



STEVE SLY  
JAPANESE WORKS OF ART

MASTERPIECE LONDON  
30 JUNE TO 6 JULY 2022





PLATE 34  
MIXED METAL KORO  
Artist - Mori Yukiasu  
Company - Maruki

Cover detail  
PLATE 6  
CLOISONNE ENAMEL TRAY  
Artist - Namikawa Sosuke (1847-1910)



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## AN INTRODUCTION TO JAPANESE WORKS OF ART FROM THE MEIJI PERIOD 1868-1912

The artists and artisan craftsmen of Japan, a beautiful and mystical chain of rugged islands in the Pacific Ocean, have been responsible for the creation of Works of Art of such breathtaking technical quality and with such a refined aesthetic taste that they rank amongst the very finest ever produced by human hand. Quite some statement – but undeniably true.

For many centuries Japan had followed an isolationist policy leaving it largely untouched by and unknown to the Western world. It therefore comes as no surprise that, when their artistic output finally emerged onto the global stage from the mid 19th Century onwards at the various Trade Fairs across Europe and the USA, it stunned and enchanted an avid and eager audience.

You may find a brief introduction to the background of how this all came about to be interesting:

Prior to the Meiji Restoration, which commenced in 1868, Japan was a feudal society with a rigid class system with the military Samurai class being the effective controlling elite. The position of the Emperor was largely that of a divine but remote symbolic head of society. The country was divided into many provinces, which were in turn governed and administered by the local dominant Samurai family headed by a Daimyo (Lord) and backed by a great many loyal armed retainers.

This governing structure meant that wealth and to a large degree patronage of the artistic communities were concentrated around the Imperial households in Kyoto and the numerous provincial capitals. For centuries skilled metalworkers, potters, carvers and lacquer artists produced beautiful and refined works for their Samurai patrons and also for the very many and varied religious temples and shrines. Generally speaking the Samurai

possessed highly refined artistic and aesthetic tastes reflected in the beautiful architecture and interiors of their castles and residences and in the artworks that they enjoyed and treasured.

This rigid feudal system survived both periods of peace and of internal upheaval and civil war but it was not until the arrival of the Americans in their heavily armed steamships commanded by Commodore Matthew Perry in 1853 and 1854 that the Japanese were finally forced to face a “modern” Western world bringing with it far superior weaponry and industrial capability. The motives of America were quite simple – to force Japan to sign trade deals and to generally open their ports to American ships and trading delegations.

This situation and how to respond to it created great confusion and disagreement within the Samurai ranks but ultimately lead to the transfer of power from the Samurai Shogunate government back to the Emperor. This restoration of power to the Emperor is known as the Meiji Restoration and heralded the start of the Meiji period. He took the name “Meiji” as his reign name which translates as “enlightened rule” and his restoration to power officially commenced on 3rd January, 1868. Consequently, the Samurai class ceased to exist and were replaced by a new Imperial Army, trained and equipped by Western military advisors.

The newly empowered youthful and visionary Emperor could clearly see that Japan needed to take its place on the global stage and to accomplish that he went on to form a Government more akin to those found in the West and eventually signed various trade agreements, not just with the Americans but with many European powers as well.

### PRICE GUIDE



Up to £15,000



£15,000 - £30,000



£30,000 - £50,000



In excess of £50,000

Thankfully he was also a great patron of the Arts and his new Governments' efforts were immediately directed towards encouraging craftsmen from all disciplines to utilise their skills and knowledge in the production of high quality, new and more "fashionable" works of art. The sheer quality of Japanese Art in all its existing forms appealed greatly to many of the early foreign diplomats, travellers and military advisors who were in Japan during the early years of the Meiji Restoration. It was a natural inevitability that demand would rapidly increase for these fabulous things never before seen by the Western World. It therefore followed that the artists who created them would now start to make new and innovative works that were even more desirable to their new customers.

Also, Japan began exhibiting at the various world Trade and Art Expositions, Fairs and Exhibitions. This resulted in a truly remarkable explosion of demand from Europe and the United States who were enthralled and entranced by these superb and previously unseen exhibits. Artists now moved from the brink of poverty (caused by the loss of their Samurai patrons) to a position of having to satisfy an insatiable demand for their wonderful creations. This demand was to continue certainly for the rest of their lives and often for one or two generations of their skilled pupils. Major artists became extremely wealthy individuals and enjoyed an enviable position within this new Japan.

Many workshops and studios were established across all artistic disciplines in order to satisfy this massive demand. Some comprised highly skilled masters with just a few pupils through to far larger operations. However, it is worth noting that a large workforce did not necessarily mean a lower quality although it is

fair to say that demand had to be met across a whole spectrum of price ranges.

I hope this briefest of backgrounds conveys some of the astonishing achievements of these artists during a period of radical change and modernisation now that Japan was no longer just a mystical and fascinating country somewhere in the "Orient".

I have been dealing in and collecting Japanese Meiji Period Works of Art for the last 42 years and I promise you that handling even a modest work can bring immense pleasure, a masterpiece will leave you speechless!

Thank you for visiting this exhibition whether in person, online or through this publication.

Steve Sly





1

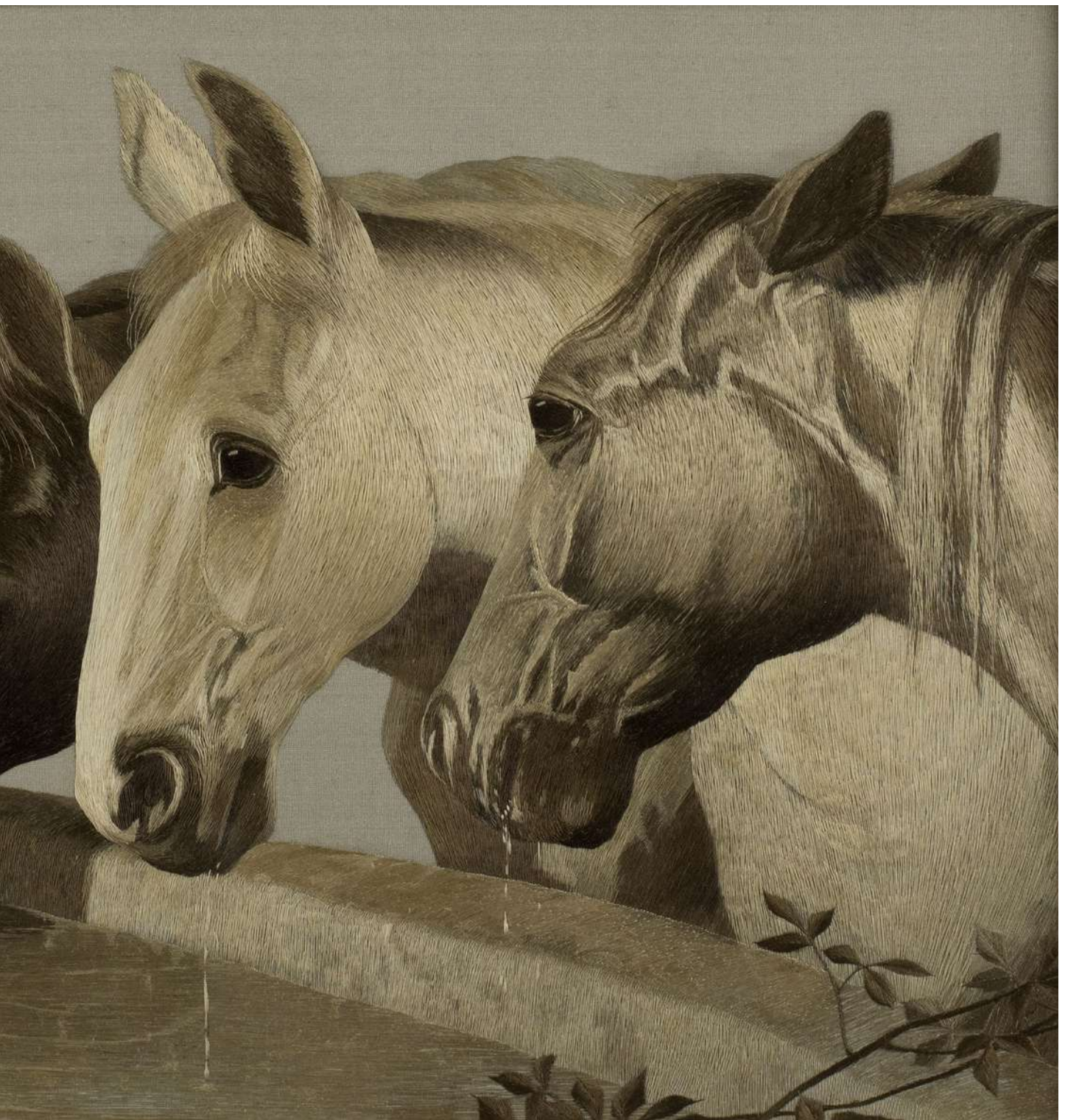
## SILK TEXTILE

Company - Nishimura

Charming silk textile finely rendered as three horses drinking at a trough, the textile housed within its original hardwood glazed frame and backed in with its original Nishimura company label, the artist has captured a quite majestic pose of three thoroughbred horses taking on water from a trough, the finest stitching imaginable brings these creatures to life, even down to the water trickling back into the trough, a most fascinating study by arguably the finest textile manufacturers of the period, a work of art that has been preserved for over 120 years and now available for your enjoyment.











