



A film by **Glenn Mitsui**

Poems written and narrated by **Brandon Shimoda**

A visual poem film tracing the stories of eight men shot and killed by military police while imprisoned in U.S. concentration camps during World War II—through the poetry of Brandon Shimoda and the quiet, atmospheric motion art of Glenn Mitsui.

A FILM BY GLENN MITSUI AND BRANDON SHIMODA

# DUST

POEMS FOR THE VANISHED. LIGHT FOR THE LOST



# D U S T

## Early Responses



“A hypnotic visual poem born of Brandon Shimoda’s brilliant words and Glenn Mitsui’s haunting imagery, brushing the dusty air with a mesmerizing golden hue to honor those who died while imprisoned in America’s concentration camps.”

*Sharon Yamoto*

“Immersive, chilling, stunningly beautiful. My mouth was dry and my heart ached.”

*Satsuki Ina*

“A searingly beautiful and captivating tribute to the lives who were taken too soon, too violently and senselessly behind barbed wire. DUST tells a camp story so heartbreaking yet forgotten. It is an imperative piece of our history.”

*Diana Emiko Tsuchida*

“A poem, a prayer, a dream— it left me in tears, thinking of how loss lies buried not only in the shadows of our WWII camp history, but in the tremors of what is happening now..”

*Nancy Ukai*

“Haunting. The eight men shot and killed in camp were victims of wartime incarceration, but the images and words of this film are acts of protest and resistance.”

*Frank Abe*

This small film is difficult to describe. And therein lies its power. Something like a prayer, a meditation, an evocation, an honoring and remembrance of forgotten ancestors. Like its title, Dust, seeping into the crevasses of our memories demanding to be un-forgotten. Beautifully realized by the poet, Brandon Shimoda, and the filmmaker, Glenn Mitsui.

*Emiko Omori*

“Words, images, sounds, and music combine in moving and provocative ways to bring lost lives, memories, and stories back to life. This beautiful work reminds us that dust does not always bury the past but can actually carry traces of it to the present.”

*Jennifer Noji*

# D U S T

## Synopsis

**DUST** is a visual poem composed of eight pieces written and narrated by author Brandon Shimoda, each one interpreted through the artwork and motion design of Glenn Mitsui.

Together, the poems move through desert landscapes, guard towers, and the silence surrounding the deaths of eight men killed inside U.S. concentration camps.

The film becomes a ritual of remembrance—an offering of breath, dust, and names—linking their untold stories to the present, where geography continues to be used as a weapon of disappearance.



# D U S T

## Director's Statement

I come to this film as a descendant of Tule Lake, Heart Mountain, and Topaz. The landscapes of the camps—dust, fences, the vastness of the desert—have shaped my family's memory, and the silence surrounding the deaths of the eight men has shaped this film.

Working with Brandon's poems opened a way to honor these histories without illustrating them literally. Instead, we allowed the film to drift between image and absence, between what is remembered and what was hidden. The camps were not benign. They were remote by design—geography was used as a weapon, cutting people off from the world and obscuring the violence that occurred there. That truth echoes in contemporary detention centers and borderlands today. DUST is a gesture toward remembrance.



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## Biographies



### **Director Bio — Glenn Mitsui**

Glenn Mitsui is a Seattle-based artist and filmmaker whose work blends illustration, motion design, archival research, and ancestral memory. His creative practice centers Japanese American history, remembrance, and intergenerational storytelling. Mitsui creates projection-mapped films for the Wakasa Spirit Stone project, honoring individuals killed in the concentration camps at the exact locations where their lives were taken.

DUST continues this work of recovery, witnessing, and resistance.

### **Writer / Narrator Bio — Brandon Shimoda**

Brandon Shimoda is the author of several books of poetry and prose, including *The Afterlife Is Letting Go*—a meditation on the memory and forgetting of Japanese American incarceration—which received the Colorado Book Award for Creative Nonfiction, and *The Grave on the Wall*, an ancestral memoir.

He is the co-editor, with Brynn Saito, of *The Gate of Memory: Poems by Descendants of Nikkei Wartime Incarceration* (Haymarket Books, 2025). His writing on Japanese American incarceration and related state violence has appeared in *The Baffler*, *BOMB*, *Brick*, *The Nation*, *The New Inquiry*, *Poetry*, *Tricycle*, and other publications.



## Information

### Historical Note

- Approximately 125,284 people of Japanese ancestry were imprisoned in U.S. concentration camps during World War II.
  - Approximately 1,862 people died inside the camps.
  - Eight men were shot and killed by military police.
- Their stories remain largely unspoken.  
DUST speaks their names.

### Tech Specs

- Runtime: 13 minutes
- Format: 2D digital motion art
- Language: English
- Aspect Ratio: 16:9
- Year: 2025

### Credits

Directed by Glenn Mitsui

Written & Narrated by Brandon Shimoda

Visual Interpretation & Motion Art Glenn Mitsui

### Contact

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