



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Aug. 6, 2020

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U.S. Postal Service Honors Sculptor and Arts Education Advocate Ruth Asawa With Forever Stamps

WHAT: The U.S. Postal Service will dedicate stamps honoring pioneering Japanese American artist Ruth Asawa (1926-2013), who is perhaps best known for her intricate abstract wire sculptures.

News of the stamps is being shared with the hashtag **#RuthAsawaStamps**.

WHO: Sharon Owens, vice president, Pricing and Costing, U.S. Postal Service

George Takei, trustee, chair emeritus of the board of trustees and founding member, Japanese American National Museum

Jonathan Laib, director, David Zwirner

WHEN: Thursday, Aug. 13, 2020, at 1:30 p.m. EDT

WHERE: The virtual stamp event will be hosted on the U.S. Postal Service's Facebook and Twitter pages.

For more information, visit usps.com/asawastamps.

BACKGROUND:

Inspired by natural elements such as plants, snail shells, spiderwebs, insect wings and water droplets, Ruth Asawa transformed industrial material into transparent and seemingly weightless works of art that challenged traditional definitions of sculpture. When shown together, her sculptures can evoke an undersea domain, a magical upside-down world or an environment all their own. A tireless advocate of community-based arts education, she is also acclaimed for her drawings, paintings, prints and large public projects.

Showcasing Asawa's wire sculptures, this pane features 20 stamps, two each of 10 designs:

- Installation view, three looped wire sculptures (left to right): Untitled (S.114, Hanging Six-Lobed Continuous Form Within a Form With One Suspended and Two Tied Spheres), circa 1958; Untitled (S.077, Hanging Miniature Seven-Lobed Continuous Form Within a Form), circa 1978; and Untitled (S.036, Hanging Seven-Lobed, Multilayered Interlocking Continuous Form Within a Form, With Spheres in the First, Sixth and Seventh Lobes), 1959
- Untitled (S.039, Hanging Five Spiraling Columns of Open Windows), 1959
- Untitled (S.157, Hanging Two-Lobed, Three-Layered Continuous Form Within a Form), circa 1958
- Untitled (S.250, Hanging Seven-Lobed Continuous Interlocking Form With Four Interior Spheres), circa 1955
- Untitled (S.055, Hanging Asymmetrical Nine Interlocking Bubbles), circa 1955
- Untitled (S.018, Hanging Miniature Single-Lobed, Three-Layered Continuous Form Within a Form), circa 1980
- Untitled (S.306, Hanging Miniature Five Interlocking Double Trumpets), circa 1978
- Untitled (S.030, Hanging Eight Separate Cones Suspended Through Their Centers), circa 1952
- Untitled (S.042, Hanging Three-Lobed Continuous Form, With a Sphere in the Second Lobe and an Open Sphere Suspended From the Bottom), 1954
- Installation view, six looped wire sculptures (left to right): Untitled (S.227, Hanging Five-Lobed Continuous Form With Spheres Suspended in the Second, Fourth and Fifth Lobes), circa 1962; Untitled (S.154, Hanging Nine-Lobed, Single-Layered Continuous Form), circa 1958; Untitled (S.142, Hanging Five-Lobed, Multilayered Continuous Form Within a Form), 1990; Untitled (S.155, Hanging Seven-Lobed, Multilayered Interlocking Continuous Form With a Sphere Suspended in the Top and Fifth Lobes), circa 1958; Untitled (S.065, Hanging Seven-Lobed, Multilayered Continuous Form Within a Form With Spheres in the Second, Third, Fourth and Sixth Lobes), circa 1960-1963; and Untitled (S.143, Hanging Five-Lobed, Multilayered Continuous Form Within a Form), 1996

The selvage features a photograph of Asawa taken by Nat Farbman in 1954 for Life magazine.

Asawa began making sculptures in 1947 and soon discovered that, in addition to single-layered sculptures, she could also create continuous or intersecting surfaces. Sensual and organic, these multilayered yet still transparent works created a dynamic interplay between interior and exterior surfaces.

Since her death in 2013, public and critical appraisal of her work has continued to reach wider audiences, with much-lauded exhibitions and publications organized by major museums and galleries across the country.

Ethel Kessler served as art director and designer for this stamp pane.

The Ruth Asawa stamps are being issued as Forever stamps, which means they will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

Postal Products

Customers may purchase stamps and other philatelic products through The Postal Store at usps.com/shopstamps, by calling 800-STAMP24 (800-782-6724), by mail through [USA Philatelic](https://usa.philatelic.com), or at Post Office locations nationwide.

The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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