### Literature:

There is little doubt that a major part of the phenomenon of Japanese works of art exploding onto the worldwide stage leading up to and during the Meiji period was bought about by the textile manufacturers of Kyoto, the most recognized of which will undoubtedly be the Nishimura company, founded in Kyoto in 1670 as textile traders.

It was the 12th generation manager Nishimura Sozayemon (1855-1935) aged just 17 and remarkably adopted into the family as the son of a Chinese scholar who took the company to its dizzy heights. As early as 1873 just one year into his tenure the company were exhibiting at expositions and even during that early period the company picked up significant awards and medals with recognition both nationally and overseas, particularly in Paris in 1878, thereafter the factory moved to new premises in Kyoto, presumably having outgrown their original site, this move coincided with the building of the new Imperial palace in Tokyo where Nishimura were commissioned to provide 64 embroidered wall panels. the highest accolade had surely now been achieved as "suppliers to the Imperial household" this was the ultimate marketing tool which was now used widely in the sales campaigns and specifically on the product labels, during the 1890's the company continued to innovate and execute new techniques, they employed the finest artists and embroiderers taking the company from strength to strength, multiple gold medals and notable awards were achieved at various national and international Expositions, there is little doubt that the appetite for Nishimura products were insatiable particularly in America and Paris where know traders were buying and or commissioning multiple items for their clients collections, and indeed their own gallery's, make no mistake some of these incredible works of art would have been expensive items at the time, with the finest pieces commissioned for the clients of wealthy merchant traders and Imperial household members.

It seemed as if Sozayemon coupled with his accolade of supplier to the Imperial household had cornered this highly lucrative market, this was the case certainly until the 1890's when the company faced stiff competition from the new kid on the block, Iida Takashima, a company founded in 1831 by Iida Shinshichi I (1803-1874) as a small retailer of non silk drapery products,

this modest shop called Takashima would through successive generations of the Iida family quickly rise to prominence as a major player on the world's stage, Imperial household suppliers and ultimately stiff competition for the long established Nishimura company. Having only gained a licence for the manufacture and sale of silk products as late as 1855 the new generation led by Iida Shinshichi II began to make inroads into the Kyoto retail market supplying mostly clothing rugs and its speciality Fukusa, to the emerging middle classes, in 1877 Iida first exhibited nationally winning numerous awards.

Following the untimely death of Shinshichi II in 1878 the company passed into the hands of the remaining siblings headed up at this point by the daughter in law of the founder Iida Utako who continued development of domestic products but with an eye on the emerging decorative textiles market, winning awards at major national and international expositions, the growth was rapid and Iida were clearly beginning to make inroads into the market once dominated by the Nishimura company, even head hunting Nishimura's finest artists to work for them, eventually in 1887 they too were commissioned by the Imperial household to supply amongst other items drapery and wall coverings for the new Imperial palace, this accolade resulted in two of Iida's weavers being elevated to the honorable rank of "Imperial artist" followed later in the 1890's with the Iida company officially recognized and now able to market themselves as "official manufacturers to the Imperial Household", had Iida outwitted their peers, clearly there was demand for two such important companies in what was at the time and clearly remains today a red hot market for arguably the finest textiles ever produced.

The above plotted history can offer only the briefest insight into an industry that simply took the audiences breath away when it launched onto the world stage during the latter part of the 19th century. For a more in depth study of Japanese textiles I would absolutely recommend "Threads of Silk and Gold" a pioneering study of Japanese textiles that accompanied the first ever textile exhibition held outside Japan, and curated by Clare Pollard at the Ashmolean museum in 2012.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 16 1/8" 41 cm

**Length:** 20 1/2" 52 cm

**Textile:** 33cm 22.5 cm

## SILK TEXTILE

Artist - Iida Takashimaya Company

Charming silk embroidered textile of a Japanese Chin dog aside a spray of peacock feathers, the picture housed within its original black lacquer cushioned frame bearing original makers label to the rear.

**Literature:**

See previous page.

**Height:** 26 3/4" 68 cm

**Width:** 21 3/4" 54.5 cm

**Depth:** 3 1/2" 8.5 cm





3

## LARGE BRONZE OKIMONO

Subject - Wild Boar

Artist - Atsuyoshi

Company - Maruki

A large-scale rendition of a wild boar captured in a purposeful striding pose by the well recorded artist Atsuyoshi, working for the highly acclaimed Maruki company, an establishment based in Tokyo and specialising in high quality carvings and sculptures. This captivating and rare size rendition has been finely detailed throughout by an artist clearly well versed with anatomy, Atsuyoshi specialised particularly in wild animal subjects, usually always for the Maruki company. The result on this occasion being a very humorous yet incredibly high-quality sculpture that would certainly be the focal point in any room setting, the roaming beast artist signed in script to the underside alongside the Maruki company seal.

### Approximate sizes:

Length: 35" 89 cm

Height: 16 1/4" 41 cm

Depth: 11" 28 cm







## 4

### HUGE SILVER & MIXED METAL BOWL

Artist - Miyamoto Shoko

Large and stylish Meiji Period 1868-1912, circa 1900, solid silver and mixed metal bowl by the renowned Miyamoto company, this significant scale vessel weighs over 172 ounces and is decorated with stylised Ho-o (Phoenix) and paulownia worked in shibuichi and gold alloys, the handles are riveted to the body exposing fine quality decorative studs, the bowl contains a removable wire basket for flower display as was the intended use when manufactured and perfect as an opulent table or consul centrepiece. Other functional uses could be as a large wine or champagne cooler filled with ice, whatever the use this magnificent vessel would grace any space as a significant focal point, signed Miyamoto Kinsei and carrying the Jungin pure silver mark.

#### Literature:

The Miyamoto company was founded in 1880 originally as a promoter of cigarettes, tobacco and supplier of cigarette cases, in 1899 it moved to Tokyo where it still trades to this day, with the emergence of wealthy tourists and high ranking diplomats came the renewed appetite for gold and silver items, Miyamoto began designing and supplying vast quantities of silverware and very soon became renowned as high quality commissioning agents who's patrons included the Imperial household and other government agencies, the company are still favoured by the Imperial household even today.

#### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 11 1/4" 28.4 cm

**Width:** 22 3/4" 58 cm

**Depth:** In excess of 172 troy ounces (excluding mesh insert)











## 5

### CLOISONNE VASE

Artist - Ando Jubei

Cloisonné enamel vase depicting narcissus flowers amidst Japanese red berry plants, the exquisite floral detail picked out in fine silver wire upon a jade background, the interior and underside heavily counter enamelled with the silver base rim stamped with the Jungin pure silver mark, the underside bears a full artist signature in silver script that translates to read "made by Ando Jubei", the vase comes complete in its original silk lined signed Tomobako.

#### Literature:

Ando Jubei 1876–1956 was a Japanese cloisonné artist who dominated Nagoya's enamelling industry from the late Meiji period until the mid 20th century, as an innovator working alongside such renowned artists as Kawade Shibataro, his works were favoured by the Imperial family as presentation gifts, Jubei exhibited at the Japan – British exposition in 1910 during a period that is now considered "the Golden Age of Cloisonné".

His works are housed in some of the world's finest museums and collections, indeed this vase, having been housed in a U.S.A. collection for 20-30 years, was by repute formerly part of the Osaka museum collection.

**Height:** 12 1/4" 31 cm

**Diameter:** 7 1/2" 19 cm





## 6

### CLOISONNE ENAMEL TRAY

Artist - Namikawa Sosuke

Charming cloisonne enamel panel manufactured by the Imperial enamellist Namikawa Sosuke in conjunction with the eminent Meiji Period artist Watanabe Seitei. On this occasion Sosuke has chosen a rectangular panel as his palette to painstakingly reproduce a Seitei painting in wireless enamel (Musen Jippo), whilst highlighting the cockerels heads and crops with fine gold wire, the scene bordered with shakudo rim for contrast and signed Seitei with seal to the front, the rear of the panel finely worked in plum and cherry blossom standard cloisonne with a central silver wire artists seal for Namikawa Sosuke.

#### Literature:

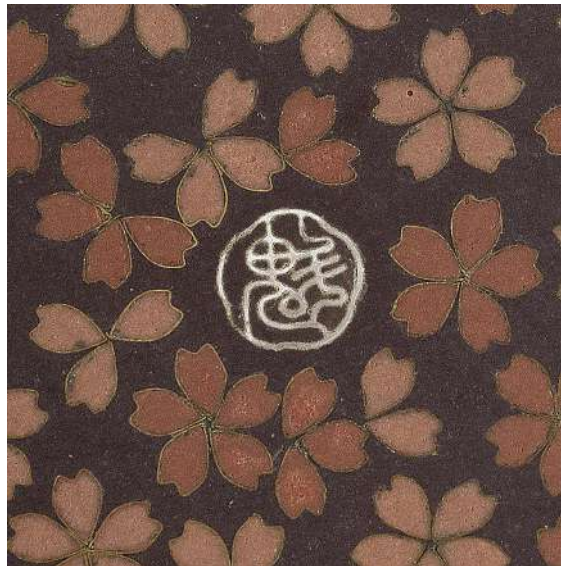
Sosuke was an absolute enamel master who along with his namesake Namikawa Yasayuki (no relation) were awarded the titles of Teishitsu Gigeiin (Imperial artists), Yasayuki worked in the more traditional elaborate and lavish wirework designs that have become synonymous with collectors worldwide, whilst Sosuke preferred to concentrate his skills perfecting the musen jippo (wireless technique). As in this instance, and as seen with many of his works Sosuke drew inspiration from tranquil landscapes and collaborated with the famous artist Watanabe Seitei (1851-1918) to produce such pieces, this tray bears the signature of Seitei with seal to the front as well as the silver wired signature of Sosuke to the rear.

