

# OCTOBER 22 & 23, 2016

## 7TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



**BY KEVINMICHAEL KEY** --- On October 22nd and 23rd members of our LA Poverty Department began gathering at the corner of 6th and Stanford for our 7th Annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists. It looked like it was going to be a bright sunny day, perfect for an outdoor artistic event. I smiled as I watched folks buzzing around, Crushow Herring hanging our big banner, Walter and folks setting up the stage, our new soundman Jake checking the sound system and Hayk and volunteers decorating Gladys Park. We definitely had all the logistics down pat. Now, were we going to be able to create our best Festival ever?

The **LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT** is a special arts group, we work to change the narrative about Skid Row and its residents, to create community and express the realities, hopes, dreams and rights of our people. A really good Festival has a vibe, a Spirit of giving and receiving, of being a part of... that's what we were looking to make happen. And that spirit was alive when Randy Belfield – who was back with his group **PASSION** - closed out the 1st day. Randy has a long connection with Skid Row. He was the music director for the Salvation Army Skid Row choir and still works with many musicians and community groups in our neighborhood. He put together a diverse set with something for everyone from uptempo R&B to slow Blues. Randy likes everyone to have a good time and see happy faces! It was the 6th festival for Franc Foster who sang on the set and got his **MELTING POT** together for the last act the next day. Unfortunately the rain started to come down just before they went up. Still, the **MELTING POT** spirit prevailed as the artists, creators and especially the audience were working together on something much, much, bigger.

For 7 years I have been MC of this event and this time we really rocked. I watched with excitement and joy as things began falling into place. Skid Row started jamming and rocking the park. At one point I swear everyone was moving to the same rhythm and beat, things were more cohesive and easy. From center stage I saw what was once a whisper turn into a shout. I saw people grasp an artistic thread to create the joyful bond of community. This was our park, these are our artists, "That was my story". I belong no other place than right here, right now. From my vantage point as Festival MC I saw with new eyes the maturation of our vision. I realized that my being MC wasn't so that I could give orders and bark directions, "pick that trash up", "no drinking in the park", I was there to help push us higher. Maybe that part of me had stood in the way of our growth as a Festival. I joined in with all of our amazing artists, drummers, activists, neighbors and performers to enjoy just jamming in our little park. And a fun thing happened, folks picked up their trash and few, if any, were drinking. It was a GREAT! Festival, our best yet. We know Skid Row has volumes of creativity and talent, this year we merged our creativity and talents with a spirit of familiarity and peace.



D.J. SIR OLIVER

JAMMING

HAYK

PRINTING FACES

OUR KIDS

SKID ROW ARTISTS

URBAN VOICES

COACH RON

I'M GONNA CHANGE MY WAYS

LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

[www.lapovertydept.org](http://www.lapovertydept.org)

