



ASIA WEEK 2023

New York

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WEEK
NEW YORK



ONISHIGALLERY

GALLERY GREETING

Since 2005, Onishi Gallery has vigorously promoted traditional arts by contemporary artists from Japan to the international audience. It has been the Gallery's mission to raise awareness of the field in the US art market, and we have been working with a number of major international museums and collectors to introduce Japanese artworks to their collections. Recently, many of our metal artists' works including works of all the metalwork Living National Treasures were exhibited at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in "Japan: A History of Style," and they became part of the Museum's permanent collection.

An important theme the Gallery has embraced and tried to support as a trend is introducing female metal artists of Japan in the US. We offer their innovative designs, shapes and colors characterized through their playful and organic creations. Female artists are all working to imprint their unique paths and achievements onto their pieces and take their place next to male artists who are dominant in the Japanese traditional art field.

In our Asia Week New York 2023 exhibition "Heated Colors, Hammered Forms: Female Metal Artists of Japan," five leading female metal artists opened their dialogue with the audience through their works in which they spent many months hammering, chiseling, heating, welding, inlaying and coloring. Every trace of those techniques conveys their passions, dreams and stories to the audience.

We are fortunate to walk together with the audience to view those five artists' personal modes of expression and share our experience of their passion.

Nana Onishi
Owner and Director, Onishi Gallery

Front Image:
Oshiyama Motoko (b. 1957)
Kakuhanmon Vase "Shunen" (Spring Festival), 2022 (detail)
Silver, brass, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and copper
h. 15 5/8 x w. 5 3/4 x d. 2 3/8 in. (39.7 x 14.5 x 8.5 cm)

“KOGEI”: JAPANESE WOMEN METAL ARTISTS IN CHELSEA

NEW YORK, N.Y. — February 2023: Chelsea gallery owner Nana Onishi has made it her mission to introduce New York audiences to the art crafts of contemporary Japan, today known collectively as “kogeï,” a word coined 140 years ago to translate the English “craft.” Just recently, Onishi’s efforts have received a major boost from Japanese officials, curators, and professional associations, who are repurposing “kogeï” to promote the exceptional nature of Japan’s heritage of traditional hand-working skills and processes.

Onishi Gallery’s latest exhibition, held to mark this year’s Asia Week New York (March 16–24), is **Heated Colors, Hammered Forms: Female Metal Artists of Japan**, turning the spotlight on the contribution made by women to an aspect of kogeï that was formerly a male preserve, closely associated with the world of the samurai. Although metals are especially hard to handle, shape, and decorate, the five featured artists have each devoted a lifetime to the medium, using it to produce masterpieces that are every bit as expressive and beautiful as work in less obstinate materials such as clay or textile.

Fashioning gold, silver, copper, and its alloys with a range of techniques including casting, chiseling, hammering, and overlay, the artists share an uncompromising passion for traditional skills and materials combined with a spirit of creative innovation, two qualities that exemplify the contemporary spirit of kogeï. Through patience, passion, and sheer hard work, they submit metals to their artistic wills, forming objects of an unparalleled grace and elegance that win viewers over at first sight.

Oshiyama Motoko creates swirling, agitated surfaces by welding together two or more different metals such as silver or shakudō, Japan’s unique blue-black alloy of copper and gold. Ōtsuki Masako chisels fine angled lines to give her work an eye-catching three-dimensional look, rich in depth and shadow. Okamoto Yoshiko uses the hagiawase technique, making intricate, colorful patterns by forging and welding alloys of different colors, including copper, silver, shakudō, and shibuichi—a gray-green alloy of copper and silver—to create surfaces that can evoke water shimmering in the breeze, or leaves dappled by sunlight. Although Hagino Noriko is also known for her colorful pieces in hagiawase technique, for this exhibition she has worked with nanryō, highly refined silver, wielding her hammer to conjure up different tones, shades, and textures from a single metal. Living National Treasure Ōsumi Yukie shapes her vessel forms through an arduous hammering process, then beats metal

leaf into a fine grid incised into their surfaces, fashioning designs evocative of wind, waves, and clouds. She writes that “metals can substitute the permanent for the fleeting and transitory, conferring eternity on phenomena that would otherwise have a limited lifespan.”

