

+

+

Utagawa Toyokuni, 1769–1825

Picture Books of Amusements of Actors on Three Floors, 1801

Color woodblock book in 2 volumes, with text by Shikitei Sanba (1776–1822)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.77.39.4.1,2
Cat. no. 131

For this two-volume work, the celebrated writer Shikitei Sanba provided anecdotes about Kabuki actors and playwrights, and Utagawa Toyokuni supplied illustrations of actors in private, informal moments backstage. Printed in color and bearing small cartouches identifying the actors, the books sold well and a considerable quantity were produced.

Shown here is a ceremonial meeting between the high-ranking actor Ichikawa Hakuen (left) and the younger aspiring actor Arashi Hinasuke II. Hakuen is inscribing a lantern for Hinasuke.

+

+

+

+

The greenroom pictured here was located on the floor below the Kabuki stage. Because of its proximity to the action, it was reserved for the top-ranking stars. The small cartouches identify the actors (right to left): Ogino Isaburō, Arashi Sanpachi, Iwai Kiyotarō, and Nakamura Kanzaemon.

Such behind-the-scenes glimpses into the workings of the Kabuki theater were of great interest to fans, who had little hope of ever venturing backstage.

+

+

+

+

Utagawa Toyohiro, active 1788–died 1829
Picture Book: Children of the East,
1804

Color woodblock book in 2 volumes, with text
by Nansenshō Somabito (1749–1807)

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.77.39.5.1,2
Cat. no. 133

This book in two volumes contains twelve
pictures of festivals and events held by

Edo's major temples and shrines. Each
double-page composition represents one
month. An explanation outlining the signifi-
cance of each event appears in the upper
portion of each image, and an essay by
the popular novelist Nansenshō Somabito
describes Edoites' favorite amusements.

The event pictured here is Shōga-ichi,
the Ginger Fair, held at Shinmei Shrine, in
the southern part of Edo. In September the

shrine hosts a fair at which townspeople
sell locally grown ginger and products such
as ginger-flavored candy. Visitors can also
purchase *chigibako*, tiered ceremonial boxes
like the one next to the seated gentleman
in this composition. Made at the shrine,
chigibako are believed to possess talismanic
powers. This man appears to be accepting a
cup of tea from a waitress—tea most likely
brewed with ground ginger.

+

+

+

+

This illustration shows visitors crossing the
river to Mokuboji temple for the Umewaka
Festival, held during the third lunar month.
Umewakamaru was son of a high-ranking
courtier of the 10th century. He was still a boy
when his father died, and he was taken to a
temple on Mount Hiei to be raised as a monk.
When he was twelve, he was abducted by a
child trafficker who planned to sell him in
the far north. En route, Umewakamaru fell

ill and died, and his body was abandoned
on the shore of the Sumida River. Mokuboji
temple was constructed on the site, and an
annual memorial service for the repose of
the boy's soul has been conducted there
ever since. To mark the occasion, the temple
also hosts a lively fair. The large red boxes
probably belong to a vendor who will hawk
his wares.

+

+

+

+

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

Utagawa Hiroshige designed many series with the title *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*. The first, launched around 1833, is now

known as the Hōeidō edition. It was 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, probably in 1834. The set owned by the Minneapolis Institute of Arts lacks the preface and likely dates somewhat later.

These two pages show Okitsu, the

seventeenth station, located near the famously picturesque pine-covered sand spits of Miho-no-Matsubara, visible in the background. Two sumo wrestlers have come to enjoy the scenery. One rides in a palanquin, requiring the strength of four bearers to keep him aloft. The other sits astride a horse that hangs its head, bowed down by its heavy load. Hiroshige was a master at enlivening his compositions with such gentle humor.

+

+

+

+

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

Hiroshige's inspiration for this illustration of Goyu, the thirty-fifth station on the

famous Tōkaidō roadway, may have been a serialized adventure by the novelist Jippensha Ikku published between 1802 and 1822. Called *Hiza kurige* (Shank's Mare), it features two hapless men, Kita and Yaji, who travel the Tokaido road together. Hiroshige's scene recalls humorous accounts of Kita and Yaji set upon by aggressive women trying to entice them into restaurants or inns. Here, two weary

travelers endure just such a fate as they arrive in town at dusk. The women's methods seem to be effective, since another traveler already sits inside the inn's entrance and appears to be removing his sandals in preparation for washing his feet in a wooden bucket being delivered by a stooped elderly maid.

+

+