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Romualdo Valenzuela
NEWSLETTER LAYOUT

Pat Adler-Ingram
Julian van Zandweghe
CONTRIBUTORS

The headquarters of the
Historical Society
is located at
Lummis Home (El Alisal)
200 East Avenue 43
Los Angeles CA 90031
323/460-5632
www.socalhistory.org

The Southern Californian

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Los Angeles City Historical Society Awarded Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award



Over 30 authors contributed to this two volume publication which took over 9 years to compile.

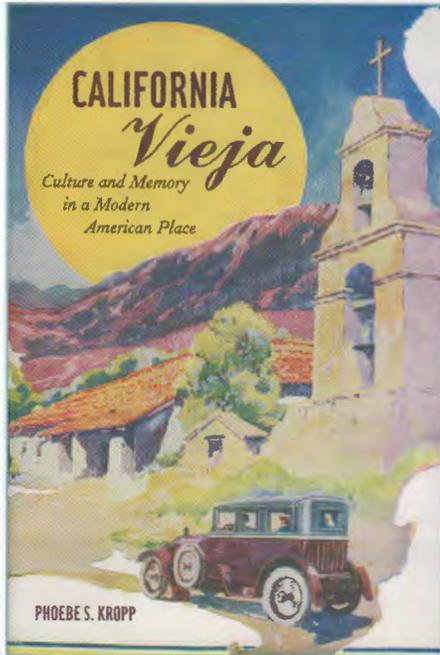
Jack Smith served Los Angeles for decades as an LA Times columnist and was the author of ten books. He was renowned for his human interest stories, particularly his anecdotes of good deeds in everyday life. In 1993, his family established the Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award through an HSSC endowment.

The Historical Society of Southern California is proud to award the Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award to the Los Angeles Historical Society for their monumental two-volume publication, *The Development of Los Angeles City Government: An Institutional History, 1850-2000*. More than

50 historians participated over a nine-year period to compile the detailed essays on the history of the various working divisions of the city of Los Angeles. One of the conceptual elements of the work was that the researchers were to make all possible use of the city archives.

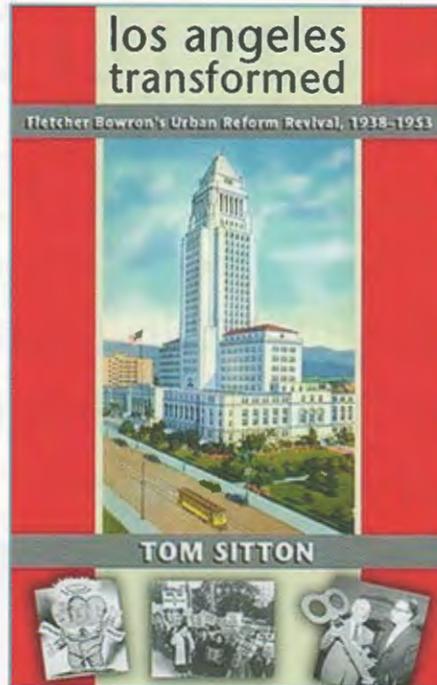
The work is prefaced with a masterful history of the creation of a governmental framework for the pueblo as it grew to cityhood. Written by the late Doyce B. Nunis, Jr., it could well stand alone as a definitive story of the development of Spanish Colonial Los Angeles to 1850.

