

Harmony, the way of clay

## Foreword

It is a great honor to present this beautiful collection and accompanying catalogue. I am grateful to Gallery Ondine and Patrick Mestdagh who are hosting the exhibition for the second time in their space. Thank you to Sophie Lorent for the catalogue design and to Cristina Ngo for the help in editing. Thank you, Paul Louis, the photographer.

My long-standing relationship with Asia and Japan is endless, thanks to all the Japanese artists who trusted me, as well as the local dealers in Japan who engaged with me even when I was mostly lost in translation. Thank you to Kanae-san for all of those years patiently bidding at local auctions. Also thank you, for all discussions shared with people involved in the field.

Ultimately, my greatest thanks go to the collectors, because without them we will not be able to share our love of ceramics with the public, we will not create a new audience to ensure a passage of unknown beauty. And finally, I hope readers will appreciate this important body of Japanese art works.

Didier Delville, curator

## Harmony, the way of clay

Japan has long been a center of ceramic excellence, but in the 20th century many of its celebrated traditions began to evolve in the most innovative and creative aspects. The exhibition brings together selected works by masters of the medium working with clay in unconventional and surprising ways.

*“In Japan, a number of time-honoured everyday activities (such as making tea, arranging flowers, and writing) have traditionally been deeply examined by their proponents. Students study how to make tea, perform martial arts, or write with a brush in the most skillful way possible to express themselves with maximum efficiency and minimum strain. Through this efficient, adroit, and creative performance, they arrive at art. But if they continue to delve even more deeply into their art, they discover principles that are truly universal, principles relating to life itself. Then the art of brush writing become shodō – the “way of the brush”- while the art of arranging flowers is elevated to the status of kadō – the “way of flowers”. Through these Ways or Dō forms, the Japanese have sought to realize the way of living itself. They have approached the universal through the particular.”*

*-H.E. Davey, Japanese Yoga*

The ways of Dō come from the Zen tradition often as a practice for monks or samurais at the beginning, and for the nobles of the court later. Ceramics are from another great tradition: Mingei (folk art). Artist-craftsmen with their sensitivity reveals that dedication to craft and continue to be considered as essential. But it can be argued that Japan’s aesthetic preferences regarding contemporary ceramics share the same value of the ways of Dō forms. Fine art in clay form has a strong artistic and meditative dimension close to Zen and its contemplative arts. That brings a spiritual aspect into finding divinity in the daily rituals of life. The more highly developed a person is as a human being, the better his body of work.

Japanese traditional arts and practices share certain ideals and techniques to achieve the same goals: serenity, mind/body harmony, awareness, and a sense of connection to the universe. Indeed, some clay artists have imbued their works with a palpable and obvious sense of energy, as if the cosmos had to come to life. An appreciation of nature and simplicity is reflected in pottery and play a central role in a potter’s life. Part of the everyday life in Japan is the belief that all natural phenomena, including human beings, animals, and plants, but also rocks, lakes, mountains, weather, and so on, share one vital quality – the soul or spirit that energizes them – Thus artists often explain that they respect the life within the material, or they bring life to clay. They are captivated by the potential of revealing nature through clay -without thoughts, without reflection, but with only the pure source of a void. The impulse might come from Japanese Buddhism, in which we are connected with one’s heart. Is the “way of the clay”, Dō emphasising a connection with the spiritual rather than the physical? Yanagi Soetsu, the leader of the 20th century Mingei movement praises crafts made according to an external power (tarikidō) as opposed to self-reliance (jirikidō).

The ancient Greeks says “Harmony”, from Harnos, which means ‘joined’ and originally ‘joining together’, ‘to fit together. It could refer to the joining of the limbs in the body. And then: the «arms of the body» or the «Arts» of the builder. Japanese clay artists open their ears and listen to the material at their fingertips without manipulating them for self-gratification. Sometimes, ego doesn’t fit with the ways of the clay. Artists listen to the material. They are listening to their hearts, their souls, to the seasons ... In the making of a work, the shape comes last, depending on the intrinsic life of the material, which directs the aesthetics and shapes of the pieces. The quality of the clay is highlighted, whether the work is modelled, turned, or sliced. And this is the opposite of the western way, where shapes come first.

