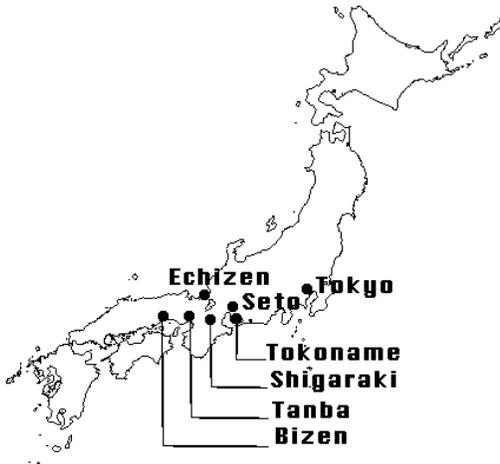


Pottery Centers of Traditional Japan



Japan is home to one of the most vibrant ceramic cultures in the world. It may also be the source of one of the oldest earthenware traditions, having begun around at least 12,000 years ago.

After World War II, six ancient kiln sites came to be known as *Nihon Rokkoyo* or the “Six Old Kilns.” These include: Shigaraki, Bizen, Tanba, Echizen, Seto and Tokoname. There were, in fact, many more than six ancient kilns sites.

Many of the artists in *New Forms, New Voices* reference these ancient ceramic traditions in their work. Below is a brief description of some of these kiln sites and traditional wares.

Shigaraki



Shigaraki is located in the southern part of Shiga Prefecture (see map) and is a wood-fired stoneware first produced at the end of the 12th century. The clay of Shigaraki, endowed with fire-resistance and elastic properties, is well suited for making large utilitarian objects, particularly storage jars, vases and bowl-shaped mortars. After World War II, large Shigaraki jars became one of the most sought-after of all traditional Japanese ceramics, admired for their rustic texture and *tsuchiaji* (“flavor of the earth”) which brought to mind weathered pieces of wood, or old stones covered in beautiful moss.

Characteristics:

- (1) When fired over 2,300 degrees (Fahrenheit), the iron in the Shigaraki clay became oxidized and produced an orange-red coloring, but the heat also drew out a pale-greenish glasslike substance from the clay.
- (2) Shigaraki wares have a natural ash glaze. This is a result of the kiln’s atmosphere. In the wood-burning kiln, ash fell and collected thickly on the vessels creating unpredictable glaze effects.



Contemporary ceramic artists live in and around Shigaraki, and/or use Shigaraki clays and firing methods in their work. The area continues to be home to many commercial kilns as well as artist's studios.

Fun fact: Besides being one of Japan’s oldest pottery centers, Shigaraki has become famous for their big, humorous *Tanuki* (“Raccoon Dog”) ceramic figures which are placed outside Japanese taverns called *izakaya*. These comical figures, which have been locally made since the Meiji Period (1868-1912), can be found all over Japan.



Echizen



Echizen, an ash-glazed, high-fired stoneware, was first manufactured at the end of the 12th century. The kilns were located near the villages of Oda and Miyazaki, in present-day Fukui Prefecture on Japan's west coast. Echizen ceramics were traditionally created for utilitarian purposes. The large storage jars, drinking vessels, wide-mouthed containers and grinding bowls were hand built. Potters used a coiling technique called *nejitate*, building the form out of levels of long, thin, cord-like clay. After creating a cylindrical shape, the surface was smoothed from top to bottom.

Characteristics:

- (1) The iron rich Echizen clay was fired between 2,200-2,300 degrees (Fahrenheit) and, due to the iron, the body fired a reddish brown.
- (2) Ash, from the wood used to fire the ceramics, sometimes landed on the surface, creating a natural glaze.
- (3) This high-fired stoneware shares properties with porcelain (very strong body, water tight) and is known as *yakishime* (a form of earthenware that fell between pottery and porcelain).



After World War II, archaeologists discovered the location of the Echizen kilns, as well as other medieval kiln sites (e.g. Kaga, Tamasu and Ouenzawa in the Hokuriku region) that made Echizen-type wares, sparking a revival of interest. In 1970, the Echizen Ceramics Village was established. Today, many contemporary Japanese ceramic artists admire Echizen pots for their bold, rugged, hand-built forms.

Bizen



Bizen wares were produced in and around the village of Imbe in Bizen province, presently a part of Okayama Prefecture. Originating at the end of the 12th century, Bizen reached its height in popularity during the 14th century. The local clay in Imbe had great plasticity; however it was also sticky and fine-grained. This was and is a difficult material for potters due to its high shrinkage and relatively low fire resistance. Bizen ware is not usually glazed because the body shrinks so much during firing that any applied glazes peel off due to the different rates of reduction. Because of the composition of the clay, Bizen wares cannot withstand rapid high-temperature changes, so the firing has to be done gradually. Most pieces were fired slowly over a 10–14 day period of time and firings took place only once or twice a year.

Characteristics:

- 1) The high strength of Imbe clay helped Bizen to retain its form, making it hard even without glaze.
- 2) Known for its earthen-like, reddish-brown surface color with an absence of glaze (although it may contain traces of molten ash resembling glaze).



During the Meiji Period (1868-1912), Bizen wares almost disappeared, along with many other traditional crafts. An effort to preserve this pottery tradition began in the 1930s and Bizen ware was designated a traditional Japanese craft by the government in 1982. At the beginning of the 21st century, it was produced in around 300

kilns and two well-known representatives of Bizen ware are represented in this exhibition: Ryuichi Kakurezaki and Togaku Mori.

Fun fact: Traditional lore suggested that food tastes better when served on a Bizen plate, and that flowers last longer in a Bizen vase. Recent scientific analysis has revealed that Bizen pottery blocks 90% of far infrared rays, keeping nearby natural materials fresh, and in the case of food, preserving their taste. The uneven surface of the pottery also makes beer taste better. These factors make Bizen pottery the favorite tableware of high-end restaurants in Japan.

Haji Ware



Haji ware was produced around the 4th century. Made in large numbers in what later became the provinces of Yamato (present-day Nara Prefecture) and Kawachi (present-day Osaka Prefecture), the production of Haji ware later spread throughout western Japan, eventually reaching the eastern provinces. Early wares were typically hand-built rather than thrown on a wheel, had round bases and were not very large. Pottery forms were created according to the *wazumi* technique, in which mounds of coiled clay were built up to shape the vessel, layer by layer. The exterior and usually the interior surfaces were scraped smooth.

