

Japanese Art—Exhibition: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan’s Great Poet and Landscape Artist, April 22, 2023 - July 23, 2023

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Japanese and Korean Art

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**Japanese Art—Exhibition: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan's Great Poet and Landscape Artist,
April 22, 2023 - July 23, 2023**

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Gallery 237: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan’s Great Poet and Landscape Artist

Fukuda Kodōjin (1865–1944) was among a handful of other scholar-artists who carried Japan’s literati painting tradition (*Nanga*) into the 20th century. His paintings often included bizarre mountain formations populated by a recluse enjoying time in nature. He was also an accomplished scholar, poet, and calligrapher who inscribed paintings with his own poems. At the height of his career in 1928–29, the incumbent prime minister Tanaka Giichi (1864–1929) and other high-ranking politicians and industrialists established the Kodōjin Society (Kodōjinkai), a testament to their appreciation. Forgotten in Japan after his death, Kodōjin remains today better known outside of Japan.

Kodōjin was fond of the phrase “Things done after studying” (*Dokusho yoji*), which appears several times in his work. It encapsulated his belief that his paintings were products of his leisure time, in contrast to his more serious pastimes, such as the study of books. “I just happen,” he wrote in the postscript to his 1918 *Album of White Clouds*, “to paint a landscape: the world will debate whether it is skillful or clumsy.”

This is the first-ever retrospective of Kodōjin’s art, including loans by international collectors. It is accompanied by a 344-page catalogue available in the museum’s store.

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Fukuda Kodōjin (1865–1944)

Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 - 1944

No. 1

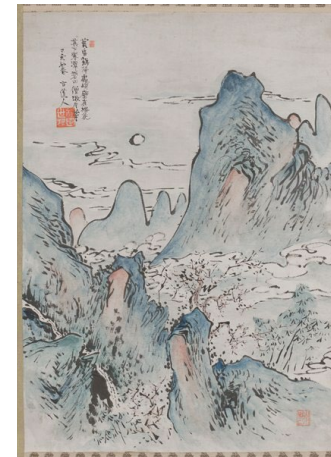
Moon over Azure Mountains, January 1899

Ink and color on paper

Bachmann Eckenstein Japanese Art, Switzerland

黄昏鶴歸處
峭壁有梅花
其下寒潭碧
山僧汲月華

Here at dusk, where cranes return,
The sheer cliffs show plum blossoms.
Beneath them the azure of a cold pond,
Where a mountain monk draws water, moon-adorned.



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This is Kodōjin’s earliest documented work, inscribed with the date January 1899: a landscape rendered in blue wash with just a few red accents. Modest in scale, the composition and execution already hint at the path he would embark on over the next 40 years in his unconventional and unrestricted style for the placement and drawing of mountains, rocks, clouds, waterfalls, and trees. Devoid of any human activity, the lofty view depicts an evening scene, with a gnarled plum tree in the center foreground and a moon in the distance. His poem, composed specifically for this painting, conveys the sentiment evoked by the image.

No. 2

Blue-green Landscape, September 1901

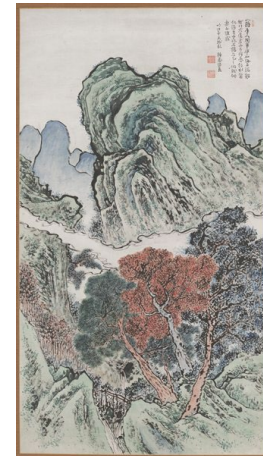
Ink and color on paper

Private Collection

寵辱人間事
譬如海上漚
超然行大道
君子有何憂
飲水醫飢渴
看雲臥石樓
亦天之河賦
此樂向誰求

Favor? Shame? Routine human affairs;
Compare them to the bubbles on the sea.
Transcendently enact the Great Way;
A gentleman, what worries will you have?
Drink water to doctor thirst and hunger;
Watch the clouds, lying in a tower of stone:
They are indeed Heaven’s poem about rivers;
From whom can you request such joy as this?

This landscape was discovered in a collection in Ehime Prefecture, the prefecture adjacent to Yamaguchi, the home of Kodōjin’s new wife, Misu. The couple visited there in mid-1901 when Misu was already pregnant with their first son. It is possible that Kodōjin painted it while at Misu’s parents’ home and before his trip back to Tokyo. Blue-Green Landscape is a formative work in Kodōjin’s his



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oeuvre for two reasons: its size and palette. Although it is only slightly taller than his average landscapes after this time, its width is approximately double, making it the largest of Kodōjin's documented hanging scrolls. This work is particularly noteworthy because it figures so early in his painting career. Given the absence of other such monumentally sized works, we might assume that this painting posed a technical challenge to Kodōjin and that he decided against working in this scale in the future. Moreover, this is the earliest known example of his use of a blue-green color palette for a landscape.

No. 3

Plum Forest, c. 1901–02

Ink on paper

Bachmann Eckenstein Japanese Art, Switzerland

結屋於虛谷
春風亦紆徐
門前咽流水
門內有梅疏

I have built my hut in a deserted valley;
The spring breeze blowing, I slowly wander about.
In front of my gate gurgles a flowing stream;
Within my gate, there's sparseness of plum blossoms.

The seals on this painting suggest that it was created in 1901 or 1902, thereby making it one of Kodōjin's earliest datable monochrome landscapes. Its compositional structure resembles the nearby *Moon over Azure Mountains* and *Blue-Green Landscape*, but here he adds figures to the vast landscape, drawing on the theme of the “recluse” that will become an essential element in many of his subsequent landscapes. The image of a recluse—a scholar wandering alone or with a companion in the mountains to play music, meditate, drink, or simply enjoy the scenery—is a common subject in Chinese literati painting. The scholar is generally rendered as a minuscule figure seen from behind; here, a man holds a staff in the bottom-right corner, followed by a young attendant carrying an unidentified object.



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No. 7

Retiring from the World at a Mountain Creek, Summer 1907

Ink on paper

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

興到復忘我
出門從意行
水邊林下路
自有好詩成

Inspiration comes, forgetting “self,”

I issue forth and go wherever I want.

The path beside the stream, beneath the grove:

Here naturally the finest poems will come.

Kodōjin noted on this painting that he made it at the “Tower of Watching Out for Immortals” (Bōsenrō 望仙樓), which could refer to his home at that time in Takagishi, Kyoto.

No. 10

Pine Trees between Cliffs, August 1910

Ink and color on silk

Robert Mangold, Kyoto

獨坐青山老
無愁白髮生
衡門日之夕
延詠愜吾情
幽菊充餐者
自知詩句清
悠悠千歲下
慕古酒杯傾

I sit alone, aging among green mountains;

I have no grief, yet hair keeps turning white.

Slanting across my gate, the sun moves toward evening;

I sing at length, pleasing my inner feelings.



