



Godzilla©1954 Toho Co.,Ltd

From Godzilla to Kurosawa The Life of Filmmaker Ishiro Honda

Steve Ryfle, writer and noted scholar of Japanese science fiction-cinema, shared the story of his book *Ishiro Honda: A life in Film, From Godzilla to Kurosawa* with Godzilla fans at Japan Society last month. Mr. Ryfle opened with Honda's most known work, *Godzilla*, on the screen while introducing Honda's childhood life before going into his educational background. Honda attended Nihon University College of Art, where he majored in film. There, he met his lifelong friend, Akira Kurosawa, along with other prominent filmmakers.

Honda worked as an assistant director, and continued this until he joined the Japanese troops. Mr. Ryfle spoke about the influence of war on Honda's work, which could be seen in his special effects scenes. Regarding the film's setting, *Godzilla* was created by the explosion of a hydrogen bomb, and is a hydrogen bomb monster. Honda saw the city of Hiroshima right after the atomic bomb attack, and because of that, the scenes of devastated cities in *Godzilla* are identical to Hiroshima's devastation.

Akira Kurosawa, one of Japan's most famous directors, was Honda's best friend. Since Kurosawa never joined the troops, he trusted Honda's opinion of the war scenes. Mr. Ryfle concluded with "Kurosawa introduced Japanese culture to the world; Honda introduced Japanese pop culture to the world". (Written & translated by Mayumi Yamamoto)

THE JAPAN VOICE

COOL JAPAN from New Yorkers' Viewpoints



Hokusai and Japan Airlines

Japonism of the Sky at Grand Central Terminal

Until Saturday, March 3, Japan Airlines is held a collaboration event, crossing over space and time with Ukiyo-e painter Katsushika Hokusai, entitled "Journey to the World of Hokusai", being held at Vanderbilt Hall in Grand Central Terminal.

Japan Airlines, which aims to be an airline that takes the world by surprise with its tradition, innovation and Japanese hospitality, shares in the vision

of the Ukiyo-e painter whose works led Japonism to cause a stir in the world. They are introducing the four hidden themes they have in common; those of skill, comfort, cuisine, and connections. Also at this event, which started on February 28, Hokusai Manga was displayed, which has been reproduced using 4K technology, as well as experience Japan Airlines' business class seats. (Photo & article by Ryoichi Miura/ Translated by Sara Welch)



Yumi Kurosawa

Yumi Kurosawa's Solo Koto Performance

March 15 at the Global Washitsu

Yumi Kurosawa, a professional koto player and composer, will hold a solo performance at the Globus Washitsu in the Flatiron Building (889 Broadway, Unit PHC) on Thursday, March 15. The performance is sponsored by the World Music Institute (WMI) Japanese Salon. Tickets are \$75, and \$60 for WMI mem-

bers. The performance will be followed by a Q&A session with Kurosawa, and a reception with sushi, sake and other refreshments. To purchase tickets, visit www.yumikuro.com. (Written by Ryoichi Miura/Translated by Yodai Kaneda)



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Teruko Kobayashi

"Live Beautiful and Youthful"

83-Year-Old Beauty Artist Teruko Kobayashi Lectured at JAA

In the periodic Lecture & Exchange Meeting of the JAA Business Women Association, beauty artist and makeup specialist Teruko Kobayashi gave her second lecture on February 26, 2018 at the Japanese American Association, following her 2016 winter lecture. The title for this year was "Do This, Don't Do That: Start Your Life Now, Anytime!"

Ms. Kobayashi, who is still an active beauty artist and who will be turning 83 on February 24, wrote a book on her life experience entitled "Do This, Don't Do That" last year (Published by Sunmark Publishing, Inc.).

"I wrote my various experiences; things that I regretted I did, and hard times that I had, stressing that it is important not to repeat the same failure, even if you fail once or twice," she said. "Now, few

people advise others by saying 'I do not recommend doing that.', and, as a person deeply associating with people in work and from a beauty maker's viewpoint, I thought it was about time I speak out."

