

OCTOBER 21 & 22, 2017

8TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



EVERY YEAR IN OCTOBER, members of the **LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT** roam the streets of Skid Row looking for Skid Row Artists in the tents and cardboard dwellings, the hotels, the missions, everywhere. We always find lots of people who paint, draw, sing, write poetry, perform hip-hop, stand-up and many wonderful musicians. We invite everyone to come and show their art at the annual **FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS**, in Gladys Park on the 3rd weekend in October.

This year's festival was the 8th with two days of perfect weather. It was the first festival to take place since the passing of our beloved MC KevinMichael Key. It was heart warming to see the support of the community, many people showed up to make the Festival a success in his absence. Festival celebrities like **CRUSHOW** (with Pit-bull and puppies!) and **UNKAL BEAN** performed both days and helped to continue the spirit of inclusiveness, love and respect, which the Festival is known for. And an enthusiastic triumvirate of **MCS TONETONE TAYLOR, CHARLES PORTER AND ANGELIE HARPER - AKA BIG MAMA**, did a great job of keeping things rolling and holding a joyous creative space for over one hundred Skid Row Artists to shine on stage and around the park --- where visual artists made and showed their work and people could attend workshops in photography, sitting yoga, register to vote, see some magic for kids, and much more.

The festival puts a spotlight on the artists in the community. And the artists and the entire community-audience testify to the existence and power of Skid Row. Amidst all the music and dancing the Festival also gives everyone in attendance an opportunity to weigh in on issues of neighborhood importance, this year that included the future of the built environment, access to public toilets and looking at the practice of community generated public safety. This year staff members from the **LA DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING (DCP)** were at the Festival to get input for the community plan they are proposing. Community members covered DCP's area with post-it notes and their ideas. Also circulating in the park with a questionnaire for residents were members of the **SKID ROW NOW & 2040** coalition. Community comments will be built into the alternative community plan that Skid Row Now & 2040 is developing. In a salute to the efforts of the **SKID ROW COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT COALITION** and their work to provide toilet access to the community, the porta potties in the park were tricked out with flowers, artwork (the Mona Lisa ---no less) and attended to by **THE TOILET LADY** who offered air freshener, hand sanitizer and towels, and refreshing mints to everyone using the toilets, which were kept immaculately clean by **BROTHER ROBERT**. Thank you Robert!

As usual the day passed in harmony and crescendoed with dancing to the sounds of **PASSION** on Saturday and **FRANC'S MELTING POT** on Sunday. **WALTER FEARS** wears many hats at the festival. He drums with the **SKIDROPLAYAZ**, which is the house band, all day long. Together with **SEAN GREGORY** he is also the stage manager. Walter described the spirit of the Festival well and unequivocally in saying, "How this festival came about, was to provide artists a place where they could come and feel like they were a "quote" artist. We accept everyone where they are, allow them to display whatever art form it is. ... We are there for the artists. If there's anything they need to make it happen on stage, if its something we can provide, then, we're gonna do it. ... A guy this year, he was a singer, but he never got to the song because he could not find the beat. He couldn't find the beat. We spent 15 minutes trying to find this guy's beat, but we couldn't find it. But we allowed him to be the artist that he was. So next year when he comes again, we hope that he'll have... the beat!" And that's the spirit of the Festival: so find your beat and bring it next October. Until then: one & two, 1,2,3,4... Keep on, keeping on.

**SKIDROPLAYAZ**

TONETONE-ANTHONY TAYLOR



CHARLES PORTER



BIG MOMMA



SEAN GREGORY

8TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

THE ARTISTS:

GARY BROWN
TOM GRODE
CRUSHOW
MELLOW-BLUEZ
SIR OLIVER
STEPHANIE BELL
FRANC FOSTER
UNKAL BEAN
TWIN SKID ROW
MANUEL COMBITO
TERRELL RAY MAGUIRE
YVONNE MICHELLE AUTRY
JORGE DA FE
BIG ROB
WALTER FEARS
CHELLA COLEMAN
PATTI BERMAN
CRAIG HENNY
MANUEL VIGIL
'KHALIF' GARY ANDERSON
RITA BARKER
ANGELIE HARPER
KANIAN CHAPMAN
DJIBRIL DRAME
GERALD ALEXANDER
REGINALD PIERRE HOLDEN
BOBBY BUCK
MIDNIGHT MISSIONARIES
ROBIN HOODLOOM
ROSA MILLER
GEORGE PORTER
DORAN RANDY BELLFIELD
DIANE MEZA
LINDAY HAMILTON
DAVE MARTINEZ
DEMETRA WASHINGTON
DANTE CHAMBERS
HOLLYWOOD MICHELLE
SHERMAN PITTS
ROBERT TOLBERT
GUY ROCHE
VICKI MATURO
TYRONE DALLAS
QUEEN TABIA
CATHY STEWART
DELTON WILLIAMS
CAPOEIRA BATUQUE
ICE TREK
JOSEPH FIELDS
RAY LEWIS
MICHAEL CLARK
NDIKO WILLIAMS
DONALD REESE
WILLIAM MAYO
PIERRE HOLDEN
CAP-C
SUNNY DEE
MARK PHILLIPS
URBAN VOICES
LEEAV SOFER
CHRIS MACK
LEONARD CAMPBELL
DAMITRI TAYLOR
PAMELA WALLS
CHRISTINA COLLIER
BRAIN PALMER
MARIANA VALLES
MS. BLACKIE
OLUSHEYI BANJO
GARY JOHN
TYSON STEPHEN
TONY ANTHONY
HOLY GRILL
DARIUS DOBSON
BRANDON FORTE
LAMONT JOSEPH
JEFF BURNOM
PAMELA MILLER FOR KMK
MR. SCOTTIE RAPPER
MR. D.J.
MS. JULINNE SVILIS
MS. INDIA
TOMMY MILLS
HIGER POETRY
JEFF MORRIS
MR. MATT
JAQUELINE & CYRUS
VALESTER JONES
DAVE SHAFRAN BAND

CRUSHOW

I've been doing art period, where ever I'm at, for a long time. I rep Skid Row. That's what it is.



TERRELL RAY MAGUIRE

Rap, it pushed me out the ghetto to a certain extent. I used to be a young little rapper. I'm trying to put out what's positive for everybody, trying to understand ways how to survive out here, right?



ROSA MILLER
WITH RITA BARKER

Everybody here is somebody.

My next step: reaching out to battered women, get an organization downtown so I can come do what I do.



TWIN
SKID ROW
FLOWING



GERALD ALEXANDER

I sang
Evergreen by Luther Vandross.

I go for studio work and guitar and piano lessons at the Lamp studio.



WE ARE THE MIDNIGHT MISSIONARIES



REGINALD PIERRE HOLDEN

I'm working on my own albums right now.
One gospel and one R&B.

You can hear an original song I did with with Nanette Frank on the internet. It's called "Can't Be Your Part Time Lover".



URBAN VOICES
BRIAN PALMER



I've been with the project three years now. Today we sang four pieces that we've been working on. The second piece called "Sylvie" was based on music back in slavery days when they weren't allowed to have instruments or nothing like that. They used body percussion and stuff like that, and that's a song from back in the '50s I believe. The last piece was our signature piece "I Smile" from Kirk Franklin and we've been performing that once since the beginning... we all love performing it.

The past three years it's been quite amazing watching the evolvement of Urban Voices Project. When I first started there was: Leeav, Christopher, Linda, and me doing performances. Now, at a Gala for Downtown Women's Center, we had sixteen people show up for the gig and wow, it's been amazing watching this group grow and watching people get their lives back in order and their souls evolve, it's been beautiful. I live in the community myself and this is how I serve the community: through Urban Voices Project giving people a voice through music, and healing through music.

Last year the Messiah project started a scholarship program, giving people in Skid Row scholarships as far as professional voice lessons. This year I am one of the scholarship guys and I'll be performing a bass solo piece "People That Walked In Darkness". I've been getting professional voice lessons from LA Master Chorale's Scott Graff all year, and I'm super excited about it, I'm already ready, you know, it's not too far away now. The biggest opportunity for me, when I came here, I had a month clean from heroin and a friend of mine that works down here got me into a rehab on the 9th floor of the Volunteers of America rehab and a month into that, I found the Urban Voices Project. And Urban Voices Project has been very healing for me in many aspects, it gave me a sense of community, it gave me a place to express myself, and also find many good friends.

