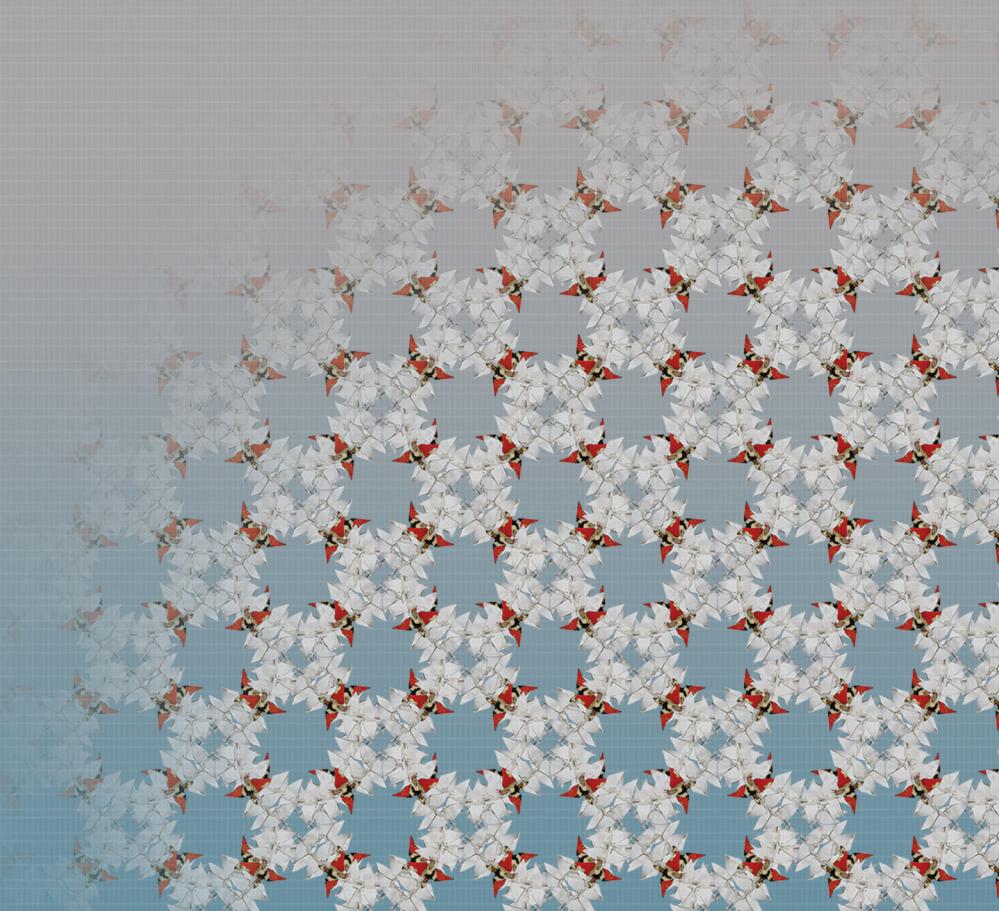


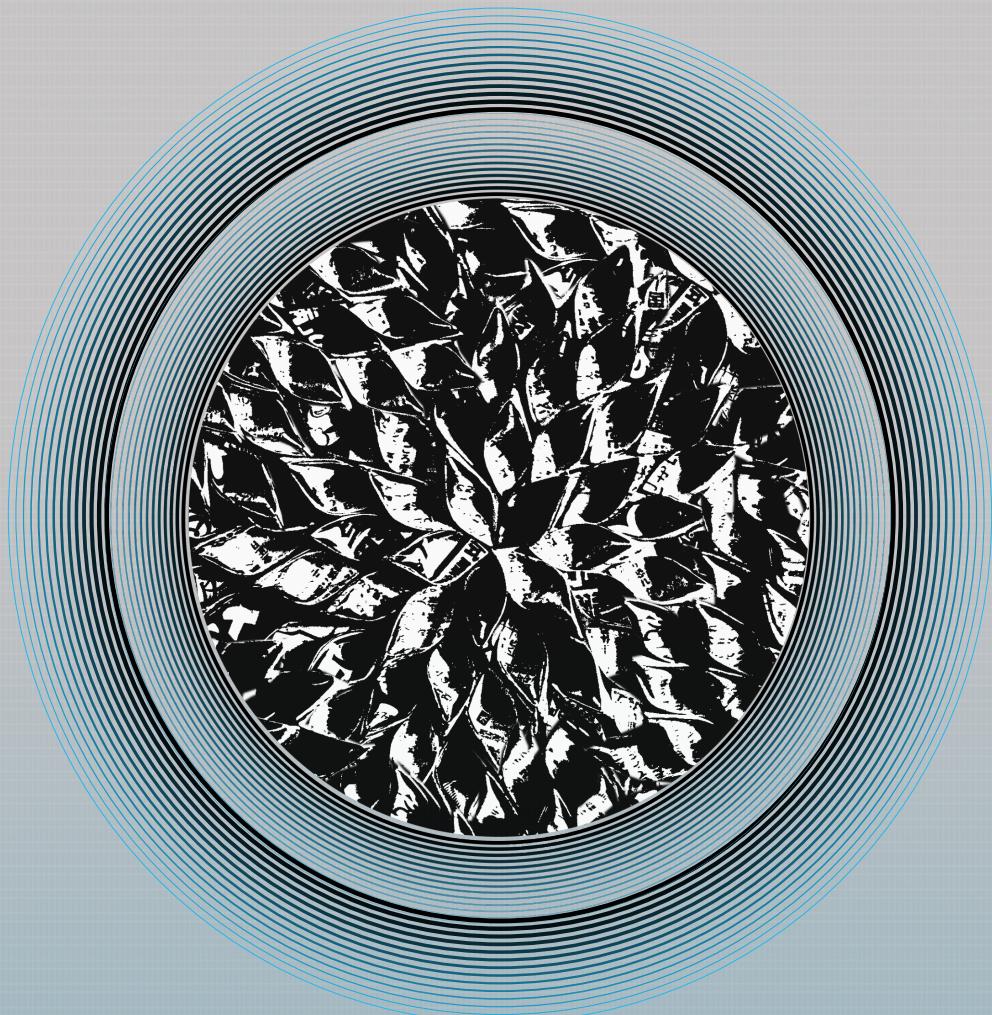


the art of  
Hiromi Ashlin



*"The butterflies in Rosei's dream would be origami"*

IHARA SAIKAKU, 1660



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<http://hiromiashlin.businesscatalyst.com>*

# WELCOME

*from*

## The Consul-General of Australia *HE the Hon* NICK MINCHIN

The Embassy of Australia is delighted to present this exhibition of works by Queensland-based artist Hiromi Ashlin.

As a Japanese Australian, Ms. Ashlin's work speaks to Australia's multicultural population. Her work draws on both her Japanese culture and her life in Australia. It also reflects time Ms. Ashlin has spent with Indigenous Australians, which has influenced the development of her practice. This is particularly notable in the large-scale work, *Town of Pearl*, on display in the exhibition.

Ms. Ashlin's background echoes the very close friendship between Australia and Japan. The special relationship between our countries is based on shared values and manifested through trade, security, culture, and people-to-people links. This relationship is essential



to both countries, and we are delighted to welcome the cooperation of the Embassy of Japan on this cultural celebration.

Australia's distant location from Washington, D.C. means it is always a significant undertaking to bring cultural programs here. I extend my thanks to BHP Billiton, the sponsor of the exhibition. Through BHP's generous support, the Embassy is able to present cultural programming such as this show, which aims to deepen international understanding of Australia.

We are pleased to welcome friends of Australia to the Embassy's gallery and we trust you will enjoy the exhibition.

*from*

Chief Executive Officer  
**BHP BILLITON**

ANDREW S. MACKENZIE



It is a great pleasure for BHP Billiton to support the 2015 Embassy of Australia's Washington DC cultural program and to join with our Embassy in presenting the works of Hiromi Ashlin.

