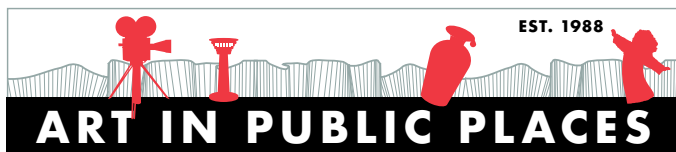


Culver CITY



DOWNTOWN CULTURAL WALKING TOURS

35TH ANNIVERSARY

THIRD EDITION 2023

Culver City's Art in Public Places Program (APPP) was established by ordinance in 1988, with the view that:

- Cultural and artistic resources, that include visual artwork, the performing arts, and architectural resources, enhance the quality of life for individuals living in, working in and visiting the City;
- Balanced development of cultural and artistic resources preserves and improves the quality of the urban environment, increases real property values, and has a positive economic impact.

By engaging the urban landscape, Culver City's APPP brings the experience of art to a broad and diverse group of people. The goal of the program is to balance the community's physical growth and revitalization with its cultural and artistic resources, resulting in improving the general welfare of the City, and increasing the availability of art to the public.

To date, there are over 100 individual artworks included in Culver City's APPP. Many of the downtown artworks in this guide are on public (City-owned) property, while some are on private property, but easily visible to the public.

Each walking tour will take approximately one hour.

Please allow more time for contemplation, exploring, and sampling local restaurants.

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DESIGN Amy McFarland, clean {slate} design
PHOTOGRAPHY Elon Schoenholz, except where noted
All images courtesy City of Culver City

CONTENTS

6 A BRIEF HISTORY OF CULVER CITY

TOUR ONE

11 PULL-OUT MAP FOR TOUR

13 LIST OF SITES FOR TOUR

TOUR TWO

49 PULL-OUT MAP FOR TOUR

51 LIST OF SITES FOR TOUR

78 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

79 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

80 MOBILE APP INFO

It is our pleasure to introduce this third edition of the **Art in Public Places Downtown Cultural Walking Tours** book that celebrates the creation of the City’s Art in Public Places Program (APPP) in 1988. The arts have defined Culver City since it was first conceived. From the early “moving pictures” filmed on the banks of Ballona Creek, to Beats by Dre high-tech audio, and the sounds of Louis Armstrong at Sebastian’s Cotton Club, to the politically engaged Commedia dell’arte of The Actors’ Gang theatre—*creativity is a constant player*—linking our past to our future. With this community guide to public art and history in the heart of Culver City, we hope to engage, entertain and inspire you today.

Something extraordinary happens when a community supports public art: It fosters a culture where art blooms and thrives on its own. So in this guide, you will find both official artworks commissioned under the City’s APPP, and other much-loved artworks that the community and businesses helped create.

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS 2023

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YASMINE-IMANI MCMORRIN
DAN O’BRIEN
FREDDY PUZA
ALBERT VERA

CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMISSION 2023

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LEORA O’CARROLL
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BRENDA WILLIAMS



A BRIEF HISTORY OF CULVER CITY

The area we now call Culver City was originally inhabited (especially around the Ballona Creek) by indigenous peoples known as *Tongva*, who were also called *Gabrielinos* by the Spanish missionaries at San Gabriel. The Tongva had lived there for a few thousand years before the Spanish arrived. Thereafter they were almost entirely subjugated. The last Tongva tribe member to live independently from European influence was found in one of the Channel Islands in 1853.

While Alta California was still under Spanish rule, many settlers traveled north from what we now call Mexico (New Spain), and established ranches in the area. Culver City was built upon two in particular: La Ballona and Rincón de los Bueyes. Some residents today are descended from those original ranchers. It was not until 1847 that the area we now know as Culver City, became part of the United States.

LEFT: **CULVER CITY 1921.** View southwest.

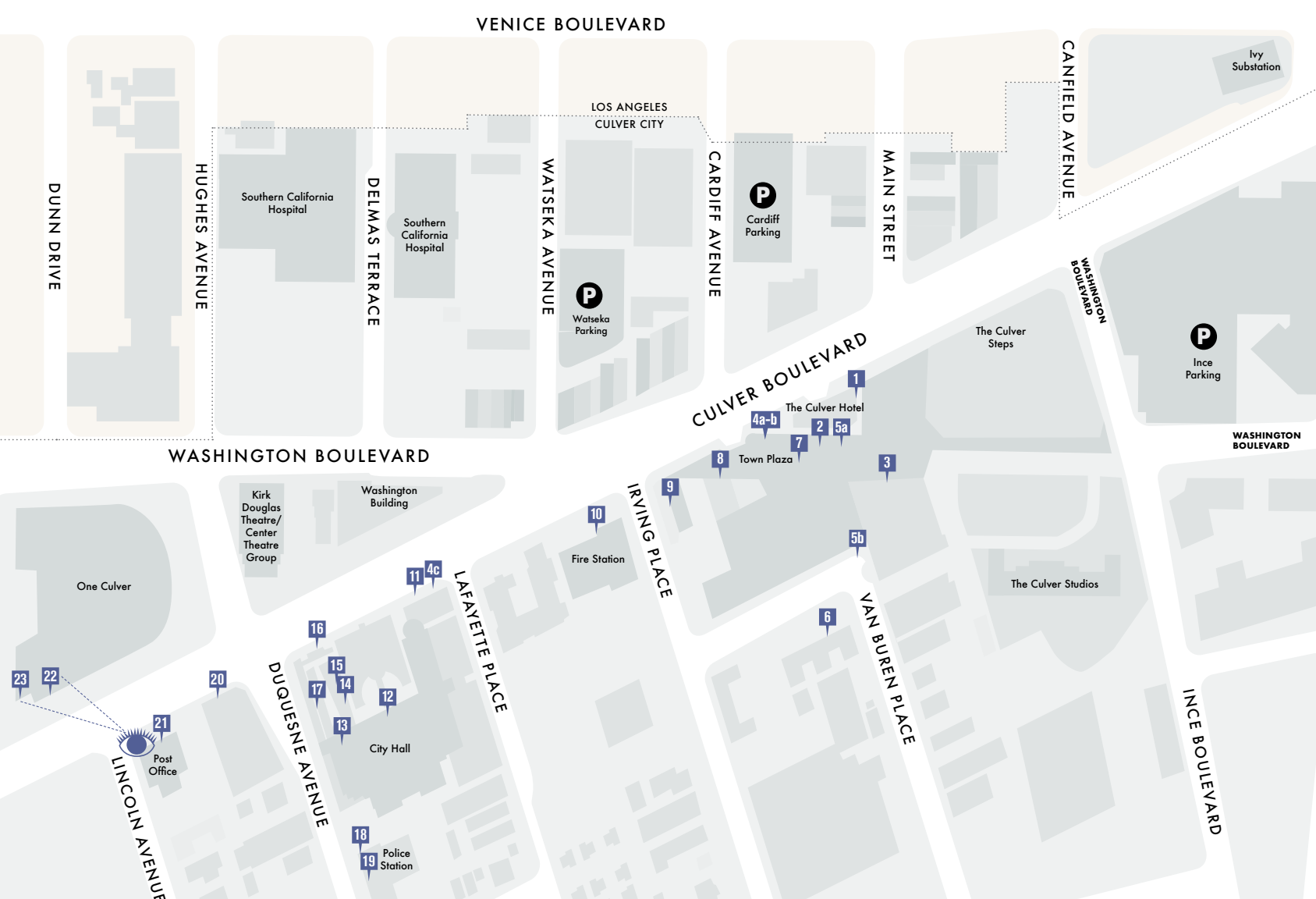
PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY MARC WANAMAKER/BISON ARCHIVES

