

Allegiance

A New Musical Inspired by a True Story

Thursday, March 22, 2018
Japan Aratani Theatre, Los Angeles

KNOW BEFORE THE SHOW

- ◉ *Allegiance* was inspired by the life of its star, George Takei (who is famous for portraying Hikaru Sulu on *Star Trek*, and more recently for his humorous and political social-media presence). He was interned as a child.
- ◉ The musical premiered at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego in 2012 and on Broadway in 2015.
- ◉ It was the first Asian American musical to open on Broadway.

QUESTIONING LOYALTY

In 1943, the U.S. War Department and the War Relocation Authority (WRA) created a document called the “Statement of United States Citizen of Japanese Ancestry,” or Selective Service Form 304A, intended to determine whether a Japanese American person being considered for U.S. military service was more likely to be loyal to the United States or to Japan. It was given to both internees and Japanese Americans already serving in the U.S. military.

The document, which became known as the “loyalty questionnaire,” asked questions about people’s backgrounds and lives and then scored the answers according to ideas of “American-ness” and “Japanese-ness.” “For example,” writes the *Densho Encyclopedia*, “speaking Japanese well, or belonging to a judo or kendo club, would result in negative points, but being Christian, or belonging to the Boy Scouts of America would result in points being added.”

Internees, including older immigrants who had not been allowed to become U.S. citizens, were also asked, “Will you swear unqualified allegiance to the United States . . . and forswear any form of allegiance or obedience to the Japanese emperor, to any other foreign government, power or organization?” Answering “yes” would have made the internee stateless, and internees had no idea what the result of answering “no” might be. The form provoked concern, unrest, resentment, and resistance among interned Japanese Americans.



TERMS

CIVILIAN EXCLUSION ORDERS: A series of directives issued by General John L. DeWitt, head of the Western Defense Command of the U.S. military, from late March to August 1942. The orders directed the exclusion of “all persons of Japanese ancestry, including aliens and non-aliens” from designated areas on the West Coast (where most Japanese Americans lived). The orders were posted and published in newspapers with the large headline, “Instructions to All Persons of Japanese Ancestry.”

EXECUTIVE ORDER 9066: An executive order issued by U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 19, 1942. It granted the U.S. military the power to exclude “any and all persons” from military areas. The order did not mention any specific ethnic or social group, but it was quickly applied to the Japanese American population on the West Coast.

SELECTIVE SERVICE FORM 304A:

The “loyalty questionnaire.”

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY: A U.S. government agency established in 1942 to “Take all people of Japanese descent into custody, surround them with troops, prevent them from buying land, and return them to their former homes at the close of the war.”

XENOPHOBIA: Fear and hatred of strangers, or of anyone or anything that is foreign.

IS \$20,000 ENOUGH?

In 1988, the U.S. government authorized reparations of \$20,000 per internment survivor. But even aside from psychological and other impacts of incarceration, the concrete economic impacts were considerable. Many families had as little as one week to prepare to leave their homes and businesses and relocate to internment camps, bringing only what they could carry with them. Most interned Japanese Americans lost all of their property: homes, businesses, and farms (nearly two-thirds of West Coast Japanese Americans worked in agriculture).

In at least one camp, experienced agricultural workers who could no longer work their own farms worked on U.S. government agricultural projects for as little as \$12 a month (much lower than typical agricultural wages at the time).

After the war, some internees stayed in the desolate areas where the camps were located rather than return to areas that now had housing shortages and where they feared racial hatred. Economic opportunities in the rural areas where the camps were located were slim. A study published in August 2017 found that “the economic consequences of internment lingered among internees even 50 years later,” and affected not only those interned but subsequent generations of their families.

TIMELINE

1850S The first wave of Asian migration to the United States, as Chinese people come to work in the gold mines and on railroads.

1870 The 1870 Naturalization Act puts controls on immigration to the U.S. and excludes Asians from receiving citizenship.

1882 Amid anti-Chinese sentiment, the Chinese Exclusion Act effectively bans immigration from China. There is an increase in Japanese immigration to replace Chinese laborers.

1905 In San Francisco, 67 labor unions form a Japanese and Korean Exclusion League. It is renamed the Asian Exclusion League in 1907 to also target Indian immigrants.

1907–08 The United States enters a “Gentleman’s Agreement” with Japan to slow the flow of Japanese immigration to the United States.

1924 The Immigration Act of 1924 creates national quotas for immigration. All immigrants from Asia are excluded.

1939 Hitler annexes Czechoslovakia and invades Poland; France and Great Britain, then Canada, declare war against Germany. Japan, at war with China, declares itself neutral in the European war. The United States, taking an isolationist stance, also declares itself neutral.

1940 Germany invades Denmark, Norway, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, and France. Italy joins the war as an ally of Germany. Great Britain, France, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, and South Africa declare war on Italy. Germany, Italy, and Japan sign a pact to create a new order in Europe and Asia. Italy invades Greece.

