



Helen Lessick

c.v.2026

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Los Angeles, CA USA

ABOUT: Helen Lessick is an arts activist and civic consultant, specializing in artist-led public programs, policies, procedures and projects. She develops opportunities to empower the work of art and artists in public space.

- Art administrator with broad experience in community art policies and public engagement practices
- Excellent administrative, fiscal and organizational skills
- Outstanding verbal and written communication skills
- Experienced fine art curator and public art collection manager
- Staff management including hiring, training, retaining arts workers
- Skilled in technology and digital asset management
- Specializing in public art programs and commissions
- Published writer, accomplished presenter and experienced facilitator of public meetings

EXPERIENCE

Art Project Producer

2026 - current

City of West Hollywood, CA

Develop and realize ten commissions for the Inventing Traditions program culminating in LA28 and Pride Games.

Civic Arts Consultant

1989 - current

Public art plans, policies, program development and project and exhibition management for clients including:

Cities of Austin, TX; Carlsbad, CA; Dublin, OH; Norfolk, VA; Oklahoma City, OK; Portland, OR; San Diego, CA; Seattle, WA; Tacoma, WA; Ventura, CA; States of Oregon and Washington; Institutions including Portland State Univ.; Rexford Industrial Realty; Socrates Sculpture Park; United Indians of All Tribes; University of Southern California.

Civic Art Consultant, City of Inglewood, CA

2012 – 2024

Planning and facilitation of all phases of art policies, programs and projects, developing annual artists' program for permanent, temporary and performed works to activate civic spaces; art collection standards, descriptions, accession numbers; led assessment of Civic Center art works; oversaw conservator treatments. Inaugurated a public art education web site based on civic and for-profit art and architecture as Inglewoodpublicart.org

Director of Civic Art + Design

2008 – 2009

Houston Arts Alliance, TX

Lead staff for public art planning and commissions for the non-profit organization contracted by the City of Houston. Developed program, projects and annual work plan; hired, trained and managed staff of five; issued RFQs for artists and contractors. Created monthly work and fiscal reports. Managed \$5M contract commissions regional and international artists. Developed 3 exhibits and 4 panels on public art; oversaw conservation and maintenance of City art collection. Reported to Board and committees monthly.

Senior Contracts Manager

2004 - 2005

The J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles, CA

Managed contracts for international conservation and research services for the cultural non-profit; tracked contract performance and payments; supervised one employee.

Metro Art Senior Public Art Officer/Collection Manager

2002 - 2004

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority CA

Developed public art transit planning for projects; lead staff for conservation and maintenance of agency art collection. Public outreach; created interpretive materials for general audiences.

Visual Art Gallery Manager & Public Art Collection Manager 1994 - 1998
King County, WA

Managed the municipal art gallery program of contemporary exhibitions and the County art collections of portable and permanent works in municipal facilities cross the 4,000 square miles. Major conservation of Morris' 5-acre earthwork and management of artwork for County Courts' remodeling. Oversaw staff of 3. Inaugurated digitized archives of historic projects.

Project Manager III 1991 - 1994
Art in Public Places Program, Washington State Arts Commission

Managed construction-integrated art projects for State Corrections and Labor & Industry. Major restoration of State Convention Center projects included art, landscaping and architectural retrofits.

Project Facilitator 1986 - 1992
Socrates Sculpture Park New York, NY

Assisted in development and realization of exhibits and temporary, site-related sculptures in a new 5-acre riverfront lot with biannual exhibitions. Participated in exhibition selections; developed park archives; managed indoor gallery program. Managed and trained facility crews and volunteers.

