Explore the Many Layers of the Arts District on November 10

by Sarah Weber

On Sunday, November 10 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Conservancy will hold a special tour to explore the history and architecture of downtown Los Angeles’ Arts District. This neighborhood, with its distinctly industrial feel and brick warehouse-lined streets, has been in a state of constant transition and change throughout its history. You can discover the many layers of its history while experiencing its colorful and artistic identity today.

Like most of the Conservancy’s one-time-only spring and fall tours, this tour will be self-paced. You can visit as many of the tour sites as you’d like during the tour hours, and at designated sites you will find Conservancy docents to provide interpretation and mini-tours. Along the way, you can take time to explore some of the interesting shops, galleries, and eateries in the area. This is a bike-friendly neighborhood, so we encourage you to bring your bicycle!

Though subject to change, at press time, tour stops include:

• Southern California Institute of Architecture (SCI-Arc; originally Santa Fe Freight House, 1907)
• Angel City Brewery (orig. John A. Roebling’s Sons Co. Wire Works Building, 1913)
• James K. Hill and Sons Pickle Works (also known as Citizens Warehouse and Art Dock, 1888-1909) - exterior only
• Private lofts in the Challenge Cream and Butter Association Building (1926)
• Private lofts in Toy Factory Lofts (orig. Star Truck and Warehouse Company, 1924)
• Private loft in Biscuit Company Lofts (orig. National Biscuit Company Building, 1925)

Please see ARTS DISTRICT TOUR on page 4

Shoppers Market: From Googie to "Craftsman"?

by Adrian Scott Fine

The former Shoppers Market grocery store (now Superior Grocers) is threatened with a proposed renovation that would erase many of its original Googie features.

Located at 133 West Avenue 45 in Highland Park, the 1960 building is a good example of mid-century supermarket design, which is becoming an increasingly rare building type.

Designed by architect Ronald Cleveland of the firm Leach, Cleveland & Associates, the building has a distinctive, lozenge-shaped roofline, textured concrete walls, and lighting that at night makes the entrance canopy and interior ceiling seem to float above glass walls.

The current owner proposes a renovation that would give the building a Craftsman-like appearance, reflecting the high concentration of Craftsman homes in Highland Park. While such contextual design may be appropriate for new infill construction, redesigning an existing building of a different era that is itself historic risks eliminating an important part of Highland Park’s multi-layered history.

Highland Park Heritage Trust prepared a Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) nomination for the building that was recommended for designation by the Cultural Heritage Commission in August 2013.

The operator of the market opposes the nomination, and Councilmember Gil Cedillo, who represents Highland Park, has not taken
Preservation Advocacy Fund: Preservation in Action

As featured in the September/October issue of Conservancy News, the Conservancy recently scored a major advocacy success at the Port of Los Angeles, securing a path to preservation for historic buildings on Terminal Island.

Preservation efforts such as the one at the Port often take many years and a significant amount of staff and financial resources. The Conservancy is fortunate to have the support of members like you, who provide about one-third of the organization’s annual revenue.

Another third of our revenue comes from philanthropic support above and beyond annual membership dues, including donations to the Preservation Advocacy Fund. The fund was established in 1996. Ever since, the financial support generated through the fund has made a difference in each and every preservation effort by the Conservancy.

Strengthen the voice you lend to preservation by donating to the fund by December 31. Your donation of any amount will make a real difference. Donate online at laconservancy.org or by calling (213) 430-4204. Thank you!

Welcome Marcella Ribeiro, Administrative Assistant

We are happy to welcome Marcella Ribeiro to the Conservancy staff as our administrative assistant. Marcella is a Southern California native with experience providing administrative assistance to nonprofit organizations. She brings a strong background in customer service and clerical work. Most recently, she worked in visitor services at the J. Paul Getty Museum. Marcella holds a bachelor’s degree from Cal Poly Pomona, where she majored in art history and minored in history. She is passionate about local heritage and culture, which makes her a great fit for the Conservancy.

Flora Chou Leaves Conservancy Staff

After five and a half years as the Conservancy’s preservation advocate, Flora Chou left the staff in October to accept a position as historic preservation specialist with the preservation architecture and planning consulting firm Page & Turnbull. She will serve as the historic preservation staff member for the firm’s Los Angeles office, providing project research, review, and technical assistance.

