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Award-Winning Japanese American Artist's Work to be Displayed at Heart Mountain Interpretive Center

The art of Hatsuko Mary Higuchi will be on display from February 19 through May 31, 2015 at the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center in Powell, Wyoming. The exhibit, titled *GAMAN: Surviving the Nikkei Gulag and Diaspora in World War II*, will feature 22 paintings and prints depicting scenes from the ten “camps” that were erected throughout the country in order to confine Japanese and Japanese Americans during World War II. Some works will be available for sale at the close of the exhibit.

“We are extremely pleased to have Ms. Higuchi’s important work on display in our Ford Foundation Special Exhibition Gallery,” notes Executive Director Brian Liesinger. “We are especially excited to premier her three newest paintings which feature Heart Mountain.”

Hatsuko Mary Higuchi was born in Los Angeles in 1939. On February 19, 1942, President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued *Executive Order 9066*, which authorized the mass removal and incarceration of “all persons of Japanese ancestry” on the West Coast. Mary’s family was imprisoned in the U.S. War Relocation Authority’s Colorado River camp at Poston, Arizona, 1942-1945.

Mary earned a teaching credential from UCLA and a MA from Pepperdine University. She taught as an elementary school master teacher from 1962 until retirement in 2003. Always interested in the arts, she took evening classes at UCLA and California State University Long Beach. Since that time, Mary has won several awards and her work has been featured in various publications.

Mary Higuchi paints a variety of themes such as landscapes, figures, and abstracts. She uses watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, collage, and calligraphy. Her *EO 9066* paintings depict faces with anonymous features or none at all, symbolizing the mass anonymity to which over 110,000 Americans of Japanese ancestry were reduced—denied due process and judged guilty solely by reason of their race. Mary Higuchi’s haunting portraits are a warning that what happened to Japanese Americans is a precedent for similar actions against other groups, unless we remember the lessons of the past.

In addition to the exhibit, a reception and artist presentation will be held on May 21 at 6 pm. The event, which will include light refreshments, will be free for students and Heart Mountain Wyoming Foundation members and \$5 for all others.

Located between Cody and Powell on Highway 14a, the Heart Mountain Interpretive Center's winter hours are 10 am to 5 pm, Wednesdays through Saturdays and by special appointment. Admission is \$7.00 for Adults, \$5.00 for seniors and students. Children under 12 with parent or guardian are free. For more information please call (307) 754-8000 or visit www.HeartMountain.org.

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