

THE SKID ROW

Winter 2024

ARTSZINE



Cover Art by Mike V. p.4

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Welcome

...to your **Skid Row Arts Zine**, your way to connect to multiple physical and online offerings of various Skid Row-based arts organizations. The Skid Row Arts Alliance seeks to promote neighborhood-based connectivity through creativity.

Visit the website: **skidrowartsalliance.com** for links to our programming.

Brought to you by the Skid Row Arts Alliance:

- Los Angeles Poverty Department
- Piece by Piece
- Urban Voices Project



... in partnership with





Piece by Piece Art Gallery

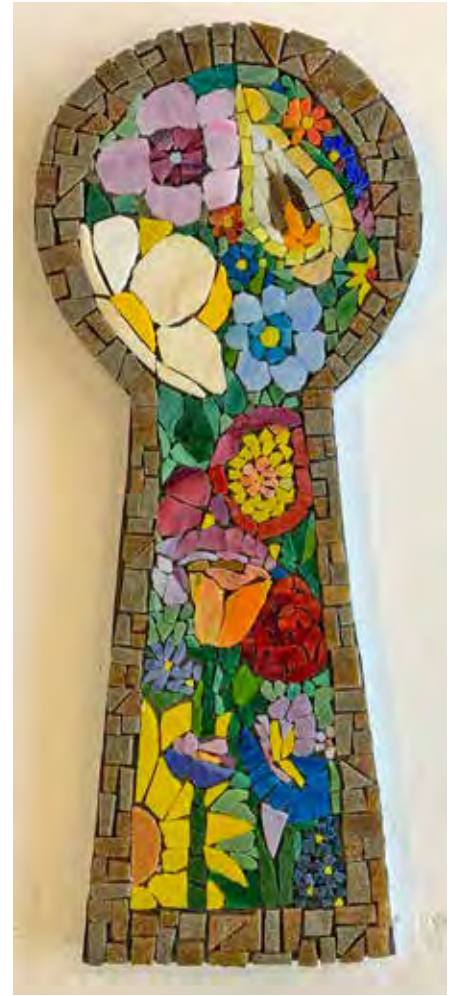
The Piece by Piece studios make space for artists to demonstrate their technical talents and creative skills. Here are a few of the artists' work. The focus in workshops is making use of recycled materials and in these artworks, you'll see glass, ceramic, beads, recycled plates and broken cups used in new and unique ways. From portraiture to abstract, from Nature to Manufactured, the possibilities are endless in the medium of mosaic.

Sign up to learn more at piecebypiece.org.
*New workshop space coming soon!



Vicki M.

← Margarita M.



Jose M.



June C.

Mike V. ↓



Below three works are by collaborative team:
Jose, Victor, Angie, Andrea, Ricardo, and Rosa



Join our community!

Piece by Piece is a nonprofit mosaic art program and social enterprise, offering free workshops and training to residents of Skid Row, South Los Angeles, and beyond. Classes are open, welcoming, and a safe space to be creative. Opportunities to earn income through the sale of individual work, or to contribute to public art, are available.

Get info or register at:
www.piecebypiece.org.
or call (213) 459-1420



Urban Voices Project in Vegas

by Tom Grode and Leeav Sofer



A definition of Medicine from the National Cancer Institute: “The practices and procedures used for the prevention, treatment, or relief of symptoms of diseases or abnormal conditions”.

A definition of Good Medicine from the Native American Tea Company: “Good medicine is a Native American belief that plants and herbs are essential for good health, and that people should live in balance with nature. Native Americans believe that respecting nature, having a kind heart, and having high moral standards are part of this balance.”

Urban Voices Project (UVP) is a music wellness nonprofit centered as a community choir in Skid Row, Downtown Los Angeles. UVP began ten years ago as a music wellness program based out of Wesley Health Center in Skid Row. The signature weekly program, Neighborhood Sing, is described by Artistic Director Leeav Sofer as an opportunity for some “musical medicine”.

As for the phrase, Motivation as Medicine, that comes from a national health conference organized by HLTH that took place in Las Vegas from October 20 to 23, 2024 with over ten thousand attending. HLTH describes itself as “the leading community for global health Innovation, connecting the healthcare ecosystem through global events, inspirational content, and impact-driven initiatives”.

UVP was brought in to perform on their main stage with seventeen singers and a three piece band. The Keynote speaker for the conference was First Lady Jill Biden.

The pop culture definition of adulthood is adults make choices and take responsibility for their choices. Some



Urban Voices Project folks taking pictures of The Sphere in Las Vegas

UVP choir members stayed in Los Angeles, the idea of singing in front of thousands of people possibly being too stressful. Other choir members went to Vegas believing that music will be the medicine for whatever emotional, relational, and creative challenges they might encounter.

Both choices of going to Las Vegas or not going to Las Vegas are equally healthy when the motivation is being an adult in relationship with other adults. And so Motivation is Medicine—along with Western Medicine, Native Indigenous Medicine, Musical Medicine, and whatever other Medicines are happening in other cultures. And add to that the Medicines waiting to be invented.

Leading up to this huge national HLTH conference, it was Road Trip time with choir folks either in Dan’s Van or Leeav’s Limo leaving for Vegas from outside Joshua House in Skid Row early morning Monday. Monday night we performed at Congregation Ner Tamid, a synagogue just outside of Las Vegas. We sang eight songs, which means we rehearsed the four songs we sang the next day at the HTLH conference. Congregation Ner Tamid was a fantastic friend and partner to us who made sure we were cared for while in Vegas including great food.

Urban Voices Project’s journey to Las Vegas highlights the power of “good medicine” in its many forms—whether through Native traditions, Western innovation, or the universal language of music. Through song, UVP fosters connection, creativity, and healing, whether on a national stage or in a local choir. There is an open invitation for all to experience this “musical medicine” by joining the Urban Voices Project programs or performing ensemble. Together, we can find harmony and healing through the power of music.