In her time on the Conservancy staff, Flora made significant contributions in a vast range of areas, from conducting conservation easement inspections to organizing advocacy workshops and much more. She analyzed countless environmental impact reports and development plans. Her attention to detail served us well on issues such as Weyernwood, the Port of Los Angeles, the Century Plaza Hotel, and most recently, the Union Station Master Plan.

We will miss Flora greatly but know that she will carry the Conservancy message forward in her next position. She plans to volunteer with the Conservancy, and we look forward to seeing her at future events.
**Preservation Issues**

*by Flora Chou, Adrian Scott Fine, Manuel Huerta, and Marcello Vavala*

For more information about these and other preservation issues, please visit [laconservancy.org/important-issues](http://laconservancy.org/important-issues).

**Hollywood Palladium**

A new project is proposed for the site of the world-famous Hollywood Palladium at 6201 Sunset Boulevard. The project would retain the historic venue and construct two 28-story towers on the parking lots to the west and north (rear) of the building. The mixed-use project would include residential or hotel, retail, restaurant, and open space.

Since its opening in 1940, the Palladium has been a popular venue for dance, live music, and special events. It remains one of the most prominent entertainment venues in Hollywood. Its exterior rehabilitation in 2008 garnered a Conservancy Preservation Award.

The proposed Palladium Residences may include interior rehabilitation of the historic lobby at the rear entry, replacement of the main entry doors on Sunset Boulevard, and repairs to the ballroom. Long-term tenant Live Nation would continue to operate the Palladium as an entertainment venue.

In the Conservancy’s comments on the Notice of Preparation for the project’s Draft Environmental Impact Report, we urged the developer to commit fully to the Palladium’s interior rehabilitation and include it as a key part of the proposed project. We also urged that the new construction be designed in a way that does not overwhelm the historic building or its signature nighttime presence along Sunset Boulevard.

**HPOZ Board Members**

The Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources (OHR) is seeking historic preservation-minded individuals to serve as board members for some of the city’s historic districts, known in the City of L.A. as Historic Preservation Overlay Zones (HPOZs). Serving on an HPOZ board is a great opportunity to get involved in preservation, help shape projects in historic neighborhoods, and get to know the community.

People with a background or interest in historic preservation, those who own property within the boundaries of an HPOZ, or HPOZ residents are good candidates. For more information about the City’s HPOZ program and a list of specific HPOZs seeking board members, visit the OHR website at [preservation.lacity.org](http://preservation.lacity.org). To apply for a board position, submit a résumé and brief statement of interest to michelle.levy@lacity.org.

**Johnie’s Coffee Shop**

The Conservancy is working closely with the owners of the iconic Johnie’s Coffee Shop (Armet and Davis, 1956) to explore options for its preservation and future use.

Located at 6101 Wilshire Boulevard, Johnie’s is one of Los Angeles’ finest examples of the Googie architectural style popular in the 1950s and ’60s. The Metropolitan Transit Authority (Metro) intends to place a temporary construction easement on the Johnie’s site to facilitate staging for the completion of a new Wilshire/Fairfax subway station. This action may limit access to and use of Johnie’s for up to ten years.

The Conservancy and our Modern Committee submitted a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) nomination for Johnie’s in spring 2013. In August, the City’s Cultural Heritage Commission voted to recommend HCM designation for Johnie’s. In early November, the nomination is set to go before the City’s Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee for a recommendation vote, followed by a final vote by the full City Council.

**UCLA Hannah Carter Japanese Garden**

While Metro acknowledges the significance of Johnie’s and the owners have not planned any modifications to the building, HCM designation will ensure that it receives strong protection from demolition and inappropriate alterations in the future.

On September 12, the California Court of Appeal issued a decision and some good news for the effort to preserve the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel-Air. Located at 10619 Bellagio Road, the garden is threatened with possible demolition if sold by its current owner, UCLA.

Members of Hannah Carter’s family are suing UCLA for breaking its promise to maintain the historic garden in perpetuity. The ongoing litigation has temporarily halted UCLA’s proposed sale and the potential loss of this significant designed landscape.

