

### JAPANTOWN TASK FORCE BOARD MEETING WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2016 UNION BANK COMMUNITY ROOM

ATTENDEES: Alice Kawahatsu, Paul Wermer, Anthony Brown, Seiko Fujimoto, Judy

Hamaguchi, David Ishida, Mark Moriguchi, Benh Nakajo, Glynis Nakahara, Beau

Simon, Neal Taniguchi, Clint Taura

ABSENT: Rosalyn Tonai, Jon Osaki

STAFF: Kimi Fukuyama, Greg Marutani

GUESTS: Karl Kawahatsu, Marvin Lambert, Julia Westlock, David Lahar, Mary-Ann Hori,

Jan Bolaffi, Paul Osaki (JCCCNC), Aya Ino (JCCCNC), Teresa Ono (JCCCNC), Tomo Hirai (Nichi Bei), Michiko Yamada, Karen Kai, Thomas Reynolds, Edward

Ong, Aubrey Shirlock, Jeremy Chan

### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Alice Kawahatsu, President.

### II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING ON JULY 20, 2016.

It was motioned by Paul Wermer and seconded by Anthony Brown to approve the July 20, 2016 minutes with the amendments that Edward Hong should be Edward Ong and Carol Ito should be Caryl Ito.

The motion was unanimously approved.

### III. GUEST SPEAKER

Paul Osaki - Issei Memorial Garden Cottage Row Mini-Park

The guest speaker spoke about making a commemorative garden in Cottage Row. The purpose is to celebrate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Japantown and honor the Issei. Handouts were passed out during the presentation (Attachment A)

Secondly, the garden would represent the Japanese cultural heritage and connection to the community. The planned layout for the garden is to remove some vegetation and replace them with elements of a Japanese garden, including stones. This would not create problems within the structure of the garden at Cottage Row.

There were some questions and concerns regarding the project. Many concerns from the neighborhood residents stated they were not informed

### IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- A. Land Use / Transportation Committee (Paul Wermer)
  - 1. Geary Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

There is still no formal response from the BRT team regarding keeping Laguna both a local and rapid stop. Rich reported the Geary BRT Citizens Advisory Committee would be meeting September 15, 2016 at 1455 Market Street beginning at 6:00 p.m.

### B. Economic Development / Marketing Committee (Alice Kawahatsu)

### 1. Visitor Center Update

No changes have been made regarding the cart. Still waiting on finances from the Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED).

During the Nihonmachi Street Fair, JTF held a information booth to pass out brochures regarding Japantown and welcome people.

### 2. Festival Sponsorship Update

No updates because there is a financial freeze on money. Only update is 3 festival sponsors were interviewed. Paul explained how city budget process is approved at the end of June. All expenditures allocated must be spent by the end of June. The grant for summer months (July & August) money cannot be used from the previous year. Also, the current year money cannot be used because it has not been dispersed.

Encumbered vs. Approved funding: Alice and Jeremy reported that Diana Ponce de Leon approved the contract amendment and extended the festival sponsorship to the following year. The discussion moved from David Ishida to Paul Warmer regarding the contract and how to use the budget money. One of the suggestions is to approve necessary amounts. A report is requested to the Board of Supervisors and a place holder must be made. The main problem is we are not specifying the amount of where the money needs to be designated.

Mark Moriguchi stated a solution would be to improve the communication within the contract as to where the budgeted funds would be spent.

David Ishida stated that a plan is necessary to discuss the amounts and put in place holders for planned expenditures. He requested a report be made to the Board.

Paul Wermer added that a proposal must be made for next year's new festival initiatives.

Jeremy discussed the timeline and plan for next year's festival grant. The amount given this past year was under a \$1,000.

### 3. Holiday Lights Update

Brought in the LED lights but the committee has not selected a design. Making the decision next month with input from Hotel Kabuki. David Ishida expressed his concern that identifying Peace Plaza and Buchanan Mall as separately with the Holiday Light project dividing Japantown. His suggestion was to make it one project. He believed that the merchants in the Buchanan Mall would contribute to the Holiday Lights

### B. Cultural Heritage (Ros Tonai)

1. Landmarking of Peace Pagoda/Plaza Update

Greg reported that the assessment of the Peace Plaza had been conducted and completed prior to the Nihonmachi Street Fair. The official report would probably be issued some time before the end of 2016.

