>> Carlene Tinker: Good morning, Mr. Ogata.

>> Robert Ogata: Good morning.

>> Carlene Tinker: Welcome to Special Collections.

>> Robert Ogata: Nice to—Thank you. Nice to meet you.

>> Carlene Tinker: I know this isn't your first time.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, it's-- I've had some other people who have had this --

>> Carlene Tinker: Good.

>> Robert Ogata: -- opportunity to be -- [interviewed]

>> Carlene Tinker: Good. Well, today, we've asked you to be an interviewee for our newly launched project which is called the Issei to Gosei Interview Project. My name is Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker and I am the volunteer coordinator for this project. And we started this last year hoping to reach a lot of folks like yourself, people who have lived in the valley, and also in your case, have been in an internment camp. OK. So, just very briefly for our audience, I want to explain how we got the name Issei to Gosei. Issei to Gosei are actually names of generations of Japanese-Americans. And the first one is Issei, they were the ones who came from Japan. They were the first generation here. Their children born here were Nisei. The children of Nisei were the Sansei. The children of the Sansei are the Yonsei. And we probably will also be able to reach out to the youngest generation that's reaching adulthood and those would be the Gosei.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Which generation are you?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, I'm actually a combination of Nisei and Sansei because my father was born in Japan and immigrated with his family in the early 1900s. My mother was born in the State of Washington.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh that's right--

>> Robert Ogata: So then as an American then, so then-- that's-- So I'm a combination of two generations.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow. So actually you're a very special interviewee.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, not completely.

>> Carlene Tinker: You're the first that I've had that.

>> Robert Ogata: Really? OK.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. First of all, let's get your full name. Could you give us your full name?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. My full name is Robert Katsusuke Ogata.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And the middle name is Japanese--

>> Robert Ogata: That's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- and who was-- who were you named after?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, we hear these stories and I remember my father saying that he wanted to go ahead and use the name of a general from years past in the Japanese-- you know, where they had been clans and so on, they're not clans, but groups. And so, he just thought this famous general should-- his name should be then carried on in my family so that's the reference.

>> Carlene Tinker: And hopefully, you've lived up--

>> Robert Ogata: Well, I would like to believe I've done something.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And your date of birth?

>> Robert Ogata: It's February the 16th, 1934.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK, so we just celebrated your?

>> Robert Ogata: 85th birthday.

>> Carlene Tinker: 85th birthday, wonderful. And residence, in what city do you live?

>> Robert Ogata: I've been living here in Fresno, California.

>> Carlene Tinker: In Fresno. And how long have you lived in Fresno?

>> Robert Ogata: We have-- I went to school here so then we have made our residence since 1967.

>> Carlene Tinker: '67.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. But I had lived here and gone to school. You know, I was growing up in Selma, California which is just south of Fresno, and then went to Reedley College and then eventually to Fresno State to get my bachelor's degree. And so my life then had been--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, basically--

>> Robert Ogata: But, you know, when Sandy and I were formally married and then established a home, that's what had happened. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Yeah, I came in 1969, yeah. OK. Occupations? I know you're retired now but you've had several jobs as I understand. What were those?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, primarily then I had-- primarily then I had been a school teacher, a secondary school teacher. I had taught in the public school system for 37 years. I started out very, very early and then my first job was at Fresno High School, which is one of the three high schools that were here in Fresno.

>> Carlene Tinker: And what year was that?

>> Robert Ogata: That was in 1962.

>> Carlene Tinker: 1962.

>> Robert Ogata: And then at that point, my roommate and I had decided that there was more to see than Fresno in California and so we made applications then to teach abroad in whatever we could find. We eventually then ended up teaching with the Armed Forces schools in Germany, and so then I spent four years in Munich teaching at the American High School there.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. But then also, weren't you in the military at one point?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, yes, yes, I was.

>> Carlene Tinker: But that wasn't connected to this?

>> Robert Ogata: No. No, this wasn't-- but this was much, much before.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, I was in the military from 1956 to-- 1956 to '58.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow, wow. And I know--I know you primarily as an artist and painter and-- of both local and international fame. So, we're very proud to have you as our guest today.

>> Robert Ogata: Thank you, thank you.

>> Carlene Tinker: What is your marital status? You mentioned Sandy but how many children do you have?

>> Robert Ogata: I have three children. My oldest is Amy and she is now a professor at USC. And then my middle daughter is Piet and she works as an independent contractor dealing with the equine industry here in Fresno. And then my youngest now is Miye who now lives right outside of Philadelphia. And she's with-- she's a senior manager with PayPal.

>> Carlene Tinker: PayPal?

>> Robert Ogata: PayPal. Yeah, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, how wonderful.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. So they're--

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Well, that's very nice.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, it's surprising because, you know, when they--when they started after high school, they eventually then went to school, all three of them went to school in the East Coast. And they all started out with different majors and it's surprising how things change over a period of time. And so-- Amy for instance now, you know, because she is involved now with art history and so on but then she started out as basically an English major and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is that right?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Well, I was a high school guidance counselor and I used to tell the kids, you know, when you go to college, you want to try lots of things--

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- you may declare psychology, English, whatever, but by getting that experience in college, then your interests and your horizons change, and consequently, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: This is the advantage of liberal arts schools--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- because they then offer the curriculum and then, you know, so that the-- you know, I think when Sandy and I had our first child, we thought that the one thing that we want to make sure was that our children were educated. And whatever direction took them, we want them to be educated.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: And so that's why we made these choices.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, and your wife also is a teacher, is that right?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, Mm-hmm.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. What grade does she-- did she teach?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, she taught in the elementary school and then eventually into-- she was-- ended her career at the Bullard Talent which is like a-- not a charter school but it's a special school for talented and performing arts as well as the visual arts and so on but yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wonderful, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: A magnet school.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. OK. So, what we're going to look at today is your personal history.

>> Robert Ogata: OK.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And as a Japanese-American who's lived in the San Joaquin Valley as I said-- and also was in an internment camp, but to really get a full story, I like to begin with your ancestors.

>> Robert Ogata: OK.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK? So, let's start with your father side, your grandfather, where was he from, why did he come to the United States, blah, blah, blah? OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. You know, we tried to do some research a couple-- several years back in reference then to our-- my history, my father's history and so on. And we knew that then that he was then from an area of Japan in the southernmost island of Kyushu and so then very close then to what's the largest city there in—oh. All of a sudden, I don't remember.

>> Carlene Tinker: You mean, on Kyushu?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, in Kyushu, but anyway, he was in a little kind of town-- a city called Fukuoka, which was-- yeah. And so from there, he had then immigrated, I think his father had come then to the United States. He immigrated him-- he came himself and then, you know, find-- tried to find jobs and develop a business and whatever. And I remember that I was told that he worked as-- in a laundry when he first came and so on. But then the rest of my grandparents came and the children, and the father-- my father and his mother immigrated after that but it was I think more than 10 years afterwards and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: So that's been pretty much my father's side history and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And so then, you know, as a young man, he just had a variety of different kind of jobs and so on, and then eventually then ended up in Southern California.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And then--

>> Carlene Tinker: But your grand-- your dad was also born in Japan, is that right? Is that what you said?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes. But he had immigrated with my grandmother, his mother.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK, OK.

>> Robert Ogata: You know?

>> Carlene Tinker: And they first came to Southern California?

>> Robert Ogata: They came to-- Well, they were-- I think initially then they had-- because my grandfather, he was working in the Bay Area, and so as a result-- and I don't know how long they stayed there before then they eventually went down to Southern California.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. So they've actually entered the United States probably through San Francisco then?

>> Robert Ogata: No, through-- what's the--what's the--Seattle--

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, Seattle.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, several people came that way too. And what was the motivation? You said they were looking for jobs.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, I don't know. You know, I don't know what my grandfather was thinking. You know, growing up in a, you know, in a small village in basically in Fukuoka and so on, at that time, it was small. And I'm sure the motivation was then that, you know, what else is there in life and so on and then they were probably looking for opportunities. And I don't know how many stories came about about what America can offer as opportunities and so on so then I think like most immigrants then, they're always looking for something that's going to be beneficial for their future.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, I know a lot of them, like my own family, think they were interested in coming and making money and returning to Japan but often they stayed here because the opportunities were much better. And I know that probably in the late 1800s, situations-- the economy was not all that thriving in Japan, so that also may have been a factor in their wanting to immigrate.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: What about your mother side?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, my mother side, she grew up in Hiroshima, you know? I mean, well, basically then, that's where her father was from. She had her-- So he had immigrated and come then to the United States and then that's where my mother was born here in the State of Washington. And then my grandfather's wife died and so then he went back then to Japan and remarried. So then as a result, my mother, as an American citizen, then was taken back to Japan, you know, with her father. And then-- So then, as a result, then she was there in her very, very early years, you know, and then eventually then my grandfather then re-immigrated again.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And so they settled basically in Southern California.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Then-- OK. Then I'm trying to figure out how your mother and father got together if your mom was in-- near Seattle or in--

>> Robert Ogata: Right. Well, he took her-- You're right. So then when my grandfather's wife died--

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: OK. So then he went back to Japan--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- and so then with my mother. So.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. OK. But then, how did your mother and father meet?

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, well, that's a very interesting story. And this is, again, one of these things that, you know, here you have this young, you know, woman and so on, because I think at the time that she was married, I think she was seven or eight-- 17 or 18 years old. So my father is considerably older. And, you know, the term “baishakunin” which is, you know, the go-between about young men wanting a wife. And so then that's how they met up and eventually married.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: So then as a result, then they had worked in a strawberry farm that was-- which is now probably Disneyland.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And so they were there for a period of time and so on, and then eventually had moved up to then to Selma and then started a business there. But of course then there was the year-- the years in between which then the Second World War and the internment, you know, and so there was a lot of moving around as a result of that--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- having to go and establish, you know, some relationship between then the City of Selma and friends that he had there but at the same time being interned in Gila, you know, for three years and--

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. So he was in Selma when the war broke out?

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Now, I was trying to remember where you were born then?

>> Robert Ogata: Then I was born in Los Angeles. I was a year old when my father-- my mother and father then moved up to Selma.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. OK. I had you a lot older at that time.

>> Robert Ogata: No.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Now you mentioned strawberries, Japanese at that time, of course your father and mother weren't citizens at that time, is that right?

>> Robert Ogata: Well--

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, your mom was.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes. But I think that there was a-- there was a law that was instituted that if you were a American citizen and then you married a, an alien that you would lose your citizenship. And so then that's what happened. And so as a result, then they had to go ahead through the years and so on then eventually got to a point closer to retirement which they both then reapplied for a citizenship then too.

>> Carlene Tinker: And so that was--

>> Robert Ogata: So she lost-- yeah, there was that period of time in which-- then that was the issue then with aliens versus Amer--citizens.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh my goodness.

>> Robert Ogata: I can't remember what the law was exactly. Sandy and I were talking about that and I had--I had not heard about that--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- but I knew that that had happened.

