

Weekly Cultural News

Substitute for monthly Cultural News June 21 - 27, 2021 (Reiwa 3)

Keep Japanese Culture Alive

Japanese American National Museum receives \$10M gift from philanthropist Mackenzie Scott

LOS ANGELES – [The Japanese American National Museum](#) (JANM) announced on June 15 that it received a transformative \$10 million gift today from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. It is the largest single gift in the Museum's history.

"After a year that profoundly challenged the Museum, the nation, and the Asian community, we are deeply grateful for this landmark gift and to Ms. Scott for her generosity and visionary support for organizations across the country which are focused on achieving social impact in their communities," said Ann Burroughs, President and CEO. "For nearly 30 years, JANM has used the lessons of Japanese American incarceration and the loss of their civil rights to illuminate a better path forward for all Americans and the nation. MacKenzie Scott's gift will ensure that we can continue to keep that history alive and to shine a light on the imperfect present and to shape a more just future."

JANM has benefited from the steadfast giving from the Japanese American and Asian American communities, and at a time when it is recognized that Asian organizations are underfunded and overlooked, the museum hopes Ms. Scott's gift to JANM and to other Asian organizations will inspire continuing support and others to give.

Scott announced her gifts in a Medium post, listing 286 diverse and wide-ranging grantees, from arts and cultural groups, to higher education institutions, to social justice nonprofits.

She wrote that she wished the headline would be "286 Teams Empowering Voices the World



Needs to Hear." "As one of those grateful 286 teams, we will continue to make sure that our nation's challenges of racism, inequity and civil rights abuses intersect with the celebrations of cultural diversity that infuse our exhibits and programs at the Japanese American National Museum," Burroughs said. "We congratulate all of the grantees, including our Little Tokyo neighbor, East West Players."

Established in 1985, JANM promotes understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Japanese American experience.

Located in the historic Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles, JANM is a hybrid institution that straddles traditional museum categories and strives to provide a voice for Japanese Americans as well as a forum that enables all people to explore their own heritage and culture.

Since opening to the public in 1992, JANM has presented over 70 exhibitions.

Japanese American National Museum “A Life in Pieces: The Diary and Letters of Stanley Hayami”

LOS ANGELES – The Japanese American National Museum (JANM) is opening a new exhibition on July 9 that brings to life the diary, artwork, and letters of a Japanese American teenager in the early 1940s whose family in Los Angeles was imprisoned by the U.S. government during World War II.

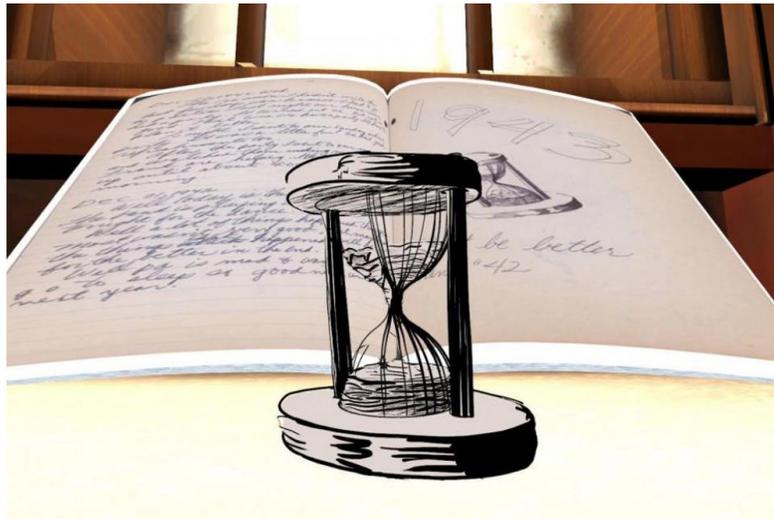
“[A Life in Pieces: The Diary and Letters of Stanley Hayami](#)” highlights the young teen’s life at Heart Mountain concentration camp in Wyoming, and his WWII letters as a

soldier in the U.S. Army’s 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the segregated, Japanese American unit that would become the most decorated unit in U.S. history for its size and length of service.

The exhibit’s immersive feature is a 360-degree video that can be viewed on a smartphone or mobile device. “A Life in Pieces” also will display Hayami’s artwork, journal entries, and letters; all of these artifacts were donated to JANM by his family.

