Shikishi - □□

The Basics

Shikishi boards are made by laminating Gasen rice paper to a hardboard backing. The edges are generally trimmed in gold, the most common size for collecting autographs and artwork measure: 9 5/8" by 10 3/4". Shikishi are traditionally used for sumi, calligraphy, watercolor and haiku. They are also popular for autographs and anime artwork.

Shikishi like most paper products come in different levels of quality and methods of production. When buying art from a source, you are almost never going to know on what type or quality of board the artist did the work on. For preservation purposes I would recommend just always assume the worst (this will be more relevant to the preservation section later). Cutiebunny, (she has an extensive Shikishi collection and is my Shikishi Senpai!) recommends that when you are buying Shikishi specifically to request art from a guest that you use either Sumitomo or the Copic Brand Shikishi, as they are both guaranteed to be acid free, this is questionable when you go to your nearest Daiso and get the 3 pack of Shikishi Boards for a couple bucks :((I still buy these but mostly as boards for guests I'm not as interested in, but I don't want to be rude). If you really want to next level it, bring a small selection of Copic markers for the guests to use on your board, as Permanent Markers that conventions supply, while acid free, do not always have the best tip and have a tendency to bleed if anything should god forbid happen to your board.

Getting Shikishi Art at Conventions

This is getting harder and harder every year. As conventions get more corporate and anime gets more popular there is much less of a chance to interact with guests and get that prized 5 minute sketch from the artist or character designer you are most interested in. Here are some basic guidelines:

1. BE POLITE - To everyone this includes the staff, the guests, and fellow con goers.
2. DON'T ask staff BEFORE OR AFTER the autograph session starts if you can get a sketch. This almost always puts the Kabash on any sketch you might be able to get from the guest (s) you are aiming for.
3. Get in line EARLY, it is best if you are at the head of the line if at all possible.
4. When it is time to get your sketch have your materials ready! Shikishi at the ready with your marker, and if you are asking for a particular character have a REFERENCE ready on your phone!
5. AGAIN I cannot stress this enough, be nice! I usually bounce up to the guest (I get excited) and hold out the shikishi to them to take and ask if they will draw the character I am requesting and show them my phone. ^_^

6. The last step is either excited gushing cause they are drawing for you... or be nice and thank them for your autograph you can ALWAYS try again at a different con it is VERY important you be gracious AND thankful at ALL times do NOT leave a bad taste in the guests mouth!



Shikishi by: Adachi Shingo - Acquired at Animazement 2016 - Kirito (SAO) - *Sword Art Online*

Getting Shikishi Art at Convention Charity Auctions

Start saving NOW, I am not kidding. Charity auction Shikishi are high dollar items, they will go for anywhere between $1,000 to $3,000 each depending on the guest. At Anime Fest Dallas during the height of the Yuri!!! On Ice craze the Shikishi Mitsurou Kubo (the creator) drew of Katsuki Yuri went for over $7,000. You can occasionally get them for cheaper if the guest is not as well known, but definitely plan to bring at least 1K, as this is not a common occurrence.

One of the nice things about the charity auction sketches is that usually a lot of time and care is put into them so they will be more detailed than a convention doodle you get for free in line. Also

in some cases the convention you get your sketches from will give you a tax form so you can write your charitable donation off on your taxes.



Koizuka Masashi - Sketch from *Seraph of the End* - Sakuracon 2017 Charity Auction Sketch (Charity - Make A Wish Foundation)

Buying Shikishi Online

There are multiple sources Shikishi can be purchased from online, some are sketchier than others. So here are just some basics.

> **Mandarake** - One of the more trustworthy sources for online Shikishi, you can sign up for an account with Mandarake as a person based outside of Japan, instead of using a Deputy (which saves you money) Mandarake does it's utmost best to authenticate their stock and they offer a guarantee if the item is ever verified to be fake they will refund your money. Shikishi will show up on their Every Day Auctions on the occasion but the best Shikishi appear during their Big Web Auctions, when they will have high profile pieces from the more well known Anime Creators. And in this case, and basically only this case, getting something from a more high profile creator is basically a safe proposition.



Shikishi from Mandarake's BWA 98 - By Fusanosuke Inariya, from a light novel she illustrated - *Mahoroba Koi Kitan*

Yahoo Japan - is a great resource for purchasing online Shikishi, but here you MUST be more careful and diligent before making your bid! Things to look out for, How well known is the artist? Anything drawn by a SUPER popular artist is almost immediately suspect, i.e. Akira Toriyama, Hayao Miyazaki, Naoko Takeuchi.... etc. There are professional counterfeiters on Yahoo Japan that do this for a living, so do your best to stay away from these super well known artists unless you are 110% sure the item is real. Does the piece have a winning notification from a magazine giveaway? Or any paperwork from the publisher of that particular artist? Be it Anime Studio or Manga Publisher? Does the picture look photo shopped? Is part of the image hidden? Many sellers of legitimate items don't show the whole image so the counterfeiters cannot counterfeit their piece. How much is the item selling for? Does the price make sense based upon the market for that particular artist/property? Always take these questions into consideration when pricing your pieces and deciding what to bid on. Another downside to Yahoo Japan is that MOST sellers don't accept international bidders, so you will have to use a deputy to purchase from Yahoo Japan.

	
Auction won off of YJ 3/15 - Likely real, price typical for high profile Yaoi Mangaka, letter denoting win from publisher, envelope from Ciel's home company Kadokawa Shoten, and image partially covered to stop counterfeiters.	Auction Rotating on YJ - Likely counterfeit, High Profile Anime/Creator, Image Photo shopped, Fu image on display. No winning notification or provenance given, just seller printed certificate authenticity.

Anime-Link - Rick from Anime-Link is a good source for authentic Shikishi Art, he also has an auction around AX time for High Profile Guests. Shikishi from him are real as he knows many of the older high profile artists and often works with conventions to bring in guests. Just make sure you bring your A-game money wise as like Charity Auctions prices are generally high. He will also occasionally post original Shikishi in his shop, just keep an eye out for updates! ^_^

eBay - In general don't do it, unless there is some sort of provenance paperwork associated with the item or the seller can vouch which convention/auction they waited in line for or purchased the item from. If you have questions about an auction's authenticity always feel free to reach out to any of the Cel/Art groups on the links page in this wiki.

Shikishi Preservation

Not a lot of studies have been done on Shikishi preservation. Because of the nature of the product (mostly paper) with some lamination. The best rule of thumb is to treat Shikishi as you would a paper sketch. So some tips on what I personally do with my collection, and if anyone would like to add more tips feel free ^_^;;

1. Keep it out of the sunlight as Paper yellows over time in direct sunlight! I have seen yellowed Shikishi and it is a thing that happens!
2. I store all my Shikishi in Mylar Bags, slit down one side, with 1/2 sheet of Microchamber behind the board to absorb any outgassing, while there are less gasses associated with paper there are still some, that can damage/yellow the Shikishi over time.

3. I also store my Shikishi in breathable bins with lids, NOT in folios, they do sell Shikishi Binders in Japan, but I have yet to find one I liked enough that met my storage criteria. Most are made of paper and are not very sturdy.

I hope this has helped everyone as a basic introduction to Shikishi and the wonderful and times frustrating and expensive world of collecting art from your favorite artists. Good luck everybody!

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