

Alfonso Pardiñas Byzantine Mosaics

Alfonso Pardiñas was born in Coyoacan, Mexico on August 24, 1924. Pardiñas moved to California around 1941. He served in the U.S. military and became a U.S. citizen as a young man. In 1948, he studied with the renowned German mosaicist, Theodore Hanisch. Early in his career he worked in Mexico (mainly in the capital) on pieces by artists like José Clemente Orozco, Diego Rivera, David Alfaro Siqueiros, Rufino Tamayo, José Chávez Morado and Juan O'Gorman. He was a prominent fixture of the San Francisco bohemian art scene in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s and collaborated with Bay Area-based artists like Beniamino 'Benny' Bufano, 'Jean' Yanko Varda, Ruth Asawa, architect Leonard Cahn and painter Alex Anderson.

He founded the San Francisco-based company, Byzantine Mosaics. His associates included Mexican muralist and fresco painter, Jorge Rodriguez who graduated from the Academy of San Carlos in Mexico City and Manuel Perdomo whose father established the first mosaic factory on the American continent. The company received frequent and sizeable public and private contracts which were executed all over the U.S., though the majority can be found in and around California (U.S. Post Office, Bank of America, B.A.R.T.). Alfonso Pardiñas and Byzantine Mosaics were often contracted to execute huge works for churches of varying denominations. One of the best known, and most visible, being the Holy Virgin Cathedral (the Russian Orthodox church with prominent gold onion domes) in San Francisco's Richmond District.

Much of his work has been destroyed over the years, often unwittingly. Only a few pieces are publicly credited to him or to Byzantine Mosaics. Research still remains to be done to unearth copies of the work contracts proving he executed extremely well known pieces such as the very famous mosaic hallway at Los Angeles International Airport. The Byzantine Mosaics files with the original commissions were lost or destroyed in the years since his death. One signed mosaic piece exists in the lobby of the Francis Ford Coppola-owned Sentinel Building in San Francisco.

Alfonso Pardiñas died in San Rafael, California on September 22, 1975. He is survived by three daughters all born in California between 1956-1964 (Francesca, Iza, Ilka), his brother Guillermo Gutierrez and nephew Memo Morantes.

His work can still be seen in and around the San Francisco Bay Area in locations like those listed below.

**For press materials, additional information on Alfonso Pardiñas or Byzantine Mosaics
please contact Fly PR T. 323-667-1344 E. flypr@flypr.net.**



**PARTIAL LIST OF MOSAIC ART
EXECUTED BY ALFONSO PARDINAS AND BYZANTINE MOSAICS**

1) Holy Virgin Cathedral, Russian Orthodox Church – Richmond District
6210 Geary Blvd., San Francisco, CA 94121

Tel: (415) 221-3255

- five onion domes in gold leaf
- 6 saints

<http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/sfsyezd2004/holyvirgin.htm>

<http://www.sanfrancisco-direct.com/activity/pray-at-the-holy-virgin-cathedral>

http://www.yelp.com/biz_photos/-aa72ilthUp55898lqEwCw?select=heBM18zjEdVI6jNHauI6ag

2) Sentinel Building (Landmark 33 - San Francisco) – North Beach
aka Francis Ford Coppola Building

916-920 Kearny at Columbus

Financial District

Built 1907

- mural in the Kearny St. lobby entrance ('signed' A. Pardiñas)

3) Cathedral Of Saint Mary Of The Assumption

1111 Gough St

San Francisco, CA 94109-6686

(415) 567-2020

<http://www.stmarycathedralsf.org/>

One of the shrines features Our Lady Of Guadalupe executed by Alfonso Pardiñas and Byzantine Mosaics.

4) Bank of Italy (now Bank of America), San Mateo, CA

depicts the history of the Bank of Italy

- large mural covering entire front of building

http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WM4Z5F_The_Little_Fellows_Bank_of_America_mural_San_Mateo_California

5) BART Stations

The El Cerrito Plaza and El Cerrito Del Norte stations were awarded national design honors by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Alfonso Pardiñas created and executed longitudinal glass wall mosaics, which are located on the station walls between the concourse and platform levels.

<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Putting-the-art-in-BART-Mosaics-murals-and-2751943.php>

5) SFO (got moved) – Bufano "Peace" sculpture (I have photo)



- 6) SFO lower level long hallway (wall murals similar to BART stations)
- 7) Ramada Inn Hotel (got moved) – Jean Varda mural near old Tower Records, Fisherman's Wharf adjacent
- 8) near Oakland Airport (Bufano mural)
- 9) Mill Valley Heliport
- 10) Mill Valley round piece (I think this is a Carlos Merida design)
- 11) Safeway sign: only remaining copies are still mounted at Mission and 30th
- 12) U.S. Post Office signs
- 13) Chinatown (on side of building, blue)
- 14) Nob Hill (white tree in apartment building lobby)
- 15) Castro St. – storefront
- 16) Fisherman's Wharf (restaurant siding, blue)
- 17) LAX / Los Angeles International Airport transit hallway
Charles D. Kratka, 85; designer, artist created mosaic tunnel walls at LAX
<http://pyramidbeach.com/2011/10/23/the-lax-hallway-mosaic/>

....this list is not complete and is a work in progress....

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