

# **BAMBOO** TRADITION IN CONTEMPORARY FORM

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## **A celebration of bamboo**

This special exhibition celebrates the creativity of Japanese bamboo artists through a collection of traditional baskets and contemporary sculptural bamboo art donated by Mr S. Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer. Mr Myer first visited Japan in 1945 while serving in the Allied naval forces.

This brief contact initiated a lifelong appreciation for the art and culture of Japan and led to his dedicated support of Asian studies in Australia that has included the donation of more than forty Japanese works of art to the NGV. Over the last several years Mr Myer and NGV curators have visited bamboo producing areas, artist's studios and galleries in Japan to research this fascinating art form and establish the first major collection of contemporary Japanese bamboo art in Australia.

## ***Bamboo: tradition in contemporary form***

Bamboo groves are synonymous with the Japanese landscape, and crafting items from bamboo is one of the oldest technical skills developed in Japan. Since ancient times skilfully crafted bamboo baskets have been used in Buddhist ceremonies and the Japanese tea ceremony with master-apprentice lineages established to pass skills down through the ages. During the twentieth century individual artisans reinterpreted these traditions to create imaginative forms and vessels for flower arrangements. Now, in the twenty-first century, a new generation of creative innovators from diverse backgrounds are creating an astounding variety of works of art that can be appreciated as contemporary sculptural forms.

**HIROI Yasushi**

**廣井 靖**

Japanese 1958

**Mareta shell F**

***Shiosai F***

しお さい

**潮騒 F**

2008

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

Yasuda Hiroi is one of the new generation of bamboo artists reinterpreting traditional craft techniques to create innovative contemporary sculptural forms. This piece uses strips of bamboo that become thinner as they move outwards from the centre, while the space between each strip increases, to create the form of a large spiralling shell. The technique skilfully produces variation within a regular structure, and a feeling of symmetry within a natural form.

**SERIZAWA Keisuke**

**芹沢 銑介**

Japanese 1895–1984

**Kimono with character designs**

***Mojimon heyagi***

も じ も ん へ や ぎ

**文字文部屋着**

1968

stencil-dyed banana-bark cloth (abaca)

Purchased with funds donated by  
Allan Myers AO and Maria Myers AO, 2015

2015.407

Serizawa Keisuke is one of the most important Japanese textile artists of the twentieth century and a leading member of the Mingei arts and crafts movement founded by Yanagi Sōetsu in the 1930s. Using a stencil-dyeing technique and Okinawan-style fabric made from abaca banana leaf fibre, this boldly patterned work features clusters of calligraphic characters, including 月 (moon), 日 (sun) and 木 (tree) that are designed into a motif and repeated over the entire kimono. Serizawa is said to have believed that wearing garments inscribed with characters would impart the magical power of the words.

**OKI Toshie**

**大木 淑恵**

Japanese 1976

**Outburst**

***Wakitatsu***

わ た  
**湧き立つ**

2008

bamboo, rattan

Purchased with funds donated by  
Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.102

Oki Toshie graduated from Waseda University, Tokyo, with a degree in literature, and in search of artistic self-expression became a dedicated student of the late bamboo master Iizuka Shōkansai. Her work *Outburst* capitalises on the illusionary possibilities that can be achieved from bamboo weaving. Its tubular double-woven structure rises to a peak and gracefully leans to one side, its form creating a mysterious illusion of the inner surface breaking through the outer surface and then returning to the inner side again.

# JAPANESE

## Bodhisattva

### *Shō Kannon Bosatsu*

しょう かん のん ぼ さつ

聖觀音菩薩

Heian period 平安時代 12th century Japan  
lacquer, gilt-Cypress (Hinoki ), crystal

Purchased with funds donated by Allan Myers AO and Maria Myers AO, 2011

2011.118

Bodhisattvas are individuals filled with compassion who, rather than enter nirvana after attaining enlightenment, remain in the life-death cycle to redeem other unenlightened living souls. From the Heian period, Japanese sculptures developed distinct characteristics, including gentle facial features with long arched eyebrows extending to a thin nose, downcast eyes and small lips. The figure, standing on a lotus flower is surrounded by a halo of swirling lotus plant motifs (*karukusa*). At the top of the halo the Sanskrit character 'Sa' refers to saintly, sacred and virtuous qualities and designates this figure as Shō Kannon Bosatsu.

# JAPANESE

## Peony basket

### *Botan kago*

ぼ たん かご

### 牡丹籠

late Edo period (mid 19th century) Japan  
bamboo

Purchased with funds donated by  
Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.505

This style of *Peony basket* is also known as a *Karamono* (Chinese-style basket) due to its large handle and symmetrical form – a shape imported from China. This style was popular in Japan during the Edo period and would be used to create large flower arrangements for formal tea ceremonies and decoration in large interior spaces. The basket's name indicates its classical use for an arrangement of peony flowers that traditionally would symbolise wealth and good fortune. This arrangement of peony and wisteria was created by the renowned flower artist Nanzawa Michiko.

