



Edo

Four Hundred Years
of Japanese Art

日本美術の400年

to

Now

ANASTASIA VON SEIBOLD
JAPANESE ART 日本美術

Edo

Four Hundred Years
of Japanese Art

日本美術の400年

to

Now

ANASTASIA VON SEIBOLD
JAPANESE ART 日本美術

Exhibition:

26th October – 7th
November 2021

4 Cromwell Place
London SW7 2JE

Conditions of sale

All works of art are guaranteed
genuine and as described.

Prices of the works described in
this catalogue and condition reports
are available on request.

VAT will be charged if applicable.
Shipping and insurance will be extra.

We have additional items in stock
and enquires are welcome.

Designer:

Aaron Canning, Salzburg

Photography:

Matt Spour, London

Print:

Push Print, London

Contents

- 10 Woodblock prints, nos. 1 – 13
- 37 Folding screens, no. 14
- 40 Lacquer, *inro* and netsuke from the Ankarcrona Collection, nos. 15 – 23
- 62 Contemporary painting, nos. 24 – 25
- 64 Glossary

The Irises of Yatsuhashi at Mikawa (*Mikawa Yatsuhashi, kakitsubata*)

Totoya Hokkei
(1780-1850)

Woodblock print, *surimono*, embellished with metallic pigments and embossing

Series: Famous Products of the Various Provinces, for the Gogawa Group (*Gogawa, Shokoku meibutsu*)

Signed: *Hokkei*

Privately published, circa 1810

Shikishiban: 20.5 x 18.3 cm. (8 1/8 x 7 1/4 in.)

Provenance: A Private Collection

In this *surimono* an orange cloth pouch which is decorated with a criss-cross pattern lies next to some paper and two iris flowers. The cloth pouch is for holding writing paper.

The diamond pattern on the pouch is known as *Narihira-bishi* and was used as a textile design especially for men's kimono. The name originates from a scene in the classical tale *Ise Monogatari* where the early Heian period poet and famous lover Ariwara no Narihira (825-880) visits Yatsuhashi ('Eight Bridges'); a place where eight planked bridges once zig-zagged over the river channels surrounded by irises. The *Narahira-bishi* with its criss-cross pattern alludes to the bridge and combined here with poetry paper and iris flowers, points to this famous episode. The metal clasp on the pouch is in the form of the Gogawa poetry club logo - the character for 'five' (*go*), which is also repeated in the inscription at the upper right in red pigment.

For the poem translation and further reading see Joan B. Mirviss and John T. Carpenter, *Jewels of Japanese Printmaking: Surimono of the Bunka-Bunsei Era 1804-1830*, (Tokyo, 2000), cat. no. 32, p. 80-81.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 11.19820

Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, object no. 2011.017.016



As spring dawns this morning
marsh flowers now appear
so splendidly - with walkways,
spread out like spider legs,
covered in layers of gentle mist.

- Ise no Hamaguri

*kesa haru ni
nari-hira bishi no
ima mekite
kumode ni sae mo
kasumu nodokesa*

The actor Nakamura Utaemon III in the role of Mino no Shokuro

Shunkosai Hokushu
(active circa 1810-32)

Woodblock print, *surimono*, embellished with metallic pigments and embossing
Signed: *Shunkosai Hokushu*
Privately published, 1823, 1st month
Vertical *oban*: 35.9 x 24.7 cm. (14 1/8 x 9 3/4 in.)

A smoking pipe lies beside a tobacco pouch decorated with a portrait of the actor Nakamura Utaemon III. He is playing the role of Mino no Shokuro in the play *Keisei Omonguchi* (The Great Gate of the Licensed Quarters), performed at the Kado Theatre, Osaka, in January 1823.

The two poems are by Shikan and Sanko, who were both disciples of Nakamura Utaemon III. It has been suggested by the academic Mr Susumu Matsudaira (d. 2000) in a letter that accompanies the print, that when Utaemon played this role, a fan could have commissioned this *surimono*, asking the two actors to compose poems and Hokushu the portrait. The two poems have been translated by Roger Keyes in a hand-written letter which also accompanies this print:

Somehow even through the mist the sun rises	<i>iroiro ni kasumi aredomo asa hinode</i>
---	--

- by Shikan
(Nakamura Utaemon IV)

The butterfly plays awhile and then returns	<i>jubun ni asobite kaeru kocho kana</i>
---	--

- by Sanko (Tomijuro II)



The actors Nakamura Matsue III
in the role of Otaka, Ichikawa
Ebijuro I as Mokuemon, and
Ichikawa Danzo V as Yashichi

Shunkosai Hokushu
(active circa 1810–32)



Woodblock print, *surimono* on deluxe paper, embellished with metallic pigments and embossing

Signed: *Shunkosai Hokushu* (on each sheet)

Artist's seal: *Hokushu*

Privately published, 1824, 3rd month

Vertical *oban*, diptych: 39.2 × 26.3 cm. (15 3/8 × 10 3/8 in.) (each sheet)

An *oban* diptych printed in *surimono* style with actors performing in the play *Gishinden Yomikiri Koshaku*, one of the numerous adaptations of the play *Kanadehon Chushingura* (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers), performed at the Kado theatre, Osaka, in March 1824. Poems are written above the actors which are signed by the artists Kunihiro, Umekuni and Nobukatsu (using the secondary name Tessai), as well as the printer and the great Osaka engraver Kasuke.

In the play, Otaka (standing on the right dressed in a sumptuous kimono) is the concubine of the villain Ko no Moronao, but her true love is Yashichi (standing far left). Eventually Otaka kills herself out of shame while riding in a palanquin.

This a fine impression of the early deluxe printing. A later, commercial edition was produced with the names of the actors replacing the poetry.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston:

accession no. 11.26637-8 (privately printed edition)

accession no. 11.35461-2 (commercial edition)



Chinese Warrior (Ryūho)
slays the White Serpent
(*Ryūho hakuja o kiru*)

Totoya Hokkei
(1780-1850)

Woodblock print, *surimono*, embellished with metallic pigments and embossing

Signed: *Nansō toka* (drawn by lamplight in southern Kazusa Province), *Hokkei ga*

Privately published, 1832

Shikishiban: 20.4 × 17.8 cm. (8 1/8 × 7 1/8 in.)

Provenance: A Private Collection

A dragon writhes through black rain clouds as the warrior Ryūho dramatically draws his sword. Ryūho is the Japanese name for Liu Bang (247-195 BC), a Chinese peasant who rose to become a rebel leader, a general and eventually the Emperor of China under the name Gaozu. According to legend he beheaded a white serpent (by some accounts a dragon).

For the poem translation and further reading see John T. Carpenter (ed.), *Reading Surimono: The Interplay of Text and Image in Japanese Prints*, (Leiden, 2008), cat. no. 126, p. 248-9.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 11.19816

Minneapolis Institute of Art, accession no. 81.133.129



Clouds surrounding
a recumbent dragon
are parted by spring breezes,
as the skies are calm
on New Year's day in the capital

*fusu tatsu no
kumo akeharau
harukaze ni
miyako no sora no
hatsuhi nodokeshi*

– Seiyokan Umeyo

Cockerel in Morning Snow

Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797–1858)

Woodblock print

Signed: *Hiroshige ga*

Sealed: *Ichiryusai*

Mid-1830s

Chutzaku: 36.5 × 12.1 cm. (14 3/8 × 4 3/4 in.)

The upright tail feathers signify the backside of a cockerel amongst snow-covered grass on the slope of a hill. It has been suggested that this was Hiroshige's interpretation of a humorous verse by the poet Hachijintei, included at the upper left. The poem describes a couple awakened early by the crow of a cockerel after a night of passion.

Hiroshige designed a series of 'bird and flower pictures' (*kacho-e*) for the poet Hachijintei. The poet's name and cursive monogram appears alongside the poems.

The morning after—	<i>kinuginu no</i>
before any conversations	<i>hanashi no imada</i>
have piled up—	<i>tsumoranu ni</i>
crows	<i>tokekau to naku</i>
a cockerel in snow	<i>yuki ni niwatori</i>

– Hachijintei

For the poem translation by The Minneapolis Institute of Art, go to:
<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/22456/rooster-on-a-snowy-hillside-utagawa-hiroshige>

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 06.1458

The Art Institute of Chicago, reference no. 1934.278



Rainstorm Beneath the Summit (*Sanka haku-u*)

Katsushika Hokusai
(1760–1849)

Woodblock print

Series: *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*
(*Fugaku sanjurokkei*)

Signed: *Hokusai aratame litsu hitsu*

Publisher: Nishimuraya Yohachi (Eijudo)

Circa 1831

Horizontal *oban*: 25.4 x 37.6 cm. (10 x 14 3/4 in.)

Provenance:

Joseph Beck (1828–1891) and thence by descent
A private European collection

'Rainstorm Beneath the Summit' is one of the trio of iconic and instantly recognisable masterpieces from Hokusai's monumental series 'Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji' (*Fugaku sanjurokkei*). The other two being 'Under the Wave off Kanagawa' ('The Great Wave') and 'Clear Day with a Southern Breeze' ('Red Fuji'). At first glance, 'Rainstorm Beneath the Summit' is compositionally similar to 'Clear Day with a Southern Breeze' ('Red Fuji'), however details contrast significantly. The calm brightness of Mount Fuji on a summer's day as the morning sun rises in 'Red Fuji', gives way in 'Rainstorm Beneath the Summit' to a dark moodiness as the same mountain is enveloped by a sudden thunderstorm around its lower slopes, the black clouds pierced for a moment by the jagged forks of a lightning bolt. The upper part of the mountain with its peak covered in a dusting of snow rises stoically above the restless clouds beneath.

Hokusai's series 'Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji' began to be published by the important publishing house Eijudo (established by Nishimuraya Yohachi) in 1831, with the issuance of five initial designs, each printed entirely in shades of Prussian blue and traditional indigo. By 1833, a total of forty-six designs had been produced by Hokusai and published by Eijudo, completing the set. During these three years, and following the first five, it is believed they continued to be issued in groups, with increasing amounts of colours added. Although the series title clearly planned for there to be thirty-six views in the set, it proved so popular that an extra group of ten additional designs were added in 1833, resulting in a total of forty-six.

A previous owner of this print, Londoner Joseph Beck (1828–1891) formed the optical manufacturing firm of R & J Beck in 1843, based at 69 Mortimer Street, London. He was also instrumental in the preservation of Clissold Park, Stoke Newington's last great open space for the public. He was an avid collector of Japanese works of art, buying at sales in London and America while on business trips. He would also meet ships in docks upon their return from Japan and bought directly from the captain and crew.



OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

Harvard Art Museums/Arthur M. Sackler Museum, object no. 1933.4.2700

The British Museum, museum no. 1937,0710,0.120

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 21.6757

The Fuji River in Snow
(*Fujikawa sekkei*)

Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797-1858)



Woodblock print
Signed: *Hiroshige hitsu*
Sealed: *Ichiryusai*
Publisher: Sanoya Kihei (Kikakudo)
Circa 1842-44
Vertical *oban*, diptych (*kakemono-e*): 73.5 × 24.7 cm. (29 × 9 3/4 in.)

Provenance: A Private Collection

An untitled vertical diptych depicting two boats navigating their way silently along the Fuji River flowing between steep, snow-covered cliffs. A lone traveller traverses the narrow bridge high above them, heading towards a hamlet tucked into the cliffs on the left. A waterfall cascades down the rocks behind.

