



For Immediate Release

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**Motoya Nakamura's "Images of the 442<sup>nd</sup>: Nisei Japanese American WWII Veterans and Their Continuing Legacy" to be exhibited in the Governor's Office Feb. 5 – April 4**

Salem, Oregon – Portland artist Motoya Nakamura will exhibit "Images of the 442<sup>nd</sup>: Nisei Japanese American WWII Veterans and Their Continuing Legacy" in the Governor's Office of the Capitol Building in Salem from Feb. 5 to April 4.

Utilizing a large format camera as a nod to the past, Nakamura photographed World War II veterans of the 442<sup>nd</sup> Regional Combat Team in 2004 and 2009. The images of the veterans, at home and with their families, reveal each individual's legacy and how their lives have changed over time. The intimate portraits allow viewers to connect to the human spirit of the men portrayed, an act that honors the veterans' courage and becomes a force against racial discrimination.

Formed in 1943, the 442<sup>nd</sup> was a segregated unit of Nisei (second generation) Japanese Americans. During WWII, the soldiers of the 442<sup>nd</sup> fought for their country on the front lines against Nazi forces and liberated Jewish prisoners from concentration camps. Meanwhile, at home in the US, war hysteria-fueled racial discrimination led to the confinement of these soldiers' families in internment camps due to their Japanese ancestry. Reflecting the courage and patriotism of its men, the 442<sup>nd</sup> became the most decorated unit in US military history for its size and length of service.

Nakamura's work is informed by his background in both photojournalism and art photography, and often explores his identity as a first-generation Japanese immigrant. He has received numerous awards and honors for his photographs, including a Pulitzer Prize for Public Service as part of a team of journalists at The Oregonian. His work has been featured in such publications as *Mix Magazine* and the *Communication Arts Photography Annual* and exhibited at venues including the Oregon Nikkei Legacy Center, Disjecta, the Portland Art Museum and Oregon's Capitol Building. Currently

creative media coordinator and photographer for the Multnomah County Communications Office, Nakamura has taught photography classes at Portland Community College, Portland State University, Newspace Center for Photography, and the Art Institute of Portland.

The Art in the Governor's Office Program honors selected artists in Oregon with exhibitions in the reception area of the Governor's Office in the State Capitol. Artists are nominated by a statewide committee of arts professionals who consider artists representing the breadth and diversity of artistic practice across Oregon, and are then selected by the Arts Commission with the participation of the Governor's Office. Only professional, living Oregon artists are considered and an exhibit in the Governor's office is considered a "once in a lifetime" honor. Artists whose work has previously been shown in the Governor's office include Henk Pander, Michele Russo, Manuel Izquierdo, James Lavadour, Margot Thompson, Gordon Gilkey and Yuji Hiratsuka.

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of Business Oregon (formerly Oregon Economic and Community Development Department) in 1993, in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission's expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development.

The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. More information about the Oregon Arts Commission is available online at: [www.oregonartscommission.org](http://www.oregonartscommission.org).