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CONDITION

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

A brief description of the grounds at Balboa Park should begin with Bertram Goodhue's plan: "The entrance was approached across a long bridge across a canyon up to what appears to be a fortified European town--the California and Fine Arts building dominate the view. Inside the grounds the exposition was laid out along the major axis of El Prado with the minor axis of the Plaza de Panama intersecting it. The California Quadrangle provided a primary open space at the entry, and small courts and vistas into courtyards with reflecting pools, which break the force of the main axis. ings and colonnades encircle and line these spaces which encouraged observers to compare it with a Spanish town. In its layout, however, the plan was highly classical, while the buildings, especially the main ones by Goodhue, gave the place its character.

The sense of homogeneity was in part due to the planting materials, for a variety of architectural styles were present, including classical, Spanish colonial, and pueblo. Nevertheless, the California Building and the Fine Arts Building, flanking the California Quadrangle to provide the dramatic view on the approach to the grounds, established a feeling of ensemble for the layout and the stylistic character of the architecture."1

The California Building and the Fine Arts Building were intended to be permanent structures and are not only distinguished architecturally but are constructed in reinforced concrete, with terra cotta infill and covered with stucco. an overlay of very complicated decorative ornament and cast stone sculpture designed by the Piccirilli Brothers of New York. The on-site architectural work was done by Carleton W. Winslow, Sr.

The California Building strongly resembles a baroque-Spanish church embellished with plaster ornament with a glazed tile dome which glitters in the sunlight. The sculpture represents the history of California and its Spanish origins. The building design is derived from the church of San Diego in Guanojuto in Mexico. The tile work was executed by Walter Nordhoff of San Diego. There are elaborate architectural descriptions of all buildings in Florence Christman's, "The Romance of Balboa Park."

Nearby is the other large structure in this group--the Fine Arts Building, it stands with connecting quadrangle walls to the California Building. It houses the Chapel of St. Francis and the "Wonder of Life" exhibit. The chapel contains a richly sculptured altarpeice with Saints associated with the history of Spain, Mexico and California. Although the chapel is used for ceremonies and weddings it has never been consecrated.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

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SPECIFIC DATES

1915, 1935

BUILDER/ARCHITECT
Bertram Goodhue, Carleton Winslow, Sr
Richard S. Requa. Walter Dorwin
Teague

Balboa Park is the cultural center of San Diego as well as being a beautifully designed urban area--one of the best planned and landscaped in America. The buildings are some of the finest Spanish Baroque revival architecture extant.

John Henderson describes the history of the park:

"In 1868, the board of trustees set aside 1400 acres of undeveloped, city owned pueblo lands for a park. This dedication was perhaps the greatest single act of foresight in San Diego's history. For many years following, the site was a park in name only as its barren hills and valleys were used only for cattle grazing, dumping grounds and gravel digging. An Indian Rancheria and city dog pound were located here and only the wildflowers gave some aesthetic relief. Constant encroachment threatened to reduce the park acreage and several attempts to sell off portions were successfully thwarted by citizens groups. However, the gradual erosion occurred with acreage given to Russ School (1881), the Children's Home (1887) and an orphanage (1889) which later became the Naval Hospital. Public interest in park beautification began in 1889 with tree plantings and a few years later, the establishment of a nursery by Kate O. Sessions. Her "rental" agreement included "planting 100 trees each year in City Park and donating another 300 trees each year for other city owned parks." To this great woman, the city owes a debt for her introduction of the cypress, torrey pine, jacaranda, cork oak, pepper, eucalyptus, fan palm and many other trees which now grace the park and various parts of the city.

In 1902, the major turning point, George W. Marston commissioned Samuel Parsons Jr., New York landscape architect, to prepare a master plan for the park. Much of the basic road, path and tree development we see today is the result of the implementation of this plan. By 1909, the idea of an exposition was formulated to celebrate the opening of the Panama Canal, scheduled for completion in 1915. Civic leaders, led by G. Aubrey Davidson, (president of the Chamber of Commerce), rallied around the tremendously ambitious project and hired Bertram Grosvenor Goodhue from New York as the architect. Originally envisioned by the Director General (Col. D. C. Collier) as a miniature Mission-style city it is interesting speculation to wonder what role Irving Gill played in the early planning. Certainly unmistakably Gill motifs occur

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See continuation sheet).

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The other structure in this California Quadrangle complex is the Administration Building which was the first one to be completed for the 1915 fair. It was designed by Carleton Winslow, Sr. It stands, like a guardhouse, to the north of the West Gate. There is crisp ornamentation on the doors and windows in the Moorish style.

