

# FALL 2003 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events are at the Asian Arts Initiative, 1315 Cherry Street, unless otherwise noted.

## RAP SERIES

### Atomic Tropic

Friday, September 19, 8 pm

Shifting spaces and borders. Crackling energy. Wacky characters. Fragments of stories, heard and overheard. The staccato sounds of urban existence. Jump start the season with authors Karen Tei Yamashita and Sesshu Foster as they share selections of poetry and prose that explore the tensions that shape transnational migration and current global culture. Guest curated by local poet Mytili Jagannathan. Co-sponsored by the Kerry Sherin Wright Prize at the Kelly Writers House.

### Live Traditions / Contemporary Issues

Friday, October 17, 8 pm

Join us for this visual anthology of Asian dance that showcases a select group of Philadelphia-area artists who practice diverse disciplines ranging from Korean ritual to Cambodian court dance. Guest curated by dancer/choreographer Roko Kawai, and followed by audience discussion about the dynamics of teaching traditional art forms in contemporary American society.

### Wince at the Sun

Friday, November 21, 8 pm

Unafraid to dispense social commentary that ranges from satirical to inflammatory, the Himalayan Project represents the essence of underground hip-hop and the sound of things to come. Join MCs Chee Malabar and Rainman as they launch a new album that dissects issues of race, pollution, immigration, and capitalism – and takes listeners on a trip from Bombay to New York, with stops in China, Europe, San Francisco, and South America!

### Women of Color / Women of Conscience

Friday, December 19, 8 pm

Come out for a holiday dance party hosted by the DC-based First Ladies DJ Collective! Dedicated to breaking the “vinyl ceiling” and making DJ culture more accessible to women from all walks of life, the First Ladies’ sally-go-round and Th Pinstriped Rebel celebrate the end of the year with us, spinning early 80’s gems and Japanese disco grooves!

### GenerAsian Next Teen Showcase

Friday, January 16, 7 pm

Teen participants from our Youth Arts Workshop programs throw down and show us their stuff! Featuring performances by the GenerAsian Next theater troupe, PSA’s produced through our Listen Up! video project, and a Gallery exhibition of visual art work created by Big Picture mural artists.

### GenerAsian Next Theater Workshop

Mondays 4-6:45 pm, starting October 6

For Asian American teens who have something to say! Join this weekly workshop where you can tell your stories and hear from other teens. All while practicing writing and performance techniques to help you tell your story on stage! (No experience necessary.)

### Big Picture Mural Arts Workshop

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4-6:30 pm, starting October 7

What do you think about the murals in this city? This is your chance to design and paint what YOU think should be on the walls of Philadelphia. Start with general drawing and painting skills, then work together with other teens to choose a theme and create an outdoor mural. (No experience necessary.)

### Listen Up Video Workshop

Wednesdays, 4-6:30 pm, starting October 8

Like watching videos? How about getting behind the camera for a change? You’ll look at the way videos are made so you can write and direct your own 30-second public service announcements. (No experience necessary.)



A piece from the “Robots & Monsters” exhibit, by Grace Chen of Oakland, CA



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## NEW FACES AT THE INITIATIVE...

### MICHIKO HUNT OFFICE MANAGER



I work on the daily operations of the Initiative's office, which includes everything from ordering supplies, coordinating the organizational calendar, and overseeing the production of our newsletter. I also support the annual Membership Campaign effort and Banquet, and will help coordinate volunteers.

#### What is your sign?

Aries, in the year of the Dragon.

#### What makes you laugh?

True and honest observations, people falling (you know you think it's funny too), my three best friends, and George Dubya's presidency (I laugh because otherwise, I'd cry).

#### Most desired superpower

After much discussion with Omar and Dennis, I've decided that flying would be the best (although I'm still partial to being invisible).

#### Reason for joining the Initiative

I believe that creative expression is a basic human right, and that all people should have access to the arts, outlets for their own creativity, and a place where their unique voice can be heard. I am inspired to be working for an organization that shares those beliefs and works to make those things possible.

### RANA SINDHIKARA ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES TRAINING (ACT) COORDINATOR

Through the ACT Program, we provide artists with unique professional development opportunities to acquire the critical facilitation and pedagogical skills needed to lead effective and



### F. OMAR TELAN PUBLIC PROGRAMS ASSOCIATE

Most notably, I am the curator of the Rap Series, new webmaster, and now responsible for starting a series of workshops to give art-making opportunities to our public.