Yamamoto BAIITSU

山本 梅逸

Japanese 1783–1856

Flowers of the four season

*Shikisōga-zu*

し き そ う か ず  
四季草花図

1849

ink and pigments on paper

Purchased through The Art Foundation of Victoria

with the assistance of Mr S. Baillieu Myer AC, Founder Benefactor, 1998

1998.246

In contrast to the imported Chinese symmetrical style of the *Peony basket* and arrangement, sixteenth-century Japanese tea masters developed a unique style of tea practice and aesthetic known as *Wabi cha* (rustic tea) and found the natural tactile qualities of bamboo ideal for producing new styles of tea utensils and baskets. This Edo-period painting by Yamamoto Baiitsu features an asymmetrical Japanese-style flower arrangement that includes magnolia, hydrangeas, lilies, chrysanthemums, mountain rose, lotus flowers, jasmine, dandelion, peony, cherry blossom and the fringed pink flower.

# JAPANESE

## Pagoda reliquary

### *Sharitō*

しゃりとう

舍利塔

late Edo period – Meiji period

江戸時代 - 明治時代 19th century Japan

copper, brass, nickel plate, silver plate, gilt, glass

Purchased, 1887

2043.a-b-D1A

Pagodas are generally constructed to house relics of the historic Buddha, eminent priests or saints. The Japanese term *sharitō* literally means ‘bone of the throat’ and ‘tower’ and the throat bone of a deceased Buddhist was regarded as an important relic to be enshrined. Other relics often enshrined included teeth, hair, bones, ashes, crystals, beads or small personal possessions.

# JAPANESE

## Bodhisattva

### *Jizō Bosatsu*

じ ぞう ぼ さつ  
**地蔵菩薩**

Kamakura period 鎌倉時代 1185–1333 Japan  
wood, lacquer, gold paint, pigment, metal, glass

Felton Bequest, 1957

1736.a-d-D4

Jiz Bosatsu assists the living on their path of salvation to paradise. Represented as a monk he holds a wish-granting jewel and a long staff. The staff has six rings and can open the six gates between the realms of incarnation that humans must negotiate before reaching paradise. These are the realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, demons, humans and heavenly beings. In Japan, Jiz is best known as the guardian and patron deity of children.

# JAPANESE

## Gyōdō mask of Bodhisattva

### *Gyōdōmen Bosatsu*

ぎょうどうめん ぼ さつ

### 行道面菩薩

Kamakura period 鎌倉時代 1185–1333 Japan  
lacquer and gold paint on wood

Felton Bequest, 1955

1535-D4

*Gyōdō* masks were used for Buddhist processions, festivals or inauguration ceremonies for a new hall of worship. Representing figures of the Buddhist pantheon, the masks are larger than human proportions giving them a superhuman presence and clear visual recognition. They were used from the Heian to Muromachi period (AD 792–1568).

**YAMASHITA Kōchikusai**

**山下 巧竹齋**

Japanese 1876–1947

**Ryurikyo-style hanging flower basket**

***Ryūrikyō-shiki tsurī hanakago***

りゅう り きょう しき つり はな かご

**柳里恭式吊花籠**

early 20th century

bamboo, rattan

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

This rare work by the Osaka-born bamboo artist Yamashita Kōchikusai is in a style that was appreciated by the literati, scholars and intellectuals of the Edo and Meiji periods. Its title, *Ryūrikyō-style hanging flower basket*, refers to the distinguished eighteenth-century poet and painter Yanagisawa Ryurikyo (1703–58) who was famous for his paintings of hanging flower baskets in this style.

# JAPANESE

## Amida Buddha

### *Amida Nyorai*

あ み だ に よ ら い

### 阿弥陀如来

Heian period 平安時代 12th century Japan

lacquer, gold and pigment on Cypress (*Hinoki*), crystals

Cypress (*Hinoki*), crystals

Purchased with funds donated by Allan Myers AO and Maria Myers AO, 2010

2010.3

Amida Buddha is the central icon of Pure Land Buddhism (*Jōdo Shinshū*) and resides over Buddhist paradise or heaven. Until the twelfth century he was usually represented seated on a lotus flower waiting for our arrival to the next life. However, from the twelfth century the concept of *raigō* (welcoming descent) flourished and Amida Buddha was often represented in a standing pose, descending from the heavens to fetch his devotees and transport them back to blissful paradise.

# JAPANESE

## Mouth organ

*Shō*

しょう

笙

Edo period (1600–15–1868) Japan

lacquer on bamboo, lacquer on wood (*maki-e*), silver

Purchased, 1887

2007.a-s-D1A

The *Shō* is a mouth organ that was used in ancient *gagaku* (court music) from the eighth century onwards. It consists of a lacquer wooden cup-shaped body into which seventeen narrow bamboo pipes are inserted vertically to symbolically form the shape of raised phoenix wings. Two of the pipes are mute, and the remainder are fitted with small metal tongues that vibrate to create sounds. The player can maintain a continuous sound by sucking and blowing alternately.