Timed, [reserved tickets](#) to the exhibit are required at [janm.org/visit](#). This immersive exhibit experience was created by Nonny de la Peña of Emblematic Group, a producer of virtual,

augmented and mixed reality; and Sharon Yamato in collaboration with the Museum. It [debuted](#) at Tribeca 2021 in New York on June 9.



Hayami was an ordinary American teenager at Mark Keppel High School in Alhambra, Calif., journaling about his dreams of becoming an artist or a writer.

But this is 1942, and his Japanese American family is forcibly removed from their home

and taken to Heart Mountain. The fear and hysteria of World War II led to 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry—most of them American citizens—to be held in remote U.S. concentration camps.

Hayami’s words and sketches are a window into his everyday life and feelings. He opens up about his family’s incarceration, the military draft, and the importance of serving his country.

In 1944, Hayami was drafted into the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. His letters home to his family reveal the hardships from the European front lines, while also keeping a positive outlook, so as not to worry his parents.

Weekly Cultural News is an alternative publication for Monthly Cultural News which we had to stop the publication in April 2020 due to COVID-19 pandemic.



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Japanese Percussion Lesson #53: “Yugao Dana” and Narimono

By Mariko Watabe

There are dance videos and shamisen videos. But KABUKI HAYASHI (Japanese percussion) videos are rarely found or discussed especially in English or with English subtitles.

I have decided to make them as I believe this art is too precious to be hidden or lost. With the guidance of Master Katada Shin-juro, I am trying to uncover the world of HAYASHI by producing YouTube videos in Japanese language with English subtitles.

To view the previous videos from #01 to #52, visit [Tsuzumibito Chanel at YouTube](#)

Ohayashi Juku (Kabuki Series) #53 <https://youtu.be/gn4Q1mE2LUo> is about “Yugao Dana” (Trellis for Bottle Gourds of Yamatogaku) and Narimono.

Yamatogaku is the new music based on the classics but added female touch compared to traditional music made for men. It inspired narimono to create different techniques while keeping much of the classical methods. From now on, the works of Yamatogaku and their narimono will be introduced one by one.

The first piece which is introduced is “Yugao Dana” (Trellis for Bottle Gourds). It was presented at a concert of Yamatogaku in 1943. Among beautiful songs which you normally see in Yamatogaku, this is a very unique and fun song which describes the simple lives of an old warm couple who lived in the countryside.



It is about one of the autumn evenings when they heard crickets and beating of a cloth. The festival dance heard from far away, which makes the couple start dancing recalling the days when they were young.

A cricket whistle and cloth beating sound accentuates the tranquility of the countryside nights. It contrasts with the lively sound of the festival played by drums and flutes.

Mariko Watabe has been introducing Kabuki dance and music to American audiences nationwide for over 40 years.

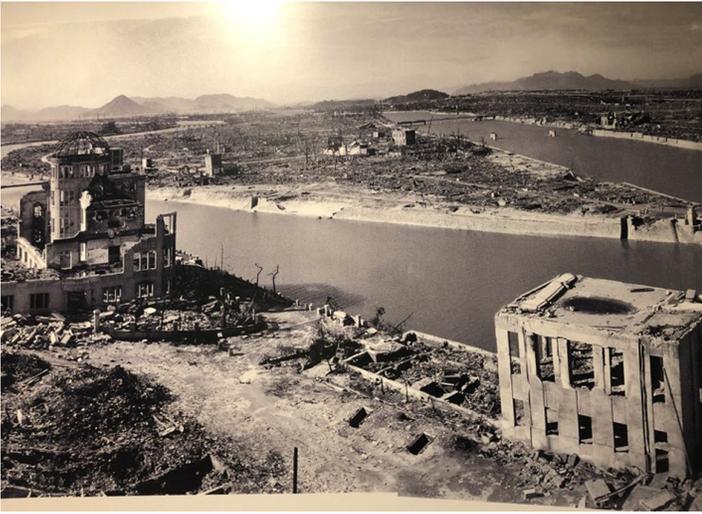
She goes by her stage names such as; Kimisen Katada for Hayashi, Kyosho Yamato for Yamatogaku, Kichitoji Kineya for Nagauta; and Marifuji Bando for dance.

