

Kintsugi and Other Japanese Arts

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Abstract

Japan is a beautiful country with a rich cultural heritage and art. There is a lot to cover about the culture of Japan. From Tea Ceremonies to Japanese pottery, to ceramics, there are several interesting things about the art and culture of this mythological god of a country. It also has a history of remarkable craftsmanship. All Asian countries have a rich culture and comparing them is nearly impossible as each country has beautiful art and culture that are diverse from each other. Asian countries' art has its wonderful world of uniqueness, created by amazing and talented artists. The heritage of every Asian country is very rich and deep. This article will mainly talk about the culture of the father of the Mythological Art of Asia-Japan. This country has seen time-to-time twists in its art form which makes it very interesting. This article focuses mainly on Kintsugi, an art form that is not only used for vessels but also needs to be inculcated by us in our day-to-day lives.

Keywords

Japan, Kintsugi, art, gold

Japanese Arts

Japan is an Island country in East Asia. It is in the northwest Pacific Ocean and is bordered on the west by the Sea of Japan. It is a very interesting country due to its food, culture, art, architecture, traditions, and craft. It is a beautiful country from the wilderness in Hokkaido to the white-pristine beaches of Okinawa. It has beautiful mountains, rocky coastlines, beautiful and long green bamboo forests, and some of the world's most jaw-droppingly wonderful waterfalls. Japan can be enjoyed all year round as it is the land of amazing diversity.

Kintsugi means to join with gold. The power of Kintsugi is not only to make the pot or vessel whole again but also to repair it with gold thread making it as good as a new one. It is basically an art form of filling any kind of broken pottery and making it whole again. This unique technique has been adopted by Japanese artists to hold the broken pieces together with the most precious metals like gold, silver, and platinum.



Image: Kintsugi Bowl

Jomon period is the time when all types of art forms took birth that matched the season or occasion for the dinners. In Jomon period pottery techniques emerged for repairing broken ceramics. This tradition, known as Kintsukuroi (golden repair) is still going on strongly.

Technique of Japanese Pot Art: Joman means pattern. The actual technique of Japanese pot art is Kintsugi or Kintsukuroi which means the process of repairing fragments and giving them a new, more refined aspect, where the cracks are hidden.

During the Jomon period (13,000 BC to 300 BC), when most inhabitants in Japan were hunters and gatherers, objects were made from clay which were then hardened by fire earthenware, stoneware, and porcelain.

Pottery and porcelain also are one of the oldest Japanese crafts and art forms dating back to the Neolithic Period.

There is a long and successful history of ceramic production. Japanese artists have brought the concept of earthenware, pottery, glazed stoneware, glazed pottery, porcelain, and blue and white color design decorative pottery. Wherever you go in Japan, be it in the village or town, you will always find ceramics. It's a part of their culture.

Tea ceremony is a famous occasion for the Japanese people and artists where they celebrate their culture and art. On this occasion and Kaiseki we find a variety of ceramics. At the Tea Ceremony, guests are expected to pick up and appreciate their Chawan (tea bowl) after having tea. At Kaiseki meals, chefs are known to be meticulous in their choice of plating, often selecting one that's the reason their art history is deep.

The highly refined traditional art forms of Japan also include Ikebana (flower arranging), gardening, architecture, painting, and sculpture.

Japan has a long varied art tradition but it is particularly celebrated for its ceramics. It has one of the oldest pottery practices in the world.

Kaiga, also is one of the oldest and most refined forms of Japanese visual art forms.

According to the studies, when the Japanese began to free itself from the cultural influence of China and develop indigenous forms of expression, the secular arts became increasingly important.

Japan is known for its rich history of art that goes back thousands of years, some that have even originated in about 10,000 BC. Most Japanese art bears the mark of extensive interaction with or reaction to outside forces. Japanese mix their art with nature, the simplicity and beauty of nature shines through in watercolors, sculptures, and pottery. Japanese people connect with the roots of oceans, islands, hills, forests, etc for their art which covers a wide range of art styles and media including natural ink painting, woodblock prints, ceramics, calligraphy on silk, and paper origami, mostly related to nature. Pottery in Japan is made with traditional efforts; a beautiful cherry blossom is hand drawn on a gourd-shaped body. The gourd-shaped body is mostly preferred because that shape has been regarded as a lucky charm for "disaster removal" and "evil protection" since ancient times.

The painting of the Japanese is famous worldwide in the name of Nihonga (a general term for traditional Japanese painting) which means that their art reflects their lifestyle and culture.

Conclusion

Kintsugi is a golden journey and is a strong metaphor for life. It teaches us that whenever ups and downs occur in our life, we should gracefully apply the concept of Kintsugi. We should stand bold rather than hiding our cracks, broken hearts, problems and imperfections. We need to learn to accept them as a part of life and find solutions to repair ourselves from the damage with positivity and emerge back stronger. There will always be uninvited challenges and we are bound to make mistakes as humans, but these things are what will help us grow, learn, and change our weak moments into strength, beauty and build character. This art technique teaches us resilience in all aspects of life.

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About the Author

Mou Mallick Dey is from Ranchi, Jharkhand. She has completed her M.A. in Economics from Ranchi University and her B.Ed in Economics from J G College, Ahmedabad. She is a learner and passionate about what she does. By profession, she is an artist and teacher. During her free time, she enjoys conducting various art workshops and exhibitions. Being around art, any form of art brings her immense joy and happiness. She writes poems, stories, essays, songs, and a lot of other things in Hindi and English languages.

Her first Anthology is "Melodious Musings of Love". As of now, 11 of her Anthology English books have been published. She is an active member of various literary and creative platforms. She has also won many awards for her write-ups and artworks.

