

ROOTS OF COOL

A Celebration of Trees and Shade
in a Warming World

July 12 - October 12, 2025





ROOTS OF COOL:

A Celebration of Trees and Shade in a Warming World

Roots of Cool invites you to connect with and cultivate appreciation for the life-giving role trees and shade play in making urban neighborhoods livable. In a warming world, shade and the cooling benefits of trees are essential, but not every community has the same access. Shade equity is an issue that disproportionately affects working-class communities, who are more likely to work outdoors, rely on public transportation, and live in hotter neighborhoods. Despite this reality, providing shade can be done in simple ways, starting with planting and caring for trees.

The exhibition features artworks in the Sturt Haaga Gallery and Boddy House, as well as outdoor installations throughout Descanso Gardens. Thirteen women artists and a diverse art collective explore the past, present, and future role of trees and shade in the city, with visual and musical works to take us through the journey and inspire us to create a cooler, greener future. The only way to get there is to train our eyes to see opportunities for change in our neighborhoods – and then roll up our sleeves and make it happen. We each have more power than we realize.

We are rooted in the past. We are rooting for the future.

– Edith and Jolly de Guzman

Image credit: TreePeople



SHADE

All you have to do is scoot across a satellite map of the Los Angeles Basin to see the tremendous shade disparity. Leafy neighborhoods are tucked in hillside canyons and built around golf courses. High modernist homes embrace the sun as it flickers through labor-intensive thickets of Eucalyptus. Awnings, paseos, and mature ficus trees shade high-end shopping districts. In the oceanfront city of Santa Monica, which has a dedicated municipal tree plan and a staff of public foresters, all 302 bus stops have been outfitted with fixed steel parasols (“blue spots”) that block the sun. Meanwhile, in the Los Angeles flats, there are vast gray expanses – playgrounds, parking lots, and wide roads – with almost no trees. Transit riders bake at unsheltered bus stops. The homeless take refuge in tunnels and under highway overpasses; some chain their tarps and tents to fences on Skid Row and wait out the day in the shadows of buildings across the street.

Shade is often understood as a luxury amenity, lending calm to courtyards and tree-lined boulevards, cooling and obscuring jewel boxes and glass cubes. But as deadly, hundred-degree heatwaves become commonplace, we have to learn to see shade as a civic resource that is shared by all. In the shade, overheated bodies return to equilibrium. Blood circulation improves. People think clearly. They see better. In a physiological sense, they are themselves again. For people vulnerable to heat stress and exhaustion – outdoor workers, the elderly, the homeless that can be the difference between life and death. Shade is thus an index of inequality, a requirement for public health, and a mandate for urban planners and designers.

A few years back, Los Angeles passed sweeping revisions to the general plan meant to encourage residents to walk, bike, and take more buses and trains. But as Angelenos step out of their cars, they are discovering that many streets offer little relief from the oppressive sunshine. Not everyone has the stamina to wait out the heat at an unprotected bus stop, or the money to duck into an air-conditioned cafe. When we understand shade as a public resource – a kind of infrastructure, even – we can have better discussions about how to create it and distribute it fairly.

Yet cultural values complicate the provision of shade. Los Angeles is a low-rise city whose residents prize open air and sunshine. They show up at planning meetings to protest tall buildings that would block views or darken sunbathing decks, and police urge residents in high-crime neighborhoods to cut down trees that hide drug dealing and prostitution. Shade trees are designed out of parks to discourage loitering and turf wars, and designed off streets where traffic engineers demand wide lanes and high visibility. Diffused sunlight is rare in many parts of Los Angeles.

Excerpt from the essay “Shade” by Sam Bloch, originally published in the April 2019 issue of Places Journal (<https://placesjournal.org/articles/shade-an-urban-design-mandate/>). Reprinted with permission.

Image credit: TreePeople

An aerial photograph of Los Angeles at sunset. The city's skyline is visible in the background, with the sun low on the horizon, casting a warm, golden glow over the city. In the foreground, a multi-lane highway is filled with cars, and various residential and commercial buildings are scattered throughout the landscape. A large, white circular border is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the main text.

HOW DO DECISIONS OF THE PAST AFFECT HOW MUCH SHADE NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE TODAY?

In Los Angeles and beyond, many neighborhoods are veritable concrete jungles with scarce tree and shade cover offering respite on a hot day. This isn't accidental. Decades of discriminatory planning and disinvestment have left lower-income areas with fewer trees and hotter streets – on average 3°F warmer and with 15% less canopy than wealthier neighborhoods. For transit riders, outdoor workers, the elderly, and the unhoused, California's once-idyllic sun is becoming a deadly threat. As the climate shifts, so must our mindset: shade is no longer a luxury, but a shared civic resource that we can grow, protect, and steward together.

Image credit: TreePeople

KIM ABELES

In Looking for Paradise (Downtown Los Angeles), Kim Abeles presents a canopy of artificial trees with exaggerated, elongated trunks made of piano wire that pierce through an aerial map of Downtown Los Angeles. Each marks the location of an actual tree, which the artist mapped out on foot over several days of walking. Collectively, they present an attractive and whimsical canopy, but upon closer inspection, it is obvious that they are planted in clusters, leaving entire blocks unshaded and calling into question the politics of shade and tree cover in the city.

