On October 2, 2022, the Japanese American Museum of Oregon opened *Resilience–A Sansei Sense of Legacy*, an exciting exhibition of work by eight widely acclaimed Japanese American artists working in a variety of mediums. These activist artists reference both iconic Japanese cultural symbols and the trauma their family members experienced during World War II incarceration in their work. Included in the exhibit are Kristine Aono, Reiko Fujii, Wendy Maruyama, Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, Tom Nakashima, Roger Shimomura, Na Omi Judy Shintani, and Jerry Takigawa.

JAMO was honored to bring one of the exhibition’s featured artists, Tom Nakashima, to Portland during the opening week of the show. Tom shared his family history, artistic practice, and sense of humor with museum visitors, volunteers, and staff. A great teacher, Tom led a two-day printmaking workshop Tuesday and Wednesday for students at Pacific Northwest College of Art’s print studio with the help of printmaking professor Yoshihiro Kitai. Nakashima often uses the classic copper plate etching technique to create images of contaminated nuclear energy sites, a subject matter he has spent much of his career exploring. He regaled the students with stories from his life as an artist throughout the day as he went through the painstaking process of tracing a drawing onto a copper plate, immersing the plate into an acid bath, and finally running it through a press to print onto paper.

During his visit, Tom also attended the Friends of JAMO opening reception. On Sunday, he gave an artist talk at the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education and then a talk at Ikoi no Kai on Friday. A breakfast was held in his honor at the Oregon Historical Society on Thursday.

Tom did not grow up in Portland, but his grandparents lived here for many years, and he has family members living in the area. His uncle was Ted Nakashima, and his cousin is Vicki Nakashima, both well-known in the local Japanese American community. We welcomed this opportunity to get to know Tom better and connect with the wider reach of the Nakashima family.

*Resilience–A Sansei Sense of Legacy* will be on view through Friday, December 23, 2022. Visit us during our extended hours through the end of the exhibition. Go to jamo.org for details.
As we near the end of 2022, I am reflecting on major changes and losses. In early February, the museum shut down as the latest coronavirus spike hit Portland and our community. Over this year, many of us lost beloved family and community members. We’ve seen some improvements to the conditions in Old Town, but attendance and participation continue to be impacted. And we are still working through a leadership transition from our beloved retired executive director, Lynn Fuchigami Parks. Through it all, we’ve leaned on the values and strengths that have seen our community through even tougher times. Using the examples of our elders, we’ve demonstrated resilience, creativity, and most importantly, coming together to face challenges.

In this 80th year anniversary of Executive Order 9066, we have achieved some remarkable things:

- An official apology from The Oregonian acknowledging the harm caused by their biased coverage during the World War II era.
- A celebration ceremony and permanent designation of the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway.
- Contribution of soil from the Portland temporary detention center to the Irei National monument and participation in the memorial ceremony in Los Angeles.
- A proposal for reimagining the Portland Expo Center as a site of memory and interpretation for the over 3,600 local Nikkei residents detained there 80 years ago.
- Development of education materials, tours, and a video sharing the story of a thriving Nihonmachi (Japantown) prior to 1942.
- Programming, films, and art exhibitions focusing on the contributions of Nikkei women, elders, artists, and families.
- Partnerships with cultural and community-based organizations to revitalize Old Town and combat anti-Asian bias.

In the coming year, we look forward to expanding our audiences, sharing our stories, and educating through our values. We know we can be successful as we rely on our dedicated and experienced staff, our generous and engaged Board and donors, and the cultivation of new friends and allies.

