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UPDATED PRICES
2026



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How to tie your shifuku on
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Hello, I'm Kyle Whittington, the face behind Studio Shifuku.

I've been sewing since I was about four years old and over the years have worked variously in fashion, interior design (hand sewing curtains and silk lampshades), and of course, the tea world. Twenty years ago I lived in Hokkaido, Japan teaching English with The Project Trust and whilst there first started learning Chanoyu, the Japanese Tea Ceremony, with the local Ura Senke teacher. I later did my degree in Japanese Art History at SOAS, University of London.

In 2017 I began seriously studying and practicing Chanoyu again, switching to the Ueda Sōko Ryū under the tutelage of Adam Sōmu Wojciński, advancing to a level where I am now able to accept students under his guidance. In 2018 he asked me if I'd attempt making a shifuku for him, and a whole new journey began. In 2019 I set up my studio and in 2021-22 built my own textile themed Chashitsu in the loft of my Hampshire (England, UK) home.





New Adventures

Summer 2024

Last year, 2023, was a pivotal year for Studio Shifuku. I had the opportunity to not only hold my first Shifuku Exhibition but to do so at my favourite tea shop, that oasis of calm, beauty and fantastic tea in the heart of London: Postcard Teas. It was a dream come true and an absolute honour. A big thank you to Tim, Haydn and the team for all their help.

Following on from the success of the exhibition I've been delighted to see my work permanently displayed at Postcard Teas, my first "stockist", a milestone indeed. For that exhibition I specially created a selection of shifuku for their Kaikado caddies and have since been invited to exhibit at the Kaikado shop and cafe in Kyoto. I also secured a joint exhibition with Sasaki Shouraku IV at Unearthed Galley in Munich and will be exhibiting at the Prague Tea Festival in 2025.

Shifuku are by their very nature bespoke, almost couture like pieces for chaire (tea caddies) and chawan (teabowls) used in Chanoyu, the Japanese Tea Ceremony. Each specifically tailored to fit the piece it holds. This catalogue features works that explore what a shifuku is and how it functions alongside purchasable pieces from the various ranges I produce. Almost anything shown can be commissioned as is or in your choice of fabric, finish etc. I offer a fully bespoke service, meaning that himo & tsugari cords are all custom made by me for each piece and can be made in a range of colours and styles to suit each piece along with a range of lining options to choose from.

Typically, outside of exhibitions, my clients are all around the world and so I start each commission process with an online design consultation to choose fabrics and colours for himo, lining etc. In most cases my unique measuring guides allow clients to take the measurements I need to make a shifuku themselves, rather than sending precious items through the mail. Commissions typically take several months to complete depending on how long my make queue is and my exhibition schedule.

My work ranges from the traditional through to boundary pushing pieces that ask us to consider what a shifuku is and how it functions as both a functional and beautiful “garment” for tea wares. I explore different fabrics and techniques, not just in the making of shifuku but all other “textile dogu” for Chanoyu, from Kobukusa, Shikibukusa, Sukiyabukuro, Shinobukuo, Otsubukuro and of course, Shifuku, the core of my work. Alongside this I research the traditional textiles, the *meibutsu-gire* of Chanoyu. This in turn informs my more creative work and interpretations.

Access to my research is thorough my Patreon patreon.com/studioshifuku where you can also join me in exploring my creative work with weekly videos and more.

Earlier this year I was honoured to be awarded the title of 袋師 *Fukuroshi* (bag master) in recognition of my work.

None of what I do would be possible without the support of those around me, my partner Ray, always stable and supportive, my best friend Pax who's belief and support in preparing for exhibitions has been invaluable. Haydn at Postcard Teas for the wonderful photography that brings this catalogue to life. Adam, my Chanoyu teacher and the person responsible for starting me on this whole shifuku journey back in early 2018. Taka, Marcel, Nessim, Sasaki and Christine for making upcoming exhibitions possible. My clients these past years who have enabled my practice to blossom and grow. Thanks to Lois for help with translations, enabling my research which in turn feeds my creativity. And of course, Rose, Jill and Sumie for their help in bringing this catalogues to life.

Thank you to my Patreon Patrons; Nessim Cohen, Carsten Kiess, Anderson Santos and Marjorie Yap and an extra special thanks to Adam Sōmu Wojciński, Eric Carr, Pauline James, Sumie Miyahara and Mariusz Mikulec.

