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City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs

presents

Music x Ideas x Space = Compose LA

*A Showcase of Composers, Musicians, and Ideas
From LA's Dynamic Music Scene*

February 6 to 27, 2019

Los Angeles – The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) is spearheading a new city-wide music presentation and lecture series for 2019, **Music x Ideas x Space = Compose LA**. From February 6 to February 27, Angelenos and visitors will be able to experience performances across the LA region as music and ideas intertwine at historic concert venues and hidden underground spaces throughout the city.

“This new pilot initiative places art at the forefront of the musical and cultural conversation while amplifying and embracing the voices of community. DCA’s Compose LA creates a dialogue connecting the composers’ music with daily life. This synergy of music and ideas at venues that traverse LA neighborhoods will create conversations that are accessible, personal, and candid,” said **DCA’s General Manager Danielle Brazell**.

“Compose LA offers a diverse platform to explore a terrifically wide range of contributions at the interface of music, sound, culture, and ideas concerning the human and the racial. The University of California Humanities Research Institute is thrilled to work closely with the City of LA to benefit our various publics in thinking our futures together” said **David Theo Goldberg, Director of the University of California Humanities Research Institute**.

By pairing music with ideas, each concert will feature not only the latest compositions by selected LA-based composers/musicians, but also California-based, world-class thought leaders who will speak to ideas the music inspires and the latest in Humanities research. This companion speaker’s series will address the theme, What is Human? What is Race? This collaborative effort with



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the University of California Humanities Research Institute reflects the mission of Compose LA which is to create a multi-disciplinary experience for its audiences.

Compose LA begins with a major symposium that focuses on the L.A. music scene: "The Future of Music in LA" which will feature panels and presentations by LA's leading composers, festival producers, and music industry professionals. Conversations will be held on the state of artist-led, DIY music spaces in LA, new models for festivals and formats for creating a thriving music scene, the rise of LA's nightlife/nighttime economies, and interviews with artists about the challenges and opportunities for making music in LA.

The symposium's initial special presentation, the "The Future City" by Conni Pallini Tipton, Senior City Planner with the Citywide Planning and Policy Division in the Department of City Planning, will focus on the massive changes the city is tracking as well as the latest trends and their impact on the music scene. The symposium is collaboration with the UCLA Center for Music Innovation directed by Gigi Lousia Johnson.

"Compose LA's ambitious program will expand much-needed creative bridges between the city's diverse musical communities and the artists who inhabit them," said **Gigi Johnson, Executive Director of the Center for Music Innovation at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music**. "While I expect Compose LA to connect amazing musical community leaders, it's also an excellent opportunity to lead the way by convening voices in Los Angeles around the questions of the future of music: How we can grow music together in a streaming-focused digital world with changing demographics? How can we work together to build even better musical futures for Los Angeles-based artists and communities?"

DCA is working with several core partners on the Compose LA initiative that include the **American Composers Forum of Los Angeles (ACF-LA)**, the **Center for Music Innovation - UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music**, and the **University of California Humanities Research Institute**. The impetus for this festival is the new golden age of music-making and forward-looking composing that has emerged in Los Angeles over the last five years. Musically, LA is in an electrifying state and is proud to reclaim its adventurous, ambitious, and generous role in the creation of new music.

ACF-LA President Steven Homestead remarked, "With the creative renaissance that we've seen in LA recently, it's an exciting time to amplify the vibrant dialogue that LA's composers, performers, and venues have been developing."

"DCA's inaugural Compose LA is designed to champion the extraordinary level of new music and ideas that are emerging from LA's incubator spaces and the great ideas in our UC system. The level of creativity is unprecedented, as are the



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roster of diverse artistic composers, artistic directors, though-leaders and innovative musical artists that are leading this change. We felt it was time to track some of the exciting work that is being developed to build community, connect diverse audiences, and bridge the many creative divides that make up the vast stew that is LA," said **Ben Johnson, DCA's Performing Arts Program Director.**

