

# West Adams Matters

## Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Murals Open to Visitors One Day Only, Saturday, October 22

*May Be the Last Chance to View Endangered Murals*



A rare opportunity to view the historic murals that grace the lobby of the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building, located in the heart of Historic West Adams, will occur Saturday, October 22, when WAHA presents a tour from 12 noon to 3 p.m., hosted in collaboration with CAAM--the California African American Museum, the Los Angeles Conservancy, and The Murals Conservancy LA.

The murals, which depict early African American contributions to the building of California, are an integral element of the new exhibit that just opened at CAAM, "Places of Validation, Art & Progression." This exhibit, which runs through April 1, 2012, is CAAM's contribution to the city-wide series of exhibitions being produced under the umbrella PACIFIC STANDARD TIME: Art in L.A. 1945-1980.

*(continued on page 7)*

## The Uninvited

**Saturday, October 29 7 p.m.**

**The Rindge Mansion, 2263 S. Harvard Blvd.**

Please join us a new WAHA event, **Filmed in West Adams**. Attendees will be able to tour the first floor of one of our finest mansions and see a great film.

WAHA will be screening *The Uninvited*, one of the spookiest ghost stories ever put to film. It is also one of the few classic haunted house movies to treat the subject with respect and seriousness. The film stars Ray Milland and Ruth Hussey in a story about a composer and his sister who discover that the reason they are able to purchase a beautiful gothic seacoast mansion very cheaply is the house's unsavory past. Unexplained sounds during the night make it obvious that the house is haunted.

*The Uninvited* was filmed in 1944 and the interiors of the house were shot in a now demolished mansion near Adams and Western. Since the actual house is no longer available, we were lucky to find a nearby location for our event. The Rindge Mansion is reputed to be haunted in its own right, so it is perfect for this film.

Attendees are asked to arrive promptly at 7 p.m. No one under 14 will be admitted for this event. WAHA will provide snacks and drinks, but please plan on dinner before arriving.

RSVPs are required and seating is limited: [events@WestAdamsHeritage](mailto:events@WestAdamsHeritage) -- Members and their guests only. ●



## Historic Firehouse Will Have A New Lease on Life



There's good news to report for one of West Adams' landmarks. Engine Company No. 18, built in 1904 and located at 2616 South Hobart (just south of Adams Boulevard), is in the process of being sold to the Exceptional Children's Foundation, with plans to utilize it as an arts training center for developmentally-disabled adults.

Old Fire House No. 18 is a designated Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument (No. 349) and is a National Register landmark as well.

This rare Mission Revival firehouse is constructed of brick, covered with original stucco. Designed by John Parkinson, one of the later architects of City Hall, it is one of the few remaining firehouses in Los Angeles

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## WAHA Upcoming Events

WAHA plans many (many) events. Please mark your calendars for these upcoming activities.

**Saturday, October 22**  
 Golden State Mutual Insurance Open House

**Saturday, October 29**  
 Filmed in West Adams: *The Uninvited*

**Saturday and Sunday, December 3-4**  
 Annual Holiday Tour & Progressive Dinner

**Sunday, December 11**  
 Holiday Party

**January (date TBA)**  
 Potluck Pajama Party

**February (date TBA)**  
 Potluck

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## History Came to Life at Angelus Rosedale Cemetery

We would like to thank everyone who made this year's Living History Tour, held on Saturday, September 24, a great success! Not only did the tour sell out (again!), the weather was cool, the performances were HOT, and WAHA was able to host a group of local history, social studies and geography public school teachers who, we hope, can help bring history to life in their classrooms in part because of our tour event.

Please give a nod of appreciation especially to our wonderful actors:



Gena Yuvette Davis  
*Miriam Matthews*  
 1905-2003



Craig Weber  
*Portus Baxter Weare*  
 1842-1909



Photos by  
 Ansley Bell

Matthew Kravitz  
*Lt. William*  
*Thornton Glassell*  
 1831-1876



Michelle Youssefzadeh  
*Nina Vitagliano Torre*  
 1890-1918



Liz Cooper (left)  
*Fanny Stenhouse*  
 1829-1904



Gisa Nico (right)  
*Francisca Dominguez Alexander Fleming*  
 1865-1901



Chris Taylor  
*H.K.S. O'Melwenny*  
 1823-1893

## *President's Message* by John Patterson

When I first joined the WAHA Board of Directors several years ago, I was motivated by a desire to participate and support the community in which I resided. Not only has that been fulfilled beyond any initial expectations, the scope of my interaction has expanded into an ever-widening array of people and communities well beyond the borders that define WAHA.

I've written before about our work with the L.A. Heritage Alliance, and its 200-plus like-minded historic and preservation organizations. I've also had the pleasure to meet and work with several people from the LA Conservancy. Most recently, our two organizations joined forces to support a new education program at "Casa Alicia" - a preservation training and awareness program being offered to at-risk youth under the auspices of nearby Pico Union Housing. It was so encouraging to see first-hand the young people's growing awareness to look beyond the drab, unkempt exteriors of so many buildings in their neighborhood to really see the history and beauty that surrounds them. It's very exciting to see a new generation of preservation-minded young people take shape.

I had the pleasure of meeting last month with UCLA's new director of our local monument: the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. Barbara Fuchs would like to see the library play a much more visible role in West Adams, so we look forward to the opportunity to arrange for many collaborations in the coming months, and to greet the new librarian, Mr. Gerald Cloud. I also received an inquiry about our June tour of the Golden State Mutual Building from Jennifer Reid, who works with LACMA's Education & Public Programs Department. I subsequently met with her following a class she was conducting with LAUSD students down at the Ascot Library on Florence Avenue. We initiated a discussion as to how we might be able to provide access for these young students to some of the educational opportunities that WAHA creates with events such as our annual Living History Tour.

