

The attached National Register Inventory-Nomination form is being returned to your office for clarification of the information indicated below. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM WHEN THE NOMINATION IS RESUBMITTED.

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7 Description: _____

CHP

8 Statement of Significance: _____

9 Bibliography: _____

10 Geographical Data -- Acreage: _____

UTM Reference(s): _____

Verbal Boundary Description: _____

12 Certification: _____

Photographic Coverage: _____

Map Coverage: _____

Other: BASIC Questions have been raised about the eligibility of these properties. Please send additional justification about the reasons you feel these properties cover

CALL LEBOVICH IF RESUBMISSION IS ANTICIPATED
Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to Ray Luce, Joe Towner

on the National Register staff, telephone 202-343-6401

Thank you for your attention to the above items.

Bill Lebovich fn
Chief, Branch of Registration

Date: March 23, 1979

should be listed even though they were created within the last 50 years. Also please send information about how many of the creators are still living. As you know we are reluctant to list the works of living artists or architects.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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September 1979

TWENTIETH CENTURY FOLK ART ENVIRONMENTS IN CALIFORNIA
(THEMATIC NOMINATION)

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ADDENDUM

The Properties selected for the Twentieth Century Folk Art Environments thematic nomination represent a unique cultural resource in California. Each one is a resource of exceptional significance in the area of folk art; collectively, they are the best of their genre in California (along with Watts Towers and the Forestiere Underground Gardens, both of which have already been listed in the National Register). They represent expression unbounded by conventionality; each a significant creation by an individualistic spirit. The resultant environments are fantasy worlds which have attracted national and international attention as the subjects of exhibitions, books, articles, and documentary films. All of the environments are fragile, irreplaceable resources which evolved through years of creation; now they are threatened with loss through deterioration and vandalism. Many of the artists have died; others have reached advanced ages where additional creation is minimal and maintenance is difficult. In the following section, additional information is summarized regarding the significance, recognition, and status of the properties and their creators.

ALBERT GLADE'S ENCHANTED COTTAGE

Albert Glade (1887 or '88-1976)

Albert Glade created a unique environment over a 10 year period, beginning in 1965. He constructed his first garden in Los Angeles in the 1920's; this property is the last of his creations. Glade died several years ago; the present owners are attempting to maintain and restore his work. The property has been featured in the 1976-'77 Bicentennial exhibition, "In Celebration of Ourselves--California," at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, and is featured in the recent publication, In Celebration of Ourselves, by Seymour Rosen.

LITTO

Emanuele Damonte (1892-present)

Litto has evolved over the past 37 years. Emanuele Damonte began his creation in 1942; now at the age of 87, his work has been slowed by age. The property has received national attention, having been featured in the exhibition, "In Celebration of Ourselves--California," at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; it also occupies a number of pages in Seymour Rosen's book, In Celebration of Ourselves, and was featured in All Their Own: People and the Places They Build, by Jan Wampler.

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CAPIDRO

John Guidici (1887-1977)

John Guidici began working on Capidro in 1932; it grew continually over the next 45 years, ending with its creator's death in 1977. Guidici's skill and use of materials is remarkable; a strong feeling of order dominates the composition--it is as though each detail has been carefully thought out and ordered. Capidro has been featured in the San Francisco Examiner and the Palo Alto Times, as well as forming an important part of the exhibition and publication, "In Celebration of Ourselves."

NIT WIT RIDGE

Art Beal (1896-present)

Nit Wit Ridge began over 50 years ago when Art Beal constructed his first dwelling in 1928. The building has been expanded continuously into a total environment since that time. Beal, now in his 80's, continues to work on Nit Wit Ridge, but much of his time is spent in maintaining his creation. The property has been featured nationally in Harper's Weekly, in Professor Jan Wampler's book, All Their Own: People and the Places They Build, and in the noted exhibition and publication, "In Celebration of Ourselves."

THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND PAINTINGS

Sanford Darling (1894-1973)

Our latest information indicates that the paintings have been removed and the property no longer retains the appearance of Sanford Darling's creation as he left it.

