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BLUE & WHITE PORCELAIN JARS, JINGDEZHEN, CHINA.
PHOTO: GEORGINA HOOPER. SEE PP15 - 17 IN THIS ISSUE.

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EDITORIAL

Josefa Green, Editor

While this is not a focus issue, this December *TAASA Review* has developed its own distinct flavour, with a number of articles covering ceramics from the East Asian region.

One reason for this is the excellent symposium held on 9 August by the TAASA Ceramics Study Group to honour Jackie Menzies, recently retired as Head Curator, Asian Art at the AGNSW. The topic was *Made to Order: Trade Ceramics from East to West*, and this issue has published articles based on the three presentations from the symposium.

Jackie Menzies focuses on *Kosometsuke* ware, underglaze blue and white porcelains exported from China to Japan in the late Ming. Made especially for the new practice of tea called *chanoyu*, *Kosometsuke* ware responded to the distinctive tea aesthetic valued by daimyo and tea masters, with its often eccentric shapes, sparse designs and deliberate artlessness and imperfections.

Porcelains were exported in vast numbers to Europe from China and then Japan from the 1500s. James MacKean examines a particular development in the early 18th century when the supply of Japanese overglazed enamel ware dried up in the face of mass produced, lower cost porcelains from China. Because the demand for Japanese Kakiemon and richer Imari styles was still high, English and Dutch enamellers started to over-decorate plain white or blue and white Chinese pieces in this palette, enhancing their value.

The final presentation by Daniel McOwan, Director of the Hamilton Art Gallery, rounded off the symposium by providing an overview of Kakiemon ware, made in Arita in Japan. Based on an exhibition of 48 high quality Kakiemon pieces now in the Hamilton Art Gallery collection, Danny provided an immensely useful description of the various types of Kakiemon ware, how and why they were produced and how they may be differentiated from each other.

Jingdezhen in Jiangxi Province has been the primary place for porcelain production in China since the Yuan period, and this is still the case today. Georgina Hooper is a painter and ceramicist who recently spent time there as an artist in residence, picking up skills from local artisans and progressing a number of her projects. The outcome has been an exhibition in Brisbane this year. I'm sure you will enjoy her reflections on her experiences working in Jingdezhen and on the works in her exhibition.

This year's ST Lee Lecture at Sydney University presented by Professor Qin Dashu from Peking University reminds us of a period in the 9th and 10th centuries when China was part of a complex pattern of international trade in ceramics and other items. John Millbank provides an excellent overview of Prof Qin's talk, which summarised recent research into the role of Sri Vijaya in Sumatra as the entrepôt for trade extending from China to West Asia.

For this December issue, we provide a selective survey of eight perhaps less well known Asian collections in Australia – collections you may want to visit in the holiday period. Pamela Bell covers the Newcastle Art Gallery's modern Japanese ceramic collection which she regards as the most distinguished of its kind in Australia. Her article focuses on the work of a somewhat earlier ceramic artist, a sake cup made by the Buddhist nun Rengetsu, recently donated to the Newcastle Art Gallery.

Robyn Butlin covers the elaborate imperial Jade carriage, made of 300 tonnes of carved green serpentine stone, now displayed in the Bendigo Golden Dragon Museum. Some readers may have seen this carriage when it was displayed for some years in the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney after being gifted to Australia by the People's Republic of China for the 1988 Bicentenary.

Two more items round off this issue. Tarun Nagesh provides an interview with Tenzin Choegyal, the force behind the Festival of Tibet which will run this January at the Brisbane Powerhouse in Brisbane. In our book review, Sylvia Xavier skilfully summarises some of the central ideas presented by 15 contributors, including scholars in the fields of anthropology, art history and curatorship. *Asia through Art and Anthropology* is an exploration of 'border crossing' in the production, contextualisation and cultural analysis of Asian art and, as Sylvia points out, its inclusion of the viewpoint of three artists from different Asian cultural traditions helps to ground the discussion.

Finally, we devote several pages in this issue to the many activities held by TAASA in the last three months. We hope you enjoy the photos, especially of our very successful celebration of the 20th anniversary of the TAASA Textile Study Group.

A very happy and safe festive season to all TAASA members. We hope to share another year of stimulating and enjoyable events in 2015.

KOSOMETSUKE - OLD BLUE AND WHITE

Jackie Menzies

In my early days working at the Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW) I enjoyed the conversations I had with the late J. Hepburn Myrtle, a generous benefactor to the Gallery who was always keen to expound his love for Chinese porcelain. It was Hepburn who introduced me to a distinct genre of late Ming Chinese porcelain made for the Japanese market and now classified by the Japanese as *kosometsuke*, 'old blue and white', a term not used at the time, but one that came into use in the early 19th century to designate this distinct class of wares.

Created through commissions from daimyo and tea masters (*chajin*), *kosometsuke* is easily recognisable by the sometimes eccentric shapes; the sparse, casual designs; and the flaws in the porcelain body and glaze: imperfections and artlessness that lend these works an unexpected charm. The best examples of *kosometsuke* are to be found in Japanese collections, since appreciation of the tea aesthetic behind them remained elusive to Chinese and Western collectors. Most were produced during the reign of the second-last Ming emperor, Tianqi (1621-27), but continued into the subsequent Chongzhen era (1628-44). Illustrations of fine examples of *kosometsuke* can be seen in the references below, while an appreciation of *kosometsuke* can be gained through the examples in the collection of the AGNSW.

The catalysts for the creation of *kosometsuke* were social and political changes within both China and Japan. In China the Imperial patronage on which the Jingdezhen kilns were dependent declined during the late Ming as China disintegrated under Manchu threats to the borders and social turmoil. The kilns at Jingdezhen, until then fully employed fulfilling orders from the Imperial Palace in Beijing, were forced to find other patrons. In Japan, the increasing popularity of the *chanoyu* tea ceremony and the associated new aesthetic of *wabi* amongst daimyo and teamasters through the Momoyama and Edo periods (1576 – 1868) necessitated orders being placed with Jingdezhen kilns as local kilns failed to meet the demand.

The new patrons for Jingdezhen porcelains overwhelmingly were Westerners who were developing a passion for Chinese porcelain. The period from the last few years of the Wanli reign (1573-1619) to 1683 when Imperial control over Jingdezhen was re-established,

MUKOZUKE BOWL, C1625-1635, PORCELAIN DECORATED WITH UNDERGLAZE BLUE, 9.4 X 10.0 CM, AGNSW, GIFT OF MR J.H. MYRTLE 1989.

PHOTO: AGNSW/JENNI CARTER



known as the Transitional period, saw new shapes and designs of ceramics produced for export to new clients. Amongst Westerners, it was first the Portuguese, then the Dutch, who filled their ships with porcelains. Such porcelains were known from 1600 as Kraak ware, the Dutch term for the large Portuguese carracks that were the first European ships to trade with China but which were soon superseded by the smaller, more agile Dutch ships which captured the booty-laden carracks. The Dutch East India Company or VOC (Vereenigde Oostindische Compagnie) was founded in 1602 to run the lucrative trade.

The AGNSW has several examples of Kraak ware, of which a modest example is illustrated. The shape is a typical Kraak bowl as categorised by Maura Rinaldi, used for Dutch tableware (1989). It appears in several Dutch still life paintings of the period, reflecting the status of such imported wares. The bowl is straight-sided, the rim is foliated, and the porcelain body thin and slightly brittle. The external design of two scholars in a landscape is distinctly Chinese, perhaps inspired by book illustrations, as were many designs on Jingdezhen porcelains. The design on most Kraak bowls is in vertical panels separated by one or two lines, and it is unusual to find a

continuous design around the body as on this piece, where the sparseness and sketchiness of drawing resonate with Japanese taste.

When tea-drinking had been introduced to Japan from China initially, great status was attached to imported Chinese wares, termed *karamono*. The new practice of tea called *chanoyu*, literally 'hot water for tea', was shaped by the uniquely Japanese aesthetic of *wabi*, a preference for the imperfect that was linked to Zen teachings, and was a more humble, understated aesthetic than that found in Chinese wares.

The earliest proponent of this new style of tea is credited as Murata Shuko (1423-1502), whose innovative approach was to balance Korean and Japanese wares with Chinese utensils. The *wabi* tea aesthetic was further extended under the famous tea master Sen no Rikyu (1522-1591) who incorporated new types of Japanese wares (*wamono*) into the evolving aesthetic. Successive influential tea masters included Furuta Oribe (1543-1615) whose taste was for bold, sculptural ceramics, and his pupil Kobori Enshu (1579-1647), official tea instructor to the second and third Tokugawa shoguns, who esteemed blue and white porcelain, and re-instated it into the tea ceremony.



Certainly as the popularity of the tea ceremony grew through the early 1600s, as daimyo fought for social distinction through tea ceremonies as opposed to the samurai battles of earlier years, Japanese potters found it hard to keep up with demand. Japanese stonewares were labour intensive, often warped by hand to achieve their contrived and artificial 'artlessness'. Tea masters turned to China to meet the demand, seeking to have stoneware shapes turned into porcelain equivalents, and even placing orders with Ming kilns for their own versions of these wares. We know from extant records that drawings, wooden models and probably actual pieces of Japanese pottery were sent from Japan by the tea masters when placing their orders.

Important to *chanoyu* is the *kaiseki* meal that accompanies a full, formal tea ceremony. The utensils used in the *kaiseki* meal include *kosometsuke* dishes, beguiling in shape and design, as well as covered lacquer bowls for soup and rice, all brought to a guest on a lacquer tray. Still today, only small serves of food are presented on the porcelain dishes to ensure the design is not hidden. Such side dishes are termed *mukōzuke* because they are placed beyond (*mukō*) the rice and soup bowls that also appear on the tray presented to a guest. They were made in sets of five or ten and by the 1620s Jingdezhen's potters were able to provide Japan with a dependable supply of imaginative sets.

Two small dishes in the collection of the AGNSW exemplify the distinctive *kosometsuke* style. Both depict similar landscape designs

in the sparse, casual style associated with *kosometsuke*. Comparison of the two designs demonstrates the deftness of the unknown hands as they executed the elements of a formula design. Typical too of this class of wares is the indifferent quality of the clay, and a glaze defect on the rim of pieces where during cooling the glaze contracts more quickly than the body underneath, resulting in the body being revealed in small spots. This defect was esteemed by tea aficionados, steeped in the aesthetics of Zen, as the imperfections and casualties of fate. There was a special term devised for rims rough with small unglazed patches – *mushikui* or 'moth-eaten', a feature admired by collectors, and even copied by some Japanese kilns.

Another, more unusual, example of a *kosometsuke mukōzuke* in the Gallery collection is a small deep bowl with a boldly serrated rim. Undoubtedly the remaining one of an original set of five or ten, this sturdy bowl in the form of a lotus flower, and with lotus bud decoration around the body, embodies not only the tea master aesthetic, but its unusual shape, unknown in the Chinese repertoire, exemplifies another aspect of this type of ware, notably its indebtedness to Japanese stoneware prototypes. Equivalent shapes can be found in the Oribe repertoire.

In his work on Transitional wares, Richard Kilburn points out that *kosometsuke* wares: '...have always been treasured in Japan... the diversity in the body, glaze, potting, shape, brushwork and decorative subject is very striking. Quite the opposite is true of

the Kraak and other export wares, which are clearly from potteries organised to produce closely similar wares in very large quantities' (Kilburn 1981: 42).

He also notes that the daimyo and tea masters who ordered *kosometsuke* wares required original designs for limited distribution - and they were prepared to pay high prices. Their specific requirements could be directly conveyed by their retainers to Chinese merchants based in Nagasaki, who would find it a lucrative enough business to deal with these orders, relaying design requirements back to the potters in China. This direct line of communication could not be matched by the Dutch or Portuguese who were unable to enter China. Kilburn further points out that there are no records to indicate who these merchants were, although it has been suggested that they may have been silk merchants from Nanjing who were drawn into the porcelain trade (Ibid).

Stylistically related to *kosometsuke* are wares with decoration enhanced with enamel colours, known as *ko'aka-e* ('old coloured') wares, also produced in Jingdezhen for Japan from 1620-45. Such colourful wares seem to have been as popular as blue and white in Japan, with their designs following the same spontaneous, casual design aesthetic evident in blue and white wares. A small dish in the AGNSW collection depicts a small dish depicting the Daoist immortal He Xiangyu, the only female of the Eight Daoist Immortals, who, according to popular legend, became immortal after literally believing a dream that a diet of powdered



mother-of-pearl would give her immortality. Leaving aside the intriguing idea of mother-of-pearl as sustenance, the design depicts He Xiangnu on a cloud, carrying an inverted, empty, lotus leaf basket on her shoulder, with a seven-character poem that may translate as 'Born upon an auspicious cloud, she returns to the fairy grotto'.

Such coloured pieces continued into the succeeding Chongzhen (1628-44) reign, sometimes with a brown glazed rim, known by the term *fuchi-beni* or lip rouge. In the Chongzhen reign there appeared another, more polished type of ware also unique to Japan. This ware, in which the blue tends to be a better quality than in *kosometsuke*, the designs complex and controlled, and the body a better quality clay, is known as Shonsui. It too is unique to the Japanese repertoire, and to date unrepresented in the AGNSW collection.

Shonsui ware reflected a shift in aesthetic trends among tea circles in the Chongzhen era (1628-44) as tea aesthetics continued to evolve in response to the culture of its day, locally and globally. In the same way, teamasters today remain patrons for unique wares to incorporate into contemporary tea ceremonies.

Jackie Menzies was Head of Asian Art at the Art Gallery of New South Wales 1980-2012.

This article is based on a presentation made at TAASA's Ceramics Study Group Seminar 'Made to Order: Trade Ceramics from East to West' held on 9 August 2014.

