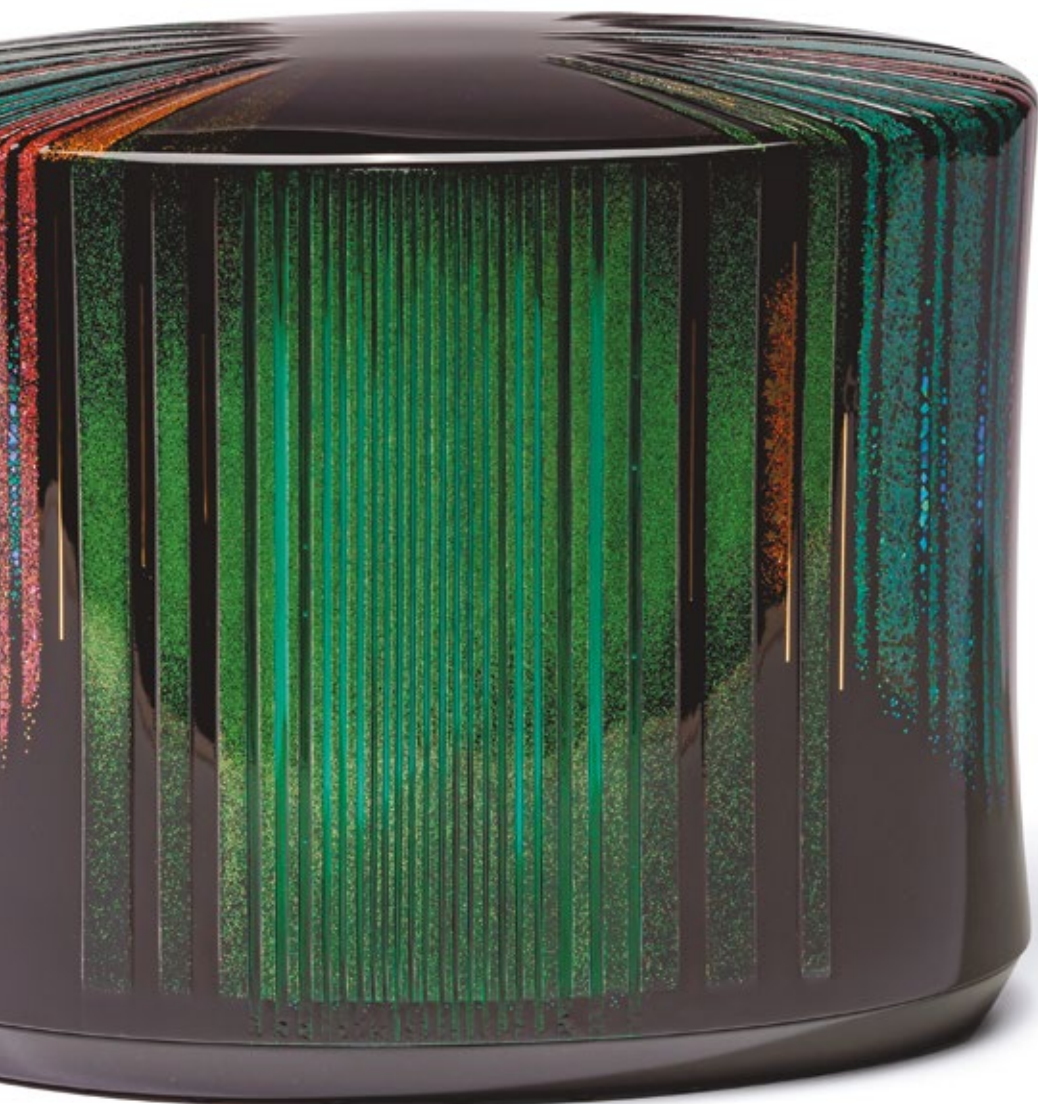


*The Spirit of Noto:  
Urushi Artists of Wajima*

&

*Waves of Resilience*



*The Spirit of Noto:  
Urushi Artists of Wajima*

*&  
Waves of Resilience*

## Foreword

Onishi Gallery, a New York City gallery specializing in Japanese art, and KOGEI USA, a not-for-profit committed to promoting traditional Japanese crafts, are proud to announce two exhibitions from Wajima focused on lacquer art in the classic tradition.

