

石川真生

ISHIKAWA MAO

私に何が

WHAT CAN I DO?

できるか

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ARTGALLERY  
TOKYO OPERA CITY

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**Red Flower: The Women of Okinawa**  
**1975-1977**

This series was first published in *Hot Days in Camp Hansen!!* (1982). Afterwards, it was republished in two different editions, *Hot Days in Okinawa* (2013) and *Red Flower: The Women of Okinawa* (2017). The Japanese title of the series is derived from the title of the latter. This work was Ishikawa's debut series as a photographer, and it can be said that her deep gaze upon humanity was developed during those days. Ishikawa has talked about it in the following way:

Unlike some Okinawans, I had zero prejudice against Black people. I had known my uncle in-law, who was an Italian American and a really good guy. So, although I hated the crimes committed by US troops, I had no animosity toward individual GIs. Even then, I naturally distinguished between the US Forces as an institution and the soldiers as human beings. When I was living with a Black GI, we watched a popular TV drama series called "Roots," which the US Forces broadcasted. The drama showed the history of the United States' mistreatment of Black people, who were captured, brought to America, and enslaved. I was appalled but felt that there was some similarity between Okinawan history and that of Black Americans, comparing the dehumanization of Okinawans by the mainlanders to that of Black people by white Americans. I chose to work at a bar for Black GIs, where a reporter for the Ryukyu Shimpo newspaper had taken me. I just wanted to take photos of US soldiers-if I had been introduced to a white bar, I would have taken photos of white GIs. But eventually I was glad that I was introduced to a Black bar, because it turned out that it really suited me.

12-17

**Uchinaa Shibai (Okinawa Play) :**  
**A Story of NAKADA Sachiko's Theater Company**  
**1977-1992**

NAKADA Sachiko is a comedy actress born in Naha in 1933. Fascinated by a play she saw during her childhood, she joined the theater company Nangetsu Bugekidan at the age of 15 in 1947 and launched her career as comedienne when her talent was discovered. After she married theater actor NAKADA Ryutaro, the couple created a company together named Nakada Ryutaro's Theater Company (later renamed Deigo-za in 1956), following which she worked as an actress praised as the "Queen of the Okinawan Play" until her retirement in 2019. Ishikawa knew her through a TV advertisement and went to see Nakada's Okinawan play with her husband at the time.

I happened to watch a TV commercial for canned pork in which NAKADA Sachiko-san appeared with her daughter. It occurred to me then that this person could be interesting. I went to see her *Uchinaa Shibai* (Okinawan Play) with my then-husband. The play was written in *uchinaaguchi* (the Okinawan language), which I could not understand very well. I could not speak the language at all, but I could listen a bit, and I could laugh. For more and more people from my generation or later, the language had become unfamiliar. These plays are the stories of us and our people. The characters were ordinary people, and the audience sat very close to the actors. It felt like watching our own family stories. I went back to see the next performance by myself and went to see Nakada Sachiko, the leader of the troupe. When I asked her

if I could take the photos of them, she said "No problem. You can visit us any time." In the photo book, you can see a scene where Sachiko-san, the troupe leader, is sleeping with Ryutaro, her husband, and her grandchildren, Masae and Mike. She has kicked away her futon and shown her naked thighs. I asked Ryutaro-san if they would mind if I published this photo. The answer was OK. He said "we have no problem with whatever Mao will do." I took photos of the Nakada Sachiko troupe for 14 years.

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NAKADA Sachiko (1933-) is the chairperson of Deigo-za Theater Company. She excels in comic roles, c.1978.

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Akemi's daughter Masae (age 6), plays the role of a child. In front of her are MINAMI Shinichi (right) and the late KAMIYAMA Tsuneo (middle). Yonabaru Town (Yonabaru Agricultural Cooperative Hall), March 1978.

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Yonabaru Town (Omitake Ward Community Center), April 1978.

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"Oh, Deigo-za is really a traveling troupe," I realized. Kadena Town (Kadena Ryuei), November 1979.

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A packed auditorium. Haebaru Town (Tsukazan Community Center), June 1981.

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Haebaru Town (Tsukazan Community Center), June 1981.

18-19

**Uchinaa Shibai (Okinawa Play) : Great Actors**  
**1989-1992**

*Uchinaa Shibai* (Okinawan Play) is a popular play in which *shimakutuba* (Okinawan language) is spoken. This type of play that was supported by ordinary people, was originally an opera to which the straight play genre was added later on. Ishikawa was drawn to its mass appeal and in 1977 acquired Nakada's permission to photograph the members of her troupe after negotiating with her directly. Ishikawa photographed them for 14 years until publishing *Uchinaa Shibai (Okinawan Play): A Story of Sachiko Nakada's Theater Company* in 1991 (self-published edition). During the final years of photographing them, Ishikawa became anxious about the fact that the actors who had been acting since the pre-war period were aging, and so she decided to photograph elderly actors of other troupes as well, which became the series, "*Uchinaa Shibai* (Okinawan Play): Great Actors."

As I finished the photo series, the professional *Uchinaa Shibai* actors, who had been active since prewar periods, were getting old and starting to pass away. I became driven by a sense of mission to take their photos before it was too late. I believe that I took the photos of about 70 to 80 percent of people who were involved in the theater, including main actors, supporting players, and *jikata* (sanshin and drum musicians).

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Ms. KANESHIRO Michiko

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Mr. OGIMI Kotaro

20-24

**A Port Town Elegy**  
**1983-1986**

In 1983, Ishikawa opened the tavern "Aaman" in a port town near Aja New Port, Naha, to earn a living after her divorce. Customers were mostly port workers, crew members, and workers engaged in distant-water fishing including tuna fishing. Her photographs of these people were published in 1990 in the photo book, *A Port Town Elegy*, and exhibited at Naha Civic Gallery. She continued with this series for three years and describes the workers who came to her tavern that were photographed as follows:

Most of these guys started working right after graduating from junior high school for various reasons, often including poverty in their families. Many of them could only speak *uchinaaguchi*. They were fascinatingly raw, honest, and rough, but tremendously sweet. They were really human. I felt melancholy for them, too. I took a similar approach to *A Port Town Elegy* as I did with the photos of Sachiko-san-sticking with my subjects 2011 and king their photos. I didn't need to give them any direction. They had real dramas more remarkable than any fiction. Their world was fascinating to me as I did not belong to it. They lived as they wished. They said what they wanted to say, and they behaved as they wanted to behave. In both of these worlds were people with extremely strong pride. They never put themselves down. I know that everyone has their own pride. As a photographer, it is my principle to respect the subject person and never to hurt their pride when I take photos. However, I might have looked down on these men at times. One day, one of the men, who was drunk, said to me in a serious tone, "Even we are living our lives." I was startled to hear these words. I realized that I had to straighten myself out, to respect them sincerely. The Japanese phrase for this is "tighten the loincloth." But as I am a woman, maybe I could say that "I put on new pants" (laughter). I take photos of the same people over and over again. Over the years, any tension between us will disappear, and they will stop being conscious of my presence. Human beings have an ugly face and a beautiful face. They tell you lies, and they tell you truth. They are sweet, and they are violent. All of these things make a person. I want to see everything. Therefore, I always take photos of people standing right in front of them. I never hide myself when I take photos.

25-31

**Life in Philly**  
**1986**

This series was photographed in 1986 when Ishikawa visited Myron CARR in the United States, an African American soldier whom she had met when taking photographs for *Hot Days in Camp Hansen!!* in Kin Town. Carr had returned to his home in Philadelphia since 1977. She showed these photographs in the exhibition "Laugh it off" in Tokyo (TOKIO OUT of PLACE) and published *Life in Philly* (Gallery OUT of PLACE) the following year.

After my divorce, I took custody of my only daughter. As I could not afford to support her through photography alone, I needed a more stable job. Because I had worked as a part-timer at bars, I believed I could run a bar by myself. I thought it would be fast and snappy. I asked my dad to get a loan for 4 million yen from

the bank under his name, and I paid him a reimbursement every month. After running the bar for three years, I sold it and satisfied my remaining debt. 500,000 yen was left. With that, I took a flight to America. When I was working in Koza, I befriended Myron CARR, then a US marine, through my first Black GI boyfriend. I told him, "I will visit America someday. I want to see the roots of the guys who were raised in poor families, became GIs, and came to Okinawa." After Myron went back home, I visited him in America to take photos of him and the Black families in his community. That's how Life in Philly was born. Myron told me not to wander around by myself while he was out for working, as it was not a safe neighborhood. But since I'm not the type of person who listens to anyone, I walked the streets alone. A lot of people tried to talk to me, but I walked without care, and it worked. Nothing went wrong. I abruptly came back in the fall before the cold winter came. When I arrived at the airport in Tokyo, I found that a lot of the people there, all of whom had black hair, were wearing clothes in dark colors and looked alike. In America, people had different skin colors and wore colorful clothes. "What the fuck," I thought. Although I had returned because I felt homesick, I realized that America felt more comfortable to me. I was bothered by the uniformity of Japan. I still remember the feeling as a shock.

32-37

**Okinawa and the Japan Self-Defense Forces**  
**1991-1995, 2003-**

As Ishikawa mentions in her interview below, JSDF members were sent to work in Cambodia from September 1992 as part of the United Nations' PKO according to the Act Concerning Cooperation for United Nations Peace-Keeping Operations and Other Operations.

Cambodia was the first place overseas where the Japan Self-Defense Forces were dispatched for a UN Peace Keeping Operation (PKO). I read news articles in the Asahi Shimbun, which ran coverage like: "The JSDF went to Cambodia and repaired the broken bridge, then the repaired bridge broke and got washed away." I wondered what kinds of PKOs the JSDF went there to carry out, so I went to Cambodia to take a look. There were landmines from the Cambodian Civil War still buried in the ground, and some organization was working to support victims of landmine explosions. A person in Okinawa had a connection and introduced me to them. I found in Cambodia that the reported bridge really was gone. At the site where the JSDF had been stationed, only the JSDF billboard was left. Their dorm was in use as a vocational training center for local people. Japan Ground Self-Defense Force has an engineering unit, which would build emergency bridges during wartime so that troops could cross over rivers. But the unit members are not professional civil engineers, so their bridges sometimes cannot withstand heavy rains or storms. Local people told me that eventually, a team of engineers came from Australia to repair the JSDF-built bridge. I wondered, then, why the JSDF had gone there. Was it just for the appearance? I decided to cover the JSDF was because I had married a Self-Defense official. Personally, I disavow the military. My position is anti-JSDF. But I do not conflate individuals with organizations, so I don't blame those who belong to groups that I do not support. That's why I was able to be with a Self-Defense official. When we were married, I had no plans to take photos of the JSDF. But after our divorce, I started to think that I should go inside and see the JSDF with my own eyes before criticizing the body. I asked an acquaintance how to apply and submitted a request to conduct coverage. After

a thorough investigation, the JSDF granted me permission. They found out that I had been involved in the anti-war movement in high school and that my ex-husband was a JSDF officer, but they still said OK. Another JSDF officer later told me that they had concluded that despite my background, it would be good to get some publicity, as the Okinawan media rarely published any articles on the JSDF-except in cases of bad incidents or accidents. I got the idea to pursue joint coverage of the grandson of Japanese Army General USHLJIMA Mitsuru and the son of Japanese Navy General OTA Minoru at the time of the Battle of Okinawa. I asked USHIJIMA Sadamitsu-san, a school teacher in Tokyo, to go with me to see OTA Hideo-san in Hiroshima. I thought it would be exciting if these two got together and had a conversation. They ended up disclosing fascinating stories. Until then, Ushijima-san had been reluctant to visit Okinawa. “My grandfather did terrible things to Okinawans during the war,” he said. But he visited after this experience, and now he frequently returns.

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Counting unexploded bombs before they eventually exploded. Camp Schwab, October 25, 1991.

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Junior and high school students in the cockpit of a P-3C, flying over Kerama. July 26, 1993.

34  
Playing a target shooting game using Type 62 machine gun. Ground Self-Defense Force's Camp Naha. August 3, 1993.

35  
Soldiers carrying missiles during a military exercise. September 9, 1993.

36  
An official of the Self-Defense Forces Regional Liaison Department interviewing a candidate. Most of the young men are wearing T-shirts and jeans. Air Self-Defense Force's Naha Air Base, September 26, 1993.

37  
Two old women passing through a former camp of the Japan Self-Defense Forces. Cambodia (Takéo), March 7, 1995.

38-44  
**Fences, Okinawa**  
**1989-**

Ishikawa photographed American soldiers including African American soldiers for the first time in 1975 in Koza, and then continued photographing them at a bar in Kin. As her subjects and places became increasingly varied, she photographed various people around U. S. bases with differing roles and positions.

