



EXPRESS Asian American Writers' Workshop holds poetry marathon

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NEW YORK

For the first time ever, Asian American and African American artists and scholars east of California are willing to meet and mend past transgressions by re-engaging their historical American pact and share their cultural experiences through artistic expression.

The Asian American Writers' Workshop collaborates with phati'tude Literary Magazine on a reading entitled Tongue Afire -- A Celebration African & Asian Culture: A Poetry Marathon held at the Langston Hughes Community Library & Cultural Center (102-09 Northern Boulevard in Corona, Queens) on December 10 at 6:30 p.m.

Part of a two-day event, the artists scheduled to appear include Roger Anthony Bonair Agard, Cheryl Boyce Taylor, Regie Cabico, Nick Carbo, Faye Chiang, Ava Chin, Staceyann Chin, Gabrielle David, Keith Gilyard, Christian Langworthy, Shirley Bradley LeFlore, Bertha Hope, Kyoko Mori, Ishle Park, Lynne Procope, Eileen Tabios, Lori Tsang and Lisa Yun, with a special introduction by Louis Rayes Rivera, professor, poet, author and author and publisher.

This honest interaction by and between Asian Americans and African Americans was conceived due to phati'tude Literary Magazine's announcement of its soon-to-be-published special issue Tongues Afire (appropriately named after poet Janice Mirikitani's poem dedicated to Maya Angelou), a celebration of the literary efforts of over 100 Asian American and African American writers.


As a result, Asian American Writers' Workshop initiated and sponsored a small gathering of artists and scholars in June 1998, which was an unprecedented success.

Due to the public's growing interest, Tongues Afire has grown from a literary achievement into a political act, with both artistic and academic communities coming together to produce this two-day event which is co-sponsored in part by the Asia Society, Poets & Writers, Poets Theater and Syracuse University.

Tongues Afire brings modern day writers of Asian American and African American descent to the forefront by the exploring their respective literatures. Because American literature and history are inextricably bound, even the most discerning will find that Asian Americans and African Americans share a uniquely parallel history -- each were legally and socially oppressed in America -- which has had a profound impact on these two distinct cultures.

The Asian American Writers' Workshop is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to further the creation, development, publication and dissemination of Asian American literature. It is located at 37 St. Mark's Place (off 2nd Avenue), New York, NY.

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