

Otsuki Exhibition
Chicago April 2025

Kano School (Painting), Maruyama Okyo (Painter) and Ichinomiya Nagatsune set the foundation for Otsuki Mitsuoki and later generations

- **Kano School:**

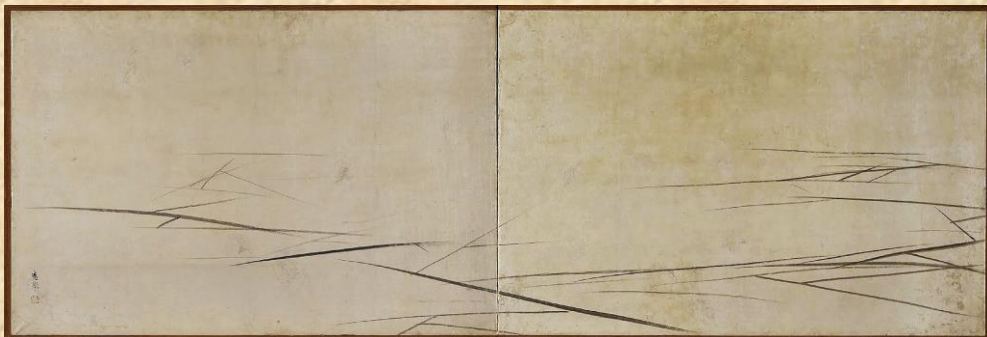
- Chinese painting techniques
- Developed its own unique characteristics by adopting elements of traditional Japanese painting (yamato-e).
- Bold brushwork and a predominance of ink.
- Initially predominance of ink and little to no color was used. Most of these paintings featured Chinese subjects, especially Zen patriarchs or Chinese landscapes
- Some of these qualities were decorativeness, patterns, and bright colors. It was the amalgamation of these two artistic styles that birthed the now-famous Kano style of painting

- **Okyo School**

- **Obsessive Observation (Shaseiga – Life drawing naturalist paintings, highlights and shadow,)**
- **Often his pictures feature a single subject on a plain background.**
- **Individualist or eccentric style , but also combined previous school's techniques**
- **These individualist painters were influenced by Western painting perspectives and scientific studies of nature and who frequently portrayed unexpected themes, or techniques, to create unique works reflecting their own unconventional personalities.**

Ichinomiya Nagatsune Signed: Echizen Daijo Nagatsune at the age of 65

- Maruyama Okyo and Nagatsune were contemporaries and both were taught painting and sketching by the Kano painter Ishida Yutei. Okyo's design were revolutionary and whose work was described as the reality of matter & illusion of space. **Both Okyo and Nagatsune were known for their sketches/sketchbooks.**
- This winter scene was done when Nagatsune was 65 and a year before his death.



Lineage of Otsuki School

- Kōrin (光林・光琳), **1st gen.** Gozaemon (五左衛門), ?-1742
- Mitsutsune (光恒), **2nd gen.** Kihachi (喜八), ?- 1785
 - Kagaharu (加賀春) Kawasaki fam. (川崎) 1776-1817
 - Aoki Harutsura 1804-1858 (May have also been a student of Goto Ichijo)
- **Mitsuyoshi (光芳・光良), 3rd gen.** Kihachi, later Gozaemon also **Yoshikuni (良邦)**, 1747-1816
 - Takaoki (孝興)
 - Ikeda Takatoshi (孝寿)
 - Ikeda Takao (隆雄)
 - * Kanō Natsuo (加納夏雄)
 - Motohiro (元広)

Focus of todays conversation

- **Mitsuoki (光興), 4th gen.** (1766-1834)

Ōki (応起) Minayama Naoichi (皆山直市)

Hideoki (秀興) Kawarabayashi (川原林) 1788-1851

Matsuo Gassan (松尾月山) 1815-1875

Tokuoki (篤興) Sasayama fam. (篠山) 1813-1891

Tokuaki (篤明) 1840-1889

Tokuhiro (篤弘) 1831-1871

Tenkodo Hidekuni (秀国) 1825-1891

- **Mitsuhiro (光弘), 5th gen.** Kihachi (喜八), later Gozaemon 1795-1841

- **Mitsuharu (光春), 6th gen.** 1830-1891

*Natsuo did not cite Nagatsune but Mitsuoki in explaining his artistic approach to his students at the Tōkyō School of Fine Arts.
Excerpt taken from “Kano Natsuo, his life, his art and his sketchbooks” by Markus Sesko

Otsuki School

The Ôtsuki school begins with Ôtsuki Korin (Mitsushige) who is a craftsman of Owari province in the early 1700s. He traced his lineage back 18 generations to Ichikawa Hirosuke who is (in legend at least) the founder of all kinko artists. Korin worked in Kyoto maintaining a shop called Senya and did metalwork of all types, including sword fittings, and followed the Goto style. Following him are Mitsutsune and Mitsuyoshi, but the 4th generation Mitsuoki would be one of the all time greats of kinko artists.

