

# 世界に通じる<sup>みやこ</sup>京の職人

## Kyoto Artisans and their Worlds

KCJS, Spring 2023, Tuesdays 13:10–16:25

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Since its inception in 794, the ancient capital of Kyoto has been the center of Japan's high-end artisanal industries. Neighborhoods, and even streets, were often defined by the various guilds that prospered throughout different parts of the city, from the famed textile workshops of Nishijin to the coveted Kyoto ware ceramics. For centuries, decorative and applied arts made in the "Miyako" have exemplified a pinnacle of refinement and quality.

This course will explore Kyoto's centuries-old artistic traditions in such areas as textiles, bamboo, paper, ceramics, lacquer, and carpentry through engagement with the city's living artists, craftspeople, and business owners. In addition to considering production techniques and aesthetic considerations for various artistic mediums, we will look how multigenerational businesses are reinventing themselves to meet the needs of the modern society, sometimes straddling the line between artisan and artist. We will also hear from individuals who, though not artisans themselves, are working to improve the future of handcrafting industries in an increasingly automated society.

Successful participation in this class will require a high degree of initiative and independent research. Each student will identify a particular area of interest and engage in independent research utilizing library and web resources in Japanese and English, as well proactively arranging interviews or other interactions with living artisans and business owners. During visits to studios, workshops, and exhibitions, students will be expected not only make careful observations but also to ask questions, take field notes, and consider approaches to the study of contemporary crafts and intangible cultural heritage. In addition to writing thank you letters in Japanese to the artists visited and preparing presentations to the class on weekly readings, done on a rotating basis, all students will submit detailed fieldwork reports documenting each visit and referencing the readings.

In lieu of a final exam, students will give a presentation on the research topic of their choice and write a final paper (minimum 8-10 pages) based on their own research and analysis on a traditional industry or artistic practice. Assessment will be based on classroom participation and thank you letters (20%), fieldwork reports (30%), final presentation (20%), and final paper (30%). Attendance is required except for medical reasons.

*\*\*This syllabus is subject to change. The class will be limited to ten students.*

## Schedule

### **CLASS 1, JANUARY 17:**

#### **Introduction: Issues for Traditional Craft Industries Today; Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts; and Nitten Exhibition**

We will first engage in a discussion with Kitabayashi Isao, founder of Design Week Kyoto, who works actively with a broad range of traditional artisanal industries, helping them to reinvent themselves into cultural businesses suited to the modern age. We will then go together to Okazaki to visit the Kyoto Museum of Traditional Crafts at Miyako Messe, which displays products and production information on dozens of traditional artistic industries of Kyoto. The museum also offers onsite demonstrations on weekends and workshops, providing possible methods for students to gain information and entry into their particular areas of interest. We will then go to the nearby Kyoto City Kyocera Museum of Art to see the Nitten (Japan Fine Arts Exhibition), a prestigious annual exhibition founded in 1907, where contemporary artists working in traditional mediums present their work to a national audience. There we will be given a special introduction to the Crafts division by artists including senior Kyoto potter Kobayashi Hideo, dye artist Tatematsu Atsushi, and senior artists representing the fields of weaving and lacquer.

Reading: Melissa M. Rinne, *Masters of Bamboo: Artistic Lineages in the Lloyd Cotsen Japanese Basket Collection*. (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 2007) pp. 14-19.

### **CLASS 2, JANUARY 24**

#### **Mingei and Ceramics**

This class will focus on ceramics and the *mingei* (folk craft) movement, beginning with a visit to the former home of potter, calligrapher, essayist, and designer, Kawai Kanjirō (1890–1966), where the director and artist's granddaughter Sagi Tamae will offer students a special look into the heart and soul of one of Japan's most influential twentieth-century artists. We will then follow up with a visit to the gallery of ceramic expert and Japan Times columnist Robert Yellin where we will be able to view and possibly even handle a wide range of ceramics by potters from Kyoto and elsewhere.

Reading:

\*Leach, Bernard and Yanagi Soetsu. *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*. (The entire book is recommended, but you're free to select readings that most interest you.)