Selected composers and artistic collaborators include: **Nicole Mitchell, James H. Leary, Vijay Gupta, Juan Pablo Contreras, Reena Esmail, Derek Spiva, Liam Mooney, Alima Lee, Bapari, Quetzal Flores, Dwight Tribble, Howard Ho, Ted Hearne, Sarah Gibson, Billy Childs, Julia Adolphe, Juhi Bansal, Maral, Heather McIntosh, George Sarah, Arthur King, Linafornia, Andrew Norman, Astronautica, Salastina, Jarina del Marco, Bridge to Everywhere, Jasmine Albuquerque, Benjamin Shirley, Street Symphony, Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra, plus others.**

Selected humanities speakers include: **Josh Kun, Akira Mizuta Lippitt, Patrisse Cullors, Shana Redmond, Robin D.B. Kelley, Terence Keel, SA Smythe, Ackbar Abbas, Derrick Spiva Jr, Catherine In-Young Lee, Catherine Gudis, and Gaye Theresa Johnson.**

Collaborative partners include: **Clockshop, Hammer Museum, Kensington Presents, Salastina, Bootleg Theater, The Word Stage, Self Help Graphics & Art, Coaxial Art Foundation, the wulf, KCRW, The Broad, Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, GIRLSCHOOL, American Composers Forum of Los Angeles, Spaceland Presents, Frieze Los Angeles, and Grand Performances.**

All events are free and open to the public. Suggested donation is up to \$20. Seating is limited to the capacity of the sites and event times and programs are subject to change.

Compose LA Programming

Wednesday, February 6, 12 noon to 6:00 pm

Music x Ideas x Space = Compose LA

Location: The Bootleg Theater, 2220 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90057

Program: The Future of Music in Los Angeles - A Symposium for the Music Scene of Los Angeles

Compose LA begins with a major symposium that focuses on the L.A. music scene: "The Future of Music in LA" which will feature panels and presentations by LA's leading composers, festival producers, and music industry professionals. Conversations will be held on the state of artist-led, DIY music spaces in LA, new



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Saturday, February 9, 7:30 pm
Clockshop x Compose LA
Curated by Clockshop Director, Julia Meltzer
Location: Clockshop, 2806 Clearwater Street, Los Angeles, CA 90039
Artist: Nicole Mitchell
Speaker: Josh Kun, Ph.D.
Program: Nicole Mitchell's *Spider Web*

In a new collaborative piece, composer/flutist Nicole Mitchell and scholar/author and MacArthur Genius Fellow Josh Kun will explore visionary/reflective glitches between 1970s and pre-apocalyptic Southern California in an exploration of race and politics of human life. Fictionally based on Mitchell's own history moving to Anaheim as a young girl and her experiences with racism in the bright glare of suburban California sunshine. With glimpses into a future climate meltdown through her mother's communication with the spirit world, the piece uses music and text to explore Mitchell's family history against the backdrop of OC's ongoing history of anti-Blackness and the LA region's ongoing history of black musical radicalism and experimental musical thinking. Mitchell and Kun will share this new, inspired work born out of their shared interests in music as language of social reckoning and social actions. Josh Kun is Director of the Annenberg School of Communication at the University of Southern California, where he is Chair in Cross-Cultural Communication and Professor of Communication, Journalism, and American Studies and Ethnicity.

Monday, February 11, 7:30 pm
GIRLSCHOOL x COMPOSE LA
Curated by Anna Bulbrook, Founder and Artistic Director, GIRLSCHOOL
Location: Navel, 1611 South Hope Street, Los Angeles, CA 90015
Artist: Maral, Jarina del Marco, and Jasmine Albuquerque
Speaker: SA Smythe, Ph.D.
Program: *JELLY*



