

KOKESHI!TRENDS

JOURNAL

こけし

Q9/2020 | VOL 5 ISSUE 3

Free Publication

Trending

New Kokeshi Designs,
by Hiraga Teruyuki,
Kokeshiums and
more.



Featured Artists

- Chiyomi Horiuchi
- Variski Arte Oriental
- Kyoko Sugiura
- Takako Hirano
- Jean Shannon
- Jacqueline Rodemann

Featured Author

Roberta Stephens

Tributes to

- Kobayashi Sadao
- Takahashi Shogo
- Sekiguchi Sansaku

Gods & Monsters

by Beverley Webster

Featured Collector

Marie Tommasini

Collection Guardianship

by Jill Holmgren

Hiraga Teruyuki

04	Trending	49	Featured Artist: Jean Shannon
06	Roberta Stpehens Co-Author An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls	54	Featured Collector: Marie Tommasini
12	Variski Arte Oriental Vanilson Ricardo Andrzejewski	58	Nicolas-Yvan Perrot's Kokeshi Paris Project: Takako Hirano
18	Chiyomi Horiuchi Francesca Iachetta	64	Under the Shade of A Bonsai Tree Interview with Jacqueline Rodemann
24	Kokeshi Stories Gods & Monsters Beverley Webster	68	Collection Guardianship Jill Holmgren
31	Kokeshi Trends Gods & Monsters WordSearch	70	Happy Halloween
32	Nicolas-Yvan Perrot's Kokeshi Paris Project: Kyoko Sugiura	72	Happy Thanksgiving
38	Takahashi Shogo Tribute	74	Tribute Kobayashi Sadao
43	Meeting the Master Sekiguchi Sansaku Francesca Iachetta	76	Donko Kokeshi
		80	Kokeshi Museums in Japan Justin Velgus
		82	Shop Listings

**Welcome to the 3rd
Quarterly Edition of KT 2020**

Founder's Letter

FOLLOW US



Dear Reader,

This year has been an interesting one. We have faced many challenges and continue to push forward as we strive for a better tomorrow. While we try to keep things lighthearted around KT, we realize that the reality can be quite stark at times. Please know that we are wishing you all the very best, and are continuously sending positive energy to our followers both in Facebook and Instagram as well as to our readers.

We hope this issue brings you joy and makes you smile. We are featuring some wonderful new artists. The Kokeshi Paris Project is going full steam ahead; we have two new additions to share with you. We also have a wonderful article by Beverley about Gods and Monsters. Jill talks about our roles as guardians for our collections and we feature some of our fellow Kokeshi Village villagers and their collections and artistic skills.

The holidays are fast approaching, please remember to keep safe. Wishing you all the best for the upcoming holidays from our family to yours.

As always I'm grateful to all the contributors, artists, collectors and of course, you, the readers. Thank you for accompanying me on this journey.

KT is actively engaging with you all through social media, so feel free to stop by and say "Hi". Please remember to follow/like us on [IG](#) and [Facebook](#)! See you there!

Sincerely,

Founder

Welcome...





Sakunami kojiri Hiraga Teruyuki is making waves in the dentō Kokeshi world. His new Kokeshi are an amazing blend of modern and traditional flavors. Pictured far right is the old school dentō type with a beautiful crab mum pattern next to his new type which features a new layered technique. Check out the Daruma-sans; they're just fiercely sweet! What do you think about these new designs? Join us on [IG](#) or [FB](#) where we'd love to hear your views! Prices range from ¥9,000-¥14,000. Available [@ galleryshin m.](#)



Kokeshi Pillows! Both a dentō and sōsaku version. They are around 33 cm tall and have a cardboard bottom so they're able to stand upright. The rest of the material is quite soft. Retail for about ¥3,000 each.



Kokeshium, a blend of traditional Kokeshi and Herbariums, is one of the latest and coolest additions to the world of Kokeshi. We recently picked up a Naruko version by Onuma Hideaki in collaboration with [Kiyou Kawashima Stores](#).

Hoping we can snatch up a Yajiro version by Sato Hideyuki over [@kijidokorosato.hideyuki](#) in collaboration with Youkaen-Store [@youkaen_sendai](#).

If you're interested contact them directly at westin-sendai@you-kaen.com. They may be able to accomodate an order. Retails for about ¥8,000. Photo: Youkaen-Store



Another Yogen No Tori popped up this month, by Tsugaru kojins Abo Muchihide. The two headed bird is a prophetic bird that delivers messages to humanity warning of impending danger and protecting against illness. Retails for about ¥2,800. Available at the Tsugaru Museum.



Event:
Kokeshi Wheel
Beauty.

Event Date:
October 3-4th

Street address:
27-3, Sakanoue,
Tsuchiyu
Onsenmachi,
Fukushima City

phone number:
024-572-5503

[Website](#)

New Artist Debut:

Shione Ikeuchi 池内潮音 y. 1997, Strain: Yajiro, Master Niiyama Mayumi/Yoshinori.

Takahashi Hiroto 高橋博斗 y. 1991, Strain: Yajiro, Master Ogura Katsushi

Ueda Yasutomo 上田康友 y. 1987, Strain Yajiro, Master Niiyama Minoru



ROBERTA STEPHENS

July/2020

Interview by Madelyn Molina

Author: Roberta Stephens

Website: <https://robertastephens.com/>

Books:

An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls

A Flower With Roots.

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself, where you are located, and what some of your favorite hobbies are.

Roberta: I am a retiree living in cool Kent, Washington where I enjoy life with my Papillion dog. I'm a native of Menlo Park, California. I became a Recreation Therapist in a State Hospital in Pomona, California before moving to Japan in 1977. That is where I met the austere faces of many Kokeshi dolls! I am currently involved with an historic (1899) Japanese church in Seattle where I teach the Bible to two classes in English and Japanese. Besides studying for this monumental task, I enjoy reading and sometimes writing about various historical themes related to Japan in some way. History is like a big puzzle with a lot of missing pieces, just waiting to be discovered. If I can find time, I'd like to spend more time with the craft called quilling.

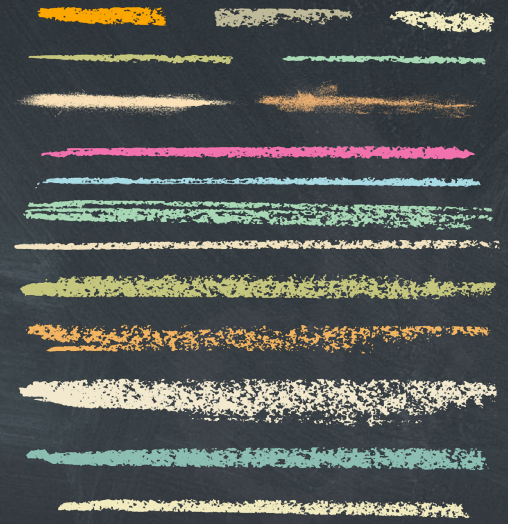
KT: You lived in Japan for awhile, is that right? How long were you living in Japan, and what was your occupation?

Roberta: I lived in Japan for over thirty-six years as a Baptist missionary. After two years of language school in Tokyo, I proceeded north to my main assignment, an historic Girls' School founded in 1892 in Sendai. I taught there for eighteen years and worked an additional ten years with small churches in the countryside before moving to Tokyo, and lastly to Yokohama to another Christian school consortium that had 13,000 students.

KT: When did you learn about Kokeshi? What, if any, cultural significance do you feel Kokeshi have with the people of Japan?

Roberta: I arrived in Sendai, having just found out how little Japanese language I really knew even though I had studied it for two years. My tutor was an avid collector of Kokeshi. Each week I went to Takeuchi, Chiko's house where I felt very uneasy with all of these pairs of eyes staring at me. The unsmiling faces did not make me feel like I was making progress in the language! Shortly, I began to ask my teacher to tell me about the dolls. When I realized that they were all actually different from each other, I was smitten! I had to find out more. Everywhere I went, I began to see them, not just at my tutor's house. As time went on, I began to see how cherished they were in the culture of the north, demonstrated by the fact

Author



that everyone living in the northeast had a minimum of one or two displayed in their homes. As is so typical of every part of Japan, each area has its own tradition or craft or food they call their own. The northeast has a corner on Kokeshi dolls. There are other types of dolls made in different areas of Japan, but Tohoku people object to calling them “Kokeshi” dolls. The stern faces on the traditional dolls reflect the harshness of life of the north in the past and the sheer grit of ‘*gaman*’ that has brought the people to where they are at present, but the brilliant colors seem to emanate hope to them. As an outsider looking in, it seems that the dolls give people the feeling of solidarity, hanging in there and hanging tight through thick and thin, with the splashes of color simply making them happy.

KT: Inquiring minds want to know, do you own any Kokeshi? What are some of your favorites? Do you like both traditional and creative types?

Roberta: I have about 100 traditional Kokeshi dolls, all purchased when in Japan or hand-me-downs from people trying to downsize. Although I have deeper connections personally to Tōgatta, my favorite dolls are from Yajirō. I love the concentric colored circles on their heads and the vivid use of the color yellow. Since returning from Japan in

Sakyo Niinuma



2014 I have not kept up with the creative styles introduced to me by Kokeshi Trends! I have never been attracted to *kindai* (new) Kokeshi but I really like the creative types, which retain some of their traditional markings of the area from which they come and the craftsmen. They are more identifiable

according to classification than *kindai*.

KT: What led to you becoming involved in writing a book about Kokeshi dolls? What things did you consider in the subject matter when putting together the book? Being part of a large group of Kokeshi collectors, some of the reoccurring questions are usually about the history of Kokeshi; did you run into that question a lot?

Roberta: My tutor, Mrs. Takeuchi taught Japanese to a foreigner before I arrived. They had already started to write a book. She asked me to help her continue the writing. After I had been thoroughly oriented to the dolls, including visiting the homes of numerous artists, we continued in earnest. The overall



Roberta Stephens

tone or pattern of the book was set. The Takeuchi's did the drawings and photography. I helped with some of the other themes and the history. We presented the three main theories for the beginnings. The one that created quite a ruckus in the Kokeshi Ai Kou Kai (fan club) was the theory espoused by all the Kokeshi artisans, that in times of great poverty in the north when food was scarce, parents were forced to terminate their pregnancy. They carved a wooden doll as a playmate for the living sibling. Although a sad part of history, we had no reader complain that we should not have written about this.

