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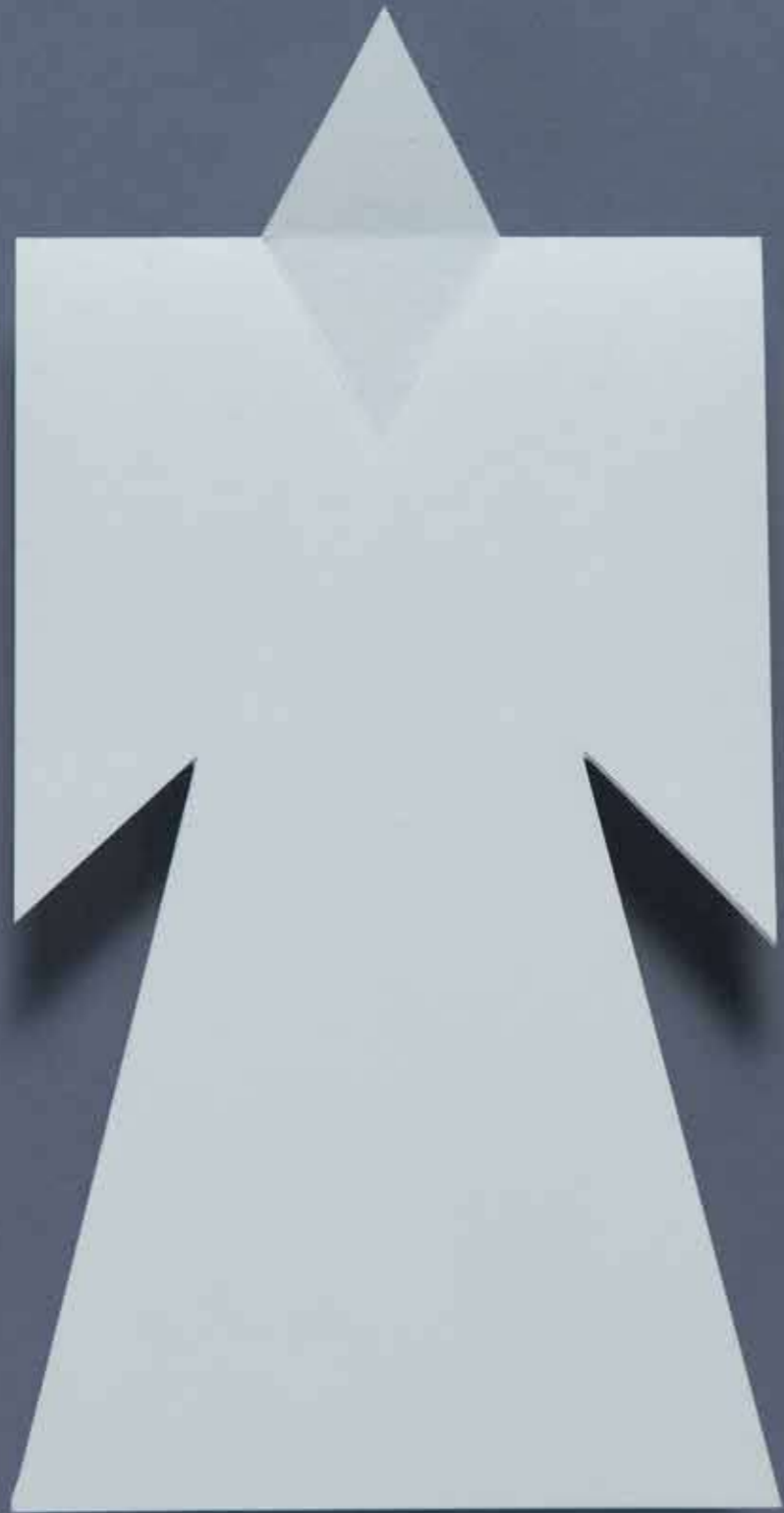
NINGYŌ : Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls

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Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls





Foreword

The Japan Foundation endeavors to promote international mutual understanding, setting its mission “Cultivating friendship and ties between Japan and the world,” in its main areas of activity, arts and cultural exchange, Japanese-language education overseas, and Japanese studies and intellectual exchange.

In the field of arts and cultural exchange, the Foundation focuses on activities to introduce Japanese art and culture to overseas, and in conjunction with these activities, the Foundation continuously conducts “Traveling Exhibition Program” organized with artworks from the Foundation's own collection. These traveling exhibitions feature about 15 different types of art, including contemporary art, crafts, photography, architecture, design, manga, and Japanese dolls, and are held every year at approximately 80 museums and exhibition facilities around the world. It is our hope that these exhibitions, which connect Japan and other countries, will bring people together and generate a dialogue around creativity through the sharing of rich artistic experiences.

