KENT TWITCHELL has painted Jesus on the sides of buildings in Los Angeles four times. One of those Jesuses (until it was whitewashed recently by a new property owner) was on the exterior of a liquor store at Vermont Avenue and 111th Street, in a gang-patrolled part of south Los Angeles known by city homicide detectives as “death alley.” Another Jesus, forty feet tall, gazes out over traffic along Wilshire Boulevard in the city’s bustling mid-section from the side of the former Otis College of Art and Design, Twitchell’s art school alma mater. A third Jesus, facing a parking lot and a suburban apartment building, wears a carpenter’s belt and a denim work shirt unbuttoned at the chest. The fourth Jesus is thirty feet tall, a bearded, dark-skinned, enigmatic figure clothed in a blood-red robe and holding out before him a leather-bound Bible. That Jesus covers the entire exterior wall of a two-story lecture hall at a Christian liberal arts college in the suburban city of La Mirada. The mural is titled simply, The Word.

Like Twitchell’s many other murals—close to fifty, in Los Angeles, Nashville, Philadelphia, Berlin, and other cities—the Jesuses were painted with special acrylic paint from detailed pencil sketches mapped onto walls via an elaborate system of grids. The paint was applied in patterns similar to a child’s color-by-numbers kit, with Twitchell sometimes suspended from a pulley to reach the highest parts of a wall. Up close, the images dissolve into rivulets of color that seem to flow around and alongside one another like streams of magnetized water that abut but never mix. From a distance, the patterns blend and harmonize into startlingly realistic likenesses. Some of Twitchell’s murals are as tall as eight stories. They stare out over the city like bright, flat, fully realized emissaries from a realm of giants. A quality of tremendous stillness surrounds them. The most effective, including all four murals of Jesus, give the impression of having existed long before the city arose, as if Twitchell did not paint them but rather scrubbed away some blemish in the air that had obscured them. This quality was especially evident in the now-vanished Jesus on the side of the death-alley liquor store. Photographs show a
111TH STREET JESUS

long-haired, bearded Hispanic man clothed in white and red robes opening his arms against a blank background nearly the width of the building [ADD PLATES REFERENCES LATER]. The gesture seems to invite the viewer into mural-land, where the hardships of urban life are dissolved in the quiet exactitude of art.

Twitchell, seventy-one, has been painting murals in Los Angeles since 1971, when, as an undergraduate at California State University, Los Angeles, he covered the side of a two-story Victorian house in the city’s Pico-Union neighborhood with a pale blue image of actor Steve McQueen. Twitchell is now considered the dean of mural art in Los Angeles, itself widely considered the mural capital of the United States. His images are an iconic, if fragile, part of the city’s ever-changing streetscape. Twitchell’s eight-story-tall rendering of the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra, Harbor Freeway Overture, has greeted traffic-jammed travelers to downtown Los Angeles from the side of a high-rise parking structure overlooking Interstate 110 for more than two decades. Another freeway-adjacent mural, The Old Lady of the Freeway, a striking 1974 image near the Hollywood Freeway of a blue-eyed, gray-haired matriarch clad in a brown bathrobe and a python-like multihued crocheted afghan, was the city’s best known mural until a property owner abruptly painted it over in 1986 to make way for a billboard. Amid public outcry, Twitchell helped to establish the Mural Conservancy of Los Angeles, dedicated to cataloguing and preserving the city’s rich history of mural art. With the conservancy’s encouragement, Twitchell sued the building owner and was awarded $125,000, though it took him five years to collect the settlement.