CAPOEIRA BATUQUE - CONTRA MEISTRE VERGATIO



I've been doing martial arts since I was four. I guess as an North African and African American, just the African Diaspora quality of the culture gave me this connection that was not there in my day-to-day life as much and then. Growing in the art - it's given me a way to understand other cultures. I now have a Masters in Counseling Psychology. I've done a lot of research in some methods of therapy that were developed in Brazil around capoeira and developed a capoeira-based therapy that I work with now. It's about how we can connect soul to soul, conscious to subconscious. The unique thing about a capoeira-based therapy is that it has aspects of multiple arts because capoeira itself has music, dance, martial arts, acrobatics, literature that goes with it.

Capoeira practice arose in the 60s during the dictatorship, and there was an anarchistic political bent to the therapy, so it was very beneficial both psychologically and socially for the people who were in it. But it also got stepped on harshly by the dictatorship so it started to fade away.

There used to be a few underground dance events that would happen in this area (Skid Row) and so you'd be here at night, parking, walking through the area, getting kind of an intimate relationship with people. At 3 in the morning, talking to people who a lot of people are afraid to approach during the daytime but it makes you realize that anybody in any situation is the same. It is just how we react to those situations and we can open our arms to people, have a dialogue or we can be fearful. It's the choice that we make.

The festival is really nice. A lot of different people are doing a lot of different things in the same space. I see a lot of people connecting in one area and then going off to another area and dialoguing, so it's really almost surprising to see such a vibrant community event happening here.

FRANC'S
MELTING POT

PERFORMING WITH
DEMETRA WILSON AND
DANTE CHAMBERS



FRANC'S MELTING POT

is a healing coalition of rock and roll and... you provide the **and**: meaning, we are an interactive collective of musical styles and community energy that comes together differently every time that we play... not the prettiest band in town, but probably the most honest. Looking forward to more partners for **MUSIC AND ART IN RECOVERY (MAR)** and **JAIL GUITAR DOORS (JGD)**, with a major concert on the horizon as a fundraiser in support of our work in the Skid Row Community. So, stay tuned.

About JAIL GUITAR DOORS

In 1978, The Clash released the song, "Jail Guitar Doors," telling the story of the imprisonment of their fellow musician Wayne Kramer. In 2007, to honor the life of Clash founder, Joe Strummer, Billy Bragg launched an initiative to provide musical equipment used to rehabilitate inmates serving time in Her Majesty's Prisons in the UK. His initiative is named for that very same song, "Jail Guitar Doors." In 2009, Wayne Kramer partnered with Billy Bragg to found Jail Guitar Doors USA. Together, their combined effort continues the mission for prisoners in America. The circle is unbroken.

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THE TOILET LADY

I was one of over 20 people who worked on a report that came out a few months ago called "No Place To Go: an Audit of the Public Toilet Crisis in Skid Row." The point of the report is: there is a huge disparity between the number of public toilets available in Skid Row and the minimum hygiene standard for a United Nations Refugee Camp. The report got a lot of media attention and now with Hepatitis A, the issue is even more serious. One proposed solution is to bring in portapotties and hire community members to monitor them. That's what San Francisco does in their Pit Stop program.



In Gladys Park, at the Festival, we set up a table next to five portapotties just to make folks' portapottie experience a little more pleasant. We had some spray cleaner, toilet paper and paper towels, hand sanitizer, and in charge of the table was the Toilet Lady! We have air freshener, smells wonderful, and a fly swatter, flies like to be around the portapotties, and best of all are the mints. People loved the mints. They came back to the table again and again to get more mints. These were the best mints in the history of mints - next to a group of portapotties.

I had this white board and people could write on the board their answers to two questions: **WHAT IS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM WITH TOILETS IN SKID ROW?** and **HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THE SITUATION?** Forty people answered the two questions and I got to talk to them about toilets, which is my favorite thing in the whole world to talk about!

