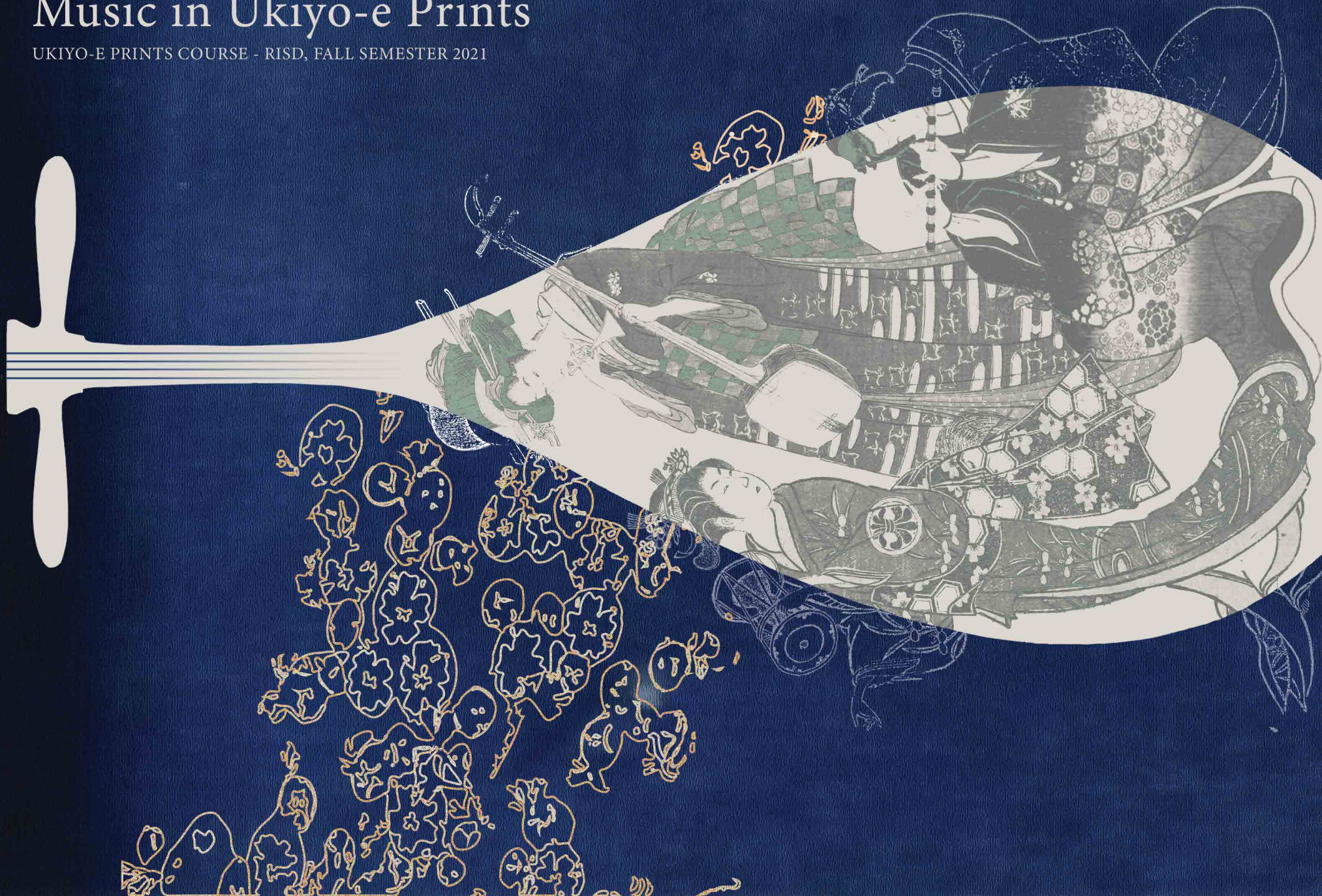
STRIKING CHORDS:

Music in Ukiyo-e Prints

UKIYO-E PRINTS COURSE - RISD, FALL SEMESTER 2021



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THAD-H791-01 Ukiyo-e Prints

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THAD-H791-01 Ukiyo-e Prints
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About This Book & This Exhibition

The book "Striking Chords: music in ukiyo-e prints" is a student version of a scholarly catalog that accompanies the RISD Museum's ukiyo-e prints exhibition of the same title. Ukiyo-e, or "pictures of the floating world," is a vibrant form of urban art that flourished in Japan during the Edo period (1603-1868) predominantly as mass-produced woodcuts. Ukiyo-e prints focused on townspeople's pleasurable pastimes, of which music was an inseparable part.

The scope of music-related topics in ukiyo-e is astounding. This refers to a wide variety of musical instruments depicted as well as to the vast range of performers portrayed. To the latter belong popular divinities, legendary and historical characters, professional entertainers – courtesans, kabuki actors, onstage narrators, itinerant blind musicians, women of samurai and commoner households, and even children. Music indeed permeated life in Edo period Japan.

This exhibition is a culmination of an ukiyo-e art history course taught at RISD in the fall of 2021. The project was generously accommodated by the RISD Museum. With the help of Wai Yee Chiong, Associate Curator of Asian Art, fifteen prints were selected from the collection of the RISD Museum. For the exhibition's online component, which is still under construction, additional prints were chosen – two more from the RISD collection, four from the collection of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow, Russia, and one from a private collection. All these works are included in the catalog.

Art history courses in such a hands-on format have been practiced since 2013. Working in small groups, students comprehensively explored the print/s of their choice and wrote essays for the catalog. Relying on close looking and massive research, they considered purely artistic matters, investigated the images' historical and cultural context, examined period-specific objects and situations represented, interpreted the once apparent hints and hidden allusions implied in the artwork, etc. Moreover, students had to always keep a large picture in mind, applying a common lens of the exhibition topic to all objects displayed. Students tried out the many tasks of an art museum curator. They gave a title to the exhibition, justified the display order, wrote educational wall labels, and, as rising designers, developed the exhibition's poster and book cover, exhibition invitations. They also continue to be working on the exhibition's digital component.

In the spirit of the exhibition topic, this project prompted the entire class to work in concordance as if an instrumental ensemble or even an orchestra. It is the students' hope that their "Striking Chords" project does indeed strike a chord in the exhibition visitors.

Elena Varshavskaya, course instructor.

Music — a Precious Thread in the Brocade of Ukiyo-e Prints: Introduction

Nicholas Grassi

"*Ukiyo*," meaning "floating world," and "*e*," meaning "picture", depicts the pleasures of bustling mundane life in Edo-period Japan, and depict food, fashion, nature, parties, theater, mythological figures, literary and historical stories prevalent to contemporary events. The exhibited prints span from the 1760s through the 1860s: the golden age of the ukiyo-e art form in its most developed state of the full-color "brocade pictures' - *nishiki-e*. Prints at the exhibition take various forms of formats, such as an album leaf, surimono (a privately commissioned square print), *hosoban* (early narrow format print), single-sheet commercial prints in large-sheet *ōban* format, and their multi-panel compositions. Each print was designed by one artist except for one print: "the Seven Gods of Good Fortune" (or Shichifukujin) which exemplifies Japan's collaborative creative practices.

Ukiyo-e prints focused on living in the moment and enjoying one's surroundings. Edo, modern day Tokyo, had over one million inhabitants by the 18th century. It was the biggest and most densely populated city in the world.[1] Ukiyo-e prints were an art form made for the masses: woodblock printed images that sold for very little and reached as many people as possible. Ukiyo-e prints' conjured reality mixed all of its genres, from *bijinga* to *yakusha-e* to *fukeiga* and *musha-e*, into one melting pot of mundane, bustling reality where each activity supports every other. For instance, ukiyo-e prints depicted and supported Kabuki theater and portrayed theater actors in posters, and depicted literary tales and mythological stories updated with modern contexts. However, every subject of ukiyo-e's visual studies was permeated by music. Music was everywhere: it was in the Kabuki theaters, on the streets, in the pleasure quarters, in nature, at parties, and in peoples' homes. The distinctions between mundane activities blur, as music takes center stage in ukiyo-e prints. Most forms of relaxation or pleasure one experienced in ukiyo-e involved or required music to function, and rarely was played for its own sake.[2] In Alexander

1 Binns, Alexander. "Looking and Listening: Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e." 2013. Routledge, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OHLfefg9Bi8gvLlZ0DmyK_w6If1DCJ2q/view

2 Ibid.

Binns' "Looking and Listening: Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e," Mr. Binns refers to Utagawa Hiroshige's print, "Matching the World and Music," (published 1849-1850) [Fig. A.] and discusses how the print embodies and presents music's integration in Japanese culture, as it depicts various moments and contexts of people with instruments and music.[3] Music, in ukiyo-e, seems to be played as a natural activity during any context. Alexander Binns also refers to Doctor Junko Muto, who "has argued that […] ukiyo-e could be enjoyed as much for the sound as for the image, and that they were designed to evoke (rather than invoke) the music that was part of a given character's identity."[4]

Fig. A. Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858). *Matching the World and Music*, 1849-1850.[5]

The two oldest forms of Japanese folk music are *shomyo* and *gagaku*. *Shomyo* is a form of Buddhist chanting, and the *gagaku* was the court's theatrical musical format. *Shomyo* is performed by Buddhist monks at religious ceremonies. *Shomyo*, directly translated, is a combination of characters for "voice" and "wisdom."[6] Meanwhile, *gagaku*, the oldest Japanese musical tradition, can be broken into two styles: *kigaku*, instrumental music, and *seigaku*, vocal music. Additionally, many Japanese theatrical styles are integrated with music, including *kabuki*, known for dramatic singing, dancing, and make-up; and *noh* theater, which often adapts traditional literary tales and usually shows the hero' transformation from a creature into a human, and uses a mask in its storytelling.[7] Notably, traditional Japanese music was characterized with minimal, quiet, rhythmic formats that use silence to great effect to depict the atmosphere of nature with percussion and stringed instruments.[8]

In Hiroshige's work, music is placed in the context of nature. Natural sounds and composed music, in Japanese culture, have a close correlation. In "The Tale of Genji," writer Kikkawa Eishi describes "an ideal fusion or harmony between the sounds of nature and the sounds of music."[9] Nature, a form of unwritten music, and written music have a fluid relationship that appears in landscape ukiyo-e prints: Alexander Binns writes that "listening to music *is* to listen to nature."[10]

In Japanese musical culture, according to Kikkawa Eishi's "The musical sense of the Japanese," there is "no strict distinction [...] between the sounds of nature and the sounds of music."[11] This connection with nature dates back to the Heian period and is still influential in Japanese

3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 JapanesePrints-London. Richard Kruml. http://www.japaneseprints-london.com/1676/
6 "History Of Japanese Music | Audio Network ". 2021. Audio Network. https://www.audionetwork.com/content/the-edit/inspiration/history-of-japanese-music.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Binns, Alexander. "Looking and Listening: Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e." 2013. Routledge, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OHLfefg9Bi8gvLlZ0DmyK_w6If1DCJ2q/view
10 Ibid.
11 Eishi, Kikkawa. "The Musical Sense of the Japanese," 1987. Contemporary Music Review. 1:2, 85-94, DOI: 10.1080/07494468400640271. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fzOZ_YbJIkuMW3tXIm8gkMi1d4SwVVaN/view

musical culture today. Natural sounds are often described as designed musical compositions in "The Tale of Genji." A section from "New Herbs" reads as follows: "blending with the voices of the sea wind and waves, the sound of the flutes enhanced by the wind blowing through the tall pines [...] was deeply impressive." [12] Additionally, in the chapter "The Wind in the Pines" from "The Tale of Genji," a character plays a *kin*, a seven-stringed instrument, in a natural landscape which is described as blending with nature. The chapter reads that the character was "playing in a little place where no other people were, the wind in the pines blended [with the *kin's* sound] in an almost uncanny fashion." [13] This admiration and observation for natural, atmospheric sounds gives a unique creative foundation for all of Japanese musical culture. Additionally, many ukiyo-e prints depict people listening to nature, one of the most famous being Hiroshige's "Listening to the Insects on Dokan-yama Hill" depicts three men looking in the same direction, listening to insects' sounds as intently if they were from an instrument.[14] Alexander Binns describes Hiroshige's print as "a stylized construction of listening."[15] Here is an image of the print [Figs. B, C]:

Fig.B. Utagawa Hiroshige, *Listening to Crickets at the Dōkan Hill*, series *Famous Places in the Eastern Capital*. Ca. 1839-1842, MFA. 11.17.259.[16]

And a close up of the three men from the above cited picture:

Fig. C. A detail of the above. Utagawa Hiroshige. *Listening to Crickets at the Dōkan Hill*, series Famous Places in the Eastern Capital. Ca. 1839-1842, MFA. 11.17.259

Furthermore, musical compositions in the Edo period even mimicked sounds in nature. The Edo-period era *nagauta* song "*Aki no irokusa*," or "the grasses of autumn" contains the following lyric: "*matsumushi no ne zo tanoshiki*," which reads "the sound of a cricket is pleasant." [17] Following this

12 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Ibid.
15 Binns, Alexander. "Looking and Listening: Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e." 2013. Routledge, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OHLfefg9Bi8gvLlZ0DmyK_w6If1DCJ2q/view
16 MFA, https://collections.mfa.org/objects/209530
17 Eishi, Kikkawa. "The Musical Sense of the Japanese," 1987. Contemporary Music Review. 1:2, 85-94, DOI: 10.1080/07494468400640271. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fzOZ_YbJIkuMW3tXIm8gkMi1d4SwVVaN/view

lyric, the song delves into a shamien-centric instrumental when the shamisen plays a "*chinchirorin*" pattern that mimics the sound of a cricket. This shamisen pattern was taken from "*Mushi no ne*," which translates to "the sound of insects," which itself was based on a *No* play from the Muromachi period called "*Matsumushi*," or "The Chirp of the Crickets." [18]

Inspired by natural atmospheric sounds, Japanese music does not follow a strict rhythmic format. Instead, notes, melodies and tempo are allowed to unfold intuitively and naturally. "*Ashirai*" is a musical composition technique that derives from the *No* musical genre that instructs musicians to allow one piece to fit into the whole naturally.[19] In this *No* technique, each instrument (and vocal) are not directly correlated in timing, but rather each musician (or singer) is free to play intuitively and allow each sound to integrate naturally over time with the other parts. This musical philosophy originates in Zen Buddhism's concept of "*fusoku-furi*" which describes an ambiguous connection between two ideas, that are neither "*fusoku,*" meaning connected, nor "*furi,*" meaning "apart."[20] This Zen Buddhist concept of separate yet connected ideas connects to atmospheric sounds feeling rhythmic yet separate. Are natural sounds designed by a specific being as one whole, or are they a collection of moments that happen independently in time, unknown of one another, overlapping to create one melody? *"Fusoku-furi*" and "*Ashirai*" both seem to connect to the natural atmospheric, almost white-noise-like, effects that natural sounds have, that are unstructured and free as a sonic moment in nature. One example of simultaneous disconnection and connection is in the song "*Kokaji,*" in which a singer is accompanied by shamisen and *hayashi* (a group of one flute and three drums), the three musical entities operate intuitively and disconnected from one another, and play in a way that harmonizes without a rigid structure.[21] When writing music, Japanese musicians call composing the vocal parts of songs "*fushi-zuke*" or "adding melody." While in the West, musicians refer to "composing" music, which implies a structural way of thinking about writing that builds to a goal. Meanwhile, in Japanese musical culture, adding a new part to a song is seen adjacent, and equal, the parts that came before. In the Japanese daily newspaper *Yomiuri Shimbun,* Yoshida Hidekazu, a western music critic, wrote that Japanese music "appeared to lack and yet at the same time actually possess a form… [Japanese musicians] prefer to leave themselves open to the flow of time, following it as they follow the path of creation." [22]

One visualization of nature's pleasure is the *hanami*, or the cherry blossom viewing parties, that would take place in March and April when people would sit to watch the blossoms [Fig. E]. The same refers to *umemi* - viewing plum blossoms [Fig. D]. One common theme of ukiyo-e is to relate nature and humanity: the line between nature and music is undone.

Fig. D. Utagawa Kunisada, 1786-1864. *A Picture of the Banquet Held in a Plum Grove in Imitation of the "Oath of the Peach Garden" Taken by Three Brave Warriors of the Sichuan*. Left sheet from a triptych. 1854/10. Private collection. Exhibition catalog, No. 12.

18 Ibid.
19 Ibid.
20 Ibid.
21 Ibid.
22 Binns, Alexander. "Looking and Listening: Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e." 2013. Routledge, https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OHLfefg9Bi8gvLlZ0DmyK_w6If1DCJ2q/view.

Fig. E. Utagawa Kunisada , 1786-1865. *Enjoying Flowers in the Inner Garden*, (Oniwa hana no asobi). RISD Museum, Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.2339. Exhibition catalog, No. 18.

Utamaro's "Tomimoto Toyohina" depicts the famous musician without her instrument in a surimono print, which is the print-quality commonly used to announce new performances, so an Edo-period viewer would have understood the connection to music.[23] In the print, Toyohina focuses her gaze to the embossed green chrysanthemums she holds, perhaps conveying the quiet contemplation music can invite. Additionally, in the print, Toyohina is focusing on the nature she holds in her hand, creating further dialogue between music and nature, and suggesting there is no boundary between the two. As Alexander Binns writes about Utamaro's print: "music is a branch of nature and thus inseparable from it."[24]

Similar to music and nature, historical narratives and music also blend in ukiyo-e. In Kitagawa Utamaro's prints, illustrating the story of Jorurihime, Minamoto Yoshitsune is depicted playing a flute in a small garden, with a woman to his right, Reizei, whom was ordered (according to the popular story) to find the musician playing the flute by Princess Joruri [Fig. F]. In this dreamlike, fantastical print, mythology, history and music intersect to create a ukiyo-e print.[25] Musical instruments, in ukiyo-e prints, often identifies a character's identity to the viewer. Musical instruments are played by geisha, kabuki actors, and *bijin*, amongst many other kinds of people. [26]

Fig. F. Kitagawa Utamaro, 1753-1806. *Ushiwakamaru (Minamoto no Yoshitsune) Serenading Jorurihime [Lady Joruri] by Flute* (Ushiwakamaru Jorurihime), 1790's. RISD, 20.1144 (a, b, c.). Exhibition catalog, No. 15.

23 Ibid.
24 Ibid.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.

Ukiyo-e prints also identify Kabuki actors by their performance in almost caricature-like stylized poses, that become a given actor's branding and iconic images that remind the audience of their performance and identity. The emphasis of Kabuki theater, and ukiyo-e's reproduction of given productions, was not about remembering plot points, but far more about what the play felt like. When ukiyo-e prints recreate Kabuki shows, they try to visually capture the feeling of the music (and performance) to understand the narrative. Therefore, music is a constructed element of an actor's identity,[27] and listening is integrated and weaved into the ukiyo-e posters and actor portraits themselves. Each Kabuki actor is accompanied by music (music played by groups on-stage is called *degatari*) on stage of two categories: *nagauta* (lyrical) and *joruri* (narrative). Ukiyo-e prints that depict dance scenes and musicians on stage are called *degatari-zu* . Torii Kiyonaga was the first ukiyo-e artist to depict on-stage musicians in 1782. A print bt Kiyonaga from 1784 depicted Sawamura Sojuro and Iwai Hanshiro, famed Kabuki actors, alongside a shamisen player and two chanters: Namisaki Tokuji, and Tomimoto Buzendayu and Tomimoto Itsukidayu respectively. All three are famous musicians and are identified in the print, pointing to how important identifying musicians are to advertising new productions. Another print by Kiyonaga, in the Kabuki subgenre called *tokiwazu*, nearly places musicians next to the actors on-stage, even though in reality *tokiwazu* musicians would be far stage right and the actors in the center of the stage. One of Kiyonaga's *tokiwazu* prints shows musicians even more prominently than the actors! Perhaps Kiyonaga's *Tokiwazu* prints reflect the increasing popularity of musicians in Kabuki theater and importance in productions' dramatic impact.[28]

Here is one of Kiyonaga's prints depicting the *tomimoto* style of music in a Kabuki theater performance, featured in our exhibition, which places particular emphasis on musicians in context with Kabuki actors [Fig. G]:

Fig. G. Torii Kiyonaga, 1752 - 1815, *Ōtomo Hitachinosuke and Those in Love with Him*, 1783. The Pushkin Museum, A-32131.[29] Exhibition catalog, No. 11.

27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia. A-32131. http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Otomo_Hitatinosuke_i_ego_vozly-ublennye.php?ref=author

Music is also used to depict beauty in ukiyo-e prints. Similarly to presenting beauties (*bijinga*) and geisha playing instruments, beauty can be portrayed in music in mythological contexts. For example, Benzaiten's biwa in many prints, including Ryūryūkyo Shinsai's depiction, symbolizes beauty in sound. The biwa itself is associated with love, and in Shinsai's print below, takes center stage of the composition, emphasizing its importance as an attribute of the goddess of good fortune [Fig. H].

Fig. H. Ryūryūkyo Shinsai, 1764-1820. *Biwa*, in the series *Musical Instruments*. MFA, 11.20750.[30]

The biwa is also presented to symbolize love and beauty with other characters, including in Yoshitoshi's "Ariko" print from 1886 where Ariko holds a biwa as she cries [Fig. I]:

Fig.I . Tsukioka Yoshitoshi, 1839-1892. *Ariko weeps as her boat drifts into the moonlight*, 1886, from the series *One Hundred Aspects of the Moon*. British Museum, 1906,1220,0.1440. [31]

30 MFA, Boston, https://collections.mfa.org/objects/213187/biwa-no-3-in-the-series-musical-instruments-gakki-sono-sa
31 British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_1906-1220-0-1440

In Yoshitoshi's print, the biwa is used as a sour memory of romance, and Ariko's emotional moment distracts from her biwa practice, silencing the instrument, and symbol of love, even only momentarily. [32]

The exhibited prints have a wide variety of instruments they depict, including the biwa and moon lute, seven and thirteen string koto, shamisen, *yokobue* (transverse lute), *sho* (mouth organ), and a variety of drums: *kotsuzumi*, *kakko* , *tsuridaiko* , and the *shimedaiko*.

The biwa is a short-necked lute with a pear-shaped body and has four or five strings and is played with a plectrum called a *bachi.* The biwa often is played by itself, but is also used for various storytelling purposes or in court music (*gagaku*). It is related to the Chinese *pipa*, which arrived in Japan in the 7th century.[33] Various shapes and sizes of biwa have been invented over the centuries for specific purposes, including the *gakubiwa* (court music), the *mosobiwa* (Buddhist monks for Sutra chanting), the *heikebiwa* (chant stories from *Heike monogatori*), the *chikuzenbiwa* (various narratives), and the *satsumabiwa* (for samurai stories).[34] The biwa appears in a few of our exhibition's prints, and notably in the following:

Fig. J. Collaborative work. Keisai Masayoshi (1764-1824), Suzuki Rinso (1732-1803), Kano Kyuen, Doshu Yoshitaka, Togyusai Ranko (1730-1799), Shuzan Keijun (1789-1801), Yoi Iden, and Shoi Shigehiro. Seven Gods of Good Fortune (Shichifukujin), 1789, a page from the illustrated book Yomo no haru. RISD Museum, 20.1333. Exhibition catalog, No. 1.

The moon lute, also called a moon guitar or Chinese lute, has a round body of a foot in diameter and short, six inch, neck. The moon lute has two pairs of silk strings and is plucked with the player's fingers or a plectrum. It was invented during the Jin dynasty between 265-420.[35] It originated in central and east asia, and in China is used in folk opera (jingxi) or as a solo instrument.[36] One of our prints exhibits the moon lute [Fig. K]:

32 Ibid.
33 Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "biwa." Encyclopedia Britannica, July 17, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/art/biwa.
34 Ibid.
35 Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "yueqin." Encyclopedia Britannica, September 25, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/art/yueqin.
36 Ibid.

Fig. K. Sonsai Koitsu, active 1818-1831. *Woman with a Moon Lute*, ca. 1820s. RISD Museum, 56.039.83. Exhibition catalog, No. 6.

The shamisen is a long-necked lute with a square body and three twisted-silk strings. It is played with a large plectrum: various shapes and sizes of plectrums produce a different sound for various genres of shamisen music.[37] There is a groove cut into the neck of shamisen that causes the lowest string to touch the fingerboard, creating the *sawari* or its iconic buzzing sound.[38] It was derived from the Chinese *sanxian*, and is used for storytelling, Bunraku, Kabuki, and koto chamber music.[39] Different sizes of shamisen appear in various genres. During *nagauta* songs (love songs) solo shamisen interludes break up the lyrical sections.[40] Several of our prints include the shamisen, but here is one that includes it most prominently [Fig. L]:

Fig. L. Torii Kyomitsu II, 1787-1868. *Horse*, series *The Twelve Signs of Zodiac in the Floating World*, ca. 1810s. RISD Museum, 20.1155. Exhibition catalog, No. 9.

37 Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "samisen." Encyclopedia Britannica, January 14, 2016. https://www.britannica.com/art/samisen.
38 Ibid.
39 2021. Metmuseum.Org. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503799.
40 Ibid.

The koto, also known as the kin, is a long board zither usually equipped with 13 strings and moveable bridges. When the player is kneeling on the floor, the koto is raised by two legs or a bridge-storage box.41 Players wear plectrums on their thumb and first two fingers of their right hand to pluck strings. The koto was introduced to Japanese court in the 8th century and was called the gakuso.42 One print in our exhibition depicts a 7-string koto [Fig. M], and another depicts a 13-string koto [Fig. N]:

Fig. M. Attributed to Kitao Shigemasa, 1739-1820. Girl as Benten, ca. 1780s. RISD Museum, from a series of *Seven Gods of Good Fortune as Children*. 13.1368. Exhibition catalog, No. 3.

Fig. N. Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858. Good-tempered / Quiet, 1847-1852, from the series *Money Trees for Virtuous Women*. RISD Museum, 48.349. Exhibition catalog, No. 7.

The *yokobue* is a transverse flute that was commonly used in Heian period court music.[43] They are generally high-pitched and made of *shinobue* bamboo. Yokobue flutes have an extra chamber

41 Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "koto." Encyclopedia Britannica, March 25, 2020. https://www.britannica.com/art/koto.
42 Ibid.
43 "14 - A Deep Dive Into Genji-E - Cat Noah Caroline Yue". 2021. Google Docs. https://docs.google.com/document/d/13plf12zDtrlTs1wV8SCUmYui8rsY3TkT4QkimMohEAA/edit.

that extends past the player's chin and is used as a shoulder rest, similar to a violin.[44] During the Edo period *shakuhachi* was the most popular instrument. The prints at the exhibition that depict flute players illustrate stories from the Heian period and thus show *yokobue* or a transverse flute, a favorite wind instrument during that era. When playing a transverse flute, the player blows into the mouthpiece at the end of the instrument, in a direction perpendicular to the flute's body. In many works of Japanese classics, *yokobue* music is played to convey the deepest and finest feelings. Two of the exhibition's prints depict *yokobue* flutes [Figs. O, P]:

Fig. O. Utagawa Kunisada I (Toyokuni III), 1786-1864. Chapter 2, Hahakigi, 1857, from the series *Lingering Sentiments of a Late Collection of Genji*. RISD Museum, 13.1410. Exhibition catalog, No. 13.

Fig. P. Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 1797-1861. *Ushiwakamaru Playing the Flute*, 1855-1856, from the series *Japanese and Chinese Comparisons for the Chapters of the Genji*. Pushkin Museum. Inventory number A-30552.[45] Exhibition catalog, No. 14.

The *sho* is a mouth organ with 17 bamboo pipes traditionally used in *gagaku* music. It can produce chords and single notes.[46] The *sho* is derived from its Chinese counterpart called the *sheng*,

44 "Yokobue - Wikipedia". 2010. En.Wikipedia.Org. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yokobue.
45 The Pushkin Museum of Fine Art, Moscow, Russia: http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Usivakamaru_igrayuzchiy_na_fleyte.php
46 2021. Atlasensemble.Nl. https://www.atlasensemble.nl/assets/files/instruments/Sho/Sho%20by%20Naomi%20Sato.pdf.

and was introduced in Japan in the 7th century. The instrument's tubes are designed to symbolize folded phoenix wings.[47]

The *tsuridaiko* (also known as a *gakudaiko*) is a hanging drum that is played with two mallets on one side, and is used in the bugaku orchestra.[48] Additionally, the *shimedaiko* is a small, shallow-bodied drum similar to *tsuzumi* drums. It is played with *bachi* sticks while it sits on a stand. *Shimedaiko* have a very taught surface and produces a higher pitch than usual taiko drums. They are used in *nagauta*, *hayashi*, *taiko*, *min'yo* ensembles, and folk music.[49] The *tsuridaiko*, *shimedaiko*, and sho are a part of an instrument ensemble in the print by Utamaro illustrating *Ushiwakamaru Serenading Jorurihime* [Figs. Q, R]:

Fig. Q. Kitagawa Utamaro, 1752-1806. *Ushiwakamaru Serenading Jorurihime by Flute*, ca. 1790s. RISD Museum, 20.1144. Exhibition catalog, No. 15.

Fig. R. A close up of Utamaro's print. From left to right, the *shimedaiko, sho*, and *tsuridaiko* are visible. Kitagawa Utamaro, 1752-1806. *Ushiwakamaru Serenading Jorurihime by Flute*, ca. 1790s. RISD Museum, 20.1144. Exhibition catalog, No. 15.

The instrument family *tsuzumi* are a family of two-headed drums with hourglass-shaped bodies. The *kotsuzumi* and the *o-tsuzumi* are the most commonly found *tsuzumi* drums, and are used in *Noh* and Kabuki theaters,[50] and while they look similar, have very distinct sounds. The *o-tsuzumi* makes a cracking sound when struck, is played from the left hip, and has a cowhide skin. The *kotsuzumi* is smaller than the *o-tsuzumi* and has a horsehide skin and can produce four

47 2021. Metmuseum.Org. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/503052.
48 "Tsuri-Daiko - Wikipedia". 2021. En.Wikipedia.Org. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsuri-daiko.
49 "Shime-Daiko - Wikipedia". 2021. En.Wikipedia.Org. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shime-daiko.
50 Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "tsuzumi". Encyclopedia Britannica, 13 Apr. 2009, https://www.britannica.com/art/tsuzumi.

soft sounds with the player's hand.[51] These sounds can be changed by adjusting rope tensions by squeezing one's left hand. The drum's resonance is adjusted by applying thin paper (called *choshigami*) to the center of the back drumhead.[52] The *kakko* is a double-headed drum that arrived in Japan from China in the 7th century. The player kneels and strikes the drum on both ends with two sticks and is often used for rhythm in *togaku* music (early Tang Dynasty). It is sometimes used in *kabuki* theater to suggest the imperial court's presence.[53] Both the *kakko* and *kotsuzumi* drums are shown in the following print from the Striking Chords exhibition [Fig. S] :

Fig. S. Chōbunsai Eishi, 1756-1829. *Beauties enjoying a boat ride on the Sumida River*, ca. 1790s. RISD Museum, 20.1133. Exhibition catalog, No. 17.

In conclusion, Japanese music is the lifeblood of Edo-period life. It weaves rhythm into every mundane activity citizens of Edo engage in, and is the throughline of many ukiyo-e prints. Japanese music has a unique sense of rhythm and connection to the natural landscape that defines the musical culture in simultaneous connection and detachment. Musicians are ukiyo-e's secret stars in kabuki theaters, literary narratives, and historical scenes, weaving their sonorous threads into the "dazzling, colorful, and sublime"[54] *nishiki-e* - "brocade pictures" of the floating world.

51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.
53 2021. Metmuseum.Org. https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/500676.
54 Website of Koho Tatsumura, one of the leading specialists in traditional weaving. http://www.koho-nishiki.com/en/about/ (as of 25 July 2018).

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Part I. MUSIC & HAPPINESS

Japanese, Edo period (1615-1868)
The Seven Gods of Good Fortune, 1800s
Polychrome woodblock printed page from a picture book.
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1333

The Seven Gods of Good Fortune:

Cross-Cultural Deities, Music, and Artistic Collaboration

Nicholas Grassi, Ray Cao, Benny Anderson, Zewei Feng

The Seven Gods of Good Fortune or *Shichifukujin* in their traditional guise seem to be enjoying their assembly as they gather together in a circle around the symbols of longevity: a crane and a turtle. The right-most warrior in armor and helmet is Bishamonten, protector of the north [Fig. A].

Moving clockwise along the lower arc, next is a big, bald Hotei leaning on his enormous bag of treasures [Fig. B].

Ebisu, the patron of fishing and trade [Fig. C], has his fishing rod and a catch of a big tai fish (giant sea bream) next to him.

Fig. A. Bishamonten, protector of the north. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Fig. B. Hotei, god of abundance. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Fig. C. Ebisu, patron of fishing and trade. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Daikukuten, a household patron [Fig. D], is leaning on a straw bale of rice with a wish-granting magic mallet atop.

Jurōjin, deity of longevity [Fig. E], is resting his elbow on a stag, his usual mount and a symbol of long life. He is holding a scepter crowned with a mushroom of longevity that could be found by stags only.

Fig. D. Daikokuten, a household patron. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Fig. E. Jurōjin, deity of longevity. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Fukurokujū, another god of longevity [Fig. F], is distinguished by his extended skull. He is dancing happily with his usual attributes of a leaf-shaped fan and a staff.

Benzaiten, the only female deity in the group, is the goddess of music, wisdom, and water [Fig. G]. She is portrayed with a musical instrument, usually a biwa lute as here. Indeed, sounds of music are necessary to ensure the happy ambience of the gathering, and perhaps Fukurokujū and the crane were dancing to Benzaiten's accompaniment.

Fig. G. Benzaiten, goddess of music, wisdom, and water. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail

Fig. F. Fukurokujū, another deity of longevity. Exhibition catalog, No. 1. Detail.

Seven gods sit on the ground in a circle that acquires trapezoid-like shape in perspective and face one another. The gods are placed in such a way that the viewer of the print feels a part of the gathering. Two are in front (Ebisu and Hotei), one is in the middle to the left (Daikokuten), and four are in a horizontal line in the center of the print's surface (Jurōjin, Fukurokujū, Benzaiten, and Bishamonten). Five of the gods (Ebisu, Hotei, Daikokuten, Jurōjin, and Fukurokujū) are actively communicating with one another, with smiles on their faces. Ebisu, sitting on the ground, seems to point towards Hotei, who is returning the smile while reclining against a large bag. Daikokuten leans with his right elbow on a large straw-covered cylindrical container for rice

and holds a pipe. Jurojin sits calmly on the back of a deer (who is curiously poised with their head up and left foreleg bent as if it is ready to run as needed. Fukurokujū crouches and leans forward as he raises his left foot, perhaps in a dance or out of excitement. Benzaiten sits calmly with one knee upright and the other on the ground to provide support for her lute. Bishamonten kneels on his right knee, but raises his left knee off of the ground. Benzaiten and Bishamonten look at the other gods, involved in communication, but have their mouths closed and seem more serious. Benzaiten is comfortably holding a biwa, but not actively playing. Her right hand is set on the side of the biwa's body, and her left hand is holding the instrument's neck.