Onishi hopes that both seasoned collectors and newcomers to the world of kogeï will appreciate the passion, care, and creativity that each of the five artists has devoted to this magical process of “substituting the permanent for the fleeting.” Looking to the future, she also sees the exhibition as a major step toward a longer-term goal of establishing major collections of kogeï in America’s leading museums.

Thanks to the generosity of a Japanese donor, the Metropolitan Museum of Art is already home to a large group of masterpieces of contemporary metalwork including several by artists in Heated Colors, Hammered Forms. Onishi now plans to improve global appreciation of kogeï by establishing a US-based network of curators, scholars, collectors, and dealers with a passion for kogeï and a determination to secure a prosperous future for Japan’s hardworking, creative kogeï artists.

For more information or appointments, please email nana@onishigallery.com or call 1.212.695.8035.



Osumi Yukie (b. 1945)
Living National Treasure

Silver Vase “*Kaikei*” (Seascape), 2019
Hammered silver with *nunomezōgan* (textile imprint inlay) decoration in lead and gold
h. 7 7/8 x w. 13 5/8 x d. 12 5/8 in. (20 x 34.5 x 32 cm)

OSUMI Yukie (b. 1945) Living National Treasure (2015)

Ōsumi Yukie was designated Living National Treasure in 2015, and is the first female metalwork artist to receive this honor in history. She specializes in *tankin*, or hammered vessels. Osumi graduated in 1969 from the Faculty of Fine Arts, Tokyo University of the Arts. Afterwards, she studied under Kashima Ikkoku (1898-1996), Sekiya Shirō (1907-1994), and Katsura Moriyuki (1914-1996). She has received many honors and awards, and most recently in 2014, was the first to be awarded a residency at The Freer Gallery of Art and Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, the Smithsonian Museum of Asian Art in Washington, D.C.

Ōsumi applies the traditional technique *nunome zōgan*, or textile imprint inlay, in her works. This involves hammering metal-leaf or wire into a fine, mesh-like grid incised into the metal surfaces. Ōsumi creates decorative and functional objects, such as vases and tea utensils. Through her designs of wind, waves, clouds and streams, she strives to create an affinity with nature as formless and flowing.

Selected Exhibitions

- 2013 - 2023 Asia Week New York, US
- 2021 - 2022 Japan: A History of Style, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US
- 2022 Homo Faber: Crafting a More Human Future - Living Treasures of Europe and Japan, Venice, Italy
- 2013 Contemporary Kōgei Styles in Japan, Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, Delray Beach, Florida, US

Selected Public Collections

Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA; National Museum of Asian Art at Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, US; Victoria and Albert Museum, London, United Kingdom; Royal Museum in Edinburgh, Scotland; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan



Osumi Yukie (b. 1945)
Living National Treasure

Silver Vase "Bakufu" (Waterfall), 2011
Hammered silver with *nunomezōgan* (textile imprint inlay) decoration in lead and gold
h. 10 x dia. 9 7/8 in. (25.5 x 25 cm)



Osumi Yukie (b. 1945)
Living National Treasure

Silver Vase "Sokai" (Deep Blue Sea), 2017
Hammered silver with *nunomezōgan* (textile imprint inlay) decoration in lead and gold
h. 10 7/8 x dia. 10 in. (27.5 x 25.5 cm)



Oshiyama Motoko (b. 1957)

Kakuhanmon Vase “*Yunagi*” (Evening Calm), 2021
Silver, brass, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and copper
h. 9 7/8 x w. 6 x d. 2 3/8 in. (25 x 15 x 6 cm)

OSHIYAMA Motoko (b. 1957)

Oshiyama Motoko is a masterful female artist who is inspired by nature and natural phenomena. Fascinated by the challenges and beauty of metalworking, she seeks to seamlessly incorporate her medium’s idiosyncrasies into her work instead of using force. She creates swirling patterns through her technique of welding together two or more metals such as silver and shakudō (a mixture of gold and copper). Oshiyama gives distinction to her works with her modern sense of design, focusing on geometric and abstract patterns.

