

The forefront of Netsuke research The "boundary" between the everyday and the special

When wearing a pouch on a belt, why is a fastener (a small device) even necessary to attach and remove the pouch? If you attach the pouch to the belt directly with a cord, does not the fastener become superfluous? One of the reasons. I began to have this suspicion was that belts themselves are originally just thin cord-like objects wrapped around the torso and fastened. And from the fact that swords were inserted through (or hung from) belts, the belt was already functioning as a wearable device. In scroll paintings and the like from the medieval period (late 11th century - 16th century), there are no visible fasteners for putting on and removing pouches for when pouches are hung from the waist (Fig. 1 and 2). Additionally, while I will not deny the insufficiency of historical documents, they also do not contain mention of fasteners either. Thus, from both painting and documentary resources, the practice of hanging pouches from belts and swords and

the necessitation of a small device to attach and remove the pouch when hung from the body can be thought of as separate issues.

Next, if we focus on the attributes of the wearers of pouches depicted in pictorial material, we see that though pouches were not depicted on the majority of people leading daily lives in the city, they are depicted on people in special situations that necessitate movement like traveling and warring. Therefore, I feel that it was this "boundary" between the everyday and the special that contains the catalyst for the birth of the fastener. And additionally, the fact that pouches were worn on the left side of the waist is also noteworthy.

Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum Curator
Kosuke (Tadakumo) Onishi

The Artist's Perspective Ito SHIGEJYO

Shigejyo specializes in small animal subjects, and her works present a fable world of anthropomorphic animals. After working as a Buddhist statue sculptor and wood carving instructor, Shigejyo began her career as a netsuke artist. She will introduce the charm of netsuke.

"I spend a day just imagining what kind of netsuke I can make. In reality, I have to consult with my current skills, but in my head, I play with all kinds of things to make netsuke."

The first thing that Shigejyo values is cuteness. She expresses honest interest that moves her. Small animals are easy to put together in the shape of a netsuke because they are easy to round out the overall shape and add her unique story to it. Each work gives "kindness" and "healing" to the viewers. Each carving is carefully executed one by one, and the result is "Smile".

"I want to create netsuke that speak to you without words, that sometimes listen to you carefully."

She brings "events" into her work, allowing the viewer to imagine the course of time. The structure of the piece, in which certain results are produced or certain problems are solved by the protagonist's animal, has an effect similar to that of a riddle and leaves the viewer with an amusing or puzzling impression. It also invites the viewer to interpret the work. Enjoying the dialogue of such a mystery story is also an appealing aspect of Shigejyo's work.



『Pika』 H4.0cm



Ito SHIGEJYO

She began carving Buddhist statues in 1996 and started making netsuke in 2001. The material used is the boxwood.

Special Exhibition for October to December

Netsuke culture to be handed down to the future

10 Netsuke with dynamic movement

■ October 1 (Sat) to 30 (Sun)

11 Exhibition of Masterpieces

■ November 1 (Tue) to 30 (Wed)

12 Netsuke associated with Sake

■ December 1 (Thu) to 29 (Thu)

We are posting the latest information and images of the Museum on Twitter and Instagram. We hope you to follow us.

- Awarded 9th Mizuki Jugodo Prize from Yamato Koriyama City, Nara Prefecture
- Featured in the February issue of Katei-gaho
- Featured in the NHK TV program "The Mark of Beauty"



Official Website

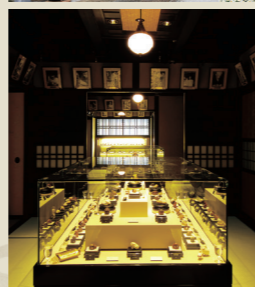


Measures to Prevent the Spread of COVID-19

- At the entrance the museum staff would measure your body temperature by non-contact thermometer and spray alcohol on your fingers. (If your body temperature is 37.5 degrees (Celsius) or higher, you may be refused to enter)
- We would ask you to write down your full name and address when entering the museum, as a countermeasure in the event that visitors or staff members were found to be a carrier.
- Please wear a mask inside the museum.

Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum

Contemporary Netsuke is the essence of Japanese aesthetics and craftsmanship. Many artists are creating netsuke works with adding new tastes. Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum is a museum that specializes in contemporary netsuke. We systematically collect, store, research and disclose documents and materials. Contemporary netsuke reflect social situation, technological progress and people's tastes of each era. Our mission is to contribute to the advancement of culture by researching contemporary netsuke from various viewpoints to investigate the characteristics of Japanese art.



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The only contemporary netsuke art museum in the world Special Exhibitions of Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum

Paradise of netsuke techniques to breathe life "Preciousness of all life"

The subject matter of netsuke is diverse and represents everything on earth. The earth is a celestial body with diverse life forms. In this exhibition, we will focus on the brilliance of life on the earth, including sea creatures, land creatures, and plants.

The Earth was formed 4.6 billion years ago. The scorching magma gradually cooled over a long period of time to form the oceans, and the long journey of life began with the ancestors of bacteria that emerged in the oceans 3.5 billion years ago.

Since then, creatures have gone through extinction and evolution, and many trajectories have resulted in a wide variety of ecosystems.

All beings have a meaning and a mission, and we are kept alive in a chain of symbiosis.