It is no accident that Los Angeles’s best known muralist has covered the sides of city buildings with images such as Holy Trinity with Virgin, 111th Street Jesus, or Seventh Street Altarpiece, or even Six Los Angeles Artists, a 1979 mural on the back wall of a state employment development office in the suburban city of Torrance that uses the likenesses of six of Twitchell’s artist friends to depict Jesus in the company of apostles Peter, James, and John, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Mary Magdalene. Here the apostles are bearded hippies with afros dressed in jeans and corduroy. The Virgin Mary is Asian-American artist Wayanna Kato, and Jesus is a mustachioed carpenter in a work belt and denim shirt. The figures are painted in Twitchell’s signature hyperrealist style. They stand face-forward against a jet-black background, their finely detailed expressions deadpan, their arms folded or hanging at their sides. In their reticent monumentality, the six artists-cum-saviors-of-the-world embody the intention at the heart of all of Twitchell’s work. Speaking late last year in his large, cluttered downtown LA studio, Twitchell said he aimed to create in viewers a sense of awe akin to his own feelings when he saw his first medieval cathedral while stationed in England as an Air Force illustrator in the 1960s. “There’s something about looking up like that that makes you feel small but not insignificant. Every person, even an atheist, has a vacuum inside that can only be filled by God. And that should be captured in a work of art.”
The definition of what precisely Twitchell has captured in the more than four decades he has spent painting giant-sized human figures on the sides of buildings varies depending on who’s looking. For some in the city’s arts establishment, the content of his work matters less than the paternal role he has played in LA’s mural legacy. “I would consider him the grandfather of murals in LA,” says Isabel Rojas-Williams, executive director of the Mural Conservancy, whose office adjoins Twitchell’s studio on the ground floor of a nearly century-old, fourteen-story former furniture warehouse. “The quality of his work, it was amazing and continues to be amazing,” Rojas continued. “And he hasn’t stopped. He’s inspirational for the new generation not only for the skill of his murals but also the way he has behaved as an artist and a person guiding and inspiring people to do the best they can.”

Scott Haskins, a California mural conservation expert who has helped to restore murals throughout the United States and Europe, singles out Twitchell for “his techniques and integrity and painting and motivation.” “I consider him to be at the top of the food chain,” Haskins says. “Some people think when you put spray paint on a wall it’s a mural. It’s not.” Twitchell, he says, “is one of the grandfathers of the highest quality of mural painting possible.”

Hollywood film and music producer Mark Joseph, a friend of Twitchell’s, came closer to Twitchell’s self-understanding when he told me in an interview earlier this year: “He’s in that difficult spot, that tension between the sacred and the secular and the subversive.” That description came near the end of a long conversation during which Joseph, who has done marketing work for the faith-oriented movie company Walden Media and produced the soundtrack for Mel Gibson’s The Passion of the Christ, lamented the “second-rate” quality of much self-professed Christian art, music, and filmmaking. Twitchell, Joseph said, has managed to sidestep the pitfalls that can trip up artists of faith. His work, housed in the permanent collection of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and frequently covered in local and art-world media, is no niche product. Twitchell neither avoids nor exploits religious themes. “Kent could have been Thomas Kinkade if he wanted to,” Joseph said. “But he’s always been out there in his quietly subversive way refusing to keep his religion out of his work. And I really admire him for that.”

Twitchell readily identifies himself as a Christian, though he doesn’t currently attend a church. (“I got out of the habit,” he says. “I don’t think not going is a cool thing.”) He also readily admits to having dabbled in Scientology, Transcendental Meditation, “eastern mysticism and out-of-body experiences,” marijuana, mescaline, and LSD, until “I remember thinking to myself, ‘This is boring. This is just boring. I don’t understand why most of these people haven’t moved on from this.’ It took away your ambition.” For a time earlier in his career, Twitchell attended Grace Community Church, an evangelical megachurch in the San Fernando Valley, which he praises for its pastor’s “emphasis on doctrine.” “Doctrine is very important to me,” he says.
Twitchell has described his faith on various occasions, and in varying terms, as a quest to encounter, and to represent in works of art, the unchanging truth of God. That quest was partly realized by his study of the Bible using a Greek interlinear translation, and by his reading of writers such as C.S. Lewis, whose books line a jumbled shelf at the back of his studio. Mostly, though, Twitchell’s search for God has been expressed on the sides of buildings.

“It’s simply an outgrowth of my search for meaning,” he says of his work. “I don’t illustrate ideas. The art is stream-of-consciousness of who I am inside.” The murals’ hyperrealism is part of the search. “I believe truth can be known and is meant to be known. Everything is not relative.... The symbolism of that is realism as opposed to a non-objective approach to art. Philosophically, I’m defending the fact that I’m more excited about doing realism. I couldn’t get up in the morning if I was going to glorify the colors that a paint manufacturer did.... The most important thing we can do in fine art is to seek the truth.”