>> Carlene Tinker: I'm not familiar with that one.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: I me-- frankly.

>> Robert Ogata: and again, you know, at that time, the anti-Asian kind of with the Chinese and so on, so there was a lot of issues that had, you know--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. And the reason I brought up the strawberry thing, that was sort of the root of a lot of anti-Asian animosity, there was competition, strawberries were successfully raised by the Japanese--Japanese-Americans, and that probably was one of the huge factors that accounted for our exclusion from the West Coast.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, I think that was true of probably most Japanese families and so on because that's the kind of work that they did. And they were very, very successful at that. And I have to believe that then that there were some other issues or forces then that were helpful then in trying to go ahead and evacuate all the Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the West Coast.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: I mean, there's a certain degree of fear, you know, as a result, you know?

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. And I understand like the farmers in Salinas and that area probably were very instrumental in raising the ire of the people to a certain degree to get us out of California.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. Very much so, very much so.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. So-- OK, so that's interesting. You're Issei, Nisei-Sansei.

>> Robert Ogata: Right, Nisei-Sansei, yeah, right. And I don't know of anybody else, friends and so on. You know, most are basically sansei, I think.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now, one interesting story you told me when we talked earlier, you said that your dad told you later that you actually came from samurai.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. What was that story?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, it's kind of interesting, you know, because as I was growing up, my father would-- you know, I'm-- he was not a person who told a lot of stories and so on. I think that he was pretty much kept to himself, you know, he was kind of quiet and so on. If you wanted then to hear about his early years or his background and so on, he was a little resistant, I think, to talk about that and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Why do you think--

>> Robert Ogata: I don't know. I think it's very cultural.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, OK.

>> Robert Ogata: You know, about things happened in their lives and so on. And I think as-- growing up in a family of boys and so on, you know, our lives were very, very different at that

time and so on. And so we're wanting to move on and whatever and so on. So then we're not necessarily interested in family history at that time. Today of course, it's a very, very, different thing--

>> Carlene Tinker: That's true. That's true.

>> Robert Ogata: So as result then, you know, we had heard these stories and so on and so when we went back then to do some research, well, I guess it was, what, eight years ago or so on, and we went specifically then to the area in which then in Kyushu where we thought there would be then people who were-- who would know. And there were some preliminary research done by a very good friend of my wife, who was an American who had married a Japanese woman and was teaching English. And so then somehow then, she got to know him, and so he took it upon himself then to do some research with the Ogata name, the family. And he said that they had, you know, found out some things that he related to us that we did not know. So then as a result of that research then, we made a decision then to go back and take a look and see if we can find some things. So I found my-- I found then I was able then to meet up with some cousins that I had never met before and so on. And I knew that they-- I knew they existed because I remember then my mother talking about them and so on, you know. So it's very interesting that when we went back to meet them, in fact we had taken a close friend of my middle daughter who is a native of Japan and so she-- we took her as an-- to-- as an interpreter. And so she was the only one that was able to go and make that communication because, you know, my Japanese is very, very limited, you know, as a young man growing up, you know-- I mean, my mother and father spoke to us in Japanese but we always spoke back in English. And so it was just so-- your understanding of the language becomes more acute but your ability to be able to speak it then is very limited. You're able to do that to some degree within the family structure but, you know, it's not a thing where that was a constant and so on. So then, you know, you forget about-- you forget a lot about your second language basically. Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: So what did you find out when you went back there?

>> Robert Ogata: So we went back there and so on. So one of the things we found out was, when in fact we were staying at an onsen [inn found near a hot spring] and then was that-- not far from the village and so-- where we were staying. And then through then this other person-- other-- the wife of a cousin, and we got in contact with her. And then so-- then she then had

apparently, they made some contact with this other cousin, which I did not know that existed and so on. So, anyway, we told them that we had a reservation at an onsen, which is a ways away. And so, we were sorry that we had to leave, but we had this-- so then we did leave. And then the-- while we were there at the onsen then, we got this notice then from the people that ran the estate well, there is a person who has called to come-- they want to come and to meet you. And so then here, we were there and so then eventually then this person shows up. And then through introduction and so on, find out this was then the cousin which I had never met and knew that existed and so on. But through those conversations that we had over, you know, as we're finishing dinner and so on, she had mentioned how grateful she was and her family was because after-- my mother and father were ahead and were running a restaurant and so on and, you know, they would send money back then to relatives. And this cousin that I had not known who was-- who had made this connection with us and so on said that one of the things that she remembers very, very clearly was that, they were in the home they had, it was then decimated by a flood. And as soon as we saw it, she says, well, then the family lost all of its, you know, belongings as well as the swords. And she specifically said that. And we thought, well, gee, you know, what I have heard about then, that the samurai were the only people that could own swords. So that was the connection then that my father talked about. And so then I said, well, that makes that even more so because, you know, I mean, I don't know how true his stories were, but I have to believe that they were, you know, that was the connection that he had with the samurai. Yeah, very interesting.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: So-- But we hadn't been back since and to do more research because there was a little village near Fukuoka called Ogata Village, and so the fact that then there's a village named after my family. So how instrumental is that in reference then to the origins?

>> Carlene Tinker: Right now, do you remember when we talked about this that the family crest has something to do--

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, in fact, I'm wearing the kamon [family crest] now.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK, tell us about that?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, it's very interesting, because again, when we had made this trip and so on, we found that then

there were some photographs and images that they had shared and so on. And in one of the photographs was an image of then-- where then a cousin had a-- was wearing a formal dress. And then the kamon was on the sleeve. And this was in the photograph. So we took a photograph of the photograph of the kamon. And so then we did some research and found out then from a man in Los Angeles who does a lot of these kinds of crests and so on. And so then we contact him, he says, well, you know, this is a pretty old one, and because he's apparently done a lot of things. So we found out then that through some research and so on that that the-- so when we first-- when we first saw that, the kamon, and then we thought that the crossed symbols, it looked like, you know, what the Japanese called daikon, which is the radish--

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: -- and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, daikon, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And we thought, what is the relationship between that and my family?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And then through research, we found out then that it is not daikon but its cloves.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh.

>> Robert Ogata: And so cloves were not something that the eastern cultures or Japanese--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- in Japan especially would have. And so we traced it back to the fact that then the Dutch in making them their, you know, forays into other parts of the world and so on brought then cloves and there was a part of then, however they used it and so on, but it was introduced then to Japan--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- and to Nagasaki. And so, we found out also then that the reason for the cloves was the fact that then they would use the scent of the cloves then-- to then help them to deter insects and whatever. So they use it as a-- what would you call it, as a scent.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: OK. But also at the same time, they said that because then the clove oil was used then to keep the swords from rusting.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh.

>> Robert Ogata: And so they used that oil so then I thought, well, OK, were they in the industry of then promoting the use of cloves as a disinfectant and/or as a oil for preventing their swords from becoming rusted?

>> Carlene Tinker: How fascinating.

>> Robert Ogata: And again, that's-- you know, I mean, we-- it has to come somewhere because it was so strange that it would be something that was not necessarily, you know--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. So then the roots for farming, dealing with the soil seem to have a history--

>> Robert Ogata: And the introduction--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- yes from, you know, the Dutch and so on, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. And the Dutch probably were there in 1500?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, sure, early on, early on, absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: And Nagasaki is south of Fukuoka.

>> Robert Ogata: Right, right. And of course then the Dutch were not allowed then to enter, I mean, set foot on the mainland and so on, so they were basically--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Yeah, that is--

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, it is, you know. And I wish we could do more research and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And we-- I mean, if we were to go back, we would have to hire someone to go ahead and take us then and-- because I think there's a lot of records then that are only accessible then to native--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- Japanese people. And you would have to then show them that you are a descendant of them, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Well, you know, I think a lot of us think that samurai are only associated with being soldiers, you know, protecting the shogun--

>> Robert Ogata: Mercenaries, yes, right.

>> Carlene Tinker: But I learned in doing some research on my own that it was sort of dependent on the shogun that-- who they were protecting.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: And what jobs they had.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. So that in itself is very fascinating.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, it is fascinating.

>> Carlene Tinker: So, I had remembered you growing up in Buena Park but I forget that you were only a child or infant really when you moved here to the valley.

>> Robert Ogata: Mmm-hmm, right. [unintelligible] Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. OK. So, you were born on February 16th--

>> Robert Ogata: In '34.

>> Carlene Tinker: 1930--

>> Robert Ogata: -- 4.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- 34.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Do you have any siblings?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, I have an older brother and I have a younger brother.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: An older brother George and a younger brother Dick.

>> Carlene Tinker: Are they alive?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: And what do they do?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, my older brother who lives in Pacifica, California and so on, and then he retired as a result of being in the banking business. And my younger brother was then also a teacher.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And so he retired from teaching.

>> Carlene Tinker: What kind of teaching?

>> Robert Ogata: He was--He a--was basically in the industrial arts and some visual arts up in-- yeah, in the east bay of--

>> Carlene Tinker: The both of them stayed in that area?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, pretty much, yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did they go to college here?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes. Well, my younger brother went to Fresno State and then my older brother then went then-- had gone then to-- there was a art school in San Francisco, the Shafer School of Art, and he went there as a-- not a-- as a designer and he worked at a firm as a designer. In fact, I think one of the first jobs he had done was I think at the-- it's a very large hotel on Venice in San Francisco, what is it-- oh, I'm just trying to think of it. Well, anyway--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: It doesn't come to mind, so honestly, he was very involved in that kind of thing.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: But then he--

>> Robert Ogata: Well, he eventually ended up in the banking business, right, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Now, getting back to your education, how did you become interested in art, because that is a very-- main interest of--

>> Robert Ogata: You know, that's very, very interesting, you know, because I never had-- you know, when I was growing up and then eventually entered a high school and so on, that Selma houses a very small school and, you know, our graduating class was 100 kids.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh.

>> Robert Ogata: And so it was very small. And so then, you know, you take classes and, you know, everything and then eventually one of the classes that we had to take was of course-- it was a combination of home economics, art, and whatever, and the teacher was basically home economics teacher and so-- but there was a lot of-- very little art training, but we had to take that, you know, we included metal shop and wood shop and so on, very, very industrial kind of activities. And so, when I graduated then, I wasn't quite sure where-- how I wanted to go ahead and, you know, pursue a career or my future in education or whatever. And so then eventually then my friend and I had then went to-- we eventually decided we would go to Reedley College. So that's where then I was really basically introduced then to-- there's a whole business about the visual arts. And it was very, very interesting because it was all kind of new for me. And I found that I-- there's a certain facility that I had for that, you know. And as a result then, that's when I had then went to transferred to Fresno State and finished up my degree. And, you know, it's a very small-- This is when the college was-- where city college is located now. And, you know, very, very influential teachers like Darwin Musselman and the Odorfers, and people that, you know, are long gone of course, but there was a very small staff there. But it was very important because it was kind of opening up then what this whole business of visual arts is about.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. So then you majored in art and then when did you decide to become a teacher?