On August 20, I responded to an invitation from the L.A. Commons Community Arts Program to attend an event they were hosting in the Rose Gardens of Exposition Park. Many young people were conducting and video recording interviews with local residents from which they will draw artistic inspiration for a series of banners being created to decorate the Expo Light Rail Line. Organizers anticipate celebrating a December opening, and I'm hopeful we might see a West Adams-inspired design amongst the banners that will stretch from downtown to Culver City.

Another outgrowth of our June event at the Golden State Mutual building was the energizing of a dialogue with our neighbor in Exposition Park, the California African American Museum (CAAM). As a part of their new exhibit, "Places of Validation, Art & Progression," WAHA has arranged for a second Open House to view the threatened murals in the lobby of the GSM building at Adams and Western, on Saturday, October 22. (See related story, page 1.) In addition, WAHA's latest publication, *West Adams' Landmarks of African American History*, is now available for purchase at the CAAM bookstore.

My hope is that were even just one of these new contacts to bring a bit more attention to our wonderful WAHA community, we will be one step closer to supporting our neighborhood and organization in new and exciting ways.

*John Patterson may be reached by e-mail at [President@WestAdamsHeritage.org](mailto:President@WestAdamsHeritage.org)*

## **Celebrate A Silver Jubilee: WAHA's 25th Annual Holiday Tour Saturday, December 3 and Sunday, December 4**

WAHA will ring in the holiday season with A Silver Jubilee Celebration in Lafayette Square, at the 25th Annual Holiday Historic Homes Tour and Progressive Dinner, on Saturday, December 3, and Sunday, December 4. We'll make merry amid bright lights and bedecked homes, toasting the season with champagne and an enticing holiday feast.

WAHA's traditional holiday tour features a sumptuous progressive dinner, with each course served in one of the featured properties. We also schedule a Sunday afternoon walking tour, without the food.

The tour will raise funds for WAHA, which since its founding in 1983 has used revenues from a variety of tours to support preservation of the community's architectural and cultural heritage.



WAHA has been dressing up and opening our holiday doors to visitors for 25 years. Since the Holiday Tour's inception a quarter century ago, we have created, cooked up, and dished out not only 24 main courses, but also at least 75 different appetizers, 25-plus desserts, a score of delicious salads, and countless variations (from curried to gingered) of pumpkin and other pureed soups -- served up each year to some 600 visitors and volunteers.

As always, many, many, many volunteers are needed for this year's Holiday Tour. All the houses and kitchens need to be staffed on the nights of the Tour. And we rely on Tour Shepherds to escort our tour guests from house to house. But in addition there are lots of volunteers who assist behind the scenes in other roles, and on other days. Can you help with any of these tasks:

- Prep Cook – cook or bake in your own home the week before the Tour
- Volunteer Dinners - pick up and deliver volunteer dinners on Saturday 12/3 and Sunday 12/4, tentatively from 4 to 6 p.m. both days

*(continued on page 6)*

# Stepping Out

## At Home With History:

### Exploring Los Angeles' Historic Preservation Overlay Zones

Sunday, November 6 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

### Country Club Park, Windsor Village & Wilshire Park

Los Angeles Conservancy presents another in its series of popular At Home with History tours exploring the historic neighborhoods of Los Angeles, known as Historic Preservation Overlay Zones, or HPOZs. Tourgoers will see firsthand how owners preserve their historic homes while keeping them wonderfully livable, adding their own personalities and layers of history.

This special, one-time-only tour will feature three relatively new HPOZs, coined "the triplet" by residents because of their close proximity: Country Club Park, Wilshire Park, and Windsor Village. The three are adjacent to one another, sharing a border along Crenshaw Boulevard near Olympic Boulevard. Developed in the early to mid-twentieth century, the neighborhoods feature diverse styles and building types, and each has a unique and fascinating history.

At Home with History includes docent-led tours of six private homes:

- The grand Mediterranean-style Milbank Mansion (G. Lawrence Stimson, 1913) in Country Club Park, a virtual twin to Pasadena's Stimson-designed Wrigley Mansion, home to the Tournament of Roses Association
- A beautifully restored 1911 Craftsman-style home in Country Club Park that includes special amenities designed for the original owner, USC music professor Horatio Cogswell
- An elegant Beaux-Arts/Italianate house circa 1920 in Wilshire Park that features unusual interior details, as well as a history that includes a notorious former madam as a tenant
- A charming 1926 Mediterranean/Spanish Colonial Revival home in Wilshire Park that beautifully blends original details with sensitive updates, including a creative backyard space
- In Windsor Village, a delightful eight-unit courtyard apartment complex in the French Eclectic style, built in 1936
- A 1915 Prairie-style home with built-ins, stained glass, and many other original elements located in Windsor Village

Guests can explore the neighborhoods at their leisure and speak with residents about their experience of living in an HPOZ.

Tickets cost \$40 for the general public, \$30 for Los Angeles Conservancy members, and \$10 for kids 12 and under. Tickets are available at [www.laconservancy.org](http://www.laconservancy.org) (direct link: <http://lac.laconservancy.org/hpoztour>). Questions? Call the Conservancy office at 213-623-2489.