Both exhibitions have been organized in support of the artists and craftspeople of Wajima and the rest of the Noto Peninsula, who continue to devote themselves to creating works of art of enduring beauty despite suffering so much from a catastrophic earthquake at the start of the year.

In the first exhibition, *The Spirit of Noto: Urushi Artists of Wajima*, Onishi Gallery and Kogei USA present a stunning collection of lacquer objects created by three National Living Treasures, Komori Kunie, Yamagishi Kazuo, and Mae Fumio, together with fourteen prominent lacquer artists, Ebata Toshio, Ebata Hiroyuki, Mizushiri Kōta, Mizushiri Satomi, Mizushiri Seiho, Nakamuro Sōichirō, Okada Yūji, Onihira Keiji, Sakamoto Yasuharu, Sakashita Yoshiharu, Shiota Junji, Suzutani Toyoshi, Teranishi Shōta, and Urade Katsuhiko, and two other distinguished craftsmen, Tachi Ichirō and Chahira Issai. The exhibition expresses the continuing strength of Wajima's centuries-old traditions, which both honor the past and evolve artistically to embrace the contemporary world.

In the second exhibition, *Waves of Resilience*, the Wajima spirit and tradition of lacquerware are given a fresh and exciting interpretation by American designer Melissa Bowers, who has absorbed the forms of traditional lacquer art and the landscape of the Noto Peninsula to create a tabletop suite in lacquer that pays homage to the artistry for which Wajima is justly famous. Traditional and new, subtle and exciting, the tabletop collection is being manufactured by Senshudo, a historic and prominent producer of lacquerware led by Yugo Okagaki, a tireless advocate for the restoration of Wajima and a vital partner in this charitable project.

We also wish to express our gratitude to Mimi Yamazaki, Chair of the Wajima Lacquer in New York Executive Committee, who has been the driving force behind this project and the exhibitions.

Onishi Gallery and Kogei USA look forward to welcoming you to the exhibitions in their new location at 16 East 79th Street on the ground floor of the historic and landmarked Sidney Ripley Mansion.

*Nana Onishi*  
Owner and Director, Onishi Gallery

## Greeting

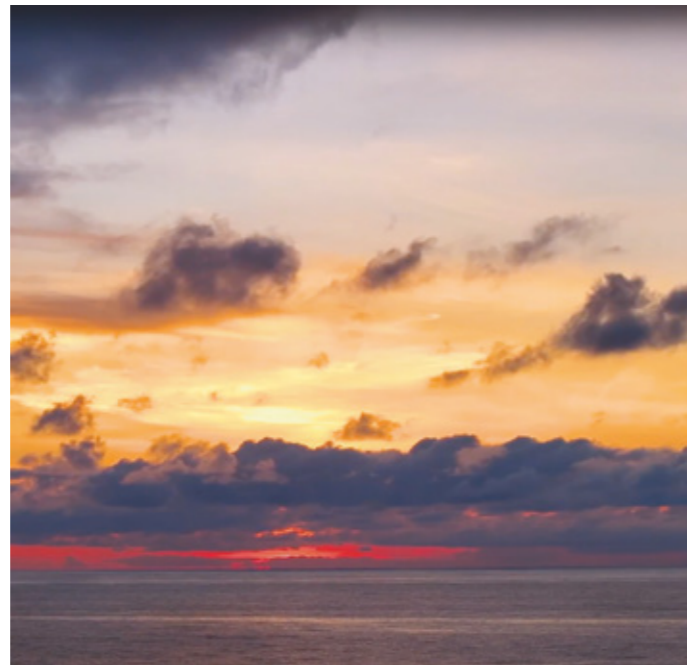
It has been a true honor to collaborate on this collection with Wajima, the lacquer capital of Japan. Through this concept and collection, I hope to raise global awareness of the intricate technique and the profound importance of this centuries-old craft.

