

# EMILY HANAKO MOMOHARA

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## **Desert Sands**

During WWII, my family was sent to the concentration camp, Minidoka, located in southern Idaho. I struggle to understand the legacy of that experience. My journey to find this heritage is the springboard for my artwork.

The physical remnants of the incarceration camp have become shrine-like in my mind. Sand, sagebrush, barbed wire, and pottery shards have replaced the stories I seek from my family's experience. In the *Desert Sands* series, I have used sand in various ways to bury, build, obscure, and reveal the experience of my family members. This methodology refers to archeology, burial and death, and the desolation of the desert. I use objects that symbolize the holes in my family stories: the Japanese culture my family was ashamed of during the war and the incarceration.

In addition, sand and desert imagery lends itself to various points in history and the world today. My work references historical and current political issues, such as immigration, war and detention.

Through video and photography, I create my own versions of the past as they relate to my current world. They are constructions, interpretations, illusions, and myths of what happened. The imagery is a personal journey of discovery and loss.