The traveling exhibition “NINGYŌ: Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls” was prepared as a successor to our highly popular traveling exhibition “The Dolls of Japan: Shapes of Prayer, Embodiments of Love.” Under the title *NINGYŌ*, which means “human shape” in Japanese, the doll culture that has been cultivated over the long history of Japan will be introduced through a total of 67 carefully selected dolls, divided into 4 sections: “Ningyō to pray for children’s growth,” “Ningyō as fine art,” “Ningyō as folk art,” and “Spread of Ningyō culture.”

The fact that dolls are an indispensable part of our daily lives is not limited to Japan, but the diversity of dolls and their delicate craftsmanship, backed by a deep love of dolls, could be said to be the characteristics of Japanese doll culture. This exhibition presents a comprehensive introduction to Japanese doll culture, from *Katashiro* and *Amagatsu*, which are considered to be the archetypes of dolls in Japan, to local dolls that reflect the climate and anecdotes from across the country, to dress-up dolls that are beloved in Japan today as doll toys, and scale figures that are highly regarded around the world. We appreciate that each doll on exhibition would be warmly welcomed all over the world, and that many audiences would experience the charm of Japanese dolls.

Finally, we would also like to express our sincere gratitude to all of the doll artists who kindly agreed to take part in exhibiting their works, to our supervisors, Mr. Hayashi Naoteru and Mr. Mita Kakuyuki, and to all those who provided their generous support, assistance, and contribution.

The Japan Foundation

Japan — A Nation of NINGYŌ

Mita Kakuyuki

Curator, Tokyo National Museum

One major aspect of Japanese culture is the depth of love for dolls (*Ningyō*; 人形). Doll culture spread in Japan particularly in the 17th century, and dolls could be found in many facets of daily life, both life in the Japanese imperial court and that of the common people. Furthermore, those dolls were advanced achievements even from the standpoint of modern arts and craftsmanship. The fact that many examples indeed enter the realm of high art is an extremely rare occurrence when compared to the culture of dolls seen elsewhere in the world. Thus it can be said that Japan is truly “a Nation of NINGYŌ”, deeply colored by the superb dolls created here and the long cultural history of valuing them. This exhibition examines Japan’s diverse doll culture from 4 perspectives to introduce the principle types of Japanese dolls and the culture behind each.

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1. Ningyō to pray for children’s growth

If one searches deep into the history of doll culture in Japan, they will arrive at rites intended to dispel misfortune which have been passed down since ancient times. As early as the 7th century, simple dolls made from wooden planks were breathed on to entrust them with protecting against misfortune in the coming year, after which the dolls were floated away on rivers. *Katashiro* (No.1) are paper dolls still used today in purification rites for the same purpose at Shinto shrines throughout Japan.

Amagatsu and *Hōko* (Nos.2,3) are dolls designed to protect babies from any misfortune that may befall them. *Amagatsu* in particular date to the imperial court over 1,000 years ago to a custom of first passing the baby’s swaddle through the arm of the doll before dressing the baby.

Japan has also long practiced rites of offering food in gratitude to the gods at each seasonal milestone, and from the 17th century onward, one such event became specialized for praying for the growth of children. March 3rd, a time when the flowers are beginning to bloom, is the day to celebrate the growth of female children (*Hina Matsuri* festival). On this day, a display with a male and female dolls dressed for an imperial wedding is decorated with dolls of their servants and bridal implements, and a feast is served for the children (Nos.5-7).

A similar day of celebration is held for the growth of male children on May 5 (*Tango no Sekku*). The iris flowers (*Shobu*; 菖蒲) offered on this day have been considered medicinal plants from ancient times, and the pronunciation of their name in Japanese also represented respect for the martial arts and spirit (*Shobu*; 尚武), making them appropriate for praying for the healthy growth of male children. Models of armor and dolls of heroes are put on display for the festival, and rice-cake sweets wrapped in blades of bamboo grass or oak leaves are eaten in celebration. Hero dolls that are particularly popular include *Momotarō* (No.15) and *Kintarō* (No.16), both known for possessing super-human strength and for having saved the people by overcoming monsters.

