

Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

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Gallery 226: Sumo

Sumo is a wrestling sport in which two opponents face off, each trying to force the other out of the ring or to touch the ground with any part of their body besides their feet. Wrestlers add to their bulk through intense exercise and highly regulated diets, and their physical size and athleticism result in exciting, dramatic matches.

Sumo was originally performed as part of a Shinto religious ritual, but by around 1800 it had evolved into a popular form of public entertainment. Held on the grounds of temples and shrines, sumo attracted large crowds and the clergy benefited from ticket sales. Wrestlers were well-known celebrities who traveled all over the country, and regularly competed in the three major cities of Edo (present-day Tokyo), Kyoto, and Osaka.

Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Mori Shūhō, , Japanese, 1738 - 1823

Frogs in Sumo Match, early 19th century

Hanging scroll: ink on silk

The John R. Van Derlip Fund; purchase from the collection of Elizabeth and Willard Clark
2013.31.51

On a damp and rainy day, a bunch of frogs are enjoying themselves with sumo wrestling. While two frogs are engaged in a bout, other frogs are sitting on the left and right to watch them while they hold their big round bellies. Each frog expresses a striking individuality, creating a richly humorous impression. Personification of frogs in human activities has been used in Japan since the Heian period (794–1180).



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Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Amusements Including a Sumo Match, second half 18th century

Six-panel folding screen: ink, color, gofun, and gold leaf on paper

Scholten Japanese Art, New York L2016.119

This screen shows a variety of popular amusements during the Edo period, but the main event, shown in the center, is a sumo match. The two stocky wrestlers are locked in each other's grip, one grasping his adversary's shoulders, the other pulling at his opponent's loincloth. A referee with a large circular fan is judging their progress. Behind them sits a man who might be the sponsor, clad in a deep blue robe.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Utagawa Kunisada, Japanese, 1786 - 1865

Miyagi Gengyo, Japanese, 1817 - 1880

Publisher: Kagiya Shōbei

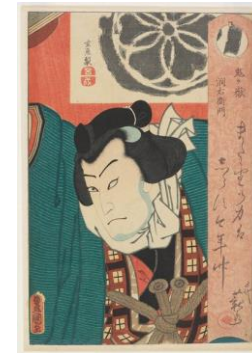
Actor Bandō Hikosaburō V as the Sumo Wrestler Onigatake Dōemon, from an untitled

actor series with wood tanzaku, 1861, 10th lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Arthur and Jane Pejsa 99.186

This is a collaborative work between Utagawa Kunisada, who designed the portrait, and Miyagi Gengyo, who was responsible for the background. On the right is a wooden board inscribed with a poem by the actor Bandō Hikosaburō V (1832–1877), who is portrayed here as the wrestler Onigatake Dōemon, one of the main characters in the play “Champion Sumo Wrestlers Victorious in Two Generations” (*Sekitori nidai no shōbuzuke*), performed at the Nakamura Theater in 1861. The plot is about a wrestler who is poised to intentionally lose a bout to rescue his lover from prostitution.



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Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Ryūryūkyō Shinsai, Japanese, 1764? – 1820

Publisher: Maruya Bun'emon

The Sumo Wrestler Shirataki Saijirō, 1814

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.99

Shirataki Saijirō was 14 when this portrait was created, and he was already five-foot-nine and 190 pounds. His career as a sumo wrestler in Edo was very brief—he only appeared in one tournament, in 1813, where he lost all bouts. This near-pristine print must have been produced shortly thereafter.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Katsukawa Shun'ei, Japanese, 1762 – 1819

Publisher: Nishimuraya Yohachi

The Sumo Wrestler Tamagaki Gakunosuke, 1806, 2nd lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.113

An imposing, six-foot-tall competitor inside the ring, Tamagaki Gakunosuke (1768–1813) appears very relaxed here in a loosely tied robe, smoking a pipe. He changed his name several times over his career as a wrestler. This portrait was released at the time of the tournament in the second month of 1806, when he began to use the name Tamagaki Gakunosuke.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Utagawa Kunisada, Japanese, 1786 – 1865

Publisher: Kitaya Magobei

Puppet of the Sumo Wrestler Hidenoyama Raigorō, from the series Wrestling Match

Between Sumo Puppets and Flowers (Sumō ningyō hana no torikumi), c. 1844

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.201

This print belongs to a series of five showing beautiful women holding puppets that represent popular wrestlers of the day (it's unclear if these puppets actually existed or were an invention of the artist). Hidenoyama Raigorō (1808–1862) was one of the



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greatest wrestlers in the Edo period. In 1847 he was appointed the ninth *yokozuna* in the history of sumo, the highest rank possible for a wrestler.

Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Utagawa Kunitaru II, Japanese, 1829 – 1874

Publisher: Daikokuya Heikichi

Picture of a Thriving Grand Fundraising Sumo Tournament, 1866, 2nd lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.214

This is the left sheet of a three-print composition illustrating on-stage and off-stage scenes during a sumo tournament that was organized as a fundraiser. From top to bottom, left to right, these are the concluding program, the bow-twirling ceremony that signals the end of a tournament day, the room where the referees assemble, the wrestler's dressing room, the sumo arena's accounting space, and the sumo arena.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Utagawa Kunisada II, Japanese, 1823 – 1880

Publisher: Kobayashi Tetsujirō

Sumo Wrestler Tagonoura Tsurukichi, 1866, 3rd lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 81.133.42

The wrestler Tagonoura Tsurukichi (1829–1900) was 37 years old when he appeared in this tournament in the third month of 1866. Tsurukichi had come to Edo from the southern island of Kyushu and at that time had been a wrestler for six years. This tournament was the last one in which he fought under the name Tsurukichi; he then changed it to Kazō, which he used until his retirement five years later. Wrestlers, like kabuki actors, would change their name to indicate that they had reached a new point in their professional life.



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Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Katsukawa Shun'ei, Japanese, 1762 – 1819

Publisher: Kagaya Kichiemon

The Sumo Wrestler Takasago Uraemon, c. 1810

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.113



Takasago Uraemon (died 1829) fought under this name from 1809 until 1821, after which he became Tegarayama Shigeemon for one last tournament before his retirement. In this portrait, made around 1810, Takasago is dressed like a samurai, carrying two swords. Only samurai were allowed to carry swords, but as some wrestlers were retained by lords, they could too. Hence this portrait shows Takasago's important and powerful status.

Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Katsukawa Shunzan, Japanese, fl. c. 1782-1798

Publisher: Iseya Kinbei

Two Boys Wrestling, 1790s

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.117



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Utagawa Kunisada, Japanese, 1786 – 1865

Publisher: Tsutaya Kichizō

The Wrestlers Takaneyama Masaemon from Higo Province (L), Shiranui Nagiemon from Higo Province (C), and Kurokumo Ryūgorō from Higo Province (R), 1843

Triptych: Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Louis W. Hill, Jr. P.75.51.198, 199, 200



This three-sheet set of prints represents the *dohyō-iri*, or ring-entering ceremony, at the beginning of a tournament day. Takaneyama appears on the left as the *tachimochi*, or sword carrier, one of the two attendants of the wrestler who performs the ceremony. On the right sits Kurokumo, who functions as the “dew sweeper”

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(*tsuyuharai*), the attendant who in ancient times would clear the path for the wrestlers. The ceremony itself is performed by a *yokozuna*, a high-ranking wrestler, in this case Shiranui, in the center. The *yokozuna* always performs the same moves in the center of the ring, including raising his right foot up high followed by his left.

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Toyohara Kunichika, Japanese, 1835 – 1900

Popular Pillars of the Spring Sumo Tournament, 1868, 12th lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

Gift of Ellen and Fred Wells 2002.161.175.1-2



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Ōhara Donshū, Japanese, 1792–1857

Sumo Wrestler Attending a Ceremony, 1830s–1840s

Woodblock print (surimono); ink and color on paper

Gift of funds from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon

P.77.27.28



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Nakajima Raishō, 1796 – 1871

Three Sumo Wrestlers, 1820s–1850s

Woodblock print (surimono); ink and color on paper

Gift of funds from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon P.77.27.144



Since all the poems included in this print refer to things associated with autumn, it must have commemorated a sumo match held that season. The large wrestler is getting dressed in a red and white ceremonial apron, which is worn for a ritual performed by ranking wrestlers before the day's bouts begin. Another wrestler of

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lower rank helps him secure the apron. Wrestlers are ranked by their achievements in a tournament and could lose their rank if they underperform.

