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The Aesthetics of
Mended Japanese Ceramics

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Foreword

The reciprocal influences in the artistic design of porcelain and lacquer; the enthusiasm, which culminated in the eighteenth century, for ceramic products with deep black, lacquer-like glazes; and the less common use of lacquer to imitate porcelain: all three testify to the fact that both materials are closely connected in European culture. Furthermore, the display of these artifacts side by side within the narrow spatial confines of a porcelain and lacquer cabinet takes into account the relatedness of the two substances and their vying with one another to produce surfaces with the most impressive gleam. Chinese artists simultaneously pursued comparable intentions in the eighteenth century, e.g. the use of porcelain to imitate red carved lacquer or the decoration of porcelain with lacquer and with ornamental techniques borrowed from the art of lacquer.

Another aspect of the interaction between these two materials, and one which has been seldom considered in the past, occupies the foreground of attention in the exhibition entitled “Flickwerk – The Aesthetics of Mended Japanese Ceramics.” The usage of lacquer to artfully repair damaged or broken ceramics, however, is a specifically Japanese phenomenon that transcends the effects immanent in the materials and is based on aesthetic ideals which evolved in the culture of tea.

The extremely creative exploration of the aesthetic potentials that become available through ennobling ceramics with “lacquer veins” or re-conceiving damaged vessels by inserting shards or “lacquer patches” is highlighted by a private collection which focuses on this field and which Thomas Bachmann and Gabriel Eckenstein, Basel, Switzerland arranged to have exhibited at Cornell University in Ithaca NY, USA and at the Museum of Lacquer Art in Münster, Germany. We express our gratitude to the lenders, to the authors Ms. Christy Bartlett, Dr. Charly Iten and Prof. James-Henry Holland for their contributions to the exhibition and its catalogue, and to Dr. Patricia Frick for coordinating the project.

DR. MONIKA KOPPLIN Director of the Museum of Lacquer Art

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A Tearoom View of Mended Ceramics

i SEN SOSHITSU XV, et. al. (eds.):
Chado Koten Zenshu. Kyoto:
Tankosha, 1971, vol. 3, *Choando ki*,
p. 357. Original text published
in 1640.

ii IGUCHI KAISEN, et. al. (eds.):
Genshoku chado daijiten. Kyoto:
Tankosha, 1974, pp. 626–627.
Tsutsui zutsu / itsutsu ni wareshi /
idojawan / to ka oba ware ni / ohi
ni kerashina 筒井筒 / 五つにわ
れし / 井戸茶碗 / とかをば我に /
負ひにけらしな. *The Tales of Ise*
verse comes from the twenty-third
segment often known as “The
Wellcurb”: Tsutsui tsu no / izutsu
ni kakeshi / maro ga take / shu-
inikerashi na / imo mizaru ma ni.
“My height that we measured / at
the well curb / has, it seems, passed
the old mark / since last I saw
you.” McCullough, Helen Craig
(tr.): *Tales of Ise*. Stanford: Stanford
University Press, 1968, p. 88.

The early history of The Way of Tea (*chadō*) has been told largely through anecdotal stories. These stories present incidents from the lives of persons influential in the practice of tea, in order to convey a perhaps more cohesive notion of the values and aesthetics than existed at the time. Notably, around the time of Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591), a seminal figure in the development of the modern practice of the tea ceremony (*chanoyu*), a number of anecdotes reveal a fascination with broken and mended objects.

Most well known among them is that concerning the teabowl named Tsutsui Zutsu.ⁱ A Korean Ido-style bowl was much loved by military ruler Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1537–1598), who had received it from Tsutsui Junkei (1549–1584). One day during a gathering, a page in Hideyoshi’s retinue dropped the bowl which broke into five pieces. All froze, fearing for the young man as Hideyoshi was known to possess a quick and harsh temper. Then one of the guests, Hosokawa Yusai, improvised a comic poem playing off three lines from a famous verse in *The Tales of Ise*:

Tsutsui’s well curb
Became split into five
Alas for that well-deep bowl
All of the blame –
It seems to have been mine.ⁱⁱ

In addition to mimicking the lines of the *Ise* verse, clever linking of words and association – the former owner’s name [Tsutsui], the five pieces of the bowl [*izutsu*], well curb [*tsutsui-zutsu*] – all obliquely reference the named style of the bowl, Ido [a water well]. Hosokawa Yusai’s complex play of language and ideas provoked laughter all around, and restored Hideyoshi to good spirits. From that day onward the bowl has been known as Tsutsui Zutsu. The mended bowl continued to be used and cherished for generations, occasionally returning to five pieces only to be mended again. Today, it holds the designation Important Cultural Property.

What can be made of this story regarding a fascination with mended objects? A bowl was greatly loved for its material qualities, described as a commanding presence, thick walls, generous round mouth, deep interior space, and loquat-colored glaze. Then the incident occurred, which could have been its demise yet was not. Mending gave the bowl new life, and in so doing forever immured a neophyte’s awkward hands, a warrior’s quick temper, a poet-scholar’s brilliant mind in its sturdy body.

Furthermore the bowl stood as talismanic proof that imagination and language had the power to make ill fortune good. Instead of the altered physical appearance of the bowl diminishing its appeal, a new sense of its vitality and resilience raised appreciation to even greater heights. Immaterial factors assumed a material presence through the lines of its mending and became an inextricable part of the bowl's appeal. One might almost say the true life of the bowl Tsutsui Zutsu began the moment it was dropped, or perhaps it was from the moment the poem was uttered.

Another, less well known story talks about the Unzan Katatsuki, a Chinese Song Dynasty (960–1279), thick tea jar or *chaire*.ⁱⁱⁱ A Sakai tea man chanced to find a Chinese tea jar of magnificent shape and glaze. He marveled over the beauty of his find as well as his own good taste, and decided to invite Sen no Rikyū for the debut of his *chaire*, eagerly anticipating what words of praise would fall from Rikyū's lips. At last the day came, and the host began to prepare thick tea for Rikyū and his fellow guests. To the host's amazement, Rikyū appeared not to notice the jar in the slightest, nor had he any words of praise. After the gathering the bitterly disappointed host threw the *chaire* against an iron trivet. A few remaining guests salvaged the pieces and mended the *chaire* with lacquer. These friends then invited Rikyū to a gathering where the mended jar was used. As soon as it emerged from the cloth Rikyū exclaimed, "Now, the piece is magnificent."

The Unzan *chaire* is noted as having broken into many small pieces, which meant extensive mending. A subsequent anecdote relates that a later owner obtained the *chaire* for one thousand pieces of gold.^{iv} He considered the mending excessively crude for such a valuable piece and decided to replace the mending with more refined work. First this owner asked advice from the most well known tea master of the time, Kobori Enshū (1579–1647). Enshū scoffed, saying the roughness of the mending precisely was what Rikyū appreciated. In later generations, the Unzan Katatsuki was recognized with the classification *o-meibutsu* or an object of high fame, and it passed through the collections of many illustrious tea masters and leaders of Japan.

