



What's Out There®

The Los Angeles Public Landscapes of

Ralph Cornell



Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden, photo by Matthew Traucht



The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF)

TCLF provides the tools to see, understand and value landscape architecture and its practitioners in the way many people have learned to do with buildings and their designers. Through its Web site, lectures, outreach and publishing, TCLF broadens the support and understanding for cultural landscapes nationwide to help safeguard our priceless heritage for future generations.

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Welcome to *What's Out There Los Angeles – The Public Landscapes of Ralph Cornell*, organized by The Cultural Landscape Foundation (TCLF) with support from local and national partners.

The narratives and photographs in this guidebook describe thirteen sites, just a sampling of Cornell's built legacy. The sites were featured in *What's Out There Weekend Los Angeles*, which offered free, expert-led tours in November 2014. This *What's Out There Weekend*—the eleventh in an on-going series of regionally-focused tour events increasing the public visibility of designed landscapes, their designers, and their patrons—is TCLF's first focused on the work of a single designer.

In researching the extant public landscapes of Ralph Cornell we came to understand why he is called “the Olmsted of Los Angeles.” A prolific designer, author, mentor, and photographer, Cornell's built legacy includes city parks, subdivisions, luxury hotels, historic sites, and civic landscapes. Spanning Picturesque, Beaux Arts, and Modernist styles, his work embodies the evolution of landscape architecture in the twentieth century. Ranging from small, isolated commissions at residential properties to expansive college campus master plans that engaged him for decades, Cornell was diversely talented. Beyond the landscapes themselves, his legacy as a thoughtful, forward-looking landscape architect is exemplified in his writing, his designs, and his teaching. In her reflection on Cornell, landscape architect Ruth Shellhorn, another pioneering Southern California practitioner, summarized him thusly: “Simplicity of design was his keynote, but this simplicity had meaning and substance. It was never cold and stereotyped. His vast knowledge of plant material gave him a palette from which to choose the elements with which to create the ‘pictures’ he desired... The result of the concept was a unified whole in which all parts were integral to the finished design.”

What's Out There Los Angeles – The Public Landscapes of Ralph Cornell was accompanied by the development of an exhibit of his drawings, photographs, and personal effects. On view at the UCLA Charles E. Young Research Library, the installation was curated by Steven Keylon, Kelly Comras, Sam Watters, and Genie Guerrard and introduced with a lecture on Cornell's legacy given by Brain Tichenor, professor of USC's School of Architecture. The tours, exhibit, and lecture were attended by capacity crowds, demonstrating the overwhelming public interest to discover more about this significant shaper of Southern California.

This guidebook and the *What's are Out There Weekends* dovetail with the Web-based *What's Out There*, the nation's most comprehensive, searchable database of our shared landscape legacy. The database currently features more than 1,700 sites, 10,000 photographs, and 900 designer profiles. *What's Out There*, optimized for iPhones and similar handheld devices, includes *What's Nearby*—a GPS-enabled function that locates all landscapes in the database within a 25-mile radius of any given location.

On behalf of The Cultural Landscape Foundation, I thank you for your interest in *What's Out There Los Angeles – The Public Landscapes of Ralph Cornell* and hope that it inspires your own personal exploration of what's out there.

Sincerely,

Charles A. Birnbaum, FASLA, FAAR
PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE FOUNDATION



Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden, photo by Matthew Traucht

“What could be more interesting and educational, to the people at large, than a public park devoted to plants indigenous to our dry and semi-arid lands, and representative of the many forms of plant life that are found along our coast slopes?”

So begins Ralph Cornell's “Wanted: A Genuine Southern California Park” published in 1912 when he was 22 years old. Beyond simply illustrating the forward-thinking, pioneering scope of Cornell's design philosophy, the statement is as relevant today as it was when it was written more than a century ago.

Ralph Cornell

Ralph Cornell was born in south-central Nebraska in 1890 and enjoyed a childhood that included riding horses and developing a deep appreciation for the plant world.

In 1908 his family relocated to Long Beach, California where his father established a eucalyptus nursery, an ill-fated business venture that would quickly bankrupt the family. From 1909 to 1914 Cornell studied botany at Pomona College where he benefitted from the tutelage of Professor Charles Baker. Sensing Cornell's potential, Baker employed him in the summer to collect plants resulting in a herbarium of more than 800 pressed, mounted, and classified specimens. At this time, Cornell also befriended plantsman Theodore Payne, a relationship that would result in the founding of one of the earliest landscape architecture practices in Los Angeles (Cornell & Payne Landscape Architect and Wild Garden Specialist, 1919-1924) and a friendship that lasted for half a century. In the summers of his undergraduate years, Cornell worked with local horticulturalists conducting pioneering propagation studies on dates, avocados, and subtropical fruit—a venture that would fund his completion of studies at Pomona College and enable him to attend Harvard University where his interest in plants was supplemented with lessons in design, drafting, and Beaux Arts planning principles. He received his Master of Landscape Architecture (MLA) degree in 1917.

After turning-down a position with Olmsted Brothers and working for a short time in Toronto, Cornell—whose sense of patriotism outweighed his detestation of violence—volunteered for the Army to serve in World War I. After engaging in battle on the front lines in France (where he marched past the seed company Vilmorin's propagation grounds and gathered seeds from red poppies growing alongside the road), Cornell returned to Los Angeles where he renewed his engagement with Pomona College,



Ralph Cornell in Yosemite © UCLA Library Special Collections

embarking on a project that would extend for 40 years. Building upon work he began there as an undergraduate, Cornell set about transforming the arid, undeveloped campus into a “college in a garden.” To accomplish this, he blended native species such as mountain mahogany, California sycamore, and live oak with exotic Chinese holly, Roman myrtle, and Portuguese laurel.

