



Kagoshima: Stories in Craft from South Japan Returns to London Design Festival

Wood artist Shintaro Oku joins for third edition at wagumi, Oxo Tower – 13–21 September 2025



London, UK — July 2025

Kagoshima: Stories in Craft from South Japan returns for its third edition at the **2025 London Design Festival**, bringing together a compelling selection of traditional and contemporary makers from Japan's southernmost region. The exhibition runs from **13th to 21st September** at **wagumi**, the Japanese design store located at London's **Oxo Tower Wharf**.

This year's spotlight is on **woodworker Shintaro Oku**, who will travel from Kagoshima to lead **to lead wood carving demonstrations and a hands-on chopstick carving workshops from 13th to 15th September at the Oxo Gallery** below the wagumi shop. Working under the **KOPPA** brand, Oku transforms camphor wood off-cuts into smooth, textural forms that honour the character of the material. His zero-waste approach and philosophy of living within one's craft have earned him recognition across Japan's contemporary craft movement.

The exhibition also features twenty one other makers whose work expresses the region's rich cultural identity and deep connection to the place. From the shimmering, hand-cut glass of **MIRIYU Kōbō** to the shrine-rooted folk toys of **Kōbō Miyaji**, the event explores the enduring creativity of Kagoshima. Ceramicist **Kaori Sasaki** of **Nohara-ya kiln** fuses Okinawan yachimun forms with the black Satsuma tradition using local clay and volcanic ash, while **Shōbu Gakuen** showcases vibrant work made in inclusive studios for artists with learning disabilities.

Visitors can also explore the delicate textures of traditional handmade paper by **Tsuruta Washi**, and taste organically grown teas from **Yamaguchi-en**, a pioneering family-run farm in the Satsuma region.

Exhibition Details:

Kagoshima: Stories in Craft from South Japan

13–21 September 2025

Open Monday to Sunday, 11am–6pm

wagumi, Unit 1.09 / Oxo Tower Gallery, Oxo Tower Wharf, Barge House Street, London SE1 9PH

Wood Carving Demonstration and Chopstick Workshops with KOPPA: 13th to 15 September at Oxo Gallery

Koppa Chopstick-Making Woodwork Workshops - 13–15 September 2025 · Oxo Tower Gallery

Koppa / Shintaro Oku will host a series of hands-on chopstick-making workshops. Koppa will be sharing some of his techniques in these special sessions. Participants will make and take home their own hand-finished chopstick set. The workshops are designed to be simple, enjoyable, and accessible to different age groups:

Workshops by age group

- **Younger children (ages 3–6):** sanding and polishing
- **Older children (ages 7–12):** simple planing and sanding
- **Adults:** the full chopstick-making process

Dates & Prices

- **Children's workshops:** 13–14 September · £19 (includes materials, instruction, and chopstick set)
- **Adults' workshops:** 14–15 September · £28 (includes materials, instruction, and chopstick set)

Each day offers **four one-hour sessions**. Adults accompanying children are welcome to observe or join in free of charge.

Tickets available via www.wagumi-j.com

Makers – Aguri no Sato (Snacks), Chiran Tea Farm (Tea), Coffee Kan (Fashion), Hachimanju Tea (Tea), Hamada Tea (Tea), Hinoki Salt, Hirameki Table Spice (Spices), Kagomania (Fashion), KOPPA (Wood), Mesena (Spices), MIRIYU Kōbō (Glass), Noharaya Kiln / Kaori Sasaki (Ceramics), Ryumonji Pottery (Ceramics), Sameshima Kougei (Folk Craft), Shōbu Gakuen (Craft), Sueshige Tea (Tea), Totsugawa Farm (Tea), Tsuruta Washi (Handmade Papers), Yagitake (Bamboo), Yamaguchi-en (Tea).

For more information, visit www.wagumi-j.com or follow @kagoshima_stories on Instagram.

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About wagumi

Based in London's Oxo Tower, wagumi is a shop that aims to showcase the best in Japanese design and crafts - and in so doing assist small producers, bring new life to traditional aesthetics and support fresh ideas. Owned and produced by Lives London, the shop uses a network of local connections to source and introduce design products and crafts that support sustainable development in Japan.

About Kagoshima Prefecture

On the southern tip of Japan's southern island of Kyushu, Kagoshima is rich in natural heritage and human geography. Formed in the late 19th century from the old Satsuma and Osumi domains, together with the northern part of the Ryukyu island chain, it is today home to around 1.5 million people. Known for the Sakurajima volcano in the bay opposite the prefectural capital, Kagoshima features a variety of landscapes across island and mountain chains. It is also home to a rich tradition in craft, encompassing glassware, ceramics, bamboo craft and more.