The photos of the bars for Black GIs were my first endeavor in photographing the US Forces. My motivation for shooting photos of American soldiers was my anger over the absurd situation in Okinawa, which made me want to see the American military with my own eyes. There were so many things that I wanted to capture, so I pursued various forms and titles. I teamed up with a reporter to publish an article series in the newspaper. I wandered around the base town. I was young and got a GI boyfriend. I took photos of my boyfriend, the inside of the base when he escorted me in,

and the busy downtown streets. The photos of the GI bars were not the last ones. The project kept going. During the Iraq War, I encountered an American soldier who was suffering from PTSD at a bar in Kin Town. He was Native American. He told me that he had been dispatched to the battlefield in Iraq six times. Although he had begged to return home, as he had a wife and children, the military did not listen to him. The madam of the bar informed me that the soldier had been racially discriminated against for being Native American. I often became acquainted with lower-ranked soldiers, many of whom the madam introduced to me, and took their photos. All of these soldiers came from poor families. Many of them had siblings and were dutifully sending money home for their educations. Madam was very sympathetic toward them, as she had gotten married in America and had two kids, but had then been divorced and returned. American soldiers are the first to go to war and kill people, but they are also the first to be killed. Soldiers are just pawns. The top people who make the orders stay in D.C., issuing commands while enjoying delicious dinners. If you are ordered to go, you have to go. If you are ordered to go back, you have to go back. That's the rule of the military. Therefore, I cannot bash individual soldiers. My feelings swing. My heart vacillates. I embrace both anger and love. That's why some of the people who are active in the anti-base movement bash me. But I insist that I can love US soldiers individually while hating the US military as an institution. We humans cannot be coded in black and white, as most people are gray. Human beings do not live in a completely clear or calculated manner.

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A superior officer inspects luggage being brought to the conflict zone. Kin Town (Camp Hansen), May 1992.

39  
Mayumi Yoza Bagwell (age 22) at her parents' home. She will return to the U. S. the following day. Tsukazan, Maebaru Town, December 1994.

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CHIBANA Shoichi's supporters barged into the elephant cage. However, a fence was set up around it and Defense Facilities Administration officials strictly guarded it to prevent the entry of the supporters. Yomitan Village (Sobe News Agency), April 1, 1996.

41  
A large transport helicopter crashed into a building at Okinawa International University and burst into flames. The U.S. military immediately entered the campus, and, without permission of the university, set up ropes around the accident crash site and declared it “off-limits.” The university president, the mayor, and even the police were refused to entry. The university protested, but the blockade continued until the aircraft was removed. Ginowan City (Okinawa International University), August 16, 2004.

42  
A U.S. military aircraft descends, barely over a residential area, towards Futenma Airfield. Ueojana, Ginowan City, July 2009.

43  
A moma-san at Splash bar, caring for young U.S. soldiers like a mother. Kin Town (Shinkaichi), March 2010.

44  
On weekends, U.S. soldiers roam the pleasure district to “buy

women.” Okinawa City, March 2010.

45-51  
**The Community Shaken by Construction of Heliport**  
**1996-**

“Hashimoto and Clinton” Ishikawa mentioned below signifies the U.S.- Japan joint press briefing of April 17, 1996 delivered by Japan's Prime Minister HASHIMOTO Ryutaro and the U. S. President Bill CLINTON.

When then-Japanese Prime Minister HASHIMOTO Ryutaro and former US President Bill CLINTON shook hands and declared that Futenma Air Station would be returned to the Okinawan people, the assembled crowd was so happy, they shouted: “Banzai!” But almost in the same breath, Hashimoto and Clinton added: “however, an alternate base has to be built in the Prefecture of Okinawa.” Isn't that a con? They proposed to move it from Ginowan to the area of Henoko, in Nago City. As Henoko is quite a conservative area, local leaders accepted the plan. But some residents opposed it, and they were the first people to rise up in protest. Luckily for me, my grandma was from a small village called Sedake, which is close to Henoko. I could gain easy access to Henoko by turning to her family. I had acquaintances and relatives who supported both the “Yes” and “No” sides of the debate over the base construction, so I had audacity entering the community. When I communicate with people, I don't ask one-way questions like a news reporter does, which can make anyone get tense. I share my opinions honestly, and we toss the ball back and forth. As my subjects get to know me, we tend to get along well. When *Inochi wo Mamoru Kai* (Protecting Life Association) was established, I was the only person who took photos of their gathering. Then, the mass media all started to cover it at once. “You guys finally noticed? Are you stupid?” I thought. My intension in photographing the group was never to propose a news story. I wanted to explore the human dramas of various people's thoughts and lives.

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KAYOU Muneyoshi (right), and KINJO Masatoki and Mieko. Barbed wire is laid along the boundary between the civilian area and Camp Schwab. Henoko, Nago City, January 15, 1997.

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She suddenly experienced temporary vision loss, so she went to the hospital for a checkup. She was immediately hospitalized. KAYOU Yoshiko (age 71) barely escaped death. Feeling relieved, her husband, Muneyoshi (age 76), hugged his wife. “There is no greater treasure for me, don't take this (Yoshiko) away from me!” he said. Okinawa City (Nakagami Hospital), April 15, 1997.

47  
SHIMABUKURO Toshihisa (age 44) works as a boat operator for people who go fishing and clam digging. Nicknamed “Hisabou,” he is “the most famous person in Henoko.” Off the coast of Henoko, Nago City, May 12, 1997.

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KINJO Yuji (1935-2007) (age 65) has been leading the opposition movement since the formation of the Association to Protect Lives in January 1997. “There are days when I feel tired and anxious,” he said. Henoko, Nago City, October 18, 1999.

49  
U.S. soldiers invite children from Henoko to the “Christmas Children's Day” event. Nago City (Camp Schwab), December 1999.

50  
U.S. soldiers from Camp Schwab, who participated in the “Henoko Haarii,” returning home by waking over the iron wire fence that separates the civilian area (Henoko) from the sandy beach of the U.S. military base. Only U.S. soldiers can pass through this fence. Henoko, Nago City, May 28, 2000.

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On March 3 of the lunar calendar, the base is opened to local residents. Nago City (Camp Schwab), April 2002.

52-55  
**My Family**  
**2001-2005**

Ishikawa underwent operations for kidney cancer in 2000 and for rectum cancer in 2001, when she was treated with an artificial anus implant. Although informed by her doctors that the cancer had also spread to her lymph-nodes, she refused chemotherapy and chose to continue her photography work. Upon leaving the hospital the same year, she went to Nago to take photographs.

When I got a stoma installed, allowing feces to be diverted from my body, my first concern was whether I would still able to fuck. I was relieved when I found that I could masturbate successfully in my hospital bed. But after I was discharged from the hospital, I looked at myself in the mirror and realized my body had been transformed. As a photographer, I naturally decided to take photos of myself. Before then, when I had seen self-portraits by other female photographers, I rather looked down on them. I wondered why they wanted to take photos of themselves. But when my body changed, I finally understood that those photographers had their own reasons for taking self-portraits. As I tired easily of taking photos only of myself, and I was living with my daughter and grandchildren, I decided to take photos of my family, too. I did shootings within the ease of everyday life. My daughter took the photo of me right after I was discharged from the hospital, but other than that, I shot photos of myself reflected in a big full-length mirror. Sometimes it was too much trouble to set up the camera, so I started to use an old-fashioned folding cell phone. I realized that this way, I could take photos anywhere. My photos suddenly changed from black and white to color because of the new camera, but I didn't care at all. I recommend a cell phone camera as the best kind for self-portraits. Around the time when I had my stoma placed, my mother was diagnosed with terminal cancer. After she was hospitalized, her legs became thinner and thinner and she ended up unable to walk. Her legs bent and looked like chicken wing tips. I decided to take photos of my mother's miserable figure. This is a terribly disgusting aspect of being a photographer. I knew that my mother was suffering, but I told her, “Mom, I'm going to take your photos.” I took away the futon covering her body and did a shooting. Both mother and daughter had gotten sick simultaneously. The two bodies had become disfigured and ugly. I wanted to show this mother-daughter pair. Although I had to get deeply involved as an object, I did not care and treated myself as someone else. I took a 'director's attitude,' to put it in a cute way, knowing that if I got too self-indulgent, I would not be able to edit the photos I took or select the best ones. So, I distanced myself, which allowed me to feel that this mother and daughter could be

interesting. There is always distance between me and the people I shoot, including myself, my daughter, grandchildren, friends, or anyone else, no matter how close they are to me. A photographer is heartless in a way.

56-61

#### Here's What the Japanese Flag Means to Me 1993-2011

For this series, 100 individuals and groups were photographed from 1993 to 1999. To make a photo book of the series, Ishikawa photographed others additionally. The series was exhibited in Osaka, Tokyo, and Nara in 1999 and published in a photo book in 2011 by Miraisha.

When I was an elementary school kid, I began to question: “Are we Okinawans Japanese? Is Okinawa a part of Japan?” This was my primary motivation for becoming a photographer. Right after I entered photography school in Tokyo, I asked: “what am I?” I got the idea to observe Japanese people to find out the answer. Around that time, I had a lot of opportunities to travel across Yamato, from Hokkaido in the north to Kagoshima in the south, for photo exhibits and talks. After finishing my assignments, I would stay at various venues, explaining my idea for a project about hinomaru, (the Japanese flag) to the event organizers, and asking them to introduce me to interesting people. Once I got my subjects’ contact information, I would negotiate with them to appear in my photos. I compiled the series as a photo exhibit titled *Here's What the Japanese Flag Means to Me*. Japanese people have complicated feelings about hinomaru. Under this flag, the Japanese Army has massacred millions of Asian people. To many other Asians, it is the most hated flag. But Japanese people have continued using hinomaru as the national symbol. I thought I could take interesting photos if I asked Japanese people in Yamato how they think of hinomaru and requested that they perform with the flag to express their country, Japan, and themselves. I knew I wanted to include members of the indigenous Ainu tribe, the historical buraku underclass, and those of Korean descent among the subjects. At the time, I had never known members of these groups individually and was very interested in them. I thought it wouldn’t make any sense to pursue this project without including these people especially because we, Okinawans, have also been constantly discriminated against by the Japanese. Using any connection I could make, I went to meet them. I’m really satisfied with the results. From the bottom of my heart, I am so glad that I did this.

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“When CHIBANA Shoichi burned the Hinomaru (Japanese flag) in Yomitani Village, I thought to myself. Before the war, we used to think that the rising sun was the flag that illuminated the world, and that the whole world was our family. However, it was a ‘robber’s flag’ a flag for those who tried to annex Taiwan, Manchuria, and Hawaii. The Hinomaru was raised during the Nanking Massacre. The atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki because of the Hinomaru. In Okinawa, everything was burned and destroyed, including Shuri Castle. Everyone was burned to the ground with the Hinomaru flying in the air. We should not fly this red Hinomaru anymore. As a mission and duty of the survivors, we must create a green island. We want a ‘green flag’ instead of a ‘sun ball’ that has been burnt down everything.” AHAGON Shoko (age 93, Okinawa; center), JYAHANA Etsuko (age 56, Okinawa; far right), YAMASHIRO Hiroko (age 29, Okinawa; second from left), INOUE Munetaka (age 20, from mainland; second from right),

SATO Kuniyoshi (age 19, from mainland; far left), Okinawa, July 19, 1998.

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Ms. Manri has a severe disability due to polio that has left her paralyzed from the neck down. “There is a saying, ‘The white of the Hinomaru represents the people’s bones and the red represents their blood.’ I am against cruel wars, but we have to fence the cruelty of human beings. After I finish performing, I feel sad. I don’t want to see or touch the Hinomaru.” KIM Manri (age 54), leader of the theater company Taihen, Osaka City, Osaka, December 7, 2007.

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“I like thinking and persevering to move my mind forward while being swallowed by the waves in its ebbs and flows. Until then, I had been living just for the fun of it. Some children stop there, but I am different. I wanted to move forward, together with the children of Nago and Japan. For some reason, I feel safe in the sea.” OSHIRO Wakana (age 26), theater school student, Nago City, Okinawa, June 8, 2008.

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Chie: “I’ve never been in public without wearing makeup. I apply makeup on my eyes only halfway. I don’t know if I am who I really am when I have makeup on.” Kana: “When I go to impoverished areas overseas as part of a university’s extracurricular activities, I feel that I am able to survive because I am in Japan. I wrapped myself in the Hinomaru thinking ‘I am protected by Japan’ and ‘I was born in Japan.’” SHINOHARA Chie (age 23; right), student at Hosei University, and SUNOUCHI Kana (age 23), student at Meiji Gakuin University, Naha, Okinawa, August 25, 2009.