In 1922 newspaper publisher Ellen Browning Scripps commissioned Cornell to develop a management plan for Torrey Pines, a small preserve of rare trees on sandstone bluffs near San Diego. Cornell, who delighted at the contorted shapes of the windswept pines and understood the rarity of their presence, stressed the importance of design restraint as San Diego matured, calling for the establishment of a natural park and a carefully planned trail network to protect the pines. Two years later he joined Wilbur Cook and George Hall to form Cook, Hall and Cornell, a firm whose work would build extensively upon Cook's 1908 master plan for the City of Beverly Hills. Cornell's design for the Beaux Arts Beverly Gardens Park, which stretched nearly two miles along the north side of Santa Monica Boulevard, provided significant public green space,

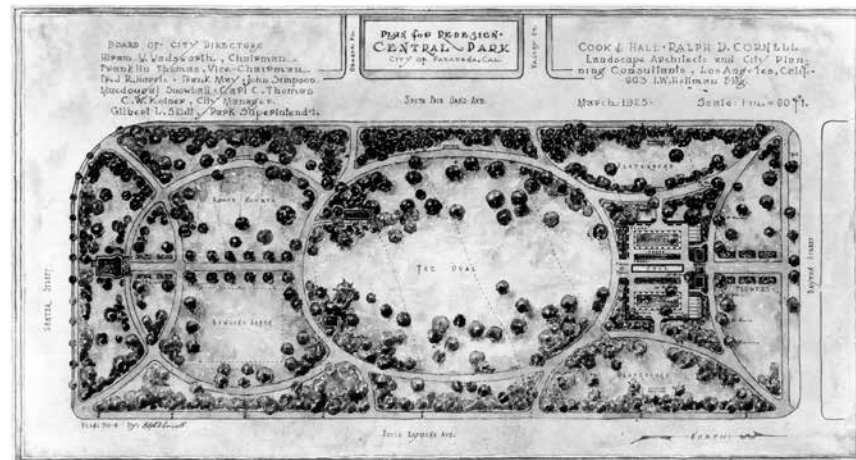
with every block planted with themed gardens, among them roses, succulents, and palms. Through this period, Cornell developed designs for subdivisions, educational campuses, public parks, botanical gardens, and served as supervisory landscape architect at the University of Hawaii. He worked on neighborhood parks in Pasadena including the sunken gardens at Washington Park and the ten-acre Central Park, Pasadena's first public green space. During this time he also married Ruth Dyer, with whom he had a child, Rosita.

In 1931 Cornell was commissioned to rehabilitate Rancho Los Cerritos in Long Beach, once part of a 27,000-acre estate but reduced by the 1930s to fewer than five. Cornell drew upon the Rancho's extensive gardens and orchards dating from the 1880s, preserved specimen trees, planted ginkgoes, canary palms, and flowering trees, restored a historic water tank, and encircled the historic house with an adobe wall.

In 1933 Cook and Hall left the firm to join the Civilian Conservation Corps and two years later Cornell was appointed Landscape Architect Consultant for the Federal Relief Administration. For the next twenty years, through the Depression and World War II, Cornell practiced solo, never closing his practice. In 1937 he was granted the role of supervisory landscape architect at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), a position he would hold until his death in 1972. To expand the campus from the four Romanesque buildings laid-out in a formal, cross-axial arrangement in the 1920s, Cornell filled an arroyo with more than one million cubic yards of soil, developed an extensive plant palette, and created a connective circulation

network to unite the 200-acre campus. In the latter part of his tenure at UCLA, his designs for the Modernist Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden and the Picturesque Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden demonstrated his adept abilities to sculpt the land and combine native and exotic plants. At the Murphy Sculpture Garden, Cornell's undulating open lawns, arcing pathways, intimate outdoor rooms, and delightful specimen trees complement the installation of more than 70 contemporary figurative and abstract sculptures. The Botanical Garden on the opposite end of campus spans both sides of a deep ravine and includes a mélange of subtropical and arid plants, a winding trail system, and carefully planned and designed spaces for reflection and plant study.

Through World War II Cornell worked for the Office of Civilian Defense and prepared designs for Los Alamos, New Mexico and the San Diego Naval Shipyard as well as a number of public and defense housing projects. His solo commissions in the post-War years included subdivisions, private residences, hospitals, cemeteries, and public parks.



Plan for redesign of Central Park, Pasadena, 1925 © UCLA Library Special Collections

Cornell also advised at numerous educational institutions, lectured extensively, published a multitude of texts including the seminal *Conspicuous California Plants with Notes on their Garden Uses* (1938, reprinted in 1978), and indulged his love for photography. In 1955 he was joined by Samuel Bridgers and Howard Troller and formed the firm Cornell, Bridgers and Troller; Jere Hazlett was added as a partner in 1969. The firm specialized in Modernist municipal projects, exemplified by their work at the Los Angeles Civic Center. The design for the Civic Center Mall (now known as Grand Park), united various civic buildings with a linear, terraced greensward built atop a parking garage with dense plantings of palm and olive, water features, and plazas. Demarcating the western limit of the Civic Center, the firm developed a rectilinear reflecting pool that anchored an elevated plaza for the Department of Water and Power headquarters. This sixteen-acre campus is adjacent to the Music Center with its reflecting pools, sunken forecourts, subtropical plants, and stepped plaza, which frames expansive views across the complex. Extending from the eastern edge of the Civic Center, Cornell, Bridgers, Troller and Hazlett designed the multi-level Los Angeles Mall to house civic structures, retail shops, and public sculpture framed by jacaranda and palm groves and spanned by an arcing pedestrian bridge.

Through his work in Southern California, as well as projects in far flung destinations including Baghdad, Cairo, and the Philippines, an untold number of lectures, more than 150 publications, and personal connections, Ralph Cornell, often referred to as the “Dean of Southern California Landscape Architecture,” influenced generations. A Fellow of the American Society of Landscape Architects, Cornell passed away on April 6, 1972. In a tribute read at UCLA's Commencement a few months later—one where he was to receive an Honorary Doctorate Degree—it was said of Cornell: “You are possessed of many talents, but perhaps none is so rare as your gift of balance, of seeing life whole: you create living environments which are at once exquisitely beautiful and eminently utilitarian. Men and women everywhere are forever in your debt.”



