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Psychicinema Multiplex: Slanguage Media and Arts Collective Takes Control of MOCA

By Wendy Gilmartin

South Bay style was on display last night when Wilmington's own media and arts collective, Slanguage, took curatorial control of MOCA's Thursday night Engagement Party series with its *Psychicinema Multiplex*. Founded in 2002 by Karla Diaz and Mario Ybarra Jr., and based in the harbor area of L.A. specifically to cultivate relationships between diverse audiences there, Slanguage has unleashed its experimental, street art approach on venues like the Tate Modern Museum and Serpentine Gallery in London, to LACMA, to Boston public schools -- and now MOCA, where Slanguage's visual assault included screenings and projections throughout the courtyard and galleries, with psychic dancers, DJs, palm readers and a prom-style portrait studio with Wilmington's hellish refineries as the backdrop.

Downstairs in the Ahmanson Auditorium, the deliciously cornball, 1976 made-for-TV Charles Manson biopic, *Helter Skelter*, flickered away. Just outside, local urban planner and artist, James Rojas, set up shop with his mini tableau of L.A.'s downtown streets. When Rojas remixes the city, it's equal parts city planning, sculpture and public service, where folks are invited to re-imagine the city's skyline by constructing a skyscraper out of a salt-shaker, a plastic giraffe or a broken necklace, and then place it on the map.

Overall, the party was a broad remix of the city's many parts, merging L.A.-centric films like *Blade Runner*, *Falling Down* and *Boyz n the Hood* together with larger cultural representations like music and dancing. Even if the intention to honor the museum's landmark 1992 exhibit "Helter Skelter: LA Art in the 1990s" was lost in the mix, Slanguage's Wilmington style was a welcome distraction.