

Los Angeles Times

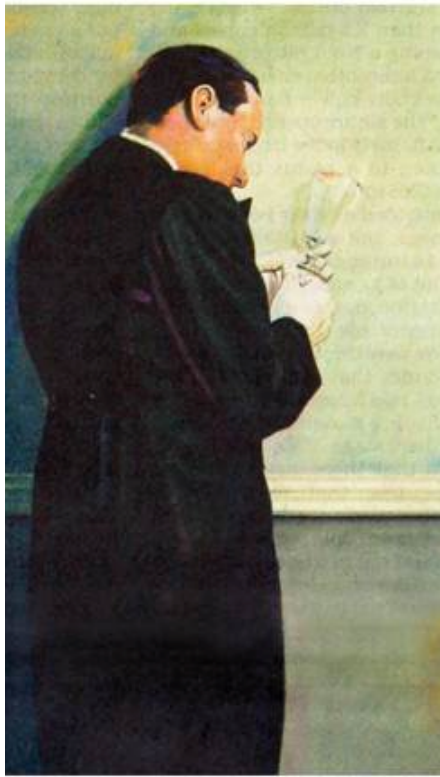
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ARTS & BOOKS

By Robert W. Welkos

Stock's 'Hollywood: Uncovered' paintings hint at my

After Mark Stock's show at Lora Schlesinger Gallery includes works featuring a longtime obsession — the Hollywood sign



Phil Cohen Collection of Bix Restaurant
"I LOVE" is part of a series. The longing
is tainted by his employer's lipstick.

creative art, Mark Stock says nothing is
getting a photo shoot for a painting he

decided to revisit one of his more
— interpreting the artistic, historical
significance of the famed Hollywood sign
model to pose for a photo shoot at a spot
Hills near Oakland that looks like the

"You have a cocktail dress? Bring a
I got the lights. I got the extension cord.
I got gloves. She shows up. She's
'this dress!' She goes in and puts the

her death from the 50-foot-high letter H in 1932.

"He is so connected to film and film noir that he belongs
down here and should be seen here," Schlesinger says.
"He's a showman in everything he does."

Why his fascination with the Hollywood sign? "It's the
monument itself. The famousness of it," Stock explains.
"When I first arrived in L.A., the first thing I looked for
was the Hollywood sign. I jumped out of my car — I
remember it was on Franklin [Avenue] and a guy was
coming out of a market and I screamed, 'Hey, is that the
Hollywood sign?' I was obsessed."

That was 1976 when, fresh out of art school at the
University of South Florida in [Tampa](#), he landed a job at
the famed artists' workshop Gemini G.E.L. in L.A. as a
printer for Jasper Johns, Roy Lichtenstein, David
Hockney, Robert Rauschenberg and others.

Today, Stock's works can be seen in the permanent
collections of the New York [Museum of Modern Art](#),
the [Brooklyn Museum](#), the National Gallery and [Library
of Congress](#). A number of Hollywood actors, directors
and producers have bought his work, and his paintings
appear in the films "Sneakers," "Class Action," "Final
Analysis," "What Women Want" and "The Human
Contract" as well as TV's "Just Shoot Me!"

The 62-year-old artist is best known for his "Butler in
Love" series of paintings, which depict a lovelorn
servant (many are self-portraits). In some of them, the
butler is holding an empty, lipstick-stained martini glass
in his white-gloved hand, despondent in the knowledge
that he can never have the woman he most desires — the
lady who employs him.



grandfathers shooting themselves in
and an aunt who hanged herself in a
of an alcoholic parent who witnessed
he watched his mother sleepwalk and
die at 47 in a traffic accident.

"I never went to a psychiatrist," he
That was my psychiatrist. I painted
loneliness or tragedy in my family."

Tall, sturdily built and balding, Stock
storyteller who, during his spare time
Bay Area jazz trio, excels at golf and
magic and card tricks. In his younger
modern dance and ballet and design
Angeles Chamber Ballet. He left L.A.
closer to art dealer Martin Muller at
Gallery in San Francisco.

He found inspiration for his painting
Little Tramp. "I was him. I was
looking for love and I realized that I
so popular. Everyone saw themselves
trying to get ahead and getting beaten

With Hollywood always in need of
paintings provide plots? Producer
("Hunter"), a landscape artist who
head curator at Gemini, is developing
TV drama series along the lines of
"Alfred Hitchcock Presents" using Stock
introduce each episode. He and Stock
project in the months ahead.

"I could do 10 stories off one of his
says. "I'd like a quirky, off-center story
did, which always had humor along
sees Stock directing and hosting the series

Stock certainly doesn't lack for inven
he surprised a woman from out of
captured his heart by taking her on a
the Hollywood sign. He had persuaded
as a butler and be waiting there