

# EVENT ANNOUNCEMENT

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DATE:** October 23, 2018

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9000 Overland Ave. - Culver City, CA 90230

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## FREE SCREENING & ARTISTS PANEL

# Dark Progressivism LA Gang Graffiti and its Impact on Art

Thursday @ 5:30 | October 25

**The public is invited Thursday October 25, West LA College, 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM**

for the current exhibition "Artists Do LA." Curator Molly Barnes presents a one night only, special screening of "Dark Progressivism," the internationally awarded documentary depicting the history of LA gangs and the uniquely Los Angeles, indigenous hand styles; letters and graffiti art which once only defined LA neighborhoods, but now is the adopted language of multi -billion dollar advertising campaigns, fashion industry styles and fine art museum exhibitions around the world.

On hand immediately following the screening for a panel discussion moderated by Molly Barnes are "Artist's Do LA" participants, legendary artists Big Sleeps and Prime, the internationally exhibited photographer and collaborator, Jim McHugh, and the film's director Rodrigo Ribera d'Ebre.

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS:

**Big Sleeps** "The artist primarily known as Big Sleeps has been interested in making art out of letters for as long as he can remember. He literally wrote the book on tattoo lettering, but growing up in the gang-infested Pico-Union of the '80s, and '90s, Sleeps was just a kid surrounded by prison tattoos and territorial graffiti. While some may have considered the street art an eyesore, the young artist viewed it as the calligraphy of his people and his neighborhood." LA Weekly

**Jose "Prime" Reza** is internationally recognized as a founding father of Los Angeles stylized graffiti, and one of the most influential artists in the history of Los Angeles public wall writing. Reza's "traditional east coast painting techniques with geometric gangster-style blocks" create bold and monochromatic pieces. Prime is one of the original members of Kill 2 Succeed, a graffiti crew that has created murals around Los Angeles for more than 30 years.

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## **WLAC: Dark Progressivism ...continued**

**Jim McHugh** has garnered many awards for his photography and is included in prominent collections such as The Museum of Modern Art, The Walker Center, The Polaroid Collection, and the National Portrait Gallery in London. He has exhibited widely both nationally and internationally. In 2010, the United Nations honored him with the IPC Professional Photography Leadership Award.

**Rodrigo Ribera d'Ebre** “is the author of *Urban Politics: The Political Culture of Sur 13 Gangs*, *The NAFTA Blueprint*, and *A Grave Situation*. He is also the writer/director of the documentary film, *Dark Progressivism*, an urban studies film that follows the trajectory of Los Angeles gang graffiti, murals, and tattoo art, and their impact on contemporary art. He has written several articles about art and culture in Los Angeles, published in the *Huffington Post*.” LA Review of Books.

The exhibit is curated by Molly Barnes. Barnes is a bicoastal art dealer, curator, radio personality and artist-in-residence at West. In addition to sharing her wealth of experience and knowledge with the college’s aspiring artists, she coordinates free exhibits and lectures which are open to the public. Parking is \$2.00 in the adjacent parking structure – exact change needed.

*West Los Angeles College is located at 9000 Overland Avenue, Culver City, CA 90230. The college is a ACCJC accredited community college providing full-time, part-time and online paths to university transfer and career preparation.*

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