- Favorite themes included reeds, snow, crows, geese and moon.
- Often included poems
- Many styles of Inkan, Shirushi, kao, signatures

Kōrin (光林・光琳), 1st gen. Gozaemon (五左衛門), ?-1742

- Korin is founder of the Ōtsuki School, in which he refers to himself as having been a descendant of this artist in 18th generation, for example: “Nihon horimono-ganso Ichikawa Hikosuke jūhachi-seson, Ōtsuki Kōrin (日本彫物元祖市川彦助十八世孫大月光林) – “Ōtsuki Kōrin, 18th generation after Japan’s ancestor of engravings, Ichikawa Hikosuke.”
- Apart from that, not much is known about Kōrin, except for his first name Gozaemon (五左衛門), and that he temporarily also worked in Nagoya (名古屋) in Owari province and in Yoshida (吉田) in Mikawa province. His master is unknown as well, but it may be safe to assume that he was an artist of the aforementioned Ko-Kinkō group. Kōrin produced works in a Gotō-style shakudō-nanako with takabori-iroe, and also such of brass decorated with kebori and katakiribori, and also several solid gold menuki of his exist.

Korin – 1st Gen

Kōrin (光林・光琳), 1st gen. Gozaemon (五左衛門), ?-1742

CanDock or Kohone (Japanese 河骨) Also called Yellow Frog Lily.

- It grows in shallow water of ponds, lakes and is commonly used as an ornamental plant in water gardens. Yellow flowers that open during the day and close at night. The leaves are large and oval-shaped and float on the water's surface. Plant and flowers are edible and are used in salads or to make tea

Is it just nature/plant? Or Kotoba Asobi play on word or deeper meaning?:

- In Japan, honne and tatemae are Japanese terms relating to a person's feelings and outward behaviors.
- **Honne** refers to a person's true feelings and desires (本音, hon'ne, "true sound") a person's honne may be contrary to what is expected by society or required according to one's position and circumstances. They are often kept hidden, except with one's closest friends.
- **Tatemae** (建前) is what is expected by society and required according to one's position and circumstances



Mitsuyoshi (光芳・光良), 3rd gen. Kihachi, later Gozaemon also Yoshikuni (良邦), 1747-1816

- Mitsuyoshi was the son of Mitsutsune and was initially also named Kihachi (喜八), but which he changed to Gozaemon (五左衛門) later. Also, he had first signed with the name Yoshikuni (良邦) before he took the name Mitsuyoshi.
- We know that he lived in the Muromachi Sanjō-sagaru (室町二条下ル) neighborhood of Kyōto, which is located about 800 m east of Nijō Castle. Mitsuyoshi died on the 25th day of the eighth month Bunka 13 (1816), and his posthumous Buddhist name is Kōkōgan Rinboku Sōho (光興岸林朴宗甫).
- It appears that Mitsuyoshi was quite skilled, but for whatever reason few works of his exist.

Mitsuyoshi (光芳・光良), 3rd gen. Kihachi, later Gozaemon also Yoshikuni (良邦), 1747-1816

Theme: Vimalakirti – 12th-13 century painting. The sutra teaches, among other subjects, the meaning of nondualism, the doctrine of the true body of the Buddha, the characteristically Mahāyāna claim that the appearances of the world are mere illusions



Yoshikuni – 3rd Gen

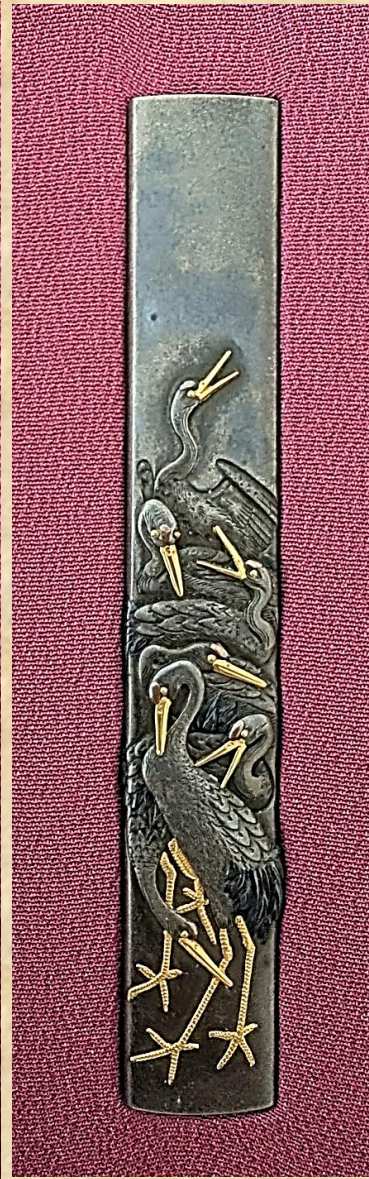
Mitsuyoshi (光芳・光良), 3rd gen. Kihachi, later Gozaemon
also Yoshikuni (良邦), 1747-1816

Ito Jakuchu
(1716-1800)



Fittings artist have always studied their painting counterparts, here we have the similar composition of Seven cranes. Depicting good fortune and longevity

Jakuchu was famous in the day and would have been copied by others. Famous for his bird paintings, “Seven Cranes” would have undoubtedly been used as reference.