Twitchell was born on August 17, 1942, in Lansing, Michigan. He was raised on what he describes as a “small family farm, of which there were many” in a rural area southwest of the city. Twitchell recalls “growing up like on the Lassie TV show, with grandma and grandpa living next door, sort of like The Waltons.” (The Virgin Mary in The Holy Trinity with the Virgin, the forty-foot-tall mural on the side of the former Otis art college building, is modeled on character actress Jan Clayton, who played the mother on Lassie in the 1950s.) Twitchell’s father, Bob, was a foreman at a local car factory in addition to farming corn, wheat, oats, and a small herd of Holstein dairy cows. “My dad was artistic about the way he raised things,” Twitchell says. “I remember Look magazine came and was photographing his corn because it was so far beyond anything in Michigan.”

Twitchell retains the unboastful, low-key affect of a man raised in the Midwest, though he is in no way self-effacing or hesitant to speak his mind. Wiry, diminutive, and crowned with a mane of gray hair swept back from his forehead, he resembles the actor and stuntman Richard Farsnworth, who starred in the 1999 David Lynch movie The Straight Story. Twitchell’s blue-gray eyes dart restlessly when he talks, and he frequently rubs his face and beard with his hands, as if wiping clean the slate of his mind to make room for more thoughts. In conversation he jumps from topic to topic, following trains of association that start with, say, a freeway mural he painted at the behest of organizers of the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles and end with how he met his second wife, Pandora, a long and colorful story involving gypsies, a Paul Anka record, and using prayer to ward off a hex. (He and Pandora are still married, and have a twenty-two-year-old son, Artie.)

When I met him at his studio late last year, he greeted me on the sidewalk wearing jeans, a gray paint-spattered sweatshirt, and black leather shoes. He led me inside, pausing every few steps to point out sketches, newspaper clippings and
giant-sized mural studies hanging from the walls, including one panel painted with a ten-foot-wide rendering of Michael Jackson’s eyes—a study for a mural put on indefinite hold following Jackson’s embroilment in child molestation charges. Twitchell’s arms moved as he talked, sometimes stretching wide like the liquor store Jesus’s, or twisting into complicated shapes to illustrate a point. “God’s always making me look like a genius,” he said after we’d spent some time talking about his work. “I’m actually very mediocre but God is always making me look like a genius.”

Twitchell’s parents began their marriage with divergent views about faith. His mother, Doris, attended a Methodist church, where she was superintendent of the Sunday school and ensured that Twitchell and his younger sister, Gloria, got a decent religious education. “She taught me at the beginning that we could talk to God and pray to God, and it was always very real to me,” Twitchell recalled. Twitchell’s father was “not a Christian at all.” Shortly after Twitchell was born, his father joined the military and was wounded by shrapnel at the Battle of the Bulge. Upon returning home, he was hospitalized with acute tuberculosis, contracted on the battlefield. Quarantined for more than two years, the elder Mr. Twitchell experienced a moment of near-death during an operation. Twitchell recalled the story:

He was falling down a shaft. And all around the shaft was black but shiny with jewels. And it was scary, and down below it was a pig, and it was the most evil creature. And it was pulling him down, and he could see up the shaft and see his friends. And they were just talking and couldn’t help him at all. Mom and all of our friends at church were praying, and he came back to life. And that was the beginning of his trail to God. He became a churchgoer and went to the same church Mom did. He thanked God he was wounded and his strength was taken away. It made him realize we have no strength and friends, but Christ is our only friend and also our only strength.

Twitchell’s chief memory of this episode is waving at his father’s upper-story hospital window during months of quarantine: “He threw candies to us out the window.” Telling this story seems to remind him of other times he has regarded his father from below. “Dad was short but I always looked up at him because I was a little kid. There’s something important to me in the way that we look up at people. When we look up into the eyes of someone grand, it at once intimidates us but also gives us inspiration.” Twitchell would experience this same feeling again in European cathedrals, which inspired the monumentality of his painting.

“I remember before going to kindergarten I would draw things,” Twitchell says. “I always drew figures with whatever I could find around the house. People throwing snowballs at each other and sliding down the hill, the world I knew.” Teachers quickly recognized Twitchell’s draftsmanship, and by the time he graduated
high school (in Lansing, where his parents had moved to be near higher quality schools) he had ambitions to become a commercial artist. He landed a commercial art job in Lansing but decided to join a friend enlisting in the military when he discovered he could serve as an Air Force illustrator. He was assigned first to paint Plexiglas screens used to plot the position of aircraft at navigation centers. He put in for a transfer and was sent to an air base at South Ruislip just west of London, where he illustrated briefing papers used by generals to inform visiting dignitaries about missile operations and other “extremely hush-hush stuff.” In his spare time he explored London museums and visited cathedrals and other monuments.