Kim Abeles is a Los Angeles-based artist whose work speaks to society, science literacy, and civic engagement. In 1987, she innovated a method to create images from smog in the air, and Smog Collectors brought her work to international attention. Her work is in public collections including the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, California African American Museum, Berkeley Art Museum, and National Geospatial Intelligence Agency.

*Looking for Paradise
(Downtown Los Angeles), 2004*

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

33" x 72" x 43"

Courtesy of the artist



DIANA KOHNE

Diana Kohne depicts stark urban landscapes that draw our attention to the fact that cities were largely built with efficiency in mind, with all the things we need as a society available, but lacking the comfort and intimacy humans need to be nurtured and connected to nature. Kohne approaches her work with play and humor, but calls on viewers to contemplate what it would feel like to experience the urban form, including heat, inside one of her paintings. Kohne captures scenes she witnesses on her bus commutes and names her paintings for streets and locations they represent. In *Lake*, the only shade in the composition is produced by the commuter waiting for the bus, and the paltry shadow of the bus stop pole next to her.

While the compositions show the present day, they represent artifacts of policy and planning decisions of the past that have created inequitable conditions, particularly for low-income communities and communities of color. In a region internationally known for its dependence on cars, Kohne uses public transit to get around, and she questions the conventional wisdom that has put cars before people. "Cars have only been here about a hundred years," she explains. "That's not really so long, so maybe [city] planning is not really so unchangeable."

Diana Kohne is a Los Angeles-based painter, printmaker, designer, and writer who uses English and American Sign Language. Her paintings and printmaking depict urban reality, while her three-dimensional works focus on the environment and social issues. She studied at the University of North Texas.

Lake, 2025

Acrylic gouache on wood

11" x 18"

Courtesy of artist

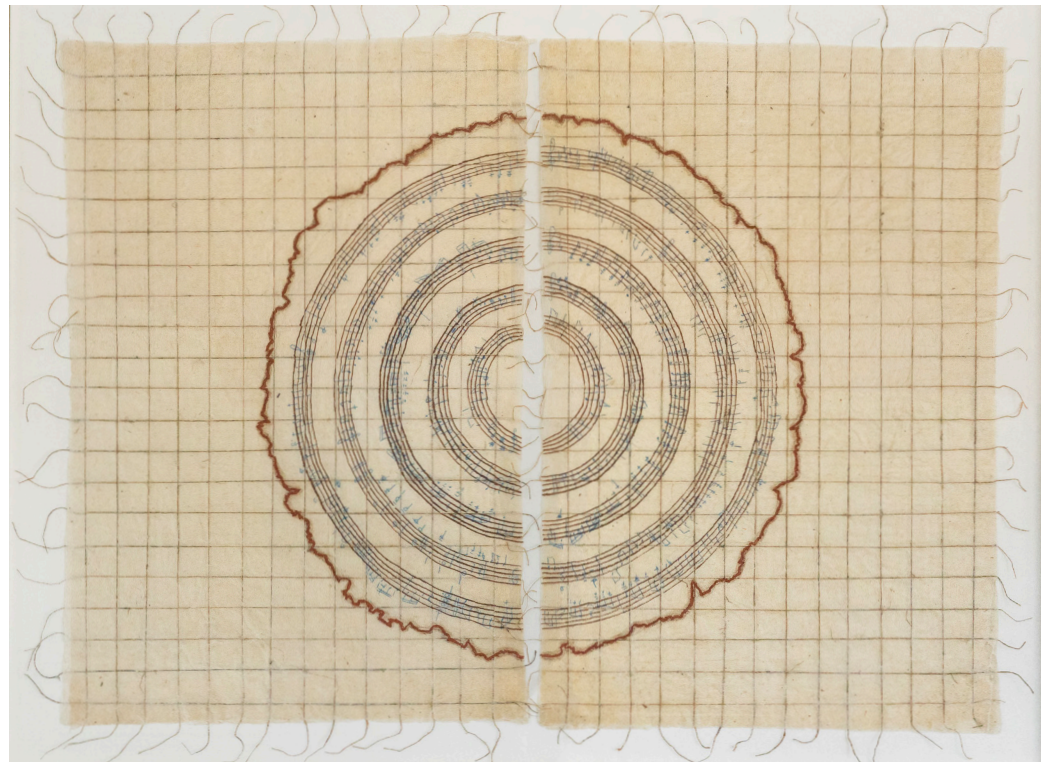


SHOSHANA BEN-HORIN

Shoshana Ben-Horin's original piano compositions in three parts explore the past, present, and future of the relationship between urban spaces and nature. The first movement pays homage to the original and ongoing indigenous caretakers of the land, as well as the abrupt shifts that colonization brought to the land. The second movement examines the current climate crisis and the collective response it demands. The final movement evokes awe and respect for trees in an imagined urban future that is in harmony with nature.

Shoshana Ben-Horin is a Los Angeles-based classical pianist, recording artist, poet, and visual artist who enjoys exploring what different expressive mediums have to offer. She trained at the Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory in Milan, Italy.

