

LOS ANGELES CITYWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXT STATEMENT

Context: Public and Private Institutional Development, 1850-1980

Sub-Context: Cultural Development and Institutions, 1850-1980

Theme: Folk Art, 1850-1980



Prepared for:

City of Los Angeles
Department of City Planning
Office of Historic Resources

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PREFACE

This theme of Folk Art is a component of Los Angeles' citywide historic context statement and provides guidance to field surveyors in identifying and evaluating potential historic resources relating to this category. Refer to HistoricPlacesLA.org for information on designated resources associated with this theme as well as those identified through SurveyLA and other surveys.

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INTRODUCTION

Folk Art as a category of architecture and landscape design differs from most other categories in that each resource is unique. Folk Art resources are expressions of individual artistic visions rather than examples of a shared design vocabulary, building type, or patronage. There are, however, characteristics which these resources typically share and set them apart from other resources.

First, each is a product of a creator untrained in the design professions. Folk Art creators are typically not architects, artists, or builders in the conventional sense. They have no education and no professional accreditation. Instead, they work from a personal vision of what they want to create and then carry out this vision on their own, sometimes using techniques inherited from traditional crafts.

Second, the resources they create are outside the boundaries of what is considered orthodox design. They ignore standard practices of architecture, construction, and landscaping, breaking the rules of good taste and accepted community norms. This follows from the creator's absence of professional training and the desire to follow a personal vision.

Third, the resource occupies a space personally controlled by the creator. The resource often consists of multiple items – structures, landscape features, and decorative objects – and fills this personally controlled space or environment.¹ This space is typically the site of the creator's home, surrounding or adjoining the dwelling, and is often within a community tolerant of a neighborhood eccentric.

Fourth, the goal of the resource is typically a display of some kind, to be seen by the public, either in passing or by invitation. There may be an obvious theme to the display, such as the creator's interest in

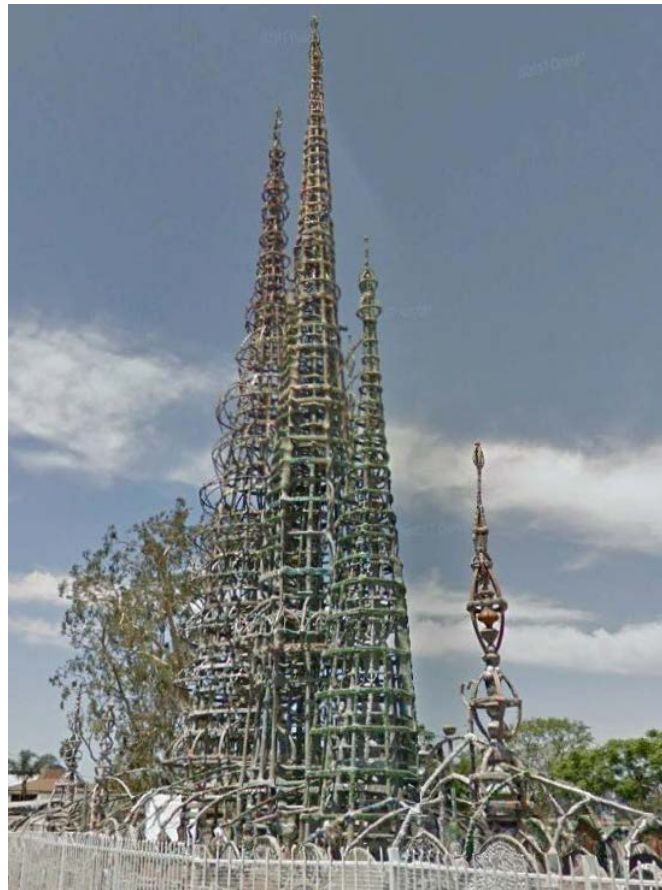
¹ The term folk art environment is also used to describe the artist-controlled space. The National Register of Historic Places Thematic Nomination for Twentieth Century Folk Art Environments in California refers to them as environments as "visitors walking through these sites will find themselves surrounded on every side by the vision of the artist..."

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automobile parts or in the characters from “The Wizard of Oz,” to cite two designated resources.² But the theme may also be some personal vision of the creator that leads to fantastic forms never explained, such as the well-known Watts Towers.³

Fifth, Folk Art resources typically employ the use of assemblage. An assemblage is a work of art that consists of smaller items – either fragments or intact objects – placed adjacent to each other to create a larger whole. The items may be chosen with clear references to the resource’s theme – such as entire car parts – or may be used for their color and texture. The assemblage may be a flat display complete in itself, much like a mosaic, or a covering over a three-dimensional object, where it interacts with the shape of the object to create a whole.



