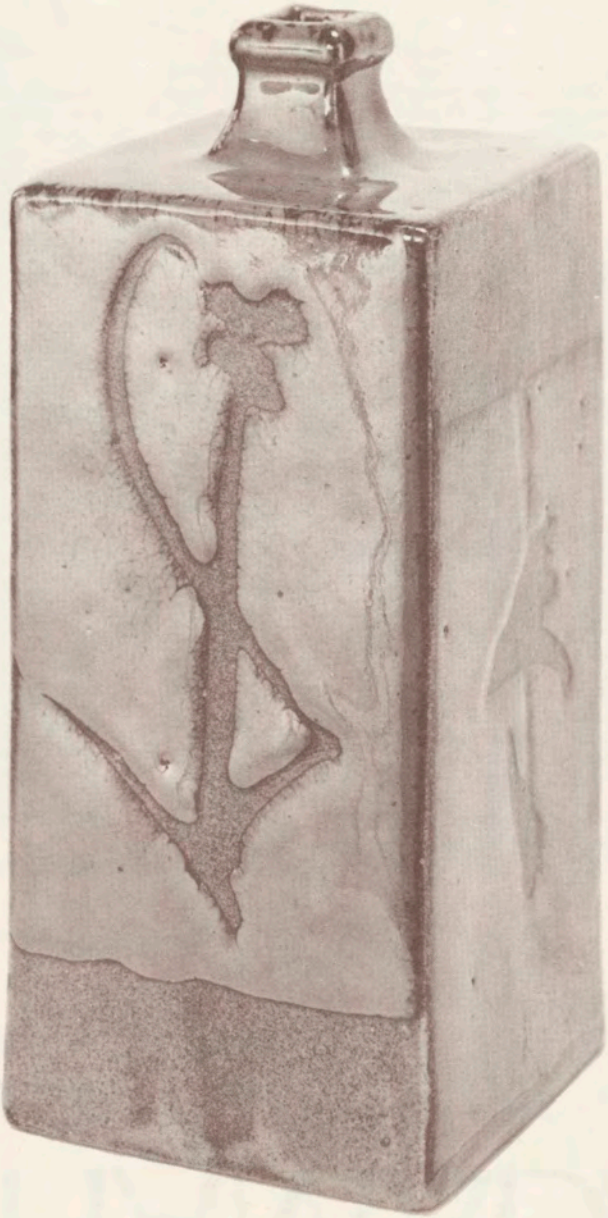
濱田庄司



SHOJI HAMADA

GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY

17 October – 11 November 1973

SPONSORED BY THOMAS AVERY & SONS, LTD., NEW PLYMOUTH

INTRODUCTION

"Few countries in the world have produced as many artist potters as has Japan, and of these many potters, Shoji Hamada stands out as one of the greatest."* Why is Hamada so highly regarded? Why did the Japanese Government bestow on him the distinct honour of Intangible Cultural Treasure?

Hamada was born in Tokyo in 1894 and graduated from the Department of Ceramics at the Tokyo Technical College in 1916. From 1916 - 1920 he attended the Kyoto Ceramic Experimental Institute. In 1919 he met two people who were to have a profound influence on his life and with whom he made lasting friendships. These were Soetsu Yanagi and Bernard Leach. Hamada travelled to England with Leach and at St. Ives in Cornwall studied, worked and absorbed Western culture. While at St. Ives he constructed an oriental kiln and imparted to those around him oriental approaches and attitudes. Thus with this contact a dialogue between East and West was born which has continued up to the present day.

In 1924 Hamada returned to Japan to take up the life he knew was important to him. He settled in the small pottery producing area of Mashiko, Tochigi prefecture (see drawing). There he built his kiln and used the local clay. He worked with the local people and experienced their simple way of life retaining many qualities of the past. In this environment, Hamada began to develop his pottery around the traditions of folk art. He worked in a communal way, alongside the other workers of the area and never signed his work, thus continuing the tradition of the anonymous craftsman. His attitude was that a pot must be functional and only then would it embody what he called "healthy beauty".

