

JEWELRY

Mikimoto celebrates 125th anniversary in vintage collection retelling

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Mikimoto's Yaguruma collection is based on the 1937 Obidome Kimono Sash Clip. Image credit: Mikimoto

By STAFF REPORTS

Japanese jeweler Mikimoto is reflecting on its history to look into the future as the brand celebrates 125 years of cultured pearls.

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Mikimoto was founded by Kokichi Mikimoto in 1893 when he created the world's first cultured pearls, which he continued to innovate on and develop. As Mikimoto turns 125 years old, the brand is recalling Mr. Mikimoto's contributions to pearl jewelry and the quality and timeless elegance of his designs.

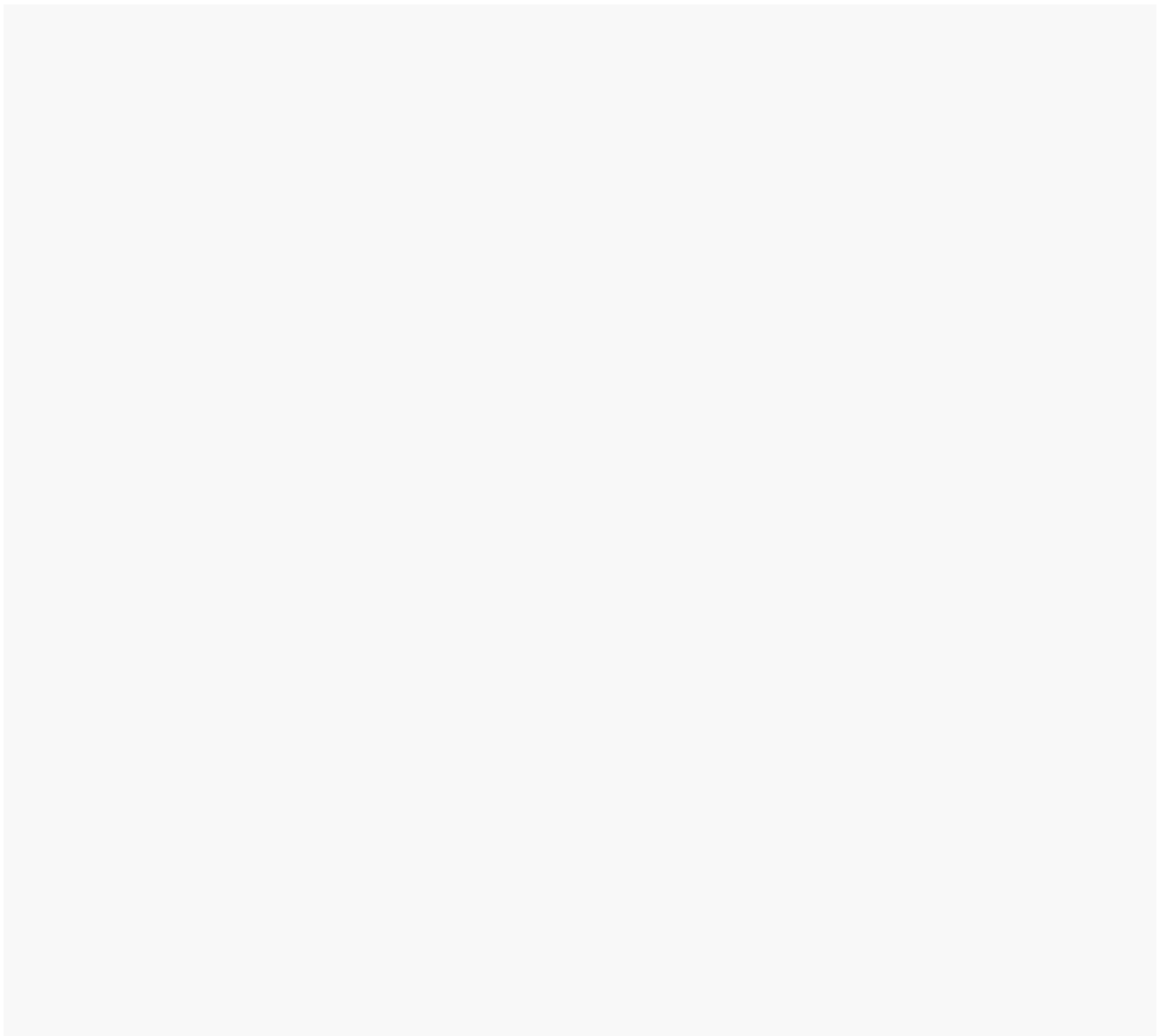
The multi-purpose pearl

At the 1937 International Exposition in Paris, Mr. Mikimoto unveiled the Obidome Kimono Sash Clip. The Art Deco-style clip was adorned with Akoya cultured pearls and precious stones.

The Obidome Kimono Sash Clip was revered for its novel versatility with 12 interchangeable settings, which allowed the wearer to disassemble and reassemble the piece to become something completely different such as a brooch or hair ornament.

Mikimoto's Yaguruma, meaning a piece with multiple functions, became the Japanese jeweler's paramount example of fine jewelry, rivaling that of its European peers.

In celebration of its 125th anniversary, Mikimoto is revisiting the classic Yaguruma design with a vintage-inspired Yaguruma collection. Mikimoto's Yaguruma collection includes a belt, bracelet and pendant, all with Akoya cultured pearls and accentuated with diamonds, mother-of-pearl and quartz.



With the latest, innovative techniques and materials, Mikimoto's legendary Yaguruma sash clip has been re-designed, taking on a fresh, modern form. #mikimoto125th #mikimotopearls #mikimotojewelry

A post shared by MIKIMOTO (@official_mikimoto) on Jan 26, 2018 at 8:19am PST

In an outline of its future, Mikimoto plans to continue its legacy of combining artistry and craftsmanship to create one-of-a-kind high-jewelry pieces, notably those using non-pearl gems.

Also, the Japanese brand plans to diversify its offerings and extend expertise through a new line of luxury gifts, such as photo frames with Akoya cultured pearls and diamonds, designed to look as lacework, and mother-of-pearl.

In 2016, Mikimoto set out to prove that pearls can defy convention with a digital campaign.

"Explore the Original" looked to show that pearls can pair with more than conservative attire, profiling three women who have an edge. Mikimoto has been working to change the perceived stuffiness of pearls, whether bringing them into women's everyday wardrobes or highlighting their appeal for the modern woman ([see story](#)).