For an identical example, on this occasion not bearing the Seitei signature, see: The Nasser D Khalili Collections, Treasures of Imperial Japan, Enamels Vol III, plate 100.

#### Approximate sizes:

Length: 9" 23 cm

Width: 6 7/8" 17 cm



## CLOISONNE ENAMEL VASES

Attr - Hayashi Kodenji

To conclude this year's Japanese works of art exhibition I am delighted to offer this outstanding quality pair of cloisonne enamel vases firmly attributed to one of the leading manufacturers of the golden age, having undoubtedly been manufactured at the Nagoya studios of Hayashi Kodenji I, 1831-1915 & Hayashi Kodenji II, 1859-1922. The deep blue enamel ground is brought to life with an opposing pair of wisteria trees within meadows of delightful cascading native flora, the trees worked in traditional and flattened silver wire to great effect, the floral displays picked out in remarkable detail with delicate cloisons of varying enamel colours, once again finely worked in traditional and flattened silver wires. The silver base and rims surmount more formal borders and further demonstrate the overall complexity and quality of these vases, a fabulous addition to your cloisonne enamel or Japanese works of art collection.

### Literature:

Hayashi Kodenji I 1831-1915 was one of the pioneer craftsman of the early Meiji period, working out of studios in Nagoya, Kodenji was instrumental in taking his wares to a wider audience, his marketing skills and determination to open up new overseas sales channels literally helped launch Japanese Cloisonne enamel production as well as the other highly regarded artists coming to the fore, onto the world stage.

It is recorded that Kodenji would have literally walked his wares to the port of Yokohama seeking out those foreign traders and routes to overseas markets. As early as the Paris expositions of 1867 & 1878 and Vienna 1873, Japanese cloisonne enamels were receiving glowing acclaim and winning medals. Following Hayashi I came the other most famous makers Namikawa Yasayuki and Namikawa Sosuke (who were not related), the trio going on to win numerous gold medals at the various expositions of the period, with the two Namikawa artists so instrumental in pioneering new enamel colours and wireless techniques, eventually being rewarded in 1896 with the highest possible accolade as artists to the Imperial household (Teishitsu Gigei-in). Quite how Kodenji was overlooked is beyond belief when you study the workmanship of some of his finest pieces, many of which are now residing in the world's leading museums and private collections.

It is probably fair to say that today's enlightened enamel collectors would certainly rank him alongside the other two as the trio of luminary artists of that golden age of cloisonne manufacture.

**Height:** 5 7/8" 15 cm

**Diameter:** 3" 7.5 cm







8

## CLOISSONNE ENAMEL VASES

Artist - Ando Company

Large pair of Meiji Period 1868-1912, circa 1910, cloisonne enamel vases by the highly regarded Ando company, this most unusual pair of vases depict a bright eyed owl in a tree top setting, gazing out at the night sky, the opposing vase simply designed to highlight the birds moonlit setting, the main body of each vase painstakingly enamelled in a wireless technique (musen) to demonstrate the effect of a moody night sky, the artist has very cleverly graduated the enamels from blue to grey. The owl and main foliage are worked in standard cloisonne techniques with the use of silver wires, each vase is fitted with substantial silver base and neck rims and signed to the underside with the Ando seal.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Height:** 14 1/4" 36 cm

**Diameter:** 7 1/4" 18.5 cm











## 9

### LACQUER SCULPTURE

#### Iki Ningyo (living doll)

As part of this exhibition we are delighted to offer this quite dramatic carved wood and lacquered figural group depicting a battle between a Japanese fisherman and a large octopus, or devil fish as it was also known, these types of ware were known as Iki Ningyo (living doll). The artist has captured the battle in staggering lifelike detail, every muscle on the fisherman being strained as he battles to kill his quarry, the octopus tentacles entwined upon every limb of its captor, only the safety net of the knife will surely render the fisherman the winner of this battle, the images speak for themselves.

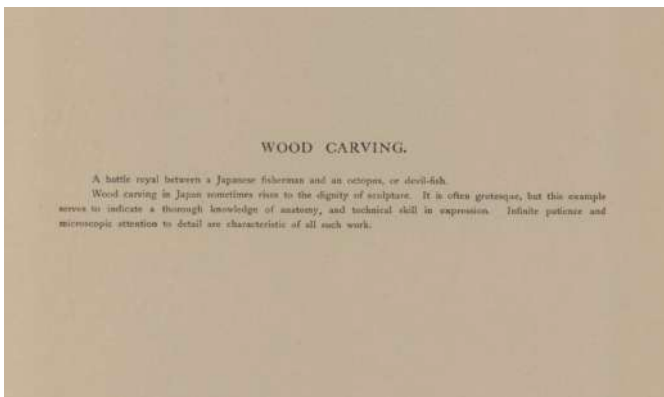
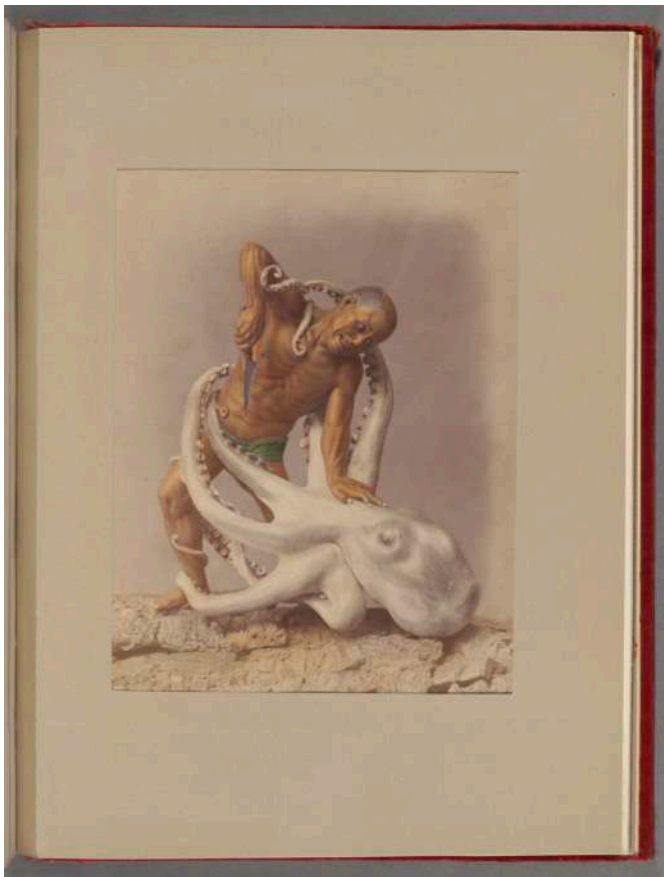
#### Literature:

Remarkably we have been able to trace this exact sculpture to a publication edited by Frank Brinkley (1834-1912) a famous ex-military man, journalist and promoter of Japanese language and the arts of the Meiji period. Brinkley not only taught the Japanese military his naval skills but also worked for the Emperor Meiji in other capacities promoting Japan.

In 1881 until his death in 1912 his business as the owner of the Japan mail, soon to be known as the Japan Times, was essentially part funded by the government due in part to its staunch pro Japanese stance, this publication was the most widely read by the English-speaking population in Asia.

Brinkley's book entitled: Japan, described and illustrated by the Japanese. Boston: J.B.Millet Company, 1897-1898. Imperial edition.

As well as the hand-coloured plate of the group resting upon a cork ground you will note a paragraph from Brinkley describing what he sees whilst exclaiming the incredible skill of the artists carving such pieces.



