

Press Release

For Immediate Release

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*Images below*



**Museum of Sonoma County presents *Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Addams***

February 19 – May 29, 2022

Santa Rosa, CA – (February 14) The Museum of Sonoma County (MSC) is pleased to announce the exhibition ***Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Addams*** on view February 19 through May 29, 2022. This exhibition features over fifty little-known photographs by Ansel Adams (1902–1984) that depict how Japanese Americans bore their treatment at the Manzanar incarceration camp in central California. Taken during World War II, the black and white images were originally published in Adams' book *Born Free and Equal* (1944) in which he protested what he called the "enforced exodus" of American citizens within their own country.

The exhibition opens on the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 authorizing the Secretary of War to "exclude" any residents from certain West Coast military areas for "protection against espionage and sabotage." Pressured by the fear, prejudice and escalating racism sweeping the nation after the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the government of the United States forced the incarceration of entire families totaling to about 120,000 men, women, and children of Japanese descent, the majority of whom were native-born Americans or legal residents.

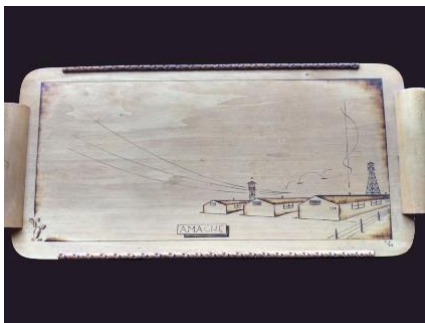
Adams' photographs capture the Japanese American belief of adapting through adversity, "*shikata ga nai*" which translates to "it cannot be helped". This belief, the sentiment felt by most first (*Issei*) and second (*Nissei*) generation Japanese Americans, was also cemented by a respect for authority. "Culturally, this is what made the people incarcerated make a difficult situation as positive as possible," said Henry Kaku, member of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), Sonoma County chapter. Although many of the photographs depict families going about their daily lives and finding purpose in their new circumstances, it cannot be forgotten that these individuals were incarcerated often for no other reason than their race. "He and other photographers were told to take only positive smiling pictures, not the despair or negative feeling photos. It did not show the anger, the despair, [or] the poor conditions of the incarceration," said Kaku.

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## Exhibition Highlights

- Over fifty photographs, including portraits and landscapes of the incarceration camp and the surrounding countryside, which display Adams' talent to capture detail, tonality and scope of his subjects.
- Work of other photographers, including Dorothea Lange, as well as documents, publications, propaganda materials, artifacts, and artwork detailing life and conditions at the camp.
- Since those incarcerated were only allowed one bag to take with them, families had to abandon heirlooms and precious objects as well as their homes and land, which were almost never recovered after the war. Sonoma County proved to be an exception, where most families recovered their property following the war. Working closely with the Sonoma County chapter of the JACL, the MSC presents a selection of stories, objects, and images related to Sonoma County residents who experienced forced incarceration in camps like Manzanar.

## Object Highlight



- Wood tray, Rose Carving, Hisakichi (William) Nomura, ca. 1943. Carved at the Granada Relocation Center, AKA Amache, in Colorado, that housed 90% of the Japanese and Japanese Americans relocated from Sonoma County. This carving depicts the rows of temporary barracks, surrounded by an empty sky laced with powerlines. On the backside of this carving is the original label from a Valley Rose apple crate. Wooden produce crates were commonly used to make these flat panel carvings in Amache.

“The Manzanar photographs of Ansel Adams remain timely as we continue to reckon with injustices of the past. The powerful images invite us to examine a particular time in history and confront the choices that were made, yet they also ask that we dig a little deeper and ask what was not captured by the camera lens. The exhibition further helps us reflect on the powerful, local story of Japanese American residents of Sonoma County, and the deprivation that they faced during World War II. It’s a story of tremendous resilience,” said Eric Stanley, Associate Director and Curator of History at MSC.

***Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Adams*** offers insight into a racially unjust period in California and American history and bears witness to the resilience of the Japanese American community. Adams’ intent was to create an important historical document and have it be “put to good use.” Even as anti-Asian racism has made the news in recent years with the emergence of the Stop Asian Hate movement, its roots run deep in the history of the United States. This exhibition is an important lesson about the past injustice done to a community because of their national origin and race, delivered 80 years after one of America’s most horrific decisions.

The exhibition is presented in Memory of Shizuo Tsujihara, and organized and generously supported by Photographic Traveling Exhibitions Los Angeles, CA.

Additional support comes from the Sonoma County Japanese American Citizens League.

To support these and upcoming exhibitions contact: Annalisa Price [aprice@museumsc.org](mailto:aprice@museumsc.org)  
707.579.1500 ext 104.

## **Programs and Events**

### **Exhibition Opening for Manzanar: Wartime Photographs of Ansel Adams**

Saturday, February 19, 2022

12:00 – 2:00 PM (PT)

Join us for the opening of [Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Adams](#) with remarks by representatives from the [Japanese American Citizens League](#) speaking at 12:00 PM and leading an origami workshop from 12:10 pm - 2:00 PM. [Sonoma County Taiko](#) will perform a ten minute set at 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM in the Museum parking lot. Opening comments and origami workshop are free for Museum members and included with admission for non-members. No pre-registration is needed. The exhibition will be open during regular museum hours from 11 AM - 5 PM.

