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Keisai Eisen, 1790/91–1848

**Woman Putting on Face Powder**

From the series *Bien Senjokō Powder*, 1820–22

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.159

Cat. no. 208

By the early 19th century, the ideal of popular beauty had changed from the graceful and sweet round-faced types favored by artists like Kiyonaga, Utamaro, and Eishi to more assertive personalities. Artists like Eisen and Kunisada were in the vanguard of this new style, depicting women who appear worldly, reckless, and even slightly dangerous.

This half-length portrait exemplifies Eisen's vision of women with sharper features, longer faces and noses, elongated eyes, and pouting lower lips. The woman holds a mirror in one hand while she applies makeup with a brush. Her lower lip is green, a popular fashion in the early 19th century. This image is from a five-print series advertising a face powder.

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Keisai Eisen, 1790/91–1848

**View of Tōeizan Temple from Benten Hall on  
Shinobazu Pond in Edo, 1830–36**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.163

Cat. no. 209

Tōeizan Kan'eiji temple was founded by the shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu in 1625, and construction of its many buildings continued throughout the 17th century. A hall dedicated to Benten (Benzaiten), a goddess of music and literature, was erected nearby on an island in Shinobazu Pond, accessible by a long footbridge.

This image is from a five-print, untitled series distinguished by printed black frames embellished with “Dutch” letters. Under the Tokugawa shogunate’s isolationist policies promulgated in the 1630s, Holland was the only Western country permitted to trade with Japan. In the early 18th century, curious about the outside world and Western scientific advances, the eighth Tokugawa shogun, Yoshimune, ordered government Confucian scholars to study the Dutch language and imported printed materials. Rangaku (Dutch studies) flourished among Japanese intellectuals as they compiled a dictionary and translated Dutch books. By the early 19th century, even ordinary citizens would have recognized the exotic letters on this print as being Dutch.

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Keisai Eisen, 1790/91–1848

**View of Takanawa in Edo, 1830–36**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.161

Cat. no. 210

As a means of ensuring peace, the Tokugawa government limited traffic on the country's roadways. Checkpoints (*sekisho*) were established along the major highways, and gated barriers (*ōkido*) controlled traffic entering the city of Edo. In 1710, the government built an *ōkido* in Takanawa, the seaside town shown here. Stone walls flanked the gate, which was closed at night. During the day, travelers and their baggage were inspected in an open pavilion before being allowed to pass through.

At first glance, Eisen's view appears typically Japanese, with Mount Fuji in the background and a lively street scene in the foreground. However, the artist included elements of Western realism. The ships in the bay diminish in size as they near the horizon, as do the buildings and trees along the shore. Eisen's figures, unlike many of Hiroshige's, are also appropriately scaled in relation to the nearby architecture. To Japanese of the time, this composition may well have looked exotically Western.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Hakone—View of the Lake**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.262  
Cat. no. 218

Hiroshige's view of Hakone Pass is among his most dramatic scenes, capturing the severe beauty of this rugged terrain. Rising abruptly beside the placid waters of Lake Ashinoko, the mountain presents a mosaic of colored boulders. Attempts by scholars (and other Hiroshige enthusiasts) to locate the spot from which the artist might have obtained this view have failed, so in all likelihood the scene is partly imaginary.

After winning the battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Tokugawa Iyasu and his military advisers devised strategies to safeguard their stronghold in Edo, from which they ruled the country. They established checkpoints (*sekisho*) on the major roadways, where all travelers had to present identification. Hakone Pass was one of two *sekisho* on the Tōkaidō road. In this scene, a feudal lord's entourage has just begun the downward journey; their hats are visible within the steep-walled pass.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Kanbara—Night Snow**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.261.1  
Cat. no. 219

Widely admired for capturing the quietude of a nighttime snowfall, Hiroshige's view of Kanbara also raises some intriguing questions. The landlocked view is most unusual, since Kanbara is a small seaside village. Moreover, snow falls but rarely in that region. It is therefore generally accepted that this scene is imaginary. Why did Hiroshige show the typically snowless Kanbara covered with snow? Throughout the Tōkaidō series, he depicted scenes at various times of day, in different seasons, and in a range of climatic conditions. Each composition was imbued with visual interest beyond the specifics of topography, thus ensuring that prospective customers would collect the entire series. Hiroshige did occasionally (as here) sacrifice accuracy. Yet in presenting the beauty of nature's diversity and changeability, the Hōeidō edition of the Tōkaidō is profoundly appealing.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Mariko—Famous Teahouse**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Francis W. Little 17.205.21  
Cat. no. 220

The chance to sample local culinary delicacies is one of the great pleasures of travel. In premodern Japan, when ordinary citizens had few opportunities for distant journeying, such occasions were prized. Many of Hiroshige's images for his various Tōkaidō series reflect an interest in local cuisines. Mariko station was known for its delicious yam soup (*tororo-jiru*). The famous poet Matsuo Bashō (1644–94) mentioned the tasty soup in a farewell message to his pupil who was departing for Edo via the Tōkaidō road.

*Plums may bloom, greens may sprout  
by the time you stop by Mariko station  
to enjoy its famous yam soup.*

In the center of the picture, a plum tree beginning to blossom accords with the poem, and Hiroshige's soft pink background suggests the warmth of a spring day.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Okabe—Utsu Mountain**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.263

Cat. no. 221

Okabe is a river gorge surrounded by steep mountains. Utsu Pass, near Okabe, was made famous by the 10th-century *Ise monogatari* (Tales of Ise), in which it was described as “an extremely dark and narrow road overgrown with maples and ivy.” By Hiroshige’s time, the Tōkaidō road followed a route slightly different from the ancient roadway. Nevertheless, Hiroshige pictured a narrow path through a darkly shaded gorge. Instead of ivy vines, he included a small red-leaved maple tree leaning over a mountain stream. The deep blue, swiftly flowing water alongside the road accentuates the steepness of the hill. Traversing the road are workers with bundles of brushwood and a traveler in a sedge hat.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Okazaki—Yahagi Bridge**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.265  
Cat. no. 222

Running along the Pacific coastline, the Tōkaidō road was interrupted by many rivers. But there were only a few bridges. This was partly because builders lacked the expertise to construct bridges that could withstand frequent floods. Another reason was that rivers were effective natural barriers. Forging a swift waterway would thwart enemy troops marching toward the government stronghold in Edo. Yahagi bridge, spanning some 1250 feet, was therefore exceptional, and no doubt astonishing to travelers.

