



松崎健

# COSMIC CONNECTION

CERAMICS BY KEN MATSUZAKI

Pucker Gallery  
Boston



**Vase**  
Yohen natural  
ash glaze  
8 x 9.5 x 9.5"  
MK1362

***All works are  
stoneware and  
come with a  
wooden box.***



# COSMIC CONNECTION

CERAMICS BY **KEN MATSUZAKI**

**W**ho is Ken Matsuzaki? First, he is a potter in a traditional vein. This may sound base or obvious, especially in a catalogue full of pottery, but the heart of a potter is unique, focused, and essential. Overall, the potter's spirit and work represents a fundamental and cosmic thread that weaves together our humanity in both a material function and a spiritual sense. Next, and well mixed with his traditional potter background, he is a true artist. His work contains and maintains beauty. This beauty is not trite as it plainly comes from a deep well of riches inside the spirit which pours through the process and clay and imbues itself into the work. It is earnest, honest, and sincere. The work speaks for itself.

As a potter and artist, Mr. Matsuzaki does not strive to achieve this beauty and production to be recognized by others or, I dare say, either to be recognizable to himself. If he did strive unwaveringly to achieve this, the work would deteriorate and would not contain the pure quality of authenticity it now has; rather the focus would move directly towards him and even his behavior as an "artist," leaving the work as a vestigial appendage—something to gawk at in relation to often flamboyant and showy acts. Rather, Mr. Matsuzaki strives for something much greater and more everlasting through his work, which connects to the eternal and cosmic thread or spirit. To do this, he has chosen the apt world of pottery.

Pottery is a fitting way to connect to the eternal thread because a potter strains and struggles, often in mass, with the basic elements of earth, water, air, and fire to create a work which is simultaneously beautiful and useful. This grounding in and cooperation with the basic elements to produce a useful item, often one that is a vessel, is at the heart of working in clay. The idea of a vessel is also poignant, as the item exists in a context where what is important is the negative space. A pot is only as useful as what it can and will hold. To intricately incorporate beauty within the pot, to elevate it to art, is illusive in some ways and straightforward in others.

To begin the endeavor to understand how pottery connects us to the eternal spirit, we must ground ourselves ever so briefly in the world of the traditional potter. The potter works with a large quantity of clay, which if one is harvesting on their own, must be dried, broken into a fine particulate,

and sifted. The powdered clay is mixed with an excess of water, left to hydrate as fully as possible, filtered, and then placed out to dry to the correct hydration. Typically, over a period of about half a year, the potter works tirelessly to meticulously shape nearly each pound into objects of use, such as plates, vases, and teapots. Even the humble rim of a cup, if not properly compressed and shaped, can cause a surprisingly terrible drinking experience. These completed works must be set out to dry completely. It is here that the work is in its most delicate state, and it is in this state that it is subjected to immense temperatures in the firing of the kiln. Top temperatures in the kiln are so extreme that its light alone can blind a person over time. The amount of wood required to continuously feed this burning flame over many days rivals the weight of an elephant. Though approaches vary, this is the general flow of the potter's art, and it takes slow and



**Round Flat Vase**  
Yohen natural  
ash glaze  
9.5 x 7.5 x 3.75"  
MK1425



**Round Flat Vase**  
 Yohen shino glaze  
 8.5 x 6.75 x 3.25"  
 MK1426

steady time. At times it is quite dull, at other times very intense, but if any of it is rushed, it generally will show. The potter must be perpetually engaged. This traditional practice with the elements and the sheer mass and physicality of the work roots the potter in the necessities, boundaries, and character not only of our material world, but of the internal world of self-discipline and human character. A potter thinks about how to make items that speak to people and are useful, but they also often work vigorously to compete with their own physical limitations to produce their work. These struggles with material, mind, and body are easier said than done. Patiently sculpting a small mountain of clay into an abundance of diverse and complex objects then giving them over to a single firing, powered for days by both body and wood, is more than just physically and mentally exhausting. I often call the firing of the kiln a 'spirit journey,' a continual process of asking the kiln questions to find out where it is,

what its problems are in the firing, and how this firing can come to peace with the world. This type of questioning seeps into the mind of the modern-day potter. In art, as in life, the results are not guaranteed.