**Katsukawa SHUNZAN**

**勝川春山**

Japanese active c. 1782–98

**Catching fireflies in the garden of a mansion**

*Yashiki no niwa no hotaru gari*

やしき にわ ほたる が

**屋敷の庭の蛍狩り**

left panel of a triptych

c. 1785–98 Edo period Japan

colour woodblock

Purchased, 1961

900.a-5

# JAPANESE

## Insect cage

### *Mushi kago*

むし かご

虫籠

20th century

bamboo, lacquer on wood, silk cord

Collection of Joan Gunn, Melbourne

Japanese culture's close association with nature and the changing seasons led to insects and their habitat being a common subject in literature, painting and woodblock prints. Collecting insects has been a popular pastime for both adults and children throughout history, and the production of meticulously crafted bamboo insect cages is a tradition that continues to this day. The example that appears in the woodblock print is square in shape, a design that arrived from China; however, the dome-topped basket on display is a design developed in Japan.

**NAGAKURA Ken'ichi**

**長倉 健一**

Japanese 1952

**Woman**

***Hito***

ひと

**女**

2014

bamboo, lacquer, clay

Purchased with funds donated by  
Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.502

Nagakura Ken'ichi's passion for beach-combing and fossicking in nature, combined with an appreciation for sculptors such as Alberto Giacometti, Henry Moore and Okamoto Tarō, has resulted in his creation of natural amorphic shapes suggestive of human forms. The simple construction of his beautifully balanced work *Woman* is magnificent. One long piece of bamboo is split into many fine strips which are interlaced densely along its entire length, except for the last few centimetres. A mix of lacquer and powdered clay is rubbed into the weave to give it an organic finish and the appearance of a natural rather than man-made object.

**MORIGAMI Jin**

**森上 仁**

Japanese 1955

**Big wave**

***Ōki na nami***

おお なみ

**大きな波**

2014

bamboo

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.501

Morigami Jin was born in the bamboo-producing town of Beppu to parents who are also bamboo artists. He is recognised as one of the new generation of innovative bamboo artists establishing an international reputation. His work *Big wave* is a simple and elegant basket that has been made with an irregular combination of twined (*nawame*) and twill (*ajiro*) plaiting. Its large undulating shape and woven horizontal weave – which gives it a slightly see-through appearance – create a rhythm of lines that give the impression of flowing water, or ocean waves.

**YUFU Shohaku**

**油布 昌伯**

Japanese 1941

**Flower basket Niō**

***Hanakago Niō***

はな かご に よう

**花籠仁王**

2015

bamboo

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015 2015.497

Yufu Shohaku is one Japan's most respected senior bamboo artists. His monumental works combine a wide variety of parts from the bamboo plant, including giant stems, sturdy straps, thinly sliced strips and gnarly roots. *Flower basket Niō* features a flower basket with the authoritative presence of a fierce Buddhist temple guardian (Niō), and can be interpreted as a preserver of the rustic qualities of Japan's bamboo-crafting past.

**YAMAGUCHI Ryuun**

**山口 龍雲**

Japanese 1940

**Dawn**

**Yoake**

よ あけ

**夜明**

c. 1969

bamboo, rattan

Gift of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2012

2012.180

Yamaguchi Ryuun is one of the many artists in *Bamboo: Tradition in Contemporary Form* who lives and works around the town of Beppu in southwest Japan. After spending several years apprenticed to the famous bamboo artist Shōno Shounsai, Yamaguchi has become a leading figure in the bamboo arts movement. In this ingenious work, groups of bamboo strips that start splayed at the edge of the basket become layered on top of each other as they interlock in the centre to form a hexagram star, and then splay out again at the other side of the basket.

# Shugetsu

週月

Japanese active 20th century

## Bamboo flute

*Shakuhachi*

しゃく はち

尺八

20th century

bamboo, lacquer

Collection of Scott Rogers, Melbourne

Taking its name from its length, one *shaku* and eight (*hachi*) *sun* (*shaku* and *sun* being traditional Japanese measurements), this style of flute is known as a *Shakuhachi*. Made from bamboo that is severed at the root, this spayed section becomes the bell of the instrument. *Shakuhachi* are capable of producing three octaves by blowing on the sharp edge, which is cut obliquely and fitted with a hard material, such as water buffalo horn or ivory. The unique sound of the *sakuhachi* is synonymous with Japan and evocative of itinerant musicians and Zen monks.

**HATSUTA Toru**

**初田 徹**

Japanese 1980

**Basket in 'thousand-line' construction**

***Sensuji moriki***

せん すじ もり き

**千筋盛籃**

2008

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

Hatsuta Toru is the youngest bamboo artist in *Bamboo: Tradition in Contemporary Form*. His *Basket in 'thousand line' construction* demonstrates his skills with the technique of *sensuji-gumi* (thousand-line construction) which consists of fixing thin bamboo strips at regular intervals between supports. In this work the basket section has been raised slightly using six thicker strips of bamboo as supports. This results in an elegant and contemporary basket that is simple yet sophisticated, which could be used in a tea ceremony for serving sweets.