Kyle



The first shifuku

A note on Knots

In the world of Chanoyu, there are many different schools of tea, each with its own unique way of doing things—including how knots are tied. No single method is the "right" way to tie a shifuku knot. Various utensils like chaire, chawan, and natsume each have specific knot styles that vary between schools. There are also different knots for short or long cords, knots that indicate whether a tea caddy is full or empty, resting knots for storage, and even secret or level-specific knots. In some incense schools, the knot changes monthly!

I tie my knots following my school's teachings but with my own artistic touch. This allows me to showcase the handmade himo cord and to distinguish my work when it's displayed or photographed. When using one of my shifuku, please tie with the knotting technique specific to your tea or incense tradition.

結び方について

茶の湯の世界には様々な流派があり、それぞれの流派特有の点前や所作において様々な違いがあるのですが、仕覆の紐の結び方もまた然り。茶入、茶碗、棗、志野袋など、それぞれの袋物によって結び方が異なりますし、短緒、長緒と紐の長さの違い、点前の途中の紐の結び方、休め紐の結びの違い、更に奥伝や道具によって違った結び方もあります。また、香道では月毎に結び方を変える場合も。私も通常は流派の教えに従っていますが、展示や撮影の際には紐の結び方を変えて作品の個性を強調する事があります。

私の仕覆をお使いの際には、それぞれの流派の結び方で結んでください。



Shifuku for Kaikado caddies

Designed and initially created for the Postcard Teas exhibition in 2023, I'm delighted to be exhibiting these at Kaikado in Kyoto in 2024. Shifuku for the 40g, 100g and 120g Kaikado caddies form the basis of the range though all other Kaikado sizes are possible. It has been a joy to explore a new dimension of my work by working with standardised sizes and designing collections for these beautiful caddies. Each and every one is a little treasure, bringing the joy of shifuku to a wider tea audience.



Available to purchase or commission in a range of fabrics & himo/lining combinations. Prices start from £190 for a 40g size shifuku.

開化堂茶筒専用仕覆

昨年、ロンドンの茶葉販売店「ポストカード・ティーズ」で開催された個展用にデザインされたラインが今年ついに京都開化堂にて、日本の皆様にもお披露目できる運びとなりました。40g、100g、120gのサイズを基本としていますが、他の全てのサイズでの対応も可能です。規格化された美しい開化堂の茶筒に合わせて仕覆をデザインする事で袋師として新たなステージへの扉が開けた事作家として大変嬉しく思っております。この小さな宝物をお茶を愛する多くの人に楽しんでいただけますと幸いです。



様々な生地と紐、裏地の組み合わせでのご購入やご注文が可能で 40g茶筒用の仕覆は190ポンド～ご購入やご注文をお受けしています。

Denim Shifuku

Denim is a wonderful and unique choice for creating more casual shifuku that will wear beautifully with time. Ranges include plain denims lined with a fun and funky fabric gives a pleasing surprise when opened. The "funky/ fluffy" denim range explores texture & tactility with pops of colour. Or for those up for getting truly wild, there's painted denim, a new limited range inspired by Maison Margiela.



Prices start from £190 for a 40g size shifuku. Available to purchase or commission.

デニム仕覆

デニムは仕覆をよりカジュアルに楽しむためにおすすめの素材で、無地のデニム生地
の裏地にはあえて個性的な柄を合わせて、紐を解いた時の驚きやワクワク感を感じて
いただけるように工夫しております。「ファンキーデニムシリーズ」、「フワフワデ
ニムシリーズ」はポップな色使いに加えて質感と手触りを追求している他、ワイルド
なテイストがお好きな方には新たにメゾン・マルジェラに影響を受けた限定シリーズ、
生地を絵の具で大胆に彩色した「ペインテッドデニム」をご紹介します。



様々な生地と紐、裏地の組み合わせでのご購入やご注文が可能で 40g茶筒用の仕覆は190ポンド
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"Series G" no.6 Leather shifuku

2024

Whilst I make leather shifuku in a variety of colours as clients request, "Series G" leather shifuku are made exclusively in the finest black napa leather repurposed from vintage leather jackets by Barcelona designer Estrella G. Hence their name. Always and only made with a black silk lining and a Cannon grey himo they are numbered along with my signature kaō as they are made. Pictured and available for the 40g Kaikado caddy is no.6 (Kaikado, Kyoto, 2024)

"シリーズG" No.6レザー仕覆

2024

バルセロナのデザイナー、エストレラGがデザインしたヴィンテージのレザージャケットを再利用した最高級の黒ナパレザーを使用した仕覆です。裏地は黒のシルク、紐はキャノングレーで、一作品ごとに私の花押と通し番号が刺繍されています。

