



More than Just a Face

Reflections of artistic expression, through facial characteristics.

What's with all the hats?

Accessorizing Kokeshi is a new Trend or is it...

What classifies a doll as a Kokeshi?

Sosaku, Traditional, Kimmie dolls, Souvenirs, Dr. MiRock

Featured Shop

Shinapari & Owner Kazue
directly from Japan
Exclusive Discounts

Featured Artist

Mena Esterel
directly from Paris

Featured Shop

The Nihon Ya & Owner
Kazuko McCracken
Exclusive Discounts

Noji Tadao

Welcome to the March edition of Kokeshi Trends.



[01 More Than Just A face](#)



[04 The Inquisitive Collectors Corner](#)

- [1. Nostalgic Kingyo](#)
- [2. Shinapari](#)
- [3. The Nihon Ya](#)
- [4. Mena Esterel](#)



[03 Hats Galore](#)



[012 Disclosures](#)
[012 Volunteer](#)



[03-04 Is that a Kokeshi?](#)



[012 Contact information](#)

Message from Madelyn Molina (Editor in Chief)

Welcome to the third issue of Kokeshi Trends. I am very excited and feel a lot of positive energy for this Month's Kokeshi Trends. We have formed some amazing synergies with Shop Owners, like The Japan Stop, Shinapari and NostalgicKingyo as well as Artist Mena Esterel to bring to you, our readers, special discounts and introduce you to trending artist who have been inspired by Kokeshi to create beautiful works of art. So grab a cup of green tea, put up your feet, pick up your favorite online reader and open up Kokeshi Trends, let's read all about what is trending in the world of Kokeshi.

P.S. Don't forget to use those discount codes, before they expire!

~ Madelyn

More Than Just a Face

By Madelyn Molina

March 14, 2016 9:30 PM EST



[Soulportals Collection]

When I think of Traditional Kokeshi, I always associate a feeling of furusato to them which means "hometown feeling". This is mostly because as I learned more about Kokeshi I became enamored with the idea that there was a true history that leads back to each hometown in Japan where an artisan would meticulously handpick the trees to chop, that would be stripped of the bark, and then aged anywhere from 1-5 years. That same artisan would later cut the wood down to just the right sizes and work the pieces of wood through his or her lathe where the cylindrical body would emerge.

The body of course should be kept within specific size measurements as this is part of the tradition handed down through many generations of Kijishi (Kokeshi makers). Once the body has become ready the Kijishi will decorate it with rokuro lines. Painting it while still on the lathe in red, green, black or even yellow. More colors are used today such as blue and purple but initially these colors were not used. It takes good precision and certainly a steady hand to accomplish this, and when you look at how closely aligned some of the lines are, it is quite amazing. The body will also be uniquely decorated by hand, with different patterns of chrysanthemums, cherry and plum blossoms, just to name a few but predominantly mums are used. I feel that the most important part of a Kokeshi is the head where the facial design and expression will breathe life into the final stages of the doll. It is through facial expressions that one can feel a sense of peace, energy, humor, and even a little sadness or poutiness from each Kokeshi. When I purchase Kokeshi I always look at their faces to see which one shares a feeling with me then that is the one I will buy. Pictured above are several Kokeshi faces from left to right, we have Nakanosawa, Tsuchiyu, Tsugaru, Hijiori, and Narugo. Can you tell who the artisan is just by looking at their faces?

I certainly have learned to connect certain facial designs to their artisans. It is a fun project to familiarize yourself with the designs that make each doll unique to its maker. Visit Facebook group Kokeshi

Village to find out who the artisans are for each Kokeshi pictured.

It is not just Traditional Kokeshi that have interesting facial expressions. We can also see them in Sosaku Kokeshi.

This beautiful lady by Oki Izumi has quite the coy look that really makes me smile as I



[soulportals.com collection]

can only imagine her winking and smiling at a gazing boy, she is dressed in a beautiful Kimono decorated with simple butterfly forms & a prominently placed, red winged butterfly on her obi as well as her hair piece, she is appropriately titled Butterfly.