- 1910** Harry Culver moved to Los Angeles from Milford, Nebraska, at age 30 and worked for I. N. Van Nuys in real estate.
- 1913** Harry Culver announced plans at the *California Club* in downtown Los Angeles, to build a city after studying the area for a year. The text of this speech appears in the sculpture *A Moment In Time's* copper newspaper referenced in No. 2 (TOUR ONE).
- 1915** Harry Culver invited film maker Thomas Ince to build his second new studio on a piece of land half way between Venice and Los Angeles, known as the Ince/Triangle Studios.
- 1917** Culver City is incorporated with an acreage of about 1.2 square miles. Basically this constituted downtown as we know it now, stretching a little beyond the boundaries of these walking tours.
- 1918** Thomas Ince builds his third studio (second in Culver City), the Thomas H. Ince Studios, that later became The Culver Studios.
- 1924** Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer creates the first great merger film studio, based in Culver City.
- 1939** Considered the greatest year in the Golden Era of filmmaking. Most films were made in Culver City, e.g. *The Wizard of Oz*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Ninotchka*, and *The Women*.
- 1988** The Art In Public Places Program (APPP) is established by ordinance.
- 2000** The latest annexation to the ever-growing city, now at just under five square miles. The largest annexations took place in the 1920s, a time of great civic growth and huge investments from industry.
- 2001** Cultural Affairs Commission established in connection with the APPP and the City's Historic Preservation Program.
- 2017** CULVER CITY TURNS 100. Culver City releases its first Creative Economy Report, modelled after the Otis Report on the Creative Economy: Los Angeles Region and the State of California.
- 2019** Creation of Culver City's Artist Laureate Program.
- 2023** THE ART IN PUBLIC PLACES PROGRAM TURNS 35.



TOUR ONE





TOUR ONE

SITE NO.	TITLE	PAGE NO.
1.	THE CULVER HOTEL	P 14
2.	A MOMENT IN TIME	P 16
3.	PLATO'S CUP	P 18
4A-B.	ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES	P 20
5A-B.	MOVING PICTURES	P 22
6.	PALIHOTEL AND MURAL	P 24
7.	THE LION'S FOUNTAIN	P 25
8.	CULVER CITY SINGULARITY	P 26
9.	LUCY AND DESI MURAL	P 27
10.	THE CITY SEAL	P 28
4C.	ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES	P 29
11.	CENTENNIAL FIRE HYDRANT	P 30
12.	CITY HALL AND HANGING GARDEN	P 30
13.	CITY SEQUENCE	P 32
14.	QUOTATION COURTYARD	P 33
15.	PANORAMIC	P 34
16.	FORMER CITY HALL FAÇADE HERITAGE PARK	P 35
17.	LA BALLONA	P 36
18.	OUR BEST	P 38
19.	SENTRY	P 39
20.	CULVER ... IS THAT YOU?	P 40
21.	POST OFFICE WITH MURAL	P 42
22.	BLOOM DIMENSION	P 44
23.	RAINBOW	P 46

1. THE CULVER HOTEL 1924

ARCHITECTS: **CURLETT AND BEELMAN**

CONTRACTOR: **THE WINTER CONSTRUCTION COMPANY**

🏠 **9400 CULVER BOULEVARD**

Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1997, a rich and illustrious past is what makes The Culver Hotel so enchanting. Built in 1924 by City Founder, Harry Culver, in partnership with renowned Los Angeles architects Curlett and Beelman, the Renaissance Revival-styled flatiron was once called the “City’s First Skyscraper”, and originally housed 150 apartments. From legendary ownership, including Charlie Chaplin and John Wayne, to distinguished guests such as Clark Gable, Greta Garbo and Ronald Reagan, the hotel tells stories—mischievous *Wizard of Oz* munchkins, secret passageways, and high-stake poker games are all woven into the fabric of its rich history. With Culver City at the center of motion picture production since the 1920s, hundreds of films and TV series have been shot in and around The Culver Hotel, from the Laurel and Hardy classics to modern-day blockbusters. The hotel was discovered in 2007 by hotelier and designer Maya Mallick, who fell in love with the property and reimagined it into a luxury boutique destination, regaining its place as a true icon in the Los Angeles region. The six-story architectural landmark is perfectly located in the heart of Downtown Culver City and features 46 vintage-inspired rooms, a lively bar and restaurant, an art gallery, and imaginative events.

WWW.CULVERHOTEL.COM PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY OF THE CULVER HOTEL



2. A MOMENT IN TIME 2006

ARTIST: **DE L'ESPRIE**

FABRICATOR: **NATIONAL HERITAGE COLLECTORS SOCIETY**

🏠 **TOWN PLAZA OUTSIDE THE CULVER HOTEL**

9400 CULVER BOULEVARD

A bronze sculpture of Harry Culver seated on a bench holding a copper newspaper dated 1917 with the headline *Culver City Becomes a Municipality on September 20, 1917*. Harry's wife, Lillian, stands behind holding their newborn, Patricia, who was apparently the impetus for incorporating Culver City. Inside the newspaper is the text of Harry Culver's 1913 speech at the California Club in downtown Los Angeles, announcing his plans to build Culver City. De L'Esprie also designed the sculpture outside the Culver City Senior Center, *Path of Life* (4095 Overland Avenue).

