

# **Japanese Art—Living Clay: Artist Respond to Nature Exhibition 2019**

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## **Upcoming in Japanese and Korean Art**

### **PERMANENT GALLERY ROTATIONS**

**Summer 2019—Galleries 206, 220, 221, 222, 223**

# Japanese Art—Living Clay: Artist Respond to Nature Exhibition 2019

## Living Clay—Artists Respond to Nature

This exhibition highlights recent work by more than a dozen Japanese women clay artists, who evoke or respond to the natural world in diverse ways, some traditional others wholly novel. Japanese clay artists have long sought inspiration in the natural world. Chargers with colorful vegetal designs, ewers shaped like gourds, and plates with misty autumn fields are all typical of functional pottery created in the golden age of Japanese ceramics 400 years ago. Since then, nature as a source of inspiration has never waned—through dramatic modernization, shifts in the status of ceramics from craft to modern art, and more recent transformations by avant-garde movements.

Details of these:



<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/122403/plate-with-pumpkins-japan>



<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/122425/gourd-shaped-flask-with-grapevines-japan>

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<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/6624/plate-with-autumn-grasses-japan>

### Gallery 251: Micro/Macronature

**Nakaigawa Yuki**, Japanese, born 1960

**As they Gather, they Separate** (*Atsumarinagara, hanareru*), 2005

Stoneware

Gift of Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz 2017.139.4a-j

For this monumental work, Nakaigawa Yuki imagines the coming together of a group of cells, which will soon divide again, a momentary occurrence referenced in the title. Nakaigawa built each cell using the coil technique before adding texture to their surfaces with her fingers and small tools, covering them in numerous layers of slip (liquid clay), and then firing them. The ten pieces are connected by bolts hidden from view. Nakaigawa has said that her fascination with nature began when she collected stones and displayed them in her room as a child. Her artistic practice remains rooted in observation of nature and attempts to recreate the shapes, forms, and energies she discovers there. Many of her large-scale works have involved this kind of assemblage of smaller forms that appear on the verge of collapse or separation.



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**Mori Aya**, Japanese, born 1989

**Physarum**, 2017

Glazed stoneware

Gift of David T. Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2017.140.1

When Mori Aya created this sculpture in 2017, it was the largest piece she had ever attempted. Inspired by the branch-like form and slow, rhythmic movement of a type of slime mold called *physarum*, she built the dramatic, detailed form by hand and used a traditional *namako* (“sea cucumber”) glaze in deep, lustrous blue that drips to bright green and warm brown in the work’s crevices and folds.



*Physarum polycephalum* (French National Centre for Scientific Research)

<https://phys.org/news/2016-04-intelligent-brainless-slime.html>

**Mori Aya**, Japanese, born 1989

**Sarcotesta**, 2017

Glazed stoneware

Lent by Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz

Mori Aya’s large, hand-built sculptures are usually informed by the physical properties of things barely visible to the naked eye—things like mold or bacteria. The title of this sculpture, *Sarcotesta*, makes reference to the fleshy outer layers of the seeds of certain plants like pomegranate, which provide a protective barrier to the seeds. The unique characteristics of this seed coat are reflected in the shape of the various ruffled, tubular shapes that project from the sculpture’s body, which are significantly plumper than those seen in her other work on view here, which was inspired by the more delicate lace-like shape of a type of slime mold.



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**Tokumaru Kyōko**, Japanese, born 1963

**Cosmic Plants**, 2008

Unglazed porcelain

The Louis W. Hill, Jr. Fund 2011.82.1

Tokumaru Kyōko meticulously fashions the components of her sculptures from porcelain clay, then joins them together to create miniature, naturalistic environments that are at once familiar and fantastical. The undulation and elegant rhythm of her long leaves and twisting branches impart a weightless, aquatic quality to the work, which would seem to be playfully ironic given the brittle, hard quality of fired porcelain.



