

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 20**  
**DOORS 5PM | EVENT 6PM**

**PROFILES OF ABOLITION:**

# **ABOLITION AND THE RADICAL IMAGINATION**

featuring **ANGELA Y. DAVIS**

with poet and writer **FRED MOTEN** and artist **MELANIE CERVANTES** of Dignidad Rebelde  
moderated by historian **ROBIN D.G. KELLEY**

This event is a benefit for **CRITICAL RESISTANCE** and **LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT**. Join us for a special celebration of Los Angeles Poverty Department's 30-year anniversary, featuring performance, music, and political conversation.

Agape International Spiritual Center  
5700 Buckingham Parkway  
Culver City, CA 90230

## **ABOUT OUR SPEAKERS**



**DR. ANGELA Y. DAVIS** is Distinguished Professor Emerita of History of Consciousness and Feminist Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz. Davis came to national attention after being removed from her teaching position at UCLA because of her activism and membership in the Communist Party, USA. In 1970 she was placed on the FBI's Ten Most Wanted List on false charges. During her sixteen-month incarceration, a massive international "Free Angela Davis" campaign was organized, leading to her acquittal in 1972. Today Prof. Davis remains an advocate of prison abolition and has developed a powerful critique of racism in the criminal justice system. She is the author of many books, including her most recent collection, *The Meaning of Freedom: And Other Difficult Dialogues* (City Lights Open Media).



**FRED MOTEN** is author of *In the Break: The Aesthetics of the Black Radical Tradition*, *Hughson's Tavern*, *B. Jenkins, The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning and Black Study* (with Stefano Harney), *The Feel Trio and The Little Edges*. A new poetry collection, *The Service Porch* and a new collection of essays, *consent* not to be a single being are forthcoming. Moten lives in Los Angeles and teaches at the University of California, Riverside.



A member of the Oakland-based arts collaboration, *Dignidad Rebelde*, **MELANIE CERVANTES** is a Xicana activist-artist whose work includes black and white illustrations, paintings, installations and paper stencils. She is best known, however, for her prolific political screen prints and posters which have been used by movements across the globe. Employing vibrant colors and hand-drawn illustrations, her work moves those viewed as marginal to the center - featuring powerful youth, elders, women, and queer and indigenous peoples.

**TICKETS: [WWW.CRITICALRESISTANCE.ORG/ABOLITION](http://WWW.CRITICALRESISTANCE.ORG/ABOLITION)**

**CRITICAL  
RESISTANCE**

**LAPD**

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ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATIONS:

**CRITICAL RESISTANCE** AND

**LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPT.**

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**CRITICAL RESISTANCE** 

Critical Resistance (CR) is a national organization formed in 2001 with chapters across the country. CR seeks to build an international movement to end the prison industrial complex (PIC) by challenging the belief that caging and controlling people makes us safe. For the past ten years, CR Los Angeles has been leading the charge to stop jail expansion in LA County and is currently focused on halting a proposed new women's jail in Lancaster. [www.criticalresistance.org](http://www.criticalresistance.org).

**LAPD**  
LOS ANGELES POVERTY DEPARTMENT

Los Angeles Poverty Department (LAPD) creates performances and multidisciplinary artworks that connect the experience of people living in poverty to the social forces that shape their lives and communities. LAPD's works express the realities, hopes, dreams and rights of people who live and work in L.A.'s Skid Row. [www.lapovertydept.org](http://www.lapovertydept.org).

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# STOPPING JAIL CONSTRUCTION

## THE FIGHT AGAINST MORE JAILS IN LA COUNTY: THE LARGEST JAIL SYSTEM IN THE WORLD



will then attempt to replace Men's Central Jail with a new complex prioritizing mental health provision and substance use services. Meanwhile in its downtown LA jail, Twin Towers, LA County currently boasts the nation's largest mental health facility.

Los Angeles County is putting forward plans and seeking funding to increase its capacity to cage its community members. The proposed new Mira Loma women's jail in Lancaster (see enclosed flyer) would attempt to add 1604 beds. That would mean 1604 Angelenos imprisoned in a jail two hours from downtown Los Angeles. The County

Critical Resistance (CR) and Los Angeles Poverty Department's (LAPD) event on February 20th 2016 Abolition and the Radical Imagination seeks to evoke a fundamental re-envisioning of the future of Los Angeles shifting away from imprisonment, to truly uplift its community members. The event will centralize discussion of community members' fight against the LA County jail proposal within a broader framework of abolishing the prison industrial complex. Poet Fred Moten who will be speaking with Angela Davis, Melanie Cervantes, and Robin Kelley on February 20th, explains, "This conversation is just a small part of the larger conversation we've always been having, that we need now to keep having, about how to defend ourselves and practice another way of living on the earth."