WWW.DELESPRIE.COM



3. PLATO'S CUP 1995

ARTIST: JIM HEIMANN

🏠 ATOP THE PLATO BUILDING, 9400-9410 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

The Spanish style commercial building with a traditional recessed second floor balcony, is from 1924 and is a designated Culver City Cultural Resource. The artwork comprises a wrought iron weather vane situated next to the crest of the red clay-tiled roof, and shows a steaming cup above a zig-zag film strip. The wind indicators read "N" and "P" (rather than North and South) for Napoleon G. Plato, a former owner of the building and a realtor who had an office there for 65 years. According to the artist, the coffee cup references the RKO Studio Café on that site circa 1937. Heimann's other artworks for Culver City are *King Kong Gone* (8620 Hayden Place) and *Studio Pass* (9336 Washington Boulevard). Heimann is a graphic designer, illustrator, teacher and author.

WWW.JIMHEIMANN.COM



4A-B. ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES 2004

ARTIST: JOSHUA CALLAGHAN

🏠 VARIOUS LOCATIONS IN DOWNTOWN CULVER CITY,
MOST WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO TOWN PLAZA

Traffic signal or utility boxes wrapped in printed vinyl, bearing photographic images of views that match their surrounding landscape. The viewer becomes engaged in the optical illusion or *trompe l'oeil* effect. There are other *Almost Invisible Boxes* throughout downtown. Can you see them? Callaghan, a Los Angeles artist, works in multi-media and exhibits internationally.

WWW.JOSHUACALLAGHAN.COM



A



B

5A-B. MOVING PICTURES 2001, 2005

ARTISTS: WICK ALEXANDER AND ROBIN BRAILSFORD

🏠 TOWN PLAZA AND CORNER OF VAN BUREN PLACE

Totalling seven unique zoetropes, this tour has just two of the series that celebrates the origin of cinema and Culver City's film studio history. Invented in 1834 by William George Horner, the zoetrope uses the *persistence of vision* principle to create an illusion of movement, while inside the drum are a series of static images viewed through vertical slots. If you adjust the rate of spin, you can observe the progression of images as "movement". Zoetrope is from the Greek words *zoe*, "life" and *trope*, "turn." Each zoetrope is created with a different style drum, varying images, and a medley of tiles and mosaics over a metal structure. The artists frequently work as a team creating public artworks and are based in San Diego.

WWW.LITHOMOSAIC.SQUARESPACE.COM

After viewing *Zoetrope #7* (5A) by The Culver Hotel, you can walk beside the movie theater, following the giant "film strip" pedestrian pathway to *Zoetrope #5* (5B).



6. PALIHOTEL CULVER CITY AND THE MIRRORED FOREST

HOTEL: 1923 MURAL: 2018

ARCHITECT: **UNKNOWN** CONTRACTOR: **R. P. DAVIDSON**

ARTIST: **DANA CARLY EITCHES**

🏠 **NORTHWEST WALL OF HOTEL, 3927 VAN BUREN PLACE**

Designated a Culver City Cultural Resource, this Zigzag Moderne style hotel was refurbished and reopened in 2018. It still maintains the roof-top neon sign dating to 1927 referring to it's former name: Hotel West End. Its original name was the Washington Hotel and it probably housed many early film crafts people.

Inspired by the designs of 19th century British artist William Morris, the mural is about the tranquility inherent in nature. Depicting flora and fauna, these elements are reflected and repeated to form new interesting patterns. "The Mirrored Forest is an ode to the natural beauty that surrounds and calms us." Although not actually under the purview of the Art in Public Places Program, this striking mural deserves a mention. Eitches is a multi-disciplinary artist based in Southern California.

WWW.DANACARLY.COM



7. THE LION'S FOUNTAIN 2004

ARTIST: **DOUGLAS O. FREEMAN**

🏠 **TOWN PLAZA OFF CULVER BOULEVARD**



An eight foot tall bronze sculpture surrounded by forty lighted jets shooting streams of water.

Although the theme is inspired by other lions associated with Culver City's movie studio history (MGM's Leo the Lion and the Cowardly Lion from *The Wizard of Oz*), this dancing lion is not a direct interpretation of either of those felines. Based in Minneapolis, Freeman's public artworks often comprise water features and have been commissioned as far away as Japan.

WWW.FREEMANSTUDIO.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: SAM LEE



8. CULVER CITY SINGULARITY 1995

ARTIST: **ERIC ORR**

🏠 **THE WESTERN END OF
TOWN PLAZA JUST SOUTH OF
CULVER BOULEVARD**

A three-sided granite column water sculpture. The late Orr was one of the Los Angeles artists who pioneered the Light and Space movement in the late 1960s and '70s, a genre primarily concerned with perceptual experience stemming from the viewer's interaction with the work. His work is in the permanent collections of major US museums, as well as in Japan.

WWW.WSTUDIO.COM

9. LUCY AND DESI MURAL 2000

ARTIST: **FRANCOIS BARDOL** ARTIST RESTORED: **2018**

🏠 **IRVING PLACE JUST SOUTH OF CULVER BOULEVARD**

While not under the purview of the APPP, this mural was originally commissioned by Prado Signs in 2000, a commercial sign company formerly in that building. This mural depicts Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz and their studio: Desilu Studios, which moved to 9336 Washington Boulevard (now The Culver Studios) in 1957. Unusually, this mural is "framed" in a three-dimensional frame.



10. THE CITY SEAL 1936

DESIGNER: UNKNOWN

🏠 ON FIRE STATION NO. 1 WALL, 9600 CULVER BOULEVARD

Glazed polychrome tile embedded into stucco wall. *The Heart of Screenland*—so named due to perceived competition with “Hollywood,” appears on a banner across the shield in the center of the seal. Adopted in 1936, the four shield elements are, in top left: a cameraman with analog camera and klieg light; top right: a rising sun; bottom left: the California State grizzly bear; and bottom right: a sprig of the official city flower, which is lantana. The flower was designated in 1929.



4C. ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES

ARTIST: JOSHUA CALLAGHAN

🏠 OUTSIDE CITY HALL
9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

Please refer to 4A description (PAGE 20).



11. CENTENNIAL FIRE HYDRANT 2017

🏠 OUTSIDE CITY HALL
9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

Next to the covered utility box, you will see a strange sight: a “golden” fire hydrant. This working brass fire hydrant was a gift from the Golden State Water Company (GSWC) in honor of Culver City’s 100th Anniversary, and reflective of the City’s more than 80 year partnership with the GSWC.

