

**Artistic Expressions in
Public Spaces in
Los Angeles and Some Other
American Cities
(Second File)**

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Part One:

Public Arts in Non-Profit Spaces

Section Four: Art in the Communities

This Section of the Research Paper shall discuss art works found in public spaces, i.e., in the neighborhood of diverse ethnic communities, on the beach, in the streets, the parks, and other public recreational sites; art works created in these places might be sponsored by non-profit organizations, government establishment, or paid for by the artists themselves.

Art works sponsored by non-profit organizations: They might carry strong messages based on the organizations' social, cultural, political and economic values and beliefs, which are unique of the particular organizations and might not be shared by individuals associated with parallel or competing organizations. Los Angeles Valley College is bounded by the Coldwater Canyon waterway, where a non-profit organization, the Social and Public Art Resource Center (APARC) which is established since 1978 (310-822-9560, www.sparcmurals.com), sponsored a series of mural paintings on the walls; the project has been called "the Great Wall of Los Angeles" (*Figure 4A through 4M*). Unlike most of art works displayed in public spaces at UCLA, this project is dedicated to a study of California's history, from Colonial times to Civil Rights Movement; and is clearly loaded with social and political messages, which are apparently "liberal" and "environmentalist." The murals depict the achievement of the people of California in science, technology, industrial and agricultural production, plus social and political events such as World War I and II, the Great Depression and the New Deal, racial conflicts and Civil Rights Movement, Prohibition and other events that are still "controversial" to some; and thus, do not fit into "arts-for-art's own sake" of "pure art" model. The associate Mural Restoration Project is also sponsored by the California Cultural and Historical Endowment (CCHE) and Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC).

Art works commissioned or funded by governmental institutions: They usually carry messages based on values generally accepted by at least the "mainstream" society, if not by all citizens, and are usually devoid of partisanship. Typical themes include public service and American patriotism; and typical aesthetic styles are more-or-less "formal," "refined," "reserved" and traditional. Examples of such art works include Bronze statues commemorating war-time heroism of American soldiers, service of firefighters, and contribution from some renowned individuals (*Figures 4M through 4R*).

Art works created in the public spaces also include mythological figures associated with the history of any particular community; and these could be a goddess or a personified animal. For example, Greek Goddess Athena is related to the name of the City of Athens; and Georgia Bull Dog is the mascot of the University of Georgia; and both images are found in the neighboring communities of the University of Georgia (*Figures 4S and 4T*). They could be sponsored by non-profits, government or individuals.

Art works created in the neighborhood: They could be found in either residential areas or on the streets with heavy traffic or business activities; and they could decorate the walls of buildings or bus stops or any available spaces. The Avenida Cesar Chavez in the Cities of Monterey Park and East Los Angeles, California, is a good example; a lot of murals have been found along this street that connects many ethnic communities (White, Latinos, Asians and others). Some of these murals are show in *Figures 4U* through *4Z*. This category of art works are created by diverse groups of artists associated with diverse constituencies, and display a fairly high degree of spontaneity and personal choice in terms of themes and styles, ranging from “serious” themes such as ethnic cultural heritage with more classic outlook to fairly spontaneous expression of self concepts about beauty and creativity, as shown in *Figure 4W*.



Figure 4A. A banner announcing the Mural Restoration Project.



Figure 4B. Several murals depict Jewish suffering during World War II and struggle for social change.

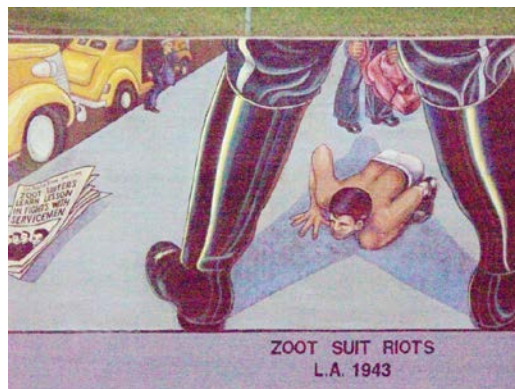


Figure 4C. One of the murals dealing with racial tensions in the cities, with a clearly “liberal” message sympathetic to minorities suffering from discrimination.



Figure 4D. Another mural dealing with Civil Rights Movement.