Considered amongst Hiroshige's masterpieces, it is thought that this design resulted from a journey he made in 1842 along the Koshukaido, travelling West from Edo.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art (The MET), New York, accession number JP3135

The Minneapolis Museum of Art, accession number 96.146.223



Dawn in the Yoshiwara
(*Kakuchū shinonome*)

Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797–1858)

Woodblock print

Series: One Hundred Views of Famous Places in Edo (*Meisho Edo hyakkei*)

Signed: *Hiroshige ga*

Publisher: Uoya Eikichi

Sealed: *aratame* (certified) and date seal Snake 4 (1857, 4th month)

Vertical *oban*: 36.8 × 25.1 cm. (14 1/2 × 9 7/8 in.)

Dawn breaks as guests make their departure from the Yoshiwara licensed brothel district after a night of revelry. Blue headscarves provide some disguise for the male guests as they leave while the sky begins to lighten above. A high-ranking courtesan accompanies one guest to the gate, which is framed by blossoming cherry trees indicating spring and the annual cherry-blossom festival.

The series 'One Hundred Views of Famous Places in Edo' (*Meisho Edo hyakkei*) comprises one hundred and nineteen landscape prints in vertical format depicting famous sites in and around the city of Edo, plus a contents page. The set was designed over approximately three years between February 1856 and October 1858, with one print by Hiroshige II added in April 1859, seven months after Hiroshige's untimely death.

The present print is a very good impression with delicate *bokashi* shading instrumental in creating an evocative atmosphere.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (The MET), accession no. JP1024

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 21.10425



The Paulownia Pavilion (*Kiritsubo*)

Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797–1858)

Woodblock print
Series: The Fifty-four Chapters of the Tale of Genji
(*Genji monogatari gojuyon jo*)
Signed: *Hiroshige ga*
Publisher: Iseya Kanekichi
Date seal: Rat intercalary 2 (1852, 2nd month)
Censors' seals: *Fuku, Muramatsu*
Horizontal *oban*: 24.3 × 35.8 cm. (9 5/8 × 14 1/8 in.)

Provenance: A Private Collection

From a set of five prints by Hiroshige based on the 11th century literary classic the Tale of Genji (*Genji monogatari*), represented here is Chapter 1, *Kiritsubo* (The Paulownia Pavilion). In this chapter the hero of the tale, Genji, is presented for the first time as a new-born to his father the Emperor, who is seated behind a bamboo curtain on a raised platform at the top of the print. A paulownia tree (*kiri*) growing in the foreground alludes to the title of the chapter.

All five prints in this set are in the horizontal format and have the series title and print title at the upper right of each design. Clouds with gold-coloured flecks envelop the outer edges of each scene; a device called *suyari-gasumi* (lit. 'straight haze'), which can be used to obscure unnecessary elements that do not need to be shown, allowing the viewer to focus on the important pictorial elements.

For the poem translation, see Murasaki Shikibu, *The Tale of Genji*, translated by Royall Tyler, (New York, 2003), p. 16.

This example is a fine impression, with strong woodgrain showing.

OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 21.9404

The Chazen Museum of Art, accession no. 1980.2148



Into that first knot to bind up his
boyish hair did you tie the wish
that enduring happiness be
theirs through ages to come?

*itoki naki hatsumotoyui ni
nagaki yo o chigiru kokoro wa
musubikometsu ya*

The Broom Tree (*Hahakigi*)

Utagawa Hiroshige
(1797-1858)

Woodblock print
Series: The Fifty-four Chapters of the Tale of Genji
(*Genji monogatari gojuyon jo*)
Signed: *Hiroshige ga*
Publisher: Iseya Kanekichi
Date seal: Rat intercalary 2 (1852, 2nd month)
Censors' seals: *Fuku, Muramatsu*
Horizontal *oban*: 24.4 x 35.8 cm. (9 5/8 x 14 1/8 in.)

Provenance: A Private Collection

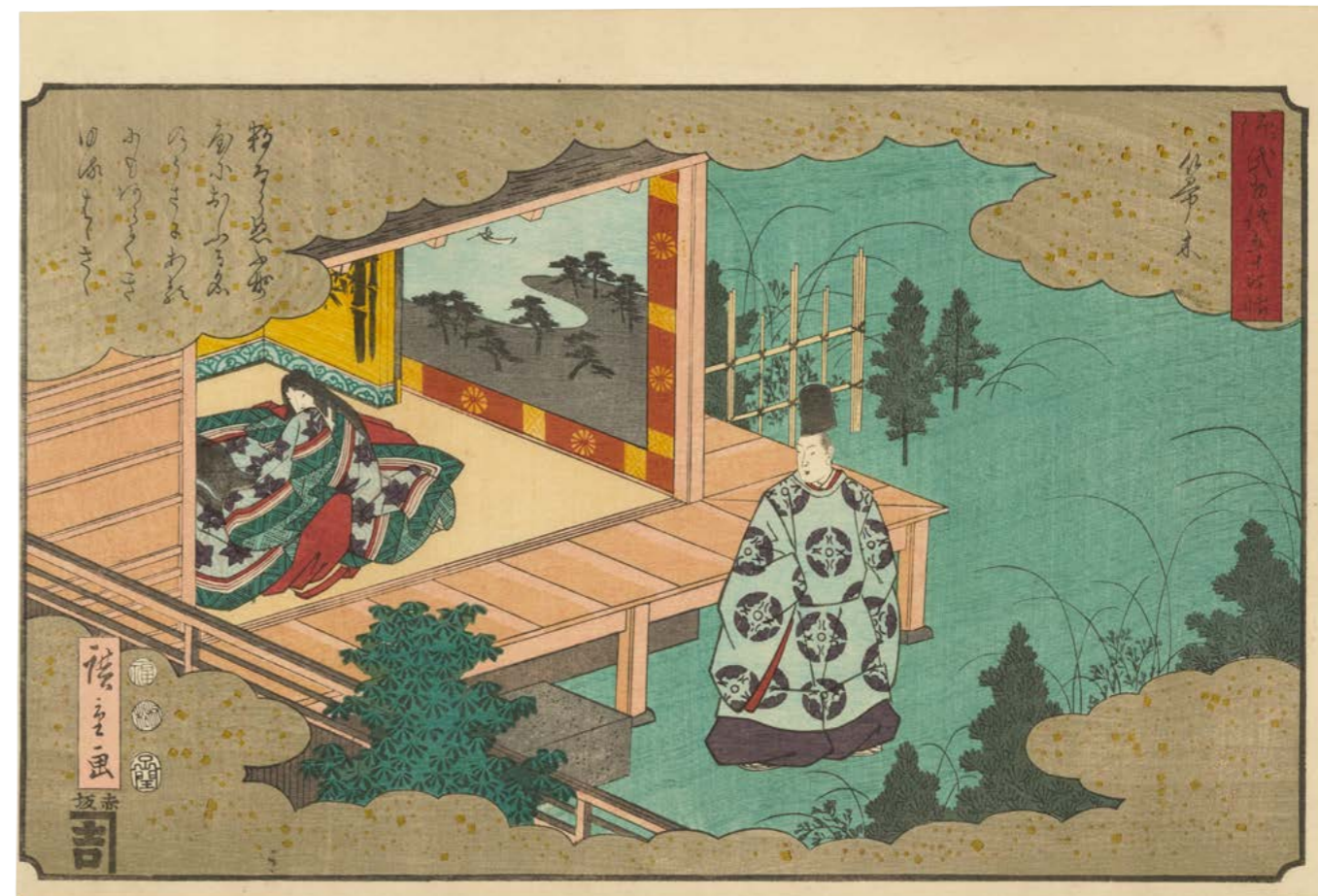
From the same set as no. 9, 'The Fifty-four Chapters of the Tale of Genji', represented here is Chapter 2, *Hahakigi* (The Broom Tree), in which Genji pursues a lady called Utsusemi. She rejects his advances repeatedly, however he persists and ends up spending the night with her. In this print Genji is depicted parting from her at dawn. She sits dressed in sumptuous robes decorated with maple leaves, looking out over a veranda onto a garden.

Hahakigi ('broom tree') is a plant from which brooms were made. In addition, the tree had the poetic reputation of being visible from a distance yet disappearing as one approached. The use of the word as the title of the chapter alludes to the relationship between Genji and Utsusemi, who has frustrated him by making herself inaccessible.

For the poem translation see Doris G. Bargen, *Mapping Courtship and Kinship in Classical Japan: The Tale of Genji and Its Predecessors*, (Hawaii, 2015), p.112.

This is a fine impression with strong woodgrain.

ANOTHER IMPRESSION:
The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 21.9405



Pitiful its fame,
that by a worthless hovel
it should have grown:
here for a moment, but no more,
the Broom tree vanishes from sight.

*kazu naranu
fuseya ni ouru
no no usa ni
aru ni mo arade [arazu]
iyuru hahakigi*

The Type with a Secret Lover (*Mabu ga ariso*)

Utagawa Kunisada
(1786-1865)

Woodblock print
Series: The Modern Thirty-two Types (*Imayo sanjuni so*)
Signed: *Toyokuni ga*
Sealed: *aratame* (certified)
Date seal: Goat 12 (1859, 12th month)
Publisher: Fujiokaya Keijiro (Shorindo)
Engraver: Yokogawa Takejiro
Vertical *oban*: 36.1 × 24.8 cm. (14 1/4 × 9 3/4 in.)

A courtesan wearing an elaborate hairstyle holds a writing brush between her teeth, and in her hands holds a letter for a secret lover. Her hairstyle is called *yoko hyogo* and has a shape like a butterfly with open wings. It is adorned with abundant tortoiseshell hair ornaments. Such hairstyles were expensive and took considerable time and skill to complete. As such they were worn by high-ranking courtesans – the cost putting them out of reach of ordinary women or even lower-ranking courtesans.

During his early 70s, Kunisada started work on several series that are understood to have been conceived with the intention of him leaving an enduring legacy as a major artist. Extra care and attention was given to the designs, as well as the materials, engraving and printing. 'The Modern Thirty-two Types' (see also nos. 12 and 13, p. 33-35) depicts portraits of various types of women from the districts of Edo and is one such series that employed the highest standards of production, including the use of imported and expensive dyes. This is especially apparent when viewing the first edition where thick, deluxe paper was also used.¹

1. Sebastian Izzard, *Kunisada's World*, (New York, 1993), p. 180-181.

ANOTHER IMPRESSION:

The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 11.41014



The Hard-to-Please Type (*Kimutsukashiso*)

Utagawa Kunisada
(1786-1865)



Woodblock print
Series: The Modern Thirty-two Types (*Imayo sanjuni so*)
Signed: *Toyokuni ga*
Sealed: *aratame* (certified)
Date seal: Goat 2 (1859, 2nd month)
Publisher: Yamaguchiya Tobei (Kinkodo)
Engraver: Yokogawa Takejiro
Vertical *oban*: 36.2 × 24.7 cm. (14 1/4 × 9 3/4 in.)

ANOTHER IMPRESSION:
The Edo-Tokyo Museum, Japan, collection ID 91210166,
go to: <https://museumcollection.tokyo/en/works/6244657/>



The Sad-at-Parting Type (*Wakare ga iyaso*)

Utagawa Kunisada
(1786-1865)

Woodblock print
 Series: The Modern Thirty-two Types (*Imayo sanjuni so*)
 Signed: *Toyokuni ga*
 Sealed: *aratame* (certified)
 Date seal: Goat 6 (1859, 6th month)
 Publisher: Yamaguchiya Tobei (Kinkodo)
 Engraver: Yokogawa Takejiro
 Vertical *oban*: 38.7 × 25.6 cm. (15 1/4 × 10 1/8 in.)

A courtesan puts on her kimono, indicating that her companion is departing. The square cartouche contains a cawing crow - the sound associated with early morning farewells in the pleasure quarters.

