

Rare Japanese-American 16mm home movies, ca. 1925-1960, now available for viewing online

The Oregon Historical Society (OHS) has announced that 15 reels of 16mm home movies shot by the Tsuboi family are now available for viewing on the OHS Digital Collections website. The films document the day-to-day activities of a Japanese-American family living in the Pacific Northwest spanning multiple generations and contain rare scenes of family life both before and after World War II.

With his older brother Suma, Teruo Tsuboi ran the Tsuboi Brothers store located at 315 Burnside Street in Portland. The store sold western-style clothing and jewelry, and after World War II, added an optometrist exam room.

Teruo and Suma Tsuboi emigrated from Okayama, Japan, to Portland in the early 20th century. They had four children (called *nisei*, or the children of Japanese immigrants born in the United States) — Teruhisa “Ted,” Akiko, Sachiko, and Kazuko.

Films include, in part: family visits to the Pendleton Round-Up, drives through the snow in downtown Portland,



RARE HOME MOVIES. The Oregon Historical Society (OHS) has announced that 15 reels of 16mm home movies shot by the Tsuboi family are now available for viewing on the OHS Digital Collections website. The films document the day-to-day activities of a Japanese-American family living in the Pacific Northwest spanning multiple generations and contain rare scenes of family life both before and after World War II. Pictured are screenshots taken from video of trips to Mount Hood (left) and the Pendleton Round-Up (right). (Images courtesy of the Oregon Historical Society)

Rose Festival parades, a Japanese baseball team at Civic Stadium, family members posing near Mount Hood, trips to and from Japan via ship, a brief glimpse of the ruins of the Minidoka incarceration camp in Idaho, a trip to Los Angeles in 1931, and various Pacific Northwest vacations and scenes from family life.

Lucy Capehart of the Japanese American Museum of Oregon (formerly called the Oregon

Nikkei Legacy Center), noted that the “Tsuboi films provide a magical window into Portland’s past. The films also show that Japanese Americans have been part of Portland’s social fabric for generations — participating in the Rose Festival parade, riding a bike down a neighborhood street, and playing baseball.”

When 16mm film first hit the consumer market in the late 1920s, it was available mainly to those who could afford the



relatively high cost of film and a camera. As 16mm became more affordable, with the added ability to shoot in color, it became the main method of documenting twentieth century family life, before being displaced by 8/S8mm, magnetic videotape, and digital video.

To view the reels, including those titled “Model T,” “Portland Winter Scenes,” “Color Parade,” and “Sea Scenes Aboard Freighter — Japanese Scenery,”

visit <https://digitalcollections.ohs.org/tsuboi-family-home-movies>.

To learn about efforts being made to preserve the experiences of Asian Americans through home movies, visit the *Memories to Light* website at <https://caamedia.org/memoriestolight>; *Memories to Light* is a project of the Center for Asian American Media. The Center for Home Movies, www.centerforhomemovies.org, is another resource that is documenting the importance of collecting and preserving home movies.

“Don’t shut up!” film spotlights Filipino journalist

By Ryan Pearson

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — Maria Ressa says she didn’t take Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte seriously when he declared four years ago that “corrupt” journalists weren’t “exempted from assassination.”

“In 2016, it was really, really laughable. And I thought, ‘Oh, doesn’t matter.’ I laughed,” said the country’s most well-known journalist and leader of the independent Rappler news organization.

Grim reality set in as Ressa was arrested and thrown in jail, targeted in a series of criminal cases, and convicted this summer on libel and tax evasion charges seen widely as attacks on press freedom. She now faces six years in prison.

A Thousand Cuts, a new documentary from Filipino-American filmmaker Ramona S. Diaz, tracks Ressa’s dual life in recent years. She’s seen smiling while accepting international media awards and praise from the likes of George Clooney, then grimly facing down online harassment, legal action, and real-world threats for Rappler’s reporting on extrajudicial killings in Duterte’s drug war.

The film argues that Americans should learn from the recent history of the Philippines, where social media has helped to divide the country and critical press outlets are regularly lambasted by the president. ABS-CBN, the country’s largest TV network, was shut down by the government’s telecommunications regulator in May.

Promoting the film in a Zoom interview from her home in Manila, Ressa shook her fists and laughed with dark humor — “Urgh! Angry!” — about what she called her “war of attrition” with the government. She’s pleaded not guilty and is appealing her convictions.

