

SPRING 2003 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GALLERY EXHIBITS

A Nurturing Spirit
Reception: Friday, March 14, 5:30-8pm
@ the African American Museum in Philadelphia

Internationally renowned artist, Albert Chong, explores the hybridity of African and Chinese elements in his Jamaican heritage. Co-sponsored with the AAMP.

Visible Resistance
March 6 - April 11
Reception and Gallery Talk: Thursday, March 6, 5:30-7:30pm

An open call for activist artwork focusing on resistance to war in the Middle East and South Asia.

Robots vs. Monsters
May 1 - June 13
Reception and Slide Slam: Thursday, May 1, 5:30-7:30pm

An exhibition exploring the influence of Asian sci-fi comics, animation, and movies on Asian American artists' work.

RAP SERIES & OTHER PUBLIC EVENTS

Write to Me
Friday, January 17, 8pm

Share the limelight with feedBack spoken word collective's Taiyo Takeda at this Asian American open mic inspired by the sentiments of poet Agha Shahid Ali.

Karmacy
Friday, February 21, 7pm & 10pm

Multi-lingual, cross-cultural, LA-based hip-hopsters Nimo and Swap come back to their college town of Illadelph to launch their newest CD South Asian-style.

Barriers
Friday, March 21, 8pm
Rehana Mirza's original play premieres in Philadelphia with original NYC cast exploring post-9/11 backlash, religious

YOUTH ARTS WORKSHOP

Teen Open House
Friday, January 31, 4-6pm
Come for the Spring kick-off event! Join teens from around the city for music, games, and a chance to sign up for our workshops!

GenerAsian Next Theater Troupe
Mondays 4-6:45pm, starting January 27
You've got a taste for telling your story on stage! Now, take your work on the road! (Returning GenerAsian participants only.)

Big Picture Mural Arts Project
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4-6pm, starting February 4
Develop your drawing, painting, and dreaming talents as we create a new neighborhood mural! (New and returning participants.)

Life Stories Video Workshop
Wednesdays, 4-6pm, starting February 19
Take the lens to the streets of Philly in this exciting video project to learn camera and editing skills. (No experience necessary.)



Youth Arts Workshop teens Khanh Le & Mary Seng

Artists Exchange Lounge
Friday, May 9, 7pm
Multidisciplinary artists from Philadelphia and beyond share their work with each other and you at this informal exchange! Free for Members!

Two Tongues
Saturday, May 10, 8pm
I Was Born with Two Tongues, the Chicago-based pan-Asian spoken word quartet, unearths rich histories of Asians in America with provocative poetry and song.

Everywhere is War
Friday, June 20, 8pm
Whether on the home front, on foreign soil, or waged silently, this year's Artists Exchange participants address the theme of war with multi-disciplinary performances created to shatter and liberate!

(list as of 12/18/02)

ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES TRAINING
Invited participants only. Contact Lori for more information!

Toolbox Tour
February 22 & 23
Learn to use the powerful aesthetic, social, and healing functions of dance as a community-building tool in this intensive workshop led by Liz Lerman Dance Exchange.

ACT Program
March 22 - April 6
Calling community-based artists to participate in an intensive workshop series to learn basic teaching techniques and share your deepest passion through a lesson plan that you'll design and lead!

Artmaking Days
March 29 & 30
ACT artists connect the message and the madness as they lead our Members and volunteers through a wide range of artmaking activities in their newly developed workshops.



KC & the So Young Band

SAVE THE DATE! ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE'S 2ND ANNUAL BENEFIT BANQUET & SILENT AUCTION FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2003

OCEAN CITY RESTAURANT IN CHINATOWN.

MORE DETAILS INSIDE!

