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博士論文

From Mingei to the Arts: An Inquiry into Samiro Yunoki's Expression through His Creative Works

民藝から芸術へ: 柚木沙弥郎の創作を通しての表現への一考察

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Abstract: The present inquiry looks into the work of Samiro Yunoki, a textile artist who began his career in *Mingei* in 1948 under the guidance of Keisuke Serizawa, initially developing a diverse volume of work in the folk crafts genre. However, after accumulating years of experience and knowledge, Yunoki moved away from Mingei and began creating a corpus of work categorizable as art. Soetsu Yanagi, the leader of the Mingei movement, states in his theoretical writings on Mingei that self-expression should be ignored when creating folk crafts; he encouraged artisans within the group to shut down any trace of individuality or unique expression and to instead create work that would service common people and provide them with "useful beauty" through crafts that they could use in their everyday life.

Samiro Yunoki eventually moved towards an artistic expression that did not align with Yanagi's Mingei ideals. The present research project aims to clarify the factors in Yunoki's life and career that made him drift away from Mingei and become a modern artist. By focusing on these points through the review of his work, we will inquire into how Yunoki's expression changed throughout his career, and how it was ultimately achieved. Inquiring into the process inherent to Yunoki's work and analyzing selected work in his production helps reveal how Yunoki's unique expression—characterized by his later work that used the *katazome* dyeing technique—emerged.

Introduction

As one of the main concerns of aesthetics, *expression* analyzes the entirety of an artist's work, from its formal structure to the intrinsic messages that a viewer might interpret from the piece. In Umberto Eco's book *The Open Work* (1962), he discusses the complexity of communication; even a message intended to be unequivocal can transcend towards an aesthetic experience. Through artwork, an artist develops a message that is ambiguous, metaphorical, subjective, and leads the viewer to multiple interpretations depending on their prior experience; at the same time, the artist aims to engage the viewer in an aesthetic experience by means of expressiveness.

Conversely, Soetsu Yanagi,[1] a Japanese art critic and philosopher born in Tokyo, who later became the founder and leader of Japan's Mingei movement in the mid-1920s, referred to self-expression as a negative quality in a craft artisan; he believed that in order to produce humble folk crafts for the common people, expression must be hindered, and the artisan should hide any trace of artistic individuality. He believed there are two ways to achieve the suppression of self-expression: creating crafts through reproduction techniques, and quelling the ego and assuming the role of the *unknown craftsman*, working anonymously and receiving no recognition.

This may have been possible in the beginning of the Mingei movement, when the creators of handmade artifacts were artisans from rural villages who made a living from the crafts they produced and sold. However, a different reality emerged when leading members of the Mingei movement (Kanjiro Kawai, Shoji Hamada, Bernard Leach, Keisuke Serizawa and

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[1] In some papers the name may appear as Muneyoshi Yanagi.

Shiko Munakata), later refer to as *artist-craftsmen* (工芸作家), emerged and were expected to lead the unknown craftsmen (無名の作家) in their work. These artist-craftsmen became renowned and well-established within craft circles, thus creating tension and conflict over Yanagi's fundamental ideals within the group.

After the war, connections from the Mingei movement to the design field were an adequate move towards the expansion of Yanagi's ideal of "useful beauty"(用の美) within Japan and abroad. Samiro Yunoki, who has been a prominent member of the Mingei movement since 1946, has achieved such "useful beauty" and self-expression in his work with *katazome*, a Japanese resist dyeing technique. However, it can be argued that his work shifted away from craft to the arts[2] over the course of his career. In the beginning of his career, after reading Soetsu Yanagi's publications *Kogei* and *Kogei no Michi* and later seeing Keisuke Serizawa's calendar created with the katazome technique, he was prompted to explore crafts production. He learned katazome from Serizawa himself and studied under artisans in Shizuoka Prefecture, which enabled him to continue producing crafts that he eventually exhibited and commercialized, as other Mingei members did. The subsequent changes to formal aspects in Yunoki's creations, analyzed from the focal point of his artistic expression, reveals a shift towards the arts and a change in his creative interest, exemplified in his first experience creating printmaking works in 1969. The present research aims to untangle these changes and grasp the characteristics of Yunoki's unique artistic expression in order to answer the question: Why did Yunoki begin to use the katazome technique, which is a traditional dyeing method intended for production of numerous pieces from one pattern (*katagami*), to create large abstract artwork that can be perceived as fine art? Why did he adapt the method of repetition present in stencil dyeing to create singular artwork? To that end, the historical events in which Yunoki began creating crafts are examined, with a focus on the significance they had on his artistic developments. In order to clarify Yunoki's developments in craft and printmaking throughout his career, it is first necessary to place him within the context of Japanese art history. This review analyzes craft and art as the two genres prevalent in Yunoki's life and career; by understanding the traits and intersections of these genres, the context in which Yunoki developed his work is examined.

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[2] The arts in the present dissertation is defined as the pursuit of expression that began emerging within artistic movements particularly in Europe during the twentieth century and was later incorporated into Japanese arts. As Kanbara describes it, during this period, the direction was for the artist to reveal their "inner self" to achieve expression (Kanbara 2002, 32-33).

Historical context

Before the Meiji restoration (1868), there were several periods in which Japan owed most of its artistic developments to China. For example, major artistic expressions revolved around literature and *sumi* ink painting, which was introduced by Zen priests from China at the beginning of the thirteenth century. During the Heian Period (794-1185), transcendental work such as *The Tale of Genji* by Lady Murasaki and creations by *Yamato-e* painters Tawaraya Sotatsu and Ogata Korin emerged from this cultural exchange. However, the end of the Edo period (1603-1868) was a time of great modernization, and reforms began pushing a shift towards Western art, seeking to replace the previous societal and cultural standards. In the Meiji period (1868-1912), the standards of Western art were introduced and institutionalized, and classifications were made for the sake of being modern. The classifications of Western-style painting, *yoga* (洋画) and Japanese-style painting, *nihonga* (日本画) were created as genres that subsequently broadened into the genres of sculpture and crafts.[3]

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[3] Tetsuo Sakai et al., *Another history of Japanese Art: Masterpieces of Modern and Contemporary Prints 2020* (Fukushima Prefectural Museum of Art and The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, 2020), 11-12.

Until that moment, art and craft hadn’t been discussed as separate genres, because the term *kogei* (工芸) (crafts), was included in a broader conception of *bijutsu* (美術) (fine arts), that included painting, sculpture, architecture, and craft. As Shirato (2011) clarifies, the concept of Western European art was introduced throughout the Meiji era and incorporated into the culture by the government, which didn’t fully grasp the imported concepts and thus often “mistranslated" them. Thus, painting and sculpture was considered higher art than *kogei*. "In the old days, there was no clear distinction between craft and art, either meant 'the work of a skilled craftsman.'"[4] For Soetsu Yanagi, this was the starting point for inventing a new concept that not only returned crafts to a high position in the cultural value system but established a new classification for folk craft.

In 1926, the term *Mingei* (民藝) was coined by Yanagi along with Shoji Hamada and Kanjiro Kawai. The word is an abbreviation of *Mishu-teki kougei* (民衆的工芸), (the common people's crafts).[5] Yanagi's aristocratic connections and education familiarized him with the arts before he founded the Mingei movement. In 1910, Yanagi launched the magazine *Shirakaba* along with other thinkers interested in modern artists, particularly those from Europe. Sakai (2020) comments that the magazine was greatly influential on young artists interested in new trends from the West; its covers featured modern artists such as Edvard Munch and Wassily Kandinsky, whose ideals and artworks encouraged young artists to engage in artistic expression.[6]

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[4] Shintaro Shirato, "The Collection of the Nihon Mingeikan and Muneyoshi Yanagi 's View of Kogei", in *Exhibition of Muneyoshi Yanagi - Eye to the daily life of the people* (NHK Promotion, 2011), 20.

[5] Kyoko Utsumi Mimura, “Soetsu Yanagi and the Legacy of the Unknown Craftsman," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts*, vol . 20 (1994), 211, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1504123.

[6] Sakai et al., op. cit., 12.

However, Yanagi decided to focus on collecting crafts, encouraged by a series of trips to Korea, China, and Taiwan that awakened a great admiration for folk crafts within him. The crafts that he experienced on these trips caused him to reflect on Japanese crafts, thus prompting him to establish what became the Folk Crafts Museum in 1936.[7] As a thinker, he also felt the need to define the distinctive embodiment of Japanese beauty, an aesthetic equivalent to that defined by the crafts he found while traveling. He discovered this in the crafts made by common people living in rural villages who created their crafts without need for recognition. Yanagi's concepts and notions that later built the philosophy of what he called *Mingeiron* (folk crafts theory), were inspired by foreign thinkers, notably William Morris, who initiated the UK’s Arts and Crafts Movement in 1860.[8] Although Yanagi argued that he wasn't influenced by foreign ideas, Kikuchi contradicts this claim, stating that foreign ideas were planted during Yanagi’s education and encouraged by the rapid social and historical changes that took place in Japan during the Taisho era (1912-1926).[9]

When Yanagi first considered founding a museum dedicated to folk crafts, he originally named it *Mingei Bijutsukan* (Japan Folk Crafts Art Museum), but he decided to remove the term *Bijutsu* (art) from the name, simplifying it to *Mingeikan* (Japan Folk Crafts Museum). Yanagi states:

> The reason why we called it "Mingei Art Museum" at first, and then shortened it to *Mingeikan* (Folk Crafts Museum) is that the term art tends to be accompanied by various incorrect ideas. Today "art" is generally considered to be in the department of "crafts," and there are many people

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[7] The Japan Folk Crafts Museum, “History of the Japan Folk Crafts Museum and Founder Soetsu Yanagi”, accessed September 20, 2020, https://mingeikan.or.jp/about/history/?lang=en

[8] Oscar Lovell Triggs, *The Arts and Crafts Movement* (New York, Parkstone International, 2012), 7.

[9] Yuko Kikuchi, *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural nationalism and Oriental Orientalism* (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 1-42.

> who separate the two. However, since it's the field of craft that we are most interested about, to express it with the word art may confuse the contents. That's why I called it the Folk Crafts Museum.[10]

It may have been a previous experience that prompted his decision to exclude the term *art* and simply name it *Mingeikan.* After the Tokyo National Museum (東京国立博物館) was rebuilt in 1929, Yanagi offered to donate a part of his collection to the museum. His proposal was declined, motivating him to establish the Mingeikan without the assistance of the public sector. The opening of his museum was thus regarded as an anti-art movement against government-made art.[11]

Focused on his interest in crafts, Yanagi based the Mingeikan on other museums that featured them, such as the Skansen Folk Museum in Stockholm, Sweden. Eventually, the Mingeikan opened to the general public in 1936 without any government assistance, thanks to a substantial donation from industrialist Magosaburo Ohara.[12] Although Yanagi greatly admired Western art as seen in the publications featured in *Shirakaba* magazine,[13] he decided to focus on exhibiting and promoting Japanese crafts. At the time, the government's interest was focused on Western art, while Japanese crafts likely represented a return to the past; therefore, Yanagi had to run his museum without government support.

Since its opening day, the work of Mingei members has been featured in exhibitions at the Folk Crafts Museum. Yanagi created a vast collection of crafts including ceramics, textiles, wood work, *otsu-e* (a type of Japanese folk painting), and *Mokujiki* sculptures (religious pieces carved by ascetic Buddhist monk Mokujiki).[14] His main aim was to create a collection that featured the crafts he had collected while traveling in Korea, China, Taiwan, and Japan, and eventually, crafts created by the artists who were grounded in the ideas that led to the establishment of the Mingei movement.[15]

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[10] The Japan Folk Crafts Association, "Nihon Mingeikan Kaikan Kinen Tokushu," in *Kogei* (Tokyo, 1936), 384.
[11] Shirato, op. cit., 20-21.

[12] Mimura, op. cit., 212.

[13] *Shirakaba* magazine was discontinued in 1923. The influence of Western art on Yanagi is discussed in Bryan Moeran's article "Bernard Leach and the Japanese Folk Craft Movement: The Formative Years," in *Journal of Design History*, Vol. 2, No. 2/3 (1989), 139-144, https://www.jstor.org/stable/1315803.

Around the same time that *Shirakaba* magazine was launched, the *Sosaku-hanga* (creative prints) movement was founded. The goal of the movement was to create "an individualism of self-drawn, self-carved, and self-printed work." The father of the movement, Kanae Yamamoto, published the journal *Hosun* in 1907 with his friends Hakutei Ishii and Tsunemoto Morita with the aim to solidify their ideas on *Sosaku-hanga*. Later, in 1918, they founded the *Nihon Sosaku-hanga Kyokai* (Japan Creative Print Association), which aimed at popularizing prints and getting them officially recognized as works of fine art.[16] Towards the end of the Taisho era, printmaking was accepted as part of the *Kokugakai* (国画会) (Society for National Painting) exhibition, and later in the *Teiten* exhibition in 1927, and the second *Shin-bunten* exhibition ("New Annual Exhibition") held in 1938 and sponsored by the Ministry of Education. It was in the latter that Shiko Munakata[17] became recognized for his print *Shomanfu Uto Hanga Mandala.*[18]

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[14] See for instance "'Mokujiki Fever' Endures" by Alice Rawsthorn, in *The New York Times*:https://www.nytimes.com/2013/12/24/arts/design/24iht-mingei24-Mokujiki-Fever-Endures.html.

[15] The Japan Folk Crafts Museum, "Collection,", accessed September 20, 2020, https://mingeikan.or.jp/collections/

[16] Printmaking, as a reproduction technique that was intended for mass production, was not considered a part of the modern art classification system: the focus at the time was on getting it recognized as a fine art.

[17] Shiko Munakata (1903 - 1975) was the leading figure of printmaking within the Mingei movement. His works were recognized in Japan as folk art and internationally as modern art. As one of the artist-craftsmen who assumed an individual approach towards creation, the influence that his work might have posed on other Japanese artists is essential to understanding Yunoki's shift towards the arts.

[18] Sakai et al., op. cit., 14.

Shiko Munakata's print work was discovered by Shoji Hamada at the 11th Kokugakai exhibition in 1936, which later attracted the attention of Soetsu Yanagi and Kanjiro Kawai. As for the efforts started by the Japan Creative Print Association to recognize prints as fine art, they continued by establishing the *Nihon Hanga Kyokai* (Japan Print Association) in 1931, which promoted international awareness of Japanese printmaking, and later started a provisional printmaking class at Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1935.[19]

After the Mingeikan was built, the collection was classified and put on display. In order to collect handicrafts, the members of the Mingei movement traveled around the country to search second-hand shops and temple flea markets for what they considered to be "beautiful items" according to Yanagi's ideals. He defined this ideal of the 'criterion of beauty in Japan' in his book *Kogei no Michi* (*The Way of Crafts*), which was later adapted by Bernard Leach in the book *The Unknown Craftsman.*[20] As previously mentioned, artwork by Mingei members was also added to the collection, which raised the question of how these artists were to be called unknown craftsmen. This prompted Yanagi to differentiate between *artisans* who created crafts following his ideals and *artist-craftsmen* who led these artisans in their creation process. This situation created tension within the group between those who supported this differentiation and those who didn't. It also revealed a paradigm in terms of this selflessness. Kanbara describes the difference between art and craft as defined by a recognition of the artist. Conventionally, at art museums, artists' names appear on captions next to the artwork, while at the Folk Art Museum, no information about the creators is given.[21] In the Mingei group, the difference between the unknown craftsman and the artist-craftsman was clearly highlighted by the fact that the former had to remain unknown and the latter had already earned recognition for his work, and continued to do so over the course of his career; this is the main contradiction revealed in the ideal of selflessness stated by Yanagi. He mentions in his essay *The Way of Craftsmanship* that individuality is not the path to achieve "no-thought" in the production of folk crafts, and that the artist-craftsman's contribution to Mingei is their intellectual ability for appreciating crafts, specifically to understand and recognize beauty rather than express it.[22] Keisuke Serizawa, a leading textile artist in the Mingei group, personified the artist-craftsman and produced work with a distinctive style that Milhaup describes as *eclectic*.[23] Other Mingei members—like the printmaker Shiko Munakata—were also not restricted to intellectual activities and created crafts with an individual approach.[24]

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[19] Ibid.

[20] Yanagi thought of a theory that would restrict the endless possibilities of humble "beauty" to only a few considerations. Thus this criteria can be summarized under the following headings: 1. 'beauty of handcrafts' (*Shukogei no Bi*); 2. 'beauty of intimacy' (*Shitashisa no Bi*); 3. 'beauty of use/function' (*Yo/Kino no Bi*); 4. 'beauty of health' (*Kenko no Bi*); 5. 'beauty of naturalness' (*Shizen no Bi*); 6. 'beauty of simplicity' (*Tanjun no Bi*); 7. 'beauty of tradition' (*Dento no Bi*); 8. 'beauty of irregularity' (*Kisu no Bi*); 9. 'beauty of inexpensiveness' (*Ren no Bi*); 10. 'beauty of plurality' (*Ta no Bi*); 11. 'beauty of sincerity and honest toil' (*Seijitsu na Ródó no Bi*); 12. 'beauty of selflessness and anonymity' (*Mushin/Mumei no Bi*). (Kikuchi 2004, 53).

Moreover, Shirato mentions that according to many Mingei critics, the Folk Crafts Museum's collection includes many things that do not fall under the ideals of Mingei for various reasons: because they were artifacts made for the ruling class (as is the case with fabric dyed by *bingata*, a traditional Okinawan technique); their expense made them inaccessible to common people; or they were not made by unknown craftsmen.[25]

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[21] Masaaki Kanbara, *Gendai no Bijutsu - Kaiga Kara Toshi he,* (Keiso shobo, 2002), 179-182.

[22] Soetsu Yanagi, *The Unknown Craftsman* (Kodansha, 1972), 201-203.

[23] Terry Satsuki Milhaupt, "In the Guise of Tradition: Serizawa Keisuke and His Eclectic Designs," in *Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design* (Japan Society, 2009), 97.

[24] See Milhaupt, 97-100 and Sakai et al., 11-15.

[25] Shirato, op.cit., 22-23.

During Japan’s postwar era, Yanagi's ideals weakened; the Second World War had a negative effect on Japan’s arts and culture, making it difficult for craftsmen to access materials or sell their goods for reasonable prices. *Washi* paper was still produced in Japan during the war, and during the American occupation, soldiers wanted to send gifts or Christmas cards to their families, thereby increasing demand for it. Yunoki, who started his career in crafts in 1946 in the postwar Mingei group, remembers working with Serizawa on setting up a group called *Moegikai* (萠木会), with the purpose of collecting materials and selling them to other artists or creators, a task that would have been extremely difficult to pursue individually. Due to the scarcity of fabric and the availability of Japanese paper, Serizawa began to dye his motifs on paper. As Yunoki mentions, "there was a demand for these kinds of products at "Ginza Takumi" in Tokyo."[26] Yunoki, who joined the Moegikai group years after its foundation, acknowledges that in the beginning it was a study group to share ideas, criticism, and even stories about the Folk Crafts Museum: a perfect learning atmosphere for a "beginner" (as he called himself). However, eventually the Moegikai group became an enterprise dedicated to selling crafts, which created friction between members who were pro-commercialism and those who were not.[27]

Artist-craftsmen in Mingei split into two groups: firm supporters of Yanagi's ideal of the unknown craftsman and those who preferred the path of self-expression. The members who joined after the war and learned of Yanagi's ideals from its initial members probably understood Mingei differently from the original members; the ideal of the unknown craftsman had been questioned, and particularly after the war, individualism unfolded in some of the initial members of the group as well.[28] By the time Yunoki joined the Mingei movement, many changes had occurred, and subleaders within the group were spreading and teaching Yanagi's ideas. Yunoki began studying the katazome dyeing technique. He chose katazome as his main medium because he was attracted to its characteristic ambiguity: the quality that makes it difficult to discern at first glance whether the work is a painting or a print.

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[26] Samiro Yunoki, "Keisuke Serizawa and 'Moegikai,'" in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Tokyo: Heibonsha, 2021), 70.

[27] "About Prof Serizawa - Part 1", in Samiro Yunoki, "Yunoki Samiro Bunken Shu" [Samiro Yunokis' Bibliography]. Accessed May 6, 2020. https://www.samiro.net/notebook2/

The Mingei members resumed efforts to continue collecting and expanding Mingei theory in Japan. Yanagi traveled abroad to seed and spread his Mingei theory, in an enterprise referred to as "reverse orientalism,"[29] while other members continued to incorporate Mingei style into modern design. Meanwhile, Yunoki continued to study katazome while receiving guidance from Serizawa. The time period marked by Japan's recovery from the war determined important changes in Mingei; perhaps most notably the collaboration of Mingei with modern design and its expansion beyond Japan.

The fact that Western art was growing in popularity while craft developed within the Mingei movement reveals the liminal state of art in Japan during the twentieth century; perhaps this ambiguous state made it easier for artists to cross over from one genre to the other. This might have stimulated Yunoki to expand his creative connections beyond crafts. At that time, the changing atmosphere that brought many artists and craftsmen into a state of flux—

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[28] Kikuchi, op. cit., 210-217.

[29] By studying Kikuchi's research and viewpoint on Yanagi's developments, one can grasp how Yanagi's Mingei theory engaged in 'Orientalism.' The embodiment of Japanese beauty sought through Yanagi's Mingeiron assumed 'Orientalism,' a widely discussed notion by Edward Said, a critical point to understand cultural expansion from the orient and occident. In her book, Kikuchi describes Yanagi's project to introduce Mingeiron to the 'othered' peripheries in Asia as 'Oriental Orientalism,' and later to the occident as 'Reverse Orientalism.' See Chapters 3 and 4 in *Japanese Modernisation and Mingei Theory: Cultural nationalism and Oriental Orientalism*, 123-241.

influencing what they absorbed and incorporated into their practice—could have easily influenced Yunoki to concentrate on production and further explore the arts.

Background and objectives

Samiro Yunoki's work and career represents the transition from craft to art. Few researchers have acknowledged this transition or referred to Yunoki as an artist. The fact that he continued using the katazome technique despite major changes in his life and career shows how katazome can defy genre, belonging both to craft and art. One must reconsider Japanese art history when studying Yunoki, one of the artists from the postwar Mingei group that has lived until this day. This research will help clarify what happened to Yunoki's connections to the Mingei movement and how his work has evolved over his career. To conduct the present research, a review on Mingei theory was important to clarify Yanagi's ideals; *Mingei* magazine and subsequent books and articles on the topic of Mingei were consulted in this research.

The book *Out of Mingei* published in 2019 by artist Yuta Nakamura and designer Yosuke Jikuhara offers historical research into the various movements that took place parallel to the Mingei movement and draws connections between relevant figures inside and outside Japan who could have influenced the main course of events that revolved around Yanagi's ideals. This research was significant to help clarify Yunoki's earlier developments in craft within the Mingei movement from a macro perspective. The lines that separated art, craft, and design in twentieth-century Japan were blurry, and the intersections that appear in the chronological maps offered by Nakamura and Jikuhara (2019) reveal the liminality of the three genres.

Another publication that aids in the understanding of Yunoki's expression is *Dreaming Hands: Samiro Yunoki's "Print" Works 1983-2007* (*Yume Miru Te: Yunoki Samiro "Han" no Shigoto 1983-2007*), published in 2013 and edited by Yusaku Masuda. It not only includes insights into Yunoki's print work, but is one of the few texts that considers Yunoki's shift from Mingei. As Masuda stated, "although it's not possible to clarify the exact time when Mingei as Yunoki's center began to shift, there's the pattern works created in katazome dyeing technique that have an urban and sophisticated decorativeness that has nothing to do with 'Mingei style.'"[30] This was the first acknowledgement that Yunoki's focus had moved from the realm of folk crafts, thus leading to the question: What were the main factors and experiences in Yunoki's life and career that enabled this change to take place?

Other researchers have noted that, beginning in 1967, Yunoki began to travel outside of Japan to experience crafts from other countries and to absorb different ways of life. During his travels, Yunoki made sketches and represented his experience through a series of images that were later compiled in his book *The Joy of Travel* published in 1986. Another book that is essential to understanding Yunoki's katazome work is the compilation of textiles, *Samiro Yunokis' Collection of Works* (*Yunoki Samiro Sakuhin Shu*), published in 1984. It offers insight into his katazome productions and pairs photographs of Yunoki's patterns with excerpts of Makoto Ooka's text (*Seiketsu Naru Mu Shozoku*) which offer a particular perspective on repetition in dyeing. Photographs of the objects[31] that Yunoki had collected during his travels are also included. It's important to point out that the photographs of the textiles aren't dated. However, from the information gathered from his biography, we can infer that they are from the year 1967—when Yunoki traveled to Europe for the first time

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[30] Yusaku Masuda, *Dreaming hands: Samiro Yunoki's "Print" Works 1983-2007* (Arts and Crafts, 2013), 87.

[31] See Appendix A.

—to the year 1982, when he traveled to India. On his trip to India, he was guided by his former student Hiroko Iwatate, founder of the Iwatate Folk Textile Museum. Looking at the textiles presented in this book, and returning to Masuda's description of his work as "urban and sophisticated decorativeness," I would add that the playfulness and bold way in which the textiles are hung "to float freely,"— placed as a mat on the grass or wrapped around a woman's body—reveals Yunoki’s need to transcend the common use of fabric in an interior design setting, beyond Yanagi's "useful beauty" and away from the craft genre.[32]

Shinichiro Fujita, who was the president of the Ohara Museum at the time, contributed to *Samiro Yunokis' Collection of Works* with the significant text *About Samiro Yunoki*,[33] in which he comments that “katazome dyeing has many restrictions which makes it a technique that cannot be freely expressed like painting, but Mr. Yunoki uses it to his advantage to make the patterns seem alive and moving." This statement suggests that at that point, Yunoki was already transcending the technique and was appropriating it to convey his own expression. Fujita continues describing Yunoki as a textile artist who started his career in crafts but was not trapped in folk art aesthetics, and he concludes the paragraph by stating that "the limitless charm of this artist is hidden."[34] Almost forty years have passed since Fujita declared this, and today Yunoki's artistic charm continues to be revealed in his katazome work, but it has certainly changed through the years; a very characteristic and different kind of expression can be observed in Yunoki's recent katazome work. The present inquiry aims to clarify and focalize these changes in his artistic expression.

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[32] Masuda, op.cit., 87.

[33] Shinichiro Fujita, "About Samiro Yunoki," in *Samiro Yunokis' Collection of Works* (Yobi Sha, 1984), 163-167.

[34] Ibid, 167.

In 1983, Samiro Yunoki began to study printmaking at Atelier MMG Tokyo. This relationship with the printing medium lasted twenty-four years and is fundamental to the construction of Yunoki's expression. It was his first time creating work in a medium other than dyeing. The book *Dreaming Hands: Samiro Yunoki's "Print" Works 1983-2007,* a thorough compilation of Yunoki's printmaking work presented with text by the editor,Yusaku Masuda, offers an insight on the process, techniques, and the culmination of this journey in printmaking that took Yunoki to exhibit his work for the first time in Paris.

The work created from the beginning of the twenty-first century until the present is considered representative of the height of Yunoki's artistic expression. The book *Samiro Yunoki—92 Years of Color and Shape* (*Yunoki Samiro-92 Nen Bun no Iro to Katachi*), published in 2014, gathers some of Yunoki's thoughts and reviews his work as a whole, from his drawings and objects to his textile, doll, printmaking and sculptural work. It offers a unique viewpoint on Yunoki that emphasizes the diversity of his work. In 2019, a visit to the exhibition *Dyeworks by Samiro Yunoki: Patterns and Colors* (*Yunoki Samiro Senshoku-Moyo to Shikisai*) at the Japan Folk Crafts Museum in Toyota was the author's first encounter with his work. Yunoki was presented as a folk artist in the exhibition, where his textiles and some objects from his personal collection were displayed. The following year, a visit to the exhibition *Samiro Yunoki: 97-year-old Dyer Here and Now* (*Yunoki Samiro no Ima*) held at the Matsumoto City Museum of Art in 2020 gave the author insight into how Yunoki's expression had crystallized. Although this exhibition gathered a diverse amount of Yunoki's work, ranging from textiles, printmaking, illustrations, and installations, the curator conspicuously organized the pieces according to the multifaceted quality of the work, clearly highlighting each of Yunoki's creative faces. The publication *Samiro Yunoki's Words* (*Yunoki Samiro no Kotoba*), released in 2021, a compilation of Yunoki's thoughts and experiences, aided in the understanding of his many facets as an artist. In July 2021, *Life in Art Exhibition*, at Atelier Muji in Tokyo's Ginza area featured a group of artists and designers that included Yunoki. The clear difference between art and design was one of the most enlightening aspects of this exhibition; experiencing Yunoki's work in this space concluded with the reflection: *Yunoki is an artist*.

Research methodologies

This dissertation follows the life history research method, a qualitative method which documents an individual’s life through diaries, notes, works and other narratives. The material compiled on Yunoki's life and career from the viewpoint of his artistic production and ulterior development of his expression became the focus of this inquiry. However, in order to have a wider range of perspectives on the artist, it became necessary to collect multiple narratives: notes written by the artist himself, work by other researchers, interviews, and my own analysis of the collected material, namely Yunoki’s artwork. Thus it became a triangulation of these different perspectives.[35]

The literature found on Yunoki's work is vast. For this dissertation it was narrowed down to material that offered insight on Yunoki's expression. A few scholarly works mention Yunoki's textile work from the technical viewpoint. Some of the catalogues and texts by curators and art historians refer to Yunoki as a folk artist tied to the Mingei movement, while others refer to him as an artist. In the current inquiry, the lead was centered on the viewpoint of Yunoki the artist, but a thorough review of the bibliography from diverse viewpoints was important to fully comprehend the influences on his work. Previous interviews by other authors and notes by Yunoki were fundamental, although personal visits to the artist's studio were ruled out as a possibility due to the spread of COVID-19. Information found in books and photographs that detail his life in the studio were also an important contribution. One of the biggest challenges of this research project was the impossibility of conducting interviews. They would have been a significant source of information while explaining specific aspects of Yunoki's process in his most recent production. In order to grasp Yunoki's production, the creation of an image database[36] based on his work was necessary. The information on the work was collected from different sources such as books, catalogs, and websites, then classified according to year of creation, technique, and genre, and finally organized in a way that could enable the author to grasp the changes and focal points in the formal aspects of Yunoki's production.

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[35] Gary Knowles and Ardra Cole, *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research-Perspectives, Methodologies, Examples, and Issues* (SAGE Publications 2007), 119-120.

This dissertation relies on Umberto Eco's thesis of the "open work," which underlines the characteristics of modern artwork as ambiguous and achievable employing unconventional forms of expression that lead to multiple interpretations of a single piece. These features are analyzed in Samiro Yunoki's later katazome work, in Chapter 3, as a way to grasp the qualities of his unique expression. The practice of collecting, which was a fundamental activity within the Mingei movement and later continued by its members, including Yunoki, is covered in James Clifford's book *The Predicament of Culture* (1988). Juan José Gómez Molina's book *Las Lecciones de Dibujo* (1995), in which he reflects on drawing as a means of expression and his experience with drawing lessons, was essential for my own writing on the same topic in chapter three of this paper.

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[36] See appendix B.

Books and catalogues in Japanese, Gómez Molina's *Las Lecciones de Dibujo* in Spanish, and a catalogue in French (*La Danse des Formes* exhibition catalogue) were translated by Rosanna Rios Perez. Unless an English translation was provided, the references to books and catalogues have been translated to English with the original title in romaji. The dissertation presented here is the outcome of my research during my candidacy; all of my ideas are contained in my research notebook "Investigación," and references, quotations and paraphrases attributable to other authors have been thoroughly documented.

The chapters in this dissertation are organized as follows: **Chapter 1** is the main body of this research. It contains a brief description of Yunoki's early life and his first connection to the Mingei movement through Soetsu Yanagi and Keisuke Serizawa. Subsequently, from the database analysis, three major periods were devised within Yunoki's production: Mingei; Travel and Printmaking; and Art and Design. The last two periods introduce the determining factors that made Yunoki move away from crafts production. From each of these time periods one work was selected and analyzed. The works were selected according to how their formal characteristics helped develop Yunoki's expression.

In **Chapter 2**, a comparative review between Yunoki and his mentor Keisuke Serizawa describes the differences in their assumed roles that eventually led them to take separate career paths. It is followed by a section that describes the act of collecting, beginning from the Mingei movement and continuing afterwards in the careers of both individuals, examining their very different perspectives on collecting.

Chapter 3 offers insight into how Yunoki's shift to the arts brought to life his artistic language, the influence of other artists, and reflective thought that help contextualize his work in the world as a modern artist. A section of this chapter is dedicated to drawing, an activity Yunoki developed that is significant in his creative pursuit and in molding his expressive persona. Examples of Yunoki's recent katazome works are analyzed from a technical and artistic point of view, framed within today's developments in katazome. Following this analysis, I offer my own perspective on katazome and conclusions with a personal reflection from the viewpoint of artistic practice in contemporary textiles.

CHAPTER 1

SAMIRO YUNOKI'S LIFE AND WORKS

1.1 Samiro Yunoki’s Family and Roots

The Yunoki family came from the small town of Tamashima in Kurashiki, Okayama Prefecture. This area is known for warm weather and a nearby port facing the Seto Sea. During the Kanbun era, Samiro Yunoki’s ancestor was appointed to work with Katsuma Itakura, then the lord of Bitchu-Matsuyama, and he stayed with family members in the old residence (*Saisotei)*[37] that still exists today. Since they lived relatively close to the harbor and the area was a prolific commercial town open to trade and cultural exchange, the Yunoki residence became the cultural center of Tamashima, with many literary artists visiting frequently. Samiro Yunoki’s grandfather, Gyokuson, experienced the rise of Tamashima culture after the Meiji era. Gyokuson was a poet and calligrapher, as well as an artist who learned *Nanga* from *Kotetsubai* (胡鉄梅), a Chinese painter who lived in Japan in the late Meiji era and became a great influence on *nanga* painters.[38] Within the artist circles in Tamashima, Gyokuson was a prominent figure and an artistic reference in Okayama Prefecture.

Gyokuson’s son Hisata, Samiro Yunoki’s father, became a Western-style painter and traveled to France in 1911 to study at the Jean Paul Lawrence Academy. After traveling and studying in France, Hisata Yunoki returned to Japan and moved with all of his family members to Tabata, Tokyo. In 1922, Samiro, Hisata’s third son, was born. While living in Tokyo, Hisata studied Western painting at the Pacific Painting Society (太平洋洋画会研究所) where he was a central painter, and participated recurrently in the Imperial Academy Art exhibition.[39] Hisata's eldest son Shokichiro Yunoki also became a Western painter. He graduated from the oil painting class at Tokyo Fine Arts school in 1941 under Takeji Fujishima, who was one of the leading figures who spread Western style painting in Japan.[40] Shokichiro also studied with Swiss painter Conrad Meili, who arrived to Japan after World War II and was appointed by the Kamakura Bunka Renmei[41] to teach in the Art Academy in Kamakura.

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[37] This Saisotei (西爽亭) residence is National Tangible Cultural Property. Japan Heritage Component Cultural Property Boshin Historic Site.

[38] Shinichiro Fujita, “About Yunoki Samiro,” in *Yunoki Samiro Sakuhin Shu* (Yobi Sha, 1984), 163-164.

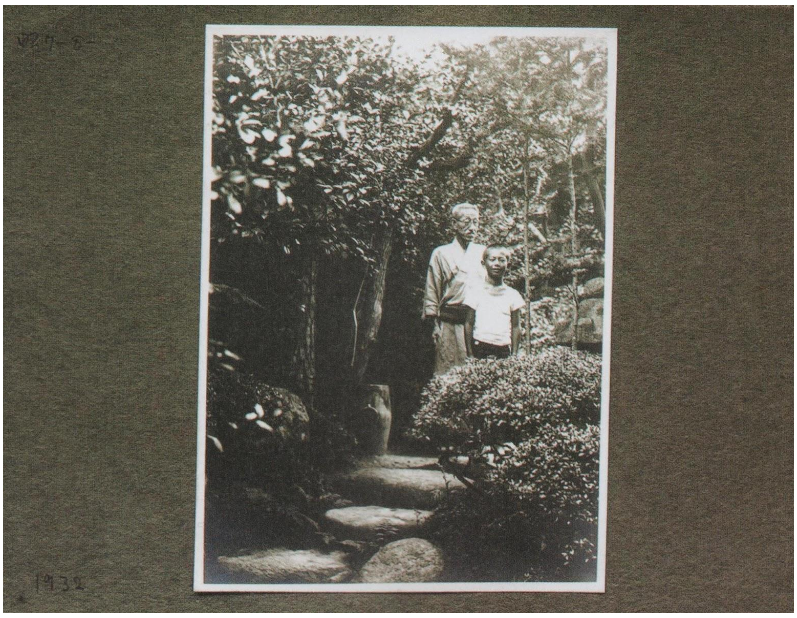

Figure 1. Samiro Yunoki at age 10 with his grandfather Gyokuson at the family home in Tamashima, 1932; photograph by Naoaki Yamamoto, from Yunoki's family album.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] An exhibition by Gyokuson, Hisata, and Shokikiro Yunoki was held from June to August 2021 at the Okayama Prefectural Museum of Art. For more information, visit: https://okayama-kenbi.info/events/event/20210521_yunokike/ (accessed August 31, 2021).

[41] Philippe Dallais and Roger Mottini, "A union of hearts and talents – Conrad Meili (1895–1969) and Kikou Yamata (1897–1975)", *Switzerland and Japan - Common Grounds and Challenges.* (2007):31-42.

Being raised in a family of painters cultivated Yunoki's interest in the arts (fig. 1). His father and brother—who both focused specifically on painting—later had an impact on Yunoki's developments as an artist, but not particularly as a painter. Many writers and artists lived in Tabata around the end of the Meiji era; Yunoki grew up in a very artistic atmosphere. Tabata was an ordinary rural village in the Tokyo suburbs, but stood out as a Cultural Village (文士村) because of the artists who flocked there at the start of the Taisho era. Indeed, when Akutagawa Ryuunosuke, a renowned novelist of that time period, moved to Tabata's *Higashidori* in 1911, it was established that many artists and writers would settle in the area. [42] During his childhood, Yunoki created his own universe. Although his health was fragile, and he didn't attend elementary school as regularly as other children, he found comfort in games, stories that he heard on the radio and later illustrated, an 8mm French projector called Patty Baby, and rattle games made with cans and other objects.[43]

As Yunoki reached adolescence, his health became stronger and he began to explore nature during walks and hikes in the surrounding areas of Matsumoto City, where he attended Matsumoto High School from 1940 until 1942.[44] During the two years that he lived there, he built a special connection with the city, a particularly important crafts center that greatly influenced his eventual entry into crafts.[45]

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[42] Fujita, op.cit., 165.

[43] Samiro Yunoki,"Samiro Yunokis' Bibliography: Upbringing." Accessed May 6, 2020. https://www.samiro.net/notebook2/

[44] See "Matsumoto no omoide" (Memories of Matsumoto) by Samiro Yunoki in appendix C.

[45] Miki Muto et al., *Samiro Yunoki, 97 Year Old Dyer Here and Now* (Matsumoto City Museum of Art, 2020), 129.

The times were difficult due to the aftermath of the war. Only a year after he began studying art history at Tokyo University, the 1943 student mobilization abruptly halted Yunoki's university studies. In addition, his family home in Tabata was burned in the war, which also prompted Hisata to take his family back to Tamashima. When Gyokuson passed away in 1943, Hisata decided to return to his family home, where he played a leading role in the Okayama Art Society (岡山画壇) until his death in 1965. After these events Yunoki returned to Okayama prefecture, where he got married in 1946. The same year, he started working at the Ohara Museum,[46] which eventually became a turning point for his calling as a craftsman. The Ohara Museum was in decline after the war; sometimes it had no visitors, which drove Yunoki into exploring the museum's complete arts and crafts collection and carefully revising the *Kogei* and *Kogei no Michi* magazine in his spare time.[47]

Enlightened by Yanagi's theory on crafts, Yunoki decided to halt his studies at the University of Tokyo indefinitely. He was inspired by his experience at the Ohara Museum where he was surrounded by crafts and became close to working craftsmen, which built up his urge to create as well. He was impressed by a calendar created by Keisuke Serizawa in 1946 (fig. 2). He wasn't sure if it was a painting or a print, because he wasn't familiar with stencil dyeing, but his interest in the technique brought him to visit Serizawa's house in Aoyama. Of all crafts, he was probably more attracted to stencil dyeing because it was colorful and closer to the genre of painting.[48]

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[46] The Ohara Museum was one of the first museums in Japan to have Western artists in their collection. It was founded in 1930 by Ohara Magosaburo to honor Kojima Torajiro, a Western-style painter who gathered an important collection of masterpieces by El Greco, Gauguin, Matisse, and Monet amongst other Western artists. Later Ohara included Mingei pieces, and created the Keisuke Serizawa and Shiko Munakata rooms in 1963. Due to the important exhibition held in 1965, a permanent modern art exhibition, the Museum was declared the first Modern Art Museum in Japan. This information is available at http://www.ohara.or.jp/en/about/ (accessed August 30, 2021).

[47] Yunoki,"Samiro Yunokis' Bibliography: Upbringing".

[48] Fujita, op.cit., 166.

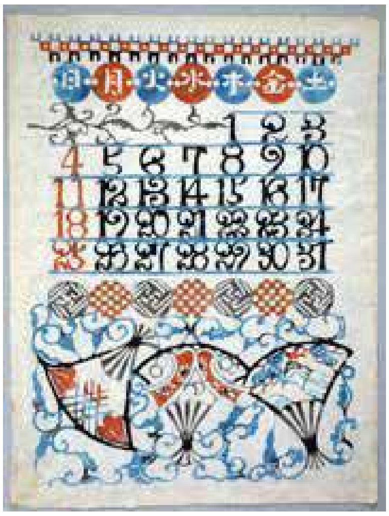

Figure 2. Keisuke Serizawa, 1946 Calendar, katazome on paper, 35.6 x 26.8 cm. Serizawa Keisuke Art and Craft Museum.

The first twenty-four years in Yunoki's life were defined by drastic changes that determined his career path and subsequent creative activities. The war marked an end to his university studies and eventually led to his encounter with crafts at the Ohara Museum. However, there were always two worlds present in Yunoki's life: the worlds of art and craft. As a child, growing up among artists who learned, embraced, and developed works in Western-style painting must have defined in him a certain taste for the arts. His studies in art history, although cut short by the student mobilization, may have instilled a certain way of seeing and appreciation for masterpieces within him. As mentioned in the introduction, pre-war Japan was a liminal state for the arts and crafts movements, and the postwar recovery, an inflection point in Japanese history, must have led people to review and reconsider their position in society. Materials were difficult to find, especially for artists, and recovery from the war was prioritized in society. However, this did not discourage Yunoki from learning katazome and creating crafts under his mentor Serizawa. In the next section, Yunoki's production is reviewed and analyzed in order to build the idea of how his expression as a creator developed; important points of change in his life and career, in terms of his production, are brought into focus in order to grasp what subsequently brought out his language as an artist.

1.2 Samiro Yunoki's Work: 1948-2021

In order to see Yunoki's work as a whole, his creations were collected into an image database [49] that organized his work by year of creation, technique, characteristics, and genre to which they belong. Nearly all titles were written in Japanese to make it easier for future researchers to find Yunoki's pieces in books or other sources relating to the database. However, in the analysis of the works, the original Japanese title was translated in order to describe and infer the meanings of each piece. Some works found in *Stencil Dyeing Collection* (*Katazome Shu* 1969) and *Samiro Yunokis' Collection of Works* (*Yunoki Samiro-Sakuhin Shu* 1984) had no creation date; therefore, it was decided to include them in the section of the database defined as "unknown date," with an approximate year of creation taken from the publication date of the book and the characteristics of the work. In the work that was collected, Yunoki's creative career was divided into the following fields: textiles (katazome and *chusen*); printmaking (*gaufrage*, monotype, mimeograph, lithography, carborundum, linocut and paper cutout); sculpture (wood, iron, dolls); painting (on glass, wood, and paper). Definitions were assigned to the three major disciplines that make up Yunoki's production. Art was defined as unique pieces that do not have any useful purpose apart from being exhibited and viewed in a museum or gallery. Crafts were defined as works meant to be useful within the context of everyday life, apart from decorating a space (such as curtains or tablecloths) or used for clothing. Design was defined as published works such as illustrations for children's books; posters; or works that are part of an interior design setting. From the database, groups corresponding to the major time periods and creative movements that intersected Yunoki's career were defined by the following categories.

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[49] See appendix B.

1. Mingei (1948-1966): work developed at the beginning of Yunoki's exploration of craft including katazome and chusen[50] pieces on fabric and paper.

2. Travel and Printmaking (1967-1999): work that was influenced by his travel experiences and printmaking as a new technique in his production, including: monotype,[51] lithography,[52] *gaufrage,*[53] and painting on glass, wood and paper. During this period he continued to produce work using the previously mentioned katazome and chusen techniques.

3. Art and Design (2000-2021): katazome and chusen pieces on fabric and paper; sculpture (dolls, wooden, metal); printed work including *carborundum*,[54]

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[50] Chusen, or injection dyeing, is like katazome in that it involves repeating a pattern through a stencil, but the dyeing process is done through a machine that pours the dyestuff on the folded fabric. See Maruyama 2021, 10-11.

[51] A monotype is a unique print created by covering a glass or metal surface with ink or paint and extracting part of the paint with the fingers to create a design; subsequently, a paper is pressed on the surface to transfer the design.

[52] Lithography is a printing process that uses a flat stone or metal plate on which the image areas are worked using a greasy substance so that the ink will adhere to them, while the non-image areas are made ink-repellent. https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/l/lithography (accessed December 28, 2021).

[53] A French term meaning *embossing.* A paper is placed on the embossed plate or surface and passed through the press to make a relief.

[54] Carborundum is a grit that is used in lithography to help ground the stones down so that the surface of the stone is perfect to draw and print from. There are three different kinds of carborundum grit used – rough, medium and fine, which gradually creates a surface to work and print from. https://www.ironbridgeframing.co.uk/printmaking/intaglio-printmaking-techniques/carborundum/ (accessed December 28, 2021).

mimeograph,[55] linocut[56] and paper cutout, all developed on paper; book illustrations; and work that collaborates with interior design.

The latter group was divided into two time periods: the first defined by printmaking work from 2000 to 2007, and the second defined by katazome work from 2010 to 2021 (the present year). Yunoki's production of katazome work suddenly increased in the past decade; he had produced textiles in previous years, but in smaller numbers. Yunoki's career was divided into these three major periods based on the understanding that crafts were predominant in the beginning of his artistic career (Mingei), in the dyeing techniques katazome and *chusen*. Yunoki's technique and expression changed in 1967 (Travel and Printmaking), when he started to travel and began to produce monotype work (1969). A period of exploration of printmaking followed, along with experimentation with painting. Yunoki began illustrating books at the end of this period; his illustration production dramatically increased in the first decade of the twenty-first century. The last period (Art and Design) is marked by a change of expression in his katazome pieces. A lot of printmaking work was also created in the first decade of this time period, using carborundum, linocut, lithography and mimeograph techniques. The next section introduces observations on the production of each of these periods, presented with events such as important exhibitions or other notable incidents of Yunoki's life. An analysis of work that is representative of each period follows.

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[55] A mimeograph is a duplicator machine that produces copies from a stencil. It preceded the photocopy machine, and became widely used in Japan, especially in the *Sosaku Hanga* group. See https://www.momaw.jp/en_exhibit/mimeograph2013-2/ (accessed December 28, 2021).

[56] **Linocut**, also called **linoleum cut**, is a type of print made from a sheet of linoleum into which a design has been cut in relief. This process of printmaking is like woodblock, but, since linoleum lacks grain, linocuts can yield a greater variety of effects than woodcuts. https://www.britannica.com/technology/linocut (accessed December 28, 2021).

1.2.1 Yunoki's Work: Mingei (1948 - 1966)

This time period was defined by Yunoki's entrance into crafts. After becoming interested in the world of stencil dyeing through Serizawa's work, and with a growing desire to learn more about crafts, Yunoki began studying dyeing, and started creating katazome works in 1948. Yunoki's work during this time period was mainly textile work defined by patterns, which are tied to the craft ideal of repetition; he engaged in the katazome and *chusen* (injection dyeing) techniques that he continued to work with over the years.[57]

In order for Yunoki to be able to begin exploring these dyeing techniques, Serizawa appointed him to live and learn in the dyeing house *Masayuki Konya* (正雪紺屋), located in Shizuoka Prefecture. According to Yunoki, after he expressed to Serizawa that he desired to learn craftsmanship under his guidance, Serizawa told him that it was better for him to study with a craftsman, so he introduced him to this house. During his stay in Shizuoka as an apprentice, Yunoki not only learned fundamental dyeing skills, but grew to understand the life of an artisan. All members of the house were involved in the dyeing process: from early morning until evening, they did nothing but hard labor. According to Yunoki, the owner of the house at the time, Ukichi Yoshioka, led the family splendidly by balancing everyday life and the family business. Yoshioka's character and charm, along with the reputation this dye house had earned over many generations, allowed him to have special benefits, even in the difficult years after the war, such as a free pass to sell *Ise Katagami*[58] throughout the whole country.[59]

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[57] Yuko Maruyama, "Tokushu wa Chusen no Otesei-fuku to Ace Hotel Kyoto," *Hana* (2021): 10-11.