Hamada's greatness lies in the fact that through his single mindedness, he along with a handful of others, revived the tradition of the artist potter in Japan and renewed the tradition of the folk arts.

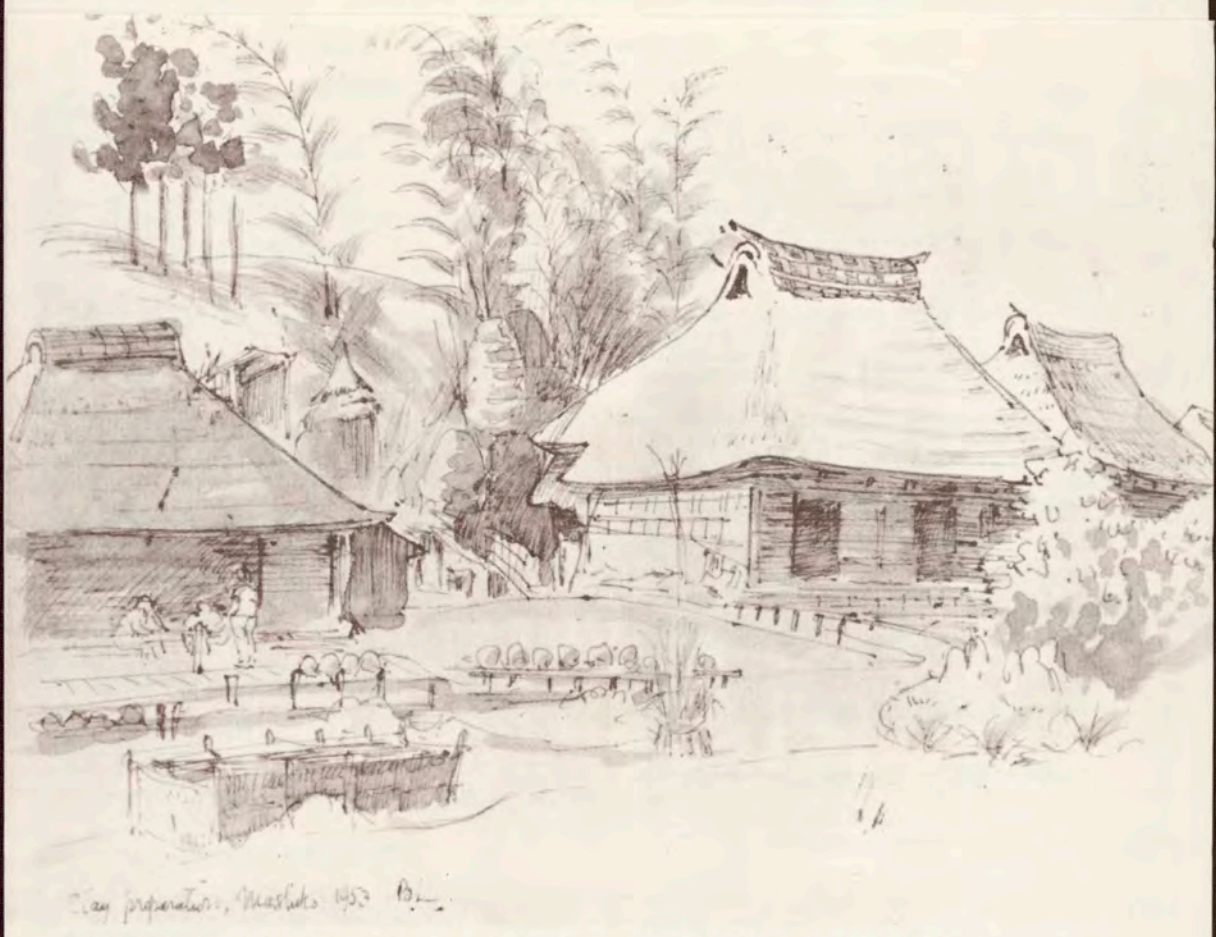
In 1937 Shoji Hamada, Kanjiro Kawai and Soetsu Yanagi established the Japanese Folk Craft Museum with Yanagi as its director. Upon Yanagi's death in 1961 Hamada took over the directorship of the Museum and extended his influence in the field of folk art. He has made several trips out of Japan to teach, learn and exhibit. One such trip brought him to New Zealand in February and March of 1965. He was the guest of the Canterbury Museum for the Pan Pacific Arts Festival in Christchurch. A large exhibition of his work was displayed at the Museum and he held various seminars. He made numerous pots while in Christchurch and some of these, together with some of the works from the 1965 exhibition, which were sold or given, are displayed in the current exhibition. Hamada's influence is not minor in New Zealand and he is highly regarded by most potters. Another exhibition of his work was held in Christchurch at the McDougall Art Gallery in June of 1973. However, this occasion, to my knowledge, marks the first time Hamada has been honoured in the North Island in a one-man exhibition.

