For Immediate Release

ONISHIGALLERY

Onishi Gallery Names Its Exhibition for Asia Week 2026 and Raises the Curtain on a Multiyear Museum Project

NEW YORK CITY (March 2026): Onishi Gallery—internationally recognized for championing KOGEI, Japan's vibrant world of contemporary craft—is thrilled to celebrate this year's Asia Week New York with a standout presentation, "KOGEI Exhibition: Metalwork and Lacquerware," on view from March 19 to April 3.

The exhibition introduces audiences to masterpieces shaped by centuries of inherited skill while offering a first glimpse of a major museum touring project set to travel across the United States beginning in 2027. At the gallery's elegant Upper East Side space in the historic Sidney Ripley mansion on 79th Street, visitors will encounter an exceptional gathering of works representing two of Japan's most iconic traditions: Metalwork and Lacquerware.

The metalwork section shines a spotlight on groundbreaking women artists who have risen to prominence in a field long dominated by men—an arena traditionally linked to physical endurance and, historically, samurai culture. Featuring the work of Oshiyama Motoko, Hagino Noriko, and Living National Treasure Ōsumi Yukie, the exhibition presents dazzling creations in gold, silver, platinum, copper, lead, and signature Japanese alloys. Through demanding, painstaking techniques such as casting, chiseling, and hammering, these artists balance expressive freedom with uncompromising technical mastery, producing works of exceptional subtlety, radiance, and refinement.

In a recent article that featured Onishi Gallery, *The New York Times* described Wajima as a "Holy Land of Lacquerware." The exhibition's lacquerware selection pays special tribute to artists from this small city at the northern tip of the Noto Peninsula—an area devastated by the January 1, 2024 earthquake and fire. In Wajima, artisans carve delicate bases from paulownia, cherrywood, cypress, and other fine timbers before applying, drying, and polishing dozens of layers of *urushi*,

the sap of the lacquer tree. These luminous surfaces become stages for gold, silver, and shell inlays—works that marry natural material beauty with disciplined craft. The exhibition brings together pieces by three Living National Treasures from Wajima—Yamagishi Kazuo, Mae Fumio, and Komori Kunie—all now rebuilding their studios and lives in the aftermath of disaster.

For its Asia Week show, Onishi Gallery is also pleased to introduce Rusu Aki (b. 1976) and Onihira Keiji (b.1973). These remarkable mid-career artists form part of a larger group whose work the Gallery will also showcase at “Homo Faber 2026: An Island of Light,” a wide-ranging festival at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice this September. Rusu creates her sculptural forms in iron that evolves through rust, welding, and time itself—poetic works that reshape space through material rhythm and presence. Based in Wajima, Onihira is celebrated for his lacquer pieces that integrate ancestral techniques with celestial, botanical, and cosmic imagery. Each work is a meditation in material, with layered lacquer, gold, and iridescent shell forming sculptural, glowing surfaces.

Together, these artists embody the spirit of KOGEI: fearless innovation paired with a deep reverence for traditional materials. Their work occupies a unique position between Western notions of “Craft” and “Art,” offering audiences a vision of Japanese creativity that remains rooted, relevant, and radiant. Onishi Gallery warmly invites you to experience the enduring beauty and contemporary vitality of KOGEI—a living heritage that continues to enrich global culture and design.

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Onishi Gallery
www.onishigallery.com
16 E 79th Street, Ground Floor, New York, NY 10075
Exhibition Dates: March 19 – April 3, 2026
Opening Party: Thursday, March 19, 5 – 8pm
Hours: 10am – 5pm, every day during Asia Week (March 19 – 27.) Other times Tuesday – Friday, 10am – 5pm.

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Asia Week New York

Featuring auctions, exhibitions, and events showcasing Asian art, Asia Week New York will run from March 19 to March 27 2026. For further details please visit asiaweekny.com.

KOGEI USA

A certified not-for-profit organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the U.S. Tax Code, KOGEI USA was established with the goal of raising the reputation of Japanese traditional arts and culture outside Japan by holding exhibitions and cultural events at major museums throughout North America and beyond. KOGEI USA's first traveling museum exhibition, "Contemporary Metal and Lacquer from Japan," will debut at the Minneapolis Institute of Art in 2027. Curated by Dr. Andreas Marks, one of the field's most respected scholars, the exhibition unites established masters and rising talents, including multiple Living National Treasures. Following its debut, the show will tour leading museums across North America, with selected works entering the permanent collection at each venue.