KT: You co-wrote the book with Takeuchi Chizuko is that right? Are you still in contact with Mrs. Takeuchi?

Roberta: I have lost contact with her. I think I might be able to find her with help from someone in Japan because I still have the name of her deceased husband and her son. We saved up money from book sales toward a third publication. She encouraged me to do a rewriting of it, but I became too busy writing another book.

KT: What were some of the challenges you

faced in the production of the book, "An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls?"

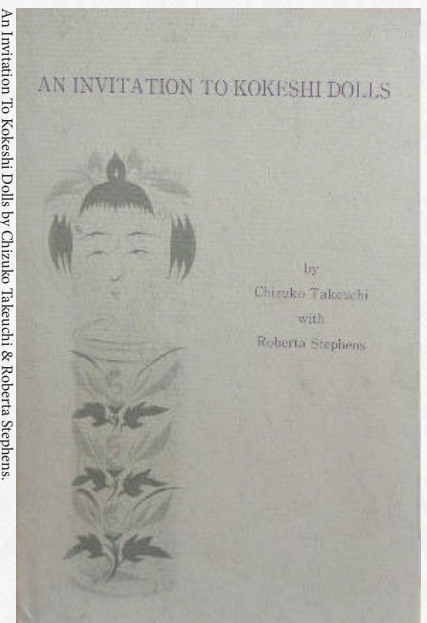
Roberta: The publication took place during the beginning to mid-1980s when Japan was trying to change its image abroad. Fairy tales were being rewritten so that their endings were not so violent etc. The Sendai Kokeshi Ai Ko Kai, which threw a publication party for me in 1981, now in 1985 asked permission to cut out or black out the section in the book about the terminated pregnancies, aborted fetuses, because it made Japan look bad. In exchange, they would buy 100 books. We were just preparing for a third printing. But after consultation with Kokeshi makers, we felt obligated to turn down their offer.

Because of that, the publisher decided not to republish the book and did not return our plates. That was the end to a book that surprisingly remains in demand to this day. Only 1000 lucky people are able to enjoy the book. One takeaway from this experience

was the importance of choosing a more mainstream publisher rather than one that is remote and lesser known, even though we thought it advantageous to choose a company in a Kokeshi doll producing area.

KT: Have you kept up with the newest trends in Kokeshi making? The new styles and designs available? With any of the Kokeshi Makers from Japan? Have you thought about writing a sequel to the book or updating/republishing the book?

An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls by Chizuko Takeuchi & Roberta Stephens.



Roberta: The new styles are very interesting. I specifically like those that can, somehow, still be identified by their location. I have not kept up with the makers in Japan. The book definitely needs updating. I don't think the list of makers and maps are necessary. That is, within a few years of the book's publication, lists and maps become outdated. In addition, some artisans are left off, or new artisans are not listed. Looking up names of towns has become easier and once one arrives, each town will easily guide a person to the artisans' homes. I would add a section on the types of wood and paint. In addition, there needs to be a section on care of the doll. It might be interesting to have a few pages regarding kindai and creative Kokeshi in order to contrast or distinguish them from each other. The book does not need a hard cover. I would be glad to help with the publication of another book but am not thinking of doing it myself.

KT: What advice would you give to anyone wanting to write a book about Kokeshi?

Roberta: The purpose of the book needs to be clear. If it is an introduction it needs to be less about showing off the dolls and more about the science/art and culture behind the dolls in order to keep the price low. If it is a showcase of the beauty of the dolls, many colored pictures are a must but will be very expensive. An introductory book like "**An Invitation**" needs some colored pictures but it makes it very pricy. We tried to be careful to not price the book greater than the cost of buying one Kokeshi doll, and therefore put the price at ¥1000. Otherwise, a buyer might return to their country with the book but not with a doll, thus harming the Kokeshi industry. Because of this decision, we lost money by selling it through book stores such as Maruzen. But stores like Maruzen and Kinokuniya were the ones that helped expand the selling area. The Kokeshi makers need to be revisited.

KT: What is the best way to describe the feeling you get when you think about Kokeshi?

Roberta: Although my Kokeshi dolls were packed away to prevent sunlight from hitting them and because I was always living in inexpensive small apartments for many years, I considered them to be my hidden friends. Now I have space enough to have my "friends" alive and awake, living with me!

KT: You've also written another book related to your experiences living in Japan. Can you tell us a little bit about that book?

Roberta: The book is a non-fiction biography of a missionary who built up the girls' school where I worked for eighteen years. It's called [A Flower With Roots—The Story of Mary D. Jesse and Shokei Girls' School](#). Her era of service was between 1911 and 1952. Anyone interested in how Christianity was lived out and shared by missionaries through education and uplift of Japanese girls in the early 1900s would enjoy this book. It also gives a unique view into what happened to the students and teachers during World War II, how they almost were forced to give up their faith, and how they managed to rebuild in a war-torn country. It's a very human story revealing the raw emotion and personal conflict necessary in building an institution on a solid foundation. It's also a book about how faith without roots growing deep will wither. Paperback and Kindle version available at [wipfandstock.com](#), or [Amazon.com](#).

KT: Is there anything else you'd like to share with the KT family of readers?

Roberta: Continue your excellent work in sharing about this craft, and carry on the task of supporting Kokeshi doll makers in Japan.

Ms. Stephens has an excellent sense of humor. As seen by her photo descriptions and choice of humorous Kokeshi.

HAHAHA

"In case I run out of firewood" 😊

Left side:

Naruko: Koretaka Kakizawa 35.5 cm

Yajiro: Sato Yoshiaki 36 cm

Hijiori: Sato Minosuke 30 cm

Right side:

Togatta: Wagatsuma Kouzou 42 cm

Togatta: Sakurai Yoshio 30 cm

Yajiro: Sato Yoshiaki 35.5 cm



The work of Takahashi Takeo was used as a model for the book cover for An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls.



Tissue anyone?

Just for fun, my only creative Kokeshi ~Roberta

KT: Kokeshi is by Miura, Setsuko, a female Kokeshi maker.





Maker: Sato Eitaro
Size: 8cm/6cm/3cm

I waited two years for these after he won the top Kokeshi Craftsman award. Mid-80's the beginning price was ¥2000

Having a friendship with several *Togatta* craftsmen I acquired these 3 generations of Kokeshi by Sato Ushizo, Sato Fumio, Sato Eihiro and his wife Kimiko.



Favorite Mini Kokeshi by Obata Toshio. They have enormous character. I feel happy when I see them.

KT: Many thanks to Roberta and of course to Mrs. Takeuchi for their wonderful contribution to the world of Kokeshi. *An Invitation to Kokeshi*, although out of print, still continues to be a collectors companion to anyone lucky enough to find a copy. I also thank you for graciously accepting my call and invitation for this interview. It has been an absolute pleasure to discuss Japan and the world of Kokeshi with you.

July/2020

Interview by Madelyn Molina

Artist: Vanilson Ricardo Andrzejewski

WhatsApp: +55 61 981218092

Email: variski@variski.com.br

Site: www.variski.com.br

Instagram: [variski_san](https://www.instagram.com/variski_san)

Home Country: Brasília

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself.

Variski: I am 51 years old; but the love for art had already been awakened in me as a child. I am a big lover of Japanese culture and I would go as far as saying that, if there is such a thing as past lives, I was Japanese in one of them. I also like to believe that I have a Japanese spirit; after all, I even married a Japanese woman!

As for things I like to do, I have to say art in general is a top pick. I have a certain ease in learning new things. I like to let my imagination lead me and so I make art a hobby. I love it all. I also love music, playing with our dogs and watching the sky at night (we live in

a place with low light pollution so the stars shine very bright). I also love being with my family, my friends and my wife and children, but I also miss a lot of them. My mother, father and brothers live very far away, so I can't be with them easily.

KT: Why Variski Arte Oriental? When did you learn about Kokeshi?

Variski: "Variski" is a combination of my full name, as I have a composite name. I used the first letters of my names and the end of my surname, and so, it became Variski.

The choice to highlight Oriental Art is my way of showing how much I identify with

Japanese culture and my admiration for the wonderful Japanese people. I first learned about Kokeshi at the house of a Japanese family I was friends with, the Suzuki family. There were pieces by Shido Shouzan, an artist that the Suzuki family held in high regard. They always spoke about the Kokeshi made by this master craftsman with great affection



and respect. His name is one that I have never forgotten.

KT: How long have you been making Kokeshi Inspired dolls? Have you apprenticed with a Kokeshi maker, or did you learn to make them on your own?

Variski: I can't recall exactly when I made my first Kokeshi, but it was a long time ago, something like 30 years in the past. I remember that I made a set of 5 pieces, representing the family of Japanese friends I've mentioned before, the Suzuki family. Then in 2018, encouraged by my family and my desire to show this wonderful art to the people in Brazil, I started producing some Kokeshi. These were then sold in the year 2020 through Instagram, where I then started to publicize my work. The little I know I have taught myself, but I do have a wish and a dream to learn and work with a Japanese artisan master, to learn more about the art of the Kokeshi.



KT: What about Kokeshi inspired you to begin to create Kokeshi Inspired works? Do you personally own any, or have a favorite artist who makes Kokeshi?

Variski: I love the culture and tradition that surrounds Kokeshi. I like how simple they may appear but at the same time how much depth their meanings can have and how diverse they can be. I have many artists that inspire me, but Shido Shouzan has a special place in my heart. As I said, I never forgot his name after first seeing his art.

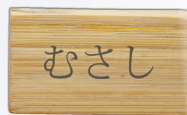
Years after that time in the Suzuki household, while rediscovering my love for Kokeshi, I searched for his name on the internet and found his art once again with new-found appreciation, becoming a great admirer of his beautiful pieces.

KT: Are you familiar with the different types of Kokeshi, traditional (dentō - 11 types) and creative (sōsaku)?



VARISKI
Arte Oriental





Variski: Yes, I have studied about it and how the culture has 11 traditional styles, followed by several post-war styles. Unfortunately, the art, as far as I know, is slowly fading away in the last generations. Many young Japanese people have no interest in it, losing work space for Kokeshi factories, thus losing a lot of knowledge about the art left by master craftsmen -knowledge accumulated for centuries.

