

From artifact technology to material language: the contemporary artistic translation of "Ikkanbari" lacquer craft

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Abstract. Taking Japanese "Ikkanbari" lacquer craft as the research object, this paper explores the specific paths through which traditional making experience enters contemporary art. By means of literature review, artifact analysis and craft process analysis, the paper examines changes in paper layer forming, lacquer layer treatment, traces of making, and modes of artifact usage. The study finds that the contemporary value of Ikkanbari is concentrated in lightweight structures, layering processes, surface revelation and concealment, and bodily participation, all of which can be transformed into new form-making approaches and viewing experiences. For the contemporary development of traditional crafts, attention should be paid to the reorganization of materials, structures and usage relations, rather than remaining at the level of replicating traditional styles or decorating with cultural symbols.

Keywords: Ikkanbari, paper-base lacquer craft, contemporary art, material language, craft transformation

1. Introduction

The integration of traditional crafts into contemporary art is often framed within narratives of preservation, innovation and transformation. Related practices cover form modification, pattern appropriation, product development and cross-material fabrication, and have gradually extended to sculpture, installation and wearable works. While these practices have increased the social visibility of traditional crafts, they do not automatically resolve the relationship between craft and art. Material names, production difficulty and traditional identity can explain the technical origin of a work, yet the meaning of the work must still be constructed through form, space, viewing and bodily experience. In his research on the relationship between contemporary art and craft, Glenn Adamson points out that making activities have always occupied an important position in modern visual art, yet this issue has received relatively limited treatment in criticism and art history [1]. This judgment suggests that the contemporary value of traditional crafts needs to be sought in actual making methods, rather than confirmed solely by the traditional names used in the works.

Ikkanbari is a suitable case for observing this issue. In the narrow sense, Ikkanbari usually refers to the craft of forming a base by layering paper, applying lacquer layers, and making artifacts. The forms presented

in existing materials are quite complex. Ikkanbari tea utensils can be made by pasting paper on wooden bases, forming paper bases, or applying lacquer in a minimalist manner; local daily crafts also refer to pasting paper on bamboo baskets and coating with persimmon tannin as Ikkanbari; contemporary descriptions from the House of Senoshi of Hirai Ikkan list structures such as washi-based, bamboo-washi composite, and wood-washi composite [2]. Local craft materials from Kagawa Prefecture also interpret Ikkanbari as a daily technique of pasting paper on the surface of bamboo baskets or wooden utensils and coating with persimmon tannin to enhance durability [3]. The expansion of the term reflects the combinations of paper, skeleton and coating in different regions, and also reminds researchers not to generalize this craft with a single artifact shape or fixed surface.

Existing studies relevant to Ikkanbari can be divided, provisionally, into several bodies of literature. The Chinese-language works consulted in this study discuss Sino-Japanese exchanges in lacquer craft, paper-base lacquerware, and changes in lacquerware core-making [4-7]. These studies clarify the broader technical background of paper-base lacquerware, but they do not all examine Ikkanbari as an independent category. The Japanese-language sources used here concern tea utensils, regional lacquer production, and scientific instruments [8-11]. Recent practice-based studies address demolding, deformation, paper texture, and coating behavior [12-14]. Within the limited corpus examined in this article, sustained analysis connecting historical object knowledge with contemporary artistic practice remains insufficient.

This paper takes the contemporary artistic translation of "Ikkanbari"¹ as its core issue. Here, "translation" refers to the adjustment of the original functions of craft operations after they enter a new creative context and to their participation in the formation of the work's meaning. The paper adopts literature analysis, artifact analysis, and craft-process analysis. The historical section takes tea utensils as its primary objects of analysis, supplemented by telescope cases that expand the structural range of paper-base artifacts. The contemporary section examines deboned reshaping and modern discussions of paper-base lacquer masks in order to analyze changes in structure, process, surface, and object use. It focuses on how paper layers and lacquer layers generate form, experience, and meaning.

