

# Baughman and Rayne Lincoln and Mercury Dealership

218 W. Commonwealth Avenue

1947

Art Deco / Streamline Moderne

Status: Unrecognized  
Significant Property



Designed by prominent architect Edward Mayberry, Jr., this one-story, 9,100 sq. ft. cast-in-place concrete and masonry building exhibits an impressive art deco/streamline Moderne front façade, a fitting design for the original use – a new car dealership with garage – that symbolized the post-World War II automotive age with its sleek and refined lines. The large plate glass windows on either side of the recessed entry were intended to showcase automobiles to be viewed by the public. An 18-inch-high flagstone-clad bulkhead is original; its use along the entire front unifies the building.

Only minor modifications have been made to the structure over the years, so the building has a high degree of historic integrity. The building's front façade appears to have been minimally altered; only the original entry doors have been replaced. In 2000, a detached, metal structure was placed on the property's west side for the storage of materials.

The building has a bit of cultural history, playing a small but significant role in the development of Chicano Rock in the 1960s. During that era, Mexican American youth in East Los Angeles began to develop a new genre of music that blended and borrowed from traditional Mexican music, rhythm and blues, salsa, funk, soul, and rock. Various labels Barrio Music, Chicano Rock, Low Rider Rock, the music has been formally named the "Eastside Sound." It was a genre of music unique to Chicano youth in the 1960s.

Beginning in May, 1963, promoters of the "Eastside Sound" used the building as the Rhythm Room. Many of the Eastside bands rehearsed and performed at the Rhythm Room, and recordings issued by Rampart Records proclaim "recorded live at the Rhythm Room." The "live" recordings, however, were under simulated conditions. Recording equipment was not adequate at the time to fully record a live band, so

friends and strangers were brought into the Rhythm Room to whoop, holler, shout, and sing-along, recreating the excitement of an East L.A. show.