

Partch



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Cultural Heritage Commission
CHC@LACity.org
25 January 2019

Re: **CHC-2018-5071-HCM; ENV-2018-5072-CE**, 1110 South Abbot Kinney Boulevard

Dear Members of the Planning and Land Use Management Committee:

It was with great pleasure that I recently heard about the efforts to make the studio at 1110 Abbot Kinney an *official* Historical Cultural Monument, since for countless musicians and artists, it achieved that status decades ago. As a voting resident in Mike Bonin's district, it is gratifying to know that the Cultural Heritage Commission, the city's dedicated body of historic preservation experts, voted **unanimously** to recommend designation of this important building. I was excited to know about its deep history with the visual arts thanks to the superb work of John McCracken, John Altoon, and Frank Eversley. But in the music world, that address has very special meaning as the studio of America's most famous maverick composer, **HARRY PARTCH**.

In fact, it was during his time at that address in Venice that Partch wrote his magnum opus entitled *Delusion Of The Fury - A Ritual Of Dream And Delusion* that was premiered at UCLA in 1969, and recorded by the Columbia Records, bringing the composer worldwide recognition. West Washington Boulevard, as it was known then, was a mecca for musicians, as it contained Partch's orchestra of over two dozen unique hand-built instruments, pictures of which have graced the pages of music history books and encyclopedias for over fifty years.

For me, as a resident of Venice, it has been such a thrill to live so close to this...ok, I must say it...shrine. You see, since 1991, I have been building copies of his instruments in order to keep alive his exquisite music. The great challenge of his hours and hours of unique compositions is that the music can only be played on those exact instruments, and until now, there was only the original set. Over the past twenty-five years, I have recreated 19 of them [see www.Partch.LA], and have performed internationally with my chamber group called—you guessed it—PARTCH. We have performed from coast to coast, and internationally, bringing this strangely wonderful music to those who have only heard it on his now famous recordings.

In just the past five years, we have received a Grammy Award and three Grammy nominations for our recordings of his music. And we're not the only ones profoundly moved by this wonderful repertoire: in 2012, the German new music ensemble musikFabrik spent over 450,000 Euros to manufacture copies of all the instruments (I

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should know, I made their guitars for them) specifically to perform *Delusion of the Fury*, which they then toured all over Europe (Edinburgh Festival, Holland Festival, IRCAM, et

al), and in 2015 the group was brought across the Atlantic to New York's Lincoln Center Festival just to perform *Delusion*.

Partch's music has deeply influenced generations of musicians, in the classical, jazz, & popular music worlds. Familiar names such as Lou Reed & Tom Waits are huge fans, and world renowned film composer Danny Elfman started his musical career in the band Oingo Boingo specifically because of Partch's instruments. Paul Simon's last album (yes, *that* Paul Simon) features half a dozen Partch instruments, and Simon even purchased one of Partch's pump organs. The actor Johnny Depp has more than once said that one role he would love to play would be that of Harry Partch. Internationally renowned choreographer Mark Morris' first dances were of Partch's music, others have followed.

I could go on-and-on, but you can clearly see that Harry Partch has had a lasting effect on American music, and I can think of no better way to pay homage to all of the creative geniuses that have lived at 1110-1116 Abbot Kinney than to honor their memory and their profound contributions to the Arts in America than to grant HCM status to this site.

I urge the PLUM Committee to recommend designation of 1110-1116 Abbot Kinney Boulevard as an Historic Cultural Monument

Thank you for your consideration,



John Schneider
Founding Artistic Director
PARTCH

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BEST CLASSICAL
COMPENDIUM
**PARTCH: PLECTRA &
PERCUSSION
DANCES**
PARTCH
JOHN SCHNEIDER,
PRODUCER



