

INSIGHTS FROM KYOTO—JAPAN—ASIA

KYOTO

JOURNAL
76

DIGITAL EDITION

RESTORING DIGNITY



After the tsunami,
Ishinomaki City
photo by John Einarsen

RE-ENVISIONING Living in the Longer Now

EVOLUTION is not always a slow and steady progression. Occasionally, a change of circumstances opens up a fresh chance to refocus, re-evaluate, and re-envision how best to achieve our goals.

Kan Naoto, in his unenviable position as current prime minister of Japan, has rightly observed that following Tohoku's earthquake, tsunami and ensuing unprecedented nuclear crisis, the nation is facing its biggest challenge since the end of World War II. A lot more is at stake now than simply bulldozing rubble into landfill, rebuilding vital infrastructure, retrofitting essential safety fixes, and rebooting a stagnant economy. What's needed once again — as in the turmoil following the capitulation of Japan's disastrous Showa military regime — is an elemental reappraisal of national aspirations.

This time not all of Japan's population has to "endure the unendurable and suffer what is insufferable," but the survivors in Tohoku who have lost family members, friends, homes, and livelihoods — and the tens of thousands forced to evacuate from the fallout zone around Fukushima, with no current prospect of return — are living the reality of Showa Emperor Hirohito's words.

With the full consequences of this all-too-predictable catastrophe still emerging, it's too soon to identify long-term changes in Japanese society, but already all across Japan there is evidence of some kind of psychological turning point. People are clearly rethinking what is most important in their lives, and in particular, reconsidering former patterns of excessive, unnecessary energy consumption.

Japan has a long history of major natural disasters, and is admired around the world for its

resilience, particularly its dramatic comeback after World War II. Japan also has a notable capacity to learn from history — it's no coincidence that the only nation whose cities experienced nuclear bombing has an anti-war clause in its Constitution.

How will Japan, characterized now by its aging, post-industrial society, respond to this new post-Fukushima reality? Once again, the nation has begun to re-envision its future.



Coincidentally, *Kyoto Journal* is also currently undergoing a major renewal — or “e-evolution...”

Generously supported by Heian Bunka Center since 1987, up to our 75th issue (deepest gratitude to Harada Shokei, our publisher), we have just become fully independent. What better time to re-imagine the magazine's aims, and form? Back then, printing on paper and shipping to subscribers and bookstores was the only viable way to publish. Much as we love paper and ink, however, we can't ignore the rapidly advancing potential of digital multimedia — a new publishing world linked seamlessly to vast social networks. (While for diehard devotees of print, we do have a print-on-demand option, also applicable to occasional special projects).

KJ remains solidly based in our home city of Kyoto, and firmly committed to our core values: continuing to provide unique insights from Asia, Japan and Kyoto, both as a regular quarterly magazine and a stimulating, active, and wholly rebuilt website. We are grateful to all our supporters; we especially thank our subscribers and contributors for their patience during this transition.

Welcome to KJ's 76th issue, our very first in fully digital format.

—Ken Rodgers



ABOVE (from "Remembering Gwangju"): These days, Hong Sung Dam is an established and well-known artist. During the Gwangju uprising, he says, "I was making banners and posters." He was especially impressed by how the citizens shared food equally during the brief days of liberation. "It reminded me of the Bible, where Jesus shared his food with the twelve apostles."

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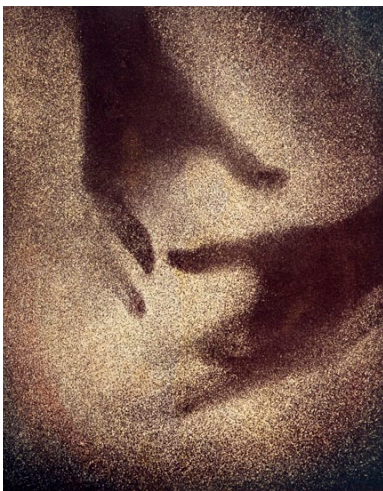
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SARAH BRAYER is known internationally for her poured washi paperworks and aquatint prints. Sarah's art is in the collections of the British Museum, the Sackler Gallery of the Smithsonian, and the American Embassy, Tokyo. She was the first artist ever invited to exhibit at Byodoin Temple, a World Heritage site dating from the Heian period, as part of Kyoto's 1200-year celebration. Her work "Revealing Red" graced the cover of KJ 73.

