



New England Chapter News

Japanese American Citizens League

May 2021

Visit our web site: www.nejacl.org

Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

It's May and we're going to see more programs and events aimed at AAPIs than we do during the entire year. We're not complaining, but it would be a welcomed surprise if the focus on our communities was an everyday event and not triggered by a special month or acts of racism and violence.

There have been so many important speakers and events that it's easy to have missed them. Luckily, many have been recorded and are available online. We've listed a few in this month's newsletter. There is one film I'm looking forward to, it's on GBH World on May 22 and 31 and called *Tokyo Hula*. It's about how the hula is the newest crazy to hit Japan. The title alone has made me curious. Broadcast details are in the newsletter.

We hope you are all enjoying the warmer weather and visiting with family and friends in person now that so many of us have been vaccinated. Please continue to stay safe and stay healthy.

WCVB TV: *Project Community -- Asian American Voices*

A WCVB special on April 27 focused on hate crimes against Asian Americans and how we are being affected in Massachusetts. Many familiar and new community leaders were featured from Boston to Lowell. The program is excellent and well worth viewing to learn what is happening in our own communities. To view, go to:

<https://www.wcvb.com/article/covid-19-political-rhetoric-added-fuel-to-already-blazing-anti-asian-american-racist-fire-project-community-aapi/36263497#>

Story Corps spotlights Tsuru for Solidarity

Mary Doi of Evanston, Illinois, and her 29-year-old daughter Lisa told their stories of what the Japanese origami cranes mean to them. Lisa is a Chicago-based organizer for Tsuru for Solidarity. To hear their story, go to:

https://www.wbez.org/stories/storycorps-chicago-our-liberation-is-bound-with-each-others/49c10894-4680-4d37-95da-c1af3db13d37?link_id=16&can_id=47321377307c703453ff3372a580a4f2&source=email-thank-you-for-joining-our-national-fold-in-news-and-events&email_referrer=email_1159247&email_subject=thank-you-for-joining-our-national-fold-in-news-and-events

Google Doodle features Japanese American

Are you familiar with Google Doodles? Those are the cartoon-like images that come up when you initially log on to Google. It usually commemorates an event or a person. Our JACL Board member Mieko Kamii called our attention to Google on May 4th and the person being celebrated was Hisaye Yamamoto, a Japanese American author and activist. You can still see parts of that salute to Yamamoto by typing "Hisaye Yamamoto" in the Google search box.

Discussions you may have missed

Many of the panel discussions and forums held during the last few months are now available online. Here are three of them.

On Causes of and Responses to Anti-Asian Violence, MIT Star Forum, March 31. The program featured Melissa Nobles, MIT; Paul Watanabe, UMass Boston; Katherine Moon, Wellesley College; and Tram Nguyen, MA State Representative. You can see it on the CIS YouTube Channel at <https://youtu.be/Bta9og-7zis>

Racism Against Asian Americans: Combatting Hate and Discrimination, the Forum at Harvard's Chan School of Public Health on April 30. Speakers were Howard Koh, Harvard Chan School of Public Health and the Kennedy School; Russell Jeung, co-founder of Stop AAPI Hate; Juliet Choi, Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum; and Paul Watanabe, Institute for Asian American Studies at UMass Boston. To view the forum, go to: <https://theforum.sph.harvard.edu/events/racism-against-asian-americans/>

Japanese American and African American Advancing the Movement for Reparations and HR-40, an ACLU webinar on March 24. A discussion on the historical impact of reparations and redress on communities, the precedent, and the path forward. Japanese Americans featured in the program include Satsuki Ina, Co-Founder of Tsuru for Solidarity; Susan Hayase, Co-Founder of San Jose Nikkei Resisters; Stan Shikuma, President of Seattle JACL; Ron Wakabayashi, former JACL National President; Troy Osaki, poet; Rev. Duncan Ryuken Williams, Director, USC Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture. To view:

<https://www.aclu.org/news/topic/reparations-h-r-40-and-the-path-forward/?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=c3cfc9d5-29b1-41da-be21-2756e44c90c4&redirect=reparations>

AAPI Programs on GBH

GBH, Boston's public broadcasting station, has scheduled more than 40 programs on TV, online, or on the PBS app during May. Most of the programs will be on GBH's World channel unless otherwise indicated. Listed below are just a few highlights.

