

Fukagawa-Seiji History and Vision

Fukagawa-Seiji takes great pride in its history and traditions. The Fukagawa family began making porcelain in 1650, and the company was founded in 1894 by Fukagawa Chūji (1871–1934). Chūji was the younger son of Fukagawa Eizaemon VIII (1832–1889), one of the founders of Koransha, another major ceramic producer in Arita. Unsatisfied with Koransha's focus on industrial ceramics, Chūji left the company to create artistic pieces that emphasized design and technique. He found popularity in foreign markets—pairs of large Fukagawa-Seiji vases were awarded a gold medal at both the 1900 Paris Exposition and the 1904 St. Louis Exposition.

Fukagawa-Seiji was appointed an official purveyor of porcelain to the Japanese Imperial Household in 1910. This designation is similar to the Royal Warrants issued by various European royal families. Antique pieces, even ones that are hundreds of years old, are still used for formal events in the imperial household. When necessary, replacements and additions are requested of official purveyors like Fukagawa-Seiji. Contemporary craftsmen must match the exact shape, design, color, and weight of these antiques. The original molds and techniques are used as much as possible to ensure that the new pieces are the same as the old ones.

Currently headed by the fourth- and fifth-generation descendants of Fukagawa Chūji, Fukagawa-Seiji produces over 3,000 different items, primarily daily-use tableware and decorative pieces. As of January 2021, six of the company artisans have been designated as Traditional Craftspersons by the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries. Tours of the facilities may be arranged by request in advance.