*Watts Towers, from the southeast
West, Center and East Towers, with Ship of Marco Polo on the right
(Photo by author)*

² These resources are the Harmon Car Wall (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 944) and the Garden of Oz (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 996). They are discussed below in the Historic Context.

³ L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 15; also discussed in the Historic Context below.

HISTORIC CONTEXT

The narrative begins with an examination of the concept of Folk Art as a category of art history and the place of architecture within this concept. It then looks at how this concept is suited to certain resources through the analysis of three designated examples: Watts Towers (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 15), the Hermon Car Wall (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 944) and the Garden of Oz (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 996). It concludes with the theme's eligibility standards used in the evaluation of Folk Art resources.

Folk Art as a Category

The idea of Folk Art as a type of architecture and landscape design evolved from a specialized field of art history. During this evolution, it became broader in scope and less constrained in criteria. But the basic assumption of "folk" versus "professional" creation remains.

Folk Art as a concept began as a category of art history during the 1920s. It initially focused on decorative forms created by individuals considered to be talented but without formal training.⁴ "In simplest terms, American folk art consists of painting, sculpture and decoration of various kinds, characterized by an artistic innocence that distinguishes them from works of so-called fine art or the formal decorative arts."⁵

The concept of Folk Art was later extended to utilitarian forms, especially household objects. The creation of these objects was seen as rooted in pre-industrial handicrafts, separate from both high-art influences and designs of factory-produced items. These Folk Art objects drew from traditional, often ethnically-based, expressions common to somewhat isolated communities. In studying these objects, scholars tended to focus on the "art" and not the "folk," with attention to aesthetics rather than the social setting.⁶

Architecture as a subject for these art historians was generally limited to surface decoration. This consisted primarily of interior finishes – wall stenciling and painted murals – but included as well exterior decoration and objects such as signs calling out taverns and tradespeople. Of particular interest as expressions of ethnic continuity were the painted barn decorations found in Pennsylvania among early German American communities.⁷

The broader concept of Folk Art, as applied to architectural resources from later periods and located outside of isolated communities, retains the assumption that the originator is talented but untrained. It differs, however, in two ways. First, it includes entire structures and landscapes as well as surface

⁴ Jean Lipman and Alice Winchester, *Flowering of American Folk Art, 1776-1876* (New York: Viking, 1974), 8.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 9.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 8-9.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 9, 214-225.

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decoration. Second, there is less stress on the use of inherited vernacular modes and more on originality, to the point that eccentricity may be the most characteristic feature. This includes the unique uses of materials along with the creation of forms never before seen.

Resources that fit this broader definition of Folk Art combine a number of elements – structures, landscape features, sculptures, assemblages of objects – into a unified whole. This whole is within a defined physical setting over which the creator has total control, typically the lot surrounding the creator's home. While apparently constructed without the use of formal plans, these resources show a unity of design, through common subject matter, forms and/or materials, based on the unique vision of the creator.⁸

Watts Towers

Understanding Folk Art as a theme is best undertaken through examining examples of recognized quality. The best known and most fully developed, in terms of fulfilling the Eligibility Standards, are the Watts Towers. They are designated at the national level as a National Historic Landmark, at the state level as California Historical Landmark No. 993, and at the city level as Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument No. 15. The literature on the towers is extensive, and the more accessible sources are listed in the bibliography.⁹

This historic context focuses on those aspects of the Watts Towers which illustrate the Character Defining /Associative Features of a significant Folk Art resource. It looks at the background of the creator, at the location of the resource, and at three specific elements of the resource itself: its forms, its construction methods, and its use of assembled found objects.

The creator of the towers, Sabato Rodia, was a natural artist without formal training in either design or construction. An Italian immigrant who also used the first names of Simon and of Sam, Rodia arrived in the United States in the early 1890s, apparently illiterate at the time. He eventually found employment as a laborer on construction sites and by the early 1920s had acquired skills in concrete work and tile setting.¹⁰

Rodia seems to have had difficulty fitting into conventional society. By 1910 he had left a wife and two children in northern California and lived as an itinerant with a drinking problem before settling in Southern California around the time of the First World War. He then went through two more romantic relationships before deciding to stop drinking, live alone and dedicate his life to his towers.¹¹

⁸ Jan Wampler, *All Their Own: People and the Places They Build* (New York: Schenkman Publishing Company, 1977), 9-15.

