SABIRU TREASURES • COLLECTOR'S HANDBOOK & CURATED LOOKBOOK

Reading Japanese Ceramics, Studio Glass & Metalwork: 20 Curated Works & Collector's Field Guide

An observational reference to signed paulownia boxes (*tomobako*), potter's seals, regional kiln traditions, material-specific care, and private acquisition profiling. All photographs are isolated in ChatGPT Studio White Specification (#FFFFFF) with natural contact grounding.



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How to Read a Japanese *Tomobako*, Potter's Seal & *Shiori*

In Japanese ceramic, glass, and metalwork collecting, the vessel and its accompanying paulownia box (*kiribako* / *tomobako* 共箱) form a single documentary unit. While a work of art speaks first through its clay body, glaze chemistry, and proportion, the inscription brushed by the maker on the wooden lid records how the artist classified the piece at the moment it left the studio.

1. BOX LID & INNER LID CALLIGRAPHY (HAKOGAKI 箱書)

Genre & Glaze Designation (Right or Center Column): The artist typically brushes the technique or glaze first—for example, *Saiyū Hanaire* (彩釉花入, Glaze-Gradation Flower Vase) on Tokuda Yasokichi III's box, *Tetsuyū Hanaire* (鉄釉花入, Iron-Glaze Vase) on Katō Shigetaka's lid, or *Kamifūsen Kōgō* (紙風船香合, Paper-Balloon Incense Container) on Kitamura Gakō's box.

Signature & Vermilion Seal (Left Column): The maker signs their art name (*gō*) followed by *saku* (作, made by) or *zō* (造, crafted by), and presses a square or oval vermilion paste seal (*shuin* 朱印).

2. BASE MARKS (ZAI-MEI 在銘) & ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS

Incised, Impressed, or Painted Marks: On high-fired stoneware (Seto, Bizen, Kasama), artists carve a knife mark (*kakihan*) or press a clay stamp into the leather-hard footring—such as Maeda Masanori's impressed square seal *Senzan* (泉山). On Nabeshima, Arita, and Kutani porcelain, the mark is brushed in underglaze cobalt or overglaze enamel.

Shiori (栞) & Tōreki (陶歴): Printed exhibition biographies list the artist's birth year, teacher lineage, and juried awards (such as Nitten, Nihon Dentō Kōgeiten, or the Japan Ceramic Society Award).

Japanese Term	Romanization & Literal Meaning	What to Observe When Evaluating a Work
共箱 / 桐箱	*Tomobako / Kiribako* (Maker-signed paulownia box)	Note wood grain continuity, peg construction, woven *sanada-himo* ribbon, and whether the calligraphy is on the outer lid (*uwabuta*) or inner lid (*uchibuta*). Never force a naturally bowed paulownia lid flat.
共布	*Tomonuno* (Maker-stamped wrapping cloth)	Linen, cotton, or silk square bearing the artist's vermilion seal; protects the vessel's rim and glaze from abrasion inside the box.
貫入	*Kannyū* (Intentional glaze crazing network)	Seen in Kyō-yaki celadon, Hagi, and Shino wares due to differential cooling contraction between body and glaze. Distinct from a structural crack (*nyū*), which passes through the clay wall.
景色 / 窯変	*Keshiki / Yōhen* ("Landscape" / Kiln transformation)	Natural ash deposits (*biidoro*), scorch marks (*hiiro*), copper-red flushes (*shinsha*), and glaze drips where flame and mineral chemistry interact unpredictably.

Curated Highlights: Japanese Ceramics, Metalwork & Woodblock Prints

Each work below is isolated in our high-resolution ChatGPT studio white format (#FFFFFF), allowing clear inspection of vessel silhouette, footring architecture, and glaze tone.



HIGHLIGHT 01 | REF: 108006765

Ichikawa Kazuhiro / Wakō (市川和啓・和光, b. 1945)

Nabeshima Celadon Peony Incense Container (Seiji Botan-mon Kōgō)

Okawachiyama, Imari (Saga) • Wakō Tōyō • D 6.5 × H 3.3 cm • 127.7 g • Signed Paulownia Box & Shiori

Molded and carved peony petals on the lid catch pooling pale green Nabeshima celadon glaze; underglaze cobalt 'Wakō' mark inside the recessed base.