She is currently living in Los Angeles area. Her activities and performances are found at <http://fujijapanesemusic.org>

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Webinar 6/24 / Hiroshima Reconstruction After Atomic Bombing: Peace Memorial Park Plan by Tange Kenzo

Free Webinar by Cultural News
Thursday, June 24, from 7:00 pm –8:30 pm

Hiroshima Reconstruction After Atomic Bombing:
Peace Memorial Park Plan by Tange Kenzo

Register in advance for this webinar:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/
WN_1VAHnDb1QJOw9h8v1asIXw](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_1VAHnDb1QJOw9h8v1asIXw)

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

This free webinar is a part of “Hiroshima Reconstruction After Atomic Bombing” series presented by Cultural News.

Immediately after the tragedy of the 1945 Atomic bombing, people in Hiroshima started reconstruction of the city. In 1946, the Hiroshima City Municipality decided the master plan of the reconstruction including green belt and parks.

By 1949, the master plan of Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was prepared and the construction budget was allocated by the national government.

In creating Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, Tange Kenzo took very important role. Tokyo-

based architect Tange spent three years in Hiroshima when he was a high school student.

In 1949, the national design competition for the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park was held, and Tange won the first prize.

Tange’s plan was extraordinary because that created the best solution for the Peace Memorial Park plan by planning the axis of the Atomic Bomb Dome over a river. In 1949, the preservation of the Atomic Bomb Dome was not decided yet. Designs of the second and third prizes did not include the axis with the Atomic Bomb Dome.

In Tange’s plan, the axis made a right angle with Peace Boulevard. And the axis was set on the line toward the Atomic Bombing Dome. On the axis, a museum and memorial monument were placed as gates.

The speaker of this webinar is Mr. Manabu Yamasaki from Hiroshima. Yamasaki is a retired city planner of the Hiroshima City Municipality, and a leader of public space utilization movement in Hiroshima.

As panelists of the webinar, those who are promoting peace and culture will join from Tokyo, Los Angeles, and Phoenix, Arizona.

Uyehara Travel

Okinawa Tour in 2022

Uyehara Travel provides the 7th Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival tour from Oct. 28—Nov. 5, 2022 from Los Angeles.



Tour Fee: \$2,800 + fuel surcharge, tax per person in twin room. \$400 surcharge for single room use.

Early Bird Special: \$2,600 by Oct. 31, 2021 .

Full price refund guaranteed by Feb. 28, 2022. \$300 deposit required upon reservation.

The Worldwide Uchinanchu Festival has been held in Naha, Okinawa since 1990 to honor the achievements of Okinawan people from all over the world.

The 7th Festival originally planned in 2021 has been postponed to 2022 due to COVID-19 pandemic.

The 7th Festival will start the eve event on Oct. 30, and the main festival will be held from Oct. 31 through Nov. 3, 2022. In 2022,

many events also will be prepared for the 50th anniversary of Okinawa Reversion from the U.S. Uyehara Travel also provides airline ticket arrangements for deviating plans.

Uyehara Travel

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North American Japanese Garden Association Conference to be held from Nov. 3-7, 2021 at Japanese Friendship Garden of San Diego

[The North American Japanese Garden Association](#) will hold the 2021 Conference at [the Japanese Friendship Garden of San Diego](#) from Wednesday, Nov. 3 through Sunday, Nov. 7.

The conference will include lectures, tours of Southern California gardens, and hands-on workshops. Conference registration will open in late July. Further details will be forthcoming. For any questions, contact NAJGA by email to info@najga.org



NAJGA's roots date back to 2009 when the International conference on Japanese Gardens Outside Japan was held at California State University, Long Beach.

This conference brought to light the need to form an organization that would help sustain Japanese gardens in North America.

As a result of the efforts of a group of leaders from the Japanese garden field and with the financial support from the Japanese Foundation, the North American Japanese garden initiative (NAJGI) was launched in 2010.

In 2011, NAJGA was formally established as a 501 c(3) non-profit organization with input from over 200 Japanese garden professionals including designers, landscapers, garden curators,

administrators, academics, craftsmen and practitioners.

NAJGA organizes a biennial conference. The 2018 conference hosted by the Portland Japanese Garden drew close to 350 participants.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 2020 NAJGA conference titled "Adaptability and Resilience: Sustainability in Japanese Gardens" which was scheduled to take place from Oct. 15-17 at the Japanese Friendship Garden in San Diego is postponed to the fall of 2021.

The conference will focus on how and why Japanese gardens are such effective models of adaptability and resilience. It will feature lectures, roundtable discussions and hands on workshop.

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