

# Seven Masters: 20th-Century Japanese Woodblock Prints from the Wells Collection

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U. S. Bank Gallery

## *Shin Hanga*, the “New Print”

Early in the 20th century, a desire to revive the great Japanese tradition of woodblock prints (known as ukiyo-e) in the context of Japan’s dynamic, modern life gave rise to an art movement known as *shin hanga*, the “new print.” At a time when art forms were undergoing changes following Japan’s rapid Westernization and industrialization, a small group of artists created beautiful and enticing pictures that were reproduced as prints of almost unsurpassed quality. This revival succeeded because the woodblock print conveyed a unique artistic expression that set it apart from established forms like ink painting and from new reprographic media such as lithography.

*Shin hanga* resurrected the highest production values of the distant past, with the use of thick mulberry paper and rich mineral pigments, special features like embossing and mica backgrounds, and an emphasis on the swirly movement of the rubbing tool, or *baren*. Each ukiyo-e had been printed by the hundreds—even thousands for the most popular designs—but *shin hanga* were produced in limited editions to guarantee exclusivity.

The seven artists presented here played vital roles in the development of *shin hanga*. The lives and work of Hashiguchi Goyō, Yamamura Kōka, Natori Shunsen, Itō Shinsui, Kawase Hasui, Yamakawa Shūhō, and Torii Kotondo showcase the diversity of this art form and offer insights into a fascinating phenomenon that began one hundred years ago. Another birthday to celebrate!

## The *Shin Hanga* Movement

In the spring of 1907, the entrepreneurial publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō (1885–1962) enlisted the painter Takahashi Shōtei (Hiroaki, 1871–1945) to design landscape prints for the foreign market. An

antiques shop in Karuizawa, a resort town popular with Western tourists, sold them for him. Shōtei’s modestly sized prints tapped into a nostalgia for Edo-period ukiyo-e and made perfect souvenirs. Shōtei ultimately designed over seven hundred prints for Watanabe, most of them untitled, undated, and on relatively thin paper.

The year 1915 marked the real beginning of the *shin hanga* movement. In the spring, Watanabe saw an exhibition of watercolors by the Austrian painter Friedrich (Fritz) Capelari (1884–1950) and thought Capelari would be a good designer for a new type of print he envisioned. It would feature the emergent Japan, with new artistic ideals but not too avant-garde. Capelari produced twelve designs for Watanabe in 1915, mostly landscapes and beautiful women. Aiming to enlarge his portfolio—he now sold original ukiyo-e, reproductions of ukiyo-e, new souvenir prints, and *shin hanga*—Watanabe engaged the Englishman Charles W. Bartlett (1860–1940) and also Hashiguchi Goyō (1880–1921). Bartlett’s first prints appeared in 1915, and Goyō’s one design for Watanabe, *Woman at the Bath*, in 1916. Demand for *shin hanga* grew, and Watanabe soon hired more Japanese artists as he strove to re-create the three pillars of ukiyo-e: Kabuki actors, beautiful women, and landscapes.

## Creating a Woodblock Print

The print designer first makes a rough graphite sketch on thin paper. Next, a sharper drawing is prepared, which is then precisely traced onto translucent paper, producing the final drawing (*hanshita-e*) that will guide the block carver.

The *hanshita-e* goes to the carver, who flips it over and glues it onto a block of cherry wood. Where the drawing is white, wood is carved away, leaving the dark outlines raised. This is the key block. A few impressions are made from it, in black ink, and given to the artist for color specifications. Instead of written instructions, some *shin hanga* designers painted the key-block impression with watercolors, to resemble the final print.

With the color directions in hand, the carver makes a key-block impression for each color. Like the *hanshita-e*, these are glued onto woodblocks, and a separate carving is made for each color.

All the blocks, with the color instructions, are delivered to the printer, who prints on thick, moistened mulberry paper, applying

pressure with a baren, or rubbing tool. Generally, the key block is printed first and then each color individually.

The printer may be asked for various special effects. Embossing is done by pressing the paper firmly, with the elbow, onto an un-inked block. Gradation is achieved by moistening a block, applying color and glue with a brush, and then printing in the usual way. A mica background is created by printing a layer of dissolved glue onto a freshly printed background color and sprinkling mica powder over the glue.

## A Quintet Group Production

The making of Japanese woodblock prints changed little over the centuries. Most prints (apart from 20th-century *sōsaku hanga*) are not the work of a single, autonomous artist. Rather, they are the product of a collaboration, with the publisher as ultimate decision maker. In general, the publisher was also the seller, aiming to attract buyers and sell as many impressions of a print as possible.

Japanese prints are composite works of art. Their creation involved a quintet of publisher, designer, carver, printer, and potential buyer. The buyers, in aggregate “the market,” decided the fate of the final print and thus influenced the production process. Their initial role was passive—the publisher simply attempted to identify their taste. But once a print was issued, the decision to purchase it (or not) determined whether it would be a commercial success and benefit the other parties. In some cases, a sixth person entered the process as commissioner or patron, financially subsidizing the print and therefore having a say in the design.

## Kabuki

Kabuki emerged in the early 17th century as a licentious song-and-dance act performed by female troupes at festivals. In an attempt to dictate public morality, the government decreed in 1652 that only adult men could perform on the Kabuki stage. Henceforth, female roles were played by male actors who evoked femininity through their studied gestures and speech.

Kabuki appealed to the burgeoning class of commoners in Japan’s newly prosperous cities. The plays were mostly warrior tales of bravery and betrayal, set in Japan’s distant past, or melodramatic domestic dramas sensationalizing actual events, such as the double

suicide of star-crossed lovers. Exaggerated movements and stylized speech characterized the acting.

Kabuki actors specialized in particular roles and became famous for developing personal styles. Intense stage makeup (*kumadori*), accentuating the muscles and veins around the eyes and mouth, conveyed a character’s bold and bombastic personality. Elaborate costumes, densely embroidered with bright colors and gold threads, added to the sumptuous and vivid effect.

The vast majority of woodblock prints produced during the Edo period (1603–1868) referenced the Kabuki theater and helped catapult actors to stardom. Some prints were published and sold in conjunction with specific performances. Others memorialized present or past actors, showing them in roles they perfected and popularized.

In the early 20th century, Kabuki had to compete with Japanese interest in Western theater and opera. Many Kabuki theaters closed and the number of actors declined, but the tradition continues today.

## Frederick B. Wells III (1928–2005)

Frederick B. Wells III amassed a superb collection of Japanese prints. A longtime trustee of the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Wells was intimately familiar with the museum’s print collection, and in 2002 he and his wife, Ellen, generously donated their own collection of some 270 prints, the core of which was an exceptional group of shin hanga. In an instant, the museum had extended its representation of the grand Japanese woodblock print tradition into the 20th century.

Fred Wells was a scion of one of the great grain families of the Midwest. His grandfather Frederick Brown Wells joined F. H. Peavey and Company in 1891, eventually becoming president. Fred grew up in Wayzata, Minnesota, and attended Blake School (then a private boys’ school). In high school, love of the outdoors led him to enroll at Thacher, an unconventional school near Los Angeles, where academics were balanced with ranch life and the curriculum included sports, music, theater, and literature. He went on to Yale University, graduating in 1950. Like his father and grandfather, he joined Peavey, where he started out at an elevator to learn firsthand about grain. Later, as a vice president of international development, he traveled in Asia. He retired in 1976 but remained on Peavey’s board of directors.

In retirement, Wells pursued his dream of opening a gallery for Asian art. First, however, he earned a master’s degree, with an emphasis

in East Asian history. He opened Asian Fine Arts on Second Avenue in downtown Minneapolis in 1981. The gallery focused on ceramics but also carried Japanese woodblock prints, decorative hanging scrolls and folding screens, and Korean furniture. Smitten with *shin hanga*, Wells made that his personal area of collecting, seeking out images that appealed to him and were in pristine condition.

