



MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 10, 2019

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**City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs
and
Friends of Watts Towers Arts Center
present the
38th Annual Watts Towers Day of the Drum Festival
Saturday, September 28, 2019, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
and the
43rd Annual Simon Rodia Watts Towers Jazz Festival
Sunday, September 29, 2019, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
at the
Department of Cultural Affairs' Watts Towers Arts Center Campus**

LOS ANGELES, CA — When you experience the drum you know you're alive and, when you experience jazz you know the music has touched your soul! Feel your heart and soul come alive at the **38th Annual Watts Towers Day of the Drum Festival on Saturday, September 28, 2019**, and the **43rd Annual Simon Rodia Watts Towers Jazz Festival on Sunday, September 29, 2019**. An all-star line-up of international recording artists, local jazz artists, drummers, and dancers will come together once again on both days, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for an unbelievable jazz and drum festival experience. Under the artistic direction of **Rosie Lee Hooks, Patrice Rushen, and Munyungo Jackson**, and presented by the **City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs** and the **Friends of Watts Towers Arts Center**, this year's festival is in honor of **Nipsey Hussle**. The entire two-day festival is free and open to the public.

Ermias "Nipsey Hussle" Asghedom who transitioned earlier this year, was a multi-talented musician, entrepreneur, father, and beloved community activist. His musical foundation began at the Watts Towers Arts Center Campus in the "Meet the Composer" program where he studied music technology and production. As an artist he established himself as a powerful talent, known for his chiseled verses and clean crisp production. As an activist he was strategic, intentional and effective in empowering his community. He will be honored at the Watts Towers Arts Campus festivals for his musicianship, and his dedication to the community.

"Every year these festivals are a cultural highlight and world-class music experience for our entire city," said **Councilmember Buscaino**. "I encourage all Angelenos not to miss a beat and make their way to the Watts Day of the Drum Festival and the Watts Jazz Festival this year."



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“Everything that is great about our City can be found in our festivals. This is how we celebrate our communities with our neighbors and friends, listening to live music, experiencing art and dance, and honoring the cultures that define our neighborhoods,” said **Danielle Brazell**, General Manager City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs. “The long-running jazz and drum festivals at the Watts Towers Arts Center Campus are moments of civic pride and what makes Los Angeles a wonderful place to experience and enjoy.”

Saturday's Day of the Drum Festival, hosted by Masters of Ceremonies **Kamau Daáood** and **James Janisse** will kick off with Aztec traditional dancing featuring Huehuetl and Teponaxtle drums. **Korean Classical Music and Dance**, will carry the sound of the drum and then hand off the rhythms to **Capoeira Batuque** who will bring a dynamic performance of Afro Brazilian Capoeira to the stage. Percussionist and composer **Kahil El' Zabar** draws on tradition, soul, jazz and blues to deliver a spiritual experience, and **Mandingue Empire** will feature dance and culture of the Mandingue ethnic group of West Africa. A performance by **Marvin "Smitty" Smith and Black Diaspora Music** will close out the stage with a musical expression of the Black Experience.

Daáood and Janisse will return for Sunday's Jazz Festival which will begin with a Yoruba ground blessing by **Alaadun** to unite all cultures. Guitarist **Darrell Crooks & Heaven** will follow, emphasizing the theme of connection with a musical twist of soul and gospel. **Jasmine Tommaso** will kick the afternoon into high gear with an artful blend of Italian jazz and West Coast soul. With the sun just moving past high noon, **Dr. Hoover** will offer a demonstration of **Tai Chi Chuan**. **David Ornette Cherry with Organic Nation** are up next and are known for their blending musical styles into a “universal language” that jazz lovers enjoy. Vocalist **Lynne Fiddmont** will deliver a performance which will echo with the riffs from R & B, Afro-Cuban, and jazz for a groovy sound you will not want to miss. **Dwight Tribble's** voice is a spiritual force and a balm that will infuse your heart and soul. The “Before I let you go” moment will come with “straight-ahead jazz” brought to us by the **Jazz Mentorship Program All-Stars featuring Patrice Rushen, Munyungo Jackson, Reggie Hamilton, Justo Almario, and Marvin "Smitty" Smith, and Aaron Janik.**

The festivals' activities are complemented by exhibitions at the Noah Purifoy and Charles Mingus Galleries featuring, "Here Today **Gone Tomorrow**" an in-house exhibition from the Watts Towers Arts Centers' archives, and an installation of musical instruments from around the world at the Dr. Joseph and Bootsie Howard Gallery. A drum pavilion and universal drum circle will also be led by Matt Gibson III, with supervised children's activities from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. and food and beverages along with arts and crafts available for sale throughout the day.