Twitchell says that from the time he was a child, he dreamed of living in Los Angeles. “Back then, television was magical.” He remembers watching the show *Dragnet.* “When the narrator said, ‘This is the city of Los Angeles, California,’ that did it for me. I knew that’s where I’d eventually go.” Following his discharge, Twitchell lived briefly in Atlanta, where he got a job as a department store display artist. When an uncle living in Los Angeles offered a place to stay while Twitchell attended college on the GI bill, he moved and enrolled first at a community college, then at Cal State LA, where he graduated with an art degree in 1972. He received his Masters in Fine Art from Otis in 1977.

“It was the hippie days,” Twitchell says, and it didn’t take long for military discipline and whatever remained of Twitchell’s childhood religious observance to wear off. In addition to the drugs and Scientology, “I was into some weird things, like pyramid power and domes, and I had these far left leanings.” Twitchell sat through his teachers’ lessons in then-fashionable abstract expressionist art, “throw[ing] around paint” for class projects. But even as he busied himself discarding his Midwest upbringing in his recreational life, some remnant from the farm and from his military work persisted in his approach to painting. From the moment he entered art school, his teachers’ and fellow students’ embrace of abstraction and conceptualism struck him as elitist and anti-religious. “It was a celebration of the universe as accident,” he says. When a classmate offered to let Twitchell use one side of the house she’d grown up in near downtown LA as a blank canvas, Twitchell knew exactly what he wanted to do.

“I painted this two-story portrait of Steve McQueen,” a populist, photographically realist image intended as an implicit rebuke of everything Twitchell had been taught in school. He used a single color, various shades of blue, “because I didn’t feel comfortable doing too many colors—I’d blow it.” The blue gave the image a ghostly quality that caught viewers’ attention. Press coverage followed, and “all of a sudden people were calling me on the phone interviewing me about this. I thought I was the next Andy Warhol.” More than that, after years of apprenticeship, Twitchell had stumbled upon his signature style. “I thought, ‘I’m home. This is it. This is me. This is finally who I am.’ It was 1971. I was twenty-seven or twenty-eight. I haven’t looked back since.”
A Hollywood makeup artist named Steve Clensos read about Twitchell and hired him to paint the side of a building he owned in East Hollywood. Twitchell painted a forty-five-foot-wide image of character actor Strother Martin against a black background, hair undulating from his head like strands of spaghetti. (The owner was delighted with the choice. He’d worked with Strother as a makeup man.) Twitchell chose images of actors because they were known and because they resonated with his childhood love of television and movies. “They were in southern California and that was their reality, and Michigan was mine. That was a place of dreams, Los Angeles.”

More commissions followed, some from private building owners, some from government agencies. At the time, Los Angeles was becoming known as a center of mural art, partly because of Twitchell’s work, and that of a Venice Beach-based mural collective called the LA Fine Arts Squad, and partly as a result of the Chicano Art Movement’s vigorous embrace of outdoor art in all its forms. It was a heady time to be a muralist. There were few city regulations governing mural art, and building owners were eager for the attention and prestige murals attracted.

Soon after Twitchell finished the Strother Martin mural, a downtown wedding boutique owner who’d happened to see it offered Twitchell $3,600 to cover one side of his store with a depiction of a bride and groom. Twitchell spent two years on the project, with the store owner, Carlos Ortiz, posing as the groom (the bride was an amalgam of Ortiz’s girlfriend at the time, a subsequent girlfriend of Ortiz’s, and Twitchell’s first wife, Susan) and buying all of Twitchell’s supplies, including scaffolding and what Twitchell described as a hanging “spider stage,” from which he applied paint to the upper reaches of the five-story image. Twitchell worked at night by the illumination of two 100-watt light bulbs, because he enjoyed the quiet and because he didn’t have to pay to park. “You’d see someone going by at two AM singing opera,” he recalls. “The sun would come up in the east off to my left, and it was time for me to wrap up because I had to get out before the parking lot people knew I was there.”