For Bizen potters - Kakurezaki Ryuichi (pg.16) - clay is central to the sculpture, there are senses emanating from the clay (tsuchi aji), which is a concept dating from the 15th century and popular in tea ceremony. Without applying a glaze, fire transcends the clay. Wada Morihiro (pg.18) with his distinctive imagery is another respected clay artist of his generation. The young Koichiro Isezaki (pg.14), also from Bizen, connote the idea of a form «bearing something within». There is no straightforward answer as to what exactly a ceramic vessel bears--it could be air, or even a void – energy filled with possibilities.

A glassy coating rendering fired clay impervious to liquid, glaze is both practical and an aesthetic addition to a form. Hori Ichiro (pg.40) is living like a hermit in a mountain village creating forms after long periods of contemplation. He uses traditional Shino glazes to bring life to his faceted shapes. Kimura Moriyasu (pg.50) at 87 years old continue to challenge the tenmoku glaze – a glaze that first appeared on tea bowls in China during the Song dynasty (960–1279).

The visual impact of Toru Kurokawa (pg.10) comes from the creation of abstract sculptural shapes looking at new mathematical theory to visualize fundamental forces of nature. Maeda Masanori (pg.8) notches the clay pot –like scars- to show that the earth hides a void inside his skin, recalling that originally it was a vase container. He is creating a strong visual impact.

The wood firing artists like Yui Tsujimura (pg.24), give a feeling of movement or vibrancy that communicates with the viewer. It is a pure energy generated through the interaction of materials and process. Shozo Michikawa (pg.36) is a master of balancing innovative forms with traditional technique, bringing his shape from inside/out with movements. Yukiya Izumita (pg.22), is a master in balancing twists and tranquillity, light and dark. Just like the yin and yang of Daoism. Kaneta Masanao (pg.28) has been trained in sculpture and challenge gravity with his signature technique Kurinuki - he creates master works of the 21st century with the ancient Hagi tradition.

Kino Satoshi (pg.46) talks about his medium – porcelain - when formed, is an “expression of delicacy, transience, and hardness allows the contradictory element of weakness and strength to co-exist”. Is he speaking about Harmony? A perfect combination between the medium, the glaze, and the kiln allowing that visual impact filled with energy and balance. When the works have their necessary harmony, they define the spaces that they are placed in, with a tranquil but riveting energy.

Modern and Contemporary art in clay share a passion for the tactile, the physical processes of shaping, and they embrace the nature of the firing, creating sculptures but testing the medium’s limitations, playfully defying its norms. Pottery contains a void within it, and it is around this void that the earth accumulates and which will be transformed in contact with fire. This is in accordance with the hands of makers – at once permanent and fragile - inviting us to contemplate our complex relationship with the Earth. These elements breath the spirit of zen. It makes my perpetual quest for beauty, a Dô.

Didier Delville, Curator

Conversation with Robert Yellin, Jozef Prellis, Geert Van der Borgh  
Soëtsu Yanagi, “The unknown Craftman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty”, p132-133  
Ref. “Listening to clay” Alice North, Monacelli Press

## Maeda Masanori, 1928-1992

Maeda Masanori is from Kyoto, he studied under the 6th generation ceramist Kiyomizu Rokubei. The integration of material, form, and the visual impact such as color, texture, sheen, size, decoration is a challenge for the creativity of an artist. The creation of abstract sculptural ceramic can loosen energy.

Maeda Masanori created a form with a sense of energy. Here, it is resulting from the asymmetry of the vessel neck, cutting one side of the perfect oval to a flat side. This sense is heightened by the contrast between the soft texture of the surface almost like skin, and the slash –like a wound- on the clay at the edge of the section. The result is an innovative movement in a sculptural form.

