



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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From a Silk Cocoon

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The Emmy Award-winning Documentary
FROM A SILK COCOON
Coming to PBS Beginning May 2007

From a Silk Cocoon, a powerful one-hour documentary that portrays the true story of a young Japanese American couple whose shattered dreams and forsaken loyalties lead them to renounce their American citizenship while held in separate prison camps during World War II will be presented on PBS beginning in May 2007. Check with your local PBS station for exact broadcast dates and times.

Unlike any other program on the subject, *From a Silk Cocoon* examines the backdrop, emotions, and reasons for the decision made by over 5,000 Japanese Americans to renounce their citizenship; and the frightening and tragic outcome resulting from the wartime hysteria and racial profiling that occurred in the name of "military necessity." Chilling similarities in government decision-making, euphemistic language, and suspension of constitutional and human rights are echoed in today's post 9/11 America.

"We were moved to the Tanforan Assembly Center where I was put in a damp, windowless, smelly horse stall. It was very filthy there and I contracted morning fever and was bedridden for most of the time. My husband and I were very discouraged that as citizens we should be treated in such a manner... I thought there was no hope for my future in the United States where we, who are American citizens, were put through such a terrible experience..."

Background:

The Civil Liberties Act of 1988 acknowledged the wrongs perpetrated against the Japanese Americans and, in doing so, has made it possible for the complexity of the incarceration experience of Japanese Americans to more fully come to light.

From a Silk Cocoon delves into the experience of a young Kibei couple, Shizuko and Itaru Ina, who respond to the loss of their civil liberties by renouncing their American citizenship during their 4½ - year internment, and committ their hope for their children for a better life in Japan. It is based on personal documents recently discovered by Dr. Satsuki Ina, the film producer and daughter of Shizuko and Itaru.

After three years of translating letters, poetry, and diaries, researching government documentation of her father's imprisonment in Department of Justice camps, and interviewing other Japanese speaking former internees, the puzzle pieces formed a disturbing disclosure of the unjustified treatment and suffering of her family and others who ultimately sought refuge from their imprisonment by declaring their loyalty to Japan. It is a story of shattered dreams, forsaken loyalties, and the precarious balance between democracy and national security.

"Tuesday, September 21, 1943. Arrived Tule Lake Segregation Center in Northern California 6:15pm. We were photographed and finger printed fourteen times."

(more)

Made possible by grants from the CCLPEP and CAAM

According to Ina, “The story reveals the insidious trauma of war and the threat to individuals, citizens or immigrants, who have links to a country that is suddenly identified as the enemy. Imbued with traditional Japanese values, yet betrayed by the country of their birth, thousands of Japanese Americans were forced to struggle with an excruciating loyalty bind that cast upon them a life-long stigma of disloyalty and cowardice. Only now is the story of their dissidence and resistance made more clear.”

“We are at the crossroads of whether we make Satsuki and Kiyoshi Japanese or American. I feel sorry for our children. Because they have a Japanese face, I don’t want them to become Americans.”

Ina adds, “It is our hope that by sharing this story we will not only educate, but inspire and strengthen community commitment to live by our cherished democratic principles, especially in time of great social anxiety.” *From A Silk Cocoon* puts a human face and heart to a historical incident that should never be forgotten, lest it be repeated again.”

Lawson Inada narrates, Lane Nishikawa and Megumi provide the voices of the young couple, and Masayuki Koga’s original shakuhachi (bamboo flute) composition is woven within Fred Meggs’ musical score.

From a Silk Cocoon was produced by the Emmy Award-winning Hesono O Production team of:

Satsuki Ina, Ph.D., Executive Producer/Co-Director/Writer
Stephen Holsapple, Co-Director/Editor
Emery Clay III, Co-Director/Director of Photography
Kimberly Ina, Associate Producer/Actress/Outreach Coordinator

From a Silk Cocoon is made possible by grants from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Program and the Center for Asian American Media (formerly NAATA), under the auspices of Asian Pacific Community Counseling of Sacramento.

DVD and video copies of *From a Silk Cocoon*, are available for purchase from the **Center for Asian American Media (formerly NAATA) at (415) 863-0814, or at their Web site: www.asianamericanmedia.org.**

To ensure that the prime-time broadcast of *From a Silk Cocoon* has the greatest possible impact, the project’s producers are encouraging interested people to plan a group viewing in their homes and/or communities, and to help publicize the program.

Viewer’s Guides and publicity materials, as well as other resources and information on the project and internment history, are available at the **From a Silk Cocoon Web site: www.fromasilkcocoon.com.**

Or contact **Kim Ina at (415) 566-3487 or by email at: kimina@fromasilkcocoon.com.**