Fred Wells became a museum trustee in 1982, serving until 1989. At first, he and Ellen supported the newly founded Department of Textiles and made occasional gifts of Asian art objects. In the late 1990s, the newly created gallery of Korean art prompted their donation of works to that collection. Reelected to the board in 2001, Fred served until his death in 2005, when the community lost a remarkable person known for his generosity, kindness, humility, and unfailing good humor.

## Introduction



Friedrich (Fritz) Capelari, Austrian, 1884–1950

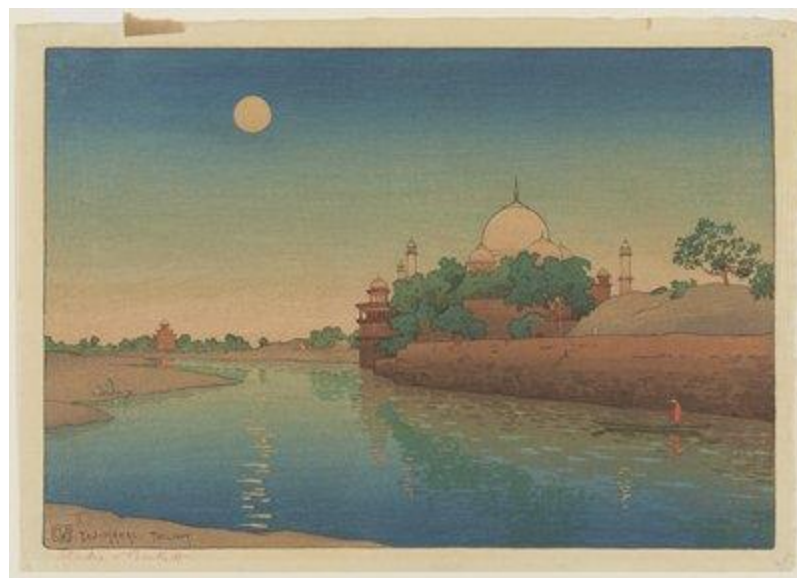
**Umbrellas**, 1915

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

The John and Shirley Nilsen Endowment for Art Acquisition 2014.66

This is thought to be the first of twelve designs produced by the publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō and the Austrian painter Friedrich (Fritz) Capelari in 1915, marking the beginning of the *shin hanga* movement. After seeing an exhibition of Capelari's subtle, romanticized watercolors of scenic views and local people—inspired by the artist's time in China, Java, and Japan—Watanabe felt Capelari would be the ideal collaborator on a new type of print, featuring Japan's modern character in a way that appealed to foreign tourists.



Charles William Bartlett, British, 1860–1940

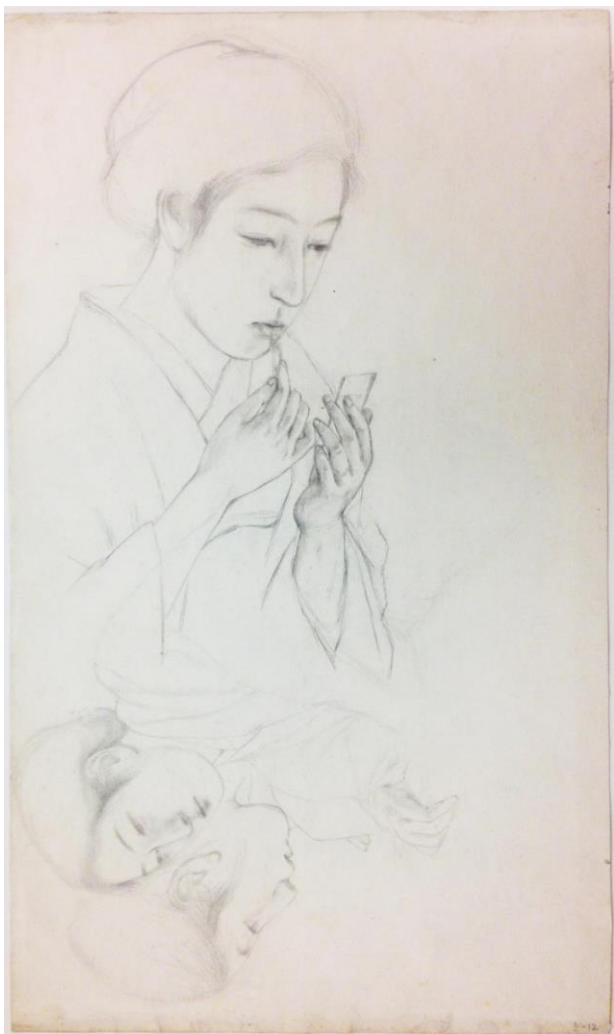
**Taj Mahal, Twilight**, 1916

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Bequest of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.294

The Englishman Charles W. Bartlett designed prints for Watanabe Shōzaburō beginning in 1915. Watanabe priced *shin hanga* by Western artists considerably higher than those by Japanese artists. Prints by Fritz Capelari ranged from 5 to 20 yen, with most at 10 yen, and those by Elizabeth Keith (1887–1956), from 8 to 40 yen. Bartlett's were generally the most expensive, selling for 30 to 50 yen. The record price for a single print was 100 yen, paid in 1932 for Keith's *Great Buddha of Kamakura* of 1919.



Hashiguchi Goyō, 1880–1921  
**Study for “Woman Holding a Lip Brush,”** before February 1920  
 Graphite on paper  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells X2004.2.34



Hashiguchi Goyō, 1880–1921  
**Study for “Woman Holding a Lip Brush,”** before February 1920  
 Graphite on paper  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.34



Hashiguchi Goyō, 1880–1921

**Key-block impression for “Woman Holding a Lip Brush,”** before February 1920

Woodblock print (key block); ink on paper

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.41

From his sketches, Goyō created the preparatory drawing that was glued onto a woodblock which was then carved to make the key block. The key block produced the black outlines here. On this rare impression from the key block, Goyō noted his color preferences for the final print: base black, glossy black, green, blue, red ocher, crimson, yellow, light blue, and skin color. He intended to have nine colors printed and then have each impression embellished with mica.



Hashiguchi Goyō, 1880–1921

**Woman Holding a Lip Brush,** February 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Self-published

Carved by Koike Masazō

Printed by Somekawa Kanzō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.47

Portrait of Chiyofuku, a *maiko* of Gion, Kyoto, as noted on the hand mirror.





Torii Kotondo, 1900–1976

**Sash**, November 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.40

This is the first of three beauties by Kotondo published by Kawaguchi Jirō after he and Sakai Shōkichi stopped collaborating. Each impression has a stamp on the back indicating that an edition of 350 was planned and also a handwritten individual number. However, the numbers actually found suggest only 100 or fewer were produced—a “blue” version with blue kimono and purple sash against a bluish background and then a “brown” version with brown kimono and red sash against a yellowish background.



Torii Kotondo, 1900–1976

**Sash**, November 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.141



Natori Shunsen, 1886–1960

**The Actor Ichikawa Ebizō IX as Togashi Saemon in *The Subscription List (Kanjinchō)*, March 1958**

Watercolor study for a print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing

Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.68

This watercolor study (never realized in print form), shows the actor Ichikawa Ebizō IX (1909–65) in an October 1957 performance of *The Subscription List (Kanjinchō)* at Tokyo's Kabuki Theater, a production that later toured to Osaka and Nagoya. One of the most popular Kabuki plays, *The Subscription List* is set in the 12th century. Togashi, captain of the guard at the Ataka Gate, is charged with stopping the disguised Minamoto leader Yoshitsune, who tries to pass through the gate with some of his men.

## YAMAMURA KŌKA (TOYONARI)



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**Spring, 1915**

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk

Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.34

Harkening back to Japan's classical past, Yamamura Kōka depicted two court women on a springtime outing to gather flowers. However, the scale of the figures and the bold compositional effect of their repetitive forms are distinctly modern. To add interest, Kōka left out one of the flowers being picked.

