

2020, a lot _____
book

ps, id

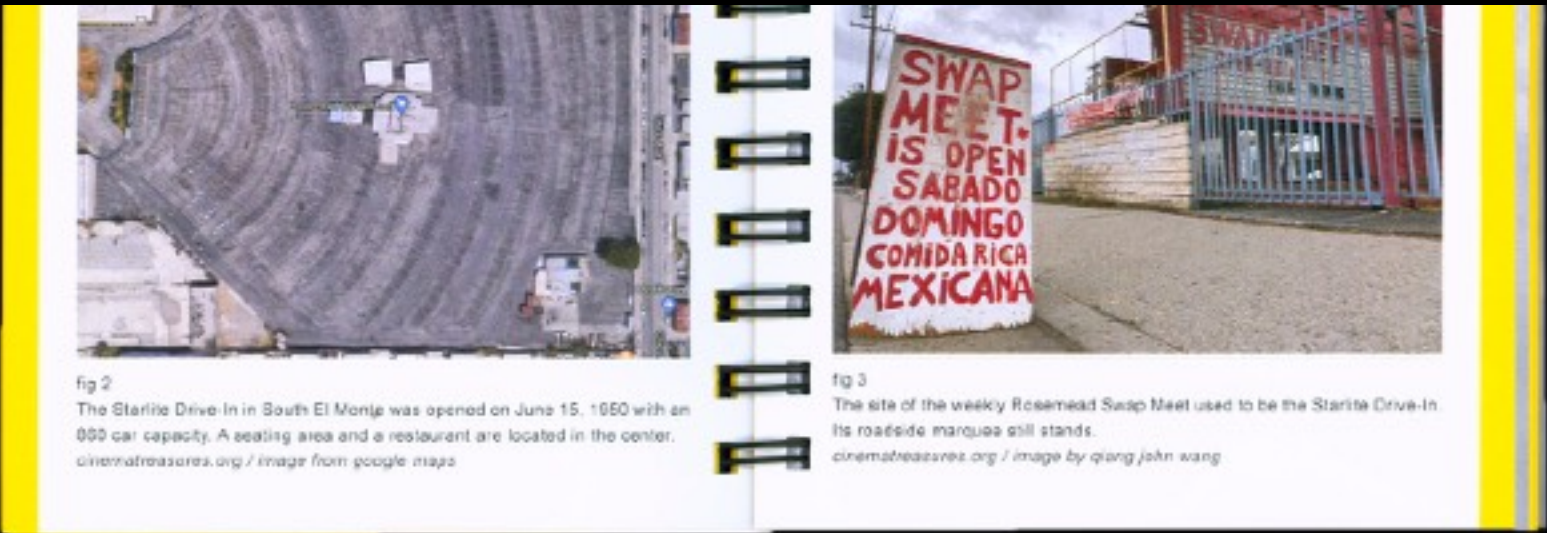


fig 2
The Starlite Drive-In in South El Monte was opened on June 15, 1950 with an 800 car capacity. A seating area and a restaurant are located in the center.
cinematreatures.org / image from google maps

fig 3
The site of the weekly Rosemead Swap Meet used to be the Starlite Drive-In. Its roadside marquee still stands.
cinematreatures.org / image by qiang john xiang

a lot for you
a lot of fun
a lot to eat
a lot to sleep
a lot to play
a lot of toys
a lot for trees
a lot to live
a lot to dance
a lot to rest

a lot to share
a lot of music
a lot to see
a lot to stay
a lot of space
a lot for us
a lot to drink
a lot to sit
a lot of birds
a lot less cars



The landscape of Los Angeles is made up mainly by and for cars. Traffic is such a problem that people often find pleasure in the mutual sympathy over each other's equally unbearable commute. We notice and talk about the long hours we spend in our cars on the road, and yet most cars are off the road — parked — for the majority of their lifetimes. With an estimated eight parking spaces for every car and policies requiring more-than-enough parking spaces to be built, parking lots dominate our built environment.¹ Yet the asphalt deserts of parking spaces are only in use mostly during the day, and often become nearly empty, if not completely abandoned, at night. Despite the massive space and energy they consume, parking lots have proliferated as a salient feature of the landscape in service of our convenience — making the city more drivable and parkable for cars and less walkable and livable for people.²

In the 1967 artist's book *Thirtyfour Parking Lots in Los Angeles*, Ed Ruscha worked with photographer Art Alanis to capture aerial images of parking lots in Los Angeles as they surveyed the city in a helicopter.³ The outcome was a series

of images depicting expansive parking structures dominating the Los Angeles landscape. While browsing through the book, I was particularly struck by the Gilmore Drive-In on West 3rd Street and South Fairfax Avenue. [fig 1] From above, the lot shows rows of parking spaces arranged in a radial form, which is atypical from the appearance of regular parking lots. Popular from around the mid to late 20th century, drive-in theaters are rare to spot today as home theaters have become popular. Today the remnants of drive-in theaters have barely survived. By complicating the banality of conventional parking lots, drive-in theaters repurpose and reinvigorate a private space for automobiles into a public one for people.

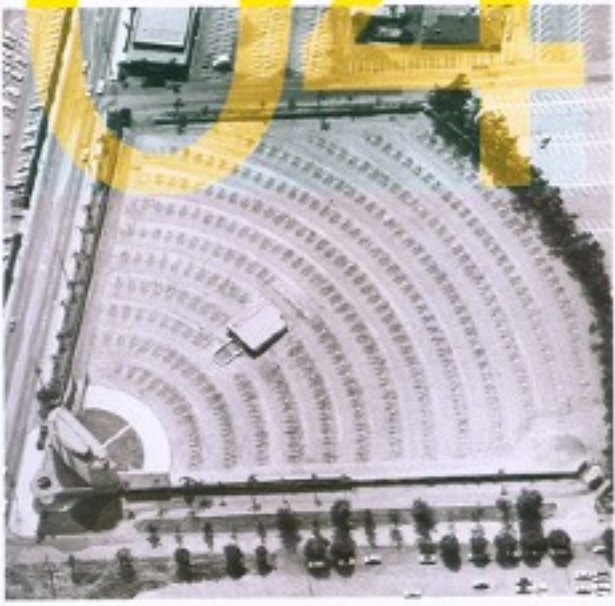


fig 1
The Gilmore Drive-In was opened in 1943 with a capacity for 850 cars.
cinematreatures.org / image by art alanis & ed ruscha

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