>> Robert Ogata: Well--

>> Carlene Tinker: Or how did that happen?

>> Robert Ogata: Right, well, you know, because then I had then decided I would extend and-- extend my education, but then I had realized that at that time, that the selective service system was still in-- it was still going on. And so I made contact with them and saying, well, you know, I'm going to like to do some graduate work and so on, where do you think I would be-- when my name would be called up then to serve? And they said, well, you know, it might be pretty soon. So then I felt, well, if I asked

them to call my name up in the summer and you serve your two years, that means you'll get out in the summer instead of being midterm or whatever. And so I thought, well, that is the plan that I would have. So then I had done some additional work and so on and eventually then that's what had happened. So then I had been going back to Fresno State after serving two years in the army.

>> Carlene Tinker: I see. And where were you stationed in the army?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, it-- you know, it started out at Fort Ord and then Fort Louis and then eventually spent Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri and spent then the rest of my career at the Savannah River Defense Area, which was a heavy water plant in--

>> Carlene Tinker: Where was that?

>> Robert Ogata: Savannah River Defense Area in Savannah-- Savannah, Georgia.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. And so as a result then, we were in this very small company. And our mission basically was then that we had a anti-aircraft battery that protected then the heavy water plant, which was for nuclear fission and so on. So, that's where I spent my two years. Yeah. And, you know, again, you know, living in the south and realizing how different the south is and the fact, it's very interesting that I was in this very small office with one other person. And after a couple of weeks then, because he was from Birmingham, Alabama, and then he, I guess had the courage to ask me, he'd ask me, he said, where did you learn to speak English so well, you know, assuming that because his association with anything Asian was probably nonexistent. And he assumed then that if I was, what I looked like, was probably from then a native country.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, what year was this that you were in Savannah?

>> Robert Ogata: I was there in-- from 1956 to '58.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. OK, so that's after World War II and still people had this impression of us--

>> Robert Ogata: Well, especially in the south.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: You know, and so on, and there were things, you know, I mean, it was very, very interesting. You know, I mean, one other thing too was the fact that then after spending my second eight weeks in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and then I had-- and I had this--orders then to go to Aiken, South Carolina was where the base was. Anyway, so as a result then, I bought a ticket on the bus. And so then, I took this long bus ride from Missouri to-- all way down into then to the south. And I realized that as we had gotten deeper in the south, and I remember there was a place in-- I can't remember if it's in Georgia or Louisiana, someplace and so on and, you know, the greyhound bus then stops and pick up passengers and let off people. And one of the things I found was that, I had gone to the bathroom. I wanted to go to bathroom and so on and I realized that then the bathroom has had white and colored. And here I was faced for the very first time about, what? I have to make a choice here, because I have never realized that they have-- I've never made that distinction about who I am.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: And so by chance then, I went into the white bathroom and nobody said anything so I guess they assumed that then if you are Asian, that you fall within that category and not of the color and so on, very interesting because there's that certain awakening in the fact that there is this difference--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: - especially in the Deep South.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. OK. Well, getting back to growing up-- we kind of got sidetracked here.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah so, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: When you were a little kid in Selma growing up, what was Selma like? What was-- Did you experience any discrimination and racism in Selma growing up at any time?

>> Robert Ogata: I didn't feel that, you know. We-- When my mother and father had then decided to move from Los Angeles as the strawberry farm was moved up the Central California, and so we had started this-- they started this restaurant business and, you know, I just-- I remember, I think, going to kindergarten and 1st grade and, you know, through the years until then the internment happened and so on. So, I am still-- have very, very close friends that I had made when I was in kindergarten. We

still see each other, you know, once a year at reunions and somewhat.

>> Carlene Tinker: That's wonderful.

>> Robert Ogata: And these are the people that I had gone to school with. So there is that very close association that you have in those very, very early years--

>> Carlene Tinker: And I take it, these were not Japanese kids.

>> Robert Ogata: These are white kids. Yes, they were Caucasian but then again, the other kids-- I mean, there were a lot of Mexican kids that are running around and whatever and so on because-- and I felt that was not any sense of discrimination at all until of course then the bombing of Pearl Harbor and it changed everything.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. We'll get to that in a minute. I know in talking to some other Japanese-Americans that some of these valley towns like Fowler, I'm becoming more acquainted with Selma now, have been really free of racism and discrimination.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, to some degree, there is. I think-- I mean, the fact that because then Selma had a west side, the original 99 Highway came right through there. And in fact, the restaurant was located so that 99 Highway is right in front of us. And so it's interesting then that in doing some research about my grandmother, and I knew she had died when, you know, when I was a very young boy, and that she was buried there, so then I wanted to go and find her grave. And so I went to the police department, this was probably maybe eight years-- eight, seven or eight years ago, maybe a bit longer, and they said, well, there are two cemeteries in Selma and I knew where the larger one was and so on. But there's another one that's located closer then to the outskirts of town. And I had remembered that, but I'd forgotten about it. So then my family and I then went out there and we found, as we were looking at the graves and so on, trying to find then where my grandmother was buried, and eventually then we were almost ready to give up and so on, and we didn't start skirting then the edges of the cemetery, and found there were a lot of Japanese names and so on, and eventually found my grandmother's grave.

>> Carlene Tinker: But in a, you know--

>> Robert Ogata: But it was--

>> Carlene Tinker: -- a set-off area.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely. So like that would be to the side, absolutely, yeah. And they were all basically then Asian names. So there was then my fairly, you know, my initial realization that back in the-- back in that--

>> Carlene Tinker: When did your grandma die?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, I can't remember when she died. Yeah, right, right, right. So it must have been probably in the, you know--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- late 30s or 40's yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, yeah. Well, what this is leading up to, you know, for so long as a child of World War II myself, when I came out of camp, I was impressed with trying to be like everybody else, OK, that there was this idea that we should all melt together, this melting pot idea that that we should strive and try to forget about our differences, we want to be more alike. But then I came across this concept of the salad bowl. Are you familiar with that?

>> Robert Ogata: No, I'm not.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. That was-- This is something I'm learning from these interviews myself. Now the current idea as opposed to a melting pot where we all want to be all alike, now we want to be like a salad bowl where we retain our individuality.

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, I see. Yeah, in contemporary society, yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: And personally, I have actually thought, you know, that's cool. I think that's a good idea, you know. We can still be like everybody else. We can be American. And that's what the melting pot idea is striving for, to be an American, but at the same time, we can be proud of our heritage--

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- and we-- our culture and what our forebearers brought to us in the United States.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely. And I think that's very true and especially in, you know, especially in contemporary culture today, I mean, I think families are so integrated that there has been in so much intermarriage that has taken place and so on, so then we have then children and grandchildren and so on that are, you know, basically then a quarter of this and a quarter of that

or whatever, you know. And yet I think it's important then for, you know families and siblings to go ahead and try to educate their children so on that this is where you come from. This is, you know, your heritage and so on. And so, you know, it's very easy to forget about those things and so on because we become very, very busy with our lives. But then again, this whole business about genealogy has become so important today. And people now, the younger people are looking toward that. And this is what, one of the things that I find that then the idea then of going back to the internment camp in Gila was something that was spurned on by my youngest grand-- I mean, my youngest daughter and so on as a result of her school. She was going back-- She was going to school in Bates College and one of her classes, she was an East Asian Studies major, and so then she-- in this class, they made trips out then to the west, to the-- as many visited--as many internment camps as they could. So then when they had done that, then she had gone back and called me. She says, you know, dad, we visited the Gila Camp and so on. We had done some-- We visited a variety of camps and so on, Gila was one. And I think it's important that you revisit the camp. And here, it had been more than 50 years. And I had forgotten about it. You know, I mean, this was something-- and there was nothing to--

>> Carlene Tinker: That's interesting. Why did you forget about it? Was it--

>> Robert Ogata: I think--

>> Carlene Tinker: Was that because in the past, you know, was it bitter?

>> Robert Ogata: You know, there was that kind of thing where, yeah, I think that you grew up with it and so on and, you know, there's no doubt that then, and I may have shared this with you before, but after I had gotten my teaching credential and so on, I had been teaching for a while, I had taught in Munich, Germany for four years, came back, and I was teaching in a high school in Oakdale, California. And the social studies teacher there said, well, were you interned in the Second World War? And it was the first time that I became conscious of the fact that, oh, nobody's ever asked me that? And so he asked me, he says that, well, you know, I think this is important. Would you be willing to come and talk to my classes? And at that time, I said, oh my goodness. No one has ever asked that to me if-- you know, of my experience and so on. And at that time then, I had said, well, I'm not sure. So then I had discussed this with Sandy, my wife. And for about a month, I was just beside myself with this idea of having to recall all of the things that had taken place in

that period of my life. And I had never done that before. And so I eventually then yielded and said, yes, I would do this. And so that was the first--first indication of telling my story as one of 120,000, you know, Japanese-Americans that were interned and this was their experience. And so then from that point on, I had been asked to do this over a period of time for some things, yes, and so on. Yeah, I'm going to pause and so on and have a glass of-- drink a glass of water, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, my eyes have a tendency to water, but cool weather and that's like-- anyway, so that's--

>> Carlene Tinker: So yeah, there's the idea so many of us wanted to forget.

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, I think so. We go on with our lives.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Or, you know, we take it as a given. It happened. We, you know, we dealt with it. We go on, you know, life goes on. That's another attitude that some people have--

>> Robert Ogata: Sure.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- assumed. Now, I have relatives who refuse to talk about camp, OK. But anyway, getting back to your daughter encouraging you to go back, was that sort of a-- did it kind of free you up? Did it kind of release anything?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, I had-- after that initial talk to the-- you know, to classes at Oakdale High School, and then I had then, you know, moved on and then teaching in various places eventually then got a job at Sierra High School, I'd be there for 30 years. And over that time, you know, there had been opportunities to be able to go ahead and have this discussion and so on. So, you know, it's-- it brings up, I think, memories as you remember them as a young boy about what life was like at that time and so on. And one of the examples was this, it was the fact that then I remember then that when the internment order came out, and I remember as a young boy because, you know, we live right in town, and on telephone poles and other places, we saw these internment notices, you know. And so that was really kind of interesting for me. And so then when the decision was made that then we had to go ahead and pack up and, you know, do all the things that are necessary, of course we had this-- my family had this businesses of the restaurant and so on. So I'm trying to go ahead and how do you deal with that? Even pets and so on, so, you know, I may have shared this with you also that then I think that I had gotten a Daisy Air Rifle BB gun for my

birthday in February. And it was probably my prized possession as a young man. And so then as a result then, she said-- my mother said, well, you could not take that to camp and so on because they would be considered contraband. So she says, well, you should give it then to your best friend. And so my best friend, his father had a hardware business so I took it over there and, you know, and told them what was happening and whatever and said that I want to give this to you. So eventually then, you know, you remember those things, you know, because they very important items--items in times for you, for a person. So as a result, I remember then, yeah, all the things that were the preparation for, you know, boarding the train and--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: That's another story and so on but--

>> Carlene Tinker: Now did your parents destroy anything?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, well, you know, my father, because we had a restaurant business and so on, so there were things like, you know, kitchen knives and things of this nature which got-- would not be-- we would not be able to take and so on. I remember him digging a hole in the backyard and he would then, you know, you have these kind of faint memories as a child and wrapping them up in oil burlap, you know, wool bags and so on and burying these things and so on, you know. And also the fact that because we had then-- we had a German Shepherd dog, you know, and, you know, what does-- what do you do with this dog? You know, I mean, all of a sudden, people had pets, you know, of all kinds. And I remember one day, the dog was gone and I knew we just kind of wondered, I don't remember asking my father what happened to the dog. But I would like-- you know, I don't know, who would he give it to, who could he give it to. You know, was there such a thing as the SPCA, what, you know. And what neighbor could you give it to because they all have the same problem--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- of having given pets. I probably think that culturally, you know, as an Issei that probably they would probably destroy the dog, I mean, what else-- you can't just let him go. The dog has a relationship with the family. We're moving, what's the dog going to do?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: So I'm assuming that he probably--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. And that probably did happen.