THANKS 2002/03 MEMBERS

Kevin M. Allaway • Noel Alumit • Anonymous Donor, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation Fund at The Philadelphia Foundation • Anonymous Donor, William Penn Foundation • Amelia Belardo-Cox • Donald O.H. Brown • Allison Budshalow • Mia Cariño • Helen Cheung • Nina Chien • John Williams Chin • Kevin Ching • Elizabeth Cho • Susan Audrey Cho • Joe Cohn • Tamiko Doi-Smith • Susanna Eng • Carmen Febo San Miguel • Suheir Hammad • Jennifer Harmelin • Mattyboy Hart • Lynne & Harold Honickman • Wai Man Ip • Barbara Isa • Gayle Isa • Hazel Isa • Leigh Jerner • Steve & Amy Jo • Juli Kang • Peter Kang • Roko Kawai • Fusaye Kazaoka • Marnie Kerr • Parag Khandhar • Anita King • Corinne Lagermasini • Valerie C. Lee • Eric Park & Grace Lee-Park • Leanna Lee-Whitman • Laura Lewis • Richard Liu • Robert Louis • Paul MacDonald • Mitzie Mackenzie • Cathy A. Madeja • Suja Mathew • Ashmi Mehrotra • Peter Missimer • Vani Natarajan • Dat Ngo • Ngo Thanh Nhan • Kristen Hopkins & Karen Nipper • A. H. & Sumie Nishikawa • Kai L. Ouye • Charles Ramirez • Hanalei Ramos • Joan Reilly • Sam DiIorio & Angie Reyes • Thaddeus Rutkowski • David & Elaine Ryan • May Sam • Lori Sasaki • Kat Schwab • Rick Shiomi • Misoon Silverberg • Kevin So • Donghee Song • Tom Andrzejewski & Jane C. Sung • Edward F. Swenson • Patrick Taba • Buech Leng Tang • Christopher Tang • Anita Thakkar • Marian Yalini Thambynayagan • Andrew & Patricia Toy • Pauline L. Tran • Walter Tsou • Kathy Uno • Mary Yee & Paul Uyehara • Neville Vakharia • Christopher Wang • Jenny Wong • Cecilia Moy Yip • Chamroen Yin • Ron & Miye Yoshida • Suzanne Young

(list as of 12/18/02)

ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE
1315 Cherry Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107
(215)557-0455
info@asianartsinitiative.org

Monday, Wednesday-Friday
10am-6pm
Tuesday
1pm-6pm

non-profit org.
u.s. postage
paid
permit #4804
philadelphia, pa

The Asian Arts Initiative is grounded in the belief that the arts can provide an important political and cultural voice for the Asian American communities in Philadelphia. We are a community arts center where artists and everyday people explore and express our diverse experiences as Asian Americans.

Visit Us!
www.asianartsinitiative.org

JOIN THE INITIATIVE!

Make a gift to our 2002/2003 Campaign now, and you'll be entitled to benefits and discounts through June 2003. Plus, you help the Asian Arts Initiative continue to use the arts to build the voice of Philadelphia's Asian American communities.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$250 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$50 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ | | | |

Name _____

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Make checks payable to the Asian Arts Initiative.
Mail to: 1315 Cherry Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

News from the ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

Winter 2003

A DIFFERENT SORT OF CONVENTION

In November, a group of New York-based curators convened at the Asian Arts Initiative for an exciting retreat to help us refine the concept for *Chinatown In/Flux*, an exhibition



Spoken Word Group
I Was Born with Two Tongues

of art installations that we hope to develop in Philadelphia's Chinatown in 2004. Made possible by a planning grant from the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative (PEI), the action-packed weekend included an introduction to the Chinatown neighborhood and a community panel discussion on the potential impact of public art in Chinatown.

Melissa Chiu of the Asia Society; Ken Chu, artist and also a program director at the Creative Capital Foundation; Cynthia Lee from the Museum of Chinese in the Americas; Edwin Ramoran, now directing the Longwood Project in the Bronx; and inde-

pendent curator Eugenie Tsai spoke in depth about the role public art has played in sparking discussion and decision-making on both the private and public levels. They shared models and ideas from arts projects that have been part of larger community development efforts around the nation and emphasized the importance for the Initiative to decide how we might want to utilize this project to situate ourselves within a larger "arts ecology."

