

JOAN B MIRVISS LTD

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“Confronting Tradition in Clay: Japanese Living National Treasures vs Iconoclasts” at the stand of JOAN B MIRVISS, Ltd. at the Winter Antiques Show, Park Avenue Armory NYC January 21-30, 2011



NEW YORK---In her second exhibition, Joan B. Mirviss Ltd. will present **“Confronting Tradition in Clay: Japanese Living National Treasures vs Iconoclasts”** at the Winter Antiques Show held in the Park Avenue Armory, Park Avenue & 67th Street, NY.

Over thirty masterful ceramic works will be exhibited by celebrated artists who have mastered, preserved and re-invented centuries-old clay traditions as well as by those ceramists who refused to conform to any specific tradition or aesthetic and pushed the boundaries of function into the realm of sculpture. While stars in Japan, many of these names are quite unknown in the West to all but a few cognoscenti. This will be the first time that these artists will have work exhibited at this established fair.

Starting in 1952, the Japanese government designated specific artists, traditional musicians and performing artists as “Intangible Cultural Properties” later termed “Living National Treasure” (*ningen kokuhô*). These individuals were viewed by the government as the embodiment of a tradition and the preservers (keepers) of that aesthetic and technique for future generations. According to Mirviss, “This official perspective continues to view ‘tradition’ as the creation of something new from what one has been inherited rather than simply recreating ancient vessels.” Many of the early recipients of this designation were indeed pioneers in addition to being protectors of respected ancient techniques and styles:



JAPANESE ART *By Appointment*

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such as Hamada Shôji (1894-77), Fujiwara Kei (1899-1983), Ishiguro Munemaro (1893-1968), Kondo Yûzô (1913-83), Kusube Yaichi (1897-1984), Matsui Kôsei (1927-2003), Shimizu Uichi (1926-2004), and Tamura Kôichi (1918-87) among others.



While some clay artists strove to reach this particular pinnacle of fame and national recognition, others have refused this honor, such as the renowned ceramists Kitaôji Rosanjin (1883-1959) and Kawai Kanjirô (1890-1966). They and others whose works stand outside of any recognized tradition have persevered either as independent artists or as part of alternative associations. A few of the leading figures in this area include Kamoda Shôji (1933-1983), Kawamoto Gorô (1919-1986), and Okabe Mineo (1919-1990). However it was the post-war groundbreaking path of the non-functional clay movement called Sôdeisha led by Yagi Kazuô (1918-79), who, together with Suzuki Osamu (1926-2001) and Yamada Hikaru (1923-2001), strenuously broke from the traditional system in 1948 to seek out creative autonomy and artistic independence.

Mirviss further stated, “After viewing this substantial body work, it becomes readily evident that these ceramists stand as pioneering masters in the history of post-war international clay. Their impact is still being felt today by an entirely new generation of Japanese artists.”

For visuals or further information, please Nami Hoppin at 212-799-4021 or nami@mirviss.com; or visit www.mirviss.com.

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