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New Exhibits Focus on Urban Expressionism and Education

PHILADELPHIA – Two art exhibits at Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) shine a light on Philadelphia's diversity and creativity. Local artist Leroy Johnson and student work from Charter High School for Architecture + Design, Philadelphia are featured in the newest exhibits accessible to ticketed passengers at PHL.

Urban Expressionism is an exhibit by Johnson, who has been creating art for nearly 60 years. He uses clay, paint, charcoal, photographs, and found objects and materials to create paintings and small-scale dioramas that depict Philadelphia's inner-city landscape.

He focuses on the architectural shapes of Philadelphia and refers to his palette as inspired by the colors of the city. His artwork is an amalgamation of his observations and experiences. His art is complex, dense, and detailed with elements of city life.

The exhibit by students from Charter High School for Architecture + Design (CHAD) features objects, graphics, and photos that are representative of their studio courses that include architecture, design, drawing, fashion design, industrial design, and textiles. CHAD is the first charter high school for architecture and design in the United States. The school's philosophy emphasizes the design process throughout the curriculum as a way for creative and analytical thinking.

Some of the images and 3-dimensional objects by CHAD students include architectural models, life drawings, and wearable fashion designs -- one made mostly of folded paper.

"What makes these new exhibits so special is that they exemplify the diversity and uniqueness of Philadelphia," said Airport CEO Chellie Cameron. "Through the Airport's Exhibitions Program, our passengers can see what the city has to offer and experience an enjoyable and memorable time while at PHL."

Urban Expressionism, located between Terminals C/D, is on display until February 2017. The CHAD exhibit, located in Terminal D, will be on display until November 2016.

The Airport's Exhibition Program is a nationally-recognized, award-winning visual arts initiative. The program provides visibility for Philadelphia's cultural life and enriches the experience of the traveling public. Since its inception in 1998, there have been more than 300 exhibits featuring work by artists and cultural institutions from the Greater Philadelphia region.