**Tanaka Tomomi**, Japanese, born 1983

**Planet**, 2015

Glazed stoneware

Lent by Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz

For her sculptural works, Tanaka Tomomi applies many thin sheets of clay to a body that she first builds by hand. She pulls and pushes this form to create flowing, organic shapes. The artist says that she discovered this technique by accident one day when she inadvertently smashed a piece of clay with her hands on her work table. Feeling inspired by the simple beauty of this flattened sheet of clay, she set out to find ways to use it in her work. She equates the layers of sheets to thoughts and feelings that pile up inside the mind, unable to be expressed in words for fear of condemnation.



**Futamura Yoshimi**, Japanese, born 1959

**Black Hole No. 8** 2015, 2015

Stoneware with porcelain slip

The Marilyn C. Benson Endowment for Art Acquisition 2016.48

The earthquake and tsunami of 2011 in the Tōhoku region of Japan had a profound impact on Futamura Yoshimi. This is reflected in her recent work, in which she explores the notions of impermanence and natural disaster. She has described her post-2011 work as “represent[ing] a fear of the uncertain, a force beyond our control which threatens to extinguish everything, even the desire for rebirth. The Tōhoku earthquake reminded me of how grateful I am to have grown up in Japan, as I could not be where I am today without its cultural influence.”



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**Futamura Yoshimi**, Japanese, born 1959

**Cercle**, 2010

Stoneware with porcelain slip

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1256

Futamura creates tubular forms on a wheel and applies white porcelain slip (liquid clay) to the surface before further manipulating the clay, which causes the slip to separate and crack. After firing, her sculptures often have a charred appearance, like burnt firewood. Futamura first trained in Seto-style ceramics, an ancient pottery style focused on traditional forms like bowls and vases. She moved to France in the mid-1990s which separated her from the orthodox, male-dominated world of traditional Japanese ceramics. This allowed her to explore her art more freely than she might have been able to had she set up a kiln in the Seto region.



**Hattori Makiko**, Japanese, born 1984

**Signs**, 2009

Unglazed porcelain stoneware

The Louis W. Hill, Jr. Fund 2011.82.2

Hattori Makiko's process is meditative. She begins with a sculptural form to which she adds many thousands of tiny, shaved bits of clay to the whole surface in a long, relentless, repetitive process that she says requires a transcendent mindset.



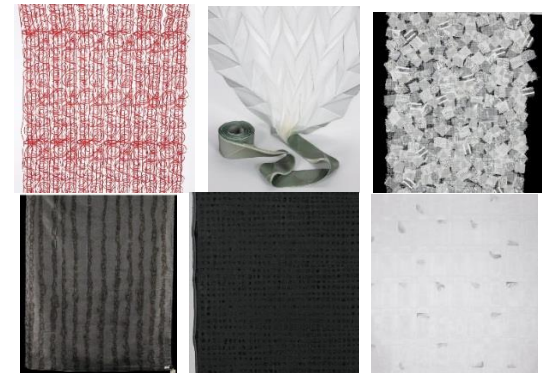
Manufactured by **NUNO Corporation**

Designed by Sudō Reiko (Japanese, born 1953) and others

Various materials

Gifts of Richard L. Simmons and Rosa Lynn Parks

Since she and textile artist Jun'ichi Arai established the textile company Nuno in 1984, Sudō Reiko has designed thousands of textiles and received numerous accolades for her groundbreaking designs. One of her, and by extension Nuno's, guiding principles is the Japanese notion of *mottainai* ("waste not"), an environmental consciousness that can be seen at work in many of Nuno's practices. Nuno, for example, has long made use of scraps of textiles. Frequently thrown away, at Nuno such scraps and damaged or rejected fabrics are



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put to use. They are repurposed in diverse ways, from simple patchwork to the creation of new fabrics using specialized technology. Other materials that are more commonly disposed of are used as well—feathers left over from poultry farming and thread made from the tough shell of silkworm cocoons, for example, can be found in the textiles displayed here.