2. From craft renewal to artistic translation

2.1. The issue of craft in contemporary art

In the second half of the twentieth century, material experimentation, process art, installation and bodily practice continuously transformed the mode of existence of artworks, and making techniques re-entered artistic discourse. Craft occupies a dual position in this transformation. On the one hand, skilled making and material knowledge provide the structural foundation for works; on the other hand, craft is easily seen as a functional tradition to be cast off. Craft often plays a role as a "marginal" identity within modern art. It is excluded by artistic discourse, yet continues to provide artists with issues of labor, materials, skill and repetitive production. A tense relationship thus forms between craft and contemporary art, and its meaning also emerges from this incomplete overlap [1].

Lacquer craft has relatively stable material properties, procedural requirements and utensil traditions, and works usually go through links such as base making, lacquering, drying, polishing and decoration. The investment of time and technical difficulty can prove the maker's professional competence, yet they cannot

¹ It usually refers to the traditional Japanese lacquer craft "Ikkanbari (いっかんばり)". It is a lightweight craft made by layering washi paper on wooden molds or bamboo baskets and coating the surface with persimmon tannin or raw lacquer.

directly guarantee that the work has contemporary artistic significance. What form the process produces after entering the work, whether the material state affects viewing, and whether the making behavior changes the relationship between the work and the body and space—these questions are closer to the scope of contemporary art judgment. Craft research should also advance from "what technology is adopted" to "what the technology does in the work".

Tim Ingold understands making as a cognitive process in which materials, bodies and environments unfold together [15]. Form does not exist in its entirety before making begins; the maker must respond to changes in the material during operation, allowing the work to gradually take shape along the actual making process. The moisture absorption, shrinkage, softness and breakage of paper, and the penetration, bonding and curing of lacquer, may all alter the predetermined form. Such changes do not mean that the creator abandons control. Control is manifested in continuous observation, adjusting force, judging the degree of drying, and deciding which traces to retain. That is, materials have their own tendencies of change, and making proceeds within these tendencies.

Contemporary research on Ikkanbari can be developed along this line of thinking. The resources it provides include the bonding relationship between paper layers, the load-bearing mode of thin-walled structures, dimensional changes caused by humidity, the fixation of the paper base by the lacquer layer, and the influence of surface coverage on viewing experience. All these contents come from craft practice and at the same time have the potential to enter contemporary art. The key to research is to identify which operations have changed the form and meaning of the work, and to avoid directly equating material names with artistic concepts.

2.2. The judgment criterion of "translation"

The contemporary transformation of traditional crafts involves multiple levels. Product design often extends the social life of crafts by adjusting functions, dimensions and usage environments; cultural and creative development expands communication through patterns, stories and brand images. These efforts have practical value, and their evaluation criteria mainly relate to usage, market and communication. The contemporary artistic translation discussed in this paper focuses on another set of issues. Material operations need to enter the meaning structure of the work, the making process needs to have a discernible impact on the final form, and a new perceptual or action relationship should be formed between the work and the audience.

Taking the paper base as an example, replacing a wooden base with a paper base can reduce the weight of the artifact, yet it does not necessarily form an artistic language. When a work uses the hollow, flexible or deformable characteristics of the paper base to change its own spatial state, the material begins to assume an expressive function. The retention of paper grain has a similar situation. Visible texture may only be a decorative effect; when the seams, cracks, moisture absorption and layering traces of paper are connected with the theme, scale and viewing distance of the work, the surface gains the possibility of further interpretation. The effectiveness of craft translation is determined by the relationship between materials, processes and the content of the work.

Based on this, this paper adopts four interrelated observation dimensions. The structural dimension focuses on how the paper base forms lightweight shells, cavities and combined units; the process dimension examines the temporal traces left by layering, demolding, drying, shrinkage and curing; the surface dimension deals with the revelation, semi-concealment and decorative coverage of the paper base; the utensil dimension analyzes how traditional actions such as holding, opening and closing, stretching, nesting and moving enter the relationship between the work and the body.

