

situation that she chooses to ignore. Tashima's grandfather experienced secondary radiation from black rain while he was helping his colleagues in the fire department in 1945. In 2011, when Tashima heard the news from Japan about the melt-down at the nuclear plant, he knew first-hand how devastating nuclear fall-out can be. "But we still just have to live", Tashima muses. "Just like having x-rays, we still have to carry on and believe that things will get better. We want to help the people who need it, but at the same time, we know that we cannot live miles from the nuclear plant—so it is a big dilemma. How do we protect ourselves and still get back to a normal life?" To Tashima, the banana represents those who try to avoid dealing with tragedy; it is a protective skin that falsely shields us from life's challenges from natural disasters to societal oppression. The oblivious woman's umbrella is another layer of protection, but to Tashima, it also represents how it protects only one person. Metaphorically, it is a call for us to consider others instead of just ourselves.

In September of 2011, Tashima will participate in the group exhibition, *To Wander Out of Place: Artists and Asia*, to coincide with the NCECA conference. The intent of the exhibition is to show the mutual influences between cultures through ceramics. For this exhibition, Tashima created *The Green Tea Series*. The new works reflect a nostalgic longing for his homeland—after living in the United States for over twenty years, Tashima still feels Japanese. For example, in *Shino Chawan Boy* (2012) a smile-



Shino Chawan Boy, multiple-fired stoneware, handbuilt, 18 x 31 x 26 cm, firing temp: cone 5, 2012

ing man bathes in a bowl of Matcha—the green tea used in the Japanese tea ceremony, while a plate of Japanese tea sweets sits nearby. While the tea ceremony is a polite, traditional ritual, it is the opposite of the man's actions of bathing nude in the beverage. In many ways, it represents the artist who is happy with his identity as Japanese, yet equally happy with the free-spiritedness that being American affords; Tashima can live in both worlds seamlessly and drink the best of both cultures.

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Hirotsune Tashima has MFA from Alfred University, NY and BFA from Osaka University of Art. He has been teaching at Pima College in Tucson since 1999. He has received numerous grants, which include Pollock-Krasner Foundation, Arizona Commission on the Arts, Tucson/Pima Arts Council, Phoenix Art Museum and Japanese Government. He has held more than 26 solo exhibitions in various locations include NY, Tokyo and Tucson Museum of Art. He was invited or juried to participate in more than 140 group exhibitions including Asian American Ceramics at Kentucky Museum of Art and Design, KY, Ceramic National at Everson Museum of Art, NY, Oregon Biennial at Portland Art Museum, OR, Immigrant Experience at Fuller Museum, MA, Clay National by National Council on Education for Ceramic Art at Barrick Museum, NV, Fletcher Challenge Ceramic Award at Auckland Art Museum, New Zealand, and Contemporary Art Competition at Taro Okamoto Museum in Japan to name a few. His artwork has been collected by numbers of private and public museums including Auckland Museum, New Zealand, Barrick Museum, NV, Everson Museum of Art, NY, Jingdezhen Museum of Ceramics, China, The Banff Centre for the Arts, Canada, A.I.R. Vallauris, France, and singer David Bowie.

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