



LOS ANGELES

CONSERVANCY

news

AWARENESS
ASSISTANCE
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We'll feature the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (left), Bonaventure Hotel (right), and other modern gems in our 2013 Curating the City initiative, part of Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A. Photos by (left) Charles Neal, County of Los Angeles, courtesy of The Music Center; (right) Annie Laskey/L.A. Conservancy.

Two L.A. Icons Slated for Rehabilitation

by Marcello Vavala

In addition to Capitol Records (featured in the last issue), you might have seen two high-profile landmarks in the news recently.

The new owners of the TCL Chinese Theatre (formerly Grauman's Chinese Theatre), Donald Kushman and Eli Samaha, have announced plans to convert the venue to a digital IMAX facility. The project would install the latest technology and re-rake the auditorium floor (altered twice previously) to accommodate stadium-style seating—upgrades that will keep the world-famous landmark a viable single-screen theatre for first-run films.

The 1927 theatre is a designated landmark (HCM #55), and the owners have retained a historic preservation consultant. Proposed changes must be reviewed and approved by the Office of Historic Resources.

Work is also under way at the 1962 Dodger Stadium, the third-oldest ballpark in Major League Baseball. The owners have retained a preservation architect as part of the team overseeing upgrades to enhance comfort yet retain the stadium's classic 1960s design. For instance, plans include installing high-definition video boards in the left and right fields while bringing back the unique hexagonal shape of both scoreboards. The work also includes widening concourses, adding more wheelchair seating, and expanding and renovating restrooms.

For more information about these and other issues, please visit laconservancy.org.

Conservancy Curates the City for the Getty's Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A.

by Cindy Olnick and Sarah Weber

Showcasing fifty years of modern architecture in Greater Los Angeles, the Conservancy will reprise our Curating the City series this spring and summer as part of the Getty initiative, Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A.

Funded by a grant from the Getty Foundation, **Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A.** will combine architectural tours, panel discussions, a film screening, and a permanent online resource to highlight L.A. County's modern architectural heritage and the need to preserve it. The program will span from 1940 to 1990, venturing into the relatively new preservation territory of the 1970s and '80s.

Though we have worked to preserve significant modern architecture for most of our thirty-five-year history—our volunteer Modern Committee was formed in 1984—the Getty initiative presents a special opportunity. "We've never had the chance to step back and take such a broad view of L.A. modernism over five decades," says Linda Dishman, the Conservancy's executive director. "What happened here in terms of architectural experimentation, technical innovation, suburban development, and master planning had an immeasurable impact not only in Southern California, but across the nation and the globe."

Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A. will treat Greater Los Angeles as a living museum, using public programming to interpret the story of L.A. modernism in different ways. Launched in 2005 with Curating the City: Wilshire Boulevard (curatingthecity.org), this

Please see CURATING THE CITY on page 6

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The Los Angeles Conservancy is a nonprofit membership organization that works through education and advocacy to recognize, preserve, and revitalize the historic architectural and cultural resources of Los Angeles County.

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Conservancy News is published bi-monthly.

Conservancy Mixer April 10 at Silver Lake's Café Stella

Join staff and friends of the Conservancy for a casual mixer the evening of **Wednesday, April 10** at Café Stella, 3932 West Sunset Boulevard, in Silver Lake. Members and non-members alike are welcome. Stop by on your way home from the office, grab a drink, and make some new friends. Admission is only \$10 and includes appetizers and one cocktail, thanks to our gracious hosts. All proceeds directly benefit the Conservancy.

Space is limited, so advance reservations are required. You can reserve online at laconservancy.org. We hope to see you there!

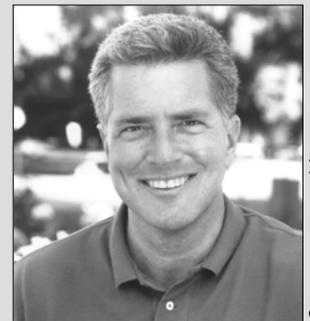
Coming Soon: New Website, Fresh Look

The Conservancy turns thirty-five this year, and we have big plans in store as part of the celebration. One of the most exciting is a new website launching around June 1 at laconservancy.org. While our current website has served us very well for more than a decade, the new site will provide the rich content you've come to expect in a way that's easier to use. Mobile-friendly design, innovative mapping, and other tools will help you explore historic places and, when needed, take action to help save them. Many thanks to the more than 1,300 people who completed our website user survey last summer. Your feedback has directly informed the planning for the website and will continue to help guide our efforts as we move forward.

