



JFNY NEWSLETTER | April 4, 2025 □

Welcome to April! □ We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who has shown up to our in-person and online events in the last couple of weeks. We truly appreciate your support as spring (and - for some of us - allergy season) is underway.

Whether you couldn't join us for our latest pop culture episode or the National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremony or want to watch again, the videos are available now on YouTube! Plus, much more in this edition. Read below for more!

From Us



JFF Theater Spotlight: Bread of Happiness

Available until April 30 (9pm EDT)

□ THIS EDITION'S FILM: *Bread of Happiness*

A young couple (played by **Tomoyo Harada** and **Yo Oizumi**) has opened Café Mani in Toya Lake, Hokkaido. Not only do they offer freshly baked breads, coffee, and meals made with local ingredients - they offer companionship to guests from all walks of life, including a heart-broken young woman, a motherless little girl, and an elderly couple, each with their own story to tell.

Showcasing the beauty of Japan's countryside, the film's simplicity yet profoundness will resonate long after it's over.

Watch for FREE today!

→[WATCH NOW](#)

ICYMI: From Us



The Educational Power of Manga and Anime Panel Now Available! Online (YouTube)

Thank you to everyone who joined us for our **The Educational Power of Manga and Anime** online event last month! We hope you enjoyed the event and learned ways to incorporate these beloved media into student development and growth.

If you're looking for additional resources, check out the following books, available now in JF USA Digital Library:

- Manga High by Michael Bitz
- Women's Voices in Manga, edited by Hiromi Tsuchiya Dollase and Masami Toku

For those who missed the livestream, the full online event is now available for

viewing on our YouTube channel.

→[WATCH NOW](#)



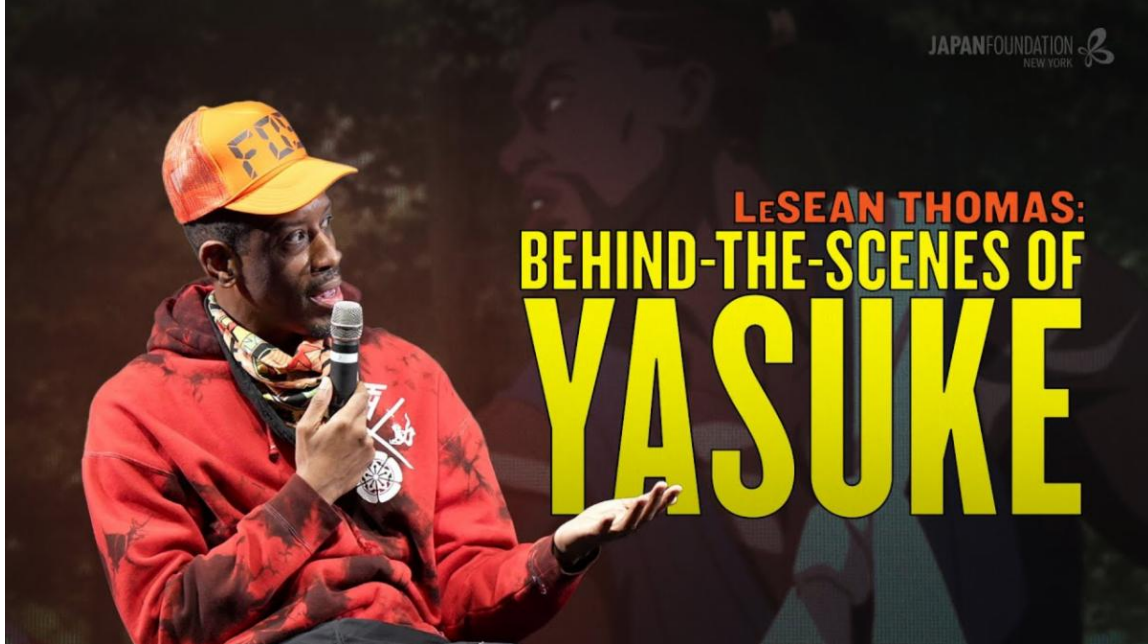
Watch the National Cherry Blossom Festival 2025 Opening Ceremony!
Online (YouTube)

Didn't get a chance to see the **National Cherry Blossom Festival Opening Ceremony** in-person or missed the livestream? The entire event is available to view on National Cherry Blossom Festival, Inc.'s YouTube channel now!

Featuring performances by:

- Tap dancer **Kazunori Kumagai** in collaboration with **Alex Blake**
- J-Pop singer-songwriter **Ka-Na**
- Puppetry organization **Seiwa Bunraku**

→[WATCH NOW](#)



Behind-the-Scenes of LeSean Thomas's *Yasuke* Online (YouTube)