**ISHOHI Setsuko**

**磯飛 節子**

Japanese 1964

**Layered lotus petals**

***Renben***

ねん べん

**蓮弁**

2011

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.107

**ISHOHI Setsuko**

**磯飛 節子**

Japanese 1964

**Tray with handle**

***Miemutsume-ami morikago***

み え む め あ もり かご

**三重六つ目編み盛籃**

2008

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

These two works by Ishohi Setsuko display her development as a bamboo artist; from producing functional baskets for flower arrangement to creating works that are to be viewed as sculptures. Ishohi, who originally studied Sogetsu-style flower arrangement and the sencha tea ceremony, started studying bamboo weaving techniques to create baskets for her own flower arrangements. Her *Tray with handle*, which features hexagonal plaiting (*mutsume-ami*), is a traditional-style basket produced for this purpose. Ishohi's background in flower arranging is also evident in her more recent sculptural work *Layered lotus petals* which is composed from six juxtaposed lotus petal shapes.

**TANABE Shōchiku**

**田邊 小竹**

Japanese 1973

**Ensō**

***Ensō***

えん そう

**円相**

2014

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

Tanabe Shōchiku was a graduate from the Sculpture Department of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music and is a fifth-generation bamboo artist of the Tanabe family, founded by Tanabe Shinjō (1821–94). This beautifully balanced contemporary work references the traditional Zen symbol of a circle, which symbolises enlightenment, strength, elegance and the universe. In meditative terms the *ensō* represents an experience of the ‘absolute void’ and a moment when the mind is free to let the body and spirit spontaneously create without boundaries.

**HONDA Shōryū**

**本田 聖流**

Japanese 1951

**Clean light**

***Seiki***

せい き

**清輝**

2014

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

Honda Shōryū's visually dynamic bamboo works express a feeling of energy and movement. His most recent series employs precisely spaced round bamboo strips with *nawame-ame* (twining) that take advantage of the natural flexibility and spring of the bamboo. The work's undulating shape is created by using hot water to soften the entire piece which is then kneaded into shape. Finally, a coating of lacquer is applied to achieve an overall gloss and preserve the work's eccentric shape.

**BABA Shodo**

**馬場 松堂**

Japanese 1925–96

**Flame**

***Honoo***

ほのお

**炎**

c. 1970

bamboo, rattan, metal

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

Baba Shodo was born in Niigata and suffered serious injury while serving in the Japanese navy during the Second World War. After returning to Japan he started his career as a bamboo artist in 1946. He is acknowledged as one of the most important and innovative bamboo artists of the mid twentieth century; renowned for creating new symbolic shapes and experimenting with the combination of metal and bamboo to create contemporary vessels for flower arrangement.

# Kanō School

## 狩野派

Japanese 15th century –19th century

## Bamboo, plum blossom and mandarin ducks

### *Take ume oshidori zu*

たけ うめ おしどり ず

## 竹梅鴛鴦図

18th century

two-panel folding screen: ink, gold paint and pigments on gold leaf on paper, lacquer on wood, paper, silk, metallic thread, brass

Collection of Konfir Kabo, Melbourne

**UENO Masao**

**上野 正夫**

Japanese 1949

**Wave**

***Nami***

なみ

**波**

2011

bamboo, rattan, lacquer, gold powder

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.104

Ueno Masuo, from central Japan, was a graduate in architecture before studying bamboo weaving in rural areas near his hometown of Nagano. To conceive the mesmerising formation of infinite geometric spiralling lines found in *Wave*, Ueno employed computer design software and then, in contrast to this digital process, constructed the work's delicate structure by subtly bending thin bamboo strips into spirals before finally applying lacquer for strength and gold powder for decoration.

# JAPANESE

## Surging waves

*Dotō*

どとう

怒涛

20th century

bamboo, rattan

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

This sculptural form by an unknown artist is in the style of one of the most influential bamboo artists of the twentieth century, Shōno Shounsai (1904–74). Designated a Living National Treasure, Shounsai was an artistic pioneer who pushed bamboo basketry to new heights and sparked a revolution in the art form that influenced a new generation of artists during the second half of the twentieth century. This piece is reminiscent of Shounsai's wave and swirling water series produced during the 1950s.

**SUGIURA Noriyoshi**

**杉浦 功悦**

Japanese 1964

**Void**

***Kokū***

こくう

**虚空**

2014

bamboo, rattan

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015 2015.500

Sugiura Noriyoshi was born in northern Japan and studied engineering in Osaka. After graduating, his desire to create three-dimensional forms with natural materials led him to study bamboo-weaving techniques in Beppu. Sugiura's engineering studies distinguish his creations from other bamboo artists through a complex geometric formation of zigzagging struts that create an impression of structural strength from lightweight material.

**YONEZAWA Jiro**

**米澤 二郎**

Japanese 1956

**Fossil**

***Kaseki***

か せき

**化石**

2015

bamboo

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015 2015.498

Yonezawa Jiro gained his bamboo-crafting skills from senior bamboo artists in his home prefecture of Oita. During his thirties and forties he established a career as a bamboo artist in Portland, United States, before moving back to Oita in 2000. Yonezawa currently works in a studio surrounded by bamboo forests and abundant nature, and his works appear organic in shape and derived from nature rather than manmade.

