

# Jomon Yayoi Kofun

Japanese Art Before Buddhism

# Japanese Ceramics

Japan has the world's longest history in making pottery by firing clay. (Yaki means cooked over direct heat) The earliest clay-fired pieces date back to Jomon pottery created 16,000 years ago. They were made by kneading and shaping clay, and then solidified by firing for enhanced durability. Through this process, one can see potters' ingenuity and artisanal skills as well as the evolving sense of beauty and value attached to pottery. Find out below the variations of Japanese pottery and its beauty by looking at different schools or styles: The six ancient kilns, or *Rokkoyo*, typical of unglazed pottery originating from earthenware; the colorful and decorative *Arita-yaki* and *Kutani-yaki*, refined by Chinese and Korean influences; *Raku-yaki* and *Oribe-yaki*, along with the *Rinpa* school of pottery, based on the *wabi* aesthetic and minimalism from the late Muromachi period. Modern works include folk-style, utilitarian pottery elaborated by Shoji Hamada and Kanjiro Kawai, praised for their practical elegance. More contemporary Japanese ceramic works are represented here as well, focusing on Koichi Uchida, Masanobu Ando, and Taizo Kuroda.

# Jomon

The Jōmon period is the time in Japanese prehistory, traditionally dated between c. 14,000–300 BCE, during which Japan was inhabited by a diverse hunter-gatherer and early agriculturalist population united through a common Jōmon culture, which reached a considerable degree of sedentism and cultural complexity.

The people that came to what would be known today as [Japan](#) first did so near the end of the last glacial period, or [Ice Age](#), most likely while following animal herds over land bridges formed during the glacial period. When the climate warmed and the land bridges disappeared, the soon-to-be Jomon people found themselves on an island.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IzlyngxiwPQ>

# Jomon Pottery

The Jōmon pottery is a type of ancient earthenware pottery which was made during the Jōmon period in Japan. The term "Jōmon" means "rope-patterned" in Japanese, describing the patterns that are pressed into the clay.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HLj1n05ewss> (Jomon Only)
- [Jomon, Yayoi, Kofun Period | Japanese Art History | Little Art Talks – YouTube](#) (Before Buddhism)
- [Asuka & Nara Period | Japanese Art History | Little Art Talks – YouTube](#) (Buddhism introduced)





























The Bearded Chuku (hollow?) Dogu - has incised horizontal bands, probably representing tattoos, across the chest, pelvis, knees, and calves. It's very short, very curly haired beard, is similar to some Assyrian depictions of Hebrews and other Black middle-easterners. 2000-1000 B.C.











# Yayoi

The *Yayoi* people (弥生人, *Yayoi jin*) were an ancient ethnic group that migrated to the Japanese archipelago mainly from the Korean Peninsula during the *Yayoi* period (300 BCE–300 CE). Radio-carbon evidence suggests the *Yayoi* period began between 1,000 and 800 BCE.

Beginning about the fourth century B.C., [Jōmon culture](#) was gradually replaced by the more advanced Yayoi culture, which takes its name from the site in Tokyo where pottery of this period was first discovered in 1884. The new culture first appeared in western Japan and then spread east and north to Honshū. While some aspects of Yayoi society evolved from the Jōmon, more important to its development was the technique of wet-rice cultivation, which is thought to have been introduced to Japan from Korea and southeastern China sometime between 1000 B.C. and the first century A.D. In keeping with an agrarian lifestyle, the people of the Yayoi culture lived in permanently settled communities, made up of thatched houses clustered into villages.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MQnyZ8owTp8>

# Yayoi Pottery

In striking contrast to Jōmon pottery, Yayoi vessels have clean, functional shapes. Nonetheless, the technical process of pottery making remained essentially the same, and in all likelihood women using the coil method continued to be the primary producers. Two technical differences, however, are significant: the fine clay surfaces of Yayoi vessels were smoothed, and clay slip was sometimes applied over the body to make it less porous. Many Yayoi vessels resemble pots found in Korea, and some scholars have proposed that the Yayoi style originated in that land, arriving first in northern Kyūshū and gradually spreading northeastward. Nevertheless, some pieces clearly show the influence of Jōmon ceramics, leading others to speculate that Yayoi wares were the product of an indigenous evolution from the less elaborate Jōmon wares of northern Kyūshū.



