

Arts and Culture in South Los Angeles

Archival Collections

An asterisk * denotes collections with registers accessible through SCL's listing in the Online Archive of California. You can reach the Online Archive of California through SCL's website at www.socallib.org or directly at www.oac.cdlib.org/dynaweb.ead

*Frances Williams Papers, 1930s-1990s, 8 cu. ft.
Papers documenting the life of the late African American actress (she had a recurring role on the Tim Reid's highly acclaimed and short-lived 1980s television series, *Frank's Place*), theater producer, and social activist. Of Left political persuasion, Ms. Williams, who was investigated by the state House Un-

American Activities Committee, retained her political beliefs and associations to the end of her life. A beloved cultural figure in the African American and progressive community in Los Angeles, she ran "The Frances Williams Corner Theater" out of her garage in South Central for decades.

Books

Central Avenue Sounds: Jazz in Los Angeles edited by Clora Bryant, et al (1998).

Comprehensive and rich volume on African American jazz musical heritage of Los Angeles with an in-depth look at the musicians, the music, and the social and political climate on Central Avenue. Written and edited by people directly involved in the creation of the music.

Central Avenue-Its Rise and Fall (1850-c.1955): Including the Renaissance of Black Los Angeles by Bette Yarbrough Cox (1993).

Fierce historical account and critical reflection of the formation, struggle, and demise of Central Avenue. Powerful herstories and histories through oral narratives and photographs of peoples who dedicated their life to rhythm, sounds, and Central Avenue.

Seeking El Dorado: African Americans in California edited by Lawrence B. De Graaf, et al (2001).

"The Evolution of Black Music in Los Angeles, 1890-1955" by Bette Yarbrough Cox. History, transformation, and spirit of Central Avenue. [pp. 249-278]

California Soul: Music of African Americans in the West edited by Jacqueline Cogdell DjeDje & Eddie S. Meadows (1998).

Focuses on African American musicians, music, and culture in California, with specific wittings on Central Avenue.

Paint the Towns: Murals of California by Robin J. Dunitz and James Prigoff (1997).

Showcases 300 of California's most outstanding murals, accompanied by personal commentaries from more than 100 artists. Includes a section on South LA.

Using History to Advance Social Justice

The Southern California Library is a vital community resource in the heart of Los Angeles dedicated to education for social change. SCL offers unique and accessible collections and programs on Southern California's social and progressive history. We engage people across generations in using history to advance social justice.

Street Gallery: Guide to over 1000 Los Angeles Murals by Robin J. Dunitz (1993).

Comprehensive guide book to the murals of the Los Angeles county, with listings and descriptions of 1200 murals, more than 100 color photographs and 22 detailed street maps. Includes a section on South LA, Vernon and Compton.

The Los Angeles Watts Towers by Bud Goldstone and Arloa Paquin Goldstone (1997).

Gives biographical information of Simon Rodia, the Watts Tower artist, and displays the towers as art, as architecture, and as a singular expression of urban culture in Southern California.

Upside Your Head: Rhythm and Blues on Central Avenue by Johnny Otis (1993).

Remembering Central Avenue, its music, musicians, religion, arts, and politics of race and rebellion through rhythm and blues.

There and Back by Roy Porter (1991).

Roy Porter's recount of his experience on Central Avenue. History, artists, photographs.

African American Expressive Culture from its Beginnings to the Zoot Suit by Shane West and Graham White (1998).

An essential history of African Americans traditions, popular culture and styles, much that encompassed South LA in the 1940s.

Los Angeles Murals by African American Artists (1995).

25 full-color reproductions of some of the Los Angeles' most beautiful and significant murals in postcard form.

Tha Doggfather: The Times, Trials, and Hardcore Truths of Snoop Dogg by Snoop Dogg (1999).

Autobiography. Sharing his life story and responsibilities. Speaking the truth on poverty, education, crime, hopelessness, police brutality, hip-hop culture, self-love and spirituality.

Wallbangin': Graffiti and Gangs in L.A. by Susan A. Phillips (1999). Redefining graffiti.

Art of resistance, rage, and survival. Personal stories and fierce photography.

Periodicals

Be-Bop and Beyond (1983–1987).

Articles about the Jazz scene and Jazz artists.

Videos

Ernie Andrews: Blues on Central Avenue [78].

A documentary film exploring the life of Ernie Andrews and the loss of Central Avenue.

Los Angeles History Project [143].

Video includes the section *Ode to Central Avenue*, a portrait of Los Angeles' Black community from the 1920s to 1940s.

Also See Pathfinders on South LA (general), and 1965 and 1992 LA Uprisings.

Compiled by SCL interns: Vanessa Diaz, Christina Guevarra, delia herrera, and Mynor Mendez, June 2003.