### Volunteers Needed:

The Conservancy would love to have WAHA members involved in the tour. There are a few different opportunities:

**Tour volunteers:** Volunteering for this tour requires training at 11:00 a.m. on October 22 or October 23 depending on the your assignment. Tour day shifts are about 3 hours, morning or afternoon. To register: <http://lac.laconservancy.org/hpozvol>. Volunteers need to complete the entire form and submit (be sure to click the "Submit" button). If you cannot attend training but are still interested in volunteering, please contact Bruce Scottow at 213-430-4218 or [bscottow@laconservancy.org](mailto:bscottow@laconservancy.org).



**Neighborhood Ambassadors:** There will also be neighborhood people at each tour site to talk about living in the area, what it's like living in an HPOZ, and answer general questions. This is less formal than regular volunteering (no script, shifts are flexible). People who are interested in this should contact Annie Laskey directly at 213-430-4209 or [alaskay@laconservancy.org](mailto:alaskay@laconservancy.org).

**WAHA info table:** WAHA may be having its own table. If you'd like to help out with that, please e-mail [president@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:president@westadamsheritage.org).

*Two of the houses on tour: Entry to the Beaux-Arts/Italianate house in Wilshire Park (top right). The Milbank Mansion in Country Club Park. Photos by Larry Underhill.*



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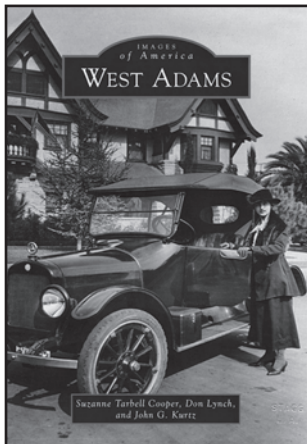
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**Jefferson Park Craftsman** — *Adam Janeiro, buyer's agent*

**Highland Park Craftsman** — *Adam Janeiro, seller's and buyer's agent*

**Picfair Spanish Revival** — *Adam Janeiro, buyer's agent*

**Jefferson Park Spanish Revival** — *Adam Janeiro, buyer's agent*  
**SOLD**

**Restored Harvard Heights Beauty!** — Updated c1905 Frank M. Tyler Craftsman, great woodwork, lush garden, vine-covered deck. *David Raposa, seller's agent*

**Heineman & Heineman Masterpiece** — Exceptional Arts & Crafts home in Harvard Heights HPOZ, HCM No. 818. *David Raposa, seller's agent.* Welcome, Liz Fuller and Daniel Kegel!

**Our agents live and work in Historic West Adams**

*David Raposa,*

*Suzanne Henderson, Adam Janeiro, Darby Bayliss,*

*Carlton Joseph, Jane Harrington*

Our Offices are in the Victorian Village,  
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## Holiday Tour Silver Jubilee

continued from page 3

- WAHA Holiday Party – decorate, set-up and otherwise assist with this party (for our members and wonderful volunteers) on the weekend following the tour
- Crafty types – we need your creative skills (and possibly your glue guns) to make tourgoer badges and ornaments
- Shopping - Trader Joe's, 99 Cent Store, Smart & Final, Von's, the Flower Mart — they'll all get a WAHA visit or two
- Holiday decorating – some of our tour properties can use a helping hand hanging ornaments, garland and other seasonal "attire" during the week before the Tour
- Street decorating - install signs at Tour houses on Saturday 12/3 by 1 p.m.

If you are available any of these times, please raise your hand and volunteer. Contact us at [volunteer@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:volunteer@westadamsheritage.org).

The Holiday Tour is WAHA's major annual fundraising event, and helps pay for our award-winning Evening Strolls as well as our many preservation support and advocacy activities. We encourage all of our members to contribute to that effort by taking the Holiday Tour and Progressive Dinner — and bringing their friends — on the day they are not volunteering.

If you purchase your ticket by November 15, prices are \$70 for non-members, \$60 for WAHA members. After November 15, all tickets are \$85 apiece. Each year, some of you wish to purchase large groups of tickets, and we love that you do so – but please contact us at [WAHAholiday@aol.com](mailto:WAHAholiday@aol.com) ASAP to reserve your block of seats. Please be sure to return the forms and your checks as early as possible, so that you and your guests will not be disappointed. It is not unusual for this event to sell out. A Holiday Walking Tour on Sunday afternoon only (no food) will also be offered (free to tour volunteers; \$30 paid admission.)

If you have joined WAHA at a membership level that may provide tickets to you and a guest for this tour, please DO contact us immediately (and no later than November 1) with your reservation, so we can be sure to accommodate you.

As always, if you just want to peek inside the homes and you ARE volunteering for the event, you may do so -- free -- during the Sunday afternoon walking tour.

As you can see, WAHA's Holiday Tour is a complex event. If you would like more information about any aspect of the tour, contact Tour Chair Lindsay Wiggins at [tours@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:tours@westadamsheritage.org).

[Please note that we have provided three distinct e-mail addresses for different purposes in this article, and we repeat them here:

To VOLUNTEER, write [volunteer@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:volunteer@westadamsheritage.org)

For TOUR VISITOR INFORMATION, and RESERVATIONS, GROUP TOURS, etc., write [wahaholiday@aol.com](mailto:wahaholiday@aol.com)

For any other aspect of the tour, write [tours@westadamsheritage.org](mailto:tours@westadamsheritage.org)] ●

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## Golden State Murals Open House

*continued from page 1*

October 22nd tourgoers will be visiting the iconic Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building, designed by architect Paul Williams in 1947 for the first African American-owned insurance company established west of the Mississippi. The Late Moderne building, with its notable integrated murals by artists Charles Alston and Hale Woodruff, was recently designated HCM No. 1000, and is one of Los Angeles' newest Historic Cultural Monuments.

