

Milano Design Week 2026
April 20 - 26

MONO-SOLUM

TRACING THE LINEAGE OF RECLAIMED BIZEN-YAKI

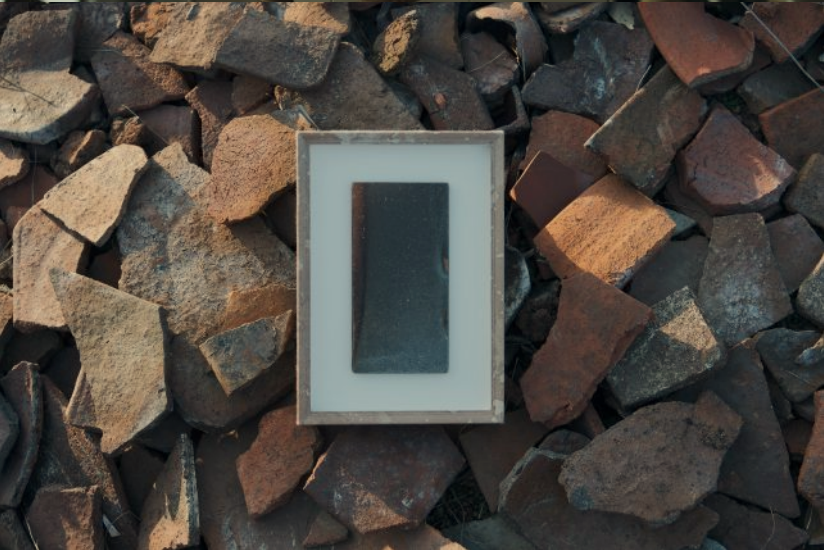
再生備前の系譜を辿る旅

by the continue. Co., Ltd.
at Biblioteca Ostinata
/Via Osti, 6, 20122 Milano

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YUSU
TAGUCHI
DESIGN





Traced back and molded anew.

This is art informed by recollection--a resuscitation of primordial wisdom stored within the earth, born once more. A thousands-year slumber disrupted by the flame of the kiln's keeper unleashes the echoes of Cretaceous period clay. The result is the advent of an unprecedented visage seemingly materialized by the earth's own tacit accord.

MONO-SOLUM

—FROM THE LATIN MONO (ONE) AND
SOLUM (SOIL, EARTH)

The bizen-yaki clay's chronicle is conveyed without a word. Liminal fragments interposed between past and present bring about a decided quietude and depth to their surroundings, and their timeless story, while unspoken, resonates with those who would behold them.

The integral methodology of MONO-SOLUM is a homecoming. Once abandoned vestigial afterthoughts of Bizen-yaki pieces are broken down into a fine power and incorporated as raw material for a new generation of ceramic art.

Having already been initiated into the kiln in its past life, the clay inhibits a complex texture compacted with a thousand-year annal of the earth. The lineage of Bizen is preserved as a manifestation of past and future with each new form, finally emerging as a work of art, its story completely unearthed.

— MASTER OF THE KILN —



Takushi Takahara

A ceramic artist based in Okayama and Bizen. After studying ceramics in Kyoto, he trained under his father, a master Bizen-yaki artist. He has been selected twelve times for the Cha no Yu Zōkei-ten (Exhibition of Forms for the Tea Ceremony), receiving three Encouragement Awards. He has held numerous solo exhibitions in Tokyo, including in Aoyama and Shibuya, and is known for a style that sublimates the spontaneity of fire and earth into forms of quiet elegance.



Sou ISEZAKI

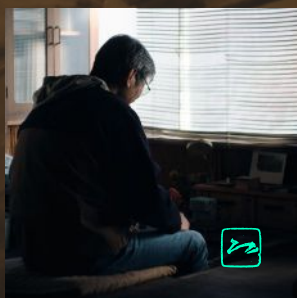
Born into the Isezaki family, long custodians of the Bizen-yaki tradition, he was raised in close proximity to clay and flame under his father Jun Isezaki who has been officially recognized as a "Living National Treasure." Working within the essential principles of Bizen-yaki—wood-firing without glaze—he embraces the natural transformations of the firing process as integral to form. His works demonstrate a sense of restraint—a subdued form that simultaneously captures the innate resilience of Bizen-yaki.