⁹ Luisa Del Giudice, "Introduction: Sabato Rodia's Towers in Watts and the Search for Common Ground," in *Sabato Rodia's Watts Towers: Art, Migrations, Development*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 5.

¹⁰ Bud Goldstone and Arloa Paquin Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers* (Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 1997), 11, 28-32.

¹¹ Del Giudice, "Introduction," 1: Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 29-32.

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Sabato Rodia surrounded by his work, photo not dated (Los Angeles Public Library)

In 1921 Rodia moved to a lot that he had purchased in Watts.¹² He then began his work, with the stated goal of building “something big” which would be “something they never got ‘em in the world.”¹³ He said later in life that he chose the site specifically so that his creation could be seen from passing interurban trains.¹⁴

Rodia’s endeavor continued for over thirty years, as he worked as a day laborer on construction sites around the city and in his free time created his towers. He built, tore down, and then reconstructed elements of his vision, gaining a local reputation as “an incomprehensible crazy man.”¹⁵ Then, in 1955, he abandoned his work, deeded the site to a neighbor, and moved north to live near family in Martinez.¹⁶

The community of Watts, chosen by Rodia for his creation, was typical of the more tolerant districts receptive to Folk Art resources. It was still an independent city in 1920 and had a reputation as welcoming working class residents of all backgrounds. Lots were inexpensive and there were no deed restrictions barring minorities from purchasing property. By the early twenties Watts had substantial African-American, Latino, and European immigrant communities.¹⁷

Of significance for Rodia was that there were no building restrictions. A lack of zoning allowed for the mixture of residential, commercial, institutional, and industrial uses. Property owners could place any number of structures of any type on their lots, including sheds for raising farm animals. (Watts consolidated with Los Angeles in 1926, but there was apparently no move to restrict Rodia’s work by the new city authorities.)¹⁸

Also significant was the presence of multiple interurban rail lines. The Pacific Electric main line to Long Beach and San Pedro, consisting of four parallel tracks, ran from north to south through the city. At the city’s center was the Watts Junction, from which the line to Santa Ana extended to the southeast. South

¹² Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 11, 35.

¹³ Quoted in Del Giudice, “Introduction,” 1.

¹⁴ Mae Babitz and Jeanne Morgan, “Conversation with Sam Rodia,” in *Sabato Rodia’s Watts Towers: Art, Migrations, Development*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 362.

¹⁵ Del Giudice, “Introduction,” 2.

¹⁶ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 41-42.

¹⁷ Del Giudice, “Introduction,” 9-10.

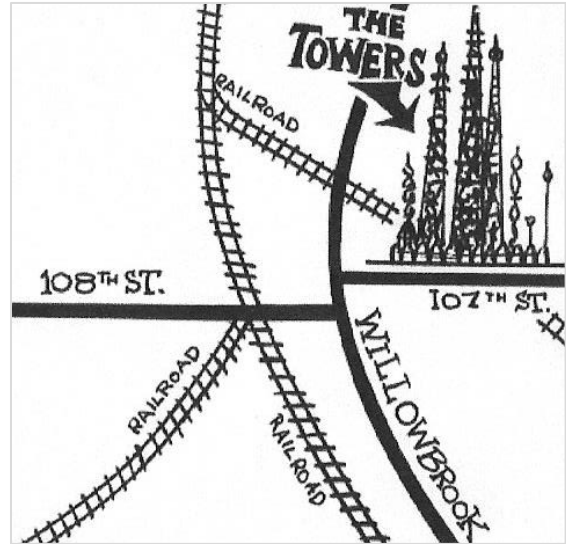
¹⁸ See theme of “Watts, 1902-1926” in the context for “Pre-Consolidation Communities of Los Angeles, 1862-1932,” in the Los Angeles Citywide Historic Context Statement.

