



## PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Frank Taira Artwork Exhibit at JCCCNC

San Francisco – The Japanese Cultural and Community Center of Northern California is pleased to announce the exhibition of paintings by Japanese American artist, Frank Taira (1913-2010). On view at the JCCCNC beginning June 11<sup>th</sup>, the exhibit will feature two paintings that reflects Taira's journey through art and life.

Frank Taira, the son of immigrants from Okinawa, was born in San Francisco and was met with much adversity throughout his life, but he faced each challenge with an art brush in one hand and fortitude in the other. At the age of 15, Taira stayed in the U.S. when his parents returned to Okinawa with his siblings so he could complete his education in California. He supported himself by working as a "house boy" for an American family and graduated from Lowell High School in 1934.

Taira was a self-taught artist who later studied at the California School of Fine Arts (1935-1938), Columbia University (1945), Arts Student League (1956) and New School for Social Research (1957). Taira's promising art career, which included an invitation for a solo exhibition at the San Francisco Museum of Art (now the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art) in 1939, was interrupted when he was imprisoned in the Topaz, Utah Internment Camp from 1942-1944. None of his artwork before WWII survived. While in camp, Taira managed to teach art alongside Chirua Obata, and upon his release moved to New York to focus on providing beauty, peace and harmony to those who see his paintings.

Taira was classically trained and experimented with semi-abstraction and realism. In a 2005 interview conducted by Taira's caregivers asking about how he describes his art, he said "the artist feels something but it's interesting to know what the viewers feels. The artist's work is there and people react to it. The painting should talk for itself without any detail or explanation from the artist." Taira goes on to say that he doesn't want others to think he is more "intelligent" than them and he wants his work to be "recognizable."

Over the decades, Taira's artwork has been exhibited across the U.S. and Italy, and has earned him seven solo exhibitions, 35 group exhibitions, and received 10 awards including a few grand prize honors for his sterling silver and semi-precious stone jewelry designs.

The JCCCNC looks to provide a home for the Nikkei artist's paintings that Taira described as his "children" and now wants someone to look after them.

The JCCCNC is thankful for the opportunity to proudly display the work that Taira saw as his own family. For more information and any inquiries please contact the JCCCNC at [info@jcccnc.org](mailto:info@jcccnc.org) or call (415)567-5505.

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