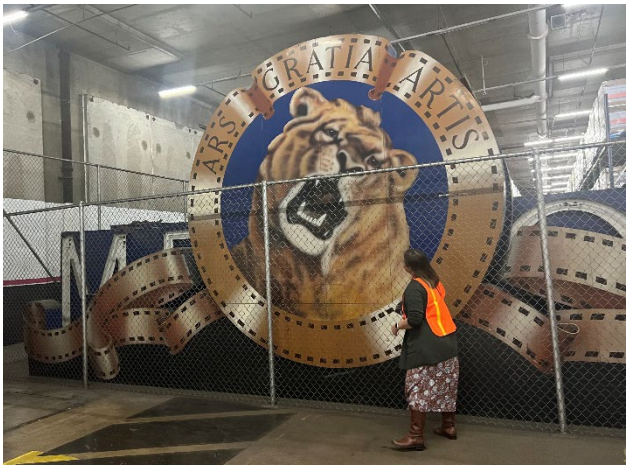
Patt Conservation
Sculpture and Collection Care

Assessment

Date: September 2, 2025
Client: City of Culver City
9770 Culver Boulevard
Culver City, CA 90232-0507
Attn: Sally Unsworth
RE: Assessment of the historic MGM Sign stored at the Dependable Distribution Center in Downtown LA

Overview and Initial Assessment



The historic artwork consists of the MGM lion logo, hand-painted on a metal backing. The sign measures approximately 10–12 feet in height and is double-sided, with the same logo applied to both faces. A solid steel frame is sandwiched between the two sides, originally serving as the mounting system for attachment to the building. Based on current information, the central beam and ladder bracing are slated for removal due to excessive weight and associated climbing hazards.

At the base, the curvature has been infilled with several sections of plywood cut to follow the arc of the logo on the upper edge and squared off at the bottom to sit flush with the floor. The purpose of this plywood intervention is unclear; it appears temporary, non-structural, and not load-bearing. The method of attachment between the painted sign faces and the internal bracing remains undetermined.

Condition

A full condition assessment could not be carried out because the artwork is presently stored in a facility with restricted access, allowing only partial visual inspection from a short distance. Certain areas were obscured entirely. From the visible surfaces, the artwork appears to be in fair to good condition.

- Paint layer: Losses are visible and range in size. Areas of fading and surface dryness are visible and consistent with prolonged UV exposure.
- Metal substrate: Red-orange corrosion is visible where the underlying metal is exposed, particularly along edges and at points of structural vulnerability.
- Dust/dirt: A layer of dust is present overall.

Despite these conditions, the artwork appears stable at present. A treatment of surface cleaning, paint consolidation, selective in-painting, and the application of a clear, UV-resistant acrylic protective coating will be recommended in a formal treatment proposal.