This story seems to tell of a different type of fascination and appeal in mended objects. While the *chaire* had been treasured by its owner, it was considered unremarkable by other connoisseurs. Only once its exquisite appearance was shattered and mended did the Unzan Katatsuki come to public acclaim. The found *chaire* had been likened to the renowned Nitta Katatsuki thick tea jar. After mending, it could resemble only itself. Here the radical physical transformation of the visual qualities of the *chaire* itself affected the change in evaluation and exerted a fascination in the tea world. Rikyū is quoted as having said, in general terms not specifically about the Unzan Katatsuki, "It is good for the

iii TSUTSUI HIROICHI: *Chanoyu meigenshu*. Kyoto: Tankosha, 1980, pp. 145–149. Also *Genshoku chado daijiten*, p. 113. The *chaire* holds the alternate names Sakuma Katatsuki and Kanamori Katatsuki after subsequent ownership. Its lineage of owners includes Toyotomi Hideyoshi, Sakuma Fukansai, Kanamori Arishige, Tokugawa Hidetada [the second Tokugawa shogun], Kanamori Shigeyori, Kyogoku Takahiro, Iyo Matsuyama Matsudaira Hisamatsu.

iv SADLER, A.L.: *Chanoyu: The Japanese Tea Ceremony*. Rutland VT and Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1977, p. 112.

utensils of a small room to be lacking.... though the use of cracked Raku ware is problematic, suitable utensils such as Song Dynasty tea jars that have been repaired with lacquer become all the more fit for use.”^v So it is not simply any mended object that increases in its appreciation but for Rikyū, the gap between the vanity of pristine appearance and the fractured manifestation of mortal fate which deepens its appeal.

In one way the stories of the Tsutsui Zutsu teabowl and the Unzan tea jar, both dating from the seminal age of Sen no Rikyū, are alike. Both objects came to life or took on a life of their own from the moment of their “rebirth” as mended objects. Yet their appeal as mended objects exerts a subtly different type of fascination based on a balance of immaterial and material qualities, of the emotional and the visual. It might be useful to consider the factors that contribute to each.

To begin with the visual affect of mended ceramics, the strongest impression is of rupture in both surface and structure. The original structure of the object at least in part determines how it breaks upon impact. The sense of its shape is altered and yet enhanced through the mending. Take, for example, the Karatsu *chaire* from this exhibition (cat. p. 42). Branching lines of gold lacquer virtually diagram the point of impact and articulate, through the fitting together of the resulting angular shapes, the soft fullness of its body. The vertical movement of the mending rises across the horizontal bands of black and chestnut glaze, lending the *chaire* a sense of height it might otherwise have lacked, and calling attention to the slightly off kilter stance. Both surface interest and structural interest have been intensified by the effects of mending.

Such objects as this are appreciated in the tearoom for their clearly uncalculated nature, a kind of physical expression of the spirit of *mushin* that underlies many traditional art forms as well as the practice of Zen. *Mushin* is often literally translated as “no mind,” but carries connotations of fully existing within the moment, of non-attachment, of equanimity amid changing conditions, of removal from the desire to impose one’s will upon the world. Accidental fractures set in motion acts of repair that accept given circumstances and work within them to lead to an ultimately more profound appearance. The only willfulness in the process is the effort to assist with the rebirth of something whose existence has been threatened, something that has held value for others. The beauty of *mushin* in mended ceramics is very close to the beauty that the American composer John Cage (1912–1992) was seeking in his method of engaging with chance to produce sound and visual compositions.

Rupture attains another sense of meaning with a Karatsu teabowl in this exhibition (cat. p. 32 bottom) where mending employs an overtly distinct aesthetic to restore a sundered fragment with its former surrounding body. The original shallow bowl seems

likely to have made a rather subdued appeal to the senses. A band of soft white clay slip casually encircles the wide mouth above exposed brown clay and is punctuated by the rise and fall of comb marks. But recording the moment of rupture, a wide swath of repair abruptly courses across the surface. The fragment it surrounds is isolated, discontinuous in line from neighboring elements, even as the bowl is structurally reunified as a whole.

One of the most deeply held values in the tearoom is that of collaboration, of multiple hands producing a seamless whole in which each individual contributor still remains distinct. Naturally this is true first of all in the interactions between host and guests. It is true also in the unique groupings of utensils brought together for the one moment of the gathering, and sometimes it is discerned within an individual object. In this bowl, we can see the hand of two artists, the original potter and the later lacquerer who brought his or her own remarkable sensibility to the way in which the repair is highlighted with gold cross-hatching on a clay-colored ground. The geometric patterning calls to mind a classic fishing net motif caught in partial rendition. The angularity of surface patterning contrasts markedly with the comb's soft, undulating movement along the white clay slip, like a fishing net cast into a flowing stream.

In the end, however, it really is rather difficult to separate purely visual appeal from emotional factors. The aesthetic that embraces insufficiency in terms of physical attributes, that is the aesthetic that characterizes mended ceramics, exerts an appeal to the emotions that is more powerful than formal visual qualities, at least in the tearoom. Whether or not the story of how an object came to be mended is known, the affection in which it was held is evident in its rebirth as a mended object. What are some of the emotional resonances these objects project?

Mended ceramics foremost convey a sense of the passage of time. The vicissitudes of existence over time, to which all humans are susceptible, could not be clearer than in the breaks, the knocks, and the shattering to which ceramic ware too is subject. This poignancy or aesthetic of existence has been known in Japan as *mono no aware*, a compassionate sensitivity, an empathetic compassion for, or perhaps identification with, beings outside oneself. It may be perceived in the slow inexorable work of time (*sabi*) or in a moment of sharp demarcation between pristine or whole and shattered. In the latter case, the notion of rupture returns but with regard to immaterial qualities, the passage of time with relation to states of being. A mirage of "before" suffuses the beauty of mended objects.

The perception of this compassionate sensitivity begins with a visual impression but often is brought to a peak of expression through poetic references that have been attached to an object, usually by one of its owners or by an aesthetic philosopher writing

vi HARE, THOMAS: *Zeami's Style: The Noh Plays of Seami Motokiyo*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986, pp. 281–282, note 20. KKS XV #747. Tsuki ya aranu / haru ya mukashi no / haru naranu / wa ga mi hitotsu wa / moto no mi ni shite.

on its protective box. A perfect example is the Seto teabowl in this exhibition (cat. p. 27). The beautiful elliptical shape of the mouth of this bowl is drawn to our attention by its interruption at three points with lacquer mending. The mending is unusual in that linear gold lines are superimposed on fields of brown lacquer, and in one area transgress the field to descend toward the interior of the bowl. The lacquer repairs contrast markedly with the soft moss-like glazed surface even as they follow the vertical streaking of the glaze. However it is the inscription of a poem inside the protective box for the bowl that establishes its emotional resonance. Quoting the ninth century poetic genius Ariwara no Narihira (825–880), the poem reads:

That is not the moon
Nor is this
The spring of years gone by
I alone remain
As I was before.^{vi}

As the poem expresses, mended ceramics convey simultaneously a sense of rupture and of continuity. That one moment in which the incident occurred is forever captured in the lines and fields of lacquer mending. It becomes an eternally present moment yet a moment that oddly enough segues into another where perishability is circumvented by repair. Simultaneously we have the expression of frailty and of resilience, life before the incident and life after. Yet the object is not the same. In its rebirth it assumes a new identity that incorporates yet transcends the previous identity. Like the cycle of reincarnation, one life draws to a close and another begins.