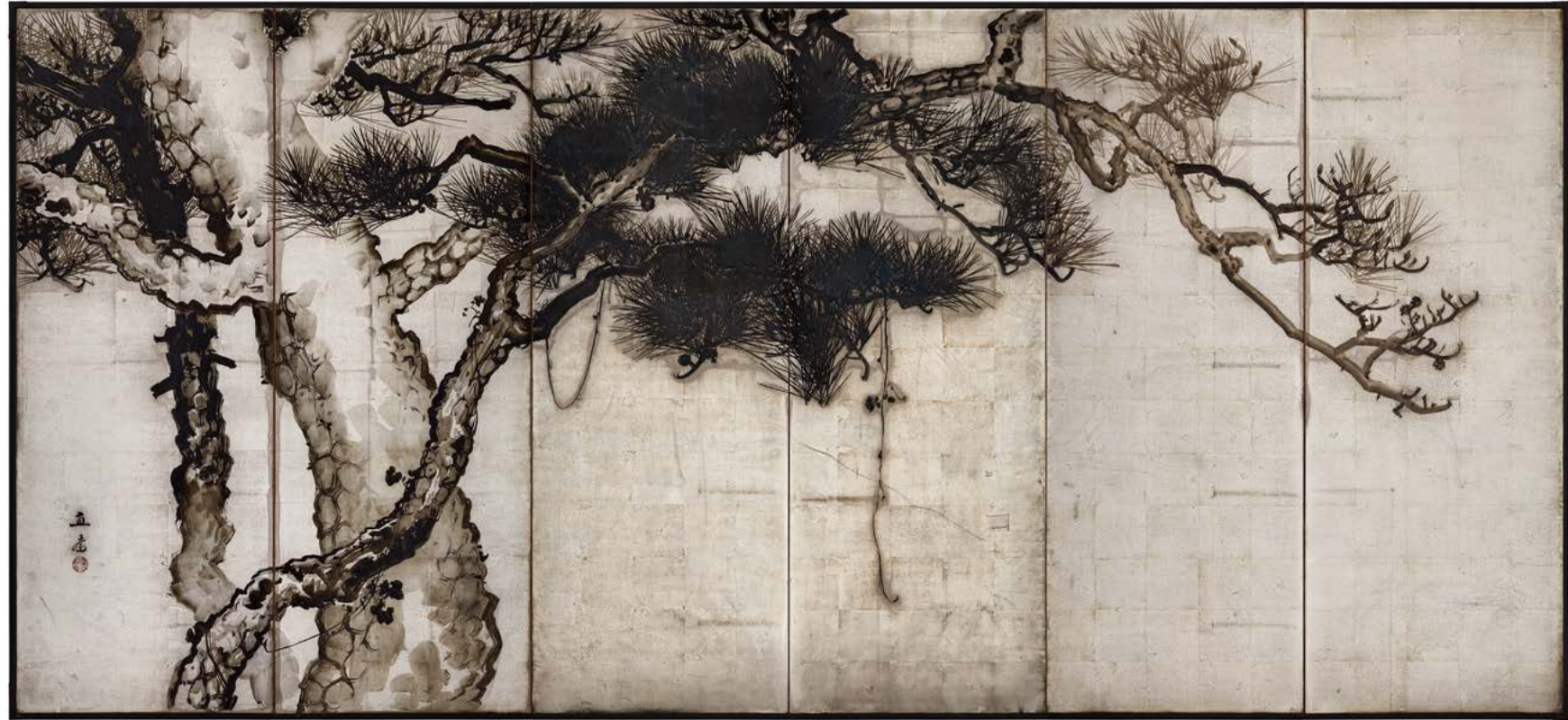
OTHER IMPRESSIONS:

The British Museum, London, museum no. 1991,0710,01
 The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, accession no. 11.41020



Pine Trees
(*Matsu no ki*)

Uenaka Chokusai
(1885–1977)



Pair of six-panel folding screens (*byōbu*)
Sumi ink and silver leaf on paper
Circa 1910s
Signed and sealed: *Chokusai*
172 × 378 cm. (67 3/4 × 148 7/8 in.)

The trunks and over-hanging branches of Japanese pine trees fill the full height of this pair of screens. Rendered by brush entirely in varying intensities of black *sumi* ink onto silver leaf applied to paper, the trees are both naturalistic and powerfully contemplative. The treatment of these trees is in the tradition of ink wash painting which originated in China during the Tang dynasty (618–907), which promoted virtuoso brushwork, as well as communication of the 'essence', or 'spirit' of the subject, over realistic imitation. The rendering of the pine trees on these screens is reminiscent of the 18th century screen paintings of Maruyama Okyo (1733–1795) and other artists of the Maruyama-Shijo School.

Uenaka Chokusai was born in Nara and studied painting under Fukada Chokujyo (1861–1947), Hashimoto Gaho (1835–1908) and Yamamoto Shunkyo (1891–1933). He also became a disciple of Nichiren Buddhism under Tanaka Chigaku (1861–1939).

OTHER WORKS IN PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, object no. J00188

The National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto, object no. J00774





15 – 23

A selection of lacquer,
inro and netsuke from the
Ankarcrona Collection

Sten Ankarcrona (1861-1936) started collecting Japanese works of art as a young officer in the Swedish navy. On his first visit to Japan in the late 1880s he became fascinated by the intricacies of Japanese lacquer, making numerous purchases, and continued to add to his collection after his return to Europe. In 1923, by then an admiral, he went back to Japan at the request of the King of Sweden, at which time he made numerous more purchases. The collection was further added to by the admiral's descendants throughout the 20th and early 21st centuries.