213-413-1077



# 7TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

## THE ARTISTS:

GARY BROWN  
TOM GRODE  
LEE MARUPIN  
JACK RABBIT  
THE NU-BLUEZ OLOGIST  
SIR OLIVER  
STEPHANIE BELL  
FRANC FOSTER  
KL BASS  
GARRISON ALECSANDER  
JOLI  
YVONNE MICHELLE AUTRY  
MALIKA MOHAMMED  
BIG ROB  
WALTER FEARS  
HUGO GONZALES  
PATTI BERMAN  
NORMAN TATE  
MANUEL VIGIL  
'KHALIF' GARY ANDERSON  
RODNEY EVER  
AMELIA - AKA BIG MAMA  
KANIANH CHAPMAN  
DJIBRIL DRAME  
AMI & ANGELICA  
SHANNON CLARE  
BOBBY BUCK  
LA RONDA HARTFIELD  
LINDY HAMILON  
ROSA MILLER  
RONALD TROY COLLINS  
RANDY BELFIELD  
PETER ASSEMBING  
DEMITRIA WASHINGTON  
LIONEL  
BILLY PARKER  
WALTER BERLOCKS  
WILLIAM OGLEFREE  
OM TABIA  
CATHY STEWART  
GHETTO HEAT  
COWBOY AKA O-G MELLO  
JOSEPH FIELDS  
RAY LEWIS  
MICHAEL CLARK  
MICHAEL MITCHELL  
DONALD REESE  
WILLIAM MAYO  
MICHAEL VECCHIO  
RENE NAVA  
ELVIS MATHEWS  
MARK PHILLIPS  
URBAN VOICES  
LEEARV SOFER  
CHRIS MACK  
ELIJAH SMITH  
DAMITRI TAYLOR  
PAMELA WALLS  
CHRISTINA COLLIER  
BRAN PALMER  
STEPHANIE BELL  
LYRICAL STORM  
OLUSHEVI BANJO  
MISTA SEE THE ENFORCER  
TONY ANTHONY  
JEN HOFER  
JESSIC CEBALLOS  
VARNAL JENKINS  
JOANNE KERMAN  
CAROL JOHNSTON  
JOJO  
MICHAEL BLAZE  
MARK MONTUE  
JUAN BROWN & DON  
HAROLD SHIRLEY  
ROBERT JENKINS  
MR. STANLEY COOPER  
DAVID KELLY  
WILLY MAYS  
JAMES WASHINGTON  
MARK A. LITTLE  
TINA MARIE VAN TASSEL  
CEDRIC BARKER  
MALIK CEARCY  
ELIVAH SHAHEED  
YOLANDA VALDEZ  
ROXANNE PEREZ  
CYNTHIA MARTINO

**GARY BROWN** I participated at all 7 festivals because of the homeless issue, because for a long time there was nothing to do here. We started and the people who are sleeping on the streets, they jumped up with life and doing stuff that got them off the streets. ... I put a little Blues in it. I mixed it up with Jazz and Reggae. I like to enjoy myself and I hope I'll be back here next year.



**JOLI** I sang an old, old jazz song: **Summertime**. It was fun, I'm glad I did it. Ask my mom and she'll tell you I've been singing from the womb. My manager, the CEO of Positive Sound, was like: Hey, let's go support another artist of ours who was singing here. And they asked me to sing at the open mic. I love to see a whole community of artists just doing their own thing in unity, its fun! My CD **Portraits** is on CDbaby.com and my website is [www.reverbnation.com/Jolisings](http://www.reverbnation.com/Jolisings)



**NORMAN TATE** I did a song called **Run**. It was a song off my album "Daniel Syndromes 2". It is a nice little rap song, no cursing, probably 3 verses: a full-length song. I posted it on Facebook, search under Norman Tate and it will pop right up for you guys. I performed a song called **Heart** last time when I was here. I know that you guys give out the DVD's. That's a wonderful type of thing. I'm glad with the whole festival. I'm enjoying it. That's what's up.



**LINDY HAMILTON** This is my first festival. I live in the Weingart. My friend Juan told me about the festival. He has a table and he is doing his thing over there and he said: "Hey, You've gotta come down this weekend." I do visual art and I got the idea just by doing music. I am a recovering addict and, like I said, by the grace of God, it's my art that keeps me going.



**CATHY STEWART** I've been in the streets since I was 12 years old with no parents. I ventured and I found Skid Row. Downtown is where my homies are, that's Skid Row. I've been down here since 1998 and I love it down here. I have Skid Row auntie and Skid Row uncle and Skid Row sisters and brothers. I started with the Man in the Mirror by Michael Jackson because I have to take a look at myself. I believe that we can make a change one day at a time. I'm with Lamp. I've been doing artwork for over 10 years. Through my creativity I express myself and get out the things I've been suffering from.



**HOUSTON - THE NU-BLUEZ OLOGIST** I just met a brilliant guitar player named Brandon. And I said, "You should play behind me and we can make up some old fashioned Blues and I'm gonna like **talk-sing**." I met my favorite poet Riccarlo at the Skid Row History Museum at a Jazz party and I thought that's a good place for the Bluez Ologist because it's about picking yourself up no matter what life throws at you. It's using your creativity and your love to create a consciousness of love. I am here because I have love for people in Skid Row.