2. Ningyō as fine art

Members of the upper class and the Japanese imperial court in particular had a love for dolls of especially refined craftsmanship. One leading example of these is *Gosho Ningyō* (Nos.17,18). Fashioned after plump baby boys, they were used as gifts during celebrations at the imperial court. They are designed to show exemplary health and instilled with auspiciousness in their clothing and implements. The general shapes are made from wood or sawdust and then finished with the thick application of a white paint made from crushed shells, giving them their notable luxurious white shine.

Saga Ningyō (Nos.19,20) originated with dolls created by Buddhist sculptors. They are carved from wood and then richly adorned in gold and various types of paint to present patterns that stand out in relief. They are considered particularly extravagant in their use of color even compared to other Japanese dolls, and were created as works of art rather than as toys.

Nara Ningyō (Nos.23,24) originated with small dolls offered to the gods at festivals held at the Kasugataisha shrine in Nara prefecture. Originally simple dolls carved from wood, the style of carving was eventually found to possess a unique beauty and it evolved into a refined and formalized style. It can be observed the unique aesthetic of *Nara Ningyō* in the polyhedral forms of their bodies and their delicate patterns of color.

Ishō Ningyō (Nos.25-27) are art dolls dressed in garments actually made of woven fabrics. The dolls, made as display items for grownups from around the 18th century, are notable for the tiny clothing made in the same way as the real items, and the poses which demonstrate the excellence of that clothing. They are also very popular overseas for accessibly expressing traditional Japanese dress, hair styles, and theatrical act.

3. Ningyō as folk art

A love for dolls has long been a part of the culture of the common people as well. Even without the use of expensive materials, colorful and fun dolls have arisen from countless examples of doll culture throughout Japan.

The folk dolls were primarily made from inexpensive materials such as clay, paper, and wood. Many were produced as a side occupation during breaks from farm work, and they provided sustenance for their simple lives. Among them, those made by painting unglazed pottery formed from common clay were the most frequently made because a mold could easily be created from an existing doll. Some clay dolls are appealing for their simple forms, such as *Imado Ningyō* (Nos.40,41), while others, such as *Hakata Ningyō* (Nos.49,50) are more artistically refined with sculpting techniques to create dolls.

Miharu Ningyō (Nos.35,36) and *Takasaki Daruma* (No.37) are made by layering paper and then painting them. *Miharu Ningyō* are created with Japanese *washi* paper and depict Kabuki actors and legendary heroes with a delicacy of both form and mannerism. The delicacy of their coloring is also particularly appealing, making them one of the leading examples of paper dolls. *Daruma* represent *Darumadaishi*, or Bodhidharma, a high priest of Buddhism. They are painted in red, which is believed to prevent illness, and their bases are made heavier so that they stand back up automatically when knocked over. They are still widely loved throughout Japan for the belief that they bring about good health and prosperity.

Meanwhile, one of the leading wooden folk dolls is *Kokeshi* (Nos.31-33). These emerged in the 19th century as gifts for children sold in hot spring towns, and children are said to have played with them on their backs. The dolls represented the application of wood lathing techniques to the production of dolls, and naturally their heads and bodies are round and cylindrical accordingly. They are notable for the easy-going expressions applied with a light touch and the red based coloring that represents protection from illness.

4. Spread of Ningyō culture

Doll culture has also expanded into the world of traditional performing arts. *Jōruri Ningyō* (No.59) are large dolls used for a traditional puppet theater, *Jōruri*, and three people operate a single doll while reciting a story using impressive voices. Their bold expressions were designed for the stage, and the true value of these dolls can be seen in their delicate and sensitive movements.

Oshie Hagoita (Nos.57,58) are wooden paddles made to strike small feathered acorns, similar to tiny badminton shuttlecocks, to which silk dolls in bas relief are affixed. They typically follow themes from Kabuki plays and represent popular actors. With expressive faces like Japanese paintings and collages of beautiful fabrics, great effort is put to express dynamic action within the narrow confines of the *Hagoita* paddles.

As Japan began to modernize in the late 19th century, the artistic evaluation of dolls temporarily became less valued for a time in the context of new values emerged. It was about 13,000 dolls sent by the United States as gifts for the children of Japan in 1927 that changed this trend. These were greatly welcomed as so-called “blue-eyed dolls”, and eventually Japan sent 58 dolls made specially to the United States in gratitude. The style chosen at that time was *Ichimatsu Ningyō* (No.60), which represents children in traditional dress.

During the production of the dolls, the contributions of doll craftsman Hirata Goyo (1903–1981) were of particularly high quality. Goyo adopted sculptural approach based on observation of the human form to create his dolls, resulting in many works which achieved the level of high art. His creative work led to a re-evaluation of dolls from an artistic standpoint and drove the emergence of new artists who made contemporary and creative dolls (Nos.61-65).

