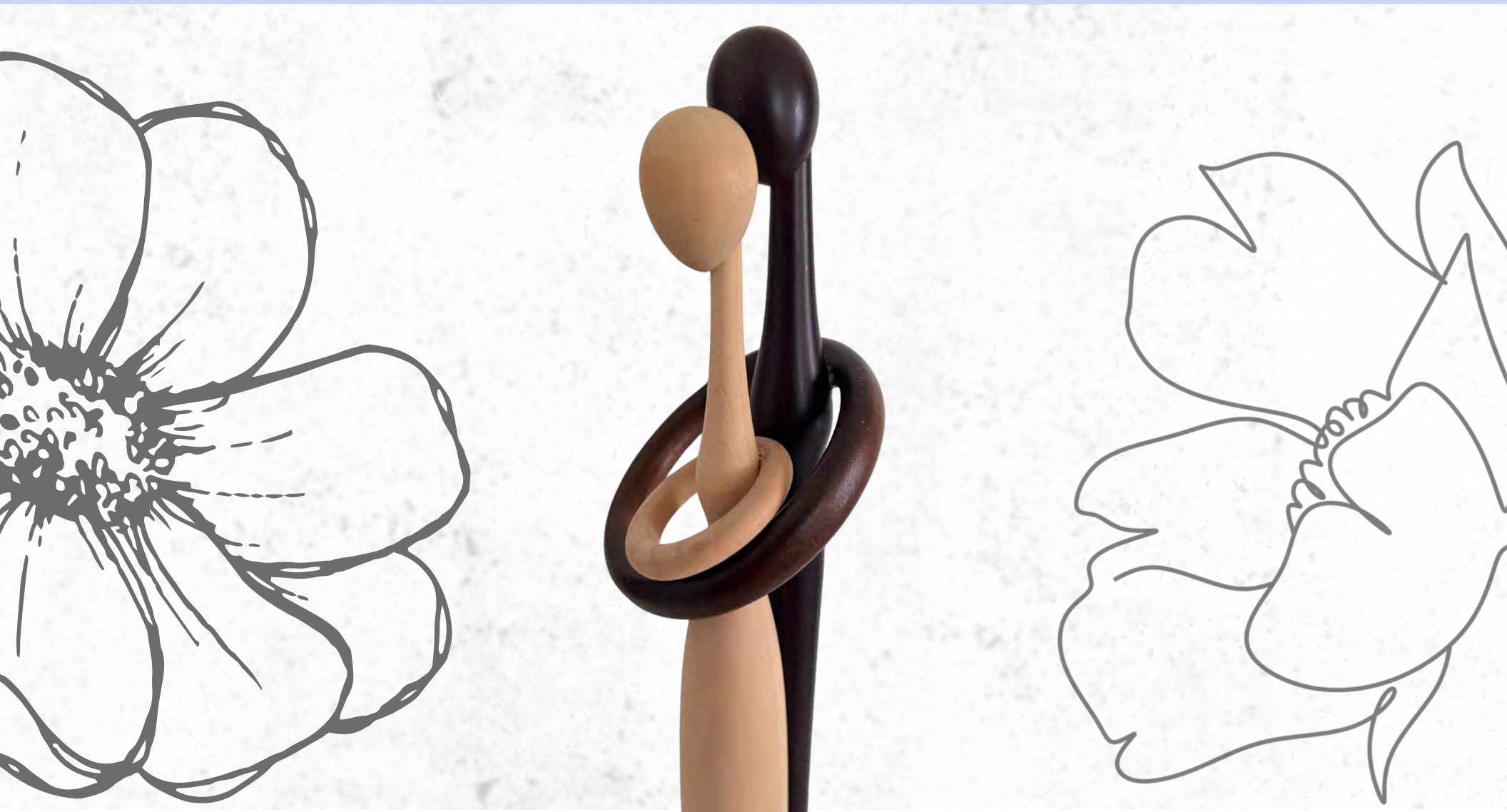


KOKESHITRENDS

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FOLK ART: Kokeshi Companions

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Kokeshi? Visit us on Facebook
@[KokeshiVillage](#) group and
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INTRODUCTION

Kokeshi Companions is a series of emotional support rituals; a sanctuary of spirit, carved in wood and held in heart. It is a love letter to the quiet companions who remind us of our strength, our softness, and our sacred enoughness.

