



Presents

# 7 Glimpses of Utopia

June 21, at 7:30 p.m., at **The National Center for the Preservation of Democracy**, located 111 North Central Avenue (on 1st Street & Central Avenue, across from the Japanese American National Museum), Los Angeles, CA 90012.

"**7 Glimpses of Utopia**" is part of the Skid Row based theater group, **Los Angeles Poverty Department's**, project **UTOPIA/dystopia**. **UTOPIA/dystopia**, seeks to find out how flesh and blood people living and working downtown envision the future of downtown and what kind of downtown they would like to be a part of.

Tonight's performance event is "**7 Glimpses of Utopia**". It takes the form of a Come Together, a community performance strategy conceived by **UTOPIA/dystopia** collaborating artist **Harrell Fletcher**. LAPD'ers and others were asked to identify and invite someone they knew who was doing something laudable, and important, something that represents the best of the current and future downtown.

The people invited were asked to do a 10 minute presentation, in any form they see as appropriate, about what they are doing to downtown and how they would like to see the future of downtown evolve. The presentations could be a performance, a demonstration or a lecture. The presentations happen back to back, combining the insight and passion of both inviters and presenters. Taken all together, they come together to create a performance that provides "**7 Glimpses of Utopia**".

Tonight's performance event is the second event of **UTOPIA/dystopia**. The first event, a panel conversation and film screening of the award-winning documentary on LAPD, "The Real Deal", took place in April as part of the **LA Central Library's Aloud Series**. The next **UTOPIA/dystopia** event is again at the **National Center for the Preservation of Democracy**, on Sunday July 22 from 2 to 4 pm. It is planned as a panel discussion and community conversation on the subject of affordable housing. It's tentatively titled: "**Affordable Housing: What, Where and for Whom?**"



**PRESENTERS** A little about me, my name is Henry Proctor and I was born in Virginia but lived most of my life in Florida. I spent most of my professional time in the food service industry. I worked as a banquet chef and traveled the Southeastern United States. I am also a recovering substance abuser, clean for 2 years. I want to foster an atmosphere of support here in the Skid Row area, and I have an idea that works with veterans as a small group of underserved Americans. Mila Franzoni is Italian and Native American, and has been involved in yoga and different spiritual practices around the United States. His father was a philosopher of note, and he is committed to helping here in this area.

*Henry will talk about his work, his personal transformation, and he and Mila will talk about the program he envisions that will get people out of poverty, not keep them trapped in it. He would like to get the ear of Donald Sterling, so that this concept could be effective as a program at the new homeless facility Sterling is planning for San Pedro street.*

**SELECTOR** John Malpede is a theater director and actor. He founded the Los Angeles Poverty Department in 1985. From 1985 through 1999, he worked on Skid Row as an outreach paralegal with the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. "I was walking and talking on Main street...looking for inspiring people that I didn't already know. One half block into it, I met Henry, we talked. Wham, bam, inspiring."



**PRESENTER** Manuel Compito (aka OG Man) is a native of Los Angeles, CA and a local artist in the Downtown community, known as SKID ROW. Once an "artist in resident" of the LAMP Art Project, he is noted for "ghetto encaustics," for art pieces as *4th Street* and *Ghost 2*. OG Man is a writer and author of *Peace N Hood*, A Coloring Book for the Urban Area whose main characters, G-Dogg and Sad Kat encourage gangs to "stop the violence and keep the peace". With the assistance of Sea Jay Films, he has created a DVD of *Peace N Hood* and is currently writing a screen play adapted from the Neo-Novel coloring book.

While art of various mediums continue to be his passion, OG MAN believes in community involvement and being of service. He is a founding member and the official spokesperson for OG's N SERVICE ASSOCIATION, which is dedicated to uplifting the men of Skid Row through "Self Help" and improving the lives of children living on Skid Row. Most of all, he's a proud father of eight children and a grandfather. For more info: [ogskidrogallery@yahoo.com](mailto:ogskidrogallery@yahoo.com)

*OG man will show some film clips of the various activities and events he has organized and spearheaded.*

**SELECTOR** Leslie Croom is the community organizer and coordinator of special projects for a local non-profit organization, as well as a founding member of HOPE, a non-profit organization, developed by and for homeless and formerly homeless families. Since 1999, she has worked with the homeless community of Skid Row in Downtown Los Angeles on treatment and prevention projects. Ms. Croom has an extensive background in community substance abuse and community building. "I am inspired by Compito because of his raw talent, his tenacity, and perseverance, and above all because of his ability to make celebratory events happen on the row, without benefit of qualitative research, political will or resources. He reminds me that all life is worth celebrating."



