

Introduction

TOMIMOTO Kenkichi (1886-1963) was born in what is now Ando Town, Ikoma County, Nara Prefecture. He is regarded as one of the key figures in the history of modern Japanese ceramics. His career began in the early Taisho period and continued until his death in 1963, during which time he created numerous works. In 1955, he was designated as a Holder of an Important Intangible Cultural Property—commonly known as a Living National Treasure—in the field of overglaze enameling on porcelain. He received the Order of Culture in 1961.

Our museum has actively collected works by Tomimoto Kenkichi since its establishment in 1973 and has introduced them in exhibitions. Last year, Dr. IMAMURA Arao (1887-1967), a longtime friend of Tomimoto's, donated 33 works from his collection to the museum. This exhibition presents all 33 of these donated works, along with selected works from our collection and works on loan—approximately 40 works in total. In addition, two special works are on display, and the relationship between Tomimoto and Imamura—both of whom were from Ando Town—is also explored.

Furthermore, 2026 marks the centenary of the beginning of the Showa era in 1926. This exhibition explores the historical background of Tomimoto's works created during the Showa era. It also examines the circumstances surrounding crafts in the early Showa era, Tomimoto's evacuation to Takayama, Gifu Prefecture during the war, and the establishment of the Important Intangible Cultural Property system in the postwar period.

Last but certainly not least, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone whose generous support has made this exhibition possible.

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