12. CITY HALL AND HANGING GARDEN 1995

ARCHITECTS: **GONZALEZ GOODALE ARCHITECTS**

ARTIST: **ED CARPENTER**

🏠 9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

This incarnation of City Hall was built in a neo-mission style, with Carpenter’s three off-set stained glass screens center front, sheltering the open-air atrium at the third floor level. The artwork descends from the roof line in a geometric abstraction and suggests a hanging garden in bloom, using leaded, hand blown, rolled and dichroic glasses to create iridescence as light shines through. The artist is based in Portland, Oregon. WWW.EDCARPENTER.NET

PHOTOGRAPHY: ED CARPENTER AND TIM STREET-PORTER



13. CITY SEQUENCE 1995

ARTIST: **BLUE MCRIGHT**

🏠 **FOYER TO MIKE BALKMAN COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

Comprising 27 individual paintings, divided into three groups: 1. Natural Elements, 2. Landmarks, 3. Stories. Conceived as *diseños* (a 19th century folk art map used by rancheros filing land grant petitions), these narrative images include references to early inhabitants, the incorporation of Culver City and the establishment of movie studios. The acrylic legend panel to the right offers a complete explanation. The artist is based in Venice, California.

WWW.BLUEMCRIGHT.COM

If you are standing outside looking in to the chambers foyer, you are probably standing on a bronze City seal, centered in the semi-circular colonnade. See No. 10 for the iconography.



14. QUOTATION COURTYARD 1995

ARTIST: **BARBARA MCCARREN**

🏠 **HERITAGE PARK, 9770 CULVER BOULEVARD**

Four free-standing brick walls constructed from the bricks of the prior City Hall, each side of which has a Dekton panel with engraved quotations from historically great international civil rights leaders. Barbara McCarren states that the quotes were each intended to address the individual's role in government – a fitting goal for an artwork situated outside the Council Chambers!

WWW.BARBARAMCCARREN.COM





15. PANORAMIC 1995

ARTIST: **BARBARA MCCARREN**

🏠 **HERITAGE PARK**

9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

Like the other art installations around City Hall, McCarren's *Panoramic* fuses the past with the present. *Panoramic* is a replica of a life-size movie camera from the early 20th century, made of painted sheet bronze and stainless steel. It originally displayed black and white historic images of Culver City, emphasizing the City's geography, history and film studio identity, however the film strip could not survive the hot summers. The images are now viewable via the QR code on the artwork.

WWW.BARBARAMCCARREN.COM

16. FORMER CITY HALL FAÇADE | HERITAGE PARK 1995

1928 CITY HALL ARCHITECT:

ORVILLE L. CLARK (ALSO DESIGNED THE WASHINGTON BUILDING OPPOSITE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF CULVER

BOULEVARD) REPLICA FAÇADE

ARCHITECTS: **GONZALEZ**

GOODALE ARCHITECTS

🏠 **9770 CULVER BOULEVARD,**

AT DUQUESNE AVENUE

The replica façade was built using some of the materials from the 1928 City Hall, especially the cast concrete decorations. Laurel and Hardy's film *County Hospital* was filmed on the original balcony, as well as the *Hunter* TV series. Heritage Park occupies the old footprint of the former City Hall. It contains three commissioned artworks.

This site was also part of the original Spanish land grant of Rancho La Ballona, as marked by the Culver City Historical Society Historic Site #1.



17. LA BALLONA 1995

ARTIST: MAY SUN

🏠 HERITAGE PARK, 9770 CULVER BOULEVARD

This large work encompasses sculptures (sea creature effigies modelled after Tongva artifacts), water features and photo etchings (depicting 19th and 20th century Ballona views), all relating to the Ballona Creek and the indigenous Tongva, who lived along its banks. Elements of the former City Hall have been incorporated in the

form of the brick walls that frame the fountain spillways' copper troughs and the photo etchings. Don't miss the informative bronze plaques on the reverse of the brick walls, or the replica fish hooks glinting on the pool floor. These were traditionally carved from abalone shells. Note the progression of the carving seen here. May Sun lived in Shanghai and Hong Kong before moving to Southern California.

WWW.MAYSUNSTUDIO.COM



18. OUR BEST 1998

ARTIST: FRANCOIS BARDOL

🏠 THE NORTHWEST CORNER OF THE CULVER CITY POLICE STATION
4040 DUQUESNE AVENUE

This glass tile mosaic honors the Culver City Police Department's dedication to the community. It features Culver City landmarks and references the City's film history, providing a backdrop to a visual narrative that includes police officers helping children. Born in Algeria, schooled in Paris as an architect, Bardol then moved to Culver City. Bardol also painted *Lucy and Desi* (No.9) and *Laurel and Hardy* (No.31.)



19. SENTRY 1999

ARTIST: JOHN OKULICK

🏠 AT ENTRYWAY TO
CULVER CITY POLICE STATION
4040 DUQUESNE AVENUE

A ceramic tiled and illuminated fountain bordered by two concrete columns at the entryway to the Police Department building. As many Culver City artworks are, this water feature was inspired by La Ballona and the significance the creek played in the settlement of this area. As the title implies, Sentry is a symbol for safety and references the contribution the Police Department makes to this community. The diamond-shaped tiles are echoed in the overhang above. Nationally renowned Okulick is based in Venice, CA. Another of his artworks can be found at 10441 Jefferson Boulevard.