We thank the participants from our Chinatown Oral History Project and other community leaders who participated in the retreat - Mabel Chan, Martin Chan, Eric Chen, John Chin, Catharine Fan-Rawlings, Alice Moy, Iwan Santoso, and Andy Toy - and PEI for their support of our Gallery program expansion!

SPRING SNEAK-PEEK!

Spring is always a busy season at the Initiative! In May, we are showcasing Chicago's spoken word quartet, *I Was Born with Two Tongues*. Not only do these dynamic wordsmiths give a powerful performance, but they also will help facilitate our 2003 Artists Exchange. We piloted the Artists Exchange program last year to enable Asian American artists to delve more deeply into a topic of particular resonance. This spring, Artists Exchange participants will examine the multiple faces of war - as it relates to personal and (inter)national politics, divides communities, and connects to issues of violence and sexuality - and create newly commissioned artwork to share at our June Rap Series. Contact us if you're an artist who wants to apply!

This spring also heralds *cultural re:production*, the pilot of our new discussion forum focused on the intersections of artmaking and activism. At our first gathering, we will invite artists to share their experiences in using art as a vehicle for community resistance and political empowerment. A later gathering will spotlight a model of arts-based social change especially relevant to youth: hip-hop activism. Stay tuned for details!

And finally, we continue to build a new tradition of Asian American open mics, starting with the theme "Write to Me" in January. We hope to see you on stage!



Spoken word artist
Taiyo Takeda

WHAT'S NEW WITH THE YOUTH?

Our Youth Arts Workshop looked a lot different last fall! In addition to our new Youth Arts Workshop Coordinator, Kavita Goyal, a new team of youth – Teena Bounpraseth, Khanh Le, Skyls (John) Savath, Mary Seng, Mike Trinh, and Suny Uy – came together as a youth leadership council.

Weekly, they have been



Gena Heng edits her PSA in the Video Room

POWER – OF ART – TO THE PEOPLE

Our Artists in Communities Training (ACT) Program continues to build the network of community-based artists. Last fall, ACT artists Lynda Black, Betsy Casañas, Jeff Cylkowski, Theresa Gaskin, Lisa Murch, Vani Natarajan, Beth Nixon, and Michelle Ortiz participated in a six-week series of workshops on communication, lesson planning, and classroom management. A highlight from the program was a dinner and discussion with ACT alums Uma Magal and Anula Shetty and longtime artist/activists Homer Jackson and Julia Lopez. The panel provided an opportunity for current ACT participants to connect with other community-based artists and to share experiences, challenges, and successes.

In addition, each ACT artist created a lesson plan to lead an arts-based workshop with a social message that he or she wanted to convey. Thanks to Holy Redeemer School, Franklin

participating in leadership development trainings and exploring all sorts of ideas and ways to create new programs – including the possibilities of workshops on Asian American history, a hip-hop event, or a youth discussion forum as a part of our effort to ensure that youth voices are at the forefront of the Initiative.

We also now have a video editing facility where youth in our *Listen Up!* workshop worked with a new teaching artist, Huixia Lu, to create 30-second public service announcements about school and social pressures. Another new face is Isaac Lin, who facilitated teens in the *Big Picture* project to create a visual arts exhibition that wonders "What're You Looking At?" in Philly neighborhoods. And finally, Catzie Vilayphonh led our *GenerAsian Next* theater troupe, bringing together old pros and new members in a rocking performance at our December Rap Series!

Learning Center, Chinatown Learning Center, Bartram Motivational High School, the Atic Youth Center, and Taggart Elementary School for serving as placement sites where the ACT artists were able to "practice" the lesson plans that they developed during the program!

Theresa Gaskin and Lynda Black, ACT Artists

SAVE THE DATE!

Join us for the Asian Arts Initiative's 2nd Annual Benefit Banquet and Silent Auction on Friday, April 25, 2003 at the Ocean City Restaurant in Chinatown. Here are six simple ways that you can show your support and get involved:

1. Attend our Banquet, and bring your friends too!
2. Join our Host Committee and sell a table of seats.
3. Contribute an item or services to the Silent Auction.
4. Place a congratulatory ad in our program book.
5. Donate a seat (or more) for teens and artists.
6. Sign up to volunteer for the event!

