

**2026 ART ON
MARKET STREET
POSTER SERIES**

2026 Art on Market Poster Series Public Art Project

The 2026 Art on Market Poster Series, titled *Now & Then: Living Memories*, will focus on previously unrecorded, newly unearthed & unconventional San Francisco histories. The name of the series is taken from a 2017 essay by writer, historian and activist Rebecca Solnit, in which she argues for “more history, not less”. Artists are encouraged to use primary sources, such as: libraries, archives, oral histories, historical societies & museums, public records, etc. to create a cohesive series uncovering overlooked histories and memorializing new histories. This project intersects with the continued work of SFAC’s Mellon-Grant funded Shaping Legacy program.



Here Signifies, 2016, screen print



COLIN KIMZEY



Pessimism of the Intellect, Optimism of the Will, 2022, inkjet print

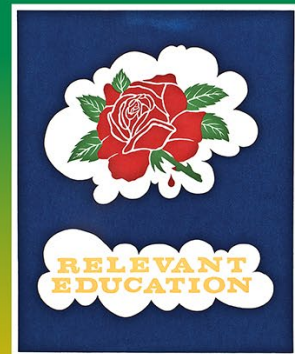
Dreaming People's History: Third World Liberation Front



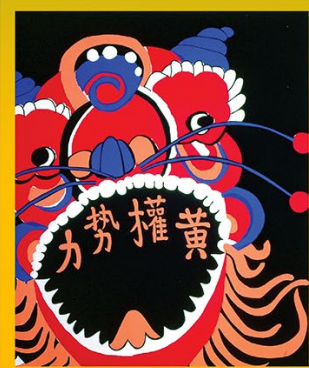
ALL POWER TO THE STUDENT REVOLT!

Asians in the US, like other people of color, did not have easy access to their history. They would have to fight for it. In fact, it required the country's longest ever student strike to establish the first School of Ethnic Studies, right here in San Francisco.

Three converging movements inspired San Francisco State College students of color to dream of their own people's histories: the Civil Rights Movement, the national liberation movements of the colonized world, and the global student movement of 1968.



Saichi Kawahara, 1968-69



Red Guard, 1968

State's Black Student Union initiated the strike in November 1968 after a year of fruitlessly negotiating for a Black studies department. It was immediately joined by the Third World Liberation Front, a multiracial coalition formed in the spring. The name of this new organization identified it with freedom struggles across Latin America, Africa, and Asia (most notably Vietnam). *Tricontinental Magazine*, published in Cuba, promoted the idea of the Third World as a revolutionary political project with vivid silkscreen posters tucked into each issue.

Silkscreen was also the emblematic art form of the other student movements that rocked the year 1968. According to Rupert García, TWLF liaison to the art department, a faculty member who had been in Paris during the famous May events recounted the silkscreen workshops that illustrated the slogans of the French student and worker uprisings. In October, México City students printed posters protesting the Olympics. The working class commuter college on the foggy edge of San Francisco was the next to start a poster brigade.

In addition to denouncing the school administration and the brutal police repression of the strike, the SF State workshop articulated a budding Third World identity. García created posters depicting Che Guevara and Emiliano Zapata; posters in Chinese declared "Yellow Power" and "China Will Be Strong" with images of dragons.

Ultimately, the central tenet of ethnic studies was to serve the people. After the victory of the strike, the students took silkscreen into their communities. García went on to cofound Galería de la Raza in the Mission; one of its first exhibitions included Cuban silkscreen posters of Vietnam. In Chinatown, poster brigade participants Jim Dong and Mike Chin cofounded Kearny Street Workshop, today the longest running Asian American interdisciplinary arts organization in existence.



Images courtesy of the
San Francisco State University archives



Red Guard, 1968

Dreaming
People's
History:
CARP



Chester Hideo Yoshida, 1982

Scouring libraries and used book stores for Asian last names, CARP turned up a trove of all but forgotten works, which they anthologized in 1975's *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*: Carlos Bulosan's 1943 *America is in the Heart*; Toshio Mori's 1949 *Yokohama, California*; Diana Chang's 1956 *The Frontiers of Love*; Louis Chu's 1961 *Eat a Bowl of Tea*; and CARP's prized find, *No-No Boy*, John Okada's 1957 novel about a Japanese American war resister.

