

KATŌ RYŌTARŌ (b. 1974)

Born into a pottery-making family, Katō Ryōtarō represents the eighth generation of ceramists working in the Mino region. His great-grandfather established the current family's studio, Kōbei-gama. Ryōtarō's grandfather, Kōbei VI (1917–2005) or better known as Katō Takuo, was designated a Living National Treasure for a multiplicity of glazes that he spent a lifetime researching, such as lusterware, *sançai* (Chinese three-color glazing), Persian-style decoration, and blue glaze, all of which he imbued with his own sensibility.

As an undergraduate student at Kyoto Seika University, Katō Ryōtarō studied under Matsumoto Hideo (b. 1951) before entering Kyoto City University of Arts' graduate program under Akiyama Yō (b. 1953); an additional major influence came from his studies with the calligrapher Ishikawa Kyūyō (b. 1945). While focusing on sculpture as a student, his work since then has returned to his familial roots with a deep appreciation of the tea ceremony. His teaware adheres to traditional aesthetics, while his surface decoration reveals this multiplicity of influences and demonstrates his brilliance at combining Japanese tradition with indigenous modern sensibility. In 2002, he built a new kiln in which the fire enters the kiln from the floor, rises and hits the ceiling, descends to the floor, and exits from the fire hole (*tōenshiki*), creating highly unusual kiln effects.

1974	Born the eldest son of Katō Kōbei VII
1997	Graduated from Kyoto Seika University, Fine Arts Department, Ceramics
1999	Completed graduate studies at Kyoto City University of Arts, Ceramics
2000	Began working at his father's Kōbei kiln
2002	Built his own <i>tōenshiki</i> kiln (where fire enters the kiln from the floor, rises and hits the ceiling, descends to the floor, and exits from the fire hole)
2010	Presented memorial work at Daming Temple in Yangzhou for the Chinese monk, Jianzhen, who introduced the Ritsu Sect of Buddhism to Japan in 754 AD)
2015	Succeeded as the eighth generation of Kōbei Kiln

Selected Awards:

2021	Arts and Culture Encouragement Prize from Gifu Prefecture
2023	Japan Ceramic Society Award

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

2007	Matsuzakaya Art Gallery, Nagoya, Aichi (again in '10, '13)
2008	Gallery Kōhōdo, Gifu Gallery Mitate, Tokyo
2009	Flower Gallery Fuji No Hana, Nagoya Takashimaya Art Gallery, Osaka (again in '12, '15)
2010	Gallery Bienio, Nagoya, Aichi (again in '13) Shibuya Kurodatōen, Shibuya, Tokyo (again in '11, '13, '15, '21, '23, '25)
2011	Art Salon KOGEN, Aichi (again in '23, '26)
2022	Takashimaya Art Gallery, Nihonbashi, Tokyo
2024	<i>Fiftieth Birthday Exhibition</i> , Tamesaburō Memorial Museum at Furukawa Art

- Museum, Nagoya
 Japan Ceramic Society Award Exhibition, Kochūkyo, Tokyo
 2025 Matsuzakaya Art Gallery ART HUB NAGOYA, Nagoya
 Hankyū Art Gallery, Umeda, Osaka
 Gallery Sakuranoki, Karuizawa
 2026 Tankōsha, Kyoto

