

June 23, 2014



## Prized Kimonos on Display at the AGGV

### **KIMONO: the Japanese Culture in its Art Form**

*June 27-October 19, 2014*

Founders Gallery

Guest curated by:  
Hitomi Harama

### **FROM GEISHA TO DIVA: The Kimono of Ichimaru**

*Until October 19, 2014*

Pollard Gallery

Curated by  
Barry Till

*See [aggv.ca](http://aggv.ca) for details*

### **Art Gallery of Greater Victoria**

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Even the untrained eye can see kimonos are great works of art, but to the trained eye, each kimono tells a story. This summer, two exhibitions at The Art Gallery of Greater Victoria will showcase dozens of historical kimonos and tell their fascinating stories.

*From Geisha to Diva: The Kimonos of Ichimaru* returns to Victoria after travelling North America for over a decade, most recently at the Textile Museum of Canada. This extremely rare and prized collection, which was donated to the AGGV, once belonged to Ichimaru (1906-1997) one of the most famous geishas of the 20th century. Ichimaru's story, which includes becoming a recording artist in the 1930s, is presented through her magnificent kimonos and personal belongings. Combining her experience as a geisha with an extraordinary talent as a vocalist and musician, she became a unique figure in the social history of modern Japan.

*From Geisha to Diva* opens alongside *Kimono: the Japanese Culture in its Art Form* on June 27 and both exhibitions run through October 19, 2014.

"The details and features that characterize kimono culture are not well known in the Western world," says *Kimono* guest curator, Hitomi Harama.

Harama, a kimono specialist in Victoria, continues, "To understand the true beauty of the kimono, knowledge of its unwritten code is essential." The sleeve length, material, colours and design, all speak to whether the person who wore it was married or single, their age, gender, class, as well as what season the kimono was for.

*Kimono* showcases codes, artistic forms and complexities of kimono culture, along with the etiquette of kimono attire for different seasons and occasions.

"The exhibition will include both my family's and local Victoria resident's collections," says Harama, whose family has operated Owmiya, a high-end kimono business for over 85 years. "All of my family's collections have been shipped from Japan."

*Kimono* also contains a digital component to display valuable Kimono examples physically unavailable for display at this time.

For more information see [www.aggv.ca](http://www.aggv.ca).

## ***Related Events at the AGGV – unless otherwise noted***

***Wednesday July 2, 2 p.m.***

### **Lecture: From Geisha to Diva: The Kimono of Ichimaru**

Join Barry Till, Curator of Asian Art for an unparalleled insight into the life of Ichimaru, one of the most famous geishas of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Till will guide us through a collection of her magnificent kimonos and other personal effects, illuminating the life and times of this unique figure in the social history of Japan.

***Thursday July 10, 7p.m.***

### **Curator's Tour with Hitomi Harama and Barry Till**

Guest Curator Hitomi Harama gives a walking tour of *Kimono: Japanese Culture in its Art Form*. Harama's family has owned and operated a traditional kimono retail store located in Nagoya, Japan for over 85 years, with a location here in Victoria providing a range of kimono services from styling to rentals. Harama is a passionate ambassador of Japanese culture with exceptional kimono expertise.

### **Slow Fashion, Handmade Lives: Conversation Series with Local Designers**

**Reserve your tickets at [slowfashion.eventbrite.ca](http://slowfashion.eventbrite.ca)**

Slow Fashion embraces garments made with sustainable fibers and hides, created by skilled designers making a living wage, using supply chains that produce quality products while enhancing culture and communities. Taking inspiration from the resourcefulness and skill of kimono couturiers, we will talk to three local fashion authorities about consumption, diversity, beauty and care in relation to our clothing in a globalized fashion world.

***Thursday August 7, 6 p.m.***

### **Rad Juli Custom Designs with Juli Steemson**

**3 Fan Tan Alley**

**Tickets \$13 (includes Gallery admission with ticket stub at a later date)**

Rad Juli is a maker of fine leather accessories, in addition to being a journeyman machinist and professional drummer. For Juli, leather is a purposeful material choice as it's durable, versatile and biodegradable. Using recycled and off-cut leather from various sources, including hides from either traditional sustenance hunters or licensed farms, she creates one of kind pieces that last a lifetime.

<http://www.radjuli.com/>

***Saturday August 9, 2 p.m.***

### **The Makehouse with Jenny Ambrose**

**833 1/2 Fort Street**

**Tickets \$13 (includes Gallery admission with ticket stub at a later date)**

Jenny Ambrose is the owner/founder of The Makehouse. She first founded and ran eco-fashion and lingerie label *Enamore* in the United Kingdom where she lived for over 13 years. Jenny returned to Canada and set up The Makehouse in 2012. She brings nearly 15 years of experience involving many dimensions of the fashion industry including design, tailoring, manufacturing, wholesale, and retail. Her portfolio also includes fashion shows, photo-shoots, teaching, mentoring and marketing.

[www.themakehouse.ca](http://www.themakehouse.ca)

***Thursday August 14, 7 p.m.***

### **Kimono Styling Demo with Hitomi Harama of Ume Silk**

**Tea Service by Silk Road Tea**

**Included with Gallery admission or membership**

Guest Curator Hitomi Harama will demonstrate and give a lecture about the structure of Kimono, showing the elegance of slow fashion and how versatile the kimono structure is for the wearer. She will also talk about the seasonal textile fabric and pattern design differences, the key elements of the beauty of traditional Japanese Kimono. Seasonal tea provided by Silk Road Tea.