\*Robert Moes, *Japanese Folk Art*. Art Services International, 1995. Pp. 1-30.

\* Richard L. Wilson, *Inside Japanese Ceramics: Primer of Materials, Techniques, and Traditions*. Weatherhill, 1999

Robert Yellin's Website with Japan Times articles: <http://www.e-yakimono.net/>

### **CLASS 3, JAN 31:**

#### **Nishijin Weaving: Kawashima Selkon Textile Company and Museum and Sasaki Noh Costumes**

This class will focus on the Nishijin weaving industry in Kyoto. We will visit two weaving companies with very different focuses. Kawashima Selkon is one of the largest luxury textile companies in Kyoto. Founded in Kyoto in 1843 and now headquartered in northern Kyoto, Kawashima Orimono was known for producing textiles for the imperial household and for international exhibitions in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Today, it produces a range of textiles, from handwoven pattern weave and tapestry weave obi to massive handwoven tapestry stage curtains to industrially woven interior fabrics. The company also is in possession of a vast collection of rare Japanese historical textiles. After visiting the museum and company, we will go to central Kyoto to visit Sasaki Noh Costumes ([佐々木能衣装](#)), founded in 1897, which is still run very much as it has been for the last hundred-plus years as a hand-weaving company with a targeted clientele of noh actors.

Read before class:

\*Hareven Tamara. "A World within a World" in *The Silk Weavers of Kyoto; Family and Work in a Changing Traditional Industry*. (Univ of California, 2002), pp 25-50

\*Kirihata Ken. *Noh Costumes*. Kyoto Shoin's Art Library of Japanese Textiles.

Shikosha, 1993. P. 8-95 (lots of photos)

\*Rinne Melissa.

\*(Optional): "Glossary," in Tokyo National Museum and Asahi Shimbun, eds., *Kimono: Fashioning Identities*. (Tokyo: Asahi Shimbun, 2020) p 371-375.

\*(Optional): Textile glossary in *When Art Became Fashion*, (LACMA) for reference.

### **CLASS 4, FEB. 7:**

#### **Karakami Block-Printed Paper and the Kyoto Kimono Industry**

For this class, we will welcome two artists to the Center for hands on demonstrations. Contemporary Kyoto artisan Sugawara Fumiyo was born the daughter of a traditional woodworker and trained at the hand-blocked paper (*karakami*) company Karacho, founded in 1624, before going independent. She will teach us the ins and outs of *karakami*, used for the most important fusuma sliding door panels in traditional Japanese architecture, and offer students a hands-on experience. For the second half of class, we will welcome kimono producer Hara Naoki, president of Futaya. After graduating from the National Defense Academy and travelling the world as a member of the Maritime Self-Defense Force, Mr. Hara recognized the power of culture and entered the Kyoto kimono industry as a producer. He will share his experience and perspectives during this class, to be followed by a tour of some of the studios he works with the following week.

Reading:

Christine M. E. Guth, *Craft Culture in Early Modern Japan*. (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2021), pp. 109-196.

### **CLASS 5, FEBRUARY 14**

#### **Yūzen Dyeing and Kimono Production: Institute for Chiso Arts and Culture and Kimono Artisans**

Founded in 1555, Chiso is one of the oldest and most influential textile companies in Kyoto, commissioning the majority of handmade, bespoke *yūzen* dyed kimono produced in the ancient capital. We will visit the Institute for Chiso Arts and Culture, founded in 2017, where we will learn from director Kato Yuriko about the history of this company and the processes of producing *yūzen* dyed kimono, executed with paste-resist and hand-applied or stenciled dyes, sometimes embellished with embroidery. Then, guided by kimono producer Hara Naoki of Futaya, we will visit studios of specific kimono decorative techniques such as embroidery and gold leaf.

Read before class:

Vivian Li and Christine Starkman, eds., *Kimono Couture: The Beauty of Chiso*. (Lewes, UK: GILES, 2020), 1–112.

