

The Art of the Book in Japan, June 2, 2006-September 3, 2006

In the early 17th century, Japan entered into a 250-year period of peace and political stability with the establishment of the Tokugawa shogunate in Edo (modern-day Tokyo). The Edo period (1603-1867) was characterized by urbanization and social change on a vast scale, fostering a distinctive popular culture that had its roots in urban economic prosperity and the spread of literacy among the merchant class and "townspeople" (*chonin*). In this newly evolving milieu, woodblock printing became the medium for artistic expression. The subjects of books, which had previously encompassed Buddhist texts and volumes of classical Chinese and Japanese literature, expanded to include light fiction, guide and travel books, practical instruction manuals, pattern books, and erotica. Illustrations were also added to printed books to increase the reader's interest. Eventually, the relationship of text and image was modified, sometimes to the point where books consisted only of images, perhaps with a prefatory text.

This exhibition includes a variety of printed materials, both in book form and as single sheets from books. Early 18th-century prints illustrate how text and image might be combined, as in Shunsho's depiction of episode two of the Tales of Ise on this wall. By contrast, in the Harunobu pages to the left of that print, poetic texts have been incorporated into the overall design of the page/sheet. Other prints are drawn from artists' books (*gafu*) that transmit compositions associated with particular painters or schools of painting; from deluxe albums of prints; and from botanical works. The examples in the cases assume two different formats: the folding book (*orihon*) and the book with sewn binding (*fukurotoji*, or "thread-sewn bag binding"). Book publication was an integral part of the very significant evolution of woodblock printing in Edo-period Japan. This selection of works from the Museum's collection is only a small indication of the printing culture that thrived during this era and continues even today in contemporary Japan.

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Kitao Masayoshi, Japanese, 1764-1824

Keisai Eisen, Japanese, 1790-1848

Raian Genki, Japanese

Tōshirō Katano, Japanese

Sketches by Keisai: Vol. 2, 1842

Polychrome woodblock printed books

Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1287

RISD MUSEUM

Japanese

Nishikawa Sukenobu, Japanese, 1671-1750

The geisha Okura and Wakamurasaki, ca. 1730s

Monochrome woodblock print

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1076



Suzuki Harunobu, Japanese, 1724-1770

Endo Matsugoro, Japanese, 18th century

Courtesan Fujinoto smoking by a heater (kotatsu) (Fujinoto), from the *Illustrated Book of Collected Beauties from the Licensed Quarter (Ehon seiro bijin awase)*, 1770

Polychrome wood block print

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1079



Suzuki Harunobu, Japanese, 1724-1770

Endo Matsugoro, Japanese, 18th century

Courtesan Utena of the Shinkanaya by a hibachi (Shinkanaya Utena), from the *Illustrated Book of Collected Beauties from the Licensed Quarter (Ehon seiro bijin awase)*, 1770

Polychrome wood block print

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1081



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Suzuki Harunobu, Japanese, 1724-1770
 Endo Matsugoro, Japanese, 18th century
Courtesan Naniwae scratching her back with pipe (Naniwae), from
 the *Illustrated Book of Collected Beauties from the Licensed Quarter*
 (*Ehon seiro bijin awase*), 1770
 Polychrome wood block print
 Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1082



Katsukawa Shunshō, Japanese, 1725-1792
Ro (Seaweed), episode 2 from *Ise Monogatari (Ro)*, *Fashionable*
brocade pictures of Tales of Ise, ca. 1772-1773
 Polychrome wood block print
 Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1105



Kawamura Kihō, Japanese, 1778-1852
 Bunchodo, Japanese
Kihō's Sketchbook (Kihō gafu), *Bird on a Flowering Plum Tree*, 1827
 Woodcut illustrated book with mica-stencilled paper wrappers
 Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2003.39.6



RISD MUSEUM

Japanese
Manual of styles, 1870s
 Color woodcut
 Helen M. Danforth Acquisition Fund 2003.39.7



Sakai Hōitsu, Japanese, 1761-1829
 Kamo Suetaka
 Matsuzawa Rōsen, Japanese
Ōson's Picture Album: A Book of Pictures by Priest Hōitsu of Universal Phenomena, 1807
 woodcut illustrated book with paper wrappers, sewn
 Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 31.408

