

April 2018

## From Executive Director Tom Ikeda

Dear Friends,

Last month I was in New York City talking at the International Center of Photography (ICP). Right before I got up to speak, I had a flashback to the beginnings of Densho. Twenty-two years ago, we dreamed that we would go to faraway cities and see powerful exhibits and projects that used the video oral histories we collected in new ways and the creators would do these projects without us even knowing they were doing them.

I saw this dream come alive last month in New York. The panel I participated in accompanied ICP's [Then They Came for Me](#) exhibit, which features sobering photographs of WWII incarceration interspersed with video monitors playing Densho oral histories on a continuous loop. Seeing the familiar faces of our oral history narrators in this prestigious museum brought warmth to my heart. And that wasn't all.

For the panel, I was joined by poet Christine Kitano, who told me she read the transcripts from our online interviews to help her write her poetry. We were also joined by Kevin Miyazaki, a photographer who created a satirical book illustrated with historic photographs and phrases from our interviews. The next evening, more artists who used Densho materials gathered in the same space: The No No Boy Project makes music based on stories uncovered in our archives, and Brandon Shimoda writes cerebral poetry and essays that also draw heavily upon Densho materials.

I realized on that trip that the archives we've spent more than two decades building have taken on a life of their own, just as I hoped they would.

This gratifying trip was made all the more meaningful by the warm reception my staff and I received from the New York Japanese American community. The group of advocates, activists, artists, thinkers, and story keepers that we connected with there are using Densho materials in innovative and inspiring new ways. They are also documenting, creating, and sharing our history on their own terms. We owe a debt of gratitude to all who welcomed us, but especially to members of the New York chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League, the [New York Day of Remembrance Committee](#), the [Japanese-Americans, Japanese in America](#) group, and the [Japanese American Association of New York](#), including Julie Azuma, Suki T. Ports, Susan Onuma, and Michiyo Noda.

I come away from that trip knowing that the future of Japanese American history is in good hands. I'm eager to hear what others are doing -- please send me a note at [tom.ikeda@densho.org](mailto:tom.ikeda@densho.org) if you create a project using Densho materials. We love to know

how the story is being kept alive!

Sincerely,

Tom Ikeda

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Calling on supporters in Seattle and beyond to join us for our once-a-year online fundraising campaign...



We love what we do—and if you're reading this, you probably do too! We're proud to offer free 24/7 access to a growing digital archive of invaluable historical materials, innovative educational programs connecting the past and present, and sharp, nuanced discussions (both online and IRL) about the continuing legacy of Japanese American WWII incarceration. But sharing these stories takes time, energy, a dedicated and sometimes sleep-deprived staff, and yes, funding.

If you value the work we do and the stories we share, please consider donating to Densho for [GiveBIG 2018](#). Whether you're a first-time contributor or a long-time donor, we need your support to keep growing.

Thanks to a matching grant from the National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Program, every dollar you give will be matched 2-to-1, doubling the impact of your donation. As thanks, we'll send all donors a set of custom-made Gordon Hirabayashi stamps and you'll be entered to win other exciting prizes. More on that soon!

To participate in this matching opportunity, [schedule your gift](#) before midnight on **May 9th**.

[Give BIG Now!](#)

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## Oral History Spotlight: Gordon Hirabayashi

April 23, 2018 marks Gordon Hirabayashi's 100th birthday. In honor of this anniversary, take a look back at our 1999

interview with him. In this clip, he talks about getting some needed words of encouragement from his mother who was at the Tule Lake concentration camp.

Happy birthday, Gordon. We miss you but your spirit of resistance and determination continues to inspire us every day!

>> [Watch the clip.](#)



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## Announcing Densho's First Resident Artists

Densho is pleased to announce that we have selected five talented artist residents to work with us this year: comic artist Kiku Hughes (see her work featured in the blog post below); musician Paul Kikuchi; designer and multimedia artist Erin Shigaki; and filmmakers Tani Ikeda and Shaun Scott.

