

The Creation of Urushi Objects

1. The Core (Wood Core) analogous to human skeletal structure

In addition the core may be ceramic or metal. In olden times animal skins were used.

lathed core wood turned and lathed on a wheel. Primarily for tea containers, bowls, etc.

joined core boards fitted together and joined. Primarily for items such as writing boxes

bent core boards steamed and bent into shape



2. The Foundation analogous to human muscles and organs

Raw urushi attaches cloth to the wood core to strengthen it. A sticky substance called *sabi*, made from mixing urushi, a polishing powder and water, is applied over the cloth layer with a spatula to perfect the shape.



3. Lacquer

analogous to human skin

In order to make a good lacquer sheath over the foundation, an under coat of lacquer and a middle coat of lacquer are applied. After that the upper coat of lacquer goes on.



Varieties of Lacquer

kakiawase nuri

wood grain visible under lacquer

nunome nuri

cloth texture visible under lacquer

kiji tamenuri

wood grain visible under toffee-colored lacquer

tamenuri

toffee-colored lacquer

ikkannuri

lacquer over papier mache

roshoku nuri

waxy black lacquer, mirror finish

shin nuri

opaque reflective surface

4. Decoration (makie or lacquer painting) analogous to human fashion

Additional decorative techniques include inlaid gold (chinkin), incised patterns (kinma), hidden image (mittae), etc.

Makie



Hira Makie (flat makie) most basic technique
a pattern is painted with urushi, gold powder is sprinkled on top, over which urushi is painted again and polished



Taka Makie (relief makie) painting on raised motif
using sabi (see above in Foundation section), sumi powder, urushi, gold or silver powder and so forth, a bas relief foundation is created, after which an urushi sheath is applied and lacquer painting is rendered.



Togidashi Makie (polished makie)

a technique for which a painted design is applied at the time of the middle lacquer, on top of which urushi is layered. Then the entire surface is polished so that the painted design floats into view. Said to be the origin of makie.



Materials

| | |
|----------|------------------------|
| kinpun | gold powder |
| ginpun | silver powder |
| kanagu | metal work |
| kirikane | cut gold foil |
| raden | inlaid mother of pearl |