



Los Angeles Poverty Department  
presents

# Glimpses of Utopia: 24 - 30

Thursday, October 25, at 7 p.m.

RED DOT GALLERY, 500 S. Spring Street, Los Angeles, CA 90013 (southeast corner of 5th and Spring St.)

THIS EVENT IS FREE.

"Glimpses of Utopia" performance events are part of the Skid Row based theater group, Los Angeles Poverty Department's, project UTOPIA / dystopia. UTOPIA / dystopia, seeks to find out how flesh and blood people living and working downtown envision the future of downtown and what kind of downtown they would like to be a part of.



Tonight's performance event "Glimpses of Utopia: 24-30" follows our September event "Glimpses of Utopia 16-23" at The Historic Fire Station, Old 23, July's "Glimpses of Utopia: 8-15" at the Red Dot Gallery and our June event "7 Glimpses of Utopia" at JANM. These events take the form of a Come Together, a community performance strategy conceived by UTOPIA / dystopia collaborating artist and 2006 Alpert Award winning visual artist Harrell Fletcher. (www.harrellfletcher.com; www.learningtoloveyoumore.com) LAPD'ers and others were asked to identify and invite someone they knew who was doing something laudable, and important, something that represents the best of the current and future downtown.

The people invited are asked to do a 10 minute presentation, in any form they see as appropriate, about what they are doing to downtown and how they would like to see the future of downtown evolve. The presentations can be a performance, a demonstration or a lecture. The presentations happen back to back, combining the insight and passion of both inviters and presenters. Taken all together, tonight's presentations become a performance event that provides "Glimpses of Utopia: 24 - 30"



LAPD rehearsing "220 more Glimpses of Utopia" in front of the Midnight Mission.

### ABOUT LAPD's UTOPIA / dystopia

One person's utopia is another's dystopia. In the past 40 years, civic policy in Los Angeles has generated the twin towers of utopia and dystopia: Bunker Hill, the redeveloped high rise financial center; and below it, Skid Row. The current real estate boom is generating new social policy, including the possible displacement of the majority population of poor people living in the area.

LAPD is a community based theater in the heart of Los Angeles' Skid Row area; an area which has the largest concentration of truly affordable housing for very low-income residents and also the largest concentration of services for homeless people in Los Angeles County. The area also has a highly developed drug recovery culture, which includes free recovery programs. Skid Row is the home of numerous AA, NA and CA groups.

Let us know if you want to get involved in any aspect of the project, including performing with us.

Contact us at [www.lapovertydept.org](http://www.lapovertydept.org) or call 213 413-1077.

What is the future vision for downtown Los Angeles? A powerful urban core that will dominate the city in the future is taking shape. But, what shape? Is the desired "new urban lifestyle" an upscale monoculture, or, is the vitality of city life essentially about a dynamic cultural, racial and economic mix?

LAPD's UTOPIA / dystopia will engage long standing and new area residents to inform and broaden the public discourse, and use performance, public art, conversations, and convenings to articulate grassroots visions of the city's future. UTOPIA / dystopia will result in performances DEC. 6-9 at THE REDCAT THEATER that articulate the dreams and fears of people in the neighborhood.



*Deacon will talk about his outreach work*

**PRESENTER:**

**Deacon Alexander**

At 21, Deacon Alexander was a founding member of the Black Panther Party. He is now a board member of the Vernon Main Neighborhood Council. In this role, he is actively trying to develop relationships and alliances with city groups that are responsible for processing city services. He is doing this type of outreach in order to make sure that more community resources and access to city facilities are available to Skid Row residents. He has been active in helping to build support for the Skid Row Basketball League. The League consists of approximately 200 members who are all residents in Skid Row. Some of the groups he has been talking with are; Parks and Recreation, L.A. Unified School District and many Law Enforcement groups



**SELECTOR:**

**John Malpede** is a theater director and actor. He founded the Los Angeles Poverty Department in 1985. From 1985 through 1989, he worked on Skid Row as an outreach paralegal with the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles.



*Dwight will talk about his experience on Skid Row and his work at St. Vincent.*

**PRESENTER:**

**Dwight Lewis** is a long term resident of downtown LA. A veteran of the drug wars, he has witnessed the change in the area from a personal point of view. Since 1992, Dwight has been an employee of St. Vincent Cardinal Manning Center, a drop-in center during the day and a shelter at night. Now a residential assistant, he works with most of the low income and homeless people. Dwight says, "I really enjoy my work because of the different variations of personalities and characters of my clients! I try to always to treat my clients as equals and deal with them on the same level."



**SELECTOR:**

**Tony Parker** has played bass since 1972. Opening for top reggae and R&B acts including The Wailers, Ziggy Marley and the Ohio Players. Tony has recorded with the late great Joe Higgs, mentor of Bob Marley, on the album "Family", Matuzalem on 'Nation Rise.' He has been a member of LAPD since 1992.



