

Santa Monica
WALL to WALL

Exploring our Murals by the Stories they Tell

November 2021

PRESENTED BY



SANTA MONICA
CONSERVANCY



OUR MURALS THEME BY THEME

The walls of Santa Monica display a profusion of murals with messages as diverse as their vibrant color schemes. Some stand boldly on our boulevards, while others are hidden in alleyways, obscured by development or faded by time and inattention.



Each one is unique, with its own story to tell or issue to air, adding vital strands of inclusion to the fabric of our city. Additional works can be seen in the interiors of Santa Monica's public buildings, including City Hall and the Main Library, offering important contributions to local history.



Whether inside or out, the murals of Santa Monica can educate and delight, inspire and incite. They also can enlighten us with street-level perspectives from the less-represented communities of our city. Here we offer a sampling of Santa Monica street murals with specific messages, curated into five thematic groups for more focused exploration. Our guide concludes with a brief discussion of the inherent challenges of preserving our murals as reflections of local history and the diversity of our city.



DIVERSE CULTURES

I'M DOWN

1639 18th Street
18TH STREET ARTS CENTER
NORTH WALL

ARTIST:
Brendan Fernandes



This mural tells the story of immigration and gentrification in the Pico neighborhood by combining the several languages spoken in the area with bold graphic design.

ANOTHER MAGICAL SUNSET

1320 4th Street
PARKING STRUCTURE
ENTRANCE

ARTIST:
Gilbert “Magu” Lujan



The artist intended to celebrate the ambiance and diversity of Santa Monica, sending a strong message of inclusion with his work. Lujan is the founder of the famous muralist group “Los Four.”

TOGETHER WE CAN END HOMELESSNESS

Colorado Avenue
& 7th Street

ARTIST:
Corrie Mattie



Housing and social services agency The People Concern teamed with the artist and Beautify Earth to create a unified campaign to address homelessness. Beautify Earth is a non-profit organization that works with communities, businesses and artists to transform bare walls into public art.

SESAME STREET (AND GEORGE FLOYD)

Pico Boulevard
& 7th Street

ARTIST:
Muck Rock
(Jules Muck)



A mural depicting the Sesame Street gang was partially overlaid with a tribute to George Floyd. Jules Muck has painted several Floyd murals to pay tribute to victims of police brutality.

THE HISTORY OF THE PICO NEIGHBORHOOD MURAL

Stewart Street
between Virginia
& Kansas Avenues
10 FREEWAY UNDERPASS

ARTIST:
Ann Elizabeth
Thiermann



This mural references many cultural resources important to the community as well as pivotal moments in the neighborhood's history. The work has been exhibited in numerous solo and group shows throughout California.

BE EVERYWOMAN LA

1801 Pico Boulevard
SUBWAY, EAST WALL

ARTIST:
Davia King



Using the public to act as her models, the artist captures each person in a blind contour style while creating a moment of connection.

POLYNESIAN WOMAN

1429 Lincoln Boulevard

ARTIST:
Clinton Bopp



In his numerous works, the artist is committed to revealing the profound inter-connectedness of people and the world around him. His art reflects the amalgamation and influence of his roots in New Zealand.

SHE WHO SEES

2625 Main Street

ARTIST:
Kristel Lerman



The artist is a graduate of the Otis School of Art and Design. In addition to her murals, she works in graphic and illustration art, design and branding, and those influences can be seen here.

INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGING

LOVE WINS

2209 Main Street
EMBELLISHES A COOPERATIVE
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

ARTIST:
Gino-Flo



This mural is a collaboration among the Community Corporation, Beautify Earth and the City of Santa Monica, and embodies the ideals of supportive housing.

YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL

2522 Main Street
SURF LIQUOR

ARTISTS:
Spencer "MAR" Guilbert
Ruben Rojas



As cofounder of Beautify Earth, Rojas uses the urban landscape as his canvas and encourages optimism and collaboration within communities. Guilbert's geometric pattern seen here is a signature style he calls fireflowers.

LOVE IMPERFECTLY PERFECT

1303 Montana Avenue

ARTIST:
Ruben Rojas



We often refrain from speaking up or taking action, fearing what others might think. This work is a reminder to calm our voices of self-doubt or insecurity and remember that we're perfect as we are.

LOVE

2827 Pico Boulevard
THE BRIXTON

ARTIST:
Allison Kunath



Inspired by the human experience of shared love, the hands spell out the word "love" in American sign language, implying that love is something that is built, as if by hand, intentionally and carefully.

TOGETHER WE CAN
1119 Wilshire Boulevard
RUSTIC CANYON

ARTIST:
Ruben Rojas



This trio of murals is classic Rojas, bringing messages of love, social change and community transformation. His art challenges the status quo and creates space for inquiry, activism and change.