Japan, Shōwa period (1926–1989)

Ohara Shōson, Japanese, 1877 – 1945

Publisher: Kawaguchi Jirō

Frogs Wrestling, 1930s

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Paul Schweitzer P.77.28.55



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Gallery 227: Monkeys

Japan, Edo Period (1603–1868)

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, Japanese, 1839 – 1892

Author: Sumida Ryōko

Publisher: Fukushimaya Tashichi

A monkey jumps into a waterfall, from the series *A Modern Journey to the West* (Tsūzoku saiyūki), 1864, 12th lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

The Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation, gifts of various donors, by exchange, and gift of Edmond Freis in memory of his parents, Rose and Leon Freis 2017.106.49

The Monkey King Sun Wukong (Son Gokū in Japanese) is one of the main characters in the Chinese novel *The Journey to the West*, or *Xiyouji*, written in the 1500s. Born from a divine stone egg, he is endowed with intelligence and magical powers. In search of spiritual understanding, he sets off on a journey but is imprisoned for bringing havoc to the Celestial Palace of the Jade Emperor. Eventually he is released to accompany the Chinese Buddhist monk Xuanzang on his journey west to India. This print shows a group of monkeys observing a waterfall. The bravest monkey jumps through the waterfall to discover its source and is later crowned the Monkey King.



Japan, Edo Period (1603–1868)

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, Japanese, 1839 – 1892

Author: Sumida Ryōko

Publisher: Fukushimaya Tashichi

Sun Wukong Fights Rasetsunyo, from the series *A Modern Journey to the West* (Tsūzoku saiyūki), 1864, 12th lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

The Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation, gifts of various donors, by exchange, and gift of Edmond Freis in memory of his parents, Rose and Leon Freis 2017.106.50

The Monkey King Sun Wukong is a main character in the classic Chinese novel *The Journey to the West*, and is seen here in a fight with the Princess Iron Fan over her magical fan. He needs this fan, which is capable of creating powerful winds that



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extinguish flames, so his party can cross the Flaming Mountains on their journey west.

Japan, Edo Period (1603–1868)

Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, Japanese, 1839 – 1892

Author: Kanagaki Robun, Japanese, 1829 – 1894

Publisher: Ōmiya Kyūjirō

Momokawa Enkoku; Sun Wukong and Raset sunyo, from the series Tales of the Floating

World in Eastern Brocade (Azuma no hana ukiyo kōdan), 1868, 1st lunar month

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper

The Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation, gifts of various donors, by exchange, and gift of Edmond Freis in memory of his parents, Rose and Leon Freis 2017.106.89



This print shows the Monkey King Sun Wukong fighting with Princess Iron Fan, as in another print nearby. But this series of prints is about more than just the Monkey King's exploits—it's about storytelling in general. Listening to professional storytellers was a popular form of entertainment in Japan in the 1800s. Each print in this series is devoted to a famous storyteller, in this case Momokawa Enkoku (1851–1922), who was just 17 when this print was published.

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Tomioka Tessai, Japanese, 1836 – 1924

Monkey trying to catch a catfish with a gourd, 1912

Tanzaku: ink and color on silk

Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2017.146.2



The poem reads: *Lately there are many more men who have a monkey's guile to stick a catfish into a gourd.* It is a reference to the determination and effort it takes to achieve the impossible—like fitting a huge fish into a tiny gourd bottle.

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Japan, Edo Period (1603–1868)

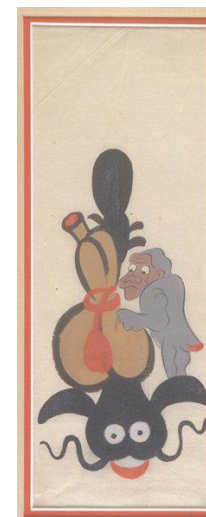
Unknown Japanese

Monkey trying to catch a catfish with a gourd, late 19th century

Painting: ink on paper

Gift of Harriet and Edson Spencer 99.59.34

Kōans are seemingly nonsensical questions that a Zen master would ask his pupils, and among the most famous kōans is this one: "How to catch a slippery catfish with a smooth gourd." In the 1400s, a court painter made the first known painting of this subject. By the early 1700s, a more humorous take on the phrase began to appear in Ōtsu-e, the simple folk paintings that originated in the town of Ōtsu, on Lake Biwa—a monkey hopelessly trying to achieve the impossible.



Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Ohara Shōson, Japanese, 1877 - 1945

Monkey Catching a Bee, before 1912

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Paul Schweitzer P.77.28.37



Japan, Shōwa period (1926–1989)

Ohara Shōson, Japanese, 1877 - 1945

Publisher: Kawaguchi Jirō

Carver: Maeda Kentarō

Printer: Komatsu Wasankichi

Monkeys and Persimmon, 1930s

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Paul Schweitzer P.77.28.53



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Gallery 237: Monkeys

Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Shibata Zeshin, Japanese, 1807 – 1891

Dog barking at a monkey trainer, mid to late 19th century

Album leaf: ink and color on paper with lacquer (urushi-e)

Bequest of Louis W. Hill, Jr. 96.146.12

Shibata Zeshin was widely regarded for his mastery of painting with lacquer on silk and paper, a unique and difficult technique that gave an appealing luster to his images. Here, a dog barks at a monkey sitting on the shoulder of its trainer. Keeping monkeys as pets, and training them to entertain people, was once popular in Japan.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Maruyama Ōkyo, Japanese, Shijō, 1733 – 1795

Monkey Hanging from a Branch, Spring 1770

Hanging scroll: ink and light color on silk

The John R. Van Derlip Fund; purchase from the collection of Elizabeth and Willard Clark 2013.31.84

Maruyama Ōkyo founded the Maruyama school of art and based his works on direct observation of nature, giving them a distinct realism. Ōkyo's keen eye is obvious in the firm grip of the monkey's paws and the wrinkles around the monkey's eyes, which gives an intensity to its gaze.



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Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Mori Sosen, Japanese, 1747 – 1821

Monkeys Playing on a Stone Lantern, early 19th century

Hanging scroll: ink and color on silk

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Miles Q. Fiterman 78.22.2

Like artists of the Maruyama and Shijō schools, Mori Sosen based his style on close observation of nature. Monkeys were his favorite subject, and he is said to have lived in the mountains for three years, observing monkeys in their natural habitat. Later in life he even adopted the art name "Sosen," which means "magic monkey" or "monkey wizard."



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Mori Sosen, Japanese, 1747 – 1821

Two Monkeys in a Pine Tree, early 19th century

Hanging scroll: ink on paper

Bequest of Richard P. Gale 74.1.298



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

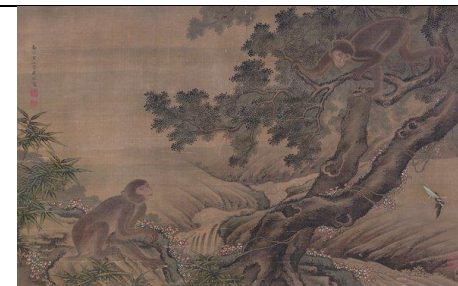
Iwai Kōun 18th century

Monkeys Watching a Praying Mantis Catching a Wasp, second half 18th century



Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.105

Nothing is known about the painter Iwai Kōun except that he was born in Nagasaki, the only port town in Japan that allowed foreigners to trade and live there during the Edo period (1603–1868). Nagasaki paintings reflect the strong influence of Chinese art, which arrived there on merchant ships. On the right side of this painting, a praying mantis has caught a wasp and is about to kill it. A monkey in the



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<p>tree above watches the spectacle, while he is observed by another monkey on the far left.</p>	
<p>Japan, 21st century Akinaga Kunihiro, Japanese, born 1978 Mimicry: Monkey, 2018 Glazed stoneware, steel The Mary Griggs Burke Endowment Fund established by the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke Foundation 2018.67a-c</p> <p>Akinaga Kunihiro makes clay sculptures, and since 2011 he has focused on creating an inventive and scientific series of black ceramic sculptures that he collectively calls “Mimicry.” The animals depicted in his sculptures are reduced to their skeletons—an attempt to capture the world between life and death—with only subtle decoration inspired by the architectural ornamentation on temples and churches. Nothing is obscured. Too often, he says, “the truth of things gets hidden,” an issue he would like to avoid. This sculpture shows a Japanese macaque, often called a “snow monkey,” lifting his arm in an ambiguous gesture.</p>	
<p>Japan, Edo period (1603–1868) Matsukawa Ryūchin 19th century Author: Umenoya Kakuju, Japanese, 1803 – 1864 Monkeys hanging on each other in lines, 1841 Woodblock print (surimono); ink and color on paper Gift of funds from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon P.77.27.155</p> <p>Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912) Yoshimi Yutaka, Japanese, 1808 – 1909 Monkey pyramid, January 1896 Woodblock print (surimono); ink and color on paper Gift of funds from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon P.77.27.148</p>	