We look forward to seeing you there!



Vietnamese Cultural Organizers artists, invited guests, and AAI staff

VOICES FROM VIETNAM

The Initiative felt truly international last December, when we hosted four artists from Vietnam for a conversation with a diverse group of local artists from our Youth Arts Workshop and Artists in Communities Training (ACT) Program. Using the languages of Vietnamese, English, music and dance, the artists spoke about issues of cultural identity and contemporary art-making in both countries – and about the first snowfall of the year, the first ever for some of the Vietnamese visitors!

We are grateful to Dance Theater Workshop in New York and Nick Stuccio from the Philadelphia Fringe Festival for making the exchange possible. We also thank the artists from Vietnam - Le Vu Long, Dao Anh Khanh, Nguyen Tan Loc, and Tran Khanh Hoang – for taking the trip to Philadelphia, and dancer/choreographer Maura Nguyen O'Donohue for accompanying them from New York!

THE ARTISTS WITHIN

At the Asian Arts Initiative, we believe that all people are creative, and we support artists in many different capacities. We interviewed a few folks to gain insight into how diverse our artist constituency truly is!

RODNEY ATIENZA

Artistic discipline of choice: Photojournalism for social justice.

Involvement with the Initiative: Volunteer photographer for the Rap Series and Chinatown Oral History Project.

Accomplishments: Documenting Chinatown's struggle against the stadium. Featured in the recently published *No Restraints: An Anthology of Disability Culture in Philadelphia* (2002).

WENDY CHEUNG

Artistic discipline of choice: Poetry.

Involvement with the Initiative: I'm brand new! I performed here when I was a youth participant in New York's Asian American Writers Workshop, and I just joined the Rap Series Project Team.

Place of birth: Lower East Side of NYC.

Family member who influenced your art: My mother. Her strength and perseverance in raising me never fails to amaze me.

JEFF CYLKOWSKI

Artistic disciplines of choice: Painting, graphic design, and performance.

Involvement with the



Jeff Cylkowski

Initiative: Led a graffiti workshop, performed in the Rap Series, participated in ACT, and just joined as a Rap Series Project Team member.

Where do you hope to live someday? Brooklyn, NY and San Francisco, bi-coastal.

Accomplishments: The places I've painted, and people I've painted with in the graffiti world.

ROKO KAWAI

Artistic disciplines of choice: Dancer/choreographer.

Involvement with the Initiative: Founding board member and most recent staff member!

Place of birth: Tokyo, Japan.

Family member who influenced your art: My mom pushed me into figure skating, ballet, and Japanese classical dance. My father had a facility in drawing that was magical; he said whatever I set my mind on, I would do well.



Teen Mike Trinh with Huixia Lu

HUIXIA LU

Place of birth: Harbin, PRC.

Involvement with the Initiative: Teaching artist of Listen Up! Video workshop. My

favorite part is getting to know my students and enjoying their works.

Current projects: Working on my first fiction film, exploring human feelings on love.

Accomplishments: *Alice Liu's Adventures in America*, a documentary about a Chinese girl's first experience in the U.S.

SHEILA RAMAN

Artistic disciplines of choice: Writing, drawing, quilting.

Involvement with the Initiative: Former Board member of three years, first as Development Committee Chair and then as Board Chair.

Family member who influenced your art: My grandfather had a great eye, my aunt is a photographer and visual artist.

Accomplishments: Making it to the finals for the Sundance Institute Screenwriting Labs.

JU-YEON RYU

Artistic disciplines of choice: Dance theatre using modern dance, Korean traditional dance, and ballet training.

Involvement with the Initiative: Rap Series Project Team member, Rap Series performer. This is where I first presented my work.

Current projects: Collaboration with a spoken word artist, related to my personal experience as a recently immigrated Asian woman—being presented at the Initiative in April!



Ju-Yeon Ryu

ANULA SHETTY

Involvement with the Initiative: Discussion panelist, teaching artist, ACT participant, performance workshop participant.