*Spring* is from a set of four hanging scrolls devoted to the four seasons. Kōka submitted this one, but not the other three, to the government-sponsored Bunten exhibition of 1915.





Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Matsumoto Kōshirō VII as Sukeroku, 1920**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.22

The actor Matsumoto Kōshirō VII (1870–1949) is shown in the role of Hanakawado Sukeroku in the play *Sukeroku's Affinity for Edo Cherry Blossoms* (*Sukeroku yukari no Edozakura*) as performed at the Imperial Theater in April 1917.

In the play, a street knight calling himself Hanakawado no Sukeroku, but who in reality is Soga Gorō, is seeking the sword Tomokiramaru, a family heirloom. Told that it is in the possession of an old man named Ikyū, who spends extravagant sums in the Yoshiwara prostitution quarter, Sukeroku visits the Yoshiwara repeatedly and eventually recovers the sword.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Nakamura Ganjirō I as Akaneya Hanshichi, 1920**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.147

Nakamura Ganjirō I (1860–1935) is pictured in the role of Akaneya Hanshichi in the play *Akane-zome* at Tokyo's Shin-Tomi Theater in February 1917.

The sake dealer Akaneya Hanshichi is married to Osono but loves the dancing girl Sankatsu, with whom he has a child. Their relationship began before his arranged marriage with Osono. Hanshichi is hiding because he killed a man who had lusted after Sankatsu and betrayed her with counterfeit money. Osono leaves Hanshichi and moves to the house of her father, who tries to persuade her to return to her husband. The story ends with the double suicide of Hanshichi and Sankatsu.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Onoe Matsusuke IV as Gorōji in *Kagatobi*, 1920**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with *nikawa* and embossing

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.38

Onoe Matsusuke IV (1843–1928) had the role of Kaminari Gorōji in the play *Plum Blossom Kaga Firemen and the Living Quarters for the Blind* (*Mekuranagaya ume ga kagatobi*) at the Imperial Theater in June 1919.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Ichimura Uzaemon XV as the Gardener Kichigorō, 1921**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.84

Ichimura Uzaemon XV (1874–1945) is depicted as the Gardener Kichigorō in the play *Midareyaki*, performed at the Imperial Theater in June 1921.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Nakamura Kichiemon I as Hoshikage Doemon, 1921**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.100

Nakamura Kichiemon I (1886–1954) is depicted here as Hoshikage Doemon in the play *Otokodate gosho no Gorozō* at the Shin-Tomi Theater in April 1922.

The formidable swordsman Doemon is after the prostitute Satsuki, the lover of Doemon's rival, Gorozō. Doemon buys her out of the brothel but is then killed by the jealous Gorozō. Gorozō and Satsuki finally commit suicide.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**The Actor Morita Kan'ya XIII as Jean Valjean, 1921**

From an untitled actor series, sometimes called *Flowers of the Theatrical World*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.53

The play *Les Misérables*, based on Victor Hugo's novel of 1862, was performed at the Yūraku Theater in December 1920 with Morita Kan'ya XIII (1885–1932) featured in the role of Jean Valjean. The first Japanese adaptation of *Les Misérables* dates from 1910.

The ex-convict Jean Valjean, imprisoned for nineteen years after stealing a loaf of bread, assumes a new identity in order to pursue an honest life. He becomes rich and successful but then contends with much adversity before dying in peace.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**Maiko**, 1924

From an untitled set of ten prints

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.52

A *maiko* is an apprentice geisha, usually fifteen to twenty years old. In the course of her education, which takes several years, she performs songs, dances, and plays the *shamisen* (a three-stringed instrument) for visitors.



Yamamura Kōka (Toyonari)

**Dancing at the New Carlton Café in Shanghai**, 1924

From an untitled set of ten prints

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yamamura Kōka Hanga Kankōkai

Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.35

This unusual view of a modern dance hall in booming, bustling Shanghai reflects the shifting interests and chic fashions of the Roaring Twenties in East Asia. A painting (whereabouts unknown) Kōka made earlier in the year depicted the same subject. These thoroughly modern women, wearing Western gowns and sporting bobbed hair, are an anomaly not only in Kōka's work but in the entire *shin hanga* movement.



## HASHIGUCHI GOYŌ



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman at the Bath**, October 1915  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Carved by Takano Shichinosuke  
 Printed by Ono Gintarō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.44

This is a prototype impression of Goyō's rare first print, the only print he designed for the publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō. It has two Watanabe seals, whereas most impressions have only one.

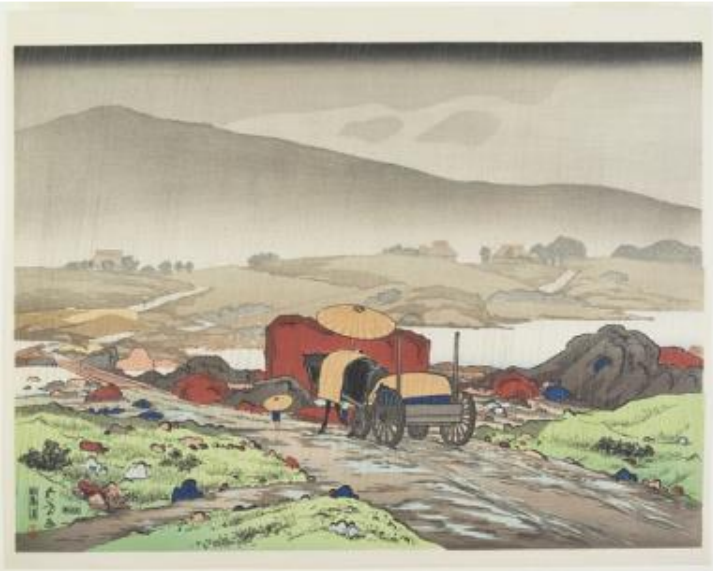


Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman Applying Powder**, 1918  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing  
 Self-published  
 Carved by Takano Shichinosuke  
 Printed by Somekawa Kanzō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.206

Goyō's model, Nakatani Tsuru, is shown putting white powder on her shoulders with the aid of a small mirror. The background and hand mirror are embellished with mica. The robe's tie-dye pattern (*shibori*) was achieved by blind printing.

Nakatani Tsuru is believed to have been the model for a number of erotic drawings by Goyō, some showing her with a male companion thought to be the artist himself.





Hashiguchi Goyō

**Yabakei**, 1918

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Self-published

Carved by Takano Shichinosuke

Printed by Somekawa Kanzō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.37

In June 1911, Goyō had embarked on a tour to Yabakei, Beppu, and the Usa Shrine, in Ōita Prefecture, during which he made sketches, watercolors, and ink paintings. Sketches from this trip were the foundation for this print, his first landscape published privately.



Hashiguchi Goyō

**Snow on Mount Ibuki**, January 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Distributed by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Carved by Takano Shichinosuke

Printed by Somekawa Kanzō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.43

This print, though not published by Watanabe, was distributed by him for the Edo Pictures Appreciation Society. On the back is a note by Goyō explaining the origin of the design. In December 1919, he was coming home from Kobe on a train that had to stop because of mechanical problems. From the window, he saw this scenery.

An impression of this print fetched the highest price at the December 1925 auction of the American Art Association (predecessor of Sotheby's) in New York: twenty dollars.



Hashiguchi Goyō

**Woman Holding a Tray**, January 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Self-published

Carved by Takano Shichinosuke

Printed by Akimoto Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.48

Portrait of Onao, a maid at the Matsuyoshi Inn in Kyoto, who posed for Goyō during his stay there in late 1919.



Hashiguchi Goyō

**Woman Combing Her Hair**, March 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Self-published

Carved by Koike Masazō

Printed by Somekawa Kanzō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.3

Portrait of Kodaira Tomi of Tokyo's Fukuda Eifuku-chō.



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman in a Long Undergarment**, May 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing  
 Self-published  
 Carved by Takano Shichinosuke  
 Printed by Akimoto Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.46

Portrait of Kodaira Tomi of Tokyo's Fukuda Eifuku-chō.



