



LOS ANGELES CONSERVANCY NEWS



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This fall, the Conservancy is thrilled to partner with A+D Museum to present a downtown walking tour exploring four major landscape designs by Lawrence Halprin. Tour sites include Bunker Hill's Wells Fargo Court (pictured above), Bunker Hill Steps, Maguire Gardens, and Grand Hope Park. Photo by Jessica Hodgdon/L.A. Conservancy.

Discover the Work of Landscape Architect Lawrence Halprin

by Alex Inshishian and Marcello Vavala

This fall, the Conservancy is partnering with the Architecture and Design (A+D) Museum to present a special walking tour, Lawrence Halprin: Connecting the Heart of Los Angeles. We are excited to highlight several of Halprin's major landscape designs in downtown L.A.

The tour coincides with *The Landscape Architecture of Lawrence Halprin*, a traveling photographic exhibit that visits A+D Museum from September 29 to December 31. The exhibit was designed by The Cultural Landscape Foundation and features fifty-six newly commissioned photographs of Halprin's work.

Cultural landscapes are not new to the Conservancy. Considered by some as secondary to buildings in the built environment, they are particularly vulnerable to development pressure. We work regularly to recognize and preserve significant cultural landscapes.

What Is a Cultural Landscape?

Cultural landscapes are all around us, shaping the unique character and identity of our communities as much as the historic buildings we admire. While prominent public spaces like Echo Park or the Rose Garden at Exposition Park are some of Los Angeles' most recognizable examples, they represent just one type and a small fraction of the cultural landscapes we encounter on a regular basis.

In addition to parks and formal gardens, cultural landscapes include campuses, cemeteries, industrial sites, grand estates, garden apartment communities, and civic and corporate properties. They often contain historic buildings.

Please see *LANDSCAPES* on page 6

Explore Koreatown November 3 – 5

We hope you can join us for a full weekend of exploration in L.A.'s Koreatown neighborhood on November 3, 4, and 5. You can choose from a range of events including neighborhood tours, panel discussions, food and drink explorations, and more.

At the turn of the twentieth century, what is now Koreatown was bucolic farmland where sheep grazed and barley crops grew. Today, this diverse neighborhood is one of the most densely populated areas of Los Angeles.

Our weekend in Koreatown seeks to help guests better understand the balance between the neighborhood's history and present, and how this dynamic reflects the city as a whole. We'll explore the area's stunning landmarks, as well as the stories of the people who have lived and worked there over the decades.

Member reservations will be available at laconservancy.org beginning **Wednesday, September 20**. Events will be individually ticketed, allowing you to choose any combination.

We are pleased to present this full weekend of events in partnership with members of the Koreatown community, and we hope to see you there!



Koreatown's Chapman Park Studio. Photo by Alex Inshishian/L.A. Conservancy.

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

Thank You, Summer Interns!

This summer, our advocacy and education departments each benefited from the hard work of two fantastic interns from the Getty Multicultural Internship Program.

Our advocacy intern, **Joshua Coronado**, will enter his senior year at UCLA this fall, where he is majoring in history and minoring in art history. Josh researched and prepared new content for our “LGBTQ Historic Places in



L.A.” microsite (laconservancy.org/lgbtq). His work highlights important places including Circus of Books (West Hollywood), Oxwood Inn (Van Nuys), and the Rev. Troy Perry Residence (Huntington Park)—helping us expand the project throughout L.A. County.

Our education intern, **Skyler Jang**, is a history major in her senior year at California State University, Fullerton. She joined us in the middle of *Last Remaining Seats* and quickly became an integral part of the education team. Skyler helped lead classes for middle school students with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), researched new walking tours, and was at the forefront of research and community outreach for our upcoming Koreatown tour.

Thank you, Josh and Skyler! We know you'll succeed in your future career paths.

Thank You for Putting LGBTQ Historic Places on the Map!

Wow. We knew Conservancy members were generous, but your outpouring of support for our first-ever crowdfunding campaign was amazing! When we emailed members asking for help to expand our short film series, *LGBTQ Historic Places in L.A.*, you started donating immediately. Through the entire campaign, members provided the vast majority of donations. Ultimately, your generous donations equalled \$5,730, or 115% of our original goal of \$5,000.

More than a thousand people have watched the first three short films online or at one of our screenings and panel conversations earlier this year.

Because of your generosity in this campaign, can expand the series to make sure it represents the full breadth and diversity of LGBTQ experiences throughout L.A. County.

If you haven't yet, please visit laconservancy.org/lgbtq to watch the first three films, learn more about L.A.'s LGBTQ heritage, and share your own story.

Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Laura Dominguez Leaves Conservancy Staff

After nearly three years in the Conservancy's advocacy department, Preservation Manager Laura Dominguez left the Conservancy in August. Laura has made lasting contributions to the Conservancy in a range of areas, including managing our easement program and working to expand our neighborhood conservation efforts. She says she is proudest of her work at the Conservancy to shine a light on historic places with cultural significance. Laura authored the Conservancy's recent successful nomination of the Pan American Bank building in East L.A. to the National Register of Historic Places. She also oversaw the creation of our LGBTQ microsite (laconservancy.org/lgbtq) and our first three short films, *LGBTQ Historic Places in L.A.*

This fall, Laura will begin pursuing a doctoral degree in public history at USC. We wish her well in her future endeavors and greatly appreciate her hard work on behalf of the Conservancy.

Preservation Issues

by Adrian Scott Fine and Marcello Vavala

For more information about these and other preservation issues, please visit laconservancy.org/important-issues.

Historic Covina Bowl Threatened

The beloved Covina Bowl closed its doors in March 2017, with the property for sale and its future uncertain.

Completed in 1956, Covina Bowl is a marvel of Googie architecture that blends modernism with elements of Polynesian and Egyptian exoticism. It is a rare, surviving example of a mid-century bowling alley. Architectural firm Powers, Daly, and DeRosa—widely recognized as a master of the form—designed the bowling center, which also housed a cocktail lounge and coffee shop.

In spring 2016, the Conservancy and our Modern Committee nominated the building to the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its contributions to postwar architecture and recreation. It was officially found eligible for listing by the Keeper of the National Register in Washington, D.C. in September. Although it couldn't be officially listed because of the owner's opposition, its determination of eligibility resulted in its listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

Despite its historic status, the building lacks any formal protections from demolition or modifications. The City of Covina currently has a grade of D+ on the Conservancy's Preservation Report Card due to the limitations of its historic preservation ordinance.

At press time, the property was in escrow. The Conservancy has met with the prospective buyer, who potentially plans to demolish the historic bowling alley. We will continue to advocate for a win-win solution that preserves the Covina Bowl building while incorporating new development on the site.

A coalition of local advocates, Friends of Covina Bowl, has formed to advocate for the preservation and sensitive reuse of this irreplaceable landmark. Please 'Like' their page on Facebook to get involved and stay informed.



The local advocacy group Friends of Covina Bowl showed their support for the threatened building at an event on July 16. Photo by Adrian Scott Fine/L.A. Conservancy.

Cities Charting Progress in Preservation

2017 is shaping up to be a banner year for cities across the county looking to improve their preservation track record. Four cities have either adopted new historic preservation ordinances or are in the process. The Conservancy has offered technical assistance to each of these jurisdictions as part of our efforts to expand preservation policies throughout L.A. County.

The cities of South Pasadena and San Gabriel, which both have long-standing historic preservation programs, adopted significantly revised preservation ordinances this summer. South Pasadena's effort was several years in the making and expanded the ordinance to reflect current best practices.

San Gabriel's newly adopted ordinance represents a major overhaul of its pioneering, yet outdated, 1965 version. One of the most significant updates is policy language calling for the creation of a Historic Preservation Commission to serve as the City's dedicated body of historic preservation experts—which San Gabriel has never had. The designation of local landmarks does not require owner consent, and for the first time, the City now has

the ability to designate local historic districts.

The City of San Marino currently lacks the ability to protect local historic resources and has the county's last remaining "recognition-only" (honorary) preservation ordinance. The City is now drafting and refining a brand new ordinance aimed at giving the City the authority to designate local landmarks and require preservation design review for designated structures. The draft ordinance contains some strong provisions, including a demolition delay policy for all structures fifty years of age or older, as well as those listed in the city's future inventory of historic resources.

In the South Bay, the City of Torrance is working on its first-ever historic preservation ordinance. The City anticipates releasing the draft ordinance for public review in the coming weeks, and the Conservancy looks forward to providing comments and input. The Planning Commission will then review the ordinance before its final vote and approval by the City Council.

BRING YOUR GROUP ON A PRIVATE TOUR

by Alex Inshishian and Bruce Scottow

Each year, thousands of people crawl out of bed and make their way downtown to take the Conservancy's signature, award-winning walking tours. Yet mornings can be tough for some, Saturdays are not for everyone, and others might prefer exploring downtown with friends, family, or co-workers.