MIMURA Chikuhō

三村 竹萌

Japanese 1973

**Droplet**

***Shizuku***

しずく

雫

2016

bamboo, lacquer

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

Mimura Chikuhō originally studied to be a trombonist in Germany; however, after returning to Japan in 1997 he became interested in making sculpture from natural materials and studied for several years under Yufu Shohaku and Honda Shōryū whose work is also included in this exhibition. Mimura's coarse and powerful weaving references Yufu's work, and his animated shapes reference the movement of Honda's work. Mimura's *Droplet* is a preeminent example of his most recent style that uses open hexagonal plating interwoven with broad strips of bamboo.

**SATO Haruo**

**佐藤 治生**

Japanese 1961

**Begin-V**

***Hajimu-V***

はじむ

**創-V**

2015

bamboo, rattan

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.103

The highly developed skills of Sato Haruo are highlighted by the centre of *Begin-V* where a fine circular plaiting technique of very thin strips of bamboo is perfectly symmetrical and tightly woven. From this refined central core, wider strips of bamboo splay out to form a dynamic structure that could be interpreted as a blossoming organic form or an industrial spinning machine part or blade. This original approach to structure and shape can be attributed to his studies in mechanical engineering and previous career working at an international semiconductor company.

## Tea and bamboo

Throughout Japanese history the tea ceremony and bamboo have had an intimate relationship. This toriawase (selection of tea utensils and accoutrements) includes a tea scoop, whisk, water ladle and ladle stand crafted from raw bamboo. The tea caddy in this arrangement is made from black and red lacquer on a cylindrical piece of bamboo that utilises the diaphragm joint as its lid. The water container is made from a giant bamboo root, the incense container is made from a small section of bamboo stem and the flower basket is contemporary bamboo sculpture. Although not made from bamboo, the iron pot and hanging scroll feature bamboo as a decorative motif.

# JAPANESE

## Pot

### *Kama*

かま

釜

early Edo period 江戸時代 17th century Japan  
iron, copper alloy (Ise Ashiya style)

## Brazier

### *Furo*

ふる

風炉

Momoyama period 桃山時代 1568–1615 Japan  
bronze (Hakata Ashiya style)

## Brazier base

### *Shikiita*

しきいた

敷板

Meiji period 明治時代 1868–1912 Japan  
lacquer on wood

Purchased with funds donated by Yoko and Adam Ryan, 2012

# JAPANESE

## Water ladle

### *Hishaku*

ひしゃく

柄杓

20th century Japan  
bamboo

Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926

2777-D3

# JAPANESE

## Tea bowl

### *Chawan*

ちゃ わん

茶碗

Momoyama period 桃山時代 (1568–1615) Japan  
stoneware (Narumi Oribe ware 鳴海織部焼)

Purchased with funds donated by Mitsubishi Corporation, 2012

Oribe ware was made in the taste of the military man and tea enthusiast, Furuta Oribe (1545-1615), and is considered by many to be the most stylish ceramic ware of the Momoyama period. This rare example of early Nurumi Oribe displays a visually intriguing design of white interlocking squares and dark dots joined by black thin lines representing a constellation of stars and planets in the sky.

# JAPANESE

## Tea scoop *Chashaku*

ちゃしゃく  
茶杓

20th century Japan  
bamboo

Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926

2779-D3

# JAPANESE

Whisk

*Chasen*

ちゃ せん

茶筴

20th century Japan  
bamboo, cotton thread

Gift of Mr W. P. Wilkinson, 1926

2781-D3

**SUGANUMA Michiko**

**菅沼 三千子**

Japanese 1940

**Bamboo root water container**

***Wagaenuri chikukon mizusashi***

わ が え ぬ り ち く こん みず さ し

**和賀江塗竹根水指**

1987

lacquer on bamboo

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

This unusual water container made for the tea ceremony is ingeniously crafted from an actual bamboo root. The work is fitted with a custom-made red lacquer lid. The bamboo stem's circular joint marks and many small dots, from where roots would shoot from, have become decorative features.

**SUGANUMA Michiko**

**菅沼 三千子**

Japanese 1940

**Kappa style bamboo tea caddy**

***Kuroro-iro take natsume***

くる ろ いろ たけ なつめ

**黒呂色竹棗**

2003

lacquer on bamboo (Kamakura-bori)

Lillian Ernestine Lobb Bequest, 2004

2004.51.a-b

**YONEZAWA Jiro**

**米澤 二郎**

Japanese 1956

**Sea horse**

***Tatsu no toshigo***

たつ と び  
**竜の落とし子**

2014

Bamboo, lacquer

Purchased with funds donated by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.499

**SUGANUMA Michiko**

**菅沼 三千子**

Japanese 1940

**Bamboo incense container**

***Take kōgō***

たけ こう こう

**竹香合**

2003

lacquer on bamboo

Lillian Ernestine Lobb Bequest, 2004

2004.52.a-b

**AZUKAWA Junko**

**東川 潤子**

Japanese born 1981, worked in Australia 2005–

**Bamboo grove and the dragonfly**

***Chikurin ni tombo***

ちくりん とんぼ

**竹林に蜻蛉**

2016

ink on paper

Purchased with funds donated by the Hon. Michael Watt QC and Cecilie Hall, 2016

**TANABE Chikuhosai**

**田辺 竹保齋**

Japanese 1868–1945

**Basket handbag**

***Teiran***

てい らん

**提籃**

Taisho period early Showa period (1912–1945) Japan  
bamboo, rattan, gourd, cotton, glass, silk, silk cord