This analysis can also avoid a common simplification in contemporary craft research. The use of traditional materials in a work cannot alone prove that tradition has gained new expression; the removal of practical

function from a work does not mean that it automatically enters contemporary art. A more reliable judgment requires returning to the interior of the work and examining whether material conditions have truly changed the form, time, space and viewing methods. Craft knowledge remains effective in this process, but its scope of action has changed.

2.3. Redefinition of the research object of Ikkanbari

The term "Ikkanbari" refers to somewhat different objects in different sources. Some literature emphasizes paper-base artifacts made by layering paper on wooden molds and applying lacquer after demolding; some local crafts paste paper on bamboo baskets or wooden utensils and use persimmon tannin or lacquer to increase strength; there are also differences in the material structures of Hirai family tea utensils, House of Senoshi artifacts and local daily necessities. If these objects are collectively referred to as a fixed technique, key issues such as whether the paper base is formed independently, the thickness of the lacquer layer, and the internal skeleton will be obscured.

This paper adopts a limited working definition: Ikkanbari refers to a set of craft practices in which paper participates in artifact forming through layering, pasting or composite methods, and the lacquer layer undertakes reinforcement, protection or surface treatment. This definition focuses on the collaboration between paper layers and coating, allowing different artifacts to retain structural differences. It also involves the understanding of "materiality". Materiality cannot be reduced to material appearance or natural properties. The lightness, softness, moisture absorption and fiber structure of paper must be transformed into specific artifacts through layering, bonding, drying and lacquering; the bonding, curing and waterproof capabilities of lacquer also vary depending on paper type, thickness, number of coating layers and usage environment.

The MIHO Museum catalogue identifies the object as a seventeenth-century paper-base lacquer tea caddy by the First Generation Hirai Ikkan. The object measures 6.1 cm in height and 9 cm in diameter, and the catalogue describes it as lightweight, resistant to deformation, and rustic in character [16]. Based on its small scale and function as a tea utensil, this article further interprets opening, holding, placing, and passing as actions through which weight and surface texture may become perceptible. This interpretation is proposed by the present study rather than stated in the museum catalogue.

The Kitayama Kaikan catalogue states that the Sōtan-preferred Ikkanbari natsume was made by applying lacquer once over a paper-covered surface [17]. This source documents a specific example of thin lacquer treatment, but it does not establish one-coat lacquering as a universal feature of Ikkanbari. This article therefore treats simplicity as a contextual aesthetic choice associated with this tea-utensil setting, rather than as the fixed essence of the technique.

The experience provided by tea utensil cases for contemporary art is mainly concentrated in scale and contact. Lacquer art research often examines the surface at the visual level, yet the weight, temperature, edges and opening/closing of tea utensils need to be perceived through the body. The tactile experience formed jointly by the paper base and the lacquer layer can be transferred to contemporary works that are holdable, openable, or require close contact. Such translation depends on the work's arrangement of the audience's actions; simply retaining rough paper grain does not naturally create corporeality.

In contrast, Edo-period Ikkanbari telescopes could reach a substantially larger scale. One example is Mori Nizaemon's *Telescope with Peony and Arabesque Pattern*, now in the collection of the Kobe City Museum. The object is 265 cm long and is constructed from lacquered paper and glass [18]. Its scale and telescoping structure extend the discussion beyond the close-range handling associated with tea utensils.

A survey of two large Ikkanbari telescopes by Tomita Yoshio et al. adopted five-stage paper-base lens barrels, with lacquer applied externally and gold leaf decoration, and thin wood chips inside for moisture

protection and deformation adjustment. When the research team made a one-fifth scale model, they used approximately 0.1mm thick washi paper wound in ten layers to obtain a paper tube about 1mm thick; different tube sections could slide smoothly, with the central axis deviation controlled within a small range. The experiment shows that layered paper bases can form thin-walled, hollow structures with certain precision, and the lacquer layer and internal reinforcement jointly participate in dimensional stability. The lens barrel is composed of nested multi-stage paper-base structures, with black lacquer, colored lacquer or gold leaf decoration applied externally, and wooden thin plates, brass components and optical parts configured inside [10].