As previously mentioned, the production during this time period falls into the category of craft, and Yunoki's work from this time period shares some defining characteristics. The textile motifs are mainly geometric shapes, some organic and very detailed motifs; the composition tends to be symmetrical in most pieces, mirrored horizontally or vertically.[60] The textile work *Geometric Noren* (1950) has a different visual characteristic and motif, probably inspired by *Ainu*[61]designs. The colors used in the work from this time period are mostly monochrome, two tones (adjacent colors), or a maximum of three colors (also adjacent color harmonies which are toned down in brown shades); the palettes are characterized by warm or cold hues. The size of the work varies depending on its function: there are long fabrics for curtains or to make clothing; *noren* for the entrance of a house or a business; and smaller pieces for interior decoration. There are two poster designs for Mingeikan exhibitions, and a calendar dyed on paper.

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[58] Ise Katagami is a special type of stencil (*katagami*) that dates back 1000 years. Some say it was probably developed during the Nara period, although its origin is still discussed. It's a traditional handicraft characterized by very detailed patterns, the production of which requires high skill, perseverance, and patience. See information in https://isekatagami.or.jp (accessed August 31, 2021).

[59] Yunoki,"Samiro Yunokis' Bibliography: Upbringing."

[60] See Appendix B.

[61] The Ainu are the minority group from northern Japan, Hokkaido, who have continued to live in that area and across the country, maintaining their roots and cultural values. Within the Mingei collection there are some Ainu objects gathered by Yanagi and Serizawa; in his textile creation, Serizawa was greatly inspired by the motifs in the Ainu textiles, and he transferred this knowledge to Yunoki. For more information on Ainu people follow this link https://www.ff-ainu.or.jp/web/english/together.html (accessed November 21, 2021).

During this learning period, Yunoki tried to imitate his mentor's style. Traditionally the process of designing a textile is broken down into many steps. First, the artist decides what image they wish to convey with the motif. After this, a series of sketches are made to create a pattern from the motif. Once the design has been created, the pattern (*katagami*) has to be cut out to make the stencil. Lastly, the colors for dyeing are chosen. An artisan would divide the work by assigning a group of people to work on each specific task. However, Serizawa honored the Okinawan way of *bingata* dyeing[62] by designing, cutting the katagami, and dyeing it all by himself. There was no division of labor; one person performed all of the tasks.[63] It's important to note that this apprenticeship in Shizuoka and introduction to dyeing developed Yunoki's sensibility for crafts creation, enabling him to develop his first work as a craftsman. He had his first job as a dyeing artisan in Kurashiki, but he exhibited his first katazome work at the *Kokugakai* exhibition in 1949 (fig. 3). Although Yunoki didn't feel particularly proud of this work, exhibiting in such an important venue was a good start for his career.[64] After his participation he became an active member of the association in 1953, which encouraged his annual participation in the exhibitions organized by the association until the present day.[65]

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[62] *Bingata* is a colorful method of dyeing originating in Okinawa. It can be traced back to the mid-fifteenth century, and it involves yuzen and katazome in the process. Serizawa had a special connection to bingata as an influence on his work. For more information on bingata, see: https://www.shuri-ryusen.com (accessed December 31, 2021).

[63] Terry Satsuki Milhaup, "In the Guise of Tradition" in *Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design* (New York: Japan Society, 2009), 97-100.

[64] Fujita, op.cit., 166.

[65] Samiro Yunoki, *Yunoki Samiro-92 Nen Bun no Iro to Katachi* (Graphic Sha, 2014), 156.

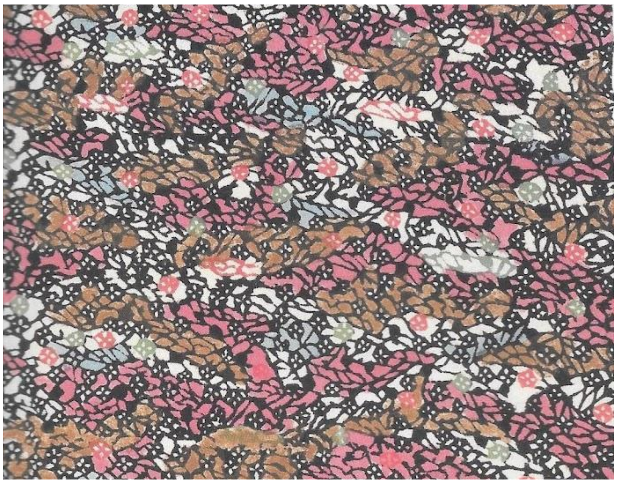

Figure 3. Samiro Yunoki, *Bingata Fu Katazome Nuno,* 1948, detail of katazome dye 《bingata-style katazome cloth》 443 x 37 cm.

Yunoki's career in textiles started to take off and in 1950, he received a telegram from Professor Serizawa, which led him to travel from Kurashiki to Tokyo to become part of the teaching staff at Joshibi University of Art and Design.[66] Serizawa taught in the crafts department that was created in 1948, and Yunoki was called to become his successor. During this time, Yunoki met and became close to Professor Yoshitaka Yanagi, Soetsu Yanagi's nephew, who was in charge of the department’s weaving lectures. According to Yunoki (2003), Yoshitaka was a very kind person with a unique personality who would encourage students to create things by making them feel confident about their ability to produce work. He and Professor Serizawa played an important role in the deepening of Yunoki’s understanding and awareness of craft techniques. Yoshitaka was a self-taught weaver. He and

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[66] Joshibi University of Art and Design was founded in 1900 by Tamako Yokoi at a time when art education at a higher level wasn't available for women in Japan. It started on the basis of improving women’s social status with the aim to educate professional craftspeople and art teachers. Moreover, their educational philosophy is to encourage “independence of women through art” and to develop students with intelligence, sensibility, and skills who can use their knowledge in art to become socially and economically independent. This information was gathered from www.joshibi.ac.jp (accessed August 30, 2021).

Yunoki shared and mutually nourished their ideas about crafts. Yoshitaka became chief of the crafts department and later dean of Joshibi University in 1975, as Yunoki later did in 1987.[67]

When Yunoki began teaching at Joshibi University, Serizawa only visited occasionally—approximately once a month—to give special lectures, for which Yunoki would assist. This also gave Yunoki the chance to learn what he couldn't acquire from the craftsman and to have a more critical view on the process of katazome. He describes a lecture given by Professor Serizawa in the summer of 1950, when he was just starting at Joshibi University, as an opportunity to learn from his master. In Yunoki's words, the workshop involved actively engaging in various katazome tasks led by Professor Serizawa; this included making *nori* paste, cutting out patterns, and washing fabric. Professor Serizawa's main goal of the workshop was for participants to fully enjoy every step of the process.[68]

In 1955, Yunoki held his first solo exhibition at Takumi Crafts Shop in Ginza, Tokyo, which was under Naokumi Shiga's supervision at that time. Dating back to 1932, the shop was dedicated to featuring high quality crafts that could be used in everyday life. Yanagi and Serizawa were both connected with Takumi; Mingei goods were sold there, and they probably encouraged Yunoki to have his first solo show at this venue. For the exhibition, Yunoki designed a poster (fig. 4) to advertise the event. This show not only marked Yunoki's first appearance as a textile artist, but also placed him in the center of Tokyo's craft market and enabled him to commercialize his work,[69] which eventually became an important aspect of the Mingei movement.[70]

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[67] Yunoki,"Samiro Yunokis' Bibliography: Joshibi Era."

[68] Ibid., "About Prof. Serizawa- Part1."

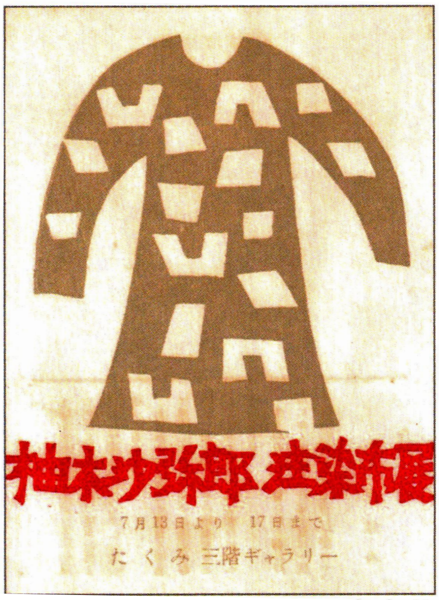
柚木沙弥郎 型染布展
7月13日より 17日まで
たくみ 三階ギャラリー

Figure 4. Samiro Yunoki, solo exhibition poster, 1955.

It is necessary to recall that during this time, Yunoki was solely creating work on fabric (katazome, chusen) and paper (poster design). He was greatly influenced by Serizawa, whose work also featured these materials, which would be present in Yunoki's creations throughout the following years. After Yunoki participated in the Kokugakai exhibition in 1949, he received the Kokugakai Scholarship (国画会奨学賞) the following year, which placed him at the center of the arts and crafts circles.

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[69] Maki Takeuchi, "Yunoki and my father Seijiro Takeuchi," in *The Mingei* (March 2017): 32.

[70] Masuda comments on how the Mingei movement focused on the commercialization of crafts and a folk craft boom occurred in the 1950s to the 60s, thus leading to the total collapse of Yanagi's original theory of crafts. See "Deviation from Mingei," in *Dreaming hands: Samiro Yunoki's "Print" Works 1983-2007*, 87.

This time period was also important due to Yunoki's participation in Expo '58, which was held in Brussels, Belgium. It was his first international appearance with a textile work, for which he received a bronze award. This was a period of first experiences in crafts production and exhibitions for Yunoki. His first solo exhibition at Takumi Crafts Shop led to future shows in similar craft venues as well as the commercialization of his work. Important figures in Yunoki's life during this time included Soetsu Yanagi, Keisuke Serizawa, and Yoshitaka Yanagi, among other personalities who enriched his world with ideas and possibilities within the crafts realm. This stage of Yunoki's life was defined by learning from and following his peers in the crafts world as well as, of course, Serizawa. There wasn't much space for his own exploration. As can be seen in his textile work from this time (see appendix B), his creative process focused on repetition, pattern, and fabrics for everyday use. However, Serizawa also encouraged Yunoki to go beyond technique; he would often lecture him on how to challenge himself to create new things, to surpass tradition and redefine his creative process. Yunoki recalls lessons with his mentor:

> I've been with Prof. Serizawa for a lifetime, but it's hard to be a great person, no one grows under a big tree. At that time I didn't have any objectivity so I would just cling to him. When the teacher would tell me to do this or that, I would do everything as I was told because I'm serious. However, it is there now because of the accumulation. After all, it is the spirit of creating new things, and things that have never been seen before. That is also a natural process. Because of Prof. Serizawa I was able to see a wide world and not fit it into a narrow world. I think this was a joyful thing.[71]

Yunoki's view of his mentor is of a person who provided him with the chance to learn katazome and opened a wide world for him, eventually driving him to explore beyond the possibilities of strict dyeing techniques. Apart from what Yunoki called an "accumulation" of teachings—which included learning technical skills and views on craft tradition as well as gaining the experience that every creator needs in the first stage of their career, and a trial and error period—Yunoki absorbed the boldness to defy tradition from Serizawa. As the main textiles figure within the Mingei group, Serizawa was difficult to level up to; any apprentice under his guidance would have acknowledged his greatness and importance in Japan. However, Yunoki received his knowledge humbly and moved towards finding his own expression in katazome. In his subsequent work, important changes are palpable. The next section will focus on how travel (encouraged by Serizawa) acted as a turning point in Yunoki's creative career.

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[71] Yunoki and Atsuta, *Samiro Yunoki's Words* (Graphic Sha, 2021), 50.

1.2.2 Yunoki's Work: Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

In 1967, Yunoki traveled to Europe for the first time. Over two months, he visited several countries including Spain, Italy and France, where he sketched images from daily life and things that caught his attention.[72] This first experience of traveling outside of Japan enriched his vision and creativity; his father had traveled to Paris in search of knowledge related to Western painting, and Yunoki felt he was able to see the city through his father's eyes. Later in the 1980s, Yunoki's former student Hiroko Iwatate guided him on an important trip to India, where he visited four villages dedicated to handicrafts and cloth production. Discoveries and significant encounters with people and artisans from these villages enhanced and fueled his creative process. Motivated by these experiences as well as his foray into printmaking, Yunoki began to redefine his style: the subject matter, composition, color palette, and presentation of his work all began to change.

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[72] Ibid., 66.

As we can see from the database (see appendix B), an important shift occurred in the work from this time period, particularly in the color palette. A work that clearly exemplifies this change is the katazome dyed kimono work *Murakumo Sansaimon* (むら雲三彩文), created in 1967[73] (fig. 5). The colors of the kimono, a triad of energetic yellow, green, and red hues, had not been seen in his previous work, but became a characteristic of Yunoki's production over the following decades. The shapes are distributed unevenly on the kimono, defining a more complex composition that is freed from the repetition scheme. This is the first of Yunoki's creations to bear this arrangement of elements. Yunoki continued to use repetition in his textiles but added other elements to the compositional space of the fabric. For example, he uses a border around the edge of a textile piece to organize the figures in the center; this element appears in rug designs, and Yunoki likely borrowed it from another country's crafts. An example of this distribution of the compositional elements is present in the work *Narabu Hito Narabu Tori* (ならぶ人ならぶ鳥) (fig. 7) created in 1983.

Another important change is the introduction of representations of people and animals in Yunoki's work. Although he continued to work with geometric shapes consistently, this addition added an extra layer to defining this new phase. Moreover, Yunoki began to explore printmaking; his first print was a monotype created in 1969, *Akarusa no Naka no Kurasa* (明るさの中の暗さ) (fig. 8), defined by contrasting colors divided in fields and framed by a series of lines that cover the entire compositional space. Later, in 1983-84, Yunoki began producing lithography works, and in the 1990s began to produce many monotype and *gaufrage* pieces. Yunoki continued to produce posters, but the composition and color palettes that had been seen in his previous poster designs started to shift into more dynamic structures. Pieces that depicted scenes from Yunoki's traveling experiences in the 1980s also became an important addition to his work in this time period. Yunoki's illustrations were used in children's books like *Magical words* (魔法のことば) written by Hisao Kanaseki and published in 1994. A series of paintings on glass and wood along with watercolor pieces were also produced during this time; they represent Yunoki's entry into a pictorial expressive phase in which he used lively colors and lines to depict characters and animals.

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[73] Some sources indicate the year of creation as 1969.

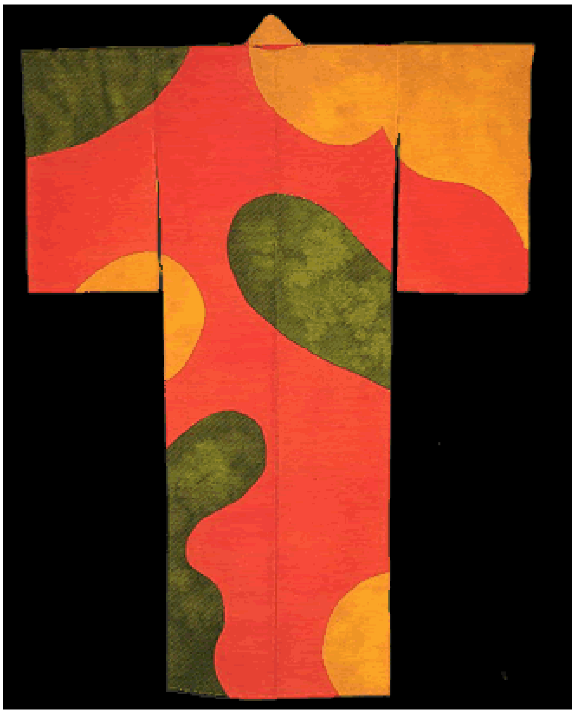

Figure 5. Samiro Yunoki, *Murakumo Sansaimon*, 1967, katazome dyed kimono《むら雲三彩文》168.5 x 133 cm. The Japan Folk Crafts Museum Collection.

Compared to previous years, this was a time of significant change and dramatic increase in work production, especially in the 1980s and '90s. But what triggered all these changes? Specific aspects of Yunoki's life and career hold some answers. Fujita addresses the shift in textiles:

> Naturally, Serizawa's art had an influence on his early work, but he gradually escaped from that and began his original development. Eventually, he became a member of the Kokugakai and actively pursued artistic activities such as solo exhibitions that fulfilled his creations. It was also around this time that he made sublime patterns of shapes from the natural world such as animals and plants, and at the same time bore abstract forms that started to be seen in his work.[74]

Corroborating Fujita's statement, as previously mentioned, Yunoki began a period of exploration that can be observed starting from the 1970s (appendix B), not only in the creation of patterns but also in the expansion of his subject matter; the composition and format of the work was also changing. In his initial phase, when he began engaging in crafts, the dimensions of the dyed fabrics reveal that they were mostly used for clothing or interior decoration, but in his book *Samiro Yunoki's Collection of Works* (1984), the textiles float "freely in the light, shade and wind with a lively expression."[75] In addition, a vertical format reminiscent of the hanging scrolls which continue to be used to display calligraphy or paintings in a Japanese-style room (fig. 6) started to appear in some of his pieces from this period. The geometrical motifs began appearing in works from the 1950s. However, the recurrence and simplicity of the motifs—and how they encouraged visual exploration beyond the bi-dimensional space of the fabric, as seen in some textile work from 1986—was a new element. Yunoki's depiction of animals and people can be described as "naive"[76] due to the simplicity and straightforwardness of their shape.

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[74] Fujita, op.cit., 167.

[75] Ibid.

[76] For a definition of the term "naive" contextualized in Modern Art, visit: https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/n/naive-art (accessed November 14, 2021)

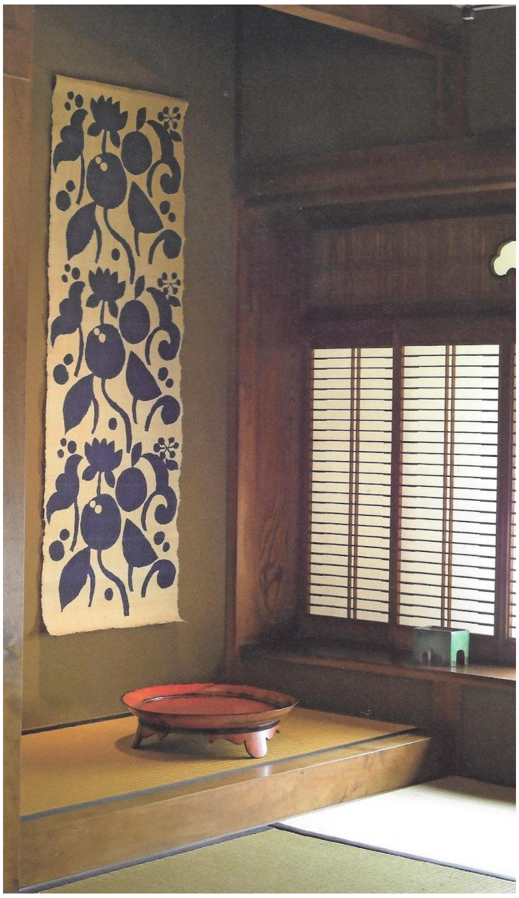

Figure 6. Samiro Yunoki, *Katazome Lotus Cloth,*1982, katazome《型染蓮文布 芭蕉》
170 x 55 cm.

Traveling to learn about old ways of dyeing and creating crafts in countries such as India, Mexico, and Turkey also nourished Yunoki's artwork. While traveling, Yunoki not only learned about local crafts, but also observed how people lived. He listened to their stories and experienced their daily lives, which elevated his connection to these places and enabled him to see beyond the technical aspect of crafts.[77] Yunoki’s insight into everyday life is particularly noticeable in his work depicting the people, sites, and animals of India, a place he visited many times.[78] He also started to incorporate a kind of dialogue between the subjects and animals he represented, as if there is a narrative to be unveiled from the scenes he depicts. The work *People Lined Up, Birds Lined Up* (ならぶ人ならぶ鳥) created in 1983 using katazome presents this dialogue-like structure (fig. 7).

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[77] Hiroko Iwatate, "Currently Living Samiro Yunoki," in *The Mingei* (March 2017): 17.

[78] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 67.

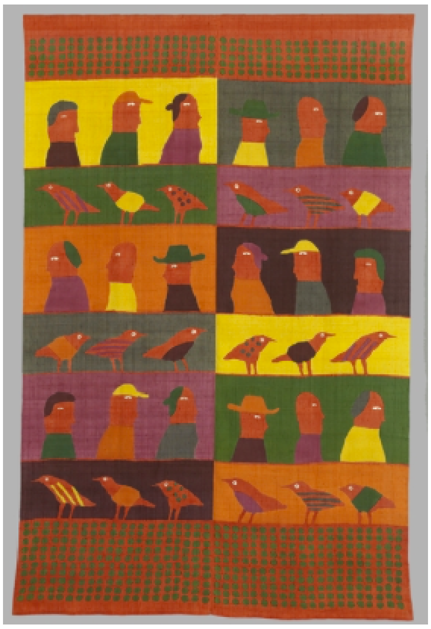

Figure 7. Samiro Yunoki, *People Lined Up, Birds Lined Up,* 1983, katazome《ならぶ人ならぶ鳥》239 x 155 cm. Setagaya Art Museum Collection.

In respect to the vibrant color palette that began to appear in Yunoki's work in the 1980s, Muto draws a connection between Yunoki's trip to India and color, stating:

> In the 1980s, brightly colored works appeared one after another. It is not unrelated to the visit of dyeing and weaving workshops in India with Mrs. Hiroko Iwatate, a student of Joshibi University of Art and design and the director of the Iwatate Folk Textile Museum. Keisuke Serizawa passed away in 1984. The loss of the leader in the history of dyeing who had been supporting him seems to have triggered a new step.[79]

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[79] Muto et al. op. cit., 130.

It's not incidental that Yunoki’s palette was influenced by the colors he saw in India. The freedom inherent to this new series of work is defined by a search into more dynamic compositions that reveal an energetic and indulgent side of Yunoki's work. In the 1980s, Yunoki began to question his creative process with textiles. He was concerned that his work was becoming too repetitious, but an enlightening journey to the US pointed him in a new direction. After this crisis, he decreased his production of textiles and insisted on engaging with other mediums. On this topic, Yunoki states:

> Just after my 60th birthday, to put it simply, I felt that I had exhausted the dyeing medium. After that, I thought that my work had become a stereotype. At that time, I went to Santa Fe in the U.S. I saw Alexander Girard's International Folk Art Museum. I was impressed by the naive dolls and toys that were made so lively and unpretentiously. Since then I have made more "works" in a more creative spirit.[80]

The "stereotype" Yunoki mentions is the concern that artists usually have when their work appears to reach a limit in their chosen medium. Thus, in order to achieve more expressive and creatively engaged work, it is essential to question what a specific technique offers and to reach beyond it. Again, Yunoki was inspired by crafts, perceiving his next step and understanding the need to be more creative and explorative. The simplicity and materiality present in the dolls he had seen in Santa Fe spoke to Yunoki and inspired self-reflection on what he had been creating.

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[80] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 29.

Subsequently, the next important inflection point in Yunoki's career arrived: his encounter with printmaking. In 1983 he started a deep relationship with Atelier MMG Tokyo,[81] where he learned and acquired a new way of expressing his ideas. This relationship not only enabled him to expand his creative language but also deepened his connection with Paris, where he produced work mainly in the 1990s at the printing workshop IDEM Paris.[82] In 1881, this printing studio was opened under a different name, Mourlot, by the map printer Emile Dufrenoy, and featured Ferdinand Mourlot's lithographic presses that still exist today. It was commissioned to print works for major artists such as Picasso, Matisse and Chagall during the twentieth century.[83] Between the creation of his first monotype work in 1969 (fig. 8) and this reencounter with Atelier MMG in the 1980s, many events had taken place in Yunoki's life and career and also in Japan. Firstly, let's examine the status of printmaking to understand what prompted Yunoki to explore this technique in the first place. During the 1950s, Japanese prints received attention from abroad in renowned international print exhibitions. As mentioned in the introduction, this was an important period for Shiko Munakata as he received top awards at exhibitions in Lugano, Sao Paulo and Venice. According to Sakai,

> Although Munakata had already earned certain recognition within Japan, the folkloric character of his works was regarded local and heretical from the point of view of modernism. Therefore, such international recognition prompted

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[81] Atelier MMG, founded in 1974, has been working in partnership with Fernand Mourlot's workshop in Paris (currently Idem Paris) to establish full-fledged lithograph technology in Japan. Excluding copperplate or silkscreen prints, it works with the artist to develop various printing techniques such as lithography, carborundum and linocut, that use paper as a support. In 1991, a gallery space opened to feature artists who produce artwork in this studio (Masuda 2013, 88-89).

[82] IDEM Paris is a printing studio built in 1881 and located in the Montparnasse district of Paris. An exceptional stock of several tons of lithographic stones of all sizes is available to artists. Idem works in a collaborative approach with the artist to develop their images. The printers guide the artist through unusual territory, introducing a multitude of possibilities, suggesting innovative and experimental techniques. The work printed by Idem is present in museum collections, international exhibitions, and private and public collections. This information was gathered from https://idemparis.com/en/workshop/ (accessed August 30, 2021).

[83] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 109-112.

> reevaluation of the "Japanese" factor and urged reexamination of the state of Japanese art.[84]

In the Mingei movement, Munakata became the master of printmaking; his woodblock prints have an expressive quality defined by the lines that configure his Buddhist images, which drew Yanagi to his creations. However, what Sakai refers to as recognition in Japan as a folk artist and international appraisal as a modern artist must have placed Munakata in the spotlight in the 1950s. Yunoki—who must have noticed the local and international attention given to Munakata's work—was likely inspired by him to try printmaking at Atelier MMG. Curiously, he didn’t choose woodblock printing, but created his first work in monotype, which is the most direct, expressive, and uncomplicated technique in printmaking. The developments in the *Sosaku-hanga* group and the state of printmaking over the next decades—during which artists constantly searched for new ways to reach expression through this medium—likely broadened Yunoki's view of its creative possibilities.

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[84] Sakai et al. op.cit., 14.

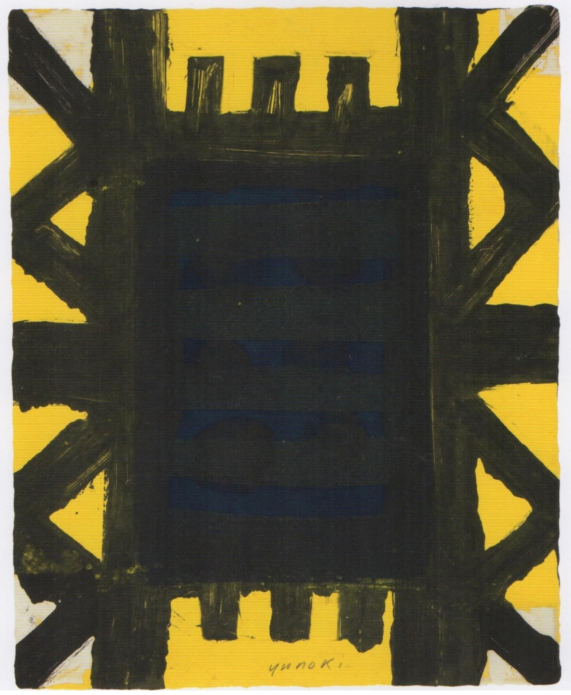

Figure 8. Samiro Yunoki, *Darkness in Brightness*, 1969, monotype《明るさの中の暗》57 x 45.8 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

Thereafter, in Japan, a more experimental approach towards printmaking techniques began to arise. Onchi Koshiro, a member of the *Sosaku-hanga* group, had been creating abstract work. Without working directly with block carving, he incorporated a wide range of objects in his prints. This kind of experimental printmaking was called *jitsuzai hanga*, meaning *material prints*. Furthermore, other Japanese artists followed this trend and began to apply materials and techniques in a distinctive way, thus broadening the possibilities of artistic expression within printmaking. Preceding this time of exploration was the pursuit of highly technical printmaking and the categorization of the works that followed, in an attempt to separate the old from the new. However, the *ukiyo-e* style was still internationally regarded as a distinctly Japanese artform, and the unique quality that made this work stand out from the rest secured a position for Japanese printmakers in international competitions. Museums in Japan began to secure collections and exhibit the works gathered by their acquisitions. The International

Print Biennale was organized, which included the Biennial Exhibition of Prints in Wakayama, which was held from 1985 to 1993 on five occasions.[85]

The 1980s and ’90s were a time of expansion in printmaking. With the broadening of museum collections and the founding of the International Print Biennale, this medium was reinstated within the arts. Yunoki was inevitably influenced by the boom in printmaking exhibitions from the 1980s to the ’90s: Tokyo also held the International Biennial Exhibition of Prints from 1957 to 1979 (東京国際版画ビエンナーレ), and many printmaking circles and studios emerged during that time, including the *Cercle de la gravure du Japon* and the Atelier MMG.

From 1983 to 1984, Yunoki produced works at Atelier MMG Tokyo, but it was from 1996 to 1997 that he substantially increased his production (see appendix B). It's possible that retiring from Joshibi University in 1991 allowed him to dedicate more time to creation in the studio. As previously mentioned, he created work especially using the monotype technique, which consists of spreading ink on a surface and drawing directly on it, using the fingers or a cloth to extract part of the ink. In his printmaking, Yunoki did not confine himself to two-dimensional work, but also explored three-dimensional pieces. While he was in Paris in the 1990s, he explored gaufrage (fig. 9). Thus, the notion of what can be categorized as printmaking is not limited to lithography or monotype; creating solid paper shapes from a mold is also included in this genre.[86]

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[85] Sakai et al., op.cit., 15.

[86] Masuda, op.cit., 91-92.

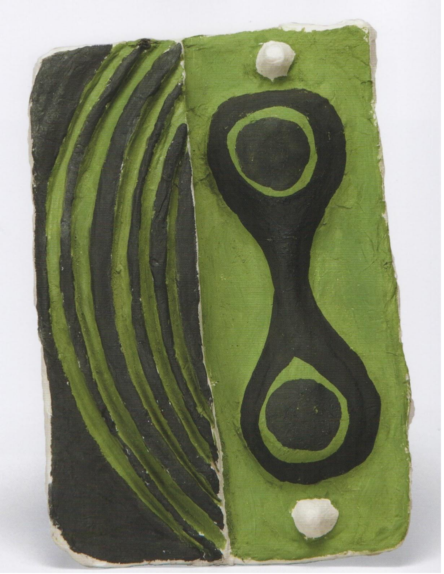

Figure 9. Samiro Yunoki, *Tomorrow's Cultivated Land,* 1997, gaufrage《明日の耕地》24 x 16.5 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

In Masuda's editor notes from *Dreaming Hands* (2013), which refers to Yunoki's prints, he references Gaston Bachelard's book *The Right to Dream*, which describes the act of being covered in substance in the printmaking studio as a dream-like state that empowers the imagination.[87] Masuda cleverly makes this connection to describe Yunoki and other artists' experiences in the workshop as a joyful encounter with matter. He compares this state with that of the French impressionists, who also became covered with substances while working in the studio (fig. 10).

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[87] Gaston Bachelard, *El Derecho de Soñar*, traducción Jorge Ferreiro Santana (Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1970), 68-70.

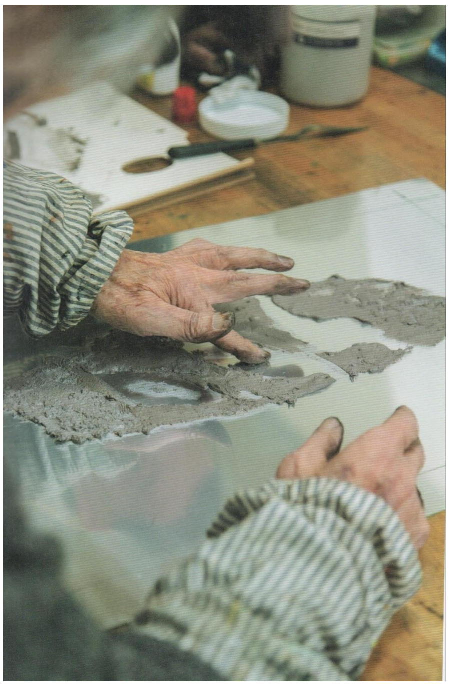

Figure 10. Yunoki in the printmaking studio, photograph: Norio Kidera.

Gaufrage was a completely different experience from katazome, a technique that demands careful attention to placing nori in specific places on the fabric. We can assume that Yunoki must have found the creative freedom that he couldn't get from katazome dyeing in the printing studio. Sharp-edged shapes and lines are one of the main features of katazome; other expressive characteristics such as texture, drawing, and relief are difficult if not impossible to achieve with this technique. In contrast, through diverse techniques, printmaking offers the possibility of achieving expressiveness using these features. In addition, the constant encounter with "chance" broadens the creative possibilities. Yunoki's works in monotype and lithography are an example of how he continued to explore his expression through printmaking.

This large production of work enabled Yunoki to join the SAGA exhibition in Paris in 1998, which gathered prints from artists around the world. On this occasion, Yunoki displayed monotype and gaufrage work. This exhibition not only placed Yunoki's creations in a new genre apart from textiles, but also widened his knowledge of techniques; it was here he encountered work using carborundum for the first time: Michel Haas's piece, *Le Débat du Cœur et du Corps* (fig. 11). For Yunoki, the most impressive aspect of working with carborundum was the materiality of the ink that dried into a sort of relief. He felt compelled to try it at Atelier MMG, where he adjusted the press to make it strong enough to make carborundum prints; in 2007, Yunoki created 60 works using this technique.[88]

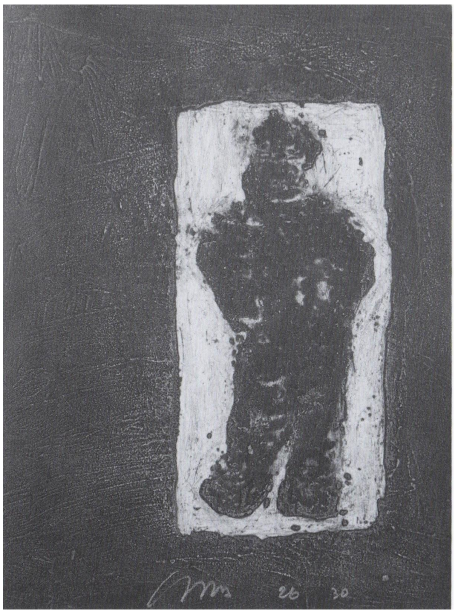

Figure 11. Michel Haas, *Le Débat du Cœur et du Corps*, 1997, carborundum, 38 x 28.5 cm. Atelier Pasnic collection.

Yunoki continued printmaking at Atelier MMG for a period of twenty-four years, from 1983 to 2007. In collaboration with technicians at the atelier, he produced around 400 works. The vast production was diverse (fig. 12-13), with techniques ranging from monotype, mimeograph, lithography, carborundum, gaufrage, linocut and paper cutout.[89] It is in this work that Yunoki's connection towards the material (matter) and his hands erases the boundary between artist and artisan, and the creation process stands beyond any attempt of categorization. This immersion into printmaking brought about expressive features that were not seen in his previous katazome works. The turn towards a new version of himself as a creator must have made Yunoki reflect deeply on the way he was creating dye work. In the work that Yunoki created after his experience with printmaking, a leap towards a synthesis of the composition elements is present; a new way of approaching katazome dyeing is particularly revealing to understand his shift to the arts.

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[88] Masuda, op.cit., 90-91.

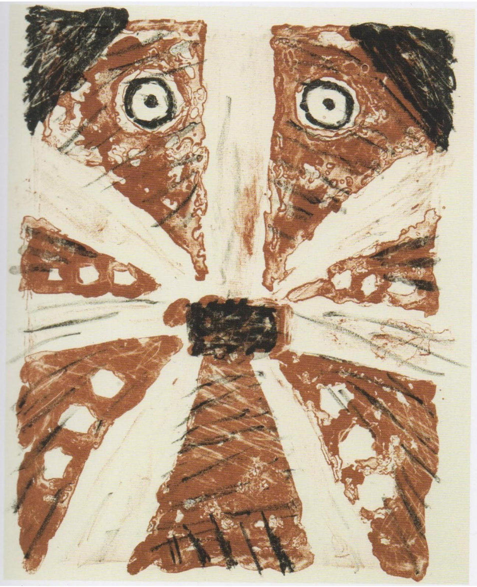

Figure 12. Samiro Yunoki, *Dog's Portrait*, 1984, lithography《犬の肖像》
26.5 x 21.5 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

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[89] Ibid., 103.

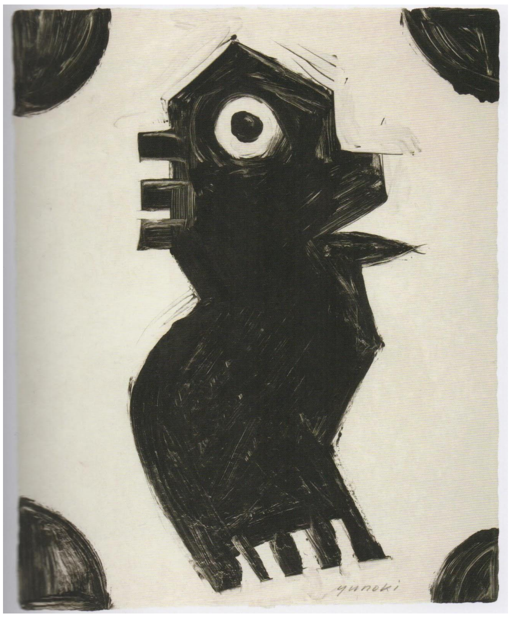

Figure 13. Samiro Yunoki, *Dancing Mysterious Person*, 1996, monotype《踊る怪人》 57 x 46 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

1.2.3 Yunoki's Works: Art and Design (2000 - 2021)

At this stage of his life, Yunoki looked back at his creative career, which had already covered half a century. Although his roots were tied to the katazome dyeing technique, his exploration of different forms of expression led him to gradually break away from Mingei and create unique and original work, consistently using contrasting, bright colors, and focusing on both abstract and figurative motifs, while displaying them as artwork.[90] As he continued to produce a vast amount of print work, he returned to dyeing with a completely different set of compositional elements and motifs—mostly abstract, but established with a newly restrained color palette. The profusion of elements that characterized repetition as a principle of his previous katazome work was replaced by an economy of shapes that characterized each textile piece with its singularity. In this period, Yunoki’s artistic language was grounded.

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[90] Aurélie Samuel and Kévin Kennel, *La Danse des Formes* (Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2014), 7.

During the first decade of the twenty-first century, printmaking dominated Yunoki's creative endeavors. New techniques were introduced to his repertoire, namely mimeograph, carborundum, linocut, and paper cutout. These new techniques, which mainly depict animals and people, are characterized by textured compositions, especially the carborundum works, or plain shapes on textured backgrounds (evidenced in the linocut work from 2001 and in the monotype work from 2003).[91] An exploration of color, line, and texture can be seen in the work created using the mimeograph technique. As for the monotype work, it reappears in monochromatic compositions that barely differentiate the figure from the background using a textured, cardboard-like surface. Gaufrage pieces are renewed by doll-like figures depicting animals and people, coinciding with the introduction of dolls in Yunoki’s creations. The paper cutout works are made up of colored compositions of a figure against a background; the contrast between these two compositional elements is similar to katazome work. As some katazome dye work slowly started to appear in 2001, a sudden surge in production began from 2010. In the textile work created from 2001 until 2006, the characteristic vivid color palette that appeared in previous creations is still present. However, from the year 2007, the palette is reduced to one or two colors, predominantly red or black on a white background; the composition reveals a different dynamic that differs from previous work, which was mainly symmetric in configuration. The viewer's eye is drawn to a specific point on the canvas[92] or invited into a maze of elements organized conspicuously on the two- dimensional space. The figure-background relationship of these elements at times seems clearly differentiated, and in other work becomes challenging for the viewer. For example, the work *Composition* created in 2010 (fig. 31) shows this ambiguity of the relationship between figure and background; undoubtedly, it challenges the viewer's perception. A series of katazome work depicts a specific object, such as a pair of scissors (*Scissors,* 2014) or a tool (*Chauvel*, 2014), addressing singularity and enhancing the object through the use of contrasting colors; in other pieces, letters of the Latin alphabet are arranged in the composition (*2018* and *Tokyo 2020*), at times accompanied by geometric shapes. From 2017, a series of textile work depicting trees begins to appear in Yunoki's dyeworks. They are like the geometric compositions in that they use just one background color, but reveal an organic, unrestricted presence that leaves plenty to the imagination. The figure of the tree is partially represented in the two-dimensional space. Three-dimensional sculptural pieces made from iron and wood were also created in this time period, in the years 2004 and 2009 respectively. Yunoki began making dolls again in 2007. He also continued to illustrate children's books during this time period.

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[91] Refer to appendix B.

[92] Canvas defined as the bi-dimensional space and not the material.

In 2003, Yunoki returned to Paris to take part in the *Salon International de l'Estampe* (International Print Exhibition), where he displayed monotype, linocut and lithography work. He held exhibitions at Gallery MMG later that year and in January 2004, where he displayed monotype, lithography, mimeograph, and paper cutout work.[93] These shows marked two decades of Yunoki's exploration of printmaking, which built a foundation from which he could reinvent himself in textile creation through abstract compositions. But how did Yunoki transition back into textile dyeing with these newly sought abstract elements? Ado Murayama's book *Night Pictures* (*Yoru no E*) (fig. 14), which included sixteen collage works by Yunoki, was published in 2005.[94] Each visual interpretation of Murayama's words consisted of small pieces of cloth in dark shades of brown and gray. The simple expression of the shapes represented Yunoki's entrance to abstract, marginal textile composition. A seminal article on Yunoki's work by curator Ryu Niimi, "Tactile Utopia in Samiro Yunoki" (Shokkaku no Yutopia-Yunoki Samiro ni) (2009), refers to these pieces as "a modern work that is simple, clear and has a soft touch, but its expression, loneliness and sadness are unparalleled."[95] Niimi continues by comparing Yunoki's textiles with the art of Swiss artist Paul Klee, establishing connections with Klee's fascination for children's drawings and incorporation of the tactile sense through fabrics he placed on the canvas.

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[93] Masuda, op.cit., 97.

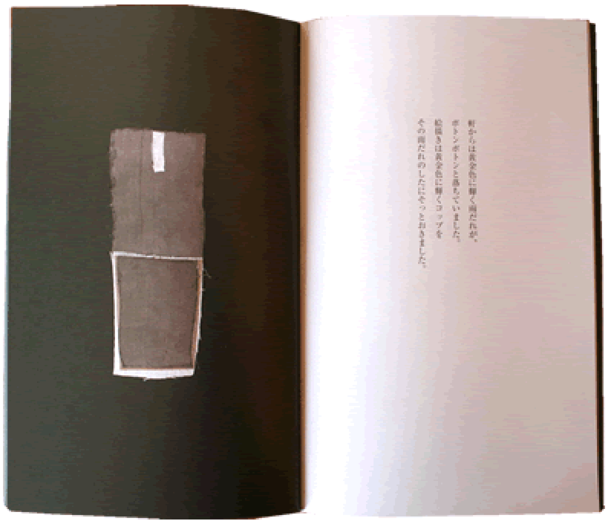

Figure 14. Samiro Yunoki's collage piece in Ado Murayama's book *Night Pictures*, 2005, 26 x 16 cm (book dimensions).

In 2008, Yunoki exhibited his textile work at Gallery L'Europe in his first solo show in Paris titled *Les Domaines Flottantes* (*The Floating Domains*). Exhibiting as a solo artist in

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[94] See the book description in https://www.samiro.net/books/yoru.htm (accessed December 28, 2021).

[95] Ryu Niimi, "Tactile Utopia in Samiro Yunoki," in *Kikan Ginka* 157-161, 2009-2010, 70.

Paris—which he describes as an important place for art and culture—was a milestone in his career.[96] As Muto stated, when he was asked at that time *What are you making now?*, he realized he had independently broken away from his previous textile work and became consciously aware of the place he had reached in his creative career. There's a proportional relationship between the previous question on the kind of work he was creating at the time of the Paris solo exhibition and his subsequent work from the year 2010. From this year, the work has a completely different appearance. On this Muto comments:

> Many of Yunoki's recent dyed works, especially those created after 2010, have various figures arranged on a single wide fabric piece, with a small number of colors. It replaces the traditional katazome work where the same motif is repeated with the method of devising pattern design. He had broken the boundary between art and design and entered a new territory.[97]

This assertion seems comprehensible when observing the work that came after the Paris exhibition, but what exactly took place in Yunoki's mindset for this shift to happen? How did his work reach the point where it became detached from pattern and the colorful expressions that characterized his previous work were reduced to a very austere palette? What is this new territory that Muto mentions? The previously cited collage work in *Night Pictures* could have heralded the change in the color palette, but how did the abstract forms appear? Looking back at the production that came before these pieces— particularly the linocut pieces from 2001—somewhat elucidates this shift. Take, for instance, the linocut work *3700 AD mode*, created in 2001 (fig. 15), that has a similar configuration as the katazome piece *Flag of Life* created in 2013 (fig. 16). In both works, a similar totem-like figure is represented, and becomes the central element of the composition. Yunoki began using symbolism that emerged from his experience in printmaking. Although it's difficult to determine at what exact point this kind of representation began to be translated into his textile creations, it is possible to draw some lines between both genres to understand the change that occurred within Yunoki.

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[96] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 102.

[97] Muto et al., op.cit., 132.

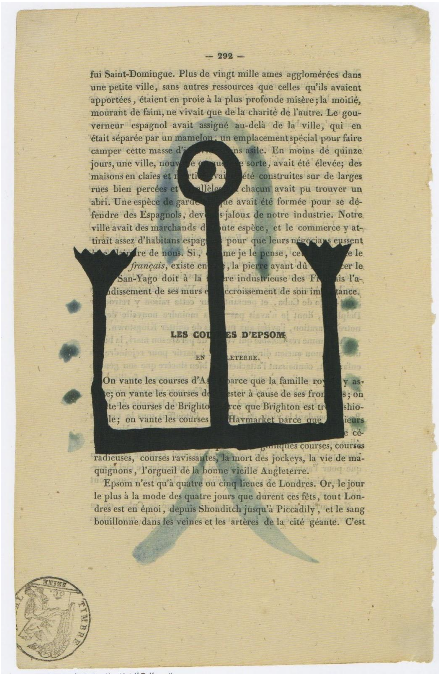

Figure 15. Samiro Yunoki, *3700 AD mode*, 2001, linocut《西暦3700年のモード》 21 x 13 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

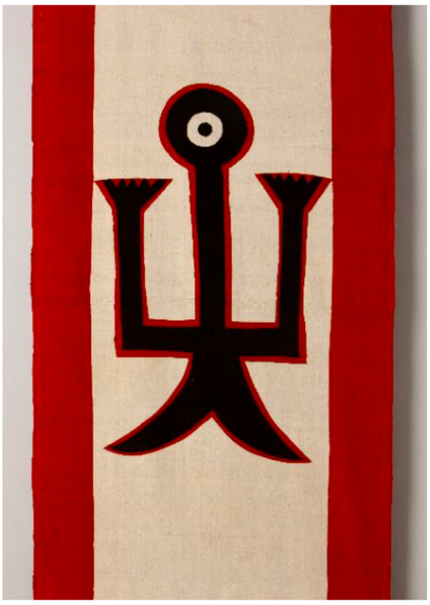

Figure 16. Samiro Yunoki, *Flag of Life*, 2013, katazome《いのちの旗じるし》
255 x 112 cm.

Similarly, in the paper cutout work *Encounter of Sound* created in 2003 (fig. 17), the geometric elements—a reduced number of shapes in the composition, thus emphasizing the figures—is echoed in various katazome works that came afterwards. As an example, the piece *2017* (fig. 18) uses similar elements, constraining the two-dimensional space to circles and rectangles. In both techniques, a stencil is applied on a surface to create figures in the two-dimensional space, thus the translation from one genre (printmaking) to the other (textiles) occurs naturally.

