

Rohwer

Kamal Badhey (she/her)¹

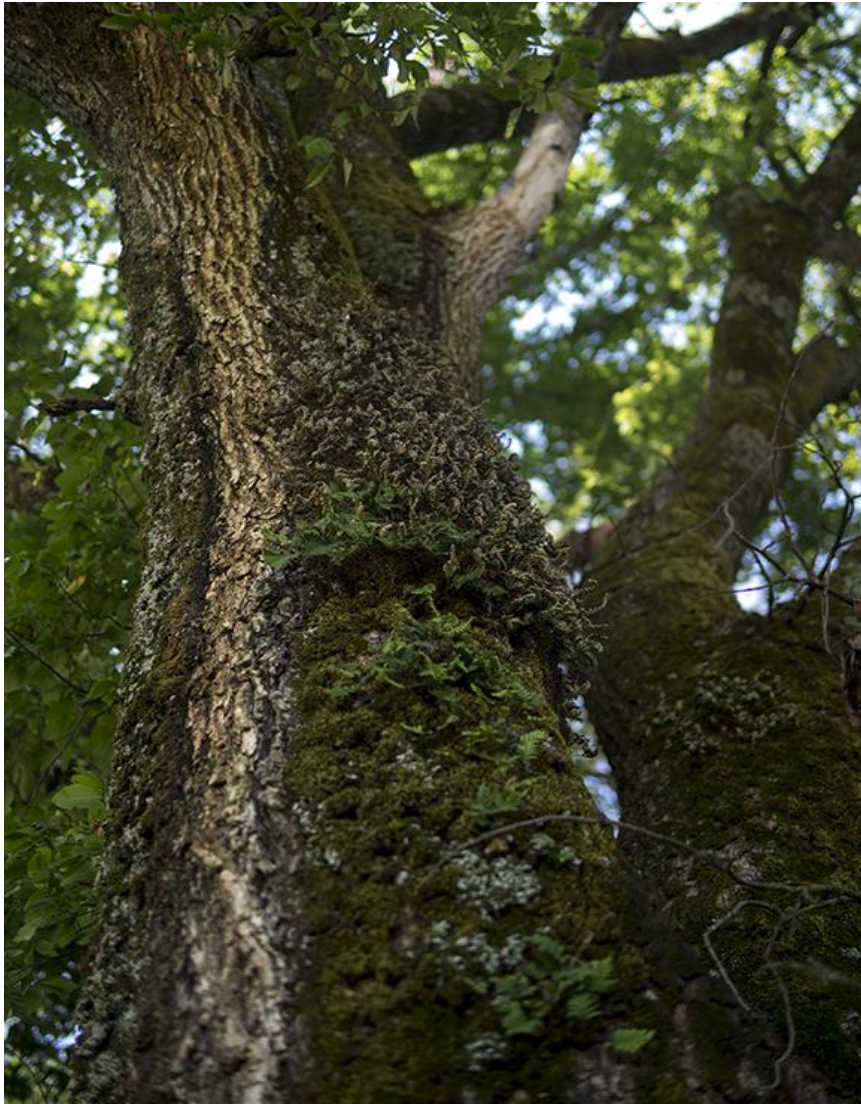
This is a reflection on the memory of the Rohwer War Relocation Center in the US. It was in operation from 18 September 1942 to 30 November 1945 and held approximately 8,475 Japanese Americans, forcibly evacuated from their homes and businesses in California and brought to the South. The internment camp, which contained schools, residences and mess halls, was located on heavily forested and swampy land in Arkansas, a state simultaneously embedded in the laws of Jim Crow South. Within the memory of this incarceration, the breath of nature brings us to the expanse of land where the camp was and how its land continues to regenerate. By sitting and observing we can smell the sticky sap, feel the moss crawling up trees, and read the words etched in stone. These words, permanent marks carving histories never told. The efforts of the memorial are made by the Japanese American community to let us not forget Rohwer.

A selection of these images from Rohwer Relocation Center Memorial Cemetery first appeared in the exhibition *ABOLITION NOW!* at the Asian Arts Initiative in Philadelphia, PA in the collaborative piece, *Land Witness* (2019). It was an artistic interpretation borne of poet, Karla Robinson and photographer, Kamal Badhey's week-long journey visiting and critically engaging with two national landmarks – Little Rock Central High School National Historic Site and Rohwer War Relocation Center – as part of the Civil Rights Educator Institute in Arkansas.

¹ If you would like to get in touch with Kamal about her photography, including ways in which the image as a form can be made more accessible to those with visual difficulties, please email her at kbadhey@gmail.com or visit her website, <https://www.kamalbadhey.com/>.

















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