

ENGLISH

## Works by Sansei Artists Address American Concentration Camps

09/15/2021

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MONTEREY — “Shadows from the Past: Sansei Artists and the American Concentration Camps” opened at the Monterey Museum of Art on Sept. 9 and will be on view until Jan. 9, 2022.

In the mid-winter of 1942, under Executive Order 9066 the U.S. military forcibly evicted 120,000 Japanese American citizens, including men, women and children, from their homes and businesses. They were transported away with only the personal possessions that they could carry and imprisoned for as many as four years in hastily made tarpaper barracks in heavily guarded camps throughout the American west — what the U.S. government and media euphemistically called “relocation centers” but were in fact American concentration camps.

This historic incident inspired Monterey Museum of Art’s exhibition “Shadows from the Past.” Curated by Gail Enns, this exhibition features paintings, photographs, and sculptures by eight renowned Sansei artists as well as historical artifacts relating to the camps and the legacy of Japanese Americans in Monterey.

Together these selected works invite visitors to reflect on the personal and collective impact of the wartime internment — what President Gerald Ford called our “national mistake” and George H.W. Bush conceded was “a great injustice, and it will never be repeated.”

**Curator’s Statement**

“My curatorial focus for the past several years has been Sansei artists — third-generation Japanese American artists — whose artworks confront the displacement and injustice of U.S. Executive Order 9066, which resulted in the forced relocation and incarceration of more than 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II. These artists represent the last generation with a direct connection to those unlawfully imprisoned in American concentration camps, and their art sheds light on a painful chapter of American history.

“While survivors from previous generations demonstrated silence and *gaman* (enduring the unbearable with patience and dignity), significant emotional trauma was passed down to subsequent generations nonetheless. For those of the Sansei generation to speak openly about this inherited trauma is courageous. To create art to be shared in a public setting is powerful and transformative.

“As a curator, my role is to create a frame of reference for audiences to contemplate these works. The works in ‘Shadows from the Past’ not only express courage and vulnerability, but also remind viewers of the important role that the arts play in shifting our perspectives about our shared American culture and history.

“I would like to acknowledge those who have contributed their time, energy, and expertise to this exhibition. These include Larry Oda for his encouragement and assistance providing access to the collection at the Monterey JACL archives, and Jan Marlese, director of the L.H. Horton Jr. Gallery at San Joaquin Delta College, who developed the online exhibition when the COVID-19 pandemic postponed the exhibition at the Monterey Museum of Art. I also extend my gratitude to Corey Madden, John Rexine, and the staff of the Monterey Museum of Art for lending support and providing the resources for the exhibition to be remounted at the Monterey Museum of Art after its reopening.

“Finally, I would like to thank the artists for their creative and personal contributions. The success of this project was due to all of these individuals’ generosity.

“Monterey was one of the few communities in California that welcomed Japanese Americans back after World War II. More than 400 residents including John Steinbeck, Ed Ricketts, and Edward Weston signed a petition proclaiming Monterey a sanctuary city for families returning from the camps. During a period when our nation once again confronts hate, racism, and xenophobia, their allyship is a potent reminder of our community’s commitment to justice and unity.”

## Featured Artists



Jerry Takigawa, “EO 9066,” print on paper, 17 X 22 inches

**Jerry Takigawa** is a photographer, designer and writer. He is the founder and creative force behind the Center for Photographic Art’s PIE Labs. He is a recipient of the Imogen Cunningham Award, the Clarence J. Laughlin Award, CENTER’s Curator’s Choice Award, and the Rhonda Wilson Award. His work is in the permanent collections of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, the Brooklyn Museum, the Crocker Art Museum, the Santa Barbara Museum of Art, the Library of Congress, and the Monterey Museum of Art.