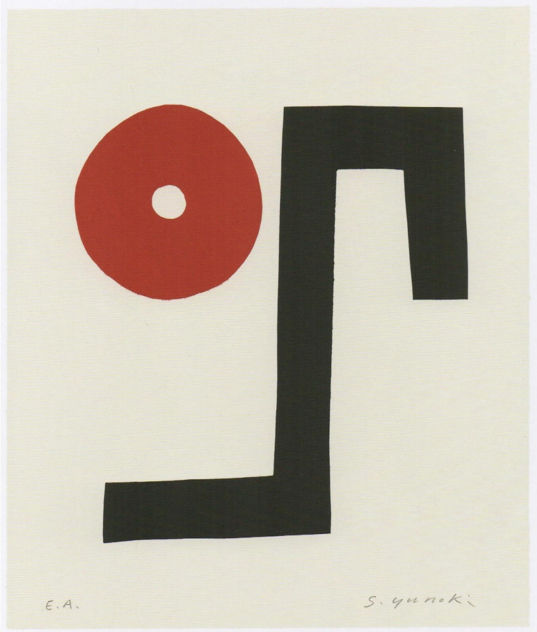

Figure 17. Samiro Yunoki, *Encounter of Sound*, 2003, paper cutout《音の邂逅》
39 x 33 cm. Utsunomiya Museum of Art Collection.

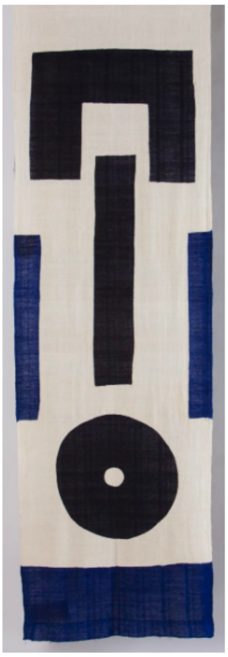

Figure 18. Samiro Yunoki, *2017*, katazome, 295 x 88 cm.

Atsuta briefly mentions Yunoki's move from using patterns to unique abstract shapes in his pieces, noting, "he did drawing-like pictures on the canvas, depicting concrete abstract motifs, shifting to something that is innovative and has a strong message."[98] The abstract motifs that began appearing in Yunoki's textile pieces were definitely innovative; their elements, along with the titles of the pieces—which are sometimes metaphorical and at other times literal—reveal a strong line of thinking that didn't follow the old rules and formulas stated by Mingei theory, but rather showed a departure from them. What Nimii (2009) previously mentioned as a "modern work that is simple and clear," seen in Yunoki's collage, is similar to Muto's opinion on his abstract work. In 2014, Yunoki returned to Paris for the exhibition *La Danse des Formes* at the Guimet Museum, where he displayed a significant amount of textile work (fig. 19), resulting in a large donation of his pieces to the museum. It was a relevant retrospective of his textile creations because it comprised more than fifty years of katazome production, and once again it offered Yunoki a chance to confirm his position as an artist. The curator Aurelie Samuel defined Yunoki's work as "a combination of ancestral knowledge with a modern vision," adding that his work, characterized by bright colors on fabric, uses patterns that are both "abstract but evocatively almost figurative." Her essay for the exhibition catalogue concludes, "Yunoki has updated the traditional stencil dyeing technique. He does not consider his textiles as simple flat decorations but as three-dimensional and dynamic art objects expressed in the space."[99]

By referring to Yunoki's work as "ancestral knowledge with a modern vision," Samuel (2014) is implying that Yunoki is appropriating the traditional technique of katazome—an artform representative of Japan's ancestral knowledge—with his modern vision to create distinctive pieces that offer an “updated” or new way of creating with katazome. Regarding Yunoki’s consideration of his work as “three-dimensional pieces and dynamic art objects expressed in the space,” it can be understood that Yunoki no longer saw his pieces as decorative, but as live objects that interacted with the space and the viewer. It's important to point out that like Munakata, who received appraisal in international exhibitions for his print work while being recognized for his expression in the 1950s, Yunoki was also noticed for his textile work in Paris as a modern artist.

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[98] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 56.

[99] Samuel and Kennel, op.cit., 5-7.

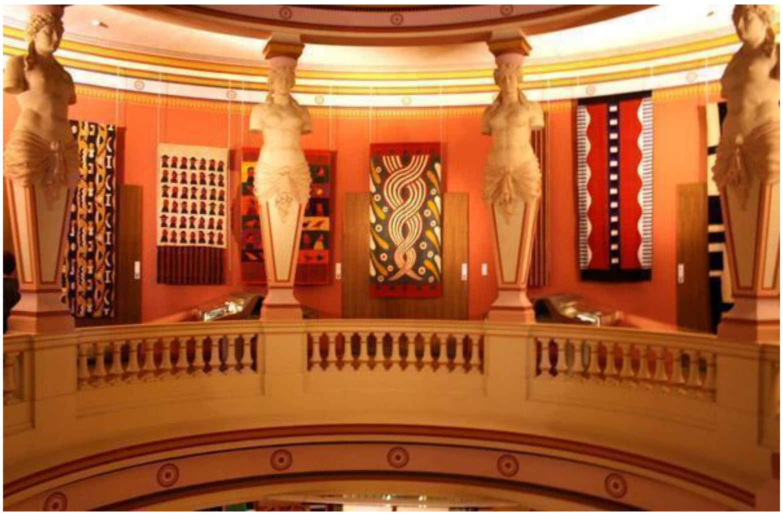

Figure 19. Samiro Yunoki, *La Danse des Formes* exhibition, 2014.

In 2018, Yunoki was invited to set up an exhibition at the Folk Crafts Museum in Tokyo, but he hesitated to accept; he was uncertain about the museum’s reaction to his new work due to its abstract nature and distance from Mingei.[100] The exhibition eventually took place as *Dyeworks by Samiro Yunoki: Patterns and Colors* (柚木沙弥郎の染色 もようと色彩), and Yunoki boldly accepted it as his response to Yanagi's proposal on Mingei.[101] For the exhibition catalogue, the essay "Seeing and Thinking Samiro Yunoki's Dyeworks" by Takeshi Matsui, Professor Emeritus at Tokyo University, refers to Yunoki's work as craft. Matsui states that Yunoki's use of materials and diverse expressions that intersect different genres grounds his work as craft. Moreover, he comments on Yunoki's individuality as non-excessive and non-intentional. Matsui concludes, "Yunoki's creations are unique crafts" and that "it has been possible for him to create beautiful things with a universal emotional effect that appeal to people widely."[102] This view on Yunoki's dyeworks as crafts contrasts Nimii’s and Samuel's conception of them as modern works of art. Matsui is clearly framing Yunoki's work within Mingei by claiming that although he followed an individual path, his personality isn't excessive. Further in the text, he exemplifies Hamada's call to pay attention to this individuality as a necessity in crafts creation, appealing for his own argument. Yunoki himself seems to acknowledge his work as craft by stating that it is his response to Yanagi's proposal on Mingei. On the exhibition, Yunoki commented:

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[100] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 31-32.

[101] This exhibition was also held at the Japan Folk Crafts Museum in Toyota, Aichi. A visit to this venue allowed me to experience Yunoki's work for the first time.

> Touching the real thing is what I also want for future visitors. Unfortunately, the work is in a glass case, and instead of watching it in a video, by looking at the real thing, and if it's possible, to be able to touch it. To have that kind of feeling is very important.[103]

Is Yunoki assuming the position of a modern artist by stating that "the feel of touch" is vital to experiencing the piece? Here, he considers the spectator's point of view and experience with the textile, not as a decorative piece to be used but as an artistic object to be absorbed through the senses. However, he seems to contradict himself on whether his dyeworks are craft or art. "Touching the real thing" could be understood as referring to the closeness one has with a craft object, or to the approach of "knowing" or "grasping" with the tactile sense—something more familiar to a person born in the first half of the twentieth century, when technology wasn't so present in daily life. An artist like Yunoki would surely encourage viewers to "get a feeling of the real thing" in order to fully grasp it, and not just observe it behind a glass case, as it was presented in the museum display. Commenting on his pieces, he says, "they are things that decorate like art, you can touch them, and they are more present in everyday life."[104] At this point in the discussion, deciphering Yunoki's words to decide if he was creating craft or art might be difficult. One must also consider the exhibition venue, which dictates the rules of how to display and visualize the pieces, thus affecting the perception of the work. In the Folk Crafts Museum, the work is viewed as craft, and no captions or information relating to the piece is displayed because the institution's philosophy is grounded in Yanagi's ideal of the unknown craftsman. Conversely, at an art museum, the curator's insight on the artwork showcases the creator's work from an artistic perspective.[105] Thus, the context greatly defines how a work is visualized and perceived by others. Yunoki seems to adapt to the different venues he exhibits his work in. His objective, as expressed in his own words, is "how to fill the gap between crafts and art." In an interview at the age of ninety, Yunoki reflected on ways "to express traditional crafts as a broader definition of art."[106] He continued to state that he should broaden the interpretation of art and craft and consider all his work art. This way of assuming both genres brings researchers' opinions on how to categorize his work to a crossroads. Further analysis on his later exhibitions and creative process might offer further elucidation.

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[102] Takeshi Matsui, "Seeing and Thinking Samiro Yunoki's Dyeworks," in *Dyeworks by Samiro Yunoki: Patterns and Colors* (Chikumashobo, 2018), 116.

[103] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 32.

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[104] Ibid., 31.

[105] Refer to Kanbara's text "Mumei de Aru to Iu Koto," in *Gendai no Bijutsu - Kaiga Kara Toshi He,* (Keiso shobo, 2002), 179-182.

[106] "Life with Aesthetic and Humor; the Dyeing Artist's House," interview by Idee Tokyo, January 8, 2013, available at https://www.ideelifecycling.com/interviews/014.html.

Although 2020 was marked by the spread of COVID-19, it was an active year for Yunoki in terms of exhibition. He returned to Matsumoto City, where he attended high school, and held the exhibition *Samiro Yunoki: 97-year-old Dyer Here and Now* (柚木沙弥郎のいま) at the Matsumoto City Museum of Art. This exhibition gathered a large amount of Yunoki's work, ranging from textiles and printmaking work to illustrations and installations. This exhibition offered visitors the chance to experience Yunoki's work firsthand again. Diverse pieces from Yunoki's production showed the multifaceted character of his work, and hinted at how best to approach Yunoki's creations. Yunoki's new work, a series of trees dyed with the katazome technique, was the most enlightening piece on display (fig. 20). These pieces, as mentioned in the introduction, are the crystallization of Yunoki's artistic language. The piece is ethereal yet strong, depicting tree trunks that could suggest Yunoki's view of his own life and the ultimate essence of what he considers "the joy of living." Technically, the medium is transcended: for a person who is not familiar with dyeing, it might be unclear if the piece is a painting or a katazome work. Framed within the two-dimensional space of the fabric, the shapes appear cut off by the limits of the canvas, as if the viewer is zooming into the tree trunk. Once again, the relationship of the figure and background appears ambiguous, and the curvy lines that define these shapes reveal a freedom in the pursuit of katagami, thus broadening the possibilities of the dyeing medium. After seeing this work, a question is raised: How did Yunoki achieve this freedom in the katazome technique?

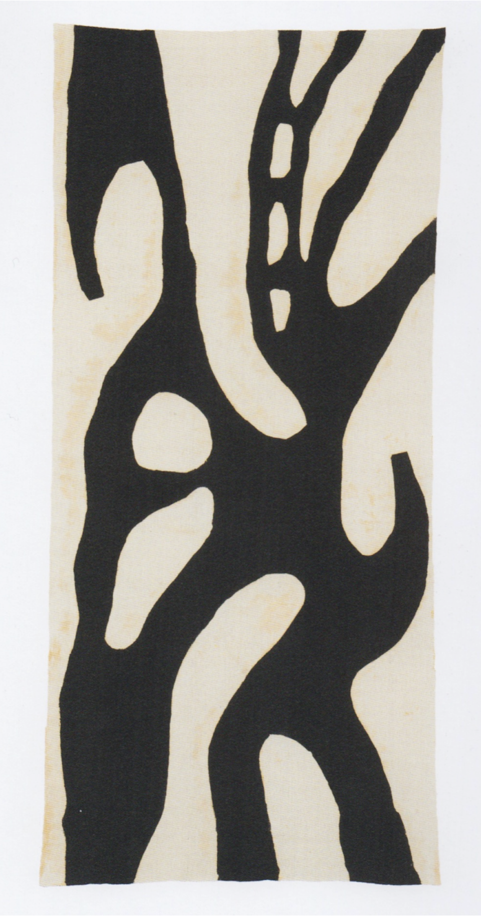

Figure 20. Samiro Yunoki, *Tree*, 2019, katazome《樹》240 x 128 cm. Artist 's private collection.

Yunoki's most recent retrospective, *Samiro Yunoki – Life,* opened on November 20, 2021 at Play Museum in Tokyo.[107] It was curated by Ayano Hayashi; Takaharu Tezuka designed the displays. The display of textile work once again exemplifies how Yunoki's life continues to be defined by his textile creations. The work is arranged in such a way as to give visitors insight into Yunoki's world, starting with his drawings and paintings in a section titled *Path of Drawing* (fig. 21). Further into the first exhibition room, his dolls are displayed in a glass case, along with the posters he created for the Mingeikan; this section is titled *People of the*

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[107] See more information on this exhibit by visiting: https://play2020.jp/article/yunokisamiro/ (accessed December 14, 2021).

City (fig. 22). In the next passageway, objects and toys from Yunoki's studio are displayed (fig. 23-24), building up the sensation of being inside Yunoki's working space. Along this passage, small textile pieces portraying objects and tools from his recent series are exhibited (fig. 24). This passage leads to the main section of the exhibition, *Forest of Textiles*, a compilation of Yunoki's work from the last seventy years (fig. 26-28). Here, the textile pieces on display are analogous to trees, spread out for visitors to walk into as if entering a large forest. The display inspires visitors to contemplate Yunoki's creative process, as the origin and essence of his fabric patterns are taken from nature and the scenery of everyday life. As he notes, "these are patterns that people grasp and express the essence of nature; everyday things and the joyful part of all these. I think that is beauty."[108] This large forest, which is designed to be observed from different viewpoints as visitors walk through the exhibition space, taking in Yunoki's katazome creations, inspires viewers to continue interpreting, creating, and connecting ideas through his colors, shapes, and lines.

At present, the 99-year-old Samiro Yunoki is still very motivated to live and continue creating. Naturally, his production rate has decreased and he cannot work at the same speed and intensity as he once did. However, he believes that the less time he has, the more time he has to concentrate on what he wants to do. Drawing is an important part of his daily life, and he continues to do it enthusiastically, even when he is in a weak physical state. He continues to work with such passion because he believes he has a mission to live for the elderly and his peers who passed away during the war.[109]

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[108] Citation taken from the captions on the exhibition display.

[109] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 69-71.

In this review of Yunoki's life and creations, an understanding of the events, influences, and shifts he experienced in his creative career offer a general view on the different elements that helped to define his expression in his katazome work. The first leap he took to break from the Mingei style present in his first work was the use of a vivid, bright color palette, influenced by his travels to India and other countries. Subsequently, he began to reorganize the elements of the compositional space, to create dynamism and a dialogue between the figures and animals that he depicted. The titles of the works also changed, from bare descriptions to reflections on stories he wishes to narrate or metaphorical messages that guide the viewer to understand his intended meaning. The dimensions of the fabric substantially changed during the travel and printmaking period, from larger sizes to smaller pieces; he currently alternates between bigger and smaller dimensions, but he is undoubtedly always considering the display space. The most recent shift in Yunoki's expression over the past twenty-one years is his return to abstract forms defined by singularity rather than repetition. His color palette also shifted dramatically from colorful triads or tetrads to monochromatic color harmonies. The exploration into diverse techniques other than dyeing has influenced and redefined his expression, which is evidenced in his later katazome work; in particular, printmaking became a turning point and reorientation of his expression in his recent katazome creations. The next section is an analysis of three selected textile pieces created by stencil dyeing. Each piece is representative of the above-mentioned time periods from Yunoki's creative career: mingei; travel and printmaking; and art and design. Each piece was selected based on its formal characteristics as well as the subject matter it addresses and its correlation to the expressive qualities that defined the artist's work during that specific time period.

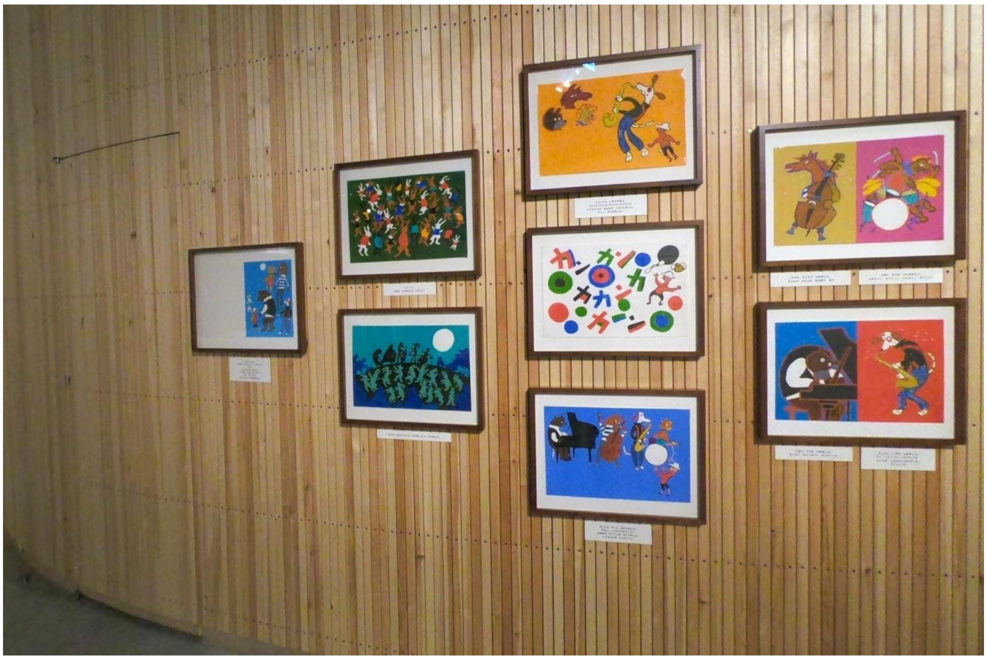

Figure 21. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. *Path of Drawing* display (photograph taken by author).

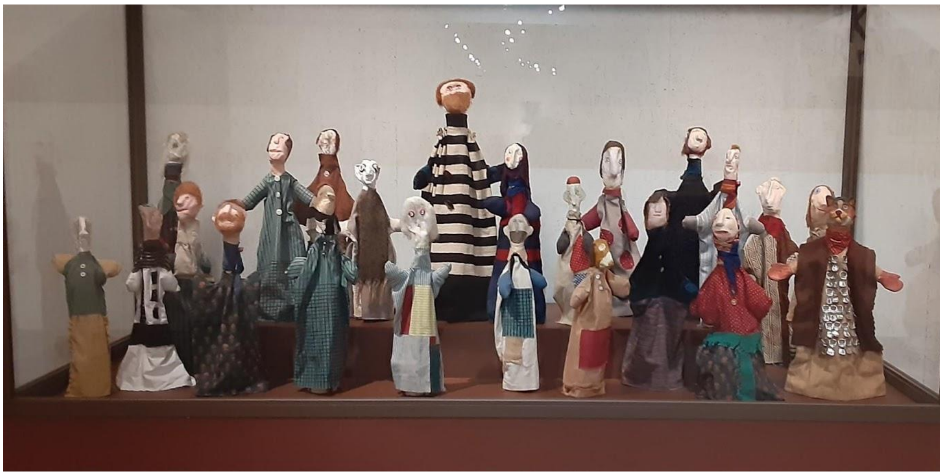

Figure 22. Exhibition view *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. *People of the City* display (photograph taken by author).

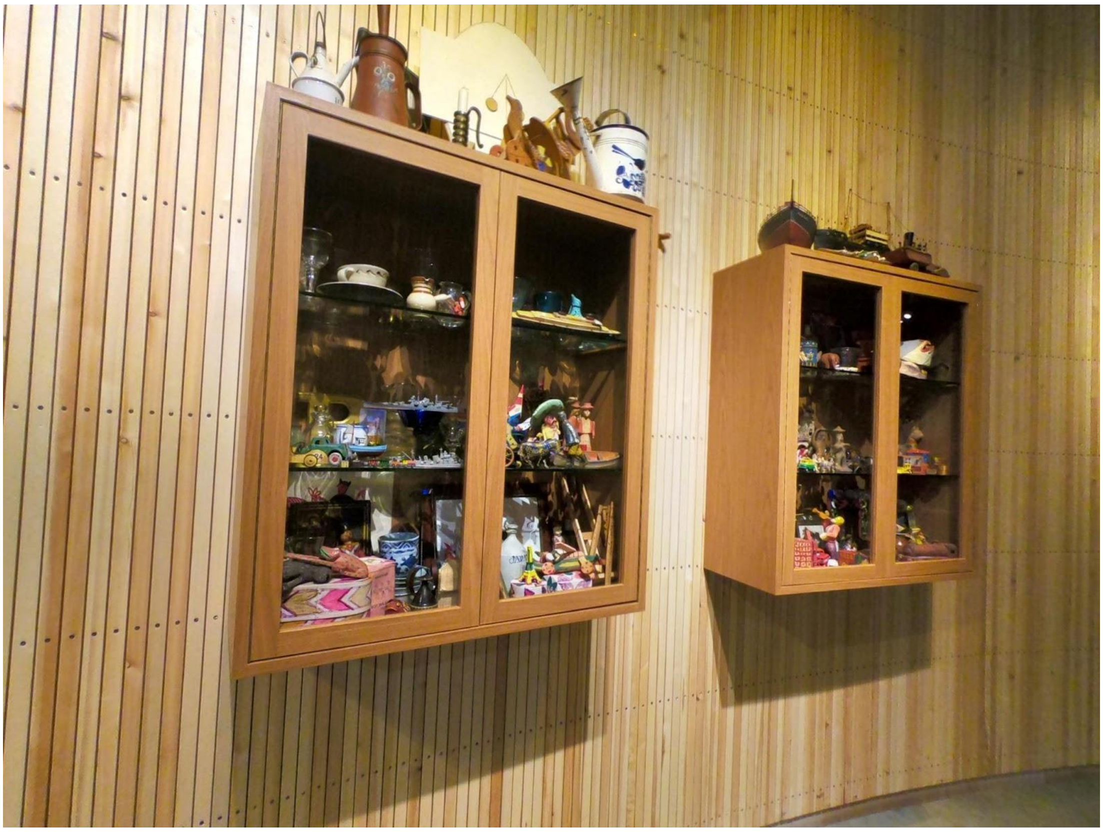

Figure 23. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. Yunoki's collection of objects and toys (photograph taken by author).

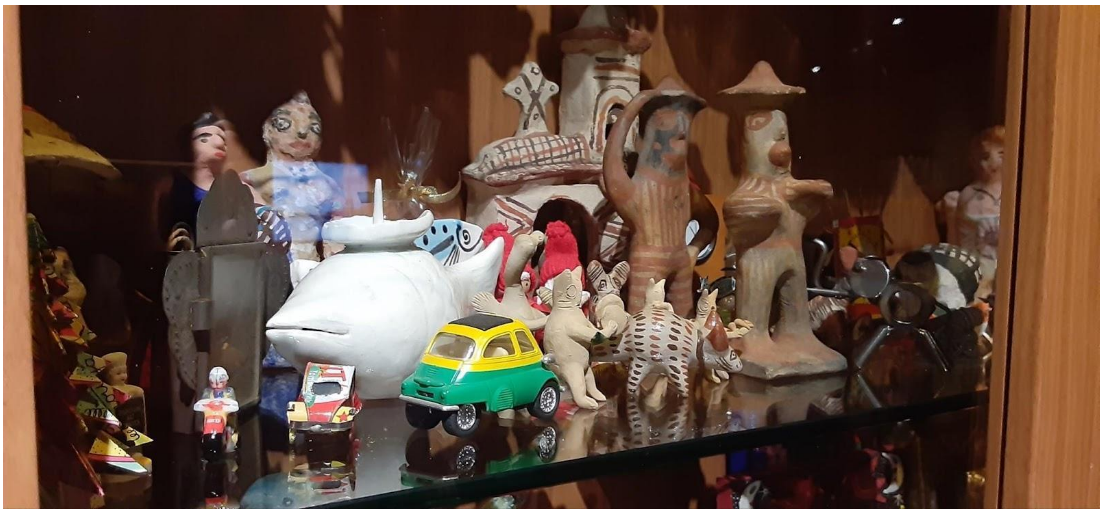

Figure 24. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. Yunoki's collection of objects and toys (photograph taken by author).

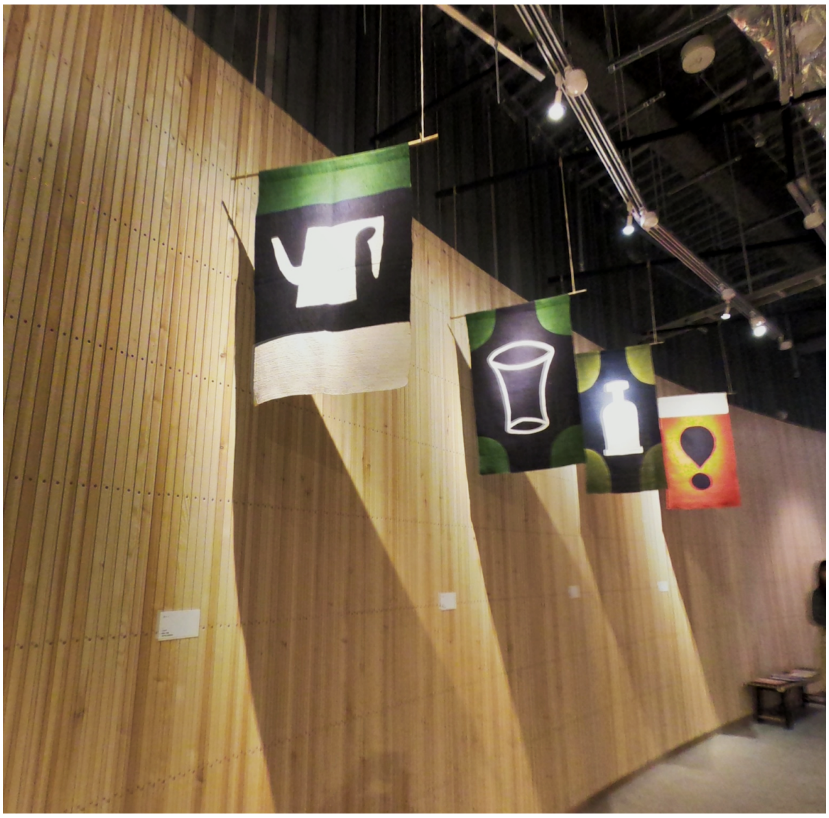

Figure 25. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. Yunoki's series of objects dyed on textiles (photograph taken by author).

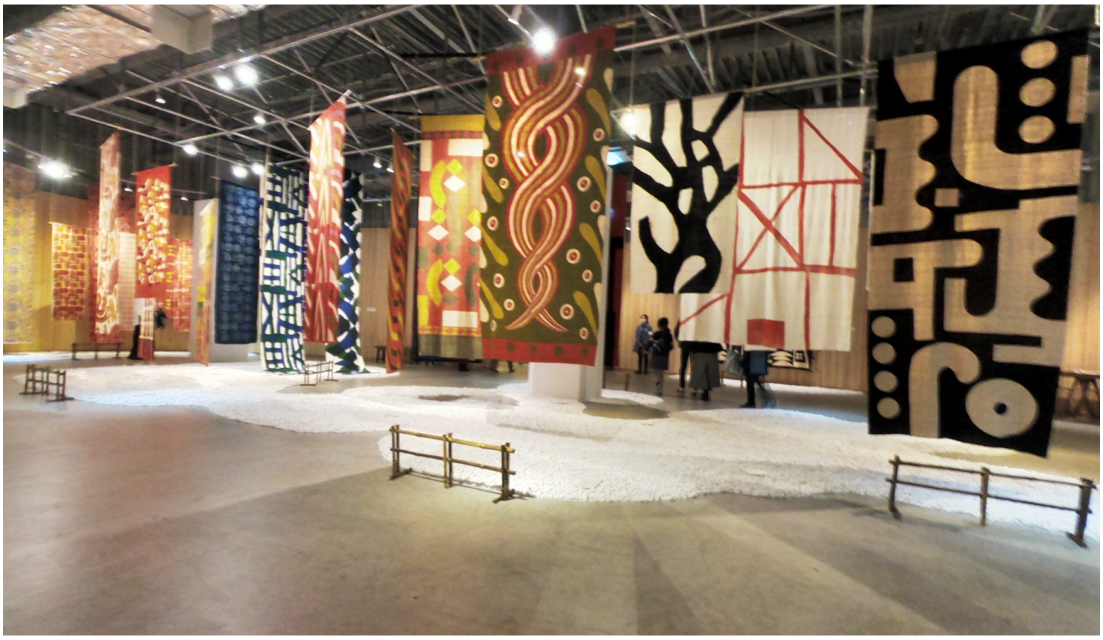

Figure 26. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. *Forest of Textiles* display (photograph taken by author).

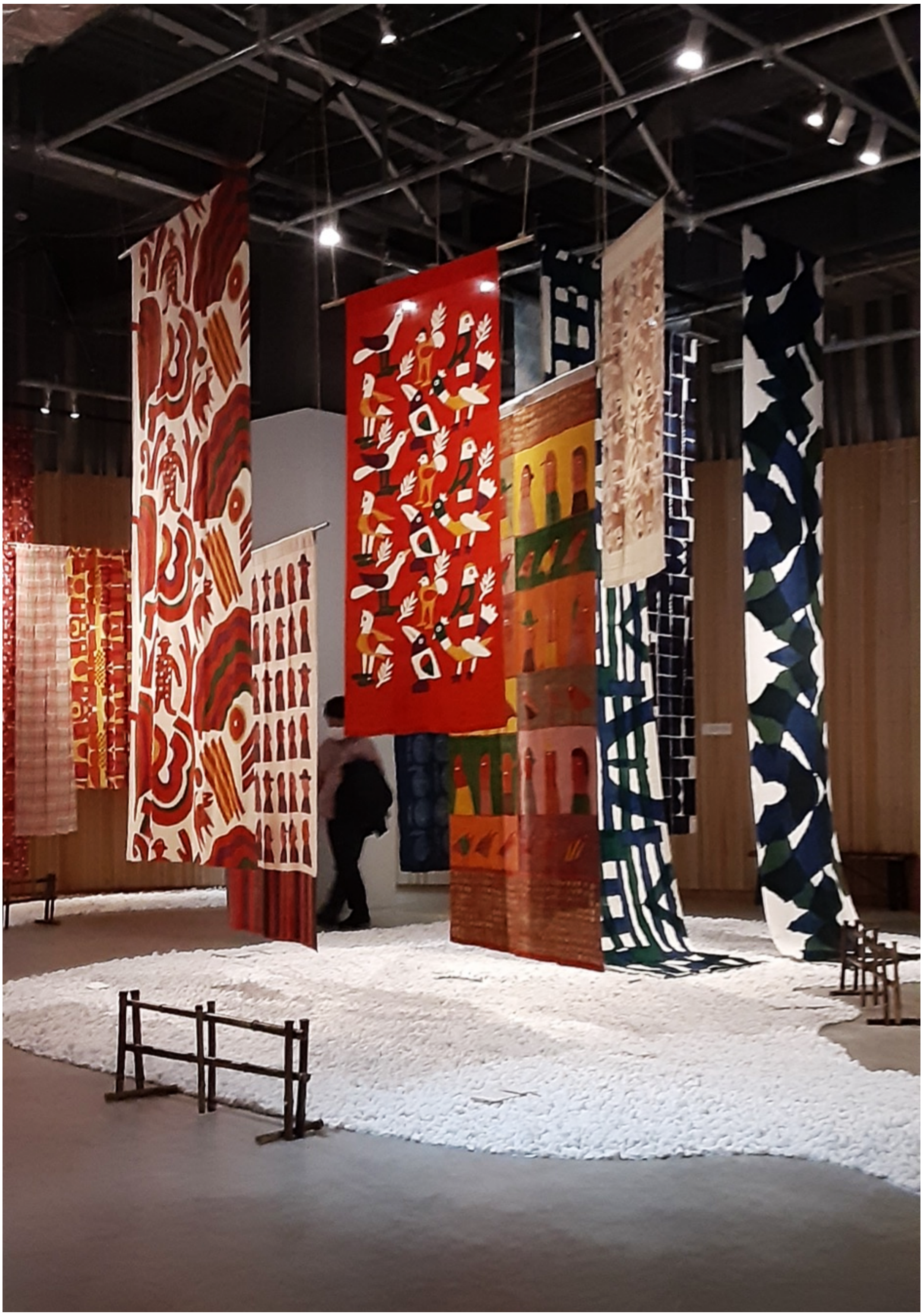

Figure 27. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. *Forest of Textiles* display (photograph taken by author).

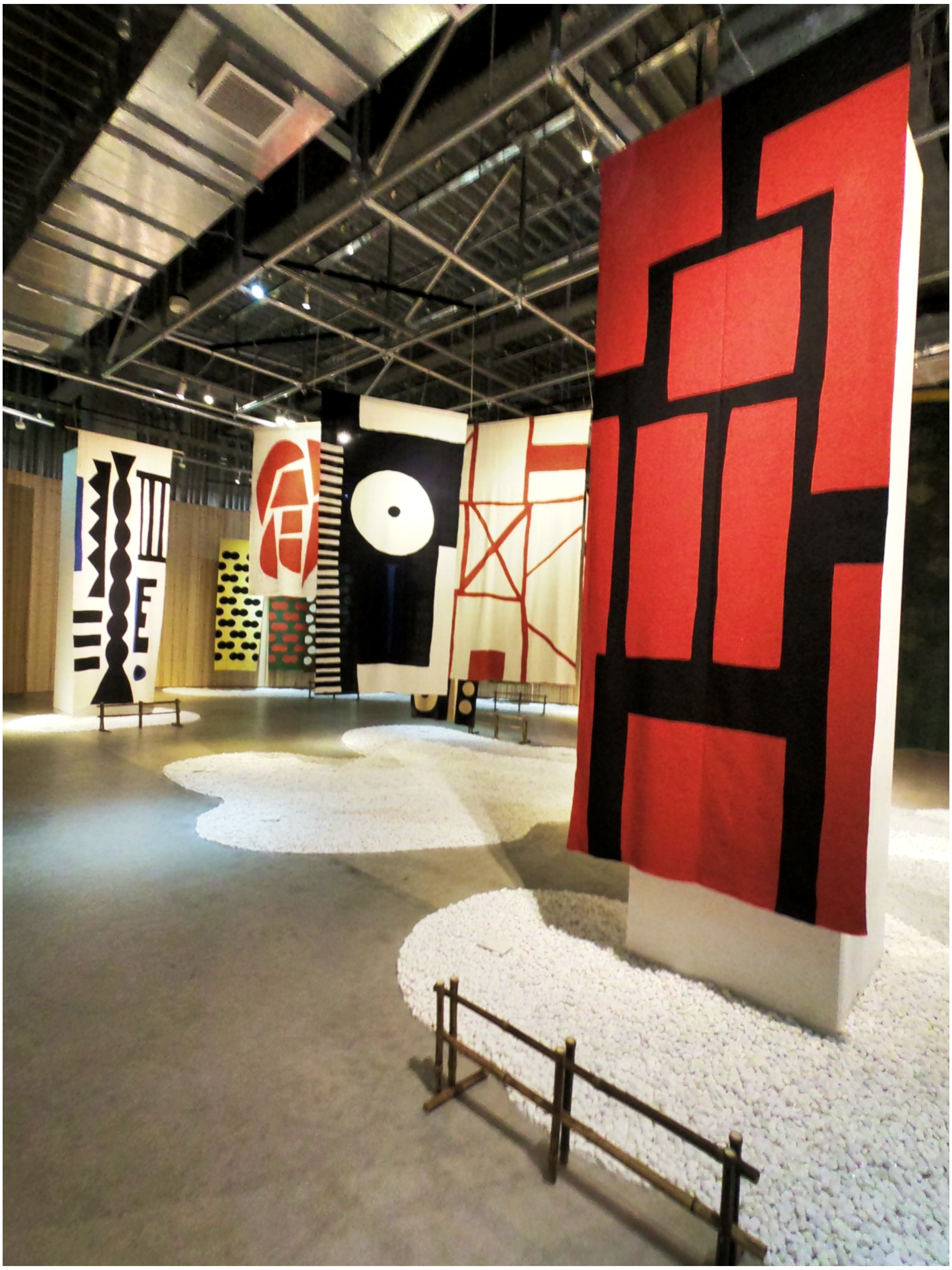

Figure 28. Exhibition view, *Samiro Yunoki—Life*, 2021, Play Museum, Tokyo. *Forest of Textiles* display (photograph taken by author).

1.3 An Analysis of Three Selected Works

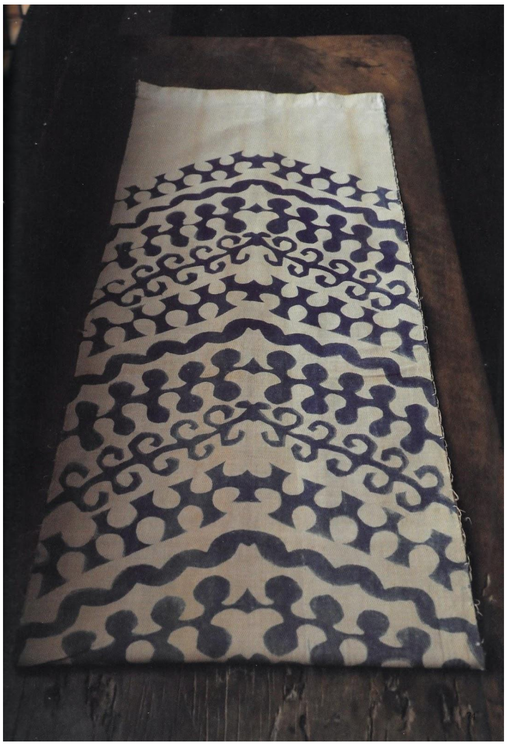

Figure 29. Samiro Yunoki, *Katazome Arabesque Curtain* (detail), 1950, katazome《型染唐草文カーテン》147 x 36 cm.

Katazome Arabesque Curtain, (fig. 29) created in 1950, is presented in the style of kimono fabric, namely *tanmono* (反物), suggesting that the dyed cloth is to be sewn into a kimono. A design of arabesque-like forms is arranged horizontally across the vertical fabric, in a symmetrical mirrored pattern with the axis aligned on the center of the textile. These arabesque forms create a V-shape across the two-dimensional space and are defined by a rhythmic alternance of circular and wavy shapes that build up the patterned structure. Rhythmic, non-competitive, homogeneous shapes are one characteristic of Yunoki's craft work from this period. The shapes create a positive-negative visual effect, enhanced by the monochromatic forms contrasting with the resisted areas of the white fabric, inviting the viewer to discern the blue-toned shapes from the white areas and vice versa. By observing the repetition in the pattern, it is possible to infer that the katagami stencil was first placed on one half of the fabric lengthwise in order to apply the nori paste, and then flipped over to place the paste on the remaining half, thus constructing the mirrored image.

This work is functional and the title is descriptive, although the word *curtain* might be misleading—the piece was probably used to make a kimono. Like many of Yunoki's pieces from this time period, the geometrical figures that compose the pattern are layered in a continuous direction that guides the eyesight one way, either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. The highly refined contrast is a characteristic present in the katazome technique, defined by an incised hard edge enhanced by the cold hue that contrasts with the white surface of the fabric. The motif is reminiscent of Ainu patterns in the way the curved shapes connect, thus suggesting that if the fabric was cut into a kimono, this connection between the shapes could be rearranged into a more complex structure. The overall patterned piece is quite calm; no accent or overly stimulating elements intercept the viewing experience.

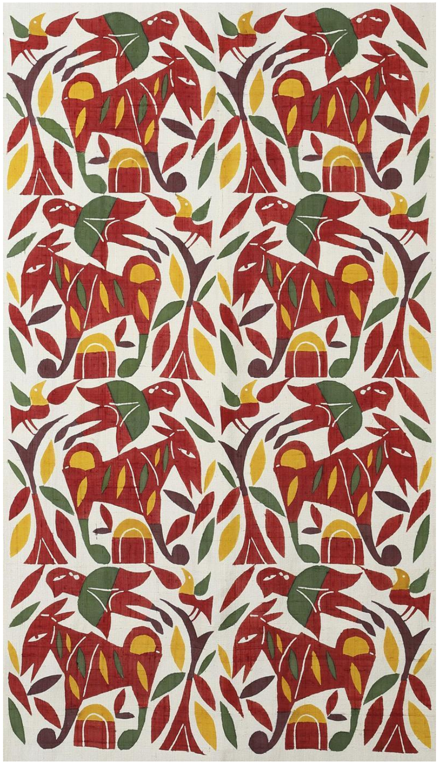

Figure 30. Samiro Yunoki, *Transmigration of Souls* (detail), 1983, katazome《輪廻流転》 175 x 77 cm. The Japan Folk Crafts Museum collection.

Transmigration of Souls (fig. 30) is one in a series of katazome works that depict scenes of Yunoki's travels. In this work, the scene represented by the pattern is, at the center, a person suspended above a cow. The figure can be interpreted as higher than the cow both physically and metaphysically. Accompanying the two figures on the right side of the pattern frame is a bird posed on a tree about to take flight. This bird could symbolize freedom or the act of existing on a higher plane. Alternatively, the bird might simply be watching or indulging in the mysterious transformation that the person and the animal are experiencing. Below the cow is a representation of what seems like a door or tunnel; considering the title, this could be interpreted as the next step to rebirth or transmigration in Hinduism. A similar depiction of an entrance is seen at the base of the tree. During his trip to Jaipur, India, Yunoki was impressed by the relationship between humans and animals; in Hinduism, certain animals like cows are considered pure and sacred.

This scene is framed in a rectangular structure that is repeated twice widthwise on the fabric; the direction of the pattern alternates on each row. The figures and plants are represented naively, showing an overall synthesis in the shapes and the details that define them. The energetic color palette, harmonized in a tetrad color scheme, is highly saturated and vigorously scattered over all the elements of the composition, suggesting that animals, humans, and nature are all made up of the same substance. The shape of the person's eye is similar to that of the cow, while the bird's eye is different; one could interpret this as a sign that the two central figures are in a different state from the bird, perhaps a kind of trance. Another interpretation could be that the bird is farther away, thus rendering the eye less detailed. The organization of elements within the pattern frame is centered on the two main figures, the cow and the man. All of the other elements are arranged around them in a circular motion suggested by the direction of the shapes. The fabric's dimensions suggest that it was created for interior design or clothing. The colors could have been influenced by Indian textiles and/or bingata textiles. Overall, the atmosphere of this piece is joyful, dynamic, and energetic, drawing the viewer in and inviting observation.

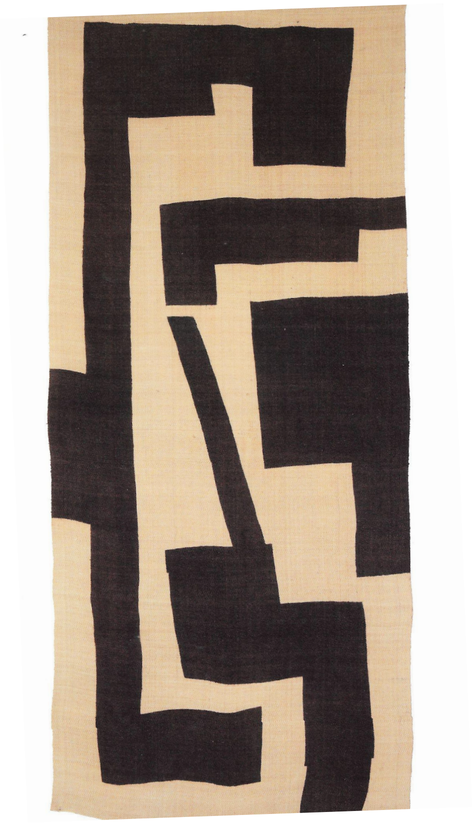

Figure 31. Samiro Yunoki, *Composition*, 2010, katazome《コンポジション》
207 x 89 cm.

In *Composition,* created in 2010 (fig. 31), abstract representation emerges, as it does in many other textile pieces from this time period. The elements that constitute this piece suggest a change in the katazome process, specifically the cutting of the stencil, evidenced in the unevenness of the shapes that are formed by the contrasting planes. Compared to previous creations, pattern is absent in this work and replaced with an arrangement of positive and negative space that interplays within the canvas composition, as suggested by the title. As for the layout, opposing forces and tension created by the positive and negative spaces on the canvas invite the viewer into exploring the whole two-dimensional space, as if drawn into a maze. The direction of the lines defined by the planes are horizontal and vertical, except for a plane at the center of the piece that skews diagonally, creating an accent or anomaly in the composition. This accent is enhanced by the position of this black plane in proximity to another black plane, thus drawing the eye to the negative space that separates them.

While creating this series of textiles, Yunoki began cutting his katagami stencils as puzzle pieces rather than cutting one big piece of katagami paper containing the whole pattern.[110] From this series, one piece of dyed textile is unique because the arrangement of the parts of the puzzle (stencil) are placed directly on the fabric, followed by the process of putting the nori over the stencil and the canvas. Thus, some shapes in the composition appear skewed. This could have been intentionally done by the artist to give a different dynamic to the lines and planes; if the same elements were placed on a different fabric attempting to repeat it, they could not be aligned in the same way for a new dyed work—inevitably, there would be slight differences. The planes that are marginalized in the canvas are broken by the frame of the two-dimensional space, directing the eye to the edges and connecting these planes to other surrounding elements. In this piece, an insightful aura is created by the abstract shapes that invite the viewer to decipher multiple messages through the use of contrasting planes.

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[110] Details about this method are offered in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 2

KEISUKE SERIZAWA AND SAMIRO YUNOKI: A COMPARATIVE REVIEW

In this chapter, Yunoki and Serizawa are addressed in a comparative review that underlines the circumstances that connected them to the world of crafts. To reach an understanding of what may have encouraged them to follow different paths in their work, their early lives, studies and formative years, and involvement in the Mingei movement are examined. This is followed by a section focusing on the act of collecting and its importance in the lives of these two artists. Within the critical framework of James Clifford's work, parallels are drawn to modern artists who also collected tribal objects.

2.1 Keisuke Serizawa's Connection to Art - Design - Crafts

Born in 1895 in Shizuoka Prefecture, Keisuke Serizawa, the second son of Oishi Kakujiro, a draper (kimono shop owner). Serizawa began exploring drawing and painting early in elementary school, which later encouraged him to lead the Shizuoka Painting Association (静中画会) at Shizuoka Prefectural Junior High School, which he entered in 1908. He was on the editorial board of *Shirakaba* magazine (the same magazine Yanagi contributed to) in 1910, when it was first published. Although Serizawa dreamed of attending art school after graduating from high school, his aspirations were altered when his family home burned down. That tragedy made him reconsider his ambition and ultimately drove him to study design[111] at Tokyo Higher Technical School, now the Tokyo Institute of Technology, (東京工業大学), at the age of eighteen. He graduated in 1916.[112]

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[111] Seiichiro Shiratori, "On Keisuke Serizawa: From Boyhood until Immediately After the War," in *Keisuke Serizawa's Works* (Kyuryudo Art Publishing, 2006), 17-18.

[112] Ibid., 230.

By comparing Yunoki's early life to Serizawa's, Yunoki appears to have been closer to the art world, introduced by his artist father and grandfather; in contrast, Serizawa grew up in a more commercial setting in his father’s kimono shop.[113] In terms of higher education, Yunoki studied art history at Tokyo University, albeit briefly, while Serizawa studied design. After graduation, Serizawa was employed at the Shizuoka Industrial Research Institute and later at Shizuoka High School as a teacher of drawing and industrial design; this was shortly after marrying Tayo Serizawa in 1917, from whom he adopted the Serizawa family name. During his time teaching drawing and design at the Shizuoka Research Institute in 1918, he also instructed at local artisans’ workshops such as *Konya*,[114] *Sashimonoya*, and *Shikkiya*, enabling him to further understand the world of crafts through his peers. He later started designing wooden toy with his brother and eventually opened the Bunkin Design company (文金図案社) with Mitsuo Ota, for which he designed advertisements, signboards, and store displays. In 1921, he was invited to work at the Osaka Prefectural Product Display Center (大阪府立商品陳列所), where he gave lectures and began poster designing. However, he worked for just two years there because he wanted "to create 'things'" with his hands rather than just "designing," and returned to Shizuoka to do so.[115]

Just as Yunoki was called to create things with his hands, Serizawa felt the need for a space that would encourage his creativity. It is likely that Serizawa couldn’t fulfill the creative urge he had experienced in his youth with design. Similarly, Yunoki was called to the crafts world later in his career by way of the Mingei group. However, Yunoki and Serizawa began their exploration with crafts with different backgrounds. As mentioned previously, Yunoki came from an artistic background and had some university experience, followed by his job at the Ohara Museum, which was the first museum with a modern art collection in Japan. Encountering masterpieces by modern artists as well as craft pieces must have been an important part of Yunoki's experience. In contrast, Serizawa's design experience preceded his encounter with crafts and greatly defined his later role in the Mingei movement.

