This exhibition has come together in an organic fashion, growing serendipitously from the academic program. Its inspiration was three-fold. First, students enrolled in an Arts Management class last spring—Maddie Hodges ’13 and Leslie Andrade ’14—presented an exhibition prospectus in class that highlighted many of the lovely Japanese woodblock prints in the College’s art collection that portray women. They and their classmates lamented not seeing more of the prints on a regular basis. Second, the Performing Art Division, led by Professor William Kershner, is presenting The King and I as the fall semester main stage musical theater production. Last, but hardly least, Associate Professor of Art History Tracy Hamilton is teaching a course this semester on the arts of Asia. Clearly, this is an opportune moment to present the fine and decorative arts on view here. In a more general fashion, and in keeping with the College’s broad mission to introduce students to the diversity of human experience, it is always instructive to consider the ebb and flow of cultural influences around the globe and to pay attention to the ways, both obvious and subtle, in which artists, scholars, and connoisseurs affect and are affected by each others’ traditions, tastes, and world view.

In planning the exhibition, “Asia” has been interpreted broadly—as both source and as inspiration. A deliberate effort has been made to include historical as well as modern works, paintings as well as furniture and apparel. It has been conscious choice, too, to include works rarely or never before shown in Sweet Briar exhibitions though they have been in the collection for years.

Current work on the woodblock prints has been greatly dependant on the research of previous gallery curators and students. For example, the woodblock prints have been featured on campus in exhibitions such as Japanese Woodblock Prints from the Sweet Briar Collection (1989), Ukiyoe in the Sweet Briar Collection: Representations of Women (1998), and Defining Influence: Japonisme and the Western Artist (2002), all of which were accompanied by informative catalogs under the guidance of former gallery directors Carma Fauntleroy and Rebecca Massie Lane. Study of the Japanese prints in the Sweet Briar collection has been greatly enriched over the years by the expertise of Professor John Goulde. Acknowledgement is due, too, to the late Ann Marshall Whitley ’47 and to Christian Carr, immediate past director of the Sweet Briar Museum, for their study and care of the Japanese lacquer ware and Asian-inspired furniture collected by Indiana Fletcher Williams.

The current exhibition, as all those presented on campus, would not be possible without the talent and hard work of Nancy McDearmon. In preparing these works for display she has been ably assisted by Caitlin Playle ’13, Ashley Rust ’13, and Ann Roach ’13. Much appreciation is due as well to the physical plant staff, whose assistance is key to all successful installations.

Karol A. Lawson
Director, Art Collection and Galleries and the Sweet Briar Museum
WILLIAM ALEXANDER 1767-1816
Chinese Mandarin 1797
aquatint with hand coloring on paper
Gift of Lydia Newland, Cochran Library assistant librarian, 1940-1978
ACG.1980.012

Alexander, who had trained at the Royal Academy in London, was the head artist accompanying the 1792-1794 diplomatic expedition of Lord George McCartney on behalf of the British crown to the Imperial (Qing Dynasty) Court of China. The artist would later serve as drawing instructor at the Royal Military College at Great Marlow and was the first keeper (or curator) of prints and drawings at the British Museum. Alexander illustrated several books about the Macartney expedition, principally Sir George Leonard Staunton’s *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* (London, 1796).

SHIRO IKEGAWA 1933-2009
Manogatari ca. 1960-1965
etching with embossing on paper
Purchase made possible by the Sweet Briar College Art Fund
ACG.1967.006

Born in Tokyo, Ikegawa immigrated to the United States in 1956 and settled in Los Angeles. There, he studied at the Otis Art Institute and earned an MFA in 1961. From the early 1960s through the late 1970s he taught at Pasadena City College and then California State University, Los Angeles and has also taught at the Otis Art Institute and Parsons School of Design. Ikegawa was awarded two fellowships by the National Endowment for the Arts, in 1974 and 1981 and was also recognized with two Ford Foundation fellowships in 1977 and 1980.