>> Robert Ogata: I'm sure it did.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. And I've read about several people having that happen, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Now, I remember too that obviously you were only about eight years old at that time?

>> Robert Ogata: Right, right when we first went, when we went.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, when the war broke out, and Executive Order 9066 was issued. That was the order that Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed designating the military zones in the West Coast, and then we had to be evacuated. Of course they never said Japanese, but it was implicit.

>> Robert Ogata: So-- Well, the signs on the telephone poles, I-- in fact, I have a copy, I mean, it's a reproduction, it said all people of Japanese descent.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And so they were very specific.

>> Carlene Tinker: But not actually in the order.

>> Robert Ogata: No, not in the order itself, right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Not actually in the order, right.

>> Robert Ogata: Right, but just the notice.

>> Carlene Tinker: So-- But then what assembly center did you go to? I mean--

>> Robert Ogata: I didn't. No, we had-- I remember because then the railroad tracks were right in front of the restaurant right next to the highway. And so I remember then that over then a week or so and several days and so on, all this activity about, you know, taking what we could carry and so on. And I remember then when the time came and we closed up the restaurant and I, you know, you look out the window then and here, there were all these people. There was this olive drabbed military train there and then there were soldiers that were there, American soldiers and so on, and you had all these people that look like me, and there were just suitcases and makeshift boxes and cardboard boxes and so on. And I remember then, as we closed up the restaurant, we walked over there with all our stuff and then we were then-- my father was issued these tags. And I remember then my mother helping me put the tag through the loophole in my

shirt. And all of a sudden, I had this thing and of course that was the now my new name all of a sudden, basically.

>> Carlene Tinker: What was on the tag?

>> Robert Ogata: It had then the identification of the family and it had a number.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, I have a copy of it, so--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, oh you do have a copy.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, yeah. It was from the internment-- yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: It was the ones that were made for that exhibition.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, right. The--

>> Robert Ogata: So then--

>> Carlene Tinker: That's-- That was a symbol signifying that you're just a number, not a person.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely, absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: Loss of identity.

>> Robert Ogata: That's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And so we boarded this train and I remember then that we were given orders. Well, actually my mother told my sisters that we were given orders that we have to go ahead and pull the shades down on the train and so on. So then that's what everybody did. And so what I remember then this very long trip on this train eventually then seeing then the environment and landscape changing and then becoming then the southwest, and eventually pulling up then to the departure point. And I was-- I can't remember what the name of-- Yuma something for sure, but, at this train station, I remember peeking under the shade, I had lifted it up and so on, and to see where we had-- why the train stopped. And, you know, you have these impressions as a young boy. And I remember then seeing this group of Native American women were sitting on blankets and in front of them were items they had made. They're like silver jewelry and various things and so on there to sell. And what an impression that left, you

know, and eventually then of course we departed and we were loaded onto trucks and then bussed into the camp.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Well, and also Gila was on an Indian Reservation, right?

>> Robert Ogata: Right, it was on the Pima Indian Reservation.

>> Carlene Tinker: Because I can recall there were two parts to Gila, Gila 1 and Gila 2.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Do you remember which one you were?

>> Robert Ogata: I was in Canal Camp, which is the camp number 1, yeah, and then Butte camp was the second camp, seven miles away.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. And as I recall, the dividing line for those who went to an assembly center and those who did not was like 99, is that true?

>> Robert Ogata: 99 Highway, absolutely. So you can imagine then that here you have the families where maybe divisional families was on the west side of 99 and maybe their children had developed a farm on the other side and so on. So there was a separation of families that took place, you know, this arbitrary line that you're made to say, this where you go and this is where you go.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Now, in the case of your dad and his restaurant, did he lose everything?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Did he?

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely. So yeah, when we came back, it was very different. We can't-- We happened to come back to Selma, of course, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. And in some cases, some people were lucky, people did watch their stuff.

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, that's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Unfortunately--

>> Robert Ogata: You hear wonderful stories about then farmers especially where they had crops that needed them to be maintained and whatever that they had member-- neighbors who were very, very good about making sure that then they worked.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, and fortunately, yeah. So when you went to Gila, what was Gila like? You were eight years old, you went to school.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely, you know, it's-- I remember—I remember very, very clearly when we were departing from the truck where we were going to be housed. And it was, you know, Block 24, you know, Barracks 7, Apartment A. And I remember then these very deep trenches where there were sewer lines and waterlines and so on, and there was this makeshift kind of boards where they were laid across so that you can access them to where the camps were because they were still in the process of building these things. And so, you know, as a child, you remember these things, how strange that is that I have to cross this, you know, this hole. And so-- But eventually then, we of course, you know, I remember then we were in the very first apartment in this barrack and, you know, I remember there was this box and it was four walls and that's what it was, you know, and how you had to do things and remember my father then trying to make some resemblance of a house and so on, I see. And in fact then because of where the beds were located and so on, trying to separate then the sleeping area or where that would be versus then what might be a sitting room or a living room or whatever, and stringing up early on, you know, just, you know, rope and blankets and whatever. You know, and so those things kind of come to mind and, you know, strange things as a young boy.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Now, what was your barrack like? Do you know-- Do you remember what it was constructed of?

>> Robert Ogata: Oh yeah. I remember it was just basically a tar paper shack.

>> Carlene Tinker: Tar paper. What kind of flooring did you have?

>> Robert Ogata: It was wood.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wood?

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, they were built on stilts-- on metal-- on-- they were actually cast concrete and they had then these supports in which they were built on top of.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: So the--

>> Carlene Tinker: The camp where I was, we had cement foundations, the perimeters were made out of cement. And some of our flooring was wood and some of it was brick.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. Well, and-- plus the fact that because it was basically four walls and so on that the realization is that then you had to get up-- you had to step out of your little box and so on and walk down to the middle of the block to go to use the latrine, you know. And how strange that was in order to have to do this, there was no running water of course in the barracks, you know? And that kind of impression that's left that you had to go to the mess hall, you know, and wait in line and, you know, and get served food that you were not familiar with or whatever. So there were all these things that had to come-- that are very, very important, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. And as I recall, most of the camps, if not all of them, were built on a similar plan, you had barracks stacked up and then in between the barracks, you had the mess hall, the latrine, and the rec hall, is that right?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, actually, what I remember then there was a wash area-- wash-- laundry area where then families can go ahead and do their laundry and so on. And-- But yeah, the-- there was-- also then, I remember there was a basketball court there in the middle too as well next to the latrine and so on. So there were some definitions about a playground or whatever, but it's basically dirt, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: And privacy was an issue as well.

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, absolutely. I mean, especially then, especially then using the latrine. You know, I mean, here you are, they're all men, you know, you walk in there, and then you have this row of, you know, wash basins and so on, and I can't remember exactly it's on, but, you know, showers and the toilets and so on, you know, I have faint memories about that, how strange that was that you had-- you went there and to do your thing and so on, but then there was all these people that you went out with.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. When you were taught the privacy was uppermost and then to have to do this and think of the women, you know, didn't have any separation between them, you know, and say go to the bathroom. Yeah. And what were the-- What was the weather like in Gila?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, the weather was-- you know, I mean, here we are in Arizona and some of the things I remember were that, you know, first of all of course it was very, very warm, very hot and so on. And--

>> Carlene Tinker: What time did you arrive?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, we got there in August.

>> Carlene Tinker: August.

>> Robert Ogata: So we were near the end of the summer and so on, but I remember then that, you know, that the temperature change in that desert was so, you know, so extreme in a sense because it was very, very warm in the daytime, and it would drop like 40 degrees and so on, and how cold it was in the evening. But I also remember these terrible dust storms that we used to have and so on. And so they would come through and, you know, I mean, because they were just basically tar paper shacks and so on, you know, there was-- I remember my mother having to go in and sweep and clean and so on because there was dust everywhere every time a storm came through. You know, again, very, very strange how you could-- you know, you make that association, you realize that as a young man then that then you had some boundaries in which you were able then to play with and this was where you would live and so on. One of the things was a dike and there was a dike that was built by the Department of Engineers and so on because in Arizona, in especially the southwest, you had these flashfloods of water that come rushing down. And there was a canal on the other side. So then they had to build this dike to then prevent then where the barracks were being built from being washed out. And so that was really an important, iconic structure, that there's this dike and we used to use that as a place to go ahead, and because I don't know, I can't even remember how—if they're 20 to 30 feet high and so on, and yet that the dike was at the-- everything on the other side of the dike as off limits, that you could not dig-- you could not go past that and so on. It was, you know-- because that's where then the gully was where the flash flooding would take place. So-- But I-- In fact I remember one time that we were-- there was a flash flood and some of the-- some men had been on the other side of that and they were scrounging wood and various things that you find in the desert and so on. And I remember then that we would run up to the top of the dike and watch this water come rushing down there. It was like a small river. And one time-- Again this was-- I don't know why this would come up, but I remember then there was a man who was caught on the other side, and he had taken off his clothes except for his underwear and then walked across this-- to get back to where the barracks

were and so on, you know, going through this flood area. I mean, you know, again, that's an important kind of iconic image that a young person would have. How strange that was, to see this man kind of dealing with the elements, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: He didn't drown then?

>> Robert Ogata: No.

>> Carlene Tinker: No, wow, because that can be-- come on so quickly.

