

Asian Arts Initiative

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ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE'S FALL 1998 RAP SERIES PROVOKES DIALOGUE ABOUT COMMUNITY IDENTITY

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The Asian Art Initiative presents a leitmotif of Asian American community experience through performance, poetry, and video in our Fall 1998 Rap Series. At each monthly Rap event, the artistic presentations and the audience discussion following challenge Rap Series participants to go beyond the limitations of mainstream opinion to create new identities that allow the overlap of race, gender, class and sexual orientation. Rap Series artists examine and combat stereotypes by exploring individual identity and that of the community.

Artists were selected from among those who responded to an open Call for Proposals that was issued by the Asian Arts Initiative in early 1998. Artists taking part in the Fall Rap Series include:

Friday, September 18, 7:30 p.m.

Carl Lee, a local filmmaker and member of the Termite TV Collective, presents a preview of WYBE's *Through the Lens* festival of independent films. The screening, like the larger festival it reflects, aims to give exposure to emerging and established filmmakers who address issues that often go unnoticed in mainstream media.

Sarah Son, born of a Korean father and Welsh- Irish mother, will exhibit *Transgressions*, a multi-media installation which explores her biracial identity through a collation of visual images and spiritual growth.

Friday, October 23, 7:30 p.m.

Lorin Lyle investigates his voice as an Asian American male through the premiere of a new dance piece which integrates his training in contact improvisation and other modern dance styles. His performance will culminate an evening of personal storytelling and performance developed by diverse Asian Americans – from a variety of ages, ethnic background, and levels of artistic experience – who are participants in our three-week workshop led by California artist Dan Kwong.

Friday, November 20, 7:30 p.m.

Ju-Yeon Ryu of Temple University's dance program reflects the everyday lives and fears of Korean Americans through a ritual dance and drumming performance, *Na*

or *Foxe's Wedding Day*. Her originally choreographed piece is inspired by the film *4.29 (L.A. riots in 1992)* as well as her own and her friends' experiences in this country.

Friday, December 18, 7:30 p.m.

Shoba Sharma explores how traditional Indian Bharathanatyam dance can be used as a medium to express and ground a community with socio-cultural values that may differ from the American mainstream. Shoba Sharma is a recipient of the Pennsylvania Council of Arts Dance Fellowship and founder of the NATYA Indian classical ensemble, who will also perform at this event.

All performances begin at 7:30 p.m. and are followed by audience discussion. All performances are held in the Asian Arts Initiative's new "home" at 1315 Cherry Street. Tickets are \$3 for members of the Asian Arts Initiative or \$5 for the general public. Advance tickets and reservations available at the Asian Arts Initiative (215)557-0455.

The Asian Arts Initiative believes that art can help raise important issues and explore identity both individually and as part of a larger community. The Rap Series brings us closer to creating a community art center for artists and others in Philadelphia to engage in the arts as a means of expressing our experiences as Asian Americans.

The Rap Series is supported in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts. Additional funding for the Asian Arts Initiative is provided by the Philadelphia Cultural Fund, William Penn Foundation, Independence Foundation, Philadelphia Foundation, Samuel Fels Fund, Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation, 1957 Charity Trust, and CoreStates Bank.

For more information about the Rap Series or the Asian Arts Initiative, please contact us at (215)557-0455.