On the other hand, there is Licca-chan dress-up doll (No.66) produced out of soft plastic by toy maker Takara Company Ltd. (today's TOMY Company Ltd.) in 1967, one of the most loved toy dolls in Japan today. The toy was designed to be smaller and younger than the popular Barbie dolls in the United States to make them more familiar as dress-up dolls for Japanese girls. At the same time, Japan's culture of collector figures that embody popular manga and anime characters in three dimensions has also become highly praised and popular throughout the world.

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Thus dolls, Ningyō, have a power to bridge the differences of race and ethnicity and directly appeal to the child in us and to our fascination with things beautiful and lovely. This is the same spirit in all of us that desires a life of abundance of peace, meaning that these dolls, though unable to speak, are perhaps messengers who come to awaken those feelings and bring us that peace. I hope that the love of dolls and the craftsmanship cultivated over long history, continues to contribute to peace throughout the world for many years to come.

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NINGYŌ

Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls



1 Ningyō to pray for children's growth

Doll culture in Japan developed out of rites to protect children against misfortune and to pray for their happiness. With the passing of time, the simple dolls used in those rites gradually became more ornate, giving rise to the today's typical style of Japanese dolls as seen in *Hina Ningyō* of the *Hina Matsuri* festival.



3



2

2 Amagatsu 3 Hōko

Mochizuki Reikou

These are both dolls used to pray for the health of babies. They are prepared before the baby is born and after birth placed by the baby's pillow to stand in for the baby and distract evil so that it does not attach itself to the baby. *Amagatsu* have been used by the Japanese imperial court for over 1,000 years, and still used today. The reason for the simple T shape is that they are used much like hangers to hold the newborn baby's clothes.

4 Tachi-bina (Standing couple)

Mochizuki Reikou

This is the oldest form taken by *Hina Ningyō* (Girls' Festival dolls) used to pray for the happiness of girls. They represent a young warrior and his wife from a period roughly 500 years ago, and that is the time when such dolls were likely first made. It is believed that the extremely stylistic representation of the *Kimono* dress inherits the tradition of *Katashiro* (No. 1) used to dispel misfortune.





5 Dairi-bina (Imperial couple)

Mochizuki Reikou

These are the main dolls used in the *Hina Matsuri* festival celebrated on March 3rd to pray for the happiness of girls. Here, *Dairi* refers to the palace which the Emperor resides in. Accordingly, *Hina Ningyō* (Girls' Festival dolls) representing the Emperor and Empress are called *Dairi-bina*. *Dairi-bina* generally depict the Emperor and Empress of the Edo period, while the clothing worn by the dolls shown here is designed after that worn by the current Emperor and Empress during palace rite in 2019.

5



6



7

6 Sannin-kanjo (Three female servants)

Housa-kahou

These dolls represent close female servants to the Emperor and Empress from the Edo period (1603-1868). The implements held by each are items used in ceremonies such as weddings. The one in the middle holds the *Shimadai*, a platform on which sake cups are placed. On the right is the *Nagae no Choshi*, implement used to pour the sake into the cups, while on the left is the *Kuwae no Choshi*, a container used to pour more sake into the *Nagae no Choshi* when it runs out.

7 Gonin-bayashi (Five musicians)

Mochizuki Reikou

These dolls represent musicians performing the accompaniment for the traditional Japanese Noh theater. While these musicians are normally adults, the forms of cute children are used for the decorative dolls of the *Hina Matsuri* festival. Just as with actual Noh performances, the singer sits on the far right followed by the various instruments in order of quietest to loudest, moving right to left.



9

9 Emperor Jimmu

Mochizuki Reikou

Emperor Jimmu was the first Emperor of Japan. This doll depicts a legend from before he became Emperor in which, during a battle with his enemies, a shining golden hawk came and landed on the tip of his spear, blinding his enemies and enabling him to win. The doll represents the history of Japan.

10 Shōki

Mochizuki Reikou

Shōki is an ancient Chinese god for warding against evil. There is a legend in China; during the Tang dynasty (618-907), the Emperor Xuanzong had become ill. As he slept, a large man calling himself Shōki came to him in a dream and dispelled the evil spirits. Upon waking, the Emperor found he had been cured. The doll is depicted with a frightening expression and a sword in his hand because it is believed in Japan that he is able to ward off evil.