HIGHLIGHT 02 | REF: 108007244

Kitamura Gakō (北村雅耕)

Kyō-yaki Paper Balloon Incense Container (Kamifūsen Kōgō) with Gold Leaf Interior

Kyoto (Kyō-yaki / Kiyomizu Ware) • H 4.5 × D 5.2 cm • Signed Tomobako ('Kamifūsen / Kōgō / Gakō-zō')

Polychrome overglaze segments evoke a nostalgic paper balloon, opening to reveal scattered pure gold leaf flakes (*kinpaku*) inside and an impressed 'Gakō' seal.



HIGHLIGHT 03 | REF: 108006825

Sakai Hōju / Yoshiki (酒井芳樹, b. 1950 • Japan Kōgei Association Full Member)

Kasama Ware Blue-Glazed Water Dropper / Bud Vase (Seiyū Suiteki)

Kasama (Ibaraki) • Itsuki Tōbō • H 9.5 × W 7.5 cm • 131.2 g • Signed Tomobako & Tōreki

Layered cobalt-blue glaze breaks warm over iron-bearing Kasama stoneware, signed by Nihon Kōgeikai Seikaiin artist Sakai Hōju.



HIGHLIGHT 04 | REF: 107937438

Katō Shigetaka (加藤重高, 1927–2013)

Seto/Mino Tetsuyū (Iron-Glaze) Square Flower Vase (Hanaire)

Seto / Mino (Aichi–Gifu) • Third Son of Katō Tōkurō • H 22.5 cm • Incised 'Shigetaka' Mark • Signed Tomobako, Tomonuno & Shiori

Slab-built architectural square vase wrapped in deep amber-black iron glaze (*tetsuyū*) over coarse Seto clay.



HIGHLIGHT 05 | REF: 107688969

Tokuda Yasokichi III (三代徳田八十吉, 1933–2009 • Living National Treasure)

Kutani Saiyū (Glaze-Gradation) Porcelain Vase (Hanaire)

Kutani (Ishikawa) • Holder of Important Intangible Cultural Property • H 21.5 cm • Signed Tomobako & Shiori • High-Fired Porcelain

Luminous turquoise, cobalt, and deep indigo glaze gradations (*saiyū* / *yōsai*) fused directly across a high-fired porcelain body.



HIGHLIGHT 06 | REF: 108042550

Maeda Masanori (前田正範, 1928–1992 • Impressed Seal 'Senzan' 泉山)

Kyō-yaki Crackled Celadon (Kannyū Seiji) & Copper-Red (Kōsai) Globular Vase

Kyoto • Pupil of Kusube Yaichi • H 18.5 × D 18.0 cm (Mouth 6.0 cm) • Impressed Square Seal 'Senzan' on Base

Translucent pale blue-green crackled celadon paired with volatile copper-red (*shinsha* / *kōsai*) lotus-petal brushwork fired in reduction.



HIGHLIGHT 07 | REF: 107880075

Imaemon Kiln (十四代今泉今右衛門窯 • Nabeshima Porcelain)

Iroe-Nabeshima Wisteria Porcelain Year Plate (2009 Limited Edition 107/200)

Arita (Saga) • Important Intangible Cultural Property Lineage • Numbered 107/200 • Original Presentation Box & Stand

Refined Nabeshima porcelain plate depicting cascading wisteria blossoms in underglaze cobalt blue and delicate overglaze polychrome enamels.



HIGHLIGHT 08 | REF: 107764507

Kōji Arata (荒田耕治, 1938–2022)

Kasama Ware Black-Glazed & Copper-Splash Single-Flower Vase (Ichirin-zashi)

Kasama (Ibaraki) • Signed Paulownia Tomobako • Globular Stoneware Form

Lustrous tenmoku-black iron glaze broken by spontaneous crimson-copper and emerald kiln splashes across a compact spherical body.



HIGHLIGHT 09 | REF: 108043129

Kobayashi Shōmin (小林尚珉, 1912–1994) & Shōkōsha (尚工舎)

1986 Cast-Bronze Archaic Tiger Bell 'Kohaku' (鋳銅製 虎鏑)

Japan • After the Sen-oku Hakukokan Western Zhou Masterpiece • H 12.0 × W 10.0 × D 7.5 cm • Cast Marks (Sumitomo Igeta + '1986' + 'Shōmin') • Dual-Inscribed Tomobako

Commemorative bronze bell featuring archaic *taotie*-derived relief wings and cresting tiger-form suspension loops.