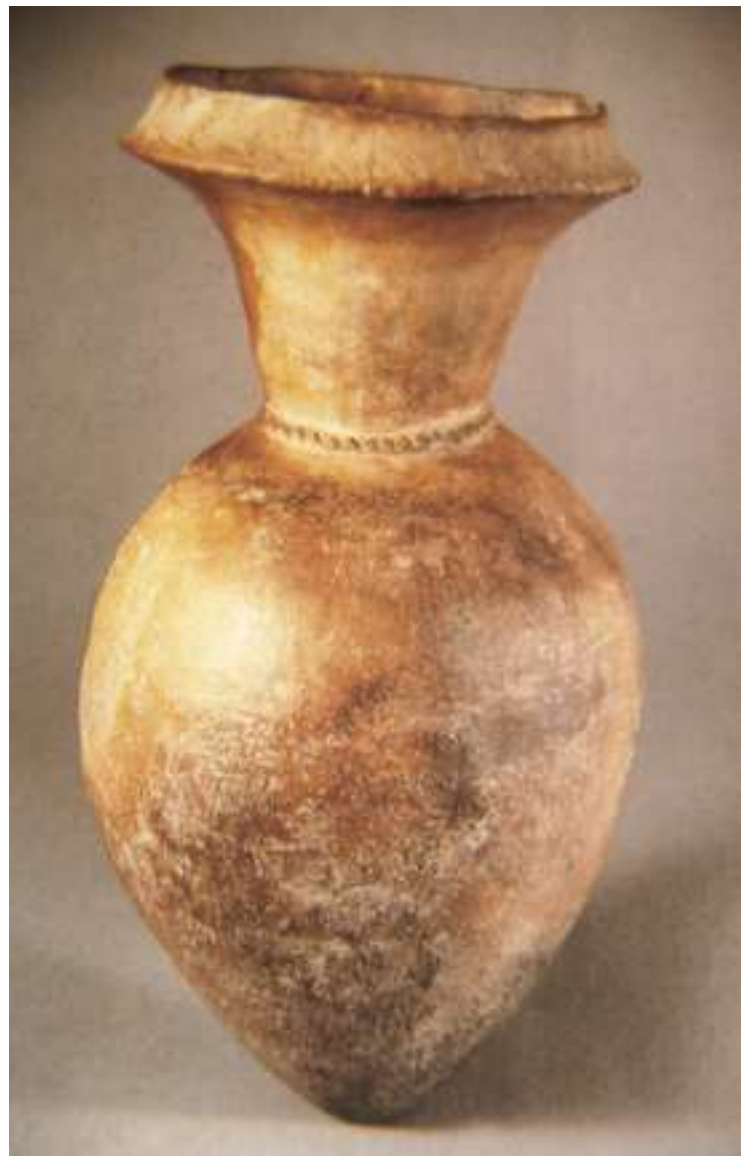
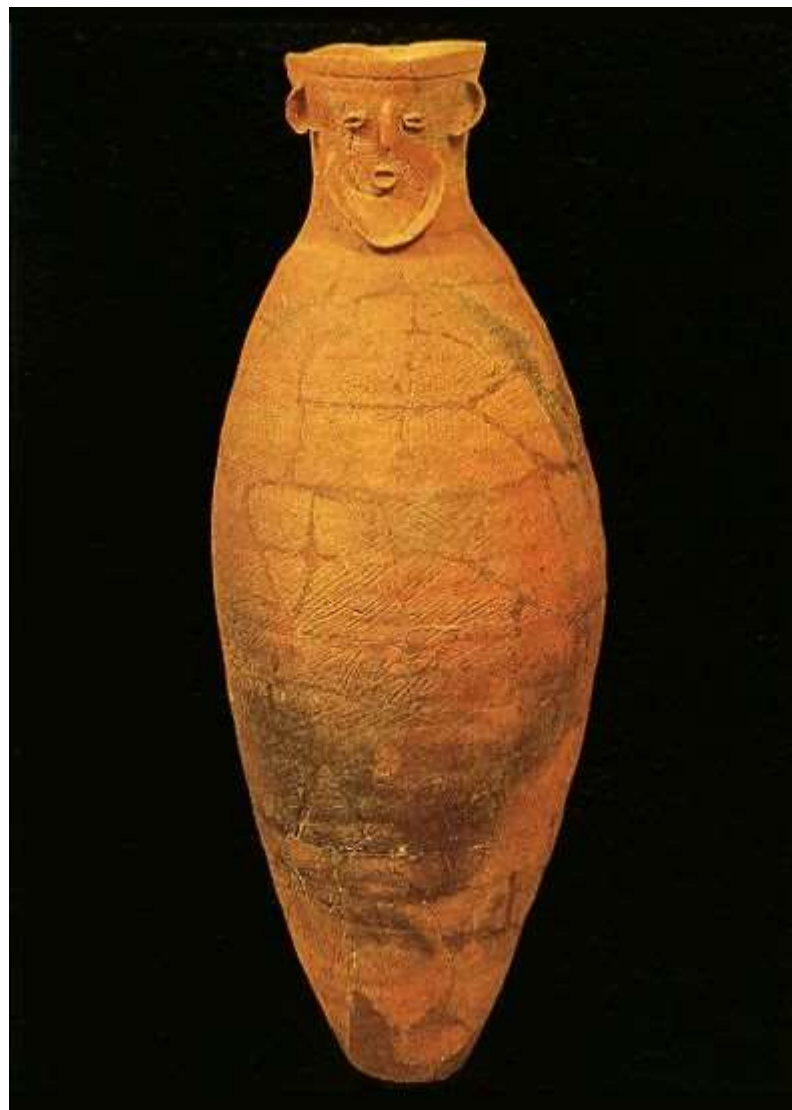