The murals are currently endangered, threatened with removal. This might be the public's last chance to view them. The open house is spearheaded by WAHA's long-running efforts of preservation advocacy to save the murals.

The relevance to the art world of the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Company is the ground-breaking support this enterprise provided to emerging African American artists. The lobby and office walls were showcases to a wide array of notable artists, including William Pajaud, Charles White, Betye Saar, and John Riddle.

Tourgoers will also receive a copy of WAHA's most recent publication, "West Adams' Landmarks of African American History," a unique compendium of photos and brief biographies of more than 70 prominent African Americans who lived in the West Adams area of Los Angeles and includes information about their homes in West Adams.

Advance tickets (\$15) are available at WAHA's website, [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org), for the afternoon open house, or call CAAM (213) 744-7536 or -7432 for the morning bus tour. ●



*The murals depict African Americans' contributions to California history. Top: Charles Alston's "The Negro in California History—Exploration and Colonization," 1527-1850. Bottom mural, painted by Hale Woodruff, depicts "The Negro in California History--Settlement and Development," 1850-1949.*


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## Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945-1980

If you have been following the local art scene of late, surely you've heard about "Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945 - 1980," and the myriad of exhibits throughout the region celebrating an important era in contemporary California art.

But, you may not have realized that this initiative touches on West Adams. Among the many exhibitions planned are those at a local institution; a show that showcases one of West Adams' most important artist of the time, an exhibit curated by one of our own members, and a salute to one of the most important architectural historians and writers of the era.

Pacific Standard Time, supported by \$10 million in grants from the Getty Foundation, is a collaboration of more than sixty cultural institutions across Southern California, and another 70 art galleries, coming together for six months beginning in October 2011 to tell the story of the birth of the Los Angeles art scene and how it became a major new force in the art world. Each institution will make its own contribution to this grand-scale story of artistic innovation and social change, told through a multitude of simultaneous exhibitions and programs. Exploring and celebrating the significance of the crucial post-World War II years through the tumultuous period of the 1960s and '70s, Pacific Standard Time encompasses developments from L.A. Pop to post-minimalism; from modernist architecture and design to multi-media installations; from the films of the African American L.A. Rebellion to the feminist activities of the Woman's Building; from ceramics to Chicano performance art; and from Japanese American design to the pioneering work of artists' collectives.

To represent the significant role of ceramics in this time period, the American Museum of Ceramic Art offers "Common Ground: Ceramics in Southern California 1945-1975." This inaugural exhibition of mid-century Southern California pottery will focus on the tremendous growth and experimentation in studio and industrial ceramic work during the decades following World War II.

One of the most important artists credited with putting ceramics on a par with other modern fine art was Glen Lukens, a USC art professor who hired architect Raphael Soriano to design what is now acknowledged as a seminal Modernist home (located at 27th Street and 5th Avenue in Jefferson Park). Although he hailed from the Midwest, Lukens forged a career on the West Coast and is now very much associated with innovative pre-war and mid-century California pottery. During his years as an instructor at the University of Southern California, Lukens brought ceramics and jewelry courses to the school's College of Architecture; students included Frank Gehry and Laura Anderson. And while his own raw works reveal the ceramicist's hand, he believed handcrafted wares and mass-produced items should be able to co-exist and complement each other.

Along with Lukens' work, "Common Ground" will survey examples of work by such notable ceramicists as Jerome & Evelyn Ackerman, Laura Andreson, F. Carlton Ball, Billy Al Bengston, Otto & Vivika Heino, Harrison McIntosh, Mineo Mizuno, Gertrud & Otto Natzler, Susan Harnly Peterson, Kenneth Price, Myrton Purkiss, Peter Voukos, and Beatrice Wood.

Lukens is also included in Los Angeles County Museum of Art's (LACMA) contribution, "California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way." This exhibition, the first major study of modern California design, will examine the state's role in shaping the material culture of the entire country with more than 350 objects, comprising furniture, ceramics, metalwork, graphic and industrial design, film, textiles, and fashion. The exhibition begins by tracing the origins of a distinctive California modernism in the 1930s, including work by Richard Neutra, Rudolph Schindler, and their contemporaries. It then explores the design innovations made possible by the conversion of World War II technologies to peace-time use, exemplified by the plywood and fiberglass furniture pioneered by Charles and Ray Eames. The heart of the exhibition focuses on the modern California home, famously characterized by open plans and indoor/outdoor living and furnished with products from companies such as Heath Ceramics, Van Keppel-Green, and Architectural Pottery. The show concludes by exploring how "The California Look" was disseminated by exhibitions, magazines, shops, and films throughout America and the world.



*Esther McCoy*

"Artistic Evolution: Southern California Artists at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, 1945-1963" is inspired by works shown at the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County (formerly Los Angeles County Museum) through the Annual Exhibition of Los Angeles and Vicinity series and related contemporary exhibitions. The exhibition highlights the central role of the Museum as a standard-bearer for contemporary art in Southern California in the 1940s-early 1960s and includes paintings, drawings, and prints, with loans of works by John Baldessari, Larry Bell, Billy Al Bengston, Tony Berlant, Lorser Feitelson, Robert Irwin, Craig Kauffman, Ed Moses, John McLaughlin, Lee Mullican, Ed Ruscha, and Betye Saar. Guest curated by art historian Charlotte Eyerman, the exhibition offers a kaleidoscopic view of the Museum's past exhibitions, when art was shown at the Museum until the move of its collections to the then-new Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Wilshire in the mid-1960s. The establishment of a new museum dedicated to the visual arts, and the subsequent move of NHM's art collections, signaled the beginning of a new era for the continually evolving art scene of Los Angeles, whose institutional roots remain in Exposition Park.