This composition includes a view of Okazaki castle, the birthplace of Tokugawa Ieyasu, founder of the Tokugawa shogunate, which ruled Japan from 1603 until 1867. After Ieyasu's death and deification, the castle was considered sacred, and only high-ranking lords with close connections to the Tokugawa family were appointed to occupy it. Perhaps that was why the government allowed the impressive bridge to be constructed. Hiroshige's print shows a feudal lord's procession making its way across the bridge en route to the castle.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Yokkaichi—Mie River**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.334  
Cat. no. 223

While Hiroshige's image of Kanbara (on view nearby) is acclaimed as a masterly depiction of snow, this composition is admired as a depiction of wind. From right to left, Hiroshige illustrated the wind's effect through the billowing coat of the man crossing the footbridge, the whipping of the willow branches, the waving reeds, and the sedge hat rolling along the road. The racing posture of the man trying to grasp the runaway hat brings earthy humor to an otherwise lonely scene.

The windswept seaside town of Yokkaichi bordered an extensive marsh where the Mie River (now known as the Mitaki River) flowed into Ise Bay. Hiroshige's view of a footbridge crossing the river with the marsh filling the background is unusual. Other artists focused on the thriving town of Yokkaichi, the fourth largest station along the Tōkaidō road.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Shōno—Driving Rain**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Provenance Mrs. Carl W. Jones P:13,709  
Cat. no. 224

Many Hiroshige enthusiasts consider this composition to be among the best in the Tōkaidō series. Obscure way stations, Shōno and Kanbara (pictured nearby) lacked distinguishing landmarks and never figured in classical poetry or noted historical events. Perhaps for that reason, Hiroshige was less fettered by convention and could give freer rein to his creativity.

The irregular bands of fine diagonal lines represent sheets of rain pelting travelers along the roadway. Wind-whipped bamboo groves in the distance are rendered as two silhouettes, the farther one printed in a paler shade of gray to suggest the obscuring effect of heavy rain. The storm's ferocity is evident also in the postures of the travelers. In showing the plight of these people, Hiroshige lets viewers vicariously experience the challenges of life on the road.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Kameyama—Clear Weather after Snow**

From the series *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
ca. 1833

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.267

Cat. no. 225

*Kameyama* and *Kanbara* (on view nearby) are the only snow scenes in the *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road* series, and both are greatly admired. *Kanbara* conveys the faint light of a snowstorm, while *Kameyama* pictures a bright, clear day following a snowfall. Blue shading along the print's top edge and pink shading at the horizon provide a striking contrast to the snow-laden, monochromatic landscape.

Ascending the steep slope, a daimyo procession approaches the wooden gate outside Kameyama, a castle town presided over by the lord of the Kameyama clan. The soldiers' blue coats and yellow sedge hats are visible through the snowy trees. Next to the gate, a stone rampart topped by a watchtower serves to fortify the town's entrance and guard the clan's stronghold.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road**, after 1834

Color woodblock portfolio in 2 volumes

Published by Takenouchi Magohachi

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.77.39.7.1,2

Cat. no. 226

**THIS LABEL WILL BE IN**

**BATCH 4 ALONG WITH A 3RD**

**PARAGRAPH**

Utagawa Hiroshige designed many series with the title *Tōkaidō gojūsan-tsūni* (Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road). The first, launched around 1833, is now known as the Hōeidō edition. It was actually a collaboration between two publishing houses: Hōeidō, run by Takenouchi Magohachi, and Senkakudō, run by Tsuruya Kiemon. When all the images had been printed, Hōeidō issued all fifty-five as a two-volume book with a preface by the *kyōka* poet Yomo no Takisui. Because Takisui dated his preface the first month of 1834, it has been widely assumed that the series was complete by that time.

The compilation owned by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts lacks Takisui's preface and includes some slightly later impressions, so it was likely compiled somewhat later. The first volume comprises twenty-seven prints, beginning with Nihonbashi and ending with the twenty-sixth station, Kakegawa. The second volume contains twenty-eight prints, picturing the stations from Fukuroi to the terminus in Kyoto. Both volumes include the publisher's colophon advertising future series by Hiroshige.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**No. 1: Nihonbashi**

From the series *Fifty-three Images of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
1847–52

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.310  
Cat. no. 231

The series *Tōkaidō gojūsan zue* (Fifty-three Images of the Tōkaidō Road) is popularly known as *Bijin Tōkaidō* (Beauties on the Tōkaidō) because it features full-length depictions of women. Each image pairs a woman with a landscape print. This compositional formula—treating the landscape as a discrete printed object rather than integrating the figure into it—explicitly reminds the viewer of Hiroshige’s fame as a landscape artist. With this view of Nihonbashi bridge, the starting point of the Tōkaidō road in Edo, Hiroshige depicted a chicly dressed woman—perhaps a geisha. Holding a letter, she glances toward a wooden box containing a large, whole fish colored the vivid blue of a *katsuo*, or bonito. Wrapped in *sasa* (bamboo grass) and boxed to keep it fresh, and perhaps accompanied by the letter, the bonito was likely a gift from a client or lover.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**No. 19: Ejiri**

From the series *Fifty-three Images of the Tōkaidō Road*,  
1847–52

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.306  
Cat. no. 232

The title *Ejiri*, referring to the eighteenth station of the Tōkaidō road, appears on the landscape portion of this print. Another notation, beneath the red series cartouche, reads “tabibito asadachi” (morning departure of a traveler), revealing that this woman is a traveler about to resume her journey. A teacup on a serving stand at her feet suggests she has taken her morning repast as she prepares to leave the inn where she has spent the night. In mid-19th-century Japan, women could travel but typically did not do so alone. This woman is probably hurrying to join her attendants or companions.

The landscape print may represent the view from the woman’s room at the inn. It shows the picturesque pine grove at Miho in the foreground. Even today, the view of Miho across Suruga Bay, toward Tagonoura and Mount Fuji in the distance, is famous.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Giant Pine of Naniwaya in Anryūmachi**

From the series *Famous Views of Osaka*, ca. 1834

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.435

Cat. no. 235

*Naniwa meisho zue* (Famous Views of Osaka) comprises ten prints of celebrated places in the thriving port city of Naniwa, now known as Osaka. Although the series title suggests a collection of landscapes, the images reveal Hiroshige's interest in people, their customs and activities. Here, a group of travelers marvel at an ancient trained pine tree. The tree grew next to a popular teahouse called Naniwaya, in the town of Anryūmachi, where visitors to nearby Sumiyoshi Shrine often stopped for refreshments. According to one account, the main branch was over eighty feet long and supported (as illustrated here) by numerous wooden braces. A keen observer of human nature, Hiroshige adroitly depicted nine people, of both sexes and various ages, engaged with each other as they exclaim and gesture at the tree. Two men are squatting down to peek beneath the great branch.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Cherry Blossoms at Arashiyama**

From the series *Famous Places of Kyoto*, ca. 1834

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51. 452

Cat. no. 236

Prominent places in Japan's historical capital are featured in the ten-print series *Kyōto meisho no uchi* (Famous Places of Kyoto). Here, cherry trees are in full bloom along the Ōi River, which flows through the western edge of Kyoto. The dense forests of Mount Arashiyama and its foothills form a resplendent backdrop to the river, especially in spring and autumn, when blossoming cherry trees or fiery maples create a tapestry of seasonal color.

