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## THE 2ND NATIONAL APIA SPOKEN WORD & POETRY SUMMIT 2003

**Chicago, IL** – The Asian American Artists Collective-Chicago proudly presents the 2nd National Asian/Pacific Islander American Spoken Word and Poetry Summit to be held August 1-4, 2003, in Chicago, Illinois. Co-sponsored by Hostelling International-Chicago, Diaspora Flow, and DePaul University Women's Studies Program, the Summit highlights the oral tradition of story-telling and poetry as a fundamental medium for creating culture, preserving history and transforming community. Over 175 people are expected to attend the four-day gathering, building upon the historic, inaugural event in 2001. The theme of the summit, "first there was the WORD...then there was the FIST!" underscores the need to build a progressive, national dialogue among APIA artists and community. "Gathering APIA artists together is in itself a political act," says Giles Li of spoken word group, re: verse. "The summit is a matter of the political content of our work being manifested in something that is positive and productive for ourselves as artists, and for our community as people. Every individual is always a work in progress, but the summit helps bring us one step closer to completion."

Incorporating workshops, showcases and regional meetings, the four-day Summit will prove to be challenging work for its participants. In emphasizing a true intergenerational dialogue, a special youth day is planned for the expected 60 teens attending and special invitations have been sent to many pioneering APIA artists. "The APIA Summit connects people, young and young at heart, who NEED to know each other," says Summit co-coordinator, Jona Mercado. "This is an amazing experience where there are no bystanders. Everyone can walk away with a deep sense of community, and learn from each other in a safe space."

### Summit events include:

- feature performances by Mango Tribe, Robert Karimi, Zero 3 and Isangmahal and more
- master classes on poetry, performance storytelling, and playwriting
- intensive workshops on artist and career management, art as an organizing tool, race as performance, multi-racial identity, and self-publishing
- group and panel discussions facilitated by participating artists and organizations from across the country
- an entire day devoted to APIA youth activities including group-building exercises, performance and writing primers, and youth-led workshops from Young Asians with Power (Chicago), GenerAsian Next (Philadelphia) and Youth Speaks (Seattle)
- a showcase highlighting work from all participants
- a series of round-table discussions and "family meetings" to review and re-envision the state of Asian America as it pertains to the artist as activist, organizer and conscience in the community

As in 2001, the Summit will precede the National Poetry Slam, to be held August 6-9, 2003, in Chicago. Participants are encouraged to stay through the duration of the Summit and NPS 2003 to help support those APIA artists competing in the slam, and to contribute to the Asian American Showcase, an NPS sponsored day-activity.

Grass-roots efforts are already underway, with invaluable fundraising and support from Isangmahal Arts Kollektive (Seattle), Proletariat Bronze (Bay Area), Balagtas Collective (Los Angeles), Yellow Rage (Philadelphia), Luvjones Productions (Chicago) and Mongrel (Minneapolis).

Daren Mooko, Director of the Asian American Resource Center at Pomona College, declares, "poets and spoken word artists are truly the historians for the masses. The second APIA Spoken Word Summit will carve its place in history for being as an event where the history tellers and history makers will, yet again, move the masses and tell the stories."

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