The results are works that straddle the separation between “art” and “craft,” aiming to create objects that aesthetically enrich our environments and lives. Oshiyama studied metal carving, chasing, and hammering techniques at the Bunka Gakuen University in Tokyo, where she graduated in 1981. Following graduation, she studied further with Katsura Moriyuki (1914–1996) and the Living National Treasure, Okuyama Hōseki (b. 1935). Oshiyama currently teaches metalwork and jewelry making at her alma mater.

Selected Exhibitions

- 2015 - 2023 Asia Week New York, US
- 2022 Japan Traditional Kōgei Exhibition, Japan
- 2021 - 2022 Japan: A History of Style, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US
- 2015 SOFA Chicago, Illinois, US
- 2010 Art Crafts in the 21st Century – Eye of the World, MOA Museum of Art, Shizuoka, Japan

Selected Public Collections

Metropolitan Museum of Art, USA; National Museum of Asian Art at Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, US



Oshiyama Motoko (b. 1957)

Kakuhanmon Vase "Shunen" (Spring Festival), 2022
Silver, brass, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and copper
h. 15 5/8 x w. 5 3/4 x d. 2 3/8 in. (39.7 x 14.5 x 8.5 cm)



Oshiyama Motoko (b. 1957)

Kakuhanmon Vase "Kagero" (Warm Haze), 2016
Silver, brass, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and copper
h. 4 1/2 x w. 9 1/4 x d. 2 3/4 in. (11.5 x 23.5 x 7 cm)



Hagino Noriko (b. 1949)

Uchidashi Silver Water Jar 01, 2017
Silver
h. 6 7/8 x dia. 6 5/8 in. (17.5 x 17 cm)

HAGINO Noriko (b. 1949)

Hagino Noriko specializes in a technique called *hagiawase*, making intricate, colorful patterns by forging and welding alloys of different colors, including copper, silver, *shakudō*, and *shibuichi*, which she learned from Living National Treasure Sekiya Shirō (1907-1994). Intrigued by Sekiya's works, Hagino became an apprentice in Sekiya's studio upon graduating from Musashino Art Junior College. From the inception of her design to the arduous process of hammering metal, Hagino takes almost six months to complete each project. She uses the natural hues of the metals as colors to create fluid patterns on her work, silver becoming white, copper becoming red, and an alloy of a mix of gold and copper becoming gold.

In Asia Week New York Exhibition in 2023, she has worked with another type of work called *nanryō*, highly refined silver, wielding her hammer to conjure up different tones, shades, and textures from a single metal.

Selected Exhibitions

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|-------------|---|
| 2016 - 2023 | Asia Week New York, US |
| 2022 | Japan Traditional Kōgei Exhibition, Japan |
| 2021 | Solo Exhibition, Nihonbashi Mitsukoshi, Japan |
| 2017 | SOFA Chicago, Illinois, US |
| 2010 | Art Crafts in the 21st Century—Eye of the World, MOA Museum of Art, Shizuoka, Japan |
| 2004 | Contemporary Japanese Metalwork, Copenhagen, Denmark |

Selected Public Collections

National Museum of Asian Art at Smithsonian Institution, Washington DC, US; Ise Foundation, Japan



Hagino Noriko (b. 1949)

Uchidashi Silver Water Jar 02, 2021
Silver and copper
h. 6 1/4 x dia. 7 1/2 in. (16 x 19 cm)



Hagino Noriko (b. 1949)

Uchidashi Silver Water Jar 03, 2022
Silver
h. 6 5/8 x dia. 6 7/8 in. (17 x 17.5 cm)



Okamoto Yoshiko (b. 1976)

Hagiawase Flower Vase “*Kunpu*” (Early Summer Breeze), 2014

Welding with copper, silver, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and *shibuichi* (copper and silver alloy)

h. 4 1/2 x w. 10 5/8 x d. 3 3/8 in. (11.5 x 27 x 8.5 cm)

OKAMOTO Yoshiko (b. 1976)