COVER: Scintillate

Scintillate is part of the "hand series," a suite of aquatint etchings printed on iridescent washi, that capture hands in light. The hands in these images are mine, and were used as a moving stencil to create forms which were etched in copper. The placement expresses the way that hands can sense, touch and sculpt subtle vibrations of light (energy). Between the hands is scintillating space, the infinite potential of what IS.

-Sarah Brayer
sarahbrayer.com

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SUBMISSIONS

Thought-provoking articles on Japan and Asia are invited. KJ is a volunteer-based, non-profit publication; contributors receive a free one-year subscription.

I AM AN ARTIST AND MY WORK IS ABOUT SEEING.

I AM AN ARTIST WHO BY A STROKE OF GOOD FORTUNE MET
A BRAVE AMERICAN LAWYER WHO REPRESENTS SEVERAL
HUNDRED IRAQI DETAINEES IN THE US FEDERAL COURTS.

it is **Difficult**

THE ABU GHRAIB IMAGES OF DANIEL HEYMAN

THE CASES ARE COMPLICATED AND I'M NOT A LAWYER. BUT I'VE LEARNED
THIS MUCH: THE IRAQIS I INTERVIEWED, RELEASED BY THE AMERICAN MILITARY
AFTER MANY MONTHS OR YEARS OF DETENTION,
WERE NEVER FORMALLY ACCUSED OF A CRIME, BROUGHT TO A TRIAL OR GIVEN
LEGAL REPRESENTATION. WHEN THEY LEFT ABU GHRAIB, MANY WERE GIVEN A
\$20 BILL AND DROPPED OFF IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT IN A RANDOM BAGHDAD
NEIGHBORHOOD - THIS WAS CALLED "THE HAPPY BUS."
ONE FORMER DETAINEE TOLD ME, "I HAD A BEARD.
THEY SAID THEY WERE AFTER MEN WITH BEARDS
WHO LOOKED LIKE BIN LADEN."

ANOTHER INTERVIEW BEGAN: "WHY WERE YOU THERE (AT ABU GHRAIB)?"
THE MAN ANSWERED: "I DON'T KNOW, I WAS NEVER ACCUSED. AT 1:30 AM I HEARD
HELICOPTERS NEAR THE HOUSE. IN
SPEAKERS I HEARD 'GET OUT OF THE HOUSE! WE ARE GOING TO BOMB THE
HOUSE.' I CARRIED ONE CHILD, MY PREGNANT WIFE
CARRIED THE OTHER CHILD. A SOLDIER HELD A GUN TO ME AND
TIED MY HANDS. SOLDIERS WERE ON THE ROOF."

DISCO MOSUL → A ROOM WHERE THE SOLDIERS WOULD PUT RELIGIOUS MEN NAKED, PUT BAGS ON THEIR HEADS AND MAKE THEM DANCE FOR 12 HOURS A FEMALE SOLDIER WOULD HIT THEM IF THEY STOPPED OR LOOKED DOWN WHEN THEY FELL EXHAUSTED, THEY WOULD BE BEATEN, THEY WOULD BE TAKEN TO THE INFIRMARY AND TELL AHMAD THAT HE SHOULD GOD HE WAS NOT AT THE DISCO, SOMETIMES THEY WERE MADE TO SLEEP ON EACH OTHER

IN MOSUL THEY WOULD UNDO THE DRESSING ON MY LEG AND POUR GOD WATER ON IT AND IT WAS MUCH MORE PAINFUL WHEN HE GOT TO A.G. THE SOLDIERS KEPT PRESSING HIS LEG AND PUT WATER ON IT THEY WOULD UNDO DRESSING HIM PUT HIM IN A METAL CHAIR AND POUR WATER ON HIS WOUNDS ONCE HE WAS SCREAMING IN PAIN AND ASKED FOR A VALI AND A BLACK ♀ NURSE JESSA SHOVED A PILL IN HIS MOUTH AND SHOVED A FULL BOTTLE OF #30 IN HIS MOUTH AND POURED AND HE THOUGHT HE WAS DROWNING. WHEN HE WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL THEY LEFT HIM OUTSIDE AT THE AIRPORT