Nishimura Nantei, Japanese, 1775-1834
 Inoue Jihei, Japanese
 Bunchodo, Japanese
 Hori Kisaburo, Japanese
An album of drawings by Nantei, supplementary volume: A book of figure drawings, 1823
 Woodcut illustrated book with paper wrappers, sewn
 Gift of the Estate of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 31.412

Nakamura Hōchū, Japanese, fl. 1790-1813
 Kinkado of Edo, Japanese
 Tampankan, Japanese
Bush warbler and blossoming plum (Ume ni uguisu), Korin gafu (An album of pictures by Korin), late 1800s-early 1900s
 Polychrome wood block print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.401



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Nakamura Hōchū, Japanese, fl. 1790-1813

Kinkado of Edo, Japanese

Tampankan, Japanese

Ogata Kōrin, Japanese, 1658-1716

Peonies (Botan), Korin gafu (An album of pictures by Korin), late 1800s-early 1900s

Polychrome wood block print

Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.437



Mori Ransai, Japanese, 1740?-1801

Kawanabe Kyōsai, Japanese, 1831-1889

Suwaraya Mohei, Japanese

Owada Yasubei, Japanese

Inoue Shofu, Japanese

Inoue Seifu, Japanese

Complete illustration of a magpie in a tree, from the illustrated book *Ransai gafu (Picture book by Ransai)*, 1801

Woodblock print

Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.465



Mori Ransai, Japanese, 1740?-1801

Owada Yasubei, Japanese

Suwaraya Mohei, Japanese

Inoue Seifu, Japanese

Inoue Shofu, Japanese

Falcon and small bird in waves, from the illustrated book *Ransai gafu (Picture book by Ransai)*, 1801

Woodblock print

Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.469



Kitao Masayoshi, Japanese, 1764-1824

Keisai Eisen, Japanese, 1790-1848

Oriole (Kori), From Raikin zui (Pictures of imported birds), 1790

Polychrome woodblock print

Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.525.2



RISD MUSEUM

Kitao Masayoshi, Japanese, 1764-1824
 Keisai Eisen, Japanese, 1790-1848
Bunting (Gabicho), Raikin zui (Pictures of imported birds), 1790
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.526.2



Kitao Masayoshi, Japanese, 1764-1824
 Keisai Eisen, Japanese, 1790-1848
Quail (Chikukei), Raikin zui (Pictures of imported birds), 1790
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.529.2



Mori Shunkei, Japanese, active ca. 1800-1820
Insects and pinks (Mushi to nadeshiko), Insect album, 1905
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.598



Mori Shunkei, Japanese, active ca. 1800-1820
 Tobu Tani Seiko
 Tani Seiko, Japanese
Butterflies (Cho), Things Creeping Under Hand, 1820
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.607



Kitagawa Utamaro, Japanese, 1754-1806
 Tsutaya Jūzaburō, Japanese, 1750 - 1797
Cormorant and egret (U to sagi), A myriad of birds compared with kyōka poems (Momo chidori kyōka awase), ca. 1790
 Polychrome wood block print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 38.003



RISD MUSEUM

Kitagawa Utamaro, Japanese, 1754-1806
 Tsutaya Jūzaburō, Japanese, 1750 - 1797
Great tit, Japanese robin (Shijukara komadori), A myriad of birds compared with kyōka poems (Momo chidori kyōka awase), ca. 1790
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 38.009



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



Kōno Bairei, Japanese, 1844-1895
 Yamada Unsodo
Horseradish; flowering cherry (Wasabi; yaezakura), One hundred flowering plants (Soka hyakushu), 1901
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Sonnabend 80.062.1



Kōno Bairei, Japanese, 1844-1895
 Yamada Unsodo
Corn flower (or, Rodger's bronze leaf); senrikoma (left) (Yagurumaso; senrikoma), One hundred flowering plants (Soka hyakushu), 1901
 Polychrome woodblock print
 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Roger Sonnabend 80.062.3