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Keisai Eisen, 1790/91–1848

**No. 2: Itabashi Station**

From the series *Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road*, 1835–36

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.186

Cat. no. 238

In the early Edo period, the government ordered the construction of five major roadways linking the shogun's castle in Edo with the distant provinces. The Kisokaidō traversed Japan's central mountains and led to the historical capital of Kyoto. This roadway crossed the Kiso gorge, for which it was named.

The series *Kisokaidō rokujūkyū tsugi* (Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road) consists of seventy-one prints, including the two termini. Keisai Eisen designed twenty-four images and Hiroshige the remaining forty-seven. Eisen tended to focus on people and their activities in a landscape setting, whereas Hiroshige emphasized the landscape itself.

Itabashi was the first station along the Kisokaidō, on the outskirts of Edo, less than six miles from the starting point at Nihonbashi bridge. Arriving travelers must still have felt fresh and energetic, as Eisen pictured them in this lively composition.

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Keisai Eisen, 1790/91–1848

**No. 20: View of Hiratsukahara in Rain near  
Kutsukake Station**

From the series *Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road*, 1835–36

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.450  
Cat. no. 239

Like Hiroshige, Eisen could convey the dynamic nuances of a rainstorm. Here a gray, streaked sky and blowing leaves evoke the turbulent atmosphere. The ox drivers, trying to hold their clothing tightly about their bodies, brace themselves against the wind, and even the massive oxen seem to have difficulty advancing.

Kutsukake, the nineteenth station on the Kiso road, is at the base of Mount Asama, a volcano that rises more than eight thousand feet. The road runs through a plain called Hiratsukahara (shown in the background), which affords travelers little shelter. During the off-season, local farmers used their livestock to transport goods between stations. Eisen probably included oxen as a way to introduce local color and to indicate that the season is late autumn, after harvesting is over.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**No. 26: Mochizuki**

From the series *Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road*, 1836–38

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.272

Cat. no. 240

The incline leading to the town of Mochizuki, the twenty-fifth station on the Kiso Road, is shown here in moonlight. *Mochizuki* literally means “full moon,” and in poetry the term is often used descriptively rather than as a place name. To suggest the night sky, Hiroshige shaded the upper portion of the print and the horizon with deepening blue. His careful spacing of the figures, so that they seem not to interact or converse, gives a sense of nighttime quiet, as though the only sound might be their footsteps on the road.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**No. 28: Nagakubo**

From the series *Sixty-nine Stations of the Kiso Road*, 1836–38

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.454

Cat. no. 241

In this quiet, moonlit picture, Hiroshige created pictorial depth using two groups of figures. In the foreground, a man and his horse, two children, and two dogs are crisply printed in multiple colors. The figures on the bridge in the middle distance, however, appear as gray silhouettes. This sharp contrast conveys the loss of visual clarity due to distance and fading light. Clearly, Hiroshige worked closely with the printers to achieve these subtle effects.

Located by the Yoda River, between the hilly neighboring stations of Ashida and Wada, Nagakubo was a popular stopping place. Travelers found accommodations at the town's many inns and restaurants. Hiroshige may have included a man with a horse as an allusion to the horse rentals and porters that were part of the town's thriving economy.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

### **Sweetfish**

From the series *Various Fish*, 1832–33

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.258

Cat. no. 244

In the eleven-print series popularly called *Various Fish*, each image bears one to three *kyōka* poems mentioning fish commonly caught in a particular season. Hiroshige depicted the fish referred to in the poems and occasionally included seasonal flowers and vegetables.

Sweetfish (*ayu*) are a summer delicacy in Japan. Their silver and light green coloration is emblematic of the clear, clean water in which they thrive. Hiroshige's inspiration here was a poem by Haruzono no Shizueda.

*Although the autumn rain has already fallen  
into the waters of a jewel river  
where sweetfish live,  
they are still swimming  
without regard for the changing season.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Prawns, Horse Mackerel, and Smartweed**

From the series *Various Fish*, 1832–33

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.103

Cat. no. 245

Prawns and mackerel, harvested by the Japanese in late summer and early autumn, are typically garnished with sprigs of smartweed, a summer herb. A *kyōka* poem by Toshinoya no Tomiharu is inscribed at the upper right.

*When they are smaller  
prawns have a pattern on their shells  
that looks like the bands on a sheath.  
It helped the fishermen of Shibaura Beach  
band them together and catch them en masse.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Bonito and Cherry Leaves**

From the series *Various Fish*, 1832–33

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.584

Cat. no. 246

The combination of a bonito with twigs of cherry suggests early summer, when cherry trees begin to fruit and the season's first bonitos are caught. Both of the poems on this print refer to *hatsu-gatsuo* (first bonito), the first catch of the season. Traditionally, the Japanese place a high value on *hatsu-mono* (first foods), the earliest fruits, vegetables, or fish of a particular season. The "first bonito" was the most prized of all and commanded a high price. People anticipated this seasonal delicacy with much excitement, as described in the poems.

*Look at the color of the first bonitos!  
They are as blue as  
morning glories.  
No wonder they come along to market  
before the sun rises.*

Toshinokado Haruki

*The first bonito  
caught on the beach  
near the place called Under Snow  
melts like snow in my mouth.  
How tasty it is!*

Toshiiori Machikado

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Egret and Flowering Irises, 1832–34**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. X2005.9

Cat. no. 247

Scholars estimate that Hiroshige designed several hundred *kachō-ga* (bird-and-flower pictures). Twenty-five are in the larger *ōtanzakuban* format (about 39 x 17.5 cm), and most of these date between 1832 and 1834. By the late 1830s, the smaller and more economical *chūtanzakuban* format (about 39 x 12 cm) had become popular. This *ōtanzakuban* print is therefore one of Hiroshige's earliest works in the bird-and-flower genre. The artist's inspiration was a poem culled from a Zen anthology. It is a type of verse in which natural imagery demonstrates a Zen truth—in this case, "reality is subject to perception."

*White egrets land in a field,  
thousands of snowflakes.  
Yellow warblers in a tree,  
a single flowering branch.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Lioness and Cub**, 1832–34

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.337

Cat. no. 248

Although lions are not native to China, the Japanese have long referred to them as *karajishi*, or Chinese lions, because the first lion images seen in Japan came from China in the 9th century. This print's subject alludes to a well-known Chinese proverb about a lioness testing the strength and stamina of her cubs by pushing them off a cliff. She accepts only those able to climb back up the rocky precipice. In some versions, the lioness conducts this terrible test when the cubs are only three days old. The first line of the accompanying poem probably refers to cubs that survived into their fourth day.

*The four-day-old Chinese lion  
although just a little cub,  
is as graceful as a peony flower.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Ducks and Reeds**, 1834–39

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.587

Cat. no. 249

Like many of his bird-and-flower images in this large, vertical format, this print reveals Hiroshige's sophisticated approach to composition. The two ducks—one seen from above, the other in profile—create a dynamic balance. A long, thin reed gone to seed indicates the season and, in running the entire length of the paper, unifies the work.

*A duck calls softly;  
a breeze sets ripples moving  
over the water.*

(trans. Alfred H. Marks)

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Java Sparrow and Magnolia**, 1834–39

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.588

Cat. no. 250

Hiroshige captured the moment when a Java sparrow alighted on a slender magnolia branch, which bends beneath its weight. Twisting its head back, the bird attempts to maintain its equilibrium. A band of gradated blue along the print's upper edge is balanced by a similarly gradated band of yellow (now faded) along the bottom. The simple verse expresses the poet's delight in the ever-changing beauty of nature.

*How delightful!  
The magnolia flowers  
just after the cherry.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Wild Geese across the Moon, 1834–39**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.231

Cat. no. 251

Wild geese—which migrate to Japan in the fall—and the harvest moon are traditional symbols of autumn. The poet describes the perfection of a single evening when both appeared.

*Will it come again—  
another night like this one?  
Wild geese and the moon.*

(trans. Alfred H. Marks)

As in other bird-and-flower woodcuts by Hiroshige, the printer used specialized techniques such as *musenzuri* (no outlines) and *bokashizuri* (gradated pigment). This suggests that *kachō-ga* (bird-and-flower pictures) in the narrow *tanzakuban* format were not necessarily inexpensive, although they presumably were sold as substitutes for hanging-scroll paintings to people who could not afford the real ones.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Java Sparrow and Morning Glories, 1834–39**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.257

Cat. no. 252

The Java sparrow (or Java finch) is native to Indonesia. Dutch or Chinese merchants introduced the bird to Japan in the 17th century, and it quickly became a favorite cage bird. Hiroshige depicted an adult sparrow, with its dramatic black head, white cheeks, and red bill, perching on a morning glory vine. Cultivation of potted ornamental flowers was a popular pastime during the Edo period; morning glories were well liked because they were easily propagated. This composition thus features subjects that would have appealed to the many botanical and ornithological enthusiasts among Hiroshige's patrons (who belonged to the vast middle-class citizenry of Edo). Hiroshige designed other morning glory prints, several carrying the same poem that appears on this one.

*Morning glories bloom and fade  
every morning and evening.  
Looking at them is never boring.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Sparrows and Camellia in Snow**, 1837–48

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.277

Cat. no. 253

Among the first blossoms of spring (in the old lunar calendar), camellias were not incongruous with snowfall. They became favorites for New Year's floral arrangements, with housewives and tea masters alike. Humble, ubiquitous sparrows had long been a favorite subject of painters. Hiroshige featured them repeatedly in his bird-and-flower compositions.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Swallows Flying through Wisteria Vines**

From the series *Anthology of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*, 1837–44

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.556

Cat. no. 254

Hiroshige took the subjects for the eight-print series *Wakan rōeishū* (Anthology of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation) from a poetry anthology compiled by the courtier Fujiwara no Kintō (966–1041) around 1012. Kintō chose 588 Chinese-style poems by Chinese and Japanese poets and 216 Japanese-style verses by Japanese writers, suitable for reading aloud on occasions such as poetry gatherings, social meetings, and festivities. Eventually the anthology became a standard text for poetry classes and even found its way into elementary schools. The verse that inspired this image was written by the 10th-century nobleman Minamoto no Sukenori.

*The purple color lingers deep inside dewdrops  
on wisteria flowers.*

*An evening bird's voice travels in the mist over  
a green forest of bamboo.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Geese against the Moon**

From the series *Anthology of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*, 1837–44

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.557

Cat. no. 255

The famous farewell poem by the Chinese poet Bai Juyi (772–846) served as Hiroshige's inspiration for this composition.

*You are leaving for a place ten thousand miles away.  
Geese are heading north throughout the months of spring.  
Who knows how many years will pass  
before I can see them, and you, again?*

Bai Juyi's poem mentions the springtime migration of geese. However, the geese here are shown against a full moon, a combination emblematic of autumn. Hiroshige may have felt that an image evoking autumnal melancholy accorded well with the sadness of separating friends. In his masterly rendering, dark blue gradations define the moon and the edge of the ethereal clouds, enhancing the moon's brightness. The use of a specialized printing technique known as *mokume-tsubushi*, to show the faint grain of the woodblock, suggests that the publisher enlisted the services of highly skilled printers.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Pine Tree**

From the series *Anthology of Japanese and Chinese Poems for Recitation*, 1837–44

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.316

Cat. no. 256

For this image, Hiroshige drew on a poem by Minamoto no Shitagō (911–83). One of the Thirty-six Immortal Poets, Shitagō is best known for his *waka* (Japanese poems of thirty-one syllables), but he also excelled at Chinese-style poetry, such as the verse on this print.

*The warmest time of summer's ninety days makes you realize  
a faint breeze in a bamboo forest is bracing.*

*The green boughs of pine in midwinter's coldest morning  
remind you of a person's stern virtue.*

Hiroshige's massive pine seems to disappear into the clouds. Pink gradation along the print's upper edge and on a band of clouds suggests the rising sun. With its bold outlines and monumental composition, this print is more akin to classical paintings than to *ukiyo-e*, perhaps reflecting the fact that the series was intended for a select market of scholars.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Shadow Figures of a Lantern and a Hawk**

From the series *Improvised Shadow Performances*, ca. 1842

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.204

Cat. no. 257

As comic entertainment, shadow performances were among the many diversions, including music and dance, offered at teahouse parties during the Edo period. In the eleven-print series *Improvised Shadow Performances*, Hiroshige depicted figures making shadows on *shōji* screens by contorting their bodies. The images demonstrate how to create ingenious shadows and could easily have been used as a how-to guide for clever shadow making.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

### **Eight Shadow Figures**

From the series *New Edition of Shadow Making*, ca. 1842

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.426

Cat. no. 258

The three prints in Hiroshige's *New Edition of Shadow Making* series were probably considered *omocha-e* (toy pictures) intended for children. Creating shadows through hand gestures was a common pastime for children, and such pictures would have helped them build their repertoire. The eight patterns presented here (clockwise from upper right) are a turtle on a rock, a man wearing a Chinese-style hat, a rabbit, a *shachihoko* (a legendary creature with the head of dragon and the body of a dolphin), an owl, a fox, a snail, and a crow. Three include written instructions on how to make the shadows move: "open your fingers within your sleeve to move the owl's wings," "draw up your knee for the fox's back," "move the chopsticks up and down [snail]."

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Sasaki Takatsuna and Kajiwara Kagesue Competing to Take the Lead in Crossing the Uji River**

From the series *Great Heroes from China and Japan*, 1834–39

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.372

Cat. no. 259

Sasaki Takatsuna and Kajiwara Kagesue were 12th-century warriors. During one military campaign, their army faced the enemy across the Uji River. While other soldiers hesitated to cross the swift river, Takatsuna and Kagesue spurred their fine horses into the torrent, competing to reach the enemy line on the distant shore. Recorded in the 13th-century literary epic *Heike monogatari* (Tales of the Heike), this episode became a favorite theme of painters and ukiyo-e artists.

Here, Takatsuna on his white horse is already in the river, while Kagesue on his black steed is still on the shore. Kagesue's footman, holding a flag emblazoned with the Kajiwara family crest of arrow feathers, watches Takatsuna in apparent dismay. As this image suggests, Takatsuna bested his comrade, winning their friendly competition.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Zhang Fei Frightening Cao Cao's Army at the Bridge of Changban**

From the series *Great Heroes from China and Japan*, 1834–39

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.373

Cat. no. 260

This scene illustrates an episode from the battle of Changban, mentioned in the 14th-century Chinese historical novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. The book is based on events of the Three Kingdoms period (220–80), when the rulers of three states—Wei, Wu, and Shu—vied for supremacy. The story appealed to Japanese readers and was adapted for numerous Japanese novels and dramas. Most recently, it inspired the creation of the computer game *Sangokushi: Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.

The battle of Changban was a famous fight between Liu Bei (161–223), who later founded the kingdom of Shu, and Cao Cao (155–220), the ruler of Wei. In 208, Cao Cao started a military campaign to expand his territory into the region occupied by Liu Bei. After winning an initial battle, Cao Cao's army advanced to Changban bridge, where Liu Bei's general Zhang Fei was the sole defender. According to the novel, Zhang Fei stood resolutely on the bridge and addressed the enemy forces so fiercely that Cao Cao retreated.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Bingo—Kannon Temple at Abuto**

From the series *Famous Places of the Sixty-odd Provinces*,  
1853

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.677  
Cat. no. 263

Built on the rocky cliffs of Abuto, on the coast of Bingo Province (modern-day Hiroshima Prefecture), the Zen temple of Bandaiji was dedicated to the Buddhist deity Kannon, believed by locals to be a protector of fishermen. Perched some thirty feet above the Inland Sea, the temple, popularly known as Kannon-dera, was an impressive place that attracted many sightseers.

The series *Famous Places of the Sixty-odd Provinces* includes one image for each of Japan's sixty-six provinces except Musashi, for which Hiroshige designed an extra image, and two compositions representing the small islands of Oki and Iki. After the unprecedented success of *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*, demand for Hiroshige's landscapes surged, and he seems to have diligently produced one series after another.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Harima—Maiko Beach**

From the series *Famous Places of the Sixty-odd Provinces*,  
1853

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.284  
Cat. no. 264

The scenic coastline of Maiko, with its ancient pines and miles of sandy beach, has been a popular tourist destination throughout Japanese history. Fairly close to the imperial capital of Kyoto, it had numerous teahouses that catered to visitors. The yellow thatched roofs pictured here probably represent such businesses. Three travelers shown enjoying the view are dwarfed by the towering pines.

Around 1850, relatively late in his career, Hiroshige started to design landscapes in vertical formats. Prints in the series *Famous Places of the Sixty-odd Provinces* show how he had begun using verticality to convey spatial recession. Here, the lowered vantage point and close-up views of trees in the foreground emphasize the long coastline and create the impression of dramatically receding space.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Fulling Cloth in Settsu Province**

From the series *Six Jewel Rivers of Various Provinces*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.78.64.34

Cat. no. 265

In this moonlit scene, two women soften cloth by pounding it with wooden mallets. The full moon, migrating geese, and pampas grass ripe with seed indicate that the season is autumn and link the image to a poem by the 12th-century nobleman Minamoto no Toshiyori.

*The sound of the wind  
in pine trees,  
combined with the pounding of silk,  
deepens the autumnal melancholy  
of a village by the Tama River.*

Pictorial and literary imagery of women fulling cloth has a long history. Traditionally, farm women undertook this task at night and during the winter season, when they had fewer chores. The act of fulling cloth first became a metaphor for loneliness in ancient China. The Chinese poet Li Bo (701–62) described women fulling cloth far into the night when their husbands were away on military campaigns.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Iris Garden at Horikiri**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Mrs. Carl W. Jones in memory of her husband P:13,719

Cat. no. 266

Horikiri Iris Garden still exists in Tokyo. According to legend, a local farmer who was fond of irises planted part of his land with as many varieties as he could acquire. By the early 19th century, the area had been converted into a public garden. Located on the outskirts of Edo, it became popular among city residents as a destination for early summer excursions. Here, visitors are shown enjoying the garden at its peak.

Hiroshige exploited the vertical format by placing several tall, graceful irises in the foreground. He made the visitors small in scale so that seen through the irises they appear convincingly far away.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Distant View of Atake in an Evening Shower over  
Ōhashi Bridge**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Mrs. Carl W. Jones in memory of her husband P:13,718

Cat. no. 267

This composition became famous in the West because Vincent van Gogh made a copy of it in oils in 1887. Western painters like van Gogh admired ukiyo-e artists' intimate views of nature and their focus on ordinary people—evident in this image of townspeople rushing across Ōhashi bridge to escape a sudden shower. The ominous clouds and the postures of the hapless people on the bridge suggest that the rain has just started. Atake, on the far shore, is rendered in gray tonalities that convey the obscuring effect of rain and the dim light of a cloudy evening sky. To achieve such remarkable results, Hiroshige collaborated with superb craftsmen. The soft, irregular shape of the low-hanging dark clouds reveals the care taken by the printer, and the extremely fine lines representing falling rain attest to the extraordinary skill of the carver.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Maple Tree at Mama with View of Tekona Shrine and Bridge**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.193

Cat. no. 268

Although Mama village was outside Edo's city limits, Hiroshige probably included it in his *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo* because many Edo residents went there to see the famous maple tree of Guhōji temple. The towering tree's wide-spreading branches formed a brilliant red canopy in autumn.