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Through a new collaboration between composer Maral and GIRLSCHOOL, *JELLY* will explore radical self-love using the medium of Jell-O as an avatar for the very strange universal human experience of embodiment. Exploring and transforming the sounds of traditional Iranian music, Los Angeles-based artist Maral has formed a unique vision of club music, one that embraces her heritage and recontextualizes it for a new audience. She is collaborating with creative visionary and interdisciplinary artist Jarina del Marco and choreographer Jasmine Albuquerque on the questions: What does it mean to be embodied? What does "body positivity" mean? What gives a body value? By pushing the limits of the once-celebrated medium of Jell-O, *JELLY* investigates, dismantles, and laughs at the rigid cultural expectations and false dichotomies that tell us what makes a "good" body, the value we ascribe to "jiggle" and "bounce," and how we decide what is "cool." Dr. SA Smythe (they/ them) is a poet, translator, and scholar of Black European Literary & Cultural Studies, Contemporary Mediterranean Studies, and Black Trans Poetics. Smythe's research is focused on literature and other cultural responses to racism, misogyny, colonialism, and other relational aspects of inequality and oppression between Europe (in particular, Italy), East Africa, and the Mediterranean. They are an assistant professor in the Department of African American Studies at UCLA, currently completing the UC President's Postdoctoral Fellowship in Anthropology at the University of California, Irvine.

Tuesday, February 12, 7:30 pm
Japanese American Cultural & Community Center x Compose LA
Curated by JACCC Vice President of Programs, Alison De La Cruz
Location: JACCC, Aratani Theatre Black Box, 244 South San Pedro Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Artist: Howard Ho with Cold Tofu & *Tales of Clamor* Creators
Speaker: Akira Mizuta Lippit, Ph.D.
Program: Tales of Clamor "Salon"

Tales of Clamour is a new play centering around two artists (played by *Kennedy Kabasares* and *traci kato-kiriyama*) positioned in debate over notions of cultural and institutional silence. As part of the original production design, composer and sound designer Howard Ho has been creating original compositions with found audio from the 1981 Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC) hearings. These hearings were the first time that Japanese Americans broke their silence in 40 years after experiencing WWII mass incarceration of Japanese Americans. *Cold Tofu*, the nation's oldest Asian American Improv Group will also share as part of their work with Ho. Akira Mizuta Lippit is Vice Dean of Faculty in the School of Cinematic Arts and Professor in the Division of Cinema and Media Studies. His research interests include: Japanese film and culture, critical theory, experimental film, and visual studies.



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Wednesday, February 13, 8:00 pm
Red Bull Music Academy and Film Festival x Compose LA
Curated by Alima Lee, Co-Curator of Red Bull Film Festival
Location: Red Bull Festival HQ, Ukrainian Cultural Center, 4315 Melrose Ave., LA, CA 90029
Artists: Bapari and Alima Lee
Speaker: Patrisse Cullors, Ph.D.
Program: Intersectionality

Working on themes of intersectionality, composer Bapari and filmmaker Alima Lee are collaborating on a new film score that will be informed by the conversation at this Compose LA event. It will be composed and performed “live” with a loose narrative structure and reminiscent of a Deana Lawson portrait with additional inspiration by portraiture and the LA landscape. Bapari (Arielle Baptiste) AKA Sensei Noir is a queer-based femme and Los Angeles-based multigenre producer, DJ, and radio host. Alima Lee is a filmmaker, DJ, and curator. Patrisse Cullors is an artist, organizer, and freedom fighter from Los Angeles. Cofounder of Black Lives Matter and founder of Dignity and Power Now, she is also a performance artist, popular public speaker, and a New York Times bestselling author.

Thursday, February 14, 7:30 pm
Hammer Museum x Compose LA
Curated by Hammer Director of Public Programs Claudia Bestor and Benjamin Mitchel, Founder and President of Kaleidoscope
Location: Hammer Museum, 10899 Wilshire Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90024
Artist: Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra
Program: Ted Hearne - By-By Huey
Sarah Gibson - I prefer living in color
Billy Childs - Unrequited - String Quartet No. 3
Julia Adolphe - White Flag
Juhi Bansal - One Brief Hour
Andrew Norman - The Companion Guide to Rome
Speaker: Shana L. Redmond, Ph.D.
Program: Love Notes

To celebrate the different forms that love can take, Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra performs an evening featuring some of LA’s most exciting composers in a special Compose LA program called *Love Notes*. As a “conductorless” ensemble, they select orchestral music that, whether written today or centuries ago, speaks profoundly to our community and is both representative of its time and timeless. Shana L. Redmond is an interdisciplinary scholar of music, race, and politics. Prior to receiving her combined Ph.D. in African American Studies and American Studies from Yale University, Redmond studied Music and African American Studies at Macalester College where she trained as a vocalist. This