The paper itself is a warm, dark beige (due to aging) with subtle lighter and darker variations with stains, wrinkles, and scratches on the print's surface. The print relies heavily on negative space, and the color is applied only to the seven gods and the four animals (and various objects and props) that surround them. A warm, dark brown line borders the composition, and is relied on to describe each figure's details. Five figures have light blue-grey baggy pants (Benzaiten, Daikoku, Jurōjin, Fukurokujū, and Ebisu) while two have darker, warmer grey pants (Bishamonten and Hotei). The light blue-grey pant color fills Bishmonten's decorative collar, and is also drawn inside of Hotei's bag's contours, in order to soften the edges and describe the object's round form. A medium-dark, neutral grey fills Hotei's sleeve cuffs, the crane's tail feathers, Jurōjin's sleeves (and patterns on them), bun, shoe, and deer's antlers, Daikokuten's hat and his magic mallet underneath his right hand, Fukurokujū's attire trim, shoes, and scarf over his head, and lastly on Bishamonten's shoes, pattern on his pants, a miniature pagoda he is holding on his left hand. The artists also use a warm, light grey to fill the bag behind Daikokuten and the cuffs of his kimono, Ebisu's shirt, Fukurokujū's kimono, Hotei's beard and the head of the turtle left of him, Benzaiten's outer kimono and a scarf forming a loop behind her and the exterior surface of her kimono, and Bishamonten's armor and forearm guards.

A subtle translucent layer of yellow was applied to the pole of Bishamonten's spear and to the surface of Fukurokujū's fan. The yellow seems to cover the orange hue that was applied to Benzaiten's instrument to its right, as it appears darker than Bishamonten's spear, but warmer than the orange biwa.

Orange covers four medium-sized shapes of the print and some smaller details. Most prominently, it covers the surface of Jurōjin's deer (with circular pockets of negative space that create patterns of the animal's fur), the straw rice bale that Daikokuten leans on (with a few individual straws that remain uncolored, stripes on Fukurokujū's fan, Benzaiten's biwa, the turtle's shell and the clothing under Bishamonten's plated armor. There is also a very subtle translucent layer of color that fills Ebisu and Hotei's skin (but the top of Hotei's skin is left as the color of the page), and the fish's tail. There also appears to be a translucent layer of a midtone grey over the deer's head and fur down its back, as well as a rectangular bar on Benzaiten's biwa.

The third most prominent color of the print is a cool, mint green that is the main color of Jurōjin's and Daikokuten's kimonos, details of Fukurokujū's fan, Ebisu's cloth belt, trim on Benzaiten's outfit, her second collar, patterns on her scarves, and the second layer from the exterior of her kimono), and Bishamonten's helmet, floating scarf that loops over his head, linear details on his forearm plates and chestplate, and patterned symbols on his orange clothing. The green color gives each character more emphasis and pushes them towards the foreground. The only god who does not have any green is Hotei (although he is the closest figure to the viewer). Jurojin's and Daikokuten's kimonos isolate their heads (and skin tone) from the background,

which allows them to pop forward even if their skin is not colored. The green on the left side of the print is balanced by the heavy, dark details on Bishamonten (such as his floating scarf) on the right edge of the print.

Each character is highlighted with a warm, opaque, saturated red that stands out second-most of any color in the image. Daikoku, Jurōjin, Fukurokujū, Hotei and Ebisu all have red lips, while Bishamonten and Benzaiten do not. The same red fills Jurōjin's wish-fulfilling scepter nyoi in Japanese or ryui in Chinese - crowned with mushrooms of immortality; red accents are present on Fukurokuju's fan, interior of Benzaiten's kimono, ribbons, headdress, the bridge of her biwa, and details on Bishamonten's forearms, helmet, body armor and the pagoda in his left hand. The crane's head and fish's body are also covered with the same saturated red.

Finally, the color that contrasts the most from the background is an opaque, dark, velvety, warm black used to accent the four left-most figures. Ebisu's hat and shirt sleeve are the largest areas of this color, and it is painted as roundel patterns in short, curved lines on Daikokuten and Jurojin's kimonos respectively. A cylindrical mallet under Daikoku's right hand is also black (with a grey square detail on top, as mentioned before). It also appears as detail lines on Daikokuten's angular hat, which further brings the bright color of his face forward. Lastly, it appears on Fukurokuju's staff that he is holding behind his head, and this also draws the viewer's eye to his body. The other three gods (Benzaiten, Hotei, and Bishamonten) do not have any black on their figures, which pushes them back in space while the others are brought forward.

It is noteworthy that such subtle coordination of colors and forms, their echoing each other in a well-thought-out manner is achieved by a group of artists, not just by one individual. Therefore, the print's collaborative subject matter is echoed throughout the printmaking process.

Moreover, this picture of an assembly of the Gods of Good Fortune is a result of artistic collaboration. Eight renowned ukiyo-e artists contributed one character to the composition, and each of the characters is an amalgam of distinct cross-cultural influences. The names of the artists are not indicated on the print from the RISD collection, but this is because this print comes from a later edition of the original publication. Originally, the composition appeared as a spread in an album Yomo no Haru (Spring is Everywhere, approximately) that contained a collection of kyōka - crazy verse - by some leading kyōka poets of the day. The book was assembled by a kyōka poet, Kyokado Magao [Shikatsube Magao], (1753-1829), to commemorate his receiving the certification of competence from his teacher, Ōta Nanpo [Yomo no Akara] (1749-1823), the leading kyoka poet of the day.[1, 2]

In addition to poetry, there were five color plates included in the album, one of which was a collaborative design of Seven Gods of Good Fortune. The original album was published in 1795 by Tsutaya Juzaburo, a preeminent publisher of ukiyo-e prints and himself a well-known kyōka poet. The book was reprinted in 1828 by a painter Takashima Chiharu (1777-1859) with some modifications. In it, only two prints out of five were reproduced, including the Seven Gods of Good Fortune but the names and the seals of the artists who designed the images were eliminated.[3]

Kyōka poetry were parodic versions of the traditional waka form written in 5-7-5-7-7 syllable lines (totaling 31 syllables per line). They often worked in several layers of meaning at once, and often poke fun of recent history and mundane life. Kyōka poems often quote classical Japanese literature and poetry to get their points across, adding to the multiple communicative layers. 4 The earliest collection of kyoka known today was the Hyakushu kyōka, also known as "Kyōka on one hundred brands of drinks," and thought to be written by a priest named Gyogetubo (1265-

1 A copy of the album can be found in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington. The Gerhard Pulverer Collection, Accession No. FSC-GR-780.849.1-2. For digital version see: https://pulverer.si.edu/node/1152/title/1

2 Information on this publication comes from the website of Nishio City Iwase Archives, https://trc-adeac.trc.co.jp/WJ11F0/WJJ-S07U/2321315100/2321315100100010/mp01407700

3 A copy of the republication of the album in 1828 by Takashima Chiharu can be found at the National Diet Library. For digital version see: https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1286973

4 Hotei Encyclopedia of Ukiyo-e, Amsterdam, 2005. Volume 2, p. 464.

1328).[5] Kyōkabon, books of kyōka poetry, originally were published without illustrations. One of the earliest illustrated kyōkabon was Bokuyo Kyokashu by Hishikawa Moronobu. During the Tenmei Era (1781-89), kyōka poetry gained immense popularity, and many full-color illustration editions of kyōkobon were published, such as Ehon mushi erabi (A Picture-book of Selected Insects) and Shioshi no tsuto (Gifts from the Ebb Tide): both illustrated by Kitagawa Utamaro. Production and popularity of kyōkabon continued through the Kanei Era (1789-1801), but popularity and production decreased in the later Edo period.[6]

Kyōka poetry was extremely popular amongst ukiyo-e artists and merchants, who wrote their own kyōka poems. In fact, kyōka poems often appeared in ukiyo-e prints and "blended poetry with pictorial design and calligraphy, and the best of them achieved an impressive harmony and interplay of graphic design and poetic style."[7] Furthermore, kyōka was so popular during the last quarter of the 18th century that it became a unique link between the samurai and chonin social classes: two groups that are historically disparate.[8] Not only did kyōka connect social classes, it also promoted collaboration between artists, actors, and writers. In Edo, poetry, calligraphy, fiction writing, ukiyo-e printmaking, and kabuki theater impacted one another in an intensely collaborative environment. [9] Additionally, bakufu retainers, samurai, and Edo chōnin (urbanites) even formed groups to collaborate on writing kyōka poetry. These groups were called kumi or ren. Our exhibition includes a deluxe print published for the poetry group Tsuru-gawa (Crane poetry group) led by Osaka poet Tsurunoya Osamaru. In it, artist Sonsai Koitsu depicted a moon lute player whose obi sash is adorned with nested cranes' silhouettes, the poetry group's emblem [see exhibition object list]. The first collaborative group was formed by Karakomo Kithushu (1743-1802) during the Meiwa period (1764-1772) called Yotsuya-ren.[10] Ōta Nanpo, then known as Yomo no Akara, Tobuchiri no Batei, Hezutsu Tosaku (Tatemasu Tomo, 1726-1789), Oya no Urazumi, One no Futoki, and other poets, also joined collaborative poetry groups. While kyōka poetry was at its peak popularity during the An'ei period (1772-1781), kumi and ren groups were rapidly established. These creative collaborations in kyōka poetry are reminiscent of the joyful conversation the Seven Gods are having in the print itself, and the mentor to Kyokado Magao (Yomo no Haru's author and assembler), Ōta Nanpo, participated in these group collaborations. This Shichifukujin print is a dense document, not only of cross cultural exchange, but also of layers upon layers of collaborative efforts.

Grouping the gods together only goes as far back as the Edo period, although the gods have existed longer than that. Bishamonten, Daikoku and Benzaiten originally come from Indian Buddhism[11]. Bishamonten is the god of warriors, Daikoku is the god of wealth and trade, and Benzaiten is the goddess of wisdom, music, and beauty. Jurōjin, Fukurokujū, and Hotei come from China. Jurōjin is the god of longevity. Fukurokujū is also the god of longevity, as well as wealth and happiness. Hotei is the god of abundance and good health. Japan's contribution is Ebisu, known as the god of fishers, agriculture, and tradesmen.[12] When the gods are introduced to Japan the artists have slowly tailor them to the Japanese liking.

Bishamonten, also known as Bishamon, is the most imposing of the seven gods. In Buddhism he is known as Vaisravana, son of Vaisrava, in Hinduism, he is known as Kubera. As Kubera, he was originally depicted as short and plump, carrying a money-pot and adorned with jewels. In Japan, he took on the much different form of a warrior, god of warriors, and punisher of evildoers. He is portrayed in full armor (yoroi) with a spear in one hand, and a small pagoda (hōtō) in the other. The hōtō is the main identifying attribute. It is the divine treasure house of

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5 John Fiorillo, "Viewing Japanese Prints: Kyoka Poetry (狂歌) Craze". 2021. Viewingjapaneseprints.Net. https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/kyoka.html.
6 Hotei Encyclopedia of Ukiyo-e, Amsterdam, 2005. Volume 2, p. 464.
7 "Viewing Japanese Prints: Kyoka Poetry (狂歌) Craze". 2021. Viewingjapaneseprints.Net. https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/kyoka.html.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 "Shichifukujin - The Seven Gods Of Japan". 2021. Seiyaku.Com. https://www.seiyaku.com/reference/seven/shichifukujin.html.
12 Ibid

Buddha's teachings and contains relics (ashes, bones etc.) which he protects and gives away to those worthy of reception. He is sitting on his right knee and quietly observes. He is the guardian of the north in the Buddhist pantheon.

Daikoku is the god of wealth and protector of trade, frequently depicted carrying a wish-granting hammer, along with two large bags of rice representing abundance and fertility. Rats, which are sometimes seen nibbling at these rice bags, represent prosperity. In Indian culture he was known as Mahākāla, a wrathful god who devoured the essence of sinners and a fierce protector of Buddhist monasteries. He was portrayed with a snarling face, a necklace of human skulls, a sword, eight arms, and snakes coiled around him. As he traveled to Japan along with Buddhism, his darker nature faded as his more positive traits rose to prominence. As Daikoku, he's seen with a smiling face, round body, and a pointy hat while resting on a bale of rice and holding a mallet. Daikoku is the symbol of bountiful harvest. He is often wearing a peasant hat (Daikoku-zukin) , a bale of rice next to him, holding a large sack and a mallet. His treasure sack contains wealth, wisdom and patience. The mallet (uchide no kozuchi) is similar to the Greek cornucopia, it can produce anything desired when struck. The mallet is often decorated with wish-granting jewels (hōju no tama), which means wealth and possibilities. This jewel is one of the seven symbols of the royal power in Buddhism.

Benzaiten, also known as Benten, is the Japanese evolution of the Hindu goddess Saraswati. In both cultures, she has strong ties to running water/the sea, and is the goddess of everything that flows (words, music, knowledge, eloquence, and time).[13] Frequently, she is depicted riding a sea dragon and playing a biwa. Benzaiten is the only female in the group, and she is sitting gracefully with a biwa in her lap. She has hair pieces and a floating scarf around her. Her hand is resting on the edge of the biwa. She is the "goddess of beautiful sound".[14]

Jurōjin was originally the Chinese Taoist god "Old Man of the South Pole". He was once a boy fated to die at 19, only to have his life extended to 91 after unknowingly giving food and drink to the stars of the North and South Pole, disguised as old men playing checkers.[15] In Japan, he is known as the personification of the southern polar star, and still maintains his status as the god of longevity. He walks with a staff and carries a fan. He is shown most frequently with a deer, also representing longevity, but is sometimes accompanied by a crane and a tortoise. He has a long white beard, and sometimes is shown to have a high forehead, representing his long life and gained knowledge. He is often confused with Fukurokuju, as they share very similar backstories and appearances.

Characterized famously by his tall forehead, Fukurokujū is said to have lived as a Taoist sage in China before becoming a god. He typically wears robes of a Chinese scholar, and carries a staff with a book/scroll at the tip, containing the names of everyone on earth and how long they will live. His own origins are very similar to Jurōjin, such as being accompanied by a crane/tortoise/black deer to symbolize longevity, having been a human before becoming a god, and is said to also be an incarnation of the southern star. His similarities to Jurojin are such that they are often confused as the same deity. Some say he is Jurōjin's great grandfather, or that they both inhabit the same body, but represent two different manifestations of the same celestial body. He is the only one of the seven gods with the ability to resurrect the dead. Fukurokujū and Jurōjin, the gods of longevity, are known for having a deer around. In Taoist legends, deer are "the only animal able to locate the sacred Fungus of Immortality and live to an exceptionally old age." It would be fitting for both gods. Chiba Reiko, author of The Seven Lucky Gods of Japan (1966) says in her book that both Jurōjin and Fukurokujū are often depicted in artwork accompanied by

13 "Goddess Benzaiten." Dictionary of Japanese Buddhism, https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/benzaiten.shtml.
14 Schumacher, https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/benzaiten.shtml
15 Schumacher, Mark. "Jurojin - Japanese Lucky God of Longevity." Japanese Buddhist Statuary, https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/jurojin.shtml.

a deer, and are thus easily confused. However, Jurōjin's deer is typically black in color. In China, she says, deer are considered wise, and the older they become, the wiser they become. This is depicted in artwork by color -- a 1000-year-old deer is blue, a 1500-year-old deer is white, and a 2000-year-old deer is black. She also says that devotees who offer Jurōjin a drink are rewarded by Jurōjin, who taps his head and gives them part of his wisdom.16 Chiba relates a story about Jurōjin's love of alcohol. He was once invited to a feast given by the emperor, and told he could drink as much wine as he desired. According to this Chinese tale, he consumed one koku (nearly 40 gallons of wine) that night, but was completely sober the next day when he presented himself to the emperor to offer thanks. He prophesied a long and golden reign for the emperor, and then disappeared in a puff of white mist."[17]

As a side note, in early instances of the grouping of seven lucky gods where Fukurokujū was combined with Jurōjin, the seventh lucky god became Kichijoten, the wife of Vishnu in Hindu mythology. In Japanese culture, she is the goddess of beauty, fertility, fortune, luck, and merit. Her appearance and attributes would eventually be re-attributed to Benzaiten.

One of the most well-known gods among the seven is Hotei. Also known as Budai, and recognized in western culture as the "Fat Buddha", his name translates directly to "cloth sack" and refers to the large bag he's known to carry. He is almost always shown laughing/smiling, and is depicted as a large bald monk wearing a simple robe. His bag contains all his possessions, and he walks around aimlessly as a symbol of contentment. An outgoing figure, he would predict fortunes, weather patterns and entertain children. In art, he is depicted with a staff, his giant bag and a fan. In myth, his bag is a bottomless cornucopia, containing an unending abundance of food, drink, and treasures for people in need. His chinese fan (ōgi), was waved in ancient times by the emperor to indicate whether or not he chose to grant a request. Hotei's fan has the magical ability to grant wishes. He is depicted in art surrounded by laughing children, and very recently has become the patron saint of bars and restaurants. His giant bag (nuno bukuro) never empties, and he uses it to feed the people in need.

As the patron of fishermen and tradesmen, Ebisu is depicted as a large, bearded fisherman carrying a fishing rod in one hand and a large red carp (koi) or snapper in the other. Koi fish is a symbol of perseverance. It is said by the Chinese that "koi leap the Dragon gate of the Yellow River and to become thereafter a dragon." The fish is also a symbol of good fortune. He is the only one of the seven gods to originate from Japan without Taoist or Buddhist influence. Legends say he was born without bones (or legs, as some stories say), and was so weak he was cast into the sea in a small reed boat before his third birthday. He washed ashore in Ezo and was cared for by the Ainu people there, where he miraculously overcame his disabilities, grew his missing bones (or legs) back, and became the god Ebisu. He is still deaf, but remains content with life nonetheless. He wears a tall folded hat known as the kazaori-eboshi, worn by lower ranking courtiers of the imperial court during the Nara period. The red sea bass/snapper are both major symbols of good fortune. Ebisu is sometimes paired with Daikoku, as they both oversee agriculture, and Ebisu is thought of as Daikoku's son.

The print "Seven Gods of Good Fortune" centers around cultural exchange and influence. Not only do the seven gods themselves originate from three distinct visual cultures, but the biwa itself, the instrument Benzaiten holds, is a symbol of cross-cultural exchange.

In discussion below particular attention is given to the phenomenon of artistic collaboration in Japan of the Edo period, and specifically to the preeminent artist, Kitao Masayoshi (1764-1824).

16 Chiba Reiko, "The Seven Lucky Gods of Japan" 1966
17 Schumacher, https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/jurojin.shtml

Eight ukiyo-e artists each designed their own character (or group of characters) in the print.[18] Suzuki Rinso (1732-1803), at the age of 64, designed Fukurokujū, Kanō Kyūen (also known as Yoshinobu) at the age of 67 designed Benzaiten, Bishamonten was designed by Doshu Yoshitaka, Hotei by Tōgyusai Rankō (1730-1799) at the age of 71, the crane and turtle by Shuzan Keijun (who flourished as an artist between 1789-1801), Ebisu by Yoi Iden (also known as Sasayama Yoi), Daikokuten by Shoi Shigehiro, and finally, Jurojin by Keisai Masayoshi (also known as Kitao Masayoshi, 1764-1824),[19] the most famous artist of the group.

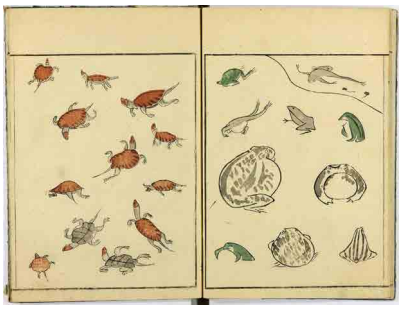
Page from an illustrated book - *Yomo no haru* 四方の巴流 Various artists, 1795 (Kansei 7, 1st month)/Kansei 1789-1801 Freer Gallery, https://asia.si.edu/object/FSC-GR-780.849.1-2/[20]

Kitao Masayoshi was the son of a tatami-maker and was a painter and print artist. He was the student of Kitao Shigemasa (he is represented at our exhibition by the image of Benzaiten as a girl, see exhibition catalog, No. 3), and later Kanō Yosen'in Korenobu.[21] As a ukiyo-e artist, early in his career, he worked as a book illustrator and print designer under the name Kitao Masayoshi. In 1794 he joined the Tsuyama fief and switched to painting and printed albums.[22] In 1797, he changed his first name to Kuwagata Keisai and became the official painter for a daimyo in Western Japan.[23] He later retired and became a monk in Edo.[24]

In 1795, he published the *Chōjū ryakuga shiki*, which was an encyclopedic volume of drawings of dogs, birds, monkeys, elephants and other animals.[25] This book documents the visual style of Kitao Masayoshi's later years, known as his "abbreviated" style (*ryakuga-shiki*[26]), which made him famous for drawing animals in a stylized, simplified manner. He was a contemporary to Hokusai, and of equal public fame. Kitao Masayoshi was famous enough that the public was able to recognize the "abbreviated" style of his later years as much as Hokusai's.[27] He went on to make many instructional books on how to paint in his "abbreviated" style.

Here is a page from Masayoshi's *Chōjū ryakuga shiki*:

18 The names are transcribed on the website of Nishio City Iwase Archives, https://trc-adeac.trc.co.jp/WJ11F0/WJJS07U/2321315100/2321315100100010/mp01407700
19 "Yomo No Haru | F|S Pulverer Collection". 2021. Pulverer.Si.Edu. https://pulverer.si.edu/node/1152/title/other/0.
20 Class PowerPoint presentation, Transcribed by instructor, Elena Varshavskaya. https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1RPucBFEsRwJcVL1sCyLISIzDZwLjw5JrHjyBAuh_hJ4/edit?usp=sharing
21 "Collections Online | British Museum". 2021. Britishmuseum.Org. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG3686.
22 Ibid.
23 "Kuwagata Keisai (1764-1824) ". 2021. Christies.Com. https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5114726.
24 "Kitao (Keisai) Masayoshi | Sansui Ryakuga-Shiki | 1800 | Zucker Art Books". 2021. Zuckerartbooks.Com. https://www.zuckerartbooks.com/artist/Kitao%20(Keisai)_Masayoshi/works/1838.
25 "18th Century Illustrated Animals By Keisai Kuwagata". 2015. Spoon & Tamago. https://www.spoon-tamago.com/2015/07/21/18th-century-illustrated-animals-by-keisai-kuwagata/.
26 "Kitao Masayoshi". 2021. Britishmuseum.Org. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG3686.
27 "18th Century Illustrated Animals By Keisai Kuwagata". 2015. Spoon & Tamago. https://www.spoon-tamago.com/2015/07/21/18th-century-illustrated-animals-by-keisai-kuwagata/.



Kitao Masayoshi (1764-1824)
Chōjū ryakuga shiki, 1797, Smithsonian Institution The Gerhard Pulverer Collection, A-FSC-GR-780.342

In the Shichifukujin print, one can see evidence of Kitao Masayoshi's famous abbreviated style. To compare, here is a closeup of the print's detail designed by the artist.

Detail of Jurōjin, from page from an illustrated book - *Yomo no haru*
Various artists, Jurojin designed by Kitao Masayoshi, 1789 (Kansei 7, 1st month), RISD Museum, 20.1333. Exhibition catalog, No. 1.

Kitao Masayoshi, who designed Jurōjin in the print, also designed the deer the god is accompanied by. While Jurojin's clothing and face are described with fine, thin lines like the other gods, the deer, while more refined than the Chōjū ryakuga shiki, is simplified compared to the other linework in the print. It is the sole element in the image where the printers allowed color and pattern to define texture. This simplified style that relies on color over line is very reminiscent of Kitao Masayoshi's drawings of frogs, as seen above in the Chōjū ryakuga shiki. He expertly draws the frog's contour with an ink line, and uses mid-tone ink wash as texture to fill the frog's shape. These dots of ink are indeed reminiscent of the deer's spots of white. In both instances, Kitao Masayoshi relies on a mixture of negative space, the white of the paper, and mid-tone value to define texture of an animal drawing. Meanwhile, Shuzan Keijun's intricately-drawn crane only relies on linework to define the bird's wings and feathers. These two vastly different approaches define the two artists' different sensibilities, and mark why this print is such a rich document of collaboration.

Similar to the Seven Gods themselves, Kitao Masayoshi was influenced by numerous visual cultures. Between 1790 and 1791, Kitao Masayoshi created the "Illustrated Book of Birds from Abroad," which was "one of the earliest and most lavishly printed sets of ukiyo-e bird and flower prints in Edo-period Japan" and is as notably high-quality as Kitagawa Utamaro's bird and insect books.29 It served as a precursor to the bird-and-flower picture book genre of the Edo period,

28 "ARC古典籍ポータルデータベース1280画面". 2021. Dh-Jac.Net. https://www.dh-jac.net/db1/books/results1280.php?f1=Ebi0427&f12=1&enter=portal&lang=ja&max=1&skip=14&enter=portal&lang=ja.
29 Chelsea Foxwell, "Mediated Realism In Kuwagata Keisai's Illustrated Book Of Birds From Abroad". 2017. Journal18: A Journal Of Eighteenth-Century Art And Culture. https://www.journal18.org/issue4/mediated-realism-in-kuwagata-keisais-illustrated-book-of-birds-from-abroad/.

and later would become "one of the most exquisitely printed illustrated books of the entire Edo period."30 While Utamaro's books focused on Japanese wildlife, Kitao Masayoshi's bird book focused on Chinese visual culture. The book is meant as a document of imported birds from Japan's only foreign port in Nagasaki. However, Kitao Masayoshi only copied paintings of birds that came into Japan. The book gives credit to the original Chinese artists and merchants, as their names are written prominently in the printed version.31 Kitao Masayoshi used Chinese-visual style poses for the birds, including posing a female goose or pheasant hiding behind the male, but with their heads pointing in different directions,32 as seen below:

Kesai Kitao Masayoshi, "Silver pheasant (hakukan) and saxifrage (yukinoshita)," 1790-1791. From the "Illustrated Book of Birds From Abroad," color woodblock-printed book. Kobe City Museum.33

There were no public art displays in Edo in the 1780s, so Kitao Masayoshi must have gone out of his way in order to practice, and master, these Chinese poses.34 Additionally, Kitao Masayoshi was influenced by western-style landscape painting and made woodblock prints of panoramic views of Edo. He painted a view of Edo of how it looked in the year 1800 titled "Panoramic view of Edo." Here is the painting below:

Kitao Masayoshi, "Panoramic View of Edo." Ink, color and gold on silk: framed and glazed. Signed *Edo Kesai Kuwagata Shoshin zu*, sealed *Shoshin*. Christie's Auction House.[35]

In the image, Kitao Masayoshi uses spatial recession of scale to indicate what is closer and farther from the viewer (as opposed to many other ukiyo-e prints which make flat or isometric landscapes), and even uses fog to break-up mountains in the farthest distance. Henry Smith, a professor at Columbia University, claims that Kitao Masayoshi was

30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 "Kuwagata Keisai (1764-1824), Panoramic View of Edo". 2021. Christies.Com. https://www.christies.com/en/lot/lot-5114726.

influenced by Maruyama Okyo's western-style panoramic views.36 He repainted his panoramic composition of Edo on the walls of Tsuyama Castle in 1809.37 In conclusion, Shichifukujin not only presents seven divine beings who are the amalgam of different cultural influences, but also are created by artists whose visual styles have roots in several foreign cultures themselves.

There is a long history in Japan of group drawings and paintings that influence the Shichifukujin print's composition and its collaborative spirit. Group-made hanging scrolls, scroll paintings, albums or screens are called gassaku.38 Some are made on commission but they seem to be always made out of the collaborators' pleasure to work with their fellow artists. Jon de Jong writes that when looking at a gassaku project, "you feel like an intruder peeking in to catch a glimpse of a group doing something intimate… People who are together having fun [and spreading] joy to others." 39 On the gassaku piece "The four greybeards of Mt Gao," one of the four contributing artists, Nantei wrote, "sekijō giboku," which translates to "enjoying the ink while being together in a room."40 While the artists who designed the Shichifukujin print's figures likely enjoyed working together, it is without doubt that the seven gods are enjoying one another's company. This print, through its collaborative creation process, also symbolizes the philosophy of gassaku projects within its composition. The seven gods are clearly having a joyous, friendly conversation with one another, as five of the seven gods have their mouths open while chatting, pointing, and laughing. Even Shuzan Keijun's crane seems engaged in the conversation. Each character in the print seems to symbolize the artist that designed it, having a visual party with the rest of the group.

Not only the lute biwa, gods' iconography, and the artists' styles are influenced by foreign cultures, the very collaborative spirit of gassaku was a creative act that connected Chinese and Japanese artists. Bunjin were Chinese artistic scholars who isolated their creative and literary careers (or pretended to do so) to amateur status because of Chinese scholar practices. Japanese citizens were forbidden from traveling to China during most of the Edo period, however, many Chinese traveled to Japan and exposed the Japanese public to Chinese cultural practices. Bunjin artists traveled around Japan looking for other Bunjin, and traded their work, and many participated in making gassaku pieces.41

Many gassaku projects seem to engage in a visual hierarchy in various methods. For instance, in "The four greybeards of Mt Gao," the oldest of the four contributors, Kōkei, drew his horse riding figure at the bottom of the composition while the youngest, Bumpō, drew his figure at the top. Jon de Jong also considers that Bumpō was the last of the four artists to paint his contribution, so perhaps he is most important? It is difficult to read exact hierarchies, but interesting to consider their role in gassaku. Usually between a teacher and a student in gassaku projects, a teacher will allow the student to draw or paint the majority of a piece, in approval of the student's work. For instance, in the painting "Pine at the beach under full moon" by teacher Kinoshita Ojū and student Maruyama Oshin, the student, Oshin, draws the pine tree (which is the majority of the image), while the teacher, Ojū, only draws the moon: a subtle compositional and visual element that only took one stroke to paint.42 Below is the painting:

36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
38 "Gassaku, Japanese co-productions". Jon de Jong. March 2004. https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Ha4O55i3dzHSUQVkd1Q1jaSjXyvhq-LL/view.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.

Kinoshita Oju, 1777-1815, and Maruyama Oshin, 1790-1838. "Pine at the beach under a full moon." Kyoto, 1815, or earlier. Sumi and light colors on paper.[43]

While most gassaku engages in hierarchies in order to honor each artist's contribution, the Shichifukujin print does not engage in any compositional hierarchy. Instead, each artists' contribution is equal to every other (except perhaps Shuzan Keijun who draws two small animals, a crane and a turtle, instead of a figure). Each god is about the same size on the page as every other, and all seem in a similar, joyful mood (except perhaps Benzaiten and Bishamonten who are quietly listening to the other five gods). Another type of gassaku is called a sekiga. Sekiga are small drawings or paintings drawn or collaged on one sheet with or without borders.44 They are not controlled or planned like painted scrolls or screens would be, but serve as great documents to gatherings of various artists. This type of gassaku, unlike others, has no hierarchical organization. The print, while planned and executed thoroughly and precisely as a woodblock should, still has visual similarities to sekiga, where all artists' contributions are equally important on the page.

In conclusion, layers upon layers of cross-cultural influence is present in the Shichifukujin print. The eight artists who contributed to this gassaku print, figures of cross-cultural exchange themselves, engaged in a cultural dialogue between one another in designing a two-dimensional representation of dialogue itself. Not only are the gods, a musical instrument, and artists' products of foresign visual and mythological influence, but the gods in the print, by engaging in conversation with one another, become symbols of influence and inter-cultural dialogue. By sharing time in a joyful conversation together, they create a cultural dialogue where they are all intellectually strengthened by a stimulating cross-cultural conversation. The gathering of the seven fortune gods depicted by various artists in their own vision creates an even diverse atmosphere. This piece surely fulfills the purpose of giving the audience a sense of joyfulness. As the general public of Edo began to enjoy the pop culture of Japan as a form of entertainment, the artists pushed the idea of music being in a casual setting with the Fortune Gods, and creating a peaceful piece of art.

43 Ibid.
44 Ibid.

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Utagawa Toyokuni I, 1769-1825
Actor Segawa Kikunojo V as Benzaiten – goddess of good fortune, in the play *Seven Transformations*, ca. 1810-1825. Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia, A-29612.1

1 The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia. http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Akter_Segava_Kikunodzyo_V_v_obraze_Bendzayten.php?ref=author

Doubling Auspicious Powers:

Segawa Kikunojō V - Impersonator of Benzaiten

Ray Cao, Zewei Feng

A gorgeous woman is dressed in an extremely elaborate attire, with the robes billowing out around her, an ornate scarf arcing over her head. Her hair is decorated with numerous intricate adornments. She sits on a craggy rock and holds a lute biwa, although she does not appear to be playing it. While her left hand presses the upper strings against the instrument's neck, her right hand holding the plectrum is raised to her face, as if she has just noticed something to her right, just out of our sight, that has interrupted her.

Who is this intriguing character in the print designed by a preeminent figurative ukiyo-e artist, Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825), a leader of the Utagawa School?

Our first guess is that this divinely beautiful woman is indeed a representation of a goddess because numerous features in her appearance and her immediate surroundings come together in the iconography of Benzaiten, goddess of knowledge, music, and wealth. The only female divinity from a mythical group of Seven Gods of Good Fortune (Shichifukujin), she was sometimes depicted among them - as in the print designed as a collaboration by several artists displayed at our exhibition. But she could also be represented alone - by herself, as here.

Goddess Benzaiten leads her story from India. Named after the Sarasvati River, in Vedic texts she is considered the goddess of learning, and the Brahman tradition sees her as a goddess of music and poetry.[1] In hymns she is described as associated with highest waters that are pervading space itself. She is said to have arisen in the clouds as moisture and that she alone represented all waters bringing in knowledge and embodying "prosperity, splendor, glory, success, growth."[2] She is also compared to speech. Thus, Sarasvati and hence Benzaiten became connected by the believers with everything that flows - water, music, speech, knowledge. These notions of the goddess' abilities determined many of her traits and symbols.

Ukiyo-e print tradition abounds in images of beautiful women that constitute the *bijinga* genre. Largely representations of professional entertainers, these icons of fashion and allure are

1 Merrily Baird. Symbols of Japan: Thematic Motifs in Art and Design. Rizzoli International Publications, NY, NY, 2001. P. 201
2 Catherine Ludvik. From Sarasvati to Benzaiten. PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, p. 116

known, among other things, for their resplendent hairstyle. The woman on this print similarly has her hair done in the most elaborate way but it is of unique configuration. Her hairdo is almost architecturally constructed of carefully arranged coiled strands. These strands imitate coils of a snake - it is said that "her hair is rolled and layered on her head like a coiled snake."[3] Because of Benzaiten's original association with water, the lore connected her to the snake and the dragon. In the image of Benzaiten in the collaborative print at this exhibition her hairdo includes a representation of a snake-bodied Shinto god Ugajin correlated with her. Unique also are Benzaiten's hair decorations. Right at the top of her head there is a Shinto shrine gate *torii*[4] that typically adorns her headdress. In her Japanese form the goddess became associated with Shintoism and in one of her forms was identified with a snake-shaped kami Ugajin [Fig. A].

Fig. A. Shinto-related adornments of Benzaiten's hairdo - snake-bodied god Ugajin in the collaborative print and shrine gate *torii* (鳥居) in the print by Toyokuni I - they symbolize her connection to Shintoism.

The halo-like scarf that encircles Benzaiten's head points to her godly nature, projecting her radiance and divinity as a goddess. The flowiness of the fabrics and the intricate details of the scarf decorated with the stylized clouds and lightning motif (known as the pattern sayagata 紗綾形) are also associated with water. The undulating border of this scarf also has perhaps water-related symbolism.

Benzaiten as the goddess of things that flow is frequently depicted sitting on a rock surrounded by the sea, and worshiped as protector of different islands. The Japanese have long believed that rocks embody sacred powers, particularly if they are of unusual shape. In Shintoism, rocks are regarded as temporary residence of the kami; in Buddhism rocks appear as supports for the deities and are often depicted as such in the art. This print by Toyokuni follows this iconographic tradition.

