

The Japan Information & Culture Center, Embassy of Japan
and The Japan-America Society of Washington, D.C. present

Netsuke

Miniature Art in the Palm of Your Hand
*Contemporary Netsuke from the Price
and Kinsey Collections*

MARCH 16 – MAY 29, 2009



Before the introduction of European fashions, Japan was quite literally a "world without pockets." Men carried their belongings in small pouches or boxes suspended from sash of their kimono with cords and a toggle, or *netsuke*. Commissioned by only the best artisans, *netsuke* were valuable, enviable symbols of status. But when Japan's ports finally opened to foreign trade and the Japanese began to adopt the western style of dress, *netsuke* fell out of use and were soon forgotten. The extraordinary miniature carvings had captivated many foreigners,

however, and soon found their way into collections in the U.S. and abroad.

Today this traditional craft has evolved into a vibrant international art form. Fifty of these contemporary miniature masterpieces from the collections of Joe and Etsuko Price and Robert Kinsey will be on display, including a set of box-style *netsuke* modeled after a series of Edo period hanging scrolls and unique collection of the twelve zodiac animals by British artist Nick Lamb.

Mr. Robert Kinsey will give an opening lecture on Tuesday, March 17th at 6:30 pm in the JICC auditorium. Joe and Etsuko Price will also be in attendance.

Over fifty years ago, Joe Price bought a painting by the artist Ito Jakuchu (1716-1800). Since then, Mr. Price and his wife Etsuko have been committed to preserving and promoting Edo period art. The Price Collection is widely regarded as one of the finest private collections of Japanese art in the world. Nearly 900,000 visitors paid to see a selection of the Price Collection's Edo period paintings, including many by Jakuchu, during its tour of Japan, making it the most successful traveling museum exhibit in the world. The Smithsonian Institute's Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of Art welcomed the exhibit's triumphant return last year with "*Painted Feathers, Piercing Eyes: Edo Masters From the Price Collection.*"

This exhibit is free and open to the public. The gallery is open Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm.
Special viewing on Saturday, May 2. Closed March 20, April 10 and May 25.



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