### **CLASS 6, FEB: 21:**

#### **Lacquer**

In this class, we will take an in-depth look at the world of lacquer through a visit to the Kyoto gallery and studio of Nishimura Keiko III, whose family has been engaged in lacquering for the past century. Their studio specializes in plain, undecorated lacquers, artisans of which have traditionally been known as “*nurishi*.” His studio has trained numerous young artisans in specific areas of lacquer making, including wood turning on a lathe and lacquering, and these apprentices continue to work with him even after going independent. Nishimura Keiko III also produces contemporary abstract art objects, but he eschews major group exhibitions such as Nitten or Dentō Kōgeiten, preferring to hold solo exhibitions. Mr. Nishimura and his employees will tell us about their work and various initiatives including the revival of historical lacquers and planting of lacquer trees in areas around Kyoto.

Reading:

Haino Akio, “The Momoyama Flowering; Kōdaiji and Namban Lacquer,” in James C. Y. Watt and Barbara Brennan Ford, eds., *East Asian Lacquer: The Florence and Herbert Irving Collection* (New York, N.Y.: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1991), 163–73.

Ann Yonemura, *Japanese Lacquer*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1979), 1-106.

Handbook for the Appreciation of Japanese Traditional Crafts

<https://www.nihonkogeikai.or.jp/en> (Online publication, read “Urushi Work” chapter carefully for vocabulary)

### **CLASS 7, FEB: 28:**

#### **Machiya and Cultural Businesses in the Twenty-first Century**

David Atkinson, CEO of Konishi Bijutsu Kogeisha (Konishi Decorative Arts and Crafts Co.), chairman of the Kyōmachiya Tomonokai (Kyoto Machiya Friends Association), and a former partner at Goldman Sachs, took over a multigenerational company that does lacquering for many of Japan's architectural cultural properties, including National Treasure temples and shrines. He is also owner of an important Meiji period machiya in Kyoto, where he will give our class a guided tour of the architecture, gardens, and other aspects of traditional city life in Kyoto.

Reading:

- \*Kyomachiya Council. *Kyoto Machiya Revitalization Project*. 2011. (whole book)
- \*Cram, Ralf Adams. *Japanese Houses: A Classic Look at Japanese Architecture*. Tuttle. P. 11-21, 85-103, 104-114.

### **CLASS 8, MARCH 7:**

#### **Bamboo Art**

Today we will hear about bamboo work from Kuroda Shōgen XIV, who is one of the Senke Jisshoku—ten artisanal lineages responsible for making ladles, flower vases, and other bamboo tea utensils for the three Senke tea schools (Omotesenke, Urasenke, and Mushakouji Senke). The first woman to head the family, Kuroda Shōgen will tell us about her family history dating back to interactions with Kobori Enshū (1579–1647) and the Battle of Sekigahara, about the materials and workmanship required in her specialty, and about the joys and challenges of carrying on four-hundred-plus-year-old traditional industry in the twenty-first century. We next will go to Kubota Birendo, which specializes in *sudare* blinds made from bamboo and reeds.

Reading:

- Melissa M. Rinne, *Masters of Bamboo: Artistic Lineages in the Lloyd Cotsen Japanese Basket Collection*. (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 2007) pp. 14-42, 126-139.
- \*Nancy Moore Bess. *Bamboo in Japan*. (Kodansha International, 2001) p. 15-51.
- Bamboo in the Home p. 114-125, Bamboo and Martial Arts p. 182-186
- \*Robert T. Coffland. *Contemporary Japanese Bamboo Arts*. Art Media Resources. Ltd., 2000. 7-15, 30-34, 48-53

### **CLASS 9, MARCH 14:**

#### **Dentō Kogeiten, Osaka, and Tanabe Chikuunsai IV**

For this class, we will travel by train to Osaka Takashimaya Department Store's gallery to see the last day of the Dentō Kōgeiten (Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition), the most prestigious craft exhibition in Japan, whose senior members are eligible for selection as Holders of Intangible Cultural Properties, better known as Living National Treasures. There, we will be given an introduction to the exhibition and works on view by world-renowned bamboo artist Tanabe Chikuunsai IV, known as much for his masterful interpretations of age-old basketry forms as he is for his massive bamboo installations, which have been commissioned by museums and other venues around the world. This is the last day of the exhibition, so numerous senior artists will be on

hand at the venue. This is an outstanding opportunity to see works in a wide range of mediums as well as to meet the artists who made them.

