

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

Lucas Museum

Elisa Leonelli · Wednesday, September 23rd, 2026



Lucas Museum of Narrative Art. Photo by Hufton+Crowd

The [Lucas Museum of Narrative Art](#) (LMNA) finally opened to the public in Los Angeles' Exposition Park, eight years after construction had began in 2018.

[George Lucas](#), the well-know writer-director of the [Star Wars](#) science fiction movie saga, said that he wished to devote an entire museum to illustrators, cartoonists and muralists who are not always viewed as the influential artists that they truly are.

I am no architect, but to my eyes, the double ovals shape of this gigantic 300,000-square-foot building, designed by Ma Yansong of [MAD Studio](#), resembles the infinity symbol, and the structure seems to hover in the air like a spaceship.

You will have to wind your way through the fourth floor interconnected galleries and choose to focus on what speaks to you.



Star Wars. R2-D2, C-3PO. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

In "Star Wars in Motion" you will find the friendly droids [R2-D2](#) and [C-3PO](#).



Luke's Landspeeder. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

Luke Skywalker and his Landspeeder from the first [Star Wars](#) (1977) movie retitled *The New Hope*.



Star Wars in Motion. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

[General Greivous](#)'s Wheel Bike from the animated TV series *Star Wars: The Clone Wars* (2003), set before *Star Wars: Revenge of the Sith* (2005), last of the three prequels written and directed by George Lucas



Triple Self Portrait, Norman Rockwell. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

Among the illustrators, I was already familiar with [Norman Rockwell](#), so I paused in front of this

sculpture, *Triple Self Portrait*.



Study for Triple Self Portrait, Norman Rockwell 1960

I looked at a black and white study for the color painting *Triple Self Portrait*, 1960



Alfred Newman and Norman Rockwell by Richard Williams 2002

I was amused by this 2002 take-off by [Richard Williams](#), titled *Alfred E. Neuman and Norman Rockwell*, replacing the illustrator with the character from [MAD magazine](#).



Mothman 1980 by Frank Frazetta

I was not overly familiar with comic books fantasy and science fiction artist [Frank Frazetta](#), but you can see why George Lucas collected so many of his originals, like *Mothman*, the cover for *High Times*, May 1980.



Critic's Corner 2007 by Ernie Barnes

I was not aware of [Ernie Barnes](#) so I was pleased to see many of his paintings, like *The Critic's Corner*, 2007



Window view. LMNA (c) Elisa Leonelli 2026

Bringing outside views inside the museum through wall-sized windows is also a feature of the Geffen Galleries at LACMA.

Read my article [here](#).

The first floor gallery, titled "The history of Narrative art: Heroes, Myths and the Sacred," brings to life reproductions of works of arts through centuries from all over the world, like Michelangelo's [Sistine Chapel](#) in Rome.



Hagia Sophia Mosque. Photo by Elisa Leonelli

I loved the interior of the [Hagia Sophia Mosque](#) in Istanbul that I visited in 1971.



LMNA Library (c) Elisa Leonelli 2026

Seeing the wood-paneled library brought back fond memories of when I travelled to Skywalker Ranch in 1988 for press interviews about *Tucker*, that Francis Coppola directed and George Lucas produced.

[See here](#) the article I wrote for *CIAK*, the Italian film monthly, when I was their Los Angeles correspondent for 1987 to 1994.



George Lucas, Francis Coppola. (c) Elisa Leonelli 1988

At LMNA's open night Gala, with Francis Coppola, Steven Spielberg, Harrison Ford, Mark Hamill, and many other celebrities in attendance, [Queen Latifah](#) noted: "Paris has the Louvre, New York has the Met and now L.A. has the artistic equal."



George Lucas, Mellody Hobson. Photo by Stefanie Keenan

See George Lucas with [Mellody Hobson](#), LMNA co-founder.

I will leave to a second article my impressions of LMNA's fifth floor, displaying a video of the "Great Wall of Los Angeles" murals by Judith Baca, movie posters in a reception room and the garden roof.

When you do [buy tickets here](#) to explore LMNA, plan on spending several hours marveling at the many discoveries you will make in this amazing museum.

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