Hiroshige pictured the view as if seen from high in the tree, whose branches and leaves frame the composition. Zigzagging into the distance, the tree-lined roadway to the temple gives an impression of great depth. In the middle ground, a short land bridge leads to a shrine dedicated to Tekona, a beautiful woman of legend who drowned herself because of her numerous suitors' ceaseless squabbling.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Fireworks at Ryōgoku Bridge**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1858

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.378

Cat. no. 269

Situated on the shores of Edo Bay, the city of Edo was defined by a network of rivers and canals. Bridges became vital links for travel and communication and also gathering places comparable to the plazas of Western cities. Erected over the Sumida River in 1659 or 1661, Ryōgoku was Edo's second major bridge.

In the early 1730s, the government sponsored an event commemorating citizens who had died in a cholera epidemic. The memorial, which included a display of fireworks, became an annual observance. Hiroshige devoted more than half of this composition to the night sky, illuminated by sparkling fireworks. On the river below, pleasure boats from which people view the pyrotechnics are festooned with red lanterns that form tiny points of light on the deep-hued water. At first glance, Ryōgoku's broad arch is a dark silhouette against the river, but a closer look reveals a crowd of tiny figures, each casting a fleeting shadow.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Drum Bridge and Sunset Hill at Meguro**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.286

Cat. no. 271

This is one of seven snow scenes in *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*. In ukiyo-e printmaking, the white portions of a design, including representations of snow, were commonly left unprinted. Late in his career, however, Hiroshige began using the technique employed here, in which some of the snow is printed in pale gray to impart subtle depth and texture.

*Taiko-bashi*, or drum bridges, were so called because the arch of the bridge, together with its reflection in the water, formed a circular shape suggesting a round drum. Such bridges were probably inspired by Chinese “moon” bridges. The summit of Yūhi no oka (Sunset Hill), on the left, was a popular spot from which to watch the sun set.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**New Year's Eve Foxfires at the Hackberry Tree in Ōji**

From the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, 1857

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.384

Cat. no. 272

Most prints in Hiroshige's *One Hundred Views of Edo* illustrate actual views, but this scene is imaginary. In Shinto belief, foxes are messengers of the gods and protectors of shrines dedicated to Inari, the god of grain. Ōji Shrine, in what is now the northern section of Tokyo, is one of the most important Inari shrines in Japan. According to legend, foxes from throughout eastern Japan journey there to pay their respects to Inari on New Year's Eve. They gather at a nearby hackberry tree and don formal clothes for the event. Foxes' supernatural power enables them to emit the mysterious small flames seen here. White foxes are supposed to be especially old and potent. Hiroshige pictured the foxes beneath the ancient tree, their small fires eerily illuminating their pale bodies. Shades of gray create an evocative atmosphere for the supernatural scene.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Triptych of Snow Viewing by the Sumida River, a Famous Place of Edo**, ca. 1834

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.329a–c

Cat. no. 275

This is one of Hiroshige's earliest triptychs. Using the full width of all three panels, he created a panoramic view of people on an outing along the Sumida River to enjoy new-fallen snow. The absence of buildings suggests the less developed east bank, probably north of Ryōgoku bridge, where Edo maintained a pastoral atmosphere into the 19th century. An anonymous verse on the left panel echoes the tranquillity of the scene.

*Falling over the Sumida River  
snowflakes disappear  
as they touch the water,  
remaining only  
on the plovers.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Winter: Snow over the Sumida River**

From the series *Famous Places of Edo in the Four Seasons*,  
ca. 1834

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.271  
Cat. no. 276

Hiroshige liked this tall format, which he used for many of his bird-and-flower compositions. This print is from a set of the four seasons, each bearing a poem. Here, the verse complements Hiroshige's image of a lonely raftsman in the harsh beauty of a winter landscape.

*Falling over the Sumida River  
snowflakes disappear  
as they touch the water,  
remaining only  
on the plovers.*

Subtle gradation of the sky from pale gray to black, along the print's top edge, provides atmospheric gloom and a contrasting background for countless white snowflakes falling on the raftsman's sedge hat and straw coat and collecting on the raft he maneuvers through the icy blue water. The successful execution of this design owes a great deal to the skill of Hiroshige's printers.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Snow Scene by the Fuji River**, ca. 1842

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.280

Cat. no. 277

Tall prints made by joining two pieces of paper together were known as *kakemono-e* because their proportions resembled those of hanging scrolls (*kakemono*), designed to fit within architectural alcoves (*tokonoma*). Since hanging scrolls were mounted with borders of sumptuous brocades, *kakemono-e* were often embellished with decorative, but less expensive, paper mountings.

Among Hiroshige's *kakemono-e*, this composition and *View of the Monkey Bridge in Kōshū Province* (on view nearby) are perhaps the most famous examples in this time-honored format. Here, the artist pictured the Fuji River flowing along the side of Mount Fuji toward Suruga Bay and the Pacific Ocean. Hiroshige's monochromatic palette, typical for snow scenes, recalls Chinese-style ink painting. Brightening the composition, hues of imported Prussian blue accentuate the Fuji River's clear, cold waters.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**View of the Monkey Bridge in Kōshū Province, 1841–42**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.279

Cat. no. 278

Sarhashi bridge, over the Katsura River, is part of the Kōshūkaidō, a major roadway constructed in the late 18th century that leads westward from Edo castle to Kōshū Province. Sarhashi is a plank bridge without vertical supports. According to legend, a Korean engineer began to build such bridges after observing monkeys crossing a valley by clinging to vines. Consequently, bridges in this style came to be called *sarhashi*, or monkey bridges.

Hiroshige took advantage of the long *kakemono-e* format to capture the imposing formations of the gorge. In this peaceful night view, the bridge and far-off mountains frame a full moon, with a farming village in the distance. In his diary of 1841, Hiroshige wrote that he traveled to Kōshū to paint a banner dedicated to a local guardian deity and while there made a drawing of the bridge. He also noted that the beauty of the area was beyond description and difficult to depict with his “limited talent.”

