

Evening Program Sums Up Commemorat

Egos are left at the door, as musicians and performing artists join together for a common cause.

By GLENN SURAVECH
RAFU STAFF WRITER

There couldn't have been a more opportune time to have such a lineup of Japanese American stars on one stage at one time.

Actors, dancers and musicians came together and put on a show like no other. In fact, the performances were so entertaining, event-goers were voicing their approval after almost every performance.

Although the show wasn't a sell-out, last Saturday's evening program, "Night of Remembrance," at the Japan America Theatre, put a nice cap on the day which was devoted to events and seminars com-

memorating the 50th anniversary of Japanese American internment.

Alongside the seminars and speeches from the day program, the evening presented an alternative approach to the Japanese American internment which began with the sounds of avant garde pianist/composer Glenn Horiuchi who floored the audience with his latest work entitled "Poston Sonata."

With nothing more than a grand piano, flute and shamisen, Horiuchi and his two accompanists crunched out an, at times, disturbing piece that left event-goers slightly puzzled.

Horiuchi displayed a command of the keyboard in ways that prob-

ably had piano instructors waiting in line for lessons after the show. He even made strange and sometimes inaudible sounds during his performance, somewhat like the sounds of two alleycats fighting over territory.

On a more direct note, Amy Hill hit the stage with an explosive performance that included excerpts from her acclaimed one-woman-show "Tokyo Bound" along with a world premiere piece written by Judith Nihei entitled, "Amy's Camp Monologue."

Casually dressed in a peach-colored blouse and silk pants, Hill needed no props or elaborate costumes to conjure up a thunderous roar of laughter in the 800-seat auditorium. In simple words, Hill was "right on," hitting every joke and line in her set.

She opened up with a hardened, hoarse-voiced, blue-haired Japanese television talk-show hostess who told us that she has "seen it all!" Then Hill segued into her experience as being a cool Japanese American in Japan belting out street-wise lingo such as "Man! Whas up wit you? I'm Japanese American!"

Most gripping was her semi-autobiographical piece explaining her New Year's visits to her friend's house whose parents were interned during World War II. Hill painted a picture that is much similar to the experiences that many event-goers see in reality.

Hill referenced the phrase, "the camps," and how that has an impact

on the Japanese American community today. Her equally humorous and hard-hitting piece also touched the issues of redress and how Japanese Americans currently deal with the weight of the interment.

She left the stage, lathered in emotionally-powered applause.

Changing gears once again, the remembrance of the internment years put a bitter taste in our mouths as dancers Nobuko Miyamoto and Long Nguyen crept on stage whispering the words, "Never Again! Never Again!"

Accompanied by Horiuchi, the dancers presented their version of the internment experience through bodily movements and singing by Miyamoto.

Entitled, "Something About Me Today," Miyamoto beautifully combined song and dance which, like Horiuchi's "Poston Sonata," was sometimes difficult to interpret. However, the dancers were successful in portraying an uneasiness similar to the way 120,000 Japanese Americans felt 50 years ago.

Moving ahead, San Francisco actor Lane Nishikawa literally captivated the audience from the moment he took the stage. Putting on his stand-up comedian routine, taken from his most recently acclaimed one-man-show "I'm on a Mission from Buddha," Nishikawa's brand of humor allowed the us to laugh at ourselves with jokes about samurai movies and growing up under a Nisei mother and father.

Combining demonstrative body

HISTORY

50 Years Ago This Week

Sunday, Feb. 15, 1942

The Southern California Telephone Company announced that it was requiring a \$5 deposit from all alien Japanese "for the duration" in anticipation of possible delinquencies due to uncertainty of conditions.

Source: Rafu Shimpō

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Monday, Feb. 16, 1942

The California Joint Immigration Committee urged that all Japanese be removed from the Pacific Coast and any other areas designated vital by the U.S. government. FBI arrests and detention of Japanese aliens was reported to number 2,192.

Source: "Japanese Americans: From Relocation to Redress," edited by Roger Daniels, Sandra Taylor and Harry Kitano

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Tuesday, Feb. 17, 1942

HOLLISTER.—The Central California Coast Counties Athletic Association (4CAA), with a record of having four major sports during its decade of activity, became one of the first Nisei athletic bodies in Northern California to discontinue its sports program during the emergency. The decision was the previous week.

Plans to hold a basketball tournament were abandoned when the majority of clubs were found to be located in restricted areas for enemy aliens.

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Wednesday, Feb. 18, 1942

EL CENTRO.—Under the direction of FBI agents, sheriff's deputies and federal officers made a general round-up of aliens in Imperial Valley and towards evening on Feb. 14 it was reported that 33 Japanese were booked. Similar raids were conducted throughout the state with larger numbers being arrested.

