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# About 2016/

Arita is an idyllic town surrounded by mountains and forests in Saga Prefecture, Japan. It was here, exactly four centuries ago, that Japan's very first porcelain was made. Between the mid 17th and 18th century Arita porcelain was highly esteemed and sought after among Europeans, having been imported in quantity by the Dutch East India Company (VOC). Subsequently, meeting domestic demand became the mainstay of the Arita porcelain industry. More recently, as global recession struck the Japanese economy in the latter half of the 20th century, this once robust market started to stagnate. Faced with a flood of low cost ceramic imports, lifestyle changes (notably in eating habits), shifts in tastes and a declining population, an unprepared Arita saw the closure of multiple potteries and the very existence of skills and expertise handed down through the centuries threatened. Today, Arita's industry has shrunk to one sixth of that during its heyday. Yet it remains a dedicated porcelain town, still excelling in the production of Japan's finest porcelain ware.

As Arita celebrates its 400th anniversary, an exciting new chapter in its history is beginning.

2016/ is a new brand. It comprises of 16 collections of contemporary porcelain created by combining the talents of Arita's highly skilled makers with those of sixteen international designers. The result is a new generation of contemporary Arita porcelain. 2016/ makes Aritaware desirable and relevant once again and in doing so revive and give new purpose to the industry and community of Arita.

The making of 2016/ has been a long and rewarding process of creative collaboration: collaboration between the makers of Arita, the sixteen designers and ten potteries and between Saga Prefecture in Japan and the Netherlands. Creative Directors Teruhiro Yanagihara and Scholten & Baijings have led the project.

2016/ collections will be available from November 2016 and distributed internationally.

# 2016/ collections



Photography: Schelkens & Abbenes

**Each of the collections sees an international designer and Arita pottery working together to create desirable porcelain objects for everyday use. The series demonstrate the extensive skills of the Arita craftsmen and women and are intended to be mass-produced, functional, and appealing to an international audience.**

## 2016/ BIG-GAME

BIG-GAME's porcelain collection, produced by Kubota Minoru Ceramics, makes good use of the most advanced high-tech materials and processes available in Arita. Two materials have been used; one that is porous and can be used to filter liquids and a second that is highly heat-resistant. BIG-GAME have designed a practical coffee set that puts the exceptional porous porcelain to practical use. Specifically, the set makes drip coffee, which is very popular in Japan. The coffee is filtered through the porous porcelain, giving the coffee an improved smooth taste and negating the need for disposable paper filters. A second series of objects includes a porcelain kettle and cooking pots. These are made using the heat-resistant porcelain and, as such, can be used directly on top of a stove, in the oven or the microwave. The handles of the vessels are insulating so it is possible to hold them comfortably even when they contain boiling water. The elementary, geometric shaped objects are produced using state-of-the-art production technology and a special glaze was developed using the particular skills of the pottery.

## 2016/ Christian Haas

Christian Haas's work has always been influenced by Japanese culture and aesthetics. For this collection, Haas has been especially inspired by the Japanese trait of combining simplicity & complexity in product design. The series began with a comparative study of the Asian and European ways of setting a table and determining objects with shapes and sizes that would work for both. The resulting collection of plates, bowls and vessels all work in a multifunctional way. Haas determined that the collection be humble and accessible, for

the everyday, and that its beauty is found in the subtlety of unexpected geometries.

Haas's collection has an additional decorative element: On the underside of each piece is a debossed 'coded' symbol. This hidden detail is for the pleasure of the owner, a quiet and unique form of decoration. Haas worked together with Housengama pottery to revolutionise traditional porcelain production techniques. One important focus was the stand or foot. Housengama developed a technique that did away with this normally necessary feature. Instead the rounded forms of Haas's plates and vessels flow into soft sculptural points that the element stands on.

## 2016/ Christien Meindertsma

In the 16th century Dutch traders made so-called 'hofreizen' – long trips by boat and foot – to visit the Shoguns of Japan. They would bring Dutch linen with them as a special gift and would return to The Netherlands with prized porcelain objects. Arita porcelain and Dutch table linen are often depicted being used together in paintings from this time. Christien Meindertsma has used this unlikely partnership as her inspiration. She has used linen cloth to model the shapes of cups, plates and bowls that were subsequently translated into porcelain.