Twitchell has supported himself with his art throughout his career, never lacking for work or for patrons willing to fund both his murals and, when needed, their restoration. And yet, commercial success and popular appeal have not always been accompanied by critical recognition. Three years ago, Pacific Standard Time, a comprehensive survey exhibition of Los Angeles art history staged by the Getty Center and a wide array of other regional museums and galleries, “completely ignored me,” Twitchell says. “I didn’t care.” Twitchell is not represented by a gallery. His work is rarely shown in exhibits and he has not been the subject of a book-length critical study. Though Isabel Rojas-Williams and others familiar with LA’s mural scene praise Twitchell’s generosity toward younger artists, he keeps a certain distance from other muralists of his generation, especially those hailing from LA’s Chicano Art Movement. Twitchell told a story of being invited
to a party at the home of comedian Cheech Marin, who owns one of the world’s largest private collections of Chicano art. “I thought, ‘Why do I want to go to his house? He snubs anything that’s not Chicano.’ We went in there and a whole bunch of art people are sitting down and...Cheech looked up at me and said ‘Kent Twitchell!’ And he hugged me, and he said, ‘My God, Kent Twitchell. I can’t believe you came. You’re my hero.’ And he told all these stories about how much he loved me. You never know who’s out there when you do public art. Because there are people who hate me, too.”

In part, this chilly relationship with swaths of the art world can be explained by Twitchell’s ongoing rejection of the major post-war trends. During our conversations, he returned again and again to long-ago arguments with art school professors and students over their elitism and knee-jerk contempt for religious faith. (One of those stories ended with the words, “This is a sham...and I’m not going with the program.”) He is even more withering toward the art world’s current infatuation with street art, as memorialized in a landmark 2011 exhibit, Art in the Streets, at Los Angeles’s Museum of Contemporary Art. “They’re absolute phonies,” he says of street-art stars such as Banksy and Shepard Fairey. “There’s as much connection with real art as Thomas Kinkade, except Thomas Kinkade actually knew how to paint.”

The lines in this debate might be more sharply drawn than necessary, but it’s undeniable that Twitchell’s art—public-spirited, representational, addressing religious themes, and by virtue of its medium unavailable for sale in today’s high-rolling art market—goes against just about every artistic trend of the years Twitchell has been at work. When I met him in his studio, one of the longest, most engaging stories he told, uncharacteristically free of digression, was of the origin of the 111th Street Jesus mural, the one on the side of the death-alley liquor store. The mural, he said, owed its existence to a local Catholic priest named Father Dennis Berry, who recruited Twitchell to help beautify the neighborhood with the help of some local youths who had recently left the gang life. Twitchell, seeking to paint “a tough Jesus” in tune with the neighborhood, modeled his mural on a young man who had played Jesus in a recent Passion play at Berry’s parish, the Church of the Ascension on 112th Street.

Working for free with two former gang members whom he taught how to paint, Twitchell applied the mural around bullet holes in the liquor store wall, beside a phone booth where gang members negotiated “four to five drug deals a day.” When the mural was done, “They had a parade where the priest came and blessed the mural. The people from the neighborhood came and put out tables and food and everyone was eating and the whole neighborhood was there—and Jesus with his arms outstretched. The parade went all through the neighborhood and people came out of their houses and joined, and it ended at the mural. And I was just a participant at that point.” He rubbed his beard, savoring the memory.
“You always want that to happen. You hope you’re uplifting. You don’t always know if you are.”

As it happens, I grew up with Kent Twitchell’s work, without knowing it was his until I began writing this story. I was born and raised in Los Angeles, and several of Twitchell’s murals, in particular *Six Los Angeles Artists* and *Harbor Freeway Overture*, have loomed large in my visual memory since childhood and young adulthood. The ubiquity of murals is one of the many things I love about LA, and I was delighted to discover that some of my favorite murals were painted by a man dedicated to communicating divine truth through monumental art. I was delighted because I never knew the images arose from a religious impulse—and I think religious art works best that way. I agree with Twitchell that the best art inculcates mysterious feelings of awe in the viewer (though, unlike Twitchell, I experience awe in the presence of abstract and conceptual art just as often as in representational works). I don’t know enough about modern-day Christian music or film to evaluate Mark Joseph’s lament that they are often sub-par. What I do know is that Twitchell’s art was probably at work on me, without my knowing it, in imperceptible but nevertheless significant ways, as I found my own way toward faith over the course of my life. For all his irascibility and tetchy relationship with his fellow artists, Twitchell clearly has managed to create work of lasting importance. If he ever truly has wondered whether his art is uplifting, I can assure him it is.

