

Creative Living

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Corinne Abatt editor/644-1100



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Lifestyle clues hidden in folds of silk kimonos

By Corinne Abatt
staff writer

In historical Japan, the kimono did more than cover the body. It was an expression of art, a statement of philosophy and a symbol of status and lifestyle.

Americans don't expect that much from a wardrobe — at the least, functional, at the most, decorative — the reverse being true for the more vain among us.

Jake Costello, a 1972 Seaborn High graduate, came into Birmingham last week from his home in Kyoto, Japan, with a cache of antique kimonos which will be on display at Halsted Gallery Sept. 10-21.

With him was Mikako Adachi, who spent a lot of time folding the silk robes after he spread them out to show the intricate painting, embroidery and dye techniques which make them so engaging.

Costello had just finished his freshman year at Western Michigan University when he went on a university-sponsored trip to China and Japan.

"That trip," he said, "stimulated my interest in the East."

After taking Asian studies at University of Michigan in the general degree program, he went into the Peace Corps, stationed in the Philippines.

Now he lives in Kyoto and works as a copywriter for a Japanese company doing business in southeast Asia.

Kyoto, he said, is one of the few places where some of the beautiful antique Japanese kimonos can still be found — provided you know where to look.

"We scoured the countryside," said Costello, explaining that the ones he brought with him are 80-100 years old.

Several rare ones are made of thread from banana leaves, tie-dyed and woven into patterns.

These robes, which take from six months to a year to make, come from Okinawa.

Another type, furisode, Costello described as, "A coming out kimono. A young woman makes her debut in society in this. She wouldn't wear it after she married."

The kimonos in the show are done in a variety of decorative processes from rice paste resist and ikat to painting and embroidery.

The more art work, the more valuable the garment. Costello pointed out that on several the more elaborate art is on the inside — to fool the tax collector into believing the wearer was only of moderate means.

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At the opening on Tuesday, Sept. 10, Costello will perform on the shakuhachi, a bamboo flute. Price range is \$150 to 1,000.

Halsted Gallery, 560 N. Woodward, Birmingham, is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday-Saturday.



Jake Costello, with Mikako Adachi modeling (above), holds the sleeve of a short kimono with an overall pattern of blue-purple done in a tie-dye technique that requires painstaking precision. At far left is hand-painted and embroidered full length kimono probably originally owned by a person of wealth. At immediate left, Mikako models a short kimono with a lining as beautifully detailed as the outside. The colors are both subtle and brilliant. All three are silk.



Staff photos by
Jerry Zolynsky

Chamber Winds expanding its horizons

The Detroit Chamber Winds will be heard in an hour-long broadcast beginning at 7 p.m. Sunday on WQRS-FM 105.

Detroit Chamber Winds, opening its fourth season Friday, Sept. 20 at the performing arts theater on OCC's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills, is now solid part of the musical activity of the metropolitan area.

The other concerts are: Christmas Brass Concert, Saturday, Nov. 30 at Christ Church Grosse Pointe and Sunday, Dec. 8, Christ Church Cranbrook; Brass Music of Five Centuries, Friday, Feb. 14, Christ Church Cranbrook; "Octo!" Orchard Ridge campus, Farmington Hills, Friday, March 7, and Ruth Laredo, pianist, and the ensemble, Friday, April 25 at Orchestra Hall.

In addition to the five concerts on the local program, the group will make its New York debut at Carnegie Hall recital hall on Sunday, Oct. 20. The Sept. 20 concert is a preview of that with selections by Mozart, Strauss, Beethoven and Dvorak.

Since almost all of the 20 members of the ensemble are Detroit Symphony Orchestra musicians, this dovetails with the symphony orchestra's concert in New York City Friday, Oct. 18.

The ensemble, with a hard-working board of trustees headed by Teryl L. Minasian and an equally energetic group of musician-administrators, has a number of corporate sponsors and individual contributors.

FOR INSTANCE, Stroh Brewery is sponsoring the Carnegie Hall concert. Seidman and Seidman, a Troy CPA firm, is sponsoring three of the regular concerts and DP Corporate Services of Livonia is co-sponsoring a fourth.

The Orchestra Hall concert marks the first time the ensemble has brought in a big-name artist for a program. The selections for the program with Laredo are the Mozart Quintet in E-Flat Major, K452 and the Beethoven Quintet Op. 16.

Two of the ensemble members, Victoria King, bassoon, and Maury Okun, trombone, described the organization, from both the business and artistic point of view, as democratic.

Okun, for instance, brought up in this area (Southfield Lathrup High graduate) is responsible for development, which among other things includes fund raising.

"I hate to admit it," he said, "but, I really enjoy it a lot," saying that would be a big help and adding, "we're also going to invite recording

company representatives to hear us."

Instead of taking quiet leisurely vacations like the rest of the world, the ensemble members use the free time for Detroit Woodwinds business.

Season tickets for the five-concert season are \$32 each, students and seniors, \$27. Mail ticket orders to Detroit Chamber Winds, Box 1588, Royal Oak, 48068-1588. For information, call 544-5508.

Oboliet John Snow (left), bassoonist Victoria King, and trombonist Maury Okun have been part of the Detroit Chamber Winds since it was founded almost four years ago. Snow has since left to become principal oboist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra but said he will be in the audience for the group's Carnegie Hall debut on Sunday, Oct. 20. King and Okun, members of the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, both grew up in the metropolitan Detroit area.

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