Benzaiten's primary attribute is lute biwa (the name derives from the Chinese *pipa*, where it came from Central Asia). Biwa is her key symbol, evoking her importance as the goddess of fluidity in nature, music, speech, and harmony. In China, this goddess was always represented with a zither. In Japan, representation of Benzaiten with a zither occurred very rarely, but our exhibition has an example, albeit in a disguise. In the print attributed to Kitao Shigemasa Benzaiten is shown allegorically as a girl playing a toy seven-string zither, perhaps because the popularity of this instrument was on the rise at the time. But Toyokuni in his print is true to

3 Ibid., 164

4 Class PowerPoint, Information for Benzaiten (slides 8-18), 2021, Elena Varshavskaya. https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1RPucBFEs-RwJcVL1sCyLISIzDZwLjw5JrHjyBAuh_hJ4/edit?usp=sharing

Benzaiten's iconography according to which she was shown sitting atop a rock surrounded by the sea and playing her biwa lute. It is interesting to compare Toyokuni's print with Benzaiten painting dating to the 14th century from a temple at Koyasan, Japan [Fig. B].

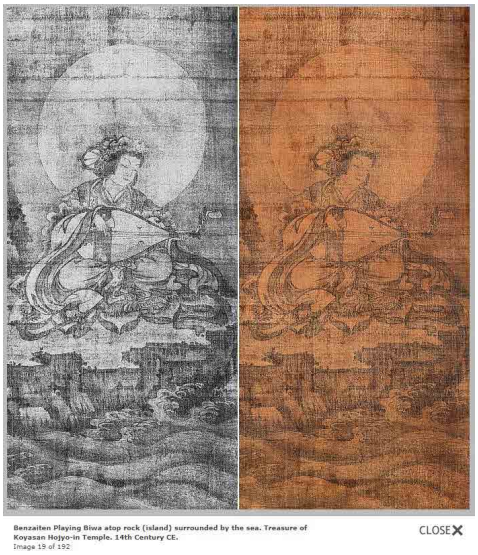

Fig. B. Benzaiten Playing Biwa atop a rock surrounded by the sea. Scroll, colors on silk, H = 104 cm, W = 39 cm, 14th c., Kōyasan Hōjōin Temple 高野.[5]

Although the image on Toyokuni's print fully corresponds to the established iconographic formula, it is in fact not just a representation of the goddess. Upon closer inspection, Benzaiten's eyes appear to be crossed in the manner associated with kabuki theater actors meant to convey emotional intensity of the culminating moment in a play. To mark the peak of the role, the actor froze in an expressive mie pose with the eyes crossed. Thus, the image offers a clue that the person on the print might be a kabuki actor performing as Benzaiten, i.e. an onnagata, a male impersonating a female role. An inscription in the upper right corner of the print indicates that this is indeed a popular kabuki theater actor, Segawa Kikunojō V (1802-1832). Segawa Kikunojō lineage was one of the leading in kabuki. Three prints at the exhibition portray actors from this lineage - Segawa Kikunojō I by Torii Kiyomitsu (RISD, 20.1072), and Segawa Kikunojō III by Torii Kiyonaga (Pushkin Museum, A-32131, in the virtual component of the exhibition). Actor Segawa Kikunojō V became tate onnagata - a top female-role actor - in the year of his debut at the age of thirteen. He is described as a talented, attractive, and versatile actor. He is also known as the author of several books.6 There is still another visual reference to the identity of the actor. The print's background, faded as it is, is patterned by barely visible shapes bearing the distinct crest of this actor lineage - silhouetted bundles of silk floss or tied tufts of silk known as yuiwata [Fig. C].

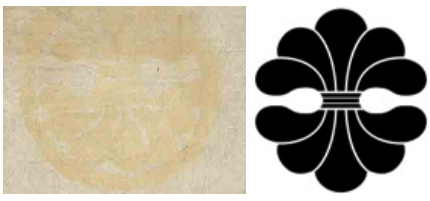

Fig. C. Yuiwata (bundled silk floss) crest of Segawa Kikunojō lineage of kabuki theater actors. Background of print, Exhibition Catalog, No. 2, and an example.

5 Japanese Buddhist Statuary. A to Z Photo Dictionary. https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/benzaiten.shtml#
6 Samuel Leiter, New Kabuki Encyclopedia, Greenwood Press, Westport, Ct & London, 1997, p. 562

The inscription on the print also tells the viewers that the actor is depicted here in the role from a famous dance play called "*Seven Transformations*" (*Shichi henge no uchi* - 七変化の内). This play belonged to the so-called "transformation pieces' - the *henge mono*. *Henge mono* were dance plays based on quick changing of spectacular costumes worn by the characters. The heyday of this type of performance was the first third of the 19th century at the time when the print discussed here was created.[7]

Toyokuni's print successfully combines the divine quality of Benzaiten and the high skill and charisma of the famous kabuki actor. The rock beneath the main figure is used with heavy basil green that grounds the figure. Benzaiten's dress flows nicely on top while having the almond brown biwa in the middle. The figure sits in the middle while the scarf wraps around the space of the head loosely and leaves just enough negative space to bring out Benzaiten's holiness. With the subtle actor crests present in the background, the figure is further pushed to the center of the attention.

Toyokuni I skillfully captured the energy of the *onnagata* actor Segawa Kikunojo V as the goddess of music, knowledge and wealth, Benzaiten, thus doubling the image's auspicious powers. Polyphonic elaboration of this composite image, fusion of the contemporary features with the traditional ones matches the idea of Benzaiten being the goddess of everything that flows. It not only communicates to the audience the level of the actor's craft but also highlights the artist's technique. The print revolves around the idea of showing the peak of entertainment of kabuki theater together with the Japanese music fused in the image of the goddess of the arts, music, and good fortune and thus showcases pop culture during the Edo period.

On Benzaiten among the Shichifukujin - the Seven Gods of Good Fortune

As has been said in the paper dedicated to all Seven Gods of Good Fortune, not the entire group originates from Japan as religious and cultural symbols. In fact, they combine features derived from the Japanese animistic religion of Shinto, Chinese Taoism, and various Indian religions. The story of Shichifukujin is a complex mixture of religious and cultural heritages crossing the boundaries of multiple countries. Among the seven gods, Benzaiten, the only female god in Shichifukujin, is also the only one that possesses a clear bond to the theme of music, one of the major components of Japanese history and culture. It is this feature as well as the fusion of images of Benzaiten from different historical backgrounds that make this lucky deity outstanding in the depiction of the print. Considered here will be a page from an illustrated album of parodic poetry kyōka, Yomo no haru, first published in 1795,8 and then again in 1828 but with names of the image designers not reproduced.9 The album includes depiction of Seven Gods of Good Fortune, a collaborative work by a group of artists. The RISD Museum has a copy of this illustration, possibly from this second publication of the album. Compared to the first edition, the illustration of Shichifukujin is obviously much more colorful, with more varied lightweight tones and more detailed patterns used in the depiction for each lucky deity. Therefore, to elaborate the analysis on Benzaiten, it would be helpful to start with the later modified version of this ukiyo-e print with no authorship indicated.

Benzaiten in Various Cultural Contexts - Method of Study

Benzaiten represents a complex mixture of traits that make her a syncretic deity worshiped by various nations. These traits are the products of cultural drifting and mixing within the con-

7 Ibid., 160

8 Freer Gallery of Art Study Collection. ACCESSION NUMBER FSC-GR-780.849.1-2. Yomo no haru, published by Tsutaya Juzaburo. https://asia.si.edu/object/FSC-GR-780.849.1-2/

9 National Diet Library Digital Collection. https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1286973?itemId=info%3Andljp%2Fpid%2F1286973&__lang=en

text of different ancient civilizations. These features form a sophisticated root system making this cultural icon an intersection of different traditional settings. Especially in Japan, throughout its history, the theme of Benzaiten has been continuously absorbing nutrients from other cultural sources, gradually integrating them into vernacular cultural soil. Therefore, in order to clearly unravel the theme of Benzaiten and its relation to different cultural backgrounds, analysis of the course of development of this deity in different countries will be undertaken as a method to approach the goal.

Benzaiten: General Chronology

Although there is no clear agreement about who owns the credit for creating the myth and iconography of Benzaiten, one can trace the chronological order of the development of this lucky deity. Her origin is associated with Sarasvati in India. Other areas considered will be China and Japan. The time period of the conceptual development of Sarasvati in India spans from ca.1500 BCE to ca.700 CE; in China, that was the time primarily from the 5th to 8th century, and in Japan, from the 7th to the 9th century. Such relatively sequential development of this music-related deity becomes a valuable reference to see the relation and transformation between the presence of Benzaiten within different historical contexts.

The path of development of Benzaiten in Japan could be analyzed with respect to two categories: its image (iconography) and the deity (the worshiped properties). In general, Benzaiten is a Japanese goddess who is known to be the goddess of beauty, reason, wisdom, and wealth. Along with this, she is also the goddess of music, arts, and dance. She grants wishes and prayers not only for wealth and prosperity but for many other things as well. This includes inspiration, talent, love, and romance. Her popularity has grown significantly because she is the patron deity of those who are in the arts – geishas, writers, dancers, singers, and more. It seems like Benzaiten takes responsibility for a wide range of well-being affairs as a lucky god, making her omnipotent. However, these divine properties were not bonded with Benzaiten all at once at the beginning. It has been rather a gradual process that goes along with the development and transformation of Japan's domestic history and culture.

Image & Deity of Benzaiten: India

Referring to the research done by Catherine Ludvik in her PhD dissertation titled "From Sarasvati to Benzaiten, there is a strong link between Benzaiten in Japan and China and Sarasvati in India, who is known as the beautiful vina (zither)-playing goddess of knowledge.10

From Ludvik's study, the development of Sarasvati as deity had undergone a gradual transformation from a river goddess to the goddess of knowledge. And her image changes along with the shift of this deity's religious affiliation.

In India, Sarasvati refers to both a goddess and an ancient sacred river in India's Vedic mythology. The native belief personified the sacred river as well as water in general, which gradually endowed Sarasvati an attribution that represents everything that flows (e.g. music, poetry, writing, learning, eloquence, wisdom, performing arts…).11 Its history could be traced back to the times even before the appearance of Buddhism in India, where it was then worshipped as a derivant of a primitive natural element rather than a product of religion. She was later invoked in Vedic rites as the deity of music and poetry in India, where its image was frequently associated with traditional Indian instrument zither. Regarding the connection

10 Catherine Ludvik, From Sarasvati to Benzaiten, (University of Toronto press, 2001), ii
11 Schumacher

between Sarasvati's image and animals, "peacock, white swan or a fowl" appeared in some other traditional Indian sources as her mounts.[12]

Image & Deity of Benzaiten: China

The transition of Sarasvati from India to China was mainly bridged by the introduction of Buddhism. The divinity's image has undergone a series of changes along with the integration of Indian Buddhism to the Chinese context. The golden Light Sutra (Konkōmyōkyō 金光明経), one crucial scriptural basis of the depiction of Benten, was translated by Yijing (635-713) in China in early 8th century. This version later became an important reference shaping the image of Benzaiten in Japanese culture. In this script, the 8-armed weapon-bearing form of Benzaiten was mentioned to play as the safeguard of the nation.

Image & Deity of Benzaiten: Japan

In Japan, the key moment happened in the later half of the Heian era (794-1185), when the powerful Tendai sect on Mt. Hiei (near Kyoto) assisted in the merger of the Hindu-Buddhist deity Benzaiten with an obscure local snake kami (deity) of water, rice, good fortune, and wealth named Ugajin 宇賀神 (also called Hakujaku / Byakuja 白蛇 or Ukaya 宇賀耶) to create the combinatory deity known as Uga Benzaiten 宇賀弁財天."This transformation of the religious group became one of the vital factors that promoted Benzaiten's popularity in Japan. It also represents the "reconnect" between Benzaiten and water, which is similar to the developmental path of Sarasvati in India. Such an act expands Benzaiten's deity to a broader range which covers the field related to people's daily life, like food crops and wealth. Consequently, it propelled Bezaiten's popularity in later eras.

It is worth mentioning that this composite goddess created from Indian Buddhist deity and local snake Kami was called Uga-Benzaiten. Its image also derives from the combination of both gods. In Marrily Baird's book, "Symbols of Japan," she mentioned the common linkage between Benzaiten and animals like white snake and dragon13. Surprisingly, the native god Ugajin appears to be a white snake with a face of a man, which further proves the fact that Benzaiten is a compound deity from multiple cultures.

The image of Uga-Benzaiten was typically shown in an eight-armed form, with each arm holding the object that symbolizes its deity and the Ugajin and Shinto Torii鳥居 (gate)14 elements decorated on its headdress. As mentioned by Ludvig's thesis, there is also a two-armed Benzaiten that appeared later in the second half of the Kamakura period. "The goddess holds a sword and jewel, suggesting an abbreviated form of the eight-armed goddess."15 There was also a six-armed version of Benzaiten which appeared more rarely around the same period.

In the print of Shichifukujin, the image of Benzaiten appears quite differently from its original depiction from Yijing's translation of Golden Light Sutra. According to Ludvig, Biwa-playing Benzaiten also appeared in Kamakura period in a naked or almost naked form, which was then called Hadaka Benten(裸辯天)16. In late Kamakura period, the fully clothed biwa-playing Benzaiten appeared, "seated on a rock jutting out over the water's edge, against a contrasting landscape of mountainous wilderness,"17 which is similar to the scene depicted in Actor Segawa Kikunojō as Benzaiten by Utagawa Toyokuni I (Exhibition Catalog, No. 2).

Benzaiten & Biwa

In both the original collaborative print of Shichifukujin considered here and its re-printing [Exhibition Catalog, No. 1], the most outstanding feature of Benzaiten would be the musical

12 Schumacher
13 Baird, Merrily. "Symbols of Japan: Thematic Motifs in Art and Design." Amazon. Rizzoli, 2001. https://www.amazon.com/Symbols-Japan-Thematic-Motifs-Design/dp/084782361X.
14 Mark Schumacher, "Benzaiten, Benten," Goddess Benzaiten, A-TO-Z dictionary of Japanese Buddhist / shinto statues (Mark Schumacher, April 30, 2012), https://www.onmarkproductions.com/html/benzaiten.shtml#Uga.
15 Ludvik 289
16 Ludvik 291
17 Ludvik 291

instrument she is holding. It could be named either a mandolin or a lute that is known as biwa in Japan.18 Benzaiten's biwa is the only musical element in the print, and this makes Benzaiten one of the major constituents of Japanese history and culture.

Biwa - General Introduction of Biwa

Similar to the derivation process of Benzaiten as a goddess, historically the biwa music also experienced a transformation in both India and China.

Referring to William Malm's "Japanese Music and Musical Instruments, "The biwa, like western lute, has come in many sizes and shapes and from many cultures. The biwa used in Japan today has two main sources, India and China." Multiple legends also illustrate biwa's relation to its source in India. One legend says that Buddha had a blind disciple to whom he taught the art of singing sutras to the accompaniment of the biwa. Another legend claims that the son of the famous Buddhist king, Asoka of India, became such a blind biwa player. There is much disagreement concerning the real origins of this music, but it is fairly certain that it was transferred to China around the 3rd century. There, this instrument, known as pipa, further evolved, apparently under central Asian influences. It is this Chinese- style lute that seems to have come to Japan sometime in the Nara period (8th century)."19 The type of biwa could also be classified into a series of categories throughout its development in history.

Chronological Development of Biwa - Form & Typology

The form of biwa is continuously under modifications as the time passes. Among all the changes, the most distinctive one is the relation of the frets to the strings.20 Unlike western guitars whose strings are very near to the fingerboard, it is impossible to push the strings of a modern biwa down to the neck as they are set very high above it and the frets themselves are more than an inch high. Such design triggers two methods of playing: "first, one may simply press the strings down on the top of each fret. This produces a definite pitch but the number of pitches available is limited to the number of frets." This method is typically used for gaku biwa. The second method "is to push the string down between the frets." In this manner a variety of pitches can be produced depending on how hard one presses down on the string. This method requires a certain amount of elasticity of the strings to be stretched, which creates a very "twangy" sound much like that of a rubber band. This sound effect will be amplified by the body of the instrument, producing one of the most characteristic elements of the biwa's tone. To be specific about the frets design, there is a tendency that it became progressively higher as the instrument evolved, where gaku-biwa is slightly higher than Chinese pipa, the Heike-biwa yet a bit higher, and the Chikuzen and Satsuma frets are quite high.

Regarding the proportion of biwa, there is a wide variety of them [Fig. D]. Essentially, they are made of two pieces. What can be typically seen on its hollowed sound box are the two crescent-shaped sound holes, a special strip of wood, cloth; lacquer or leather are sometimes placed across the body to protect it from the blows of the plectrum. This interesting leather component is called bachimen. Bachiment only appears on the older style biwa which is played in such a manner that the plectrum actually strikes at this place. 21 Looking back to the print of Benzaiten holding the biwa-like instrument, one can also find this element right on the body of it, which may be helpful for those who want to distinguish the category of the biwa and the approximate time of the print's publication.

18 YABAI
19 Malm, 133
20 Malm, 138
21 Malm, 143

One of the most important factors in the tone of a biwa is the placement of the tail piece, that is, the piece of wood to which the strings are attached. Depending on the thickness of the sides of the biwa, the tailpiece may be attached either over solid wood or over the hollow section, which depends mainly on a matter of taste and different schools of biwa music.

To give a general introduction to typical biwa categories, gaku-biwa, the largest one in the biwa series. Gaku-biwa possesses four frets and strings. It is plucked with a small bone plectrum (bachi), and only the pitches produced by pressing directly on the frets are used. This is the instrument that is said to have been primarily a Chinese development. The Heike-biwa is somewhat smaller than the gaku-biwa. Its strings are played between the frets instead of playing right on it. The Heike Story, one of the most famous narratives in Japanese history, is performed by Heike-biwa. Last but not least, the Chikuzen-biwa, in its classical form, is the smallest of the existing biwa. It is said to be more directly related to the Indian form of lute. It also bears the closest resemblance to the old blind-priest biwa.22

Reviewing again the pose that Benzaiten is holding, the biwa in the Shichifukujin print, one could refer to the hold position developed along with the Chikuzen-biwa. Since modern Chikuzen music developed more directly out of shamisen music, the biwa itself is held sideways like a shamisen, unlike the upright position of the Satsuma school. Actually, the original biwa playing position was to sit cross-legged and place the biwa in a guitar position. The upright position developed in the Meiji period. Therefore, with the cross-legged position as well as the bachimen placed on the fingerboard shown in the print, one can tell the biwa that Benzaiten is holding would be a quite old styled biwa. This type of biwa may even be traced back further to be a pipa that came from China because the consecutive folding pattern at end of its neck differs it from regular biwa design.

On Biwa Music in Japan: Summary

Biwa music, though subject to new and very strong competition, is still an element in the overall picture of Japan's musical life. Much of its storytelling function has been usurped by radio, television, and films, but it still retains that rare combination of music and drama that only narrative singing can offer. The setting and society may have changed, but the biwa bards of Japan continue to capture the imagination with tales of love and adventure.

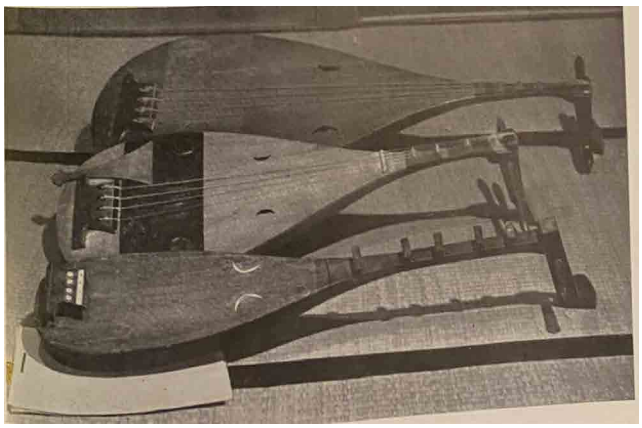

Fig. D. From top to bottom:
Gaku-biwa (楽琵琶) - used for court music, it is the largest of these types.
Heike-biwa (平家琵琶) - used to chant stories from the Heike monogatori, a 14th c. epic about the wars between the Taira and the Minamoto warrior clans.
Mōsō-biwa (盲僧琵琶) - characterized by a narrow body; used by Buddhist monks for chanting of sutras.

22 Malm, 145-147

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Attributed to Kitao Shigemasa, 1739-1820
Child as Benzaiten Playing a Toy Zither, 1780's
Polychrome woodblock print
RISD Museum. Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1368

A Girl as Benzaiten:

Endearing Appearance of the Music Goddess, print by Kitao Shigemasa

Lynn Cho, Miranda Cancelosi, Celine Lam

The young girl with her distinct youthful hairdo and long-sleeved kimono sits on her knees and is playing a zither-like string instrument she is holding. She seems focused on her playing with a somewhat inward glance, her mouth half-open. She is perhaps singing, accompanying herself with music as her hands nimbly pluck the strings. She faces slightly to the left, affording a better view of her meticulously rendered appearance.

The girl's hair is made into a style known as keshi-wage (芥子髷) [Fig. A]. Notably, it is divided half up and half down. Bangs frame her round face. The upswept part is made into a topknot, with flowers and adornment placed in the up-done part of her hair.

Fig. A. Hairstyle *keshi-wage* - hair divided, with one part swept up to make a small topknot.

The girl is dressed in a furisode - a kimono with long swinging sleeves reaching to the ankle that were worn by the young of both genders up to the age of twenty. The gentle flow of fabric, elegantly draping around the figure as here, was (and is) considered a sign of youthfulness. The girl in the print has bows tying the openings of her sleeves together to keep them from opening up. Her furisode, worn over an undergarment without a pattern, is striped with orange, and decorated repeatedly with circular, angular, and floral shapes filled with crisscrossing lines, and with large chrysanthemum flowers with leaves attached to them. She wears an undergarment visible, without print. Her obi appears to be fastened with a bow in the back. Bows also tie her sleeves together, to keep the long sleeves from opening up. Stitching is visible over her shoulders in the kimono.

The instrument she is playing has seven strings. It appears like a painted board, with one bridge that runs across the width of the board and raises strings to play and manipulate. This instrument represents a seven-string koto - sichigenkin (七絃琴). Having come down from Chinese zither kin (琴), it was used in Japan up to the Heian period (8th - 12th cc.) when it lost

its popularity and was revived again during the Edo period.1 In the seven-string koto traditional multiple bridges are not used. Fingers of the left hand are used to press the strings down at a needed position on the fingerboard while fingers of the right hand are used to pluck the strings. The length of the sound box is approximately 1.1 meter versus 1.8 meters of the common thirteen string koto. In the print, however, it is said that the girl is playing a toy seven-string koto.2 The fingerboard is beautifully decorated. Under the strings, a traditional pattern of chrysanthemums in a stream are drawn in lively lines that look like brushstrokes made with sumi ink.

Attributed to Kitao Shigemasa (1739-1820), this print is part of a series that depicts children as Seven Gods of Good Fortune, a widely popular group of deities in Edo period Japan. The young girl in the print stands for Benzaiten (Benten for short), goddess of music and wealth, one of the most revered among them. According to a brief overview provided by Merrily Baird in her book "Symbols of Japan,"3 Benzaiten was named after the Sarasvati River in India. She was regarded as the goddess of learning in the Vedic tradition and the goddess of music and poetry in the Brahman tradition. In Japan she became venerated as both a patroness of music and art and a goddess of wealth. Perhaps the above-mentioned decorative motif of chrysanthemums in a stream depicted on the girl's koto is related to Benzaiten's original association with water [Fig. B].

Fig. B. Chrysanthemums in a stream (菊に流水模様 – *kiku ni ryusui moyo*).4

As the goddess of music, her attribute is a biwa lute with which she is usually represented.

Fig. C. Japanese, Edo period. The Seven Gods of Good Fortune, 1800s. Polychrome woodblock print. RISD Museum. Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1333. **Exhibition Catalog, No. 1**. Detail.

Here, however, she is depicted playing the koto, not biwa, which made the meaning of the image more ambiguous. Her plump frame and the roundness of her face calls to mind the Edo period beauty ideal of women. The heavier build was seen as more desirable.5 Though she is still young, her hair style represents this figure transitioning into full womanhood. Her not yet fully a woman also adds another layer of luck to the image, as children were seen as closer to the gods than adults due to high child mortality.

On a lighter note, representation of girls playing music or taking music lessons is not rare in ukiyo-e prints. Ukiyo-e as a style was most closely connected with urban culture and learning music was considered a necessary accomplishment for commoner girls. Though presented as a

1 Class PowerPoint for this print: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1vc0-Qtp4LygrR7QAiyxXofh9N3v5WA-wftFj2tY5OAM/edit?usp=sharing; Genshoku ukiyo-e daihyakka jiten, v. 5, p. 78 (Encyclopedia of ukiyo-e in 11 vols, 1980-1982)
2 Ibid.
3 Merrily Baird. Symbols of Japan: Thematic Motifs in Art and Design. Rizzoli International Publications, NY, NY. 2001. 201
4 Website of seasonal prints, https://takezasado.com/?pid=153138213
5 Masahiko Kawahara, "A Female Beauty of the Tang Dynasty: the Tomb Figurine of a Woman Holding a Pekinese," Kyoto National Museum, accessed October 28, 2021, https://www.kyohaku.go.jp/eng/dictio/touji/kasai.html.

goddess, the girl in the print was still a child shown with a musical toy.

Though many inferences may be made about this figure based on her hair, kimono, and instrument, the context of the print is also crucial to the reading of "Girl as Benzaiten". Given its nature as part of a series, and how all seven gods are depicted, these prints are likely meant to stand as abstract representations of the Gods, not as narrative figures. Elements like the figures' hairstyle, while it informs the nature of the figure, are meant to emphasize a beauty ideal, not portray the figure as an individual. The artist, Kitao Shigemasa, was also a prominent bijinga designer, and was a figure who started a lineage of ukiyo-e artists.6

The print of a girl representing Benzaiten reflects multiple facets of the Edo period culture. A color woodblock print of ukiyo-e style, it focuses on the present-day life with the customs and fashions of the moment. Every detail in the appearance of the girl is veritable and precise. This is true about the depiction of her musical instrument and the rendering of her pose and movements. Making the girl relatable to the bijinga or "beautiful women" genre is also done in the sensual and lighthearted spirit of ukiyo-e. Presenting a girl playing a musical instrument testifies to the pervasiveness of music in Japan's urban life at that time. Identifying the girl with the popular goddess of wealth and music further elevates the significance of music in people's everyday lives. Resorting to the image of a child, the artist not only emphasizes the charm of youthfulness but brings in the theme of the future with its possibilities of luck and achievements.

Some thoughts about all three children prints at the exhibition

Children represent the future, and in such a class based society as Edo Japan, this future is held up through what is accessible to the poor and through tradition. Elements in these prints indicate specific cultures among the youths as well as festivals and mythologies. One specific element in children that holds important value in the culture is purity, which we can find in the colors of their garments as well as the activities they perform. Overall, children are an integral part of the ukiyo-e print culture. The first two prints give detailed descriptions of the traditions of Jinjitsu (Exhibition Catalog, No. 4) and Choyo (Exhibition Catalog, No. 5), whereas the third print (Exhibition Catalog, No. 3) exhibits the cosplay and divine nature through the depiction of a young girl. By studying these prints representing children, the audience will have a better understanding of such topics.

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6 "Benzaiten." Wikipedia. Wikimedia Foundation, September 12, 2021. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benzaiten#:~:text=Benzaiten%20(%E5%BC%81%E6%89%8D%E5%A4%A9%2C%20%E5%BC%81,from%20the%20Hindu%20goddess%20Saraswati.&text=Benzaiten%20is%20a%20syncretic%20entity,wisdom%20in%20the%20Tokugawa%20period.

Exhibition Catalog, No. 4. New Year (Jinjitsu), 20.1122.

Torii Kiyonaga, 1752-1815
New Year (Jinjitsu), from the series *Children Games of the Five Festivals* (Kodakara gosetsu asobi), ca. 1794
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1122.

Torii Kiyonaga, 1752-1815
Chrysanthemum Festival (Chōyō), from the series *Children Games of the Five Festivals* (Kodakara gosetsu asobi), ca. 1794
Polychrome wood block print
Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1124.

Children Mimicking Adults:

Music at Sacred Annual Festivals

Celine Lam, Miranda Cancelosi, Lynn Cho

In the end of the 18th century ukiyo-e artist Torii Kiyonaga designed a print series called "Amusements of Children during the Five Festivals." The title of the series appears in a bookmark shaped cartouche in the right corner of each print. The prints show traditional celebrations of the Five Sacred Festivals of Japan (Gosetsu) but performed by children. Two prints from the series involve music and will be considered below. One of them is dedicated to New Year observances and the other to the Chrysanthemum Festival.

The New Year print (Exhibition Catalog, No. 4) shows five children in the midst of the festivities on the seventh day of the First Month (celebrated now on January 7th after Japan accepted the Gregorian calendar during the Meiji period, 1868-1912). The tradition of this celebration came from China over a thousand years ago. First introduced in the Nara period (8th century), it was fully integrated during the Heian period (794-1185).[1] Together, in this print, children play to welcome in a year of good health and prosperity.[2] Known as "Human Day," it is believed to be the day when humans were created by the Chinese mother goddess, Nu Gua (Nuwa) - after six other creatures, one per day. Thus, on the seventh day, divinations were performed for man, and punishments were not to be carried. An important part of the observances is consuming a seven-herb porridge. Nanakusa, the seven young herbs, are believed to possess good fortune value and that gathering them and eating them would strengthen the body and ward off evil spirits.[3]

The music and key prop elements portrayed in the print carry forward the theme of New Year celebrations. These objects call back to Japan of the Edo period, its customs and traditions.

In the upper part of the print, children dance and play under a shimekazari, a rope sacred to Shinto known as shimenawa holding strands of straw, paper and fern. Shime refers to a rope to mark a sacred area in Shintoism, Japan's indigenous religion, and kazari means "decoration."

1 Haruo Shirane, Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons, Columbia University Press, 2013. 155
2 "Https://Www.japanese-Wiki-Corpus.org/Culture/Choyo%20(Chrysanthemum%20Festival).html" Japanese-Wiki, N.d.
3 Haruo Shirane, Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons, Columbia University Press, 2013. 135, 156

This decoration is very significant to Japanese culture as the straws are normally hung by the entrance of the households.[4] It creates a boundary to the pure space for the gods to enter. People thus use shimekazari to invite Toshigami — the God of Year, in and chase away the devils.[5] The fern on the decoration symbolizes family and hope for future generations.

The other characteristic decoration of the New Year festivities depicted here is a very special arrangement of objects placed onto white cloth in a wooden stand that is engraved with a large central pattern. This arrangement consists of a miniature pine tree, a lobster and piles of mandarin oranges and coins. The tree has been carefully grown to make it look old and natural, with a knotty and twisted trunk. This group of objects, all symbols of longevity and wealth, represents the island of immortality, Hōrai (Penglai in Chinese) - the mythical island of perpetual youth [Fig. A]. To be more specific, the lobster symbolizes longevity, and the spines of lobsters were often thought to resemble the armor of the samurai.[6] So, every element in the print ushers in various kinds of good fortune as the year starts.

Fig. A. New Year arrangement symbolizing Hōrai, the Island of Immortality.
Left: Torii Kiyonaga, New Year celebration (RISD Museum, 20.1122), detail
Right: Utagawa Toyokuni. The First Month, from Modern Actor Portraits. Detail. National Diet Library.[7]

The children are dancing barefoot. The figure to the left is playing a tsuzumi - a hand drum of hourglass form. This is an instrument of Japanese origin commonly used in Noh chanting, Kabuki music, and Japanese folk music. Tsuzumi is also a popular instrument people play during New Year. Noh music was originally played only by the high-class groups in Japan before the 1800s. Here, however, inclusion of drum music has a different reason that will be discussed below.

So, the dancer on the left wears a blue and orange kimono with four visible layers beneath. He wears an ori-eboshi, a formal folded hat of a courtier. As with the drum, the type of his hat is associated with the nature of the dance he is performing. He also has two strands of unshaven hair right by his ears and his hand reaches out as though preparing to hit the drum. The figure next to him dances along holding an open fan. He has longer hair and also wears an official hat eboshi of a different type. He is wearing a wide jacket called suo that is layered over many other dress elements. The suo is richly decorated with cranes, themselves longevity symbols [Fig. B].

4 "Https://Www.japanese-Wiki-Corpus.org/Culture/Choyo%20(Chrysanthemum%20Festival).html" Japanese-Wiki, N.d.
5 Ibid
6 "An Ode to Osechi Ryōri: The Symbolism of Japanese New Year." Umami Insider, December 15, 2017. https://www.umami-insider.com/osechi-ryori-symbolism-japanese-new-year/.
7 National Diet Library website. https://dl.ndl.go.jp/info:ndljp/pid/1308617?tocOpened=1

Left: Fig. B. Torii Kiyonaga, New Year celebration (RISD Museum, 20.1122), detail
Right: Fig. C. Kitagawa Utamaro & Katsukawa Shuncho. Two geishas performing 'manzai' (万歳) performance. Tayu role - delivers congratulatory address, is dancing in court-hat and voluminous robes with fan; Saizo role – follows with the drum, is wearing court-hat and playing hand-drum. 1791-1793. British Museum, 1908,0616,0.159. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_1908-0616-0-159

In fact, the dancers are representing a kind of New Year street performance called Manzai (in original writing, 10000 years - a wish for longevity). It started as a door-to-door two-person comedy. Performers would go from house to house dancing and singing auspicious words in exchange for rice or gratuities. The main character, Tayu, dances in 'kaze-ori eboshi' court-hat and voluminous 'suo' robes, while Saizo, wearing 'haberi-eboshi' court-hat, accompanies him on a hand-drum. Manzai was incorporated into urban culture of the Edo period, entered Kabuki repertory and was performed by geisha at parties. Representation of Manzai in a ukiyo-e print was immediately recognized by the viewers and was certainly appreciated as adding the New Year good luck wishes [Fig. C].[8]

The three children at the bottom of the print are playing together with toys next to them. An adolescent girl is in the green kimono loosely pointing to the tsuzumi drum player as she speaks with her companions. She appears to be the oldest of the bunch, and the two others look at her, as though listening to her words. She holds a hagoita - a wooden paddle used to hit a shuttlecock in the hanetsuki game (also known as oibane) that is similar to badminton but played without a net. Rooted in Shinto rituals, this game has a long history of being associated with the New Year observances and the concept of attracting good luck. The game was originally played by the girls while the boys were associated with lucky arrows hamaya to drive away evil.[9] The shuttlecock hane to be used in the game rests on the ground in front of the girl. It seems to be made in the traditional way of a soapberry seed with feathers attached to it [Fig. D]. The girl seems to be talking with the child next to her in the bottom right corner. One can speculate if they are about to start playing hanetsuki. The girl's hair is tied into the momoware style with a kanzashi hair pin and a kushi comb. Her green kimono calls to mind the color waketake-iro, which suggests fresh bamboo. She has an orange underlayer for her green kimono, indicating that she represents a character that is fashionable and knowledgeable about the event.

The child she is talking to appears to be a younger girl, wearing a cherry blossom adorned red kimono with a peachy underlayer. She is holding a temari, literally, a hand ball [Fig. E] while listening to the girl in green. Temari balls are made of a round core of tightly rolled paper, covered with fabric scraps and cotton threads and then wrapped with multicolored silk threads to make a complicated geometric pattern on the surface. Strongly associated with New Year celebrations, they are used for decoration and as a traditional toy for girls. The intricate geometric pattern is visible on the temari the

8 The British Museum. Comments to print by Katsukawa Shuncho and Kitagawa Utamaro, Geisha performing Manzai. https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/A_1908-0616-0-159
9 Hanetsuki. Wiki Corpus. https://www.japanese-wiki-corpus.org/culture/Hanetsuki%20(Japanese%20badminton).html

girl in the print is holding. Her hair is tied back in what appears to be a bow, and her swinging sleeves are tied together with a ribbon half way of their length to make acting in a kimono more convenient.