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The mysterious chrysanthemum suffices for this diner;
I know the purity of those verses of Tao Yuanming!
Far, far beyond a thousand years,
Admiring antiquity, I will pour a glass for him.

Until around 1914, Kodōjin frequently painted polychrome landscapes for which he applied washes of pale color, sometimes in combination with light ink. In the early 1910s his color palette became more vivid with the use of oranges, pinks, and reds. He noted that he painted Pine Trees between Cliffs at “A Place with Yellow Leaves in White Clouds” (Hakuun kōyō sho), which could refer to the area where he lived but may also have been a location he visited in or outside Kyoto.

No. 12

Landscape in Pale Red, April 1912

Ink and color on silk

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center by David Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2013.29.341

性本拙衣食
棲遁慕昔賢
自耕幽谷底
或嘯白雲巔
采藥隨麋鹿
煎茶汲石泉
逍遙吾願足
時復仰蒼天

By nature clumsy about clothing, food,
I perch in reclusion, admiring ancient sages.
I plow myself bottoms of hidden valleys,
Or whistle on peaks above white clouds.
Gathering herbs, I follow the deer;
Brewing tea draw water from rocky streams.
Wandering at leisure, fully content,
Often gazing up again at blue sky.



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No. 17

Excursion into the Mountains, September 1914

Ink on paper

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

落日蒼天色
寒山啼鳥聲
蕭蕭紅葉下
冉冉白雲生
獨往情無極
高秋老益清
因看明月出
偶訪道人行

Setting sunlight darkens Heaven's color;
Cold mountains, sounds of singing birds.
Sighing, sighing, red leaves tumble;
Curling, rising, white clouds emerge.
Alone I go forth, feelings without limit:
Autumns seem still purer as I grow old.
And now I see the bright moon rising—
This is the time to visit a man of the Way.

In the 1910s, Kodōjin produced another style of landscape that is characterized by monochromatic sparsity: withered trees with trunks rendered with dark lines, emaciated mountains, and a generous use of blank space are the main elements of these works. Their simpler execution allowed them to be produced comparatively swiftly, and it is no surprise that he created a considerable number of these landscapes.



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No. 14

Landscape after Mi Fu, October 1914

Ink on satin

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1041

雲起山皆動
泉流石亦鳴
年來仙窟裏
自覺道心生

Clouds arise, the mountains now all move!

Streams are flowing, the very stones sing out.

For years, here in this grotto of the Immortals,

Feeling the mind of the Way arise in me.

This example belongs to a set of at least two hanging scrolls that are exceptional because they are the tallest of Kodōjin's landscapes, and they are painted on satin instead of on silk or paper. Satin was frequently employed by the painter and calligrapher Zhang Ruitu (1570–1641), but only around four percent of Kodōjin's works are on satin. This painting and its counterpart Quiet Mountains on a Slow Day could form a pair of summer (this painting) and winter landscapes, or they might have belonged to a set of four, each portraying a season, only two of which are currently documented.



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No. 18

Quiet Mountain on a Slow Day, October 1914

Ink on satin

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1040

日高門尚掩
樹暖雨初晴
獨坐幽花落
閒庭春艸生
讀書頗樂道
省事豈無情
性本憐微物
相馴鳥雀鳴

Sun risen high, door still shut tight,
Trees all warm, rain just clearing up,
Alone I sit where mysterious flowers fall
In quiet courtyard where spring plants grow.
Reading books, greatly enjoying the Way,
Reducing chores—doesn't that help the feelings?
By basic nature, fond of tiny things,
As if tamed, little sparrows chirp.



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No. 26

Solitary Orchid with Bizarre Stone, December 1919

Ink and color on silk

Patricia S. Criticos Collection

衣食非不拙
憂道臥衡門
金錢非不貴
積善遺兒孫

Clothing, food? It is not that I am not clumsy,
But grieved at the world’s ways, I rest behind my gate.
As for money, it is not that I am not rich,
But to accumulate goodness, I will leave it to my children.

Kodōjin regularly painted orchids, sometimes in black or red ink, sometimes on their own, but frequently in combination with a distinctive vertical rock form as seen here. This hanging scroll is rendered in greater detail and would have taken considerably more time than any of the other four orchid paintings currently known. He sometimes added a third element—plum blossoms. Missing from this configuration were the bamboo and the pine, which together would have constituted the “five purities” (gosei), a favorite subject of the natural world for literati painters. Kodōjin frequently reused his poetry; this poem also appears on Landscape with Snow Scenery (19D).



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No. 24

Running Water and Plum Blossoms, c. 1913-21

Ink and color on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.8

雲本無心舒
花絕無草過
小人求諸奴
非是佛經法

Clouds, lacking any mind, unfold;

Flowers—utterly nonexistent!—fade.

The petty man seeks truth from slaves:

This is not the dharma of Buddha's sutras.



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Gallery 238: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan’s Great Poet and Landscape Artist

First sales exhibition in 1919

The first commercial art galleries opened in Japan in 1910, first in Tokyo and, a few months later, in Kyoto. On November 17, 1914, while Kodōjin was in Takamatsu, the poet Oka Tōri (1879–1916) opened the gallery Heian Gabō on Shijō Street in the Gion district of Kyoto. The ground floor was built in a Western style (visitors could keep their shoes on); the upper floor was in a traditional Japanese style with tatami mats. In the summer of 1919, Heian Gabō held an exhibition of Kodōjin’s painting and poetry, which could have been his very first one; no earlier exhibition is known. It included this set of four seasons and the two albums that can be counted among Kodōjin’s best works.

Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 – 1944

No. 19A

Landscape with Spring Scenery, April 1918

Ink and color on silk

The Suzanne S. Roberts Fund for Asian Art 2012.71.4

花宿幽鳥
石潭遊美魚
出門行樂久
入室復繙書

Amid flowering trees are perched hidden birds;
In stony tarn are swimming lovely fish.
I sally forth, enjoying myself for hours,
Return back home, again flip through my books.

The titles of the four landscapes are written by Kodōjin on the individual storage boxes: Landscape with Spring Scenery (Shunkei sansui), Landscape after Mi Fu (Bei Futsu sansui), Landscape with Autumn Scenery (Shūkei sansui), and Landscape with Snow Scenery (Sekkei sansui). Each work was meticulously executed. Color is applied for the blossoms in the spring landscape and for the



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foliage in the autumn landscape. In contrast, the summer landscape, which is in the style of the Chinese painter-calligrapher Mi Fu (Mi Fei, 1051–1107), one of the four greatest calligraphers of the Song dynasty (960–1279), and the winter landscape are both monochrome.

No. 19B

Landscape after Mi Fu, April 1918

Ink on silk

The Suzanne S. Roberts Fund for Asian Art 2012.71.3

一旦謝名利
林下忘世囂
請看自然理
春筍入夏高

One day I said goodbye to fame and fortune,
Beneath the forest, forgot all worldly noise.
Please take a look at the Principles of Nature:
Spring bamboo shoots with summer surge up high.