Characteristics:

- (1) Haji vessels are undecorated, unglazed, have wide rims and the body is typically a rust-red color.
- (2) This type of pottery often displayed large smoke-blackened burn marks either from firing at low temperatures, under 1,800 degrees (Fahrenheit), or from prolonged use as cooking pots.

Fun fact: Everyday pottery items from this period are called Haji ware, but ritual and funerary objects that used the same clay are called *Haniwa*. This pottery was made in the form of houses, boats, animals, women, hunters, musicians, and warriors. Some *Haniwa* served as guardian figures for the tombs of ancient Japanese emperors.



Iga Ware



This high-fired ceramic was first produced in the 16th century in Iga province (the western part of today's Mie Prefecture) close to Shigaraki. Iga vases were made out of rough clay, sometimes with tiny white stones added, which gave an additional surface texture. In the past, Iga wares were hand-built, which allowed the potter to take advantage of the irregularities of the material. Later, production by wheel also developed.

Characteristics:

- 1) Iga has a rustic appearance and purposefully deformed shapes, given extra character by the intentional gouges and dents (*herame*). Many modern Iga sculptural vessels have a primordial quality with rough and consciously fractured bodies full of rugged corners that bring to mind the fallen away sides of a mountain.
- 2) Extremely resistant to heat, Iga can withstand repeated firings, and is often fired over three days.



Fun fact: Iga ware incorporates a 3-million-year-old form of clay known as *gaerome*, which contains abundant coarse silica particles. When fired, the unglazed pottery is both porous and fireproof, making it excellent for cooking (e.g. covered clay pots known as *donabe*), as excess water can be absorbed from the ingredients to enhance the flavor of the dish.

Hagi Ware



The tradition of Hagi pottery is said to spring from two Korean brothers who first fired Hagi sometime around 1604 in Matsumoto-Nakanokura, what is now Yamaguchi Prefecture. Hagi ware would later be called Matsumoto ware (or Matsumoto Hagi) after the official Hagi kiln was established. In 1663, two first generation potters, Saeki Hanroku (1630–1682) and Miwa Kyūsetsu (1630–1706), joined the Matsumoto kiln, which improved production. The historic and artistic value of Hagi ware grew when Miwa Kyūwa (1895-1981) was designated a Living National Treasure (Holder of Intangible Important Cultural Property) for Hagi ware in 1970. His younger brother Miwa Jusetsu (Kyūsetsu XI) received the same title in 1983. Work by a Miwa family descendent, Kazuhiko Miwa, is featured in *New Forms, New Voices*.

Once shaped on the potter's wheel, a Hagi piece is allowed to dry for two to three days. After this, slip or brush patterns are applied, and the vessel is left to dry again before being fired. Pieces are first fired inside the firing chamber for at least 15 hours, but may require a further 30 hours. After firing, the firing chamber is sealed tight. The fired pieces are removed from the kiln after having cooled for between twenty-four hours and five days.

Characteristics:

- 1) The charm of Hagi pottery lies in the rough texture of the clay and the pock marked surfaces laced with cracks in the glaze.
- 2) The traditional clay used for Hagi ware is soft, airy and is a mixture of three main raw clays (Daidō clay, Mitake clay, and Mishima clay). This blend creates a synergetic effect between the clay and the glaze.
- 3) The famous Hagi-style glaze is a semi-opaque, cloudy white glaze made by mixing earth ash with straw ash. Today, the most valued shade of this glaze is *Kyūsetsu White* which has the appearance of thick, fluffy, and warm cotton.



Fun fact: Hagi ware continues to absorb color even after it is fired. The crackle of the glaze thus becomes more apparent over time. It is said that the ware changes tone and color "7 times", a quality highly appreciated by users. The more you use Hagi ware, especially if used to drink tea, the more interesting it becomes.

Oribe Ware



Oribe ware is named after Lord Furuta Oribe (1544–1615), who introduced vivid patterns and colors (especially green copper glaze) to a previously somber, monochromatic ceramic type. Traditionally made in Tajimi, located in Gifu Prefecture, Oribe popularized a new aesthetic of the irregular (uneven shapes, unique colors) and the accidental.

The distinctive, bright green of a typical Oribe ware was the first bright, translucent stoneware glaze created in Japan. Although the kiln and glaze technology for Oribe both had Chinese origins, the look and

use of Oribe glazes were wholly Japanese. The loose, abstract application of the glaze and the potters' embrace of irregularities in both the form and decoration of the pots make for a distinctive and engaging ware.

Characteristics:

- 1) Oribe is most identifiable for its use of green copper glaze and bold painted designs with geometric patterns.
- 2) For the brilliant green color, wares are fired over 2,200 degrees (Fahrenheit).
- 3) Green is the typical color of Oribe ware. However, brown, red, orange, and later black glazes are also present.



Created by: Johanna Darilek, October 2017

New Forms, New Voices: Japanese Ceramics from the Gitter-Yelen Collection

Text Panels and Label Copy

Japan is home to a culture of fired clay that is both venerable and vibrant, with one of the world's longest unbroken traditions of ceramic manufacture, dating back more than 15,000 years. *New Forms, New Voices: Japanese Ceramics from the Gitter-Yelen Collection* presents the rich diversity of the most recent chapter in this long history through a selection of seventy-nine modern and contemporary ceramics created by forty artists.

Energized by global influences, traditional philosophies and techniques, there are likely more artists in Japan earning a living from ceramics today than anywhere else on earth. This selection, drawn from the distinguished collection of Dr. Kurt A. Gitter and Alice Yelen Gitter, has been formed over the past forty years and is built upon long-standing relationships between the couple and the artists and their in-depth knowledge of each artist's work. Guest-curated by noted Japanese art scholar Joe Earle, the exhibition is presented in five sections, revealing the vast range of imagination and endeavor of these ceramic artists.