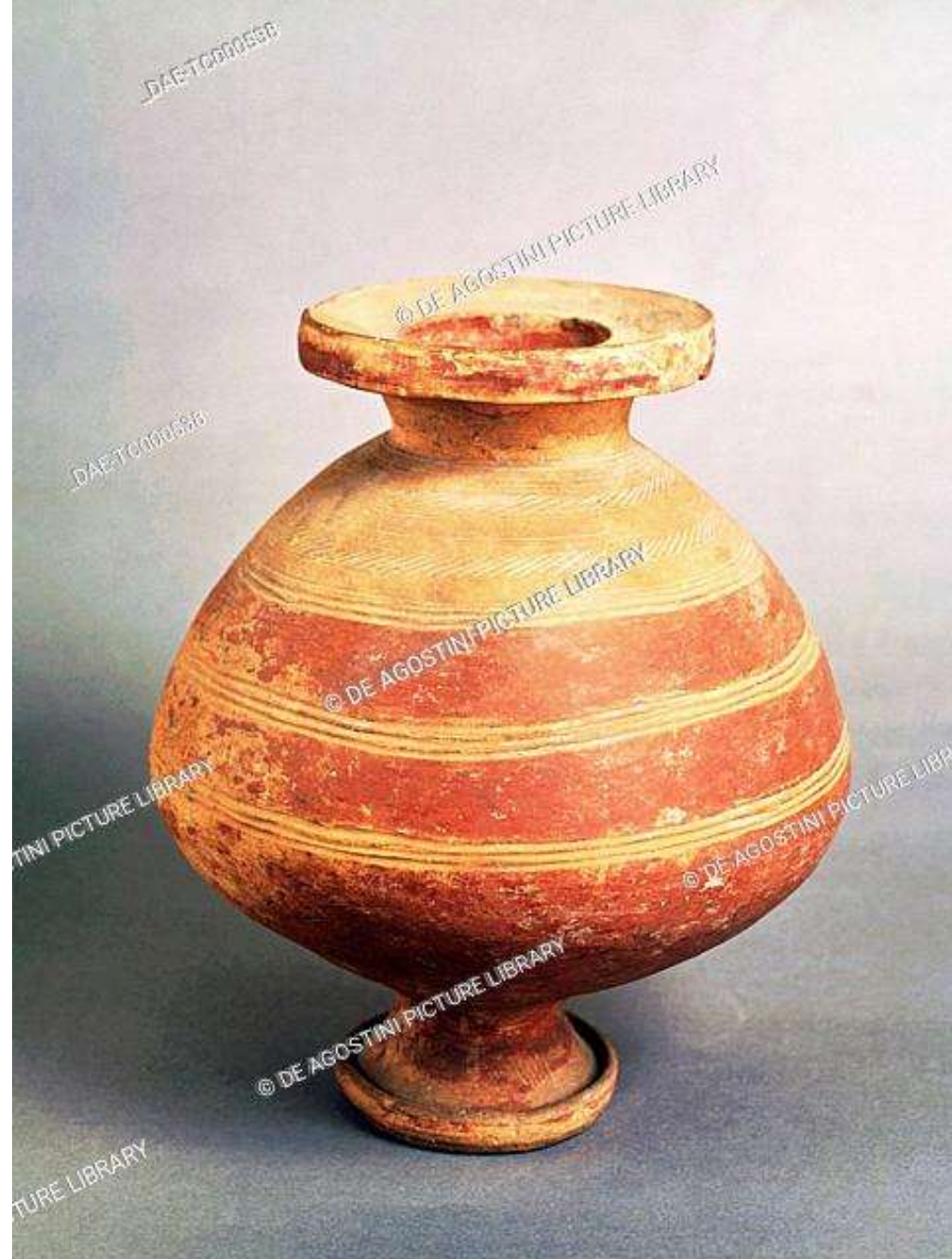












# Yayoi Bronze

The **Yayoi** people mastered **bronze** and iron casting. They wove hemp and lived in village communities of thatched-roofed, raised-floor houses. They employed a method of wet paddy rice cultivation, of Chinese origin, and continued the hunting and shell-gathering economy of the Jōmon culture.

**Yayoi culture**, (c. 300 bce–c. 250 ce), prehistoric [culture](#) of [Japan](#), subsequent to the [Jōmon culture](#). Named after the district in [Tokyo](#) where its [artifacts](#) were first found in 1884, the culture arose on the southern Japanese island of [Kyushu](#) and spread northeastward toward the [Kantō Plain](#). The Yayoi people mastered [bronze](#) and [iron](#) casting. They wove hemp and lived in village [communities](#) of thatched-roofed, raised-floor houses. They employed a method of wet [paddy](#) rice cultivation, of Chinese origin, and continued the hunting and shell-gathering economy of the Jōmon culture.







# Kofun

**Kofun** (古墳, from [Sino-Japanese](#) "ancient grave") are megalithic [tombs](#) or [tumuli](#) in [Northeast Asia](#). Kofun were mainly constructed in the [Japanese archipelago](#) between the middle of the 3rd century to the early 7th century CE.<sup>[1]</sup>

The term is the origin of the name of the [Kofun period](#), which indicates the middle 3rd century to early–middle 6th century. Many Kofun have distinctive keyhole-shaped [mounds](#) (*zempō-kōen fun* (前方後円墳)), which are unique to [ancient Japan](#). The [Mozu-Furuichi](#) kofun or tumulus clusters were inscribed on the [UNESCO World Heritage List](#) in 2019, while [Ishibutai Kofun](#) is one of a number in [Asuka-Fujiwara](#) residing on the [Tentative List](#).

