ON VIEW

Working Conditions
September 3 - December 15, 2018
Opening Reception: First Friday, September 7, 6 - 8 pm
Asian American lives are shaped by the concept of labor, whether working in factories overseas, as carnetakers in the United States, or performing the emotional labor of smiling every time someone asks “Where are you from?” The artists in Working Conditions utilize a variety of strategies—performance, video, painting, installation, sculpture, and mixed media—to illuminate the ways in which labor operates on a global and a personal level.

The opening reception will feature:
Performance by Rebecca Maria Goldschmidt
In the Filipino kitchen, vinegar is an eminently ingredient, but beyond its culinary value, it also serves as a medicinal and spiritual tool that has been essential to our survival. Neatly arrange a laminate in an interactive installation inviting audiences to experience toasting locco, a sugarcane vinegar, and recall their own memories of bitterness, perseverance, and labor, as they learn about key historical events.
Performance by Shizu Homma
Reflecting on her personal labor history, Shizu Homma will perform traditional Japanese embroidery at the opening reception and additional performances during gallery hours and have finished needlework to frame. Visitors are invited to ask her about work she has done—illegal, legal, voluntary, coerced, paid and unpaid. Homma’s performance will continue during gallery hours from September 10 – September 21.

COMING UP

Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival
November 16 - 18
Asian Arts Initiative continues its collaboration with PAAFF, now in its 15th year. The largest East Coast festival showcasing films created by and about Asian Americans & Pacific Islanders, features a variety of film genres, live musical performances, chef tastings, and other social events that is celebrated at the festival! For a full schedule of programs visit: www.paaff.org. Featuring special screenings of Von Hyphenated, a collection of short films curated by Sarah Zhu Ibrahim and Lila Ymention, and AFTEREARTH, a multi-channel documentary film by Jess X. Snow and Kith Tan.

LEEWAY ARTIST IN RESIDENCE: Mina Zarfzad
Ticking Materiality: A tale of longing and belonging is a study of a domestic task—e.g. food preparation—through ritual choreography. The piece explores the contact point between body, object, and environment through the lenses of social and political devastation and displacement.

FOR FAMILIES

Youth Arts Workshop After School Program
Monday - Friday, 3 - 6 p.m. September 3, 2018 - June 8, 2019
Calling all middle school students (grades 6-8) to join the Youth Arts Workshop (YAW) Fall 2018 After School Program to participate in a fun variety of art projects, open studios, field trips, guest artist workshops and homework help. Free snacks provided. Contact: jlawner@AsianArtsInitiative.org or call 215 557 0455 for registration and more information.

Community Craft and Art Fair
Saturday, December 8, 12 - 4 p.m.
Check out an array of unique jewelry, crafts, art, accessories, and more—featuring a myriad of local artists and artisans, along with YAW students showcasing original artwork that they have created throughout YAW’s Fall after school program. Just in time for the holiday gift giving season!

ON STAGE & ON SCREEN

The Living Deal: API Poets on Loss, Labor, and Love
Featuring Wendy Xu, Faisal Mohyuddin, Raena Shiral, Ahmad Almallah, and Cynthia Dewi Oka
First Friday, November 2, 7 pm
How does intergenerational trauma in API immigrant communities shape our relationships to labor, including intimate, familial, and emotional labor? How do we define our worth in the context of political erasure, economic necessity, and inherited patterns of gendered violence? How do we accept and remake our difficult inheritances? Five API poets share original work to explore these questions.

3:25pm Performance by Gu Wei
First Friday, December 7, 7 pm
A conversation between various mechanical entities—the sewing machine, the percussive ensemble, and the human worker—3:25 pm is a musical score inspired by the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire in New York City on March 25, 1911. By incorporating the date of the fire into its title, 3:25 pm seeks to pay tribute to the 146 workers who perished in this horrific incident, many of whom were immigrants who barely spoke English and worked in unsanitary and dangerous conditions.

25TH ANNIVERSARY

Shahzia Sikander Artist Talk
Save the Date: October 19
Community College of Philadelphia
Pakistan-born and internationally recognized, Shahzia Sikander’s pioneering practice challenges the strict formal tropes of Indo-Persian miniature painting by incorporating the language of cinema and digital media. As we unveil Shahzia Sikander’s “The Peripheral Gaze,” commissioned by Asian Arts Initiative for the Pew-funded (ext)CHANGE project as part of our 25th Anniversary celebration.

Idea (ext)CHANGE: A Symposium Celebrating 25 Years of Art and Community with Asian American Literary Review
Saturday, December 1, 2018
Plenaries and Discussion Sessions: 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Reception: 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Join us for a symposium celebrating two publications that highlight Asian Arts Initiative’s history of programming and romance with the issues facing our communities. This fall’s Asian American Literary Review serves as a catalyst for our 25th Anniversary Celebration Weekend, providing a look at the commissioned artworks, (ext)CHANGE project, as well as a curriculum by Dan S. Wang and pop up art by Colette Fu. Additionally, Asian Arts Initiative’s Neighborhood Programs Report to the Field documents our community programs from 2013-2018, and conveys lessons from the field at large through essays from Roberto Bedoya and Maria Rosario Jackson.

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Beyond Appropriation: Economic Exploitation and Erasure Black and Brown Workers Collective Workshop
First Friday, October 5, 7 p.m.
In racialized capitalism, Black and Brown labor is invisibleized, privatized, sold, and consumed without uplifting the work put into crafting it—or the worker who crafted it. This workshop examines the intersection between cultural production, cultural appropriation, economic exploitation and its impacts on marginalized black and brown working artists. We will examine current strategies employed on the ground—strategies utilized by the Black and Brown Workers Collective and other radical labor advocacy groups as well as those practices that have not yet been realized.

I’m Afraid of Men” Book Reading and Q&A by Vivek Shraya
Sunday, September 23, 1 - 2 pm
Raised as the child of South Asian immigrants in Canada, a trans artist explores how masculinity was imposed on her as a boy and continues to haunt her as a girl—and how we might reimagine gender for the twenty-first century. Vivek Shraya will read and answer questions about her new book, I’m Afraid of Men. Co-presented by Asian Arts Initiative, Leeuwarden Foundation, City of Philadelphia Office of Immigration Affairs, and City of Philadelphia Office of LGBTQ Affairs.

CULTURE & DIALOGUE

“I’m Afraid of Men” Book Reading and Q&A by Vivek Shraya
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