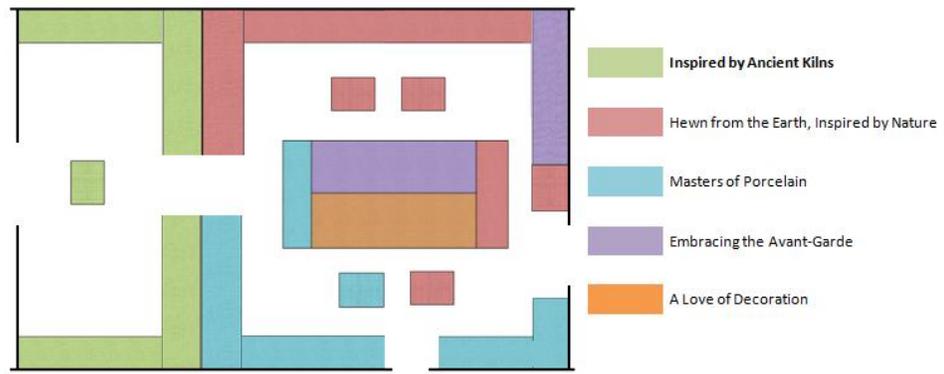
Inspired by Ancient Kilns, the first section, places three early pots from the Gitter-Yelen collection alongside recent work by contemporary artists who either live and work at a traditional kiln site or make wares based on classic kiln prototypes. Artists whose work emulates aspects of the natural world are the focus of the next section, *Hewn from the Earth*. The technical perfection, innovation, and ingenuity of post-war artists working in the medium of porcelain to create both sculptural and traditional vessel forms are highlighted in the third section, *Masters of Porcelain*. *Embracing the Avant-Garde* features work by ceramists who have challenged both the dominance of the semi-hereditary workshop system and the assumption that clay objects should be made in utilitarian shapes, including members of the highly influential Sodeisha group, active from 1948-1998. The final section, *A Love of Decoration*, is devoted to artists working in both stoneware and porcelain, who use a variety of techniques to enliven the surface of their works.

The works assembled here, created mostly during the early 21st century, demonstrate the success of artists from the second and third post-war generations in creating new and original modes of expression. Poised at a turning point between past and future, these artists are engaged with a more pluralistic outlook, deepening their engagement with other cultures without losing sight of their own rich past.

All works on view are on loan from the Gitter-Yelen Collection.

Inspired by Ancient Kilns

Many of Japan's ancient kiln centers are still active today, and the country's historic ceramics remain an important source of inspiration for contemporary artists. The eight artists whose works are seen here either live and work at a traditional site of ceramic production or make wares based on classic prototypes. Although these artists draw inspiration from the past, their work is radically different from their antecedents.



Three early pots representative of historic kiln production and ranging in date from the 4th to 15th centuries can be seen in the case at the right. These products of medieval kilns exerted a powerful influence on Japanese ceramic artists in the Post-war Period due to their austere, elegant, and yet irregular forms, and their varied surface textures and colors.



Echizen Ware
Storage Jar
10 ½ x 13 ¼ in

Echizen Storage Jar

14th-15th century

Stoneware with natural ash glaze

Major centers for the production of stoneware developed throughout Japan during the 12th century, including at Echizen, in present-day Fukui Prefecture. Archaeologists discovered the location of these kilns after World War II, sparking a revival of interest. Contemporary potters admire Echizen ceramics for their bold, hand-built forms and the accidental glazing of their surfaces, caused by the accumulation of ash during the long firing process.



Haji Ware
Jar
14 ½ x 12 ⅞ in

Haji Jar

4th century

Earthenware

The hand-built, utilitarian Haji wares often bear large burn marks, either as a result of their firing, or their prolonged use as cooking vessels. Their elegant and irregular forms and varied surface color and textures have served as an inspiration for many post-war potters.



Shigaraki Ware
Storage Jar
18 ½ x 16 in

Shigaraki Storage Jar

15th century

Stoneware with natural ash glaze

Originally made to store rice and other foodstuffs, stonewares from Shigaraki attained great renown during the 16th century due to their popularity amongst devotees of the tea ceremony. The products of the Shigaraki kilns —their rugged, hand-built forms and dramatic surface texture and color—have exerted a powerful influence on contemporary ceramic artists throughout the world.

Ryuichi Kakurezaki

Japanese, born 1950

Kakurezaki's rugged and assertive works embody both tradition and innovation. A native of Nagasaki, Kaurezaki is now a resident of Imbe, the home of the ancient Bizen kiln site. His works retain their functionality, as the platters and vases on view here attest, but his forms depart from the traditional with their sharp edges and fresh aesthetic.



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Fish Bowl in Shigaraki Style, 1999-2000
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
12 5/8 x 39 in



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Long Platter, 2004
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
2 7/8 x 29 1/2 in



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Small Bucket-Shaped Flower Stand, circa 2004
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
9 3/8 x 10 1/4 in



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Three-Sided Vase, 2004
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
8 5/8 x 6 3/4 in



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Large Platter, circa 2006
Marbleized stoneware with natural ash glaze
6 x 34 5/8 in



Ryuichi Kakurezaki
Bizen-Ware Large Flower Vase, 2003
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
21 x 9 1/2 in



Togaku Mori
Bizen-Ware Rectangular Plate, circa 2000
Unglazed stoneware w/
kiln effects
15 x 9 1/2 in

Togaku Mori

Japanese, born 1937

Coming from a family of potters who have worked at the Bizen kilns for centuries, Mori has revitalized traditional working practices. The roundel at the center of this *Plate* was created through a traditional technique known as *hidasuki* ("fire cord decoration"), wherein an area is protected from falling ash and flame by placing a pre-fired clay medallion over the area. The red lines were created by strands of rice straw nested between the medallion and the work being fired. This unique method was revived in the 1930s and has become a hallmark of contemporary Bizen ware.



Yasuhisa Koyama
Wind, circa 2004
Stoneware with natural ash glaze
12 5/8 x 12 5/8 in

Yasuhisa Kohyama

Japanese, born 1936

Born in Shigaraki, Kohyama employs both the local sandy clay and the traditional firing methods associated with this ancient kiln. Fascinated by the area's earlier stoneware technology, Kohyama revived the use of the *anagama* (a simple tunnel kiln with a single chamber), building the first such kiln in the Shigaraki valley since late-medieval times. Kohyama has modified these ancient methods and carries out not one but multiple firings at very high temperatures to create sculptural ceramics that evoke the effect of natural forces on the surface of the earth, but remain timeless in their beauty.

Shiro Tsujimura

Japanese, born 1947

Tsujimura, a largely self-taught potter, has been inspired by the form and firing techniques of several old kilns, but Iga wares—an ash-glazed, high-fired stoneware first used for formal tea drinking around 1600—are among his favorites. His rough, boldly formed stoneware vessels and craggy, upright flower vases, as seen here, are fired using nontraditional methods, such as adding fuel oil to the kiln.