Both festivals take place at the Department of Cultural Affairs' Watts Towers Arts Center Campus at 1727 East 107th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90002. For more information, please call 213.847.4646, or visit wattstowers.org.



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The Campus is easily accessible from:

- 1) the 105 – East Freeway at Wilmington Avenue by taking Exit #10;
- 2) via the 108th Street Bus Stop, the 305 and 612 Routes;
or
- 3) the 103rd Street / Kenneth Hahn Station via Metro’s Blue Line.

Self-parking and Valet parking are free.

ADA: Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request.

Festival Schedules:

38th Annual Watts Towers Day of the Drum Festival
Saturday, September 28th, 2018 | 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Masters of Ceremonies: **Kamau Daáood** and **James Janisse**

11:00 a.m. **Xochipilli**

Aztec traditional dancing with Huehueltl and Teponaztle drums.

12:00 p.m. **Korean Classical Music and Dance**

Traditional Korean drum and dance.

1:00 p.m. **Capoeira Batuque**

An explosive and dynamic performance in the Afro Brazilian art of Capoeira.

2:00 p.m. **Kahil El’ Zabar**

Higher consciousness, rich and compelling, fearless and deeply spiritual, a sacred journey.

3:00 p.m. **Mandingue Empire**

Celebrating music, dance and culture of the Mandingue ethnic group of West Africa.

4:00 p.m. **Marvin “Smitty” Smith and Black Diaspora Music**

A musical expression of the Black Experience.



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43rd Annual Simon Rodia Watts Towers Jazz Festival
Sunday, September 29, 2018 | 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Masters of Ceremonies: **Kamau Daáood** and **James Janisse**

10:30 a.m. **Alaadun**

Yoruba ground blessing uniting all cultures based on common themes and principles.

11:30 a.m. **Darrell Crooks & Heaven**

Spiritually connected.

12:30 p.m. **Jasmine Tommaso**

A vocalist who styles Italian Jazz and West Coast Soul.

1:15 p.m. **Tai Chi Chuan**

School of healing martial arts, Dr. Daniel Hoover, Instructor.

1:30 p.m. **David Ornette Cherry with Organic Nation**

A musical fusion of cultures, purely garage-style beats, universal language emphasizing a positive state of mind.

2:15 p.m. **Charles Mingus Award**

Presented by the Watts Towers Community Action Council.

2:30 p.m. **Lynne Fiddmont**

Vocal stylings that tap and maneuver between R&B, Afro-Cuban, and Jazz melodies. Perfect for real music lovers and groovy people.

3:30 p.m. **Dwight Trible**

An adventurous spiritual jazz singer who opens his mouth and the spirit pours out. Bringing people together and healing their hearts.

4:30 p.m. **Jazz Mentorship Program All-Stars featuring Patrice Rushen, Munyungo Jackson, Reggie Hamilton, Justo Almario, and Marvin "Smitty" Smith, and Aaron Janik.**

Straight Ahead Jazz.



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All Day Activities at the Festivals:

Drum Pavilion: Universal Drum Circle

Led by Matt Gibson III

Noah Purifoy & Charles Mingus Galleries

Here Today, **Gone Tomorrow**

An in-house exhibition from the Watts Towers Arts Centers' archives.

Dr. Joseph & Bootsie Howard Gallery

International musical instruments

Permanent Exhibition

Charles Mingus Youth Arts Center

Supervised children's activities 12:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Garden Studio

Tiling and garden activities, turtle pond, and African Sulcata Tortoise dwelling, tiling projects, etc.

Watts Towers Amphitheatre

Food Court

Additional Sponsors:

The festivals are sponsored in part by:

GRoW @ Annenberg™ a philanthropic initiative dedicated to supporting humanitarian efforts across the globe as well as innovative projects in health, education, the arts and civic and cultural life.

Visual Art:

The art representing the festivals is by artist, **Aise**.

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



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Angeles by stimulating and supporting arts and cultural activities, ensuring public access to the arts for residents and visitors alike.

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, Instagram [@culture_la](https://instagram.com/culture_la), and Twitter [@culture_la](https://twitter.com/culture_la).

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