JOIN US Dec. 21 →

Urban Voices Project has long been a Skid Row community choir, yet offers so much more. UVP provides music education and wellness classes, as well as building community spaces to express voices of humanity. Visit our website for info!

www.urbanvoicesproject.org

Follow us: @urbanvoicesproject
Email: info@urbanvoicesproject.org

THE URBAN VOICES PROJECT 10th Anniversary
Presents:
A Holiday Called Home
A Skid Row Community Celebration
Sat. Dec. 21, 2024
12pm-4pm
Terasaki Budokan,
249 S Los Angeles St
FREE FOOD - MUSIC - ART



FEATURED ARTIST: Rosa Miller

A Life Painted with Joy



Step into a room where Rosa Miller is, and you'll feel her presence before you even see her. Her laughter—big, warm, and contagious—bursts through like sunlight on a rainy day, lifting the spirits of everyone around her. Rosa carries joy as effortlessly as her bright smile, filling each space with warmth and

color. She's a true original, and her story, like her art, brims with resilience, vibrancy, and an unbreakable love for community.

Originally from Virginia, Rosa first discovered her creative side singing in church choirs as a child. Music became her way of connecting, a language all its own. Years later, after a life-changing accident brought her to Skid Row, Los Angeles, she found herself building a new life in an unexpected community that soon felt like family. Through the Urban Voices Project (UVP), a group that uses music to foster expression and connection, Rosa found her voice again. For seven years, she has sung with UVP, her voice a source of strength and beauty in the community. And through UVP, she discovered The People Concern's Studio 526—a creative sanctuary where she could explore new artistic horizons.

For two years, Studio 526 has been Rosa's second home, a place where her art flows as freely as her laughter. "Art is healing," she often says, and for Rosa, this is more than a belief—it's a truth she lives every day. She remembers a moment in the studio when she had leftover paint but no clear idea of what to do with it. Alice, the studio manager, stepped in and suggested she set aside the brush altogether. Instead, Rosa took up a palette knife and spread the paint directly onto the canvas. Letting her hands guide her without any plan, she felt an unexpected freedom and joy emerge. Since that moment, Rosa has been hooked on painting with her heart, often returning to the theme of vibrant, abstract hearts—symbols of her love for people and her desire to share the healing power of art. "I love people," she says, "and I want to share the joy of art with them." Her advice to anyone going through a tough time: "Try expressing yourself through art. It's healing. You come in feeling down and leave



Revival (LOCATION UNCONFIRMED)

lighter and happier—it works for me, and it can work for you, too." She laughs, taking a sip of coffee, savoring the moment between strokes.

Rosa's creativity doesn't stop at the studio. She's also a regular with LA CAN's rooftop garden program, where she helps bring fresh produce and wellness to the community. For Rosa, gardening is yet another form of art—a way to nurture life, to connect with others, and to bring people together. Her dedication to cultivating beauty and connection shines through, whether she's planting seeds, spreading colors across a canvas, or lifting her voice in song.

In all she does whether painting hearts, singing at Art Jams, working in the garden, or sharing her voice with UVP Rosa Miller radiates joy. Her life and work show that resilience is beautiful, that laughter is powerful, and that healing happens wherever there's love and connection. Rosa has transformed her own challenges into a gift for others, and with every heart she paints, she shares a piece of herself with the world.



Clockwise from top left:
*Fall Leaves, Nowhere, Still Water, Volleyball,
Tears Drop*

ART JAM at The People Concern Studio 526



Every second Friday, The People Concern's Studio 526 transforms into a hub of music, art, and community spirit with Art Jam, a celebration of resilience, talent, and shared creativity. At 5 PM, the studio becomes a makeshift stage, where the lines between performer and audience dissolve. This isn't just an open mic—it's a community-owned space where artists are the MCs, stage managers, and sound techs, running the show and sharing their stories.

George, a resident MC at Art Jam, brings sharp wit and contagious energy, often diving into spontaneous karaoke or self-roasting to the crowd's delight. Recently, his magnetic personality landed him a gig as MC for Water Drop LA's gala, proving that courage and humor open new doors.

Then there's Gerardo, the "Prime Minister" of Skid Row, known for his charisma and theatrical flair. An actor, screenwriter, and wedding officiant, he might slip into an accent mid-sentence or belt out a song, adding a touch of drama to every Art Jam.

On the soundboard, Marco—a talented guitarist—ensures every beat and ballad sounds its best. When he's not managing tech, he occasionally steps onto the stage with soulful performances that captivate the audience.

Art Jam is more than a show; it's a sanctuary for self-expression. From drums and guitars to community art stations, it's a space to celebrate birthdays, milestones, and creativity. Join us every second Friday from 5–7pm at Studio 526—where the stage is yours to create, perform, or simply cheer. Experience the unique magic of Art Jam.



JOIN US! The People Concern’s Studio 526 welcomes artists of all levels. We firmly believe that creativity resides within everyone. Our space offers access to art supplies and boasts a music room equipped with keyboards, drums, pianos, microphones, and guitars. Moreover, we host a monthly Art Jam, providing a platform for performance and creative expression. Interested in getting involved? See page 27 for calendar of on-going events at Studio 526. Reach out to us at: ArtsProgram@ThePeopleConcern.org



STUDIO 526 SCHEDULE

Art Studio Hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 12:30pm–3:30pm

Music Studio Hours (by appointment only): Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 9am–3:30pm (1.5-hour sessions)

Please note: All new artists must first attend the New Artist Orientation prior to using the studios.

New Artist Orientation: Select Tuesdays and Thursdays. See schedule →

Art Jam: 2nd Friday of every month, 5pm–7pm (open to the public)

ORIENTATION SCHEDULE

1st Thursday of every month, 10-11am
3rd Tuesday of every month, 1-2pm

Jan 21	(Tue)	1pm-2pm
Feb 06	(Thu)	10am-11am
Feb 18	(Tue)	1pm-2pm
Mar 06	(Thu)	10am-11am
Mar 18	(Tue)	1pm-2pm
Apr 03	(Thu)	10am-11am
Apr 22	(Tue)	1pm-2pm
May 01	(Thu)	10am-11am



THEPEOPLECONCERN

Because everyone should be housed, healthy and safe

Studio 526 @ The People Concern

526 San Pedro, Los Angeles, CA 90013

Email: ArtsProgram@ThePeopleConcern.org

wwwthepeopleconcern.org | (213) 757-8598

LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT'S UPCOMING EXHIBITION

February 1–March 30, 2025

Tents and Tenants:

After Echo Park Lake

Abandoned by the city during a global pandemic, unhoused organizers created an encampment that became an uprising. Its archive is the practice of a collective future.