Hats, Galore!

As of late there has been a noticeable trend in Traditional Kokeshi that have a new



piece of attire in their ensembles. While it may seem like a new trend, it is actually not. The Kokeshi on the right is by

Jinnohara Yukinori, (Tsuchiyu). There are many artisans that began to use hats as a way of making their designs unique, without compromising the traditional designs that have been handed down through generations.

The goal is to appeal to an ever changing demographics of collectors. The hats have become prevalent on many Kokeshi as well as intricate. For example on this Kokeshi by Watanabe Tetsuo (Tsuchiyu) the Kasa hat is a spinning top, quite fun really, and there is no way of knowing ahead of time! So it would be a nice surprise to gift to someone who really enjoys Kokeshi and tops.



I recently purchased a beautiful Narugo Kokeshi by Yoshida Katsunori. What I love most is the simple design and the richness of the wood, although there is no face drawn, the hat suffices to give it just the right amount of character, and it is removable too!



Is That a Kokeshi?

Some new, noteworthy, products that have hit the market appear to be inspired by Kokeshi. Such as Cokets (Kokettsu). I particularly like their Kawaii (cute) designs, that are vibrant & full of color. Each one comes totally accessorized with hair, fur, ears, hats, you name it they probably have it. While they

may appear to be Kokeshi, it is important to note that they are Kokeshi Inspired and in a class of their own. This is one of my favorite ones so far because they are holding on to traditional Kokeshi dolls.



[image: <https://twitter.com/coketss/media>]

Another notable entry into the Kokeshi inspired Art world is Dr. MiRock Toys, vinyl figures designed by Yowohei Kaneko who recently in 2015 released a very Tsugaru like vinyl toy. Miroku rocket & Miroku body New Year Golden Bombers



Kirameki Mudon color, pictured. [image: [Dr. MiRock Toys](#)]

The Kimmidoll collection was inspired by Eastern culture and calls out Japanese Kokeshi Dolls as an example of the beauty found in Easter culture. All their beautiful dolls are given a Japanese name that translates to a simple phrase or single

word that carries an expressed feeling such as Seiko, meaning success, and who's story says that her "Spirit inspires and motivates". We love anything that has a message of inspiration and motivation, Kimmidolls are beautifully inspired not only in design but in the message they send about the Eastern Culture. [image: Kimmidoll.com]



THANK YOU...

Before proceeding into the next segment of Kokeshi Trends. I would like to thank Célia Fuhro for her assistance in translating Kokeshi Trends' interview in French with Mena Esterel. I would also like to thank Kazuko McCracken for granting permission to use Kokeshi pictures taken by her. Most of all thanks to you, the readers of Kokeshi Trends for wanting to know more about Kokeshi and making this project worthwhile.

The Inquisitive Collectors Corner



This is a new segment for Kokeshi Trends and it will roll out every quarter. The goal here is to introduce artisans who are inspired to create Kokeshi related art, shop owners who sell Kokeshi, and the Artisans who create Kokeshi as well as collectors who buy them. Knowing about the who, what, where and why, of Kokeshi, gives us a holistic view and understanding of Kokeshi. The following pages will cover some of these areas in the form of an interview where questions are followed by answers (Q&As).

SHOPS: NOSTALGIC KINGYO



Featured Shop:

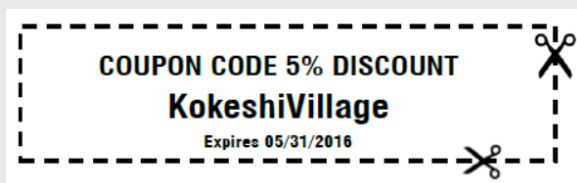
Nostalgic Kingyo.