We are also updating the Conservancy logo based on extensive research and input over the past year, including a pro bono project with the brand strategy firm Added Value. Though fresher in appearance, the logo will continue to convey the Conservancy's devotion to the historic architecture of Greater Los Angeles. It will also form the basis for a graphic identity system to make our communications visually cohesive, yet flexible enough to express the distinct flavor of our many different programs. You'll see the new identity emerge over the next year, and we welcome your feedback.

Huell Howser (1945-2013)

Huell Howser, host of public television programs including *Visiting with Huell Howser* and *California's Gold*, passed away in January. Described by Conservancy Executive Director Linda Dishman as "the first social media," Howser brought a new level of awareness and accessibility to exploring historic places. "He had stories that weren't about the brick and mortar, but the people and lives they touched," she said at a public celebration of Howser's life. "Each story about a place was like a brick that helped build support for the preservation movement in Los Angeles."



Conservancy archives

Shannon Ryan Leaves Conservancy Staff

In February, Shannon Ryan left the Conservancy staff to pursue her career in urban planning. She has taken a position with the City of Los Angeles, as a planning assistant in the Office of Historic Resources' Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) unit. She has worked toward this goal for several years, so while we miss Shannon, we are thrilled for her. We greatly appreciate Shannon's contributions on staff as both membership assistant and communications coordinator, as well as her ongoing support as a Conservancy member. We look forward to working with her in a new capacity. As we often say, no one ever truly leaves the Conservancy!

Finding the Win-Win for Wyvernwood

by Adrian Scott Fine

The Conservancy often hears arguments that older buildings cannot be rehabilitated, that outdated features and lack of modern conveniences can be addressed only through demolition. Yet more often than not, these claims are not fully backed by solid analysis or a thoughtful process of exploring a range of alternatives to find a win-win solution.

A perfect example is the current effort to preserve Wyvernwood in Boyle Heights. Opened in 1939 as Los Angeles' first large-scale garden apartment community, Wyvernwood is now threatened with complete demolition and redevelopment.

To demonstrate the potential for a win-win, we offer two local examples of other garden apartment developments currently undergoing extensive rehabilitation—Chase Knolls in Sherman Oaks and Lincoln Place in Venice. Neither is identical to Wyvernwood in all aspects, though each shares similarities and was also once threatened with demolition and redevelopment.

Chase Knolls

Between 1947 and 1949, Chase Knolls was built on a thirteen-acre site in Sherman Oaks with buildings designed in a vernacular modern style. Like Wyvernwood, the apartments are primarily two-story buildings clad in stucco with minimal architectural detailing. The buildings are joined side-by-side or at right angles in clusters to form enclosed courtyards of green open spaces.

In 2000, a plan emerged by then-owner Legacy Partners to demolish the existing 260-unit development for a new 403-unit project. Following strong opposition from long-time tenants, the Conservancy, and then-Councilmember Michael Feuer, Chase Knolls was successfully designated as a Historic-Cultural Monument.

After much debate, the owners ultimately decided to preserve Chase Knolls. A negotiated solution included sensitive infill development, allowing them to build up to six new buildings with 141 units. This increases the number of allowable housing units to 401, just shy of what was originally proposed



Chase Knolls in Sherman Oaks, now being rehabilitated. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine/L.A. Conservancy.

through demolition. Legacy Partners also pursued incentive programs including the Mills Act to provide substantial property tax relief in exchange for preserving and maintaining the historic property.

In 2002, Chase Knolls was sold to TransAction Financial Corporation. Despite some delays, the owners anticipate completing a full exterior rehabilitation of all buildings by spring 2013—including new roofs, period-appropriate paint colors, and the restoration of key features. Although approved, no new buildings have been constructed at Chase Knolls to date.

Lincoln Place

Another success story hails from Venice. Built between 1949 and 1951, Lincoln Place was intended primarily to house veterans returning from World War II.

