



December 12, 2020

Dear Friends of LAPD,

While this extremely difficult year is coming to an end, the pandemic continues. Until it is over, the period of adaptations continues. I'm happy to report that our Skid Row artists have all remained healthy and that with a variety of zigs and zags we have all been able to stay connected and making work.

From the beginning, as the first arts organization in Skid Row in 1985, we've believed that the arts are a powerful vehicle for bringing people together and for engaging the whole person. From the beginning, we said our goals were to make community on Skid Row and to get the real deal out to normalville. By engaging the whole person and linking people to one another, we reweave the social fabric: people know, trust and support one another in determining and reaching individual goals and organically link one another to gain needed services and discover and realize opportunities for themselves and as a community.

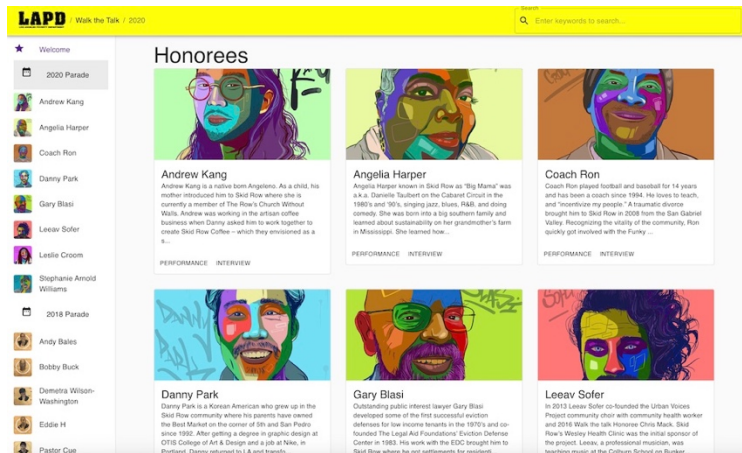
The need for community is deeply felt by everyone during the pandemic and acutely felt by our community artists living in single room occupancy hotels, apartments and tents. With our partners in the Skid Row Arts Alliance, we have created and distributed a monthly Arts Care Package that includes a [Zine of arts activities](#), art supplies, and masks and public health information. Initially these were distributed to 200 plus Skid Row artists connected to our programs. We are now producing 3,000 copies of each edition of the 40-page zine.

During the pandemic we continued our thrice weekly performance workshops – by shifting them to Zoom. And thanks to the initiative of our archivist Clancey Cornell's go fund me campaign, we've provided tablets and Wi-Fi hotspots for many of our members to enable their participation. Staying connected has meant not only emotional support and the fun of creating together, but also has allowed for the sharing of health information and how to access Cares Act support.

In our rehearsals we have collectively devised a new script imagining "The New Compassionate Downtown" – a place where all downtown residents, affluent and poor, want to reside, not because of night life, but because of the profound history of compassion, mercy, second chances and mutual aid that lives in Skid Row culture.

The performance was supposed to take place in March 2021 at our Skid Row History Museum & Archive space. Now our plan and hope, is to do this performance as scheduled in March but physically distanced and outdoors in the parking lot of The Box Gallery.

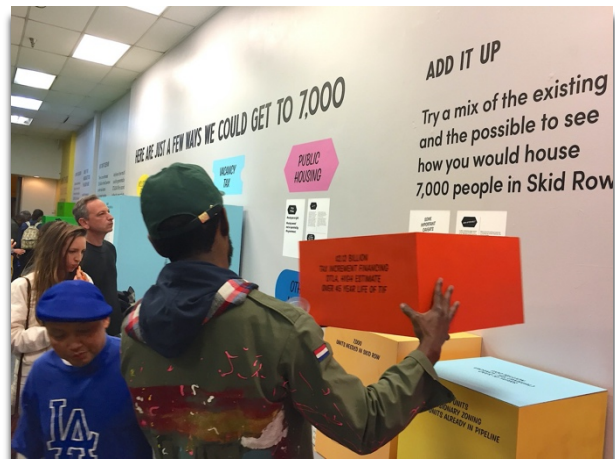
During the pandemic, we successfully generated and mobilized a number of Plan B's. In May, we realized our biennial [Walk the Talk performance / parade](#) that celebrates Skid Row people and their transformative initiatives.



A community nominating process determines the honorees who are interviewed, and their words distilled into theatrical performances enacted during the parade. While we couldn't be in the streets, we were able to realize Walk the Talk as a Zoom event and launch an important dedicated [website](#) that makes accessible 68 videos of interviews and performances from all years of the project, and that constitutes a people's history of Skid Row.

<https://app.reduct.video/lapd/walk-the-talk>

While our Skid Row History Museum & Archive has been closed to the public during the pandemic our 4 part time archivists have continued their work from home, with periodic trips to the Museum to grab additional boxes of documents and media from LAPD's [history and also the collections](#) that have been given to us by individuals and organizations in Skid Row. Everything is being organized in one integrated system that will be available to the public. As we do this work the archive continues to be utilized by journalists, scholars and community residents.



Just before the March lockdown, we opened, at the Museum, the exhibition [“How to House 7,000 People on Skid Row”](#) realized by Rosten Woo, Anna Kobara and LAPD.

The exhibition physically concretized the funding needed for 7,000 housing units for people now houseless in Skid Row –and the public policies, both in place and needed, that could create the \$35 billion needed to do it. It made clear that there are multiple ways to get there, making it impossible to deny it can be done. Rosten has made both a [zine](#) and a [video walk through](#) of the exhibition.

In October, we were able to realize our [11th annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists](#), (which is usually attended by 1,000 people over 2 days in Gladys Park), as a hybrid event, streamed live on YouTube and Facebook, to comply with the Parks Department directive limiting in person attendance to 50 people. The first-ever hybrid iteration of the Festival, virtual and live from Skid Row's Gladys Park & Studio 526, has been viewed by over 800 people.



As part of CAP UCLA's Tune-In Festival, violinist and founder of Street Symphony, Vijay Gupta and The Kronos Quartet jam on Los Angeles Poverty Department's performance- and interview excerpts from our Walk the Talk Archive.



January 27, 2020. Skid Row History Museum & Archive. **Plans of Our Own – Community Responses to the DTLA 2040 plan** and the formal launch of the [Central City United People's Plan](#), a resident-led vision developed by LACAN, LTSC, SEACA, and Public Counsel.

For years LA's, Department of City Planning has been producing a vision for downtown LA that completely overhaul's the land-use framework of the city, imagines nearly 200,000 new residents, and nearly 60 billion dollars of land value by 2040.

Please consider making a contribution to LA Poverty Department as we continue to generate Plan B's and look forward to getting back to realizing Plan A's.

Wishing you and yours good health and good spirits.

Sincerely,

John Malpede
Artistic Director, Los Angeles Poverty Department

Donate* on our secure website: <https://www.lapovertydept.org/donate/>
Or send a check to Los Angeles Poverty Department, POB 26190, Los Angeles CA 90026

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