The Kokeshi in this collection are more than objects, they are part of a ritual, a reflection, a gentle guide through the emotional landscapes we navigate daily.

Rooted in the traditions of Japanese folk art and blossoming into contemporary care, Kokeshi offer emotional support not through words, but through presence. They invite us to pause, to feel, to remember.

Each essay and ritual in this series is crafted to feel like a warm companion, blending heartfelt reflection with everyday care, so collectors can feel seen, supported, and proud of the stories they hold.

Read them in stillness, share them with kindred spirits, or transform them into practices of your own making.

However they find you: alone, in shared spaces, or through living rituals, may they remain as gentle presences, walking softly with you through the seasons of your life.

~Madelyn Molina

Art of Stillness

"Peace lives within me."



In a world that prizes speed, productivity and constant connectivity, stillness can feel like a radical act. Yet it is in stillness that we often find clarity, creativity, and a deeper sense of self. The art of stillness is not merely the absence of movement; it is the presence of awareness. It invites us to pause, to listen, and to reconnect with the rhythms that lie beneath the noise.

Stillness cultivates space. In that space, thoughts settle, emotions soften, and insight emerges. Whether through meditation, quiet walks, or moments of solitude, stillness allows us to observe without reacting, to feel without fleeing. It is a practice of being rather than doing, of surrendering control and embracing presence.

Kokeshi artisans have long turned to observation in stillness as a source of inspiration. It is the blank canvas before the first brushstroke, the silence between musical

notes, the breath before a word is spoken.

In stillness, we touch the timeless, the part of us that is not defined by roles, schedules, or expectations.

To embrace the art of stillness is to reclaim our inner sanctuary. In stillness, these hand-made Kokeshi remind us that we are not machines, but beings with depth, mystery, and the capacity to simply be.



Artisan:

Kakizawa Yoshinobu - 柿沢是伸
b. 1974

Master:

Kakizawa Koretaka - 柿沢是隆

Style: Naruko

Collection: Soulportals.com



Art of Stillness

"Peace lives within me."

Ritual of Reverent Stillness

A quiet ceremony for welcoming, tending, or simply being with your Kokeshi companions.

Preparation

Choose a time when the world softens: dawn, dusk, or a gentle rain. Light a candle or place a small bowl of water nearby to honor impermanence and reflection.

Invitation

Greet your Kokeshi by name, aloud or in thought. Let each one know they are seen, cherished, and safe. If new to your collection, whisper a welcome: *"You are home."*

Stillness Offering

Sit with them in silence. No cleaning, no arranging, just presence. Let your breath slow. Notice the grain of the wood, the stroke of the paint, the stories they carry. If thoughts arise, let them pass like clouds.

Gesture of Care

Gently touch each Kokeshi, as if brushing away dust from a memory. You may hum a tune, recite a poem, or simply breathe. If you feel moved, place a small token, flower, stone, or folded paper, beside them.



Closing Blessing Thank them for their stillness, their witness, their quiet companionship.

Extinguish the candle or pour the water into the earth. Carry their calm with you.

Artisan:

Hiroi Michiaki - 広井道顕

1933 - 2020

Master:

Agatsuma Kichisuke - 我妻吉助

Candlestick Spinners

Collection: Soulportals.com



Carrying Quiet Strength

"I face the day with bravery."



Quiet strength is the kind that doesn't need to announce itself. It moves through the world with grace, resilience, and a steady pulse of purpose. Unlike loud declarations or dramatic gestures, quiet strength is felt in the way someone holds space, listens deeply, or chooses integrity over applause. It is the strength of roots rather than storms - anchoring, nourishing, enduring.

To carry quiet strength is to trust in your own rhythm. It means showing up even when no one is watching, honoring your values in small, consistent ways. It's the courage to be gentle in a harsh world, to speak truth with tenderness, and to protect what matters without fanfare. This kind of strength is often mistaken for passivity, but it is anything but. It is active, intentional, and deeply powerful.

In the realm of collecting, especially of folk art like Kokeshi, quiet strength manifests in stewardship. It's the care taken to learn an

artisan's story, the patience to wait for the right piece, the reverence shown in how a Kokeshi is placed, dusted, or named. It's the strength of devotion, of emotional resonance, of honoring tradition while holding space for innovation.

Artisan:

Niiyama Minoru - 新山実
b. 1956

Master:

Niiyama Manabu - 新山学

Collection: Soulportals.com



Carrying Quiet Strength

"I face the day with bravery."