Dancing Joshua tree, near Twentynine Palms, 1930 © UCLA Library Special Collections, photo by Ralph Cornell

Education

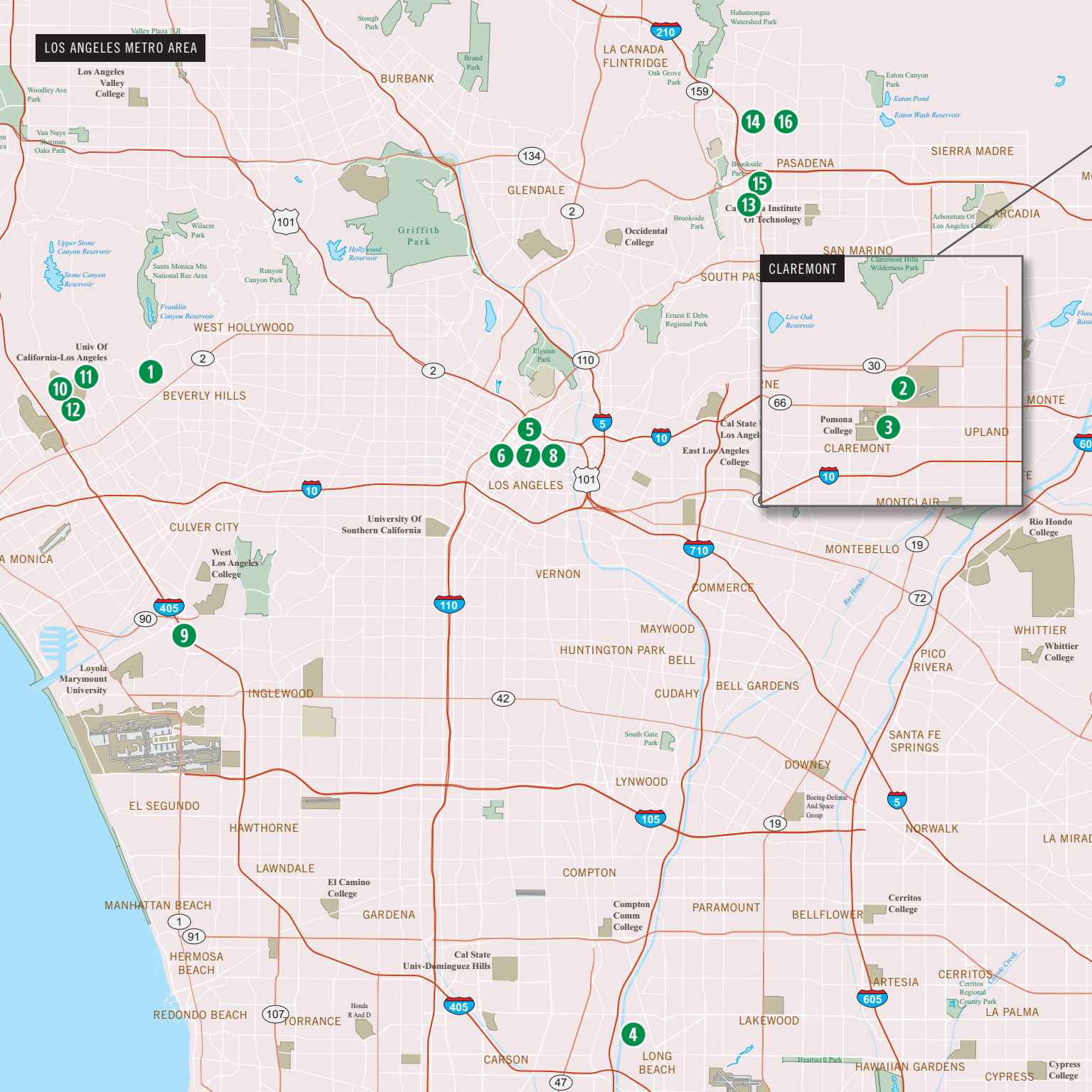
- 1909-1914 Attended Pomona College, studied plant science
- 1915-1917 Attended Harvard University, earned Master of Landscape Architecture

Firms

- 1919-1924 Cornell & Payne Landscape Architect and Wild Garden Specialist
Ralph Cornell and Theodore Payne
- 1924-1933 Cook, Hall & Cornell
Wilbur Cook, George Hall, Ralph Cornell
- 1955-1969 Cornell, Bridgers and Troller
Ralph Cornell, Samuel Bridgers, Howard Troller
- 1969-1972 Cornell, Bridgers, Troller and Hazlett
Ralph Cornell, Samuel Bridgers, Howard Troller, Jere Hazlett

Supervisory Role at Academic Institutions

- 1919-1959 Pomona College
- 1937-1972 Supervising landscape architect at UCLA
- 1928-1941 Supervising landscape architect at University of Hawaii



Beverly Gardens Park, photo by Matthew Traucht

List of sites

BEVERLY HILLS

- 1 Beverly Gardens Park

CLAREMONT

- 2 Harvey Mudd College
- 3 Pomona College

LONG BEACH

- 4 Rancho Los Cerritos

LOS ANGELES

- 5 Grand Park
- 6 LA Mall
- 7 LA Department of Water and Power
- 8 LA Music Center
- 9 Hillside Memorial Park
- 10 University of Southern California, Los Angeles (UCLA)
- 11 Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden (UCLA)
- 12 Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden (UCLA)

PASADENA

- 13 Central Park
- 14 La Pintoresca Park
- 15 Memorial Park
- 16 Washington Park

Beverly Gardens Park

Landscape Style:

Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:

Public Park – Neighborhood Park

Designed By:

Ralph Dalton Cornell
 Wilbur D. Cook, Jr.
 Cook, Hall & Cornell
 Mia Lehrer + Associates

This sixteen-acre linear park stretches nearly two miles along Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevards in Beverly Hills. Three central blocks were delineated as parkland in the 1906 subdivision plat by Wilbur D. Cook, Jr., providing a buffer between the residential area to the north and the city’s commercial core. Opened in 1911, the small park featured a large raised, concrete reflecting pool known as the lily pond fronted by the iconic Beverly Hills sign and stands of cypress and ficus trees.

