



Sadako Sasaki

***“The history of the world is none other than the progress of the consciousness of freedom.” — G.W.F. Hegel***

## Remembering the Past to Transform the Future

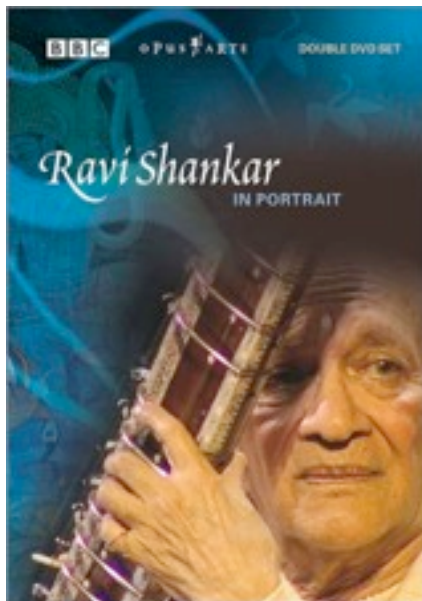
Several observances during the month of August remind us of the perils of war, the challenges to peace and the possibilities of social transformations using principles of human rights. On August 6th and 9th the bombings in 1945 of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are remembered with sadness for the awful pain such A-bombs brought to human beings. Yet, the 9th of August has been named Sadako Peace Day in honor of the Japanese girl who died from leukemia before her attempt to fold 1000 paper cranes was complete. She believed a wish could come true if you folded 1000 paper cranes, symbols of peace. Her friends completed her task, and thousands have joined in the ritual since then. To bring hope out of the observance of tragedy is noble and valuable. Such hope could be strengthened by a universal commitment by governments as well as citizens to the removal of nuclear weapons and a rejection of their use. The threatened use of nuclear weapons implicit in a policy of nuclear deterrence is a weak foundation for building peace among mankind.

Currently, there is revived concern about the risks of nuclear energy for peaceful uses. The impact of the meltdowns in Japanese facilities has awakened fresh thinking as well as fresh fears about our human ability to control nuclear resources. Many protest that their

*(Continued on page 3)*

Theme for 2011: The New Learning: Pathways to Global Culture  
Aim 9. To assist in the emergence of men and women of universal culture, capable of continuous growth in non-violence of mind, generosity of heart and harmony of soul — Declaration of Interdependence

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Ravi Shankar – In Portrait

**Film: Saturday, August 6**

**7:00 p.m.**

**Concord House  
1407 Chapala St.**

*Films for non-violence of mind, generosity of heart, and harmony of soul*

This 2002 film looks at the roots of classical Indian music and visits with classical musician Ravi Shankar, who reflects on his close relationships and reveals his important influences. This beautiful film contains many clips of Ravi Shankar playing, including early pieces from the 1930's to excerpts from the Monterey Pop and Woodstock performances.

This is the last in the series, “2011 Summer Films at the Institute.”



### **Book Circle: *American Veda* *How Indian Spirituality* *Changed the West***

**Forum: Mondays, Aug. 1, 8, & 15  
and Tuesdays, Aug. 23 & 30**

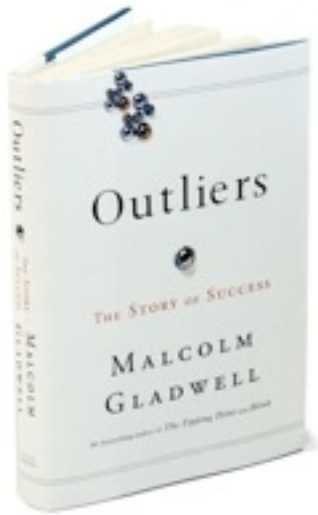
**7:30 pm**

**Concord House  
1407 Chapala St.**

Discussion of the *American Veda* by Philip Goldberg will continue and conclude during August. The focus will be on Chapters 11-18 documenting how a variety of spiritual seekers, radicals, celebrities and contemporary clerics brought Indian religious ideas and meditation techniques into Western consciousness during the last decades of the 20th century. General reflections on the accomplishments of the book will be shared at the last meeting on Tuesday, August 30th. NOTE SOME CHANGES IN THE MEETING SCHEDULE. Contact Carolyn Dorrance at 967-1055 for further information.

Call 967-1055 or email [Carolyn@worldculture.org](mailto:Carolyn@worldculture.org) for more information.