#### What's your "theme song"?

That's a tough one... here's a list of 3... "Sensitive Artist" by King Missile, "Catch" by The Cure, "Our Lies" by Rasputina

#### What is your favorite color?

Black, the color of my pain. Goth black. So black you have to say it twice. Black black.

#### Favorite movie

Currently "Queen of the Damned"... the best comedy I've ever seen...

#### Favorite guilty pleasure

Hilariously bad movies (see favorite movie).

#### What makes you laugh?

Aside from bad movies?

#### Reason for joining the Initiative

Aside from the highly lucrative and glamorous not-for-profit lifestyle?

#### What artist or art form has had the biggest impact on you?

I'd like to say poetry; but, in reality, it's television.



### DENNIS CHIUTEN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

I am responsible for the Initiative's fundraising efforts, including grant writing and management, special events like the Banquet, and the annual Membership drive.

#### Most embarrassing moment

When I was a teenager my ball bounced into our seldom-used pool. I leaned over the edge to retrieve it, and disturbed a nest of wasps that was living underneath the rim of the pool. They promptly attached themselves to my head and ankles, and I grabbed the ball and ran, screaming, towards the house. Along the way, I stepped right in a pile of dog surprise that my dog, Hobbes, had left right in the middle of the yard... so I continued hobbling towards the house as I tried to scrape the surprise off my shoes on the run. My neighbors saw the whole thing from their yard.

#### Most desired superpower

The ability to fly (quickly).

#### Favorite guilty pleasure

Wearing a shirt with a Chinese character on it, when I don't know what the character means.

#### Reason for joining the Initiative

My girlfriend (Hanalei Ramos), a performance poet who's been involved in a lot of the Initiative's programs over the past few years. We were in a long distance relationship (Philly-LA) for a year and a half, and when she introduced me to the organization, it seemed like the perfect opportunity for me to fulfill my long-held dream of being involved in the Asian American arts movement despite my utter lack of creativity.



Detail of "Momentum" installation by Jeff Cylkowski



Asian Arts Initiative staff: (l-r) Sean, Dennis, Gayle, Rana, Michi, Omar, & Kavita

## SUMMER SNAPSHOTS

- Our Gallery reception for Jeff Cylkowski's *Momentum* installation, which doubled as the opening event for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts' Preserving Diverse Cultures conference. A packed crowd of people from all over the state watched Jeff mix visual art with dance and spoken word.
- A fundraiser we hosted for the 2nd national Asian Pacific Islander American Spoken Word Summit. Curated by Yellow Rage, performers from Washington D.C. to Boston helped make it possible for members of our GenerAsian Next teen theater troupe to attend the conference in Chicago.
- The Open Space gathering hosted by Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. The Cultural Alliance is an advocacy organization that provides services to arts and culture organizations throughout the Philadelphia region. Veterans of our staff got a chance to meet up with colleagues, while new staffers got a chance to introduce themselves to the Philadelphia community, plus learn an innovative technology for convening conferences!
- A tour of the Clay Studio, which serves the Philadelphia arts community with various ceramics classes, as well as a large gallery space. Our staff got a personalized tour of an exhibit of 22 contemporary Chinese ceramicists, plus an inside look at the facilities and a history of this organization which has made its home in Old City for over a decade.
- An ice cream and water ice party to celebrate the completion of the neighborhood mural our Youth Arts Workshop teens created through the Big Picture project sponsored by the City of Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program. If you're on Carpenter between 9th and 10th, take a look to see the fruits of their labor. Special thanks to the Anastasi family for their help and support.
- A staff exchange with the Art Sanctuary. Located in North Philadelphia, the Art Sanctuary works with the African American community through programs very similar to what we offer to the Asian American community. We hope that this first visit is the beginning of an ongoing relationship that enables us to collaborate and open up dialogue between our communities.



Big Picture Mural Project participants in front of the completed mural at 9th & Carpenter



Big Picture Mural Project participants with the Washington Avenue Neighborhood mural design

## CONGRATULATIONS ROKO & ANULA!

We proudly announce that two longtime members of the Asian Arts Initiative family, Anula Shetty and Roko Kawai, are the new recipients of prestigious artist fellowships!

