

OCTOBER 29 & 30, 2022

13TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



By Adrian Excel --- October, 2022

--- It's art time again, well at least in Skid Row it is. This time every year the Festival For All Skid Row Artists brings light to the hearts of the city's most vulnerable. This is done through the efforts of the Los Angeles Poverty Department. LAPD is a theater troupe, started by John Malpede as a performance workshop in 1985. The Poverty Department has helped the flame of ART stay alive in the minds and hearts of the city's most forgotten, so the world could know; you can have value no matter the situation. This year was special for many reasons. For starters this is the first year the festival was back to its two-day schedule since the pandemic made us all go inside of ourselves. The festival has happened for thirteen years, but this year it felt new. I like to call this year's festival The Great Reset.

A reset to a clock we can't allow to run out of time; Art. Throw out history, Art has been the place where you could find the truth of the times in question, when you could not trust the history books to keep it 100%. The festival has always been a snapshot of the humanities that has helped keep humanity in the community of the city's most marginalized. This year was no different. It opened up with the sounds of Ashe Ase Drummers, who have been providing the community with rhythm and sounds of a time long ago, for a very long time. The pandemic made us all wonder what the world would look like, on the other side of the hall of mirrors we all had to pass through. If the festival has any inclination on what the world will look like, I'm super optimistic.

This year's M.C. was the fabulous Lorinda Hawkins, who introduced everyone and sang a few songs herself. The lineup was jam packed with some of the community's most known artists, like Crushow, Unkal Bean, Mike Mahaney – who sang a duet with Stephanie Bell, Mello Bluez, Joe Clark aka Michael Jackson, Lee Maupin channeling James Brown, the Toilet Lady was back with the Toilet Report, Robin Hoodloom, Chris Mack and Urban Voices Project, Cuban Percussion, Olusheyi Adeeko Banjo and Stephan Folds sang songs that made us all happy, and many others came to share their talents and enjoyed being together again. Coach Ron M.C.-ed a fashion show of the Skid Row Brigade's T-shirts. And Joseph Warren and Lady Dee-Dee were back with a whole new edition of the LA Playmakers as the final act of the 2-day festival and they got everyone on their feet and dancing in Gladys Park – which is soon to be re-named General Jeff Memorial Park.

Celestine Williams, who used to sign up artists at the table in front with Linda Harris (remember her!?) when we started the festival in 2010, was back at the sign-up table wearing her **Menacing Cool** shades, giving away more **Skid Row Artist** sunglasses to all the artists who signed in. Sean Gregory was managing the stage again, hooking everyone up to Henry Apodaca's sound system. And the 'Grande Dames' of the festival: Stephanie Bell, Lorraine Morland, Leyla Martinez, and Linda Leigh made sure that everyone got their Festival For All Skid Row Artists 2022 T-shirt – specially designed by Adrian Excel for this occasion. Tom Grode and Carol Zou with Skid Row Now & 2040, filmed people's responses to the DTLA2040 community plan. Skid Row Action Plan asked, "What is your dream for the Skid Row community?" and created a community wish-list painting with Jose Mata, and the Sidewalk Project did Narcan trainings and gave info for Harm Reduction.

This year we got to see a lot of new faces too. The pandemic had ushered in a large number of new artists to the community. And boy oh boy did they show you and show out. We heard from an amazing guitarist that goes by the name Valkor. There was a performer by the name of Angel Correa who blessed us with a poem that was so accurate in depicting the community it could have been called 'Skid Row'. There were Kimani Afi and Theresa Smith dancing the Kakilambay, a traditional Senegalese dance. Gladney Cedrick sang beautifully. Ande K. aka Vegan Ande came with a ukulele and 2B Roy sang West Coast reggae. Our park attendant, City Guy G.O.D., turned out to be a rapper. He did two favorites Dream On and Novocaine, and he has his own clothing line: Worldwide City Fashion. And even though it wasn't a competition, I did have a favorite. That was Squiddy Jamzzz, playing the clarinet, who did two original songs that could top any billboard charts with Deeja Marie on piano and vocals.

The festival did not only provide for self-proclaimed artists. There was a creative station available for anyone attending to tap into their own creativity. There was a station where you could paint, there was a station where you could make mosaic art with Piece by Piece. Studio 526 was there with their new project manager Alice Corona, and Hayk Makhmuryan had his own workshop: Doodles Without Borders and displayed all the community paintings we have made during past festivals. You could make your own 'Pop Up Cards' at Creative I, and wood utensils and mini boards with Would Works. There was even yoga with Raquel Barrantes to help all in attendance to relax and enjoy. I saw Pepper and Eric Dean balance on one leg while breathing deeply! VLM, Kaniah – aka Little Mama, and many others exhibited paintings and artworks. This is a festival that provides something for the mind, body and soul, because it is a festival for the people of Skid Row.