YASUO KUNIYOSHI 1893-1953
Octopus 1922
ink on paper
Gift of Barbara Prentiss Jones Hale ’43
ACG.1999.006

Born in Okayama, Japan, Kunioshi immigrated to the United States in 1906. He studied art for several years at the Los Angeles School of Art and Design, and then moved to New York. There he studied at the Art Students League and was influenced by teachers such as the realist Kenneth Hayes Miller. Like his fellow modernists, and friends, Stuart Davis and Walt Kuhn, Kunioshi blended elements of abstraction with naturalistic figures. He also sought to bring Japanese aesthetic sensibilities to Western imagery. He was awarded a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship in 1935. Though he publicly denounced the military aggression of Japan, Kunioshi, like many American citizens of Japanese descent, suffered suspicion and humiliation during World War II. Following this difficult time, his career rebounded. In 1947 he was elected the first president of the Artist’s Equity Association, a group dedicated to promoting the welfare and recognition of professional painters, sculptors, and printmakers and in 1948 his work was honored by the Whitney Museum of American Art with a retrospective exhibition (the museum’s first ever dedicated to a living artist).
This particular drawing dates from a period during which Kuniyoshi devoted considerable energy to ink drawings. They are considered his prime medium of expression in the early 1920s, just at the outset of his mature career when he was establishing himself as a professional in New York. His delicate touch is readily apparent here, as is a subtle sense of humor as a thick spill of his own ink stands in for the hunting octopus’s sinister cloud.

AN LIN  born 1930
Silver Land  1983
woodblock on paper
Gift of friends, alumnae, and faculty on the occasion of a Sweet Briar College-sponsored tour of China
ACG.2001.009

BERTHA BOYTON BULL LUM  1869-1954
Temple in the Rain  1913
woodblock on paper
Purchase made possible by the Friends of Art
ACG.2005.001

Lum, widely considered to be one of the early 20th century’s most accomplished printmakers, sought to blend Japanese print techniques, design sensibility, and subject matter with a Western, modernist perspective. Born in Iowa and raised there and in Minnesota, she studied design at the school of the Art Institute of Chicago and also trained with illustrator Frank Holme. Her first exposure to Japanese prints came with the 1893 World’s Columbian Exposition in Chicago. She spent her 1903 honeymoon travelling in Japan and returned in 1907 to spend several months training with the master block cutter Bonkotsu Igami. Lum returned to Japan numerous times during the 1910s to study and eventually won the respect of both Japanese and American connoisseurs. Her prints earned her a silver medal at the San Francisco Panama-Pacific International Exposition in 1915. Following her divorce, she lived with her daughters in China in the 1920s and again in 1948-1953.

KEIKO MINAMI  1909-2004
Hibou (Owl)  ca. 1960-1965
etching on paper
Purchase made possible by the Sweet Briar College Art Fund
ACG.1964.005

Minami was born in Hirokawa, Japan, and studied art in Tokyo. She spent much of her professional career in Paris, France, with her husband, printmaker Yozo Hamaguchi. Minami was named the official artist of the United Nations in 1959 for her print Tree of Peace.
RAYMOND NEILSON  1881-1964
*Chinese Figure* (or *Porcelain and Glass* or *White on White*)  1939
oil on canvas
Gift of Mrs. Victor W. Henningsen, Sr.
ACG.1984.005

Neilson, whose father was a stockbroker, was born and raised in New York. He attended the U.S. Naval Academy, graduating in 1905. He served at sea for a few years and was called back as a reservist during World War II. He studied at the Art Students League in New York with William Merritt Chase and in Paris with expatriate Americans such as the Impressionist Richard Miller. Neilson later taught at the Art Students League and at the National Academy of Design. He was best known as a portrait painter.

