

柚

木

沙

弥

郎

HUMOUR in COLOUR

Textures and textiles by Yunoki Samiro



Samiro Yunoki was born in 1922. In 1947 he began to work at the Ohara Museum of Art in Kurashiki in Okayama prefecture, a town with rich traditions and a centre of Japanese folk crafts (mingei). While at the museum Yunoki saw a calendar designed by Keisuke Serizawa, a master craftsman in the art of stencil-dyeing (katazome). The calendar featured bold patterns printed on rich textured handmade paper. This inspired Yunoki to study the mingei traditions being revived under the guidance of Soetsu Yanagi in a group which included the potters Bernard Leach and Shoji Hamada.

Yunoki decided to devote himself to the study of katazome and armed himself with a letter of introduction from Yanagi when he traveled to Tokyo to meet Serizawa, who recommended him to study katazome "in the field". Yunoki therefore apprenticed himself to a craftsman working in the small fishing town of Yui in Shizuoka prefecture, not far from Mount Fuji.

In 1949 Yunoki exhibited at the Kokugakai Tenrankai (a society exhibiting Japanese Arts and Crafts), and has continued to do so ever since eventually becoming its President. In 2003 he led the society in presenting the opening exhibition of the Baillie Scott house, Blackwell on the shores of Windermere following its refurbishment.

Yunoki was elected President of the Women's College of Fine Art in Tokyo, a position he held until his retirement in 1991. He has held two exhibitions in Paris in recent years and most recently exhibited at the Setagaya Art Museum in Tokyo in May 2013.



Yunoki has diversified his work considerably, experimenting with rough natural materials, painting on wood, glass, and textile materials. He retains a strong link to the rich folk craft tradition which inspired him but brings to it his own style full of warmth, wit, and humour. His bold use of colour and contrast bring a lively dynamism to his chosen medium.

Free talks 6 pm 7, 14, and 21 February at the Michaelhouse Centre
Works on display have been loaned by private owners and Addenbrooke's Hospital