GRANDMA PRISBREY'S BOTTLE VILLAGE

Tressa Prisbrey (1896-present)

Grandma began building her village of discards from the local dump in 1956, and continued to work on it until she ran out of room. The village is now completed, and Grandma still watches over and maintains the property. Featured in the Walker Art Center's exhibition, "Naives and Visionaries," in Minneapolis in 1974, Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village received national attention. In Martin Friedman's introduction to the exhibition catalog, Naives and Visionaries, Grandma Prisbrey's creation is described as "a marvel of assemblage technique... she has a perfect sense for selecting and combining improbable materials for structural and ornamental use. Rows of colored glass bottles are incorporated

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in the simple curved walls of her buildings, permitting light to enter. With considerable sensitivity, she has used glass and crockery shards as tesserae for her mosaic floors. In one room, vibrating wall surfaces are generated by hundreds of pencils in geometric configurations--her invention is boundless. Grandma's art is simultaneously beguiling and sinister. Groups of dolls impaled on metal rods are macabre sentinels surrounding the buildings." The subject of numerous exhibitions throughout this country and abroad, Grandma Prisbrey's Bottle Village was most recently featured in the Bicentennial exhibition and publication, "In Celebration of Ourselves."

OLD TRAPPER'S LODGE

John Ehn (1897-present)

Old Trapper's Lodge was created in the 1940's; it is a sculptural environment based upon the mythology of the Old West. This remarkable environment totally envelops the front of the motel and dominates the visual impression of the property from the street. John Ehn still resides on the site of his creation, but advancing age precludes any further work. The environment is complete, and is now overgrown with vegetation. It has been recognized in the local media, and featured in the Bicentennial exhibition and publication, "In Celebration of Ourselves."

POSSUM TROT

Calvin Black (1903-1972)
Ruby Black (? - present)

Possum Trot is an exceptional, technologically innovative folk environment. Located in a harsh, wind-whipped desert area, Possum Trot has been deteriorating in recent years. Calvin Black died in 1972, ending any further expansion of Possum Trot; Ruby Black continues to live on the property. The folk environment was started in 1954, and its use of windmills to capture the desert winds to animate the dolls created a kinetic fantasy world in this otherwise bleak area. Possum Trot has been featured in European cinema, and was an important part of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art exhibition, "In Celebration of Ourselves--California." It is also featured in the publication, In Celebration of Ourselves.

HULA VILLE

Miles Mahan (? - present)

Miles Mahan began his work on Hula Ville in the mid-1950's after his retirement. His environment covers 2½ acres of painted signs, poems, statues and rock

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arrangements. Its focus is literary expression, with the environment composed primarily of Mahan's poems painted on signs. The work has been featured in a number of exhibitions, including the Bicentennial exhibition, "In Celebration of Ourselves--California," and the resulting publication, In Celebration of Ourselves.

DESERT VIEW TOWER

Robert Vaughn (1878- ?)
M. T. Ratcliffe (1882- ?)

"Desert View Tower was started in 1923 by Robert Vaughn to commemorate the Mormon Trail. In the 1930's M. T. Ratcliffe, an engineer, came to the desolate area to recuperate from tuberculosis and work on the tower. He spent off hours in the surrounding rocks, carving skulls, buffalo, snakes and strange little animals."¹ Animal figures, carved in situ, lurk in the rocks surrounding the tower, creating a fantasy world of excitement, surprise, and strange beauty. This remarkable sculptural environment is a unique creation, which ironically has received little recognition. It is featured in the exhibition and publication, "In Celebration of Ourselves." This folk art environment was created in the 1920's and '30's; it is presently operating as a small museum.

CHARLEY'S WORLD OF LOST ART
HAPPY VILLA

Charles Kasling (? - present)
William Averett (? - present)

These two properties lie side by side to form a unique environment of folk art expression. Averett began constructing his plaques, maps and tableaux in 1965, and was joined by Driftwood Charley in 1967. The property was described by Seymour Rosen as "a kind of above-ground archeological dig with bas relief and miniature villages. His fantasy animals, sourdoughs with donkeys and amorphous shapes populate an almost formal garden. When alone, you get the feeling you are the first person ever to stumble on this lost civilization. You are free to fantasize and make up your own history and myths."² Although the youngest property included in this folk art nomination, it has received national recognition within the short span of its existence. It was featured in Jan Wampler's book, All Their Own: People and the Places They Build, and occupies a prominent portion of Seymour Rosen's In Celebration of Ourselves, which resulted from Rosen's noted Bicentennial exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, "In Celebration of Ourselves--California". The property has had some vandalism in the last few years; it is a special, fragile environment which is of exceptional quality and importance, definitely worthy of recognition and preservation.

¹Seymour Rosen, In Celebration of Ourselves, page 60.

²Seymour Rosen, In Celebration of Ourselves, page 135.