



## 2006 NEWSLETTER

### Two front page articles from LA TIMES TUES SEPT 20 :

Common Article 3, of The Geneva convention, which sets international standard: for the treatment of wartime prisoners bans "outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment."

LAPD cannot arrest people for sitting, lying or sleeping on public sidewalks in skid row. Such enforcement would amount to "cruel and unusual punishment", in violation of the 8th Amendment to the US Constitution because there are not enough shelter beds.

### Here's what's in the works for LAPD, and what we've done recently:

#### In The Works:

**NOW through-January 2008: *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 real estate boom has generated new social policy, including the desired displacement of the majority population of poor people living in the area. The other LAPD, in defiance of the 9th Circuit court of appeals ruling barring the criminalization of homelessness, has engaged in a policy of constant harassment and daily arrests of people living on the streets. All to make the area safe for development. ***UTOPIA / dystopia*** research and community activities started in October, and continues. ***UTOPIA / dystopia***, will engage long standing and new area residents to challenge the development interest promoted vision of the "new urban lifestyle" as an upscale urban monoculture, through strategic public art / conversation convenings. The project will culminate in the making of the performance ***UTOPIA / dystopia*** by a diverse group of downtown residents, including homeless and formerly homeless residents of skid row, the working poor, immigrants and the area's burgeoning loft-living population. ***UTOPIA / dystopia*** public events will begin April 19th with a screening of **The REAL DEAL**, Tom Jones' film on LAPD at the ALOUD series at the Central Library. LAPD partners for ***UTOPIA / dystopia*** include; SRO Housing, Inc; The Democracy Forum of the Japanese American National Museum, REDCAT theater, and UCLA.

**January-March 2007:** LAPD's theater work is gaining attention in Europe due to the social challenges there now: pressures to dismantle the social safety net, demands of war on terror, war on drugs, all American exports. Theater artists there, where work has been pretty aestheticized for many years --are now discovering engaged theater as a means of understanding and resisting current pressures. January through March LAPD will work with Nieuwpoort Theater and a community cast in Gent, Belgium to develop and present "**Legal / Illegal**", which specifically looks at the ways in which US policy impinges on Belgian sovereignty, including secret CIA flights, restrictions on use of the harbor and immigration policy.

#### Recent Projects:

During the past year, LAPD has worked with some of the most forward looking non-profits addressing homelessness and grass roots community development including: SRO Housing, LA Community Action Network, and United Coalition East Prevention Project, all in Los Angeles; Project H.O.M.E. in Philadelphia and Urban Ministries Center in Charlotte, N.C. We've also worked with incredible arts organizations and theater companies including Art Sanctuary in Philadelphia and Cosmic Theater / Made in da Shade in Amsterdam, NL. Recent LAPD projects have continued to focus on: recovery from addiction and drug policy reform, the criminalization of homelessness and human rights abuses experienced by homeless people.

**January - February:** FRIED POETRY directed by RON ALLEN. Ron Allen poet and playwright is also a Buddhist monk and has also worked extensively in arts in recovery programs in Detroit. LAPD and Ron worked together during LAPD's 2002 Agents & Assets residency in Detroit. LAPD invited Ron to create a new performance on spirituality and recovery. The result was FRIED POETRY presented at BEYOND BAROQUE in Venice on Feb. 24 and to a huge Skid Row crowd at SRO Housing's James Woods Community Center in Skid Row on Saturday Feb 25. FRIED POETRY featured poetry and music created and performed by 20 Skid Row residents. In the process Ron Allen moved to Los Angeles and LAPD is looking forward to cooking up more fried, broiled, steamed, baked and raw Ron Allen projects. Ron Allen says: "An addiction is anything that keeps you from expanding and experiencing your deeper self."

Allot of synergy was cooked up with the Fried Poetry project: Rick Mantley performed in a play of Ron's that was produced in South Central Los Angeles over the summer. LAPD linked project participant Mel Johnson with UCEPP, to lead a series of theater workshops and a performance at UCEPP in October.