R. H. Ballard
Director

* Yanagi, Soetsu: Shoji Hamada, Tokyo, 1961, p.3.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The exhibition has been made possible through the generous loans of many individuals and institutions. I must thank Rex Valentine, the Canterbury Museum, the Auckland Institute and Museum, Len Castle and many others who have helped in the organization of the show or so kindly parted with their treasures for the duration of this exhibition. A special expression of gratitude goes to Thomas Avery and Sons Ltd., for their kind grant towards the production of this catalogue.



CLAY PREPARATION, MASHIKO, 1953 BY BERNARD LEACH, COLLECTION LEN CASTLE

COVER: CAT. No. 15. BOTTLE; JAPAN 1964

SHOJI HAMADA

GOVETT-BREWSTER ART GALLERY

17 October – 11 November 1973

SPONSORED BY THOMAS AVERY & SONS, LTD., NEW PLYMOUTH

INTRODUCTION

"Few countries in the world have produced as many artist potters as has Japan, and of these many potters, Shoji Hamada stands out as one of the greatest."* Why is Hamada so highly regarded? Why did the Japanese Government bestow on him the distinct honour of Intangible Cultural Treasure?

Hamada was born in Tokyo in 1894 and graduated from the Department of Ceramics at the Tokyo Technical College in 1916. From 1916 - 1920 he attended the Kyoto Ceramic Experimental Institute. In 1919 he met two people who were to have a profound influence on his life and with whom he made lasting friendships. These were Soetsu Yanagi and Bernard Leach. Hamada travelled to England with Leach and at St. Ives in Cornwall studied, worked and absorbed Western culture. While at St. Ives he constructed an oriental kiln and imparted to those around him oriental approaches and attitudes. Thus with this contact a dialogue between East and West was born which has continued up to the present day.

In 1924 Hamada returned to Japan to take up the life he knew was important to him. He settled in the small pottery producing area of Mashiko, Tochigi prefecture (see drawing). There he built his kiln and used the local clay. He worked with the local people and experienced their simple way of life retaining many qualities of the past. In this environment, Hamada began to develop his pottery around the traditions of folk art. He worked in a communal way, alongside the other workers of the area and never signed his work, thus continuing the tradition of the anonymous craftsman. His attitude was that a pot must be functional and only then would it embody what he called "healthy beauty".

Hamada's greatness lies in the fact that through his single mindedness, he along with a handful of others, revived the tradition of the artist potter in Japan and renewed the tradition of the folk arts.