Figure 4E. One of the murals depicting political life during the New Deal, especially labor organizing and strikes

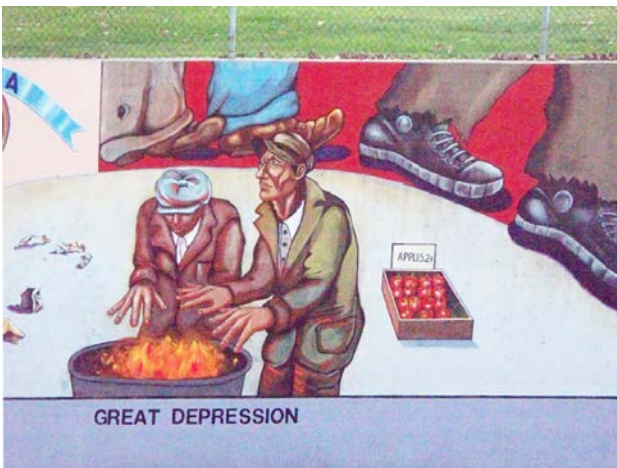


Figure 4F. The suffering of the poor during the Great Depression.

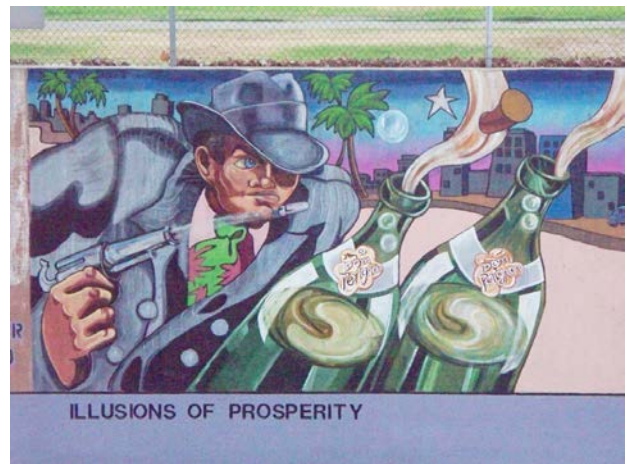


Figure 4G. The illusion of prosperity with desire for abundant consumption right before the outbreak of the Great Depression

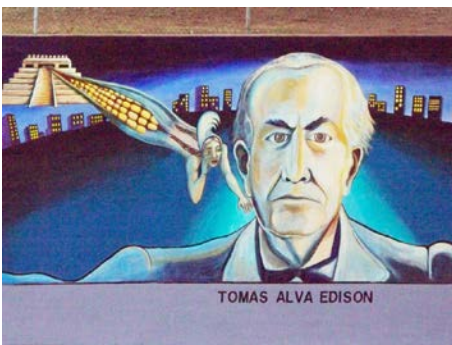


Figure 4H. Scientific achievements such as the invention of light bulbs and others are described in many pieces of murals.

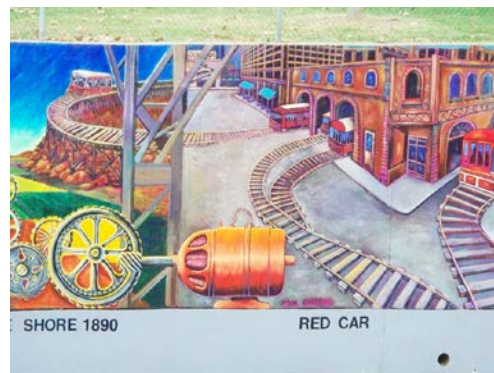


Figure 4I. Progress in transportation.



Figure 4J. Fruit production.



Figure 4K. Pre-historic animals in California.



Figure 4L. Prohibition and its end represented by the barrel-breaking ax.

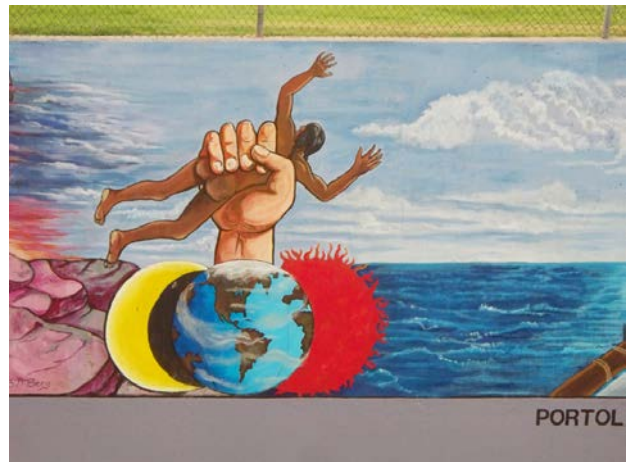


Figure 4M. Colonial history with racial oppression.