That's why the Conservancy offers private group tours, giving you the power of choice. Your group of up to twelve people will have your own personal docent. In most cases, you can choose the time, date, meeting location, length, and ending location for the tour. If your day's plans include lunch, dinner, an art gallery, a museum visit, or maybe a stop at a bar you've heard about, we can design your tour to accommodate those plans.

Private group tours are perfect for family reunions, alumni groups, social clubs, and more. And the pricing is reasonable—in some cases, no more than a public tour. We do ask that you request your tour at least four weeks in advance so that we can schedule your docent and handle all logistics.

For more information or to schedule a group tour, visit laconservancy.org/group-tours.



A USC alumni group on a tour of downtown L.A. Photo from Conservancy archives.

Thank You for Attending *Last Remaining Seats*

by Bruce Scottow

While our *Last Remaining Seats* (LRS) series was born downtown, we have often ventured to historic theatres throughout the Los Angeles area for screenings. This year, for our thirty-first season, we held screenings in the South Bay, visiting the stunning Warner Grand Theatre in San Pedro for the first time.

Highlights from this season included a special lecture by Leonard Maltin before the *Wings* screening, a fashion show of iconic Hollywood costumes on stage before *Easter Parade*, a panel discussion with production-team heavies from *Jaws*, and a moving tribute to the late director Curtis Hanson before one of his most beloved films, *L.A. Confidential*.

As always, the Conservancy's dedicated volunteers proved vital to the success of the 2017 LRS season. Beginning their work in late 2016, the thirty-two volunteers of the LRS Committee (listed at lower right) selected the season's lineup. Committee members then worked together in small teams



A fashion show of iconic Hollywood costumes before our screening of *Easter Parade* was one of this season's highlights. Photo by Mike Hume.

to develop pre-show interactive displays, programming, and activities for their team's assigned screening.

If you are interested in joining the LRS Committee to help plan the 2018 season, please attend the upcoming committee meeting on **Tuesday, September 12**, at 7:30 p.m. Please email Bruce Scottow at bscottow@laconservancy.org for details.

In addition to our LRS Committee, nearly 100 volunteers stepped up to donate their time and talent at screenings. Volunteer roles included leading theatre and backstage tours, ushering, taking photos or video, passing out programs, checking tickets at the door, managing the lines out front, helping backstage, and so much more. We extend our deepest thanks to our volunteers, as well as our 2017 sponsors, in making this season a success.

Thank You, Sponsors!

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Silvertop's Revival: Q&A with Architect Barbara Bestor

The Conservancy will hold our annual benefit on **Thursday, October 5** at John Lautner's modernist masterpiece, Silvertop. This event offers an extremely rare opportunity to see this truly exceptional home. A limited number of spaces were available at press time, and we expect to sell out. For current information, visit laconservancy.org/silvertop, email silvertop@laconservancy.org, or call (213) 430-4204.

Under the thoughtful stewardship of new owners Sophia Nardin and Luke Wood, the iconic Silvertop has been revitalized by architect Barbara Bestor, whose goal was to preserve the home's integrity while keeping its spirit of innovation alive. We spoke with Barbara about Silvertop and its place in Los Angeles' architectural history.



Photo by Ray Katchatorian.

L.A. Conservancy (LAC): Los Angeles was a particularly fertile place for modernist architecture in the 1950s and 1960s. Where does Silvertop fit into L.A.'s modernist legacy?

Barbara Bestor (BB): Lautner is part of the wave of experimental modernists that arrived in Los Angeles in part because of their teacher and/or employer, Frank Lloyd Wright. The enthusiasm for groundbreaking formal and lifestyle experiments combined with the very hospitable climate was perfect for architects looking to remake the idea of home. Silvertop is the "Fallingwater of Los Angeles" in that it is completely unique in each individual part as well as an overall masterpiece.

LAC: When you were brought on to revitalize this property, what was your vision?

BB: There was a huge amount of work to do to simply identify each system, be it mechanical, air conditioning, multiple recipes of terrazzo, etc. We pored through the Getty collection drawings (hundreds!) and interviewed historians, former employees of Lautner's, and many contractors as we made a game plan for the restoration. A few parts of the house that had been installed in the early 1970s were fair game for replacement, and in these areas—the



Architect Barbara Bestor. Photo by Laure Joliet.

kitchen, master bath, and guest house—we designed new insertions using the same palette of natural materials from the house, but using them differently to mark them as non-original.

LAC: What about the work you can't see?