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No. 19C

Landscape with Autumn Scenery, April 1918

Ink and color on silk

The Suzanne S. Roberts Fund for Asian Art 2012.71.2

落日幽巖下
寒泉木葉沈
澄然明似鑑
照見古人心

Setting sun beneath a hidden cliff;
Cold spring, where leaves are sinking.
Crystalline, as clear as a mirror;
Here are reflected the hearts of the ancients.

No. 19D

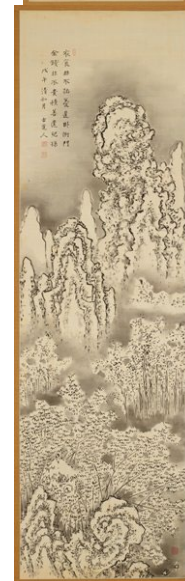
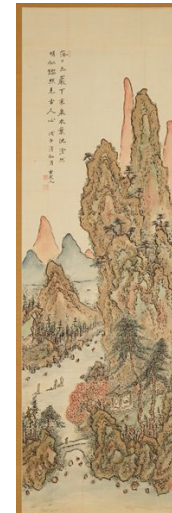
Landscape with Snow Scenery, April 1918

Ink on silk

The Suzanne S. Roberts Fund for Asian Art 2012.71.1

衣食非不拙
憂道臥衡門
金錢非不貴
積善遺兒孫

Clothing, food? It is not that I am not clumsy,
But grieved at the world's ways, I rest behind my gate.
As for money, it is not that I am not rich,
But to accumulate goodness, I will leave it to my children.



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No. 21

Album of Colored Clouds, c. 1918

Ink on silk

Gitter-Yelen Collection

The Album of White Clouds illustrates landscapes in monochrome, while the scenes in the Album of Colored Clouds are in color. Each has 14 leaves, consisting of a frontispiece, six alternating calligraphies and landscapes, and a postscript. The 12 landscapes are little jewels that offer a carefully rendered and innovative scene. The ink landscapes in subtle gray shading offer a striking contrast to the color landscapes in deep green and blue tones. It seems that this album pair was the only work by Kodōjin to be sold at auction during his lifetime, at the prestigious Kyoto Art Club (Kyōto Bijutsu Kurabu) on December 4, 1933 (lot 137).

No. 20

Album of White Clouds, c. 1918

Ink on silk

Gitter-Yelen Collection



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Gallery 239: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan's Great Poet and Landscape Artist

Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 - 1944

No. 36

Solitary Journey of a Recluse, October 1925

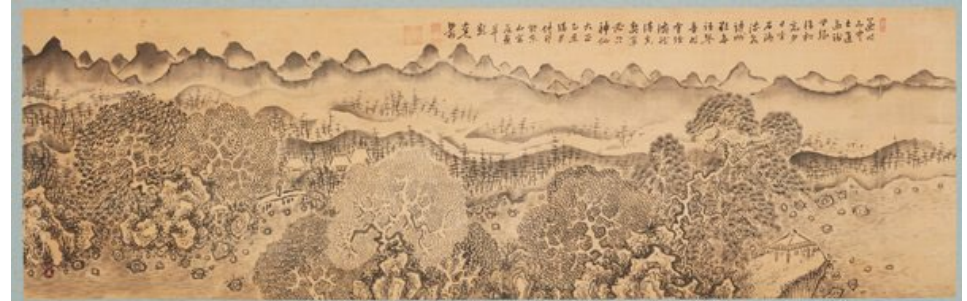
Ink on silk

Anonymous gift in honor of Gordon Brodfuehrer 2017.144.3

遂作山中士
道遙謝世緣
撫松忘夕日
坐石聽清泉
詩妙欲無語
琴音非有絃
憇然得真契
寧必問神仙

And so I have become a mountain-dwelling scholar,
Wandering freely, having renounced worldly karma.
Caressing a pine tree, I forget the westering sun,
Sitting on a rock, listen to the pure stream.
I want my poems so subtle that they lack words,
My lute playing so fine it is as if I used no strings.
Joyfully I have grasped true integration:
What need to query the spirits and immortals?

The vast majority of Kodōjin's paintings are oriented vertically (i.e., hanging scrolls), but on rare occasions he worked in horizontal formats, including wide compositions that would have been framed. This format was inspired by the horizontal handscroll; Kodōjin mostly employed these for calligraphy works that featured the names of a room or a building and hung over doorways or



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under eaves. Landscape paintings in this format are unusual, and Solitary Journey of a Recluse is the largest known horizontal landscape painting by Kodōjin.

No. 16

Beyond Mi Family Style, Spring 1927

Red ink on paper

Private Collection

米家以外
別開一法
箇中天地
獨住者誰

Beyond the Mi family style

I have created a style quite different.

The world shown in this picture:

Who is the one living alone?

The Chinese painter-calligrapher Mi Fu (Mi Fei, 1051–1107) is acknowledged as one of the four greatest calligraphers of the Song dynasty (960–1279). No extant paintings can be definitively authenticated as by Mi Fu; however, his distinctive style of rendering mountains without outlines through the use of wet dots of ink (so-called “Mi dots”) had become popular during the Yuan dynasty (1271–1368). Kodōjin discovered his own affection for these misty scenes and adopted a Mi Fu style in more than 20 hanging scrolls and in several album pages. The title of this painting, Beyond Mi Family Style, signals his wish to go a step further, which he did through the use of red instead of black ink.



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No. 5

Album of What Exists, c. 1907

Ink on paper

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

This small-format album from 1907 is the earliest documented of the 15 albums known by Kodōjin. His signature is not found in this album, the artist opting instead to disperse 18 different seals throughout it. The six paintings in *Album of What Exists* are all ink landscapes. They offer a range of scenic views and how to render them, including, for the first time, a mountain range in the style of the Chinese painter-calligrapher Mi Fu (Mi Fei, 1051–1107) that he would frequently revisit throughout the remainder of his career.

Set of two tea caddies, Summer 1923

Wood, ink

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

In addition to his poetry and painting, from at least 1923 onward Kodōjin joined with various craftsmen in composing poems for and creating decorations on their artworks. Such collaborations were firmly grounded in the literati tradition. They attest to Kodōjin's versatility, expanding his art practice to attract clients who would not otherwise have been interested in acquiring a painting or a calligraphy.



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Strawberries, 1930s

Ink and color on silk

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the
Center by Dr Hashimoto, Wakayama 2013.29.898.3

夏に入りて
またるゝものは
苺可な

At the beginning of summer,
Things waited for;
Strawberries.