Reading:

Handbook for the Appreciation of Japanese Traditional Crafts

<https://www.nihonkogeikai.or.jp/en> (Online publication, please read all, including chapters on ceramics, textiles, urushi work, metal work, woodwork, woodwork and bamboo work, dolls, and various works, and familiarize yourself with terminology of areas of particular interest.)

Chikuunsai Website [chikuunsai.com](http://chikuunsai.com) (please familiarize yourself with Tanabe Chikuunsai family history and range of works and prepare questions to ask the professional bamboo artists who work in his studio.)

### **CLASS 10, MARCH 28:**

#### **Japanese Carpentry and Architecture, Sukiya to Contemporary**

For this class we will take a bus trip up to Kutsuki, in Takashima, Shiga prefecture, to see the workshop of the contemporary sukiya carpenters Sankakuya. The head carpenter of this company, Asahina Hideo, was trained under the preeminent carpenter Nakamura Sōtōji, helping construct Japanese architectural residences and other structures for clients such as the Rockefellers and John Lennon. At their lumberyard, we will learn about the distinctive selection and treatment of various woods in Japanese architecture. We will then go to look at

\* S. Azby Brown. *The Genius of Japanese Carpentry*. P. 20-24, 55-58, 59-65, 69-78.

\*Engel, Heinrich. *The Japanese House, a Tradition for Contemporary Architecture*.

Tuttle, 1964. P. 410-450 + section on tools and materials passed out in class.

\*General/ Optional): Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi, *What is Japanese Architecture?* Kodansha International. 1983. P. 74-7, 80-87

\* Background culture: Tanizaki Jun'ichiro, *In Praise of Shadows*.

### **CLASS 11 APRIL 4**

#### **Final Presentations I**

### **CLASS 12 APRIL 11**

#### **Final Presentations II**

## Reference Books for Further Study

### General

- Mason, Penelope. *History of Japanese Art*. Harry N. Abrams, Inc. 1993.
- Mizoguchi Saburo. Louise Cort, tr. *Design Motifs*. Weatherhill, Shinbundo, 1973
- Paine, Robert and Alexander Soper. *The Art and Architecture of Japan*. Penguin Books. 1955, 1981.
- The Japan Craft Forum. *Japanese Crafts*. Kodansha International, 2001.

### Bamboo and wood

- Bess, Nancy Moore. *Bamboo in Japan*. (Kodansha International, 2001.) Robert T. Coffland. *Contemporary Japanese Bamboo Arts*. Art Media Resources. Ltd., 2000.
- Rinne, Melissa. *Masters of Bamboo: Artistic Lineages in the Lloyd Cotsen Japanese Basket Collection*. Asian Art Museum. 2008.
- Sekijima, Hisako. *Basketry: Projects from Baskets to Grass Slippers*. Kodansha International. 1986.
- Mertz, Mechtild, *Wood and Traditional Woodworking in Japan*. Kaiseisha Press, 2011.

### Carpentry and architecture

- Brown, S Azby. *The Genius of Japanese Carpentry*. Kodansha Inter. 1995.
- Carver, Norman F. *Japanese Folkhouses*. Documan Pr Ltd. 1984/2006
- Cram, Ralf Adams. *Japanese Houses: A Classic Look at Japanese Architecture*. Tuttle.
- Cram, Ralf Adams. *Impressions of Japanese Architecture and the Allied Arts*. Tuttle, 1982.
- Engel, Heinrich. *The Japanese House, a Tradition for Contemporary Architecture*. Tuttle, 1964
- Kyomachiya Council. *Kyoto Machiya Revitalization Project*. 2011.
- Ludvik, Catherine. Michiru Kanade, et al. *Chūgūji Imperial Convent*, Yashiro Asano pub. 2009
- Roderick, John. *Minka, My Farmhouse in Japan*. Princeton Architectural Press, 2007.
- Seike Kiyosi. *The Art of Japanese Joinery*, Weatherhill, 1977, 81.
- Kazuo Nishi and Kazuo Hozumi. *What is Japanese Architecture? A survey of Traditional Japanese Architecture*. Shokokusha pub., 1983