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2007 *Contemporary Makers: Teabowls Special Collection*, Mistukoshi Art Gallery,
 Kogei Salon Art Square, Nihonbashi, Tokyo
 2008 *Chaki 103 no kagayaki ~ Mino no bi ten* (Radiance of 103 Teaware Utensils: The
 Beauty of Mino Exhibition), Furukawa Art Museum, Nagoya
Mino Tea Party, Shingen Monastery, Tajimi, Gifu
 2010 *Sera Masanori feat. New Generation Ceramists Exhibition*, Mitsukoshi Art
 Gallery, Nihonbashi, Tokyo (again in '13)
 2011 *Chakai [onkosōshin]* (Tea Ceremony: Embrace the Past to Create the Future),
 Furukawa Art Museum, Nagoya
 2012 *Sera Masanori feat. New Generation Ceramists Exhibition*, JR Mitsukoshi
 Art Gallery, Osaka
Echigo-Tsumari Art Triennale, Niigata
Mino Ceramics Now, Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu
Ubusuna Tea Party, Ubusuna House, Niigata
 2014 *9th Paramita Ceramic Grand Prize Exhibition*, Paramita Museum, Komono
 2015 *Finest Teacups*, Shibuya Kuroda Toen, Tokyo
 2016 Katō Kōbei VII – Katō Ryōtarō Father-son Exhibition
 Mitsukoshi Art Gallery, Nihonbashi, Tokyo
PUNK – Kōgei Tama no kyūsai (PUNK - Crafts: Salvation of Souls),
 Rakusui-tei Museum of Art, Toyafma
 2017–18 *Tennen no kuro: tetsu to tanso no monogatari* (Natural Black: A Tale of Iron and
 Carbon, INAX Live Museum, Tokoname, Aichi
 2018 *Beyond Boundaries: A Tomorrow of Traditional Decorative Arts*, Wako, Tokyo
 2019 *Kyū no jikū* (Time and Place of Nine Artists), Takashimaya Art Gallery, Nihonbashi,
 Tokyo
Kōbei-gama rekidai ten (Generations of Kōbei Kiln), Toshin Mino Ceramic Art
 Museum, Tajimi
 2023 *Four "Mino" Ceramic Artists Exhibition*, Wako, Tokyo
 Tokai Traditional Craft Association Exhibition, Aichi Prefectural Art Museum
 2024 *Eternal Partnership: Japanese Ceramics in Blue & White*, Asia Week New York,
 Joan B Mirviss LTD, New York, NY
KO+GEI, Tokyo Art Club, Tokyo (again in '26)
The Art of the RAMEN Bowl, Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu
 2025 *Tool or Art*, Expo 2025, Osaka
 2025–26 *72nd Japan Kōgei Association Exhibition*
 2026 *THE MINO – Chisō* (Stratum), Isetan Art Gallery, Shinjuku, Tokyo
Playing with Tradition: Modern and Contemporary Mino, Joan B Mirviss LTD, New
 York, NY

Selected Public Collections:

Furukawa Art Museum, Nagoya
Ibaraki Ceramic Art Museum, Kasama
Midorigaoka Art Museum, Ikoma
Museum of Fine Arts, Gifu
Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu
Onkoshūseikan, Chiyohō Inari Shrine, Nagoya
Rakusutei Art Museum, Toyama
Tōshin Mino Ceramic Art Museum, Gifu

Selected References:

Gendai Nihon no tōgeika (Japanese Contemporary Ceramists). Tokyo: Yosensha, 2010, pp. 32–33.

Honoho Geijutsu 110 (Summer 2012): p. 28.

Honoho Geijutsu 121 (Spring 2015): pp. 14–17, English summary pp. 1–3.

Honoho Geijutsu 146 (Summer 2021): pp. 86–89, English summary p. 4.

Honoho Geijutsu 150 (Summer 2022): pp. 88–91, English Summary p. 1.

Honoho Geijutsu 163 (Fall 2025): pp. 78–85.

Honoho Geijutsu 165 (Spring 2026): p. 85.

Mino Ceramics Now 2012. Gifu: Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Gifu, 2012, p. 62, pl. 53, p. 110, p. 118.

Mino no tōgeika tachi: hyakukyūnin no sakka to muttsu no kamamoto (Ceramists in Mino: 109 Artists and 6 Kilns). Tokyo: Abe Shuppan, 2015, p. 50.

“Modern Tea Bowls Selected by Sen Sōoku.” *Honoho Geijutsu* 137 (Spring 2019): pp. 28–29 and English summary pp. 1–2.

PUNK. Toyama: Rakusui-tei Museum of Art, 2016, pp. 28–31, 58.

Shino to Oribe; All of Shino & Oribe. Tokyo: Abe Shuppan, 2013, p. 72, English summary pp. 1–3.

Tōgeika 150-nin: 2014-nen gendai Nihon no seiei tachi (150 Ceramicists: The Best Contemporary Japanese Artists). Tokyo: Abe Shuppan, 2014, pp. 42.

Tōsetsu 854 (October 2024): pp. 4–25.