



MEDIA ALERT
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The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
presents
***Civic Virtue: The Impact of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery
and the Watts Towers Arts Center***

Exhibition Dates:

Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG)
December 15, 2011 to February 12, 2012
4800 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90027

Opening Reception: Thursday, December 15, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Accompanied by an Open House at Hollyhock House and a Jazz Performance

Watts Towers Arts Center (WTAC)
December 17, 2011 to February 12, 2012
1765 East 107th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90002

Opening Reception: Saturday, December 17, 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Accompanied by a Jazz Performance and tours of the Watts Towers

Performance and Public Art Festival:

Civic Virtue: Watts Here and Now
Watts Towers Arts Center (WTAC)
January 28, 2012, 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
1765 East 107th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90002

Los Angeles – The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is pleased to present ***Civic Virtue: The Impact of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the Watts Towers Arts Center***, a dual-venue exhibition examining the institutional histories of two of Los Angeles’ oldest and most diverse artistic centers operated by the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA).

A related program, entitled ***Civic Virtue: Watts Here and Now*** will celebrate the public art and performance emanating from the Watts community in the 1960s and 1970s, while creating new work relevant for today’s audience.



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The exhibitions and festival are part of ***Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945 – 1980*** an unprecedented collaboration, initiated by the Getty, bringing together more than sixty cultural institutions from across Southern California for six months beginning October 2011 to tell the story of the birth of the L.A. art scene. Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America. For more information, visit pacificstandardtime.org.

Civic Virtue: The Impact of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the Watts Towers Arts Center will showcase the work of the artists, curators, and community activists whose contributions greatly enhanced the culture of our City and helped to define Los Angeles as an international artistic center.

The exhibition at the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery is a chronological survey examining the role of civic government in relationship to the development of arts in Los Angeles traced through painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, photography, and film. Intersections between policymaking and art are framed through a timeline denoting key events, architectural plans by Frank Lloyd Wright, modernist artworks scrutinized under McCarthyism, and early citywide festivals celebrating diverse artists from Karl Benjamin to David Hammons.

The Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery's contributions to local artists are reprised through an overview of its exhibitions, including major retrospectives for Lorser Feitelson, Julius Shulman, and June Wayne. Iconic artists such as John Altoon, Llyn Foulkes, John Mason, Betye Saar, and Patssi Valdez are presented in association with the gallery's history, while experimental performance that occurred at Barnsdall Park by Guy de Cointet and Robert Wilhite and Senga Nengudi, Marren Hassinger, and Ulysses Jenkins is also examined.

The exhibition at the Watts Towers Arts Center is a chronological survey examining the development of this important grass-roots arts space into an established, nationally-recognized, community arts center. Photography, assemblage artwork, film, and a timeline illustrate the center's early trajectory as an entity focused on preservation of Sabato (Simon) Rodia's Towers in Watts, youth arts education, and community empowerment, with works exhibited by Noah Purifoy, Harry Drinkwater, Sister Mary Corita Kent, Julius Shulman, and Andy Warhol.

Artistic responses to social conditions and historic events in Watts including sculptural projects *66 Signs of Neon* and *O Speak, Speak* are examined in this exhibition, along with a cross section of artists engaged in community building affiliated with the center such as: Dale Brockman Davis, Charles Dickson, Willie Robert Middlebrook, John Outterbridge, and Judson Powell. Multidisciplinary arts programming encompassing music, dance, theater, and festivals tied to the Watts Towers Arts Center are also highlighted.



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Civic Virtue: Watts Here and Now will be part of the *Pacific Standard Time* Performance and Public Art Festival, featuring over 40 events throughout Southern California in late January, 2012. As an extension of DCA’s exhibition at WTAC, ***Civic Virtue: Watts Here and Now*** will feature three components: public art, music, and a literary program.

Five contemporary artists, Toni Love, Noni Olabisi, Margaret Garcia, Dominic Moody, and AfraShe Asungi will create a new, temporary public art piece inspired by *O Speak, Speak*, a public sculpture in Watts by John Outterbridge, Elliott Pinkney, Charles Dickson, Dale Brockman Davis, and Nate Ferrance existent in the 1970s. The musical component will be co-presented with the Grammy Museum’s “Evening With” series, featuring an intimate performance and Q&A with musicians closely related to Watts. The literary component will pay homage to *The Watts Writers Workshop*, a significant cultural program established in 1965 after the uprising in Watts and will be produced by *The New Short Fiction Series*, Los Angeles’ longest running spoken word series acclaimed as an innovative forum for presenting the best voices in West Coast literature to Southland audiences.

A full-color catalog is being produced to accompany DCA’s *Pacific Standard Time* exhibitions, and will include a foreword by DCA Executive Director, Olga Garay with essays by: the exhibitions’ curator, Pilar Tompkins Rivas; former LAMAG director, Josine Ianco Starrels; writer, D.J. Waldie; and art critic and writer, Suzanne Muchnic. It will also include an introduction by Jeffery Herr, the Hollyhock House historic site curator, and an interview conducted by Herr with artist and former director of the WTAC, John Outterbridge. Historical notes and acknowledgments by current LAMAG curator and director of exhibitions, Scott Canty, and current WTAC director, Rosie Lee Hooks will appear as well in the publication.

Civic Virtue: The Impact of the Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery and the Watts Towers Arts Center, the exhibition catalog, and the public art, music, and literary program components comprising ***Civic Virtue: Watts Here and Now*** are all supported by the Getty Foundation.

About *Pacific Standard Time: Art in L.A. 1945 – 1980*

Pacific Standard Time is a collaboration of more than sixty cultural institutions across Southern California, 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



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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.

Initiated through \$10 million in grants from the Getty Foundation, *Pacific Standard Time* involves cultural institutions of every size and character across Southern California, from Greater Los Angeles to San Diego and Santa Barbara to Palm Springs.

Pacific Standard Time is an initiative of the Getty. The presenting sponsor is Bank of America.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

The **Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)** generates and supports high-quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles' 4 million residents and 25 million annual visitors. DCA advances the social and economic impact of the arts and assures access to arts and cultural experiences through grant making, marketing, public art, community arts programming, arts education, and partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in neighborhoods throughout the City of Los Angeles.

DCA's operating budget and managed portfolio totaled \$36.7 million in fiscal year 2009/10. It consisted of: \$9.6 million in Transient Occupancy Tax funds; \$12.2 million in funds from the Public Works Improvements Arts Program; \$8.6 million from the Private Arts Development Fee Program; \$4.9 million in City related and indirect cost allocations; and \$1.4 million in private and public funds raised during the year. DCA grants approximately \$3 million annually to over 280 artists and nonprofit arts organizations through its long-established Grants Administration Division. DCA provides arts and cultural programming in its numerous neighborhood arts and cultural centers, theaters, and historic sites, and manages several arts and education programs.

The Department also administers the City's Private Arts Development Fee and Public Works Improvements Arts Programs, a portfolio of approximately \$20.8 million in fiscal year 2009/10. In addition, DCA raises outside public and private funds, over \$15 million since fiscal year 2007/08, used to re-grant to LA-based arts and cultural organizations for special grant initiatives and to support DCA's special programming and facilities. DCA markets the City's cultural events through development and collaboration with strategic partners, design and production of creative promotional materials, and management of the culturela.org website visited by over 2.7 million people annually.

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