Chan came across *No-No Boy* in a used book store in Japantown in 1970 and bought it for fifty cents. CARP republished the book when no one else would, with Wong selling copies out of the trunk of his yellow Mustang and mailing out orders himself. Okada's book had been rejected by his community when he died in 1971 (just months before CARP could track him down); at the height of the Asian American Movement, the 1976 CARP edition sold out before it even went to print. The University of Washington, which had rebuffed CARP at first, took notice. Today *No-No Boy* is recognized as the first Japanese American novel, and UW has reprinted many of the works CARP brought back to light in *Aiiieeeee!*

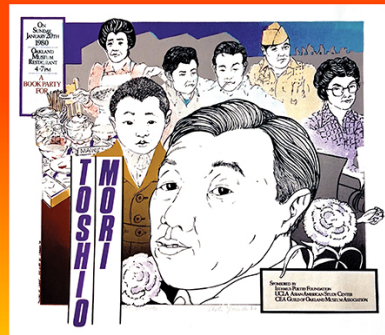


Artist Unknown, 1975

WE ARE NOT
NEW HERE

Images courtesy
of the Kearny Street
Workshop archives
and Nancy Wong

The Third World Liberation Front won a College of Ethnic Studies at SF State in 1969, but teachers like Jeffery Paul Chan, founding member of the College and its Asian American Studies Department, had little available material for their first classes. Chan, playwright Frank Chin, creative writing graduate student Shawn Hsu Wong, and poet Lawson Fusao Inada formed the Combined Asian-American Resources Project, or CARP, to uncover as many writings by Asian Americans as possible.



Chester Hideo Yoshida, 1980

CARP held the first Asian American Writers Conference in 1975, while Chan taught the resurrected literature of Asian America to the alumni of the Third World Liberation Front. His students went on to make their own contributions to the literature, art, and activism of the Asian American Movement.

Español
中文
Filipino



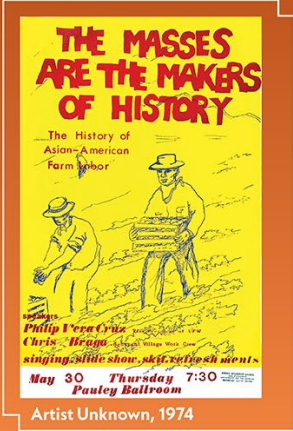
Dreaming People's History: Manilatown Manongs



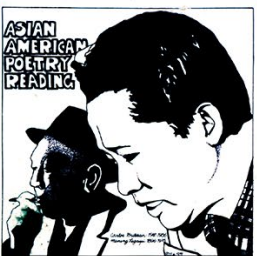
ISUDA TI IMMUNA

Images courtesy of
the Kearny Street
Workshop archives

Following the Third World Liberation Front strikes for ethnic studies in 1969, Pilipino American poet Al Robles began taking his tape recorder to San Francisco's historic Manilatown to learn from its elderly bachelors—the manongs, from Ilocano for older brother. A community that once spanned several blocks of Kearny Street was reduced to a single building, the International Hotel (or "I-Hotel"), whose residents had formed the United Filipino Association the previous year to fight their eviction. One of the UFA's tenant leaders was the poet Joaquin Legaspi.



Over the course of the 10-year fight for the I-Hotel, Robles and his peers developed close relationships with the manongs and recorded dozens of interviews. They learned of their elders' leadership in the labor struggles of the 1930s from the fields of California to the canneries of Alaska, which steeled them to resist eviction. The manongs told of exploitation, racist mobs, and anti-miscegenation laws. These oral histories fed the younger generation's poems, posters, murals, and even a traveling play (*Isuda Ti Immuna*, "They Who Were First" in Ilocano) by which they preserved these parts of the Pilipino American story for posterity.

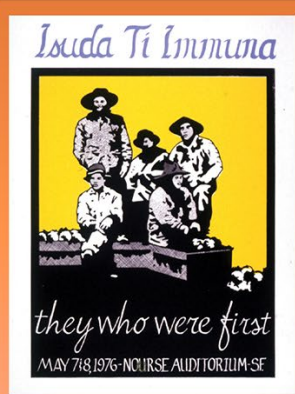


City College of San Francisco
50 Phelan Avenue / SF
ARTS Building / Rm.A308
March 16 / 8:30pm

Jack Loo, 1977

Like the other manongs, Legaspi came to the US as part of the early waves of Pilipino contract laborers. After being blacklisted from Hawai'i for organizing his fellow workers, he joined the bohemian community down the street from the I-Hotel at the Montgomery Block, one of a handful of Asian Americans including painter and poet Nanying Stella Wong (the "Monkey Block" was demolished in 1959 to build the Transamerica Pyramid, a looming symbol of the Financial District swallowing up Manilatown). Legaspi himself coined the term "Manilatown" as director of the Manilatown Multi-Service Center (the blueprint for poet social workers like Robles at the later Manilatown Senior Center and Janice

Mirikitani at Glide Church). Before he passed away in the midst of the eviction struggle in 1975, he introduced the new generation to the poetic world of the manongs and left a profound impact on their writing.