Larger than Chase Knolls but smaller than Wyvernwood, Lincoln Place spans thirty-three acres and currently contains about 700 units. It shares the hallmarks of historic garden apartments, with vast open space and thoughtful design.

The threat to Lincoln Place first came to the Conservancy's attention through our Modern Committee in 2001. The then-owner had long sought a plan to redevelop the highly valuable site for condominiums.

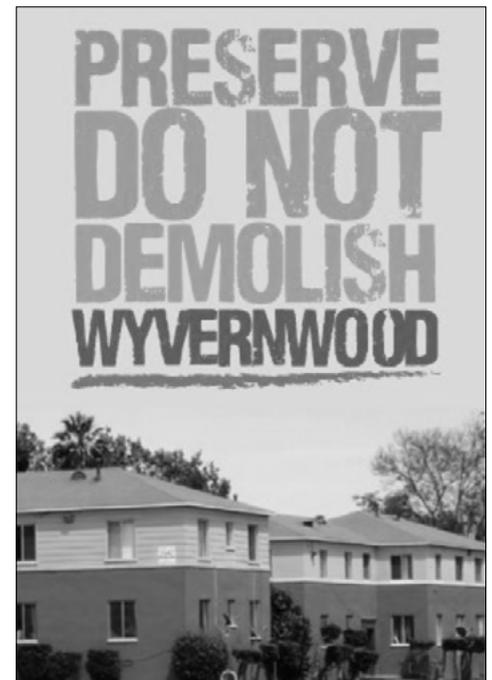
What evolved was an epic preservation battle lasting nearly ten years, with improper demolitions, numerous lawsuits (some about affordable housing, not historic preservation), and multiple hearings before the State Historical Resources Commission.

Two pivotal events changed the direction of this effort: the sale of Lincoln Place in 2003

to Denver-based AIMCO, the nation's largest apartment holding company, and the 2005 election of Councilmember Bill Rosendahl. After much negotiation by the Lincoln Place Tenants Association, a plan for preservation finally emerged. AIMCO nominated Lincoln Place for Historic-Cultural Monument designation and pursued two incentive programs for rehabilitation: the Mills Act and the Federal Rehabilitation Investment Tax Credit. As with Chase Knolls, the Lincoln Place plan allows for sensitive new construction—in this case, up to thirteen new apartment buildings on site. The work is slated for completion by the end of 2014.

Clearly, historic garden apartments—even those considered out-of-date or suffering from deferred maintenance—can be preserved through win-win solutions. When a settlement was finally reached in 2010 for Lincoln Place, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa commented, "...it will serve as a model locally and nationally for sustainable rehabilitation of older, low-rise rental housing while providing green jobs in Los Angeles."

For more details on Wyvernwood and garden apartments, visit laconservancy.org.



One of several graphics created by Wyvernwood residents in favor of preservation. Image courtesy of SomosWyvernwood.org.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT IN 2012!

Last year was a successful one for the Conservancy, and we want to thank each and every one of our members for your support. Here are some highlights of what you helped us achieve. Just as every membership makes a difference, every action taken on behalf of a specific issue—from writing a letter or attending a hearing to spreading the word to your friends—makes a difference. Thank you!

Wide-Ranging Advocacy

- Took direct action to help preserve **45** threatened historic places
- Analyzed and commented on **30** environmental impact reports
- Provided technical assistance to nearly **700** callers
- Established **3** new conservation easements, for a total of **31** permanently protected historic buildings

Top Preservation “Wins”

- Helped the **City of Beverly Hills** adopt a new preservation ordinance to protect its historic places
- Saw the public review process through for the 1966 **Century Plaza Hotel** redevelopment project (approved in January 2013)
- Worked with our Modern Committee to successfully nominate the 1965 Los Angeles **Department of Water and Power Building** as a Historic-Cultural Monument
- Worked with the Los Angeles Unified School District to save 1920s and '30s historic buildings at **Jordan High School**

