

Japanese America Podcast Launches Season Two with an Episode Dedicated to Japanese Stationery

Japanese America podcast returns Feb 13! ☑☑ Season 2 kicks off with Japanese stationery & cultural storytelling. Listen now! #Podcast #JapaneseAmerican

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“

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Michelle MaliZaki

American National Museum proudly announces the return of its popular podcast, Japanese America, co-hosted by standup comedian Michelle MaliZaki and writer/filmmaker Koji Sakai. Season Two will premiere on February 13, 2025, with its first episode diving into the cultural significance of Japanese stationery—an everyday object that holds extraordinary meaning within the Japanese American community.

Produced by Koji Sakai and co-hosted by Koji Sakai and Michelle MaliZaki for the Japanese American National Museum, Japanese America, Japanese America highlights

the stories, history, and contemporary experiences of Japanese Americans, blending humor, heart, and history to create a rich listening experience. This season, the podcast will feature interviews with notable guests, including Yuri Aida, president of Designphil America Inc., and Mark Sakaguchi, regional manager of Kinokuniya Bookstore, who will discuss how Japanese stationery continues to foster creativity, connection, and storytelling across generations.

Michelle MaliZaki, co-host and comedian, explains, “Japanese stationery has been a quiet but meaningful part of my life, connecting me to my roots. Through this episode, we want to show how small objects like notebooks and pens carry stories across generations and serve as bridges between past and present.”

Koji Sakai, co-host and writer, adds, “This season, we’re focusing on hidden cultural gems that shape our identities and the ways in which our community continues to adapt and thrive. From traditional crafts to modern innovations, our guests will help us explore the full spectrum of the Japanese American experience.”

What to Expect in Season Two:

Episode 1: Japanese Stationery – Discover the rich cultural history behind Japanese stationery and how it serves as a creative outlet and memory-keeper.

Notable Guests – Hear from influential voices, including artists, chefs, and designers, such as Yuri Aida, who discusses the Traveler’s Notebook as a vessel for personal journeys, and Mark Sakaguchi, who shares how Kinokuniya Bookstore has become a hub for Japanese culture and creativity in Los Angeles.

Cultural Preservation – Episodes will delve into how Japanese Americans maintain their heritage through food, art, activism, and everyday objects.

Humor and Insight – Michelle’s comedic touch combined with Koji’s historical lens ensures a mix of entertaining and thought-provoking discussions.

Mark Sakaguchi, who grew up in Los Angeles and now manages one of the most prominent Japanese bookstores in the U.S., says, “Kinokuniya has always been more than a bookstore—it’s a place where people discover cultural treasures, including Japanese stationery. We see customers sharing their passion for writing and drawing, continuing traditions that bring them closer to their heritage.”

Yuri Aida, a featured guest in the premiere episode, notes, “The Traveler’s Notebook is more than just a product; it’s a vessel for memories, ideas, and shared experiences. We hope listeners will be inspired to think about the ways they document their own journeys.”

The new season will explore topics that range from family traditions and historical milestones to modern artistic expressions within the community. Each episode will be available on major podcast platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and Google Podcasts.

About Japanese America: Japanese America is a podcast dedicated to amplifying the stories of the Japanese American community through humor, personal reflection, and cultural exploration. Co-hosted by Michelle MaliZaki and Koji Sakai, the podcast is produced by the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles.

About the Japanese American National Museum: The Japanese American National Museum is committed to preserving and sharing the stories of Japanese Americans and their contributions to society. Located in Los Angeles, the museum serves as a vital resource for education and community engagement.

Season Two Launch Date: February 13, 2025

Website: www.janm.org/podcasts/japanese-america

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