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program is highlighted by Ted Hearn’s *By-By Huey*, which like Robert Arneson’s painting *Bye Bye Huey P.* is a portrait of 24-year-old Tyrone “Double R” Robinson, who murdered Black Panther Party cofounder Huey P. Newton in 1989; Sara Gibson’s *I prefer living in color*, which is her love letter to David Hockney’s *Snail’s Pace*, a gigantic painted landscape of shapes with a shifting light installation created to represent Los Angeles’s Mulholland Drive; Billy Child’s *Unrequited*, about a relationship never moved to the next level and the tragedy of love unfulfilled; Julia Adophe’s *White Flag*, a lyrical work featuring two musical ideas developed independently and then merged together at the climax; Juhi Bansal’s *One Brief Hour*, inspired by Walt Whitman’s *One Hour to Madness and Joy*, and Andrew Norman’s *The Companion Guide to Rome*, inspired by the beauty of Roman churches and a year of living in the Eternal City.

Sunday, February 17, 3:00 pm
The World Stage x Compose LA
Curated by The World Stage artistic director and jazz artist
Dwight Tribble
Location: The World Stage, Leimert Park, 4321 Degnan Blvd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90008
Artist: James H. Leary, featuring Dwight Tribble and the James H. Leary
Legacy Ensemble
Speaker: Robin D.G. Kelley, Ph.D.
Program: So Far So Good

“Composer James H. Leary is one of LA’s great geniuses who never got the recognition he deserves, and much of his music has never been performed” as stated by Dwight Tribble, artistic director of The World Stage. As part of a very special evening of rarely performed works, Grammy-awardee James H. Leary will use the James Leary Legacy Voices in a special program of original compositions: *A Song for My Mother* – sung by Dwight Tribble which is Leary’s tribute to all mothers; *Free Flow Tribute* will be the main focus of the program, which will feature many different musicians and vocalists in Leary’s oeuvre, and who will come together for this one-night only Compose LA event. As part of this program, James Leary will play the bass and conduct an accompaniment of piano and drums. Robin D.G. Kelley is a professor of history and American studies and ethnicity at the University of Southern California. One of the youngest tenured professors in a full academic discipline – at the age of 32 – Kelley has spent most of his career exploring American and African-American history with a particular emphasis on African-American musical culture, including jazz and hip-hop.



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Tuesday, February 19, 7:30 pm
Spaceland Presents x Compose LA
Curated by Liz Garo, Talent Buyer Spaceland Presents
Location: Tangier Room, Hotel Figueroa in DTLA, 939 S Figueroa St., Los Angeles, CA 90015
Artists: Heather McIntosh, George Sarah, Arthur King, Linafornia, and Astronautica
Speaker: Terence Keel, Ph.D.
Program: Selected Works

Featuring a roster of LA-based musicians that are both composers and musicians who will explore what it means to be human through their touch mixed with electronics. They ask the question: Are pre-programmed sampled strings that can be manipulated to perfection the idea of being human or is it more human strumming, bowing, plucking their traditional instruments? This evening will intersect the mix of being human / machine / layered vocals / field recordings and performing. George Sarah has made a name for himself since 1985 by successfully combining two very different genres of music; classical and electronica creating a conscious, haunting quality popular among the youth oriented electronica crowd. Heather McIntosh started her musical career playing with the bands of The Elephant 6 Collective, Gnarlz Barkley, and Lil Wayne. Following her touring days, she has been regularly composing music for film and television since 2011. Leimert Park native Linafornia easily has one of the best stories to come out of LA. She's taken over the decks at Low End Theory, LA's famed experimental club night and scored back-to-back first place finishes at the prestigious Beat Cinema Beat Battle. Astronautica is Edrina Martinez, a singer/songwriter and electronic producer whose music captures the eclectic nature of LA's experimental beat scene and its connections to different cultures around the globe. The LA native brings a playful sense of exploration to her sound, creating a unique style of lush electronica with elements of hip hop, indie, R&B, and EDM. Arthur King is an experimental music and visual art collective seeking to engage the known and unknown inherent in creative expression. The group is comprised of a myriad of musicians, visual artists, and filmmakers that record albums, compose music, create installations, and more. Terence Keel is a historian, scholar of religion, and critical race theorist who earned his Ph.D. from Harvard University. He has written widely about the history of racism and its connections to science, religion, politics, and modern life. Keel's first book, *Divine Variations*, published by Stanford University Press, documents the intellectual legacy shared between modern scientific racism and religion in Europe and America. Keel has come to UCLA as an Associate Professor with a joint appointment in the UCLA Institute for Society and Genetics, and the Department of African American Studies.