Detail left, no.17:

A Lacquer Accessory Box (*Tebako*)
Meiji Period (Late 19th Century)

A Black Lacquer Cabinet with Poetic Inscriptions Edo Period (17th Century)



A rectangular cabinet with hinged door opening to reveal three interior drawers. Decorated overall in Rimpa style in gold *takamaki-e* and inlays of mother-of-pearl and lead against a black lacquer ground. Also with black lacquer interiors and rims, patinated copper fittings and with an applied lead panel to one side inscribed *Koetsu*.

The sides and front of the cabinet are inlaid with calligraphic inscriptions of poems relating to Mount Fuji. The three interior drawers are decorated with dragonflies in flight. The inside of the door with two stylised pine trees on a hill.

37.5 × 21.5 × 23.5 cm. (14 3/4 × 8 1/2 × 9 1/4 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The Rimpa School was an important part of the Edo period (1615-1868) revival of the aristocratic ideals of the late Heian period (794-1185). Rimpa artists decorated paintings, ceramics and lacquerwares in a highly decorative and patterned manner, often with themes relating to nature and the seasons drawn from Japanese literature such as *The Tale of Genji* and *The Tales of Ise*, as well as Heian period poems composed by courtiers. Two of Rimpa's most important artists were Hon'ami Koetsu (1558-1637) and Tawaraya Sotatsu (died *circa* 1640). Born into one of Kyoto's wealthiest upper-class families, Hon'ami Koetsu is known to have been highly sophisticated in artistic pursuits. He was regarded as one of the three greatest calligraphers of his time, was a tea master, and designed decorations on lacquer and metal ware.¹

This table cabinet is lacquered and inlaid with the restrained elegance of the Rimpa style that appealed to imperial patrons as well as samurai clients. The decoration of gold *maki-e* lacquer and various inlays including lead and mother-of-pearl is indicative of Koetsu-style lacquerware.

Among such works known as 'Koetsu lacquers', some pieces may have been made under the direction of Koetsu, some with his advice, whereas many others are in styles influenced by him but without involvement by him.² Although it is not possible to confidently attribute this cabinet to Koetsu himself, the inlaid lead panel on one side bearing his name, combined with the bold design and theme from classical literature, show his influence. Another cabinet with similar decoration of calligraphy in *maki-e* and inlays of lead and mother-of-pearl, designated as an Important Art Object, is in The Seikado Bunko Art Museum, Tokyo.

1. Miyeko Murase, *The Deer Scroll by Koetsu and Sotatsu Reappraised*, 'Four Masterpieces of Japanese Painting: A Symposium', Seattle Art Museum, 20th May 2007, p. 2.

2. Felice Fischer, *The arts of Hon'ami Koetsu: Japanese Renaissance Master*, Exhibition catalogue, The Philadelphia Museum of Art, (Philadelphia, 2000), p.108-110.

A Lacquer Writing Box
(*suzuribako*)
Edo Period (Late 17th -
Early 18th Century)



Decorated in gold and silver *hiramaki-e* and *takamaki-e* against a *nashiji* ground. Details are in gold and silver *kirikane*, *kinpun*, *keuchi*, *uchikomi* and inlays of stained stag antler, ivory, coral, iron, solid gold, and silver. The rims of the box are *fundame*, the water-dropper is silvered brass and in the shape of a persimmon fruit with leaves.

The outside of the box depicts a mountainous landscape with pavilions beside a lake. The inside of the cover depicts a gnarled plum tree and camellia in bloom overhanging a brushwood fence and rocks. A fitted inner tray shows a pine tree.

21.4 × 20.6 × 4.2 cm. (8 3/8 × 8 1/8 × 15/8 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The use of fine and precious materials combined with a high level of craftsmanship employed in the making of this writing box demonstrates the high esteem accorded calligraphy in Japanese culture. While serving a practical function of housing the implements of writing such as the inkstone, ink sticks and brushes, such lacquerwares also served an aesthetic purpose, revealing much about the prevalent tastes of the day.

The designs on *suzuribako* often represent highly refined visual representations of classical poetry, literature, history and mythology. The dramatic rendering of the mountains and overall composition of the landscape depicted on the present box shows a strong influence of Momoyama period - early Edo period painters such as Unkoku Togan (1547-1618) and Unkoku Toeki (1591-1644). For a pair of folding screens by Unkoku Toeki depicting a similar landscape to this box in the collection of The Iwami Art Museum, go to: <https://artsandculture.google.com/asset/screen-depicting-landscape-unkoku-toeki/kwF7fEn778DsEQ>

Published: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 61, p. 60-61.



A Lacquer Accessory Box (*Tebako*)
Meiji Period (Late 19th Century)



A deep box with rounded corners and flush-fitting cover, lavishly decorated in gold *hiramaki-e* and *takamaki-e*, with details in *keuchi*, *ginpun*, *uchikomi* and *kirikane*. The box rims in silver.

A mountainous landscape of Chinese-style pavilions and thatched huts amongst bamboo, maple, willow, pine, and cherry trees. Stylised waves churn against a rocky shore. The sky and interior are in rich *nashiji*.

27.3 × 22.8 × 13.1 cm. (10 3/4 × 9 × 5 1/8 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

Published: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 76, p. 82-83.

A Somada Lacquer Tiered
Incense Box (*Jukogo*)
Meiji Period (Late 19th Century)



The box with two tiers and flush-fitting cover intricately decorated overall with inlays of cut shell and gold and silver foils. The interiors with dense *nashiji*, the rims silver and inner rims in *fundame*.

The cover of the box depicts the hermit Lin Pu and a crane beside a blossoming plum tree, bamboo, and rocks. The sides and edges with finely inlaid geometric patterns.

6.3 × 6.3 × 5.1 cm. (2 1/2 × 2 1/2 × 2 1/8 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The ancient and idyllic scene on the cover of this incense box, as well as the patterned sides are rendered with the intricate use of gold, silver and *aogai* (lit. blue-green shell). Finely cut and shaped, these tiny pieces of shell and precious metals were inlaid into a highly polished black lacquer ground, forming precise geometric and pictorial designs. The marbled turban (*yakogai* – lit. night-shining shell) was selected for its varying blue, green, pink, and violet colour. When turned in the light, the various elements of the design on the cover of the box change colour, and the use of shell in this manner was employed particularly by craftsmen of the Somada school. The founder of the school, Somada Kiyosuke is alleged to have studied the technique from Chinese artisans residing in the port of Nagasaki in the early eighteenth century.¹

Published: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 69, p. 70-71.