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EUROPEAN DECORATION ON EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY ORIENTAL PORCELAIN

James MacKean

For most of the 16th century Portuguese merchants in Antwerp in the Spanish Netherlands controlled the spice trade in northern Europe, and they brought porcelains in their cargoes – the rarity of which made them highly desirable luxury goods. In 1580 Philip II of Spain claimed the throne of Portugal and united the two kingdoms. Philip II had a passion for collecting and was said to have amassed over 3000 pieces of Chinese porcelain, inventoried after his death in 1598.

After 1580 the Dutch were at war with Spain in a struggle for independence, and from 1595 Philip II closed Portuguese ports to the Dutch and cut off their access to spices and other goods from the east. So began a new era of seafaring ventures to the Indonesian islands by Dutch merchant vessels, followed by the founding of the Dutch East India Company, *Verenigde Oost Indische Compagnie* - known as VOC - in 1602.

From the start, blue and white porcelain, mass produced in Jingdezhen and shipped from Canton, dominated Chinese exports to Portugal and Holland between 1500 and 1645. Very small amounts of polychrome enameled wares were exported in the Ming period – those that did reach Europe with *kinrande* decoration – a Japanese term for gold brocade with lace-like gilding on red grounds dating from the reigns of Jiajing and Wanli - being considered great treasures.

In 1644 the Ming dynasty was overthrown, plunging the country into a civil war that disrupted trade and the porcelain industry for over 30 years. Into this breach, the Dutch based at Deshima Island trading post in Nagasaki harbour started to buy Japanese porcelain jars, flasks and ointment pots from 1652, and in 1658 for the first time included porcelain with coloured enamels as well as blue and white and white porcelains.

The coloured pieces sold extremely well in Amsterdam, leading to increasing orders for enamelled pieces in red, yellow and green. The designs of porcelain with coloured enamel decoration evolved by the 1680s into the familiar Kakiemon and Imari styles. The Japanese porcelains commanded considerably higher prices in Holland than Chinese counterparts, which were by that time re-appearing in blue and white and also in enamelled wares with a translucent green known as *famille verte*.

BOWL WITH PHOENIX AND SEATED MONKEY, CHINA C.1690 - 1710, PORCELAIN WITH UNDERGLAZE BLUE, OVERGLAZE ENAMEL ADDED IN HOLLAND C.1710 - 1730. PRIVATE COLLECTION



The supply of Japanese enamelled wares dried up after 1700 in part due to the Chinese starting to make porcelain in a simplified Imari style, mass produced and for a cheaper price. The continued insatiable demand for enamelled wares in the Kakiemon and richer Japanese Imari palate led to English and Dutch enamellers starting to over-decorate plain white or second quality blue and white Chinese wares that had landed in London or Holland – thus enhancing value, and resale of more desirable coloured wares to an eager public.

Helen Espir, who researched auction records of the East India Company in London, found that considerably higher prices were paid for Japanese than for Chinese porcelain (Espir 2005). The demand for Japanese porcelain was strong, but production was restricted – so here was a gap in the market that the Dutch and English enamellers could profitably fill.

The enamellers were skilled artisans who also applied enamels to glass, or who had learned their trade painting Delft tin-glaze pottery. The simplest way of transforming Chinese porcelain into 'Japanese' was to over decorate Chinese blue and white with overglaze red and gold to create the appearance of Imari. Tea, chocolate and coffee wares were commonly enhanced in this way.

Robert McPherson, a London dealer in these wares, divides European decoration of export

porcelain into three groups. The first group is where European enamels have been added to augment or enliven the existing Chinese decoration when this was rather plain or where the piece was undecorated.

The bowl illustrated here is an example of this first group. It is decorated in under glaze blue with the Chinese phoenix in flight and it dates from 1690 to 1710 – that is mid to late Kangxi period. It is unmarked. In China the phoenix symbolized the Empress but was unfamiliar to Europeans who may have seen it as a peacock, which may explain the odd addition of a beak. The Dutch decorator has carefully enhanced the bowl with red, grey-green and gold. Then, quite charmingly, a seated monkey has been added, holding an orange or a pomegranate!



DISH, CHINA C.1700 - 1720, WHITE PORCELAIN WITH OVERGLAZE ENAMEL DECORATION ADDED IN HOLLAND C.1720 - 1730, METALLIC RIM ADDED LATER IN THE 18TH CENTURY IN PARIS. PRIVATE COLLECTION.

BOWL, CHINA C.1690 - 1710, PORCELAIN WITH UNDERGLAZE BLUE AND OVERGLAZE ENAMEL DECORATION OF PHOENIX, 'CLOBBERED' WITH A FURTHER OVERGLAZE ENAMEL DECORATION OF PANELS WITH FIGURES AND BIRDS. PRIVATE COLLECTION



The second group can truly be termed 'over-decorated' where the European enamelling was added partly or wholly on top of the existing Chinese design, sometimes taking no notice of the original patterns or colours. This was often rather crudely done, at least to the modern eye, leading to the term 'clobbered' in common use by dealers and collectors of these wares.

The bowl shown here has been well and truly clobbered by the imposition of a pattern of panels with figures and birds, the phoenix ignominiously ignored to the extent that a parrot is perched among her streaming tail feathers. On the inside the bowl is painted with baskets of flowers.

A third group – much less commonly encountered, is where the original Chinese enamels have been partially or wholly removed to leave some space or a blank canvas for the European enameller.

The point of adding the decoration was to increase the desirability and thus the saleability of the export porcelain, and so increase the profit to the merchant. Decoration was also added to make the piece more fashionable, and in response to higher market prices for polychrome pieces in comparison to blue and white or undecorated wares. In the early 18th century, there was no greater fashion in the courts of Europe than for gilded Imari and for sumptuously decorated Kakiemon wares.

The finest Kakiemon porcelains from the kilns in Arita in Japan were expensive luxury goods

DEHUA BEAKER, CHINA C.1680-1700, OVERGLAZE ENAMEL DECORATION ADDED IN LONDON C.1700-10. PRIVATE COLLECTION



enamelled on a very white finely levigated clay in a palette of translucent blue, yellow, blue-green, red and black enamels and then gilded. Dutch enamellers achieved high quality Kakiemon style decorations on plain white Chinese or Japanese porcelain. They also combined and adapted Kakiemon style decorations of birds and foliage to the shapes and surfaces on which they were painted. This work was mostly done between 1710 and 1730, and the insatiable appetite and deep love of Japanese porcelain held by Augustus the Strong and his Dresden court drove much of the demand for the finest pieces.

There are many examples of oriental porcelain on which the European enameller has faithfully copied the Japanese design, and dated examples show that this had been achieved by 1708. The Chinese dish of 1700-1720 illustrated on p7 has been painted in Holland between 1720 and 1730. It tells a Chinese story based on an event in the childhood of Sima Guang (Shiba Onko in Japan), the celebrated statesman and historian of the Song Dynasty, which was a story very popular in Japan in the 17th century and often depicted in Kakiemon porcelain. It tells how the quick-witted child saved his friend from drowning in a large jar of water by hurling stones to break the jar. Later, the Meissen and Chelsea factories copied this design. This dish has a metallic rim that was added later in the 18th century in Paris. The Japanese original would have had a brown iron oxide glazed or *fuchibeni* rim, which the French metallic rim imitates.

Demonstrating Augustus's personal taste, more than 60% of the European decorated

pieces in his collection was in Imari or Kakiemon style, the rest being mainly chinoiserie, with fanciful Chinese landscapes, chinamen, exotic flowers and birds. *Famille rose* and *famille verte* were both much copied, and other pieces were decorated with mixed Japanese and Chinese motifs that defy easy classification.

The square bottle depicted on p9 was exported from Arita as a plain white undecorated ware. In Japan it would have held sake and is known as a *tokkuri*, but in Europe these bottles were quite commonly used as flasks to hold liquor in a gentleman's travelling portmanteau. It was decorated in Holland 1725-30.

The bottle's decoration is more exuberant and less restrained than Kakiemon designs, and shows how the motifs became mixed to create a European pseudo-Japanese version of Kakiemon: charming but having lost its Japanese aesthetic of spare, asymmetric design. The Dutch enameller has decorated the porcelain surface more highly; the Japanese original design would have allowed more of the pure white porcelain body to be on show.

In many cases, plain white Dehua (or Blanc de Chine) pieces such as wine cups were quite delicately over decorated using a Kakiemon palette. Both porcelain and decoration tended to be dated to the early 1700s.

Augustus's collection far exceeded any other in scale and magnitude – he was smitten incurably with *La Maladie de Porcelaine* and spent vast sums acquiring it. That relatively few of his pieces were decorated in Europe

shows that such over-decorated porcelain occupied quite a small part of the market.

Using inventories from 1721 and 1728 of the Japanese palace in Dresden, Helen Espir identified 444 European decorated pieces, of which 220 remain. This is out of a total of more than 24,000 items of Oriental porcelain itemized later after Augustus's death in 1733, of which more than 10,000 remain in the Porzellansammlung at the Zwinger Palace in Dresden. Losses during the Seven Years War (1756-63), sales of duplicates in the 19th and early 20th century, further losses during World War II and the removal of the collection to the Soviet Union in 1945 as spoils of war, all contributed to the reduction in numbers (Espir 2005).

Many of the more utilitarian over-decorated wares used in domestic settings may not have fared so well from use and thus not come down to us today. Pieces of over-decorated porcelain could quite easily be found in antique shops in Holland or on Portobello Road Market in London until they were more systematically collected by a handful of collectors from the 1990's onwards.

It is only in the last 20 years that scholarly attempts have been made to identify and publish examples of European decorated oriental porcelain, with notable collections made by Bernard Watney and most recently Helen Espir, whose 2005 monograph remains the best reference work on the subject. Major pieces from the Helen Espir collection have been appearing on the London antique market in recent years.

The octagonal Dehua beaker shown here has a moulded design of the 8 Daoist immortals and was over decorated in London around 1700-10. It is an early example of the enameller seeking to add value by decorating a rather plain object, using a palette of red tracery, green, black and aubergine. The immortals have been amusingly transformed into playful exotic chinamen.

The Bernard Watney collection of 76 pieces was sold at a London auction in 2003. The catalogue of the sale with accompanying scholarly article by Errol Manners classified English and Dutch decorated pieces stylistically so that dating could be worked out, and showed how later in the mid 1700s London enamellers such as James Giles took to ordering large quantities of plain white hard paste Chinese porcelain in requested European shapes as a cheaper alternative to sourcing English soft paste porcelain from Worcester and Chelsea for decoration.



Chinese collectors have been unaware about the fate of these export wares, and do not collect them, although quite recently they have shown much interest in other export wares more to Chinese taste. European collectors have mostly devalued these over-painted wares as being 'clobbered' or 'naïve', but to my eye the European interpretations of oriental designs have a rustic charm, with their layered history as objects made more to flatter rather than to deceive.

James MacKean is a Brisbane based collector.

This article is based on a presentation made at TAASA's Ceramics Study Group Seminar 'Made to Order: Trade Ceramics from East to West' held on 9 August 2014.

All images supplied, with thanks, by Georgina McPherson, R & G McPherson Antiques, London.

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KAKIEMON: ONLY AN EXPORT PORCELAIN?

Daniel McOwan

This talk was given by Daniel McOwan, Director Hamilton Art Gallery to TAASA Ceramics Study Group Seminar 'Made to Order: Trade Ceramics from East to West' held on 9 August 2014.

My aims in this talk will be to give you a brief background to Hamilton's collection as I am a long way from home and my presence here needs some explanation. In addition I will explain why Hamilton organised *Kakiemon in Australia* this year and what this exhibition contained. Finally I wish to address the question of whether Kakiemon was a trade ceramic for Europe or China or a ceramic for the home market.

Hamilton's Asian Collection has an interesting genesis that parallels the foundation of the Asian collection at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). The story starts with two neighbours Sir Keith Murdoch (1885-1952) and Herbert Wade Kent (1877-1952) who lived on the Mornington Peninsula near Melbourne. They were great friends and travelling companions, and accompanied one another on buying trips to China. They both formed large collections of Chinese art, in particular Chinese ceramics.

In 1938 Kent presented his collection of 129 Chinese works of art to the NGV and provided the foundation for their collection of Chinese ceramics. Sir Keith Murdoch died unexpectedly in 1952 and to contend with probate, Dame Elisabeth Murdoch sold her husband's collections. It so happens that Herbert Buchanan Shaw, Hamilton's great benefactor, was collecting very actively at this stage. He attended the sale and purchased many of the lots, and not just the Chinese ceramics but glass, silver and paintings as well. In 1957 Herbert Shaw left his collection to the people of Hamilton. This included some 185 Chinese works of art and a small number of Japanese and Korean works.

Hamilton's Japanese Collection had a slightly different genesis but developed from Herbert Shaw's bequest. In 2002 after seeing a Japanese collection at Canterbury Museum in Christchurch, New Zealand, I decided to build a collection in Hamilton to complement the broad Chinese collection and made the first purchases in 2004. There were a number of factors behind this decision. I

DISH, KAKIEMON WARE 1680-1700, PORCELAIN WITH ON-GLAZE AND UNDER-GLAZE DECORATION, H. 2.7 CM, Ø 20.1 CM, VALERIE SHELDON BEQUEST, COLLECTION HAMILTON ART GALLERY, PHOTO PATRICIA BEGG



wanted to form a collection from Asia's other sophisticated ceramic culture that would complement our Chinese works. Increasingly I realised that Japanese ceramics were the real bridge between the nascent European porcelain tradition and the long-standing traditions of Asia. Such a collection would enable us to link the European, Chinese and Japanese ceramics into a single story, as the Shaw Bequest's other significant component was European ceramics.