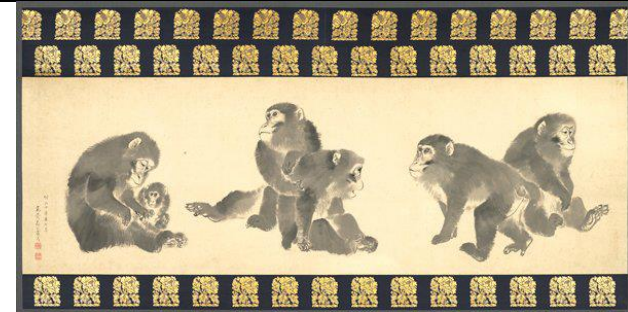
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Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)
Ōhara Donshū, Japanese, 1792–1857
Monkey on a snow hill, 19th century
Hanging scroll: ink and color on paper
Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1039



Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)
Mori Kansai, Japanese, 1814 – 1894
Monkeys, July 1887
Hanging scroll: ink on paper
Gift of Alfred and Ingrid Lenz Harrison 2002.143.1

Mori Kansai was the grandson of Mori Sosen (1747–1821), who was famous for his paintings of monkeys—including a work hanging nearby. Kansai chose the same subject for this painting, but his approach was much looser and more spontaneous. Kansai used a wide, flat brush and did not render the hair as finely and meticulously as his grandfather did.



Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)
Ōnishi Chinnen, Japanese, 1792 – 1851
Monkey in a wedding gown, c. 1836
Woodblock print (surimono); ink and color on paper
Gift of funds from Mr. and Mrs. Samuel H. Maslon P.77.27.21

Beneath the traditional white headdress and elaborate gown is a highly unusual bride. This scene may illustrate one of many Japanese folktales involving marriages



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between humans and animals, or it may simply represent the mischievous nature of monkeys. In any case, the monkey's furry face peeking out from the headdress, and its hairy foot protruding from beneath the hem of the dress, make for a comical image.

Japan, Edo period (1603–1868)

Unknown Japanese

Story of the Wisteria Basket (Fujibukuro no sōshi), 18th century

Handscroll: ink and light color on paper

Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.34

This handscroll illustrates the story of a beautiful woman who is married to a monkey against her will. One day, the story goes, an old farmer exhausted by his labors rashly promises the hand of his daughter to anyone willing to do his work in the fields. A monkey appears, accepts the offer, and, after doing the work, says he will come the next day to fetch his bride. The parents attempt to hide the girl by burying her in a box in the ground, but the monkey and his followers find her and take her to their mountain home. Before leaving to hunt for fruit, the monkeys put the woman in a large woven basket and hang it from a tree. Meanwhile, her distraught parents have enlisted the aid of hunters, who shoot down the basket and rescue the daughter. In her place, they leave some fierce dogs, which attack the monkey and his crew, killing all of them save one. The girl marries the chief hunter and everyone—except for the monkeys—lives happily ever after.



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Gallery 238: Modern Design

Kamisaka Sekka

Kamisaka Sekka is considered the restorer and last great master of the centuries-old Rinpa tradition, which was dedicated to simplified shapes, bold designs, and decorative patterning. By promoting the compelling graphic quality of Rinpa aesthetics into craft, Sekka became a pioneer of modern design in Japan.