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**View of the Whirlpools in Awa Province, 1857**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Provenance unknown X2002.1.59a–c

Cat. no. 281

In 1857, the year before he died, Hiroshige designed one of his most ambitious undertakings—a set of three triptychs celebrating the scenic beauty of Japan. Each of these landscape panoramas illustrates a different aspect of nature: the forbidding power of mountains cloaked in snow (*Mountains and River at Kiso Gorge*), the calm of a moonlit bay (*Eight Views of Kanazawa in Musashi Province at Night*; on view nearby), and the restless energy of the sea in this composition. Together, they form the traditional subject grouping *setsu-getsu-ka* (snow, moon, flowers). Here, the whirlpools of the Naruto Strait, between the islands of Shikoku and Awaji, form aquatic “blossoms” with their spiraling currents. Attracting throngs of visitors each year, the sight remains as popular today as it was in Hiroshige’s time.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Eight Views of Kanazawa in Musashi Province  
at Night, 1857**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.342a–c  
Cat. no. 282

Hiroshige's *setsu-getsu-ka* (snow, moon, flowers) set of three triptychs (two are on view) exhibits compositional devices that the artist had refined throughout his long career: a bird's-eye vantage point, recession into the deep distance, and a spare palette. These masterly panoramic views in the large triptych format rank among Hiroshige's most impressive works. In contrast to his earlier landscapes, including many in his extremely successful Tōkaidō series (ca. 1833), they do not feature human figures. Given Hiroshige's ability to use figures as a means of engaging the viewer, it is notable that these monumental landscapes from the end of his life are nearly devoid of figures.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Lantern Plants as *Mitate* of Children at Play**, ca. 1842

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.109

Cat. no. 285

In summer, *hōzuki*, or lantern plants (a type of ground-cherry), bear red fruits surrounded by papery orange husks. Using a needle, Japanese children poke a small hole in the fruit, through which they remove the flesh and seeds. Blowing into the empty fruit, they delight in producing trumpet-like sounds. Capitalizing on the popularity of *hōzuki* among children, street vendors began to offer the plants for sale in the Edo period.

Hiroshige pictured the *hōzuki* as dancing children. The round, red fruits represent the children's heads, and their bodies appear to be peeled-back lanterns. Two of the *hōzuki* children carry younger ones on their backs. Three hold fans made of *umi-hōzuki* (*hōzuki* of the sea), or whelk egg cases, also prized as blow toys. Since children commonly held hands and danced in lines during the Bon Festival in mid-July, these dancing *hōzuki* children may allude to that custom.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Gift: Spotted Lilies**

From the series *Flowers as Mitate of Three Ideograms: Wealth, Prosperity, and Longevity*, ca. 1844

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.173  
Cat. no. 286

Although most of Hiroshige's fan prints are landscapes, he created a number of series in fan format with floral designs. This fan print is from a series in which three types of flowers stand for three types of good fortune: wealth, prosperity, and longevity. Spotted lilies represent prosperity (*roku*), which can connote a "gift," as is made clear in the accompanying inscription.

*Spotted lilies among all others  
are gifts from heaven because  
their roots are edible, delicious and nutritious.*

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Nojima, Eboshijima, Natsushima, and Sarushima—  
Islands off Kanazawa in Bushū Province**

From the series *Islands of Various Provinces*, 1843–46

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.313

Cat. no. 287

In the fan-print series *Islands of Various Provinces*, Hiroshige depicted many of the small islands of Japan. This view from Kanazawa Beach, today part of Yokohama, shows three islands. From right to left, they are Eboshijima (so named because its shape resembles an *eboshi*, the tall lacquered hat worn by courtiers), Natsushima, and Sarushima. Nojima is the tip of the peninsula at the far left. Hiroshige introduced some local color by showing women gathering seashells on the beach. The full moon and migrating geese signify that it is autumn. Such a scene, mounted on the ribs of a fan, offered the viewer visual relief from the summer's heat with the promise of cooler evenings to come.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Lady Murasaki at Ishiyamadera Temple, 1847–48**

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.78.65.69

Cat. no. 288

The Heian-period noblewoman Murasaki Shikibu (active ca. 973–ca. 1016) is renowned as the author of *Genji monogatari* (Tale of Genji). Since its creation, her fifty-four-chapter novel of courtly romance has been a rich source of inspiration for artists and poets.

According to one account, Murasaki came up with the idea for her novel while staying at Ishiyamadera temple in Ōmi Province (modern-day Shiga Prefecture). She was copying holy sutras and praying for inspiration when the harvest moon rose against the dark sky. Suddenly, she conceived the novel's storyline and jotted it on the back of the sutra paper. In this fan print, Murasaki wears the multilayered costume of a ranking Heian-period woman and sits at a low writing table, holding a brush. Seen in the distance, the Karahashi bridge, which spans the Seta River near its mouth, helps identify Murasaki's location as Ishiyamadera temple, also near the river's mouth.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Snow at Akashi**

From the series *Snow, Moon, and Flower Pictures from the Tale of Genji*, 1854

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.78.64.42  
Cat. no. 289

The well-known writer Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783–1842) began publishing a serialized takeoff on the 11th-century courtly novel *Tale of Genji* in 1829. Ryūtei's hero, Mitsuuji, is the son of the 15th-century Ashikaga shogun Yoshimasa but is meant to satirize Prince Genji. Both men, for example, are notorious womanizers. Unlike the original novel, which focuses on the characters' emotions, Ryūtei's version features action and adventure.

Soon after Ryūtei's installments began to appear, publishers started issuing single prints inspired by his story. Such images, and others based on similar satires, were known as *Genji-e* (Genji pictures). Hiroshige, too, created *Genji-e* prints. Here, the central figure is Mitsuuji, who is visiting a shrine with his attendants. They stand overlooking the beach of Akashi (in modern-day Hyōgo Prefecture).

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797–1858

**Distant View of Zōzu Mountain in Sanuki Province,**  
1856

Color woodblock print (*nishiki-e*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.78.65.70

Cat. no. 290

Zōzu (Elephant Head) Mountain is the location of Kotohira Shrine, dedicated to the god of agriculture and navigation. The shrine attracted pilgrims from all over the country, who wore distinctive white outfits and carried large rectangular boxes on their backs. In this fan print, such a pilgrim is crossing a bridge. The two women in the foreground (one carrying a walking stick) are probably also en route to the shrine. Unburdened by the belongings needed for a long journey, they likely represent visitors from nearby villages.

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Totoya Hokkei, 1780–1850

**Sugoroku (Japanese Backgammon)**

From the series *Children's Games*, 1820–22

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.78.63.30

Cat. no. 294

The women pictured here have coiffures and clothing typical of the Genroku era (1688–1704). This reflects a nostalgic trend between 1804 and 1830 among Edo sophisticates, including *kyōka* poets, who romanticized earlier eras. The women are engaged in *ban-sugoroku*, a game similar to backgammon, played on a board (*ban*) by two people. The one who first moves all fifteen pieces over to the opponent's side is the winner. Hokkei's *Children's Games* series was likely commissioned by the *kyōka* poetry circle Hanazonoren. Poems by two members appear on this print, one of which reads:

*You must be able to get  
anything you want anytime you ask.  
Look at how our sugoroku game is going, my dear!  
The dice keep giving you  
any numbers you need.*

Kinreisha Otonari

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Totoya Hokkei, 1780–1850

**View of the Monkey Bridge, 1824**

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.254

Cat. no. 295

Spanning the Katsura River, which runs through the mountains of Kōshū Province (modern-day Yamanashi Prefecture), Monkey Bridge is known for its unusual cantilevered structure. Legend has it that a Korean scholar visiting Japan in the 8th century devised this method of bridge building after watching monkeys cross a ravine by holding onto wisteria vines hanging from the cliffs.

