

OCTOBER 26 & 27, 2024

15TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



By Zach Rutland

For two days each year in Skid Row, Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) brings artists and grassroots organizations doing transformative work in the neighborhood together in Gladys / General Jeff Memorial Park. This gathering is known as the **FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS**. And now it's 15 years strong! You know why? Because the festival exhibits greatness and it is an historically significant occasion. The Festival is nothing short of **LEGENDARY**. This year's festival in particular was exciting. There were 65 performances on the legendary stage at General Jeff Memorial Park! This can't happen without the amazing people involved.

A LEGENDARY PRODUCER.

Our legendary festival producer Henriëtte Brouwers spends countless hours crafting the line-up, organizing teams of people to find artists on the streets of Skid Row, getting resources for artists and creativity stations, documenting the festival, working with organizations, volunteers, and attaining park permits — the whole shebang!

A LEGENDARY CREW.

This year we were blessed to have not just one, but two energetic MCs: the actor/writer/director Lorinda Hawkins Smith and LACAN's social justice warrior, Mr. Pancake. Shawn Gregory and Henry Apodaca aka 'DJ the Archivist' held it down with ease and kept the ball rolling on stage all day, performance after performance. The house band, SkidRoPlayers led by Ptah filled the park with a constant rhythm, giving us a beat to go off for both days of the festival. In the words of Mr. Pancake "beeaaouttiifuul peeoplee!!!" and that includes the people holding it down at the sign-up table, the T-shirt table, and the interview station: volunteers and LAPDers working the festival.

LEGENDARY PERFORMERS.

Stephanie Bell, whose performance was so magnetic, it literally drew everyone to, and on, the stage. Lee Maupin aka 'James Brown' did his thing...or rather, *got-up-off-offa-his-thing*, and moved everyone else to do the same. There were dedications to two legendary people of Skid Row history — Robin Hoodlum honored Frank Foster and Crushow honored General Jeff Page — the songs were fresh and original works. Keeping Skid Row history alive. Tons of other original acts crushed it on stage: Jelly (from New York), Nomadic Divine, 'Ghost', Darrick, Rashawn Tolliver, Yard X, Craig Strayhorn, Daz, B-Hold Da General, Adam Smith, Ric-Hard, and Unkal Bean. Alvan Hughes danced to Whitney Houston. The Urban Voices Project was back as were the Cubanos with their drums and rhythms and Charles Porter was ready to perform with them again. This jam has become a Skid Row festival tradition. Mello Bluez and New Soul Revival closed out the first day and got everyone on their feet. On Sunday, the festival's closer, *You Guys Suck Like Real Hard Shut The Fuck Up Thanks*, sent socially-conscious-revolutionary-punk messaging into the airwaves, allowing us to all to appreciate the power of music in the face of systematic oppression. Original artists from the ground up, that's what we are here for!

We can't forget **LEGENDARY VISUAL ARTISTS** and organizations on the basketball court: Studio 526, Doodles Without Borders, Creative I, Michele Lorusso's writing station, Piece by Piece, Would Works was back and taught you how to make your own wooden whistle. LAPD's Sara Fetherolf's Kids Art Station drew many new young Spanish speaking residents of Skid Row. A special shout out to more amazing artists who displayed their work: Kush with his enormous collages and a beautiful book, Kenneth Ross had his big paintings displayed at the back of the basketball court, Reynaldo Antonio exhibited some of his 3000 paintings, Salvador Sanchez showed his paintings on the fence, and Mo'sART came with his carved-out palm fronds. Kaniah Chapman was back. And Stuart Perlman painted people's portraits.

LEGENDARY FOOD FOR BODY AND SOUL.

The Hippie Kitchen, Food Not Bombs and From The Heart Productions came in clutch with food for the whole park. We had a long food line for a couple of hours each day—a truly great contribution for the festival. Thank you for your culinary skills. Michael Waterman was back. Blue Hollywood Street Sanctuary gave a harm reduction training, LA Public Library shared info about their many programs, LA Department of Cultural Affairs had maps of the transformation of Fire Station 23 into an art center, LADOT asked input for how to make the streets of Skid Row safe for seniors, United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP) shared info about their drug prevention work and John Malpede registered voters. Jen Hofer typed up a poem for you. And another shout out to Alice Corona of Studio 526, who designed the **FESTIVAL T-SHIRTS!**