写真は40gの開化堂茶筒用、No.6。

(開化堂、京都、2024年)

Prices to commission leather shifuku for Kaikado caddies start from £320 for a 40g size shifuku

Prices to commission leather shifuku for Chaire from £350 plus leather

This piece, no.6 £320

開化堂用レザー仕覆は40gサイズ320ポンドより





Shouraku

A new collaboration with Sasaki Shouraku IV featuring pieces by Sasaki Shouraku IV and the Shouraku workshop. These three pieces were first shown at the 2023 Postcard Teas Exhibition. December 2024 sees my first joint Studio Shifuku x Shouraku exhibition at Unearthed Gallery in Munich.



Double layered shifuku

2023

Beginning a collaboration with Japanese master potter Sasaki Shouraku IV felt like it needed a new and elevated approach that responded to the chaire and the beauty of its glaze. By layering a tulle over the base fabric I was able to evoke the semi transparent glaze of the chaire and the way it pools and flows over the clay. The gold fabric, a personally special fabric that I have used in my Chashitsu, also subtly references Sasaki Shouraku's distinctive use of gold in his other work. Layering these two fabrics creates depth and movement and a unique experience for the guests at heiken (viewing and handling of the tea equipage). The gold and green himo gives a nod to the rich green glaze of the chaire.

Studio Shifuku collection.

Prices to commission a shifuku in this style from £280 plus fabrics

This piece (shifuku & chaire) £545

Chaire by Sasaki Shouraku IV



Silk Road (2023)

With this rich and vibrant fabric, "Katmandu" by English textile house Marvic Textiles, I reference the movement of textiles around the globe. Whilst in the UK the paisley pattern often evokes exoticism, in Japan it is often seen as being a very English pattern, highlighting the way textile patterns are viewed and interpreted differently as they move around the world. The himo is woven in a spiralling pattern of rich gold and red flecked with gold.

Studio Shifuku x Shouraku collection, available to purchase.

This piece (shifuku & chaire from the Shouraku workshop) £325



Highland (2023)

The soft heather pink glaze of this chaire contrasts perfectly with the dark blues and greens of the "Black Watch Modern" tartan. The soft mauve of the himo again contrasts with the dark tartan whilst simultaneously referencing the heather tones of the glaze as well as the traditional purple himo, creating a subtle link between Japan and Scotland.

Studio Shifuku x Shouraku collection, Private collector, UK

This piece (shifuku & chaire from the Shouraku workshop) £320





Tartan line

Tartan may just be the British answer to *meibutsu-gire*. With over 4000 named tartans in existence there are endless options to explore. The beautiful pure wool weaves of traditional tartans make for excellent tea textiles across a range of uses in the tea world. Cutting the same tartan in different ways gives a multitude of different effects.



Pieces available to purchase or by commission.

タータンライン

日本の名物裂に相当する英国の布地を挙げるとすれば、それはスコットランドが起源のタータン チェックではないかと思います。現存する4000種類以上のタータンには無限の選択肢があり、伝統的な美しいピュアウール織りは、茶の湯の世界でも様々な用途で活用する事ができます。同じ柄でも生地の中の部分を切り取るかによって様々な表情が生まれるのもタータンの面白さの一つでしょう。



展示作品はご購入できる他、注文のご依頼も受け付けています。

Shifuku for special events

I sometimes describe my work as "teaware couture" as each custom made shifuku is much like a couture gown: individually designed to fit the piece inside. But it can also be specifically designed or selected for a special occasion. An "occasion" shifuku can mark a special event or add that extra touch to a Chaji theme such as the one I made for Hatsugama 2024 (middle opposite) using the Burns tartan to reflect one of the themes of the Chaji and designing the himo based on the Shikibukusa I made and used in the other half of the Chaji.

特別イベントのための仕覆

私は自分の仕事を「茶道具のクチュール」である、と表現することがあるのですが、それはオーダーメイドの仕覆は、特別に仕立てられたガウンのように、ひとつひとつが道具に美しく沿うようにデザインされ、仕立てられているからです。そして「初釜2024」(写真中央)のように特別な日のためにデザインしたり、選ぶこともあり、茶事のテーマやイベントの内容に合わせて様々な表情を加えることができます。



Pieces available by commission from £230 plus fabric.