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Plaintiff in a medical malpractice lawsuit regarding gender-affirming surgery. “I underwent surgery at Osaka Medical College Hospital in 2006, but my breast was cut too deep and necrosis occurred. I filed a lawsuit and am expected to receive a settlement recommendation soon. The reason I cut the Hinomaru in half and stood on it was because when I tried to discuss issues concerning peace at the university, the students were divided. I painted my scar in red, representing the ‘Hinomaru red.’ The pain dripped eerily. The handcuffs express my fear of the Hinomaru/Kimigayo, which seems to keep people imprisoned mentally.” (\*Victory settlement, March 2010) YOSHINO Yugi (age 26), graduate student at Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, November 9, 2009.

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“In my third year of high school, I felt that the teachers were imposing information on me in the name of education. I hated it, and I couldn’t get out of my house. I am wearing the school uniform because I was robbed of my youth during my high school days. I feel that deep within the Hinomaru lies the blood and corpses of those who had tortured people. The ruins represent my mind. I feel I am being surveilled even at this moment.” YOSHIYAMA Morika (age 20), a temporary worker in a public office, Nakagusuku Village, Okinawa, November 29, 2009.

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#### Morika's Dreams 2012-2013

After becoming acquainted with YOSHIYAMA Morika, a young woman who worked part-time at the museum in Onna Village, Ishikawa took photographs of her, seeing her as a kind of performer. The photographs were published in *Morika - Yume no Sekai* from Miraisha in 2014.

Physically, Morika looks radical, but she speaks slowly and politely. I found this gap interesting. When I met her, I was taking photos for *Here's What the Japanese Flag Means to Me*. I asked her if she would like to appear in the series expressing herself using hinomaru. She said OK right away. Morika wore a high school girl’s uniform. She was bleeding from between her legs. I asked her why. She responded that it represented the blood of comfort women during the wartime. Virgins were forcibly bloodied by the Japanese military, and she boldly expressed it. What a girl! I was deeply impressed. There is some distance between Morika and me. We don’t feel or act with one heart and mind. Although Morika did her best during the shooting, I directed her slightly to create a great photo. I gave Morika minor instructions, such as to look in this or that direction. As Morika is quite self-assertive, I held back in the beginning. At one point she wept and insisted: “Even though I perform, it will be Mao-san’s photo. I feel like I’m just being a model.” I responded to her sincerely: “Morika, you’re wrong. You are strongly present here, and we are equal. I have chosen the title Morika’s Dreams, and our names will appear jointly as co-authors. Royalties will be shared.” Morika was so happy to hear that. She has strong pride, and she did a great job. She deserves my respect. As I am the elder, my name came first, which is why the author credit is “Mao Ishikawa x Morika Yoshiyama.”

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#### The Great Ryukyu Photo Scroll 2014-

This ongoing series began in 2014. While historic figures appear in the series especially in Part 1, Ishikawa’s focus is set on the histories of ordinary people. Contemporary Okinawan people’s lives are portrayed here as well. The series demonstrates the scope of photographic expression across Ishikawa’s entire career thus far. This exhibition shows Part 8, 9, and 10 for the first time in a place other than Okinawa. Part 10 is the latest part and was just photographed this year (2023). Ishikawa comments on how she began this series:

No celebrities appear in either Dai-Ryukyu Shashin-cho (The Great Ryukyu Photo Book) or Dai-Ryukyu Shashin Emaki (The Great Ryukyu Photo Scroll). It’s a people’s history. It asks: How do ordinary people move around? It only shows the people I got interested in. It’s not the story of heroes or well-known politicians. For Part One of the Scroll, I wanted to start the timeline right before the Satsuma invasion. Therefore, the early photos are historical fiction. At some point the historical scenes in the photos catch up to modern time, perhaps even to today. I found some people who I wanted to have in the scroll and asked them to perform as themselves. It was up to them to decide what to do, and I gave minimal direction. For Part Seven, the most recent so far, I made some trips to take photos in Miyako, Ishigaki, and Yonaguni Island, where a lot of powerful characters appeared and performed. One of the consistencies I’m trying to maintain in the series is

to include at least one photo in each part related to the Battle of Okinawa. I also want to show the people who were forced to be comfort women. But as I put so many other themes into the series, I cannot always include both of these topics in every part. Even so, I never forget either of these issues. They are the point of origin for me.

Although these photos are fictional creations, some of them were taken like documentary images. I never make a plan beforehand. I just enjoy the encounter with the people, who determine what happens in the photos. When you are adventurous, these encounters will occur naturally, which makes things more thrilling.

#### Part 1 2014

63

*Uminchu* (fisherman) made a big catch. (Ryukyu Kingdom era)

64

Sweet potato *harusaas* (farmers) enjoyed a bumper harvest. (Ryukyu Kingdom era)

65

“Satsuma, don’t come!” A *kaminchu* (Okinawan priestess) praying.

66

In March 1609, Satsuma Domain invaded Ryukyu with a squadron of 3,000 warriors under the Tokugawa Shogunate’s permission to conquer the kingdom. Satsuma conquered the Amami Islands one after another, and subsequently occupied Shuri Castle in April. Ryukyu surrendered. Permitted to take control of Ryukyu by the shogunate, Satsuma had the Amami Islands ceded to it and put them under its direct control. While the Ryukyu Kingdom came under Satsuma’s rule, it still maintained its tributary relationship with China in which the King of Ryukyu regularly gave tribute to the Chinese Emperor to receive certification of his kingship from the Emperor.

67

“The Ryukyu Disposition”

On March 27, 1879, MATSUDA Michiyuki, Disposition officer of the Meiji Government, led the squadron with some 560 soldiers and policemen, proclaimed the abolition of the Ryukyu Domain and the establishment of Okinawa Prefecture at Shuri Castle. The kingdom with 500-year history ended and was annexed to Japan. The last king, SHO Tai, was ordered to move to Tokyo.

68

The former Ryukyu officials and all islanders fiercely resisted but were captured and tortured. The severe crackdown by the Meiji Government lasted until the First Sino-Japanese War, which began in 1894.

69

Opposition arose between JAHANA Noboru and NARAHARA Shigeru, the Governor of Okinawa Prefecture and former feudal retainer of the Satsuma Domain. JAHANA resigned as an official and protested against the Meiji Government and the prefectural governor. He became a leader of the civil rights movement. In 1901, he showed signs of mental illness during a trip to Kobe and later died from a disease.

70

In March 1944, the Japanese 32nd Army was formed in Okinawa. As many as 143 comfort stations were constructed across the Nansei Islands. It is said that there were approximately 1,600 comfort women in total from Okinawa, Japan, Korea, and Taiwan.

71

The Battle of Okinawa. In March 1945, U.S. Forces landed on the Kerama Islands for the first time followed by its invasion of the main island of Okinawa in April. Many Okinawans had their loved ones killed during the battle. Houses and fields were requisitioned by the U.S. Forces to construct military bases while their owners were detained in POW camps. Those who lost their houses were forced to move somewhere else village by village.

72

The Battle of Okinawa. In June 1945, Japanese Forces were brought to bay by U.S. Forces at the beach of Mabuni, Itoman. The battle was so devastating that a quarter of Okinawans were killed.

73

The Battle of Okinawa. In June 1945, a child who survived alone while all of his family members were killed on the way escaping from the U.S. Forces. There were about 1,000 war orphans.

74

During the 1950s, the U.S. Forces bulldozed the houses and farmlands of Okinawan people and constructed U.S. military facilities on these lands. A farmer imploring the U.S. soldiers, “My paddy is right there, let me go over the fence!”

75

Okinawa under U.S. occupation. There were many rape cases committed by U.S. soldiers. They attacked women regardless of ages, from a 9-month-old baby to the elderly. Some victims were even murdered. The suspects were arrested by the U.S. Forces and put on military trials but mostly acquitted and discharged. The military let them fly back to the states. Many of their records say, “penalty unknown,” that is, the suspects were free of any condemnation.

76

After the annexation to Japan, an assimilation policy was applied to Okinawan households and schools. As speaking *uchinaaguchi* (Okinawan language) was banned, Okinawan children were strictly taught to speak in standard Japanese at school. This policy continued into the post-war era and the “dialect card” punishment lasted until 1960’s.

77

The “Peace March Aspiring for Okinawa’s Reversion to Japan” arrived. School children waving small Japanese flags distributed by their teachers welcomed the march along roadsides.

78

Crashed onto the roof of a house next to the Futenma Air Station is a mock Osprey, the U.S. military aircraft that is unpopular for its risks of crashing. The part of the pilot was played by KOHAT-SU Masamitsu, the scriptwriter of the comedians’ collective FEC, who wrote “Funny Tales about Military Bases in Okinawa”. You can see an Osprey hangar inside the base.

79

November 2013 at LDP headquarters. The LDP Secretary-General ISHIBA Shigeru held a press conference with five LDP Diet members of Okinawa who won the election on a pledge to have Futenma Air Station transferred out of Okinawa, and announced that the five “agreed” on plans to relocate the Futenma base to Henoko area.

80

In January 2014, the LDP Secretary-General ISHIBA Shigeru dangled a 50-billion-yen subsidy for Nago City in exchange of support for the LDP candidate for mayoral election. Re-elected anti-base mayor INAMINE Susumu manifested “disapproval” to the Governor NAKAIMA Hirokazu who had approved the request of the landfill project at Henoko from the Ministry of Defense. In the Diet, a member of the House of Councilors, SHIMAJIRI Aiko, requested the government to mobilize police and the Coast Guard to crack down “illegal” protestors.

81

Despite the strong opposition of Okinawan people, the Ministry of Defense started new base construction at the offshore of Camp Schwab in Nago.

82

Ignoring Article 9 of the Constitution of Japan, Prime Minister ABE Shinzo steers toward the use of the Right of Collective Self-Defense by following only the cabinet decision without debates in the Diet.

83

A series of arrogant speeches and actions. Okinawan people with *shiiisaa* (guardian lions) in the lead try to kick out Prime Minister ABE Shinzo and Diet member ISHIBA Shigeru, who are inflicting more and more burdens related to military bases on Okinawa. (On the beach of Henoko, Nago.)

84

“Don’t bring misfortunes to Okinawa!” A *kaminchu* (Okinawan priestess) prays towards Japan.

**Part 8**

**2020-2021**

85

“Canoe Team Henoko Blue” [SUZUKI Kimiko (age 62)]  
Permission has been given to install a conveyor belt at Shiokawa Port and for the temporary storage of red soil in the premises of Ryukyu Cement. The government office gives favors to one company and helps promote construction. These permissions allow the transport of red soil by sea, which is beyond the intended purpose and legal use of the Awa pier. The permissions involve the illegal act of filling Henoko with red clay. It is illegal to use the seawall as a pier. The prefectural government has only responded to the numerous illegalities with vague “administrative guidance” that is not legally enforceable. The people of the prefecture have called for a hunger strike to stop the filling of Henoko with soil containing human remains. The governor has only issued an “administrative order” to allow the contractor to continue mining.

In response to the prefectural government’s vague response, the Defense Bureau is forcing the construction work to be carried out in a lawless and illegal manner. Every day, red soil roughly amounting to 2,000 ten-ton trucks is brought into Oura Bay via

large barges and thrown into the sea at Henoko.

If you can’t imagine the anger and sorrow of those of us who stand at the construction site and see this mountain of red soil, then the government’s response of “stopping the construction of the new base in Henoko by any means” is nothing but a fantasy. (June 3, 2021)

86

“Canoe Team Henoko Blue” [SUZUKI Kimiko (age 62)]  
People often ask me why I moved from Tokyo to Okinawa to paddle a canoe. I want to be close to the site, to see the sea being killed, to accept the reality of it, and to stop the construction. That is what paddling the canoe is all about. Our rowing canoe is like a pram. The Coast Guard’s boats are equal to tanks. The ugly Suga regime cannot maintain the policy intertwined with their claim that “Henoko is the only place” without using the Coast Guard, a violent apparatus of power that has an overwhelmingly larger quantity and better mobility than the weapon I have - a canoe. I use my canoe as a sharp blade aimed at Suga. (May 2, 2021)

87

“It’s a matter of children’s lives” [YONASHIRO Chiemi (age 48), Mimiru (age 7), Tamaru (age 10)]  
In December 2017, an object from a U.S. military aircraft fell on Midorigaoka Nursery School where my then-three-year-old daughter was attending. Six days later, a U.S. military aircraft window frame fell on Futenma Daini Elementary School. This year, my daughter graduated from the nursery school and entered Futenma Daini Elementary School. The children will grow up, but the dangers remain the same no matter where they go in Okinawa. In the case of Midorigaoka Nursery School, no measures were taken because the U.S. military did not acknowledge the incident. In the case of Futenma Daini Elementary School, the U.S. military acknowledged the incident, apologized, and said “we will not fly over the primary schools as much as possible,” and the national government also installed surveillance cameras and five red lights to inform U.S. military aircraft that the school is there. However, these are of no use at all, and U.S. military aircraft continue to fly over the school as if nothing happened. In order to improve their risk management skills, the school tells the children to “look, listen, stop, and run away if you feel scared” when U.S. military aircraft fly over.