12



10

15 Momotarō

Matsuzaki Koikko

Momotarō is a hero from a Japanese folktale that describes how he was born from a peach, and grew up to travel to the island of the ogres, accompanied by a dog, a monkey, and a pheasant, to take back the treasures the ogres had stolen. In his left hand, Momotarō holds a bag of sweets called *kibi dango* that he gave to the dog, monkey, and pheasant to get along with.



15



17

2

Ningyō as fine art

As production techniques for doll making evolved, dolls began to be loved as objects of art for display from around the 17th century. These dolls, made with sculpting techniques, delicate colors, and finely produced clothing, broke from the realm of toys to enter the domain of fine art.

19



20

17 **Gosho Ningyō: Treasure ship**

Nakamura Shinkyo

The term *Gosho* refers to the Japanese imperial court. These dolls were loved by the members there from the Edo period (1603-1868), and were offered as gifts for a variety of different celebratory occasions. They depict plump and healthy babies with smooth white skin, representing beauty, purity and honor. They are often depicted holding treasure ships that bring good fortune, or cranes that signify long life, in their hands, with images of treasures on their waistcoats. These motifs give them an auspicious affect, which is appropriate for celebratory gift-giving.

19 **Saga Ningyō: Enmei fuku no Kami (God of hapiness and longevity)**

Nakamura Shinkyo

Saga Ningyō are notable for the gold leaf and paint applied in minute detail to their clothing, making them one of the most luxurious among Japanese dolls from the Edo period (1603-1868). This doll represents a deity who brings good fortune, holding a bag in their left hand from which any treasure can be brought forth.

20 **Saga Ningyō: Karako (Chinese-style children)**

Hayashi Mikiko

These *Saga Ningyō* are particularly small that represent exquisite craftsmanship. They represent children typically depicted in paintings from ancient China that have long represented beauty and celebration in Japan. One of the children holds a *Shishigashira*, designed after a lion's head, to perform the *Shishimai* dance which serves to dispel evil. Despite their minute size, these dolls represent Japan's traditional sense of aesthetic beauty and technique in condensed form.



24

24 Nara Ningyō: Shōjō

Araki Yoshindo

The origins of *Nara Ningyō* date back to dolls created over 800 years ago for festivals at the Kasugataisha shrine in Nara city. They are carved from wood and then painted in luxurious colors. They are particularly notable for their bold forms achieved by carving the wood in one sitting using a single chisel. This work represents a character in the traditional Japanese Noh play called *Shōjō*. *Shōjō* is a fairy who bequeaths a sake jug, which can never become empty, to a young boy who is devoted to his parents. His hair and clothes are all depicted in red.



25

25 Ishō Ningyō: Fuji Musume (Wisteria maiden)

Heian Mitsuyoshi

This doll depicts a traditional Japanese dance representing the dancing spirit of the beautiful *Fuji* flower, or Japanese wisteria. The pronunciation of *Fuji* in the name *Fuji Musume* is similar to the Japanese words for uniqueness (*Fuji*) and safe (*Buji*), and is thus considered a good omen.

The same weave, coloring, and needlework is used, with the same materials and methods, to make the doll's clothing as is used for actual clothes worn by people, condensed into minimal form for the doll. Even the accessories decorating the doll's hair have been painstakingly created in the same way as their real equivalents.

26 Ishō Ningyō: Maiko

Heian Mitsuyoshi

This doll depicts a young girl who performs dances at traditional banquets in Kyoto, wearing her clothing for going out. The same weave, coloring, and needlework is used, with the same materials and methods, to make the doll's clothing as is used for actual clothes worn by people, condensed into minimal form for the doll. Even the accessories decorating the doll's hair have been painstakingly created in the same way as their real equivalents.



26

3

Ningyō as folk art

Dolls are the crystallization of a parent's love for their child. Throughout Japan, doll culture rooted in local areas blossomed among the common people. Generally made from cheaper materials such as clay, paper, and wood, the many distinctive styles all share in common a theme of big-hearted smiles.



NAGASAKI



KYOTO



HOKKAIDO



MIYAGI



50



51

FUKUOKA



48

HIROSHIMA



37

GUNMA



38

FUKUSHIMA



35



41

TOKYO



CHIBA



39



54

OKINAWA



53

KAGOSHIMA



46

KAGAWA



44

SHIGA



SHIZUOKA



42





49G Hakata Ningyō: Yuya

Shirozu Masaoki

Hakata Ningyō come from Fukuoka city, Fukuoka prefecture, and date from the Edo period (1603-1868). They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. This work represents a character called Yuya in the traditional Japanese Noh play, a beautiful woman of the Heian period (794-1185) who performs a dance at a flower-viewing party at Kiyomizu-dera temple in Kyoto while worried about her mother at home far away. The wood base represents the Noh theater stage.