Ôtsuki Mitsuoki – 4th Gen (大月光興)

- Ôtsuki Mitsuoki (大月光興) was born in Meiwa 3 (1766) and passed away on August 15 in the fifth year of Tenpô (1834). He was a son of the third generation master of the Ôtsuki School, Mitsuyoshi (光芳).
- He was first called Kihachirô , and then Gosaemon. Throughout his life, he used many art names including Ryûsai, Dai-Ryusai, Ryûkudô, and Shiryûdô. Upon the death of his father, he became the fourth and the most famous master of the Ôtsuki School.
- The Ôtsuki School was one of the largest schools of metal workers in Kyôto. Mitsuoki was highly renowned for his proficiency, which is considered equal to that of Ichinomiya Nagatsune. He trained many expert artisans in his studio, among whom are included his own son, Mitsuhiro and Hideoki who later became Ikkôsai, Matsuo Gassan, and Tenkôdô Hidekuni.
- He studied the art of drawing under Ganku and Rosetsu ,who was also in the Maruyam Ôkyo's studio. Metals favored by him include iron, shakudô, shibuichi, and brass. Among them, brass or shinchû was his most favorite for using as the ground metal.

Mitsuoki

ÔTSUKI MITSUOKI O-KOZUKA 大月光興

The kozuka is a combination of shakudô on the obverse which has been deeply carved in katakiri bori of a Bijin (beautiful woman or courtesan) waking with her attendant holding a large umbrella over her to protect her from the sun's rays. The shakudo is black and rich showing a high gold content. The reverse is made of shibuichi. The lower portion has been delicately carved with a "planes of Musashi" theme of a skull and bones lying among the weeds.

The upper part of the reverse has two lines of poetry which refer to the transitional state between death and rebirth promulgated by certain Buddhist schools. It is read as follows:

**Ashita ni kôgan arite,
Yûbe ni hakkotsu to naru.**

"In the morning, their faces are rosy and they are full of pride, but at the end of the day, they will also just be bones decaying in a field."

– Fujiwara no Yoshitaka (藤原義孝, 954–974)

The center left of the reverse has Mitsuoki's signature which reads, Tsuki Mitsuoki kore o tawamure (月光興戯之) which translates as, "Playfully, Tsuki Mitsuoki". It is said that he used this signature, Tsuki Mitsuoki, later in his life when he had fulfilled all of his artistic desires.



Ôtsuki Mitsuoki (大月光興)

- Oni no kannebutsu is one of the themes of Ôtsu-e, a popular genre of painting from Ôtsu, Shiga Prefecture. It depicts an oni wearing monk's clothing and performing winter training.
- Kannebutsu is a part of Buddhist religious training. It involves getting up before dawn on winter mornings and patrolling the streets loudly reciting prayers (*nenbutsu*). Oftentimes devotees bang a gong while repeating the name of Buddha, and visit house to house to collect alms. It is performed by ascetics and laypeople alike.
- This theme was very popular with Otsuki school



Ōki (応起) Minayama Naoichi (皆山直市)

- Dates of birth and death are unknown. Naoichi (直市), his workshop was Hishi-ya (菱屋), and he signed his name first with the characters (応興). Incidentally, the characters of his name, initial and later ones, can also be read Masaoki. Ōki used the gō Chikuhō (竹鳳) and Reiyodō (麗誉堂). Some sources list the latter gō as Reibokudō (麗墨堂). Later Ōki used the characters: Ōki (応起) .
- Tagane no Hana lists two places of residence, one at the intersection of Nijō (二条) and Aburanokōji (油小路), and the other near the intersection of Nijō and Ogawa (小川).
- Works are rare. Workmanship is refined and highly detailed, and that many of his fittings follow a quite gorgeous approach. Fittings depicting various Sennin, fittings depicting the Arashiyama (嵐山) and Takao (高雄) areas of Kyōto were noted in various books and articles

Ôki – Juyo Mitokoromono

kozuka mei:

遊仙之図 三所同作 竹鳳応興

Yûsen no zu mitokoro dôsaku Chikuhô Ôki
+ kaô

Motif of Yûsen, part of a set of mitokoro
(i.e. menuki, kozuka, fuchigashira) made by
my hand, Chikuhô Ôki + kaô

menuki divided mei:

応 (Ô) 興 (Ki)

fuchi mei:

麗譽堂応興

Reiyodô Ôki + kaô

Ôki himself named the theme of this mitokoromono on the kozuka: Yusen, a journey through the land of the Immortal Saints. Though his work is now very rare, this set is even more so as it bears his early style of signature. His inheritance from his teacher and the play on names is found within this set in several places as he uses two of his own chosen names of Chikuhô Ôki, and Reiyodô Ôki.