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman in Summer Clothing**, June 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Self-published  
 Carved by Koike Masazō  
 Printed by Akimoto Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.45

Portrait of Nakatani Tsuru.



Hashiguchi Goyō

**At a Hot Springs Inn**, July 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing

Key block carved by Koike Masazō

Color blocks carved by Maeda Kentarō

Printed by Hirai Kōichi

Posthumously produced by Hashiguchi Yasuo

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.24

This portrait of Nakatani Tsuru had not been printed at the time of Goyō's death. It was first produced around 1952 under the supervision of his nephew, the painter Hashiguchi Yasuo.



Hashiguchi Goyō

**Woman after a Bath**, July 1920

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Self-published

Carved by Takano Shichinosuke

Printed by Somekawa Kanzō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.42

Portrait of Kodaira Tomi of Tokyo's Fukuda Eifuku-chō.



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Study for “Girl in a Summer Kimono,”** before August 1920  
 Graphite on paper  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.158



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Girl in a Summer Kimono,** August 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Key block carved by Koike Masazō  
 Color blocks carved by Maeda Kentarō  
 Printed by Taguchi Kikumatsu  
 Posthumously produced by Hashiguchi Yasuo  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.38

Goyō’s model, Nakatani Tsuru, is holding a richly decorated obi (sash), which she will wrap around her black summer kimono.

Goyō left behind a number of unfinished works, including preparatory drawings and key-block proofs. This design was first printed around 1952, under the supervision of his nephew, the painter Hashiguchi Yasuo.





Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Study of a frontally posed nude**, early 20th century  
 Graphite on paper  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.36



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman Holding a Hand Towel**, October 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Posthumously published by Fujiki Kikumaro  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.25

Portrait of the geisha Hisae from Tokyo's Shinbashi district, as indicated by her name on the towel.

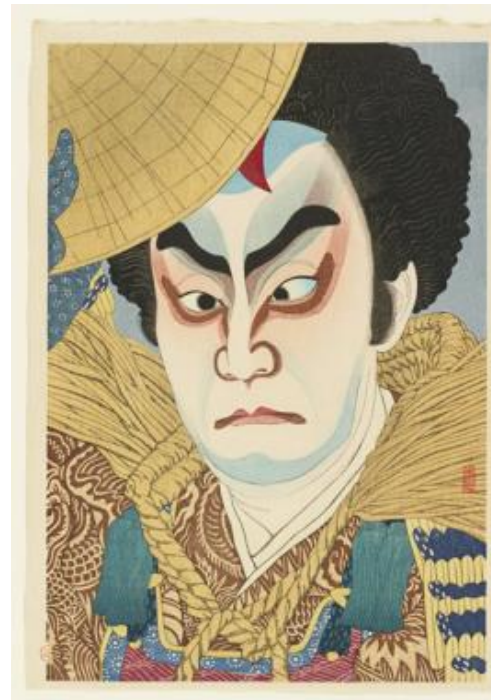
After Goyō's death, this print was finished by his student the art dealer Fujiki Kikumaro, following Goyō's indications.



Hashiguchi Goyō  
**Woman Cutting Her Toenails**, October 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink on paper  
 Carved by Maeda Kentarō  
 Printed by Imai Danshi  
 Posthumously produced by Hashiguchi Yasuo  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.159

When Goyō died, he left a number of unfinished works including this. In 1953, his nephew, the painter Hashiguchi Yasuo, oversaw its first printing.

## NATORI SHUNSEN



Natori Shunsen  
**The Actor Ichikawa Chūsha VII as Takechi Mitsuhide**, 1926  
 From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.60

Ichikawa Chūsha VII (1860–1936) played Takechi Mitsuhide in *The Picture Book of the Taikō* (*Ehon Taikō*) at the Kabuki Theater in May 1919.

The plot involves a conspiracy to overthrow the lord Oda Harunaga (the historical Oda Nobunaga), led by his subordinate Takechi (in real life, Akechi) Mitsuhide. Here, Mitsuhide appears disguised as a farmer, with a straw cloak and hat. He will mistake his mother for his enemy and accidentally kill her.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Nakamura Utaemon V as Yodogimi, 1926**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

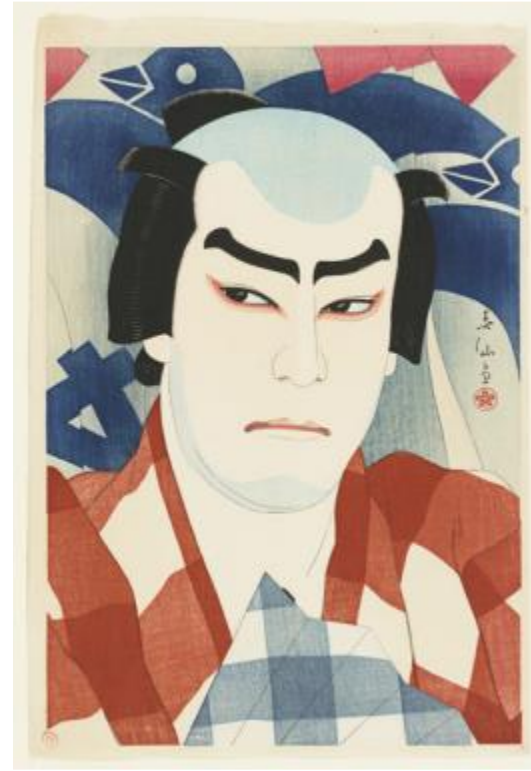
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with embossing

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.56

The modern Kabuki play *A Sinking Moon over the Lonely Castle Where the Cuckoo Cries* (*Hototogisu kojō no rakugetsu*), by Tsubouchi Shōyō, premiered in 1905.

The role of Yodogimi was written especially for Nakamura Utaemon V (1865–1940), portrayed here as he performed it at the Kabuki Theater in June 1925. Yodogimi, widow of the famous warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi, discovers a plot by Tokugawa Ieyasu to usurp her son's power. She kills one of the conspirators and, increasingly paranoid, attacks Ieyasu's granddaughter, her son's betrothed.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Jitsukawa Enjaku II as Danshichi, 1926**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica on fan

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.121

Jitsukawa Enjaku II (1877–1951) is shown as Danshichi Kurobei in the play *Summer Festival: Mirror of Osaka* (*Natsu matsuri naniwa kagami*), performed at the Kabuki Theater in August 1925.

The fishmonger Danshichi has been released from jail after wounding a man in a street fight. He later kills his father-in-law in a dramatic scene, struggling with him in mud and water.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Onoe Matsusuke IV as Kohei, 1925**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

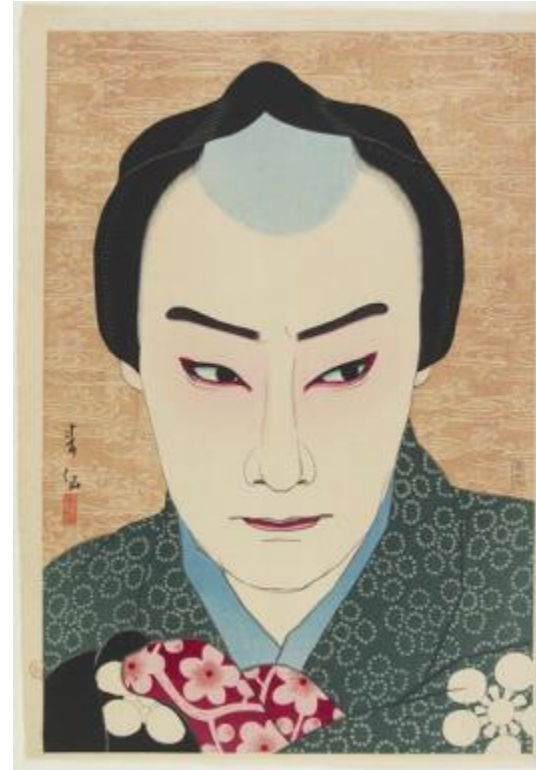
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.61

Onoe Matsusuke IV (1843–1928) appears here as Nozarashi Kohei in the play *Imashimegusa susuki no nozarashi* at the Ichimura Theater in November 1915.