To listen to the original compositions, visit tinyurl.com/rootsofcoolmusic



Music for Roots of Cool: A Celebration of Trees and Shade In A Warming World, 2025

Multi-media work of music and accompanying visual artwork

Original compositions in three movements written and performed by the artist / 36 minutes

Nepalese oil paper, oil marker, oil pencil / 40" x 30" unframed

Courtesy of the artist



WHAT ARE SOME PRESENT-DAY CHALLENGES TO INCREASING SHADE AND TREE COVER EQUITABLY?

As the planet heats up, shade is no longer a luxury – it's a necessity. It shapes where we go, how long we stay, and what's possible in a day. In Los Angeles's semi-arid climate, creating shade through trees is vital but challenging. Young trees need water and care, yet limited resources mean many go without. In some neighborhoods, community volunteers step in – in others, the support isn't there. The result?

A divide between communities rich in canopy and those left in the sun. Shade, like so much else, is unevenly shared.

LISA TOMCZESZYN

Every Bench Deserves a Tree strives to recreate the opposing sensory experiences of heat and cool that urban dwellers encounter in the city. Visitors are invited to feel the contrast between a sense of calm – sitting under the graceful branches of a tree built from recycled paper and paper leaves cut from photographs of the oak grove at Descanso Gardens – and a sense of unprotected exposure under unfiltered light sitting on a bench marked “Asphalt Avenue.” The juxtaposition of the shaded and unshaded urban experiences continues to be explored in Tomczeszyn’s paintings, on exhibit near the installation.

Lisa Tomczeszyn is a Los Angeles-based artist whose work is in reaction to the wild and the tame in the natural world, and the histories of human kind’s relationships with the planet and themselves. Her art practice is in constant response to current events and the wayward actions of humankind. She attended Parsons School of Design NYC for fashion and textile design, received a BFA at Southampton College for painting and lithography, and earned an MFA in theatrical design from the Yale School of Drama.



Every Bench Deserves a Tree, 2025

Upcycled paper, cardboard, wire, and wood

132" x 90" x 48"

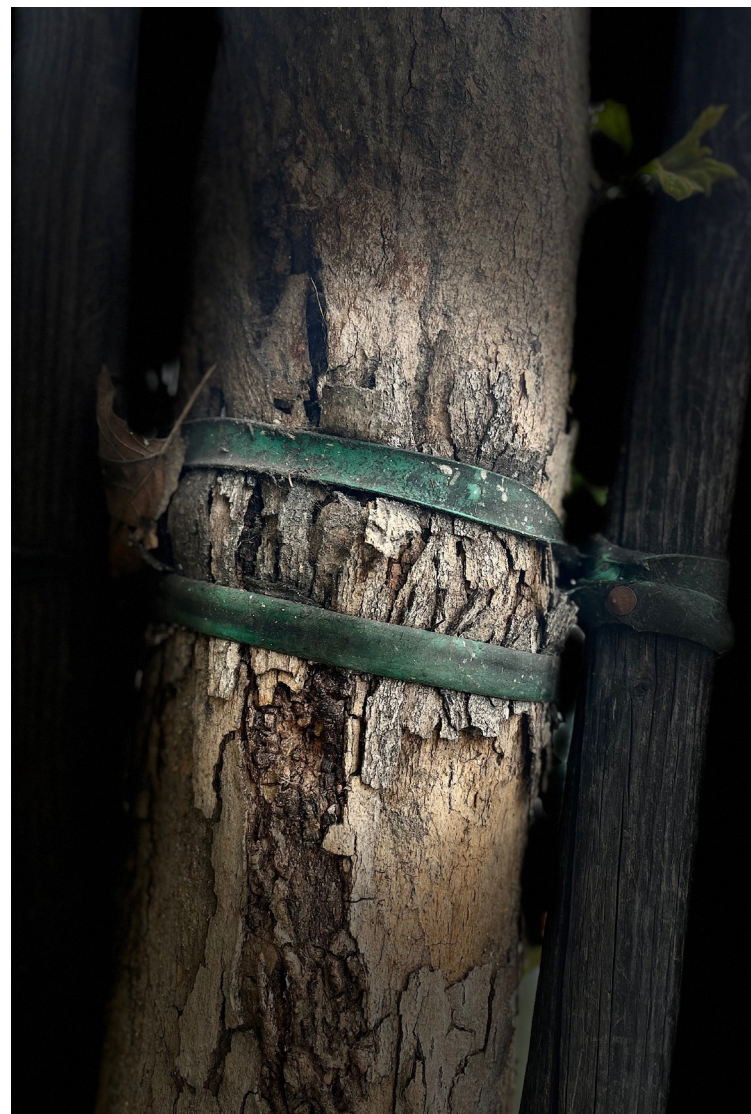
Courtesy of the artist

LOIS KELLER

The Stakes We Leave Behind is part of a larger installation presenting a series of photographic portraits of trees that document how good intentions of urban tree plantings over time can devolve into neglected artifacts of a forgotten past. Alongside the photographs, Keller incorporates physical materials she collected as a volunteer providing stewardship care for public trees in Los Angeles. For Keller, each tree represents a crossroads at the interventions that people bring to urban areas – which can be helpful, or can be harmful. The artist invites visitors to see themselves as positive change agents who can provide the continued care required to help trees thrive in their own communities.