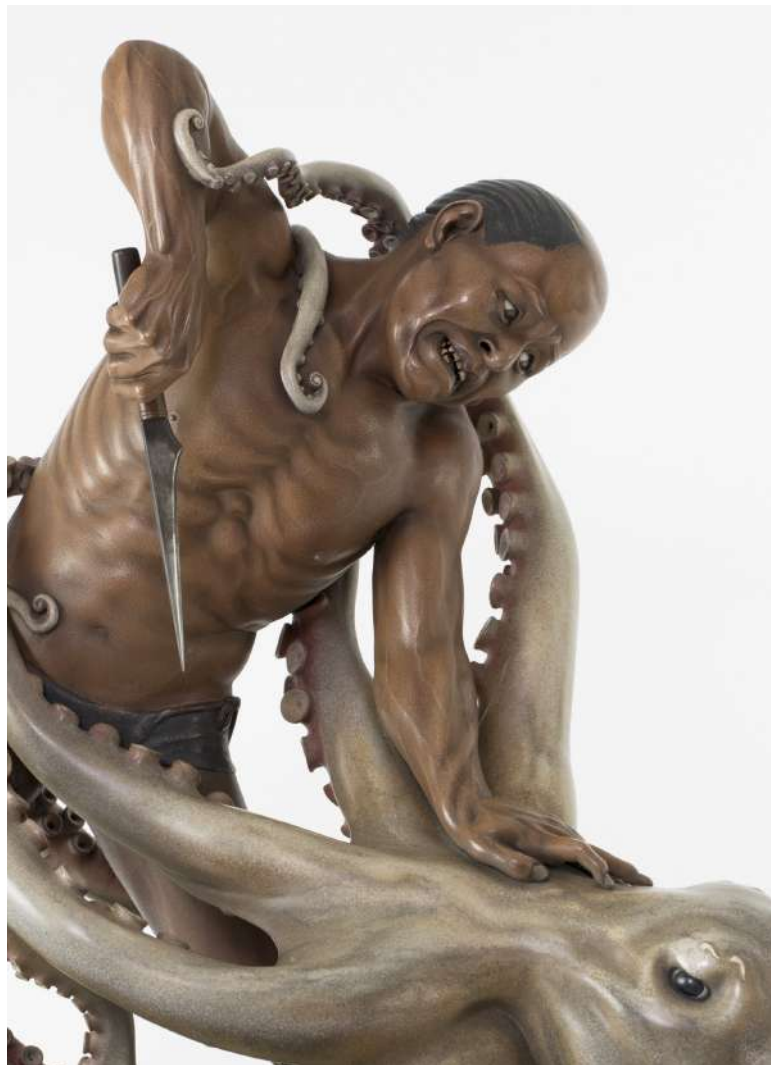
### Iki Ningyo

These incredible lifelike studies of everyday people and scenes of Japan were known as Iki Ningyo which literally means living doll, such was the skill of these artists to replicate the anatomical form in such fine detail. Originally life size studies were used in the domestic market at shrines and as part of fairs & travelling exhibitions. The emerging wealthy tourists and early visiting dignitaries to Japan soon became the new eager audience, thus creating demand for smaller more intricate models of characters going about their daily lives, rickshaw pullers and market traders were some of the more common models. Museums in Europe and the USA were inspired to commission life size studies of people, including Samurai, with a pair of 224 cm high Sumo wrestlers now residing in the Sheffield Museum, having been gifted to them in 1891 by a patron emigrating to Japan.

Some 125 years since this publication I am absolutely thrilled to be able to offer this rare item to the market as part of this year's exhibition.

#### Approximate Sizes: (excluding base)

<b>Length:</b>	18"	46 cm
<b>Height:</b>	19 1/2"	49.5 cm
<b>Depth:</b>	10"	25.5 cm





## MIXED METAL IRON PANEL

Artist - Hagiya Katsuhira

Mixed metal Iron panel by Hagiya Katsuhira 1804-1886, his art name Seiroken, the ironwork panel housed within its original hardwood frame depicts the often seen but nonetheless charming subject of Birds upon a branch of native flora, this particular early Meiji period panel demonstrates all the skills of a leading Mito school metalworker more akin to making tsuba and sword fittings for the shogunate and now adapting his unique skills to satisfy the emerging western market. The inspiration for this naive yet charming study is probably from an earlier Japanese or even Chinese painting. Artists with such breathtaking metalworking skills as Katsuhira could simply replace a paintbrush with a chisel and produce staggering quality works of art. Katsuhira would have been very adept working with bronze and other such soft alloys as gold, silver and shakudo, as this panel clearly demonstrates.

Signed within a gilt signature seal and housed in its original period frame, a beautiful work of art from a leading Edo / Meiji period metalworker.

### Literature:

Hagiya Katsuhira was born in 1804 as Terakado Yasuke, he took his name from a combination of the Mito masters who taught him and subsequently went on to become one of the most eminent Mito school artists and tutors, with many of his works now residing in the worlds most recognized museums and collections, in 1844 Katsuhira began working directly for the Mito clan where he took on the role of Goyo or official artisan for the Mito Tokugawa Daimyo, this role would have likely given Katsuhira special privileges including the ability to wear Swords in public places, a privilege usually reserved for the Samurai classes, he went on to teach such famous artists as Unno Shomin and Kano Natsuo amongst others, with one of his two sons Suzuki Katsuhira achieving the status of head craftsman to the Suzuki family and thus adopting their name, Hagiya and died at the age of 83 in 1886.

**Length:** 25 1/2" 65 cm

**Height:** 18 1/2" 47 cm

**Depth:** 3/4" 2 cm











# 11

## MIXED METAL TSUITATE

Artist - Hagiya Katsuhira

Silver & mixed metal table screen by one of the leading artists of the late Edo early Meiji Period, Hagiya Katsuhira, the main frame of this delightful Tsuitate (table screen) is manufactured from silver in the form of bamboo, the central panel has been cleverly formed as sprays of bamboo offering a pierced double sided aspect into which is housed a sensational quality mixed metal roundel, depicting the seven lucky gods at sea upon the Takarabune (treasure ship). The artistry and metal work is simply breathtaking and fully demonstrates metalwork skills of Katsuhira during the latter years of Edo as a Mito school master, as well as reinforcing his new found ability to cross over into the emerging export market, working on commission for such forward thinking companies as Ozeki.

### Literature:

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In 1844 Katsuhira began working directly for the Mito clan where he took on the role of Goyo or official artisan for the Mito Tokugawa Daimyo, this role would have undoubtedly given Katsuhira special privileges including the ability to wear swords in public places, a privilege usually reserved for the Samurai classes, he went on to teach such famous artists as Unno Shomin and Kano Natsuo, amongst others, with one of his two sons (Suzuki) Katsuhiro, achieving the status of head craftsman to the Suzuki family, and thus adopting their name, Hagiya died at the age of 83 in 1886.

See Plate 18 - 2020 Vision of an enlightened ruler - for a mixed metal panel by this artist.

See plate 16 - 2020 Vision of an enlightened ruler Vol II - for a mixed metal panel by the artists son, Suzuki Katsuhiro for the Ozeki Company.

### Approximate sizes:

Height:	9"	23 cm
Width:	8 1/4"	21 cm
Depth:	3"	7.5 cm











12

## KAZARIDANA DISPLAY CABINET

Artist - Unknown

This black lacquered hardwood cabinet rests upon a simulated bamboo stand with the bamboo theme following throughout the structure, the display shelves decorated with pierced open fretwork gallery's, the door and drawer fronts decorated in sumptuous gold lacquer decoration upon well textured natural timber panels. The unknown lacquer artist has captured egrets, geese and other native birds either in flight or wading amidst Lotus plants and lakeside foliage, the doors latch closed with mixed metal decorated catches, a further pair of doors adorned with floral displays and silver handles, the sliding panel decorated upon a carved wicker ground features a cockatiel sat upon a perch preening its feathers.

**Height:** 53 1/2" 136 cm

**Width:** 45 1/4" 115 cm

**Depth:** 13" 33 cm











## LARGE SILVER & MIXED METAL VASE

Artist - Hasegawa Issei

Large pure silver and mixed metal vase by the highly regarded and well recorded artist Hasegawa Issei, his art name Gyokutosai, on this occasion the artist has crafted a four panel mixed metal vase rising to a very charming flared and folded neck rim, the well-defined four section vase depicting individual scenes of native birds worked in mixed alloys. The first panel depicts a solid shakudo crow upon a prunus cherry blossom tree, his eyes rendered in gold, the opposing panel depicts a Japanese wagtail aside a lakeside setting, the third panel displays a silver snowy egret in flight and the final scene shows a pair of oriental ducks feeding within a lake. A most charming hand made vase by a highly skilled and well recorded artist, the vase nicely signed to the underside and would make a charming addition to your Japanese works of art collection.

### Literature:

Hasegawa Issei (art name Gyokutosai) worked in Asakusa Tokyo during the Meiji era, he exhibited at the Chicago columbia exposition (1893), Liège exposition (1905) – he exhibited a crystal ball on a metal base, and was recorded at the Paris exposition (1900) exhibiting a silver vase, as well as an incense burner and bird subject okimono.

The Kyoto Sannenzaka Museum has several works by the artist.

The Khalili collection has two works by the artist reproduced in The Meiji no Takara, Metalwork (Part I – plate 66, and Part II – plate 130).

### Approximate sizes:

Height: 11 7/8" 30.2 cm

Width: 4.75" 12 cm





14

## MIXED METAL KODANSU

Artist - Nogawa Company

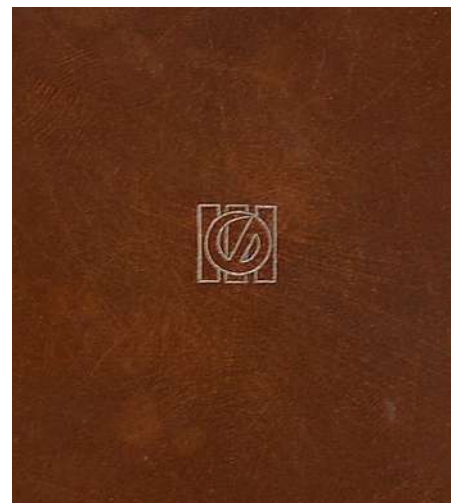
Mixed metal Kodansu cabinet by the Nogawa company of Kyoto, the caramel bronze body has been inlaid with a multitude of mixed metals capturing tranquil garden scenes with birds and butterflies in flight amidst native flora, the domed top decorated with various scholars implements amidst stylized clouds and surmounted by an opulent gilt carrying handle resembling opposing beasts. The cabinet stands upon silver mounted and finely decorated shakudo feet, the door hinges and hardware detailed with gilt wirework, the interior houses a set of three graduated hardwood drawers each decorated with mixed metal work, the individual button handles in the form of silver and gilt chrysanthemum.

The cabinet bears the Nogawa company seal to the underside.

