

LOS GATOS

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Los Gatos

Living



IWASAWA—

Soul of Japan in Los Gatos

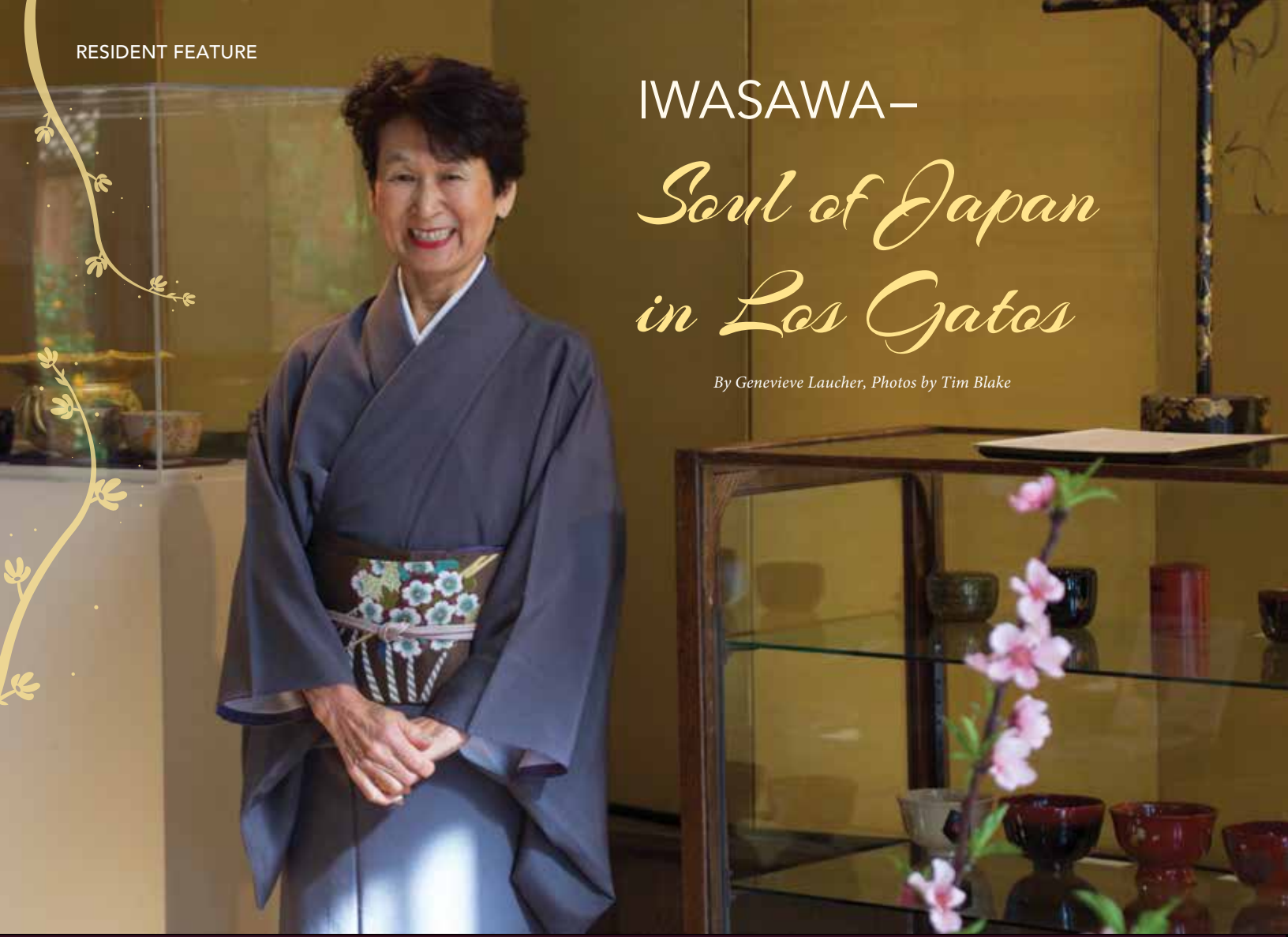


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IWASAWA— *Soul of Japan in Los Gatos*

By Genevieve Laucher, Photos by Tim Blake



The gallery at night

Walking around downtown Los Gatos, you've probably seen Kumiko Iwasawa's gallery, Iwasawa Oriental Art—the beautiful, Japanese-style building stands out from its neighbors on University Avenue. Even more fascinating is the gallery's history and the rich Japanese culture Kumiko brings to our community.

