



230 Ashland Pl  
Capital Campaign

# Opportunities for Recognition & Tribute

Add your story to our archive.

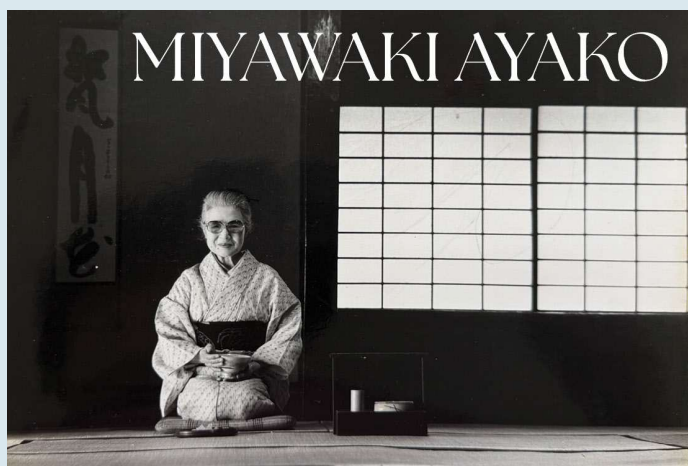


BLUE LIBRARY  
Grancestor Campaign

TATTER

# The Grancestor Campaign: Paying Tribute

At TATTER, we know that textile artistry transcends time. Skills, cultural traditions, and meaningful rituals pass from generation to generation, creating a global conversation through craft. Our library and archive celebrates this rich legacy of innovation and artistry.



After leaving school, she began working at a clothing store. The store was destroyed in the massive earthquake of 1923. Ayako wrote that, had it not been for this disaster, she might have become a designer. She later found a clerical job at a Tokyo government office, but this was merely a job to survive. Then, Ayako married Haru Miyawaki, a painter, and began living with her elderly mother in Nagoya. This mother-in-law was very strict. Ayako learned from her the importance of cherishing and respecting things. They were later blessed with three children. As the war progressed, the wonderful partners who understood and respected each other faced defeat and the end of the war in 1945.



Miyawaki Ayako was born Kadowaki Ayako on February 8, 1905 in Tokyo, Japan. Born the eldest daughter of a very wealthy family in Tokyo, her father's business failed when she was in junior high. Financial hardship ensued, and Ayako could no longer attend her school—a girls' art school. It was likely around this time that the foundation for her future work began to take root in Ayako's heart.

**As a housewife, fabric was always close at hand for Ayako. But it wasn't until after the war, when she was forty, that she touched fabric in a different way.**

During the war, American forces conducted carpet bombing raids on urban areas, forcing citizens to flee to air-raid shelters multiple times a day whenever the sirens sounded. At the war's end, Ayako felt that time was no longer needed for such escapes. She began working for herself. Ayako confessed to her husband, Haru, the feelings she had long held in her heart all along. I want to do something too! I want to be involved in "art," not just as a housewife. I don't want to use his precious paints, and I want to do something of my own. Ayako was 40 years old.

## *The story of your ancestor commemorated in our digital archive*

TATTER began as a modest textile library with a mission to elevate the textile arts. Today, we house over 10,000 books, periodicals, and exhibition catalogs, and a permanent collection of over 4,000 artifacts. This unique research center is the heart of our new flagship space.

Reflecting TATTER's commitment to amplifying unsung textile artists and practitioners, we invite you to permanently honor a textile maker's legacy while supporting our Ashland Place Capital Campaign. Through the Blue Library Grancestor Campaign, each shelf will be named for a textile maker chosen by the donor—whether an ancestor, a contemporary designer, a family member, or an inspiring artist. Each Grancestor will also have a biography with images in our digital legacy archive, creating a lasting tribute that will be seen and appreciated by generations to come.

# “The future of textile craft lies in the hands of our ancestors.”

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Japan at that time must have been unimaginably poor compared to today. She sewed and mended fabrics for clothes and futons. When they could no longer be sewn, she used them as rags. When even those became too tattered to use as rags, Ayako made her first work from that fabric.

“If she could do it, so could I.” This was the starting point for the artist Miyawaki Ayako. She had no formal teacher. Only her painter husband was her lifelong mentor in beauty. She would show him every finished piece first.



“Observe things closely” was a phrase constantly repeated. “When I observe, nature itself teaches me. Nature is my teacher.”



When you look closely at her enlarged works, it becomes clear she wasn't fixated on the act of “sewing” itself, nor would she consider her technically exceptional. The focus was on how to use a part of the fabric to use, how to boldly cut it out with delicate lines to express the subject. Sewing was merely one means to fix that form in place.

Our goal is to build a new library that acknowledges that the future of textile craft lies in the hands of our ancestors — most of whom were not recognized during their lifetime. Grancestor Campaign shelf naming opportunities start at \$10,000. For more information, please contact Executive Director, Jordana Martin at [jordana@tatter.org](mailto:jordana@tatter.org).

Grancestor Campaign donations will go directly towards the construction and maintenance of the new museum and library.

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