



MINGEI

The Beauty of Everyday Things



MANU PROPRIA

MINGEI

The Beauty of Everyday Things

The concept of mingei (民芸), variously translated as "folk craft", "folk art" or "popular art", was developed from the mid-1920s in Japan by a philosopher and aesthete, Yanagi Sōetsu (1889–1961), together with a group of craftsmen, including the potters Hamada Shōji (1894–1978) and Kawai Kanjirō (1890–1966).

As such, it was a conscious attempt to distinguish ordinary crafts and functional utensils (pottery, lacquerware, textiles, and so on) from "higher" forms of art – at the time much admired by people during a period when Japan was going through rapid westernisation, industrialisation, and urban growth. In some ways, therefore, mingei may be seen as a reaction to Japan's rapid modernisation processes.

The aesthetic, philosophical and theoretical aspects of Mingei is summed up in "ordinary people's crafts" (minshuteki na kogeï). In Soetsu Yanagi's opinion, beauty could be found in common and utilitarian everyday objects made by nameless and unknown artisans, as opposed to higher forms of art manufactured by named artists.

He claimed that the beauty of folk crafts laid in the usage of natural and local materials, handmade production, traditional design and methods, functionality, simplicity in design and form, multiplicity (items replicated in quantity) and inexpensiveness. The objects should be created by unnamed craftsmen, demonstrating a healthy attitude during the production process, and feature regional crafts, representative of the area where they were manufactured.

MINGEI Collection

Following the Mingei philosophy, this Collection features one-of-a-kind Objects made from rural materials Urushi, Bamboo, Wood, Ebonite, Brass, Silver and Gold Each Object is a true Unique Piece made by an "unknown" craftsman

"manu propria" (lat. m.p., mppria, mppa, mpria) - with my own hand

Mingei - the Japanese folk art movement

Mingei (民芸) is what the Japanese call their folk art, a movement that originated a hundred years ago. The simple everyday objects are always made by unknown artisans, so mingei also means "art of the common people".

As in many other countries around the world, this idea has given rise to a movement in Japan that seeks to highlight and preserve the aesthetics of traditional everyday objects and regional characteristics such as the patterns, motifs and colors used. In Japan, this movement is synonymous with the idea of Mingei.

The idea is that traditional handicraft products, which are mostly created by the people as everyday objects, have their own aesthetics that are worth preserving. Its origins go back to various European thinkers at the end of the 19th century. Artists and theorists living in Japan, such as the famous potter Bernard Howell Leach, and students returning from abroad also brought the idea to Japan at the beginning of the 20th century.

In Europe, the establishment of the idea of folk art was accompanied by an expansion of the criteria for "art" as the true, genuine, beautiful and the pursuit of perfection that had applied from the Renaissance to the late modern period. No artist can actually achieve this exaggeration. Rather, mingei goes hand in hand with an aesthetic of use, of flaws and a lack of perfection, indeed in a certain sense of the everyday and sometimes "ugly".

In Japan, with its very own aesthetic principles, some of which are strongly derived from the teachings of Buddhism, an important role was given to flaws and everyday objects from as early as the 10th century. The idea of folk art therefore hardly required any real expansion of aesthetics. Here, already existing principles were rather extended to a wider range of everyday objects of the (common) people.

One difference that always separates folk art from regular or high art is the lack of academic preparation and training of the mostly anonymous producers, be they craftsmen or factory workers. The Japanese state actively tries to preserve and honor traditional crafts by granting outstanding representatives the status of "national treasures". These can be potters, paper makers or textile printers, for example.

As with the European folk art movements, a kind of ambivalence towards the expanding industrial production of everyday objects certainly played an important role, especially at the beginning. Folk art or local art is defined as artistic and creative work that goes beyond classical and modern art.

In most cases, folk art is integrated into craft traditions or domestic production. In most cases, the objects classified as folk art also have an everyday use - as drinking vessels, furniture or clothing, to name just a few examples.

In German-speaking countries, the term "folk art" goes back to the Austrian art historian Alois Riegel, who probably first used the term around 1894.

With increasing industrialization, such domestic and handcrafted works became increasingly rare and interest in folk production, some of which had been handed down for centuries, suddenly increased.

Mingei has its very own prerequisites and characteristics, some of which overlap with folk art from other parts of the world, while others differ from them



SUSUTAKE Mingei 1

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite. The invisible housing of the cap and the section made from Ebonite. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is not polished, appears natural matte similar to «Nuritate”. The ends of barrel and cap are natural Nodes. (All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 2

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite. The invisible housing of the cap and the section made from Ebonite. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished, The ends of barrel and cap are natural Nodes. (All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 3

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite. The visible housing of the cap and the section made from Ebonite. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished, The ends of barrel and Cap are natural Nodes.
(All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 4

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite. The visible housing of the cap and the section made from Ebonite. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished. The ends of barrel and Cap are closed with Ebonite.
(All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 5

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite. The visible housing of the cap and the section made from Ebonite. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished. The body is made from one piece of Baboo
The ends of barrel and Cap are closed with Ebonite.
(All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 6

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite, Brass. The visible housing of the cap and the section made from Brass. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished. The body is made from one piece of Baboo
The ends of barrel and Cap are closed with Ebonite.
(All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 14 mm





SUSUTAKE Mingei 7

Material used: Bamboo, Urushi Lacquer, Ebonite, Brass. The visible housing of the cap and the section made from Brass. The Bamboo sealed with Urushi, a technique called «Fuki-Urushi» On this version the Urushi is polished. The body is made from one piece of Baboo The ends of barrel and Cap are closed with Ebonite.
(All Pens are hand made one-of-a-kind Objects)

Total Length: +/- 180 mm, Length barrel with #6 Nib: +/-160 mm. Diameter section: 11 mm