His works have been part of a special selection, exempt from appraisal, of numerous selections. He had served as judge of the Kyoto Municipal Exhibition. He is a fellow of the Nitten Exhibition. Masanori sold works to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through the Japan New Craft Art Exhibition. He has become a member of the Kofukai.



Untitled, Post-war period  
Stoneware  
52 x 40 x 38 cm

## Kurokawa Toru, born 1984

Kurokawa Toru's works are coil-built hollow-core geometric forms with a palpable and mysterious presence. They evoke a natural formative organic process and capture the dynamism of natural movement without actually replicating any specific form. The shapes are new and unknown but remain fired in a traditional climbing kiln (anagama), often using smoke naturally. Kurokawa displays a mastery of wood-firing. Through his unique creative processes, he creates sculptural forms that stand apart from those by any other Japanese artist.

Recent forms are related to the mathematical superstring theory says Toru, an attempt to explain all of the particles and fundamental forces of nature in one theory by modelling them as vibrations of tiny supersymmetric strings.

As an undergraduate he first studied sculpture before focusing on ceramics, which in turn led him to further study in graduate school and where he remains a teacher. He was a student of the eminent ceramics artist, Akiyama Yo. Early on, Kurokawa won the important Chōza Grand Prix in 2007.

He is in the Horvitz Collection (USA), Asian Art Museum (San Francisco) and in selected Japanese museums.

Cycle, 2022  
Natural ash-glazed stoneware  
Anagama kiln  
45 x 21 x 51 cm



Protocell-J, 2022  
Natural ash-glazed stoneware, anagama kiln  
47 x 29 x 60 cm



## Isezaki Koichiro, born 1967

Isezaki Koichiro is a trailblazer among a family of traditionalists. He has preserved his renowned father's Bizen techniques while simultaneously reimagining ceramics with atypical forms. He is the son of Living National Treasure Jun Isezaki and the rising star of the Isezaki family, which included his grandfather Yozan Isezaki, one of the first generation of great Bizen potters in the 20th century.

Clay is the lifeblood of Bizen, it has long been thought. Because Bizen clay cannot withstand sudden changes in temperature, firing temperatures need to be raised very slowly. An element of chance is inherent as they involve a glaze produced through natural burning materials inserted in the kiln during the firing process. Isezaki takes this a step further to come up with more creative and modern forms with a textural twist.

«Knowing how your crude clay existed before it was excavated significantly affects subsequent creation. (...) Thoughts about the land it came from, and the immeasurably long time that nurtured it definitely has some kind of effect on me,» says Isezaki. He became an apprentice of New York-based ceramicist Jeff Shapiro, whose work he greatly admires.

He describes his creative aim and the spatial effect of clay objects as follows: «Shape, texture and color are aspects that determine how an object comes across, but are by no means the purpose of the object. What fascinates me most are the effect a clay object has on surrounding space and on emotions, and how the object conveys the multifarious richness clay brings with it.» The workings of an invisible yet fertile power that transcends words could be another way of describing Isezaki's work.

He has exhibited extensively, including at the National Museum of Modern Art Crafts Gallery, Mitsubishi's retail store, and the Paramita Museum, where he won the Ceramic Art Grand Prize in 2011. He has exhibited mostly in Europe and in the USA.

Yō, 2022  
Stone ware, natural ashing with Hidasuki patterning (fire markings)  
13 x 13 x 29 cm





## Ryūichi Kakurezaki, born 1965

Ryūichi Kakurezaki lives in the heart of the Bizen region. He makes use of the local clay and time-honored firing techniques yet breaks free from old models. Exhibitions of Kakurezaki's work have been known to sell out in a few hours. Kakurezaki is a rare example of a potter who began as a design student then apprenticed with Bizen artist Isezaki Jun (b. 1936, Living National Treasure for his preservation of Bizen techniques), and now is one of the most celebrated clay artists of his generation—working in the Bizen region, but using his own kiln. While other Bizen potters concentrate on reviving Momoyama-period (1573–1615) tea wares, Kakurezaki aggressively defines a contemporary approach.