As an evolution of her collection Meindertsma has worked with Fujimaki Seitou pottery to invent a special glaze that incorporates waste porcelain material gathered from each of the other 2016/ collections. The flecked glaze is a celebration of the coming together of the Arita potteries and is suitably colourful and 'confetti-like'.

## 2016/ Ingegerd Råman

Ingegerd Råman's collaboration with the Koransha pottery has resulted in a supremely functional stacking tea set. When stacked together, the individual vessels are given an additional utility; tea can be kept warm, dishes preserved, and storage becomes easier. Along with being functional, the stacked set also looks beautiful.

# 2016/ collections

The velvety black glaze used by Råman has been meticulously and laboriously developed especially for this product. It has been created with longevity in mind; it maintains its colour and will not dull or turn grey. A matt white glaze has been developed as a second option for the set. Råman states that the set was developed following a truly collaborative process between designer and craftsman. Råman's extensive experience in ceramic manufacture was matched by Koransha's expertise, together their joint knowledge of handicrafts and high tech production has resulted in a porcelain collection with an uncompromising finish.

## 2016/ Kirstie van Noort

Kirstie van Noort set out to explore the raw material used in the production of Arita porcelain. She visited the quarries and factories where the famous Arita porcelain clay is gathered and processed and found that the kaolin harvested from in and around Arita was especially pure, leaving just a tiny amount of waste. However, these small deposits of mineral waste gave van Noort and Sehyo pottery enough material to develop seven new colours specific to Arita and one new clay body. Like van Noort, Sehyo is a specialist in material investigation.

As the new colours and clay incorporate leftover material from the regular manufacturing, the resulting tableware is made completely from a single source of raw material. The new clay body van Noort has developed is made using a mixture of Kaolin and black Amakusa stone. Normally, white Amakusa stone is used in the preparation of Arita porcelain and the black is discarded. The emphasis is on the unique colour palette and so the collection consists of basic shapes in two series; the first demonstrates the seven new pigments and the second grey series is made from the new clay body.

## 2016/ Kueng Caputo

Kueng Caputo set out to best illustrate the skills of the craftsmen and women they were partnered with. Although the porcelain production of Arita is deemed industrial, the reality is that many of the processes involve handwork and numerous careful steps.

The resulting series of vases and bowls makes use of Kin'emon Toen pottery's specialist technique of airbrush painting called fukitsuke.

The technique enables soft gradients of colour and texture to be applied to the surface of the porcelain. Kueng Caputo and Kin'emon Toen have invented a surface covering that creates an optical illusion, a play of light and shadow, making the viewer question the edges of the object.

## 2016/ Leon Ransmeier

Early in his research, Leon Ransmeier made what might seem an obvious discovery: the shapes of traditional Japanese ceramics feel good in your hand. Ransmeier wanted to respect such tactile forms while introducing a more technical vocabulary that invokes the relationship between comfort and work. Because tools are used with repetitive force, they are designed to be comfortable. The handles in his collection for 2016/ borrow the language of tools such as saws or wood planes.

The coffee pot handle is angled to make pouring easier. Volumetric slip-cast handles on the teapot, vase, and cup fill the hand when grasped; handles and spouts are literally stuck onto the vessel, their shapes celebrate this technique. The exterior surfaces of Ransmeier's collection are unglazed. When interacting with the objects the user touches the clay directly, which has a soft and pleasing quality. Ransmeier has worked with Hataman Touen pottery to develop his collection in highly vitreous Amakusa porcelain – meaning it becomes glass-like when fired and the surface won't easily stain.

## 2016/ Pauline Deltour

An especially impressive production technique, unique to Arita, inspired Pauline Deltour's tea set collection. The Kouemon pottery is able to mass-produce vessels which are very thick on the bottom yet

have a fine, thin edge. This process requires great skill, a long firing time and special clay. Attempting it would normally result in cracked and broken pieces.

Almost every bowl in traditional Japanese tableware has a foot observed Deltour. So this common element was retained in her collection, giving the tea set both identity and visual coherence and stability. Deltour further studied the typologies of cups and dishes used in daily life in both Asian and European food culture to find the right balance between shape and proportion, capacity and handling for her collection. The traditional glaze colours found in traditional Japanese porcelain; dark blue, brick red and celadon green were appropriated by Deltour and used in a fresh manner.