This was an admirable ambition but finding Edo period and earlier ceramics in Australia proved difficult and so initially I collected Meiji to early Showa period ceramics and metalwork. This was gradually extended to include contemporary ceramics and metalwork (ie post 1945), and for a time I let the collection rest there. Edo period works slowly arrived into the collection through gift or overseas purchases and in this way our first Kakiemon pieces entered the collection.

There was considerable interest in these Kakiemon pieces and in talking to Patricia Begg, President of the Glass and Ceramics Circle of Australia, we decided to see what additional pieces we could collect together. As it turned out this was genuinely rare

material, sought by few collectors. Eventually we managed to get together 48 pieces which was sufficient for Hamilton's display space. Consequently *Kakiemon in Australia* was born.

At about this time, Menno Fitski's publication on the Kakiemon in the Rijksmuseum collection appeared and this contained much reference material and some new thoughts on how Kakiemon could be classified (2011). Fitski differentiates between Kakiemon *ware* and Kakiemon *style*. These two groups originate at the same time (c.1700) but from slightly different locations in Arita township, the home of all early Japanese porcelain.

Fitski defined Kakiemon ware as a product attributed to the Sakaida Kakiemon family, originating from the Nagawarra area of Arita, and Kakiemon style as originating from the Uchiyama area of Arita at the same time (1670-1700). Kakiemon ware is characterised by very high standards of production and is not just wheel-turned but moulded as well. These high standards apply to every aspect of the production process. The clay is usually flawless, the painting well placed and usually asymmetric, the decoration leaving reasonably large areas clear and the colours limited to a small and consistent palette. The undersides

DISH, KAKIEMON WARE 1660-1680, PORCELAIN WITH UNDER-GLAZE BLUE DECORATION,
H. 2.8 CM, Ø 18.6 CM, DONATED THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S CULTURAL GIFTS
PROGRAM, COLLECTION HAMILTON ART GALLERY, PHOTO PATRICIA BEGG



are often marked with the so-called *fuku* or good luck marks and the spur marks are evenly spaced and cleanly broken off leaving the minimum sized mark on the glaze.

To simply say that Kakiemon ware is defined by its quality is of little value unless you can apply standards to measure what 'quality' means. The fact that a piece is moulded is an indication that the piece may be Kakiemon ware and after this the characteristics of each of the four classes of Kakiemon needs assessing.

These four classes are:

- Under-glaze blue decorated wares
- The archetypal on-glaze decorated wares
- Wares with both on-glaze coloured and under-glaze blue decoration
- Plain white wares

Under-glaze blue decorated wares

The blue colour is 'clean' and usually graduated through areas of infill. This contrasts dramatically with both Kakiemon style wares and general blue and white porcelain from Arita which is normally infilled with a single tone of blue. Frequently large areas are left undecorated but the areas that are decorated have clearly discernible images. Early blue and white Arita ware frequently has such simple images on it that it's hard to discern what is a tree, what is ground, what is rocks and so on. Kakiemon wares have a clear, easily read decoration.

The archetypal on-glaze decorated wares

These are the recognised on-glaze decorated wares that appear in the literature as the archetypal Kakiemon ware. They are best characterised by large areas left undecorated and the decoration is asymmetric. The

DISH, KAKIEMON WARE 1680-1700, MOULDED PORCELAIN WITH ON-GLAZE DECORATION,
H. 3.4 CM, Ø 21.7 CM, VALERIE SHELDON BEQUEST, COLLECTION HAMILTON ART GALLERY,
PHOTO: PATRICIA BEGG



tones of the on-glaze colours are consistent in colour from piece to piece. Two bodies appear – the milk white (*nigoshide*) paste and a fairly white hard paste. The *nigoshide* paste inevitably shows signs of movement in the kiln and was probably only briefly manufactured in the earlier period (1670-1690). It is rarer than the literature would have you believe and it was only used for on-glaze decoration.

Demand seems to have caused a move to the harder white paste after 1690 for on-glaze decorated wares. These are the high-period works from around 1700 that have decorated borders and *fuchi-beni* iron brown glazed rims. They are what everyone thinks of as Kakiemon and they come in set sizes like Nabeshima ware.

Wares with both on-glaze coloured and under-glaze blue decoration

Another group has strong under-glaze blue complemented with on-glaze red, green and yellow and occasionally blue. This under-glaze blue is brighter than that used on plain under-glaze blue wares as a contrast to the bright on-glaze colours. The on-glaze areas are often only small highlights and the blue design tends to dominate. Again large areas are left undecorated and Chinese subjects or landscapes dominate the decoration.

Plain white wares

These rarely appear in European collections but the Shibata catalogue (1997) distinguishes them as a separate group. They are invariably moulded with shallow decoration of flower or plants and have *fuchi-beni* rims. They tend to look like Chinese Ding wares but their forms have an older source in Tang Dynasty silverware.

Kakiemon - its artistic sources

Japanese bird and flower painting is often cited as the origin of Kakiemon ware decoration but it needs to be remembered that this has Chinese sources as well. Two of the pieces in the exhibition *Kakiemon in Australia* were decorated with scenes from Chinese mythology. These were the bowl decorated with the Four Greybeards of Mt Shang and one with Liu Ling (220-310 CE) who was one of the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove.

These two bowls have Japanese provenances and came to Hamilton's collection from Japan. Kakiemon is considered by some in the West to be made for the Chinese market although its absence from Chinese museum collections perhaps indicates that it was not appreciated in China or just did not end up in the collections. When Kakiemon was being exported to the West by the Dutch they shared Deshima Island with the Chinese as a trading post, so one would presume the Chinese had access to Kakiemon just as the Dutch did.

My feeling is that Kakiemon ware was probably made for the Japanese elite reflecting their sinophile education and tastes. Only wealthy people could afford the level of quality that characterises this ware and its modern rarity is indicative that it was not made in large quantities like other Arita porcelains, especially the later Imari ware. Kakiemon's pronounced Chinese attributes would have been understood by the educated classes in Japan and it is more than likely that they commissioned Kakiemon wares decorated to their taste.

Kakiemon ware was made in a restricted range of patterns with the same pattern appearing on different shapes. This contrasts

SET OF FIVE BOWLS, KAKIEMON WARE 1680-90, MOULDED NIGOSHIDE PORCELAIN WITH ON-GLAZE DECORATION, H. 4.5 CM, Ø 13.0 CM,
PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, HAMILTON ART GALLERY, TRUST ACQUISITION – GEOFF AND HELEN HANDBURY GIFT, PHOTO PATRICIA BEGG



with later Imari ware, where patterns were rarely repeated and tended towards freehand decoration.

A new chronology

The time may have come to look at the lineage of Japanese porcelain as being either on-glaze decorated or under-glaze blue and white until c.1700 when Imari ware appears. Just consider that the on-glaze decoration of iroe-Kutani (lit. 'red-painted' but meaning brocade or 5-colour ware) and aode-Kutani (green Kutani or Ko-Kutani) seems to have appeared around 1640. Then this style was followed by a simpler on-glaze aesthetic which I am suggesting was Kakiemon ware, only appearing after 1640. By 1700, Imari ware combining under-glaze dark

blue with over-glaze red and gilding starts to dominate the market, while Kakiemon ware has fallen out of fashion and production appears to have more or less ceased.

As with the on-glaze tradition, an under-glaze blue version of Ko-Kutani seems to have preceded the production of blue and white Kakiemon ware.

The Filial Piety plates

We know that the export of Kakiemon ware ends around 1710 and the family fell on hard times. It is often assumed that was the end of the story but there are a group of wares that possibly indicate a continuity of production and these are the so called filial-piety plates.

They are titled thus because they are moulded with illustrations based on the Tang Dynasty Confucian poems *The Twenty-four exemplars of Filial Piety* and the poems are painted in under-glaze blue on the plates. Some in the West feel they are not Kakiemon ware because their quality is not as good as c.1700 pieces but this loss of quality may have had economic drivers. The Kakiemon family still holds the moulds for their production and it seems odd that they would be storing moulds that are not for their own work.

In 2012 Sakaida Kakiemon XIV passed away leaving a son and a grandson, so hopefully Kakiemon ware may still be with us long into the foreseeable future.

I would particularly like to thank Patricia Beggs for her assistance and encouragement and also to thank the lenders to the exhibition.

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Note: All works in the exhibition were referenced to the Shibata catalogues, particularly those pieces reproduced in Volume 5 which is dedicated to 'Enpo period (1673-1681) wares' (ie Kakiemon).



DISH FILIAL PIETY SERIES C. 1770, MOULDED PORCELAIN WITH UNDER-GLAZE DECORATION, H. 4.7 CM, Ø 30 CM,
PURCHASED WITH ANNUAL COUNCIL ALLOCATION, COLLECTION HAMILTON ART GALLERY, PHOTO PATRICIA BEGG

TENZIN CHOEGYAL AND THE BRISBANE FESTIVAL OF TIBET

Tenzin Choegyal and Tarun Nagesh

From the roof of the world to the suburbs of Brisbane, Tenzin Choegyal's journey is an adventurous story of music, art, travel and activism that seems to have eternal drive. There's always a new project in the pipeline for the Tibetan-born Queenslanders with the infectious laugh; juggling festivals, hosting international visitors, fundraising for charities and managing a musical career that sees him as one of our most unique musicians and in international demand.

In August 2014, ABC's *Foreign Correspondent* followed Tenzin on a journey to Upper Mustang and the city of Lo Manthang on the Nepal/Tibet border, a stone's throw from the land where he was born. It was a deeply moving story of personal discovery through a region he last crossed when he was a small child fleeing his homeland, but also a chance to share his contemporary take on Tibetan music with people living in one of the few preserved centres of traditional Tibetan culture. As Eric Campbell pointed out while Tenzin contemplated his nerves before performing for the royal family of Lo Manthang, it's quite a contrast to previous performances which include playing at Carnegie Hall, collaborating with William Barton, and for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Immediately after returning to Australia Tenzin was back in the throes of his various projects, with Brisbane's Himalayan Film Festival opening one week later. This included the award winning film *Bringing Tibet Home* by renowned artist Tenzing Rigdol and director Tenzin Tsetan Choklay. Tenzin Choegyal produced the score for his Tibetan-American

friends, and participated in its premiere in Australia at the Brisbane International Film Festival, only the second screening of the controversial film in the world.

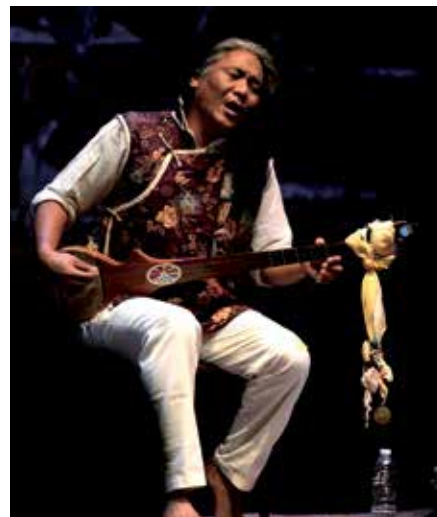
Tenzin is a board member of the Australia Tibet Council and president of the Tibetan Community of Queensland Inc. He is founder of the annual Festival of Tibet, the only one of its kind in Australia, which attracts visitors from across the country and around the world (many of whom can usually be found staying at his home during the festival). In addition to sacred art workshops, Buddhist teachings, films, musical performances and talks, in 2014 he brought Dicki Chhoyang, Foreign Minister of the Tibetan Government in Exile to the festival and a group of Tibetan monks who reside in India, with whom he toured through regional Australia performing and teaching communities about Tibet and Tibetan Buddhism. The coming festival (January 2015) will feature Jetsun Pema, former president of the Tibetan Children's Villages and sister of the 14th Dalai Lama.

Between a tour of regional New South Wales and an upcoming tour of Japan, Tenzin spared some time to speak to TAASA about his plans for the 2015 Festival of Tibet.

The festival of Tibet is approaching its seventh year. What was the motivation behind starting the festival and why do you think it has become such a unique event in Australia?

The first Festival of Tibet in 2009 was inspired by the uprisings and protests which occurred around the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Many

TENZIN CHOEGYAL PERFORMING AT THE RUBIN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK. PHOTO: JANE STEIN



people in Tibet and all around the world were trying to raise awareness of the human rights abuses in Tibet, often at great personal risk. I wanted to join all these brave people and tried to think of the most effective thing I could do here in Australia. As I had been working in the arts and music industry in Australia for over a decade, putting on a festival seemed like a logical course of action and something I felt could bring the kind of awareness that was needed at that time. So that was the beginning of the Festival of Tibet. When His Holiness the Dalai Lama comes to Australia there is a flurry of attention and I wanted to do something to complement that spark of interest that people feel, to offer a festival experience where people can find out more about Tibet and Tibetan culture and our struggle for human rights. His Holiness is of course my prime inspiration and I strive for the festival to embody his philosophy of non-



THE 4TH FESTIVAL OF TIBET, BRISBANE POWERHOUSE 2012. PHOTO: CAROLYN CHRISTENSEN



violent action and compassion and keep it alive and fresh in people's mind.

The festival program offers a broad range of events; what importance do you place on this diversity and is there a common thread that always underpins it all?

The common message is the Tibetan message. Each Festival has its own underlying theme - one year we explored environmental issues, another year we focused on women's experiences and during another festival we focused on the activist experience. The themes not only concern Tibet but society at large, actually, the whole planet. A lot of the panel discussions focus on social, political and environmental issues, but also human emotions, psychology and Buddhist philosophy. Then we also share specific Tibetan cultural and traditional arts and practices as well, like creating the sand mandala. But we're bringing these into a modern art space so it's accessible to as wide an audience as possible, unlike a monastery which is largely cloistered. I try to combine the traditional with the contemporary through as many activities, concerts, workshops and other events as possible, some free, some ticketed. My ultimate goal is to raise awareness and the diversity in the program means that hopefully there will be something which appeals to everyone.