We can't wait to share their projects with you as they progress! And huge thanks to Seattle Office of Arts & Culture for funding this talented group of artists!



OFFICE OF ARTS & CULTURE

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## Blog Highlight: Sexual Violence, Silence, and Japanese American Incarceration

In recent months, an outpouring of stories of sexual harassment, abuse, and assault has sparked long overdue conversations around the prevalence of sexual violence and the policies, attitudes, and silences that uphold it. As descendants of Japanese Americans criminalized during WWII who often use our own families' stories to warn against the repetition of history, we know well that to understand our present we must reckon with our past. But for too long, the stories we tell have erased the victims and survivors of sexual violence in our own community. It is time we broke that silence.



>> [Read more.](#)

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## Blog Highlight: An Open Letter to the Incarceration Apologists in our Comment Section

To the armchair historians and devil's advocates bravely defending Japanese American incarceration in our comment section, this one's for you.

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule of being triggered by other people's gender pronouns and asking women what they were wearing to school us on our own history. We know you have many choices when you engage in online trolling, and we thank you for flying Densho.

>> [Read more.](#)

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## Come work with us!

Are you a current student or recent graduate from a library and information science or archival studies program? Come spend the summer sharpening your digital archiving know-how through a PAID **Digitization Internship** at Densho!  
\*Space goggles not included.

>> [Learn more and apply.](#)

AND we're still looking for a talented **Fund Development Director** to help us grow and sustain our work! Due to the rise of nationalism and xenophobia in the United States, Densho is expanding its education and communications programs, and is launching a multi-year fundraising initiative.

>> [Learn more and apply.](#)

Please help us spread the word about these exciting opportunities.

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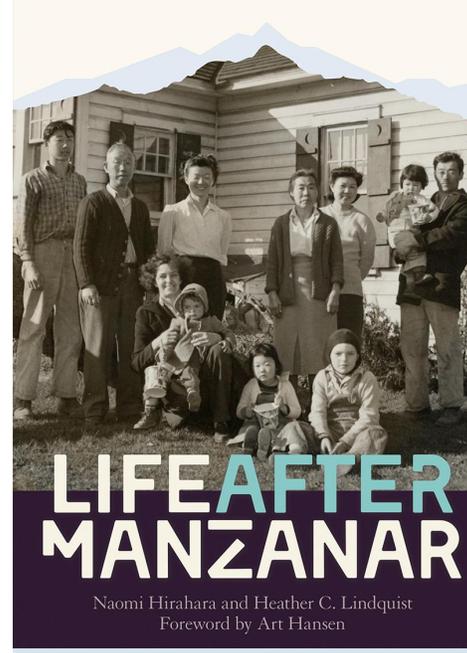
**Book Event: Seattle Public Library,  
May 6**



From the editor of the award-winning *Children of Manzanar*, Heather C. Lindquist, and Edgar Award winner Naomi Hirahara comes a nuanced account of Japanese American resettlement after World War II.

Join Densho and Elliott Bay Books at the Seattle Public Library on May 6, from 2:00-3:15 for a presentation by the authors, followed by a discussion moderated by Tom Ikeda.

>> [More about the event.](#)



### Save the Date: November 3

Last but not least, we're delighted to share that the second annual Densho Dinner will take place on the evening of November 3, 2018 at Bellevue's Meydenbauer Center. We're putting together an exciting program and will be sharing more soon so please just hold the date for now!



### Can you help us find the owner of this album?

An album full of photos taken at Minidoka and Amache was left behind at one of the old hotels in the Seattle Chinatown-International District. We would love to help get the original back to its rightful owner, but we need your help to do so!



The man in the center front of the photo at right is Harry R. Hatate and he appears in many of the photos so it's possible it's his album. Do you know Harry's family? Or do you recognize this photo? If so please shoot us an email at [info@densho.org](mailto:info@densho.org) and help us solve this mystery.

STAY CONNECTED:



