

Tie · *James Reiss*

This hand-sewn silk twill tie with an orange
and black geometric motif suggests
an eighteenth century Japanese lacquer —
or head band worn by a hermit scholar.
Squinting into the candlelight,
he practiced calligraphy till the lantern
glinted, night-warm, on his wrist
and he felt he could freely transcribe:

“Dusk sets out over the valley
on a new career every night.
My Lord Yoshimune writes that he is tired
of life as a public servant.
I grow bonzai trees, tiny replicas
of evergreens, yet I have never
seen such precision of thought expressed
in cloud formations. . . .”

He paused to wipe his forehead with this tie.