Wishing you safe and joyous holidays,
—Mark Takiguchi

In January, the Living Arts program will turn the Japanese American Museum of Oregon’s rotating gallery into a space for active community building and art making:

**InterACT!: The Art of Creating Together**
Opening January 2023
Visiting Artists Events January 21 and 22
Closing Celebration February 2

This interactive exhibit will include workshops featuring art and activism, performances, book talks, and a rare visit by national artists Nobuko Miyamoto and traci kato-kiriyama. Our special guests will be here January 21 and 22, bringing their talents and inspiration to our Portland community. Be on the lookout for more details and announcements soon, and plan on participating at the museum in the new year!
THE OREGONIAN APOLOGIZES

You may have heard about the recent apology from The Oregonian for its history of supporting racist and biased coverage of many groups including Japanese Americans. I was fortunate to be in attendance on October 6 at a meeting for visiting artist Tom Nakashima at the Oregon Historical Society (OHS). It was a meet and greet for folks from the Portland Art Museum, OHS, and other area institutions, including The Oregonian. Tom’s cousin, Vicki Nakashima, a local resident, was there and shared an editorial written by her father, Ted, and published in the New Republic in 1942. His essay detailed the horrific conditions at the Puyallup detention center in Washington. At the time, The Oregonian published an editorial refuting and dismissing his claims. We have a copy of that newspaper in our collection at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, which we brought to this meeting to provide the historical record.

Terese Bottomly, editor for The Oregonian, was present in addition to reporter Rob Davis and photographer Beth Nakamura. As we discussed the incident and Tom’s artwork based on the original letter, Terese stood up and addressed Vicki and Tom directly, apologizing on behalf of The Oregonian. It was a surprising and powerful moment; the room fell silent. Chisao Hata, Creative Director of the Living Arts Program at JAMO, had set up this gathering, but none of us knew this was going to happen. The apology came too late for Vicki’s father, Tom’s family, my parents, and so many others who have passed on, but it opens up a space for healing and unburdening the weight of this historical hurt. I am still processing the magnitude of this acknowledgement. I encourage everyone to read the Publishing Prejudice series in The Oregonian and invite you to see Tom’s work at JAMO to better understand this dark chapter when the news media sided with power and fear instead of justice.

—Mark Takiguchi

EXHIBITION OPENS FEBRUARY 18, 2023

Second generation Japanese American (Nisei) soldiers played a pivotal role in supporting the U.S. war effort during World War II. A Long Road to Travel focuses on the often arduous journey these soldiers undertook to serve their country, overcome prejudice at home, and achieve recognition for their heroism. Expanding on the Oregon Historical Society’s What if Heroes Were Not Welcome Home, this exhibition will explore these important stories and encourage thoughtful reflection from visitors, asking them to consider what they would have done in the same situation.

A Long Road to Travel opened last August at the History Museum of Hood River County in conjunction with the dedication of the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway, a 41-mile scenic roadway from the Columbia River to Mt. Hood. Opening February 18, 2023, at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon, the exhibition will include additional artifacts from JAMO’s permanent collection.
As of this writing, I have been at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon for four months! There were a few weeks at the start where I felt like I was trying to swim through a tidal wave while learning the systems of a new position so different from my previous role as a classroom teacher. I still have a lot to learn, but now that I feel more settled, I’ve been able to take on projects such as:

• Collaborating with the Minidoka National Historic Site to develop a place-based teacher workshop for summer 2023.
• Assembling an Educator Advisory Committee to guide and pilot new curricular materials and inform museum programming.
• Creating docent study guides for our current Resilience exhibition and the Nisei Veterans exhibitions at both the History Museum of Hood River County and the Japanese American Museum of Oregon.
• Organizing events and workshops with our partners in the neighborhood cultural district.
• Expanding our virtual program offerings.
• Revitalizing the docent program.

Expanding the docent team was a clear priority when I joined the museum. Docents are volunteer educators who lead tours of the museum and Plaza or visit student and adult groups across Oregon. Over the last few months, I have had discussions with mentors here and other nearby institutions, read new literature from museum educators, and attended the Western Museums Association Conference, all of which have given me insight into the ways museums are updating their docent programs to meet current needs.