In closing I would like to zoom out because perspective is everything right? What is Skid Row, some would ask? I would then ask, 'What is Larchmont?' A community. So is Skid Row. But some would disagree. Why is that? Is it because the people don't own a 2022 Mercedes? But Skid Row has yoga, coffee shops and food. Not to mention Art. So, if we don't see Skid Row as a community then we might need to reconsider why that is. We as the human race have an obligation to maintain our collective humanity and when we stop doing that, I don't think we can continue to call ourselves human. Only the humanities can save humanity.

13TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

ALL ARTISTS:

COACH RON
GARY BROWN
LORRAINE MORLAND
THE TOILET LADY
CRUSHOW
MELLO-BLUEZ
NEW SOUL RENUWAL
DONNY
UNKAL BEAN
LINDA LEIGH
MATT HORNS
CREATIVE I
YOUNG MI CMI
MARYLOU JACOBS
ALEXANDER LEVI
VALKOR SLAYER
CITY GUY G.O.D.
2B ROY
JEFFERY JACKSON
JOSE ROMERO
ARTERMIS
ANDE K
MARLA GIGGI
PEARLEAN VICTORIAN
MARYLIN ZARRY
BIG MAMA
KANNIAH CHAPMAN
LARONDA HARTFIELD
ROBIN HOODLOOM
DAKARRI ASHBY
QUEEN MAMA TABIA
MIKE MAHANEY
STEPHANIE BELL
ASHIE ABE DRUMMERS
RAY LEWIS
BEKUS
WILL GORDON
GARY BROWN
OMAR LEWIS
DONALD REESE
DARIUS DOBS
URBAN VOICES PROJECT
ANA PEPE
BIBI ROSALIA
CHRISTOPHER MACK
LEEARV SOFER
MARILYN IRIZARRY
IRON DONATO
BLACK BLOSSOM
AYOO DUZE
YOUNG KILO
LEE MAUPIN
DENISE SILKIE HARRIS
JOSEPH WICKS
MARK WASHINGTON
STAN WATSON
JACOB BATHERY
PAUL RUSSO
KENNY CHRISTOPHER
DEMETRA WILSON
RENO GREENFIELD
JOSEPH WARREN
CUBANO PERCUSSION
LEYLA MARTINEZ
PEDRO MUNECO
PEDRITO "EL BALSETO"
POCHOLO
JULIAN "EL BOXEADOR"
YOLANDA
RODGER
CEDRIC CASHAW
CASSIUS
ALICE CORONA
HAYK MAKHMURYAN
YVONNE MICHELLE AUTRY
FOOTIE
VLM
LORRAINE MORLAND
JAMES
LEE MAUPIN
DAWN MENDELSON
SQUIDDY JAMZZZ
DEEJHA MARIE
OLUSHEMI ADEEKO BANJO
STEPHAN FOLDS
ERIC DEAN
HOLLY DEE
JOE CLARK
RAQUEL BARRANTES

CITY GUY G.O.D.

I RAPPE DREAM ON. I WROTE IT 'CAUSE TODAY, A LOT OF PEOPLE STRUGGLE AND THEY JUST NEED A LITTLE MOTIVATION TO KEEP THOSE DREAMS GOING. THE 2ND SONG IS NOVOCRINE. IT'S THE ANESTHETIC AT THE DENTIST. I WROTE IT WITH LUCIANO, CUZ SHE'S MY DRUG AND SHE TAKES ALL MY PAINS AWAY.



MS. MARLA GIGGI

TALK IS CHEAP



VALKOR SLAYER

I HAVEN'T REALLY PERFORMED MUCH LATELY WITH GUITAR. I'VE BEEN IN TWO BANDS AS A DRUMMER, BUT I FINALLY CAME INTO MY OWN AS A GUITAR PLAYER OVER THE LAST COUPLE YEARS. SO, NOW THAT I'M GETTING MY CHOPS UP, IT'S TIME TO START SHARING IT WITH THE WORLD.



ALEXANDER LEVI

PERFORMING MY NEW TRACKS DOBBIE & JERUSALEM



2B ROY

'JELLO' AND 'GIRLS DANCING' ARE MY HIT SONGS. I AM FROM BELIZE CITY, BUT I GREW UP HERE IN CALIFORNIA. I LOVE REGGAE SO THAT KIND OF GREW ME INTO WEST COAST REGGAE.



JEFFERY JACKSON

THIS IS A SONG BY GEORGE BERNARD WORRELL, JR. KEYBOARDIST AND A FOUNDING MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT-FUNKADELIC.



MELLO BLUEZ WITH BROTHER DON ON GUITAR.