Pflueger Award Winners



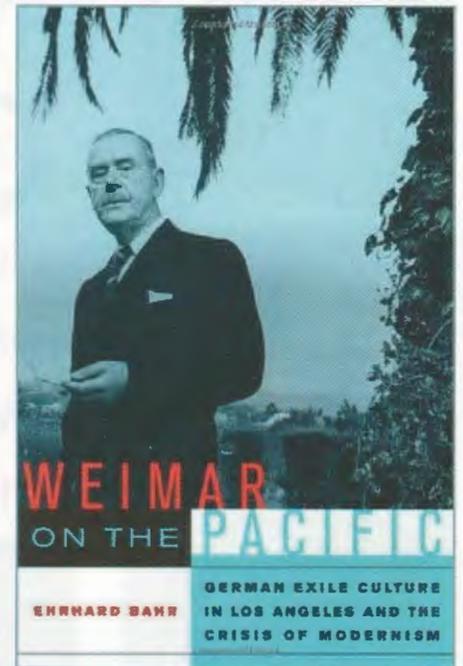
California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place
By Phoebe S. Kropp

The characteristic look of Southern California, with its red-tiled roofs, stucco homes, and Spanish street names suggests an enduring fascination with the region's Spanish-Mexican past. In this engaging study, Phoebe S. Kropp reveals that the origins of this aesthetic were not solely rooted in the Spanish colonial period, but arose in the early twentieth century, when Anglo residents recast the days of missions and ranchos as an idyllic golden age of pious padres, placid Indians, dashing caballeros and sultry señoritas. Four richly detailed case studies uncover the efforts of Anglo boosters and examine the responses of Mexican and Indian people in the construction of places that gave shape to this cultural memory: El Camino Real, a tourist highway following the old route of missionaries; San Diego's world's fair, the Panama-California Exposition; the architecturally- and racially-restricted suburban hamlet Rancho Santa Fe; and Olvera Street, an ersatz Mexican marketplace in the heart of Los Angeles. *California Vieja* is a compelling demonstration of how memory can be more than nostalgia. In Southern California, the Spanish past became a catalyst for the development of the region's built environment and public culture, and a civic narrative that still serves to marginalize Mexican and Indian residents.



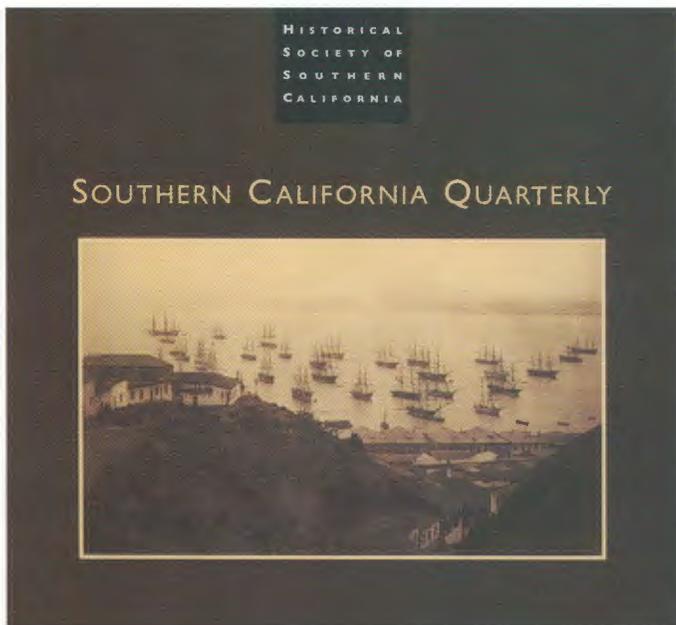
Los Angeles Transformed: Fletcher Bowron's Urban Reform Revival, 1938-1953
by Tom Sitton

When Fletcher Bowron (1887-1968) ran for mayor of Los Angeles in 1938, his twelve years as a superior court judge with a reputation for honesty and fairness carried him to victory against a notoriously corrupt incumbent. During his nearly fifteen years as a neo-progressive mayor, Bowron presided over fundamental reforms in the police department, public utilities, and other agencies charged with basic services, rooting out bribery, kickbacks, and influence peddling. World War II brought economic and population booms, racial conflict, social dislocation, and environmental problems to Los Angeles and complicated Mayor Bowron's job. After the war Bowron initiated massive public housing and desegregation projects. These forward-looking programs alienated enough voters to cost him the 1953 election as his leftist supporters fell away under the influence of McCarthyism. This political history of the mid-twentieth century reform period in Los Angeles is also a case study of the ways outside events can affect municipal affairs. As Tom Sitton demonstrates, the choices made during Bowron's administration have had a direct bearing on how Los Angeles looks today and how its government operates.