Queen Gives a Speech, March 31, 2021. Photo by Joey Scott

It Is Only Possible To Fail If We Forget By Annie Powers

If, as Cuban militant Che Guevara put it, “the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love,” then the **After Echo Park Lake Archive** is a love letter to the future.

Convened by the UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy, the After Echo Park Lake Archive began with a collective of housed and unhoused scholar-organizers who participated in the encampment uprising—myself included. Organizing through, and bearing witness to, the afterlives of the Echo Park Lake eviction, the collective’s members experienced the ways in which the encampment was remembered—and, crucially, misremembered. There were flashy news stories depicting the infrastructure built by encampment residents, the support of the homeless community by the housed community, and the mass eviction by militarized riot police. Marches, rallies, direct actions, and eviction defenses at Echo Park Lake all made their way into print – itself an achievement. But beneath and preceding these public accounts, we knew, was the much longer, quieter work required to build the power to fight and the power to stay. What about the months of weekly strategy

meetings and outreach walks? Discussions during pick-up basketball games? Planning schematics for building the showers? Neither spontaneously formed nor perfect by any stretch of the imagination, the organizing between housed and unhoused tenants at Echo Park Lake offers key lessons, ideas, and histories to homeless people’s movements of the present and future.

This became the principle of the archive: collecting records of the Echo Park Lake experience that might help housed and unhoused organizers of the future take up the fight in their own times and places. Specifically, this meant prioritizing materials not otherwise publicly available—those produced by encampment members and organizers themselves in the process of collective struggle. Crucially, we include memories in this collection process, and so the archive contains oral histories with key participants in the Echo Park Lake encampment uprising. We opted to collect materials that would otherwise disappear, materials that tell stories not heard in the press, materials that offer a blueprint for the struggle at Echo Park Lake—not to copy-paste into new contexts, but so that organizers of the future can understand the conditions in



Jed Parriott, *Dawn Blockade at Echo Park Lake*, January 24, 2020. Work in progress, acrylic on canvas, 10'x6'. Photo courtesy of the artist

which we operated and the paths we chose to take. We also make clear that the eviction from Echo Park Lake was not the end of the story: the people involved kept fighting back.

For members of the After Echo Park Lake Archive Collective, the archive attempts to historicize the future. When we began to organize, there were few examples to which we could look. We now understand that this is not because homeless people did not organize in the past, but because there is no historical consciousness of such movements in the United States. The After Echo Park Lake Archive attempts to cut against such forgetting. We hope to pass on these lessons of love and life – and conflict, confusion, and repression, too – to our descendants in struggle. Together, unhoused and housed people, organizing in solidarity, cracked open a window into a different world—one whose undergirding logic was not banishment but loving solidarity. Despite the mass eviction and the death and suffering it yielded, the archive suggests that we must not see Echo Park Lake as a failure—but part of a long arc of organized homeless people’s struggle in Los Angeles, the United States, and the world. It is only possible to fail if we forget.



Skid Row History Museum & Archive:
250 S. Broadway, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Museum Hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, 2-5pm
and by appointment: info@lapovertydept.org

Public Programs

- Saturday, February 1, 5pm: Public Opening
- Friday, February 21, 7pm: Tenants in the Streets
- Friday, March 21, 7pm: The Liberatory Living Room

This exhibition is organized by the UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy with support provided by the Mellon Foundation. It is on display February 1– March 30, 2025 at the Skid Row History Museum & Archive, a project of the Los Angeles Poverty Department. The After Echo Park Lake Archive can be accessed at the Skid Row History Museum & Archive.

LA Poverty Dept.'s Stay at the COVID Hotel

By Sara Fetherolf and Pamela Miller



Since last March, the Skid Row History Museum & Archive has been transformed into a Covid Hotel. Los Angeles Poverty Department's exhibition, performances, and community conversations have told the story of LA County's successful Quarantine & Isolation (QI) medical shelter program during Covid. QI sites were motels transformed into hospitals, healing places for homeless people and others who had no safe place to quarantine.

Our five community conversations featured folks who worked in the QI sites, alongside Skid Row community advocates. These conversations imagined the possibilities of a world where lessons learned from Covid inspire a new, more compassionate approach to healthcare and housing.

But if you weren't there, don't worry—we've got a cheat sheet. (You can always watch the full conversations at our website <https://www.lapovertydept.org/projects/welcome-to-the-covid-hotel>) Or scan the QR code →



Adversity Generates Innovation

Dr. Jennifer Sudarsky will be the first to tell you that “adversity generates innovation.” As the Medical Director of QI sites, she described their beginnings. “It was a moment...where we realized: holy shit, this is the last stop,” Dr. Jen said. “There's nowhere else for these people to go. We had to learn to de-escalate. We had to learn to deal with people who were using. We had to learn to help people who were in withdrawal or who were embarrassed to tell us they were using and let them know it's okay.”

Nurse Marissa Axelrod focused on the vulnerability of Skid Row residents, and the surprising success of the Covid response: “We thought, we're living in a shelter, living in close communities on the street. How could our population not be at higher risk? But they ended up doing pretty damn good.”

Soma Snakeoil of The Sidewalk Project, defined the term, “harm reduction,” which was an especially important topic. “It is a social justice movement that fights for the rights and for the liberation of people who use drugs and sex workers and can be expanded to other marginalized groups.” Dr. Emily Thomas Chief Medical Officer, Housing for Health, LA County Department of Health Services (DHS), expanded on how harm reduction became an important component of the QI sites: “We got to teach everybody who came into the Quarantine & Isolation sites to actually do harm reduction. And so that's going to start the conversations around our opioid crisis in Los Angeles County.”



Housing is Healthcare (Part 1)

Our second conversation focused on how housing is foundational for health, as Covid made clear. As Dr. Heidi Behforouz, Medical Director of Housing for Health (HFH) at Los Angeles County Department of Health Services, said, “Part of being human means having your basic needs met. And housing is one piece of it, but it’s a fundamental piece.” Nurse Angi Enriquez agreed that housing is part of health: “If you don’t have a place where you can feel safe and where you will be able to eat and where you can feel, hopefully, loved, how are you gonna care about going to the doctor and taking care of your body?”