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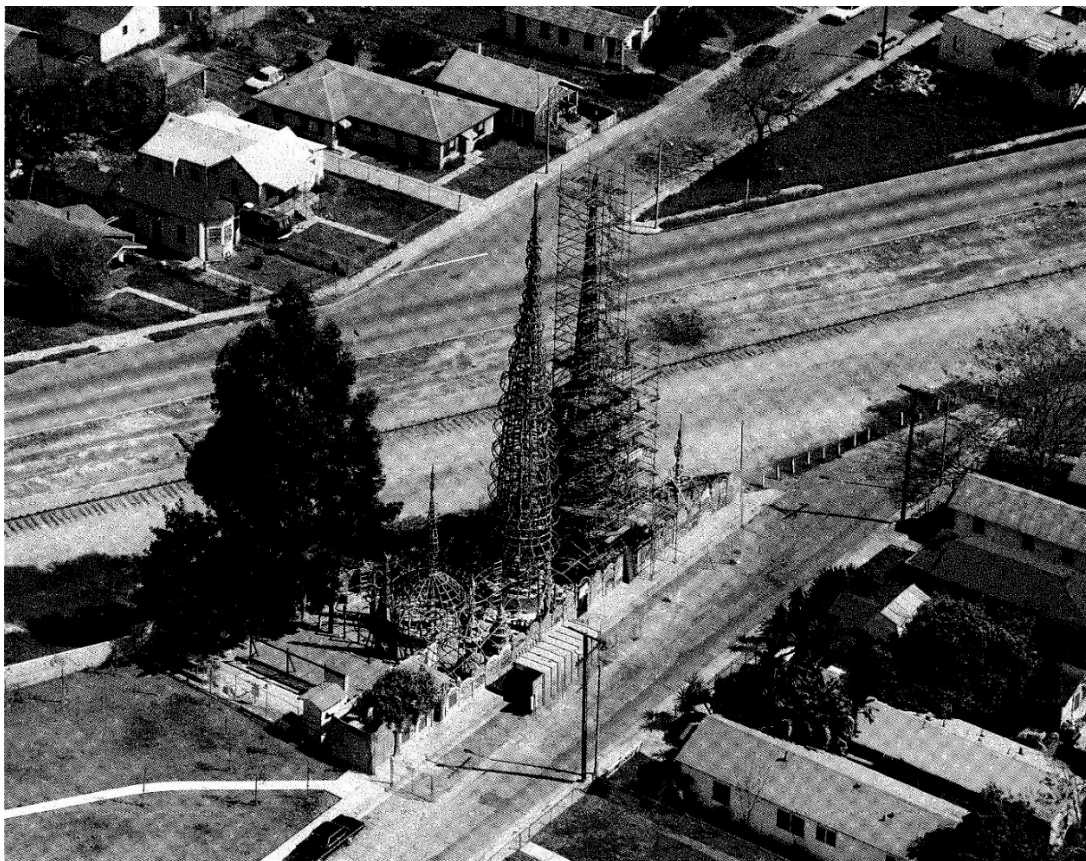
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of the Junction the line to Redondo Beach extended to the southwest. These three busy rail lines gave Watts a less than desirable aura for those in search of suburban tranquility, while providing good commuting connections for the less-well-off residents without cars.

Rodia built his towers on a triangular site in the southeast quarter of Watts. The angled side faces northeast and borders the rail line (now an abandoned right-of-way) to Santa Ana. The south side opens to Robin Street, today's East 107th Street, which dead-ends at the tracks at the eastern point of Rodia's property. The triangular site extends 138 feet along 107th Street and is 69 feet deep on its west side. The angled side bordering the tracks is 155 feet.¹⁹



1962 Map showing Watts Towers and rail lines through Watts (Los Angeles Public Library)



Watts Towers, aerial view showing surrounding low-scale mixed-use neighborhood
East 107th Street in the foreground, rail line right-of-way to the rear
(Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources)

¹⁹ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 11.

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The neighborhood along 107th Street was one of small residences on narrow lots, many with second buildings in the rear. In 1922, shortly after Rodia began his towers, he had neighbors to his west but half the lots across 107th Street were vacant. By 1950 some but not all of the vacant properties had been built upon, and the surrounding properties were still primarily single-story dwellings with outbuildings. This small-scale residential character provided a vivid contrast to the monumentality of the towers.²⁰

The unconventional background of Rodia and the tolerant nature of the Watts location are both typical of Folk Art resources. But the Towers themselves are unique, reflecting the unique vision of the creator. The primary elements are three conical structures of tall and narrow proportions, constructed as open frameworks or armatures of horizontal and vertical bars. The west tower is 99 ½ feet tall, the center tower 97 ¾ feet, and the east tower 55 feet.²¹



*Watts Towers, view from the east, photo circa 1973
East 107th Street on the left & rail line right-of-way on the right
(Los Angeles Public Library)*

²⁰ Aerial photograph in Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 79; 1922 Sanborn Map for Watts, Sheet 15.

²¹ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 50.