Shiro Tsujimura
*Iga-Ware Standing
Flower Vase, 2004*
Stoneware w/
natural ash glaze
17 ½ x 7 ½ in



Shiro Tsujimura
Large Jar, 2008
Stoneware w/
natural ash glaze
19 ⅝ x 17 ¾ in



Shuheiji Fujioka
*Iga-Ware Flower
Vase, circa 2010*
Stoneware w/
ash glaze
12 ¼ x 6 ¾ in

Shuheiji Fujioka

Japanese, born 1947

Fujioka balances tradition and modernity in his boldly modeled flower vases. While his works share characteristics with many modern sculptural ceramics from around the globe, they also reference traditional wares such as those from the Iga kilns, with their shiny emerald-green glaze that sometimes forms small globules; unglazed or semi-glazed areas of orange or brown; and occasional scorched patches, the half-random results of natural wood firing.



Masanao Kaneta
*Hagi-Ware
Water Jar*
Glazed Stoneware
8 ⅝ x 10 ¼ in

Masanao Kaneta

Japanese, born 1953

Kaneta abandoned his long-time use of a kick wheel in favor of a more direct, personal encounter with his raw material. He slams the clay against a board to compress and strengthen it, pounding it with his bare hands to develop the overall form, then carves away parts of the surface to create a sculptural effect, scooping a cavity in the center, and applying a rich frosting of rice-ash glaze that fires in places to pinkish-gray accents as shown here.



Kazuhiko Miwa
Garland Number 9,
 2006
 Stoneware with
 Hagi-style glaze
 8 7/8 x 3 1/2 in

Kazuhiko Miwa

Japanese, born 1951

A member of one of the most highly regarded lineages of Japanese potters, Miwa's artistic formation was also influenced by American artist Peter Voulkos (whose work is on view in *Personalities in Clay: American Studio Ceramics* on the second floor), who encouraged Miwa to study in the United States. Miwa's powerfully shaped vessels are cloaked in what is known as a Hagi-style glaze (developed by Miwa's ancestors), a translucent whitish glaze with a fine web of exposed cracks, created by a heating and cooling process wherein the glaze shrinks faster than the vessel's body, drawing out the natural, colors of the clay.



Koichi Uchida
Large White Jar,
 2011
 Glazed Stoneware
 20 1/2 x 21 5/8 in

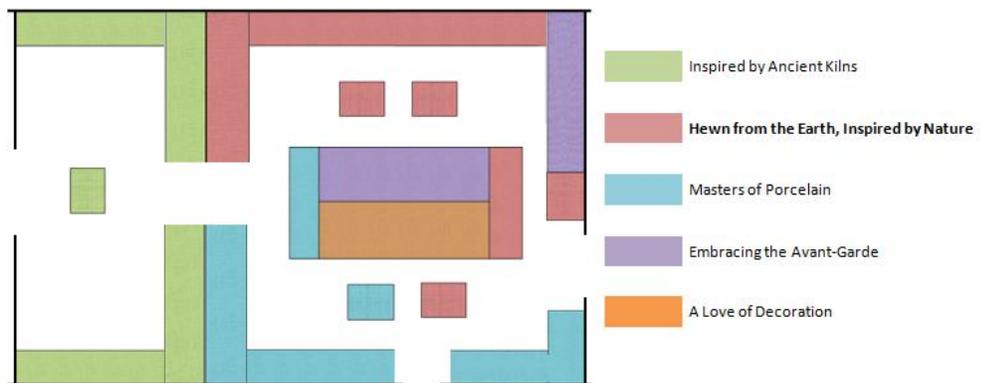
Koichi Uchida

Japanese, born 1969

Uchida's generously formed vessels, with wide, slightly irregular mouths, reflect his love of imperfect, worn surfaces. His works do not overtly reference specific kilns or ceramic types, whether Japanese or foreign, but rather incorporate elements from a number of world traditions. This jar is part of his *Kasai otsubo* series ("Large Jar with Added Color"), all made from unrefined white clay with the lightest possible dressing of glaze.

Hewn from the Earth, Inspired by Nature

Many contemporary ceramic artists seek to emulate the effects of natural phenomena in their work. The six male and four female artists whose work is seen here each employ different construction and firing techniques to create objects that either recall natural forms (such as rocks, shells, ice, landforms or water) or to create works that appear to be formed from elemental, and at times cataclysmic, forces of the natural world. These references to convulsive environmental forces may perhaps allude to Japan's geographic origins as a chain of volcanic islands.



Ken Mihara

Japanese, born 1958

Mihara's high-fired stoneware vessels are hand-formed; their distinctive surfaces the product of a sequence of firings. The first, at a relatively low temperature, lasts half a day. The second, at high temperature, lasts for between thirty and forty hours. Between the first and second firings the piece is covered with fire-resistant clay to prevent accidental glazing. This protection is removed before the final firing, allowing the surface of the

finished piece to take on a range of colors due to the kiln environment and the interaction of the iron in the clay with the high heat.



Ken Mihara
Orange Vessel w/ Lip,
"Origin," 2006
Stoneware
7 ¾ x 13 ¼ in



Ken Mihara
Flower Vessel,
2007
Stoneware
18 ⅛ x 31 ⅛ in



Ken Mihara
Flower Vessel,
2010
Stoneware
12 ⅝ x 15 in



Kenji Gomi
Colored Ceramic Form,
circa 2010
Stoneware
18 ½ x 10 ⅝ in

Kenji Gomi

Japanese, born 1978

Gomi's elegant, organic forms showcase the striking visual effects the artist achieves through his unusual firing process. Gomi partially buries his vessels in rice husks, creating contrasts between the section submerged below the husks and the portion exposed to fire and ash. The striking result creates a surface akin to that of stones excavated from an ancient archeological site. This illusion is, on closer examination, dispelled by faint traces of a bluish color on the surface.

Yo Akiyama

Japanese, born 1953

One of Japan's most inventive potters, Akiyama creates his distinctive unglazed tubular forms by making flat rings of stoneware clay, scorching them with a blowtorch, and then turning them inside out so that the inner surfaces, cracked and distorted, are revealed. After he has joined several rings together, he embeds the surface with iron filings and fires the whole piece in a gas kiln. This innovative surface treatment contributes to the impression that Akiyama's fissured, fractured ceramic sculptures have been dug from somewhere deep within the earth.