Accomplishments: Member and co-director of Termite TV. I'm tremendously proud of the alternative and community based body of work we have created.

Current projects: Multimedia show as part of the performance group Asians Misbehavin'.

Family member who influenced your art: My parents are great storytellers of Indian mythology. Much more exciting than television!

SELKIRO SONG

Involvement with the Initiative: Seeing Voices and Listen Up! workshops participant

How does your art relate to your vision of the world? I am into writing from my point of view when I was a child, age 1-10.

Current projects: Interviewing random people in Norfolk, VA. I feel powerful in a creepy sort of way, capturing their expressions, voices, movements, a few minutes of their life in my camera.



Anula Shetty



Selkiro Song

BROUGHT TO YOU BY...

Ever wonder how we plan the Rap Series, the multi-disciplinary performances we sponsor each month? The answer lies in a pool of talented volunteers who bring diverse perspectives and experience as Asian Americans, activists, and artists to our Rap Series Project Team! The group meets regularly to discuss issues critical to our communities and to evaluate and recommend artists and themes for the shows. Veteran members include our Executive Director Gayle Isa, Mytili Jagannathan, Priyanka Jindal, Shweta Parmar, Ju-Yeon Ryu, and Public Programs Coordinator Lena Sze. A warm welcome to our new members, Teena Bounpraseth, Wendy Cheung, and Jeff Cylkowski. Call us if you'd like to join!

BEHIND THE SCENES

Our hard-working staff is constantly striving to develop our skills and find the best ways to build our organization! Last fall, we were excited to participate in a grant-writing workshop led by Board member Tanya Regli and a budget workshop led by former Board member Romola Bose. We also attended a series of workshops sponsored by the Bread & Roses Community Fund (and coordinated by our former staff member, Alix Webb!) about more effective meetings and how to work with volunteers. For all our hard work, we celebrated the season with a staff holiday lunch graciously donated by our "Uncle Joe" at Joe Poon's Asian Fusion Restaurant!

STAFF

Liz Cho, *Operations Manager*
Kavita Goyal, *Youth Arts Workshop Coordinator*
Gayle Isa, *Executive Director*
Roko Kawai, *Grants Manager*
Magda Martinez, *ACT Program Facilitator*
Lori Sasaki, *Education Programs Coordinator*
Sean Stoops, *Gallery Coordinator*
Lena Sze, *Public Programs Coordinator*

INTERNS

Jane Choi, *Office Assistant*
Susan Oh, *Office Assistant*

FALL 2002 YOUTH ARTS WORKSHOP ARTISTS

Isaac Lin, *Big Picture*
Huixia Liu, *Listen Up!*
Catzie Vilayphonh, *GenerAsian Next*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Hai Cau, *Board Treasurer & Finance Committee*
Gerry Givnish
Jenny Hamilton, *Fundraising Committee Co-Chair*
Gayle Isa
Sophia Lee, *Board Development Committee Chair*
Pat Ma, *Board Chair*
Sally Munemitsu
Eva Ray
Tanya Regli
Anita Thakkar, *Fundraising Committee Co-Chair*
Gabrielle Wanamaker
Ken Wong
Thao Le & Chris Ruggiero, *Legal Advisors*
Hiro Nishikawa, *Advisor*

RAP SERIES PROJECT TEAM

Teena Bounpraseth • Wendy Cheung • Jeff Cylkowski • Mytili Jagannathan • Priyanka Jindal • Shweta Parmar • Ju-Yeon Ryu

GALLERY PROJECT TEAM

Nadia Affif • Nour Jallad • Hyunseung Kim • Sue Shon

VOLUNTEERS

Gordon Adams • Teena Bounpraseth • Lai Har Cheung • Gena Heng • Luong Ho • Hyunseung Kim • Diana Kurniawan • Vesna Lhon • Mary Ng • Jesse Olanday • Kim Pham • Angie Reyes • Mary Seng • Patrick Taba • Mike Trinh

2002/2003 FUNDERS

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(list as of December 18, 2002)

