



DEPARTMENT OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS
City of Los Angeles

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MEDIA ALERT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Department of Cultural Affairs presents
humor us at Municipal Art Gallery**

Los Angeles— Asians and Asian Americans are often stereotyped as eternal foreigners, model minorities, shy lotus blossoms, or emasculated wimps, yet they are not commonly seen as the creative stewards of comedy themselves. *Humor us*, an exhibition of 20 Asian American artists with ties to Southern California, changes this perception. The exhibition will be held at DCA's Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery from September 14, 2007 to December 30, 2007. The free Opening Reception will take place on Sunday, September 16, 2007, from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. and is open to the public.

By linking humor to Asian Americans, *humor us* questions the parameters of identity, while recognizing the continuing importance of race and representation within and outside the United States. Asian and Asian Americans are often the butt of jokes and used as comic relief within mainstream media – from Fu Manchu to William Hung (of American Idol notoriety). By presenting incongruities, absurdities, and irrationalities, *humor us* will evoke a smile, chuckle, or a laugh from the audience; however, it will also engage the viewer in a critical exploration of what, indeed, is so funny. With nearly 100 works ranging from the delightfully ridiculous to the plain silly, as well as those that deploy humor, both subtly and bombastically, as a means of social engagement and critique, *humor us* seeks to create a context in which humor can be explored, questioned, and even challenged.

Participating Artists

Humour us highlights artists who have taken humor into their own hands, and also examines the role of cultural specificity in the operations and reception of humor. They include Shane Abad, Tetsuji Aono, Susan Choi, Young Chung, Allan deSouza, Cirilo Domine, Reanne Estrada, Anna Sew Hoy, Pearl Hsiung, Terence Koh, Byong Ok Koh, kozyndan, Dinh Q. Lê, Candice Lin, Sandra Low, Sandeep Mukherjee, Udam Nguyen, Kaz Oshiro, Joey Santarromana, and Niphan Sawannakas

Related Events

Friday, October 5, 7:30 to 9:00 pm: Artists' Conversation
Saturday, October 27, 2:00 to 3:30 pm: Artists' Conversation
Saturday, December 1, 2:00 to 3:30 pm: Artists' Conversation

Humour us is curated by guest curators Viet Le, Yong Soon Min, and Leta Ming.

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Viet Le is an artist, creative writer, and curator whose work has been featured in *Fuse*, *Amerasia Journal*, *Asia Pacific American Journal*, *corpus*, the *Tebot Bach* poetry anthologies, and *Flaunt* magazine, among others. Le obtained his MFA from the University of California, Irvine. He recently curated the performance event *Miss Saigon with the Wind* (Highways Performance Space in Santa Monica, CA), the visual art show *Charlie Don't Surf* at the International Centre for Contemporary Asian Art (Centre A) in Vancouver, B.C., and has organized numerous cultural arts projects as a board member of Vietnamese American Arts and Letters Association. He is currently co-curating with Yong Soon Min the exhibition *transPOP: Korea Viet Nam Remix*.

Yong Soon Min is an artist and independent curator. Her artistic practice incorporates diverse media and processes that engage issues of representation and cultural identity, the intersection of history and memory, and the role of the artist and the arts as agents of social change. She is a professor in the Studio Art Department at UC, Irvine.

Leta Ming co-curated *Social Capital: Forms of Interaction* at the Whitney Museum, an exhibition of contemporary art in various media that examined both discordant and harmonious forms of social interaction.

ABOUT DCA

The Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) serves as a leader to generate and support high quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles residents and visitors. DCA also advances the social and economic impact of the arts and assures access to arts and cultural experiences through grant making, marketing, public and community arts programming, arts education, and creating partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in every community in the City of Los Angeles.

DCA grants \$3.4 million annually to over 300 artists and nonprofit arts organizations and awards the Artist-in-Residence (A.I.R.) and City of Los Angeles (C.O.L.A.) Individual Artist Fellowships. It provides arts and cultural programming in numerous Neighborhood Arts and Cultural Centers, theaters, and several arts and education programs for young people. The Department operates two historic monuments, directs public art projects, and manages the City's Arts Development Fee, Art Collection, and Murals Program. DCA markets the City's cultural events through development and collaboration with strategic partners, design and production of creative promotional materials, and management of the culturela.org website.

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