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### ***Outliers: The Story of Success***

**Forum: Saturday, August 27**

**4:00 - 6:00 p.m.**

**Concord House**

**1407 Chapala St.**

**Presenter: Carol Bemis**

Explore some of the “Big Questions” asked by best-selling author **Malcolm Gladwell** in this provocative study of human potential and success. Outliers, according to Gladwell, are: “Beneficiaries of hidden advantages, extraordinary opportunities and cultural legacies that allow them to learn and work hard and make sense of the world in ways that others cannot.” Thus, success is the result of accumulative advantage offered by family and social experience as well as hard work compared to reliance solely on individual talent. Participants are encouraged to read the book and come with questions to the forum.

### **Remembering the Past to Transform the Future**

potential for damage is out of proportion to their benefits, especially when other alternatives can be developed. Some technologies cannot be defended creditably as instruments of peaceful living.

More defensible and more universally influential are ideals, including principles for organizing liberal, democratic societies with maximum opportunities for freedom, peace and justice. August 26th marks the anniversary of the proclamation of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen in 1789. The Declaration was written by leaders of the French Revolution and approved by the Constituent Assembly claiming to represent the “Third Estate” -- that is, the people. Its proclamation turned this group of educated, philosophically inclined citizens into revolutionaries hunted down by the King’s soldiers. Brief but dramatic, the document includes ideas such as a natural right to liberty, property, equality, security, religious toleration and freedom of expression, press and association. The new Assembly also outlawed slavery. Its bold statements are more comprehensive than the carefully crafted defense of independence contained in the American Declaration of Independence. Although the French were less successful in setting up governmental institutions than the Americans, their Declaration of Human Rights served as the grandest statement of universal human rights and citizenship until the United Nations approved a Universal Declaration of Rights in 1948.

## In August

### Anniversaries

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|------------|--|
| 1st        | Herman Melville, American author, poet b. 1819   |
| 4th        | Percy Bysshe Shelley, English Romantic poet b. 1792                                      |
| 4th        | Knut Hamsun (Pedersen), Norwegian author, Nobel laureate b. 1859                         |
| 4th        | Louis Armstrong, African-American jazz trumpeter, singer b. 1901                         |
| 5th or 6th | Alfred, Lord Tennyson, English Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom b. 1809               |
| 6th        | Alexander Fleming, Scottish biologist, pharmacologist, Nobel laureate b. 1881            |
| 9th        | Amedeo Avogadro, Italian physicist, mathematician, educator b. 1776                      |
| 12th       | H.P. Blavatsky, Russian author, co-founder of the Theosophical Society b. 1831           |
| 12th       | Erwin Schrödinger, Austrian theoretical physicist, Nobel laureate b. 1887                |
| 15th       | Shri Aurobindo Ghose, Indian nationalist, poet, philosopher, spiritual teacher b. 1872   |
| 17th       | Pierre de Fermat, French lawyer, mathematician b. 1601                                   |
| 23rd       | Georges Cuvier, French naturalist, zoologist b. 1769                                     |
| 24th       | Paracelsus, Swiss alchemist, physician d. 1541   |
| 24th       | William Wilberforce, British politician, philanthropist, abolitionist b. 1759            |
| 26th       | Antoine Laurent Lavoisier, French chemist, biologist, father of modern chemistry b. 1743 |
| 27th       | Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, German philosopher b. 1770                                |
| 27th       | Giuseppe Peano, Italian mathematician b. 1858  |
| 28th       | Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German writer, playwright b. 1749                            |
| 29th       | John Locke, British philosopher b. 1632  |

(Con't. p. 5)

## Remembering the Past to Transform the Future

Such documents have provided both an organizing foundation and a set of ideals for radically transforming social conditions and political systems. Modern political history illustrates amply their influence in every corner of the globe. Although some might complain of the excesses of freedom or disruption to social order and cultural traditions resulting from the influence of these powerful statements of human rights, few want to live in a society bereft of their transformative and protective influence. Where human rights and democratic government are well established, citizens live in peace and participate freely in voicing their views on global issues of war, weapons, environment, famine and social justice, to name a few. Of course, the dissemination of ideas for the last 500 years has been facilitated by the technology of printing. Thus, political history and self-government reflect a debt to the publication of the first Gutenberg Bible on August 24, 1456. Making the Bible, as well as scores of books, journals and newspapers widely available released a freedom to know and think that transformed human consciousness.