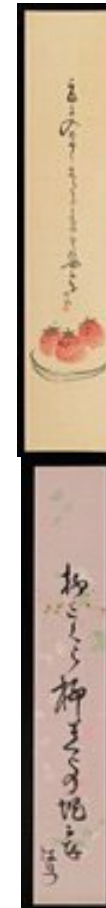
Willow and Cherry, c. 1930s

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the
Center by Dr Hashimoto, Wakayama 2013.29.898.1

柳さくら
柳さくらの
堤可な

The willow and cherry,
The willow and cherry
Riverbank.



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No. 33

Fishing Alone in a Pure Creek, Spring 1924

Ink on silk

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.840

人皆曰吾老
我豈徒守愚
讀書不甚解
求道與誰俱
自古天下士
却作布衣徒
悠然獨養志
寄跡泉石區

People all say I must be getting old,
But maybe I have been cultivating this stupidity!
I read books, but do not know how to interpret them;
I seek the Way, but have one to share with.
From ancient times, truly world-class scholars
Have been followers of the Way of Simple Clothes.
Trancelike, alone I nurture my intentions;
Visitors, please note this “region of streams and rocks.”

Kodōjin also inscribed this prose:

此幅固非應需而既作也。自画自娛，聯以達真耳。不問巧拙不論家派，著吾家
法直興化合矣。豈復他有哉々々

This work was certainly not done under any compulsion. I paint myself for my
own pleasure, simply to achieve Truth. For me there’s no question of skill or
clumsiness, no concern about Schools of Painting: I implement my own style
under direct inspiration of harmonious transformation. How could there be
anything more to it than that?



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No. 42

Wind and Moon by the Riverside, c. 1922-24

Ink and color on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.968

風月誰為主
河濱獨結廬
任他生計拙
舜亦學陶漁

Wind and moon—who is their master?
By riverside alone I have built my hut.
So what if my plan for life is clumsy?
Even Shun made pottery and fished.

No. 35

Fuji Above the Clouds, October 1925

Ink on paper

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

維嶽三州青未了
陰晴屢變走雷霆
雲煙泱泱壓平麓
日月動搖離大溟
半夜高寒明帝座
千年獨立表神靈
溫容如玉使人敬
君子國中留典型

Sacred peak—three provinces—
The green goes on forever;
Dark or clear, through several changes
Roll the thunder bolts.
Clouds and mist so vast and wide,
Press on the foothill plains,
Sun and moon move on and on,



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Departing from the great expanse.
At midnight, high and cold,
Our brilliant Monarch's throne;
For thousands of years, standing alone,
Manifesting divine intelligence.
His glowing face like jade
causes men to feel reverence:
True gentlemen bequeath to their land
Model works as classics.

No. 22

Countless Peaks and Streams, Autumn 1918

Ink and color on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.27

1

林晴啼鳥響
早起出門行
欲汲清溪水
前山受日明

2

唯有白雲動
我心歸一聞
超然窮達外
獨坐見空山

3

忽有清機發
吟詩上翠微
夕陽明古逕
松色照寒衣

4

獨往空山夕
相隨一古琴
水中天上月
雨雨照吾心



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5

初日照門戶
一花高立霜
起來汲寒水
山色遠蒼蒼

6

我心清不寐
明月在天閒
寂寂虛窗外
秋聲夜動山

7

曲逕通深竹
故人有幽墅
思詩坐雨前
可與青山語

8

颯颯空林葉
荒村燈火青
行人不見影
一犬吠寒星

9

古寺寒燈照
幽人獨坐長
夜深如有鬼
風葉走虛廊

10

山靜雲猶宿
日高門未開
落花幽意動
啼鳥故人來

11

客去柴門寂
秋心弄物萃
幽禽啄枯葉

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寒日照孤花

1 Sky over forest clears, singing birds echo,
Up early I am out the door to walk.
I want to draw water from the clear stream
As the mountains ahead receive the sun's light.

2 Only the white clouds are moving—
My heart returns to primal peace.
Transcendentally, beyond success and failure,
I sit alone to watch deserted hills.

3 Suddenly pure inspiration strikes—
Chanting poems I climb the blue-green slopes.
Evening sun glows down the ancient path;
Pine tree colors illumine my cold robe.

4 Alone I go up the empty mountain—evening,
And all I bring is my ancient lute.
In stream water, in the sky—two moons,
And this pair now glows within my heart.

5 The new sun shines on my gate;
One flower grows there, upright through the frost.
I rise to draw some cold well water;
Mountain colors stretch far away.

6 My mind too clarified for sleep,
The moon appears in Heaven.
In the silence outside my empty window
Autumn sounds are shaking the mountain tonight.

7 A winding path leads deep into bamboo

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Where a friend has a hidden retreat.
Meditating poems we sit as rain comes down;
We can discuss them with these mountains of green.

8 Soughing, soughing, leaves in the empty wood;
From the deserted village, one lamplight, dim.
The traveler sees not a single shadow;
Somewhere a dog barks at the cold stars.

9 In the ancient temple, one cold lamp glows;
The hidden one sits alone for hours.
Deep in the night, there seem to be ghosts:
Windblown leaves twirling down empty cloisters.

10 The mountain, calm, last night's clouds still here;
The sun is high, the gate remains unopened.
Flowers falling—movement of mysterious meaning;
To songs of birds, an old friend now appears.

11 My guest has left, the bramble gate is silent.
My autumn heart touches season's colors.
A hidden bird pecks at withered leaves;
Cold sunlight illuminates a solitary flower.

“One Thousand Mountains and Ten Thousand Streams” was a popular subject of literati painters, and Kodōjin created several versions. In this one, the title adequately relates to the myriad rock formations conceived in shades of light orange separated by negative space filled with different expanses of water. He further enhanced the remarkable scenery by using gray dots to convey the sense of dense foliage growing on the rocks, in places even upside down. Furthermore, Kodōjin added an unusually large number of poems. His paintings generally have one poem and any additional text is prose. Here, however, he inscribed 11 poems, by far the most compared with all of his

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other paintings. He likely opted for 11 in order to have one poem represent each group of the 1,000 mountains and streams mentioned in the title.

