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Volume 2, Issue 1

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The JCCC is pleased to bring you Kokuban - our monthly e-bulletin that covers topics from heritage treasures to stories about this unique community.

Sedai Features: Jean Nobuko Nagata – Returning to Canada After WWII



Jean Nobuko Nagata. 2010-031. Sedai Oral History Collection.

This month, we place a spotlight on the late Jean Nobuko Nagata's interview with Sedai. Her parents and older siblings moved to Vancouver, BC in 1933 from Fort McCloud, AB. Jean was born at St Paul Hospital, Vancouver in 1933 and in 1935, her sister, fondly known as Flo was born. Soon, her family

decided Jean and Flo would migrate to Japan where their Obasan (grandmother) lived. Life was not easy for the three in Japan especially during WWII when they were separated from their family in Canada. This interview documents when Jean, Flo, and Obasan received news in the Fall of 1948 that they would be moving back to Canada to reunite with their family, who were settled in Toronto, ON. Their journey started on September 25, 1948 and they only arrived in Toronto on October 12, 1948. In this short clip, Jean retells her journey from Yokohama to Hawaii, San Francisco, and finally to Toronto by way of ship and railway.



We would like to thank our reader for all the feedbacks we received! We are pleased to let you know that we have made one improvement based on your feedback. We will be adding closed captions to all Sedai Feature from this month onwards.

Archaeology of History and Memory: Interview with Nikkei Artist Erica Kaminishi

This month we speak to [Erica Kaminishi](#), whom the JCCC is pleased to partner with for the next permanent exhibition, Maru: Immigration Stories. In 2020, the JCCC commissioned Erica for a participatory art installation that explores the theme of immigration, culture, and identity with the title All in one, one in All No. 01. Read on to get to know Erica, her inspirations, as well as All in one, one in All No. 01.

JC: JCCC; EK: Erica Kaminishi

JC: Being a transnational Nikkei artist, can you tell us about your background and how that influence your work?

EK: I am third generation Japanese Brazilian, born and raised in Brazil. I started attending studio art classes and workshops with a Japanese Brazilian artist in my teenage years, and after high school, I went to Japan for the first time, where I worked and studied for a period of three years. After Japan, I did an exchange in England, then, I returned to Brazil to attend a visual arts college. After graduation, I went back to Japan, where I did a Master and

Doctorate in Visual Arts. During this second period living in Japan, I had the opportunity to study traditional Japanese culture and art, formally. It was during this period that I started to question quite a lot about my origins, my relationship and my place in contemporary Japanese society and in the Japanese culture inherited from my parents... But those questions were never clear, very conscious. Uncertainties, comparisons and searches have always been reflected in my works themselves.

From 2010, I started to develop participatory art projects, involving the public (the other) in the production of the work. This relationship with the public was another way of thinking about alterity and my position as a foreigner in that country, in that "strange" environment. Around this period, at the end of 2010, I moved to France. The first years in France were very challenging, but at the same time very enriching. The issues related to immigration, discrimination and racial borders are much more explicit in Europe; and people do not stay quiet, instead they take to the streets to complain and demand human rights. This direct confrontation better guided my work that had been more timid and veiled, until that moment, as how the Japanese culture is characterized.

In total, it is about 20 years, half of my life transiting, coming and going between three continents, until now. This journey and the experiences that I acquired were and are transformed, refined and incorporated into my work. In a way, I can say that my works are like a personal diary, an intimate portrait of myself. I always say that it is an archaeological investigation of my own history and memory, but at the same time, this process also contextualizes the present moment and portrays the lives of many, who cultivate inherited and transnational cultures.



Erica Kaminishi. Garden. Mixed media: fiberglass sculptures, automotive paint and synthetic grass. Dim 9 x 9 m, 2011. Funarte Contemporary Art Award 2010, São Paulo, Brazil. Photo by Tatewaki Nio.

JC: The JCCC recently commissioned a work titled ***All in one, one in All No. 01*** for the JCCC's new permanent exhibit, Maru: Immigration Stories. Can you tell us about that work and how does the new artwork All in one, one in All No. 01 converse with your previous works and experiences?

EK: All in one, one in All brings references of Zen Buddhism, precisely from

concepts of inter-being by the monk [Thich Nhat Hanh](#). One of the inter-being principles is “We do not exist independently. We inter-are. Everything relies on everything else in the cosmos in order to manifest — whether a star, a cloud, a flower, a tree, or you and me.”



Erica Kaminishi. Growing Memories (detail). Mixed media: Jigsaw-puzzle, polystyrene foam and gel ink pen. 150 x 400 cm. Exhibition Echigo Tsumari Art Triennale 2012, Niigata, Japan. Photo by Osamu Nakamura.