**ROSA MILLER** I have been doing the festival for 5 years. Skid Row is my heart. I've been downtown for 7 years, coming back and forth every day. This is where I'm always doing something: at the Downtown Women Center. I wanna thank them for providing my clothes: I thank God for Ann Douglas! And I just want to thank KevinMichael for doing this festival. He is a great man, he does a lot for this community. And I just thank you all. I just sang **Take Me Back**. That's one of my 20 songs on youtube. I made that my major song. Google Rosa Miller and all my songs are in a yellow box that says Rosa Miller Gospel.



## RONALD TROY COLLINS



Last year I performed at the Skid Row show. I was on crack, really bad, and what got me here this time is God and my manager. In May I was sleeping in a cardboard box. I used to sing on the streets for food every day and I met these beautiful individuals. Aimee Schoof, William Baine and Jerry and they see something in me and they took me in. They paid for rehab and they are making a documentary called **Mighty Ground**. Google it. It's gonna be an awesome documentary about how I moved from being on the streets to being in college now, being in a rehab facility. Being clean and sober 90 days. It's gonna be 6 months. This is the way we are giving back to the community because this is the community where I came from. Everything that you are going through in your life is to prepare you for what God has for you in the future. When the door opens, when there is an opportunity to go to a rehab facility, when there is an opportunity for someone to help you; when that door opens; walk through it. Take advantage of it because you might not get that opportunity again. I know a lot of people who when they get off of drugs, they feel hopeless, like there is no way out, like nobody loves or cares about them. For every wicked thing that goes on, there are 10 greater things that are good. You've got a lot of good people that's down here that are willing to help. But you've got to make yourself available and be able to accept it.

## JOANNE KERMAN



I was invited by Austin to partake in this festival. I had no idea what it was, except that it was a Skid Row festival and I said, "That sounds great." I did a couple of songs that I wrote. The first song was about, just *'feeling good'* and the feeling that I had when I wrote it was just... I had so much joy, yeh, I went to a festival like this and I felt so good and I went home and wrote that song. The second one was *"There is a ghost that haunts the Palisade's Light house"* and its been a legend for a lot of years. I have a friend that lives up there. We wrote a song about it that's called **Long White Gown**. And the guys were playing percussion behind me, it was really fun. I'm from Los Angeles, from South Central, so I've been down here before but I've never parked and come into Skid Row. This is great. I have 30 years of sobriety. And if it wasn't for the grace of God, I wouldn't be alive, it's a miracle that I'm here. What saved me was AA and God, but it was in that order 'cause I had let go of God and AA hooked me back up. Like a conduit and then I found him again

## PETER ASSEMBING



I am a friend of Mr. Randy, the bass player who's coming later on and he's a regular musician with Rosalie Brooks who was a Jimmie Hendrix's co-writer. I started playing in 1974 and I have been pursuing a career as a professional musician since then. I have encountered tremendous obstacles, but I'm still here fighting the battle. I have lived around here. I didn't know about this festival and am fascinated by the fact that I'm here. It has a great vibe, wonderful energy, and the people are just incredible. They bring the best out of me. It's an honor for me to be here frankly. I think this is an area that may have the potential to change the entire city. We need the attention of the people that have the power, of the politicians. This is America and nobody is exempt from giving to their own homeland. We're here to fight together and to find a better situation for every single person around here. Like John Kennedy said, *"Don't ask your country what they can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."* Everybody's concerned about making money, but I think people come first. Without disrespect, I hope that Hip Hop producers will try to share more with the acoustic community, with old and new. I think we need to inject Hip Hop with new blood. It's not just about killing your brother. There's more constructive causes that we can all fight for and I encourage and invite them to fight for those greater causes. I think a lot of the musicians that are dominating the airwaves right now will benefit from a music education in other fields like jazz, rock, classical. It's time to explore new ideas. It's all the same: kill this, hit the other. Let's think about peace, let's think about brotherhood, let's think about a greater Los Angeles, and a greater America.