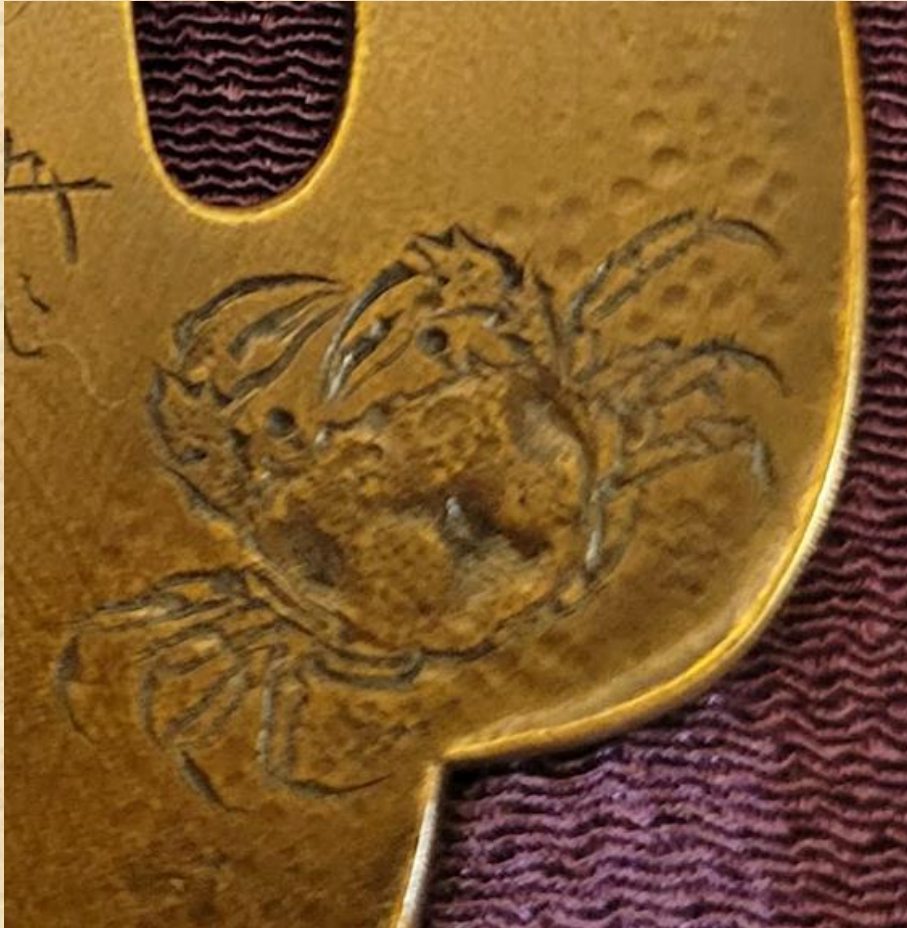
(Portions taken from writeup by Darcy Brockbank)



Gassaku:

Mitsuoki Mitsuoki (光興), 4th gen. (1766-1834)

/Oki Ōki (応起) Minayama Naoichi (皆山直市) Using later signature



Oni no kannebutsu is one of the themes of Ōtsu-e, a popular theme for Otsuki school artisans

On one level, the image is a caricature of religious hypocrisy, but on another level, it can be seen as a reminder of the path to salvation.

<https://yokai.com/oninokannebutsu/>

Signed:

裏毛彫光起(興)作

Ura Kebori Mitsuoki Saku

紋応起彫之

Mon Oki Ho Kore

The Japanese folktale about a crab and a monkey is called "Saru Kani Gassen" which translates to "The Battle of the Monkey and the Crab" demonstrating a theme of justice and retribution.



Mitsuhiro (光弘), 5th gen. Kihachi (喜八), later Gozaemon 1795-1841

- Mitsuhiro was the son of the fourth generation Mitsuoki and was born in Kansei seven (1795). His first name was Kihachi (喜八), which he later changed to Gozaemon (五左衛門), and he succeeded as fifth generation of the Yamashiro-ya workshop.
- Mitsuhiro lived in the vicinity of the intersection Yanaginobanba and (柳馬場) Nijō (二条), which is three blocks south of the Imperial Palace, although it appears that he also lived near the intersection of Ebisugawa (夷川) and Takakura (高倉), which is just two blocks to the east of the former place.
- Mitsuhiro used the *gō* Kishōtei (其昇亭) and Dairyūjō (大竜城), and when he entered priesthood at the age of 45, he took the name Sōju (宗寿). The fifth generation died on the 14th day of the second month Tenpō twelve (1841) and is buried at the Kōmyōzan Nenbutsu-ji in Kyōto. His posthumous Buddhist name is Ryōzan Sōju (量山宗寿), and he had a younger brother named Najirō Naomitsu (直次郎直光).
- Mitsuhiro's technical skill is similar to that of Mitsuoki, but he did not have Mitsuoki's imagination. That is Mitsuhiro's designs do not show original ideas and are more ordinary.
- Mitsuhiro's signature style varies over time, and it has to be pointed out that during the latter half of his career, he used a *kaō* that is very similar to *kaō* of the Gotō School

Mitsuhiro – 5th gen

Mitsuhiro (光弘), 5th gen. Kihachi (喜八), later Gozaemon
1795-1841

Jurōjin (寿老人) is one of Japanese mythology's Seven Gods of Fortune or Shichifukujin. He is the god of longevity, wisdom and immortality Chinese Taoist god.

People believe himself as the God of Wisdom and longevity had been live in the world for 1500 years.