This project specially planned and elaborated for the JCCC is related to my participatory art projects that have already been exhibited in Japan and in Brazil. It is also related to my other works, such as the Clouds series. Clouds alludes to the symbolic elements, such as clouds and waves, present in the traditional Japanese painting Yamato-e or other schools (style) like Kanno.

For this project, I planned a large-scale white cloud whose contours allude to a topographic map with its contour lines. Those elements are also present in my other works. The public will be invited to participate in the creative process by drawing and writing with blue pen on white sticky notes in droplets shapes. Then, the filled in sticky notes will be fixed on the surface of the large map-cloud, which at the end will be full of blue droplets.



Erica Kaminishi. All in one, one in All No. 01 mockup. 2020.

It is a way of reflecting on how everything is interrelated: the cloud is not formed with just a drop of water. Just as we need each other to build something relevant in this world, we must also think that everything coexists within a natural cycle and we need to take care of. From a simple rain, the earth has enough nutrients for a tree to grow, and bear fruit and raw material

for us to manufacture the paper, on which we draw...I think the result will be surprising! I look forward to seeing the whole process in action, as the public's presence and participation is the most important part of the project.



Erica Kaminishi. Mi Casa, Su Casa - (visitor participation). Mixed media: Jigsaw-puzzle and gel ink pen. 150x150 cm. 2010. Exhibition Aichi Triennale 2010, Nagoya, Japan.

JC: What do you hope will be accomplished with the installation of All in one, one in All No. 01 in Toronto, Canada?

EK: I hope that the project will become a meeting point between different generations and people. As well as an initial encouragement for a more pertinent reflection in relation to the surroundings, to the local and other cultures history. A simple exchange of smiles between the participants will be already an empathic exchange in relation to the other.

JC: Do you have a message for our readers?

EK: I hope everyone are safe and well. I am looking forward to exchange with everyone my thoughts and ideas!

We Need Your Help!

Last issue, we highlighted a letter from the from the [Harold Takayesu's Collection](#). We have received communications from some of our Kokuban readers regarding the identity of Mary from the letter written on the evening of February 26, 1946 in New Denver to Harold Takayesu. We would like to thank everyone who has worked with us to identify Mary but our inquiry isn't done yet as the identity of Mary remains a mystery.

Here's what we know about Mary from the content of the letter: She lived in New Denver, BC in 1946 where she worked as a teacher. Mary had a sister named Helen who was underage in 1946. Helen immigrated to Japan with her parents after WWII. If you know or have information about Mary or Helen, please contact us at heritage@jccc.on.ca

New Denver

Feb. 26. 1946

8:15 P.M.

Dear Harold

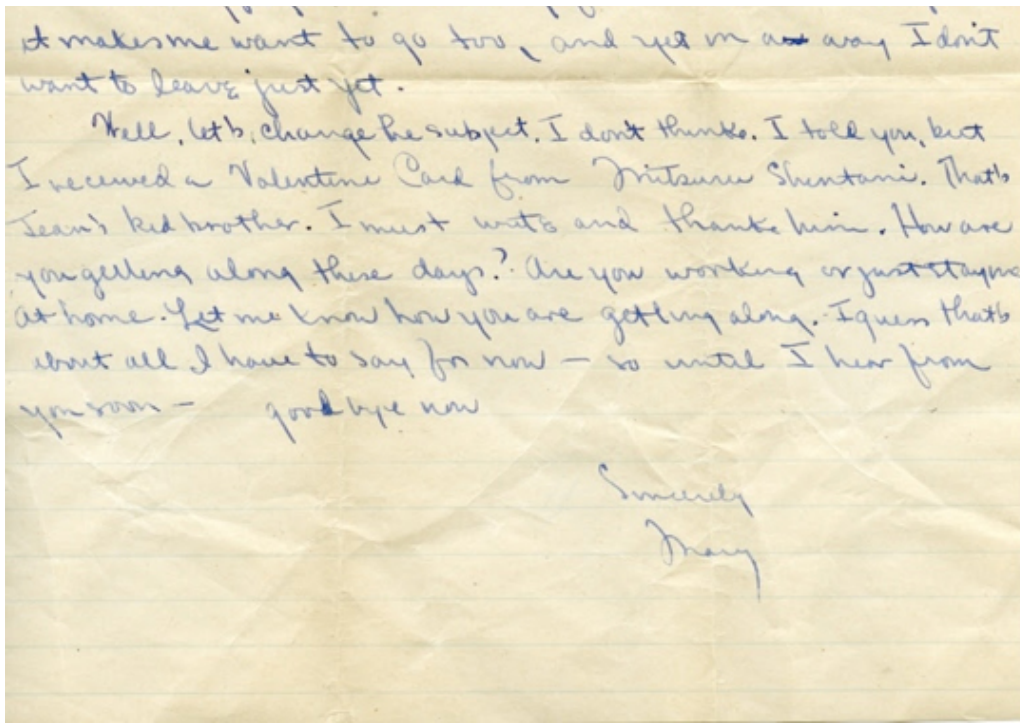
I've still my school work to do, but I thought I'd write a few lines to you. I received your gift yesterday and oh, Harold, I don't know how to thank you. Receiving a pair of nylons is something extraordinary. I think I'm the only teacher on the staff with a pair, because if any teacher did get one, she'd tell us. For all you know I might be the only one in Denver yet, at present. I handled it with care, - after all, it's something rare around the ghost town you know. It's really too good for me. I won't wear it here, I'll wait until I'm leaving. In the meantime, I'm wearing my other ordinary pair.

