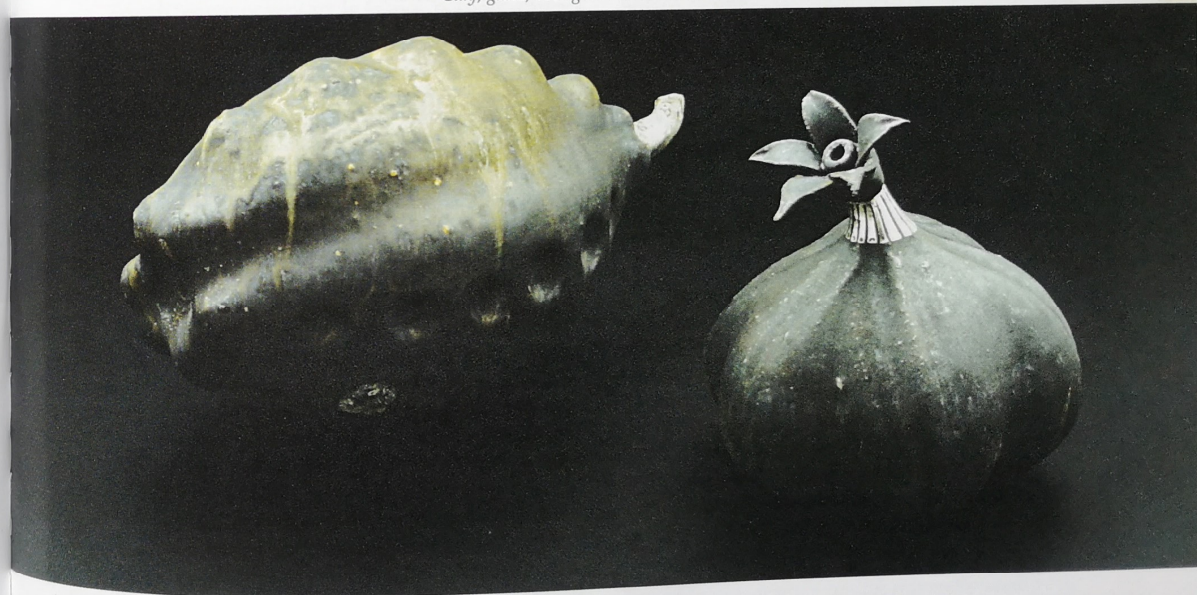




*Stacked House Box. 2006. Clay, glaze. 20 x 35 x 15 cm.*

*Left: Two Pitchers. 2007. Clay, glaze, brass. 14 x 7 cm. Right: Dark Patina Fruit. 2008. Clay, glaze. 21 x 13 cm. Below left: Dark Patina Fruit. 2007. Clay, glaze, over glaze silver. 26 x 13 cm. Below right: Dark Patina Fruit. 2007. Clay, glaze, over glaze silver. 17 x 14 cm.*



which glaze reminiscent of the southern seas was applied in geometric patterns over a pure white porcelain form. In works such as this, he explored the nature of clay and its relationship to glaze. Around the same time, he became interested in woodfiring, and produced a large number of works fired in wood kilns.

In recent years, Yamada has focused his attention on vessel-based work. The reason he has begun to concentrate on functional work is related to the attraction and curiosity toward objects that has developed within his mind. There is a certain trend in Yamada's vessels: the type of vessels he makes, such as stacked boxes, pitchers, teabowls, ceramic pillows and soy-sauce bottles, have a slightly different character from the works of other Japanese artists.

Yamada says that he is often unconsciously attracted to the power emanating from old things and the special power of their certainty of form. His particular focus on making objects for use in daily life is a result of the merging of this unconscious attraction with his natural curiosity. For example, his *Stacked Boxes* grew out of his attraction to traditional Japanese storehouses as he unconsciously tried to make something approaching them in his own work. Not as decorated as a residential house, a storehouse, with its simple quiet form and white walls, represents for Yamada the beauty of Japanese culture.

In recent years Yamada has travelled repeatedly to Korea. In Korea, he was attracted to Joseon furniture and utensils. In the foreign culture of Korea, he

encountered elements that were not a part of his own identity, which caused him to begin to think about Japanese traditional culture and the traditions of daily life in Korea. Eventually Yamada began to seek in his own work the kind of attraction and inspiration he felt in objects from the past.

In his 2007 exhibition at Tong In Gallery in Seoul, he showed works that he says "take on the generations" as they are used. His display was interesting as, for example, on a round ceramic tray, he placed a Korean silver spoon along with a pouring vessel and a sake cup. The round tray is a daily utensil in both Japan and Korea. The pouring vessel, tastefully decorated with a matt-black glaze and dull silver overglaze enamel, is somewhere between traditional and modern. Yamada says that these glazes become more and more familiar as people use the vessel. Yamada was fortunate to have this exhibition as an opportunity to find out how his work can be put to use in the living environment of a foreign culture.

Yamada calls his newest series *Dark Patina Fruit*. The inspiration for this new work was a decorative lotus root he found at an antique shop. Combined with his interest in plants, he says he was fascinated by this lotus root. He was certain that anyone would be attracted by this power of existence that had moved him so. The works of this series are formed in a unique way. Using a core of crumpled newspaper on the interior, he chooses a comfortable form while rolling the clay.

finishing the piece in his hands, he can tell how the piece will feel in the user's hand. At first glance, the work appears to be a metal model of a fruit, but it is actually a functional vessel with a special warmth.

One work from the *Dark Patina Fruit* series received the Encouragement Prize in the 2008 Asahi Craft Exhibition, and its strange power attracted the attention of many people. In the *Dark Patina Fruit* series,

Hiroko Miura continues to broaden his world, listening to the voice of his own heart while discovering, step by step, the traditions and new possibilities of ceramic art.

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