The day I visited his studio, I took time before and after our meeting to drive past a few of his murals, including *Six Los Angeles Artists*, which I remember passing countless times as a child on the way to and from the Long Beach office where my parents worked. I parked in front of the mural on a sunny morning just before lunchtime and got out, staring up at the figures who had seemed so mysterious and otherworldly to my young eyes all those years ago. A homeless man calling himself Donald approached and asked if I had a light for a cigarette stub he held in his hand. I asked him if he liked the mural. “I graffitied it,” he replied. “When I was thirteen years old. I got arrested, all that bullshit. I still like it. Who are these people, anyway?” I told him they were artists. “Artists!” he exclaimed. “I never knew.” After sharing some stories about people he’d punched in the face over the years, and proudly showing me his new medical marijuana ID card, Donald took another look at the mural. “He’s a professional, right?” he asked of Twitchell. I said he was. “And I was a criminal,” Donald said sadly. We exchanged goodbyes and he continued on his way.

After a fruitless search through parking lots and behind chain link fences, I learned from some guys in a bar on Vermont Avenue that the *111th Street Jesus* mural had been painted over by a new property owner. The guys directed me to the liquor store, which appeared abandoned. I found the wall where the mural had been and gazed at it while two boys waiting for their parents to finish loading
baskets of laundry into the back of a dented Ford Expedition pelted the wall with pieces of rotten fruit fallen from a nearby tree. I tried, without much success, to envision the joyful neighborhood celebration staged at the mural’s completion. The scene was depressing, and I walked back to my car.

By the time I left Twitchell’s studio, it was dark. I drove to Broadway, downtown, and parked illegally in the lot adjacent to the five-story Bride and Groom mural. Graffiti covered the bottom portion, but the upper reaches were clear, and I pictured Twitchell hanging from the side of the building on his spider stage, his two 100-watt bulbs glowing wanly in the late night dark. Much of the building has been converted into apartments, and out of one window came the sounds of a domestic dispute. A woman’s voice rose above the downtown din: “Stop whining! No! Where’s your fucking stroller?” The bride and groom, like all of Twitchell’s painted figures, do not radiate happiness or any other strong emotion. But I took comfort from the fact that they were still there, still together amid the changes and chances of the city.

My last stop of the night, after a furtive walk up a freeway entrance ramp to get as close as possible to the towering musicians of Harbor Freeway Overture, was Twitchell’s first mural, the two-story blue Steve McQueen he painted all those years ago, in his days of marijuana and pyramid power. Miraculously, the mural is still there and wholly untouched, though the building was long ago converted into apartments and part of the ground floor now houses a corner market plastered with ads for Mexican wire transfer services and the popular game show 100 Latinos Dijeron. A satellite dish sprouts from McQueen’s right shoulder, but otherwise the actor remains unblemished, his ghostly, iconic face staring with movie-still perfection at the cars cruising up and down Union Avenue pumping Norteño music. I could hear a suspenseful movie playing inside one apartment, children’s voices in another. Just inside the brightly lit market doorway were bins filled with bananas, watermelons, and bags of Lays potato chips.

This part of Los Angeles, Pico-Union, has changed utterly from the days when Twitchell painted McQueen, becoming a predominantly El Salvadoran neighborhood, home to waves of refugees from that country’s brutal civil war, as well as a transnational street gang called Mara Salvatrucha. What struck me as I gazed at the mural was how it has persisted through all the changes. The same is true of all of Twitchell’s murals, each enduring in a city now vastly different from the one he encountered as a young, star-struck, newly discharged soldier in the frothy 1960s. Even the 111th Street Jesus, I decided, was still there, just obscured by a layer of white paint.

I thought of something Twitchell had told me just before I left his studio. We were standing near the small kitchen, which Twitchell keeps stocked with food, vitamins, Yerba Mate tea, a microwave and toaster oven, and a washer and dryer, because “I spend eighty percent of my time here.” I asked him about Los Angeles,
why he came to the city and why he couldn’t imagine living anywhere else. He replied: “In the Midwest, you get this rep for your lifetime. There’s something about LA that’s the opposite of that. Maybe that’s why creative people tend to come here. We forgive each other for failing and looking foolish. We forgive them by doing something good.”