WE CALL OUR ENSEMBLE NEW SOUL REVIVAL.



ASHIE ABE DRUMMERS FROM THE HEART



MY NAME IS KIMANI AFI. I'm headquartered in Leimert Park. I'm a dancer and a drummer. I've always liked to dance this Senegalese, West African dance, my heart feels it. This dance really speaks to my soul, it is my culture, it's my heritage. I get my exercise and dance at the same time!

I AM TERESA SMITH, also from Leimert Park. I am a choreographer, dancer, actress. I've danced modern jazz ballet all my life. I danced at Alvin Ailey. Linda Johnson was my first African dance teacher, and it was just fire. It was like the spirits, the ancestors, literally got inside of me. It's a great feeling to carry on the African culture. I teach children. I have a one woman show.

KAKILAMBAY is a sacred dance. Once every seven years, this spirit, this Kakilambay, comes out of the forest. This is a time to beseech Kakilambay to help the women who are not able to have children, or you need more agriculture, more farming, more crops. It's a community festival for the whole village. People come to get healed mentally, physically, and spiritually. The movements come from harvesting and giving and receiving the healing, and giving a prayer. In the African culture the movement is not wild and crazy. Every rhythm, every song, every dance has a meaning.

SQUIDDY JAMZZZ & DEEJHA MARIE



MY NAME IS SQUIDDY JAMZZZ. I'm a clarinetist, slash vocalist. And here's DEEJHA MARIE. We've been playing music together for a couple weeks now. It's been amazing. I always had to endure. But the clarinet always had my back, so I stick with the horn. I love playing music and you can follow me on Instagram and YouTube. I'm playing through the changes. I was in the car crash. I ended up in a coma for two weeks. When I woke up, I had no memory of what happened. I didn't know what was wrong with my face, but when I finally got a chance to look in the mirror, half my face was gone. I was really depressed. I had to get six different surgeries on my face in six months. During the process, I picked up the toy flute, the ocarina. They called it a sweet potato. It was like therapy for me. When I finally was done with all the surgeries, I ended up homeless in Arizona. I found this job pushing flyers. They would slave me, not even paying me all the money they were supposed to pay me. But I saved up some money and I was like, I need to play an instrument. Maybe I'll play the flute, I wanna do something that I love and that I can get paid for doing. Maybe I'll just be a musician. I ended up getting a clarinet. I had to google what it was. And ever since we've been inseparable. I was practicing eight hours a day every single day for two years. And I was homeless for those first two years. But it was always progression though, if I stayed true to clarinet practice under the bridge. I never put it down. It was my life. I street performed to make money to eat. It's been about six years. I got to play with Miley Cyrus and a couple other people. Good stuff.

DEEJHA MARIE I met Squiddy on the street. I'm a Go Show winner and I played with the great Sue Palmer and the Motel Swing Orchestra in San Diego for many years. But I wanted to move on after my kids got grown. So, I came to Los Angeles. Now I wanna be downtown because I feel like I need to give some of me, the music. I'm a really a vocalist, but I've been trying to play piano since I was 18. I've been singing pretty much all my life. My mother died at 42 with cancer, and I was on my own pretty much. Singing saved me from doing drugs, it just saved my life. Because I didn't have no guidance and I had four beautiful children. My children are doing great and I'm so happy. I always thank my mother that I did a good job for her grandchildren. That's what keeps me going and the music. There's nothing like music. I hope to help the community and bring love, peace and happiness.

GLADNEY CEDRIC / ANDE K-IRON-CHRIS MACK



GLADNEY: This is my first year right here. There is a freedom that comes with performing. You look at yourself and say, "Is that what I did?" I can look back and say, "I did this." It's like looking in the mirror, you're expressing yourself. I'm coming out of the shyness closet. Coming out to the world and making my craft known. Yeah.

MY NAME IS ANDE K, AKA VEGAN ANDE. I play the ukulele. It's my very first time here. I come to realize how wonderful this community of people who get together for such a thing like this is. I think that we need more of this for people to be saved from all their mental problems. People can at least connect with others. I'm so happy to become a part of it.

13TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

CREATIVITY STATIONS



WOULD WORKS



CREATIVE 1



YOGA



SKID ROW ADVOCATES



SKID ROW ACTION PLAN

"What is your dream for the Skid Row community?"

EXHIBITIONS



HAYK MAKHMURYAN INTERVIEWS JOSE ROMERO



ARTEMIS

My art helps me fill the hole inside of me of nihilism and nothingness.



VLM



LORRAINE MORLAND



PIECE BY PIECE - JAMES

SKID ROW NOW & 2040

Carol Zou films Mary Jacob's response to the Green Paper for DTLA2040.



SIDEWALK PROJECT

Narcan training and Harm Reduction.



