

ASIAN LACQUER CRAFT EXCHANGE PROGRAM in Yangon “The Allure of Lacquer”

အာရု ယွန်းလက်မှု အနုပညာဖလှယ်ရေး အစီအစဉ် (ရန်ကုန်)

ညီးငြင်သော ယွန်း

報告書

Proceedings

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok, The Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project Executive Committee



Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Program in Yangon

“The Allure of Lacquer”

漆はウルシ科の木から採れる樹液で、アジア独特の素材です。日本その他、中国・韓国、ミャンマー、タイ、ベトナムなどの国でも漆が採れ、漆器が生産されています。しかしながら、アジアの各国の経済発展に伴い、人々の生活スタイルも変化し、漆工芸への関心は少なくなり、漆器を使用する家庭も減ってきてています。

アジア漆工芸学術支援事業は、漆器産地であるバガンで2005年より交流事業を行ってきました。しかしながら、バガンでは限られた漆器製造関係者間による交流にとどまるため、広く漆工芸の魅力、漆工芸の可能性・素晴らしさを発信するためには、都市であるヤンゴンの地での交流事業を開催が必要と考えるようになりました。各国の漆文化や技術表現を学びあう交流を行なうことで、新たな漆に対する価値の発見や共有をし、今後、変化する生活スタイルに添ったデザインのや、芸術表現としてのミャンマーでの漆工芸の革新を期待しつつ、日本やアジアの文化の相互理解を深めていくことを目的とし、2017年9月9日、ヤンゴンのMYANM/ARTギャラリーにてミャンマーと日本、そして東南アジアの漆作品の展示、漆芸作家によるトークイベント、そして技術体験ワークショップを行いました。なおこの事業は、国際交流基金バンコク日本文化センターとの共催し開催いたしました。

アジア漆工芸学術支援事業
代表 松島さくら子

Natural lacquer, the sap of several tree species native to East and Southeast Asia, has been used since antiquity to protect and ennable wood, bamboo, and other materials. As they evolved, Asian societies developed their own unique lacquer arts culture. Asian societies still produce lacquerware, but in our increasing fast-paced world, lacquer culture and industry is in decline.

This event sought to increase awareness of the beauty of lacquer and the remarkable culture that surrounds this wonderful art and craft. At all our events the goals are to: 1) Encourage Asian peoples to rediscover and preserve their traditional lacquer cultures; 2) Encourage artisans and artists to create new designs and renew lacquer's relevance to our modern lifestyles. We believe that developing an understanding of Asian lacquer culture in its totality will lead to the strengthening of our individual lacquer cultures.

The Yangon Program was a collaboration between the Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project (ALCEP) and the Japan Foundation in Bangkok. ALCEP began in Bagan in 2004 with yearly programs by Japanese and Myanmar lacquer experts. In 2014 the project expanded and since then has held programs in Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. In Yangon, lacquer artists and artisans from Myanmar, Japan, Thailand, Vietnam, and Cambodia exhibited their art and discussed the state of the lacquer arts in their nations.

Sakurako Matsushima
Director, Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project

Program

期間 : 2017年9月9日(土)

場所 : MYANM/ART
98 Bo Galay Zay Street 3rd Floor, Yangon

内容 : 1)アジアの漆作品展示
2)トークイベント
3)技術体験ワークショップ

主催 : 国際交流基金バンコク日本文化センター
(The Japan Foundation, Bangkok)

協力 : アジア漆工芸学術支援事業実行委員会
Japan Culture House
Lacquerware Technology College,
Myanmar Lacquerware Association
東京芸術大学

後援 : 在ミャンマー日本国大使館



Poster and banner

Date: 9 September, 2017

Place: MYANM/ART, 98 Bo Galay Zay Street 3rd Floor, Yangon

Events:

- 1) Exhibition of Asian Lacquer Artworks
- 2) Panel Discussion: Artists from Japan, Myanmar, and SE Asia
- 3) Workshops: Myanmar and Japanese traditional lacquer techniques

Organizers: The Japan Foundation, Bangkok
The Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project Executive Committee

Support: The Japan Culture House, the Embassy of Japan in Myanmar, the Bagan Lacquerware Technology College, the Myanmar Lacquer Association, and Tokyo University of the Arts



Exhibition

9 September (13:00~17:00)

“Asian Lacquer Art Exhibition in Yangon”

Over 20 lacquer art works from Myanmar, Japan, Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam and USA were exhibited.