The last child puts his finger to his mouth as he listens to the girl in green. He holds a kite with the Chinese character for 'turtle' in his right hand, and the string for the kite goes around and under him [Fig. F]. The turtle that is believed to live for ten thousand years. Thus, it is one of the major symbols of longevity, and reference to it is most appropriate at the time of New Year celebrations.

New Year toys on the print (Kiyonaga, RISD 20.1122), left to right: Fig. D. (a) battledore; (b) shuttlecock; Fig. E. (c) handball temari; Fig. F. (d) a kite with a character for turtle inscribed, Fig. G.

This boy is centrally placed between himself and the three children. His kimono has a repeating disc pattern. His hair is shaved on the dead top of his hair and the tufts are made in style typical for young boys. He is also barefoot, and his feet peek from under his kimono.

The print overall is faded but still offers a variety of color tones hinting on its original brightness.

The print is signed by the artist - the characters on the left say "by Kiyonaga." Underneath the artist's signature in the bottom left corner of the print there is the seal of publisher Ezakiya Kichibei. It is important to mention that this series of prints was also published by the publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō, the circumstance to be discussed below.

To conclude, the image is replete with auspicious symbols. They include traditional adornments to attract good fortune, toys and implications of games associated with luck, and a vibrant felicitous performance that enlivens the celebrations with the dynamic dance and music.

Chōyō - Chrysanthemum Festival

Torii Kiyonaga's second print is dedicated to the celebration of the Chrysanthemum Festival known as Chōyō festival (Exhibition Catalog, No. 5). Depiction of chrysanthemum flowers is a direct reference to this sacred annual observance. Chōyō festival originated from China and is a festival for people to celebrate longevity.[10] The festival is celebrated on the 9th day of the 9th month. In traditional Chinese characters, the number nine is the highest single digit number, and double nine plays a significant meaning in the culture.[11] The word "Chōyō" means double the positive energy. Eventually, the duality of active numbers was interpreted as an auspicious sign that called to be celebrated. in Japan, it gained the status of one of the main annual festivals observed. The festival became associated with the chrysanthemum (kiku in Japanese) since it is the flower of the season. It is believed that cultivation of chrysanthemums originated in China. Merrily Baird in her book "Symbols of Japan" writes that the Taoist tradition refers to a Sweet River Valley where people lived to old age because they drank water into which chrysanthemum flowers fell. There is also an important legend of Chrysanthemum Boy that originated in China but became particularly devel-

10 A. C. Yu, "Choyo (Chrysanthemum Festival) - Japanese Wiki Corpus," Choyo (Chrysanthemum Festival) - Japanese Wiki Corpus, accessed October 28, 2021, https://www.japanese-wiki-corpus.org/culture/Choyo%20(Chrysanthemum%20Festival).html.

11 Ibid

oped in Japan, as discussed below. Chrysanthemums are said to have been introduced to Japan before the Nara period (8th c.). The first use of the chrysanthemum as an emblem of the Japanese imperial family dates to the 13th century. Later many commoner families also used chrysanthemums as their family crests. Multiple chrysanthemum blossoms filling the space or floating in a stream constitute widespread decorative motifs in Japanese arts.[12] There are many different types of chrysanthemum flowers. Some have small and compressed yellow petals with a tint of pleasing smell, others are large-flowered species. Already in the Heian period, people celebrated the Chōyō festival by rubbing their bodies with the night dew of chrysanthemums and drinking chrysanthemum sake as well as decorating their houses with Chrysanthemum.[13]

Scanning through the print, chrysanthemums are spotted multiple times. From the top of the piece, the young boy holding a flowering chrysanthemum branch dances to the music [Figs. G, H]. The boy is wearing an orange and green kimono with long sleeves associated with youthfulness. Multiple lighter layers of garments are worn underneath. Chrysanthemum patterns are shown all over the garment of the dancer which is directly connected with the festival. An extra layer of chrysanthemum-patterned kimono-shaped garment is wrapped around the dancer's waist. It almost looks like an obi belt on the kimono -- a traditional Japanese accessory used to secure the kimono from opening up. However, this fabric is obviously fitted - has the sleeves and the hems of its own. Moreover, the sleeves are tied with ribbons exactly in the same way as the dancer's own sleeves. This was done to limit the length of the swinging sleeves of the garments for the young. The hems of this outer garment also visibly part following the boy's energetic dance movements.

According to Haruo Shirane, we deal here with the talismanic powers ascribed to natural motifs.[14] This concept is traced down to the Heian period (794-1185) and became even more pronounced at later times. During the Muromachi period it found further elaboration in the Noh theater plays, one of most famous being the Chrysanthemum Child, or Kiku-jidō directly related to our print.

Here is the story told on the website of the Noh Theater Kanze School that leads its history from the 14th century. According to the Kanze Noh Theater synopsis, "Jidō was a boy who served Emperor Mu of the Zhou dynasty in ancient China. One day, he committed an offense by stepping over the emperor's headrest. So severe was this offense that he barely escaped being put to death. He was driven from the court and banished to Mount Rekken. Feeling pity for the boy, Emperor Mu secretly gave him a headrest upon which he had written two verses from the Lotus Sutra and he taught him to recite these verses and pray every morning. When Jidō copied the verses onto a chrysanthemum leaf to remember them, the dew that formed on the leaf became a miraculous elixir, and the boy who drank the elixir became a hermit remaining eternally youthful for over eight hundred years."[15] This is said to be the origin of the Chrysanthemum Festival.

The dance is referred to in another play, "Jidō of the Headrest" (Makura-Jidō) based on the same story. In it, when visited by the emperor's envoy, Jidō performs a dance of joy. He tells the official that dew dripping from the leaf has created a pool in the valley, which has become the headspring of the medicinal water. The official and Jidō exchange cups of the water as sake, making it an offering of prayers for the longevity of Emperor Wen and the enduring prosperity of his reign. Jidō returns to his hermit's hut on the mountain."[16] It is this very dance that is referred to in Kiyonaga's print who not only celebrates longevity associated with chrysanthemum and the festival of the 9th day of the 9th month but also wittily "plays" on the youthfulness of Chrysanthemum Boy placing him among other children contrary to the original legend in which both other participants - the emperor and his envoy - were adults.

12 Merrily Baird, Symbols of Japan. Thematic Motifs in Art and Design. Rizzoli International Publications, NY, NY. 75-76
13 Ibid.
14 Haruo Shirane. Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons. Columbia University Press, 2013, 134
15 The Noh Theater website, Kanze School https://www.the-noh.com/en/plays/data/program_085.html
16 Ibid.


Left: Fig. H. Torii Kiyonaga, *Chrysanthemum Festival* (RISD Museum, 20.1122), Exhibition Catalog, No. 5. detail
Right: Fig. I. Katsukawa Shunchō, active about 1780–1801. Actor Iwai Hanshirō IV as Kikujidō. The MFA, 21.5930.[17]

Next to the dancer, there is a growing chrysanthemum bush that is inherently connected with the theme of the festival. Below the dancer there are six more children, five sitting in a circle and one - a baby - being held up. This group consists of three adolescent girls sporting female hairdos. They are being amused by the shamisen music that is being played by two girls shown on the left.

The girl immediately under the dancer elegantly plays her shamisen, a long necked string instrument the body of which is made of wood and is covered with cat or dog skin. In her right hand she is holding the plectrum bachi with which she is plucking the strings while pressing the strings on towards the top of the instrument's neck with her left hand. During the Edo period shamisen was the instrument that commoner women were encouraged to play in hopes to enter a samurai household since the samurai women were not engaged in this art form.[18]

She seems to focus on the play and perhaps is also singing since her mouth is slightly open.

As this befits an adolescent girl, she is wearing a long-sleeved furisode that swells elegantly to the ground echoing the curve of her bent knees. Her outer green-bluish kimono is decorated with the asa-no-ha pattern based on the stylized representation of a pattern similar to hemp leaves. This asa-no-ha hemp-leaf pattern became popular among women and children in the Edo period.19 It was especially popular with children and newborn babies for its meaning of healthy growth. This girl's hairdo is adorned with a kushi comb and kanzashi - a decorative hairpin here adorned with butterfly figures. The hairpins were often made of wood, tortoiseshell, ceramic, or metal but here the material is not easily identifiable.

Below the shamisen player in greenish-bluish outfit there is another girl in orange kimono who is also playing the shamisen. Sitting with her back towards the print viewers, she looks at the two children to her right. Like the shamisen player just discussed, she is wearing a fashionable hairdo of an adult woman. She is also dressed in a swinging-sleeved furisode with the long sleeves flowing smoothly down to the ground - just like the other player above her. Stitches are visible on all outfits of the children. Is it to make it easy to readjust the garments as the child grows? Further research is needed to answer this question.

Under the chrysanthemum bush there is another adolescent girl with an adult woman's hairstyle. She is holding up a baby. Is she the older sister shown with her baby sibling as they are enjoying their time together? The child is raising its hand perhaps trying to reach the flower while the older girl tries to keep the baby safe. This adolescent girl is wearing a flower pin called hana-kanzashi as a decoration which was originally a Chinese cultural item.20 Below these two characters are two young children also enjoying the festival. The child on the right wears a kimono with striped patterns called bōjima, a popular pattern at that time of the Edo period.

17 The MFA, 21.5930. https://collections.mfa.org/objects/233608
18 Reiko Tanimura. Practical Frivolities: The Study of Shamisen among Girls of the Late Edo Townsmen Source: Japan Review , 2011, No. 23 (2011), p. 79
19 "Traditional Japanese Pattern." Nippon.com, Https://Www.nippon.com/En/Japan-Data/h00478/Traditional-Japanese-Patterns.html, 17 Feb. 2020.
20 "Tsutaya Jūzaburō," Wikipedia (Wikimedia Foundation, October 16, 2021), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsutaya_J%C5%ABzabur%C5%8D.

This print by Torii Kiyonaga recreates the joyful spirit of the Chrysanthemum Festival celebration. Tradition, dance, musical duo, youthful beauty, early childhood, and nature all come together in the charming images invented by the artist to amuse his audience.

Question about the Series Edition

As is common for ukiyo-e print series, all prints in a set share formal features. It has been mentioned earlier that prints have the title of the series inscribed in a cartouche in the right top corner of the sheets. The signature of the artist and the seal of the publisher, Ezakiya Kichibei, are close to the left edge of the prints. This edition of Kiyonaga's print series, however, represents an interesting case of different publishing houses working with the same designs. The MFA collection has the same series of prints (accession numbers 11.13930 and 21.5474; Figs. J & L) but published by the preeminent publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō (1750-1797). The prints published by him are known for their detailed and extraordinary craftsmanship and vibrant colors. Tsutaya Jūzaburō started his publishing house in Edo in 177421. As a publisher, Tsutaya Jūzaburō was very selective with the designs, he represented the most prominent ukiyo-e artists at the time such as Utamaro and Sharaku.22 Not only did he work with the most talented artists at the time, as a publisher, he hired exceptionally skilled craftsmen for every stage of the printing process to achieve the highest printing quality. Comparing the two versions of the prints, we observe the clear differences in colors. Tsutaya Jūzaburō's version exhibits a much more vibrant and saturated color palette whereas Ezakiya Kichibei's version has a toned down and muted color palette due to fading over time.

Torii Kiyonaga, right to left: **Fig. I.** (a) by publisher Ezakiya Kichibei (RISD, 20.1122); **Fig. J.** (b) by publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō (MFA,11.13930) ; **Fig. K.** (c) by publisher Ezakiya Kichibei (RISD, 20.1124); **Fig. L.** (d) by publisher Tsutaya Jūzaburō (MFA, 21.5474)

The outlines in Jūzaburō's print are clearer with more defined and sharp edges. We can also see the difference in contrast of colors - Tsutaya Jūzaburō's version showcases higher contrast in comparison with Kichibei's print. Further research would be needed to determine why these designs were published twice and why two leading publishing houses were interested in having a run of these images. Did it promise to be a profitable undertaking? Maybe the pigments need to be carefully studied since the MFA imprints possess vibrancy of colors not often seen among the prints dating back to the end of the 18th century.

To conclude, the prints of the series displayed at the exhibition celebrate two of five annual Japanese festivals. By presenting these festivals as children activities Kiyonaga playfully interprets major events in adult life in the spirit of ukiyo-e. Children are endearing and charming. When depicting children as adults, social restrictions can be left aside. Additionally, representation of children is auspicious in its own right since children symbolize progeny and thus, potentially, prosperity. In both prints music and dance bring in sound and tempo to the entertaining colorful pictures and render them true celebrations.

21 "Tsutaya Jūzaburō," Wikipedia (Wikimedia Foundation, October 16, 2021), https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tsutaya_J%C5%AB abur%C5%8D.
22 Ibid

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Part II. AT THE HEART OF ENTERTAINMENT: MUSIC, COURTESANS & KABUKI ACTORS

Koitsu, active 1818-1831
Woman with a Moon Lute, mid- to late 1820s
Polychrome woodblock print with embossing and metallic pigments
Gift of George Pierce Metcalf 56.039.83

The Moon Lute Player:

Music & Poetry in a Deluxe Print

Serene Lin

A young graceful woman is sitting elegantly in an empty space. She is holding a moon lute *gekkin*, a stringed instrument with a circular body and a short neck. The *gekkin* is resting on her lap, her right hand on the top of its body, her left at the tuning keys. The pick, traditionally adorned with beads and a tassel, lies idly beside her. Why did she pause? Is she playing for herself? Or is a listener implied? Is she posing for praise? Or in preparation for a solo performance? This print is ambiguous. Three poems are placed in the upper part of the print, two to her left and one to her right, creating an engaging conversation with the visual arts and literature.

The print is small and elegant - it is a square with a side of 20.8 cm. It is considered as a *shikishiban*, a *surimono* type of paper cut in a square size.[1] Only four colors are used for the print: the black with subtle gradations, also orange, blue, and yellow. There are shiny metallic patterns and some relief printing visible only when the print is slowly observed. These refined features are characteristic of *surimono* or privately commissioned prints. The print in question is a premium example of *surimono.*[2] These features impact the perception of the two languages used for the poems as well as the usage of different scripts, accounting for a very quiet yet poetic atmosphere permeating the image. To what extent do the stylistic elements of the piece hold significance historically in the Edo period on gender divisions, cultural influences and the exploration of style within the *surimono*? Not only does this *surimono* comment on the historical context of the Edo period with gender divisions and cultural influences, it also has a lot of stylistic qualities to analyse. Through this paper, there will be a conversation between the exploration of the style and technique alongside with how literature reframes and recaptures the visual imagery into another meaning.

Firstly, studying the wearable garments and minute details of the main subject allows us to connect with identification of hierarchy, class and also historical background. From the head-

1 Presentation Kabuki Theatre & Torii Kiyomasu
2 Instructor, Elena Varshavskaya. Lecture RISD 2021

piece, to the different patterns and the minimal colour palette usage, Koitsu uses only one subject matter in this *surimono* to show the cultural trends in the mid- to late 1820s. This piece is a polychrome woodblock print known as *surimono*. *Surimono* directly translated means 'printed things.[3] There is a conversation between the print designer and viewers on how poetry and literature influence one perspective on the printed artwork thus creating a balance of a narrative and utilization of allusions.[4] *Surimono* were limited edition and privately commissioned prints used as greeting cards for celebrations like the New Years[5] or other celebratory events. Even though this is a very minimalistic print, with just some poetry and a centralised subject matter of a woman holding a gekkin supported on her lap, there are certain nuances that symbolise the grace and poise of mannerisms and the still ambience of the piece. The space where the woman is sitting is represented by the artist by leaving all surrounding areas the colour of the original paper.

The subject playing a musical instrument alludes to a ceremony that is about to take place as the *gekkin* is the only solo played in the scene. The instrument is not played, but held by the woman. Indeed, there is no movement depicted, giving the image a very tranquil and still atmosphere. In the Edo period, the meaning behind playing music and of the music itself was to articulate 'moral or social value'[6]. At that time Japan still relied on Chinese instruments within the usage of which it sought to create the Japanese identity of music. A lot of imported Chinese instruments, including the *gekkin*, were 'reworked into something properly artistic'[7]. The appearance of the instrument wasn't changed, however the music was reworked into something more "Japanese." The significance of plucked instruments have historically been connected with storytelling, singing and theatre[8] that ties it to literature.

Let's now consider the *gekkin* player in a more detailed way. Her hair is held together as a bun with a comb *kushi*, two *kanzashi* pins, one crossbar pin *kogai,* and a ribbon *yuiwata*.[9] Such ribbons were worn by young women. The woman's hairdo is an elaborate *shimada*-style chignon that includes the so-called lantern sidelocks *tōrōbin* (燈籠鬢).[10] Such sidelocks were mostly worn in the mid-Edo period, named so for their transparency11. This transparency is beautifully rendered on the print allowing one to see the shape of the woman's ear. The yellowish color of her hair adornments appears coordinated with the colour of the instrument and with the color and the hem of her inner kimono. The woman is wearing several layers of kimono, as was common at that time. Her innermost kimono is orange. Then comes a lightly-colored kimono the collar of which is decorated with the *asa no ha* or "hemp leaf" pattern. Her outer kimono is of deep black color at its upper part but lightens up toward the hem. The effect is achieved by applying a printing technique of bokashi - gradation. Her hairdo and her garments were common among the urban population, the *chōnin* - townsfolk, "persons of the block."

Although not in the current case, surimonos were also used as a form of advertisement, where masters of *kyōka* poetry (literally, "mad poetry," a type of witty verses) or also musicians would promote themselves through these polychrome prints. Over the woman's kimono scattered are flowers of *Adonis amurensis, Fukujuso* in Japanese. These flowers signify luckiness and prosperity; this flower also signifies "inviting happiness" and is used for planting at New Year's parties.[12]

The intricacies of materiality are noteworthy here. Making of surimono prints involved application of metallic dusts and usage of refined paper often customized to the needs of each specific print. Even though it is faded on this particular print, the once silver or gold dusted flower motifs that are now grey and dull due to time reinforces the details of her garment.

It is important to consider the image's historical setting. The role of upper class women in

3 Katharina Epprecht, "Reading Surimono," 1
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid.
6 Gerald Groemer. The Rise of "Japanese Music", 11
7 Ibid., 12
8 F. Du Bois, M.D. "The Gekkin Music Scale"
9 Ukiyo-E Hairstyles Panel, The Tenshin Memorial Museum of Art , Kitabaraki, Ibaraki Prefecture, Japan
10 Music in Ukiyo-e, PowerPoint presentation, Instructor, Elena Varshavskaya, Lecture RISD 2021
https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Q9ARv__m5h-RhN5r54DpoHIfpMbT5edh9dtlmHs7_VY/edit#
11 Yu, A. C. "Japanese Coiffure - Japanese Wiki Corpus."
12 Adonis amurensis flower database

the Edo period was to serve as an example for commoners. These women were 'designated as the pillars of domestic morality'.[13] There were strict rules for women of every class, and everyone was expected to align with societal standards, as well as their choice in music. Music became a vital part of life for women as many commoners utilized their musical talents for earning a living. The skill to play music was considered a necessary accomplishment. Having this essential skill allowed them to find employment in the household of status, which led to an opportunity for a "high quality spouse". After marriage, these female musicians supplemented their family income by teaching music to local students" also invited to play at parties.[14] Specifically in this print, Koitsu uses stylistic details on the young woman's garments that perhaps suggest how this woman has refined taste and is following the 'proper' music of the Edo period. These exquisite details indicate also that both the artist and his audience appreciated a very subtle form of beauty.

Koitsu uses various mediums and materials to emphasise key focal areas of the print. The *gekkin* itself is printed with a wood grain-like texture to allow the viewer to tell it apart from other pale colours involved in the print. All these details and nuances engage with the minimalistic qualities of the print. Unlike many other ukiyo prints, there are no printed background patterns or details. Despite that, the text and its composition separates the foreground and background of the print. The woman is the focal point of the composition, but the delicate lettering of the poems transforms the space around her. The text of the poems has two distinct scripts, one very defined and articulated, while the other is more artistic, cursive and organic. The soft gradation in the background of a warm gray tone is shown by the woodblock printing technique *bokashi*. The colour scheme and patterns on the garment are very simple compared to other prints at the exhibition.

The paper used in ukiyo-e print production was made from *kōzo* or paper mulberry. The paper for surimono was typically of a high-quality. It was *hōsho-gami* and the finest printing techniques were used to take advantage of these papers.[15] Here the paper grain is meticulously preserved, as there are textures of fibres that were preserved in the medium. Unlike standard ukiyo-e, the papers for surimono were frequently left untreated, which made them more absorbent. This resulted in the image of such prints to be 'softer' in appearance.[16]

As has been said above, the print contains three poems. Two of them must be *kyōka*, which, as has been said, are 'playful verses' popular in the last quarter of the eighteenth century in Japan[17]. The rightmost poem - the first one to be read since in Japan the reading progressed from right to left, is written in the *kanshi* style, which directly translates to "Chinese poetry." Presence of this *kanshi* poem reflects a heavy influence of cultural exchange during a thousand-year-long period from the early Tang dynasty to the Edo period. The peak of Japanese kanshi poems were in the Edo and Meiji periods, in association with Neo-Confucianism, its concept and the background. These ideas of social harmony based on social stratification and proper personal conduct[18] were a part of the Tokugawa official ideology at the time when ukiyo-e was becoming the leading art form in Japan and when *bijinga* - the beautiful women genre, was at its peak. These ideas were enjoyed by Japanese society at large - from the military to the commoners and were often popular among academics and intellectuals[19]. It can be inferred that this greeting card was addressed to someone from the educated circles, perhaps affluent entrepreneurs or samurai, who could understand and analyse the poetry in relation to other *kyōka* verses in context. These types of poetry had a narrative within their context that was spoken in the language of courts in Japan from the Heian period. Since then and to the Edo period, it was passed down through oral tradition, being performed and sung, a form of spoken literature. [20]

13 Gerald Gromer "The Rise of Japanese Music," 15
14 Ibid., 14-15
15 Fiorillo, Viewing Japanese Prints, Surimono, Kyoka
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Birth of Ukiyo-e and Bijinga. Lecture, Elena Varshavskaya, course instructor. RISD 2021
19 Moor, Tokyo Weekender, Art & Culture, Japanese Culture
20 Ibid.

The contents of the poem written in Chinese is a narrative telling about the woman sewing a cloth shoe, with leaf metaphors. Subsequently, a fortune teller comes along out of the gate, starts laughing hysterically. There are some onomatepia words '呼了一聲, 呼了一聲' and repetitive words that add to a specific song written the rhythm and beat it has in each syllable. The poem also mentions a character singing in falsetto thus adding to a musical variety of the image. Based on this poem, we can infer that the woman playing the *gekkin* would be the solo instrumentalist of the song. Unclear why the fortune teller is in the poem? There is hidden ambiguity present in the poet's way. Since women in the Edo period are seen to have domestic roles, having chosen this poem for the print seems to identify the role of women in Edo society.

The *kyōka* movement itself was very impactful in the early 1800s. Witty verses had a 31 syllable structure.[21] These *kyōka* poets and masters used the influence of surimonos as a way of advertising and promoting their reputation. The creation of surimonos also aided *kyōka* masters in their teaching careers, and were distributed to impress current and new students. Therefore, it led *kyōka* masters to have a steady income during this time period.[22]

In the context of the meaning carried by this surimono's formal elements, the print has conformed to the three ritualistic aspects that were important during the New Year. These ritualistic aspects are devotion and the focused care that are expressed in the materials and design; symbols of good fortune, and a feeling of nostalgia that are communicated in this surimono's colour and content. According to McKee in "Reading Surimono", "surimono conformed to the ritualistic New Year in three important respects: devotion and focused care in their materials and design; symbols of good fortune, along with a feeling of celebration or nostalgia in their content and colouring".[23] We can see this in the representation of the Adonis flower on the layered kimono, and also the use of metallic powders on the outfit itself. This greeting card is really significant and represents New Year's Day, also known as the "transformative power in light of the season."[24] (36, McKee) Subsequently, a renewal of time and metamorphosis, that is completely contrasted in the visual imagery of the stillness on the main subject. Careful placement of the text and the visual imagery impacts the structure and meaning behind this privately commissioned piece. As surimonos were not made to be commercially mass produced, this established high quality materials used on the artisans of the time periods.

Looking further into the artist Koitsu Sonsai (fl. 1818-1831), his works were in the style of Katsushika Hokusai's surimonos on coloured paper and illustrated books of *kyōka*. This style was rather minimalistic and mimicked outlines and lineworks specifically. Although it is said that his style was influenced by Hokusai, it is unclear if this was further acknowledged.[25] In conversation about this particular style and colour palette, the RISD Museum holds another print that shares some features with the surimono of the woman with a moon lute considered here. This other print, designed by Asa no Katsumi (Figure A), pictures an Osaka poet Tsurunoya Osamaru (ca. 1751–ca. 1839) as a papier mache doll of a *gidayu* chanter. The key similarities are the blue, red and black colours as well as the position the figure is placed in the print. The kyōka poems included also resemble a calligraphy style as in the print by Koitsu. However, there is no reference to the *kanshi* style poetry in that other work. It turned out that these both surimono prints belong to the same poetry circle. Poetry groups often had a symbol that meaningfully identified the group, and such a symbol can be seen in both prints. The nested-crane that is repeated on the woman's *obi* sash is an emblem of a poetry group Tsuru-gawa led by the very poet Tsurunoya Osamaru portrayed on the discussed above surimono that shows him as a papier mache doll [Fig. A].[26] This

21 Fiorillo, Viewing Japanese Prints, Kyoka Craze: https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/kyoka.html
22 Kobayashi Fumiko, *Surimono to Publicize Poetic Authority* in "Reading surimono: the interplay of text and image in Japanese prints," edited by John T. Carpenter. Zürich. Leiden, Boston, 2008. Pp. 46-47
23 McKee, in "Reading Surimono," 36
24 Ibid.
25 存斎光一 存斎光一の概要." 辞典・百科事典の検索サービス - Weblio辞書
26 RISD Museum, Surimono from Osaka and Edo: The Pumpelly Album, 2008. https://risdmuseum.org/exhibitions-events/exhibitions/surimono-osaka-and-edo

poetry group's emblem of a nested crane can be seen on the man's garment. The bird has a clear outline of the same motif. The specific culture of poetry groups is apparent in the commission of surimono prints. These two prints are a prime example of poets commissioning surimono, and having a language of exchange with other members within their circle.[27] It is noteworthy that the musical theme is present in the two prints, where one is chanting while the woman is preparing to play the *gekkin*.

Fig. A. Asaka no Katsumi, *Portrait of Tsurunoya Osamaru (ca. 1751–ca. 1839) as a Papier-mache Doll of a Gidayu Chanter*, 1820s. RISD Museum. 56.039.73.[28]

This enchanting and enigmatic woodblock print offers insights into the rich historical background of the surimono as a specific type of ukiyo-e prints. This surimono also offers evidence of the importance of Chinese cultural exchange for the development of Japanese music. It also presents music as an inseparable part of life for regular townspeople - whether as a career choice or entertainment. In the urban culture of Edo period Japan instrumental music and music that accompanied recitations were equally valued — together with the witty kyōka poetry and the exquisitely elegant images on the surimono prints.

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27 Bull, Surimono History, What is a Surimono?

28 The RISD Museum, https://risdmuseum.org/art-design/collection/portrait-tsurunoya-papier-mache-doll-gidayu-chanter-5603973?return=%2Fexhibitions-events%2Fexhibitions%2Fsurimono-osaka-and-edo

Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Good-natured (Otonashiki),
from the series *Money Trees for Virtuous Women* (Fukutoku kane no naru ki), 1847-1852
Polychrome woodblock print. RISD. Gift of Mr. Curtis B. Brooks 48.349

Virtuous Women, Music, & the Stroke of Luck

Naiqian Chen, Jackson Kneath

In a moment of stillness a magnificently and elegantly dressed woman rises out from the calm atmosphere. She is in preparation to play the koto - a Japanese thirteen-string zither. The woman is either a high-ranking courtesan or a geisha well trained in the arts. There is a central theme that repeats itself throughout this composition: a message of hopes for happiness and prosperity.

Behind the woman in the upper right part of the print branches of a tree emerge from the atmosphere. The foliage consists of elongated yellow and round blue leaves or flowers. The branches intertwine in a rather natural way. Adjacent to the branches on the right is a rectangular frame that bears an inscription. This is the title of the series to which this print belongs. It states "*Fukutoku kane no naru ki*"[1] which translates to "*Money trees for Virtuous Women*." The title explains the shape of the leaves that resemble coins. The oval yellow leaves are in fact golden coins *koban*. Value of a *koban* was one *ryo*, equivalent to 1 koku of rice, the amount needed to feed one person for a year. The round shapes of leaves or flowers have a square opening in the middle - they represent bronze coins *mon*.[2] This explains the bluish color of the round pieces, which renders the patina on the bronze. The clustered coins shown as leaves on branches are a typical depiction of the money tree.[3] It is the yellowish and the bluish colors of the foliage that flow through the entire print and each of its elements. On a closer inspection, the branches turn out to be the hiragana signs combined with one *kanji* (Chinese character) of the Japanese writing system. The branches are composed of the signs for the word "*otonashi-ki*" meaning "a tree" for the "obedient, quiet, good-tempered." The hiragana signs are written right to left - をとなし木 [**Fig. A**].[4] Needless to say, money trees are a symbol of good luck.

1 *Prints of Japan. Kakure-Mino thru Kappazuri*, https://www.printsofjapan.com/Index_Glossary_Kakuremino_thru_Kappazuri.htm
2 Tokugawa coinage. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokugawa_coinage
3 Prints of Japan. *Kakure-Mino thru Kappazuri*, https://www.printsofjapan.com/Index_Glossary_Kakuremino_thru_Kappazuri.htm
4 Elena Varshavskaya, course instructor. Support PowerPoint presentation https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1roRhy8VAzyXZNSJM-w7ehK--1jyiDc-WzaKiYSzyOPtc/edit?usp=sharing

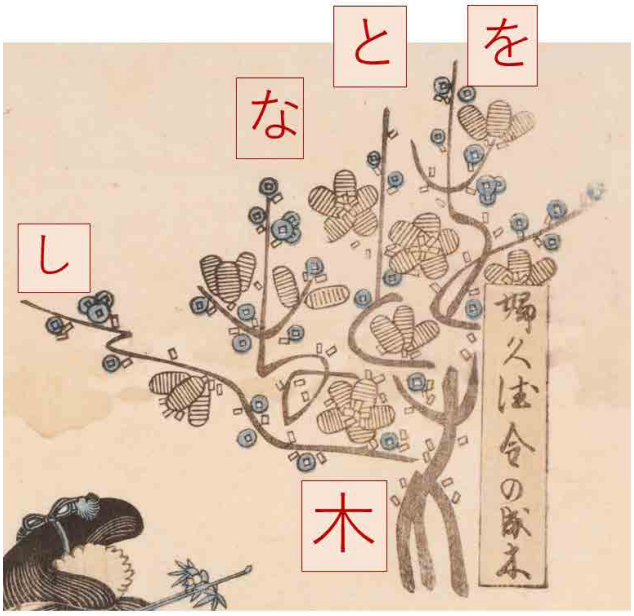

Fig. A. Transcribing of the hiragana signs for the branches and the *kanji* for the tree trunk.

The message here is that a tree like this one would grow for an "obedient, quiet, good-tempered" virtuous woman of the series title. Various prints of the series refer to different virtues that potentially would be rewarded with the gift of the money tree. Returning to the title of the series considered above, although the phrase *kane no naru ki* refers literally to trees, it came to mean a "generous patron" or an "inexhaustible source of funds." *Fukutoku* of the title, which means "good fortune" or "happiness and prosperity," is written here with the characters meaning "wife," "a long time," and "virtue."[5]

All of this is suspended in the atmosphere surrounded by still clouds. In between the woman and the trees are characters printed against a fading sky. The atmosphere appears warm. There is a focus on the present moment, the woman is about to play the koto.

The composition moves vertically from right to left (which is similar to reading the Japanese characters: right to left, top to bottom).

The Koto Player

The young pensive woman shows elegance through her appearance, posture, and line weights. The woman is wearing a *shimada-mage*, specifically a *taka shimada*, a type of traditional decorative Japanese hairstyle popular in the Edo period. Women in the Edo period could not freely choose their hairstyles, but hairstyles can represent different meanings, such as social status, age, and profession.[6] The major feature of *taka-shimada* is that the chignon *mage* is higher, fuller, and more rounded.[7] It is noticeable that although originally the *taka-shimada* hairstyle was worn by young women in the samurai families, here it indicates a lower social status since, as said above, the portrayed woman is a professional entertainer, a courtesan or a geisha. This perhaps reflects the social appreciation of women that have versatile skills in art, as professional entertainers in Edo could have a relatively good general education.[8] They represent the trend and the modern symbol of that

5 Yonemura, Ann et al. *Masterful Illusions*. Smithsonian Institution, 2002, # 15 (p. 284-285); also #281

6 "Beauty Secrets - Edo Era Makeup and Hairstyles in Japanese Prints," Beauty Secrets - Edo Era Makeup and Hairstyles in Japanese Prints, August 27, 2020, https://amis-musee-cernuschi.org/en/secrets-de-beaute-maquillage-et-coiffures-de-lepoque-edo-dans-les-estampes-japonaises/.

7 Missmyloko, "A Random PSA on the Differences between Geiko Shimada and Taka Shimada," Mylokoville, January 13, 2017, https://missmyloko.tumblr.com/post/155791386153/a-random-psa-on-the-differences-between-geiko.

8 Cecilia Segawa Seigle, Yoshiwara: The Glittering World of the Japanese Courtesan (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993).

period of time to blur the social borders between the classes.

Furisode - The Player's Luxurious Long-Sleeved Kimono

The woman is dressed elaborately. She is wearing layers of patterned kimono. Her sumptuously decorated *obi* sash is tied at her back in an impressive bow. Her outer kimono is a *furisode*, the term that means "swinging sleeves" and refers to a garment with sleeves reaching to the ankles of the wearer. *Furisode* were worn only by the young unmarried women. Here one must look very closely to follow the length of the sleeves because the pattern on the lower part of the sleeves merges with the pattern on the hem of the woman's kimono. The pattern consists of flowing intertwining floral and linear elements. It is also possible to notice that in the elbow areas and to the sides of the kimono's collar there are stylized plum flowers. They serve as her crests that traditionally were put in these very places with the fifth one put under the collar at the back. The woman's ample *obi* sash is also splendidly patterned with large floral motifs.

Seasonal references in the patterns of the woman's kimono and her decorative hair pins, *kanzashi*, are consistent. The floral motifs decorating *kanzashi* are likely chrysanthemums and bamboo leaves, which represent January flowers.[9] Some patterns on the kimono have ume flowers, which also blossom in winter.

The abundant flowing fabric of the woman's garment foams creating curvilinear wave-like forms around her at the floor, almost filling the diagonal stretch of the print.

The Koto, the Music, & the Nature

A woman is sitting in a three-quarter turn preparing to play a koto. Musicians play koto while sitting on the right-hand side of the instrument. She seems to be attaching picks or plectrums on her thumb, middle and index fingers. Called *tsume* (nails), these picks sit like thimbles and are used to pluck the strings of the koto. In front of the woman, the koto, longer than the foaming hem of her garment, goes directly off the limits of the sheet on the right. The koto's length is an estimated seventy one inches which is nearly six feet (180cm). The koto is a horizontal zither made of paulownia wood, most commonly with thirteen strings. The strings are stretched over movable bridges which can be adjusted in advance to prepare certain musical tones.[10] Here the koto bridges are already all in place as the woman prepares to start performing. The koto is played by plucking the strings with the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand, which are fitted with the above-mentioned *tsume* plectrums. The left hand may alter the pitch or sound of each string by pressing or manipulating the strings to the left of the bridges.[11] There are designs painted on the side of the koto. The birds are flying over the crushing waves. The designs are minimal yet dynamic and reflect the energy of music. There is a string and tassel at the base of the string board. The tassel is made of hair and flows delicately beside the koto. All decorative elements appear in the state of flux.