The conversation focused on how the QI sites helped people connect with housing resources, and how that model can play out in the future. “Covid showed us that it was possible,” said Steve Diaz, a community advocate. “After Covid, we should not be doubting anything except that it can’t be done.”

Housing is Healthcare (Part 2)

The connection between housing and healthcare is bigger than just one conversation! Part 2 went into how the QI workers built trust to help people get supportive services and housing. Bianca Martinez reflects on that process: “Often we heard, ‘this is the first time I’m in a bed,’ and most times we would leave them alone for about three to four days because we’re like, do what you have to do, get comfortable.” Meanwhile, social workers like Bianca would be working hard behind the scenes to help find housing.

“Right when we got the intake it was action, because ten days to find placement is very difficult,” she said.

Building trust didn’t just lead to housing placement. Nurse Tina Juarez describes how she used harm reduction to start a conversation about getting addiction treatment: “I was able to get to a point where, after trust developed and we were talking about harm reduction, some of them asked for help. They didn’t want to die of an overdose, and they didn’t want to die of Covid.”

Finally, Molly Rysman (HFH) shared info about the Skid Row Action Plan, to enthusiastic community support! “How do we create a radically hospitable health care environment that welcomes people in,” Molly asked, “where they’re met by people with lived experience who can support them in accessing the health care they need?”

(continued on page 16)





Covid Confidential

Molly's excellent question was picked up after a summer break, in a conversation with Eric Espinoza, the head of operations for the Covid Hotels. Eric went over the lessons learned, what worked, and how to create long-term programs based on these experiences. "There was a reflective moment where our operations were like: wait, if this was anything outside of Covid, this still works," Eric said. Which leads us to...

Going Forward

In our last conversation, we heard from people who are creating programs inspired by and continuing the work of the QI sites. Dr. Shayan Rab, Associate Medical Director, LA County Department of Mental Health (DMH), introduced the HOME Team, a street psychiatry unit, and expanded the definition of harm reduction: "There is a larger form of harm reduction, which I like to think we apply on the HOME team, which is preventing the trauma that can also come with involuntary hospitalization. When you end up in a hospital, you can be put in restraints, you can injure yourself, you're getting injections against your will. It is a dangerous place to be. And just by treating people on the street, we have been able to avoid hospitalizations."

Gabriela Ramirez, IHOP Manager, chimed in with information about the newly formed IHOP (Interim Housing Outreach Program, not the pancake restaurant). "Through the pandemic we saw a lot of lessons to be learned and that's when we started to see the need for additional services to be provided. So, the IHOP team was created."

Finally, Victoria Onwualu Director of Housing and Health at JWCH, talked about the Safe Landing site at the Cecil Hotel, and how such sites are reimagining shelter access. For Victoria, building trust is just as important as it was at the QI sites. "We don't force anyone," she said. "We're open. You walk in. We don't even talk to you about housing. What we are there for is to give you a bed, shower, and food. If you're able to take that, we can then go into what is going on in your life. What type of housing are you looking for?"

With all these exciting new developments in the world of healthcare and housing access, what's next for LAPD and the Covid Hotel? So glad you asked!





What's next?

The Covid Hotel Welcomes You to the Future

“Let’s get this show on the road!” someone said. And so we will.

On December 14, 2024, at 2pm, at the closing of the exhibition, Los Angeles Poverty Department will perform *The Covid Hotel Welcomes You To The Future*.

In early 2025, LA Poverty Department and our ensemble of Skid Row community members will be spreading the message of our “Welcome to the Covid Hotel” project to all corners of LA County. Or—to be more accurate—to all 8 of the County SPAs. (No, these SPAs are not places to get green-goop facials, they’re “Service Planning Areas”—the County government carves up the sprawling county land into 8 areas, so that planning for public health and clinical services can be more localized.)

So, what’s the message of “Welcome to the Covid Hotel?” Mainly, it’s a hopeful message about a better way to provide quality healthcare for people in poverty and experiencing homelessness—and get them housed.

LAPD’s project was inspired by the passion of the frontline QI workers—their belief that the model of care they developed could repair a broken healthcare system and solve homelessness. The heart of the exhibition is the QI workers’ stories (interview excerpts) on “motel room” TVs; Nurse Tina who emphatically proclaims, “We can end homelessness in a measurable, reasonable amount of time! We can do it! We did it. I’m living proof. We did it!”

LAPD’s idea to use our “Covid Hotel” artworks as a tool for advocacy was born from the passionate reactions to our project from QI heroes like Nurse Tina, Medical Director Dr. Jennifer Sudarsky, and many vocal Skid Row residents. During “Covid Hotel” community conversation events, many people shared stories of struggling to untangle the red tape of bureaucratic healthcare systems. Everyone agrees that the lessons learned at the QI’s prove that there is a better way. And that way is about having recuperative health care drop-in centers staffed by doctors, nurses, mental health clinicians, and social workers who work as a team to treat “the whole person”—human to human – not automated answering systems that never let you speak to a person or endless forms that are impossible to decipher. The vision for creating these centers in every SPA is based on the theory that if there were barrier-free places staffed by empathetic people that homeless people could go to when they need care, they would go get care. Or, if a person sees someone living on the streets in need of care, rather than feeling helpless, they will know there is actually something they can do in their own neighborhood – take them to get care.

By taking our “Covid Hotel” show on the road, LAPD will bring the QI’s story to the attention of healthcare workers, community advocates, stakeholders, and advocates. We’ll give a performance, followed by a panel of local experts in conversation with their neighbors and find out what it will take to bring this vision into reality in all parts of LA County’s 4,084 square miles—far and wide.

(We’re coming to you, Lancaster!) ■

Skid Row History Museum & Archive Calendar: Winter 2024/2025

All events are free. Check our website for updates about the movies we are screening and the public conversations and events we are hosting at the museum: lapovertydept.org

Or stop by to pick up a hard copy of the calendar with all events, and check out the exhibition!

The museum will be closed from December 21, 2024, until January 5, 2025.