His vision has helped him create his own style of Bizen which I shall call Hesei Bizen. He has given Bizen a fine-arts mentality. In the world of Bizen, pieces from the Momoyama period through the middle of the Edo-period are known as Ko-Bizen or «old Bizen» and are highly treasured. Kakurezaki has studied Ko-Bizen as well as many forms of contemporary art and has tapped into the spirit of Bizen without being a complacent participant.

His thoroughly original designs have earned him success and won him numerous prestigious shows as well as the Japan Ceramic Society Prize. Kakurezaki Ryūichi is designated as an Important Intangible Cultural Asset by Okayama prefecture as of March 2019. His work is in major Collections including The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, Oxford, UK, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA, Philadelphia Museum of Art, USA, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan, and Musée Tomo, Tokyo, Japan.

*Hiruko*  
Bizen stoneware  
42 cm



## Wada Morihiro, (1944-2008)

Wada Morihiro is one of the most popular clay artists of his generation, exhibiting in large shows often sold-out within hours of opening. Rejecting the classical aesthetics of Kyoto and Kansai-style pottery, he developed his own distinctive imagery that employed a range of techniques including slip decoration, inlay, wax-resist, carving, underglaze, blue-and-white (sometsume), and blown-on glaze.

Wada Morihiro followed in the footsteps of ceramic genius Kamoda Shoji (1933-1983) by opening his own studio in Kasama city after finishing graduate work at Kyoto Art University, where he had studied with renowned artist Tomimoto Kenkichi (1886-1963). Wada began exhibiting at some of Japan's best contemporary ceramics galleries as early as 1979, when he was honored with a solo exhibition at Minami Aoyama Green gallery. From this early success, Wada soared in reputation and fame, enjoying numerous solo exhibitions at prime venues.

International acclaim soon followed. He won numerous prizes, including a gold prize in Faenza, Italy in 1980, and was widely collected by both private collectors and museums. His work is vigorous, intriguing, and ever changing. In Wada's hands, nature became abstract as plants, animals, and natural forces became symbols and decorative elements, combining into intricate abstract patterns. These patterns often rise from the repetition of abstracted natural form, becoming a unique expression of Wada's view of the natural world. He used different forms of clay, sand, and slip. He experimented with various colored natural clays that produce a variety of colors after high firing, including grey-green, dark auburn, purple, and navy. His sudden and early death in 2008 left an enormous hole in the world of contemporary Japanese ceramics.



Untitled  
Stoneware  
23 x 28 x 23 cm

## Shunichi Yabe, born 1968

Shunichi Yabe is the grandson of the Living National Treasure of Bizen, Toshu Yamamoto (1906-1994). Bizen is a municipality in Japan famous for its rustic pottery. Its wares represent one of the great refinements of technique and style. Yet Yabe's soaring sculptures are worlds apart from the traditional vessels of his famous grandfather. Yabe exhibits in his work a penchant for the sculptural, as can be seen from his degree in Sculpture at the Nagoya University of Arts. It is his ability to create dynamic objects, not fettered by the ghosts of Bizen tradition and freed from functionality, which has made Yabe one of the most exciting artists to come forth.

Yabe has a keen and natural sense of line. The artist takes great care in first drawing an image of the work, and after hand-building the basic form, the piece is carved with a knife into the form he had envisioned. After carving, the piece is first bisque-fired and its main-firing is executed in a small wood kiln for 3 days at a temperature reaching 1180 degrees. The resulting futuristic forms of Yabe's stoneware present new possibilities for Japanese Bizen clay in the 21st century.

Among museum collections of Japanese ceramics, the British Museum has already acquired several of his works.



