

Mural #1: Hermosa Beach Pier Plaza Circa 1924

Location: 14th and Hermosa Avenue on North Facing Wall of Parking Lot C



ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Art Mortimer

Mortimer was born in Long Beach, California, and is a graduate of Occidental College in Eagle Rock, California. He moved to Santa Monica in 1965 and has been working as a freelance artist since 1969. He painted his first mural in 1971, on the side of the house he was living in, at the beach in Santa Monica. Also in 1971 he worked with artist/film maker Terry Gilliam in London on a series of short animated films that became part of a Mary Feldman television series shown in the USA. He lived and worked at the beach in Santa Monica until December, 2002, and now lives in West Los Angeles. Since 1971 he has painted over 100 murals, including major public murals in Claremont CA, Billings MT, 29 Palms CA, Lompoc CA, Susanville CA and many Southern California communities. Among many other murals, he has painted a 300 ft. long 'History of Long Beach' mural in that California beach city (2003); a 4-story high mural in downtown Santa Monica about the beach, commissioned by the Milken Family Foundation (1998); a mural on Fairfax Ave. in Los Angeles depicting the history of the Jewish community in Los Angeles (1985); one on the side of Brandelli's Brig bar on Abbot Kinney Blvd. in Venice (1973); a large piece in the new corporate headquarters of Rockwell International in Seal Beach CA (1992); a mural on the history of Century City in the lobby of a high-rise office building in Century City (1991); a large mural on the side of Bloomingdale's department store in New York City for the State of California depicting the various regions of California (1989); and many private commissions. His plein air and studio paintings, depicting mostly Southern California urban and semiurban landscapes, are an expression of his interest in the exploration of the

world we inhabit in our everyday lives, particularly the intersection between the man-made and the natural world. Considered one of the originators of the mural movement in Los Angeles, his mural work has been featured in numerous exhibitions and photographic collections, as well as in newspapers, magazines, books, television and films all across the United States and in many countries around the world. He was honored as Artist of the Year in 2004 by the City of Long Beach. Several of his murals have also won community beautification awards. The April, 2009, issue of Southwest Art Magazine featured a 6-page article on his murals and paintings. He was a featured artist in the book "Sketchbook Confidential" published by North Light Books in 2010, and wrote a 3-page article in November, 2010 issue of The Artist's Magazine. He is currently teaching Mural Painting at Los Angeles Trade Technical College. He has also been a part-time faculty member at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles where he has taught Landscape Painting, Mural Painting, and Plein Air Painting, as well as Life Painting and Painting I and II. He has also taught classes and workshops on mural painting in a variety of schools and communities. He is a member of the board of directors of the California Public Art and Mural Society, and is also a member of the National Society of Mural Painters and the California Art Club.

ABOUT THE MURAL:

The scene looks west along Pier Avenue toward the public pier. It depicts Pier Avenue as it appeared in 1924. The building on the far left housed the National Bank of Hermosa Beach. In 2011 it is the home of the Bank of America. The building on the right was occupied by the Hermosa Pharmacy, and later a clothing store. Today it is occupied by CitiBank. In front of the pharmacy is a Pacific Electric Red Car trolley, then the major mode of transportation for the "rich and famous" to get from Los Angeles to Hermosa Beach. The large building in the left-center was the Pier Hotel. In 2011 it continues life as a youth hostel in the upper floors, with a restaurant and bar on the ground floor. The red-roofed building in the center of the mural is the rather elaborate entrance to the pier with the right side occupied by the Chamber of Commerce, and the left side by a dancing pavilion. Later, the City Library occupied this building. The public pier in the center of the mural was a 1,000' concrete structure, originally built in 1914 when it was erected to replace several versions of wooden piers that were often washed away in winter storms. This pier was replaced by yet another pier in 1965. That pier was subsequently remodeled and reinforced in the year 2000. Other business of the period can be seen in the mural. On the right side of Pier Avenue you'll find a Candy Store, Sid's Cafe, Piggly-Wiggly market, and the Kerwin Family Bakery. Along the left side of the street are Robert's Liquor (although this was the period of Prohibition,) another bakery and a florist. In 2011 Robert's Liquor is still a going concern. Many other buildings depicted in the mural are still in use in 2011, but the entrance to the public pier is now open. At the pier head is a statue of local surfer Tim Kelly and to the left of the pier you will now find the LA Co. Lifeguards Headquarters.