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### 2. Ruth Asawa Fountains

In Ros's absence, Paul Wermer reported there was nothing new to report on this item.

### C. Steering Committee CBD Update (Greg Marutani)

1. Draft Formation Plan- Action Item

There will be a meeting next Wednesday, August 24, 2016 of the Ad hoc committee that has recently been assembled. They will be reviewing the Draft Request or Proposal (RFP) for the necessary services to complete the requirements to officially form a CBD.

Greg Marutani reported that the staff from the Mayor's Office is attempting to include these funds into the current contract with JTF to expedite the process.

A request was made for the Executive Committee to make a Timeline for CBD.

Funds to operate JTF, plan new festivals, information booth expansion and formulate a pledge for the Mayor's Office of Economic Development (MOED).

### D. Executive Committee

1. Dignity Fund support letter update

Alice Kawahatsu reported she signed an endorsement form adding JTF's support of the Dignity Fund. This was done on August 13, 2016.

### E. Finance Committee (Mark Moriguchi) \*Listen recording)

Funding from the City will come in by December after approval. From July to December we are out of contract. Any salary has been paid will be coming out from other funds. The City will make a separate grant in order to pay the salaries. Details are still being made in order to spend the money. Questions came across regarding annual grant to cover current time period and also if the grant year can be controlled. Concerns came up about the grant time frame and how much money is given.

A suggestion was made that one of the board members help negotiate time frames for the grant and how to spend the money.

Greg said he hoped to hear from the Mayor's Office staff soon and would pick up the contract at City Hall and take it to our fiscal agent, JCYC for signature by Jon Osaki. He added this would be completed by the end of this week.

F. Ad-Hoc Community Benefit District (CBD) Committee (Bob Hamaguchi) - In Bob's absence, Greg reported that the Ad Hoc Committee is scheduled to meet August 24, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at the JACL Headquarters located at 1765 Sutter Street.

### G. Ad Hoc Digital Access by the Community

Paul Wermer reported that he has received some comments and suggestions for JTF digital access. In addition, what information content should be on the website, different social media outreach and certain reccomendations should be able to review by the Board meeting and move on to the next software, cloud storage of documents and calendars

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### V. New Business

A. LANDMARKING OF THE 1830 SUTTER JULIA MORGAN BUILDING (NLF)

It was reported Shelley Caltagirone is currently on vacation and no update has been made.

Nihonmachi Little Friends (NLF) is waiting to meet with Ms. Caltagirone to find out what is required by the organization and the impact of landmarking. Also, if there will be any impact on their current expansion project.

David Ishida asked for a future agenda items and background information presented to the Board in advance.

### VI. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT\*\*

- A. Nichi Bei Foundation (NBF) announced upcoming events: September 10, 2016 Fundraiser Film screening of Persona Non Grata- Chiune Sugihara and October 1, 2016 Nikkei Angel Island Pilgrimage also sponsored by the Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation and the National Japanese American Historical Society. Handouts were left for pickup Attachment B
- B. Anthony Brown announced the Aerial Arts Festival this weekend August 19th-21st. Handouts were left for pick up ATTACHMENT B

### VII. STAFF REPORTS

A. Crime Report (Greg Marutani)

Greg highlighted SFPD Northern Station will be having a Coffee with a Cop event at Benkyodo on Wednesday, August 24, 2016 from 10:00 to noon. This is a time for local residents, merchants and others to share their concerns with the local police officers from Northern Station.

In response to an inquiry, Greg reported that the foot patrol officers (Yuka Nagamine and Nick Zerga) will be walking their beat in Japantown and lower Fillmore. They are scheduled to to be at the event.

B. Japantown Observations (Greg Marutani) Please refer to Japantown Observations.

### VIII. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Please refer to President's Report for upcoming events. Alice highlighted the Angel Island event. In addition, Kenji Taguma elaborated more on the upcoming Nichibei events.