“You don’t know how powerful government is until you come under attack the way we have. When all the different parts of government work against you — it’s kind of shocking,” she said. “I can’t wait to really write this — because I can’t write at all right now, because then I would be in contempt of court.”

Facebook has become the center of the internet for most Filipinos, and Rappler utilized it to grow rapidly as a startup news site. But the film shows how Duterte’s populist campaign harnessed the platform to spread its message and target Ressa and other journalists.

Duterte supporters live-streamed protests at the Rappler office, and death threats flooded the comments alongside red heart emojis. Disinformation on the



FREEDOM OF THE PRESS. Maria Ressa (pictured), the award-winning head of a Philippine online news site, Rappler, talks to the media after posting bail at a Regional Trial Court following an overnight arrest by National Bureau of Investigation agents on a libel case in Manila, the Philippines, in this February 14, 2019 file photo. *A Thousand Cuts*, a new documentary by Filipino-American filmmaker Ramona S. Diaz, tracks Ressa’s dual life in recent years. (AP Photo/Bullit Marquez, File)

social-media platform exacerbated the problem, she said.

“Social media, the tech platforms have created a system where lies laced with anger and hate spread faster than facts. And it has placed people like me at risk,” Ressa said.

Ressa began wearing a bulletproof vest because of threats. She is seen in the film repeatedly pleading with Facebook representatives to delete violent posts or cut livestreams. In July, she grew frustrated watching Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and other tech leaders speak before the U.S. Congress.

“For the tech giants, it’s willful blindness, willful ignorance, willful arrogance — because people like me are feeling the impact of the decisions they make,” Ressa said.

Diaz, who spoke from her home in Baltimore, hopes her film can help protect Ressa — and other independent journalists.

“It’s a global story,” she said. “There are very many Marias around the world. And that’s why it’s key to keep the story of press freedom ... and the importance of independent media alive.”

Even during a pandemic shutdown and under court-ordered restrictions, Ressa is doing her part.

“Part of the reason we’ve survived the last four years is because I haven’t stopped talking,” she said. “That’s the best strategy so far to deal with a government that wants you to shut up. Don’t shut up!”

EVENTS

TBA 2020

September 10 through 30

The 2020 edition of the Portland Institute for Contemporary Art’s (PICA) Time-Based Art (TBA) Festival will be nothing like prior events. Featuring a mix of virtual and in-person events, the annual convergence of contemporary performance, dance, music, new media, and more takes place September 10 through 30. All indoor and outdoor TBA events follow Multnomah County guidelines for gatherings, including wearing masks, maintaining a six-foot distance, and limiting numbers. For more information, call (503) 242-1419 or visit www.pica.org/TBA. To view virtual events, go to www.picatv.org.

“Live Aloha Hawaiian Cultural Festival”

September 11 through 13

The “Live Aloha Hawaiian Cultural Festival,” part of Seattle Center Festál, is streaming online Friday through Sunday, September 11 to 13, beginning at noon. The virtual festival features three days of online programming, including presentations, spoken word, music, food demonstrations, virtual workshops, and more. For more information, call (206) 684-7200 or visit www.seattlecenter.com. To view virtual events, go to www.seattlelivealohafestival.com.

Virtual “Under the Moonlight”

September 13, 5:00pm

The Lan Su Chinese Garden is celebrating its 20th anniversary. During the past two decades, the garden has become a hub of Chinese culture, history, art, music, performance, celebration, and more. Join Lan Su virtually to learn more about the garden and to support the peaceful oasis in downtown Portland. For more information, call (503) 228-8131 or visit www.lansugarden.org.

Portland Taiko and No-No Boy

September 26, 7:00pm to 8:30pm

View a free online concert video event featuring Portland Taiko and No-No Boy on Saturday, September 26 at 7:00pm. For the past month, members of Portland Taiko have been recording videos in outdoor locations — farms, parks, forests, and vineyards — that will be featured. The show will present musical stories based on the immigrant history of Japanese Americans in Oregon — from Orient to Ontario and Toledo to Portland. Why is there a town called Orient? Who harvested the sugar beets and onions in eastern Oregon? Who faced an angry mob in Toledo? Why were thousands of Oregonians of Japanese descent stripped of their civil liberties and imprisoned? While the history is specific to the *nikkei* community in Oregon, the stories of hardship, racism, perseverance, and community are familiar to many. For more information, call (503) 288-2456 or visit www.portlandtaiko.org.