Though titled *Chinese Figure*, it appears from the woman’s general appearance that the porcelain sculpture pictured here is actually Japanese. This is also a somewhat risqué figurine—the imagery of a woman biting a folded handkerchief is used in Japanese prints (and even in modern anime) to suggest extreme emotion, frequently with a sexual connotation, and this figure is also posed untying her sash, a similarly provocative detail. It is unclear if Neilson realized this and simply used the porcelain as an exotic prop or if he deliberately chose to build this seemingly straightforward still-life composition around a titillating figurine.

HOVSEP PUSHMAN  1877-1966
*The Book of Life* (*Une Page de Khayyam*)  1924
oil on canvas
28 1/6 x 24 3/16 inches
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Henningsen, Jr. (Mayde Ludington ’48), 1987
1987.006

Armenian by birth, Pushman immigrated to the United States as a teenager and subsequently became a naturalized citizen. An early education in Constantinople (Istanbul) was followed by art studies in Paris. Pushman specialized in still-life paintings and in all his work focused on exotic objects with an Asian, rendered in a rich, dark palette. His paintings, appealing to a decided taste for all things Asian in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in Europe and America, were extremely popular and Pushman enjoyed significant commercial success.

The title of this painting refers to *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, a book of poetry by an Iranian scholar of the late 10th and early 11th centuries. Khayyam’s poetry was translated into English by Edward Fitzgerald in 1859. While scholars in the 150 years since have questioned the accuracy of Fitzgerald’s interpretation, the book has inspired countless artists in all media throughout Western Europe and the United States. In Pushman’s painting no particular text can be read, but the opulent golden pages suggest a well of mysterious, timeless knowledge. Certain of Khayyam’s quatrains will be familiar to Western readers even today, for example (XII): “A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,/A Jug of Wine, A Loaf of Bread—and Thou/Beside me singing in the wilderness—/Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!”
MIRIAM SCHAPIRO  born 1923
Kimono  1976
collage and acrylic on canvas
60 x 50 inches
Gift of Jane Roseberry Tolleson ’52, 1996
1996.008

Characterizing her series of kimonos as “a ceremonial robe for the new woman…dressed with the power of her office,” Schapiro deliberately adopted fabric and the visual language of costume as her expressive tool in the 1970s in order to honor women. She has noted that, “the collage elements in my paintings are the needlework of departed and forgotten women.” She first came to national attention for her collaborative work with Judy Chicago at the Feminist Art Project at the California Institute of Arts and their work on the 1972 installation Womanhouse.

Born in Toronto, Schapiro was educated at the University of Iowa and Hunter College. She has been recognized by a Guggenheim Foundation fellowship (1987) and a lifetime achievement award from the College Art Association (2002).

NOBURU TSURUTANI  1941-2007
Memory of Europe  ca. 1960-1970
serigraph on paper
Gift of Mary Ann Lee Smith ’22
ACG.1971.022

ANSEI UCHIMA  1921-2000
Forest Byobu (Autumn Stone)  1979
woodblock on paper
Purchase made possible by Murrell Rickards Werth ’44, Louise Smith Barry ’44, Elisabeth Vaughn Bishop ’44, Margaret Mohlman Degler ’54, Martha Shmidheiser DuBarry ’48, Frances Caldwell Harris ’42, Frances Martin Lindsay ’50, Janet Staples Munt ’44, Harriett Stephenson Tavenner Owens ’44, Edna Syska Peltier ’42, Annabelle Forsch Prager ’43, Sara Davis Spencer ’48, Jean Blanton Stein ’44, and Helen Gravatt Watt ’44, in memory of Jovan de Rocco, Professor of Art 1940-1958
ACG.2003.001

Born in Stockton, California, Uchima went to Japan as a young to study architecture. He was stranded there by the onset of World War II and was not able to return to the United States until 1959. He settled in New York, where he taught at Sarah Lawrence College and Columbia University from the early 1960s to the late 1980s. His work was recognized with two Guggenheim Foundation fellowships, in 1962 and 1970.