I will continue to raise my voice to protect my daughter and to help children at primary schools have a safe and secure school life that they should be granted with. In Okinawa, where there have been military bases for 76 years since the end of World War II, women volunteers from the prefecture are organizing an event called “Kotori Fes - I wish only little birds would fly in the sky” to approach these issues with their main concern being children’s lives, all while having fun with the children. I put birds in the photograph to express our message. As a resident who lives around the Futenma base, I included the fence in the background to express that the base is a daily problem. The face masks with X put on the Osprey and the helicopter are an expression of “please be quiet because it’s disturbing us every day.” No matter what the situation is, mothers have been working on this issue not only with anger and sadness, but also with a bright and positive anticipation for the future. The poster also expressed the brightness of the future. (March 26, 2021)

88

“From a sea of landfill to a sea of love” [OHYAMA Moritsugu (age 44), engineer (environment related)]  
With the opening of both the West Coast Road and Parco, the sea in Urasoe has become a sea loved by many people. At low tide, there are children swimming and people walking on the mudflats. At dusk, many people come to watch the sun set over Kerama. It is unbelievable that we are building an unnecessary military port in these waters.

I would like to defend the importance of this sea with a megaphone, jumping higher than anyone else. I want it to be loved even more by the people of the prefecture and by people around the world. When the place is enjoyable, people gather, and when people gather, we can change politics. I hope to work together with many people, with those who have realized the beauty of the sea, to protect it. (June 13, 2021)

89

“Out of the spell, into a new Okinawa” [IREI Yuki (age 42), former member of Urasoe City Council]  
I want people to be aware of the chains and the curse on Okinawa, which cannot be removed unconsciously. Okinawa has been tormented by the base issue for many years. It is a fact that there is a difference in the ways of thinking between the older generation of those who experienced the war, the working generation whose work is tied to the bases, and the younger generations who take the presence of the bases for granted because they’ve existed since before they were born. Regardless of age or gender, there are people in Okinawa who stand up and fight to change the situation, people who are beginning to realize the absurdity of the situation, and people who are indifferent. In response to the absurdity of the situation imposed on Okinawa by the authorities, I competed in the Urasoe mayoral election in February 2021 with the sole aim of opposing the construction of a military port and protecting the rich natural environment of the sea for the future of our children. This photo was taken in the sea, on the west coast of Urasoe where land reclamation is planned. The curse on Okinawa is represented by the chains and the kimono with an iron mesh pattern, people trying to break free from the chains, people who have started to notice the situation (e.g. the octopus catching men and fishing women), young people struggling with a sense of helplessness and frustration, and people enjoying the sea in a relaxed manner without noticing their surroundings. I want to tell the people of Okinawa that the spell and chains of the base issue can be broken if we unite and fight against it. We hope that you will join us in raising our voices against those in power who are depriving us of our right to live in Okinawa. (June 13, 2021)

90

[TAKAHASHI Chie (age 49), acupuncturist] [YAMAGUCHI Kyoko (age 62), self-employed] Yonaguni Island  
TAKAHASHI Chie: The horses are from the South Ranch where the Self-Defense Force base was built. These horses are not purebred Yonaguni horses, but mongrels. In the past, for human convenience, there was an attempt to raise food horses by mixing other breeds with the purebred Yonaguni horses. But the person who started it left the island and the plan ended halfway. However, natural breeding has continued in the South Ranch and we can no longer find the purebred. But the horses were still able to live quietly until the base was built. There were stables which, although rusty and broken, provided shade on sunny days and shelter from the rain on rainy days. There was also a small waterhole. In the evening, the horses and cows would often gather there. But

when the construction of the Self-Defence Force's base started, the whole place was destroyed and there was no place for them to rest. Of course, the area of grassland that provided food was also reduced. During the construction work, the horses and cows would come in and stand in the area where the backhoe was operated every day. This was their home before. Humans have taken away for their own purposes the place where the horses used to live. The cattle that were raised for food were all sold somewhere, but the horses were not sold because they have no value as a native species. They have owners who do nothing to help them when they breed, give birth, get injured, or get sick. They have no shade in the hot sun, and even during typhoons they hide under the screw pine trees. Their food is mostly grass, so they are almost wild. For some reason, as the temperature rises, the number of flies and mites increases in this area. The flies sting the horses and the itchy scratches cause small injuries, which the flies swarm over and scratch again, causing even deeper wounds. And so it goes on until the weather gets cold and the insects disappear. There is no evidence of native horses on this small island, and it is not hard to imagine that they were brought here for human purposes. The horses have always been at the mercy of humans. I understand that there is no point in apologizing to them, but I can't help doing so. And I can't help but feel respect for the strength of these horses that, regardless of the given environment, live their lives without a care in the world.

YAMAGUCHI Kyoko: "Let's not fight, let's get along." This is the fifth year that the Self-Defense Forces have been stationed on Yonaguni Island. These are the words left behind by the now-deceased man who always fought with us.

Countries should get along without fighting. Let the inhabitants of the island get along without fighting. It would be so much better... When I moved to Yonaguni 40 years ago, it was like one country. The people of Yonaguni are proud to be *Duman-tuu* (Yonaguni people). They cultivated the fields, worked hard, helped each other's fields in the *Yuimaaru* spirit, and brought up their children. Now, Yonaguni has become an island of bases, hosting the military, and is at the mercy of the Japanese and Americans. The fields have been destroyed and the power of self-government has been eroded. The revitalization of the island by the Self-Defense Forces is a fantasy that will never be realized. (June 11, 2021)

91

[KANO Fumie (age 61), innkeeper] [YAMADA Kazuyuki (age 69), farmer] Yonaguni Island

KANO Fumie: "The meaning of the words on the T-shirts": *Bantadounanchima* (Our Yonaguni Island) *Katirarinun* (Let's protect it, we can't abandon it!)

Thoughts before the base was built: Yonaguni Island is peaceful. Cows and horses coexist peacefully, and the South Farm overlooking the sea was made famous by "Dr. Coto's Clinic". We must not let the Self-Defense Forces build their base at a place that both townspeople and tourists love. We must prevent it!

Thoughts since the base was built: The cows have disappeared, the radar base has been erected, military vehicles have been brought in as if they own the place, and the Self-Defense Forces personnel in camouflage uniforms have been walking around Minami Farm, making the scene bizarre. It is heartbreaking to see the horses startled by the car horns, the fireworks, and the drone training. Are the occasional road blocks a way for the horses to relieve their stress? On top of this, if the Electronic Warfare Operations Unit would be stationed as part of military buildup, we will be targeted even more. I hope the island can be made a safe place to live in through peaceful diplomacy!

YAMADA Kazuyuki: The island of *Marunma* floats on a strong current. We must not give up the charm of an island where people from around Asia interact and exchange goods. (June 11, 2021)

92

"A mother who fights to protect even when she is helpless"

[The HIGA family: Toshiko (age 79), Maria (age 52), Rina (age 14), Eri (age 12), Hisui (age 10)]

When she was a child, living with her mother in the town of Camp Hansen, she was attacked by more than a dozen American soldiers. I still remember how my mother fought like a demon to keep her daughter alive, despite being in despair as her pleas to the police for help were ignored. Based on this experience, I created this scene to express the will of my children (her grandchildren) and myself to protect my mother.

The thin string I hold in my hand represents the cord of an electric appliance that my mother used during her fight.

The children are also determined to protect their grandmother. It was my mother's fight on that day that made me who I am and eventually led to the births of her grandchildren. (Text: HIGA Maria, November 7, 2020)

93

"Walking together closely"

[Mr. and Mrs. NAKANISHI Chishun and Masae]

Chishun (age 72) has been using a wheelchair for the past six years. He goes to a rehabilitation session three times a week and also drives himself to the annual *Shogaisha Henoko no Tsudoji* (Assembly of the Disabled), which is held to oppose the construction of a new U. S. military base. He likes to talk to people, so he sometimes holds "Tempura Summit" for anyone who wants to eat and *gyuntaku* (talk) at a local tempura restaurant. On his Facebook page, which he updates everyday, he writes: "If I don't move my body, I'll be no good. I will commit to rehabilitation!" Nakanishi is battling spinocerebellar degeneration, an intractable disease whose causes are still poorly understood. When he was young, he was a sprinter (short-distance runner) and was the mayor of Kombu Ward, Uruma, where he grew up. He gradually became unable to walk around when he was 40 years old. He went to many hospitals to see doctors but could not find out the cause of his condition and it was not until he was 64 that he found out the name of his disease. Even after many years of rehabilitation, he will never be able to walk again like before.

But he says, "I'm trying to do everything I can so that my condition doesn't get any worse. I'm stubborn." He never gives up. He is always in good spirits. When I asked him if he ever gets depressed, he replied, "Never. If I were, I would be hopeless. I don't want to be like that."

His wife, 69-year-old Masae, married into the Nakanishi family in Kombu Ward from Tokyo, and has supported Mr. Nakanishi while raising their two young daughters and teaching calligraphy classes. She laughs, "My husband has so many things he wants to do." Finally, I asked Mr. Nakanishi again, "Why are you working so hard?" He answered, "It's because I don't want to become bedridden. I don't want to trouble my wife. That's how I feel." (Interview: ISHIKAWA Mao, Text edit: YAMAUCHI Yuki, June 26, 2021)

94

"W Setsu-chans"

[UECHI Setsu (age 94) and YAMAZATO Setsuko (age 83), *Inochi to Kurashi wo Mamoru Obaa Tachi no Kai* (Grandmothers Club for Protection of Life and Well-being)]

The members of the *Inochi to Kurashi wo Mamoru Obaa Tachi*

*no Kai* call the two of them "W Setsu-chan" because they are always together. Ms. UECHI Setsu lost her father early, and she has had a hard time since she was a child.

In order to help her mother as much as possible, she has taken different jobs, including working as a maid in various shops and as a bill collector for a gas company in her old age.

The representative of *Inochi to Kurashi wo Mamoru Obaa Tachi no Kai*, Ms. YAMAZATO Setsuko, is her close friend. They live nearby. She joined the *Obaa Tachi no Kai* because she didn't want another war to happen. On days when the group has activities, W Setsu-chans travel together using Setsuko's car. (March 31, 2021)

95

"*Kichi Iranai Team Ishigaki* (Team Ishigaki: We Don't Need Bases)"

[UEHARA Masamitsu (age 68)]

NAKAJIMA Sawako (born in Tokyo) is an unparalleled cat lover who is taking part in the campaign against the construction of a missile base in the Hiratoku Omata area of Ishigaki Island. She was tired of living in the big city and retired early from her job to live a peaceful life with her cats in her "final home" overlooking the sea of Ishigaki Island. On March 1, 2019, the government, the Ministry of Defense, and the Okinawa Defense Bureau forced the construction of the base. Since then she has been taking part in protests and monitoring activities in front of the gate of the former Juumaaru Golf Course, led by the citizens' volunteers. Even though the number of participants in the monitoring activities has decreased, she has been working, sometimes alone, in the monitoring tent twice a week, from around 9:00 a.m. to noon, for more than two years, checking the entry and exit of construction vehicles.

The two of us discussed the progress of the construction work by comparing the photos and drone aerial footage that I have taken around the site with the vehicle log notes that Sawako has recorded, and we provided information to the anti-base citizens' group. We are constantly seeking ways to prevent the construction of a military base on Ishigaki Island while taking actions. It is a question of being in sync to organize a movement that can carry out the necessary matters promptly. In May of this year, during our surveillance activities, a group of six people claiming to be a nationalist right-wing group shouted and threatened us, saying, "Remove the tent!" and "We will mobilize the whole country and come here on 6.23!" But she was not intimidated by them and said, "Stop the exhaust gas of the car!" I admired her gutsy attitude. This person who says, "I just don't want the base to be built and I don't care about difficult things," is so valuable as a partner on this island. The "Land Control Law," a rare and evil law passed by the force of numbers on June 16, 2021, will have a major impact on the islands of the Ryukyu Arc. Let's revive the fight for the islands of the Ryukyu Arc, to reject being the sacrifice and human shield for Yamato (mainland Japan) again! (June 9, 2021)

96

"Representative of *Ishigaki-shi Jumin Tohyo wo Motomeru Kai* (Ishigaki Citizens Association Demanding for Referendum)"

[KINJO Ryutarou (age 30)]

From the time I was in primary school, I was forced to help out in the fields while my classmates were playing. I wanted to live abroad, so I went to America. After graduating from university, longing to wear a suit and tie, I worked as a "salaryman," but I wasn't confident in my work. I came back to Okinawa and started farming. People around me told me that my parents were happy. Today, I run "Fruits Garden Kinjo" with my parents. We grow man-

goes, acerola cherries, and atemoya. (April 3, 2021)

"About the trial"

On the basis of the basic autonomy ordinance of Ishigaki City, we submitted more than a third of the signatures, but the local referendum we requested has not been held yet. We are now asking the court whether the mayor of Ishigaki is obliged to hold a city referendum. (April 3, 2021)

97

"Secretariat of *Ishigaki-shi Jumin Tohyo wo Motomeru Kai* (Ishigaki Citizens Association Demanding for Referendum)"

[IRAMINA Takatora (age 30)]

One time when I was in primary school, I was doing my homework in detention. My father came in, slapped me in the face, and took me home. Even the school principal tried to stop him. "Mr. Iramina, please stop!" But my father didn't listen to him. From a young age I was made to help in the fields.