LOVE + ACTION
1929 Main Street

ARTIST:
The Art of Chase



The artist's psychedelic, graphic and positive aesthetic adds to the urban landscape but also seeks to create a dialogue between city inhabitants and within ourselves. The artist has painted some 350 murals worldwide.

THE UNIVERSE IS CONSPIRING
1812 Lincoln Boulevard

ARTISTS:
Heidi Neilson
Amanda Harris-Gibbs



The owner of a therapy spa engaged the artists to create a permanent mural on the side of her building incorporating her guiding principle in the universe. It took nine weekends to complete the work.

GRATITUDE
1302 Santa Monica Boulevard
MARCO POLO IMPORTS

ARTISTS:
Cloe Hakakian
Ruben Rojas



This mural overlooking a car lot is a pleasant reminder to come from a place of gratitude. The artists believe that when we are grateful, we are abundant and can receive all of life's blessings.

COMMUNITY PRIDE

GREETINGS FROM SANTA MONICA

315 Colorado Avenue

ARTISTS:
Victor Ving
Lisa Beggs



In collaboration with the now-closed Bloomingdale's as a way to give back to the community, the artists painted their 32nd vintage-looking souvenir postcard mural near the end of old Route 66.

SANTA MONICA BEACH

1234 4th Street
PARKING STRUCTURE 1

ARTIST:
Art Mortimer



This mural was intended to bring the historic and contemporary beach experience into downtown Santa Monica — which is separated from the shore by the Palisades cliffs — for the benefit of nearby workers and passersby.

SANTA MONICA PIER MURAL

1614 Santa Monica
Boulevard

ARTIST:
Gustavo Zermeno Jr.



The artist grew up in Venice, the son of Mexican immigrants. His inclusion of wings in this mural reflects their importance in Mexican culture as a symbol of union, strength and balance.

SANTA MONICA TRIBUTE

Olympic Boulevard
at 6th Street
SANTA MONICA HIGH SCHOOL

ARTIST:
Ruben Rojas



Beautify Earth commissioned this mural in appreciation for the love and support that Santa Monica has given to the organization. The mural runs nearly a half-block near what used to be the terminus of iconic Route 66.

DOGTOWN
1011 Wilshire Boulevard

ARTISTS:
Luke K2S
Quik K2S



The history of skateboarding in Southern California has been strongly influenced by the surf culture in the surrounding areas of Santa Monica and Venice, nicknamed Dogtown.

**BY THE BAY,
BY THE WAY**
215 Bay Street
RESIDENTIAL ALLEY

ARTIST:
Bob House



With this mural depicting life around the Santa Monica Pier, the artist wanted to dignify and bring pride to a neglected alley not far away.

**THESE NIGHTS
ARE STILL OURS**
2807 Main Street
ASHLAND HILL

ARTIST:
Jonas Never



The prolific artist considers this mural his most challenging technically. Pictured is the Ocean Skyway, a gondola that once rose above the bygone Pacific Ocean Park.

**SANTA MONICA
BLUFFS**
1021 Pico Boulevard

ARTIST:
Clinton Bopp



This work is part of Beautify Earth's promotion of Santa Monica neighborhoods, including more than 25 murals in the Pico neighborhood.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

I DREAM OF EQUAL RIGHTS

2408 Lincoln Boulevard

ARTIST:
Muck Rock



This mural of Jeannie from the beloved TV series exemplifies Muck's strong belief in empowering young women. The artist works with the Queens Project in Watts, mentoring girls the way renowned muralist Lady Pink once did for her.

THE GUARDIAN

1450 11th Street
RED CROSS OFFICE

ARTIST:
Francisco Letelier



Here, the mural employs the benevolent, metaphoric figure of a woman to celebrate the Red Cross and the historic role of women in the organization.

ECOLOGY

BOMBING SCIENCE

2602 Lincoln Boulevard
BLICK ART
WEST SIDE OF BUILDING

ARTIST:
Louis Masai



This work focuses on the dangers of extinction due to pollution, including to big-eyed thresher sharks, a species suffering an apparent decline in population. The shark is trailed by a honeybee, a species facing similar challenges.

WHALE OF A MURAL

Ocean Park Boulevard
at 3rd Street

ARTIST:
Daniel Alonzo



The artist intended this 1983 mural as a statement about the vulnerability of whales, in solidarity with the Save the Whales campaign underway at the time.

INSPIRATIONAL PEOPLE

KOBE BRYANT MURAL
1911 Lincoln Boulevard
FACING REAR ALLEY

ARTIST:
Muck Rock



This mural from the Iverbe Sports Camp is one of many around Los Angeles painted in remembrance of the renowned basketball player and his daughter Gianna.

ABE LINCOLN MURAL
2640 Lincoln Boulevard

ARTIST:
Trek Kelly



This mural is part of a Beautify Earth effort to enliven and uplift the area. Lincoln's quote is a folksy take on the classic Chassidic adage, "Think good thoughts and it will be good."