The people of India used the ideals of the French and American Revolutions as well as British traditions to defend their right to independence from British colonial rule. Thus, on August 15th, they will celebrate the 64th anniversary of that non-violent victory. Although the contributions of a remarkable leadership group including Gandhi may be a dim memory, the Indian Independence movement stands out

## Remembering the Past to Transform the Future

as a remarkable accomplishment in a complex context where both historical continuity and modernizing change influenced the success of the movement. Despite the weight of traditional factionalism and its own possession of nuclear weapons, India is emerging as a constructive contributor to a global community based on diplomacy and commerce.

The commitment to universal principles of human rights and democratic institutions of government does not conflict necessarily with loyalty to religious and cultural values. The Hindus of India will celebrate on August 22nd, the birth anniversary of Lord Krishna whom they believe to be a Divine Personage. Others of their countrymen along with Muslims living all over the world will observe the month of RAMADAN, beginning August 1st and ending with the festival of EID on August 30th. Such observances of religious holidays are now part of the rhythm and culture of a world divided up into nation states. To assume that the values and practices of modern liberal democracies are incompatible with loyalty to traditional religion and culture is not a valid assumption. The agitation and violent protests of minorities do not destroy the eclectic processes whereby men and women in contemporary societies build a peaceful and productive life rooted in a rich array of cultural values and social ideals. Their efforts to construct an internally felt mixture of values drawn from many sources, old and new, ideal and practical, individual and shared, is what makes them peaceful and productive citizens.

It is those who have not developed and internalized a culture of truly human values who

### In August

#### Anniversaries

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| 29th | Maurice Maeterlinck, Belgian playwright, poet, essayist, Nobel laureate b. 1862                         |
| 30th | Ernest Rutherford, New Zealand chemist, Nobel laureate b. 1871  |
| 30th | Mary Shelley, British novelist, writer b. 1797  |
| 31st | Maria Montessori, Italian educator, physician, first woman in Italy to receive a medical degree b. 1870 |
| 31st | John Bunyan, English Christian writer, preacher d. 1688   |
| 31st | Hermann von Helmholtz, German physician, physicist b. 1821  |

(Con't. p. 6)

are drawn into committing horrific acts of violence and evil such as we read or hear about in the daily news. Their violence thrives in symbiotic relationship with the less visible violence built into political rationalizations of war and weapons. Let us use moments of remembrance and observance to nurture an alternative world culture of peace. Remembrance of the past can become a progressive way to imagine a better future.

Carolyn Dorrance

#### **PRISM Online Community Calendar**

PRISM lists member-recommended community events of interest on the IWC website. Please e-mail suggestions to [donna@worldculture.org](mailto:donna@worldculture.org).



## INSTITUTE OF WORLD CULTURE

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### SAVE THE DATE

#### NEW BOOK CIRCLE

Discussion of Jeremy Rifkin's *The Empathic Civilization: The Race to Global Consciousness in a World in Crisis* will begin on Monday, September 5 (Labor Day) at 7:30 pm. Rifkin's study of human history connects the development of human empathy with both the complex expansion and the entropic disintegration of civilizations. The ISBN of the book, published by Penguin Books in 2009, is 978-1-58542-765-9. For more information, contact the Coordinator of this book circle, Dr. Maurice Bisheff at [maurice@west.net](mailto:maurice@west.net).

### In August

#### Observances and Acknowledgements

- 1st (2011) Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting begins
- 2nd Ratification of the U.S. Declaration of Independence begins in 1776
- 2nd First underground subway opens in London in 1870
- 6th Atomic bomb dropped by the U.S. on Hiroshima, Japan in 1945
- 8th Gandhi launched his "Quit India" movement in 1942 to gain independence from British rule
- 9th Sadako Peace Day, in honor of the Japanese girl who tried to fold 1000 origami cranes, symbols of peace (following the atomic bombs dropped in Hiroshima)
- 12th International Youth Day declared by the United Nations in 1999
- 15th India's Independence Day celebrated commemorating independence from British rule and birth as a sovereign nation, both in 1947
- 12th/18th Discovery of the two moons of Mars by Asaph Hall in 1877
- 22nd Janmashtami, birth of Lord Krishna, the most venerated god in the Hindu pantheon
- 26th Women's Equality Day commemorates the day women in the U.S. gained the right to vote in 1920
- 27th The Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen adopted by France's National Assembly in 1789
- 28th William Herschel first used his newly completed astronomical reflecting telescope in 1789
- 28th First commercial radio broadcast initiated from New York in 1922
- 29th Discovery of electromagnetic induction by Michael Faraday in 1831

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