You have had some important international guests in the past, and are soon to host Jetsun Pema. How easy is it to attract and facilitate visits from members and associates of the Tibetan Government in Exile?

Actually during the very first festival we were linked by video message to the Prime Minister of the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, Lobsang Sangay. He was very pleased to address the festival patrons and to speak

about the many tragic self-immolations and the 2008 uprisings. It really grew out of that and from the third festival I've tried to bring an international speaker every year. The Government-in-Exile and Tibetan NGOs have been very supportive.

I first brought Jetsun Pema out for the series *Women with Wisdom* at the Sydney Opera House a couple of years ago. I grew up in the Tibetan Children's Village in India where she was the President for more than 40 years. Jetsun Pema is known by Tibetans as 'Ama la' (mother) as she really was like a mother to us all. I felt so fortunate to bring her here to Australia and to see her inspire people with her wisdom and experiences. She had heard about my work through the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, but it was like a dream for me when she accepted my invitation.

You have become a world renowned musician specialising in the dranyen (Tibetan lute) and lingbu (transverse bamboo flute) as well as vocals. How did you come to learn these instruments and form a career out of Tibetan music?

I was never formally taught but was always around music. My mother used to sing when I was growing up at home; in a traditional Tibetan house there is always music accompanying everyday tasks. At school there were music classes and although I enjoyed music, and particularly singing, I never thought of it as a possible career. After school I went to university to study Politics and English and later studied tabla for a year in Delhi, but ended up back in Dharamsala (centre of the Tibetan community in exile) running a shop selling Tibetan instruments, music recordings and traditional dance costumes. I think I spent most of my time playing the instruments and writing songs rather than being a very good shop keeper!

My dranyen is one of a kind. I made it for my own style of music. Traditionally dranyen are made to a specific key, but I've custom designed mine so that it can be played in various keys which has been great for collaborations with other musicians from many traditions and backgrounds. My music could be considered experimental and contemporary, but the essence is Tibetan.

My musical career really kicked off around 1997 when I came to Australia. My wife says 'you came with one bag, two instruments, and a voice full of passion for Tibet'. I definitely had no money in my wallet. Luckily I started getting gigs in Brisbane, was fortunate enough to meet some extremely supportive people who work in multicultural arts, Pat and Sim Symons from Woodford Folk Festival, and things just evolved from there.

Many of the activities you're involved in are for purely charitable purposes, including raising money for the Tibetan Children's Village in Dharamsala. Would you like to tell us a little about these organisations.

The Tibetan Children's Village is mostly funded through international sponsorship and support from India. The Indian government has generously given the land to the Tibetans and the school really has become a big village over the last 50 plus years and houses and educates over 2000 students in Dharamsala. There are actually TCV schools in many Tibetan settlements around India. I was living there from 1980 to 1993 so I spent about 13 years of my life in that school, living with 'house parents' and only seeing my mother for a couple of weeks every year. Mostly in those times the students were orphans or semi-orphans or had destitute parents who couldn't look after them. That was one of the best schools a Tibetan could go and it's still now probably one of the best schools in India, using the Indian curriculum and some innovative Montessori techniques. So now I have the opportunity to give back to TCV. We used to be told when we were growing up 'you are the seed of Tibet's future' and now I'm old (laughs), I have to call today's kids the future seeds of Tibet, and those seeds need tending to grow strong.

The seventh Festival of Tibet runs from 19-25 January 2015 at Brisbane Powerhouse. Tenzin Choegyral is currently working on a new album which he hopes to finish by the end of 2014.

Tarun Nagesh is Associate Curator, Asian Art, Queensland Art Gallery/Gallery of Modern Art.

FINE CHINA - NEW DIRECTIONS FOR JINGDEZHEN

Georgina Hooper

The insight of working and living as an artist in residence for three months last year in Jingdezhen challenged my perceptions of the concept 'made in China'. This unique opportunity I had, to live, learn and work with and amongst the highly skilled ceramic community of Jingdezhen and its international community of artists further opened my eyes to the potential for global artistic exchange in this country of cultural fecundity and flux.

Described as China's porcelain capital, Jingdezhen is located in the Northeast of Jiangxi Province. With a population of 1,520,000 it seems like any modern industrial Chinese city at first, however the city is established on a foundation built over 2000 years ago. Jingdezhen and its historic ceramic community is now a melting pot of old and new - tradition and change. It is workplace and artistic destination to an eclectic mix of local and international artists - affordable, welcoming and full of potential. This bustling city, with its rich artistic heritage and frenetic pace, is fast becoming a new frontier for artists in the pursuit of learning, ambitious projects and cultural exchange.

Jingdezhen and its ceramic community initially came to my attention through a short documentary produced by the Tate Modern on Ai Wei Wei's Unilever Series Sunflower Seed project. The short film captured the creation of Ai Wei Wei's large-scale installation that he produced in Jingdezhen in 2010. It consisted of millions of hand-cast, hand-painted porcelain sunflower seeds and was a project that yoked the strength of knowledge of China's traditional



HAND PAINTING PORCELAIN IN JINGDEZHEN.
PHOTO: GEORGINA HOOPER



CEPHALOPOD CUPS, GEORGINA HOOPER, 2013, UNDERGLAZE PAINTING ON PORCELAIN. PHOTO COURTESY GEORGINA HOOPER

ceramic techniques and processes with the country's capacity for mass production.

Ai Wei Wei employed over 1600 individuals in Jingdezhen and used around 30 separate steps of the ceramic process in his project. The artwork and its accompanying film shed new light on mass production in China and its potential. It effectively captured my imagination - setting me on a path to explore Jingdezhen's rich ceramic culture myself. A year later in June 2013, I found myself living and working as part of this artistic community as an artist in residence.

The extent of ceramic techniques, processes and expertise that is in active use today in Jingdezhen is abundant, including slip casting, hand building, wheel throwing, mould making, decals (designs applied by

printed sheets), under-and over-glazing, and even brush making. New developments like PVD, a process of coating ceramics in gold or silver metallic surface are unique to the area.

As a visiting artist one has the ability to draw from an entire community of ceramic experts to collaborate with, learn from and employ. Chinese artists and ceramic workers embrace these new encounters with a great sense of patience, flexibility and often humour. Indeed with no ability to communicate in Mandarin, it can be a challenging process, but with the right attitude and support, this can be navigated to become an entirely rewarding and delightful artistic and cultural exchange.

As a newcomer it would seem virtually impossible to establish a practice without the recent development of places like The Pottery



CERAMICS WORKSHOP, JINGDEZHEN. PHOTO: GEORGINA HOOPER

Workshop (developed by Caroline Cheng) and Sanbao Ceramic Institute (created by Jackson Li), who offer residencies to artists from around the world. Artists in residence are provided with a studio space, accommodation and meals, direction and assistance in all matters ranging from negotiating with kiln owners for firing, to booking train tickets. Once given the lay of the land though, it is possible to move independently around the city and in particular around the artist precinct known as the 'Sculpture Factory', a gated city focused purely on porcelain production, exhibition and artistic exchange.

The Pottery Workshop, located within the Sculpture Factory itself, allows artists to reside and work amongst the frenetic pace of China's ceramic industry. For the resourceful and more experienced of Jingdezhen's artistic international pilgrims, finding and hiring an affordable assistant, private studio and apartment is common, there is even a youth hostel within The Sculpture Factory where artists can stay and a plethora of wonderful places to indulge in Chinese culinary delights. Ceramic students studying at the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute are invited each week to hear residents speak about their practice and experiences and these formal talks spill into informal socializing afterwards.

The introduction of international artists has required locals to find ways to apply their traditional ceramic processes to non-traditional projects that communicate with a contemporary visual language.

Traditionally in Jingdezhen, the production of ceramics makes each craftsperson - the wheel thrower, the mould maker, the slip caster, the painter, the glazer - responsible for only one step of a larger manufacturing process. Local artisans and craftspeople work with exceptional skill and their unassuming attitude is humbling. Yet, although there is a great demand for the porcelain tableware and other objects produced in Jingdezhen, which line the shelves of shopping centres all over the world, the remuneration for such items seems negligible and unsustainable in comparison to the time, work and resources that go into the production of these common use items (Songjie, Shujing & Xinghua 2012:49).

The many processes involved in extracting the porcelain clay, processing it through pounding, refining and then the extensive techniques needed to transform it into a perfect mug or vase for sale makes one wonder how it is even possible to purchase a porcelain cup from Ikea for such a nominal amount of money, yet it is.

The disassociation of the artistic and technical process involved in creating porcelains, and the sheer quantity that is being produced, has the effect of devaluing the ceramics themselves and the workers who produce them. One merely needs to visit the numerous art museums across China to see the testament of centuries of artistic prowess; generations of skill and technique, refined and perfected. This however is not what one thinks about when one considers the production of porcelain today.

The sheer demand for product does take its toll. Kilns are unpacked too early, the quickly cooling porcelain a cacophony of tinkling sounds as artisans rush forward with mittens to collect their treasures. The kilns so readily fired leave little time for maintenance and cleaning, resulting in many works ruined with 'kiln poo' or black debris which stick to the glaze during the firing process - a most frustrating reality for the international artists who also have their work fired amongst the kitschy baubles, utilitarian Ikea-style bowls and the heads of Buddha.

Despite its history of fine porcelain production, particularly in the Ming and Qing periods, the modern age has seen Jingdezhen's ceramics industry artistically and economically suffer. By 1949 the population of the city declined to about one-third of its peak in the 18th century. Despite the reorganisation of its ceramics industry during the 1950s in the form of cooperative associations (Encyclopædia Britannica Online) there is still a long way to go before Jingdezhen comes close to its former glory, with some arguing that its '... global past of ceramics manufacture remains too fragmented to allow for its complete reconstruction' (Gerritsen 2009:148).

Like a plant pruned back in the winter in preparation for new growth, however, this downturn is arguably a temporary stage, and Jingdezhen in my eyes will blossom again even more vibrantly. Li and Li, in their assessment of Jingdezhen's future potential, eloquently explain how in order '...to develop creative economy, we must integrate cultural resources to stimulate a large cultural potential, attracting the world's creative talents to come to Jingdezhen for development' (2011:74). This idea is exemplified by the invitation to international artists like myself to participate in an emerging, mutually enriching global artistic exchange.

While in Jingdezhen, I focused on two aspects - underglaze painting and the process of large scale ceramic production. Already a trained painter, I sought to apply my painting



skill to porcelain surfaces, finding that this offered a delightfully challenging extension of the traditional Chinese landscape painting I was trained in at Tianjin University as part of my art history studies at the University of Queensland.

The highly absorbent surface of the bisque fired porcelain quickly draws the underglaze into its porous surface, just as rice paper wicks away ink. In both disciplines, the mark making is an immediate and permanent process. The delicate variables that can affect the outcome of the final piece, such as the fluidity of the underglaze, the pressure, speed and movement of the brush, are vital to the ceramic painting process. However unlike Chinese landscape painting, it is difficult to know for certain what the painted ceramic will look like until the work comes out of the kiln, this knowledge can only be attained through a long term practice with the ceramic medium.

After only three months of practice I gained a profound respect for this art form and the dexterous hands of Chinese artisans who warmly shared their knowledge with me. The collection of hand painted cups and plates which I produced takes the utilitarian objects of Jingdezhen designed tableware and transforms them into objects which emphasise the delicate beauty of fine China and its elegant aesthetic. By approaching ceramic objects as something of a three dimensional 'canvas', I hoped to enhance the delicate nature of my painting while emphasizing the craftsmanship of Chinese ceramic traditions. This fusion of traditional and contemporary is the element of my work that I am most proud of.



With its blooming galleries, cafes, studios and an ever-increasing international and Chinese community of contemporary artists, the Sculpture Factory can't but help conjure a likeness to Beijing's 798 artist district. An old weapons manufactory converted into galleries and studios covering perhaps 5kms square of space, 798 has become something of an artistic village, shopping district and contemporary arts space that just keeps growing, and attracts more noteworthy artists, Chinese and International, each year. One can easily see Jingdezhen's Sculpture Factory following the same trajectory.

Georgina Hooper is a Brisbane based artist and a graduate of Fine Art from Griffith University, currently studying Art History with the University of Queensland. Georgina is returning to Jingdezhen, and subsequently Japan, this December to create a body of work for her April 2015 exhibition *Resonance*, which will explore the concept of communities and how we identify and connect with others outside of our own race, class and social demographic.

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I also embraced the opportunity to learn more about slip casting on a large scale, with the creation of my large scale, interactive installation for my Brisbane based exhibition *Itadakimasu* held in September this year. My installation *Floating Exchange* comprised of 260 slip cast porcelain fish (made during my residency in Jingdezhen), suspended from a 5m bamboo boat with antique silk thread.

The work explored themes of consumption, the true value of things and how the individual is an integral part of the whole. A vital element of the piece was my audience, which was invited to participate by cutting away a fish and in exchange, asked to tie something (anything other than money) on the empty thread in its place. My work aimed to provoke audiences into considering the value of porcelain and finite resources as well as the larger context of culture and the environment.

The process of slip casting, cleaning, glazing and firing the fish for the installation was not as straight forward as I had anticipated, but through a process of trial and error I quickly came to understand the constraints and necessities involved in the process of working with porcelain to create something out of the ordinary in Jingdezhen. Through the necessity to think and work beyond the standard mould and to problem solve the artwork to a point of success, the skills of local ceramic workers were tested and extended as my understanding of the ceramic process was expanded.

International artists are setting up their own studios, or are undertaking residencies and a subtle shift can be seen. Local workers are being paid for their skill and knowledge by international artists keen to learn and make use of their expertise. Artists bring their own unique projects and draw from the community in a different way.