The Embassy of Australia's cultural program is a unique opportunity for Australian artists to introduce their work to new audiences, and an important way Australia can showcase the very best in Australian artistic talent, cultural expression and diversity.

Ms Ashlin's works are a striking example of that talent and are themselves a celebration of the rich cultural diversity that so much defines the Australian story.

For more than a century, BHP Billiton has been an integral part of that story as we have grown from humble beginnings in the Australian outback to become the largest

diversified resources company in the world.

Indeed, 2015 marks 130 years since a syndicate of seven, led by Charles Rasp, registered a new corporation in Melbourne called 'Broken Hill Proprietary Company Limited', two years after discovering silver and lead in an Australian town of the same name.

Today, we play a vital role in supporting growth and development through our operations around the world. While our perspective is global, we proudly celebrate our national heritage through programs such as Hiromi's exhibition, thereby bringing Australia to the world.

I hope you enjoy the exhibition.

*Andrew S. Mackenzie'*



## ABOUT HIROMI ASHLIN

Born in Kawasaki City, Japan in 1973, Hiromi Ashlin is a "Ju-Dan" level Japanese calligrapher and origami master. She creates remarkable works possessing a Zen-like quietude within organic environments of powerful movement and color transitions.

Hiromi's works require the assemblage of meticulously-folded Japanese papers, calligraphy painting, stippling and washes. She also makes and uses her own handmade papers to mount and embellish her origami designs. Her signature block is the Japanese rendering for "Hiromi".

Hiromi's artistic talent was recognized early on by her parents and others. She began studying art in earnest as a teenager in the early 1990s, initially focusing on oil painting, drawing & design. In the mid-90s she relocated to Tokyo and began working at the prestigious Tokyo Game Designer School.

Inspired by its rugged natural beauty, Hiromi spent nearly a year (1996/1997) traveling across Australia, learning about this vast country's indigenous cultures, its history and its diverse inhabitants. She married her husband, Brent Ashlin, in Perth in 2000, and they permanently

Detail, *Mudai #1*, 2007, Hiromi Ashlin,  
Collection of Mr. & Mrs. John Ondos



relocated to Broome in 2005. Broome is situated in the remote Northwestern part of Australia's Kimberley and has the Indian Ocean as its western border. Hiromi and her husband quickly became part of Broome's vibrant, laid-back art scene.

At the time, Broome was a small resort town gaining worldwide recognition as a trendy art enclave. The town's flourishing travel and tourism economy was growing by leaps and bounds by virtue of its propitious location as a major stopping off point for international cruise ship travelers.

### THE BROOME FACTORY

Shortly after arriving in Broome, the Ashlins, who now had three children, set up housekeeping. Brent was working and traveling in connection with his duties in the aviation industry. In 2005, Hiromi opened a small merchant's stall in Broome's Courthouse Market and began selling assorted arts and crafts she had started making from Japanese washi paper.

The word "washi" comes from "wa", meaning 'Japanese', and "shi", meaning 'paper'. Characteristically, washi is produced from the bark fibers of the gampi tree, the mitsumata shrub, and the paper mulberry, all of which are indigenous to Japan. Washi paper is tougher and more resilient than ordinary paper, which is generally made from wood pulp. As a consequence of its durability, washi is well suited for use

in many traditional Japanese arts, such as origami, and has been used for over two thousand years as ornamental and decorative media for all kinds of Japanese artwork.

She soon affiliated with one of Broome's most innovative and visionary gallery owners, Lachie Fraser, at his 9 Farrell Street **Broome Factory Gallery**, quickly garnering an international following for her beautiful & delicate origami paintings.

