

Remarks by H.E. Mr HAYASHI Hajime,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
on the occasion of the opening of Raku Kichizaemon XV Jikinyū
on Thursday 16 May 2024

Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure for my wife and me to be present at the opening of Raku Kichizaemon Jikinyū's second exhibition in the UK, following the first one held here in 2022 exactly two years ago, I clearly remember that we thoroughly enjoyed it and it was truly a great success.

Raku Jikinyū has organised the "Kichizaemon X" series as a collaboration with artists and objects that have strongly influenced him. The last exhibition was a joint undertaking with Kazimir Malevich and this one involves music. He has chosen one of the most prominent Japanese composers of the 20th century, Takemitsu Toru, together with Alban Berg, one of the three influential composers of the New Vienna School in the early 20th century. Both are known for their outstanding and also pioneering approach to classical music, which certainly inspired Jikinyū in making his latest works, *White Rock* and *Black Rock*.

It is with great pride that we unveil these creations from Jikinyū today. They epitomise the seamless fusion of tradition and innovation, showcasing a distinctive style that pays homage to the rich legacy of Raku ware while embracing contemporary aesthetics. The artistry of Jikinyū serves as a bridge between the timeless beauty of traditional Japan and the contemporary world, and has justly earned admiration and acclaim worldwide.

Through the harmonious interplay of Raku ware and the music of the two modern classical composers, we are invited to embark on a journey of sensory delight and artistic exploration. I am sure that the resonance between ceramics and music promises to evoke profound emotions and enrich our cultural experience.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere thanks to David Juda and everyone associated with Annely Juda Fine Arts, who have enabled this second exhibition by Raku Jikinyū to take place.

Thank you very much.