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## Exhibition At Joan B. Mirviss Focuses On Seven Japanese Ceramics Masters

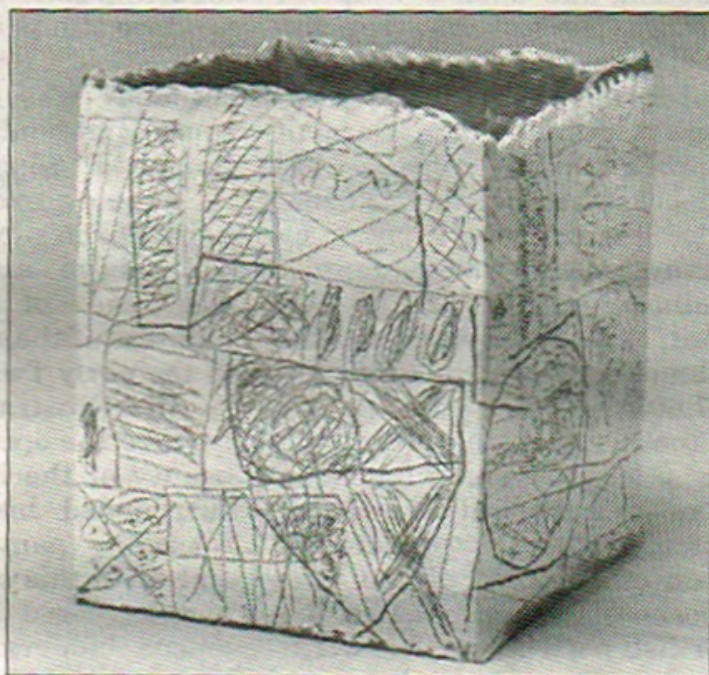
NEW YORK CITY — From March 14 to April 26, Joan B. Mirviss is presenting "Seven Sages of Ceramics; Modern Japanese Masters," an exhibition organized in collaboration with the leading modern ceramic dealer in Japan, Shibuya Kuroda Toen. This is the concluding exhibition of the gallery's 35th anniversary year and follows two years after its exhibition "Birds of Dawn: Pioneers of Japan's Sodeisha Ceramic Movement." The current exhibition's illustrated catalog includes an insightful essay by Kida Takuya, curator at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo.

This exhibition focuses on seven modern masters of the clay medium — all creative virtuosi as well as brilliant technicians. Spanning a period of more than 50 years, starting just prior to World War II, these artists were at the vanguard of Japanese clay art, when it was poised to assume its present position as the most diversified and inventive in the world.

These men transformed and surpassed the classical standard for functional ceramic excellence — devotion to the ancient Chinese traditions or allegiance to the late Sixteenth Century Momoyama tea wares, thought to be the golden-age acme of Japanese ceramics — and brought to their oeuvres a new, modern and highly influential sensibility.

Taken from the ancient theme of "the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove," the show's title references the Third Century group of learned Chinese men who escaped the corruption and intrigues of the court to live in seclusion, often meeting in a bamboo grove where they held influential discussions about life, art and culture. This show features the work of seven Japanese masters of clay who are all enormously celebrated in Japan but remain largely unknown in the West: Arakawa Toyozo, Ishiguro Munemaro, Kamoda Shoji, Kawakita Handeishi, Kitaoji Rosanjin, Okabe Mineo and Yagi Kazuo.

Each brought new light and creativity to specific



**Yagi Kazuo, white square vessel with incised abstract pattering, 1966, glazed stoneware 12¼ by 10½ by 10½ inches.**

aspects of the ceramics field. Some focused on new interpretations of classic tea wares of the Momoyama era, while others sought to meld tradition with highly personal interpretations. Like the Seven Sages, these seven featured artists distanced themselves from the ceramic establishment and brought their unique independent spirit, passion and talent to their art form. Many of the artists never had the opportunity to communicate or collaborate with each other, so this exhibition provides a visual forum or virtual "bamboo grove."

Individually and as a group, they paved the way for the succeeding postwar generation of clay artists who collectively have been referred to as the new Golden Age of Japanese Ceramics.

Joan B. Mirviss is at 39 East 78th Street. For information, [www.mirviss.com](http://www.mirviss.com) or 212-799-4021.