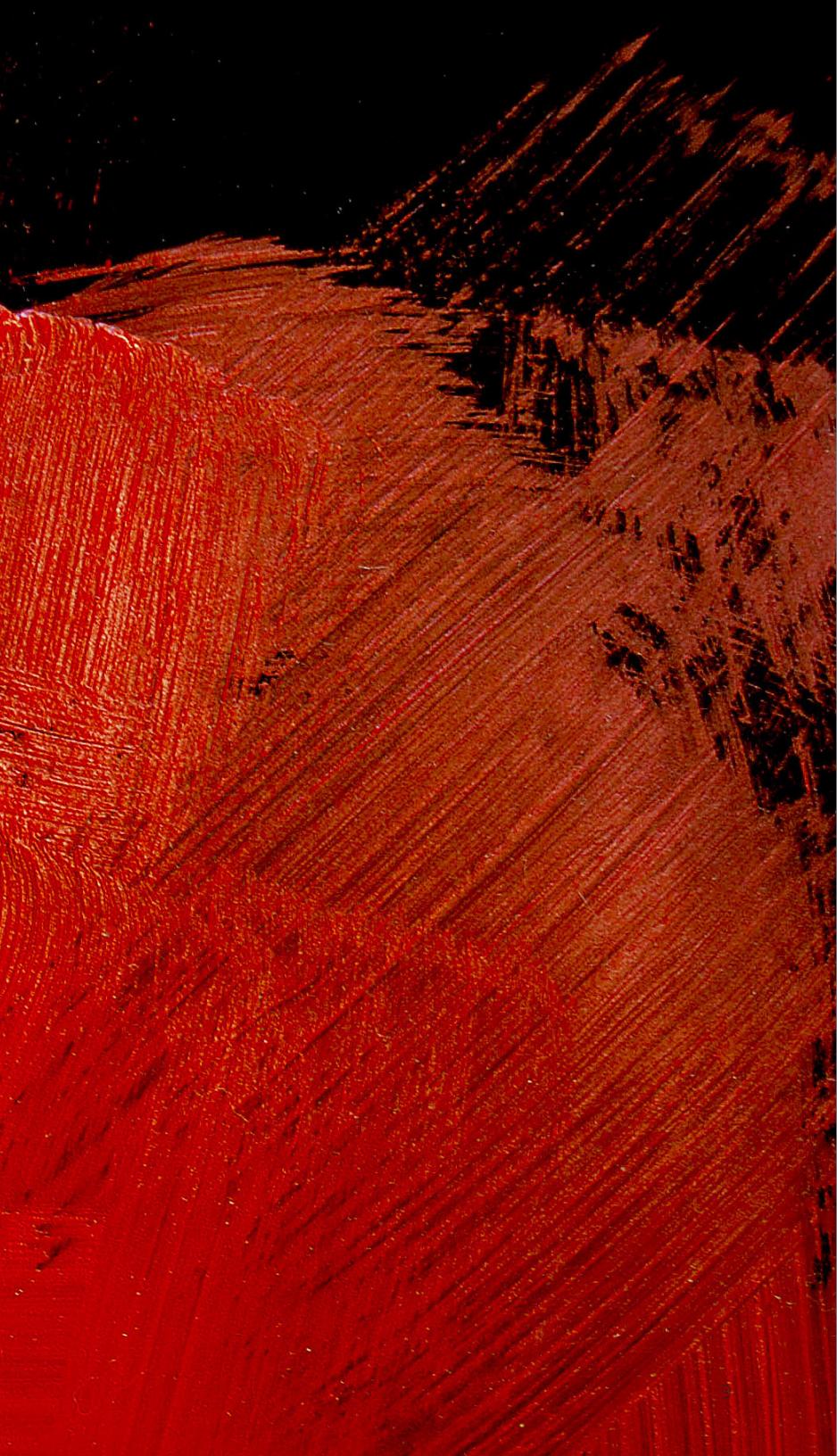
### AFTER BROOME & TO THE PRESENT

In 2010, seeking deeper spiritual inspiration from its beautiful rain forests and beaches, Hiromi and her family traveled to the South Pacific Ocean nation of Vanuatu. After nearly two years abroad, and with her children's education in mind, she and her family returned to the mainland in 2011, settling in the Trinity Beach environs of Cairns, Queensland, Australia, a major jumping off point to the Great Barrier Reef and the perfect location to focus on her family and thriving art practice.