Kabumoto Norihisa's research on three small Ikkanbari telescopes from the Iwahashi family further discusses multi-stage storage, brass frame reinforcement, lens barrel decoration and products of different sizes. The Iwahashi family simultaneously produced wooden, bamboo, and Ikkanbari telescopes. Based on Kabumoto's findings, the present article interprets the advantages of the paper-base solution in terms of portability, nested storage, and adaptability in production. The surface of such artifacts can be fully covered by black lacquer, colored lacquer and patterns, and viewers may not directly recognize the paper base. Paper still plays a role through weight, wall thickness and telescopic structure, and materiality is manifested through structure and usage [11].

The contrast between tea utensils and telescopes indicates that Ikkanbari did not develop as a single visual style. Paper grain may remain visible, but it may also be completely covered by polished lacquer and decoration. Paper bases can support the close handling of small tea utensils as well as the thin-walled, hollow, and nested structures of telescopes. The significance of paper and lacquer therefore changes with object type, function, and conditions of use. Research on Ikkanbari should move beyond generalizations such as "light paper base" and "simple thin lacquer" and instead examine how paper, lacquer layers, and object structures are reorganized in different contexts.

3. The transformation of craft knowledge into contemporary material language

3.1. Lightweight shells and spatial relations

The transformation of paper from a flat material to a three-dimensional base requires winding, pasting, splicing or mold forming. The load-bearing capacity of a single layer of paper is limited; layering increases thickness and bonding area, and curved surfaces and cylindrical shapes can also improve overall stability. After lacquer seeps into the fibers or covers the surface, the soft paper layer gradually becomes a thin-walled shell. Historical artifacts use this structure to solve problems of weight, portability and usage; contemporary art is more concerned with how lightweight shells change the scale, suspension method and spatial position of works.

The hollow structure endows the work with internal space. For example, the cavity of traditional tea utensils is used to hold items, the cavity of telescopes serves the optical path and sleeve, and demolded works retain the inner mold that once existed. When entering the context of sculpture and installation, the cavity can become a trace of absence, and can also accommodate light, sound or sight. A paper-base work may appear heavy in appearance, yet its actual weight is very low, creating a gap between visual judgment and bodily expectation. The artistic effect of lightness depends on volume and display method; the lightness of small artifacts is often a condition of usage, while the lightness of large-scale works may directly change the audience's perception of gravity and material substance.

Zhou Junnan's "deboned reshaping" practice introduces an experimental approach to paper-base lacquerware through foam-mold dissolution and secondary forming. Paper and latex are first applied to the exterior of a foam form. After drying, the foam is gradually dissolved with a solvent, causing the unsupported paper shell to deform. Before the structure becomes fully stabilized, the maker further reshapes it through squeezing and kneading and reinforces the changing form through lacquer impregnation and curing [12]. The final structure is therefore shaped jointly by the original form, the loss of internal support, material instability, and subsequent manual intervention. In the interpretation proposed here, the significance of this case lies in the way the disappearance of the internal support changes the outer contour and spatial character of the work.

Structural translation requires the correspondence between material capabilities and the work's issues. Replicating wooden base forms with paper bases mainly changes weight and production methods; when the cavity, suspension, collapse or mobility of the paper shell changes the way the work occupies space, the material begins to enter artistic language. Lightweight shells can support large-scale, temporary and movable works, but may also cause problems such as insufficient durability and monotonous form. Creators need to make specific choices among strength, scale and display duration.

