1921 Walter and Louise Arnsberg move their collection of Dada and Surrealism to Hollywood, subsequently schooling a generation of local artists and curators in modern art.

1945 Editor John Entenza founds the Case Study House program, recruiting architects like the Eameses, Richard Neutra, and Pierre Koenig to design visionary modern homes.

1954 The Watts Towers are completed, establishing Southern California as a hub for assemblage art. Noteworthy practitioners over the ensuing decades include Edward Kenholz, Bruce Conner, Wallace Berman, and Betsey Saar.

1962 Los Angeles’ Ferus Gallery is the first to give Andy Warhol—who will later say, “The further west we grow, the more Pop everything looked”—a venue to exhibit his iconic Campbell’s soup cans.

1970 John Baldessari founds the Post Studio course at Cal Arts, where he teaches David Salle, Jack Goldstein, James Welling, and others who will later move to SoHo and participate in New York’s mighty art boom.

1972 Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro open Womanhouse, a Hollywood mansion in which 17 female artists receive rooms to do what they want with, turning L.A. into a mecca for feminist art.

1974 To critique the assumption that all Mexican-American artists are muralists, members of the performance-art collective Asco create an “instant mural” by taping themselves to the exterior of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

1979 Robert Williams coins the term lowbrow art to describe L.A. skate and surf culture’s mix of graffiti, cartooning, illustration, tattoo art, and custom car painting, later founding Juxtapoz magazine to celebrate it.


2003 Heavyweight dealers Blum & Poe open on La Cienega Boulevard, signaling the arrival of Culver City as a major arts center.

THE CULTURAL DIET

GUY PEARCE

After memorable roles in the Best Picture winners The Hurt Locker and The King’s Speech and the acclaimed HBO mini-series Mildred Pierce (for which he received an Emmy nomination), the 43-year-old Aussie is switching gears for the horror flick Don’t Be Afraid of the Dark. Not surprisingly, his cultural preferences are as varied as his resume. David Walters

BEST SONG TO GET DOWN TO

“Get Down” by Def Leppard

FASHION ESSENTIAL

“Anything from my collection of Fiorentini + Baker boots. I’ve got four pairs now. One is a black-leather motorcycle boot, and the others are lower lace-up suede.”

ARTISTS WHOSE WORK I’D LIKE TO OWN

“John Olsen, Paul Klee, and Dr. Seuss. They all use bright colors and have kind of a naive quality about them. I have a few Dr. Seuss prints and a painting of an early version of the Cat in the Hat. You can see the progression—the character changed a bit in the book.”

STYLE ICON

“Nick Cave. I love the fact that he’s always so immaculately dressed. I did finally see Nick in a pair of shorts. We were in the desert on the set of The Proposition—which Cave wrote—and it was about a million degrees. I guess he couldn’t bear it, though he was still wearing a white button-up shirt. And he was back to wearing his three-piece suit on the set of The Wettest County in the World—his next film. There’s something supremely cool about him. You can’t picture him in a tracksuit.”