EXHIBITIONS:

Welcome to the COVID Hotel (Closing December 14, 2024)

Open Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 2–5pm

Unveiling unexpected lessons about healthcare for the homeless that emerged from LA County-run Quarantine & Isolation sites during the Covid crisis.

TENTS AND TENANTS: After Echo Park Lake—February 1–March 30, 2025

Open Thursday, Friday, Saturday: 2–5pm

Abandoned by the city during a global pandemic, unhoused organizers created an encampment that became an uprising. Its archive is the practice of a collective future. Organized by the UCLA Luskin Institute on Inequality and Democracy.

PERFORMANCE:

The Covid Hotel Welcomes You to the Future: December 14, 2pm

Performance by Los Angeles Poverty Department.

THEATER WORKSHOPS: Tuesdays, 2–5pm; Thursdays, 7–9pm

We're creating theater performances from scratch with creative input from everyone involved.

LOS ANGELES TENANTS UNION—Downtown Local:

Wednesdays, 7pm

Do you need repairs in your unit? Did you get an eviction notice?

BOOK CLUBS:

• Saturdays, 12 – 2pm

Hosted by Public School Los Angeles

You will be reading *A Thousand Plateaus* by Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, page by page, together with Andrew Culp, a professor at CalArts.

• 1st & 3rd Sundays, 2 – 4pm

Hosted by Public School Los Angeles

Reading of the new translation of *Capital* with one of the founding members of The Public School, Kevin.

FREE MOVIE NIGHT: 1st & 3rd Fridays, 7pm

FREE Movie screenings, Free popcorn, Free coffee & Free conversation

MUTUAL AID SELF / SOCIAL THERAPY (MAST): with Mel Butler

2nd & 4th Sundays, 2–4 pm, hosted by The Public School Los Angeles.

SKID ROW ARTS ALLIANCE (SRAA) MEETING: 2nd Tuesday,

11am–12:30pm, various helpful workshops, training and exchange for Skid Row artists

CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP: 3rd Tuesdays, 10:30am–12pm

(led by published author, Ivy Pochada)

SOCK PUPPET WORKSHOP: Last Fridays, 3–5pm (led by Marilyn Irizarry)

OPEN MIC NIGHT with Lorinda Hawkins Smith: Last Friday, 5–8pm

Whether you're a seasoned performer or a first-timer, this is your chance to shine on stage. Sing, play an instrument, recite poetry, or share a story. EVERYONE IS WELCOME!





CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOP

SKID ROW HISTORY MUSEUM & ARCHIVE

Los Angeles Poverty Department



SRAA WORKSHOP: Grant Writing



SOCK PUPPET WORKSHOP



THEATER WORKSHOP



MOVIE NIGHT



OPEN MIC NIGHT

LAPD
LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

250 S. Broadway, Los Angeles
213-413-1077, info@lapovertydept.org

Founded in 1985, Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) is the first arts group in Skid Row made up of Skid Row residents, housed and un-housed. We make performances, create exhibitions and we have an archive of Skid Row History.

Movie Night



LAPD website



New Collection at Skid Row History Museum & Archive donated by Nancy Mintie, the founder of Inner City Law Center

By John Malpede



1985, Nancy Mintie in front of a construction trailer in Skid Row that served as the second office of the ICLC.



Nancy and John viewing the archived collection

I met Nancy Mintie in the Summer of 1984. At that moment Nancy was a member of the Catholic Worker community (CW), A.K.A., “The Hippie Kitchen.” Nancy was a recent UCLA law school graduate—who, as she says, couldn’t cook. So, what did she do? She started the CW Legal Clinic in a donated trailer that sat behind the Catholic Worker—where their garden now is.

The clinic helped Skid Row residents with tenancy issues, general relief (GR) issues, and all kinds of legal situations. Just before I met her in 1983, a grassroots organizing effort called the “Homeless Organizing Team” (HOT) came together, spearheaded by CW member Matt Lyons and community member Harry Rogers. I met Matt, Harry, and other members of HOT, in the summer of 1984 when they were testifying at the Board of Supervisors meeting on the habitability of the Skid Row Hotels. I immediately offered myself up as a volunteer and started working with HOT.

On top of being a lawyer, Nancy was a piano player and a poet, and she was married to the accomplished photographer Arden Algier. In other words, when I told her I was a performance artist she wasn’t scared.

Big changes were happening. The CW legal clinic was spinning off to become its own non-profit. I was still living in New York, but when I came back for two months in the fall to work on HOT’s Tent City action opposite City Hall over Christmas and New Year 1985, Nancy and I agreed to write a grant to the California Arts Council for me to be artist-in-residence at Inner City Law Center (ICLC).

After Tent City, I went back to New York and raised some money there to come back and spend another two or three months (or as long as the money lasted) volunteering. Inner City Law now had its own office at 544 S. San Pedro—next

to the Weingart Center. It also had support from Legal Aid Foundation to hire two outreach paralegals. Nancy offered me the job. It was the best—running around Skid Row helping people with tenancy and GR problems. Eventually I ended up going to every DPSS office in LA County—more than once—to monitor systemic GR problems and help the people who suffered because of them.

Nancy had a piano in her office, and like every other surface in her office, it was piled high with legal papers. The explosive growth of ICLC—from a largely volunteer effort in a trailer to a non-profit with ten or so employees—happened in a matter of months. It was amazing how well Nancy navigated this transition. She knew what she was doing. And she was doing a lot. With its strategic location in Skid Row, ICLC became the vital center of the efforts of the Homeless Litigation Team, a consortium of some many of the best public interest lawyers in Los Angeles, representing Legal Aid, the ACLU, Western Center on Law and Poverty, and a number of other equally important groups in legal services. At the same time, Nancy was pursuing a number of habitability cases against slum landlords in Skid Row and Westlake. And she won the biggest settlement in the history of the city, against a slumlord, forcing him to make his buildings habitable.

I worked for ICLC for four years, and during that time, at nights and on weekends when the lawyers weren’t around, A Poverty Department workshops started. We would push the desks aside and clear some space to have theater workshops and make some stuff up. We started performing around town and then around the country and did two shows in Europe. After four years I stopped working as a paralegal—with LAPD doing a lot, I couldn’t keep doing both. But LAPD continued to rehearse at ICLC for another



Fighting the Rats While Beating Off the Pundits

■ **Inner city:** The attacks on poverty lawyers wind up hurting those who are least able to defend themselves: the poor.