Detail,

*Yuuki, Shinnen, Shinrai (Courage, Belief, Faith)*, 2007,  
Hiromi Ashlin,  
Collection of Mr. David Tittsworth



"The Art of Hiromi Ashlin" includes new works from Gallery Sydney-East and private art collectors. Four of Hiromi's exhibited pieces, "*Town of Pearl #2*", "*Takara (Treasure)*", "*Niji to Taiyo (Rain Meets Sun)*", and '*Byakkudan (Sandlewood)*', demonstrate Hiromi's interest in pyrography. This wood burning technique is exemplified in her work, "*Takara (Treasure)*", containing over 700 individual crane elements circled by an enfolding paper wrapping decorated in burned figures. Hiromi used incense to create these ornaments, which are both spiritual and artistic in their design and execution.

The enormous time required to fold and arrange hundreds, and sometimes thousands of origami elements, makes Hiromi's art inimitable and unique. As a Japanese-Australian artist, she is strongly influenced by her ancestry, training and environment.

"The Art of Hiromi Ashlin" is a lens into Hiromi's working style and the myriad cultural connections informing her work. The exhibit brilliantly showcases one of Australia's most exciting and innovative artistic talents.

# ABOUT THE HAPPY BIRD PROJECT

Hiromi founded the Happy Bird Project in 2010 as a philanthropic avenue for creating art for the benefit of others. At each of her major exhibitions she respectfully asks visitors to create a "wish for our planet" and to write or draw their wish on a small square of Japanese traditional paper (washi). At the end of the exhibition she takes the collected "wish" papers and folds them into individual cranes creating special art works that are sold, or auctioned, with all proceeds benefiting a specific charity, cause or individual.

## Participate & Become A Work of Art!

Hiromi is creating a Happy Bird Project piece to commemorate her Australian Embassy exhibition in Washington, DC. She kindly asks you to take a moment to reflect on a special wish or devotion and to write or draw your wish at the Happy Bird Project table and place it in the Wish Box. You are welcome to contribute more than one wish!

At the end of her Washington, DC show in January, your wish, and the collective wishes of all other exhibition participants, will be shipped to Hiromi in Cairns, Queensland, Australia. Hiromi will fold all of the wishes into a unique origami painting which, in turn, will be returned to the United States for framing and forwarding to BHP Billiton's US headquarters in Houston, Texas for auction at the conclusion of Hiromi's United States

tour. Your wish will be part of the collective wishing of all the Happy Bird Project participants from the Australian Embassy's exhibition. So, through your participation, you will become a work of art!

## About "Takara (Treasure)"

Hiromi's exhibition at the Australian Embassy contains a beautiful example of a Happy Bird Project piece. "Takara (Treasure)" is comprised of seven hundred and nineteen multi-colored crane elements containing the collective wishes of students at the Trinity Beach State School. Hiromi volunteered to do a one-week workshop at the school, where she discussed the "Takara (Treasure)" project and instructed students on origami folding, calligraphy, and paper making.

Inspired by images of the Coral Sea, to the east & north of Queensland, the work's impassive earth-toned surface consists of neutral colors and organic elements, which includes sprinkled sand Hiromi collected along the shores of Trinity Beach.

As viewed from the sky, we look into a deep pool of spectral colors dancing with energy produced by the totality of colored crane elements, each containing a unique written "wish" or "devotion", forming a beautiful aggregation of humanity's collective aspirations.

At the periphery of the cranes is an enfolding paper wrapping which Hiromi decorated by burning configurations in the paper using incense, an artistic as well as a spiritual constituent of the painting.

All proceeds from the sale of "Takara (Treasure)" will go to charity.



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Hiromi's massive Town of Pearl #2 was created as an institutional piece specifically for her exhibition at the Australian Embassy. It is a fusion of her cross-cultural heritage as a citizen of Australia born in Japan.