I don't believe the machine can replicate the charm of the movement of a skilled craftsman's hand, perhaps even small defects that value the Kokeshi, and they can't match the simplicity, the thoughts of the craftsman during the creation process. And that's how I want to do it, starting from the preparation of the wood to the finished art. I want to go through the 3 different ways of working with Kokeshi, first being the 11 traditional types (Yamagata, Yajirō, Sakunami, Hijioro, Kijiyama, Tōgatta, Tsugaru, Tsuchiyu Zaō -takayu, Naruko, Nanbu), then going for modern Kokeshi, and eventually I'd like to find and materialize my own style.

KT: Can you tell us a little bit about the tools you use to create your Kokeshi Inspired dolls?

Variski: Starting with wood, I like the light-colored type, preferably white. I use a Cypress species from the Conifer family, usually looking for dead, dry tree trunks. After selecting and preparing the wood, I go to a small lathe adapted by me and using simple tools, make the wood into the shape I want usually without a strict plan, using only imagination and what the old Cypress wood allows.

After turning the wood, I go to my painting station and for a few minutes I look at the turned parts and try to imagine the colors, the style, happy, sad or loving faces, sometimes getting

inspiration from Kokeshi made by Japanese artisans. The paints I use always have water as a base, because I have a variety of colors. For the final finish, I use natural wax and often a water-based varnish.

KT: Tell us a little about your design process. How do you decide what type of doll you want to create?

Variski: I found that in the past, Japanese artisans did not do design planning. As Kokeshi dolls can have many meanings, be it cultural, religious, for good luck or one of their main meanings in translation, "lost children". When painting a Kokeshi I try to understand what it wants, how it wants to be dressed and how it can make someone happy seeing it. Sorry if I'm not being very specific, but I like to design my Kokeshi as a person who identifies with the art and tries to understand it. I speak of a great desire to learn more about the art world of Kokeshi.

KT: I couldn't help but notice that some of your Kokeshi Inspired dolls resemble traditional (dentō) Kokeshi. Normally these types of Kokeshi are not re-created by artists in or outside of Japan unless they belong to that particular lineage of makers. Are you concerned at all that collectors and artists of Japan may consider your dolls to be copies? Why did you make these specific types? Are they favorites of yours? Some examples from your IG account: (1) is very similar to dentō, Zaō Kokeshi, (2) similar to dentō, Yajirō Kokeshi. (3) similar to one made by Sekiguchi Sansaku.

Variski: I'm still trying to find my place in this art world. When trying to find an identity or a style for a Kokeshi, many times by admiring Japanese artisans, I try to place myself next to the footsteps of their pieces, with no intention of copying them; it is often a way that

I find to honor the artist. I would've very much liked to have belonged to a line of Japanese Craftsman or to have been adopted by one; it is perhaps a distant desire of my soul. As for the dolls mentioned above, dentō, Zaō Kokeshi, I really like this style from the Yamagata region, Shido Shouzan's region and my mother-in-law's hometown. The reference to Sekiguchi Sansaku is a tribute to my wife's mother, who works very hard. They have always been farmers, "land workers", as she describes them. They are currently my favorites. I apologize if my tributes came out in the wrong way. I have made these pieces with personal meanings and with the uttermost love and respect for Kokeshi and for the Japanese culture in general. My intention isn't to make copies, but to admire these works and creators as I try to find a style of my own.

KT: I know many artists that start by emulating the Kokeshi they like. You have good technical skills and your designs are beautifully executed. Will you begin to create designs that are more exclusive to your aesthetic?

Variski: Certainly, I just need to resolve some things, and hone in on my style to find my real Kokeshi. When that happens, you will be the first to hear the news. I even have some rehearsals, but I'm not exactly there with them yet.

KT: Any memorable feedback received from customers about your work?

Variski: The Brazilian public admires Kokeshi a lot. It is very difficult to acquire original pieces here, I have been looking for Japanese artists in Brazil, but without much success. I am fortunately receiving many compliments from the people who look at my work. The Japanese community in my region also enjoys my work, including my Kumiko art on panels and lanterns.

KT: Do you sell your work? and if yes, where can they be purchased and do you ship them internationally?

Variski: Yes, I have sold some pieces through social media, unfortunately not selling internationally yet. Soon I will have the online store in operation and will be able to sell and offer international shipping.

KT: Is there anything more you would like to share with our readers about your work?

Variski: I am a lover of Japanese art and culture. I chose to use my handmaking skills in the practice of Kokeshi art and Kumiko art. I didn't have a master to teach me. I am carried away by my feeling of love for art. I feel very good doing it, like I am familiar with this art. For this reason, I am in search of my true Kokeshi, my inner Kokeshi. I want to make this practice my big project. I want to understand its meaning and meet a Kokeshi artisan. I want to live it. And maybe, in the future I want to teach people the art to share what I've learned and to make their lives happier. And I have a deep wish. I wish in some time to show pieces with my own style, with me being recognized as Variski, its creator. And maybe one day to be held in high regard for some piece made by me, like I do with my inspiration, the great Shido Shouzan. Love your Kokeshi! Thank you.

KT: Thank you for sharing your beautiful Kokeshi inspired work with us. It is truly an honor to learn about your work. Your passion and desire to create an authentic work is palpable and we wish you much success in your Kokeshi Journey knowing that you will find your inner Kokeshi very soon.

Chiyomi Horiuchi



Interview by Francesca Iachetta
@ [artigianatogiappone](https://www.artigianatogiappone.com)
Artist: Chiyomi Horiuchi

Last year, from May 03-05, 2019, I had the opportunity to go to Japan to see the 61st All Japan Contest, a National Kokeshi Doll Competition that takes place every year in Shiroishi City. Kokeshi doll artisans from across Japan submit their work in a variety of categories. These categories range from traditional to modern innovative styles of Kokeshi. On that occasion, between hundreds and hundreds of Kokeshi, I was particularly attracted to a certain sōsaku Kokeshi. It was she, among many who called me, who whispered, "Take me home with you".

Next to the Kokeshi was a tag with the name and photo of the artist, Horiuchi Chiyomi, an artist that unfortunately I didn't know. I decided to adopt and take this wonderful work home with me to Italy. I was curious to know more about the artist who made it, since I knew nothing about her, and so I tried to ask for information. After some research, I managed to contact her by phone. It was my desire to meet her and she was very kind and

friendly in accepting my request and invited me to her house. So, after a few days, I went to Saitama, the city where she lives. When I arrived at her house, I was greeted by a lady who was a little embarrassed but smiling, amazed and at the same time grateful that I wanted to meet her. She was very kind in responding to my curiosity and showed me some of her works.



Meet Okiniiri
the Kokeshi who
"called me".

The Interview:

Francesca: The Kokeshi you made (that I bought at Shiroishi) is called Okiniiri. What does it mean in Japanese?

Chiyomi-san: The word "okiniiri" in Japanese means "my favorite". This young girl wears her favorite scarf to go out on a cold day.

Francesca: Thank you very much; she is simply adorable.

Chiyomi-san: I'm happy that you like it.

Francesca: At what age did you start making Kokeshi and why?

Chiyomi-san: I started making Kokeshi thirteen years ago at the age of fifty. A friend of mine, also a Kokeshi artist, started taking

courses and so I attended and I followed her course.

Francesca: Oh, wow, congratulations! You look much younger.

Chiyomi-san: I am no longer very young; I was born in 1956.

Francesca: From whom or from what do you take inspiration to make your Kokeshi?

Chiyomi-san: I take inspiration from nature, history and Japanese traditional fables.

Francesca: What kind of wood do you use to make your Kokeshi?

Chiyomi-san I use Mizuki, Hiba, and Keyaki wood. I especially like the light-colored wood.

Francesca: Is there a particular design or motif that you use in your Kokeshi?

Chiyomi-san: No, there is no particular design. I take inspiration from time to time.

Francesca: Did any of your works win prizes?

Chiyomi-san: Yes, I have been awarded prizes at the National Modern Kokeshi Exhibition:

- 2012 New Face Award for Ofuro Daisuki "I love baths"
- 2014 Annual Grand Prize for Yume "Dream"
- 2017 Examiner Special Award for Harukaze "Spring Wind"
- 2018 Kokeshi Crafts Society Award with Konoha no Sei "Fairy of Leaf"
- And The Sennan Shinkin Bank Award for Naisyo "Secret" at the All Japan Kokeshi Competition in 2019

Francesca: Wow, congratulations! Thank you so much for answering my questions.

Chiyomi-san: Thank you very much. It was a pleasure to meet you.

Before leaving, after a photo with her and

an exchange of compliments, I asked her if I could buy for my collection a pair of Hina Matsuri Kokeshi that were exhibited near her TV. With an affirmative answer, I left with another of her works and with the promise



that she would make some works for me to sell in Italy.

After our meeting Chiyomi-san won the 2019 Annual Grand Prize at the National Modern Kokeshi Exhibition for her Kokeshi work titled Taketori Monogatari; "The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter". She was very nice to send me a photo of her with the prize and the Kokeshi.



Chiyomi-san kept the promise that she would make some Kokeshi to be sold in my webshop in Italy and a little over a year from our meeting her wonderful works arrived .



Kokeshi works made before and after painting. I am very happy to introduce a good artist like Chiyomi Horiuchi-san because her works are really very beautiful, colorful and full of details. I thank Chiyomi-san for collaborating with me and wish her much luck.



Award winning
Kokeshi Dolls
by Chiyomi
Horiuchi.

Chiyomi Horiuchi







KOKESHI STORIES: GODS AND MONSTERS

BY BEVERLEY WEBSTER



THE SEVEN LUCKY GODS (SHICHIFUKUJIN; SHICHI = 7, FUKU = LUCKY, JIN = GOD/DEITY)

Seven is a lucky number in many countries around the world, including Japan. Rather than being an imported superstition, it is due to the importance of the number seven in Buddhism. The Japanese celebrate the seventh day after a baby's birth and mourn the seventh day after someone's death. Seven steps or platforms form a full hina doll display for Girl's Day (Hina Matsuri), and the Star Festival (Tanabata), one of Japan's five traditional seasonal festivals, is often celebrated on the seventh of July (7/7).

It is thought that the grouping of seven deities, to represent good fortune, originated around the late fifteenth century in the Muromachi era (1336 – 1573). Each of the deities existed in their own right before the Japanese grouped them together. In fact, the actual members were not standardized until the late seventeenth century.

The group are gathered from a mix of religions. Ebisu comes from the Shintō tradition and is the only native of Japan. Daikokuten, Bishamonten and Benzaiten stem from Hinduism, and Jurojin, Fukurokuju and Hotei are from China's Taoist-Buddhist tradition.