Lois Keller is a Los Angeles-based multidisciplinary artist working in drawing, installation, and performance. Her annual plein air Matilija poppy series documents seasonal change, while her participatory works explore memory, presence, and environment. She has exhibited nationally and completed residencies at Château d'Orquevaux in France and the Residency Project in Pasadena.

The Stakes We Leave Behind, 2025
Mixed media installation using digital
photographs on archival paper, wooden tree
stakes, tree ties, nails, brick, cardboard,
found street well soil and garbage
Dimensions variable
Courtesy of the artist



LESLIE K. GRAY

Gray's three-part installation of "bus stops" explores the past, present, and future of access to shade in the urban context and invites visitors to consider what kind of future they want to travel toward and help manifest. Located in three different parts of Descanso Gardens, each installation presents a combination of comfort and sun exposure, and is accompanied by facts about heat risk to riders and other relevant information designed to pique visitors' curiosity and raise awareness. The Bus Stop of the *Present*, located near the Camellia Forest, is more inviting than the *Past* installation located at the curb in front of the main entrance – it is still not quite comfortable. It offers limited shade and serves as a reminder that the urban planning decisions of the twentieth century prioritized cars over people. Combined, the works explore what a lack of access to shade feels like in the urban context, showing the stylized absence of trees and shade, prompting us to consider the reality experienced daily by

people who rely on public transportation. The *Future* installation, located outside of the Sturt Haaga Gallery, inspires us to imagine what access to shade in the urban context could feel like if we centered the human experience in a whimsical and celebratory way.


Leslie K. Gray is a Los Angeles-based visual artist, writer, and director specializing in puppetry and other theatrical presentations. Her work has been seen locally and internationally at such places as The Music Center on Tour, The Skirball Cultural Center, The Getty Museum, Highways Performance Space, Ma Chere Artspace in Chiang Mai, Thailand, and El Museo Nacional in Montevideo, Uruguay. She teaches puppetry and art workshops for numerous community organizations and museums, and is a credentialed K-12 Special Education and Deaf Education specialist teacher.



*Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade -
Bus Stop of the Present, 2025*

Acrylic, papier-mâché, fabric, PVC, metal
36" x 108" x 72"

Courtesy of the artist

A photograph of a tree-lined street with a large white circle overlaying the center. The circle contains text. The background shows a paved road, sidewalks, and lush green trees with sunlight filtering through the leaves. A few cars are parked along the street.

WHAT COULD A COOLER, GREENER CITY LOOK AND FEEL LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

In the city of the future, nature thrives alongside innovation, and urban residents feel connected with the resources that sustain them. Tree-lined streets weave through neighborhoods, parks bloom atop rooftops, and waterways thread through urban centers, cooling the city and welcoming encounters with nature. The air is cooler, and birdsong softens the city's hum while shaded walkways invite people outdoors. Resilient communities are strengthened by their connection to nature's seasons. Here, humans and nature coexist, nurturing a future that is sustainable and inviting.

PASCALINE DOUCIN-DAHLKE

Doucín-Dahlke's sculptural work evokes the abundance that the California climate offers – one which shimmers with sunshine, warmth, blue skies, and bright light. In a changing climate, we increasingly realize that this lifestyle comes with a cost – but her work helps to simultaneously remind us that nature can provide respite and sorely needed shade, especially in working-class neighborhoods. To Doucín-Dahlke, the use of repurposed plant material is a way to tap into our collective creativity and ability to find solutions to climate change and other challenges of our era.

Pascaline Doucín-Dahlke is a Los Angeles-based artist whose work consists of conceptual, semi-abstract acrylic paintings, digital art, art installations, and mixed-media drawings based on local landscapes, nature, architecture, and still life. Her body of work largely consists of reinterpreting landscape space through personal observation, with a hidden message behind it.



Suspended Garden, 2025

Umbrella, leaves, pods, acrylic paint, thread, rope, wire

60" x 36" x 60"

Courtesy of the artist

CIDNE HART

Hart's *Traversing the Warming Forest* incorporates varied dyeing methods, including cyanotype, a photographic process discovered in the nineteenth century that enables exposure under a film negative or objects such as vegetation to produce an image onto fabric. Hart also uses multiple natural dyeing methods, including indigo, shibori, and eco-printing, which utilizes leaves to print an image onto fabric through contact, bundling, and heat via steaming or boiling. Hart invites visitors to surround themselves with the beauty of the forest while contemplating the uncertain future of our warming world. The resulting installation has spatial passages to experience the individual details from inside as well as from outside.

Cidne Hart is a Los Angeles-based artist whose creative and teaching work includes drawing, photography, bookbinding, and a wide variety of printing methods such as letterpress, image transfer, and cyanotype. Her work has been exhibited both locally and internationally.