1941 Germany invades the Soviet Union.

DECEMBER 7, 1941 Japan attacks Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

DECEMBER 8, 1941 The United States declares war on Japan. Germany and Italy declare war on the United States.

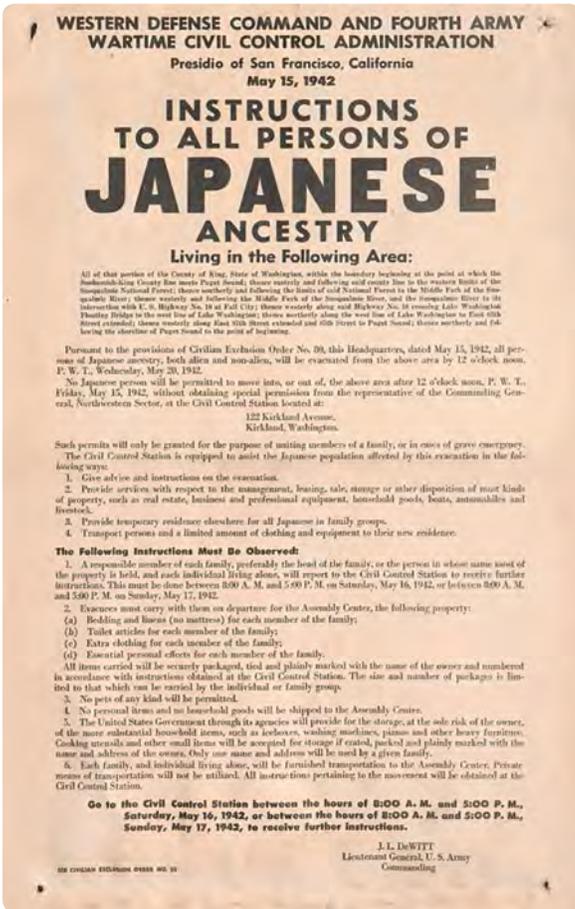
FEBRUARY 19, 1942 U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs Executive Order 9066, which authorizes the removal of anyone from military areas as deemed “necessary or desirable” by military commanders.

1942 The U.S. military defines much of the U.S. West Coast as a military area. Over the next few months, more than 110,000 Japanese Americans are relocated to internment camps created by the U.S. military. They live in camps for two and a half years.

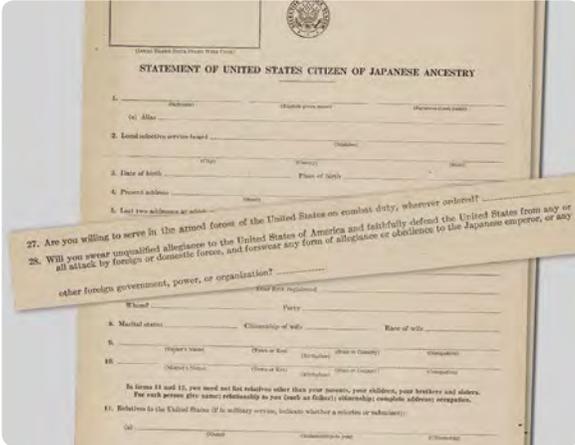
DECEMBER 17, 1944 U.S. Public Proclamation No. 21 declares that, effective January 2, 1945, Japanese American “evacuees” can leave the camps.

1988 U.S. President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, giving each survivor of the Japanese American internment \$20,000 and an apology.





Sign posted notifying people of Japanese descent to report for incarceration



Loyalty Questionnaire



U.S. President Ronald Reagan signs the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, establishing reparations for victims of Japanese internment, into law. Photo: Courtesy of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

PANIC ON THE WEST COAST

Some say President Roosevelt was responding to a culture of fear and panic on the West Coast, where some Americans feared invasion by Japan, or sabotage by Japanese American spies. Combined with preexisting racism, their fear became a wave of xenophobia.

Ten Americans were convicted of spying for Japan during World War II. They were all Caucasian. Not a single Japanese American person was ever convicted of any serious act of espionage or sabotage during the war.

