



# ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

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High-resolution images available upon request and online at:  
[www.canarypromo.com/asianarts](http://www.canarypromo.com/asianarts)

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Asian Arts Initiative Hosts Dynamic Monthly Open Mic Nights to promote open dialogue about culture, community and creativity** *Family Style Open Mic series runs every third Friday through May of 2013*

PHILADELPHIA — From Sri Lankan poetry to Filipino hip-hop, **Asian Arts Initiative's** monthly **Family Style Open Mic** series features an eclectic mix of multi-disciplinary performance and storytelling geared toward promoting open dialogue and sharing of a diversity of cultural experiences. The 2013 series, held third Fridays at Asian Arts Initiative's theater (1219 Vine St.), is hosted by **Michelle Myers** and **Catzie Vilayphonh** of the spoken-word duo **Yellow Rage** and includes a monthly featured guest as well as a lineup of local performers.

Encouraging conversation about the diverse experiences of Asian Americans as well as extended "family" of all cultures, Family Style Open Mic allows participants a 5-minute spot for poetry, storytelling, dance, theater or music performances; original work is especially encouraged. A pre-reception for all open mic guests and performers offers free food and drinks provided by this season's sponsor, **Circles Thai Cuisine**.

On **February 15**, in conjunction with the Philadelphia Free Library's "One Book One Philadelphia" 2013 selection *The Buddha in the Attic* by Julie Otsuka, Family Style Open Mic will feature **notable poet Gowri Koneswaran**, a Sri Lankan Tamil American writer, singer and lawyer who works to advocate for animal welfare, the environment, and the rights of prisoners and the criminally accused. She has performed at Lincoln Center Out of Doors, the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage and the Smithsonian Folklife Festival. A poetry coordinator at Bloombars and a host of open mics at Busboys and Poets in Washington, D.C., Koneswaran will perform at Asian Arts Initiative with the theme "Stories of Where We Come From."

The special guest performer scheduled for **March 15** is **SNRG** ([SNRGmusic.com](http://SNRGmusic.com)), a **Filipino hip-hop and rap group** on video rotation on MTV Asia that has performed live across the world including in Toronto, Manila, Los Angeles and New York. The performance on **April 19** comes from closer to home, featuring the former frontman of Philadelphia-based band Miss Vintage. **Musician and lyricist Jason Min** ([jasonminmusic.com](http://jasonminmusic.com)) released his debut self-titled EP in November 2010 and stays active in the Philadelphia music scene with a unique sound driven by layered guitar lines and melodic, ambient

soundscapes paired with introspective lyrics. Finally, the season closes on **May 17** with a “**Best of Family Style**” presentation featuring favorites from the 2012 and 2013 seasons.

### **Family Style Open Mic: Schedule of Events\***

#### ***Friday, February 15***

7:30-9:30 p.m., \$5-\$10 (sliding scale)

Pre-show reception begins at 7 p.m.

Featuring notable poet, singer and lawyer Gowri Koneswaran

#### ***Friday, March 15***

7:30-9:30 p.m., \$5-\$10 (sliding scale)

Pre-show reception begins at 7 p.m.

Featuring Filipino Hip-Hop & Rap Group SNRG

#### ***Friday, April 19***

7:30-9:30 p.m., \$5-\$10 (sliding scale)

Pre-show reception begins at 7 p.m.

Featuring musician and lyricist Jason Min

#### ***Friday, May 17***

7:30-9:30 p.m., \$5-\$10 (sliding scale)

Pre-show reception begins at 7 p.m.

Featuring Best Of Family Style Open Mic 2012-2013.

**\*Family Style Open Mic participants are highly encouraged to sign up in advance [online](#).**

The Family Style Open Mic series takes place at Asian Arts Initiative, 1219 Vine St., Philadelphia, PA 19107. In addition to these monthly programs, Asian Arts Initiative hosts exhibitions and ongoing youth workshops. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 12-6 p.m., and by special appointment. Admission to the gallery is free. For more information, call 215-557-4055 or visit [www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org).

### **About Asian Arts Initiative**

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. Recently relocated due to the expansion of the Pennsylvania Convention Center, 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, please call 215-557-0455 or visit [www.asianartsinitiative.org](http://www.asianartsinitiative.org).

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**To request photos, interviews and more information, please contact:**

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