*Lisa will be talking about her work as an advocate for permanent supportive housing and superior services, and her current projects at DWC, where she's leading the development of a 75-unit housing project for low-income women; establishing the Succeeding through Innovation Initiative to research, develop, and share best practices in the field; and working toward the establishment of Skid Row's first community-wide domestic violence/sexual assault program.*

**PRESENTER:**

**LISA WATSON**

In her current position as Executive Director of the Downtown Women's Center (DWC), Lisa Watson oversees the administration of a nationally recognized model program providing permanent housing and supportive services to 2000 homeless women annually on Los Angeles' Skid Row. Lisa initiated DWC's comprehensive *Health Outreach Initiative* to bring much-needed medical and wellness services to the women of Skid Row; increased the number of agency volunteers by 500; and developed new partnerships to address the dramatic rise in women's homelessness.



**SELECTOR:**

**Henriette Brouwers** was born in the Netherlands and came to America in 1993. She is a theatre maker and started working with the Los Angeles Poverty Department in 1999.



**PRESENTER**

**Oscar Harvey**, stage name "Oscar Night," is a six-year community resident and musician. He has been playing professionally for 15 years. He plays harmonica and recently started learning and playing bass guitar. He has seen and lived both the best and worst of times here in Skid Row. Oscar says he seeks "to create and cultivate beauty and not corrupt it, this keeps me centered."

*Oscar will give a musical performance.*

**SELECTOR**

**Kevin Michael Key** After using illegal drugs for over 40 years, "Kevinmichael," as he is known in the recovery rooms, has been a clean and sober member of the Skid Row recovery community for the last five years.



**PRESENTER**

**Steve Diaz** "Baby" Steve Diaz is a resident organizer with the Los Angeles Community Action Network (LACAN) for five years. Steve's experience at the Frontier Hotel, after the City Attorney's office filed an injunction targeting community members while overlooking the wrongs of the corrupt landlord, spurred him to a life of activism. He works primarily on landlord/tenant, civil rights and nutrition issues. This young man's work ethic and passion for justice is inspiring.

*Steve will talk about his work for LACAN*

**SELECTOR**

**General Dogon** was born in downtown LA and has lived here off and on for most of his life. He currently lives in a residential hotel on Main Street, which has become the front line of downtown gentrification. Dogon has been a longtime community activist and organizer and has worked with LACAN for the past two years. He is a product of LA's criminal IN-justice system and now works night and day to ensure real justice for original downtown residents. He's an invaluable resource to the downtown community for many reasons, but especially in this time of increased policing and the unfair treatment that has resulted.



**PRESENTER**

**Fridgeir Helgason** I was born on a small island off the southern coast of Iceland. My family escaped a volcano eruption there in 1973. I came to L.A. on Christmas day 1986 and lived here in downtown until 1990 when I moved to New Orleans to pursue a chef's career. I lived in New Orleans for 14 years and moved back to L.A. In 2004 I ended up on Skid Row due to my alcoholism. I checked into the Midnight Mission on Dec 1st, 2004, which is my sober date. I lived there for one and a half years. While I was there I started studying film making at L.A.C.C. but changed my major to photography last year.

*I have a short DVD of a film I made while living at the Mission that I would like to show.*

**SELECTOR**

**Stella Dottir** was born in Iceland and came to the U.S. in 1988. She is a professional fashion designer and has her own shop on 430 S. Main Street. She lived in New Orleans and came to LA because of a vision. She follows her heart and is a happy woman because she lives in the present. She has always opened her own business with no money. She found a very beautiful and expensive homeless cat with silver colored fur in front of the bank on the day that she went there to ask for a loan. The bank keeper told her he had no money for her and now she has two pairs of cats: the father at home and the son in the shop. She started her business on Skid Row in July last year because she likes to be in a place where all kinds of different people live together.



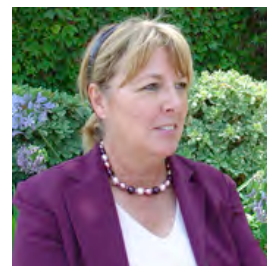
**PRESENTER**

**Gordon Turner** is a Deputy City Attorney for the City of Los Angeles. He is leading the City's litigation against area hospitals and that discharge patients homeless patients to the streets by driving them or directing them to Skid Row. His other current cases are in the areas of child truancy, gangs and truancy and youth protection.



**SELECTOR**

**Rosemary Anaya** is the Director Economic Development and Community Outreach, in the Office of the LA City Attorney. Recently she held the position of VP & COO of the Downtown Center Business Improvement District (DCBID) and Central City Association of Los Angeles, Inc (CCA). In addition to providing operational oversight to the DCBID, Rosemary oversaw the management contract with the Historic Downtown BID. at California Polytechnic University at Pomona. Recognized for her work on quality initiatives, she was appointed to a Cal State Quality Improvement Committee, and has held positions with non-profits in Pasadena. Rosemary and her husband, David, reside in Claremont.