Some people believe that if you pray to the Seven Lucky Gods you will be spared from seven misfortunes (mainly things westerners would class as "acts of God" such as wind and storm damage, flooding and drought, as well as theft) and instead you will be granted the seven blessings of happiness (long life, good fortune, popularity, purity, authority, love & respect and abundance).

The Gods come to prominence on New Year's Eve when, according to tradition, they arrive in human ports on their treasure ship (Takarabune) to bring good fortune to those who believe. Children are given money for the New Year in envelopes decorated with an image of the Shichifukujin in their treasure ship and they place this envelope under their pillow on the first evening of the year. If they have a lucky dream that night then they will supposedly have a good year. But, if they have a bad dream, they must set the image adrift on a river in order to change their luck. Families also make a pilgrimage in the first week of the year to temples associated with one or more of the Seven Lucky Gods.

The Shichifukujin were originally associated with merchants and businessmen, but over the centuries other professions have appropriated one or more of the gods as their patron.



Photo: 7 Lucky Gods & Treasure Ship (Soulportal Collection)



(Depicted in the photo, from left to right)

Ebisu - the god of good fortune, fishermen and merchants. He holds a large red tai (sea bream) under his left arm and a fishing rod in his right hand.

Daikokuten - the god of wealth, farmers, food and prosperity. He has a large bag of treasures slung over his left shoulder and holds a magic mallet (uchideno-kozuchi) in his right hand.

Jurojin - the god of wisdom and longevity. He has a long white beard, wears a scholar's cap and carries the scroll of life (on which is written the lifespan of all living things) attached to his staff.

Fukurokuju - the god of wealth, happiness and longevity. Like Jurojin he also has a long white beard (sometimes they are considered different manifestations of the same celestial body) but is distinguishable by his elongated head. He holds a staff or a cane with a scroll attached to it (said to contain all the wisdom in the world) or sometimes an oogi fan (see Hotei, below).

Bishamonten - the god of treasure, wealth and warriors. He wears a suit of armor, including a helmet, and is armed with a weapon, in this case a spear (yari).

Benzaiten - the goddess of everything that flows, including water, music, poetry and eloquence. She is the only female of the group and holds a biwa (Japanese lute). Usually depicted with a hair bun (mage), in this example she's wearing a snow hat.

Hotei - the god of contentment and happiness. He has a smiling face and a large belly and is recognized outside of Japan as the Laughing Buddha. He often carries a wish-granting fan which is known in Chinese as an oogi.

Kokeshi depicting the Seven Lucky Gods can come in a variety of sizes and include examples of them in their treasure boat, on a lucky mallet, on a fan, in a rice bowl or sake cup or on a sake bottle.

DARUMA (FROM A SHORTENING OF BODHIDHARMA)

Daruma dolls can be found in their thousands across Japan and are a symbol of good luck and perseverance (the kanji for which is often written across their mid-section) embodying the popular Japanese proverb, "fall down seven times, get up eight." They are usually made from papier-mâché using washi paper and are typically red, hollow and round. They come with blank, white eyes - you fill in

the left eye when you set yourself a goal, this reminds you that you are working to fulfill it. When you achieve your goal; you fill in the right eye.



Papier-mâché Daruma

Wooden Kokeshi variants can look very much like the paper type or be more of an accurate representation of Bodhidharma, the sage monk who is credited for bringing Zen Buddhism to China, and on whom all daruma are modelled. He lived during the 5th/6th century AD. Legend has it that he spent nine years in deep meditation staring at a blank wall. So determined was his quest for enlightenment that his limbs atrophied and fell away, leaving only his undaunted



Wood Daruma

spirit. The resulting round body allows Daruma-san to remain standing despite life's hard blows.

Other deities represented in Kokeshi form include Kannon, the goddess of mercy, and Jizō Bosatsu, the guardian of children, usually shown as a Buddhist monk.

Western religious figures are also depicted including the Madonna & child and even catholic nuns.



Photo: Madonna & child/Monk/Mountain Priest/
(B.Webster Collection)

MONSTERS (YŌKAI)

Yōkai are a class of supernatural monsters, spirits, and demons in Japanese folklore. They come in a wide variety of guises, mainly from an oral storytelling tradition. Because the stories have been handed down over many years, even the stock characters can seem contradictory; they could be fierce or tame, weak or powerful, evil or good.

TANUKI (BAKE-DANUKI)

A tanuki is a real animal, translated as “Japanese raccoon dog” although not related to the raccoon. They are shy, nocturnal animals found across the whole of Japan. Beloved for their cuteness, they have appeared in Japanese folklore for centuries.

The yōkai form of tanuki, called Bake-danuki, are known as masters of disguise,



with the ability to shape-shift. They have a jovial nature and particularly enjoy tricking humans, but can sometimes be gullible and absent-minded. They are widely seen in Japanese art, and statues of them appear all over Japan.

They are often depicted as having large eyes, a fat belly and a big tail to represent alertness of their environment, decisiveness and steadfastness in adversity, respectively. You will see them wearing a hat to protect them from trouble, carrying a sake bottle that signifies virtue, and a promissory note to represent trustworthiness.

KAPPA

A kappa is a water sprite or river monster, said to be about the size of a small child but with a scaly skin, webbed hands and feet, a turtle shell on his back and a beak for a mouth. Some kappa can be merely mischievous while others are malevolent, drowning livestock or kidnapping and eating children. One way to appease them is to feed them cucumbers, which they like eating almost as much as they do flesh.

Parents warn their children not to swim in the river alone or a kappa will get them. Signs with kappa pictured on them are placed near dangerous sections of rivers as a warning not to swim there.

Kappa have a small bowl-like dent on the top of their heads that must be kept full of water, or else they will lose their magical powers and even die. Since kappa are extremely polite, one way to get the better of them is to bow low and they will copy you, thus spilling their water. It is believed that if you refill a kappa's bowl with water from his native river he will serve you faithfully for the rest of your life.



Kappa Kokeshi (B.Webster Collection)

TENGU

Tengu are protectors of the sacred forests and mountains. Originally with a bird-like form, they relish in diverting monks from the path to enlightenment. Over the years they have become more human-like, with their beaks metamorphosing into a long nose, albeit on a red, angry-looking face. They are often depicted wearing the priestly clothes of a yamabushi (ascetic mountain hermit), in particular the token, an item of headwear that also doubles as a drinking cup.

Whether in bird or human form, they still have wings and can fly. They are able to control the wind and are experts in martial arts, particularly swordsmanship.

Tengu appear in Noh plays, especially in the comic interludes known as Kyogen. Images of tengu are found at Shintō shrines and there are even several mountains called Mount Tengu (one on Honshu, one on Hokkaidō and two on Kyūshū) where they are thought to reside. Many places hold annual tengu festivals, which may explain the prevalence of tengu masks across the whole of Japan.





ONI

Oni are demons or ogres and usually have red, blue or green skin, one or more horns on their head and fang-like teeth. They are often depicted carrying an iron club (kanabo) and wearing a tiger-skin loincloth.

Said to be born from the souls of truly wicked people who have gone to hell, oni are purely evil, bringing disaster, spreading disease and

generally proving a scourge of humankind.

Oni masks are worn during the Setsubun (Bean Throwing) festival, either at shrines or by parents in order to frighten their children. Roasted soya beans are thrown at the oni while shouting, "demons out, luck in!"

Beverley Webster KT contributor
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Group Photo (B.Webster Collection)

KOKESHI TRENDS

GODS AND MONSTERS

WORD SEARCH

P	U	J	U	K	O	R	U	K	U	F	N
N	I	J	M	B	Q	J	L	Q	P	E	D
E	N	H	L	O	U	A	R	Z	T	P	S
T	N	T	S	R	N	A	P	N	T	D	V
I	T	R	O	E	M	S	O	P	O	M	T
A	R	J	T	U	R	M	T	G	A	E	V
Z	I	I	R	I	A	U	Y	E	N	K	V
N	O	A	E	H	A	K	S	G	R	K	W
E	D	N	S	T	C	K	U	A	X	S	D
B	J	I	I	U	O	T	ō	T	E	T	D
Q	B	X	L	T	J	H	L	Y	Y	R	Y
D	J	N	Z	D	D	Y	T	Z	N	M	T

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Jurojin | • Yōkai |
| • Fukurokuju | • Kappa |
| • Bishamonten | • Oni |
| • Benzaiten | • Tengu |
| • Hotei | • Treasure Ship |
| • Daruma | • Lucky Gods |
| • Monsters | |

Kokeshi Paris Project



Kyoko Sugiura



"I decided to dress this already beautiful Kokeshi with flowers... Above all, I wanted to paint a picture that would make the most of the beautiful wood surface. I wanted to dress her in delicate flowers with fine lines."

Kokeshi Paris Project

August 2020

[The Kokeshi Paris Project](#)
[Nicolas-Yvan Perrot](#)

By Madelyn Molina

Interview: Kyoko Sugiura

Artist & Textile Designer

Site: kyokocreations.com

IG: [@kyoko_creation_broderie](#)

FB: [@KyokoCreation](#)

It is my pleasure to introduce the work of Kyoko Sugiura, a Japanese artist and designer living in France. Her specialty is embroidery and textiles. Sugiura-sensei's detailed and beautifully hand-crafted work has been shown in a plethora of venues. She has recently ventured outside of her specialty to create a beautiful work of art for the [Kokeshi Paris Project](#).

[The Kokeshi Paris Project](#) is the brainchild of Nicolas-Yvan Perrot, a Kokeshi aficionado who has been working with Paris artists to create an exclusive collection of Kokeshi inspired works. The ultimate goal is to introduce Kokeshi into mainstream art venues, demonstrating that what was once a simple child's toy is so much more. He recently created a Facebook group [Kokeshi Paris Project](#). If you'd like to see more photos of the works, exclusively presented here on KT, join him (and many of the featured artists) in this group.

This is the 4th installation of the [Kokeshi Paris Project](#); a beautiful, picturesque symphony of flowers and insects by the amazing artist Kyoko Sugiura.

KT: When Nicolas approached you about his project did you know right away that you wanted to take part in the project? What were your thoughts?

Sugiura-sensei: I've known for a long time that Nicolas is a collector of Kokeshi dolls. When he told me about this project, I thought, "Why me?", because I'm not a painter. I've always worked in embroidery and I deal in textiles. I've painted some pictures, but mainly embroidery designs, and I've never done any serious painting with a brush. But I thought it would be interesting to do something with wood, a material I don't usually work with, and so I accepted the challenge. But I didn't have any ideas, at the time, of what I would create.