Pottery, like all art, reflects the character of its maker. For Mr. Matsuzaki, this is a character of humility and humanity. In his pottery, he strives to remove himself as much as possible, instead aiming to uplift the cosmic connection of clay as a reflection of our minds, bodies, and spirits. He seeks an ultimate flow state, becoming one with the clay so that form and function arise from a space of creativity grounded in tradition. I imagine that he, like many potters in my experience, hopes his work will be integral to the quiet (even mundane) moments of others. It is in these quiet states that the world stops its spin and we enjoy the innately human feeling of connection to the natural world, of our smallness in the immense cosmos.

— Caroline Staller



**Toukaiseki Sake Bottle**

Hakuji glaze  
5 x 3 x 3"  
MK1464

**Sake Bottle**

Kakewake oribe glaze  
5 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1461

**Sake Bottle**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
6 x 3 x 3"  
MK1460

**Sake Bottle**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
5 x 3 x 3"  
MK1459



**Toukaiseki Vase**

Yuugen glaze  
7.25 x 3 x 3"  
MK1485



**Vase**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
9.25 x 8.5 x 8.5"  
MK1364



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
11 x 6.25 x 6.25"  
MK1383



**Sake Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
1.75 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1521

**Sake Cup**  
Gold shino glaze  
2.25 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1513

**Sake Cup**  
Shino glaze  
2.25 x 3 x 3"  
MK1526

**Sake Cup**  
Shino glaze  
1.5 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1527



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen yuugen glaze  
6 x 10.75 x 3.5"  
MK1394



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen glaze with inlay  
6.25 x 12 x 3.75"  
MK1393



**Toukaiseki Rectangular Vase**

Yohen natural ash glaze

5.75 x 14 x 8.25"

MK1395



**Toukaiseki Vase**

Shino glaze

5 x 8.5 x 4"

MK1404





**Vase**  
Oribe glaze  
7.75 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1422



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Seihaku glaze  
3.75 x 4 x 4"  
MK1416



**Vase**  
Yohen shino glaze  
14.25 x 6 x 6"  
MK1369



**Toukaiseki Vase with  
Metal Base**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
9.75 x 9.5 x 5"  
MK1378



**Neriage Bowl**  
Yohen glaze  
5.25 x 11.5 x 11.5"  
MK1465

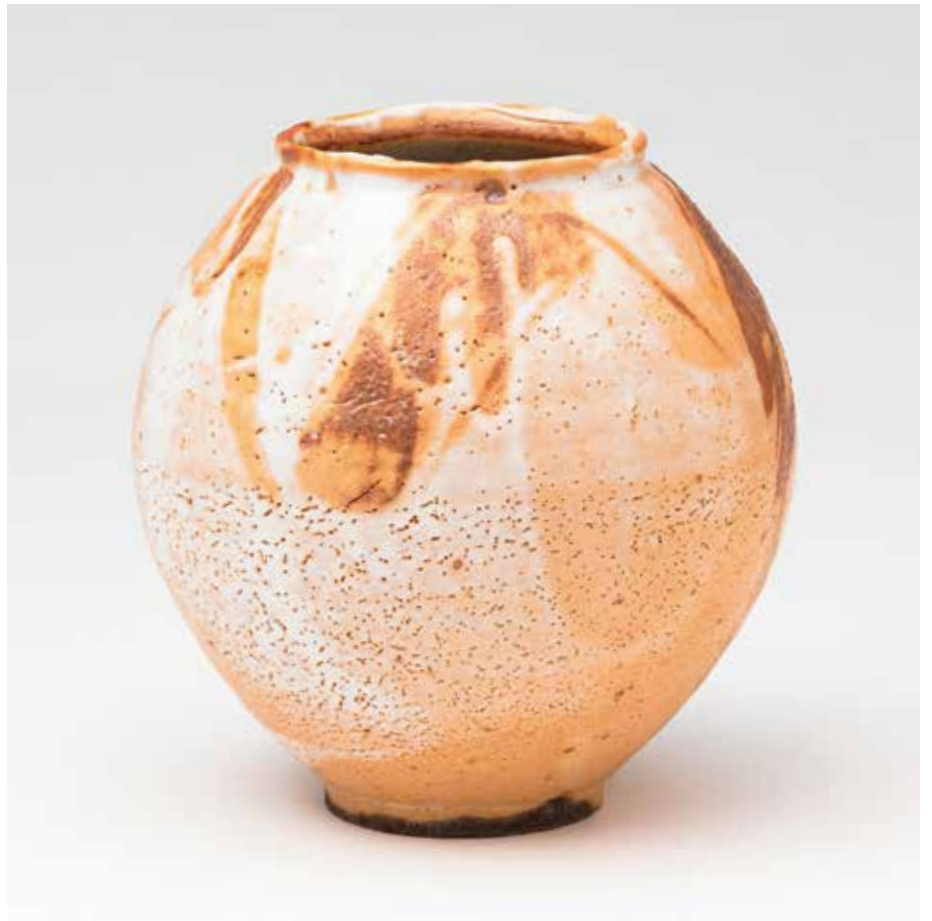
**Toukaiseki Vase with Metal Base**  
 Yuugen enzo glaze  
 8 x 8.5 x 4.5"  
 MK1361



**Tea Bowl**  
 Gold shino glaze  
 3.5 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
 MK1446



**Tea Bowl**  
 Akebono shino glaze  
 3.5 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
 MK1447



**Vase**  
 Shino glaze  
 8.5 x 8 x 8"  
 MK1365



**Vase**  
Yohen soda glaze  
8 x 7 x 7"  
MK1374



**Small Vase**  
Nanban glaze  
5 x 6 x 6"  
MK1440



**Square Plate**  
Oribe glaze  
1.75 x 10 x 10"  
MK1467



**Vase**  
Kiseto glaze  
7 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1421



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yuugen glaze with inlay  
12 x 7.75 x 6.5"  
MK1385

**Sake Cup**

Yohen shino glaze  
2.5 x 2.5 x 2.5"  
MK1531

**Sake Cup**

Yohen soda glaze  
2.5 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1523

**Sake Cup**

Kiseto glaze  
2.75 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1518

**Sake Cup**

Tetsu shino glaze  
2.5 x 3 x 3"  
MK1514

**Mizutsugi**

Oribe glaze  
11.25 x 10.25 x 7.25"  
MK1449

**Sake Cup**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
1.5 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1532

**Toukaiseki Ginsai Sake Cup**

Yuugen glaze  
2.75 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1530

**Sake Cup**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
2.5 x 2.5 x 2.5"  
MK1522

**Sake Cup**

Gold shino glaze  
2 x 3 x 3"  
MK1528

**Round Flat Vase**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
10.25 x 8.25 x 2.5"  
MK1376



**Rectangular Vase**

Oribe glaze, hand brushed  
10.25 x 9.75 x 3"  
MK1367



**Sake Cup**  
Shino glaze  
2.25 x 3 x 3"  
MK1516

**Sake Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
3.25 x 2.5 x 2.5"  
MK1520

**Sake Cup**  
Shino glaze  
2 x 3 x 3"  
MK1525

**Sake Cup**  
Oribe glaze  
2.25 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1517





**Hisago Vase**  
Yohen soda glaze  
8.5 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
MK1372



**Hisago Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
10 x 5 x 5"  
MK1371



**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1504

**Cup**  
Gold yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1492

**Cup**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
4.25 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1495

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1491



**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1502

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1489

**Cup**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
4 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1507

**Gosuji Cup**  
Yohen soda glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1508



**Rectangular Vase**  
Yohen glaze  
7 x 3.75 x 2.5"  
MK1432



**Rectangular Vase**  
Yohen soda glaze  
7 x 3.5 x 2.5"  
MK1434



**Sake Bottle**  
Oribe glaze  
5.5 x 3 x 3"  
MK1462

**Sake Bottle**  
Yohen shino glaze  
5 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1457



**Plate**  
Oribe glaze  
.75 x 9.5 x 7.5"  
MK1482



**Sake Cup**  
Shino glaze  
2.5 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1515

**Sake Cup**  
Kiseto glaze  
2.25 x 2.75 x 2.75"  
MK1519

**Sake Cup**  
Gold shino glaze  
3 x 2.5 x 2.5"  
MK1529

**Sake Cup**  
Yohen soda glaze  
2 x 3 x 3"  
MK1524

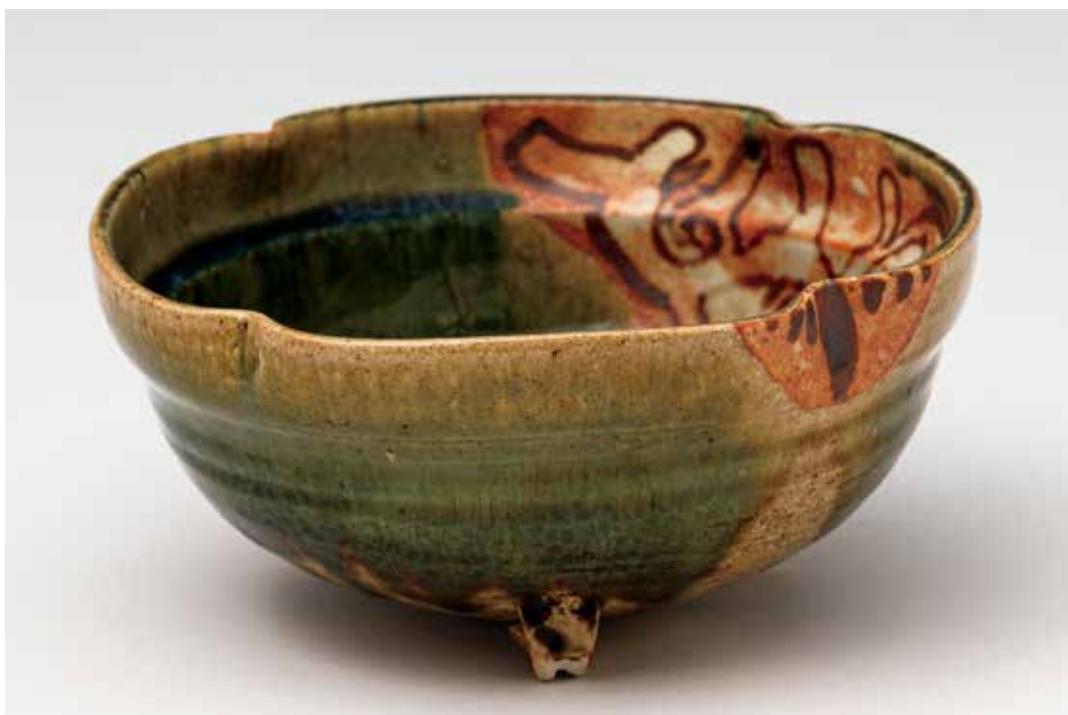


**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1493

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1509

**Cup**  
Gold shino glaze  
4 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1506

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1490



**Bowl**  
Oribe glaze  
3.75 x 7.75 x 7.75"  
MK1471



**Square Plate**  
Oribe glaze  
1.75 x 6.75 x 6.75"  
MK1478



**Sake Bottle**  
Yohen shino glaze  
6.25 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1458

**Toukaiseki Sake Bottle**  
Hakuji glaze  
6.25 x 3 x 3"  
MK1463

**Sake Bottle**  
Yohen shino glaze  
6.25 x 3 x 3"  
MK1455

**Sake Bottle**  
Yohen shino glaze  
6 x 3 x 3"  
MK1456



**Round Flat Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
9 x 7.75 x 3.75"  
MK1424



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
 Yohen shino glaze  
 14 x 7.5 x 7.5"  
 MK1396



**Hisago Vase**  
 Yohen soda glaze  
 9.5 x 5 x 5"  
 MK1370



**Small Vase**  
Mashiko tetsue karakusa glaze  
6 x 6.25 x 6.25"  
MK1437



**Small Vase**  
Mashiko glaze, hand brushed  
5.75 x 6 x 6"  
MK1438



**Toukaiseki Water Container**  
Hakuji natural ash glaze  
6.5 x 7.5 x 7.5"  
MK1445



**Water Container**  
Yuugen shinogi glaze  
6.5 x 6.5 x 6.5"  
MK1444



**Vase**  
Yohen shino glaze  
8.75 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1420



**Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
8.25 x 4.75 x 4.75"  
MK1418



**Cup**  
Tetsu shino glaze  
3.75 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1500

**Cup**  
Oribe glaze  
4 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1511

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1510

**Cup**  
Oribe glaze  
3.75 x 3 x 3"  
MK1512





**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
6.75 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1399



**Vase**  
Yohen yuugen glaze  
5.5 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
MK1423



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Oribe glaze  
10.25 x 5.5 x 5.5"  
MK1388



**Vase**  
Yohen soda glaze  
13.75 x 9 x 7.25"  
MK1368

**Square Plate with Handle**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
5 x 8 x 8"  
MK1469



**Ryuumonn Kasiwa Plate**  
Oribe glaze  
3 x 10 x 6.75"  
MK1473



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Seihaku natural ash glaze  
7.5 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1402



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
3.75 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
MK1413



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Oribe glaze  
5.5 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1410



**Water Container**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
6.75 x 7.25 x 6.5"  
MK1443



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen soda glaze  
7 x 6 x 6"  
MK1392



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Hakuji glaze  
6 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1411



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Oribe glaze  
7 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1409



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Hakuji natural ash glaze  
7.5 x 6.75 x 6.75"  
MK1390



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen glaze  
7 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1401



**Vase**  
Yohen oribe glaze  
7.5 x 4.75 x 4.75"  
MK1417



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Yohen yuugen glaze  
5 x 5.5 x 5.5"  
MK1403



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Hakuji glaze  
6 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1412

**Kakewake Plate**  
 Oribe glaze  
 4 x 7.5 x 6.25"  
 MK1474



**Tea Pot**  
 Yohen shino glaze  
 6.25 x 6.75 x 4.75"  
 MK1451



**Rectangular Vase**  
 Yohen natural ash glaze  
 7 x 3.5 x 2.5"  
 MK1429



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Oribe glaze  
4.25 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
MK1415



**Small Vase**  
Tsshya glaze  
4 x 5 x 5"  
MK1442



**Rectangular Vase**  
Yohen shino glaze  
7 x 3.75 x 2.5"  
MK1428



**Toukaiseki Vase**  
Mashiko kohiki glaze  
8.75 x 5 x 5"  
MK1391





**Kakehana**  
Oribe glaze  
1.75 x 18.5 x 1.5"  
MK1483



**Box**  
Oribe glaze  
3.5 x 9 x 6.75"  
MK1481



**Toukaiseki Cup**  
Hakuji glaze  
4.25 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1497

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1503

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1505

**Toukaiseki Cup**  
Hakuji glaze  
4 x 3 x 3"  
MK1498



**Cup**  
Tetsu shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1496

**Cup**  
Tetsu shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.5 x 3.5"  
MK1494

**Cup**  
Yohen shino glaze  
4.25 x 3.75 x 3.75"  
MK1501

**Cup**  
Tetsu shino glaze  
3.75 x 3.25 x 3.25"  
MK1499



**Kakehana**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
2 x 14.75 x 1.5"  
MK1484



**Katakuchi Water  
Container**  
Tetsu shino glaze  
5.75 x 9.25 x 8"  
MK1470

**Toukaiseki Vase with Metal Base**

Shino glaze  
8.75 x 8.5 x 4"  
MK1379

**Tea Bowl**

Shino glaze  
3.5 x 4.5 x 4.5"  
MK1448

**Tea Pot**

Yohen natural ash glaze  
5.75 x 6.75 x 5"  
MK1453



**Square Bowl**  
Oribe glaze  
2.25 x 8 x 8"  
MK1475



**Plate**  
Yuugen karakusa  
glaze  
1.75 x 7 x 7"  
MK1480



**Square Plate**  
Yohen soda glaze  
1.75 x 7 x 7"  
MK1477



**Mizutsugi**  
Yohen natural ash glaze  
9 x 8.75 x 6.5"  
MK1450



Ken Matsuzaki was born in Tokyo in 1950 and received a degree in Ceramic Art from Tamagawa University School of Fine Arts, Tokyo. He moved to Mashiko in 1972 to apprentice with Tatsuzo Shimaoka (who himself had moved to Mashiko to study with Shoji Hamada). After a five-year apprenticeship, Matsuzaki established his own kiln, Yuushin Gama, down the road from Mr. Shimaoka. Matsuzaki's works have a strong grounding in the Mingei philosophy though his approach is very contemporary, introducing a focus on the Oribe style with yohen, shino, and oribe glazing.

Matsuzaki's work has been exhibited all over the world, and is in the collections of the Cleveland Museum of Art (Ohio), The Worcester Museum of Art (Massachusetts), the Tikotin Museum (Israel), and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York).

松  
青  
健

PUCKER

ESTABLISHED 1967 BOSTON

GALLERY

**PUCKER GALLERY**

240 Newbury Street, 3rd Floor  
Boston, MA 02116  
617.267.9473  
contactus@puckergallery.com

**GALLERY HOURS:**

Monday through Saturday  
10:00 AM to 5:30 PM  
Sunday 1:00 to 5:00 PM

Pucker Gallery is a member  
of the Boston Art Dealers  
Association and the New  
England Appraisers  
Association.

**CREDITS:**

*Design:*

Leslie Anne Feagley

*Editors:*

Jeanne Koles and  
Beth Plakidas

*Photography:*

Kan Matsuzaki

© 2024 Pucker Gallery  
Printed in Canada by  
Friesens, Inc.



COSMIC  
CONNECTION

CERAMICS BY KEN MATSUZAKI

**DATES**

11 May through  
23 June 2024

**PUBLIC OPENING**

**RECEPTION:**

Saturday 11 May 2024  
3 to 6 PM

The artist will be present.

**ONLINE EVENTS:**

Please visit  
[www.puckergallery.com](http://www.puckergallery.com)  
for a list of virtual gatherings  
and events accompanying  
*Cosmic Connection*.



**COVER:**

*Top left: Toukaiseki Vase with  
Wooden Base*

Yohen natural ash glaze  
15.25 x 15.25 x 6"  
MK1359

*Top right: Toukaiseki Vase  
with Wooden Base*

Shino glaze  
10 x 7.5 x 4"  
MK1380

*Bottom left: Toukaiseki Vase  
with Wooden Base*

Oribe glaze  
9.75 x 7.75 x 3.75"  
MK1381

*Bottom right: Toukaiseki Vase  
with Metal Base*

Yohen yuugen enzo glaze  
10 x 10 x 5.5"  
MK1360

**BACK COVER:**

*Rectangular Vase (front and back)*

Yohen natural ash glaze  
10.25 x 9.75 x 3.75"  
MK1366

Please visit  
[www.puckergallery.com](http://www.puckergallery.com)  
to view the full catalogue  
for this exhibition, which  
includes additional  
works and images.