Owners:

Aurelien & Mizue Blancard

Platforms: [Etsy Shop](#) and business **website:** www.nostalgic-kingyo.com

Kokeshi Trends is honored to be able to feature one of our favorite shops, [Nostalgic Kingyo Etsy Shop](#). I recently reached out to Aurelien and Mizue Blancard, who have several Etsy shops & have just recently moved to their own domain www.nostalgic-kingyo.com, and asked if they would be willing to collaborate with Kokeshi Trends. Not only did they say yes but they were generous enough to offer Kokeshi Trends readers a 5% discount coupon on purchases (use coupon code "KokeshiVillage" at checkout. Here is what I learned through an e-mail interview about this excellent shop and the owners that make it a great place to buy.



INTERVIEW (KT= Kokeshi Trends)

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself, where you are located, and what you do.

A&M: We are a French-Japanese couple who live in Osaka Japan. We have three online shops selling Japanese vintage items. They are:

www.takamura-store.com (Original anime cels and sketches used in studio for the production of Japanese animation).

www.happyxel.com (specialized in Japanese retro gaming).

www.nostalgic-kingyo.com Nostalgic Kingyo (Japanese antique and vintage items such as, Kokeshi and kimonos.

KT: The name of your shop actually means something in Japanese, what does it mean and why did you choose this name for your shop? What do you love most about having an online shop?

A&M: Kingyo means goldfish in Japanese. We chose this name because our image of "Kingyo" is really nostalgic. When you visit shrines or temples during the Japanese Summer Festival (Matsuri) you can play a goldfish scooping game called Kingyo Sukui.



[image: Google]

Also we love the design of "Kingyo" in the Ukiyo-e (Japanese woodblock print and Japanese textiles such as Kimono. So when we decided to open the antique shop, we thought that "Nostalgic Kingyo" was a good combination of words to represent a Japanese antique and vintage shop.

KT: What types of Kokeshi dolls do you usually carry in your shop, and do you take request for certain types of dolls?

A&M: All of our Kokeshi dolls are vintage, most of them were made in the 50s-70s. You can find some Kokeshi made by artist that are nice and sophisticated but also souvenirs of Japanese local hot springs

and tourist places (kitch and cute design). If you are looking for a specific kind of Kokeshi, for sure you can contact us for a request.

KT: How do you go about picking Kokeshi for your shop, what specific things do you look for?

A&M: We love to visit Japanese country side, so each time, we try to discover some places where we can find nice Kokeshi. When we decide to get an item for our shop, we use our first impression. So if the item has something kind of charming with Japanese and vintage touch we select it. Time to time we disagree with each other, but this is the reason why we have multiple shops with different products.

KT: What makes your shop the ideal place to buy Kokeshi? Where can we find your shop? Where do you ship, which countries do you not ship to? Is there something special about your shop that you would like to share with us?

A&M: You can find our shop on Etsy also we have just opened our own online shop with only our finest items, www.nostalgic-kingyo.com. Since our Kokeshi are all vintage and handmade, we always have different types of Kokeshi and most of them are unique. So even if you don't find your "beloved one" now, sooner or later you will find it! Also we have our fare price and our Kokeshi are well protected for overseas travel. We ship to all countries, without overcharging on shipping fees!

Thank you Aurelien and Mizue for your candid interview and for telling us about

you, and your wonderful Japanese vintage shops. Not to mention we are super excited to receive your special discount code for Kokeshi Trends readers.

SHOPS: SHINAPARI



Featured Shop: shinapari

Owners: Kazue-san

Platforms: eBay

Kokeshi Trends is honored to be able to feature another one of our favorite shops, Shinapari who was very happy to collaborate with Kokeshi Trends and is offering our readers a 10% discount. Shinapari offers some Kawaii, (cute) Kokeshi most are newly released while others are vintage.



INTERVIEW

KT: Tell us a little about yourself.

KS: I am a home maker and I do volunteer work at a nursing home sometimes. I love going to Kokeshi exhibitions.

KT: Why did you decide to sell Kokeshi on eBay?