Continuing from the Yayoi period, the Kofun period is characterized by a strong influence from the Korean Peninsula; archaeologists consider it a shared culture across the southern [Korean Peninsula](#), [Kyūshū](#) and [Honshū](#). The word [kofun](#) is Japanese for the type of [burial mound](#) dating from this era, and archaeology indicates that the mound tombs and material culture of the elite were similar throughout the region. From China, Buddhism and the Chinese writing system were introduced near the end of the period. The Kofun period recorded Japan's earliest political centralization, when the Yamato clan rose to power in southwestern Japan, established the [Imperial House](#), and helped control trade routes across the region.



# Kofun Keyhole Tombs

Kofun (from [Middle Chinese](#) *kú* 古 "ancient" + *bjun* 墳 "burial mound")<sup>[3][4]</sup> are burial mounds built for members of the ruling class from the 3rd to the 7th centuries in Japan,<sup>[5]</sup> and the Kofun period takes its name from the distinctive earthen mounds. The mounds contained large stone burial chambers, and some are surrounded by [moats](#).

Kofun have four basic shapes: round and square are the most common, followed by 'scallop-shell' and 'keyhole.' The keyhole tomb is a distinct style found only in Japan, with a square front and round back. Kofun range in size from several meters to over 400 meters long, and unglazed pottery figures ([Haniwa](#)) were often buried under a kofun's circumference.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkUIMRTEe-k>







# Haji Pottery

**Haji pottery** (土師器, *Hajiki*) is a type of plain, unglazed, reddish-brown [Japanese pottery](#) or [earthenware](#) that was produced during the [Kofun](#), [Nara](#), and [Heian](#) periods of [Japanese history](#). It was used for both ritual and utilitarian purposes, and many examples have been found in Japanese tombs, where they form part of the basis of dating archaeological sites.