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Friday, February 22, 8:00 pm
the wulf. & Coaxial x Compose LA
Curated by the wulf. board member Casey Anderson
Location: Coaxial Arts Foundation, 1915 South Main Street,
Los Angeles, CA 90016
Artist: Liam Mooney
Speaker: Ackbar Abbas, Ph.D.
Program: Liam Mooney's *Flatland*

Liam Mooney's *Flatland* (2019) is a work loosely patterned after Edwin Abbott's novella, *Flatland: A Romance of Many Dimensions*. Abbott's examination of humanity—and the natural and constructed categories contained therein—still seems to have the sting of relevance, and the listener might not find it at all difficult to connect Abbott's observations to features of present-day societies. Mooney's work takes a sound-driven investigation of materiality as a jumping off point, often repurposing everyday objects to ends both cartoonishly-distorted and beautiful: drumheads are activated by a series of vacuum cleaners; Styrofoam coolers are bowed with large dowels, covered in rosin, until they disintegrate; etc. Mooney's ability to arrange focused compositional forms around each re-presentation results in utterly unique sound experiences. An aficionado of fakes, Ackbar Abbas is the author of some of the most influential texts on Hong Kong culture and literature, and on culture, literature, film, art, architecture, and critical theory more generally. A professor of comparative literature and film at the University of California, Irvine, Abbas was born, raised, and—as he puts it—corrupted in Hong Kong. He insists on thinking with whatever is at hand, materially and ideationally, on finding the deeply revealing in the obvious, significance amidst desolation, possibility in vulnerability, a map of culture in the design it authorizes.

Monday, February 25, 8:00 pm
American Composers Forum of Los Angeles x Kensington Presents x
Salastina x Compose LA
Curated by Steven Homestead-Director of American Composer Forum
of Los Angeles; Scott Bauer, Mathieu Young, Micah Greenberg-Artistic
Directors of Kensington Presents, and Salastina Artistic Director, Maia
Jasper White
Artists: Bridge to Everywhere, Salastina, Juan Pablo Contreras,
Reena Esmail, and Derrick Spiva Jr
Location: The York Manor, 4908 York Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90042
Speakers: Derrick Spiva Jr and Katherine In-Young Lee, Ph.D.
Program: Derrick Spiva Jr's Bridge to Everywhere performs the work
of Juan Pablo Contrera, Reena Esmail, and Derrick Spiva Jr; Salastina
performs the music of Derrick Spiva Jr.

The special evening is the work of several artistic collaborators. It features two of LA's leading new music performance groups, Bridge to Everywhere and



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Salastina, focusing on the works of Derrick Spiva Jr. The first part of the program features Spiva’s masterwork, the gorgeous and profound *American Mirror*. Written for Salastina, it features Spiva’s signature style of integrating musical practices from different cultural traditions around the world. The second part of the evening features *Bridge to Everywhere*, performing works by composers Reena Esmail and Juan Pablo Contreras. Katherine In-Young Lee is an Assistant Professor of Ethnomusicology at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.