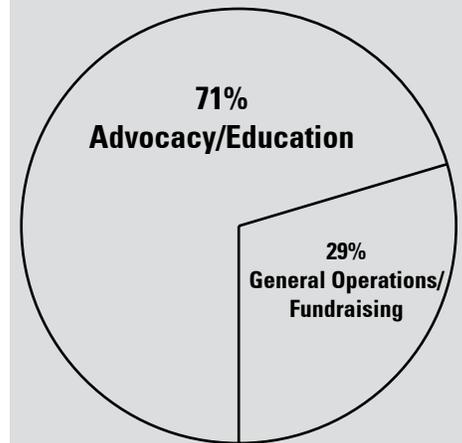
Public Engagement

- Welcomed **11,071** guests to the 26th season of Last Remaining Seats
- Took a record **8,768** guests on our regular walking tours, including **1,061** school and college students
- Celebrated the best in historic preservation with **541** guests at the 31st Annual Preservation Awards Luncheon
- Convened **113** people in Hollywood for the 10th annual Historic Preservation Overlay Zone (HPOZ) Conference, co-sponsored by the City of Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources
- Networked with **80** garden apartment lovers at “I Heart Garden Apartments Day!” in Baldwin Hills
- Hosted **3,755** people at additional public tours and programs, spanning from San Pedro to Pomona
- Led **12** students (ages 11-13) on Adventures in Architecture, our summer program for underserved, inner-city youth with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA)
- Had nearly **400,000** visitors to our website at laconservancy.org
- Reached nearly **10,000** “likes” on Facebook (help us get there!)
- Neared **5,000** followers on Twitter

Organizational Strength

- Ended the year with **6,446** active members, representing more than **\$600,000** in general support for the Conservancy’s advocacy and education programs
- Raised a record **\$130,000** for the Preservation Advocacy Fund, thanks to donations in honor of Linda Dishman’s twentieth year as executive director
- Benefitted from the hard work of **320** volunteers

Your Membership Has a Direct Impact



Revenue from membership represents one-third of the Conservancy’s annual income, and the majority of this revenue goes directly to support our dual mission of advocacy and education. By maintaining your Conservancy membership, you play an important role in helping us preserve, revitalize, and promote Greater Los Angeles’ architectural and cultural heritage.

BIG FILMS, NEW VENUE FOR LAST REMAINING SEATS

by Sarah Weber

The twenty-seventh year of this signature series promises big films, and the addition of a new venue, as we present classic films and live entertainment in the historic movie palaces of Los Angeles.

We will continue to feature some of the beautiful Broadway theatres, and we will return to the Saban Theatre in Beverly Hills.

For the first time ever, we will visit the 1964 Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, designed by Welton Becket and Associates for The Music Center of Los Angeles County and now home to L.A. Opera. We will screen the classic musical *My Fair Lady*, released the same year (1964). We are thrilled to present this special screening as part of the Getty initiative, Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A. (see cover story).

We will also open and close this season on Saturdays, making it even easier for you to attend. This year's series begins on **Saturday, June 1**, runs every Wednesday evening in June, and closes on **Saturday, June 29** with two screenings of the iconic film *Casablanca*.

As always, members enjoy advance purchase and discounts on tickets. Tickets go on sale to Conservancy members at **10 a.m. on March 27** and to the general public on **April 10**. Advance tickets are \$16 for Conservancy members (\$20 for the general public). For details, visit laconservancy.org.

Thanks to Our Sponsors

We offer special thanks to our 2013 Last Remaining Seats sponsors (as of press time): Series Star Sponsor: Hollywood Foreign Press Association; Series Supporting Sponsors: Steve Bing, Walter and Holly Thomson Foundation; Series Sponsors: NBC Universal, Paramount Pictures, Cole's Originators of the French Dip/213 Cocktail Revolution; Evening Sponsors: Cathy and Steve Needleman, Clifton's/The Edison, Linda and Jerry Bruckheimer, The Getty Foundation, The Music Center, Twentieth Century-Fox, Warner Bros., Hugh Hefner; Media Sponsors: Los Angeles Downtown News, Laemmlle Theatres.



We're thrilled to host a double screening of *Casablanca* at the Saban Theatre on Saturday, June 29! Photo courtesy Warner Bros.