I run a tea farm called Harusato. The tea is made from the leaves of shell ginger, guava, mulberry, Japanese loquat, chomei-so, Ryukyu pine, lemongrass, turmeric, and noni. It is made with great care for taste. (April 3, 2021)

98

"Secretariat of *Ishigaki-shi Jumin Tohyo wo Motomeru Kai* (Ishigaki Citizens Association Demanding for Referendum)"

[MIYARA Nao (age 30)]

I play the *sanshin* (Okinawan guitar) and am involved in traditional performing arts, *shishi-mai* (lion dance), and community events as a youth chairman. My grandfather and father were both cowherds. After graduating from Tokyo University of Agriculture, I trained myself for three years at a big farm in Tokushima. When I came back to Ishigaki, I started working at my parents' Miyara Farm.

I feel happy when the results are good and the cows are sold at a good price, when the meat achieves the satisfactory quality of Ishigaki beef. In Yaeyama, it is common to sell live cattle at an auction, but I am happily running my favorite livestock farm while carefully considering whether to sell the calves by auction or as meat. (June 10, 2021)

99

"Onna village flower offering stand"

[YOSHIDA Katsuhiko (age 73)]

I started offering flowers at the place where the body of a woman was abandoned on May 19, 2017. Every time I sort through the bouquets, stuffed animals, drinks, incense sticks, letters, etc., the anger of the person whose life was suddenly taken and the indignation of her parents shake my heart. Many people from Okinawa, the mainland, and abroad have offered flowers and prayed. I am sure you feel the same way. We *Uchinanchu* (people native to Okinawa) have always valued "*Nuchi-Dou-Takara*", the protection and nurturing of life. However, in *Uchinaa* (Okinawa), there are still absurdities, wherein lives are suddenly taken away. *Yurchenaibiran* (we cannot forgive).

As long as the absurdities exist, the *Uchinanchu* will continue working toward social reformation.

That is why we need to be *Icharibachoudee* (holding hands with the people of all over the world), and to be determined to not let it happen again, to not forget, and to commit to what we can do. These are the *Chimugukuru* (mind) of *Uchinanchu*. At the end, her father, with tears in his eyes, told me. "I live for the soul of my child..." (Participants: MIYAGI Chie, Teguzumanhana, April 28, 2021)

100

“Team Akabanaa”  
[UENO Sayaka (age 41)]

Parents and children are playing happily. Men and women of all ages are stretching to the music. Children jumping into the sea without worrying about changing their clothes for the journey home was a daily sight until not so long ago.

In the winter of 2019, life changed completely. In the wake of COVID-19, normality has been taken away. In September, just before the coronavirus hit, we had a study group. We were joined by organizations, photographers, activists, and friends from the media to organize information. The topic of the meeting was the murder of a woman in Chatan on the 13th of April of the same year. After the incident, the key word that spread quickly was “entanglement in a romantic relationship.” However, with additional testimonies from the victim’s friends and follow-up interviews, it became clear that the incident was not just a case of a tangled relationship, but a murder in which the victim’s human rights were taken away due to the perpetrator’s one-sided feelings. But the truth was not heard so widely. On the contrary, we started to encounter one-sided information, saying that the crime was inevitable because it was the fault of the victim, as though the victim was responsible for the crime. We need to correct this misinformation and share the thought that victims are not at fault. In order to do so, we need to, above all, think about what we can do to prevent the same thing from happening again. Thus, we decided to hold a memorial meeting on the anniversary of the victim’s death, and form the organizing committee “Team Akabanaa”.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic became so great that it became difficult to have meetings in the hall or in a large group. However, we still felt that we had to do something about what happened to her and to create a society where victims are not blamed for what happened to them. So, on April 11, 2020, we gathered at Araha Beach, where there were still very few people, to hold a silent standing event (a moment for us to just stand and share our thoughts). One year has passed since then. On the 13th of April 2021, although it is, unfortunately, still not possible to hold a meeting, we invited our friends to share a moment with us in the hopes that we could do the same thing as last year. There was a much larger number of people who were just hanging out at the beach than last year and many of them looked at us with curiosity. In the middle of the meeting, some parents and children, tired from playing, went to the pavilion and shared juice. The victim of the incident would have spent such time with her children on this beach and she must have thought that her time would continue. “We must not let it happen again. It’s not your fault.” I thought of her as I continued standing in silence. (April 11, 2021)

101

“Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base)”  
[SHIMIZU Hayako (age 72), Secretary General]

I have lived on this island for 26 years. The sea of coral reefs is bright, the sunsets are beautiful, and they continue to soothe my aging heart. But as my children and other children have grown up and left the island, the camouflaged armies and missiles have arrived. The fields, where the wind blows, are disappearing, being replaced by empty white buildings and people flocking in for money and power. Today, I have no choice but to raise the rainbow flag, raise my fist, and shout: “Give me back my island time!” (April 8, 2021)

102

“Former Miyakojima City Mayor SHIMOJI Toshihiko Arrested on Bribery Charges!”

The campaign against the construction of the Ground Self-Defense Force’s garrison on Miyakojima began on May 11, 2015, when the then-Vice Minister of Defense came to inform the former Mayor of Miyakojima City, Shimoji Toshihiko, of the “Land Self-Defense Force Deployment Plan”. Less than four months earlier, Shimoji had colluded with the president of the failing Chiyoda CC golf course to sell the land to the Ministry of Defense. The government and the Ministry of Defense purchased it with hard-earned tax money worth 800 million yen. The golf course was turned into a missile base. The former mayor Shimoji was arrested in May 2021 on suspicion of bribery for receiving 6.5 million yen from the golf course president.

The former mayor had been the subject of numerous allegations. Many citizens thought that he was finally arrested. After all, base construction is a “hotbed of pork barrel politics.” The former mayor often failed to hold himself accountable, saying, “National security is the sole responsibility of the state.” But, in fact, what he meant was, “It is my exclusive right to line my own pockets!” (Text: SHIMIZU Hayako, Secretary General of *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base), June 15, 2021)

103

“Stopping construction vehicles”

Every day from Monday to Saturday, from early morning to noon, residents of Bora prevent construction vehicles from entering and leaving the Ground Self-Defense Force’s Bora Training Ground. They are staging a protest against the deployment of missiles by delaying the construction for as long as possible.

Even if the vehicles leave, they will soon return with more earth and sand. That’s why we have to stop the vehicles from leaving. These two, plus co-chairman Hiromori, were named the “Three Musketeers of Bora” by SHIMOJI Kaoru. (April 6, 2021)

104

“Missile Danyakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai (Opponent Residents Association against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment)”

[SHIMOJI Kaoru (age 67)]

We have been asked many times why we are organizing the opposition movement. Many of them say that there is no point in protesting because the depot will be built anyway. To those who say, “You can’t win by challenging the government, so what’s the point of protesting?”, SHIMOJI Hiromori (co-chairman of the association) responded with such powerful words: “This is about how we live our lives.” Thinking about the history and the pride of the people who have lived in this remote, harsh, and never-so-blessed land makes me want to stay close to them.

It is unbearable to see the island, which was originally blessed with rich nature, being rapidly destroyed. All we can do, as pathetically powerless as we are, is to continue to insist on our right to live a normal life on the island as we take it for granted. By continuing to communicate about the violence of the state, we make visible what is happening here. It’s a never-ending effort, but we have to work at it, following our convictions. (June 7, 2021)

105

“Family protest”

[Mr. and Mrs. SHIMOJI Hiromori and Kaoru]

The husband, Mr. Hiromori, age 71, is co-chairman of the *Missile*

*Danyakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai* (Opponent Residents Association against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment). He and his wife, Ms. Kaoru, age 67, stand in front of the gate of the training ground every day to protest. Kaoru keeps her smartphone and streams the “Bora Dayori” online as they protest every day. Her live-streaming channel reports: “Today, how many construction vehicles entered the area,” “the Self-Defense Forces are conducting shooting drills,” “construction work is going on here and there,” “someone came to support the protesters today,” and so on. As the information spreads through “Bora Dayori”, more and more people from all over the country are coming to visit the site. (April 5, 2021)

106

“Morning Scenery”

[SHIMOJI Akane (age 42), member of the Miyakojima City Assembly]

In Bora, where I live, we have shown our opposition to the deployment of the JGSDF ammunition depot by passing a resolution against it in the community as soon as it was decided. My father, as a representative of the local community, has been persistently opposing the project while the construction work is proceeding steadily. I thought it would be very meaningful to have a city councilor from the local community express opposition to the project so as to keep the hearts and minds of the local people together since most of them are not able to show their faces in public. When I first came back home four years ago, I thought I would enjoy a relaxed life in the countryside, but I have been forced to scramble to address the deployment plan. If it hadn’t been for the ammunition depot, I don’t think I would have become a member of the city council, but now, I feel that I am following in the footsteps of my father who was once a member of the council. My mother and her supporters, by talking about the fields and the sea with the locals as they sit in front of the gate of the ammunition depot, have turned the site into a place to pass on to the next generations stories of the island and the idea of life. In the course of our activities, our different ways of life have intersected and, although our activities take the form of an “opposition movement,” I think that the roots of our activities are connected to the question of how to live on this island. I don’t know if we will be able to reach the end of the opposition movement and the cancellation of the deployment, but I want to see how far we can change the current situation. I think it is important for us to go up the stairs one step at a time. My goat is one year old. He has been limping since he was born and his owner, who was our next-door neighbor, was having trouble with him, so I adopted him about six months ago. (June 7, 2021)

107

“I will live proudly as Black”

[OYAFUSO Family: Daisuke (age 40), Ai (age 38), Tiiida (age 10), Yunta (age 9), Ninufa (age 5), Kanayoooo (age 2)] Motobu-cho

When I tell people that I am one of the *Uchinanchu* in Japan, they keep saying, “No, no, you are different.” When I act like I don’t want to be considered Japanese anymore and begin acting American and Black, they say, “No, no, you should behave like you’re Japanese.”

The classmates of my son, Tiiida, told him at school one day, “Tiiida, you are American, but you call yourself Japanese.” He answered, “What? I’m not American, I’m Black.” My son is growing up proud to be Black. #okinawa #blacklivesmatter (Text: OYAFUSO Ai, June 27, 2021)

Part 9

2021-2022

108

“I won’t lose!”