ミャンマー・日本・ベトナム・タイ・カンボジアの漆器・現代漆作品約20点展示

Myanmar

Lacquerware Technology College

U Kyaw Kyaw Win, Daw Swe Swe Myint, Daw Tin Mar Win, U Tin Win, U Zaw Naing, Research and Development Department

Myanmar Lacquerware Association

U Aung Kyaw Htun, U Ko Ko Maung, U Maung Maung, Daw Maw Maw Aung, U Myo Myo, U Soe Myint

Japan

Matsushima Sakurako, Ogura Norihiko, Okukubo Kiyomi, Tanakadate Ami

Southeast Asia

Cambodia - Eric Stocker (France),

Thailand - Lipikorn Makaew, Rush Pleansuk, Sumanatsya Voharn

Vietnam - Cong Kim Hoa, Trinh Tuan

USA

Sha Sha Higby

In addition, artwork from student collaborations between the Bagan Lacquerware Technology College and Tokyo University of the Arts was also exhibited.



Street of MYANM/ART



Lacquer object works



Myanmar lacquer art



Japanese lacquer art



Various lacquer works were exhibited

Opening 9 September (13:30~)

Opening Remarks:

開会の挨拶

Ms. Nathalie Johnston, Director, MYANM/ART

Mr. Yusuke Matsuoka, the Embassy of Japan in Myanmar

会場である MYANM/ART のナタリージョンストン氏, 日本大使館広報文化班の松岡裕祐氏に開会の挨拶と開催の意義についてお話をいただいた。



Ms. Nathalie Jhonston



Mr. Yusuke Matsuura

Panel Discussion

9 September (13:40~15:20)

Part 1

“What is Lacquer? - Lacquer Art in Asia”

Moderator: Dr. Yoshie Itani

パネルディスカッション “漆とは何か? アジアの漆芸”

モデレーター: 井谷善恵

13:40 – “What is Lacquer?” Sakurako Matsushima,

Lacquer Artist, Professor, Utsunomiya University,
Japan

Natural lacquer—urushi in Japanese—is the sap of several species of

trees native to East and Southeast Asia. In early times, craftspeople who recognized its durability and lustrous allure began using it to coat wood, pottery, baskets, and other objects. Today, contemporary artists are increasingly working with urushi in their paintings, art objects, and jewelry.



Lacquer Art in Asia

Myanmar – U Maung Lin, Head of Department, Lacquerware Technology College

In Myanmar, there is evidence that Lacquerware production began in the Bagan Era (12th century). From the 16th century through the 19th and early 20th centuries, Lacquerware production gradually increased and quality improved. Previously, there were more than 35 Lacquerware production centers. Today however, there are only about five centers left that continue Lacquerware production and most are depended upon market conditions and facing less skill workers. Bagan, the ancient capital, was and is the place most visited by local and foreign travelers. Therefore, Lacquerware production is more developed and of high quality due to market demands, but is also facing the issue of maintaining a skilled labor force. In addition to the high-quality traditional lacquerware produced in Bagan, modern design has also improved. Lacquer businessmen, craftsmen, and labors are cooperating to better develop lacquerware production in Bagan.



Japan – Matsushima Sakurako

Urushi—Japanese natural lacquer is a part of everyday Japanese life. Urushi crafts include bowls, chopsticks, boxes, trays, and furniture. Urushi has also been widely used to paint and decorate temples. Many Japanese consider urushi an important symbol of our culture and heritage. Contemporary urushi arts can be divided into crafts and creative arts, both using the same traditional methods and techniques. Because of the breadth and scope of traditional lacquer culture, contemporary lacquer expression is



extensive and diverse. Drawing on distinctive regional technologies and traditions, lacquer craft artists create their own styles of modern lacquerware. In addition, many artists use lacquer as medium for pure artistic self-expression.