May 11 at 8 pm

May 15 at 7 pm

May 16 at 5 pm

America Reframed: Curtain Up! The young Asian American students of PS 124 in New York City's Chinatown prepare for a production of "Frozen Kids." In the process they discover their own cultural identities.

May 22 at 1 pm, GBH44

May 31 at 8 pm

Pacific Heartbeat: Tokyo Hula. Today nearly 2 million people dance the hula in Japan. An examination of tourism, economics, and a love for all things Hawaiian. The film begs the question: what is the line between sharing and selling culture?

Available NOW online

Asian Americans. All five episodes of the series seen on PBS in 2020 are available online. It traces the history of Asian Americans in America and the ongoing role they have played in shaping the nation's story. To see the series, go to:

<https://worldchannel.org/show/asian-americans/>

For a complete listing of GBH programs during AAPI Month, go to:

https://worldchannel.org/press/article/asian-american-pacific-islander-viewer-guide/?utm_source=lterable&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Race%20in%20America&utm_content=AAPI%20Launch_04_30_21

Report on Aging Equity in Boston

The Institute for Asian American Studies is among six institutes and centers at UMass Boston collaborating on the report, "Aging Strong for All: Examining Aging Equity in the City of Boston." The report focuses on older residents of color in Boston and features a chapter on Asian Americans. Paul Watanabe was a co-author of the report. To access the report, go to: <https://scholarworks.umb.edu/demographyofaging/49/>

Recent Books to Consider

We sometimes receive recommendations about books that might be of interest to our membership. We are not able to review the books, but will pass this information on to you. ***Forever Struggle: Activism, Identity, and Survival in Boston's Chinatown, 1880-2018*** by Michael Liu. In writing about Boston Chinatown's long history, Liu, a lifelong activist and scholar of the community, charts its journey and efforts for survival – from its emergence during the time of immigration to its more recent involvement to keep commercial developers at bay.

Remembering Our Grandfather's Exile: US Imprisonment of Hawai'i's Japanese in World War II by Gail Y. Okawa. Okawa chronicles the Hawai'i Japanese immigrant experience during WWII. She follows them from the pre-war climate in Hawai'i, to arrest by the FBI, to exile in a Department of Justice prison in New Mexico, and to return to Hawai'i.

Facing the Mountain by Daniel James Brown. The story of four Japanese American families and their sons who volunteered for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. See the story in this newsletter about a special event on May 11 by Densho to launch the book.

LECTURES, DISCUSSIONS & MISC.

All events are virtual

JACL-NY: A Celebration of Children's Day

Saturday, May 8, at 1 pm (Eastern Time) registration required

The New York chapter of JACL is joining with the New York Day of Remembrance Committee to host a special event for families that will feature a read-along and art activity with author and illustrator **Katie Yamasaki**. Katie will read from her book *Fish for Jimmy* that tells the story of a family's incarceration during WWII. The program is ideal for families with children between the ages of 5 and 11. Advance registration required at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZcvc-GsrD8rHd00TOSI4tIG2UapU7xgl5wp>

Japan Society: Japanese for Kids!

Tuesday, May 11, from 3:30 to 4:30 pm (Eastern Time) registration required

A Japanese language class for kids grades K-2 is being offered by Boston's Japan Society. Students will learn *hiragana*, hear cultural stories and do a craft with the *Sensei*. No prior Japanese experience required. The class will be conducted primarily in Japanese.

Registration fee is \$25. To register: <https://www.japansocietyboston.org/event-4242843>

Book Launch: *Facing the Mountain***Tuesday, May 11 at 5 pm (Pacific Time)****registration required*****Facing the Mountain: A True Story of Japanese American Heroes in World War II***

chronicles the incarceration of the Japanese Americans and the experiences of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The book is by Daniel James Brown, the author of the NY Times bestseller *The Boys in the Boat*. This virtual event will feature a conversation between Brown and Densho Executive Director Tom Ikeda, who conducted oral histories with many of the men highlighted in the book. ***Facing the Mountain*** grew out of a conversation Brown had with Ikeda in 2015. Brown tells the story of the kaleidoscopic journey of four Japanese American families and their sons based on his extensive interviews with the families of the protagonists as well as his deep archival research. Information and to register:

<https://densho.org/mountain/>

Wednesday, May 12 from 6 to 7 pm (Eastern Time)**registration required**

Author Daniel James Brown introduces his latest work, ***Facing the Mountain***, in a short illustrated presentation followed by a conversation with Roland Nozomu Kelts. This event is sponsored by the Boston Public Library and American Ancestors NEHGS (New England Historic Genealogical Society) in partnership with the Japan Society of Boston and GBH Forum Network. The program is free and open to the public. To register:

https://wgbh.zoom.us/webinar/register/5916178355589/WN_ApnVmgVjTyeJa-TiW0rB-w

Panel: *Intergenerational Trauma of Japanese Americans***Wednesday, May 12, from 6-7:30pm (Pacific Time)****registration required**

San Diego JACL will present a panel discussing the intergenerational impact and trauma of the Japanese American incarceration during WWII. Featured on the panel are Debra Kuwahara, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs at the California School of Professional Psychology, and Donna Nagata, Professor of Psychology, University of Michigan. The program is free and open to the public. Information and registration by email:

sandiegojacl@gmail.com.

GBH: Asian American & Pacific Islander Heritage Month Event**Thursday, May 13, from 6 to 7 pm (Eastern Time)****registration required**

Boston's public broadcasting station will feature a panel of speakers offering a look at the history of Asian American and Pacific Islander hate crimes in the US and suggest ways viewers can become involved in their communities to combat racism and bigotry. The program is free and open to the public. The speakers will include:

John C. Yang, President and Executive Director, Asian Americans Advancing Justice

Rachael Rollins, Suffolk County District Attorney

Sovanna Pouv, Exec. Dir., Cambodian Mutual Assistance Assn. of Greater Lowell

Dr. Catherine Vuky, Dir. Of Asian Mental Health, William James College

Ryan Doan Nguyen, Harvard freshman & lead organizer, Stop Asian Hate Boston Rally

Information and registration:

https://www.wgbh.org/events/asian-american-and-pacific-islander-heritage-month-event-virtual?utm_campaign=website&utm_source=sendgrid.com&utm_medium=email

CAAMFest offers more than 80 films on-demand

May 13 to 23, 8 am to 11:59 pm (Pacific Time)

Tickets required

The Center for Asian American Media (CAAM) is offering its annual film festival online and on Demand. More than 80 films by Asian American filmmakers will be featured. Tickets range in price from \$10 for a single feature or \$50 for an on-demand pass for the entire festival. For more details and a complete list of films, go to:

<https://caamfest.com/2021/on-demand/>

Godzilla and the Imagination of Anxiety -- from Hiroshima to COVID-19

Tuesday, May 18, from 8 to 9 pm (Eastern Time)

registration required

Since Godzilla first appeared 70 years ago, it has become a cinematic icon and a globally recognized symbol of Japan. The speaker is Bill Tsutsui, a specialist on the economic, environmental and cultural history of modern Japan. His talk will explore how the 33 Godzilla films can help us understand Japan's resilience in the face of disasters, the global popularity of Japanese monsters, and the ways we all address our fears of invisible threats, both radioactive or viral. The program is free and open to the public. Information and registration:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/godzilla-and-the-imagination-of-anxiety-from-hiroshima-to-covid-19-tickets-149212981043?aff=ebdssbonlinesearch>

Healing Fractured Communities: Coming to Terms with Systemic Racism

Wednesday, May 19, from 3 to 4 pm (Eastern Time)

registration required

The panelists will discuss the links between systemic racism, cross-communal trauma, and how mental healthcare workers can make a difference. The program is sponsored by national JACL, the Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation and the American Psychological Association. The featured speakers are:

Shirley Ann Higuchi, JD, Chair of the Heart Mountain Wyoming Fund

Dr. Satsuki Ina, psychotherapist, activist, writer and filmmaker

Dr. Arthur C. Evans, CEO of the American Psychological Association

David Inoue, Executive Director of the Japanese American Citizens League

Maysa Akbar, Chief Diversity Officer, American Psychological Association

Information and registration:

<https://jacl.salsalabs.org/healingfracturedcommunities/index.html?eType=EmailBlastContent&eld=d4f063d5-60c3-45a4-9978-a5731b5580b9>

International Voices from Japan: Life in Japan as Bridge Builders

Friday, May 21 at 7 pm (Eastern Time)

registration required

What is it like to live in Japan if you come from another country? The Japan Society of Boston has invited long-term Japan residents Mandy B. Blue, from Spain, and Americans Don Johnson and Edward Demling to discuss their experiences living in Japan and offer the perspective from differing professions, locations, and ages. The program is free and open to the public. Suggested donation is \$10 to \$20. Information and registration:

