



**PACIFIC
STANDARD
TIME:**
ART IN L.A. 1945–1980

DON'T THINK IT'S POSSIBLE TO SEE ALL OF THE PACIFIC STANDARD TIME SHOWS? WELL, IT IS!

by Kyle Fitzpatrick on March 2, 2012

Seeing all 68 Pacific Standard Times shows sounds like an endeavor: it would require a lot of traveling, a lot of ticket purchasing, and a lot of intellectual bandwidth to soak it all in—it's a lot! But, it certainly is not impossible. Vi Ha, a local Angeleno, has accomplished this task, checking each show off of an excel document she created to track the shows and their accompanying catalogues. We asked this nearly omniscient art person a few questions on the challenges of seeing all of the shows, advice for those who want to achieve a similar goal, and what shows stood out from the pack.

What inspired you to seek out all of the Pacific Standard Time shows? Was this out of curiosity, did it build from seeing a few shows, or was seeing all the shows something you set out to do when you first heard about it?

The inspiration to seek out the Pacific Standard Time shows started back in November when I went to the Getty Museum. At the bookstore, I realized they did not carry all the catalogues to all the museum shows. As a Pomona College alum, I was hoping to see a copy for the catalogue for *It Happened At Pomona*. This event instigated a twofold goal—to see as many of the shows as possible and to purchase as many of the catalogues as I could find.

As a librarian, I strive to organize data into meaningful and useful information, so as my first step in this project, I put together a Pacific Standard Time spreadsheet. The spreadsheet has been through many iterations and by now, there are 13 columns that list information on all the museum shows, when I am going to see it and which show has a catalogue.

The hardest part to putting together the spreadsheet was the lack of information on who had catalogues. I knew I could not depend upon the Getty bookstore or Amazon to put together the list. I based my list on what was in WorldCat, a tool that searches the participating libraries' catalogues simultaneously and I knew that the Getty Research Institute would be getting copies of all the catalogues.

What do you find to be the most important part of Pacific Standard Time that you have gathered from seeing all of the shows? What is the biggest benefit in seeing all of the shows?

The amount of knowledge and the number of questions I have after seeing these shows are one of the perks. I would like to know the history of the La Jolla Art Museum. I enjoyed learning a bit about the Women's Building. I was fascinated that Billy Al Bengston started out doing ceramics and that Turrell came to Claremont to study ceramics. The involvement of the Los Angeles Public Library in a few key art pieces was also something new to me—Al Ruppersberg's *Missing 1972* and FAR's piece with Dan Graham's *Clinic for a Suburban Site*, done on 2nd floor at Central.

Also, it needs to be said that I would never have gone to a lot of these

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museums if it were not for Pacific Standard Time. As a lifelong Angeleno, Watts Towers was always on my list of things to do, but I had never gone until now.

What has been the hardest part about seeing all of the Pacific Standard Time shows? What has been the easiest part?

The cost of seeing the shows has been a factor. I had to build a part of spreadsheet to include museum free days. The easiest part is that I have my weekend plans set for the next few months.

What advice would you give to other art enthusiasts who want to try to see all of the Pacific Standard Time shows?

Plan to see the museum shows in geographical clusters and to check ahead of time what the hours of operations are for the individual museums. I had to go to Chapman University twice to see their gallery; some say that the first time I went there might have been the real experience. I had to go to Watts Towers twice because I did not realize it closed at 4PM.

The obvious question everyone is dying to hear: what is your favorite (or favorites!) Pacific Standard Time shows?

Thus far, my top 5 Pacific Standard Time shows are:

1. *MCASD's Phenomenal* (They know how to hang Irwins there.)
2. *LAMAG's Civic Virtue* (This is the rare Pacific Standard Time show with no Ruscha and Baldessari! It gives a historical perspective of municipal support of art in Los Angeles.)
3. (tied) *OCMA's State of Mind* (Will probably go up to Berkeley to see it there)
3. (tied) *Laguna Art Museum's Best Kept Secret* (Artists not included in other shows are in this one.)
5. *Pomona College Museum of Art's It Happened At Pomona*. (Disclaimer: I went to school here. Amazing art passed through during that brief moment in time.)

My favorite catalogues (not surprisingly) mirror the show list:

1. Pomona College Museum of Art's *It Happened At Pomona*. The amount of information that the authors chose to put in the book is fabulous.
2. LAMAG, Watts Towers and Department of Cultural Affairs' *Civic Virtue*. The book is \$20 and union printed.
3. MCASD's *Phenomenal*. One will miss seeing the pieces installed in natural light, but the catalogue does a good job of contextualizing and explaining MCASD and the collection.
4. Autry Museum, Fowler Museum, and LACMA's *L.A. Xicano*: The book is one part history, one part work of art, one part documentation and one part new voices/new thesis.
5. Scripps College's Williamson Gallery's *Clay's Tectonic Shift*: In spite of the conflict of interest, it is a wonderful catalogue.

I have yet to see Norton Simon's Proof and I suspect this act will shift the list.

As we've said time and time again, it really is an attainable task to make it out to see all of the Pacific Standard Time shows. Vi went particularly above and beyond the scope of art viewer to see all the shows and, for that, we give endless applause. If you'd like to tackle shows before the end of Pacific Standard Time in March, you can check [this page](#) to see which Pacific Standard Time shows are still open. See you in the museums, everyone!

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