### Papermaking and printing

- Barrett, Timothy. *Japanese Papermaking: Traditions, Tools, and Techniques*. Weatherhill, 1992, 2004.
- Design Exchange. *Karacho: Karakami Paper in Kyoto*. Design Exchange, 2004.
- Hunter, Dard. *Papermaking: The History and Technique of an Ancient Craft*. Dover Pub, 2011
- Needham, Joseph. *Science and Civilization in China: Vol 5, Chemistry and Chemical Technology, Part 1, Paper and Printing*. Cambridge University Press,

1985.

### **Textiles**

- Kyoto Shoin's Art Library of Japanese Textiles –20 volumes  
Benjamin, Betsey Sterling. *The World of Rozome: Wax-Resist Textiles of Japan*. Kodansha International. 1996.  
Kyoto National Museum, ed. (Yamakawa and Bethe). *Transmitting Robes, Linking Minds: the World of Buddhist Kasaya*. Kyoto National Museum. 2010  
Bethe, "Reflections on *Beni*: Red as a Key to Edo-Period Fashion" in *When Art Became Fashion*. (p. 133-151)  
Brandon, Riko Mochinaga. *Country Textiles of Japan: The Art of Tsutsugaki*. Weatherhill, 1986.  
Hareven Tamara. *The Silk Weavers of Kyoto; Family and Work in a Changing Traditional Industry*. University of California Press. 2002.  
Kiriata Ken, "Yūzen Dyeing: A New Pictorialism" in *When Art Became Fashion*.  
Murashima, Kumiko. *Katazome, Japanese Paste-Resist Dyeing for Contemporary Use*. Lark Books, 1993  
Nakano Eisha with Barbara Stephan. *Japanese Stencil Dyeing: Paste-Resist Techniques*. Weatherhill, 1982.  
Noma Seiroku. Armins Nikovskis tr. *Japanese Costume and Textile Arts*. Weatherhill. The Heibonsha Survey of Japanese Art. Weatherhill, 1974.  
Sandberg. *Indigo Textiles: Technique and History*.  
Stinchecum, Amanda. *Kosode: 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Century Textiles from the Nomura Collection*. Japan Society and Kodansha International. 1984  
Takeda, Sharon, et al. *When Art Became Fashion*. Los Angeles County Museum, 1992  
Wada Yoshiko, et al. *Shibori: The inventive Art of Japanese shaped Resist dyeing: Tradition, Techniques, Innovation*. Kodansha International. 1983.

### **Ceramics**

- Cort, Louise Allison. *Shigaraki Potter's Valley*. Kodansha International, 1979  
Cort, Louise Allison, et al. *Isamu Noguchi and Modern Japanese Ceramics: a Close Embrace of the Earth*. Smithsonian Institute, Washington, 2003  
Fujioka Ryoichi. Louise Cort, tr. *Tea Ceremony Utensils*. Weatherhill/ Shibundo, 1973  
Honolulu Academy of Arts, *Yakimono: 4000 Years of Japanese Ceramics*. 2005  
Kawahara Masahiko. *The Ceramic Art of Ogata Kenzan*. Japan Arts Library. Kodansha International, 1985  
Leach, Bernard and Yanagi Soetsu. *The Unknown Craftsman: A Japanese Insight into Beauty*. Kodansha Amer. 1990  
Pitelka, Morgan. *Handmade Culture: Raku Potters, Patrons, and Tea Practitioners in Japan*.  
Wilson, Richard. *Inside Japanese Ceramics*. Weatherhill, 1995,1999  
Lee Anthony. *Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Robson Books, 2008.  
Sadler, A. L. *Cha-no-yu The Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Tuttle, 2001.