Pattern Research Project: An Investigation of The Pattern And Printing Process - Shippo Tsunagi

Emilie Krysa

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Shippo Tsunagi
Culture and History

Shippo pattern originates from Japan and dates to the Heian period (794 AD -1185), although it became more popular during the Edo period (1603-1868) (Mason). The pattern is called "shippo" in Japanese which means "cloisonné," which is an ancient form of enameling metalwork that would often use inlays of gemstones (Edmonds). The pattern would often appear on these enamels (Hibi). Shippo also means treasures, or "seven treasures" which refers to the seven treasures of Buddhism, which were most often said to be gold, silver, lapis lazuli, agate, pearl, crystal, and coral (Hibi).

Design

The scale of my pattern my pattern example is 1" horizontal x 1" vertical.

Use

Traditionally, shippo appeared on women’s kimonos and were often worn during times in which one would want good luck, such as weddings or new years (Mason). In my own experience, I’ve noticed shippo pattern being used in sidelights beside front doors on Monument Avenue and West Franklin St. It is possible that the pattern is imposing good luck onto all those who enter, exit and dwell in the home.

Color

"Overlapping Circle"  

"Overlapping Circle (Sandals)"  

"Overlapping Circle (Bowl)"  

"Overlapping Circle (Hand warmer)"  

"Sashiko: Shippo-Tsunagi - Seven Treasures"  
Phantasm, Bonnie. www.Spoonflower.com

Materiality

Since shippo traditionally appeared on kimonos, often the materiality was that of silk, however it also appears on porcelain bowls and furniture.

Craft

The pattern was traditionally embroidered on by hand or it was hand dyed/ painted in a very long and tedious process by professionals. "Sashiko," which is a basic running stitch, is one style of embroidering that Shippo is often depicted (Briscoe). Today Shippo can be applied to nearly any surface imaginable through digital printing.

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Emilie Krysa | December 2017