Source: Rafu Shimpō



For the Sake of the Children

(Below) Young people, under the guidance of Jennifer Matsuura and Chris Ishida, make crafts at the children's workshop.



Photos by MARIO G. REYES/Rafu Shimpō

ation with a Blast

movements and facial expressions, Nishikawa brought flurries of laughter to the opening routine.

The Hawaiian-born actor contrasted his performance with a gripping segment called "Uncle Blackie." The piece was dedicated to his uncle, a member of the 442nd, who had a lot of pent up stress created by the internment experience and the war.

Clad in a 442nd uniform, Nishikawa put on an incredible rendition of his uncle complete with mannerisms and a Hawaiian-pigeon accent. The audience was deathly silent throughout the "Uncle Blackie" piece, which addressed the role of the Nisei soldier in relationship to the entire community and some of the heroisms that the 442nd, 100th and MIS performed during World War II.

As well as grabbing the audience's emotions, Nishikawa himself was near tears after his performance. His ability to "get into character" was incredible.

He summed up his set with another segment from "I'm on a Mission from Buddha" called "Asian America: Where are You?" which pokes fun at community members who have put away their heritage and assumed new roles in suburbia.

The evening event closed with an hour-and-a-half of music done by a collaboration of Asian American musicians, who one time or another played with the jazz/fusion group Hiroshima.

The "Day of Remembrance

Band" featured David Iwataki, Yutaka Yokokura, Jesse Acuna, Atomic Nancy and Pauline Wilson along with active Hiroshima members Dan Kuramoto, June Okida Kuramoto and Johnny Mori.

The adult contemporary/fusion concert brought together some of the Japanese American community's top players who fused a playful performance that assumed the characteristics of a full-fledged "jam session."

Tunes from Yokokura, Iwataki and Hiroshima's repertoire were all highlighted. Egos were all left at the back door as each player had time to flash their technique and style.

Featuring artists all on the forefront of mainstream entertainment, the "Night of Remembrance" proved to the community that they have something to be proud of.

Applause goes out to the event organizers Yokokura, Iwataki and Miya Iwataki who also acted as one of the evening's hosts alongside Warren Furutani, president of the Los Angeles City School Board.

Although the evening made the message about internment loud and clear, it's unfortunate that this sort of event could not reach a larger, non-Asian, audience who could benefit from learning about the impact that World War II had on the Japanese American community.

But like it said in the title program, this event also played an important role reminding the community of something that should never be forgotten—the internment.



Fighting Spirit Awards go to, left to right, Bert Nakano, Lily Okamoto and Bernadette Nishimura.

APPOINTMENTS

Ochi Named to State Council

Assembly Speaker Willie L. Brown, Jr. (D-San Francisco) has appointed Rose M. Ochi and Clothilde Hewlett to the California Council on Criminal Justice.

Ochi of Los Angeles is executive director of criminal justice planning for the city of Los Angeles. She holds bachelor's and master's degrees from UCLA and a J.D. from Loyola Law School.

Hewlett, of San Francisco, director of the Verification and Analysis Committee of Bar Examiners, Office of Admissions, State Bar of California, serves as a public member. She holds a bachelor's degree from U.C. Berkeley and a J.D. from Boalt Hall Law School.

The California Council on Criminal Justice reviews, revises and approves a comprehensive state plan for the improvement of criminal

justice and delinquency prevention activities within the state.

OBITUARIES

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(Above) Winners of the Day of Remembrance Essay Contest, sponsored by the Y.K. Kubota Scholarship Fund, are, left to right, Dana Kawaoka, first place, senior high division; Daniel Shea, first place, junior high division; Jeremy Shoji, third place, junior high division; Suzanne Kiyomi Shimoyama, third place, senior high division; and Christie Mayumi Onoda, second place, senior high division. Not pictured is Dan Nishimoto, second place winner in the junior high division.

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GARDENERS' FEDERATION, INC.

EDUCATION & PROGRAM COMMITTEE
P.C.O. TRUCK INSPECTION

Date: FEBRUARY 24, 1992 (MONDAY)
& MARCH 23, 1992 (MONDAY)

Place: FEDERATION PARKING LOT
Time: 9 A.M. TO 2 P.M.

MUST MAKE RESERVATION.
PLEASE CALL (213)628-1595
BRING NECESSARY PAPERS AND
\$25.00 IF NOT PAID.

Southern Calif. Gardener's
Federation, Inc.
333 S. San Pedro St.
Los Angeles, CA 90013