Okamoto Yoshiko started as an illustration book artist and author in Yamaguchi prefecture, where she spent her young adult period depicting the beautiful four seasons and stories of nature found in her everyday life. Enrolling in arts and craft classes conducted by a Living National Treasure metalwork artist Yamamoto Akira (who also comes from Yamaguchi prefecture), shifted her direction to become a metalwork artist. After graduating college, she became a pupil of Mr. Yamamoto and learned his specialized technique of *Hagiawase* (heat welding method with metal forging) and *Kiribame-Zogan* (heat welding method with cutout inlay). Her working motif has remained the same throughout her artist's career that is an endless story of nature woven by the four seasons in which she incorporates poetic and musical aspects. This is done by using gradation of many layers of colorful tones of metal.

Examples of her depicted scenes in her works include: shimmering water surface in the blowing wind, the leaves of the trees shining through the sunlight, a pleasant breeze with the scent of spring, fireflies fly by the riverside in silence and daffodils blooming dignifiedly in the snow. She says that the completion of her works is not the outcome of the creation itself, but when it touches the hearts of those who view it.

Selected Exhibitions

- 2023 Asia Week New York, US
- 2022 Japan Traditional Kōgei Exhibition, Japan
- 2021 “Metal Kōgei Exhibition,” Kanazawa Yasue Gold Leaf Museum, Japan
- 2020 “Tansuio Award Exhibition: Contemporary Japanese Metalwork,” Sekido Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan

Selected Public Collections

Ise Foundation, Japan



Okamoto Yoshiko (b. 1976)

Hagiawase Box “*Sokyo*” (Shimmering Water), 2018

Welding with copper, silver, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and *shibuichi* (copper and silver alloy)
h. 4 1/8 x w. 10 1/2 x d. 4 1/8 in. (10.5 x 26.5 x 10.5 cm)



Okamoto Yoshiko (b. 1976)

Hagiawase Incense Burner “*Spring Wind*,” 2021

Welding with copper, silver, *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy) and *shibuichi* (copper and silver alloy)
h. 5 1/2 x w. 4 1/8 x d. 4 in. (14 x 10.5 x 10 cm)



Otsuki Masako (1943-2022)

Silver Vase “Yu” (Play), 1997
Silver metal carving with *shakudo* (copper and gold alloy)
h. 13 x w. 6 1/2 x d. 5 1/8 in. (33 x 16.5 x 13 cm)

OTSUKI Masako (1943-2022)

Ōtsuki Masako graduated from the Department of Design at Tama Art University, Tokyo in 1966, and has incorporated design skills into her metalwork pieces. Ōtsuki has stated that in artwork, highly developed techniques should meet refined designs to appeal to audiences. Ōtsuki uses the *hatsuri* technique, which she chisels fine angled lines to give her work an eye-catching three-dimensional look, rich in depth and shadow. Gold, silver, copper and a copper silver alloy, all of varying degrees of solubility, are precisely handled by Ōtsuki with great focus and intensity. In addition, skilled engraving gives her work the finishing touch, lending metal, a cold medium a feeling of warmth and life in the artist's forms.

Selected Exhibitions

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| 2016 - 2023 | Asia Week New York, US |
| 2022 | Japan Traditional Kōgei Exhibition, Japan |
| 2021 - 2022 | Japan: A History of Style, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US |
| 2015 | SOFA Chicago, Illinois, US |
| 2013 | From Craft to Kōgei, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, Japan |

Selected Public Collections

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US



Otsuki Masako (1943-2022)

Copper Box with Fern Patterns, 2016
Copper metal carving with gold decoration
h. 3 1/4 x w. 6 1/4 x d. 3 1/4 in. (8.3 x 16 x 8.3 cm)



Otsuki Masako (1943-2022)

Silver Vase "Ko" (Sparkling Water), 2007
Silver metal carving with gold decoration
h. 11 7/8 x w. 13 x d. 8 1/4 in. (30.2 x 33 x 21 cm)