There is a major shift underway in the museum field to create more accessible docent training and participation models. I am now assembling an advisory committee of existing docents to guide the creation of a new model of training that takes these best practices into account.

We would love to have you join the Japanese American Museum of Oregon docent team! If you are interested in learning more, please contact me at elissa@jamo.org.

—Elissa Dingus
One of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon’s most important long-term projects is to ensure that the Portland Expo Center remains accessible as a site of conscience and interpretation. As Metro seeks to redevelop the property, we have been working diligently with them and other decision makers to ensure that our community stewards the future of Hall A and the surrounding lands. This site is one of the few remaining structures used to unjustly detain people of Japanese descent under horrible conditions in 1942. Over 3,600 Japanese Americans were held for months before being shipped off to more permanent incarceration centers. The Portland Assembly Center, as it was known then, contains the history, pain, and lasting trauma of this rupture in our community, and that’s why the site was selected for the first Oregon Day of Remembrance in 1979. Since then, JAMO and partner organizations such as Vanport Mosaic have held regular programs in Hall A to remember, memorialize, and advocate for justice.

Our recent proposal to Metro was drafted in partnership with community members and other stakeholder organizations and we will continue to advocate vigorously for the necessity of preserving the site. We are calling for a permanent interpretive center to provide education, engagement, and most importantly, a space for healing and reflection. The current building has many restoration needs, a result of years of poor maintenance. We are looking for support from governmental and other agencies who recognize the unique nature of this site and value its importance. The legacies of our families and friends will remain front of mind as we are driven by a vision of a cultural resource that will serve our community for generations to come. We are committed and hopeful as we begin this winding and long path.

EXPO CENTER UPDATES

VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE RETURNS IN 2025

If you have been out to the Expo Center MAX station recently, you may have noticed the absence of Voices of Remembrance, the artwork by Valerie Otani that was installed as a memorial to the Japanese American families who were held here in 1942. TriMet is currently managing the restoration of the torii gates, which were damaged by water and exposure over the 11 years since they were installed. They are employing woodworkers trained in traditional Japanese carpentry to carve new timbers for the gates and plan to have them back in place in 2025.

Top left: Images from 2017 & 2022 memorial events at the Expo Center. Photograph on left by Rich Iwasaki

Bottom left: Portland temporary detention center men’s dorm, 1942. Courtesy Army Signal Corps

Top right: Valerie Otani and Voices of Remembrance. Photograph by R. Okamoto
Thank You, Lynn Fuchigami Parks

On Sunday, November 20, 2022, at the Western Forestry Center we came together to celebrate Lynn Fuchigami Parks and her service, vision, leadership, and decade of dedication. Community members, leaders of organizations, politicians, and a broad representation of people influenced and inspired by Lynn over the years toasted and praised her unique style of leadership and genuine ability to connect people, ideas, and action. Through her vision and undaunting service, she led the former Oregon Nikkei Endowment into a rebranding process to become the Japanese American Museum of Oregon. Because of her genuine belief in history, legacy, and cultural integrity she led the way to create a new permanent home, and made it happen during a global pandemic! The heart of historic Nihonmachi was in what is now known as Old Town, and it was imperative to her and others that we uplift, remember, and honor the community that thrived here.

The vision of the Japanese American Historical Plaza led to the need for an Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, which led to the dream of a beautiful new home for the Japanese American Museum of Oregon at Naito Center. As a community, we are inspired by the legacy Lynn Fuchigami Parks leaves for us.

Thank you, Lynn, for sharing, teaching, leading, and believing in our community, and the importance of protecting and sharing Japanese American history and stories.

Thank you for building a home where we can thrive, protect, and uplift our story of America.

