

American Peril, Israeli short films, Diwali at the Art Museum, and more

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Is there any candy left over at your house? Have you ordered your heirloom turkey yet? If you're happy exploring what the city has to offer before the next celebration is upon us, here are some ideas for this weekend.

America in peril?

The Philadelphia Asian American Film Festival (PAAFF) doesn't open until November 8, but the festival's visual exhibition exploring the history of anti-Asian racism in the U.S. opens on Friday night at Old City's Twelve Gates Arts gallery, with a reception from 5:30-8:30pm. **American Peril: Imagining the Foreign Threat** offers more than 60 original printed works covering the Chinese Exclusion Era of the mid-1800s; WWII anti-Japanese propaganda, anti-Japanese sentiment in the auto industry in the 1970s and '80s, and the political context of post-9/11 Islamophobia.

Framing issues like contemporary Islamophobia as a larger historic trend "encourages viewers to consider historical precedents and their effects," organizers say, "and to think more critically about today's xenophobia." The show's works come from the collection of PAAFF festival director (and BSR film writer) Rob Buscher, Cathy Matos, and Jamal J. Elias. It'll be up through November 30.



Toast your shitty week with the cast of 'This Week Sucked.' (Image courtesy of ComedySportz.)

This Week Sucked

ComedySportz at the Adrienne has another Friday night option. The hour-long improv show ***This Week Sucked*** (\$10) is probably what you need right now. It starts at 10pm and invites the audience to divulge their worst “bad bosses, breakups, hookups, adulting challenges and general woes,” which the cast then uses to create instant comedy at your expense, but also your catharsis. The show is BYOB. If you miss it this weekend, it’ll be back on November 9, 16, and 23 at 10pm.

THE INVENTOR

On Saturday afternoon, stay in the neighborhood and you can catch a free reading of the new play ***THE INVENTOR***, by Daniella Vinitzki, at

the Drake at 2pm. This one-day event is presented in partnership with Iron Age Theatre and The Producer’s Fund. The story follows “a renowned scientist and immigrant on the cusp of completing an invention to benefit mankind,” despite his post-war PTSD and poor medical care. His transformative concept, once thought impossible by science, may come apart as he battles these demons. Director Marcia Ferguson, a senior lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania theater department and professional actor and director, works internationally in theater, film, and television. The reading features Damon Bonetti, Maia DeSanti, John Lopes, and Michelle Pauls.

Staring Back at the Sun

Beginning on Thursday night and concluding with the second half of the program on Saturday (both at 7pm), Lightbox Film Center presents ***Staring Back at the Sun: Video Art from Israel: 1970-2012***. This short film series showcasing 38 Israeli artists, some presented outside their home country for the first time, is produced by Artis and presented in partnership with the Philadelphia Museum of Art (in conjunction with Yael Bartana: And Europe Will Be Stunned, on view through January 1, 2019).

The Thursday night program (96 minutes) features parts I and II of the program, while Saturday night (125 minutes) closes with parts III and IV. The shorts explore how the art of video, perhaps more than any other medium, “has shaped the world in radical ways” over the last 50 years.

Video is both “an agent of mass communication and an artistic medium,” and that’s especially important in Israel, organizers say: “As Israel’s internal politics and conflict became more visible on television, in film, and



A still from the 1994 film 'No More Tears.' (Image courtesy of Lightbox.)

on the streets in the late 1990s and early 2000s, video art in Israel came into its own.” This program offers “critical and challenging” insight into the relationship between art and culture, and larger societal forces.

Dazzling Diwali

On Sunday from 10am-3pm, it's a pay-what-you-wish family day at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, featuring Dazzling Diwali, to celebrate the Hindu Festival of Lights. From 10am to 3pm, participants can create a Diya lamp out of clay at the Balcony

Studio. At 11am, noon, 1pm, and 2pm, you can take a special mini-tour of artworks from South Asia, including the Pillared Temple Hall. And at 11:30am and 1:30pm, catch a dance performance from Traditions of India.

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