

Year 4

# Fukuoka Upon Key

malt   
& grain  
cane   




Catalogue

美 (び / Bi) ,  
is often used to refer  
to art itself, or the  
fine arts. This is also  
Malt, Grain & Cane's  
ongoing series  
of collaborations  
with esteemed  
Japanese artists.



# #018

# Irish 2002

This barrel has been fully aged in a Port Wine Cask; and has spent most of its maturation time in Ireland.

21 Years  
One of 221 Bottles

Distilled — 13 May 2002  
Bottled — 04 Feb 2024



53.1% Vol

## 88Bamboo's Thoughts

Really impressive stuff here - this has got presence! It almost feels like a digestif at times, and I do so enjoy the combination of bright candy confectionaries coupled with heavier richness. This is packed with candied fruits too - which is always a hit. It's straightforward and uncomplicated but tasty. You're not going to struggle to grasp this - it's friendly and approachable, flavour rich and forward, it's just damn enjoyable.

Yet where this stands out is not only the good balance between cask and spirit - I told you MGC was good at that - but also that even with the rich and candied flavours, the medium-bodied thickness as well as the more savoury finish is impeccably tuned to keep a holistic balance across

the whisky. It's never too sweet, too rich, too dense, but at the same time, expect this to give big flavours but with controlled structure that it takes you all the way to the edge of.

Very tasty, I think this might be MGC's sleeper hit of its Year 4 collection. It's impossible to not like this.

## Tasting Notes by 88Bamboo.Co

### COLOUR

Gold with Copper Flecks

### AROMA

Really candied richness, loads of maltose candy, honey, as well as some confectionary candies of bubblegum and cotton candy, but only if they were coated with maple syrup - surprisingly it's only moderately sweet, and is really more candied in texture. More on stewed plums and prunes. It's got great density and fullness, and in particular a very satisfying depth. It brightens up with time, giving in to more along those confectionary candies.

### TASTE

A good moderate punchiness to make a presence. More of those honey, maltose candy, and then candied fruits of peaches, apricots and yellow raisins. It's tinned fruit syrup meets honey and tanghulu (a popular Chinese treat of fruits coated in maltose). At times it's reminiscent of medium-bodied Cognac - this very lovely sort of candied body, lots of richness, with light bits of clove spices.

### FINISH

Takes a more savoury turn here. There is of course the raisins and cooked plums and prunes too. But some good dabs of teriyaki sauce. It's got a nice creaminess into the finish with a long and deep warmth.



# Calligraphy Beast - Rising (2023)

Hara Airi  
原 愛梨

「世の人は我を何とも言わ  
ば言え 我なす事は我のみぞ  
知る」

Whatever people may say  
about me, I know what  
I'm doing.



Ryoma Sakamoto, (坂本龍馬 or 坂本竜馬,  
3 January 1836 – 10 December 1867) was a  
Japanese samurai, a shishi and influential figure  
of the Bakumatsu, and establishment of the  
Empire of Japan in the late Edo period.

# #019

## Williamson (Laphroaig) 2010

14 Years  
One of 262 Bottles

This barrel has spent most of its maturation time in a Refill Sherry Barrel, and was racked & finished in an **Oloroso** sherry barrel for 16 months.

Distilled 05 APR 2010  
Bottled 22 JUN 2024



62.1% Vol

## 88Bamboo's Thoughts

A thoroughly impressive Laphroaig! On the nose, it was incredibly expressive, not just delivering such a spectrum of flavours, but it was such a cascade of hyper realistic imagery that it evoked, of sour cranberries and slurping on charcoal grilled oysters, topped off with seaweed salad and a spritz of lemon juice! They all play off one another, almost in crescendos. The Islay peat is also more prominent here, backed up by a superbly buttery maltiness that bolsters that ashy, roasted malt quality, balanced then against that coastal aspect. It's not overly sweet, yet neither is it overly bitter - it all centers around this mix of charred grains and oceanic sea spray which only gives way at times to a slight rancio quality.

It's remarkably complex and expression, at times even bright and

summer-y. It leans more dry and is definitely one for the peat fans.

Compared to the Cream Sherry, this is sweeter, more bold and muscular, with a more approachable classic Laphroaig sensibility. The Cream Sherry is more elegant, understatedly complex, and definitely goes beyond what we typically know Laphroaig to be.

## Tasting Notes by 88Bamboo.Co

### AROMA

Bright and citrusy here, there's certainly a mix of sea spray and iodine that fills the backdrop with oyster shells and kelp. Bursts of freshly squeezed lemon and grapefruit, giving way to ashy, burnt aromas of charred lemons, charcoal fire and wood ash. With time, sour berries, red currants and cranberries show up, both fleshy yet tart, giving some acidity as well. More of grilled oyster shells, wet clay, and toasted oat biscuits, it's becoming more roasty and grainy, before making a trip back to freshly squeezed orange juice and frangipani blossoms.

### TASTE

A lot going on here. An initial hit of fleshy berries of fresh cranberries and gooseberries, and then on to tart green apples and pears, all of which brings acidity, greenness and some sweetness to the palate. Very juicy! It starts to show a more nutty side - salted macadamia nuts, roasted malt, it's both buttery and slightly bitter, it's malty yet charred. More on burnt toast, sprinkled in with spices of cloves. Some waxiness of dark chocolate that threads the palate.

### FINISH

More denseness, definitely more peaty, with subtle tones of wood ash, wet clay and grilled seaweed. More on charcoal, burnt toast and toasted oats. Little flecks of acidity - unsweetened lemonade - with also a rancio composed of the chalky savouriness of saucisson skins.

# BEING ALIVE VII (2024)

Tanaka Chisato  
田中千智



# #020

## Williamson (Laphroaig) 2010

14 Years  
One of 257 Bottles

This barrel has spent most of its maturation time in a Refill Sherry Barrel, and was rereacked & finished in a **Cream** sherry barrel for 14 months.

Distilled —05 APR 2010  
Bottled —22 JUN 2024



62.4% Vol

## 88Bamboo's Thoughts

A really complex and multi-faceted whisky - certainly far extending from what you'd typically find from the standard Laphroaig fare! This was particularly enjoyable on the nose where it's got this understated complexity that makes you picture both meadows in bloom and tar pits, all layered in by this ashy smokiness that gives it a sensuousness. This feels wild and untamed, and you never really know which way it's heady, always keeping a couple of surprises at the next turn. When you think ash, you're greeted with the most delicate chrysanthemum florals. It's fresh, rich and raw, with such an eclectic assembly of flavours.

This is a whisky that you really ought to sit on, and with each passing sip, more is uncovered. It showcases a side to Laphroaig you don't often see - a more grassy, herbal, earthy, rustic aspect that spans an impressive array of multitudes. A most sophisticated whisky to close your eyes and think about.

## Tasting Notes by 88Bamboo.Co

### AROMA

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### TASTE

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### FINISH

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# BEING ALIVE V (2022)

Tanaka Chisato  
田中千智



#021

# Haiti Rum 2004

20 Years  
One of 159 Bottles

This barrel has been aged  
6 years in the tropics,  
and 14 years in continental  
Europe.

**Specially bottled for Bar Lamp  
Ginza's 20th Anniversary**



58.6% Vol

## 88Bamboo's Thoughts

A very well-executed Haitian rum! This is definitely well presented, an excellent piece of work, very very impressive! For a start, it's incredibly tasty, and simply put it's rich, it's intense, it's this concentrated focus on honey and green and white tropical fruits that persists from the nose to the palate and finish.