THE ROLE OF SRI VIJAYA IN EARLY INTERNATIONAL TRADE: 2014 ST LEE LECTURE BY PROFESSOR QIN DASHU

John Millbank

On 2 September the ST Lee Annual Lecture on Asian Art and Archaeology was delivered at the University of Sydney by Professor Qin Dashu of the School of Archaeology and Museology, Peking University. Professor Qin, a world leading scholar on Chinese ceramics, has led numerous research projects and kiln site excavations in China and abroad, including recent excavations in Kenya to study remains of early Chinese-Africa trade and interactions. The subject of Professor Qin's lecture was "Sri Vijaya – The entrepôt for circum-Indian Ocean Trade".

Those who, like me, started collecting pre-Ming Chinese ceramics in Australia 20 or more years ago, will remember finding fairly numerous Chinese *qingbai*, celadon and blue-and-white bowls, boxes and jars. Commonly these examples came here not directly from China but from Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia, Malaysia or the Philippines. Professor Qin's lecture outlined the result of recent research on the extensive early trading networks which brought Chinese goods to these countries and far beyond.

From modest beginnings in the mid-8th century, Asian maritime trade in ceramics developed rapidly in the second half of the 9th century as manufacturers in China identified markets overseas and began to cater to their preferences. These exports were in large quantities: the 9th century wreck found off Belitung in the Java Sea, carried some 50,000 ceramic pieces. The 10th century wreck off Cirebon, also in the Java Sea, carried 500,000 ceramic pieces as well as other cargo. By this time Chinese export commodities, mostly comprising silks and ceramics, were being traded throughout Southeast Asia, by way of Sri Lanka and the Malabar coast of India to the Persian Gulf, and across the Indian Ocean as far as East Africa.

Southern and western bound cargoes from these and other coastal ports in China did not necessarily go directly to all destinations, but usually went first to one of a number of entrepôts in Southeast Asia for reloading on to other ships bound elsewhere. Perhaps the most important entrepôt in the 9th and 10th centuries was Palembang, capital of the Buddhist kingdom of Sri Vijaya on the island of Sumatra.

CHANGSHA PLATES FROM THE BELITUNG WRECK C. 826CE. PHOTO COURTESY PROF QIN DASHU



Professor Qin turned to early historical records to throw light on the role of Palembang in Chinese commerce and foreign relations. Yijing, a Tang Buddhist monk who journeyed to India by sea in the second half of the 7th century, recorded his own travels and those of others of his time. Travelling via Sri Vijaya where he stayed for up to a year learning Sanskrit, he continued to India where he studied Buddhism for more than a decade. He returned to China, again via Sri Vijaya, where he spent eight years translating Buddhist sutras and writing. In his history of travels between China and India, Yijing records 57 travellers making the journey by land or sea in the 50 years from 641 to 691. About twice as many of these travellers journeyed by sea as by land.

In the 9th century the Chinese Prime Minister Jia Dian, a scholar and something of a geography enthusiast, wrote in considerable detail about routes from China to other lands. Of the seven routes recorded, only two were by sea, one to Korea and points north, the other to the kingdoms of the South China Sea and Indian Ocean. His description of the latter route contains detailed sailing instructions for a route from Guangzhou along the coast of Vietnam and Malaysia to Sri Vijaya, then west via Sri Lanka to Basra at the top of the Persian Gulf, and on by river to Baghdad. Jia Dian also records, although in less detail, a journey from a point in East Africa (probably present Tanzania) to the Persian Gulf.

As well as Chinese, several Persian and Arab scholars documented the same maritime routes in the 8th to the 10th centuries: the Persian Al-Sirafa writing around the second half of the 8th century; the Arab geographer Khurdābih (second half of the 9th century); and the Arab traveller, Alma'ūdi (first half of the 10th century). All these texts recorded in detail the maritime routes west of the Malacca Straits but were less detailed for routes east of the Straits, suggesting Arab travellers were less familiar with the eastern end of the voyage. Jia Dian's account by contrast is more detailed on the eastern section of the journey and less detailed west of Malacca. According to Professor Qin, combining available records confirms the existence during this period of three major international trading circuits: between China and Southeast Asia; between Southeast Asia and Arabia and the Persian Gulf; and between Arabia and East Africa.

The journey from China to Baghdad was said to take about three months one way, but because of delays due to monsoon cycles and the need to wait for prevailing favourable winds, the round journey to Baghdad and back would have taken two years. Accordingly it is quite unlikely individual traders followed the whole route, most preferring for commercial reasons to sail between entrepôts, especially Sri Vijaya in the Malacca Straits, a major crossroads for the route between the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean, and Basra at the top of the Persian Gulf in present-day Iraq.



The importance of Sri Vijaya is corroborated by the official Song Dynasty history, which records that the kingdom sent 14 diplomatic and trade missions to the Song court in the period 962-1008, bringing tribute including ivory, rhinoceros horn, pearls, incense, frankincense, mastic, rose perfume, crystal, Buddhist sutras, textiles, lamp oil, glass perfume bottles, coral, dates, peaches, granulated sugar and (possibly) African slaves. Some of these products clearly originated from Africa, the Middle East and South Asia, and were held, along with local and Chinese goods, in special state warehouses for trade goods.

All of these products have been found in shipwrecks of the period investigated by archaeologists. The Belitung wreck was of an Arab-type ship identified as the *Batu Hitam*, dated to around 826. Its major cargo of Changsha ware was packed for protection in large ceramic jars (Dusun) of a kind known to be produced in Guangdong. The Changsha pieces would have been shipped from the home port of Yangzhou to Guangzhou, where they were repacked for the longer sea voyage to Sri Vijaya.

It used to be assumed that after the cargoes were loaded onto the *Batu Hitam* in Yangzhou, the ship set sail along China's southeastern shore, calling in at the ports of Mingzhou and Guangzhou to pick up more cargoes before heading for Southeast Asia, and that the vessel then sank en-route to Java or on the return voyage back from Arabia. On the basis of the mixed cargo it carried, Professor Qin thought it more logical that the *Batu Hitam* originated in the Middle East and was loaded with

goods from diverse sources assembled from warehouses in Palembang before being lost on its way further east to Java.

Changsha ceramics as found on the Belitung wreck were major export items from China in the 9th century, and while abundant remains have been found in Sumatra and Java, comparatively few appear along the coasts of Malaya and Vietnam. This seems to confirm that ships sailed direct from China to Sri Vijaya without stopping along the route. The few Changsha pieces found in Indochina were probably carried by traders sailing in the opposite direction, from Palembang. This would have been more efficient and economical than stopping serially at ports in Indochina to trade.

The Cirebon wreck can be dated to around 968. A native Southeast Asian vessel fitted out for deep sea sailing, its cargo consisted of huge quantities of Chinese ceramics accompanied by such exotic goods as lapis lazuli, tin and iron ingots, lead coins and glass bottles from the Mediterranean. It also would have acquired this complex cargo at a single port, most probably Palembang, before setting sail for its final destination in Java. One investigator has calculated that the size of its ceramic cargo would probably have satisfied the needs of the Java market for a full year, suggesting the existence of a monopoly trader.

Palembang reached its high point as an entrepôt at the end of the 9th century, in the dying stages of the Tang dynasty in China. In 879 an army of rebels against the Tang occupied the port city of Guangzhou. In the



course of this occupation thousands of foreign merchants, Southeast Asian, Arab, Persian and Indian alike, were massacred. Many of the survivors are known to have moved to Palembang, which consolidated its position as a major regional trading centre throughout the 9th century. In 1025 Sri Vijaya was conquered and occupied by the Tamil Chola kingdom of Sri Lanka but Palembang remained its capital under Tamil rule until some time in the 1080s. Its final eclipse as capital marked the end of Palembang's leading role in international trade relations for several centuries.

Later in China, ceramic production for export was encouraged by the government and an indigenous merchant fleet built to service overseas markets. The Song and Yuan export wares we are most familiar with reached Southeast Asian markets on Chinese ships operated by Chinese traders. But Professor Qin reminds us of an earlier time when a different pattern of trade, undertaken by cosmopolitan merchants relying on a complex of entrepôts on the sea routes of Asia and the Indian Ocean, established a taste for Chinese ceramics across the known world.

Dr John Millbank is an independent scholar and collector of Chinese ceramics.

IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN: OTAGAKI RENGETSU AT THE NEWCASTLE ART GALLERY

Pamela Bell

This Japanese sake cup is not in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, or any of the State galleries. It is one of about 400 pieces in the Japanese ceramics collection held by the Newcastle Art Gallery. In this collection, Newcastle Art Gallery holds five pieces by the world famous Otagaki Rengetsu (1791-1875): delicate hand-made, earthenware objects with a simple slip glaze incised with poems written by the artist.

The artist, who took the name of Lotus Moon, appears to be almost a cult figure in the world of Japanese art. Her life spanned the late Edo and early Meiji Period when Japanese life changed from an enclosed society to an engagement with the wider world. However feudal laws still operated, which meant that Rengetsu must have been extremely astute and brave to have survived as a lone woman.

Rengetsu's early life exposed her to many hardships. She was born illegitimate, adopted by a Samurai family, married twice and had several children, all of whom died. When her second husband died she joined her step-father in a monastery, but on his death she left the monastery and began a peripatetic life, teaching herself how to make simple hand built ceramics, and receiving some instruction from potters in Kyoto. She wrote poetry related to the *wabi-sabi* aesthetic, which is the tender side of zen practice. She inscribed or carved her poems onto the outside of her pots, mostly using the women's script *hiragana*, although she also knew *kanji*. She moved from place to place selling her work.

While the tea bowls are inscribed with poems with a Zen Buddhist theme, the sake cups are usually engraved with verses related to the convivial practice of sake drinking. In this case, however, Rengetsu has written the following:

*Time has passed.
On the kitchen shelf –
blackened with soot:
a Buddha image*

This sake cup was probably made for use in the warmer summer months, as cups with straighter sides were used in the colder wintertime. The rhythmic nature of Rengetsu's distinctive calligraphy adds an enigmatic and otherworldly characteristic to this fascinating object. It is ironic that although Rengetsu made her ceramic pieces for sale to humble

people in the small towns where she lived, her art has now become collectable world-wide.

The other ceramics by Rengetsu held by the Newcastle Art Gallery include a similar sake cup with carved inscription; a sake flask with yellowish glaze, painted inscription and a small butterfly; a shallow pot with a lid and handles with incised characters on the lid, glazed inside, and a tea bowl with straight sides labelled 'after Rengetsu'.

The Japanese ceramics collection as a whole has been acquired by the Newcastle Art Gallery mainly by donation from individuals, corporations and through trading links. Its content is predominantly stoneware or earthenware, with a few examples of modern porcelain objects. The earliest acquisitions are two stoneware objects by Hamada Shōji (1894-1978), a square stoneware plate decorated in two tones with Japanese characters, and a serving bowl with salt glaze over blue and brown radiating stripes on a grey body. Hamada became a Japanese Living National Treasure in 1955, revered as the most celebrated Japanese potter of his day. He was an engineer at the Kyoto Ceramics Testing Institute and was one of several Japanese potters associated with Bernard Leach, with whom he travelled to England, assisting in setting up Leach's pottery at St. Ives.

The collection also contains a pair of small porcelain plates by another Japanese Living National Treasure, Tomimoto Kenkichi (1886-1963). These plates are 15.5 cm. in diameter with cream limestone glaze and iron brushwork with green spots. They were acquired for the Gallery from the collection of the distinguished Australian potter who spent some time in Japan, Les Blakebrough. Tomimoto studied architecture in Japan and the United Kingdom. He also met Bernard Leach, and introduced him to Kenzan, the Raku potter who became Leach's teacher.

SAKE CUP, 1833, OTAGAKI RENGETSU, EARTHENWARE WITH CLEAR GLAZE, H. 3.3CM, D. 6.5CM.
GIFT OF MARYANNE VOYAZIS AND RON RAMSEY IN MEMORY OF ANN LEWIS AO 2011.
NEWCASTLE ART GALLERY COLLECTION



A recent acquisition of a group of ceramics includes two dishes by Uno Sango (1902-1988) the founder of Shikokai (Society of the four harvests, 1947-1958) a movement which followed an abstract sculptural style of pottery. These striking stoneware pieces are a circular dish with a deep celadon glaze decorated with abstract flowers in green, and a blue glaze stoneware dish of irregular square shape, flamboyantly decorated in dark green, red, cream and white.

This brief survey can only suggest the excellence and interest of this collection, which is the most distinguished of its type in the country.

Dr Pamela Bell OAM, while Curator of the University of Sydney Art Collection, acquired for the Collection a significant group of modernist Japanese prints in memory of A.L.Sadler.

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THE CHINESE JADE CARRIAGE IN BENDIGO GOLDEN DRAGON MUSEUM

Robyn Butlin

The saga of the jade carriage, currently in the collection of the Bendigo Golden Dragon Museum, reads like a mystery to be unravelled. According to the concierge at the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney, it was first exhibited there in November 1986 after an extensive renovation of the derelict building. However further information reveals that it was given to Australia as a gift on the celebration of the bicentenary in 1988 by the People's Republic of China Government.

This carriage was believed to be the only one in the west, however there is also a carriage of similar quality in the Belz Museum of Asian and Judaic Art in Memphis Tennessee. That carriage also includes a jade horse in harness. Perhaps there are other similar carriages around the world yet to be identified.

In the QVB it was installed in a glass case and included Chinese imperial figures in elaborate dress inside the carriage. Many other carriages were also on show in the Queen Victoria Building at this time: several interesting clocks, a full size statue of Queen Victoria in coronation regalia and a replica copy of the British crown jewels were also on display.

Although it is called a jade carriage, this carriage is really made from the more common and much softer green serpentine stone. It took approximately 100 artists and 300 tons of raw stone to create, with a final weight of over 2 tonnes. It is a modern reproduction of an imperial marriage carriage, carved in intricate detail including many auspicious traditional symbols and designs.