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ADRIAN EXCEL DESIGNED THE T-SHIRTS



LINDA LEIGH - LORRAINE MORLAND - STEPHANIE BELL - LEYLA MARTINEZ

This year's T-shirt was designed by Adrian Excel and Tyler Madsen. Adrian is a local artist who has worked with the Poverty Department on and off since 2010, Adrian designed the T-shirt for the 2012 festival. Tyler is a local business owner who has designed the t-shirt for the festival since 2014. The theme of the t-shirt was "Past, Present and Future". In the design Adrian attempted to infuse multiple styles of written communication, while keeping to a trend Tyler started of remembering those we lost since the last festival.

The 2022 t-shirt was Adrian Excel's attempt at honoring the late Virgal Abloh who was a fashion designer who took street fashion to contour level. Virgal would put words in quotations. You can see the influence if you know what to look for. But Adrian took it to a whole other level when he infused five different written communication into the T-Shirt. Together it represents past, present and future communication.



L.A. PLAYMAKERS: Drums - Joseph Hicks, Percussions - Mark Washington, Bass - Stan Watson, Guitar - Jacob Bathery, Sax - Paul Russo, Trumpet - Kenny Christopher, Vocals - Demetra Wilson, Keyboards - Reno Greenfield, Keyboards - Joseph Warren.

EDWIN FOUNTAINE JR has been a member of the Central City Praise Team for the past 10yrs. A master guitar player, audio engineer, auto mechanic, and a master with computers, just to name a few. You will be missed Edwin, much Love from CCC. --- Joseph Warren

ABOUT LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

LAPD's MISSION: Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) creates performances and multi-disciplinary 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 narrative 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 for and by homeless people in the nation, as well as the first arts program 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 entire city of Los Angeles and the nation.

CUBAN PERCUSSION WITH PEDRHO "EL BALSETO", POCHOLO, JULIAN "EL BOXEADOR" AND CHARLES PORTER, DANCING ARE PEDRO MUNIKO AND LEYLA MARTINEZ



The 13th Festival for All Skid Row Artists is produced by Los Angeles Poverty Department with support from United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP) and Love Nail Tree.

This year's festival is made possible with the support of Department of Cultural Affairs of the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Kindle Project, Department of Recreation and Parks, Council District 14 and the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council (DLANC).



Newspaper design & edit: Henriëtte Brouwers.

Videographers: Quoc Quan Le and Jose Hernandez.

Photos: Ashley Mendez, Julian Lozano and Henriëtte Brouwers.



HENRY APODACA & SEAN GREGORY



MELLO BLUEZ - M.C. LORINDA HAWKINS - FOOTIE

ENORMOUS THANKS TO...

* OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

Studio 526, Piece by Piece, Creative I, United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP), Sidewalk Project, Skid Row Now & 2040, Skid Row Action Plan, Skid Row Brigade and our 'house band' the Ashe Ase Drummers from the Heart.

Tyler at Love Nail Tree printed our Tshirts -again! CD 14, Rec & Parks and DLANC.

* THE L.A. POVERTY DEPARTMENT CREW:

Henry Apodaca, Stephanie Bell, Emily Benoff, Henriëtte Brouwers, Clancey Cornell, Iron Donato, Footie, Sean Gregory, Tom Grode, Lorinda Hawkins, John Malpede, Hayk Makhmuryan, Lee Maupin, Leyla Martinez, Lorraine Morland, Diane Prozeller, Zach Rutland, Adrian Turnage and Shawne West.

* **VOLUNTEERS:** Young Mi, Dakarai Ashby, Cathy Gudis, Ian Gabriel, Tiffany Quezada, Franny Alfano, Victoria Romano, Isabela Ramona, Grace Leary, Jules, Bree Lauren.

* **CREATIVITY STATIONS BY:** Creative I, Studio 526, Piece by Piece, Raquel Barrantes. Doodles Without Borders and Would Works.

* **SOUND:** Henry Apodaca. * **STAGE MANAGER:** Sean Gregory.

GET READY FOR LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S

14TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

SATURDAY & SUNDAY, 12-4PM, OCTOBER 28 & 29, 2023

The Festival is 2 afternoons of non-stop performances created and performed by Skid Row talents. We're talking about performance of all kinds: music, dance, spoken word, poetry, theater and visual artists will display their work. We'll have workshops and creativity stations - so anyone can make some work on the spot. If you want to perform or exhibit your work, contact us anytime before October and get your spot at the festival.



OUR HOUSE BAND

THE ASHE ASE DRUMMERS FROM THE HEART

WITH SKID ROW DRUMMERS OMAR, DARIUS, CASSIUS, DONALD REESE AND GARY BROWN

WRITE OR CALL US!

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