The designs painted on the koto flow into the cascading fabric of the long kimono the woman is wearing. Although the patterns appear to be abstract, they seem to reference both the trees behind the woman as well as the seascape decorating the koto and evoking a larger world of nature.

We can speculate that the woman symbolizes a middle ground between these two forces of nature. The branches appear untamed, artificial as they are, unlike the koto which is the

9 "What Are Traditional Japanese Hair Accessories?," Silvermerc Designs, April 10, 2021, https://silvermerc.com/what-are-traditional-japanese-hair-accessories/.
10 Magda Kyrova, in Haags Gemeentemuseum, *The Ear Catches the Eye: Music in Japanese Prints*. (Leiden, the Netherlands: Hotei Pub, 2000), 17.
11 Encyclopedia Britannica, koto https://www.britannica.com/art/koto

most structural element of the print. Developing the idea of the musician as a middle ground, let's look at the print beginning at its bottom part. The structural koto is adjacent to the woman with her kimono flowing yet still contained. Then the "untamed" trees are spelling out words above her. The musician is a translator of nature and its chaotic tendencies. Each of these elements reflect one another, through their color and their vegetal ornamentation. It is worthwhile to reiterate that the color scheme of the print is remarkably consistent as if all elements of the composition are contributing to the elaboration of a melody. There is a strong emphasis on their connections and their similarities. There is a notion of the musician being at one with naturature as she plays her koto. She is translating nature's message like the poem spelled out in the freehand cursive writing in the left upper part of the print through her instrument into song.

The poem to the left can be rendered as "Happiness is ready in the home -- at the willows -- for a courtesan."[12] The allusion to the willow tree is a reference to the willow-lined streets of Yoshiwara, the licensed red-light district. The poem likely implies the hopes of this young beautiful and skillful koto player to escape the hardships of her service exactly thanks to her gift as a musician that complement her good looks and quiet personality. Her thoughts are perhaps of a chance to charm a wealthy client and become a part of a wealthy household. The print warns, however, that this lucky turn of events will occur only for a quiet and obedient woman. Only for such a proper, good-tempered woman a money tree will grow, as the print title announces.

Fine Printing Techniques & the Print's Appeal to the Senses

Every effort was made to make this print beautiful and enticing. The techniques used here show great care and gentleness. Hiroshige chose to apply fabric printing, mica glue printing, blind printing, and gradient *bokashi* to create subtle color variations and textures. In this way the artist made subtle poetic references to nature, thus adding to the lyrical ambience of the image as a whole. *Karazuri*, also known as gauffrage, is a technique for pressing hard surfaces into paper without applying ink.[13] Thin, fine lines from the wood texture give a volume definition of the clouds. The cloud's edges are sharp when closer to the character, and fade away on the top of the sheet. The other technique, *bokashi*, shows gradients in color. This print shows a gradient of shading that is slightly darker than the color of the paper, which helps the clouds fade in the background more subtly. Thus the print is not purely a 2D print anymore, but a print that has dimensions and depth rendered with great elegance.

Utagawa Hiroshige & the Print's Formal Elements

This print was designed by Utagawa Hiroshige who was one of the last greatest ukiyo-e artists of the golden era of this artform. Utagawa Hiroshige is well known for his very atmospheric depictions of nature, stylish portrayals of beautiful women, and urban life of the Edo period. His ukiyo-e prints influenced many French impressionists.

There are three seals from the left-hand side of the print. The writing beside two round seal marks represent the artist's signature on the print, *Hiroshige ga* (廣重画), while the round marks are seals by the individual censors. From 1847 to 1853, censors of ukiyo-e prints worked usually in pairs.[14] Here the print bears seals of censors Mera and Murata. The bottom left corner has a publisher's seal, Aritaya Seiemon, who was active during the mid-19th century towards the end

12 Transcription of the poem provided by the Bank of Japan Currency Museum, Tokyo, Japan. Private communication. It reads:目出たさの // 家内そろふて// 柳かな //有女. Received from course instructor, Elena Varshavskaya, together with rendering of content. Same print is in the collection of the Currency Museum at: https://www.imes.boj.or.jp/cm/research/nishikie/001004/006/901241_2/html/

13 "E Gallery Article Deluxe Printing Techniques--Gauffrage." Ukiyo. Accessed October 21, 2021. http://www.ukiyoe-gallery.com/gauffrage.htm.

14 Jan van Doesburg, "Ukiyo-e to Horimono," Issuu, accessed October 21, 2021, https://issuu.com/horimono/docs/ukiyo-e-to-horimono/50.

of the Edo period. The publisher also printed designs by other famous artists, such as Hokusai and Kuniyoshi.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this print places emphasis on the most refined artistry in every aspect of its form and content. There is a unity that integrates all elements of the print. One can claim that music relationships are established between the details in the gorgeous appearance of the young musician, the included poetry lines, and multiple references to nature, direct and indirect. The woman prepares to play in a hope for happiness and good fortune in the future.

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Utagawa Toyokuni II (Toyoshige), 1777-1835
Popular Comic: Bat Nikki (Ryukō kyōga nikki)
from the series *Contemporary Figures* (Imayō sugata), 1830's
Polychrome woodblock print. Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1408

Contemporary Chic:

Music, Theater, Partying, & Fashion, print by Utagawa Toyokuni II

Yuanyuan (Yuki) Cao, Rilia Li, and Xiaoqi Shen

A stylishly dressed and coiffured young woman sits on the ground, looking down and preparing to begin playing the shamisen. The beauty is adjusting the bridge to the upper part of the shamisen body, holding the bridge with both hands. The instrument's bottom part is placed on her lap with the instrument's neck pressed tightly against her left shoulder. An ivory plectrum *bachi* and a sake-cup rinsing vessel are on the ground next to her. On the top left, the gourd-shaped cartouche contains the series title, *Contemporary Figures (Imayō Sugata)*. On the top right, there is an inset shaped like a folding fan *ōgi*. In it, depicted are two anthropomorphic bats. Across the fan runs a small rectangular cartouche with the title of this particular print, *Popular Comic: Bat* (silhouetted, not written) *Nikki* (see Figure 1).

Utagawa Toyoshige is known as Utagawa Toyokuni II. Once head of the Utagawa School after the death of his teacher, Toyokuni I, he created an intriguing scene vibrant with details.[1] Let us now examine those details to understand what makes this image a picture of a "contemporary figure" as claimed by the series title?

A young woman, the print is dedicated to, is lavishly and thoughtfully groomed. Every element of her appearance appears deliberate. The woman wears a stylish hairdo *taka-shimada* or "a tall shimada" with a heavy knot of hair folded backward. *Taka-shimada* was a later version of the *shimada-mage* or the *shimada* chignon.[2] The shimada hairstyle was a popular fashion trend that was spread throughout the Edo period. It featured an upswept style with buns at the back. Eventually, wide semi-transparent sidelocks were added to this hairstyle. Thanks to the sidelocks' see-through quality, this type of hairdo was called "the lantern shimada" or the *tōrōbin shimada*.[3]

1 "Brooklyn Museum," www.brooklynmuseum.org, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/665.
2 "What Is It, Shimada (Hairstyle). Encyclopedia," en.google-info.in, accessed November 5, 2021, https://en.google-info.in/3785048/1/shimada-hairstyle.html.
3 Ibid.

Fig. A. An artificial hairpiece supporter *tobosashi* 髷差

A particularly full topknot characterizes *taka-shimada*. The *tabosashi,* an artificial hairpiece, was added beneath the *tabo* (髷, chignon) as the bun supporter to make the hairstyle appear fuller [**Fig. A**].[4] Besides the aesthetic influences, the *tabosashi* could also be used to keep the hair away from touching the kimono collar. It is not entirely clear if *tabosashi* is used in the current case.

The woman's hairdo is held together by a set of traditional accessories. Here belong a comb kushi, a hairpin with a rounded top, tama-kanzashi, two hairpins adorned with flowers, hana-kanzashi, and a bar-shaped hairpin kōgai worn at the base of the hairdo [Fig. B].[5]

Fig. B. Utagawa Toyokuni II. *Popular Comic: Bat Nikki*
Exhibition Catalog, No. 8. Detail.
Hairstyle decorated with a set of hair accessories,
including *kushi*, *tama-kanzashi*, *hana-kanzashi*, *kōgai*

The woman here also has an additional thin hairpin placed at the back of her hairdo. This delicate hairpin is playfully adorned with a snail. Unlike the woman's other hair accessories that seem to be made of tortoiseshell often used for this purpose, the thin one is bluish and appears to be made of metal, also a widespread material for hair ornaments. This hairpin doesn't seem to be very practical but instead functions as a mere decoration - an individual touch, a display of her taste.

The layered outfit of the woman is equally elaborate and most carefully devised. The varied collars of her garments indicate she is wearing several, one on top of another. During the Edo period, the

4 Weltmuseum Wien, "Weltmuseum Wien: Artificial Hairpieces," www.weltmuseumwien.at, October 30, 2017, https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/object/455008/?offset=7&lv=list.
5 Weltmuseum Wien, "Weltmuseum Wien: Artificial Hairpieces," www.weltmuseumwien.at, October 30, 2017, https://www.weltmuseumwien.at/en/object/455008/?offset=7&lv=list.

traditional Japanese attire had evolved from the straight cut style in the Heian period to the predecessor of kimono, *kosode*, characterized by the "unisex outer garment."[6] Influenced by its national policies of restricting foreign contact, the cut of the kosode remained relatively stable until the transformation to modern Japan in the Meiji period.[7] The kosode is suitable for all social classes and genders, thus becoming a unified traditional cultural symbol. In the Edo period, the kosodes were marked by the same proportions for the main-body panels and the sleeve panels; the edges were typically rounded, the armholes small.[8] These features of the kosode are recognizable in the woman's clothing.

Her innermost *kosode* seems to be made of monochromatic reddish-orange fabric - we can infer this by comparing the narrow reddish strip of the woman's inside collar with the reddish patch of material visible where the hems of her outer garment part as she kneels. This reddish-orange inner garment seems to have an ornate blue neckline adorned with gold-like, thin-outlined floral motifs. In the imprint that belongs to the RISD collection, the color of her outer robe is a light deluded terracotta orange and is trimmed with purple along the hem.

Fig. C. Utagawa Toyokuni II. *Popular Comic: Bat Nikki*
Exhibition Catalog, No. 8. Detail.
Pattern known as Korin-style chrysanthemums (光琳菊).

The upper part of the outer orange garment is adorned with circular patterns. The placement of these circular patterns on the shoulders and around the elbow suggests that they are family crests five of which were traditionally placed on a garment - one at the back, two at the front of the sleeves, and two at the sleeves' back. On the woman's outer light orange garment towards its hem depicted is a "chrysanthemums in a steam" motif (菊に流水模様 – *kiku ni ryusui moyo*) [**Fig. C**].[9] Blue circles with protruding elements stand for the chrysanthemums with leaves; the white concentric curvilinear line suggests the stream. The *obi*, the wide fabric belt tied in most cases at the back, is of purple fabric patterned with goldish brown trailing "swallows in rain" motif (つばめ雨文様 – *tsubame ame*) [**Fig. D**].

Fig. D. Utagawa Toyokuni II.
Popular Comic: Bat Nikki
Exhibition Catalog, No. 8. Detail.
"Swallows in rain" motif.

Given the ornate appearance of the woman and her elaborate clothing, you may wonder who the woman is. Referring to the scene in other prints among the series, this print probably takes place in Yoshiwara, a government-licensed red-light district.[10] In the Edo period, the emergence of entertainment zones with "kabuki theaters, tea houses, and brothels" was one of the most prominent developments in Japan's new urban culture.[11] By looking at the activity that happens

6 CynthiaGreen, "The Surprising History of the Kimono," JSTOR Daily, December 8, 2017, https://daily.jstor.org/the-surprising-history-of-the-kimono.
7 Ibid.
8 Susan Anderson Hay, ed., *Pattern and Poetry: No Robes from the Lucy Truman Aldrich Collection at the Museum of Art* (Rhode Island, 1992).
9 "菊に流水模様 - フォトライブラリー," www.photolibrary.jp, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.photolibrary.jp/img274/114816_2267383.html.
10 "Utagawa Toyoshige:「今様姿」「流行狂画★(こうもりの絵)」「さやあて」- Tokyo Metro Library," Ukiyo-e Search, accessed November 5, 2021, https://ukiyo-e.org/image/metro/0793-C056.
11 "Brooklyn Museum," www.brooklynmuseum.org, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/665.

in this specific print, the woman may be a *geisha* —a female performance artist or entertainer adjusting the shamisen on the ground with a sake cup on the side. She is likely to be in a private room of a tea house or a *machiai*[12] (遊里付待合 a waiting room in a kabuki theater), preparing her performance to the drinking guests.

Objects included in the composition give us a hint of what this woman is, where she is, and what will happen. The woman is holding a shamisen (See Figure 6). The shamisen[13] (三味線) is a Japanese instrument composed of three strings, a round body (do-胴), a long narrow neck (*sao*-棹) and a head[14](*tenjin*天神). It is derived from the traditional Chinese instrument *sanxian*. In front of the woman's knee, is the shamisen plectrum—*bachi* (撥). The *bachi* or the plectrum is the device to pluck the strings to create a highly percussive sound.

Fig. E. Beauty holding a shamisen

By identifying the shape, the color of the *bachi* as small and ivory-made in print in front of the player, the shamisen that the beauty plays is probably from the type of *Nagauta*. In addition, based on the speculation of the women, the size of the shamisen might be *hosozao* (細棹), which is often used for *Nagauta* shamisen to play geisha music. So the shamisen can be classified as *Hosazao Nagauta* Shamisen. In the print, the shamisen has a black cover (*do kake*) strapped to the side of the body to protect the beautiful cherry wood from the perspiration of the shamisen player's right forearm.

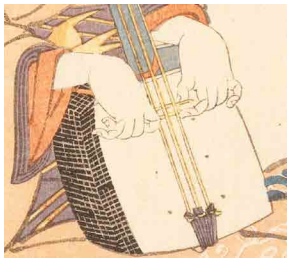

Fig. F. Adjusting the bridge *koma* to the shamisen

Meanwhile, the beauty is holding a *koma* (駒)[15], a shamisen main fret, to change the sound by putting the *koma* in a different position [**Fig. F**]. Looking at the wide *koma* the woman is holding in the print, the shamisen would have a gentle tone. The bottom of the shamisen is a

12 "Utagawa Toyoshige:「今様姿」「流行狂画★(こうもりの絵)」「さやあて」- Tokyo Metro Library," Ukiyo-e Search, accessed November 5, 2021, https://ukiyo-e.org/image/metro/0793-C056.
13 "Shamisen - Wikipedia," en.m.wikipedia.org, n.d., https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shamisen.
14 "Shamisen Body – Shamisen Japan," accessed November 5, 2021, https://shamisenjapan.com/shamisen-body/.
15 "*Koma* – Shamisen Japan," accessed November 5, 2021, https://shamisenjapan.com/koma/.

large knot (*ne-o*) where all the strings are threaded and twined together. The sound of shamisen will get lower if the *koma* are positioned close to the *ne-o*. The sound would get higher when *koma* is placed close to the middle of the shamisen body. In the print, there are three sets of holes in different positions on the shamisen body. The woman is busy adjusting the bridge of the instrument at the highest of the three possible positions. The fact that the woman is tuning her shamisen testifies her expertise as a musician or a professional shamisen player. She knows how to play shamisen and adjust *koma* positions for certain types of music that she is inclined to perform.

The other object placed right in front of her - the sake rinsing vessel with four sake cups altogether suggests that she will be joined by a party of two or three participants [**Fig. G**]. Such basins for rinsing sake cups are called *haisen* (杯洗)[16].

Fig. G. *Haisen* - basin to rinse sake cups, and sake cups - in front of the beauty

During the Edo period, it was common for the participants of a drinking party to drink sake from the same cup to increase the unity of the gathering, mutual understanding, and closeness of all the members. People felt that such shared experiences helped one to understand what another feels. The exchange of sake cups was called *kenshū* (献酬). At the exhibition, there is another instance when a vessel for rinsing sake cups is depicted to be used during a party. Typically, the *haisen* would be replaced by large basins or bowls for common people. The refined, patterned *haisen* is only used in high-class restaurants. And the porcelain or lacquer *haisen* is aimed to look better at banquets featuring sake. In this print, the bat-patterned porcelain *haisen* suggests participants or the place is open to high-class. The shape of this *haisen* is also more unusual and delicate than normal *haisen*. The *heisen* vessel depicted here has a unique ladle-like shape with a short and broad handle rising perpendicularly from the ladle's basin and bending outwards. The ladle's basin is filled with water in which traditionally three sake cups are floating. There is another sake cup of a different kind at the flat portion of the vessel's handle. The red sake cup is called *sakazuki*[17](盃), the traditional sake cup style with a wide mouth. People would first pour sake to the other person and accept it from others by holding the *sakazuki* one hand on the bottom and the other on the side. This symbolic ceremonial consumption is similar to *kenshū*, which allows people to express hospitality and friendliness. In general, the unique *haisen* and *sakazuki* in the print testify that the scene would provide for people of taste. Relating to the artist's background, it is not surprising that Utagawa Toyoshige, perhaps running a pottery business,[18] might have more access to unique porcelain *haisen* vessels.

There are bat patterns on the sake set. Bats bring in the theme of auspiciousness. Chinese is a tonal language with many characters having the same sounds but written with different characters. The Chinese word for bat is "fu," pronounced the same as the word for happiness "fu."

16 "Sharing a Cup Together Haisen (Sake Cup Basin) | GEKKEIKAN KYOTO since 1637," www.gekkeikan.co.jp, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.gekkeikan.co.jp/english/history/culture/haisen.html.

17 "Sakazuki Sake Cups," SAKE.treat | Premium Made in Japan Sake Sets, Sake Cups, Tea Sets and Wagyu Beef, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.saketreat.com/collections/sakazuki.

18 The British Museum, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/term/BIOG6956

Hence the bat was portrayed in China as a substitute for the concept of happiness. Therefore, Chinese artists have used five bats to represent the five blessings: health, long life, prosperity, love of virtue, and tranquil, natural death. In art, the bats often are bright red, which is the color of joy. Sometimes bats are encircled in stylized calligraphy known as the prosperity symbol and would be embroidered on expensive clothing to imply that a person's prosperity came from a virtuous lifestyle.[19] In Asian cultures, bats continue to evoke strong, positive emotions. The Japanese borrowed Chinese characters for their *kanji* and applied them to their own words for "happiness" and "bat." The stylish people and eventually the general population would have known that the image of a bat on items, such as clothing, accessories, utilitarian objects, was an auspicious symbol.

The bats also connect us with another topic present in the print - the inset [**Fig. H**].

Fig. H. Inset in the shape of a folding fan *ōgi* with anthropomorphic bat figures.

Bats there are amusing and entertaining - they are anthropomorphic. Japan has a long history of showing animals as the main characters involved in human activities. In the *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals* [**Fig. I**] created in the 11th-12th centuries and considered the earliest example of manga in Japanese history, human-like animals are delineated in a lively manner with ink.[20]

Fig. I. *Scrolls of Frolicking Animals and Human*s (Chōjū jinbutsu giga), scroll 1.Attributed to Toba Sōjō (1053-1140). Kōzan-ji temple, Kyoto.

For the contemporaries, however, it was immediately apparent that those were not just auspicious creatures. It was clear that these bats were not just made human-like; contemporaries understood that those bats represented concrete characters that everyone knew from the kabuki theater performance and ukiyo-e prints of *yakusha-e* genre. Therefore, the fan-shaped inset on the top right that bears an inscription that reads "Popular Comic, Bat-Nikki" (流行狂画 //bat's silhouette 仁木) illustrated scenes from a famous kabuki performance, but acted out by bats. The inset illustrates the evil magician Nikki Danjo and his antagonist, loyal retainer Arajishi, in bat form. This story refers to the scene from a kabuki play *Date kurabe Okuni Kabuki.* It is interesting to compare the performing bats to the representation of a scene from a kabuki performance of this play [**Fig. J**]. In both images, the rightmost figures (a bat in blue and a human in grey) are standing in a similar posture and both are holding a scroll in their mouths. Similarly, the leftmost figures (a bat in green and an actor in brown) are shown with identical props, attacking the opponents with a folded metal fan in the right "hand" and a sword in the left. The sameness of the scene is obvious.

19 "Bats in Chinese Art," Bat Conservation International, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.batcon.org/article/bats-in-chinese-art/.
20 "Studio Ghibli Adapts the World's Oldest Manga into Short Animation for Conservation Project," SoraNews24 -Japan News-, March 15, 2016, https://soranews24.com/2016/03/16/studio-ghibli-adapts-the-worlds-oldest-manga-into-short-animation-for-conservation-project/.


Left: Inset in the shape of folding fan *ogi* with anthropomorphic bat figures
Right: Fig. J. Utagawa Kunisada. *Kabuki actor Ishikawa Danjūrō VII performed both roles - of evil Nikki Danjo and of loyal Arajishi Otokonosuke.* 1829. Arthur Tress Collection of Japanese Illustrated Books. Box 10, Item 5.[21]

In Act IV, performed in *aragoto* style, Arajishi Otokonosuke - a faithful retainer of Yorikane and Tsutukiyo, has been kept away from the little lord by the machinations of Tashio Gozen and the conspirators. Although he is not allowed to see the child, Arajishi Otokonosuke tries his best to guard the boy by taking up a post below the floor of the boy's room as an alert. Followingly, Arajishi is waiting there when he sees a giant rat come down through the floor carrying a roll of paper in its mouth. Arajishi puts his foot on the rat and tries to kill it with his iron fan. He wounds the rat on the head, but it wriggles away. The rat vanishes in a cloud of white smoke and transforms into evil Nikki Danjo, who has occult powers, clad in grey garments and with the document between his teeth. Hence, in the print, the bat-formed Nikki, in a standing posture and dressed in blue, is depicted as carrying a sword with the document in his mouth.[22] Meanwhile, the bat-formed Arajishi, in a flying pose and dressed in green, is carrying swords and trying to hit Nikki with his iron fan.

The inscription on the right next to the figure is the artist's signature: Gosotei Toyokuni ga. As mentioned before, Utagawa Toyokuni II adopted the name of his teacher Toyokuni I, the head of the Utagawa school, after the latter's death. To see the differences in their signatures, one could observe Toyoshige's characteristic more cursive scripted *toyo* (豊). Utagawa Toyokuni II also has other names, such as Genzō (artistic nickname - 源蔵) and Gosotei or Kōsotei (*gō* 後素亭). Ukiyo-e artists usually had many artistic names that they added to their last name or the name of the lineage to which they belonged. Artists might change their names due to changes in artistic style or momentous events in their life. The given print is signed "Gosotei Toyokuni."[23] According to his biography, the artist used this name in the years 1829 - 1835.

Another significant detail is the red circular seal under the artist's signature, the so-called *toshidama*, literally a "year jewel" (年玉) [**Fig. K**]. It is a symbol of a New Year gift, and its shape is derived from the cursive form of the character for "year" - toshi.[24] This form became a seal of the Utagawa School of ukiyo-e artists.


Left: Fig. K. *Toshidama* seal of the Utagawa School - here placed under the artist's signature
Right: Fig. L. *Toshidama*-framed cartouche with series title *Contemporary Figures* (Imayō sugata 今様姿)

21 Kislak Center, University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Arthur Tress Collection of Japanese Illustrated Books. Box 10, Item 5: https://franklin.library.upenn.edu/catalog/FRANKLIN_9977502567803681
https://web.sas.upenn.edu/tressjapanese/2020/07/14/utagawa-kunisada-%E6%AD%8C%E5%B7%9D%E5%9B%BD%E8%B2%9E-ichikawa-sansho-kyoka/
22 "伽羅先代萩（the Precious Incense and Autumn Flowers of Sendai）| 歌舞伎演目案内 – Kabuki Play Guide –," enmokudb.kabuki.ne.jp, accessed November 5, 2021, http://enmokudb.kabuki.ne.jp/repertoire_en/meiboku-sendai-hagi-the-precious-incense-and-autumn-flowers-of-sendai
23 "Lyon Collection : Artist : Utagawa Toyokuni II (二代目歌川豊国) [Utagawa Toyokuni II]," www.woodblockprints.org, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.woodblockprints.org/index.php/Detail/entities/36.
24 "Otoshidama 御年玉 New Year's Gift," Vegder's Blog, June 2, 2009, https://printsofjapan.wordpress.com/2009/06/02/otoshidama/.

Moreover, there at the top left of the print there is green gourd-shaped cartouche with yellow *toshidama*-frame in which the series title *Contemporary Figures* (*Imayo Sugata* 今漾姿) is written in white. This cartouche indicates the series that the print belongs to [**Fig. L**]. In Japan, the gourd is associated with various divinities and is found in many regional folk tales stemming from Taoist beliefs. The curvy shape was usually perceived as a symbol of prosperity, good health, and good fortune.[25]

Fig. M. Utagawa Toyokuni II (Toyoshige). Actor Ichikawa Danjūrō. Ca. 1830. MFA.[26]
The actor is wearing his signature kimono decorated with bats and gourds[27] that are both depicted on the print discussed in this paper.

Interestingly, the bat and the gourd - two most important auspicious symbols in this print - are known to coexist on a famous kimono of a celebrity kabuki theater actor, Ichikawa Danjūrō VII [**Fig. M**]. Ichikawa Danjūrō VII is the very actor who played the role of both Arajishi Otokonosuke, the faithful retainer, as well as the role of evil Nikki Danjo [**Fig. J**] in the play used as a comparison to the bats on the fan-shaped inset. Perhaps the artist purposefully brought together the bat and gourd in one print to pay homage to the famous actor without depicting him directly. Hints of this kind were highly appreciated in ukiyo-e.

Close observation of every carefully detailed element of this ukiyo-e print proves the immense complexity of this artform and reflects the continuation of the long tradition of Japanese culture. The piece exhibits Toyoshige's artistic sophistication in connecting the shamisen, the bats, the gourd, the clothing patterns, etc., to the world of the kabuki theater. By employing the symbol of contemporary figures on the Kabuki actors' clothing, Utagawa Toyoshige demonstrates that the Japanese courtesan industry, and even larger, ukiyo-e culture in general, was remarkably rich in its knowledge and understanding of the legacies of the past and the developments of the present, that it was inventive, witty, always ready to fully enjoy life. Moreso, the Utagawa School's outstanding achievement in ever stylish and up-to-date images of beautiful women and kabuki actors is also evident here.[28] The series to which this print belongs is called "Contemporary Figures." The shamisen player in this print embodies the spirit of being modern. She is dressed and coiffured according to the latest fashion of the day, all objects around her are steeped in cultural associations, as she prepares to entertain the guests with the shamisen - perhaps in the kabuki theatre. The playful and meaningful scene of the bats reinforced the cultural identity of this contemporary period. Through observation and research, the beauty and the elements in the image are testified as authentic embodiments of contemporary culture, a life that could not have existed without music.

25 Nalata Nalata, "Motifs in Japanese Design | Nalata Nalata," Nalata Nalata, 2015, https://nalatanalata.com/journal/motifs-in-japanese-design/.
26 The MFA. Print by Utagawa Toyokuni II. Accession number: RES.51.14. https://collections.mfa.org/objects/321105
27 Mack, Karen. The History of Yukata Fashion. Part I. Edo period. Atomi University. Research Gate. 2014. P. 106
28 "Brooklyn Museum," www.brooklynmuseum.org, accessed November 5, 2021, https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/exhibitions/665.

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Torii Kiyomitsu II (Kiyomine), 1787-1868
Year of the Horse,
from the series *Twelve Signs of the Zodiac in Ukiyo-e* (Ukiyo jūnishi), 1810s
Polychrome woodblock print. RISD. Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1155

Happiness in the Year of the Horse

Shuixin Wang

"Uma" or "Horse" is an ukiyo-e print with only two characters in the middle and a horse seal with the name of the series in the upper left corner. The print was designed by Japanese artist Torii Kiyomitsu II in the year 1810, as a celebration of the upcoming Year of the Horse. We know that the year of the White Metal Horse started on February 4, 1810 and continued through January 25, 1811. Although the print only depicts a lady, a boy, and a seal without any background or decoration, Torii Kiyomitsu still enriches his print with metaphors.

Fig. A. The seal with five characters: ukiyo-e junishi 浮世十二支.
Exhibition Catalog, No. 9. Detail.

Horse, the Auspicious Symbol

Five characters are written near the horse pattern on the seal. They mean the twelve signs of the floating world (ukiyo-e junishi 浮世十二支) [**Fig. A**]. The twelve signs are also known as the Twelve Signs of Zodiac, an ordering system that originated in ancient China and spread to Japan in the third or fourth century, working as a dating system, astrological traditions, and or-

dinals. The horse is the seventh animal in the system. Although the system and animal symbols were invented by ancient Chinese, they are seldom depicted as subjects or themes in Chinese paintings working as a year celebration. Ancient Japanese, however, used these twelve animal symbols more frequently and endowed them with new cultural implications. Horses can be found commonly near Shinto shrines. Because of their speed and robust physique, horses are regarded as the transportations for *kami* - divine spirits worshipped in Japan's indigenous religion of Shinto. The supernatural connection makes horses frequently used in Shintoist celebrations, especially white horses, no matter real horses, sculptures, or paintings. The symbolic horses are called "*Shinme*" (神馬). According to an old Japanese saying, seeing a white horse at the beginning of the year is a sign of good luck and ensures good health in the upcoming year. A festival named *Aouma Sechie* (白馬節会) is on the 7th day in the beginning new year.

Information behind the Characters' Appearance

The main characters in the piece are a woman and a young kid riding on a hobby horse. The lady's hairstyle is known as *yuiwata*, held together with decorative hair pins, combs, and cloth bands. The hairstyle is a variation of the *shimada* hairstyle—a widely popular hairstyle in the Edo period and commonly depicted in ukiyo-e prints [**Fig. B**]. She is wearing at least three layers of kimonos. Her spectacular outer robe is *a furisode* or a swinging-sleeves garment. The *furisode* garment was worn by the unmarried women before turning twenty. Thus, the *furisode* became a symbol of youthfulness. The top one is a dark green kimono decorated with three patterns. The white, most outstanding pattern is called *kasumi* (霞) which means mist and is a common motif that symbolizes spring. Little bird patterns between the *kasumi* bands is called *chidori* (千鳥) or plover symbolizing prosperity. Two cherry blossoms—one is near her collar and the other is on her sleeve—are depicted as well. They are seen at the places typical for the family crests - next to the kimono collar and on a sleeve. Usually these would be placed symmetrically with one more representation added on the back. The pattern on her large purple and black checkered *obi* sash is called *Ichimatsu* (市松). It was a common and traditional pattern named after kabuki actor Ichimatsu Sanogawa I (1722-1762) who wore it on stage. The same pattern was used as the logo of the 2020 Summer Olympics [**Fig. C**].

Left: Fig. B. Hairstyle *yuiwata* –held together with decorative hair pins, combs, and cloth bands
Right: Fig. C. Pattern known as *kasumi*, *chidori*, and *Ichimatsu*
Exhibition Catalog, No. 9. Detail.

The lady's head is a little bit bent forward as she is looking at the young boy. His hairstyle is perhaps *tsunodaishi* (角大師), a double-horned devil for young kids beginning at age of 3-4. Young boy's hair was divided into five areas that were tied. According to other prints, there can

be just two tufts—the forelock and the one on the top of the head, a crown ponytail is called *keshi-bozu* (芥子坊主) [**Fig. D**]. Compared with the lady's kimono, the boy's clothes are decorated with concise lines. However, the purple color shows he lives a good life—purple dye is expensive and rare because of the difficulty of extraction and preservation so that it can only be afforded by people of high status and the rich townspeople.

Fig. D. Hairstyle *tsunodaishi* (角大師), a double-horned devil for young kids beginning at age of 3-4.

The boy is riding a hobby horse, a common toy in ukiyo-e prints. The hobby horse is often designed only with a horse's head on a stick but his hobby horse is definitely a luxurious version -- the whole horse body is made just like a real horse and decorated with a sophisticated red and yellow bridle and a yellow saddle. The hobby horse is used in the boys' games of warriors. Noteworthy, the toy is a white horse as well. Hence, it may be a symbolic token wishing the boy (and children in the household) to grow up healthy and happy.

Shamisen, the Newborn and Widespread Instrument

The lady holds a shamisen in her left hand and a plectrum *bachi* in the other hand. Shamisen is often depicted in ukiyo-e prints and is very popular today. However, compared with those instruments which have thousands of years of history, shamisen is a quite young instrument: it is derived from *sanxian*, a Chinese instrument, of the16th century. Shamisen is constructed with a long, slim neck called *sao* and a hollow body, known as *do*, covered with skins on the front and back. Traditionally, the body is made of wood, and dog's or cat's skin is used for covers. The shamisen in this print is so detailed that the audiences can find a woodgrain pattern as a decoration on the side of the body. Although there is not much information given by the print, we can still know this probably is a *hosozao* (細棹), shamisen with a thin neck and particularly square body, or a *chuzao* (中棹), shamisen with a middle thick neck. The other two main classifications of shamisen are *futozao* (太棹) and Heike shamisen. *Futozao* shamisen has a thicker neck and larger body. This type is a recent variation. Heike shamisen has a much shouter neck (almost half of the other variations of shamisen). The shorter neck helps produce a high range of tones while playing the instrument. All those shamisen variations are designed to play different genres of shamisen music. *Hosozao* is mainly used in *nagauta* (長唄), *hauta* (端唄) and *kouta* (小唄). *Chuzao*, because it has an extended fingerboard, has a higher register than *hosozao*. *Chuzao* is usually played in the *jiuta* style and *min'yo* style. *Futuzao* is favored in more modern styles: *tsugaru* and *gidayu*. Finally, just like its name, Heike shamisen is designed for *Heike ondo*, a folk tune commemorating the fall of the Taira clan or Heiki, defeated by the Minamoto, or Genji, in 1185. The *bachi* (撥) in the young lady's right hand is perhaps *jiuta bachi*, because it is the longest and widest. Just like shamisen, the plectrums *bachi* are also varied in shape, size, and material depending on the specific genre.

In the print, the young lady and the boy are dressed in a luxury style, however, do those well-decorated clothes really reflect their social status? Are all music-related objects and instruments symbols of graceful art and high-rank taste? Everything may have been different in the amazing Edo period.

Before the Edo period, the ruling class had hegemony over music and culture fields. Commoners were forbidden from building "the stages or procuring the luxurious costumes and props that a full-fledged *Nōh* performance required."[1]

Instead, the *bakufu* organized sporadic public performances, which show the grandeur and brilliance of the ruling class that all the townspeople could not achieve. However, authority of the rulers was challenged by lower classes, especially merchants, peasants, and craftsmen who started to accumulate wealth due to rapid commercialization and commodification in the 17th century. Classic *Nōh* text chanting becomes a fad and quickly, street *Nōh* performers show up. The street *Nōh* performers "catered to the desire of commoners everywhere to familiarize themselves with properly scaled-down versions of an old and noble art."[2] However, although not only musical performing was thriving among commoners but also noble classes were interested in lower class music styles as well. Music played by some instruments, such as shamisen or *shakuhachi*, was regarded as unrespectable and lubricious. Does the shamisen in the beautiful Horse print serve as a metaphor for lewd behavior? Well, it might be, but here are some other explanations as well. Although shamisen was thought of as a low-rank instrument, the strict regulations were mainly made for men. In the Edo period, different statuses and genders had different ethical requirements. Men were allowed to attend *bakufu* supported activities but not allowed to play shamisen. Women, on the other hand, were forbidden to attend musical activities, especially men-dominated Nōh theater. However, upper class women were supposed to have some knowledge about music. Most of them chose to learn shamisen or koto, which can be played inside the room. In the urban area, on the other hand, young girls with slight instrument skills had better employment opportunities. The thriving of music and shamisen could not be controlled easily.