Even as a long history and consummate appreciation of mended ceramics in the practice of Tea exist, these talismanic objects are seen in the tearoom only during the last two weeks of October. The waning days of autumn are known as the season of *nagori* in Japan, of which the appreciation of mended ceramics is an essential part. A utensil that has been cherished by a succession of individuals, through that very regard, comes to be damaged. Yet rather than excluding the object from aesthetic consideration, the mending stands as evidence of the regard in which it has been held. It attests to its inherent worth. Such a disregard of pristine artistry emphasizes the qualities of the object that transcend physical beauty. Its appeal is situated precisely in its emotional qualities. The limitation of such a powerful aesthetic to two weeks of the year may seem unusual but has

precedence in Japan's poetic tradition, especially linked verse. Words considered the most emotionally volatile were limited to one occurrence per one hundred sequences of verse, precisely in order to preserve their affective impact.

When the dwindling of autumn's abundance, the inkling of winter's austerity are strongly felt, persons whose hearts incline to the Way of Tea gather in a small hut to engage in this special sensitivity. The scroll sets the tone, often a scrap of writing by a particularly beloved figure who is no longer in the world. Words quickly brushed in a moment with no thought of their preservation have been mounted as a scroll and placed in the *tokonoma*. Their very ordinariness is what poignantly conjures the memory of that person. Then too, the year's supply of tea that had been brought out for the first time the previous November is running low. While only enough thick tea for three guests may be left, five are invited. And with deep gratitude and pleasure, they make sure the amount of tea offered in the single bowl is sufficient for each one to savor what remains of that year's tea. This is the strongest expression of *nagori* – the intense beauty of a communal impulse to cherish and to share that which remains. Mended ceramics teach us this lesson and this beauty.

CHRISTY BARTLETT → p. 24

Mending Ceramics – An Anthropological Context

Cultural anthropologists seek to build bridges between cultures; helping people in one time and place understand the thought and behavior of others. In this particular case, I want to help you understand why broken tea ceremony ceramics were sometimes mended – often in an eye-popping manner! To do this, we need to understand some norms of an influential sub-culture of Japan, that of the tea ceremony.

I have done research on the tea ceremony since the late 1970s, mostly in Tokyo. I am not a historian, so this article will give an understanding of mended ceramics from a contemporary vantage point.

What is the tea ceremony? – This question, of course, can be answered in many ways, depending on the speaker. Very simply, you might say it is the serving of powdered green tea (*matcha*): The bright green powder is put into a small bowl, a few spoons' worth of hot water is added, they are whipped together with a bamboo whisk, then the tea is set in front of the guest. The tea ceremony certainly has roots in Zen Buddhism, and the quiet, focused atmosphere of a tea gathering strikes some as “religious”.

In my years of observing elite practitioners of the art, I have come to the conclusion that once a student has mastered the performance level, he or she is initiated into a new level of understanding of the art. It does involve communion among the assembled host and guests, but the quiet focus I've often witnessed is that of a group of game-players!

Before the game starts, the host has selected 30 to 40 pieces of art that will decorate the tea room, be used to serve the meal, or to prepare the tea. These would include a piece of calligraphy, a lacquered jar that holds the powdered green tea, the ceramic tea bowl, or the sliver of bamboo used to scoop the tea. Collectively, these are called “utensils” (*dōgu*). The guests must assume that each utensil in the tea room was selected by the host for one or more expressive purposes; that the day's combination of utensils is unique to that gathering; and that many of these individual pieces carry meanings that merge into larger patterns of meaning, into themes. Each piece of art is a puzzle in itself, but the unique assemblage of these pieces is a higher-level puzzle. The goal of the guest is to understand as many of the puzzles as possible, and thus discern the host's expressive intent. This process of creating puzzles by the careful and intentional selection of utensils is called *toriawase*.

Sometimes a gathering's theme is basically related to the season – such as, “It's winter, it's cold, and we are trying to make you feel comfortably warm.” Other themes might mark life transitions. I went to one gathering where there were utensils associated with festivity-in-general, and more with old-age celebrations in particular. There were also several allusions to teacher/student relations, and to the creation of a line of successors. It turned out that the gathering celebrated the 88th birthday of the host's teacher.

Some of the puzzles are easy, some, more intellectually challenging, and others are private little messages sent to particular guests which perhaps only that guest can understand. I call these “public allusions”, both easy and hard, and “personal allusions”. An easy public allusion might be the serving of chrysanthemum-shaped sweets in October: Any novice should be able to understand that the sweets allude to the season. A tricky public allusion at a tea gathering in late spring might involve realizing that the tea scoop, something normally made of bamboo, is today made of oak. Oak is the tree associated with Boys’ Day, a holiday in early May. This, too, then, is a seasonal allusion, but it requires deeper consideration on the part of the guest. Public allusions might refer to seasons, historic times, places, public figures, degrees of ritual formality, or even abstract concepts. A public allusion is something that any thoughtful and well-informed guest should have a chance at understanding. A personal allusion, on the other hand, is the host’s attempt to evoke a personal memory in a particular guest. Any guest might be thrilled at solving a difficult public allusion, but the personal allusions are usually the most emotionally charged.

In contrast with other venues, the guests at a tea ceremony are probably experienced players of this game, eagerly looking for the meanings behind the day’s selected art pieces. Typically, there will only be three or four guests, all of whom are likely to be close friends of the host, sharing decades of personal histories. Accordingly, the public allusions will tend to be challenging, and the personal allusions plentiful.

If you think you have a reasonably good interpretation of the host’s reason for selecting a particular piece, or feel you have uncovered the over-arching themes of the gathering, you want to share that idea with others. The participants indicate to the host that they understand pieces of the puzzle, but, interestingly, these remarks are always oblique, indirect, and are often crafted to serve as hints to others about the significance of a piece.

I once heard a head-guest ask, “Is this tea-bowl from the time when we...?” The host smiled, nodded, and the conversation moved on to other pieces. The others in the room surely realized this was a response to a personal allusion about which the rest of us knew nothing. In this case, I later learned, the tea bowl was one that the host and the head-guest had used when, together, they hosted their first public tea gathering (*ōyose chakai*) some 20 years before.

The significance of an allusion is not discussed directly while in the tea room, because this leaves others a chance to ponder the clues. The guests know that many allusions will be personal, and thus impenetrable to others. They also realize that some utensils may carry multiple meanings aimed at different guests, so no single interpreta-

tion will obviate others. If the host realizes a puzzle he or she has constructed is too hard or has gone unnoticed, the host may drop hints. After the day's ritual is concluded, there is free exchange about the utensils and their significance, and friends are often initiated into new gossip – about the utensils and about the people to whom the utensils alluded. Much of this game of creating and interpreting *toriawase*, then, revolves around the utensils. They constitute the hosts' expressive tools in this game of non-verbal communication, and are, therefore, an important focus of attention for any tea practitioner.