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The Kodōjin Society

In November 1928, Kokubu Saitō (Tanenori, 1873–1950), an official at the Cabinet and Home Ministry and a prolific poet and teacher of Chinese-style poetry, was in Kyoto to attend the enthronement ceremony of Emperor Shōwa. Saitō was an old friend of Kodōjin’s who was impressed by his life as a literati and his corpus of excellent paintings and calligraphy; both inspired him to initiate the Kodōjin Society (Kodōjinkai). The pamphlet announcing the foundation of the Kodōjin Society in December 1928 begins with a glowing description of Kodōjin by Saitō, who declared the 63-year-old to be “a phoenix of painting and a kirin of calligraphy” (a kirin is a legendary unicorn-like creature). The list of 53 founders reads like a Who’s Who of politicians and industrialists at that time:

Tanaka Giichi (1864–1929)	Prime Minister
Wakatsuki Reijirō (1866–1949)	Former Prime Minister
Ogawa Heikichi (1870–1942)	Minister of Railways
Mitsuchi Chūzō (1871–1948)	Minister of Finance
Kuhara Fusanosuke (1869–1965)	Minister of Communications
Yamamoto Teijirō (1870–1937)	Minister of Agriculture and Forestry
Kamata Eikichi (1857–1934)	Counselor, Privy Council
Yagyū Toshinaka (1867–1941)	Viscount
Kurachi Masao (1867–1935)	Managing Director, Mitsukoshi
Yukawa Kankichi (1868–1931)	Director General, Sumitomo
Kanamori Mataichirō (1873–1937)	Director, Osaka Electric Tramway
Ōta Mitsuhiro (1874–1939)	Director, Keihan Electric Railway
Sakamoto Senji (1869–1934)	Director, Yoshino Railway
Tanaka Hiroshi (1866–1957)	Director, Kyoto Electric Light
Fujioka Jōkichi (b. 1873)	Executive Director, Mitsui Mining Company

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Fukushima Kashizō (b. 1859)

Director, Keijo Electric

Ōta Isoji (dates unknown)

Director, Tokyo Gas

Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 - 1944

No. 80

Landscape in Pale Red, c. 1930-35

Ink and color on paper

Private Collection

深人善容物
靜者能養心
無事因修道
和情為撫琴
松風吹大壑
山月照空林
但恐驚仙鶴
莫教樵斧侵

The deep thinker is good at comprehending things;
The serene one is able to nurture his mind.
With no pressing matters, I can cultivate the Way;
With harmonious feelings, I start to play the lute.
Wind in the pines blows through the great valley;
The mountain moon shines on the deserted wood.
Only immortal cranes might be startled:
Please do not let the woodman's axe invade.



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No. 38

Excursion in Cloudy Mountains, c. 1922-32

Ink on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.1

筆端存造化
一幅直千金
自濕雲煙氣
若聽山水音
未成歸隱計
聊寫臥遊心
是我幽居趣
應從畫裏尋

The tip of my brush has Creator's Power,
So a single scroll is worth a thousand pieces of gold!
When moistened with vapors of cloud and mist,
It is like hearing the sounds of stream and mountain.
Since I have not carried out my plan of hermitage,
I just use this to show my "armchair wanderer's" heart.
And thus my joy of living in retirement
Must be sought here, inside this painting.



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No. 39

One Thousand Mountains and Ten Thousand Ravines, c. 1922–32

Ink on paper

Gift of Willard G. Clark 2017.145.6

真人本無位
樂道不求名
白日逍遙足
天地一心清
常服煙霞氣
浩然仙骨輕
苟能得乘化
可以悟無生
神龍洞中老
時復卷雲行

The "True Man" basically has no fixed place;
He joys in the Way and does not seek for fame.
In broad daylight, he wanders free and easy,
Unified mind all pure between Heaven and Earth.
Regularly he imbibes the ether of the mists,
Transcendently his immortal bones turn light.
And if he can ride on Transformation,
He may gain enlightenment about the Unborn.
A divine dragon, aging in his cave,
From time to time twirling up among the clouds.



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No. 63

Crabs Walking Sideways, c. 1928

Ink and color on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.23

遠流波如層
終日釣舟橫
但有蠢翁動
魚今不求名

In this far-flowing stream, waves like layered peaks!
All day, beached fishing boats lie on their sides.
There are only these foolish fellows abroad:
Today, no fish are out seeking fame!

This painting was included in the sales exhibition at Mitsukoshi department store on February 22–26, 1929, and is featured in the book *Rock Slivers and Lonely Clouds*. Ishikawa Yoshijirō (1881–1969), managing director of Kyoto Electric Light, acquired this painting for only 120 Yen in 1928 (approximately \$54 at that time, or about \$900 today).



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No. 64

Moon and Pine Tree, c. 1928

Ink on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.7

松子南望照飲泉
山中高臥豈將仙
此來當笑皆依舊
何獨文章不流連

Gazing south through pine cones,
There shines my drinking brook:
Here in the mountains, calmly reclining,
Could I almost be an immortal?
Coming here again, I must laugh—
Everything just the same,
So why is my writing—that alone!—
Not flowing effortlessly?

Published in the book *Rock Slivers and Lonely Clouds*, this painting was also included in the sales exhibition at Mitsukoshi department store on February 22–26, 1929. Izumi Kichijirō (born 1874), a lead pipe manufacturer and founding member of the Kodōjin Society in 1928, purchased it for Yen 120 (approximately \$54 at that time, or about \$900 today).



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No. 62

Withered Tree and Winter Crow, c. 1928

Ink and color on paper

Mary and Cheney Cowles Collection

青山日相對
白雲日往來
青山與白雲
悠悠有樂哉

Green mountains face me every day,
Clouds daily come and go.
Green mountains and white clouds:
Ah! Reverie! Here is joy!

This remarkable landscape exemplifies Kodōjin’s command of abstraction. Although abstraction in Western painting would not become a movement until the late 1800s–early 1900s, in China abstract painting was recognized at least one millennium earlier, dating from the Tang dynasty (618–907). One technique, called “splashed ink” (C: pomo, J: hatsuboku), freely applies swathes of wet ink; it is tied to the “boneless” technique but is more defined. Here, Kodōjin leaves considerable negative space and places only five tall, vertical peaks in the background, each painted with a wet brush in a different color: red, black, yellow, green, and blue. The withered tree mentioned in the title is positioned at the bottom edge of the painting, rendered in black with red spots, atop of which sits the almost indiscernible crow.



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No. 60

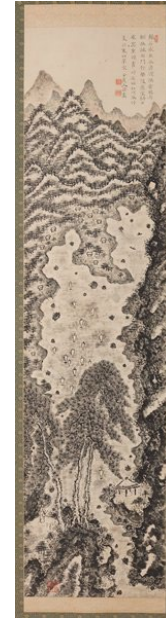
Silhouettes of Sails and Glowing Pine Trees, May 1928

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1004

緑石求魚
水清淺隔
雲聽鳥樹
扶疎出門
行樂復還
室斜日在
窓重讀書

Along the rocks I search for fish
Where water's clear and shallow;
Beyond the clouds I hear the birds
Where trees spread in profusion.
I go out my gate to enjoy myself,
Then return back home;
As setting sunlight shines through the window
Again I read my books.



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No. 48

Landscape with Rice Fields, Spring 1923

Ink and color on silk

Private Collection

野外逢晴日
人生樂出遊
欣欣草木秀
湏湏春水流
山色自蒼翠
細雨潤平疇
農家將有事
處處鷄犬幽
良辰本如此
携酒復何求

Out in the wilds I meet the clear day—
In human life, all take joy in wandering!
Full of happiness, trees and flora flourish;
Gurgling along, springtime waters flow.
Mountain colors, naturally bluish-green;
Fine rains moisten the level farms.
The farmers soon will have work to do:
Everywhere, chickens and dogs seem hidden.
Fine times basically are like this:
Jug of wine in hand, what more would you seek?