The El Prado Complex consists of the following structures, buildings, gardens and plazas:

The Cabrillo Bridge (with approaches and guardhouses)

The House of Charm

The House of Hospitality

The Electrical Building

The Botanical Building

The Organ Pavilion

The Alcazar Gardens

The Plaza de Panama

The El Prado Arcade

The Fine Arts Gallery

The Casa del Prado (reconstruction)

The Natural History Museum

The following brief description is extracted from Jean Stern's National Register report.

House of Charm

The House of Charm is a two story building located on the southwest corner of the Plaza de Panama. It is designed in the relatively plain "mission" style, with very little elaborate ornamentation.

The main entrance to the House of Charm is on the east side of the building, facing onto the Plaza de Panama. The facade juts out from the side of the building, and is highlighted by two large engaged towers flanking the main doorway.

The House of Charm was designed by Carleton Monroe Winslow. It was originally built as a temporary building for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

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House of Hospitality

The House of Hospitality is a two story building located on the southeast corner of the Plaza de Panama. It is based upon the highly ornamented Spanish Baroque style, with heavy emphasis on door and window moulding.

The northwest corner of the building is embellished by a tall square tower, the upper part of which is covered with very elaborate detailed relief.

The south side of the building is characterized by an open-air patio area and a series of terraces leading south into a garden.

The interior of the House of Hospitality is an open two-story courtyard. Both stories are arcaded and supported by columns and pillars on each level. In the center is an octagonal tiled fountain with a statue.

The House of Hospitality was originally designed as a temporary building for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. At that time, it was called the Foreign Arts Building and it had a south wing and no central open courtyard. The building was saved from destruction and, with alterations, was used during the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, where it was called the House of Hospitality. The 1935 alterations were the removal of the south wing to make way for the patio and terraces, and the removal of the central part of the building where the courtyard now exists.

The original design is by Carleton Monroe Winslow, and the 1935 alterations are by Sam Hamill.

Electrical Building

The Electrical Building is a two story building located on the south side of El Prado, just east of the House of Hospitality. The building is laid out on an east-west axis, with two pavilions extending out of the main (north) face.

The north face is highly decorated, with two main entrances, each within a pavilion, one near the northeast corner, the other near the northwest corner. The first story (street level) is lined by the extension of the El Prado arcade. The street side of

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the arcade is open, each arch supported by a rectangular pillar. The building side of the arcade joins into the building wall, creating a blind arcade. The arcade changes as it passes through both pavilions by becoming elaborately decorated vestibules trimmed with several rows of moulding.

The Electrical Building was designed by Frank P. Allen, Jr. It was originally built as a temporary building for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. At that time it was called the Commerce and Industries Building. In 1916, the name was changed to the Canadian Building. The building was saved from destruction and during the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition it was called the Palace of Better Housing.

The elaborate Spanish Baroque design of the Electrical Building was inspired by the Casa Consistorial at Palma de Majorca, Spain.

Botanical Building

The Bontanical Building is a large lath covered structure housing an interesting collection of plants. The main portion of the building is built of redwood, supported by steel trusses painted to match the redwood. The overall shape of the building is that of a central dome of open-work lath, with two barrel vaults extending east and west, also of open-work lath. The central dome rests on four large steel arches covered in redwood. The dome is capped by an open cupola.

The Botanical Building was designed by Carleton Monroe Winslow. It was built for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. At that time, it had a northern wing which extended from the central dome. This wing was different from the east and west wings in that it was glass-covered. The building remained virtually intact into the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, where it housed a botanical display.

Organ Pavilion

The Organ Pavilion is located south of the Plaza de Panama, along Pan American Road. It is a building over three stories tall, flanked on the east and west by two colonnades, which curve out in front of the building (north side) forming a large atrium. In front of the building is a concrete stage that is completely open-air, as is the atrium.

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The central building contains the organ. The facade of the building has a huge arch in the center.

The building is framed at all four corners by monumental engaged columns with spiraling vines. These are topped by Corinthian capitals, upon which is a winged angel blowing twin long trumpets.

The bronze plaque on the west side of the central arch on the front of the building reads as follows:

To the people of San Diego this pavilion and organ are presented and to them and the people of all the world this pavilion and organ are dedicated by John D. Spreckels and Adolph B. Spreckels, January First A.D. Nineteen Hundred and Fifteen. Harrison Albright Architect.

Alcazar Gardens

The Alcazar Gardens lie between the California Quadrangle and the House of Charm, on the south side of El Prado. The gardens are layed out in a rectangular form, with the east-west axis being longer.

