

It's a 'Roll Call' When an 80s Graffiti Crew Reunites in LA

Diana Shi — Oct 23 2016



Artwork by Slick. All images courtesy the artists and L.A. Louver

In the 1980s, the Los Angeles graffiti movement moved alongside its counterpart in New York, spreading instances of urban expression across public spaces and reconfiguring pop culture imagery across the city's accessible surfaces. Graffiti artist, [Gajin Fujita](#) crafted a certain urban escape in the artistry of tagging, harnessing the landscape of LA to develop his own artistic voice. Fujita started his career by creating graffiti text juxtaposed against traditional Japanese *ukiyo-e* style, in an expression of his Los Angeles roots.

Through a new group exhibition this fall titled *Roll Call*—a name derived from graffiti artists' adding their signature tags to collaborative works—Fujita celebrates his respected street art crew, Kill 2 Succeed, while corralling eleven artists from LA, including himself, to fill the Venice gallery [L.A. Louver](#).



Por todo El Mundo, Big Sleeps

The story of Kill 2 Succeed's origins begins with Fujita and his childhood friend, Alex Kizu aka Defer. The Roll Call curator met Kizu in middle school, and the two eventually bonded over the artform in a precious sliver of pre-internet time when both artists became enamored with photographs of graffiti. The thrill the two friends experienced over street art manifested itself into forming their first crew, "Kids Gone Bad" or KGB, which also included artist and friend, Jesse Simon. In time, the group evolved into a new, expanded collective of taggers, dubbing themselves "K2S," or Kill 2 Succeed. Other artists featured in the show include Chaz Bojorquez, David Cavazos (a.k.a. Big Sleeps), Fabian Debora, Ricardo Estrada, Patrick Martinez, RETNA, Jose Reza (a.k.a Prime), Slick, among others.



Artwork by Prime



Exempt, Jesse Simon

“Graffiti took me all over the city, seeking out prime real estate to stake my claim, tag my name and flex my skills. It’s how I came to know all the artists in this exhibition; some of us go back almost 30 years,” Fujita tells The Creators Project. Fujita credits street art for bringing the forward-thinking spirit of K2S to reality. He says “Graffiti is the foundation on which we built our artistic practices. But beyond graffiti, Los Angeles is what unifies us. We shaped our skills on its walls and structures.”

“To me, these artists are a cross section of generations and geographies of graffiti,” says Fujita. “This show is a reflection of the people that have impacted my life, and the city of Los Angeles.”

K2S's reunion show *Roll Call* will show November 16—January 14, 2017 at the L.A. Louver. Find more information, [here](#).



We come spinning...scattering stars, Chaz Bojorquez