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No. 79

Red Leaves and White Clouds, April 1934

Ink and color on paper

Stuart Katz Collection

自古高臥士
志與世相違
不許題鳳字
載酒叩巖扉
童子護猿鶴
見余語依依
先生偶有事
朝出向帝畿
政局昨來變
無論問是非
誰使蟄龍起
谷口斷雲飛

From ancient times, scholars of high reclusion
Have had a purpose at odds with the world outside.
No one allowed to inscribe Phoenix here!
Just bring some wine, knock at my bramble gate.
A boy servant cares for my gibbons and cranes;
When they see me, we chat intimately.
And when this gentleman happens to have business,
He embarks at dawn for the emperor's realm
The administration recently has been changed:
It matters not to me if this be good or bad.
Who might awaken this hibernating dragon?
Only cloud fragments, scudding past the valley mouth.



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No. 78

Plum Blossom Library, c. 1922-37

Ink and color on paper

Gordon Brodfuehrer Collection

誰結茅屋
山水絕俗
修竹梅花
主人如玉

Who has built his thatched hut here,
Mountains and streams cut off from the vulgar world,
Tall bamboo and plum-tree blossoms,
The master himself as pure as jade?

No. 68

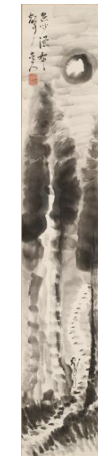
Wanderer Under the Moon, c. 1913-37

Ink on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.22

退步瀑布聲

I step back at the sound of a waterfall.



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No. 52

Bamboo in Snow, c. 1927

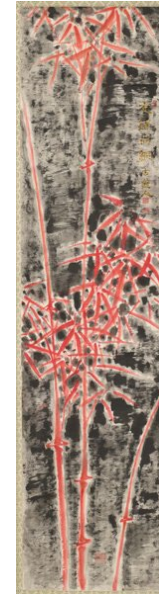
Ink and color on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.24

衣錦尚綱

Wearing silk, yet displaying plain cloth.

This is a noteworthy and unusual piece in Kodōjin's corpus of work because the bamboo is painted in red ink, set against a background that is inconsistently washed with black ink. Bamboo was a frequent motif in Kodōjin's oeuvre. At least six other paintings of bamboo are depicted with red ink, but this is the only one with a black background, hinting at a nocturnal scene.



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Gallery 252: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan’s Great Poet and Landscape Artist

Blue-Green Landscapes

Landscapes rendered in blue-green are Kodōjin’s most detailed and sumptuous paintings. During his lifetime, and even today, they attract the highest prices and are greatly sought after. These painstakingly executed works took longer to produce and were created with expensive natural pigments: ground malachite for the green and azurite for the blue. Such rich colors intensify the lush appearance and create a shimmering surface effect. They also account for the steep prices, particularly when compared with his regular color landscapes; Kodōjin needed to recuperate his material costs. In China, the tradition of blue-green (Chinese: qinglu) landscape painting was well established by the Tang dynasty (618–907), and it underwent a revival in the late Ming dynasty (1368–1644). More than distinctly colored representations of the natural world, these blue-green paintings conjured up magical properties because malachite and azurite were associated with the alchemical search for the elixir of immortality.

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Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 - 1944

No. 57

Blue-green Landscape, Summer 1932

Ink and color on silk

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.6

落日蒼天色
寒山啼鳥聲
蕭蕭紅葉下
冉冉白雲生
獨往情無極
高秋老益清
因看明月出
偶訪道人行

Setting sunlight darkens Heaven's color;
Cold mountains, sounds of singing birds.
Sighing, sighing, red leaves tumble;
Curling, rising, white clouds emerge.
Alone I go forth, feelings without limit:
Autumns seem still purer as I grow old.
And now I see the bright moon rising—
This is the time to visit a man of the Way.



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No. 58

Blue-green Landscape, April 1928

Ink and color on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.21

191

一日不讀書
三月減其樂
何如富貴人
束之委高閣
吾抱躬行志
至老猶力作
偶為識字農
賦性奈劣弱
聊云樂天命
守分伍燕雀
營巢茅屋足
豈羨乘軒鶴

If I do not read books for a single day,
For three months my pleasure is reduced.
How about those wealthy, high-placed folks
who pack them away in high towers?
I embrace the ambition of "carrying it out in my conduct,"
Until old age, still working hard at it!
I happen to have become a literate peasant:
Alas, that my nature is so weak!
For now, I will just enjoy Heaven's Mandate,
Accepting my lot like the swallows or sparrows.
They are content building nests in thatched roofs;
Would they envy that crane who rode in a carriage?



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No. 56

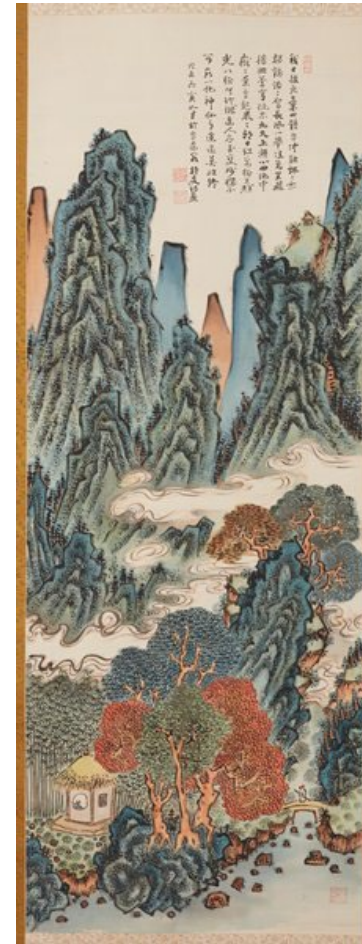
Blue-green Landscape, February 1926

Ink and color on silk

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.902

我日服元氣
四體自冲融
颺颺乘獨鶴
浩浩駕長風
一舉凌萬里
飛騰排蒼穹
抗志九天上
游心四海中
嶽嶽景雲起
杳杳朝日紅
萬物生輝光
八極何玲瓏
達人應至變
妙機不可窮
一化神仙骨
逍遙莫始終

One day I shall imbibe the Primal Ether,
And all four limbs will be in harmony.
Floating, floating, I will mount a solitary crane,
And vastly, vastly ride the long wind!
One leap up and I will pierce ten thousand miles,
Soaring on high, reaching the azure vault!
My powerful ambition set on the ninth heaven,
My journeying heart covering all the four seas!
Towering, mountainous, colored clouds will rise,
Scintillating, the morning sun rise red!
All ten thousand creatures will emit a brilliant radiance,
And the eight corners of the universe—how dazzling they will be!
The Achieved Man must engage in perfect transformation,



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So wondrous junctures will never be exhausted.
Once metamorphosed into the bones of an immortal,
free and easy wandering without beginning or end!

