

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WORLDS OF HOMELESSNESS

Worlds of Homelessness, a project of the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles, is a week long program in Los Angeles proposing an interdisciplinary and global engagement with homelessness, and its connections to inequality, gentrification, racism and migration.

The project creates a platform for local and international artists, architects, and scholars to come together to share ideas.

Discussions, music performances, and film screenings will take place from October 22 – 27, 2019 in Los Angeles at the Skid Row History Museum and Archive, NAVEL, and SCI-Arc, and culminate with the Festival for All Skid Row Artists on October 26 and 27, 2019 in Gladys Park in Skid Row.



Worlds of Homelessness is a project of the Goethe-Institut that offers an interdisciplinary engagement with the issue of homelessness and its many related themes such as the gap between rich and poor, participation, inequality, gentrification, racism, and migration. Worlds of Homelessness draws on the international network of the Goethe-Institut to bring together local and international artists, architects, scholars, and others to create a platform to share ideas, thoughts, and present their work. The project also examines the wide range of strategies being employed to engage with the many questions and challenges surrounding the issue.

“Homelessness and housing precarity are worldwide issues,” says Lien Heidenreich-Seleme, Director of the Goethe-Institut in Los Angeles. “While we realize that homelessness in Los Angeles is a local discussion that needs local solutions, we also believe that housing is a global phenomenon that could benefit from international discourse.”

The project is developed in cooperation with the Los Angeles Poverty Department, which has created art with and promoted the activism of Skid Row artists for decades; the Thomas Mann House, the renowned independent architecture school SCI-Arc, the



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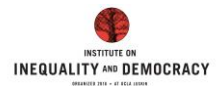
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DATE

September 2019



SCI-ARC



NAVEL

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Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin, and NAVEL, a collectively driven cultural organization.

The event series including discussions, music performances, and film screenings takes place from October 22 – 27, 2019 in Los Angeles at the Skid Row History Museum and Archive, NAVEL, and SCI-Arc, and culminates with the Los Angeles Poverty Department's 10th Annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists on October 26 and 27, 2019 from 1-5pm each day in Gladys Park, Skid Row.

The LA Playmakers will open Worlds of Homelessness and close the Festival for All Skid Row Artists. The band was founded 5 years ago by Joseph Warren and Stan Watson. They all were members of the Praise and Worship Team at Skid Row's Central City Church of the Nazarene. "These accomplished professional musicians have played with a number of well-known jazz and pop music figures. They embody the creative spirit that persists in this community," explains John Malpede, Artistic Director of the LA Poverty Department.

Day 1:

Framing the Issue: Discussion and Music Performance by the LA Playmakers

22 October

Los Angeles Poverty Department's Skid Row History Museum and Archive, 250 South Broadway, Los Angeles

5.30-10pm

Homelessness and housing precarity are a global phenomenon on the rise. Rents and prices for homes are increasing worldwide. The impact of gentrification and the rising cost of living in places that were once considered affordable often push vulnerable communities out of their homes.

In a city like Los Angeles, the divide between rich and poor is ever-present. The saying „Homelessness is just a paycheck away“ is often used to describe just how close to eviction many people are, should they lose just one month's income. Universities are trying to find strategies to assist those students who are able to pay their tuition but cannot afford stable housing. Meanwhile, the artists, activists, and long-term residents of Skid Row community are striving to sustain, preserve, and expand the low-cost housing and resources in the neighborhood that help people living in poverty.

In cities like Berlin, anti-gentrification experts are demanding much more drastic rent control, with some calling for the expropriation of apartments and houses that are not used by their owners. Other parts of the world are seeing a change in the perception of informal settlements as large communities call them their homes.

How are the issues of homelessness and housing precarity spoken about and addressed in different communities, cities, countries, or parts of the world? How can we understand and examine the interconnectivity and linkages between homelessness and its many related themes such as rich and poor, participation, inequality, gentrification, racism, and migration? Is housing a human right that demands stronger policies by policymakers? How can the knowledge and needs of communities become important drivers for change?

Discussion participants include: **Ananya Roy** is Director of the Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin, home to the Housing Justice in #Unequal Cities



Network, a global research endeavor at the intersection of scholarship and the politics of housing; **Michele Lancione** from the University of Sheffield, who has researched in Eastern Europe and started the Radical Housing Journal; **Crushow Herring, aka Showzart**, is a virtuoso artist who works from the streets of Skid Row; and **Barbara Schönig** from the Bauhaus University in Weimar, who has researched affordable housing in Germany.

Day 2:

How can artists engage with homelessness in meaningful ways?

Discussion and Film Screenings of Long Story Short by Natalie Bookchin and Ex.st by Radames Eger and Jonas Reuter

23 October

NAVEL, 1611 S Hope St, Los Angeles

3-9pm

Artists have a different way of seeing and describing the world. Art has often been political, and artists have often raised awareness for social issues through their work. How have artists engaged in a meaningful way with homelessness? What strategies have they used to engage with communities, or are they part of the communities themselves? What challenges do artists face, and how do they engage with these challenges? What types of artistic engagements with homelessness are problematic and why? What could be described as best practices?