KS: The first time, I wanted to show my hobby and someone purchased my Kokeshi listing very quickly. So I decided to

sell Kokeshi to people who cannot come to Japan or go to Kokeshi exhibitions.

KT: Do you also collect Kokeshi or just sell them? and do you have a favorite type of Kokeshi?

KS: I also collect Kokeshi, my favorite artisan is Suzuki Masaichi. Although, now I do not have any of his dolls mainly because my customer really wanted to have them. I am missing my collection but I took some photos.

KT: Where do you ship, which countries do you not ship to?

KS: I ship to America, England, France, Singapore, Greece, Brazil, Germany and within Japan. I have not shipped to Italy or Russian etc. However, I love Kokeshi fans, so I will do my best to ship to as many places as possible.

KT: How can shoppers get your discount, what do they need to do?

KS: Shoppers can email me the item numbers of the products they want to buy with the subject line Kokeshi-Village and then I can send an invoice with 10% off.

Thank you Kazue-san for sharing with us a little about yourself and your wonderful shop. Not to mention we are super excited to receive your special discount code for Kokeshi Trends readers.

SHOPS: THE NIHON YA



Featured Shop:

jaksemm ([The Japan Stop](#))

Owner: Kazuko McCracken

Platform: eBay

Kokeshi Trends is honored to be able to feature another one of our favorite sellers and their shops. I have personally shopped from Kazuko's shops since 2012. She has been a great source of information often helping me decipher signatures for artisans that I am not familiar with. I am thrilled that she is willing to collaborate with us and assist in any way she can. One of the things I like most about Kazuko's listings are the information that she includes such as the artisan's name, DOB and Master which are very important to know if you want to preserve the history of your Kokeshi. She also offers combined shipping to save the buyer on shipping cost. She packages her items well and ensures delivery in a timely manner.



INTERVIEW

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself, where you are located, and what you do.

KM: I am originally from Japan, not from Tohoku region where Kokeshi dolls are made. I heard of Kokeshi dolls when I was growing up, but never owned one. I have been living in Minneapolis, MN since 1996. I am doing consulting work for copier/printer parts industry for a long time and also sell such parts and Kokeshi dolls on eBay. I also sell at local Antique shows

a few times a year. My products are all made in Japan.

KT: Is there a story behind the names you have chosen for your shops? What do you love most about having an online shop?

KM: I used to own the website called "The Japan Stop". When I was thinking about the name, my son came up with this name. I recently moved my shop on to eBay. The good things about eBay shop is that I get so much more attention from customers and I can close the shop when I'm away for work or vacation.

KT: What types of Kokeshi dolls do you usually carry in your shop, and do you take request for certain types of dolls?

KM: I sell all kinds - traditional, creative and souvenir types. I do take requests from customers, but don't ask for a commitment.

KT: How do you go about picking Kokeshi for your shop, what specific things do you look for?

KM: I usually don't buy a brand new Kokeshi doll. I think majority people prefer "vintage" over new" unless it's very unique. I also pick dolls according to my taste most of the time. If the doll talks to me, I will buy it. However, sometimes I am required to buy them in bulk and I sell whatever comes in. I'd like to expand creative Kokeshi doll line, but they tend to be more expensive, makes it difficult to buy.

KT: What makes your shop the ideal place to buy Kokeshi? Where do you ship, which countries do you not ship to? Is there

something special about your shop that you would like to share with us?

KM: I ship worldwide. I try to do extensive research for each doll before I list on eBay. So customers can learn about the artist. I try to acquire dolls that appeal to all levels of collectors. New collector, seasoned collector, collector who only buy a specific kind. I hope people will learn more about Japanese dolls and other unique products from Japan. Also shipping locally to US customers makes the delivery safer and much shorter for customers.

KT: How can shoppers get your discount, what do they need to do?

KM: Once shoppers have completed their shopping they can use the, eBay, request an invoice feature. They should type in the comment box "Coupon Code Kokeshi-Village" and I will send them an invoice with 10% off.

