

*An Artist Among Us ...*  
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Artist and sculptor, Timothy Washington



One of the many works Washington has sculpted over the years.

Timothy Washington is a South L.A. gem, who has paved a way for future artists.

There are few artists who can say their art occupies space in places such as CBS, NBC, FOX and MGM but Timothy Washington can. Washington is one of South L.A.'s hidden treasures having contributed his talent to multiple projects and requests in the Southland.

Born in Watts, Washington went to school locally and developed a love of art at an early age. "My grandfather was a carpenter and I used to watch him build stuff with his hands." Washington also remembers a family on his block and how they fed his growing love of art.

"There used to be a little Jewish boy... his father was a professional artist. He used to let us work with some of the professional paints, equipment and stuff. We used to play with his son, my little brother was there also, they would get tired of messing with art stuff but I would stay up there with him all day."

Washington had been bitten by the art bug. It was at Mt. Vernon Junior High School, where he would receive more rec-



ognition for his talents and later at Dorsey High School. “My high school art teacher was very instrumental in helping me win a scholarship to [Chouinard Art School]. That was the best art school in the nation. I won a four-year scholarship and immediately after that, I got an offer to work at CBS as a graphic artist.”

This is where Washington would begin his run with some of the biggest broadcast networks around. He would go on to work at NBC as a scenic artist where he would paint the backdrops to many of the sets. He’s worked sets for big Hollywood acts like Dean Martin, Redd Foxx, Flip Wilson, the set of Sanford and Son and Johnny Carson to name a few.

“[Fox] had a permanent collection,” said Washington. “They bought for pieces of mine to be added to their permanent collection.” Those pieces, according to Washington include an anti-war piece, anti-poverty piece, the third panel was a piece on the death of Martin Luther King, Jr., John F. Kennedy and Robert Kennedy and last was a figurative piece.

Washington would bounce around to different television studios after NBC. He eventually went to work for Universal Studios, where he worked on Jesus Christ Superstar. Washington was then sent to Chicago to work on The Blues Brothers but the cold weather would soon send him back to sunny California. “I couldn’t take that cold weather—I had to get away from there,” he said.

He would continue his colorful trail to the place where dreams are made... Disneyland. He would work there and another popular themed park, Knott’s Berry Farm for a while before leaving for other ventures and interests. Washington also worked for a private company, GNG, where he did a lot of work for MGM in Las Vegas.

“I did a lot of work, a lot of Egyptian stuff for them,” said Washington. “At the MGM Grand, I was painting these large hot dogs and hamburgers that they used in the food court.” Washington eventually retired from doing art professionally and continued working on his personal artwork instead.

Washington is known for his unique and eclectic sculptures, which he describes in a certain way. “Sculpture...which is spiritually motivated and in some cases spiritually executed.

He continued, “It’s futuristic, innovative but underline spiritual.”

Washington will be having his first solo museum exhibition at the Craft & Folk Art Museum on Saturday, January 25 at 6:00pm. His figurative art features graphic engravings on aluminum, monumental sculptures and folk art assemblages. Washington’s work can also be found in the permanent collection at the California African American Museum (CAAM).

“In fact, [Craft & Folk Art Museum] is going to borrow this tall, female sculpture carved out of wood from CAAM and it’s going to be shown at the reception.”

The Timothy Washington: Love Thy Neighbor exhibit will be held at the Craft & Folk Art Museum, January 26-April 27. The museum is located at 5814 Wilshire Blvd. in Los Angeles, CA. For more information, please visit [www.cafam.org](http://www.cafam.org)