RECENT PRESENTATIONS AND LECTURES

April 2026: 'STJr: In Service of Art' book launch with the artist, The Creative House Gallery, Inglewood, CA
June - Aug. 2025: 'Public Art Workshops,' free workshop series and panel by Inglewood's cultural leaders, supported by the Creative House Gallery, the Inglewood Arts Commission and Public Art Fund, CA
April 2025: 'The Civic Canvas: Inglewood,' El Sistema USA conference, Beckmen YOLA Center Inglewood, CA
May 2024: 'Public Art and Ideas,' ArtX, Coconino Center for the Arts/ Creative Flagstaff, Flagstaff, AZ
Oct. 2017: Moderator and Panelist, 'Art and Forest Resources,' Pinckey Center for the Arts, Bend, OR
April 2016: Presenter, 'Creative Catalysts,' Loz Feliz Charter School for the Arts, Los Angeles, CA
Sept. 2015: Presenter, 'Jinan Exhibition and Conference: International Public Art: Urban Art and Public Ecology,' Shandong University School of Art and Design, Jinan, China
July, 2015: Panelist, 'Public Art in a Climate of Change,' International Awards in Public Art, co-organized by University of Auckland, Shanghai University and Shandong University, Auckland, New Zealand
June, 2014: Co-discussant, 'The Future of Public Art,' Public Art Network, Nashville, TN
Jan. 2014: 'Public Art and Placemaking,' panel, Annenberg Beach House, Santa Monica, CA
April 2013: 'Visual Resourcefulness and the Public Art Challenge,' VRA conference, Providence, RI
Sept. 2011: 'Creative Processing,' Lewis + Clark College, Portland, OR
June 2011: 'Plan A: Artist-Initiated Projects,' Americans for the Arts Public Art Network, San Diego, CA
March 2009: Panelist, 'Systems of Sustainability' Blaffer Gallery, University of Houston, TX
Oct. 2008: Moderator, "Context: Site and Sculpture," Sculpture in Public: Part 2, ISC, Grand Rapids, MI
April 2008: 'Temporary Sculpture: Artists Talk,' Chaffey College, Rancho Cucamonga, CA
Feb. 2007: 'Professional Practices,' Florida Gulf Coast University, Ft. Myers, FL
Oct. 2005: 'Collection Management of Contemporary Public Art,' University of Southern California Public Art Graduate Studies Program, Los Angeles, CA
June 2005: 'Temporary Projects, Permanent Effect,' panelist, Public Art Network, Austin, TX
Feb. 2005: 'Physical Thinking,' Pinckney Center for the Arts, Bend OR
July, 2004: 'Temporal Shift,' moderator & presenter, Public Art Network, Washington, D.C.
March 2004: Panelist, Visual Resources Association national conference, Portland, OR
Oct. 2001: 'Ground Work: Maintaining Robert Morris' Public Earthwork,' Cambridge Art Council, MA

SELECT PANELS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES and COMMUNITY SERVICE

2025: Juror, Public Artist Roster, Maryland State Arts Council, MD
2024, 2025: Juror, Grants for Art Projects, City of West Hollywood, CA
2018- 2019: Juror, Public Art Commissions for Scissortail Park & Convention Center, Oklahoma City, OK
2017: Panelist, Arts Organization Operational Grants, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, CA
2013: Co-juror, 'Year in Review,' Florida Public Art Coalition, FL
2010: Co-juror, 'Year in Review,' Public Art Network, Americans for the Arts, Baltimore, MD

2008: Juror, 'Zone 5 in the City,' site-related environmental art projects, Arroyo Arts, Los Angeles, CA
2007: Juror, Commission for Downtown Civic Space, Public Art Program, City of Phoenix, AZ
2005: Juror, Promenade Public Art commission, Santa Monica Arts Commission, Santa Monica, CA
2004 - 2007: Silver Lake Parks and Open Space Committee, Los Angeles, CA
2003: Juror, Main Street Promenade Public Art Commission, City of Ventura, CA
1995 - 2002: Art Committee, Washington State Convention and Trade Center, Seattle, WA
1991 - 2000: Advisory Board, Socrates Sculpture Park, New York, NY
1997: Special Projects Jury, Seattle Arts Commission, Seattle, WA
1995: Residency Program Jury, Pratt Fine Arts Center, Seattle, WA
1985 - 1986: Co-founding group, Socrates Sculpture Park, New York, NY