## 2016/ Saskia Diez

Jewellery designer Saskia Diez has taken a motif common in Japanese imagery as a starting point for her collection: scales. Scales are found on dragons, koi carp fish and snakes – all familiar symbols in Japanese culture. Similarly this simple shape can be found in decorative images of waves or in the petals of a lotus flower. Each of these symbols has a different meaning in Japanese culture; a dragon, for example, represents wisdom and goodness, whilst a koi means determination, courage, and success. The snake is a symbol of good luck and change, whereas water means movement, fluidity and life.

Diez notes that there is not an especially rich heritage of jewellery making in Japan, whilst there is a strong tradition of symbolic decoration and motifs. Subsequently, Diez has developed the idea of scales as a wearable 'second skin' made from porcelain. She has worked with Hataman Touen Corporation, a pottery highly skilled in hand-painting, to develop a collection of bangles, rings and pendants. The jewellery is fresh and modern in feel but also incorporates Hataman Touen's specialist skill; each piece is elegantly hand-painted.

## 2016/ Shigeki Fujishiro

The popular opinion of Arita porcelain's colour palette might be that it is 'blue on white'. But when designer Shigeki Fujishiro explored the common styles of Arita porcelain he discovered the predominance of the colour red. Even the application of paint to porcelain in Arita is called 'aka-e' (meaning painting red), after the Chinese porcelain of the same name. Red is a symbolic colour of Japan and Fujishiro decided to make it the central feature of his collection.

Fujishiro collaborated with Kin'emon Toen pottery. Together they emphasised the functionality of the objects, creating tools for everyday use, with shapes that would be suitable to either eastern or western tables. The red colour comes from a mixture of red pigment and glaze being applied to the objects. After the initial glaze, an additional glaze is applied using an air-brush painting technique that is a speciality of Kin'emon Toen.

## 2016/ Stefan Diez

This is a convenient yet distinct collection of tableware for everyday use that balances Western and Eastern eating habits. The porcelain industry has developed details that became common all over the world and are the result of efficient production processes. Diez erased these expected elements, removing the feet and conventional plate rims, and in doing so developed a series of forms that put the porcelain closer to the hand, letting the user feel the subtleness and precision of these soft shapes. Details such as handles add an iconic character to the range creating contrast between their easy curved form and the very delicate, taut and even body of the vessel.

Diez employed some of the typical craft details in his designs that pottery Kawazoe Seizan is able to convey thanks to the tight local network of craftsmen, and combined them with industrial processes. The irregular peaked grinding surface in the grater uses a technique owned by pottery Kyuemon whereas the holes in the tea strainer are made in the Hotarude technique – a skill that is unique to Arita where porcelain is decorated with small holes and transparent glaze.



# 2016/ collections

## 2016/ Studio Wieki Somers

Studio Wieki Somers has collaborated with the Koransha pottery to create two tea sets that combine traditional crafts with advanced technology. The tea sets showcase the iconic 'Koransha blue' glaze and feature patterns inspired by an ancient decorative technique that employs metal stencils to create sprayed motifs on the surface. The studio adapted this technique and abstracted it – revealing the process in the pattern and thereby celebrating the craft. The traditionally used metal stencils are replaced by functional parts of the products, for example the lid of the teapot and the handle of the cup. The forms that appeared during the process refer to one of Japan's most iconic symbols: the moon.

## 2016/ TAF

TAF have designed an adaptable everyday porcelain collection. They concentrated on the notion that the collection should be able to work both for adults and children. A full size plate for a child might be used as a side plate for an adult for example. Consequently, each piece in the range has a double function; it can be used by children and adults, it has more than one use, and can be applied to both an Asian and European table setting. The collection, created together with Tokunaga pottery, has playful elements. Some of the shapes look like spilled liquid, and applied geometric designs are naïve. The outlines of these designs mimic the lines drawn by a ballpoint pen but are in fact made using the blue paint that has been used in Arita for 400 years. Canteen cups and a found industrial pitcher lent inspiration to the collection's forms.

## 2016/ Teruhiro Yanagihara

This standard tableware service is stackable, simple, and able to be mass-produced at low cost. The set comes in a basic Arita white or special grey glaze. It is intended to be unobtrusive, essential, and applicable to almost any interior, a basic tool for everyday use. Yanagihara developed an experimental glaze with Fujimaki Seito, a potter whose family has produced porcelain since 1775. The glaze is inspired by the 'failed' glazes that can occur during the porcelain manufacturing process. Yanagihara has reflected on the Japanese culture of revering an object's imperfection and created a glaze with a purposefully uneven texture, making the rough finish and dimpled surface a feature rather than a fault.