Thank you for continuing to share your heart, ambition, and beauty with all of us!
On August 13, we gathered in Hood River to celebrate the rededication of Highway 35 as the Oregon Nisei Veterans World War II Memorial Highway. We were able to honor, in person, four Nisei veterans and three widows of Nisei veterans plus descendants, family members, and community. Thank you to all who made this happen: donors, organizers, and members of the advisory committee, including American Legion Hood River Post 22, Japanese American Museum of Oregon, Oregon Nisei Veterans, Portland Japanese American Citizens League, and The History Museum of Hood River County, with support from The Bend Heroes Foundation. Be sure to enjoy this beautiful stretch of roadway sometime soon and see for yourselves the new signs commemorating our vets!
Marie Hashimoto

The Japanese American Museum of Oregon was lucky to have Marie Hashimoto as a summer intern this year. She helped out in archives, especially with research and digitizing the collection.

Where are you from? Why brought you to Portland?

I was born and raised in Kailua, Hawai‘i, and came here to study history at the University of Portland.

What brought you to the Japanese American Museum of Oregon?

When I’ve had open-ended assignments for school, I’ve gravitated towards Japanese American history. I’m particularly interested in how incarceration exists in the historical memory—how it is discussed and remembered in both academia and the public sector. I visited JAMO last year and enjoyed the exhibits and used the research library a little bit. I was looking for an internship that connects with my major and is something I am passionate about.

What is your research about?

My thesis is focused on Japanese American resettlement in Portland after incarceration, beginning at the end of 1944 through 1950 or so—the immediate period after camps closed. For those that decided to come back to Portland, how did they rebuild their lives? Most of the scholarship tends to focus on incarceration, but it’s important to understand what happened after. People had to pick up the pieces of their lives—how did that process of rebuilding actually happen?

I’ve primarily been looking at the work that was done on the Coming Home exhibition about 10 years ago, which contained many oral histories on the postwar years. I’ve also been looking at the Hirahara Collection for photographs of social life in Portland from 1948-1952 and looking for any mentions of social clubs that were started. I’m using a lot of newspaper articles, mostly from The Oregonian, to gauge public opinion—how resettlement is being discussed by the editors but also any letters from the public.

What will you do next?

I’m currently a senior in the process of writing my thesis on postwar Nikkei resettlement in Portland, which is based primarily on sources I was able to access because of this internship. After graduation, I will be taking a gap year, and then hopefully working towards my PhD in history.

Thank you Marie for bringing your skills and curiosity to JAMO!

There are many ways to volunteer at the Japanese American Museum of Oregon. We are currently most in need of docents and greeters. Visit jamo.org/volunteer or email us at info@jamo.org to find out more.
It took a historic event to redress the trauma of the past. It took a spiritual ceremony designed with clarity of purpose to gracefully begin a long awaited generational healing process rooted in tradition, prayer, community, and ancestry to understand the power of acknowledgement and deep reverence for past wrongs committed to our families.

I was one of several hundred who represented the 75 sites where Japanese Americans were incarcerated during World War II. We gathered for dinner at the Japanese American National Museum’s plaza in Los Angeles on Friday evening, September 23. On Saturday, the well-choreographed event led us, with a religious leader alongside, to form a procession from the historic Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple. This was the site where Japanese Americans in Los Angeles had to gather (most likely my dad was there) before being taken to assembly centers and eventually to the “internment sites.” A large tree watched over all of us as we assembled—the same tree that watched as our parents’ and grandparents’ lives were taken away.

The Buddhist ceremony was familiar: the chanting and incense burning is in our blood—in our memories of weddings, funerals, and Obon gatherings. One by one, we approached the sacred book of names, bowed, and touched a single tile embedded in the first page of the book. This tile contains soil from the 75 sites; more tiles will be used to create a glass sculpture that will be permanently displayed at the Japanese American National Museum. We then placed our sotoba (wooden boards) with our site’s soil in a line together. The ceremony took us through four gates: The Gate of the Past, The Gate of Wood: Consoling Spirits in the Book of Names; The Gate of Fire: Activating the Ceramic Artifact; The Gate of Earth: Offering Tablets and Soil; and The Gate of Metal: Strength in Exile.