HIGHLIGHT 10 | REF: 107937204

After Takehisa Yumeji (竹久夢二, 1884–1934)

Set of Three 'Kuroneko' (黒猫, Black Cat) Woodblock Prints on Washi

Taishō Lyric Graphic Tradition • Japanese Washi Paper • 3 Prints in White Presentation Mats (Window 8.4 × 6.5 cm each)

Intimate woodblock vignettes pairing Yumeji's iconic black cat with kimono patterns and Taishō-roman modernity.



HIGHLIGHT 11 | REF: 107734025

Japanese Roof-Tile Artisan (美術陶器 額瓦 'Tatsu' 辰)

Smoked-Silver Ceramic Dragon Relief Plaque (Ibushi-Gawara / Gaku-Gawara)

Traditional Japanese Architectural Tile Craft • High-Relief Smoked Clay (*Ibushi*) • Original Presentation Box

Carved and molded in deep three-dimensional relief and carbon-smoked to a graphite-silver metallic sheen.



HIGHLIGHT 12 | REF: 107738274

Japanese Esoteric Buddhist Metalwork Workshop

Cast Copper-Alloy Wisdom Sword of Monju Bosatsu (Monju no Chie-ken / Kurikara-ken)

Japan • Two-Part Interlocking Bronze Casting • H approx. 14 cm • Dragon-Wrapped Vajra Hilt Blade + Triangular Lotus Pedestal

Represents the flaming dragon king Kurikara coiling around the double-edged sword that severs delusion.



HIGHLIGHT 13 | REF: 107803131

Taisyō Maeda (前田泰昭, b. 1951 • Japan Kōgei Association Director)

Arita Porcelain Cobalt & Copper-Red Glaze Vase (Yūri-Kōsai Hanaire)

Arita (Saga) • Mayor of Arita Award & Nitten Lineage • H 23.5 cm • Signed Paulownia Tomobako

Vibrant crimson underglaze copper-red (*yūri-kōsai*) and deep cobalt-blue glazes merging across a classical Arita porcelain shoulder.



HIGHLIGHT 14 | REF: STORE-SAEKI

Saeki Morimi (佐伯守美, b. 1949 • Mashiko / Tochigi)

Nerikomi / Zōgan Inlay Incense Container (Kōgō) with Winter Forest Motifs

Mashiko (Tochigi) • Japan Ceramic Society Award Recipient • H 3.1 × W 5.3 cm • Signed Tomobako & Shiori • Laminated & Inlaid Colored Clays

Poetic birch and winter forest silhouettes inlaid directly into the clay body using Saeki's signature *nerikomi-zōgan* technique.



HIGHLIGHT 15 | REF: 107800514

Hiroki Hayakawa (早川嘉則 • Kandagama 閑田窯)

Sculptural Pebble-Form Stoneware Flower Vessel (Hakeme Hanaire)

Contemporary Japanese Studio Ceramics • Signed Tomobako • Hand-Built Stoneware with Brushed White Slip

Organic river-stone silhouette swept with dynamic white *hakeme* slip brushmarks and warm iron-ash kiln blush.



HIGHLIGHT 16 | REF: 107790502

Yamane Seigan (山根清玩, b. 1952)

Hagi Ware 'Kujaku' (Peacock) Matcha Tea Bowl (Seigan Blue Chawan)

Hagi (Yamaguchi) • Signed Paulownia Tomobako ('Hagi-yaki / Chawan / Seigan-saku') & Shiori

Radiating peacock-feather ash and cobalt-turquoise glaze rivulets over coarse, porous Hagi tea-ceremony clay.



HIGHLIGHT 17 | REF: 107702018

Hodaka Ryūji (穂高隆児, b. 1976)

Contemporary Oribe Matcha Chawan (Tea Bowl)

Kasama / Mino Tradition • Signed Paulownia Tomobako ('Oribe Chawan / Ryūji')

Trained as a chef in Japan's diplomatic service before turning to pottery, Hodaka throws muscular tea bowls with pooled copper-green Oribe glaze.



HIGHLIGHT 18 | REF: 107702024

Sakamoto Arata (坂本新, b. 1959)

Iridescent Lustre-Glaze Tall Cup / Vessel (Rasutā-yū)

Contemporary Japanese Studio Ceramics • With Artist Shiori Biography

Reduction-fired metallic lustre glaze shifting between peacock blue, violet, and silver across a finely ridged cylindrical profile.



HIGHLIGHT 19 | REF: 107784016

Seifū (清風 • Takaoka Metalwork)

Takaoka Cast Bronze Hōju-Form Kōro (Incense Burner) with Verdigris & Gold Leaf

Takaoka (Toyama) • Signed Tomobako ('Seifū')

Sacred wish-fulfilling jewel (*hōju*) silhouette patinated in turquoise verdigris (*rokushō*) and highlighted with hand-applied gold leaf.



