



SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SANTA MONICA-MALIBU UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

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### **SMASH Students Participate in Citizen Journalism Project at the Autry Museum of the American West**

Santa Monica Alternative School House (SMASH) students were invited to participate in the Citizen Journalism Project with the Autry Museum of the American West during the 2016-17 and 2017-18 school years. This program, coordinated through the Autry education department, is in tandem with the current La Raza exhibit continuing until Feb. 10, 2019. Photos, poems and essays of nine SMASH students will be published as part of this project.



Their work for this project was also featured at the recent district-wide art show in May.

SMASH's participation in the Autry Citizen Journalism project is a direct outgrowth of the school's own art as social practice initiative, an interdisciplinary art venture/incubator for interdisciplinary projects rooted in student interests and collaboration with classroom teachers, professional arts leadership mentors and Los Angeles-based institutions.

"As social artists, we call upon our creative skills to work with and engage people in our communities to raise awareness, create dialogue and affect change," Marni Gittleman, SMASH integrated arts coordinator said. "Working with the Autry provided our SMASH social artists with real world experience in crafting compelling messages around current issues, action and change."

The four issues will all contain SMASH student work:

Volume 1, Issue 1 - Signs of the Times, published fall 2017.

Volume 1, Issue 2 - LA:LA, published winter 2018.

Volume 2, Issue 1 - The Other and the State, expected publication during the 2018-19 year.

Volume 2, Issue 2 - Portraits of a Community, expected publication October 2018.

The published work and more information regarding the La Raza exhibit is [online](#).

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With the guidance of classroom teachers Genie Hwang, Erin Haendel and Jennifer Mack, students with published work include: Psippi Haendel, Thea Leimone, Emie Malanaphy, Liliana Mukherjee, Aurelio Paltera, Lola King, Sydney Palleiko, Kaleb LeBlanc and Simone Kay.

“SMASH Principal Jessica Rishe reflected, “I see the power of these student real world exhibitions that comes from combining what students studied in history, current events and visual arts media, with the museum staff expertise around content, format for installations, and community impact. “

Special thanks to Autry mentors: Sarah Wilson, education curator and Nicole Martinez, outreach educator.

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