IN THE SUN 3 HOURS THE WATER MADE THE WOUND WORSE IT GOT MORE INFECTED THEY PUT HIM ON A METAL CHAIR EVERY DAY TO MAKE HIS PAIN WORSE FOR 12 DAYS HE WAS LEFT IN THE SUN AND THEY WOULD OPEN HIS DRESSING AND PUT A PASTE ON HIS LEG

IN TBNSINA THEY AGAIN POURED AT TRANSI FOR TOND HIM THAT THEY WERE GIVING HIM TO MAKE HIS LEG WORSE SO THAT THEY COULD CUT IT OFF A DR. TOLD HIM THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE HIS LEG FROM THIS OPERATION ROOM AND HE WOKE UP 3 DAYS LATER W/ A

HELD FOR TREATMENT HE WAS HEID FOR 8 MONTHS THIS WAS SOOH

THE NURSE HOW TO TAKE DIDNT KNOW AND JUST CUT THEM OUT AND LEFT THE STIMING INSIDE AND THE STIMING CAME INFECTED HIS ACCUSSATION FABER JUST SAID

HE WOKE UP 3 DAYS LATER W/ A LEG

RESTORING DIGNITY: IT IS DIFFICULT

My brothers were handcuffed. They put the women and children in the middle of the road. It was the worst day. They took everything in the house. They covered my head with a bag. In the prison the female soldier asked me to take off my clothes. I begged not to. She asked me if I was married and how many children I had and I cried because I worried about my wife and children.”

[see <http://www.smithmag.net/wp-content/uploads/abu/AmmanSeries/8.jpg>]

WITNESSED the interviews of over 40 former detainees of Abu Ghraib Prison’s notorious “hard site.” The interviews were held in small conference rooms in hotels in Istanbul or Amman — small tourist hotels, mostly — with rooms filled with touring retirees and young couples on their honeymoons. People present included an Iraqi victim, a translator, a note taker, perhaps another lawyer, myself. We all sat around a table, the witness on one side, myself on the other. I usually manipulated the seating in order to have a clear view of the former detainee’s face so that the finished portrait, full frontal, looked out at the viewer. The lawyer asked a question; it was translated; the Iraqi answered; the answer was translated — sentence by sentence — and then the lawyer asked another question, and so on, until the interview was complete. I painted the portrait and copied the words of the interview verbatim onto the artwork. On paper, I worked with colored gouaches. When I worked in copper, I scratched the letters backwards into the metal so that when the print was made the words would read forward.

Often the victims of torture — for what else can we call this? — were arrested in the middle of the night, ripped from their homes by mob-like patrols of US soldiers. Still others were arrested after having survived bomb attacks in public squares, only to be arrested as the US military thought that proximity to a bombing must mean complicity with in that crime. One Iraqi medical professional was arrested because he had an arrest record, not withstanding

