

## "Miné: A Name for Herself": A Performance Commemorating an Artist's Work behind Barbed Wire



Photo Courtesy of Miné Okubo Estate.

**Monday, February 19, 2007**  
**6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.**

**Location**  
Smithsonian Freer Gallery of Art,  
Meyer Auditorium

**Program Series**  
▶ Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program

**Category**  
▶ Performances

**Free.**

**Registration & Seating Info**  
First come, first served

"Miné: A Name For Herself" is a performance salon featuring Japanese American actress Cheryl McCarthy and Japanese actress Fumiko Hamada. The play is presented by the Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program in remembrance of Franklin D. Roosevelt's signing of Executive Order 9066 on February 19, 1942, which led to the suspension of civil rights for 120,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry.


Written by Mary H. Curtin and Theresa Larkin, "Miné: A Name For Herself" presents the art, opinions, and perspective of Japanese American artist Miné Okubo. Born in 1912 in Riverside, California, Okubo earned a master's degree from University of California at Berkeley. She won a fellowship in 1938 to study art in France and Italy, and came back on the last passenger ship before war was declared in Europe. She found work doing public art projects through the federal WPA in the San Francisco area. Like other Japanese Americans who were suddenly considered enemies because of their ancestry, Okubo and a brother were taken to an internment center. The internees were given numbers, rather than names, for identity. Okubo would later publish an award-winning memoir, *Citizen 13660*, a narrative and visual diary of her internment camp experiences, in 1946.

Miné and her brother were transferred after six months at the first camp to another in Utah. Okubo did pen and ink drawings of what she saw. She taught art to children while interned. Eventually she entered a magazine contest with a drawing she did of a camp guard. *Fortune* Magazine discovered her talent and offered her a job in New York that led to her release from the camp. Okubo shipped a crate of her belongings straight to the magazine's offices, and someone found her a Greenwich

Village apartment where she would live for the next 50 years. She quickly became a lively part of the New York City art scene, creating paintings and other artworks that would be exhibited from Boston to Tokyo.

During this performance, stories of Okubo's experiences in the camps of Tanforan and Topaz are interwoven with her reminiscences about her later life as a New York artist as she shares her aesthetic principles and art with her audience.

All events and programs are subject to change.

 Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Program

Co sponsors: The Artists' Collective, National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, Japanese American Veterans Association, Japanese American Citizens League



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