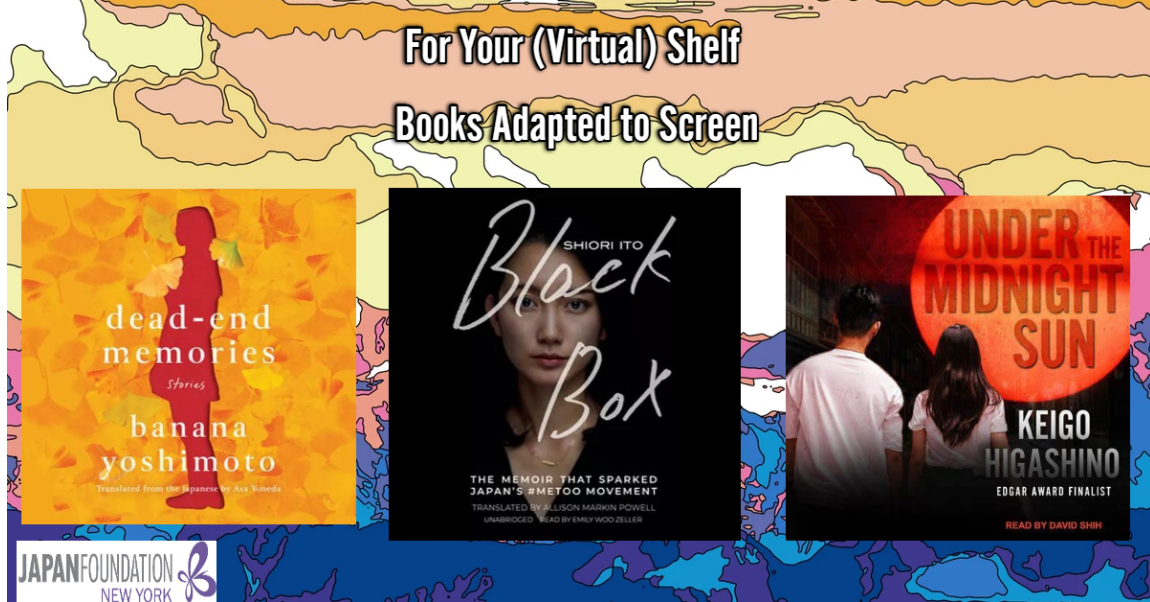
We are pleased to announce the second of the videos from our ***Foreign Exchange: Anime Inspirations & Visionaries with LeSean Thomas*** multi-day series is now available on our YouTube channel.

LeSean Thomas is one of the few Black Americans working in the anime industry in Japan. His most recent work is Netflix's ***Yasuke***, which he created, directed and executive produced.

In this conversation, he shares the behind-the-scenes stories and process – including collaborating with Japanese animation creators – and highlights the synergy that catalyzed an innovative way to tell the story of the legendary Black samurai.

→ [WATCH NOW](#)

For Your (Virtual) Shelf



For Your (Virtual) Shelf: Books Adapted to Screen

Our digital library doesn't only have books that you can read, but you can listen as well. In this edition, we introduce a couple of audiobooks, currently available in our digital library, that have been since adapted to film and television.

□ APR. VOL. 1 THEME: Books Adapted to Screen

□ APR. VOL. 1 BOOKS:

- ***Dead End Memories***

- Written by Banana Yoshimoto
- Narrated by Kathleen Li
- A collection of stories featuring five women who seek healing following sudden and painful events

- ***Black Box***

- Written by Shiori Ito
- Narrated by Emily Woo Zeller
- A sobering memoir chronicling a woman's quest for justice after her case was labeled a black box - untouchable with no hope of prosecution

- ***Under the Midnight Sun***

- Written by Keigo Higashino and Joseph Reeder
- Narrated by David Shih
- A complex, psychological novel about crime and the effects, featuring a detective investigating the crime and two teenagers directly impacted in a span of twenty years

→[LEARN MORE \(Dead End Memories\)](#)

→[LEARN MORE \(Black Box\)](#)

→[LEARN MORE \(Under the Midnight Sun\)](#)

Not what you're looking for this time? There are plenty more books of all genres available. Visit the JF USA Digital Library today!

→[LEARN MORE](#)

You will need a library card to be able to borrow and place holds for the books in the digital library. Visit the Japan Foundation, Los Angeles website below for instructions on how to get your digital library card.

→[LEARN MORE](#)

From Our Grantees



On Education

Ongoing until August 17

Amant (Brooklyn, NY)

On Education brings together works by 35 international artists, including Japanese artist **Tetsuya Ishida**, that approach education from unconventional perspectives. These works offer alternative, more productive methods of education in environments disrupted by endemic underfunding, spiraling culture wars, unsustainable debt, and the lasting impacts of racism and colonialism.

→[LEARN MORE](#)



Arkansas Cherry Blossom Festival

April 12, 10:30am

Hot Springs Convention Center (Hot Springs, AR)

The Arkansas Cherry Blossom Festival will feature an array of children's activities, cultural exhibits, and interactive experiences, including the ever-popular Anime Cosplay Contest. Attendees can also explore art displays, calligraphy demonstrations, origami stations, and Japanese storytelling sessions.

→ [LEARN MORE](#)

From Our Friends



By the Shore of Lake Michigan Recovering WWII Prison Camp & Resettlement Stories through Poetry

April 7, 7pm

Japan Society (New York, NY)

As part of the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, Japan Society is hosting a book talk and signing featuring the newly translated tanka poetry book ***By the Shore of Lake Michigan***. Editor **Nancy Matsumoto**, translators **Mariko Aratani** and **Kyoko Miyabe**, and **Eri F. Yasuhara** will be the speakers for this event.

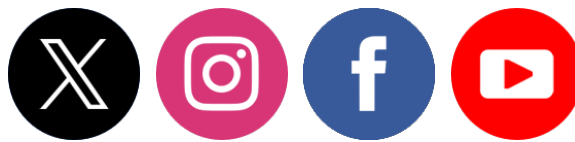
The book, 15 years in the making, features a collection of World War II-era *tanka* poetry written by first-generation Japanese-American couple and Nancy's grandparents **Tomiko** and **Ryokuyō Matsumoto**, who were incarcerated in one of the ten prison camps.

→[LEARN MORE](#)

Image #6 Credit: Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster, *Part Two (Constructing)*, 1992. Courtesy the artist and Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris.

For inquiries, please contact: NY_info@jpf.go.jp

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