Gyogetsu, Moonlight, 2019  
Bizen Stoneware  
59,2 x 36 x 25 cm

## Yukiya Izumita, born 1966

Yukiya Izumita was trained in Kokuji-ware, used as common daily ware for over 200 years, under the guidance of Gakuho Shimodake. Izumita further opened his own workshop in Noda Village, near the ceramic production center of Aomori Prefecture in Northeast Japan in the 1990s. This area is known for its very severe weather, and Izumita became inspired by the coastal winds and the endurance found in seaside culture.

Due to the ravages left behind by the tsunami of 2011, in which the artist lost his home, Izumita takes on a personal yet studied approach to his craft. Using a meticulous process with natural clay, each work expands in a synergistic fashion, becoming a breathing, organic life of its own.

Infinite, bold and vibrant, the work of Yukiya Izumita can be seen as experimental, abstract or continuous, depending on one's own interpretation – nevertheless, it is a pleasure to bestow on one's eyes. *Sekisoh (layers) Series, 2022*, presenting itself as an intricate array of layers that would easily remind one of rustic metal or antiquated, washed-away driftwood, in the shape of waves cratering inward like if it had nowhere else to go. Izumita brings with him an understanding of drastic change and adapting artistically to such a change. It is rare to see clay sharpened to the finest edges, ripped, twisted in impossible ways like a giant origami, creating forms of exquisite beauty in a tranquil tension.

In Japan, Izumita is the recipient of numerous accolades such as the Excellence Award at the 20th Biennial Japanese Ceramic Art Exhibition in 2009 and the Grand Prix at the Asahi Ceramic Exhibitions of 2000 and 2002. By exhibiting at SOFA New York in 2005, he was also met with international recognition. He is in the permanent collections of the Yale University Art Gallery, Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Iwate Museum of Art, and the Minneapolis Institute of Art.



*Sekisoh (layers) Series, 2022*  
Iwate clay  
55 x 17 x 35 cm

## Yui Tsujimura, born 1975

Yui Tsujimura art is all about simplicity, purity, restraint, and humility. The simple form and color of Tsujimura's stoneware is typical of the humble and austere quality of Japanese tea ceramics. Tsujimura, who began by working for his father, famed potter Shiro Tsujimura, built himself a kiln in 2000 and has been producing works of striking complexity and arresting beauty ever since. Drawing on a history of thousands of years of Japanese ceramics, Tsujimura's creations, both functional and purely aesthetic, reflect one of the longest artistic legacies on earth, an unbroken line of tradition and evolution stretching back to the Neolithic era.

Tsujimura's works are obviously hand-crafted and carefully considered. Many pieces are crafted from thinly shaped clay that drooped and sagged under gravity's pull; the final results are evocative of human fallibility and weakness. Tsujimura fired many of the pieces on their sides, leaving colors streaked horizontally around the curves where the pigments had trickled. The shades are often almost-translucent hues of emerald and turquoise, the colors appearing like moving forms trapped under the sheen of their glaze.

The potter's pieces serve as a progression, no doubt, with their candid forms and apparent intimacy and honesty. But ancient techniques and aesthetics find their way into his pieces, as if to prove the impossibility of escaping the pressing weight of history and cultural inheritance. These are forms with relevance and immediacy, but also an underlying immortality. What's new today will be old tomorrow, but creativity is timeless.

Tsujimura's work is exhibited regularly throughout Japan and can be found both in private collections as well as museum collections in Japan and outside, including the Metropolitan Museum New York. He has held a solo exhibition in New York in 2011.

Untitled, 2022  
Stoneware with wooden ash  
44 x 43 x 44,5 cm





Untitled, 2022  
Stoneware with wooden ash  
43 x 35,4 cm

## Masanao Kaneta, born 1953

Masanao Kaneta creates dramatic, powerful ceramics that evoke the sweeping curves, sharp peaks, deep gorges, and the snow-covered mountain landscape reminiscent of his home in Hagi, Japan. The town of Hagi has been a major ceramic center in Japan since the arrival of Korean potters over four hundred years ago. Hagi wares have been celebrated for centuries for their refined forms, irregular textures and subtle glazes which often bead or crawl during the firing.

