



# Naoto Sekiguchi

JAN 19, 1958 - SEP 21, 2021



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# Naoto Sekiguchi

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**N**aoto Sekiguchi passed away in early September 2021 at the family home in Fayetteville, AR. Naoto was born in Tokyo, Japan to Tochiko and Tetsundo Sekiguchi. As an infant, he, his mother, and elder sister made the voyage to America and moved to Stillwater, Oklahoma where his father was completing his Ph.D. The Sekiguchis eventually settled in Fayetteville Arkansas where they were among the town's first Asian families. Naoto was a compassionate, gentle, and kind person from the start, who was always creating.

Naoto earned his architectural degree from the University of Arkansas in 1982 and began his career at Fox and Fowle Architects and later with James Wines at SITE Architecture Art Design in New York City. He worked at numerous firms in Seattle, Fay Jones and Maurice Jennings in Fayetteville, Eric Owen Moss in Culver City, CA, Jennifer Siegal OMD in Los Angeles, CA and firms in Tokyo, Japan, and Penang, Malaysia. Although he was a talented architect, Naoto really shone through his teaching. He worked in the architecture departments at the University of Oregon, University of Minnesota, Chiang Mai University, and Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. He was dedicated and invested in his students and left a lasting impression on many of them.

Throughout his life, Naoto traveled the world from Greece to Laos to Malawi. More recently he found homes in Harbin Hot Springs and Sierra Hot Springs in California, and fell in love with Portugal. Naoto approached each new place with curiosity and each person he met with warmth and compassion forming friendships everywhere he went. You could pick a location and, chances are, Naoto had been there and would be able to regale you with a wild and funny story.

Later in his life, Naoto focused increasingly on his creative pursuits, particularly his writing and music, which celebrated the beauty of humanity but also challenged with humor the ills and injustice he saw in the world. Naoto was profoundly empathetic, he felt the world around him even when it hurt. When he saw something he knew was wrong he spoke out and stood his ground. He cared for and gave to people with all of himself.



## Obituary

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Naoto is celebrated and deeply missed by his siblings Tomoko Sekiguchi, Mary Kirasich (Mark), June Sekiguchi, and Eugene Sekiguchi (Alison Parry), as well as his nieces and nephews Hana Mei, Quin, and Jaden Breeland, Aya Cockram (Gareth Newnham), Joseph Kirasich and Kaitlin Kirasich Kinzer (Sean), and Evan and Mia Sekiguchi who he loved and cherished. He is also survived by great-niece Cora Newnham who will grow up listening to his music and being delighted by his art, and dear friends Jane Scroggs, Randall (Poot) Cannon, Jon Green, Emmitte Watson, Jim Horn, Mike Breeland, Michael Cockram and many others. Our hearts are broken with his loss, but we are thankful that he is resting in peace closer to his mother and father and that he left so much of himself with us in his writing, music, art, and in our wonderful memories of him.

A celebration of life will be held at a future date to be announced.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations to Mutual Aid Disaster Relief

(<https://mutualaiddisasterrelief.org/donate/>),

Khmer Magic Music Bus (<https://www.cambodianlivingarts.org/donate/>), or

First Place (<http://www.firstplaceschool.org/donate>).

To sign the online guest book please visit [www.bernafuneralhomes.com](http://www.bernafuneralhomes.com)



# Tribute Wall

**Naoto Sekiguchi**  
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**Tokyo Joe** posted:

January 21 at 12:13 PM



**Tokyo Joe** January 21 at 12:15 PM  
Fight intolerance!



**Tokyo Joe** posted:

January 2 at 10:18 AM



**Tokyo Joe** January 2 at 10:20 AM  
Long may you run, brother.



**Eugene** shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.



October 1 at 4:59 AM



**Tokyo Joe** posted:

September 30 at 12:33 PM



**Jon Green** shared an album called **Memories Album**.



September 29 at 3:07 PM



**June Sekiguchi** shared 4 photos to the **Memories Album** album.



September 29 at 4:28 AM



## Tribute Wall

**Naoto Sekiguchi**

JAN 19, 1958 - SEP 21, 2021



**Darlene Davison** shared an album called **Memories Album**.



September 29 at 7:24 AM



## Tribute Wall

**Naoto Sekiguchi**

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**Jeannie Dykes** posted:

Each and every word that could be used to describe someone who was pure in heart would describe Naoto. He was the calm before, during, and after the storm. Everyone loved him and will miss him.

September 29 at 4:28 AM



**Mark McMurtrey** June 7 at 12:20 PM

I just saw this in the Arkansas Alumni magazine last week and I was stunned. I grew up with all the Sekiguchi kids and you could not find a better bunch of people, from top to bottom. Ours prayers go out to all his friends and loved ones, who were many.



