



Watanabe: Japanese Print Envoy

Drawn from the Chazen's collection of nearly four thousand Japanese prints, this exhibition focuses on the work of one publisher: Shozaburo Watanabe. Determined to renew the tradition of Japanese color woodcuts, Watanabe hired a new generation of artists and craftsmen to create prints that brought traditional techniques into the twentieth century. He called these prints "shin hanga" or "new prints," now the generic name for the style his workshop pioneered. The prints are colorful images of traditional Japan's natural beauty, made with a Western audience in mind. Watanabe actively sought out artists who would incorporate a more western style of representation into his prints and he actively courted the international market.

Although the styles of the prints were new, Watanabe's shop was very traditional. He hired and directed the designers, block-cutters and printers who made the prints. Many of Watanabe's most innovative prints, made at the beginning of his publishing career, are rare; the Kanto earthquake of 1923 destroyed his shop, including stored prints and the blocks they were made from. This exhibition brings together many of these early prints as well as later impressions to tell the story of the workshop that set the standard for the new generation of print publishers.

Basic Facts

Exhibition Fee: \$10,000 for a 12-week display, plus roundtrip shipping via fine arts shuttle

Packing: all works are framed and crated

Space Requirements: variable, but initially shown in 1,400 square feet / 205 running feet

Number of artworks: approx. 50

Tour Dates: January – December 2019

Didactics: Introductory panel, section labels, and extended object label text provided in digital format

About the Curator

Andrew Stevens, Distinguished Curator of Prints, Drawings, and Photographs at the Chazen Museum of Art, has published on a variety of subjects from the prints of 18th century printmaker, William Hogarth, to the color woodcut in Japan, Europe and America. He is an expert on connoisseurship and history of print, early 20th century color woodcuts in Japan, America and Western Europe, and the prints of Hiroshige. Drew has also explored technical aspects of printmaking processes, and organized more than 60 exhibitions and eight catalogs of prints, drawings and photographs.

Sample Checklist

See attached.

Contact

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Images left to right:

Ito Sozan, (Japanese, b. 1884 - active ca. 1915-1926), *Swallows in Willow Tree*, 1919-1926, color woodcut, 375 x 164 mm, bequest of John H. Van Vleck, 1980.2856

Ito Shinsui, (Japanese, 1898 - 1972), *Snowy Night* from the series *Twelve Images of Modern Beauties*, 1/1923, color woodcut, 408 x 242 mm, bequest of John H. Van Vleck, 1980.2797

Kawase Hasui, (Japanese, 1883 - 1957), *Tutsa Marsh, Mutsu*, from the series *Souvenirs of Travel, First Series*, Summer 1919, color woodcut, 364 x 242 mm, bequest of John H. Van Vleck, 1980.736