**Height:** 7 1/2" 19 cm

**Length:** 6 1/4" 16 cm

**Width:** 4 3/4" 12 cm





15

## BRONZE OKIMONO - DRAGON KING OF THE SEA

Artist - Otake Norikuni

Large cast bronze sculptural okimono depicting Ryujin, Dragon King of the sea, this finely cast bronze figure stands upon a rectangular base, the base itself raised upon mythical beast scroll feet, the frieze decorated with animals of the zodiac to each of the four sides with the corners of the base represented as birds, their tails forming the gallery. The highly regarded and well recorded artist Norikuni has captured Ryujin holding a gilt Tama (sacred jewel) whilst standing bare foot upon a huge Dragon Fish, the imposing figure incredibly well cast and chiselled in fine detail, particularly his facial features, flowing hair and elaborate robe, his helmet further surmounted with a writhing dragon, the artist has fully signed this large and imposing piece to the underside of the base which translates to read - made in Tokyo great Japan by Otake Norikuni.

A great statement piece to add to your Japanese okimono collection or just to place as an impressive and interesting talking point in a room of your choice.

### Literature:

Otake Norikuni was one of a handful of luminary bronze casters of the late 19th century working alongside such leading lights as Oshima Joun at the Tokyo school of art and taking inspiration from master wood carvers such as Takamura Koun 1852-1934. Norikuni exhibited at many of the expositions of the period winning multiple medals for his breath-taking works, some of which can be found today in the collections of Nasser D Khalili. In particular Vol II of metalwork, plate 98 depicts a very similar subject of a sea god presenting the jewel to Susanoo, a very similar study was also recorded as having been produced by Oshima Joun, and others, for the 1851 industrial exhibition.

### Approximate sizes:

Height: 23 3/4" 60.5 cm

Width: 13" 33 cm

Depth: 8 1/2" 21.5 cm







16

## MONUMENTAL MIXED METAL EXHIBITION VASE

Artist - Suzuki Chokichi

Company - Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha

Massive early Meiji Period 1868-1912, circa 1882, bronze and mixed metal floor standing baluster vase fully signed by the Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha, a government sponsored company formed in Tokyo in 1874 and soon to be headed up by the illustrious Suzuki Chokichi, his art name Kako. The vase stands upon a traditional footed base with ribbed decoration repeated on the shoulders and top rim, the main body of the vase is formed from a mixture of alloys to produce stunning autumnal effects that are instantly recognisable as works produced by Chokichi during his early years at the company, rich tones of red, black and nutty brown interspersed with green give rise to a most charming alloy upon which Chokichi has applied lavish mixed metal foliage and floral displays, with the use of alloys such as gold, silver, copper and shibuichi to name a few. The main central band of the vase has been hand planished to offer a different texture, on this occasion Chokichi has demonstrated flush inlay techniques with the use of shibuichi, silver, copper and two colours of gold, portraying paulownia and associated foliage. Finally, as if that were not enough painstaking work the vase terminates with a pair of bands to the foot and neck rims, each decorated with stylized floral mon in lavish gold, silver and copper. A simply breathtaking example of the skills of one of the most highly revered Japanese metalworkers of the Meiji period.







### Exhibitions:

The identical vase was exhibited at the 1883 Boston exposition upon the stand of the Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha company, it stood opposite another vase, this time decorated with an owl in flight that we now know to be housed in the famous collections of Professor Nasser D Khalili, Treasures of Imperial Japan, Metalwork Vol I - plate 3.

Almost 140 years later I feel both privileged and honoured to be able to host such an important piece of documented Japanese history in this year's exhibition catalogue, and I very much look forward to finding a suitable home to preserve this magnificent vase for future generations.

When studying all the highly skilled techniques on this mammoth project it is easy to understand why Chokichi's company was instrumental in the rapid growth of the emerging export market and the subsequent huge demand for Meiji period metalwork. His success eventually rewarded with the rare accolade of Imperial artist (Teishitsu Gigeiin) to the emperor Meiji, himself a patron of the arts of this magical period.

### Approximate sizes:

Height: 36" 91 cm

Width: 17" 43 cm







17

## SILVER CARP OKIMONO

Artist - Tansho

A magical pair of cast silver carp upon an oval black lacquered base, the carp finely rendered from pure silver with mixed metal eyes picked out in shakudo, shibuichi and gold, the fish have been sculpted in fine and realistic detail, in particular the scales and fins, and overall the balance of the fish are a perfect lifelike rendition. The fish are positioned upon an oval black lacquer base where they display to the best effect, each carp signed to the underside Tansho, and bearing the jungin pure silver mark, come complete with signed Tomobako.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Length of carp:**

11 1/4" 28.5 cm

8 3/4" 22 cm

**Base:**

17 1/2" 44.5 cm

12 1/2" 32 cm







## MIXED METAL VASES

Artist - Suzuki Chokichi

Company - Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha

Delightful pair of mixed metal multi patinated bronze vases by the highly regarded Imperial artist Suzuki Chokichi, his art name Kako, here Chokichi has used his exceptional skills to showcase mixed alloy techniques in sensational autumn colours, the crusty skin of these incredibly heavy vases is a combination of greens, browns and reds that only Chokichi could have perfected to this standard, and are instantly recognisable as his work. The native birds are cast and chiselled in fine detail and once again synonymous with work by Chokichi, the other decoration demonstrates the artists abilities and eye for the unusual, bright gold hanging bean pods are interspersed with other native flora on one vase, whilst mixed metal catkins and interesting grasses decorate the other. Each vase has been painstakingly inlaid around the shoulders with a band of geometric gold floral decoration and is signed to the underside with the full signature of the Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha, a most charming pair of vases from the early production period of Chokichi's output, certainly pre 1891, and just delightful in every respect.

### Literature:

As previously stated Suzuki Chokichi (Kako) was director, designer and lead artist of the government sponsored Kiritsu Kosho Kaisha company until its closure in 1891, his adventurous artistic ideas, as demonstrated in these vases, were reputedly not always well received by the government funded factory, they probably had one eye on commercial quantity and more repetitive works than Kako would have liked, he went on to produce many other individual high quality and now famous works housed around the world's great collections and leading museums, including a monumental 2.8m Koro surmounted by an Eagle which resides in the Victoria and Albert museum, and arguably his most famous known work being a set of twelve mixed metal birds of prey, now rightfully resting in the Tokyo national museum.

Suzuki Chokichi's work was eventually rewarded in 1896 when he was granted the rare accolade of becoming an Imperial artist (Teishitsu Gigeiin).

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 11 5/8" 29.25 cm

**Width:** 6" 15.3 cm







## SILVER INCENSE BURNER

Artist - Gyokuruken Sanmi / Kazumi

A cast solid silver and mixed metal Koro (incense burner) in the form of a Shi Shi Dog or "Komainu" the Japanese counterpart, also generically known as a Lion Dog or Foo Dog.

The skilful artist Sanmi (also known as Kazumi) has captured great movement in this mythical beast, its front paws rest upon the solid shakudo and gold ball which also forms the receptacle for incense, the creatures tongue articulates to open and close off the incense escape route, artist signed to the underside.

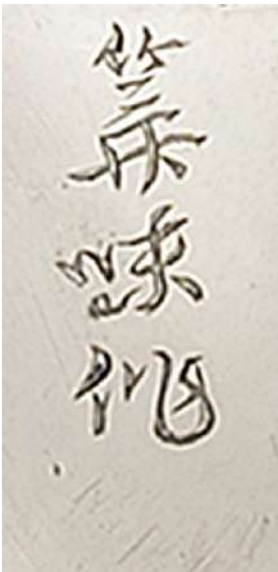
### Literature:

A strikingly similar, though smaller, version of this Koro can be found on Page 109 of "Splendours of Imperial Japan", that example commissioned by the Ozeki company.

The Komainu or Shi Shi Dog are most often seen in pairs as guardians of Buddhistic Temples and Shrines in Japan, usually one with its mouth closed and the other open, apparently chanting in unity Buddhistic words with symbolic meanings of beginning and end.

**Height:** 6 3/4" 17.5 cm

**Length:** 6 3/8" 16 cm













20

## IRON WALL PANEL

Subject - Eagle in moonlight

Artist - Not Known

This captivating Meiji Period iron and mixed metal onlaid wall panel depicts a large majestic eagle perched upon a tree in a moonlit setting. The highly skilled yet unknown artist has captured the most charming pose of a bird of prey gazing towards the moonlit sky, the scale of the bird understandably portrays him posed as the striking feature, his feathers finely delineated and highlighted in gilt with a silver breast and gilt and shakudo legs, his head turned gazing up to the night sky with his enormous shakudo beak glistening in the moonlight, the autumnal foliage multi patinated in the style reminiscent of Suzuki Chokichi's early works and contrasted perfectly against the riven iron backdrop, all housed in a contemporary looking but original period matt black frame. If you capture the light perfectly on the moon the scene instantly comes to life, a very classy addition to your Japanese themed room or metalwork collection.

### Frame sizes:

**Height:** 36 1/2" 93 cm

**Width:** 26 3/4" 68 cm





## 21

### SATSUMA VASE

Artist - Yabu Meizan

Fine quality Satsuma vase by arguably the most coveted Satsuma artist of the Meiji period, Yabu Meizan, this charming vase is predominantly decorated with a landscape as the backdrop to a bustling waterside setting, the artist has captured the scene of working river boats and pleasure craft manoeuvring upon the busy waterways within a continuous scene of buildings and pavilions beneath a mountainous landscape backdrop. The base of the vase decorated with panels of native flora above a formal border, the neck and shoulders adorned with delicately painted opposing bands of pink and gilt flowers below the traditional black dot rim synonymous with works by Yabu Meizan, the vase finished with a gilt band to the rim and a gilt signature to the underside.

**Provenance:**

Russian private collection, the former owner of this magnificent vase thought so highly of it that he or she has had manufactured a purpose built fitted hardwood storage box.