KT: Can you share with me a little bit about your creation process? What came to mind when you decided on the color and design scheme for the Kokeshi?

Sugiura-sensei: When I first saw the natural wooden Kokeshi, which was still untreated, I was struck by the beauty of the wood. Since I am Japanese, I am very familiar with Kokeshi wooden dolls. My friend's parents were collectors of Kokeshi and

whenever I visited her house there were always Kokeshi of all sizes lined up in her home. So, I had seen many different kinds of Kokeshi in the past. But the Kokeshi I received from Nicolas was not just the wooden doll that I had always imagined. It was so beautiful and amazing.

As soon as I received the Kokeshi, I went to Japan. While I was in Japan, people in France were banned from going outside to prevent the spread of the corona virus and my flight back to France was cancelled. I had to stay in Japan. A state of emergency was also declared in Japan, and I was forced to refrain from travelling. While in Japan, there were no restrictions on going out for walks, etc. so, I walked around my neighborhood every day. It was just in time for cherry blossom season. I was reminded of the beauty of Japanese spring when I saw the Japanese cherry blossoms, which I hadn't seen in years, since I went to France. Then, as the *somei-yoshino* cherry blossoms began to fall... the *yaezakura* (double-petaled cherry tree blossoms) and then the *hanamizuki* (flowering dogwood) came into bloom, one after another.

I had not yet done anything to the blank Kokeshi at that time. The beautiful wood of the Kokeshi had remained natural. I think I needed the time to decide what I would do for her. I decided to dress this already beautiful Kokeshi with

flowers. I think it was because of my stay in Japan in the spring. Above all, I wanted to paint a picture that would make the most of the beautiful wood surface. I wanted to dress her in delicate flowers with fine lines.

KT: What feeling would you like the Kokeshi to convey to viewers?

Sugiura-sensei: I hope to convey the quiet and beautiful power of nature. It is the power of the wood of the Kokeshi doll itself and the power of the flower garments worn by the doll.

KT: Is there anything more you'd like to share about this experience working with the Kokeshi Paris Project?

Sugiura-sensei: It is very interesting to look at the works of the other artists. I can see that each of them puts different feelings into the same object.

KT: Thank you for taking the time to answer our questions, Sugiura-sensei. We hope that many will be reminded of Japan while being inspired to enjoy the beauty of Kokeshi and flowers, thanks to your beautiful work.



Kokeshi Paris Project



"I hope to convey the quiet and beautiful power of nature. It is the power of the wood of the Kokeshi doll itself and the power of the flower garments worn by the doll." ~ Kyoko Sugiura





There is no greater joy
in life, than the joy
of creating something.



TRIBUTE: 高橋正吾
TAKAHASHI, SHOGO
KOKESHI KOJIN
1929 ~ 2020





Shogo Takahashi November 2001.

Photo by Keiichi Kouda.
Used with permission from
the photographer.

KokeshiWiki: [Profile](#)



高橋正吾
TAKAHASHI, SHOGO
1929 ~ 2020

A simple line painted with a brush...
awakens joy and happiness of the soul and mind.

It is with a heavy heart that we convey to his family and
friends our deepest condolences お悔やみ申し上げます.



Greetings. My name is Francesca Iachetta, I am the owner of [Artigianato Giapponese](#) and have the extreme pleasure of travelling to Japan for my business. I would like to share with you, the readers of this beautiful magazine and Kokeshi enthusiasts, one of my encounters with a Kokeshi artist that I will always carry in my heart; the one with Master Sekiguchi Sansaku.

I will never forget that day. It was June 14, 2016, the day of my birthday, that Sekiguchi-sensei allowed me to go to his house to meet him. It was the best birthday present he could give me.

Upon my arrival at his house, his sweet and very nice wife welcomed me and invited me to enter. Inside was Sekiguchi-sensei who was waiting for me in his studio. I instantly felt a great emotion. He was surprised that I wanted to meet him and was intrigued as to why. I told him that my job was to import Japanese handicraft objects to Italy, especially Kokeshi, but that I was there because being a Kokeshi

collector myself I had the great desire to know him and to be able to buy one of his works directly from him.

I asked the Master when and why he started making Kokeshi. He told me that at the age of 15 he started working in a small factory in Tokyo. He worked from 6:00 A.M to 8:00 P.M and sometimes he even finished later. There was an art school near the factory and from a window he could see students drawing. He had wanted to be a painter since he was a child and was so impressed to see those students draw and paint that he, too, wanted to be as good as them. So, he started studying art and he realized he loved to paint and create things.

He began making Kokeshi as a souvenir of the hot spring town after he came back from detention in Siberia. He was detained in Siberia for 4 years. He lost many companions but he survived (see editors note). Creative Kokeshi is a wooden doll that was born after the war. By creating Kokeshi as a souvenir he had managed to combine his passions, painting and the art of creating. Then, he started using a lathe to create his Kokeshi. It was then that he realized it would be an essential tool to materialize his works.

Sekiguchi-sensei said, "Kokeshi are dolls that are born from the grain of the wood and my job is to find them and pull them out. In each of them there is an incredible beauty and every time it is a great emotion." He then showed me his workshop, where he makes



Meeting the Master Sekiguchi Sansaku



Kokeshi, and his beloved lathe.



He also introduced me to his daughter Oki Izumi and son-in-law Oki Yasunobu, also great Kokeshi artists, who were in the laboratory painting their works. Sekiguchi-sensei asked his daughter if she would accompany me upstairs to show me his works.

When we got upstairs, we entered a museum room where the Sekiguchi family's Kokeshi were exhibited. At that moment, I felt like a child in a room full of games. Finally, I could admire his masterpieces live. There were hundreds of Kokeshi and I didn't know where to look first. I got excited to the point of tears. I had never seen so many masterpieces all together; I felt like I was living a dream.

I absolutely love his Kokeshi works for the expression on their faces and for the accuracy of the details. Having to choose one was not easy. In the end, the one that won me over, even based on my budget, was a delightful girl in a burgundy kimono. Once taken in my hands I could no longer put it down. I loved her right away.

After filling my eyes with so much beauty, Oki-sensei and I went back down to where Sekiguchi-sensei was waiting for us. He told me that he made that Kokeshi in 2010 using a 20-year-old piece of keyaki

wood. Her name was Taishun "Waiting for spring". The Master then took a wooden tag on which he wrote the name of my new Kokeshi and put his signature and stamp.



Taishun (center)

Then Sekiguchi-sensei's wife came to offer me a cup of tea and to proudly show me a book with photos she had taken of some of her husband's works. A very nice woman, sunny and full of vitality despite her age. And to my great amazement, she told me that I could keep the book. You cannot imagine the joy I felt inside my heart after receiving that gift. That day was one of the best birthdays of my life.



Unfortunately, Sekiguchi-sensei passed away almost two years later from this meeting, on April 20, 2018. When I received the news, I was deeply sorry and sad.

In October 2018, I returned to Japan and returned to the Sekiguchi's family's home to offer condolences to his wife and daughter. Once through the door of the house a veil of sadness covered my face and my heart. His wife and daughter accompanied me to the small "Butsudan" altar and there we lit an incense. Once again, I was there in his house, but this time to make a prayer for the Master and to thank him one last time for giving me the opportunity to meet him.

Thank you, Sekiguchi-sensei. A great artist has passed away (1925-2018).

He devoted himself to creative Kokeshi dolls and received numerous awards such as the Prime Minister's Award in 1969, 1973 and 1975, the International Arts and Culture Award in 1986 and the "Medal of Honor" with a yellow ribbon in 1984. In 1978, he was designated as a Modern Master Craftsman (it is an excellence skill prize). He started making Kokeshi in 1958 and continued until his death.

Editor's Note: (J. Holmgren)

After the Second World War had ended, an estimated 500-700,000 Japanese soldiers who laid down their arms on the Asian mainland were interned in over 70 Russian labor camps. The Russian government used the ex-soldiers to work coal mines and build railroads. The work was hard and Siberian winters were harsh. Many did not survive. While the majority of internees were released in 1947-1949, the last were not freed until 1956, 11 years after the end of the war.



A photo with the Master





SEKIGUCHI SANSAKU

1925 ~ 2018





Interview by Madelyn Molina

Featured Collector/Artist: Jean Shannon

Country of Residence: USA

Contact e-mail: jeanprints@gmail.com

KT: Please tell us a little bit about yourself.

Jean: I'm an artist, a retired college teacher, and a life-long collecting "magpie." From the time I saw my first Hiroshige woodblock prints (at around age 5) I was fascinated with Japanese culture and with the art of print making. In 1999, my husband and I moved to Mashiko, Japan. There, I taught English and studied sōsaku hanga woodblock print making for almost 10 years. I returned to live in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 2009. Since then, I continue to make art, and helped found a popular annual artists' art crawl, where I show my work along with over 100 other neighborhood artists, and have the occasional gallery show.

KT: When and how did you first become interested in Kokeshi?

Jean: My first Kokeshi was a gift many years ago from my uncle who was living in Okinawa. She may have been an Okinawan style doll (I no longer have her) -- but I remember her red kimono, a bright spot in my tiny, dark, "garden level", first apartment! In 1998, on a trip to Japan, we stopped in Sendai where the owner of a second hand shop watched with amusement as I oohed and aahed over a jumble of old Kokeshi dolls. He invited us to climb up to his "treasure



attic," where he pulled out boxes of ceramics for my potter husband, along with several Kokeshi for me. He laughed in surprise when I picked the chunky wide-eyed (and heavy!) Zaō style doll by Abe Tsunikichi (1904-1991) over the lighter, more elegant others.

KT: Do you have a favorite Kokeshi that you would never part with?

Jean: After we returned from that trip to Japan, my husband gave me a present of a vintage Tōgatta doll by Sato Kichinosuke (1908-1973). This is probably my oldest doll, and she has a very "astringent" expression which made me aware of the individuality of the doll and, for the first time, gave me an awareness of the personality of the artist/crafts person who made it.



KT: Do you collect both sōsaku and dentō Kokeshi? If no, which do you collect? If yes, do you have a preference between the two styles and why?

Jean: I have a few cute omiyage Kokeshi, and a couple of newer ones acquired by accident or thrift shop, so I enjoy looking at all varieties. However, I prefer the traditional Kokeshi. I appreciate the constraints that force the artist to express within a specific form. Like a sonnet or a Japanese tea bowl, within the



constraints - endless variety!