The Japanese-inspired elements of "Town of Pearl #2" are largely technical in nature, demonstrating Hiromi's masterful use of traditional origami materials. Large petal origami is employed throughout in a severely limited palette of natural colors that have been infused with delicate incense burning throughout. Hiromi's "Australian" contribution to "Town of Pearl #2" is predominately thematic. She readily identifies with and incorporates the traditional Australian Aboriginal motif of viewing her "country" (Broome, WA) from the sky, depicting a landscape of hills, valleys and songlines signifying Broome's location within the traditional lands of the Aboriginal Yawuru people.

Each year Broome celebrates this fusion of different cultures in an annual festival called "Shinju Matsuri" (Japanese for festival of the pearl) which celebrates the Asian influenced culture brought here by the pearl economy and commemorates the important Aboriginal involvement in Broome's pearling industry.

The town has a deep history based around the harvesting of pearls, starting with the initial cultivation of oysters for mother of pearl in the 1880s to present day major cultured pearl farming enterprises.

# ABOUT TOWN

The first pearl divers to work in Broome were the indigenous Australian Aboriginal peoples. They were "blackbirded" (enslaved) and forced to dive naked, with little or no equipment. Pregnant girls were used as divers as they were believed to have superior lung capacity. In 2010 the Shire of Broome and Kimberley commissioned a Memorial to the Indigenous Female Pearl Divers.

Asians and islanders began filling the dangerous pearl diving jobs in Broome after slavery was abolished. Diving suits were introduced to accommodate deeper diving and Japanese immigrants were especially valued for their experience in the pearl industry. The Japanese came to Broome to work on the small sailing ships and on shore-based activities supporting the harvesting of oysters from the waters around Broome. They were specialist divers and were an indispensable part of the industry until World War II.

The riches from the pearl beds did not come cheaply, however, and the town's Japanese cem-

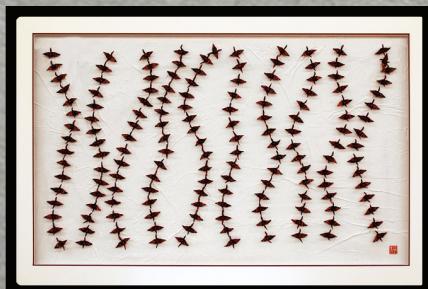


# OF PEARL #2

etery is the resting place of 919 Japanese divers who lost their lives working in the industry. Many more were lost at sea, and the true number of deaths is unknown.

Hiromi's powerful "Town of Pearl #2" commemorates Broome's physical beauty while testifying to the complex and sometimes difficult adjustments among Australia's diverse ethnic populations.

#1. *Yuuki, Shinnen, Shinrai*  
(Courage, Belief, Faith), 2007  
Folded Washi and paint, 26 1/4 x 44 7/8in



#2. *Nobiru (Grow)*, 2007  
Folded papers, Kamakura Bori  
design, hand made papers,  
26 1/4 x 44 7/8in



#'s 4-6. *Mai (Dance) 1, 2, 3*, all 2015  
Folded traditional Japanese papers &  
Japanese Uzin-Washi,  
each, 20 x 20in



#3. *Maebure (Prelude)*, 2007  
Folded traditional Japanese paper & Japa-  
nese Uzin-Washi,  
44 3/8 x 52in

#7. *Kokyou (Hometown)*, 2007  
Folded Uzen-Washi & Japanese  
magazine papers,  
27 1/2 x 48in



#9-12. *Vanuatu Water, Aka (Red), Gift, Ao (Blue)*, all 2015  
Folded Uzen-Washi,  
17 1/2 x 21 1/4, 17 x 19, 12 x 12, 16 1/2 x 20 1/2



#8. *Mudai #1*, 2007  
Folded traditional Japanese papers &  
Japanese Uzin-Washi and inks,  
48 x 33in