**PRESENTER** To be announced. Adele has promised to select a prominent member from the Los Angeles architectural community who will talk about how their vision of the New Downtown includes the existing community of long-term, low-income residents, rather than their displacement.

**SELECTOR** Adele Yellin, who with her late husband Ira, developed downtown landmarks Grand Central Market and the Bradbury Building, is a board member of numerous organizations involved in furthering utopian ideals of downtown Los Angeles including Angel's Flight and Project Restore. She is also a member of REDCAT Circle.





**PRESENTER** Julie Rico manages both Red Dot Gallery & Bistro and Weeneez located on 500 S. Spring. She resides in the Security Lofts; where she has lived for 1.5 years. She opened the two adjoined venues in 2006. Wine tasting and Degrees of Weirdness are hot offerings at Red Dot. Rico believes that all of the residents, businesses, and homeless can move forward together with proper education and development.

*Julie will talk about how hot dogs and art go hand in hand downtown..*



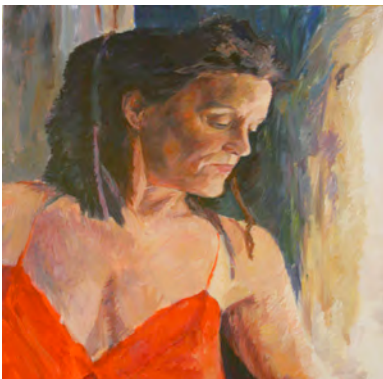
**SELECTOR** Riccarno Porter, writer-consultant-public speaker, grew up in Los Angeles. He attended John C Fremont High, Occidental College, LATTC and El Camino College. He now writes for the Long Beach Times and other newspapers and magazines. In the early 90's, he toured nationally with the Los Angeles Poverty Department. Mr. Porter also worked as a community activist on Mumia Abu-Jamal's campaign, Geronimo Jijaga Pratt's campaign and many others. He worked with the Sierra Club and other environmental groups. He has tutored youth groups on both coasts. He has been working in Public Relations since 2005.



**PRESENTER** Hylen Burt is a Jazz musician who has lived on Skid Row for six years. Jazz is his major concern, but he also plays R&B, pop, blues and some classical. Hylen currently plays in the LA CityCollege Big Band and is working on a self produced CD, which will be a culmination of the various life experiences. Hylen is also the subject of a documentary that will be making the rounds in this year's film festivals called: 'The Light in Darkness', about the artists in the Skid Row area.

*Hylen will perform a Jazz standard and a piece of original work that will be on his CD.*

**SELECTOR** Tony Parker has played bass since 1972. Opening for top reggae and R&B acts including The Wailers, Ziggy Marley and the Ohio Players. Tony has recorded with the late great Joe Higgs, mentor of Bob Marley, on the album "Family", Matuzalem on 'Nation Rise'. He has been a member of LAPD since 1992. "I am presenting Hylen Burt as an example of a long-term resident of downtown who is connecting in a positive way by performing in the art galleries and clubs in the area."



**PRESENTER** Stella Dottir was born in Iceland and came to America in 1988. She is a professional fashion designer and has her own shop on 430 S. Main Street. She lived in New Orleans and came to LA because of a vision. She told me that she follows her heart and that she is a happy woman because she lives in the present. She has always opened her own business with no money. She found a very beautiful and expensive homeless cat with silver colored fur in front of the bank on the day that she went there to ask for a loan. The bank keeper told her he had no money for her and now she has two pairs of cats: the father at home and the son in the shop. She started her business on Skid Row in July last year because she likes to be in a place where all kinds of different people live together.