1. Beatrix von Ragué, *A History of Japanese Lacquerwork*, (Toronto, 1976), p. 197.



A Miniature Lacquer *Karabitsu*
(Chinese-Style Six-Legged Chest)
Meiji Period (Late 19th Century)



Decorated in gold and silver *takamaki-e* against a *nashiji* ground. Details are in *kirikane* and inlays of gold, silver and coral. The corners and rims of the chest are in *fundame* and the interior and base are *nashiji*.

Blossoming plum branches, pine and bamboo trees cover the top and sides of the box. Stylised bands of mist envelop the cover.

8.6 × 12.9 × 10.3 cm. (3 3/8 × 5 1/8 × 4 1/8 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The box is intricately decorated with the traditional grouping of plum, pine and bamboo (*shochikubai*); a theme which derives from Chinese Tang dynasty (618-906) poetry and represents steadfastness, nobility and longevity. A standard-sized *karabitsu* was used for the storage of suits of armour or clothes.

Published: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 66, p. 68-69.



20

An Ebony Netsuke of a Horse Edo Period (19th Century)



A seated horse, finely carved.
The eyes inlaid in pale and dark cow horn.

Signed under hind leg:
Itsumin (Hokyudo Itsumin, active *circa* 1830-70)

3.9 cm. (1 1/2 in.) wide

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

Hokyudo Itsumin lived and worked as a netsuke carver in Tokyo.

OTHER WORKS:

The British Museum, London, Museum no. OA+.14268
(a wood *okimono* of Gama Sennin on a toad)

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, accession no. A.50-1952
(a wood netsuke of Gama Sennin)

A Three-Case Lacquer *Inro* Edo Period (19th Century)



Finely decorated in gold and silver *hiramaki-e*, *takamaki-e* and with details in *kirikane* and *keuchi* against a *kinji* ground. The figures are in various inlays of soft metals: *shakudo*, *shibuichi*, gold and silver. The interiors and risers are in *nashiji*, the rims *fundame*.

A warrior kneels before a senior courtier in front of the veranda of a palace. The courtier grasps a golden-scaled snake in his hands whilst the warrior holds up his hands as if to receive the snake. The reverse depicts gnarled pine and autumnal maple trees beside a meandering stream.

Signed: *Yanagawa Naotsune* on an inlaid gold tablet, *Kajikawa saku* in gold lacquer and with a red pot seal *Ei*

6.2 × 6.2 × 2.7 cm. (2 1/2 × 2 1/2 × 1 1/8 in.)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The making of this *inro* required the collaboration of two craftsmen highly specialised in different crafts - lacquer and metalwork. The signature *Kajikawa saku* (made by Kajikawa) is by a member of the renowned Kajikawa family, famous for lacquer. The signature *Yanagawa Naotsune* is for the inlaid metalwork.

Published: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 39, p. 42-43.

A Four-Case Lacquer *Inro* Edo Period (19th Century)



Finely decorated in gold, silver, black and red *hiramaki-e*, *takamaki-e*, *togidashi*, *keuchi*, *kirikane* and *kinpun* against a gold ground. The fan of inlaid mother-of-pearl. The interiors and risers are *nashiji* and the rims *fundame*. An attached carved red lacquer netsuke is of two *karashishi* playing with a ball and a Somada-style black lacquer *ojime* with auspicious motifs.

Rosei sleeps on a low bed in the shade of a tree, a fan held in front of his face. The black mist emanating from him drifts off to the right, covering the reverse of the *inro* and contains his dream - a court procession.

8 cm. (3 1/8 in.) high (the *inro*), 3.7 cm. (1 1/2 in.) wide (the netsuke)

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The scene here is based on an 8th Century Chinese moral tale in which a man called Lu Sheng (Japanese: Rosei) leaves his village in search of an illustrious career in the civil service. The tale was later adapted in Japan, inspiring the 15th Century Japanese Noh play *Kantan*, and was modified to reflect the Buddhist philosophy of Noh theatre's elite warrior audience.

In the Noh drama, Rosei falls asleep and dreams that he is visited by a grand entourage who invites him to become the Emperor. When he awakes, Rosei realises that his reign as emperor was simply a vain dream, and in doing so he learns the vanity of human ambition.

On the reverse, Rosei's dream is depicted as a ghostly procession of servants leading a carriage and horses that would carry him to the Imperial court to become Emperor. The scene is only just visible when the object is turned in the light

OTHER WORKS:

The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, accession no. W.247:1-1922

(another *inro* with the same subject), go to:

<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O457881/inro/>

A Five-Case Lacquer *Inro*
Meiji Period (Late 19th Century)



Decorated in gold, silver, red, and green *togidashi* and *kinpun* against a black lacquer ground with *hirame*, *nashiji* interiors and risers, *fundame* rims.

The *inro* is decorated overall with sprays of chrysanthemums (*kiku*), bush clover (*hagi*), branches of cherry (*sakura*) and plum (*ume*), peonies (*botan*), iris (*shobu*), and fringed pinks (*nadeshiko*), lotus leaves (*hasu*) to the base and further bush clover to the top.

Signed in seal form in red lacquer: *Shiomi Masanari*

9 cm. (3 1/2 in.) high

Provenance: The Ankarcrona Collection

The plants that cover this *inro* indicate the various seasons. The cherry is associated with spring, the iris with early summer, the peony high summer, the lotus late summer, the wild pink, chrysanthemum and bush clover with early autumn, the maple with later autumn and the gnarled plum with late winter.

