



For immediate release: October 7, 2025

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Los Angeles Poverty Department proudly presents its 16th annual

Festival for All Skid Row Artists!

Celebrate the creativity of the Skid Row community!
Saturday and Sunday October 17-18, 2025, noon – 4 pm in Gladys Park

Skid Row's leading arts organization stands up to the government's assault on small arts groups and vulnerable communities by declaring the (unofficial) theme of this year's Festival:
Joy is Resistance!



(Los Angeles, CA) — Don't miss the 16th annual FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS! Saturday, October 18 and Sunday October 19, each day from 12-4 pm in Gladys Park/General Jeff Park, (on the corner of 6th Street and Gladys Avenue.)

Presented by the Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD), the Festival is two days of live non-stop music and performance, and visual art, showcasing the diverse talents of Skid Row residents. The festival is a grassroots cultural event where over 150 Skid Row Artists perform or display their artwork to enthusiastic audiences of neighbors from Skid Row and across the Los Angeles region.

The Festival's origins date back to 2010, Animating Democracy, a program of Americans for the Arts, released "Making a Case for Skid Row Culture: Findings from a Collaborative Inquiry by the Los Angeles Poverty Department and the Urban Institute." This study by John Malpede (Los Angeles Poverty Department) and Mario Rosario Jackson (Urban Institute) — who would later become the head of the National Endowment for the Arts (and has since stepped down) — documents the role of arts and culture in Skid Row. This study found that culture comes from the ground up in Skid Row and is often initiated by residents and resident driven initiatives. LAPD launched the Festival to recognize these artists and initiatives, and to stimulate a new way of envisioning and talking about this neighborhood.



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LAPD is renowned in the Skid Row neighborhood and nationwide for its longevity (40 years!) as a social practice arts group whose work is created in collaboration with the community. LAPD was the first arts organization in Skid Row and the first theater group for homeless people in the United States. Today, it may come as no surprise that LAPD is struggling to survive the government's arts funding cuts. LAPD has long been funded by the federal agencies that have been decimated by DOGE, and, like so many other small arts organizations, we are seeking supporters to fill that gap. Next month, a Go Fund Me campaign will be launched in the hopes of raising money to keep its Skid Row History Museum & Archive open and its art making alive. LAPD is determined to keep the Festival going and going! Joy is the name of the game, and there is never any shortage of it at the Festival for All Skid Row Artists!

Word is starting to spread about this year's event. Artists are rehearsing their acts and putting the finishing touches on their artworks. LAPD members are doing street outreach throughout Skid Row, ensuring many people will participate for the very first time and become part of Skid Row's creative community. As always, the Skid Row Drummers will be the house band, and longtime Skid Row artists like Crushow, Silkie Harris, Robin Hoodloom, Olusheyi Adeeko Banjo, Sir Oliver, Hylan Burt, Mello Bluez and Swami Doni, Urban Voices Project, and Los Cubanos will be performing. All artists will be interviewed about their work by our LAPD members.

Festival attendees will be warmly welcomed to roll up their sleeves and unleash their creative spirits at a range of artist-led workshops. Visual arts workshops will be offered by Studio 526, Creative I, Piece by Piece, and Doodles Without Borders. There will be a space for kids and poetry writing. Community groups and the LA Public Library will be there to encourage engagement and advance the quality of life in the Skid Row community.

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THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTERS

The Festival for All Skid Row Artists is made possible with support from California Arts Council and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. LAPD programs are supported by Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, California Humanities, The Kindle Project; and Los Angeles County Department of Arts and Culture. LAPD is a member of Los Angeles Visual Arts Coalition (LAVA) and Skid Row Arts Alliance.

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 theatrical performances, exhibitions, publications, 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.