



Intro Handbook: Studies Of Netsuke, Intro, And Laquer

Raymond Bushell

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For collectors who have discovered the delights of such miniature Japanese art forms as the *inro* and the *netsuke*, this authoritative and enlightening book offers a wealth of valuable information. That it also affords entry to a world of fascinating design and superb craftsmanship goes without saying. In addition to illustrating in color and discussing in detail 108 distinguished inro and their accompanying *netsuke*, as well as 18 related miniature objects, it presents highly informative essays on the making of *inro*, on pearl shell inlays, and, in particular on the materials and techniques of lacquer art, the last of these with 62 color photos. It also furnishes an extensive list of lacquer artists' signatures with 386 photos. It is refreshing to have an author tell his readers not only what his book is but also what it is not. In his introduction Bushell says: "This book is addressed to the collector of *inro*, *netsuke*, and other forms of miniature Japanese art, with emphasis on works in lacquer. Its purpose is specific and limited. It is not a comprehensive study of lacquer. It is not a historical survey, a technical analysis, a comparative examination, or a compendium of terms and definitions. In point of time it is limited to the Tokugawa, Meiji, Taisho, and early Showa periods. In point of craft it is limited to the later development of precise and sophisticated techniques, with their brilliant decorative effects." Bushell points out that he is not making an unnecessary emotional appeal in praise of lacquer. His objective is far more practical. This book is the product of his efforts to understand the structure underlying the beauty of lacquer art and to provide clear and simple explanations. Because other books on the subject had not satisfied him, he undertook his own basic research, and here he presents the information he acquired through painstaking study with master lacquer craftsmen and other authorities.

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