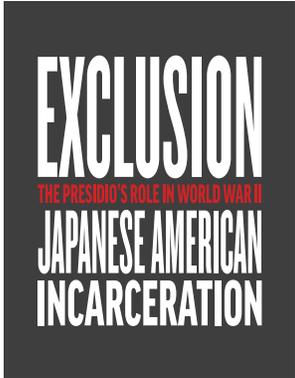


ARTIST BIO



ARTIST JUDY SHINTANI

Japanese American artist Judy Shintani was born in Ames, Iowa to a mother from Honolulu, Hawaii and a father from Poulsbo, Washington. Her father's family lost their oyster farming business when they were taken to Tule Lake Incarceration Camp in the 1940's. Her mother saw the bombers flying overhead on their way to attack Pearl Harbor. Her family ended up in the Central Valley of California where her mother was the first Asian American elementary school teacher in Lodi, and her father worked in television broadcasting. Judy grew up in a small and Central Valley town, before moving to the Bay Area for college. Years later she began exploring her roots and family history.

Shintani has exhibited throughout California, the Pacific Northwest, and Southwest. She was recently an artist in residence at Santa Fe Art Institute and at Creativity Explored in San Francisco. She was awarded the Peninsula Arts Council 2012 Award for donor support for her Coastside Artists for Doctors Without Borders project. In addition to making art, Shintani owns and runs the Kitsune Community Art Studio in an old dairy barn in Half Moon Bay. She is a member of the Asian American Women's Artist Caucus and on the board of the Northern California Women's Caucus for Art. Judy has a Masters in Transformative Art from JFK University, Berkeley and a Bachelor's of Science in Graphic Design from San Jose State University.

Judy Shintani will exhibit two of her works, *Pledge of Allegiance* and *Deconstructed Kimono*, in the Heritage Gallery, located in the Presidio Officers' Club (50 Moraga Avenue, San Francisco), on a rotating basis:

- *Pledge of Allegiance*: March 27, 2017 – September 27, 2017
- *Deconstructed Kimono*: September 28, 2017 – March 27, 2018

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Deconstructed Kimono

My kimono alterations reflect the loosening connection to ancestry and culture.

During WWII anything “Japanese” was burned like books, dolls, clothing. Speaking the language was discouraged. I have heard many of my generation did not learn to speak or read Japanese. After our parents were released from the Japanese American Incarceration Camps, the goal for some was to assimilate and be “American.” For some families it was difficult to hold onto traditions.

As I cut away the designs and embellishments from the kimonos, I felt somewhat uncomfortable. I am destroying a symbol of my Japanese culture. I wonder, who was the woman who wore it? What was her life like? The cutting became a meditation.

I honor the cut out pieces in altars below the kimonos, holding them lovingly as lessons and parts that have died to make room for experiences. The kimono is reduced to a skeleton, a web, yet the garment still maintains its elegant and simple structure even after deconstruction.

The deconstructed garments represent not only the personal space but also the liminal space where the transformation of tradition, culture, and structure takes place.



Pledge of Allegiance

This flag is constructed from Tule Lake Incarceration Camp barrack wood I gathered with my father after attending a pilgrimage there. The barrack had been moved to a farmer’s land after the war ended and he invited those with ties to the camp to take wood before he burned the dilapidated building.

My father was imprisoned there during his teenage years. The pledge of allegiance phrase “with liberty and justice for all” rang hallow during the 1940s when the US government forced the unconstitutional imprisonment of 120,000 men, women and children of Japanese ancestry, 2/3rds of them US citizens, into incarceration camps. Tule Lake camp became a segregation and high security camp for internees who were labeled disloyal.