Here with his staff, minogame (tortoise living 10,000 years) and his taoist scroll, the lifespan of living things



Hideoki (秀興) Kawarabayashi (川原林) 1788-1851

- Dated works of Hideoki are extremely rare. Hideoki was born in Tenmei eight (1788) in Kyōto, died on the second day of the twelfth month Kaei four (1851) at the age of 64 and had the first name Genshichi (源七), and lived near the intersection of Kamanza (釜座) and Oike-agaru (御池上ル). He initially ran a shop that produced fans named Tango-ya (丹後屋), and was also a *haikai* poet at the side.
- At some point in his life, he became a student of Ōtsuki Mitsuoki, and it turned out that he had a natural talent for engraving, which allowed him to become a renowned master of the craft. Hideoki used the *gō* Bunryūsha (文龍舎) and Hōsai (宝斎), trained many outstanding artists himself:
 - Sasayama Tokioki (篠山篤興)
 - Tenkōdō Hidekuni (天光堂秀国)
 - Matsuo Gassan (松尾月山)
 - yama Isshū/Kazuhide (亥山一秀)
- Among Mitsuoki's students, it can be said that Hideoki was most like his master and often produced Zen-like works that leave a lingering impression, and had a fondness for *Ōtsu'e* motifs.
- Hideoki mostly worked in *shibuichi*, followed by brass, but also used iron and *suaka* occasionally, and the vast majority of his fittings has a polished finish. Hideoki used the techniques of *takabori*, *usunikubori*, and *katakiribori*, which are usually enriched with *iroe* and/or *hira-zōgan*.

Hideoki - Hosai



The **Otowa Waterfall** is located at the base of Kiyomizudera's main hall. Its waters are divided into three separate streams, and visitors use cups attached to long poles to drink from them. Each stream's water is said to have a different benefit, namely to cause longevity, success at school and a fortunate love life. However, drinking from all three streams is considered greedy.

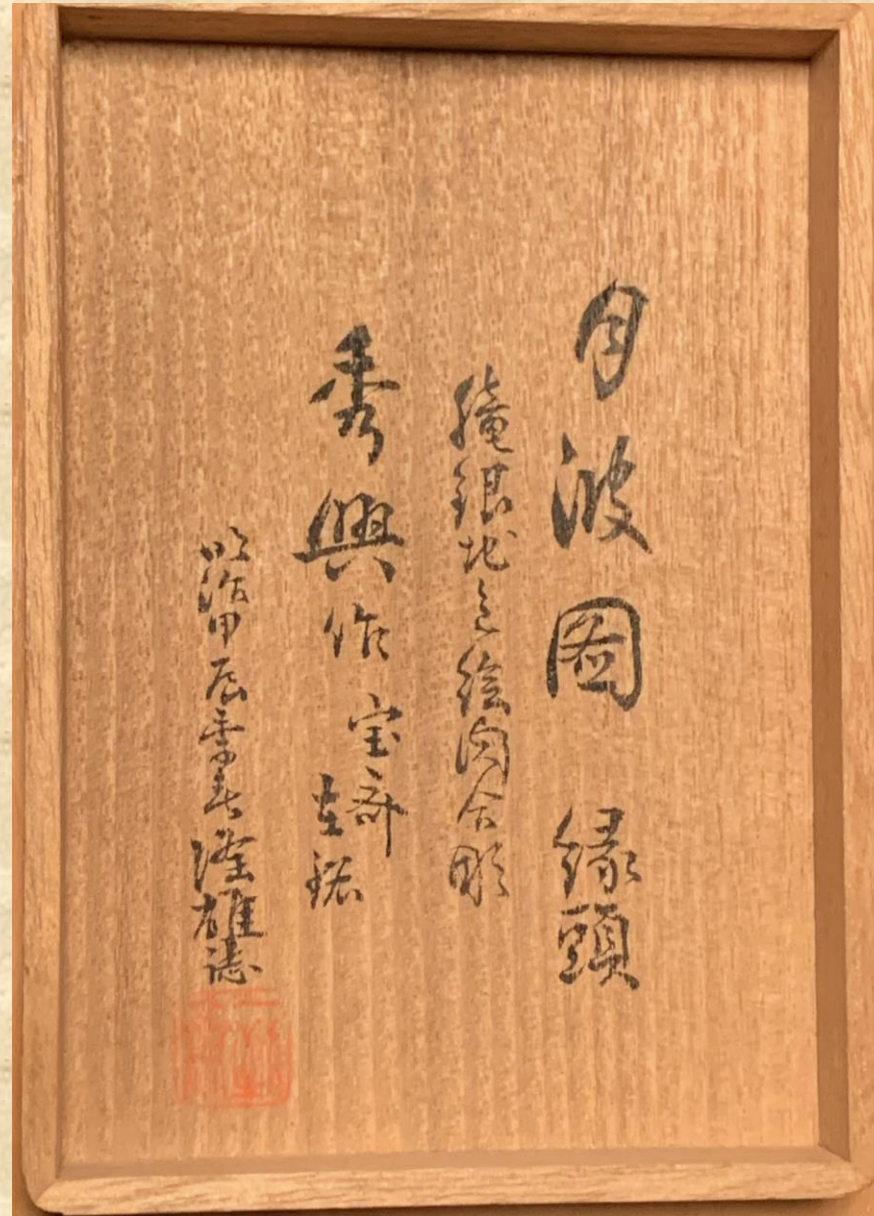


Hosai Hideoki (Kao)