KT: Tell us a little bit about your collection.

Jean: I now have a tiny collection, about half of my original small collection-- (some were given as gifts, some sold). I rotate and display a few at a time so I can see them with a fresh eye. They're stored in plastic bins, cushioned with bubble wrap. There are no humidity worries in Minnesota - our house is very dry!

KT: How do you decide what Kokeshi to add to your collection?

Jean: If I can afford the doll, the decision is totally on the doll's facial expression, and then if it will inspire my own creative work. Condition is not an issue for me. I love seeing all kinds of dolls (thank you Kokeshi Village!), but the Tsuchiyu style is my favorite.

KT: Why do you collect Kokeshi?

Jean: They make me smile! They inspire my own artwork. They are an affordable, traditional folk craft, and I can feel a connection with the artists who made such wonderful dolls.

KT: You also make Kokeshi inspired woodblock prints, is that right? Can you tell us a little bit about woodblock printing and how you came to create works inspired by Kokeshi using this print form?

Jean: When I lived in Japan, I had the good fortune to study sōsaku hanga, the 20th century "self-carved, self-printed" style of woodblock print making, with a wonderful teacher and joined a small group of artists who met regularly with him. We exchanged New Year's postcards (nengajo) as well as summer greeting cards. Valentine's Day is not such a popular holiday in Japan, but I decided to make and send Valentine cards. Those valentines were my first Kokeshi prints. Recently I was interested in the mother and child Kokeshi motif and made prints of the four seasons, with images inspired by hours of looking at "Oshin" Kokeshi on Pinterest and eBay! It's a universal theme, so they are enjoyed by non-Kokeshi enthusiasts.

KT: Do you also make other subject matter types of wood block prints? Can you tell us a little about them? Do you have a favorite type of print you create?

Jean: I've made woodblock prints inspired by Japanese and Chinese folk toys, several Japanese landscape/ temple prints, and prints of folk toys from other countries. I also make







monoprints, stencil prints, and seasonal screen print postcards. This summer I made an "Amabie" card to send to my friends, wishing them health and safety during the coronavirus!

KT: Do you sell your woodblock prints? If yes, how can collectors purchase them?

Jean: Yes, I sell my work. Unlike other types of print making, like screen printing, which produce multiples, my woodblock "sōsaku hanga" prints are closer to a monoprint, since I only make one, or at most two at a time and they are never exactly alike. I am in the process of re-awakening my blog jeanprints.blogspot.com where my work can be seen. If you see my art on Facebook you can send me a message!

KT: Is there anything more you would like to share with us?

Jean: In these distressing, uncertain times, it's wonderful to have a Facebook forum to learn about Kokeshi and to share the pleasure of these charming folk toys with collectors from around the world. Also, I've learned so much about my own dolls in just a short time. I'm grateful to be a member of Kokeshi Village and grateful to the members who so kindly share their dolls and their knowledge!

KT: Thank you for joining us here on KT and sharing your wonderful talent. We are happy to have such amazing people as part of our KT/KV family.



Jean Shannon



Marie Tommasini

Featured Collector

August/2020

By Madelyn Molina

Name : Marie Tommasini

Instagram: @marie_tomminette

We recently reached out to our Instagram followers [@KokeshiTrends](#) wanting to learn more about them and their collections. One of the respondents is Marie Tommasini [@Marie_tomminette](#), a French lady living in beautiful Paris. Marie was a former language teacher in Germany. However, when she settled in Paris she worked for a Japanese company (37 years ago), and since then her love for Japan has never stopped. Marie is fond of Japanese ceramics, ukiyo-e, lacquerware and of course, the subject of the day, Kokeshi dolls!

KT: When and how did you first become interested in Kokeshi?

Marie: The wife of one of my former bosses introduced me to the world of dentō Kokeshi. Her husband was transferred to Kobe for business reasons and they spent five years there. She was offered a Kokeshi during a dinner she held at home and the collection started from then on. She collected about eighty dentō Kokeshi during her stay in Japan. Her Kokeshi are huge and massive and are now displayed in their Swiss home.

KT: Can you share with us a picture of your first Kokeshi? Tell us a little bit about why you bought it?

Marie: I incidentally fell upon a book written by M. Evans and R. Wolf called "[Kokeshi: Wooden Treasures of Japan](#)". It raised my interest. The seller was US-based and had two bobblehead Kokeshi to sell at the same time. This was the



start of my collection.

KT: Do you have a favorite Kokeshi that you would never part with?

Marie: This is a very difficult question for me,

since I love them all. I love the Riyoza Tsuji Kokeshi (especially the black one), because their shape is particular, as if crafted in one piece, head and body make one. I admire the maker's craft. But I also love the Kaguya No Hime (Bamboo Princess) a Kokeshi I found in a store in



Amano Hashidate. It was left alone on a dusty shelf in the back of the room. I was incredibly attracted to that part of the store and when I saw her, I had to bring her back with me. Then there is also the last find called *Ise* by Takashi Yoshida. She is incredibly beautiful. Her kimono bears carved ume flowers and fans. And finally, I was recently offered two musical Kokeshi by Usaburo.

KT: Do you collect both sōsaku (creative) and dentō (traditional) Kokeshi?

Marie: I definitely collect sōsaku.





Kaguya No Hime (Bamboo Princess) by Yamagishi Masayoshi

Kokeshi. I find them more attractive and they tell me a more vivid story.

KT: Do you have a preference for new or vintage and why?

Marie: I like vintage Kokeshi and even if they have a mark, I do not hesitate to buy them, as it means that they have something to tell. Their life was eventful.

KT: About how many Kokeshi would you say you have in your collection, where do you keep them, and how do you care for them?

Marie: I have forty-six Kokeshi in my collection. They are displayed in my atelier. I dust them regularly, of course, and shelter them from the light.

KT: How do you decide what Kokeshi to add to your collection?

Marie: It is a mixture of everything: color, style, design, with a slight

tendency for those bearing carved patterns.

KT: Why do you collect Kokeshi?

Marie: It is difficult to explain addiction. It is certainly to keep the link with Japan, a country I have visited many times. I am very close to the culture and to the Japanese way of living.

KT: I would like to believe that Kokeshi are growing in popularity. If you could influence the future of Kokeshi, what would you want to do to ensure that the craft continues on for future generations?

Marie: This is a good question, as I have been asking myself how I could help perpetuating this art: writing articles, giving small conferences, organizing exhibitions. I am thinking about the Japanese Culture House in Paris.

KT: Are you familiar with the term “destashing?” Meaning to reduce the size of a collection by selling, trading or giving an item away.

Marie: No, I was not familiar with “destashing” and do not think I will ever do it.

KT: Has collecting Kokeshi created additional interest in Japanese arts, culture, etc.? If yes, what sort of interest?

Marie: I would like to practice Nihonga or Etagami, because I like the finesse of the drawings on the Kokeshi.

Many thanks to Marie for sharing with us her amazing collection and her love for Kokeshi.



Usaburo - Musicbox Kokeshi



Riyoza Tsuji



Takashi Yoshida



Usaburo Kokeshi

Takako Hirano



Kokeshi Paris Project





August 2020
[The Kokeshi Paris Project](#)
[Nicolas-Yvan Perrot](#)

By Madelyn Molina
 Interview: Takako Hirano
 eMail: takapomme@mac.com
 Website: takakohirano.com
 IG: [@aka_pomme](#)
 FB: [@takako.hirano.artiste](#)

It is my pleasure and honor to introduce the work of Takako Hirano. She was born in Japan and studied at [Tama Art University](#) in Tokyo. She has worked in Paris since 2004. Hirano-sensei specializes in engraving and lithography. The art created by Hirano-sensei is the 5th installation of the Kokeshi Paris Project created by Nicolas-Yvan Perrot.

KT: When Nicolas approached you about his project did you know right away that you wanted to take part in the project? What were your thoughts?

Hirano-sensei: Thank you for your interest and enthusiasm! My experience in participating in the Kokeshi Paris Project has been a fruitful and happy one. Since my childhood I have known about Kokeshi, which is part of my traditional culture.

KT: When you saw the blank Kokeshi pieces, what was your thought? Did you have an idea right away of what you would create?

Hirano-sensei: I thought, here is an opportunity for me to start with a fresh mind about Kokeshi. On one hand, there was the thought of emulating the creations of other artists that had been tasked with a similar demand. On the other hand, my process has been to let my inspiration flow.

The choice I made of making twins came from my visit with Nicolas. I was immediately attracted to a couple of smaller Kokeshi forms amongst the much

bigger ones. I had recently combined wood and metal on an art piece, and the wings and beaks idea came to me as I recalled that art piece. So, the Kokeshi became birds.

The choice of the color yellow came instinctively. Blue is a natural choice, as blue and yellow are complimentary and they represent the sun and the sky. The sun can also represent flowers. The sky is where rainbows happen when it plays with the sun. My main inspirations are from nature, which also inspires my work with engraving and printing. All these successive waves of ideas flew in together in a beautiful and easy way.

KT: Is there anything more you'd like to share about this experience working with the Kokeshi Paris Project?

Hirano-sensei: Now I feel very happy about the positive feedback from Nicolas, you, and all the friends who saw the Twins Birds. I wish them well with all their new Kokeshi friends!



The Twins





Kokeshi Paris Project



August 2020

Interview by: Madelyn Molina
Featured Artist:
Jacqueline Rodemann

eMail: contact@shadeofabonsai.com
Etsy Shop: [ShadeOfABonsai.etsy.com](https://www.etsy.com/shop/ShadeOfABonsai)
Website: [shadeofabonsai.com](https://www.shadeofabonsai.com)
Facebook: [@shadeofabonsai](https://www.facebook.com/shadeofabonsai)
Instagram: [@shade_of_a_bonsai](https://www.instagram.com/shade_of_a_bonsai)
Home Country: Australia

For anyone who loves Kokeshi, finding accessories that have Kokeshi motifs are a treat. So, when Jacqueline Rodemann responded to our call for entries, I was tickled pink to see her Kokeshi inspired jewelry. Jacqueline lives in a lovely, small city called Hobart in the beautiful state of Tasmania, Australia. She enjoys getting out in the stunning Tasmanian wilderness, vegan cooking, live music, dancing with friends and travelling (particularly to Japan). She is a jewelry and homewares designer.

