



INGLEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY (1973)

Adjacent to City Hall is the Library. One of the most unique features of the building is its organization and circulation flow. The front facade would naturally be on Manchester Boulevard, the main street. Luckman flipped it to the Plaza side and then placed the cars and service below the building. This forces everyone to go through the Plaza and proceed upwards to the second level.

There are other features emblematic of International Style Buildings of the era. Each elevation is different reflecting the building's orientation. Circulation elements (stair and ramp) are visually expressed and are bumped out of the facade plane. The functional elements such as the Lecture Hall are treated as separate buildings.

The building is also made of poured-in-place reinforced concrete, a technique that requires precise wooden molds to be made. It was the material of choice for many significant public buildings of the era, most notably Boston City Hall. It was very innovative at the time allowing the architect to create very sculptural facades with a tremendous amount of precision. It is not used as widely today, probably because of the expense and level of craftsmanship required. Using it for the Library allowed Tom Van Sant to create The Written Word very successfully incorporating an artwork into the elevations.

Architect

Charles Luckman Associates

Landscape Architect

Robert Herrick Carter

Inglewood Public Library
101 West Manchester Boulevard
Inglewood, CA.



Charles Luckman

Charles Luckman was born in Kansas City and studied architecture at the University of Illinois graduating in 1931 in the midst of the depression. Since jobs in the profession were hard to come by, he took a job in the advertising department of the Colgate Palmolive Peet Company. Four years later he became a sales manager of the Pepsodent Company; though his efforts, profits quadrupled and he became the President of Lever Brothers when it purchased Pepsodent. In 1937 he was featured on the cover of Time Magazine. He was 27 at the time.

He commissioned Gordon Bunshaft of Skidmore Owings and Merrill to design Lever House. Thru a creative interpretation of the setback zoning code, this became the first glass skyscraper on Park Avenue. After the building was completed, Luckman decided to return to architecture eventually joining William Pereira in Los Angeles. Together they designed many buildings including the Theme Building at LAX and the Prudential Tower in Boston. On his own Luckman also designed the Los Angeles Convention Center, Madison Square Garden and the Inglewood Forum.



Robert Herrick Carter

Robert Carter was born in LA in 1919 and studied architecture at USC. His father was a horticulturist; he began to become very interested in commercial landscape in the forties. Landscape Architecture as a profession didn't really exist at the time. In many ways, he helped invent it. At the time, planting around new buildings consisted of Juniper trees. Little attention was paid to open space and vegetation around the city. He was the first to plant flowering trees in Los Angeles and one of the first to add palm trees. He is responsible for introducing species like jacaranda to public spaces. Some of his projects in Los Angeles includes the airport, LACMA, Century Plaza Hotel, Universal City, Arco, and the Zoo.



He began to work on greening deserts by utilizing native plants in the 60's and designed projects in Saudie Arabia. He won many awards.



Top Photo: 2014

Middle Photo: 2014

Bottom Photo: Aerial Construction Photo
Inglewood Public Library Collection