3.2. Layering, drying and making time

The structural strength of Ikkanbari comes from repeated operations. Each pasting is affected by paper fiber, water content, paste concentration and drying state, and the application of the next layer must respond to the changes of the previous layer. The completed base preserves multiple production stages, yet a smooth surface may hide all this time. The curing of lacquer introduces humidity and temperature conditions, and the production process consists of alternating operation and waiting. Ingold's understanding of making as a process in which the maker continuously adjusts amid material changes helps explain the coexistence of control and uncertainty in paper-base lacquer craft [15].

Contemporary creation can transform layering from a hidden process into a visible structure. Paper layer edges, seams, cuts and different coating states can show the order of making, and local shrinkage and warping can also retain the time experienced by the material. Labor input does not automatically gain artistic value because it is displayed; layering needs to be connected with the temporal experience addressed by the work. Memory deposition, daily repetition, bodily labor or material aging can all be reasonable directions; if complex procedures are only used to prove technical difficulty, the audience will still remain at the level of admiring the craft.

"Deboned reshaping" also provides an example of controlled instability in the making process. Zhou distinguishes between the initial deformation caused by the loss of internal support and the subsequent reshaping produced through manual intervention and renewed lacquer curing [12]. The maker can select materials, thickness, solvents, and the timing of intervention, but cannot completely predetermine the resulting form. The present article therefore interprets the work as a negotiation between technical control and material response, rather than as unrestricted material spontaneity. Process translation also requires that the final work retain recognizable results. If layering and drying are completely hidden, the audience can only understand the making time through explanatory text; if all procedures are exposed, the work may become a technical demonstration. More mature treatments select a few key traces, allowing the audience to infer the making process from the form and surface, while retaining necessary opacity. The sense of time in paper-base lacquer craft therefore comes from selection, not the number of procedures.

3.3. Surface revelation and concealment and material judgment

Historical Ikkanbari artifacts do not have a unified surface. The thin lacquer treatment of Sōtan's preferred natsume makes the paper characteristics relatively easy to identify, while the black lacquer, colored lacquer and gold leaf of large telescopes cover the paper base inside. Paper can be directly revealed, and can also appear indirectly through weight, percussion sound and damaged parts. Surface treatment regulates the order in which the audience recognizes the material; while protecting the paper base, the lacquer layer also determines when paper enters perception.

Contemporary material art often regards roughness, seams and fibers as material authenticity, and regards smooth coverage as concealment. This dichotomy tends to solidify paper grain as a symbol of simplicity, nature and handicraft. Huang Yuzheng discusses textures produced through crepe paper, cloth-textured paper, and manual kneading [13]. From the perspective of the present article, however, repeated combinations of dark brown surfaces, wrinkles, and irregular forms may cause paper texture to become a conventional symbol of "naturalness". On the other hand, in the aforementioned telescopes, the paper base is completely covered by the decorative layer, and the material identity is not clear at first viewing; the audience revises their judgment through information about weight or structure. Concealment plays a positive role here, creating a distance between visual appearance and internal structure. Contemporary creation can control material information through revelation, semi-concealment and full coverage, and can also set different layers in the same work. The visibility of paper grain thus becomes a surface strategy, rather than a standard of value.

The lacquer layer can also change the color, hardness, and tactile qualities of paper. Sakate and Kojima examine traditional water-repellent and waterproof treatments for washi and compare the practical performance of several processing methods [14]. Their study supports the narrower point that coating choice and processing conditions affect the behavior of treated paper. When choosing transparent, translucent, thickly coated, or polished surfaces, creators need to consider both structure and viewing.

3.4. Artifact movements and bodily relations

Both Ikkanbari tea utensils and telescopes rely on specific movements to fulfill their functions. Tea utensils require holding, lid opening and passing, while telescopes enter usage through pulling, nesting and aiming. The light weight of the paper base makes these movements smoother, and also affects the body's expectation of the artifact. Before picking up a lacquer ware, people often predict its weight based on the black lacquer or gold leaf surface; the light feeling after actual touch breaks the visual judgment. Lightness thus goes beyond engineering performance and becomes a perceptual difference occurring on the body.

Paper-base lacquer masks provide a clearer example of the relationship between material structure and bodily use. Chen Dongjie notes that paper-base and bodiless lacquer masks were valued for being both lightweight and durable, particularly in religious and performance contexts where large masks had to be worn, carried, or moved during ritual activities [19]. He also observes that wet paper can be shaped directly to form smaller decorative elements. On this basis, the present article interprets the material significance of such masks as emerging through wearing and bodily movement, rather than through visual appearance alone.

This relationship can be extended to contemporary installations and wearable works. Movements such as opening, closing, nesting, wearing, and moving can become part of a work's structure, and the audience may shift from static viewers to active participants. The suitability of paper bases for wearable forms has been discussed above in relation to masks [19]. In telescopes, telescoping depends on winding precision, lacquer-layer control, and structural reinforcement [10, 11]. If a contemporary work merely imitates the appearance of these movements, the relationship between movement and material structure will be weakened.

Utensil translation is not equivalent to adding interactive mechanisms. The audience's ability to open or move the work only indicates that movement is permitted; what consequences the movement produces determines its artistic effect. Opening the lid can change the relationship between interior and exterior, telescoping can reorganize the work and space, wearing may affect identity perception, and carrying can form a temporary connection between the work and the site. Historical Ikkanbani artifacts preserve bodily knowledge formed through long-term use, and contemporary creation can extract these relationships without replicating the original artifact forms.

4. Conditions and boundaries for the establishment of contemporary artistic translation

Synthesizing the foregoing, to judge whether Ikkanbani craft forms a contemporary artistic language, several interrelated criteria can be proposed from within the work. Whether paper layers and lacquer layers affect form and space, whether the making process leaves necessary results in the work, whether surface treatment regulates material cognition, and whether artifact movements change bodily relations—these questions jointly constitute the evaluation basis. No single indicator is sufficient for judgment, nor does a work need to satisfy all conditions at the same time. Specifically, there are four situations.

First, from material replacement to structure generation. The contemporary renewal of traditional crafts often starts with material replacement. Changing a wooden base to a paper base reduces the weight of the artifact and changes the production method. As long as the form, scale and viewing method remain unchanged, such changes mainly belong to technical updating. Structural translation requires that the paper base have an irreplaceable impact on the work's space. When cavity, thin wall, suspension, collapse, nesting or movement become part of the work, the material participates in form generation. This judgment also applies to large-scale works. Paper bases have the advantage of light weight, yet are not suitable for bearing all structures. Increasing the number of layers will increase weight and drying time, overly large planes are prone to deformation, and supports and reinforcements may weaken the role of the paper layer itself. Creators should decide whether to use skeletons, composite materials or partial lacquer layers according to display duration, transportation methods and audience distance. The clearer the structural choice, the more reliable the connection between traditional techniques and contemporary works.

Second, from process display to process expression. Paper-base lacquer craft has numerous procedures, and labor and time can easily be regarded as proof of value. Craft proficiency can guarantee work quality, yet still cannot replace artistic judgment. Process translation focuses on how procedures change the form of the work and allow the audience to perceive time, repetition and material changes. For example, "deboned reshaping" preserves visible deformation and secondary shaping in the completed form [12]. If the work were restored entirely to a standardized shape after completion, the instability introduced during the process would remain only a technical means.

Process expression also requires restraint. Displaying every layer of paper and every brush of lacquer publicly can easily turn the work into a craft archive. Creators can choose partial cutting, retaining edges or setting different curing stages to allow key processes to enter viewing, while avoiding explanatory text bearing all interpretation. Material reactions should form a relationship with the work's theme, and accidental effects do not constitute concepts in themselves.