California African American Museum (CAAM) presents "Places of Validation, Art, and Progression," which retraces the steps that African Americans took in creating a solid foundation for Black artists and their work to thrive in Los Angeles. Focusing on the period from 1945 to 1980, though looking back as far as the late 1920s, the exhibition and its catalogue draw upon stories that give intimate insight into the network of a Black art scene in Los Angeles. From the artists themselves and the validators (supporters, advocates, collectors, educators, historians) have come artworks, photographs, videos, catalogues, artifacts, announcements, flyers, sound recordings, and wifi components, which provide a comprehensive picture of the evolution of the visual arts in a Black Los Angeles, and a tribute to a people who supported the arts and were determined to see their artists succeed.

Another aspect of the Black art scene were the photographers who documented it. California State University Northridge Art Galleries presents "Identity and Affirmation: Post War African American Photography," 145 images produced by Los Angeles artists, who explored modernist tendencies as they embraced and depicted the vibrant development of the arts, music, politics, family, and social life in the Black community and Los Angeles at large. The innovative improvisations of jazz, of particular importance during this period, can be seen in the work of these photographers in both their subjects and approaches to photography. Photographers represented include Roland Charles, Guy Crowder, Jack Davis, Bob Douglas, Joe Flowers, Maxie Floyd, Calvin Hicks, Bob Moore, and Charles Williams.

Also at Cal State Northridge: "Jerry McMillan: Artist – Photographer" (February 10 - March 31, 2012). Curated by West Adams resident Stephen Peckman, the exhibition highlights McMillan's more than 45 years of groundbreaking work in photography that continues to challenge the conceptual and physical boundaries of the form. McMillan, a Pasadena resident, is an acknowledged early innovator of photo-sculpture whose work has been called "state of the art" by *Newsweek* and "a visual primer of photography" by *Artweek*. The retrospective will include about 50 works from three distinct periods of McMillan's artistic oeuvre: (1) Traditional photography from the early 1960s and his first attempts at blurring the boundaries of photography and painting with the "Door and Window" series; (2) His pioneering photo-sculpture work from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s: chrome plated bags and steel, copper, and brass three dimensional photographic etched sculptures; and (3) His non-objective pure camera abstractions from the late 1970s to the present.

ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives presents "Cruising the Archive: Queer Art and Culture in Los Angeles." The work of gay and lesbian artists, activists, filmmakers, and community leaders living and working in Los Angeles between the end of WWII and Gay Liberation of the 1970s will be presented alongside archival materials from ONE's extensive collections. As the oldest LGBT organization in the United States and the largest repository of LGBT materials in the world, ONE is uniquely positioned to contextualize this period often understudied within LGBT history. "Cruising the Archive" will be on view concurrently in two locations: the ONE Archives Gallery and Museum in West Hollywood, and the ONE Archives location in West Adams.

"Sympathetic Seeing: Esther McCoy and the Heart of American Modernist Architecture and Design" is on view at the MAK Center until January 8, 2012. For more than 40 years, architectural historian and author Esther McCoy's work articulated the concepts and vibrant character of West Coast modernism. Her writing appeared regularly in the *Los Angeles Times*, *Arts & Architecture*, *Zodiac* and *Architectural Forum*. In 1960, McCoy published *Five California Architects*, her groundbreaking book that remains an essential volume on California architecture.

For a full schedule of Pacific Standard Time exhibits and events, including details on these, visit [www.pacificstandardtime.org](http://www.pacificstandardtime.org). ●



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# Preservation Matters

## WAHA Advocates to Save the Bank of Tokyo

The Bank of Tokyo/Union Bank building in Jefferson Park, which exemplifies the community's important Japanese-American heritage, once again threatened with demolition. A hearing is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday afternoon, November 1, at City Hall before the City Council's Planning and Land Use Committee (PLUM), to determine whether or not this building can be saved while also permitting the development of a new Fresh & Easy on the same large parcel.

WAHA, along with numerous qualified historians, considers the Bank of Tokyo building to be a historical resource. WAHA also believes that adaptive reuse of the building will enhance the overall project on the site at the corner of Jefferson and Crenshaw, very close to the new Expo Line station.

A mid-century modern building designed by a pair of noted architects, Tosh Terasawa and Arthur O'Leary, it is associated with the Japanese American resettlement experience in Jefferson Park after the internment camps of World War II, with the Japanese Americans' quest for financial equality in the face of racism, and with the development of a thriving commercial business corridor (Jefferson Boulevard) catering to the nearby Japanese American community during the late 1940s until well into the 1980s.

For those of us who moved to the Historic West Adams District because of our fondness for Victorian, Craftsman and/or Period Revival residential architecture, it may be a little more difficult to love the simple lines of mid-century commercial design. But it is important to remember that many significant cultural heritage stories — especially those associated with the many layers of history of the West Adams District's successive waves of residents — are represented by bricks-and-mortar buildings, including modern structures.

The Bank of Tokyo building retains sufficient integrity to express its association with the lives of persons important to local history (Terasawa in particular), and its association with broad patterns of local and regional history. Although only five percent of Jefferson Park's households were home to persons of Japanese descent in 1930, the Japanese American population had increased dramatically through the decade — until these families were forcibly uprooted after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941. After the war, many Japanese American families (including Terasawa's) resettled in the Jefferson Park area, near the Centenary United Methodist Church at 35th and Normandie. It took many years for these families — who had been interned with only the belongings they could carry in a suitcase, thus losing nearly everything else — to rebuild their lives. The bank building represents a tangible connection to an era where racism was still rampant, and lenders would not make loans to Japanese Americans; the Bank of Tokyo was erected to help right that wrong.