This is precisely the theme of this exhibition, "Feeling Life."

Netsuke artists' attitude of looking at familiar objects and carving them with vivid depictions is an ode to life.

七月の企画展
水中に広がる神秘を求めて
「根付水族館」
7月1日(金)～31日(日)

八月の企画展
珍しい動物たちのユーモラスな世界
「根付動物園」
8月2日(火)～31日(水)

九月の企画展
四季折々の草花に癒されるひと時
「根付植物園」
9月1日(木)～30日(金)

生命を
感じる展
生命の息吹を感じる巧みの技法園

京都 清宗根付館
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
KYOTO SEISHU NETSUKU ART MUSEUM

Promotional poster



As a leading company in the fields of printing and information processing, Sagawa Printing Co., Ltd. is supporting the Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum with the aim of passing Japanese culture to the next generation and developing global art.

7 Seeking mysteries in the water

Special Exhibition in July "Netsuke Aquarium"

■ July 1 (Fri) to 31 (Sun)

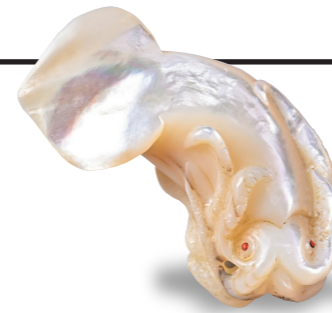
The ocean is the source and home of all living things. Vapor from the ocean creates clouds, rain falls on the mountains and fields, springs become rivers, and then return to the ocean, a cycle that has nurtured various forms of life. The ocean is a treasure trove of diverse creatures, and there may be unknown creatures waiting to be discovered in the still unreachable depths.

Welling springs, rushing torrents, tranquil ponds, and dark seabeds, leading netsuke artists scoop up creatures from all corners of the globe to swim in this netsuke museum.



「 Floating Ice and Angel 」
KIHO (1957~)
H3.8cm

Clones are compared to angels because they swim on a pair of winged feet.



「 Surely, Squid! 」
YUZAN (1947~)
H1.7cm

The strong luster of the thick mother-of-pearl reproduces the characteristics of the squid.



「 Decorated Fish 」
HIDEYUKI (1941~)
H2.5cm

The work is characterized by exotic colors and patterned designs reminiscent of deep-sea fish.



「 Hermit Crab 」
KODO (1940~)
H3.4cm

The hermit crab is popular for their humorous appearance carrying a scroll shell on their back.



「 Swimming Together 」
KUKAN (1968~)
H3.5cm

The goldfish is superimposed on the sense of freedom and liberation of swimming "as you wish".

8 Humorous world of rare animals

Special Exhibition in August "Netsuke Zoo"

■ August 2 (Tue) to 31 (Wed)

Netsuke were most often made with animal subjects, with familiar animals, animals from the twelve signs of the zodiac, animals from legends, and animals of good luck favored by the public. Today, it has expanded to include all kinds of animals from around the world.

Extinct animals, and the species in the Red List, or unknown and imaginary animals. This is a zoo where such animals can play freely.



「 Leopard 」
MEISHU (1934~2016)
H3.9cm

The beautiful spots of the leopard are all represented by tortoiseshell inlays.



「 Shoebill 」
ZANMAI (1967~)
H7.5cm

The Shoebill is a precious bird and famous as a "non-moving bird".



「 Monkey 」
SUZAN (1955~)
H4.9cm

What do chimpanzees, which are considered closest to humans, think?



「 Greater Flamingo 」
NICK (1948~)
H3.0cm

The flamingo, which means "flame" in Latin, is a bird considered a symbol of good luck.



「 Mother and Child 」
KOEN (1950~)
H4.7cm

The artist created an orangutan mother and child netsuke as a sign of hope.

9 Healing flowers of the four seasons

Special Exhibition in September "Netsuke Botanical Garden"

■ September 1 (Thu) to 30 (Fri)

The Japanese climate has four distinctly beautiful seasons, and the Japanese have cherished this beauty, expressing it in poetry and paintings. They have found beauty and charm in nature's transience and imperfection, and have discovered a profound world in nature.

Since ancient times, people have also adorned their heads and crowns with flowers in an effort to acquire the spiritual power of nature and the life force of plants. Perhaps it is because we resonate with such power that we are healed when we see flowers. Enjoy the garden in full bloom with flowers of netsuke.



「 Seven Autumnal Herbs 」
SEIZAN (1926~)
H2.8cm

This work celebrates the beauty of seven typical autumnal blooms of herbs.



「 Chinese Lantern 」
SHINGETSU (1941~)
H3.1cm

"Chinese lantern", which turns bright red at the end of summer, is reproduced by dyeing with natural grasses and trees.



「 Akebia Fruits 」
TAISEI (1953~)
H3.9cm

The fruit of "Akebi", one of the tastes of autumn, is represented by inlaid black-lip shells.



「 Hydrangeas and Dragonflies 」
MASAYUKI (1954~)
H4.2cm

This maki-e work also represents the passage of time by changing the hues within the hydrangea.



「 Late Summer 」
SHOJO (1947~)
H4.0cm

The ripe camellia fruit and new buds are juxtaposed to symbolize the cycle of nature.