<https://hagiyakiya.com/en/> (no words-12 minutes)



# Haniwa

The Haniwa are terracotta clay figures that were made for ritual use and buried with the dead as funerary objects during the Kofun period of the history of Japan. Haniwa were created according to the wazumi technique, in which mounds of coiled clay were built up to shape the figure, layer by layer.

**Haniwa** (“clay cylinder” or “circle of clay” in Japanese) are large hollow, earthenware funerary objects found in Japan. Massive quantities of **haniwa**—many nearly life sized—were carefully placed on top of colossal, mounded tombs, known as kofun (“old tomb” in Japanese).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhmBnwkit34>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCpiIPj7xgI> (smart history)















# Ainu



The Ainu or the Aynu, also known as the Ezo in historical Japanese texts, are an East Asian ethnic group indigenous to northern Japan, the original inhabitants of Hokkaido and some of its nearby Russian territories. Official estimates place the total Ainu population of Japan at 25,000.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XdymygPFeal>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fKZOmRNarj8> (5 mins good)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iA7BILX-q4I> (22 mins)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4whDM7AE-nE> (9 mins cloth from treebark)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4Lbbqa\\_m2Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4Lbbqa_m2Q) (history)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1uIPkbAW7c> (2019)













# Ainu Art

The **Ainu** are the inheritors of many long artistic traditions in both the visual and performing **arts**. Among their most celebrates are those of storytelling, music, dance, embroidery, tattooing, and woodcarving. ... These dances similarly take the perspective of the kamuy they depict, such as the crane dance.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rbHsOGlxQmk> (3 mins)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zf3rPRtoy0k>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCkG8OqRBsE>

Throat singing

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ijAaLHBi18>

Ainu dance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceGbsJ2ygw8> (3 mins)



# Tamasay

A tamasay is a bead necklace worn by Ainu women for special occasions. The necklace is called a shitoki if it has a medallion. They are made with large glass beads the Ainu obtained through trading with Chinese merchants. The Ainu also obtained glass beads secretly made by the Matsumae Clan.









# Ainu Textiles

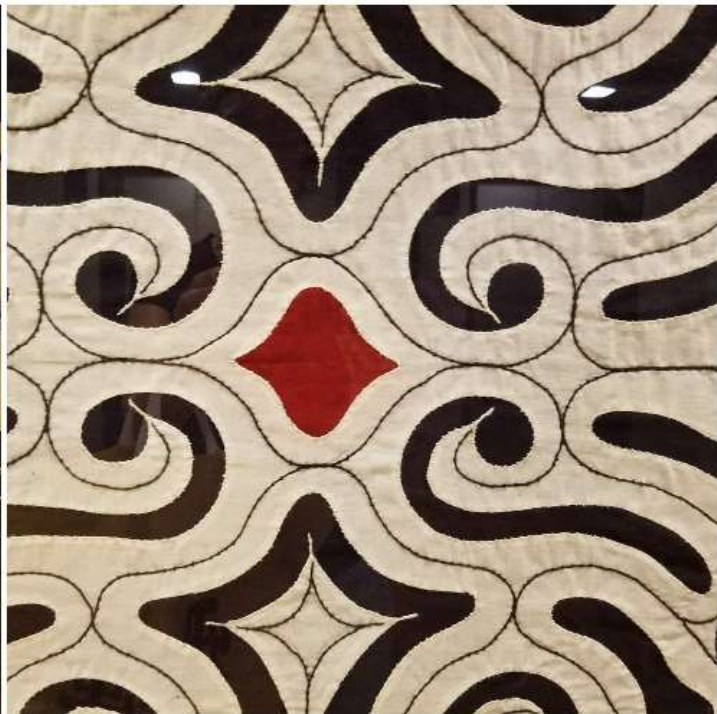
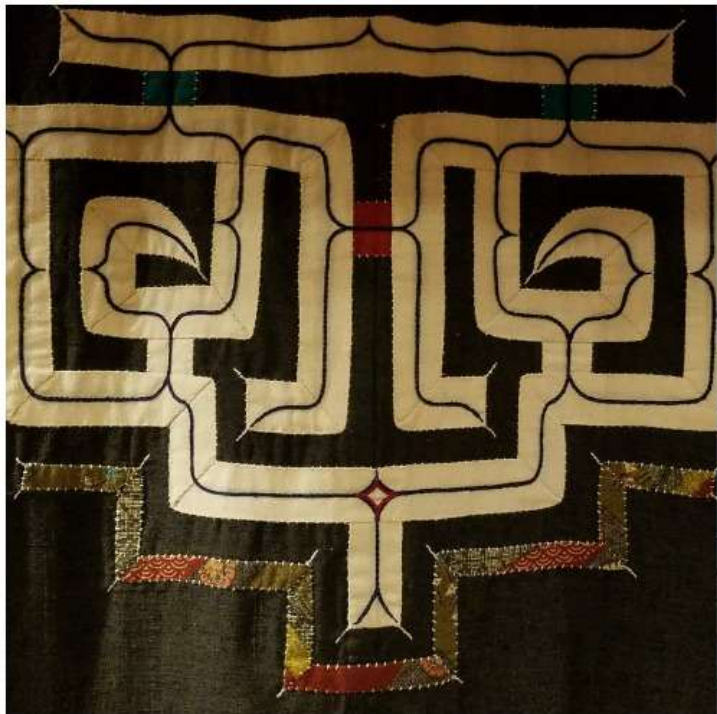
The patterns featured in **Ainu textiles** were not intended to represent anything specific, but the garment was meant to protect the wearer. ... This coat is made of cotton, but the **Ainu** are better known for making so-called “bark” clothes from attush, fibers made from elm trees, or retarpe, white fibers made from nettles.

