

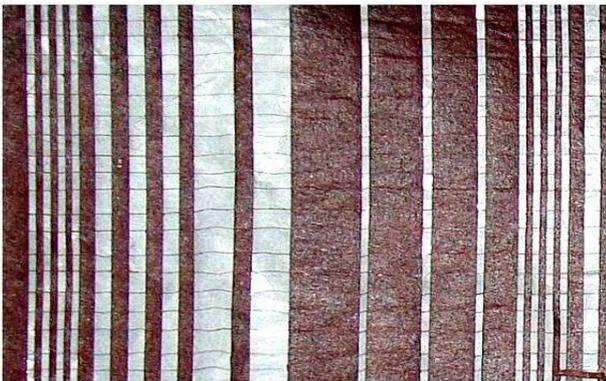
Katagami technique Itoire

Katagami require four types of carving/cutting techniques.

Around 1595, fairly advanced Katagami techniques were found. Katagami artisans producing good quality Katagami in the 1920s received higher incomes than school teachers.

Katagami artisans started training as teenagers. They started by making their own cutters before carving Katagami and worked only one of the four types of techniques to develop as professionals. The fineness of work seems to have resulted with presbyopia (inability to close focus) for most of the Katagami artisans in their 40s, probably largely due to working by candle light.

This article explains the Shimabori cutting technique, the cutting of straight lines.



The lines are cut out using a rule as a guide.

The printed results are lines of various widths.



Discrepancy in lines of colour is very obvious to the eye and the gaps between the strips needs to be controlled; so the Katagami is reinforced.



The method of reinforcing is called the Ito-ire technique; building into the katagami thin silk threads across (perpendicular) to the lines.

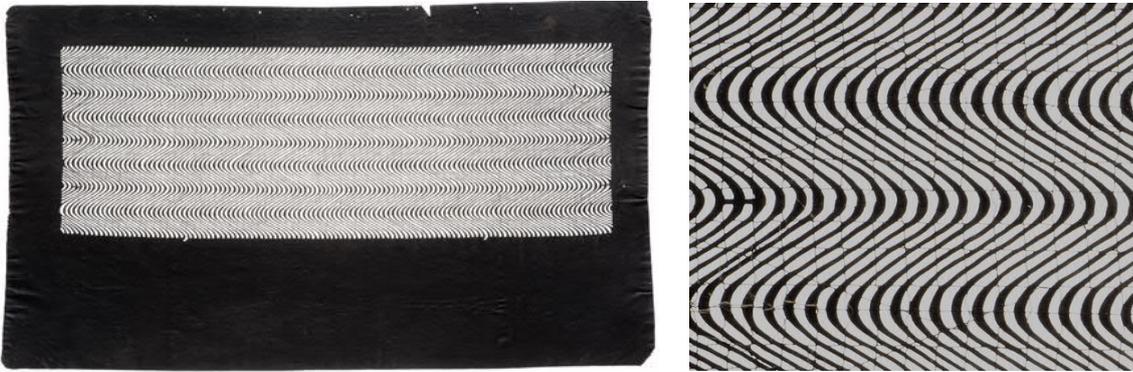


Itoire and Shabari artisan, Master Toshiko Matsui, Shiroko, Mie

http://www4.airnet.ne.jp/sakura/blocks_menu/conjyaku_09/itoire/itoire_fr5.html

The Ito-ire technique is also used in the three other carving techniques.

In the Silver studio collection, we have some Katagami using this technique. This "Ito-ire" technique is very labour intensive. Sometimes it was strung up on a board by craftswomen, and sandwiched in between two sheets of the same stencil; a meticulous process of creating a grid of silk threads and then sandwiching it between the two layers of cut stencil, bonded with Kakishibu (Persimmon tannin). In others it was literally sewn in, to catch all the fine detail.



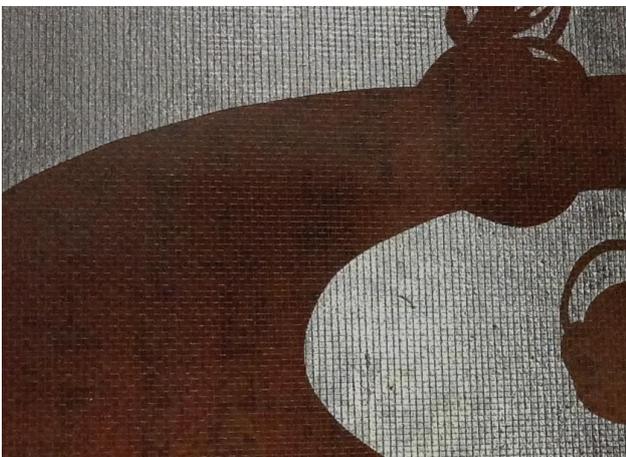
Basically Katagami are made of three layers of washi paper bonded together with Kakishibu. However if Itoire "Ito-ire" is needed for the Katagami, four layers of washi are used, two either side of the Itoire.

Beginning in 1600, this technique was carried out by a number of women artisans up to the 1920s.

The last part of the Itoire technique is to blow off excess Kakishibu. This must be done moderately* and with care so as not to affect the pattern.*One reason why women carried out this process.



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In 1921, the Sha-bari (gauzed mesh) technique was developed. It was often the case that this was fixed in place with lacquer because it was mounted to the Katagami externally on the underside (next to the fabric).

This mesh method is still used today, it is very uniform and machine made, often synthetic.

However even today, the traditional Itoire technique is used for the Shimabori Katagami.