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Surrounding them are numerous other sculptures, also constructed as open frameworks, including the Gazebo with a 38-foot-high spire, the Ship of Marco Polo, with a spire of 28 feet, an additional 28-foot-high free-standing tower, and the 27-foot-tall edifice called the Chimney. Smaller elements are the 19-foot high Garden Spire, and yet another tower of 13 feet.²²

Enclosing these are the north wall, along the tracks, and the south wall, along 107th Street, both eight feet high, divided into segments, and faced with decoration. A canopy shelters what was the entry to Rodia's house (no longer standing). Numerous other open and solid elements fill the site and a patio floor covers the entire area.²³

The trio of primary towers and the surrounding elements are significant in three ways: first, the overall forms themselves; second, the construction techniques used in creating the forms; and third, the assembled use of found objects as coverings for the forms.

The origins of Rodia's idea for slender conical forms are uncertain. One source might have been something he remembered from his native Italy. Scholars have noted the Towers' resemblance to the *Gigli* ("lilies") of Nola. These were temporary structures which were displayed during religious festivals in the southern Italian city of Nola, not far from Rodia's birthplace.²⁴

The *Gigli* were tall, narrow wooden towers of obelisk form. Each *Giglio* was about 80 feet high and consisted of a wood framework, slightly tapered as it rose, which was covered with papier-mâché. The wood framework was constructed with horizontal cross members which could be used as a ladder, thereby eliminating the need for scaffolding, a technique employed by Rodia.²⁵



Watts Towers, detail of tower
(Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources)

²² Ibid., 50.

²³ Ibid., 50-53.

²⁴ Felice Ceparano, "The *Gigli* of Nola During Rodia's Times," in in *Sabato Rodia's Watts Towers: Art, Migrations, Development*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 125-144

²⁵ Ibid.

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The construction technique used for the towers was ingenious and apparently came from Rodia's intuitive understanding of reinforced concrete, or ferro-concrete, structural technology. The horizontal and vertical bars consisted of scrap steel, such as piping, bent into the shape required. Rodia then wrapped the bars in wire mesh and coated the mesh with concrete.²⁶

Some joints between the steel bars were held in place through friction, with a smaller pipe inserted into a larger pipe and fixed by nails driven into the joint. Other steel elements were spliced and lapped, and the wrapping of wiring and concrete acting together provided the joint. The result of this coating was a shell of reinforced concrete, or ferro-concrete, similar to that used by pioneering European engineers in the early 1920s.²⁷

Rodia also intuitively understood the need for seismic protection. Linking the taller towers and interspersed among all the elements are horizontal and angled buttressing rods, arched and decorated in such a way as to become part of the artistic whole. The entire ensemble can flex and remain in place during an earthquake.²⁸

Onto these unique forms with their innovative construction techniques Rodia applied a covering that consisted of assemblages of found objects, both whole and in fragments. These included broken dishes, tiles, mirrors, rocks, seashells, and any other items that would provide color. He also made use of containers for soft drinks and other consumer items, displaying the labels if possible. The smaller items were used on the towers and surrounding bars, while the larger items fit onto the flat surfaces of the fences and the more solid sculptures.²⁹



Watts Towers, view of tower bases and buttressing supports, photo circa 1966 (Los Angeles Public Library)

²⁶ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 54-55.

²⁷ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 54-56; Leon Whiteson, *The Watts Towers of Los Angeles* (Oakville, Ontario, Canada: Mosaic Press, 1989), 22.