In 1902, Sekka traveled to Europe to conduct research on European craft and design and was able to visit the Glasgow International Exhibition, then the largest exhibition in Great Britain of achievements in art, industry, and science. After his return, Sekka edited design magazines and issued books of design patterns. In 1907, he founded the Kabikai, a research association concerned with the creation of new craftworks for the industrial age. In an article for the magazine *Beauty*, published in 1909, he expressed his vision of a designer's role: "A designer has the duty of guiding craftsmen and encouraging them in the development of products; he must give his all to the task of increasing national production." While he continued to work as an artist himself, he was also active as an instructor, juror, exhibition organizer, and art director. He is also credited with the interior decoration of the Tenyo-Maru and Chiyo-Maru, two passenger ships that connected Asia with the United States.

Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Things from Many Worlds, May 1909–January 1910

Album; color woodblock printed book

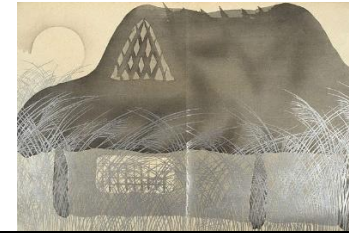
Gift of Elizabeth and Willard Clark 2013.30.66.1-3

This work is comprised of three woodblock printed albums, each containing 20 double-page compositions that include popular motifs such as deer among pine trees and waves. The images form an elegant balance between the principals of modernism and the tradition of the decorative style called Rinpa, which Kamisaka Sekka had studied extensively and brought to new life in his work. Though the albums are intended as printed art rather than a book of patterns, a number of the designs reappear on three-dimensional works like trays and lacquer boxes, as well as in Sekka's later paintings. The themes featured in this collection are



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predominantly classical, such as the beauty of nature, figures in traditional attire, or motifs drawn from classical literature, like *The Tale of Genji*.



20th century

Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Screen with four fans, 1920s–1930s

Two-panel folding screen (furosaki); ink, color, and gold on silk

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.55

This small folding screen is a so-called tea screen. It surrounds the heater used to simmer water during tea gatherings to shield the surroundings from charcoal fire sparks. The decorated side faces the attendants. While sometimes more flame-resistant materials like green bamboo or wood are used, this particular example is, somewhat impractically, made of paper and decorated opulently with four gilded paper fans mounted on the silvered surface. Each fan is decorated with motifs taken from the natural world: cherry blossoms, red chrysanthemums with blue balloon flowers, a pine tree, and a breaking wave.



Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Tobacco tray with wave design, a pair, 1920s–1930s

Tray; lacquer on wood, glazed ceramic, and bamboo

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.73.1a-c and 2013.29.73.2a-c

This simple tobacco set would be placed as a courtesy in the covered seating area outside of a tea house. The trays are sparsely decorated with rolling waves rendered as sketches of silver against a black ground. The set was regularly used, as evidenced by the light underpinnings of red showing through where the black overcoat has worn away, and the remnants of tobacco ash in the celadon ceramic jar.



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Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Humorous Designs, April 1903

Album; color woodblock printed book

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.66

This collection of 46 designs was assembled by Kamisaka Sekka in the year after he returned to Japan from studying contemporary European approaches to arts and crafts. These designs reveal European influences and show his ability to play with images from several cultures. In contrast to his other design collections, the themes here are diverse. They consist of motifs derived from traditional Asian art, such as zodiac animals, and themes of Western origin, like Art Deco vases. In his introduction to the compilation, Sekka refers to his work as more “jokes” than art, and points out that he has created them lightheartedly.



Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Calligraphy box decorated with gentians, 1920s

Ceramist: Eiraku Zengorō

Manufactured by Ichinose Kohei

Writing box (*suzuribako*); colors on Paulownia wood, glazed stoneware, silver, wood, metal

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.71a-l

Kamisaka Sekka designed this *suzuribako*—a box for calligraphy utensils—with colorful gentians but it was crafted by Ichinose Kohei, who engraved his signature on the inside. It is transparently lacquered to bring out the grain of the light paulownia wood, and the joints constructed of wooden pegs therefore remain visible on this object. Removing the lid reveals an insert for holding brushes and writing accessories. Underneath is space for the ink rubbing stone, which is glazed in green with a rabbit design, and the ribbon-shaped water dropper, glazed in yellow with a flower design.



