



JAPANESE CANADIAN
CULTURAL CENTRE
日系文化会館

Issei Day
一世の日

Shin-Ijusha 50th Anniversary Event
新移住者50周年記念パーティー

Arigato Day
ありがとうデー

JCCC Movie Night: Yoko the Cherry Blossom
月例映画鑑賞会「陽光桜」

Heritage

six children – too young to have known their father alive or in death – worth? No one responded to my inquiries.

Nonetheless, we must not underestimate the good resulting from redress. In the 1960s my friends joined Brownies, but I was excluded; then came redress - suddenly in 1988, it was okay to be a Japanese Canadian. In fact, a sansei like me was unprepared for sudden acceptance given that my upbringing had taught me to be ashamed of my heritage. I started to admit that I had a Japanese middle name, "Sumire", which is absent from my university diplomas. Still, the road to inclusion is full of potholes. A few years ago in a law firm where I worked, a colleague remarked that I look "Japanese", not "Chinese" given the slant of my eyes. More recently, I was faced with the option of selecting "Japanese" or "Other" for my nationality – I checked "Other" and typed "Canadian".

The legacy of redress and our ancestral losses, the legacy for future generations, is the Canadian Race Relations Foundation (CRRF). And of most significance for the cause of human rights is repeal of the War Measures Act. Without that, neither the intent of the redress nor the intent of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms can be realized. By that action Brian Mulroney assured the assertion of human rights in Canada - that is his enduring legacy. At the time of the Air India bombing when racism against Canadians of East Indian descent surfaced and schoolchildren in turbans were ostracized, I recall thinking that without redress, they too could have been treated like us. Viewing the travelling Anne Frank exhibit in Toronto recently, I recalled the generosity of the Toronto Jewish community during the dispersal and I commented in the guest book at John Polanyi School on the role that the CRRF should play in observance of Yom HaShoah.

In 2017 it's too late to hear the voices of the issei and nisei who have passed on. Because redress did not bring restitution, our stories and our suffering— and jiichan's ashes – are buried in our collective psyche. Shikata ga nai says that it was all swept under the rug. It's what our ancestors could not say that is the response we seek. Joy Kogawa seemed disturbed at dinner at Ichiriki Restaurant that I had concluded years ago that jiichan's ashes had been tossed into the garbage. How many others have spent their lives searching for lost ashes?



Family photo with grandfather Joichi Uyenaka, his wife and 5 of his 6 children in the late 1930s

Banners: Hoyano and Yamada at the JCCC Gallery

by John Ota

It's like stepping into a dream.

The exhibition of banners by Heather Yamada and Warren Hoyano provoke reactions that run the gamut of human emotions. It is a roller coaster of the senses.

Hoyano's rugged, body shaped sculptures address social justice and political issues. They hang from the ceiling like carcasses, lean against walls or are crumpled into twisted forms of despair. Gritty and rough, they are composed of discarded materials and formed into statements about war, terrorism, climate change and infectious disease. His sculpture of deserted backpacks reminds me of the threatening message that these previously innocent objects mean in a contemporary urban setting. As I walked the gallery, I kept glancing at the backpack and Hoyano's images of exploding shrapnel and nails. Oddly, now I'm on the lookout for deserted black backpacks whenever I'm downtown.



Turn around and there are Yamada's, glorious vertical banners that happily lift the senses and catch the breeze. Long and unfurled in red and teal, they trace Yamada's physical paint strokes and brush markings as she moves along the washi paper banner. Her training in Buddhism and Japanese arts of shodo and ikebana are embedded in the banners. In particular, her bold brush strokes of gold paint reflecting in the light almost allude to the paranormal.

But what is most striking about the exhibit is what Hoyano and Yamada do with their deep connection with paper. Think paper – and it is a common, utilitarian product, easily discarded without a second thought.

"But these artists understand paper," says Bryce Kanbara, curator of the JCCC Gallery. "How it's made, physical properties, how to manipulate it and to make it a work of art. The artist relationship with paper is calculated, exploratory and respectful."

Hoyano and Yamada have transformed the gallery into a powerful and beautiful environment. But they've also made acute statements about themselves and the world. This exhibition, like life, has beauty and anxiety at every turn.

"Look For Banners To Rise" Exhibition. Warren Hoyano and Heather Midori Yamada. JCCC Gallery until **Thursday October 26, 2017.**