

Hiroshima Reconstruction Project

April 5, 2010

Mission Statement

Our Purpose

Sixty-five years have passed since – nuclear weapons were used on human beings.

With the deep conviction that humankind never experience a nuclear war again, the **Hiroshima Reconstruction Project** is committed to spreading the non-nuclear message through a powerful story-telling technique that uses digital image technology. Our theme is the enormity of loss caused by the Atomic Bomb. Our intention is to convey the truth to international society.

Our Project

Countless efforts have been made in the past to convey the enormity of loss brought about by the atomic bomb. But there was a story that no one could tell *effectively*. It is the story of the tragic loss of a warm community, vibrant with a culture rich in tradition and aesthetics, never to be revived again.

The **Hiroshima Reconstruction Project** is now undertaking this challenge. Based on U.S. intelligence aerial photos taken of the city just prior to its fate, the team is bringing the once bustling town, “back to life” – through the use computer graphic imagery to reconstruct it piece-by-piece, brick-by-brick.

Our project leader is Mr. Toshihiko (Masaaki) Tanabe, who was eight years old at the time of the bombing. His childhood home stood next to the A-Bomb Dome. At seventy-two years old now, he has enough energy and drive to undertake this colossal undertaking, yet has an accurate memory of his beloved hometown.

The project has turned into a Japan=U.S. collaboration. On the U.S. side, led by faculty member Mr. Eric Hanson (visual effects creator of “Day After Tomorrow,” “Cast Away” and “Fifth Element”), students from the School of Cinematic Arts at the University of Southern California have contributed their skills to the modeling, texturing, lighting and shading of the A-Bomb Dome. In Japan, students from Tokyo University, Waseda and other institutions are offering their specialized expertise as well. A Japanese-American producer from Tokyo Broadcasting System has made this bilateral collaboration possible.

Interwoven with photos and interviews with former residents, these beautifully rendered digital images have been incorporated into a half-hour documentary for screening at the United Nations at the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in May 2010.

Featured in this work is the reconstructed community of Nakajima district, before it was gutted in the bombing. It is the present-day site of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, just across the river from the A-Bomb Dome. Here was a traditional town similar to Kyoto, and its residents were busy carrying out their lives just as usual on that fateful day.

The foremost feature of this project is that it is based on “first-hand information.” The project leader, who grew up and knows Ground Zero first-hand, before and after, composed this documentary film using primary information obtained only through carefully conducted interviews and testimonies of *hibakusha* and former residents. In this way, the streets, houses, and daily life-culture of that time were brought to life again in the form of a documentary film.

The first-ever A-Bomb dropped on people destroyed and eliminated the whole community: its buildings, many of its residents, and their existing way of life. Many of the victims are in eternal sleep deep under that ground. The park was constructed over them. Few people are aware of these facts.

Many tens of thousands of human lives were lost because of the A-Bomb. These lives and the vibrant culture of those days can never be revived. We hope this project will provide persuasive evidence for a strong warning never to allow such a catastrophic loss to befall humankind again.

HIROSHIMA

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Our Activities at the Review Conference

The **Hiroshima Reconstruction Project** will be organizing a side event, details below:

Date: Monday, 3 May

Time: 1:15-2:45 PM

Place: NGO Room (Room A, Temporary North Lawn Building) *Booking request had been made

1. Introductions – Information on the Project and its Goals (5 min)
2. Speech by Mr. Tadatoshi AKIBA - Mayor of Hiroshima, President of Mayors for Peace (10 min)
3. Speech by Mr. Masaaki TANABE – Project Leader and Producer/Director of film (10 min)
4. Screening of film: “**Un Unrecognized Loss: Message from Hiroshima**” (2010, 30 min)
5. Introduction of U.S.=Japan Collaboration (5 min)
6. Q&A/Media interview (20-25 min)

Total: 85-90 minutes

Our Hope

We feel the Hiroshima Reconstruction Project has great significance for peace and humankind. With its strong visual and emotional impact, it has potential for widespread international ramifications and appeal, providing an opportunity for people worldwide to take part in a meaningful international social responsibility effort.

The project is timely – with President Obama’s epoch-making Prague speech and Nobel Peace Prize still fresh in our minds, and being in the midst of the growing threat of nuclear war as tensions rise in the Middle East, Afghanistan and the Korean peninsula – the background has been set.

We look forward to presenting this project at the Review Conference, and hope it will contribute to the global discussion on how we can all partner together to abolish nuclear weapons.

Masaaki Tanabe
Project Leader, HRP

Audio-visual requirements: (Attn: NGO Coordinator)

- Two microphones with stands;
- Audio speakers;
- A projector (if possible, HDTV);
- A large screen (if possible);
- An HD-cam videotape player (if possible);
- Necessary cables for using the above;

*If an HD-cam videotape player is not available or prohibitively expensive, we will play the film from a PC.

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