For more than a year, UCLA has delayed the lawsuit through numerous appeals. In its recent ruling, the Court denied UCLA’s latest appeal, which claimed that a preliminary injunction had been issued in error. This action clears the way for the Carter family’s lawsuit to proceed to a trial on the merits of the case.

Since early 2012, the Conservancy has been active in this issue as part of the local, state, and national Coalition to Save the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden. Designed by Nagao Sakurai and Kazuo Nakamura, the garden has been identified as one of the finest examples of a private, residential Japanese-style garden in the United States.
ARTS DISTRICT TOUR  continued from page 1

Special thanks to Presenting Sponsor Linear City Development LLC and Supporting Sponsors Gilmore Associates, L.A. City Councilmember José Huizar, and Matt Construction for their generous tour sponsorship.

Tickets are $30 for Conservancy members, $35 for the general public, $15 for students, and $10 for kids 12 and under. For details and tickets, visit laconservancy.org/artsdistrict.

From Grapevines to Railroads

Had you visited the area now known as the Arts District in the mid-nineteenth century, you would have seen acres of vineyards. In fact, Vignes Street, which runs through the northern edge of the district, was named after Jean-Louis Vignes. He arrived in Los Angeles from France in 1831 and found in Southern California the perfect climate for planting grapes.

By 1847, Vignes had over 40,000 vines. His vineyard, El Aliso, was the largest producer of wine in California, turning out 150,000 bottles a year. Other winemakers and fruit growers followed Vignes, and by the late nineteenth century, oranges and grapefruit had outpaced grapes as the primary product of the area.

Railroads and manufacturing emerged to serve the citrus industry’s shipping needs, and so began the industrial chapter in this neighborhood’s history. Many of the factory buildings constructed in the Arts District during the first half of the twentieth century leave clear signs that they were built around the railroad. Buildings curve unexpectedly, following tracks long since covered over, and doors and loading docks are set high above ground level to the height of a boxcar.

By the end of World War II, the neighborhood was clearly industrial, and railroads were giving way to the trucking industry. As manufacturers outgrew their space or merged with larger competitors, warehouses grew vacant and the neighborhood began to decline, as did much of downtown Los Angeles in the 1960s.

Enter the Artists

In the 1970s, a group of urban artists—many of whom were being priced out of the increasingly expensive Venice arts scene—saw opportunity in this abandoned stretch of downtown. Vacant warehouses made perfect and roomy live/work studios at rock-bottom prices. This migration into the Arts District was done quietly and illegally until 1981, when the City acknowledged the situation and implemented the Artist-in-Residence (AIR) program, which legalized the residential use of formerly industrial buildings.

After the AIR program began, early developers of the Arts District were often artists themselves. One of the most important legacies of these early artist/developers is that they saved and rehabilitated buildings that help convey Los Angeles’ industrial and transportation history. They became grassroots preservationists—finding value and use in buildings that had been neglected for decades, and breathing new life into them.

The James K. Hill and Sons Pickle Works Building (1888-1090) is one example of an industrial building that was adaptively reused. In the 1980s and ’90s, it housed contemporary artists and was known as the Citizens Warehouse and Art Dock. The Conservancy has been advocating for the preservation and rehabilitation of this rare Victorian-era brick building, which the Los Angeles Bureau of Engineering recently proposed to demolish.

Along with the influx of artist residents, art galleries, bars, and performance venues began to open, creating a neighborhood identity and serving as incubators for ground-breaking artists and musicians. In the mid-1990s, Joel Bloom, an early advocate for the community and its unofficial mayor, opened Bloom’s General Store. Located in the former American Hotel on Traction Avenue and Hewitt Street, Bloom’s served as the heart of the Arts District until after his death in 2007.

True to Its Roots amid Revival

In 1999, the City of Los Angeles passed its landmark Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (ARO). The ARO fueled downtown’s nascent renaissance by relaxing zoning codes for the residential conversion of commercial and industrial buildings built before 1974. The ordinance fostered another significant wave of development in the Arts District, shining a spotlight on the neighborhood as a creative and unique place to live.