This work is one of a series of 25 large-scale prints, all titled Forest Byobu, meant to evoke the broad scope of the natural world—light, color, and sounds. The Japanese word “byōbu” means “folding screen.”
UNKNOWN (Persia)
*Page from the Shahnama (Book of Kings)* ca. 1600-1650
ink and hand-coloring on vellum
Transfer from Cochran Library
ACG.1995.015

The *Shanama*, or *Book of Kings*, is a two-part poem comprising approximately 60,000 rhymed couplets that purports to tell the history of all the kings of Persia. It was written by the 10th century poet Abu’l Kasim. It was commissioned in the late 10th century AD by Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni. This page is written in the script known as Shekasteh Nas’taliq, a cursive style developed in the 17th century.

UNKNOWN (China)
*Rubbing of a Chinese Relief Carving*
ink on paper
Gift of Susan Van Cleve Riehl ’47
ACG.2000.019

**Clothing, Fabric, Accessories, Furniture and Furnishings**

**Center of Gallery**

Lady’s Court Robe, Qing (Ch’ing) Dynasty, China ca. 1850-1900
embroidered satin
Gift of Carol Rice M.D., College physician and Professor of Health Education, 1920-1940
Sweet Briar Museum; Transfer from Cochran Library

This robe would have been worn by a noblewoman or high-ranking concubine at the imperial court.

Imperial Court Robe, Qing (Ch’ing) Dynasty, China ca. 1850-1900
silk kesi (ko-ssu or k’ossu) weave with metallic thread embroidery
Gift of Carol Rice M.D., College physician and Professor of Health Education, 1920-1940
Sweet Briar Museum; Transfer from Cochran Library

The five-toed dragon on this robe indicates that it would have been worn at the imperial court by a very high ranking nobleman, perhaps a member of the emperor’s family. Dragons with four and three toes indicated lower ranking noblemen and court officials. The fabric is also decorated with stylized clouds, a symbol of good luck and happiness, and other auspicious symbols.

**Case**

Brocade fabric sample, Japan
silk 1700s
Gift of the Carnegie Corporation, 1930
ACG.2010.004.009
Fabric sample, Japan  
embroidery on silk     1800s  
Gift of the Carnegie Corporation, 1930  
ACG.2010.004.010

Fabric sample, Japan  
silk and paper     1700s  
Gift of the Carnegie Corporation, 1930  
ACG.2010.004.011

These fabric swatches are part of a larger collection of similar samples from around the globe that were donated as a study collection to Sweet Briar College in the 1930s by the Carnegie Corporation. The organization, founded in 1911 by industrialist Andrew Carnegie “to promote the advancement and diffusion of knowledge,” had at that time a very active program for supplying colleges with materials to support the curriculum. The set of fabric samples was apparently intended a reference collection for study in design and industrial arts. Around the same time, the College also received from the Carnegie Corporation a collection of music recordings, a collection of reproductions for use in art history classes, and a notable collection of European prints. The latter materials are now cared for by the art gallery staff and are used regularly in other exhibitions.

Case

Fan, China     1875  
ink and watercolor on paper mounted on silk  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Dickey (Margaret Stuart Wilson ’41)  
ACG.1982.002

The fan bears a poem on it titled “Melancholy Sunset.”* The poet stands on the bank of a river at sunset. It is autumn and maple and willow leaves are turning red. Petals are falling in the gentle wind and drizzling rain. The grasses are moist with dew. The poet is reminded of a sad dream of his dear distant lover and he becomes melancholy.

*Translation by Li Xinyu (Liv Li) ’15.