Hiroshi TOYOFUKU

A ceramic artist based in Okayama, a prefecture historically known for Bizen-yaki production.

Grounded in the tradition of unglazed, wood-fired ceramics, he incorporates the natural layers and movement of clay directly into his forms, emphasizing the inherent expression of the material. By utilizing a primitive coil-building technique which involves overlapping layers of clay, he showcases nature's might within a contemporary sculptural language.



Toshihide OAE

Born into the Oae family, one of the six historic lineages of Bizen master potters, he manages his own kiln "Furōgama" in Imbe, Okayama. There, he conjures up works that reflect the subtle interplay of hi-aji (the trace of fire) and tuchi-aji (the character of clay)—the essential aesthetic essence of Bizen-yaki. While still grounded in tradition, his incorporation of other mediums opens a new dimension in the art form within the context of contemporary life.

— MASTER OF THE FRAME —



Mayo YOSHIDA
/ kuroganeFrame

Born in Okayama, she began her career at a frame workshop before apprenticing under a master in Kurashiki, where she studied traditional techniques of gilding and carving. In 2021, she began working independently, dedicating herself to creating custom, bespoke frames. Drawn to Italian frames of the 14th and 15th centuries, she traveled to Florence to study classical carving and framing techniques. Her works reinterpret these historical forms, treating the frame itself as an autonomous work of art.

— TYPOLOGY / FORMAT—

Works are produced in two sizes with frames handcrafted by a frame artisan, finished with Japanese washi paper. With unique combinations of ceramic, frame, and washi paper, each piece is unlike any other.



MONO-SOLUM_01
W240 H340 D40 MM



MONO-SOLUM_02
W240 H240 D40 MM

— POTTERY SEAL / SERIAL NUMBER —

A mark used to distinguish the works during firing in the large communal kilns known as Ōgama. In addition, for these art pieces produced in limited numbers, each piece bears a unique numbering that indicates its position in the kiln, the maximum firing temperature, and the duration of the firing process.



— BIZEN WARE —

LOCATION



Bizen-yaki is one of Japan's oldest ceramic traditions, produced primarily in the Imbe district of Bizen City, Okayama Prefecture. Blessed with the mild climate of the Seto Inland Sea and iron-rich clay, the region has sustained its ceramic lineage since the Heian period. Today, Bizen is recognized as one of "Six Ancient Kilns of Japan" (Nihon Rokkoyō).

HISTORY



Developing from the late Heian into the Kamakura period, Bizen-yaki refined its aesthetic alongside tea ceremony culture (cha-no-yu).

Fired for over ten days in wood kilns without glaze, flame and ash paint natural patterns known as hidasuki, goma, and sangiri. Emerging fortuitously, these surfaces define the distinctive character of Bizen-yaki, often described as an art "shaped by earth and fire."

CHARACTERISTICS AND BEAUTY



The distinctive feature of Bizen-yaki is its natural, unglazed surface. Each piece is unique, shaped through the dialogue between clay and flame. Colors ranging from copper red to dark brown are created by the reduction of iron contained in the clay. Strong and durable, Bizen-yaki has been valued for centuries for tea utensils, vases, and objects for everyday use.



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Produced, Directed by YUSUKE TAGUCHI DESIGN

The background of the image is a close-up, high-contrast photograph of a fire. Bright orange and yellow flames are visible, with dark, charred wood or charcoal in the foreground. Overlaid on this image is a teal-colored topographic map. The map's contour lines are intricate and follow the general shape of the fire's spread, with some lines forming circular patterns that suggest peaks or specific intensity levels. The map is semi-transparent, allowing the fire's texture and colors to show through.

A WORK OF ART SHAPED
BY THE MEMORY OF THE EARTH.
REBORN THROUGH FIRE.