**Literature:**

Yabu Meizan 1853-1934 was a leading figure in the manufacture of Satsuma wares producing high quality items in lower volumes than many of the larger factories of the late 19th early 20th c, his early works won multiple prizes at the various world expositions from Paris 1889 through to San Francisco 1915, his pieces were in such demand at the time and have subsequently continued to command high prices, with the finest items now residing in the worlds leading Japanese works of art collections and museums. Following the first world war period Yabu continued to decorate blanks, but now in higher volume with much simpler decoration of sprigs of maple or birds within autumnal foliage, he continued until his death in 1934 aged 80.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Height:** 7 1/8" 18 cm

**Diameter:** 3 1/4" 8.5 cm





## LARGE SATSUMA VASE

Artist - Kinkozan

Important Satsuma vase by the highly regarded Kinkozan studios of Kyoto, this magnificent large-scale vessel is an absolute masterpiece that reflects the very finest output that the Kinkozan studios could muster in the latter part of the 19th century, circa 1895-1900. The cobalt blue body is finely decorated with gold and silver decoration, the vase is predominantly decorated with two opposing panels that sit between exceptionally fine scroll handles, gilded and carved in exquisite detail. The first panel depicts the scene of a warrior and attendant sat in a waterside setting, his attention drawn to what may well be an apparition of a Goddess, seemingly floating above the fast-running water, possibly a famous Japanese tale. The reverse depicts a tranquil scene of trees amidst a lakeside setting with characters crossing a bridge in the foreground, the artist captures the early morning mist in the minutest detail as it rises between the trees. Each of the main panels are framed between gilded bands of finely decorated flowers that have been potted in relief (moriage), the artist has continued displaying his extraordinary skills on the shoulders by forming raised bamboo form swags decorated in exquisite detail above four panels housing dragons, birds and minogame. The sheer scale and brilliance of this piece ranks it at the very pinnacle of Kinkozan's work and was in my view undoubtedly destined for exhibition to display the remarkable range of techniques achievable at this time. Simply breath-taking work that is artist signed to the underside.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 11.5"      29.2 cm  
**Width:** 10 1/4"    26 cm  
**Depth:** 9"        23 cm











## KAGA SCHOOL MONKEY VASE

Artist - Hokugaku I

This magnificent quality piece of Kaga metalwork reigns from the very early years of the Meiji period circa 1875. The vase is a tour de force of inlaid mixed metal work typical of the Kaga school artists displaying various techniques of geometric mixed metal banding to the shoulders, base and neck. Undoubtedly the highlight being the carved monkey preening himself as the central character, the artist has literally used his chisel as a paint brush (Katakiribori) and to stunning effect, a spray of peaches finely carved to the rear, the shaped base supported by three mythical beasts.

Artist signed to the underside with a transcription that loosely reads: 'Made by an old man Hokugaku, Yokoyama Yazaemon Takashige, resident of Etchu' (modern day Toyama prefecture).

Suggested date between 1870 -1879 after he moved from Kaga province.

**Literature:**

The suggested artist Hokugaku I (Yokoyama Yazaemon, Takashige) is recorded as having a large pair of vases in the Tokyo National museum and made in 1873. Ref - E 13012

Hokugaku I also has a pair of vases housed in the Austria art museum, these particular vases won a prize in the 1873 Vienna exposition.

There is a further vase by this artist documented in the Kaga Kinko Taikan plate 307.

**Height:** 15" 38 cm  
**Width:** 9" 23 cm  
**Depth:** 9" 23 cm



## GOLD LACQUER BOX

Provenance – Ex Michael Tomkinson Collection

Outstanding gold lacquer and shibayama decorated storage box with en-suite tray, formerly in the collection of Michael Tomkinson. The exterior of the box is finely decorated with landscape scenes each housed within a silver frame, the outer borders contrasted with a speckled nashi lacquer ground, each landscape painstakingly decorated in various types of gold lacquer resulting in numerous textured surfaces, shades and colours, the artist or artists unknown have then painstakingly worked the lacquer panels in the finest detail using pearl and shells in the Shibayama technique. Upon lifting the lid you are treated to an absolute delight, the artist has decorated the inner lid with a majestic scene of pigeons feeding beneath willow and prunus blossom trees. The inner en-suite tray displays a scene of ducks upon a lakeside setting, once again all panels fully lined in silver to protect the lacquer components. The box is simply breathtaking and once in the hand it is difficult to put down whilst gazing in awe at the literally hundreds of hours of work involved in its manufacture.







**Literature:**

Michael Tomkinson 1841-1921 gained a worldwide reputation as a collector of Japanese works of art which he displayed at his home in Kidderminster. His collection was eventually published in two volumes in 1898, although he continued to collect long after these first productions, his pieces now highly coveted by Japanese aficionados with many traceable to numerous high quality collections around the globe.

**Provenance:**

Ex Michael Tomkinson number 768 and by family descent.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Length:** 8 1/2" 21.5 cm

**Depth:** 6 7/8" 17.5 cm

**Height:** 4" 10 cm

\*This item has been registered under the de-minimis legislation required to legally sell such items, it is registered as ref: YSKCRJBG an item made prior to 1947 containing less than 10% ivory.











## LARGE SHAKUDO KORO

Attr - Kashima Ippu

Outstanding shakudo and mixed metal koro (incense burner) this large and exceptionally rare koro is predominately formed from hand beaten sheets of shakudo, a highly revered alloy containing a percentage of gold that had been perfected in the 16th century by Japanese sword fitting makers. The artist has decorated this opulent vessel with two opposing panels, the first of Manchurian cranes stood aside a flowing river amidst native foliage, the reverse as a pair of quail foraging within a floral landscape with butterflies in flight, each panel housed within gold and silver brocade borders giving the appearance of tied silk ribbons. The koro stands upon four silver mounted shakudo legs each decorated in gold floral swags, this floral theme continues around the central panels, the handles and lid of the vessel.

Each scene painstakingly framed in gold or silver wired nunomezogan technique, some finely stippled to portray a nanako ground, the neck is further decorated to each side with an opposing pair of phoenix (ho-ho birds) in flight. A not insignificant gold and silver Imperial chrysanthemum adorns the lid which fits snugly upon a silver lined interior, and is finely pierced to the underside with a pair of phoenix in flight, this piercing intended to allow the escape of incense. The sides of the vessel are quite remarkable in that they are decorated with what can loosely be described as a pair of mythical kirin clambering upon stylized trailing foliage, a most unusual subject matter almost resembling a more European armorial crest, the nunomezogan work is once again sensational in every respect, as indeed is each and every aspect of this outstanding piece of Meiji period metalwork.



### Literature:

A vessel such as this formed from solid hand beaten shakudo is quite unique in terms of its proportions and subject matter, there appears no record of a shakudo vessel of this scale in any of the better known collections, auction records or readily available research books, undoubtedly it was a special commission or destined for one of the international expositions, and in my view there were only a handful of artists capable of producing such a vessel at the time this was manufactured.

One of the better known artists producing larger scale high quality items using nunomezogan techniques were Kajima Ikkoku I & II, their pieces were as incredibly lavish as this, although were usually decorated upon iron or bronze, as were the works of the Tekkodo company.

The other artist that comes to mind is Kashima Ippu 1828-1900, he is recorded as being the zogan worker on a collaborative bronze koro that sold at Christies in May 2012, the main subject matter of cranes aside a flowing river is the same, although not uncommon, however the scrolling vine work to the body and handles are remarkably similar to the decoration on our koro, as is the mythical kirin type creature within the scrolling vines in the lower front panel. From that example and dateline I think we may make a tentative attribution. For the sheer brilliance of the metalwork skills we could similarly plump for Yamada Motonobu, Ishi Masao or Unno Moritoshi, although these artists were not recognized in the very specialist nunomezogan techniques that this magnificent koro displays.

In summary unless the Koro surfaces in a historic exhibition catalogue we may never know for sure which metalwork master or masters produced it, this will not alter its scarcity and I am delighted to bring it to the market as a major part of this year's exhibition.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 14 5/8" 37.3 cm

**Width:** 10 1/4" 26 cm

**Depth:** 5 1/2" 14 cm









## IRON KABUTO KORO

Most unusual iron and mixed metal koro in the form of a Samurai helmet (Kabuto), the unknown artist has used his metalworking skills to create a perfectly functional silver lined incense burner (koro) in the form of what I interpret to be a 14th century Nara school style of helmet. The iron delicately hand-beaten to form the helmet plates and neck guard, the stud work finely detailed in gilt, with silver banding between the plates protecting the extremities. To the front of the helmet a mixed metal flaming dragon explodes into life above another dragon, this time writhing across the peak. The interior is silver lined with a delightful pierced inner lid for the escape of incense through the gilt decorated finial above.

**Literature:**

Although unsigned, to me this koro instantly represents a transitional period, and a perfect example of a former sword fitting maker now turning his incredible skills to the manufacture of goods aimed at the emerging export market. Sadly many of these artisans remained unrecorded, and simply worked for the larger well known schools or manufacturing studios of the late 19th century. A most unusual piece of Meiji restoration metalwork that perfectly demonstrates a synergy between the artists former and newfound ways of life.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Height:** 5 3/4" 14.5 cm  
**Width:** 6 1/2" 16.5 cm  
**Depth:** 6 1/4" 16 cm



## TANTO – DAGGER

Artist - Kansai

The saya of this Meiji period mounted tanto is decorated with red autumnal maple leaves, perhaps indicating the annual spectacle of falling leaves near the shrine at Arashiyama (Kyoto) or the Aridoshi shrine in Osaka, and, may also give meaning to Hagakure, the book of the Samurai (the hidden leaves) giving practical and spiritual guidance to warriors. The opulent mixed metal fittings are further decorated with various stories relating to shrines and indicating that the tanto was possibly commissioned by or presented to a priest or other high ranking official. The gold and shakudo decorated fan on the kurikata is signed in tiny script by Kansai, (see literature below for further information and likely attribution), along with the other mixed metal mountings, all of which carry messages within the decoration. The kozuka blade is in our researchers opinion unreliably signed by an Edo period master Nagasone Kotetsu ii (active 1670-1690), the kozuka blade itself looks to fit the Edo period, as does the blade of the tanto, although unsigned the tang is mounted within a fine ray skin handle (tsuka) bound beautifully with a pair of Shi Shi dogs (Temple guardians) within the grip.

