

# Los Angeles Times

## Shepard Fairey, street artists brighten West Hollywood library

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The new public library in West Hollywood isn't expected to officially open until October, but at least one component of the complex is already garnering public attention: a new group of murals created by street artists Shepard Fairey, Retna and Kenny Scharf.

The outdoor murals are a joint project by the artists, the city of West Hollywood and the Museum of Contemporary Art. They can be found on the library's parking structure, near the corner of Melrose Avenue and San Vicente Boulevard, across from the Pacific Design Center.

Andrew Campbell, the city's cultural affairs administrator, said in an interview that officials had invited MOCA Director Jeffrey Deitch to tour the library while it was under construction. He said

Deitch saw the walls and thought they would make an ideal extension of the museum's "[Art in the Streets](#)" exhibition.



Fairey's large-scale mural features a peace dove next to an elephant, both rendered in his signature style. You can view more photos of the near-finished [artwork on Fairey's website](#).

"Calm down taxpayers ... I was not paid to do the mural and paid for my own supplies and labor," the artist wrote on his site.

Fairey's mural stands 70 feet by 106 feet. The street artist has also been commissioned to create indoor work for the library, along with artist David Wiseman.

On another part of the parking structure, Retna has created a textual mural that incorporates strangely encrypted blue writing, which is said to be quotations from Salman Rushdie. Scharf's mural, on yet another part of the building, features a colorful explosion of cartoon-like characters.

The artists were chosen by MOCA -- they all are featured in "Art in the Streets" -- and each design went through a formal approval process with the city, according to Campbell. "This isn't graffiti. We consider this street art because it was approved," he said. "There's always people who are opposed to something, but our feedback so far has been overwhelmingly positive."

The city of West Hollywood is paying for anti-UV and anti-graffiti coating, but the rest of the funding for the murals is coming from MOCA and the artists.

The city plans to host the murals for at least one year, through July 2012.



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-- David Ng

*Photos, from top: Shepard Fairey in front of his mural at the West Hollywood Public Library; Kenny Scharf's mural; workers attend to Retna's mural. Credit: Joshua Barash*