

TITLE: *Kagurazaka Dori*
(*Kagurazaka Street After a Night Rain*)

ARTIST: Hiroshi Yoshida

DATE: 1929

SIZE: 16" x 10 ¾"

MEDIUM: Ukiyo-e Woodblock Print

ACQUISITION #: 70.170.17

ADDITIONAL WORKS BY ARTIST IN COLLECTION?

YES NO



Artist's Biography

Hiroshi Yoshida was born in Kurume, Japan in 1876. He was the adopted son of his junior high art teacher, Yoshida Kasaburo. Hiroshi Yoshida is "considered one of the leading figures of the renewal of Japanese printmaking after the end of the Meiji period (1912)" (www.artelino.com). Yoshida's talent was discovered early and at the age of 18 he enrolled in a private art school in Tokyo. His early works consisted mainly of oil paintings. It was not until later in his career (1920) that Yoshida became a woodcutter. In Tokyo, Yoshida met Watanabe Shozaburo, a publisher and owner of a print shop. Watanabe published the first seven of Yoshida's woodprints, but they were destroyed during a fire in 1923 following the Great Kanto Earthquake. Yoshida is considered a member of the Shin-Hanga movement. This movement developed during the twentieth century and integrated Western elements into traditional values of Japanese prints. His artwork encompasses his two main passions: mountaineering and travel. The majority of his works are landscapes. Yoshida produced 259 woodblock prints. His last project was a series entitled *One Hundred Views of the World*, but he was unable to see the final product due to his death in 1950.

Contextual Information

Japanese woodblock prints are often detailed and characterized by flowing, curved outlines, simplistic forms, and flat areas filled with color. Woodblock prints were first introduced in the eighth century. They were monochromatic and mainly used for religious texts. Creating a woodblock print involved specific techniques and goals steeped in the Japanese tradition. The knife of the artist was meant to imitate a painter's brush. The wood used to create woodblock prints was selected only from a certain species of tree. The texture of this wood was extremely fine and very hard. The majority of prints were produced in the cities of Osaka, Kyoto, and Tokyo.

Ukiyo-e prints, a genre of woodblock work, were the most popular and well known. These prints encompass the idea of pleasure in its widest sense while conveying a harmonious feeling within the viewer (Ukiyo-e to Shin Hanga). Ukiyo-e means "pictures of the floating world;" these images illustrate the impermanence and fleeting quality of the beauty within this world. Many of the scenes depicted the everyday, illustrating to viewers the harmony and beauty of daily life and the way this life should be enjoyed, not frowned upon.

The first prints used only one color, such as *Hyakumanto Darani*, commissioned by Empress Shotoku in 764; later developments allowed the appreciation of multiple colors though the technique of woodcutting remained the same.

Woodblock Process

Kagurazaka Dori includes 67 total steps in the process for creating this woodblock print. Pictured here is step 17. The number of steps in this series is analogous to the amount of colors and carved woodblocks needed to create the final image. Following is the process for creating a woodblock print.

Step One: The artist creates a painting.

Step Two: The artist or craftsperson traces the painting and marks the location of each color.

Step Three: The artist or craftsperson makes a template for each color and then produces separate woodblocks for each.

Step Four: The woodblocks are pressed sequentially onto a paper in a certain order, producing the final product.

Related Terminology

Shin-Hanga Movement ("new prints"): occurred from c. 1901-1960 and integrated Western elements into traditional values of Japanese ukiyo-e prints. It was inspired by European Impressionism, which incorporated light and expressions of individual moods.



Japanese School, *Hyakumanto Darani*, 764 CE, ink on paper

Resources

"Hiroshi Yoshida 1876-1950."
http://www.artelino.com/articles/hiroshi_yoshida.asp

"Hiroshi Yoshida (1876-1950)."
<http://www.artifact.com/artist/yoshida-hiroshi-052mpq3309>

"Bokashi" (Gradation of Colors).
<http://www.ukiyoe-gallery.com/deluxe.htm>

Japan and Its Influences

ACTIVITY LESSON PLAN: Grades K-5

Session Activity: In this session, students will learn about the differences in some artworks from Japan before and after the Shin-Hanga movement.