[YONASHIRO Mamoru (age 47), Chiemi (age 49), Tamaru (age 11), Mimiru (age 7)]

I was born and raised in Futenma, and it was natural for me to be based there. However, in 2017, when I received a call from my then-three-year-old daughter’s preschool that “parts of a U.S. military aircraft fell from the sky,” my mind went blank, my body shook, and I could not stop crying. At that moment, as if a spell had been broken, I realized that we were living in such a dangerous place and, together, with other mothers, we began working as #Group “Kodosora” (Protecting Children’s Skies) to amplify our call: “Don’t fly over our children’s schools!”. Various U.S. military aircraft fly over Futenma day and night. Sometimes we see them dozens of times a day. This is not a well-known fact and, in order to convey the current situation, we began recording the flight times and posting videos of the flights on SNS. In this picture, we show how even children, who are used to the noise, cover their ears and how cats freeze in fear whenever fighter jets fly low overhead. During our previous takes, I was standing in front of the Osprey, protecting the children who were covering their ears, and posing as though I was recording its flight time. Then Ms. Mao said, “You can do any pose you like!” and so the children went in front of the Osprey and started striking a fighting stance. It was very surprising. This is how the children really felt... I was reassured that the children, whom I thought I had to protect, have grown very strong and tough in the five years since the accident. From now on, I will not be defeated by the U.S. military or the Japanese government!!! (The role of the cat was played by MIYAGI Tomoko, a fellow #Kodosora member who is very expressive. Thank you!) (Text: YONASHIRO Chiemi, April 17, 2022, on the rooftop of a private house in Ojana, Ginowan City)

109

[NAKAMURA Midori (age 42), President of the *Okinawa no Beigunkichi wo Tokyo ni Hikitoru To* (Party to Take Back U.S. Military Bases in Okinawa to Tokyo)]

I have been going to Okinawa since June 2016. Over the past six years, I have talked to many people and observed the current situation, but I have completely different feelings now than when I first started going there. Back then, I was “angry” at the Japanese government together with the Okinawan people, but now I feel a strong sense of discomfort not only with the Japanese government, but also with people on the mainland who simply say “go for it, Okinawa” and consider the issue as other people’s business. For example, there is a song called “Give Okinawa Back”. When I saw people from mainland Japan singing this song together with Okinawans, I did not feel anything at all, in fact, I even liked it. However, two years after I started going to Okinawa, I began to feel that the Okinawans’ appeal to “Give Okinawa Back” was unmistakably directed at the mainland, including myself, and I started thinking that singing along with them would be irresponsible for me to do as a person coming from the side that is imposing the bases on the island. YARA Chobyu, the chief of the administration at the time of Okinawa’s reversion, prepared a “Proposal for Reversion Measures”. It contained the desire for a “new Okinawa.” If mainland society was ready to respond to it, there could have been legislators who would have pledged to change the situation in Okinawa during the election campaign. But I learned that there was no one like that in the past 50 years. I also saw a councilor

telling the Okinawan people after the Nago mayoral election in January of this year, “You just have to work hard again and there will be another one next time.” “Mainlandizing Okinawa” should mean that Okinawa is given equal rights with the mainland. But now, the idea is falsely interpreted and many treat Okinawa as subordinate to the mainland. When we say “Okinawa doesn’t need what the mainland doesn’t need,” the mainland replies, “the mainland also doesn’t need what Okinawa doesn’t need.” We need to stop such rhetorical fallacies and historical revisionism. We would like to call for a reaffirmation of the fact that Okinawa has been sacrificing itself by taking over bases that used to be on the mainland. We will continue demanding that the mainland take responsibility and take back the bases that were forced on Okinawa. We want to realize the cessation of both the Futenma operation and the construction of the new Henoko base. (April 16, 2022, on the rooftop of Okinawa International University, Ginowan City)

110

“The 3rd memorial meeting”

[UENO Sayaka (age 42), member of Team Akabanaa]

The third memorial service. On April 13, 2019, a U.S. Navy sailor murdered a Japanese woman before committing suicide in Kuwae, Chatan Town, Okinawa. We have been holding a memorial service every year since 2020, at the beach in Chatan, to remember her life that was taken in front of her beloved children. It is a very small gathering, but it provides a gentle time to think about her and her family, to pray, and to be together. However, I wonder how many people will remember this incident and her story. At the end of April 2016, another young woman lost her life in an incident also stemming from the U.S. base. On the anniversary of her death this year, many people visited the site and laid flowers. Their lives are of the same value. Both lives were taken by one-sided violence. That is why we gather every year to remember her in our prayers. (April 9, 2022, Sunset Beach, Chatan Town)

111

“I will not forget. I won’t let it happen again... Pray!”

[YOSHIDA Katsuhiko mowed and cleaned up the site with his three grandchildren before the seventh anniversary of a woman’s death. (From left) YOSHIDA Shintaro (senior at Okinawa International University), FUJISHIRO Kotoha (freshman at Gushigawa High School), FUJISHIRO Hironosuke (senior at Gushigawa High School)]

Everyone has the right to have children, raise them, and live happily. Here in *Uchinaa* (Okinawa), this natural order of things is not really possible. On April 28, 2016, at the age of 20, her dream of marriage was taken away and, on May 19, she was found dead in the bushes along Prefectural Road 104. I was there at the scene. “Again...” I was filled with anger. The faces of the parents who gave birth to her and nurtured her came to my mind. They had been praying for their daughter’s safety and waiting for her return, but their hopes were cut short. After days of being alone, unable to speak, and enduring the loneliness, she finally returned to the warmth of her parents. Along the prefectural road, the number of flowers offered to the temple is increasing day by day. We share the *chimugukuru* (heart) of *Uchinanchuu* (the Okinawan people), the anger and frustration in grief, as if it were my own. A flower stand was also built and the prayers of the people of the prefecture never ceased. Once a week, to cherish our *chimugukuru*, we take care of the flower stand and mow the grass around it. My grandchildren also help me. I have met many people and learned a lot about their *umui* (heartful thoughts). We closed the seventh death anniversary with prayers and tears. The hearts of

her parents will never be at ease. April 28th is “the day of prayer” for the family, “the day of humiliation” for the *Uchinaa*, and “the day of restoration of sovereignty” for the *Yamatu*. The militarization of the Ryukyu Islands has progressed and this absurdity in Okinawa has continued unabated even 50 years after its reversion to Japan. “*Nuchiru-Takara*” (life is treasure) is the most important word for *Uchinanchu* to resolve everything. We will not forget April 28th and we will not let it happen again. We are determined and we pray together with all of you. (April 24, 2022 at the site of Onnason Afuso, Onna Village)

112

“Island contaminated by U.S. military foam”

[(From left) YONASHIRO Chiemi (age 48), YONAHA Saki (age 37), SHIROMA Mayumi (age 43), GUSHIKEN Yoshino (age 43)]

On August 26, 2021, contaminated water containing organic fluorine compounds (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances or PFAS) was released from the Futenma Airfield into the public sewage system by the U.S. military. Outraged by this, mothers in Ginowan City, where the PFAS was released into the sewage system, organized the “Standing to Protect Water for Life”. The provisional target for water quality set by the Ministry of the Environment is 50 nanograms of perfluorooctanesulfonic (PFOS) and perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) per liter. The water collected by the Ginowan City administration from the sewage system on the day of the discharge was found to be 13 times this amount. Organo-fluorine compounds, which were released into the sewage system by the U.S. military, is the generic name for several chemical substances. In Japan, the Chemical Substances Examination and Regulation Law (Chemical Substances Control Law) has banned the manufacture and import of PFOS for all uses since 2018! PFOA is also considered to be a substance that, once taken into the body, is difficult to expel, poses a risk of premature birth for pregnant women, and is possibly a carcinogen. The arrogance of the U.S. military to release such dangerous compounds into the civilian sewage system without permission is making me tremble with anger. Having a base means that even the water necessary for daily life cannot be safe and secure. In fact, mothers in Ginowan City, where the discharge problem occurred, told other mothers living outside the area, “You might be thinking the discharge problem won’t affect you. You open the faucet and comfortably use the water for washing vegetables and drinking. But in reality, Okinawa is located next to the base and this water may be contaminated by PFAS!” We are desperately trying to stop them from using the water. The base issue and the protection of water for life — they may seem to be two separate issues, but if we do not speak up regarding both, we will not be able to protect our children’s future or their health. With these thoughts in mind, I expressed this extraordinary situation in Okinawa with love and humor. (November 24, 2021, Yomitan Village)

113

“HADAKA”

[MAKISE Akane (age 45), stripper]

In the spring of 2017, I visited Henoko and Oura Bay for the first time. I was almost crushed by the sight of the sea being violated with a rattling roar and the sadness and anger of the people who were watching the construction site with me. Who am I? I may be one of *Yamatonchu*, who continue to force the Okinawan people to live side by side with war. I may be one of those who are taking this ocean away from the future of Okinawa and the earth and one of the people who are taking away the lives of many creatures. I have to do something and I want to do something about it. Since

then, I have been visiting Okinawa. I have swum in seaweed beds where dugongs used to come to eat, in blue coral forests that seem to rise from the depths of the ocean, and in green coral where many fish swim around and live. These fish and I are both living for a brief moment in the endless life of the earth. I was fascinated by the sight of these fish, born and passing away with only one body. I would swim like crazy and suddenly feel a sense of dread, as if I shouldn’t go any further. When I looked out from the sea, I saw a construction site. Humans are using big tools to destroy this ocean. We are taking away the life of the sea to build bases used for killing people and making money.

If I am naked like a fish, I am a vulnerable creature.

If I stay naked like a fish, I will hear the voice of life.

I no longer want to live by taking someone else’s peace.

I will no longer live by trampling on someone else’s life.

I will not carry a flag or a weapon.

I was not born to kill.

I was not born to be killed.

I was born to live together.

I want to return Henoko and Oura Bay to the sea where dugongs live. I also want to return to the sea someday. I want the world to become unarmed and make earth a place without war. (April 7, 2022, Sedake Beach, Nago City)

114

[SHIMIZU Hayako (age 73), Secretary General of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base)] She has been standing with a rainbow flag in her hand for almost 20 years. Don’t die, the Self-Defense Forces! Don’t kill! Dismantle the base! I stand here again today. (May 20, 2022, Miyakojima Camp, Ground Self-Defense Force)

115

“Female Self-Defense Force member holding a gun”

[SHIMIZU Hayako (age 73), Secretary General of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base)] She must be in her twenties? A young petite woman, a member of the Ground Self-Defense Force, approaches with a rifle disproportionately held. Her eyes, which can be seen through her mask, are cool and pretty. She could be my granddaughter in terms of age. Why is she doing that? I want to ask her. Holding the gun, which must be quite heavy, with her finger on the trigger, she tries to control me as I cross the border, doing exactly as she has been taught and using exactly the words she has been taught. You, who have not yet known the loves and hates of love, the struggles of life, who have not yet stood up to the threat of violence, who have not yet wandered the line between life and death, why do you train with a weapon in your hand, shouting to kill people? Why does this country train these young men and women to kill people? That’s why we don’t need a nation. We don’t need a nation that has to kill each other to defend its territory. Bases are the very visualization and embodiment of a nation. So, I will probably keep saying, until the day I die, “no bases, no missile bases.” The insanity of my body, which has already seen hell when I was a child, will not be surpassed by the threat of state violence. (May 19, 2022, Miyakojima Garrison, Japan Ground Self-Defense Force)

116

“The Self-Defense Forces base is right in front of my farm”

[NAKAZATO Seihan (age 68), melon farmer, representative of the

*Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base); NAKAZATO Chiyoko (age 68), manager of a one-tsubo farm]

In 2022, 50 years have passed since the reversion of Okinawa Prefecture to Japan. What is the Japanese government’s intention in deploying the Self-Defense Forces to the Ryukyu Islands as a commemoration of the reversion? (Even though Okinawa is used as a shield for the defense of the mainland,) The Ministry of Defense says, “It is the responsibility of local governments to protect the safety of residents, not us.” (December 1, 2021, Nakazato Farm in Uenoobaru, Miyakojima City)

117

“Training right above my home village”

[NAKAZATO Chiyoko (age 68)]

Have you been following us to the skies of Miyakojima? The training planes that always interfered with my classes when I was in junior high school were not satisfied with flying over Futenma and now they are flying over Miyakojima. Wouldn’t it be nice to fly all the way to the sky above the Prime Minister’s Residence in Tokyo? (December 1, 2021, Japan Air Self-Defense Force Miyakojima Sub Base)

118

“TABATA Masuo (age 84), who was assaulted”

[SHIMIZU Hayako (age 73), Secretary General of the the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents’ Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base)] Sitting by my side is Tabata-san, who is always hardworking and serious. This elderly person with a limp and a physical disability was hit and pushed by a 39-year-old foreign woman, a family relative of a Self-Defense Force member. He was just trying to put up a flag in preparation for an anti-war standing action which he does twice a week. Mr. Tabata was knocked flat on his back and was unable to get up on his own. While on the ground, he called the police with the phone in his pocket. Another woman on the street, who witnessed the incident, helped him get up. The issue here is not that the female assailant is a cowardly, violent individual. The atmosphere within the Self-Defence Force that drove this woman to such violent extremes is horrifying. People are divided and groomed to be hateful and exclusionary. Such a social trend is frightening. I wouldn’t simply say “love and peace,” but how can we make the world a little more peaceful? How can we hold the hope of living in our hands? How can we tell people that they can trust others and they will not be betrayed? I can only find a glimmer of hope in the woman who helped Mr. Tabata after he collapsed. (May 19, 2022, Miyakojima Camp, Ground Self-Defense Force)

119

“The cleared land, where my parents’ house used to stand.”