2013 LRS Lineup

Saturday, June 1
Orpheum Theatre
To Catch a Thief (1955)

Wednesday, June 5
Palace Theatre
La Bamba (1987)
co-presented with the Latin American
Cinematheca of Los Angeles

Wednesday, June 12
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion
My Fair Lady (1964)
presented as part of Pacific Standard
Time Presents: Modern Architecture in
L.A.

Wednesday, June 19
Los Angeles Theatre
All About Eve (1950)

Wednesday, June 26
Orpheum Theatre
Ben-Hur (silent, 1925)

Saturday, June 29
Saban Theatre
Casablanca (1942)
matinee and evening screenings

2013 Volunteer Awards



25 Years of Service

Chris Nichols
Betty Pettit
Robert Simonton
Tanya Gutierrez
Steve Markham



15 Years of Service

Regina O'Brien
Gregory Figueroa
Shannon Simonds
Chris Green
Eric Evavold (not pictured)
James Ratay (not pictured)



Exemplary Service in 2012

Don Weggeman, for Service on
Behalf of Walking Tour Program
Mike Henderson, for Research and
Presentation on San Pedro YWCA

Photos by Larry Underhill

Curating the City Instagram Contest

Share your vision of modern L.A.!

Are you on Instagram? If so, you can use it to help us celebrate fifty years of modern architecture with **Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A.**

On our various Curating the City tours, you'll have the chance to step inside some of Los Angeles' most exquisite and daring architectural accomplishments.

We invite you to be part of the series by capturing and curating *your own* vision of modern L.A. through your camera lens!

Since the contest takes place on Instagram, all you have to do is point, shoot, and use the hashtag **#CuratingtheCity** during any of our Curating the City tours for a chance to win prizes throughout the series.

Following each tour, we'll feature select photos on the Conservancy's Instagram and Facebook pages.

It couldn't be easier to participate! Here's how:

1. Follow the Conservancy on Instagram (@**laconservancy**) and experience Curating the City through *our* lens.
2. Use your smartphone to photograph anything you'd like (where permitted) while taking one of the Curating the City tours.
3. Upload the photo(s) to Instagram.
4. Tag your photo(s) using the hashtag **#CuratingtheCity**, as well as the specific hashtag for the relevant tour you are taking—**#VeniceEclectic**, **#ModernSkyline**, or **#ModernbyMoonlight**—so that we can track your submission by tour. Multiple photos are welcome!
5. Have fun!

CURATING THE CITY continued from page 1

broad-based educational approach encourages the ongoing exploration—and appreciation—of L.A.'s unique built environment.

One of the most exciting outcomes of this initiative will be a new website at laconservancy.org (see page 2) with a dedicated section (microsite) for Curating the City: Modern Architecture in L.A. From famous icons to hidden gems, the microsite will include a map of 300 modern places to explore firsthand or online, sharing your own stories along the way. The microsite will also include an essay by renowned author Alan Hess, info about preservation success stories and challenges, and more.

The preliminary Curating the City schedule (subject to change) is below. For details, updates, and reservations, please visit laconservancy.org.

- **Saturday, April 20** – Our spring tour, **Venice Eclectic**, will explore how affordable land, a culture of creativity, and an open-minded community made Venice of the 1970s and '80s the right place and time for experimental young architects to cut their teeth using unorthodox materials in limited spaces. The result is an impressive collection of surprising, whimsical, and innovative modern structures by architectural greats such as Steven Ehrlich, Frederick Fisher, Frank Gehry, Frank Israel, and others.
- **Saturday, May 11** – The Conservancy's **annual meeting** will feature a panel of experts discussing the evolution of downtown's Bunker Hill from an upscale residential district at the turn of the twentieth century into the world-class commercial and cultural hub it is today. Held at the striking Bonaventure Hotel (John Portman & Associates, 1974-78), this free event will include a breakfast reception and optional tours of the hotel and surrounding area.
- **Every Saturday in May and June at 2 p.m.** – The Conservancy will spotlight our **Modern Skyline Walking Tour** of the skyscrapers, plazas, and public art that define downtown's Bunker Hill. Skilled volunteer docents will share fascinating stories of the area's transformation and show how the city center mixes the new with the old as it changes over time.
- **Thursday and Friday evenings, May 23 and 24** – In a nighttime twist on the Modern Skyline Tour, **Modern by Moonlight** will show the skyscrapers and plazas of Bunker Hill under the light of a full moon. The tour will end at the BonaVista Lounge atop the Bonaventure Hotel (to be confirmed) with a cocktail and spectacular nighttime views.
- **Wednesday, June 12** – **Last Remaining Seats** (see page 5) will visit the 1964 **Dorothy Chandler Pavilion** for the first time, screening the classic musical, *My Fair Lady*. The film opened the same year as this wondrous venue, designed for The Music Center by Welton Becket and Associates.
- **Saturday, July 27** – A **"Landmark This!" workshop** will focus on landmarking modern and culturally significant resources, and a second **panel discussion** (topic TBD) will explore themes of modernism in Greater Los Angeles.