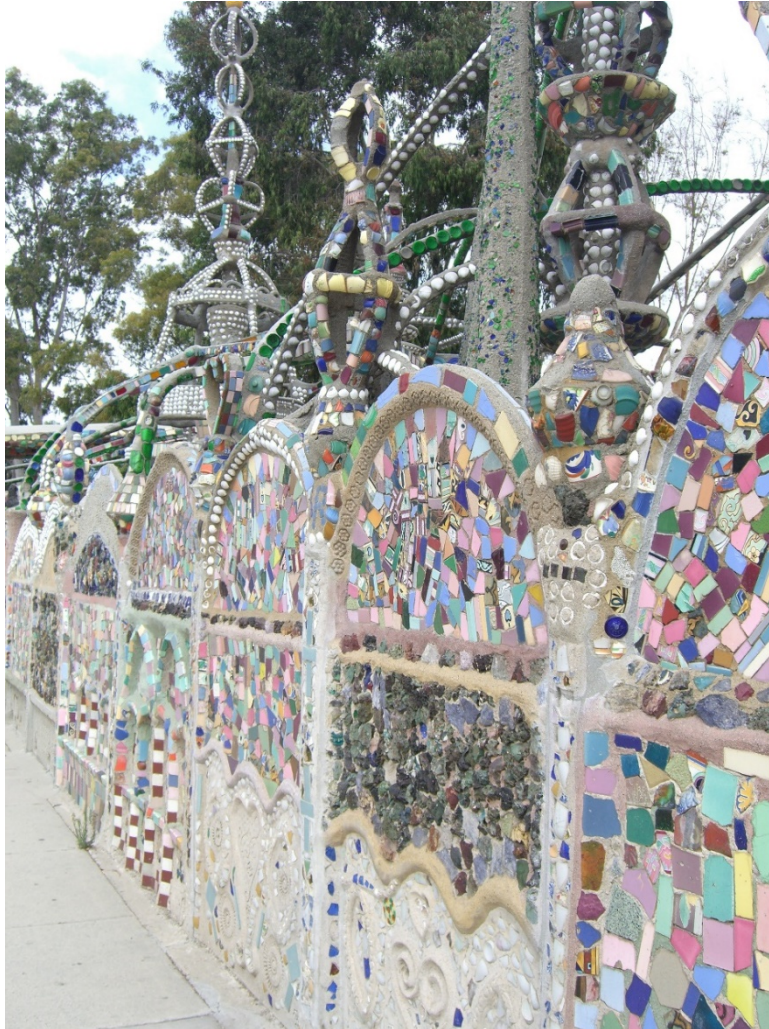
²⁸ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 54; Whiteson, *The Watts Towers of Los Angeles*, 22.

²⁹ Goldstone, *The Los Angeles Watts Towers*, 64-74.

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This decoration may draw from what one authority has called a desire for spectacle in the Italian culture of Rodia's youth, thereby rooting the Towers in a particular ethnic heritage. Together with the creation of an attention-getting form, such as the Towers themselves, came a desire for colorful ornament. The same authority maintains that the use of found objects embedded in concrete, as a means to do this inexpensively, is a common occurrence in Italian immigrant neighborhoods in many parts of the country.³⁰



*Watts Towers, enclosing wall
(Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources)*

³⁰ Joseph Sciorra, "'Why a Man Makes the Shoes?': Italian American Art and Philosophy in Sabato Rodia's Watts Tower," in *Sabato Rodia's Watts Towers: Art, Migrations, Development*, edited by Luisa Del Giudice (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014), 183-203.

Hermon Car Wall and Garden of Oz

There are two other designated resources which illustrate the Character Defining/Associative Features of Folk Art. The first is the Hermon Car Wall (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 944). The creator was not a trained designer, and the wall makes use of found objects, assembled around a theme.

The Hermon Car Wall is a retaining wall constructed on what was then private property in the decade between the early 1930s and early 1940s. Its significance is its use of assorted automobile parts embedded into the wall's concrete. This assemblage drew from a vision of the builder, the owner of the property who had an enthusiasm for motor cars.³¹

The owner-builder was Albert Emmanuel Sederquist, a clerk of the Los Angeles Traffic Bureau and then the Carmichael Traffic Corporation. Sederquist appears to have had no artistic, mechanical or construction training and based his creation solely on his love of cars. He owned several intact automobiles along with numerous parts of others.



*Hermon Car Wall, with wood-spoke automobile wheels along top edge
(Photograph by Charles J. Fisher contained in Historic-Cultural Monument Application)*

³¹ The following discussion draws from the Staff Recommendation Report and the Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the Hermon Car Wall, Case No. CHC-2008-3350-HCM, Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 2007-2008.

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In 1932 Sederquist bought a hilly parcel of land on the edge of what is now Ernest Debs Regional Park, along the south side of what was laid out as Pullman Street west of Monterey Road in the Hermon district of Northeast Los Angeles. (Although called out on maps, Pullman west of Monterey was not considered a “defined” street, and as late as 1950 remained undeveloped.)³²

Sederquist actually lived in a hotel on south Main Street and apparently used the land for weekend campouts and picnics. Soon after buying the land he began building the wall, using the labor of his three nephews. They completed construction in the early 1940s and Sederquist retained the property until his death in 1959. (The land upon which the wall sits is now owned by the City and a public walkway runs above the wall.)

The wall is undulating and varies in height. At the highest point it features four wooden spoked wheels from automobiles of the 1920s. Below that are various engine and transmission parts from Model T Fords and early General Motors cars. Also embedded are bricks from a school demolished after the Long Beach earthquake of 1933 and other collected items. (Sections of the wall have collapsed, and loosened objects have been salvaged.)