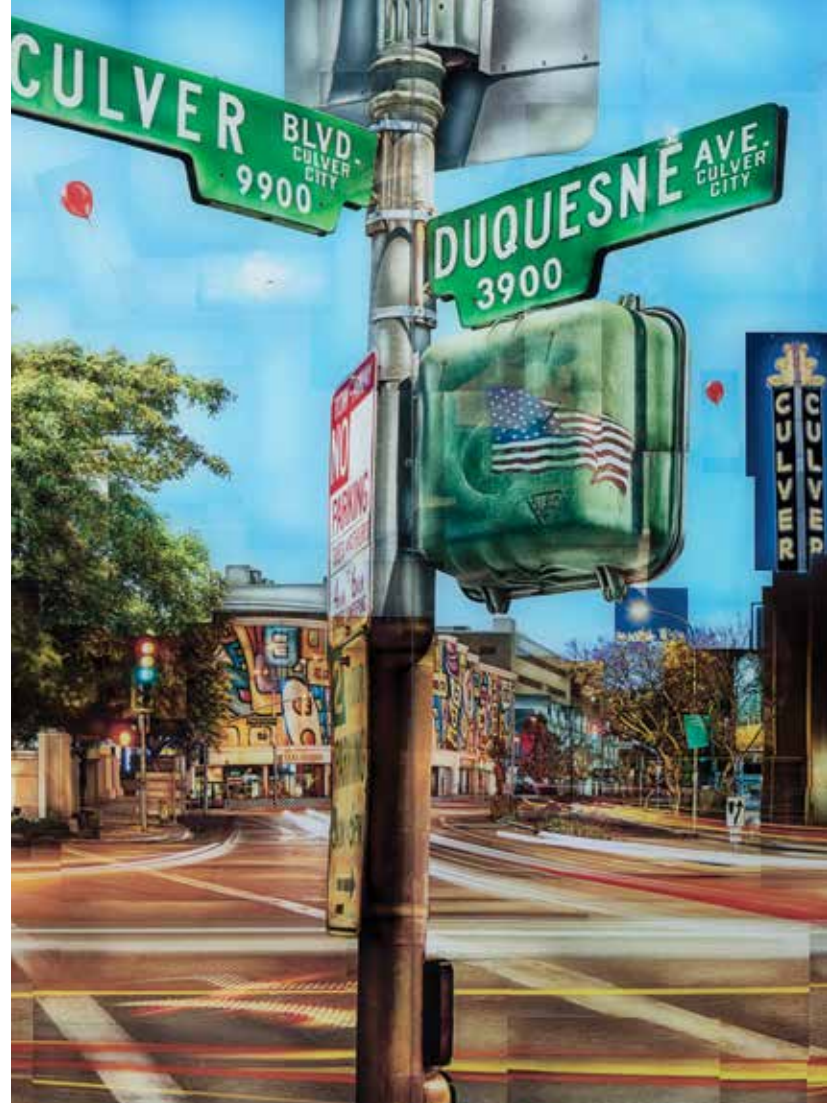
20. CULVER...IS THAT YOU? 2009

ARTISTS: **MOSHE AND EDDIE BRAKHA**

🏠 **9900 CULVER BOULEVARD ON THE OUTSIDE WALL OF SUITE 1A**

The father and son photography team created a composite photographic image to form an impression of the nearest intersection. It incorporates daytime and nighttime exposure photos, and promotes the idea that we do not always notice things that surround us. Directly behind the street post can be seen a former building that was covered in an artwork by another local artist, Ed Massey. Moshe Brakha is originally from Israel and his son was born in Los Angeles.

WWW.BRAKHAX2.COM



21. GATEWAY STATION POST OFFICE AND INTERIOR MURAL 1940 AND 1941

ARCHITECT: **LOUIS A. SIMON** MURAL ARTIST: **GEORGE SAMERJAN**
📍 **9942 CULVER BOULEVARD**

A designated Culver City Cultural Resource, this post office was built in the PWA Moderne style of cast-in-place concrete. There are two splendid Moderne cylindrical lanterns in cast metal with glass lenses on either side of the front entrance. Inside is a mural by George Samerjan, executed in egg tempera on gesso over plaster. The mural was commissioned by the United States Post Office, and is therefore not part of Culver City's APPP, however it is historical and a pertinent image of the MGM Studios back lot. Later, among his many projects, Samerjan was commissioned to design sets of commemorative postage stamps.

From the top of the entry steps you can view the final two artworks on this tour. No. 22 (*Bloom Dimension*) is directly across the street on the walls of One Culver. No. 23 (*Rainbow*) is visible as you look to the northwest towards the old MGM studio lot.



22. BLOOM DIMENSION 2019

ARTIST: JASON WOODSIDE

🏠 10000 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD (ONE CULVER)

CAN BE VIEWED FROM THE TOP STEPS OF THE

GATEWAY POST OFFICE

Jason Woodside's spray-painted murals are often characterized by vivid colors, fades with contrasting bands of patterns and shapes, as well as a hip urban energy. *Bloom Dimension*, which is installed in three locations at the site, includes all these elements.

Here, the color palette was inspired by blooms found within the region: the toasted yellow and orange of the golden California Poppy; purples referencing Verbena; and, perhaps most importantly, the fierce bright red, representing the native Toyon shrub, found in abundance in and around Culver City.

Bloom Dimension also references Culver City's past. The artwork incorporates color gradients and simulated movement intended to pay homage to the land on which One Culver was built and the native people (Tongva) who once resided here and whose woven baskets were characterized with geometric patterns.

WWW.JASONWOODSIDE.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: LOUISE COFFEY-WEBB



23. RAINBOW 2012

ARTIST: TONY TASSET

BEST VIEWED ON THIS TOUR FROM THE WESTERN-MOST

TOP STEPS OF THE GATEWAY POST OFFICE

This oversize artwork can be seen from many street angles, but is actually situated on the studio lot, west of the Madison Street entrance between Washington and Culver Boulevards.

Rainbow is 94 feet high and stretches 188 feet wide, made of steel with a weight of 100,000 lbs., clad in painted aluminum. For the concept, Tony Tasset was inspired by multiple factors including rainbows as a symbol for imagination and optimism. The work also

references *The Wizard of Oz*, which was filmed here on the former MGM lot in Culver City in the late 1930s.

