



**GODDARD COLLEGE**

PROGRESSIVE EDUCATION FOR CREATIVE MINDS



**Judy Hiramoto, MFA**

**Faculty Advisor, MFA in Interdisciplinary Arts Program**

*Plainfield, Vermont Residency Option*

### ***Extended Faculty Biography***

I live in San Francisco. As an undergraduate at an alternative college (Antioch College) the joke among students was that after graduation, there are only two places to live – San Francisco or Berkeley. What draws me to the Bay Area is the cosmopolitan and innovative life style including art, ecology, technology, and a generous tolerance for eccentricity. As I was returning on a plane from Vermont, I overheard a student tell a first-time visitor, “You’ll love San Francisco. It’s the kind of place where you can wear a clown suit and mismatched shoes, and no one will criticize you. Friends probably will say, ‘I like the way you’re expressing yourself today.’”

My home is located at the base of San Bruno Mountain. Since the Summer 2007 residency, my research involves the history and ecology of this area that is considered to be one of the seventeen unique and endangered environments in the world and home to three rare butterflies. When the Ohlone people lived here it was an Eden teeming with wildlife living in a riparian environment. Only a few hundred years after the Spanish conquest, it is now an area where only drought-resistant native plants survive.

Recently I planted native species in my garden such as California fuchsia, monkey flower, and lupine to make it more hospitable to butterflies, humming birds, and bees. It is also a staging ground where I create situations to observe natural phenomena in an art project called Jakata Tales. Seven statues of unfired clay Buddhas were covered with guacamole, flax seeds, honey cake, beef, chicken, ham, and salmon. Ants and flies immediately began crawling over the statues. Nocturnal creatures gnawed and mauled the Buddhas, leaving their marks on the clay bodies. These phenomena were documented with photographs.

A recent, completed series is Nuclear Culture that includes ceramics, installation, landscape design, photography, and digital art. The series questions the ethics of bombing civilians in Hiroshima and Nagasaki; nuclear testing in the Nevada Desert which spread fallout throughout America; and the displacement of Bikini Islanders when their islands became the site for further tests. A dialogue I initiated with American Friends Service Committee (a Quaker group) led to a four-person art exhibit on nuclear issues with lectures and performances by artists and the community. Last spring the Hiroshima Peace Institute invited me to Hiroshima to present my work at a workshop with artists, historians, and scientists. Selected work from this series may be viewed at <http://www.planeteria.net/home/jmhiramoto/art.htm>.

I worked as an archeologist in this series, excavating quotes and images from the twentieth century to exemplify what a bizarre culture we have become. I placed imagery and text in other systems such as science, language, and music notation to create associations between seemingly disparate systems and to explore how meaning is construed. Work in this series ranges from ceramic sculpture and installations to photographs and digital imagery. The series was presented in eight solo exhibitions including Wilmington College, Ohio; University of Alaska, Anchorage; University of Southern Oregon, Ashland; University of the Arts, Philadelphia; and Community College of Southern Nevada, Las Vegas. Selected work from this series may be viewed at <http://www.planeteria.net/home/jmhiramoto/art.htm>.

An earlier series of figurative ceramic sculpture expresses gender issues in art. It investigates the challenges women artists face regarding art education, museum display, commodification, appropriation as well as economic, social, and political situations in which the artists find herself.

My work has been exhibited nationally as well as in Japan, Taiwan, Italy, France and Canada. I was awarded a fellowship from American Association of University Women, and grants from the Henry and Chiyo Kuwahara Creative Arts Grant from the Japanese American Citizens League as well as the California Arts Council. My art is in public collections of the City and County of San Francisco, King County Public Art Program (Seattle, Washington), and Oakland Museum (California.)

I have an interdisciplinary artistic practice in which my studio work encompasses a range of media which has its foundations in art history, art theory, history, feminism, and literature of Asian, Hispanic and western cultures. My research interests include women artists, issues of race and gender, nuclear culture, a revisionist version of World War II, 19th century European culture, Japanese culture, contemporary art, art theory, museum display, and economic systems. My current research and artwork is about the commodification of the justice system.

I teach ceramic sculpture, art history, and courses on feminism in the Bay Area. I also worked with a diverse student population on public art and student art projects including people with AIDS, children, frail seniors, and physically and mentally challenged adults.

I grew up in a bi-cultural Japanese American family in Hawaii and currently live in San Francisco. My travels to South America for a year and an extended residency in Japan for five years have been major influences in my artistic practice.

As a graduate of Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio, I advocate a student-centered education in which students are actively engaged in an individualized, integrated and interdisciplinary creative process.

Educational Background: MFA, Ceramics, San Francisco State University; BA, Literature, Antioch College, Yellow Springs, Ohio.