The Arts District today remains the home of many artists, as well as those in other creative industries such as technology and entertainment. It continues to attract new development and new residents, yet it retains the authentic feel of its industrial heritage. The district’s more than 100 murals speak to its continued resonance as a creative hub.

With the many changes taking place in the Arts District, now is the perfect time to explore this neighborhood’s rich history. We look forward to spending a day in this unique neighborhood, reading the many layers of history in its built environment.
**Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas Comes to the Orpheum**

by Bruce Scottow

Join us on **Sunday, December 8** at 2 p.m. for the Conservancy’s eighth annual holiday film matinee. This year, we will present the Touchstone Pictures holiday favorite, *Tim Burton’s The Nightmare Before Christmas*, at the magnificent Orpheum Theatre (1926) on Broadway.

This 1993 stop-motion animated feature, produced and co-written by Tim Burton, is a unique holiday treat. To most kids—and their parents—there couldn’t be two holidays more different than Halloween and Christmas. Enter Jack Skellington, the king of Halloween Town. Weary of his year-after-year production of frightful witches and werewolves for his town’s residents, Jack wanders away one day, stumbling on a portal that leads to a very different place: Christmas Town!

Inspired by the spirit of Christmas (but fundamentally clueless about its traditions), Jack decides to take over the holiday. He assigns his equally clueless denizens the task of re-inventing it, Halloween-style.

The film will screen at the historic Orpheum Theatre in downtown L.A.’s Broadway Theatre District. The Orpheum opened in 1926, the fourth and final house in Los Angeles operated by the Orpheum vaudeville circuit. Designed by G. Albert Lansburgh, the theatre reflects the gilded and formal French Renaissance style of the sixteenth century. A multimillion-dollar rehabilitation was completed in 2001. The Orpheum is a popular event and filming location and was featured in the 2011 Academy Award-winning film, *The Artist*.

Tickets for the holiday film matinee are $10 for Conservancy members, $5 for children 12 and under, and $15 for the general public. For tickets, visit [laconservancy.org/holiday](http://laconservancy.org/holiday).

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**VOLUNTEER PROFILE: KENON BREAZEALE**

by Bruce Scottow

“I like teaching, and I knew I was going to miss it.”

- Kenon Breazeale

In 2005, Kenon Breazeale retired from her position teaching art history at Cal State University Northridge. But, as she suspected, she wasn’t about to retire from teaching.

Within that same year, Kenon had entered and completed the Conservancy’s docent training program. A few weeks later, the weekly tour goers had become her new students, and Kenon was back doing what she loved to do.

Students can teach, too. In fact, it was two of Kenon’s graduate students at CSUN, including Conservancy volunteer Daniel Paul, who first pointed her our way.

Kenon leads our Art Deco, Historic Downtown, and Modern Skyline tours, as well as Central Library tours for the Los Angeles Public Library. She recently spoke at the event *Central Library: 20 Years Later*, commemorating the 1993 reopening of the Central Library.

Beyond her busy docent schedule, Kenon loves to travel and read. The Internet also satisfies her penchant for writing, and you’ll often come across her reviews of books or products on Amazon or comments on *The New York Times* online.

A longtime advocate for women’s rights, Kenon singles out the Downtown Women’s Center as a well-deserved recipient of her time and support.
a position. Without the councilmember’s support, it is unclear if the building will be declared an HCM. The nomination will next go before the City Council’s Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee on October 22 for its recommendation to the full City Council.

The Conservancy believes that HCM designation would not interfere with the store’s operations, its continued use as a market, or plans for interior upgrades and improvements. Instead, we encourage the operators to embrace this opportunity to showcase the building’s unique, authentic Googie character.

Only a handful of mid-century grocery store buildings in Los Angeles survive without being altered beyond recognition. Among the few remaining intact examples are those currently housing Vicente Foods in Brentwood, a Ralphs Market in Studio City, a 99 Cents Only in North Hollywood, a Hannam Market World in Koreatown, and a vacant former Big Lots in Hollywood. Though they were designed in many different styles by different chains and stores, these markets are instantly recognizable for their wide spans, visible lighting patterns, and extensive glazing that displays the inside out.

With so few examples remaining, we consider the Shoppers Market building a worthy example with a high degree of integrity that should be recognized and protected.