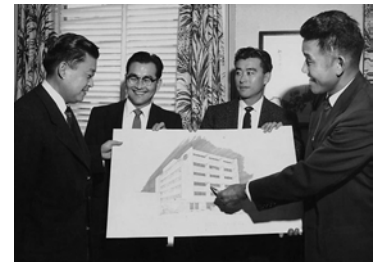
Much of this story remains unknown to Angelenos. In his introduction to the *REgenerations Oral History Project: Rebuilding Japanese American Families, Communities, and Civil Rights in the Resettlement Era: Los Angeles Region*, historian Arthur A. Hansen writes that:

*"...the resettlement experience of Japanese Americans has been relegated to the margins of scholarly literature and popular memory, not only outside, but also within Japanese America. This neglect of the resettlement era, which sociologist Tetsuden Kashima as far back as 1980 labeled 'social amnesia,' has not been salutary.*

*"In the mainstream American public (including the general academic community) it has fostered the false understanding that, notwithstanding their wartime exclusion and incarceration, Japanese Americans metamorphosed almost instantly after World War II into what the U.S. media by the early 1960s was marketing as this country's 'model minority.' Such a wrong-headed perception is consonant with the consoling American myth that our nation's most undemocratic deeds and uncivil behavior inevitably result in egalitarian progress. However, this outlook simultaneously cleanses the 'relocation' of its status as a bone fide social disaster, replete with long-lasting dislocations and repercussions, and reduces the painstaking rebuilding role by Nikkei individuals, families, groups, and communities during the postwar years to a puzzling miracle of race, ethnicity, and culture.*

*"As for the comparative neglect by Japanese Americans of 'resettlement,' this also has been costly. Having at last confronted one traumatic chapter of its collective past, 'relocation,' through the protracted process of 'redress,' the community has tended, understandably enough, to curtail its rendezvous with its own recent history."*

*Tosh Terasawa with plans for a modern building (top, right); with Mayor Sam Yorty; at a relocation camp (left)*



Unfortunately, the environmental document that was circulated (known as an “MND,” or Mitigated Negative Declaration) also exhibits the same sort of “social amnesia” when staff fails to acknowledge the wealth of material presented to the Planning Department first in 2007 and again in July 2011, when a new project emerged involving the same site.

The MND does not identify the building as an historic resource (along with several other omissions), and as a result WAHA has appealed its certification and has asked the City Council to redo it, or prepare a full Environmental Impact Report if demolition remains a part of the project. Because the primary reason demolition is being considered at this point is to provide approximately twice as much onsite surface parking as is technically required, and the project also has available to it an adjacent, 500-parking space parking structure, WAHA believes a true exploration of alternatives would result in the Bank of Tokyo’s retention on site.

## Background

Jefferson Park extends from Western on the east to Crenshaw on the west, from about 26th Place to Exposition. Both before and after World War II, many Japanese-American families settled in the area (and more broadly to about Vermont on the east, and to La Brea on the west.) Many (or most) of the resettlers lost their homes during internment at such relocation camps as Manzanar.

One of those resettlers was a young man named Toshikazu (“Tosh”) Terasawa. Terasawa and his family lived on East 2nd Street in Boyle Heights before WWII. Boyle Heights at the time was one of the most diverse communities in the country; it was home to Russians, Jews, Mexican Americans, Japanese Americans and other immigrants – not living in separate enclaves but rather side-by-side in a multicultural neighborhood. But like thousands of other Japanese American families, the Terasawa (sometimes written Terazawa) family was rounded up in March, 1942, placed on a bus and transported to Manzanar’s barracks and tents in the desert. Tosh Terasawa was 19 years old, and was a recent graduate of Roosevelt High School.

## Internment

According to Densho, the Japanese American Legacy project, “The United States Government incarcerated 120,313 Japanese Americans during World War II, placing the majority of them in 10 concentration camps run by the War Relocation Authority or in other camps or centers of detention run by the Justice Department or other government agencies. Americans of Japanese ancestry, 70 percent American citizens, were forced off the West Coast or parts of Hawai’i. Most had to sell their homes and businesses at great losses and some lost everything without compensation. Two-thirds of those incarcerated were American citizens by birth, their parents, not allowed to become citizens, had lived as permanent U.S. residents for the previous 20-40 years. In 1982, a committee appointed by the U.S. Congress concluded that the incarceration was carried out without adequate reasons of security and was motivated largely by racial prejudice, wartime hysteria and a failure of political leadership.

“This was a dark chapter in American history: the mass incarceration of loyal Japanese Americans into barbed wire compounds surrounded by guards by their own government.”

“Concentration Camps” was the term used by U.S. officials at the time: Congressman John Rankin said on December 15, 1941, “I’m for catching every Japanese in America, Alaska, and Hawai’i now and putting them in concentration camps.” And Henry McLemore, a Hearst syndicated columnist, wrote in January, 1942: *“I am for immediate removal of every Japanese on the West Coast to a point deep in the interior. I don’t mean a nice part of the interior either. Herd ‘em up, pack ‘em off and give ‘em the inside room in the badlands. Let ‘em be pinched, hurt, hungry and dead up against it . . . Personally, I hate the Japanese. And that goes for all of them.”*

In 1943, Tosh Terasawa was sent to Camp Savage in Minnesota, (pictured, prior page). Terasawa had returned to Manzanar by 1944, and also spent time interned at Tule Lake Camp. After the war, Terasawa moved to Jefferson Park. He was able to attend USC, and became a licensed architect in 1949. About 15 years later, while enjoying the fruits of a well-established architecture career, Terasawa and his partner, Arthur O’Leary, were hired to design the Bank of Tokyo’s branch building that would serve this community.