Cambodia - Eric Stocker

Historically, Cambodia had a thriving lacquer industry and culture. But the industry and technical skills were lost in the upheavals of recent times. However today, lacquer trees (*Gluta usitata*) are being tapped in Kampong Thom province and lacquerware using natural lacquer is being made in Siem Reap. More artisans are recognizing the beauty of natural lacquer and are exploring its possibilities. There has been a rebirth of lacquer culture in Cambodia.



Thailand - Sumanatsya Voharn

Lacquer sap (*Gluta usitata*) has been used since ancient times to strengthen and protect bamboo and wooden objects. In the north where the tree is common, sophisticated techniques were developed and lacquerware handicrafts became an important industry. Traditional design motifs were usually of Buddhist beliefs and myths. Today, however, the industry is in decline. Factories churn out low quality products for tourists mostly using chemical varnishes and acrylics. Traditional techniques need to be passed on to younger generations who need to use them in contemporary artistic expression. Lacquer arts and crafts needs to be introduced at art education institutions.



Vietnam - Trinh Tuan

Lacquer art in Vietnam can be divided into two genres, *do son*, lacquer crafts and *son mai*, lacquer painting. *Do son* includes tableware, furniture, and Buddhist statues. Unfortunately, with the advent of modern mass production, chemical varnishes replaced natural lacquer in most craft industries. *Son mai*, however, still flourishes as an art form. Colonial schools introduced Western style painting. Local artists then began using lacquer sap (*T. succedaneum*) in paintings, creating a new art form. Being uniquely Vietnamese increased its visibility and many young artists became lacquer painters. Lacquer is not an easy medium to work in; therefore, master artists need to hand down to younger generations the techniques that they learned over time.



Part 2 14:30~15:10

Panel Discussion “The Allure of Lacquer, and the future of lacquer arts and culture”

Moderator: Ken Dillon

パネルディスカッション “漆の魅力と漆芸文化のこれから “

モデレーター: ケンディロン

Panelists:

- U Maung Lin (Head of Research and Development Department, Lacquerware Technology College)
- U Aung Kyaw Htun (Myanmar Lacquerware Association)
- Sumanatsya Voharn (Lecturer, Chiang Mai University, Thailand)
- Eric Stocker (Owner, Angkor Artwork, Siem Reap, Cambodia)
- Trinh Tuan (Lacquer Painter, Hanoi, Vietnam)
- Sakurako Matsushima (Lacquer Artist; Professor, Utsunomiya University, Japan)
- Yoshie Itani (Historian, Japanese Art History; Professor, Tokyo University of the Arts, Japan)

In the second discussion, discussants were asked what made them choose lacquer arts; what was lacquer's allure? Answers were personal and varied, from being born into a lacquerware family, to the attraction of its history and traditions, to a love of working with the possibilities of the material itself. The floor was thrown open for questions and the audience actively joined in the discussion.

One audience member asked about the drawbacks of working with natural lacquer. U Aung Kyaw Htun addressed some technical difficulties, the time needed to remove water and the time it took to harden in particular. He noted the lack of modern methods to speed up these processes. Trinh Tuan, however, noted again that while lacquer is not easy to work with, the final product had a luster and sheen not found in other mediums. He also noted that lacquer is a natural material unlike acrylics and varnishes.

Sakurako was asked about lacquer education and how to begin as a young artist. She spoke of the importance of exposing young artists to quality lacquer art to stimulate and encourage them to use the material. Sakurako stated that she hoped that the lacquer art exhibition in Yangon would help young artists to awaken to the possibilities of lacquer art. Sumanatsya Voharn agreed that students tended to use acrylic and other modern materials and needed more exposure to the quiet and slow beauty of working with lacquer



Workshops

9 September (15:30~16:30)

Myanmar lacquer techniques including gold leaf (shwei-zawa), and chinkin were practiced.

ミャンマーの伝統的漆器装飾技法である箔絵と日本の伝統的漆器装飾技法の沈金の体験ワークショップ

- **Myanmar Lacquer Technique “Shwei-zawa” Workshop**

Instructor: U Zaw Naing (Instructor, Lacquerware Technology College)

ミャンマーの箔絵ワークショップ 講師: ウ ソーナイン (漆芸技術大学指導員)

Shwei zawa is a gold leaf layer technique. Yellow powder mixed with neem resin is drawn on the parts that are not to be gilded. Then, a thin lacquer coating is applied. Next, gold leaf is affixed to the piece. When dry the piece is washed removing the powder and resin revealing the pattern. Usng a simple shwei zawa technique, designs were created on 30 x 55 mm oval pendants.