**Literature:**

The suggested artist for the opulent mounts Kansai is also known as Katsurano Bunyu (Katsurano Fumio 1868-1940), who studied under Kano Natsuo at the age of 22, in Edo (Tokyo). See pages 66 and 541 in the *Toso Kinko Jiten* by Wakayama Takeshi for biography.

**Kozuka:** The artist Nagasone Kotetsu's signature is on the kozuka blade although the blade might have been made by a later Edo period sword-smith, for example Minamoto no Kiyomaro who often emulated the blades of the past great masters, furthermore I am reliably informed that two of the Kanji characters on the blade of the kozuka are written incorrectly, although many similar examples of this signature have been recorded.







**The Fittings:** Mixed metals and alloys of gold, silver, shakudo and shibuichi.



**Kurikata:**

Chinese style fan, one of the auspicious symbols.  
The fan handle signed in tiny script by Kansai.



**Kakure:**

Two rats sitting on the Shinto paper ribbons  
(Noshi). The rats are messengers of God Daikoku.



**Kakure-gasa:**

Man with broken umbrella probably represents  
Kino Tsurayuki approaching the Aridoshi shrine  
in Osaka.



**Kojiri:**

Decorated with traditional lantern (toro) made of  
stone, wood, or metal, like many other elements  
of Japanese traditional architecture it originated  
in China where they can still be found in Buddhist  
temples and Chinese gardens.

**Kozuka handle:**

The subject matter of the kozuka: Moso (Meng Zong in Chinese) who is a Chinese paragon of filial piety, and lived in the 3rd century AD. On the reverse of the kozuka, a bamboo grove is aptly pictured. In the depths of winter. When his mother was ill and expressed a strong desire to eat stewed bamboo shoots, Moso bravely went out to dig in the snow. Moso is often depicted as one of twenty four Paragons of Filial Piety.





## SILVER &amp; SHIBUICHI TANTO

Artist - Yasukazu

Most unusual late Edo early Meiji period, circa 1865 ken bladed tanto, the main body of the scabbard is formed from solid shibuichi carved to represent clouds upon which silver mounted and gold decorated dragons appear as the dominant feature. The ken formed blade is further carved with a dragon chasing the flaming pearl. The solid silver mounts are signed by the artist Jokatsusai Yasukazu who is recorded as being active between 1850-1880, unusually the mounts are also signed with an inscription that reads Yusho ga, this translates to "an image of mysterious and tranquil beauty" and would tie in with the dragons amidst the swirling clouds. In this example it possibly refers to the tranquil dragon, which is a mysterious and profound existence in universe and heaven.

**Literature:**

The Tang on this blade is signed Amakuni, this would be in honour of the legendary founder of the Yamato school and not in any way intended to deceive.

Artist: 保一 Yasukazu (active circa 1850-1880)

The artist is listed on page 545 in The Toso Kinko Jiten by Wakayama Takeshi: Surname Kobayashi 小林. The artist is the same as Chinju / Yoshihisa 珍寿. There are known works of Kozuka and Fuchi-kashira by the artist with signatures 如葛斎保一 Jokatsusai Yasukazu (Jokatsusai Hoichi) with kao, and 保一 Yasukazu (Hoichi) with kao. He studied under Tsuchiya Takechika 土屋武親. Jokatsusai Yasukazu (Jokatsusai Hoichi) lived and worked in Tottori, Inaba Province (modern Tottori Prefecture), late Edo Period.

The artist is also listed under the name of 珍寿 Yoshihisa (Chinju), on page 484, in The Toso Kinko Jiten by Wakayama Takeshi: Surname Kobayashi. Given names: Zenbei and Yasuhira. A student of Takechika 武親. Kobayashi Yoshihisa 小林珍寿 (also known as Jokatsusai Yasukazu 如葛斎保一) was an official retainer artist for the Tottori Domain, Inaba Province (modern Tottori Prefecture) since the Ansei 5th year (1858). He was active into the mid-Meiji period and some of his work bearing his age of 66 years old.

**Approximate sizes:**

Length overall: 15" 38 cm

Length of blade: 9 3/4" 25 cm









## FINELY MOUNTED TANTO

Attr - Ishiguro Masatsune III

A finely mounted aikuchi Tanto, the iron scabbard mounted with an entwined silver dragon of exceptional quality, adorned with gilt flames emulating from its body and mounted with a sacred jewel between its horns, the handle of the Tanto formed as a Vajra which symbolizes such things as power and indestructible forces in the Hindu and Buddhist religions. The slightly waisted Ken formed blade is inscribed on its original sized tang as Ichi (one) a famous sword makers mark attributed to the Ichimonji school of makers, the blade itself is carved in fine detail with a depiction of Fudo Myo-o to one side and Bonji script to the reverse, and is adorned with a beautiful silver and gold decorated habaki (collar) carved with swirling clouds, a most opulent and increasingly scarce Japanese work of art.

**Literature:**

The signature mark on the tang reads Ichi (one) and would have been an honorary signature, in recognition of the Ichimonji school, this was not intended to deceive.

The mounts although unsigned can possibly be attributed to an artist working in the mid 19th century by the name of Ishiguro Masatsune III.

For an almost identical example signed by this artist see: The Nasser D Khalili Collections, Treasures of Imperial Japan, Metalwork II Plate - 161.

**Approximate sizes:**

<b>Length overall:</b>	16"	40.5 cm
<b>Length of blade:</b>	10"	25.5 cm (inc habaki)



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## LARGE MIXED METAL O-TANTO WAKIZASHI

Attr - Ishiguro Masatsune III

An exceptionally large and fine Meiji period 1868-1912 mixed metal mounted O-Tanto Wakizashi, the iron scabbard mounted with an entwined silver dragon adorned with gilt flames emulating from its body, and mounted with a scared jewel between its horns. The handle of the Tanto formed as a Vajra which symbolizes such things as power and indestructible forces in the Hindu and Buddhist religions. The slightly waisted Ken formed blade is inscribed in gold on its original sized tang in honour of Masamune, the blade itself is carved in fine detail with a depiction of Fudo Myo-o to one side and a scrolling banner to the reverse and fitted with a gold decorated habaki (collar), a most opulent and increasingly scarce Japanese work of art of very large proportions.







**Literature:**

The gold inlaid (kinzogan) signatures on the tang are merely honorific references to famous swordsmiths in Japan and not intended to deceive.

Typically, swords dedicated to temples and for presentation were made on special order for wealthy patrons with extremely high-quality mounts and fittings. Many older style blades like these ken blades were later mounted and often honorary signatures were added to the tangs. The gold inlaid signature on this large ken sword is Masamune, arguably Japan's finest and most famous swordsmith.

The mounts although unsigned can possibly be attributed to an artist working in the mid 19th century by the name of Ishiguro Masatsune III.

For an almost identical much smaller example signed by this artist see: The Nasser D Khalili Collections. Treasures of Imperial Japan, Metalwork II, Plate - 161.

**Approximate sizes:**

**Length overall:** 25" 63.5 cm

**Length of blade:** 14 1/8" 36 cm (inc habaki)





## LARGE MIXED METAL LIDDED VASE

Attr - Kajima Ikkoku II (1846-1925)

This sensational large and imposing lidded vessel is predominately decorated with mixed metal doves in foliage upon the main central bronze body, the finely executed overlaid decoration includes silver, shibuichi and gold among other alloys. The shaped base and neck of the vessel painstakingly damascened in two colour gold nunomezogan work upon a faux iron textured ground, detailing swags of native flora, the neck rim and extravagant flared side handles further damascened in a geometric diaper pattern. The lid of the vase continues the theme of a matching geometric border beneath further fine quality two colour gold damascened floral displays and is surmounted by a studious mixed metal hawk perched upon a tree stump.

### Literature:

Kajima Ikkoku II was originally known as Mitsutaka until the death of his father in 1882, when he inherited the name Kajima Ikkokusai. A Tokyo artist specialising in Nunomezogan in his own right as well as his work being recorded as commissions for other famous Tokyo companies such as Tekkodo.

Whilst this particular vase sadly lacks its signature seal, it is in my opinion without doubt a product of the Ikkoku family of makers, a four generation family who's works are well recorded across numerous well known collections and historic auction records. Very few Meiji Period company's could manufacture this type of ware with such a highly skilled level of intricacy, particularly the use of damascened geometric borders and inlays (nunomezogan). The well known Komai Company of Kyoto predominately worked upon iron as did the Tekkodo company, aside from Inoue and lesser known nunomezogan artists such as Kashima Ippu, there were really only the Ikkoku family skilled enough to manufacture this vase, and Kajima Ikkoku II would have been the lead artist at the time this was manufactured circa 1890.