*Stella will speak to you from her heart about what it is like to be a resident of downtown and to work on Skid Row. Coming from Iceland and knowing the European culture, Stella has a special view on poverty and finding solutions for homelessness.*



**SELECTOR** Henriette Brouwers was born in the Netherlands and came to America in 1993. She is a theatre maker and started working with the Los Angeles Poverty Department in 1999.



**PRESENTER** Pete White, founded Los Angeles Community Action Network (L.A. CAN) in 1999 and has not deviated from, "speaking truth to power" while confronting and contesting those forces who are at odds with this community's best interests.

*Pete will document the shameful connivance of LAPD, (the cops), with the corrupt landlords and opportunistic politicians, to deny basic rights of citizenship to members of this community.*

**SELECTOR** K. Michael Key, better known as "Kevinmichael" in the rooms of recovery in and about Skid Row, has been a community resident and member of both LACAN and LAPD since July 2003. As a former member of the California State Bar and a current member of The Other Bar, I am dedicated to the struggle against all forms of injustice targeting the members of my community. While still a student in NYC, I learned to ask, "Who's interest do you serve?" of our leaders and of myself.



# CHANGE X CHANGE

## Los Angeles Poverty Department's Workshop in Art and Social Change:

**July 9 - 27, 2007 for Performers and other Artists, Students, Activists, People Working for Social Change.**

LAPD's 3 week summer workshop is part of LAPD's year-long project UTOPIA/dystopia: changeXchange focuses on community engagement and the development of performance work.

- \* Community interaction includes meetings and volunteer work with grass roots organizations working for social justice on Skid Row.
- \* changeXchange performance workshops are about understanding and articulating your Skid Row experience through performance. Workshop teachers include: LAPD director John Malpede and LAPD project *La Llorona*, *Weeping Women on Skid Row* and *Fried Poetry* directors Henriette Brouwers and Ron Allen.

Workshop takes place Monday-Friday, 10:00am–1.00pm & 2:00-5:00pm and some activities in the evenings and on the weekends.

- Tuition is \$1,000. Financial assistance is available.
- If you choose, you can stay in safe, affordable housing on Skid Row provided for absolutely free by project partner SRO Housing, Inc.

To Apply: Copy the subscription form on the home page of our website: [www.lapovertydept.org](http://www.lapovertydept.org) and email it back to us at the "contact us" page.

**About The National Center for the Preservation of Democracy:** The National Center for the Preservation of Democracy is a non-profit, non-partisan educational institution that provides tools for living democratically in a diverse American society. Partnering with educators and community-based mentors, the National Center works to inspire youth to become active, informed participants in shaping democracy in America.

**Vision Statement:** To inspire and educate all people to live by democratic principles.

**Mission Statement:** To promote the principles of democracy, diversity, and civic involvement.

The National Center for the Preservation of Democracy takes as its fundamental premises the following assertions: 1. We, the people, shape democracy; 2. I, too, can shape democracy; 3. and those who have struggled for freedom and equality have extended democracy's reach for all.

### **About The Los Angeles Poverty Department:**

LAPD's mission is to create performance work that connects lived experience to the social forces that shape the lives and communities of people living in poverty. The Poverty Department is committed to creating high-quality, challenging performance works that express the realities, hopes and dreams of people who live and work on Los Angeles' Skid Row. LAPD is dedicated to building community and to the artistic and personal development of its members. Since 1985 LAPD has offered performance workshops that are free and open to the Skid Row community. The workshops take place at a variety of sites, with the in-kind support of a variety of community partners which have / do include: SRO Housing Corporation, St. Vincent's Cardinal Manning Center, Inner-City Law Center, United Coalition East Prevention Program (UCEPP), LA Community Action Network (L.A.CAN), Church of the Nazarene. LAPD has been at the forefront of a shift in viewing performance as a rarefied, esoteric art form to a view of art that is socially inclusive and has a wide scope of appeal and access.

*"The Los Angeles Poverty Department, despite the homeless status of many of its members, has thrived for years from its downtown outpost and continues to offer theater that's often stunning in its honesty and lacking in pretension."*

----C. Monaghan, LA Weekly

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