I aspire for this collection to evoke the resilience of the artisans and inspire a renewed appreciation for their work. It not only symbolizes the recovery and healing of displaced craftsmen but also represents an opportunity to restore Wajima as a sanctuary for creativity and tradition.

Like a wave, the collection's viewing experience will flow, and I hope it will continue to be showcased in future locations, spreading the message of this timeless craft to wider audiences.

As we often reflect in meditation, the wave is part of us, and in the stillness of the sea, we become one.

*Melissa Bowers*  
*Interior designer and founder of M.A.Bowers Inc.*



## Greeting

I should like to express my heartfelt gratitude to people around the world for their kind thoughts following the earthquake that shook the Noto Peninsula on New Year's Day 2024.

*Urushi* is one of Japan's most representative art crafts. The people of Japan attach great spiritual value to *urushi* and cherish it for use on special occasions and in special places.

The city of Wajima is a center of lacquer craft, a place where artisans have long worked every day of their lives to refine their skills. However, even though nine months have passed since the disaster they are still facing great difficulties due to the earthquake's devastating impact.

This charity exhibition was planned to give hope to such artisans. I want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Onishi Gallery and committee Chair Mimi Yamazaki for their cooperation in making it possible.

During the earthquake in January, we experienced unprecedentedly strong tremors. We were lifted into the air, and the furniture flew around. We have managed to get by with the help of the local community, but even now the memory of it fills me with fear.

However, we will not be defeated.

This exhibition marks the start of our effort to remind the world of the brilliance of *urushi*. We hope and pray that it becomes a banner of hope for lacquer artisans.

*Yugo Okagaki*  
*Wajima Lacquer in New York Executive Committee*

There is no better black than the black of *urushi*, a unique substance that captivates all who see it. I am so pleased that lacquer art—a special symbol of Japan—is getting to be better appreciated by our friends overseas, making me confident that *urushi*, along with the colors it expresses, will remain with us forever. I pray that in the future its star will shine ever brighter.  
*Yamagishi Kazuo, Living National Treasure*

I am delighted that thanks to Onishi Gallery our American friends have been given this opportunity to appreciate the luster and colors of *urushi*, a material unique to Japan. It is wonderful to see lacquer art being honored in this way.  
*Mae Fumio, Living National Treasure*

In a work made from *urushi*, the bounty of nature is married to the skill of the lacquer artist. Since no two pieces can be the same, lacquer art never ceases to fascinate us. When made with true dedication, lacquer art embodies the very spirit of *urushi*.  
*Komori Kunie, Living National Treasure*

*Yamagishi Kazuo*  
*Living National Treasure*



Cylindrical Tea Caddy with Design in Chinkoku and Inlay, *Two Rivers*, 2021  
Japanese cherry birch, gold powder, and urushi  
2 3/4 x 2 3/4 in. (6.8 x 6.8 cm)



Box with Design in Chinkoku and Inlay, *Young Maples*, 2021  
Paulownia, gold powder, and urushi  
5 3/4 x 7 1/4 x 7 1/4 in. (14.6 x 18.4 x 18.4 cm)

*Komori Kunie*  
*Living National Treasure*



Small Box in Ajiro Weave with Tamenuri Urushi, 2022  
Paulownia, hemp cloth, bamboo, urushi  
3 3/8 x 6 1/2 x 5 3/8 in. (8.5 x 16.6 x 13.5 cm)

*Mae Fumio*  
*Living National Treasure*



Squat Tea Caddy with Design in Chinkin,  
*Chrysanthemum Dew*, 2024  
Zelkova, gold  
2 1/2 x 3 3/8 in. (6.3 x 8.5 cm)