By NANCY MINTIE

The badly shaken mother sat in the construction trailer that served as my office, surrounded by her four beautiful young daughters. In a quivering voice, she told me how she had been awakened by the screams of her youngest daughter. When she flipped on the light, she saw blood on the child's face and bloody rat prints across the pillow case. She then opened a paper

on them and still others have been disabled from lead-paint poisoning.

The parents of these children work at jobs that pay minimum wage or worse and don't have the money to move to better housing. One father told me how he worked all day at a job involving heavy manual labor, then tried to stay awake at night to watch over his family with a broom in his hand to fight off the rats that climbed onto the bodies of his sleeping wife and children. Another mother told me that she went to sleep in tears each night, praying that our lawsuit would be successful so that her family could escape their nightmarish existence.

attack the very few lawyers in this country who devote their lives to changing such horrific living conditions. They say that we poverty attorneys are merely young, childish, yuppie advocates who are ruining the quality of life in many communities by defending the anti-social behavior of the poor.

These commentators might be surprised to know that in my Inner City Law Center, a typical small legal-aid organization, four of the five lawyers are in their 40s, and two of us are the mothers of young children. Some of us have lived in extreme poverty in order to do this work, and all have sacrificed the comfort and security that a conventional law career would bring. My courageous staff members put their bodies on the line every day by going into the most dangerous neighborhoods and buildings in this city to bring hope to those trapped on the streets or in the slums.

Some have claimed that it is a misguided "abstract compassion" that motivates us. But if you'd ever held a rat-bitten child in your arms, you would find nothing "abstract" about the experience. At my office, we do this work because we have grown to love the children and their families who come to us in distress.

Broad-based attacks on poverty attorneys have created a climate of hostility which has made it nearly impossible to raise funds to continue this work and the efforts of other legal-services organizations around the country. At this moment, Congress is moving forward with plans to decimate or even eliminate all federal funding for all legal aid to the poor. If we go, then the rats and slumlords will be free to prey upon the poor children of Los Angeles.

Nancy Mintie is the founder and director of the Inner City Law Center, a nonprofit legal services organization.

'Some have been attacked by rats, some have had cockroaches trapped in their ear canals, damaging their hearing, others have suffered crippling injuries when ceilings collapsed on them and still others have been disabled from lead-paint poisoning.'

Most Americans have no idea that this kind of housing exists in a city such as ours. They think of it in terms of the tenements of New York a century ago. However, as we who are on the front lines of the war against poverty know, entry-level housing for the poor is virtually synonymous with slum housing in Los Angeles.

Despite this reality, it has become fashionable for ill-informed political pundits to



INNER CITY LAW CENTER
LAWYERS FOR THE HUMBLE AND FORGOTTEN

BALLERINA V. SLUMLORD
Mariene Jacobo, whom we represented in a successful lawsuit against the slumlord who owned her apartment building.

five or six years—well after they'd moved to their current location at Seventh and Central.

From the beginning Nancy had a vision for recognizing and serving the whole person—that's the way the Catholic Workers did it, that's the way Nancy did it, and that's the way I see it too.

In the late 1990's, Nancy left ICLC, and in 2000 in Claremont, where she and Ardon were living, she created another organization, Uncommon Good, which had the multi-dimensionality that she longed for. Working with 100's of working-class families, she developed programs that addressed physical health, mental health, education and the environment, with the goal of breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty. Uncommon Good's organic farm provided jobs and healthy produce to families. Uncommon Good has mentored thousands of children and helped them go to college. Uncommon Good created a program that pays medical school tuition for people who then come back and provide care in the community. Uncommon Good does many more amazing things than I'm aware of.

Nancy Mintie is now retiring from Uncommon Good and she has generously donated materials from her years at Inner City Law Center to the Skid Row History Museum & Archive.

Nancy is a beautiful, caring, person, a visionary and a person that I am so very lucky to have met, worked for, and continue to have as a friend. She's changed countless lives, including mine.



Clockwise from bottom left: 1) 1993 Inner City Law Brochure featuring "Ballerina vs Slumlord"; 2) 1985 Tent City Protest at LA County Board of Supervisors. Nancy testified to the board on behalf of protestors; 3) Nancy Mintie with her client, three-year-old Eric Molina, who was attacked by rats in his slum apartment. Mintie won \$1.25 million in his case; 4) LA Times 1995 "Fighting Rats While Beating Off the Pundits"; 5) 1985 Inner City Law Center board and staff

Cultivating Neighborhood Connections Through Art

Windows of Little Bronze Tokyo Partners With Five Local Artists to Honor and Build Connections Between Little Tokyo and Skid Row

By Hayk Makhmuryan

Little Tokyo and Skid Row neighborhoods are right next to each other in Los Angeles' downtown—even with some overlap—and, unsurprisingly, they have a shared history: both of displacement and discrimination, as well as perseverance and building community power. The vision of Sustainable Little Tokyo's Windows of Little Bronze Tokyo project in 2024 is to use arts and cultural rootedness to facilitate learning about these histories, as well as deepen relationships among people in the two neighborhoods and broader Asian American and Black communities.

Far beyond only commissioning artists for artwork, the project was intentional in designing a community orientation (May 11), opening celebration (August 8) and culmination event (November 17) that would connect community members and groups with each other, be a communal learning, collaboration inspiring and storytelling space, with the selected artists weaving those stories into their work.