It has been awesome learning about you and your shop Kazuko and we are pleased to have you as one of our KokeshiVillage Group Members. The help you provide group members, and myself does not go unnoticed, helping us to identify artisans, goes a long way when building a collection that is complete and accurately attributes the makers that bring us these amazing and magical works of art. We are also super excited to offer Kokeshi Village members your 10% discount for The Nihon Ya shop!

ARTISTS: MENA ESTEREL



Location: France

Kokeshi Trends is honored to be able to feature Artist Mena Esterel one of our Kokeshi Village Facebook Group members.

INTERVIEW

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself, where you are located, and what you do.

ME: I live in a little village, in the south of France, in the heart of Estérel's massif. I share my time between two activities, painting and management of a holiday cottage; where my husband and I, welcome tourists all year. We have both created and decorated this cottage and its garden to receive our guests, and introduce them to our beautiful region which is our passion.

You can see our websites:

- <http://lasourgentine.wix.com/var83>
- www.abritel.fr/location-vacances/p1156157
- www.amivac.com/location-de-vacances-83853

KT: When did you discover you wanted to be an artist, and was there something that inspired you to become one?

ME: Twelve years ago, I went through a difficult time of bereavement, that deeply affected me and changed my life as I knew it. Painting was an extraordinary discovery which helped me to start over by creating a personal work. I went to many paint shops such as Canne's Fine Arts Association, and Michel Moreau's workshop, acquiring many artistic techniques over the years by means of different experiences.

[image: Mena Esterel]



KT: When and how did you first become interested in Kokeshi and what about them inspired you to create Kokeshi art?

ME: Last year, we had the joy to become grandparents of two granddaughters, Salomé and Pauline. I also wanted to choose a subject related to children. I found Kokeshi dolls by chance on the Internet. I read many articles and I discovered Japanese culture. The Edo era and its cultural abundance drew all my attention. I chose to concentrate all my research to Kokeshi and Japanese culture for the entire year.



[image: Mena Esterel]

KT: What other subject matter do you also use to create your art?

ME: In the early part of my training, I especially worked on portraits in particular women portraits. My goal was to try to give them a spirit, to breathe life into their eyes, and transmute their feelings. Afterwards, I study Provence's landscapes and marine landscapes. The theme of the Venice Carnival and its masks was an inspiration too.

KT: I was looking at some of the pictures of your artwork on your Facebook Page. You have such wonderful detail in your work, many of the background motifs and designs are very typical of Japanese art especially scenes from what appear to be from well known Ukiyo-e (wood block) prints such as the "wave". Do you get some inspiration from these other Japanese art forms, what kind of research goes into creating your artwork?

ME: I draw my inspiration in the Japanese Edo period by revisiting and by reinterpreting its intense cultural ferment.

The great master's prints like Hokusai (The Great Wave of Kanagawa, Falcon and Cherry Blossom, Kirifuri Waterfall, The Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji), The Samurai's and Geisha's world, The Japanese tattoos, mons and kamons (Japanese emblems). Nature inspired me too. There is an inexhaustible variety of topics, vegetables, flowers, stylized flower patterns, prints and landscapes.

KT: Art is almost always about conveying a message, what message do you want your art to send?

ME: My objective was to highlight vibrant colors and geometrical patterns such as lace stitch motifs (sashiko) with the elegance of the Kokeshi's outline. By melding design, graphics and refinement. I wanted to deliver a breath of fresh air and happiness, and I wanted to create a poetic world full of joy and wisdom. During my different exhibitions at the end of the year 2015, the visitors' reaction confirmed that I reached my goal. They particularly liked the joy and the cheerfulness which emerged from my creations, especially in that period where France was affected by tragic events.

KT: Why do you use skateboards instead of canvas?

ME: I chose to work on recycled skateboards because it has been years that I have lived in contact with this culture, skateboarding. This is because of my son, Clément, who is passionate about it since his childhood. He works as a skateboard teacher in a big association in Marseille. It was Clément who suggested I take this format and supplied me with some boards to recycle them. I really liked to work on

this original format, because it is made of wood and it has specific dimensions.



