

Advance Exhibition Information  
For Immediate Release

**KATÔ YASUKAGE**

**MARCH 28-APRIL 2, 2003**

**International Asian Art Fair  
The Seventh Regiment Armory  
Park Avenue at 67<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York, NY 10021**

Joan B. Mirviss Ltd., one of the world's leading dealers in modern and contemporary Japanese ceramics, will present the work of the Japanese ceramic artist **KATÔ YASUKAGE** at the International Asian Art Fair in New York. One of the top young ceramics talents in Japan, Katô specializes in the centuries-old traditions of milky white shino and the green copper glazed oribe wares. Coveted by connoisseurs of the tea ceremony for more than four hundred years, and celebrated by cognoscenti throughout the world, shino and oribe ceramics have a long and distinguished history (which will be covered in the depth in an important exhibition of masterpieces of traditional oribe ceramics scheduled to open at the Metropolitan Museum of Art this autumn).

**Katô Yasukage** (b.1964) is the eldest son of the thirteenth generation Mino potter Katô Kagekiyo (Seizô). The progenitor of his distinguished line of potters established the first Mino kiln in 1574, and the second in this line, Kagenobu, was the creator of the celebrated Motoyashiki kiln (multi-chambered climbing type) that forever changed the way Japanese ceramics were produced. Despite this illustrious ancestry, Katô Yasukage's emergence was anything but direct or easy.

Following the untimely deaths of his father and grandfather (Shoichi), both master

pottery, Katô was sent by the devastated family to Bizen, another historically rich Japanese ceramic center. There, while still a teenager, he studied the art of unglazed ceramics for several years with the National Living Treasure Yamamoto Tôshû. Returning to his home in Gifu after further academic training in sculpture, Katô brought with him a fresh vision and approach towards the traditional shino and oribe techniques.

Powerful forms and exquisitely pure glazes characterize his seemingly traditional ware. His work reveals a remarkable assimilation of traditional aesthetics that is redefined within a modern and highly personal oeuvre; this is particularly evident in his forceful sculptural vessels. His smaller functional works are a joy to hold, always perfectly balanced, sensuous to the touch and dazzling in the richness of his glazes. He is one of the very few artists left in Gifu still wood firing in the manner of his ancestors. At the remarkably young age of 36 Katô Shôji was designated the fourteenth master in this celebrated family of artists and received the new name of Yasukage. The exhibition of Katô Yasukage's work at the International Asian Art Fair will include more than thirty works that range from soaring and sweeping sculptural forms to intimate tea bowls and sake cups. This will be the artist's first exhibition outside Japan.

**For visuals and more information, please contact:  
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