

**Fall 2025 Arts of Asia Lecture Series  
It's Magic: Art and the Power of Transformation  
Sponsored by the Society for Asian Art**

## **Kiln Magic Transformation through Fire and Ash**

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Where does the magical transformation of clay into functional ceramics find its origins?

How does the technology of the kiln develop in Asia?

How are kiln atmospheres controlled and what effects do they create?

Where do contemporary Japanese ceramic artists find their inspirations and techniques?

1. Kakurezaki Ryuichi and Bizen past and present
2. Kamada Koji and Song Dynasty Jian ware
3. Michikawa Shozo, ash-glazed stonewares, and the climbing kiln
4. Kino Satoshi and Celadon-glazed porcelain

### **Some useful terms:**

**Earthenware** – low temperature fired ceramics

**Stoneware** – high temperature fired ceramics

**Porcelain** – highest temperature fired, refined ceramics

**Bizen** – One of the former provinces of Japan and home to one of the six ancient kilns

**Bizen ware** – Unglazed ceramics for the Bizen region made from iron-rich, local clay

**Tenmoku** – 天目 Japanese term for Chinese black-glazed Jian-wares

**Jian ware** – 建窯 Chinese stoneware from Fujian Province

**Hare's Fur and Oil Spot** – Distinctive glaze patterns found on Jian wares

**Oxidation** – chemical reactions that take place in the presence of oxygen

**Reduction** – chemical reactions that take place in an oxygen-starved atmosphere

**Celadon** – green, iron-oxide glaze

**Seihakuji** – Japanese term for pale blue celadon glaze

**For further reading:**

**He Li**, *Chinese Ceramics: A New Comprehensive Survey from the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*, Rizzoli, 2006.

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**Dejoie, C., Sciau, P., Li, W. et al.** "Learning from the past: Rare  $\varepsilon$ -Fe<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> in the ancient, black-glazed Jian (Tenmoku) wares." *Sci Rep* **4**, 4941 (2014).

**Yu Li, Bin Zhang, Huansheng Cheng, Jianming Zheng**, "Revealing the coloration mechanism in the earliest Chinese celadon glaze," *Journal of the European Ceramic Society*, Volume 39, Issue 4, 2019, Pages 1675-1682.

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**Brian Moeran**, "The Art World of Contemporary Japanese Ceramics," *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, University of California Press, Vol. 13, No. 1 (Winter, 1987), pp. 27-50.