A tea room is filled with utensils alluding to many people, and, often, several have been selected to highlight the individual guests' connections with those people. Even utensils acquired primarily to convey certain seasonal, aesthetic or historical notes cannot fail to also allude to people. It is easy to interpret this situation as a modeling of the tea community, symbolically affirming the belongingness of every guest, placing them in the context of a rich network of like-minded people.

The host, of course, is also associated with and represented by the utensils he or she owns and uses. The host's own membership in this ritual community is validated each time he or she enacts this model of community by meaningful deployment of his or her utensils.

This modeling of the tea community also accounts for continuity through time. If an old utensil is used, it reminds you that your community stretches back into the past. Even a new tea bowl can suggest historic depth, if, for example, it is made by the 11th generation artist of a family that has always made tea bowls in this style. Tea practitioners also expect their utensils to outlive them, so, to the extent that their own stories are remembered with the use of those utensils, they can hope to be remembered after death as well. Owners of utensils, therefore, often have a sense of being temporary caretakers. They might have inherited a collection, or perhaps they have acquired antique pieces in addition to new ones, but they intend to document and preserve the objects so as to successfully project them into the future.

When, in 1983, I was leaving Japan after four years, one of my teachers praised my utensil collection, and said she was happy people in America would see those utensils and learn something about the tea ceremony, but, she admonished, "Those utensils belong to the tea ceremony. You must do everything you can to ensure that a hundred years from now, they remain in the tea ceremony."

To be able to use utensils expressively, the owner must document the origins of the piece, and then must remain aware of the stories that accrete to the object over time. Some owners put notes into the wooden boxes in which such utensils are normally stored. They also use these utensils in teaching their weekly lessons, creating opportunities to remind

themselves of details every time they use a piece. Additionally, hosts keep records of every tea performance, making note of the utensils used and the guests present. This kind of knowledge can suggest details for future *toriawase*.

Various kinds of memory-work are used to project the utensils into the future, but the most important is the investment of memories in a successor. If there is a son or son-in-law, respectively a daughter or daughter-in-law who teaches and co-practices with the owner, the owner, over a span of many years, can review the collection and recount its narratives as part of his or her successor's training. This ensures that when the successor takes over the family's "practice", he or she will have a collection of utensils that can be used with greater nuance.

Aside from such global strategies for entire collections, two ways to ensure a "good future" for an individual piece also come to mind. The first, called *hakogaki*, involves having a famous person certify an individual utensil as especially impressive. The person who makes this declaration signs the box in which the piece is stored, alongside the artist's signature and seal. *Hakogaki* literally means "box writing". The famed person is usually the head (*iemoto*) of a school of tea, but can also be some other important tea practitioner, or, if the piece is an antique, perhaps the successor to the original artist's lineage. Frequently, famous artists will ask an *iemoto* to sign the box before the work is first sold. The artist pays a fee, and the price of the work is raised accordingly. Alternately, the owner of a utensil may ask some tea luminary for their endorsement, again, paying a fee. The utensil might simply be a favorite of the owner, or might be a recently acquired antique with very few stories, but otherwise impressive. A utensil with a *hakogaki* glistens by association with its signatory, and is bound to carry its owner's name into the future. A second strategy is to mend a utensil. Perhaps the utensil is a recently acquired antique that had fallen into disuse because of a crack. Maybe you simply dropped a favorite utensil. I was once served tea in a mended bowl, and later heard it had been rescued from the ashes of a medieval castle burned in war. One bowl in this exhibit has a *hakogaki* explaining it came from an archeological dig (cat. p. 34 bottom). For whatever reason any such utensil became damaged, somebody stepped in and restored to the tea ceremony part of its heritage.

Mending utensils is not cheap, and not all damaged objects receive such ministrations. The owner has to decide that the piece has sufficient historical, aesthetic, personal or social value to merit a new investment. The expense of repairing might be similar to that of acquiring a *hakogaki*, but a newly-mended utensil proclaims the owner's personal endorsement, and visually apparent repairs call attention to this honor.

Ceramics Mended with Lacquer – Fundamental Aesthetic Principles, Techniques and Artistic Concepts

i HARA ICHINA: *Kintsukuroi kōbō – urushi de yomigaerareru tuskuroi no waza*. Tokyo 1998 [原一菜『金繕い工房 – 漆で蘇らせるつくろいの技』東京1998年], p. 146.

ii HARA 1998, preface, p. 17, 146.

From aesthetic, technical and artistic viewpoints, the restoration of ceramics with lacquer, which has been practiced in Japan for many centuries and which has been particularly cultivated since the sixteenth century, is a highly distinctive and extremely fascinating field of Japanese art.ⁱ

As collective terms for all kinds of objects that have been restored with lacquer, the Japanese language contains the two words *urushitsugi* (“to patch with lacquer”) and *ursuhitsukuroi* (“to repair with lacquer”), both of which have been in the language since the sixteenth century, as well as the word *urushinaoshi*, which denotes “lacquer repair”.

These technical terms usually refer, on the one hand, to repairs made of black lacquer (*kuro urushi*) colored with iron oxide or ebony black, and to repairs made of red lacquer colored with red ochre respectively iron oxide (*benigara/bengara urushi*), or with cinnabar (*shinsha/shu urushi*).ⁱⁱ On the other hand, they also refer to repairs executed with lacquer that has been mixed with gold or silver powder.

This exhibition of ceramic artifacts focuses primarily on the latter type of repairs, whereby the usage of sprinkled gold powder is specifically denoted in Japanese as *kintsugi* (“to patch with gold”) or *kintsukuroi* (“to repair with gold”). Additionally, these words are also used to refer to lacquer restored with silver powder, so in this context it would be more appropriate to use the phrases “to patch with metal” or “to repair with metal”. This seems all the more reasonable because the character *kin* can mean “metal” in a more generalized sense. A clearer differentiation can be achieved through combination with the word *naoshi* (“repair”), which is further clarified on the basis of its connection to concepts such as *kinnaoshi* (“gold repair”) and *ginnaoshi* (“silver repair”).

Fundamental Aesthetic Principles

A characteristic feature of the use of lacquer to repair ceramics is the fact that, in addition to the wholly practical function of restoring the functional usefulness of cherished ceramic artifacts, lacquer simultaneously also serves as a medium for the artistic and aesthetic transformation of the flawed object through intentional inclusion of the damage. Hence, when restoring with lacquer, the intention is not to render the damage wholly invisible, but rather to use the injury as the central element for the metamorphosis of the damaged ceramic into an object imbued with new characteristics and with an appearance that exerts a completely different effect. As a general rule, the repaired artifact acquires far higher value and enjoys greater appreciation than it had in its previously undamaged state. The explanation for this can be found in a distinctively Japanese aesthetic perception and sensitivity which, rather than considering defects, wear associated with

ageing, and imperfections in general as flaws, is able to discover a profound and touching quality in them. The roots of this mode of perception and sensitivity can be traced to the aesthetic ideals of *wabi* and *sabi*, which originated in the art of poetry and were firmly incorporated into the art of tea by the great tea masters Takeno Jōō (1502–1555) and Sen no Rikyū (1522–1591). Both words are difficult to translate: the former can be approximately rendered as “poverty and undemandingness”, the latter as “seclusion, ageing, patina and decay”. Not strictly separated in actual practice, *wabi* and *sabi* are intimately inter-linked and often interchangeable ideals embodying the beauty that inheres in whatever is humble, simple, impermanent and secluded.

