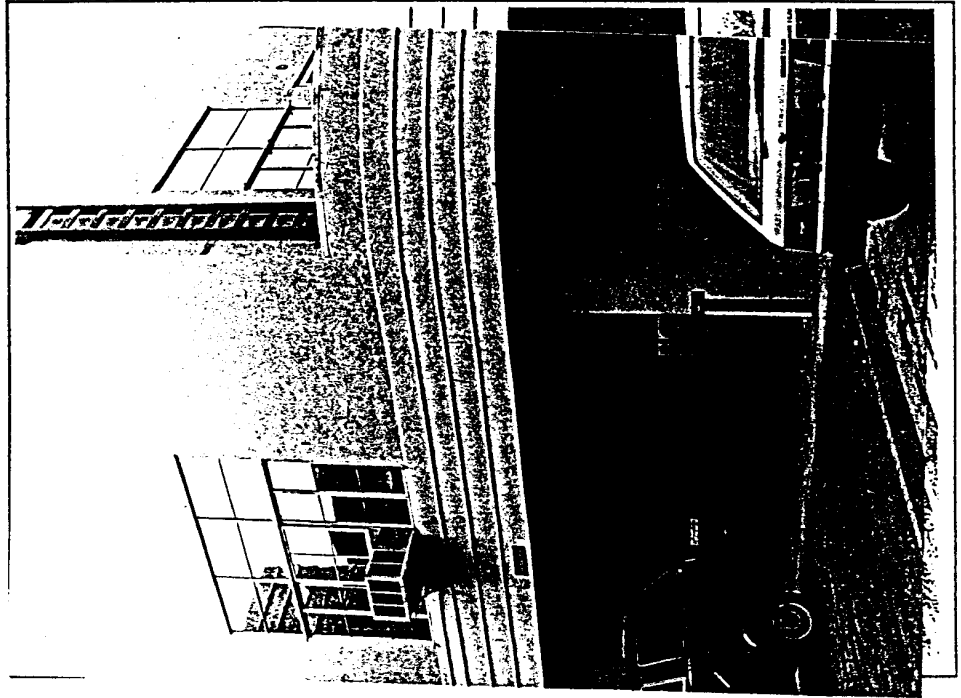
ADDRESS:
10202 #43
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1917

STYLE:
MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Garland Building

A wide four-tiered beltcourse is the most prominent Moderne feature of the stucco-clad two-story building shown above. It forms a second story balcony on the south side of the building. A recessed porch, supported by large round stucco-clad pillars, shelters the large multi-paned windows in the first floor. Multi-paned metal-framed casement windows, capped with 6-light fixed transoms, punctuate the second story. A flat roof and unbroken parapet form the top of the building.

SIGNIFICANCE:

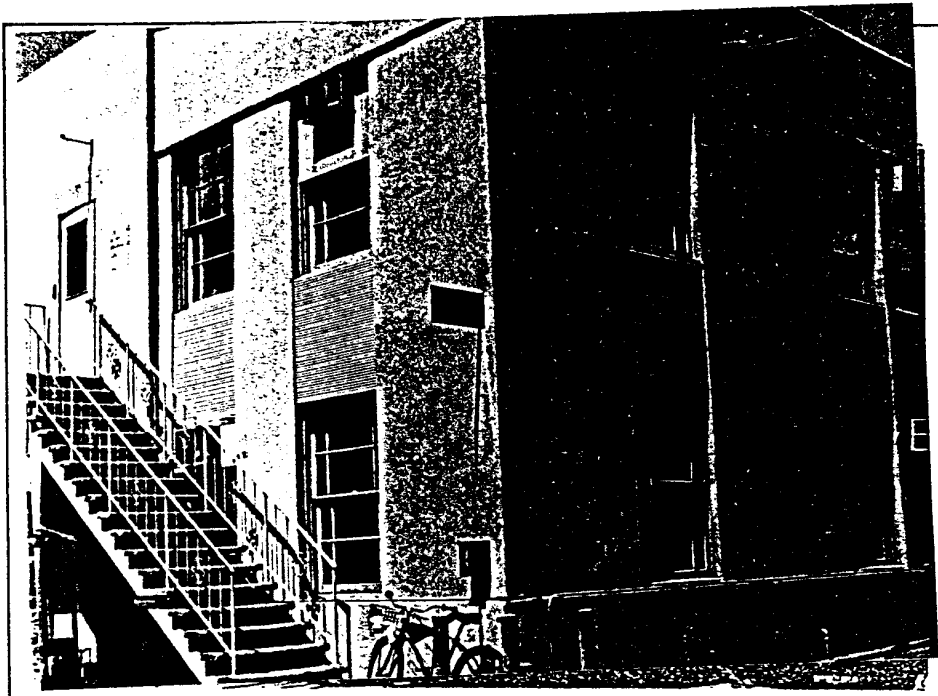
ADDRESS:
10202 #39
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COMMENT:
COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Tracy Building

