



Sons And Daughters Of Los: Culture And Community In L.A. (Wide Angle Books)

David E. James

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Los Angeles. A city that is synonymous with celebrity and mass-market culture, is also, according to David James, synonymous with social alienation and dispersal. In the communities of Los Angeles, artists, cultural institutions and activities exist in ways that are often concealed from sight, obscured by the powerful presence of Hollywood and its machinations. In this significant collection of original essays, "The Sons and Daughters of Los" reconstructs the city of Los Angeles with new cultural connections. Explored here are the communities that offer alternatives to the picture of L.A. as a conglomeration of studios and mass media. Each essay examines a particular piece of, or place in, Los Angeles cultural life: from the Beyond Baroque Poetry Foundation, the Woman's Building, to Highways, and LACE, as well as the achievements of these grassroots initiatives. Also included is critical commentary on important artists, including Harry Gamboa, Jr., and others whose work have done much to shape popular culture in L.A.

The cumulative effect of reading this book is to see a very different city take shape, one whose cultural landscape is far more innovative and reflective of the diversity of the city's people than mainstream notions of it suggest. "The Sons and Daughters of Los" offers a substantive and complicated picture of the way culture plays itself out on the smallest scale in one of the largest metropolises on earth contributing to a richer, more textured understanding of the vibrancy of urban life and art. Author note: David E. James is Professor in the School of Cinema-Television at the University of Southern California. He is the author or editor of five books, including, most recently, "Power Misses: Essays Across (Un)Popular Culture".

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