

MAKE MEND KINTSUGI HACK

Wabi-Sabi Workshop Series

Friday, April 15, 2022
USC Fisher Museum of Art Courtyard
University of Southern California

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- This is the third in a series of wabi-sabi workshops presented by the USC Roski School of Art and Design.
- Participants are invited to bring small items that need repair or embellishment.

WABI-SABI

Wabi-sabi is a concept in Japanese aesthetics that centers the beauty in imperfection, seeing flaws as part of beauty. Many of the art and craft practices associated with wabi-sabi include everyday techniques and skills to elevate or showcase broken or damaged objects and highlight their flaws.

KINTSUGI

Kintsugi is a technique of repairing and embellishing broken pottery with gold or gold dust. Instead of trying to hide the repair with adhesives that would blend in or be camouflaged, kintsugi deliberately highlights the seams of repair. This practice of “golden joinery” (kintsugi) or “golden repair” (kintsukuroi) draws attention to damage, turns it into a thing of beauty, and celebrates breakage and repair as part of an object’s history.



Regarding the history of kintsugi, historians are not entirely certain, but believe the practice dates back to the late fifteenth century. There is a legend in which a Japanese shogun (military ruler) sends a cracked tea bowl to China to be repaired. The shogun was displeased with what he deemed an ugly repair, and craftsmen were motivated to create a more beautiful method of repair, which led to kintsugi. Kintsugi was a common practice in Japan by the seventeenth century.

There are several different styles of kintsugi, including

- ◉ **crack**, the most common technique, involving minimal lacquer
- ◉ **piece**, which includes larger fragments of epoxy to replace missing pieces of the original object
- ◉ **joint-call**, which integrates pieces from other broken objects, joining together different aesthetics

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ◉ What does it mean—philosophically, psychologically, or otherwise—to highlight damage and repair as part of the history of an object?
- ◉ How can repair be a wellness practice?
- ◉ What is the value of seeing the beauty in imperfection, or the imperfection in beauty?
- ◉ To what else can you apply the concept of wabi-sabi?

IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- ◉ Repair Café
<https://www.repaircafe.org>
- ◉ Tom of Holland: The Visible Mending Programme
<https://tomofholland.com>
- ◉ Artist Andrea Zittel
<https://www.zittel.org>
- ◉ Victor Solomon's kintsugi basketball court
<https://www.dezeen.com/2020/08/18/victor-solomon-kintsugi-court-basketball/#>
- ◉ Bonnie Kemske's lecture from the National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts—"Kintsugi: The Broken Pot Made Whole"
<https://bit.ly/KintsugiJournal>
- ◉ Upcoming Visions and Voices events:
 - 4/20:** [Earth Week Celebration featuring Ron Finley and the Arts and Climate Collective](#)
 - 4/21:** [Ku'er Worlds: Queering Chinese American Identities in Art and Film](#)
 - 4/22:** [Ku'er Worlds Workshop: Art and Filmmaking Workshop](#)
 - 4/29-30:** [South of Expo: Art, Artists, and Cultural Spaces Since the 1960s](#)



Kintsugi crack method



Kintsugi piece method



Kintsugi joint-call method

LOCAL POTTERY STUDIOS:

- Clay ca | <https://www.clayca.com>
- Pot | <https://www.potstudiola.com>
- The Pottery Studio | <https://thepotterystudio.com>

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

CHRISTINA SNIDER of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

BOOKS

- Laura Price and Harriet Hawkins, *Geographies of Making, Craft and Creativity* (New York: Routledge, 2018).
- Elizabeth Kiritani, *Vanishing Japan: Traditions, Crafts & Culture* (North Clarendon: Tuttle Publishing, 2012).
- Brian Moeran, *Folk Art Potters of Japan: Beyond an Anthropology of Aesthetics* (London: Routledge, 1997).

ARTICLES

- Caitlin DeSilvey, James R. Ryan, and Stephen Bond, “[Everyday Kintsukuroi: Mending as Making,](#)” in *Geographies of Making, Craft and Creativity* (New York: Routledge, 2018): 195–212.
- Curtis Benzle, “[Kintsugi and Object History,](#)” *Pottery Making Illustrated* 19, no. 6 (2016): 12–14.

DATABASES

- [JapanKnowledge](#)
- [Art, Design & Architecture Collection](#)
- [Cultural Japan](#)

JOURNALS

- [Arts and Crafts of Japan](#)
- [Studies in Japanese Literature and Culture](#)

ADDITIONAL ELECTRONIC RESOURCES

- [Japanese Studies research guide](#)
- [USC Dornsife Shinso Ito Center for Japanese Religions and Culture](#)