This is one of several Moderne buildings that were built during the 1930's. The 30's was an important era in the evolution of sound movies. Many of screenland's greatest stars used these buildings. The stucco-clad exterior is original and has a narrow rim along the top of the second story windows and along the bottom of the first story windows. The recessed double-hung windows have a narrow vertical border of glass on the outside edges. They are used singly and in pairs in both the first and second floors, in a matching pattern. The entrance is in the southeast corner and is delineated with a square offset bay. A stairway leads to the second floor entrance. A wooden door, accented with a large window, leads to the interior.

SIGNIFICANCE:

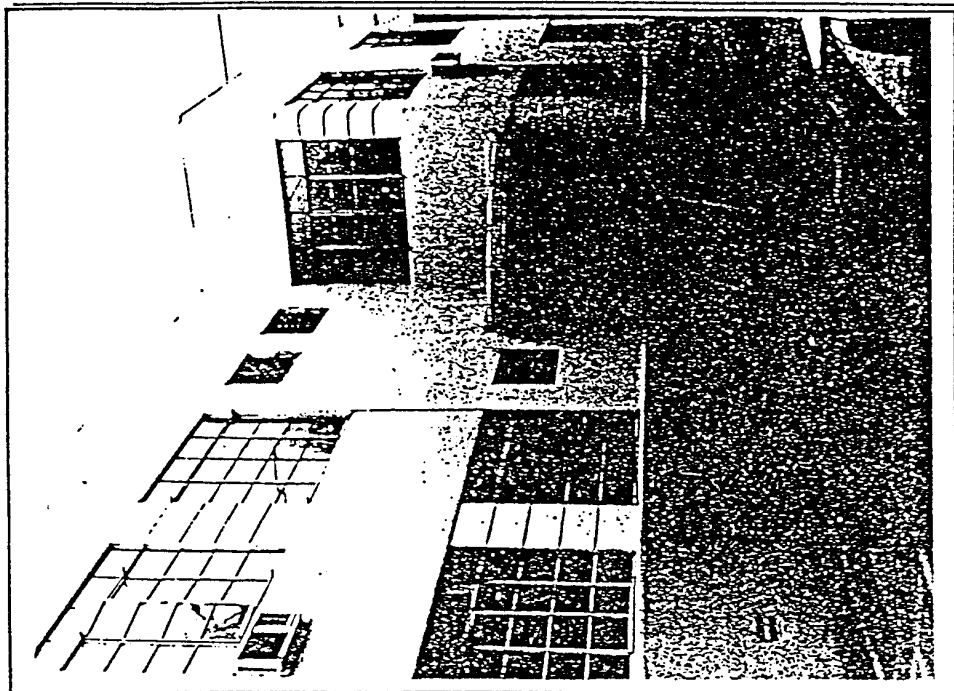
ADDRESS:
10202 #34
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
STREAMLINE MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Hepburn Building

The business office shown here is two-stories high, topped with a flat roof and unbroken, metal-trimmed parapet, and clad in stucco. Score lines, typical of 30's architecture, accent the corners of both the first and second stories. A row of large multi-paned metal-framed windows, slightly recessed, runs along the second story. Some of the windows can be opened with a crank, but the outside and top sections are stationary. A pair of high 4-light metal-framed windows is located above the corner entrance. The windows on the first floor match those on the second floor. A rounded metal canopy shelters the door. Sets of square terracotta drain pipe accents the foundation. The section of stucco below the windows extends outward a few inches.

