

A child's mind would be the best way to describe what I wish to express as a metalwork artist. It is the sense of excitement that you used to feel as a child when experiencing something new or discovering something rare, where your heart beats fast. Having always had a strong interest in living creatures, I was the sort of child who would spend ages looking at an illustrated dictionary without getting bored, all the while thinking about something I had never seen, and I would spend all day collecting insects. Although I am an adult now, this feeling continues to be indispensable and it plays an absolutely central role in the production of my work.

My main reason for producing artwork featuring creature motifs is that I am fascinated by the beauty of the form that has been created through continuous development over a long period of time within the natural environment which can never be artificially created. I wish to express such beauty with my own sensitivity.

I apply *chōkin* (metasmith) techniques as a means of expression. *Chōkin* is a traditional Japanese metalworking technique that is used mainly in the decoration of fittings for armour, swords, spears and sash clips. It features incredibly delicate expressions in detail and a variety of colours that are difficult to believe in metalwork. Among these, I mainly use the technique of *uchidashi*, which involves hammering the back of a metal plate to create a bulge and then sculpting shapes on the surface with a tool called a *tagane* or chisels. Whilst this technique is often used for reliefs, I apply it in my own way to create expressions in three dimensions. Since I process it from a plate, I still find it a very difficult and time-consuming technique.

Nevertheless, I make various discoveries and enjoy experiencing my own development as I learn expressions that I was unable to create before due to difficulty and also through improving my own work rate by becoming more efficient. When looking at a finished work, it may be that I am the one who is most surprised by the fact that it is made from a plate. Thinking in this way helps me to maintain my motivation.

Another reason why I am attracted to this technique is the variety of colours. Although the traditional technique of colouring incorporates so many colours it is hard to believe it is made of metal, I try to create various colour expressions using the material of metal, with different modern methods also added. This is due to my desire to express metal, which is a material with a hard and cold image, as something that can make a space bright and colourful.

My wish is for my artwork to become a lucky charm for whoever owns it. I hope it becomes a communication tool which makes their living space brighter and enriches their minds, as a result of them being surprised by and sympathising with my findings and inventions or keeping it beside them.