



# THE ILLIAD BOOKSHOP



# INTRODUCTION

The Iliad Bookshop is a used bookstore in North Hollywood, California. It opened in 1987 by founder and proprietor Dan Weinstein. The Iliad is one of the largest used bookstores in the city with over 150,000 books and a store that is over 5,000 square feet. People come from all over the city to visit this cozy bookstore and the customers consist of mostly older folks and book lovers. Many customers are regulars that come in weekly and are known by name by all of the store's wonderful employees. When entering the store the first thing you will notice is the classic smell of books and paper. The store isn't dead quiet like a library, which is much different than the lively atmosphere of the Iliad, filled with music and chatter from staff and customers. The friendly employees and customers add to the feeling I get when entering the store which is very comfortable and homey, they make you feel welcome the moment you step in. To the patrons of this store, it's about more than used books, it's about nostalgia. The Iliad is full of wonders, filled with thousands of different stories and characters. It's not just stacks of books and books, but instead entire universes, just waiting to be rediscovered.

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# THE BOOKS & MANY GENRES

The website points out that, while their name is “The Iliad,” they are not a Greek bookstore. The name was actually a literacy joke from their first location, where they were next to a store called “Odyssey Videos.” Although it specializes in literature and the arts, the Iliad Bookshop is home to a wide variety of books; informational, fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, philosophy, history, biography, music, erotica, and an impressive collection of rare books. Most regular books sell for around \$5 to \$10 but there is also a section for discount book priced at \$1 to \$2. Rare books can sell for as much as \$100,000. These rare books include vintage books, first editions, and signed copies. Rare and expensive books are stored behind the front counter or in a large safe. My favorite books are fiction sci-fi and fantasy and there is a large selection, many shelves full of sci-fi and fantasy books. There is also a large selection of young adult books and children’s books.

In every section of the store, the shelves are full of books, floor to ceiling. Tall and short ladders are scattered across the store so you can reach books on the tall shelves. My dad describes the store as being a safe place with nostalgia around every corner. I go there with him and we look for original copies of the books he read as a child. We look through the fantasy and literature books with a list of titles until we find his favorites. Books such as Lord of The Rings and Chronicles of Narnia have had many different covers throughout the years, so we look for the same versions he had when he originally read them. That is part of what makes The Iliad great, they have a wide variety of books, new and old, which makes it easy to find something specific. No matter what you’re looking for when you come into The Iliad, anyone can easily get lost amongst the stacks and stacks of books.



# THE ACCOLADES & FILM FEATURES

The Iliad Bookstore and its beautiful interior design has been nominated for and awarded many accolades for being recognized as one of the best used bookstores in Hollywood, LA, and even the country. With over 400 five-star reviews on Yelp and Google, it's obvious that the public loves this store. The Iliad Bookstore has also been featured in many TV shows and been used as a filming location for movies and commercials. The staff and owners are happy to have people using the shop in their films, even including a section on their website for how to contact them for it. They regularly transform the store for movies and videos, they can change the signs and add fake plants to send the whole store into a fantasy wonderland. It is easy to see why anyone would want to use the Iliad as a set for their film or show, it's got a very photogenic aesthetic to it, with its rows of perfect shelves. It looks like a very classic used bookstore while also having enough of its own unique style to it to make it stand out. It's location in North Hollywood near film central also makes it an ideal place to film or shoot.



## Accolades

*Best Shopping Spots in North Hollywood* by CBS LA  
*50 of the Best Indie Bookstores in America* by Huffington Post  
*Best Used Graphic Novels* by The LA Weekly  
*Best Bookstore, Valley* by The LA Weekly  
*Readers Choice* by The L.A. Times  
*One of the Best Used Bookstores* by Los Angeles Magazine

## TV & Film

*CBS Sunday Morning with Melissa McCarthy*  
*Ant-Man and the Wasp*  
*Jane the Virgin*  
*Up All Night*  
*Storage Wars*  
*Lethal Weapon 3*





# THE CATS & PET HISTORY

Something that makes the Iliad Bookshop unique is its long history of bookshop cats. Any customers coming into the store must be a cat lover because it is home to two cats, Zeus and Apollo. They are brothers who started living at the Iliad in 2014 when they were 8-weeks old. They are both very friendly, and especially playful in the morning and evenings. In the afternoon you might find them napping at the front counter or on boxes towards the back of the store. One of my favorite things to do when I first entered the store is to find and pet both of the cats. The last time I visited I found Apollo hanging out at the front desk on a chair. It took me longer to find Zeus, he was sleeping comfortably under a tarp on top of a box in the back corner of the store. The employees describe Apollo as being a very friendly cat who demands attention and loves rough pets. Zeus is quieter and likes to hide more, but is also more likely to

instigate fights with Apollo. Some other cats that have lived in the Iliad include Henrietta, a stray that lived there from 2011 to 2013. Zola, a one-eyed cat that was rescued in 2006 and lived there until her passing in 2011. Torq and Helga, brother and sister, became the store mascots in 1994 until retiring in 2006. Charlie was a neighborhood stray who started living in the store in 1988 where he lived until moving out in 1995. Bugs and Lamont were the first stray cats to start spending time in the store, they also moved out after being adopted in 1995. Before any of the cats lived at the Iliad full time, there was a dog that was there since the beginning. His name was Jack and he was a purebred tri-colored collie that lived there until he passed of old age in 2000. All of the pets are lovingly remembered on The Iliad's website where the pets have their own page and each pet has a photo and bio.



# THE WALL MURAL & DESIGN STYLE

Before even entering the store the first thing you'll notice is the bold blue and orange colors that the building is painted and the giant book-shaped columns in the front. The sign above the front door that says Iliad Bookstore has decorative fonts and is made up of different shades of blue and green stones and tiles which makes it glitter in the sun. The next thing you'll see is the murals painted across both front walls and along the back, painted by Paul Dilworth. This magical mural depicts a scene featuring many famous authors and musicians featured a Greek theme and scenes from classic literature, such as Alice in Wonderland, Chronicles of Narnia, Lord of The Rings, and The Magic Pool. One back wall specifically depicts scenes from The Iliad and The Odyssey. More references to Greek art history can be found in the murals and around the sign where there are angels framing the name. The inside of the store is decorated with more Greek styled items including a small replica sculpture of Michaelangelo's "David" in the main room in front of the front counter. More of the bookcases reach almost to the ceiling and are aligned in perfect symmetrical rows. The bookcases are orange-tinted wood which contrasts nicely with the painted walls which are purple, teal, or blue. There are two rooms and two archways between the rooms that are painted brightly and have ornate gold flourish. In the backroom, there is a small open area with two couches, three chairs, and a table in the middle, perfect for sitting down and checking out a book before buying it. Around the small open area is surrounded by children's books from classic fairy tale picture books to new chapter books.



## Famous Figures

*Charles Dickens*  
*Edgar Allan Poe*  
*Stephen King*  
*Emily Dickinson*  
*Bob Dylan*  
*Martin Luther King, Jr.*  
*J. K. Rowling*  
*William Shakespeare*  
*Mark Twain*  
*The Beatles*  
*George Martin*  
*Louis Armstrong*  
*Amy Winehouse*





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