

new series Tinged with strange fates.

HISTORY OF CONTEMPORARY NETSUKES

The impact of contemporary netsuke :Modernism and Auteurism

In this article, we will explore the creative movement of contemporary netsuke, which began in the 1970s, in terms of changes in style and technique. At that time, the ivory industry was divided into rough and finished; the skills of ivory craftsmen who had been exporting since 1870 were handed down. Netsuke became small carvings for appreciation with elaborate decoration and diverged from the original practical netsuke of the Edo period. In 1981, an exhibition of over 200 old netsukes from the USA was held. The unique form and deformation of the old netsuke seemed to young artists to have an aesthetic sense in common with the world-famous modern art of Henry Moore and Brancusi. The possibilities found in the old

netsuke allowed the artists to utilize their new sensibilities and to restore the original form of netsuke.



KANGYOKU [Stidious Ox]
ivory H4.1cm



KANGYOKU [Chinese Zodiac Ox]
ivory H3.0cm



THE GOLDEN NETSUKES AWARDS
GRAND PRIX
KUKAN[Cardsharps] H5.0cm

Kukan, who has won the most number of grand prizes in the Golden Netsuke Awards organized by the museum, explained his work.

The Artist's Perspective KUKAN

"The inspiration came from the idea that all the characters were bad guys. I made the netsuke with a slightly stylish atmosphere. Playing cards were brought to Japan through trade at the end of the 16th century, but did not really spread until the 1870s. At that time, society was changing due to aggressive westernization policies. The "Cardsharps" that blended in with the Rokumeikan, a symbol of this westernization, are the subject of this work. However, they are all cardsharps! Who will win?"



Kukan

Born 1968. Characterized by a style that combines Japanese sentiment with dynamic plastic beauty.

Special Exhibition for October to December 2025

Netsuke that connect people and beauty.

"Prosperity of Netsuke"

10 "Festivals and ceremonies"
■ October 1 (Wed) ~ 31 (Fri)

11 "Netsuke in all their glory"
■ November 1 (Sat) ~ 30 (Sun)

12 "Netsuke narrating things"
■ December 2 (Tue) ~ 28 (Sun)

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"



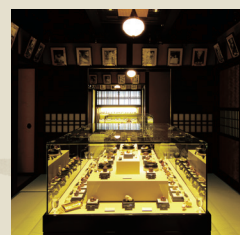
Official Website→



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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Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum
46-1 Mibukayougosho-cho Nakagyo-ku
Kyoto 604-8811 Japan
Phone: +81-75-802-7000
www.netsuke.jp/



The only contemporary netsuke art museum in the world

Special Exhibitions of Kyoto Seishu Netsuke Art Museum

The Charm of Japan through Netsuke “Amazing Netsuke! This is Japan!”

This summer, tourists from all over the world are visiting Japan, drawing attention to Japanese culture and art. Japan has a unique aesthetic sense that is close to nature and appreciates the beauty of the four seasons. It also displays simplicity and tranquil beauty of style. In such a Japan, there is a mixture of various arts, which is truly "Amazing! Japan". Netsuke were also born from such Japanese climate and culture. Netsuke are recognized worldwide as a unique Japanese art and

craft. Netsuke were originally used as clasps for hanging ornaments from the obi when wearing a kimono. Gradually, its fine workmanship and fashionable design led to it being highly valued for its artistry. The museum has taken on the challenge of presenting contemporary artists on the theme of Japanese beauty and culture. This exhibition focuses on netsuke based on the unique culture, arts and customs of Japan and introduces the fascination of Japan.

QR Code (公式HP) QR Code (YouTube動画)

The Charm of Japan through Netsuke. Amazing Netsuke! This is Japan!

"Brilliance of traditional arts" July 1 (Tue) ~ 31 (Thu)
"Summer Fun for Yokai Monsters" August 1 (Fri) ~ 31 (Sun)
"Samurai and Oiran (courtesans)" September 2 (Tue) ~ 30 (Tue)

根付で見る日本の魅力
『あっぱれ!ニッポン』展

7月「芸能の華」展 / 7月1日(火)~31日(木)
8月「妖怪たちの夏休み」展 / 8月1日(金)~31日(日)
9月「侍と花魁」展 / 9月2日(火)~30日(火)

公益財団法人 京都 清宗根付館
Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
KYOTO SEISHU NETSUKES ART MUSEUM
〒604-8811 京都市中京区壬生賀陽御所町46番地1 (壬生寺東側)

