COMMUNITY ARTISTS SHIMMER, SHAKE, AND SHINE AT 2nd annual ‘Festival for All Skid Row Artists’

The Los Angeles Poverty Department, with partners UCEPP and LAMP ART PROJECT, produced the 2nd annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists on Friday and Saturday January 27 and 28, from 12 – 4 PM in Gladys Park in Skid Row. This year’s festival was twice as long as last year’s because there are so many Skid Row artists whose work needs to be heard and seen. Not only did the festival showcase Skid Row’s brightest stars, the open mic part of the program was used by newbie’s to step up with their first time performances. And Festival #2 included some artists from other parts of LA, to encourage artistic exchange and to bring folks from all over to see and appreciate Skid Row’s artists at work.

The ‘2nd Festival for All Skid Row Artists’ gave a menacing-cool face to the creative community of Skid Row. Los Angeles Poverty Department filmed and photographed the works and performances. We included all participants in our Skid Row Artists registry and archive of artists work. All participating artists received a pair of yellow shades, with the inscription “Skid Row Artist: MENACING COOL” imprinted on the left temple. We want to raise-up all creative people on Skid Row. Fill out the coupon on the back of the newspaper, turn it in at UCEPP, and get your own pair of menacing cool shades that identify you as a Skid Row artist.

GET READY for THE NEXT FESTIVAL: That’s right the 3rd annual Festival is coming up fast. Festival #2 got put off from December to January ---when a tree fell in Gladys Park during a windstorm. To avoid bad weather messing with art, we are planning to move next year’s festival forward so that it happens in the fall. We’ll set exact dates at end of the summer.

Artists performers - rap/song/poetry/theater/spoken word/music/dance: Linda Harris, Jennifer Campbell, Raspin Stuwart, Carol Shelly, Cierra Payton, Robert Gupta & Zach Dellinger with the Street Symphony, Khalif, Gary Brown, SkidRowPlayaz & Big Rob, G-Nut, John Kaye, TWIN Skid Row Flowin, Brian Beasley, Queen Mary Barnes, Crushow Herring, Queen Tabia Salina, Predestined, Michelle Yvonne Autry, Unkal Bean, Mariella & Samira Saba, Charles Porter & UCEPP Youth Leaders, Doe DC Dijon, A LIVE, Mark Philips, LA Poverty Dept. staff, Joe Clark & Anthony Page, Billie Clay, Yolanda R. Robins Hall, Big Mack, Bobby Copper, Chesterlas Nelson, Samuel Nunez, Michael Jackson, Norman Tate, Steven Angel, Jeffrey Jackson, King Howard & Don Ovon Johnson, Paul McCarty, Wesley McIntosh, Franc Foster & James Garcia, Jose VanDenburg, Tommy Newman & Faith Factory, Anthony Rios, Soni, and others.

G-Nut
I was born and raised in Los Angeles. I was ten years old when I started recording my own songs. My cousin, K1, from the group Jungles, inspired me while I was growing up. He was the one that taught me to rap. I try to send a message through my music for teens and misguided adults. Rapping and making music helps me express my emotions about what is going on in my mind. I perform for the people that live on Skid Row for free. I want the people who live there to know that they have a friend in me. I don’t judge anyone. Almost everyone on Skid Row knows my song Mike Jack. You can check out my music on YouTube!

Flo Hawkins
I was born in Chicago and started drawing when I was very young. I was five years old when I made my first painting. The beautiful California weather made me want to move to Los Angeles. When I am painting or drawing it makes me feel like I’m in heaven because it is so peaceful. You can find my murals all over downtown Los Angeles. Many people know me for the portrait I made of Tupac. It is called “What I See Can Be Me,” and you can see it in the big mural on 5th and Crocker. Michael Blake, from the Skid Row Photography Club filmed it and put it on YouTube. I try my best to make my work look and feel realistic. I want to send out a message for peace throughout the world through my artwork.

