

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **MAY 1 ONLINE GALA & AUCTION FOR THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM KICKS OFF ASIAN AMERICAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH**

**LOS ANGELES** - May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, and the **Japanese American National Museum (JANM)** will kick it off with its May 1 virtual [Gala and Auction](#). A full month of events and activities are also scheduled.

The Gala variety show, which is free to the public, will feature a diverse slate of [entertainment](#) and special guests. Co-hosts for the online show are **Derek Mio, July Lee** and **Amy Hill**. The online [auction](#) – featuring unique arts and crafts, gourmet meals, sports outings and other one-of-a-kind items – is also open to the public.

During Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, JANM is hosting events including:

- Saturday, May 08, 2021 - Friday, May 21, 2021

A free play, *Question 27, Question 28*

This [drama](#) explores the experiences of Japanese American women during the World War II concentration camps. This is an abridged version of the original by Chay Yew, and it is directed by July Lee and shortened and edited for families.

Watch on [JANM's YouTube Channel](#) starting on May 8th.

- Thursday, May 13, 2021 from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM PDT

Nikkei Uncovered: a poetry reading

Join us for our second annual virtual [poetry reading](#) with a powerful poet lineup featured in Discover Nikkei's [Nikkei Uncovered: a poetry column](#), hosted by poet and performer traci kato-kiriyama. This year, pairs of poets will be reading works in conversation with each other. kato-kiriyama will also provide writing prompts for audience members to reflect on. Featured poets: are [Amy Uyematsu](#) and [Miya Iwataki](#), [Curtiss Takada Rooks](#) and [Mariko Fujimoto Rooks](#) and [Shō Tanaka](#) and Paulette M. Moreno.

[Tickets](#) are a suggested donation of \$10.

- Sunday, May 23, 2021, 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM PDT

## The Eighth Annual Imagine Little Tokyo Short Story Contest Awards Ceremony

Each year, this contest heightens awareness of Little Tokyo by asking writers to pen a story. The [ceremony](#) will feature theatre artists, Greg Watanabe, Jully Lee, and Eiji Inoue, will showcase the winning stories with dramatic readings from the three contest categories—Adult, Youth, and Japanese language. *The contest is presented by Little Tokyo Historical Society in partnership with JANM's Discover Nikkei project.*

[RSVPs](#) for this virtual zoom event are required.

- Tuesday, May 25, 2021, 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM PDT

Art Break – Interactive sculpture workshop with Ako Castuera

Sculptor Ako Castuera [will teach participants](#) how to make and form an easy bakers clay using just flour, salt, and water, inspired by artist Ruth Asawa who also used this simple medium to create sculptures. Castuera is informed by the diverse cultural and environmental features of Southern California, on Tongva Land, where she was born and currently lives.

[RSVPs](#) are required for this virtual zoom event.

For more information or questions, contact [publicprograms@janm.org](mailto:publicprograms@janm.org).

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Established in 1985, **JANM** promotes understanding and appreciation of America's ethnic and cultural diversity by sharing the Japanese American experience. Located in the historic Little Tokyo district of downtown Los Angeles, **JANM** is a hybrid institution that straddles traditional museum categories and strives to provide a voice for Japanese Americans as well as a forum that enables all people to explore their own heritage and culture. Since opening to the public in 1992, **JANM** has presented over 70 exhibitions onsite while traveling 17 exhibits to venues such as the Smithsonian Institution and the Ellis Island Museum in the United States, and to several leading cultural museums in Japan and South America. For more information, visit [janm.org](http://janm.org) or follow us on social media [@jamuseum](https://www.instagram.com/jamuseum).

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