*Hermon Car Wall, with embedded engine parts
(Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources)*

The other designated resource is the Garden of Oz (L.A. Historic-Cultural Monument No. 996), located in the Hollywoodland section of the Hollywood Hills. It also is based on an individual’s unique vision and uses found materials to create assemblages reflecting this vision. But it differs in one regard. While the

³² Sanborn Map, Volume 12, Sheet 1270, 1920-1950.

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individual having the original vision is not an artist, the work has been carried out by a number of artists – by one count over seventy-five – most of whom considered themselves professionals.³³

The Garden of Oz is the creation of Gail Cottman. Trained as a journalist, Cottman worked as a publicist for the motion picture industry and as a director of television publicity for MGM Studios. She later founded the Pro Video News Service, a client-supported news agency that specialized in accessing television news shows via satellite.

Cottman acquired her Hollywoodland home in 1977 and purchased an adjoining lot for an extension of her rose garden. With the aid of a contractor and a stone mason, she created a concrete flower bed inlaid with beads and pieces of tile. This gradually grew into a garden designed around the images presented in the “Wizard of Oz.” Beginning in 1991 and working with several artists, Cottman developed this original setting into what has been described as a children’s folk art peace garden.



Entrance, Garden of Oz

(Photograph by Charles J. Fisher contained in Historic-Cultural Monument Application)

Unlike other Folk Art resources, the display was intended to be hidden from the public right-of-way and accessible by invitation. The garden is a private space not visible from the street. Only a decorative gate, flanked by similarly decorated fence panels, indicates its presence. Inside the gate is a series of landscaped spaces connected by concrete pathways and steps, into which are embedded ceramic fragments, beads and marbles, along with art tiles specifically designed for the garden.

³³ The following discussion draws from the Staff Recommendation Report and the Historic-Cultural Monument Application for the Garden of Oz, Case No. CHC-2011-70-HCM, Los Angeles Department of City Planning, 2010-2011.

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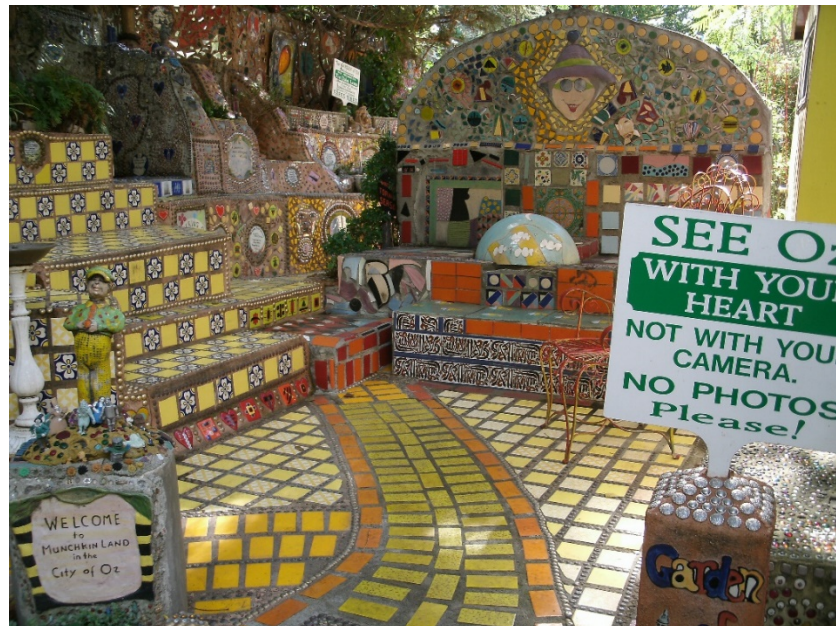
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Contained within these landscaped spaces are concrete thrones, also covered with found objects and with tiles made by contributing artists. A throne was part of the original rose garden and Cottman continued the use of this device as a means of paying tribute to significant individuals. The first was “Dorothy’s Throne,” in honor of the Oz theme. Later thrones are dedicated to musicians ranging from Duke Ellington through John Lennon to Esa-Pekka Salonen, as well as political leaders associated with peacemaking, such as Yitzhak Rabin and Anwar Sadat. Rosa Parks has a throne in her honor.