Traversing the Warming Forest, 2025

Eco printing, rust printing, indigo printing,
cyanotype, and natural dyes on varied fabrics

72" x 84" x 72"

Courtesy of the artist

SARITA ZALEHA

Zaleha's installation explores the visual perception of shade with its dappled light and layered density, evoking the feeling of being immersed in the protective canopy of a large sycamore tree. For the creation of this work, dozens of broken leaves were collected from the Arroyo Seco – a seasonal body of water that meanders downward from the San Gabriel Mountains, through La Cañada Flintridge and Altadena, before joining the Los Angeles River near Downtown LA. The leaves were then copied and printed in layers with the use of a risograph duplicator machine. The prints are bound into accordion books that are hung vertically en masse along the gallery wall. The artist invites visitors to ask themselves: What do you notice in the shade?

Sarita Zaleha is a Los Angeles-based artist and educator whose work explores how human perception of the environment – natural and mediated – affects how we understand climate change, the degradation of the environment, and also its restorative potential. Zaleha's work allows space for viewer-participants to recognize unexpected emotions related to the natural world, and to create connections and take action with these emotions.



Sycamore Leaves from the Arroyo Seco, 2025 (detail)

Artist book installation with risograph printing

192" x 108"

Courtesy of the artist

VICTORIA ARRIOLA

Long Shadows Fall presents multiple sculptural assemblages featuring reflective metallic globes paired with single tree branches – some suspended vertically from above, others standing upright below – creating a dialogue between grounded and elevated forms. The assemblages are surrounded by additional branches, positioned to reflect the evolving natural and projected light, evoking the feeling of an interior forest. As the light shifts throughout the day, the installation produces a dynamic interplay of shadows and reflections – suggesting the quiet presence of the sun and the illusion of shade. As visitors approach from the garden entrance and arrive at the gallery, Arriola's work aims to create a sense of transition – inviting them into a space that feels simultaneously magical and hyper-real, yet grounded in natural, familiar elements.

Victoria Arriola is a Los Angeles-based, mixed-media, interdisciplinary artist who draws inspiration from her Latin roots, her homes in Denmark and Iceland, and her travels. She has taught art and design at the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Southern California. She is a Fulbright Specialist and guest lecturer at the Danish School of Media and Journalism in Copenhagen.



Long Shadows Fall, 2025 (detail)

Metal globes, tree branches, organic
ground cover, mirrors, projected light
216" x 96" x 60"

Courtesy of the artist

ROBIN LASSER

Postcards to a Cooler Future is an installation composed of seven large-scale postcards that serve as a form of poetic wayfinding, offered as love letters in the time of climate change. On one side, the postcards feature tableau imagery inspired by urban trees of Los Angeles, Descanso Gardens' trees, and shades of cool in a warming world. Written messages on the other side contemplate nature's role and her resilience in a changing climate. This large-scale installation is accompanied by meditative video art that can be viewed at www.robinlasser.com.

Robin Lasser is a professor of art at San José State University who produces photographs, video, site-specific installations, and public art dealing with public health, environmental issues, social justice, and the promotion of public dialogue. Lasser has exhibited her work nationally and internationally, including the De Young Museum in San Francisco, the National Gallery of Modern Art in Bangalore, India, and the Recoleta Cultural Center in Buenos Aires, Argentina.



Postcards to a Cooler Future, 2025

Archival metal photograph

45" x 30"

Courtesy of the artist

A group of children are participating in a tree-planting activity. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair is focused on the soil, wearing a blue shirt and a green safety vest. Next to her, a boy in a blue cap and a grey and blue jacket with a green safety vest is also working with the soil. They are wearing green gloves. In the background, other children are visible, some holding shovels. The ground is dark brown soil, and there are some green plants starting to grow. The scene is outdoors, likely in a park or a schoolyard.

HOW CAN OUR OWN RELATIONSHIP TO TREES AND SHADE TRANSFORM OUR NEIGHBORHOODS?

When we see trees and shade not as extras but as essentials, our neighborhoods begin to change. Shade offers relief, connection, and resilience – but only when it's shared and cared for. By noticing where shade is missing, imagining greener spaces, and supporting tree care, we each become part of a larger story – one where nature is woven into daily life, cooling our cities and connecting communities. Our relationship to trees and shade can shape a future where every neighborhood thrives in the heat, in the seasons, and in the shared effort to grow something better, together.

Image credit: TreePeople

CHANTÉE BENEFIELD

Cool Canopy uses umbrellas as a metaphor for the life-giving benefits of trees, inviting visitors to notice and appreciate through symbolism the simple grandeur that urban trees provide. The installation recreates the feeling of being underneath a canopy of leafy trees, enjoying the vibrancy of green, cool shade – but in a manner that calls for our attention outside of the daily doldrums. Benefield was working on this installation when the Eaton Fire devastated her community of Altadena in January 2025, burning her family home and artwork. Recreating this lost work had added significance for Benefield, as the umbrellas serve as a reminder of the trees lost in her home and neighborhood.

Chantée Benefield is a Los Angeles-based mixed-media artist and designer whose work expresses the often-ignored realities of the Black experience. Her work spans from representational portraiture to abstract expressionism. She received her training in painting at Howard University in Washington, D.C.