*Ebata Toshio*



Incense Container with Design in Kirigane and Raden, *Forbearance Grass (Davallia mariesii)*, 2021  
Japanese cypress, cut gold foil, gold powder, silver powder, South Sea abalone  
2 ¼ × 2 ½ × 2 ½ in. (5.6 × 6.2 × 6.2 cm)

*Ebata Hiroyuki*



Box with Design in Kirigane and Mother-of-Pearl, *Tortoiseshell Patterns, Flowers, and Stripes*, 2022  
Japanese cypress, cut gold foil, gold powder, silver powder, gold foil, South Sea abalone, marbled turban shell (yakō), white-lipped pearl oyster  
3 ⅞ × 6 ⅞ × 4 in. (9.2 × 16 × 9.7 cm)



## Mizushiri Kōta



Square Plate with Design in Chinkin,  
*Centennial Cherry Tree*, 2023  
Paulownia, metal powder  
1 3/8 × 9 1/4 × 9 1/4 in. (3.5 × 23 × 23 cm)

## Mizushiri Satomi



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Waves*, 2018  
Paulownia, metal powder, pigment, eggshell  
6 × 9 7/8 × 4 3/4 in. (15 × 25 × 12 cm)

Box with Flower-Pattern Design in Maki-e, 2023  
Zelkova, metal powder, mother-of-pearl  
2 1/8 × 6 3/8 in. (6 × 16 cm)

Mizushiri Seiho



Box with Design in Chinkin and Inlay, *Waves*, 2024  
Paulownia, metal powder  
7 1/8 x 6 3/8 x 4 3/8 in. (18 x 16 x 11 cm)



Box with Design in Chinkin, *Floral Arabesque*, 2009  
Paulownia, metal powder  
6 3/8 x 10 1/4 x 5 1/4 in. (16 x 26 x 13.5 cm)



Box with Design in Chinkin, *Deep Sea*, 2023  
Paulownia, metal powder  
2 1/4 x 12 1/4 x 11 1/8 in. (5.5 x 31 x 28 cm)

*Nakamuro Sōichirō*



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Rippling*, 2024  
Paulownia, metal powder, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
3 ¼ × 5 × 5 in. (8 × 12.8 × 12.8 cm)

*Ōkado Yūji*



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Meadow*, 1994  
Paulownia, gold powder, white-lipped pearl oyster,  
hemp-cloth reinforcement  
5 ⅞ × 9 ½ × 4 ¾ in. (14 × 24 × 12 cm)

# Onihira Keiji



Box with Design in Raised Maki-e, *Soaring Aurora*, 2020  
 Dry lacquer and wood (base), gold-silver alloy, gold, South Sea abalone, pigment  
 8 1/2 x 10 3/8 x 5 3/4 in. (21.7 x 26.4 x 14.5 cm)



Box with Design in Maki-e and Mother-of-Pearl, *Moonlit Road*, 2019  
 Dry lacquer and wood (base), gold, white-lipped pearl oyster, pigment, South Sea abalone, dry lacquer powder  
 8 1/2 x 8 7/8 x 6 1/8 in. (21.5 x 22.6 x 15.6 cm)



Box with Design in Raised Maki-e, *Angel's Ladder*, 2022  
 Dry lacquer and wood (base), South Sea abalone shell, white-lipped pearl oyster, gold, white gold, silver, pigment  
 8 1/4 x 10 5/8 x 6 1/8 in. (20.7 x 26.8 x 15.3 cm)

*Sakamoto Yasuharu*



Box with Design in Maki-e, *In the Glitter*, 2016  
Paulownia, metal powder, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
5 5/8 x 11 x 5 3/8 in. (14 x 27.5 x 14.2 cm)

*Sakashita Yoshiharu*



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Massed Cherry Blossom*, 2024  
Paulownia, metal powder, pigment  
4 1/4 x 15 3/4 x 4 1/8 in. (10.5 x 40 x 10.4 cm)