In the context of ongoing resistance to jail construction, the event will give voice to community members fighting the false notion of gender responsive jails. As CR-LA member Shabina Toorawa points out, "as women of color, as mothers, and as primary care givers, we support reproductive justice and trans power, and we know what true gender empowerment is. It certainly isn't imprisonment, lock up, and jail expansion."

As LA County proposes to continue to expand its jail system - the largest in the world - the nation looks to decarcerate our jails and prisons. Through a combination of State and County funding, Los Angeles would spend over \$2 Billion on new jail construction. Matt Weathers, a member of CR-LA highlighted this disconnect. "People around the country are calling for an end to the imprisonment of Black and Brown communities, yet we're here in LA in 2016 where our Board of Supervisors is trying to recklessly rush towards building new jails that will cost us over \$2 billion in construction alone, with costs sure to grow." He continued on the need for community action, saying that "we won't let the Board of Supervisors and the LA County Sheriffs position themselves to be the main so called 'service providers' for communities of color in Los Angeles. We need to have our resources going towards solutions that will empower and strengthen our communities rather than destroying them."

Kevin Michael Key, a member of LAPD, admonishes the State for prioritizing the jail plan over much needed funding for the basic care of his clients on Skid Row. "While our education, housing, and healthcare services struggle to find resources, we can somehow always find funding for new cages. This \$2 billion jail plan shows that the State and local government officials' vision for our communities is not a healthy vision." Community members are well positioned to fight LA County's jail building efforts as they have mounted a strong defense and stalled jail construction for the last ten years, and just within the last year managed to delay the Mira Loma Jail proposal several times. Organizers in the jail fight will help build a radical inspiration for their ongoing work through this event. Kevin Michael Key continued "As our communities grow ever more organized, we will find new ways to disengage from State violence and rely upon new norms that create and enhance community health and well-being."

# NO MORE JAILS LOS ANGELES

*The LA Sheriff is attempting to move forward with a plan to build a new women's jail in Lancaster. We believe that locking people up in cages does not make anyone safer, and only serves to tear communities apart. We are working to stop this jail, and are demanding investment in resources that actually create strong communities.*

## WHAT WE WANT

### **Pretrial Diversion & Bail Reform**

50% of the county's jail population is pretrial. This means they have not yet been convicted of anything, or sentenced to any time, but are locked up simply for not being able to afford bail. We must stop locking up poor people.

### **Mental Health Diversion & Care**

People dealing with mental health issues make up at least 20% of the jail population. Women, particularly women of color, face severe medical neglect and abuse while locked up. A jail is no place to treat people, we want community based healthcare so that people can actually get the resources they need.

### **Reentry Programs**

The population in LA women's jails has been steadily declining, and will continue to do so with reforms like Prop 47. So why is the county wasting \$103 million for a new women's jail? We should work to reduce the jail population, and use that money for more reentry programs that support people once they are reunited with their communities.

### **Community Resources & Alternatives to Imprisonment**

Strong and safe communities are ultimately a result of having access to affordable housing, healthcare, and education, as well as resources for survivors of sexual and domestic violence. Building more jails will only mean less resources and more harm for our communities.

# JAILS HARM COMMUNITIES AND DESTROY THE ENVIRONMENT

*As part of building a jail, the county must do an Environmental Impact Report, which assesses the negative impacts that the construction of the jail will have on the environment and the people. Jails are terrible environmentally, worsening things like traffic pollution and the degradation of natural resources. Prisoners in this area are also highly susceptible to serious diseases like Valley Fever. The county must do what is best for our environment and our communities and put an end to this jail plan.*

## WHY WE OPPOSE THIS JAIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL GROUNDS

- ✱ People in the jail will be highly susceptible to Valley Fever. Since 2005, thousands of California prisoners contracted the disease, and over 50 have died as a result. Yet, Valley Fever is basically ignored in this report.
- ✱ The site where the jail will be is a “hazardous materials site.” Building it will put those inside the jail in significant danger.
- ✱ A new jail in Lancaster will mean more travel, creating more traffic and pollution.
- ✱ Family visits are crucial for prisoners to maintain strong connections and reduce recidivism. The longer distance makes it harder for family members to visit their loved ones who are locked up.
- ✱ Two underground storage tanks at the site have failed leak detection tests, which means there could be contamination of soil and groundwater.
- ✱ For people at the jail, there is a high risk of exposure to contaminated soil and ground since 44% of the project site will be “outdoor pervious area.”
- ✱ Stormwater drainage and the water supply are not up to current standards.
- ✱ The Environmental Impact Report must assess alternatives to building the jail. However, the report does not look at alternatives to imprisonment that would make this jail completely unnecessary.