

Cultural Daily

Independent Voices, New Perspectives

From Every Aching Bone

Chiwan Choi · Tuesday, October 22nd, 2013

It's easy to say something is historic, the way we say we love a brand of soap or how this or that is the bestest thing ever.

But perhaps for the first time in my life, with LAB•FEST, I feel from the depth of my heart and from every aching bone in my body and from every inch of this brain that won't stop spinning and spinning that I was part of something historic, something so much bigger than me, bigger than a published poem, bigger than any publishing industry or literary award.

Over the course of twelve hours on a suffocatingly hot Saturday inside a bookstore in downtown Los Angeles, about one thousand people came, performed, listened, laughed, danced, and celebrated our city, the artists, and each other.

The artists who shared their work, all for free: [Mike the Poet Sonksen](#), [Luis J. Rodriguez](#), [Sesshu Foster](#), [Jen Hofer](#), [Erik Shveima](#), [Wendy C. Ortiz](#), [Anthony Miller](#), [Kate Crash](#), [The Six Shooters](#), [JT Steiny](#), [Shana Nys Dambrot](#), [CRYPTIK](#), [Shark Toof](#), [Andrew Hem](#), [Nathan Ota](#), [New Blue Sun](#), [Steve Abee](#), [Sam Dufelmeier](#), [Poesia Para La Gente](#), [Jessica Ceballos](#), [Karineh Mahdessian](#), [Ryan Nance](#), [Luivette Resto](#), [Abram Gomez](#), [Billy Burgos](#), [Matt Sedillo](#), [Brandon Brown](#), [Alex Hohmann](#), [Yago S. Cura](#), [Iris De Anda](#), [Urban Voodoo](#), [Luke Gattuso](#), [Dennis Cruz](#), [Ariana Evans](#), [Andrew Choate](#), [Khadija Anderson](#), [Traci Akemi Kato-Kiryama](#), [Kim Calder](#), [Chris Kerr](#), [Melora Walters](#), [Lillian Rivera](#), [Kima Jones](#), [Cara Chow](#), [Lauren Marks](#), [Azarin Sadegh](#), [Reyna Grande](#), [Inner Ecstasy](#), [Quetzal](#), and [El-Haru Kuroi](#).

Thank you to all of the artists above. I can't even begin to say how much we love you and that we are lucky to be part of such a caring, selfless, and gracious tribe. I mean, look at that list again.



At the end of the night, I was surprised that the great Steve Abee was still around. I joked that I'd never seen him for so many hours consecutively. We started walking to King Eddys to close out the night. "That was a Los Angeles moment," he said. We all nodded.

My brain is not all here yet and my body is a wreck right now. There's really not much more I can write tonight. I will later. But what I can say for now is LAB•FEST was many things—an arts festival, a grand opening celebration for DT•LAB, a reading, a concert, a book signing.

Above all things, it was our love letter to Los Angeles.

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