It always feels like the festival can't top itself, but it does every year. If 2024 had you down, THIS should lift you up. The LA Poverty Department has recorded and documented 15 YEARS of the Festival since 2010. My mission as an archivist at the Skid Row History Museum & Archive is to preserve the memory and history of these legendary performances, legendary artists and legendary friends — hopefully in perpetuity (meaning...forever!). When the world feels like it's upside-down and breaking down, it is important to recognize the creativity and grassroots efforts of our communities to ensure these histories are included in the global narrative of history, today. Change is happening on the ground level, and the festival is evidence of that change. To have an opportunity to participate and witness this history with all of you for the past six years, is amazing to me. **THANKS TO EVERYONE FOR ANOTHER LEGENDARY FESTIVAL IN 2024.**

15TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

THE ARTISTS:

GARY BROWN
TOM GRODE- TOILET LADY
CRUSHOW
MELLOW-BLUEZ &
NEW SOUL REVIVAL
STEPHANIE BELL
UNKAL BEAN
CHELLA COLEMAN
KANIHA CHAPMAN
ROBIN HOODLUM
ROSA MILLER
YVONNE MICHELLE ATRUY
QUEEN MAMA TABIA
PTAH AHOCHI TEHUTI EIL
MICHAEL CLARK
DONALD REESE
WILLIAM MAYO
DARIUS DOBSON
MARK PHILLIPS
URBAN VOICES PROJECT
LEEAR SOFER
KATE RICHARDS GELLER
CHRIS MACK
LORRAINE MORLAND
ELK RING
YARD X, CRAIG AND TEZ
SALVADOR SANCHEZ
IRON DONATO
MICHAEL BENNETT
ALVIN HUGHES
JACIE ROWE
B'WOLD DA GENERAL
GERARDO DIAZ
TIFFANY AYALA
DEEJA MARIE
JUSTIN AKA 'GHOST'
CEDRICK CASHAR
A. 'TONETONE' TAYLOR
RASHAWN TOLLIVER
DARRICK
ONYNE
DARRIN WILKERSON
LADY VANESSA
JUS LA'DELLE
NOMADIC DIVINE
SWAMIDONNIE
MARCO GARY
ADAM SMITH
LOS CUBANOS
MARK PHILLIPS
B'MORE
RIC-HARD
REYNALDO ANTONIO AKA
'ANTHONY QUINN'
JELLY HARDY
DIANA PEREZ RAMIREZ &
SU HIJO ANDRE
JUSTIN 'GHOST'
ALVIN HUGHES
LEE MAUPIN
SILKIE HARRIS
NANCY ROSS
MARQUIS HUDSON
MERRIWEATHER JACKSON
EL NEGROLITO
DARRICK
KUSH
RAY & RASHAN
DIANA & ANDRE PEREZ
STUDIO 526
CREATIVE I
PIECE BY PIECE
MICHELE LORUSSO
SARA FETHEROLF
LADY VANESSA FREEMAN
P. HENRY MCDONOUGH JR.
MO'SART
KENNETH ROSS
DOODLES W.O.
WAYK MAKHMURYAN
JEN HOFER
WOULD WORKS
STUART PEARLMAN
SONYA C.
MARILYN IRIZARRY
LEYLA MARTINEZ
MUNECO
SC MERO
CHARLES PORTER

TIFFANY AYALA

Today I performed for the first time. Sing-along was fun and getting to hold my guitar on stage. Performing helped me get out of my shell.



ALVIN ALEXANDER HUGHES JR.

I danced like Whitney Houston because she died, and it's very sad. She died because of drugs, and I wanted to mimic her actions. It was very powerful. I cried after I finished that expression.



GERARDO DIAZ

I performed a song by Teddy Swims and a song by Coldplay: *Sky Full of Stars*. I feel their songs a lot with passion. When I sing I feel free, free from all my bullshit, you know.



RAY /BORNSPITTA & RASHAN /ANONYMOUS THE LYRICIST

This is me trying to represent Skid Row and Gary where I come from. I was homeless there. I was homeless here. I had to come up, kind of rebuild. It's putting them on a map to show there's some good people that come from these areas.