Weimar on the Pacific
German Exile Culture in Los Angeles and the Crisis of Modernism
by Ehrhard Bahr

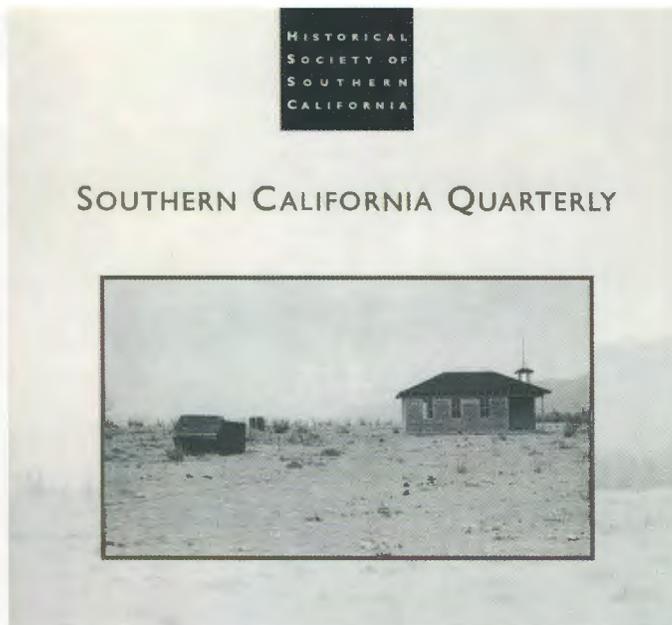
In the 1930s and 40s, Los Angeles became an unlikely cultural sanctuary for a distinguished group of German artists and intellectuals—including Thomas Mann, Theodore W. Adorno, Bertolt Brecht, Fritz Lang, and Arnold Schoenberg—who had fled Nazi Germany. During their years in exile, they would produce a substantial body of major works to address the crisis of modernism that resulted from the rise of National Socialism. Weimar Germany and its culture, with its meld of eighteenth-century German classicism and twentieth-century modernism, served as a touchstone for this group of diverse talents and opinions. *Weimar on the Pacific* is the first book to examine these artists and intellectuals as a group. Ehrhard Bahr studies selected works of Adorno, Horkheimer, Brecht, Lang, Neutra, Schindler, Döblin, Mann, and Schoenberg, weighing Los Angeles's influence on them and their impact on German modernism. Touching on such examples as film noir and Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, Bahr shows how this community of exiles reconstituted modernism in the face of the traumatic political and historical changes they were living through.



The Doyce B. Nunis, Jr. Award

Kelly J. Sisson Lessens, "Bound For California: Chilean Contract Laborers and Patronos in the California Gold Rush", 1848-1852, SCQ v.90 n.3

Hired Chilean laborers who ventured to California during the early years of the gold rush rarely appear in the historical record. However, notarized contracts signed in the cities of Valparaíso and Santiago between 1848 and 1852 illuminate how hired laborers, mostly illiterate peons, actively shaped companies and expeditions bound for California. By reading these for evidence of what the Latin Americanist Arnold Bauer has identified as a "system" of "give and take, choice and accommodation," we can better understand how even the most marginalized workers made the transnational spaces of the North American West and the Pacific world comprehensible within their own schemas and patterns. This paper proposes that hired laborers were central to the organization of Chileans' emigration patterns in the California gold rush; that their relations were far more complex than the "free" or "unfree" binary representations supposed; that they actively mapped the relations of production they expected to deploy in California's physical and social spaces; and that by turning to alternative archival sources, U.S.-based historians can better link the histories of the Pacific world to those of the North American West.



