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Japantown PDX

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Euri Kashiwagi
March 2019

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HISTORY

Japantown was established as a community for Japanese immigrants looking for a job in Portland from 1890 to 1941. There was an increase with the amount of hotels and restaurants in the community as the Japanese population grew in the 1890s. Many immigrants came in as laborers from Japan, searching for a way to gain money. Between the 10 years from 1890 to 1900, the Japanese community grew 2501 people, compared to the years before where there were only 25 Japanese immigrants or so-called *Issei*. Many of them lived there in where the current Old Town Chinatown is: between West Burnside to Northwest Glisan and 1st to 5th Avenue.

Japantown was more of a community, not a tourist destination. As people came into the area, Japantown started to establish as a community, helping each other out through establishing venues that will support the members in surviving America. Mikado Hotel and Bathhouse, located in current Northwest Everett and 3rd Avenue, provided housing and a seven by 15 foot communal bath to Japanese men who came to Portland to earn money to send back to their families, which was a common practice with Japanese people at the time. They were an important element of the community, where they can tidy themselves and work for their family out of the area.

The end of the community came suddenly. Other than the Mikado Hotel, there were other Japanese immigrant friendly hotels, barbershops, pools, bathhouses and restaurants, creating a united and cooperative community called Japantown.

However, as the Japanese population grew, the laws restricting immigrants increased which troubled many of the contractors with the additional fee they owed for hiring non-American workers. In 1941, America declared war as the attack on Pearl Harbor happened and the prejudice against Japanese people and immigrants grew rapidly.

The year after, the exclusion order was issued in Portland, as the Japantown community members were assembled to move to Northern California and to internment camps. That was the end of the Japantown.

76 years after the incident, I propose to rebuild the community that was tight and cooperative in the area which is now called Old Town Chinatown. With the multiple Japanese corporates and organizations that are deeply related to Portland, there is a need for an organized space where they can hold events and to have their own business venues. While creating diversity into the area, it also supports the local industries as well as businesses. Most importantly the rebranded space will tell about the history that lies in Portland regarding Japanese-Americans and *Issei*. •

AUDIENCE

My primary audience will be the Japanese-American and Japanese organizations in Portland. There are many Buddhist temples, a Methodist church and organizations supporting the community. This includes the Portland-Sapporo Sister City Association, Japan-America Society of Oregon and Nikkei Jin Kai, all of them hosting events to spread Japanese culture. Each organization has its own space dedicated for the events, so they do not have to borrow space from elsewhere. A current need in the Japanese organizations is a consistent space they can use where they do not have to pay extra money to retrieve a venue for the event.

My secondary audience the project will be appealing towards will be tourists and Portlanders that are interested in Japanese culture. Currently there is a trend of Japanese companies and Japanese owned businesses to be successful in Downtown Portland, including the Muji Portland shop and the upcoming Kinokuniya bookstore. Many people visit the area for those shops, and the Japantown rebrand will be an eyecatch for them. It will be a place for them to know about the history of Japantown, the tight community we had and bring it back in present Portland.

COLOR & TYPE

The colors are based on traditional natural dyeing colors that were popular during the first Japantown era. The red is called the *Shinku*, taken from safflowers and was a very popular color for dyes. The blue, *Nando-iro*, is a iteration of a blue that is used for indigo dyeing which has been a nationally popular tone to be used for clothing. The yellow is the *Kuchinashi-iro* which is a redish yellow tone that is taken from the fruit of gardenia.

The tones can be used with a lower opacity to give a softer and a more modern look, as traditional cloth dyeing was done to differentiate occassions for when the clothes were worn.

The choices of the typefaces are based upon readability and containing the futuristic look through consistent stroke thickness. Avenir LT Std as the main typeface for a bold and eyecatching look, and the FreightText Pro as the secondary for the body texts.

Shinku
真紅
#AD002D
R.173, G.0, B.45
C.21, M.100, Y.85, K.15

Nando-iro
納戸色
#008899
R.9, G.136, B.152
C.84, M.31, Y.35, K.3

Kuchinashi-iro
支子色
#FBCA4D
R.251, G.202, B.77
C.1, M.20, Y.81, K.0

Avenir LT Std 95 Black

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ! ?

FreightText Pro Book

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz
o 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 ! ?

LOGO

The identity of the community is inspired by the current trending design style in Japan. Circles, round text and minimal information are often used to create a friendly vibe to the branding. Another inspiration is the traditional ink stamp, using the round outline and the lined out words.