For more information and the latest on how you can help, please visit our website at [laconservancy.org](http://laconservancy.org).

**Preservation's Next Generation**

_by Bruce Scottow_

This past summer marked the fifth year of the Conservancy’s participation in the Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA) summer school program. The program, which targets underserved, inner-city youth from the Rampart community near Lafayette Park, provides classes in academics, the arts, and athletics.

The Conservancy’s class, Adventures in Architecture, hosted four walking field trips for the kids, ages 11-13, to historic buildings and landscapes within their neighborhood. This summer’s program included visits to and tours of the former Bullock’s Wilshire department store (the Art Deco masterpiece now part of Southwestern Law School), the Felipe de Neve Branch Library (home to a former, and possibly future, Shakespeare Garden), the Park Plaza Hotel (once the city’s largest Elks Club Lodge and now a popular event venue and filming site), and the American Cement Building Lofts (a Mid-Century Modern office building that enjoys new life as a live/work structure).

The neighborhood field trips culminated in a Metro Rail ride into downtown Los Angeles to tour the skyscrapers of Bunker Hill. The trip included a picnic lunch at the foot of the Union Bank Building and a glass elevator ride to the top of the Westin Bonaventure Hotel.

Each day’s outings were preceded by slide show presentations and followed by engaging, behind-the-scenes tours and a variety of hands-on activities. All of these activities were designed to introduce HOLA students to the rich architectural history within their neighborhood and city, and to the importance of sustaining their community’s built environment.
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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Give a Gift Membership for the Holidays

Share your passion for preservation by giving a gift membership to a family member or friend for the holidays.

Each gift membership comes with a full year of benefits, including Conservancy News and special discounts and advance notice for special tours and events.

If you purchase a gift membership by December 31, we will invite both you and your gift recipient to a special walking tour of Union Station, to take place in early 2013.

You can purchase your gift membership online at laconservancy.org.

Thank you, and happy holidays!
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.

Go to laconservancy.org for the latest information about issues and events.

Explore the unique history and architecture of downtown Los Angeles’ Arts District on this one-time-only special tour. See page 1 for details.

Ring in the holiday season at our annual holiday matinee. Join us at the historic Orpheum Theatre for a screening of this unique holiday favorite. See page 5 for details.

Share your passion for historic L.A. by giving a gift membership this holiday season. It’s the gift that lasts all year! See page 7 for details.
A self-paced neighborhood exploration, with docent-led tours at a variety of sites

Sunday, November 10, 2013
10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Explore the dynamic downtown Arts District with the Los Angeles Conservancy. Docented sites include private lofts, Angel City Brewing Company, SCI-Arc, and more!

Once a booming industrial area criss-crossed by railroad tracks, this district later became a haven for artists, who repurposed empty warehouses as studios and living spaces, creating a unique community.

Info and tickets: laconservancy.org/artsdistrict
LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY PRESENTS

DECEMBER 8, 2013 at 2 p.m.
at the historic ORPHEUM THEATRE

TIM BURTON’S
THE NIGHTMARE BEFORE CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 8, 2013
at 2 p.m.
at the historic ORPHEUM THEATRE
Halloween = scary ghosts and goblins, spiders and snakes
Christmas = candy canes and presents, Rudolph and Santa!

To most kids – and their parents – there couldn’t be two more different holidays than Halloween and Christmas. Enter Jack Skellington, the king of Halloween Town. Weary of his year-after-year production of frightful witches and werewolves for his town’s residents, Jack wanders away one day, stumbling on a portal that leads to a very different place: Christmas Town!

Inspired by the spirit of Christmas (but clueless on its traditions), Jack decides to take over the holiday and assigns his equally clueless denizens the task of re-inventing it, Halloween-style! This stop-motion animated feature, produced and co-written by Tim Burton, is a unique holiday treat.

Bring family and friends, come early or stay late, do some holiday shopping, go ice-skating at Pershing Square, and dine at nearby eateries! (See the special offers at left)

Happy Holidays from the Los Angeles Conservancy!

Generously Sponsored by:

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Major funding for the Los Angeles Conservancy’s educational programs is provided by the Kenneth T. and Eileen L. Norris Foundation.

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