

# The Asian Reporter

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Please send all correspondence to: The Asian Reporter  
922 N Killingsworth Street, Suite 2D, Portland, OR 97217  
Phone: (503) 283-4440, Fax: (503) 283-4445

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Publisher **Jaime Lim**  
Contributing Editors

**Ronault L.S. Catalani (Polo), Jeff Wenger**  
Correspondents

**Ian Blazina, Josephine Bridges, Pamela Ellgen, Maileen Hamto, Edward J. Han, A.P. Kryza, Marie Lo, Simeon Mamaril, Julie Stegeman, Toni Tabora-Roberts, Allison Voigts**  
Illustrator **Jonathan Hill**  
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News Department e-mail: [news@asianreporter.com](mailto:news@asianreporter.com)  
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**MY TURN**

■ **Dmae Roberts**



## Random thoughts as summer slips away

**B**link, and a week flies by. Blink again, a month. The older one is, the more time seems to speed up. When I was a teenager, time seemed to move so slowly. I couldn't wait to grow up, leave my parent's house, go to college, have my own apartment, and live my own life. Now time flies by so quickly it's as if I'm on a merry-go-round watching scenes from my life swirl around me.

I find myself re-living past memories while taking in the present moment by moment. The future is filled with thoughts of things I've never done as well as things I'd like to try that will challenge me. I'm not quite ready for a bucket list. I've never believed in one final list, though throughout my life, I've kept lists of projects to create, roles to play in theatre, and countries to visit. Along the way, I found that as soon as I checked items off the list, I added others.

Lately, I've grown tired of working on the familiar — the tried and true — so I've explored new challenges in different disciplines and subjects. What I've seen evolve in public radio and local theatre is less interesting to me right now. When younger generations of colleagues tell me about their "new" ideas in radio, theatre, or multimedia, they seem reminiscent of productions in my earlier years.

These days, I feel less inclined to talk about theatre and radio projects I worked on back in the late '80s, '90s, and double-zeros. (What is the last decade called?) When I've spoken about them, I received blank stares or conciliatory nods, or saw in their faces the creeping realization that I'm much older than they imagined. I smile, lend my support or advice, and add my thoughts as a mentor; that seems to be the major role I play these days.

In earlier decades, colleagues my senior were my mentors. I gleaned their wisdom and went on to receive grants, opportunities, and awards at a relatively young age. I always thanked my mentors for their valuable advice in speeches and interviews. Over the years, I've mentored and taught hundreds of young people. Some dismissed my advice, but occasionally, these same go-getters returned sheepishly to seek more help. Maybe, when I was their age, I was like that, too.

I guess that's the way parents feel about their

kids. I never wanted children. I've been happy raising my cats. My oldest kitty, Mimi — my first one as an adult — lived to be 21 years old. My twin tabby cats are now 12, but the boy, Joey, has become sickly. My hubby and I give him medicine for irritable bowel syndrome and feed him every few hours in an effort to get him back to a healthy weight.

As I grow older, I've find myself becoming grumpier. I laugh at my possible future — destined to resemble the old lady in a rocking chair on her porch yelling at the neighbor kids to "Get off my lawn!" Although, since my husband and I don't have a lawn, perhaps it'll be more like "Get off our urban farmyard!"

I have projects piling up on my desk and my calendar is fully booked nearly a year out. I'm excited most days about what I'm doing, but sometimes it feels like a never-ending labor. Still, I remain committed to making some kind of an impact in our community by working on an Asian American and Pacific Islander theatre company and creating a pan-Asian online archive of oral histories. I also find myself peering over the fence at more personal projects and activities with greener, more enticing pastures.

I have started writing a second book and a new stage play. With summer in full swing, however, I often just want to relax — sit in the sun, take a trip to the coast or the gorge, go to the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, pick blueberries in my backyard, read as many sci-fi and fantasy books as possible, watch new space-opera shows such as "Dark Matter" or "12 Monkeys" on the SyFy network, or binge-watch television shows I've not had a chance to watch before, like "The West Wing" or "Jessica Jones," on Netflix.

I dream of long lazy days — of being bored and sleeping more than six-and-a-half hours per night. I've heard of the word "vacation" — something that rarely comes easy to a freelancer like myself — and it sure sounds good these days.

As I write, the summer is already slipping away. Before I blink a few more times, it'll be September and I probably will not have accomplished everything I'd hoped. Time moves too quickly. Blink.

*Opinions expressed in this newspaper are those of the authors and not necessarily those of this publication.*

### Wondering what events are going on this week?

Check out *The Asian Reporter's* Community and A.C.E. Calendar sections, on pages 10 and 12.