*Shiota Junji*



Kanshitsu Bowl, 2002  
Dry lacquer  
2 ¾ × 12 ½ in. (7 × 32 cm)

Kanshitsu Tray, *Wave Pattern*, 2002  
Dry lacquer  
1 × 12 ½ in. (2.5 × 32 cm)

*Suzutani Toyoshi*



Caddy for Leaf Tea, *Hazy Moonlit Night*, 2024  
Zelkova, metal powder, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
2 ⅞ × 2 ⅞ in. (7.4 × 7.4 cm)

Teranishi Shōta



Incense Container, *Chicken*, 2020  
Zelkova, metal powder, silver, pigment  
1 1/8 x 2 7/8 in. (2.6 x 7.4 cm)

Tea Caddy, *Dignity*, 2023  
Zelkova, metal powder, pigment  
2 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (6.3 x 8.7 cm)



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Spring Light*, 2007  
Paulownia, gold, silver, mother-of-pearl  
5 5/8 x 10 3/4 x 6 in. (14.3 x 27.2 x 15.1 cm)

Urade Katsuhiko



Box with Design in Maki-e, *Scarlet Rosemallow*, 2021  
Paulownia, metal powder, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
5 5/8 x 9 7/8 x 4 3/8 in. (14 x 25 x 11 cm)



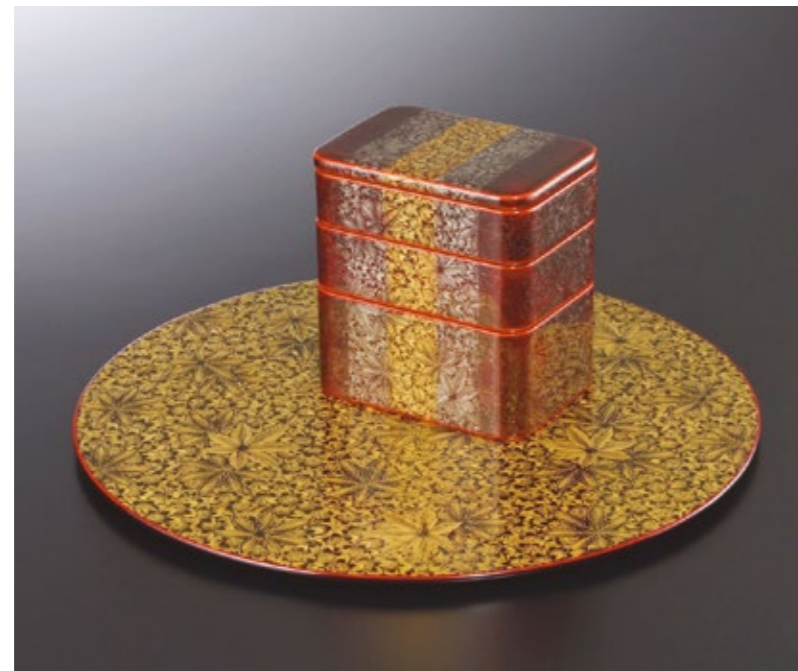
Set of Plates with Flowing Water Design, 2018  
Zelkova, metal powder, mother-of-pearl  
7 1/2 in. (19 cm)



Kanshitsu Box with Design in Maki-e, *Early Summer*, 2017  
Dry lacquer, metal powder, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
4 1/4 x 8 7/8 x 8 7/8 in. (10.5 x 22.3 x 22.3 cm)



*Tachi Ichirō*  
of *Senshudo*



Bonbonnière with Round Tray in Chinkin, 2024  
Wood, gold powder, and urushi  
Bonbonnière: 5 1/2 x 5 1/8 x 3 3/4 in. (14 x 13 x 9.5 cm)  
Round Tray: 14 3/8 in. (36.5 cm)