So what was the number one answer? Fifteen people answered the first question this way: **NOT ENOUGH!** and the answer to question number two: **BUILD MORE!**



MELLOW BLUEZ: "I think cleanliness is important. So whatever it takes -- porta potties, showers, and we have to clean our hearts, so we need art. I will volunteer to sit in a circle once a week and read Maya Angelou, Adrienne Rich and all the writers who have helped me. I'd be happy to do this free, because if it heals me, it can heal somebody else. Word. Mellow Bluez."

CRUSHOW: "Without a doubt, the area is pretty much controlled by the community: the neighbors that live in the hotels and the tent-dwellers. Any plan has to be a plan with the grassroots. If they don't feel like they own it, it doesn't happen. ... Within this community, it's not about what you have, who you are, how you look, what gender you are, or if you choose to not be the gender that you are. Here, they accept you for who you are. That's what this community does more than any community. This community picked up on the LGBT thing before the world did. ... It has to be a strategic plan with the grassroots. With the community. That's who it's for, so if the community's not understanding how they keep it and feel like they own it, it doesn't happen."

HAYK MAKHMURYAN: In small and big ways it happens every day when folks in the community come together to do anything from cleaning up the streets as individuals and looking out for their neighbors to more deliberate spaces that get created and talked about. Whether it's Father's Day that happens over here or the studio that I facilitate or UCEPP's monthly coalition meetings that they hold and facilitate, this recognition that safety and security and comfort and accessibility are absolutely possible, is an integral part of a whole lot of groups on Skid Row.

RE-ZONING SKID ROW

On Saturday Brian Eck and Patricia Diefenderfer from the Department of City Planning, spent the day enjoying the Festival, talking with residents and getting ideas on what the Skid Row neighborhood should look like and who should it house in the future. Eck and Diefenderfer are in the midst of preparing the new community plan for downtown. The Skid Row community has been eager for dialogue with them, and DCP staff members have been willing to engage—having made several presentations and listening to community input at LAPD's Skid Row History Museum and at The James Wood Community Center. Last summer 15 DCP staff members played zoning themed miniature golf on "The Back 9", the installation designed by artist Rosten Woo and LAPD at the Skid Row History Museum.

Neighborhood groups and residents have banded together to form "Skid Row Now & 2040" and this community coalition is developing a set of equitable development principles that they'll share with DCP to lay the groundwork for continued dialogue. At the festival "Skid Row Now & 2040" volunteers (from Occidental College) engaged with residents to fill out questionnaires that are being used to generate the equitable development principles.



ROBERT TOLBERT

Wherever you have art, it's a free space for people to express themselves. What I learned growing up in South Africa: the main thing the Afrikaner government did when the nationalists came to power in 1948, they took away their spaces to create their art, thus being able to express themselves. That's number one that they did. Even in the black areas they did that. And then they took land, especially if it was nice land, they took that from us and gave it to Afrikaans or whites of English descent. And they never allowed us to have guns so we couldn't fight back in any way to get justice. When you take away spaces where people can express themselves artistically, it takes away from their self worth and their self being as a human being. So I think having artists in Skid Row and in other areas is vitally important. It's important because it shows our humanity.



I came here in 1980 as a student from South Africa. I have dual citizenship. My mother is from here and my father is Zulu.

DJIBRI Drame's VISUAL LITERACY WORKSHOP

When I came here I thought: "America's been lying to me with all that Hollywood stuff." But when you come to this kind of festivals, you know that human beings are really powerful. By seeing all this energy. It's like black people, white people, Mexicans, Native Americans, coming together to do stuff together because of poverty. I think Skid Row is one of the best schools in the US. Merci !



I'm from Senegal, West Africa. I got to the US last August. Last year I just found out about the festival on the internet and I came out to support and just like buy some stuff. Support with my money. I came down with my daughter. She was kind of like a super star. Everybody was like playing with her. And this year I came back and I was like "I need to do something. I need to inspire." And since I'm a visual artist and filmmaker, curator, independent scholar, I decided to participate and to lead a visual literacy workshop. I had so far 10 participants. And they really loved it. Rosie was part of it and she received a certification of photography from Skid Row, the 8th Annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists."