BB: The other major transformation we undertook was a huge and somewhat invisible rebuilding of the technology of the house—in particular the very extensive and subtle lighting systems, but also old and new major mechanized architectural elements. The house now is fully a 21st century state-of-the-art technological masterpiece at the same time it is a 20th century architectural one!

For more of our interview with Barbara, visit our blog at laconservancy.tumblr.com.

A Surprising Summer with HOLA Students

by Sana Ahmed

The Conservancy had another great summer with Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA), a nonprofit that works with under-served youth in the Westlake/MacArthur neighborhood of Los Angeles. Conservancy staff led a preservation workshop series for twelve students (ages 11-13) exploring historic spaces in their neighborhood, including the MacArthur (formerly Park Plaza Hotel) and First Congregational Church.

At each site, students learned about the building's history, its design, and how its function has evolved over time to meet the changing needs of the community. Students also discussed why preservation matters. Through conversations with staff from each site, students gained valuable insight into how they can advocate for preservation in their neighborhood.

There were also a few surprises along the way, including an unexpected musical performance at First Congregational Church. The church is home to the largest church organ west of the Mississippi River, and our group was lucky enough to hear a few pieces performed by the organist in residence. Both youth and staff were in awe of the organ's immense power.

We also introduced a new activity called Juno, featuring a paper cut-out of a curious alien who wanted to learn about historic places. Juno joined us on each adventure, after which students wrote on his "body" what they learned or enjoyed from the day.

The workshop ended with a historic downtown tour and visit to OUE Skyspace, the observation deck atop the US Bank building, where students saw their neighborhood from a wholly different perspective.

A special thank-you to longtime Conservancy volunteer Mary Alice Wollam, and summer intern Skyler Jang, for their support.



HOLA students outside First Congregational Church. Photo by Sana Ahmed/L.A. Conservancy.

LANDSCAPES continued from page 1

Broadly defined as landscapes that have been affected, influenced, or shaped by human involvement, cultural landscapes are classified into four general types by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, some of which can overlap: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

Much like the standards for the treatment of historic properties, the Secretary of the Interior has established guidelines for the treatment of cultural landscapes.

As with historic buildings, cultural landscapes tell great stories, give us a sense of place, help us learn who we are and what we value as a culture, and embody our shared history.

Preserving Cultural Landscapes

The Conservancy has long recognized the importance and value of cultural landscapes in our communities. We've helped to raise awareness of their significance through events like our 2007 tour, *Cultivating L.A.*, which focused on Japanese Gardens in Los Angeles County, and the upcoming tour, *Lawrence Halprin: Connecting the Heart of Los Angeles*. We have also worked to protect notable landscapes through our advocacy efforts.

A recent example underscores the unique challenges that cultural landscapes can face when their significance, and the need to evaluate it, go unrecognized. Mariners Village is a large-scale apartment community in Marina del Rey designed to resemble a seaside village, with landscape design by Phil Shipley. A proposed renovation project would remove original plantings and water features that are integral to this property's character.

The landscape was originally conceived to create a unified and cohesive design with the buildings, yet the landscape is now considered little more than expendable space available for modification. The Conservancy has shared our concerns on the project, and it had not advanced to the approval process at press time.

One of the Conservancy's most visible advocacy efforts surrounding a cultural landscape was our multi-year effort (2011-2017) as part of a diverse coalition to protect the Hannah Carter Japanese Garden in Bel-Air.



A proposed renovation project would remove original plantings and water features at the Mariners Village apartment community in Marina del Rey. Photo by Katie Horak.

The 1961 garden has been called one of the largest and finest Japanese gardens in America. Yet its fate fell into question when longtime owner and steward UCLA (to which the property was donated in 1964) listed the garden for sale—with no requirements that it be maintained or preserved.

In a settlement with the original owner's children, UCLA agreed to a condition on the sale that the garden be preserved for at least the next thirty years. In addition to our work with the coalition, the Conservancy successfully nominated the garden for Historic-Cultural Monument designation, offering protection beyond the next thirty years.

The Landscapes of Lawrence Halprin

One of the most notable landscape architects of the twentieth century, Lawrence Halprin was well known for his work in cities, including Los Angeles. Halprin designed his landscapes to complement the world around them, bringing the natural world into the urban environment.