Ms. Kobayashi illustrated her eventful life from birth to present, screening pictures on a monitor, before approximately 100 attendees.



She is an ever-shining beauty expert. "Now, at 83 years old in this 100-year longevity age, I will not be able to live for another 30 years. So, I established my third company to keep my philosophy alive," she said. The energetic, vivid life philosophy drew laughs and sighs of admiration from the audience. (Written by Yukiko Takada/Translated by Kunio Shimura)



Advertisement

●Focusing on historical issues from the overseas point of view in 5 chapters

Comfort Women Statue in San Francisco: Influence on School Education and Children

Hello, everyone! I am Yumiko Yamamoto, president of the grassroots civil group "Nadesiko Action," also referred to as "Japanese Women for Justice and Peace." Our goal is to not pass on the negative legacy of the comfort women issue, which fabricates the historical narrative that "comfort women were sex slaves" to the next generation.

Last year, a comfort women statue was erected in San Francisco. Plans for the statue started in July 2015 when a resolution, "Urging the Establishment of a Memorial for 'Comfort Women'" was first proposed at the Board of San Francisco. Since then, for more than two years, together with Japanese and Japanese American women in San Francisco, our struggle and actions against the comfort women statue had begun. We organized several petition and signature gathering campaigns and opposition email campaigns. These women went to the committee and board meetings to speak many times and delivered materials and documents to the board of supervisors and staff. We tried everything we could very diligently and patiently. At the very last board meeting of last November, when San Francisco

finally accepted the comfort women statue, we were told to wait for six hours before public comments could be made, but still we spoke against the statue. Despite our tremendous effort, it was very disappointing that the Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco gave us no support.

Korean American civil groups have erected comfort women monuments and statues in the United States. However, in San Francisco, the Chinese American civil group called the "Comfort Women Justice Coalition" was the organizer. Two Chinese American women are co-chairs. Both are retired judges of the California high court, and one of them was a founder of "The Rape of Nanking Redress Coalition" in 1998. In addition, the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in San Francisco supported them.

Naturally, a Korean American group cooperated with the coalition. The group invited a self-proclaimed former comfort woman to the board meetings and ceremonies, attracting big media attention. This elderly Korean woman is the one who hugged President Trump at the banquet on his visit to the Republic of Korea in November

last year. She is akin to a famous spokesperson of the comfort women support group "Chong Dae Hyup," which is known as a pro-North Korean group.

I have watched the San Francisco board of supervisors in recent years, and I felt their very strong discrimination against Japanese and Japanese Americans who opposed the comfort women statue. The board is an official and public place. They must listen to the pros and cons with fairness. But, a chairman once interrupted an opposition speaker and called him "a history denier." One supervisor said to the people who spoke against the comfort women statue, "Shame on you!" four times. Later he received a letter of protest, but he replied with "Shame on you!" again. Some people say that San Francisco is now one of the autonomous regions of China. As far as I have seen with the San Francisco board, I totally agree with this opinion.

Now, what we must concern ourselves with most is the influence on the children. The comfort women statue in San Francisco is placed in a public park in town. On a big signboard, explanations of the statue are inscribed in five languages:



English, Korean, Chinese, Filipino and Japanese. They read, "Comfort women who were sexually enslaved by the Japanese Imperial Armed Forces" and, "Most of these women died during their wartime captivity." This park will likely be one of many field trip destinations for schools.

In California, the Board of Education decided to include "Comfort women as institutionalized sexual slavery" in the high school curriculum since last year. There are an estimated 6.2 million students in California. Their backgrounds are multicultural and multinational. They will be educated with this false notion of "comfort women" for years. We must concern ourselves with its terrible influence on future decades.

We must not leave fabricated history to our children. Let me introduce the "Nadesiko Action" approach to this in the next chapter.

Yumiko Yamamoto, president of the grassroots civil group "Nadesiko Action," also known as "Japanese Women for Justice and Peace."