Hakogaki by Takao (Natsuo's Brother)

Box (Ryushido) Mitsumura Toshimo
光村利藻 (1877-1955)

- This fuchigashira was in the Ryushido collection
- Mitsumura was a talented commercial photographer and printing entrepreneur. Born in Kobe, he was the son of Mitsumura Yahei. When Mitsumura was 14 years old, his father died, leaving him an enormous inheritance.
- Fascinated by the skill and beauty of sword fittings, he used his inheritance to amass a magnificent collection of swords and fittings of over 3,000 pieces. He held regular appreciation and appraisal events.



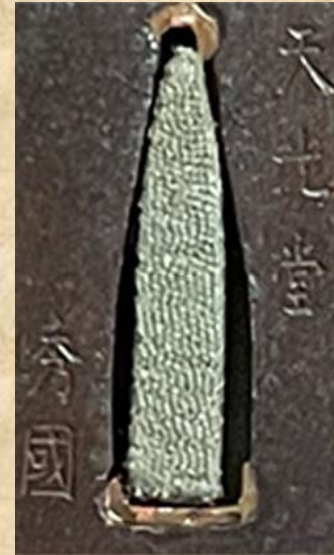
Tenkodo Hidekuni (秀国) 1825-1891

- Hidekuni's real name was Nakagawa Daizō (中川代蔵) and he was born on the tenth day of the third month Bunsei eight (1825) as the eldest son of a *kinkō* artist in Yonago (米子) in Hōki province. At the age of twelve or thirteen, Daizō started to learn the craft from his father, but at the age of 18 he went to Kyōto to study with a renowned master, entering so the workshop of Kwarabayashi Hideoki, who had been a fellow student of his father under Ōtsuki Mitsuoki.
- Daizō eventually married the second daughter of Hideoki, Ito (イト), and took the name Kwarabayashi Hidekuni. Hidekuni was 27 years old when his master and father-in-law died in Kaei four (1851) and when he succeeded as second generation Kwarabayashi.
- Around this time, he adopted the *gō* Kinryūsai (金龍齋) decided on the art name Tenkōdō (天光堂), which Hidekuni henceforth signed with.
- Regarding Hidekuni's signatures, the vast majority of his works is signed "Tenkōdō Hidekuni" (天光堂秀国). Like his master, he usually abbreviated the family name Kwarabayashi to as Kawa, and we know signatures of the type "Kinryūsai Hidekuni" (金龍齋秀国), "Kawa Hidekuni" (川秀国)

Tenkodo Hidekuni (天光堂秀国)

1825-1891

- This tsuba and accompanying fuchigashira are part of a daisho set included in the *Tagane no Hana*, which were part of the Mitsumura collection.
- Mitsumura as mentioned in the previous slide, produced a large set of reference books entitled, *Tagane no Hana*. The title, which translates as *Flowers of the Chisel*, encapsulates the fine beauty of sword fittings that is unfolded like a flower by the use of small chisels called *tagane*.



AOKI HARUTSURA 青木春貫 (1805-1858)

- Aoki Harutsura's (青木春貫) first name was Jinkichi (甚吉) and he was born in the second year of Bunka (1805) in Kyôto. Harutsura was first of all focusing on kozuka and kôgai and was referred to by the nickname Yamajinra (山甚裏). First, he learned from his father Jinsuke (甚助), but studied later with the Ôtsuki School artist Yamazaki Kagaharu (山崎加賀春) and it is said that he also learned from Uesugi Kazutsura (上杉加寿貫) and Gotô Ichijô (後藤一乗).
- Harutsura signed in a characteristically clerical script (reisho) and, among others in the variants “Harutsura” (春貫), “Aoki Harutsura” (青春貫), and “Seiryûken Harutsura” (青柳軒春貫).
- Most of his works are of shakudô or shibuichi and show a minute takabori ornamentation that is accentuated with many variants of zôgan-iroe. He died in Ansei 5 (1858) at the age of 54. One of his students was Masatsura (政貫)..

MENUKI BY AOKI HARUTSURA 青木春貫 (1805-1858)

These menuki truly testify to Harutsura's great skill and the cocks are interpreted in a powerful manner that makes them look like starting to set-off at any moment, only being held back by the courtiers who handle them.

This lively scene is very well captured and the use of the various zôgan-iroe accentuations is very typical for Harutsura. A dignified and very tense masterwork



Tokuoki (篤興) Sasayama fam. (篠山) 1813-1891

- Tokuoki was born on November 17 th of Bunka 10 (1813) and he passed away on December 10 of Meiji 24 (1891) at the age of 79. He was the eldest son of Yahan Teigogai. He married the eldest daughter of Kwarabayashi Hideoki and became his student. He worked in Kyôto.
- After the Meiji Restoration, he was placed in charge of the government office for the encouragement of industry located in Kyôto.
- Tokuoki's family names were Sasayama and Fujiwara. His art names were Bunsen, Bunsendô, Hôsendô, Ikkôsai, Manundô, Masaichirô, Ôsumi, Sensai, and Shôkatei.