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[113] Ibid., 17.

[114] This was the artisan workshop where years later Serizawa suggested Yunoki should learn dyeing.

[115] Shiratori, op.cit., 18.

After returning to Shizuoka in 1925, Serizawa and his wife started the handicraft group *Konohanakai* (このはな会)[116] along with several young women in the neighborhood. Due to the lack of quality children's clothes during this period, the members of this group handcrafted clothes with embroidery, knitting, and tie-dye techniques. The group was later involved in producing other items such as cushions, wall hangings, and handbags, and with time they used other techniques such as wax-resist dyeing and katazome. Serizawa's main role was to design while the other members created. During the five years the group was active, they were involved in not only creating but also exhibiting the work. It was in this way that Serizawa was introduced to, and fully grasped katazome dyeing technique. Many sources state that Serizawa became a dyer due to his encounter with Soetsu Yanagi and the bingata dyeing technique, but in fact he got his experience from working with the Konohanakai group.[117]

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[116] Not to be confused with the postwar *Konohanakai* group.

[117] Shiratori, op.cit., 18.

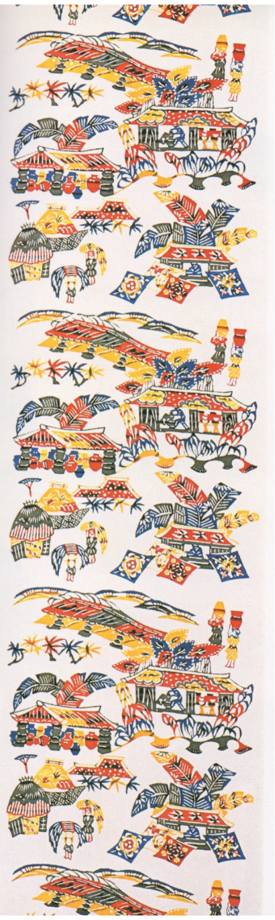

Figure 32. Keisuke Serizawa, *Scenes in Okinawa*, 1954, detail of katazome obi, 36 cm (w). Serizawa Keisuke Art and Craft Museum.

Serizawa incorporated the colorful palette characterized by bingata textiles in his designs (fig. 32), and—as mentioned in Chapter 1—also embraced the Okinawan method of creating a piece alone, with no division of labor involved.[118] Through katazome dyeing, Serizawa was able to achieve a unique style that defined all of his creations with particular imagery: Chinese characters written in calligraphy, nature (fig. 33), and people or geometric shapes. His colorful palette, unrestricted composition, and design skills earned him the title of Living National Treasure for katazome technique as Important Intangible Cultural Property in 1956.

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[118] See appendix D.

Led by design ideas and influenced by the crafts he collected, Serizawa achieved his own voice through the dyeing medium. Milhaupt comments on Serizawa's unique style as a fusion of multiple cultural values:

> His *noren* (entrance curtain) from 1955 (see cat. 42), for example, disguises his cultural eclecticism. Within the white outlines of the Chinese character *fuku* (good fortune), the left half of the character comprises motifs of bamboo and the right side a peony. The palette is reminiscent of Okinawan *bingata* dye colors - vibrant yellows, reds, and blues. Serizawa is known to have studied and favored the Okinawan practice of cutting the stencils and dyeing the fabrics himself, rather than relying on a division of labor between stencil cutter and dyer, the conventional practice in Japan. Serizawa's composition bears further visual and structural affinities with Korean *munjado* (combinations of characters and motifs).[119]

Milhaupt notes the influences from China, Okinawa, and Korea (fig. 35) apparent in the diverse elements that constitute Serizawa's style. In the noren piece (fig. 34) mentioned, all of these stylistic elements are so intrinsically fused together, it would be difficult to separate them, but I would add to Milhaupt's statement that it was Serizawa's knowledge of design and ability to create functional pieces with aesthetic appeal that enabled him to rescue katazome from oblivion. Westernization affected all aspects of society, including clothing; kimonos were being replaced by Western-style clothes, and Serizawa must have observed this shift at his father's kimono shop. By using katazome to create things other than kimonos like curtains, interior design appliqué, and book covers, Serizawa was reviving a need and appreciation for stencil dyeing. However, the changes incorporated by Serizawa to this traditional dyeing medium and his rampant individuality made some people question the fact that he was promoting traditional unknown craftsmen through the Mingei movement. These changes and their ulterior influence on Yunoki's creative path are discussed in the next section.

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[119] Terry Satsuki Milhaupt, "In the Guise of Tradition", in *Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design*. (New York: Japan Society, 2009), 97.

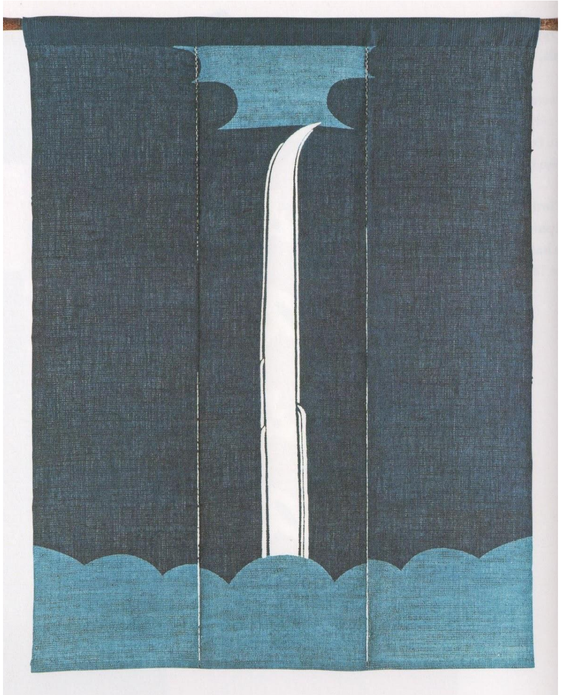

Figure 33. Keisuke Serizawa, *Nachi Waterfall*, 1962, katazome noren, 132.4 x 99.4 cm. Serizawa Keisuke Art and Craft Museum.

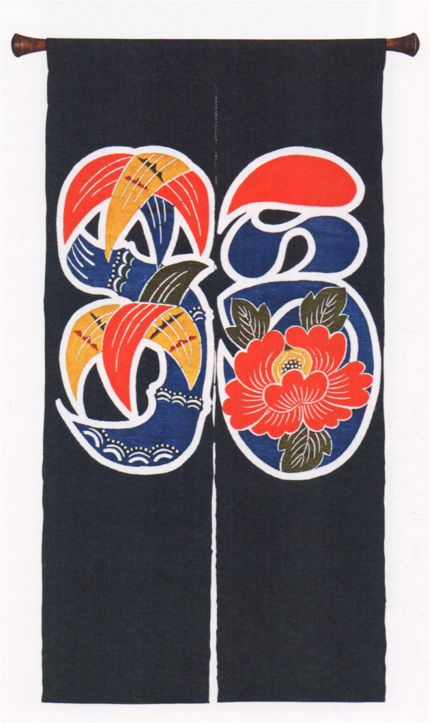

Figure 34. Keisuke Serizawa, *Bamboo and Peony in the Chinese Character Fuku (Good Fortune)*, 1955, katazome noren, 155.4 x 80.5 cm. Serizawa Keisuke Art and Craft Museum.

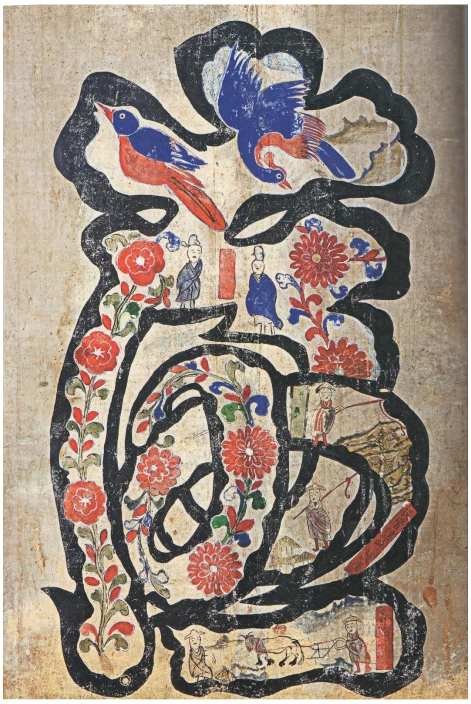

Figure 35. *Munjado* (picture ideograph), 19th century Korean craft, ink and color on paper, dimensions unknown (*Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design*, 96).

2.2 Serizawa and Yunoki: Roles and Approaches to Mingei

Keisuke Serizawa met Soetsu Yanagi in 1927 and came across his theory through the publication *Kogei no Michi.* In 1927, Serizawa was invited to Yanagi's father's house in the Kamigamo neighborhood of Kyoto to see his collection of crafts, which impressed him greatly.[120] It wasn't one single thing that motivated Serizawa to actively get involved in the Mingei movement; many factors prompted this decision. He was involved in designing but wanted to create handicrafts. Although the Mingei group's focus on collecting and exhibiting crafts was grounded in Yanagi's ideal of an aesthetic that served as a national model of beauty, for Serizawa, appreciation of crafts as valuable items didn't necessarily involve aesthetic consideration.[121] Serizawa's training as a designer made him see beyond the aesthetic value of a piece and focus on functionality, because design prioritizes purpose and utility above all. Now, this doesn't rule out Serizawa's good eye for and appreciation of beauty, but the focus of his work and research in the Mingei movement was to review the functionality and aesthetic properties of the objects that were created and collected within the group. Conversely, Yunoki, who had a brief but significant experience studying art history and aesthetics at Tokyo University and came from a family connected to the art world, probably developed a different value system for crafts. This could have been one of the major differences between Serizawa and Yunoki regarding their appreciation of crafts and is probably one of the many reasons why Yunoki eventually drifted away from Mingei and moved towards the arts. For a better understanding of Serizawa's role in Mingei, his supervision of specific projects will be reviewed and contrasted with Yunoki's role within the group.

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[120] Shiratori, op.cit., 12.

[121] Ibid., 19.

In 1928, Serizawa went to Ueno Park in Tokyo to design the booth for the Shizuoka Tea Industry Association for the Commemorative Imperial Ceremony Domestic Products Promotion Exposition (大礼記念国産振興東京博覧会). The Mingeikan was displaying part of their collection at the same exhibition. Serizawa was particularly impressed by the bingata textiles, especially the colors and patterns, which gave him a "returning home-like feeling." This encounter led him to deeply consider dyeing as his medium of expression, and to return to bingata for continuous inspiration.[122]

At the beginning of his relationship with the Mingei movement, Serizawa designed the front cover of *Kogei* magazine (fig. 36), and later went on many research trips around rural areas of Japan to search for and collect crafts that would fit Yanagi's ideal of folk crafts. In 1934, Yanagi joined him on one such trip to Shikoku. In 1935 he traveled to Ogawa City in Saitama Prefecture to research dyed paper and katagami and to teach a group of artisans about fabric colors. In 1940 he went to Okinawa for research and to conduct a survey on local folk crafts, and in 1944 he held a workshop on flower design in Kurashiki.[123] It is clear from these journeys that Serizawa's involvement with Mingei during that time was to perform research work and guide craftsmen on topics related to pattern design, dyeing, and materials used in crafts; he was fully engaging in his role as an artist-craftsman in the Mingei movement.

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[122] Ibid.

[123] Miho Moriya, "Prewar Mingei Movement and Keisuke Serizawa," in *Keisuke Serizawa's Works* (Kyuryudo Art Publishing, 2006), 217.

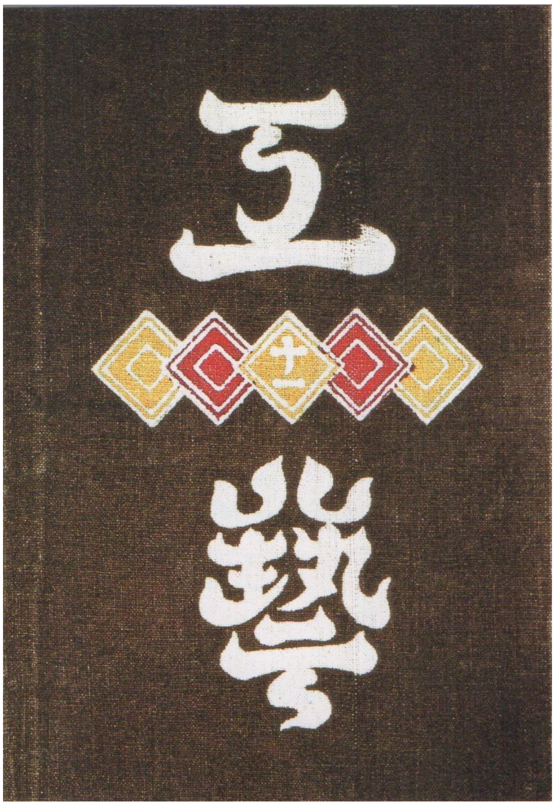

Figure 36. Keisuke Serizawa, cover for Issue 11 of *Kogei* magazine, 1931, katazome, 22.6 x 15.7 cm. Serizawa Keisuke Art and Craft Museum.

On the inquiry conducted by Miho Moriya based on Serizawa's research activities within the Mingei movement, it's important to mention that Yanagi was the main supervisor of the crafts created and later displayed in the group. He would visit the workshops to inspect the process and craftsmanship and later instruct one of the members to follow up and lead changes in the production whenever necessary. One example of this was a visit to a Japanese straw mat company in Kurashiki in 1932 during which Yanagi advised them to use natural dyes. The creators made the change as instructed, but during a follow-up visit the next year, they were asked to make a more significant change in the pattern they were using, and Serizawa became the design instructor to guide the artisans through the new pattern. This was his first involvement as a design instructor within the Mingei movement. In 1944, Serizawa and Yanagi held a training session at the Japan Folk Crafts Museum for which they invited skilled lacquerware artisans who made *kabazaiku*.[124] For the occasion, Yanagi asked Serizawa to work on the design patterns. Serizawa took some notes in the form of sketches that are descriptive of the overall shape of the items and reveal his reflections on important design aspects and characteristics of birch craftsmanship.[125]

Serizawa became well-known for his katazome textiles, but his contribution to the Mingei movement as a researcher who visited the artisan's workshops, traveling all over Japan to collect and instruct on specific aspects related to pattern design or dyeing, is essential to understand how he developed his role as an artist-craftsman beyond his own production. Beyond his capacity as a skilled dyer, Yanagi probably saw a teacher in him, someone who could guide craftsmen in textile techniques. His contribution to the group wasn't questioned, however, when he was awarded the Living National Treasure title in 1956 for his *kataezome* [126] (型絵染め) technique, as the government authorities called it at the time, a title that is evaluated with the metrics of "artistic value, importance in craft history, and local tradition." Once again, the paradox that was manifest in the Mingei group concerning inexpensive, anonymous, and collectively produced crafts was raised. Milhaupt makes a clear interpretation of this event, stating:

> Serizawa as remembered in the cultural imagination represents an important transitional figure moving from anonymity of the mingei artisan to the celebrated position of Living National Treasure as embodied in an individual craftsperson. While his works reveal polarities between

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[124] Literally translated to *birch craftsmanship,* kabazaiku is a very special form of lacquerware made from cherry tree bark. For more information see https://japan-brand.jnto.go.jp/crafts/woodcraft/12/ (accessed November 21, 2021)

[125] Moriya, op.cit., 218-219.

[126] From 1956, after Serizawa was awarded the Living National Treasure title, the technique was called kataezome. Nowadays, it is referred to as katazome or kataezome.

> tradition and innovation, everyday and extraordinary, inexpensive and costly, regional and international, anonymity and identity, their attraction may lie in the ability to extract essential elements from the visual arts and technical processes of various cultural practices and transform them, appearing fresh yet steeped in time-honored conventions.[127]

Considering Milhaupt's words and Yunoki's initial involvement in the Mingei group in Serizawa's shadow, Yunoki's eventual disengagement from Mingei could be explained by his relationship with Serizawa. He learned from and witnessed his mentor not only being recognized for his achievements but moving forward beyond tradition, exemplifying the figure of an artist rather than a craftsman, and reaching local and international spheres through his work. Yunoki, who was still learning crafts from his master and finding his way into the craft world that gradually accepted him, focused on achieving a decent level of quality with katazome before moving forward and defying tradition. However, Yunoki recalls his mentor stressing that "all of you stay cross-legged on tradition and don't study at all."[128] Serizawa called for craftsmen to overcome the established way of doing things—technique and tradition, which are tied together in crafts—but also taught that these two elements are the foundation of the creation process. Serizawa had experience in design instruction that Yunoki didn't have by the time he joined the Mingei group. Yunoki had taught craft at Joshibi University, but even then, he was always looking up to Serizawa as his mentor. Because of this, he couldn't fully achieve a leading role within the Mingei group, thus driving him to consciously focus on his own production.

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[127] Milhaupt, op.cit., 99.

[128] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 48.

2.3 The Art of Collecting Crafts: Serizawa and Yunoki

Shiratori explains that, influenced by his previous experience creating and designing items with dyeing techniques in the Konohanakai group, his involvement with artisans in Shizuoka, and Yanagi's teachings, Serizawa started a collection of small votive tablets[129] (小絵馬) from around Japan in 1919.[130] Unfortunately, part of the votive tablets collection was destroyed in 1945, during the war. However, around 120 tablets dating from prewar to postwar times remain in the Serizawa Museum Collection. From that time, and with his later involvement with the Mingei movement, he broadened his collection with items from trips all over the world. The collection contains crafts and objects from Japan, Asia, Africa, Europe, Oceania, and North and South America. There are roughly 6000 items,[131] including textiles, ceramics, woodwork, toys, masks, books, paintings, dolls, votive tablets, jewelry, and furniture. The items span various time periods, representing different periods of craftsmanship.[132] The textiles include *furoshiki*, *yogi*, *umagarinonuno* (wrapping cloth, night kimono, and horse decoration textiles respectively). Yunoki also began collecting objects from his trips to various countries, mostly crafts and objects that caught his interest. The items Yunoki collected are arranged in his studio in Tokyo and occasionally he displays them with his textile work, as he did at the exhibition held at the Toyota City Folk Craft Museum, *Dyeworks by Samiro Yunoki: Patterns and Colors* held in 2019. Both Yunoki and Serizawa have referred to the objects they collect as sources of inspiration or encouragement that nourish their creative work. Serizawa began collecting through his votive tablets, and Yunoki began collecting around the time he started to become involved with the Mingei movement. Both artists continued to do so for the rest of their lives.

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[129] Votive tablets, *ema* (絵馬) are small wooden tablets used by Shinto worshippers to write a wish that they leave hanging in the Shinto shrine for the gods or spirits to receive. They usually have a representation of an animal in Shinto imagery. For more information see https://readingreligion.org/books/health-related-votive-tablets-japan (accessed November 22, 2021).

[130] Shiratori, p.cit., 19.

[131] For more information on Serizawa's collection, visit: https://www.seribi.jp/shuushuu.html (accessed November 24, 2021)

[132] Seiichiro Shiratori, "On Keisuke Serizawa," in *The Beauty of Ainu Handiwork: From the Collections of Yanagi Soetsu and Serizawa Keisuke* (The Foundation for Ainu Culture, 2019), 244.

It's interesting to see how collecting was also a fundamental activity for modern artists, particularly in Europe; they amassed tribal objects considered rare and with a "primitive" character that was a novelty for them. Such objects were an endless source of inspiration for them in their pursuit of the avant-garde. Some of these artists, including Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró, and Alberto Giacometti, incorporated in their artistic discourse formal aspects assimilated from their encounter with these objects. On this, Clifford (1988) comments:

> Around 1910 Picasso and his cohort suddenly, intuitively recognize that "primitive" objects are in fact powerful "art." They collect, imitate and are affected by these objects. Their own work, even when not directly influenced, seems oddly reminiscent of non-Western forms. The modern and the primitive converse across the centuries and continents.[133]

Clifford continues to analyze the fact that modern art museums have exhibited these objects next to the masterpieces they inspired. He specifically exemplifies this with mention of the exhibition "*Primitivism*" *in 20th Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* held at the MOMA in New York in 1984-85. He argues that the vague discourse underlying the "primitiveness" of the object erases any possibility of accessing information about the creators or gaining full understanding of the object. Thus its actual connection to the masterpiece is disengaged and a different discussion is proposed; for example, how the masterful creations that were inspired from the object have gone in a completely different artistic direction. Moreover, these “othered” stories behind the objects are completely ruled out, thus offering a limited contextualization of the object.

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[133] James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988), 190.

At the beginning of the Mingei movement, Yanagi celebrated the beauty of folk crafts by exhibiting and enhancing them in the Mingeikan. However, in his idea of the *unknown craftsman*—a creator who must stay in the shadows for the sake of a greater good, to bring beauty to everyday life—one can draw parallels to the stories that are not conveyed in the modern art museum. Consequently, crafts from anonymous artisans that have been mostly found in artist's collections, namely those of Yunoki and Serizawa, have been displayed in the Folk Crafts Museum following the same pattern as modern art museums. Following Clifford's argument on the inability to ground an artist's work from the "affinity" that it shares with the collected object, he goes on to state that it was possible for these objects to circulate in European flea markets, the artist's studios, and consequently, modern art museums, due to the crude reality of colonialism; that is generally the suppressed historical background of the object, which modern art museum do not acknowledge. On this aspect he adds:

> Obviously the modernist appropriation of tribal productions as art is not simply imperialist. The project involves too many strong critiques of colonialist, evolutionist assumptions. As we shall see, though, the scope and underlying logic of the "discovery" of tribal art reproduces hegemonic Western assumptions rooted in the colonial and neocolonial epoch.[134]

Inaga (1999) proposes that Yanagi was in fact assuming a colonialist position by gathering and collecting objects from Korea, stating that a "hidden structure of domination, which sustains Yanagi's position as a colonizer," underlies his empathy for Korea and its crafts. He bases his argument on the fact that Yanagi's recurrent trips to Korea—taking and recontextualizing crafts under the premise of rescuing beautiful objects from flea markets and shops where their worth was underappreciated—betrayed his biased view on Korean Folk Crafts. On this he comments:

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[134] Clifford, op.cit., 197.

> Here is one of the main paradoxes of Yanagi's ideology. His aesthetic and empathic contemplation ironically displaces these handwares from their original context of everyday usage. It is at the price of this de-contextualization that the unknown Korean popular craft were saved from oblivion and publicly recognized and made visible as aesthetic objects to be conserved and presented at the Korean Popular Art Museum. Here lies a fundamental dilemma of the politics of "visualizing" and "aestheticizing" what has until then remained invisible and out of the realm of aesthetic consideration.[135]

It's important to point out that in both the Modern Art Museum and the Folk Crafts Museum, a need to "visualize" and "aestheticize" objects taken from their original context problematizes our conditioned view of the object as it actually is: a utilitarian object. Whether such objects belong to the realm of ethnography or should be appreciated from an aesthetic perspective is an important discussion that continues to take place at art museums and venues that display such objects. I would add that I believe it would be most significant to give the creator's story, as well as present it from both ethnographic and aesthetic viewpoints. James Clifford continues to research and work on ways of displaying and making visible such hidden narratives. In 2018, during an international symposium organized by the National Museum of Ethnology in Osaka (Minpaku) titled *The Future of the Museum: An Anthropological Perspective*,[136] Clifford discussed some ideas on how to create a different dynamism between artifacts and museum visitors by incorporating the narrator in the story of an object. One method he proposed was to use short videos to explain the use and connection of the object to its community. The narrator could be a scholar or a person who has experienced the object within its original context—a person who belongs to the community the object originally came from. This talk was enlightening because it revealed a different approach and way of preserving oral history, which is usually passed down through community members. By making the object perceivable in its full context with interpretation from someone from its place of origin, the viewer can appreciate and understand the object at a deeper and more significant level.

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[135] Shigemi Inaga, “Reconsidering the Mingei Undô as a Colonial Discourse: The Politics of Visualizing Asian 'Folk Craft,'”in *Asiatische Studien, Zeitschrift der Schweizerischen Asiengesellschaft*, Vol.LIII, No.2 (1999), 226.
[136] James Clifford et al. International Symposium “Future of the Museum : An Anthropological Perspective”, *Bulletin of the National Museum of Ethnology.* Vol.45, Num.1, (August 31, 2020): 115-176, http://doi.org/10.15021/00009580

Yunoki and Serizawa's search for crafts was grounded in a creative need to absorb and understand the ways in which beauty was expressed in objects they gathered from around the world. Mingei activities and exhibitions reveal that the influence that these items had on their work cannot be quantified, but some similarities can be drawn from the crafts to elements they incorporated into their work. The Ainu garments that were an important item within the Mingei movement are one example of this influence; Serizawa researched and wrote about the Ainu people, and designed and dyed the magazine cover for the special issue *Ainu Geijutsu* on Ainu crafts (fig. 37). Moreover, two textiles created by Serizawa and Yunoki echo Ainu imagery (fig. 38). Serizawa's piece *Sasabun Noren,* (笹文のれん) (1972) (fig. 39), and Yunoki's piece *Geometric Noren* (1950) (fig. 40) both recall Ainu motifs and synthesis in their use of color, which contrasts the pattern with the background.

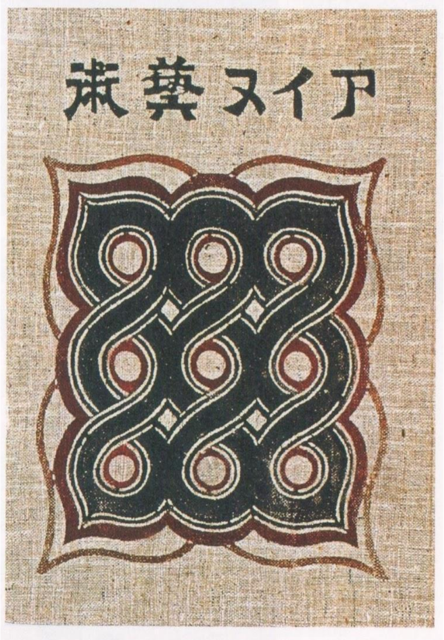

Figure 37. Keisuke Serizawa, cover of *Ainu Geijutsu* (*Ainu Arts*) numbers 1-3, 1941-1943, katazome, 30.3 x 21.4 cm. Serizawa Keiko Collection.

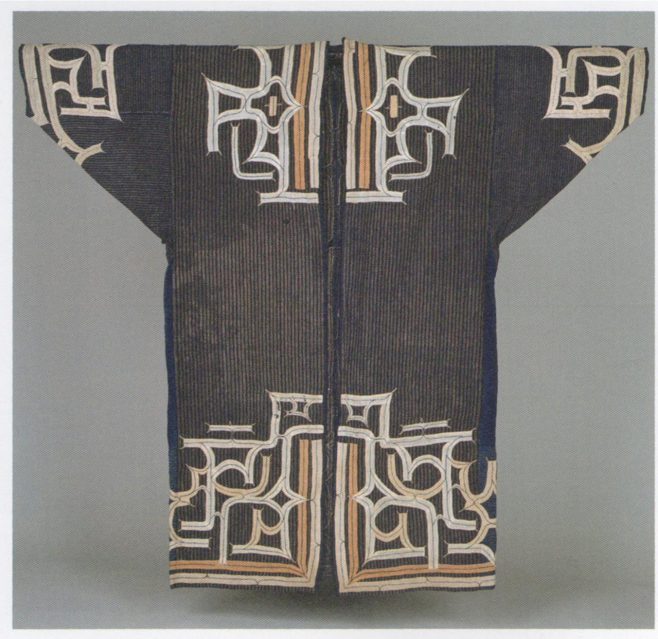

Figure 38. Ainu garment, cotton, 119.5 x 134 cm.

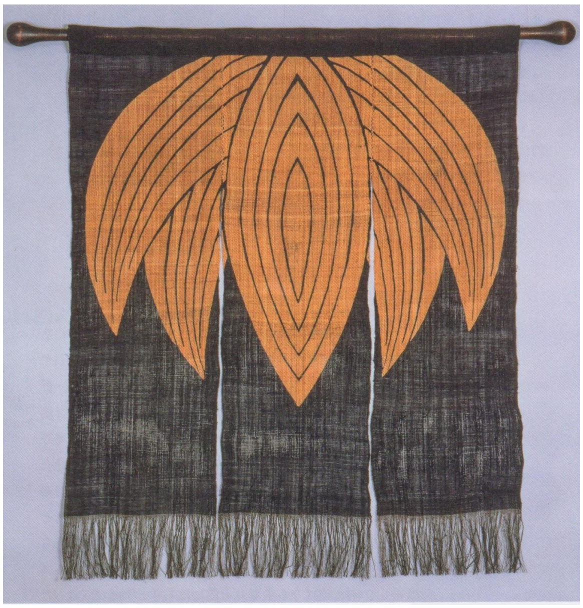

Figure 39. Keisuke Serizawa, *Sasabun Noren*, 1972, katazome《 笹文のれん》151.8 x 110 cm.

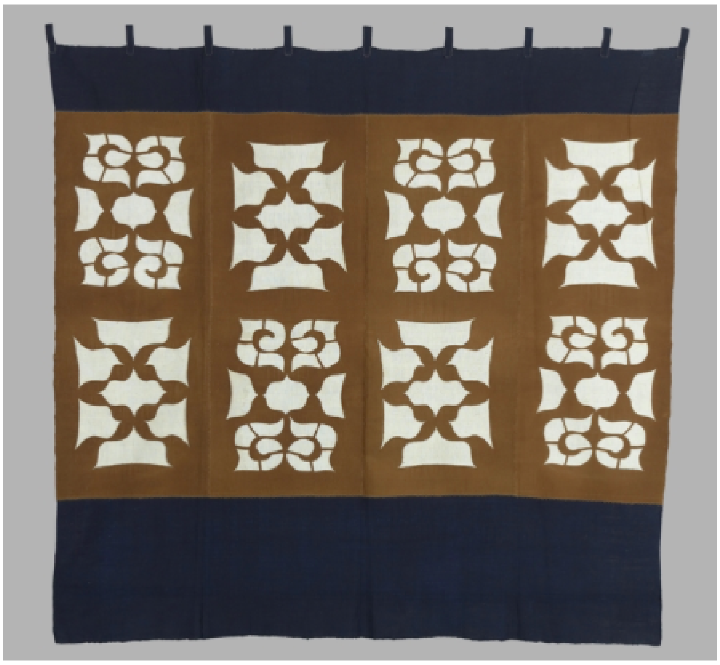

Figure 40. Samiro Yunoki, *Geometric Noren*, 1950, katazome 143 x 144 cm. Guimet National Museum of Asian Arts.

Although Yunoki and Serizawa addressed Ainu motifs differently, they both had a deep understanding of the visual composition and contrasting color palette that defined Ainu patterns, as well as the intrinsic magical meanings present in the motifs. In an essay based on Ainu garments by Serizawa in 1971, he writes, "I want the form of this powerful cloth to be seen. This kimono is both beautiful and mysterious." On this essay, Shiratori[137] comments that Serizawa refers to Ainu garments as "cloth modelling" (布の造形); this can also be interpreted as "cloth shaping," and he adds that Serizawa was viewing Ainu handicrafts from the perspective of a craftsman or a designer.[138]

On the other hand, based on Yunoki's piece *Geometric Noren* that was displayed in his exhibition *La Danse des Formes* in 2014, Kennel comments:

> The talismanic patterns of spirals, thorns and braces in this work, are present in Ainu garments, placed on the edges- the neck sleeves and bottom of the garment- to protect the wearer from evil spirits. By integrating these motifs into his work, Yunoki assumes the primary utility of noren, which is also to prevent evil spirits from entering the building.[139]

Using katazome techniques, Yunoki was transferring visual elements that have a protective function for the Ainu people onto noren, a utilitarian object of everyday Japanese life. Kennel adds that the use of the color brown in Yunoki's piece recalls the use of fiber plants like elm bark that is present in Ainu textiles, and the "strong contrasting colors announces the continuation of Yunoki's work."

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[137] Seiichiro Shiratori, "Serizawas' Ainu Collection," in *The beauty of AINU Handiwork: From the Collections of Yanagi Soetsu and Serizawa Keisuke,* 170.

[138] Ibid., 170-171.

[139] Aurélie Samuel and Kévin Kennel, *La Danse des Formes* (Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2014), 22-23.

In a publication from 1972 that gathers Serizawa's collection of objects,[140] along with those of Shoji Hamada and Kichinosuke Tonomura, crafts from around the world are organized and described by Hamada and Tonomura, commenting not only on the visual aspects of the piece, but also the details on the craftsmanship and usage (fig. 41-42). I consider this book a good example of the nature of Mingei work that Serizawa was doing related to collecting objects. In Shiratori's essay about Serizawa, he describes him as "Omote Serizawa" and "Ura Serizawa," meaning the front side and back side respectively. "Omote Serizawa" is the side of him that describes his work, which in Shiratori's words represents the purification and richness sought from "Ura Serizawa," which reveals his collector's side. He adds that in a newspaper interview, Serizawa commented on his collection, "I see things with my eyes as a designer, and always compete with the person who made it. I think I have no choice but to buy it, for the shape and design that I could not think of."[141]

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[140] Shoji Hamada, Keisuke Serizawa and Kichinosuke Tonomura. *Sekai no Mingei (*Asahi Shinbun Sha. 1972).

[141] Shiratori, "On Serizawa," in *The beauty of AINU Handiwork: From the Collections of Yanagi Soetsu and Serizawa Keisuke*, 244. Also see "Keisuke Serizawa's Ainu Collection," 170.

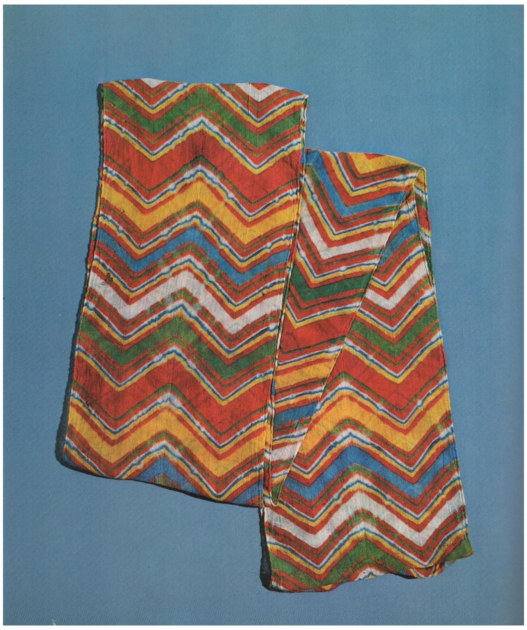

Figure 41. Tie-dye piece from India used by women in everyday life, usually wrapped around the body, 16 x 192 cm. Kichiemon Okamura private collection.

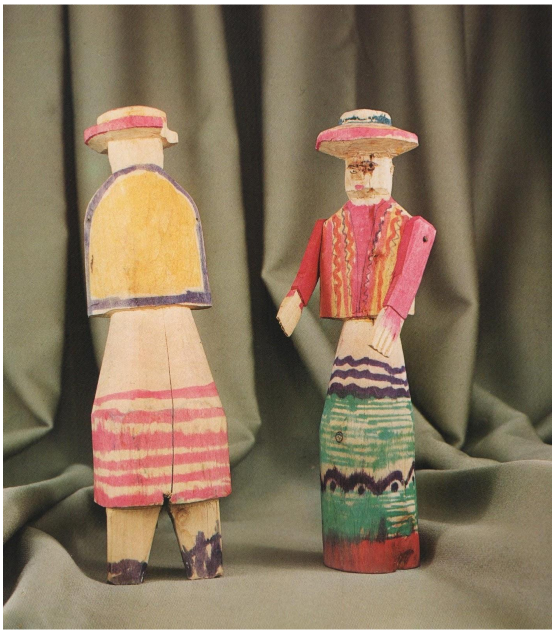

Figure 42. Wooden dolls from Peru commercialized as souvenirs. Originally created in various places for festivals, especially for children of the area. Height: 24 cm. Keisuke Serizawa Collection.

Serizawa's attitude towards collecting—focused on thinking, analyzing shapes and forms, and devising utility in found objects—contrasts with Yunoki's *need* to collect. Although they were both influenced by Mingei, the influence on their work differs. In an interview conducted in 2013 by Life Cycling, a web magazine published by Japanese interior brand IDÉE, Yunoki comments that his criteria to pick an object is based on finding something that is "fun and exciting;" or that "jumped out at me when I first saw it." He reflects that he became attracted to toys (fig. 43) by pure intuition, and that the material from which an object is made is more meaningful than anything else; the clay figures (fig. 44-45) in his collection are one such example. Yunoki is driven by the feeling an object evokes in him; the materials are also something fascinating and encouraging in his creation process, especially when he reflects on the fact that, "Even if the country is not rich, it's great if the people can make something enjoyable. When I saw artworks like this, I realized that things have to be happy all the time."[142] This brings attention towards the way he assumes creation, and what he draws from these objects as a creative motivator; Yunoki confesses that he never planned to start a collection, but he found crafts he felt compelled to buy during his travels to many countries.

In this chapter, Serizawa and Yunoki's background, education and roles in Mingei revealed two different characters who experienced crafts from different perspectives. Serizawa, who began as a designer and had experience teaching design, assumed the role of a designer-researcher within the movement. In contrast, Yunoki began creating and entered Mingei as an apprentice rather than a leader. Serizawa became the leader of textiles through his mastery of the katazome technique; this was possible because he had previous experience in craftsmanship. Through participation in the Mingei movement and his encounter with bingata and Ainu crafts which he later began to collect, along with his exposure to other cultural backgrounds, he defined an eclectic style that earned him the title of Living National Treasure. Yunoki began to intuitively collect, driven by his travels around the world. Collecting was a joyful experience and motivated him to continue creating. In the objects they collected, both Serizawa and Yunoki were looking for a specific style characteristic of crafts that would challenge and question their own creative process (as modern artist Picasso was when he collected African masks). Both artists became individual figures, namely artist-craftsmen within Mingei, but their interests drove them to take separate paths, probably because the foundation that grounded them to the Mingei movement was also shifting at that time. In the 1960's, Sori Yanagi, Soetsu Yanagi's son, started to rise as a product designer in Japan; consequently, he succeeded his father as the leader of the Mingei movement in 1977. His role in the movement, which lasted twenty-nine years, accelerated the new direction the group was already taking towards modern design.[143] As for Serizawa, he had to secure his title and reputation as the leading figure in katazome, so he continued to work on his individual style. Yunoki, on the other hand, began to turn his path away from Mingei and towards finding his own artistic language.

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[142] Samiro Yunoki : Dyeing artist / Shibuya-ku, Tokyo / 2013.1.8"Life with Aesthetic and Humor; the Dyeing Artist's House" Available at https://www.ideelifecycling.com/interviews/014.html (accessed May 11, 2020)

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[143] See, for instance, *A Few of His Favorite Things: Folk Art that Inspired the Modern Designs of Sori Yanagi* by Susan Rogers Chikuba. Available at https://artscape.jp/artscape/eng/focus/1311_01.html (accessed November 28, 2021)

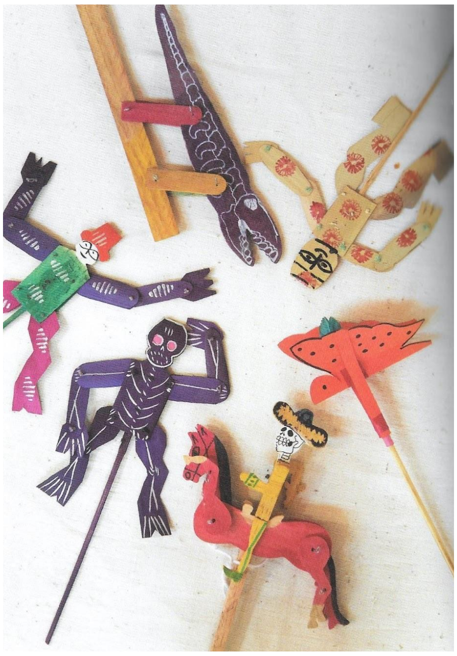

Figure 43. Samiro Yunoki's Collection. Mexican toys.

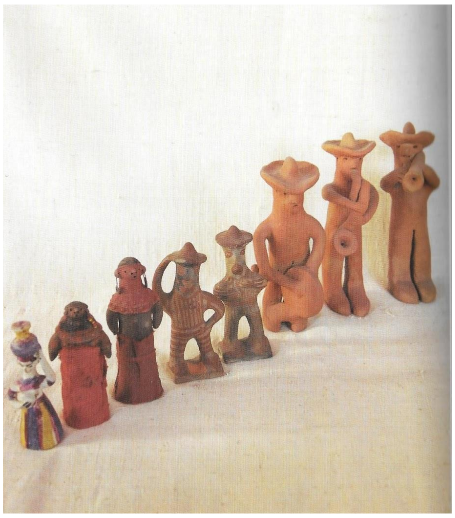

Figure 44. Samiro Yunoki's collection of clay figures from Nairobi, Kenya (left); Peru (middle); and Mexico (right).

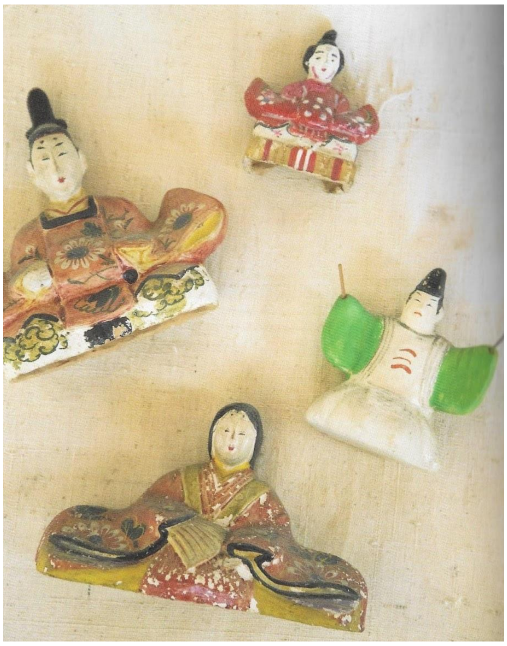

Figure 45. Samiro Yunoki's collection of Japanese clay dolls from Sendai, Tohoku.

CHAPTER 3

EXPRESSION IN SAMIRO YUNOKI'S WORK

3.1 Yunoki's Shift Towards the Arts

The Greek word *techne* refers to crafts or the art of creating, but its meaning is broad; Aristotle used it to refer to the use of reasoning or discourse, as well as the act of creating something using productive technique.[144]

Like *techne*, the term *craft*, when contextualized in Mingei, involves a "highly skilled craftsman" who can create "useful beauty." In Japan, in order to become a *shokunin* (craftsman), one must study their chosen skill for years. After one reaches near perfection with a technical skill, there is still a gap separating the artisan from the artist. The artisan continues to polish their skill, while the artist enters new territory, driven by action and reflection and inspired by the possibilities or limitations offered by technique. This process usually takes place unconsciously, and the artist becomes aware of it only once they have crossed the threshold.

In Japan, specifically in textile craftsmanship, skillful technique has been the focus of creation for centuries. Throughout Japan’s history, textile artisans have used a broad spectrum of traditional dyeing and weaving techniques to reach a specific purpose: to create clothes for people to wear. Artisans all over the country felt it was their duty to create high quality, beautiful fabrics that were most often used to make kimonos. Techniques from abroad infiltrated Japan throughout its history and were later incorporated into the culture and helped redefine this traditional craft. As Yamanobe mentions, there were three major periods in which influence from abroad was significant in textiles:

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[144] See for instance https://oxfordre.com/literature/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.001.0001/acrefore-9780190201098-e-121 (accessed December 20, 2021).

> First the Nara Period (7th-8th centuries) when Chinese culture of the T'ang Dynasty was introduced and flourished. Second, interrupted by the Heian and Kamakura Periods (9th-early 14th centuries) of Japanization, the Muromachi, Momoyama and Early Edo Periods (early 14th-17th centuries) influenced by Chinese Ming culture and also partly by *nambam* (European) culture. Third, following the Edo Period of national isolation, the Meiji Period (middle 19th-early 20th centuries) and afterwards when European textile industry along with machine civilization was an important influencing factor.[145]

Usually, after being absorbed into Japanese culture, these techniques were perfected to reach a higher standard of quality. Of the dyeing techniques, katazome has been used consistently throughout Japan's history to create a repetitious pattern or design on a kimono or yukata. According to Ikuta (2013), various theories indicate that it was during the Kamakura (1192-1333) and Nanboku-cho (1336-1392) periods that katazome was established; it was later perfected during the Momoyama period (1568-1603). In the Edo period (1603-1868), the most prestigious katagami designs, known as *Ise katagami,* were developed in Ise Province;[146] they continue to be honored as an important cultural asset in Japan (fig. 46). Despite the Meiji Restoration's huge impact on traditional craftsmanship due to the introduction of industrial methods to Japan, katagami continued to find an important place in society. In the 20th Century, katagami experienced a wave of popularity that brought it overseas, mainly to Europe, where it influenced artists and designers. A field of study that included katazome has recently been named after "another form of *Japonisme*." The beauty and complexity of katagami is now echoing in other spheres.[147]

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[145] Tomoyuki Yamanobe, *Old Textile Arts Transmitted in Japan* (Tokyo : Mainichi Shinbun Sha, 1975), 2.

[146] Ise Province, was an area in Japan which is currently named Mie *ken* (prefecture), central Honshu, Japan. It is situated on the Shima Peninsula on the southern shore of Ise Bay (Ise-wan) of the Pacific Ocean, about 10 miles (16 km) southeast of Matsuzaka. Accessed December 31, 2021, at https://www.britannica.com/place/Ise-Japan.

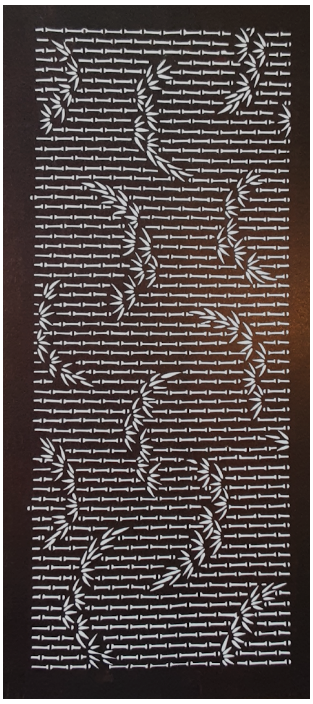

Figure 46. An Ise katagami depicting bamboo leaves.

It was Serizawa who restored katazome dyeing to the center of crafts within the Mingei movement by both collecting katazome pieces and practicing the method individually. Thus, in his own work he began to incorporate changes in the traditional way of creating katazome textiles. Addressing the idea of tradition, Yamanobe explains, "A line which runs uninterruptedly through it, is tradition; when this line is maintained and handed down from one craftsman to another as a means of livelihood, it is transmission."[148]

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[147] Yuki Ikuta, *Traditional Japanese Stencil Patterns* (PIE Books, 2013), 11-15.

[148] Yamanobe, op.cit., 2.

How can tradition resist societal changes without dying out? The only way to persist is to shift towards something innovative, either by altering the technique's original purpose or by changing the steps or methods of the technique. Although Serizawa was greatly criticized for assuming the role of an individual artist which eventually earned him renown throughout Japan, one must recognize that he was able to infuse life into katazome dyeing and placed it back into the scope of creation. Serizawa widely preached the changes he made in katazome as he tried to encourage other craftsmen around him to do the same. One notable example is his pupil Yunoki, who initially saw this technique as more suitable for multiple reproduction than the *yuzen*[149] technique. The return of katazome came after the war, when kimonos were slowly disappearing; artisans began to explore dyeing methods on paper and other materials, producing objects other than clothes.[150] Yunoki and Serizawa experienced this wave in the *Moegikai* group, and they continued to work with katazome technique on paper. But how was Yunoki able to grasp this need to overcome tradition and turn the technique around to his advantage? In the beginning, like any other artisan, he repeated the formulas that were passed on by his senior craftsmen. As Kanbara stated, an artisan follows the same procedure to accomplish the same piece repeatedly, whereas an artist attempts new things in the creation process.[151] A shokunin keeps repeating this knowledge and technique without questioning it; Yunoki was able to transcend it and like Serizawa, infused new life into katazome. There have been two specific points in Yunoki's career that determined changes in his approach to katazome. The first one took place when he began to display his dyed patterns as fabrics that floated freely in space (fig. 47). As described by Fujita, by disengaging the fabric from its intended use as a garment or other cloth, he was consciously aware of the power that the fabric and colors have as an independent "lively expression" that constantly changes for the viewer.[152]

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[149] *Yuzen* technique involves drawing designs on a white fabric with nori paste (dye resist) and dyeing the fabric in multiple colors. Compared to katazome, yuzen doesn't incorporate repetition of a pattern. For more information see https://galleryjapan.com/locale/en_US/technique/textiles/20101/. Accessed January 2, 2022.