Inrō, Japan  
gilded and polychromed lacquer on unidentified wood or paper support, with silk cord and ivory netsuke     ca. 1850-1900  
Gift of Carol Rice M.D., College physician and Professor of Health Education, 1920-1940  
ACG.1979.012

This is a segmented container used for carrying medicines and cosmetics. Usually highly decorated with exquisite patterns, these containers hung from an obi (sash), with the netsuke (toggle) and cord tucked next to the wearer’s body.
Pair of Bridal Shoes, China
embroidered silk or satin
Sweet Briar Museum

Case

UNKNOWN (China)
*Leaf from Book 331 of the Buddhist Canon* 1263
ink on bamboo fiber paper
Transfer from Cochran Library
ACG.1995.012

UNKNOWN (Japan)
*Love poem by Fujiwara no Sadakata, poem twenty-five of the Hyakunin Isshu (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets)* ca. 1780-1820
woodblock on paper, with mica and silver
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Victor Henningsen, Jr. (Mayde Ludington ’48)
ACG.1988.008

The poet, a courtier, writes of yearning to meet his lover secretly. The 12th-century collection of poems in which this was originally included is one of the best known works in Japanese literature.

Case

UNKNOWN (Great Britain)
*Page from a Travel Sketchbook* 1844
pencil and watercolor on paper
Gift of Susan Van Cleve Riehl ’47
ACG.2000.014.r

European and American travelers from all walks of life toured the exotic edges of the Mediterranean throughout the 19th century. This notebook, which is filled with similar sketches of Turkish men, exemplifies the travelers’ interest in exotic clothing and surroundings.

Case

Tray, China ca. 1840-1860
gilded and polychromed lacquer on wood
Sweet Briar Museum; Bequest of Indiana Fletcher Williams

Pedestals

Japanese-style bamboo-motif side chair, America ca. 1880
unidentified wood and woven rush seat
Sweet Briar Museum; Bequest of Indiana Fletcher Williams
Game Table, England ca. 1840-1855
gilded and polychromed lacquer on papier mache, plaster, and wood with brass hardware
Sweet Briar Museum; Bequest of Indiana Fletcher Williams

These pieces, as well as the lacquer tray, exemplify Western artisans’ and connoisseurs’
fascination with the decorative arts and design motifs of the Far East. Beginning with the earliest
contacts as China and Japan opened, reluctantly, to European and American diplomats,
adventurers, and merchants, furniture, porcelain, prints, scrolls, fabrics and all kinds of
accessories flooded the West.

The game table (which is still marked with a price in British pounds) was probably purchased in
London by College founder Indiana Fletcher Williams when she visited there with her brother
and sister in the 1840s. Their father, Lynchburg businessman and Amherst County land owner
Elijah Fletcher, had sent them on a tour of Europe to finish their education, a common practice.

Woodblock Prints

The art collection at Sweet Briar College holds approximately 100 Japanese woodblock prints,
acquired from the 1970s through 2010. All have been gifts to the College from alumnae and
friends and all are used as a curricular resource by professors and students. Included in the
present exhibition are 26 of these prints, by 11 artists.

Japanese prints habitually include censor seals and artist’s monograms, as well as image titles
and other information that identify the maker, date, and subject. Translation of such inscriptions
on Sweet Briar’s prints has been done over the years by Professor John Goulde, Terukata Fujieda
(Masashino Art University, Tokyo), Yoko Matsumoto, Seiji Nagata, and Takahiro Ueda.

The Japanese woodblock printmaking tradition is acknowledged world-wide for the exquisite
detail, subtle color, and innovative compositions demonstrated by its practitioners. From the
very beginning of official European contact in the 19th century, these delicate images have
enthralled Western artists and they had a profound effect upon Impressionist artists such as
Edgar Degas and Mary Cassatt as well as a host of modernist artists and craftsmen. Growing
from a long tradition of book and newspaper illustration, popular entertainment, and advertising,
these prints illustrate varied aspects of Japanese life and culture—from the famous “floating
world” (“ukiyo-e”) of courtesans in the urban entertainment districts, to scenes from kabuki
theater and novels, to views of landmarks, such as the sacred Mt. Fuji, or other spots of noted
natural beauty.

It is often difficult to reconstruct an artist’s complete biography, as individual artists took the
names of their teachers and also changed their names as they moved upward in the ranks from
apprentice to master. In the following checklist, artists are listed alphabetically with the name of
their “school” affiliation first. The Utagawa “school,” with which many of the artists shown here
were affiliated, was founded by Toyoharu (1735-1814) in Tokyo in the late 18th century and
became Japan’s most famous and influential printmaking enterprise.
HIROSHIGE III 1843-1894
*Teahouse on a Cliff* ca. mid to late 1800s
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.009

Hiroshige III was a pupil of Utagawa Hiroshige and was the second husband of his master’s daughter, Otatsu.

KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI 1760-1849
*Bridge at Sunset from Oumaya Pier (from Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji)* ca. 1822-1831
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.010.c

Hokusai is thought to have been the son of a mirror maker. He worked in a public lending library as a youngster then was apprenticed to a wood carver at age 14. By age 18 he was apprenticed to the artist Katsukawa Sunshō. Early in his career he produced the usual images of courtesans and actors from popular theater then worked illustrating books. At the peak of his career, in his 60s, he began work on what is considered his masterpiece, *Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji*. Unlike many of his fellow artists, Hokusai did leave a written record of his professional life, *Gakyō Rōjin Manji* (1834), or *The Old Man Mad about Art*.

KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI 1760-1849
*View from Fujimigahara in Owari Province (from Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji)* ca. 1822-1823
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.010.b

The figure in this view is shown caulking seams in a large wooden tub. Rice paddies appear behind him.

KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI 1760-1849
*View from Kajikazawa in Kai Province (from Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji)* ca. 1822-1831
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.010.d

KATSUSHIKA HOKUSAI 1760-1849
*Tategawa in Honjo, Edo (from Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji)* ca. 1822-1831
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth W. Smith
ACG.1970.010.a

The scene is at the Nishimura lumberyard in the Tokyo business district known as Honjo. Tategawa is the name of a small river in the area.
KEISAI EISEN  1790-1848
Fashionable Young Woman Playing Three Musical Pieces: Koto  ca. 1840-1848
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.035

Eisen was particularly known for his images of beautiful women, known as “bijinga,” as well as for “shunga,” or erotica. Indeed, some connoisseurs consider his work to be somewhat decadent stylistically, too opulent and overwrought in decorative detail compared to the subtly and restraint of earlier artists. Eisen wrote a supplement to a well known history of the woodblock print, *Ukiyo-e Ruiko*, called “Notes of a Nameless Old Man.”

The woman shown here is an entertainer or courtesan. Musical skill was considered an essential accomplishment. Her elaborate clothing and hair ornaments would have been considered garish for a noblewoman.

KEISAI EISEN  1789-1851
A High Ranking Geisha  ca. 1840
woodblock on paper
Gift of Elmer and Paula Stone
ACG.2000.010.b

KEISAI EISEN  1790-1848
Irises on the Morning of the Gogatsu Festival (from Five Annual Festivals: Gogatsu)  ca. 1840
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.038

This is depiction of an upper class woman, not a courtesan, carrying iris leaves arranged in a teapot—a stylized gift presented on the eighth day of the fifth month (May) during a festival commonly conflated with a holiday celebrating boys and children in general. Tradition holds that bathing with water in which iris leave have soaked brings good health for the coming year.

KEISAI EISEN  1789-1851
Woman with Open Umbrella  ca. 1840
woodblock on paper
Gift of Elmer and Paula Stone
ACG.2000.010.a

KEISAI EISEN  1789-1851
Woman with Closed Umbrella  ca. 1840
woodblock on paper
Gift of Elmer and Paula Stone
ACG.2000.010.c
KITAGAWA UTAMARO  1753-1806
_Washing Clothes_ (from _Five Occupations of Married Women_)  ca. 1790
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.032

The artist studied as a child with the painter Toriyama Sekien. As a mature print designer, he was the principal artist associated with the publisher Tsutaya Jūzabutō.

KOCHORO KUNISADA  1786-1865
_Autumn Moon (Evening Scene, Fireflies and Moon)_  1857
woodblock on paper
14 x 9 ½ inches.
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith, 1970
1970.056

Kunisada, known for his immense output and widespread popularity, took his master’s name in 1844, becoming Toyokuni III and head of the Utagawa school of printmakers.

This idealized young woman is not a courtesan but—judging by her elaborate and expensive clothing— is perhaps a member of a prosperous family. Her name, Miyuki, is even provided in the cartouche. The chrysanthemums decorating her kimono suggest the autumn season. The complexity and harmony of the fabrics in the kimono and the number of robes worn reflected the wearer’s wealth (or the wealth of a courtesan’s establishment) and her level of good taste. The print dates from the Ansei Period (1854-1860).

UTAGAWA HARUTAKE
_The Farmer’s Wife in Harvest Season_ (from _Notable Occupations in the Country of Plenty_)  ca. 1851
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth W. Smith
ACG.1970.023

The image shows a woman bringing a meal, packed in a wooden lunch box on a tray with tea cups, to laborers in the fields. The poem included in the image describes the richness of the harvest and compares fields of rice with the ocean.

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE  1797-1858
_Evening Snow on Mt. Hira_ (from _Eight Views of Lake Biwa_)  ca. 1840
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.048

Lake Biwa is the largest lake in Japan. The Hira Mountains are west of the lake, on the border of the Shinga and Kyoto Prefectures.
UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE  1797-1858
*Countryside by the Tama River* (from *Famous Views of Edo*)  ca. 1853-1858
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.051

This landscape view provides a fine example of graduated color printing in the same wood block. The Tama is the major river on the main island of Honshū and flows through Tokyo.

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE  1797-1858
*Five Pines, Onagi Canal* (from *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*)  ca. 1856
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.048.g

This depicts the last surviving tree—note the man-made supports for its limbs—of an admired group of five along the Onagi River in the city now known as Tokyo. This image is scene 97 from the series of 100.

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE  1797-1858
*Inasa Mountain at Nagasaki in Hizen Province*
(from *Famous Views of the Sixty-odd Provinces*)  ca. 1853-1856
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth W. Smith
ACG.1970.047.b

Hiroshige was born to a hereditary retainer of the shōgun—he was of the dōshin rank and was a fire fighting official at Edo (Tokyo) castle. The artist actually held the same post from 1809 (at age 12) to 1823. He was apprenticed as a teenager to the artist Utagawa Toyohiro and studied the Kanō and Shijō painting styles. Hiroshige is acknowledged as one of the masters of Japanese printmaking. His serial views along the Tōkaidō Road and sets of views of beauty spots around the country are considered his finest works.

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE  1797-1858
*Ōtsu, Hashirii Teahouse* (from *Fifty-three Stations on the Tōkaidō*)  1834
woodblock on paper
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Victor W. Henningsen Jr. (Mayde Ludington ’48)
ACG.1985.003.c

This scene is from the southeastern shore of Lake Biwa, Japan’s largest lake. The Tōkaidō Road connected Edo (Tokyo) and Kyoto. In the 19th century various scenic spots along the road became a popular topic—something of a tourist destination—for literature and visual art. It is still one of modern Japan’s busiest transportation corridors.
The print illustrates an episode from the *Kanadehan Chûshingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)*, one of Japanese literature’s best-known and best-loved adventure epics and a perpetual inspiration for kabuki theater. Rooted in real events from the early 18th century, the *Chûshingura* tells of warriors bent on avenging their lord. In the tale, Moronô is the duplicitous governor of Kamakura and Hangan is his manipulated and disgraced retainer forced to commit suicide, thereby leaving his loyal retainers leaderless and intent on revenge.

**UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE 1797-1858**

*Servants of Asano Takumi Driving Off the Retainers of Morono, Castle of the Shogun in Edo,* from Act III of the *Kanadehan Chushingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)* ca. 1845-1853

woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.049.d

The print illustrates an episode from the *Kanadehan Chûshingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)*, one of Japanese literature’s best-known and best-loved adventure epics and a perpetual inspiration for kabuki theater. Rooted in real events from the early 18th century, the *Chûshingura* tells of warriors bent on avenging their lord. In the tale, Moronô is the duplicitous governor of Kamakura and Hangan is his manipulated and disgraced retainer forced to commit suicide, thereby leaving his loyal retainers leaderless and intent on revenge.

