



• **Miné Okubo** •  
**an american  
experience**

A retrospective exhibit of paintings and drawings of a Nisei woman artist  
The Oakland Museum July 18 to August 20 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, California

a presentation of The Special Exhibits and Education Division



**"I relived momentarily the sorrows and joys of my whole evacuation experience, until the barracks faded away into the distance. There was only the desert now. My thoughts shifted from the past to the future."**



These final lines from Miné Okubo's book, "Citizen 13660," describe an experience that drastically changed the life and perspective of this famous Japanese-American artist.

Her paintings, sketches and drawings will be presented as symbols of those unique Japanese-American transformations in the Oakland Museum exhibition, "Miné Okubo: An American Experience," July 18-August 20 in the Great Hall Low Bay.



Born in Riverside, California, daughter of an artist and master calligrapher, educated at the University of California, Berkeley (where she received her master's degree in art), Miné Okubo traveled to Europe on a fellowship in 1938.



Upon her return, she was — like 110,000 others of Japanese ancestry — sent to "relocation camps." Her book, an illustrated diary of those experiences, and her illustrations in "Trek," the Topaz camp magazine, attracted attention at Fortune magazine.



Miné Okubo went to New York in 1946 to do illustrations for the magazine. She has remained in Greenwich Village ever since, painting, completing murals, fresco tiles and mosaics, and illustrating editions of Life, Time, Saturday Review, as well as many books.



Her works in oil, watercolor, tempera and gouache reflect each stage of her unique life situation, one closely paralleling the lives of many other Japanese-Americans.



Today, her work is bright and expansive. Cats, children, birds, flowers and ships are intertwined with distinctive Japanese and Oriental symbols.

According to Ben Hazard, the Oakland Museum's Curator of Special Exhibits and Education, these are contrasted with the "dark, crimped and depressed charcoal studies made while she was in the internment camps. She was depressed and her work shows her acute awareness of who she was at the point in time."

There are also her pre-war impressionistic paintings in France, her renewed color applications after release from the camps, and her evolving abstract expressions as she found her way back to her art.



**"This first major Western showing of Miné's work will go off as scheduled," Hazard added, "but because of recent museum budget limitations we'll have to turn elsewhere for funding for her first major catalog. We'd like to elicit support from all communities to make this catalog a reality."**

Contributions for the Miné Okubo exhibition catalog may be made out to "Miné Okubo Exhibition" and sent to the Oakland Museum, 1000 Oak Street, Oakland, Calif. 94607.