### **The Shimizu Family: WWII Experience**

Saturday, February 26, 2022

11:30 – 12:00 PM (PT)

Join us for a special talk by Bruce Shimizu inspired by the museum's newest exhibition [Manzanar: The Wartime Photographs of Ansel Adams](#). The Shimizu family moved to Sonoma County in the 1890's making Bruce Shimizu, a fourth generation North Bay native, who grew up on a chicken ranch in Cotati. Bruce was the National Youth Director for the Japanese American Citizens League. He also serves on the Board of Directors of the Sonoma County Chapter of the Japanese American Citizens League and is a member of the Chapter's Speakers Bureau. Bruce is also one of the founders of Sonoma County Taiko, a local community based Japanese drumming group. Program is included with general admission. No pre-registration needed.

Details and registration available on our website: [www.museumsc.org/events](http://www.museumsc.org/events).

Public programs related to the exhibition will be posted on our website:

[www.museumsc.org/events](http://www.museumsc.org/events)

## **About the Museum of Sonoma County**

Located in Downtown Santa Rosa on Seventh Street between A and B Streets, the Museum of Sonoma County (MSC) presents exhibitions of modern and contemporary art and local and

regional history. MSC is open year-round with changing exhibitions, public programs, school tours, and special events. MSC preserves and manages a regional art and history collection of over 18,000 objects, the region's largest object documentation of Sonoma County's history and culture.

### **Mission**

The Museum of Sonoma County engages and inspires our diverse community with art and history exhibitions, collections, and public programs that are inclusive, educational, and relevant.

### **Smithsonian Affiliate**

The Museum of Sonoma County has been a Smithsonian Affiliate since 2009. Smithsonian Affiliations establishes long-term partnerships with museums, education and cultural organizations to facilitate the loan of Smithsonian artifacts and traveling exhibitions, as well as to develop innovative educational collaborations locally and nationally. Created in 1996 by an act of the Smithsonian Board of Regents, the program is overseen by the Smithsonian's Assistant Secretary for Education and Access and is one of the pillars of the Institution's national outreach efforts. There are more than 200 Smithsonian Affiliates in nearly every state, Puerto Rico and Panama. Affiliates represent the diversity of America's museum community—size, location and subject—and serve all audiences. More than 8,000 Smithsonian artifacts have been displayed at Affiliate locations for the past 20 years.

### **Admission**

Adults: \$10.00

Seniors, Students, Disabled: \$7.00

EBT Cardholders: FREE

Museum Members: FREE

Children 12 and under: FREE

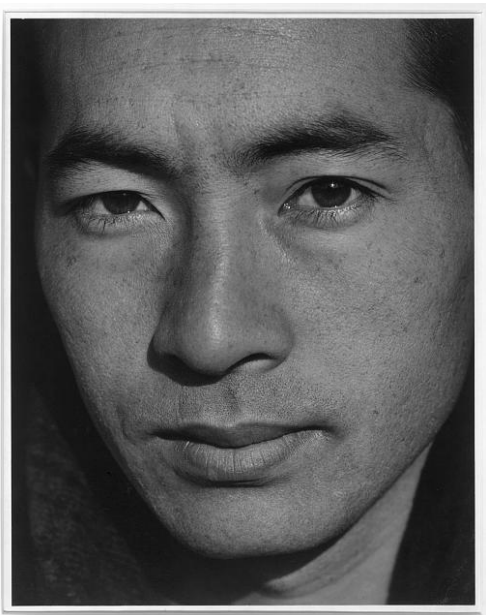
### **Museum Hours**

Open: Wednesday through Sunday, 11:00am-5:00pm

Images ([click here](#) for link)



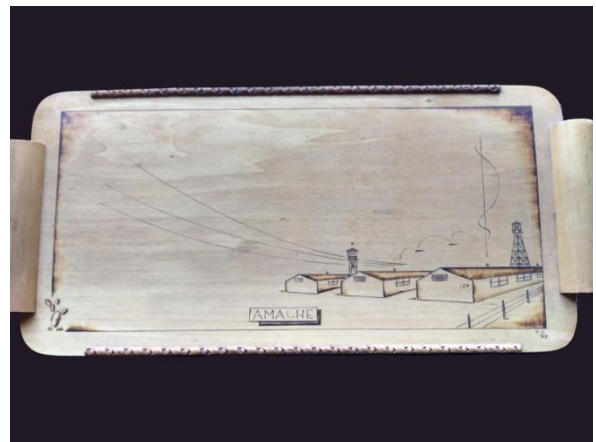
Photograph, *Manazanar Street Scene, Clouds*, Ansel Adams, 1943



Photograph, *Yuichi Hirata*, Ansel Adams, 1943



Mizuhi envelope, Unknown, mixed media, ca 1943



Wood tray, *Rose Carving*, Hisakichi (William) Nomura, ca. 1943