

Advance Exhibition Information
For Immediate Release

KAWASE SHINOBU

MARCH 31-APRIL 6, 2005

International Asian Art Fair

THE SEVENTH REGIMENT ARMORY
PARK AVENUE AT 67TH STREET
NEW YORK, NY 10021

Joan B. Mirviss Ltd, one of the world's leading dealers in modern and contemporary Japanese ceramics, is pleased to present the work of the celebrated Japanese ceramic artist **Kawase Shinobu** at the International Asian Art Fair. Titled "The Serene Beauty of Celadon/*Seijaku no bi*," the exhibition will feature masterworks from the artist's personal collection and will highlight his best forms and styles created over the past twenty years. Kawase's ceramics grace the collections of important Japanese collections and museums as well as major Western institutions such as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Brooklyn Museum



Kawase Shinobu (b. 1950)
Vase 2004 14 3/8 x 8 3/4

of Art, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Royal Ontario Museum, and the Victoria & Albert Museum. In Japan, his prominence in the rarified world of artists working in this difficult medium is reflected in his nickname—"Seiji Shinobu"—*seiji* being the Japanese word for celadon. In 1981, he was the youngest ceramist to ever be awarded the prestigious Japan Ceramic Society Prize. Remarkably, despite his international reputation, this will be Kawase's first solo exhibition outside of Japan.

Inspired by the classical ceramics of Song Dynasty China (960-1270), Kawase was first discovered celadon glaze when, by chance, he noticed the green tonality produced in the pooling of glaze at the base of a piece of *sometsuke*, or blue-and-white ware. Subsequently his grandfather, Kawase Chikushun and father, Chikushun II, both potters of blue-and-white and polychrome ware, introduced the young Shinobu to these traditional forms and glazes. Potting by age eighteen, he was soon lured by the Chinese aesthetic to the Palace Museum in Taipei to study firsthand the Song Dynasty masterpieces. There he reveled in dignify, elegance, and cool appearance of the Northern Song celadon vessels. A trip several years later to London brought him to the renowned Percival David Foundation, where he spent four influential days immersed in the beauty of the collection. The interplay between the softness of the clay body and the suppleness of the glaze, together with the clarity of the silhouettes of the vessels, spoke directly to his aesthetic appreciation of the medium. He recently wrote:

“By searching for the elusive color of Song celadon and stretching the aesthetic boundaries of Chinese traditional forms, the warm and serene beauty of this art form emerges in the plasticity of the clay and the coolness of its glaze.”

Since celadon is so difficult to produce and involves a high percentage of firing losses, very few artists in Japan dare to work exclusively with this glaze. Over the past twenty-five years, Kawase has



Kawase Shinobu (b. 1950)
L Bowl 1998 3 3/8 x 8 7/8
R *Mizusashi* Water Jar 2001 5 6/8 x 9

refined his own formulas for the ideal blue-green color for his celadon glazes through extensive and meticulous testing, blending in iron oxide, yellow sand, and sometimes even magnetic powder. His works are created from both red porcelaineous stoneware and white porcelain.

In this, his first international exhibition, Kawase has selected highlights from his personal collection, enabling interested visitors to fully appreciate the artist's complete mastery of his medium. The dignified elegance of his forms, potted to perfection, covered in refined blue glazes, complemented by the modernity of his interpretations of classical Song ceramics, have earned him the admiration of collectors, connoisseurs and artists everywhere.

**For visuals and further information, please contact:
Nadine Welch at**

**Joan B. Mirviss, Ltd.
PO Box 231095
New York, NY 10023**

**Tel: 212 799-4021
Fax: 212 721-5148**

Email: joan@mirviss.com