VISUAL ARTISTS & CREATIVITY STATIONS

LAMP ARTS PROJECT masterminded the creativity stations.

Artists displayed their art and created some more over the course of the two days.



REGISTERING TO VOTE

Employees from the city of Los Angeles and LA County took turns setting up a table where people could register to vote.



8TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



Chella Coleman, Cathy Gudis and camera man Rusti Hood interviewing Djibril Dramé.



Sherri Walker, Jamaya Capri and Lois Kessel signing people up and into the database.



LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S CREW AND STAFF:
Austin Hines, Henriëtte Brouwers, Walter Fears, Sean Gregory, John Malpede, Tom Grode, Larry Swanson, Reggie, Stephanie Bell, Christina Collier, Jamaya Capri, Sherri Walker, Chas Jackson, Anthony Taylor, Charles Porter, Angelie Harper, Jen Wilson, Gary Anderson.

ABOUT LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

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 works express the realities, hopes, dreams and rights of people who live and work in L.A.'s Skid Row.

LAPD's VISION: LAPD makes artistic work to change the narraive about Skid Row and people living in poverty. In doing so, LAPD aims to create a community of compassion, change individual lives and inspire the next generation of artists.

LAPD's HISTORY: The Los Angeles Poverty Department has been working in LA's Skid Row since 1985, hosting free performance workshops and creating art. LAPD was the first theater company run for and by homeless people in the nation, as well as the first arts program of any kind for homeless people in Los Angeles. Our original goals remain the same: to create community in Skid Row and to amplify the voices of the people who live in Skid Row, in order to share the lived experience of our company and community members with the larger city of Los Angeles and the nation.



ENORMOUS THANKS TO...

... OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS: Lamp Arts Project and United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP). Alex Market helped pay for our lunches again and Michael Waterman came to provide water and celebrate another year of Water Corps. Love Nail Tree designed and printed our Tshirts, which were provided at cost by Jacob at the Fabric Planet. Council District 14 provided tables and chairs and DLANC provided our sound equipment and technician Jake Kelley. Our 'house band' the Skidroplayaz synched our heart beats.
... OUR VOLUNTEERS: Clancey Cornel, Rusti Hood, Ajay Bhavsar, Amy Hawkins, Jackie, Lois Kessel, Ian Gabriel, Maria Montag, Maryam Francesca, Nathalie B., Chen Ju, Cassie Hunter, Robert the cleaner and everyone who helped clean the park.
... OUR ARTISTS WHO FACILITATED THE CREATIVITY STATIONS AND WORKSHOPS: The Big Draw LA, Visual Literacy Djibril Dramé, Yoga on Chairs Ramiro, Magic and Reading for the Kids Larry Swanson. The Lamp Artists and many more.
... OUR SCOLARS AND INTERVIEWERS: Chella Coleman, Catherine Gudis, Kim Welsh, Michael Alexander, and the students from Occidental College and the Los Angeles Department of City Planning. Helki Frantzen and Linus Shentu filmed the festival.

GET READY FOR LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S
9TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS
COMING UP SATURDAY & SUNDAY OCTOBER 20 & 21, 2018

The Festival is 2 afternoons (1-5PM) of non-stop performances created and performed by Skid Row talent. We're talking about performance of all kinds: music, dance, more music, spoken word, poetry, theater and yes, even more music. Skid Row visual artists will display their work and we'll have arts workshops going on, so anyone can make some work on the spot. If you want to perform or exhibit your work, contact us anytime between now and October and get a spot at the festival.



CALL OR WRITE US!
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facebook.com/lapovertydepartment
twitter.com/lapovertydept



The 8th Festival for All Skid Row Artists is produced by Los Angeles Poverty Department with partners Lamp Arts Program and United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP), Love Nail Tree, Alex Market and Fabric Planet. This year's festival is made possible with the support of California Arts Council's Local Impact program, National Endowment for the Arts, Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Los Angeles, L.A. County Arts Commission, California Humanities, a non-profit partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Department of Rec and Parks, Council District 14 and Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council.