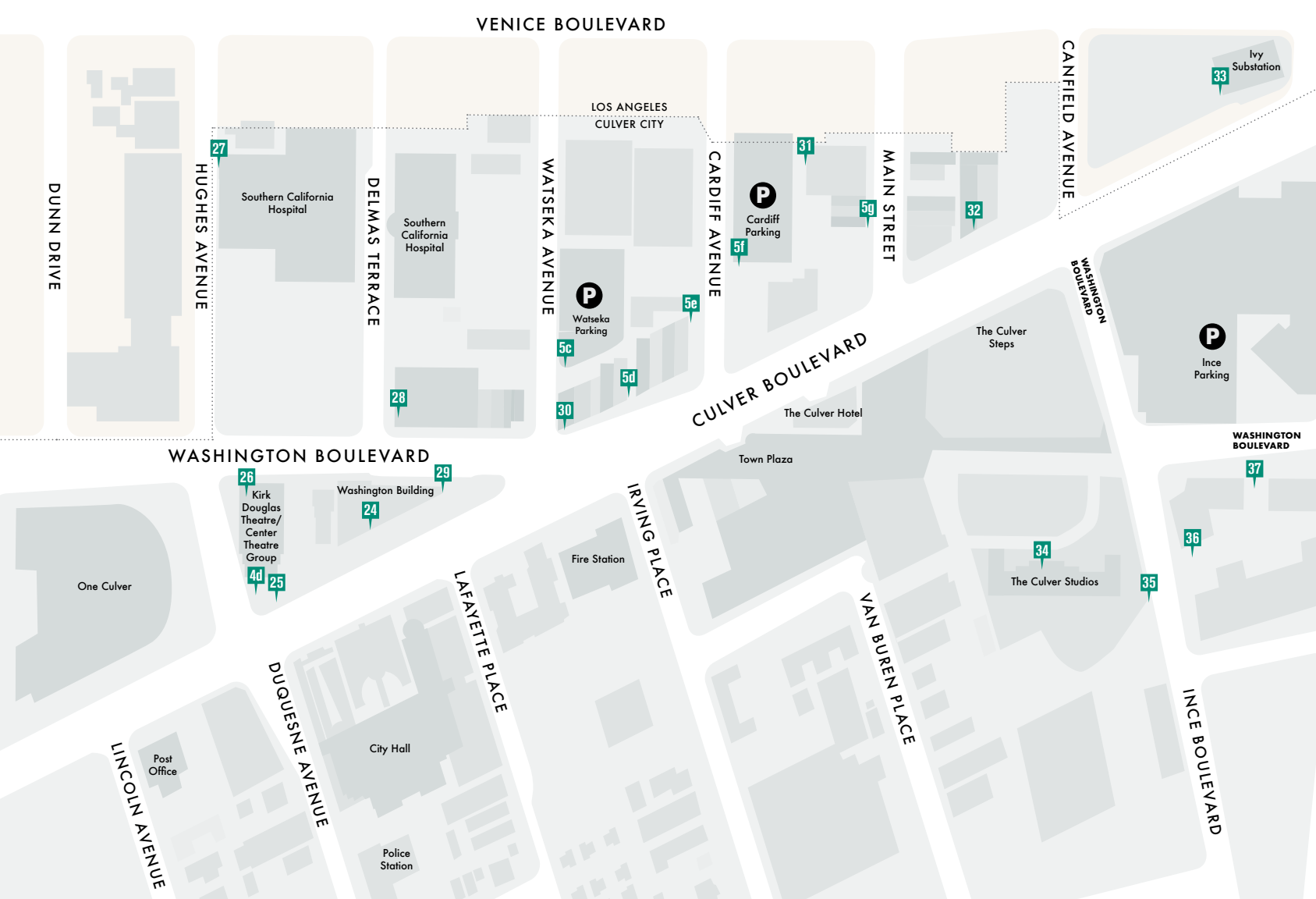
In addition to *Rainbow* saluting the specific history of its immediate location, it also addresses another facet of this region's art culture, the Light and Space movement originating in Los Angeles in the 1960s.

WWW.SONYPICTURESMUSEUM.COM/EXHIBITIONS

You may now continue with **TOUR TWO**, perhaps after taking a refreshment break at one of the many downtown restaurants. We begin the next tour at the Washington Building which conveniently houses a coffee shop. The site numbers continue on from Tour One.







TOUR TWO

SITE NO.	TITLE	PAGE NO.
24.	WASHINGTON BUILDING	P 52
25.	TRUTH OR FICTION	P 54
4D.	ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES	P 55
26.	KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE	P 56
27.	LEGION BUILDING	P 58
28.	ARCHITECTURE OF PLANTS	P 59
5C.	MOVING PICTURES	P 60
29.	ORNAMENTAL STREET LIGHTS	P 61
30.	HULL BUILDING	P 62
5D-F.	MOVING PICTURES	P 64
31.	LAUREL AND HARDY MURAL	P 66
5G.	MOVING PICTURES	P 67
32.	THE CITIZEN BUILDING	P 68
33.	IVY SUBSTATION	P 70
34.	THE CULVER STUDIOS	P 72
35.	STUDIO PASS	P 74
36.	SCAN	P 76
37.	PRIMORDIAL REFLECTIONS	P 77

24. WASHINGTON BUILDING 1926–28

ARCHITECT: **ARTHUR SCHOLZ AND ORVILLE L. CLARK**

CONTRACTOR: **ORLOPP AND ORLOPP**

🏠 **9720-30 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD**

On the National Register of Historic Places and a designated Culver City Cultural Resource, this was originally commissioned by Charles E. Lindblade (a business associate of Harry Culver) in the Beaux Arts style. It is one of two triangular (or “flat-iron”) buildings in downtown Culver City, the other being The Culver Hotel. Made of poured reinforced concrete, note the row of rondels below the roofline showing a bas-relief of first president George Washington’s head. Both façades feature intaglio classical-style lettering WASHINGTON. Orville Clark was also the architect for two other Beaux Arts buildings in downtown Culver City: the former City Hall and former Fire Station. In 1931 the Washington Building served as the Culver City Post Office until the Gateway Post Office was completed in 1940.



25. TRUTH OR FICTION 1995

ARTIST: **NOBUHO NAGASAWA**

🏠 **NORTHEAST CORNER OF CULVER BOULEVARD AND DUQUESNE AVENUE, BEHIND THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE**

Comprised of three free-standing triangular pillars of glass etched with images referencing motion picture history, such as MGM's Leo the Lion, and Salvador Dali's "eyes" from Hitchcock's *Spellbound*. At night they are illuminated from within and Southern California nature and history images are kinetically projected. At the center of the three pillars, do not miss a recessed glass circle with a depiction of a human hand and the constellation Ursa Major. Nagasawa is based in New York.

WWW.WESTWOODGALLERY.COM/NOBUHO-NAGASAWA



4D. ALMOST INVISIBLE BOXES

2004

ARTIST: **JOSHUA CALLAGHAN**

🏠 **NORTHEAST CORNER OF CULVER BOULEVARD AND DUQUESNE AVENUE, BETWEEN THE KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE AND TRUTH OR FICTION**

Functional utility boxes are wrapped in printed vinyl with images that usually match the surrounding vistas. However in this instance Callaghan has made a tongue-in-cheek statement by using images of birds of paradise plants. His other covered utility boxes can be seen along Culver Boulevard and in the Town Plaza.