## 2016/ Tomás Alonso

Tomás Alonso's collection consists of a series of containers with complimentary basic geometries, colours and sizes. The containers don't have predetermined functions but instead work together in different contexts and in different arrangements. Alonso is leaving the user to decide their own use for his vessels. The proportions and sizes of the containers make them suitable as desktop accessories at a worktable, as decorative arrangements, or to serve food at a dining table – Alonso noted the particular importance placed on food presentation in Japan during his research. This collection makes good use of the highly skilled mold-making techniques available in Arita and the ability to fire porcelain precisely. Although elementary, the shapes in Alonso's collection are especially difficult to achieve. The collection uses special porcelain clay developed in Arita that allows the shapes to be thinner and stronger and create crisp geometrical shapes. Alonso worked with Sehyou pottery to achieve these forms and to develop a range of colours using a new technique that sees pigment mixed with clay as a replacement for traditional glazing.

## EDITIONS

**2016/ Editions by Scholten & Baijings and Teruhiro Yanagihara showcase the most impressive skills of the Arita potteries. These limited series have been designed as a means of demonstrating, and celebrating, the exceptional wealth of knowledge held by the porcelain makers of Arita. Once, passionate porcelain collectors would seek out the finest examples of Aritaware. By creating two editions of rare and extraordinary pieces 2016/ reignites that appreciation and keeps these valuable techniques alive.**

## 2016/ Scholten & Baijings

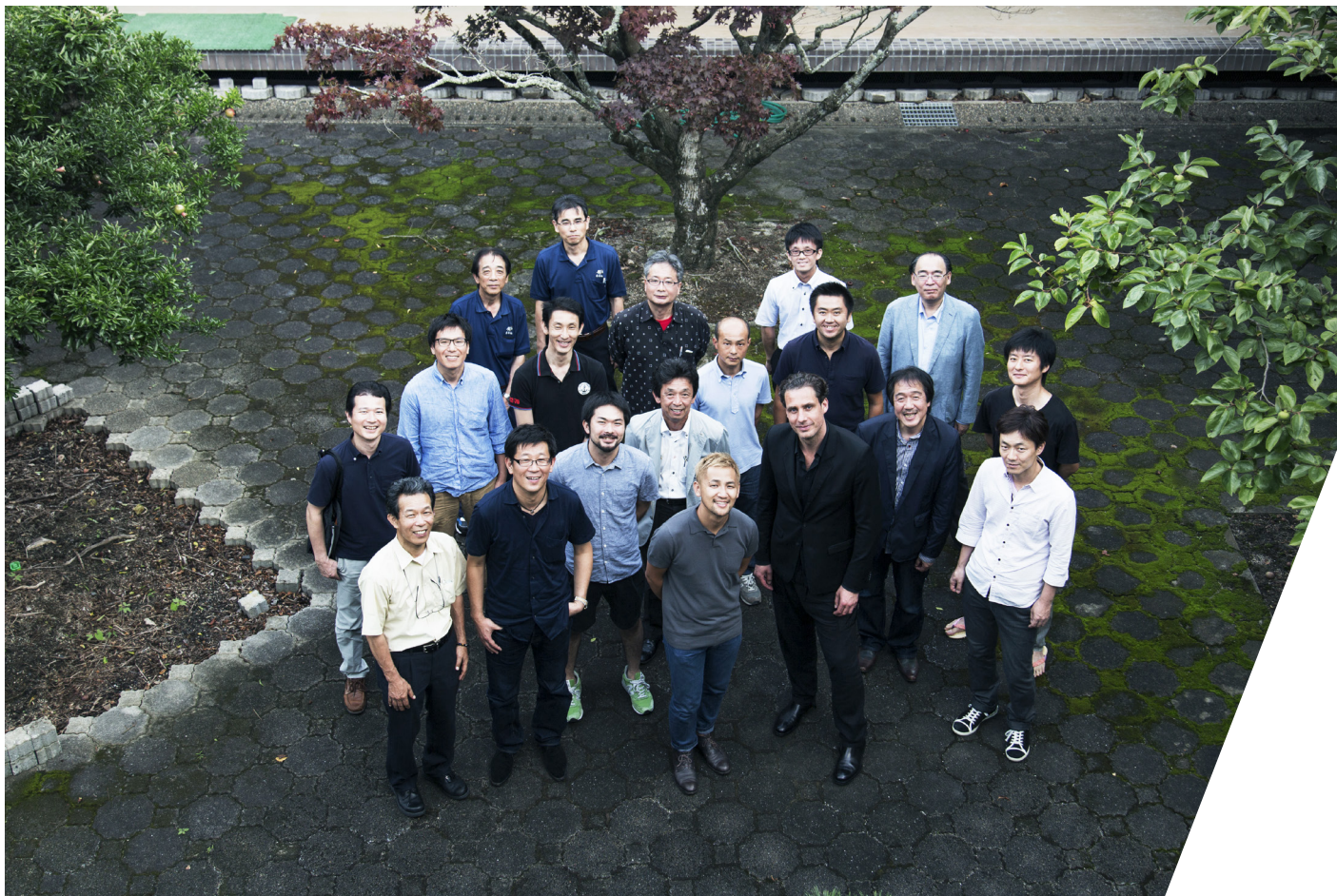
In twenty-seven dishes Scholten & Baijings celebrate the beauty of 400 years of Arita porcelain and demonstrate what a rich source of inspiration traditional Aritaware can offer contemporary design. Exploring Arita's outstanding examples of hand-painting, they reviewed hundreds of pieces and came across countless techniques showing incredible refinement. Almost every dish is carefully hand-painted by the skilled craftspeople in Arita. Hand-painting with this level of sensitivity is an especially remarkable talent of Arita and particular to the Hataman Touen pottery. Scholten & Baijings have chosen to celebrate this unique skill but rather than use recognisable imagery as would be customary, Scholten & Baijings have instead applied patterns that are abstractions of traditional motifs. Scholten & Baijings studied Arita's historical porcelain collections, systematically rummaged through books, museums and the archives of their collaborating pottery, Hataman Touen, making note of the finest examples of hand-painted Aritaware. Long forgotten techniques were rediscovered and later brought back to life in the final works. The designers deconstructed their selected examples, reducing them to single components. They dissected, distilled, abstracted and then reassembled the imagery to leave them with a palette of shape, colour and technique. All the dishes have origins in actual historical forms. But when these were superimposed on one another – by combining two, or even three outlines – complex new shapes emerged that could only be produced with the help of the latest technology. Supported by the Saga Ceramics Research Laboratory in Arita, the highly detailed moulds were produced by 3D printing and 5 Axis CNC milling.

