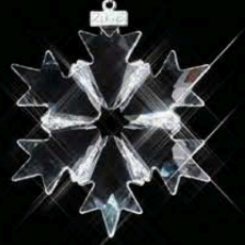


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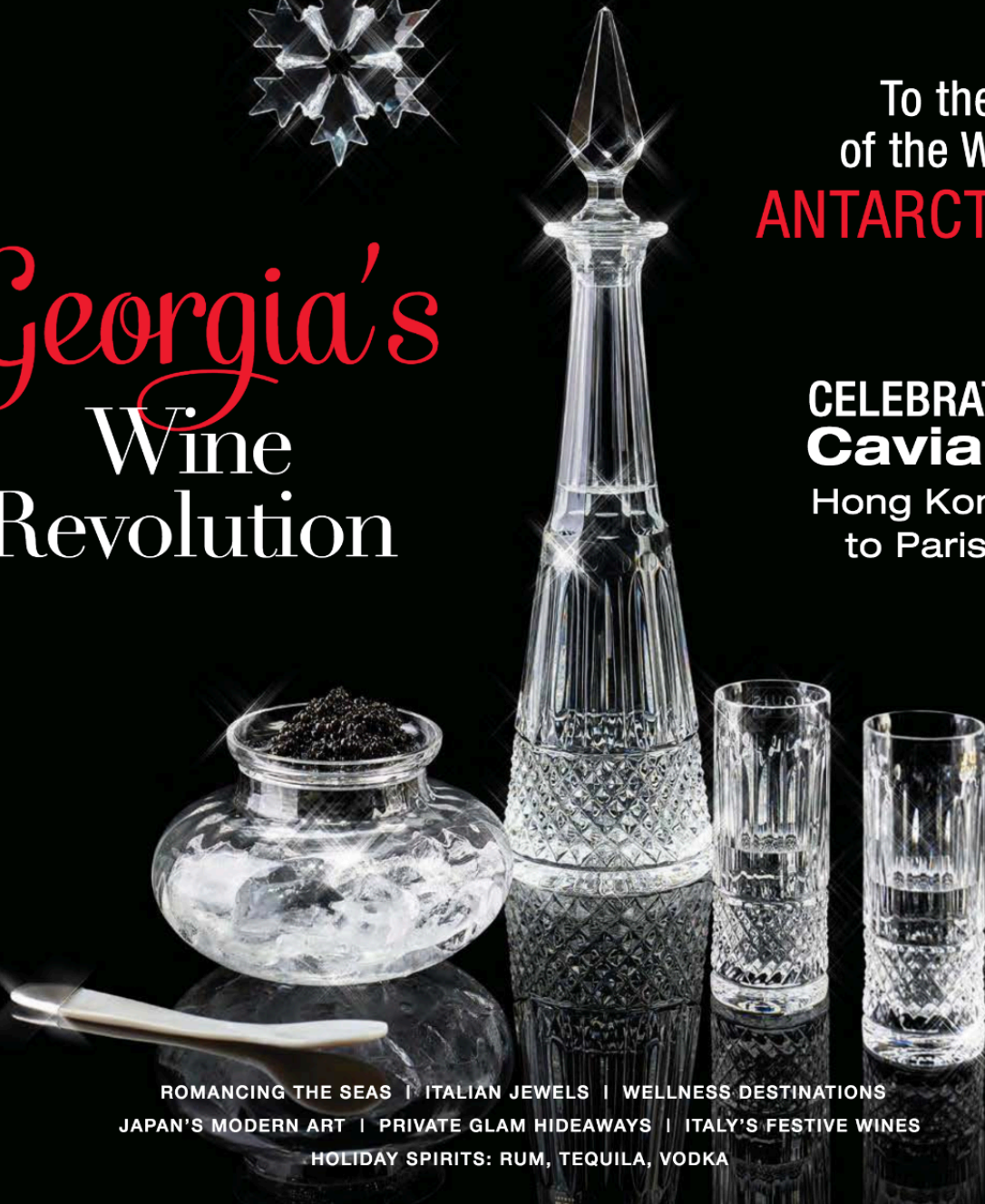
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A gold-glazed stoneware tea bowl by Ogawa Machiko

Gallerist Joan Mirviss champions the allure of contemporary Japanese ceramics. by Jeffrey Hantover

CONNOISSEUR, COLLECTOR, CURATOR OR SIMPLY AN ADMIRER OF BEAUTY — ALL ARE BENEFICIARIES OF THE CURRENT GOLDEN AGE OF JAPANESE CERAMICS. Standing at the center of this diversity and depth of ceramic creation, promoting and shaping it, has been Joan Mirviss. In her exquisitely designed New York gallery and at international fairs, she has exhibited the work of living national treasures and unknown talents her keen and wide-ranging eye has discovered.

For Mirviss, who has helped build private and museum collections for 40 years, what distinguishes a great artist is, first and foremost, technical mastery. True artists then transform technique

into work profoundly creative, new and inspiring. The visual and tactile magnetism and obvious technical mastery of artists like Ogawa Machiko, Kishi Eiko, and Sakiyama Takayuki awe and seduce us.

Ogawa Machiko's rock-like sculptures, combining glass, clay and minerals and fired multiple times, appear to be made by nature itself and excavated from the earth's depths. Contrast her rough-hewn work with Kishi Eiko's finely textured and patterned surfaces that suggest handwoven fabric. Kishi painstakingly striates damp clay, punctures thousands of tiny holes with needles and applies up to 13 colors of slip with a small brush into each hole

before spraying on a thin transparent glaze. It is no surprise that her 2019 fall show has been five years in the making.

One feels the play of wind and water along the seashore in Sakiyama Takayuki's swirling stoneware vessels with sand glaze. In 1999, Mirviss saw in functional plates Sakiyama was showing in a Tokyo gift shop the spark of his artistic mastery. Since then he has had six sold-out shows at her gallery and garnered pride of place at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and major museums worldwide.

As Mirviss says, "You don't need an art history degree to appreciate contemporary Japanese ceramics." Its allure is immediate and mesmerizing. ☼