Conclusion

So, does the shamisen in the lady's hand contain an erotic meaning? Maybe. However, it may not have any metaphor or hidden meaning. Shamisen is depicted because people in the Edo period loved music, and shamisen is usually seen in commoner girls' hands. The presence of a musical instrument in the New Year print proves that music was considered to be a part of being happy. Obviously, this referred not only to the Year of the Horse but across time since the series was dedicated to all twelve animals of the zodiac in the world of ukiyo-e.

1 Gerald Groemer, The Rise of "Japanese Music." The World of Music , 2004, Vol. 46, No. 2, Japanese Musical Traditions (2004), pp. 9-33.
Published by: VWB - Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung
Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/41699564
2 Ibid.

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日日静好, 【和柄】日本b花紋圖様——霞（かすみ）, https://lapeacefulday.com/【和柄】日本花紋圖様-霞（かすみ）/

日日静好, 【和柄】日本花紋圖様——千鳥（ちどり）, https://lapeacefulday.com/【和柄】日本花紋圖様-千鳥（ちどり）/

Torii Kiyomitsu I, ca.1735-1785
Segawa Kikunojō II, Edo period, early 1760s
Polychrome woodblock print (*benizuri-e*). RISD. Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1072

Segawa Kikunojō II:

A Famed Performer

Jihyun Woo

A beautiful woman clad in layered robes is shown gracefully holding a tsuzumi, or hand drum, mid-performance. Her hair is ornately decorated with multiple hair accessories. The figure is an onnagata, or a woman being impersonated by a man. We see a distinguishable family crest image on the actor's sleeve and the inscription of the actor's name on the right, which lets us identify the actor as Segawa Kikunojō II. The print is a benizuri-e, a print with limited colors, red and green. The setting of this print is difficult to discern, so it is unclear whether or not she is playing for an audience, but we do see a sliding paper wall behind her that suggests that she is next to a house gallery.

This print, Segawa Kikunojō II is an example of yakusha-e, or an actor print. It was designed by Torii Kiyomitsu I, identifiable by the artist's signature inscription on the bottom left, and published by Yamashiroya, identifiable by the cartouche on the bottom right. This print is dated in the early 1760s. During this time, Kiyomitsu worked primarily with benizuri-e [1] and actually helped pioneer its popularity before the advent of nishiki-e, or full-color prints, in 1765. Benizuri-e translates to a red (beni) printed picture, but in practice was actually commonly printed with red and green, as seen here.[2] This print is in a hosoban format, or narrow print, that was common in yakusha-e during this time. This format allowed Kiyomitsu to fit the figure's entire body and gesture on the page. Torii Kiyomitsu depicted Segawa Kikunojō II in a way that made him easily recognizable to the viewers. The prominent family crest on his sleeve is of a yuiwata mon, or a bundle of silk floss, that was used by the esteemed Segawa Kikunojō kabuki actor lineage. He is also easily recognized by the two inscriptions on the side which reveal his name Segawa Kikunojō II, and nickname Rokō. Before joining this lineage, Segawa Kikunojō II went through a few actor names as he performed at different theatres. He rose to fame in 1756 at the Ichimura-za and took on the name Segawa Kikunojō II that same year. Two years later,

1 Benizuri-e.The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints. Hotei Publishing. Leiden, 2005. 422-423
2 (C)2001 Japanese Architecture and Art Net Users System. JAANUS. http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/b/benizurie.htm

he became the tatte onagatta, or top female impersonator, at the Nakamura-za, one of the three licensed kabuki theatres of Edo. In fact, he became such a well-known figure that his nickname was used to name trends such as Rōkō mage, a popular hairstyle.[3]

An interesting aspect of this piece is that Torii Kiyomitsu I included details that hint at the setting in which this performance is taking place. These minimal details contribute to the life-like quality of the image, and provide the viewer with context clues. Though we are only shown a small piece of the big picture, we can see that Segawa Kikunojō II is in front of a shōji, or sliding paper door, that has been pushed to the left. We can see that there is a room behind the opened door by the inviting receding vertical lines on the floor. This room is recognizable as the gallery that usually surrounds a house. It is unclear if he is standing indoors or outdoors, and because onnagata were required to dress and behave like women even outside of theatrical performances, it is also unclear if he's playing onstage for an audience or simply for his own pleasure.

In this setting, Segawa Kikunojō II is depicted mid-gesture, about to strike the tsuzumi, or kotsuzumi, that he holds in his hands. The tsuzumi is a percussion instrument that was commonly used even in the earliest kabuki theatre performances. They were used for a variety of purposes such as indicating the start of the play, setting the atmosphere, or something more specific like kodama, having drums answer each other on opposite sides of the stage to imitate the sound of an echo in a mountain setting. [4] The body of this instrument is made of wood and has two heads made up of skin stretched over iron rings. The two heads are held together by a cord, or shirabeo, that wraps around the rings.[5] Segawa Kikunojō II is holding these cords with his left hand with one of the drum heads resting on his right shoulder. His hand gestures are naturally graceful, which undoubtedly contributed to his popularity as a performer. While this gesture may look effortless due to his immense musical skill, he is actually placing his hands very deliberately to produce the correct sound. The pitch of the tsuzumi varies depending on how the musician maneuvers his hand to strike the drum and how hard the musician squeezes the cords with his opposite hand to change the tension of the drum heads.[6] The tsuzumi was a core instrument in the kabuki theatre musical ensemble, among many other instruments. In kabuki theatre, the tsuzumi players, of which there were often multiple, were lined up on tiers on stage. These players would often sync up to the rhythm of the concurrent shamisen music, together setting the tone for the performance.

Because kabuki theatre played such a huge role in the culture of Edo period Japan, yakusha-e such as these were high in demand. Kabuki actors enjoyed much fame and influence among their viewers, especially those as talented as Segawa Kikunojō II. Kabuki theatre music had a pivotal role in the overall atmosphere of the performance and the story being told by the actors. The demand for prints such as Segawa Kikunojō II, which depicts both of these performative aspects, demonstrate the importance of the celebrity actor and the instrument tsuzumi in kabuki theatre.

3 Samuel Leiter, New Kabuki Encyclopedia, Greenwood Press, Westport, Ct & London, 1997, p. 562.
4 William Malm. *Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*. Charles E. Tuttle Company. Rutland, VT, Tokyo, Japan. 1959. P. 229
5 Traditional Music Digital Library. Tsuzumi. https://www.senzoku-online.jp/TMDL/e/05-tsudumi.html
6 Let's Play the Kotsuzumi #2. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mFP11sVtZ4Q_

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Torii Kiyonaga, 1752 - 1815
Otomo Hitachinosuke and Those who Love Him, 1783
Polychrome woodblock print. The Pushkin Museum. Inventory number A-32131.[1]

1 The Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow, Russia. http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Otomo_Hitatinosuke_i_ego_vozlyublennye.php?ref=author

Musicians On Stage:

A Comprehensive View of Kabuki Theatre

Jihyun Woo

A trio of musical kabuki theatre performers, made up of two chanters and one shamisen musician, are stationed behind three actors on stage. They are sitting on top of a *tokodai*[1], a raised platform, and the two chanters are kneeling in front of a *kendai*,[2] or lectern. They are wearing patterned *kamishimo*, which is formal attire distinguishable by the exaggerated shape of the shoulders, while the shamisen musician is wearing a black cloak. The actors in front of them are performing a scene involving some kind of romantic conflict in the form of a *michiyuki*, or a dance interlude. The man in the center holds a spool of thread and is surrounded by two maleactors impersonating women, or *onnagata*.

The print *Yanagi-no Ito Koino Odomaki* was illustrated by Torii Kiyonaga and depicts a scene from the play "Yanagi-no ito Koi no Odomaki", which was performed in the third month of 1783 at the Nakamura Theater.[3] Torii Kiyonaga pioneered this subgenre *degatari-zu* in *ukiyo-e*. *Degatari* translates to "narrator's appearance" and refers to the appearance of musicians and chanters during kabuki theater performances.[4] The chanters, depicted in the upper left, were responsible for narrating the actors' performance, while the shamisen player beside them provided the atmosphere for the drama that was simultaneously performed by the actors. Prior to Torii Kiyonaga's prints, musicians were not commonly illustrated in theatrical prints, despite their vital role in performances.[5]

The chanters and the shamisen player are depicted with great sensitivity to their individuality and the psychological state of inspiration. Their names are known from the title page of the practice book for that performance [**Fig. A**]. The book originates from the Tomimoto family that performed on that occasion. A vertical slip containing the musicians' names reveals that the two chanters' names are Tomimoto Toyoshidayu and Tomimoto Buzendayu, and the shamisen player's name is Namizaki Tokuji. The chanters and shamisen musicians are performers of the

1 Fiorillo, John. "Degatari (出語り) "Narrator's Appearance"". Viewingjapaneseprints.net. https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/degatari.html.
2 Leiter, Historical Dictionary of Japanese Traditional Theatre.
3 Torii Kiyonaga. Actors Segawa Kikunojō III as Koito, Sawamura Sōjūrō III as Ōtomo Hitachinosuke, and Yamashita Mangiku as Shizuhata-hime, with chanters Tomimoto Buzendayū and Tomimoto Itsukidayū, and accompanist Namizaki Tokuji. MFA,impressions: 11.13925 (color), 11.13926 (key block). https://collections.mfa.org/objects/206235 Accessed on Nov 15, 2021.
4 Fiorillo.
5 Binns, Alexander. "*Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e*".

tomimoto style, which along with *tokiwazu* and *kiyomoto*, belonged to major narrative (*jōruri*) styles of kabuki theatre music.

Fig. A. The title page of the book *Edo no hana mimasu Soga*
The Tomimoto collection. 1783, 1st month, 15th day
Nakamura-za theater, Edo.
Vertical slip contains the names of chanters: right - Tomimoto Itsukidayu (富本斎宮太夫);
center - Tomimoto Buzendayu (富本豊前太夫), left - Tomimoto Toyoshidayu (富本豊志太夫) [6]

As mentioned above, the chanters are formally dressed in *kamishimo*, which is attire that had originally been worn by warriors starting in the 15th century, but eventually became a costume for stage musicians. They are raised slightly higher than the shamisen player because they are kneeling on top of cushions that support their knees.[7] Torii Kiyonaga cleverly uses the height of the *tokodai* (the raised musician's dias) to create a stacked composition that allows the viewer to see many performers in one space, with the musicians on top and actors on the bottom.[8]

The shamisen musician on the far right is differentiated by his contrasting attire and slightly lower position on the platform. The shamisen, a traditional Japanese three-stringed instrument, is essential in kabuki musical performances. It is a highly versatile instrument that was played in a variety of social settings, and was also an essential part of Japanese folk music. It has a "sharp but slightly wistful tone",[9] and is accompanied by a drum-like sound, which is caused by the plectrum hitting the strings and skin. The body and neck are made of wood, with the top and bottom covered with catskin or dogskin. The strings are made of silk, and their gauge was adjusted depending on the type of music that was performed.

The actors positioned in front of and below the musicians are acting out a scene from the play "Yanagi-no ito Koi no Odomaki." Though the exact synopsis of this play is unknown, it seems to depict a musical dance scene similar to one from another play, "Imoseyama Onna Teikin."[10] Kabuki dances were usually independent of the play that they appeared in, and often had a different title.[11] The kabuki dance performance "Koi no Odomaki", is a part of both of

6 The University of Tokyo Academic Archives Portal, https://da.dl.itc.u-tokyo.ac.jp/portal/en/assets/a2294a23-a230-4148-bf6f-2403c3bf3fb0
7 Samuel Leiter, Historical Dictionary of Japanese Traditional Theater, 2014. P. 59.
8 John Fiorillo. Viewing Japanese Prints. https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/degatari.html
9 William Malm. 1959. Japanese music and musical instruments. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co..1959. P. 213.
10 For synopsis see https://www.kabuki21.com/iot.php
11 Yumiko Hasegawa. "Degatari-Zu: An Examination of the Transition in the Depiction of Onstage Kabuki Musical Ensembles in Color Woodblock Prints (1746-1866)." *RIdIM/RCMI Newsletter* 22, no. 2 (1997): 62–68. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41605025.

the mentioned kabuki plays, and depicts two women and a man involved in a romantic conflict. The man in the center, played by actor Sawamura Sōjūrō III, is holding a spool of thread. From the synopsis of the known play "Imoseyama Onna Teikin", we infer that he is using this spool of thread to attach to the kimono of the woman on the left, played by the *onnagata*, Yamashita Mangiku, to follow this female character along as she runs away. We can also infer that the woman on the right, played by another *onnagata*, Segawa Kikunojō III, is in love with the man and is looking at their interaction possibly with jealousy or anger.[12] The three actors, accompanied by the music produced by the chanters and shamisen player, are performing this scene in the form of the aforementioned *michiyuki*. Commonly inserted in the middle or end of a kabuki theatre play, *michiyuki* were scenes of travel that occurred especially when the characters are romantically tied in some way.[13] The Tomimoto style of music was particularly in demand for kabuki dance scenes and were used for a specific scene in a multi-act kabuki play[14], as is the case here.

Kabuki theatre was a major development during the Edo period and played a huge part in Japan's social sphere at the time. People of all classes came to see kabuki theatre performances, and the actors became very well-known and influential in society.[15] Music is a vital part of kabuki performances, and musicians were often auspiciously presented on stage for the purposes of theatricality. Kabuki music, both onstage and off, was carefully orchestrated to provide the necessary atmosphere for performances. As musicians became as well-known as the actors, depicting them in ukiyo-e became a way of emphasizing their influence and promoting kabuki. Degatari-zu celebrates both the musical and dramatic spirit of kabuki theatre and reflects the cultural importance of these performances during the Edo period.

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"Koi no Odomaki", https://www.kabuki21.com/koi_no_odamaki.php.

12 For synopsis of "Koi no Odomaki" see: https://www.kabuki21.com/koi_no_odamaki.php

13 Fiorillo, John. "Degatari (出語り) "Narrator's Appearance"". Viewingjapaneseprints.net. https://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/texts/topics_faq/degatari.htm l.

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15 William Malm. Japanese music and musical instruments. Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle Co. 1959. P. 35.

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), 1786-1865
A Picture of the Banquet Held in a Plum Grove in Imitation of the "Oath of the Peach Garden Taken by Three Brave Warriors of Sichuan." Left panel from a triptych. 1854/11. Private collection.

Music's Unifying Power:

A Plum Viewing Party and the Oath of the Peach Garden

Jason Liao and Julia Chien

A young elegant man in the indigo flower-patterned kimono and a black coat over it is playing the shamisen under a branch of plum blossoms in the evening garden. A hand towel *tenugui* with blue dotted stripes is thrown freely over his shoulder. Made of cotton and often printed with indigo as here, *tenugui* indicates in this case the informality of the occasion - perhaps, a party with friends. Next to the shamisen player is a red-lacquer tray with carefully selected tableware - a shallow white-and-blue porcelain bowl with sliced food, chopsticks near the bowl, and two matching bowls - the taller one for food and a flatter one perhaps a *sakazuki* (杯) for sake. These two matching bowls seem to be made of black lacquer with golden-sprinkled design, a famous Japanese technique of *maki-e*. It is obvious that the feast is in progress. The player is holding a fan-shaped ivory plectrum *bachi* with which he is striking the chords of the shamisen while adjusting a peg on the instrument's neck. The shamisen is a three-stringed musical instrument derived from the Chinese instrument *sanxian*. It became exceedingly popular among townspeople during the Edo period and thus is often depicted in ukiyo-e as the artform closely associated with various kinds of sophisticated leisure. The young player looks inspired and gentle, directing his glance righwards. This print is in fact a left panel of a three-part composition, a triptych that shows two other participants of the feast, one on each panel. All three prints can be found in the Tsubouchi Collection of Waseda University.

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), 1786-1865
A Picture of the Banquet Held in a Plum Grove in Imitation of the "Oath of the Peach Garden Taken by Three Brave Warriors of Sichuan." Triptych. 1854/10
Waseda University database, Nos. 006-5461 (right), 006-5462 (central); 006-5463 (left).

The characters portrayed in the triptych are identified on the Waseda University database as kabuki theater actors. The one on the left that has been just discussed is Nakamura Fukusuke I better known as Nakamura Shikan IV (1831-1899).[1] A son of an actor, he debuted in Osaka and eventually became one of the leading players in Edo (Tokyo). He played multiple roles and was "reaping fame throughout Japan" as his brief biography states.[2]

The central panel shows a spectacular woman who is in fact an onnagata - a male actor impersonating a female role. Since in kabuki theaters all actors were men, female roles were also performed by male actors. During this informal and perhaps imaginary gathering the onnagata actor appears as a woman because the onnagata were required to dress and behave like women even outside of theatrical performances. This actor is identified as Bandō Shūka I (1813-1855), also known as Bandō Mitsugorō V, was famous for his expressive voice and excellent appearance. At the time of this print's publication, he was one of Edo's most popular stars.[3]

The person depicted in the rightmost print of the triptych is kabuki actor Kataoka Kadō II (181-1863), also known as Kataoka Nizaemon VII. He specialized in leading male roles *tachi-yaku* and exceedingly popular, particularly as *nimaime* - young, handsome lover.[4] Here he sits pensively holding a toothpick next to his mouth. This actor as well as the actor on the left are both focusing their attention on the central figure, the lavishly attired graceful *onnagata*, the only one shown standing full length. The feast is elegantly set in the late evening. The plum branch extends across the triptych right to left, two candle lanterns softly lit the gathering, all objects look refined.

Above him there is a cartouche framed with three swords and a commander's fan with constellations. The cartouche contains an inscription explaining the meaning of the scene. The inscription reads, *A Picture of the Banquet Held in a Plum Grove in Imitation of the Oath of the Peach Garden Taken by Three Brave Warriors of the Sichuan*.

Thus, the gathering of the celebrities acquires a new dimension being compared to an exemplary legendary gathering from the Chinese lore. The Oath of the Peach Garden is a fictional event in Luo Guanzhong's *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (三國演義). It is a 14th century novel set at the end of the Han dynasty and the Three Kingdoms period (220-280 CE) in Chinese History. *The Oath of the Peach Garden* is the oath of fraternity taken by three characters (Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei) who thus become sworn brothers. The Oath is as follows:

> When saying the names Liu Bei, Guan Yu, and Zhang Fei, although the surnames are different, yet we have come together as brothers. From this day forward, we shall join forces for a common purpose: to save the troubled and to aid the endangered. We shall avenge the nation above, and pacify the citizenry below. We seek not to be born on the same day, in the same month, and in the same year. We merely hope to die on the same day, in the same month and in the same year. May the Gods of Heaven and Earth attest to what is in our hearts. If we should ever do anything to betray our friendship, may heaven and the people of earth both strike us dead.[5]

Chinese classical novels were familiar to townspeople in Japan of the Edo period. At that time in Japan there were intellectual movements such as *kangaku* (漢学) - Chinese Learning and *kogaku* (古学) - Ancient Learning, that attached great significance to the study of Chinese classical legacy. It was in the 17th and 18th centuries that Chinese classical novels of the Ming and Qing dynasties, including *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, were adapted for the contem-

1 Waseda University Cultural Resource Database, https://archive.waseda.jp/archive/image-viewer.html?arg={%22subDB_id%22:%2252%22,%22detail_page_id%22:%221;170370%22,%22image_no%22:%222%22,%22kind%22:%220%22}&lang=en
2 Samuel Leiter, New Kabuki Encyclopedia, Greenwood press, Westport, CT & London, 1997, p. 44
3 Ibid., p. 37
4 Ibid., p. 297
5 Translation:Romance of the Three Kingdoms https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Translation:Romance_of_the_Three_Kingdoms/Chapter_1

porary Japanese readership, commented upon and popularized. The key stories from the novels became widely known and were often illustrated in the popular urban art of ukiyo-e. *The Oath of the Peach Garden* was one of them. Reference to this fictional event became a metaphor for fraternal loyalty among the friends.

There are other examples of ukiyo-e designs where the *Oath of the Peach Garden* is similarly used as an idiom of fraternal friendship among the members of the gathering.

Utagawa Kunisada I (Toyokuni III), 1786–1864
Parody of the Oath of the Peach Garden. 1850s. Toshidama Gallery.[6]

Utagawa Kunisada I (Toyokuni III), 1786–1864
Parody of Heroes of the Three Kingdoms: Sumō Wrestlers Tsurugiyama (R), Hidenoyama (C), and Koyanagi (L). 1843-1847. MFA, 08.541.2a-c[7]

The literary comparison implies not only the friendship that unites the stars but emphasizes seasonality that is at heart of Japanese culture. Since the original vow was taken under the peach trees, Japanese popular culture used this as a pretext to show their favorites involved in seasonal celebrations. All examples given here show popular figures banqueting under the plum trees, whether kabuki actors ro sumo wrestlers.

The actors are shown during the spring event known as *umemi* - observing plum blossoms in the second month rather than during *hanami*, cherry blossom viewing that starts later. The plum flowers are the first to bloom after winter heralding the beginning of spring. They also possess a fine fragrance that adds to enjoyment of *umemi*. The plum flowers on the branch are beautifully articulated in Kunisada's triptych accentuating also the flower motifs throughout the composition. Nakamura Fukusuke in the print at the virtual exhibition wears a kimono, which

6 Toshidama Gallery, https://www.toshidama-japanese-prints.com/item_877/Kunisada-Three-Actors-in-a-Parody-of-the-Three-Kingdoms.htm

7 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Accession number https://collections.mfa.org/objects/501085/parody-of-heroes-of-the-three-kingdoms-eiyu-mitate-sangokus

exhibits a combination of dual repetitive flower patterns and vertical stripes in between. In the juxtaposition to the branches above covered with flourishing white and yellow flowers, nature serves as decorative components to represent the celebratory and gloriousness of the banquet.

The immense use of blue in this piece is particularly stunning and it has multiple functions in the print. There is a large variety in the depth and vibrancy of the deep blues. It is textured, layered, and lighter in the background to make it recede. The slightly faded texture in the background helps describe the infinity of an open space which subtly delivers the lavishness of the banquet to the viewer. The blue that comes to the forefront is the blue on the musician's kimono. Demonstrating the intricacy of the flower patterns against the off-white layer below, the three dimensionality and richness of the blue furthermore welcomes the viewers to the seasonal celebration. This three dimensionality is expressed also through the artist's interest in capturing the things in mid-action: the plectrum is striking the strings, the tenugui on the actor's right shoulder moves lightly, and this makes the scene more tangible and relatable for the viewer.

The print representing Nakamura Fukusuke I is the left piece of the triptych - a three-panel composition designed by the leading figurative ukiyo-e artist, Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III) back in 1854. All prints of the triptych share markings, including the artist's signature in a red toshidama seal - a form with swelling in the upper right part, here - of yellow color. Derived from the auspicious expression meaning "the year jewel," the *toshidama* was a trademark of the Utagawa School of ukiyo-e artists and is often seen on their prints used in an inventive way.

Above the signature there are two white-field seals. The round one is a censorship seal that says *aratame*, meaning that it was reviewed by the designated authorities. The oval one contains the date of the print - it reads, Year of the Tiger, 11th month, which corresponds to 1854 of the Gregorian calendar. The seal shaped as overlapping mountain-like triangles with an ivy leaf underneath is the sign of the publisher, Tsuchiya Kichizō. Observation of these markings brings production of the print into focus.

Under the blooming plum branch Nakamura Fukusuke I plays his shamisen with inspiration. His facial expression conveys a subtle sense of cheerfulness and delight that strengthens the overall jubilant atmosphere of this friendly seasonal celebration.

Whether the print is dedicated to a fictional gathering of celebrities or a real event, it glorifies artistic leisure that joins together nature and culture. Accomplished performers are taking pleasure in live music, in the sight and the scent of the year's first flowers, while evoking a lofty ideal of fraternal friendship from the Chinese timeless classics, *Romance of the Three Kingdom.*

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Part III. MUSIC, DANCE, SONG: PASSIONS OF THE PAST THROUGH THE LENS OF THE PRESENT

Exhibition Catalog, No. 13.

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), 1786-1865
The Broom Tree (*Hahakigi*),
from the series *Lingering Sentiments of a Late Genji Collection* (Genji goshū yojō),
Edo period, 1857, 11th month.
Left side of a polychrome woodblock printed diptych
with embossing and metallic pigments. RISD. Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1410.

A Deep Dive into *Genji-e*:

Analysis of Kunisada's Print *Hahakigi*

Catherine Wu, Yue Zi, Haoyu Li, Caroline Zou

An expressly graceful and elegant young man is cutting a triple-bent posture in a half-kneeling – half-seated position. Everything about this man is particular and commands attention. He is wearing a distinctive hairstyle. He is clad in gorgeous, exquisitely adorned layered kimonos. He is playing the transverse flute (*yokobue*) with ease and refinement of movements. The sword to his right and the standing screen *tsuitate* to his left are sumptuous. Floating around him are minuscule yellowish-brownish squares and triangles reminiscent of metal filings on Heian period decorative papers. Designed by Utagawa Kunisada (1786-1865), this print belongs to the Genji world - the red elongated cartouche indicates that it comes from the series called *Lingering Sentiments of a Late Collection of Genji* (源氏後集余情). The adjacent square cartouche with ripples of color conveys the name of the print which is *Hahakigi – the Broom Tree*. Prince Genji is the protagonist of Japan's world-famous literary masterpiece of the 10th century, *The Tale of Genji,* written by the court lady Murasaki Shikibu (紫式部) . The name of the print seems to confirm this – *The Broom Tree* is the name of chapter 3 in the *Tale of Genji* and the name of chapter 2 in its reworking to be discussed below.[1] Ukiyo-e prints related either to the original *Tale of Genji* or its reworkings are known as *Genji-e*. They constitute a distinctive genre of ukiyo-e prints: *Genji-e* exist in thousands of designs.

The closer observation of the print, however, reveals that although it indeed belongs to the world of Genji, its connection to Japan's all-time classics is not direct. *Dai-ni no maki: hahakigi* (第二の巻：ははき木) or *The Second Scroll: the Broom Tree* designed by the artist *Utagawa Kunisada* is a print from the popular illustrated novel *Nise Murasaki inaka Genji* (*Rustic Genji by a Fake Murasaki*). This popular novel by Ryūtei Tanehiko (1783-1842) published in the 1830s was a parody of the original *Genji Monogatari* (*Tale of Genji*) that was written during the Heian Period. Ryutei Tanehiko, a prominent author of his time, a poet and writer of serial novels of which his *Rustic Genji by a Fake Murasaki* truly immortalized his name. The print's association

1 Andreas Marks, *Genji's World in Japanese Woodblock Prints*, Hotei Publishing, 2012, p. 136.
According to the source, "one would assume that the numbers in the square cartouches are a reference to Genji chapters. … Here, however, the number corresponds to the chapter of the serial novel, *A Rustic Genji by Fake Murasaki*.

to musical instruments, captivating formal qualities, and profound historical background in association with the original *Tale of Genji* as well as the parody reveals values as well as traditions in earlier periods of Japan.

The detail that immediately identified the depicted person to the contemporaries was his unique hairstyle. The central part of his topknot is wrapped with a braided cord while the tip of the topknot is divided into two parts. As a result, his topknot looks like a lobster tail or a tea whisk, which is reflected in the name of this hairdo called *ebi-chasen-mage* (海老茶筅髷) or "topknot shaped as lobster-*ebi* or tea-whisk *chasen*" (Varshavskaya). This detail was invented by Utagawa Kunisada in his illustrations to the above mentioned 19th century lighthearted reworking of *The Tale of Genji* by Ryūtei Tanehiko.

The parody *Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji* changed the setting of the novel. It also differed in how the illustrations accompanied the text on every page. This parody is a *gōkan* 合巻 (lit. bound together volume). It has a two-page spread of images surrounded by the text of the story.[2] Kunisada played an essential role in creating the visual equivalence to the book by Ryūtei Tanehiko. Ryūtei Tanehiko, the author of this parody, decided to have the story set in the 15th century and have the love affairs of the modernized Prince Genji ("Mitsuuji - The Rustic Genji") take place in the licensed quarters unlike the original novel that took place at court in the 10th century. This parody follows the journey of Ashikaga Jirō Mitsuuji (足利次郎光氏), a character based on Hikaru Genji, the original's protagonist. Moreover, "unlike the original *Tale of Genji*, the *Rustic Genji* includes many attempted assassinations, fight scenes and murders, catering to a modern audience that presumably found the slower pacing of the older classic unpalatable".[3]

The author of the original *Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu served as a tutor to the young empress Fujiwara no Shoshi (later known as Jotomonin), which made people assume that Genji was conceived by a woman author with a female readership in mind. Leading to a new literature area, a genre of fiction rooted in the oral storytelling tradition and firmly associated with women's writing made it an undeniable classic.[4]

The tale tells the story of the son of the emperor of ancient Japan (known to readers as Emperor Kiritsubo) and a low-ranking concubine named Kiritsubo Consort. The son is known as Hikaru Genji or the Shining Prince for his good looks and many talents. Eventually Prince Genji fell in love with Lady Fujitsubo who resembled his late mother and who soon became the Emperor's consort. Lady Fujitsubo became Genji's first love and he had a secret affair with her. In the early chapters of the *Rustic Genji* - the parody novel - similar circumstances are described.

As has been said earlier, the print *Hahakigi* belongs to the genre of *Genji-e*. *Genji-e* are ukiyo-e prints related either to the original *Tale of Genji* or its reworkings. Even though the name of the protagonist in *Nise Murasaki* is Mitsuuji, the prints based on the book are still classified as *Genji-e*.[5] Within this genre, there are multiple categories including "straightforward illustrations of the original book and *mitate-e* designs that have 'parody' elements of the original story with modern-day equivalents or make humorous comparisons of the tale's chapter titles and other unrelated subjects." [6] The category to which *Hahakigi* belongs is the latter one. The *Hahakigi* print recontextualizes the original tale, meshing it with an Edo Period background.

During the Edo period, the Heian period was depicted over and over again through the lens of the original *Tale of Genji* because it was heavily romanticized. The print *Hahakigi* has multiple references to the traditions of the Heian period and thus serves as an expression of cultural nostalgia for what things were like during that period. It also is a good example of how in the

2 Mueller, C. K. (2012). *Sewing Together the Gōkan*: Text Through Image in the Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji (thesis). 1.
3 Ibid., 30
4 The Tale Of Genji, Wikipedia
5 Amy Reigle Newland, ed. *The Hotei Encyclopedia of Ukiyo-e*, Amsterdam, 2005. Volume 2, 434-435
6 Ibid.

later Edo period many wanted to "develop their Japaneseness," to follow the rigid social structure, and repeatedly depict artistic beauty of the past in the same way.[7] Such cultural tendencies can be associated, in part, with Japan's self-imposed isolation - between 1630s and 1853 almost all contacts with the outside world had been terminated, and interest in Japan's native cultural legacy was gaining momentum. Publishing industry flourished with many classical works of literature being studied, commented upon, reworked, and illustrated.

Kunisada, who designed illustrations for the *Rustic Genji, continued* producing prints based on the novel-parody throughout his career, altogether dedicating to this theme thirty-seven print sets. In those prints Kunisada was often reworking his own illustrations for the book. The print *Hahakigi* considered here is one such example. Kunisada's print series *Lasting Impressions of a late Genji Collection* belongs to his most successful works among the *Genji-e* published over three and a half years from 1857 to 1861. Publication of this series was a collaborative venture undertaken by four publishers in four different districts: Ebisuya Shoshichi in Nihonbashi, Hayashiya Shogoro in Ryogoku, Sakanaya Eikichi in Shitaya and Wakasaya Yoichi in Shiba.[8] Because of the varying locations of the publishing houses, this collaborative publication could reach a greater potential market. Moreover, the techniques used for the prints of this series were bold and innovative and can even be described as avant-garde. The prints were designed as large format (*ōban*) diptychs, each composition consisting of two panels joined together. Production itself was luxurious. The publishers used heavy paper and applied multiple special effects such as blind printing, textile printing, burnishing, and gradation. Beautifully decorated covers were designed for the print series. Like those covers, the prints feature scattered square patterns printed in yellow and brown, mimicking the cut gold and silver foil used in paintings - these details are well seen in the print considered.[9]

The captivating figure of the depicted character, the print's saturated colors, and intricate details in the print such as the just mentioned gold-like specks that are scattered all over the background make the piece a fascinating one to analyze formally. From the text on the red cartouche, the viewers can tell that this print is related to *The Tale of Genji*. The main character is a stylish young man gracefully keeping a complex body position as he plays a flute. He is lavishly dressed. The purple color of his kimono suggests refined taste and privilege. Similar to many other regions, the color purple was regarded as particularly refined, especially this deep shaded purple called *koki-murasaki*. The textile on his purple kimono is embellished with a geometric pattern of hexagonal units resembling a pattern on a tortoise shell. The pattern is overprinted above the purple of the kimono making it look sumptuous. The gradient *bokashi* lightens up the tone towards the bottom of the sleeves and at the hip area of the kimono providing a delicate background for the resplendent large colorful flowers. The gradient is blending with the patterns on the kimono going from dark to light to dark again. He is wearing a red and orange checkered sash *obi* tied around the waist. As has been mentioned earlier, his unique lobster-tail topknot (*ebi-mage*) makes him easily identifiable as Mitsuuji. He is also distinguished by the family crest of the Minamoto/Genji family. Well visible on Mitsuuji's sleeve, the white *sasarindō* crest consists of five downward blades of bamboo grass and three upright gentian flowers. To the left, resting on the ground, next to Mitsuuji is his sword.

The fit of the garment is loose, revealing Mitsuuji's right foot evoking an informal and playful behavior. Additionally, he is depicted with an animated expression - he is either smiling as indicated through the raised ends of his lips or the position of his lips is necessitated by blowing

7 *Japan In The Heian Period and Cultural History*: Crash Course World History 227
8 Andreas Marks, *Genji's World in Japanese Woodblock Prints*, Hotei Publishing, 2012, p. 136
9 Marks, Ibid.

as he plays the flute . His eyes are almost as if he is avoiding eye contact with any other character, focusing on playing the flute while thinking about the presence of the other person, the presence of which is only hinted upon. Throughout the print, there is a general outline for every subject and element in the piece, suggesting a lighthearted theme.

The red accents in the areas designated for the inscriptions bring attention to the words that give the viewers context. Altogether there are seven different frames floating around the picture surface. At the very top left of the sheet is the title in red rectangle. The text reads "*Lingering Sentiments of a Late Collection of Genji."* Next to the title is another text box with a red, blue, and green mountain-like painterly pattern that gives the illusion of a painting hanging on the walls of a room. As has been said earlier, the square-shaped frame contains the name and the number of the chapter illustrated.

The scene is set indoors; however, there is no depiction of a wall or a ground, there are just speckles imitating golden foil scattered throughout the background. There is also one piece of furniture indicating that there is a ground, but no lines were made to show it clearly. On the right of the print stands a *tsuitate*, a single panel freestanding partitioning screen cut off by the edge of the print. Echoing in a way the floral designs on the kimono, the frame of the *tsuitate* is painted with golden wisteria flowers over the black lacquer coat. Adjacent to the lacquer frame within the frame of the screen there are blue silk borders decorated with black floral patterns known as *mokkō* (木瓜) that were widely used by the nobility during the Heian period. The *tsuitate* screen is key to showing that the scene is set indoors. The composition we see is only half of the full original scene that was designed as a diptych. The RISD Museum owns only the left panel with the depiction of Mitsuuji. Depiction of only a part of the *tsuitate* suggests that there is another panel that goes along with the image. It shows that the composition is incomplete when just standing as its own that the story is not finished. The full diptych from the collection of the MFA in Boston is reproduced below [**Fig. A**].