The site of the former Japanese American relocation camp at Manzanar is now a registered historic landmark. It bears a plaque which reads, “May the injustices and humiliation suffered here as a result of hysteria, racism and economic exploitation never emerge again.”

WAHA believes that the Bank of Tokyo building can similarly tell this story of a dark chapter in American history to future generations.

The Bank of Tokyo building represents a still-standing piece of community fabric in a neighborhood where much has been demolished. It is reflective of a time both past and present of a neighborhood filled with diverse culture. It is important to work toward goals that ensure the Japanese-American community’s history in Jefferson Park, as expressed through physical structures, is not erased. ●

*Boarding the bus for relocation, Little Tokyo, 1942*



# Preservation Matters

## Engine Co. No. 18

*continued from page 1*

built to accommodate horse-drawn engines. Two towers with octagonal tiled roofs frame its principal façade. In between the towers lies a scalloped parapet – a common design element of the Mission style. (More historical background: The horse era in Los Angeles fire-fighting history began in 1877 with the purchase of two horses for the volunteer company Hose Company No. 1. By the time Engine Company 18 opened, the City Fire Department employed about 175 men, with a monthly payroll of \$15,000, and in 1906 alone the Department placed 32 new horses into service.)

In 2005, the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) announced plans to sell the building, triggering a firestorm of protest from neighbors and local organizations (including WAHA), all of whom expressed the desire that the building remain in public use. In the mid-1980s the fire station had been transferred to the CRA to be utilized for art classes, as a graphic arts training center, gallery, and other “public uses.” Many of our neighbors and WAHA members attended classes and events in the firehouse when it was a lively venue. For much of the last decade, Engine House No. 18 has been vacant and padlocked. WAHA included the building in our 2008 tour, Landmarks of West Adams, to help focus attention on the situation.

Nonetheless, the CRA proceeded to issue a Request for Proposal, seeking developers to either adaptively re-use the property for private housing (affordable or market rate), or for a public use. There was more than one responding offer. CRA accepted the proposal by the Exceptional Children’s Foundation to purchase the fire station for \$500,000 and repurpose Engine House No. 18 with a new non-profit arts training use which, according to the CRA staff report, “creates educational, cultural and employment opportunities in the Project Area and surrounding South Los Angeles.”

The Exceptional Children’s Foundation (ECF) is a non-profit organization started in 1946 by parents who had children with developmental disabilities. Back then parents were encouraged to place their special needs child in state institutions. However, this group of parents wanted to raise their children at home. Today the organization serves over 2000 children and adults and their families throughout Los Angeles County, with early intervention, speech therapy, physical therapy, residential, work training and art programs, such as this one. You may recognize ECF’s name, since it has a longtime facility on Adams and Cimarron. It has been running art programs since 1968.

The art center at Engine Company No. 18 will employ 30 artists who will support the clients’ creativity. According to the accepted proposal, the building will basically remain the same with cosmetic refurbishing (following Secretary of Interior guidelines), electrical and HVAC upgrades, and the addition of a small elevator and a kiln. The renovated space will include showcase areas, and state-of-the-art ceramics and printmaking departments. The mission of ECF’s art centers is to train adults with developmental disabilities into working fine artists. Art Center participants range in age from 18 to 65 and often have multiple disabilities - mental retardation, cerebral palsy, epilepsy, autism and/or emotional and psychiatric disorders. ●



*Engine Company No. 18 was built to accommodate horse-drawn fire engines. The photo to the left is on a more light-hearted occasion: a race between two companies. The fire station remained in service through the 1930s, as can be seen in the other two photos on this page.*

## UCLA's Clark Library Announces 2011-12 Chamber Music Season

The winners of the 2011 Grammy Award for chamber music number among the top performers scheduled to appear over the coming year at UCLA's William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. In addition to the Parker Quartet, the concert season includes a command performance by Augustin Hadelich, widely considered the best young violinist active today.

The season runs from Sunday, Oct. 30, through Sunday, April 22, 2012, at the gem-like 1926 library, located in Los Angeles' historic West Adams district. "I'm extremely pleased to continue the long and proud tradition of Chamber Music at the Clark," said Barbara Fuchs, the newly appointed director of the UCLA Center for 17th- and 18th-Century Studies, which organizes the concerts. "This promises to be our best season ever."

The Sunday afternoon concerts offer a rare opportunity to visit the sumptuous library and grounds, which were donated 85 years ago to UCLA by philanthropist and copper fortune scion William Andrews Clark Jr., who also founded the Los Angeles Philharmonic. The 2 p.m. performances take place in a 100-seat drawing room specifically created by Clark in 1926 for his own chamber concerts. The wood-paneled room features an ornate fireplace and elaborate murals. A reception with the musicians follows each concert.

During its 17-year history, Chamber Music at the Clark has earned a reputation as a launching pad for up-and-coming American talent and for fine foreign ensembles seeking to make inroads in the U.S. Demand consistently outstrips seating in the intimate venue, so organizers distribute tickets by lottery. Submissions are due approximately five weeks prior to each concert. The next deadline is October 28.