The canopy has an entwining dragon motif with two lanterns, dragons being especially auspicious creatures usually associated with the emperor and high officials. The main body is elaborately carved in openwork patterns including a phoenix and dragon and buddhist deities; symbols of luck, prestige and authority. The two front shafts are made of lively dragons guiding the carriage and behind the seating area are two ornamental fans which symbolise imperial dignity. Altogether there are 188 dragons, 18 Phoenixes, 36 bats and 155 strands of beads. It is 2800mm in height, 3080mm long and 1800mm wide.

In many cultures around the world jade is valued for its toughness and beauty. In China it became the symbol of royalty, power, and

JADE CARRIAGE, CHINA, 20TH CENTURY, GREEN SERPENTINE STONE. PHOTO: ROBYN BUTLIN



wealth, comparable in value to gold and diamonds in the west. Because of the Chinese love of jade, many green gemstones have been presented as jade, and jade and other similar hard ornamental stones, some of very large size, are often used as centrepieces in hotel foyers or as gifts to important business people, carved into objects such as large sailing ships (including intricate chains, ropes and sails) or displays of fruits, flowers and various animals and bird life.

In 2006 when the carriage was no longer wanted in the Queen Victoria Building it was removed to the Chinese Garden of Friendship. This garden was established in the Darling Harbour precinct near Sydney's China town in 1988. Another bicentennial effort, it was opened on 17 January 1988 to celebrate the friendship between Sydney and Guangzhou (Canton), Sydney's sister city, in the Chinese Province of Guangdong. It is a garden of peace and tranquility and is very impressive in the heart of the busy city. Its ongoing growth and maintenance is supplied by the Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority.

By 2013 it was feared that the jade carriage, open to the elements in its Darling Harbour garden setting, could be damaged by the weather. Many alternative sites were sought. Finally, in a rather precarious operation, the removalists separated the carriage into two pieces, top and bottom, and trucked it to its

chosen home in Victoria, the Golden Dragon Museum in Bendigo.

The Bendigo museum was built in 1990 to preserve its collection of dragons used in processions and other textiles, craft objects and processional regalia which illustrate the colourful history of Chinese settlers in Bendigo. There are several tableaux of Chinese homes and shops from the gold rush period and especially notable are several Chinese processional dragons. Loong is the oldest imperial, five clawed dragon in existence, built about 1892 and first used in processions in Bendigo at the annual easter parade in 1892. It was originally 60 metres long and built of silk, mirrors, bamboo and papier mache. It required 22 carriers and is now only 29 metres long and too frail to be used in procession.

Extensive and fascinating information on the Chinese inhabitants of the Bendigo area and their customs and way of life is available at the Golden Dragon Museum.

Robyn Butlin has long had a passion for collecting and working with gemstones and has a keen interest in Chinese history and art; has studied Mandarin, practised calligraphy and learned Chinese silk embroidery in Suzhou. She enjoys adding to her collection of Chinese snuff bottles.

ASIAN COLLECTIONS IN AUSTRALIA

Covering a few of our possibly less well known collections of Asian art and cultural artefacts throughout Australia.

ATHERTON CHINATOWN, QUEENSLAND – HOU WANG TEMPLE



INTERIOR OF ATHERTON CHINATOWN HOU WANG TEMPLE. PHOTO: GORDON GRIMWADE

86 Herberton Road, Atherton QLD
www.houwang.org.au/museum

Atherton Chinatown, in Australia's tropical North Queensland developed in the late 1800s, and by the late 1920s was almost deserted. The town left a legacy: a highly significant archaeological site and now a rare form of Chinese temple.

A century ago there were over 100 similar temples in Australia but nowadays, the Hou Wang temple is the only remaining intact regional temple of its kind.

Gold attracted thousands of Chinese to North Queensland in the late 1800s. As the gold dwindled and racist sentiments increased, the Chinese were forced to find work in other areas - in timber and firewood cutting and then farming maize - on leased land. A small but thriving township sprang up, complete with stores, herbalists, bakeries, laundries, and boarding houses. The Returned Soldier Settlement Scheme at the end of WW1 resulted in the eviction of Chinese Australians from their farming leases. By the late 1920s Chinatown was almost deserted.

The Hou Wang Temple, built of local timber and corrugated iron just before 1903, was the social and religious heart of Atherton's Chinese community and is nowadays the only remaining structure of the original town. Most of the fittings for the temple, including the elaborate carvings, bell and metal vessels were made in Guangdong Province in China. Members from the community contributed money to pay for the construction of the temple and their names are recorded on inscriptions on the artefacts. The temple was donated to the National Trust of Queensland by the Fong On family in 1979. Conservation of the temple buildings was completed in 2002.

Gordon Grimwade

BENDIGO GOLDEN DRAGON MUSEUM



EXTERIOR, BENDIGO MUSEUM. COURTESY BENDIGO GOLDEN DRAGON MUSEUM

1-11 Bridge Street Bendigo, VIC
www.goldendragonmuseum.org

Thousands of intrepid Cantonese Chinese travelled across dangerous seas and rugged countryside to reach the rich goldfields in the heart of Victoria in the 1850s. They called this place *Dai Gum San*, Big Gold Mountain.

Today, *Dai Gum San* is again rich as the Chinese cultural centre of Australia. Where wealth was once measured in gold, it now sits in the deep history left behind by those early Chinese miners. In the heart of Bendigo, the Golden Dragon Museum tells this history and houses the longest and oldest Imperial dragons in the world. Alongside the dragons is a rich collection of processional regalia, imperial furniture, embroidered costumes, ancient currency and hundreds of other artefacts that portray the history and splendour of the culture of these Chinese settlers.

The new *Dai Gum San* forecourt links the Golden Dragon Museum with the *Yi Yuan* Gardens and *Guan Yin* Temple. Spanning the historic Bendigo creek this new development glitters with golden pavers and colourful Chinese symbolism. The gardens are a place of peace and beauty and the *Guan Yin* Temple, a suitable home for the goddess of compassion. Visit the website for guided group tour information, school workshops and activities, and cultural festival and event dates.

Anita Jack, General Manager, Bendigo Golden Dragon Museum

CHINESE MUSEUM, MELBOURNE



EXTERIOR, CHINESE MUSEUM, COHEN PLACE, MELBOURNE. CHINESE MUSEUM COLLECTION

22 Cohen Place, Melbourne
www.chinesemuseum.com.au

In the heart of Melbourne's Chinatown, the Chinese Museum offers a fascinating snapshot of 200 years of Chinese history in Australia and of the diversity of Chinese art forms. Exhibits are arrayed across four floors; the museum is active in documenting, preserving and researching Chinese culture in Australia.

Greeting visitors is the mighty Millennium Dragon, a ceremonial dragon the head of which alone weighs 200 kilograms and is carried by eight people. The dragon spirals across two floors and has pride of place amongst a collection that highlights the profusion of celebratory events in the Chinese calendar including lion-dancing costumes, processional lanterns and animals and *kaifeng* kits originating in Henan province.

Elsewhere the collection displays seemingly run-of-the-mill items that reveal the artistic currents that run through Chinese life: vintage tea cups and caddies, cloth toys, wood carvings, musical instruments, paper funerary items, embroidered shoes, purses, slippers and wedding costumes. Other notable items are a *babu* canopy bed (late Qing dynasty), constructed from 50 pieces of interlocking wood, with inlaid wood and bone panels, and an elaborate 1980s porcelain replica of a Han Dynasty seismograph. Displays reveal the richness of the Chinese contribution to Melbourne's cultural fabric, including Chung On, the well-loved Moonee Ponds nightspot, and a Chinese herbalist from 1970s Prahran. Museum staff are engaged and helpful and the museum runs tours both of exhibits and the surrounding Chinatown neighbourhood.

William Gourlay

HAMILTON ART GALLERY



TEA BOWL KOHIKI TYPE C.2008, TSUJIMURA SHIRO, JAPAN (B.1947), STONEWARE, NARA, JAPAN,
PURCHASED WITH ANNUAL COUNCIL ALLOCATION, HAMILTON ART GALLERY

Brown Street, Hamilton
www.hamiltongallery.org

The Asian collection at Hamilton Art Gallery consists predominately of Chinese and Japanese ceramics with the displays changing every few months. The Chinese ceramics came to the collection from an original bequest by local collector Herbert Shaw. This collection

represents nearly every type of Chinese ceramic from archaic times onwards. Some highlights are a Song Dynasty Longquan lidded jar, Cizhou and Jian ware pieces, a large Yuan Dynasty Cizhou jar, Qingbai wares representing domestic and burial ceramics and a selection of Ming five-colour wares. The selection is completed with Qing imperial and non-imperial wares. The Gallery also has a small collection of Peking glass, hardstone carvings and a few pieces in ivory.

The Japanese collection has been formed over the last six years or so and contains a small group of pre-Edo period ceramics, Edo period porcelains including a group of important Kakiemon wares and Meiji period ceramics and metalwork. There is also an extensive collection of modern Japanese ceramics dating from the early 20th century to contemporary times. Many of these pieces are not on display but if visitors are seeking specific artists I refer them to the Gallery's website where there is a search function under the collections section that enables listing, sometimes with images, of what the Gallery holds. If you wish to see specific pieces please email us prior to your arrival.

Daniel McOwan, Director, Hamilton Art Gallery

NICHOLSON MUSEUM, SYDNEY



TERRACOTTA FEMALE FIGURINES, HARAPPAN 2500-1750BCE, NICHOLSON MUSEUM, THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY

University of Sydney
sydney.edu.au/museums/collections/nicholson

In 1947, during the tumultuous establishment of an independent Pakistan and India, the Nicholson Museum received a donation of over 50 objects from the Government of India. At the request of Museum curator, Professor Dale Trendall, the objects received were a representative sample of material from the Indus Valley, which complimented the museum's then growing Near and Middle Eastern collection.

The objects were primarily from the site of Harappa, dated to 2250-1750BCE and included terracotta figures and animals, beads and stones tools, lamps and pots as well as a stamp seal depicting a "unicorn" or more accurately a mythical bull. Throughout the 1940s new excavations in the Indus Valley such as those conducted by Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Director General of the Archaeological Services of India, at the site of Mohenjo-daro, revealed the extent and scale of the ancient Harappan cities and culture.

Trendall also acquired material from governments, archaeological institutions and museums across West and Central Asia with a view to establishing a rich teaching resource at the University of Sydney. Today the Nicholson's Near Eastern collection spans from modern day Pakistan to Turkey and encompasses material from some of the great civilizations and archaeological sites of the Asian continent. The Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney is Australia's largest collection of antiquities, with collections of Egyptian, Mediterranean, European and Near Eastern cultural material.

Candace Richards, Curatorial Assistant, Nicholson Museum.

QVMAG - GUAN DI TEMPLE



INTERIOR, JOSS HOUSE (GUAN DI TEMPLE), LATE 19TH CENTURY. COLLECTION OF THE QUEEN VICTORIA MUSEUM AND ART GALLERY.

Wellington St, Launceston
www.qvmag.tas.gov.au/art-gallery/guan-di-temple/

Launceston's Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery holds a large and culturally important collection of artefacts relating to Chinese temples (known to Europeans in the past as 'Joss Houses') from Tasmania's north-east. During the 1880s this area was a hub of tin mining, and attracted a large Chinese population. This population gradually declined and many smaller towns were abandoned. As the temples closed, key items from each were brought together, eventually ending up in the Weldborough temple. When it closed in 1934, the custodian transferred custody to the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery. The museum's Guan Di Temple is still a functional place of worship, and contains items from six temples.

The original temples were small wooden buildings with tin roofs. They always had a verandah at the front to act as a portico, and were aligned north-south. Many items in the temple are rare and significant. They include incense pots, incense burners, a large carved gilt altarpiece, three wall-hung floats depicting golden palaces, parasols and hanging banners, a large collection of inscribed carved plaques, and two sets of papier-mâché and silk opera figurines. Although most items were imported from makers in Guangdong Province in China, some pieces represent local construction, including gongs with frames made from bicycle wheel rims, and a rocking horse representing the mount of the temple's main deity, Guan Di.

Jon Addison, Curator, History, Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery

UQ ART MUSEUM, UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND – NAT YUEN COLLECTION OF CHINESE ANTIQUITIES



BLUE AND WHITE 'GRAPE DISH', MING DYNASTY, YONGLE PERIOD 1403–1424, BLUE AND WHITE GLAZED PORCELAIN
DIAM. 37.8 CM, COLLECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND. GIFT OF DR NAT YUEN THROUGH THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT'S CULTURAL GIFTS PROGRAM, 2005. PHOTO: CARL WARNER

University Drive, St Lucia
www.artmuseum.uq.edu.au

The Nat Yuen Collection of Chinese Antiquities comprises over 80 objects donated to The University of Queensland since 1994 by Dr Nat Yuen. A resident of Hong Kong, Dr Yuen has collected Chinese antiquities for over 25 years. His gifts to the University span 5,000 years of Chinese culture, with pieces ranging from the Neolithic period to late Qing dynasty. The collection provides a rich resource for students and scholars of Chinese antiquities, and the general community. In 2010 Dr Yuen received the UQ International Alumnus of the Year Award.

The Nat Yuen Collection demonstrates special features of particular periods, such as form, patterns, clay types and glazes. It includes Neolithic earthenware ceramics, bronze ritual wares, a lively Tang horse and groom, a range of Song and Yuan ceramics and fine examples of underglaze blue and white porcelains. A group of blue and white ware from the Collection is presently on view at the Queensland Art Gallery | Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane.

View the entire Collection online and access The Nat Yuen Collection of Chinese Antiquities Learning Resource at <http://www.artmuseum.uq.edu.au/nat-yuen-collection>. Displays from the Collection are rotated regularly on Level 1, UQ Art Museum, James and Mary Emelia Mayne Centre, The University of Queensland. Enquiries about current display: artmuseum@uq.edu.au or 07 3365 3046.