[150] Samiro Yunoki, "Kaisetsu," in *Katazome Shu* (Sanichi shobo, 1969).

[151] Kanbara, op.cit., 184-186.

In his classification of "open work,"[153] Eco (1962) includes pieces that incorporate movement into their composition because this quality makes them “unplanned or physically incomplete structural units.” Based on Alexander Calder’s mobile pieces, he argues:

> In the present cultural context, the phenomenon of the "work in movement" is certainly not limited to music. There are, for example, artistic products which display an intrinsic mobility, a kaleidoscopic capacity to suggest themselves in constantly renewed aspects to the consumer. A simple example is provided by Calder's mobiles or by mobile compositions by other artists: elementary structures which can move in the air and assume different spatial dispositions. They continuously create their own space and the shapes to fill it.[154]

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[152] Shinichiro Fujita, "About Samiro Yunoki," in *Samiro Yunokis' Collection of Works* (Yobi Sha, 1984), 167.

[153] "In *Opera aperta* the idea of the open work serves to explain and justify the apparently radical difference in character between modern and traditional art " (Eco 1962, "Introduction," IX). Eco explains the characteristics that define an "open" work of art; "open" in the sense that it has multiple meanings and possibilities to interpretation.

[154] Umberto Eco, *The Open Work* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1962), 12.

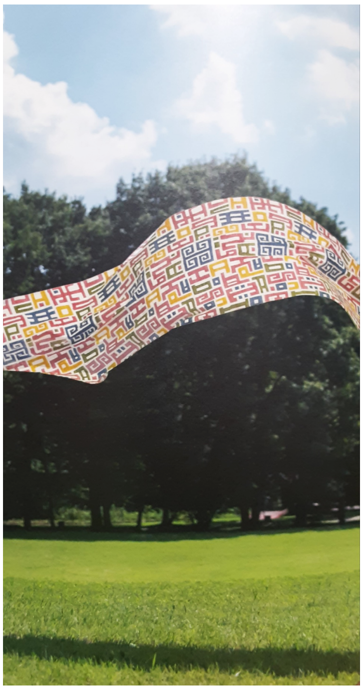

Figure 47. Samiro Yunoki, *Katazome Geometric Cloth*, 1982, katazome (detail) 400 x 75 cm. Private collection.

This mobility is a quality that began to appear in Yunoki's fabric displays, particularly evidenced in the book *Samiro Yunoki Collection of Works* (1984). Whether this was consciously assumed by Yunoki from the beginning or not, the textile pieces displayed in recent years in exhibitions such as *Samiro Yunoki: 97-year-old Dyer Here and Now* and *Samiro Yunoki—Life* (as referenced in chapter 1), exemplify a reiteration of this mobile characteristic in Yunoki's textile pieces.[155] Yunoki describes his textiles as "a shape that flutters in the wind, wrinkles and folds" and concludes by saying that "it's different from a painting drawn on a canvas."[156] Looking back on his Paris exhibition *La Danse des Formes*,

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[155] In an exhibition with artist Kan Yasuda, held at Kan Yasuda Sculpture Museum 'Arte Piazza Bibai' in 2017, in a posterior interview conducted by Haruko Maruyama, Yunoki discussed this mobile characteristic. See https://www.1101.com/n/s/yasuda_yunoki/2019-11-17.html

[156] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 29-30.

Yunoki himself admits that he began to look at his fabrics as artwork when he was told that it would be ridiculous to cut the fabric and make it into clothes.[157]

Yunoki again modified the katazome method when his abstract compositions began to appear. His katagami creation process changed during this period; he no longer repeated a pattern on the fabric, but instead expressed a singular motif or image that would fill the two-dimensional space. To that end he began to build up the katagami directly on the fabric like a positive shape structure, using cutout shapes that he arranged on the canvas, in some cases like a puzzle, to create the line structure that he would subsequently dye (fig. 48-49). Although it may seem like a small shift in the process, the implications that this modification has on the resulting piece are tremendous; inaccuracy in placing nori over the stencil or leaving a small window for "chance" would definitely influence the outcome that make a strictly technical skill like placing nori on the katagami more flexible. Additionally, not conceiving the katagami in the traditional repetition scheme from the beginning of the process broadens the possibilities of the imagery to be expressed. On this, Yunoki comments, "In the middle of the creation process there are changes, and this is the most thrilling and interesting moment of creation." He continues:

> In creation, the most important thing is to enjoy the process, and the essence of this accumulation will be revealed. Therefore what is born from chance and failure is interesting.[158]

What he means by the accumulation process is the technique and all the steps involved in dyeing. Failure is also an essential part of katazome dyeing; as Serizawa once taught him during a class at Joshibi University, one should pay the most attention to the dye that ends up in the wrong areas. However, this encounter with chance should not be misunderstood as veneration of intuition during the creation process; an artist who has full command of their skill and understands what to do when a "mistake" is made is able to responsibly fix it or manipulate it to their advantage. Referring to this, Eco comments:

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[157] Ibid.
[158] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 55-56.

> The critical analysis that seems to be closest to the Western conception of artistic communication is the one that tries to recognize, at the heart of the "accidental" and the "fortuitous" that are the substance of a work, the signs of a "craft" or "discipline" by virtue of which, at the right moment, the artist is able to activate the forces of chance that will turn his work into a *chance domestique*.[159]

Yunoki had learned from the shokunin all the necessary skills to dominate the dyeing medium and had years of experience producing work. He had a very thorough method that he followed (as his notes on dyeing reveal in fig. 50) and could allow the appearance of the "accidental" to take place under his own rules and conditions. Thus, these two ways in which Yunoki defied the traditional method of creating katazome pieces may have been the critical inflections that led him to cross over from craft to art. As previously mentioned, Serizawa's encouragement along with his own knowledge of the technique prompted this shift, but this change wouldn't have taken place if Yunoki hadn't reflected deeply on his creation process. By introducing changes in the process, new expressive possibilities were born, along with a new aesthetic formulation. According to Eco, the "cultural patterns of the West" have evolved from transforming tradition:

> Art, in all its forms, has also evolved in a similar fashion, within a "tradition" that may seem immutable but which, in fact, has never ceased to introduce new forms and new dogmas through innumerable revolutions. Every real artist constantly violates the laws of the system within which he works, in order to create new formal possibilities and stimulate aesthetic desire.[160]

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[159] Eco, op.cit., 102.

[160] Ibid., 79.

The necessary changes introduced to traditional katazome dyeing, born from Yunoki's need to transform the medium, enabled his pieces to cross the threshold from Mingei to art. As described by Kanbara, one of the fundamental problems of Yanagi's mingeiron is that it originally focused on the appreciation of craft rather than the production process sought by artisans. There were incongruences between the expressive needs that were visibly manifesting within the Mingei members that couldn't be resolved within Yanagi's theory.[161] As mentioned previously, Yunoki became worried about becoming a stereotype or repeatedly creating the same things after he turned sixty. This prompted him to reinvent his textile method, which evolved from his previous experience of expanding his expression with printmaking. Modern artists focus on self-expression and individuality,[162] and Yunoki was moving towards achieving both things.The gap that separates an artist from an artisan is their reflection process on a piece throughout the creation process. By assuming individuality and self-expression, adopting an action-reflection attitude toward creation, and evolving beyond traditional methods, Yunoki entered the art genre.

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[161] Kanbara, op.cit., 185.

[162] Kanbara, op.cit., "Modernist Art Movement," 28-32.

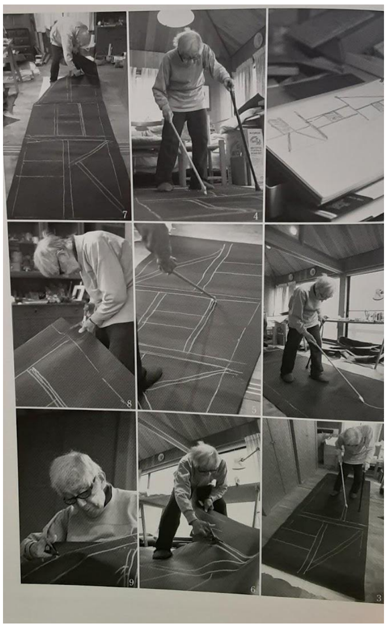

Figure 48. Samiro Yunoki, drawing and cutting the katagami for the piece *2017・12.*

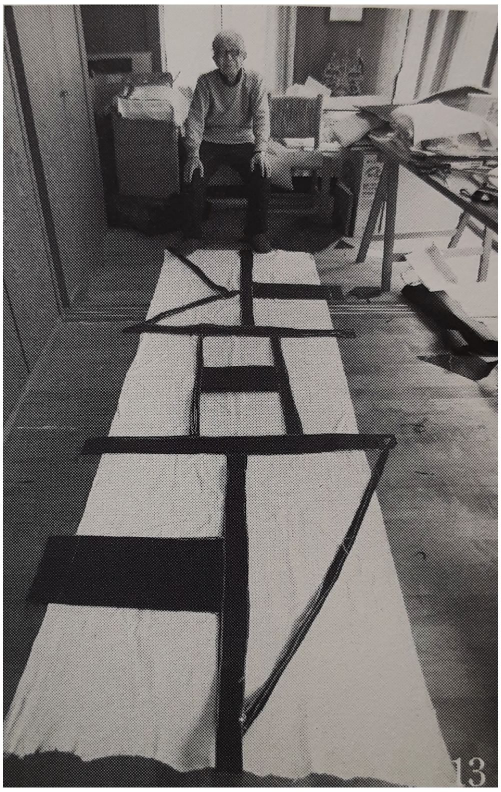

Figure 49. Samiro Yunoki facing the completion of the katagami for the piece *2017・12.*

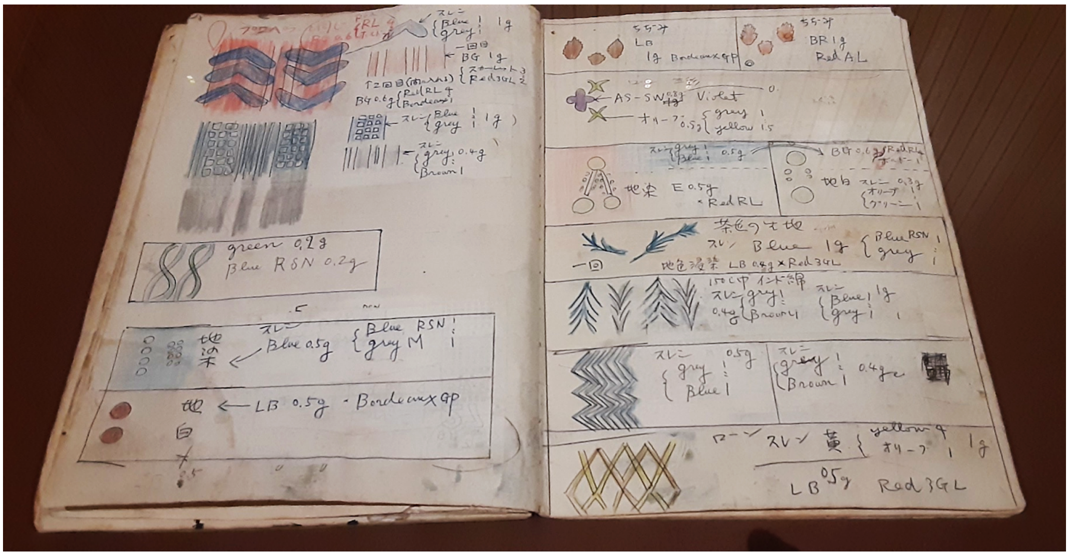

Figure 50. Samiro Yunoki's dye notebook. Photograph taken by author.

3.2 Drawing as a Means of Expression

Yunoki has always incorporated drawing into the various mediums he has engaged with: in his textiles, drawing defined the *kata* (form) that is translated onto the stencil; in printmaking, drawing started to appear as a direct expression in monotype pieces, and recurrently enhanced other printing techniques such as linocut and mimeograph; and drawing was fundamental to his painting, including his illustrations for children’s books. The following figure visualizes Yunoki's developments in drawing within the main fields that he engaged with:

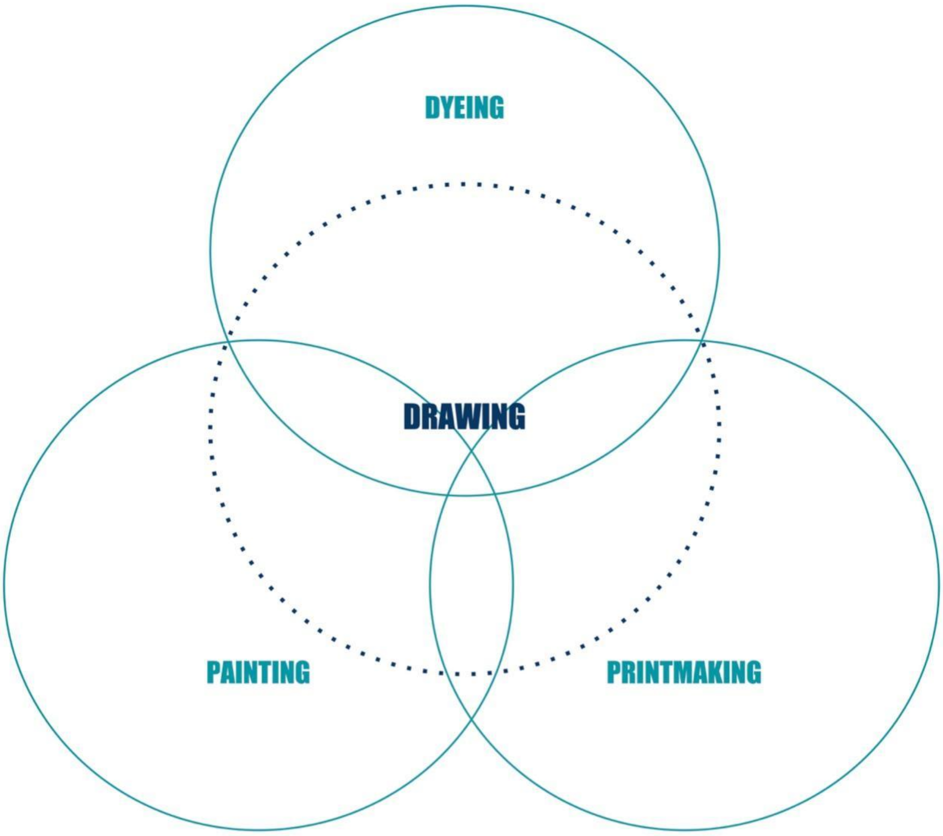

Figure 51. The different mediums in which Yunoki incorporates drawing. Diagram created by author.

In the dyeing medium (katazome or chusen), sketching is the first step in the process of designing the katagami: sketches are simplified and transformed into the pattern or design. In this process there is a synthesis that takes place in the depicted motif; a very complex and detailed drawing is simplified into a plain shape that becomes the pattern and can be cut into layers. For printmaking, almost all techniques (apart from monotype, for example) require a plate, made of wood, metal or stone, on which the image is transferred in order to be printed repeatedly. In the transference of the original drawing onto the plate, detailed elements of the drawing are considerably reduced. Monotype and lithography techniques involve a more direct way of making the image appear (by drawing directly on the glass or stone surface), before being transferred on paper, thus the possibilities for expression are greater. On the qualities of lithography as a technique, Kandinsky comments:

> “Lithography"—as the last invention in the series of graphic processes—affords the highest degree of flexibility and elasticity in its workmanship. Its particular speed in creation, combined with an almost indestructible hardness of the block, completely suits the “spirit of our time.” Point, line, plane, black and white, coloured works—everything is accomplished with the greatest economy. Flexibility in the handling of the lithographic stone: that is, ease of application with any tool, and the almost limitless possibilities of correction—especially the removal of faulty spots which neither the woodcut nor the etching readily permits—and the resulting facility in the execution of works without an exact previously formed plan (e.g., in experiments), fulfill both the external and the inner current need to the highest degree.[163]

Painting is one of the most flexible mediums in which to incorporate drawing, in the first and sometimes even in the final stages of creating a piece. One way drawing is integrated in the last stage of a painting involves applying a substance (usually oil, acrylic, ink, or watercolor) to the composition with gestural brushstrokes or a line structure that defines an expressive accent on the piece, leaving traces of the drawing. A demarcated line that defines figures is an important characteristic of Yunoki’s paintings, and is also visible in his illustration work (fig. 52-53). He sometimes addresses his subjects with humor and a playful vibrant palette that invites continuous observation.

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[163] Wassily Kandinsky, *Point and Line to Plane* (Dover Publications: Apple Books, 1979), 228.

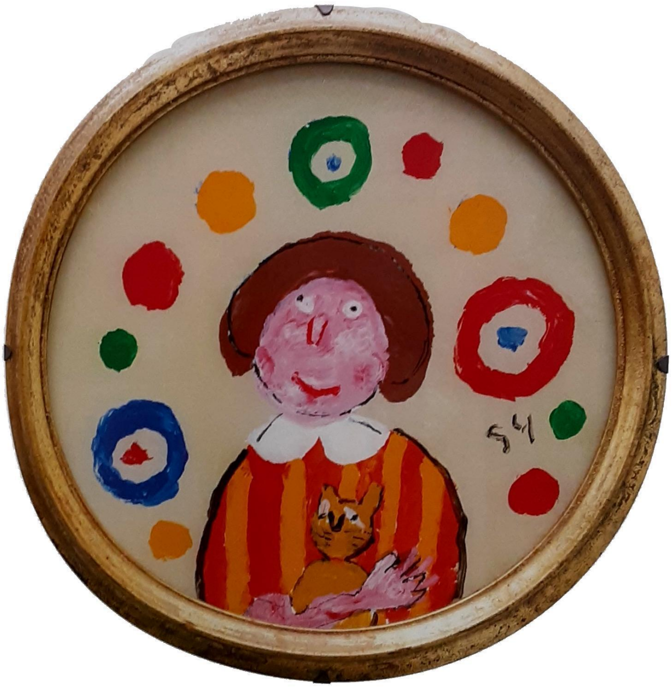

Figure 52. Samiro Yunoki, *Girl Holding Cat*, 2016, painting on glass, 23 cm in diameter. Private collection.

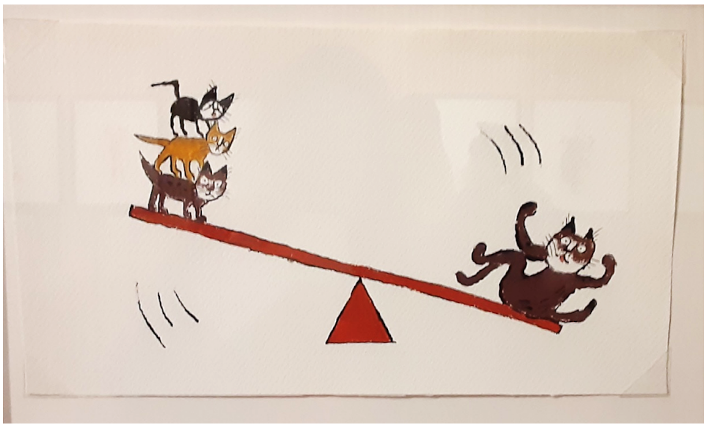

Figure 53. Samiro Yunoki's illustration for *Gittanko Battanko*, 2000. Photograph taken by author at Play Museum display.

On Yunoki's learning period, Naruhisa comments, "Yunoki was seeing Hisata's painting work on a daily basis, and although he liked drawing since he was a child he never received direct teaching."[164] There's no evidence that he received formal academic training in drawing, but growing up within a group of painters could have led to his absorption of some technical skills. However, Hisata represented the subject matter in a naturalistic style, whereas Yunoki's naive representations draw him closer to Art Brut[165] as mentioned by Tsukimori in the essay "Innocent Patterns and Clear Colors," where he states:

> My view is simple. This is because the beauty of Yunoki's work and the beauty of those primitive forms are very close. Yunoki's patterns and colors are as pure as primitive art. Don't be afraid to misunderstand, it also corresponds to toddler paintings and certain Art Brut works.[166]

Tsukimori’s allusion to "the beauty of those primitive forms" refers to the objects displayed in the exhibition *Samiro Yunoki's Dyed Patterns and Colors* held at the Japan Folk Crafts Museum in 2018, where he encountered the masks made by the *Dogon* people in Mali displayed side by side with Yunoki's textiles (fig. 54). He is drawing attention to the primitive quality of Yunoki's work and implying that his motifs are reminiscent of some Art Brut pieces and children’s paintings. This quality in Yunoki's drawings and paintings helps one understand the level of simplicity he reaches in his later textile pieces. His abstract motifs in the work developed over the last twenty years suggest that from the initial sketch to the drawing on the katagami, there are fewer steps to reach synthesis in the motif; it is almost as if he draws directly on the fabric.

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[164] Hirose Naruhisa, "Encounter in Kurashiki, Interest in France," in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Heibonsha, 2021), 79.

[165] Contextualization of this term in https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/art-brut (accessed November 30, 2021).

[166] Toshifumi Tsukimori, "Innocent Patterns and Clear Colors," in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Heibonsha, 2021), 91.

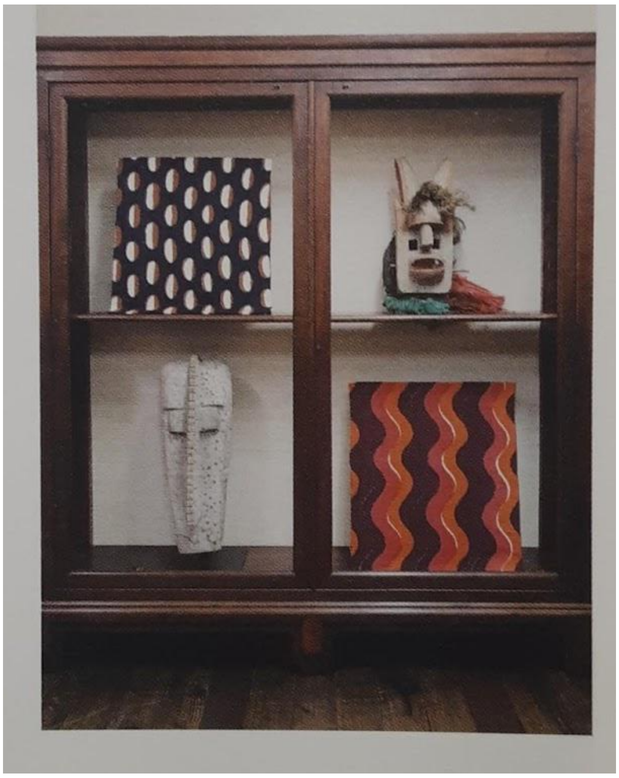

Figure 54. *Samiro Yunoki's Dyed Patterns and Colors* exhibition display 2018, masks by *Dogon* people from Mali and Yunoki's textiles, Tokyo Mingeikan.

Returning to the illustration works and paintings developed by Yunoki, described by Tsukimori as *children's depictions*, it's important to note that his lack of formal artistic training in drawing brought about a certain style that shares similarities with work developed in the Cobra movement founded in Paris (1948-1951). Like Art Brut artists who sought a raw expression of emotions, "Cobra stood for the joy of complete spiritual and artistic freedom and spontaneity in response to the horrors of the Second World War. The Cobra members found inspiration in children's drawings, prehistoric artifacts, non-Western art, comics and other expressions of folk culture."[167] The artistic freedom underlined in the Cobra movement aligns with Yunoki's line of thinking when he mentions Alfred Wallis' pieces as a great inspiration. On this, Yunoki reflects:

> This person lived as a "personal individual." I wasn't obsessed with the fact that I had to draw like this, so I drew on cardboard boxes and pieces of paper. I tend to think that I have to use watercolor paper or paint because I have too much wisdom, but in a world unrelated to this, Wallis was absorbed only by what he wanted to draw. I really admire him. Therefore, I want to close the store for the "social individual" and draw more just for myself, just like Wallis. Now that I'm 98 years old that's what my heart goes for.[168]

What Yunoki refers to as a "social individual" is a person who complies to a job request, with specific characteristics and purpose; the "personal individual" is someone who possesses the freedom to create whatever they desire, just for the pleasure of making something. Alfred Wallis spent most of his life on a ship as a sailor. He began painting around the age of seventy, depicting the sea, the ship, and St. Ives, where he lived and worked. His artwork, born from a naive representation of the life that passed before his eyes, had an unrestrained attitude (fig. 55). His paintings and drawings are now considered "outsider art," and have been featured in the Tate Britain.[169] This freedom to draw for oneself instills the need to create outside the norms of utilitarian production. For Yunoki, this impulse appears in the daily sketches that bring him joy or the travel drawings that began as a depiction of what he saw and experienced, presented in the form of notes (fig. 56-58). Above all, the result of becoming a "personal individual" is the constructive experience towards self-expression. As an example of this, the watercolors from the 1990s that Yunoki painted in Matsumoto City introduce a phase that is not usually addressed in discussion of Yunoki's production (fig. 59-60). The brushwork featured in these works is almost calligraphic in nature, sometimes dynamic, at other times contained. Gomez Molina refers to the presence of such freedom in a drawing as an attempt to seize "from the convulsion and from that primary gesture, the ultimate value of the individual."[170]

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[167] *Cobra Museum Magazine*, edition 2 (Spring 2019): 14, available at https://cobra-museum.nl/museum/cobra-magazine/

[168] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 38-39.

[169] Art UK, "Alfred Wallis", accessed September 30, 2021, https://artuk.org/discover/artists/wallis-alfred-18551942

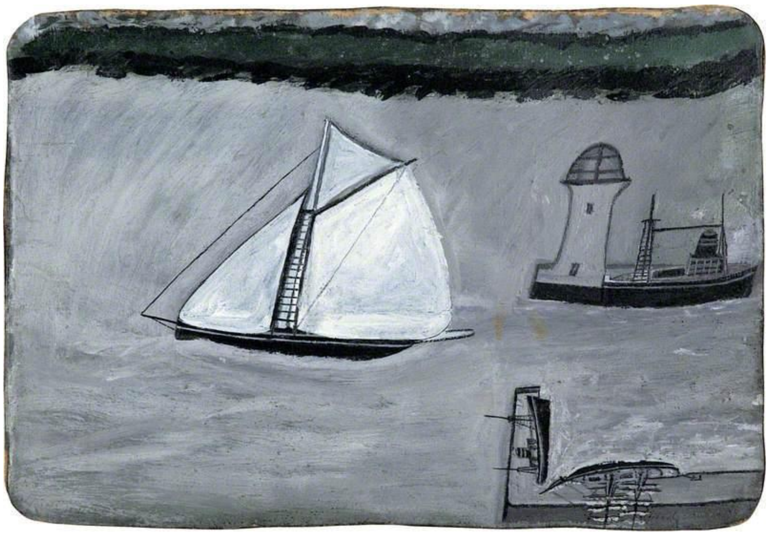

Figure 55. Alfred Wallis, *St. Ives Harbour: White Sailing Ship*, 1934-1938. Oil and pencil on card, 32 x 46.5 cm. The Pier Arts Center Collection.

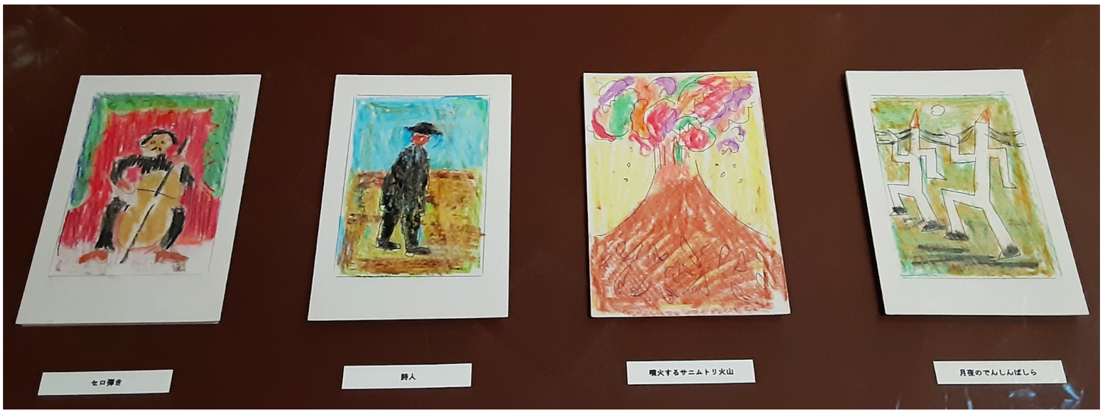

Figure 56. Samiro Yunoki's sketches displayed at *Samiro Yunoki—Life* Exhibition. Photograph taken by author.

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[170] Juan Jose Gomez Molina, *Las Lecciones del Dibujo,* (Cátedra, 1995), 125.

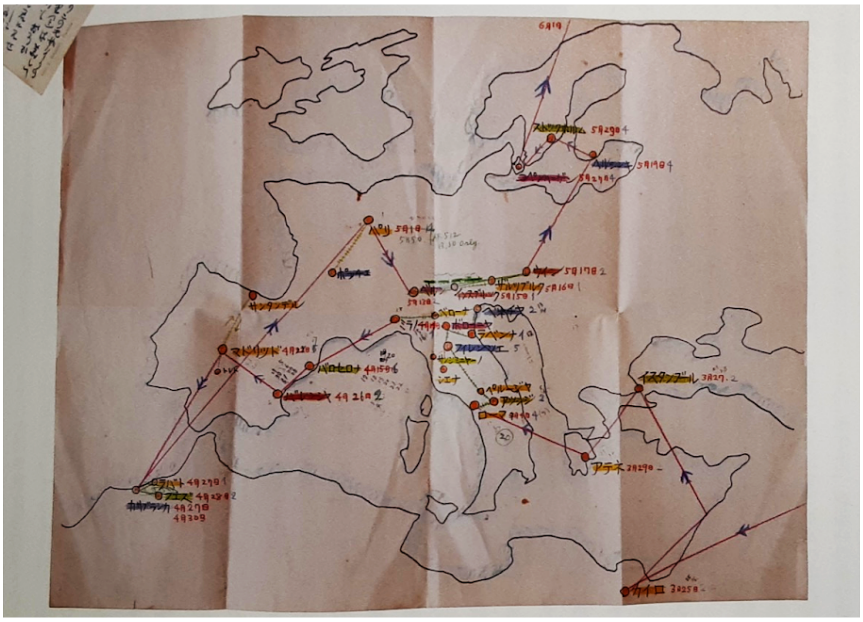
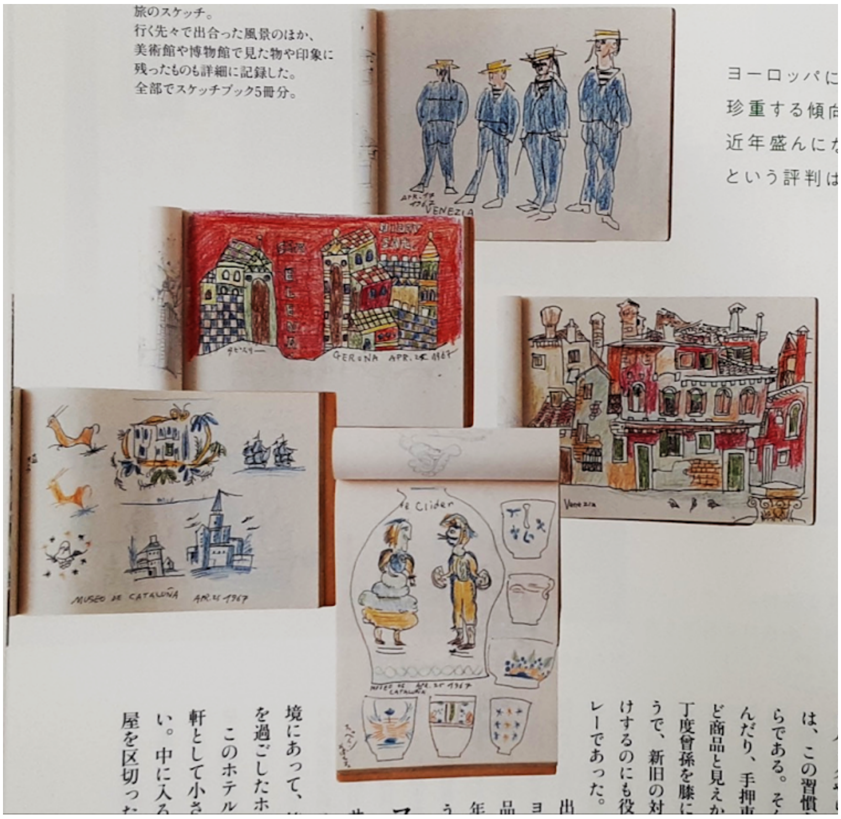

マドリッド
サンタンデル
バルセロナ
シエナ
ローマ
アテネ
イスタンブール

Figure 57. Map drawn by Samiro Yunoki indicating the plan for his first trip to Europe in 1967.


VENEZIA
GERONA APR. 1967
MUSEO DE CATALUÑA APR. 1967
Venezia

旅のスケッチ。
行く先々で出合った風景のほか、
美術館や博物館で見た物や印象に
残ったものも詳細に記録した。
全部でスケッチブック5冊分。

ヨーロッパに
珍重する傾
近年盛んに
という評判は

は、この習慣
らである。そ
んだり、手押
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丁度曾孫を膝に
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レーであった。

境にあって、
を過ごしたホ
このホテル
軒として小さ
い。中に入る
屋を区切っ

Figure 58. Sketches drawn by Samiro Yunoki depicting his encounters in different countries during his first trip to Europe in 1967.

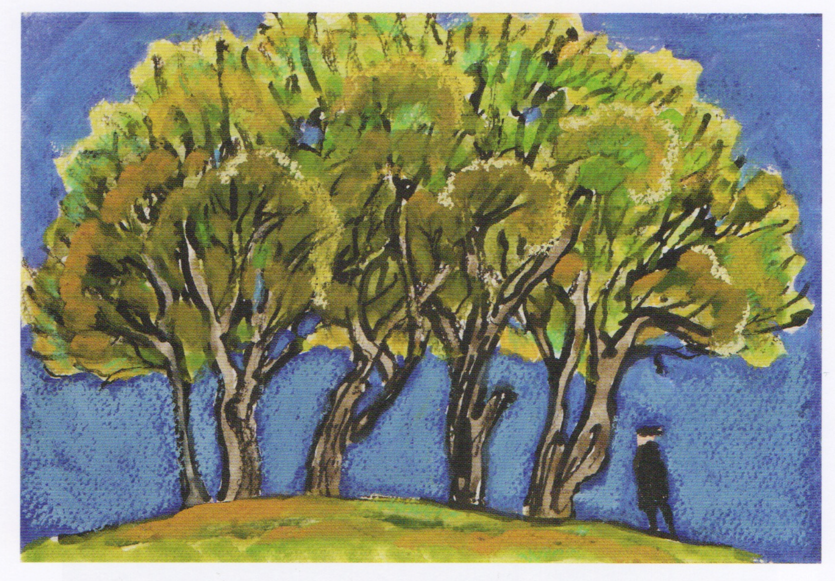

Figure 59. Samiro Yunoki, *Forest in Shinen Yuru Prefecture*, early 1990s, watercolor on paper, 14.6 x 21.4 cm. Kyusei Koto High School memorial hall.

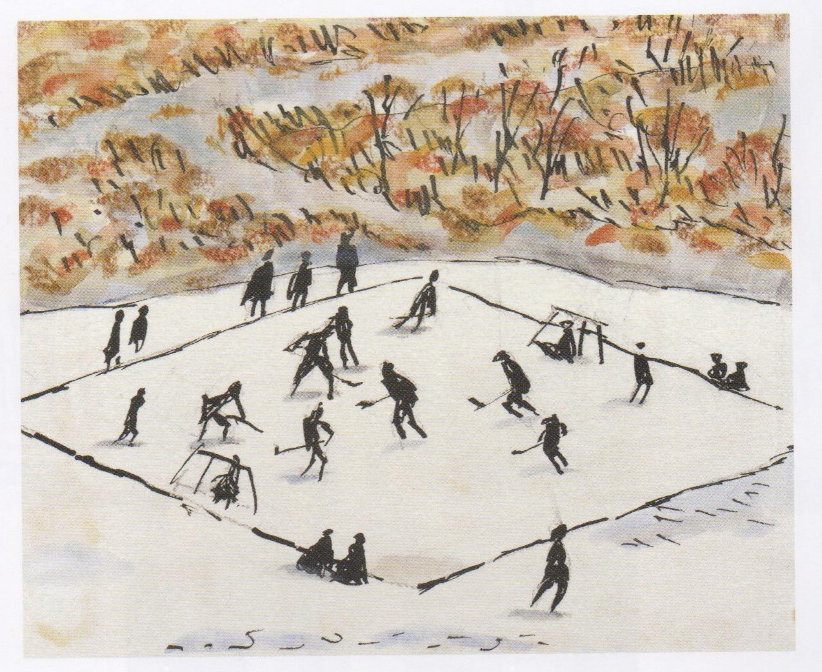

Figure 60. Samiro Yunoki, *Rokusuke's Hot Battle*, early 1990s, watercolor on paper, 14.8 x 16.5 cm. Kyusei Koto High School memorial hall.

The freedom with which an artist seizes that primary gesture does not imply a lack of reflection. Drawing as an activity that serves several disciplines by providing a structure for organizing reflective thought, rather than a representational purpose, continues to occupy an important place within the art, craft, and design fields. However, the subordination of drawing as merely descriptive or decorative annuls any possibility for individuality. This is what Yunoki was alluding to when he mentioned Wallis drawing only what he desired. The act of drawing not only allows one to seek individual values, but to build the imagery that nourishes artistic practice. On this, Gomez Molina writes that the problem with drawing in today's world is its relationship with digital forms that build our reality and the interaction with these digital interfaces.[171] Thus, we must rescue drawing as an activity that enhances the imagination to create new relationships with the things around us. There will always be images that repeat the reality that we constantly consume, but in the visual grammar that is accumulated through the sketches that don't end up in galleries or museums, there is a deep reflective process that should be sustained by artists as a constant practice. Drawing as a means of expression—a daily practice that helps an artist access alternate imagery and broaden their ability to create new connections between things—is pointed out by Gomez Molina (1995) as the ultimate purpose of this activity.[172]

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[171] Molina, op.cit., 137-145.

[172] On this approach to drawing, see Ramuntcho Matta's work, which Yunoki mentioned in the "Talk on the 12-meter Choju Giga piece drawn by 96-year-old Samiro Yunoki," interview. Follow his daily drawings in https://www.lespressesdureel.com/EN/ouvrage.php?id=6918&menu=4 (accessed December 22, 2021).
A similar approach is seen in Gabriel Orozco's sketchbooks, available at:
https://thereader.mitpress.mit.edu/art-is-the-opposite-of-spectacle-the-stunning-notebooks-of-gabriel-orozco/ (accessed November 2, 2021).

Yunoki declared enthusiastically, "In my late years I'm not taught by anyone. I draw what I want to draw freely." confirming that the technique is secondary, above all is the passion to draw.[173]

Towards enhancing that creative freedom and continuing to search for these connections and relationships between things, Yunoki reflects on his work and what he has accomplished; he has also kept challenging his creativity by gathering inspiration from important work produced by his predecessors. This was the main motivation for creating the *Choju-Giga*[174] piece, which eventually resulted in an exhibition held at the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Modern Art in 2019. Yunoki's inspiration for this piece was an ancient work titled *Choju-Giga* (*Scrolls of Frolicking Animals*), a 12th century national treasure monochrome ink painting by the Buddhist painter Sojo Toba (鳥羽僧正) depicting anthropomorphic animals (fig. 61-62). At the age of ninety-six, Yunoki wanted to create his own scroll and produce a piece connected with Toba Sojo's classic artwork with the support of Ado Murayamas' (村山亜土) 1957 *Butoh* drama that was also based on this scroll. Yunoki alludes to the end of the Heian period as marked by natural disasters and political struggles; he compares the hardships of that era with the present day, which he describes as chaotic.[175] In Yunoki's *Choju-Giga* (fig. 63-67), the expression that is materialized by powerful calligraphic strokes not only reveals Yunoki's "personal individual" but summarizes his reflective thinking on the present day.

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[173] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 79.

[174] Samiro Yunoki, "Talk on the 12 meter Choju Giga piece drawn by 96 year old Samiro Yunoki," interview by Harue Maruyama, *Hobonichi*, July 18, 2019, https://www.1101.com/n/s/samiro_yunoki/2019-07-18.html.

[175] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 80-81.

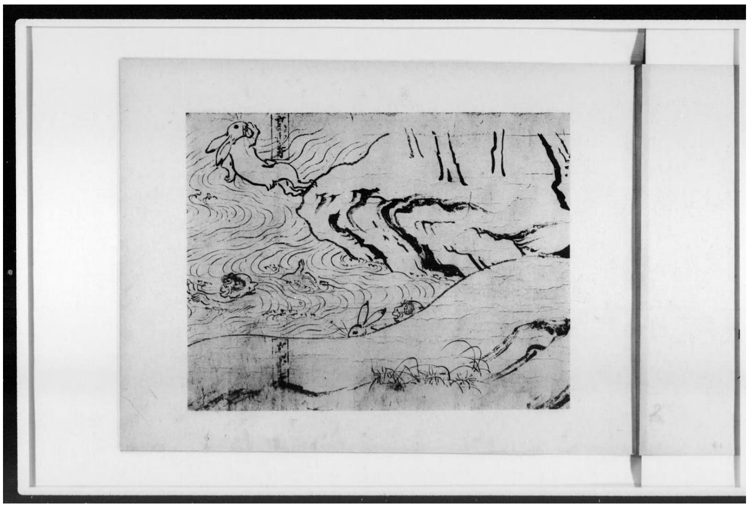

Figure 61. Sojo Toba, *Choju Giga* (detail), 12th century scroll, ink on paper. From the book *Kōsanji Zō Toba Sōjō Chōjū Giga*, edited by Sanyokai. Kosan Ji, Kyoto.

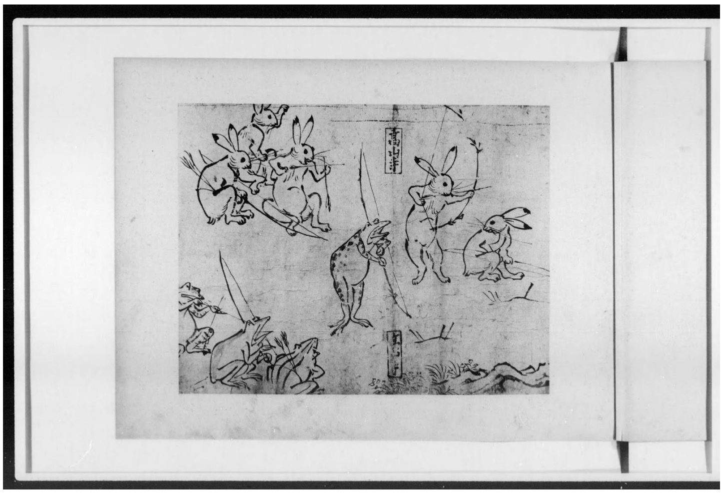

Figure 62. Sojo Toba, *Choju Giga* (detail), 12th century scroll, ink on paper. From the book *Kōsanji Zō Toba Sōjō Chōjū Giga*, edited by Sanyokai. Kosan Ji, Kyoto.

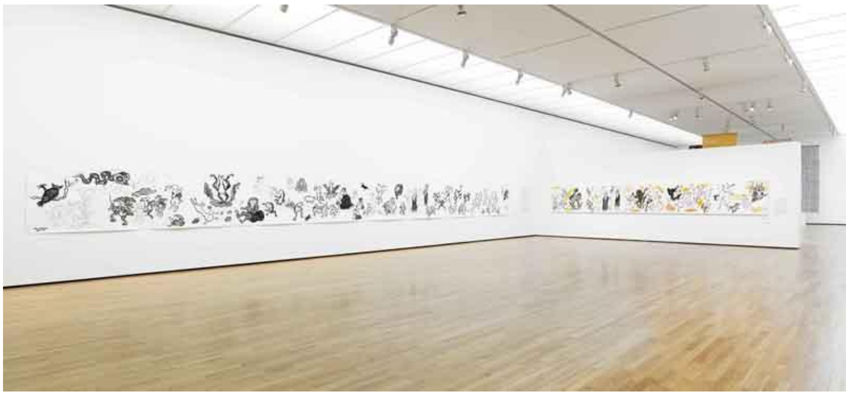

Figure 63. Samiro Yunoki, *Choju Giga*, 2019, watercolor on paper, 114 x 1193 cm. Exhibition view at the *Choju Giga* exhibition at Kanagawa Prefectural Museum.

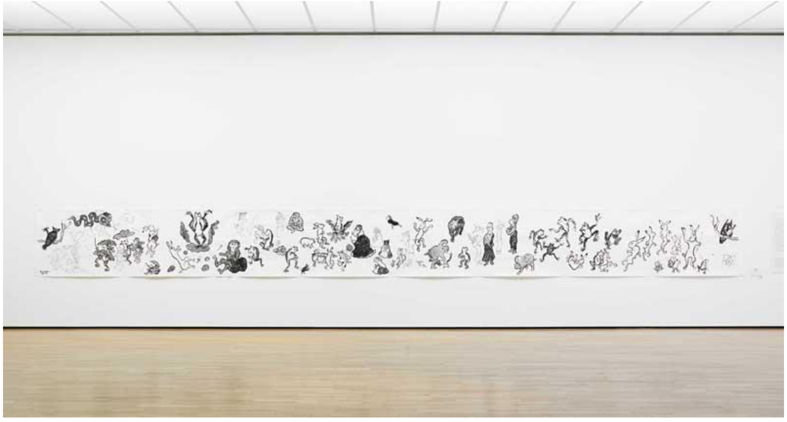

Figure 64. Samiro Yunoki, *Choju Giga*, 2019, watercolor on paper, 114 x 1193 cm. Exhibition view at the *Choju Giga* exhibition at Kanagawa Prefectural Museum.

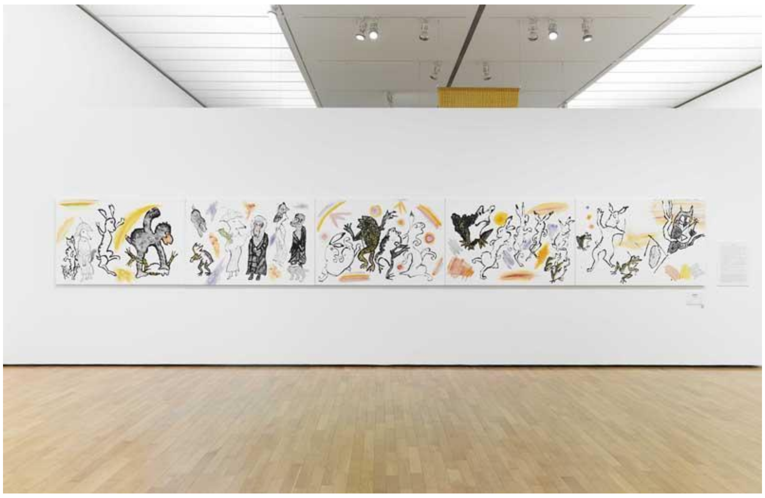

Figure 65. Samiro Yunoki, *Choju Giga*, 2019, watercolor on paper, 114 x 1193 cm.
Exhibition view at the *Choju Giga* exhibition at the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum.

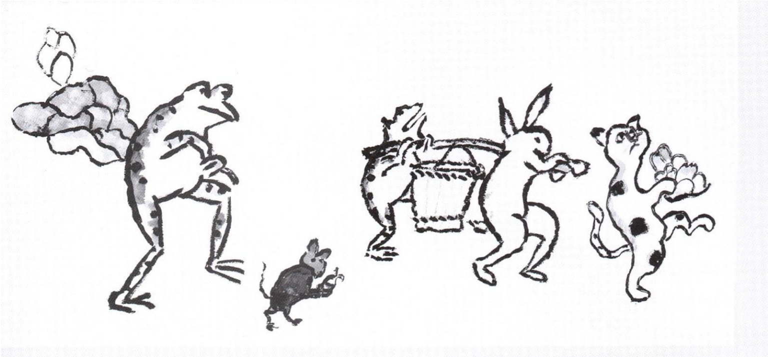

Figure 66. Samiro Yunoki, *Choju Giga*, 2019, watercolor on paper (detail), 114 x 1193 cm.
Artist's private collection.

