**What are the themes presented in the 2 short solo productions? Which ones resonated personally with you?**

The themes that are presented in the productions were tragedy and a focus of actual historical events through the perspective of women based on the verbatim excerpts from interviews. I think that the whole performance was unique, well portrayed with the testimonies and interviews.

One thing that hits personally on an emotional level is that the feeling of helplessness in terms of crises arises and that there is a restricting hope and doubt for the people who felt it. They are worried and anxious and also being called a certain inappropriate term as an insult to one’s race also is sadly disturbing.

**What statement do you think each playwright/actor was making in her piece?**

The first playwright featuring Linda Irigashi characterizes her statements as naïve and innocent women who has a hard time figuring out that she was culturally abused. At some testimonies, she showed bitterness and questioning and somehow sarcastically presenting a humble and accepting but in fact hurt and partly annoyed inside. Following playwright Yumi Iwama, she mentioned the most of statements of Sukumoto which she expresses an indignant, resentful, and discontented soul. In the overall statements, they are heard as self-conscious, concerned, angry, disappointed and show the resiliency of character of an experience of Japanese women in the United States. Meanwhile, playwright Stephanie Keefer represents Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt generally bringing up reports. In some other statements, she portrayed American people which shows disgust to the Japanese and calling them Japanese “Japs”. Lastly, playwright Helen Ota depicts her character as afraid and felt threatened violently. Her statements emphasize a tone that is scared, restricted, worried, helpless, and hurt. You can also identify that her character is in a state of shock and almost pleading for help.

In summary, I think that the words expressed the thoughts beautifully and each of the statements has its own strengths.

**Which moment(s) spoke to you the loudest/moved you emotionally/left an impression?**

One of the moments that is the most compelling is portrayed by the playwright Helen by the statement of Yoshida because it shows her being in a position when there is nothing that she can do given which you are born in that race. The injustice could be disheartening and one playwright also mentioned the Japanese phrase “Shikata-Ganai” which means “it cannot be helped or nothing can be done about it.” And it also goes for the gentlemen that commit suicide because of the hopelessness of being rejected by their country and their mothers watching their husbands and sons being taken out and going to war and fight for his country that doesn’t treat their way they are as a Japanese-American citizen in the country.

**Did you learn anything new or was there a perspective you were introduced to that you hadn't been exposed to before?**

Yes. With regards to the offensive terms such as “Jap” were heard throughout the play which is used in the historical context within those years in the 1940s. It is not commonly used today as it is already understood today as slurs. These languages are outdated as today and not commonly used and regarded as inappropriate if used in the present time.

I believe that we have to keep frequently repeat these stories so that further generations will know these lessons and learn how it impacts to us today. Even though there are offensive terms that still exist today I think that these stories are important because we should know how these people feel and it's easy to materialize if we don’t understand how they are feeling.

It is also a good stance that we can avoid the unwanted things that happened in the past where it is necessary to study and learn of the contributions of people of color to the country and it helps us to understand what needs to be changed and done.

**References:**

Question 27, Question 28 Timeline and Japanese Glossary. *Shikata-Ganai*. Retrieved from https://artistsatplay.org/2021/04/13/free-theatre-for-young-audiences-performances-question-27-question-28/

https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2004-feb-20-et-boehm20-story.html