Yo Akiyama
Untitled T-015,
2011
Stoneware
13 ⅝ x 12 ¼ in



Yo Akiyama
Flower T-172,
2017
Stoneware w/
silver glaze
16 ¾ x 11 in



Yo Akiyama
Metavoid 8,
2005
Stoneware
22 x 29 ⅞ in



Jun Nishida
Untitled, early 21st
 century
 Porcelaneous stoneware
 with powdered glaze
 12 ¼ x 22 in

Jun Nishida

Japanese 1977-2005

This work, from Nishida's now-famous *Zetsu* ("Extremity" or "Extinction") series, entered the kiln as a large, nearly one ton mass of porcelain clay covered with an extremely thick glaze. After firing, individual works were excavated from this mass and worked by the artist, who smashed away at the clay with a hammer to reveal pre-formed pipe-like structures and rougher, underfired surfaces in sharp contrast to the glassy exterior. Nishida died in 2005, at the age of 28, in an explosion during the commissioning of a new communal kiln in Indonesia.

Machiko Ogawa

Japanese, born 1946

Combining technical expertise with a love of geologic forms, Ogawa has developed a unique practice of creating works that seem to have emerged naturally from the earth, with warped and fissured surfaces offset by deep interior pools of crackled blue glaze.



Machiko Ogawa
Lunar Fragment-2, 2014
 Unglazed porcelain
 w/ glass
 16 ¼ x 15 in



Machiko Ogawa
Lunar Fragment-1, 2014
 Unglazed stoneware
 9 ⅝ x 17 ⅞ in



Machiko Ogawa
*Large Vessel w/
 Metallic Glaze*, 2009
 Glazed stoneware
 7 ¾ x 10 ⅝ in



Machiko Ogawa
*Silver Boat-Form
 Vessel*, 2009
 Glazed Stoneware
 5 ½ x 22 ½ in



Machiko Ogawa
*Plate Glass
 Fragment-1*
 2 x 17 ⅞ in



Machiko Ogawa
*White Vessel w/ Cracked
 Blue Glass Glaze*, 2009
 Unglazed porcelain w/ glass
 18 ¾ x 24 ⅞ in



Machiko Ogawa
Layered Vessel, 2014
 Unglazed porcelain
 w/ glass
 5 ½ x 19 ¼ in



Machiko Ogawa
2013-SH-4
 7 ⅞ x 21 ¼ in

Yukiya Izumita

Japanese, born 1966

Izumita's work evokes the stark beauty of windswept, storm-beaten desolate shores of his native Iwate Prefecture in northern Japan. He skillfully prepares and manipulates the local salt-rich clay, blending it with sand and stones, which he then spreads, twists, and hones, often after first creating studies in folded paper. Using

both gas and wood fueled kilns, he deepens the sense of primal nature by limited application of glazes to enhance the erosion-exposed surfaces of his strangely formed sculptures.

Perhaps more than any other artists in the Gitter-Yelen collection, Izumita's pottery closely reflect his local environment—Iwate Prefecture in northern Japan, an area with high mountains, lush forests and scenic seashores. By limiting the application of glazes, his strangely formed sculptures capture a raw, earthy and textured surface that resembles jagged layers of bedrocks.



Yukiya Izumita
Layers, circa 2011
Stoneware
10 ¼ x 18 ⅞ in



Yukiya Izumita
Folds, circa 2011
Stoneware
14 ¾ x 25 ⅝ in

Shoko Koike

Japanese, born 1943

One of the earliest female Japanese studio potters to earn a living from her work, Koike was also among the first ceramic artists to make the evocation of natural forms a cornerstone of her practice, in works that suggest ocean waves or the strata of seaside cliffs. Here, she finished her pots with a shell-like ribbing, achieved by applying multiple layers of clay followed by coats of rich, thick, creamy white glaze into which she scratches textures and crevices using a comb-like tool.



Shoko Koike
Shell Vase, 2003
Glazed Stoneware
7 ½ x 15 ⅜ in



Shoko Koike
Shell Vase,
circa 2007
Stoneware w/
sand glaze
14 ⅞ x 16 ½ in



Takayuki Sakiyama
Listening to the Waves,
2004
Glazed stoneware
16 x 14 ⅞ in

Takayuki Sakiyama

Japanese, born 1958

Sakiyama uses the sandy clays of Shigaraki to create large double-walled flower vases that combine functionality with bold sculptural form. His love of the ocean is apparent in each of his serene pots, whose twisted, scraped surfaces evoke wave patterns on the water's edge of a fine-grained beach.



Sachiko Fujino
Bud Flush 2010-II, 2010
 Stoneware w/
 matte glaze
 14 1/8 x 18 7/8 in

Sachiko Fujino

Japanese, born 1950

Fujino worked in fashion design and textile-dyeing before embarking on a career as a potter. Her background is apparent in her approach to clay, which she folds, tucks, and crimps as one might a piece of cloth, exploiting the flexibility and plasticity of the medium to its fullest extent. For several years she has created increasingly elaborate, flower-like forms enhanced by a thin mixture of clay and water applied using an airbrush-like tool, giving the plain surfaces of her works a sense of warmth and depth.



Yoshimi Futamura
Vasque (Bowl), 2010
 Stoneware and
 porcelain
 10 x 19 1/8 in

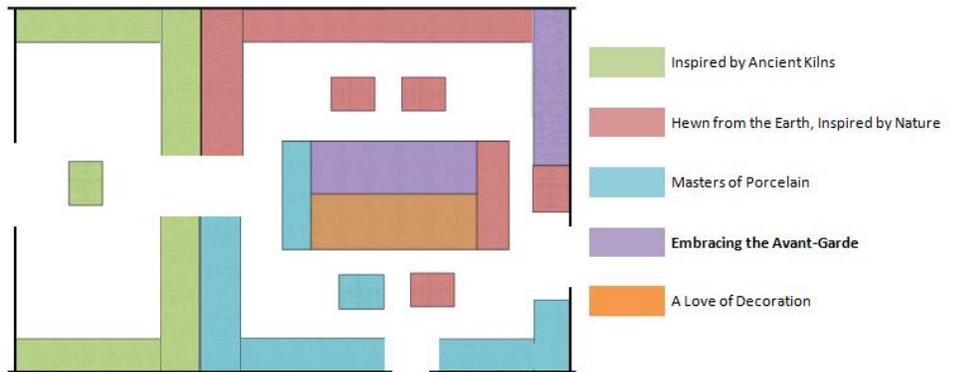
Yoshimi Futamura

Japanese, born 1959

Futamura lives and works in France and established her own wood-fired kiln there in 1995. This has removed her from the constraints of Japan's largely male-dominated ceramic world and given her the freedom to develop a new expressive language. Her use of pre-fired granules of porcelain clay gives her cracked, almost solidified lava-like works, a particularly distinctive and charred appearance.

