

We Love L.A.

Directors do love Los Angeles, and have used the city as a backdrop—and a character—since the beginning of film. In this selection of behind the scenes shots, we capture directors at work “from the South Bay to the Valley.”



VALLEY GIRL: (above) Paul Thomas Anderson, with Heather Graham on a poolside location for *Boogie Nights* (1997), often sets his films in his native San Fernando Valley. The movie was largely shot in Reseda and Van Nuys, immortalizing such local landmarks as Gourmet Video and Miss Donuts. (opposite) Los Angeles City Hall was open only a few months when director Jack Conway shot the silent film *While the City Sleeps* (1928) on a rooftop downtown. He was using L.A. to double for New York in a detective story starring Lon Chaney.





THRILL RIDE: George Roy Hill (center) directs Robert Redford (left) in front of the carousel on the Santa Monica Pier in *The Sting* (1973). Although the picture takes place in Chicago, it was shot on the backlot of Universal Studios and on locations in Pasadena and downtown L.A.

BEACHED: Elliott Gould (right), on location in Malibu, starred as a modern Philip Marlowe roaming around L.A. in the early '70s in Robert Altman's reworking of Raymond Chandler's *The Long Goodbye* (1973). "We were trying to not make Los Angeles look so pretty," said Altman.

PHOTOS: (TOP) AMPAS; (BOTTOM) UA/MGM



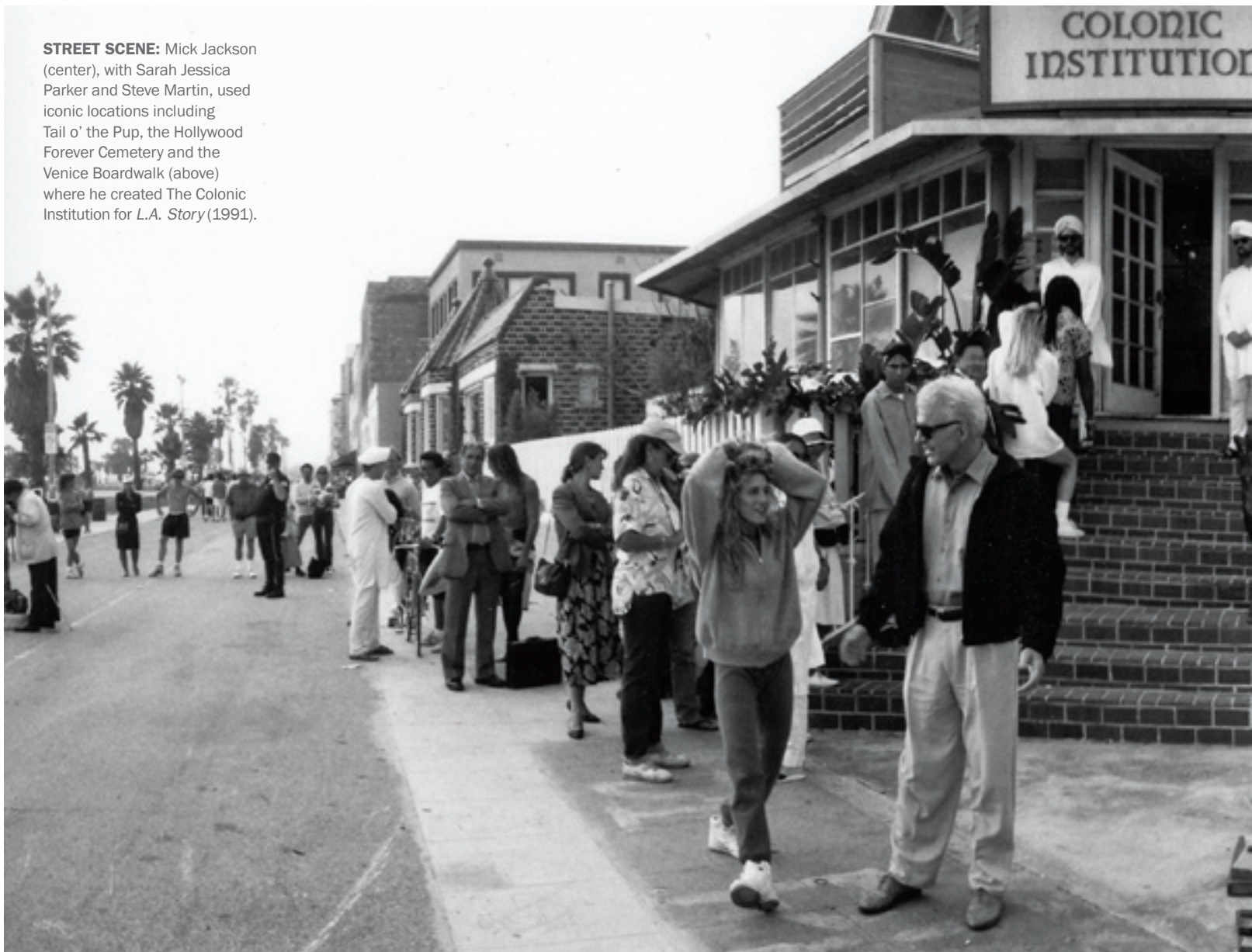
UP IN SMOKE: Paul Haggis' *Crash* (2004) was the first movie to be set primarily in Los Angeles and win a best picture Oscar. This scene, where police officer Matt Dillon rescues the woman he harassed (Thandie Newton), was shot on top of a hill at 36th Street and Gaffey in San Pedro.