In 1929, one Yen equaled around 45 U.S. cents, The majority of the hanging scrolls included in the 1929 exhibition *Rock Slivers and Lonely Clouds* were priced at between 100 and 500 Yen (\$45–\$225, or about \$720–\$3,600 today). However, this painting, listed at the hefty price of 2,500 Yen, was by far the most expensive hanging scroll in the sale because of the premium materials used for it. The scroll would have cost \$1,125, at that time close to the average annual income of \$1,368 in the United States and approximating the price of two new cars. Today, this price roughly equates to \$18,000–\$19,000.

No. 55

Blue-green Landscape, ca. 1922–32

Ink and color on silk

Private Collection

讀書天下樂
此外復何求
獨坐間思古
幽人最愛秋
孤雲如有意
落日不知愁
借問誰同調
山高水自流

Reading books is the greatest pleasure on earth!

Aside from this, what more need you seek?

Alone I sit, calmly contemplating the past;
the hermit loves autumn the best!

That solitary cloud seems to have feeling;
The setting sun knows nothing of grief.

Let me inquire: who shares this melody,

“Mountains High,” or “Water Simply Flowing”?



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No. 45

Landscape with Plum Forest, ca. 1926

Ink and color on silk

Stuart Katz Collection

繞屋吹梅花
春風興有餘
古香流几席
春意滿琴書
樂道耽山水
忘機友鳥魚
此中聊自得
終日無塵語

All round my house, blowing plum petals,
The spring winds are so full of spirit!
Ancient fragrance wafts over desk and mat,
Springtime feeling overflows lute and books.
Enjoying the Way, I relax with mountains, rivers;
Forgetting machination, befriend the birds and fish.
In all of this for now I find my true self:
All day long, not one word of dusty speech.

In this exceptional composition, an impressive mountain in the center dominates the scene with a rugged rock formation supporting countless plum trees—characteristically Kodōjin—pushing in all directions, even upside down. This work has a prose inscription in which Kodōjin describes the practice of composing an original:

I merely depict the mountains and rivers of my heart, painting the inspiration of a moment. Coming and going with liberated hiking staff, I may also come up with a poetic inscription. And then, a thousand years later, should the painting suffer damage or loss, this poem may serve to preserve its spirit, an equivalent to the actual painting! Would that not be worthy of just one laugh?



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No. 54

Blue-green Landscape, Spring 1921

Ink and color on silk

David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama Collection

溪聲廣長舌
山色清淨身
絕妙蘇公偈
古來噍一人

“Stream’s sound”—“from broad, long tongue”;
“Mountain colors”—“this pure, cleansed body.”
Ah, how marvelous, Master Su’s gāthā!
He was the one man from antiquity to now.

This is Kodōjin’s only horizontal blue-green painting. While dated to 1921, it is stored in a box that Kodōjin inscribed and dated twenty-one years later. In the poem that he composed specifically for this work, he adapted phrases from the famous Chinese literati Su Shi (Dongpo, 1037–1101):

贈東林總長老
溪聲便是廣長舌
山色豈非清淨身
夜來八萬四千偈
他日如何舉似人

Presented to Senior Monk Linzong:

Stream’s sound must come from broad, long tongue;
how could mountain colors not be pure, cleansed body?



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No. 82

Album of Untrammeled Living, March 1933

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.935

The majority of Kodōjin's albums date from the 1930s and follow the same format with a frontispiece, six leaves of alternating paintings and calligraphies, and a postscript. The paintings in this album are only rendered in ink. The postscript reads:

余以詩書画三拙自名焉此帖即是觀者宜察微意所存不問其拙而可

I have named myself for poetry, calligraphy and painting, my "Three Clumsinesses!" This album is a perfect example. The viewer would do well to discern wherein my subtle meaning lies, without questioning the clumsiness.

One-of-a-kind Bamboo Root, Autumn 1924

Bamboo

The Kura Art Gallery, Kyoto

This leaf-shaped bamboo tray was made for use in sencha tea practice. Inscribed by Kodōjin, it pictures a snail. It was produced by the Yamada Heiandō, a workshop established in Tokyo in 1919 that remains in operation today.



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No. 81

Seclusion at a Stream and Bamboo, ca. 1933

Ink and color on paper

Private Collection

日出往南潤
猗猗綠竹陰
清風多古意
吹我塵外襟

The sun rises above the southern moisture;

Rich and full, shade from green bamboo.

A pure wind full of feelings of antiquity

Wafts them toward my dust-free lapels!

Kodōjin used the same poem on several unrelated paintings. In this case, he used the inscribed poem in a painting of bamboo in snow from c. 1925–35, a monochrome landscape from 1936, and a polychrome landscape from c. 1930–38.



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No. 76

Landscape in Pale Red, Spring 1929

Ink and color on paper

Private Collection

一日不離道
老來志愈堅
養得浩然氣
畏天且樂天
高臥白雲裏
猶龍抱玉眠
有事則英雄
無事則神仙

I do not leave the Way for a single day;
The older I get, the firmer my will.
I have nurtured the Overflowing Energy,
In awe of Heaven, yet joying in Heaven.
I rest high among the white clouds,
Like a dragon who sleeps, clutching his jade.
If you have affairs, then be a hero;
If without affairs, then be an Immortal.



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Book *Withered Trees and an Abundance of Spring*, March 1927

Ink on paper

Private Collection

This is Kodōjin’s paintings catalogue *Withered Trees and an Abundance of Spring* (*Koboku yoshun* 古木餘春), which Fusehara Keiichirō (dates unknown), the owner of the scroll mounting shop *Shunpōdō* (est. 1856) in Kyoto’s Nakagyō ward, issued on March 8, 1927. It accompanied an exhibition held at the Kyoto Art Club on March 9–10. No records exist to suggest that Kodōjin had an exhibition of his paintings after 1919. *Withered Trees and an Abundance of Spring* therefore marked a pivotal moment in his painting career.



Book *Rock Slivers and Lonely Clouds*, February 1929

Ink on paper

Private Collection

The book *Rock Slivers and Lonely Clouds* (*Koun henseki* 孤雲片石) was the last of Kodōjin’s artworks published during his lifetime. It was printed in Kyoto by the famous art-publisher *Unsōdō* on February 15, 1929. It lists 87 works by Kodōjin, including the title and the type of work, as well as the names of the owners of 20 pieces. All but one were included in a sales exhibition held at the *Mitsukoshi* department store on February 22–26. The first painting in the book and the most expensive overall was *Colorful Clouds and Rising Sun*, a pair of two-panel folding screens priced at 5,000 Yen (today about \$36,000–\$38,000). The majority of the hanging scrolls ranged between 100 and 500 Yen.



