

KITAÔJI ROSANJIN (1883-1959)

- 1883 Born in the village of Kamigamo to the north of Kyoto as the second son of Shinto priest Kiyoaya Kitaioji
Given name Kitaioji Fusajirô
- 1889 Left the Hattori family in April and was registered as the adopted son of Takezô Fukuda, a woodblock carver
- 1895 Inspired the works by Takeuchi Seiho, aspires to become a painter
- 1899 Becomes a painter of the then-popular Western-style signboards; studied calligraphy
- 1900 Started to collect antiques
- 1903 Settled in Tokyo
- 1905 Became a live-in apprentice of the renowned commercial calligrapher Katei Okamoto
- 1907 Left Okamoto and became an independent calligrapher
Began accepting calligraphy pupils under the name Fukuda Ôtei
- 1910 Visited Seoul, Korea and stayed there for three years
On the way to Japan, met Chinese calligrapher and seal engraver Wu Chang-shi in Shanghai
- 1913 Went by the artist name Fukuda Taikan. Visited Nagahama, Shiga Prefecture, and carved inscriptions on wooden plaques for wealthy local merchants. Through friend, was introduced to Kyoto magnate and art collector Naiki Seiki, whose influence on Rosanjin was to be enormous. Rosanjin began touring around, taking meals at the homes of friends and patrons along the way
- 1915 Succeeded to the Kitaôji name. He toured the Hokuriku district, and first became to be involved in pottery making, decorating blue-and-white porcelain and red overglaze enameled wares, at the kiln of the potter Suda Seika in Ishikawa
- 1916 Used the name Kitaôji Rokei (Rokyô) on advertising leaflets for his seal engraving business.
- 1919 Began antique appraisal business with Nakamura Takeshiro
- 1921 Began membership-based Gourmets' Club (*Bishoku kurabu*); the club becomes fashionable among Tokyo food-lovers
- 1922 Changed name into Kitaôji Rosanjin
- 1924 Produced dishes such as porcelain for the Gourmets' Club, and met a ceramic artist Arakawa Toyozô
- 1925 Opened Hoshigaoka Restaurant in the precincts of Hie Shrine; Rosanjin became manager and chief chef
- 1926 Established the kiln in order to produce dishes for the Hoshigaoka Restaurant. Next year, Arakawa Toyozô joined and became the director of the kiln
- 1928 Investigated old kilns in Korea
- 1930 Arakawa discovered an old kiln in Mino. Rosanjin supported his investigation
- 1936 Fired from the Hoshigaoka Restaurant
More focused on producing ceramics, especially for the commission of the custom-made gift set
- 1940 In addition to pottery, began to produce paintings
- 1943 Focused on producing lacquer wares
- 1945 Lost Tsukigaoka restaurants in Tokyo and Osaka by fire during the war
- 1946 Opened the ceramic shop "Kadokado bibô" in Ginza, Tokyo and changed the name of the kiln into "Rosanjin Ceramic Arts Institute"
- 1949 Visited Bizen potter Kanashige Tôyô with Isamu Noguchi
- 1951 Noguchi and his wife moved in next door to Rosanjin in Yamazaki, and set up a studio
- 1952 Began producing Bizen style pottery
Rosanjin 25-year of his career Exhibition, Takashimaya Department Store Gallery, Tokyo
Rosanjin Ceramic Works Exhibition, Urasenke Tea Society, Kyoto
- 1953 Mrs. John D. Rockefeller III visited Rosanjin in Yamazaki.

- Commissioned murals Sakura [Cherry Blossoms] and Fuji, to decorate the smoking room of a Panamanian ship, exhibited in Takashimaya Department Store
- 1954 Visited the U.S. and Europe with 200 works, invited by Rockefeller Foundation; gave lectures at Museum of Modern Art and other museums; and donated works to various institutions
- 1955 Asked to accept to be a Living National Treasure for Oribe glaze, but declined
- 1959 Died at the age of 76

Awards:

- 1904 Won a first prize at the prestigious Nitten Art Exhibition for the calligraphy in clerical script style (*reisho*). The winning work was eventually purchased by Viscount Kôken Tanaka, Minister of the Imperial Household.
- 1905 Entry to the Nitten Art Exhibition again for a work in block style (*kaisho*), under the name of Fukuda Kaitsu

Solo exhibitions:

- 1925 The 1st solo exhibition, Tsukigaoka Restaurant
- 1928 Mitsukoshi Department Store Gallery, Nihonbashi, Tokyo
- 1929 Mitsukoshi Department Store Galleries, Nihonbashi, Tokyo and Osaka
- 1929 Mitsukoshi Department Store Galleries, Nihonbashi, Tokyo and Osaka
- 1930 *Hoshigaoka kiln works*, Matsuzakaya Department Store Gallery, Nagoya
- 1934 *Kitaoji Family Ceramic Collection Exhibition*, Matsuzakaya Department Store Gallery, Ueno, Tokyo
- 1935 *100 Works by Rosanjin*, Matsuzakaya Department Store Gallery, Ueno, Tokyo
- 1936 *Rosanjin Recent works: Bowls*, Hoshigaoka Restaurant, Osaka
- New painting exhibition*, Hankyu Department Store Gallery, Osaka
- 1938 *Recent small painting exhibition*, Sanmaido Gallery, Ginza, Tokyo
- 1939 *Rosanjin Ceramics Exhibition*, Osaka
- 1941 Painting and ceramic exhibition, Takashimaya Department Store Gallery, Osaka
- 1949 Seisenkaku, Kanazawa
- 1955 *Rosanjin Works Exhibition*, Kyoto Art Club, Kyoto (both spring and fall; also in '56, '57, '58)
- Kanazawa Art Club, Kanazawa
- Takashimaya Department Gallery, Tokyo (also in '56, '57, '58)
- 1957 *Works by Rosanjin: Ceramics and Calligraphy*, Meitetsu Department Store Gallery, Nagoya
- 1958 Kochukyo, Tokyo
- 1959 Calligraphy exhibition, Kyoto Art Club, Kyoto

Group exhibitions:

- 1951 Selected to *Contemporary Japanese Ceramics Exhibition*, Musée Chernuschi, Paris; the exhibition traveled to Vallauris, France, where Rosanjin's work attracts the attention of Paolo Picasso
- 1954 Exhibition was held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, presenting some 250 works. The exhibition traveled to London, Paris, and Rome
- 1959 *Contemporary Japanese Ceramics Exhibition*, National Museum of Art, Tokyo

Reference:

Cardozo, Sidney B., and Masaaki Hirano. *The Art of Rosanjin*. New York: Kodansha International LTD., 1987.