REPORTS & ASSESSMENTS

Public Art: Artists' Handbook, Office of Arts & Cultural Affairs, San Diego, CA, 2008
Collection Assessment, Recommendations for Collection & Policy Analyses, City of Austin, TX, 2009
Master of Public Art Studies Internship Program: Enhanced Goals & Guidelines, University of Southern California, 2007
Public Art Collection Memorabilia & Monuments Assessment, Cultural Affairs Department, Norfolk, VA. 2007
Artists Opportunities in Transit Facilities, Metro Art, Metro Regional Transit, Seattle, WA. 1991
Program Assessment and Opportunities, USC School of Fine Art: Graduate Program in Public Art 2006
Public Art/Portland State University, analyses with M. Taylor & C. Lee, Oregon Arts Commission, 1992
Metro Art Collection Annual Assessment, LACMTA, Los Angeles. 2003, 2004.
King County Art Collection Annual Assessment, Seattle, WA. 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998

MASTERPLANS and PUBLIC ART PLANS

City of Dublin Public Art Masterplan, Dublin Arts Council, Dublin, OH, 2019; Five year plan update, 2024
Public Art Annual Plan, City of Inglewood, CA, 2015, 2016, 2017
Houston Arts Alliance Civic Art + Design Annual Plan, Houston, TX, 2009
Inglewood Transit Connector Public Art Plan, Inglewood CA, 2022 (unrealized)
Waterfront Park Master Plan, public art within EDAW master plan, City of Portland, OR, 2002
Artists Opportunities in Transit Facilities, Metro Art, Metro Regional Transit, Seattle, WA. 1991

SELECT PUBLICATIONS and ARTS WRITING

'Art on Site: Four Collaborations,' essay for *Social Engagement in Art: Lessons of Collaboration for Political Life*, Diane Boros, editor. Routledge Press, NJ, 2026.
'Beta Test; San José's Mineta International Airport,' Public Art Review Issue #44, St. Paul, MN. 2011
'Experiments in Public Art: Inglewood, CA,' Structural Expressionism, Los Angeles, 2025
'Golden State Alchemy,' Public Art Review Issue #33, J. Becker, ed. St. Paul, MN, 2005
'Ground Work: Restoring R. Morris' earthwork,' in Conservation and Maintenance of Contemporary Public Art, Hafthor Yngvason, Editor; Archetype Publications, Cambridge, MA, 2002
'Growing Artists Public Projects,' chapter, Proceedings of the 2025 World Public Art Conference, United Nations, New York, NY. Published by the University of Shanghai, China, 2026
'Painting is a Verb,' exhibition essay, Wasmer Gallery, Florida Gulf Coast University, Fort Myers, FL, 2025
'Process and Product: Palimpsest at Art Basel Miami Beach,' Surface Design Journal, Sebastopol, CA. 2010
'Public Art for Community Change,' chapter in Building Communities, Not Audiences, Doug Borwick, ed. Winston-Salem, NC 2012
Public/Private: a blueprint for temporary public art projects. Tacoma Arts Commission, WA. 1994
Public Art 101: multiple articles, Seattle Arts Commission, Barbara Goldstein, editor. May 1999. Reprinted
'Putting the Artist in Public Art,' International Sculpture Center, Sculpture on-line, Glenn Harper, editor. April, 2015
'Still I'll Rise: Public Art in the Time of Furloughs,' Public Art Review Issue #44. Spring 2011.
'STJr: In Service of Art,' monograph on painter and USMC veteran Sidney Tuggerson Jr., Los Angeles, 2026
'You're in the Public Now,'" Sculpture on-line, G. Harper, ed. Washington, D.C., October 2010

BIOGRAPHICAL

Helen Lessick was born in Philadelphia, PA and educated in the American west. She participates in art and culture projects and programs across the United States, and in Africa, Europe and Oceania from Los Angeles.