Michele Helmrich, Associate Director (Curatorial) | UQ Art Museum

WOLLONGONG ART GALLERY - MANN-TATLOW COLLECTION OF ASIAN ART



SATSUMA WARE COVERED KORO, MEIJI PERIOD (1868 - 1912), JAPAN, PORCELAIN WITH OVER GLAZED ENAMEL & GOLD, 12 X 12 CM., WOLLONGONG ART GALLERY. PHOTO: BERNIE FISCHER

Cnr Kembla & Burelli Sts, Wollongong
www.wollongongartgallery.com/collections

at Wollongong Art Gallery celebrates one such person and his generosity. William S. Tatlow is an ardent collector with a range of interests which includes Asian art, ceramics and furniture, an interest nurtured over a period of 25 years with the help and assistance of his good friend Mr Singh Mann.

As a private collector his collection was never intended to cover all periods in Chinese history, never aimed to be comprehensive, rather it reflects his personal tastes, values and interests. For Mr Tatlow each piece has its own special story to tell whether through its distinctive shape, techniques of construction or decoration. Each individual object, be it Neolithic earthenware, fine decorated porcelain, intricately carved ivory or beautifully finished furniture, has not only the story of the artist who created it trapped inside, but the memories of people and places which were fondly travelled by Mr Singh Mann and Mr Tatlow as they enjoyed the thrill of collecting treasures.

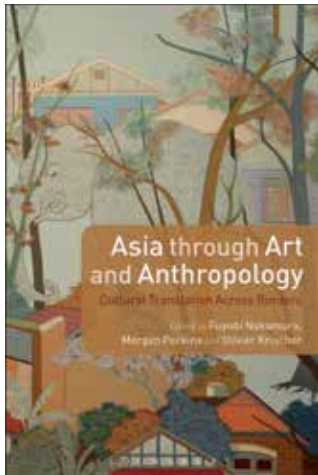
Although Mr Tatlow had considered gifting his collection to various institutions, he developed a strong connection with Illawarra during his residency here in the 1980s and after some positive discussions with then Gallery Director Peter O'Neill decided on Wollongong Art Gallery in 2003, thus filling a gap in the Gallery's collection.

John Monteleone, Program Director

The development of public art collections is punctuated by the stories of benefactors whose generosity becomes the catalyst for the development of often unique and important collections in unexpected places. The Mann-Tatlow Collection of Asian Art

BOOK REVIEW: ASIA THROUGH ART AND ANTHROPOLOGY

Silvia Xavier



Asia through Art and Anthropology: Cultural Translation Across Borders

Nakamura, F., Perkins, M. and Krutcher, O. (eds.),
2013
Bloomsbury Academic, London and New York
RRP AUD\$45.99 paperback; AUD\$105 hardcover,
256 pages.

The 15 contributors to this beautifully presented book invite the reader to consider the task of the cultural translator and the question of how Asia 'has been imagined, represented, and transferred both literally and visually across linguistic, geopolitical, and cultural boundaries' (p2). Three artists from different Asian cultural origins join prominent and emerging scholars in Asian art and culture from the fields of anthropology, art history and curatorship, to explore the profits, perils, and even possibility, of border-crossing in the production, contextualisation and cultural analysis of "Asian" art.

Howard Morphy sounds the challenges of an increasingly global world in which artists navigate the contradictions of co-existing in local *and* global spaces. To the physical act of mobility, John Clark adds the imaginative potential of motility, meaning that artists not only *do move* but more significantly, *can move*. Clark notes how art's ambiguity or 'areas of ambiguity for different sets of beliefs at the same time' (p23) render cultural translation complex and contingent. Clare Harris, writing about contemporary Tibetan artists whose often involuntary mobility results in the *untranslatability* of their art, claims the art world is 'no [egalitarian] paradise' for 'even as it celebrates placenessness, [it] is still inclined to put art and artists in their place' (p34).

Some artists find refuge in interstitial spaces, in both geopolitical and discursive terms, that variously offer free play, escape from exogenous or endogenous strictures, and sites of transgression, uncanniness, defamiliarisation or hybridity. In essays by Phoebe Scott, Natalie Seiz, David Teh and Masafumi Monden, artists, art practices and aesthetics from respectively Vietnam, Taiwan, Thailand, and Japan, contend with the limits of cultural identity that has been troubled by colonialism, exposure to, and appropriation of, Western aesthetics (including racialised perceptions of gender), travel, and unanticipated problems of receptivity on re-entry 'home'. In most cases, hard-won accommodation is found in an amalgam of cultural influences that cross boundaries of time and place.

Christopher Pinney's critique of colonial paradigms registers the power tensions of a 'complex translational zone' (p124) as he compares photographic images of colonial and postcolonial India. Images are also the subject of Barbara Hartley's essay in which she uses Bakhtinian *polyphony* to describe a Japanese literary artist's failed attempts to overlay a Chinese writer's gruesome texts with a de-historicised 'landscape of solace' (p135) to fantasise away Japanese atrocities against China.

In a different vein, Morgan Perkins's 'ethnographic account' (p78) of the contemporary art practice of Lin Haizhong, the Hangzhou-based Chinese ink-painter and educator, emphasises how Lin's unequivocal attachment to the timeless values of *literati* painting and his concern with the 'accomplishment of one's self' (p85) are at the core of the painter's spiritual and artistic practice.

The centrepiece of the book is the inclusion of the three artists' voices with attractive colour illustrations of their works. As Howard Morphy points out, the voices of artists are integral to, yet too often omitted from, discourses and critiques about art.

Relating her feminist activism in Thailand, European travels and subsequent migration to Australia, Phaptawan Suwannakudt confesses that she does 'not easily feel at home in places' (p96). The 'language of [her] studio practice' (p100) is her lifeline, without which

she cannot exist. The use of Thai names and script gives her work meaning, providing emotional bonds and a sense of 'home'.

Script is also significant for Savanhdyary Vongpoothorn who began in 2005 to incorporate Lao-Pali texts in her work. She was inspired to create *Floating Words* (2005-2006) by a gift from her husband, anthropologist Dr Ashley Carruthers, of local magazines from Vietnam printed in Braille. 'Conceptually ... it was important [to her] that the Braille was Vietnamese' (p107) and, originating from a key migration point for migrants from Vietnam into Laos, her country of origin, the text too migrates. Carruthers's translation of the Braille from a sighted copy is another signifier of border-crossing.

Chihiro Minato's movable type projects resulted in a rare intersection of his two worlds of writing and photography. Minato draws awareness to the tactile and cerebral senses of play that underpin the writing and reading of Japanese typeface; they do not only communicate meaning. He cites too the many transformations of the Roman letter alphabet, including graffiti, and alludes to important changes in the adoption, adaptation and rejection of Chinese characters in East Asia.

The book ends on a provocative note. Catherine Diamond argues that five Asian theatre productions from the 1990s that attempted to stage 'a representative Asian identity' (p190) ended up as 'Asian-centric' performances revealing fragmentations that testify to the *impossibility* of "Asia".

Silvia Xavier is a Voluntary Guide and committee member of the Asian Art Group at the National Gallery of Art, Canberra.

RECENT TAASA ACTIVITIES

TAASA IN VICTORIA Visit to See Yup Temple 31 August 2014

TAASA members and guests enjoyed a guided tour of the little known See Yup Temple in South Melbourne, colloquially known as the Joss House. The temple is the oldest Buddhist temple in continuous use in Australia, being built in 1856 for the Chinese people who came to Australia from See Yup (four districts in Southern China) to work on the Victorian gold fields.

See Yup immigrants' traditional eclectic beliefs incorporated Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, deity-worship and ancestor-veneration. The temple was built as a meeting place but also includes two altars for worship, and three memorial halls. The memorial halls hold more than 13,000 tablets in commemoration of members who died and were buried in Victoria between 1850 to the present day. The high-Victorian architecture is infused with many traditional Chinese elements and the space is embellished with exquisite hand-carved artefacts from Guangzhou. We were able to view several areas not usually open to the public.



TAASA MEMBERS OUTSIDE SEE YUP TEMPLE. PHOTO: BORIS KASPIEV

TAASA in QUEENSLAND Artist Talk – Vipoo Srivilasa 6 September 2014

Thai born and Melbourne based Ceramic Sculptor Vipoo Srivilasa spoke engagingly to TAASA members about his artistic practice at a show of new works at Edwina Corlette Gallery. Vipoo's latest creations in blue and white porcelain were cross-species: '...animals that are so cute you don't know how bad they are – rabbits, feral cats – invaders', thus setting up double-edged analogies with foreign arrivals, the European appropriation of the Australian continent and his continuing investigation of the fluidity of borders between East and West.



VIPOO SRIVILASA AT EDWINA CORLETTE GALLERY.
PHOTO: MANDY RIDLEY

On the weekend of Vipoo Srivilasa's visit to Brisbane, he was announced as the major prizewinner in the Gold Coast International Ceramic Award – for his work *Battle of Old and New World Power – 2012*, which depicted two water buffalo warily circling each other, a commentary on the red and yellow shirt protests in Bangkok. The theme of global warming causing coral bleaching in the Great Barrier Reef was explored in the work *Bleach IV - 2012*, a proposed acquisition for QAGOMA. Vipoo had undertaken a residency in Jingdezhen in 2012, and these works dated from that time.

Lindy Lee - The Dark of Absolute Freedom & TAASA Qld end of year event 5 November 2014

TAASA QLD members gained many wonderful insights into the artistic life of Brisbane-born and Sydney-based artist Lindy Lee in a new major survey currently on show at UQ Art Museum until February. The floor talk, given by senior curator Michele Helmrich, led us through three decades of Lindy Lee's work. We followed Lindy's journey from the earliest dark field prints, though to more intensely personal works about her own family and their dislocation in Australia as migrants. Her recent large scale abstract molten metal and pierced screens have resulted from an exciting collaboration with Brisbane based Urban Art Projects' (UAP) Foundry.



MICHELE HELMRICH AT HER LINDY LEE FLOOR
TALK TO TAASA MEMBERS. PHOTO: MANDY RIDLEY

Afterwards, 18 TAASA supporters came along to an Indonesian banquet, as we celebrated our first full year of the re-activated events program. Much thanks go to Sushma Griffin for event co-ordination.

TAASA TEXTILE STUDY GROUP Shared Passions - Symbolism & Imagery in Asian Textiles 13 August 2014

Following on from the TAASA symposium on the same topic held on 19 July, Margaret White invited members to bring along textiles from their collections that portray symbolism & imagery. Contributors, following pre-set guidelines, were asked to explore the theme and to share their knowledge and passion for their textiles with a 5-10min. presentation to the group.

These "shared passion" sessions have proved very popular and this one was no exception with 11 members presenting a wide range of textiles from many different regions. Some examples shown were a Central Asian Suzani, a Kashmir Shawl, a Tampuan skirt from Cambodia and even an ancient Egyptian textile fragment. All textiles displayed strong imagery and stimulated lively discussion amongst those present.

The Rabari Shawl – Symbol of Change 10 September 2014

Carole Douglas' recent article in the September Textile edition of the *TAASA Review* was wonderfully illustrated on the night with a stunning display of rich and colourfully embroidered Rabari wedding shawls.



LACHHUBEN RABARI SCRUTINISES A CONTEMPORARY
WEDDING SHAWL. © CAROLE DOUGLAS 2014

TSG 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION 28 OCTOBER 2014

Oh, what a night! Textile Study Group members, along with other TAASA members & guests, 85 in all, celebrated this milestone event with gusto at Nilgiri's Indian restaurant. In typical TSG fashion, people arrived dressed in their colourful Indian finery. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect with friends, and to acknowledge what has been a very successful study group over two decades.

The anniversary happily coincided with Diwali, an ancient Hindu festival which celebrates the victory of light and thus the evening was themed with this in mind. Music welcomed guests, who could choose to be adorned with Indian hand bling and bindis (ladies only!) Guests were surrounded by Indian textiles, garlands and tea lights set among Hindu sculptures. While nibbling on delicious savouries and biryani, guests were treated to classical

Kathak & Bollywood fusion dances. Later, participants were invited to join in a Bollywood segment and we saw some very enthusiastic moves. Prizes were awarded for best dancers, best dressed and lucky door numbers. Goodbye gifts included diyas, the traditional oil lamp, and after dinner sweet fennel seeds to commemorate Diwali. Kudos must go to the magnificent job done by the organising committee - Marianne Hulsbosch, Helen Perry, Soraya Raju and Margaret White.

Margaret White



DANCE PERFORMANCE BY SHRUTI



ORIGINAL MEMBERS GAY & HAROLD SPIES



TAASA MEMBERS GETTING THEIR GROOVE ON



ORGANISING COMMITTEE MEMBERS HELEN PERRY & SORAYA RAJU WITH TSG MEMBERS ANNIE HOLSTOCK & SUE OGLE



TSG PARTY



TEXTILE GROUP MEMBERS MARGARET MCALEESE AND SANDY REGAN



ORGANISING COMMITTEE MEMBERS MARGARET WHITE AND MARIANNE HULSBOSCH



DANCE PERFORMANCE BY SHRUTI

Carole's long association with Kachchh & her deep respect for Rabari women and their craft resulted in a personal & passionate presentation that expanded on the excellent TR article. All present were captivated by the story of the Rabari women's shawls and dazzled by the spectacular beauty of their lively embroidery.

TAASA CERAMIC STUDY GROUP

Made to Order: Trade Ceramics from East to West 9 August 2014

This half day symposium held at COFA's premises in Paddington, Sydney was held to honour Jackie Menzies, who has recently retired as Head Curator, Asian Art at AGNSW. It featured three engaging and informative talks by Jackie, James MacKean (Brisbane collector and convenor of TAASA in Qld) and Danny McOwan (Director of Hamilton Art Gallery).

