

Japandi Revisited

For Immediate Release

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Wayne Art Center Announces the Opening of *Japandi Revisited: shared aesthetics and influences*

Wayne Art Center is pleased to partner with Tom Grotta and Rhonda Brown of *browngrotta arts* in Wilton, Connecticut, with the opening of *Japandi Revisited: shared aesthetics and influences*. This exhibition highlights artists working in Japan, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Denmark, and explores the common approaches shared between Japanese and Scandinavian cultures through art whose work reflects similar sensibilities. These include: 1) an appreciation for integrating nature and natural materials; 2) a near-reverence for exquisite craftsmanship; 3) an admiration for repurposing and respect for old and cherished items; and 4) a preference for neutrals and primary colors, clean lines, and under-ornamentation.

Japandi Revisited: shared aesthetics and influences is this year's featured companion show to *CraftForms 2024*, the 29th International Juried Exhibition of Contemporary Craft. Dedicated to enhancing the public's awareness of fine contemporary craft, this year's juror Jo Lauria, a Los Angeles-based curator, author and educator, selected artwork by 101 artists from 34 states and three countries, including Canada, Taiwan, and Japan. Both *CraftForms 2024*, on view in the Davenport Gallery, and *Japandi Revisited: shared aesthetics and influences*, on display in the Ethel Clark Sergeant Smith Gallery, will be open to the public through January 25, 2025

Japandi is the result of an artistic kinship between Scandinavia and Japan that stretches back a century and a half ago when Japan's closed border policy was lifted in 1858, and Danish designers and creatives began traveling to Japan. Early influence can be seen in ceramic crafts, architecture, and Danish furniture. After World War II, the Japanese government began promoting cultural exchange among designers and artists from Scandinavia. Today, the work of select fiber and modern craft artists uniquely embodies principal elements of what is currently termed Japandi style - from their use of natural materials and neutral color palettes to the fundamentally "slow art" process of hand craftsmanship. The core of their processes and materials invoke an intrinsic sense of contemplation, tranquility, and harmony that reverberates through their work and into the spaces the artworks inhabit. Both cultures make room for reuse, artful imperfection, and comfortable simplicity, through the Japanese concept of *wabi-sabi* and the Scandinavian idea of *hygge*.

Japandi Revisited: shared aesthetics and influences features more than three dozen artists from six countries whose works are complementary in approach and execution. Artists include **Birgitte Birkkjaer** (Denmark), creating baskets made from handmade paper yarn inspired by the Japanese paper textiles *shifu*; **Jiro Yonezawa** (Japan), known for his bamboo basketry that represents a search for the beauty and precision in nature and a way to balance the chaos evident in these times; **Mia Olsson** (Sweden), handcrafted sculptures in natural sisal; **Hiroyuki Shindo** (Japan), handwoven fabrics dyed with natural indigo; basket maker **Markku Kosonen** (Finland); **Chiyoko Tanaka** (Japan), large-scale linen weavings; **Eva Vargö** (Sweden), who repurposes antique papers from Korea into her works; **Hisako Sekijima** (Japan), basket forms; **Gudrun Pagter** (Denmark), abstract work; **Keiji Nio** (Japan), who photographs nature and silkscreens the images onto fabric that he then plaits, often using the Japanese technique *kumihomo*; and **Jane Balsgaard** (Denmark), who uses wood and paper to create objects that reference boats and sails and wings, referencing the old as well as the organic by incorporating artifacts in her works at times.

Curators Ronda Brown and Tom Grotta of *Japandi Revisited* explain, “we were intrigued by the way Scandinavians integrate good design in all aspects of their lives, from plates and dish towels to rugs, furniture, automobiles and art. Markku Kosonen, embodied this approach - making furniture, wood bowls, even jewelry in addition to his sculptural willow artworks. The Japanese take this approach as well. The dialogue of thought, hand, eye and materials integral to the approach of these artists results in work that is timeless and deeply pleasing to acquire and live with.”

Wayne Art Center is a non-profit organization dedicated to enriching our community through the arts. Since its founding in 1931, Wayne Art Center has established itself as a vital cultural resource, offering arts education, exhibitions, outreach programs and special events. Wayne Art Center remains steadfast in its mission to afford artists and the broader community an interdisciplinary venue to explore, share and learn, while fostering a sense of community for arts education and appreciation.

Wayne Art Center is located at 413 Maplewood Avenue in Wayne, Pennsylvania. Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 10 am-5 pm and Saturday, 10 am – 4 pm. For more information, visit craftforms.org or call 610-688-3553.

Exhibition Images may be found on Dropbox:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/38i7itczfblr2hby7ab9y/AHzcBNNIawsF_U4JILnJ9mo?rkey=27389uufsnwmm0j2ahhe4bi1&st=x2p6walx&dl=0