KT: When and how did you first become interested in Kokeshi?

Jacqueline: I love Japanese art and design. My own jewelry and homewares designs are influenced by the beautiful traditional patterns and Japanese icons such as origami cranes, koi fish, lucky cats, dango, bonsai, Mt. Fuji and of course Kokeshi. I have only started collecting Kokeshi during the last few years.

KT: Can you tell us about your first Kokeshi?

Jacqueline: I purchased my first Kokeshi from a Japanese fabric store

in a nearby town. My mother has a great collection, most of which have been purchased at the same store. With 10 dolls, I don't have a huge collection yet but I am very keen to expand this collection and purchase some new and interesting ones.

KT: Do you like both *sōsaku* (creative) and *dentō* (traditional) Kokeshi?

Jacqueline: I'm not sure I could choose. I love the traditional forms and patterns, as well as the history of the traditional Kokeshi; but I love the artistic, diverse and innovative designs of many of the *sōsaku* Kokeshi.

KT: You also make Kokeshi inspired jewelry, is that right? Can you tell us a little bit about your journey to create Kokeshi inspired Jewelry?

Jacqueline: As I mentioned, a lot of my designs are inspired by Japanese icons; and the beautiful Kokeshi was an obvious choice as a concept. It is a more contemporary take on the Kokeshi and a unique type of earring. They are laser cut and then painted



1st Kokeshi, Sakunami Traditional Type



Photo:
Anji Salz [@salztokyo](https://www.instagram.com/salztokyo)



Jacqueline Rodmann



and coated in resin. On some, I have used colorful chiyogami paper to create a more authentic Japanese style.

KT: You make many different designs, is there any specific artist that influences your work?

Jacqueline: I love Yayoi Kusama. Her work is so fun, vibrant and innovative. She is such an inspirational woman. I have seen a lot of her artwork, at MONA in Hobart and much throughout my travels in Japan. My favorite piece of my own jewelry work is the Kokeshi earrings inspired by her, which feature her signature dots on the body and her bright red hair. They are also one of my most popular designs and usually sell out once listed in my store.

KT: What materials do you prefer to use on your jewelry? Do you take custom orders?

Jacqueline: Most of my jewelry is laser cut from vibrant acrylics and most designs (not the Kokeshi) incorporate lovely Tasmanian timber. I also like to use chiyogami paper and gold leaf, which I have purchased during travel in Japan. I generally don't take custom orders. However, if a particular design is sold out I am happy for customers to put in a request to be notified when it is available again. Some designs can be changed slightly if needed.

KT: Tell us a little bit about the name of your line of products, "Under the Shade of a Bonsai Tree".

Jacqueline: There is a line in the Aussie song - Waltzing Matilda: "Under the Shade of a Coolibah Tree". I'm an Australian artist creating Japanese inspired products; hence, the emergence of my Etsy store name - Under the Shade of a Bonsai Tree.

KT: Where can Kokeshi enthusiasts buy your beautiful Kokeshi inspired jewelry?

Jacqueline: I have an online shop where my work can be purchased www.ShadeOfABonsai.etsy.com. My Kokeshi designs do sell out quickly so, if there aren't any available, it is best to follow me on Instagram as that is where I announce new listings. I also stock my work in many shops and galleries around Australia.

KT: Is there anything further you would like to share with KT readers?

Jacqueline: I am finding your Facebook group fantastic and am constantly amazed by everyone's wonderful collections and enjoy learning about all the different designs and makers. Thank you.



Jacqueline Rodmann



Photo: Anji Salz (pictured) [@salztokyo](#)
Wearing Under the Shade of Bonsai Tree earrings by
Jacqueline Rodmann

Collection Guardianship

August 2020

By Jill Holmgren

You love your collection. You've enjoyed finding those special Kokeshi, learning about them and displaying them in your home.

But, someday, you may find yourself moving to a smaller home or moving on to new interests, or the Kokeshi may become part of your estate. How do you make certain that your dolls will go to someone who will take good care of them and appreciate them like you do? As a collector, it's good idea to make a long-term plan for your collection.

Here are some things to think about as you plan:

1. Document your collection as much as you can. Collectors, museums, appraisers and buyers will all want to know who made your Kokeshi and any other information you can provide. For tax purposes, you may need records on how much you paid for each doll.


2. Talk to family members, or watch to see if any of them seem attracted to part of or all of your collection. This will help you decide if you want to give some or all of your Kokeshi to family or friends. Make sure they know how to care for the dolls. If you plan to include the Kokeshi in your estate, make certain the recipients actually want them and have a place for them. If the Kokeshi are to be sold, make certain the executor of your estate understands their value.

3. Museums rely upon the generosity of collectors. Identify museums, cultural centers or libraries that may like to have your Kokeshi. Make sure they can properly store or display your items. Each museum has a specific mission, and your Kokeshi must fit with their collection plan.

Museum donation is a mutual agreement: you make an offer and they decide whether or not they can accept. Once the collection has been accepted, the museum owns the dolls. They can put the items in storage, display all or part of the collection, and even sell or offer some of the items to other museums.

With a professional art appraisal, you may be able to receive a tax deduction for your donation. Depending on where you live, sometimes the tax deduction for a donation is a higher amount than what you may receive after paying taxes on the money received from





selling your dolls. Appraisals cost money. For an accurate appraisal, document your collection and look for an appraiser who is familiar with Kokeshi. If you plan to enjoy your collection during your lifetime and put the museum donation in your will, make arrangements with the museum ahead of time.

4. You can donate your collection to a charity fundraiser for a hospital, cultural center, disaster relief organization, school, historical society, etc.

5. If you choose to sell your collection, advertise it well. The more information you can include about each doll, the better. You can sell them individually or as a group. Expect to receive less per item when you sell them as a group, or when you sell to shop owners. Markets fluctuate with popularity and with the economy, so a Kokeshi may sell for more, or less, than what you paid. If you want someone to sell them for you, search for a dealer, shop or art auction house who know about Kokeshi, and make an agreement as to their fees and how much time they have to sell the dolls.

With good care, the work of Kokeshi artists should last for generations. We are temporary caretakers of these wonderful works of art. It's our responsibility to make certain that the Kokeshi which bring us so much joy are protected and appreciated for years to come.

Note: (MMolina)

It has been my experience that appraisers tend to undervalue Japanese Kokeshi Folk Art collections. This is primarily because collectors have not included supporting documentation to aid the valuation process. Because the appraiser often has no connection to the Kokeshi-collecting network, or knowledge about the variety of Kokeshi types, they have no method of gauging prices.

As collectors, we are in the distinct position of knowing the collection scene and thus understanding the value of our Kokeshi. This is why it is important to choose an appraiser who is familiar with Kokeshi Folk Art and who understands the value of the collection or, at a minimum, one who will do the necessary research. Most importantly, remember to document your Kokeshi and, if you can, keep records of similar works which have sold in the market, to keep track of current pricing.



Abo Masafumi
Available @Kokesia



Suzuki Akira



Trick



Abo Masafumi

Treat



Tayama
Izumi



happy
Thanksgiving



Sasamori Junichi

To Each and Everyone



Sato, Kazuo



TRIBUTE:
小林定雄
Kobayashi Sadao
Hijiori
1933-2020

Donko Kokeshi
By Madelyn Molina

Donko Kokeshi
By Madelyn Molina

New Style Kokeshi

The creation of new style Kokeshi (shingata) blossomed in post-WWII Japan. Several types were developed: sōsaku (creative), donko (nodders), and omiyage neck-swing (souvenir) types such as Kappa, Tanuki etc. After the war, many soldiers who returned with disabilities found a new way of making a living through the wood working industry¹.

Donko Kokeshi – The Starting Point

The focus of this article is on the new type donko Kokeshi (どんここけし). It is believed that donko Kokeshi were first produced in the 1950's. Some believe that donko designs had already been made pre-war, by Masaaki Hiroi (1935-2019). If we do the math, it might seem that Hiroi-san may have been too young to produce any toys during the war years (1939-1945), but in fact, he began making toys at the early age of nine years old. The entire Hiroi family were wood craftsmen, making all kinds of products². Either way, there is not much of a gap between the possible production start years. So, it is safe to say they were in production from 1945 through the mid-1960s.

There is much speculation about who made the bodies of these donko Kokeshi, as many of the woodturners never signed the pieces, even if they did the complete work, including painting. We know for sure that Hiroi-san turned them as a special request for toy shops, to be painted and sold as toys. They had become quite popular during the 1950s-1960s Kokeshi boom. Furthermore, for the first time in 1961, The All Japan Kokeshi Concourse in Shiroishi awarded prizes and recognized the new style of Kokeshi. There is still some question about where

the name donko(どんこ) originated, as many craftsmen are not familiar with the name. It may be a term only known to members of the original group making them, many of whom are now gone. We continue to research this phenomenon and will write a follow-up article should we uncover more information. We believe production areas to have been Sendai and Tōgatta Onsen.



Beverley Webster Collection

The Makers

So, besides Masaaki Hiroi, who else produced these works? First, let us define the three types of categories for the donko creation process:

- The wood turners who only turned the pieces without painting them.
- The painters who only painted the Kokeshi and did not turn them.
- The wood turners/painters who did both.

Through years of scouring the internet for information and endless hours of searching through auction sites, and from members of our amazing Kokeshi Village Facebook Group, I've managed to gather a plethora of

donko Kokeshi images. Interestingly, I did find some donko Kokeshi signed by well-known dentō (turned sōsaku) craftsmen such as Sato Suigai, Okamoto Usaburo, Ishihara Hideo and Takahashi Hashime, the latter two leading the way in Sendai. This truly comes as no surprise, as they were part of the early sōsaku movement. There were other artists who may not be as well known by collectors today but who were at the pinnacle of their success during the early Kokeshi years, Tōgatta craftsmen who had formed a working group with the Hiroi family, Azuma Yoshisuke (1919-2014), Sakai Shojiro, (1921-), Konno Mikio (1931-2010), and Murakami Tamajiro (1926-) to name a few.

Let's also keep in mind that these same craftsmen, many of whom are today recognized as masters, humbly produced all types of new style Kokeshi including omiyage (souvenir) works.

