



Press Release
For Immediate Release

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Painter Keisho Okayama Retrospective to Be Exhibited at JACCC, May 6 to June 10, 2023

LOS ANGELES, CA – JACCC will host the exhibition “Keisho Okayama: Selected Works,” featuring the paintings, drawings and masks of Keisho Okayama, active in Los Angeles starting in the 1960s.

Okayama’s work bridged the worlds of abstraction and figurative observation. With a highly personal color palette and sense of space, he emphasized the spiritual and subconscious.

Keisho Okayama was born in 1934 in Osaka, the middle son of a Jodo Shinshu Buddhist priest. In 1936, at the request of the abbot, his father brought the family to the United States to serve a congregation in Watsonville, and then later at the Buddhist Churches of America Headquarters in San Francisco, California. After the outbreak of war between the U.S. and Japan, the Okayama family was first forcibly evacuated to Tanforan Racetrack in San Bruno, then to Topaz War Relocation Center, an incarceration camp in central Utah.

Okayama studied art at UCLA, where he received a BA in Art in 1962, and took figure-drawing classes at Los Angeles City College. He was prolific, painting and drawing throughout his life, producing work in acrylic, pencil, sumi, watercolor, charcoal, and oil pastel.

Okayama has said, “My primary concern has always been to establish a condition of feeling with forms in space that felt to me to be true. The images must feel real to me.”

Beginning in the early 1970s, Okayama became a member of the Senshin Temple Kinnara Gagaku group. In addition to learning to play the hichiriki, Okayama also made hichiriki and Bugaku masks for Kinnara.

Hirokazu Kosaka, JACCC’s Master Artist in Residence and exhibit curator, said, “Okayama represents a unique perspective among Japanese American artists during an explosion of U.S. postwar creative experimentation. He is part of our artistic heritage.”

Opening Date and Reception: Saturday, May 6, 1 pm-4 pm
Gallery Hours: Tuesday-Sunday, 12 noon-4 pm (closed on Mondays)

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Founded in 1972, Japanese American Cultural & Community Center (JACCC) is one of the largest ethnic arts and cultural centers of its kind in the United States. The Japanese American Cultural & Community Center weaves Japanese and Japanese American arts and culture into the fabric of our communities. JACCC remains firmly rooted in Little Tokyo, providing a vital place to build connections between people and cultures, locally and internationally. Through inclusive programs and authentic experiences, we continue our traditions and nurture the next generation of innovative artists, culture-bearers, and thinkers. www.jaccc.org