



**powell street festival society**

パウエル祭協会

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

*Powell Street Festival Society and Blim present*

# KAORI KASAI: URA MONCHAN

**March 4 - 27, 2010**

**OPENING Thursday, March 4, 2010, 8:00 - 11:00 pm/ ARTIST TALK @ 8:30pm**

**FLIM NIGHT: Films curated by artist Kaori Kasai, Friday, March 26, 8:00-11:00pm**

**Blim, 197 17th Ave. E, Vancouver**

More information: 604 683 8240 or [www.powellstreetfestival.com](http://www.powellstreetfestival.com)

Powell Street Festival Society and Blim present the exhibition *Kaori Kasai: Ura Monchan*. Using androgynous characters, Kasai creates storyboards of short vignettes about kinship, alienation, emotional boundaries and our interactions with physical environments. During her artistic residency/exhibition, Kasai will present new paintings and print-based works, curate a Film night (film event) on March 26<sup>th</sup>, and produce a limited edition screen printed shirt available at Blim.

Kasai's new works in *Ura Monchan* include paintings and prints of a character named Monchan. Monchan is a complicated character whose name is derived from a combination of the Japanese colloquial term for monster, or "Mon," and "chan," the suffix used at the end of a name to denote endearment. Monchan reflects the artist's struggles of acceptance and sense of self as a landed immigrant in Canada. This delightful character was conceived during a period of difficulty in Kasai's life and became a source of comfort when the artist felt lonely or isolated. On the surface Monchan is the epitome of calmness, but on the inside, Monchan faces emotional turmoil. Unlike the eponymous character epitomized in Kasai's forthcoming children's book, *Monchan's Bag*, Monchan is not perpetually cute, cuddly and happy. Entitled *Ura Monchan*, or "reverse side of" Monchan, this exhibition reveals the behind-the-scenes version of Kasai's child-friendly Monchan. *Ura Monchan* depicts a complex, non-gender specific, and self-questioning character who represents Kasai's struggles with self-expression in an often-alienating culture.

Kasai 2010 children's book, *Monchan's Bag*, is published by Simply Read Books. Her works have been exhibited at Giant Robot, Little Otsu and SOMARTS (San Francisco), Compound Gallery (Portland), gallery 1 (Japan), and the Powell Street Festival (Vancouver) at Helen Pitt Gallery. Visit [www.powellstreetfestival.com](http://www.powellstreetfestival.com) for more information on all events.

On opening night, Thursday, March 4, Kasai will give an artist talk at 8:30 pm. Kasai will also curate FLIM night on Friday, March 26. Come watch Kasai's selection of films, and view new works produced during her residency at BLIM; entry fee: sliding scale of \$7 - \$10. Blimited: Limited Edition Screenprinted shirt by Kaori Kasai available at Blim for month of March. Images available upon request.

This is the launching event for the **Powell Street Festival's 2010 season of events**. More information at [www.powellstreetfestival.com](http://www.powellstreetfestival.com). Follow us on Twitter @ <http://twitter.com/powellstfest> Blim: [www.blim.ca](http://www.blim.ca)

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