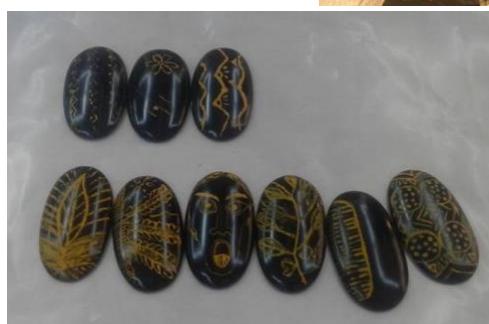
ミャンマーで漆塗りの上に金箔を文様に沿って貼り付けていく技法を Shwei-zawa 言います。金箔を貼らない箇所に黄色い顔料をニーム樹液で溶いたもので描き、漆を薄く塗った上に金箔を貼り、その後に水で洗い流すことで、ニーム樹液の顔料で描いた箇所の金箔が落ち、箔文様が浮かび上がってきます。30 x 55 mm の楕円の黒い漆塗りのブローチ・ペンダントに自由にミャンマーの箔絵を施す体験をしていただきました。



Drawing on the pendant



Participant put gold leaf on the pendant



Gold leaf was affixed



Local artist and foreign tourist participated

Japanese Lacquer Technique “Chinkin” Workshop

Instructor: Kiyomi Okukubo, Ami Tanakadate (Tokyo University of the Arts)

日本の沈金ワークショップ 講師: 奥窪聖美, 田中館亜美

“Chinkin” is a gold-inlaid lacquer decoration technique using gold powder or leaf in etched grooves. The technique originated in China and later introduced into Japan. After the pattern has been incised into the lacquer surface with a fine chisel “chinkin-tou”, raw lacquer is rubbed into the grooves as an adhesive for gold powder or gold leaf pressed into them. In this workshop using chinkin technique, designs were created on 30 x 55 mm oval pendants.

沈金は、漆塗り面に線彫りや点彫りを施し、薄く漆を擦り込ませ、金粉・銀粉を蒔き付けることで、彫った部分にのみ金銀粉による文様が浮かび上がって見える表現です。30 x 55 mm の楕円の黒い漆塗りのブローチ・ペンダントに沈金刀やニードルを使いスクラッチングし金粉・銀粉を蒔いて沈金を施す体験をしていただきました。



Explaining chinkin material and technique



Number of young people were participated



Participant chinkin works



Etching design on the pendant



With participants

Conclusion

ミャンマー最大の漆器産地であるバガンにて2002年より漆工芸を通した交流をおこなってきました。2015年より一旦東南アジアの他の国へと事業を拡大し、3年ぶりにミャンマーでの開催となりました。9月2~4日にバaganで交流事業を開催し、その後シャン州の漆産業及び漆樹調査を経て、ヤンゴンで初の開催に至りました。

本事業では、1)アジアの漆作品展示、2)トークイベント、3)技術体験ワークショップを行いました。作品展示では、各国の漆工芸作品を一堂に展示することで、同じ漆を使用しながら異なる表現や技術があることを見ることができ、漆工芸の多様性と可能性を発信することができたと考えています。また、トークイベントでは、各国の漆芸専門家より漆工芸の現状を発表していただき、直面する状況を相互確認しました。また、同専門家によるアジアの漆文化の魅力を伝え、発展と継承していくための意見交換を行いました。参加者には次世代を担う学生や若い芸術家、日本文化に興味をもつ方々、外国人旅行者の参加も多数見受けられました。多くの質問がでるなど、興味を深めていただけたのではないかと手応えを感じています。ワークショップでは、日本とミャンマーの金粉や金箔を使用した漆技法を体験しペンダントを制作していただきました。初めての漆の技法でしたが、参加者の皆さんはそれぞれの金による表現を体験し充実した時間を過ごしていただけたと考えています。これらの活動を通じ小規模ながら異なる環境、漆文化の現状と魅力を共有する双方向の交流を行うことができ、漆工芸を通したネットワークを広めることができたと考えています。