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Gallery 251: Fukuda Kodōjin: Japan’s Great Poet and Landscape Artist

Kodōjin’s ‘Poverty’ and Death

The 1929 exhibition prospectus hailed Kodōjin as one of the great masters of nanga painting, and as someone who took pride in his poverty and enjoyed life as a hermit. However, the Japanese word for “poverty” connotes a sense of “voluntary and honorable poverty,” a philosophical tenet that in fact has no connection to real-life poverty; it conveys the notion of a simple and frugal life, one not desirous of worldly wealth and materialism. Though we might interpret this idealism as honorable, we should perhaps step back and reappraise it within the context of the artist’s life. Kodōjin earned his living from selling his poetry and paintings, and fashioning an image of an artist seeking higher principles associated with past masters would have benefited him. Like most if not all professional artists, Kodōjin consciously crafted a persona that served his own ends. In reality, he had a family with four children, traveled constantly through Japan, and enjoyed drinking. He was prolific, selling hundreds of paintings and calligraphies over the 40-some years of his career.

During the Asia-Pacific War, Kodōjin lost his third child and was grief stricken. The privations of wartime undoubtedly made life difficult. Possessing neither the energy nor the willpower to continue, Kodōjin died on September 10, 1944, at age 79.

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Fukuda Kodōjin

Japanese, 1865 - 1944

No. 73

Pine Tree and Rising Sun between Cliffs, c. 1931-33

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1254

昔賢能守節
千古感吾情
昨日入山去
未首薇蕨生

The sages of the past were able to hold to virtue,
Moving me from thousands of years in the past!
Yesterday I went into the mountains
But could not find any ferns growing there.

No. 93

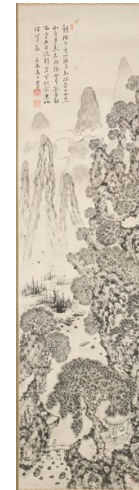
Quiet Setting of a Mountain Creek, Spring 1940

Ink on paper

Gift of David Tausig Frank and Kazukuni Sugiyama 2015.111.20

觀樹知異心
聽鳥知殊音
日出見山高
月來見水深
風行花自動
天寒魚自沈
靜者無雜念
忘跡理可尋

Contemplating, grasping the mind with thoughts of departure,
Alone I seek to know extraordinary music.
The sun emerges—one sees the height of the mountains;
The moon arrives—one sees the water's depth.
The wind blows—all the birds in motion;



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The sky turns cold—fish naturally submerge.
In serenity, with no wild thoughts,
The forgotten path now can be found again.

Very few paintings and calligraphies by Kodōjin can be firmly dated to the 1940s; it is clear that Kodōjin was no longer as prolific as he once was. Quiet Setting of a Mountain Creek from the spring of 1940 is the last detailed landscape by him.

No. 71

One Thousand Mountains and Ten Thousand Ravines, c. 1937

Ink on silk

Private Collection

石洞白雲起
松風天地閑
行歌日之夕
幽意滿空山

From the stone cave, white clouds rise;
Pine winds—Heaven and Earth are calm.
I walk along, singing, the evening of the day,
Mysterious feeling fills the deserted mountain.

One Thousand Mountains and Ten Thousand Ravines is a meticulously conceived panorama in ink with layer upon layer of interlaced rocks and mountains. This undated landscape was kept along with a letter from July 1937, which was sent with the painting from the Kyoto mounting shop Yamakawa Shōbidō to Taiji Gorōsaku (1875–1957) in Wakayama. The Shōbidō, located in central Kyoto directly south of the imperial palace, fulfilled six purchase orders to Gorōsaku from 1930 to 1938. Gorōsaku must have purchased the paintings unmounted and then had them mounted in Kyoto before taking them to his home in Wakayama.



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No. 92

I Take Refuge in the Amida Buddha, Winter 1942

White on black paper

Private Collection

南無阿彌陀佛

I take refuge in the Amida Buddha.

With his health steadily in decline, Kodōjin produced this calligraphy invoking the Amida Buddha in 1942; it is the only known scroll with a Buddhist prayer by his hand.

No. 74

Pines and Poetry, October 1932

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture; formerly given to the Center by Elizabeth and Willard Clark 2013.29.842.1-2

Left:

愛此老松樹

自存君子姿

有時明月夜

仙鶴來宿枝

I just love this old tree!

How it preserves the demeanor of a gentleman!

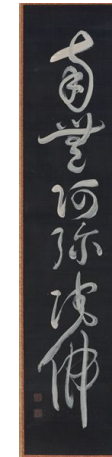
At times, on moonlit nights,

Immortal cranes come to spend the night on its branches.

Right:

置酒高堂且論文

梅花爲我吐清芬



left



right

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We set out wine in the high hall and then converse of letters;
Plum blossoms for us spit forth their pure blossoms.

Bamboo and pines were the principal subjects in Kodōjin's folding screens from the 1930s. In October 1932, he painted this pair of *Old Pines* that illustrates two gnarled trees bent toward each other. It is quite possible that this was a commission, but unfortunately no records have survived.

No. 87

Snow Daruma, c. 1943

White on red paper

Private Collection

雪達磨

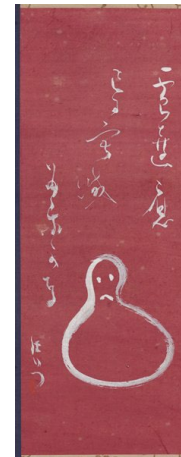
已に寂滅

為樂かな

Snow Daruma

Already vanished to nirvana,

Real joy.



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No. 84

Sharing One Mind, c. 1922-24

Ink on paper

Private Collection

灯ともして
大根洗ふ
野川かな

Lighting a lamp

They wash a daikon,

In a river through a field.

In *Sharing One Mind*, executed in an ink wash, a tiny mouse sits on a large daikon radish. The combination of a mouse and a daikon (nezumi daikon) is a winter motif in Japanese art that was popular in the 1800s and 1900s. It is mentioned in *Blownfur Grass* (Kefukigusa), a guide to haikai poetry compiled in 1638 by Matsue Shigeyori (1602–80).

No. 94

Self-portrait of the Venerable Seisho, 1941

Ink on paper

Gift of the Clark Center for Japanese Art & Culture 2013.29.1005

崑寿

Aged seventy-seven.

Following the traditional Japanese age system whereby a child is 1 year old at birth, Kodōjin turned 77 in 1941, an auspicious birthday in East Asia. On the occasion, he painted this self-portrait that pictures him as a young man. He could have painted it in Kyoto or when he was in his hometown of Shingū for birthday celebrations, as attested by a photograph showing him together with ten friends, colleagues, and supporters outside a restaurant.



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