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Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Sweets box with violets, 1920s

Covered box; gold and maki-e laquer on wood, and lead

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center by Joe Brotherton 2013.29.74a,b



Covered boxes like this are often used to serve the small cakes provided during tea gatherings to cut the bitter taste of the green tea powder. This *kashibako*, designed by Kamisaka Sekka, hints at the wabi aesthetic, which prizes naturalistic or imperfect objects. Though the box's smooth, round shape stands in direct contrast to the rustic ceramics favored by wabi style practitioners, the rough grain of the wood is retained on the outside of the piece. The exterior of the container is covered in a thin coat of clear lacquer, lending the natural wood a glossy finish, while the lid is coated in black lacquer with a design of gentians in silver and gold.

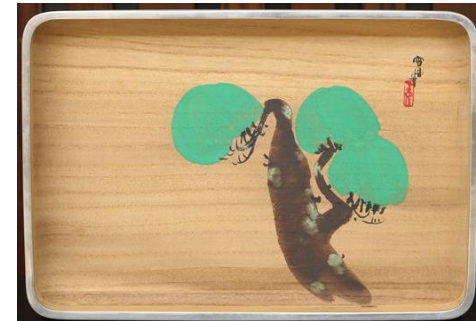
Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Tray with old pine tree, 1920s–1930s

Tray; ink and colors on Paulownia wood and silver

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.72



This transparently lacquered light wood tray with a silver frame is decorated with the design of an old pine tree, painted by Kamisaka Sekka. In Japanese iconography, the pine tree serves as a symbol for winter and for longevity. Here, used as a decorative element, it is reminiscent of the decorative Rinpa style of painting, revived by Sekka after its peak in the 1700s. The pine's trunk features the typical puddle ink technique (*tarashikomi*) of that style.

Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

Small box with country house, 1920s

Covered box; gold, lead, maki-e lacquer, and mother-of-pearl on wood

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.107a,b

Delicate mother-of-pearl and lead sheet inlays are used in this small box designed by Kamisaka Sekka. Over the smooth surface of the black lacquered background and matte sprinkled gold base of the tree and house exterior, the inlays are markedly raised. This effect, which adds a level of depth to the overall composition, would have been achieved by molding the lead and pearl inlays over a layer of paste made by mixing lacquer, pumice, and water.



Kamisaka Sekka, 1866–1942

Japan, Taishō period (1912–1926)

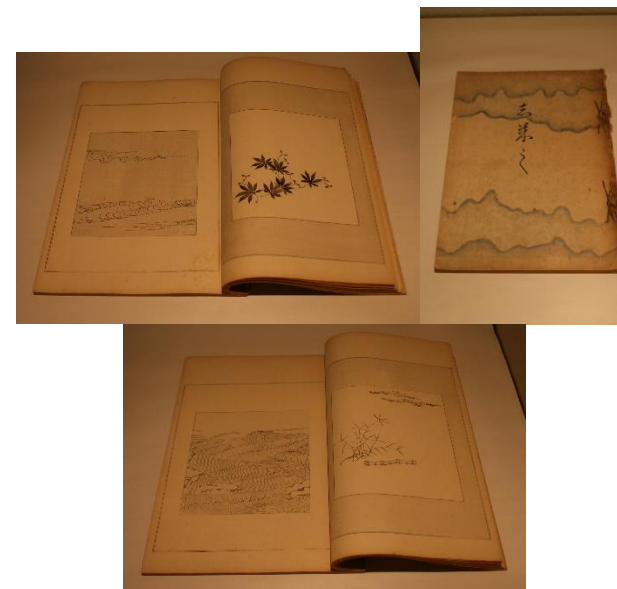
Picture cards, February 1901

Published by Tanaka Jihei

Album; color woodblock printed book

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.64.1-2

This two-volume design collection plays with designs presented in the square format of traditional picture or poem cards. Volume one features 32 images, including two color prints in green and orange, while the remaining designs and the 30 images in volume two are depicted in monochrome ink woodblock print. The designs include images from nature, such as waves and plant motifs, but also some abstract patterns.



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Gallery 239: Meiji Art

Meiji-Period Art

In 1868, Japan's feudal system collapsed and imperial power was reinstated under Emperor Meiji (1852–1912). Japan reopened to the West after more than 250 years of isolation. A rapid modernization and redefinition of Japan followed, including the arts. The traditional patrons of the arts—the samurai class—dissolved and artists sought new patrons with updated tastes. Western-style decoration became popular, and craftspeople of all kinds adjusted to meet this new demand. Metalworkers, for example, turned from making functional fittings for swords to creating objects for display.