In the late 1920s adjoining parcels were added, expanding the park to its current 23 blocks. Building upon Cook’s plan, Ralph Cornell developed Beverly Gardens Park in 1931; each block-sized green space included a ten-foot-wide paved promenade concrete benches, trimmed hedges, and flower beds. The overall park design generally featured lawn areas adjacent to street frontage with trees planted to shade a decomposed granite path. Three specialty gardens—palms, roses, and cacti and succulents—were also created, along with four pergolas and three fountains spread throughout the park. The Electric Fountain, designed by Ralph Flewelling and Merrell Gage, incorporated a 50-foot-diameter tiled basin with reliefs of scenes from California history along with a cast concrete figure of a kneeling figure of the Native American Tongva tribe. By the mid-twentieth century the lily pond was replaced by a raised lawn and flower display. In 2014 the lily pond was rebuilt, part of the overall restoration of the park led by Mia Lehrer + Associates.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo Larkin Owens

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Harvey Mudd College

Photo courtesy Harvey Mudd College



Established in 1955, this undergraduate campus in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains was constructed on agricultural land formerly occupied by citrus groves. In 1956 the Claremont College Consortium provided a linear sixteen-acre plot of rocky land north of Scripps College with the understanding that views of the mountains and a grove of liquidambar trees be preserved. Architects Edward Durrell Stone and Earl Heitschmidt and the landscape architecture firm Cornell, Bridgers and Troller were commissioned to design the master plan. Though limited funding prevented extensive landscape improvements, faculty and students cleared rock, leveled land, and planted trees to beautify the campus.

Preserving native live oaks and sycamores, Cornell designed the central axis known as the Great Mall and the cross-axial Liquidambar Mall. From 1960 to 1970 Thomas Church served as a consultant to Cornell, Bridgers and Troller. Cornell's design for Platt Boulevard established the southern border of the campus, which was then surrounded by a naturalistic landscape. The centrally located, 2000-foot-long Great Mall unifies the campus, anchored on the west by the sunken Hixon Court with its geometric pool and *Venus* sculpture by Giovanni Bologna. Oriented west to east, the level, open axis is flanked by symmetrically aligned low, buff-colored, U-shaped buildings, each with its own courtyard open to the Mall. Fronted by arcaded porticoes, the repetition of buildings is reinforced by walkways, seating areas, and specimen trees. Over the years, the original sixteen-acre core has expanded to 33 acres, with parking along its periphery and residential dorms to the east.

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Campus – Quadrangle Plan

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller
Thomas Dolliver Church
Edward Durrell Stone



Pomona College

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:
Campus – Quadrangle Plan

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Myron Hunt

Envisioned in 1888 by its founders as a “college of the New England type,” this school opened in a five-room cottage and, later that year, was relocated to a hotel in Claremont. Surrounded by 260 lots that had been abandoned with the collapse of the Southern California real estate boom, distinctive halls were constructed on the twelve-acre park-like campus. In 1905 an adjacent 65-acre plateau and stream bed known as Blanchard’s Wash were added. Three years later architect Myron Hunt developed a Beaux Arts plan inspired by Thomas Jefferson’s Academical Village in Virginia. Framing views and possessing a significant central open space, Hunt’s Marston Quadrangle was organized in a symmetrical plan flanked by Mission Revival buildings and anchored by the Neoclassical Carnegie Library. In 1919 Ralph Cornell began his 40-year role as Pomona College’s supervising landscape architect.

Developing his “college in a garden” plan and departing from his own emphasis on using California natives, Cornell replaced the existing chaparral and sagebrush with sycamores, live oaks, pines, and subtropical exotics. Masses of vegetation including flowering trees, shrubs, and perennials delineated intimate outdoor rooms, provided seasonal variations of color and texture, and framed surrounding vistas. Native plants in the Wash provided a naturalistic link to the canyons while more formal plantings expressed Cornell’s orderly and considered design. Lined by live oaks, punctuated with fountains, and dotted with memorials and seating, the axial Stover Walk parallels Marston Quadrangle. Measuring 140 acres today and enveloped by modern classrooms and athletic fields, the historic core retains its character.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo courtesy Pomona College



courtesy Pomona College

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Rancho Los Cerritos



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Constructed in 1844 at the heart of John Temple's 27,000-acre cattle ranch, this adobe house was flanked by a two-acre garden and orchard. Temple imported fruit seeds and black locust from the east, which he added to plantings of local olives, pomegranates, and citrus. Organized into a grid, the irrigated gardens adjacent to the adobe house included a two-story wooden veranda and a courtyard. In the 1860s the ranch was sold to the Bixby family who preserved and maintained Temple's gardens. In the 1880s the land was slowly subdivided and by the late 1920s all that remained was 4.7 acres.

In 1931 Llewellyn Bixby returned to the vastly reduced property and commissioned Ralph Cornell to design gardens, some of which were inspired by the historic landscape. Cornell preserved several of the original trees and a specimen fig planted in the 1880s. Utilizing Mediterranean and subtropical varieties of orange, guava, and avocado, Cornell developed two distinct orchards and lined the curving driveway with natives and exotics.

In 1955 the Bixbys transferred the property to the City of Long Beach to be interpreted as a historic resource. The site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1970. The smaller orchard was replaced by an herb garden in 1987 and the primary orchard was renovated in 2001. A redwood water tower, circa 1870, was rebuilt in 2007 and five years later a visitor center was constructed. Under a public-private partnership with the City, the Rancho Los Cerritos Foundation assumed responsibility for operations in 2014.

Landscape Style:
Mediterranean

Landscape Type:
Garden and Estate
Cultural Institution

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell



Photo by Marie Bamidge-McIntyre



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Civic Center

Landscape Style:

Beaux Arts / Neoclassical
Modernist

Landscape Type:

Institutional Grounds – Governmental
Public Park
Plaza

Designed By:

Ralph Dalton Cornell
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller
Charles Mulford Robinson
J.S. Rankin
Wallace McHarg Roberts & Todd
Suisman Urban Design

Related Landscapes:

Grand Park
LA Mall
LA Department of Water and Power
LA Music Center

Located in the northern part of downtown Los Angeles between Bunker Hill and the old Pueblo, this governmental complex has the nation’s second largest concentration of public sector buildings and workers after Washington, D.C. As early as 1900 public officials, based on a plan from city planner Charles Mulford Robinson, conceived of a City Beautiful-style civic center. In 1917, landscape architect J. S. Rankin submitted a site plan for the center’s current location, but only the construction of City Hall (in 1928) occurred before World War II.

