

On the occasion of the “Treasures of Okinawan Dyeing and Weaving - The Yaeyama Collection of Yosho Tobaru” exhibition

The Okinawa Churashima Foundation, under its management philosophy of “Sharing the Brilliance of the Beautiful Islands with the millions” regards Okinawa's rich nature, culture, and history as the “blessings of the islands”. It conducts research and technological development based on these resources, disseminates information and educates people in the region, as well as in the rest of Japan and abroad. The Foundation aims to connect the brilliance of Churashima (beautiful islands) inherited from the past to the present and to the future.

Since 1992, the Foundation has been collecting arts and crafts materials related to the Kingdom of the Ryukyus. In particular, we have been actively engaged in the repair and restoration of materials related to *bingata* and woven textiles, in order to enhance the value of these materials as cultural heritage and to pass on the rich culture of Okinawa to future generations.

As part of these efforts, the special exhibition “Treasures of Okinawan Dyeing and Weaving: The Yosho Tobaru Collection” organized by the Foundation and held at the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum from October to November last year, was highly acclaimed by many people. This year, the Foundation will build on this success by presenting a new exhibition, “Treasures of Okinawan Dyeing and Weaving: The Yaeyama Collection of Yosho Tobaru” under the auspices of the Ishigaki City Government and the Ishigaki City Board of Education.

This year's exhibition will feature 114 works, an expansion of last year's exhibition of 87 works. These works are the result of 21 years of hard work by Yosho Tobaru, and play an important role in passing on Okinawa's cultural heritage to the future. The exhibition in Ishigaki City, Mr. Tobaru's hometown, is especially significant for the region. This exhibition features works by seven living national treasures and two prefectural intangible cultural property holders, including the *kataezome* works of Yoshitaro Kamakura, the first honorary citizen of Ishigaki City and a living national treasure, the *bingata* works of Yuko Tamanaha, also an honorary citizen and a living national treasure, and the Yaeyama *jofu* works of Sachiko Arakaki, an Ishigaki City resident newly designated as a living national treasure this July. The works of seven living national treasures and two prefectural intangible cultural property holders are on display.

We hope that this exhibition will provide an opportunity to deepen understanding of the rich dyeing and weaving culture of Yaeyama and Okinawa, and to pass it on to the future.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to all those who have contributed to the realization of this exhibition, especially to Mr. Yosho Tobaru. We hope you will take

note of the technical and aesthetic details in each of the works and fully appreciate the depth of Okinawan textile dyeing and weaving culture.

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Okinawa Churashima Foundation

President Seijun Wakugawa