The proprietor Kumiko Iwasawa is from Hakodate, a port city on the island of Hokkaido in Japan. Hakodate has a wealth of natural beauty and is surrounded by the ocean. Hakodate was voted the number one charming city enjoyed by tourists. Bringing Hakodate's essence to Los Gatos, thirty-three years ago Kumiko and her husband developed an empty lot into a distinguished Japanese art center at 75 University Avenue. This sophisticated business draws in international clients with keen interest in a variety of connoisseurship.

One of Kumiko's many lecture programs is focused on Japanese lacquer art at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco. This workshop, led by Kumiko Iwasawa and Christy Bartlett, the Director of the Urasenke Foundation, San Francisco, provides the opportunity to explore how works of Japanese lacquer are made, how historical trends in lacquer art influence Japanese artists and how the beauty of lacquer complements the Way of Tea. Supplementing the presentation was a multimedia opportunity to view exquisite lacquer objects.



The ancient vase, Sueki 須恵器 on display with flowers from the backyard garden of Iwasawa. Sueki period: 7th century AD.



Painting of Hakone Gardens by Gregory Burns with other contemporary artworks by Ken Matsumoto and David Kimball Anderson, displayed with a 19th century Imari vase.



Japanese delegates from Mie Prefecture (the location of this year's G7 Summit) visited Iwasawa and David Kinch from Manresa



Calligraphy class held via YouTube (using modern technology to study traditional Japanese culture) on Wednesday nights

Another aspect of her profession was working on the Manresa publication, *Manresa: An Edible Reflection*.

"Kumiko Iwasawa and her extraordinary gallery in Los Gatos have been a refuge and inspiration for me in many ways. I am humbled by her dedication to quality and beauty on such a high scale and am proud to have used her pieces at Manresa Restaurant and as meaningful contributions in our own published works. The spirit of Iwasawa Oriental Arts truly is an oasis in the frenetic nature of our modern lives."
 ~ David Kinch, Chef-Proprietor, Manresa Restaurant in Los Gatos

For the community of Los Gatos, Iwasawa Oriental Art authored and presented a digital publication on Japanese lacquered arts centered on the tradition of 写 utsushi, and an exhibition to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the gallery in 2012. This project embodies the strong motivation to present the true nature of creativity within tradition, which is deeply embedded in Japanese culture. The digital publication will utilize the latest technology in digital media and serve as a vehicle to educate a wider audience on the importance and soul of utsushi.

This book is being offered as a free research resource to the public and is a way for Kumiko to express her gratitude to society for their support of Iwasawa Oriental Art over the last 30 years.



Deep appreciation of the seasons has immeasurable significance in Japanese culture. The cherry blossoms on display for the season are pictured in a contemporary vase. In Japan, cherry blossoms symbolize the transience of life, which is a major theme in Buddhism. The cherry blossom tree is known for its short but brilliant blooming season, a natural process that metaphorically describes human life.



NUMU's Stephen Beal exhibition with Director Lisa Coscino. From left, Stephen Beal, Director Lisa Coscino and gallerist George Larson.

Creativity Within Tradition:

Capturing ancient tradition, in a new age digital publication: Download the book as PDF from www.japaneseartantiques.com or download from iTunes to read on your iPad with iBooks or on your computer with iTunes.

Spanning from the 7th century to current multimedia, Kumiko brings together diverse multicultural communities of all ages and orientations to deepen their awareness and connection in the arts.

"Iwasawa Oriental Art has been in business in Los Gatos for over thirty years, introducing Japanese Art and Culture to a broad audience. In addition to showing traditional art objects, Iwasawa Oriental Art presents numerous exhibits and programs that introduce many aspects of Japanese culture — such as tea ceremony, calligraphy, lacquer wares, and food — to its community. As one of the most innovative galleries in Silicon Valley, Iwasawa Oriental Art is now engaged in combining traditional arts with modern and contemporary art, to demonstrate the appeal of modern aesthetics in Japanese arts."

~ Emily Sano, Director Emerita, Asian Art Museum San Francisco

Celebrating the Fruition of Good Deeds

<http://www.japaneseartantiques.com>

Iwasawa Oriental Art

75 University Ave., Los Gatos CA 95030

Hours: 11am-5pm Tuesday-Saturday

To confirm the gallery is open or to schedule an appointment, please call 408-395-2339.