SIGNIFICANCE:

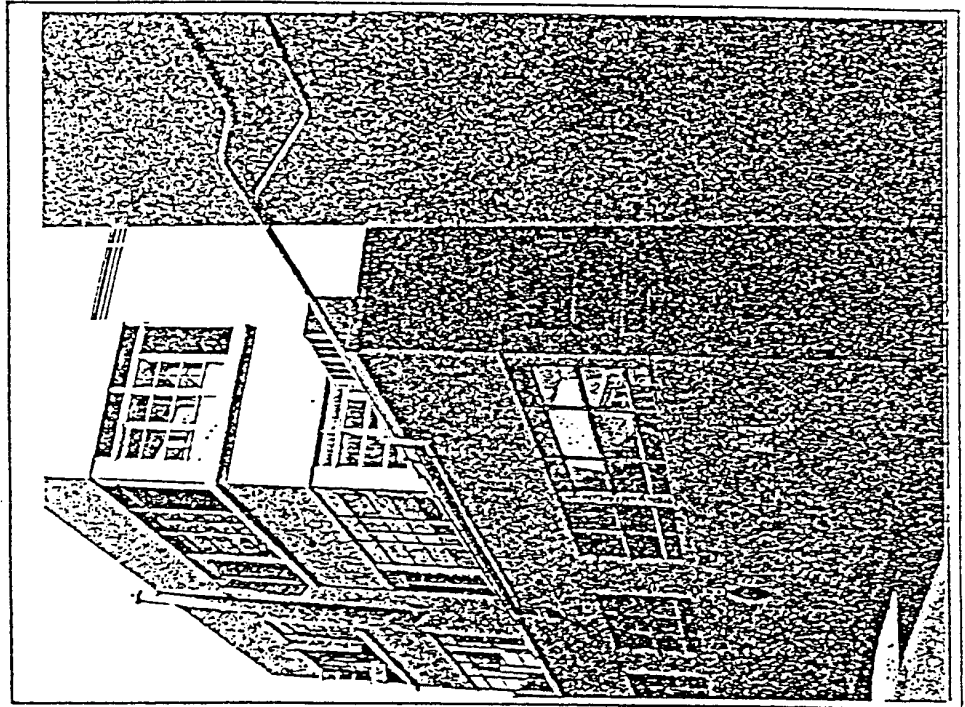
ADDRESS:
10202 #35
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1937

STYLE:
ZIGZAG MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Gable Building

Three stories high and clad in stucco, this flat-roofed Moderne building is almost completely original. Rows of wood molding emphasize the tops and bottoms of the window sections. The multi-paned windows are framed with metal. The banks of windows accent the corners of all three floors. Recessed hallways lead to plain doors. The rails of the walkways* are constructed of metal pipe.

* fire escapes

SIGNIFICANCE:

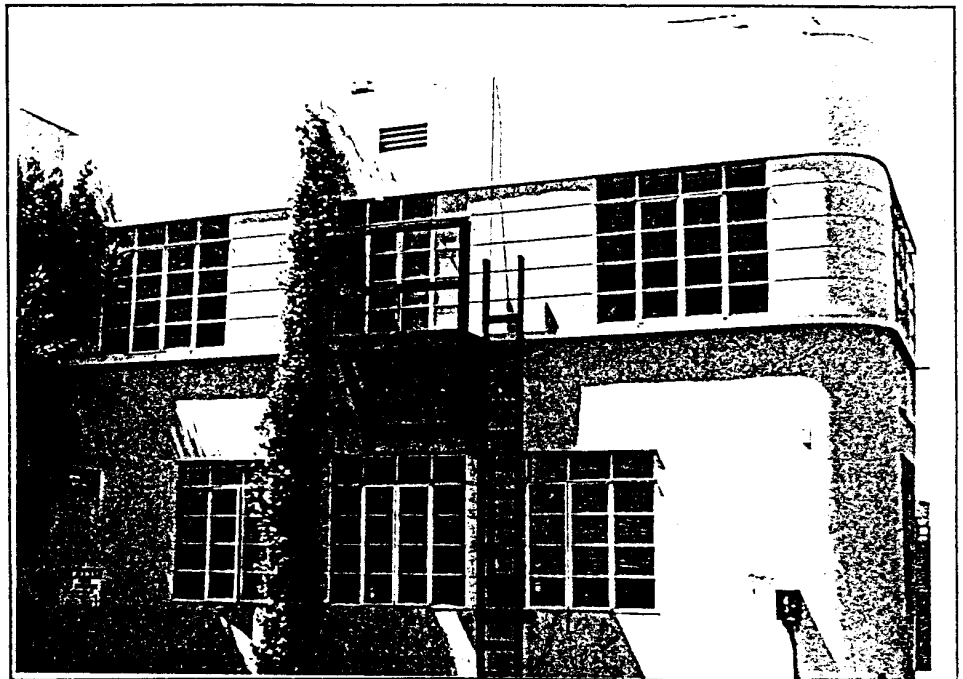
ADDRESS:
10202 #48
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
STREAMLINE MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COMMENT:
COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Myrna Loy Building