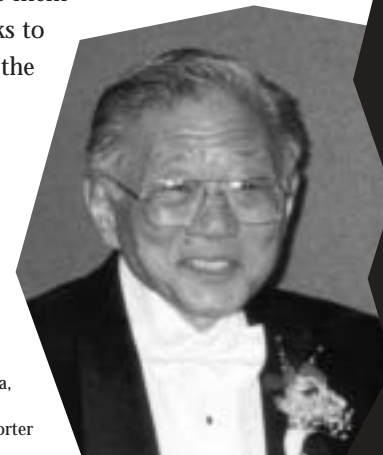
We have known Anula since 1995, when we first featured her short films as part of our multidisciplinary Rap Series. Since then, Anula has completed our Artists in Communities Training (ACT) program, where she honed some of the facilitation skills that she now puts to use as a teaching artist in our Youth Arts Workshop. This June, Anula won an Independence Foundation Fellowship in the Arts, and will now be able to pursue a personal project: completing the script for her full-length feature film *Junk Mail*, which tells the story of a 22-year-old immigrant Indian woman searching for love and political voice in America.

Roko was a founding Board Member, and has served on our staff as Grants Manager for the past year. A dancer and choreographer who has performed at venues throughout Philadelphia, New York, and as far away as New Zealand, Roko was awarded a Pew Fellowship in the Arts that will support her continued study of Japanese classical dance over the next two years. Roko is currently participating in the Asian Pacific Performance Exchange (APPEX) Project in Bali and Hawaii, and will be returning to Philadelphia this fall for performances at the Painted Bride Art Center and at the Asian Arts Initiative's October Rap Series!

## IN MEMORY OF ALBERT ISA

With sadness, we commemorate the passing of Albert S. Isa. Al was the father of our Executive Director, Gayle Isa, and a great supporter who made many contributions to the Initiative—including several staff appreciation dinners, multiple Memberships, a recent used car donation, and two cross-country trips to attend our Annual Banquet and Auction! As a self-employed accountant and entrepreneur, he took pride in his daughter's role in founding the Initiative, and in the recognition the organization has received for its excellent fiscal management. He was a family storyteller, an avid fan of theater and visual art, and quite probably a closet artist himself.

His wife Hazel Isa and daughters Gayle and Michelle Isa have made a \$1,000 gift to the Asian Arts Initiative in his memory. We extend our sympathies and our thanks to the Isa family. To Al, we promise to keep up the good work that made you so proud!



The late Albert S. Isa, Asian Arts Initiative champion and supporter

### STAFF

Dennis Chiuten, *Development Associate*  
Kavita Goyal, *Youth Arts Workshop Coordinator*  
Michiko Hunt, *Office Manager*  
Gayle Isa, *Executive Director*  
Roko Kawai, *Grants Manager*  
Magda Martinez, *ACT Program Facilitator*  
Susan Oh, *Office Assistant*  
Rana Sindhikara, *ACT Program Coordinator*  
Sean Stoops, *Gallery Coordinator*  
Omar Telan, *Public Programs Associate*

### YOUTH ARTS WORKSHOP ARTISTS

Issac Lin, *Big Picture Mural Project*  
Anula Shetty, *Life Stories Video Project*  
Catzie Vilayphonh, *GenerAsian Next Theater Troupe*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

### TEEN LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Teena Bounpraseuth • Khanh Le • Mary Seng • Selkiro Song • Mike Trinh • Suny Uy • Tom Vassallo

### RAP SERIES PROJECT TEAM

Teena Bounpraseuth • Dennis Chiuten • Jeff Cylkowski • Mytili Jagannathan • Shweta Parmar • Ju-Yeon Ryu

### GALLERY PROJECT TEAM

Hyunseung Kim • Anna Perng • Rana Sindhikara • Miki Takamori • Lilia Yan

### 2002/2003 FUNDERS as of 8/15/03

1957 Charity Foundation, Inc.	Philadelphia Arts in Education Partnership
Allen Hilles Fund	Philadelphia Cultural Fund
Citizens Bank	Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative
Claneil Foundation	The Philadelphia Foundation
Douty Foundation	The PNC Foundation
FleetBoston Financial Foundation	Quaker Chemical Foundation
The Ford Foundation	Rohm & Haas Company
Henrietta Tower Wurts Memorial	Samuel Fels Fund
Independence Foundation	Support Communities Outreach Program, City of Philadelphia
Lawrence Saunders Fund	The Seybert Institution
National Endowment for the Arts	Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation
National Performance Network	Verizon Foundation
PECO Energy	Wachovia Foundation
Pennsylvania Council on the Arts	William Penn Foundation
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission	WOMENS WAY
The Pew Charitable Trusts	

