

James Denning – Short Article for Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine

I wrote several freelance articles for the Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine between 2000 and 2001. This one, published on November 26, 2000, covered a public art initiative to support local charities.



SERAPHIM AND THE CITY

Karl Marx may have been wrong about a lot of things, but he was spot on when he wrote that certain trends are historically inevitable. And so it is that Los Angeles soon will host its own Parade of Fiberglass Things.

In our case, they're life-size hand-painted angels, about 400 of which are scheduled to descend on the city's sidewalks, parks and plazas in February. (Two early arrivals appeared briefly in California Plaza downtown.) The angelic horde will remain until May, when each angel will be auctioned off to benefit Volunteers of America, Catholic Big Brothers and other nonprofits.

It's actually a rather cute idea: Fabricate some fiberglass seraphim, find sponsors, add artists and, before you can pass the collection plate for

the charities, you have an angel parade. Finally, in a city named for angels, we won't have such an awful time finding one.

We were beaten to the punch on the basic concept by New York and Chicago, which cached cows, Cincinnati, which paraded pigs, and even Bloomington, Ill., which celebrated its sesquicentennial with Corn on the Curb. The mind reels at what San Francisco might soon immortalize, so we should, awash as we are in angels, count our blessings.

Here's hoping that our angels aren't like those New Yorkers who won't shut up about how much better everything is back home. Los Angeles may not be heaven, but the weather is warm and the sidewalks have more room than the head of a pin.—JAMES DENNING