A flat roof and unbroken parapet caps the two-story stucco-clad Moderne building shown here. The second floor windows are accented by horizontal bands which run below and above the windows in a continuous line. Horizontal scorelines run parallel to the bands and strengthen the horizontal emphasis. Pairs of 4-light casement windows, flanked by matching 4-light stationary windows and topped by matching transoms, are used throughout the building. A band of three such groupings forms a row along the first story and the south sides. Moderne architecture was a distinctive departure from the formal Neo-classical Beaux Arts elegance featured in the grand entrance and Washington Street facade of this studio lot. Moderne styling is well represented here.

SIGNIFICANCE:

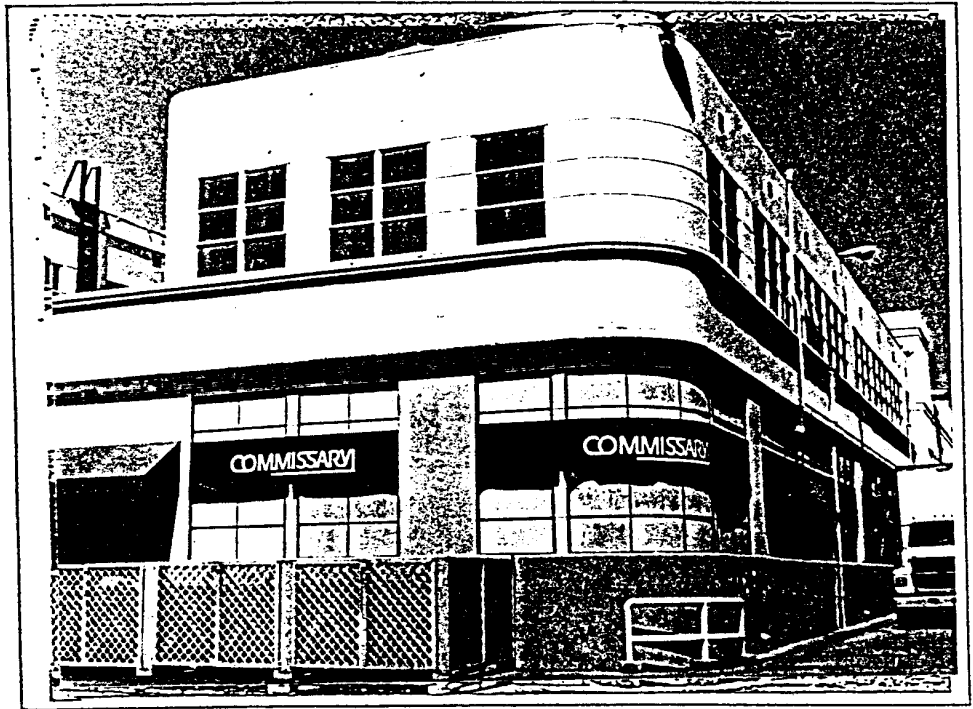
ADDRESS:
10202 #45
WASHINGTON BLVD.

DATE:
1935

STYLE:
STREAMLINE MODERNE

HPAC RANKING:
SIGNIFICANT

COLUMBIA STUDIOS



DESCRIPTION: Commissary

A rounded corner accents the two-story Streamlined Moderne Commissary. Large multi-paned windows, interspersed throughout the building let in large amounts of light. Stucco-clad panels are used between and below the first floor windows. A row of multi-paned windows run along the second story, below the flat roof. The interior of the Commissary has recently been remodeled. The Commissary is where the stars, directors and producers eat lunch. This was especially true during the days of the "star system" in the 30's, 40's and 50's.

SIGNIFICANCE: