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Kokeshi, From Tohoku With Love



Synopsis

Kokeshi from Tohoku with Love is a book that looks at the craft and culture of kokeshi dolls. Kokeshi are the traditional dolls that are made of wood and are characterized by their lack of arms or legs. They are produced in the Tohoku region of Japan and were originally a children's toy, although it is more often used as a form of decoration nowadays and displayed in the home. Abroad, they are considered to be an icon of Japan, and reflect Japanese aesthetic sensibilities with their simple, elegant and minimalist designs. Kokeshi have the appeal of imperfection and hand made exclusivity as no two dolls are the same, each kokeshi embodies the qualities of wood, something that is often referred to as "warmth." In fact, for collectors, more than the freshly made kokeshi, many covet the atmosphere of the vintage kokeshi-- rather than degrading, as with plastic or artificial materials, the wood picks up a dewy, subdued colour and the delicately painted features fade gracefully with time. This book is the only English language book that looks at this culture in depth and is the only book with English language interviews with the masters of the craft. The author, Manami Okazaki, visits all 6 prefectures of Tohoku to profile 20 artisans in the remote hot spring villages where they are made. Included are the work and interviews with the masters to the up and coming artists, and highlights many aesthetic theories and sensibilities that are prevalent in contemporary design, even today. The book also looks at Japanese hotspring culture, and Tohoku culture to paint a holistic picture of kokeshi culture. This book will delight fans of wooden crafts, Japanese culture and travellers to Japan. The book gives an insight into the psychology of the craftsman, the process of production, the motifs and the various types, which will inform the collector. This book will also suit travelers to Japan who wish to explore the Northern region of Japan, and their charming hot spring villages. Included are hundreds of photographs. This book is intended for charity and all proceeds will go to schooling in Tohoku post March 11 tsunami.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Finally a informative and interesting book on kokeshi that is in English and available for a very reasonable price. This is not just a picture book that you will flip through and then never pick up again. I have been a avid kokeshi fan for years and will be rereading different parts of the book because there is quite a lot of information in it. Most of the book is taken up with interviews of different kokeshi masters. What a treat for those of us who can't travel to northern Japan and figure out how to get to some of the remote areas where the artists live. My sister just returned from a trip to Japan and made multiple trips up north to visit kokeshi museums etc. She bought two kokeshi books for me while she was there and was surprised when she returned and received Ms. Okazaki's book that I ordered for her from . She agrees that this is a great book. If the author ever follows this up with a book in english on kokeshi terminology (with photos) and how to get to the kokeshi making areas, I would buy it. The author is very generous since proceeds from the sale of the book go to Tohoku relief aid. For those of you who have had sticker shock when looking for kokeshi books on ebay, buy this book now before it sells out. Great book, great purpose and great on the pocketbook.

Whether you are a serious collector or have just recently become aware of kokeshi, you can't go wrong with this book. From the affordable price, comprehensive information (much of which is not available anywhere else),lavish photos, great book design and great writing to the proceeds of the sale going to the people of Tohoku Japan who are still suffering from the tragic effects of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, this book is a winner!

I have just recently accidentally discovered Kokeshi on the Etsy site, and I became immediately curious if there was a book out there that would be affordable, and informative. Leave it to to have such a book available. This book is wonderful! I am amazed at how reasonably priced it indeed was, in regards to the wealth of information it contains. Whether you are a serious collector, or a Newbie, like myself, you will truly enjoy this delightful book. It is so helpful now, purchasing Kokeshi, and being able to research the backstory on a particular doll. Also, learning that donations are being

made to help Tsunami victims, is an added bonus. Wonderful photos.... In depth info., very user-friendly.

I love this book. It is an interesting look into the artists and regions that produce kokeshi. I wish it was longer with more artists and history because I enjoyed it so much. But, for the price, the book is a great thing to have. I especially liked the map showing where each type of kokeshi was made.

An interesting addition to the history and culture of kokeshi that is published in English. Provides a fine companion to a much earlier book "An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls" by Chizuko Takeuchi with Roberta Stephens, published in English in 1982.

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