48 Miyoshi Ningyō: Sakura-mochi Musume (Girl holding cherry blossoms)

Marumoto Takashi

Miyoshi Ningyō were first created in Miyoshi city, Hiroshima prefecture roughly 170 years ago at the end of the Edo period (1603-1868). They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. This doll depicts a beautiful girl holding cherry blossoms. The doll is typically offered as a gift in the hopes that female children will grow up to be beautiful and happy like the doll.



44 Obata Ningyō: Sumo wrestler

The 9th Obata-ningyō

Obata Ningyō were first created in Higashi-Omi city, Shiga prefecture, roughly 200 years ago towards the end of the Edo period (1603-1868), imitating *Fushimi Ningyō* of Kyoto. They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. This doll represents a sumo wrestler in Japan's national sport, sumo wrestling. With their impressive bodies, sumo wrestlers have long symbolized health and strength. The doll is used to pray for male children to grow up in good health.



30 Nipopo

These dolls have been made by the inmates of Abashiri Prison in Abashiri city, Hokkaido, since 1954. *Nipopo* means "a little child of wood" in the Ainu language spoken by Ainu people in northern Japan, and is made from the wood of the Japanese pagoda tree. It is said to bring happiness and a popular souvenir for tourists visiting Abashiri.



41 Imado Ningyō: Fukusuke

Yoshida Yoshikazu

Imado Ningyō were first created in Tokyo roughly 300 years ago. They are formed from clay and painted after baking. This doll depicts a short man with a large head called Fukusuke. He was loved by all for always being attentive to others and working very hard. For this reason, displaying Fukusuke dolls in shops is believed to ensure that many customers will visit.



47 Takamatsu Hariko: Tai-mochi Ebisu (God with a giant sea bream)

Ohta Mikiko

Takamatsu Hariko come from Takamatsu city in Kagawa prefecture and date from about 150 years ago. They are formed from *washi* paper, a specialty of Japan, and then painted. This doll depicts the deity Ebisu who is believed to bring happiness and a large catch for fishermen, and the impossibly large fish he holds represents a prayer for those things to happen. With its fortunate motif, the doll has even been chosen in the design of Japanese postage stamps.



35 Miharu Hariko: Kakko

Ozawa Sora

Miharu Hariko were first made over 200 years ago in the late Edo period (1603-1868). They are formed from *washi* paper, a specialty of Japan, and then painted. This doll depicts a woman dancing a traditional Japanese dance while playing a drum hung from her hip.



54 Ryukyu Hariko: Chin-chin Uma

Toyonaga Morito

Ryukyu Hariko come from Naha city, Okinawa, where they have been passed down for generations. The dolls depict the gorgeous riding style of the royal family from the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom (1429-1879) on their way to a horse racing ceremony. The dolls are mounted to wheeled bases so they can be played with by pushing them, and the older examples contained a device in the base that would make a ringing noise "ching-ching", which combined with the Japanese word for horse, or *uma*, give the dolls their name of *Chin-chin Uma*.

31-33 **Kokeshi**

Abe Kunitoshi, Takahashi Shogo, Inoue Harumi

Kokeshi are wooden dolls in Tohoku region, northeast area in Japan. They are notable for the lack of arms or legs, and the extremely simplified human form. These dolls are said to have first been created in the areas of hot springs roughly 150 years ago. Loved for their simple designs, they began as gifts purchased by long term visitors to the hot springs, and are still popular today, particularly with young girls. There are more than 11 styles of *kokeshi*, and each style has own motifs and patterns painted on its head and body.

42 **Shizuoka Anesama**

Nakadaira Ikuno

These dolls have been passed down for generations in Shizuoka city, Shizuoka prefecture. Made from *washi* paper, a specialty of Japan, they depict women's backward appearances wearing traditional Japanese dress and hair tied in the traditional manner. They are notable for their simple designs featuring the white of the *washi* paper as an accent, without drawing a face or coloring the hair black. Japanese girls played with dolls such as these until about 100 years ago.

34 **Ejiko**

Takahashi Yuji

Due to the relative cold in the north of Japan, farming families used to put their small children in straw baskets to keep them safe and warm during farm work. This endearing doll depicts that practice. The same materials and methods are used to make this doll as *Kokeshi* (Nos.31-33), another wooden doll passed down over generations in the northern region of Japan.