## 2016/ Teruhiro Yanagihara

Despite its form, the traditional hexagonal Arita vase and this tall vase with a wide upright neck are, in fact, entirely impractical: They are made from porous porcelain and cannot hold water. These are showpieces, explains designer Teruhiro Yanagihara, and intentionally unnecessary. Rather, the vases' purpose is to explore the newest and most remarkable high tech materials and methods of manufacturing available in Arita. It is a remarkable characteristic of the town that centuries-old techniques are practised alongside the most innovative and scientifically advanced methods of production. Yanagihara worked with the material scientist at the Saga Ceramics Research Laboratory to develop ever-stronger advanced clays. Alumina based clay has been used here. The mouldings for the vases were made in foam plastic polymer sponge and produced by Fujimaki Seitou. This could be recognised as the least structural porcelain in the world.

There are 30 available sets of each edition.

# 2016 Corporation



Photography: Kentia Hasegawa

The 2016 Corporation has been created to manage the sales and promotion of the 2016/ collections. Traditionally, different trading companies work directly with potteries in Arita, each independently investing in creating market opportunities for the porcelain products being made. However, the unusually collaborative and extensive nature of the 2016/ project has inspired a different way of working.

The new 2016 Corporation is an alliance between specialist companies who will sell and promote the 2016/ products internationally. Through promoting these new works the 2016 Corporation will demonstrate the inherent skills involved in producing Aritaware to the world. They aim to bring about a revival of the entire Arita porcelain industry and to stimulate further growth and innovation. The 2016 Corporation will strive towards building a recognised international brand synonymous with the highest quality Japanese porcelain. Additionally, 2016 Corporation is available to assist external brands in producing porcelain in Arita and has already had

success in bringing important design brands such as HAY and Georg Jensen to Arita.

Noriyuki Momota (Momota Touen Ltd) is the president of the group. Further members include Fumiya Shinohara (Marubun Co. Ltd), Yukimistu Yamamoto (Yamachu Co. Ltd), Yuji Fukagawa (Koransha Co. Ltd), Yasushi Fukaumi (Fukaumi Sanryudo Ltd), Takashi Tazawa (Land Co. Ltd), Masami Yamaguchi (Yamato Thojiki Co. Ltd) and Gen Harada (Housengama Co. Ltd).

The 2016/ collections will be available in November 2016

## **2016 CORPORATION**

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## Creative Platform in Arita

Saga Prefecture has aspirations for Arita to become a craftsmanship hub, attracting international creatives in the near future. The plan is to establish an active space for creative exchange that offers workshops, exhibitions, lectures and an 'in-residence' programme for local and international artists and designers.

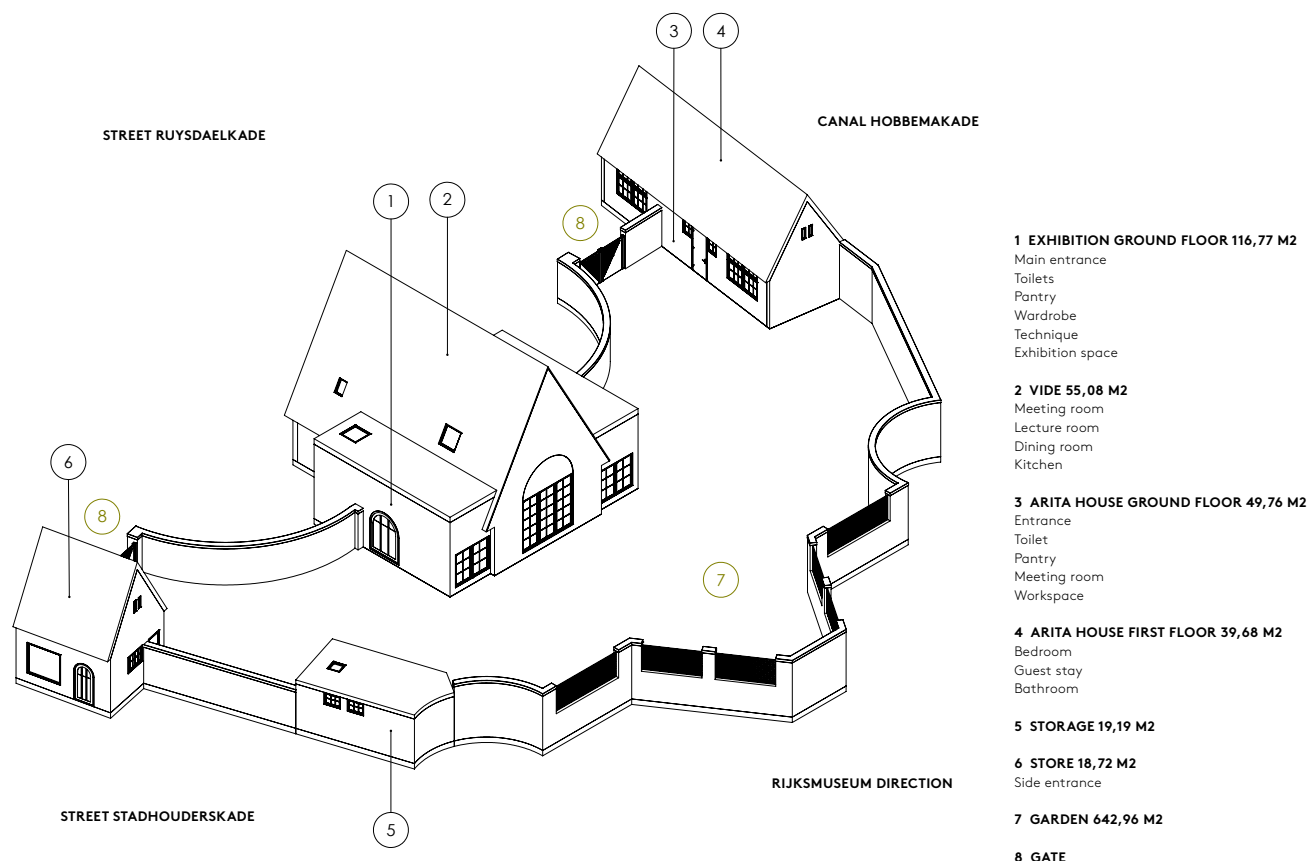
Between June and November 2016 the first in-residence participants will begin work in Arita. Two groups of artists and designers from the Netherlands will begin their stay in Arita where they will be producing works in collaboration with the local potteries. The Saga Ceramics Research Laboratory will give further support to visiting

artists and designers; it boasts a highly equipped centre that can offer technical support of truly international quality.

The Creative Platform will build on the opportunities initiated by the 2016/ project. The Platform will continue to forge international links, to further encourage collaboration between design and craftsmanship. Once established, this will act as the focal point for more activities that support exploration, communication and collaboration in the context of porcelain manufacture in Arita.



# Arita House Amsterdam



The Arita House is located adjacent to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam in a historic building dating from 1925. The substantial premises consist of several buildings and cover an area of 645 m<sup>2</sup>. The aim of Arita House is to connect, as well as promote, contemporary Japanese and Dutch culture, with the ambition of revitalising the unique historical exchange between Japan and The Netherlands. This new cultural landmark will be open between 19 May and late December 2016.

The Arita House in Amsterdam will show the design and production process behind the new porcelain items from the 2016/ collection and demonstrate how the designers involved were inspired by Japanese craftsmanship and cultural heritage. In addition, a programme of discussions, lectures, workshops and tea ceremonies will run during its opening. SHOP/SHOP is where visitors will be able to purchase porcelain from the 2016/ collections and other products from the Saga Prefecture, such as tea and sake.

Piet Oudolf, Holland's most renowned garden and landscape designer, has designed the gardens of Arita House.

Sponsored by the Saga Prefecture Japan  
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## ARITA HOUSE AMSTERDAM

Exhibition '2016/ collections' & SHOP/SHOP

Opening Hours  
Thursday – Saturday  
10.00 – 18.00

Location  
Ruysdaelkade 2 – 4  
1072 AG Amsterdam  
The Netherlands

[aritahouseamsterdam.com](http://aritahouseamsterdam.com)  
[info@aritahouseamsterdam.com](mailto:info@aritahouseamsterdam.com)

# 2016/ Movie

Hikaru Fuji, artist and filmmaker, was invited to make a short film about the 2016/ project. This film will be given its first screening during the Salone del Mobile in Milan. Thereafter, the film will be shown during various exhibitions of the 2016/ project including that held at the new Arita House Amsterdam.

Hikaru Fuji studied at the École des Arts Décoratifs, Paris and the Uni-versité de Paris. He works in both the visual arts and cinematic disciplines and has recently been addressing social and political situations in Japan with his work. His films 'ASAHI' and 'Project Fukushima' have both won international and domestic acclaim.

## Arita / Table of Contents Studies in Japanese Porcelain

The art of Japanese porcelain manufacturing began in Arita in 1616. To mark its 400th anniversary 'Arita / Table of Contents' charts the unique collaboration between 16 contemporary designers and 10 Japanese potteries as they work to produce 16 highly original, innovative and contemporary porcelain collections for everyday use in the 21st century. Visually stunning, this book is a fascinating study in how modern interpretation can revive an ancient industry.

Maps, illustrations and a gallery of 12 key historical objects provide a comprehensive introduction to the craft and region, while more than 500 images document the creative process of each designer; from inspiration and influences, through drawings, models and production

to final product. The book explores the unique relationship between design and craft, building on the understanding that contemporary design evolves from the intersection of different disciplines and technologies. The book features some of the foremost designers working today.

'Arita / Table of Contents' is the latest addition to Phaidon's growing collection of Japan-inspired publications and, together with the 2016/ project, the book celebrates an exciting new chapter in the history of Arita's porcelain production.

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### ARITA HOUSE AMSTERDAM

Exhibition '2016/ collections' & SHOP/SHOP,  
Japanese tableware and more  
Ruysdaelkade 2-4,  
1072 AG Amsterdam, The Netherlands  
Thursday – Saturday 10:00 – 18:00  
aritahouseamsterdam.com  
info@aritahouseamsterdam.com

From its inception, the 2016/ project has encouraged the coming together of different people, disciplines, cultures and businesses to achieve a shared objective.

We are very grateful to have been supported by sponsors from both Japan and The Netherlands throughout. Their generous help and contribution has made the 2016/ project possible and we thank them greatly.

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