Kohei, a freak-show producer, has a tattoo of a skull (*nozarashi*). He lets himself get arrested for the murder of a town clerk that was actually committed by his son Rokunosuke.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Nakamura Ganjirō I as Sakata Tōjūrō, 1925**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.59

Nakamura Ganjirō I (1860–1935) is pictured here as Sakata Tōjūrō in the performance of *Tōjūrō's Love* (*Tōjūrō no koi*) at the Shin-Tomi Theater in March and April 1921. He had filled the same role at the play's premiere, in 1919.

Tōjūrō is an actor preparing to play a seducer. He tests his acting skill on Okaji, the wife of a teahouse owner. Unaware that she is being exploited, Okaji is ashamed and commits suicide.





Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Nakamura Fukusuke V as Ohan, 1928**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with embossing

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.146

Nakamura Fukusuke V (1900–1933) performed as Ohan in the play *Union by the Weir in the River Katsura* (*Katsuragawa renri no shigarami*) at the Azabu Meiji Theater in February 1924.

The drama is based on a real event that happened in Kyoto in the 18th century. Ohan, the fourteen-year-old daughter of a merchant, falls in love with Chōemon, her family's forty-year old next-door neighbor, when the two accidentally meet while traveling. Ohan becomes pregnant. At the end of the play, the lovers drown themselves in the Katsura River.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Ichikawa Sadanji II as Marubashi Chūya, 1931**

From the series *Supplement to Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.157

Ichikawa Sadanji II (1880–1940) appears here as Marubashi Chūya in the play *Record of the Great Pacification of the Keian Period* (*Keian Taiheiki*), performed at the Meiji Theater in April 1923.





Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Nakamura Kichiemon I as Otokonosuke, 1931**

From the series *Supplement to Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.104

Nakamura Kichiemon I (1886–1954) is shown playing Arajishi Otokonosuke in *Lespedeza, the Famous Tree of Sendai (Meiboku Sendai hagi)* at the Kabuki Theater in October 1928.

Otokonosuke stands below the floor of an inner room of the Ashikaga palace, guarding Tsurukiyo, the son of the feudal lord Yorikane. A large gray rat rushes by with a scroll in its mouth. Otokonosuke fails to kill it, and it escapes in a cloud of white smoke from which the villain Nikki Danjō appears with the scroll between his teeth. Otokonosuke is no match for Nikki Danjō's magical powers.



Natori Shunsen

**The Movie Actor Hayashi Chōjirō as Yukinojō, 1935**

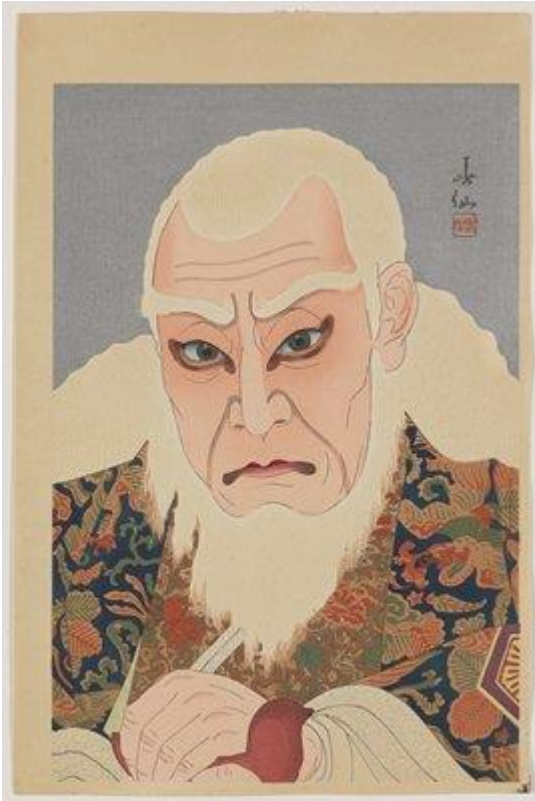
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Yada Michio

Printed by Ono Tomisaburō

Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.40

In 1935, *Yukinojō henge*, in English known as *The Revenge of Yukinojō*, was a successful movie produced by Shochiku. Hayashi Chōjirō (Hasegawa Kazuo, 1908–84) played the lead role of Nakamura Yukinojō. He was trained as a Kabuki actor but then became an extremely popular movie actor, appearing in 290 films between 1927 and 1963.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Ichikawa Chūsha VII as Kiichi Hōgen, c. 1936**

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing  
Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.37

Shunsen based this image on Ichikawa Chūsha VII (1860–1936) playing Kiichi Hōgen in the Hongō Theater's November 1924 production of *Kiichi Hōgen's Three-Volume Book of Tactics* (*Kiichi Hōgen sanryaku no maki*). Kiichi Hōgen is an elderly strategist in possession of an important book on tactics, which he tries to safe keep.

This print does not have a publisher's seal, and the paper is larger than that used for Shunsen's commercial actor prints. It may well have been a special edition, perhaps commissioned by the actor's fan club.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Nakamura Ganjirō II as Manno, c. 1954**

Hanging scroll; ink and color on silk  
Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.39

This painting probably depicts Nakamura Ganjirō II (1902–83) as Manno in the Kabuki play *The Ise Dances and Love's Dull Blade* (*Ise ondo koi no netaba*).

Manno, the chief maid of the brothel Aburaya, is an evil woman. She will be killed by Fukuoka Mitsugi, the hero of the play. Ganjirō II performed this role in August 1954 at the Kabuki Theater. Apart from this painting, Shunsen also created a print of the same subject, which was published by Watanabe Shōzaburō.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Ichikawa Sadanji II as Narukami, 1926**

From the series *Creative Prints: Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells X2004.2.11

Ichikawa Sadanji II (1880–1940) appears here as the priest Narukami in the play *Narukami*, performed at the Imperial Theater in December of 1919.

A pious mountain priest with magical powers, Narukami has captured the dragon god in retribution for the emperor's refusal to build him a temple. Because the dragon god is the source of rain, the country is now suffering from a drought, and Princess Taema is sent to trick Narukami into revealing how to free the captive god. But Narukami transforms (through a quick costume change on stage) into the furious thunder god.



Natori Shunsen

**The Actor Matsumoto Kōshirō VII as the White-Bearded Ikyū, spring 1929**

From the series *Supplement to Collected Portraits by Shunsen*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.122

Matsumoto Kōshirō VII (1870–1949) is depicted playing the White-Bearded Ikyū (in reality Iga Heinaizaemon) in *Sukeroku: Flower of Edo* (*Sukeroku: Yukari no Edo zakura*) at the Kabuki Theater in March 1929.

Ikyū (identified by his long white beard) is a wealthy old samurai who tries to come between the lovers Hanakawado Sukeroku, a dashing *otokodate* (chivalrous commoner), and the beautiful prostitute Agemaki of the Miuraya brothel.



## YAMAKAWA SHŪHŌ



Yamakawa Shūhō

**Red Collar**, 1928

From the series *Women in Four Settings*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Bijutsusha

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.145

This print represents spring, which is associated with youth. The red inner robe (revealed by its collar) and bright pink kimono imply that this woman is quite young. The kimono's pattern suggests *meisen*, a fabric made of plain-weave raw silk with stenciled or woven designs (from pre-dyed warps and wefts). Fashionable and modern, *meisen* often featured bold nontraditional patterns like these interlocking red and white squares.



Yamakawa Shūhō

**Twilight**, April 1928

From the series *Women in Four Settings*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica and embossing

Published by Bijutsusha

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.69

The title *Twilight* refers to the time of day in summer when people went out to catch fireflies. This was traditionally done with a round, nonfolding fan (*uchiwa*) like the one shown here. During Japan's notoriously hot and humid summer months, blue was a popular color, visually conjuring coolness. The fishnet pattern on this woman's pale blue kimono adds to the sense of freshness because of its association with water.