In the context of restorations using lacquer admixed with gold or silver powder, these two aesthetic ideals are augmented by another factor. This aspect involves the urge to express the profound esteem felt for the damaged object through the use of a commensurately prized repair material. It is therefore not particularly surprising that gold and silver were often the substances of choice, especially because these metals have traditionally been accorded the status of exclusivity and nobility in Japan and elsewhere.

Another aesthetic influence which deserves emphasis here is the decorative aesthetic that began to establish itself among the elite circles of the Japanese warrior class in the second half of the sixteenth century. This aesthetic was characterized by the bold and lavish use of gold and silver appliqués. In the course of the early Edo period (1603–1868) it was, however, gradually replaced by an evolution toward somewhat more restrained forms which more clearly reflected the classical courtly taste. One example of this trend is well represented by Hon’ami Kōetsu’s (1556–1637) pursuit of *fūryū* (“aesthetic refinement”) and *suki*. The latter term now means “artistic taste”, but in the sixteenth century it also and primarily meant “love for refined art”. A second example is the ideal of *kirei sabi*, the “elegant patina” embodied in the aesthetics of the tea master Kobori Enshū (1579–1647), who emphasized atmospheric and exquisitely balanced elegance.ⁱⁱⁱ

The above remarks by no means exhaust the entire spectrum of aesthetic foundations because, in addition to the aforementioned notions, unmistakable traces were also left in the art of lacquer restoration by the ideal of *asobi*, which was first articulated by the famous tea master Furuta Oribe (1543/44–1615). Oribe used *asobi*, which can be approximately rendered as “play, pleasure, entertainment”, to pursue a path that contrasts with the other ideals because it intentionally strives for playful creativity and pleasurable variety. Among the other consequences of this approach to lacquer restoration was the emergence of designs that were significantly more extroverted and playfully experimental, more emotional, and sometimes even endowed with a crude vitality.

iii HAYASHIYA TATSUSABURO,
NAKAMURA MASAO, HAYASHIYA
SEIZO: *Japanese Arts and the Tea
Ceremony*. The Heibonsha Survey
of Japanese Art, vol. 15. New York,
Tokyo 1974, p. 63, 90.

iv Hara 1998, p. 19, pp. 26–27, 30–31, 34, 53, 72. See also PIERT-BORGERS, BARBARA: *Restaurieren mit Urushi – Japanischer Lack als Restaurierungsmittel*. Museum für Ostasiatische Kunst, Kleine Monographien, vol. 6, Cologne 1987, p. 1, 13.

v HARA 1998, p. 26, pp. 32–33, 36–37; PIERT-BORGERS 1987, p. 18.

The Techniques

The technical aspects of lacquer restoration are no less diverse than its aesthetic considerations. Numerous lacquer compositions and disparate methodologies became established, and these typically varied from one restorer to another and from one workshop to another.

Kishōmi urushi (“pure lacquer”) forms the basis for all gluing work, which should be understood as the use of lacquer to insert original ceramic fragments (*tomotsugi*: “original patches”) or to replace larger breaks with alien ceramic parts (*yobitsugi*: “borrowed patches”) or pieces of wood (*mokuhēn*). *Kishōmi urushi* is a raw lacquer of the highest quality. For the gluing per se, it is mixed with an equal quantity of rice glue. The resulting mixture, which has been used for many centuries, is called *nori urushi* (“glue lacquer”). This material is not only strongly adhesive, it also dries fairly rapidly, i.e. within a few days’ time. A second and more recently invented adhesive mixture is a combination of *kishōmi urushi* and flour glue. Known as *mugi urushi* (“grain lacquer”), this blend is as strongly adhesive as *nori urushi*, but requires a longer drying interval of up to ten days.^{iv}

The adhesive lacquer is allowed to dry and the object is left to repose for a period of one to three months. The agglomerated pieces of ceramic or wood along the excess lacquered parts are then removed or abraded away with charcoal. This is followed by cleansing and the application of colored lacquer. Depending on the artistic intention, this colored layer may either form the final lacquer layer or, in the case of *kintsugi* processing, it can serve as a substrate onto which are sprinkled (*makibanachi*) gold or silver powders, which are available in various shapes and sizes. In this latter case, red lacquer is often used as a substrate, although black lacquer is also sometimes used as a background for sprinkled silver. The metal powder is sprinkled after the substrate lacquer has undergone a brief drying phase: the powder can be gently rubbed into the lacquer surface or freed from excess material components in several successive operations and with the aid of a sprinkling brush (*makifude*).

After sufficient drying time has elapsed and the lacquer has homogeneously bonded with the metal powder, a final polishing with silk batting further enhances the gleam of the incorporated metal powder. Alternatively, another variant relies on the application of transparent lacquer (*suki urushi*) to the polished layer of lacquer and metal powder. After this uppermost transparent layer has dried, it undergoes polishing, which improves its ability to protect against external influences such as abrasion and discoloration. This highlights the desire to lengthen the lifespan of the ennobled appearance created through restoration with gold or silver powder as a material reflection of the esteem in which the artifact is held.^v

Compared to the aforementioned kinds of restorative work, pieces which have suffered a type of damage known as *hotsure* (“frazzle”) require significantly more time-consuming and labor-intensive restoration. *Hotsure* denotes small fractured areas along the rim of the lip or foot of a ceramic object. The original shards that splintered off the vessel are not used to repair this type of damage; instead, the defective area is coated with layer upon layer of lacquer, and this process is repeated until the damaged part has been sufficiently filled with lacquer. Red, and often also black lacquer, is used for this purpose, whereby each successive layer must be allowed to dry for five to seven days before the next coat can be applied. After enough lacquer strata have been applied and allowed to dry, excess material is removed from the edges of the broken area and the surface of the inset lacquer patch is abraded so that it harmoniously conforms to the thickness of the vessel’s wall. The next step is to cleanse the treated parts, followed by the application of another layer of lacquer. This coating can either serve as the final stratum or it else can be used as a substrate onto which metal powder is applied. In the latter case, the phases of the work proceed analogously to the method detailed above.^{vi}

vi HARA 1998, p. 18, pp. 22–27.

vii HARA 1998, p. 19, 40.