Publications: Eskenazi Ltd., *Japanese Inro and Lacquer-ware from a Private Swedish Collection*, (London, 1996), no. 19, p. 30-31.

*Coordinates Pointing to the
Origin of Light, 2012*

**Asakura Takafumi
(b. 1978)**

Black ink on *washi* paper, mounted on dark blue silk as a hanging scroll
Artist's seal at lower right
Fitted wood box (*tomobako*) inscribed by the artist and with two seals

89.7 × 69.3 cm. (35 1/4 × 27 1/4 in.) (size of scroll, open)

In his work the artist Takafumi Asakura displays an extraordinary ability to combine tradition and modernity. Using brush and ink, mythical beasts, Shinto gods, elements of nature and calligraphy are brought together with a powerful energy, coalescing into works of deep visceral beauty.

Coordinates Pointing to the Origin of Light embodies these elements, bringing forth a Yatagarasu, or three-legged crow - a mythical creature who appeared as a servant of Amaterasu, the goddess of the sun. The bird is captured mid-flight amongst swirling mist; the seemingly detached elements of its sinuous body forcefully sweeping across the pictorial plane.

As is Asakura's trademark, the negative space is filled with calligraphic text from the *Kojiki* ("Records of Ancient Matters"), an important source book for customs, divination, and ceremonies of ancient Japan. Sections describe myths and legends. Asakura uses the precision and fluidity of his brush to transcribe sections of the text as the backdrop to *Coordinates Pointing to the Origin of Light*.

OTHER WORKS:

Spencer Museum of Art - University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas, USA
Minneapolis Institute of Art, USA, accession no. 2013.29.1172, go to:
<https://collections.artsmia.org/art/116942/dragon-asakura-takafumi>

The Kennedy Theatre, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, USA
Okamura Tenmangu Shrine, Yokohama, Japan
Osannomiya Hie Shrine, Yokohama, Japan
Takaoten Shrine, Hachioji, Japan
Jujusan Asakawa Kotohira Daigongen Shrine, Hachioji, Japan



Escalator #27

Taira Hisaya
(b. 1960)



Acrylic on canvas

Signed on the reverse: *H. Taira*

Titled and dated on the reverse: *Escalator #27, 2010*

70 x 120 cm. (27 1/2 x 47 1/4 in.)

Hisaya Taira began producing photorealistic paintings based on photographs after he graduated from Tama Art University, Tokyo, in 1984. For his subjects, he takes scenes that we rarely pay attention to; mundane places such as empty parking lots, deserted stairwells, corridors, underground platforms, and escalators. Completely ordinary places that we have all been in at some point or another. Captured using meticulous brushwork combined with the high degree of accuracy allowed by acrylic paint, the scenes are stripped of all emotion.

Light also plays an important role in Taira's work; sometimes it is artificial from electric ceiling bulbs or the glare of electric advertising billboards, and sometimes natural with bright sunlight illuminating his street scenes.

See commentary by Tsutomu Miura, Curator, Tottori Prefectural Museum, *The Paintings of Hisaya Taira*, (Yoshiaki Inoue Gallery, Osaka, 2016), p. 86-91.

Exhibited: Tottori Prefectural Museum, Tottori, Japan, *Our Collections!*, Exhibition, 16th February - 10th March 2019



Detail, no.8:
Dawn in the Yoshiwara (*Kakuchu shinonome*)
Utagawa Hiroshige

Glossary

A

Aratame: 'certified'. Censorship seal on prints.

B

Byobu: lit. 'wall wind', or 'protection from wind'.

Folding screens constructed of paper or silk attached to a wood frame which is often lacquered. The paper surface often embellished with gold or silver leaf, which is then painted with the desired subject.

C

Chutzanzaku: paper format for prints, approximately 38 × 13 cm. (15 × 5 in.).

F

Fundame: lacquer technique; fine metal dust sprinkled onto wet lacquer to give a smooth, matt metallic appearance.

G

Ga: picture, drawn by... Used in artists' signatures.

Ginpun: silver powder used in lacquer.

H

Hiramaki-e: lacquer technique; low-relief lacquer decoration.

Hirame: flat gold flakes applied to lacquer surface.

Hitsu: 'drawn by...'. Used in artists' signatures.

I

Inro: small medicine box, usually lacquered.

K

Kacho-e: lit. 'bird and flower pictures'.

Kanzashi: long ornamental hairpins.

Keuchi: lacquer technique in which details are applied in *hiramaki-e* over *hiramaki-e* or *takamaki-e*.

Kinji: shiny gold lacquer ground.

Kinpun: gold powder used in lacquer.

Kiri: paulownia tree.

Kirikane: small squares of cut gold foil inlaid into lacquer.

Kiwame: 'approved'. Censorship seal on prints.

Kyoka: a comic form of poetry.

N

Nashiji: irregularly-shaped flakes of gold suspended in clear or yellowish lacquer.

O

Oban: paper format for prints, approximately 38.1 × 26 cm. (15 × 10 ¼ in.).

Ojime: bead for tightening the cord of an *inro*.

S

Saku: 'made by...'. Used in artists' signatures.

Shakudo: alloy of copper and gold with a blue-black colour.

Shibuichi: alloy of copper and silver with a grey-green colour.

Shikishiban: square paper format used mostly for *surimono*, approximately 20 × 17 cm. (7 7/8 × 6 5/8 in.).

Surimono: a privately commissioned print for distribution at New Year or on special occasions. Usually carefully and sumptuously printed.

Suzuribako: box for storing writing implements.

T

Takamaki-e: lacquer technique in which lacquer is built up in high-relief.

Tebako: a formal lacquer box for accessories.

Togidashi: lacquer technique where the design is revealed by polishing away additional layers of lacquer.

U

Uchikomi: inlay into lacquer of pure gold nuggets.

Y

Yoshiwara: licensed pleasure quarters in Edo, established by the shogunate.



富嶽三千景
山下
白雨

北奇改爲下