Yamakawa Shūhō  
**Approaching Snow**, December 1927  
 From the series *Women in Four Settings*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Bijutsusha  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.55

In this extreme close-up of a young woman's face, part of her traditional *shimada*-style coiffure is cropped off by the frame. The pattern of snow-covered nandina branches with red berries decorating her kimono, the pale gray background suggesting snow-laden clouds, and her sleeve-covered hand raised to protect against a chilly wind all proclaim the season to be winter.



Yamakawa Shūhō  
**Autumn**, 1927  
 From the series *Women in Four Settings*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Bijutsusha  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.120

Only a few woodblock prints by Shūhō exist. The series *Women in Four Settings*, each image associated with a season, is considered his best.

*Autumn* shows an assertively modern woman, or *moga* (abbreviated from *modan gaaru*, modern girl). Rather than the traditional *shimada* hairstyle, she sports the modish *rajio-maki* (radio roll), recalling the headphones used by radio announcers. Her green jacket (*haori*), beneath her maroon shawl, is patterned with Western playing card suits.



## TORII KOTONDO



Torii Kotondo

**Applying Powder**, June 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Sakai and Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.21

This is the first of twenty-one beauty prints Kotondo designed between 1929 and 1934. The woman's undergarment has been allowed to slip off one shoulder as she smooths powder onto her neck, recalling Hashiguchi Goyō's *Woman Applying Powder* of 1918. With her hair arranged in a loose chignon at the nape of her neck, this woman is clearly a modern beauty.



Torii Kotondo

**Long Undergarment**, July 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Sakai and Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.71



Torii Kotondo

**Snow**, October 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Sakai and Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.128

This beauty sits before a *kotatsu*, a charcoal-heated table, used as a leg and foot warmer, that was placed in the center of a room and covered by a futon. Snow is visible through the window.



Torii Kotondo

**Rain**, October 1929

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Sakai and Kawaguchi

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.20



Torii Kotondo  
**Combing Hair**, October 1929  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Kawaguchi  
 Carved by Itō  
 Printed by Komatsu Wasankichi  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.135



Torii Kotondo  
**Vapor**, October 1929  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Sakai and Kawaguchi  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.139



Torii Kotondo  
**Applying Powder**, summer 1930  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Published by Kawaguchi  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.39



Torii Kotondo  
**Lip Rouge**, January 1932  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Published by Ikeda Tomizō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.140

In November 1931, the publisher Ikeda Tomizō began to produce a set of twelve beauty prints by Kotondo. These were Ikeda's first prints. The project was completed in 1934, with each design printed in an edition of one hundred. This is the second design in the set.





Torii Kotondo  
**Napping**, February 1933  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Ikeda Tomizō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.64

The first edition of this design has a silver mica background. After all printing was completed, the key block was deliberately gouged to destroy it, and a print of the gouged block was included in the sale. This design is the eighth in a set of twelve beauties.



Torii Kotondo  
**Fine Weather in Early Summer**, May 1936  
 From *Ukiyo-e Kai*  
 Woodblock-printed magazine insert; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Ukiyo-e Dōkōkai  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.142

Kotondo often portrayed women who appear to be slightly behind the times, whose simple dress and hairstyles and unaffected gestures seem charmingly feminine. Among his works, this frontispiece (*kuchi-e*) from the May 1936 issue of the magazine *Ukiyo-e Kai* (*Ukiyo-e World*) well represents this feminine élan. Dressed in a simple striped kimono in subdued colors, the woman looks over her shoulder toward the viewer, her gaze impassive and peaceful. A glimpse of her red undergarment, accenting her bare neck, conveys a subtle and decorous eroticism.



Torii Kotondo  
**Abe no Yasuna, Spring**, spring 1938  
 Hanging scroll; ink and color on paper  
 Gift of funds from Ellen Wells 2014.36

This painting references a Kabuki dance about the 10th-century nobleman Abe no Yasuna. As a young man, Yasuna became engaged to Sakaki-no-mae, the beautiful daughter of the famous astronomer Kamo no Yasunori. Unfortunately the astronomer died, and Sakaki-no-mae was driven to commit suicide by her cruel step-mother. Mad with grief, Yasuna began wearing Sakaki-no-mae's short-sleeved silk robe and a purple headband (a symbol of insanity), as in this painting, which shows him wandering in the countryside in spring. Mentally mixing past happiness with present sorrow, he dreams that the robe is Sakaki-no-mae herself, but then sadly recognizes this is an illusion.



Torii Kotondo  
**Yoshimura Ijūrō VI's Memorable Stage Concerts, 1941**  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Courtesy of Scholten Japanese Art

Between 1929 and 1934, Kotondo designed twenty-one beauty prints, but he seems not to have delved into Kabuki motifs until 1941—rather unexpected given his family background and position as head of the Torii school. Only two theater prints by him are known. One is this unusually large memorial print (*shini-e*) of the *nagauta* singer Yoshimura Ijūrō VI (1859–1935) with Kotondo's portrait of the Ibaraki demon and a reference to the play *The Subscription List* (*Kanjinchō*), Ijūrō VI's most famous performance, for which several audio recordings exist.

## ITŌ SHINSUI



Itō Shinsui

**Woman Looking at a Mirror**, July 1916

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.205

This was Shinsui's first collaboration with the publisher Watanabe Shōzaburō and is considered representative of all his prints. Intended for the foreign market, it originally had an English title, *The Scarlet Lady*. This hardly does justice to how skillfully the artist suggested inner reflection by focusing the woman's gaze on a mirror outside the frame.

Many years later, Shinsui's contemporary, the *ukiyo-e* scholar Fujikake Shizuya, lauded this print for "outstanding composition," "superior color distribution," "beauty of color tone," "lines that convey volume," and the artist's "care not to bring the painting line into prints." Notable, too, are the deliberately made rubbing lines in the background, done with the corner of the rubbing pad (*baren*), which create textural tension against the large flat blocks of red and black.



Itō Shinsui

**After the Bath**, January 1917

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.162

Shinsui found that the *shin hanga* production system of employing a carver and a printer did not always allow him to pursue art on his own terms. Commenting on this work a few years after it was published, he wrote: "I made this design because Mr. Watanabe wanted it. Personally, I do not care much about it."





Itō Shinsui

**Mii Temple**, July 1917

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.3



Itō Shinsui

**Floating Temple of Katada**, May 1918

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.2





Itō Shinsui  
**Pine Trees at Karasaki**, May 1918  
 From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.4



Itō Shinsui  
**Ishiyama Temple**, December 1917  
 From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.9

According to tradition, in the 11th century Lady Murasaki began writing her famous novel, *The Tale of Genji*, while seated on a veranda at Ishiyama Temple, on the shore of Lake Biwa. The sight of the harvest moon rising over the lake inspired her. Thus, for most Japanese, Shinsui's view of a full moon shining on an empty covered veranda at Ishiyama Temple evokes thoughts of the famous author composing her novel of courtly love.



Itō Shinsui

**Chinese Bridge at Seta**, May 1918

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.5



Itō Shinsui

**Awazu**, May 1917

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.7

Itō Shinsui submitted his first landscape series, *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*, to an exhibition in June of 1918. Seeing these images triggered Kawase Hasui's interest in designing prints, and he approached Shinsui's publisher, Watanabe Shōzaburō, with some landscape sketches of his own.



Itō Shinsui

**Hira**, May 1917

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.8



Itō Shinsui

**Yabase**, July 1917

From the series *The Eight Views of Lake Biwa*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.17.6



Itō Shinsui  
**Rainy Season**, November 1919  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.91



Itō Shinsui  
**Before a Thunderstorm**, March 1920  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.88

Wind-whipped grasses and a bird precariously aloft in the dark sky evoke the anxiety felt in anticipation of an imminent storm. This print shares an expressionist intensity and the experimental qualities of works by artists of the noncommercial *sōsaku hanga* movement, who carried out all aspects of printmaking themselves. This and other works by Shinsui from his early period are clearly at odds with the general perception of *shin hanga* as neo-*ukiyo-e* expressions of the timeless Japanese sensitivity to nature and the seasons.