Quiet Strength Ceremony

A ritual for grounding, honoring, and embodying the quiet power of your collection.

Grounding Gesture

Begin by placing your feet firmly on the floor. Breathe deeply. Let your spine rise like a mountain, your breath flow like wind. You are the vessel of quiet strength.

Companion Recognition

Choose one Kokeshi to hold or sit with. Reflect on its story, who made it, what it evokes, how it came to you. Whisper a phrase of gratitude: *"You carry strength in silence. I see you."*

Symbolic Offering

Place a small object beside the Kokeshi, a stone, a leaf, a folded paper with a word of strength. This is your offering, your acknowledgment of shared resilience.

Silent Witnessing

Sit in stillness for a few minutes. Let the quiet speak. If emotions rise, let them move through you. You are not alone in your strength.

Closing Affirmation

Touch the Kokeshi gently and say: *"We endure. We honor. We carry quiet strength."* Blow out a candle or open a window to release the moment into the world.



Artisan:

Kuribayashi Issetsu - 栗林 一雪
1926-2011

Collection: Soulportals.com

He once said, *"I want to breathe life into the Kokeshi, without speaking a word."*



Joy in Small Things

"Happiness grows when I notice it."



Joy doesn't always arrive with fanfare. Often, it tiptoes in quietly, through the scent of rain on dry earth, the curve of a handwritten letter, or the way sunlight dances across a wooden surface. In a world that often equates happiness with achievement or grandeur, joy in small things reminds us that fulfillment is not distant or rare, it's woven into the everyday.

This kind of joy is intimate and grounding. It teaches us to notice, to savor, to be present. A chipped teacup with a story, a Kokeshi's painted smile, a shared laugh, these moments are not distractions from life's purpose; they are its purpose. They connect us to memory, to meaning, and to each other.

For collectors, joy in small things is a familiar language. It's the thrill of discovering a forgotten piece, the quiet pride in a well-loved shelf, the ritual of naming and tending.

Each item is a portal to delight, not because it is rare or expensive, but because it resonates. It holds a whisper of beauty, a flicker of connection, a spark of joy.



Artisan:

Janice Levi

Kokeshi Inspired

Collection:

Soulportals.com

Joy in Small Things

"Happiness grows when I notice it."



The Joyful Glimpse Ceremony

A ritual for celebrating the small delights within your collection and your day.

Opening Smile

Begin by smiling, gently, even if just inwardly. Let your breath follow the smile. You are entering a space of lightness.

Tiny Treasure Selection

Choose one small item from your collection, a miniature Kokeshi, a charm, a note tucked behind it. Hold it in your palm and admire its details. Say aloud or in thought: "You are small, and you are enough."

Joyful Pause

Sip something warm or refreshing. Let this be part of the ritual. Taste, breathe, and notice. You are allowed to enjoy.

Delightful Placement

Place the chosen item somewhere new, a counter top, bedside table, a travel pouch. Let it surprise you later. This is your planted joy.

Closing Whisper

Write or speak a single word that captures the moment: "Soft," "Found," "Bright," "Here." Let it echo. Let it stay.



1960s vase-inspired miniature
omiyage Kokeshi
Collection: Soulportals.com

Quiet Work of Healing

"I honor my feelings with love."



Healing rarely arrives with a dramatic flourish. More often, it unfolds in silence, in the slow stitching of broken trust, the gentle reweaving of self-worth, the quiet return to breath. It is not linear, nor loud. It is patient, layered, and deeply personal. The quiet work of healing asks us to sit with discomfort, to honor grief, and to choose tenderness again and again.

This kind of healing is not passive. It is active in its softness, courageous in its vulnerability. It shows up in small choices: resting when the world demands motion, forgiving when bitterness tempts, tending to what was once neglected. It is the work of reclaiming wholeness, not through perfection, but through presence.

For collectors, especially of emotionally resonant folk art like Kokeshi, the quiet work of healing is mirrored in stewardship. Each Kokeshi may carry a story of loss, resilience, or transformation.

The act of caring for them, of creating sanctuary, becomes a ritual of self-care. Through touch, attention, and reverence, healing is not only remembered, it is practiced.



Artisan:

Takeda Masashi - 武田 まさし
1930-2015

Master:

Takeda Usaburo - 武田卯三郎

Collection: Soulportals.com

Quiet Work of Healing

"I honor my feelings with love."