Garden of Oz pathway

(Photograph by Charles J. Fisher contained in Historic-Cultural Monument Application)



Garden of Oz tiled stairway and Dorothy's Throne

(Los Angeles Office of Historic Resources)

Conclusion

Applying the criteria for Folk Art to resources observed in the field requires flexibility. Few resources have all the Character Defining/Associative Features listed under the Criteria for Folk Art. Most resources have some features and lack others. The most common feature appears to be the public display of assemblages of objects. Two resources from SurveyLA findings are exemplary of what may be found.

The first is the “Tile House” at 7110 West Sycamore Trail in Studio City. The house is a Spanish Colonial Revival with Moorish features build in 1927. George Ehling, an actor who also worked as a studio prop maker, purchased it in 1967. Over the next forty years he proceeded to cover the exterior with mosaics of found materials, including ceramic, porcelain, marble, clay, and glass. The landscape consists of decorative tiles and river rock.³⁴



*“Tile House,” 1927, 1967-present
7110 West Sycamore Trail, Studio City (SurveyLA)*

The second is the “Venice Mosaic Tile House” at 1116 East Palms Boulevard in Venice. The house dates from 1947, but the Folk Art elements are a later addition. As with the Studio City resource, the significant feature is the use of assemblages of found objects, together with ceramic items created specifically for the site. The work is actually a creation of a husband and wife team of trained painters and ceramic artists, Gonzalo Duran and Cheri Pann, who have chosen to work in a Folk Art mode.³⁵

³⁴ “Individual Resources Report, Sherman Oaks-Studio City-Toluca Lake – Cahuenga Pass Community Plan Area,” SurveyLA; Obituary for George T. Ehling, 1927-2016,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 19-21, 2016.

³⁵ “Individual Resources Report, Venice Community Plan Area,” SurveyLA.

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*"Venice Mosaic Tile House," 1947-present
1116 East Palms Boulevard, Venice (Photo by Author)*

While identifying a Folk Art resource is relatively easy, in that the creator's desire for display makes it generally highly visible from the public right-of-way, assessing the significance of the resource may be more difficult and requires the judgement of an expert in the field of Folk Art as a discipline. This is particularly true for the National Register.

ELIGIBILITY STANDARDS FOR FOLK ART

Summary Statement of Significance: Resources evaluated under this theme are significant in the area of Art as important examples of folk art. Folk Art resources combine a number of elements – structures, landscape features, sculptures, assemblages of objects – into a unified whole. This whole is within a defined physical setting or environment over which the creator has total control, typically the lot surrounding the creator’s home. While apparently constructed without the use of formal plans, these resources show a unity of design, through common subject matter, forms and/or materials, based on the unique vision of the creator. There are few folk art resources in Los Angeles.

Period of Significance: 1850-present

Period of Significance Justification: Folk art resources can be from any time following the incorporation of Los Angeles as a city in 1850. Folk Art as a concept began as a category of art history during the 1920s. Known examples in Los Angeles date from the 1920s and later, but earlier examples may be found.

Geographic Location: Citywide, but sparse

Area of Significance: Art

Criteria: NR: C CR: 3 Local: 3

Associated Property Type: Sculpture

Property Type Description: Non-traditional sculptures and associated structures and landscape features; typically found on what was originally a residential site adjacent to the home of the creator.

Property Type Significance: See Summary Statement of Significance above.

Eligibility Standards:

- Exemplifies the tenets of folk art environments (structures, sculptures, landscape elements)
- Retains the essential character-defining features of folk art environments

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Character Defining/Associative Features:

- Constitute an environment, through which viewers wander surrounded by the work
- Typically expresses a whimsical or fanciful vision, unschooled or naïve in art-historical sense
- Unity of design, technique and/or theme, based on the vision of the creator
- Unusual, sometimes unique, use of construction methods
- Innovative use of natural materials such as native stone and shells
- Use of recycled materials and found objects, ranging from ceramic tiles to car parts
- Often carries out an artistic vision with traditional craft techniques
- Colors may be vibrant, ranging from monochromatic to complementary
- Uses multiple iteration of similar objects, colors and/design motifs to achieve thematic unity
- May be utilitarian (e.g. retaining wall) as well as decorative
- May be monumental in scale or otherwise stand out from its surroundings
- May include creator's living space with access controlled by the creator
- May have ethnic and/or cultural association expressed through design and/or construction technique
- For the National Register must be of exceptional importance if less than 50 years of age

Integrity Considerations:

- Should retain integrity of Location, Design, Feeling, Materials, and Association
- Retains sufficient integrity to convey significance
- Original use and/or ownership of property may have changed, but the elements maintain the integrity of the original creator
- Public access maintained to preserve the display aspect of the resource

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