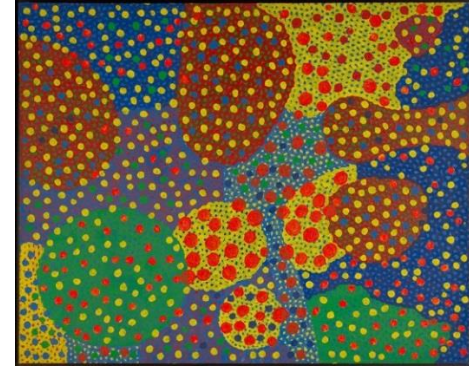
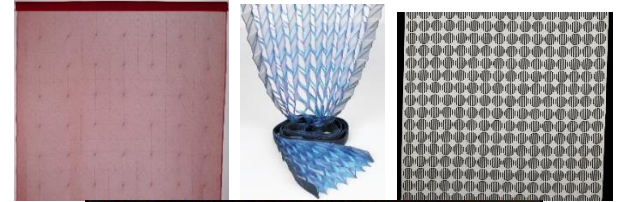
**Kusama Yayoi**, Japanese, born 1929

**Untitled**, 1967

Oil on canvas

The John R. Van Derlip Fund 2010.7

Kusama Yayoi left her native Japan at age 29 and moved to New York City, where eight years later she created this work, an exuberant painting of interlocking shapes and forms that seems to simulate at once the movement of cells and that of the universe. Kusama has made many of these works over the course of her life and calls them “infinity nets,” images based on hallucinations she has experienced since childhood. Giving physical form to these visions was a way to deal with them, as she has described in her book *Manhattan Suicide Addict*, a faux autobiographical account of her decade in New York. Kusama wrote of her infinity nets, “A polka dot has the form of the sun which is a symbol of the energy of the whole world and also the form of the moon, which is calm. Round, soft, colorful, senseless and unknowing. Polka dots can’t stay alone, like communicative life [sic] of people, two and three and more polka dots become movement. Our earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity.”



## Gallery 252: Flora

**Kanbe Tomoyuki**, Japanese, born 1975

**Foundation of Light**, 2006

Four-panel folding screen; color and gold on paper

Gift of Willard and Elizabeth Clark

At first glance, this appears to be simply an overhead view of a pile of ginkgo leaves in late autumn. Look closely to discover a whole host of other autumnal creatures, who have made a temporary home here.

Kanbe Tomoyuki has said that this depiction of nature and living





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creatures moving among the leaves with their small life dramas refers to the hardships of modern life. One of a series of paintings featuring similar seasonal scenes, the naturalistic appearance of Kanbe's paintings derives from a unique collage technique: he applies gold paint, gold leaf, and other mineral and metallic pigments on various kinds of paper and layers them. He paints the leaves on the bottom of the pile on hemp paper, and the middle and top layers on ultra-thin Japanese paper called *tengujōshi*. Thus the leaves actually overlap one another, just as they do in nature.

**Inaba Chikako**, Japanese, born 1974

**Leaf vessel**, 2017

**Porcelain**

Lent by Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz

Inaba Chikako's porcelain sculptures consist of organic, curvilinear forms that appear to flow as a natural extension of plant materials. Quiet and rhythmic, her works often mirror the shapes of seeds, leaves, or sprouts. Originally trained in Tokyo, Inaba traveled worldwide in search of inspiration for her work before settling temporarily in the ancient pottery town of Tajimi and later establishing her own kiln in another ancient pottery region, Shiga. Despite her location in these ancient centers of ceramics production, Inaba's forms and techniques bear little resemblance to traditional Japanese pottery.



**Fujikasa Satoko**, Japanese, born 1980

**Blooming**, 2016

Sand-glazed stoneware with matte white slip

Lent by Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz

To create her flowing, hand-built sculptures, Fujikasa Satoko carefully manipulates thin coils of Shigaraki clay, a rough and sandy but pliable clay that has been used by Japanese potters in the Shiga region for centuries. The process can take many months. Her extremely thin-walled and dynamic forms push the limits of technique, appearing as thin sheets of clay whipping in the wind or perhaps moving air itself.