Itō Shinsui

**Ikenohata at Night**, January 1921

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.170

A separate paper attached on the back explains how this print was produced as an annual project of the Appreciating Edo Paintings Society.



Itō Shinsui

**Applying Powder**, spring 1922

From the series *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.70

In the spring of 1922, Shinsui began designs for the first large-scale series of beautiful women with the publisher Watanabe: *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*. The plan was to issue editions of two hundred and release one print per month, starting in June. However, by May 1923 production was not finished. Shinsui designed the tenth beauty in June and the eleventh in July. The tremendous devastation of the Great Kantō Earthquake, on September 1, delayed things further, and the twelfth beauty did not come out until December.



Itō Shinsui

**Early Summer Bath**, spring 1922

Artist's proof

From the series *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.96



Itō Shinsui

**Lip Rouge**, October 1922

From the series *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.136

This is an artist's proof. It is on thinner paper than that generally used for prints, and there is no edition stamp on the back.



Itō Shinsui

**Woman from Ōshima Island**, October 1922

From the series *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.169

This beauty wears the indigo-dyed attire traditional on Ōshima Island, including a cotton towel (*tenugui*) on the head to ease carrying water buckets.



Itō Shinsui

**Snowy Night**, January 1923

From the series *Twelve Forms of New Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.143



Itō Shinsui

**Intermission**, May 1925

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Iseya Tatsugorō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.160



Itō Shinsui

**Cooling Off**, June 1925

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Iseya Tatsugorō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.168

Shinsui rarely worked for publishers other than Watanabe Shōzaburō. However, during a short intermezzo from 1925 until 1927, he designed five beauty prints for Iseya Tatsugorō, smaller than those Watanabe published.





Itō Shinsui  
**Fragrance of the Hot Spring**, autumn 1930  
 From the series *The First Collection of Modern Beauties*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.75

Limiting the editions to 250, Shinsui and Watanabe began working on the series *The First Collection of Modern Beauties* in May of 1929. The plan was to create 12 prints that would be sold to a maximum of 200 subscribers, with the remaining 50 prints to be sold in Watanabe's store.

D125.6

istribution to subscribers was meant to start in July of 1929. After he designed the last beauty of this series in July 1931, Shinsui kept going, creating the first print for *The Second Collection of Modern Beauties* in August.



Itō Shinsui  
**The Grounds of a Shrine in Snow**, winter 1930  
 From the series *The First Collection of Modern Beauties*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.167



Itō Shinsui

**Sewing on a Collar**, 1929

From the series *The First Collection of Modern Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.19

The unusual second seal and the signature *Shikuntei shujin* suggest that Shinsui intended this impression as a gift.



Itō Shinsui

**Firefly Catching**, July 1931

From the series *The First Collection of Modern Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.165

Catching fireflies near water was a favorite activity on a hot summer evening. This was traditionally done with a round, nonfolding fan (*uchiwa*) like the one held by this young woman (note her Western hairstyle).



Itō Shinsui  
**Charcoal Foot Warmer**, December 1931  
 From the series *The Second Collection of Modern Beauties*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.95

*The Second Collection of Modern Beauties* was another set of 12 prints issued in editions of 250. *The First Collection of Modern Beauties* had been completed in two years, but this new series took five years, because Shinsui was spending more time on his paintings.



Itō Shinsui  
**Snowstorm**, December 1932  
 From the series *The Second Collection of Modern Beauties*  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Printed by Ono Gintarō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.161





Itō Shinsui

**Firefly**, June 1934

From the series *The Second Collection of Modern Beauties*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.97

A young woman is about to bat a firefly with her round fan. She will then place the paralyzed firefly in a cage, collect more, and later release them all at once.



Itō Shinsui

**Pupil of the Eye**, August 1936

From the series *The Second Collection of Modern Beauties*

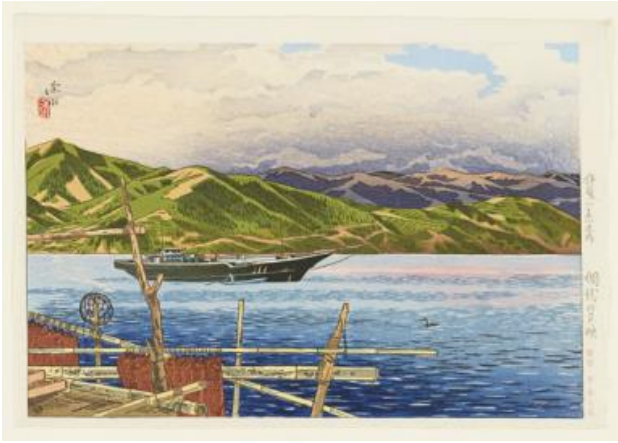
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.23

The second signature by Shinsui, added above the sleeve, indicates that this impression could have been a gift from him.





Itō Shinsui

**Evening Glow at Ajiro, 1939**

From the series *The Eight Views of Izu*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Printed by Ono Gintarō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.125.2



Itō Shinsui

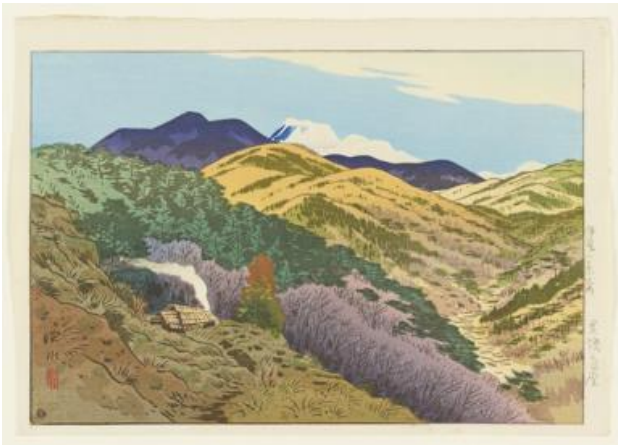
**Night Rain at Tago, 1939**

From the series *The Eight Views of Izu*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.125.7



Itō Shinsui

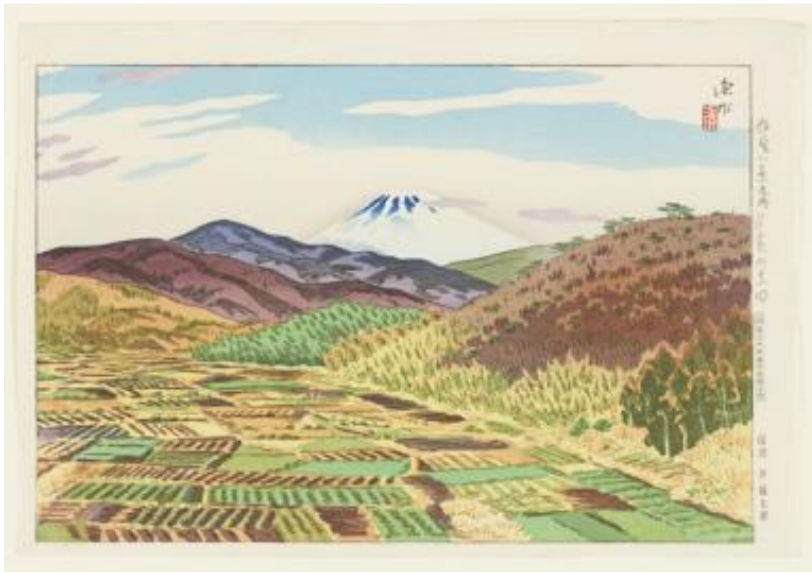
**Charcoal Making at Hino, 1939**

From the series *The Eight Views of Izu*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.125.6