[YONAHARA Masae (age 78), manager of *Inochi to Kurashi wo Mamoru Obaa Tachi no Kai* (Grandmothers Club for Protection of Life and Well-being)]

In 1956, when I was in fourth grade, I came to Ishigaki Island from Shimoji Town on Miyakojima as part of the immigration plan of the Ryukyu government. My father was the eldest son in the family, but their land was small. There were few fields. We were poor. We were forced to migrate from Kuroshima to Nosoko-mura Shimojidan, a land abandoned because of malaria, but the government did not conduct an investigation. There was no electricity, running water, school, doctor, or road. We walked for two hours



on a mountain road to arrive at Shimojidan at the foot of “Nosoko Marpe”, where we are now. I really wonder if the Ryukyuan government of the time treated us as human beings by bringing us to such a place, or if they just let us come here because they didn’t care. Those of us who made it to this place somehow managed to make it livable, but when I was in sixth grade, my father died at the age of 42. I became the one who had to protect my mother and younger siblings. I did whatever I could and worked hard. (Text: YONAHARA Masae)

In this place where Ms. Masae had lived with difficulty to protect her family’s life, a Self-Defense Force missile base, which is complicit in actions that take lives, is now being constructed at a rapid pace. She has had a difficult life, and that is why she understands the weight of life. This land, which she had struggled to cultivate, is not for the Self-Defense Force. It is the land that Ms. Masae and her family have cultivated to protect their own lives, even though they were deceived by the government officials. In order to protect this land, Ms. Masae always says, “I will stop the construction of the Self-Defense Force’s base for my children and grandchildren even if I have to risk my life!” (Text: ISHIKAWA Mao and UENO Sayaka, May 16, 2022, Nosoko Shimojidan, Ishigaki Island)

120

“Kainan Crossroads”

[UEHARA Masamitsu (age 69), farmer, representative of *Kichi Iranai Team Ishigaki* (Team Ishigaki: We Don’t Need Bases)]

In response to the decision made by Japan’s central government and the Ministry of Defense to deploy the Japan Self-Defense Force’s missile base in the Hiradoku-Omata area of Ishigaki Island, the community centers of four surrounding villages (Takeda, Kainan, Omoto, and Kawahara) have proposed resolutions against the deployment.

Since the construction of the base was forced to proceed on March 1, 2019, the Kainan community, which resides the closest to the planned site, has been suffering from the exhaust gas and tremors caused by large construction vehicles on Prefectural Road 87 from early in the morning to late in the evening as well as the noise of stones being crushed at the construction site. Those are man-made disasters (pollution) caused by the construction of the base, while human rights and the right to life continue to be violated and destroyed. Today, there are approximately 20 households living in Kainan village, but it was once a farming village of 50 households. Planned immigrants from Okinawa Island and free immigrants from Ishigaki Island settled there and it has a vibrant history. That history is being overwritten and transformed into that of the military base, where duties will be performed for war and power will be exercised for civilian oppression. The base construction, which is progressing on a daily basis, is located 330 meters from the village of Kainan. The construction of four ammunition depots is underway at a distance of 100 meters from Prefectural Road 87, which is only about 1.1 kilometers from Omoto Elementary School. Also, there are plans to build something called a “ground” about 250 meters away from Kainan village. The citizens pointed out that it would become a helipad where Osprey and other helicopters could take off and land. However, the Ministry of Defense intentionally did not respond to the citizens’ concern about the “ground.” The Ministry of Defense is planning to open the “Ishigaki Island Garrison” in March 2023, but they will not be able to open as planned due to wastewater treatment problems and other issues! Many people who have been playing a central role in the campaign against the deployment of the Ground Self-Defense Force fought for the “last chance” on

February 27, the day we lost the Ishigaki mayoral election. Now, we must rebuild the force with the people of Asia to fight against the construction of the military base on Ishigaki Island and the military fortification of the Ryukyu Arc. (February 27, 2022, Kainan Crossroads, Ishigaki City)

121

“The Frontline of Surveillance Activities”

[UEHARA Masamitsu (age 69), farmer, representative of *Kichi Iranai Team Ishigaki* (Team Ishigaki: We Don’t Need Bases)]

Since March 1, 2019, the day the Japan Self-Defense Force forcefully began the construction of a missile base in the Omata district of Hirae, Ishigaki Island, my life has changed drastically. I began to devote myself to the base construction opposition movement. I had decided to realize my dream of spending a relaxing life as a *Harusaa* (farmer) with my wife after having lived in the mainland for 43 years, but that became no longer possible. The distance from the house to the construction site is 7.5 kilometers, which is less than 15 minutes away by car. Moreover, with the noise of construction echoing through the fields, I cannot ignore the construction work in progress. Therefore I ended up spending more time monitoring their activities than working in the fields. The government and the Ministry of Defense have acquired 46 hectares of land for the planned missile base of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force. The main buildings of the Ishigaki Island garrison is concentrated in the former Jumar Golf Course within the site, and it is almost impossible to monitor the construction work due to the huge rocks obscuring the view, the installation of surveillance cameras, and the strict gatekeeping. Diet members, prefectural and city council members, and citizen activist groups have been requesting for information disclosure. However, the government and the Ministry of Defense have been insincere in their response. It is essential to expose the illegal construction work and stop the base from being built by partnering with the Okinawa Drone Project to take aerial photos and investigate the illegal construction at the site. (February 27, 2022, Mr. KABIRA’s pineapple field, Ishigaki City)

122

“Women who never give up”

[UEHARA Masamitsu (age 69), farmer, *Kichi Iranai Team Ishigaki* (Team Ishigaki: We Don’t Need Bases)]

NAKAJIMA Sawako (age 72) and Ms. T are of the same age and hail from Tokyo and Shizuoka, respectively. They are checking vehicles entering and leaving the base construction site along Prefectural Road 87. While the anti-base movement has been stagnant, both of them have energetically participated in standing and protest rallies and monitoring activities in various parts of the city. The parasol with lettering on it was made by Ms. T and it stands out for its appeal to citizens and drivers on the road. What the government and the Ministry of Defense are afraid of is the voice and strong will of the citizens. Persistence brings us force. (February 27, 2022, along Prefectural Road 87 in front of the old Jumar Gate)

123

“Learning from Horses”

[TAKAHASHI Chie (age 50), acupuncturist]

When I am with the horses at Minami Ranch, I tell them, “Thank you for always being here.” The horses here are not native Yonaguni horses. They are large horses crossbred a long time ago to serve as food. However, this is only the one-sided view of humans, and both purebreds and hybrids are still “horses.” It has been six

years since the Self-Defense Force’s base was built and opened in the Minami Farm where these horses live. Since the base was built where the stables used to be, the horses have nowhere to hide when there is heavy rain. Although the Adan forest provides shelter from the wind, it does not protect them from the rain. The horses have accepted this condition and are still going strong today. During the construction of the base, the horses did not retreat when they had to, even when a ten-ton dump truck came right in front of them and honked its horn. They completely ignored the trucks and rested in the middle of the road. Since the road runs through the ranch, it is only natural for the horses to block the road and relax in groups. The road is for humans, not for them. Recently, there was some kind of construction going on in the base again and a ten-ton dump truck was passing by, but the horses were still the same. Sometimes they retreat immediately and sometimes they do not retreat at all. The horses that are interested in people will interact with them, but the horses that aren’t will stay away. Horses do not kick people unless they are startled or we do something they don’t like. Of course, horses do not go out of their way to threaten or hurt people. Even when they are confronted, they don’t fight because they don’t want to be confronted. They maintain their own way of being while acknowledging others. It is a very strong and simple way of being—peaceful and in harmony with other beings. Many people have been led astray and brainwashed into forgetting this, but it is also the true way of being human. I wonder how much this place and the people are being healed by the horses just being here and preserving the energy of peace and harmony around this “inorganic building.” That is why I express my gratitude and care when I interact with the horses. I wish that these “inorganic buildings,” not only in Yonaguni Island but everywhere, will disappear as soon as possible. (May 14, 2022, Yonaguni Island South Farm)

124

“*Dai 22 Gun Shireibugo Hozon Kokai wo Motomeru Kai* (The Association Demanding the the 32nd Military Headquarters Trench Preservation and Opening)”

[Vice President: KAKINOHANA Houjun (age 88), professor emeritus at University of the Ryukyu. Director: FUKUMURA Shunji (age 69), architectural designer]

The human mind is not a physical object and is not visible to the eye. However, the human mind is the source of all activities and it is the human mind that starts and ends wars. During the ground war, Okinawa became a battlefield “filled with all kinds of hell” as the U.S. forces indiscriminately bombarded the island from land, sea, and air. Commander USHLJIMA Mitsuru decided on May 22, 1945, to retreat to the south, where the Okinawan residents had taken refuge, instead of defending the 32nd Army headquarters bunker built under Shuri Castle.

The means of expressing hell, a manifestation of the human mind, include writing, music, sculpture, and photography. To explain the need for the preservation and opening of the 32nd Army headquarters bunker to the public, KAKINOGANA uses text while FUKUMURA uses a scale model to present the entire headquarters bunker, which cannot be seen. In this photo, architect Fukumura Shunji shows a model of the 32nd Army Headquarters Dugout, the command post of the Okinawa ground war, built beneath Shuri Castle. (January 31, 2022, Haebaru Cultural Center)

125

“A Mantis Axe, But I’ll Keep Going!”

[SHIMOJI Hiromorii (age 72), co-chairman of the *Missile Dan-yakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai* (Opponent Residents Asso-

ciation against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment)]

The construction of an ammunition depot and shooting range in Bora, Miyakojima by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force began in October 2019. A missile base is being built right next to the village of Bora, pointed toward China. The base will cover an area of 19 hectares. It is supposedly 19 hectares in order to evade Okinawa Prefecture’s assessment. Three ammunition depots (two of which are already completed) and a firing range are under construction, but an extraordinary amount of time and effort has been put into these facilities. It seems that this 300-meter-long shooting range is not just a training area. By the way, the distance from the ammunition depot to the nearest house is 250 meters and the villages of Bora and Nanamata fall completely within one kilometer from it. This proximity is the biggest problem. Our opposition activities initially began with a sit-in in front of the gate to stop a convoy of dump trucks transporting soil and sand. That year, most of the construction vehicles headed for the north gate from a side road (city road) on the national highway that passes through Bora village. However, the sit-in was soon broken up by riot police. The distance between the national road and the gate is 100 meters. We changed our tactics. A few to a dozen of us gathered and stopped the convoy and used the way between the two national roads to employ delaying tactics. We slowly walked on the road for about 50 minutes and then 30 minutes. We passed around a microphone, shared our thoughts and feelings, sang songs, and supported each other while walking. In late November, the convoy of dump trucks stopped coming in. Around the same time, the work shifted to clearing the site and constructing a road for vehicles to enter and exit the site from the seaside (south side prefectural road). Thereafter, the seaward entrance became the main entrance to the facility. Construction of the ammunition depot began fully in April 2020. The main entrance and exit is on the seaside. The prefectural road is now too wide for us to block by walking slowly. We brought folding chairs in front of the gate and stopped the construction vehicles. We let worker vehicles and light trucks pass. We stopped dump trucks and other vehicles for 20 minutes and concrete mixer trucks for 10 minutes. The number of concrete mixer trucks passing through would reach nearly 100 on some days. We protested from early morning until 3:00 or 4:00 p.m. In 2021, the construction of the shooting range began and, in 2022, our fight entered its third year. Now, the number of construction vehicles has decreased. However, we cannot be complacent. I cannot stand in front of the gate all day long, but I want to stand there at least in the morning along with the local people and supporters who attend almost every day. I am sincerely grateful to every one of them. (May 23, 2022, Miyakojima City Ground Self-Defense Force’s Bora Training Area)

\*Mantis Axe: An obviously smaller and weaker person who challenges a larger and stronger person without pretending to be capable of doing so.

126

“During resistance”

[SHIMOJI Akane (age 42), member of the Miyakojima City Council]

On the morning of November 14, 2021, an MSDF convoy entered Shimosaki Wharf in Hirara Port. After the prefectural police pushed aside the protestors and confirmed that a truck loaded with ammunition was proceeding into the island, I hurried to Bora, where the ammunition depot was located. There were already many people gathered in front of the ammunition depot gate in Bora (my hometown and where I live now). The press and the Okinawa Prefectural Police were there. People from the city

center and the local area gathered to oppose the ammunition delivery. If the Okinawa Prefectural Police removed us, the trucks loaded with ammunition would be taken into the facility. Still, we must leave proof of our opposition. We must not allow our will to be drowned out by the many other things that are going on. I greeted each person as they sat in their folding chairs and waited for the moment of resistance. One by one, feeble fires come together to form a light that illuminates the area. The fire of resistance will not be easily extinguished. (November 14, 2022, Miyakojima City Ground Self-Defense Force's Bora Training Area)

127

“Division”

[SHIMOJI Kaoru (age 68), member of the *Missile Danyakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai* (Opponent Residents Association against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment)]

Boxes were being lined up in front of the gate on the day of the missile delivery. I noticed that piles of something were hidden several days ago, but I didn't know what they were. On the day of the missile delivery, I found out that they were assembly boxes. I still wondered why they were lined up along the border of the Bora training area even though there was a nice fence and a checkpoint at the main gate. The boxes looked light enough to be carried by two people, but ten troopers were moving and carefully arranging them in rows. I looked inside the box. There was what seemed to be a thick plastic bag that could store water, so I looked up at the sky and wondered if it would rain.