Healing Sanctuary Ceremony

A ritual for honoring emotional restoration through your collection.

Gentle Arrival

Begin in a quiet space. Let the light soften, or allow the moon to keep watch. Place your hand over your heart. With each slow breath, remind yourself: you are safe, you are held, you are home.

Companion Selection

Choose a Kokeshi that brings comfort, maybe one with gentle colors, a calm expression, or a history of resilience. Hold it softly and say: *"You remind me that it's alright to be broken, and that healing can unfold."*

Restorative Gesture

Wrap the Kokeshi in a soft cloth or place it on a cushion. This is not for display; it is for rest. You may add a sprig of lavender, a crystal, or a handwritten note of affirmation.

Silent Witnessing

Sit beside the Kokeshi in stillness. Let emotions rise and fall. You do not need to fix anything. You are simply here. If tears come, let them be part of the ritual.

Closing Blessing

Light a candle and speak a phrase of release: *"I honor the quiet work. I trust the slow bloom."* Let the flame flicker as a symbol of resilience. When ready, extinguish it with gratitude.



Bluebearvendingco

Artisan: Joanna McPherson

Kokeshi Inspired

b. 1973 ~

London, England

Title: Don't stand too close to me
2020 Covid 19

Collection: Soulportals.com

Kokeshi of Connection

"We belong to each other"



Kokeshi are more than carved wood and painted smiles; they are vessels of connection. Born from the hands of artisans and passed between generations, each Kokeshi carries stories, emotions, and the quiet imprint of human touch. To hold a Kokeshi is to hold a thread that links past to present, maker to keeper, tradition to transformation.

Connection through Kokeshi is not always loud or obvious. It may begin with a glance, a face that reminds you of someone, a pattern that stirs a memory. It deepens through care, through naming, through the rituals of placement and tending. These Kokeshi become companions, witnesses, and bridges. They connect us to our own inner worlds, to the spirit of craftsmanship, and to others who share in the joy of collecting.

In a fragmented world, the Kokeshi of connection reminds us that wholeness is possible. That even in silence, we are not alone. That beauty, when shared, becomes belonging.

Artisan: Mogami Minoru

Collection: Soulportals.com



Kokeshi of Connection

"We belong to each other"



The Thread of Connection Ceremony

A ritual for honoring the relational spirit of your Kokeshi collection.

Opening Gesture

Begin by placing two hands over your heart. Breathe in slowly and say: *"I am part of something."* Let this truth settle.

Companion Pairing

Choose two Kokeshi, perhaps ones that feel like opposites or complements. Place them side by side. Reflect on what connects them: color, story, emotion, or intuition.

Connection Note

Write a short note or phrase that links the two: *"You both carry joy," "You remind me of home," "You hold the same sky."* Tuck this note beneath or between them.

Shared Placement

Place the paired Kokeshi in a communal space, a shelf, a table, a travel pouch. Let them be seen together. This is your visible thread.

Closing Whisper

Speak aloud: *"Connection is a gift. I honor the ties that bind."* You may choose to share this ritual with another collector, or simply carry its warmth into your day.

Artisan:

Taizan Sugizaki - 杉崎泰山

Title: Akebono - あけぼの

Collection: Soulportals.com



Kokeshi of Resilience

"Strength in Imperfection"



Resilience is not the absence of hardship; it is the quiet decision to continue, to adapt, to grow. In the world of Kokeshi, resilience is carved into every curve, painted into every line.

These Kokeshi, often born from humble wood and shaped by hand, carry the marks of imperfection with grace. A faded stroke, a knot in the grain, a chipped base, these are not flaws but stories. They speak of endurance, of transformation, of beauty that does not depend on symmetry.

Strength in imperfection is a philosophy rooted in Japanese aesthetics, especially wabi-sabi, the celebration of transience and the incomplete. Kokeshi embody this spirit. They remind us that resilience is not polished or pristine. It is tender, weathered, and deeply human. Each Kokeshi, whether traditional or creative, holds space for what has been broken and lovingly mended.

For collectors, the Kokeshi of resilience offers more than visual charm. It becomes a mirror for our own journeys. To care for a Kokeshi with a crack or faded paint is to honor the strength it took to survive. To display it proudly is to say: *"I see your story, and I cherish it"*.



Artisan:

Miyashita Hajime - 宮下 はじめ
b.1940

Collection: Brandy E.

Kokeshi of Resilience

"Strength in Imperfection"



Resilience Reverence Ceremony

A ritual for honoring imperfection and the quiet strength within your collection.