Fig. A. Utagawa Kunisada. Ch. 2, *Hahakigi*, from the series *Lingering Sentiments of a Late Collection of Genji*. 1857. The MFA, 00.1851a-b.[10]

The colors do seem bright and vivid throughout the whole composition and there are a lot of details in the patterns of the clothing and furniture.

10 Image source: https://collections.mfa.org/objects/175854/ch-2-hahakigi-from-the-series-lingering-sentiments-of-a-l

It is helpful and instructive to compare this print with Kunisada's original illustration for Ryūtei Tanehiko's book [**Fig. B**]. It is clear that Kunisada only slightly reworked his earlier design.

The obvious difference between the two is that commercial print is in color and the book illustration is monochromatic. The book's illustration has a border while the commercial doesn't. Pages in the book are just in paper color while the background of the commercial print is covered with geometric shapes imitating sparkles.

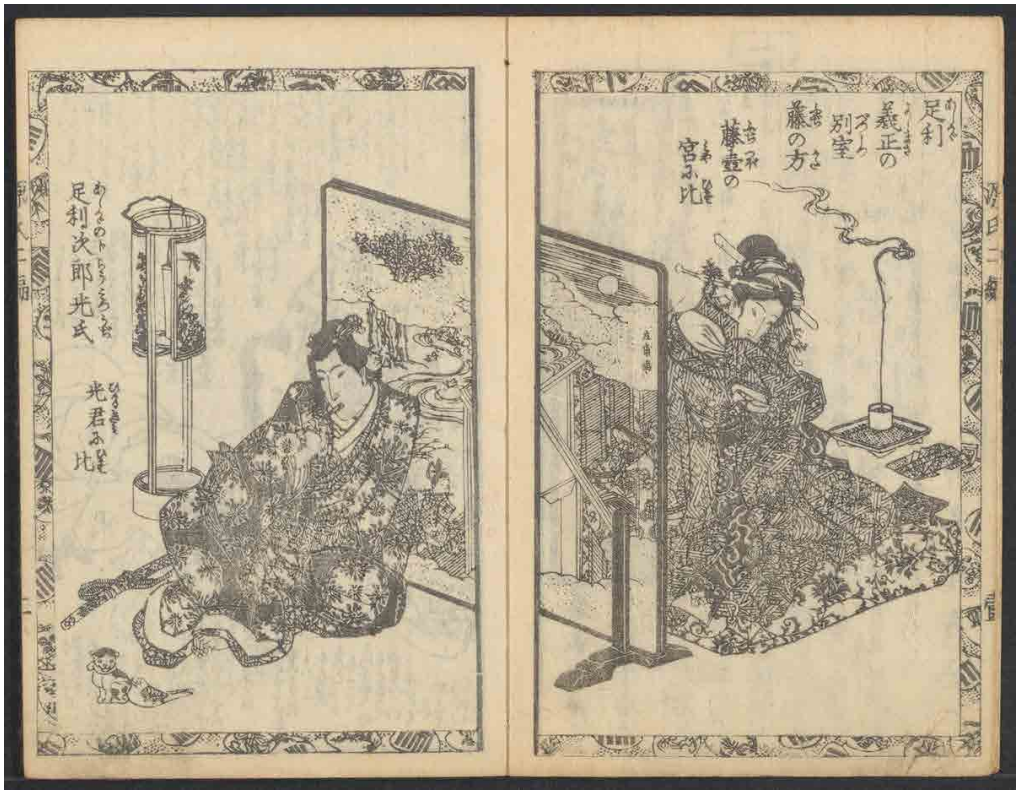

Fig. B. Illustration: Utagawa Kunisada, in Ryūtei Tanehiko 1783-1842. *Inaka Genji*. Edo: Senkakudō Tsuruya Kiemon inkō, Bunsei kichū-Tenpō 13 [1829-1842] shinchō. Harvard College Library Harvard-Yenching Library.[11]

Among the similarities one should mention the presence of text in both versions. However, the text in the book is floating freely on the page while in the commercial print it is enclosed either in a cartouche or a similar square-like border.

The overall position of Mitsuuji is similar in both images but there are a number of differences. Rendering of the interior space is somewhat more detailed in the book where a cylindrical lamp and a toy cat and a toy bird are shown next to Mitsuuji. With all the similarity between the image of Mitsuuji in both cases, the way how he is holding the flute is different. In the book illustration he is playing a longitudinal flute *shakuhachi* while in the commercial print he is playing a transversal print *yokobue*. The musical aspect of this decision is discussed below. Furthermore, the *tsuitate* partition in the commercial print is made of a split bamboo screen, the silk border and the lacquer with golden design. The *tsuitate* partition in the book illustration contains a detailed scene that portrays a scene from the original *Tale of Prince Genji* [**Fig. C**].

11 Persistent Link https://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:37563741?n=3
Ryūtei Tanehiko 1783-1842. Inaka Genji. Edo: Senkakudō Tsuruya Kiemon inkō, Bunsei kichū-Tenpō 13 [1829-1842] shinchō. Page (seq. 3). Repository Harvard College Library Harvard-Yenching Library. Harvard University. Accessed 22 November 2021

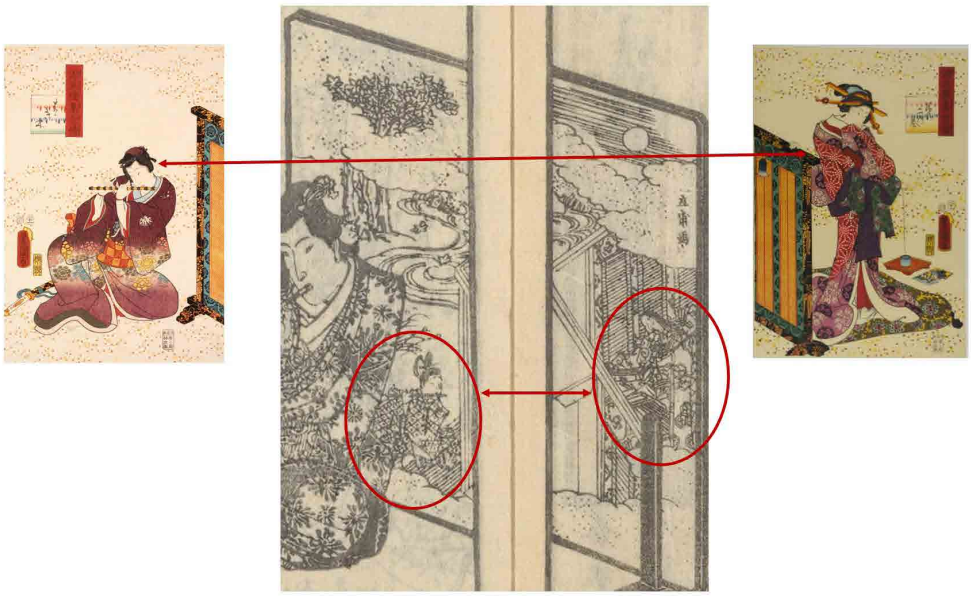

Fig. C. By Utagawa Kunisada, in Ryūtei Tanehiko 1783-1842. *Inaka Genji*. Harvard College Library Harvard-Yenching Library. *Tsuitate* screen detail.[12]

This *tsuitate* screen from the book shows Prince Genji in the palace garden playing the flute to accompany Lady Fujitsubo in the palace interior. This scene is a guide for the viewers that should help understand that the relationships between Mitsuuji and Fujitsubo in the parody are parallel to the relationships between Prince Genji and Lady Fujitsubo. Of course, the situations are not identical and that's why there are differences in how the women are represented: lady Fujitsubo in the parody print is standing instead of famously playing the koto when she is joined by Prince Genji's flute music. This is discussed further in the paper.

Depicted in the print, *yokobue* (横笛) is a type of Japanese transverse flute or *fue*. The *Tale of Genji* is a literary product of the Heian period (794-1185), in which court music became popular. In court music, *ryuteki* (flute) was one of the most common wind instruments played along with stringed and percussion instruments. At the same time, the *Rustic Genji* was produced during the Edo period in which *shakuhachi* became the most popular flute for the public. Ryuteki being a part of the category of *yokobue* shows that this is a reference to the original *Tale of Genji* being set in that time frame. This indicates that the flute is an element that references the classic while also acting as an expression of emotions.

The flute is a vital instrument in the *Tale of Genji* and appears multiple times in the story. Every chapter in the tale is replete with the appearance of scenes detailing music and musical instruments.[13] In the first chapter of the *Tale of Genji*, Murasaki Shikibu mentions that "when it came to music, his flute and koto made the heavens echo," which indicates the musical talent that Genji possesses and how incredibly outstanding he is compared to others in the court. In the same chapter, Murasaki Shikibu employs flute as a medium to indicate the emotions that Genji has developed toward Fujitsubo by delineating that "on evenings when there was music, he would play the flute to her koto and so communicate something of his longing, and take some comfort from her voice, soft through the curtains." This is an embodiment of how Genji is touched and starts to develop an obsession with Fujitsubo when he learns that she resembles his mother. This scene here is similar to what is depicted

12 Persistent Link https://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL:37563741?n=3
Ryūtei Tanehiko 1783-1842. Inaka Genji. Edo: Senkakudō Tsuruya Kiemon inkō, Bunsei kichū-Tenpō 13 [1829-1842] shinchō. Page (seq. 3). Repository Harvard College Library Harvard-Yenching Library. Harvard University. Accessed 22 November 2021

13 Malm, William P. Japanese Music And Musical Instruments. Charles E. Tuttle, 2013. 153

in the print but without the appearance of the koto, which prioritizes the *yokobue* as the primary means of expressing the inner feelings of the characters.[14]

The book illustration compared to the print seems busier in pattern and loses the focus of the musical instrument as it gets lost in the motif of the kimono. It is harder to tell the mood of the scene since the lines are thicker and it is unclear what expression Mitsuuji has on his face while courting the lady. The book illustration has various elements with patterns, including that *tsuitate* that divides the space between the two characters while connecting the two panels of images. The *tsuitate* in the book is illustrated with a landscape, including a musician playing the *yokobue*, right next to the main figure, which is in a very similar pose as Mitsuuji is shown in the actual print. As has been just discussed above, this illustration establishes the parallelism of relationships between those who are illustrated on the *tsuitate* and the main characters of the novel. However, in the actual print, everything is more toned down to have the main focus on Mitsuuji as the main figure playing the flute, and the *tsuitate* being more obvious as a room divider to show that it is a piece of furniture.

The print *Hahakigi* combines features of two stylistic genres in the art of ukiyo-e print, *bijinga*, and y*akusha-e,* therefore making it a fusion piece of both styles. "*Bijinga* is a genre of *ukiyo-e* with three distinctive features. First, *bijinga* images portray women that were commonly considered to have ideal facial appearance. Second, women depicted in *bijinga* wear beautiful attire that was either traditional or in fashion at the time. Third, women in *bijinga* assume feminine postures."[15] The faces of women in Japan's *bijinga* paintings look mostly alike and can feature both males and females with their upper body often shown in a diagonal sway. This could be seen in the print *Hahakigi*. Mitsuuji is portrayed with "ideal facial features," his posture is almost fluid, his luxurious garments flow softly.[16]

Comparably, the print *Hahakigi* also shares features with the genre of *yakusha-e*. *Yakusha-e* is a genre in ukiyo-e art, which depicts kabuki actors. Ukiyo-e represents kabuki actors as portraits on their own or on the theater stage, frozen in exaggerated poses at the culminating moment of the performance. Although the print *Hahakigi* is based on an adventure book and thus doesn't fit into the genre of *yakusha-e*, Kunisada included some features of *yakusha-e* in Mitsuuji's image. One reason for that might be the dramatic intensity of the events that happen in the *Rustic Genji*. Another reason might be the immense popularity of *yakusha-e* during the time when Kunisada was designing the print *Hahakigi*. One can assume that the spread of the theater-related prints further promoted the kabuki theater. Many items within the print such as the *tsuitate* and the *yokobue* could be considered props of Kabuki if they were depicted within the theaters.[17] In the *Hahakigi,* the extravagant pose of the character and his facial expression with crossed eyes (called *mie* - a special stance when the actor freezes) are features of *yakusha-e*.

Since the *Rustic Genji* is a parody of the *Tale of Genji*, the characters in the stories appear to be different and similar at the same time. The author weaves elements of the later Edo period into the story. This is shown through this print's focus on aestheticism, characteristic for the Heian period, through the coexistence of patterns from both the Heian and the Edo period on the *tsuitate* screen in the print, etc. Thus, the *Rustic Genji* becomes a reflection of the Edo period society through the new depiction and reiteration of the original *Tale of Genji*. Despite transformations that many elements portrayed in the print underwent in the story's new version of the Edo period, the *yokobue* is an element that references the Heian Period in the original tale while expressing the emotions of the characters. Given these points, one can conclude that music transcending the boundaries of time and space, plays an essential role in conveying human emotions and marking history.

14 E. Varshavkaya, course instructor, class PowerPoint presentation. https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1aHBKyuj0CI5H-hA3GZiMP7d-POFWtHBjapRojsC6r0sM/edit?usp=sharing

15 Kokugakuin University, Bijinga portraits reflect ideal faces of each era https://www.kokugakuin.ac.jp/en/article/10536

16 Ibid.

17 Yakusha-e. Artelino website.

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Exhibition Catalog, No. 14.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi, 1798-1861
Ushiwakamaru Playing the Flute, 1855,
Woodblock print, 37 cm x 25.30 cm, The Pushkin Museum. A-30552.

Kitagawa Utamaro, 1754–1806
Ushiwakamaru (Minamoto No Yoshitsune) Serenading Princess Joruri (Jorurihime) by Flute, 1790s,
Polychrome woodblock print.
RISD Museum. Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1144.

Ushiwakamaru's Flute:

Balance of Power and Finesse

Jessie Jing

The subject of many *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, Minamoto Yoshitsune (c. 1159-1189), a major historical figure that lived during the end of the Heian period and the beginning of the Kamakura period in Japan and revered for his achievements as military commander, his martial skills and musical abilities, is depicted with his *yokobue*, a Japanese flute made from bamboo, and often with several other characters that are illustrated in the well-known story of his life.

One print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi depicts a young Yoshitsune, then known as Ushiwakamaru (young ox), playing his flute during his first encounter with Musashibo Benkei, warrior-monk and later comrade in arms to Minamoto Yoshitsune, on a bridge.[1]

In another print, Kitagawa Utamaro's triptych, "Ushiwakamaru (Minamoto no Yoshitsune) serenading Jōrurihime [Lady Jōruri] by flute (Ushiwakamaru Jōrurihime)," depicts a slightly older Minamoto Yoshitsune playing his flute to serenade Jōrurihime as she plays the *koto*, a Japanese zither, accompanied by ladies-in-waiting. The scene is a clear reference to the love story of Ushiwakamaru and Jōrurihime while he was on his journey to Oshu with merchant Kaneuri Kichiji.[2] Within these two scenes, we see how Yoshitsune utilizes music and his flute as a tool for manipulating, enticing, and influencing different characters. The larger theme of music as a highly important, respected, and powerful tool of Japanese culture is present here.

Minamoto Yoshitsune is an extraordinary and idealized figure in Japanese history. Born into the Minamoto clan in an era of strife, he grew up to be a skilled warrior, military genius, and excellent in character. Though he was revered as a loyal, affectionate, and kind-hearted character to all including his subordinates, defeated enemies, friends, and women, he still retained the brashness, arrogance, and short-tempered nature of what was typical for a young man with his background.[3] As his story goes, he was separated from his family as a young child and brought up in a temple, training with the Great Tengu, a mythical supernatural being, and his follow-

1 Merrily C. Baird, *Symbols of Japan: Thematic Motifs in Art and Design* (New York: Rizzoli, 2001), 299.
2 Helen Craig McCullough, *Yoshitsune: A Fifteenth-Century Japanese Chronicle* (Stanford University Press, 1966), 47.
3 Ibid, 32.

ers.[4] When he was old enough, Yoshitsune embarked on several journeys to reestablish the high position of his clan.

Yokobue: Ushiwakamaru meets Benkei

Yoshitsune is described on one such journey in the print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi. Ushiwakamaru is depicted in the scene of his first encounter with Musashibo Benkei, a warrior-monk who was attempting to rob 1,000 swords and wanted to target Ushiwakamaru.[5] Here, he is seen playing the *yokobue* flute beside a bridge in the foreground. Benkei is in the background of the print looking towards the ground. This scene belongs to the *musha-e* (warrior pictures) genre, of which our author Kuniyoshi is the founder. The choice to depict the legendary hero in this particular genre only further reveres him. The journey described in this scene is the one in which Ushiwakamaru first meets his future warrior-in-arms—Benkei. As said above, in the most well-known version of the story, Benkei is a lawless warrior-monk looking to rob 1,000 swords from men who are walking by the Gojō bridge.[6] He has collected 999 swords when Ushiwakamaru appears, and Benkei challenges him to a duel. Ushiwakamaru wins, and Benkei becomes his right hand man.[7]

In Kuniyoshi's print, Ushiwakamaru is wearing dark green outer robes with the Minamoto *sasarindō* crest and *karakusa* pattern. The Minamoto *sasarindō* crest is made of the shape of bamboo grass and three gentian flowers [**Fig. A**].[8] His crest is a clear indicator of the Minamoto clan. Attached to the crest are *karakusa*, plants that are usually connected to branches and vines, that symbolize continuity and potentially the longevity of the Minamoto reign.[9]

Fig. A. The Minamoto *sasarindō* crest on Ushiwakamaru's robes in both prints.

His skirt is red and has motifs of waterfowls that are of Persian origin, as well as a *kikkōman* pattern, "a geometric pattern consisting of hexagonal units resembling the shape and pattern of a tortoise shell," that symbolizes longevity [**Fig. B**].[10] His robes are in the courtier style and emphasize the nobleness of Yoshitune's character.

Fig. B. The kikkōman pattern (Left two images) and waterfowls (Right two images) on Yoshitsune's robes.

He is wearing platform *geta* sandals and is carrying two swords on his left side. Ushiwakamaru is also wearing a scarf on his head that nearly reaches the floor. This is a kimono-shaped veil (*kazuki*) worn by women of status starting in the Heian period. It was common for temple acolytes to cover their head and shoulders with cloaks of this kind. His makeup is also done in the fashion that was common for the Heian period nobility and appeared popular for young women of the Edo period, in which he sported *hikimayu* eye-

4 Ibid, 38.
5 Ibid, 40.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Baird, *Symbols of Japan*, 72, 78.
9 Ibid, 87.
10 "JAANUS / Kikkoumon 亀甲文," accessed October 21, 2021, http://www.aisf.or.jp/~jaanus/deta/k/kikkoumon.htm.

brows, those that were plucked and replaced by short thick lines drawn in with *sumi* (black India ink) [**Fig. C**].

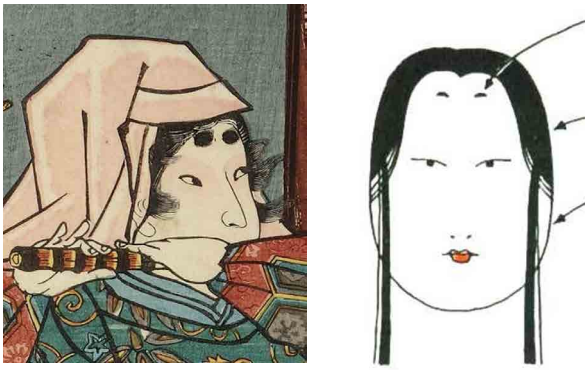

Fig. C. A closer look at Ushiwakamaru's makeup and resemblance to Heian nobility.

In this depiction of Ushiwakamaru, a youthful Yoshitsune highlights the feminine ideal of beauty that was regarded as desirable in the young, particularly during the Heian period that is often described as effeminate. Ushiwakamaru is also depicted here playing his flute. Though the instrument itself has no musical significance, the recurring motif of the flute across several prints with Yoshitsune as the subject portray him as sensitive and elegant, even in harsh circumstances of fighting and war.

In the background, Benkei, the warrior-monk, is wearing a grey and white shawl—a monk's cowl that appears here lowered and folded around his neck, decorated with the *sayagata*, interlocking Buddhist swastikas (*manji*) [**Fig. D**]. This is a pattern that originated in Indian architecture, imported into Chinese fabrics and subsequently into Japan.

Fig. D. The *sayagata* pattern on Benkei's cowl folded around his neck.

The presence of his cowl patterned with the *manji* lets the audience know that the man standing by the bridge is in fact Benkei and gives us context for the scene taking place in front of us.[11] His pants are red and have a Chinese flower motif (*karahana mon*). The rest of the background is kept simple and dark, an artistic choice to keep Yoshitsune as the focal point of the image.

Shown here in this *musha-e* print, we see Kuniyoshi emphasize the musical ability of a military hero to show the excellent character and expression of personal refinement that Yoshitsune embodies. Within the Edo period, imagination and characterization of this well-known historical figure idealized him as (1) a sensitive hero capable of deep romantic emotions (as seen in the later Joruri story); (2) a lyrical personality contrasting to the cold and calculating Minamoto Yoritomo, Japan's first shogun, Yoshitsune's elder half brother and destroyer; and (3) an embodiment of the gentle and refined spirit of the Heian period court culture idealized in the Edo period as "a pristine age, free from foreign influence"—a nostalgia for the culture of the past.[12]

11 Baird, *Symbols of Japan*, 231-232.
12 Haruo Shirane, ed., *Envisioning The Tale of Genji: Media, Gender, and Cultural Production* (Columbia University Press, 2008), 38.

Ushiwakamaru Serenades Jōrurihime

In our second print, "Ushiwakamaru serenading Jōrurihime by flute," we see a group of characters participating in an ongoing musical party. All are dressed elaborately and most are currently in the middle of playing instruments. From right to left, we have three ladies-in-waiting surrounding Lady Jōrurihime, who is playing the *koto*. The three ladies-in-waiting are playing the *tsuridaiko*, *sho*, and *kakko* (right to left) - these instruments will be discussed below. In the middle, another lady-in-waiting, Reizei, is holding up a lantern towards the two men on the left who are obstructed from the rest of the musical party with a bamboo fence. Yoshitsune is playing the flute while Kichiji is squatting on the ground looking up at him. Our main characters within this scene are Jōrurihime, Yoshitsune, Reizei—the lady-in-waiting, and Kichiji, the merchant with whom Yoshitsune is traveling.

The scene in front of us is the starting point of the love story between Ushiwakamaru and Jōrurihime. As the tale goes, Minamoto Yoshitsune, on his way to the north of the country is traveling together with Kaneuri Kichiji, a merchant. It is on this journey in which Ushiwakamaru conducts a coming of age ceremony for himself and changes his name to the one we know well, Yoshitsune.[13] As Yoshitsune comes to Mikawa, the town in which a beautiful young lady Jōruri resides, he takes interest in her and spies on her composing and playing music with her attendants. As Jōruri plays her *koto*, Yoshitsune joins her with the flute. Curious about who the accompanist is, Jōruri sends Reizei, her lady-in-waiting, to figure out the identity of the man and test his abilities. After succeeding, Yoshitsune is invited within where he soon declares his love for Jōruri, but she declines his advances. When she finally gives in, Jōruri's mother approaches her room and Yoshitsune has no option but to flee. Jōruri finds a sick Yoshitsune abandoned on the road to Fukiage and nurses him back to life. After his recovery, they declare their love and recite their goodbyes.[14] Here, section four and five of the twelve-section story are illustrated. Section four and five of the love story relate how Yoshitsune begins to accompany Jōruri's musical party with his flute. Jōruri suspects the man may be of Minamoto descent, as he is traveling with Kichiji, and sends Reizei to observe the man more carefully. She returns convinced that the nicely attried handsome flutist is Minamoto Yoshitsune.[15]

This beautiful scene originates from the *otogi zōshi*, short story, of Yoshitsune and Jōruri passed down through oral tradition in the Muromachi period through the Edo.[16] The story, most widely referred to as *jōruri jūnidan zōshi*, contains twelve sections and was frequently recited as a ballad by blind musicians utilizing descriptive passages that mention music, literature, and religion frequently.[17] The resulting ballad was so popular that *jōruri* became the term used for ballads recited in this manner, and the addition of puppets and *shamisen* resulted in a new dramatic form for theater.[18] Not only is there significance in the birth of a new genre of music from the *Jōruri jūnidan zōshi*, but also the instruments within this particular scene are of importance. Although the scene in front of us is from a story with characters that date back to the Heian period, all of the distinct features — the musical instruments and style of dress — are reminiscent of modernity i.e., the time within the Edo period. Ukiyo-e prints showing distant past in the contemporary guise constitute a larger category of images known as *mitate-e* that loosely may be translated as "substitute pictures." Many of the prints within this genre also avoided serious subjects, such as political or historical scenes, and instead depicted more lighthearted scenes, usually romance or leisure, within the *iki* aesthetic.[19]

The images in the genre we now call *mitate-e* are actually reminiscent of images that elegantly rework (*fūryū yatsushi*) historical figures and literature, rather than *mitate*, which in the Edo

13 McCullough, *Yoshitsune*, 43.
14 Ibid, 47-49.
15 Ibid, 48.
16 Ibid, 47, 50.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
19 Alexander Binns, "Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e," n.d., 120.

period had more vulgar connotations.[20] The purpose of the genre was to create a visual parody of the historical context or literature that was being depicted within a particular *ukiyo-e* print, contrasting as many elements as possible while still alluding to the original stories.[21] Most similarly, *mitate* can be compared to Western twentieth century camp, where both genres looked to weaponize parodies "to carve out space within the dominant culture" and eventually became a part of that commercialized mainstream.[22] As a result, each element within this serenade amplifies the complexity of this genre and the popular culture within the Edo period.

Our principal lady Jōrurihime is seated on the floor of a raised platform that belongs to the indoor and outdoor shared space. She is focused on playing the koto, an elongated Japanese zither with thirteen strings stretched over movable bridges, usually made of ivory or wood, that can be adjusted to achieve different tones.[23] Rectangular plectra are attached to the fingers on her right hand that help her pluck the strings. The fingers on her left hand are pressing the strings to the left of the bridge, varying the tension and modifying the pitch of each plucked string [**Fig. E**].

Fig. E. A close up of the koto, movable bridges and finger picks.

The *koto* was an instrument largely reserved for noble women, showing their refined lifestyle and free time. Playing koto entered the commoner home "as an accomplishment for daughters of rising commercial class and nobility" during the Edo period.[24] The instrument became the center of musical compositions, and two schools were established in the early 16th century that then popularized the genre of koto music, *sōkyoku*.[25] We can speculate that Jōruri belongs to the school of Ikuta due to her rectangular plectrums that she is using to pluck her koto.[26] *Sōkyoku* here also shows the importance of koto music as a literary plot device. It became a popular convention amongst Japanese writers to include *sōkyoku* into literature and especially in those with romantic themes.[27] Often, suitors would be drawn in by a beautiful lady playing the koto and fall in love.[28]

In front of Jōrurihime, we see three ladies-in-waiting playing various instruments. On the right, the lady-in-waiting is seated and playing the *tsuridaiko*, a large double-faced Japanese drum that is suspended in a round frame and supported by a crossed base.[29] There are cloud-shaped decorative wood carvings at the bottom of the frame, and carvings shaped as fire at the top of the frame. The face of the drum has a large *tomoe* symbol. She is striking the face of the drum with two black beaters. The lady-in-waiting in the middle is seated and playing a black lacquered *sho*, a Japanese woodwind instrument that exhibits a set of seventeen reed pipes placed in a cup-shaped wind chest,[30] that is held up by a silver band. On the left, the lady-in-waiting is kneeling while playing the *kakko*, a double-headed Japanese drum laid sideways on a cloud-patterned stand. The drum is held together by a leather tension cord that weaves through holes on each drum face.[31] The drum has cloud-shaped patterns and also features a *tomoe* symbol like the *tsuridaiko*. These instruments meant to be used for an ensemble were decorated as a set. She is striking the drum on both sides with thin sticks.

20 Amy Reigle Newland, The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), 124.
21 Timothy T Clark, "Mitate-e: Some Thoughts, and a Summary of Recent Writings," 2020, 10.
22 Ibid, 25.
23 Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Ear Catches the Eye: Music in Japanese Prints. (Leiden, the Netherlands: Hotei Pub, 2000), 17.
24 William P. Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, New edition., The Yamaguchi Kan Series. (Tokyo ; Kodansha International, 2000), 193.
25 Haags Gemeentemuseum, *The Ear Catches the Eye*, 17.
26 Ibid.
27 Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, 195-196.
28 Ibid.
29 Ibid, 103.
30 Ibid, 110-111.
31 Haags Gemeentemuseum, *The Ear Catches the Eye*, 24.

Fig. F. The *tsuridaiko* drum, *sho*, and *kakko* drum (Left to right).

Though the instruments that the ladies are in accompaniment to koto, they are still a significant part of the ensemble and each have their unique roles in instrumental music. The *tsuridaiko* is only used in instrumental music and marks time rhythmically to identify larger phrases within a piece of music.[32] The *sho* is largely used for harmonies, but not in the same way Western harmonies are utilized. Instead, the *sho* "freezes" the melody in a transcendental way.[33] The notes for the *sho* are believed to imitate a phoenix cry and the shape is also modeled after the bird.[34] The "leader" of the ensemble is the *kakko*, which is used to regulate the tempo of the piece by various patterns in free rhythmic sections and "mark[s] off the passage of a certain number of beats or phrases.[35] The decorations on these various instruments all allude to auspiciousness. The *tomoe* motif on the *tsuridaiko* and *kakko* looks like a yin-yang pattern and may have had a religious origin.[36] The drums also have clouds, which are symbols of religious meaning in Buddhist and Taoist traditions and signs of divine authorities [**Fig. F**].[37]

On the left of the musical party, Minamoto Yoshitsune is standing and playing a red and black lacquered *yokobue*, a cylindrical open side-blown Japanese flute that is made from a bamboo tube with seven finger-holes and one mouth hole [**Fig. G**].[38]

Fig. G. A close up of the black and red *yokobue* that Yoshitsune is playing.

Just as the koto was used by writers in Japanese literature to lure suitors to beautiful women, the flute accompanying the koto became an idiom of being in love and of longing for the beloved in Japanese literature. As a result, the classical tradition continued in this lighthearted way in many literature-based illustrations including ukiyo-e prints of the Edo period.[39]

Just as the musical instruments depicted within this scene reveal some of the cultural and social conventions of the Edo period, the clothing and hairstyle of each of the characters further indicate these same norms. Jorurihime's hair is styled in the *tōrōbin shimada*, a variation of the *shimada* hairstyle that resembles a lantern and implements "a half-moon-shaped strut (*binzashi*) made from tortoise-

32 Malm, *Traditional Japanese Music and Musical Instruments*, 103.
33 Ibid, 112.
34 Ibid, 110-111.
35 Ibid, 104.
36 Baird, *Symbols of Japan*, 218-219.
37 Ibid, 27-28.
38 Ibid, 28.
39 Clark, "Mitate-e: Some Thoughts, and a Summary of Recent Writings.", 7-8.

shell" placed laterally across the head.[40] Her side hair forms wide "lantern sidelocks" (*tōrōbin*).[41] Here, Jōrurihime's *kanzashi* hair pins are much more elaborate than those of the ladies-in-waiting surrounding her. Each of the ladies-in-waiting also sport the *tōrōbin shimada*, but the *kanzashi* that hold up each of the ladies' hair are more simple than the elaborate flower-adorned hair pins that Jōrurihime wears [**Fig. H**].

Fig. H. Jōrurihime's *tōrōbin shimada* (Left) compared to one of the lady-in-waiting's (Right).

Her magnificent hair ornaments clearly indicate that she is the main character in the scene. It is noteworthy that the hairstyle of all women depicted here came into being only during the Edo period - over six hundred years after the events the triptych refers to. The choice to depict these ladies in the *shimada* hairstyle alludes to them being the most fashionable courtesans—the trendsetters.[42]

Jōrurihime wears largely purple outer robes with a large-flowered chrysanthemum (*tairin-kiku*) pattern [*Fig. I*]. Her inner robes are red and have a small white floral pattern.

Fig. I. The *tairin-kiku* pattern on Jōrurihime's robes.

From right to left, the ladies-in-waiting are also wearing Edo period styled fashionably patterned layered robes. On the right, the lady is wearing a grey outer robe with a pattern combination of scattered pine needles (*matsu no ha moyō*) and pine fronds (*wakamatsu no moyō*), a tradition adopted from China.[43] The evergreen is a symbol of longevity, good fortune, and steadfastness, and particularly in the Edo period, pine is a homonym for "to wait" in a political context.[44] Her inner robes are whtie with a red sakura-leaf pattern (*sakura-hana mon'yō*) [**Fig. J**].

Fig. J. The *matsu no ha moyō*, *wakamatsu no moyō*, and *sakura-hana mon'yō* patterns (Left to right) on the lady-in-waiting's robes.

In the middle, the lady-in-waiting is wearing a black and red outer robe with a five-petal flower and white outlined heart-vine or hollyhock (*aoimon*) pattern. The *aoi* is a plant referred to as "hollyhock," "bistort," or "heartvine" in English and supposedly has the power to ward off thunderstorms and earthquakes.[45] Her inner robes are red with a white tie-dye *kanoko-shibori* pattern [**Fig. K**].

40 Newland, The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints, 495.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
43 Baird, *Symbols of Japan*, 61-62.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid, 69.

Fig. K. The *aoimon* (Left) and *kanoko-shibori* (Right) patterns on the lady-in-waiting's robes.

On the left, the lady-in-waiting is wearing cream outer robes with a white *sakura* pattern, and her grey inner robes potentially have a white *chidori* pattern, or plovers, which are an auspicious symbol that is associated with longevity [**Fig. L**].[46]

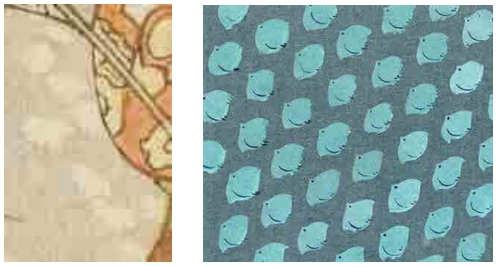

Fig. L. The plover bird *chidori* pattern on the lady-in-waiting's robes.

Yoshitsune is wearing elaborately patterned purple outer robes with the Minamoto *sasarindō* crest in a golden color. Shown here as in the other print, the Minamoto crest confirms to the viewer that the character depicted here is one of the most revered Japanese historical figures. His sleeves are also longer than those of the other characters. Long swinging sleeves were a distinctive feature of the garment for the young worn by both genders. In the story, he is sixteen years old. Yoshitsune's wide green pants with orange lining are *hakama*—a type of divided skirt, a part of the official costume of a nobleman. He is wearing black inner robes. His platform *geta* sandals are particularly high. Yoshitsune is carrying a sword on his left side. Yoshitsune's hair is up in the *chonmage* hairstyle, popular for samurai in the Edo period, in which the top of the head is shaved and the rest of the hair is tied in a topknot [**Fig. M**].[47] His hairstyle here is also one popularized in the Edo period, solidifying the category of *mitate-e* we see applied in the scene.

Fig. M. Yoshitsune's *chonmage* hairstyle.

Kaneuri Kichiji is squatting on the ground to the left of Yoshitsune listening to him play. He is wearing simple green robes patterned with *shōbugawa-mon*, a design with abbreviated representations of sweet flag or iris (*shōbu*) leaves and flowers [**Fig. N**]. His inner robes are red and have a white circle pattern, and his hairstyle is a variation of the *chonmage*.

