

Hannah Klein Releases 'The Man Who Made Wonder,' a Memoir of Japanese Wooden-Top Master Masaaki Hiroi

Hannah Klein's memoir celebrates world-renowned Japanese craftsman Masaaki Hiroi, whose wooden tops brought artistry and wonder to audiences worldwide.

KITAKYUSHU, FUKUOKA, JAPAN, October 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Author [Hannah Klein](#)

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Masaaki Hiroi's wooden tops have carried Japanese craftsmanship to many countries. He became a cultural ambassador without words, and this book tells his remarkable story.”

*Hannah Klein, author of
Wonder Man*

announces the release of “[The Man Who Made Wonder: Masaaki Hiroi, Craftsman and Artist](#) — A Memoir of Japan's Master of Wooden Tops,” an expanded memoir celebrating the life, craftsmanship, and international legacy of world-renowned Japanese craftsman [Masaaki Hiroi](#).

Hiroi transformed wooden tops into objects of artistry, movement, and delight. His creations reveal how a traditional craft can cross borders, connect generations, and inspire curiosity through the simple pleasure of play. The memoir introduces readers to the person behind these works and explores the relationship between craftsmanship, artistic expression, and cultural exchange.

Drawing on her personal memories of Hiroi, Klein offers an intimate portrait of a craftsman whose imagination reached audiences beyond Japan. The book brings together episodes from his life, encounters overseas, and reflections on the human relationships that helped carry his work into the wider world.

Hiroi's international recognition included honorary citizenships from Seattle and Fort Lee, New Jersey. These honors reflect the goodwill he inspired through his craft and his connections with people across cultures. His story offers a distinctive perspective on cultural diplomacy: the ability of an individual artist to build understanding through creativity and personal encounters.

This expanded edition includes previously untold episodes and additional material. It revisits a memoir first published under the title “Wonder Man: A Memoir of a Craftsman Who Is Recognized as an Artist,” written under Klein's former pen name, Hannah K. The first edition was a finalist in the 2014 Eric Hoffer Book Awards.

Hiroi's legacy also has a connection to Israel. Klein donated her collection of his wooden toys to the Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art in Haifa, contributing to the preservation of his work and its appreciation beyond Japan.

"The Man Who Made Wonder" invites readers interested in Japanese art, traditional craftsmanship, biography, and international cultural exchange to discover a life shaped by creativity and the joy of making. It also considers the lasting importance of preserving the stories behind handmade objects—the experiences, relationships, and imagination that give them meaning.

The book is available in paperback and Kindle ebook editions on Amazon.

About the Author

Hannah Klein, the professional pseudonym of Hiroko Kasai, is a Japan-based nonfiction author, geopolitical analyst, independent journalist, and podcaster. A member of the American Society of Journalists and Authors, she writes about history, culture, international affairs, and the people whose lives connect these fields. She has published under the name Hannah Klein since 2023.

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