

HYPERALLERGIC

EVENTS

An Art Program in Los Angeles Proposes Ways to Address Homelessness

The Goethe-Institut has partnered with the Los Angeles Poverty Department in organizing *Worlds of Homelessness*, a weeklong interdisciplinary series of events featuring artists, architects, advocates, and performers.



Matt Stromberg October 23, 2019



The LA Playmakers (©Goethe-Institut)

Los Angeles is in the midst of a remarkable period of cultural and economic prosperity, with an internationally recognized arts scene and a nonstop construction boom reshaping the city's skyline. However, alongside the emergence of several new high-profile arts institutions and a glut of high-rises transforming downtown, Los Angeles's homeless epidemic has reached unprecedented

proportions. According to the [2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count](#),

homelessness was up 12% in LA County since 2018 with an unhoused population of over 58,000. And that growing population has to contend with disturbing episodes of hostility and violence.

In response to this rising trend and related issues of inequality, gentrification, and racism, the Goethe-Institut has partnered with the Los Angeles Poverty Department in organizing Worlds of Homelessness, a weeklong interdisciplinary series of events featuring artists, architects, advocates, and performers. The program began last night at the Skid Row Museum & Archive with a panel discussion framing the issues, followed by a performance from the LA Playmakers — professional musicians who came together five years ago as members of the Praise and Worship Team at Skid Row's Central City Church of the Nazarene.



Radames Eger (©Jonas Reuter)

Tonight's program at Navel deals with how artists can meaningfully engage with homelessness, with Henriette Brouwers and John Malpede, who founded the LA Poverty Department in 1985, the first performance group in the country to feature primarily homeless people. Joining them will be Radames Eger, a Brazilian-born, German fashion designer who creates clothes for the elderly, sick, and homeless; Brazilian actor and director Licko Turle who founded the Theatre Center of the Oppressed in Brazil in 1986; and artist and educator Fabian Debora, the Executive Director of Somos L.A.

Arte – Homeboy Art Academy.

Upcoming programs explore the role of architecture, design, and city planning in addressing housing insecurity, and how knowledge and data about homelessness is collected and used. The talks will be complemented with film screenings, including Natalie Bookchin's 2016 film "Long Story

Short,” composed of 100 interviews at homeless shelters, food banks, and job training centers in Los Angeles and the Bay Area; and “The Advocates” (2018) from Remi Kessler, which follows three homeless advocates, providing a personal perspective on the overwhelming problems they face.

Worlds of Homelessness will conclude with the 10th annual [Festival for All Skid Row Artists](#), a two-day celebration of art and music highlighting the vibrant and diverse artistic community of Skid Row, capped off by a closing performance from the LA Playmakers.

When: Tuesday, October 22–Sunday, October 27

Where: Various venues in Downtown Los Angeles

More info at [Goethe-Institut](#)