最後に、本事業の開催に關しご提案やご意見をくださった在ミャンマー日本大使館の松岡裕佑氏をはじめ日本大使館の関係各位に御礼を申し上げます。また、講演・ワークショップの講師を務めてくださったミャンマー、日本、ベトナム、タイ、カンボジア(フランス)の先生方、当事業にご賛同いただき共催していただいた東京藝術大学をはじめ関係者の皆様、会場を提供してくださった MYANM/ART の Johnston 様、参加者の皆様、最後に当事業の現地運営を担っていただいた国際交流基金バンコク日本文化センターの桑原輝氏と Japan House の皆様にはご協力をいただいたこと深く感謝申し上げます。

アジア漆工芸学術支援事業実行委員会
代表 松島さくら子

Since 2002, Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project has held yearly exchange programs on urushi crafts in Bagan, Myanmar's largest lacquerware production center. In 2015 the Project expanded to other nations in Southeast Asia. In 2017, we returned to Myanmar for the first time in three years with a program from 2 to 4 September. Project members also visited the Shan State to survey lacquer trees and production. On 10 September, for the first time, a program was held Yangon.

The program consisted of: 1) An exhibition of Asian lacquer arts and lacquerware; 2) A panel discussion by artists from Japan and Southeast Asia; 3) A workshop introducing Myanmar and Japanese lacquer techniques to Yangon participants. For the first time, Yangon residents were able to see a broad range of lacquer arts and crafts including lacquer painting, objects, and sculpture. We believe that the exhibition, though small, gave the attendees a sense of the variety and potential of lacquer arts. The panel discussions allowed discussants the opportunity to share the current state of lacquer arts, education, and culture in their nations. Opportunities to expand the reach of lacquer arts and industry as well as challenges facing it were candidly discussed. An important point made was that in each nation there were young artists choosing to study lacquer arts. In the second discussion, discussants were asked what made them choose lacquer arts; what was lacquer's allure. Answers were personal and varied, from being born into a lacquerware family, to an attraction to its history and traditions, to a love of working with the possibilities of material itself. The floor was thrown open for questions and the audience actively joined in the discussion. The workshop participants eagerly applied themselves to learning the *chinkin* and *shwei-zawa* techniques being taught. They asked many questions and artists and artisans were on hand to help especially with the use of gold foil and powder. The participants were proud of their work and the quality and beauty of their pendants.

Through the day's activities, we believe that interactive exchanges were created and that participants developed a better understanding and appreciation of the totality of lacquer culture in Asia and the variety of lacquer arts and crafts.

Lastly, I would like to thank Mr. Yusuke Matsuoka of the Japanese Embassy in Myanmar who was very kind and helpful in offering valuable suggestions on organizing of this program, and the Embassy itself for its support. I would also like to thank the teachers and artists from Myanmar, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, and Cambodia, who served as lecturers, discussants, and workshop leaders; and the teachers and staff Tokyo National University of the Arts who co-sponsored this project. In addition, I would like to acknowledge the cooperation and generous support of Ms. Hikaru Kuwahara of the Japan Foundation of the Bangkok International Exchange Foundation and Japan House who was responsible for the local management of this program. Finally, I would especially like to thank Natalie Johnston of MYANM/ART who offered the venue.

Director Sakurako Matsushima
Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project Executive Committee

Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Program in Yangon

Date: 9 September, 2017

Place: MYANM/ART, 98 Bo Galay Zay Street 3rd Floor, Yangon

Organized

The Japan Foundation, Bangkok

Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project Executive Committee

Support

Japan Culture House, The Embassy of Japan in Myanmar

Bagan Lacquerware Technology College, Myanmar Lacquer Association, Tokyo University of the Arts

Contact Myanmar: Japan Culture House

<https://www.facebook.com/jch.yangon/> Phone: +95 9 45914 8405

Contact Japan: Asian Lacquer Craft Exchange Research Project Executive Committee

Faculty of Education, Utsunomiya University, 350 Mine, Utsunomiya, Tochigi, Japan

<http://asian-urushi.com> e-mail: info@asian-urushi.com