Embracing the Avant-Garde

After World War II, a number of potters turned their back on time-honored artistic and social conventions, rejecting the vessel form and developing a new style of ceramic sculpture. Among the most influential were members of Sodeisha, including Kazuo Yagi, Junkichi Kumakura, Osamu Suzuki and Hikaru Yamada, whose works can be seen here. This avant-garde group that played a seminal role in world ceramics from 1948-1998 and its impact is still evident today.



The Sodeisha potters and their followers moved in different directions after the 1950s, and although some even made vessel-like objects upon occasion, they remained united in their shared respect for clay as a medium, their quest for creative autonomy and avoidance of convention and their openness to trends in global 20th-century art.



Junkichi Kumakura
Work, 1965
 Unglazed stoneware
 23 5/8 x 14 1/8 in

Junkichi Kumakura

Japanese, 1920-1985

Kumakura abandoned his traditional training and early practice in the post-war era, becoming one of the founding members of the avant-garde Sodeisha group in 1957. His forceful rejection of utilitarian shapes is illustrated in his biomorphic sculptures, made using ash-glazed Shigaraki clay. This *Work* resonates with eroticism and sexuality, and echoes concerns by European modernist masters such as Henry Moore.

Osamu Suzuki

Japanese, 1926-2001

A founding member of the influential Sodeisha avant-garde ceramic group, Suzuki began making ceramic sculptures in 1955, and in the 1960s initiated work on a series of minimalist forms inspired by nature. The first of his *Horses* dates from 1967. As seen in the case nearby, Suzuki later produced a series of small, whimsically named forms made from porcelain with a pale blue glaze.



Osamu Suzuki
*Set of Four Miniature
 Celadon Forms (L->R)*
Hailstone, 3 7/8 x 2 3/8 in
Sand Dune, 4 3/4 x 2 3/8 in
Sign of the Wind, 7 5/8 x 2 5/8 in
Heaven's Boat, 1 5/8 x 2 3/4 in



Osamu Suzuki
Horse Form, 1982
 Stoneware w/
 red slip and ash glazes
 31 1/2 x 12 in

Kazuo Yagi

Japanese, 1918-1979

A leading figure in post-war ceramics, Yagi founded the avant-garde Sodeisha group in 1948. He stunned the Kyoto ceramic world with his unconventional abstract works that asserted their sculptural form and eschewed functionality. Yagi later went on to make a number of vessel-like pieces, finished in a white glaze incised with scribbled abstract motifs, which recall his work in the immediate post-war years.



Kazuo Yagi
Flask,
 circa 1960
 Glazed stoneware
 6 3/8 x 6 in



Kazuo Yagi
Sgraffito Square Jar,
 1966
 Glazed stoneware
 12 3/8 x 9 7/8 in



Hikaru Yamada
Sculpture,
circa 1993
Glazed stoneware
18 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in

Hikaru Yamada

Japanese, 1923-2001

A founding member of the avant-garde Sodeisha group, Yamada started his career creating functional vessels but gradually made their openings smaller and smaller until they disappeared altogether. He later created elaborate hand-built abstract sculptures, as can be seen here, covering the stoneware body with a smoke-blackened finish or a matte silvery glaze.

Kazuo Takiguchi

Japanese, born 1953

Takiguchi is best known for his amorphous, organic sculptures, created through a unique process. He spreads clay on pieces of canvas, attaches pulleys to the corners and manipulates these canvas-clay sheets to form balloon-like, biomorphic shapes with openings that reveal the thinness of the body. Takiguchi also creates smaller, colorfully glazed vessels decorated with a lively, upbeat mixture of traditional and contemporary motifs.



Kazuo Takiguchi
Untitled, 1992
Glazed stoneware
14 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 26 in



Kazuo Takiguchi
Untitled, 2008
Glazed stoneware
8 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in



Kazuo Takiguchi
Look up at the
Stars from the Plain,
2005
Glazed stoneware
9 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ in



Kazuo Takiguchi
Untitled, 2004
Glazed stoneware
14 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 21 $\frac{5}{8}$ in



Kaku Hayashi
Zero, circa 2010
Stoneware
20 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 21 in

Kaku Hayashi

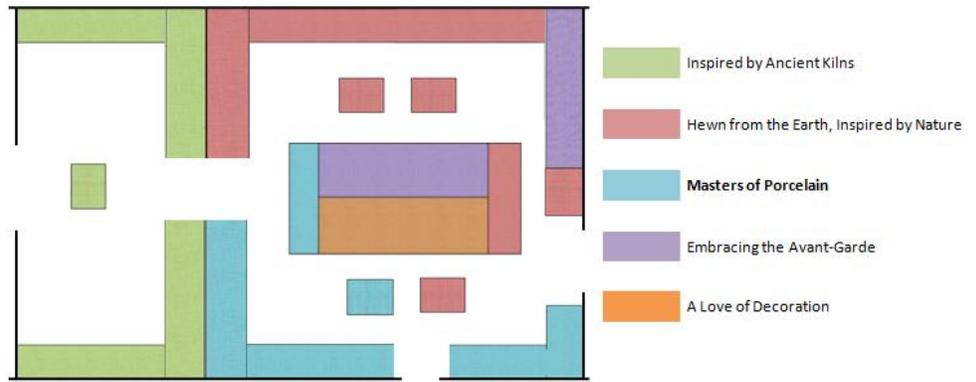
Japanese, born Taiwan, 1953

Hayashi's *Zero Trajectory* series, of which this work is a part, recalls the Zen Buddhist concept of 'zero' or 'nothingness', often represented in the form of an *enso*, or Zen circle. Most commonly encountered in two dimensions (in painting and calligraphy), Hayashi here creates a three-dimensional, dynamic, sculptural form that simultaneously asserts and negates the physical nature of nothingness.

Hayashi has straddled cultures and experienced displacement throughout her life: born in Taiwan, she moved to Japan at the age of ten, unable to speak Japanese. Japan severed ties with her birthplace when she was still a teenager, when normalizing diplomatic ties to China. These disruptions have convinced her of the important role art can play in overcoming barriers between nations, transcending differences in language, culture, and belief.

Masters of Porcelain

Porcelain, a high-fired ceramic ware of Chinese origin, was not made in Japan until the early 17th century. The identification of the deposits of the raw material necessary to make porcelain (china stone and china clay) as well as the kiln technology to fire at the requisite high temperatures was made by captive Korean potters, who had been forcibly taken from their homes during Japan's failed invasion of their country. These potters and their Japanese descendants created a thriving industry that served domestic, regional and international markets. The artists featured here create both porcelain vessel forms and pure sculpture, all asserting a distinctive new aesthetic that is neither Chinese nor traditionally Japanese.



