SATSUMA HATPINS

Wheaton Village
2007

Featuring hatpins from the collection of Cathy Miller and Virginia Woodbury

By Jodi Lenocker
SATSUMA

- Where is Satsuma?
- It is in Japan
- In the Southern area of Kyushu Island
- In the Kagoshima Prefecture
What is Satsuma ware?

- Satsuma ware is technically a glazed pottery (faience)
  - It is made from clay from Kyushu Island
  - It is fired at lower temperatures than porcelain
  - But is fired at higher temperatures than most pottery
SATSUMA

- Satsuma ware is characterized by:
  - A soft ivory colored crackled glaze
  - An overlay of decorations in raised polychrome enamel colors and gold
  - Gold lacquer made from gold ground into a powder
    - Applied in many thin coats
    - Followed by several firings
SATSUMA

- Glaze is thin and glassy
- Cracks caused by difference in shrinkage between body and glaze during cooling
- Europeans thought it was due to plunging into cold water
- Crackles break surface into thousands of tiny planes and gives a soft effect
• Satsuma ware:
  – May include “Gosu blue”, a highly saturated cobalt blue glaze
  – Is crafted and decorated by hand so no two pieces are exactly alike
History of Satsuma ware

• 618-907 (Tang Dynasty) China developed true porcelain (Kaolin and Petuntse)

• 1100’s secret spread to Korea

• 1500’s Japanese were making porcelain

• In 1598 the Japanese invaded Korea

• Shimazu Yoshihiro, daimyo of Satsuma Province, brought back and impressed Korean artisans

• Local rulers set up kilns on their estates to produce pottery and porcelain for their use
History of Satsuma ware

• Shimizu used the Korean artisans to develop his own ceramic industry
• Satsuma ware was not true porcelain but it was hard and able to hold liquids
• Secrets of the craft were handed down generation to generation until the 1960’s
• Artistic perfection was a goal during this era
• The continued patronage of the Shimazu family contributed to its popularity

Shimazu Mon
History of Satsuma

• The purpose of making pottery and porcelain was to produce beautiful vessels for the tea ceremony.

• Early Satsuma was simple, with a cream colored body with a finely crackled light yellowish glaze.

• Decorations were simple, consisting of flowers, Phoenix or Dragon.

• The early wares were prized by noble houses and noticed by early Western visitors.
History of Satsuma

By end of 18\textsuperscript{th} century, Kyoto artisans introduced enamel colors to Satsuma artists.

Kyoto studios began producing fine, artistic “Satsuma” ware from clay brought from Kyushu.
History of Satsuma

Kyoto-style Satsuma is lighter in body color and its crackle is less pronounced.
History of Satsuma

Kagoshima-style Satsuma is darker in tone and has stronger crackle lines in the glaze
History of Satsuma

- By the end of the 18th century, the Satsuma artists learned to decorate with colored enamels and gold
- Geometric patterns and repetitive patterns (diapers) appeared
History of Satsuma

By the end of the 19th century:

- More subtle color shades appeared giving perspective
- This led to motifs with landscapes and figurals
- Figural Satsuma was specifically for export
- After 1870, the use of Gosu blue from industrially refined cobalt
History of Satsuma

• Portuguese were in Japan from 1542-1639
• After the Portuguese were expelled, Japan cut off trade except with China and Korea
• Dutch were allowed to trade, but only from a small peninsula in Nagasaki
• In 1853, Commodore Perry visited Port of Kanagawa and was turned away
History of Satsuma

• In 1854, he returned and the Treaty of Kanagawa allowed Commodore Perry to open limited trade with America

• In 1858, the Harris Treaty officially opened trade relations with the US
History of Satsuma

- At the 1867 Paris Exhibition, Satsuma ware was exhibited and was very popular.
- Increased export demands prompted an increase in production.
- The artistic studio approach changed.
- Production became industrialized.
- Factory workers were used in an assembly line and some attention to detail was lost.
History of Satsuma

• In spite of industrialization, some manufacturers maintained small studios in factory compounds for the best artists to produce exquisite Satsuma ware:
  – Sobei Kinkozan
  – Yabu Meizan
  – Ryozan
Dating Satsuma

• Edo period: 1615-1868
  – Later years of the feudal age-Tokugawa Shogunate

• Meiji period: 1868-1912
  – The beginning of open trade with West-Emperor Meiji

• Taisho period: 1912-1926
  – A period of increased mass production-Emperor Yoshihito

• Showa period: 1926 to present
Dating Satsuma

- Acceptable forms for dating
  - If time period is known, piece can be dated as:
    - “vase, early Meiji period”, or
    - “vase, late Edo period”
  - If an approximate date within a time period can be established, piece can be dated as:
    - “vase, Meiji period, circa 1890”, or
    - “vase, Edo period, circa 1820”
History of Satsuma

- Hatpins would be late Meiji or early Taisho
- During the Meiji period (1868-1912) and up until today, Satsuma was produced:
  - Mainly for export
  - In several cities, such as:
    - Kyoto
    - Tokyo
    - Nagoya
    - Yokohama
Satsuma Marks

• Marks are unreliable in determining age or authenticity

• Marks were found in designs, on rims, covers, lids, and bases

• Paper labels were also used—deteriorated over time

Shimazu Family Mon
Cartouche reads
Meizan Hododa
Satsuma Marks

- Marks were bought, sold, and openly copied
- One family may use same mark for generations
- Mark can indicate factory, potter, decorator, pattern, customer, or exporter
- Between 1891 to 1921, (McKinley Tariff Act), “Nippon” was used to designate country of origin

Yabu Meizan (1853-1934)
Satsuma Hatpins

• Since the Japanese wore no buttons, none were made until export trade was established with the west

• Based on this, one suspects that hatpins were also made solely for the export trade
  – Japanese women did not wear hats
  – Japanese women wore ornamental hair pins, but they were not made of porcelain or ceramic
Satsuma Hatpins

• Are characterized by the color of the glaze (old ivory or straw) and the fine crackle lines over the exposed surface.
• As with buttons, it is probable only a few were made with the Gosu underglaze.
• And probably fewer still were underglazed with a dark green back or rim.
Satsuma Hatpins

Hatpins are found in several shapes

Flat heads with a metal back

Elongated tapered square
Elongated tapered round
Elongated tapered geometric
Round balls
Satsuma Hatpins

- Several firings in a kiln were needed to complete a hatpin head
- The first firing was to establish a shape
- The second firing was to produce the glaze
- Item was hand painted and returned to the kiln for slow heating (one color at a time)
- A final firing was for the raised gold enamel
Satsuma Hatpins

• Many hatpins were exported in pairs, packed in thinly cut wooden boxes up to 12-14 inches

• Also, hatpin heads were made in Japan, imported by distributors, who inserted the pins

• A metallic cup finding usually meets the decorative trim

• The flat disc findings are sometimes called “sleeves”, similar to ones used on buttons
Satsuma Hatpins

- The heads were made in the age when there was more care with design execution

- The brushwork is painstaking and detailed

From Virginia Woodbury Collection
Satsuma Hatpins

The enamel colors are soft and mellow, with blue, red, green, rust, and gold predominating.
Satsuma Hatpins

- Encrustations of gold are characteristic of this age
  - It stands out from the surface and can be felt
  - Small gold stippling on the background was typical of good quality work
Satsuma Hatpins

- Early outlines were in black

- Gold outlines date from circa 1905

- White and yellow outlines that blend in with background from 1915 on
Satsuma Hatpins

Subject matter was in 4 major groupings:

1. Botanical—depicting symbols of Japanese values
   - Chrysanthemum: Purity
   - Plum blossom: Symbolic of womanhood
   - Iris: Flower of victory
   - Wisteria, Jasmine, Bamboo: Commonly found
Satsuma Hatpins

2. People- most often seen are women

May appear singly, but usually are in groups

Women usually represent noblewomen or geishas
Satsuma Hatpins

Occasionally, a warrior lord or Samurai is found

Unique European Couple
Satsuma Hatpins

3. Animals—most commonly bird, butterflies, and dragons
   - Bird favorites are cranes and small song birds
Satsuma Hatpins

– Butterflies symbolize transformation, Spring, maidenhood, and happiness in marriage

Virginia Woodbury Collection
Satsuma Hatpins

- Japanese dragon (3 toed) is a symbol of good luck, long life, and protection against misfortune
4. **Scenes**: most common scenes include:
   - A view of Mount Fiji
   - Pagodas
Satsuma Hatpins

• Many of our hatpins reflect the late Meiji Era (up to 1911), when craftsmanship and the arts flourished
• Those from the Taisho period (1911-1925), a time of increased mass production, still reflect good quality work
• Thus, Satsuma hatpins remain highly collectible
Satsuma Hatpin Holder

It is 4.28 inches tall
Slightly ribbed body
Sources

• Books:
Sources

• Internet:
  – “Satsuma Buttons” by Dr. Stefan O.Schiff, www.tias.com/articles
The End