The next Board meeting will be Wednesday, September 21, 2016 at the Union Bank Hospitality Room

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Rosalyn Tonai Secretary

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### ISSEI COMMEMORATIVE GARDEN PROPOSAL

(Cottage Row Mini-Park)

### PURPOSE

To celebrate the 110th anniversary of Japantown by creating a Japanese garden in commemoration of the (ISSEI) first generation of Japanese in America at the historic Cottage Row Mini-Park.

### GOALS

- to create the first permanent public recognition of the Issei generation that established Japantown in the Western Addition in 1906
- to instill a sense of Japanese cultural heritage in the park that will connect the neighborhood to the history and spirit of the Japantown community
- to create a Japanese streetscape garden that will become an educational and cultural destination point in Japantown for locals and tourists

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This year 2016, marks the 110th anniversary of Japantown in the Western Addition. In May of 1906, just one month following the devastating San Francisco Earthquake, the Issei or 1st generation of Japanese living in San Francisco sought to identify a neighborhood in which to create a Japanese community. Within a matter of months hotels, restaurants, grocery and other retail stores started to spring up in the Western Addition or Fillmore District as it was also referred to back then.

Over the decades, the Japantown community would flourish in the Western Addition encompassing thirty square blocks and over two hundred small businesses. It was here that the 2nd generation of Japanese Americans, called (Nisei) would be born. Around the 1920's, in order to address the growing family needs of Japantown, the Issei built community institutions including language schools, churches, temples and community facilities such as the Japanese YMCA (today the Buchanan YMCA), Japanese YWCA (Nihonmachi Little Friends) and the Japanese Salvation Army building, (now the Chinese Consulate).

The Japantown community continued to strive, up until World War II when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which forced all Japanese Americans living on the west coast to concentration camps. In a matter of a couple of months, what was once a thriving Japantown community became a ghost town. Houses became abandoned, businesses boarded-up and churches and temples stood empty, except for

some household goods stored there, since people were allowed to take only what they could carry.

In 1945 as the war came to an end, Japanese Americans were allowed to leave the camps and return to their homes and community. In San Francisco just as the Japantown community started to re-establish itself, in 1948 the City began plans to condemn Japantown and the Western Addition. This plan would force homeowners and businesses to sell their property to the Redevelopment Agency (RDA) for demolition and redevelopment. Throughout the 1960's and 70's almost every home and business in Japantown was demolished and whole city blocks in the area were leveled to the ground. Over 60% of the Japanese American's living and conducting business in Japantown lost their property and were forced to leave the community again. For many in the community, this was viewed as the second evacuation of Japantown.

### THE ISSEI GARDEN PROJECT

In celebration of the 110th anniversary of Japantown, the Issei Garden Project proposes to create a Japanese Zen rock garden at the Cottage Row Mini-Park to commemorate the first generation of Japanese Americans called, "Issei" who established Japantown in 1906.

Type: Japanese Style Zen Rock Garden

Principal Landscaper: Mr. Shigeru Namba is one of the foremost Japanese landscape gardeners in the United States. One of his projects includes the private estate of Larry Ellison, which is one of the largest Japanese gardens in North America (almost twice the size of the Japanese Tea Garden). Mr. Namba also collaborated with landscape gardener Mr. Isao Ogura to create the Tanforan Memorial Garden located at the Tanforan Shopping Center in San Bruno, which was the former site of the Tanforan Assembly Center where the Japanese American's from Japantown, were first evacuated to at the start of WWII, prior to being sent to the concentration camps. Together they also partnered on the Garden of Remembrance located at San Francisco State University that recognizes the 19 Nisei students forced out of the school and also the 120,000 Japanese Americans forced into concentration camps during the war.

Mr. Namba and Mr. Ogura are members of the Professional Gardeners Federation of Northern California and will be donating their time and expertise to this project.



Larry Ellison Japanese Garden



SF State Garden of Remembrance

Site: The Cottage Row Mini-Park is located on Sutter Street between Webster and Fillmore Street. The proposed location of the Issei garden would be the front of the park facing Sutter Street (approx. 30' x 25'). The front location provides the greatest exposure and will act as a cultural streetscape for the park. The garden will also draw locals and tourists alike to the park and become a photo and social media site for Japantown. Having the Issei garden situated in front can also best reflect the historic designation of the park on the National Register.



Front of Cottage Row Mini-Park

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places worthy of preservation. Authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect America's historic and archeological resources.