>> Robert Ogata: Of course, absolutely. Yeah, but again, you know, that-- Again, you know, that thing, this thing called a dike and so on, and I may have shared also the fact that after then the first year or so on, and you get to know kids of your own age and so on running around with each other and whatever, and so then we found that we could then explore on now the forbidden side of the dike and so on, and we would go over there, and we would dig, you know, as kids would do, they would build little kind of forts or structures as little kind of private places. And I remember then we were digging, you know, this sandy soil and so on, and we would scrounge then pieces of wood and cardboard to span this little depression that we had made, and we would crawl in there and that would be our little private space. You know, I mean, and that's very typical, I think, of kids, you know, having a fort. So, when we went back, you know, and again, there was lots of stories about that as well, but I remember when we had gone back at the insistence of my daughter, that when we had-- I remember going up on the top of the dike and telling them, my family, I said, well, you know, this was important to us in a sense. And then all of a sudden, while I was standing there, you know, I said [inaudible] "we had built this fort". And so then my daughter said, "well, let's go see if we could find it", you know, after all these years, you know, it probably would have been washed away or whatever. So we then ran down and then she went to one-- she went one way and I went the other way. For whatever reason, I went the way that I did, and I came across this depression in the ground, which, you know, was not a natural depression. It was not a part about the flash-flooded area and so on. It was beyond that. And I just said, "oh my goodness, this is the fort we built." And the depression was obvious enough because it was big enough and it indicated entry areas and so on, but it was pretty much filled with a lot of sand, but it was unnatural. And I said, that's what it was. That was our little fort.

>> Carlene Tinker: That is--

>> Robert Ogata: Very interesting, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: That is amazing, oh my god.

>> Robert Ogata: But there were lots of stories that took place, you know, with my brother's-- excuse me, my father's pond and all that and so on, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow. What did your-- Getting back to life in Gila, you went to school--

>>Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. What did your mom and dad do?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, the only jobs they had-- my mother took a job in the cafeteria and so on. And, you know, it's very interesting here, you have these wooden picnic tables they were, you know, lined up in rows and so on. And as families would do was that then they all kind of made individual decisions about, this is where my family is going to be. And so that when you went for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and so on and you went through the mess line and so on, you went to that table. And, you know, and everybody respected that, everybody had like a family dining area, this wooden picnic table. And I remember going there and then, you know, standing in line, whether it be raining or whatever, if you wanted to go ahead and eat, that's what you did. I remember the food, I remember eating a lot of jell-o, you know, because, you know, the food was this generic kind of food that was being cooked not by your parents but by these strange people, you know. So yeah, so as a result in growing up, that was it, you know. And going to school, I remember that on Saturdays, especially during then the vacation months and so on, that my mother would give us a nickel and they had-- the community center, they would have them sell ice cream bars. And that was very exciting for young-- as young kids and so we would go there to wait in line and pay a nickel for an ice cream bar which was, you know, unheard of at that time.

>> Carlene Tinker: A special treat.

>> Robert Ogata: A very special treat absolutely, yeah. Again, things like that, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Now what did your dad do?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, my dad then, after the-- I think the first year or so, and I can't remember the date and so on, then he was then-- they were requesting for volunteers, young men able then to be able to go ahead and harvest then crops in the State of Idaho and so on. And so, I remember then that he had

gone through this and then had an ID card. And the only reason I know this is because after my visit then after more than 50 years at the camp, at the insistence of my daughter, we then contacted the Department of Interior and requested all of the information about the Ogata family. And so they sent us a manila folder that was packed full.

>> Carlene Tinker: Who did you get this from?

>> Robert Ogata: Department of Interior.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh wow.

>> Robert Ogata: And so then they had apparently this with every family in every camp that was-- so then you could, if you wanted to have information about your family--

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, I haven't done that. I will--

>> Robert Ogata: Well, yes. And so we got this manila folder and had everything from your grades that you were in school, what grades that you got, you know, the jobs that were performed and so on and so forth. And we found this ID with a photo of my father. And this was then the ID photo in this card that he had to have when he was then a volunteer to then harvest crops in Idaho. So there was a lot of young men, they had no jobs, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And so, as a result, the-- you know, the crops had to be harvested and so on—

>>Robert Ogata: It was World War--They were gone--all the G.I. men were gone

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, and all the men, yeah, were on that war, yeah. Right.

>> Robert Ogata: And so here was this labor force that was just there. And so that's what he did. And again, I don't remember how long he was gone, probably four or five months, maybe six months, I'm not sure. But, you know, I was-- I knew he had done that. But here in this packet was this evidence about my father. And that was one of the very, very few photographs that I had of my family during-- so when I had decided to do a series of drawings about then that period of my life after visiting the camp or site, and so as a result, I use that image from his ID photo as one of the drawings and this is what he looked like at that time, yeah, and so-- because you know, again, you know,

cameras were considered contraband. Nobody had cameras and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, supposedly--

>> Robert Ogata: But we didn't record, right. Yeah. We couldn't record, you know, images of people, whatever and so on. And so then, you know--

>> Carlene Tinker: So what-- did he do this all the time when you were in Gila?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes. He would-- I don't know how often he did it but we were there for three years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Periodically.

>> Robert Ogata: So probably then, he was, you know.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: But I don't remember him doing another job, yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. When did you-- How long were you in Gila?

>> Robert Ogata: Three years.

>> Carlene Tinker: Three years. And then you-- Did you come directly back to Selma?

>> Robert Ogata: Right. But what had happened was that then, I think that then before-- I think before then, we were released from the camps and it was getting near-- toward the end, you know, after the war was over and so on, I think there were-- I think citizens that were interned were now being released to go back to their farms and their jobs or maybe their buildings that they owned and whatever. And I remember that my father-- again, we were doing some research then, my father, he was also then released to come back then to Selma, and then to come and take care of things and so on with this other man he was good friends with who owned a large grocery story. And so, you know, making, you know, kind of preparations for the return of families then to where they had homes. And I'm sure this was probably true within people who owned farms, they were, you know, to get back to where they can then start to manage and--

>> Carlene Tinker: So when your dad and your family came back to Selma, did he directly go back to restaurant business--No, he was helping with the farm--

>> Robert Ogata: No, he was just helping-- just doing this and we're [inaudible] different things, no, the restaurant was, you know, basically was taken over by another family and so on. So then he was helping this-- his friend.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, OK.

>> Robert Ogata: And taking care--

>> Carlene Tinker: And so then ultimately, he was able to—

>> Robert Ogata: He went back and then we were released, we came back then to Selma, OK? And then as a result, already because of this pre-- you know, return to organize then-- so then this man also then said, well, you know, there are certain kind of jobs that you could have and he's already kind of made the groundwork when they returned and so on. So I remember then my father then not having a job, the restaurant was, you know, there was different people running it and so on. So I remember very early on that we would then go as a family to pick crops and so on and, you know, grapes and whatever and so on. This was my first experience in doing that, you know, not growing up on a farm. And so, as young kids, you know, we would help pick, you know, whatever it was, grapes and so on, but we would also be running around and whatever. So, we were not as serious as, what, you know, we needed to be and so on. But yes, we did that and we lived in this little, what we called a tin shack on the other side of the rail-- tracks and so on, and we were there for until we then had enough money to go ahead and start a restaurant but it was in a different location--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- at this time.

>> Carlene Tinker: So how were you received in Selma? Did you have any problems coming back?

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, terrible.

>> Carlene Tinker: Terrible?

>> Robert Ogata: Terrible. I remember-- Oh, I remember that very, very clearly and so on because at that time, here we were, you know, and it was in August and September, school started. And so then my mother says, well, you know, you're going to be going to this grade, da da da, at this school, Garfield School and so on. And because during that couple weeks of August and so on, trying to go-- and my older brother and I then went downtown to take a look and see, well, you know, these are things that we remember as kids, you know, there are these stores and so on.

And I remember then that as we were walking and so on, that people then would drive by and yell obscenities and, you know, make, you know, motions and so on, you know, anything to go ahead and show their disgust of us and so on. I remember we would walk into stores that we even remember, I mean, you know, whether it be a lunch counter or whatever and so on, and not get waited on, you know. And the realization all of a sudden that this is who you are now, this is how you-- when you entered in in camp, you were a very, very different person. The fact that you were a part of the community, now all of a sudden, you come back to this community which you know but you not-- aren't-- you're not a part of it. Now you are separate. And so, as a result, that certainly influenced then the way that we-- who we became.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. How long did that last?

>> Robert Ogata: I think it—it would have lasted for the first couple-- the grades that we were when we-- when we came back and went to grammar school and so on. You know, and I think there was a certain degree of unsureness about then who we are in this community, where all these people in the school classroom were all white, you know. There were some Hispanic kids and so on. But basically then, you stand out and you are a little reticent about being a part of then whatever these kids did, you know, during recess or whatever. And it was not until then that we-- I entered into middle school. We had to go to a different school. And this was again, you know, a different building in a different part of the town of Selma. And I remember very clearly that entering, I think, it was the 7th-- the 6th grade or 7th grade, I guess. Was it or was it the 8th? I think it was 6th to 8th, yeah. But anyway, I remember all the kids gathering here at the first day of school outside and then the principal now is on a PA system welcoming all of the kids and dah, dah, dah, and so on and so forth and so on, and then, you know, the bell rings and we all-- all the kids seem to know what rooms they were assigned to. And so then as the bell rang, then everyone rushed off and so on. And I remember then eventually finding my room and so on, and walking in, this was the homeroom that you had and there was another Japanese-American boy and myself and we walked into this room and so on, everybody was seated already and we walk in a little late and of course then that draws a huge attention to us and so on. We gave the teacher then what information we had about who we are and whatever. And then she said, well, go ahead and please take a seat. And there was seat that was near the front and there was a seat near the back. And so, I just-- So then I just was going to go ahead take a seat in the front and so on, then I heard this voice say, hey, hey, come

back here. And just-- I just did that. I automatically just walked back and took the seat near the back and so on. And what happened was that then, it happens that this group of kids who were-- you know, it's one of these things where you have kids that are kind of, you know, respected and kind of big man on the campus kind of thing and so on, they've had this, you know, either athletes or whatever and so on. And it happens then, these-- there was this group of kids that were these kids and so on. And so then I just became aligned with that group.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And they took me in. And so as a result then, I never had an issue again through all the years I went through secondary education and so on, even through high school and whatever, you know. But it's kind of interesting that as this took place and so on, then you eventually then you graduate and you go into the high school. And the different grades of freshman, sophomore, and so on, and the Japanese kids, some were on the farms that we just kind of knew each other and so on, and we had this small social group of kids and so on. And this was something because I remember then one of these kids that I had gone-- and again, from kindergarten then to then this was in high school and so on. And during the daytime in school, you hung around with these kids. You would go to the same little hotdog stand to eat or you hang around on the campus, sitting on the lawn. There was always these cliques or groups and so on. And that's what it was. At night, it was different. You never-- I never went to dances. I never went to social events and so on. It was just kind of-- I don’t know if it was an unwritten kind of understanding that the community had and so on. And later on, I remember then having a conversation from one of these-- a girl who I had gone to school with her all these years and so on. And we were talking about then school dances and school activities and whatever, and then she said, well, do you remember this dance and these dances we used to have? And I said, well, no I don't, I never went. And it never occurred to her that then that Asians had this different lifestyle that was separate then from-- but during the day, it was very homogenized and--

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow. So this was probably in the '50s.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, because-- yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. Yeah. The anti-Asian sentiment really-- because I grew up in the '50s as well and it was pretty prominent and still prominent--

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, it still was and so on, you know, I think that there are certain things that you could do and you could behave and you could be a part of.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: And it basically was-- is basically functioning as part of the school.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: That would be sports that you played in and the teams you played with--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: -- the friends that you made and whatever, you know, and the classes that you had and whatever. In fact, one of the things I remember was that my indoctrination then to this is the fact that then when I a sophomore, I was nominated to be the sophomore class president and, you know, what is this, you know? Wow. I've achieved something very, very interesting.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. But there were-- certain areas were forbidden.