## GHETTO HEAT



Yeh man! We are a political acoustic, melodic Hip Hop band based out of Los Angeles. This guy is from South Central. I'm originally from Detroit but I'm from the bay area. We do a lot of music on social issues with the groove and funk aspect of it. You know, you gotta speak on these issues and bring it to light. We got **Ghetto Heat** starting up last year for the sole purpose of making music and art that is about uplifting our communities and fighting against gentrification and police brutality and all sorts of New Age oppression. We have a bunch of friends that are based out here in Skid Row, like our friend Walton Jordan and our friend Elk Ring who used to be out here. It's so refreshing to meet people from Skid Row because they are free of all the other errors that you find in Los Angeles. They can be true artists. Our album is called **Don't Sell The Hood**, our website [GhettoHeat.bandcam.com](http://GhettoHeat.bandcam.com)



## 7TH FESTIVAL FOR AL SKID ROW ARTISTS

### NEW VOICES IN SKID ROW



#### DAMITRI TAYLOR

I've come several times. However, I didn't have the courage to sign up. Today I felt that it was necessary to sing the song that I did, which was Marvin Gaye's, *What's Going On*. There's a lot of atrocities that are being done to everyday people. It's not a black thing: it's people, humanity. I'm ready to have all of the murders stopped that's happening in the United States. I feel exhilarated having participated. I feel like I have done more of my duty as being a part of this community. It is to tap into a rich art, and I feel really good about being a part of today as well as yesterday, when I sang with the choir.

I have been a member of the community since 2000. I lived here homeless twice, in 2000 I had three girls with me. I was crying so hard, because I did not want to come down here, but when I came down I found such a different picture than what had been painted in my head about what is down here. I found that this is a city within its own city. This is a city rich in culture, rich in art, rich with lives. These are people that have come upon hard times. There are people who have mental health. There are people who just want to live down here because they want other people to see their lives and there being hope. I volunteered and I'm still a part of The Downtown Women's Center. This is the only center downtown that services women. They have very many resources there.

I want to thank the community for embracing my family and keeping us grounded and welcoming us. It has been a very good learning lesson: it has expanded the thinking that I have about human beings as a whole. I learn more every day about the vastness of the richness of this beautiful city within itself. There is no city that is like this. It is a wonderful city.

Instead of scratching the surface: come, dive in and come see what beauty that lies here.



#### JURN BROWN

I'm a new artist out. I was invited here to show off some of my exhibits. I'm doing a book and prints to where I can one day have my own shop where I can do T-shirts and put some of my prints on air-brushing and do vans and stuff like that. Me and my wife, we stay at the Union Mission. I had to wait for them to get all my medical done. I hadn't drawn in four years, but I decided to sit here every day in front of the Union and draw. A whole lot of people was stopping and noticing my drawings and they kept asking me, "Why don't you show this to tattoo artists or go do the comic book?" Well, I have put out a comic book. So I decided to make another one as well as make copies and prints of tattoos and stuff that people like. I've been trying to figure out of a way to make a buck and the man upstairs gave me a vision. He's given me a story. I'm trying to put together a Christian comic book Bible. Each one of these pictures is part of book one. It is called *Redemption*. It is the battle that we cannot see, but it deals with what's going on now. They're trying to start the rapture and deliver the Antichrist before Lucifer is ready and before God is ready in his time. So, to stop them from doing so, He send these three particular angels to defeat them and keep them bound and close the portal. That's the whole story of the first book. That's just generally what I'm feeling. It's something new, something different.



#### CAROL JOHNSTON

**MARK MONTUE:** I'm hanging out with Michael Blaze from the *Skid Row Photography Club*. Anybody who wants a picture, we take their picture and we give it to them, free of charge, of course.

**CAROL JOHNSTON:** I'm here to support Mark Montue and Mike Blaze. I'm also here to support Stephanie and the fellow artists at this spectacular festival and filming some live musical performances and doing some media marketing, getting the word out right now, while it's happening.

I heard about Skid Row the first day I arrived here in L.A. I was supposed to move in with a friend and it didn't happen. So, I found myself homeless and I made some phone calls and I found myself down at L.A. Mission. I went around to a few different shelters. In that experience I learned all about the homeless population here in L.A. I was familiar with it in D.C. because I volunteer with a number of programs there. I had no idea it was happening out here in L.A. until I saw it first hand.