Yasuko Sakurai
White Flower, 2008
Glazed porcelain
10 3/8 x 19 in

Yasuko Sakurai

Japanese, born 1969

Although trained in Japan, it was during her studies in France that Sakurai learned to use plaster molds to fashion complicated shapes, a process that brought her closer to her material and enabled her to make fine, sharp pieces freed from the weight of Japanese tradition. To construct her pierced forms, Sakurai builds a structure made of pre-cast porcelain tubes, pours slip between them, then removes the tubes from the still wet clay and hand-carves out the shape prior to firing. This challenging process results in intriguing porcelain webs that mingle exterior and interior, light and shade.

Sueharu Fukami

Japanese, born 1947

Fukami's minimal, abstract sculptural forms are formed by injecting liquid clay into a mold under high pressure, using a technique whose precise details remain secret. His work has earned him a worldwide reputation for its combination of the global language of sculptural abstraction with a traditional Japanese disregard for the time and effort required to produce works of flawless beauty.



Sueharu Fukami
Sky III-I, 2002
Glazed porcelain
and wood
19 x 41 in



Sueharu Fukami
Distant Seascape I
Glazed porcelain and granite
4 3/8 x 15 3/4 in



Sueharu Fukami
Mid-Air III
Cone-Shaped Bowl,
circa 2005
Glazed porcelain
14 1/8 x 21 1/4 in

Tsubusa Kato

Japanese, born 1962

Kato experiments with the sculptural potential of imported porcelain clay from New Zealand, skillfully carving extraordinary, jagged, fragile yet aggressive-looking works that have gained him a global following. He applies lavish quantities of transparent glaze, which can produce unpredictable results due to his use of a wood-fired kiln, emphasizing an aesthetic that both celebrates and challenges our assumptions about the purity and malleability of porcelain clay.



Tsubusa Kato
Square Box, 2004
Porcelain w/
seihakiju glaze 3 x 14 $\frac{3}{8}$ in



Tsubusa Kato
Large Standing Form, 2014
Porcelain w/
seihakiju glaze
29 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ in



Tsubusa Kato
Rhomboidal Celadon Vase, 2004
Porcelain w/
seihakiju glaze
11 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 24 in

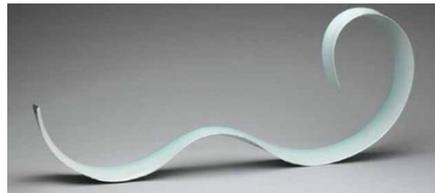
Satoshi Kino

Japanese, born 1987

Kino uses the pottery wheel to create works that appear to deny this particular method and technique. After throwing a thin ring of porcelain clay, he cuts the ring into pieces and returns to the wheel to manually stretch and transform the material into long, flowing ribbons, eventually firing them with a pale blue-green celadon glaze. The resulting delicate, fragile-looking forms suggest exciting new possibilities for the future of porcelain sculpture in Kyoto.



Satoshi Kino
Fall Wind 041008, 2014
Porcelain w/ *seihakiju* glaze
9 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 21 $\frac{7}{8}$ in



Satoshi Kino
Fall Wind 16-32, 2014
Porcelain w/ *seihakiju* glaze
13 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 34 $\frac{5}{8}$ in



Satoshi Kino
Fall Wind 150202, 2014
Porcelain w/ *seihakiju* glaze
15 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ in

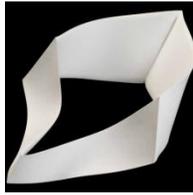
Shigekazu Nagae

Japanese, born 1953

Raised in a family that produced porcelain table wares, Nagae developed an artistic practice that combines predictability with chance. The works on display here were created by injecting liquid porcelain clay into a parallelogram-shaped mold. The resulting form is fired until it is strong enough for him to hone the edges and give the flat surfaces a textured pattern. After being sprayed with a glaze, it is suspended inside a gas kiln, attached with supports and weights that will cause the porcelain to warp and curve during high-temperature firing. Early works were made from a single parallelogram. Later the artist nested one inside the other so that they morph into complex, interlocking lines and surfaces.



Shigekazu Nagae
Forms in Succession,
2008
Glazed Porcelain
9 ¼ x 11 ¾ in



Shigekazu Nagae
Wind, 2008
Glazed Porcelain
5 ½ x 15 ¾ in



Ryota Aoki
Bijoux (Jewels),
circa 2004
Glazed Porcelain
9 ⅞ x 14 ¼ in

Ryota Aoki

Japanese, born 1978

This work, part of Aoki's groundbreaking *Bijoux* series, was created through a multi-step process in which molded porcelain clay achieved its final form by removing sections to create a unique sculptural work. Prior to firing, Aoki used the clay with a special glaze of his own devising which was slowly forced to the surface in the heat of the kiln, creating a snow-white finish.

Shinobu Kawase

Japanese, born 1978

A third-generation potter, Kawase is a leading creator of elegant vessels cloaked in celadon glaze (known as *seiji* or *seihakuji* in Japan). After throwing a piece on the wheel, he waits until the clay is semi-dry before continuing the shaping process, creating curves and shaped edges. His later works, with their sharp points and undulating lobes are executed in an unmistakable individual style.



Shinobu Kawase
*Celadon Flower-Shaped
Bowl*, 2004
Porcelain w/
celadon glaze
3 x 9 in



Shinobu Kawase
Large Celadon Bowl, 2005
Porcelain stoneware w/
celadon glaze
4 ¼ x 16 in



Akihiro Maeta
White Porcelain Twisted
Faceted Jar, 2015
 Glazed porcelain
 10 7/8 x 10 1/2 in

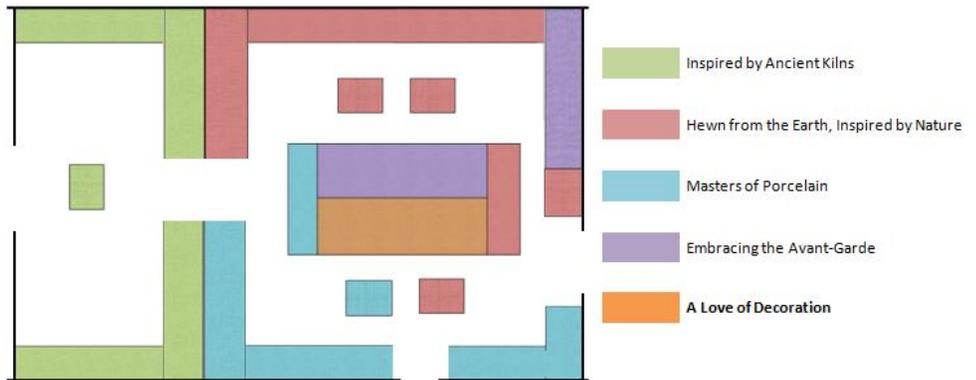
Akihiro Maeta

Japanese, born 1954

Maeta’s deceptively simple vessels celebrate perfection of form and surface quality. His accomplishments in the realm of contemporary porcelain manufacture have earned him the official designation of “Holder of an Important Intangible Cultural Property.” This title is informally known as “Living National Treasure”.