PRIVATE EYE: Roman Polanski's *Chinatown* (1974) recreated L.A. of the '30s at locations around the city, including the roof of a Spanish style house in Echo Park. For the film's finale, production designer Richard Sylbert turned a street with a couple of Chinese restaurants into Chinatown.

PHOTOS: (TOP) LIONSGATE/BFI; (BOTTOM) MPTV.NET

STREET SCENE: Mick Jackson (center), with Sarah Jessica Parker and Steve Martin, used iconic locations including Tail o' the Pup, the Hollywood Forever Cemetery and the Venice Boardwalk (above) where he created The Colonic Institution for *L.A. Story* (1991).



MAD MEN: Richard Donner with Mel Gibson in front of a mural in Venice Beach during the shooting of *Lethal Weapon* (1987). The city hung Christmas lights on Hollywood Boulevard a few months early so action scenes near the end of the picture would look like they were happening in December.



HOTEL CALIFORNIA: William Wellman (center) with Janet Gaynor, Adolphe Menjou and Fredric March poolside at the Ambassador Hotel shooting the original version of *A Star Is Born* (1937). Other L.A. locations included Santa Anita Park racetrack, the Club Trocadero, and the Hollywood Bowl.

PHOTOS: (TOP) COURTESY MICK JACKSON; (LEFT) WARNER BROS./EVERETT; (RIGHT) KOBAL



PHOTOS: (LEFT) KOBAL; (RIGHT) WARNER BROS./EVERETT

FOUNTAIN SERVICE: Billy Wilder (left) set *Sunset Boulevard* (1950) at many authentic L.A. locations. However, this scene with William Holden (right) at Schwab's Drugstore was shot on the Paramount lot. Exteriors were filmed outside the famed hangout at Crescent Heights and Sunset.

TRUE GRIT: Antoine Fuqua (right), with Denzel Washington and Ethan Hawke, became an "urban anthropologist" using neighborhoods like South Central, Baldwin Hills and MacArthur Park for *Training Day* (2001). Gang members from the Crips and Bloods were used to give the film authenticity.



HEAVENLY CREATURES: Brad Silberling transported Wim Wenders' *Wings of Desire*, about angels moving among the living in Berlin, to L.A. in *City of Angels* (1998). Nicolas Cage and Andre Braugher play angels who meet every morning at dawn at Malibu Beach to listen to celestial music.



STARGAZING: Nicholas Ray with James Dean at Griffith Park Observatory, site of the famed knife fight in *Rebel Without a Cause* (1955). Ray shot several scenes at the observatory in black and white before the film switched to color. He also filmed at Santa Monica High and John Marshall High.

SIG ALERT: William Friedkin (left on crane) filmed the climactic chase of *To Live and Die in L.A.* (1985) on Highway 47 and the 110 Freeway in San Pedro. He had the oncoming cars drive in the wrong direction so it would look like the chase was moving through traffic. The scene took him six weeks to shoot.