HIGHLIGHT 20 | REF: 107789674

Shūji Yanagibashi (柳橋修二 • Kasama Ware)

Kasama Ware Ovoid Stoneware Vase with Colored Slip Inlay

Kasama (Ibaraki) • Signed Paulownia Tomobako

Warm iron-rich Kasama stoneware ovoid vessel banded with rhythmic geometric colored-slip inlay.

Material-Specific Care Notes for Collectors

Medium / Technique	Cleaning & Water Exposure	Long-Term Storage & Display
Overglaze Enamel, Kinrande & Gold/Platinum Leaf Porcelain (Kutani, Imaemon Nabeshima, Kyō-yaki Kamifūsen Kōgō)	Hand-wash gently in lukewarm water with a soft sponge; never use abrasive pads, citrus/acidic detergents, dishwashers, or microwaves, as gold leaf (*kinpaku*) and overglaze enamels sit above the main glaze.	Interleave stacked dishes with acid-free tissue or soft cloth so metallic accents are not scratched by unglazed porcelain footrings.
Crackled Stoneware, Hagi, Shino & Yakishime (Hagi Chawan, Oribe, Kasama, Bizen, Iga)	Before using a porous *chawan* or *guinomi* for tea or sake, soak briefly in clean water so moisture fills the micro-pores and prevents sudden staining. Rinse with plain water—no scented soap—and air-dry completely for 48–72 hours before boxing.	Never seal a damp stoneware vessel inside a closed *tomobako*; trapped moisture can cause mold on the wood and musty odors in porous clay.
Lustre Glaze & Metallic Overglaze (Sakamoto Arata Rasutā-yū)	Wash gently by hand with mild soap and water; avoid acidic liquids (lemon/vinegar) left standing for long periods, and never place in a microwave or dishwasher.	Wipe dry with a soft lint-free cloth to preserve the iridescent metallic sheen.
Cast Bronze & Copper-Alloy Metalwork (Kobayashi Shōmin Kohaku, Takaoka Kōro, Monju Sword)	Preserve the intentional patina (*furu-bi, rokushō* verdigris, or wax-sealed bronze tone). Dust with a soft dry brush or lint-free cloth; never apply commercial metal polish or chemical cleaners.	Handle with clean, dry hands or cotton gloves to avoid skin-oil spots; keep in a stable, low-humidity interior environment.
Woodblock Prints on Washi (Takehisa Yumeji Kuroneko)	Keep strictly dry and out of direct sunlight or high-UV halogen spotlights to protect fugitive organic and mineral pigments.	Retain non-destructive corner-pocket mounting on acid-free archival mat board; never dry-mount or tape *washi* margins.

PART IV • THE 3-QUESTION COLLECTOR'S PREFERENCE PROFILE

Unlock the Closed VIP Archive Lookbooks (Vol. 1 & Vol. 2)

Alongside our live Catawiki curation, Sabiru Treasures maintains a private reference archive of **603 Japanese ceramic and studio glass works** acquired over a six-month mandate for a seasoned European collector (including works by Living National Treasures Osamu Suzuki and Tatsuzo Shimaoka, Sodeisha pioneers Satoshi Sato, Yutaka Kondo, and Somi Yorigami, and modern masters Ryoji Koie, Ryuichi Kakurezaki, Sueharu Fukami, and Goro Suzuki).

To request complimentary access to our two private reference volumes—**VIP Archive Vol. 1 (Avant-Garde, Sodeisha & Modern Masters)** and **VIP Archive Vol. 2 (Curated Sake Ware: Guinomi & Tokkuri)**—plus 48-hour *First Look* previews before public auction listing, share your answers to three brief questions at:

https://www.sabirutreasures.com/looking-notes

1. **Which three works or artists speak most to your shelf?** (Name up to three reference numbers or kiln traditions—e.g., Sodeisha sculptural vessels, Bizen *yakishime*, Mino Shino/Oribe, or Seihakuji porcelain.)
2. **What element matters most when you hold a piece?** (a) Kiln & glaze landscape (*keshiki / yōhen*), (b) Footring & sculptural silhouette (*kōdai*), (c) Signed *tomobako* & exhibition lineage, or (d) Tactile utility for tea, sake, or flowers.
3. **Would you like 48-hour First Look notifications & bespoke sourcing notes?** Tell us any specific artists, forms, or budget range you are quietly searching for in Japan.