



ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

1219 VINE STREET * PHILADELPHIA, PA 19107 * (215) 557-0455

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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URBAN CONVERGENCE EXHIBITION CAPTURES SYNERGY OF COLLIDING HIGH ART AND STREET ART WORLDS

June 12 – August 2, 2009

PHILADELPHIA, PA—Asian Arts Initiative and MadeULook Productions host *Urban Convergence*, a multi-artist exhibition curated by Jeff Cylkowski from June 12 through August 2, 2009. An opening reception will take place at the Asian Arts Initiative, 1219 Vine Street, Philadelphia on Friday, June 12, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The marriage between art and culture has never been more prominent than it is today. Examples abound: Damien Hirst's paintings as the backdrop of Jay-Z's music videos; Takashi Murakami's designs on Louis Vuitton's accessories and Kanye West's album cover; graffiti art on Converse sneakers, Sprint advertisements, and energy drinks; Shepard Fairey's iconic "HOPE" portrait of President Obama. These collaborations reflect an unprecedented merging and morphing of artistic genres and culture—high art with street art, underground with pop, fine art with street culture—that is breaking down social barriers and dated paradigms and clearing space for new ideas and aesthetics.

Hailing from metropolitan hubs throughout the country—Philadelphia, New York, San Francisco, Chicago, and Washington D.C.—these artists will share exciting work in a variety of mediums and styles that demonstrate a nationwide convergence toward a fresh contemporary sensibility with an urban edge: Pose II, Joshua Maze, Dave Cramske, Isaac Lin, Rodney Camarce, Jesse Olanday, Sun You, Figments by Ciriaco, Anjni Raol, Shin Ae Tassia, Chanika Svetla, Bret Syfert, Junghwa O'Connell, Miss Tina Wong, Teel MUL, and Dan "R5" Barojas.

Urban Convergence is curated by Jeff Cylkowski, a Korean American adoptee and Brooklyn-based multidisciplinary painter, muralist, and hip-hop artist. Before receiving a formal art education from the Pratt Institute, he spent years immersed in urban subcultures. The spirit of that experience continues to inform his work today. In summer 2009, he will be Artist-in-Residence at the Asian Arts Initiative. His residency will include a six-week series of painting and mural-making

workshops with local youth in partnership with the City of Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, beginning July 6 and culminating with an exhibition of new work on August 14, 2009.

Please contact Asian Arts Initiative for more information about *Urban Convergence* or Jeff Cylkowski's residency: (215) 557-0455 or Toni@asianartsinitiative.org

Major support for this project with Jeff Cylkowski has been provided by *Artists and Communities*, a program of Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation made possible by major funding from The Heinz Endowments, the William Penn Foundation, and the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts.

The **Asian Arts Initiative** is a community-based arts center in Philadelphia that engages artists and everyday people to create art that explores the diverse experiences of Asian Americans, addresses our social context, and imagines and effects positive community change. We host a range of activities including an annual season of performances, our gallery and exhibition series, and our Youth Arts Workshop and other education programs. Recently relocated due to the expansion of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the Asian Arts Initiative is now in a new home at 1219 Vine Street where we are contributing to the revitalization of Vine Street and Chinatown North. For more information about the Asian Arts Initiative, please call (215) 557-0455 or visit www.asianartsinitiative.org.

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