*I STEP ON THE FLOOR BAREFOOT,  
DANCING, AND MY KIDS RUN IN  
AND THEY SAY, "MOM, WHAT YA DOING?"  
AWWW.....*

*"DANCING ON THE CUPCAKE THAT I SAW, AINT IT GOOD.  
AND SAW IT WAS GUNKING UP..."*

*ITS THE GRAPES THAT DRAPE OF THE WALLED PALACE THAT MAKES ME  
SPEW INK AT THE MOANS*

*CAUSE YA JEALOUS*

*I DIPPED MY FOOT IN THE STAR IN THE FLOOR, AND MY KIDS WENT, ANI  
MY CARROTS WENT, I LIKE DENTYNE AND I GET GRIN WHEN I SIT.  
THINKING AND DEEDS DONE DRIVING, EATING DONUT HOLES THAT MY*

*KIDS HIDE TO DO NOTHING BUT BINK....*

*I STICK MY FOOT BACK INTO THE STAR IN THE FLOOR, ITS WATERS FEEL  
LIKE ALCOHOL*

*THEN I HEARD MY DAUGHTER CRY, "HE'S PUSHING ME..." AND I  
HUNGER FOR THE QUIET THAT DATE CAKES TAKES TO BAKE.*

*MY TOES ARE SULLEN AND IN STROKE.  
FOR THE FINE IS NOSE OOOH, OOOH, OOOH, AND EVERYTHING IS TOES.*

**Patricia Smith**



**March:** LAPD partnered with Urban Ministry Center and with Davidson College to develop a community based performance called: EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN FOR THE CITY OF CHARLOTTE.

A performance was built during a short residency using insights of homeless and low income people living in Charlotte and addressed perceived dual standards of dealing with disaster victims vs chronic homeless. Thematically it also addressed the endangered status of young Black men. This project was supported by Sunshine Lady Foundation through Davidson College and initiated by Davidson student and UMC volunteer Kendal Stewart.

**April:** Halo Group's film history of LAPD, **THE REAL DEAL**, directed by Tom Jones, premiered at the Beverly Hills Film Festival and Jones won the festival's Best Producer Award. The film has since been screened at Impact Festival in New York City; the Kettelhuis Theater in Amsterdam, NL and at Sauk Valley Community College in Dixon, Illinois.



**May-June:** LAPD produced **Sleepwalking Democracy** in collaboration with Amsterdam based hip-hop theater group, Made in da Shade. Five LAPD'ers spent two months in Amsterdam toward 8 performances in The Netherlands at the beginning of July. **Sleepwalking Democracy** was inspired by LAPD's **Agents & Assets** and looked at an infamous drug sting corruption scandal, "the IRT Affair" in the Netherlands. The performances with combined LAPD and Made in da Shade personnel took place in a gigantic warehouse and employed live surveillance videomixing from Blue Noise Department and in performance DJ mixing from DJ LoveSupreme.

**October- November: Agents & Assets;** LAPD's national residency program on drug policy and drug policy reform took place in Philadelphia and Baltimore. Six LAPD'ers worked with 8 participants from Project HOME men's and women's recovery programs in North Philadelphia, hosted by Art Sanctuary. The group traveled the performance to The Baltimore Theater Project. Andre Hart, case manager and himself a graduate of the mens's recovery program said that one of the biggest obstacles to recovery is the being able to forgive yourself for all the harm you've done to yourself and your community as a drug user and/or dealer. He went on to say that working on **Agents & Assets** made clear to all that some of the irresponsibility belonged to the social policy makers, and so the project made it easier, for participants to forgive themselves and to begin to reverse the cycle of hurt. Lorene Cary, author and founder of Art Sanctuary wrote to LAPD:

We are teasing out some of the meaning of the art process you accomplished with the actors from Project H.O.M.E., and with the audiences. We witnessed, from a distance, the exquisite care and attention you gave to the actors and to the many meanings of the play. That, after all, has been a deep teaching to our entire community, and a confirmation of what we know about art in community, but rarely see in action so total and committed and complete.

With thanks and praise, Lorene



Your support of LAPD is enormously appreciated. LAPD is a 501(c)3 non profit and your donation is tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Sincere Thanks,

**John Malpede**  
for LAPD

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