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Photo exhibit by homeless women who 'Got Caught Up Out There'

The Venice Arts Gallery is featuring "Got Caught Up Out There," an exhibit of photographs by homeless women who suffer from some form of mental illness, through Monday, August 31st.

Riding buses during the day to stay safe and struggling to find hope and home after having gotten "caught up" in the life of the streets are only some of the themes explored by the women in their provocative photography exhibit, a Venice Arts spokesperson said.

An opening reception for the artists is scheduled from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, July 25th at the gallery, 1702 Lincoln Blvd., Venice.

"Got Caught Up Out There" features the work of nine women affiliated with Santa Monica-based OPCC's Daybreak Shelter and Day Center, the only program on Los Angeles' Westside specifically targeting homeless, mentally ill women, said Jim Hubbard of Venice Arts.

The project was supported by a grant, one of five county-wide, from the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, as part of a pilot project by the county linking the arts to homeless services. Over the course of 12 weeks, Venice Arts' photographers taught the women how to use the methods of documentary photography to tell stories of their lives.

The process of image review and editing also offered an opportunity for reflection, storytelling, discovery and catharsis, Hubbard said. The women formed a bond with one another and with their photography team, he added.

"It was extraordinary to see the impact of the project on the women's lives," Hubbard said. "Most talked about how it helped them to feel better about themselves and their futures. One is enrolling in a media program at Santa Monica College."

Since 1993, Venice Arts has operated innovative programs in documentary photography, filmmaking, and multimedia in Los Angeles.

Information, (310) 578-1745, or jim@venice-arts.org.



A WOMAN PASSES TIME inside the OPCC Daybreak Shelter in Santa Monica. (Photo by Emily Jacobson)