ONYNE DAVENPORT

People should not be so uptight about Christianity. I would like people to know that Buddha is cool, Jesus is cool, and Krishna is cool, and Allah is cool, and aliens or Anunnaki's may have come here and so be that as it may, one never knows, does one? So, religion is just spirituality and consciousness. It's all one.



MARCO GARY

I'm a songwriter. I called that song *Loco* because the original rhythm to the song sounded like a locomotive and we're living in a crazy world, so it didn't make sense.



PTAH AHOCHI TEHUTI EIL

You are not who you think you are. You are not what you think you are. You are much more than what you think you are. And in that notion right there, you are everything. You are anything. You are the all.



MICHAEL BENNETT

I just performed *Outside* a song from the band Staind, and my original song, which I never performed in front of anyone, which is called *It's All My Fault All the Time Every Day*.

They both deal with a lot of pain from my upbringing. *Outside* deals with someone who acts like they're better than you, but they don't ever see their own flaws. That's why in the song he says, "I can see your insides. Your colors are just as ugly as mine." We both have our own flaws. And my own song was based on my relationship with my grandmother. Because sadly, I didn't realize until later in life that she was a narcissist. She would blame me for everything that happened. And then, if I retaliated to what she did, I got blamed. I was told to be the bigger person and not get mad at her for what she did. But the song wasn't about bashing her. It was about asking her for help. "If you see something wrong with me, don't just point it out. Be there and help me be better than what you see I am right now."

Around 2021 I started trying to write songs. But I couldn't come up with good lyrics. I wanted to make a song based on my relationship with my grandmother. When I heard this particular track, the words came out. I was able to put it out there, which I was happy about. It was very important to perform it here. This was the one day where I was actually stressing out about singing these two songs. Any other day I could sing these songs perfectly. No issue. Today, I was getting really worried, thinking, 'Man, my voice is not going to work and I'm going to sound horrible singing them.' My girlfriend was really supportive and told me I'm going to kill it and thankfully I did. And for the first time ever, I actually was warming up early in the morning to get my voice ready, because I was cracking on the simplest notes. I was like, 'Oh man, really? Of all days today!' But then I forced myself to just relax, breathe. When I was on stage, I was starting to panic. I could feel my eyes were starting to vibrate. I closed my eyes, and I was just like, 'Chill, relax and just do it. Just feel the music and just do it.'



DIANA & ANDRES PEREZ

I am Diana Perez Ramirez, we are from Mexico Puebla and this is my son Andres. No matter what situation you are going through, always do good without comparison and you will see that everything you do in this life will be gratifying and rewarded in a good way for you. Go ahead, don't stay here. Go out and clean your home and your streets and let's do something for everyone.



NOMADIC DIVINE

My artist name is Nomadic Divine. I performed three songs that I wrote myself. They're actually on my albums. I have multiple albums on Spotify, YouTube, and other online platforms.

I sang *Mother's Day*. That was obviously about my mother. You love your mom, and you wouldn't even take the time out to write a song for her. You take the time out for people that you care about. But sometimes people don't take the time to understand their kids. And that's what I was feeling. 'She don't understand me, she's not trying to listen.' So, I thought, I'm going to write a song about it. It kind of sounds like a dis track, but it's a dis track to your mama that you really love.

I probably was 17 when I got in the studio and started making songs. And I've been making albums and writing a lot ever since. Music is like the next thing to God, because, instead of writing in a diary, you could just write a song. In a way you are sharing your feelings when you don't have that person to share with, maybe it's your mom or your dad or your brother. Or you're trying to seek healing through a person, and you can't because they're not open enough to give you that healing. Then that's where God comes in and he allows you to see your talents. And it's usually through music, like, "Oh, hey, I just wrote a song. Now I guess I kind of feel better cause I had a chance to talk about it." That type of thing.



YARD X, CRAIG STRAYHORN AND TEZ



YARD: We are Yard, Craig and Tez. We just did the song *Sunshine*. The struggle will be gone. You can catch us on YouTube. We're out on pretty much all streaming platforms. We used to stay in the same building right down the street on Boyd. We lived in the neighborhood. We had our ups and downs too, you feel me? It wasn't easy.