[https://www.creativecowboyfilms.com/blog\\_posts/ainu-weaving-and-embroidery](https://www.creativecowboyfilms.com/blog_posts/ainu-weaving-and-embroidery)













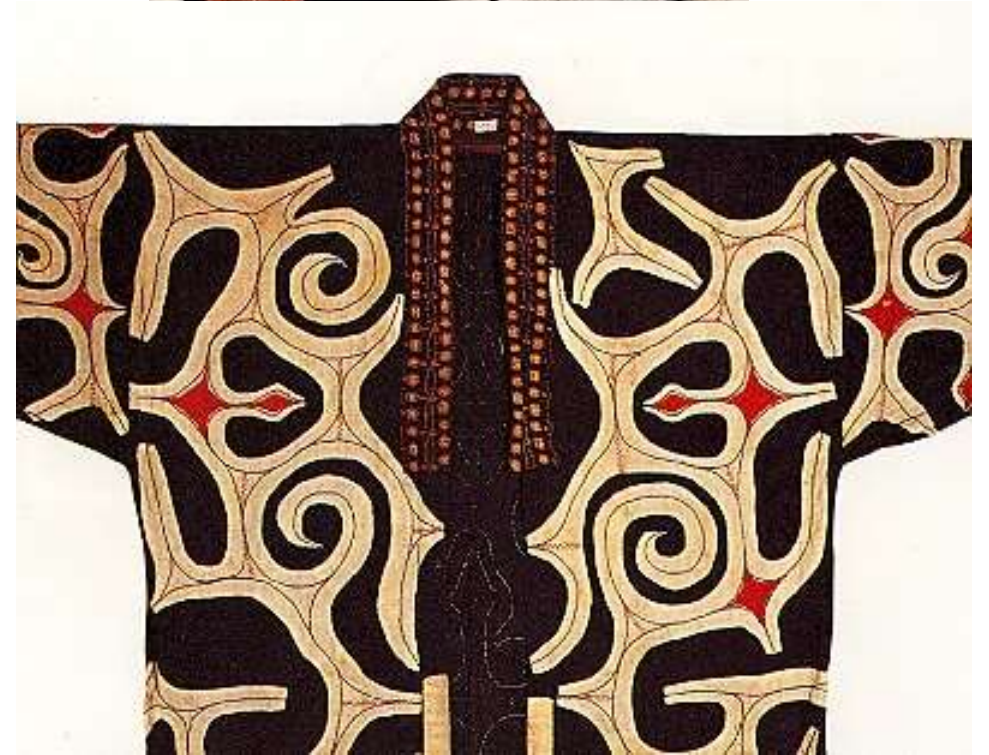
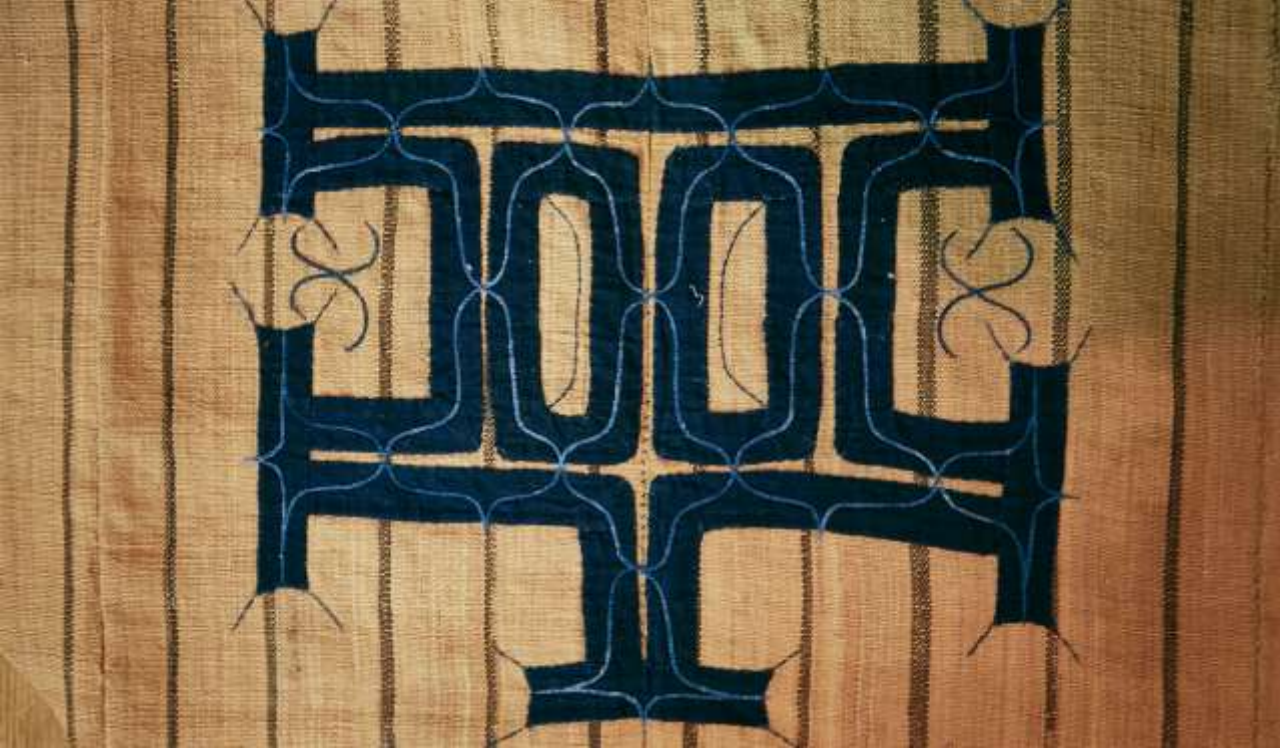






















# Contemporary Ceramics



# Tambayaki

Tambayaki, or Tamba ware, is an 800 year old tradition that is still carried on today by about 60 kilns located around the Tachikui district.

Tanbayaki has been produced in the village of Tachikui, Hyogo pref. for over 800 years. Although counted as one of the ancient six potteries in Japan with Seto, Tokoname, Shigaraki, Bizen and Echizen, Tanba has certain characteristics which set it apart from its peers. A comparison of pieces from the Momoyama period (Late 16th century) shows Tanbayaki to have a lighter, more refined feel, attributed in part to the fact that the natural glaze has a greenish tinge. These pieces, then fired in "Ana-gama" (cave kilns) are now referred to as "Old" Tanba. Various developments over time also contributed to Tanbayaki's uniqueness. Late in the Momoyama period a new method of firing was introduced, using a kiln built on a slope ("Nobori-gama"). In the early Edo period, the area produced a diverse array of pottery, ranging from pepper pots for the feudal lords to tea ceremony ware under the guidance of Enshu Kobori.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r9uNWxBpJuE>

Image







# Hitomi Hosono

Hitomi Hosono is a London-based ceramicist who won the inaugural Perrier-Jouët Arts Salon Prize. She is known for intricate ceramic pieces that are inspired by botanical studies and her memories of the Japanese landscape and the greenery of East London.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dZWYou8HTBw> (Japanese Porcelain—400 year tradition)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqQ\\_Bg0FaeE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqQ_Bg0FaeE)