Artist Unknown, 1976

THEY
WHO
WERE FIRST

Dreaming
People's
History:
Angel
Island



THE FIRST ASIAN AMERICAN
WRITERS WORKSHOP

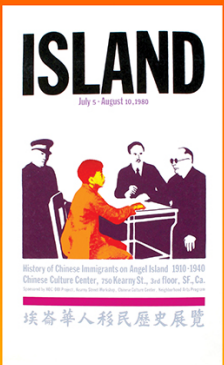
Images courtesy
of the Kearny Street
Workshop archives



Laurie J. Chan, 1975

entry or deporting them. During their imprisonment, the detainees wrote poetry about the voyage to America, their longing for home, and their treatment on the island, keenly aware that they were experiencing racial discrimination.

Poet Genny Lim, together with historians Him Mark Lai and Judy Yung, began a project (HOC DOI—History of Chinese Detained on Island) to collect, translate, and publicize the poems. They invited photographer Crystal K.D. Huie to take pictures of the carvings and other members of Kearny Street Workshop to make wall rubbings.



Zand Gee, 1980

WAS A
DETENTION CENTER

Asian Americans dreaming people's history found an unexpected resource in 1970: Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. The island had been converted to a state park and the old immigration station on it slated for demolition when Park Ranger Alexander Weiss discovered Chinese calligraphy carved into the walls under the paint. Unable to read the writing or convince his superiors it mattered, he reached out to George Araki, his biology professor at SF State, who had the walls photographed; the engravings were determined to be poems written by detainees held at the immigration station during the Chinese Exclusion Act.

US immigration authorities singled out Chinese migrants for medical examinations, interrogations, and long periods of confinement on the isolated island before ultimately allowing them



Leland Wong, 1976

KSW mounted an exhibition of the Chinese experience at the immigration station in 1976, showing the wall rubbings and Huie's photographs alongside their own silkscreen posters and sculptures. It inspired members of the Chinatown community to break their silence about their own time in detention. Lim, Lai, and Yung published their interviews alongside 135 translated poems in the first edition of *Island: Poetry and History of Chinese Immigrants on Angel Island, 1910-1940* in 1980.

Español
中文
Filipino



Dreaming
People's
History:
Internment



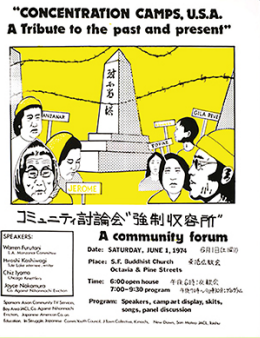
WE ARE THE
CHILDREN

Images courtesy of
the Kearny Street
Workshop archives

In 1969, on the heels of the Third World Liberation Front strikes and the historic Southern California pilgrimage to Manzanar concentration camp, Bay Area Japanese Americans trekked to Tule Lake. Of the over 125,000 people of Japanese ancestry the US incarcerated during World War II, Tule Lake Segregation Center on California's northern border was where the government sent the dissidents, draft resisters, and "no-no boys"—those who answered "no-no" to the loyalty questionnaire asking young men to enlist in the army and swear allegiance to their incarcerator.



Chester Hideo Yoshida, 1981



Wes Senzaki, 1974

He read his poems at every subsequent pilgrimage, becoming known as the Poet Laureate of Tule Lake.

Alongside teach-ins and community forums, poems sowed the seeds for a full-blown movement for redress and reparations. Sansei poets Janice Mirikitani and Lawson Fusao Inada wrote about their childhood experiences at the Rohwer and Jerome camps, respectively, and edited major works featuring voices from camp. Inada republished Toshio Mori, author of *Yokohama, California*, in *Aiiieeeee! An Anthology of Asian-American Writers*; Mirikitani edited *Ayumi: A Japanese American Anthology*, published in 1980. In addition to writing and art by Yonsei (fourth generation), Sansei, and Nisei, Ayumi unearthed and translated work by the Issei, the first generation of Japanese immigrants to America, finally repairing a continuity broken by the concentration camps.



Español
中文
Filipino

OF THE
CONCENTRATION CAMP

If internment planted a deep shame within the Nisei (the second generation of Japanese Americans) around not only the camp experience but their heritage altogether, the stigma of Tule Lake was unspeakable. The Sansei, their children, began the pilgrimages to recover their people's history from the culture of silence and official propaganda, eventually bringing along Nisei pilgrims like Western Addition librarian and no-no boy Hiroshi Kashiwagi. On the bus ride to his onetime prison, Kashiwagi was inspired to write "A Meeting at Tule Lake" about the next generation of radicals rediscovering the site of his own idealistic youth.



Wes Senzaki, 1973

Project Schedule

- **Adrian Arias**
 - January – March 2026
- **Colin Choy Kimzey**
 - April – June 2026
- **Vida Kuang**
 - July – September 2026
- **Amir Khadar**
 - October – December 2026