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**Tokuda Yasokichi IV**, Japanese,  
**Rising Dragon**, 2017  
Porcelain with *yōsai* glaze  
Lent by Carol and Jeffrey Horvitz

Tokuda Yasokichi IV is one of very few female heads of a traditional Japanese pottery lineage, which tend to be dominated by male potters. Born Tokuda Junko, she succeeded her father, who passed away in 2010, as head of the Tokuda lineage of potters who have specialized in a style of porcelain called Kutani. Works made in this traditional style often feature vivid colors (red, green, purple, blue, and yellow) and are sometimes described as “overglaze enamels,” meaning that color is added to a glazed and fired body and is then re-fired at a lower temperature. This makes the colors particularly vivid. Tokuda’s work is a continuation of that of her father, who in the 1970s essentially replaced the overglaze enamels of traditional Kutani with a concentrated glaze called *yōsai* that is just as vivid. For her extraordinarily large, flower-shaped vase, Tokuda Yasokichi IV uses this technique in dark purple that fades as it moves up the “petals.”



A traditional Kutani plate featuring vivid overglaze enamels

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**Ono Hakuko**, Japanese, 1915–1996

**Flower vase**, c. 1980

Glazed porcelain with underglaze gold leaf

The Gary L. Gliem Endowment for Japanese Art, L2019.9

Ono Hakuko was born to a potter father and by her mid-twenties had already established her first kiln. In addition to learning from her father early on, Ono began an intensive study in 1964 with Katō Hajime (1925–2000), who was recognized as a Living National Treasure. From Hajime, she learned the difficult *yūri kinsai* technique, which she used to create this vase. For this time-consuming process, Ono first created the form and fired it (a preparatory step called "bisque firing"), adding to this hardened body initial designs in cobalt. Next, Ono cut and incised gold leaf and a finally a layer of lightly colored enamel, before re-firing the vessel. This intricate process resulted in the luminous, sunburst-like surface this vase. For her mastery of this technique, Hakuko became only the second woman potter ever to earn the prestigious Japan Ceramic Society Prize in 1980.



## **Yoshida Fujio**

**The six prints on display here are from a series created by Yoshida Fujio in the early 1950s, featuring close-up views of flowers common to the Japanese islands. Using traditional Japanese woodblock printing techniques, her pictures of the delicate, swirling insides of flowers like irises, gladioluses, and wild ginger border on abstraction. Yoshida Fujio was among the first women Japanese painters to work in the Western style. She was also the first female artist in the celebrated Yoshida family of painters, a leading artistic family dating back to the early 1800s. After traveling throughout North America in the early 1900s, preparing numerous sketches and drawings that gained her wide acclaim within the United States, she returned to Japan. There, especially after the end of World War II in 1945, she focused on oil painting and woodblock printing.**



**Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987

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### **Gladiolus**, 1953

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly give to the Center by H. Ed Robison, in memory of his beloved wife Ulrike Pietzner Robison 2013.29.528

### **Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987

#### **Iris**, 1953

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly give to the Center by H. Ed Robison, in memory of his beloved wife Ulrike Pietzner Robison 2013.29.530

### **Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987

#### **Yellow Iris**, 1954

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Yoshida family 2006.49.9

### **Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987

#### **Nasturtium**, 1953

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly give to the Center by H. Ed Robison, in memory of his beloved wife Ulrike Pietzner Robison 2013.29.531

### **Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987

#### **Myōga**, 1953

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly give to the Center by H. Ed Robison, in memory of his beloved wife Ulrike Pietzner Robison 2013.29.529

### **Yoshida Fujio**, Japanese, 1887–1987



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**Flowering Kale**, 1953

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of the Yoshida family 2006.49.8

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## Galleries 253: Biomorphism

Shinoda Tōkō

105-year-old Shinoda Tōkō started practicing calligraphy 100 years ago, when she began studying with her father. Beginning in the late 1940s, she began merging traditional Chinese and Japanese calligraphic traditions with Abstract Expressionism (AbEx), an artistic movement focused on expressing emotion through abstract art. Her work developed further in this direction when she studied the works of Jackson Pollock (1912–1956) an AbEx artist known for “drip” paintings. She studied his work over several years in the United States in the late 1950s, though she has never fully abandoned calligraphy.