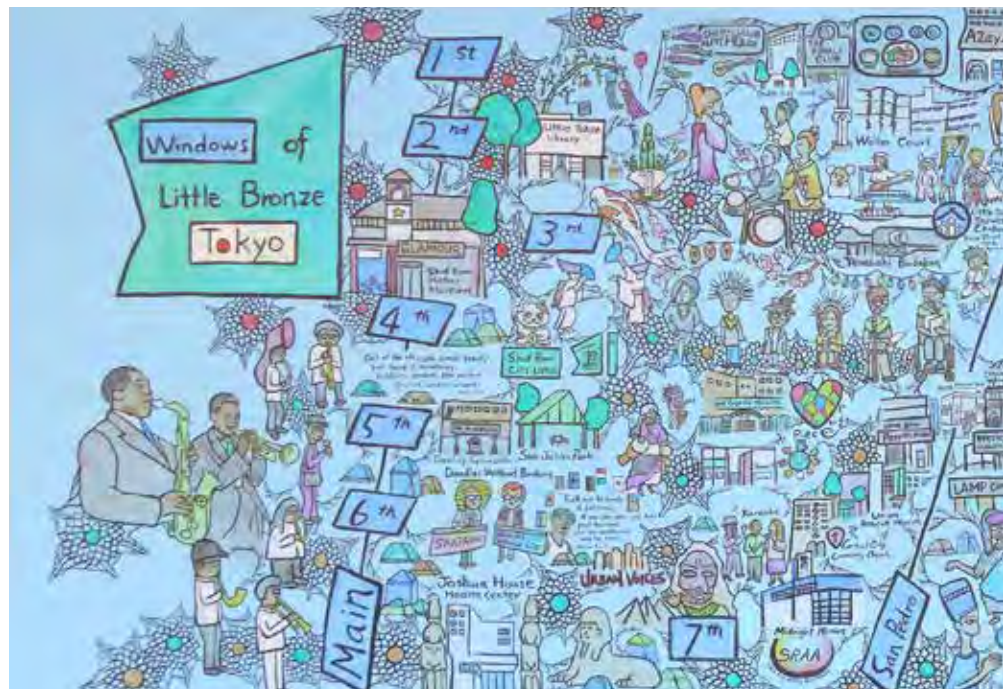
The project collaborated with two sites, Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN) in Skid Row and Azay Restaurant in Little Tokyo, with artwork and interactive activities at both sites during the opening and closing celebrations respectively. The art included incredible visual work by Carey Westbrook, Miki Yokoyama and Ayumi Chisolm, pop up art-making workshops facilitated by Ayumi and Carey, community interviews and panel discussion by documentarian and storyteller Bobby Buck; and a collaborative performance by Wayne Hoggatt drawing from jazz, Japanese taiko and West African drumming.

Windows of Little Bronze Tokyo celebrates Black and Japanese community presence in the area we now know as Little Tokyo and Skid Row neighborhoods going back to 1880s, including the Bronzeville era during World War II, when Japanese Americans were forcibly removed and incarcerated, and African Americans facing racist restrictions

in other parts of Los Angeles moved into the neighborhood and infused it with jazz and other forms of culture. The name of the project comes from one of the epithets for the neighborhood during the post-war era—the brief period of time following the war as Japanese Americans began moving back and lived in an integrated, multiracial community.

This project is as relevant as ever today, as we root in existing histories to cultivate a shared hope for more solidarity to continue to be built in years ahead.

For more information, please visit: sustainablelittletokyo.org/projects/windows or bit.ly/sltwindows2024.



Right: Panelists at Opening Ceremony on August 8, 2024 at LACAN



Below: Mural of historically Little Bronze area, now Skid Row, by artist Miki Yokoyama, (photo by Tina June)



STREET SYMPHONY



MUSIC WITH A MISSION

Monthly Program at The Midnight Mission every 4th Thursday of the month after lunch services at 2:30PM. Performances are open to the public, and all participants receive opportunities to connect during the programming and resources.

MUSIC FOR THE SOUL

Every fourth Friday of the month, at 10AM, Street Symphony musicians and Downtown Women's Center residents share meditative musical offerings to convene vulnerable spaces of community and conversation.



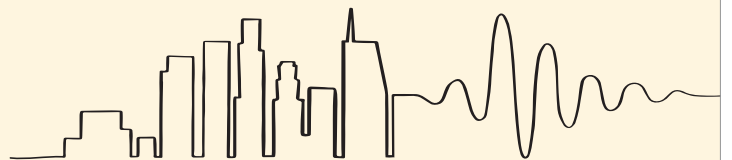
MIDNIGHT STRINGS WORKSHOP

This is a 8-10 week committed group of residents, staff, and teaching artists and musicians from Street Symphony. During the residency, a Street Symphony teaching artist will lead participants in group guitar lessons for the cohort of participants. The workshop will explore different genres and styles of guitar playing, and will feature local guest guitars. Next workshop start in Spring/March.

OUR MISSION:

Street Symphony harnesses the convening power of music to invite connection and relationship

WWW.STREETSYMPHONY.ORG





UNITED COALITION EAST PREVENTION PROJECT

Established in 1996, United Coalition East Prevention Project is located at 804 E. 6th St. in Skid Row. We specialize in alcohol and other drug prevention and community mobilization to support a healthy and vibrant Skid Row neighborhood. We meet monthly to discuss prevention initiatives and community-driven programming at our local Skid Row parks.

UCEPP Monthly Coalition Meeting:
First Thursday of each month at 2 PM,
in person and on Zoom*

*Zoom (Meeting ID 87890708182) link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87890708182> →



For more information on how to get involved and support community prevention and improvement efforts please contact:
charlesp@socialmodel.com

Social media: @ucepp_smrs



Creating Justice LA

Hours of Operation

Monday: 9 am–2 pm

Wednesday: 9 am–3 pm
(12pm) Healing Circle Book Club

Thursday: 4 pm–9 pm
(6pm) Off The Top Thursdays

Friday: 2 pm–6 pm
Freestyle Fridays

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Museum & Archive
250 S. Broadway,
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www.lapovertydept.org ~ info@lapovertydept.org ~ 213-413-1077

Come out
and Enjoy
the Fun!

facebook.com/openmicnightdtdla

doodles without borders

doodles without borders (dwb) is committed to equitable access to arts, cultural, and social spaces as a fundamental human right and collective responsibility.

Connect with Hayk and dwb events:
doodleswithoutborders.com | [@doodleswithoutborders](https://twitter.com/doodleswithoutborders)

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
SKIDROWARTSALLIANCE.COM

Explore a variety of inspiring programs from music to theater, visual arts and much more. Each program uses the arts to nourish wellness, community and connectivity.