51G/51H **Akasaka Ningyō**

Noguchi Koichi

Akasaka Ningyō have been passed down for generations in Chikugo city, Fukuoka prefecture. They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. They are notable for their rough carving and simple colors.

38 **Miharu Daruma**

Hashimoto Shoichi

They are formed from *washi* paper, a specialty of Japan, and then painted. This *Daruma* is characterized by a slightly vertical, flat head, and an arabesque pattern on either side of the face, meaning fire protection. It is said that the eyes are drawn from the beginning in order to give a glare to ward off demons and bring good luck. The character written on the belly is *Fuku*(福), which means happiness.

37 **Takasaki Daruma**

Minegishi Kimitsugu

This doll has been made in Takasaki city, Gunma prefecture, since roughly 200 years ago. *Daruma* depicts Dōdhidharma, or *Daruma Daishi* in Japanese, the founder of the Zen Buddhism. It is said to bring happiness and grant wishes. The reason that the eyes are not painted on is because traditionally, one eye is drawn on when making a wish, and the second is only drawn when that wish comes true. The doll's red clothing represents the long held belief in Japan that the color red has the ability to dispel misfortune. The eyebrows and facial hair are designed after the crane and tortoise respectively, as both represent longevity.

52G/52H **Koga Ningyō**

Ogawa Kenichi

Koga Ningyō have been passed down for generations in Nagasaki city, Nagasaki prefecture. They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. They are notable for their rough carving and simple colors.

39 **Shibahara Ningyō: Kamishimo-bina**

Chiba Soji

Shibahara Ningyō were first made in the town of Chōnan in Chiba prefecture roughly 150 years ago in imitation of *Imado Ningyō* of Tokyo (Nos.40,41). They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. The dolls depict the Japanese marriage ceremony as it once was.

45 **Cha-no-ki Ningyō**

Oiwa Kosho

This is a carved wooden doll that has been passed down for generations in Uji city, Kyoto prefecture. The doll is made by carving the wood of the tea plant, or *Cha-no-ki* in Japanese, and then painting it. The doll depicts a woman in traditional dress who is harvesting tea leaves. The basket she holds in her arms contains green tea leaves. The doll is said to bring longevity and happiness and dispel misfortune.

52G/52H **Kōsa Ningyō**

Ogawa Kenichi

Kōsa Ningyō have been passed down for generations in Nagasaki city, Nagasaki prefecture. They are formed from clay and then painted after baking. Nagasaki was a place where trade from overseas had been allowed in the Edo period (1603-1868) as an exception, so it was possible for Japanese people to see foreigners there, and dolls depicting those foreigners were made accordingly.

4

Spread of Ningyō culture

The well-honed skills and techniques of doll production were put to good use in the worlds of traditional performing arts and also toys. The reappraisal of dolls as art in modern times drove the emergence of many talented doll creators as works of art, and Japan's doll culture further went on to give rise to the collector's scale figures popular throughout the world today.

60



59G



59H

60 Ichimatsu Ningyō

Nozaki Houju

Ichimatsu Ningyō are dolls played with by both girls and adult women much like dolls in the West, by holding them and changing their clothes. The joints of their arms and legs are made to bend in order to put on and take off clothing. The name *Ichimatsu* is taken from a famous Kabuki actor from about 280 years ago who was considered handsome. Though these dolls were made as toys for play, the craftsmanship that went into them makes them worthy for viewing as objects of art.

59G Jōruri Ningyō: Hatsugiku

Head: Ningyō Tsune, Costume: Torokko kobo

59H Jōruri Ningyō: Takechi Jujiro

Head: Ningyō Yoshi, Armor: Ningyō Isa

This type of doll is made for use in *Jōruri*, a traditional Japanese puppet theater, in which the doll is controlled by three operators. They are designed with a mechanism to allow opening and closing the eyes. Puppet theater using dolls like this was once performed all throughout Japan. These examples were used in Tokushima prefecture. 59G depicts a beautiful princess called *Hatsugiku* who appears in a story entitled *Ehon Taiko-ki*, while 59H depicts a young military commander called *Jujiro* who appears in the same story.



58G **Oshie Hagoita: Dōjōji**

Kyogoku Kinzan

Oshie is a method of cutting a thick paper along a design, wrapping each part in fabric, and then combining the parts in bas relief. For this type, the *Oshie* doll is further attached to a paddle used in a traditional Japanese game much like badminton. It is believed that displaying it dispels misfortune. This example depicts the lead character of the extravagant scene from Kabuki play *Dōjōji* who is a girl with a single-minded love.