Everybody told me not to come downtown. I'm glad that I did because what I found when I'm down here is not what a lot of people were telling me. There's a bigger picture that needs to be seen by the whole world of what's down here on Skid Row. It's a beautiful community, it's a lot of beautiful families down here and it definitely needs to be shown, more than what the media portrays as being Skid Row. There's a lot of resources down here. I've come across a lot of people that have asked me to help them and they seem ashamed but I tell them, I hug them anyway, "Look, don't be ashamed to ask for help. It's here, use it." Understand this, Skid Row is about people. Here it's about love and commitment and community. We're all in the same boat. Nobody is greater than any other. Understand that if you find yourself here, you find yourself among love.

### OLUSHEYI BANJO & MISTA SEE THE ENFORCER

**OLUSHEYI:** I came down here in 2004 'cause I had nowhere else to go. They invited me for the 3rd, 4th year in a row and I just excepted it. I love it, I love Skid Row, I love LAPD. I love just being around. You and I performed my song *Uplifted the Housed Remix*.

**MISTA SEE:** My rap verse is the *Ten Commandments*. I break 'em down in a normal way, give it that real gangster force. Just give it that edge but still keep it real honest, give you the rules.

I saw *A Little Shop Of Horrors* and I said, "This isn't real." I got down to Skid Row and I said: "Oh my God, this is real!" I used to come down to events like this and I've never been victimized, asked for money or robbed. If you carry yourself with respect, you get respect all around.



### CARBOARD ORIGAMI



**TINA HOVSEPIAN:** I'm the founder and inventor of *Cardboard Origami*, which is a portable shelter that you can open and close with no assembly required and provides instant shelter for people.



**ALEX VARIJANIAN:** It is to not only provide the transitional housing but we have a 4-step model to get people into permanent housing within 10 months.

### STORY TIME & MAGIC FOR KIDS BY LARRY THE READER



### SAFETY ZONE & TENT & CREATIVITY STATIONS



The **SKID ROW DESIGN COLLECTIVE** had their *Safety Zone* on display and **FAITH PURVEY** added her *Safety Fort* and asked people to write what makes them feel safe on it.



### WORDS WE HAVE LEARNED SINCE 9-11



Artist **CLAYTON CAMPBELL** conducted a workshop as part of his exhibit which was on display at the **Skid Row History Museum & Archive**. He invited participants to identify words they have learned or that have gained new meaning since 9-11 and then photographed the people holding their words and installed the pictures in the exhibition at the Skid Row History Museum & Archive.

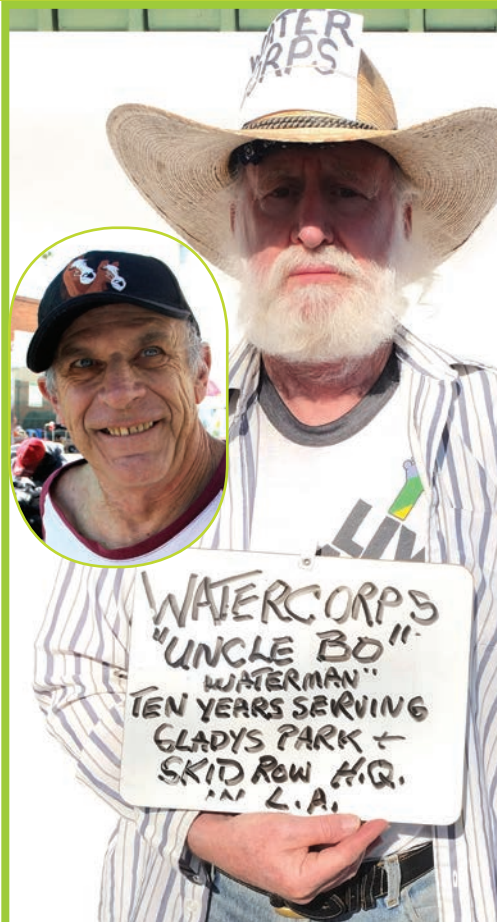
### YOGA WITH 'I AM WELLBEING CENTER'

Each day **FREIDEL KUSHMAN** and **MARCO TIAMA** gave Yoga exercises to everyone who needed them.