Lawrence Halprin: Connecting the Heart of Los Angeles will tour four major Halprin designs in downtown L.A.: Wells Fargo Court, Bunker Hill Steps, Maguire Gardens, and Grand Hope Park. Together, these sites create a path of open spaces through the heart

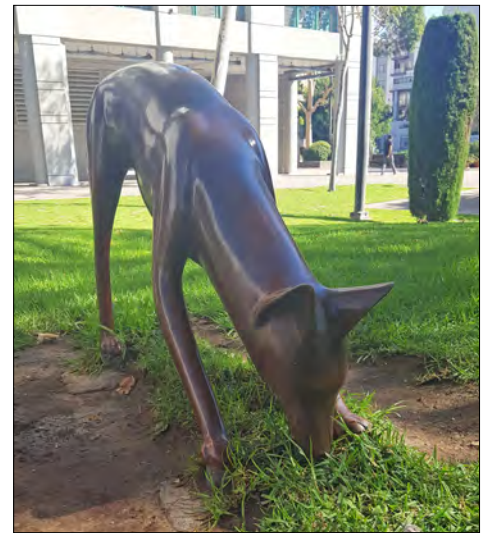
of Los Angeles and are known as the Los Angeles Open Space Network.

Halprin designed each of these sites to reflect Los Angeles and Southern California culture. The sparse use of water exemplifies the dry climate, and multiple areas integrate artwork by local artists. Halprin created each park to be unique, yet each one connects to the larger picture of open spaces in Los Angeles.

This special tour will take place at 1 p.m. on **October 22, November 5, November 19, and December 17**. Reservations will be available at laconservancy.org beginning September 1.

The Conservancy is excited to collaborate with A+D Museum to shine a light on Lawrence Halprin's contribution to the Los Angeles landscape, and we hope you can join us.

To learn more about the photography exhibit, *The Landscape Architecture of Lawrence Halprin*, visit aplusd.org. To learn more about the life and work of Lawrence Halprin, visit laconservancy.org/architects/lawrence-halprin.



Site-specific and contemporary art are integrated into Halprin's four major downtown projects. Grand Hope Park features the bronze sculptures *Urban Curious Coyotes*, *Snake*, *Hawk* by Gwynn Murrill. Photo by Jessica Hodgdon/L.A. Conservancy.

JUNE 14 / AUGUST 8 MEMBERSHIP REPORT

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

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

IT'S MEMBER SEPTEMBER!

We know Conservancy members like you join because you care about historic places across Los Angeles County. But of course, membership has other benefits as well!

Throughout September, all current Conservancy members can register for our signature walking tours at **half off the member price**. Members at any level can reserve up to four spaces on any of our regularly scheduled tours for only \$5 each.

There's no code to enter—just log in to your member account on laconservancy.org, and you'll see the discounted \$5 price on walking tours. If you have any questions about your account, contact us at info@laconservancy.org or (213) 623-2489.

We want you to have time to take as many tours as you'd like. As long as you register between September 1 and September 30, the discount will apply for all tours taking place through November 2017.

To learn more about the tours and to register, visit laconservancy.org/tours. This members-only perk is just one small way for us to express how very much we appreciate your support. Thank you!



During the month of September, members can register for walking tours, including Historic Downtown, Art Deco, Union Station, and more for half off the regular member price! Photo by Annie Laskey/L.A. Conservancy.

CONSERVANCY WALKING TOURS

During Member September, tours cost \$5 for Conservancy members, \$10 for youth 17 or younger, \$15 for the general public.

Most tours require reservations. We accept walk-ins on some tours, subject to availability.

For details and reservations, visit laconservancy.org/tours. Questions? Contact us at info@laconservancy.org or (213) 623-2489.

WALKING TOURS

Angelino Heights

First Saturday of each month

Art Deco

Every Saturday

Broadway Historic Theatre & Commercial District

Every Saturday

Historic Downtown

Every Saturday

Millennium Biltmore Hotel

Every Sunday

Union Station

Every Saturday

Customized group tours available by special arrangement. For details, visit laconservancy.org/tours or contact us at info@laconservancy.org or (213) 623-2489.



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For the latest updates and hundreds of historic places to explore, visit laconservancy.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS



Photo by Larry Underhill.

MEMBER SEPTEMBER

September 1 – 30

Throughout September, members can register for walking tours at half off the regular member price! Details on page 7.



Photo by Jessica Hodgdon/L.A. Conservancy.

LAWRENCE HALPRIN: CONNECTING THE HEART OF LOS ANGELES

October 22 – December 17

Join us for a special downtown walking tour of four major landscape designs by Lawrence Halprin, presented in partnership with A+D Museum. Details on page 1.



Photo by Ryan Tanaka.

KOREATOWN WEEKEND EXPLORATION

November 3 – 5

Our fall tour of Koreatown takes place over a full weekend! You can choose from a range of events including tours, panel discussions, and more. Member tickets go on sale September 20.