**Michael Meek** October 4 at 7:58 AM

In 1967, at a Math Department picnic held on the Buffalo River, I first met Naoto and the rest of the Sekiguchi family. It was clear that Naoto was highly intelligent, kind and compassionate; he had a heightened sensitivity that made him aware not only of his own but of the pain and insecurities of others. Naoto went on to lead a life of achievement. It is heartwarming to know that Naoto helped people to transform themselves through education. News of Naoto's passing left me stunned. However, reflecting on those long past days has helped me to recall proudly the relationship my family had with the Sekiguchis. We have always regarded them with the utmost respect, esteem, and affection. My sincere condolences to all who love Naoto. Michael Meek



**June Sekiguchi** September 30 at 9:20 AM

You were a great friend to Naoto. Thank you for all your support. We're so glad you were in his life. ~June



**Jon Green** September 29 at 3:00 PM

Seldom in life do you share a close friendship with someone for 55 years. Naoto and I go back to third grade together. He was truly a world citizen having traveled extensively. He was an accomplished artist and craftsman. He was generous and selfless, sensitive and kind. Most of all, at least for me, he was one of my oldest and dearest friends. A priceless gift to me and the world. I will miss him terribly. Rest In peace and comfort my brother. You will not be forgotten.



**Darlene Davison** September 29 at 7:20 AM

I couldn't have said it better Jeannie. He was a kind and gentle soul. I will miss knowing he is somewhere in the world following his path. His life was lived to the fullest. I am so happy to have been a part of his world. Sekiguchi family, I am thinking of each of you and the special place your family has in my memories and heart.



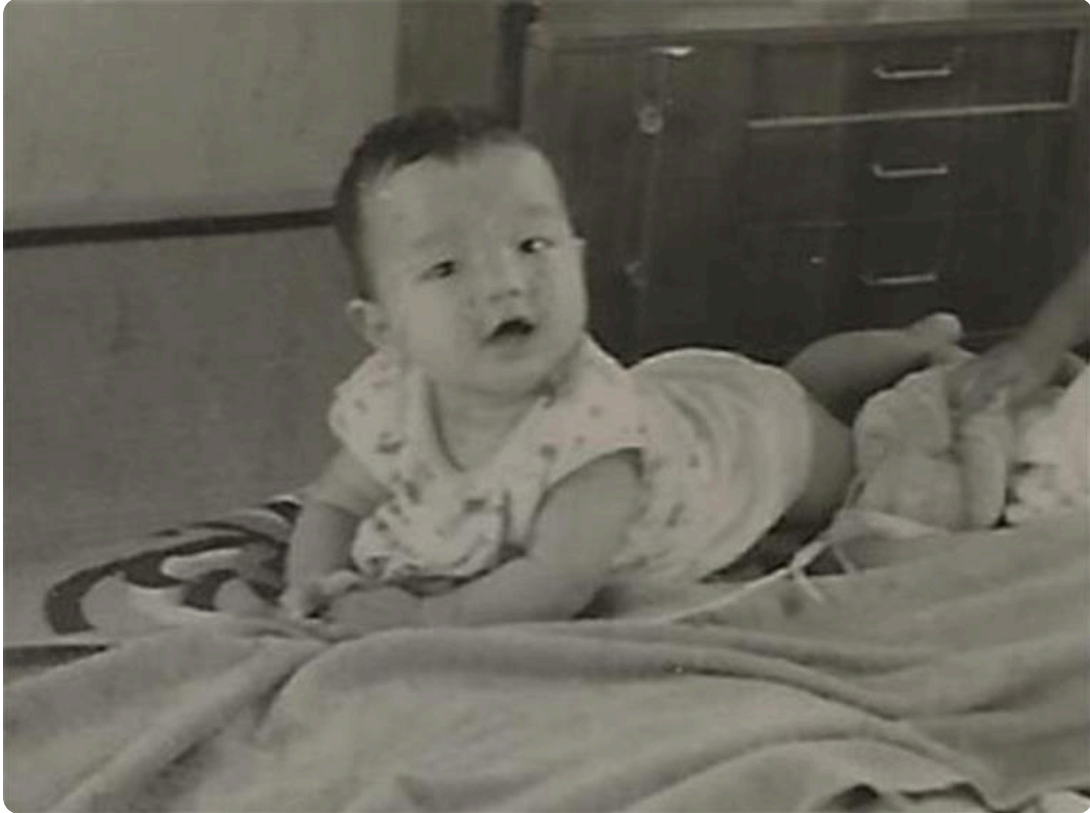
## Media

**Naoto Sekiguchi**  
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Eugene shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.

October 1 at 4:59 AM



Tokyo, Japan circa 1958



# Media

**Naoto Sekiguchi**

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Jon Green shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.

September 29 at 3:07 PM





# Media

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June Sekiguchi shared 4 photos to the **Memories Album** album.

September 29 at 8:42 AM



Evan, Alison, Mia and Uncle Naoto



Jaden, Naoto and Mike Breeland



Tomoko, Jun, and Naoto circa 1965



Naoto and Eugene at Aya's wedding 2017



# Media

**Naoto Sekiguchi**

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**Darlene Davison** shared a photo to the **Memories Album** album.

September 29 at 7:24 AM



New York City 1982



## **Memories only last if you share them**

Join us in honoring Naoto by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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