[image: Mena Esterel]

KT: What memorable responses have you had to your work, can you give us an example?

ME: My exhibition was a full success and I sold many boards. I'm glad to know that they were integrated into new homes, especially in children and teenagers' rooms. The circle is complete, I created boards to celebrate the birth of my grand-daughters and all this boards which represent children with Kokeshi dolls appearances are living a new life in other children dreams.

KT: Which one of your creations is your favorite and why?

ME: I love them all for their singularity and all the love that I put into creating them. Each board is unique and has its own story.

KT: Do you also collect Kokeshi Dolls? If yes, who is your favorite Artist and what is your favorite doll? Finally, please tell us

where we can purchase your amazing artwork.

ME: I don't collect Kokeshi dolls, but I am pleased to discover every unique and authentic model you show on the Facebook page. I'm glad to know that they are loved and pampered in your homes, your own passion will give to them a second life. It will thrill and perpetuate parts of the craftsmen's' soul in time. I'm a part of a collective website where you can look at my gallery. I publish on it some boards as the years go. Here is the link, www.lixow.com/mena



[image: Mena Esterel]

(L) Natsuko Kids Summer

(R) Fuyuko Winter's Child

Thank you Mena we have learned so much about what inspires you to create these beautiful works of art. We hope to see more in the future.

April Kokeshi Trends....

Stay tuned for April's Kokeshi Trends Journal. We will be bringing you some more exciting content, as more interviews with artisans, collectors and discounts will be coming your way!

Become a Volunteer!



Want to be a part of this exciting new adventure? Kokeshi Trends would love to hear from you!

If you like to write, illustrate, take videos, edit or have an idea, we are all ears. What better platform to introduce and grow your skill sets than through a community project that shares information with an international audience.

KT is currently looking for volunteers in the fields of... Drum Roll...

1. Editors
2. Illustrators
3. Writers
4. Photographers
5. Researchers
6. Translators (Japanese -English)
7. Social Media Guru's
8. Videographers
9. Trend setters (yes, you!)
10. Journalist / Bloggers

Email us at contact@KokeshiTrends.com & tell us why you'd be a perfect fit for KokeshiTrends, We are waiting to hear from you!

CONTACT

Facebook Group: KokeshiVillage
Web: www.soulportals.com
e-Mail: Contact@KokeshiTrends.com

To contact the author of the articles in this Journal or if you would like to see a segment in Kokeshi Trends on a specific subject matter, related to Kokeshi, please send me an e-mail and I will see what I can do. Brossia@soulportals.com

DISCLOSURES

ⁱ The use of the eBay name is in accordance with the eBay intellectual property guidelines. No affiliation, endorsement, for products or services has been made when referencing eBay. Sole mention is, as allowed, to refer to sellers and their selling platforms.

ⁱⁱ Photos used in this Journal have credits to their respective owners where no credit is given they are images of the soulportals collection.

ⁱ <http://pages.ebay.com/help/policies/everyone-ebayipuse.html>

ⁱⁱ Faces 1-3 are photographs taken by Kazuko McCracken and are Kokeshi in the Soulportals.com collection. In the V1 Iss 2 release images that were used were from Google, and Yahoo Auctions. The cover photo was by seller sigema127 and the Kokeshi is by Kato Tatsuo titled Butterflies, it is in the soulportals.com collection and was purchased from the aforementioned seller. Souvenir shell Kokeshi featured was found via Google image search. The Yuji Watanabe Flashlight was from Wahooya.com. Shido Shouzan Kokeshi photo by the seller and in the soulportals.com collection. The Hijiori Kokeshi image was my image altered via photo shop the doll is in the soulportals.com collection. The Kokeshi Tracker and all images used were of Kokeshi in the soulportals.com collection photo shopped by me for use in the Journal and Tracker.

*Volunteer Kokeshi Clipart from cliparts.co