#13. *Soragamieru (I Can See The Sky)*, 2013

Box folded Japanese papers, burned incense, bubble paint,  
26x 40in



#14. *Renkinjutsu #2 (The Alchemist)*, 2013

Box folded Japanese papers, fiber thread, paint & wash,  
33 1/2 x 34in



#15. *Aomaru (Blue Circle)*, 2007

Box folded traditional Japanese papers,  
fiber thread, paint, wash, stitching,  
25 3/8 x 35in



#16. *Takaranotizu #2*, 2007

Japanese inks, wash, fiber thread, 33 1/2 x 34in



#17-18. *Niji to Taiyo (Rainbow & the Sun) &*

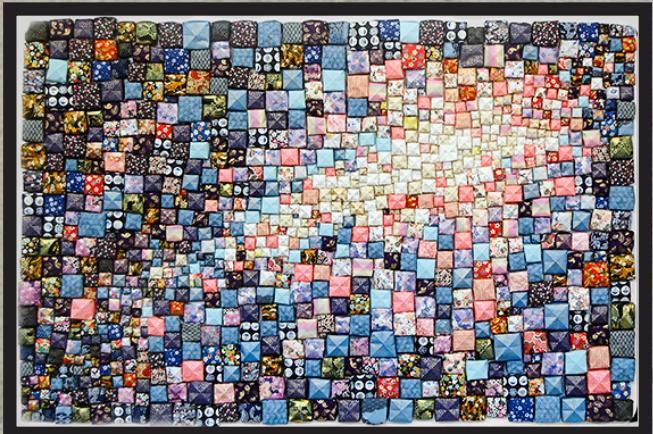
*Byakudan (Sandalwood)*, both 2013

Hand made Japanese paper, wash, burned incense, 33 x 43in



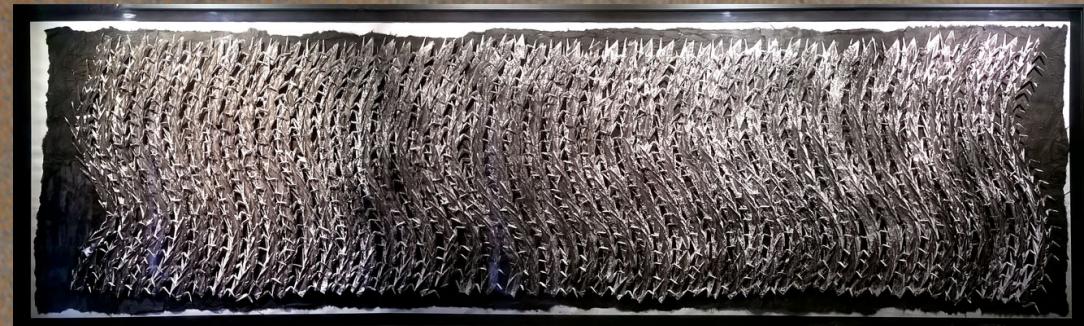
#19. *Musunno Hosi (Innumerable Stars)*, 2007

Box folded Uzen-Washi papers, 61 x 41 1/4in



#20. Green, 2015

Folded and pressed traditional Japanese paper, Japanese ink, banana fiber paper, 16 1/2 x 21in



#23. 1000 Cranes: Night Journey, 2007,

Folded and pressed traditional Japanese paper, Japanese ink, hand made papers, 88 1/4 x 27 1/8in



#'s 24, 25, 26, White Flower #1, Shinju, White Flower #2, all 2015  
Folded traditional Japanese paper, (for Shinju, pearls),  
12 x 12, 17 1/2 x 21 1/4, & 9 x 12in



#21. Shizuku (Rain Drop), 2015

Folded traditional Japanese paper, paint, stippling and wash, 21 x 25in



#22. 1000 Cranes in Moonlight, 2015

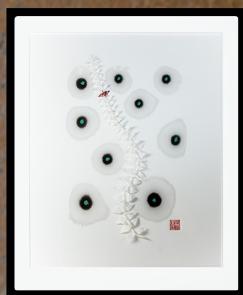
Folded and pressed traditional Japanese papers, 39 x 29in