Mary Altemeier Dobbs
I have always been artistic but I got inspired to start painting here on Skid Row. I love to paint the scenery from Skid Row. My paintings portray the Downtown Los Angeles skyline and other scenes from Skid Row. While living here I’ve been inspired to bring Skid Row into a positive light, instead of the bad connotations it receives, and I decided to do that with my paintings. My art has been filmed and was shown in “The Solos,” “The Bold and The Beautiful,” and “Humble Beauty.” I am a member of the LAMP Art Project.

Darlene Altemeier Dobbs
I was born in Chicago and started drawing when I was very young. I was five years old when I made my first painting. The beautiful California weather made me want to move to Los Angeles. When I am painting or drawing it makes me feel like I’m in heaven because it is so peaceful. You can find my murals all over downtown Los Angeles. Many people know me for the portrait I made of Tupac. It is called “What I See Can Be Me,” and you can see it in the big mural on 5th and Crocker. Michael Blake, from the Skid Row Photography Club filmed it and put it on YouTube. I try my best to make my work look and feel realistic. I want to send out a message for peace throughout the world through my artwork.

Christopher Como
I make ‘fine art.’ I brought a few portraits in black and grey of Steve Harvey, Tupac, and 50 Cent. People tell me my work is realistic, flawless and that it is intriguing because it has a color of its own. I like to capture the emotion and the essence of the picture. I want my work to be aesthetically pleasing for the viewer, but it also serves as a therapy tool for myself. When I draw, I become lost in my work, as if in a trance. It becomes a way to forget about everything else.

LuAnne Poindexter
I was born in South Pasadena and I am seventy-one years old. I started creating my own artwork when I was three years old. I love making art: I was born to be an artist. I am still inspired by a very passionate painting of a bright red girl holding a sword that I created many years ago. My artworks are quotes about love, music, and drugs. I don’t just do artwork; I also design clothing, purses, hats, and much more! I am proud of a piece I did on Alvaro Street, near downtown Los Angeles, called “I Am Women.” It is a 4 x 5 picture and you can see it right now at the Alvaro Street Gallery.

Mariella Saba
My performance tells the story of immigrants who are selling their fruits downtown. They are being harassed by the police while they are just trying to make a living. I make ‘Spoken Word Teatro,’ merging theatre and poetry. I want to address political issues that we are facing right now because of my identity and what I experienced because of that: I am Latino with immigrant parents. I am Queer. When your identity is under attack, you fight back, and theatre and creative art is a powerful way to do just that. I want to send a message that promotes unity and power against ignorance through my work. I want to humanize an issue and create empathy. That is also therapeutic for myself.

Queen Mary Barnes
We think that Queen Mary is a very artistic woman. She inspired us to express our artistic potential to the world and not be afraid of getting laughed at. We believe that Queen Mary will continue to make art with others, especially with children because she loves them. Besides being artistic, Queen Mary has a charisma that draws people’s attention. She is very sweet, kind-hearted, spiritual, funny, smart, and throughout it all she is an inspirational leader. We hope that one day more people get to see her art work and get to know who she is, because she is very talented and for a talent like hers to never be noticed would be a shame.

By Karinna Guerrero and Nataly Garcia

Chad Sperandeo
I am from Chicago and I was an actor before I became an artist. I’m 42 years old. For five years now I have been making these glass mosaics. I love the beautiful colors of glass. I have been interested in art and I’ve taken a lot of art classes since I was little. I make glass mosaic art on jewelry boxes, paintings, paint pots, and much more! Every piece of glass mosaic I make has a story behind it.

Paul Mitchell
I’m originally from Seattle. My dad inspired me to become an artist and I became a house painter in my dad’s business. I was disabled for three years. In order to keep a positive attitude I started to paint full time. My artwork is colorful. I am a visual art worker. I have to go to the location that I’m going to paint to get into the mood and to focus on what I am painting. While I’m there I create a story about the image that I’m painting.
Twin - Skid Row Flowin

I am a musical artist. I’m not a rapper, but a spoken word poet. I have been writing my own music for twenty years, but I only started performing ten years ago. I write my own lyrics because it is easier for me to express what I feel through musical words than in a regular conversation. My music mainly expresses how I feel about the stereotypes that are put on the Black Men of Skid Row. You can find my music on YouTube!