Figure 4M. Art works celebrating American patriotic heroism. Bronze sculpture commemorating the fallen and wounded American soldiers in Kentucky Medal of Honor Memorial commemorating the sacrifice of American soldiers, in downtown Louisville, in front of the City Hall (left). Korean War, Southeast Asia Campaign, and Desert Shield, in front of the Georgia State Government compound across the street from the State Capitol in Atlanta, Georgia (right).





Figure 4N. Art works celebrating life of ordinary Americans, in their relaxed entertainment or recreational activities, found in downtown Louisville, Kentucky.





Figure 40. Bronze statues celebrating American leaders and heroes, such as Benjamin Franklin (top left) and President Abraham Lincoln (top right), and stone carving of the head of Thomas Merton, monk, poet, social critic and spiritual writer (1915-1968), with an interesting placement of the art work, commemorative plate and bike rack (bottom). All located in downtown Louisville, Kentucky.



Figure 4P. Bronze statue of firefighter and children (left) and bas-relief depicting a fire-fighting operation, downtown Louisville, Kentucky.



Figure 4Q. Stainless steel abstract art works in downtown Louisville, Kentucky.



Figure 4R. French Rococo style stone carving decorate many old public and private buildings and plazas in downtown Louisville, Kentucky.



Figure 4S. Ceramic sculpture of Georgia Bull Dog, the symbolic animal of the State of Georgia and of the University of Georgia.



Figure 4T. Stone carving of the Goddess Athena, symbol of the City of Athens, Georgia.

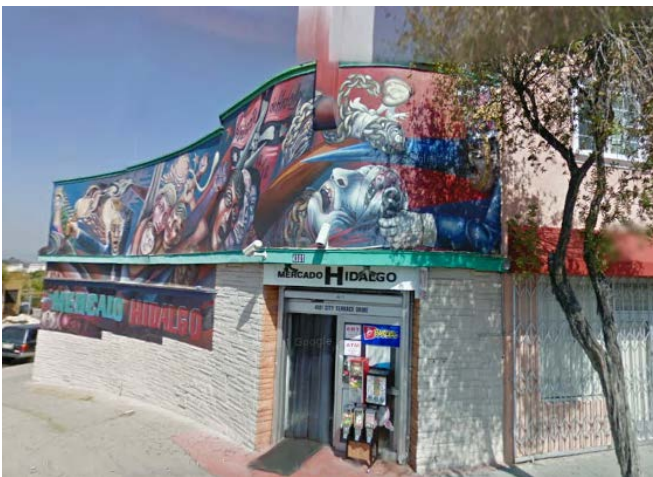


Figure 4U. A mural depicting Latino life and struggle, on the building housing a food store named Mercado Hidalgo at 4101 City Terrace Drive, Monterey Park, California, at the cross section of City Terrace Drive and Miller Avenue.



Figure 4U. Continued.



Figure 4V. Several murals depicting life in the multi-ethnic community, on the walls of commercial buildings along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.



Figure 4W. Sharp contrast in aesthetic style and tastes in the creation of murals (on the top is a mural paying homage to Latino heritage on the second floor wall of a commercial building, with fairly refined details, harmonious integration of curvilinear and straight line element and well-unified warm color scheme suitable for the theme; at the bottom is a mural of pop art style allowing “freer” expression of artistic ideas, in a non-conventional fashion, on the wall facing a narrow alley; both are located along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.



Figure 4W. Murals paying homage to Latino political campaigns on the walls of commercial buildings along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.



Figure 4X. A mural depicting busy economic activities in the cities and the countryside on the wall of a commercial building along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.



Figure 4Y. Ceramic mosaic pictures decorate many building walls such as the one of a Mexican immigration service center along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.



Figure 4Z. Mural depicting the beauty of nature on the walls of commercial buildings along Avenida Cesar Chavez, Monterey Park, California.