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Pacific Asia Museum announces *Active Cultures'* second season



September 21, 2011—Pacific Asia Museum continues its popular *Active Cultures* series beginning October 21, 2011. *Active Cultures* pairs engaging speakers in a dynamic, conversational program. Each evening features two experts and two topics not necessarily sharing an obvious connection. Each speaker makes a short, 30 minute presentation on their area of expertise, and then shares the stage in an open session where they take questions and along with the audience explore the connections between their topics. The evening concludes with continued conversation over food and drink as the audience and presenters come together in an informal reception.

On October 21, the season kicks off with “The Cult of Hatsune Miku” and “New Muslim Cool.” Social media researcher Alex Leavitt, a PhD candidate at USC, will discuss the unique success of Hatsune Miku, a Japanese pop star created completely by computer software and online fans. Documentary director Jennifer Maytorena Taylor will then share her insights into Muslim youth culture through her films *New Muslim Cool* and *Ramadan Primetime*.

The series takes Pacific Asia Museum’s rich history of promoting dynamic cross-cultural conversations to the next level. By deconstructing the standard lecture format, and mixing topics and themes, *Active Cultures* is a fresh way of approaching art and culture. *Active cultures* is free to Pacific Asia Museum members and \$10 for the general public. The full schedule of the 2011-2012 season is below.

October 21, 2011

The Cult of Hatsune Miku In July 2011, Japanese pop idol Hatsune Miku performed to a sold-out Nokia Theater in Downtown LA. But Miku isn't real: she's the combination of computer software and the online contributions of thousands of people. Social media researcher Alex Leavitt, a PhD student at the Annenberg School for Communication at USC, looks at how Miku epitomizes the success of networked, peer-produced media and illustrates the potential for new forms of youth identity in Japan.

New Muslim Cool Muslims of all cultural backgrounds around the world are using music, film and television, the internet and fashion to remix and redefine their experiences and identities. Documentary director Jennifer Maytorena Taylor shares clips from two of her most recent films, *New Muslim Cool* and *Ramadan Primetime*, and discusses the intersections of faith, global pop, and youth culture.

November 18, 2011

Buddhist Geeks: Uniting Technology and Wisdom Vincent Horn is a co-founder and director of the innovative media project Buddhist Geeks. He will explore the interdisciplinary insights to be gained by combining geek culture's radical experimentation, facility with external technologies, and forward-thinking with Buddhism's wisdom of the human condition, mind training systems, and familiarity with the inner world.

Cultural Identity and The Modern Sounds of Indonesia Traditional styles of music like *gamelan* are closely associated with cultural identity in Indonesia, much the way jazz is in America. Popular modern music of the region, however, reflects a wide range of influences, both local and international. San Francisco-based bassist and composer Cory Combs will speak about and share clips of the modern sounds of Indonesia, including *kroncong*, *dangdut*, protest music, and Indonesian hip-hop, broadly considering how music represents a nation.

January 20, 2012

The Power of 1970s Kung Fu Cinema The 1970s are recognized as the most influential decade in martial arts cinema, bringing major breakthroughs in fight choreography and filmmaking, the rise of the genre's most influential actors/directors and the creation of a worldwide following. Yet the films also had personal impact as they built national identity and pride - and even saved the life of tonight's presenter, pioneering stuntman, fight choreographer and film historian Dr. Craig D. Reid.

Love Hotels: The Hidden Fantasy Rooms of Japan The public and private in Japan are closely guarded spheres, separated by strongly-held notions of acceptable behavior. Heightened awareness of what is proper pervades daily life and relationships - thus the love hotel has emerged to fill the need for private space. Photographer Misty Keasler will share images and insights gathered during her year documenting these highly decorated, tech-savvy, simultaneously public and private rooms. *Both authors' books will be available for purchase and signing.*

February 17, 2012

East of Western: Development of the Art Scene in Pasadena Artist Richard Jackson shares some of his personal experiences of the growing art scene in Pasadena in the late 1960s and early 1970s, reflected by a boom of artists utilizing commercial spaces in a yet-to-be-gentrified Old Town, Art Center College of Design's relocation from downtown LA to Pasadena, and the final days of the Pasadena Art Museum.

Splendid China: Building Life with Intelligence Principal of the L.A.-based Studio 0.10, USC School of Architecture Assistant Professor Andrew Liang also directs the Asia Architecture and Urbanism Study Abroad Program, leading upper division architecture students on a 15 week quest to study the rapid urbanization of China. He presents a view "through the looking-glass" of the unprecedented environments being created at unimaginable speeds and scale.

About Pacific Asia Museum

Pacific Asia Museum is among the few institutions in the United States dedicated exclusively to the arts and culture of Asia and the Pacific Islands. The museum's mission is to further intercultural understanding through the arts of Asia and the Pacific Islands. Since 1971, Pacific Asia Museum has served a broad audience of students, families, adults, and scholars through its education and outreach programs.

Pacific Asia Museum is located at 46 North Los Robles Avenue, Pasadena, California 91101. The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is \$9 general, \$7 students/seniors, and free for museum members and children under 12. Admission is free every 4th Friday of the month.

For more information visit www.pacificasiamuseum.org or call (626) 449-2742

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