WWW.JOSHUACALLAGHAN.COM



26. KIRK DOUGLAS THEATRE 1947

ARCHITECT: **CARL G. MOELLER (1947) AND STEVEN EHRlich ARCHITECTS (2004)**

🏠 **9820 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD AT DUQUESNE AVENUE**

A designated Culver City Cultural Resource, this building was originally a movie theater. The Culver Theater was in the Streamline Moderne style made famous by movie theater developer George Skouras. It features exterior cast-in-place concrete walls, and glass block windows. Of significance is the polychrome marble terrazzo paving (The Kiki and David Gindler Terrazzo) around the undulating ticket kiosk, the marquee canopy and neon sign tower. The original “Culver” neon signs above the marquee were the inspiration for the 21st century re-branding of the city and were incorporated into Culver City’s logo. Since 2004, the notable Center Theatre Group has made its Westside home here, after Kirk and Anne Douglas made a major contribution enabling conversion to a 317-seat live theatre. The transformation from movie theater to live theatre was designed by award-winning Steven Ehrlich, a Culver City architect, and is an excellent example of adaptive re-use. The design firm Sussman/Prejza & Company were retained to complete the current exterior design.

WWW.CENTERTHEATREGROUP.ORG/VISIT/KIRK-DOUGLAS-THEATRE



27. LEGION BUILDING 1925

ARCHITECT: **UNKNOWN** CONTRACTOR: **DON S. ELY**

🏠 **3824 HUGHES AVENUE (NORTH OF WASHINGTON, THE STREET CHANGES ITS NAME FROM DUQUESNE)**



This designated Culver City Cultural Resource, in the Spanish-style, was originally an American Legion Clubhouse (Post #46). It was constructed over the site of the first Culver City swimming pool. Harry Culver had donated land for that purpose, being keen on outdoor sports. Like much of Culver City, the original land was part of the Rancho La Ballona land grant. It was recently restored and currently belongs to the nearby hospital.

Culver City Historical Society Historic Site #5.

Now you can short-cut to the next tour site by walking north to Venice Boulevard (you are leaving Culver City at this point!), turning right, and then turning south onto Delmas Terrace.

28. THE ARCHITECTURE OF PLANTS 2021

ARTIST: **VERONIKA KELLNDORFER**

🏠 **9735 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD**

(BEST VIEWED FROM WEST SIDE OF DELMAS TERRACE)

This “window wall” was created in Germany and comprises 24 panels with silkscreened cacti printed directly on the glass. Berlin-based artist Kellndorfer used her own photo of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Freeman House in Los Angeles to create the 3-story glass feature. The image shifts with the time of day and amount of light. The building that surrounds the art (*Brick & Machine*) was designed by Abramson Architects and is a contemporary interpretation of the historic brick landmarks in the area.

WWW.KELLNDORFER.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: SEANCOSTELLOPHOTO.COM





5C. MOVING PICTURES 2001

ARTISTS: **WICK ALEXANDER
AND ROBIN BRAILSFORD**

🏠 **ON WATSEKA AVENUE AT THE
PASEO ENTRYWAY AT THE CORNER
OF THE PARKING STRUCTURE**

This artwork is one of seven unique zoetropes celebrating the origin of cinema and Culver City's film studio history. This tour has five of those and this *Zoetrope #1* is structurally the simplest. The drum patina echoes the brick wall and slate below, and the foliage becomes an integral part of the artwork. Invented in 1834 by William George Horner, the zoetrope used the persistence of vision principle to create an illusion of movement. Inside the drum is a series of images that can be viewed

through the slots and by adjusting the rate of the spin of the drum, the viewer is able to observe a progression of images. *Zoetrope* is from the Greek words *zoe*, "life" and *trope*, "turn."

WWW.LITHOMOSAIC.SQUARESPACE.COM

Across the street you will find an attractive commercial building (9700 block on Washington Boulevard) in the Streamline Moderne style. This is a newer building that was skillfully upgraded to reflect those horizontal lines typical of the Moderne period.

29. ORNAMENTAL STREET LIGHTS 1930

MANUFACTURER: **UNION METAL CORP.,
CANTON, OHIO**

🏠 **ALONG CULVER BOULEVARD
FROM JACKSON AVENUE TO
INCE BOULEVARD**

Streetlights have become an object of interest, thanks to Chris Burden and his iconic installation at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, entitled *Urban Light*, where lights similar to these can be viewed. Elegant double-headed street lights are seen outside the Washington Building going east along the north side of Culver Boulevard. With all the changes in lighting technology, it is a wonder that these *electroliers* (as multi-headed street lamps are often called) are still standing and working! They were built by Union Metal (their logo is still on the base), a company that has been building streetlights for over 100 years.



30. HULL BUILDING 1925

ARCHITECT: UNKNOWN

🏠 9543 CULVER BOULEVARD, CORNER OF WATSEKA AVENUE
AND CULVER BOULEVARD

A designated Culver City Cultural Resource in the neo-classical style, this was built by Dr. Foster Hull as the first hospital in Culver City at a cost of \$10,000. The *Culver City Daily News* boasted of a fluoroscope, x-ray, electrical Turkish bath, and Alpine sun-ray! (November 24, 1925). In the 1930s the building was acquired by Louis Freeman, a grocer who supplied MGM Studios, and it has been in the Freeman family ever since in various iterations, now currently a restaurant. The original glazed cast concrete columns are still a feature, and were also recognizable as “Flynn’s Arcade” in the classic science fiction film of 1982, *Tron*.

Culver City Historical Society Historic Site #2.



5D-F. MOVING PICTURES 2001

ARTISTS: WICK ALEXANDER AND ROBIN BRAILSFORD

5D: ZOETROPE #2

🏠 OUTSIDE 9531 CULVER BOULEVARD (NORTH SIDE OF STREET)

5E: ZOETROPE #3

🏠 OUTSIDE 3865 CARDIFF AVENUE (WEST SIDE OF STREET)

5F: ZOETROPE #4

🏠 ON CARDIFF AVENUE PASEO BETWEEN THE PARKING STRUCTURE AND THE CORNER BUILDING

These three zoetropes are each distinctly different with contrasting materials, differently shaped spinning cylinders and images within. Their initial concept remains the same (SEE 5C, PAGE 60).

Continue walking through this paseo, turning north between the parking lot and Main Street, where you will see a mural.