Gift of Colonel Aubrey H. L. Gibson (Rtd), 1971

AS16-1971

This basket, known as a *teiran*, could be used as a handbag to carry personal effects or a basket to carry a small portable tea set for outdoor tea ceremonies. Tanabe Chikuhosai, born at the dawn of Japan's modern era, was a second-generation artist in the important Tanabe family lineage to which the contemporary bamboo artist Tanabe Shōchiku, also included in *Bamboo: Tradition in Contemporary Form*, is a current fifth-generation member.

**UEMATSU Chikuyu**

**植松 竹邑**

Japanese 1947

**Haze**

***Kasumi***

かすみ

**霞**

1995

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

**WATANABE Chikusei**

**渡辺 竹清**

Japanese 1932

**Flower basket**

***Hanakago***

はな かご

**花籠**

2005

bamboo, rattan, lacquer

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.504

**WATANABE Chikusei**

**渡辺 竹清**

Japanese 1932

**Tea basket**

***Chakago***

ちゃ かご

**茶籠**

2005

bamboo, rattan, silk cord

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2015

2015.503

Watanabe Chikusei is the second son of a traditional bamboo crafting family. From a young age he studied under his father and in 1966 took the artist's name Chikusei, succeeding his father as the family's head bamboo artist. *Tea basket* and *Flower basket* are examples of traditional baskets produced to perfection. *Tea basket* is used to contain a travelling tea set for outdoor tea ceremonies, and *Flower basket* is used to hold a small flower arrangement for display in a traditional Japanese interior. In recent years Chikusei has gained attention for his collaborations with Tiffany & Co. to make a line of bamboo handbags bags.

**SUZUKI Shōnen**

**鈴木 松年**

Japanese 1848–1918

**Plum blossom, bamboo and sparrow**

***Baichikujaku zu***

ばいちくじゃくず

**梅竹雀図**

from *The World of Art*, vol: 4 (*Bijutsu sekai ni jūni kan*

美術世界 二十二寒) compiled by Watanabe Seitei, published

by Shunyōdō, Tokyo 1890–1894

colour woodblock, silk thread

Shaw Research Library, National Gallery of Victoria

**Watanabe SHOKA**

**渡辺 小華**

Japanese 1835–1887

**Flower basket**

***Hanakago***

はな かご

**花籠**

from *The World of Art*, vol: 22 (*Bijutsu sekai ni jūni kan*  
美術世界 二十二卷) compiled by Watanabe Seitei, published  
by Shunyōdō, Tokyo 1890–1894

colour woodblock, silk thread

Shaw Research Library, National Gallery of Victoria

**MURUYAMA Ōkyo**

**円山 応挙**

Japanese 1733–1795

**Waves and eccentric rocks**

***Kigandōzo zu***

き がん ど と う ず

**奇巖怒涛図**

from *The World of Art*, vol: 21 (Bijutsu sekai ni jūni kan  
美術世界 二十二卷) compiled by Watanabe Seitei, published  
by Shunyōdō, Tokyo 1890–1894

colour woodblock, silk thread

Shaw Research Library, National Gallery of Victoria

**GANKU**

**岸駒**

**Japanese 1749–1756–1839**

**Tiger and bamboo**

***Tora ni take***

とら に たけ

**虎に竹**

from *The World of Art*, vol: 21 (Bijutsu sekai ni jūni kan  
美術世界 二十二卷) compiled by Watanabe Seitei, published  
by Shunyōdō, Tokyo 1890–1894  
colour woodblock, silk thread

Shaw Research Library, National Gallery of Victoria

# JAPANESE

## Box with flower baskets, birds and flowers

### *Hanakago to kachōe zu hako*

はな かご か ちょう え ず ふた つき はこ

### 花籠と花鳥画図蓋付箱

late Edo period, early Meiji period (1860–80) Japan  
lacquer on wood, gilt, gold paint, metal, shell

Purchased, 1880–1881

2004.a-b-D1A

**Shigeyoshi**

**重義**

Japanese

**Sword guard with bamboo design**

***Take zu tsuba***

たけ ず つば

**竹匁鍔**

Edo period (1600–1615–1868) Japan

iron, gilt, copper

Felton Bequest, 1921

2270-D3

**Masakata**

**正方**

Japanese

**Sword guard with bamboo leaf design**

***Take zu tsuba***

たけ ず つば

**竹匁鍔**

Edo period (1600–1615–1868) Bushū, Japan

iron, gilt

Felton Bequest, 1921

2271-D3

# JAPANESE

## Sword guard with bamboo design

### *Take zu tsuba*

たけ ず つば

### 竹匁鍔

Edo period (1600–1615–1868)