The Bush Street-Cottage Row Historic District, which includes the mini-park was nominated and became part of the National Register of Historic Places in 1982. Other notable San Francisco sites and the year they were nominated for the National Register include; Alcatraz 1976, Coit Tower 2008, Palace of Fine Arts 2005, Fort Point 1970, Golden Gate Park 2004 and the San Francisco Cable Cars 1966.

"In March of 1875, a Col. Charles L. Taylor purchased Cottage Row and later in 1882 constructed the six-row houses and the one single family home to rent out as income property. Taylor himself chose the name Cottage Row, which was listed among San Francisco's streets as early as the 1886 city directory.

Cottage Row is a small alleyway lined with six colorful row houses; it stretches from Bush Street to Sutter Street. The mini-park serves as the front yard for this historic row. Cottage Row was often referred to as Japan Street before WW II because Japanese Americans inhabited the entire district up until their internment during World War II. In the tiny rear gardens of Cottage Row, the Issei grew vegetables, which they offered to the public for sale at an informal weekly open market held every Saturday along the row" (excerpt and interpretation of the 1982 Nomination of the Bush Street-Cottage Row Historic District).

### CONCLUSION

In the 1960's and 70's the RDA not only demolished almost every home and business in Japantown; they also uprooted every tree and plant in the community as well. The Cottage Row Mini-Park is the only remaining open green space left in Japantown making it the ideal location for a garden to commemorate the Issei who established Japantown 110 years ago.

The timeliness of this project is imperative. Not only do we celebrate the 110th anniversary of Japantown this year, but more importantly, the 2<sup>nd</sup> generation of Japanese Americans, (Nisei) are well into their late eighties and nineties with a substantial percentage of them having already passed away. Being able to dedicate the garden in the place they once lived and played would be of great significance before they pass away.

### PRINCIPAL ORGANIZER

The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California 1840 Sutter Street San Francisco, CA. 94115 (415) 567-5505 www.jcccnc.org

Contact Person: Paul Osaki, Executive Director

### LANDSCAPE GARDENERS

Mr. Shigeru Namba and Mr. Isao Ogura

### HONORARY CHAIRPERSONS FOR THE 110TH ANNIVERSARY

Consul General Jun Yamada, Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee, City and County of San Francisco Board President London Breed, City and County of San Francisco



Dear 110th Anniversary of Japantown Planning Committee:

project. I believe that the garden would great Cottage Row Mini-Park.	add our support for the Issei Commemorative Garden atly enhance the cultural and historical character of the
The Bush Street-Cottage Row Historic Distri	ct was added to the National Register of Historic Places Places is the official list of the Nation's historic places
preservation of our neighborhood. Cottage F	the Japantown community take great pride in the Row was often referred to as Japan Street before WW I entire district up until their internment during World
signed Executive Order 9066, which forced concentration camps. In a matter of a cou community became a ghost town. Houses be	I World War II when President Franklin D. Rooseveld all Japanese Americans living on the west coast to apple of months, what was once a thriving Japantown came abandoned, businesses boarded-up and churches the household goods stored there, since people were
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We strongly urge that the San Francisco Re garden is installed as part of the 110 <sup>th</sup> annive	c. and Park do everything possible to ensure that the ersary being celebrated this year.
Name (print);	
Signature:	Date
Address:	City Zip

### JAPANESE GARDEN PROJECT Cottage Row Mini-Park

Dear San Francisco Recreation and Park Commissioners, As a resident of the Cottage Row Mini-Park neighborhood, I my strong support for the Japanese Garden Project at the Cottage Row Mini-Park. The Japanese Garden Project would create a small Japanese garden in the front area of the park to commemorate the first generation of Japanese American (Issei) as part of the 110th anniversary of Japantown. I believe the garden can positively enhance the neighborhood because it would: \_\_\_\_ Greatly improve the look of the park Encourage people to enjoy the park Help to deter crime and littering in the park Help to beautify the entire neighborhood Encourage people to pick-up after their dog Be a positive step in helping to rehabilitate the park Help to build neighborhood and civic pride Enhance the cultural and historic character of the park Help to educate visitors to the park about the history of Japanese Americans and **Japantown** Promote greater cooperation between the neighborhood and the Recreation and Park Department We strongly urge that the San Francisco Recreation and Park do everything possible to ensure that the garden is installed as part of the 110th anniversary being celebrated this year. The timeliness of this project is imperative. Not only do we celebrate the 110th anniversary of Japantown this year, but more importantly, the second generation of Japanese Americans (Nisei) are well into their late eighties and nineties with a substantial percentage of them having already passed away. Being able to dedicate the garden in the place they once lived and played as children would be of great significance before they pass away. Name (print): Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City Zip

