



# ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Lights Out for Chinatown Public Art Installation

**Closing Reception for *Chinatown In/flux* installation *the little red string***

**Monday, July 6, 7:00-9:00 pm**

**Carlton Street between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets, Philadelphia, PA**

**Hosted by the Asian Arts Initiative**

Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> marks the last chance to see **Jonathan and Kimberly Stemler's *the little red string***, a brilliant cluster of lanterns installed beneath the Reading Viaduct crossing Carlton Street between 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Streets in Chinatown North. The lanterns will be removed on July 7<sup>th</sup> at the request of the Reading Viaduct Company. An alternative location is yet to be determined.

To honor *the little red string*, the Asian Arts Initiative will host an evening of music, food and celebration under the lanterns on Monday, July 6<sup>th</sup> from 7:00 to 9:00 pm. Light refreshments will be provided. Entertainment will include live music by local guitar players Annie Seng, Owen Zhong, and others. Community members are encouraged to bring dishes to share in a potluck picnic and their own instruments and join in the jam session. The event is free and open to the public.

Visually suggesting stars and constellations, *the little red string* literally lights the way beneath a dark viaduct tunnel for the community's expansion in Chinatown North. The lanterns are inscribed with personal stories from youth and senior Chinatown community members describing their connection with the night sky in their respective homelands, ancestors and traditions.

The removal of the little red string echoes the Asian Arts Initiative's own current struggle to settle in a permanent home. Recently displaced due to the expansion of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the organization is working to secure \$2 million in eligible funds from the State of Pennsylvania to secure its current location before the purchase option expires on September 30<sup>th</sup>.

The little red string is one of four works of art on display in the Asian Arts Initiative's four-month-long public art exhibition, *Chinatown In/flux: Future Landscapes*, a public art exhibition celebrating the growth, change, and resiliency of Philadelphia's Chinatown. The remaining pieces, including Rebecca Hackemann's *Visionary Sightseeing Binoculars*, Nadia Hironaka's *Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio* and Kikuchi + Liu's *Chinatown Orange* will be on display through August 2, 2009. Maps and information are available at the Asian Arts Initiative at 1219 Vine Street or online at [www.chinatowninflux.org](http://www.chinatowninflux.org).

*Chinatown In/flux: Future Landscapes* has been supported in part by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council and the National Endowment for the

Humanities' *We the People* initiative on American history, and the National Performance Network's Performance Residency Program. *Chinatown Orange* is a National Performance Network Creation Fund Project co-commissioned by Asian Arts Initiative in partnership with Arts at Marks Garage and the National Performance Network. Major contributors of the National Performance Network are the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Ford Foundation, Nathan Cummings Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts (a federal agency).

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[www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org).

*Chinatown Influx: Future Landscapes*. Now through Sun, Aug 2, Sites throughout Chinatown, Philadelphia, PA, for more information: Asian Arts Initiative, 1219 Vine Street, 215-557-0455,  
[www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org), [www.chinatowninflux.org](http://www.chinatowninflux.org)

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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. The Asian Arts Initiative supports a performance season, a visual arts and exhibition program, and youth and educational workshops throughout the year. Recently relocated due to the expansion of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, the Asian Arts Initiative is at a new location at 1219 Vine Street in the northern end of Chinatown, Philadelphia where it is developing a new multi-tenant arts facility. [www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org).

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