>> Robert Ogata: Oh, absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, underwritten, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: I want to remind you, obviously, you remember on February 19th, 2000-- I mean, 1942, OK. That was when the Executive Order was signed and that sent us away. We just recognized that day a couple of weeks ago, yeah, with a day of remembrance--

>> Robert Ogata: I see.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. There was a luncheon and there was a little bus ride that took us around Fresno. How do you remember your ancestors? How do you remember? What do you do to remember your ancestors and the experiences that you had in Gila--

>> Robert Ogata: You're right. And I think that probably the one thing and I never would have expected to be where I am in relationship to all of this, because I think one of the things

that made a difference was that then that very, very early conversation in that social studies class at Oakdale High School, you know, and giving this talk about then the internment and how then from that point on having had different kind of conversations with whether it be church groups, schools, you know, organizations, and whatever. And so that's been this introduction-- reintroduction then to this. And also, the same fact that because then as a result, I had then-- after I had gotten my credential and so on, teaching and so on, in the summer months, I would continue on with my artwork because that was basically my major. And so then, wherever I was when I was teaching in Munich American High School and still doing work and whatever and participating in exhibitions and whatever, and that continued when I came here back then to--

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh, I think we were talking about how the future generations are going to enlighten everybody about their ancestry. Is that right?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, I questioned that.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>> Robert Ogata: I questioned that because I was thinking about what my contribution was. I'm trying to personalize this in a way, you know, what have I done? You know, have I taken on some responsibility? Because I think, generally speaking, I think the people of my generation probably have not so much. I mean, other than [Reverend Masuda] and people like that who are very, very vocal and have done things, you know, for PBS and whatever. But, you know, you—theirs a handful of people, and most of us are going to be gone in just a few years. So then what do their future generations do? And this is why I questioned my grandson. I questioned my daughter. And so, you know, that's, you know-- This project is about that. But yet, how far does it go?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, right.

>> Robert Ogata: What kind of a record or if there is this intent to move beyond where it is?

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: Is that-- Is this some kind of an obligation? Is it 50%, 25%?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: I don't know.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Because I haven't talked to them.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Well, I think you brought up an interesting fact, a point that just how much are the younger generations doing?

>> Robert Ogata: Yes.

>> Carlene Tinker: How much of our generations are going back to the camps?

>> Robert Ogata: That's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Like yeah, that's an idea that I had mentioned about that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Because that would be interesting to know.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: To hear you had a camp of almost of 10,000 people in this one camp. How many people have been back? I— again, like I said, I bet there's less than 1%.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Well, they do-- Several of the camps have pilgrimages--

>>Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- that have started.

>> Robert Ogata: Right. Like Manzanar and--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, Manzanar.

>> Robert Ogata: Right. Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: My camp, which is Amache.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: I think about 50 years ago, they started pilgrimages. And currently, I'm a participant of the Amache Field School, which is an archeology school that's sponsored by Denver University. And we have an open house for people who have been in camp or have relatives who have been in camp.

>> Robert Ogata: That's great.

>> Carlene Tinker: And this last year, we had about 75 people come, which I--

>> Robert Ogata: Terrific.

>> Carlene Tinker: You know, it's been a gradual thing but more and more, for many reasons, people are realizing that they need to look back and see where they came from. And so we are getting a lot of people coming to this archeology site.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. So that-- I'm not-- I can't speak for the others but--

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- certainly, there have been--

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, I wonder. You're right. I wonder about that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah, because-- I mean, so then, the connection between all of the other camps whether it be, you know, posted or whatever and so on, you know, what is taking place? Is there--is there something? Is it-- Is there an energy about then where-- what you're participating in compared to the almost no energy, I'm assuming, at Gila?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And there, you have two camps of more than 20,000 people at the two camps.

>> Carlene Tinker: Wow.

>> Robert Ogata: Because they had Butte and we had, you know--

>> Carlene Tinker: That's right.

>> Robert Ogata: The Canal.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Major, and yet I don't hear about anything.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. That's true. I know I met some people in Los Angeles recently, well, in Las Vegas, I've gone to reunions for my camp. And there's a group of people, young people, OK, maybe Yonsei, they are actually participating in a consortium. And I think they're meeting this month as a matter

of fact or maybe next month. They meet in Washington, D.C. and they're reaching out. So, there are efforts. It's just not-- I'm not completely familiar with it. But my friend, she's very active. She didn't even know her grandparents were in Amache until they died. OK. They found photos with the name Amache on the back of the photos and, oh my gosh. So, that was a realization for her and she's really interested in finding out about her own history and helping others.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, that's kind of interesting as you--as we talk about this. When the Japanese National Museum was in its early years and so on, they were asking for donations and so on. So we donated money and so we thought this was, you know, a museum-- I mean, an institution that's necessary and so on. So as a founding manner-- member to some degree then, and yet so when they came up and the curator came up to see my work and so on, yet the response was nothing. And so recently then in the reenrollment into the Japanese Museum and so on, I made a little notation saying that I realize that then the activities that take place are basically from certain areas and so on. What you are doing for Central California?

>> Carlene Tinker: Nothing.

>> Robert Ogata: Nothing, not that I know of.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Now I don't know--

>> Robert Ogata: So here you have a National Museum. What role do they have?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: What role do they have in relationship to Yonsei here?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Or to whatever this is happening?

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, right.

>> Robert Ogata: It seems that there's not even kind of-- it's like the right hand doesn't go with the left hand as well.

>> Carlene Tinker: Exactly. I was just going to say that one group is doing something but they don't publicize or somehow that information doesn't get-- it's not unified.

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: Their’s not a unified effort to really propogate this--

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- this information.

>> Robert Ogata: You're right. I mean, even the fact that the National Museum exists today, how many people have been down there? You know, how often do you go? You know, I'm saying things about this unique camp site, you know, I don't know, I don't have a vehicle. I don't have a source of, you know, people who are energized enough to be able to do this and so on. I just exist on my own, you know, what I do, and how I'm able to go ahead and get my work out, and where other people can see it and so on, and make some effort in terms of identity, you know, ethnicity and so on because we are now coming to a point where now we are becoming so one as a nation and so one of immigrants and so on. And we all want to do this little part to remain and have this identity. And so however you do it, in your job, whatever and so on, or this--

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. Well, I'm glad that you brought this up because it incentivizes me to reach out to some of these younger people because I do work with these kids during the summer when I go on these archeology field trips. There-- I know that some of them are very into it, OK. Do you remember the name Pat Suzuki, an entertainer?

>> Robert Ogata: Oh yeah, everyone knew.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, her nieces are very involved in the Japanese-American culture, OK. And so, I can-- let me-- that's an assignment that I made for myself just now--

>> Robert Ogata: Sure.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- to really reach out and find out what the kids are doing.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely. And then are they reaching out beyond where they are? Because they can go ahead and excavate and do all this and so on, research as much as they can, is there a question in their mind saying, well, I wonder if this is happening in other camps.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah, yeah. I don't know.

>> Robert Ogata: Do you work in isolation?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. That's very good. As I said, I've got a new project, yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Terrific.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, let's get back to your life. It sounds like when you first came back from camp from Jer-- Gila, excuse me, that things were not really very comfortable but eventually, things kind of panned out. When you were in high school, you--

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- you were able to participate generally but there were some very gray areas that you couldn't participate in. So basically, how would you evaluate your life in Selma in the San Joaquin Valley? Has it been positive? Has it been negative?

>> Robert Ogata: No, I still consider then my hometown, Selma, my hometown. I'm reminded every-- annually when there is a retirement for all of the graduates from Selma High School. Its one time that I can make a connection then with then people that have traveled from distances to come to this and I have my Japanese-American friends that I went to high school with. Then in Los Angeles or other places in the city, I mean in the valley, I have my Caucasian friends who still some live in Selma, some live in other places and so on. But at this one point for two days, they get together and exchange stories about that. You know, and that's, well, a part of it. And you may see effort to say, no. You know, let's have a pre-retirement dinner and so, you know, just a clique of small group of friends and so on, so let's go out and have some Mexican food. So you make the effort to get down there and share that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: You know, so it's a small part.

>>Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>>Robert Ogata: But then there are other friends and so on that I-- you know, my Japanese-American friends and so on are all kind of scattered and I've lost track of them. You know, they've gone through [unintelligible] and other places to live or whatever, and I haven’t made any connection. The only connection I make is that if there's a death, you know, but that's it.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: So, you know, it's getting even harder for us to do and because, you know, I don't know if it's because of

then where we are in life or maybe then the fact that this had happened to us. And maybe we're in that position where we don't want to worry or forget or think about it. I don't know. I haven't-- You know, I haven't had this kind of conversation with them.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Because often, we don't do that. If we spend enough time together, it'll get around to that. It'll get around to camp, you know, because it's a part of our history and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: But for most of the time, we're too busy with small stuff that makes no sense at all. That's true.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. We lose sight. The way I'd become familiar with you, Mr. Ogata, is through your exhibit that you had here at the Henry Madden Library, when two years ago, I think it was, we had the Executive Order 9066.

>> Robert Ogata: Right. Has it been two years?

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. I think this was two years.

>> Robert Ogata: I had it well--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: OK.

>> Carlene Tinker: And there's a wonderful story behind those drawings that you exhibited. Do you want to tell us a little bit about the background on how you painted those-- not painted, but drew those pictures? And maybe you can show us a few of them.

>> Robert Ogata: Sure. I had-- Of when--after then my daughter's insistence that I revisit the site at Gila, and then I knew that after coming back there and I came back into my studio I had a little upsto--uptown loft down in Central Fresno, and I kind of thought about it for a period of time and realized that, yeah, you know, this is important. This is important for me and I think it's important for other people. And so, I thought, well, OK, I'm going to take on this project. And so I did as much research. I went through the Fresno County Library, dug up information about then the people who took photographs of the camps, about the people that were involved in, you know, in any kind of relationship to the camp that were within, you know, militant kind of, you know, communication and so on. And so then I just went to my studio and I knew at that point that because

of the experience and the kind of rawness of the experience that they would be black and white drawings. They would be charcoal drawings and so on. I knew they would not be finished paintings because that says almost too much and it doesn't reflect then what then the experience was about. I think that the immediacy of the drawings and the lack of color was important. So then I would take these large sheets of watercolor papers, size the area, and then start doing these drawings. I try to imagine then what my brother-- older brother and younger brother look like. And so I would start drawing these things of what does a 10-year-old look like? What does a 5-year-old look like? And I would just kind of figure out and so on. So then some of the drawings I have done, they were not from photographs. They were just from what I thought kids at that age would like.