The Carl I. Wheat Award

Scott Zesch, "Prelude to A Massacre: Chinese Los Angeles in 1870-1871", SCQ v.90 n.2

The infamous and tragic Chinese massacre of 1871 in the western frontier town of Los Angeles did not happen in a vacuum. Scott Zesch traces the way the Chinese were represented in the town's newspapers and court proceedings for the couple years preceding the episode, revealing how Anglo and Hispanic prejudices were shaped. His examination of criminal court cases involving Chinese and the civil cases among the litigious Chinese have enabled him to sort out the various associations known as *huiguan* and their roles in the outbreak of violence that ended in interracial mob violence.

Back Issues of the Southern California Quarterly may be purchased online at www.socalhistory.org. \$20.

Pflueger award winning books can also be found at the El Alisal Book Store or online at www.socalhistory.org



LA's Early Moderns: Art, Architecture, Photography

Edited by William Deverell; by Victoria Dailey, Natalie Shivers, Michael Dawson

The modernist pioneers of Los Angeles art and architecture made statements in their work and legacies, but they were every bit as much a community as they were individual satellites of expression. These people gathered in solidarity, they met as friends and lovers, and they shared excitement over their important breaks with tradition. In modest but lasting ways, they changed Los Angeles forever. There is history in that, and there is inspiration as well. This book is about a secret Los Angeles, a Los Angeles filled with optimism about a different kind of "city of the future."

L.A.'s Early Moderns is available at the El Alisal Book Store and online at www.socalhistory.org. \$35.



Autry History Conference

HSSC's annual History Conference, "Los Angeles Renaissance: Redefining the Soul of a City," took place at the Autry National Center. The focus of the conference was the cultural renaissance that took place in Los Angeles between the two wars. The conference opened with William Deverell's keynote address, in which he discussed the emergence of the Modernist movement in the context of a city growing from a provincial center to a metropolis.

His address was followed by Southern California Quarterly book review editor Sarah Schrank's paper, "Monuments on the Margins," relating the story of Simon Rodia's fantastic towers in Watts and the city's long struggle to integrate the site into its cultural heritage.

The first half of the conference wrapped up with a panel entitled "Music and the Transformation of Los Angeles," led by HSSC board member Dr. Kenneth Marcus, who, along with a professional violinist and keyboardist, used selections

by Arnold Schoenberg to demonstrate how music itself changed with radical new ideas of composition. Schoenberg was one of the refugees from Hitler's Germany to bring an international insight to Los Angeles music and literature. Historians Andrea Thabet and Sherrie Tucker discussed the roles the Hollywood Canteen and the Hollywood Bowl played in the overall transformation of the arts in Los Angeles.

After lunch, members and guests enjoyed a free visit to the museum and reconvened in the Wells Fargo Theatre for the second half of the conference. Antiquarian bookseller and historian Michael Dawson spoke about early modern photography in Los Angeles. The photograph-as-record of Dorothy Lange and the photograph-as-art of Edward Weston marked the transitions of the era between the wars. Jake Wien spoke about wood engraver Paul Landacre and the influence of his brilliant black and white interpretations of the California

landscape. His close ties to the creative printers and publishers of Los Angeles were paralleled by his Hollywood friendships.

Finally, Barbara Lamprecht presented a paper focused on the early work of the architect Richard Neutra, specifically his first major project, a landscaped cemetery in Germany.

After the presentations, guests enjoyed a wine and cheese reception in the courtyard.



Guests enjoying refreshments at Autry



Melinda Feldman (left) with Hynda L. Rudd (right); Hynda Rudd accepted the Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award on behalf of LACHS



Autry docent coordinator Susan DiCato (right) outside Autry with LACHS president Todd Gaydowski (left)



Presenters Sarah Schrank (left) and Barbara Lamprecht (right) enjoy a drink after the lectures



Violinist Leila Nassar-Fredell (left) and pianist James Lent (right) waiting to play



William Deverel delivered the keynote address at the Annual Autry History Conference



Jake Wien gave a comprehensive view of Paul Landacre and his early career in L.A.