An eighth-generation Hagi master potter and innovator, Kaneta created a sculptural oeuvre that remains grounded in functionality. Due to his early training as a sculptor, his forms have a strong and dramatic presence that sets them apart from works by other artists working in this traditional ceramic center.

Using centuries-old glazes, Kaneta creates unique and readily identifiable functional and non-functional sculptural forms. For Kaneta, the scooped-out clay form with its ridgelines becomes complete only with the power imbued by the firing process. The resulting ceramics strike a masterful balance between form and surface.

He has been displayed both nationally and internationally innumerable times. Museum exhibitions include the 400-year Hagi retrospective at the Suntory Museum, a major group exhibition at the Ibaraki Prefecture Ceramic Art Museum and displayed at the Nihon Dento Kogei Ten. Kaneta's works in public collections include: the National Museum of Modern Art Tokyo, Yamaguchi Prefecture Museum, Gifu Modern Ceramics Museum, the Brooklyn Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco; and the Metropolitan Museum New York.



Scooped-out sculptural Vessel, 2021  
Hagi kohiki-glaze with kiln effects fires to earthy tones  
45 x 30 x 30,2 cm



Glazed stoneware, 2018  
Scooped-out vessel with Hagi and ash glazes with greys, pink coloration and extensive kiln effects,  
53 x 30,5 x 36,5 cm



Glazed stoneware, 2018  
Scooped-out vessel with Hagi and ash glazes with greys, pink coloration and extensive kiln effects,  
31 x 30 x 39,5 cm



## Tomonari Hashimoto, born 1990

Tomonari Hashimoto is a ceramic artist based in Shigaraki. He is exhibited widely across Japan and in 2020, his work joined the permanent collection of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London.

In 2017, after his graduation at the Kanazawa University of Art and his PhD in Fine Art, he became artist in residence at the Shigaraki Cultural Park. In 2019, he held his first overseas solo exhibition in Hong Kong and was selected as an on-site exhibitor at the Korean International Ceramic Biennale 2019 in Icheon World Ceramic Center. He was one of the youngest finalists at the LOEWE Craft Prize 2019 exhibited at the Sogetsu Kaikan in Tokyo.

Tomonari does not title any of his work, preferring to leave interpretation up to the viewer. After hand forming and sculpting the shapes, they are bisque-fired, then glazed and fired again at a relatively low temperature (between 1000 and 1100 degrees, like Raku ware). Then he builds a brick oven around each piece and brings the temperature up to 500 degrees, and adds millet or rice husk, which carbonizes the surface, creating incredible colors and random patterns leaving the viewer with a feeling like rusted or heated metal. Many of his works are monumental.

The Heart Sutra, one of the most famous texts in Buddhism, states that “form is emptiness, emptiness is form”. This seeming paradox is a core philosophy of Japanese design and culture, where absence can be as important as presence.

Untitled, 2020  
Stoneware, saturated glaze, multi-fired oxide metal  
28 x 28 x 82 cm



### Shozo Michikawa, born 1953

Shozo Michikawa balances both traditional ceramic heritage techniques with innovative forms, and his works are often imbued with a strong sculptural presence, always retaining some type of function. The artist grew up in the region of Hokkaido, Japan, where he was able to experience nature in its purest form. His artworks bring the feeling of natural phenomena rather than deliberately crafted works.

Michikawa's process and output exhibit highly petrological forms reminiscent of rock formations, earthy fissures, and the beauty of primordial natural phenomena. The characteristic shapes of the artist's works are made by using the speed and centrifugal force of the potter's wheel and expanding it from the centre with a wooden stick. Michikawa has developed a unique approach building from the negative space outward, but never considering the outside of a piece. The colors are generated in the high-firing kiln, where often natural earthy hues develop or melt with applied materials, or carbonization process of reduction firing.