Discussion participants include: **John Malpede and Henriëtte Brouwers** of the **Los Angeles Poverty Department**, which has worked in the Skid Row Community for over three decades, realizing the Festival for All Skid Row Artists, as well as award-winning performances, exhibitions, and the biennial Walk the Talk parade; **Radames Eger**, who grew up in Brazil and moved to Frankfurt, Germany with a dance scholarship. He has experienced homelessness and designs and creates clothes for homeless people, including jackets that can be changed into sleeping bags, which he distributes to the community for free; **Licko Turle** from Brazil has worked with social movements in Brazil, including the „Movimento Sem Teto da Bahia” as well as the Theatre of the Oppressed; and **Fabian Debora** is an artist who served as the Director of Substance Abuse Services & Programming as well as a mentor at Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles for a decade and is currently Executive Director of Somos LA Arte - Homeboy Art Academy.

Day 3:

How can design engage with housing insecurity and homelessness and nurture thoughtful processes with communities? Discussion

24 October

SCI-Arc, 960 E 3rd St, Los Angeles

6-8pm

There is a common misconception that city planning and architecture seek to provide „solutions to end homelessness.“ These solutions include various types of supportive, affordable, and shared housing as well as small scale structures providing temporary shelter. Independent of the quality of design thinking such projects and structures can be met with opposition by the communities coming from the prospective occupants and the existing community.

How can homeless communities become a part of the strategic design process that is engaging and beneficial for them? How can architects produce mutually supportive environments for houseless communities? How can community-driven processes



contribute to responsible and comprehensive design solutions? How can schools of design and architecture encourage the success of such initiatives?

“SCI-Arc is known for meeting a design challenge with speculative and radical thinking, and though design alone will not solve the problem of homelessness, it might be able to identify new directions and fresh approaches for some of the many fields engaged with the crisis” comment Hernan Diaz Alonso, Director of SCI-Arc and Erik Ghenoiu, Research Coordinator.

Panelists include: LA architect **Michael Maltzan**, who has completed projects with the Skid Row Housing Trust; **Alexander Hagner** from Vienna, Austria, who has created mixed housing that brings people experiencing homelessness together with students; **Anne Graupner and Thorsten Deckler** from Johannesburg, South Africa, who have worked with informal settlements, community architects and students from the Johannesburg University Faculty of Architecture and Design; and **Ana Elvira Vélez**, an architect from Columbia, who has successfully created collective housing in Medellín.

Day 4:
Knowledge Production and Ways Forward. Discussion and Film Screening “The Advocates” by Remi Kessler

25 October

Los Angeles Poverty Department’s Skid Row History Museum and Archive, 250 South Broadway, Los Angeles

3–9pm

Homelessness is approached differently in various disciplines and among different countries. How is knowledge about homelessness generated? Can we compare homelessness and housing precarity in Germany and the US? How do issues around homelessness connect to informal settlements in the global South? How do we collect data, and how is this data used? How can the knowledge and needs of communities themselves become important drivers for knowledge production and ways forward?

Discussion participants include: **Jutta Allmendinger** from Berlin, Germany, is President of the WZB Berlin Social Science Center and one of the first Thomas Mann House residents who researched homelessness, particularly the working homeless in Los Angeles, continuing her research in Germany; **Hilary Silver**, currently Chair and Professor of Sociology, International Affairs, and Public Policy at the George Washington University, has researched homelessness in the United States amongst many other related issues; **Cristina Cielo**, who has worked with informal settlements in Ecuador as well as questions regarding homelessness in the Philippines; and **Charles Porter**, a staff member of the United Coalition East Prevention Project (UCEPP) and a community activist in Skid Row.

Day 5 and 6:
The 10th Festival for All Skid Row Artists

26 and 27 October, Gladys Park, 6th Street and Gladys Avenue, Skid Row, Los Angeles

1–5pm

Presented by Los Angeles Poverty Department, the annual Festival for All Skid Row Artists has become one of the most anticipated grassroots cultural events in the area. Since 2010, the weekend-long Festival has encouraged the artistry of known neighborhood artists, while also identifying and engaging art makers who are unknown even in their own Skid Row neighborhood. LAPD documents the artists’ work and keeps a registry of Skid Row artists, which now numbers more than 800.



Worlds of Homelessness is a project of the Goethe-Institut, in cooperation with the Los Angeles Poverty Department, the Thomas Mann House, SCI-Arc, the Institute on Inequality and Democracy at UCLA Luskin, and NAVEL.

For the program in details, more information on the participants and related articles, please visit: www.goethe.de/usa/worldsofhomelessness

About the Goethe-Institut Los Angeles: The Goethe-Institut is the cultural institute of the Federal Republic of Germany with a global reach. The institute fosters international cultural cooperation and dialogue. The Goethe-Institut Los Angeles operates on a partnership basis.

For more information, please visit:

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LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT <https://www.lapovertydept.org/>

THOMAS MANN HOUSE <https://www.vatmh.org/en/tmh-mission-statement-eng.html>

NAVEL <https://navel.la/about/>

SCI-Arc <https://www.sciarc.edu/institution/about>

INSTITUTE ON INEQUALITY AND DEMOCRACY at UCLA LUSKIN
challengeinequality.luskin.ucla.edu

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