iron, copper

Felton Bequest, 1921

2168-D3

# JAPANESE

## Box with flower basket and musical instruments

### *Hanakago to gakki zu hako*

はな かご がっ き ず ふた つき はこ

花籠楽器匁蓋付箱

late Edo period, early Meiji period  
(1860–80) Japan

ivory, metal, brass, coral, shell, gold paint

Felton Bequest, 1930

3216.a-b-D3

# JAPANESE

## Inrō with bamboo grove

### *Chikurin zu inrō*

ちくりん ず いん ろう

竹林図印籠

late Edo period, Meiji period 19th century Japan

lacquer on wood, mother-of-pearl, gold, pigments, silk cord

Gift of Mr Geoffrey Innes in memory of Mr Guy Innes, 1960

136-D5

# JAPANESE

## Flower basket

### *Hanakago*

はな かご

花籠

early 20th century

bamboo, rattan, wood

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

Displaying vertical strips of bamboo woven in a technique known as *yoroi gumi* (armour plating), and featuring a gnarly wooden handle, this basket is an excellent example of *Mingei*, literally 'arts of the people', and exhibits the *wabi-sabi* aesthetic of beauty and raw emotion found in objects made by unknown craftsmen.

**BUSEKI Suishin**

**武関 翠心**

Japanese 1888–1983

**Flower basket**

***Hanakago***

はな かご

**花籠**

mid 20th century

bamboo

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

# JAPANESE

## Flower basket

### *Hanakago*

はな かご

花籠

early 20th century

bamboo, rattan

Collection of Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, Melbourne

This tall simple flower basket signed by 光月 (Kōgetsu), an unknown twentieth-century artisan, is an excellent example of early twentieth-century basket weaving that was produced as souvenirs for visitors to hot spring towns such as Beppu. Techniques practised in the production of the baskets in this display case can be seen as preserving historical weaving traditions and setting the foundations for the twentieth-century creative bamboo arts movement.

## **Bamboo in daily life**

Throughout Japanese history bamboo has been a part of everyday life, art, craft, design, literature and cuisine. The bamboo grove is regarded as a place of scholarly retreat, and bamboo's lightness, strength, flexibility and cylindrical structure has been suited to the creation of artistic products and functional objects. In these Edo-period woodblock prints and early photographs that depict bamboo groves and everyday life we see bamboo being used to make an astounding array of objects, including baskets, umbrellas, fences, water ladles, flower vases, whistles, walking sticks, lanterns, smoking pipes, hats and plumbing systems to carry flowing water.

**Katsukawa SHUNSHŌ**

**勝川 春潮**

Japanese 1780–95

**Parody of the seven sages of the  
bamboo grove**

***Chikurin no shichigen***

ちくりん しちげん

**竹林七妍**

right panel of a diptych

c. 1788 Edo period (1600–1615–1868) Japan

colour woodblock

Purchased, 1993

AS32-1993

**Kitagawa UTAMARO**

**喜多川 歌麿**

Japanese 1754–1806

**Winter morning**

***Fuyu no asa***

ふゆ あさ

**冬の朝**

late 18th century Edo period

(1600–1615–1868) Japan

colour woodblock

Felton Bequest, 1909

409-2

Utamaro is the most celebrated *ukiyo-e* artist of *bijin-e* (pictures of beautiful women). In this depiction of an early winter morning, two courtesans discover the bamboo ladle of a stone cistern frozen in a block of ice. This scene, complemented by the red berries of the heavenly bamboo tree (*nanten*), indicates the arrival of winter. The ice is rendered with a transparent mika shell-powdered pigment.

# JAPANESE

## Buddhist priests

*Sōryo*

そうりょ

僧侶

1880s

albumen silver photograph, colour dyes

Purchased, 2004

2004.561

Kitagawa UTAMARO

喜多川 歌麿

Japanese 1754–1806

Chrysanthemum festival 9 September

*Kugatsu no kokonoka choyōnōsekku,*

*gosekku*

く がつ この か ちょうよう せっく こ せっく  
九月の九日重陽の節句, 「五節句」

left panel of a pentptych, from the

*Five festivals* series

c. 1803

colour woodblock

# Utagawa KUNISADA (Utagawa TOYOKUNI III)

歌川 国貞 (三代 歌川 豊国)

Japanese 1786–1865

## The hour of the boar, Fourth hour of night

*I no koku, Yoru yotstu toki*

い の こく よる よつ とき  
亥ノ刻 夜四つ時

from the *Twelve Hours of a modern clock series* (今世時計十二時 *Imayo tokei jyūniji*)

1818–24

colour woodblock

Felton Bequest, 1909

434-2

In historical Japan, each day was divided into twelve segments named after the animals of the zodiac calendar. The fourth segment – from 9 to 11 pm – was attributed to the boar. During the evening, temples, shrines, restaurants, shops and inns would use lanterns made from paper and bamboo to advertise or announce that they were open for trade. In this image by Utagawa Kunisada we see a woman with a portable, collapsible lantern carried at the end of a stick. Such lanterns were popular and often featured a painted or stencilled family or business crest.