TANTO KOSHIRAE BY SASAYAMA TOKUOKI 篠山篤興 (1813-1891)

- Sasayama Tokuoki belonged to the renowned Ôtsuki School of Kyôto kinko artists and had studied with Kawarabayashi Hideoki, who was the best student of master Ôtsuki Mitsuoki. At that time, the Ôtsuki School had given rise to many outstanding artists, e.g., Ôtsuki Mitsuhiro, Matsuo Gassan, and others. Among them, Tokuoki was held in particularly high esteem.
- In Bunkyû two, (1862) Tokuoki received an order to make the fittings for a sword to be worn by the Tokugawa Shôgun. For this he was awarded with the honorary title of Ôsumi no Jô. The year after, in Bunkyû three (1863), he had the honor of making sword fittings for Emperor Kômei and was given the art name of Ikkôsai on this occasion.
- The lacquer artist, Nagata Shûsui, (永田習水, 1811-1875) was one of the most talented masters of his craft from the Bakamatsu the Meiji eras. Shûsui worked for the Imperial Palace and for Emperor Meiji.
- With the kashira depicting Mt. Fuji, the menuki of two hawks, and the kojiri of three eggplants, the theme of the koshirae can be understood as Hatsuyume, the first dream one has in the new year. This dream would foretell the luck of the dreamer in the ensuing year. It is considered to be particularly good luck to dream of Mt. Fuji, a hawk, and an eggplant, a belief that has been in place since the early Edo period. In addition, the fuchi and koiguchi depicting pine needles and pine cones represent the New Year as well.

Tokuoki Juyo Tanto Koshirae

For complete details, please see link <https://nihonto.com/fw-81/>



Tokuoki



TSUBA BY SASAYAMA TOKUOKI 篠山篤興 (1813-1891)

This tsuba is part of a Tokubetsu Juyo koshirae



The omote has high relief carving with gold, silver, shibuichi and scarlet colored copper (hi-iro- dô) suemon-zôgan iroe (applied inlays with coloring). There is a kaku-mimi with ko- niku (squared with slight rounding).

This tsuba depicts the Aridôshi Shrine and the horse races held there as part of the May 5 th “boy’s day” celebration. It has an aori-itomaki-gata (off-centered square with rounded corners shape) with a shakudô nanako ground on the omote (obverse) and a shibuichi polished ground finish on the ura (reverse) representing day and night.



The ura has sukidashi takabori (high relief carving from within the surface metal) with a shakudô inlay and a sukinokoshi-mimi (raised rim) carved from the surface metal. There are two hitsu-ana with one hitsu filled with gold and the other hitsu lined with gold fukurin. The signature reads “Sasayama Tokuoki (篠山篤興kaô).

Tokuoki



Nagasawa Rosetsu

Rosetsu was a favorite artist of the Otsuki school and had a significant influence on Mitsuoki. Here you can see the similarities in the composition and likeness on the Fuchigashira by Tokuoki.

KANO NATSUO 加納夏雄 (1828-1898)