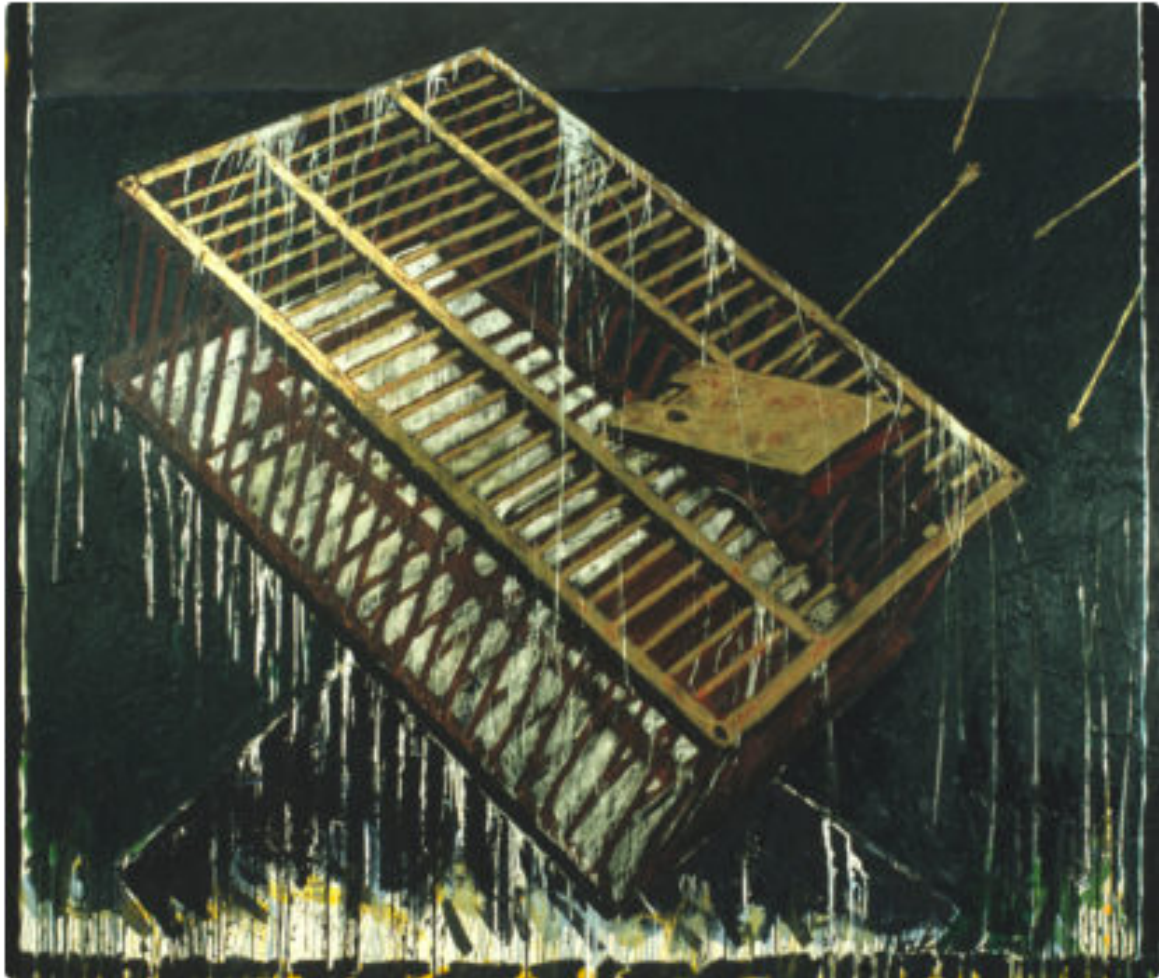
Masako Takahashi, "Journal-Diario 2014-15," human hair embroidery on silk kimono roll

**Masako Takahashi** is the only artist in the exhibition who was born in an American concentration camp. She received a B.A. in art from Berkeley and has had work exhibited internationally including Art in General, (New York); El Museo de la Ciudad de Queretaro (Mexico); The Museum of Natural History (Mexico City); International Shibori Symposium (Hong Kong); Centraal Museum (Netherlands); Asian Art Museum (San Francisco).