Breaking it down further, what impresses me is how the layering of these fruits is rendered so tastefully and elegantly - at first it comes off as a hit of these concentrated fruit cordials, yet quickly you'll notice various aspects of it that calls out to you and guides you to peeling back that layer, beneath one layer are the green fruits of bananas and other unripe tropical fruits that gives greenness and some sourness; peel back another layer and you find musky white fruits of longans, langsat and more fleshy mangosteens, whilst a different layer gives more acidity of white dragonfruits. And that goes on,

and on. It's incredibly complex yet subtle in its complexity - incredibly exotic and again superbly structured and concentrated.

It also features this wonderful intensity and power that demonstrates that it can keep that concentration of fruit all the way through, not ever letting up, even on the finish. Impressively it never thins out! It's got a peppery hit that perks you up, along with that zingy freshness of acidity of the green fruits that's almost reminiscent of a White Burgundy. Into the finish, there's this nice textural tension where that acidity builds and gives a nice pucker and dryness that keeps you going back for more in search of that freshness and crystalline bedrock of honey and maltose.

Very, very delicious. It's impressive and has a presence in and of itself. It's one that's worth taking the time to sit back, unpack and appreciate.

## Tasting Notes by 88Bamboo.Co

### COLOUR

Gold

### AROMA

It opens up delicately aromatic, with a light muskiness of tropical fruits of longans and langsat, even some gooseberries and mangosteens, as well as some green bananas - all of which coated in an almost crystalline layer of sweet and rich maltose and honey. It's giving tropical fruits in the form of tanghulu. With time, it's more on orange blossoms, apricots and a mix of green and ripe mangoes. It's a little green, with also some tinned lychees and white dragonfruit. The fruits come together cohesively and the layers of which are subtle yet distinct enough to pick out with time. It's rather multi-dimensional in its fruitiness - musky, estery, sweet, tart, zesty, green, exotic. With time it settles on honey, dried mangoes, orange blossoms and some gentle notes of sarsaparilla.

### TASTE

Medium-bodied, great richness here, it's got a really good intensity and focus in delivering a fruit basket that is at once distinct yet incredibly cohesive and well-integrated. Again there's that elegant and crystalline coating of honey and maltose, within which are longans, green bananas, langsat, mangosteens and lychees. It's again slightly green, definitely tropical, and with a slight muskiness - a whole bunch of green and white tropical fruits. There's a nice peppery hit to it as well that perks it up, as well as a gentle acidity that keeps it fresh. It's expansive in its fruitiness, with layers that fan out from a concentrated and well-defined core.

### FINISH

The intensity and power carries through to the finish with that pepperiness, along with the maltose, honey and tropical fruits. It's an incredibly long finish, with the richness persistent, with more of the greenness of green bananas and unripe tropical fruits delivering more of that acidity with a slight pucker - that textural tension that builds at the finish is really enjoyable. A slight bit of diesel and green olives, giving some salinity to it as well, before it's back to the honey and green tropical fruits.



# Drawing - Dragon (2024)

Hara Airi  
原 愛梨



# Year 4

Hara Airi 原愛梨

- #018 Irish 2002
- #021 Haiti Rum 2004

Tanaka Chisato 田中千智

- #019 Williamson (Laphroaig) 2010
- #020 Williamson (Laphroaig) 2010



# Hara Airi

## 原 愛梨



Airi Hara began calligraphy at the age of two and won numerous awards at an early age. At just eight years old, she won one of the most famous calligraphy contests in Japan. Since starting her career as a calligrapher, she has established a new style of calligraphy, “painting with letters.”

She is the only artist in the world who transforms names and words into art pieces through advanced calligraphy techniques. In Japan, her work has been featured in various media outlets, and she has received commissions from world-renowned athletes, actresses, artists, and prominent companies, consistently exceeding expectations with creations that evoke emotions beyond imagination. Her pieces have been exhibited internationally, earning high praise in cities such as New York, Paris, and Dubai.

Airi continues to break traditional concepts of calligraphy, creating innovative works, including three-dimensional calligraphy pieces using materials like metal and driftwood. In an era where digitalization has reduced the need for handwriting, she is revolutionizing calligraphy by evolving it into a unique form of art, aiming to share the beauty of calligraphy and the power of words with the world.