Share your experience and ideas for the next Zine!
Reach us at info@skidrowartsalliance.com

Skid Row Happenings: Ongoing

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<p>Music Education Labs: 1–3pm Urban Voices Project, held at Studio 526 (see p.7)</p>	<p>Virtual Art Inspiration: 11am–12pm, (Zoom Beginning mosaic workshop with Piece by Piece instructor. (see p.5)</p> <p>Art Studio: 12:30–3:30pm Music Studio: 9am–3:30pm (1.5-hr. sessions by appt.)</p> <p>New Artist Orientation: 1pm, on Select Tuesdays. Studio 526 (see p.11)</p> <p>Music Wellness Labs: 1–2pm, Urban Voices Project, held at Central Library, 630 W. 5th at Flower. (see p.7)</p> <p>Theatre Workshops: 2–5pm, LA Poverty Dept. (see p.18)</p>	<p>Free Beginning Mosaic: 10am–12pm, Piece by Piece): Learn basic mosaic techniques and be part of this welcoming and friendly community! ON HOLD</p> <p>Neighborhood Sing: 2–3:30pm Urban Voices Project, Joshua House Clinic, 325 E 7th St, LA (see p.7)</p>	<p>Art Studio: 12:30–3:30pm Music Studio: 9am–3:30pm (1.5-hr. sessions by appt.)</p> <p>New Artist Orientation: 1pm, Select Thursdays, Studio 526 (see p.11)</p> <p>Skid Row History Museum & Archive Exhibition—Tents and Tenants: After Echo Park Lake, opens 2/1/25. 2–5pm (also Fri & Sat) (see p.12)</p> <p>Neighborhood Sing: 2:30–3:30pm, Urban Voices Project, held at Central Library, Meeting Room B, 630 W 5th St, at Flower (see p.7)</p> <p>“How dare you!” community arts table: 3–4:30pm, doodles without borders, General Jeff (Gladys) Park (see p.26)</p> <p>Off the Top Thursdays—Open Mic: 6–9pm, Creating Justice LA (see p.25)</p> <p>Theatre Workshops: 7–9pm, LA Poverty Dept. (see p.18)</p>	<p>Art Studio: 12:30–3:30pm Music Studio: 9am–3:30pm (1.5-hr. sessions by appt.) Studio 526, (see p.11)</p> <p>Music Wellness Labs: 1–2pm, Urban Voices Project, by Zoom (see p.7)</p> <p>Book Clubs on Saturdays & Sundays at LA Poverty Dept. (see p.18)</p> <p>MONTHLY FRIDAY EVENTS</p> <p>Studio 526 Art Jam: Open Mic, Music and Art, 2nd Friday, 5–7pm (see p.11)</p> <p>Buskfest, 3rd Friday, 11am–2pm (UVP: 5th & San Pedro, p.7)</p> <p>MONTHLY @LA POVERTY DEPT. (p.18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skid Row Arts Alliance Meeting/Workshop 11am–12:30pm, 2nd Tuesdays • Creative Writting workshop: 3rd Tuesday, 10:30am–Noon • Free Movie Nights at the Museum: 1st & 3rd Fridays, 7–9pm • Sock Puppet Making Workshop: Last Friday: 3–5pm • Open Mic with Lorinda Hawkins Smith Last Friday: 5–7:30pm • Mutual Aid Self/Social Therapy (MAST): 2nd & 4th Sunday: 2–4 pm by Public School Los Angeles

We want to hear from you!

The Skid Row Arts Zine is for you, the members of Skid Row community. Our goal is to encourage and engage your creative spirit by providing safe spaces and opportunities for you to create and thrive. We invite you to a short survey about what you enjoy and would like to see in the Arts Zine.

Go to: <https://shorturl.at/xDvcs> or scan the code below (updated).



FREE @ THE CENTRAL LIBRARY

The Central Library offers many free events and classes

Go to <https://tinyurl.com/3usdk728> for more information on current and future free exhibits, events, workshops and many other helpful resources at this branch.

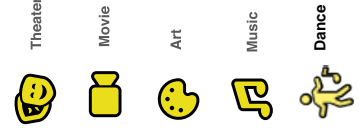


Join the Octavia Lab for free access to high-tech tools!

Octavia Butler was an award winning science fiction writer who broke new ground in a male dominated field. Her legacy lives on in Central Library’s **Octavia Lab: Creativity Within Reach** which offers high tech tools for artists free of charge. Under the heading of Design Computers, Equipment, and Studio, the Lab services include 3D Printing, Laser Cutter, Epson Large Format Printer, and a Green Screen Backdrop. In the Studio are Video and Audio programs including Final Cut Pro and Garageband. The Lab is open Monday through Saturday afternoons and Staff at the front desk are there to help. Workshops are offered to help you use the large range of equipment. Go to lapl.org/labs.

Skid Row is a dynamic and powerful arts community. Anywhere on the streets of Skid Row, creativity is happening. This map will show you where to untap the artist inside you.

SKID ROW ARTS MAP



- 1** **Skid Row History Museum & Archive and Los Angeles Poverty Department**
Theater Workshops, Monthly Open Mics, Movie Nights, Exhibitions and Forums
250 S. Broadway | 213-413-1077
www.lapovertydept.org
- 2** **Central City Community Church of the Nazarene**
419 E. 6th St. | 213-689-1766
- 3** **The Midnight Mission**
601 S San Pedro | 213-624-9258
- 4** **Studio 526 (Art & Music studio)**
526 S. San Pedro | (213) 757-8598
- 5** **Urban Voices Project**
323-741-1887
www.urbanvoicesproject.org
- 6** **"Movies in the Park" and "Drumming in the Park"**
• San Julian Park
312 E. 5th St. (5th & San Julian)
• General Jeff Memorial Park (formerly Gladys Park)
808 E. 6th St. (6th & Gladys)
- 7** **Joshua House Clinic**
UVP Singalong
325 E. 7th St, Los Angeles
- 8** **Piece by Piece**
Call for address: 323-963-3372
www.piecebypiece.org
- 9** **Central Library**
630 W. 5th St. (at Flower) | 213-228-7000



- Refresh Spot
- Bus Stops
- Metro Station
- Landmarks

Designed and Produced by Sebin Song and Xivi Huang of the USC Roski School of Art and Design. Supported by USC Arts in Action, part of USC Visions and Voices: The Arts and Humanities Initiative.