On Sunday, I stamped the hanko for my grandfather, mother, and father with my cousin, who lives in L.A., at my side. My hands would not stop shaking as I felt I was stamping for them, not me. The tears were overwhelming, and the cathartic experience will live with me forever. I encourage everyone to go to L.A. this year, find your family, mark the Ireichō, and stay informed about the two-year evolution of this national monument.

Those of us from Portland represented several other sites and roles in the Ireichō. We are planning an online event where we can share our experiences soon.

—Chisao Hata, Representing the Portland Assembly Center
Retired U.S. Army Col. Jimmie Kanaya passed away on November 7, 2019. His military career spanned three decades and three wars. He was born in Clackamas, Oregon, in 1920 to Issei parents and joined the Army in April 1941. After Pearl Harbor, he was moved further inland outside of the military’s “exclusion zone” for people of Japanese descent. He was briefly allowed to return home to help his parents pack up and sell their belongings before their forced removal to the Portland temporary detention center and later the Minidoka concentration camp.

Jimmie Kanaya continued his training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, joining the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, the military’s segregated unit of Nisei soldiers.

The 442nd RCT were sent to Italy as replacements for the heavily wounded 100th Infantry Battalion in June 1944. The December 23, 1944, issue of the Minidoka Irrigator featured an article on Lt. Kanaya’s Silver Star award for bravery in saving the lives of his fellow soldiers while under enemy bombardment. At the time of the article, he had been a German prisoner of war for two months. During an escape attempt in April 1945, he smuggled these two butter knives through the gates of Oflag XIIIB, a POW camp outside of Nuremberg, and buried them under a tree. When he was finally released after the end of World War II, Lt. Kanaya rejoined his parents in Chicago. In July 1953, he returned to Germany and retrieved the knives from where he had buried them.

In remembrance of her husband’s heroic deeds, Lynn Kanaya, Jimmie’s wife of 17 years, donated these knives and numerous other family and military records to the Japanese American Museum of Oregon. We thank her for this donation that honors the legacy of Jimmie Kanaya.
SAVE THE DATES

December 23
Resilience–A Sansei Sense of Legacy closes

January 13
InterACT!: The Art of Creating Together starts

January 21
Surviving Japanese American Incarceration: A Conversation and Book Discussion, part of the Multnomah County Library’s Everybody Reads program

January 21 and 22
Artists Nobuko Miyamoto and traci kato-kiriyama visit JAMO

February 2
InterACT!: The Art of Creating Together First Thursday Celebration

February 17
Friends of JAMO preview for A Long Road to Travel

February 18
A Long Road to Travel: The Service of Japanese American Soldiers in WWII opens

YES, I WANT TO JOIN!

My support will help ensure that the history, art and culture of the Nikkei are preserved and shared with the community for generations to come.

- Student $30
- Senior (62+) $35
- Individual $50
- Couple $75
- Family (up to 5 members) $100
- Patron $500
- Benefactor $1,000

Special Educator Rate: $35 Special invitations to educator events, discounts on workshops, curriculum, and resource materials

Have you considered putting the Japanese American Museum of Oregon in your will?

YOU CAN ALSO JOIN ONLINE AT JAMO.ORG/JOIN

☐ Check Enclosed (Please make payable to JAMO)  ☐ My Company Will Match My Gift

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Name

Partner Name

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You can help reduce the cost of postage and the amount of paper we use by electing to receive your future newsletters from us electronically. Please indicate choice when you sign up as a new or renewing Friend of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon.

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Adults: $8
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Telephone: 503.224.1458
E-mail: info@jamo.org
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PLEASE TAKE NOTE OF OUR HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Additional Days:
Tuesday, December 20
and Wednesday, December 21
11 AM to 3 PM

The Museum Will Be Closed:
Saturday, December 24
Sunday, December 25
Sunday, January 1