A comparatively simple method is used to repair ceramics which have suffered cracking. Cracks may be caused by external influences acting on the ceramic object long after its manufacture, or they can occur during the production process, specifically during its firing in the kiln. This latter type of damage is termed *kamakizu* (“kiln wounds”). Irregardless of their cause, cracks are classified according to size: experts distinguish between *hibiware* (“crack”) and *nyū* (“hairline crack”). The former denotes wider fissures in ceramics, the latter describes narrower ones. The crack is filled with transparent lacquer, which is usually applied in several layers, each of which must be allowed to dry for about a week before the next coat can be added. Excess lacquer is then removed along the crack and the object is cleaned. This is followed by the meticulous application of red or black lacquer, which, as in the other methods, may serve either as a final coating or as a substrate lacquer onto which metal powder is subsequently sprinkled.^{vii}

This discussion of technical aspects should not fail to mention another important field: namely, decorative applications, which are by no means rare. In addition to décor that has been directly painted on, such restorative embellishments are typically executed in the *maki-e* (“sprinkled picture”) technique with flat or raised relief. They can be used to repair broken or cracked areas, as well as on substituted segments with sufficiently large surface areas. In the *maki-e* technique, the contours of floral, faunal or geometric motifs are either traced onto the desired locations with red or black lacquer, or else they may be painted there freehand. The next steps in the process of creating a décor with flat relief (*hira maki-e*: “flat sprinkled picture”) are to brush red or black lacquer onto the area

viii HARA 1998, p. 77, pp. 110–113;
PIERT-BORGERS 1987, p. 16.

that will later be decorated with sprinkled metal, to allow this area to dry briefly, and then to sprinkle it with metal powder. As described above, this powder is afterwards repeatedly rubbed into the lacquer with a sprinkling brush. Once this task has been accomplished and the décor has been freed from excess powder, and after it has been allowed to dry thoroughly, the artifact is polished with silk batting. Depending on the ultimate effect desired, this polishing may be followed by an application of transparent lacquer, which is left to dry and then polished with *tsunoko* (“powdered stag’s antler”). The procedures for creating a raised décor (*taka maki-e*: “high sprinkled picture”) are slightly different and encompass two variants, both of which begin similarly: the contours of the motif are drawn and lacquer is applied to areas that will later be sprinkled with metal powder. In the first variant, which is known as *sumikoage taka maki-e* (“high sprinkled picture with charcoal powder elevation”), powdered charcoal is sprinkled onto the surface and rubbed into it. After the powder affixed to the lacquer has dried sufficiently, another layer of lacquer is applied. When this layer has hardened adequately, it is abraded with charcoal to eliminate any minor unevenness. The process is repeated to achieve the best possible balance between the desired elevation and flatness of the décor. This step is followed by the application of another coat of lacquer, into which powdered precious metal is sprinkled. Frequent use is made here of *kindei* (“gold slurry”) or *gindei* (“silver slurry”), which consist of minutely pulverized gold-leaf or silver-leaf, respectively. The final steps in the work are identical with those used when applying a flat sprinkled décor. The characteristic feature of the second variant, which is known as *urushiage taka maki-e* (“high sprinkled picture with lacquer elevation”), is that the added decorations are made entirely from lacquer. Depending on the preferences of the individual restorer, so-called *e-urushi* (“picture lacquer”) may be used: this substance is made by blending equal quantities of transparent brown *kurome urushi* (“dehydrated raw lacquer”) and *benigara* (“red iron oxide”).

The sprinkling of the metal powder and the subsequent final steps in the work are essentially not different from the *sumikoage* variant, thus completing our survey of techniques.^{viii}

The Artistic Concepts

The components of lacquer restoration, however, are not limited to the aspects of aesthetics and technique described above: they also include artistic concepts, among which particular emphasis should be given to three important ideas, each of which can be highly adaptively implemented in the aesthetic systems. These three basic concepts, which have survived without interruption to the present day, are known as *kinsugi*, *tomotsugi* and *yobitsugi*, illustrating that these already familiar terms do not only have technical mean-

ings. The specific feature of the *kintsugi* concept, which is suitable for rectifying all types of damage, is the use of lacquer mixed with gold or silver powder, sometimes also combined with lacquer parts that are finished without metal powder. The *tomotsugi* concept is restricted to restorative work in which existing breaks can be patched by inserting original fragments. This method is only practicable if the shards are sufficiently reusable. By contrast, the *yobitsugi* concept inserts alien ceramic pieces. This approach is often used to treat larger damaged areas or when an artist deliberately wants to implant alternative material rather than utilizing existing and essentially usable original fragments. Three distinct approaches can be distinguished in the usage of alien materials: firstly, the integration of ceramic pieces which closely match the original appearance of the artifact undergoing restoration; secondly, the usage of closely matching fragments together with totally different and distinctive shards; and thirdly, the insertion of pieces which look distinctly unlike the original ones. Extraordinarily diverse and creative design potentials consequently result, especially from the use of the second and third approaches, which can be regarded as expressions of Furuta Oribe's ideal of *asobi*.^{ix}

Depending on the nature of the existing damage, all three concepts share the characteristic that they can be combined with one another, thus further broadening the creative spectrum. For the *kin-*, *tomo-* and *yobitsugi* concepts, the shared palette of artistic means ranges from the use of colored lacquers, metal powders and decorative appliques with the *maki-e* technique to the possibilities that can be realized through the insertion of original and alien pieces.

Another noteworthy aspect of the *tomo-* and *yobitsugi* concepts would seem to be that with respect to the initializing events of the restoration and/or the new artistic design, not only accidental damage, but also deliberate damage can be involved. The artistic impulse for this is found in the work of Furuta Oribe, who discovered an appealing beauty in severely misshapen or even deformed objects. This discovery not only prompted him to use accidentally or intentionally manufactured tea utensils that have this quality, but also to deliberately damage objects which he regarded as "too perfect." He thus radically shattered or expanded the boundaries of the usual process of design. This boldness was strongly rejected by elite circles, but ultimately gained a lasting and still valid foothold in the fascinating art of lacquer restoration as the expression of an irrepressible urge to creatively alter objects.^x

ix HARA 1998, p. 19, 51.

x HAYASHIYA/NAKAMURA/
HAYASHIYA 1974, p. 59.

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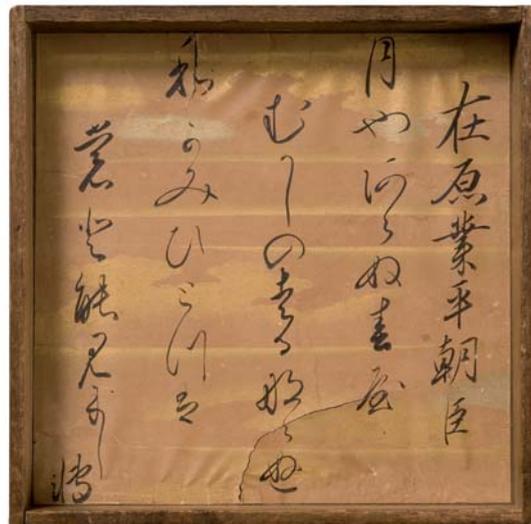


→ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 17th century, Korea, H.: 3 3/8 in. (8,5 cm), D.: 6 7/8 in. (17,5 cm). From the collection of Fujikawa Kokusai [Bunkido] (1807–1887), a lacquer artist.





→ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), Kato Shirozaemon Kagemasa (1169–1249) attr., Seto ware, H.: 2 5/8 in. (6.7 cm), D.: 6 3/4 in. (17.2 cm). Calligraphy on a cropped poem sheet (*shikishi*) pasted to the inside of the box cover: “That is not the moon / Nor is this / The spring of years gone by. I alone remain / As I was before.” (Poem by Ariwara no Narihira translated by Thomas Hare, in: Zeami’s Style. The Noh Plays of Zeami Motokiyo, Palo Alto 1986, p. 281, note 20.)





→ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 16th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 2 5/8 in. (6.8 cm), D.: 4 in. (10.2 cm). From the collection of Kokubun-ji temple in (former) Owari Province.



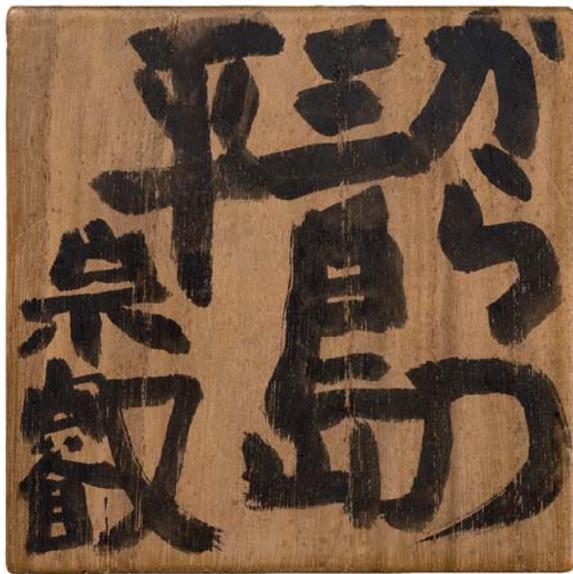


→ SAKE SAUCER (*sakazuki*), "Bamboo grove crane" (poetic name), 16th century, Shino ware, H.: 1 1/8 in. (2.8 cm), D.: 4 1/2 in. (11.3 cm).
From the collection of the calligrapher Hisada Kakunan (b.1921).





→ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 16th century, Mishima-Karatsu ware, H.: 2 in. (5.2 cm), D.: 5 7/8 in. (14.9 cm). From the collection of Okada Sōei (1909–1958), collector, scholar and dealer in ceramics.





↑ **DISH** (*zara*), 16th century, Korea, H.: 1 3/8 in. (3.6 cm), D.: 5 3/8 in. (13.7 cm)

↓ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 17th century, Hagi ware, H.: 3 1/4 in. (8.1 cm), D.: 5 1/4 in. (13.4 cm). From the collection of the painter Tomita Keisen (1879–1936).





↑ SHALLOW SAKE SAUCER (*sakazuki*), 17th century, Shino ware, H.: 1 in. (2.5 cm), D.: 4 1/2 in. (11.5 cm)
↓ TEABOWL (*chawan*), 16th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 2 3/8 in. (6.0 cm), D.: 7 1/4 in. (18.5 cm)





↑ SAKE FLASK (*tokkuri*), 17th century, Arita ware, H.: 7 3/8 in. (18.8 cm), D.: 4 in. (10.1 cm)

↓ OBLONG TRAY (*kakuzara*), 16th century, E-Shino ware, H.: 2 in. (5.0 cm), L.: 9 in. (23.0 cm), W.: 7 3/4 in. (19.7 cm)





↑ **DISH** (*zara*), 17th century, yellow Seto ware (*kiseto*), H.: 1 1/8 in. (3.3 cm), D.: 6 3/4 in. (17.1 cm)

↓ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 15th century, yellow Seto ware (*kiseto*), H.: 2 5/8 in. (6.6 cm), D.: 6 1/4 in. (15.9 cm)





↑ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 18th century, Takatori ware, H.: 1 7/8 in. (4.8 cm), D.: 5 1/2 in. (14.0 cm)
↓ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 18th century, Kihara ware, H.: 2 1/2 in. (6.3 cm), D.: 3 7/8 in. (9.8 cm)





↑ **FOOD DISH** (*mukozuke*), 17th century, Tanba ware, H.: 1 1/2 in. (4.0 cm), L.: 6 3/4 in. (17.3 cm), W.: 5 1/8 in. (13.0 cm)
↓ **FOOD CONTAINER** (*mukozuke*), 18th century, yellow Seto ware (*kiseto*), H.: 2 7/8 in. (7.3 cm), D.: 3 3/4 in. (9.6 cm)



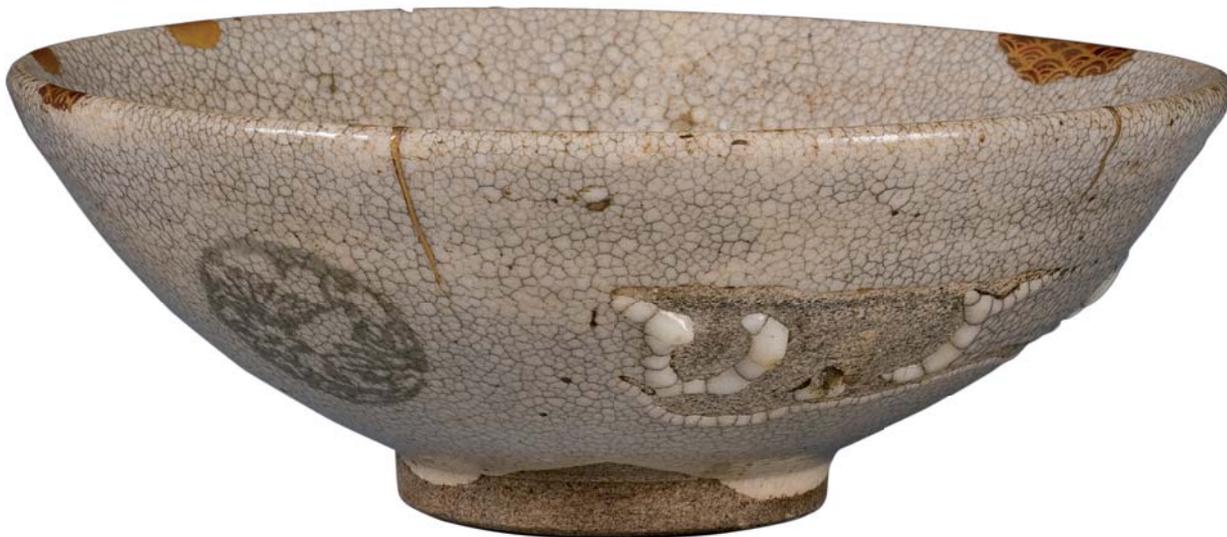


↑ **DISH WITH HANDLE** (*tetsukibachi*), 18th century, Takatori ware, H.: 2 3/4 in. (6.2 cm), L.: 4 5/8 in. (11.6 cm), W.: 4 1/4 in. (10.9 cm)
↓ **FOOD CONTAINER** (*mukozuke*), 17th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 2 3/4 in. (7.1 cm), D.: 4 3/8 in. (11.2 cm)





↑ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), "Chrysanthemum dance" (poetic name), 17th century, Irabo ware, H.: 2 5/8 in. (6.7 cm), D.: 6 in. (15.3 cm)
↓ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 18th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 2 1/8 in. (5.4 cm), D.: 5 1/2 in. (14.6 cm)





↑ **DISH** (*zara*), 17th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 1 1/8 in. (2.8 cm), D.: 4 3/4 in. (12.2 cm)

↓ **TEABOWL** (*kutsugata chawan*), 18th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 3 1/8 in. (7.9 cm), D.: 5 1/2 in. (14.1 cm)





↑ **FOOD CONTAINER** (*mukozuke*), Otagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875), H.: 3 1/2 in. (9.0 cm), D.: 3 in. (7.8 cm). With an autograph poem: “Still light/ The cuckoo’s song/ Here on [mount] Kase/ Will be my souvenir tomorrow/ when I return to the capital” (Lotus Moon. The Poetry of the Buddhist Nun Rengetsu, translated and introduced by John Stevens, New York 1994, p.49.)

