

Breaking the Silence: The Japanese American Experience

**A Project of the Washington State Civil Liberties Public Education Fund
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction**

Dear Educator,

We are:

- Japanese Americans
- Seattle-based theater artists
- Humanities educators
- Former child internees of WW II American internment camps
- The last generation alive to have experienced Japanese American internment

Breaking the Silence was first performed at the University of Washington in 1985 as an oral history play. It was written by Nikki Nojima Louis, who combined written and oral histories with poetry and music to create a three-generational saga of one culture's Twentieth Century American experience. Since 1985, the *Breaking the Silence* project has attracted audiences regionally and nationally, offering schools, colleges, libraries, and communities a variety of programming opportunities.

Now, with funding from a grant from the Washington State Civil Liberties Public Education Fund, we are able to offer our programs **free of charge until June 30, 2004**. These programs are presentations based on the play and can be tailored to the age and needs of your students. They offer all ages an opportunity to "inhabit history" through the lens of a multicultural experience. For K-12 teachers, they fulfill the CBA models for Social Studies.

Issues of constitutionality and civil liberties are presented through the immigration, internment, and redress experiences of Japanese Americans. The goal of our project is to show that the lessons learned from one group's experience affects the lives of all Americans.

You may select from one or more of these program options based on the play (we are not able to offer the performance of the play due to limited funding):

- Slide/lecture presentation with Q&A (K-12 and above) (30 min.)
- Interactive script reading between students and project members (Middle school and above, best with those with good reading ability) (60 min.)
- Teacher-training workshop (2 hrs.)

Our study guide (*An Arts-Based Curriculum Guide on the Japanese American Experience*) is provided to schools. All presentations can be customized to your needs and interests.

There is no cost for any of these programs; they will be booked on a first-come, first-serve basis.

We hope you will invite us to your school, library, or community to share with you our knowledge, our experiences, and our commonalities.

Nikki Nojima Louis, Project Director
Author, *Breaking the Silence*

Angie Bolton, Artistic Director
Director, Growth & Prevention Theater

**For information, contact our tour manager:
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