In 1937 Shoji Hamada, Kanjiro Kawai and Soetsu Yanagi established the Japanese Folk Craft Museum with Yanagi as its director. Upon Yanagi's death in 1961 Hamada took over the directorship of the Museum and extended his influence in the field of folk art. He has made several trips out of Japan to teach, learn and exhibit. One such trip brought him to New Zealand in February and March of 1965. He was the guest of the Canterbury Museum for the Pan Pacific Arts Festival in Christchurch. A large exhibition of his work was displayed at the Museum and he held various seminars. He made numerous pots while in Christchurch and some of these, together with some of the works from the 1965 exhibition, which were sold or given, are displayed in the current exhibition. Hamada's influence is not minor in New Zealand and he is highly regarded by most potters. Another exhibition of his work was held in Christchurch at the McDougall Art Gallery in June of 1973. However, this occasion, to my knowledge, marks the first time Hamada has been honoured in the North Island in a one-man exhibition.

R. H. Ballard
Director

* Yanagi, Soetsu: Shoji Hamada, Tokyo, 1961, p.3.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The exhibition has been made possible through the generous loans of many individuals and institutions. I must thank Rex Valentine, the Canterbury Museum, the Auckland Institute and Museum, Len Castle and many others who have helped in the organization of the show or so kindly parted with their treasures for the duration of this exhibition. A special expression of gratitude goes to Thomas Avery and Sons Ltd., for their kind grant towards the production of this catalogue.

CATALOGUE

1.
Square bottle, thrown and pressed; Japan 1965
White translucent glaze
Height 30 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

2.
Squared vase; N.Z. 1965
Black glaze with iron glaze wax resist decoration
Height 21.5 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

3.
Water pot; N.Z. 1965
Black glaze with iron glaze wax resist decoration
Height 23 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

4.
Flattened Bottle; N.Z. 1965
Iron glaze body with tenmuku and ash glaze
Height 18.5 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

5.
Tea pot with cane handle; N.Z. 1965
White glaze, black wax resist decoration
Height 18 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

6.
Medieval styled jug; Japan 1926
Salt glaze
Height 25.5 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

7.
Cut vase; Japan 1926
Salt glaze
Height 28 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

8.
Saki cup; N.Z. 1965
Ash glaze and wax resist decoration
Height 6.4 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

9.
Dish; Japan 1965
Iron rust glaze with wax resist design
Diam. 32 cm
Collection Canterbury Museum

10.
Moulded flat square bottle; Japan 1965
Iron rust, green glazes with brush design
Height 23 cm
Collection Robert McDougall Art Gallery

11.
Moulded square bottle; Japan 1965
Iron rust glaze, wax resist pattern
Height 24.8 cm
Collection Robert McDougall Art Gallery

12.
Moulded square vase; Japan 1965
Height 25.5 cm
Collection Mr. A. Coberger

13.
Moulded square dish; Japan 1965
White translucent glaze, black glaze design
28 cm square
Collection Mr. A. Coberger

14.
Vase; Japan 1954
Brown wood ash glaze called Ame
Height 22.5 cm
Collection Len Castle

15.
Bottle; Japan 1964 (reproduced on cover)
Wax resist decoration—between a clear glaze and a volcanic rock glaze
Height 24 cm
Collection Len Castle

16.
Plate; Japan 1966
Wax resist decoration—between a clear glaze and a volcanic rock glaze
Diam. 26 cm
Collection Len Castle

17.
Plate; Japan 1954
Thrown by one of the members of Hamada's Workshop and decorated by Hamada
Diam. 24 cm
Collection Len Castle

18.
Plate; Japan 1954
Thrown by one of the members of Hamada's Workshop and decorated by Hamada
Diam. 18 cm
Collection Len Castle