#27. Town of Pearl #2, 2015

Folded traditional Japanese paper, burned incense, 120 x 83in



#'s 28, 29, 30, 31. Circle, White Moon,  
Planet Shadow #1 & 2, all 2015  
Folded origami, Japanese ink,  
stippling & wash,  
12 x 12, 16 1/2 x 17 1/4, 18 x 22, & 18 x 22in

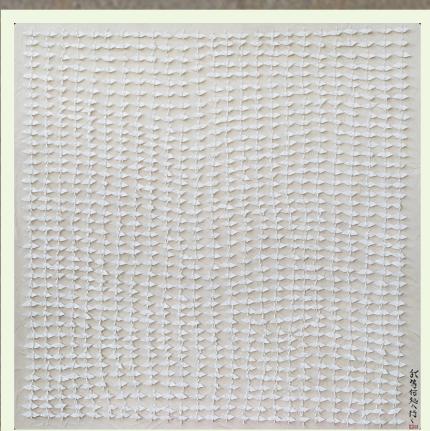


#'s 33, 34, 35. Tabi (Journey) #1, 2, 3, all 2015  
Folded traditional Japanese paper, Japanese ink, wash,  
18 x 22, 17 x 21, 18 x 22in

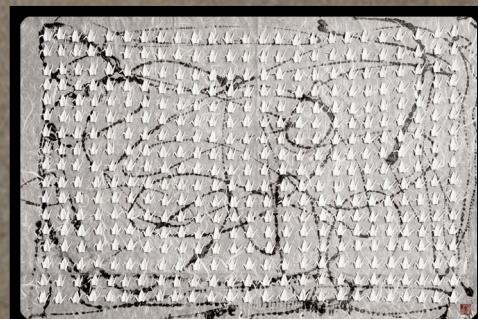


#36. Susumu (Steps), 2006  
Folded traditional Japanese paper, Uzen-Washi,  
Japanese calligraphy, ink wash, hand made  
papers,  
29 3/4 x 44 1/2in

#32. Senbazuru Warera Dokoyuku,  
(1000 Cranes Where Are We Going?),  
2013  
Folded traditional Japanese paper,  
41 x 42in



#37. Karappo (Empty), 2007  
Folded traditional Japanese paper,  
Japanese ink, hand made papers,  
ink wash,  
27 1/2 x 37 1/2in



#38. Takara (Treasure), 2015  
Folded traditional Japanese paper,  
ink wash, burned incense,  
41 x 43in

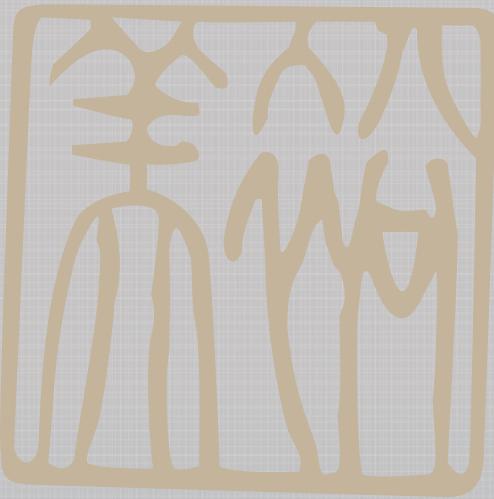


Gallery Sydney-East Design Consultancy is honored to be the exclusive sales representative for Hiromi's artwork in the United States.

Hiromi's art is highly prized and in great demand in Australia. Her exhibition works typically sellout quickly in-country. For patrons in the United States interested in acquiring a Hiromi work, please contact Gallery Sydney-East and we will be pleased to assist you in finding the perfect work for your home or business.

Hiromi's art is shipped from her studio in Cairns, Queensland, Australia, to Gallery Sydney-East Design Consultancy. Because of the fragile nature of Hiromi's art, great pains are taken to ensure each work is shipped to the United States fully protected during its international journey. Works are shipped unframed. Upon arrival in the United States, Gallery Sydney-East encloses each work using museum conservation materials including museum solid rag mats and 99% UV protected glass or acrylic.

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