Bay Area artist **Reiko Fujii** has exhibited at the Berkeley Art Center, the Bedford Gallery (Walnut Creek), di Rosa Preserve (Napa), Olive Hyde Gallery (Fremont), JFK University Art Gallery, Cal State Hayward Art Gallery, SOMArts Cultural Center in San Francisco, and Fresno State University Henry Madden Library.

Furniture maker, artist, and educator **Wendy Maruyama** has been making innovative work for over 40 years. Maruyama's work can be found in both national and international museums' permanent collections, including the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Dallas Museum of Art, Dallas; Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, Launceston, Australia; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Philadelphia Museum of Art; Museum of Art

and Design, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles; Mint Museum of Art, Charlotte; Fuller Craft Museum, Brockton; Mingei International Museum, San Diego; and the Oakland Museum of California.



Tom Nakashima, "CAGE," 1990, oil on canvas, 87" X 97"

**Tom Nakashima** is an internationally exhibited artist who has had over 30 major solo exhibitions. His work has appeared or been reviewed in *Art in America*, *Artforum International*, *Art News*, *The Washington Post*, *The Paris Review*, *The New Art Examiner*, *Southern Accents*, and *Elle Magazine*. He has received numerous awards and fellowships including The Joan Mitchell Foundation Award for Painters & Sculptors. His work is in the permanent collections of The Corcoran Gallery of Art, The Smithsonian's American Art Museum, L'Hermitage and numerous other museums. Nakashima is a professor emeritus from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

**Lydia Nakashima Degarrod** is a visual artist and cultural anthropologist who creates works that blur the line between art and anthropology. She has exhibited work at Harvard University's David Rockefeller Center Gallery; de Young Museum; the Meridian Gallery (San Francisco); Center for Latin American Studies (University of California at Berkeley); University of Virginia; Centre for Imaginative Ethnography (Vancouver); and SOMArts Cultural Center (San Francisco). She has been an artist in residence at the de Young Museum of Art, a visiting scholar at UC Berkeley, and a senior fellow at Harvard University's Center for the Study of World Religions.

**Lucien Kubo** has shown her work predominantly in social justice exhibitions including "The Pursuit of Hope," ARRT, Santa Cruz; "Endangered Species," Cabrillo College, Davis; "Generation Nexus: Peace in the Post War Era," NJAHS, San Francisco; "Some Assembly Required: Race, Gender & Globalization," UCSC at California Folk Art Museum of L.A.; and "Distillations: Meditations on the JA Experience," JFK University, Berkeley. Solo exhibitions include UCSC's Eloise Pickard Smith Gallery, Santa Cruz; the Asian Resource Center, Oakland; and the Resource Center for Non-Violence, Santa Cruz. Other exhibition venues include Museum of Art & History, Santa Cruz; Sebastopol Center for the Arts; Joyce Gordon Gallery, Oakland; and Heritage Foundation, S.F. Kubo has received awards from *Porter Gulch Review*, Graphic Artists of the Year, Winners Circle, SCAL, and Cover Art for Signs, *Journal of Woman in Culture and Society*, Rutgers University.

**Na Omi Judy Shintani** has been the recipient of many awards and exhibitions and her work has been shown nationwide. Solo exhibitions include the Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara; Springfield College, Springfield, Mass.; Ruth's Table, San Francisco; the Peninsula Museum of Art, Burlingame; and the Santa Fe Art Institute, Santa Fe, N.M. Shintani is a member of the Asian American Women's Artist Association and the

Northern California Women's Caucus for Art. She founded the Kitsune Community Art Studio in Half Moon Bay and is currently a teaching artist at Foothill College. She has a Masters in Transformative Art from JFK University and a BS in Graphic Design from San Jose State University.

The museum is located at 559 Pacific St., Monterey. Hours: Thursday-Saturday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Closed on Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and New Year's Day. Admission: \$15 for adults; free for students and active military with ID, those 18 and under, museum members, NARM and AAM members.

For more information, call (831) 372-5477 or visit <https://montereyart.org/>.



Na Omi Judy Shintani, "Remembrance Shrine," 2007-2019, birdcage, rice paper, ink, 48h x 24w x 12d inches

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