

Mountains and Rivers: Scenic Views of Japan, July 10, 2009–November 1, 2009

The landscape has long been an important part of Japanese art and literature. It was first celebrated in poetry, where invoking the name of a famous location, or *meisho*, was meant to summon a certain feeling. Later, paintings of these same locations would bring to mind their well-known poetic and literary history. Together, the poems and imagery comprised a canon of place and sentiment, as the same *meisho* were rendered again and again.

During the Edo period (1603–1868) the landscape genre, initially available only to the elite, spread to the medium of woodblock printing, the art of commoner culture. In the 19th century, when most of the works in this exhibition were made, several factors led to the rise of the landscape genre in woodblock prints. Up to this time, the staples of the woodblock print medium had been images of beautiful courtesans and handsome kabuki theater actors.

First among these factors was the rising popularity of domestic travel. The development of a system of major roads allowed many people to travel for both business and pleasure. Woodblock prints of locations along these travel routes could function as souvenirs for those who made the trip or as fantasy for those who could not. Rather than evoking a poetic past, these images of *meisho* were meant to tantalize viewers into imagining romantic far-off places.

Another factor in the growth of the genre was the skill of two particular woodblock print artists—Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858) (whose works are heavily represented here). Hokusai is often credited with initiating the popularity of landscape prints with his well-known series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, which would later inspire Western artists such as Claude Monet. Both artists' innovative compositions and unusual treatment of the landscape made their works highly sought after; thousands of their prints were made to satisfy the print-buying public.

As the popularity of the landscape genre grew, artists tried to find novel ways to reinterpret the genre, collaborating with each other, combining it with other genres, and referencing and remaking earlier work to turn familiar landscapes into something new. This exhibition follows the landscape in woodblock prints from its traditional connections to classical poetry, through its celebration of famous locations and travel, to artists' playful riffing on the genre.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

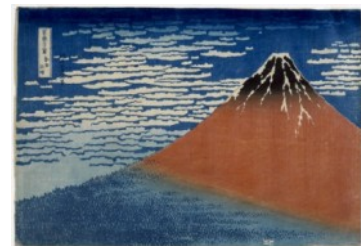
Sadahiro Utagawa, Japanese
Kinkado of Edo, Japanese
Yokkaichi, The fifty-three stations of the Tokaido, late 1830's
Polychrome wood block print
Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1363



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Utagawa Kunisada, Japanese, 1786-1865
Maruya Kyushiro, Japanese
Yokogawa Horitake, Japanese
Shinagawa, The fifty-three stations [of the Tokaido] by twin brushes,
1854
Polychrome wood block print
Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.2327



Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Nishimuraya Yohachi, Japanese
*Fine wind, clear weather ["Red Fuji"] (Gaifu kaisei), Thirty-six views of
Mount Fuji*, ca. 1829-1833
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1185



RISD MUSEUM

Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Nishimuraya Yohachi, Japanese
Hodogaya on the Tokaido (Tokaido hodogaya), Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji, ca. 1829-1833
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1196



Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Nishimuraya Yohachi, Japanese
Kirifuri falls at Mount Kurokami, Shimotsuke Province (Shimotsuke kurokamiyama kirifuri no taki), A journey to the waterfalls of the various provinces, ca. 1831-1832
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1216



Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Nishimuraya Yohachi, Japanese
Kintai (Brocade) Bridge, Suo Province (Suo no kuni kintaibashi), Wondrous views of famous bridges in the various provinces, ca. 1831-1832
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1225



Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Nishimuraya Yohachi, Japanese
Abe no Nakamaro [701-770] (Abe no Nakamaro), The hundred poems explained by the nurse, ca. 1835-1836
Polychrome woodblock print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1228



RISD MUSEUM

Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Takenouchi Magohachi, Japanese, late 18th century-mid 19th century
Vesper bell, Mii Temple (Mii no bansho), Eight views of Omi [Lake Biwa], ca. 1835
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1278



Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Tōshirō Katano, Japanese
One hundred views of Mount Fuji: Vol. 2, 1875
Woodblock printed book with embossed paper covers
Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 31.396.2

Katsushika Hokusai, Japanese, 1760-1849
Tōshirō Katano, Japanese
One hundred views of Mount Fuji: Vol. 3, 1875
Woodblock printed book with embossed paper covers
Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 31.396.3

RISD MUSEUM

Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Murataya Jirobei, Japanese
Shinobazu Pond (Shinobazu no ike), Famous places of the eastern capital, ca. 1836
Polychrome woodblock print
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.248



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Takenouchi Magohachi, Japanese, late 18th century-mid 19th century
Mie River, Yokkaichi (Yokkaichi miegawa), The fifty-three stations of the Tokaido, ca. 1833
Polychrome woodblock print
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.44



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Takenouchi Magohachi, Japanese, late 18th century-mid 19th century
Driving rain, Shono (Shono hakuu), The fifty-three stations of the Tokaido, ca. 1833
Polychrome woodblock print
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.46

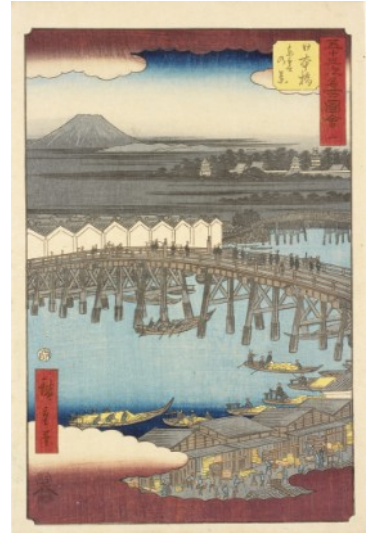


RISD MUSEUM

Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Takenouchi Magohachi, Japanese, late 18th century-mid 19th century
Tsuruya Kiemon, Japanese, late 18th century-mid 19th century
Shinmachi Bridge, Hodogaya (Hodogaya shinmachibashi), The fifty-three stations of the Tokaido, ca. 1833
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.5



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Kichizō Tsutaya, Japanese
View with dawn clouds, Nihon Bridge, From the series Pictures of Famous Places of the Fifty-Three Stations of the Tokaido, 1855
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Marshall H. Gould 46.293.4



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Kichizō Tsutaya, Japanese
The sea at Satta, Suruga Province, Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji, 1858
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Marshall H. Gould 46.293.5



RISD MUSEUM

Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Maruya Kyushiro, Japanese
Toi Jewel River, Settsu Province, The six jewel rivers of the various provinces, 1857
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Marshall H. Gould 46.293.7



Utagawa Hiroshige, Japanese, 1797-1858
Uoya Eikichi, Japanese, 19th century
Dawn inside the Yoshiwara, Meisho Edo Hyakkei, 1857
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Marshall H. Gould 46.295.7



Hasegawa Tōun, Japanese
Yoshida Goheiji, Japanese, late 17th century
Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang Rivers with Chinese and Japanese Poems, 1695
Woodblock printed book with mica
Gift of Mrs. Carroll Miller 53.303



RISD MUSEUM

Yanagawa Shigenobu, Japanese, 1787-1832
Abe no Nakamaro and a Chinese, probably autumn 1823
polychrome woodblock print
Gift of George Pierce Metcalf 56.039.15