El Prado Arcade

The south side of El Prado is lined by a continuous arcade that originates at the California Quadrangle, continues around the south side of the Plaza de Panama, and terminates at the northeast corner of the Electrical Building.

The Alcazar Gardens were designed by Frank P. Allen, Jr. They were built for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, where they were known as Los Jardines de Montezuma. At that time, the semi-circular apse at the west end was topped by a pergola. Later, the gardens were re-designed for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition, and were named the Alcazar Gardens. In 1962, restoration of the garden was sponsored by the San Diego Rotary Club.

Plaza de Panama

The Plaza de Panama is formed by the intersection of El Prado with Pan American Road, the central north-south avenue which begins at the Plaza de Panama and leads

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southward to the Organ Pavilion and into the Palisades Area. At present (1975) the Plaza de Panama is bordered on the north by the following buildings: The West-Wing addition to the Fine Arts Gallery (1966) occupies the northwest side, the Fine Arts Gallery (1925) occupies the north side, and the Timken Gallery (1965) which occupies the northeast side. The southern part of the plaza has the House of Charm (1915) on the southwest side, and the House of Hospitality (1915) on the southeast.

In addition, the southern edge of the plaza is formed by the continuation of the El Prado arcade. There, on a traffic island in the middle of Pan American Road, is a monumental statue of El Cid on horseback. The statue is the work of Anna Hyatt Huntington and it was made in 1930.

The Plaza de Panama was originally part of the ground plan for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

Fine Arts Gallery

The Fine Arts Gallery is located on the northern edge of the Plaza de Panama. It is a two story building with a central portion that juts out slightly forward from two side east-west wings.

The side wings are roofed in red tile, in contrast to the central facade. In addition, the wings are mostly plain flat wall while the central facade is highly ornate.

The central facade is dominated by an elaborate portal.

The Fine Arts Gallery was designed by William Templeton Johnson and Robert W. Snyder. It was built in 1925. The building occupies the site of the Sacramento Valley Building from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition.

Casa del Prado

The Casa del Prado is located on the north side of El Prado, across from the Electrical Building. It is made up of two parts, the main building on El Prado, and a second building in the form of Mexican church, facing onto Village Place, an avenue which begins at the eastern end of El Prado and leads northward to Spanish Village. These two buildings are joined by an open arcaded courtyard.

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The interior of the main building is a two story arcaded courtyard, supported by plain rectangular pillars. This courtyard houses the Panama California Sculpture Court, in memory of Frank F. Evenson.

The Casa del Prado is a roonstruction of the original building that was built for the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. At that time it was known as the Varied Industries Building. In 1935, during the California Pacific International Exposition, the building was called the Food and Beverage Building.

Natural History Museum

The Natural History Museum is a three story concrete edifice located on the northeast corner of El Prado and Village Place. It is characterized by a central pavilion with adjoining eastwest wings, and a west wing addition extending northward.

The Natural History Museum was designed by William Templeton Johnson in 1931, and opened in 1933. The sculptural detail on the facade is the work of Arthur Putnam.

The site of the Natural History Museum was originally occupied by the Southern California Counties Building from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition. After the fair, the old building was renamed the Civic Auditorium. In December of 1925, the Civic Auditorium burned down. The site was marked for the new Natural History Museum which opened in January of 1933. In 1935, the building was called the Palace of Natural History during the California Pacific International Exposition. During World War II, the building was vacated and used as a hospital.

The Natural History Museum houses a superb collection, including the Klauber Rattlesnake Collection, the largest in the world. The building also houses the Klauber Herpetology Library, the largest collection of reptilian bibliography in the world."²

The circular Ford Building was built for the 1935 California Pacific International Exposition and is currently under restoration. Designed by Walter Dorwin Teague in the Art Moderne style, it is a fine example of the streamlined idiom with its rounded edges and geometrical details. Nearby is the Ford Bowl, (an amphitheatre) in the same style. They are sited on a promontory overlooking the city and the San Diego bay.

Most of the basic research on the Fair used herein is based as well on Theodore Prudon's paper for the SAH, Philadelphia, May 1976.

Henderson, John, AIA Guide to San Diego.

²National Register of Historic Places nomination form.