Left to right:

London Tea Friends Summer Tea Fest 2023 - Private collector USA

Hatsugama 2024 - "Robert Burns" theme - Studio Shifuku collection

London Tea Friends Summer Tea Fest 2024 - Available to purchase with chaire

Dress Stewart

2024

Taking inspiration from the glaze of this Chaire by renowned Czech potter Jan Pavék I selected this Royal Dress Stewart Tartan (muted), cutting the pattern so that the colours of the tartan reflected the colours found in the glaze of the Chaire. The himo, in "cloud-burst" draws the Chaire and shifuku together.

Studio Shifuku Collection

Prices to commission a shifuku in this style from £230 plus fabric
Chaire by Jan Pavék, price by request.



Shifuku for the Kanaami Tsuji Circle Tea Infuser

Designed and created specially for the Postcard Teas exhibition in 2023, the shifuku for the Kanaami Tsuji Circle Tea Infuser perfectly moulds to the cup, offering protection when traveling or sharing tea *nodate* (outdoors) style. I carefully designed the closing fit so that the strainer is held firm to prevent movement in transit. Finished with a short himo for ease of use rather than the traditional long himo used for chawan.



Prices from £245 plus fabric. This piece £255. Available to commission.

Cup-stack shifuku

Shifuku have many uses in the wider tea world such as holding single or sets of cups, tea pots and other tea wares. As each shifuku is custom made it can be made to exactly fit and protect your favourite tea wares and look gorgeous at the same time.



Available to commission. Prices from £230 plus fabric.

For a cup-stack shifuku felt stack protectors are included as standard. Padded silk stack protectors can also be made at additional cost as well as any other padding or protection needed for your tea ware needs. The "Box Shifuku" (next page) is ideal for irregular shapes and delicate pieces.

Box shifuku

2022-23

With this new style of shifuku I explore how a shifuku fits and how it protects a piece. The lower half of the shifuku is self-supporting with a square base and a padded interior in which sits the spherical *mitate* (found/non-traditional) chaire by British potter Charlotte Grinling. The upper, opening portion of the shifuku gathers with a long cord, elevating the piece to require special handling within the *temae*. The colours of the chaire are reflected in the blue, white and pale grey of the shifuku and himo.

Whilst this piece plays with circle and square shapes, the concept of "box shifuku" is adaptable to suit a range of geometric combinations. This concept also provides a means of safely housing and protecting irregularly and unusually shaped or particularly delicate items that would benefit from sitting in a supportive, padded base.

Studio Shifuku collection.

Prices to commission from £450 plus fabric



Shinobukuro

Shinobukuro or incense pouches are used to hold sachets of incense in both the tea ceremony and incense ceremony worlds. Traditionally made with two different fabrics, one for the base and one half, one for the other half. Why? No-one quite knows. My work explores this in different ways through the fabrics, decoration and cords (himo & tsugari) used.



Prices to commission from £230 plus fabric

Sukiyabukuro

Sukiyabukuro are the delightful, versatile, unisex "clutch" bags that Chanoyu practitioners used to carry papers, cloths and other personal items when attending tea events and practice. My work explores different textiles and effects of pattern matching.

They also make wonderful evening clutch bags outside of the tea world.



Prices from £170 plus fabric. Available to commission.

Historical recreation

2021 & 2022

The Nampō Roku is the most important manuscript on the development of the art and practice of chanoyu. Written around the late 17th century, the Nampō Roku is the first written record of the oral accounts of the earliest tea procedures devised by Shōgun Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1435-1490). It also describes the development of Sen Rikyū's (1522-1591) wabicha style of tea, the utensils Rikyū created with Takeno Jōō (1502-1555), and the procedures employed by the early tea masters. One such procedure describes a tenmoku tea bowl displayed in the tearoom inside a shifuku, with its stand (tenmoku-dai) also shown in a shifuku. This procedure has been forgotten in modern chanoyu practice. With this set of shifuku for tenmoku tea bowl and support stand (tenmoku-dai), we can imagine anew the earliest tea procedures and recreate them within our contemporary practice.

These two shifuku were recreated thanks to the research and translation work of Adam Sōmu Wojciński. patreon.com/adamsomu

Private collector, France.

Prices to commission from £340 per shifuku plus fabrics.



Versace VJC Couture

2021

The tradition of *meibutsu-gire* textiles often drew on the re-use of textiles from luxurious garments. So what better than to use this delectable fabric from a Versace VJC Couture jacket circa 2007 that no longer fits me! The small, subtle geometric pattern is perfect for shifuku scale.

Due to the limited availability of this fabric, pieces are numbered with only three (including this one) currently in existence. The first completed shifuku in this fabric, and the first to feature not just handmade himo but also handmade tsugari (twisted cord that attaches the himo) was gifted to Wafūdō, home of the Ueda Sōko Ryū in Hiroshima and appeared in the school magazine later that year.

Studio Shifuku collection.

Prices to commission from £270 including fabric (limited availability)



Dior dahling

2023

Whilst researching the *meibutsu-gire* textile “Sōkun-donsu” I discovered that it was used by Christian Dior in 1954 for a coat, pictured in Vogue (Paris). This shifuku is directly inspired by this image and asks questions around the naming of *meibutsu-gire* textiles. Given that these textiles were often named after the people who used them, in this case the tea master Imai Sōkun (born 1552), could we rename this textile “Dior donsusu”?

The main body of the shifuku takes its form from the Dior coat whilst responding to the hexagonal shape of the *mitate* chaire: a repurposed Royal Worcester lidded pot. The upper, closing part of the shifuku and lining is made from a vintage Dior print scarf, closing around the “neck” of the lid.

Private collector, UK/Japan

Prices to commission from £500 plus fabric

This piece £645





Gown

2023

This shifuku responds to the form of the chaire, exploring the idea of tea-ware couture and questioning how a shifuku is shaped and how it opens. Initial inspiration came from my clients request for a red-carpet inspired shifuku that would show off the “bellybutton” of the chaire. Working primarily with the shape of the chaire and drawing inspiration from John Galliano for Christian Dior circa 2007-2008 I created a tailored back with the himo positioned on the front rather than top as it normally would be. The shifku clings to the body of the Chaire before billowing out from under the lugs (arms) either side and closing over the top in a luxurious puff of silk. The exaggerated tassel of the himo adds that additional red-carpet glamour.

Private collector, Canada.

Prices to commission from £600 plus fabric

This piece £635



Chainmail

2023

This piece questions what it means for a shifuku to protect something. Chainmail of course was a form of armour and protection on the battlefield and as such draws reference to the Sengoku or warring states period in Japanese history when Chanoyu was born.

To create this I individually stitched every link of silver chain onto a tulle base which has then been padded to create a protective "fabric" before being lined in black silk with exposed decorative stitching inside. Working in this medium has required new approaches around the construction and shaping of a shifuku throwing up countless new challenges and taking seemingly endless hours of delicate stitching. The hope is that over time the silver will gradually tarnish, changing character as it ages and going from its current "bling" to a softer, more "wabi" aesthetic.

Private collector, France

Prices to commission from £2000 plus materials

This piece £2350



Yojohan beaded Shifuku

2019

An early foray into the idea of embellishing shifufuku and altering the fabric itself. Here I took the classic yojohan four and a half mat tearoom layout and wrapped it around the shifuku, executed in black bugle beads on a green ground representing fresh green tatami. The golden silk lining nods to the eventual change in the colour of the tatami over time. Special attention when planning the pattern was needed to allow for the inevitable interactions of bugle beads with seams and edges.

Studio Shifuku collection.

Prices to commission from £500 plus fabric/beads.

This piece with chaire is available by enquiry.



Sign me

2023

Strongly inspired by my client's love of fashion house Maison Margiela's painted and graffitied pieces and the hot pink of Valentino 2022-23 this shifuku for a "clog shaped" chawan is made from a repurposed pink denim jacket. This required careful planning and shaping due to the squashed, non-circular shape of the chawan and in order to repurpose the jacket seams to sit perfectly within the side indentation of the chawan. Once constructed I applied white paint in a manner referencing Margiela whilst the chawan was inside the shifuku so that it's shape would be reflected in the brushstrokes.

The himo is woven in a blend of three tones of black silk to give a liquid inky effect as the intention is that this shifuku will be written on over time. Drawing inspiration from Sandy Powell's suit signed by stars (now in the V&A), the idea is that over time dates, events and signatures in the life of the chawan and shifuku will be added to it, eventually covering the surface and merging with the inky himo. This piece invites us to question the role and life of a shifuku over time.

Private collector, France.

Chawan shifuku (irregular shape) to commission from £410 plus materials

This piece £575



Cloud-Gire Collection

My first collection (2023) features an embroidered cloud pattern in silk and gold thread on a linen ground. This draws on elements of my research, chashitsu and shifuku making over the last few years and asks questions around how we value textile items in the world of Chanoyu.

Discover more at studioshifuku.com/cloud-gire



Pieces available to purchase or by commission.





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