62H

62H **Let the pure rain fall**

Igeta Hiroko

This is a work of formed and baked clay. This work seems to represent the determination and strength of wishing to be like a big cloud, a cloud that drop pure rain on the land.

61H **Yuki no Asa (A Snowy Morning)**

Haruki Tadao

This work was made by forming the shape from a mix of powdered paulownia wood and starch to be molded, then covering it with layers of whitewash made from shells, and finally using *washi* paper, a special product of Japan, for the clothing. The work depicts a woman chafing her hands in the brisk air of a snowy morning.



61H



63G



65G

63G Tranquility years of sorrow, years of joy
Fukuda Tomoko

This work involves the application of cloth onto the surface to recreate the texture of human skin. The same materials and methods used to make actual clothes worn by people are used, condensed into minimal form for the work. The calm and gentle expression on her face seems to speak quietly to the observer of her long life.

65G Huh? What?
Taki Yasuko

This work involves the application of leather onto the surface to recreate the texture of human skin. The same materials and methods used to make actual clothes worn by people are used, condensed into minimal form for the work. The work beautifully captures a common moment from everyday life, rather than a special scene from a special day.

66G Licca-chan

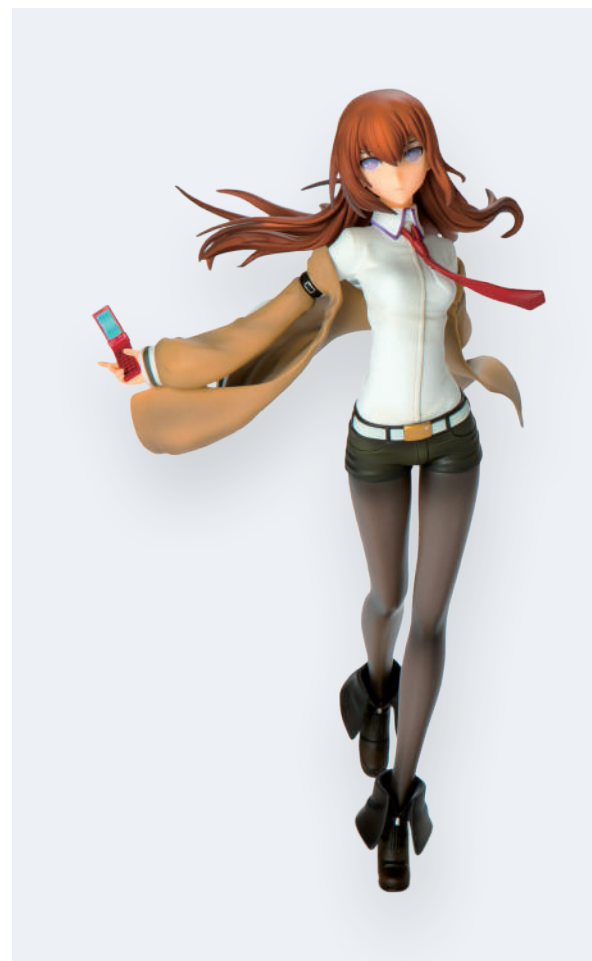
TOMY Company, Ltd.

This is a dress-up doll made of soft plastic. It was first released by a Japanese toy maker in 1967, and remains popular today, though the body shape and expression has changed slightly over the years to keep up with the fashion of the times, which can be seen by comparing the old and new examples shown here. Recently, Japanese girls are playing with Licca-chan in the same way as girls did in the Edo period (1603-1868) with *Ichimatsu Ningyō* (No.60).

© TOMY



66G



67

67 Collector figure

Good Smile Company, Inc.,
Sculptor: Tokunaga Hironori

These figures represent popular characters from games and animation. It is actually very difficult to recreate in three dimensions the characters that are normally depicted in two in a way that satisfies the expectations of the fans. Japan has several figure manufacturers with particularly advanced modeling and high precision fabrication capabilities. These manufacturers are often the first to release characters from new Japanese anime and games, motivated by the expectations of fans all over the world.

Kurusu Makise from STEINS;GATE ©2009-2018 MAGES./5pb./Nitroplus

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Art and Beauty of Japanese dolls

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Note: Some of the artworks featured on this leaflet and exhibited are different.

Images: 1 **Katashiro** Mochizuki Reikou (p.2), 64 **Sakura Rugby Player** Nakamura Hiromine (p.7), 32 **Kokeshi (Tsuchiyu style)** Abe Kunitoshi (p.31)