**Rachel Barton Pine**, a former child prodigy who has gone on to a significant recording and performing career, both as a classical violin soloist and a heavy metal rocker, performs December 4 for the first time at the Clark. Despite a professed affinity for Black Sabbath, Metallica and Slayer, she will be presenting traditional — and spectacularly demanding — fare for a violin virtuoso: all 24 of Niccolò Paganini's *Caprices for Solo Violin*. (Lottery closes Oct. 28.)

**The Boston Trio**, a female ensemble recognized as one of the best American trios in chamber music today, will return January 22 for their third performance at the Clark. Among their offerings, the cellist, pianist and violinist will tackle Dmitri Shostakovich's rarely performed *Trio No. 1* and Maurice Ravel's only piano trio, which is a renowned masterpiece. (Lottery closes Dec. 2.)

**Augustin Hadelich**, in his fourth appearance at the Clark, will perform Jan. 29 with acclaimed pianist Joyce Yang. The program will feature a seldom performed piece, *From Far Beyond Chrysanthemums and November Fog*, by 20th-century Japanese composer Toru Takemitsu, and a Ravel piece, *Tzigane*, that is rarely performed on violin. (Lottery closes Dec. 2.)

**The Parker Quartet**, in its second appearance at the Clark, will perform a March 11 program that includes *Intimate Letters*, the haunting autobiographical piece by early 20th-century Czech composer Leos Janacek popularized in the soundtrack to the 1988 film adaptation of Milan Kundera's *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*. The Twin Cities-based string quartet won a Grammy Award earlier this year for a recording of little known quartets by the 20th-century Hungarian composer Gyorgy Ligeti, whose music has been featured in such Stanley Kubrick films as *2001: A Space Odyssey* and *Eyes Wide Shut*. (Lottery closes Feb. 3.)

**The Ying Quartet**, a string ensemble renowned for its cohesion (three are siblings who have played together all their lives), returns March 18 for its sixth Clark appearance. In the quartet's only Los Angeles performance this season, it will present a Russian-themed program, featuring a piece — *Quartet No. 2 in A Minor, Op. 35a* — by the rarely performed late 19th-century Russian composer Anton Arensky, Dmitri Shostakovich's infrequently performed *Quartet No. 12* and one of Beethoven's "Razumovksy" *Quartets*, named for the Russian ambassador in Vienna who commissioned them. (Lottery closes Feb. 10.)

**Sergey Antonov**, widely regarded as one of the top cellists in the world, performs April 22 for the first time at the Clark. Along with pianist Ilya Kazantsev, the 2007 Tchaikovsky Competition gold medal winner will play Frédéric Chopin's technically demanding *Introduction and Polonaise Brillante, Op. 3*, Richard Strauss' rarely performed *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 6*, and Sergei Rachmaninoff's much beloved *Sonata for Cello and Piano, Op. 19*. (Lottery closes March 16.)

Tickets cost \$25. Lottery submission forms are available at this website: [www.c1718cs.ucla.edu](http://www.c1718cs.ucla.edu). Submissions must either be hand-delivered or postmarked by the deadline to UCLA's Center for 17th- and 18th-Century Studies, 310 Royce Hall, Box 951404, Los Angeles, CA 90095-1404. ●



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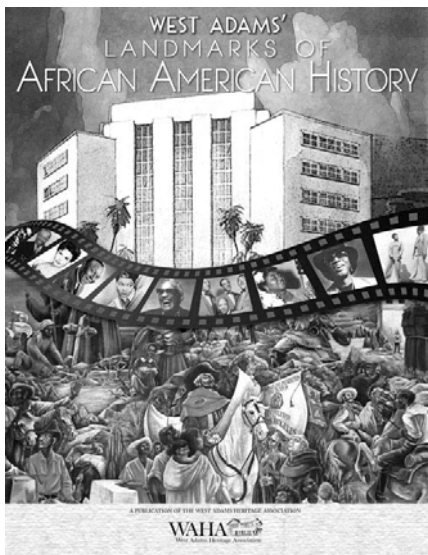
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Inside the pages of *West Adams: Landmarks of African American History*, you'll learn about religious and civic institutions that play significant roles in West Adams' (and Los Angeles') black heritage, along with civil rights leaders, entertainers, sports figures, wartime heroes, and trailblazers in their fields. You'll meet many who forged the way:

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- African American attorneys who fought for civil rights, not only for black residents but also their Japanese-American neighbors
- Trailblazing black journalists
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- A lauded African American soprano whose life was cut short by a tragic accident
- The first black dentist to graduate from USC's renown School of Dentistry, and his wife, the first female black dentist to do the same; together they helped found the Los Angeles chapter of the NAACP
- The first African American actor to find success on the Silver Screen — and many others who followed in his footsteps to a reel life in Hollywood and a real life in the West Adams District



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# Calendar ✓

## Upcoming Events

Look for more details on upcoming events on WAHA's website, [www.WestAdamsHeritage.org](http://www.WestAdamsHeritage.org)

### OCTOBER

#### Saturday, October 29

Filmed in West Adams: A screening of the romantic supernatural thriller, *The Uninvited*. RSVP required. (see story, page 1)

### DECEMBER

#### Saturday and Sunday, December 3 and 4:

Celebrate A Silver Jubilee: WAHA's 25th Annual Holiday Historic Homes Tour & Progressive Dinner (see story, page 3)

## Open House at Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building

Saturday, October 22  
Noon to 3 p.m.

**This may be your last chance  
to view the endangered murals!**  
(See page 1 for information)



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