TEZ: here with Yard, Craig Strayhorn. Right here. Local hip-hop artist in downtown Skid Row. I started off in the Youth Center in Santa Monica. PICO Youth and Family Center empowered me to be a better citizen, student, artist. Also, the PYFC taught us about the arts and got us involved with the voting and everything else that goes on in Los Angeles City Council to be aware. A lot of people don't utilize those things, but you actually need to be somewhat political to see change in our communities.

SKID ROW is one of the places that taught me whether it's life or death, are you going to live or die, choose one. Shout out to the Skid Row community, definitely. We are for the people. We want to thank you guys for having us.

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KENNETH ROSS

displayed his big and small cardboard canvases at the basketball court.



ANA LARA BELTRAND INTERVIEWS REYNALDO ANTONIO 'ANTHONY QUINN'

I live in the Cuban area, here in Skid Row. Today is my birthday. I have about 3000 pieces. I use my imagination and I paint everything I see: the present, past and future. For Skid Row, I wish much peace to everyone. It's needed.



MO'ART

I've been around since 2010, been around the Skid Row Artists Collective. I do painting, drawing, sketching, car painting, building things. I brought my Palm Trees. And I painted a great deal on that mural for General Jeff. I was the one that brought it down here in my truck. I play with the drum circle at Leimert Park, and they invited me to come over here. People needed to know and give me some recognition. I've been drawing all around town. I was



in all of Los Angeles Art Shows, the Art Walk.

This is the city of Angels. We're trying to beautify it.



SALVADOR SANCHEZ

I've been in Skid Row area for about four months. Man, it opened its arms up to me. I appreciate it. There's so many beautiful people down here and so many programs. All the paintings that are up there came out over the last three months. I made them in Skid Row at the Russ Hotel. Yeah, it's given me inspiration. I've been clean for seven months. When I paint, it gives me a natural high. So, I'd rather get high on the art.

I went to Cal State LA for about nine years. It's called the Conservatory of the Arts, an LA-based program that taught art, music, visual, to low-income children. I went there for nine years until senior grade. Without art, I would have been dead or in prison, and that's a fact. It gave me another way of just living.



LADY VANESSA FREEMAN WITH PATRICK HENRY McDONOUGH JR.



I brought the work of an artist named Patrick. He was the Joker. We stayed at the Midnight Mission for four years, and while we were homeless, he made all kinds of paintings. And I do moods and scenery with charcoal paintings. I put some of his art out there. He was fighting with pain and depression. He was fighting with acceptance. He passed away. He was upping his medication, it was dangerous. If I had known about the Narcan kits, he'd still be here today. I'm glad that they have these artists come together here, because they show up with the Narcan, and they show people how to use it, and make

them aware, and that's good. I didn't know until I started going through a lot of his papers, the stuff he drew, the stuff he wrote, the poems he put. If I had known, I could have gotten more help. But we don't know. They don't ask. And they never will because they're afraid of being shunned. They're afraid of being outcasted. What's normal? So, I say, just be yourself and just be you and just be proud that you're alive and here and keep going. Don't quit.

POVERTY DEPARTMENT

ADOLF SIMPSON - KUSH



This is my first festival, but I've been homeless here in Skid Row for years, since the 70s in and out of prison. My artwork started in Chino prison. I was there in the early 90s and it was so depressing in the dormitory. One day I said to myself, 'I'm gonna make some images, some pictures, put them on the shelves of my locker and try to lift my spirits.' I started collecting National Geographic magazines and stuff and taking a razor blade, cutting out the images and the words. And once I did that, it just started to heal me- heal me from my addiction and everything else. Other inmates, were coming past my locker and they were saying: "Did you make that? If you make me something like that, I'll have my wife put some money on your books." They were gathered around my locker, talking about that they hadn't seen their kids in three, four years and that if it wasn't for drugs, they wouldn't be here. Yeah, it was such a cathartic moment for everyone in the dormitory. One day I went to the yard and they shook the door down and tore my pictures up. From that point on I was convinced in my soul to continue with this artwork. And when I got out of prison, I went to Trade Tech for two and a half years, worked on my art every day. When I got out of school, I had a collection of artwork. It changed my life.

During my life journey, I came to realize how self-gratification is such a motivation for most humans, including myself for a long period of time. But in my growth and through this art and my healing process, I've come to understand that life is so much more rewarding, when you're not out for yourself, but when you invest in others and when you share, and become a part of society with others. There is so much strength in unity.