Itō Shinsui

**Early Spring at Yoshida**, 1938

From the series *The Eight Views of Izu*

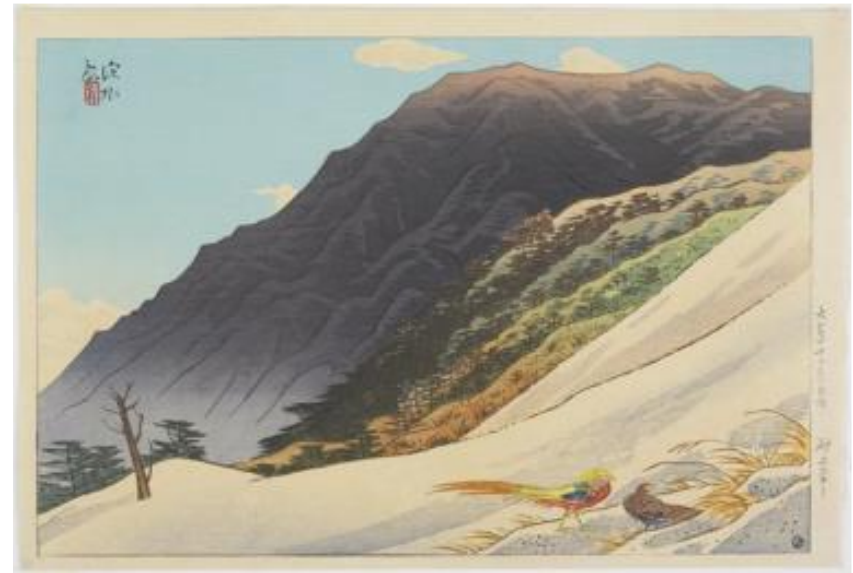
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Printed by Ono Gintarō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.125.1

In *The Eight Views of Izu*, Shinsui focused on scenes in the former Izu Province, located on the Izu peninsula, in present-day Shizuoka Prefecture. Izu is a popular resort region with famous beaches and many hot springs.



Itō Shinsui

**Sand Hill for Skiing**, 1939

From the series *The Twelve Views of Ōshima Island*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.16.11



Itō Shinsui

**After Rain**, 1938

From the series *The Twelve Views of Ōshima Island*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.16.6

Ōshima Island, in Sagami Bay, is about sixty miles south of Tokyo. In the Edo period (1603–1868), the Tokugawa shogunate sent convicts into exile on Ōshima. The epicenter of the Great Kantō Earthquake of September 1, 1923, was deep beneath this island.

Publication of *The Twelve Views of Ōshima Island* began in 1937, marking the end of sixteen years during which Shinsui designed no landscape prints. His return to this genre must have been successful, since there are at least two editions of this series. He continued to design landscape prints for Watanabe well after World War II.



Itō Shinsui

**Sea Breeze**, 1938

From the series *The Twelve Views of Ōshima Island*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.16.8



Itō Shinsui

**Windy Evening**, 1938

From the series *The Twelve Views of Ōshima Island*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.16.7





Itō Shinsui  
**Marutapura River in Borneo, 1943**  
 From an untitled series of Indonesian scenes  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.171

As a member of the Navy Information Team, Shinsui traveled to Southeast Asia in April 1943. An album of sketches dated to late June seems to have been the basis for a set of three prints published later that year by Watanabe. In his peaceful and idyllic views of the islands of Celebes (today Sulawesi), Java, and Borneo, he entirely ignored the actual situation, omitting any trace of the Japanese occupation, which had begun in the spring of 1942. Before that, these islands were under Dutch control. The Indonesians resented the Dutch, so possibly the Japanese slogan to be “the leader of Asia, the protector of Asia, the light of Asia” might have sounded appealing at first.



Itō Shinsui  
**A Japanese Woman, 1942**  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Printed by Ono Gintarō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.166





Itō Shinsui  
**Snow Hood**, 1950  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper with mica  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.27

Shinsui modeled this print after his painting *Spring Snow (Haru no yuki)*.



Itō Shinsui  
**A Woman in Western Dress**, 1960  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.68

This print is after Shinsui's painting *Red Gloves (Portrait of a Woman)*, from 1957, now in the Yamatane Museum, Tokyo.

## KAWASE HASUI



Kawase Hasui

**Mishima River, Mutsu**, summer 1919

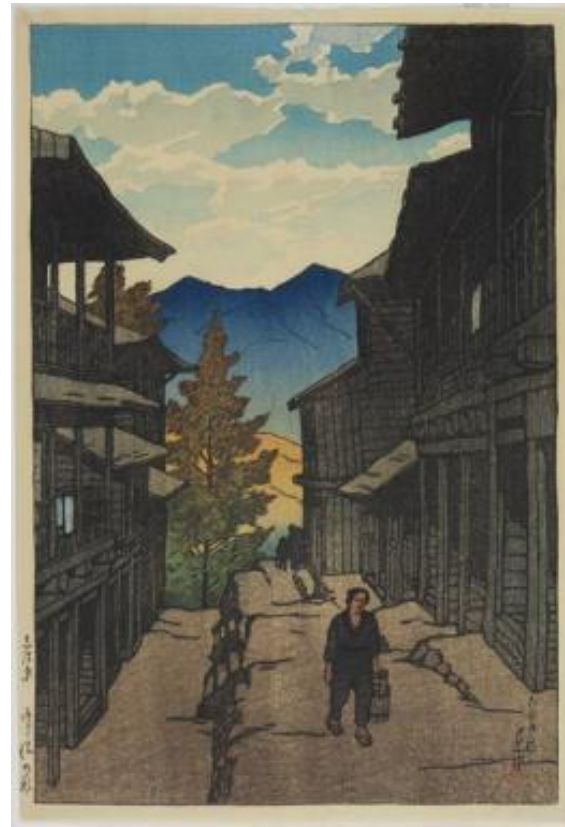
From the series *Souvenirs of Travel, First Collection*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.63

The series *Souvenirs of Travel, First Collection*, made in 1919 and 1920, consists of sixteen designs of locations in the north, central, and southeast of Japan's main island, Honshu.



Kawase Hasui

**Autumn at the Arayu Hot Spring, Shiobara**, autumn 1920

From the series *Souvenirs of Travel, First Collection*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.133



Kawase Hasui

**Moonlight over Lake Kamo, Sado**, August 16, 1921

From the series *Souvenirs of Travel, Second Collection*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.66.1



Kawase Hasui

**Water Conduit, a Scene in Sado**, August 21, 1921

From the series *Souvenirs of Travel, Second Collection*

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.66.2

Hasui's second *Souvenirs of Travel* series, issued from January to December of 1921, comprises twenty-eight designs. Six depict Sado, the largest island in the Sea of Japan, off the coast of Niigata Prefecture.





Kawase Hasui  
**Iris**, July 1929  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Kawaguchi  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.134



Kawase Hasui  
**Evening Shower at Imai Bridge**, August 1932  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.131

Imai Bridge, spanning the Edo River, connects Tokyo and Chiba Prefecture. The old wooden bridge has been replaced; the current bridge dates from 1979.





Kawase Hasui

**Fuji River**, February 1933

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.29

The Fuji River originates in the Akaishi and Kantō mountains and flows into Suruga Bay.



Kawase Hasui

**Dusk at Asō, Ibaraki Prefecture**, December 1936

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.132



Kawase Hasui  
**Hataori in Shiobara, 1946**  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.67

The village of Shiobara in northern Tochigi Prefecture, famous for its hot springs, seems to have been one of Hasui's favorite places. He featured it in eleven designs between 1918 and 1955.



Kawase Hasui  
**Spring Dusk at the Tōshō Shrine in Ueno, 1948**  
 Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
 Published by Watanabe Shōzaburō  
 Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.129

The Tōshō Shrine (Tōshōgū), in Tokyo's Ueno Park, is dedicated to the first Tokugawa shogun, Ieyasu (1543–1616). It affords a good view of the five-storied pagoda of Kan'ei Temple, pictured here, where six of the fifteen shoguns are interred.