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

Yufei Zheng

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Kiku
The creation of the Kiku pattern was the result of direct communication via a diplomatic envoy and the trade between China and Japan during the 8th century establishment of the Tang dynasty of China and the Nara Period of Japan (710-794 AD). This is the time period where the chrysanthemum flower was introduced to Japan. The Chrysanthemum flower pattern does not appear until the early Heian period (794-1185 AD) and it becomes a very popular motif used by the Japanese throughout the whole country in the Kamakura period (1185-1333 AD) and onward (Mizoguchi, 1973). You can see the Kiku motif on everything; from kimonos, samurai armor, houseware, pottery, stationary, paintings, house decorations, and Shinto shrine roof decorations. In Japanese culture, the chrysanthemum flower symbolizes longevity, rejuvenation, and autumn. Some people believed that if you drank chrysanthemum tea you would gain a longer life (Blakemore, 1906-1997).

Contemporary

The contemporary Kiku motif only depicted on the outline of the precedent, was allowed to use the imperial seal. Now the Kikumon is able to be used because the chrysanthemum is Japan’s national flower. You can find it today on everything; from kimonos, samurai armor, houseware, pottery, stationary, paintings, house decorations, and Shinto shrine roof decorations. In Japanese culture, the chrysanthemum flower symbolizes longevity, rejuvenation, and autumn.

Kiku pattern from Suzanne Tucker Home is digitally produced, while the preceding pattern is hand printed. The contemporary Kiku motif was influenced by the original 19th-century Japanese futon cover. This textile also comes in green and red colors. The pattern and color are digital screen printed with ink in the UK (A. Jones, personal communication, September 17, 2018).

History and Culture

The creation of the Kiku pattern was the result of direct communication via a diplomatic envoy and the trade between China and Japan during the 8th century establishment of the Tang dynasty of China and the Nara Period of Japan (710-794 AD). This is the time period where the chrysanthemum flower was introduced to Japan. The Chrysanthemum flower pattern does not appear until the early Heian period (794-1185 AD) and it becomes a very popular motif used by the Japanese throughout the whole country in the Kamakura period (1185-1333 AD) and onward (Mizoguchi, 1973). You can see the Kiku motif on everything; from kimonos, samurai armor, houseware, pottery, stationary, paintings, house decorations, and Shinto shrine roof decorations. In Japanese culture, the chrysanthemum flower symbolizes longevity, rejuvenation, and autumn. Some people believed that if you drank chrysanthemum tea you would gain a longer life (Blakemore, 1906-1997).

Precedent

Chrysanthemum flower patterns are widely used in Japan. There is no definite Kiku pattern because over five thousand varieties of the patterns have been created by the Japanese (Blakemore, 1906-1997). The textile is said to be inspired by a 10th-century Japanese futon (bedding) cover (Suzanne, 2018). The futon cover during that time period was made out of 100% Japanese cotton and dyed with Japanese indigo. Japanese artisans found that the cotton turned out to be a better material for the purpose of bedding and indigo dye can easily adhere to the cotton fabric (Kimoboy, 2018). There are two types of futon covers during that time period/katagami, and Tuszugaki.

Katazome

Katazome is a Japanese resist-dyeing technique using the stencil. The materials used in the process are rice paste, stencil, and indigo. The rice paste is a combination of rice husks, lime, and water. Sometime, a color will be added to the rice paste for the clearance of the pattern. The rice paste is spread across the fabric through the stencil using a spatula. The fabric is put into hot water to ensure the indigo-dye will dye evenly on to the fabric. Then you put the fabric into the blue color dye. The number of times the fabric is submerged in the dye will determine how deep the blue color is. The fabric is to be then put under the sun and left to set into the cotton fabric. The second to last process is to wash the resist paste off by first washing it in the hot water, using a brush to scrape the paste off, and washing it in the cold water. The last process is to wait for the fabric to be dry (Jackson, 2015). However, katazome can not be accomplished without the stencil, katagami.

Tsutsugaki

Tsutsugaki is a resist dye technique where the resist paste is being applied directly by hand. The craftswoman will put the rice paste into a cone-shaped tube and dip paper as a drawing utensil by squeezing the paste out on the fabric. The creation of the design is not a single process. The craftswoman will do a initial base dye by outlining the design. Then the fabric will be dried and the paste will be washed off. The process will repeat to add details in the areas that are not dyed by the indigo (Kimoboy, 2018).

Evolution

The evolution of the Kiku pattern reflects on the changes in technology over time. The contemporary Kiku pattern from Suzanne Tucker Home is digitally produced, while the precedent pattern is hand crafted.

Work Cited

4. condell, l. (2016). Different sizes of sharpened carving knives are used during the carving process (Omiya, 2017).
9. Condell, l. (2016). Different sizes of sharpened carving knives are used during the carving process (Omiya, 2017).
11. Kiku pattern from Suzanne Tucker Home is digitally produced, while the preceding pattern is hand printed.
12. Contemporary Kiku Drawing Using Adobe Illustrator
14. Contemporary Kiku Screenprint in Col
15. 19th-Century Japanese Futon Cover
16. Katagami, also called as ise- katagami, is the paper stencil used to imprint the pattern onto the fabric. The process of carving the stencil takes years of training and practicing until they create these exquisite paper stencils. These intricate stencils cannot be created without the proper prepared papers (Condell, 2016). Layers of washi papers are bonded together using persimmon tannin liquid to create the stencil papers. A sheet of the stencil paper will contain three layers of washi paper. Each sheet of washi paper is carefully cut into the top of the next one using a brush to press it down. Then each paper will be placed on top of a wood panel for drying under the sun. At last, the papers will be hung vertically and put into a smoking room for up to 7-10 days (Kimoba, 2017). In the end, the white washi papers will turn into this copper brown color. The persimmon tannin makes the paper waterproof (Condell, 2016). Different sizes of sharpened carving knives are used during the carving process (Omiya, 2017).
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