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"Deru Kugi Wa Utareru" ("The Nail That Sticks Up the Farthest ...") is featured in the "If You Remember, I'll Remember" exhibit, which showcases the participatory work of Kristine Aono.

Block Museum exhibit explores art and memory

What objects and images are key to our memories? And what are the responsibilities of those who pause to remember individuals? Injustices? Wars? The new exhibit "If You Remember, I'll Remember" at the Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art is not afraid to ask the big questions, focusing on some important events in our nation's history.

During World War II, more than 120,000 Japanese-Americans were in internment camps. Artist Kristine Aono's participatory installation — "The Nail That Sticks Up the Farthest ..." — memorializes and draws attention to the injustices suffered by those who were incarcerated.

Her installation includes testimonies of former internees as well as a letter written by her grandfather, who was interned at a camp in Idaho. The title of her work refers to a

Japanese proverb and is symbolized by hundreds of nails that protrude from the walls of the installation.

War is the subject of a selection of works by artist Dario Robleto, who incorporates artifacts, photographs and mementos from the Civil War through recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan into tapestries of remembrance. His sculptures explore personal experiences of love and loss as a result of war, especially the effort that goes into creating memorials and the bonds of love that effort implies.

The exhibit includes sculptures, installations, videos and other works created by seven contemporary artists. Their work serves as an invitation to reflect on our nation's past while contemplating the present, through objects, sounds and images that unlock memories.

Saturday through June 18, Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art at Northwestern University, 40 Arts Circle Drive, Evanston; free admission; 847-491-4000; www.blockmuseum.northwestern.edu — Louise Burton