<https://www.japansocietyboston.org/event-4277771>

EXHIBITIONS

Glenn Kaino: *In the Light of a Shadow*

MASS MoCA, 87 Marshall Street, North Adams, MA

phone: 413-662-2111

The exhibit runs until September 4, 2022

In the Light of a Shadow is inspired by the connection between two protests -- the tragic events known as "Bloody Sunday" from Selma, Alabama and Derry, Northern Ireland. The installation spans the entire football-field size Building 5 gallery and provides an immersion experience of moving shadows and evocative soundscape. Kaino has had solo exhibits at the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, The Andy Warhol Museum, the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others. Information: <https://www.wbur.org/artery/2021/04/02/mass-moca-glenn-kaino-in-light-of-shadow>

Jerry Takigawa: *Balancing Cultures*

Griffin Museum of Photography, 67 Shore Rd., Winchester, MA phone: 781-729-1158

The exhibition runs until May 23.

Jerry Takigawa is an independent photographer, designer and writer. His exhibit gives voice to a story that his immigrant grandparents and American-born parents suffered in silence. When his mother died, he was left with photos from his family's incarceration during World War II. He has created an exhibit of photographs, memories and artifacts reflecting the pain and hardships experienced by his family and thousands of Japanese and Japanese Americans during the war. Information: <https://griffinmuseum.org/show/balancing-cultures/>

Kimono Couture: The Beauty of Chiso

Virtual Exhibition

Worcester Art Museum, 55 Salisbury Street, Worcester

The **Worcester Art Museum** is partnering with Chiso, the distinguished, 465-year-old, Kyoto-based kimono house to present a view of the world of traditional kimono design and artistry. Over the course of 10 videos, the virtual exhibit provides a rare, behind-the-scenes look at the creation of the *Worcester Wedding Kimono*, the first kimono ever commissioned as a work of art by an art museum. For information and access to the video series, go to: <https://www.worcesterart.org/exhibitions/kimono-couture/>

Conservation in Action:

Japanese Buddhist Sculpture in a New Light

Museum of Fine Arts, 465 Huntington Avenue, Boston

A rare, behind the scenes look at the conservation of seven Buddhist sculptures. Visitors are invited to watch as conservators study and treat the sculptures in a public conservation studio. The wooden figures – images of worship depicting Buddhas, Guardian Kings, and a Wisdom King – are decorated with polychromy or gilding and date from the 9th to 12th centuries. The conservation project occupies an entire gallery in the Museum, allowing visitors to observe the techniques employed by conservators as they carefully clean the sculptures and secure areas of loose paint, lacquer, and gilding. Information: <https://www.mfa.org/exhibitions/conservation-in-action-japanese-buddhist-sculpture-in-a-new-light>

AUDIO THEATRE

Huntington Theatre Company

Tiger Style! – An Audio Play

All four episodes of the Huntington Theatre's hit 2016 production of ***Tiger Style!*** is available as an audio play online. *Tiger Style!* Is the story of squabbling siblings Albert and Jennifer Chen – both have reached the pinnacle of academic success, but as adults feel they are epic failures. He's just been passed up for promotion and she's been dumped by her boyfriend. They confront their parents and launch an Asian Freedom Tour from California to China. The comedy examines race, parenting and success with wit and sharp humor. The cast includes Francis Jue, Emily Kuroda, Rubio Qian and John Norman Schneider. The play is by Mike Lew. This event is free and open to the public. To listen to the play, go to:

https://soundcloud.com/huntington/sets/tiger-style-an-audio-play?utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBLAST_3.3_TigerStyle!Entireseries&utm_content=version_A

Huntington Theatre Company

***The View from MemChurch* by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro**

A short audio play by Rosanna Yamagiwa Alfaro, a NE JACL member, is featured in the Huntington Theatre Company's *Dream Boston* series. Rosanna's play is set in Harvard Yard with a cast that includes Emily Kuroda, Alberto Isaac, and Calley Chase. To listen to the play, go to:

https://www.huntingtontheatre.org/season/upcoming/dream-boston/memchurch/?utm_source=wordfly&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=EBLAST_12.8_DreamBoston&utm_content=version_A