JAY ADAMS TRIBUTE
2003 Main Street
DOGTOWN COFFEE
EAST SIDE OF BUILDING

ARTIST:
Chase



This mural is dedicated to Dogtown's legendary skateboarder Jay Adams, who died in 2014 at age 53. The artist received permission from renowned photographer Glen E. Freedman to use his amazing image of Jay as a reference.

ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
101 Wilshire Boulevard
FAIRMONT MIRAMAR HOTEL
& BUNGALOWS

ARTIST:
Jonas Never



The artist began with graffiti, which accustomed him to painting big. His experience playing college baseball gave him an appreciation for athletes. Eventually, his work blended sports and pop culture. This mural was a result.

PRESERVATION IN PRACTICE

All murals face inherent threats from the elements, vandalism and erasure. While not all of them are meant to be permanent, others become important statements or symbols of their times, worthy of preservation as snapshots of local history or windows on neighborhood cultures.

While there are no specific protections for murals in Santa Monica's municipal code, they may be protected as "character defining features" in designated landmarks. In recent years, the Santa Monica Conservancy has advocated for the preservation of two important mural installations, the City Hall murals by Stanton Macdonald-Wright and *Pleasures along the Beach* by Millard Sheets at Wilshire Boulevard and 26th Street.

HISTORY AND RECREATION MURALS

1685 Main Street

SANTA MONICA
CITY HALL LOBBY

ARTIST:
Stanton
Macdonald-Wright



The Santa Monica Conservancy is leading efforts to protect these threatened murals by educating the community about their history and meaning in the face of objections by some about the way they present local history.

PLEASURES ALONG THE BEACH

2600 Wilshire Boulevard

FORMER HOME SAVINGS BUILDING

ARTIST:
Millard Sheets



After a lengthy effort to designate the former Home Savings building and its artwork, which was strongly supported by the Santa Monica Conservancy, the City settled the owner's lawsuit challenging the designation by allowing the mural to be relocated.

MUIR WOODS MURAL

721 Ocean Park Boulevard

FORMER OLYMPIC HIGH SCHOOL

ARTIST:
Jane Golden



Badly damaged by the elements, this mural was facing a paint-over until activists objected and the School Board voted to establish a community process to either restore the mural or create a new work.

UNBRIDLED

Ocean Park Boulevard and 3rd Street

ARTIST:
David Gordon



Here, we see Rachel Burch of May & Burch Conservation removing graffiti on the mural. The 35-year-old work underwent a major restoration by the firm in 2017, including the repair of surface damage. "This restored back a lot of the original beauty of the mural, which was quite disfigured by dirt and non-original layers that had deteriorated over time," Burch said.

CREDITS

CONTENT

Sherrill Kushner
Steve Loeper
Libby Motika
Libby Pachares
Robin Tung

PHOTOGRAPHY

Peter Leonard
Steve Loeper
J.J. Prats

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SOURCES

annthiermann.com
The Argonaut
theartofchase.com
Beautify Earth
Complete Guide to
Street Art Murals in Santa Monica
daviaking.com
Lifehacker
LinkedIn.com/in/kristel-lerman
therebbe.org
Santa Monica Daily Press
Spencermarguilburt.com
Venice Paparazzi-Beyond the Streets
Wescover

MURALISTS

PAGE 1, FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

East Los Streetscapers
Marcel "SEL" Blanco and Ruben Rojas
Carl Markham
Hex & Keo

PAGE 10, FIRST AND SECOND PHOTOS

Kristel Lerman
Ann Elizabeth Thiermann

PAGE 12, FROM TOP TO BOTTOM

Jesse Spears & Shrine
Eva Cockcroft
Artist unknown
[@LvLUPKid](https://twitter.com/LvLUPKid)

PAGE 13, BOTTOM OF PAGE

Ann Elizabeth Thiermann



ABOUT THE CONSERVANCY

Founded in 2002, the Santa Monica Conservancy promotes widespread understanding and appreciation of the cultural, social, economic, and environmental benefits of historic preservation.

The Conservancy supports Santa Monica's unique historic resources with a broad program of educational tours, lectures and special events, advocacy, and annual awards recognizing significant preservation efforts. Thousands of residents and visitors have enjoyed our tours of the Annenberg Community Beach House, historic downtown Santa Monica and the Preservation Resource Center, an 1890s shotgun house rehabilitated by the Conservancy, and our Mosaic webinars presenting the stories of the diverse communities that shaped our City.

The Conservancy works to ensure that historic preservation is incorporated in City plans, that property owners receive incentives to preserve their historic structures, and reviews demolition applications for properties forty or more years old to determine if they merit nomination for protection as designated City Landmarks.

If you enjoyed this program, please consider making a donation or joining our organization. Visit www.smconservancy.org or email info@smconservancy.org for more information.



www.santamonicaconservancy.org

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