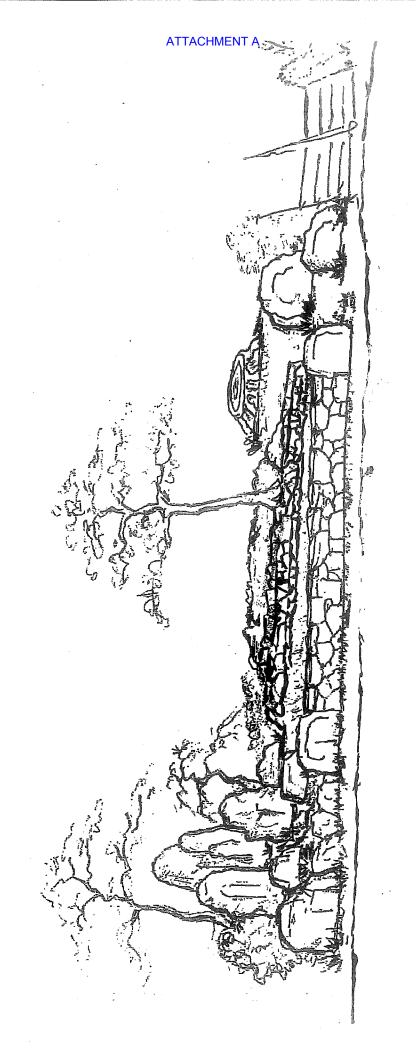
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SUTTER STREET VERSION 1

Existing Ginko Tree Lawn Area Cottage Row

Walkway Stairs to Nowhere Existing Existing Existing Stone Planter Ground Cover Stonewall 4 ff. 4 ft. Suffer Street ISSEI GARDEN PROJECT at Cottage Row Mini-Park Stonewall Over Existing Woodwall Fence Line Front of House Set-Back Sakura Trees Matsu Trees Stone "Dry" Maple Tree Waterfall Existing

NOT TO SCALE



### JAPANESE GARDEN PROJECT



### AT THE COTTAGE ROW MINI-PARK

Join us for a community meeting to discuss the creation of a Japanese garden at the historic Cottage Row Mini-Park to commemorate the Issei (first generation of Japanese in America).

Help us pay tribute to the generation that first established Japantown. This is a program of the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of San Francisco's Japantown being celebrated throughout this year. The goals of the project are:

- To create the first permanent public recognition of the Issei generation that established Japantown in the Western Addition in 1906
- To instill a sense of Japanese cultural heritage in the park that will connect the neighborhood to the history and spirit of the Japantown community
- To create the first Japanese streetscape garden that will become an educational and cultural destination point in Japantown for locals and tourists



For more information contact:

ya Ino

Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California (415) 567-5505 or aino@jcccnc.org

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### Cottage Row loses its redwoods

Posted on April 2, 2014 by editors



Five redwoods were cut in the mini-park at Cottage Row.

THERE HAD BEEN TALK for years about cutting down the rapidly growing redwood trees in the park along Cottage Row. Suddenly one day in mid-February the five redwoods were felled, along with a massive eucalyptus tree and other smaller trees.

The howls of outrage among many neighbors now seem to be giving way to acceptance.

"I was opposed to cutting the trees when they could have been trimmed," said Cottage Row resident Jeff Staben. "But now that you see the light and openness, it's nice. If only people would stop using the park as a dog potty."



A crew from the city's Department of Recreation and Parks has removed the trees and the redwood stumps and begun to refurbish the mini-park, which serves as a front yard for the historic Cottage Row homes. New Japanese maple trees and perhaps cherry trees and magnolias - will be planted in a nod to the heritage of the row before its Japanese-American residents were ousted and interned during World War II. A few redwoods remain on private property.