*Chahira Issai*  
of *Senshudo*



Incense Container, *Nihonbashi*, 2023  
Dry lacquer, gold, mother-of-pearl, pigment  
1 x 4 1/2 x 3 1/4 in. (2.5 x 11.5 x 8 cm)

Incense Container, *Ox-Drawn Coach*, 2023  
Black persimmon  
2 1/2 x 4 x 2 in. (6.2 x 10 x 5 cm)

# Biographies of Living National Treasures

## Yamagishi Kazuo

b. 1954, Living National Treasure

Lacquer (*Chinkin*)

Designation Year: 2018

### Selected Exhibitions

- 2023 Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition, Japan
- 2023 Living National Treasure Annual Exhibition, Japan
- 2014 *From Craft to KOGEI*, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo
- 2014 Mokichi Okada Award Exhibition, MOA Museum of Art, Atami, Japan

### Selected Awards

- 2018 Hokkoku Cultural Award
- 2012 Medal with Purple Ribbon
- 2016 NHK Chairman's Award at the Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition
- 2010 NHK Kanazawa Broadcast Station Manager Award at the Ishikawa Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- Asahi Shimbun Award at the Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition
- 2007 25th Anniversary Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 2005 Prince Takamatsu Memorial Award at the Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition
- 2003 Japan Kogei Association Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1999 Japan Kogei Association Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1996 Tokyo Metropolitan Board of Education Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1991 Commissioner for Cultural Affairs Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1989 Japan Kogei Association Award at the Ishikawa Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1988 Asahi Shimbun Award at the Lacquerware Traditional Kogei Exhibition
- 1987 Japan Kogei Association Award at the Ishikawa Traditional Kogei Exhibition

### Selected Public Collections

- Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art
- Wajima Museum of Urushi Art, Wajima, Japan
- Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- National Crafts Museum, Tokyo
- Jingu Art Museum, Ise, Japan
- Ishikawa Nanao Art Museum, Nanao, Japan
- Kanazawa Port Cruise Terminal, Japan
- Yokohama Iseyama Kotai Jingu, Yokohama
- University of Toyama, Toyama, Japan
- KIBUN Collection, Japan
- Ishikawa Prefectural Library, Kanazawa, Japan
- Agency of Cultural Affairs, Japan



## Komori Kunie

**b. 1945, Living National Treasure  
Lacquer (Kyūshitsu)  
Designation Year: 2006**

### Selected Exhibitions

- 2023 Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition, Japan
- 2023 Living National Treasure Annual Exhibition, Japan
- 1996 *Rainbows and Shimmering Bridges: Japanese Contemporary Lacquerware*, Japan Society Gallery, New York and Denver Art Museum, Denver, USA
- 1995 *Japanese Studio Crafts: Tradition and the Avant-Garde*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- 1994 *Arts and Crafts: 100 Creators of Ishikawa*, Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- 1993 *Nuances in Lacquer: 70 Years of Innovation*, National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

### Selected Awards

- 2006 Medal with Purple Ribbon
- 2004 Mokichi Okada Grand Prize
- 2002 Japan Kogei Association “Important Intangible Cultural Asset” Holder’s Prize for *Magewazukuri Rantaiban, Reimei* (Bentwood Basketry Tray Named Dawn) at the 49th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition
- 1999 Hokkoku Culture Award
- 1992 Grand Prize, Ishikawa Contemporary Art Exhibition, Kanazawa, Japan
- 1990 Hokkoku Award, Ishikawa Contemporary Art Exhibition, Kanazawa, Japan
- 1989 Incentive Award at the 30th Ishikawa Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition, Kanazawa, Japan
- President of NHK Prize for *Ajiro-shimamon Jūbako* (Twill-Weave Tiered Box with Striped Pattern) at the 36th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition
- 1987 Incentive Award at the 28th Ishikawa Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition, Kanazawa, Japan
- 1986 President of NHK Prize for the entry *Magewazukuri Rantai Jikirō* (Bentwood Basketry Food Box) at the 33rd Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition

### Selected Public Collections

- Agency for Cultural Affairs, Japan
- MOA Museum of Art, Atami, Japan
- Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- Wajima Museum of Urushi Art, Wajima, Japan
- National Crafts Museum, Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art
- Jingu Art Museum, Ise, Japan
- Matsushita Shinshin’an, Kyoto
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London
- Atsuta Jingu Museum, Nagoya, Japan
- Hiroshima University Museum
- Kanazawa Nakamura Memorial Museum, Kanazawa, Japan



## Mae Fumio

**b. 1940, Living National Treasure  
Lacquer (Chinkin)  
Designation Year: 1999**

### Selected Exhibitions

- 2023 Japan Traditional Kogei Annual Exhibition, Japan
- 2023 Living National Treasure Annual Exhibition, Japan

### Selected Awards

- 2011 Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette
- 2001 Medal with Purple Ribbon
- 1998 Hokkoku Cultural Award
- 1997 Japan Art Crafts Association “Important Intangible Cultural Asset” Holder’s Prize, 44th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition
- 1993 “Important Intangible Cultural Asset” Holder’s Selection Award, 40th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition
- 1992 President of Japan Art Crafts Association Prize, 39th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition
- 1973 Minister of Education, Science, and Culture Award, 20th Japan Traditional Art Crafts Exhibition

### Selected Public Collections

- Tokyo National Museum
- National Crafts Museum, Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art
- 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- Ishikawa Prefectural Museum of Art, Kanazawa, Japan
- Wajima Museum of Urushi Art, Wajima, Japan



**Onishi Gallery** opened in 2005 and features contemporary Japanese artists working in a range of media—ceramics, metalwork, lacquer, glass, sculpture, and painting—who are united in their embrace of traditional techniques, yet distinct in their exquisite and diverse modes of expression.

**KOGEI USA** is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization recently established with the goal of raising the reputation of Japanese traditional arts and culture outside Japan by holding exhibitions and cultural events at major museums in the US and Europe.

“**Living National Treasure**” (*Ningen Kokuhō*) is the term popularly applied in Japan to individuals designated “Preservers of Important Intangible Cultural Assets” (*Jūyō Mukei Bunkazai Hojisha*) by the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology under a system inaugurated in 1955.

**Waves of Resilience** is an eleven-piece luxury tabletop collection which reflects Japan’s seas, skies, and journeys of healing, using the traditional art of lacquer to reflect the normally tranquil beauty of the earthquake-affected local landscape and the strength of its people. Featuring an incense holder, trays, cup, vase, platter, charger, trays, a bar, a coaster set, and other vessels, it merges classical techniques with contemporary aesthetics.

**Melissa Bowers**, founder of M.A. Bowers Inc., is redefining the landscape of luxury interior design through a series of prestigious projects and innovative ventures. With a keen eye for detail and a passion for timeless elegance, Bowers continues to set new standards in the design world, combining her deep appreciation for vintage aesthetics with a contemporary sensibility.

**Senshudo** was founded during the Meiji era (1868-1912), and is the leading specialist in *Wajima-nuri*, a type of lacquerware that has played an essential part in the lives, culture, and heart of the Japanese people since ancient times. *Wajima-nuri* involves over one hundred processes done entirely by hand, from the undercoating through intermediate and surface coatings to the final decoration in *maki-e* sprinkled metal powders.

*Exhibition Venue*

Onishi Gallery  
16 E 79th Street, Ground Floor  
New York, NY 10075

*Exhibition Dates and Hours*

October 1-25, 2024  
Opening Reception: Tuesday, October 1, 6-8pm

*Gallery Contact*

Nana Onishi  
212.695.8035 / nana@onishigallery.com  
www.onishigallery.com

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*Media Contacts*

Andrey & Melissa Public Relations  
a@andreyandmelissa.com  
m@andreyandmelissa.com

*Catalogue Design*

Hyperkit, hyperkit.co.uk



M.A. BOWERS, INC.

