



**EXAMINATION REPORT AND PROPOSAL**

**OWNER/AGENT**

OWNER'S ID NUMBER [REDACTED] N/A  
 EXAMINER Rik Workman  
 DATE OF REPORT June 18, 2013

**ARTIST/MAKER (Owner Attribution)**

Unknown  
 SIGNATURE and its LOCATION Makers on bottom  
 TITLE (“”) or DESCRIPTION Japanese vase made into lamp  
 DATE OF OBJECT circa 1880-1912  
 STRUCTURE Ceramic, wood, and lamp parts  
 DIMENSIONS (H x W x D) 27 inches x 6 inches x 6 inches  
 ACCESSORIES None  
 LABELS/DISTINGUISHING MARKS Japanese cartouche with cross in circle mark of the Shimazu Clan of Kyushu, Japan.

**PRE-TREATMENT PHOTOGRAPHS**

- A1 Front, Normal Illumination
- A2 Right, Normal Illumination
- A3 Left, Normal Illumination
- A4 Right, Normal Illumination

**MATERIALS ANALYSIS**

SAMPLE and LOCATION	ANALYTICAL METHOD	FINDINGS
Water, green glaze just below chipped handle.	Rolled with cotton swab.	No change in glaze.
Ethanol, green glaze just below chipped handle.	Rolled with cotton swab.	No change in glaze.
Xylene, green glaze just below chipped handle.	Rolled with cotton swab.	No change in glaze.
Toluene, green glaze just below chipped handle.	Rolled with cotton swab.	No change in glaze.

**1. DESCRIPTION**

**• THE OBJECT**

The object is a Japanese Satsuma style ceramic vase, which depicts Japanese men and women in traditional dress, surrounded by flora, in a public outdoor setting. The vase has been transformed and reutilized as a lamp using a carved wooden base and modern lamp parts.

**• HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

The object is of considerable importance to the owner. There are maker’s marks on the vase’s bottom which appear to support the idea that this is a vase made by the Shimazu Clan of Kyushu, Japan, however the hole drilled through the bottom has made complete identification difficult. All research suggests that this piece was manufactured for export to Europe and America pre 1891:

“Marks on export porcelain: In 1891 the McKinley Tariff Act was instated, requiring items imported into the United States to be marked in English with the country of origin. The name "Nippon" was chosen for items coming from Japan. (Nippon is the Japanese name for Japan.) In 1921, the official country of origin name requirement was changed to "Japan", thus creating a defined time period 1891-1921 in which wares were marked Nippon. Previous to 1891, items were either not marked at all, or marked with Japanese characters. During the period 1921-1941 porcelain should be marked "Japan" and roughly after 1941, marked "Made in Japan", though numerous exceptions appears to occur.”<sup>1</sup>

However, this would only be true if the object was exported to the United States. If the object had been an export to Europe, the requirement above would not hold true. It is likely that this piece derives from the *Meiji* period in Japan, dating 1868-1912<sup>2</sup>.

- **FABRICATION**

Judging from marks inside the vase, it was likely made on a potter's wheel. Water was applied to a break edge and it did not absorb, and this is an indication of a high fired ceramic.

## II. CONDITION

- **OBJECT DESCRIPTION**

The foot of the vase is decorated with a green band of interlocking triangles which sits parallel below a line of floral dentils that circumnavigate the piece. The body of the vase depicts 17 men, women, and children dressed in traditional Japanese attire. The characters are ambulating, standing, and sitting in an outdoor public space surrounded by vibrant flora, gardens, and lamps. The shoulder of the object is detailed with colorful geometric shapes circling parallel below a band of interlocking triangles identical to the one seen on the foot. The neck of the piece is adorned with colorful flora connected by green stems below a line of leafy dentils, while the lip displays a singular band of red spirals. Finally, the two handles, which are situated opposite each other, consist of gilded animal heads which resemble a dog-lion, with the handgrips spewing from their open mouths.

- **EXAMINATION**

The vase appears to have sustained substantial impact which resulted in breaking the top third of the piece into 8 distinct shards. The largest of these shards, which comprises approximately 80% of the impacted pieces, was kept in situ by support provided by the lamp pipe and vase cap. The remaining 7 shards suffered breaks with flake loss of paint and glaze. A hairline crack runs diagonally across the body of the vessel deriving from the probable impact epicenter. One of the handles appears to be missing a fragment of the animal's snout, while both handles show loss of gild, likely deriving from use ware.

## III. PREVIOUS TREATMENT

There were no records presented that showed previous treatment, nor was there any evidence found that indicate a previous conservation treatment, however the bottom of the vase was drilled through in order to make the vase into a lamp. What appears to be spray paint was also found near the top of the lamp. The paint was partially covering the gilding on one handle and appears as if it is the same color as the lamp parts. This is possible evidence that the color of the lamp parts was applied as an aerosol, leaving the overspray on the ceramic.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bonsaiinformation.com/porcelain.htm> (accessed 6/20/2013)

<sup>2</sup> Cox, W.E. 1944. *The book of pottery and porcelain*. New York, NY: Crown Publishers  
<http://gotheborg.com/marks/satsuma.shtml> (accessed 6/20/2013)

**TREATMENT PROPOSAL**

1. Perform written and photographic documentation before, during and after treatment.
2. The surface of the art object will be cleaned with a solution of ethanol and water.
3. The broken pieces will be reattached with an appropriate adhesive.
4. Losses will be filled as needed.
5. The repair will be toned to match the color and finish of the object.

**FACTORS INFLUENCING TREATMENT**

As with any conservation treatment, there is the possibility of unforeseen circumstances, which may influence a change in the proposed treatment. Any changes in the treatment which would alter the general approach or take the treatment beyond the bid cost will result in consultation with Client.

**ANTICIPATED RESULTS OF TREATMENT**

The broken pieces of ceramic will be reassembled to form the original vase. The fill and inpainting will be performed with the goal of removing the visual distraction caused by the damage.



A2, Right, Normal Illumination



A1, Front, Normal Illumination



A4, Left, Normal Illumination



A3, Back, 2013-22 A62 Normal Illumination





A6, Detail, Normal Illumination



A5, Detail, Normal Illumination