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STATEMENT: THE JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM MOURNS THE PASSING OF HOLLY YASUI – WRITER, EDITOR AND FILMMAKER

LOS ANGELES - The **Japanese American National Museum (JANM)** mourns the death of **Holly Yasui**, 67, a writer, editor, and documentary filmmaker. She died Oct. 31 in Mexico from complications of COVID-19 and was the youngest daughter of Minoru Yasui, the legendary Japanese American lawyer and civil rights activist.

“The Museum is deeply saddened to learn about the passing of **Holly Yasui** whose film about her father keeps the legacy of his groundbreaking civil rights activism alive,” said Ann Burroughs, President and CEO of **JANM**. “**Holly’s** film memorializes the remarkable efforts of how one man – her father – was fearless in his drive to correct a terrible injustice. His spirit lived on in **Holly’s** own deep commitment to social justice.”

A native of Denver, **Yasui** was a writer, editor and translator (Spanish to English) who resided for many years in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico.

Holly Yasui produced a 2017 documentary film about her father, *[Never Give Up! Minoru Yasui and the Fight for Justice](#)*. It recounts the life of [Minoru Yasui](#), the son of Japanese immigrants in Oregon, who later became the first Japanese American attorney in that state.

During World War II, and after Executive Order 9066 led to the forced removal and incarceration of more than 120,000 persons of Japanese ancestry, it was Minoru Yasui who initiated the first legal test of the order. He spent nine months in solitary confinement awaiting his appeal to the US Supreme Court, but ultimately lost the appeal and was sent to Minidoka concentration camp in Idaho.

A longtime friend of **Holly Yasui**, mourned the loss of a vigilant advocate for human rights. “Holly lived her father’s words ‘We are all placed on this earth to make it a better place for everyone,’” said June Berk. “She carried out her father’s wishes in extraordinary ways.”

In a 2017 interview with [Discover Nikkei](#), **Yasui** was asked about the kind of advice her father might give to today’s young activists. She harkened back to her father’s fire in the belly.

“*Never give up! Keep on fighting, stand up and speak out!*” she said. “Work for the common good, help to make the world a better place in whatever way you can, according to your own convictions and passions and life experiences.”

Survivors include sisters, Laurie Yasui and Iris Yasui.

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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 or follow us on social media [@jamuseum](https://www.instagram.com/jamuseum).