In the 'Sculptural Form' series, each work commands a notable presence. Their often upright stance suggests the possibilities of infinite rotation. The horizontal cuts, executed before the clay is set upon the wheel, disrupt the sculpture in different sections, and much like music, they grant rhythm to the form and provide for variations of movement and composition.

In 2005, he was given the honour of being the first Japanese artist to have a solo exhibition in The Forbidden City, Beijing. Michikawa's works are in numerous museum collections, including the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, the Victoria and Albert Museum London, Musee Cernushi, Paris, the Shimada City Museum, and recently the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, and the Portland Art Museum.

Sculptural Form series, 2022  
Natural ash  
41 x 17,5 cm





Sculptural Form series, 2022  
Natural ash  
34,5 x 14,5 cm

## Hori Ichiro, born 1952

Hori Ichiro exemplifies the best in Japanese ceramic artistry, as he is rooted in classical styles while bringing those traditions forward with a strikingly contemporary flair. Born into a ceramic-making family in Gifu, Hori Ichirō studied as a young man under Living National Treasure, Katō Kōzō (b. 1935). In 1984, he built his own anagama (tunnel) kiln in the mountains of Mizunami City, where he continues to experiment with traditional materials and techniques, producing pieces of great complexity and variety.

A self-described mountain man who lives in semi-seclusion, Hori Ichiro resides at his kiln compound isolated from modern life. His exceptionally powerful works in a range of Mino styles, however, are by no means stuck in the past. He brings an exciting modern perspective to a venerable tradition.

Known primarily in Japan for his dynamic wood-fired vessels and white and gray Shino and Seto teabowls, Hori's distinctive forms result from long periods of contemplation. He fires his kilns just twice a year, using long, low-heat firings to allow the clay's deep-reddish tone to emerge through the thick, creamy glazes. Using all the traditional styles of Mino as his foundation, Hori's inner tension and strength emerges in clear, robust forms.

Hori Ichirō's works have been featured in museum exhibitions at the Asian Art Museum, San Francisco, Honolulu Museum of Art, Honolulu, and Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Berlin, Germany. He is collected by major museums in the USA, including the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Seattle Art Museum, San Antonio Museum of Art, Crocker Museum of Art, and the Cincinnati Art Museum.

Shino glazed stoneware, circa 2022  
40 x 40 cm





Shino glazed stoneware, circa 2022  
40 x 40 cm

**Ito Shin, born 1952**

Ito Shin was born in Chiba in 1952 and has lived and worked in Mashiko in Tochigi Prefecture. He studied under Kikuchi Akira, another Mashiko artist. He is a member of the Dento Kogeikai, or traditional arts guild and also the Japan Ceramics Exhibition and has been selected to exhibit in these shows since 1977.

Here is a patterned Seki vase by Ito Shin enclosed in the original signed wooden box titled Henko, or receptacle. The patterns are similar to the indigenous Ainu Robe from Northern Japan or a neolithic Cong jade from China.



Henko (receptacle)  
*Stoneware*  
51 cm

## Satoshi Kino, born 1987

Satoshi Kino was given his first museum solo exhibition at a young age at the New Taipei City Yingge Ceramic Museum, Taiwan. Originally interested in pursuing a career as a stone sculptor, Kino encountered the powerful sculptural ceramics of Nishida Jun (1977-2005) in an exhibition and decided to major in ceramics. Inspired by Nishida's powerful large and dense forms, he initially attempted to follow in that sculptural perspective but soon realized this did not suit his own aesthetic sensibility.