Opening Breath

Begin by breathing deeply. Place your hand over your heart and say: *"I welcome what is whole, and what is healing."*

Chosen Companion

Select a Kokeshi that bears a mark of imperfection, a faded pattern, a chip, a handmade asymmetry. Hold it gently and reflect: *"You are resilient. You are beautiful."*

Symbolic Stitch

Place a small thread, ribbon, or piece of gold paper beside the Kokeshi. This represents kintsugi, the art of mending with honor. You may wrap it loosely or tuck it beneath the base.

Witnessing Stillness

Sit with your Kokeshi in silence. Let your thoughts wander to moments when you've endured, adapted, or grown. Let the Kokeshi be your companion in reflection.

Closing Affirmation

Speak aloud: *"I honor the strength in imperfection. I carry resilience with grace."* You may choose to write this phrase and place it near your display as a reminder.



Artisan:

Ishihara Hideo - 石原 日出男
1925-1999

Collection: Soulportals.com



Kokeshi of Self-Love

"I am enough, exactly as I am."



Self-love is not a destination, it is a daily practice, a quiet remembering. It is the gentle voice that says, *"You are worthy,"* even when the world is loud with doubt. In the realm of Kokeshi, self-love is carved into simplicity. These Kokeshi, often minimal in form yet rich in spirit, remind us that beauty does not require embellishment. That presence alone is powerful.

To say *"I am enough, exactly as I am"* is to honor the cracks, the quirks, the quiet strengths. It is to stand in your own light without apology. Kokeshi, with their serene expressions and hand-painted individuality, reflect this truth. No two are alike, and none strive to be. They simply are; whole, imperfect, beloved.

For collectors, the Kokeshi of self-love becomes a mirror. It invites us to see ourselves in the Kokeshi we choose, to recognize our own

worth in the act of care. Each ritual, each placement, each whispered name becomes a declaration: *"I am enough"* *"This moment is enough"* *"This love is mine to keep"*.

Artist:

Hitoshi Makino - 牧野均
b. 1956

Titled: Yorisou

Collection:

Soulportals.com



Kokeshi of Self-Love

"I am enough, exactly as I am."



Self-Love Sanctuary Ceremony

A ritual for affirming worthiness and celebrating your inner light through your collection.

Opening Affirmation

Stand or sit comfortably. Place both hands over your heart and say aloud: *"I am enough, exactly as I am."* Let the words settle into your breath.

Companion Selection

Choose a Kokeshi that feels like a reflection of your spirit, whether joyful, quiet, bold, or tender. Hold it gently and say: *"You remind me of my beauty."*

Mirror Offering

Place the Kokeshi beside a mirror or reflective surface. Let it witness you, and let yourself be witnessed. You may add a flower, a charm, or a note that reads: *"I am whole."*

Stillness Moment

Sit in silence with your Kokeshi. Let your thoughts soften. If self-doubt arises, greet it with kindness. You are not here to fix, only to feel.

Closing Blessing

Speak aloud: *"I honor myself. I honor this love. I carry it forward."* You may choose to repeat this ritual on days when your light feels dim, or share it with someone who needs reminding.

Artisan:

Kato Tatsuo - 加藤竜雄

b. 1940

Titled: Early Spring

Collection: Soulportals.com





Epilogue: A Whispered Thank You

This series began with a breath, with stillness, with softness, with the quiet courage to feel. Through each essay and ritual, we've walked together across emotional landscapes: resilience and rest, joy and healing, connection and self-love. Each Kokeshi companion has offered not just beauty, but belonging, a reminder that art can hold us, that tradition can transform us, and that collecting can become a sacred act of care.

To hold a Kokeshi is to hold a story. To tend to one is to tend to yourself. And to share them, to name them, ritualize them, celebrate them, is to build a community rooted in reverence and resonance.

May these offerings continue to echo in your days. May your shelves be sanctuaries, your rituals be reminders, and your heart be gently held by the companions you've chosen. You are enough. You are connected. You are resilient. And you are never alone.

Thank you for walking this path with grace.

Artisan:

Alexa Fitzgibbon

Kokeshi Inspired

Title: Chiasa - 1000 Mornings

Collection: Custom work for Soulportals.com

"Chiasa" means a thousand mornings—a name that beautifully echoes the rising phoenix, a symbol of daily renewal and quiet rebirth.