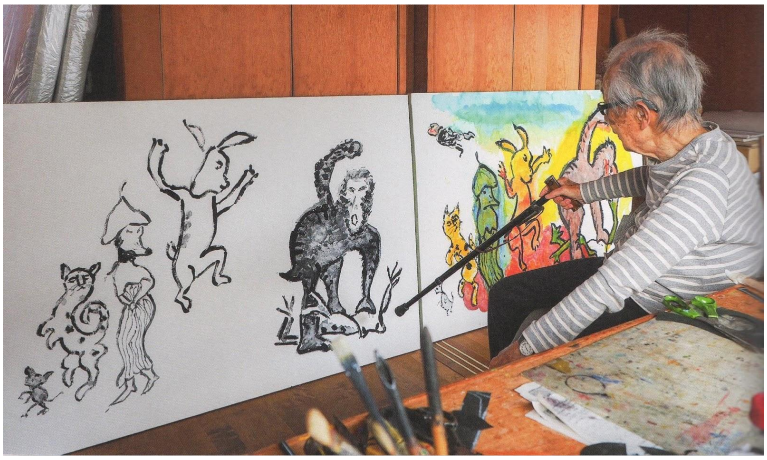

Figure 67. Samiro Yunoki facing the *Choju Giga* piece in his studio.

3.3 Yunoki's Recent Katazome Work: Artistic Language

In recent years, Yunoki's developments in katazome characterized by abstraction and a restricted color palette have revealed a set of elements and symbols that function as a sort of alphabet. These elements, which can be defined as Yunoki's artistic language, are meant to be decoded and interpreted by the viewer. Yunoki's later textile work can be organized in different groups or series according to the presentation and combination of these elements. The first group, which consists of geometric fields distributed on the canvas, is defined by structures that divide the two-dimensional space in a complex arrangement. In this series the contrast between the planes and the space that separates them creates a linear structure that catches the eye, enhancing the tension between the different planes. The piece *Song of Joy* (fig. 68) resonates with this line-plane structure; the lines that divide the two-dimensional space were inspired by a tent that Yunoki encountered and thought interesting. These lines, representing the stitch of the tent, encourage the eye to go in different directions, all oriented towards the margins of the fabric. This construction began to appear in 2000, increasing with time. Geometric shapes and lines usually appear as motifs in this series, interplaying within the boundaries of the canvas.

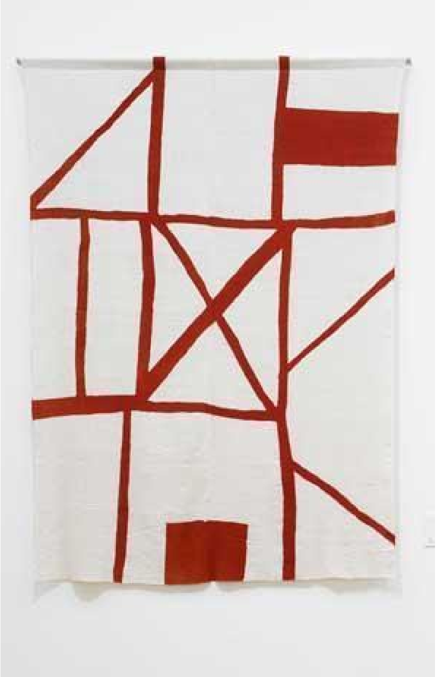

Figure 68. Samiro Yunoki, *Song of Joy*, 2019, katazome, dimensions unknown.

A totem-like image reappears in pieces in another group of textile work. At first glance, it seems to represent geometric shapes, but upon second glance, it evokes ancient symbols. Returning to the printmaking piece *3700 AD Mode* (fig. 15) which was translated into a textile piece in *Flag of Life* (fig. 16) (see Chapter 1), the symbolic elements used to depict a figure reminiscent of prehistoric times appears to be more than just geometric shapes. There's a connection to what Tsukimori referred to as a "primitive" characteristic in Yunoki's textiles. Another piece depicting these totemic pieces, *Katazome Fabric 05'* (fig. 69), seemingly resonated from a sculptural piece created the previous year (fig. 70).

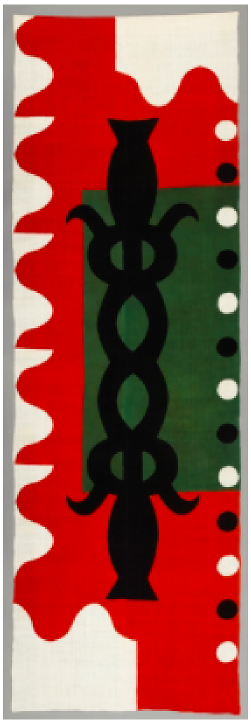

Figure 69. Samiro Yunoki, *Katazome Fabric 05'*, 2005, katazome, 362 x 115 cm. Guimet National Museum of Asian Arts.

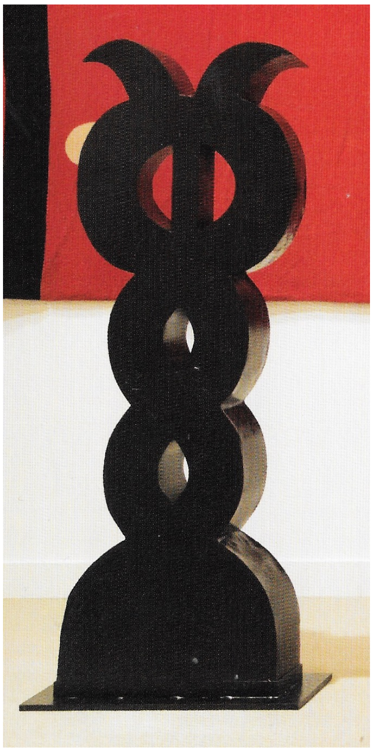

Figure 70. Samiro Yunoki, *Insect God*, 2004, iron sculpture, 180 x 60 x 20 cm.

Yunoki's incorporation of text in the form of letters from the Latin alphabet defines the next group of work. At times, the letters are inscribed in geometric planes that cover the entire two-dimensional space, but in other pieces they float and interact with other planes, defined by colors that contrast with the background. Usually, they do not convey a specific word or message but rather are distributed across the canvas as interacting shapes. The piece *Tokyo 2020* (fig. 71) is one of the few works with a decodable text; the canvas is defined by the word "Tokyo," which covers the whole horizontal space. The letters interplay and appear to be composed of geometrical shapes. In another piece, *2018* (fig. 72), capital and lowercase letters are distributed vertically on the canvas along with other punctuation marks: an exclamation mark, a period, and *kakko*, the brackets used in Japanese to indicate quotation marks. The letters and marks all differ in size, thus drawing the eye to certain accent points in the piece. By incorporating letters in the composition, a new relationship between image and text broadens the spectrum of decodification and interpretation.

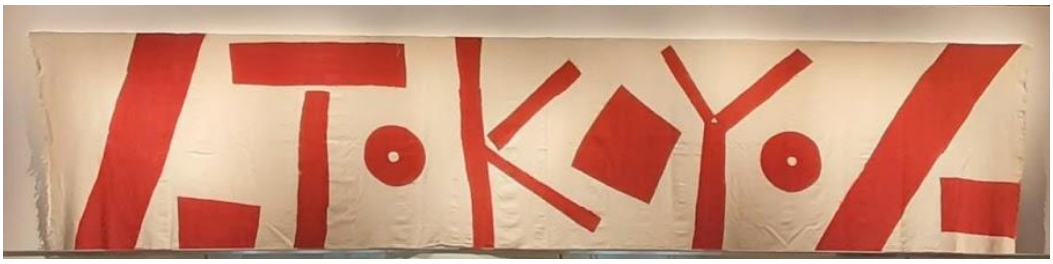

Figure 71. Samiro Yunoki, *Tokyo 2020*, 2020, katazome, 112 x 509 cm. IDÉE Tokyo Collection.

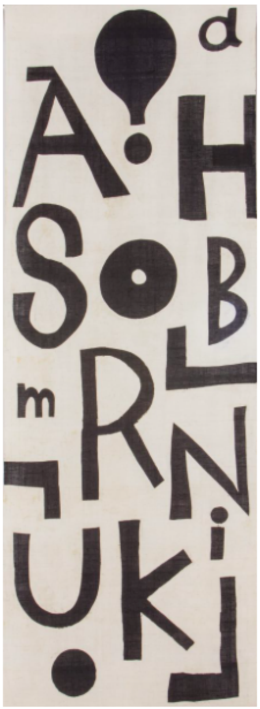

Figure 72. Samiro Yunoki, *2018*, 2018, katazome, 350 x 112 cm.

The next group is composed of figures that depict objects or a specific figure, identifiable by the title of the piece or by the simple and direct representation of the motif. In this group, the depicted figure covers the whole compositional space in a singular framing that places the main object at the center of the canvas. Both the high contrast that separates the figure from the background and the simple expression transform these pieces into a graphic representation that could operate as a symbol or an emblem, thus offering an almost unequivocal message. In the piece *Bottle* (fig. 73), this kind of representation is present: the viewer is directed towards a direct message that is conveyed through the title and the simple graphic representation offered in the piece. The same graphic depiction can be observed in the piece *Exclamation Mark* (fig. 74).

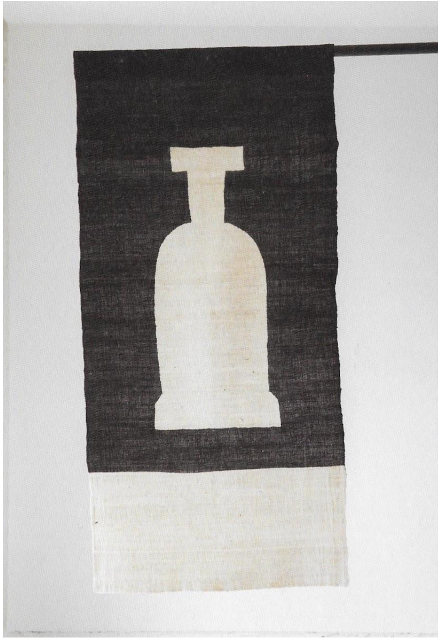

Figure 73. Samiro Yunoki, *Bottle*, 2013, katazome, dimensions unknown.

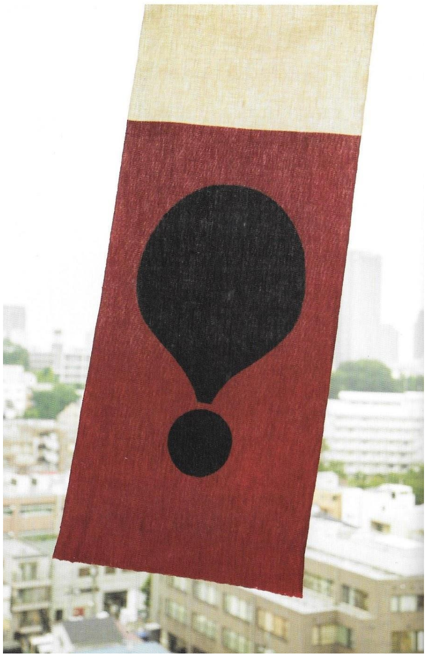

Figure 74. Samiro Yunoki, *Exclamation Mark*, 2012, katazome, dimensions unknown. Setagaya Art Museum Collection.

Trees are the last group depicted in Yunoki's latest katazome pieces (fig. 75-76). Every piece in the series contains the same visual characteristics: a trunk figure seized within the canvas. At times it is defined by a color contrasting with the background, and in other pieces two figures are layered, intersecting at certain points in the two-dimensional space. These pieces that represent the natural world can be described as the organic counterpart that differ from the geometric depictions found in other series created by Yunoki. The suggestive and symbolically charged elements present in this series, defined by sinuous planes that denote trunk figures, are comparable to a single brushstroke that is made with a continuous action across the canvas.

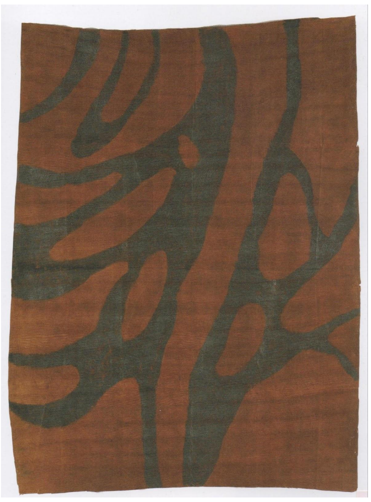

Figure 75. Samiro Yunoki, *Hommage to Sekal*, 2017, katazome, 164 x 127 cm. Izumi Museum Collection.

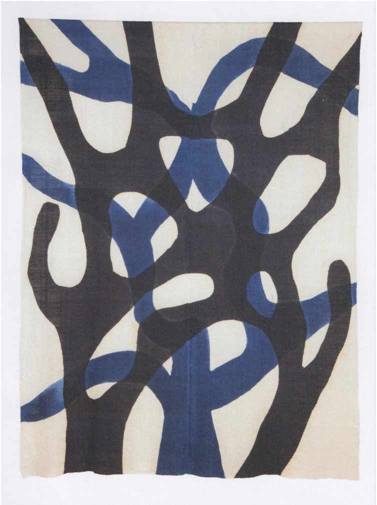

Figure 76. Samiro Yunoki, *Tree Leaking the Sun*, 2013, katazome《 木もれ陽》225 x 180 cm. Artist's private collection.

From these groups, one can observe that all the elements Yunoki has incorporated as codes and symbols for the spectator to decipher define his visual language. The enthralling aspect of Yunoki's textiles is that in some pieces, they exchange their codes, and in others, they represent worlds within the universe of work he has created. The level of ambiguity is considerably higher in some series; for example, the trees series is more ambiguous than the objects series. The formal aspect of the piece as well as the possibilities for interpretation define this difference. The objects are presented as a figure and given a title that refers directly to the depicted motif; on the other hand, in the trees series, the viewer can only see a portion of the motif and must imagine the rest of the image. In both pieces, the motif has a substantial level of synthesis and abstraction, but the trees series offer more possibilities to connect the image to multiple connotations. In terms of style, one can conclude that abstraction is the pinnacle of Yunoki's expression using katazome and this is masterfully achieved with a simple economy of elements and colors in the composition, presented through an important range of textile pieces.

If Yunoki's later textile pieces were to be inscribed to categories within Japanese art history, opinions related to the position of dyeing within this context must be considered. Let's begin by recalling his own words. He mentions that textiles are a flexible material; unlike a painted canvas, which cannot be folded or flutter freely. He adds that Japanese art has been mainly dominated by craft, and continues to state that Japanese people are taught art history based on the Western notion of art. Even his father, who was a painter, never called himself an artist. Yunoki wondered if his recent creations belong to the art or craft genre, because even from his perspective, most Japanese art can also be used as everyday objects, and he hesitates to state that his later textiles are pieces of art solely meant to be displayed in galleries. As Yunoki reflects on his later textiles as unique pieces that are "not to be used to create clothes," he assumes the perspective that his work can be referred to as "another kind of art."[176] During an interview, Naoto Fukasawa, product designer and current director of the

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[176] Yunoki and Atsuta, op. cit., 29-31.

Folk Crafts Museum, raised Yunoki's need for his work to be categorized as "another kind of art" and not as dyeworks or folk crafts;[177] this is the "new territory" that Muto mentioned in Chapter 1.[178] As an example of this categorization, Yunoki refers to his recent pieces installed in the Ace Hotel Kyoto. Indeed, the formal characteristics of Yunoki's textiles which he believes place them between the art and craft genres indicate that they can be categorized as "informal art" or *un art autre* (art of another kind), thus specifying a relationship with other artists and art movements.[179] Two of the main characteristics of informal art are the use of expressive freedom and unconventional materials, which broaden the range of possibilities for interpretation in a single piece. On this, Eco comments:

> "Informal art" is open in that it proposes a wider range of interpretive possibilities, a configuration of stimuli whose substantial indeterminacy allows for a number of possible readings, a "constellation" of elements that lend themselves to all sorts of reciprocal relationships.[180]

The "configuration of stimuli" that Eco refers to is present in Yunoki's series of abstract textiles as line, plane, text, color, texture, and movement. These are the elements that are configured in his pieces for the spectator to perceive and interpret according to their cultural background. A motif, even one as universal as a tree, will be interpreted differently by a person in Japan and a person in Africa, and this is confined to the personal experience and background that they have with trees.

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[177] "Samiro Yunoki x Naoto Fukasawa" interview in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Heibonsha, 2021), 114-115.

[178] Muto et al., op.cit., 132.

[179] The term *un art autre* was coined by French critic Michel Tapié in his 1952 book *Un Art Autre*. See the publication by Tracey Bashkoff, Megan M. Fontanella, and Joan Marter, *Art of Another Kind: International Abstraction and the Guggenheim, 1949-1960* (Solomon R Guggenheim Museum, 2012), 8.

[180] Eco, op.cit., 84.

At this point the question that lingers is: How did Yunoki reach this level of simplicity and synthesis in his artistic language? How did his work become "another kind of art"? As mentioned in the previous sections, modifications to the katazome technique and the expressive freedom that he reached through drawing in recent years, could have encouraged a simplification in the artistic discourse. In addition to this, Yunoki's influence from other artists made him desire to break away from craft's "useful beauty." Zbyněk Sekal was one of Yunoki's main influences. He was a Czech artist who belonged to the avant-garde circles rooted in Prague's surrealist tradition starting from the 1960s, and developed a corpus of work characterized by material paintings and bronze sculptures that deeply reflected the human condition and referred to his status as an exile.[181] Yunoki has two of Sekal's bronze sculptures in his collection (fig. 77-78), and dedicated one of his recent textile pieces to him. He notes that Sekal's sculpture is one of his favorites, and that the simplicity of the shape, scraped-off surface, and the intense spirituality of the piece made him reflect on how different it was to the work he had been creating.[182] After encountering Sekal's sculpture Yunoki thought "I need to be freed from craft's "useful" attribute."[183] Moreover, Yunoki describes that he felt Sekal's pieces gave him "the courage and power to live."[184]

Sekal's pieces are complex and provoke deep reflection in anyone who experiences them. Their connection to his own experience of the human condition at its worst state—having experienced WWII, being secluded in a prison cell and becoming an immigrant—must have raised these difficult topics in his work. Yunoki expresses that the bronze piece in his collection "overwhelmed him for its high spirituality" and made him feel that he was "reborn again."[185] His work also expresses, through simple but complex shapes, a status of solitude and imprisonment. Yunoki, who also experienced the war, would naturally feel a strong connection to Sekal's work. Looking at the formal aspects of Sekal's work and Yunoki's geometric abstract pieces like *Composition* or *Song of Joy*, there are some elements, such as the use of positive-negative space, that establish a dialogue between the two artists.

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[181] See https://www.belvedere.at/en/zbynek-sekal#TheArtist, accessed December 4, 2021.

[182] Sekal traveled to Japan in 1989 and held an exhibition in 1997 at Gallery Tom with Teruo Katoh and a solo exhibition in 2013-14. Later, in 2021 the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum showed his works in an exhibition titled "Walls & Bridges." He created a series of works titled "gates" towards the 1980s and 90s that represent his life experience with borders and migration. A description of these "gates" pieces connecting Kafka's work and Sekal's painful memories of gates by Harue Maruyama is available at https://www.gallerytom.co.jp/ex_page/kako/2013artists/sekal2013_dec.html. (accessed January 22, 2022).

[183] Samiro Yunoki, "Curiosity and Challenge: Exhibition Record," in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto*, 85.

[184] Yunoki and Atsuta, op. cit., 77.

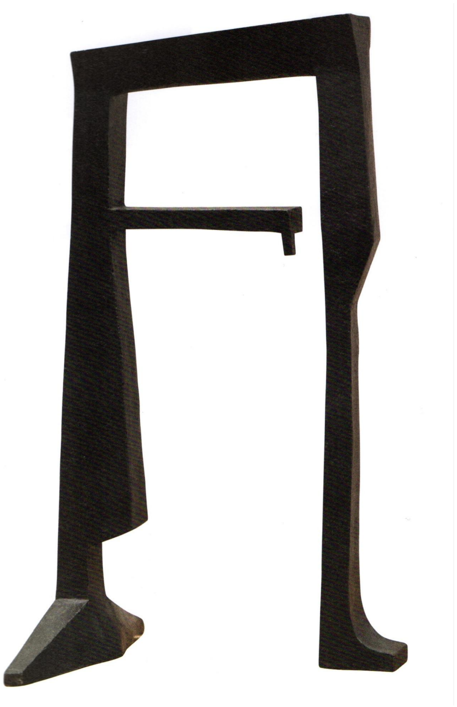

Figure 77. Zbyněk Sekal, *Untitled*, 1980, bronze sculpture, 37.8 x 21.3 x 18.8 cm. Yunoki 's private collection.

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[185] Mito Shimonaka ed., *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Heibonsha, 2021), 147.

Figure 78. Zbyněk Sekal, *One's Appearance*, 1990, bronze sculpture, 45.7 x 10.8 x 4 cm. Yunoki 's private collection.

Samuel mentions other modern artists who influenced Yunoki: "Matisse for the cutting, Miró for the use of blue, Kandinsky for the strength of colors, Dufy for his decorative creations, and even Klee for the constant relationship with childhood."[186] Naruhisa adds that the use of color in Sonia Delaunay's abstract paintings can be paralleled to Yunoki's, and Claude Viallat's pieces that range from two- to three-dimensional and employ vivid colors can also be related to Yunoki's recent work.[187] The formal presentation of Yunoki's recent textiles, specifically the totem-like figures (*Flag of Life)*, can be compared to Miró's pieces (fig.79). Although Yunoki doesn’t mention the influence of this artist, the fact that Miró created the piece *Innocent Laughter* (fig. 80) for Expo ’70 that was displayed at the Minpaku (National Museum of Ethnology) suggests he may have encountered him. This large mural consisting of 640 porcelain tiles now belongs to the National Museum of Art Osaka, where it is displayed.[188] Further inquiry revealed that Yanagi visited Barcelona in 1950 to hold the *Japanese Folk Crafts* exhibition, and that Miró visited the venue, which later led him to become an advocate of the Mingei movement and encouraged him to visit the Folk Crafts Museum during his stay in Japan. For the Expo ’70 exhibition, the Folks Crafts Museum displayed work by Mingei members, including Yunoki.[189]

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[186] Samuel and Kennel, op.cit., 7.

[187] Hirose Naruhisa, "Encounter in Kurashiki, Interest in France,” in *Yunoki Samiro: Tsukuru to Ikiru Koto* (Heibonsha, 2021), 79.

Among the creative activators incorporated in Miró's work, there's a presence of *graphismes* (fig. 81) that were sought through the *calligrammes*[190] developed within the Surrealist circles. [191] Miró was interested in Japanese writing and had an affinity for "detailism" that he related to the art of Japan.[192] These graphismes found in several works by Miró are also an important characteristic of Serizawa's calligraphic gestures (fig. 82). Yunoki has also incorporated text in his work (fig. 84), probably inspired by his mentor's pieces, but unlike Serizawa's hiragana calligraphy, the text in Yunoki's pieces was in the Latin alphabet. Further inquiry on the connection among Miró, Yunoki, and Serizawa would be enlightening; this can be followed up in future research inquiries.[193]

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[188] See https://www.nmao.go.jp/collection/collection_outline/, accessed December 4, 2021.
Miro held an exhibition in 1966 at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, at which time he traveled to Japan with Shuzo Takiguchi, resulting in a deep friendship (See "Sobre La Correspondencia Inédita entre Joan Miro y Shuzo Takiguchi. Relación Personal y Colaboración Artística," by Pilar Moreno, available at https://doi.org/10.3989/aearte.2000.v73.i291.832). In 1957 Takiguchi became involved in the exhibition "Sekai Gendai Bijutsu Ten" held and organized by Michel Tapié at the Bridgestone Museum of Art, Tokyo.

[189] "Joan Miro no Chokoku-ten go Shokai Sono 3," *Asahi Beer Oyamazaki Villa Museum of Art* (Staff Blog), August 12, 2019, https://www.asahibeer-oyamazaki.com/blog/2019/08/post-42053.html. Also see appendix E.

[190] For more information on calligrammes, see: https://publicdomainreview.org/collection/apollinaire-s-calligrammes-1918, accessed December 4, 2021.

[191] Danyel Madrid, "Moving Through the Magnetic Field: Joan Miró and the Perforated Line in his Surrealist Paintings," *USC McNair Citations,* Volume 2, (Fall 2006): 19-38, https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.101.1185&rep=rep1&type=pdf

[192] Charles Palermo,"Miró Projects," in Guerrero-Strachan, Jesús, et al. *Miró: The Experience of Seeing:Late Works, 1963-1981* (Seattle Art Museum, 2014), 55-67.

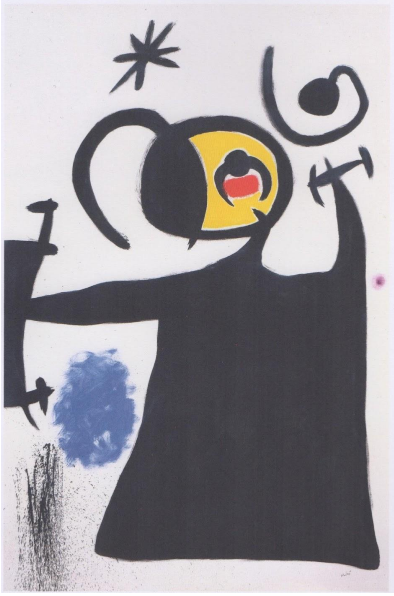

Figure 79. Joan Miró, *Woman Entranced by the Escape of Shooting Stars*, 1969, oil on canvas, 195 x 130 cm. Reina Sofia Museum Collection.

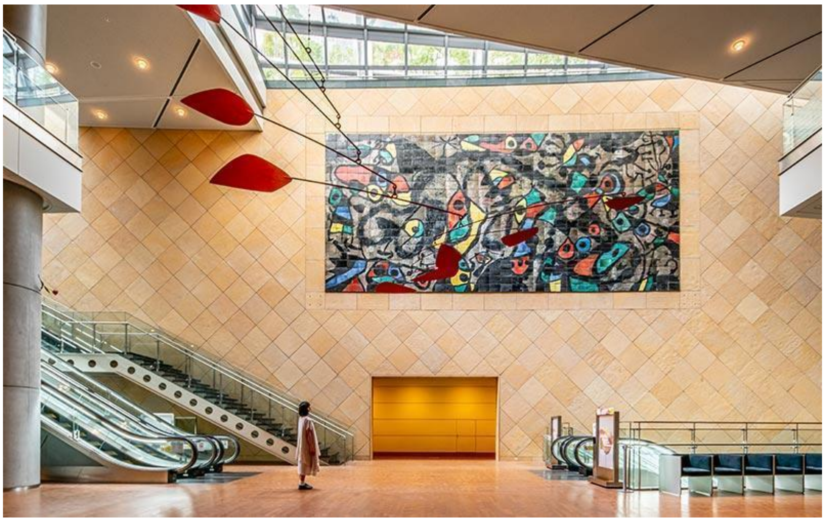

Figure 80. Joan Miró, *Innocent Laughter*, 1969, porcelain tile mural, 500 x 1200 cm. The National Museum of Art Osaka Collection.

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[193] See Miró's piece featured in EXPO' 70 and the Folk Crafts Museum display in Appendix E.

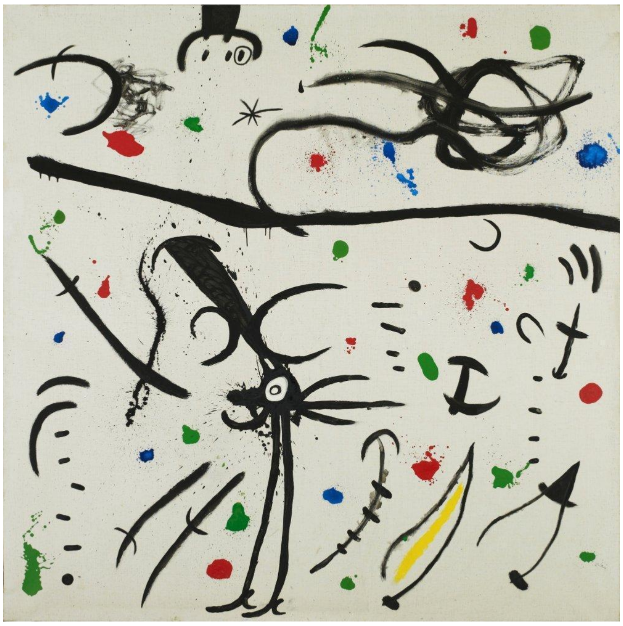

Figure 81. Joan Miró, *Animated Landscape*, 1970, acrylic and oil on canvas, 200 x 200 cm. Fundació Joan Miró Collection.

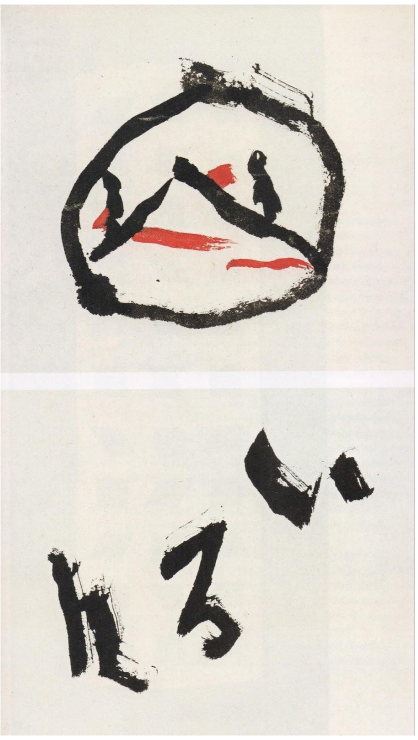

Figure 82. Keisuke Serizawa, *Mount Fuji and Japanese Syllables I, Ro, Ha*, 1984, ink on paper, 137 x 63.7 cm and 136.5 x 63.5 cm. Serizawa Keiko Collection.

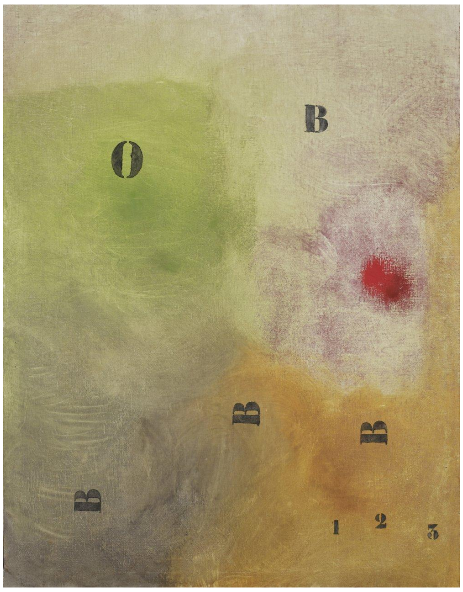

Figure 83. Joan Miró, *Letters and Numbers Attracted by a Spark (III)*, 1968, acrylic on canvas, 146 x 114 cm. Fundació Joan Miró Collection.

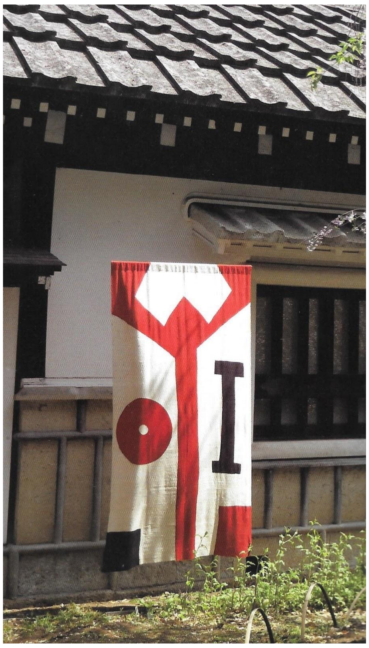

Figure 84. Samiro Yunoki, *2016*, 2016, katazome, 243 x 127 cm. The Japan Folk Crafts Museum Collection.

Yunoki's notes mention the famous children’s book author Kenji Miyazawa,[194] who influenced Yunoki greatly. In 2016, he illustrated Miyazawa's story (fig. 85-86) *Ame Nimo Makezu* (雨ニモマケズ); by expressing Miyazawa's sensibility with freely created watercolor works, he captured Miyazawa's life philosophy of reviving human connection with nature. Yunoki's relationship with this author dates to 1969, when he created katazome works based on Miyazawa's short story *The Restaurant of Many Orders*. From the katazome works a postcard set was edited by Kogensha. In 1993, he recreated in delightful watercolor pieces Miyazawa's hometown, Morioka, in Iwate prefecture, which inspired the fictional place “Ihatov;” the painting took him over three years to complete, with sketching trips that took him to visit Kenji's hometown in different seasons. An exhibition of Yunoki’s paintings was held at Kogensha, and on the occasion he expressed his great admiration for Miyazawa, stating:

> The story of Kojuro on Mt. Nametoko is one of my favorite fairy tales and Mt. Nametoko is a place for admiration. I want to devote myself to Kenji's size who sees it being one step away.[195]

When referring to "Kenji's size," Yunoki is referencing his ability to connect with nature from a humble and respectful distance while simultaneously being part of it. These words reflect Yunoki's standpoint towards his relationship with nature which can be recalled in the recent trees series. The connection between the writer and the artist is based on the influence Miyazawa had on Yunoki, from their view of life rather than the formal connections of their work. The philosophy they both share is fundamental to the philosophy and artistic language that drove Yunoki to develop his later textile pieces.

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[194] Miyazawa Kenji (1896–1933) was a poet, writer of children’s stories, garden designer, socialist, devotee of the *Nichiren* Buddhist cult, collector of *ukiyo e* woodblock prints, agricultural engineer, adviser and teacher. He was born and worked in Iwate, the north-eastern part of mainland Japan, at that time one of the country’s most deprived and barren agricultural areas, which he named ‘Ihatov,’ an imaginary dreamland. He devoted his life to the local peasants and their environment, working towards the renaissance of peasant culture. Although it was not until after his death that his life and activities became widely known, the last decade has seen a ‘Miyazawa Kenji boom’ in Japan (Kikuchi 2004, 36).

[195] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 60-61.

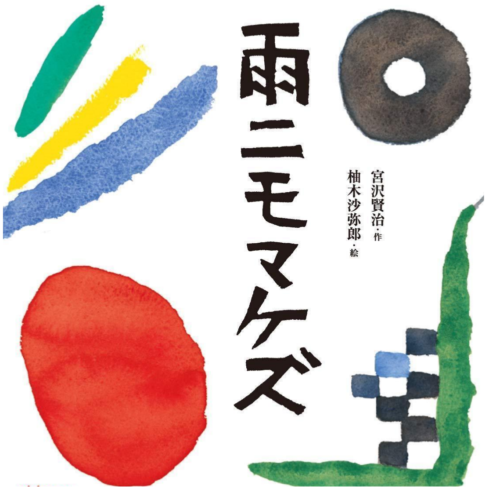
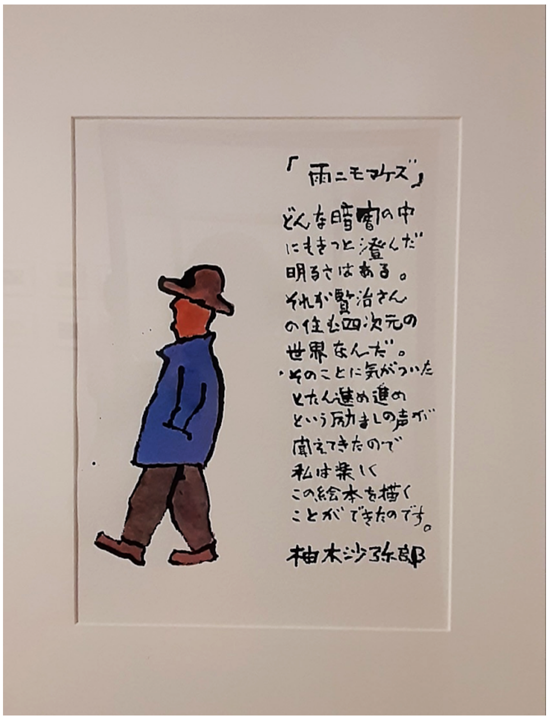

雨ニモマケズ
宮沢賢治・作
柚木沙弥郎・絵

Figure 85. Samiro Yunoki, *Ame Nimo Makezu* (*Undaunted Too by the Rain*), 2016.



「雨ニモマケズ」
どんな暗闇の中
にもきっと澄んだ
明るさはある。
それが賢治さん
の住む四次元の
世界なんだ。
・そのことに気がついた
とたん進め進め
という励ましの声が
聞えてきたので
私は楽しく
この絵本を描く
ことができたのです。
柚木沙弥郎

Figure 86. Samiro Yunoki's illustration for *Ame Nimo Makezu*, 2016. Photograph taken by author at Play Museum display.

Due to his humble character, Yunoki's words fall short in describing his own work. In recent years, Yunoki has spoken in interviews about his process and his perception of the present day.[196] He says that in the last ten years, "the world has changed dramatically" and that he cannot "keep up with that speed anymore;" he also wants to have more time to continue working in his studio (fig. 87-97) where he spends most of his days.[197] For Yunoki the connection between art and life and the fun that he has linking both through his work is the driving force that has kept him creating.[198] Nowadays, many of his pieces belong to important private collections and museums, including the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo; the Fukushima Prefectural Museum of Art; the Kanagawa Prefectural Museum of Art; and the Musée National des Arts Asiatiques - Guimet (Guimet National Museum of Asian Arts) in Paris.

I have addressed Yunoki's shift from Mingei to art, focusing on how he sought to achieve his self-expression by changing his technical approach. The way he has used drawing as a means of expression and a fundamental activity that encourages him to connect things he encounters around him was also discussed. This helped elucidate Yunoki's reflective and creative process through drawing and the sudden surge of freedom and individuality visible in his more recent work. Lastly and most important, his artistic language was reviewed and compared within the framework of Eco's "open work" theory, followed by a review of the artists who have influenced his artistic endeavors. Yunoki's artistic language found in his later textile pieces is the culmination of a transformation process that was nourished by technique, reflection, and experience in the dyeing medium.

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[196] "Samiro Yunoki Exhibition 'Folk Artist'", interview by Idee Tokyo, fall, 2020, Video 4:24, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wHmMnbEPcOw

[197] Yunoki and Atsuta, op.cit., 36.

[198] "Life in Art'", interview by Idee Tokyo, July 9, 2020, Video 6:58, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Us6y88u7bCQ

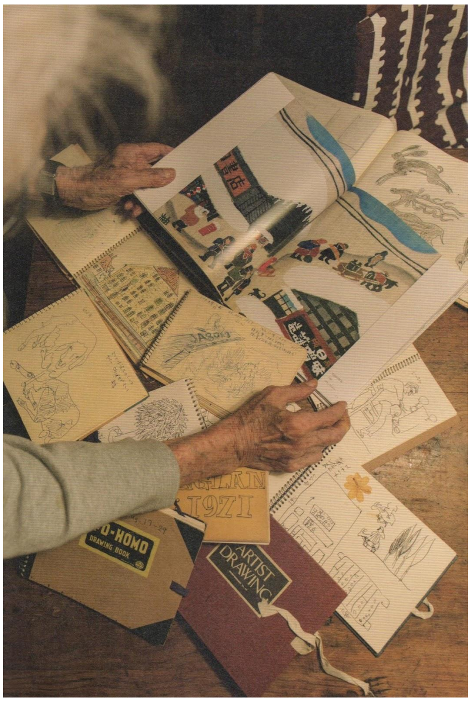

Figure 87. Samiro Yunoki in his studio with his sketchbooks. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

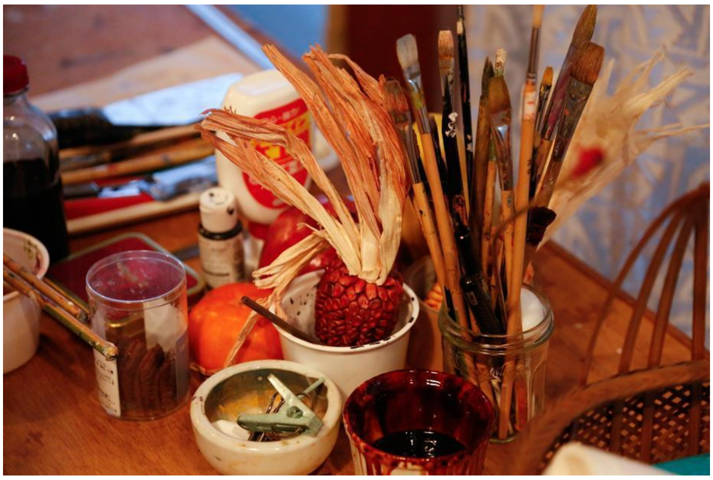

Figure 88. Samiro Yunoki's tools in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

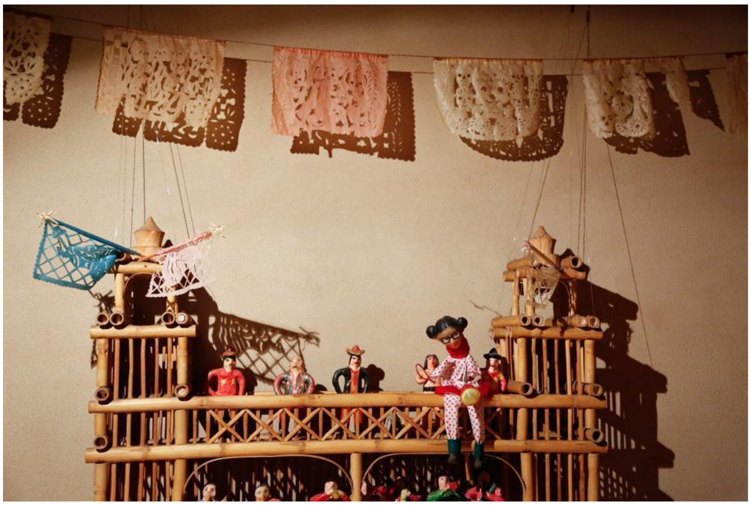

Figure 89. Samiro Yunoki's collected objects in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

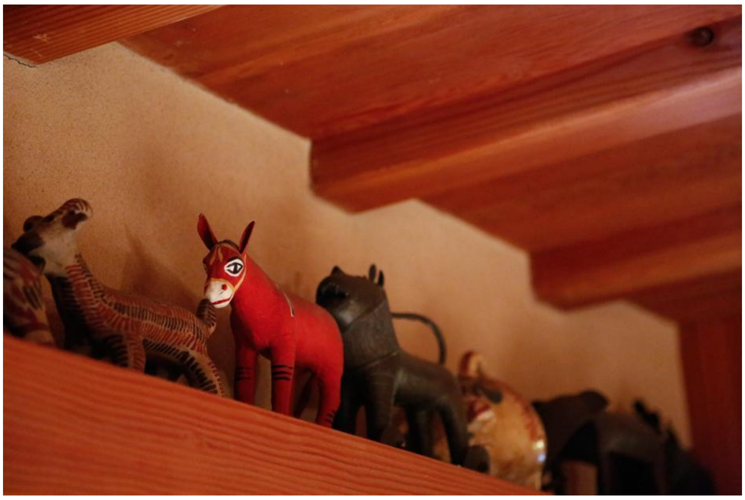

Figure 90. Samiro Yunoki's collected objects in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

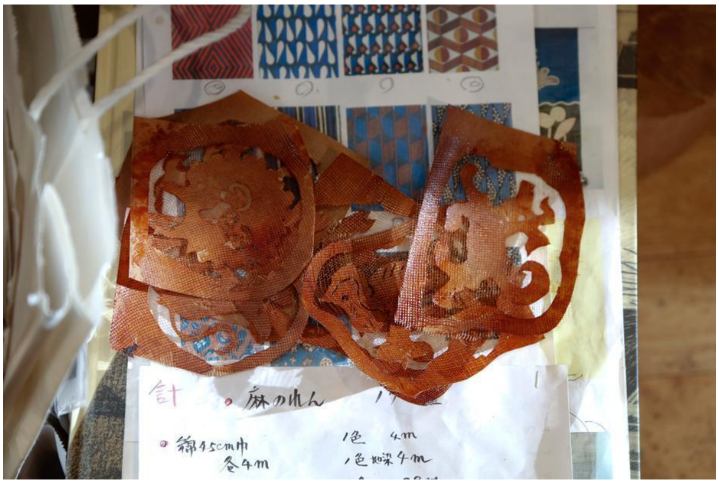
計
麻のれん
綿45cm巾
各4m
1色 4m
1色 蝶 4m

Figure 91. Samiro Yunoki's katagami in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

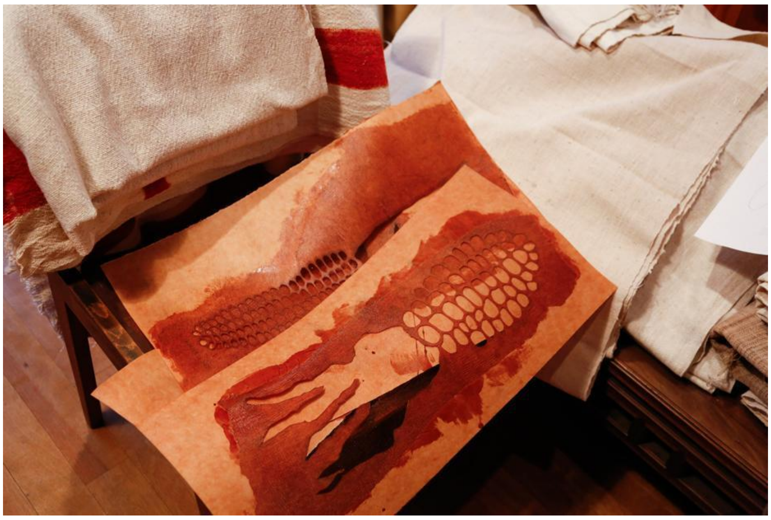

Figure 92. Samiro Yunoki's katagami in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

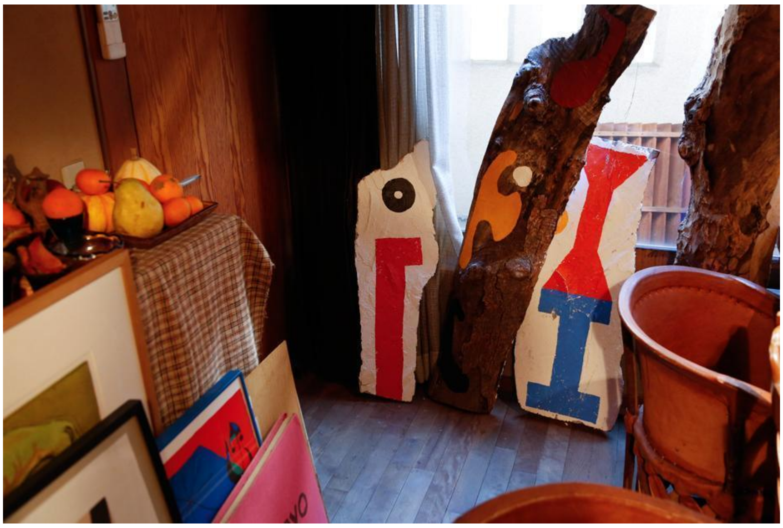

Figure 93. Samiro Yunoki's sculptures in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

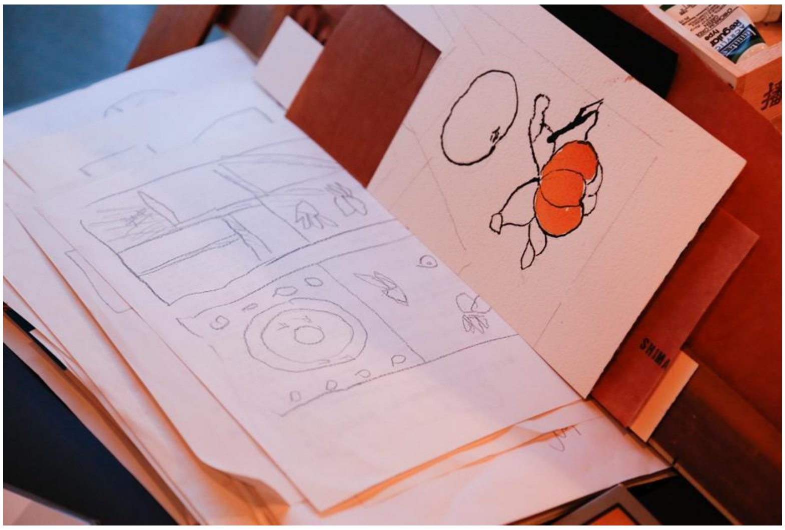

Figure 94. Samiro Yunoki's drawings in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

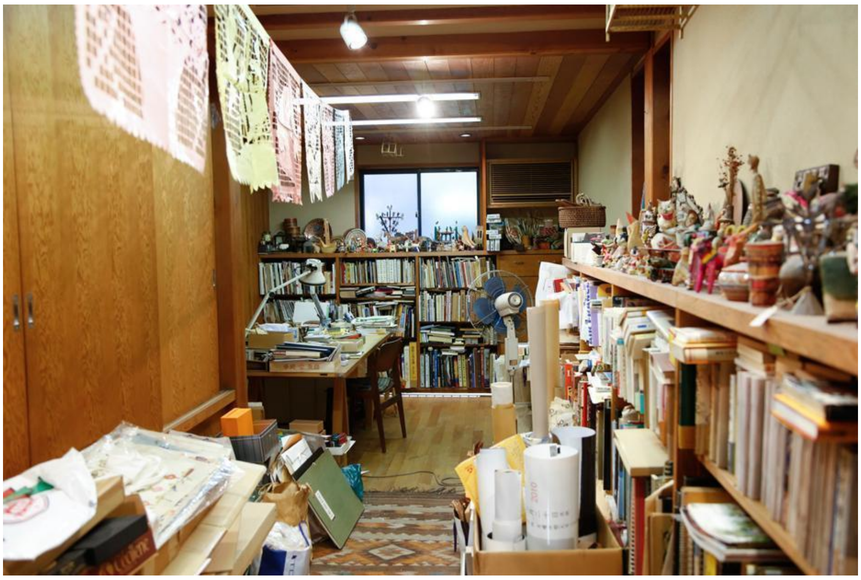

Figure 95. Samiro Yunoki's studio view. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

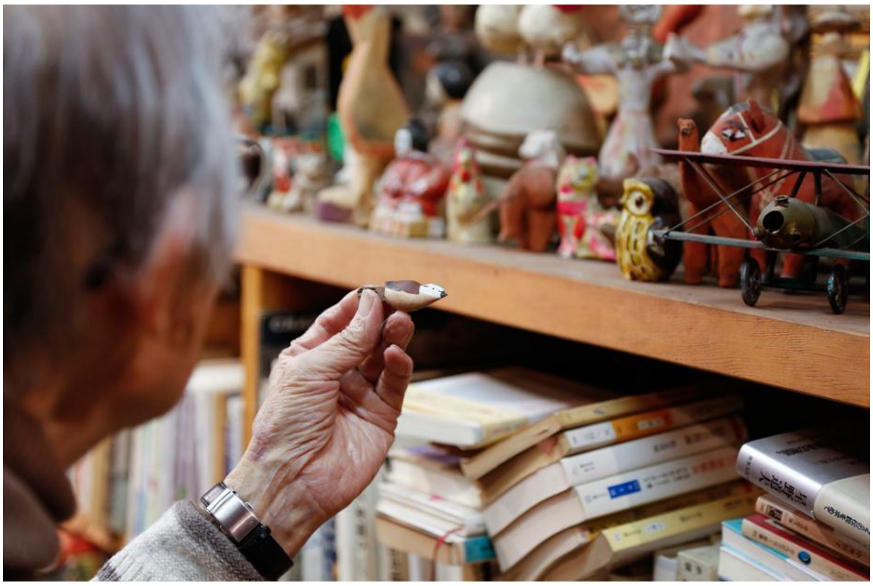

Figure 96. Samiro Yunoki observing his collected objects. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

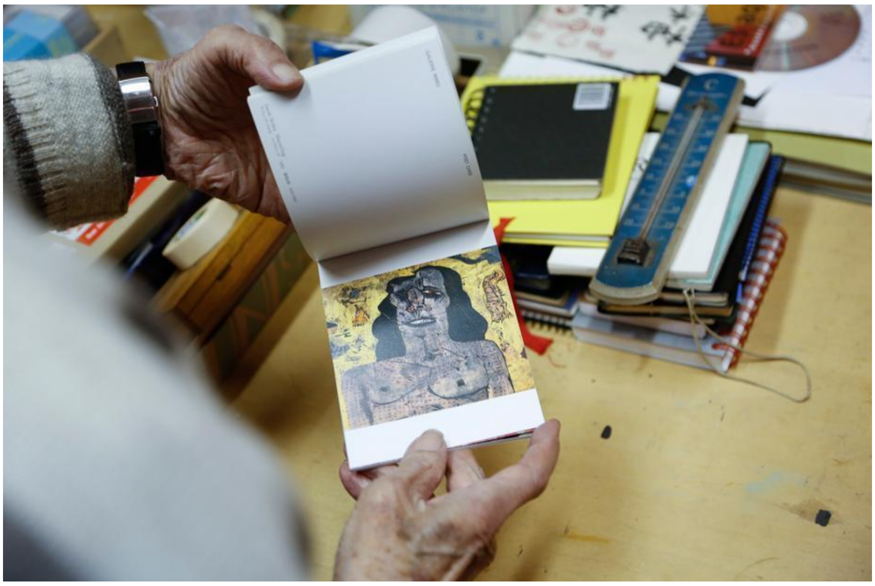

Figure 97. Samiro Yunoki in his studio. Photograph: Norio Kidera.