"We're stabilizing the park and updating the landscaping," said Steve Cismowski, the manager

from Rec & Park responsible for Cottage Row. "Those redwoods were always the wrong species for a park this size. We caught it just in the nick of time."

He said the interim plan — what he called "shoestring and duct tape landscaping" — will make the park safer and more usable. "But it isn't intended to be the end of the conversation — just the beginning," he said.

Cismowski and his crew expect to work in the park every Monday for the next six weeks, completing their limited work by mid-May. They are widening the planters where the redwoods stood, building new steps and adding Japonesque touches. The eucalyptus stump — too big to grind out — will remain.

While Cottage Row has lost its redwoods, it has gained its own song — a lyrical melody by singer-songwriter Eve Fleishman, who lives nearby.

"Twice a week I could sing to the five small redwood trees that inspired the bridge lyrics of my song, City Light," she said. "I felt like crying when I saw they were gone. Not much to sing about on Cottage Row right now."

Eve 'n Steven take a field trip for "City Light" ...



Filed under: Home & Garden, Landmarks, Video

« A salon offers help and hope The buzz on Divis: change is coming »

# SAN FRANCISCO PREMIERE • BENEFIT SCREENING

Based on the true story about Diplomat Chiune Sugihara, refugees, saving 6,000 lives who issued visas for Jewish in the midst of WWI.





Destar Colon Cast

# "Persona Non Grata"

Saturday, Sept. 10, 2016, 5 p.m.: \$50

New People Cinema, 1746 Post St., S.F.'s Japantown A Benefit Screening for the Nichi Bei Foundation Film • Discussion • Reception • Entertainment

(1:30 p.m. Screening ONLY: \$20)



Chiune Sugihara

refugees are alive today because of his actions. Now, more than 70 years after the end of sign transit visas for them. It is estimated that around 40,000 descendants of the Jewish Germany, daring to defy his own government and following his own convictions to During the dark days of war, a compassionate Japanese diplomat served as a beacon of light for some 6,000 Jewish refugees escaping certain death at the hands of Nazi World War II, the dramatic truth behind this decision comes to the big screen.

## SPECIAL GUESTS AT 5 P.M. BENEFIT SCREENING:

- Japanese American director **Cellin Gluck** ("Transformers," "Remember the Titans," "Contact")
  - Madoka Sugihara, granddaughter of Chiune Sugihara, from Japan
- Sugihara visa survivors or descendants (invited)

- Toshiaki Karasawa, one of Japan's leading actors who was twice nominated for the Japan Academy Awards and was named Best Newcomer in 1992.
  - Koyuki, known to international audiences from "The Last Samurai" (2003), stars as Yukiko, Chiune Sugihara's wife who supports and brings him peace of mind throughout his journey.

### Yirti 組改 **Benefitting the**

FOUNDATION





### or e-mail:

### www.nichibei.org/persona-non-grata For more information or tickets, visit:

programs@nichibeifoundation.org

# **SAVE THE DATE!**



# Saturday, Oct. 1, 2016

11 a.m. to 3 p.m. (program with speakers to start at 11 a.m.) Immigration Station at Angel Island State Park

## Family History Workstations • Speakers Performance • Exhibits

Join us for the third Nikkei Angel Island Pilgrimage to rediscover the little-known history of the Japanese and Japanese American descent — the second largest immigrant group — landed between legacy at Angel Island, where 85,000 persons of Japanese 1910 to 1940, before setting foot in America

# Presented by the Nichi Bei Foundation Wirht Met

in partnership with the

Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation and the

with support from the California Parks Service, California Genealogical Society, San Francisco State University National Japanese American Historical Society and San Francisco JACL

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### Angel Island

### AND JAPANESE BENTO LUNCHES ONLINE: MORE INFORMATION AND TO ORDER FERRY PACKAGES

www.nichibei.org/angel-island-pilgrimage

e-mail: programs@nichibeifoundation.org



spectacle, daring athleticism, aerial dance, A dynamic, 3-day indoor and outdoor festival bringing together innovative and circus performance!

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Fort Mason Center for Arts and Culture 2 Marina Boulevard (at Buchanan Street), San Francisco, CA

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AUGUST 19-21, 2016