Hokkei designed this image to mark the coming of 1824, the year of the monkey in Chinese astrology. The rising sun, emerging here from behind a mountain peak, is an auspicious symbol of the New Year. *Surimono* such as this were typically made for distribution to members of *kyōka* poetry groups, and two poems are included here.

*How many years have passed  
and how many more springs will come to  
the Monkey Bridge  
since the Korean scholar  
crossed it for the first time?*

Gurendō Nagakubo

*As if connecting the clouds  
drifting across, here in the village of cranes,  
the Monkey Bridge crosses  
even above the haze  
hanging over the treetops.*

Yomo-utagaki Magao

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Totoya Hokkei, 1780–1850

**Kamata**

From the series *Trip to Enoshima Island*, 1833

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.183

Cat. no. 296

This print is from a series picturing sixteen places along the route from Edo to Enoshima Island. Excursions to Enoshima were popular with Edo residents since the distance (about thirty miles) was only a two-day walk. A shrine dedicated to Benzaiten, a goddess of music, attracted people who liked to combine traveling with religious pilgrimage. In 1833, the year Hokkei designed this print, Enoshima Shrine exhibited its special statue of Benzaiten, offering pilgrims a rare opportunity to see the holy image.

The Buddhist swastika (*manji*) above the red title cartouche is the mark of the poetry group Manjiren, and a verse by one of Manjiren's members mentions the blossoming plum trees of Kamata, a village on the way to Enoshima.

*Plum blossoms perfume the air.  
As viewers pass each other  
carrying the scent on their sleeves  
the fragrance follows them.  
Spring is here in Kamata!*

Kenchōtei Fusako

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Totoya Hokkei, 1780–1850

**Ryūdō**

From the series *Trip to Enoshima Island*, 1833

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.182

Cat. no. 297

Ryūdō (literally, “dragon’s cave”) is located on Enoshima Island. Visitors usually climbed the hill to offer prayers to Benzaiten, goddess of music, in her shrine at the top, and then descended the far side to the rocky shore and Ryūdō cave. Surrounded by the Pacific Ocean on three sides, this spot afforded a magnificent view of Mount Fuji and became a popular site for picnics. The series *Trip to Enoshima Island* was published by the Manjiren poetry society to commemorate the New Year of 1833. Two poems by Manjiren members appear at the top of this print.

*As a souvenir of the island  
I bought a colored cloth  
with a pattern of bush warblers.  
A tasteful accompaniment  
would be flower-colored seashells.*

Shinrintei Kimori

*The first cry of a bush warbler  
is a springtime jewel.  
It is as precious as the famous seashells called tsukihi-gai,  
likened to the glow of the moon [tsuki] and sun [hi].  
Two jewels, here on the beach of Enoshima.*

Shinsuitei Maki

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Totoya Hokkei, 1780–1850

**Courtesan Looking at a Foreign Ship, 1818–44**

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.186

Cat. no. 298

Before becoming a full-time artist, Hokkei ran a fish retailing business, hence his surname, Totoya (fishmonger). He lived and worked in Edo, and most of his *surimono* prints were commissioned by poetry societies there. The poem on this print describes the special charm of the Maruyama, the licensed pleasure quarter in the city of Nagasaki, which at that time had the only port open to international trade.

*It's a mild day  
here in the Maruyama  
in warm Nagasaki.  
I'd rather be here,  
especially on a day like this.*

Established in 1642, the Maruyama became one of Japan's most thriving pleasure quarters. A document recorded 103 brothels and 766 courtesans in that area in the 1670s. The main customers were the Chinese and Dutch merchants who were permitted to trade with Japan. A high-ranking courtesan is shown here, her elaborately dressed hair and gorgeous *uchikake* robe advertise her elite status.

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Sonsai Kōitsu, active ca. 1825–ca. 1835

**Old Man Who Made Blossoms Bloom, 1825–35**

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.191

Cat. no. 299

The old man here is Hanasakajijii, the hero of a Japanese folktale. After a spiteful neighbor killed his beloved pet dog, Hanasakajijii spread the dog's ashes beneath a dead tree, which then miraculously blossomed. Kōitsu depicted a vigorously budding plum tree, the harbinger of spring. Four poems, by four poets, inscribed on the print describe the coming of spring.

*Although the spring breeze  
blew the flowers off  
a plum tree,  
the scent remains  
like a mist in my sleeves.*

Bōkōrō Mitsume

*Dressed in a robe  
of mist,  
my shoulders square up  
with the fresh fragrance  
of plum flowers.*

Chōkanbō Sekiō

*The balmy sky of spring  
arrests my old eyes.  
The plum scent  
remaining in my sleeves  
greet my old nose.*

Jōsuitei Shitami

*Here I am  
as aged as the old man  
I read about long ago  
in a children's book.  
Let's make the ancient plum tree bloom!*

Shūchōdō Monoyana

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Utagawa Kuninao, 1795–1854

**Sun Wukong Exhaling Manzai Performers, 1836**

Color woodblock print (*surimono*)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.48

Cat. no. 300

The monkey Sun Wukong is a character in the epic Chinese novel *Xiyouji* (Journey to the West), written in the late 16th century. Based on the travel diary of the famous Chinese monk Xuanzang, who traveled to India to study Buddhism, the novel is a fictionalized version of the monk's long and difficult pilgrimage. One of three creatures sent by the Buddha to protect Xuanzang on the journey, Sun Wukong has the magical ability to replicate himself. In the story, he stuffs a clump of his own fur into his mouth and exhales, and the airborne hairs transform into miniature versions of himself.

Instead of thousands of Wukong replicas appearing in the exhaled breath, Kuninao pictured two shadowy figures dressed as *manzai* performers. *Manzai* (literally, "ten thousand ages") is an auspicious and comical dance-and-song routine performed at New Year's by two entertainers as a means of bestowing blessings on the community. Two poems inscribed in the square cartouche strike a celebratory note.

*The sun is so glittering on this spring day  
that its light could reach the Chinese capital.  
How auspicious is this New Year!  
Let's enjoy the elegant dance of manzai performers.  
May Japan last for ten thousand years.*

Morinoia Kiyokage

*As blown from the monkey's mouth  
the puff produced something different,  
something more amusing than clones.  
Here they are the manzai performers,  
completely appropriate for this spring day.*

Fukuhō Arimi

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