Following the War, extensive urban renewal led to the razing of many of Bunker Hill’s historic buildings and the construction of the Santa Ana Freeway, which separated the area from the city’s historic core. The civic center axis was reoriented and by 1956 there were numerous proposals for a Modernist complex centered on a twelve-acre mall designed by Cornell, Bridgers and Troller. The mall was built over a subterranean parking garage and lined with Functionalist-style buildings, with the Los Angeles Music Center and Department of Water and Power anchoring the northern terminus. In 1972 a master plan by landscape architects Wallace, McHarg, Roberts & Todd re-designed the area to include a greater proliferation of pedestrian-friendly amenities, including the Los Angeles Mall, a multi-level civic and retail space with parkland spanning both sides of Temple Street. In 1998 a master plan by a team led by Suisman Urban Design established a governmental district with City Hall and the Civic Center as the central nexus uniting the surrounds.



Photo by Kansas Sebastian



Photo by Charles Birnbaum



Photo by Steven Keyton

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Grand Park

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Commemorating the 44 settlers who established the City of Los Angeles in 1781, El Paseo de los Pobladores de Los Angeles ("The Walk of the First Settlers of Los Angeles") was dedicated in 1966. Spanning a steep hillside and bordered by thoroughfares and civic buildings, Cornell, Bridgers and Troller began work on the twelve-acre park in 1956. Situated over a subterranean parking deck, the rectilinear Beaux Arts park, also called the Civic Center Mall, was comprised of a sequence of plazas between the Music Center and Grand Avenue to the northwest and Spring Street and City Hall to the southeast. Hill Street and Broadway bisect the linear alignment of the park.

The upper, northern section was designed to frame views across broad terraces planted with groves of trees, ornamented by pools and fountains, and flanked by steps and promenades. Just below Grand Avenue, the Arthur J. Will Memorial Fountain with circular pools and arcing water jets set in rectilinear pools animated the upper terrace, which was bordered by palm and olive groves. The lower terrace, flanked by masses of native and exotic plants and lawn, was comprised of a central plaza punctuated by flags and statues of George Washington and Christopher Columbus. Spiral ramps on both ends of the rectangular park provided access to the parking deck below. In 2010 Civic Center Mall, renamed Grand Park, was redesigned by Rios Clemente Hale Studios as the centerpiece of the Grand Avenue Redevelopment Project.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Public Park
Plaza
Institutional Grounds – Governmental

Designed By:
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller
Rios Clemente Hale Studios



Photo by Steven Weylon



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Los Angeles Mall

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Plaza
Public Park
Shopping Center – Shopping Plaza/
Shopping Mall

Designed By:
Howard Troller
Cornell, Bridgers, Troller and Hazlett
Wallace McHarg Roberts & Todd

Between 1973 and 1975, the Civic Center complex was expanded east of City Hall to encompass two city blocks. Designed by architect William Stockwell with landscape architects Cornell, Bridgers, Troller and Hazlett, the Mall was conceived as a traditional town square – a place for community meetings, retail, civic institutions, and the display of public art. Comprised of two aboveground stories and four subterranean levels, the campus, which is bisected by Temple Street, is united by a pedestrian bridge and a belowground tunnel. Retail shops line the tunnel, connecting the North and South Malls.

At grade and flanked by municipal buildings, the plazas—primarily paved—are softened by raised beds of lawn, flowering shrubs, and specimen trees. The South Mall, anchored by the Brutalist-style City Hall East and framed by a diverse mix of towering deciduous trees, includes the Eleanor Chambers Memorial Fountain (alternatively called the “Dan-de-lion”) designed in 1974 by Howard Troller and Hanns Scharff and two Chinese lions installed to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the signing of Declaration of Independence. The sunken palm court with arcing paths features Jan Peter Stern’s stainless steel *Cubed Square* installed in 1974. The North Mall’s elevated plaza is enclosed by mature jacaranda and dominated by Joseph Young’s 60-foot-tall *Triforium*, a colorful sculpture with 1,500 blown-glass prisms synchronized to an electronic glass bell carillon installed in 1975. A sunken plaza at the base of the Children’s Museum includes a food court, stands of palm, and the Robert J. Stevenson Fountain, a red and brown pointed obelisk set into a pool.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Kansas Sebastian



