





Makie, a lacquer working technique, is a traditional craftwork passed down through generations for over 1,500 years.

While other lacquer techniques such as "Hyoumon" and "Raden" originated in China, the oldest evidence of Makie lacquer was discovered inside Shousouin Temple. It is believed the Makie technique is indigenous to Japan and is unique in the world.

The word "makie" come from "maki" meaning "sprinkle" and "e" meaning "painting".

In the makie technique, patterns and pictures are drawn on to lacquer ware with lacquer, and while they are still wet, gold and silver metal powders are sprinkled on to designs adhering to the wet lacquer.

Any excess powder protruding from the drawings and remaining unattached to the surface are later brushed off, thus allowing beautiful patterns to finally emerge.

Makie is further divided by its techniques: Tokidashi Makie, Hira Makie, Taka Makie, Shishiai Makie, Rankaku Makie among others. The technique of "shading off" by a way of sprinkling the powder is also used. Makie is an art form with a wide variety of expressions.

The fact that metal powders are not pasted, but “sprinkled” might give some insight into the Japanese characteristic of being finely tuned to details.

[http://nippon-kichi.jp/article\\_list.do?kwd=1922&ml\\_lang=en](http://nippon-kichi.jp/article_list.do?kwd=1922&ml_lang=en)

Suruga lacquer ware is characterized by the use of Makie. Makie is a decorative technique in which gold and silver powder is spread over the lacquered surface to create beautiful patterns. After spreading the powder, it is dried, applied raw lacquer to fix the powder, ground with charcoal, dried again through the process of suri-urushi (applying and wiping off lacquer again and again), and given a final grind to finish. The craft dates back to 1828, when Senzo Nakagawa, a lacquerer living in the Suruga region, acquired the skill of Makie and used it in his lacquering processes. In 1830, two Makie lacquerers, Tomekichi and Senjiro Kobayashi, came from Edo (present-day Tokyo) and taught their skills to the local craftsmen, which highly enhanced Makie techniques in this region. Suruga lacquer ware was one of the representative export products from the Meiji period (1868-1912) through the early Showa period (1926-1989), but after World War II, lacquer ware was considered as expensive luxury not suitable for daily use. Today, articles such as suzuribako (box for writing equipment), trays, fubako (letter box), flower vessels, geta (Japanese sandals), and accessories are being made.

Certain patterns, textures and designs can be identified to particular artists who will specialize with the use of certain materials. The themes of Maki-e decoration are usually drawn from nature, illustrating birds, fish, Dieties, Demons and Gods, landscapes or simply dazzling effects of gold or silver dust. The pens themselves are usually formed from ebonite but animal horn is also used.



[http://www.danitrio.com/history/history\\_2.htm](http://www.danitrio.com/history/history_2.htm)

### **Momoyama period (1568-1615)**

Momoyama period. all about Oda Nobunaga's short regime and Toyotomi Hideyoshi's rise and fall has for only 30 years, this period also influenced a lot to arts including Maki-e by introducing Kodaiji Maki-e. Kodaiji is a mausoleum at Mt. Higashi of Kyoto for Toyotomi Hiyoshi, and Zushi temple for his wife. In this period, Maki-e had a big change from exaggerated Taka Maki-e to simple black and gold Hira Maki-e which was made all over in the temples on every poles and wall. The designs were also changed from sceneries to "Autumn flowers" like designs with flowers and birds. Momoyama was a war torn age, and Samurai under that circumstance liked to show off something and selected their swords with paintings on its sheath. The simple techniques but look good were generally demanded by the customers. However, just simple Hira Maki-e could not compete with colorful Taka Maki-e, and that eventually the craftsmen created new ideas of designs with E-nashiji using different gold powders sprinkling over the surface and burnishing repeatedly, and the other important idea was "Katamigawari", two different types of designs separated by a straight line on the object. Such as this simple Kodaiji Maki-e, mainly of Hira Maki-e was born as the result of the deadlock by the exaggerated Taka Maki-e once prevailed in Muromachi period.

### **Edo period (1615-1868)**

In 1549 Japanese got a rare chance to export Maki-e to Europe through missionary work and fascinated all Europeans at that time. The export was booming and there were so many factories working day and night for the demands. Even when Tokugawa Shogunate closed the country in 1639 and only let Dutchmen deal with them on a specified islet, the Maki-e fever was yet stronger than ever. From that time, Maki-e designs seemed to be divided in two general categories, a colorful Maki-e and Raden covering entire pieces called Namban Shikki, while that the Maki-e was not covered entirely but left open spaces here and there without Raden was called Komoh Shikki. All these Maki-e were mostly Hira Maki-e, because it was easy to make for the big demand.

The biggest Maki-e communities during the Edo period were founded in Edo (Tokyo), Kyo (Kyoto) and Kanazawa in Ishikawa prefecture. Kanazawa was then governed by the Maeda clan, called Kaga Hyakuman-goku (1,000,000 Goku is the size of territory which can produce the equivalent of 150,000

***Carved lacquer***

(diaoqi) Method of decoration that involves carving built-up layers of thinly applied coats of lacquer into a three-dimensional design.

***Engraved gold***

(qiangjin) A decorative technique in which an adhesive of lacquer is applied to fine lines incised on the lacquer surface, and gold foil or powdered gold is pressed into the grooves.

***"Filled-in"***

(diaotian or tianqi) Decoration in which lacquer is inlaid with lacquer of another color. There are two methods of filled-in decoration: one involves carving the hardened lacquer and inlaying lumps of other colors; the other is called "polish-reveal."

***Hira Maki-e***

A flat lacquer decoration with no relief. The powdered metals are sprinkled onto the surface while the coating is still wet. Then another coating is applied. At the end the surface is polished flat.

***Lacquerware***

A decorative work of art usually made of wood and coated with lacquer, an organic sealant.

***Maki-e***

The general term in Japanese for lacquer decoration in which gold or silver powder is sprinkled on still-damp lacquer. There are three forms: hira maki-e (flat), taka maki-e (relief) and togidashi maki-e (burnished).

***Nashiji***

A Japanese lacquer technique that produces a reddish, speckled surface, also called "pear skin," by the sprinkling of especially fine, flat metal flakes over the half-dry lacquer base.

***"Polish-reveal"***

(moxian) A variety of "filled-in" lacquer decoration. Thick lacquer is applied repeatedly in certain areas to build up a design; then the ground is filled with lacquer of a different color and the entire surface is polished down to reveal the color variations.

***Taka Maki-e***

A lacquer technique where several coats of lacquer are applied to a surface to achieve a relief effect. Taka maki-e is the most difficult of the Japanese lacquer techniques and requires very high skills.

***Togidashi Maki-e***

In this technique, the design is painted in lacquer, and gold or silver powder is sprinkled over it; when the lacquer is dry, another coat is applied to the design to fix the powder. **Ro-iro-urushi** (black lacquer without oil) is then applied over the entire surface, and, after it has dried, it is burnished briefly with charcoal.

### **Urushi**

A lacquer from the Japanese urushi tree. It imparts shiny and durable appearance. Urushi is usually black but can be of different colors with the addition of metallic pigments.

basic lacquering - short video : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnCTEt4F9A>

video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hvvE-sevKls>

long video - skip around ... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKvbp4Ucpg>

video: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oTe\\_sH9qs0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6oTe_sH9qs0)

Yosegi — Wood working - VERY COOL trying to save the craft - modernize designs but not compromise the tradition  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6lgumdy9Shs>