# Bizen Pottery

Bizen ware was traditionally produced in and around the village of [Imbe](#) in [Bizen province](#), from where it received its name. It is therefore also known as Imbe or Inbe ware. It has ties to [Sue pottery](#) from the [Heian period](#) in the 6th century, and made its appearance during the [Kamakura period](#) of the 14th century.<sup>[1][2][3]</sup>

Bizen was considered one of the [Six Ancient Kilns](#) by the scholar [Koyama Fujio](#).<sup>[1]</sup> It experienced its peak during the [Momoyama period](#) of the 16th century.<sup>[4][5]</sup> During the Edo period, the [Ikeda](#) lords of the [Okayama domain](#) continued to support the kilns and gave special privileges to families who operated them, such as the Kimura, Mori, Kaneshige, Oae, Tongu, and Terami.<sup>[1]</sup> The rustic quality of Bizen made it popular for use in [Japanese tea ceremony](#).<sup>[6][7]</sup> Ware of the early phase is called old Bizen style (古備前派 *Ko-Bizen-ha*).

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw87q8E2lwY>

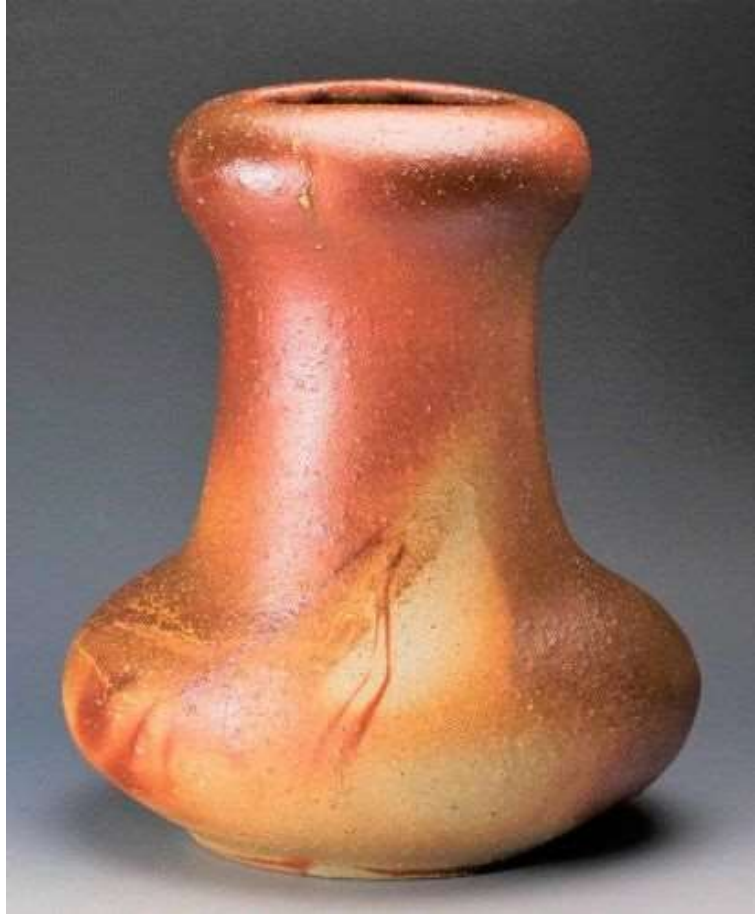
## The Life of Koichiro Isezaki's Contemporary Bizen

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=if3rvx-Bhiw>











# Otani Workshop

Takashi Murakami collaborator, Shigeru Otani, widely-known as the singular artist behind the alias Otani Workshop, carries on the artistic tradition while injecting contemporary aesthetics to create a unique practice of his own. Humanlike subjects with eccentric features such as elongated arms and misshapen heads are a few hallmark motifs inherent across Otani's extensive oeuvre. "I think the boundary line of art is swaying. So, rather than saying that I am entering the contemporary art [world], I think I am perhaps at the boundary line of contemporary art," expressed the artist. "Like where does the contemporary art end?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O8O0l2uSMbM>







# Igayaki

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEMuk4XqzLE> (Igayaki pottery—15 minutes)



# Assignment Suggestions...

- You rope, string or fibers to create patterns in an artwork
- Use woven fibers in an artwork
- Create a vessel
- Make your own Haniwa (Have fun—you can use tp or paper towel rolls to create figures)
- Create an artwork that plays with ornate decorative elements and/or minimalism
- Ainu patterns