Board member Paul Spitzerzi presented the Jack Smith Community Enrichment Award

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

LUMMEIS DAY

2011



The Old Spanish Trail Association warmly invites friends of the Historical Society of Southern California to attend our 2011 conference on "The Old Spanish Trail in California." The conference will take place June 2-5, at the Kellogg West Hotel, in Pomona, CA; and will feature noted experts on the trail and on southern California history during the Mexican period.

For more information and to register online, visit www.oldspanishtrail.org/conference.

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SUMMER
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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY



SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA QUARTERLY

SUMMER 2011 (vol. 93, no. 2)

A Preview

LOCATING ABSENCE: THE FORGOTTEN PRESENCE OF MONJERÍOS IN
ALTA CALIFORNIA MISSIONS

BY CHELSEA K. VAUGHN

NAVIGATING THE FLUID BOUNDARY: THE LOWER COLORADO RIVER
STEAMBOAT ERA, 1851–1877

BY ERIC BOIME

BRONZEVILLE, LITTLE TOKYO, AND THE UNSTABLE GEOGRAPHY OF
RACE IN POST-WORLD WAR II LOS ANGELES

BY HILLARY JENKS

Chelsea K. Vaughn is a PhD candidate in Public History at the University of California, Riverside. Her dissertation work focuses on representations of race and gender within popular portrayals of Western History. The *monjerios*, or girls' dormitories, of the Spanish Mission system in California, provide an important site of examination for this research.

Eric Boime is an assistant professor at San Diego State University, Imperial Valley campus, where he teaches Modern United States History, with emphases in Environmental History, the Southwest, and American Popular Culture. He has published articles in *History Compass*, *Americana: The Journal of American Popular Culture*, and the *Pacific Historical Review*. He is currently writing a book on the Colorado River Delta and the international conflict over the Colorado River.

Hillary Jenks is a historian and assistant professor in the University Honors Program at Portland State University. Her scholarship focuses on comparative racialization and metropolitan community formation in the twentieth-century United States. She is currently revising her award-winning dissertation, "Home Is Little Tokyo: Race, Community, and Memory in Twentieth-Century Los Angeles," into a book. Her next project will examine the intersections of racial formation, urban revitalization, and environmental policy in the late twentieth century. She received her PhD in American Studies and Ethnicity from the University of Southern California in 2008.

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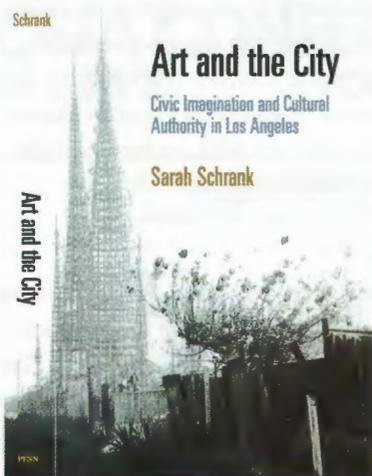
Schrank

Art and the City

Civic Imagination and Cultural
Authority in Los Angeles

Sarah Schrank

Art and the City



Art and the City
Civic Imagination and Cultural Authority in
Los Angeles
by Sarah Schrank

Art and the City uncovers the historic
struggles for cultural expression and creative
space that are hidden behind the city's
booster mythology. \$25.

Save The Date May 15, 2011

MOTA Day

Join us for the 22nd anniversary of Museums
of the Arroyo Day, where five museums locat-
ed along the Arroyo Seco in Los Angeles and
Pasadena open their doors free of charge.

June 5, 2011

Lummis Day

Celebrating the Spirit and Diverse Culture
of L.A.'s Northeast Neighborhoods
with Food, Music, Art, Poetry and Dance