**UTAGAWA KUNIOSHI 1798-1861**

*The Teaching of Grass Script to Children* (from the series *Among the Arts*) ca. 1840

woodblock on paper
14 ¾ x 9 5/8 inches
Gift of Miss Ruth W. Smith, 1970
ACG.1970.002

The artist was the son of a silk dyer and trained in the studio of Utagawa Toyokuni. Kunioshi was a very well regarded artist of the Tokugawa period. In addition to his work as a printmaker, he studied traditional Japanese painting in the Taso school and Chinese-style ink painting in the Kanô school.

Grass script—so called because of its organic, flowing lines—is a style of cursive Chinese calligraphy and was first developed in the Han Dynasty. A boy is shown here practicing (note the sample calligraphy to his left) while his mother prepares ink. Humorously, the child appears to have produced more blotted work than clear characters. Above them an open text offers instruction on the art of writing.
UTAGAWA KUNIYASU  ca. 1800-1830
Procession of Boys Dressed as Samurai on the Boys’ Festival of the Fifth Day of the Fifth Month  ca. mid 1800s
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.014

UTAGAWA SADAHIDE  1807-1878/1879
The Great Prelude (from The Treasury of Loyal Retainers)  ca. 1842-1878/1879
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.049.a

The print illustrates an episode from the Kanadehan Chûshingura (The Treasury of Loyal Retainers), one of Japanese literature’s best-known and best-loved adventure epics and a perpetual inspiration for kabuki theater. Rooted in real events from the early 18th century, the Chûshingura tells of warriors bent on avenging their lord. In the tale, Moronô is the duplicitous governor of Kamakura and Hangan is his manipulated and disgraced retainer forced to commit suicide, thereby leaving his loyal retainers leaderless and intent on revenge.

UTAGAWA SADA HIDE  1807-1878/1879
The Fleet of Ashikaga Takauji Departing for Battle  ca. 1825-1860
woodblock on paper
13 7/8 x 18 3/8 inches
Gift of Carol Rice M.D., College physician and Professor of Health Education, 1920-1940
ACG.1979.003

The subject of this print, Ashikaga Takauji, was the first shogun (1338-1358) of the Ashikaga shogunate. In the 1330s he was instrumental in aiding the Emperor Go-Daigo in seizing Kyoto during the Genkô War. During the 1340s and 1350s, Takauji was deeply involved in the internal strife and warfare caused by the opposing forces of the Southern and Northern imperial courts. His impressive military and political exploits figure in the epic narrative Taiheiki (Chronicle of the Great Peace), published in 1371.

UTAGAWA YOSHITORA  active 1850s-1870s
Orian, The Highest Ranking Geisha  1859
woodblock on paper
Gift of Henrianne C. Early ’13
ACG.1974.001.e

“Orian” generally indicates a highly cultured courtesan from the most exclusive entertainment urban districts, trained in literature and refined skills such as music. The elaborate golden hair ornaments indicate that she is a high ranking courtesan in her “green house” (brothel). Her teeth are blackened, a fashionable court style also adopted by married noblewomen. She wears black lacquer “zori” (sandals). The crane and turtle pictured as part of the design on her kimono mean
long life and happiness. The “hairy turtle,” an odd but fairly common image in Japanese art, is meant to indicate a creature so old that it has seaweed growing on its shell.

UTAGAWA YOSHITORO active ca. 1850s-1870s
Watching a Morning Street Dance (from Famous Places of the Tōkaidō Road) ca. 1860
woodblock on paper
Gift of Miss Ruth Woodhull Smith
ACG.1970.059.a

The artist, born in Edo (Tokyo), was a pupil of Utagawa Kunioshi. In addition to his work with individual prints, he is known for illustrations of books and newspapers.