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Fiber Futures: Japan's Textile Pioneers (Japan Society Series)

Joe Earle, Hiroko Watanabe

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This book documents and exhibition of contemporary Japanese artists who are active at the cutting edge of the global fiber-art movement, transforming fabrics into sculptures, pictures, emulations of nature, or even abstract meditations on memory and identity. The materials they use range from silk, cotton, recycled cocoons, antique paper scraps, jute, and hemp to stainless-steel wire and synthetic fiber. Their methods are sometimes traditional, but can also incorporate the latest weaving and dyeing technology, often with the goal of expressing an environmentally conscious green ethic.

The thirty artists, including both established figures and newcomers, were selected for *Fiber Futures: Japan's Textile Pioneers*, an exhibition at New York's Japan Society Gallery. Introductory essays by Hiroko Watanabe, President of International Textile Network, and Gallery Director Joe Earle provide the context for these innovative, beautiful, and sometimes challenging works of art. The catalogue section features artist statements, informative commentary, and lavish photography, much of it commissioned especially by Japan Society.

Originally conceived in 2007, *Fiber Futures* came to fruition after the devastating natural disasters that struck Japan on March 11, 2011, events which give the exhibition and its catalogue added significance. *Fiber Futures* not only reflects the fecundity of Japanese artistic tradition, but also speaks to the resilience and ingenuity of the Japanese people and their ability to repurpose the past in order to better shape the future.

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