So-called World's Fairs became an attractive venue for the Japanese government to demonstrate the sophistication of Japanese artisans. On the first day of the fair in Philadelphia in 1876, nearly 200,000 visitors stormed into the exhibition. The result was a boom of interest in Japanese arts and crafts around the world.

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Silver stand by Shreve & Company, San Francisco, 1852–1967

Dessert stands, c. 1900

Satsuma ware; porcelain, silver

Gift of Leo A. and Doris Hodroff 97.153.81.1.3,4



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Small plate with decor of flowers and butterfly, 1890s

Satsuma ware; glazed stoneware, gilt

Gift of Henry and Elizabeth Hyatt 98.255.1



Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Echigo-no-Kami 19th century

Large vase with gourd handles, late 19th century

Vase: Bronze

Bequest of John Scott Bradstreet 14.80



During the Meiji period, Japanese artisans like Echigo-no Kami, the creator of this vase, shifted their work to meet the tastes of an international market. John Scott Bradstreet, who bought this vase, was exactly the type of foreign consumer they hoped to reach. A Minneapolis-based designer and interior decorator, Bradstreet influenced local tastes by importing Asian goods to adorn the homes of Minnesota's wealthiest families. To some extent these artisans were victims of their own success, as Bradstreet also developed his own designs and manufacturing processes in response to the growing appreciation for Japanese decorative arts—often bypassing Japanese artisans entirely. Examples of Bradstreet's Japanese-inspired design can be seen in the living room from the circa 1906 William and Mina Prindle House, on view on the third floor at Mia.

Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Vase, late 19th century

Cloisonné enamel

Gift of Gary L. Gliem 2007.107.15



Namikawa Yasuyuki, 1845–1927

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Covered bottle with butterflies, flowers, and vine designs, around 1900

Cloisonné enamel

Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.444a,b



Nishimura Goun [obverse], 1877–1938

In the style of Mori Sosen [reverse], 1747–1821

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Rooster and hen in the fall rice harvest [obverse]; Monkeys amidst cherry blossoms [reverse], c. 1910

Four-panel folding screen; ink and color on silk [obverse]; embroidery on silk [reverse]

Given in memory of Henry Dutton Thrall 77.53



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Nagasaki Harbor triptych, 1880s

Hand colored photograph

Mary Griggs Burke Collection, Gift of the Mary and Jackson Burke Foundation 2015.79.542



Ivory carving

In the 1800s, the use of ivory for everything from buttons to billiard balls was widespread in America and Europe. In Japan, ivory was the main medium for *netsuke*, the small and intricately carved toggles that men used to keep their wallets, tobacco pouches, and other personal containers from falling off the sash that held their kimono. As Japanese men shed traditional clothing styles, *netsuke* were no longer needed, and ivory carvers turned to producing sculptural objects instead (*okimono*). These pieces were often humorous—people interacting with monkeys was a popular motif—and proved popular abroad and at home, especially with foreign tourists.

Hōgetsu, 19th century

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Monkey trainer with child, late 19th century

Ivory

Gift of Leo A. and Doris Hodroff 96.147.27



Tsugitoshi, 19th century

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

Tug-of-war between monkeys and farmer with his son, late 19th century

Ivory

Gift of Leo A. and Doris Hodroff 96.147.59



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Shioda Toshichika, 19th century
Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)
Monkey trainer, late 19th century
Ivory
Gift of Mrs. Stanley Hawks 78.69.5



Kyūichi, 19th century
Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)
Hunter carrying a monkey he caught, late 19th century
Ivory
Gift of Leo A. and Doris Hodroff 96.147.30



Kōgetsu, 19th century
Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)
Monkey trainer with two monkeys, late 19th century
Ivory
Gift of Leo A. and Doris Hodroff 96.147.61



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019

Japan, Meiji period (1868–1912)

The Golden Pavilion in Kyoto, early 20th century

Four-panel folding screen; silk with embroidery in silk and metallic thread, wooden frame with lacquered decoration; on reverse: ink and color on silk

The John R. Van Derlip Fund 85.11



Japanese Art—Gallery Rotations, Winter-Spring 2019