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

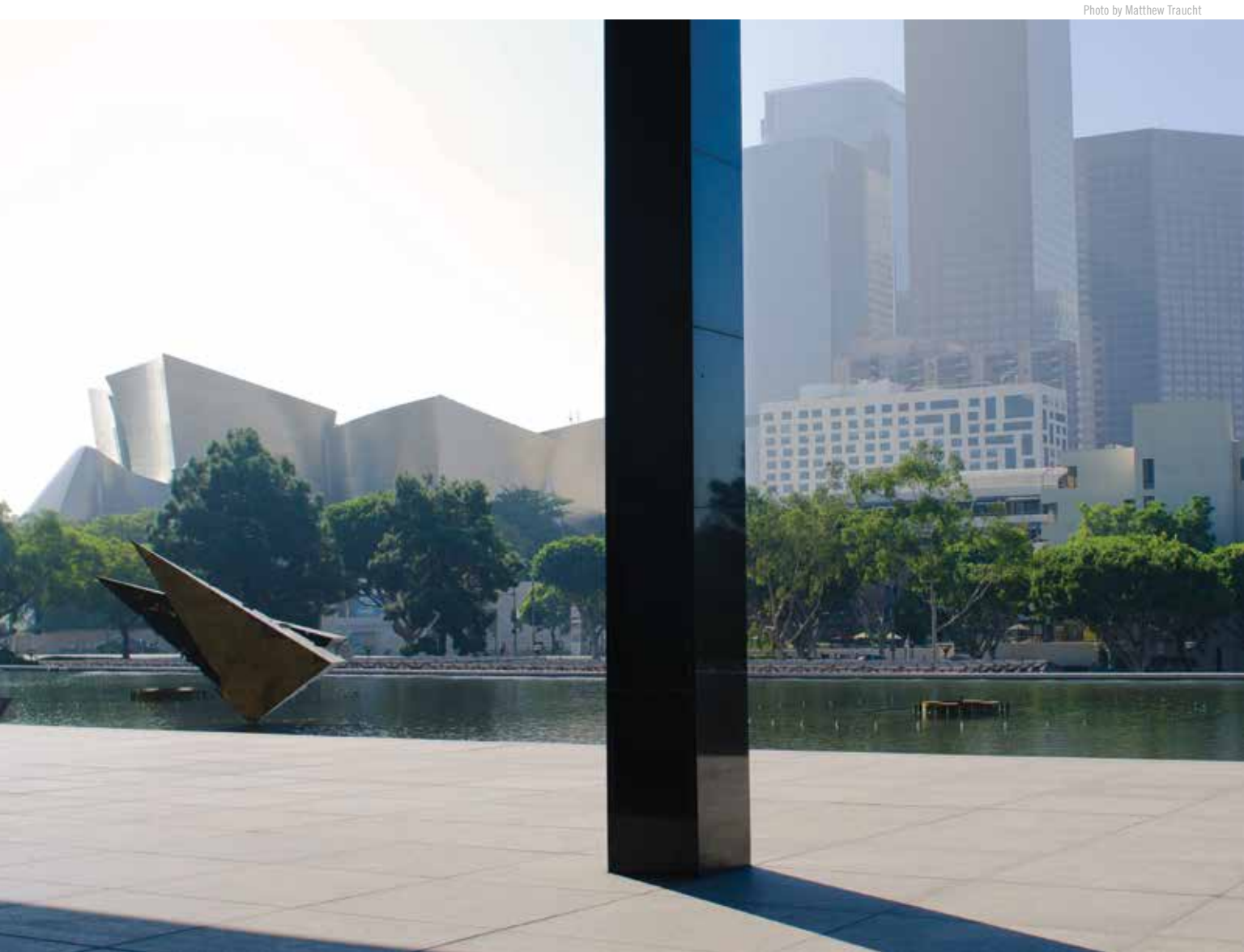


Photo by Matthew Traucht

Established in 1902, the Department of Water and Power's seventeen-story, International Style headquarters was designed by Albert C. Martin and Associates in 1959. The steeply sloping site on the western edge of the Los Angeles Civic Center comprises an entire city block; its sixteen-acre campus was designed by Martin in collaboration with landscape architects Cornell, Bridgers and Troller.

The rectangular tower, situated on an elevated plinth above a three-level parking garage, is surrounded by a plaza set with square granite pavers and a shallow rectilinear reflecting pool. The aggregate-clad pool is the most prominent feature of the campus and encircles the building like a moat. It is spanned on its eastern side by a wide bridge that connects to a linear greensward and the sidewalk along Hope Street. Divided evenly between the north and south sides of the building, eight fountains with golden lights and choreographed jets are positioned within the pool. Integrated with the building's innovative air-conditioning system, the pool was designed to contain 1,250,000 gallons of water while the pump circulates 20,000 gallons per minute. *Colpo d'ala*, a sculpture by Arnalda Pomodoro, was installed in the pool's southern end in 1988. The periphery of the site is lined with mature deciduous trees, native plants, and a cluster of boulders from the Alabama Hills north of Los Angeles are located at the northeastern corner of the property. Ten granite, raised planting beds flank the bridge and line the entrance along Hope Street, where symmetrical pairs of L-shaped staircases lead down to the parking level.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds – Governmental Plaza

Designed By:
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Steven Keylon

Los Angeles Music Center

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds – Cultural Plaza

Designed By:
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller

Located at the western end of the Civic Center, this performing arts campus is one of the country's largest, encompassing eleven acres and four separate venues. In 1955 Dorothy Chandler, wife of the *Los Angeles Times* publisher, began fundraising for a permanent home for the city's Philharmonic; Los Angeles County later provided a site at the top of Bunker Hill with unparalleled views of the mountains to the north from downtown. Designed by Welton Becket and constructed between 1962 and 1967, the Modernist center features three structures flanking an east-west oriented, landscaped plaza: the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (1964), the Mark Taper Forum (1967), and the Ahmanson Theatre (1967).

The largest of the three original structures, the Pavilion, faces the drum-like, circular Forum bordered on one side by a paved plaza and the other by a reflecting pool in front of the Ahmanson Theatre. The buildings are connected by a stepped plaza designed by landscape architects Cornell, Bridgers and Troller in collaboration with Becket. The plaza originally contained a shallow reflecting pool at its center, into which *Peace on Earth*, a monumental sculpture by Jacques Lipschitz was added in 1969; the pool has been drained and now is comprised of kinetic fountains. The eastern stairs are dominated by *Dance Door*, a bronze sculptural piece created in 1978 by Robert Graham and donated to the Music Center in 1982. The sunken forecourts fronting the buildings contain planters with small ficus arranged in two neat rows, while the periphery is lined with mature deciduous trees and planting beds filled with palms.



Photo by Charles Birnbaum



Photo by Charles Birnbaum



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Hillside Memorial Park

Photo by Steven Keylon



Planned in 1941 by Harry and Robert Groman as the final resting place of Southern California’s Jewish community leaders, this 45-acre wedge-shaped site in Culver City was designed in 1945 by Ralph Cornell in collaboration with architect Arthur Froehlich. Taking advantage of the naturally hilly location, Cornell gracefully located vehicular circulation on roads that meandered around the site. Though not built when the Park opened in 1946, the design team proposed a mausoleum at the crest of the hill, from which a 120-foot waterfall would cascade dramatically down the hillside, terminating in a reflecting pool.

Cornell’s planting plan featured two pairs of specimen Port Jackson figs at the Centinela Avenue entrance to the Park. Four more surrounded the hexagonal parking area, one pair framing the view towards the crest of the hill and the proposed mausoleum and cascade. The site was enclosed by clusters of Canary Island pines, with picturesque groupings of Italian stone pine planted along the roadways. Olive, magnolia, and elm completed the basic framework, punctuated with a wide array of flowering trees and shrubs for seasonal color.

In 1951 architect Paul Williams designed a restrained two-story Neoclassical Modern mausoleum using the same basic footprint proposed in Cornell’s plan. Williams also designed an adjacent monument for entertainer Al Jolson that includes a 75-foot-tall pillared mosaic-adorned dome, from which a modified version of Cornell’s tiled waterfall cascade and flower-lined reflecting pool were finally built. Later monuments include sculpture by Albert Wein (1968) and Mary Ann DeVine (1992).

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Cemetery – Memorial Park

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell



Photo by Steven Keylon



Photo by Steven Keylon



Photo by Steven Keylon

University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical
Mediterranean

Landscape Type:
Campus – Land Grant College

Designed By:
George W. Kelham
John W. Gregg
Wurderman and Becket
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller
Howard Troller
Jere M. Hazlett
Emmet L. Wemple & Associates
Hodgetts + Fung

Related Landscapes:
Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden
Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden

Established in 1919 the Southern Branch of the University of California was developed from the State Normal School. The campus expanded to a new rural, 200-acre tract in Westwood Hills in 1924, with ocean views and the verdant backdrop of the Bel Air hills. In 1926 architect George Kelham developed a Beaux Arts campus master plan, with four red brick Romanesque buildings set in a cross axial arrangement. Kelham worked with the site's hilly, irregular terrain by using terraces and steps on the west side of the hill and creating a Romanesque bridge over an arroyo to the east, which constituted the main entry axis. Landscape architect John Gregg designed a corresponding Mediterranean campus landscape through the 1930s, which was continued by Ralph Cornell after 1937. In 1947 the arroyo was filled and the bridge buried to create Dickinson Court and Plaza.

Between 1948 and 1968 the Los Angeles-based firm Wurdeman and Becket were consulting architects for the campus, initiating an era of Modernist planning principles and International-style architecture. From the 1950s until 1972, Howard Troller and Jere Hazlett of Cornell, Bridgers & Troller served as principal landscape architects, overseeing the creation of the Grand Axis, the Inverted Fountain, the Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden, Bruin Walk and Bruin Plaza. Later development in the southwestern quadrant of the campus incorporated gardens designed by Emmet L. Wemple & Associates and a new entrance at Le Conte Avenue by Hodgetts + Fung Design Associates. Surrounded by residential neighborhoods, the campus today measures 419 acres.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Charles Birnbaum



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Photo by Matthew Traucht



Franklin D. Murphy Sculpture Garden

Photo by Matthew Traucht



The Murphy Sculpture Garden was envisioned in 1960 by University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Chancellor Franklin Murphy to be a public sculpture garden, a place for students and staff to experience art as a part of daily life. Built as part of a larger campus expansion plan, UCLA's supervisory landscape architect Ralph Cornell and his partner Howard Troller were commissioned to design the five-acre rectangular site, a former parking lot nestled amidst campus buildings.

Designed without knowledge of what sculpture the site would exhibit, Cornell and Troller envisioned the garden as a piece of art in itself. Rigid forms on the outer edges of the space, including linear concrete pathways and raised terraces, provide a transition between the modern campus buildings and the inner park. Specimen trees and small groves punctuate the undulating topography of expansive lawns while curvilinear pathways provide access to intimate spaces. A bridge spans the park, providing direct access to the central campus and allowing pedestrians to pass over the lawn. Sculptures, including works by Alexander Calder and Auguste Rodin, are set into the terraces, along pathways, and placed in curving concrete seating areas at the edges of the lawn. Plantings include an allée of coral trees along the northern terrace; rows of canary pines; jacarandas; sycamores; eucalyptus, and redwood trees. Dedicated in 1967, the garden is maintained by the Armand Hammer Museum of Art and Culture Center at UCLA.

Landscape Style:
Modernist

Landscape Type:
Institutional Grounds – Cultural

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Howard Troller
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Charles Birnbaum



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden

This seven-acre botanical garden at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Westwood campus was established in 1929 as a teaching facility and laboratory. Originally encompassing 31 acres, the garden was sited in the southeastern corner of the campus near an arroyo lined with willows. The arid hills were planted with coastal sage scrub, to which collections of eucalyptus and ficus were added. The area's microclimate allowed for the propagation of tropical and subtropical plants; flora common to Australia and Hawaii were displayed in thematic gardens, including gymnosperms, palms, succulents, aquatics, and camellias. The first manager of the botanical garden, George C. Groenewegen, obtained specimens by donation, largely from the United States Department of Agriculture, the California Botanical Garden, and the Huntington Botanical Gardens.

The garden flourished under the direction of landscape architect Ralph Cornell from 1937 until the mid-1950s. His partner, Howard Troller, designed the subtropical conservatory and a lath house that was constructed for research purposes in the northwestern corner of the garden in 1952. Between 1956 and 1974, the garden was managed by Mildred Mathias, for whom it was named in 1979. Plants are arranged by geographic, taxonomic, or cultural themes, and special collections include Malaysian rhododendrons, bromeliads, cycads, ferns, and shrubs found in Mediterranean climates. "The nest," is a small amphitheater designed by the garden staff and constructed from Northern California incense cedar and boulders in 1996.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque or "Romantic"

Landscape Type:
Botanical Garden

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Howard Troller
Cornell, Bridgers and Troller



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo courtesy Mildred E. Mathias Botanical Garden

Photo by Matthew Traucht



Central Park

Established in 1902 as one of Pasadena's two earliest parks (on land purchased contemporaneously with that for Memorial Park), this ten-acre rectangular greensward occupies several blocks in the heart of the city. Situated south of the Hotel Green (completed in 1893), and adjacent to the Santa Fe Railroad Station (which began operating in 1887), the centrally located park provided recreational space for tourists. After the City purchased the land, landscape architect Thomas Chisholm designed the Picturesque park to include extensive lawns, a bowling court, and a tourist club all connected by a serpentine pathway. A stone horse trough donated by the National Humane Society in 1905 was installed in the park's northeast corner.

