

Humble Productions
Presents
h u m b l e
b e a u t y
— Skid Row Artists —
A DOCUMENTARY BY
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Honest Engine Films

SYNOPSIS

This is a powerful story about how art saved the lives of a group of talented homeless and indigent men and women who, despite a daily struggle for survival, create art in the worst area of Los Angeles known as Skid Row. It's also about the ubiquity of art in human life. People strive to make art, no matter how humble the circumstances, and in return art changes their lives.

Over a four year period, HUMBLE BEAUTY follows the lives and progress of several artists from LA's Skid Row, reported to be the largest concentration of homeless in the United States, the Homeless Capital of America. Skid Row is a shock when you encounter it and the film's first-person narration and gritty photography conveys that experience to viewers.

Some artists find their art supplies in garbage cans and dumpsters. They draw on old paper bags. Many have joined art workshops led by dedicated artist-social workers and are given paint, canvases, frames, easels and the technical, creative and supportive guidance to create remarkable, often therapeutic, works of art. Many of these artists have shown and sold their work in downtown LA galleries.

Art changed their lives dramatically. The process of making art has helped many find their true identities. One woman told us that coming to the Workshop is the only reason she has for getting up in the morning. A directionless hustler has become a known, respected painter and community leader. A shy immigrant who creates, in classic primitive style, riotously colorful scenes from his childhood in a tiny Mexican village has suffered a major setback – he's been admitted to art school at the University of California, Berkeley and awarded a scholarship but can't attend due to his immigration status. One artist was a 12-year old runaway from an Indian Reservation in 1941 and has been on the streets of Skid Row ever since.

Audiences have found the program empowering and inspirational. Several viewers have said they will never view a homeless person in the same way again. HUMBLE BEAUTY has given voices and faces to homeless artists who are overflowing with intelligence, humor and creativity. Their stunning artwork speaks for itself.

There are many ways to get to Skid Row and the redemptive power of art can sometimes point the way out.

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