"Four Arches" (Alexander Calder, 1974) at Security Pacific Plaza in downtown Los Angeles, featured on the Modern Skyline walking tour. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine/L.A. Conservancy.

NOVEMBER 17 / JANUARY 18 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

The Los Angeles Conservancy would like to acknowledge the generous contributions of our new Supporting members, and the new and renewing members of our Sustaining, Benefactor, and Cornerstone groups.

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Your membership provides the Conservancy with crucial operating funds, as well as strength in numbers to maintain a powerful voice for preservation.

Join or renew at laconservancy.org.

FIVE REASONS TO RECEIVE OUR MONTHLY E-NEWS E-MAIL

1. Things happen!

While the bi-monthly publication you're reading now provides a lot of information, it's not always the most timely. E-News hits your inbox once a month with up-to-the-minute information on important issues, events, and more.

2. It's a quick, colorful read

E-News features quick bits of information with links to details, so you can get the latest at a glance. And it's in color!

3. Fun contests

E-News features monthly contests such as "Name That Building" and "Share Your Story." It's a great way to learn about historic places, interact, and win cool prizes.

4. Give your two cents

We often reach out to E-News subscribers for feedback on initiatives. More than 1,300 subscribers completed the survey that's informing development of our new website (see page 2).

5. It's free

While it won't cost you anything, the value of E-News is priceless! Sign up in seconds at lac.laconservancy.org/signup.

**CONSERVANCY
WALKING TOURS**

Walking tours begin at 10 a.m. except where noted. Tours are \$5 for Conservancy members and children twelve and under; \$10 for the general public. Walk-ins are accepted on most tours. Pre-payment is required on Angelino Heights, Biltmore Hotel, and Broadway.

For details and reservations, visit laconservancy.org. Questions? Call the Conservancy office at (213) 623-2489.

WEEKLY TOURS

- Art Deco**
Every Saturday
- Biltmore Hotel**
Every Sunday, 2 p.m.
- Broadway: Historic Theatre & Commercial District**
Every Saturday
- Historic Downtown**
Every Saturday

BI-WEEKLY AND MONTHLY TOURS

- Angelino Heights**
First Saturday
- Downtown Renaissance: Spring & Main**
Second and Fourth Saturdays
- Modern Skyline**
First and Third Saturdays, 2 p.m.
- Union Station**
Third Saturday

Youth, family, and group tours by arrangement; call (213) 623-2489 for information.



Los Angeles Conservancy
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laconservancy.org

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Last Remaining Seats tickets on sale March 27 to Conservancy members! See page 5.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Conservancy archives

**LOS ANGELES
HERITAGE DAY**
Sunday, April 14
Pico House, El Pueblo

Celebrate the history of Los Angeles County during L.A. Heritage Day—a free festival-type event with info tables and activities by around 100 heritage groups (including us!). Visit laheritage.blogspot.com for details.



Gareth Kantner

CONSERVANCY MIXER
Wednesday, April 10
6-8 p.m.
Café Stella, Silver Lake

Join staff and friends of the Conservancy for a casual, early evening get-together. \$10 admission includes appetizers and one cocktail. Space is limited, so reserve now at laconservancy.org. See you there!



Trudi Sandmeier

**SPRING TOUR:
VENICE ECLECTIC**
Saturday, April 20
Various sites in Venice

As part of the Getty's Pacific Standard Time Presents: Modern Architecture in L.A., our spring tour in Venice will explore the architecture of our more recent past! See page 1 for details.