Cool Canopy, 2025

Umbrellas, spray paint, acrylic paint, wire

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist

VALERIE DAVAL

In *Angele Heart*, Daval builds upon a continuing body of work inspired by a photograph of her grandmother as a young adult, sitting in nature and crafting garments from chestnut leaves. Angele takes refuge in the shade of trees, seeking protection from the heat and the passage of time – without it, she risks disappearing. Shade is more than a physical space; it is a place of preservation, a threshold between presence and absence. Trees, with their deep roots and vast canopies, become silent guardians of her existence. For Daval, this painting is a tribute to women across generations, embracing both fragility and strength, presence and absence.

Elsewhere in the series, she pays tribute to indigenous women, exploring the vestiges of their intimate link to the natural world and the concepts of family and connection across generations. The women in Daval's work are connected to prints of leaves, symbolizing the

body and protection. The leaves offer shelter and natural shade, resembling lungs and blood vessels – representing a life force – while the women's bodies symbolize the essence of trees. Beyond the narrative, these works embody sisterhood and profound kinship with the natural world.

Valerie Daval is an artist, teacher, and art therapist based in Los Angeles. She draws, paints, sews, and otherwise creates works exploring the concepts of memory and belonging, focusing on the relationship between humanity and nature. She studied Art and Architecture at the École Supérieure des Beaux-Arts du Mans, in France. Her artwork has been exhibited in France, Germany, the U.K., and the U.S.



Angele Heart, 2024

Acrylic on fabric on canvas

30" x 60"

Courtesy of the artist

YARN BOMBING LOS ANGELES

Old-growth forests exhibit distinctive ecological features and are often home to rare, threatened, and endangered species of plants and animals, making them ecologically significant. Unfortunately, many of our old-growth forest stands are threatened by habitat destruction at the invasive hands of man. *Forest for the Trees* is a fiber-based installation of works by dozens of contributing artists. Presented with the hope to address the wonders and perils of the forest, the installation creates an environment that is at once unique and fantastic, dangerous and bizarre, and acknowledges that one day, the built environment may be all that's left.

Forest for the Trees was initiated in 2011 by the Arroyo Arts Collective in Northeast Los Angeles. Its co-producer, Yarn Bombing Los Angeles, invited artists from all over the world to contribute work. Artists use standard, recycled, and unusual materials to create all of the elements one might see in a forest. From its debut at Avenue 50 Studio, *Forest for the Trees* has evolved into installations at Craft

and Folk Art Museum, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Angels Gate Cultural Center, Skirball Cultural Center, Manhattan Beach Creative Art Center, Brand Library, and Tom Bradley International Terminal at LAX.

Yarn Bombing Los Angeles is a group of fiber artists collaborating since 2010 to stage public installations that expand the definition of public art, blending street art, fiber art, social practice, craft, and high art. Led by core members Darlyn Susan Yee and David Orozco, the eclectic group encompasses all ages, genders, and backgrounds. YBLA encourages professional artists and novice crafters to use materials ranging from yarn to garbage bags using traditional fiber techniques to create collaborative installations – resulting in works that may be whimsical, humorous, conceptual, or political. The common thread is the creation of work that pushes the knit/crochet envelope and presentation of the work in the public realm.



Forest for the Trees, 2011-2025 (detail)

Mixed media including yarn, collage, knit material, and paint

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artists

READY TO LEARN MORE AND TAKE ACTION?

Join **ShadeLA**, a people-powered movement to make LA cooler – one shaded space at a time. From trees and bus shelters to park canopies and restaurant awnings, we're weaving shade into the fabric of LA's streets, culture, and future.



About ShadeLA

ShadeLA is powered by USC Public Exchange in collaboration with UCLA Luskin Center for Innovation, and with participation by the City of Los Angeles, County of Los Angeles Chief Sustainability Office, LA Metro, and the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games (LA28).



Learn more by scanning the QR code or visiting Shade-LA.com.

Roots of Cool has partnered with **Dashboard.Earth** to guide visitors through the most important actions they can take at home and in their community to help adapt to climate change – starting with connecting with free tree programs around Los Angeles County!



About Dashboard.Earth

Dashboard.Earth is a free app that makes it easy – and rewarding – to take action on climate change. Whether you're saving water, composting at home, or planting a tree, your actions add up. Track your impact, earn prizes, and be part of a growing community creating real change right.



Find a free tree program near you, and connect to local organizations that are part of the solution by visiting tinyurl.com/DescansoDashboard.

As part of **Roots of Cool**, we partnered with **The Nature of Cities** and their worldwide network to collect responses from a wide range of urbanists, scientists, and artists to the question: As the world warms up, how are you thinking about the role that trees and shade can play in making your city or region livable?



About The Nature of Cities

The Nature of Cities exists to curate joined conversations about urbanism across ways of knowing and modes of action. They create transdisciplinary, publicly available, and widely disseminated programs, events, knowledge, and engagements for green city making. They strive for cities worldwide that are resilient, sustainable, livable, and just.



Listen to and read responses from around the world by visiting thenatureofcities.com/TNOC/roots-of-cool.