EAST WEST PLAYERS

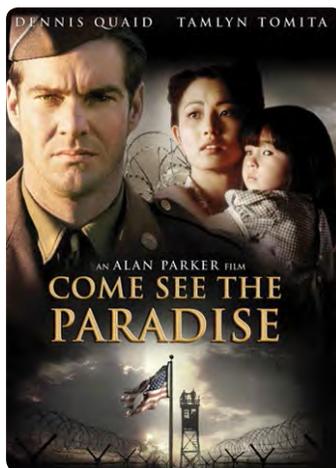
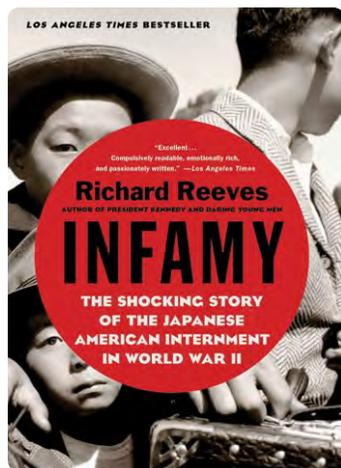
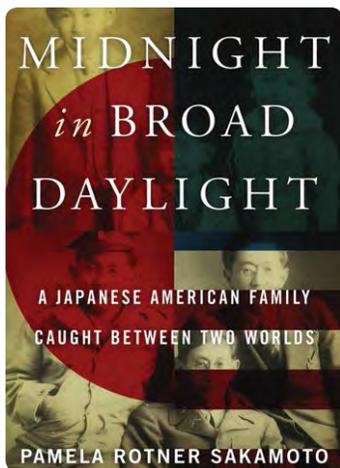
Founded in 1965, East West Players is the nation's longest-running professional theater of color and the largest producing organization of Asian American artistic work. The company aims to continue the movement to develop, foster, and expand Asian Pacific performance into a major force on the national arts scene in the 21st century; increase opportunities for Asian and Pacific Islander artists on stage and in other media; and introduce audiences to diverse Asian Pacific experiences.

THE JAPAN ARATANI THEATRE AT THE JAPANESE AMERICAN CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY CENTER

Founded in 1971, the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center is one of the largest ethnic arts and cultural centers of its kind in the United States. Located in Little Tokyo, the historic heart of L.A.'s Japanese American community, JACCC was the dream of visionary Issei and Nisei (first- and second-generation) Japanese Americans to create a permanent center for the community where arts and culture come alive and can flourish for future generations. JACCC's Center Building opened in 1980. This was followed shortly thereafter by the opening of the Aratani Theatre and JACCC Plaza in 1983.

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What values or character traits motivate Sam to fight in the war and Kei to protest the government's treatment of her people?
- What did you know about the internment of Japanese Americans before this event? Think about how you learned what you knew, or why you didn't know much, as the case may be.
- How would you react to being asked to "forswear any form of allegiance" to your or your family's homeland?
- What would be sufficient reparations for Japanese Americans' experiences of internment?



IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MAY WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Japanese American National Museum
www.janm.org
- Go For Broke Monument
www.goforbroke.org/visit/monument/index.php
- East West Players
eastwestplayers.org
- Japanese American Cultural and Community Center
www.jacc.org
- George Takei on Facebook
www.facebook.com/georgetakei
- Musicals at the Ahmanson Theatre
www.centertheatregroup.org/visit/ahmanson-theatre/

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

ANTHONY ANDERSON of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about tonight's performance. Those with a call number (e.g., books and DVDs) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g., databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Wendy L. Ng. *Japanese American Internment during World War II: A History and Reference Guide*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002.
DOHENY LIBRARY: D769.8.A6 N4 200
- Richard Reeves. *Infamy: The Shocking Story of the Japanese American Internment in World War II*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2015.
DOHENY LIBRARY: D769.8.A6 R43 2015
- Bill T. Manbo and Eric L. Muller. *Colors of Confinement: Rare Kodachrome Photographs of Japanese American Incarceration in World War II*. Documentary Arts and Culture. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2012.
DOHENY LIBRARY: D769.8.A6 M327 2012

- Sakamoto, Pamela Rotner. *Midnight in Broad Daylight: A Japanese American Family Caught between Two Worlds*. New York: Harper Perennial, 2016.
DOHENY LIBRARY: D753.8.S24 2016

RECOMMENDED AUDIO VISUAL

- Come See the Paradise* (1990 film)
LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 11471
- Farewell to Manzanar* (2011 film)
LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 6639
- To Be Takei* (2014 film)
LEAVEY LIBRARY: CIRDSK-DVD LVYDVD 9127
- Allegiance: Original Broadway Cast Recording* (2016)
MUSIC LIBRARY: CD-AUDIO 25492MUS

SELECTED DATABASES

America: History & Life with Full Text: "The definitive index to articles and other literature (books, dissertations, book reviews, etc.) covering the history and culture of the U.S. and Canada, from the 15th century to the present. Indexes nearly 1,800 journals from 1860s to present, including all key journals in the discipline, state and local history publications, and selected articles from scholarly journals in the social sciences and humanities."

IIPA (International Index to the Performing Arts): "IPA draws its current content from more than 100 international performing arts periodicals from 9 countries, and also indexes feature performing arts articles and obituaries appearing in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. IIPA covers nearly all aspects of the world of the performing arts, from the most scholarly studies to the latest crazes. Most IIPA records in the current coverage (1998 forward) contain an abstract."

JSTOR: "A growing full text collection of core social science, humanities, and science journals."

Japanese Relocation During World War II: National Archives (www.archives.gov/education/lessons/japanese-relocation)

"Roosevelt's order affected 117,000 people of Japanese descent, two-thirds of whom were native-born citizens of the United States. The Issei were the first generation of Japanese in this country; the Nisei were the second generation, numbering 70,000 American citizens at the time of internment."