The concept for the logo as a whole is the wide mix of traditional Japanese culture and a modern design trend in Japan. Both Japanese-Americans and Japanese people treasure the Japanese culture very much. This also goes to the *Issei* that lived in Portland’s Japantown. The logo mark should be expressing the pride as a Japanese ancestry through the traditional and current design elements of the country.

** logo mark can be used with or without the text JAPANTOWN PDX*

SOLID COLORS

JAPANTOWN PDX

JAPANTOWN PDX

JAPANTOWN PDX

TRANSPARENT BACK

JAPANTOWN PDX

JAPANTOWN PDX

JAPANTOWN PDX

PATTERNS

The patterns that will be used on the deliverables has been traditionally dye printed on to clothes and created into traditional wear such as *kimono*. Each pattern will have a different use in separate occasions.

The red one is the *Kiku* (菊) pattern, which is the Japanese word for Chrysanthemum. As the national flower of Japan, it is seen in many festivals including ones celebrating the Emperor to very small communal ones. **It will be used for formal occasions.**

The blue is the most common *Seigaiha* (青海波), portraying the movement of the waves. It is symbolic for representing surges of good luck, as well as power and resilience. As a community that contains so much history revolving around that, the pattern fits very well. **This one will mainly be used for event promotion.**

The yellow illustrating the arrows is called the *Yagajiri* (矢絰), mainly used as a lucky charm in weddings. It is based off the saying once the arrow is fired, it never returns. **To catch new audiences, this will be used for tourism promotion.**

DELIVERABLES

All of the deliverables will live in where the New Japantown will be located: Old Town Chinatown. They will be used to promote the existence of the first Japantown by the Japantown PDX committee, and business ideas that will be in the area.

This will include decorations and handouts, such as posters that will be promoting tourists and community members to visit the historical area. The pamphlets will be for them and the Japanese or Japanese-American organizations to learn about the project in reviving and storing it. The other part of the deliverables will mainly be used by the committee to promote their activities in reserving event space in the area as well as planning for them. Business cards, letterheads, stickers as well as social media accounts and their official website will be part of that.

POSTERS

The posters will be posted around the community. Each of the posters will include an archival photo that was taken in the first Japantown to show how included the *Issei* community was at the time. This design also includes the incorporation of modern design with the old photography.

The archival photography is overlaid with the logo. This is an example of where the solid color in the logo will be switched out with another design element. This will only be seen in limited occasions, including the sticker design.

PAMPHLET

Handouts will be an essential promotion for advertising the community to the community members. The pamphlet will include the brief history of Japantown, the design choices for the logo which will be communicating the importance of bringing back the community. On the backside of the pamphlet will be a poster introducing the logo mark to the audience. The *washi* paper includes an eye-catching texture to make it appealing for people to pick it up.

There will be a Japanese translated version offered as well.

SPACE DESIGN

An essential part of the new Japantown will be the reserved event space for the communal organizations. The building will also function as the main office for the Japantown PDX Committee which will be scheduling the events for the organizations. By having a set space for events, people in the community will be able to walk into whatever workshop or event that will be offered on that day.

We will be offering business ideas into the new community for the area that do not have Japanese or Chinatown related businesses or venues already there.

- Additional business/venue to Japantown
- Business/venue already existing

POSSIBLE BUSINESS IDEAS

- Japanese franchise
 - Clothings: Uniqlo / GU / Beams
 - Foods: Ippudo Ramen / Marugame Udon
 - / Beard Papa's / Coco Ichiban Curry
 - Other: DAISO dollar store
- Local stores
 - AirBnB / Hotel / Guest houses / Bath houses / Martial art / Salon / Restaurant
- Stores existing from Japantown
 - Ota Tofu / Oregon Nippo Newspaper /

The left will be the posters that will be hung on the street signs to notify tourists that they are in the Japantown district. The top is the signage for the office and event space of Japantown. They both use the *seigaiha* pattern, which symbolizes that they will be having events in the space and give a very festive feel.

COMMITTEE
COLLATERALS

As the committee starts reaching out for external organizations around Portland, they will be needing to identify who they are. The business cards to hand out and the letterhead for important letters will include the memorable patterns, as well as imprinting the logos largely. The website and social media pages will be promoting the upcoming events in the community space.

Stickers will be handed out as a souvenir or a memory of visiting the office and district of New Japantown PDX. This can be found together with the pamphlets.

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

– Margaret J. Wheatley

「一番大切なものに気づけるコミュニティ以上に
力強いものは無い。」

– マーガレット・J・ウィートリー

deliver the history