- A** *Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade - Bus Stop of the Past*
- B** *Cool Canopy*
- C** *Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade - Bus Stop of the Present*
- D** *Postcards to a Cooler Future (3 of 7)*
- E** *Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade - Bus Stop of the Future*
- F** **Sturt Haaga Gallery**
 Gallery A: How do decisions of the past affect how much shade neighborhoods have today?
 Gallery B: What are some present-day challenges to increasing shade and tree cover equitably?
 Gallery C: What could a cooler, greener city look and feel like in the future?
- G** **Boddy House**
 Reflection and Activation: How can our own relationship to trees and shade transform our neighborhoods?
 Activity Room
- H** *Postcards to a Cooler Future (4 of 7)*
- I** *Beautiful Altadena: An Ode to the Trees*



*A Celebration of Trees and Shade
in a Warming World*

COMPLETE LIST OF ARTWORKS

OUTDOOR INSTALLATIONS

Chantée Benefield

Cool Canopy, 2025

Umbrellas, spray paint, acrylic paint, and wire

Dimensions variable

Beautiful Altadena: An Ode to the Trees, 2025

Canvas, acrylic, paper, cardboard

Dimensions variable

Leslie K. Gray

Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade – Bus Stop of the Past, 2025

Acrylic, papier-mâché, fabric, PVC, metal

84" x 48" x 24"

Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade – Bus Stop of the Present, 2025

Acrylic, papier-mâché, fabric, PVC, metal

108" x 72" x 36"

Getting There: A Journey to Equitable Shade – Bus Stop of the Future, 2025

Acrylic, papier-mâché, fabric, PVC, metal

108" x 72" x 36"

Robin Lasser

Postcards to a Cooler Future, 2025

7 archival metal photographs

45" x 30" each

STURT HAAGA GALLERY

Kim Abeles

Breathing Trees, 2018

Digital print on silk of tree trunks

16" x 150"

Dodger Stadium, 2007

Edition #6/8

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

8" x 10" x 3.5"

Enchanted Forest and Palms, 2009

Archival ultrachrome print on pipe holder

12" x 36" x 5"

Signs of Life Diptych, 2006

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

12" x 12" each

Enchanted Forest (and golf course) II, 2009

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

10" x 16-5/16" x 18-3/8"

Enchanted Forest, Infrared, 2012

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

12" x 73" x 12"

Terracotta Palms, 2007

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

12" x 12" x 12"

Looking for Paradise (Downtown Los Angeles), 2004

Archival ultrachrome print and model trees

33" x 43" x 72"

Victoria Arriola

Long Shadows Fall, 2025

Metal globes, tree branches, organic ground cover, mirrors, projected light

216" x 96" x 60"

Shoshana Ben-Horin

Music for Roots of Cool: A Celebration of Trees and Shade In A Warming World, 2025

Multi-media work of music and accompanying visual artwork

Original compositions in three movements written and

performed by the artist / 36 minutes

Nepalese oil paper, oil marker, oil pencil / 40" x 30" unframed

Pascaline Doucin-Dahlke

Suspended Garden, 2025

Umbrellas, leaves, pods, acrylic paint, thread, rope, wire

60" x 36" x 60"

Cidne Hart

Descanso Depths: Leaves and Spaces for Us All, 2025

Eco-printed leaves from Descanso Gardens on BFK Rives paper, cyanotype on onion skin paper. bound into accordion book

135" x 11"

Who Has the Trees in L.A.?, 2025

Eco printed leaves on U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps of Los Angeles area

76.5" x 68.5"

With the Low Winter Sun, the Olive Tree Casts Quite a Shadow on our Backporch / Guavas, Liquid Amber, Oak, Sycamore, and Pecan Leaves Fall into my Pot, 2023

Two-sided quilt of cyanotypes and eco prints on antique saris and vintage fabrics

72" x 41"

Lois Keller

The Stakes We Leave Behind, 2025

Mixed media installation using digital photographs on archival paper, wooden tree stakes, tree ties, nails, brick, cardboard, found street well soil and garbage

Dimensions variable

Roots of Cool, 2025

Acrylic on canvas

80" x 62"

Human Stakes, 2025

Tree stakes and bindings

29" x 96" x 29"

Diana Kohne

Hyperion, 2024

Acrylic gouache on wood

16" x 13"

Western, 2025

Acrylic gouache on wood

19.5" x 12.5"

Lake, 2025

Acrylic gouache on wood

11" x 18.5"

San Fernando – Sun Valley, 2025

Acrylic gouache on wood

11" x 14"

Magnolia, 2025

Acrylic gouache on wood

9.5" x 13"

La Brea, 2025
Acrylic gouache on wood
19" x 13.5"

San Fernando – Cypress Park, 2025
Acrylic gouache on wood
9" x 12"

San Gabriel, 2025
Acrylic gouache on wood
15" x 15.5"

Figueroa, 2025
Acrylic gouache on wood
17" x 20.5"

Lisa Tomczeszyn
Every Bench Deserves a Tree, 2025
Installation of upcycled paper, cardboard, wire, and wood
132" x 90" x 48"

No Relief at The Dollar Tree, 2025
Oil on board
16" x 20"

Shade 56 & York, 2025
Oil on board
36" x 24"