SAGAWA PRINTING 佐川印刷株式会社は印刷及び情報加工の分野でのリーディングカンパニーとして、日本文化の継承と美術の発展を目指し、京都 清宗根付館を応援しています。

Promotional poster

7 Special Exhibition in July

“Brilliance of traditional arts”

■ July 1 (Tue) ~ 31 (Thu)

Netsuke are based on the performing arts, such as Kabuki and Noh. The performing arts in Japan originally date back to ancient Shinto rituals, with Kabuki spreading in the early 17th century and becoming popular as entertainment for the common people, along with Ningyo-Joruri (puppet theatre). The performing arts include theatre, music, dance and storytelling, and convey the trends of each period.

8 Special Exhibition in August

“Summer Fun for Yokai Monsters”

■ August 1 (Fri) ~ 31 (Sun)

In August, netsukes of yokai monsters, demons and ghosts will be available at the museum. Since ancient times, Japanese people have believed that all natural objects are inhabited by spirits, and that yokai Monsters are the cause of bizarre phenomena and the fury of nature. However, there is a culture in Japan that enjoys laughing at the “symbols of fear”, yokai, as funny.

9 Special Exhibition in September

“Samurai and Oiran (courtesans)”

■ September 2 (Tue) ~ 30 (Tue)

Samurai and Oiran are key words in Japanese culture. Samurai have played a role in Japanese politics as beings with a sense of loyalty and ethics common to Western chivalry. Oiran, on the other hand, were the highest-ranking prostitutes in the brothels of the Edo period and became a source of fashion due to their good looks, culture and refined sense of beauty.



『 Shibaraku (Kabuki Play) 』
MOTOMASA (1976~)
H3.8cm

Kabuki became popular because of its chivalrous heroes who helped the weak and subdued evil.



『 Izutsu 』
ISSU (1960~)
H5.0cm

Noh theatre has a history of about 650 years and is renowned as one of the greatest masterpieces of its kind.



『 Yamanaka Shigure (Ballad) 』
MASAYUKI (1954~)
H2.5cm

The subject is a short song about a one-night stand in a hot spring resort. Local craftsmen made the piece.



『 Female 』
RYUSHI (1934~)
H5.0cm

At a woman's most beautiful age, the gesture of covering her mouth shows a daughterly shame.



『 Izaemon (Kabuki Play) 』
MASATOSHI (1915~2001)
H5.3cm

A popular love story in Kabuki theatre. It represents the downfall of Izaemon, who is disowned by his parents.



『 Buddhist incantations recited by demons 』
KIHO (1957~) H4.3cm

Ogre sutra reading is a ruthless person pretending to be charitable. In Netsuke, the ruthless ogre gets merry and dances.



『 Nurikabe (Specter) 』
KOZAN (1946~)
H4.3cm

A spectre that prevents humans from walking at night. In Netsuke, they are frightened by barking puppies.



『 Ayakashi-no-sato (Specter) 』
IPPU (1970~)
H7.3cm

How many of these spectres can you find in their habitat? If you look carefully, you will see the “?” mark.



『 Karasutenngu (Specter) 』
HDEYA (1971~)
H3.8cm

He is so called because he has a raven's beak. He is an excellent swordsman and is about to start training.



『 Adhuki-togi (Specter) 』
YOUJI (1934~2023)
H3.6cm

It is said to be an auspicious specter, and that if seen, daughters will quickly become related to it.



『 Oda Nobunaga (Samurai) 』
KUKAN (1968~)
H5.1cm

Nobunaga won with 2,000 men against 25,000 led by enemy generals. The figure raising the call to arms.



『 Princess of the tribe (Genji) 』
MICHI (1948~)
H6.4cm

The Tale of Genji describes a court event celebrating the harvest, in which a spectacular dance was performed.



『 Musubi Karigane 』
AYA (1949~)
H3.6cm

Warlords have several family crests. The artist wished for peace by engraving a peacetime crest on a battle helmets.



『 Celebration 』
AKIRA (1949~)
H5.9cm

Maiko are a highlight of Kyoto's cultural life and add entertainment to banquets with their dancing, singing and shamisen.



『 Having no way to fight (Samurai) 』
TANETOSHI (1947~) H4.3cm

In a fierce battle, the young warrior should have run out of weapons, but he seems to have found some strategy.