Remember you mentioned in your letter about meeting Vic Kadaraga. Well, I received a letter from him yesterday much to my surprise. He sent a clipping which he cut out from a newspaper - about what Vic had written or appealed for the Japanese Canadians. I presume you have read it long before I did. It really made me feel sad + as I read it, it brought tears to my eyes. I hope that everything will turn out for the best. If mother + father have to go back, it means Helen will have to go back and I can't imagine Helen going back to a country she's never seen and a country not hers. Marianne turned

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sixteen (so she says) So I take it for granted that she is. So Kenny + Marianne have decided to stay. This breaking up of families is going to be a very sad affair. When I start thinking about it all, it just makes me feel so sad. If this case is final, + mom + dad have to go back, + I leave for the east, I'm going to lose all enthusiasm about going to school etc.

So many people are leaving for the east nowadays, and



Letter from Mary to Harold Takayesu (Page 1,2). February 26, 1946. Harold Takayesu Collection. 2010.58.06.18

Chance to win a Daruma! Let's welcome spring and ward off bad spirit with Setsubun.

邪を払って、春を呼び込む節分。写真を投稿してダルマ人形を当てよう！

Setsubun is a festival which marks the beginning of spring. More than that, it is a time where people carry out a series of traditions in order to ward off bad spirits. In Japan, on the day of Setsubun, which is February 2 this year, people throw beans to keep bad spirits out, and bring the blessings in.

春が始まる（立春）の前日を「節分」と呼び、今年は2月2日が節分です。節分の日には、邪（鬼）を払い、福と春を呼び込む「豆まき」をします。そして、節分の日には、恵方（今年は南南東）に向かって、願い事をしながら黙って巻きずしを丸かじりします。

At the JCCC, we are encouraging the community to participate in some of these Setsubun traditions. During lock down, and amidst this global pandemic, Setsubun is a great way to have fun with your family at home, while praying for a year of good health.

パンデミック禍の中ではありますが、今年一年の健康と幸せを願い、ご家族で節分の日を楽しく過ごしてみませんか。

To learn more about how to celebrate Setsubun at home, please check out [this website](#).

For mask ideas,

アイデア1. 鬼の面を作ってみよう!

Watch this video. (動画)



Download the template. (テンプレート)



To learn how to make an ehomaki sushi roll, see [this web page](#).

アイデア2. 恵方巻きを作ってみよう。

Avocado and Salmon Ehomaki Sushi Roll

Just quickly marinate and then wrap up these colorful ingredients!

Cooking time: 20 minutes, Servings: 2, Calories: 5.4g

Ingredients (servings: 2):
 avocado 1
 salmon (sashimi-grade) 150 g (5.3 oz.)

Directions:
 (1) Prepare the ingredients for marinating. Slice the avocado in half, remove the seed and peel, then cut up into 1.5 cm (0.4 in.) cubes. Also cut the salmon into 1.5 cm (0.4 in.) cubes. Place the salmon

Show us how you celebrate Setsubun by posting your pictures on [JCCC's instagram](#) account. Please follow JCCC [@japanesecanadianculturalcentre](#), and post your pictures with hashtag [#jccsetsubun](#) for a chance to win a Daruma from JCCC's gift shop. Or If your account is private, feel free to send your photograph as message to JCCC on Instagram. Don't miss the chance to bring home this fortune ushering doll!

JCCCでは、「節分の日」キャンペーンを行います。節分の日のお祝いの様子を写真に撮ってインスタグラムに投稿してください。投稿方法：[JCCCインスタグラムアカウント \(japanesecanadianculturalcentre\)](#)をフォローし、[#jccsetsubun](#)をつけて、あなたの節分の日の写真を投稿してください。或いは（プライベートアカウントに設定されている方は）InstagramメッセージでJCCC宛てに送付してください。応募者には抽選で1名さまに、縁起のいい置物「だるま」の人形をプレゼントします。あなたの節分の写真のご投稿をお待ちしております。



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