As I watched with great curiosity, the men silently proceeded with their deployment work without making eye contact with me and, as they were pulling out, I asked them if I could put trash there. The troopers returned to the base in silence and, after a few seconds of silence, only one of them turned around and replied to me, “No, you can't.” The Ministry of Defense repeatedly says, “We will explain the situation in detail so that the residents will understand.” It is a small thing, but I think it is one of our battles to ask them to put that into practice. (November 14, 2021, at the Miyakojima City Ground Self-Defense Force's Bora Training Area)

128

“Continuing to Raise the Banner of Resistance!”

[SHIMOJI Hiromori (age 72), co-chairman of the *Missile Danyakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai* (Opponent Residents Association against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment)]

The construction of an ammunition depot and firing range in the Bora area of Miyakojima City by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force began in November 2019. The northern gate near National Route 390, which runs through the village of Bora, was the main entrance for the construction vehicles. In 2020, the entrance was moved to the seaside and the construction vehicles disappeared from the residents' view. In front of the seaside gate, it became difficult to protest by walking very slowly like we used to. Even so, people from near and far, including local residents, gather daily in front of the gate to protest. (December 1, 2021, Miyakojima City Ground Self-Defense Force's Bora Training Area)

129

“Akane loves animals.”

[SHIMOJI Akane (age 43), a member of Miyakojima City Council]

She was in the goat pen across the street from her parents' house, covered in feces, caring for a baby goat with an injured leg. (May 23, 2022, Bora, Miyakojima City)

130

“Living as biracial (mixed-roots) in Okinawa”

[OYAFUSO Daisuke (age 41), Ai (age 39), Tiiida (age 11), Yunta (age 10), Ninufa (age 6), Kanayooo (age 3)]

Is it kind to hide how mixed-roots children have been treated in Japan and Okinawa, that they were denied Japanese citizenship until 1985, that they were not allowed to attend public schools or even enter institutions for war orphans? Even though the number of mixed-roots children is increasing, why does society continue to treat them as if they were foreigners who just arrived in Japan yesterday?

I want to interrogate the attitude of promoting “education for the Japanese.” Are we still forcefully imposing “Japanese-ness” on our children? When we instill “Japanese-ness” by teaching *Ojigi* (bowing) culture, are we leaving mixed-roots children behind? Failure to understand the problems that society inflicts on minorities means that we may not even realize that we ourselves are unconsciously inflicting these problems on society.

It is the indifferent who are shaping society at the expense of victims of the U.S., the U.S. military base in Okinawa, racism, microaggressions, etc. Once these people shed their indifference, society and the world will change. (April 24, 2021, Motobucho Public Market)

Part 10

2022-2023

131

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The Self-Defense Force systematically moved a great many items to Ishigaki, including missile vehicles, for the first time. OKUMA Masanori and other local protesters face off with Self-Defense Force officials from early in the morning. (March 5, 2023)

132

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

UEHARA Masamitsu (age 70) faces off with Okinawa Police. (March 5, 2023)

133

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The Self-Defense Force vehicles land on Ishigaki Island for the first time. The islanders who gathered in protest face off with Self-Defense officials and the Okinawa Police. (March 5, 2023)

134

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The Maritime Self-Defense Force's transport ship Osumi arrives to import ammunition to Ishigaki. (March 18, 2023)

135

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

UEHARA Masamitsu (age 70, left), the leader of *Kichi Iranai Team Ishigaki* (Team Ishigaki: We Don't Need Bases), makes a protest against the opening of the Ground Self-Defense Force Camp Ishigaki. (April 2, 2023)

136

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The newly established Ground Self-Defense Force camp. At the foot of an array of Okinawa policemen watching, a pair of a man and a woman daringly spread banners in protest against the camp. I was impressed by their courageous action. (April 2, 2023)

137

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

On March 16th, 2023, the Ground Self-Defense Force Ishigaki Camp opened. The friends of UEHARA Masamitsu (age 70) arrive from the Tokyo Metropolitan area. They shouted “No PAC3, no base, no camp!” (April 27, 2023)

138

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

TOME Mitsuko (age 69) spins silk thread between the shipment of pineapples. 1 (April 26, 2023)

139

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

TOME Mitsuko (age 69) spins silk thread between the shipment of pineapples. 2 (April 26, 2023)

140

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

TOME Mitsuko (age 69) boils cocoons and takes out the contained pupas to spin silk thread between the shipment of pineapples. 3 (April 26, 2023)

141

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

The grandson of a pineapple farming family in Ishigaki has just started school. I waited to photograph him as going to school with other children. (April 28, 2023)

142

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

Mr. and Mrs. TOME and their grandson having their photograph taken together in their farm. (April 28, 2023)

143

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

Busy preparing for the shipment of pineapples. (June 22, 2023)

144

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

Pineapples to be shipped. (June 22, 2023)

145

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

Ripe wax apples fallen around a farmer taking a break. (June 22, 2023)

146

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

Mother picking up her playing son while working to ship pineapples. (June 22, 2023)

147

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

An unmanned roadside pineapple stall. (June 22, 2023)

148

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

On Okinawa Memorial Day, schools are closed. The grandson is absorbed in hunting cicadas. (June 23, 2023)

149

“Pineapple Farm in Ishigaki Island”

“We grow and sell pineapples since our previous generation. I go to our orchard at 6:00 in the morning to harvest the fruit. Since my day starts early, I need a nap to maintain my energy. I used to take a nap at 1:00 every afternoon. This area was quiet with cars passing by only once in a while, but since the new GSDF camp was established near here, an increasing number of people related to the camp are coming and going now. It's been too noisy for me to take a nap. SDF members in camouflaged uniforms come and go on cars and motorbikes. Probably they want us to get used to their presence! Although they celebrated the opening of the camp in March with a flourish, we should never give up protesting. Since Kainan is such a small village, our protest movement barely grows bigger. Even if we are told to move away from here, I want to live here and keep this farm with my family forever.” (June 23, 2023)

150

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The gate of the Ground Self-Defense Force Camp Ishigaki. A man who seemed to be an officer came out. (June 22, 2023)

151

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

The Ground Self-Defense Force Camp Ishigaki opened. (June 24, 2023)

152

“Self-Defense Force in Ishigaki Island”

PAC3 (surface-to-air missile system MIM-104F Patriot) was parked near an artificial beach on private property. Seeing some SDF members in camouflaged uniforms doing something from the road, I came closer to the fence and asked them very loudly, “What are you doing?” and “Training or something?”, over and over again. They ignored me. (June 24, 2023)

153

“Self-Defense Force in Yonaguni Island”

As the SDF tank arrived at Yonaguni Airport, YAMADA Kazuyuki (age 70) and other Yonaguni residents made a protest. (November 17, 2022)

154

“Self-Defense Force in Yonaguni Island”

The tank leaving Yonaguni Airport. (November 17, 2022)

155

“Self-Defense Force in Yonaguni in Island”

Protesters KANO Fumie (age 62), YAMAGUCHI Kyoko (age 64), and YAMADA Kazuyuki (age 70) (from left to right), eagerly waiting for the tank that was going to move on the public road from Yonaguni Airport. (November 17, 2022)

156

“Self-Defense Force in Yonaguni Island”

Local residents who rushed to GSDF Camp Yonaguni from Yonaguni Airport to protest. (November 17, 2022)

157

“Self-Defense Force in Yonaguni Island”

Seven years have passed since the GSDF Camp Yonaguni was established within Minami Farm, where these horses had lived. While their home changed, the horses still live strong moving along the road eating the grass on both sides of the road. (November 16, 2022)

158

“Self-Defense Force in Miyako Island”

The members of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents' Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base) make a protest against the state funeral of former Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in the city center of Miyako. (September 27, 2022)

159

“Self-Defense Force in Miyako Island”

NAKAZATO Seiha (age 69), one of the co-chairman of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents' Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base), working in his field. (September 29, 2022)

160

“Self-Defense Force in Miyako Island”

NAKAZATO Seiha (age 69) and SHIMIZU Hayako (age 74), the co-leaders of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents' Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base). (September 29, 2022)

161

“Self-Defense Force in Miyako Island”

The GSDF Camp Miyako is located in front of the melon field of NAKAZATO Seiha (age 69), the co-chairman of the *Missile Kichi Iranai Miyakojima Jumin Renrakukai* (Miyako Island Residents' Liaison Committee that Does Not Need a Missile Base). The members of the group watch and make a protest at the camp's gate, speaking to GSDF officials. (September 29, 2022)

162

“GSDF Bora Training Area, Gusukube, Miyako”

SHIMOJI Hiromori (age 73) and his wife Kaoru (age 69), the co-chairmen of the *Missile Danyakuko Haibi Hantai Jumin no Kai* (Opponent Residents Association against Missiles and Ammunitions Depot Deployment), continue to make a protest at GSDF Bora Training Area. (September 26, 2022)

163

“GSDF Bora Training Area, Gusukube, Miyako”

Every day we record the arrivals of construction vehicles and military vehicles. How is a base constructed and reinforced? Instead of averting our eyes, we strive to watch with our eyes wide open. This activity is hard. The man sitting on the road is SHIMOJI Hiromori, my husband. Taking photographs upon sighting a vehicle approaching to the gate of the training ground became our habit. It is damn hot from July through September. (Text: SHIMOJI Kaoru, September 27, 2022)

164

“GSDF Bora Training Area, Gusukube, Miyako”

For the construction work of a shooting range, concrete mixer trucks and dirt trucks come one after another. I hate to admit but making a record is all I can do. In order to express our opposition, I take photographs when vehicles halt. (Text: SHIMOJI Kaoru, September 27, 2022)

165

“GSDF Bora Training Area, Gusukube, Miyako”

The village we can see in the distance is the village of Bora, where we live. A missile base was created next to our village, and now a shooting range is being built so close to the border between our

village and the base. Besides, there is an ammunition depot in front. In the Battle of Okinawa in WWII, the Japanese army used Okinawan people as their shields. The situation remains the same even after the army became the Self-Defense Force following the war. (Text: SHIMOJI Kaoru, September 28, 2022)

166

“Slander Quiz: A way to communicate the ‘true’ Okinawa invented by mothers” Okinawa Island

[MIYAGI Tomoko (age 54) and YONASHIRO Chiemi (age 50), #Group “Kodosora” (Protecting Children's Skies)]

We are mothers of young children. Only within a week, parts and window frames of an American military helicopter fell on our children's daycare center and elementary school. We immediately started protesting to protect our children. Soon we received various slanders. We are threatened and hurt. Not only us but also many others who make protests in Okinawa receive such hurtful words. However, we wonder, “Should we overlook these matters?” We are mothers. When we do our activities, we are striving to smile no matter how sad and frustrated we feel. As we do so, we thought of the “Slander Quiz” as an effective way to communicate the ‘true’ Okinawa. What we want to communicate through the “Slander Quiz” are three things: “This is false!”, “This is true.”; and “These words hurt people badly.” In the form of quiz, we communicate the ‘true’ Okinawa with sense of humor and smile. The bird-shaped hats we wear represent our hope for a safe sky where only birds fly. Since somebody falsely said, “There was originally no house or school in Futenma,” we are attacked by harsh words like, “It's your fault because you chose to live by the U.S. military base for money.” So, we showed our fists this time as we often do for punishment to our kids who did something wrong, saying, “Let me give you *meegosa* (‘fist’ in Okinawan language)!” There are a lot of false rumors on the internet. As they are widely spread, many people believe them without figuring them out for themselves. It is dangerous if fake rumors spread as truths. And the believers of these rumors often attack others by slandering. It is easy for us to say something online. We would like you to know that there are people hurt and saddened by the words you sent thoughtlessly. (July 1, 2023)

Note:

• In this handout, each section is described according to the order in which it was exhibited. For works with individual captions, the work number, caption and year of production are listed after the description.

• The commentary for the section was written by Amano Taro. The words Ishikawa Mao in the text are quoted from the interview in the catalogue of the exhibition “Ishikawa Mao: Bad Ass and Beauty - One Love” held at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum and Art Museum (March 5 until June 27, 2021).

• Information on the interview is as follows.

“Interview: ISHIKAWAMao,” *ISHIKAWA Mao: Bad Ass and Beauty - One Love*, T&M Projects, 2021, pp. 13-20

Interviewers: KAMEGAI Fumiaki (Curator, Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum), CHO Sun Hye (Curator, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum), NAKAMURA Fumiko (Curator, Aichi Prefectural Museum of Art)

Interview dates: July 9, 30, August 27, and September 23, 2020

Edited by: KAMEGAI Fumiaki