For another smaller example of this type of ware see: The Nasser D Khalili Collections, Meiji No Takara, Metalwork part I, plate 40, in this instance Kajima Ikkoku II has collaborated with the Tekkodo Company, note the nunomezogan diaper pattern in the main panel closely matching the geometric borders on this vase.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 17" 43 cm  
**Width:** 10" 25.5 cm  
**Depth:** 8" 20.2 cm







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## DAMASCENED IRON BOX

Artist - Komai company

Damascened iron box by the Komai company of Kyoto, the lid of the box is most unusually decorated with a scene of a horse outside a stable block with more traditional scenes of mount Fuji and lakes in the distance, the exterior of the box is finely decorated with a plethora of butterflies in mixed alloys including copper, the interior has been further decorated with gilt chrysanthemums, this splendid box stands upon shaped bracket feet and carries the full Komai dragonfly seal mark to the underside, thus dating it circa 1900.

**Height:** 2 1/4" 6 cm  
**Length:** 6 3/4" 17.3 cm  
**Depth:** 3 1/4" 8 cm









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## LARGE SILVER VASE

Artist - Multi signed

Company - Ozeki

This unusually large, rare and important Meiji Period (1868-1912) solid silver vase, bears the seal of the world famous Ozeki Company of Yokohama as well as multi signed panels from each of the artists responsible for their manufacture. This very large fully lined vessel is predominately decorated to each of the four convex shaped panels with native birds amidst flora in low relief, each panel very subtly highlighted with other alloys including gold. These individually artist signed panels are held in place and framed by the most succulent quality trailing wisteria, each sprig carefully cut by hand from solid sheets of silver and formed into a sturdy body, the quarter lobed base and neck of the vase are once again formed from hand beaten solid silver extensively decorated with the Imperial chrysanthemum and peonies. The underside of this magnificent vase carries the all-important seal of the Ozeki Company.



### Ozeki Company:

The Musashiya company, operated by Ozeki Yahei and his son Sadajiro, were perhaps the most successful of the concerns selling high-quality decorative art during the Meiji era, Ozeki was especially well known in the west as a broker for the highest quality metalwork objects.

Ozeki commissioned works from such leading metalworkers as, Unno Moritoshi, Yamada Motonobu, Kaneyasu Masatoshi, Suzuki Katsuhiro amongst other recognised artists, all of which appeared in exhibitions under the brand name Ozeki.

The astonishing work on Ozeki pieces may have seemed over-elaborate to Japanese tastes at that time, on the other hand, this is an indication of Ozeki's success as a businessman, he had a firm grasp of western tastes. Ozeki remained in business throughout the Meiji period and into the subsequent Taisho era (1912-1926).

### Artists:

The four silver artists that combined their skills to produce this magnificent vase are listed as follows in both Japanese and English translations.

明辰刻	Akitatsu koku	Meishin koku
友長刻	Tomonaga koku	Yucho koku
政寿刻	Masatoshi koku	Seiju koku
正一刻	Masakazu koku	Shoichi koku

### Literature:

For a similar example of the finely hand cut Wisteria on this vase see: The Nasser D Khalili Collections, Metalwork I, Plate 49. This opulent mixed media silver & enamel Koro once again demonstrates the painstaking work involved in hand cutting Wisteria and trailing foliage from sheets of solid silver.

It is worth noting that as time progressed, and naturally with a keen eye on commercial viability, many lesser known artists and factories were able to reproduce this technique by simply pressing out foil thin sheets of silver, the effect was strikingly similar until it came to handling such items, at which point the difference in quality becomes instantly recognizable, the name Ozeki was synonymous with quality.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 16" 41 cm

**Diameter:** 8 1/4" 21 cm









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## MIXED METAL KORO

Subject - Hawk upon stand

Artist - Mori Yukiasu

Company - Maruki

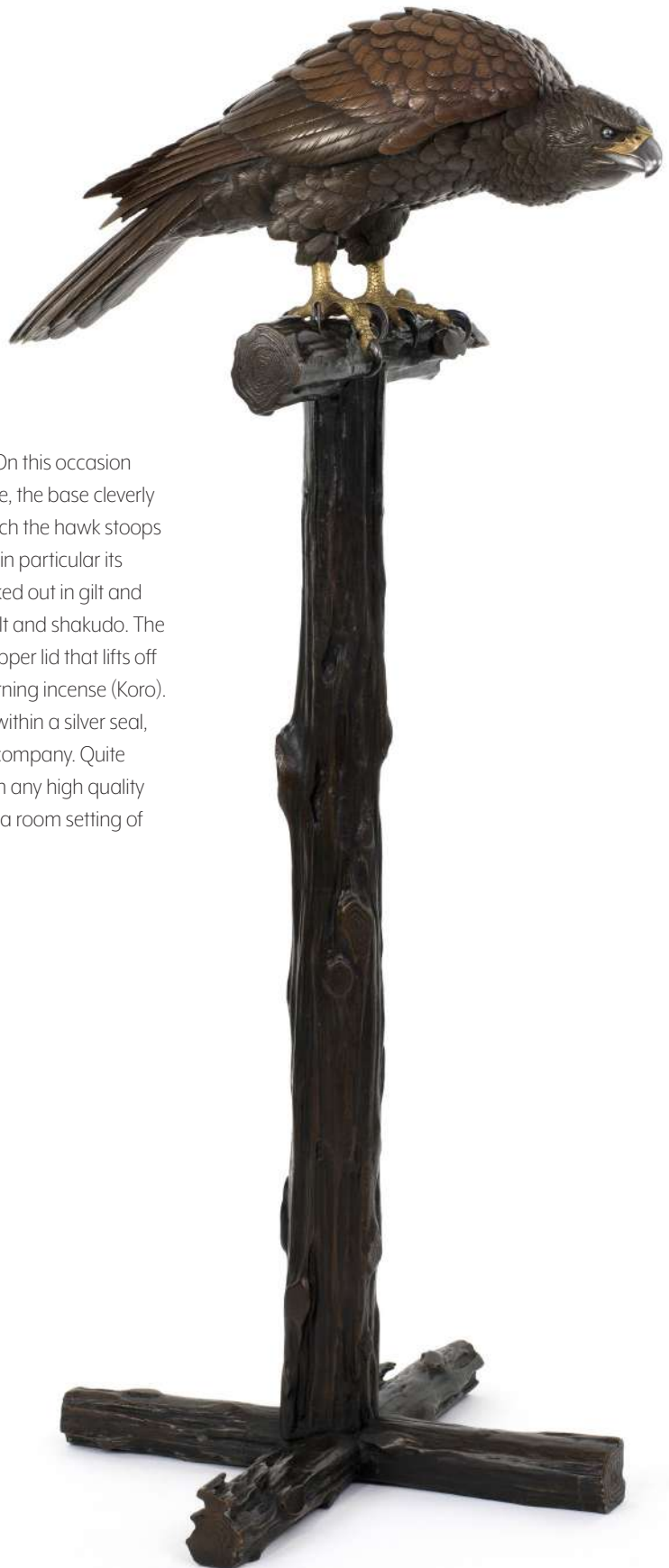
A captivating, rare and unusual mixed metal hawk on stand in the form of a koro (incense burner), this large and powerful study is fully artist signed and bears the seal of the highly regarded Maruki company, a Tokyo based firm renowned for manufacturing higher quality okimono between 1870-1895. On this occasion the artist has captured a hawk perched upon its bronze base, the base cleverly formed to resemble a jointed rustic wooden perch upon which the hawk stoops head down about to take flight. The detail to the hawk, and in particular its feather work is simply breath-taking, the menacing eyes picked out in gilt and shakudo, the legs and razor sharp talons also rendered in gilt and shakudo. The birds contrasting upper feathers are formed as a pierced copper lid that lifts off to reveal a silver lined interior, this void for the purpose of burning incense (Koro). The underside of the tail feathers artist signed Mori Yukiasu within a silver seal, accompanied by the well-known factory seal of the Maruki company. Quite simply a captivating sculptural okimono that would sit well in any high quality Japanese works of art collection or simply as a focal point in a room setting of your choice.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 39" 99 cm

**Stand:** 31" 78.5 cm

**Hawk:** 18" 46 cm





## SILVER OKIMONO

Subject - Manchurian Cranes

Artist - Unknown

To bring closure to this particular collection I am delighted to offer this most charming Meiji Period 1868-1912, pure silver and mixed metal sculptural okimono depicting a pair of Manchurian cranes stood upon a naturalistic wooden base, the base resembling a muddy lakeside bank. The unknown artist has captured these beautiful birds in a natural pose with plenty of movement, one bird seemingly preening its feathers as the companion looks on, the cast silver bodies are finely carved and contrasted with shakudo tail feathers, with shibuichi legs and bright red caps to the crown along with finely gilt eye detail, bringing these birds to life. A most delightful pure silver and mixed metal sculptural group by a highly skilled Meiji period artist.

### Literature:

Manchurian cranes are highly revered in Asia, they represent such things as good luck and in particular longevity, as they mate for life, as such these birds would make an ideal anniversary gift for a loved one.

### Approximate sizes:

**Height:** 11 1/8" 28 cm

**Width:** 9" 23 cm

**Depth:** 7 1/2" 19 cm







PLATE 24  
GOLD LACQUER BOX

**MASTERPIECE**  
LONDON 30 JUNE TO 6 JULY 2022

Photography – Emma Van Lindholm  
Photography – Chris Challis  
Research & translations – Mieko Gray  
Design – Steve Hayes  
Printing – Blackmore, Dorset





PLATE 8  
CLOISONNE ENAMEL VASES  
Artist - Ando Company