**KUSAKABE Kimbei**

**日下部 金兵衛**

Japanese 1841–1934

**Vegetable peddler**

***Yaoya***

や お や

**八百屋**

1880s

albumen silver photograph, colour dyes

Gerstl Bequest, 2000

2000.73

# Tamagawa SHŪCHŌ

玉川 舟調

Japanese active 1790s – c. 1800

## Komurasaki and Gonpachi

*Komurasaki Gonpachi*

こむらさき ごん ぱち

小紫 権八

c. 1800

colour woodblock

Felton Bequest, 1909

412-2

One of most popular stories of tragic and forbidden romance during the Edo period was that of Komurasaki and Gonpachi, based on a true story. Gonpachi, desperate to buy the freedom of his lover, the courtesan Komurasaki, turned to crime, was apprehended and executed. Upon hearing of her lover's fate Komurasaki escaped from the pleasure district and took her own life by his graveside. In this sensitively designed pillar print we observe a peaceful and intimate moment the couple had before their tragic end. Komurasaki relaxes, smoking a traditional Japanese bamboo pipe (*kiseru*) and Gonpachi gazes into the distance, contemplating a blissful future together.

**Keisai EISEN**

**溪齊 英泉**

Japanese 1790–1848

**Spring rain**

***Harusame***

はる さめ

**春雨**

c. 1820

colour woodblock

Felton Bequest, 1909

455-2

# Felice BEATO

フェリーチェ・ベアト

Italian / English 1832–1909, worked throughout Asia and Europe 1853–90

## Barbers

*Kamiyui*

かみ ゆ

髪結い

1863–68 Japan

albumen silver photograph, colour dyes

Purchased through the NGV Foundation with the assistance of The Herald & Weekly Times Limited, Fellow, 2001 2001.5

Felice Beato's images capture Japanese street life during the closing years of the Edo period. Here we see barbers plying their trade in a streetside setting with items made from bamboo, including the fence, umbrella and broom. The man on the right is having his hair arranged in a topknot (*chonmage*) that was originally worn by samurai and also adapted by the merchant class during the latter half of the Edo period.

# Baron Raimund von STILLFRIED

ライムント・フォン・シュティルフリート

Austrian 1839–1911, worked throughout Europe and Asia  
1871–1910

## Blind shampooer (Blind masseur)

*Mōmoku no anma shi*

もうもく あんまし

盲目の按摩師

c. 1875 Japan

albumen silver photograph, colour dyes

Gerstl Bequest, 2000

2000.71

Written accounts by Western visitors to Japan in the 1870s invariably describe life on the streets. A noted character that often captured their attention was the so-called 'blind shampooer' who was, in fact, a masseur. In this elegant and restrained studio reconstruction we see a young man holding a bamboo whistle to announce his presence to potential trade.

**Suzuki HARUNOBU**

**鈴木 春信**

Japanese c. 1725–70

**Under pink plum blossom a green  
bamboo water pipe**

***Kōbai ni aoku yokotau kakei kana***

こう ばい あお よこ かけひ かな  
**紅梅に青く横たふ筧哉**

from the *Elegant versions of ink in five colors series* (風流五色墨 *Fūryū goshiki-zumi*)

1768

colour woodblock

Purchased, 1945

1431-4

Harunobu is credited as being one of the first artists to create polycrome nishiki-e (brocade) prints during the 1760s. His refined depictions of women are imbued with a visual lyricism that encourages us to experience the scene through intimate human relationships, poetry and visual references to nature. This composition that depicts a young woman and man playfully wrestling over the possession of a romantic poem evokes the aroma of spring, from the plum blossom, and sound of running water, from bamboo pipes in the garden. The poem, signed Chōsui, is by the Edo period haiku poet Sakuma Nagatoshi.

**SUGIURA Noriyoshi**

**杉浦 功悦**

Japanese 1964

**Heaven's nest**

***Tenmō***

てん もう

**天網**

2014

bamboo, rattan

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.105

Sugiura Noriyoshi's engineering background is evident in the complex geometric structure of *Heaven's nest*. Couplings of thin strips of bamboo are gently curved and woven to create a large, spherical see-through shape. The work's delicate outer shell contrasts with a robust inner tube that acts as the basket's central core and a receptacle to hold a flower arrangement.

**HAYAKAWA Shōkosai V**

**五世 早川 尚古齋**

Japanese 1932–2011

**Flower basket using uneven weaving  
technique**

***Shichiku-mizore-ami-hanakago***

し ちく                      あみ はな かご  
**紫竹みぞれ編花籃**

c. 1980

bamboo

Purchased with funds donated  
by Baillieu Myer AC and Sarah Myer, 2016

2016.106

The plaiting style used as a visual feature in this beautifully balanced flower basket is typical of the Hayakawa family style that has been passed down a master–apprentice lineage since the late nineteenth century. The artist’s great-great-grandfather Hayakawa Shōkosai I (1815–79) was one of the first bamboo artists to sign his work, and according to family tradition only one son of each generation is allowed to inherit the family title and profession. In 2003 Hayakawa Shōkosai V received one of Japan’s highest honours when he was designated a Living National Treasure.