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2000s: Restorationism and Diversity vs. 2010s: Expanding Subjective World

■ June 1 (Wed) to 30 (Fri)

Special Exhibition in June

“Reconstruction and Visualization”

Around 2000, netsuke artists with diverse backgrounds, including artists, designers, and illustrators, who first learned about netsuke through the spread of the Internet, appeared on the scene.

The opening of this museum in 2007 brought about a major change in his style as he became more concerned with visual expansion and the completeness of his work.



「Momotaro」
KUKAN (1968~)
H4.2cm

He specializes in reconstructed combinations of figurative elements, and a heightened sense of storytelling characterizes his theatrical staging.



「Duet」
YOKA (1968~)
H3.3cm

As Surrealist artists did, she adds new meaning to even vessels by distorting their forms and combining them with emotional expression.



「Black Hole」
MITSUKUNI (1959~)
H5.2cm

The work has a comical characterization and a cause-and-effect narrative that is as entertaining as an act of comedy.



「Misfortune Turned into Fortune」
IPPU (1970~) H4.1cm

His works focus on the emotional turmoil of people when they come into contact with otherworldly beings such as demons, ghosts, and bugs.



「House Guard」
ITARO (1961~)
H4.4cm

He specializes in fine sculpture based on his experience with woodblock prints. He attempts to express "individuality" through memories of places and nostalgic subjects.



「Three Sages Tasting Vinegar」
MOTOMASA (1976~)
H3.6cm

Since the opening of the museum, his research into Japanese culture and classical art has broadened his subject matter, and he has been creating figure works.

「Toad Wizard」
TETSURO (1960~)
H4.9cm

He studied oil painting at Tokyo University of the Arts. He advocates that there is universal beauty in a good work of art, which he expresses in his unique realistic style.

Special Exhibition for July to September 2023

Challenging the Unknown

7 Special Exhibition in July “Heated Competition”
■ July 1 (Sat) to 30 (Sun)

8 Special Exhibition in August “Inhabitants of Another World”
■ August 1 (Tue) to 31 (Thu)

9 Special Exhibition in September “Longing to Travel”
■ September 1 (Fri) to 30 (Sat)

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"



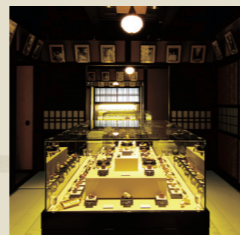
Official Website→



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.

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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■ Exhibition Highlights

■ The Forefront of Netsuke Research

[Publisher]

Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
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The only contemporary netsuke art museum in the world

Special Exhibitions of Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum

Back to the Beginning of Contemporary Netsuke

“Netsuke Chronicles 1973→2023”

Around 1970, the "contemporary netsuke" movement began in the netsuke world, incorporating modern sensibilities. In the 1990s, a new phase was ushered in with the use of new craft techniques and materials. The artists sought to overcome the previous era and always tried to express the "now".

This exhibition will overview the history of contemporary netsuke over the past 50 years, while also unraveling its relationship to global trends and social phenomena.

The April exhibition looks back on the period from 1945 to the 1970s, tracing the budding awareness of young artists and the beginning of contemporary netsuke. The May exhibition will look at the variety of expression that resulted from the entry of foreign artists, jewelers, and lacquer craftsmen in the 1980s and 1990s. The June exhibition introduces the new challenges of contemporary netsuke, which have been tackled by artists with professional backgrounds, such as fine artists, who have appeared on the scene since the year 2000.

飽くなき挑戦
受け継ぐ熱意

NETSUKE CHRONICLES
1973-2023

現代根付の軌跡展

BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF CONTEMPORARY NETSUKE

京都 清宗根付館
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
KYOTO SEISHU NETSUKE ART MUSEUM
〒604-8811 京都市中京区壬生買限所町46番地1 (壬生寺東側)

「継承と革新」展
Special Exhibition in April
"Inheritance and Innovation"
4月1日(土) ~ 30日(日)
April 1 (Sat) to 30 (Sun)

「遊び心と表現」展
Special Exhibition in May
"Playfulness and Expression"
5月2日(火) ~ 31日(水)
May 2 (Tue) to 31 (Wed)

「再構築と視覚化」展
Special Exhibition in June
"Reconstruction and Visualization"
6月1日(木) ~ 30日(金)
June 1 (Thu) to 30 (Fri)

Promotional poster

4 Postwar: Workshop System and Japanese Hobby vs. 70s: Netsuke Modernism

■ April 1 (Sat) to 30 (Sun)

Special Exhibition in April

“Inheritance and Innovation”

After World War II, the boom in American souvenirs led to a boom in netsuke. At that time, many standing statues were made with Japanese taste and were finely decorated and painted.

An encounter with a foreign collector in the early 1970s marked the beginning of the contemporary netsuke movement. Breaking away from the traditional workshop system, the movement adopted the principle of "one artist, one work. The simplicity of the form can be described as netsuke modernism.