19.
Lipped bowl; Japan 1966
Translucent rice ash glaze over yellow ochre pigment
Height 10.5 cm
Collection Len Castle

20.
Tea Ceremony Bowl; Japan 1966
Wood ash glaze
Diam. 16 cm
Collection Len Castle

21.
Tea Ceremony Bowl; Japan 1966
(Winter Type)
Height 11.5 cm
Collection Len Castle

22.
Drinking Beaker; Japan 1953
'Unomi' Wood ash glaze and brush decoration
Height 9.5 cm
Collection Len Castle

23.
Lipped Bowl; N.Z. 1965
Glazed and fired by Len Castle
Diam. 19 cm
Collection Len Castle

24.
Lipped Bowl; N.Z. 1965
Glazed and fired by Len Castle
Diam. 15 cm
Collection Len Castle

25.
Lidded Pot; N.Z. 1965
Height 11 cm
Collection Len Castle

26.
Plate Japan c.1950
Rice ash glaze over black slip. Iron resist decoration
Diam. 18 cm
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

27.
Plate; Japan c.1950
Rice ash glaze over black slip. Iron resist decoration
Diam. 18 cm
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

28.
Grey Slab Vase; Japan c.1950
Rice ash glaze over alternate panels of black slip. Iron brushed decoration
Height 29 cm
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

29.
Temmoku Vase; Japan c.1950
Black Temmoku glaze with wide band of white rice ash glaze. Finger decoration on wet glaze
Height 19 cm.
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

30.
Tea Bowl; Japan c.1950
Rice ash glaze over black slip. Iron brushed decoration
Height 8 cm.
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

31.
Bowl; N.Z. 1965
Semi matt feldspathic glaze. Iron brushed decoration
Height 21 cm
Collection Auckland Institute and Museum

32.
Bowl; N.Z. 1965
Semi matt feldspathic glaze. Iron brushed decoration
Width 18 cm
Collection Auckland Potters on deposit at the Auckland Institute and Museum

33.
Tea Bowl N.Z. 1965
Semi matt feldspathic glaze. Iron brushed decoration
Height 8 cm
Collection Auckland Potters on deposit at the Auckland Institute and Museum

34.
Teapot; N.Z. 1965
Feldspathic glaze with poured iron decoration
Height 13 cm
Collection Auckland Potters on deposit at the Auckland Institute and Museum

35.
Grey Slab Vase;
Rice ash glaze decorated with white, poured cross and iron brush work
Height 21 cm
Collection P. Stichbury on deposit at the Auckland Institute and Museum

36.
Temmoku Slab Vase; Japan c.1950
Black Temmoku glaze, finger decoration on wet glaze
Height 21.5 cm
Collection Helen Mason on deposit at the Auckland Institute and Museum

37.
Slab Prunus Vase; Japan c.1950
Black Temmoku glaze, finger decoration on wet glaze
Height 24 cm
Collection T. Bayliss

38.
Dish; Japan c.1950
Rice ash glaze over black slip. Iron resist decoration
Diam. 18 cm
Collection T. Bayliss

39.
Tea Bowl; Japan c.1950
Kaki glaze, resist decoration
Height 8 cm
Collection T. Bayliss

40.
Tea Bowl; Japan c.1950
Rice glaze over black slip, brushed iron decoration
Height 8 cm
Collection T. Bayliss

41.
Bowl; Japan
Decorated with iron oxide brush work, glazed limestone and ash glazes
Diam. 19 cm
Collection Roy Cowan

42.
Goblet; N.Z. 1965
Engraved, clay and ash type glaze
Height 9 cm
Collection Roy Cowan

43.
Bowl; N.Z. 1965
Copper glaze with poured iron and limestone decoration—oxidized firing
Diam. 31.3 cm
Collection Manawatu Art Gallery

44.
Vase, thrown and squared; N.Z. 1965
Iron glaze decoration beneath grey transparent glaze
Height 22.9 cm
Collection Dr. R. Duff

45.
Incense box; Japan 1965
White glaze with iron glaze brush decoration
Height 6.4 cm
Collection R. H. Riccalton

46.
Cut vase; N.Z. 1965
Tenmuku glaze
Height 24.1 cm
Collection R. H. Riccalton

47.
Tea Pot; N.Z. 1965
Height 17 cm
Collection Mary Hardwick-Smith

Published by the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth, N.Z.
Designed by R. H. Ballard
Printed by Masterprint