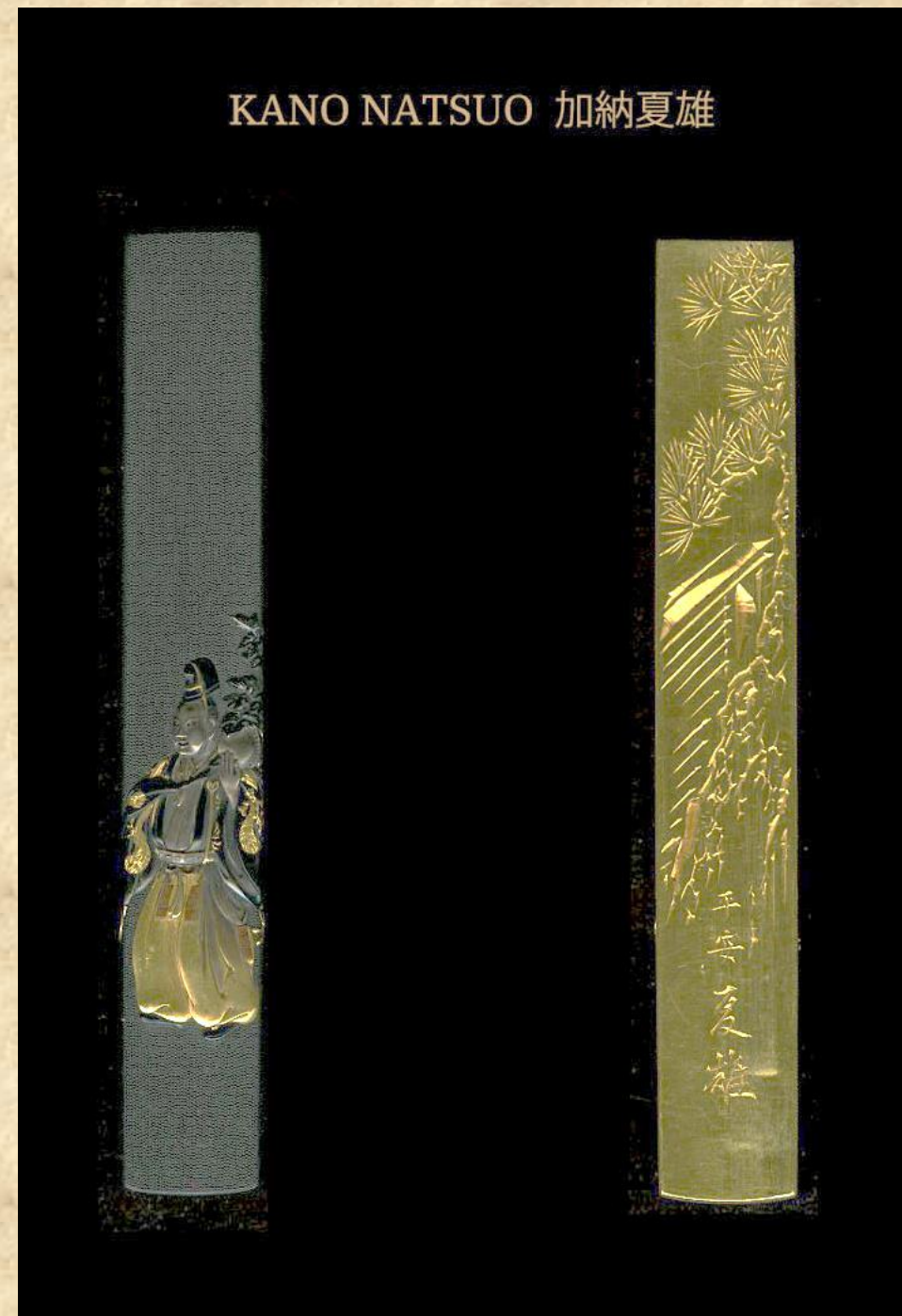
- Kanô Natsuo (加納夏雄) was born on April 14 th of the 11 th year of Bunsei (1828) as the son of a rice dealer in Kyôto. In the 5 th year of Tenpô (1840) at the age of seven, he was adopted by a sword dealer, and grew up learning the sword dealing business. At the age of twelve, he was trained by a goldsmith by the name of Okumura Shôhachi and studied the basic skills of metal work such as nanako and uchidashi chiseling.
- In the 11 th year of Tenpô (1840), he joined the studio of Ikeda Takatoshi (池田孝寿), who belonged to the Ôtsuki school to study the art of ke-bori and katakiri-bori. He was called Toshiaki around this time in his career. While training in metalworking, he also took drawing lessons from Nakajima Raishô (中島来) who belonged to the Maruyama school of painters.
- He also took Chinese classical literature lessons from Tanimori Tanematsu (谷森種松). These backgrounds in different areas account for Natsuo's workmanship based not only on excellent skills but also on intellectual taste.
- Natsuo opened a workshop in Kyôto and in the first year of Ansei ,1854, at the age of 27, he moved to Kanda in Edo. In the period of the late Edo Shogunate times and into the Meiji era, there were a great many artisans who produced outstanding artistic works. Among them all, however, Natsuo has long been considered to have been the best.
- Not only did he produce a great many works of art, he also trained and developed a good number of students who became great artists in their own right. Some of the more famous were Kagawa Katsuhiro (香川勝広), Tuskada Shûkyô (塚田秀鏡), Unno Shômin (海野勝珉) and Shôami Katsuyoshi (正阿弥勝義). Natsuo died on February 3, 1898.

KOZUKA BY KANO NATSUO 加納夏雄 (1828-1898)

This kozuka is part of a Tokubetsu Juyo koshirae
<https://nihonto.com/nakai-koshirae/>

Kozuka: July 7th, the shichi-seki or tanabata star festival

- The kozuka has an illustration of a courtier at a kemari kick-ball match. More specifically, this illustration is of the ceremony called Edamari, or going around with a branch, that leads up to the Nara era kick-ball game played during Tanabata (the July 7th festival). This ceremony is still conducted, and the game is still played at Shiramine-jingu in Kyôto.
- It has a shakudô nanako ground with high relief carving and gold silver, shibuichi and suaka zôgan iroe (inlays and coloring). The back plate is gold with katakiri and ke-bori carving illustrating an ancient pine tree. The signature reads Heian Natsuo (平安夏雄).



Natsuo (加納夏雄) (1828-1898)

Natsuo learned classical Chinese under Tanimori Shigematsu (谷森重松) and painting from Nakajima Raishō (中島来章, 1796-1871) from the Maruyama-Shijō school (円山四条).

At eighteen years old Natsuo (still signing as Toshiaki) became an independent artist and opened his own shop. He took inspiration in this time period from Ichimoniya Nagatsune, Otsuki Mitsuoki, the early Goto craftsmen, Somin, Yasuchika and Nara Toshinaga by making utsushi (reproductions) of their works..



Otsuki School



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