ASIA WEEK NEW YORK

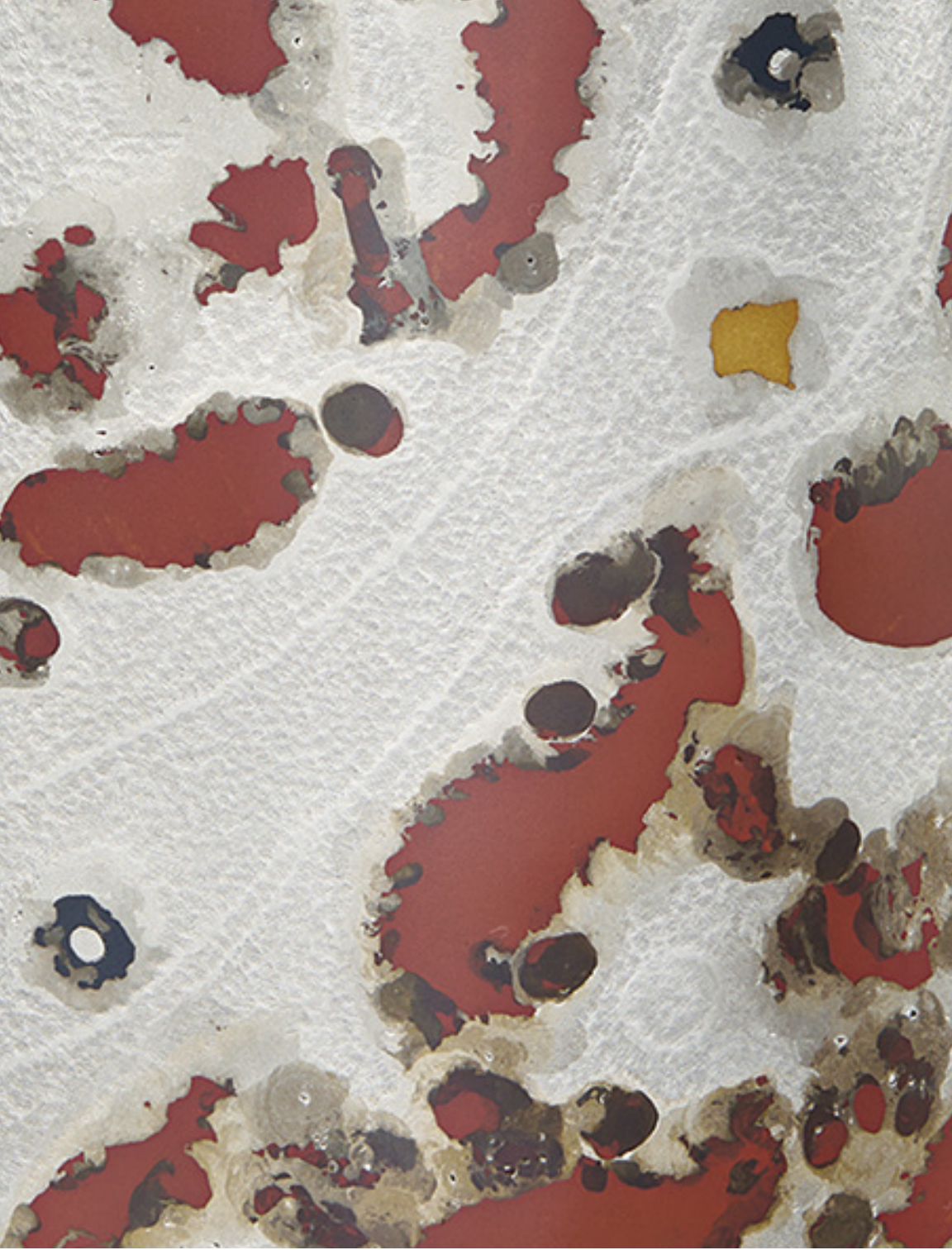
2023

Heated Colors, Hammered Forms:
Female Metal Artists of Japan

March 16 - 24, 2023

Onishi Gallery
521 W 26th Street, NYC

Ōsumi Yukie
Oshiyama Motoko
Hagino Noriko
Okamoto Yoshiko
Ōtsuki Masako



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