>> Carlene Tinker: Oh wow.

>> Robert Ogata: Even myself, I had no drawings of myself. The only photograph that I had was then from the department of interior collection of then of information about all the internees and so on that we had asked for and so on. So there was that ID photo of my father. That was the only drawing-- I mean, photograph of my father. Everything else was then accumulated from things that I had read, things that I had thought I remembered, you know, like I thought I remembered then the olive-drabbed train there and all these people that would gather there and seeing that train, you know, and all these people there that look like me that were kind of, no, there were the plainclothesmen, you know, Caucasians, you know, probably FBI, you know. And yet they were there in the olive-drabbed, you know, uniformed soldiers that were there, you know, just they were there, you know. And I don't know if they had anticipated or expected some kind of negative response or so on. So anyway, then the drawings and then eventually then that's why-- matter of fact, I've done them and so on. And they set a date to show them at the cooperative gallery they belong to and that's when then Jacquelin Pilar who was the curator of the Fresno Art Museum at the time had said, you know, I want to see what's happening at your studio. So that's when she came by, saw the drawings, and I said nothing to her and she spent probably 15 to 20 minutes looking at them. We had no conversations at all. And the first thing she says, she said, can the museum have these drawings on loan? We have a show that's coming up at the museum and it's a show about discrimination. And so I said, yeah, I guess so, you know, I-- they're finished pretty much here and so on. And so we scheduled that and so on, and so that was then the traveling show of "The Diary of Anne Frank" exhibition as well as the discrimination about other ethnic groups whether it be

army and genocide or whatever people that had, you know, that had grandparents who were involved in that and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: So yeah. That's when--

>> Carlene Tinker: Do you have any of those photos that maybe--

>> Robert Ogata: Yes, I do. And it's just kind of interesting that when I prepared to come, my wife said, she says, you know, I think maybe you should just take this just in case. And so I wasn't quite sure, you know, whether it was going to be necessary or not. So yes, these are then a collection of photos that I had taken when I revisited the site at the insistence of my daughter. So they were images of what I saw and sensed after more than 50 years, and about what then things that I kind of remembered and knowing then my history was about the dike or about then a pond or about this and that, that I had completely forgotten about. But once you're there, you have this experience coming back right at you, the smell of the desert, you know, the mountain range that you saw every day for three years, and so on. So then I took a lot of photos and so on, took photos of then the pond that my father had built and other additional information and so on. So that's what I had used harshly as the information or narrative information about the experience of three years and so on.

>> Carlene Tinker: Isn't that amazing that you could stand there and just being physically there all of a sudden--

>> Robert Ogata: You can't forget that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Isn't that amazing?

>> Robert Ogata: I know, yeah. I mean, small things like that, you know, about how the smell of the desert and that's a very distinct smell. So yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: And I was old enough to understand that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. I said that to one of the anthropologists and I said, “wait a minute, I haven't thought about this for years, I'm standing in my barrack and all of a sudden, I could remember where the potbelly stove was. I can remember where the cot was.“ And she said, “yeah, we have these layers. We have these layers of memory.”

>> Robert Ogata: That's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: And just being physically there.

>> Robert Ogata: That's right.

>> Carlene Tinker: elicited--

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah. And when we went down to the National Museum, they have a reproduction of a room and when I walked in there and I was like, this is really small. It was 20 by 20 or 20 by 25, you know, feet, and as a young boy of seven or eight, you know, you don't think of those things and so on. But as an adult coming back and seeing this, and it's just this raw--

>> Carlene Tinker: That's where you lived.

>> Robert Ogata: Yes. But, you know, the things that are important for a young child are very different than they are for an adult or someone who was a teenager and so on. So I have-- Yeah. I don't know what I can-- that will show up on the camera, you know, that would indicate then, you know, that experience and so on. This was a Canal Camp-- Again, I guess I'll have to hold it up like this, Canal Camp-- a little bit of history and so on. One of the other things too is that when we visited this camp, let me show you maybe some things that might be appropriate. I mean, this is important. Here is this person who I don't even know at all. And in fact, there are-- her name is Harata and she was in the camp and it just so happens that their family or the husband had built this little below-ground pond and to go ahead and make reference to this pond was the fact that there was a canal that ran on one side of the camp and in this dike that was made by the Corps of Engineers to prevent flooding. And so, then a lot of men in the camp would then-- because the barracks that were on these--

>> Carlene Tinker: Piers.

>> Robert Ogata: -- piers and so on and were basically had a little space, crawlspace beneath them because there's no plumbing and whatever. And to create a little shady spot, would then dig out these ponds so the fish they caught would have some shade so as instead of being out in the wide open and so on. I mean, somewhere out in the open and so on. So anyway, what had happened was that then the person who was this-- this person who was the head of the-- gave me access to the camp and so on, and said as he was-- as we were touring the site said, well, you know, there are all these ponds, for some reason. It must be

because of the canal and people went fishing and caught things and whatever. But we have one pound-- one pond who-- that is above ground and I kind of named it the crown pond because it's the only one that's above the ground. And as he was saying this, it didn't mean anything to me at all. And until then, we started touring the site. And let me show you then what I found. We saw-- Well, there were some other things and so on but anyway, here is an example then. OK. Yeah. OK. This is then as we were making our tour on the camp to see where the mess hall was located and you can still tell that's where the mess hall was because there was a raised path and it had pebbles on it. And so, he said, well, yeah, that was where we used to stand in line to gain access to the mess hall. And I said, well, if that's where we gained access, and I walked around I said, well, this is where the exit was. Strange how, you know, you understand, well, that's what this place was. And so then as we were touring around, my daughter who read a map of the camp and she knew where 24 7A was located, she said, well, this is where it is, and I think we're getting close to that. So then we were kind of following her, and she's said, well, I think this is where your barrack was, 24, you know. And this is number 7, this is where it stood. And as we approached there, we saw this structure on the ground. And as soon as I saw it, I began--was immediately taken with a flashback of watching my father exit the barrack and reaching in the water of this above-ground pond to get water to go in and rinse his face. And I thought, oh my goodness, I have forgotten about the fact that this was his. So this is an example of the pond itself, and I don't know if its legible or not or so on. And the fact that then he had then found bits and pieces of concrete and rocks and that's what the men did. And so he built this thing that was above the ground. So that is a remnant of my past and my experience that I had never anticipated that would exist. So, based on this then, it led me then to understand about that, oh yeah, well, let's go ahead and climb--scamper up to where the dike is. And this is then a dike that was built to then return then-- oh let me go in and get to that point here. Oh yes, well, this is the view-- that's the view, that's a little bit awkward. The view here is then standing on top of the dike looking down the length of the dike. And it was built by the Corps of Engineers because as they were building the camp, that they would have these flash floods and water would come in then to the building area and so on so they had to build this to define then where then to make sure the water then moved to another area and so on. Let me-- OK. So then, as we were there during this visit and we scampered up the top of the dike, my daughter and I had them—we were standing there and then with—this other man who was the-- who led us--

who took us there and so on. And we were talking about this and then there is a photograph of maybe-- maybe it's not here. Yeah. Anyway, there's a photograph then of him and then-- and as we were standing there. And it's-- Again, it's very, very surprising the fact that you know this structure and your flashback as a seven or eight-year-old boy, and I said, oh, we built a fort on the other side of this dike. And so my daughter, Miye said, well, let's go and try to find it. So we scampered down on the backside of the dike and so on and then she went to one side and I went then to the left. And for some reason, I had no reason to understand why, I came right upon then where the fort was built. I for some reason sensed that this is where it is. And so, it's very, very hard to see then but basically it was a depression in the ground and here is a small photograph here of then me sitting there or squatting there and saying, well, this is then this shallow space in the middle of the desert that was once covered with shrub and cardboard and sand to disguise it that you could, as a seven or eight-year-old boy crawl into, and had this little private space as young kids would do.

>> Carlene Tinker: And to think it's still there.

>> Robert Ogata: Right, absolutely. In fact this is the photograph and--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- the three of us standing on the top of the dike.

>> Carlene Tinker: On the dike, on the lower level--

>> Robert Ogata: Looking back, yes. Looking back--

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: -- at the where the site of the, of the camp was located. So as a result then, I mean there's some other things, though, theirs a-- well, I think this--Well, there is a--

>> Carlene Tinker: So how did you move to your drawings, what-- but you didn't use these photographs when you did your drawings. You said all of that--

>> Robert Ogata: I did, look--.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- came from your memories.

>> Robert Ogata: Well, in case, this is a photograph right here of then the home base of the baseball field that was right adjacent to the barrack. And I thought that was incredible this artifact and so on. And so I took a photo of it and I said, “well, OK.” This is a part of that history about then, remember watching baseball game, youth baseball games of people playing it because the access was right there. And so as a result, I thought it was important. It's a part of our history and so on. One thing-- you know what, I just-- as I look at these images and so on and I had shared this and the fact that then information about, with Carlene, about the idea that then in the portion of the camp and so on that as I think the camp were being notice everyone going to be leaving and so on that then a family had a pet dog that had died and they had-- the family had built this concrete monument to this dog. It was on of course the Pima Indian people's reservation. And then after the camps were deserted and so on, well, in the process the Pima people then developed a culture of agriculture which is not a part of their inheritance and so on. The Pima people were not farmers. But then as a result then, what had happened on their land by then-- because there were-- I remember there were flower farms where the Japanese men would then develop flow—you know, acres of flowers and so on and citrus and so on, so then they, over a period of time realized at the end that they can become a now a culture and a people that are now agriculturalist.

>> Carlene Tinker: Hmm. Huh.

>> Robert Ogata: You know, because their history doesn't say that.

>> Carlene Tinker: I'll be darned.