『 Kamo (Noh Play) 』
ISSHU (1917~)
H5.5cm

With delicate decoration and coloring backed by superb craftsmanship, this standing netsuke is a true embodiment of Japanese beauty.

『 Neigh 』
KANGYOKU (1944~)
H6.8cm

The artist, who comes from a family of animal carvers, is known for his anatomy-based sculptures that evoke the skeletal and muscular structure of the body.



『 Monkey Trainer 』
ICHIRO (1891~1977)
H3.9cm

The roundness that fits comfortably in the hand is typical of netsuke. The proportions of the larger head (baby shape) give this piece a familiar and endearing look.

『 Raven Embracing Skull 』
TANETOSHI (1947~)
H4.0cm

In the Edo period, skulls were used to ward off evil and symbolize the resolve of the samurai who did not fear death. This work is filled with poetic sentiment.

『 Soga no Goro 』
MASATOSHI (1915~2001) H5.4cm

This is one of the masterpieces of the postwar period that amazes with its extreme carving. The appearance of the Kabuki actors is realistic.



『 Landing on Water 』
BISHU (1943~)
H4.3cm

This piece set the direction of contemporary netsuke by its form, which omits decoration and leaves a large hole in the mass.

『 Neigh 』
SENPO (1954~1994)
H5.1cm

He has hearing difficulties and throughout his life has produced introspective works on the subject of voice and sound.

5 80s: Formalism vs. 90s: Craft techniques and playfulness

■ May 2 (Tue) to 31 (Wed)

Special Exhibition in May

“Playfulness and Expression”

In the 1980s, netsuke was increasingly powerful in terms of modeling and had a rich sense of volume and dynamism. Netsuke was increasingly appreciated as works of art both in Japan and abroad.

In the 1990s, jewelry, lacquer, glass, and foreign artists brought a new style of craftsmanship to the netsuke. Wordplay and puns were also important elements in netsuke. In 1994, an exhibition of contemporary netsuke was held at the British Museum.



『 Tales of Ise 』
RYUSHI (1934~)
H4.9cm

Since it was difficult to design young women for netsuke, he tried his own unique posing and became a pioneer of the beautiful women's netsuke.

『 Roar 』
KANSUI (1955~)
H5.6cm

He specializes in sculptures of bizarre creatures and humanoid animals. He is known for his grotesque style of realistic carving of the invisible and fantastic world.



『 Beginning of Summer 』
SUMI (1944~)
H3.1cm

Nudes are rare among the subjects of netsuke, but the artist pioneered a new genre of highly artistic works featuring a white finish without coloring.

『 In the Time Dimension 』
KIHO (1957~) H4.1cm

He was a craftsman of precious metalwork for gemstones, and he specializes in inlaying, freely combining a wide range of materials.

『 Solar System Four Dimension 』
AKIRA (1949~) H3.7cm

He actively incorporates metalworking and lacquer crafting into his netsuke from his position of freedom as a jewelry designer.

『 Protecting Her Egg 』
IKKU (1949~)
H3.6cm

With his sense of design and advanced engraving techniques, he has brought a new style to the netsuke world, attempting to transcend the boundary between netsuke and art.

『 Heavy Smoker 』
MASAYUKI (1944~)
H3.5cm

He also uses his skills as a maki-e craftsman to make tea ceremony utensils and other items, and creates netsuke that is full of witty ideas.

The Forefront of Netsuke Research

"The Fenollosa of Netsuke"

Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum
Curator
Kosuke (Tadakumo) Onishi

Having come to Japan through an invitation from the new Japanese government, it was philosopher Ernest F. Fenollosa (1853-1908) who recognized the value of, and contributed to the revival of, traditional Japanese art that had been devastated by the Westernization

policies promoted by Japan as a modern nation. Within the Buddhist sculptures of the Nara period, Fenollosa discovered linkages to Greek and Roman aesthetic ideals, which served as the classical tradition in the West. This in turn inspired him to encourage Japanese people to become aware of traditional Japanese beauty. And the momentum for a revival of Japanese art that was being cultivated in this way ignited fire in the hearts of artisans.

When looking back in this way upon Fenollosa in the context of the revival of Japanese art, there is a benefactor we simply must honor in the revival of Netsuke crafting. Half a century ago, crafters had rebranded their efforts with the name contemporary

Netsuke in their quest for a completely new kind of Netsuke creation that was not trapped by the past, and the figure who encouraged among them Netsuke creation from the angle of modern sensibilities and lit a fire in their hearts was major industrialist and Kinsey International Art Foundation founder Robert O. Kinsey. Whereas Fenollosa established "Kanga-kai" (The Society for the Appreciation of Paintings) and aimed for the creation of new formats for Japanese painting by the young generation, Kinsey advocated for contemporary Netsuke out of a similar sense of duty and aesthetics. As a result, it is no exaggeration to say that without this activity, contemporary netsuke would have taken a different path than it has.



Mr. Robert O. Kinsey (pictured right) and Director Kinoshita (pictured left) in Los Angeles, USA