

# Los Angeles Times

## L.A. to spend \$750,000 to conserve public murals and paint new ones

By: Deborah Vankin

<http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/arts/culture/la-et-cm-los-angeles-mural-conservation-program-20150914-story.html>

### Los Angeles Times Says:



Los Angeles will announce a new Citywide Mural Program on Tuesday that calls for \$750,000 to be spent on the restoration and preservation of historic fine art murals as well as the development of new ones.

The Department of Cultural Affairs program, which will run through June 2016, is an outgrowth of the city's 2013 ordinance allowing new murals after a nearly 10-year ban, said Danielle Brazell, the department's general manager of cultural affairs.

"Once it passed and murals were no longer illegal, we had a new set of guidelines in which the city could get behind murals once again," Brazell said. "For close to a decade, there were no resources to restore fine art murals or commission new ones. This is something the mayor put in the budget last year and the City Council supported it."

L.A. is considered a mural capital with a deep tradition of communities expressing themselves through public art. The new mural initiative, Brazell said, is meant to generate civic pride and an awareness for these historic works, many of which are 30 or more years old.

The funds include \$400,000 that will go to the Social and Public Art Resource Center, or SPARC, and the Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles. The two nonprofit groups will conserve 11 murals that have been damaged. The work will include applying an anti-graffiti coating to protect the artwork from vandals.

"Our office conducted a survey to establish a ranking of historically significant murals," said Felicia Filer, Cultural Affairs' director of public art.

SPARC, which will restore nine murals, has begun conservation on seven, including Roderick Sykes' 1989 "Literacy," Yreina Cervantez's 1988-1989 "La Ofrenda" and George Yepes' 1989 "Mujer del Este de Los Angeles."

The Mural Conservancy will tackle conservation of the 1973 collaboration between artists Willie Herrón III and Gronk titled "Moratorium: The Black and White Mural," in Boyle

Heights, as well as Judithe Hernández's 1977 "Homenaje a Las Mujeres de Aztlan," a collaboration with Carlos Almaraz of the Ramona Gardens Housing Project.

The new program provides \$300,000 for 15 City Council offices to commission new works or to conserve existing ones. They also will use the funds for documentation and educational outreach, Filer said.

"We heard a lot from the mural community that there needed to be a mural education program re-educating the public about the murals that exist within their communities," Filer said. "So the council offices are beginning to look at ways of doing outreach -- things like mural tours, artists working with youth on new projects, social media efforts, college students conducting surveys of murals in their district."

The remaining \$50,000 for the new program will go toward clerical administration on the mural projects.

"Los Angeles has a rich collection of murals that explore our stories and leave a recorded history," Mayor Eric Garcetti said in the city announcement. "Murals are one of our most vibrant forms of public art, and this sizable investment will help us to both conserve many of our city's fading murals and create new ones for Angelenos to enjoy." SPARC founder and artistic director Judith F. Baca noted that some may say Los Angeles doesn't have a heart or a civic center. "But it's unique in that it has *many* hearts, *many* community centers," she said. "What the murals do is they put a face on these places. The murals give us a kind of grass-roots vision of place and who we are as a people."