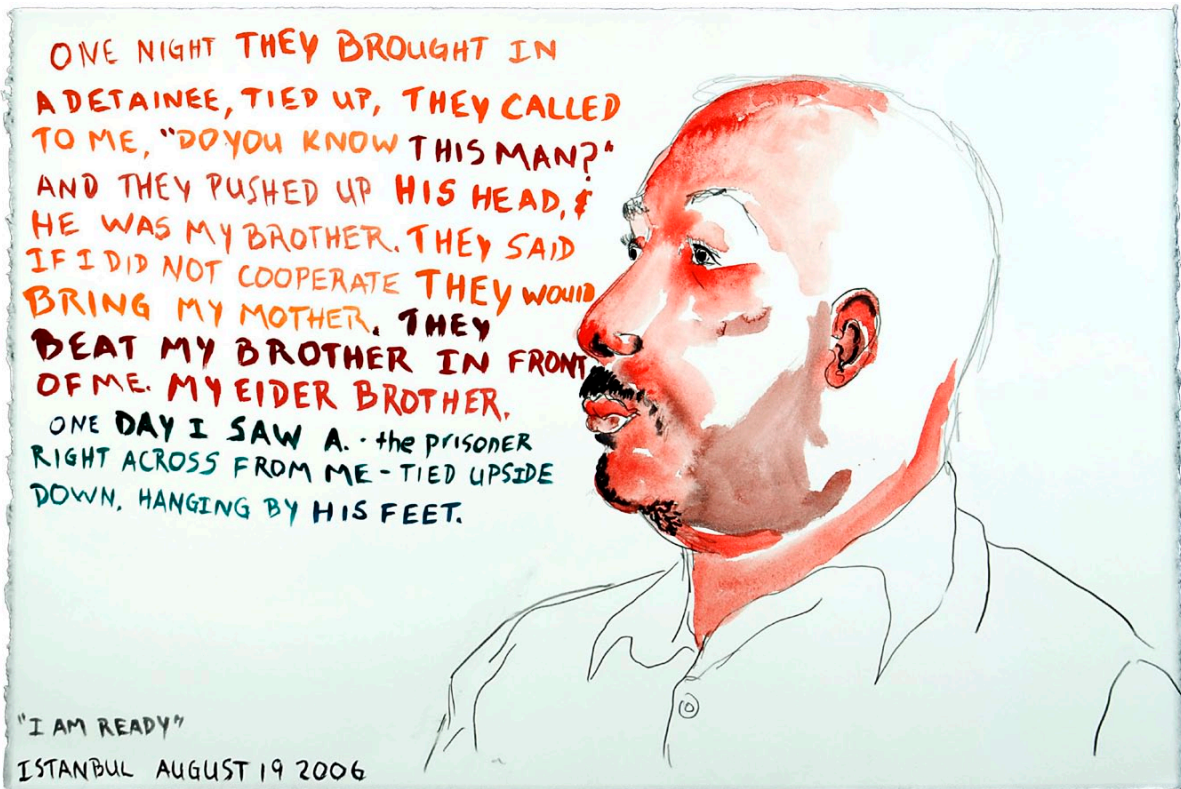
the fact that the US military released him from that initial incarceration with an apology that stated that his first arrest had been a complete mistake. The first time, the apology came four months before they actually let him out of prison. Even in cases of wrongful imprisonment, foot-dragging paperwork exacts its pound of flesh.

After hearing the particulars of an arrest I heard the particulars of each interrogation — at Abu Ghraib and elsewhere — things so awful it is hard to write them here. Detainees witnessing other detainees being raped by Americans; men telling me of being sodomized with broomsticks; of hanging by their arms for days at a time until the pain from their dislocated shoulders made them lose consciousness; the beating of genitals with metal pipes; of endless nakedness and sexual humiliation — and, yes, of hearing what sounded like other prisoners being drowned by water. The litany of horrors goes on and on. One man told me of being kept in a coffin-sized box — naked, blindfolded, hands cuffed behind his back — for 16 days. Every three days he was given an intravenous drip to prevent him dying from dehydration.