31. LAUREL AND HARDY MURAL 1996

ARTIST: **FRANCOIS BARDOL** ARTIST RESTORED: 2019

🏠 **PASEO IN BACK OF 3833 MAIN STREET**

Using a stock photo of silent movie comedians, Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, Bardol was commissioned by the owners of the former Stellar Hardware on Main Street, to paint a mural honoring the stars and the nearby former Hal Roach Studios. The image was adapted to the hardware theme by clothing Laurel and Hardy in overalls, holding a hammer. Originally located at the corner of Washington and National Boulevards, the Hal Roach Studios site was marked in 1980 with a plaque as one of Culver City's most famous and important studios. Why paint a mural on a wall that is difficult to view? Well, when it was originally painted, there was no parking structure, so it could easily be viewed from Cardiff Avenue. See also Nos. 9 and 18 for Bardol's other works.



5G. MOVING PICTURES 2001

ARTISTS: **WICK ALEXANDER AND
ROBIN BRAILSFORD**

🏠 **PASEO EXITING ONTO MAIN STREET**

The final *Zoetrope #6* of this tour comprises a spiraling steel pedestal with ceramic mosaic base.

Now continue east on Culver Boulevard to the next historic building. You will be crossing Culver City's Main Street, which is commonly held to be the shortest in the U.S. – two thirds of a block (as the city line actually stops in the alley rather than at Venice Boulevard).



32. THE CITIZEN BUILDING 1929

ARCHITECT: **ORVILLE L. CLARK**

CONTRACTOR: **O'HANLON AND FLANSBURG**

🏠 **9355 CULVER BOULEVARD**

On the National Register of Historic Places, and a designated Culver City Cultural Resource, this structure perfectly typifies Art Deco style. When Eugene Donovan, publisher of *The Citizen* newspaper, moved from San Francisco after surviving the 1906 earthquake, he wanted to build a new headquarters for his newspaper. Note the beautiful cast concrete flowers on the face of the building. The Citizen Publishing Company frequently printed dummy newspapers for the motion picture industry.

Culver City Historical Society Historic Site #4



33. IVY SUBSTATION 1907

ORIGINAL ARCHITECT: **UNKNOWN**

REDEVELOPMENT ARCHITECT: **MILFORD WAYNE DONALDSON**

1987/1993

🏠 IN THE CORNER TRIANGLE WHERE VENICE AND CULVER BOULEVARDS MEET, NESTLED WITHIN MEDIA PARK

Older than Culver City, this Mission Revival style railway traction substation is on the National Register of Historic Places. Built at the junction of three rail lines, this important public transit hub was one of the reasons that Harry Culver decided to develop the surrounding land. The substation sat next to a little depot, the very spot where Harry Culver first noticed his wife-to-be, actress Lillian Roberts, waiting for the Red Car to go shopping in downtown Los Angeles. The substation was named after a real estate tract called Ivy Park, which was absorbed when Culver City incorporated in 1917. By 1961 the Red Car (Pacific Electric's mass transit system) was no more, and the substation was abandoned. Eventually, the building was purchased by the City of Los Angeles, who partnered with the former Culver City Redevelopment Agency to renovate it in 1993 for use as a community theater, now the home of Tim Robbins' The Actors' Gang. Although not actually within Culver City's boundaries, the Ivy Substation is a very visible gateway to this city. Fortunately, Culver City has a special lease agreement with the City of Los Angeles to keep this wonderful building and Media Park under Culver City's cultural umbrella.

WWW.THEACTORSGANG.COM

The Ivy Substation is also designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument #182.



34. THE CULVER STUDIOS 1918

ARCHITECT: MEYER & HOLLER, THE MILWAUKEE BUILDING CO.

BUILT BY THOMAS H. INCE

📍 9336 WEST WASHINGTON BOULEVARD

Director Thomas Ince's second studio in Culver City, and third studio on the West Coast, had been originally known as the Thomas H. Ince Studios. After his death, it became variously the DeMille Studios, RKO, Selznick, Desilu, Culver City Studios, Laird International Studios, and most recently The Culver Studios. Ince's first Culver City studio has not survived. Ince was offered this land by Harry Culver to build his studio further inland from his very first studio, the coastal "Inceville," where he was tiring of the foggy days and the blustery sand affecting filming.

The main administrative building is in the Colonial style, and appeared in the opening credits for some Selznick films, such as *Gone with the Wind*. This may have led to a popular but misinformed assumption that the building was used for the home "Tara" in the film. Within this administration building is Ince's original nautically-themed office, as he was an avid sailor. Four of the studio bungalows, where famous stars relaxed, have been designated as Culver City Cultural Resources.

Culver City Historical Society Historic Site #7.

PHOTOGRAPHY: COURTESY MARC WANAMAKER/BISON ARCHIVES



35. STUDIO PASS 1996 AND 1998

ARTIST: JIM HEIMANN

🏠 GATE 2 (EAST SIDE OF THE CULVER STUDIOS
ON INCE BOULEVARD)

Urban archeologist, writer, designer, and artifacts collector Jim Heimann created this series celebrating the history of the motion picture industry. Multiple sculptural finials, made of wrought iron and porcelain, contain names of some of the studios that once occupied this site. They were restored and resited in 2022 when parts of the studio were updated and expanded.

WWW.JIMHEIMANN.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: CHRISTINE BYERS



36. SCAN 1996

ARTIST: **JUD FINE**

🏠 **INCE BOULEVARD, EAST SIDE, JUST SOUTH OF WASHINGTON BOULEVARD**

Comprising two elements: the *Nipkow Disk* is in the paved and concrete walkway and contains 27 lights in a spiral representing the holes of the original scanning device used in mechanical television. The lights are planned to go on and off at seemingly random moments. The second element, *525 Scan*, is a curved stainless steel plate, etched with 525 scan lines and the names of people who contributed to the development of television.

Walk back up to Washington Boulevard and continue east towards the Expo Line Metro Station. If you stop on the south side of the street you will see the final tour stop.

PHOTOGRAPHY (RIGHT): LISA NARUKO



37. PRIMORDIAL REFLECTIONS 1996

ARTIST: **ALBERT PALEY**

🏠 **9050 WASHINGTON BOULEVARD**

Following the curve of a driveway, these two semi-circular sculptural fences are made of steel with painted and oxidized copper which produces the green patina. The artist sought to enhance the entrance to the lot while addressing “dynamism and change, emphasizing active contour and silhouette.” Paley began as a goldsmith but is now more famous for his monumental architectural ironwork.

WWW.ALBERTPALEY.COM

Now you have come to the end of the second tour.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

CULVER CITY HISTORY:

www.culvercity.org/history

www.culvercityhistoricalsociety.org

THE CREATIVE ECONOMY REPORT:

www.culvercity.org/creativeeconomyreport

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B. CHRISTINE BYERS

CULTURAL AFFAIRS MANAGER





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