↓ **INCENSE CONTAINER** (*kogo*), 17th century, Arita ware, H.: 1 3/4 in. (4.6 cm), L.: 3 7/8 in. (9.7 cm), W.: 2 7/8 in. (7.4 cm)





↑ **FLOWER VASE** (*hanaire*), 17th century, Shigaraki ware, H.: 4 1/8 in. (10.6 cm), D.: 4 7/8 in. (9.8 cm)

↓ **TEABOWL** (*chawan*), 15th century, Tokoname ware (*yobitsugi*-repairs with 18th century porcelain), H.: 2 1/4 in. (5.9 cm), D.: 6 1/2 in. (16.4 cm)





→ **TEA CONTAINER** (*chaire*), 18th century, Karatsu ware, H.: 2 3/4 in. (6.8 cm), D.: 2 3/8 in. (6.1 cm), Museum für Lackkunst, Münster, Germany, Inv. no. AS-J-c-31



→ **TEA CONTAINER** (*chaire*), 18th century, Seto ware, H.: 2 7/8 in. (7.4 cm), D.: 2 in. (5.0 cm), Museum für Lackkunst, Münster, Germany, Inv. no. AS-J-c-30



→ TRAY (*bon*), 18th century, red Raku ware, H.: 5/8 in. (1.7 cm), L.: 7 3/8 in. (18.6 cm), W.: 3 3/8 in. (8.6 cm)



→ **FLOWER VASE** (*hana tsutsu*), Ohi Chozaemon [Hodoan] (1630–1712) attr., Ohi ware, H.: 10 3/8 in. (26.3 cm), D.: (Rim) 1 7/8 (4.7 cm), D.: (Bottom) 2 1/2 in. (6.2 cm)

Glossary

<i>asobi</i>	遊び	play, pastime, entertainment, pleasure, aesthetic ideal
<i>benigara/bengara</i>		
<i>urushi</i>	紅殻漆\弁柄漆	red lacquer, lacquer colored with red ocher or iron oxide
<i>chadō</i>	茶道	The Way of Tea
<i>chaire</i>	茶入れ	tea jar or tea container
<i>chanoyu</i>	茶の湯	tea ceremony
<i>dōgu</i>	道具	utensils (for the tea ceremony)
<i>e-urushi</i>	絵漆	picture lacquer, mixed from equal parts of transparent brown <i>kurome urushi</i> and red iron oxide
<i>fūryū</i>	風流	aesthetic refinement
<i>gindei</i>	銀泥	silver slurry, minutely pulverized silver-leaf
<i>ginnaoshi</i>	銀直し	silver repair, lacquer repair with silver powder
<i>hakogaki</i>	箱書き	literally “box writing”, a note certifying the quality of an art object written on its storage box
<i>hibiware</i>	ひび割れ	crack
<i>hotsure</i>	ほつれ	frazzle, small fractured areas along the rim of the lip or foot of a ceramic object
<i>hira maki-e</i>	平蒔絵	sprinkled picture with flat relief décor
<i>iemoto</i>	家元	the head (e.g. of a school of tea)
<i>kamakizu</i>	窯傷	“kiln wounds”, cracks which appear when ceramics are fired
<i>kindei</i>	金泥	gold slurry, minutely pulverized gold-leaf
<i>kinnaoshi</i>	金直し	gold repair, to repair ceramic with lacquer and gold powder
<i>kintsugi</i>	金継ぎ	to patch with gold, technique and artistic concept to repair ceramic using lacquer with gold or silver powder
<i>kintsukuroi</i>	金繕い	to repair with gold, technique and artistic concept to repair ceramic with gold or silver powder
<i>kirei sabi</i>	奇麗寂	elegant patina, aesthetic ideal
<i>kishōmi urushi</i>	生正味漆	pure lacquer
<i>kuro urushi</i>	黒漆	black lacquer, lacquer colored with iron oxide or ebony black
<i>kurome urushi</i>	くろめ漆	dehydrated raw lacquer
<i>makibanachi</i>	蒔き放ち	the sprinkling of powder into the lacquer surface
<i>maki-e</i>	蒔絵	sprinkled picture, décor enhanced with sprinkled powder
<i>makifude</i>	蒔き筆	sprinkling brush, used to rub sprinkled powder into the lacquer
<i>matcha</i>	抹茶	powdered green tea
<i>mokuhen</i>	木片	pieces of wood used as substitutions for larger imperfections
<i>mono no aware</i>	物の哀れ	literally “pathos of things”, also translated as empathy towards things

<i>mugi urushi</i>	麦漆	grain lacquer, mixture of <i>kishōmi urushi</i> and flour glue
<i>mushin</i>	無心	literally “no mind”, innocent, fully existing within the moment
<i>nagori</i>	名残	remains, the waning days of autumn are known as the season of <i>nagori</i>
<i>nori urushi</i>	糊漆	glue lacquer, mixture of <i>kishōmi urushi</i> and rice glue
<i>nyū</i>	にゅう	hairline crack
<i>ōyose no chakai</i>	大寄せの茶会	public tea gathering
<i>sabi</i>	寂	aesthetic ideal involving qualities of seclusion, ageing, patina and/or decay
<i>shinsha/shu urushi</i>	辰砂漆朱漆	red lacquer, lacquer colored with cinnabar
<i>suki</i>	数寄	artistic taste, love of refined art
<i>suki urushi</i>	透漆	transparent lacquer
<i>sumikoage taka maki-e</i>	炭粉上高蒔絵	sprinkled picture in raised relief, powdered charcoal is included in a built-up layer
<i>taka maki-e</i>	高蒔絵	sprinkled picture with décor in raised relief
<i>tokonoma</i>	床の間	small raised alcove in a Japanese style room
<i>tomotsugi</i>	共継ぎ	original patches, technique and artistic concept using original pieces
<i>toriawase</i>	取り合せ	the careful and intentional combination (of various tea utensils for a tea ceremony)
<i>tsunoko</i>	角粉	powdered stag's antler
<i>urushitsugi</i>	漆継ぎ	to patch with lacquer
<i>ursuhitsukuroi</i>	漆繕い	to repair with lacquer
<i>urushinaoshi</i>	漆直し	lacquer repair
<i>urushiage taka maki-e</i>	漆上高蒔絵	sprinkled picture with décor in raised relief and structure of lacquer strata
<i>wabi</i>	侘び	aesthetic ideal involving qualities of poverty, simplicity, modesty and undemandingness
<i>yobitsugi</i>	呼び継ぎ	borrowed patches, technique and artistic concept with usage of alien ceramic parts

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