In 1927 Ralph Cornell was commissioned to redesign both Central and Memorial Parks. Reflective of the Beaux Arts style, Cornell's design for Central Park included a centrally-located elliptical path that enclosed an open lawn and connected to the surrounding street by arcing walkways. Bowling greens and clay roque courts (similar to croquet) were located in the southern end while a playground, formal flower gardens, and an aviary were located in the north. The horse trough was repurposed to serve as a fountain. In 1929 a Spanish Colonial Revival clubhouse designed by architect Wallace Neff was constructed between the bowling greens and roque courts. Groupings of palm, eucalyptus, acacia, and camphor laurel punctuated the park and lined its paths. The park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1983 as a contributing feature of the Old Pasadena Historic District.

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:
Public Park – Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Cook, Hall and Cornell
Thomas Chisholm



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht

La Pintoresca Park

The park's origins date to 1888 with Quaker John Hunt Painter's construction of the Painter Hotel, which included formal gardens, expansive orchards, and an arroyo stone retaining wall surrounding the four-acre property. The hotel was renamed La Pintoresca (Spanish for "picturesque") following Painter's death in 1892, indicative of the uninterrupted views of the San Gabriel Mountains. The building burned in 1912 and the City of Pasadena purchased the property three years later for use as a park.

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:
Public Park – Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Theodore Payne

In 1924 landscape architects Ralph Cornell and Theodore Payne were commissioned to design the site. The northern section of the park accommodated active recreational activities with the installation of courts for tennis and roque (a game similar to croquet). A wood and concrete pergola was constructed south of the courts and a large, elliptical lawn occupied the park's center, encircled by a walk connected to the peripheral streets. Cornell incorporated the existing landscape features including vegetation and retaining wall, which he opened to the south to create a new entrance to the park. Cylindrical drinking fountains constructed of arroyo stone and concrete were also installed at this time. The park's perimeter was planted with palms, camphor, and specimen trees including Deodar cedars and a Moreton Bay Fig.

By 1930 the park was reduced to three acres after the construction of an electricity substation and a Spanish Revival library, both designed by architects Cyril Bennett and Fitch Haskell. In the 1960s the lighting and paths were renewed though Cornell's alignment and placement was retained.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Pasadena Memorial Park

Originally known as Library Park for Pasadena's first library, a stone Romanesque building constructed on-site in 1890, this five-acre park was one of the earliest established in the city. Created in 1902 along with the nearby Central Park, the triangular green space is bordered to the east by a railroad completed in 1887 and on the west by Raymond Avenue, lined with palms when the park was established. A serpentine network of paths transected wide expanses of open lawn, which were punctuated by trees, shrubs, and a gazebo. On Memorial Day, 1906 a Civil War monument was dedicated. In 1927 when the library collection was relocated off-site, the firm Cook, Hall & Cornell was commissioned to redesign both Library and Central Parks.

Landscape Style:
Beaux Arts / Neoclassical

Landscape Type:
Public Park – Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Cook, Hall and Cornell

Ralph Cornell's interest in experimenting with local and exotic plants is apparent in the park's design with the use of masses of distinctive coniferous and deciduous trees including the massive bunya-bunya imported from Australia, towering palms, and flowering shrubs. In 1930 an Art Deco band shell was constructed, designed by architect Edward Mussa and dedicated by the American Legion on Memorial Day. Two years later the Daughters of Union Veterans of the Civil War dedicated two tiled fountains designed by Ernest Batchelder. A number of other memorials have been installed in the park over the years. The library, damaged by an earthquake in 1933, was dismantled in 1954, though the entrance arch was preserved and still stands at the northwest corner of the park. In 1983 the park was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Civic Center Historic District.



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht



Photo by Matthew Traucht

Washington Park

Located in the northwestern neighborhood of Washington Square, this was one of the city's earliest public parks, created within a three-acre vacant lot on the southeast corner of El Molino Avenue and Washington Boulevard that was purchased in 1920. In 1922 landscape architects Ralph Cornell and Theodore Payne completed a plan for the park and its "sunken gardens." The site, a natural stream basin, had irregular terrain, which the designers leveraged with the incorporation of pathways, river rock walls, native plants, a rustic stone bridge, a tennis court and small playground. In the 1940s the Works Progress Administration constructed a stone wall and an additional 2.1 acres were purchased, making space for a softball diamond, a new playground, and a parking lot. Basketball and handball courts and adult exercise equipment were added over time.

In 2003 the city, in partnership with the Friends of Washington Park and the Theodore Payne Foundation, selected landscape architects Troller Mayer Associates, Perry & Associates, and Onyx architects to implement an updated master plan, which included retaining and enhancing the historic look and feel of the park, and a focus on the use of local native plants. Also included were a stone stage, accessible pathways, and native plant demonstration gardens, all completed in 2006.

Landscape Style:
Picturesque or "Romantic"

Landscape Type:
Public Park – Neighborhood Park

Designed By:
Ralph Dalton Cornell
Theodore Payne



Photo by Matthew Traucht



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(left) Rosita Dee Cornell standing on a rock in Pigeon Pass, shielding her eyes from the sun, Riverside, 1936 © UCLA Library Special Collections, photo by Ralph Cornell

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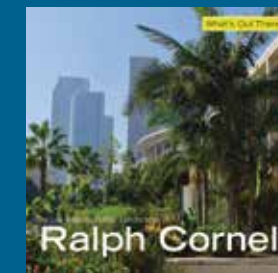
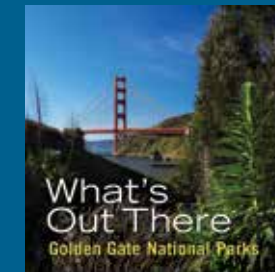
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