Fascinated by the potential of fired porcelain to become like stone when polished, Kino chose to focus on this. His sculptures resemble long, billowing ribbons of celadon-glazed porcelain. First throwing a spherical band on the wheel, rather than mold-casting, Kino then severs this tapered band into segments. Using the centrifugal force of the wheel, he manually transforms these thin, attenuated, sections into flowing works of art. After drying, he thoroughly sands the entire work prior to bisque firing. Then, before the final firing, he applies translucent bluish white (seihakuji) glaze with a compressor before firing in a reduction atmosphere.

Satoshi Kino's porcelain sculptures are inspired by the serenity inherently found in water, the air, plants, and other natural elements, particularly the phases of the moon. Furthermore, he tries to replicate the tension that quietly exists in our surroundings and convey that through his works.

According to Satoshi: "The forms of my porcelain sculptures are expressed solely in lines. It was exciting for me to discover that when I am throwing a piece, I could stretch the clay into very thin forms, and this process would erase the marks of my hands and fingers. It's as though only a thin outline remains on the wheel. To me this is a resonance of something that has vanished."



Glazed porcelain, 2021  
Oroshi T18-1  
90 x 8,5 x 49 cm



Untitled, 2019  
Porcelain with *seibakuji* glaze  
35 x 37 x 20,5 cm



**Kimura Moriyasu, (born 1935)**

Kimura Moriyasu is one of the most important artists who still creates new tenmoku in Japan, mastering the glaze in a difficult balance between unique tones and sparkles and the kiln. He grew up in a potter's family — his father, Kimura Shigeji (1895-1971) was a painter of Kyo-yaki (Kyoto ware) and his two elder brothers, Kimura Morikazu (1921-2015) and Kimura Morinobu (1932- ) are both artist potters.

Known for his tenmoku works, Moriyasu was first inspired by the National Treasure yuteki (oil spot) tenmoku tea bowl housed in a museum.

After learning the basics of ceramic art at the Kyoto Municipal Industrial Arts Research Institute, he studied under his eldest brother Morikazu, making his first step towards becoming a tenmoku-ware artist. Since then, he has been producing tenmoku wares with unique tones and glaze textures for over 60 years, many of which are housed in museums overseas as well as in Japan. He exhibits with the Gendai Nihon Togeiten and Nihon Dento Kogeiten among others. He has been awarded the Kyoto Prefectural Order of Cultural Merit (2004). Kimura's works in public collections include British Museum, London, UK; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, U.S.A.; Dallas Museum of Art, TX, U.S.A.; Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX, U.S.A.; Peabody Essex Museum, MA, U.S.A.; National Palace Museum, Taipei, Taiwan; Jingu Museum, Ise, Mie, Japan; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, Japan; and the Kansai University Museum, Osaka, Japan; among others.

left an enormous hole in the world of contemporary Japanese ceramics.



Untitled, 2022  
*Tenmoku glaze*  
16,5 x 13,5 x 20cm

## Yamato Yasuo, born 1933

Yamato Yasuo was born to a long line of Hagi potters. It is likely no collector of Hagi will need an introduction to this ground-breaking artist. He learned under his father Harunobu and grandfather Shoroku. He is one of the first to challenge many traditions associated with Hagi Yaki.

He was displayed with Sodeisha, Kofukai, the Nitten, Nihon Dento Toge Ten, Nihon Toge Ten among others.

He was designated as an Intangible cultural property of Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1988. In addition, he has received several important honors; the Award for Distinguished Service to Art by Yamaguchi Prefecture in 1989, the Chugoku Cultural Award in 1992, the Japan Art Crafts Association Award in 2005, and the Order of the Rising Sun with Gold Rays Rosette in 2007.

In 1995, Yasuo was presented his pseudonym "Tsugen" by the chief priest of Tofukuji temple in Kyoto. His work "Ensaï Otsubo" was preserved in Ise Shrine in 2000, and "Kaime Tohbako" in Yakushiji temple in Nara in 2002. His work is held in the collection of the British Museum and the V&A as well as the Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art among many others.

*Sekisob* (layers) Series, 2022  
Iwate clay  
55 x 17 x 35 cm



# COLOPHON

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