Shade Idell & Cypress, 2025
Oil on board
16" x 20"

On Fire Town Pizza, 2025
Oil on board
16" x 12"

Shade on York, 2025
Oil on board
11" x 14"

Sarita Zaleha
Sycamore Leaves from the Arroyo Seco, 2025
Artist book installation with risograph printing
216" x 108"

Treeminders, 2025
Risograph prints
5.5" x 8"

BODDY HOUSE

Valerie Daval
The Song of Lola Kiepjá, 2024
Acrylic on paper and fabric on canvas
30" x 30"

The Shade of Tiara Anima, 2025
Acrylic on fabric on canvas
30" x 30"

Angele Heart, 2024
Acrylic on fabric on canvas
60" x 30"

Kauxia, 2024
Acrylic on fabric on canvas
16" x 26"

Lailuka, 2025
Acrylic on fabric on canvas
16" x 26"

Traces of Shade, 2023 - 2025
Mobile sculpture installation with acrylic on fabric, leaves, and kapok silk
Dimensions variable

Cidne Hart
Traversing the Warming Forest, 2025
Eco printing, rust printing, indigo printing, cyanotypes, and natural dyes on varied fabrics
72" x 84" x 72"

The Sun Burns I, 2024
Shibori-resisted, indigo-dyed print on vintage fabric scraps
46" x 50"

The Sun Burns II, 2024
Shibori-resisted, indigo-dyed circle Shibori-resisted, indigo-dyed print on vintage fabric scraps
50" x 50"

Yarn Bombing Los Angeles

Forest for the Trees, 2011-2025
Mixed media including yarn, collage, knit material, and paint
Dimensions variable

Forest for the Trees Contributing Artists:

Edith Abeyta, Alyssa Arney, Mercy Azarcon, Amy Bauer, Alexis Bell, Tegan Bellamy, Luisa Bottari, Leslie Brown, Burbank's Fiber Fiends, Alexandra Busby, Diane Bush, Linda Cahoon, Jill Cary, Janice Carter, Mara Cheng, Jean Choate, Jen Chow, Kathryn Cobbin, Irene Cochran, Leighann Corbin, Bernice "Bee" Colman, Yolanda Diaz, Sue Dietel, Katelyn Dorroh, Erica Durante, Beth Elliott, Hui-Mei Ellis, Jacque Lene Engel, Chantal Eyong, Jennifer Fahy, James Jude Ferrera, Esther Finney, Liz Flynn, Amy Frey, The Fuzzy Panda, Glendale's Jewel City Knitters, Carmela Gomes, Becky Goodman, Grace, Linda Greco, Judy Gregory, Connie Griffin, Andy Hadwick, Jennifer Hall, Julia Hartley, Margaret Hatfield, Ruth Head, Laura Henley, Yolanda Hernandez, Amy Caterina Hill, Heather Hoggan, Lynne Hopper, Jeanette Johannes, Kristen Johannsen, Lisa Jong, Sarah Jung, Patty Kersting, Julie Kornblum, Arzu Arda Kosar, Jessica Lam, Diane Larsen, Bisi Lawal, Debi Leibovitz, Linda Leonard, Justine Leong, Sheilah Levin, Stella Ligutom, Terri Lonski, Sylvia Lyons, Kristie Mach, Geeta Mande, Charlotte Marshall, Karen Semenoff McCuaig, Silvia Mendoza, Tyler Mitzner, Theresa Knopf Morgan, Allie Moskowitz, Lauri Mraz, Alice Neal, Nancy Nelson, Janice Ogata, Pat Olson, Diane Olson-Baskin, Gilda Ongkeko, Racquel "Rocky" Ormsby, David Orozco, Olga O'Shea, Niccole V. Osborn, Pasadena's Crochet Meet Up, Lori Perea, Domenica Piumetti, Rita Poon, Nancy Pyne-Hapke, Irene Rezaie, Adrianna Rianna, Judy Richards, Penny Richards, Glenid Rivera, Dolores Robles, Connie Rohman, Marsha Rose, Mary Rosales, Joan Sauve, Erin Shea, Jocelyn Sia, Ginna Siman, Rachel Sirr, Andrea Smith, Kathleen Smith, Rita Smith, Jennifer Snoeyink, Beth Sterner, Ann Storc, Kazuko Tajima, Cameron Taylor-Brown, Jerene Thomson, Threadwinners, Kacy Treadway, Christina Tucker, Cristina Tueler, Evelyn Van Orden, Bonnie Vilchez, Nicole Wade, Jane Wang, Jessica Wards, Kayla Waxman, Fumiko Wellington, Natalie Welts, Nicholas Welts, West Flamingo Yarn Stormers, Wetherby, Maryam Will, Tracy Williams, Stefa Witt, Darlyn Susan Yee, Mariam Yonsset, Maria Zapata, Carol Zou.



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Roots of Cool is dedicated to Pam Gibson and Jim Hardie, and their decades of commitment to greening and cooling LA's most forgotten neighborhoods.

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1418 Descanso Drive
La Canada Flintridge
CA 91011

Chantée Benefield - *Cool Canopy*, 2025 (detail)