>> Robert Ogata: You know they lived on the last-- as Native Americans live and so on, you know. They had, you know, what is their culture? You know, is it about making pottery? Is it about what? Is it about ranching? What? So anyway, I thought that was very important. So, anyway, let me show you some images then. This is an image which was a-- what had happened was and I don't know if I had mentioned this the fact that then that I had gone to my studio and then had then developed these drawings in my studio and then the Director of the Fresno Art Museum, Jacquelin Pilar [assumed spelling] had come to my studio to see what was taking place, what was that-- what I doing and so on. So I showed her. “Well, these were drawings that we’re doing as a result of my visit to the internment camp.” So then she said, “wow.” And I don't know if I even mentioned this, that the fact that I said that, you know, after looking at them, and she had spent some time, saying, "Can the museum then borrow these for

an exhibition? We have an up-and-coming exhibition called it was about discrimination that was held at the Fresno Art Museum in 1995." And I said, “well, yeah, sure, I guess.” And so then as a result, this was the first showing of these drawings and this, and of course it was, you know, dedicated to my mother and father, you know, the fact that they, you know, this was then their history. This was, you know, their family that eventually were part of this and so on. I want to show you some drawings. Well, these are-- OK. This is the installation view of how the drawings were done and so on. They were on the wall. And there were some individual-- one of the things I found-- here are some individual images of the drawings. And one thing I found in was that in my studio wall, I had this, upstairs loft and I would do these singular drawings on paper and then I found that there was something missing as I looked at the drawing, I kept pondering, sitting in my studio looking at these drawings and looking at this, what's wrong, what's missing here? And I realized that that then, the experience I had of three years was a narrative experience in which we have these highlights of different things that took place in that three-year time as you were growing up as a young boy. And you remember things like buying ice cream bar for 5 cents. You remember then the flood that took place over here and watching this man trying to cross then this flooded area. You remember the ghost stories that were told by your older siblings or teenage kids to go ahead and frighten these young boys and whatever. So we have this part of this and so on. And I realized that that what I should maybe think about is, maybe move them around. I kept moving them around and eventually found as I moved them around a story started to develop with each set of drawings and then concluded at that point with drawings that should butt up against each other or overlap slightly with different images that talk about a particular thing. The dike, you know. The dike. And for us it was important and so as a result then that's what I had used. And so there was some drawings about that. There is the fact that with my father, after the first year had that the government-- that needed then young eligible people to harvest crops in Idaho and so on because most eligible young people had all gone off to war. And so I remembered then that he had then— were gone to go ahead and harvest sugar beets and whatever during that period. And so, in looking at archival information from the Department of the Interior, I found his ID photo that he used had to carry around during that time that he was there. So then this modern photo over here is then the photo of him, all right.

>> Carlene Tinker: And that's the only photo that you used in this drawing.

>> Robert Ogata: That was the only photo that I had used other than some things--archival photos that were taken by other people who were documenting the camps, you know, there were airplane shots, and so on. And, you know, that's a part of that history and so on. And I would go ahead and reach out and search that. And then at the same time try to go ahead and remember things that took place. So I might show you a couple more. What, I will-- here, let me show you the one of-- yeah. Oh, here. The photo here on the bottom where my finger is me and my brothers. And I had no photos of what we looked like. So this is a what would you call it, a suggestion about what young Japanese boys look like at certain ages and I just kind of made that up. And so I used that as documentation of the experience and so on. This is then my father, here I know these tags here, I guess they're in the way. My father here and that's his photo from-- ID photo from when he went off to go and harvest crops and the baseball home plate--

>> Carlene Tinker: On that baseball home plate.

>> Robert Ogata: -- because he was an avid baseball fan. And I think this was a tribute to him the fact that then the idea of then seeing the baseball home plate and who he was. And this is of course then-- let me show you, this one here, the further one here in the bottom here is the photo of three people, the one young photo of my mother, as she was as a young person growing up in the United States. The one in the middle was as I remember her. And the photo on the other side is then my daughter who is responsible for this series of drawings. So there's a legacy then that I am trying to show.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: This is also then a photo of her and her section then of the exhibition [Photo of daughter, Miye, in front of an exhibition]. Because in her research, the senior research when she was in college, she had taken upon herself in her senior thesis to do the-- to document then the literature that came out of the camps at that time because there were where she had found, that as she visited, the camps, she had done doing her research with her college group that literature was a part of all of that. And so she then documented as much as she could and that became then the sole source for then for her senior paper. So, anyway, that's a-- here's my--

>> Carlene Tinker: Your family?

>> Robert Ogata: Family, yeah. And then of course then this was, you know after my mother and father died. You know, they were

not aware of what was going to be taking place and so on. These were the drawings in my studio, as you can see my wall was covered with these images and trying to figure out how to make them work, how to make them fit. So--

>> Carlene Tinker: Now what's happened to these? Where are they going? Or are they going anywhere?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, at this point, the drawings are in my studio and I-- and my son-in-law make a box so that there is-- these drawings when they have been shown several times and they've been shown as unframed drawings just as they were showing us sheets of paper. And so they're designed then with a piece of plexi that covers them and supports them. So you see them as just-- because there's something about when you frame a drawing, it becomes too formal, it becomes too kind of precious, and I wanted them-- this is the way they were done in my studio, this is the way that you see them.

>> Carlene Tinker: And that was your reflection. Those were your memories.

>> Robert Ogata: Personal memories, reflections about my time there and so on. Yes, absolutely, so. Anyway, there are-- well, I guess, yeah, that's pretty much it. You know, this is-- the bottom photo here of my daughter and me, and then the title of the show. You know the title, you know, "Experience, Memory, and Legacy". You know, drawings of the internment camp.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Well, you know, Mr. Ogata, I-- first of all, your story is fascinating, OK? And obviously, I've learned a lot, and then also you gave me the task of doing more research on who is carrying on the torch --

>> Robert Ogata: Right, absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- you know?

>> Robert Ogata: Sure.

>> Carlene Tinker: And then I think --

>> Robert Ogata: I mean, this is a part of it.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yes. This is a part of it.

>> Robert Ogata: You're doing your part now.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right. And that is one of the reasons I became so interested in this interview project partly because of my own awakening, OK? And I think that I've heard that you said

that too about first, you were denying-- going through a period of denial but then --

>> Robert Ogata: That’s right, that’s right. Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And it's so important for people like you to have shared your stories because without this kind of a project, it would be lost.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely.

>> Carlene Tinker: Certainly, your family has heard them, however, to have them actually documented this very precious and other people besides your family, scholars who want to know about World War II or want to know about Japanese-Americans in the valley, this is a wonderful resource, OK. And the fact that you through your art have passed on your thoughts about your heritage, about your family, about your mother and father or your brothers and so forth. All of these things are positive contributions on your part. I think one of the things I like to ask people when I interview them is, what kinds of contributions do you think you've made. What kind of legacy are you presenting? How would you like to be remembered?

>> Robert Ogata: Well, you know, I think the thing that I find that-- because I have to continually kind of make reference then to the culture as early immigrants and so on growing up in a immigrant family pretty much and what the culture was like. And it's very, very distinct and different and so on compared without what the culture of Americans today. So I take a look at then my culture and yet I take a look at then my daughters, I took a look at my grandchildren, and every generation that comes along, the culture changes. And so then we have this kind of sense of identity because its become so mixed and changed and so on that culture gets lost. And, yeah, I think it's important then that future generations understand then that, you know, what is my responsibility as a part of this culture because it's very easy then to become-- not deny but we get so overwhelmed with life in general. And we find as result of this then-- you know, thank goodness that there's a certain kind of, you know, interest today about genealogy and I find that even my wife and her research into genealogy about finding about her family and so on has been very inspirational for her. And she's going back to Germany three or four times to do that research. And so even she has then, you know, realized that this is important and so on. And so as result then, as I look at myself or I look at-- like I said my grandchildren or whatever, what's going to happen now? And so I'm hoping then that then-- that there is a continuing kind of interest, motivation, then, to say well you

know, we need to do more of this. How can-- you know, and the problem of course is the fact that how do we do this? Because we can talk about these things and so on, but it always takes action.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: I mean, it's the very same thing as when I first was asked to speak about my experience as an internee when I got this job at Oakdale High School and the social studies teacher there, I can't even remember his name and so on, and asked me if I was an internee and-- so then if I would then talk to this group, at that point, in dwelling over this over a long period of time, said, I, well, I could easily say well no, I think it's-- I never thought about that, and I don't think it's necessary to, you know. But yet, I felt this gnawing necessity to say "I need to do this." And so you then drum up the courage to bring back all these things that you had completely forgotten about and say, this is what I-- this is my story, this is my family's story. And so--after I had done that, I-- which I found was very, very difficult and so on. Then in previous years and so on when I've been asked to talk about this and so on, I found it to become easier and easier and easier to do. But also find that then this is a kind of obligation that I have. I don't know if it's a commitment and so on, I think my artwork in some small way reflects that. But I think it's an obligation at the same time that this be then something that is continuing as it go on from generations.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right, right. Well, I think certainly you were doing your part and-- within your own family making sure that they realize who they are and where they came from.

>> Robert Ogata: Sure.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And I accept the responsibility just like you in trying to make sure that other people know about our history. For so long I've denied it.

>> Robert Ogata: Sure.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK. And so now it sort of a personal responsibility that I fill in. I like the term, obligation. OK. And I'm not embarrassed about it anymore.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: OK.

>>Robert Ogata: Sure.

>>Carlene Tinker: And--

>> Robert Ogata: And to realize that we have gone through that. That there was a point-- and I don't know if, you know, third and fourth generation, they've never experienced that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: They don't know what it's like and this is why I talk about how culture has changed that then we have gone through that period of denial and frustration and all the negative things that took place and so on. So we have been reliant on that experience to become who we are today.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: Whereas today, I don't know what obligation then my grandson has. He's just like everybody else.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And I think by assuming this responsibility, you and I and others who are also involved in passing the word on --

>> Robert Ogata: Right.

>> Carlene Tinker: -- OK, I think it sort of a individual fulfillment of what we are and what our lives have been.

>> Robert Ogata: I hope so.

>> Carlene Tinker: I hope so too.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Is there anything else that you would like to share? I think we've kind of covered a lot today.

>> Robert Ogata: Probably more than you want to hear.

[Laughter]

No, but I-- the one thing I thank you for this opportunity to be able to share this. And, you know, because as I've talked about this in other venues and whatever but to have-- and again, it's been documented in other places as well. But to have this done as a part of a project, a singular-minded project to go ahead and document then the lives of people that have gone through this and so on is again, a little bit different too. And I think that's important.

>> Carlene Tinker: Yeah.

>> Robert Ogata: Yeah.

>> Carlene Tinker: Right.

>> Robert Ogata: I think you have a big job ahead of you.

>> Carlene Tinker: What's that?

>> Robert Ogata: You have a big job ahead of you.

[Laughter]

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, I'm going to-- I'm turning 80 this year, so. I'm counting the years.

>> Robert Ogata: OK. Yeah, I--I understand that.

>> Carlene Tinker: Well, anyway, it's been wonderful.

>> Robert Ogata: Thank you.

>> Carlene Tinker: I hope you have enjoyed it.

>> Robert Ogata: I've enjoyed it very much.

>> Carlene Tinker: As I said at the outset, this will become part of a website, it'll be Issei to Gosei Interview Project. Your interview will be uploaded, it will be available to anybody online. And that's the beauty of the technology today.

>> Robert Ogata: Sure. Absolutely true.

>> Carlene Tinker: And it's wonderful.

>> Robert Ogata: Absolutely true.

>> Carlene Tinker: And I hope the readers and people who would view this interview will experience a wonderful experience that I have [had] today. Robert Ogata, husband, father, grandfather, teacher, artist, I don't know if I should put them in that order.

>> Robert Ogata: Its perfectly fine, its great, works for me.

>> Carlene Tinker: And today, that concludes our interview. Today is Monday, February 25, 2019. And thank you again, Mr. Ogata. I appreciate your participating--or.

>> Robert Ogata: Thank you for having me.