CONCLUSIONS AND REFLECTION

After reviewing Samiro Yunoki’s work in the database and addressing the specific points at which the characteristics of his expression in katazome changed, I conclude that the most relevant inflections in his life and career led to the surge of his artistic expression. At the beginning of his career, Yunoki’s ties to the Mingei movement under Keisuke Serizawa’s guidance made him produce work that followed the Mingei style. Later, his travels to India and other countries introduced him to crafts that influenced his work and redefined his color palette to warm contrasting hues. After engaging in mediums other than dyeing, Yunoki’s expression began to change. Around this period, he also began approaching his textiles as pieces not to be used for clothes or to decorate a room. He viewed them as having a spatial disposition that would draw the viewer into a different kind of aesthetic experience with the cloth, one that indulges the senses. At the turn of the millennium, followed by an intense production of prints, his textile pieces were characterized by abstract expressions, a reduced color palette, and a detachment of pattern that was replaced by singularity in the subjects he addressed. The most important conclusion to draw from Chapter 1 of this work is that in order to grasp the changes in Yunoki's expression and understand the interactions, similarities, and differences between the genres he engaged with, his work must be first studied as a whole. Despite the diverse artwork that defines Yunoki's production, the interactions and traits that can be observed between printmaking and katazome indicate that these two mediums have great importance in Yunoki's artistic career, mainly because they defined his artistic persona. Other mediums such as painting, illustration, and sculpture were assimilated into Yunoki's production to ground his creative freedom that culminated in his later katazome pieces.

Even today, Yunoki recalls and acknowledges the fundamental basis that the Mingei movement provided him in his production of crafts. However, his individuality and independence from Mingei—which can be deduced from his later katazome pieces—show that he disengaged from craft and entered the genre of art with a powerful artistic language. Yunoki sees himself as a creator who is not tied to a genre, and this is observable to a certain extent considering the diverse array of work that defines his lifetime production. However, he states that “arts and crafts are the same thing”; asserts that both handicrafts and artwork should be defined as artistic; and insists that he is not comfortable with categorizations that divide creation into different groups, thus revealing an unclear standpoint towards the genres of art and craft. Following Kanbara’s statement that differentiates craft as the genre that focuses on production of utilitarian objects and art as the creation of pieces born from the desire to create, a separation of both genres is warranted. In recent years, Yunoki has affirmed that he has the freedom to create what he wants, and this is observable in the katazome methods he has employed, resulting in his latest abstract, unique pieces. Yunoki’s hesitance to frame his work as either art or craft evidently shows the contradictory nature of his work, which he ultimately calls "another kind of art." Although Yunoki’s work has the background of a hand-crafted object, it is often displayed in museums and captioned with a title, author and sometimes a "do not touch" sign, which makes it art and not craft. For Yunoki, the period during which he was close to Serizawa and modeled his crafts after his teachings is fundamental to his work. However, after Serizawa passed away, his presence faded, giving Yunoki the freedom to create what he desired. For Yunoki, Serizawa will always be a major figure of katazome production, and he will never forget their shared experience in the Mingei movement—collecting crafts from various cultures, being moved by the objects they encountered, and traveling to change their perception of the world.

Yunoki’s introduction to katazome through Serizawa was one of his most significant experiences on his path towards creation. If Yunoki had started his creative career producing work in mediums other than dyeing, such as painting or sculpture, today's textile pieces wouldn't exist in Japanese art, and a traditional technique like katazome certainly wouldn't be considered a plausible medium for making art. By becoming the "individual craftsperson" and a Living National Treasure, Serizawa built the bridge for Yunoki to cross over from the genre of craft to art. Moreover, the different roles they both assumed in the Mingei movement—Serizawa as a researcher and artist-craftsman who viewed crafts from a design perspective and Yunoki as his apprentice who focused on crafts production—could have encouraged Yunoki’s subsequent movement away from craft. As Chapter 2 concludes, the relationship that Yunoki and Serizawa had towards collecting objects sheds some light on the great appreciation they both had for craft, and this is observable in the characteristics of some of their katazome pieces, like the Ainu garments that clearly show the influence these objects had on their work.

The focus of the current research was on expression and how Yunoki achieved his artistic language in his later katazome works, leading to the understanding of why he made the shift from reproduction with katazome to creating unique pieces. He exchanged the notion of large quantity production for his recent textiles which are considered unique pieces that have been acquired by private and museum collections. Yunoki's fear of exhausting the dyeing medium and becoming a stereotype drove him to explore different mediums and techniques such as printmaking, illustration, and painting. Due to this experience, he gained a new perspective on dyeing and pushed the boundaries of the technical and expressive possibilities within katazome. To that end, Yunoki replaced repetition with singularity, useful beauty with sense-indulging, and reproducibility with unique work. These changes led to his defiance of tradition, altering the katazome method to his advantage, which encouraged a whole new set of imagery from his work. The way Yunoki displays his work in gallery spaces allows the viewer to experience his warm and energetic expression differently than if it was simply hung on the wall. His katazome pieces build towards an aesthetic experience because they are not limited to visual perception, but incorporate the tactile senses, thus bringing the spectator closer to the artwork. Yunoki's work, defined as "another kind of art," incorporates experience of Mingei craft with art: with textiles, he adds a tactile stimulus to the viewer’s experience, mirroring the closeness one can have with objects through everyday use. At the same time, he expresses the individual freedom and uniqueness of the art piece.

Yunoki's work not only places him at the same level of importance as his contemporaries, Shiko Munakata and Keisuke Serizawa, but outside the genre of craft and into a whole new dimension of expressive possibilities. Yunoki uses a technique originally used for clothing to incorporate imagery onto fabric that activates the viewer’s imagination by provoking multiple interpretations from a single piece. As seen in Chapter 3, the influence of Western modern artists on Yunoki that may have driven him to modify the way he perceived and created his textile work is significant to understanding Yunoki's shift to art. His return to katazome in the 2000s with a renewed independence from craft answers the question of why he changed the characteristics of his katazome pieces. As mentioned previously, he wanted to be closer to the creative freedom that wouldn't confine him to a defined category. Yunoki has definitely brought katazome back into today’s art world with his textile work, like his mentor Serizawa once did in the 1950s. Textiles are created with material that is closer to our tactile human experience and thus brings forth a new way of interacting with the art piece; this is one of the many features that makes it stand out in contemporary art.

In recent years, textiles have claimed new terrain within contemporary art; this is particularly true for installations that effectively take over a gallery or museum space, as well as the public sphere. Yunoki’s body of work lays the foundation for a future of textiles both inspired by traditional techniques and with growing possibilities in contemporary art. The present research gave me insight into the life and work of Samiro Yunoki, whose multifaceted production is at first daunting to try to understand, but enthralling to research. It has made me understand the problem of defining art and craft in Japan, a country with a history that has merged these genres and made it difficult to study and analyze certain art movements of the twentieth century, like Mingei. Researching the practice of the artists who have experienced these changes offers an understanding of the complexity of pairing theory with a piece of art or craft. I have found that Yanagi’s Mingei theory poses some paradigms that must continue to be studied and reflected upon from the perspective of the artist's practice. Further inquiry on other Mingei members would help clarify how their developments were aligned or disengaged from Yanagi's Mingeiron, but this must be thoroughly enquired from the artist's production process, line of thinking, and outcomes of their creative activities. Yunoki, whose work has intersected the genres of craft and art, is one of many examples of this paradigm. Studying his work has allowed me to reflect on my own process using katazome dyeing techniques and how I incorporate technique in creation, from the moment an idea germinates to the completion of a piece.[199] Yunoki’s life and work have also shown me that multiple factors define artistic language; they are not quantifiable at times but must be reflected upon throughout an artist’s creative career. By incorporating this reflection in our process, we will be able to foresee the next step in action and creation and reach a more critical standpoint of our practice as artists.

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GLOSSARY

Ainu (アイヌ). The indigenous people of Japan. Historically based in Hokkaido but at present living across Japan. Their rich culture and knowledge of crafts are some of Japan's intangible assets.

bijutsu (美術). Fine art. In a broader meaning, something that appeals to the senses, but it can also refer to specific genres such as craft, painting, sculpture, and photography.

bingata (紅型). A polychrome dyeing technique from Okinawa. To create pieces in this technique, a stencil or freehand *yuzen* is used to make the pattern. The fabric is then dyed in bright colors. It is used for kimono, furoshiki, curtains, etc. These pieces are mainly for festive occasions.

Butoh (舞踏). A dance or performance style that was born in postwar Japan (Ankoku-butoh). It involves slow, controlled movements performed by the dancer.

Choju-giga (鳥獣戯画). A picture scroll that was created in the thirteenth century by the monk Toba. It depicts anamorphic animals painted in monochrome brushwork.

ema (絵馬). Votive tablets hung by Shinto worshippers in a shrine. They have a written message or a wish to the gods and usually bear pictures of animals or Shinto imagery.

furoshiki (風呂敷). A piece of square fabric traditionally used in Japan to wrap gifts or transport clothes or other items.

geijutsu (芸術). Any form of creative expression. This term is used for expressions in contemporary art and can also refer to the style, medium, or materials that embody a specific expressive form.

Japonisme. A French term coined in the late nineteenth century referring to the influence of Japanese art and design in the Occident.

Jitsuzai-hanga (実材版画). Material prints. This series of experiments developed by Koshiro Onchi in the 1950s aimed to broaden the expressive quality of woodblock prints by adding diverse materials to the woodblock, such as wire or lace.

kabazaiku (桜皮細工). Also known as birch craftsmanship. This technique employs cherry bark to create decorative tea boxes and other accessories.

kata (型). A shape, form, mold, or model. In dyeing techniques, it refers to a pattern or motif.

katagami (型紙). A paper stencil in which an elaborate pattern has been cut out with a knife. It is created using Japanese paper (*washi*) that is strengthened by applying layers of fermented persimmon juice (*kakishibu*) on it.

katazome (型染). Traditional Japanese dyeing technique. It involves a stencil (katagami) used to repeat a pattern on fabric. In the past, it was only used to dye kimono, but nowadays it is used for interior design textiles or other garments.

kata-e-zome (型絵染). In 1956, when Keisuke Serizawa received the title of National Living Treasure, the technique widely known as "katazome" was changed to "kata-e-zome" by official authorities in charge of the award. In present-day Japan, both terms are used to refer to the same technique.

kogei (工芸). In Japan, kogei or crafts are objects, garments, and artifacts created using traditional techniques, passed on by artisans who continue them to the present day. Its meaning is broad and distinctively different in each period.

kogei sakka (工芸作家). An artist-craftsman. Soetsu Yanagi referred to them as leaders in the Mingei movement because they could appoint and guide the artisans in craft creation.

Mingei (民藝). A term coined by Soetsu Yanagi, Kanjiro Kawai, and Shoji Hamada in 1926 to refer to crafts for ordinary people. "Min"(民) means people and "gei"(藝) means craft.

Mingeiron (民藝論). Folk Crafts theory is defined by Soetsu Yanagi in his publication "Kogei no Michi" and specifically for Mingei. In Yanagi's theory, he defines beauty under the following categories: 1. beauty of handcrafts, 2. beauty of intimacy, 3. beauty of use/function, 4. beauty of health, 5. beauty of naturalness, 6. beauty of simplicity, 7. beauty of tradition, 8. beauty of irregularity, 9. beauty of inexpensiveness, 10. beauty of plurality, 11. beauty of sincerity and honest toil, 12. beauty of selflessness and anonymity.

Moegikai (萠木会). A group founded in 1950 by Keisuke Serizawa that aimed to collect materials such as fabric and paper for dyeing. Samiro Yunoki and other creators were involved in the creation, exhibition, and commercialization of crafts within this group.

Mokujiki (木喰). A holy priest from the late Edo period (1718-1810). He practiced Buddhism and sculpted wooden statues carved from one piece of wood. The style present in his sculptures was different from other statues created at the time; it depicted a simple expression in the representation of the Buddhist figures.

mumei no sakka (無名の作家). An artisan who assumes anonymity and is opposed to recognition. A term coined in the Mingei movement to define the "unknown craftsman."

Nihon Sosaku-hanga Kyokai (日本創作版画協会). The Japan Creative Print Association founded in 1918 by printmaking artists in Japan, including Kanae Yamamoto, aimed to "promote the art of printmaking." The group sought to achieve recognition by exhibiting Japanese prints in international exhibitions and establishing printmaking departments in art schools.

nihonga (日本画). Japanese-style painting. Term coined in the Meiji period to differentiate paintings created with Japanese materials and techniques from those employed in the West.

noren (暖簾). A split fabric curtain. It is usually found at the entrance of a Japanese house or business. Those hung at business entrances indicate that the shop is open.

nori (糊). A rice-based paste used in Japanese resist dyeing techniques such as katazome and yuzen.

otsu-e (大津絵). A genre of folk painting that originated in Otsu during the Edo period.

ukiyo-e (浮世絵). Literally "pictures of the floating world." A style of woodblock printing developed in the Edo period. Its characteristic is the use of several woodblock plates to create a polychrome print.

Saisotei (西爽亭). The former residence of the Yunoki family built in the Tenmei era (1781-89) in Tamashima, Kurashiki. It was previously the Bitchu Matsuyama clan's residence. Because it is a classic village headman's building, it was conferred the title of National Tangible Cultural property. It was donated to Kurashiki in 1993.

shokunin (職人). A skilled artisan who has mastered a skill over years of training in their field.

Sosaku-hanga (創作版画). A movement founded by Kanae Yamamoto and other printmaking artists around 1907; it aimed to reach expression in printmaking, and ultimately to recognize print works as art.

tanmono (反物). A roll of cloth material used to create a kimono. It measures 37-38 cm wide and 12-14 m long.

washi (和紙). Traditionally crafted Japanese paper. "Wa"(和) means Japanese and "shi"(紙) means paper. This technique has been continued in rural areas in Japan for over 1300 years as one of the main handicrafts in the country. In the production of washi, kozo (mulberry), and ganpi fibers are boiled, beaten, and cleaned by hand to remove impurities. One of the main centers of washi production is Echizen, in Fukui prefecture. In this region, people honor kawakami-gozen (the upriver princess), the goddess of paper.

yogi (夜着). A nightgown worn over one's head while sleeping. A large quilt shaped like a kimono.

yo no bi (用の美). Crafts that accomplish beauty and functionality in everyday life. For Soetsu Yanagi, all crafts within the Folk Crafts movement should embody "useful beauty" (yo no bi).

yoga (洋画). Western-style painting. Term coined in the Meiji period that categorized paintings with techniques and materials from the West.

yuzen (友禅). A Japanese dyeing technique that employs freehand drawing using rice-based paste (nori) on fabric. It was established in the mid-Edo period and, combined with embroidery and tie-dyeing, provides a wide range of patterns and motifs.

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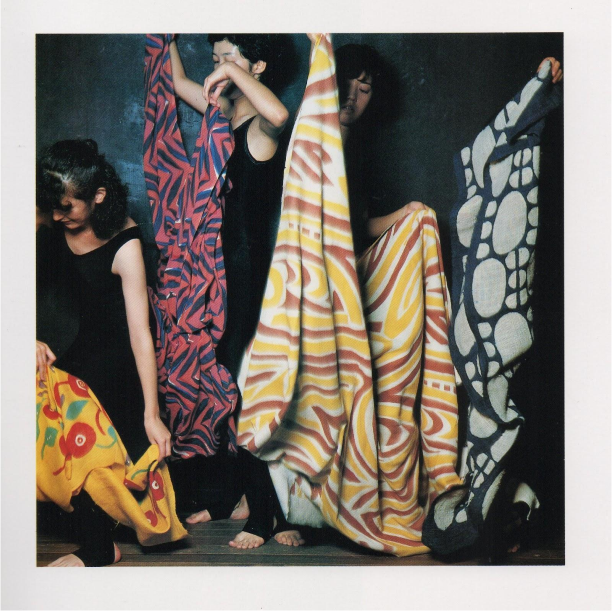
APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

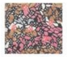
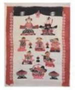
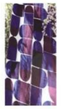
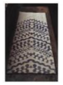
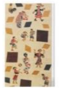
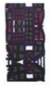
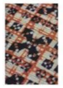
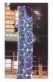
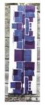
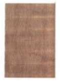
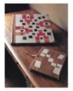
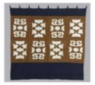
Leather shoes from India. Source: *Samiro Yunoki's Collection of Work*, 106.

革の履物　インド　天地28 cm

Women using Yunoki's textiles to wrap it around the body. Source: *Samiro Yunoki's Collection of Work*, 153.

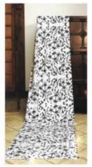
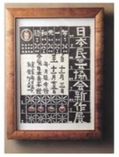


APPENDIX B -
Image Database of Samiro Yunoki's works (1948 - 2021). Created by author.

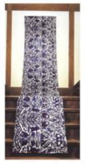
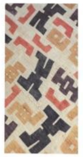
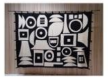
Year / Genre	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts
1948	 Title: 紅型風型染布 (detail) Size: 443x37cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: detailed homogeneous pattern, 3 color, organic shapes									
1949										
1950	 Title: 型染雛飾布 Size: 54x36.3cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: pattern, symmetrical, more than 3 colors, represents people	 Title: 型染雛飾布 (detail) Size: 288x87cm Technique: Injection dyeing (注染) Characteristics: homogeneous pattern, 3 colors, geometric shapes	 Title: 型染唐草文カーてん(detail) Size: 147x36cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: pattern, symmetrical,1 color, organic shapes	 Title: 童女の四季 (detail, folding screen) Size: 155x185cm (Byobo) Technique: Katazome Characteristics: pattern, more than 3 colors, represents people and geometric shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (Geometric pattern cloth, detail) Size: 613x85cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: pattern, 3 colors, geometric shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (Geometric pattern cloth, detail) Size: 267 x 74.5cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: pattern, 2 colors, geometric shapes	 Title: 注染水玉文布 Size: 510x91cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: pattern, 2 colors, geometric circular shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 Size: 560x90cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: pattern, 2 colors, geometric shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (Geometric pattern cloth, detail) Size: 550x84cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: pattern, 2 colors, geometric shapes, very detailed	 Title: 幾何文カレンダ Size: 36.5x26cm(front) 51x49.5cm(back) Technique: Dyeing on Japanese paper Characteristics: square pattern, geometric shapes, reticularea composition
	 Title:Geometric Noren Size: 143 × 144 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: pattern, Ainu inspired, 3 colors, colour-BG composition									
1951										
1952										

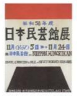
Mingei (1948 - 1966)

Mingei (1948 - 1966)

Year / Genre	Crafts	Design								
1953										
1954										
1955	 Title: 注染竹文布 Size: 542x85cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: organic simple pattern, one color, represents bamboo	 Title:日本民藝協会新作展 Size: 59.5x44.5cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: geometric composition, 3 colors, kanji and diagrams								
1956										
1957										

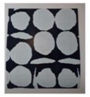
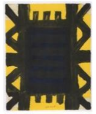
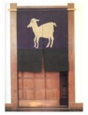
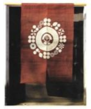
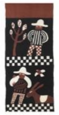
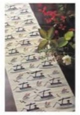
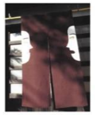
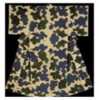
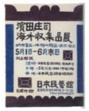
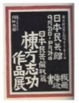
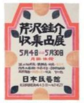
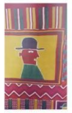
Mingei (1948 - 1966)

Year / Genre	Crafts									
1958										
1959	 Title: 注染ロマネスク文布 Size: 400x91cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: organic simple pattern, one color, represents organic geometric shapes									
1960	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 358x92cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, more than 3 colors, module shapes									
1961	 Title: 幕 Size: 184x258cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, monochromatic, module shapes, contrast									
1962										

Year / Genre	Crafts	Crafts	Design							
1963			 Title: 日本民藝館展 Size: Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: geometric shapes, kanji and numbers, 3 colors, frame composition							
1964										
1965										
1966										
1967	 Title: 型染むら雲三彩文着物Size: 168.5x133cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free geometric pattern, 3 colours, large round shapes									
Unknown date (Aprox. 1967-69) 『形染集』	 Title:Wall hanging (detail) Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric shapes,repetitive forms, 2 colors, two line composition	 Title:Wall hanging Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric shapes,repetitive forms, more than 3 colors, aligned composition								

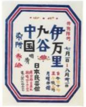
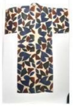
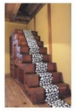
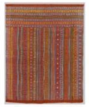
Mingei (1948 - 1966)

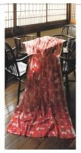
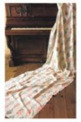
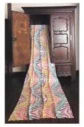
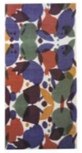
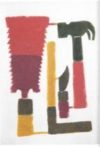
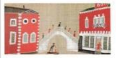
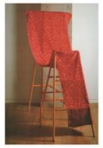
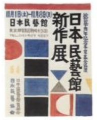
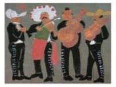
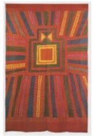
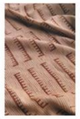
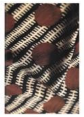
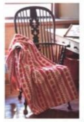
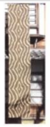
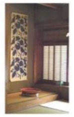
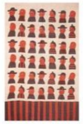
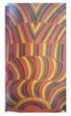
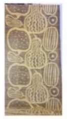
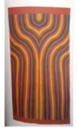
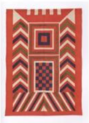
Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

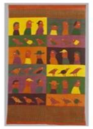
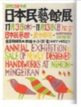
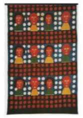
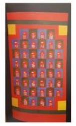
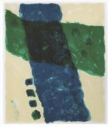
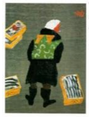
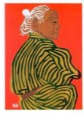
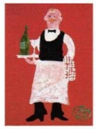
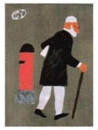
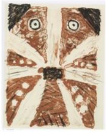
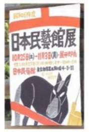
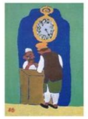
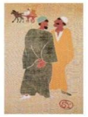
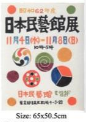
Year / Genre	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Crafts	Design	Design	Art	
1968										
1969	 Title:丸文 Wall hanging (detail) Size: 320 x 88 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric shapes,repetitive forms, monochromatic, circle composition								 Title:明るさのなかの暗さ Size: 57x45.8cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: geometric shapes,symmetry, 3 colors, frame composition	
1970	 Title: 型染山羊文暖簾 Size: 108x86cm Technique: Katazome (noren) Characteristics: free pattern, 3 colors, centered composition, simple shapes, contrast	 Title: 型染童女文暖簾 Size: 118x77cm Technique: Katazome (noren) Characteristics: free pattern, 2 colors, centered composition, simple shapes, contrast	 Title: メキシコ人物(detail) Size: 129x57cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free pattern, 3 colors, people and animals, simple shapes, contrast	 Title: 型染釣舟文帯地 (detail) Size: 488x31cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, 3 colors, simple shapes, contrast	 Title: 型染阿吽文暖簾 Size: 121x75cm Technique: Katazome (noren) Characteristics: free pattern, 2 colors, mirrored composition, simple shapes, contrast	 Title: 雲文麻地注染着物 Size: Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: free pattern, 2 colors, free composition, simple cloud shapes, contrast	 Title:濱田庄司海外収集品展 Size: 65x50cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: geometric shapes, kanji and numbers, 3 colors, frame composition			
1971							 Title:棟方志功作品展 Size: 65.5x50.5cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: kanji composition, 3 colors, frame structure, contrast, letters on background	 Title:芹沢銈介収集品展 Size: 66x50cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: geometric shapes, kanji and numbers, more than 3 colors, frame composition		
1972	 Title: 人物 (detail, folding screen) Size: 179x151cm Techvnique: Katazome Characteristics: people and geometric pattern, more than 3 colors, dynamic composition									

Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

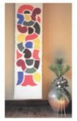
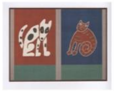
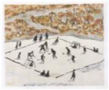
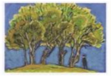
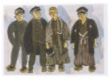
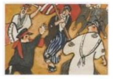
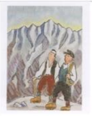
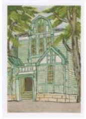
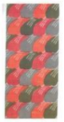
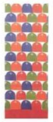
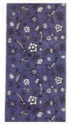
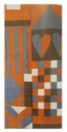
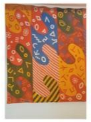
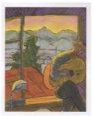
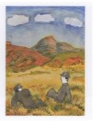
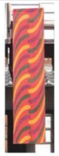
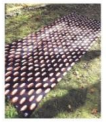
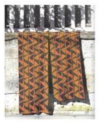
Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

Year / Genre	Crafts	Design								
1973		 Title:伊万里・九谷・中国の染村赤絵展 Size: 65x50cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: letters composition, more than 3 colors, frame structure								
1974	 Title: 型染貝文布 (detail) Size: 507x34.5cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, nature pattern, 2 colors, contrast									
1975										
1976	 Title: 型染貝文布 (detail) Size: 507x34.5cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, nature pattern, 2 colors, contrast									
1977	 Title: Stripes Size: 196 × 156 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: Lines and dots, homogeneous, more than 3 colors, color composition									
Unknown date (Aprox. early 1980s) 『柚木沙弥郎作品集』 Art & Crafts										

Year / Genre	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts
1978										
1979										
1980	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 314x111cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: geometric pattern, 3 colors, large round shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 394x92cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: geometric pattern, 3 colors, detailed shapes	 Title: 注染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 314x111cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: free geometric pattern, more than 3 colors, line rhythmic shapes	 Title: 注染石榴文布 (detail) Size: 290x55cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: free geometric pattern, more than 3 colors, large round shapes				 Title: Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free geometric composition, more than 3 colors, depicting tools	 Title: ベニス風景 Size: Technique: Illustration Characteristics: free composition, more than 3 colors, depicting the city landscape in Venice	 Unknown date (Aprox.) 『柚木沙弥郎作品集』
1981								 Title: 日本民藝協会新作展 Size: 65x50.5cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: geometric shapes, more than 3 colors, linear composition Design	 Title: 四人の楽師メキシコ Size: Technique: Illustration Characteristics: free composition, more than 3 colors, depicting a group of people	 Unknown date (Aprox.) 『柚木沙弥郎作品集』
1982	 Title: 型染櫛文布 (detail) Size: 395x92cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, 2 colors, line, rhythmic pattern	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 311x105cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, 3 colors, shapes and lines (African textiles influence?)	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 620x89cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, 2 colors, rhythmic shapes	 Title: 型染大理石文布 (detail) Size: 513x89cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: wave like pattern, 3 colors, symmetrical	 Title: 型染蓮文布 芭蕉 Size: 170x55cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric free pattern, 3 colors, lotus round shapes	 Title: 並ぶひと Size: 192 x 125 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free pattern, 3 colors, people arranged in lines	 Title: 型染細地壁掛布 Size: 186 x 142 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: wavy pattern, more than 3 colors, mirror composition	 Title: うり (detail) Size: 365 x 125 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: vegetable motif pattern,2 colors, repetitive shapes	 Title: 型染細地四彩壁掛布 Size: 256 x 139 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: wave line pattern, 4 colors, mirror composition	 Title: 祝日 Size: 205 x 145 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric pattern, 4 colors, mirrored and rug style composition

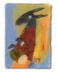
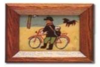
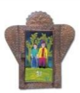
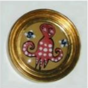
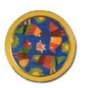
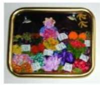
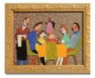
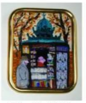
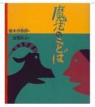
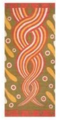
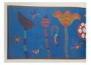
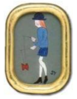
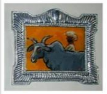
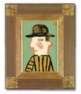
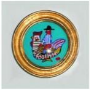
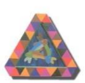
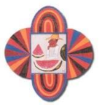
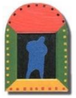
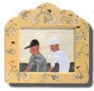
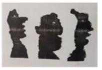
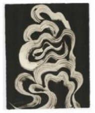
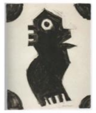
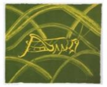
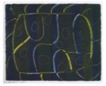
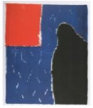
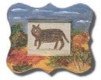
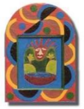
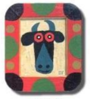
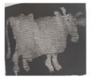
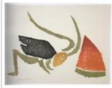
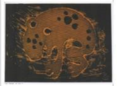
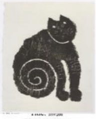
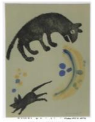
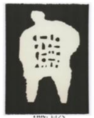
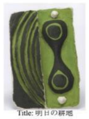
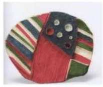
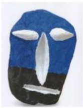
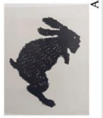
Year / Genre	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Design	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art
1983	 Title: 型染稿文布 (detail) Size: 294x78cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: lines pattern, homogeneous, more than 3 colors	 Title: 型染渦文布(detail) Size: 348x98cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, curved nature pattern, 3 colors, large shapes	 Title: Transmigration of souls (detail) Size: 175x77cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics:defined repeated motif, more than 3 colors, animals-plants-people	 Title: 喜びの鳥 Size: 176x76cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: defined repeated motif, more than 3 colors, animals-plants-	 Title: ジャイプルの朝 Size: 180x76cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: defined repeated motif, more than 3 colors, animals-plants-people	 Title:ならぶ人ならぶ鳥Size: 239 × 155 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: color-figures composition, more than 3 colors, human and bird shapes	 Title: 日本民藝館展 Size: 65.5x50.5cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: letters composition, more than 3 colors, bird shapes	 Unknown date (Aprox.) 『柚木沙弥郎作品集』	 Title:人びと 280 × 150 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: color-figures composition, more than 3 colors, human faces lined up	 Title:交わる流れ Size: 38x33cm Technique: Lithography Characteristics: free composition, 3 colors, shapes on BG
1984	 Title: 春を待つ (waiting for spring) Size: 245x130cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric free pattern, more than 3 colours, circular shapes					 Art & Crafts Title: 買い物 Size: 32.5 × 23.5 cm Technique: Katazome? Characteristics: main figure in center, vertical composition, more than 3 colors	 Art & Crafts Title: あんまあ Size: 32.5 × 23.5 cm Technique: Katazome? Characteristics: figure on BG composition, portray, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 給仕 パリ Size: Technique: Characteristics: free composition, more than 3 colors, depicting a waiter in Paris	 Title: ポストと老人 ポンペイ Size: Technique: Characteristics: free composition, more than 3 colors, depicting a person	 Title:犬の肖像 Size: 26.5x21.5cm Technique: Lithography Characteristics: free composition, 3 colors, animal depiction, expressive
1985										
1986	 Title: 注染三色ジグざく文布 (detail) Size: 296x120cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: geometric zigzag pattern, more than 3 colors, homogeneous	 Title: 型染木目文布(detail) Size: 246x122cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric free pattern, 3 colors, rhythmic shapes	 Title: 注染三色うねうね文布(detail) Size: 294x112cm Technique: Injection dyeing Characteristics: geometric wavy pattern, 3 colors, homogeneous				 Title: 日本民藝館展 Size: 65x50cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: letters composition, more than 3 colors, animal motif	 Title: 時計屋 パキスタン Size: Technique: Characteristics: free composition, more than 3 colors, depicting people	 Title: 立ち話 カイロ Size: Technique: Characteristics: free spatial composition, more than 3 colors, depicting people	
1987							 Size: 65x50.5cm Technique: Katazome on Japanese paper Characteristics: letters composition, more than 3 colors, circles motif			

Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

Year / Genre	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art & Crafts	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art
1988										
1989										
1990	 Title: 型染唐草文布 Size: 188 x 48.5 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, free form, nature pattern, more than 3 colors, contrast		 Title: 犬猫 (around 1990) Size: 88.4x119cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: animals depicted, contrast, more than 3 colors, free form		 Title: 六助の熱戦 (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.8x16.5cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: people depicted, contrast, texture, more than 3 colors, expressive line and composition	 Title: 新緑燃ゆる県の森 (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.6x21.4cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: tree and person depicted, contrast, texture, more than 3 colors, expressive line and composition	 Title: 青春群像 (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.8x21.3cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: people depicted, contrast, texture, dark tones, expressive line and composition	 Title: 鳴呼青春 (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.8x21.8cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: people depicted, adjacent colours, texture, red tones, expressive line and composition	 Title: 雪にうそぶく (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.9x21.4cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: people depicted, contrast, texture, more than 3 colors, expressive line and composition	 Title: Matsumoto_high school_entrance (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 14.7x21.5cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: building depicted, adjacent colors, texture, 3 colours, line and composition
1991	 Title: 型染花弁文帯地 (detail) Size: 493x27cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, nature pattern, more than 3 colors, symmetry	 Title: 型染爪文帯地 (detail) Size: 501x36.5cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, more than 3 colors, symmetry	 Title: 型染水辺文布 (detail) Size: 90x42cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, nature pattern, 3 colors, sea animals and plants	 Title: 信号II(detail) Size: 258 x 104 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, checked pattern, 4 colors, contrast	 Title: 波動(detail) Size: 250 x 600 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, checked pattern, 4 colors, contrast	 Title: Afterglow (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 18.7 x 14.6cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: person depicted, contrast, texture, more than 3 colors, expressive line and color hue	 Title: 秋天王ヶ鼻 (early 90s) (Matsumoto) Size: 19.4x14.6cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: people depicted, contrast, texture, more than 3 colors, expressive line and color hue			
1992	 Title: 型染巴文布 Size: 289x90cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, free form, nature pattern, more than 3 colors, symmetry	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 493x27cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, contrast, 3 colors, symmetry	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 417x57cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, homogeneous, rhythmic shapes, 3 colors, symmetry							

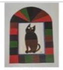
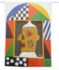
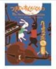
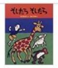
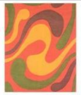
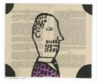
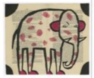
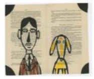
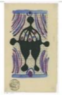
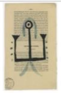
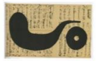
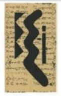
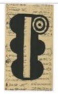
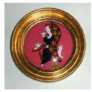
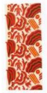
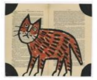
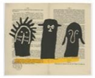
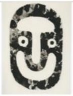
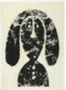
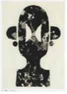
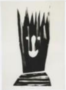
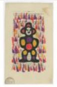
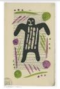
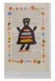
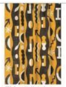
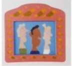
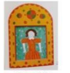
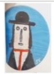
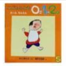
Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

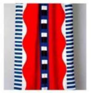
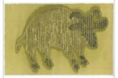
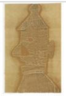
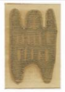
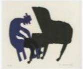
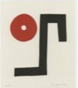
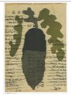
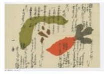
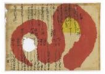
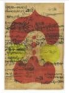
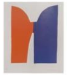
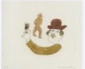
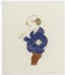
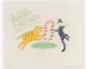
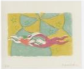
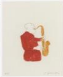
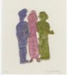
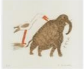
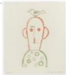
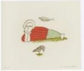
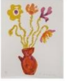
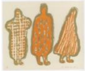
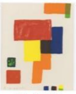
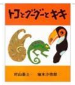
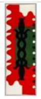
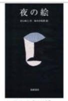
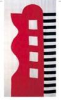
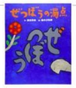
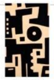
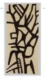
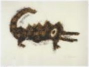
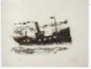
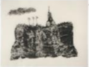
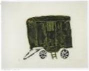
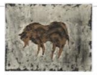
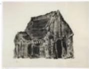
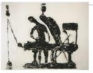
Travel and Printmaking (1967 - 1999)

Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Design
1993										
1994		 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive stroke (Aprox.date)	 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive stroke (Aprox.date)	 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figures composition, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Title: 蛸 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, plane colors, more than 3 colours, line and shape, strong outline (Aprox.date)	 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figures composition, organised on frame, textured colors, more than 3 colours, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Title: The Market in Paris Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, scene, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figures composition (cutout), textured BG, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast, (Aprox.date)	 Title: パリの新聞売場 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figures composition, scene, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Title: 魔法のことば Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figures composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast
1995	 Title: ねじり文 Size: 362 × 122 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: symmetry, vertical composition, ascending twist, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 水辺文屏風(detail) Size: 57 × 198 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: sea creatures and plants, landscape composition, free form, more than 3 colors	 Title: 鶏に乗る男 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, plane colors, more than 3 colours, line and shape, strong outline (Aprox.date)	 Title: 牛と男 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figures composition, textured colors, more than 3 colours, expressive stroke (Aprox.date)	 Title: 鶏に乗る男 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, plane colors, more than 3 colours, line and shape, strong outline (Aprox.date)	 Title: 鶏に乗る男 Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, plane colors, more than 3 colours, line and shape, strong outline (Aprox.date)	 Title: 三尾の魚 Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figures composition, organised on frame, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast, frame deco (Aprox.date)	 Title: 西瓜売り Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, textured colors, more than 3 colours, expressive tones, contrast, frame deco (Aprox.date)	 Title: 未完の巨人 Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, plane colors, more than 3 colours, expressive tones, contrast, frame deco (Aprox.date)	Art  Title: サイクリング Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, textured colors, more than 3 colours, contrast, frame deco (Aprox.date)
1996	 Title: 好きみはさまざま(めいめいの意見) Size: 56.3 x 76.3 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, people depiction, monochromatic, texture	 Title: 雲が湧く Size: 37x45cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free form, drawing, organic, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 踊るの怪人 Size: 57x46cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: symmetry, homogeneous, person, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 秋 Size:47x57 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, lines on BG animal depiction, 2 colors	 Title:草むらのなかで Size:47x57 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, lines on BG animal depiction, 3 colors	 Title: 人影 Size: 56.5x46.5cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, geometry and figure, 3 colors	 Title:山猫 Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, textured colours, more than 3 colors, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	 Title: 雄牛 Technique: Painting on wood Characteristics: figure composition, painted on frame, plane colors, more than 3 colours, expressive tones, contrast (Aprox.date)	
1997	 Title: 白牛 Size: 47 x 56.5 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animal depiction, monochromatic, texture	 Title: 夏 Size: 50x66cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animal depiction, more than 3 colors, texture	 Title: 沼の主 Size:56x76 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animal depiction, 2 colors, texture on BG	 Size: 66x50cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animal depiction, monochrome, figure contrast on BG	 Size: 76x56cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animals depicted, 3 colors, figure contrast on BG	 Size: 66x50cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, person depicted, monochrome, figure contrast on BG	 Title: 明日の耕地 Size: 24 x 16.5cm Technique: Gaufrage (embossed) Characteristics: free composition, 3D, 3 colors, figure contrast on BG	 Title: 豊かな土地 Size: 21.5x27cm Technique: Gaufrage (embossed) Characteristics: free composition, 3D, more than 3 colors, figure contrast on BG	 Title: 神性 Size: 21x15cm Technique: Gaufrage (embossed) Characteristics: free composition, 3D, 3 colors, figure depiction	Art  Title: 黒兎 Size:56.5 x 47 cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: free composition, animal depiction, monochromatic, texture

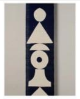
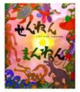
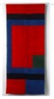
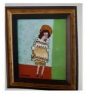
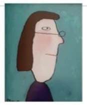
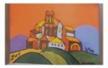
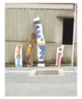
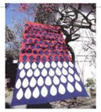
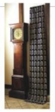
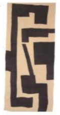
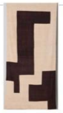
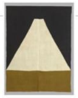
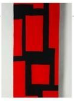
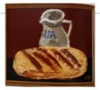
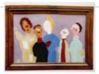
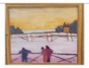
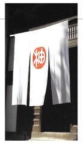
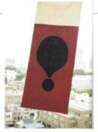
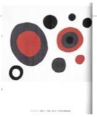
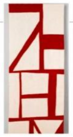
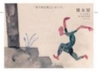
Travel and Printmaking
(1967 - 1999)

Art and Design
(2000 - 2021)

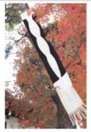
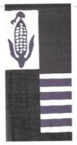
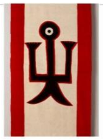
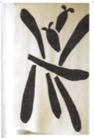
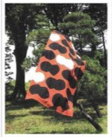
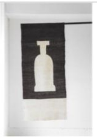
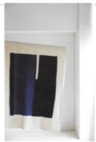
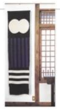
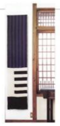
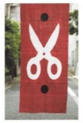
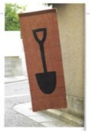
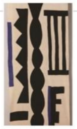
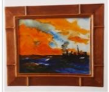
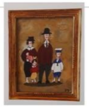
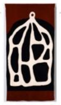
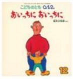
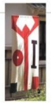
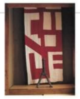
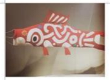
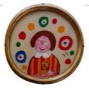
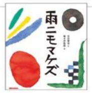
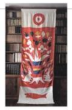
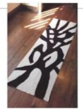
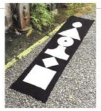
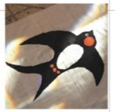
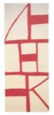
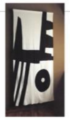
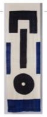
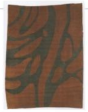
Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Design
1998										
1999								 Title: 猫 Size: 45 x 33 cm Technique: Painting/ wood Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast, frame deco	 Title: 白い帽子の男 Size: 45 x 33 cm Technique: Painting/ wood Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast, frame deco	 Title: つきよのおんがくかい Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figures composition, animals depicted, more than 3 colors, contrast
2000										 Title: そしたらそしたら Technique: illustration Characteristics: figures composition, animals depicted, more than 3 colors, contrast
2001	 Title: Wave Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free composition, wave motif, person, more than 3 colors, contrast figure- BG	 Title: P大学文学部教授 Size: 21x26cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: frame, lines on texture background, person, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 愛する象 Size: 21x26cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: frame, lines on texture background, animal, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 紳士と愛犬 Size: 21x26cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: frame, lines on texture background, animal and person, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 開幕 Size: 21x13cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: frame, lines on texture background, figure, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 西暦3700年のモード Size: 21x13cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on BG, lines on texture background, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 形象2 Size:32x43 cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on BG, shape on texture background, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 形象4 Size:43x30 cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on BG, shape on texture background, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 形象 Size:43x30 cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on BG, shape on texture background, monochrome, contrast	Art  Title: アフタヌーンティ Technique: Painting on glass Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, line and shape, strong outline
	 Title: March Size: 294x125cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: free composition, wavy motif, animal & person, more than 3 colors, contrast figure- BG	 Title: 三毛猫 Size: 21x26cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: frame, lines on texture background, animal depicted, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 三毛猫 Size: 21x26cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figures on texture background, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 魔術師 Size: 63x48cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: figure on background, face created by textured forms, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 少女 Size: 63x48cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: figure on background, face created by textured forms, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 宇宙人 Size: 63x48cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: figure on background, face created by textured forms, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 僧正さま Size: 63x48cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: figure on background, face created by textured forms, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 大道芸人 Size: 21x13cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on textured background, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 巷に歌が流れてる Size: 21x13cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: figure on textured background, 3 colors, contrast	
	 Title: Lino Western paper G Size: 36 x 26.5 cm Technique: linocut Characteristics: ghostly figure, more than 3 colors, contrast, written bg paper	 Title: セ・ラ・ヴィ Size: unknown Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , fabric dress, solid head-hands	 Title: パリの空の下 Size: 55.5x38.5x10cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , fabric dress, solid head-hands	 Title: 勲章をつけた猫 Size: 55x40x10cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , fabric dress, solid head-hands	 Title: 町の人C Size: 18.5x10x10cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , bust sculpture, sturdy	 Title: 町の人D Size: 19.5x80x90cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , bust sculpture, sturdy	 Title: 町の人E Size: 20x90x10cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , bust sculpture, sturdy	 Title: 町の人B Size: 20x8x11cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , bust sculpture, sturdy	 Title: 町の人A Size: 18.5x10.5x9.5cm Technique: gaufrage Characteristics: 3D figure , bust sculpture, sturdy	
2002	 Title: 萌芽を求めて Size: 306 × 122 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, stripes, 3 colors	 Title: コーラス Size: 37 x 39 cm Technique: Painting/ wood Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast, frame deco	 Title: 少女 Size: 34 x 24 cm Technique: Painting/ wood Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast, frame deco	 Title: 赤いネクタイの男 Size: 17.5 cm (diameter) Technique: Painting/ wood Characteristics: figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast,						 Title: えーん　えんえん Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast

Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art
2003	 Title: 無限層 (部分) 77th kokugakai Size: 120x300cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, symmetry,more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: さ迷える仔羊 Size: 43x56cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: textured shape, simple shape,animal, monochrome, figure-background	 Title: 道化役者 Size: 59.5x 42cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: textured shape, simple shape,person, monochrome, figure-background	 Title: 家なき子 Size: 59.5x 42cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: textured shape, simple shape, monochrome, figure-background	 Title: 踊るピアノ Size: 33x39cm Technique: 紙の版 Characteristics: figure on BG, simple shape, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 音の邂逅 Size: 39x33cm Technique: 紙の版 Characteristics: figure on BG, simple shape, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 黒大根 Size: 48.6x40.6cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: figure on textured BG, simple shape, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 香のもの Size: 39x52.8cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: figures on textured BG, simple shapes, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 辰年 Size: 41.7x50cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: figure on textured BG, simple shapes, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 五穀豊穣 Size: 40.5x 27.5cm Technique: Monotype Characteristics: figure on textured BG, simple shapes, more than 3 colors, contrast
	 Title: 音の邂逅 Size: 39x33cm Technique: 紙の版 Characteristics: figure on BG, simple shape, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 乾盃 Size: 33x39cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, people, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 街角で Size: 39x33cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figure on BG, person, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 虎の曲芸 Size: 33x39cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, person-animal, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 空中ぶらんこ Size: 33x39cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, people, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 楽士 Size: 39x33cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figure on BG, person, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: トリオ Size: 39x33cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, people, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: マンモスとこうのとり Size: 33x39cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, animals, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: ぼくの心は鳥のよう Size: 39x33cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, person-animal, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: ものの思い Size: 33x39cm Technique: mimeograph Characteristics: figures on BG, person-animal, more than 3 colors, contrast
2004	 Title: けしの花 Size: 39x33cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: flower figures on BG, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 砂漠の人たち Size: 33x39cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: figures on BG, people, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 街の明り Size: 39x33cm Technique: lithography Characteristics: geometric figures on BG, shapes, more than 3 colors, contrast					 Title: トコとグーグーとキキ Size: variable Technique: Sculpture (diverse materials) Characteristics: depiction from illustrations, figurative	Design  Title: トコとグーグーとキキ Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figures composition, animals depicted, more than 3 colors, contrast	Art Title: 虫の神さま Size: 180 × 60 × 20 cm Technique: Sculpture (Iron) Characteristics: totem shape, monochrome, contrast, vertical
2005	 Title:'05 78th kokugakai Size: 350×120cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, organic center shape, more than 3 colors, contrast								Art  Title: 夜の絵 Technique: collage Characteristics: geometric composition, fabric bricolage, abstract, monochrome, contrast	
2006	 Title:縞文'04 80th kokugakai Size: 120×300cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, wave-line stripes, more than 3 colors, contrast								Design  Title: ぜつぼうの濁点 Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figure composition, plane colours, more than 3 colors, contrast	
2007	 Title: '07 81st kokugakai Size: 340×150cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, circles and rectangles, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: Untitled Size: 275 × 130cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, figure-BG, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 笑うワニ Size: 50x66cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: textured figure on BG, expressive, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 北へ！ Size: 51x66cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: object on BG, textured,expressive, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 城 Size: 50x70cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: building on BG, textured,expressive, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 孤独な荷車 Size: 50x70cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: object on BG, textured,expressive, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 洞窟のビゾン Size: 50x66cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: figure on BG, textured,expressive, 2 colors,	 Title: 石の家 Size: 50x66cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: building on BG, textured, expressive, monochrome, contrast	 Title: リト・プレス Size: 50x66cm Technique: carborundum Characteristics: figures on BG, textured,expressive, monochrome, contrast	Art & Crafts Title: 指人形 Size: Technique: textile and gaufrage Characteristics:variable size, various colors

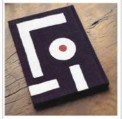
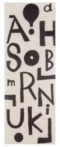
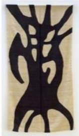
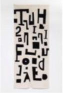
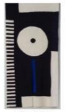
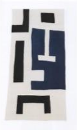
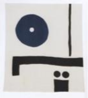
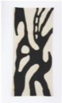
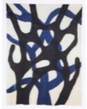
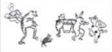
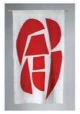
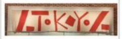
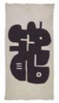
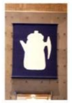
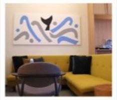
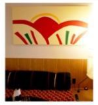
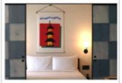
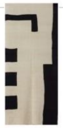
Art and Design (2000 - 2021)

Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art				Art	Design
2008	 Title: '08 82nd kokugakai Size: 330×50cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, totem like, 2 colors, contrast									 Title: せんねんまんねん Technique: illustration Characteristics: letters and figures composition, animals depicted, more than 3 colors, dynamic contrast
2009	 Title: '08 83rd kokugakai Size: 258×113cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, color-shape composition, 4 colors, contrast	 Title: フランス人形 Size: 41 x 35 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, outline, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 婦人象 Size: 33 x 28 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, outline, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 晩鐘を開く Size: 32 x 41 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, outline, more than 3 colors, contrast					 Title: 村木のオブジェ Size: Technique: Sculpture(Wood) Characteristics: free form, totem like, more than 3 colors painted on wood	
2010	 Title: 型染幾何文布 Size: 143x80cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, nature pattern, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 型染幾何文布 (detail) Size: 327x57cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, repetitive pattern, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: Composition Size: 207x89cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, monochrome, free composition, figure-background	 Title: 染布 84th kokugakai Size: 270×129cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, monochrome, free composition, figure-background						
2011	 Title: Mount Fuji Size: 157 × 120 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, nature depiction, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 2011 85th kokugakai Size: 300×95cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, 2 colors, free composition, figure-background	 Title: パンと壺 Size: 32 x 38 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, layered colors, more than 3 colors, figure BG contrast	 Title: 指人形 Size: 32 x 44 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, figures on BG, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: セーナの景色 Size: 25 x 29 cm Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive color planes, landscape depiction, more than 3 colors, contrast					
2012	 Title: 型染柚文暖簾 Size: 176x239cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: graphic, simple shape and composition, hanko like	 Title: Exclamation mark Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: graphic, simple shape and composition, figure-background, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: とうもろこし輪切り Size: 130x170cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: graphic, geometric simple shapes and composition, figure-background, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 2012 86th kokugakai Size: 250×91cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, monochrome, free composition, figure-background						 Title: 雄女房 Technique: illustration Characteristics: figure-BG composition, person depicted, more than 3 colors,

Art and Design (2000 - 2021)

Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Design	
2013	 Title: 型染幾何文布 Size: 173x25.5cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, free form, monochrome, contrast	 Title: とうもろこし一記念日 Size: 199.5x113.5cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, reticular composition, shapes on BG, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: いのちの旗じるし 87th Kokugakai Size: 255×112 Technique: Katazome Characteristics: totem figure, free composition, shapes on BG, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: とうもろこし-みのる Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: simple figures, free composition, shapes on BG, monochrome, corn shape, contrast	 Title: まゆ玉のうた Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: simple figures, free composition, shapes on BG, 3 colors, circular shape, contrast	 Title: 瓶 Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: simple figure on BG, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 無題 Size: 171 x 87cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple figure on BG, 2 colors, contrast			
2014	 Title: いのちの旗じる・まゆ玉 Size: 213.5x56cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, free form, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: いのちの旗じる・青すじ黒すじ Size: 201x57cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, free form, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: はさみ Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: simple shapes on BG, free form, 3 colurs, contrast	 Title: シャベル Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: simple shape on BG, free form, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 2014 88th Kokugakai Size: 360×115cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric figures, free composition, shapes on BG, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 空　海　船 Size: 28 x 33 cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: expressive color planes, layered, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 家族の写真 Size: 25 x 19.5 cm Technique: watercolor Characteristics: expressive BG, figures on BG, outline, more than 3 colors, contrast			
2015	 Title: 鳥かごは鳥を探して旅に出た～カフカのことばより 89th Kokugakai Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric figures, free composition, shapes on BG, 2 colors, contrast								 Title: おいっちにおいっちに Technique: illustration Characteristics: figures-BG composition, people depicted, more than 3 colors	
2016	 Title: 2016 (90th Kokugakai) Size: 243x127cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, alphabet symbols, free form, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 2016・12 Size: 290x100cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, angle shapes, line & form, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: こいのぼり Size: 140 x 325cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: volumic carp fish, free shapes, color & form, 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 猫を抱く少女 Size: 23cm (diameter) Technique: painting on glass Characteristics: expressive figures, free shapes, color & form, outline, more than 3 colors, contrast					 Title: 雨ニモマケズ Technique: illustration Characteristics: simple shapes, geometric composition, more than 3 colors	
2017	 Title: 生命の樹 Size: 252x91cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, symmetry, animals-plants, more than 3 colors, contrast	 Title: 古木 Size: 307x91cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, form-lines, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 六輪塔 Size: 239x57cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes,tower composition, monochrome, contrast	 Title:ツバメのうた(detail) Size: 90x96cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, swallow, free form, monochrome, contrast	 Title: 2017・12 Size: 233x91cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, lines-space, free composition, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: 隅 Size: 200x110cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, spatial composition, free form,monochromatic, contrast	 Title: 2017 90th Kokugakai Size: 295×88cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric figures, free composition, shapes on BG, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: Hommage to Sekal Size: 164×127cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic figures, free composition, trunk shapes on BG, 2 colors		

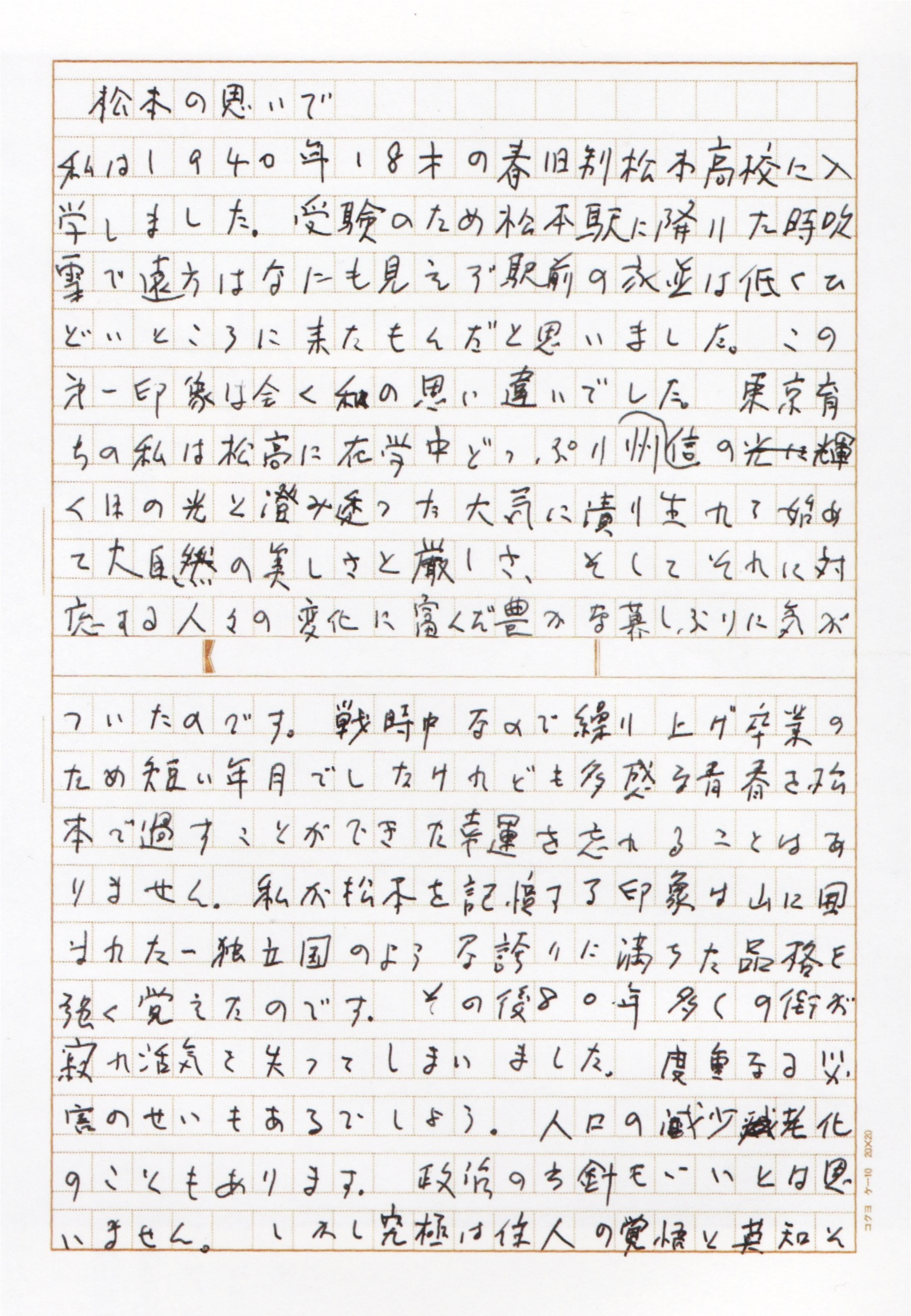
Art and Design (2000 - 2021)

Year / Genre	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art	Art		
2018	 Title: Book cover 'Samiro Yunoki's colors and forms' Special edition Size: 26.5x19cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric, simple shapes, lines and circles, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 2018 92nd Kokugakai Size: 350×112cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: letters composition, lines and circles, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: いのちの樹 Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, lines structure, monochromatic, contrast							
2019	 Title: Untitled Size: 282x115cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: letters composition, lines and circles, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: 2019 93rd Kokugakai Size: 227×115cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, lines and circles, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: Untitled 2019 Size: 239×115cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, lines and circles, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: Untitled 2019-2 Size: 225×180cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, lines and circles, 2 colors, contrast	 Title: 樹 Size: 240x128cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, lines structure, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: 木もれ陽 Size: 225x180cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: organic, simple shapes, lines structure, two colors, contrast	 Title: Choju Giga (detail) Size: 114×1193cm Technique: Ink on paper Characteristics: gesture,composition scroll like, expressive brush line, monochromatic, contrast	 Title: Morning Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, shapes interacting, 1 color, contrast		
2020		 Title: Tokyo 2020 Size: 112 x 509 cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, lines create letters, space, figure-BG monochromatic contrast	 Title: 夜 Size: Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, shapes create totem figure, figure-BG monochromatic contrast	 Venue: Ace Hotel Kyoto Characteristics: Displayed at the entrance, figure-BG composition, object depicted, monochrome	 Venue: Ace Hotel Kyoto Characteristics: Displayed at the toilet entrance, geometric composition, shapes, 2 colors	 Venue: Ace Hotel Kyoto Characteristics: Displayed at the lobby, free composition, shapes, 3 colors	 Venue: Ace Hotel Kyoto Characteristics: Displayed in the room, free composition, shapes, 3 colurs	 Venue: Ace Hotel Kyoto Characteristics: Displayed in the bedroom, geometric composition, tower shapes, more than 3 colors		
2021	 Title: 2021 94th Kokugakai Size: 200×85cm Technique: Katazome Characteristics: geometric composition, lines and space, monochrome, contrast									

Art and Design (2000 - 2021)

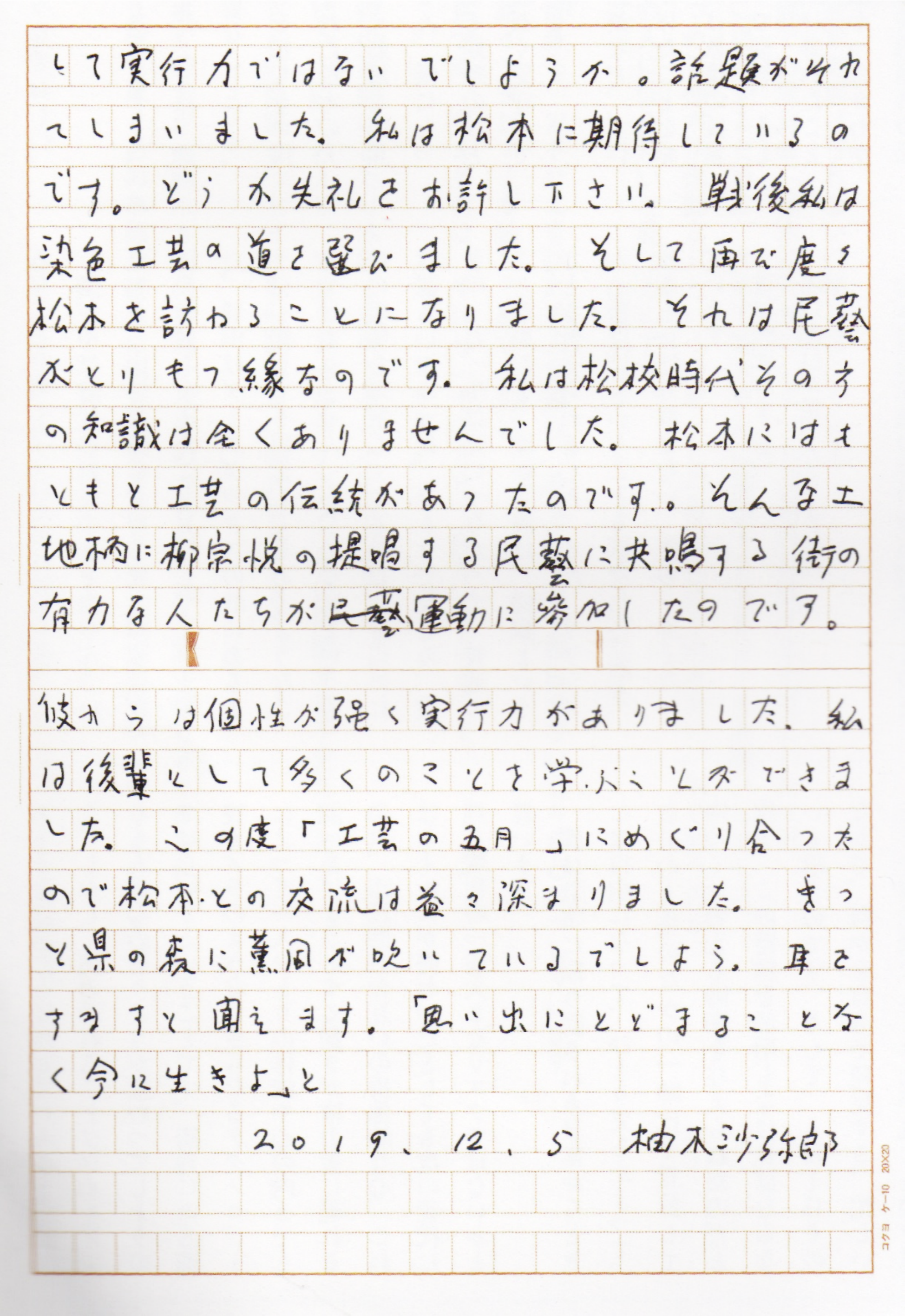
APPENDIX C

A letter by Samiro Yunoki on memories of Matsumoto city. Written on December 5, 2019. Source: *Matsumoto Crafts Month*, "Yunoki Samiro Ima no Ikiyo, " May 2020.



松本の思いで

私は1940年18才の春旧制松本高校に入学しました。受験のため松本駅に降りた時吹雪で遠方はなにも見えず駅前の家並は低くひどいところに来たもんだと思いました。この第一印象は全く私の思い違いでした。東京育ちの私は松高に在学中どっぷり州信の~~光た~~輝く陽の光と澄み透った大気に漬り生れて始めて大自然の美しさと厳しさ、そしてそれに対応する人々の変化に富んだ豊かな暮しぶりに気がついたのです。戦時中なので繰り上げ卒業のため短い年月でしたけれども多感な青春を松本で過すことができた幸運を忘れることはありません。私が松本を記憶する印象は山に囲まれた一独立国のような誇りに満ちた品格を強く覚えたのです。その後80年多くの街が寂れ活気を失ってしまいました。度重なる災害のせいもあるでしょう。人口の減少~~[illegible]~~老化のこともあります。政治の方針もいいとは思いません。しかし究極は住人の覚悟と英知で


コクヨ ケ-10 20X20

として実行力ではないでしょうか。話題がそれてしまいました。私は松本に期待しているのです。どうか失礼をお許し下さい。戦後私は染色工芸の道を選びました。そして再び度々松本を訪ねることになりました。それは民藝がとりもつ縁なのです。私は松校時代その方の知識は全くありませんでした。松本にはもともと工芸の伝統があったのです。そんな土地柄に柳宗悦の提唱する民藝に共鳴する街の有力な人たちが~~民藝~~運動に参加したのです。

彼らは個性が強く実行力がありました。私は後輩として多くのことを学ぶことができました。この度「工芸の五月」にめぐり合ったので松本との交流は益々深まりました。きっと県の森に薫風が吹いているでしょう。耳をすますと聞えます。「思い出にとどまることなく今に生きよ」と

2019、12、5　柚木沙弥郎

Letter from Mr. Yunoki

My Memories of Matsumoto

I enrolled in Matsumoto High School when it was under the old Japanese education system on my eighteenth spring, 1940. When I arrived in a snowstorm at Matsumoto Station for my entrance exam, my impression was that I came to a terrible place, not being able to see anything but the small houses by the station. This first impression turned out to be a total misunderstanding. Born and raised in Tokyo, I was immersed in the faint brightness and the clear air of Shinshu while I was at Matsu-High, and for the first time in my life, I have come aware of the beauty and severity of Mother Nature and the people's rich and colorful lives surrounding it. Although I had to graduate from school early due to the war, I will never forget how blessed I was being able to spend my years in youth in Matsumoto. I strongly remember the grace of the proud town, surrounded by mountains and standing there as if it were an independent state. 80 years have passed, and many cities have lost their liveliness. I'm sure part of it is because of so many disasters. Another part of it must be because of the aging and decreasing popularity. I cannot say that the government policies are doing any good. But extremely, it all comes down to the readiness, wisdom and action of the people. Sorry, I got a bit off track. I just cannot help counting on Matsumoto. Please forgive me. After the war, I chose the path to dyeing craft, and that led to me coming back to visit Matsumoto many times. That is the connection that folk art brings. I had absolutely no knowledge in this field while I was a high school student. Matsumoto originally had the tradition of crafting. With that basis, influential people who sympathized with Muneyoshi Yanagi's idea of Mingei participated in the movement. Those people had unique characteristics and the power of execution. I have learned many things from them as their juniors. My recent encounter with "Kogei no Gogatsu" deepened my connection with Matsumoto all the more. I can feel a balmy breeze blowing through the forests of the small town. Listening to the wind, I hear their voices: Do not abide in your memories. Live your present.

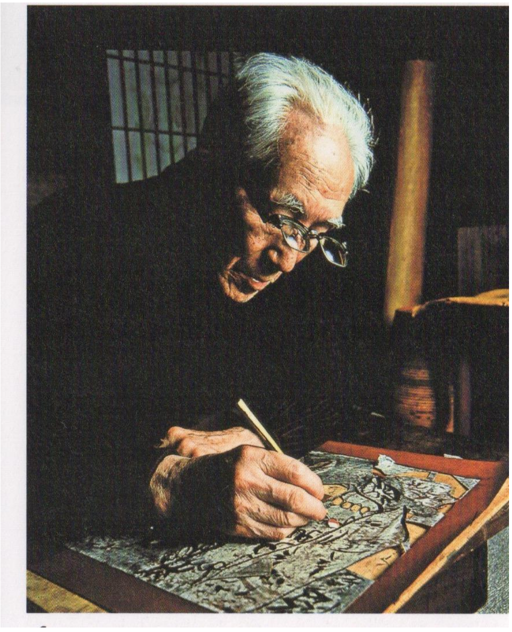
2019.12.5 Samiro Yunoki

Translation by Rio Yoda.

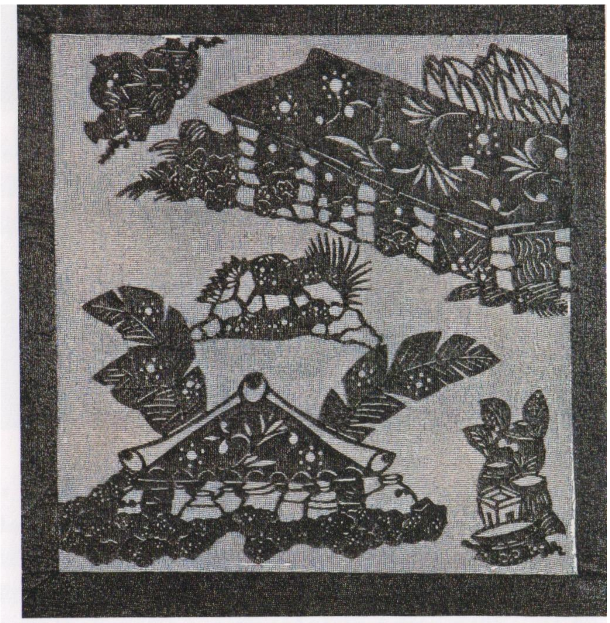
APPENDIX D

Serizawa's Dyeing Method.
Source: ***Serizawa: Master of Japanese Textile Design*****, 21-23.**

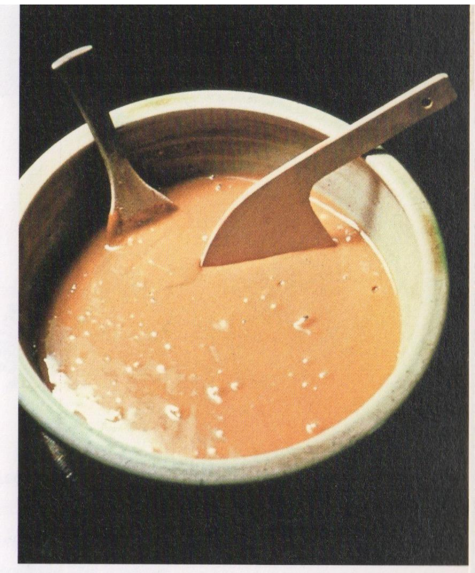
1. Cutting the katagami.



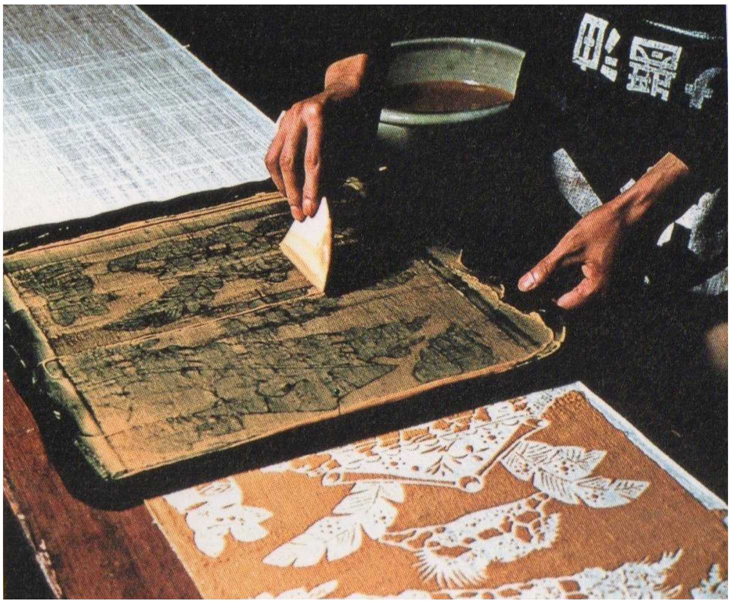
2. Silk netting the katagami to avoid small parts to fall off.



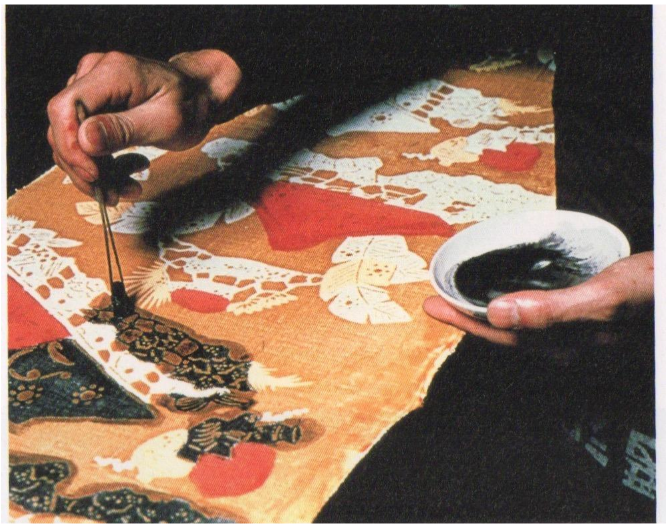
3. Making the nori paste.



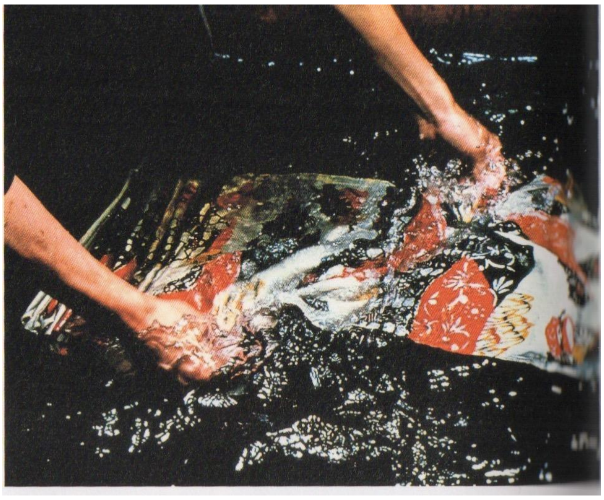
4. Applying the nori paste on the fabric.



5. Coloring /Dyeing the fabric

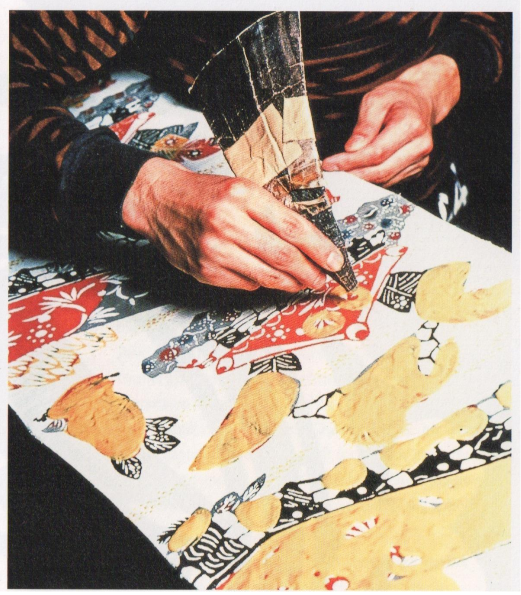


6. After fixing the dye in the steamer, wash the nori off the fabric.



7. Drying the fabric

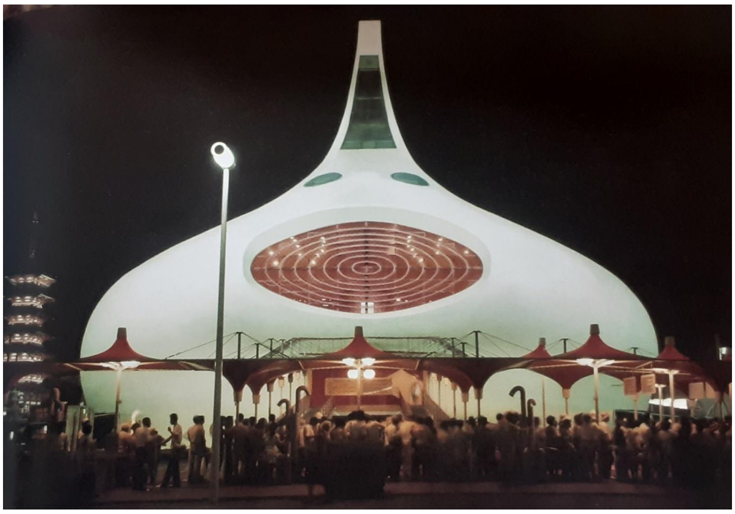
8. Applying paste on dyed areas to dye with ground color on background (optional)

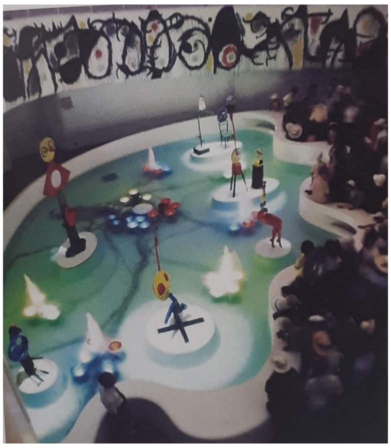


9. Repeat steps 5-7 after this.

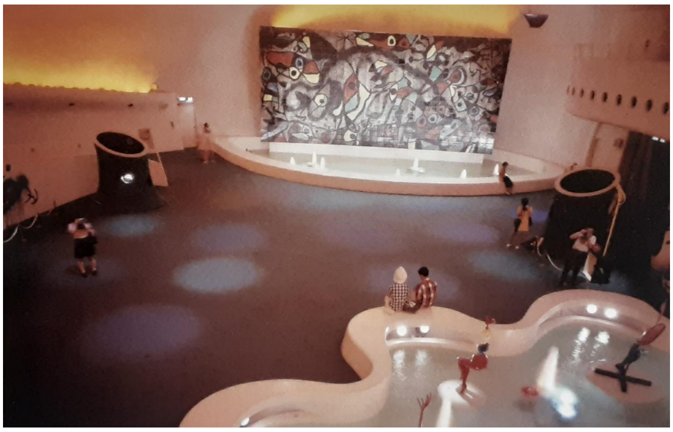
APPENDIX E

Joan Miró's work *Innocent Laughter*, 1969, porcelain tiles mural, 500 x 1200cm in the Gas Pavillion, EXPO' 70. Source: *Osaka Banpaku: 20 Seiki ga Yume Mita 21 Seiki,* 130.



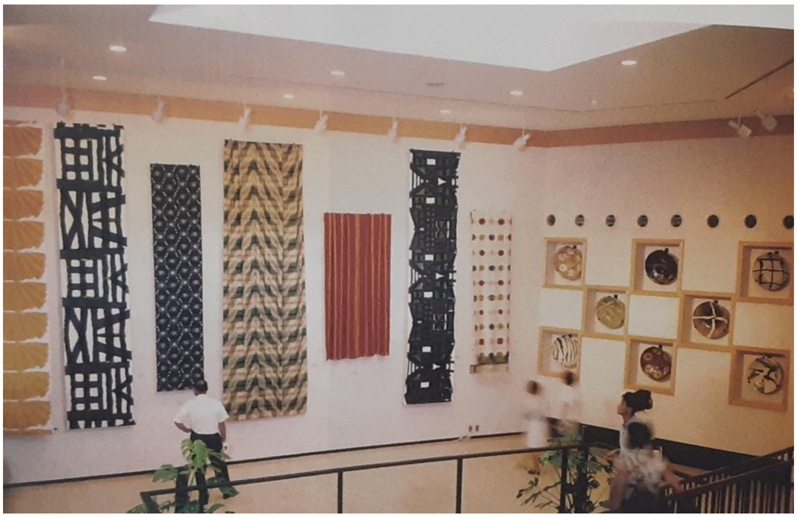


Mural and Objects created by Miró



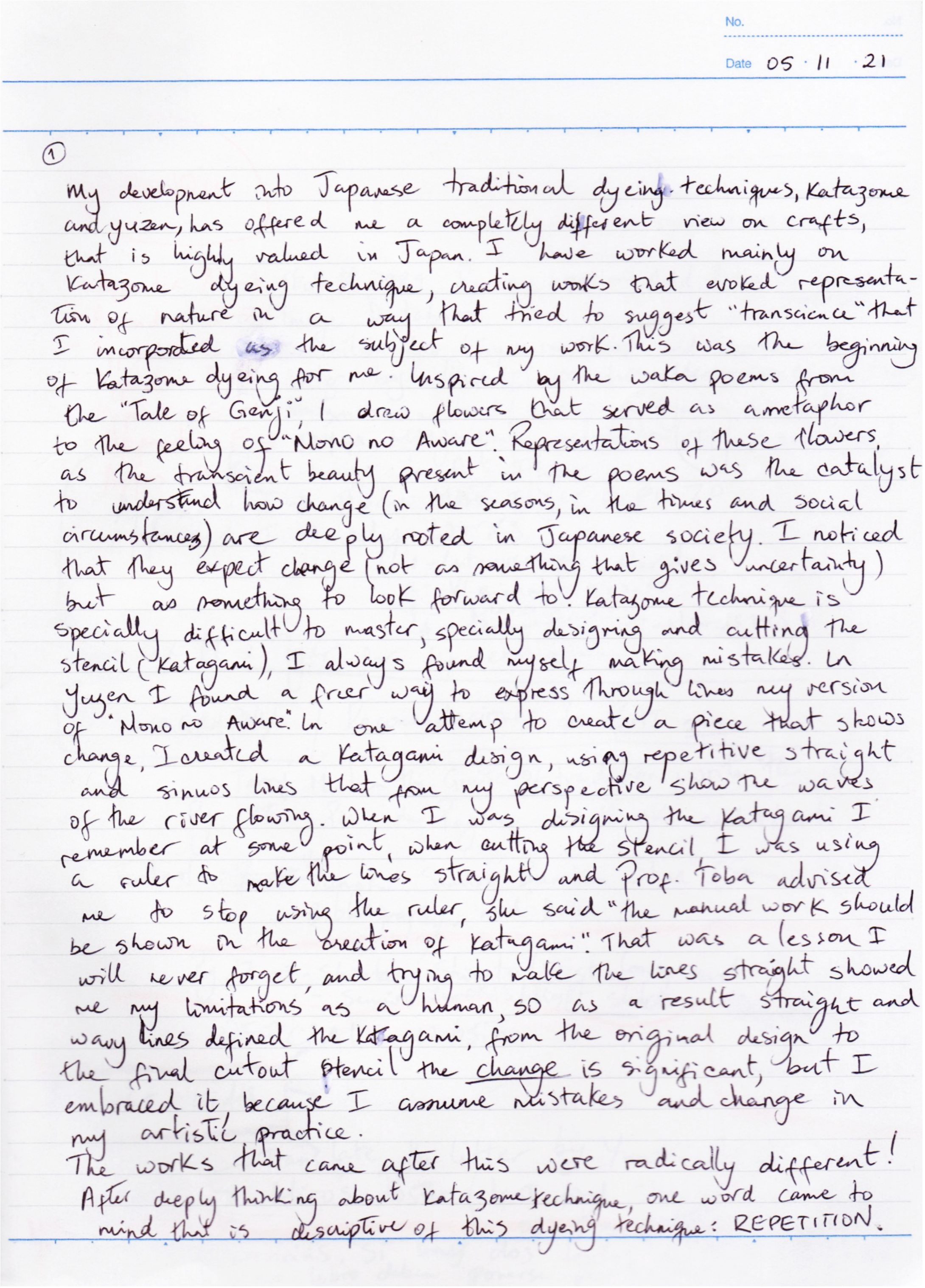
***Innocent Laughter* piece.**

The Folk Crafts Museum display in EXPO' 70. Source: *Osaka Banpaku: 20 Seiki ga Yume Mita 21 Seiki,* 139.



APPENDIX F

A reflection on katazome dyeing by Rosanna Rios Perez. November 5, 2021. Taken from "Investigación"research notebook.



No.

Date 05 · 11 · 21

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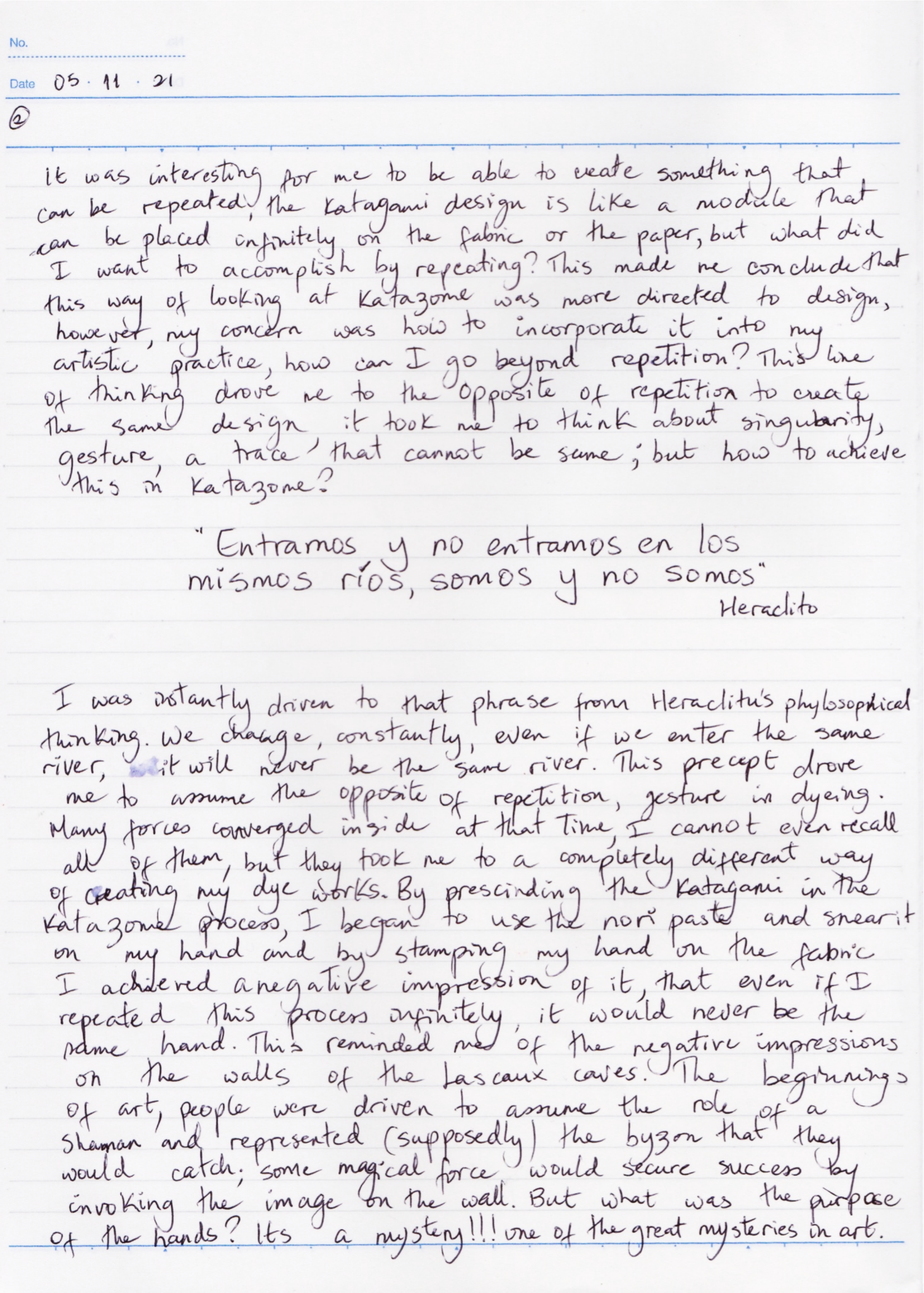
My development into Japanese traditional dyeing techniques, Katazome and yuzen, has offered me a completly different view on crafts, that is highly valued in Japan. I have worked mainly on Katazome dyeing technique, creating works that evoked representation of nature in a way that tried to suggest "transcience" that I incorporated as the subject of my work. This was the beginning of Katazome dyeing for me. Inspired by the waka poems from the "Tale of Genji", I drew flowers that served as a metaphor to the feeling of "Mono no Aware". Representations of these flowers, as the transcient beauty present in the poems was the catalyst to understand how change (in the seasons, in the times and social circumstances) are deeply roted in Japanese society. I noticed that they expect change (not as something that gives uncertainty) but as something to look forward to. Katazome technique is specially difficult to master, specially designing and cutting the stencil (katagami), I always found myself making mistakes. In Yuzen I found a freer way to express through lines my version of "Mono no Aware". In one attemp to create a piece that shows change, I created a Katagami design, using repetitive straight and sinuos lines that from my perspective show the waves of the river flowing. When I was disigning the Katagami I remember at some point, when cutting the stencil I was using a ruler to make the lines straight and Prof. Toba advised me to stop using the ruler, she said "the manual work should be shown in the creation of katagami". That was a lesson I will never forget, and trying to make the lines straight showed me my limitations as a human, so as a result straight and wavy lines defined the Katagami, from the original design to the final cutout stencil the change is significant, but I embraced it, because I assume mistakes and change in my artistic practice.

The works that came after this were radically different!
After deeply thinking about Katazome technique, one word came to mind that is desciptive of this dyeing technique: REPETITION.



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it was interesting for me to be able to create something that can be repeated, the Katagami design is like a module that can be placed infinitely on the fabric or the paper, but what did I want to accomplish by repeating? This made me conclude that this way of looking at Katazome was more directed to design, however, my concern was how to incorporate it into my artistic practice, how can I go beyond repetition? This line of thinking drove me to the opposite of repetition to create the same design it took me to think about singularity, gesture, a trace that cannot be same; but how to achieve this in Katazome?

"Entramos y no entramos en los
mismos ríos, somos y no somos"
Heraclito

I was instantly driven to that phrase from Heraclitu's phylosophical thinking. We change, constantly, even if we enter the same river, it will never be the same river. This precept drove me to assume the opposite of repetition, gesture in dyeing. Many forces converged inside at that Time, I cannot even recall all of them, but they took me to a completely different way of creating my dye works. By prescinding the Katagami in the Katazome process, I began to use the nori paste and smear it on my hand and by stamping my hand on the fabric I achieved a negative impression of it, that even if I repeated this process infinitely, it would never be the same hand. This reminded me of the negative impressions on the walls of the Lascaux caves. The beginnings of art, people were driven to assume the role of a Shaman and represented (supposedly) the byzon that they would catch; some magical force would secure success by invoking the image on the wall. But what was the purpose of the hands? Its a mystery!!! one of the great mysteries in art.

Reflection on katazome dyeing

My development in Japanese dyeing techniques katazome and yuzen, has offered a completely different view on craft that is highly valued in Japan. I have worked mainly on the katazome dyeing technique, creating works that evoked representations of nature in a way that tried to suggest "transience" that I incorporated as the subject of my work. This was the beginning of katazome dyeing for me. Inspired by the waka poems from "The Tale of Genji," I drew flowers that served as a metaphor to the feeling of "Mono no Aware." Representations of these flowers, as the transient beauty present in the poems, was the catalyst to understand how change (in the seasons, in the times and social circumstances) are deeply rooted in Japanese society. I noticed that they expect change, not as something that gives them uncertainty, but as something to look forward to. Katazome technique is especially difficult to master, especially designing and cutting the stencil (katagami), I always found myself making mistakes. In yuzen, I found a freer way to express through lines my version of "Mono no Aware." In one attempt to create a piece that shows change, I created a katagami design using repetitive straight and sinuous lines that from my perspective show the waves of the river flowing. When I was designing the katagami, I remember at some point, when cutting the stencil, I was using a ruler to make the lines straight and Prof. Toba advised me to stop using the ruler, she said "the manual work should be shown in the creation of katagami." That was a lesson I will never forget, and trying to make the lines straight showed me my limitations as a human, so as a result straight and wavy lines defined the katagami; from the original design to the final cutout stencil the change is significant, but I embraced it, because I assume mistakes and change in my artistic practice.

The works that came after this were radically different! After deeply thinking about the katazome technique, one word came to mind that is descriptive of this dyeing technique: REPETITION. It was interesting for me to be able to create something that can be repeated, the katagami design is like a module that can be placed infinitely on the fabric or the paper, but what did I want to accomplish by repeating? This made me conclude that this way of looking at katazome was more directed design, however, my concern was how to incorporate it into my artistic practice, how can I go beyond repetition? This line of thinking drove me to the opposite of repetition to create the same design. It took me to think about singularity, gesture, a trace that cannot be repeated; but how to achieve this in katazome?

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Rosanna Rios Perez
05.11. 2021.