



Photo courtesy of Compound

Compound: A Sanctuary for Art, Wellness, and Community

By Meghan O'Dell

Long Beach is a city that truly has it all: beautiful beaches, a bustling downtown, many diverse neighborhoods, historical landmarks, a range of independent and family-owned shops, several museums and art galleries (and hundreds of public murals), delicious cuisines representing multiple cultures, a robust music scene, and much more. And the best part? There's always something new that takes me by surprise. In this case, it's an art and wellness complex nestled in the Zaferia neighborhood.

Compound is part art museum, part wellness and community center housed in a beautifully designed space. I attended the opening reception of their amazing interactive exhibit Chromasonic and was blown away by the space itself, the art within it, and the people who created it. Below is an interview with Exhibitions/Facilities Manager Phil Shelly, who has been with Compound since it was in the construction phase in October 2022.

How did Compound come to be?

Founder and creative director Megan Tagliaferri wanted to create a culture complex in Long Beach where all are welcome and feel a sense of belonging. Believing that contemporary art and wellness both offer opportunities to stimulate empathy and growth, the mission was and is to create a space where all aspects of a person, and community, can be nurtured. Wellness is often left out of conversations about art, but we think the health of communities can be uplifted by the experience of art.

What kinds of exhibits does Compound feature?

Compound's focus is on contemporary art, and we are currently featuring two exhibitions. Chaos to Cosmos is exhibited throughout our expansive warehouse space and sculpture garden. It features an array of multigenerational artists, many of which are from the Light and Space movement, which originated in Southern California in the 1960s, but also includes burgeoning artists like Seffa Klein. In our adjoining building (the Lab), we feature commissioned experimental and immersive art. The current exhibit is a light and sound experience called Field Study by artist collective Chromasonic. The artists are using the space as a laboratory to test for a larger exhibit. The light and sound sequences of Field Study are composed and change each month.

What else does Compound offer?

Compound offers a diverse array of programs to nourish the human experience. Wellness programs include, but are not limited to, breathwork, yoga, sound baths, and meditations. We pair with other local nonprofits to offer art and culinary programs: we're starting a brunch series and music programming, as well as artist talks and socially conscious cinema.

What does Compound mean to you, and what do you think it means to the neighborhood?

Compound is a magical and ever-evolving space that is activated by the experience of those who interact with it, whether it's a program partner conducting a workshop or a guest experiencing the space for the first time and realizing that it's here for them to enjoy, relax, and reflect. I believe we are a sanctuary for the neighborhood. We want everyone to feel at home here. It is a place to heal and a place to enjoy with family and friends, or to meet new people.

Are there any upcoming exhibits you can tell us about?

On May 7 from 4 to 8 p.m., Compound and Chromasonic are pairing with World Central Kitchen to host a benefit for Ukraine. World Central Kitchen is a nonprofit organization that is currently serving more than 350,000 meals a day and has served millions of meals to families in Ukraine, Poland, Romania, Moldova, Hungary, Slovakia, Spain, and Germany. Chromasonic has created a light and sound sequence inspired by the Ukrainian flag to bring attention to this tragedy and the resilience of the human spirit. DJ Olive Kimoto will perform, and food will be provided by Wide Eyes Open Palms. We welcome the community to come support this meaningful cause. The event is free but space is limited, so [reserve your spot here](#). Donations can be made [here](#).

In June, we are hosting a photography exhibit featuring the works of local artist Leah Norwood, curated by Brandie Davidson. The exhibit to follow Chaos to Cosmos is called Divine Feminine.

Compound is open Thursdays to Saturdays from 12 to 7 p.m. and Sundays from 12 to 5 p.m. Keep up with programs and events on their website at www.compoundlb.com and on Instagram at @compoundlbc.

Meghan O'Dell, a freelance writer and editor, has been a Long Beach resident for 18 years. She loves reading, seeing live music, and watching too many shows, and she lives with her husband and their Calico cat in the Bluff Heights neighborhood.