These early new style works hold a crucial part of the history of Kokeshi in that they pushed the craft into a new realm of free designs, elevating the artistry into award-winning creations and museum exhibitions. They captured the imagination and fascination of tourists, inspiring them to take home a piece of Japan to share with their part of the world, thus bringing recognition to the craft and developing a new group of collectors. All the while, this provided a livelihood to the men and women creating them. So, while the works may not be signed, their importance and contribution to the Japanese economy and culture is certainly recognized, and collectors worldwide are, even today, enamored by these Kokeshi.

Descriptive Qualities of Donko Kokeshi

So, what exactly does a Donko type of Kokeshi look like? They are characterized particularly by their wobbling heads, which are created by a loose-fitting joint connecting the head to the body—a design also seen in the Kina Kina /Nambu and

Hanamaki dentō Kokeshi. These are not to be confused with the plethora of omiyage Kokeshi, which may have a similar loose-fitting neck joint, but a different body style.

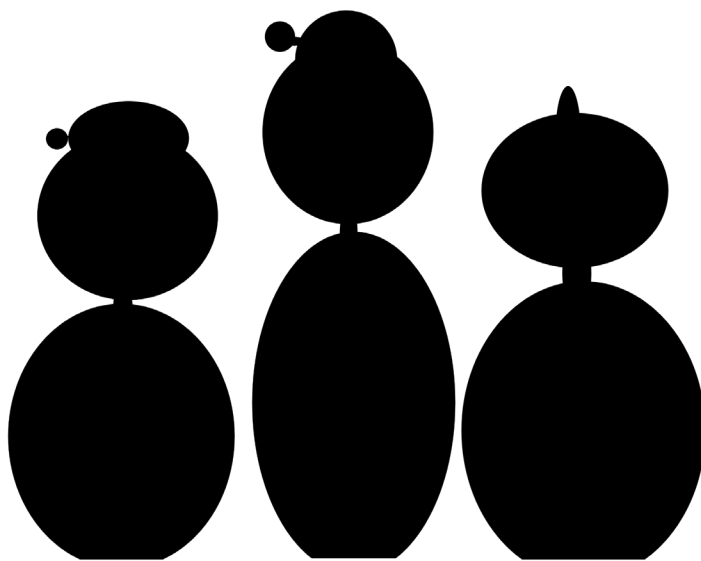
Donko Kokeshi have a robust round or thick elongated shape and more often than not were made in pairs: a boy and girl, with the girl usually having a mage hair design and kanzashi hairpin and the boy a pointed *chasen-mage* hairstyle.

Unfortunately, some of these pairs end up separated by sellers who may not know that they should be kept together.

There is some question about the categorization based upon shape. I believe the lines have further been blurred because collectors sometimes blend nodders and donkos into the same categories. In speaking to fellow Kokeshi researchers, the consensus was that the rounded head and body types are donkos, and all others are nodders.

This, of course, is not an official designation by any means, but a method by which to try to categorize them. Kokeshi with a narrow-waisted bowtie body shape have not been categorized as donko Kokeshi, but were

Donko Kokeshi Shapes



referenced to as noddors because of their loose-fitting necks.

Rarity

I often see sale listings describing these dolls as “rare”. Are they truly rare? Well, the market is currently saturated with this particular type of Kokeshi, so I wouldn’t necessarily call them “ALL” rare. I would, however, say that some of them could be considered rare. For instance, those with signatures are less common, since many were made in a dual process of makers and painters and no one signed them. Donko Kokeshi in excellent, unchipped, condition are also a challenge to find. The donko Kokeshi are known for having serious paint chipping issues. Once chipping begins, it generally becomes worse, losing design elements along with those chips of paint. Needless to say, that does not deter many collectors, who have found them irresistibly charming, from adding them to their collections.

I hope this article has helped build better

understanding the donko Kokeshi. They are quite charming, and deserving of admiration and appreciation of their beauty. They are also part of the foundation which led to the sōsaku movement that collectors know and love today. I would not feel my collection to be complete without having a few of them to grace my displays.

Many thanks to our fellow Villagers (collectors) who were kind enough to share their images. If you’d like to see more photos of donko Kokeshi, visit our website, KokeshiVillage.com.

~Happy Collecting!

-
1. McDowell, Jennifer E. "Kokeshi: Continued and Created Traditions ([Motivations for a Japanese Folk-Art Doll](#))," pp. 95-97 [PDF 111-113 of 317]; retrieved 08/14/2020
 2. KokeshiWiki Contributors. "Masaaki Hiroi." KokeshiWiki, (<https://kokeshiwiki.com/?p=1678>). Accessed August 14, 2020



Valerie Kivshar Collection

Photo: @kokeshi_addict



Meagan Dolby Collection



Pair by Ueki Masako Photo: Public Domain

DONKO

Kokeshi Museums in Tohoku, Japan

(Aomori, Yamagata, Miyagi, Fukushima. There are none in Akita/Iwate.)

Updated August 11, 2020
by Justin Velgus

AOMORI PREFECTURE:

Museum Name:

Tsugaru Kokeshi-kan (津軽こけし館)

Highlights: Collection of 4,000 kokeshi, corner to view kokeshi being made by craftsman, Japan's largest Kokeshi (4.21m, 755 kg)! Gift shop sells over 1,000 kokeshi representing all 11 types from around Japan.

Website: <http://tsugarukokeshi.com/>

Hours: Open year-round 9:00-17:00
(closed Dec 29~Jan 3)

English Address: 72-1 Toyama, Fukuro, Kuroishi, Aomori 036-0412 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒036-0412青森県黒石市大字袋字富山72-1

YAMAGATA PREFECTURE:

Museum Name: Yamagata Densho Kokeshi-kan (やまがた伝統こけし館)

Highlights: Collection of 6,700 kokeshi and wooden toys based off of several large collection donations, hosts the Michinoku Kokeshi Matsuri (one of Japan's BIG 3 kokeshi appraisal contests) each autumn.

Website: <http://www.kankou.yamagata.yamagata.jp/kokeshi/>

Hours: Open year-round 10:00-18:00
(closed Tuesdays & Dec 29~Jan 3)

English Address: 2-7-10 Shinanukamachi, Yamagata, Yamagata 990-0042 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒990-0042 山形県山形市七日町2丁目7-10

MIYAGI PREFECTURE:

Museum Name: Japan Kokeshi Museum(日本こけし館)

Highlights: One of the largest kokeshi museums in Japan, display of past winning kokeshi from the famous Naruko Kokeshi Festival, paint-your-own kokeshi experience.

Website: <http://www.kokesikan.com/>
Dedicated English website: <https://k-k-s.tokyo/>

Hours: 10:00-16:00

English Address: 74-2 Naruko Onsen Shitomae, Osaki, Miyagi 989-6827 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒989-6827宮城県大崎市鳴子温泉字尿前74-2

Museum Name: Iwashita Kokeshi Museum (岩下こけし資料館)

Highlights: Half kokeshi shop with many original creations, half museum with free admission. Located between central Naruko Onsen area and the Japan Kokeshi Museum, largest collection of kokeshi-related literature in Tohoku, kokeshi painting experience.

Website: <https://www.iwashita.info/>
Hours: Open year-round 8:00-17:30

English Address: 74-2 Naruko Onsen Furutomae, Osaki, Miyagi 989-6827 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒989-6826宮城県大崎市鳴子温泉字古戸前80

Museum Name: Museum of Kamei Collection (カメイ美術館)

Highlights: The museum houses three main collections: butterfly specimens, paintings, and kokeshi. Located a 10-minute walk from Sendai Station, collection focuses on older kokeshi with regular special exhibits about more unique types/themes.

Website: <http://www.kameimuseum.or.jp/>

Hours: Open year-round 10:00-17:00 (closed Mondays, and Dec 28~Jan 4)

English Address: 1-1-23 Itsutsubashi, Aoba-Ku, Sendai, Miyagi 980-0022 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒980-0022 仙台市青葉区五橋1-1-23

Museum Name: Zaō Kokeshi Museum (みやぎ蔵王こけし館)

Highlights: Collection of 5,500 kokeshi from around Tohoku makes this the largest collection in Japan, kokeshi painting experience, occasional chance to see artisan making kokeshi.

Website: <http://www.kokeshizao.com/>

Hours: Open year-round 9:00-17:00 (closed Dec 29~Jan 3)

English Address:
Shinchinishiurayama-36-135
Togattaonsen, Zao-machi, Katta-gun,
Miyagi 989-0916 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒989-0916宮城県刈

田郡蔵王町遠刈田温泉字新地西裏山36番地
135

FUKUSHIMA PREFECTURE:

Museum Name: Nishida Memorial Museum (原郷のこけし群西田記念館)

Highlights: About 1,000 kokeshi on display, including important prewar kokeshi, located between central Fukushima City and Tsuchiyu Onsen inside tourist attraction Anna's Garden.

Website: <http://nishidakinenkan.or.jp/>

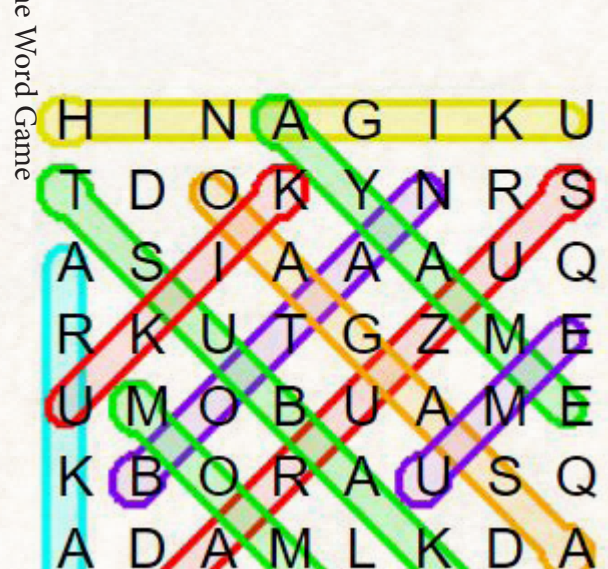
Hours: Open year-round 10:00-17:00 (16:30 in winter) (closed Dec 29~Jan 3)

English Address: 3-183 Arai-Yokozuka, Fukuro, Fukushima, Fukushima 960-2156 Japan

Japanese Address: 〒960-2156 福島県福島市荒井横塚3-183

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The Flowers of Kokeshi



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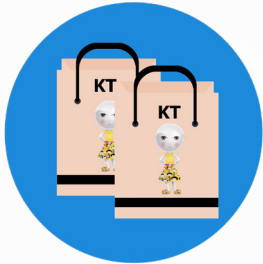
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Information

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