Her abstract forms, which exhibit an unmistakable calligraphic sensibility, are intended to suggest the vitality of the natural world. In addition to her unwavering interest in calligraphy, Shinoda has also maintained an interest in traditional materials used in Japan for centuries: ink, metallic pigments, and metal leaf on Japanese paper. This hinged screen is an example of a traditional *furosaki*, a small barrier used during a Japanese tea ceremony.

**Shinoda Tōkō**, Japanese, born 1913

**Boat**, 1962

Two-panel folding tea screen; silver on blue paper, silver leaf

Mary Griggs Burke Collection; gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.200



**Shinoda Tōkō**, Japanese, born 1913

**Movement and Stillness**, 1964

Ink on paper

Mary Griggs Burke Collection; gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.202



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**Shinoda Tōkō**, Japanese, born 1913

**Untitled**, c. early 1960s

Ink and white pigment on paper

Mary Griggs Burke Collection; gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.203



**Koike Shōko**, Japanese, born 1943

**Shell vessel**, 1995

Stoneware with white and brown iron oxide glazes

Louis W. Hill, Jr. Fund 2008.17.1a,b

Koike Shōko seeks inspiration for her pottery in the shapes and forms of the sea, especially various types of shells. She exclusively uses clay from the area of Shigaraki (an ancient Japanese pottery center) and covers her forms with thick matte white glaze before adding darker accents to the edges in iron-oxide or metallic glazes.



**Koike Shōko**, Japanese, born 1943

**Snail Shell vessel**, 1990s

Stoneware with white and brown iron oxide glazes

Gift of Ellen Wells 2015.116.2





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**Katsumata Chieko**, Japanese, born 1950

**Biomorphic vessel**, 2005

Glazed stoneware

Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.347



**Katsumata Chieko**, Japanese, born 1950

**Akoda**, 2012

Glazed stoneware

The Ted and Roberta Mann Endowment Fund 2012.72.2



Katsumata Chieko forms her works by hand and then covers them with a thin cloth, through which she applies layers of color. Then she fires the form multiple times and applies more color, producing a soft but vividly colored object. Katsumata's vessels and sculptures are often inspired by forms and textures found in nature.

Katsumata trained as an industrial designer but devoted herself to pottery after a chance encounter with the American potter Fance Franck. After several years studying pottery in Paris, she returned to her native Japan, where she has become one of the most celebrated clay artists active today.

**Kishi Eiko**, Japanese, born 1948

**No. 20**, 1994

Stoneware with colored clay *chamotte*

Gift of David T. Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.31

Kishi Eiko is known for her laborious *saiseki zogan* technique, building geometric forms from raw Shigaraki clay mixed with crushed fired clay (called *chamotte* or *grog*). The surface is manipulated with needles and other small tools, resulting in a complex surface that can appear to change dramatically depending on how close you are to the work. From a distance they may appear as naturally formed rock strata, while up close they resemble carefully woven textiles.





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Kishi trained at Kyoto Arts University and the Ceramic Research Center in Hyogo before establishing her own studio in her native Kyoto. Unaffiliated with any of Japan's longstanding pottery traditions, she has been free to develop her own unique style.

**Kishi Eiko**, Japanese, born 1948

**No. 4**, 1985

Stoneware with colored clay *chamotte*

Gift of David T. Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.28



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## Gallery Consumerism

**Mishima Kimiyo**, Japanese, born 1932

**Untitled**, 2007

Sculpture; Glazed stoneware

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center by Jeanne and Michael Klein 2013.29.1159



**Mishima Kimiyo**, Japanese, born 1932

**Cultural News**, 2007

Sculpture; Glazed stoneware, gold

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center by the artist 2013.29.1046a-d