Materials: printmaking (teacher's choice)

Objectives:

1. Students will learn about the Shin-Hanga movement.
2. Students will discuss the key aspects of the Shin-Hanga movement and relate at least one aspect of the movement to their personal lives.
3. Through comparison and contrast, students will more clearly understand the way art evolves over time.
4. Students will use personal moments to create prints using characteristics of Shin-Hanga.

Activity Procedure: In the first part of the activity, students will look at *Night Attack on Sanjo Palace*, a painting from the thirteenth century not affected by Shin-Hanga. Students will describe the work. Then, students will discuss what Shin-Hanga is and the key aspects of the movement. Students will then look at Hiroshi Yoshida's *Kagurazaka Dori* woodblock print. Utilizing the key aspects for comparison and contrast, students will discuss the way these works of art illustrate cultural change. Once the students have grasped the understanding of Shin-Hanga, they will recall moments in their lives that illustrate key aspects of Shin-Hanga, for example enjoying a harmonious moment with friends and family (expression of individual moods). The students will then create Shin-Hanga prints that emphasize the chosen aspects.

Key Aspects of Shin-Hanga:

- Traditional Japanese ukiyo-e subjects (i.e. landscapes and city life)
- European Impressionism
 - Light effects
 - The expression of individual moods

Vocabulary:

Impressionism- a movement in the late 19th century in French painting, characterized by the goal of reproducing an impression of a subject by use of reflected light and color and the blurring of outlines



Japanese School, *Night Attack on Sanjo Palace*, 13th c. CE, hand scroll, ink and colors on paper, 1.25 x 22.1' (<http://popartmachine.com/item/pop-art/BMFA-BMFA.SC785/ARTIST-NOT-RECORDED-NIGHT-ATTACK-ON-THE-SANJO-PALACE,-FROM-THE-ILLUSTRATED>)

Sunshine State Standard: Grade 3

Big Idea: Historical and Global Connections

Enduring Understanding 2: The arts reflect and document cultural trends and historical events, and help explain how new directions in the arts have emerged.

Benchmark: Compare differences or similarities in artwork across time and culture. **VA.3.H.2.1**

Historical Social Aspects within Different Cultures

ART HISTORY LESSON PLAN: Grades 9-12



Eugene Delacroix, *Jewish Wedding in Morocco*, c. 1839, oil on canvas, 41.3 x 55.1"

Session Activity: the West influenced the art of Japan in the twentieth century. In accordance, the West had been drawing inspiration from the East. In this activity, students will discuss the way these two areas of the world were being influenced by one another. Students will discuss this cross-pollination.

Objectives:

1. Students will understand the time overlap between art movements and the way they influence different parts of the world.
2. Through comparison and contrast, students will understand the aesthetic relationship between the East and West.
3. Students will be able to observe two works of art and through certain motifs be able to determine references and influences the artists' took from other cultures to create those works.

Activity Procedure: Students will look at Eugene Delacroix's *Jewish Wedding in Morocco* (c. 1839); students will discuss the artist's Romantic style, which included Middle Eastern cultural influences. Students will then look at Hiroshi Yoshida's *Kagurazaka Dori* woodblock print. Students will compare and contrast Yoshida's print (see above lesson plan) and Delacroix's *Jewish Wedding in Morocco*, focusing on the following key idea: the idea of looking at unfamiliar cultures and their conventions while incorporating these in artwork. Conventions can include those in the social realm like shared customs or those in the artistic realm like the use of linear perspective in the West or the use of flat areas of color in the woodblock prints of the East. At the end of the activity, students in small groups will create PowerPoints that summarize the information researched and discussed, as well as personal opinions of the works of art.

Sunshine State Standard: 9-12

Big Idea: Historical and Global Connections

Enduring Understanding 2: The arts reflect and document cultural trends and historical events, and help explain how new directions in the arts have emerged.

Benchmark: Analyze artistic trends to explain the rationale for creating personal adornment, visual culture, and/or design. **VA.912.H.2.6**