Participants were able to discuss the topic with the speakers and were treated to a hands on viewing of a number of ceramic pieces generously brought in by James. Articles based on these presentations are published in this issue of the *TAASA Review*.



FROM L TO R: DANNY MCOWAN, JACKIE MENZIES AND JAMES MACKEAN AT THE CSG SYMPOSIUM. PHOTO: SANDY WATSON

A Dealer's Perspective: Collecting & Authenticating Chinese Ceramics 7 October 2014

Ray Tregaskis, long term antique dealer and expert, gave nearly 40 participants a 'warts and all' insight into the world of buying, selling and evaluating Asian ceramics. His presentation covered many aspects including how to develop connoisseurship, current collecting trends (especially in the field of Chinese ceramics) and his personal tastes and experiences. Participants were able to handle a range of ceramic pieces which Ray used to illustrate his talk, and those who brought in their own pieces benefitted from Ray's expert assessment of their origin and dating.



RAY TREGASKIS AT THE CSG TALK. PHOTO: MARGARET WHITE

TAASA HAS A FACEBOOK PAGE!

As part of our planned update of TAASA's website, we now have a facebook page. Please check it out at www.facebook.com/taasa.org. You can do this even without joining facebook.

TAASA is keen to increase its online presence over time. We hope you will use this space to share your interest and enthusiasm for the Asian arts, and to find up to date information about TAASA and other Asian arts events.

TAASA member Alex Lucas created our facebook page and has very kindly volunteered to be our ongoing facebook page manager, so if you have any interesting information about Asian related events, please contact her at: aluc9339@uni.sydney.edu.au. TAASA's policy is to promote only events run by not for profit organisations on its site.

We would encourage you to 'like' our facebook page - and start the conversation!

TAASA MEMBERS' DIARY DECEMBER 2014 – FEBRUARY 2015

TAASA End of Year Party, Sydney 6- 8pm, Wednesday 3 December 2014 Korean Cultural Centre, Elizabeth St Sydney

Join TAASA to celebrate an active year for the Society and to enjoy good company, refreshments and a viewing of the finalists' works for the the annual Korea-Australia Arts Foundation Prize.

Cost: \$25 members; \$30 non members

RSVP to Sandy Watson at:
sandy.h.watson@gmail.com.

Member Viewing of the Powerhouse Museum's Asian jewellery collection Thursday 19 February 2015, 2- 3.30pm

As part of the current exhibition *A Fine Possession: Jewellery and Identity*, TAASA members will be given a double treat: expert guidance of the Asian jewellery component of this exhibition by Min-Jung Kim, Curator of Asian Arts and Design, plus a trip to the basement to be shown a selection of the PHM's extensive Asian jewellery holdings including its Japanese comb collection, Chinese jade hairpieces, Chinese toggle collection (probably the largest in the world) and Japanese netsuke.

For TAASA members only and limited to 20 participants.

Cost: \$15. RSVP to Jillian Kennedy at jillianannkennedy@hotmail.com.

TAASA IN VICTORIA

TAASA Victoria End of Year Party Thursday 4 December 2014, 5.30 – 7.30pm East & West Art Gallery, East Kew

Cost: \$20 members, \$25 non-members.
Bookings essential.

For bookings and further information on TAASA Victoria events, contact Boris Kaspiev at: vic.taasa@gmail.com or 0421 038 491.

2015 events

TAASA members in Victoria have been asked to nominate their priorities for a possible program of events for next year. Further information will be provided once this feedback has been received.

Contact Boris Kaspiev at:
vic.taasa@gmail.com or 0421 038 491.

Please note that the Bonhams auction preview & talk in Sydney for TAASA members, advertised for 29 October 2014, has been rescheduled for Wednesday 18 March 2015. Further details to be advised.

WHAT'S ON: DECEMBER 2014 – FEBRUARY 2015

A SELECTIVE ROUNDUP OF EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

Compiled by Tina Burge

NSW

Conversations through the Asian Collections
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
October 2014 - October 2015

Drawn from the AGNSW's collection, this exhibition brings together Asian art of the past and present in a major refresh of the Asian galleries. Contemporary artworks are positioned next to the historical works that inform and inspire them, in a series of dynamic 'conversations' that allow visitors to look afresh at the historical collection. Leading off those conversations are 24 renowned contemporary artists, among them Anish Kapoor, Suda Yoshihiro, Shahzia Sikander and Ah Xian. These artists see the past as a deep resource and constant spur to the imagination – their work attests to the live connection it has to the present.

Encompassing almost 300 objects, the exhibition features many icons of the Gallery's collection as well as new acquisitions.

Chinese New Year Events at the Art Gallery of NSW

During the last two weeks of February, the AGNSW will be holding a number of events in association with Chinese New Year:

15 February 2015, 1pm - 4pm, the Korean monk Suan will demonstrate his method of achieving inner peace and joy through the vehicle of brush and ink. Suan resides at Tongdo-sa Temple in Korea and has been practising painting, calligraphy, seal carving and poetry since the 1960s. He is visiting Sydney as the guest of Jongbop-sa Temple, Belfield.

15 February 2015, as part of the City of Sydney 2015 Chinese New Year Festival, Chinese-Australian artist Ah Xian will be in conversation with Claudia Chan Shaw about how he incorporates the work of traditional Chinese artisans in his practice.

Go to the website: www.ag.nsw.gov.au closer to the time for details about other talks and children's activities.

Collection+ Pinaree Sanpitak

Sherman Contemporary Art Foundation
16/18-20 Goodhope St, Paddington, Sydney
17 October - 13 December 2014

SCAF presents the latest in its *Collection+* series of exhibitions. Curated by Jasmin Stephens, works by eminent Thai artist Pinaree Sanpitak from the Gene and Brian Sherman Collection are shown alongside works drawn from other private and public collections in Australia and Thailand. *Collection+* focuses attention on the ways that the collecting activities of individuals and institutions sustain and stimulate the lives of artists. *Collection+* is Sanpitak's first solo exhibition in Australia.

See <http://sherman-scaf.org.au/exhibition/collection-pinaree-sanpitak/>



PINAREE SANPITAK, *THE MIRROR*, 2009, ALUMINIUM AND MIRRORING GLASS, 193 X 95 X 18 CM, INSTALLATION VIEW, COLLECTION+: PINAREE SANPITAK, SHERMAN CONTEMPORARY ART FOUNDATION, SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA, 2014, COLLECTION: GENE & BRIAN SHERMAN
PHOTO: SILVERSALT PHOTOGRAPHY

Actions for Tomorrow by Yangjiang Group

4A Centre for Contemporary Asian Art
17 January – 7 March 2015

Yangjiang Group's first exhibition in Australia is an ambitious contemporary art project that will see the Chinese artist group take over 4A and the Chinese Gardens during the Sydney Chinese New Year festival. Yangjiang Group will present two new bodies of work that will incorporate large-scale calligraphic murals, wax-covered clothing and sculptural elements to transform 4A into an immersive installation, illuminating the connections between the social function of calligraphy in contemporary Chinese culture, and its impact on the economic transactions that occur during our everyday lives.



YANGJIANG GROUP, *AFTER DINNER SHU FA AT CRICKET PAVILION*, 2012, EASTSIDE PROJECTS AND GRIZEDALE ARTS, BIRMINGHAM.
COURTESY THE ARTISTS AND VITAMIN CREATIVE SPACE

VisAsia General meeting

Art Gallery of New South Wales,
Centenary Auditorium
10 December 2014 from 5.00 – 6.30 pm

Michael Brand, Director, AGNSW Suhanya Raffel, Director of collections and Warwick Johnson, Chair of VisAsia will discuss the future plans for the Asian collection and exhibition program at the Art Gallery of NSW.

Please RSVP by 3 December:
rsvp@ag.nsw.gov.au

A collector's tale: building a collection of Qing and Republican Chinese ceramics

Asian Art Institute of Australia Talk at Bonhams, Sydney
6 December 2014 at 2pm

Iain Clarke will offer his personal view of collecting Chinese Ceramics from the late Qing, Republican and People's Republic periods (1850-2010), sharing his experiences of building up his collection. Examples from his collection will be on view in the AAIA's exhibition at Bonhams, 76 Paddington St, Paddington on Friday 12 – 5pm and Saturday 10am – 5pm.

RSVP for the talk by email to asianartinstitute@gmail.com or phone Larry Lucas (m) 0411 156 720

A fine possession – Jewellery and Identity

Powerhouse Museum, Sydney
24 September 2014 – 20 September 2015

A fine possession celebrates the central place of jewellery in our lives, from antiquity to the present-day, through a sumptuous selection of jewellery made, worn and collected in Australia. Although it sources jewellery from around the world, there are many Asian related pieces such as a silver headdress

inlaid with kingfisher feathers from China from about 1800; a happiness gold and turquoise necklace from Rajasthan, India from the mid 1900s, and a 'Java-la-Grande' bracelet from Goa, India, from around the second quarter of the 16th century.

For more information go to:
www.powerhousemuseum.com/exhibitions/jewellery/evolution

QUEENSLAND

7th Festival of Tibet

Brisbane Powerhouse
19 - 25 January 2015

Brisbane's Festival of Tibet is the largest annual celebration of Tibetan culture in Australia and a unique world event. Founded by musician Tenzin Choegyal, January 2015 will mark the seventh edition of the festival which features art workshops, musical performances, films, Buddhist teachings and a range of talks. This year's festival will also host former president of the Tibetan Children's Villages and sister to the 14th Dalai Lama, Jetsun Pema.

For further information go to:
www.brisbanepowerhouse.org/festivals/festival-of-tibet-2014

Future Beauty: 30 Years of Japanese Fashion

Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), Brisbane
1 November 2014 – 15 February 2015

The exhibition explores the tremendous innovation of Japanese fashion designers from the early 1980s to the present. With over 100 garments featured in the exhibition, ranging from the classic and elegant to outrageous, this is a rare opportunity to view these unique creations first hand. Curated by eminent Japanese fashion historian Akiko Fukai, Director of the Kyoto Costume Institute in Japan, this exhibition explores the unique sensibility of Japanese design, and its sense of beauty embodied in clothing.

For further information go to: <http://www.qagoma.qld.gov.au/exhibitions/current/futurebeauty>

VICTORIA

Takahiro Iwasaki: Itsukushima Reflection Model

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
5 December 2014 – 6 April 2015

Takahiro Iwasaki is recognized as one of Japan's new generation of emerging young artists, who creates intricately detailed models that reinterpret contemporary cityscapes and iconic historic buildings. The reflection model series focuses on seven

of Japan's most sacred buildings that all have an intimate visual relationship with the reflections they cast in the water that surrounds them. Playing with this striking visual relationship Iwasaki constructs precise three dimensional models that are exhibited suspended, in a way that combines the actual building with its illusionary reflection to create one complete form.

Wayne Crothers, Curator, Asian Art will give a talk on 5 December 2015 at 12.30pm on Takahiro Iwasaki. He will discuss Iwasaki's intricate suspended three dimensional model of the sixth century Shinto shrine of Itsukushima commissioned by the NGV, the third in a series of seven of Japan's most sacred buildings.

For more information go to:
<http://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/whats-on/exhibitions/exhibitions/takahiro-iwasaki>

INTERNATIONAL

THAILAND

The 5th ASEAN Traditional Textiles Symposium, Chiang Mai

19 – 21 January 2015

The ASEAN Traditional Textiles Symposium's core objective is to preserve and promote traditional textiles of ASEAN nations. The first symposium was held in Indonesia in December 2005 and the topics in 2015 include dying cloth using natural dyes; using natural fibres; conserving and developing traditional textiles, and developing commercial traditional textiles.

For more information go to:
www.payap.ac.th/sites/fabric

CANADA

The Lost Dhow: A Discovery from the Maritime Silk Route

Aga Khan Museum, Toronto
December 13, 2014 - March 15, 2015

In 1998, an Arab ship carrying goods from China was discovered at the bottom of the Indian Ocean off Belitung Island, Indonesia. Dating from the 9th-century, the Belitung shipwreck is the earliest Arab vessel of this period to be found with a complete cargo, including silver ingots, bronze mirrors, spice-filled jars, intricately worked vessels of silver and gold, and thousands of ceramic bowls, ewers, and other vessels. The exhibition will reveal the interconnections between two great powers, the Tang and Abbasid Empires, whose influence collectively stretched from the East China Sea to North Africa.

For more information go to:
www.agakhanmuseum.org

FRANCE

Splendor of the Han – Rise of the Celestial Empire

Musee Guimet, Paris
22 October 2014 - 1 March 2015

The exhibition is presented as part of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the French Republic and the People's Republic of China. The Guimet has been loaned major works from 27 provincial Chinese museums, including many new archaeological discoveries, such as jades, bronzes, ceramics to lacquer ware, covering every field of artistic endeavour from delicate objects to monumental sculptures.

For more information go to:
www.guimet.fr/en

UNITED STATES

Roads of Arabia - Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Asian Art Museum, San Francisco
24 October 2014 - 18 January 2015

Over the last 40 years, archaeologists working in Saudi Arabia have unearthed an astonishing number of artefacts that have radically transformed scholarship of the region. *Roads of Arabia* features more than 200 objects, ranging from excavated stone tools—some dating back more than a million years—to a 17th century set of gilded doors that once graced the entrance to the Ka'ba, Islam's holiest sanctuary. Beginning with some of the earliest evidence of humankind, *Roads of Arabia* goes on to explore the historical and cultural development of Arabia. Tracing ancient incense trade routes and early-Islamic pilgrimage roads that once spanned the peninsula - connecting Arabia to Iraq, Syria, Egypt, the Mediterranean and beyond - the exhibition offers firsthand insight into the remarkable cultural interactions that occurred between Arabia and its diverse neighbours.

For more information go to: www.asianart.org/exhibitions_index/roads-of-arabia

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