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frequently in the arcades (with their pure circular arches), the administration building, the Cabrillo bridge, the botanical building and lily pond. In any event it is known that he acted as a consultant, but soon moved to Los Angeles, establishing a second office. Goodhue brought to San Diego the flamboyant, exciting Spanish-Colonial with the churrigueresque, the renaissance of the baroque and rococo styles, which turned the public taste away from the pure Mission simplicity. The Exposition plan was drawn, featuring the present well integrated classical scheme of landscaped buildings. The lath and plaster buildings were only to last a few years and were to be replaced later with permanent structures and landscaped gardens. The Exposition opened on 1 January 1915 and formally closed at the end of 1916, paying all its expenses and resulting in accomplishments that were far reaching for San Diego and its future role. Many new residents were attracted and, impressed by what they saw, stayed. Balboa Park emerged as the center of the city's social, cultural and recreational The San Diego Zoo was established (1922) using the few animals that had been exhibited. Art and cultural exhibits were utilized and formed the beginning of the Fine Arts Society, the Museum of Man and the Natural History Museum. Morley Field developed after John Nolan's plan in 1927 and many WPA projects were instituted in the 1930's. By 1935, the city was ready for another fair and the California-Pacific International Exposition was planned, with Richard S. Requa as architect. Requa, trained in Gill's office, had developed his own architectural vocabulary, solidified by his world travels and is responsible for the buildings in the Palisades area, the Spanish Village, Old Globe Theater, Alcazar Garden and the Cafe Del Rey Moro patio and gardens. Used by the military throughout the war, with little additional development, the park suffered its next greatest encroachment by freeway projects, Cabrillo Freeway in the 1940s and interstate 5, in the Balboa Park, now 102 years old, has indeed weathered many storms and has been the focus of much of San Diego's development. Along with the harbor, Mission Bay and, once, Mission Valley (now tragically destroyed) it is still one of San Diego's greatest assets."1

Bertram Goodhue was a logical choice as a designer--he had traveled widely and, with Sylvester Baxter, wrote Spanish Colonial Architecture in Mexico. He had designed the Washington Hotel in Colon, Canal Zone and the Episcopal Cathedral in Havana. The master plan of the park was to be designed by the Olmsteds and Goodhue--the Olmsteds withdrew and Goodhue then created the park. With local architects working on individual structures.

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There are a few remnants remaining of America's Expositions--Memorial Hall in Philadelphia (1876), the Museum of Science Industry in Chicago, (1893), the empty meadows at Flushing--in San Diego one can see a great deal of the 1915 fair today.

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Those portions of the land designated as "City Park Reservation," known as Balboa Park, in the Pueblo Lands of San Diego, in the City of San Diego, County of San Diego, State of California, according to Map thereof by James Pascoe, a copy of which was filed in the Office of the County Recorder of said County, and is known as Miscellaneous Map No. 36, which lies within Pueblo Lots 1135, 1143 and 1144 of the Pueblo Lands of San Diego, according to Map thereof by Charles H. Poole, a copy of which was filed in said County Recorder's Office and is known as Miscellaneous Map No. 35, described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the Easterly line of Route 163, as located and established as of the date of this instrument, with the North line of said Pueblo Lot 1135; thence Easterly along said North line of Pueblo Lots 1135 and 1136 to an intersection with the Westerly line of Park Boulevard, as located and established as of the date of this instrument; thence Southerly and Southwesterly along the Westerly and Northwesterly line of said Park Boulevard to an intersection with the Northerly line of Interstate 5, as located and established as of the date of this instrument; thence Westerly along said Northerly line to an intersection with the Easterly line of said Route 163, thence Northwesterly and Northerly along said Easterly line of Route 163, returning to Point of Beginning.

Said area shall encompass those structures which were erected for the Panama-California International Exposition of 1915-1916, the California Pacific International Exposition of 1935-36, and the Timken Fine Art Gallery and West Wing of the Fine Arts Gallery which were constructed in 1964.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY RECEIVED DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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PHOTOGRAPHS AND THEIR DESCRIPTIONS

SITE: Balboa Park Historic District

LOCATION: San Diego, California

PHOTO CREDIT: City of San Diego

DESCRIPTION: 1. Casa del Prado, view from South

2. Casa del Prado, view from South

3. The El Prado Arcade

4. Natural History Museum, view from South

5. Fine Arts Gallery, view from the South

6. Electrical Building, view from the North

7. House of Hospitality, view of the West

8. House of Charm, North Portal

9. Organ Pavilion, View from Northwest

10. Cabrillo Bridge, view from the South

11. Alcazar Gardens (partial view)

PHOTO CREDIT: HABS, Marvin Rand

DESCRIPTION: 12. Balboa Park, Entrance

13. Balboa Park, Entrance

14. Botanical Garden

15. Botanical Garden, Interior

16. Botantical Garden