## 7TH FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS



Michael Hubman and Uncle Bow alias the *Watermen* celebrated the 10 year anniversary of **WATERCORPS** with us. "We provide clean drinking water to the homeless people on Skid Row in Los Angeles. There's a truck in the downtown facility. We fill up at the drive through water store and distribute 12 to 72 gallons in a day in 18 oz cups at a time, otherwise it will heat up and it will not be cool water. We're the largest non-organization in the world. It came from a Katrina response. I went with some friends from the Rainbow family - the Rainbow people are an extension of the hippies going back to free speech, human rights, anti-war movement - and we staffed a kitchen at St. Bernard Parish Louisiana. I was going to start a disaster relief organization for the next disaster. But I figured I'd be sitting around waiting for a disaster. Then I knew of a disaster that was happening twenty-four seven. So I came to Skid Row. We've been at it ten years now."



### ENORMOUS THANKS TO...

... **OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS:** **Lamp Arts Project** and **UCEPP**. **Alex Market** helped pay for our lunches, **Council District 14** provided tables and chairs, **Love Nail Tree** designed and printed our tshirts, which were provided at cost by Jacob at the **Fabric Planet** and **DLANC** provided our sound equipment and technician Jake Kelley. Our 'house band' the **Skidroplayaz** synched our heart beats.

... **OUR VOLUNTEERS:** Clancy Cornel, Alyssa Dominguez, Leslie Frank, Rusti Hood, Colin Rich, Ajay, Derek Rothschild, Chelsea Monet, Michael Gray, Sachi, Sean Gregory, Lois Kessel, Antonio Rodriguez and **Water Corps's** Michael Waterman and Uncle Bow, Robert the sweeper and dancer and J.R. James Russel Williams, caretaker of Gladys park.

... **AND THE ARTISTS WHO FACILITATED THE CREATIVITY STATIONS:** Kathy and Young Mi, **Paper Mache Bowls:** Garrison Alecsander, **The Big Draw LA**, **Poemas & Cartas - Poems & Letters:** Jen Hofer and Jessica Ceballos, **Hair & More:** La Ronda Hartfield, **Skid Row Community Clean UP:** Coach Ron, **Give Away:** Tracie W., **Doctor Sawm-Bey shares the magic of reading!**, **Sacred Children's Photo Shoot:** Michael Blaze, JoJo & Mark Montue, **Words We Learned Since 9-11:** Clayton Campbell, **Yoga:** Freidel Kushman and Miarco Tiana, **Cardboard Origami:** Alex Yarianian and Tina Hovsepian, **Skid Row Design Collective** and Faith Purvey with the **Safety Fort** and the **HIV Mobil testing unit** of the Aids Health Care Foundation in the Public Health Division was able to reach out to 34 people. Quoc Quan Le filmed and edited the DVD of the festival.



SKIDROPLAYAZ

### LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S CREW AND STAFF:

Austin Hines, Henriëtte Brouwers, KevinMichael Key, Walter Fears, RCB, John Malpede, Larry Swanson, Stephanie Bell, Sherri Walker, Chas Jackson, Anthony Taylor, Jen Wilson, Manuel Vigil, Gary Anderson, Christina Collier, Lee Maupin, Tom Grode.

### ABOUT LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

**LAPD's MISSION:** Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) creates performances and multidisciplinary 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 narraive 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 run for and by homeless people in the nation, as well as the first arts program of any kind 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 larger city of Los Angeles and the nation.

## 8TH ANNUAL FESTIVAL FOR ALL SKID ROW ARTISTS

COMING UP SATURDAY & SUNDAY OCTOBER 21 & 22, 2017

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, more music, spoken word, 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.



Crushow Herring and Artist

### CALL OR WRITE US!

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### FIND LAPD ONLINE:

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The 7th Festival for All Skid Row Artists is produced by Los Angeles Poverty Department with help from community partners Lamp Community's Arts Program and United Coalition East Prevention Project, Love Nail Tree, Alex Market and Fabric Planet. This year's festival is made possible with the support of California Arts Council's Local Impact program ~ CAC's Local Impact program is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Department of Cultural Affairs of the city of Los Angeles, L.A. County Arts Commission, Department of Rec and Parks and the Downtown Los Angeles Neighborhood Council.

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Photos: Austin Hines, Henriëtte Brouwers, Camila Arevalo



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