Each morning offers a fresh beginning, a chance to rise again with grace, strength, and softness. It's a fitting companion to this emotional support series, reminding us that healing is not a single moment, but a rhythm.

Chiasa, poised in her quiet radiance, makes a perfect closing image for this epilogue, a visual whisper that says: "You can begin again, always".





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Resources

KokeshiWiki.com

KokeshiVillage.com



Front Cover - Taizan Sugizaki

Back Cover - Kishi Sadao (Nakayoshi)



This issue is dedicated to Robert Wolf and Michael Evans, who helped us shape our shelves and kindled our Kokeshi spirits. This is our thank you. Your shared knowledge and wisdom carved paths of joy, connection, and quiet transformation into a world of wooden treasures, where magic lives in every grain.

With admiration and affection, we wish you a retirement as rich and meaningful as your contributions.





MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

Continuing the Conversation: Thank You for the Lessons

For decades, Robert Wolf and Michael Evans have shared not only their knowledge of Kokeshi, but their hearts, teaching us to see the dolls not just as objects, but as carriers of spirit, memory, and connection.

Their legacy continues in every conversation sparked, every doll cherished, and every insight passed on.

From Collectors with Love: Community Messages

In the following pages, we share heartfelt messages from the Kokeshi collectors community, expressions of gratitude, stories of connection, and reflections on the many ways your work has inspired, guided, and enriched their collecting journeys.

Community Member from CA, USA

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

My very first Kokeshi book discovery was Wooden Treasures of Japan by Robert and Michael. I was instantly captivated by its stunning images and the wealth of artisan information on every page. To my delight, I even spotted several pieces that were already part of my own collection! I eagerly devoured the book, page by page, checking to see

how many artisans and dolls I could identify. That moment marked the beginning of a lifelong passion, one that inspired me to learn more, and eventually to pay it forward by helping create our wonderful Kokeshi Village Community and the Kokeshi Trends Journal.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Thank you, Robert and Michael, for always being so generous with your time in answering my inquiries and for sharing your passion with me. I have learned so much from you both and will forever be grateful for your friendship, your knowledge, and our shared love of these wonderful wooden treasures.

Community Member from VA, USA

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

Their books on sosaku and creative Kokeshi greatly increased my appreciation of these styles.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Thank you for all your great research on Kokeshi which benefited all of us. I treasure the special Kokeshi that I have purchased from you.



MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

Community Member from Alaska, USA

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

We stand on the shoulders of giants, some so tall they elevate us into the clouds. Then, they lift their arms, and we're among the stars. For those of us who find peace and joy from Japanese Kokeshi, Michael Evans and Robert Wolf have been the strongmen who provided a foundation for our knowledge and appreciation of this treasured craft. Communicating the results of their dedicated research through beautiful prose, they have contributed immeasurably to our

knowledge of Kokeshi and Kokeshi artists, expanding the reputation and appreciation for this Japanese mingei, and revealing how Kokeshi reflect culture and cultural change. Their books fill not gaps, but chasms, in our knowledge, especially about sōsaku Kokeshi. Creating a community of collectors, they have kept the tradition alive, supporting perpetuation of this traditional craft that has captured so many hearts. We gratefully acknowledge their

decades of effort, professionalism, and love for Kokeshi. We can only hope that, in some small way, we will follow their example and add to their work, standing tall, extending our arms and, like them, assisting collectors up into the beautiful starlit world of Kokeshi.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

There's something about people who love Kokeshi, who see the beauty, the craftsmanship, the heart of a country and culture. No matter their start in life or route to discovery, Kokeshi have captured them and become part of their existence. Those people who embrace Kokeshi appreciate art, life, community,

humanity. They are kind. They want to help others. They reach out. They share, each according to their skills and talents. Some embody the spirit of the art in ways that only others who also appreciate Kokeshi can understand. I see that in you. You have done so much for the art--your research, your writing, your sharing, your support of this craft and of the people who collect. Know that it is so very appreciated! They say that the soul of the tree goes into the Kokeshi. I think that those of us who live with these wooden treasures also absorb some of that. Call it Kami, Shinrin-yoku, Kokeshi Magic, or what have you---Thank you for sharing it with all of us.



MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

Community Member from United Kingdom

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

Thank you Robert and Michael. I came across your site early in my Kokeshi collecting journey. I immediately started saving to treat myself to your book "Kokeshi - wooden treasures of Japan" which is a beautiful and enlightening resource and was the first book on Kokeshi that I had found in the English language. At that time I was mainly collecting omiyage Kokeshi (mostly noddles, ones that particularly told a story about life in Japan, especially those bought while I lived in Japan in 2003/4). Through your book and website I learnt more about the different regional Kokeshi families and decided to look for a typical example of each traditional style. I now have a bookcase dotted with beautiful examples, alongside two display cabinets full of omiyage noddles.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Thank you so much for sharing your knowledge and passion for Kokeshi with the English speaking world. I hope you have a wonderful retirement among the fantastic Japanese collection you have amassed. Please know that your teaching will continue to be shared and appreciated by those of us who also appreciate the beauty, simplicity and tranquility of living with these exquisite works of art.

Community Member from IL, USA

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

One of my first Kokeshi books was authored by Robert and Michael. It's a wonderful publication filled with expert knowledge & it always makes me smile when I revisit it.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Thank you Robert and Michael for sharing your knowledge and expertise! The Kokeshi community benefits daily from your passion and efforts.



MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

Community Members from Canada

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

Both of your passion and knowledge for Kokeshi has inspired me to further deepen my own understanding and interest in collecting Kokeshi and has fueled my love for this highly creative craft immensely.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Dear Robert and Michael, Sending care and love to you both. A heartfelt thank you for all your valuable support, information and inspiration. It has meant the world to me ❤️👉

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

Robert, you were approachable and willing to share knowledge while being humble yourself. Thank you.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Best wishes for your next adventure.

Community Members from France

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Many thanks for all you did. Kokeshi 'world is a world of joy and happiness. You will be missed.

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

I bought my first Kokeshi and book on Kokeshi at Mingei Arts

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

Thank you Robert and Michael for having opened my eyes to the Kokeshi world. I started my collection with you and since then my love for them has never failed. You Will be missed. Happy, well-deserved retirement.



MESSAGES OF APPRECIATION

Community Member from Florida, USA

Share how MingeiArts has contributed to your Kokeshi Learning Journey.

So many times I've browsed the Learning sections on your Mingei Arts website, sometimes because I was trying to match a specific Kokeshi, and often just because your pages are so beautiful and I wanted to become familiar with the style and look and significance of every Kokeshi artist featured on your site. I appreciate so much that whatever information you were able to find on each artist or each specific piece, a little or a lot, about the artist's life and educational background, the types of wood they used, the name an artist gave to their work, or the stories or poems that inspired them to create a specific Kokeshi, you shared it, and you kept the information available in a wonderfully organized fashion so not only the person who bought the piece, but the rest of us, could benefit from your knowledge and your care. You shared your love of art, which is an inspiration to all of us to continue that love and "pay that information" forward. I had acquired online a particularly beautiful Kokeshi, Yuki Michi | Snowy Road by Miyajima Muhitsu, in excellent condition. The seller obviously did not know the value of the work, but I paid my \$30 and I was very happy; until the seller messaged me to say, something like this: "I'm sorry, I just can't sell this. I didn't know how much it meant to my daughter.

It belonged to her grandmother. My mother bought this Kokeshi many years ago in Japan." The seller was also Japanese, living in the United States, and it was important to her to let me know why she couldn't sell it and had my understanding before she refunded my money. In the spirit of "giving forward" that you taught me about Kokeshi, I shared with her and her daughter exactly what they had, the value of it, and the story of the work. I gave her the link to your pages at Mingei Arts, and she was extremely appreciative, and happy to share that knowledge with her daughter who could not let "Snowy Road" leave their home, and I was happy for them that they would not only keep a family heirloom, but know its name, the artist's biographical history, the wood it was made from,

and why it was created. Thank you for doing that for all of us.

Your message to Authors Robert Wolf and Michael Evans:

The depth and beauty of your work shared at Mingei Arts, and your insight has enriched my life. I've used your site many times for the artist pages, and recently I've read your articles and viewed your videos. I own all of your books. Your website has been valuable to me in learning about Kokeshi and mingei, and your love for the art and culture and workmanship they represent is evident in every word and every photograph you've shared throughout the years. Thank you with all of my heart, and thank you for your collaboration with Kokeshi Village so that the significant body of your work will continue to be appreciated and enjoyed. The text, page layout and quality of your photographs on your Mingei Arts site has provided me with many peaceful and stimulating hours of joy.

FOLK ART: Kokeshi Companions



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