Jeffrey Jackson

I am a Vietnam War veteran. I gave many years to the Army, and I received a degree in music from City College. Jackson 5, Bobby Siel, and the Civil Rights of the 60’s had a big impact on my life. I am starting an organization for Drummers called, “Drummer Personify,” which is open for anyone who desires to educate themselves.

Violists Robert Vijay Gupta and Zach Dellinger of the Street Symphony

We had such a blast playing for the LAPD Skid Row Artist’s Festival - the connection with this totally human community, truly onsite, hands-on outreach to an audience on Skid Row reminds us why we make music. Zach and I performed the G major duo of Mozart, on the composer’s 256th birthday - I don’t think he could have asked for a better audience or venue. The Street Symphony hopes to be back very soon.

Curshow ‘Art is Life, Life is Art’

I was born in Missouri and raised in South Central Los Angeles. I am dedicated to Skid Row and I’m a member of the Skid Row brigade. I have been rapping for 7 years making “New Era Folk Songs.” I love basketball really developed a passion for painting and customizing skateboards, T-shirts, and sneakers. It gives me a creative way to connect to life. I’m also a father and my son Arteist loves to paint as well. Ice Cube, Public Enemy, Tupac, and LL Cool J. are my positive influences. It was great to perform on the same stage with Chuck D, Flava’Flav, and Yoyo during Operation Freedom last week on Skid Row.

Ciera Payton

I am a New Orleans native. I performed an excerpt of my one-woman show called “Michael’s Daughter.” I stepped into my father’s shoes and told his story from his point of view; his experiences that lead to his incarceration. I tell my dad’s story and I give some insight into the relationship I have with him. My dad has been in prison since I entered high school. He is the inspiration for this one-woman show. It clearly has impacted my life and my relationships. This performance is healing for myself but I hope it also touches my audience.

King Howard ‘Self-imagine’

I grew up performing in church-performance choirs, cover bands, orchestras, and directing choirs. The Gospel has given me a purpose; using great music to spread a message for today’s modern times. My contribution as a Top 40 artist is to provide music that is healthy for the soul-and great for raising well adjusted children who grow to be kind, competitive, eager, inventive, spiritual, and make great choices in their lives. I have come across too many people who need a healthy mind reconditioning. It’s like speed counseling to music! U feel me? It’s like my message rides the vehicle of music. So much can be accomplished in people by simply groovin them the way they need to be grooved- if u will... peace and blessings...

We couldn’t have done the festival without the X-MC!:

Left: Ray Young a.k.a. X-Ray and Right: Xavier Estrada a.k.a. X-Man, our master sound engineer who brought his amazing music production skills and equipment so that every artist would sound the best possible! Thank you X-Mcn!

A special thanks to the SkidRowPlayaz who drummed both days of the festival, supporting others and making the atmosphere.
ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS


GET YOUR OWN PAIR OF MENACING COOL SHADES

Register as a Skid Row artist.

Fill out the coupon and send to:
Los Angeles Poverty Department
PO Box 26190
Los Angeles, CA 90026
OR
put the coupon in the Skid Row Artists Box at UCEPP 6th Street or call:
(213) 727-8000

NAME:

TELEPHONE:

EMAIL:

Los Angeles Poverty Department, founded in 1985, is made up of people who make art and live on Skid Row, Los Angeles. LAPD's mission: Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) creates performances and multidisciplinary artworks that connect the experience of people living in poverty to the social forces that shape their lives and communities. LAPD's work explores the realities, hopes, dreams and rights of people who live and work in L.A.'s Skid Row.

The Festival for All Skid Row Artists is produced by LA Poverty Department with support from the California Arts Council's Great Public Value Program and the James Irvine Foundation. CAC's CPV program is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts.