



JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAI'I

Honoring our heritage. Embracing our diversity. Sharing our future.

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i Presents Celebrate!: The Evolution of Japanese Celebration in Hawai'i *New exhibition runs from April 17 – June 18*

Honolulu – The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i is proud to present **Celebrate!: The Evolution of Japanese Celebration in Hawai'i**. The new exhibition, which runs from April 17 - June 18, will take a deeper look at the ways that the Japanese community in Hawai'i celebrates numerous occasions from its earliest days to the present.

Told through historical photographs, videos, objects and art pieces, the exhibition will include traditional Japanese celebrations such as New Year's, bon festival, and cherry blossom viewing and how they evolved into unique local festivals and practices. It also looks at celebrations that take place over the course of one's life, from birth to graduation to weddings to yakudoshi and other special celebrations such as business openings and openings of temples, schools and other community institutions. There will also be a section on historical and political celebrations, from anniversaries of historical events to commemorations of important community milestones.

"Celebrations are a window into how the local Japanese American community sees itself," said Brian Niiya, Director of Program Development for the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai'i.

"Celebrations can provide a revealing look at what issues were important to the community over time."

The exhibition will also convey how local Japanese culture has influenced, and been influenced by, the other cultures of Hawai'i. For example, how bon dances have evolved from a Japanese religious ritual into a multi-ethnic festival enjoyed by all people of Hawai'i.

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Special workshops for this exhibition will include:

- **The Cherry Blossom Festival Then and Now Panel Discussion (Saturday, April 24 1:00-3:00 p.m.) 5th Floor Lounge:** A panel discussion led by Professor Christine R. Yano of the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa will include key figures from both past and contemporary festivals. Professor Yano will also sign copies of her book, *Crowning the Nice Girl: Gender, Ethnicity, and Culture in Hawai‘i’s Cherry Blossom Festival*.
- **Kau Kau Cuisine & Culture in the Hawaiian Islands (Saturday, May 8 11:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.) Gallery Theater and Courtyard:** A talk focusing on food and celebrations by Arnold Hiura, author of the new book *Kau Kau: Cuisine & Culture in the Hawaiian Islands*. He will also sign copies of his book at this event.
- **Bon Dancing Through the Generations: A Discussion on Bon Dance in Hawai‘i (Saturday, May 22 1:00-3:00 p.m.) 5th Floor Lounge:** A panel discussion on the bon dance phenomenon in Hawai‘i moderated by Derrick Iwata, Education Specialist for the Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai‘i and bon dance aficionado, and featuring speakers Kenji Johnasen, Instructor, Tomodachi Odori Kai, Betty Dela Cuesta, Head Instructor, Yamada Dance Group, Alice Shiroma, Assistant Instructor, Yamada Dance Group, Ralston Nagata, Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, and Jane Heit, President, Hilo Meisho-In Tsukikage Odori Kai. After the discussion, there will be a mini bon dance lesson.

The exhibition is made possible through a generous grant from the Island Insurance Foundation. Programs are sponsored by the Hilo Nihonjin Gakko Fund.

Special presentations are free and open to the public. The exhibition is open to the public for the standard gallery rates (see below). JCH members receive free admission. People attending the special presentations will also receive free admission to view the exhibition on that day. For more information, please call the Cultural Center at (808) 945-7633.

Gallery Rates:

Visitor

- Adults (18 years and above) \$7
- Youth (6-17 years), Students and Seniors (70 and above) \$5

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Kama‘āina

- Adults (18 years and above) \$5
- Youth (6-17 years), Students and Seniors (70 and above) \$3

Military

- Active Duty \$3

School Tours

- Adults \$3
- Students \$2

*Free Day: Second Saturday of each month

The Japanese Cultural Center of Hawai‘i (JCCH), a non-profit organization, strives to strengthen our diverse community by educating present and future generations in the evolving Japanese American experience in Hawai‘i. It is located at 2454 South Beretania Street in Mō‘ili‘ili. The Center features a Community and Historical Gallery, Resource Center, Kenshikan martial arts dōjō, Seikōan Japanese teahouse and Gift Shop. For more information call (808) 945-7633, email info@jcch.com or visit the website at www.jcch.com.

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