



Takatori - Yaki

Japanese ceramics

Tristan Hoare is delighted to present, *Takatori-Yaki* an exhibition of Japanese ceramics from Kyushu: the southernmost of Japan's four main Islands.

In the late 17th century the great warrior-general Toyotomi Hideyoshi launched several military campaigns against neighbouring Korea. During this time whole families of skilled Korean potters were forcefully brought back to Japan. Their kidnapping and re-location to Kyushu coincided with a demand for "Wabi-Cha", a style of Tea Ceremony wares that rejected the luxury favoured by the elites in favour of more simple wares and natural materials. These Korean potters and their descendants were soon greatly valued and placed under the protection of the Kuroda clan. Their refined and elegant ceramics are known and respected all over Japan today.

The ceramics in this exhibition are the work of the current head of the family and his son - the 13th and 14th generations. They are made at the wheel using local clay and natural glazes and fired in a 'Norobigama' wood fired kiln. Firing takes place twice a year and lasts several days during which the family doesn't sleep. The kiln requires constant supervision to achieve and maintain the correct temperature and conditions. They must imagine the flame path as it rushes through the kiln and use this intuition to paint the pieces with fire. It then takes several days for the kiln to cool before the ceramics can be removed and the results observed; a moment of great anticipation!

Takatori-Yaki ceramics have a quiet, subtle elegance very much in tune with the place and spirit in which they are created. Spend a little time around them and their refined simplicity becomes apparent.

"Now I am the 13th generation of and heir to the *Takatori-Yaki* art which has a particular and traditional technique....I will pass on the traditional method to the next generation and try to make superior pottery to the best of my ability."

Hassen Takatori