Third, from paper grain style to surface judgment. Paper grain has become the most recognizable visual feature in contemporary paper-base lacquer craft. It can convey fiber, touch and hand-making processes, yet is also easily quickly classified as simplicity, nature or wabi-sabi. When such associations lack specific artifacts

and historical context, they compress complex craft into a decorative style. The minimalist surface of Sōtan's preferred natsume belongs to a specific tea ceremony choice, while the covering lacquer surface of telescopes proves that Ikkanbari can pursue complete, precise and decorative appearances.

Contemporary works need to establish their own surface judgment. Revealing the paper layer is suitable for addressing fiber, damage and time; translucent coating can create internal and external layers; full coverage can form material misrecognition and weight contrast. There is no preset hierarchy among different strategies, and the evaluation basis is how the surface changes the audience's understanding of the work. Material revelation can also occur through touch, sound and movement, not limited to visual texture.

Fourth, from function renewal to bodily relation. Product design extends the daily use of traditional crafts through function renewal, and jewelry, lamps and daily utensils can all be reasonable directions. The judgment criteria of contemporary art are slightly different. Functions can be retained, weakened or rearranged, and the work needs to explain why the body contacts the material in this way. The lightness, temperature and flexibility of the paper base only fully emerge in holding, wearing, moving and approaching.

Bodily relations can also limit formal choices. Wearable works must consider edges, strength and skin touch; operable installations must deal with wear and tear, liability and audience safety; works that need to be moved must arrange weight distribution and grip positions. These issues are technical in nature, yet directly determine the experience of the work. Craft knowledge shows practical value here, helping artists implement bodily participation into structure, rather than staying at the concept of "inviting interaction".

5. Conclusion

This study examined how the craft knowledge of Ikkanbari can be translated into contemporary artistic language. Through literature review, artifact analysis, and craft-process analysis, it focused on paper-layer formation, lacquer-layer treatment, making processes, and use-related actions. The analysis shows that the contemporary potential of Ikkanbari lies not simply in thin lacquer or visible paper texture, but in four interrelated dimensions: lightweight shell structures, accumulated making time, surface-based material cognition, and bodily relations generated through holding, opening, nesting, wearing, and moving.

Historical examples demonstrate that Ikkanbari does not correspond to a single visual style. Tea utensils emphasize close-range handling, lightness, and restrained surfaces, whereas telescopes show that layered paper can also support thin-walled, hollow, nested, and relatively precise structures. These differences indicate that the significance of paper and lacquer changes with object type, function, and conditions of use. The contemporary translation of the craft therefore depends on reorganizing these material and structural capacities rather than reproducing an established appearance.

On this basis, the article proposes four criteria for evaluating contemporary artistic translation: whether paper and lacquer generate form and space; whether making processes leave necessary and perceptible results; whether surface treatment regulates the viewer's recognition of material; and whether use-related actions reshape the relationship between body and object. These criteria do not constitute a fixed checklist, nor must every work satisfy all four. Their value lies in directing analysis toward what materials and processes actually do within a work.

The contemporary examples discussed in this article further show that craft knowledge can be redirected from stable utensil production toward controlled deformation, spatial experience, and bodily participation. This shift does not eliminate technical demands. Questions of strength, curing, deformation, edge treatment, durability, and audience safety continue to condition artistic form. Craft knowledge therefore remains an active structural resource in contemporary art rather than merely a sign of tradition.

This study is limited by its reliance on literature, museum records, and published discussions of artworks. It does not include direct material testing of historical objects, systematic observation of exhibition settings, or interviews with contemporary makers and audiences. Future research should combine material experiments, field observation, and interviews to examine more precisely how paper type, number of layers, coating methods, scale, and modes of display affect form and experience. Comparative analysis between design products and contemporary artworks may also clarify how the criteria of utility, durability, perception, and artistic meaning diverge or overlap.

Ikkanbari remains relevant not because it preserves a fixed style, but because its material knowledge can be repeatedly selected, reorganized, and activated in response to new artistic problems.

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