CREATIVITY STATIONS



WRITING WITH MICHELE LORUSSO



WOULD WORKS



STUDIO 526



PIECE BY PIECE



MAKING MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS WITH KIDS

FOOD FOR BODY AND SOUL



BLUE HOLLYWOOD STREET SANCTUARY



LA PUBLIC LIBRARY



DELICIOUS BEANS FROM THE HIPPIE KITCHEN



FOOD NOT BOMBS



DOODLES WITHOUT BORDERS

QUEEN MAMA TABIA



STUART PERLMAN - JOHN MALPEDE

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15TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



Adam Johns filming the artists' interviews by Iron Donato, Lee Maupin, Chella Coleman and Tom Grode.



MICHAEL WATERMAN



ZACH RUTLAND - HENRY APODACA



AMELIA RAYNO



Clancey Cornell, Franny Alfano, Pamela Miller, Emily Benoff and Jamaya Capri signing Skid Row Artists up and into the database of All Skid Row Artists.



LA POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S CREW: Franny Alfano, Henry Apodaca, Stephanie Bell, Henriëtte Brouwers, Jamaya Capri, Clancey Cornell, Iron Donato, Sara Fetherolf, Sean Gregory, Tom Grode, Lorinda Hawkins Smith, Ana Lara, Jaiye Kamson, John Malpede, Leyla Martinez, Lee Maupin, Pamela Miller, Lorraine Morland, Mr. Pancake, Zach Rutland, Anthony ToneTone Taylor, and SkidRoPlayaz: Macky, Omar, Ptah, Darius, William, Nancy, Donald, Jermaine & Gary.

ABOUT LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

Los Angeles Poverty Department is a multi-disciplinary arts organization that produces and presents artworks and events that instantiate the existence of the Skid Row community—affirming its assets, advocating for its rights, and supporting its aspirations. LAPD projects interweave exhibitions, publications, theatrical performances, public conversations, and cultural events. Programs are developed, produced, and performed collaboratively with Skid Row community members. Founded in 1985 by John Malpede, LAPD was the first performance group in the nation made up principally of homeless people, and the first arts program of any kind for homeless people in Los Angeles.

SKID ROW HISTORY MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

Since 2015, LAPD has operated the Skid Row History Museum & Archive in downtown Los Angeles. In addition to being the primary venue for the presentation of LAPD artworks, the Museum partners with Skid Row organizations and individuals to provide free space for their civic and cultural activities. Our community archive houses 20,000+ items documenting the 50+ year history of activism and agency in Skid Row. Located at 250 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, 90012, the Museum is open to the public Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from 2-5 pm and by appointment.

ENORMOUS THANKS TO...

... **COMMUNITY PARTNERS:** our 'house band' the Skidroplayaz, United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP), Studio 526, and Blue Hollywood Street Sanctuary. The Hippy Kitchen, Food Not Bombs, The Heart Productions, My Friends House LA and Michael Waterman for delicious food, snacks and refreshing water. And Gregory Young, the Ambassador to Gladys Park. Council District 14 provided tables and chairs.

... **VOLUNTEERS:** Shawne West, Emily Bennof, Franny Alfano, Ana Lara. And Alice Corona who designed the T-shirt!

... **MC'S:** Lorinda Hawkins Smith and Mr. Pancake.

... **ARTISTS WHO AT THE CREATIVITY STATIONS AND WORKSHOPS:** Piece by Piece, Creative I, Michele Lorusso, Doodles Without Borders, Jen Hofer, Would Works, and Sara Fetherolf.

... **INTERVIEWERS:** Lee Maupin, Chella Coleman, Iron Donato, Tom Grode and Adam Johns.

... **CAMERA MEN:** David da Rozas and John Adams.



ALICE CORONA



DAVID DA ROZAS

GET READY FOR LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S 16TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS COMING UP SATURDAY & SUNDAY OCTOBER 25 & 26, 2025

The Festival is 2 afternoons (12 - 4PM) of non-stop performances created and performed by Skid Row talents. 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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The 15th Festival for All Skid Row Artists is produced by Los Angeles Poverty Department. This year's festival is made possible with the support of California Arts Council's Local Impact program, the Department of Cultural Affairs of the city of Los Angeles, the L.A. County Department of Arts and Culture, the Kindle project, the Department of Recreation and Parks, and Council District 14.

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