*Gordon Turner will speak about patient dumping on Skid Row.*

**About The RED DOT GALLERY:**

**"Hot Dogs and how they can save the ART!" by Julie Rico**

Sid and I were living in D.C. when we talked about how we might help support the art community. The gallery system that I had worked in did not work. The films that Sid worked on did not seem to work out financially either. We both put huge efforts into the support of the art community. But our contributions were limited due to financial restraint.

After visiting the famous Bens Chili Bowl in Washington D.C and enjoying the casual attitude and very long lines. We started thinking about hot dogs. We then started to research. I would go everyday to the Portland Library while living there and researched hot dogs. I found the most amazing information on hot dogs.

Just looking at the hot dog history in the United States was also a revelation that hot dogs are serious business here in the United States. Maybe hot dogs could really support the art community?

So Sid and I set out to develop a business model that would incorporate a hot dog restaurant with an art gallery. With the revenue from the sales of hot dogs we could support the artists with increased attendance, marketing opportunities not offered in normal gallery settings. And we could create the best hot dog restaurant in the world in which we could all enjoy.

When we moved back to Los Angeles we began searching for a location. Through the help of a number of people we discovered our new location in downtown Los Angeles. Here will sell hot dogs, chili and tamales in the Weeneez area. You can also enjoy seafood appetizers, soups, delicious gourmet coffee drinks, beer and wine in the Red Dot area.

**UTOPIA/ Dystopia Events**

**November 16**

**4:00 to 4:15 pm: 250 Glimpses of Utopia and Counting** Participate in, or view, an outdoor utopian movement performance spectacular. We will line the sidewalks from Skid Row to City Hall with 15 minutes of movement that will express our Utopian dreams for Los Angeles. You can be part of it, and participate in 2 workshops leading up to the event.  
Call: 310-227-6071.

**4:30 to 5:30 pm:** Reception for participants and public, to informally exchange experiences of **220 Glimpses**. At Red Dot Gallery  
Followed by:

**5:30 to 8:00 pm: 250 Glimpses of Utopia and Counting** conversation event with diverse voices envisioning the future of downtown Los Angeles. They will talk about what they are doing in the Skid Row community and adjacent downtown areas, and how they hope to see the future evolve for people living and working there.

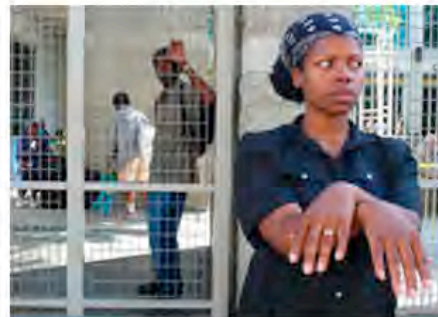
**December**

**6:00 to 9:00 pm:** LAPD performs **UTOPIA/Dystopia**, a new performance that articulates the dreams and fears of people in the neighborhood. REDCAT Theater, corner 2nd and Hope Streets. 213-327-2800, [www.redcat.org](http://www.redcat.org)

*"... the Los Angeles Poverty Department, ( is) a truly unique part of the Southern California theater scene." — James Taylor, Theater Talk, KCRW-FM*

*"The Los Angeles Poverty Department has become one of the country's most outspoken and profound Theater troupes." — Natalie Haddad, REAL DETROIT*

*"The Los Angeles Poverty Department, despite the homeless status of many of its members, has thrived for years from its downtown outpost and continues to offer theater that's often stunning in its honesty and lacking in pretension." — C. Monaghan, LA Weekly*



**About The Los Angeles Poverty Department:**

LAPD 's mission is to create performance work that connects lived experience to the social forces that shape the lives and communities of people living in poverty. The Poverty Department is committed to creating high-quality, challenging performance works that express the realities, hopes and dreams of people who live and work on Los Angeles' Skid Row. LAPD is dedicated to building community and to the artistic and personal development of its members. Since 1985 LAPD has offered performance workshops that are free and open to the Skid Row community. The workshops take place at a variety of sites, with the in-kind support of a variety of community partners which have included: SRO Housing Corporation, St. Vincent's Cardinal Manning Center, Inner-City Law Center, United Coalition East Prevention Project, LA Community Action Network and Central City Community Outreach.

LAPD's **UTOPIA / dystopia** project is supported, in part, by: LA County Arts Commission; The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs; The National Endowment for the Arts -Theater; the California Arts Council's Creating Public Value program; The MAP Fund, a program of Creative Capital, supported by the Rockefeller Foundation and Animating Democracy, a program of Americans for the Arts Institute for Community Development and the Arts. Additional funders of LAPD include The Nathan Cumming Foundation .