Currently based in New York, she continues to grow as an artist, traveling the globe to showcase her ever-evolving creations

# Tanaka Chisato

田中千智



She was born in 1980 in Hyogo Prefecture and grew up in Itoshima City, Fukuoka Prefecture. She currently lives and works in Fukuoka City.

She began painting oils when she was a junior high school student. She graduated from Kyushu Industrial University-affiliated Kyushu High School in 1998 with a degree in design. In 2005, he graduated from Tama Art University with a degree in Oil Painting in the Department of Painting. In 2006, she returned to Fukuoka and began her career as a painter.

In 2023, she held a large-scale retrospective exhibition at the Fukuoka City Art Museum. The wall painting project, which started at the same time, has changed three times in three years, with additions made in January of each year,

and has been in public production at the museum for a total of three months. The “Living mural” was completed at the end of last month and is now on view to the public.

She has pioneered a unique technique of painting figures in glossy oil on a flat, jet-black background using acrylic paint. Her works are fantastical, combining contrasting elements, such as the glittering landscape in jet black.

In 2024, she opened a studio on Nokonoshima Island, a 10-minute ferry ride from Fukuoka City. The nature and landscape that we see have changed, and the colors that spread across the canvas have also changed little by little.

# Founder's Notes



## Hello Fans and Friends of Malt, Grain & Cane!

We're thrilled to announce our 4th release since 2020, and this one is truly something special. This time, we're proud to partner with two incredibly talented artists from the lively city of Fukuoka, Kyushu, Japan, whose unique visions have brought a fresh new energy to our collection.

Introducing Fukuoka Upon Key—a title that's as clever as it is meaningful. It's inspired by the airport code for Fukuoka City, FUK, adding an extra layer of connection to the artists' home.

So, what makes this release stand out? Both Airi and Chisato share a striking passion for the color black (Key), which plays a powerful role in their art. Airi's stunning calligraphy uses black to create depth and elegance, while Chisato uses it as a backdrop that makes the vivid colors in her pieces truly pop out and come alive.

To mark our 4th anniversary in 2024, we've intentionally incorporated the kanji character 四 (four) into the calligraphy on the first and last pages of this catalog, giving it a personal and celebratory touch. We've also woven in the iconic Hakata Niwaka mask from Fukuoka, symbolizing the deep connection between Malt, Grain & Cane and these two incredible artists.

The kanji artworks of 四 & 美, created by Hara Airi (原 愛梨), are the perfect representation of this collaboration — elegant, meaningful, and visually stunning.

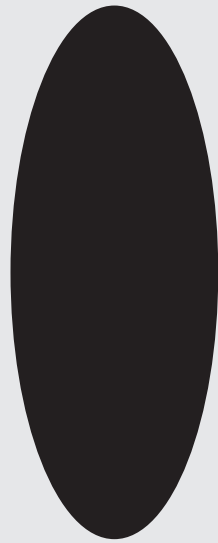
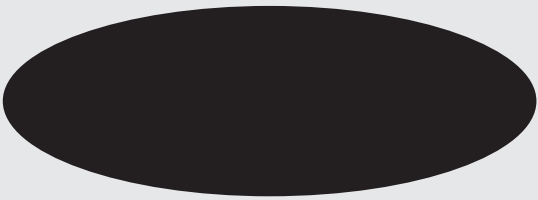
Marcus, @HampdenPirate  
*Founder of Malt, Grain & Cane*

Malt, Grain & Cane is an independent spirits bottler based in Singapore, a bustling trading hub for South-East Asia. Established in Fall 2020, it starts with a dream, to bring quality malt, grain and sugar cane-based spirits to Asia Pacific and Oceania.

Our goal is to bring quality spirits at competitive prices to this part of the World. Our pursuit for quality will never cease, for we believe, consumers will be more educated on what a quality spirit is, and will be drawn towards it as the global community grows.

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