Tuesday, February 26, 7:00 pm
Notes of Worth: A conversation and performance with Street Symphony
Artists and collaborators: Reena Esmail, Benjamin Shirley, Vijay Gupta, Host Madeleine Brand, Street Symphony Quartet
Location: The Annenberg Performance Studio Space at KCRW, KCRW Media Center, 1660 Stewart Street, Santa Monica, CA 90404
Speaker: Catherine Gudis, Ph.D.
Program: Social Justice in Four Movements
Hallelujah - Leonard Cohen, performed by Vijay Gupta on violin
String Quartet Op. 41 No. 1, movement 3 - Robert Schumann
Dawn’s Final Thoughts - Benjamin J. Shirley
Take What You Need - Reena Esmail

KCRW will host a unique Compose LA that combines conversation and performance with Street Symphony. Street Symphony was founded by musician and MacArthur Genius Fellow Vijay Gupta as a place to create powerful engagements between professional and emerging artists and communities disenfranchised by homelessness and incarceration in Los Angeles County. Hosted by KCRW’s Madeleine Brand, the conversation/performance will feature powerful works of four diverse composers, and most notably Benjamin Shirley, who spent two years on skid row and was Street Symphony’s first composer-in-residence and Reena Esmail, the current composer-in-residence. Each work has a unique relationship to the Street Symphony and addresses the human condition. Catherine Gudis is the Associate Professor of History and Director of UC Riverside’s Public History Program. She has worked for over twenty years with art and history museums, in historic preservation, and on multi-platform, place-based projects that focus on Southern California and explore how public space is privatized, landscapes racialized, and inequalities of access amplified.



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Wednesday, February 27, 7:30 pm
Self Help Graphics & Art x Compose LA
Curated by Betty Avila and Miranda Ynez, Artistic Directors
Location: Self Help Graphics, 1300 East First Street, Los Angeles, CA 90033
Artist: Quetzal Flores
Speaker: Gaye Theresa Johnson, Ph.D.
Program: Selected works

Quetzal is one of LA's leading bi-lingual bands based in East Los Angeles comprised of highly talented musicians who joined for the goal of creating good music that tells the social, cultural, political, and musical stories of people in struggle. The band was founded by Grammy Award-winning composer Quetzal Flores, Director of Arts and Culture for East LA Community Corporation, with the intention of pushing the boundaries of Chicano music. Self Help Graphics & Art is proud to present this special Compose LA event that will be a multimedia, participatory experience that includes a collective songwriting exercise and an exhibition of SHG serigraphs curated by Quetzal and UCLA professor and author Gaye Theresa Johnson. Their dialogue will unpack the ways music and visual art address issues of race, space, and inequity in communities of color. The audience, which we anticipate will include participants from the Eastside and all over Los Angeles, will compose a musical piece using a pedagogy created by Martha Gonzalez with Quetzal. Flores' practice portrays how music, culture, and social activism combine to build community and music in settings varying from intimate audiences to corporate team structures. Gaye Theresa Johnson is Associate Professor of Chicana and Chicano Studies and African American Studies at UCLA. She writes and teaches about race, freedom struggles, cultural history, spatial politics, and political economy. Her first book, *Spaces of Conflict, Sounds of Solidarity: Music, Race, and Spatial Entitlement in Los Angeles* (University of California Press) is a history of civil rights and spatial struggles among Brown and Black freedom seekers and cultural workers in LA.

About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)

As a leading, progressive arts and cultural agency, DCA empowers Los Angeles's vibrant communities by supporting and providing access to quality visual, literary, musical, performing, and educational arts programming; managing vital cultural centers; preserving historic sites; creating public art; and funding services provided by arts organizations and individual artists.

Formed in 1925, DCA promotes arts and culture as a way to ignite a powerful dialogue, engage LA's residents and visitors, and ensure LA's varied cultures are recognized, acknowledged, and experienced. DCA's mission is to strengthen the quality of life in Los Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.



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DCA advances the social and economic impact of arts and culture through grantmaking, public art, community arts, performing arts, and strategic marketing, development, design, and digital research.

DCA creates and supports arts programming, maximizing relationships with other city agencies, artists, and arts and cultural nonprofit organizations to provide excellent service in neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles.

For more information, please visit culturela.org or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/culturela](https://www.facebook.com/culturela), Instagram [@culture_la](https://www.instagram.com/culture_la), and Twitter [@culture_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la).