A Love of Decoration

The earliest of Japanese ceramics, made some 15,000 years ago, are known as Jōmon, or “cord-marked” wares, testifying to the desire of these ancient potters to embellish the surfaces of their vessels. Centuries-old practices, such as painted iron-oxide decoration, underglaze blue cobalt, over glaze enamels or various methods of incising continue to be employed by today’s artists, who decorate their wares with contemporary motifs that are sometimes rich in social comment and satire. Other ceramic artists have developed a personal visual language that combines original forms with sophisticated and ground-breaking techniques, unimagined by their ancestors.



Toshisada Wakao
Gray Shino-Ware Bowl
with Dragonfly and
Lotus, 2003
 Stoneware with gray
 Shino glaze
 4 3/8 x 11 3/4 in

Toshisada Wakao

Japanese, born 1932

Wakao works within the traditions associated with the important late-sixteenth century Shino kilns in Gifu Prefecture. When decorating his works, he first covers the surface of with liquid iron-rich clay. When this has dried he scrapes away areas that will appear white in the finished piece and applies the glaze, wiping it away in a few places, such as the veins of leaves, which will turn brown or, where the glaze is thin, red during firing.

Ryoji Koie

Japanese, born 1938

An unapologetic product of the 1960s generation, Koie revels in the unpredictability of ceramics and is outspoken in his criticism of artists who try to achieve superficial perfection. He works in a broad range of

techniques and materials, including decorated porcelain, unglazed stoneware, and especially his version of Oribe, a copper-green-glazed ware that was first made some four centuries ago.



Ryoji Koie
Oribe-Style Jar,
2008
Glazed stoneware
9 ½ x 11 in



Ryoji Koie
Tea Bowl, 2004
Glazed stoneware
3 ½ x 4 ⅞ in



Ryoji Koie
Salaam-Salaam
No. 3, 1991
Glazed stoneware
2 ¾ x 13 ⅜ in



Ryoji Koie
Large Oribe-Style
Jar, 2004
Glazed stoneware
13 ⅜ x 12 ⅝ in

Goro Suzuki

Japanese, born 1941

Suzuki developed a unique version of Oribe, a ware first made at the start of the seventeenth century and characterized by lively, often abstract decoration. His style is unconventional in terms of both potting and decoration, light-heartedly incorporating cartoon-like elements from contemporary life such as electric lights, helicopters, stretch limos, and buses while making dramatic use of the famous Oribe copper-green glaze.



Goro Suzuki
Yaschichida-Oribe-Ware
Jar, 2010
Glazed stoneware
9 ⅝ x 5 ⅝ in



Goro Suzuki
Large Teapot
Glazed stoneware
17 ⅞ x 18 ⅞ in



Takuo Nakamura
Vessel That is Not a
Vessel, 2016
Glazed Stoneware
9 ½ x 16 ½ in

Takuo Nakamura

Japanese, born 1945

Nakamura draws inspiration from Kutani ware, colorful enameled porcelain, but models his decoration on a still more prestigious source: the great artist Korin (1658–1716), who pioneered the technique of flat, stylized painting in ink and vibrant mineral pigments on gold. Intended to be arranged by the viewer, Nakamura's non vessel works—painted on both sides—breathe new life into a revered pictorial tradition.

Taimei Morino

Japanese, born 1934

Morino's unique style of decoration embodies the concept of *ma*, a conscious use of negative space, in both two and three-dimensions. Working as a ceramic instructor at the University of Chicago in the 1960s, Morino experienced first-hand the latest international trends in the field of ceramics. His best-known works are the pierced wall-like pieces, as seen here. Hand-built, he finished the surface with several layers of high-gloss glaze, each separately fired, and then modified to create irregular surface patterning.



Taimei Morino
Work 97-4, 2005
Glazed stoneware
13 5/8 x 8 1/8 in



Taimei Morino
Black Bowl w/
Red Wave, 2004
Glazed stoneware
2 3/8 x 8 1/2 in



Taimei Morino
Black Flower Vase w/
Red Wave Pattern,
2004
Glazed stoneware
7 5/8 x 9 1/4 in



Eiko Kishi
*Noh-Inspired Form
with Colored-Clay
Inlay*, 2006
Glazed stoneware
18 1/4 x 22 7/8 in

Eiko Kishi

Japanese, born 1948

The abstract, geometric form of this work is inspired by the Noh theatre and its elaborately costumed actors. *Form* displays the *saiseki zogan* technique, a painstaking process of creating thousands of small holes that are then filled with colored slip inlays. The entirety is then sprayed with a thin glaze before firing and results in a stone-like surface whose tiny vibrant inlays are visible only upon closer inspection.



Masahiko Ichino
Vase with C-Shaped
Patterns, circa 2003
Glazed Stoneware
23 x 13 ¼ in

Masahiko Ichino

Japanese, born 1961

Ichino creates sculptural vessels adorned with lively and contemporary surface decoration. Both his father and brother were potters who worked within the traditions of Tanba (one of Japan's medieval kiln sites). Ichino, freed from such restrictions by virtue of being the younger son, set up his own kiln and developed his own practice, with a distinctly urban and cosmopolitan approach with stoneware.



Zenji Miyashita
Budding Wind,
2004
Stoneware w/
colored clay
15 x 9 ½ in



Zenji Miyashita
Faraway, 2004
Stoneware w/
colored clay
18 x 19 ⅜ in

Zenji Miyashita

Japanese, 1939-2012

Miyashita has adapted the traditional technique of *saidei*, wherein light-toned clay is colored with a variety of natural stains. His sculptural stoneware vessels are decorated with bands of clay mixed with cobalt, chrome, or other metal-based pigments, applied in thin, overlapping bands with irregular edges that resemble ocean waves or receding mountain ranges.