



Kintsugi

Pol Arnal Tröger
History of Fashion
by Sara Bevilacqua
2020 - 2021

Kintsugi is an ancient Japanese technique or art, better-said, that consists of repairing broken pottery, as simple as that. Well, it isn't. This technique has a singular and beautiful concept behind it.

When a jar, for example, accidentally falls and gets damaged, an average 2021 person would first be sad and then proceed to throw it as garbage.

Well, Kintsugi would collect all the pieces possible and start to paste them together. The peculiar trait about this technique is that instead of trying to repair the object in a way that it looks as new or at least not damaged, they realize the reparation in a way that it's seen, and that's the philosophy of this art.

It is to value the history of objects and their struggles, in some way. Every jar is unique and has its own history, and the damage is part of its history, not its end. Damage makes a jar even more unique, and more precious.

This art empowers what we could call scars, and in some way imperfections. For the reconstruction, there are different materials used, but in the majority, they are metals, in a liquid form. The most commons are Gold, Silver, and Platinum.

We can understand the name now, having in mind that "Kin" is translated as gold, and "Tsugi" is translated as repair.

So, we can see that with this technique, in addition to the piece gaining historical value, it also gains value in materials resulting in a completely more valuable object. It also teaches us that something broken isn't condemned to die, it can end up in something better.

This technique is beautiful in all its aspects. Objects treated with Kintsugi are physically beautiful and they carry a strong philosophy, a resilience philosophy.

This art having Japanese origins is not surprising, due to their culture and way of thinking. Kintsugi is directly associated with a way of seeing, or better said a philosophy too, called Wabi-Sabi.

This is the practice of understanding imperfection as something beautiful. It motivates us to not hide imperfections, to show them instead.

So an asymmetric bowl isn't a failure, and an object affected by time is still beautiful.

This technique can be really interesting applied to fashion, especially nowadays, with the success of fast fashion. It happens as with the example of the jar I wrote about before, when a garment gets damaged it's common to just throw it away and buy a new one.

It would be great to find a way to apply this philosophy, Wabi-Sabi or Kintsugi, to fashion. The fact of transforming something considered trash into something considered art is incredible, and in my personal opinion would motivate people into keeping their damaged garments, so it would definitely be a sustainable solution to waste excess.

Kintsugi in actuality is quite famous and has, in some form, evolved into different practices. I would say that nowadays the physical technique used by Kintsugi is popular and used but not the philosophy.

We can see different variants of this technique such as ceramic collages and deformed pottery by unifying two different objects. These, even not following the Kintsugi traditional process, are in my opinion also a way of art.

Last assignment I chose a jar that had drawings on it representing history, this time I've chosen a jar that has its own history.

