

Wednesday, July 2, 2003



NISEI PROJECT

"Nisei" tells the story of a Japanese-American soldier whose mother tells him to bring honor to his country, no matter how his family has been treated.

Tribute to nisei soldiers opens tomorrow

Star-Bulletin staff

The struggles and victories of a Japanese American soldier come alive on stage when Covenant Dance Theatre of New York presents "Nisei," tomorrow through Saturday at Leeward Community College Theatre.

An homage in dance to World War II AJA veterans, "Nisei"

CORRECTION

Saturday, July 5, 2003

>>> Correct times for neighbor island performances of "Nisei" accompany a review on

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begins a four-island tour with an opening night benefit performance at 8 p.m. Thursday at Leeward to benefit the Library of Congress Veterans History Project in Hawaii.

Hilo-born Marla Hirokawa created the dance in honor of her late father, Lawrence Hirokawa, a soldier in the 100th Battalion and recipient of a Purple Heart and Bronze Star. She founded Covenant Dance Theatre in New York in 1989.

The story-dance tribute opens with an old nisei looking at his photo album with his granddaughter as memories of his years as a soldier come to life. When war broke out, he was required to report for duty. Despite the racism and suspicion his family encountered, his mother reminded him to bring honor to his family and his country, America.

"'Nisei' debuted in 2001 at the Richard Perry Theatre in Brooklyn," said Hirokawa.

"With so many nisei veterans living in Hawaii, it was almost a given to bring it home. 'Nisei' is dedicated to the special heroes as a way to preserve their legacy of courage, sacrifice and honor."

Student dancers from Ballet Hawaii will join 26 dancers from New York. At the end of the production, WWII veterans from Hawaii will make walk-on appearances.

"Nisei" is performed to original music by Keith Hall and Taki Rentaro, Johann Pachelbel's "Canon" and the U.S. Army's official song, "The Caisson." Excerpts from President Roosevelt's "Day of Infamy" speech and President Truman's "Atomic Bomb" announcement are included in the score.

"Nisei" nights will include performances by the Kenny Endo Taiko Ensemble and Oahu-born actor/playwright Lane Nishikawa, as well as "A New York Rhapsody," a light, 20-minute piece set to George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue." The theme is a day in the life of a

Saturday, July 5, 2003,
Page D5. They are also
listed below:

'Nisei'

Repeats at Leeward
Community College
Theatre at 1:30 and 7:30
p.m. today. Tickets \$15 to
\$35. Call 947-5702.

On neighbor islands:

>> Kauai Community
College Performing Arts
Center, 7 p.m. Tuesday.
Tickets \$15 to \$25.

>> University of Hawaii
at Hilo Theatre, 7:30 p.m.
July 11, and 1:30 and 7:30
p.m. July 12. Tickets \$15
to \$25.

>> Maui Arts and Cultural
Center Castle Theater,
7:30 p.m. July 15. Tickets
\$15 to \$35.

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news coverage, call Editor
Frank Bridgewater at 529-4791
or email him at
fbridgewater@starbulletin.com.

New Yorker, including riding the subway, standing in lines, missing cabs and, of course, falling in love.

"I thought it would be fun to bring a piece of New York to Hawaii with me," Hirokawa said.

The Nisei Project is sponsored by Bank of Hawaii, Continental Airlines, Central Pacific Bank, Hawaii Air Cargo, Roberts Hawaii, Zippy's Restaurants, and KTA Superstores.

For information, visit the Web site www.niseiproject.com or call 947-5702.

'Nisei'

On stage: 8 p.m. Thursday, 7:30 p.m. Friday, 1:30 and 7:30 p.m. Saturday

Place: Leeward Community College Theatre

Tickets: \$35 general; \$25 seniors, military and veterans; \$15 children. Opening night benefit is \$50 or \$100 (with dinner). Saturday matinee includes free shuttle from Japanese Cultural Center of Hawaii for seniors. Call 945-7633.

Call: 947-5702

Also: Kauai Community College Performing Arts Center, July 8, 6:30 p.m., \$25; University of Hawaii at Hilo Theatre, July 11, 8 p.m., and July 12, 1:30 and 7 p.m., \$25; Maui Arts & Cultural Center Castle Theater, July 15, 6:30 p.m., and July 16, 10 a.m. \$35.

An interview with Marla Hirokawa is available online:
<http://archives.starbulletin.com/2003/04/06/features/story1.html>



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