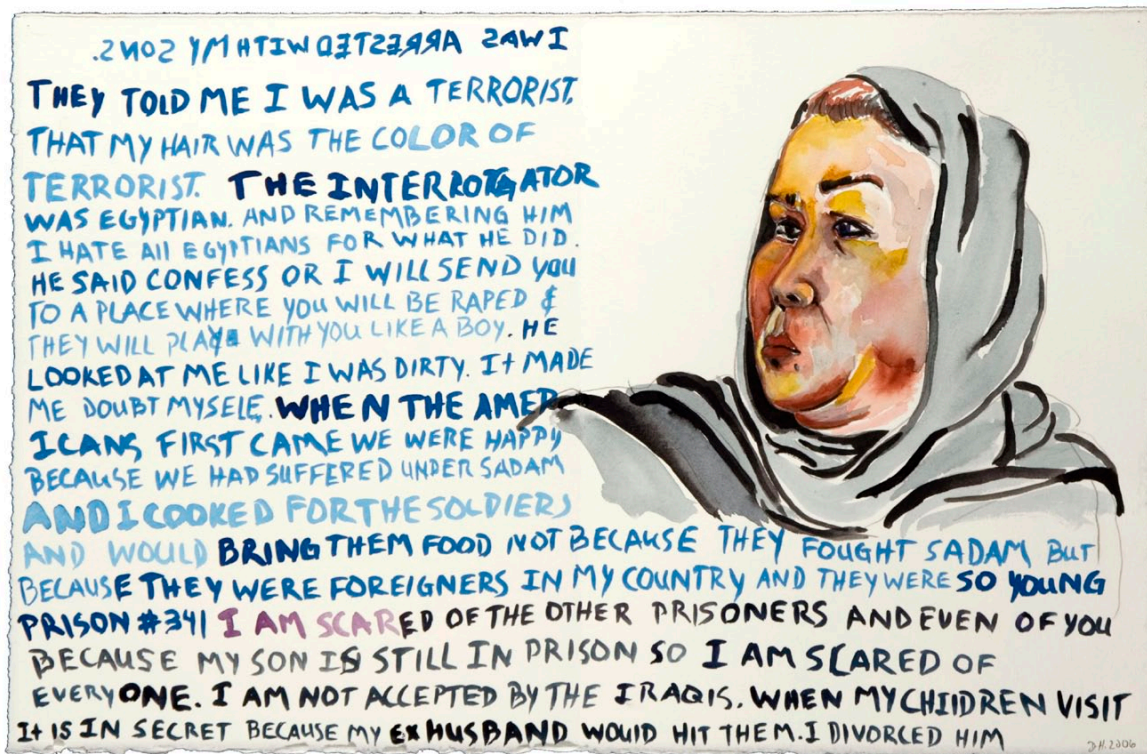
“One night they brought in a detainee, tied up. They called to me, ‘Do you know this man?’ And they pushed his head, and he was my brother. They said if I did not cooperate they would bring my mother. They beat my brother in front of me. My elder brother. One day I saw ‘A’ — the prisoner right across from me — tied upside down, hanging by his feet.”

[see <http://www.smithmag.net/wp-content/uploads/abu/Istanbulwatercolors/1.jpg>]

MY EXPERTISE resides in my ability to draw a nose, a shirt collar, the shape of a finger. I am not a fact checker, judge, government employee, journalist or historian. I don’t speak Arabic, and I have no prior connection to Iraq. I am not in Congress, and I don’t have any special access to files, briefings, reports, or any other form of US governmental analysis. But the stories of prisoner abuse in Iraq were



I am Ready, watercolor and pencil on paper, 15x22-1.5, 2006



I was arrested with my son, watercolor and pencil on paper, 15x22.5, 2006

RESTORING DIGNITY: IT IS DIFFICULT

From catalog notes to “Bearing Witness - Recent Works” List Gallery, Swarthmore College, PA, and Ezra and Cecile Zilkha Gallery, Wesleyan University, CT March - May 2010



From the Time of Morning Prayers, gouache on nishinoushi paper, 2008-1

eating away at me from the inside. In 2004, when the notorious pictures were released — naked men piled up beside two gawking US soldiers smiling and giving a thumbs-up signal — I realized I needed to expunge the trauma of such horrors by making my own images from them. Something as simple as the right to wear clothing in prison was never part of the discussion at art school, and yet as an American I felt compelled to dedicate my art to ensuring that the pernicious curtailment of this right would not go unnoticed. This decision gave me the courage to listen more acutely, and indeed to use my listening as I would any other tool of art-making — to enlarge my understanding of a hidden world so that expression, when it did come, would be based on something real, something palpable. I would use my listening as a way of maintaining fidelity to reality.

I AM AN ARTIST, and my work is about seeing. Seeing has led me to listening, and listening to writing. This is what I have realized: that listening — and by this I mean hearing, really hearing — is difficult work. As difficult as drawing a folded finger or an upturned nose, perhaps more so. I have concentrated on listening to people whose stories are often dismissed as unimportant. But quite the opposite is true: the stories I heard were fascinating and full of bravery and courage, told by people who have little, if any, access to impartial public airing of their stories. Many don't speak English. They are dispossessed by war or poverty or minority status. Through these encounters, I hope to honor their dignity and humanity, and to give voice to voices the public has not had a chance to hear.





'He Could Feel the Dog's Breath,'
drypoint print on BFK, 27x22,
2006, ed. 30

SEE ALSO <http://www.danielheyman.com/>

Interview by David Feffer (Foreign Policy in Focus):

http://www.fpif.org/articles/interview_with_daniel_heyman

The Detainee Project: <http://www.detaineeproject.org/>