46 (C) 2001 Japanese Architecture and Art Net Users System. JAANUS / Chidori 千鳥," accessed October 21, 2021, http://www.aisf.or.jp/~-jaanus/deta/c/chidori.htm.

47 Suzanne G. O'Brien, "Splitting Hairs: History and the Politics of Daily Life in Nineteenth-Century Japan," *The Journal of Asian Studies* 67, no. 4 (November 2008): 1309–39, https://doi.org/10.1017/S0021911808001794.

Fig. N. The *shōbugawa-mon* pattern on Kichiji's robes.

Shown as a commoner, Kichiji is looking at Yoshitsune with admiration. While Kichiji is accompanying Yoshitsune, Reizei is fulfilling the task that Jōrurihime asked of her. While carefully clutching her robes, she is quietly approaching the bamboo fence that encloses Joruri's estate. Behind the fence are Yoshitsune and Kichiji. With a lantern in her hand she is illuminating the space around in a hope to discover who the flute player accompanying Jōrurihime's *koto* music is. In the middle of the scene, she bridges the musical party of women with the two men. Her outer robes are purple and patterned with chrysanthemums in a stream, *kiku ni ryūsui moyō* [**Fig. O**].

Fig. O. The *kiku ni ryūsui moyō* pattern on Reizei's robes.

Her hair is in the same style as the other women—the *tōrōbin shimada*. She wears platform sandals, but they are a different style compared to the ones that Yoshitsune is wearing.

The entire scene in front of us is taking place on a vast estate, with a huge building and a strolling garden. There is an open gallery with stepping stones running along the building and a stone lantern. A winding stream, rolling grassy hills, and old curved pine trees deepen the garden into the background with the help of linear perspective. A blooming bush is next to the musical party of women, echoing their own blooming beauty. The integration of this musical scene within a beautiful depiction of nature illustrates the fluidity of nature and music, "a harmony between the sounds of nature and the sounds of music."[48] Music becomes a partner to nature, as the sounds of the instruments seamlessly blend with the sounds and experiences of the surroundings.[49] Music was rarely an isolated experience in the Edo period and thus was represented as such within *ukiyo-e* prints of that period.

Music was highly influential within the sphere of Japanese literature and art. It created an environment to discuss and represent refinement and elegance of the noble life. Musical instruments were used to express feelings and sentiments, especially those that were romantic, as seen in the scene of Jōruri playing the *koto* accompanied by her ladies-in-waiting and Yoshitsune on the flute. The scene is based off of the love story between Jōruri and Yoshitsune, a historical figure of the Heian period with many military accomplishments. Jōruri leads her musical ensemble, consisting of a *sho*, *tsuridaiko*, and *kakko* in *sōkyoku* as Yoshitsune serenades her with his flute. Yoshitsune is often seen with his flute, as seen in the scene of him as a boy standing in front of a bridge in another print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi. Each of the cast of characters is elaborately and appropriately dressed to make a playful comparison of the classical story with the resplendent fashions and gentle allure of the courtesans glorified in *ukiyo-e*. Each element of each scene comes together to give us a clear look into the importance of music in Edo period art.

48 Binns, "Music and Sound as Visual Trope in Ukiyo-e," 121.
49 Ibid.

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Exhibition Catalog, No. 16.

Chōbunsai Eishi, 1756-1829
Beauties Boating on the Sumida River, ca. 1790s
Two prints from a polychrome woodblock printed triptych
RISD. Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 20.1133.

Kitagawa Utamaro, ca. 1753-1806
Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve as She Dances at Wakamiya, Tsurugaoka, ca. 1797
Polychrome woodblock print. The Pushkin Museum. Inventory number A 31831-31833.5
The Pushkin Museum, Moscow, Russia.
http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Sidzukagodzen_tancuyuzchaya_v_Vakamiya_Curugaoka.php

Shizuka Gozen's Dance & Song in Ukiyo-e Context

Prints by Chōbunsai Eishi and Kitagawa Utamaro

Joanne Ahn, Yewon Chun, Jamie Gim

Chōbunsai Eishi's *Beauties Boating on the Sumida River*

Beautiful women in ornate elegant kimonos are traveling aboard a roofed boat that is gliding on top of rippling waters in Kitagawa Utamaro's print *Beauties Enjoying a Boat Ride on the Sumida River*. Chōbunsai Eishi, an important ukiyo-e artist who excelled in the *bijinga* genre—the genre of beautiful women—depicts this scene in an extended three-print composition, two of which are in the RISD Collection.

Three women are seated under the roof that goes over the main part of the boat. The woman in the center boasts elaborate, floral hair decorations and hair that is gathered high on her head and falls over her back. She, alone, leans on an armrest, or *kyōsoku*, with her left arm while holding a flat red lacquer, or *sakazuki*, in her right hand. She is attended to by the kneeling women in front of and behind her. In the rear of the boat closer to the stern, are two more women. One sits with her knees folded, the other stands with her right arm raised, perhaps dancing. In the space in front of the roofed portion of the boat are two more women. The one at the forefront is playing a drum, and the one farther away, with a simple, youthful hairdo, seems to be an assistant of some kind.

The majority of women shown here are wearing *tōrōbin-shimada*, a hairstyle characterized by the lantern-type *shimada* chignon with wide semi-transparent sidelocks. This look was common during the period the print was created in. The women also wear layered patterned kimonos, a fashionable look at the time. Despite the trendy time and place that make up the scene of the print, there are distinct details beneath its surface that distinguish it from being a simple leisurely moment from contemporary life.

A second glance at the print unveils each figure's movements and gestures that give her a sense of nobility. Moreover, there is one distinct pattern, the *sasarindō*, that is seen multiple

times throughout the composition. This motif, a combination of five bamboo leaves that point downward and three gentian flowers which point up, is a well-known family crest in Japan. It is primarily associated with the Minamoto clan of the first shoguns in Japanese history. The *sasarindō* pattern is conspicuously placed at the gable of the boat's roof and is repeated at the corners of the boat's curtain. It is seen yet again adorning the kimono of the central woman under the boat's roof.

These clues come together when the last print of the triptych is considered - the full print can be found, for example, in the Kislak Collection of Japanese prints at Upenn [**Fig. A**].

Fig A. Chōbunsai Eishi, 1756-1829. Beauties Boating on the Sumida River, ca. 1790s. UPenn, Kislak Collection of Japanese Prints. Gift of Dr. Cecilia Segawa Seigle.[1]

This leftmost panel of the triptych introduces two more women, one who dances and another who plays a hand drum, or *kotsuzumi*. The side of the prow bears the *sasarindō* symbol. The dancing woman is portrayed mid-movement with her left arm raised and her long sleeve cascading down, following the flow of air that her dance creates. In her right hand she holds a fan. Her pose and gesture identify her as Shizuka Gozen [**Figs. B, D**], young lover of Minamoto Yoshitsune (1159-1189), one of Japan's favorite and most well-known historic figures remembered as a tragic hero.

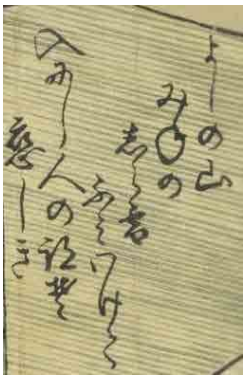
Fig B. Chōbunsai Eishi, 1756-1829. Beauties Boating on the Sumida River, ca. 1790s. UPenn, Kislak Collection. Left print of the triptych, see Fig. A.[2]

1 Upenn, Kislak Collection of Japanese Prints, https://web.sas.upenn.edu/japaneseprints/chobunsai-eishi-pleasure-boat-triptych-with-beauties-ca-1792-93/

2 UPenn, Kislak Collection of Japanese Prints, https://web.sas.upenn.edu/japaneseprints/chobunsai-eishi-pleasure-boat-triptych-with-beauties-ca-1792-93/

The Story of Shizuka Gozen's Dancing for Minamoto Yoritomo

Let's now briefly review the story as it is retold in the Chronicle of Yoshitsune, an anonymous tale of the 15th century, that became the classical account of Minamoto Yoshitsune's life. The military ruler of Japan, its first shogun, Minamoto Yoritomo (1147-1199), her lover's half-brother, turned against his younger sibling. It is not known exactly what caused Yoritomo's anger. Perhaps he became envious of the many illustrious victories held by Yoshitsune as the Minamoto clan was fighting for power. Minamoto Yoshitsune had a mistress at that time - lady Shizuka Gozen. Lady Shizuka Gozen was a *shirabyoshi* dancer famous for her beauty and dancing. *Shirabyoshi* dancers were women dancers who dressed in men's clothing performing to rhythmic songs, a popular form of performance in the Heian and Kamakura periods. Having learned that Shizuka Gozen was captured, Minamoto Yoritomo wanted to see this celebrity dancer and forced her to perform for him. The performance took place at the Wakamiya Shrine at Tsurugaoka in Kamakura, the administrative center of the Minamoto shogunate. Although Shizuka Gozen was performing on the orders of Minamoto Yoritomo to entertain him, she instead made her performance dedicated to her only love, Minamoto Yoshitsune, who at that time had been chased by Yoritomo. While dancing, she sang a song avowing her unfading feeling for her beloved.



Kitagawa Utamaro, central sheet from triptych Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve, ca. 1797. Shizuka Gozen's poem floating against the bamboo curtain above Shizuka's tossed sleeve.[3]

Her song is cited in the 15th century anonymous chronicle called *Gikeiki* (義経記 *Chronicle of Yoshitsune*) which became a classical account of his life. According to this book she sang, *How I long for him – The person who vanished, Cleaving a way// Through the white snows// On Yoshino's peaks.*[4] Shizuka's song enraged Yoritomo. The book then quotes Yoritomo saying "... she might as well have said outright "Yoshtsune is still ailve in spite of Yoritomo's efforts to destroy him." The story was illustrated in ukiyo-e numerous times but often in a disguise.

Here we consider two such interpretations both dating to the last decade of the 18th century, both designed by great masters of the bijinga genre, Kitagawa Utamaro and Chōbunsai Eishi.

Back to the discussion of the beauties on the pleasure boat by Chōbunsai Eishi. By disguising a classical story as a scene of contemporary pleasurable pastime, Eishi creates a *mitate-e* - a witty recasting of a classical story in the most modern form. The artist depicts all historical characters as fashionable courtesans of his day. It is up to the viewer to figure out the meaning of individual details. If the woman dancing on the prow is Shizuka Gozen, then we can assume that the most ornate woman watching her stands for Minamoto Yoritomo [**Fig. E**]. She is the central person in the boat and the viewers identify her with Minamoto Yoritomo. All evidence comes together to

3 Translation in McCullough, Yoshitsune: A Fifteenth-century Japanese Chronicle 1966, p. 234-235. Transcription of the poem: 吉野山 峰の白雪 ふみわけて 入りにし人の 跡ぞ恋しき.

4 Ibid.

confirm the guess. This refers to the central location of her seat and to the fact that she is the only one who has an armrest to lean upon. She is also the only one to have a portable table in front of her, and the only one with a sake cup. The most definitive indication that this beautiful woman indeed stands for Minamoto Yoritomo is the *sasrindō* crest of the Minamoto clan that decorates her kimono. Adding on, there is a second dancer on the boat standing at the stern. Perhaps she is Shizuka Gozen's mother who figures prominently in the story.

Kitagawa Utamaro's *Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve as She Dances at Wakamiya, Tsurugaoka*

Let's now consider a triptych by Kitagawa Utamaro dedicated to the same subject matter. This time the print's title written at the top of the right panel openly announces the theme being illustrated. The print is called *Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve as She Dances at Wakamiya, Tsurugaoka*, 1797, the Pushkin Museum.

A simple glance at Utamaro's print *Shizuka Gozen Dancing at Wakayama, Tsurugaoka* displays the female dancer performing center stage, holding a fan in one hand. Her sleeve is tossed over in a pose, similar to that of Eishi's *Beauties Enjoying a Boat Ride on the Sumida River*. Three musicians play hand drums and one plays a flute to the right of her, indicating dance and music. Six people are seated on the floor watching on her left, one of which is sitting on an elevated platform. The dancer's headdress, fan, and her decorated, layered garments give away her profession. Two more people watch from the right, engaging in conversation and kneeling in flowery garments that are depicted like *bijinga*, showing Utamaro's purposeful layering of the old classical story and the icons of his contemporary ukiyo culture, beautiful courtesans.

Uniformed male-like musicians, with their long black headpieces and layered clothing, are shown as females of the *bijinga* genre as they accompany the female dancer who dances in front of the main audience. All of them have hairdos protruding to the sides semi-transparent sidelocks of the most popular hairstyle *torobin-shamada*, the "lantern chignon." Thus, Utamaro playfully, audaciously and subversively superimposes the 12th century legend from the samurai lore and contemporary culture of commoners, the ukiyo-e [**Fig. C**].

Fig. C. Kitagawa Utamaro, ca. 1753-1806
Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve as She Dances at Wakamiya, Tsurugaoka, ca. 1797
The Pushkin Museum. Inventory number A 31831-31833. Detail - right part.

The setting of the piece is the Wakayama shrine at Tsurugaoka in Kamakura, the seat of the Minamoto shoguns established by Minamoto Yoritomo, Japan's first shogun, for whom Shizuka Gozen is dancing. The interior is decorated with a screen that stands behind the viewers on the left and drapes that hang from the ceiling. The walls are decorated with imagery and characters, revealing the homeowner's high status. The screen pictures cranes and the ceiling curtain features a family crest of *sasarindō* that was unique to the Minamoto clan. The crest is seen again covering the garment of the woman sitting on the platform. It reminds us of the same crest depicted on the garment of the woman observing the dance in Eishi's print where the crest appears also along the drapes that hang on the perimeter of the boat. The room and all those who reside in it are covered in elaborate textiles, indicating that the event is exclusive to people of higher status which was so as the dance was performed on the order of the shogun.

Despite the variety of movement depicted in the piece, the print is compositionally well balanced. The young beautiful dancer is centrally placed while the musicians and viewers sit around almost forming a circle. The dancer's sleeves and fan move with her arms and flow swiftly through the air. Music seems to play through the room and print, as though the music flows out of the paper to the viewer. The famous words of the above quoted song that Shizuka Gozen sang while dancing are inscribed on the bamboo screen on the wall to the left of the Shizuka's tossed up sleeve. These words perhaps made Shizuka's powerful song sound in the minds of the print viewers as they contemplated the print.

The color scheme of the print is now muted but the wide variety of shades suggests that the print was originally colorful and vividly patterned. A more thorough look into the subject of the piece, Shizuka Gozen, reveals much more about the figure and the time period.

Two Shizuka Gozen's triptychs - the Shared Features

The two triptychs illustrating the story of Shizuka Gozen and created approximately at the same time (the last decade of the 18th century) by the leading masters of the *bijinga* genre - by Kitagawa Utamaro and Chōbunsai Eshi, share many features.

Shizuka Gozen's elegant pose in her dance is prominent in both triptychs. The dancer at the front of the boat strikes the same pose that is struck by the *shirabyoshi* dancer in Kitagawa Utamaro's print of Shizuka Gozen. The repeating of the dancer's pose in ukiyo-e prints by different artists illustrating the same story in a contemporary appearance indicates that it has become a recognizable marker of this subject matter. It was this stereotypical pose of the dancer that allowed understanding that the woman at the front of the boat in Eishi's print is, therefore, the same Shizuka Gozen depicted in Utamaro's print [**Fig. D**].

Fig. D.Left: Kitagawa Utamaro, central sheet from triptych *Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve*, ca. 1797.
Right: Chōbunsai Eishi, left sheet from triptych, *Beauties Boating on the Sumida River*, ca. 1790s.

Fans portrayed in the prints in the middle of the performance also contain symbolism. Japanese fan dancing is an ancient tradition which dates back to 600 BC. Fans were used for storytelling and entertainment just as the two art prints depict it. Fan dancing was an aristocratic art form as fan itself was an item indicating the person's social status, which embellishments with sandalwood, ivory and mother-of-pearl were for those in high rank. Fan dancing usually involves slow and deliberate poses, figures and movement which often tell a story, as numerous gestures are symbolic. Fan dancing formed an essential part of celebrations, including marriage ceremonies and coronations. The dance is accompanied by traditional Japanese music. Along with fan dancing, *tsuzumi* drums were also a part of traditional music, which was associated with celebrations, festivals and entertainment. Both triptychs that are discussed here represented Shizuka Gozen performing a fan dance.

As has been said already, Minamoto Yoritomo is also encrypted in these two bijinga prints. In both triptychs Yoritomo is cleverly depicted as a beauty distinguished as the figure of authority within the room and the boat [**Fig. E**]. In Utamaro's triptych, Yoritomo is the only person with a special headgear and is the only one seated on a raised platform while everyone else is on the floor. Yoritomo's garment is adorned by the s*asarindō* crest of the Minamoto clan. In Eishi's print, the lady that implies Yoritomo is depicted in the center of the scene, with a special headgear. Leaning on an armrest and holding a sake cup, she obviously is the one for whom the performance is held. The woman's outer kimono is also decorated with the *sasarindō* design [**Fig. F**].

Fig. E. Minamoto Yoritomo in disguise
Kitagawa Utamaro, left sheet from triptych *Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve*, ca. 1797. Pushkin Museum.
Chōbunsai Eishi, left sheet from triptych, *Beauties Boating on the Sumida River*, ca. 1790s. RISD

Fig. F. *Sasarindō* - the Minamoto Crest, on curtains and "Yoritomo's" garment
Kitagawa Utamaro, left sheet from triptych *Shizuka Gozen Tosses Her Sleeve*, ca. 1797. Pushkin Museum.
Chōbunsai Eishi, left sheet from triptych, *Beauties Boating on the Sumida River*, ca. 1790s. RISD

In both cases we see that both artists choose to portray exclusively women, more precisely - modish courtesans who are only shown "playing out" the famous historic situation. Both images are subversive. They challenge the government control of popular culture by representing famous historical figures, including military rulers, as high-ranking courtesans.

Within strict status enforcements there always existed consorts and love stories. The triptych *Shizuka Gozen Tosses her Sleeve as she Dances at Wakamiya, Tsurugaoka* by Kitagawa Utamaro shows exactly this type of situation. The same can be said about *The Beauties on a Pleasure Boat* by Chōbunsai Eishi, though this was done less openly. Despite Shizuka's status, her song for her lover is honored and finds a way to the hearts of all the people in Japan today. In later years, upper class culture was lost and the ways of the low classes gradually rose. Nobles and commoners alike found interest in the poem and print expressing the tragedy of a noble in distress and his captured dancing concubine. Relationships that defied social status and instead fought against what was wrong increasingly held more substance and romance in the people's eyes than did those that expressed social order and the idealized beauty in nobility. To this day, performances at festivals, like the ukiyo-e poem of Shizuka Gozen dancing at Wakayama, are held in honor of ancient dancers and stories that defied social norms.

In traditional Japan, woodcuts for prints of dance depict historical dances, religious or secular festival dances, theater dance like the kabuki dance, and private entertainment dance. The symbols present within these prints are crucial in expressing these different settings and emotions the artist wishes to convey.

Musical instruments and performance symbolize and represent the period and its culture that produced it. [6]

Conclusion

Rapid commercialization and commodification made class distinction difficult to maintain; there was a sudden mixture of classes. Peasants became rich, nobles became laborers, servants became lovers of elites, and merchant houses were led by women. Social norms were changing and people developed interests in status discourse and its drama. There was an increasing trend of nobles or warriors wanting to see the commoner musical, even calling them in for private performances. The interest in commoner music did not wane and only irritated conservative philosophers and lawmakers who continued to advocate samurai ideals.

The ukiyo-e prints from the Edo period show the social norms meant to be preserved in their beauty but eventually disrupted with love stories that would show the realities of what being emotional humans are. The beauties in society that were thought to simply exist among a male

6 Tsuge, G. (1978). *Bamboo, silk, dragon and phoenix: Symbolism in the Musical Instruments of Asia.* VWB - Verlag für Wissenschaft und Bildung.

society have much more complex roles that communicate through music and dance societal and personal anecdotes, representing relationships and love that stirred norms within social and political lives, and the intentional details that find themselves within the print through motions of dance and symbolism that allow the audience to have a more personal and entertaining experience with these artistic expressions.

Investigation of these two prints demonstrates that the popular art of ukiyo-e delighted in playful interpretation of history by transplanting the past into the floating world of pleasures with its lighthearted values and adoration of feminine beauty embodied by courtesans of Yoshiwara.

Ukiyo-e prints illustrating the story of Shizuka Gozen celebrate the extraordinary power of love that emboldens a young, frail woman to openly express her feelings. Moreover, it celebrates the remarkable capacity of music, dance, and song to convey human deepest emotions in the most moving way.

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The Pushkin Museum, Moscow, Russia - image source. http://japaneseprints.ru/data/engravings/Sidzukagodzen_tancuyuzchaya_v_Vakamiya_Curugaoka

Part IV. IN TUNE WITH NATURE

Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), 1786-1865
Enjoying Flowers in the Inner Garden (Oniwa hana no asobi), 1840s
Polychrome woodblock printed triptych
RISD. Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.2339

Music Flowering in the Spring Garden

Lydia Pinkhassik, Ariel Pan, Liu Yang

This piece is a triptych depicting three women walking somewhere, with each woman taking up her own panel. Each of the three women is carrying something relevant to their goal. Reading from right to left, in order, they are holding a black wooden case, presumably for tofu; a shamisen in one hand and a bowl to rinse sake cups in the other (called a haisen); and a heavy wooden bucket of sake. In the background, we see flowering trees, a winding river, some mountains, a small bridge over a stream, a couple of buildings, and some far-away people performing various tasks. The building on the right side of the screen is semi-open, which allows people to observe the beauty of the changing seasons. A lady in blue is sitting inside and looking out to enjoy the scenery. A lady on the far right is preparing food there - as she fries skewered miso-coated tofu on the grill, she gently controls the heat with a folding fan [Fig. A].

Fig. A. Utagawa Kunisada (Toyokuni III), 1786-1865
Enjoying Flowers in the Inner Garden (Oniwa hana no asobi), 1840s. Details.
Left to right: sake bucket; *haisen* - vessel for rinsing sake cups, and shamisen; tofu box; grilling miso-coated tofu.

This is a multicoloured print, with the primary colours featured being light blue, salmon red, black, and white. There has been some layering of these colours to create specific shades. The ground is represented as the plain white of the paper. In the right panel, the woman carrying the black case is turning around to face the other two women. Behind her, we see blue grass - the same colour as the blue hills far in the distance, interrupted sometimes with light red trees. Between the hills in the background and the woman in the foreground, we see a red building

surrounded by a few people. In the upper right corner, there is a circular cartouche. In the middle panel, the woman carrying the shamisen is walking, smiling at the woman in the right panel. We see the river more clearly in the background, as well as the large flowering cherry blossom tree. The blossoms are large and beautiful, signalling that this is the perfect time to view them.

The buildings in the background are not just any random buildings one might find in a town of that period - they are specifically part of a daimyo's residence, called a yashiki. The entire luxurious scene is all part of a daimyo's estate. We can see only a small portion of the compound - the entire grounds would contain storehouses, archery and riding ranges, stables, kitchens, lookout towers, gardens, and possibly a shrine, as were commonly found in most large daimyo yashiki.[1] Of course, daimyos were military figures, and part of their duties was to change every year between serving the shogun in Edo and spending a year in their own provinces. So how is it that they were able to maintain such expansive and gorgeous estates when they were absent every other year? Simply because they were not the only ones living there. Aside from employing various maids and footmen to do manual labour around the home, daimyo would employ retainers - these were men who would oversee the estate in their absence and join them in battle when necessary, in exchange for a stipend for themselves and their families.[2] These retainers were samurai as well, and while by the time of the Edo period they were no longer fighting as that was the time of peace, they were still highly respected. They lived lives that permitted time for entertainment, and were often represented relaxing.[3] We do not know if the daimyo who owns the yashiki depicted is actually present, but there are some suggestions as to the culture and air of conviviality in the estate regardless.

The feature of the triptych that most immediately draws the viewer's attention is the elegant grace of the three women, particularly the one in the middle. They are all wearing richly decorated kimonos with flower motifs. The women carrying the case of tofu and bucket of sake are both wearing aprons, while the woman in the middle is not. All three belong in some capacity to the yashiki seen in the background. We know this in large part due to their hairstyles. The two on the left and in the centre are wearing what is known as a taka-shimada hairstyle, which was common among women from samurai families, while the one on the right is wearing a katahazushi hairstyle, which was worn by married women belonging to the families of daimyo's retainers.[4] All three women are very beautiful and quite young. This signals that this print is bijinga.

Bijinga is one of the leading genres in ukiyo-e art. The term "bijinga" refers to prints and paintings depicting beautiful women. Throughout history, art containing beautiful women has been very popular in many cultures, and Japan was no exception - bijinga and its more risque sister genre shunga were extremely popular in the Edo period,[5] with many prominent ukiyo-e artists revered now for their landscapes having also produced a large amount of risque or even outright erotic images.[6] So great was the popularity of beautiful women images among artists and consumers alike that it was a popular practice among ukiyo-e artists to represent a wide variety of scenes and concepts as beautiful women, typically courtesans and kabuki actors who were female impersonators (onnagata.) Utagawa Kunisada, the designer of this print, was a particularly well-known and celebrated artist of the bijinga genre, with nearly a third of his immense body of work dedicated to portraying beautiful women. His influence was so great that his style became the defining characteristic of the Utagawa school of ukiyo-e, which was particularly influential in the early to mid 19th century. We can see here a special trademark

1 Vaporis, Constantine N. "A Tour of Duty: Kurume Hanshi Edo Kinban Nagaya Emaki." *Monumenta Nipponica* 51, no. 3 (1996): 279. https://doi.org/10.2307/2385611.
2 Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia. "daimyo." Encyclopedia Britannica, September 10, 2019. https://www.britannica.com/topic/daimyo.
3 Vaporis, Constantine N. "A Tour of Duty: Kurume Hanshi Edo Kinban Nagaya Emaki." 279–307. https://doi.org/10.2307/2385611.
4 Japanese Coiffure. https://www.japanese-wiki-corpus.org/culture/Japanese%20Coiffure.html
5 Eichman, Shawn, and Stephen Salel. "Why So Much 'Shunga' at the Honolulu Museum of Art?" *Impressions*, no. 36 (2015): 132–43. http://www.jstor.org/stable/24869059.
6 Marco Benoît Carbone in: Hackett, Jon; Harrington, Seán (2018). *Beasts of the Deep: Sea Creatures and Popular Culture*. Indiana University Press. p. 63. ISBN 9780861969395.

of the school. In the top right corner, he has included a round cartouche of a peculiar shape. This is a reference to a toshidama, or a "year jewel." This symbol refers to the New Year and is considered auspicious, and quickly became a hallmark of the Utagawa School - and of Kunisada's own work.[7] He was most famous for his work depicting (and personal life involving) performers called geisha, who were celebrated members of many of the scandalous circles in Edo. After the sumptuary laws of 1842 banned the depiction of geisha and courtesans in art, Utagawa Kunisada turned to representing young women from other walks of life to avoid upsetting the government censors.[8] We know that the Enjoying Flowers in the Inner Garden print was made sometime in the 1840s, and since these young women are not courtesans but rather women in service of a samurai family, we can safely assume that this print was made after these laws were introduced. What is particularly interesting about this example of bijinga is that these beautiful women are pictured as though they are almost melding with the flower garden. Their kimonos are covered in beautiful floral motifs, and the resulting business makes their clothes combine with the cherry blossoms behind them. These ladies are not the only ones enjoying beautiful flowers - the viewers are as well. In portraying these women in these lavish patterns and in the process of preparing to view beautiful objects, Utagawa Kunisada is inviting us to also enjoy looking at beautiful objects - in this case, the women themselves. As the ladies appreciate the transient, impermanent beauty of the cherry blossoms, we enjoy the transient, impermanent beauty of the ladies, preserved forever in this print.

When it comes to the female figures in the Edo period, the first thing that attracts our attention is their kimono, a Japanese iconic garment that portrays feminine beauty[9]. The pattern motifs on their kimono reflect Japanese people's active involvement and consideration in their social occasions. Both the woman on the left side and the lady at the centre wear kimono with the pattern of cherry blossoms (sakura) - one features blossomed branches the other features single blossoms. The women are heading for the preparation of hanami, which is a celebration involving cherry blossoms. So, the motif of their garment precisely matches the event. For instance, the time period of wearing kimonos bearing the sakura pattern is short, corresponding to the cherry blossom's short season.[10] This highlights just how much Japanese people, particularly Japanese women in the Edo period, valued the appropriateness of their dress to the season and their social situation. Though the woman on the right is not wearing a kimono bearing the sakura motif like her two companions, the reddened maple leaf motif adorning her own kimono can create an illusion of autumn's arrival, which makes other people feel the cool autumn wind - much appreciated on a hot spring day. Making others feel comfortable through textile motifs is a sign that one respects their surroundings and peers in Japan[11]. Even the seemingly small decision of the pattern of a dress hides a great deal of meaning [Fig. B].

Fig. B. Kimono textile patterns, left - sakura leaves on branches; center - sakura leaves floating; right - reddened maple leaves in a steam.

7 Vegder. "Otoshidama 御年玉 New Year's Gift". https://printsofjapan.wordpress.com/2009/06/02/otoshidama/
8 Izzard, Sebastian. "THE BIJIN-GA OF UTAGAWA KUNISADA." Impressions, no. 3 (1979): 1–5. http://www.jstor.org/stable/42598052.
9 Seiroku Noma and Armins Nikovskis, in *Japanese Costume and Textile Arts. Translated by Armins Nikovskis*, vol. 16 (New York, NY: Weatherhill, 1974), 28.
10 Keiko Nitanai, "Spring," in *Kimono Design, An Introduction to Textiles and Patterns* (Rutland, Vermont: TUTTLE, 2017), pp. 1-395, 28.
11 Ibid., 218

Also, the differentiation between their kimono's styles implies that Edo women cherish their feminine youth. If we observe the three female figures closely, we see the difference in the length of their sleeves. The lady in the middle wears a kimono with longer sleeves, which is called a furisode in Japanese, literally referring to "swinging sleeves."[12] In the Edo period, only unmarried young ladies wore furisode in formal occasions, and it signifies Japanese women's short youth,[13] due to the high rate of marriage at young age and high mortality in the Edo period. The lady in the center of the triptych print chooses to wear the furisode bearing single cherry blossoms in a slightly abstracted style. This choice of motif not only gives an impression of her great value of the hanami and feminine elegance, but also implies the transience of life because of the flower's fading beauty.[14] This young lady looks to be as old as the woman on the right, who is clearly (according to her hairstyle) married, and yet she is still unmarried. In Japan, unmarried young women are highly stigmatised, to the point where unmarried women over the age of twenty-five are referred to as "Christmas cake" - meaning that just like how no one wants Christmas cake after December 25, no one wants a woman after she's turned twenty five.[15] Yet, this woman seems perfectly happy wearing her furisode, even one bearing such a clear motif, which gives this piece a sense of relaxation.

The sense of appreciation for the transient aspects of life carries through not only with the young lady's furisode, but also with the very event that the three are preparing for. Inspired by cherry blossoms' fragile beauty and short season, Japanese people feel obliged to enjoy their transient life during the sakura blossom viewing.[16]

Rituals celebrating the native cherry trees' blossoms, or sakura, date back thousands of years. It is said that the Deity of Rice Paddies (Tano Kami) lives in the sacred mountain full of cherry trees, and that he comes to the secular world in spring to protect the paddy crops so that the paddy crops will bear a good harvest in autumn.[17] As a result, Japanese people perceive cherry blossoms as the Deity of Rice Paddies's spiritual embodiment and the prediction of a good harvest and a better life,[18] although the season of cherry blossoms is as transient as human life.[19] Thus, peasants performed rituals to celebrate and encourage a good harvest in the spring, and ended their festivals with feasting under the sakura trees. This ritual started to prosper among Japanese royal families and nobles in the Heian period, but didn't become urban civilians' leisure until the Edo period.[20] In hanami, friends usually gather around to view the cherry blossoms, and eat, drink sake, sing, dance, and play music. This music involved a variety of musical instruments, such as the shamisen pictured in this print.

As mentioned already, these women all belong in some way to a daimyo's household. Only two of them are wearing aprons because the third, the one in the middle, is the shamisen player who will be providing the music for the group, and will thus be "on display". The composition of the piece highlights the shamisen player's importance: the two women in aprons are both looking in her direction. Whether one reads the triptych from left to right or from right to left, as is customary in Japan, the body language and eye lines of the women on the outside lead to the one in the middle. This makes sense, as music is a very important part of hanami.

When one thinks of Japanese music, there are certain elements that immediately spring to mind: the profound usage of silence, or "ma"; the close ties to nature and natural sounds; and the

12 "Trends in Furisode: Fashion: Trends in Japan: Web Japan," Trends in Furisode | Fashion | Trends in Japan | Web Japan, accessed November 19, 2021, https://web-japan.org/trends/09_fashion/fas110224.html.
13 Ibid.
14 Seiroku Noma and Armins NIKOVSKIS, in *Japanese Costume and Textile Arts. Translated by Armins Nikovskis*, vol. 16 (New York, NY: Weatherhill, 1974), 165.
15 Anisa Kazemi, "5 Festive Facts about Japanese Christmas Cake". https://savvytokyo.com/5-facts-japanese-christmas-cake/
16 Narumi Yasuda, "HANAMI Cherry Blossom Viewing," in *Introduction to Japanese Culture*, ed. Daniel Sosnoski (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2015), pp. 8-103, 12.
17 Sepp Linhart, Sabine Frühstück, and Emiko Ohnuki Tierney, Chapter 11. "Cherry Blossoms and Their Viewing A Window onto Japanese Culture," in *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 214.
18 Sepp Linhart, Sabine Frühstück, and Emiko Ohnuki Tierney, Chapter 11, "Cherry Blossoms and Their Viewing A Window onto Japanese Culture," in *The Culture of Japan as Seen through Its Leisure*, 215
19 Narumi Yasuda, "HANAMI Cherry Blossom Viewing," in *Introduction to Japanese Culture*, ed. Daniel Sosnoski (North Clarendon, VT: Tuttle Publishing, 2015), pp. 8-103, 12.
20 Haruo Shirane, "Chapter Six Annual Observances, Places, and Entertainment," in *Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), pp. 1-336, https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/ebookviewer/ebook/bmxlYmtfXzQ2MTEzM-l9fQU41?sid=255d1389-ec56-4e19-a74e-31bf1a241021@redis&vid=0&format=EB&rid=1, 169.

wide variety of string instruments which, while similar in materials and construction, are hugely diverse in their tone and implementation. One of the most famous string instruments popular in Japanese music is the shamisen. The shamisen bears significant resemblance to its American cousin, the banjo - it is also made of a few sheets of wood covered with skin and some strings, and it is (with only rare exception) played with a pick rather than the player's bare fingers. While the shamisen is naturally suited for a specific tonal range, by the early nineteenth century, shamisen players in Edo had already begun to experiment with the tones of their vocal accompaniments, extending their creative freedom past what the original masters had perhaps intended.[21] This extended freedom meant that they were able to communicate more ideas and concepts with their music. The shamisen was particularly popular among the emerging bourgeois class in Edo Japan, but less approved of in high-class samurai families. It was thought to be a low-class distraction, and indeed, some even characterised women who did not live up to a certain standard of achievement regarding their wifely duties as lazy, shamisen-obsessed good-for-nothings.[22] Still, young commoner women were often encouraged, if not forced, to learn to play the shamisen, in hopes of attracting the attention and protection of a samurai.[23] Women with musical talents were often perceived as more attractive and desirable.[24] In the later Edo period, during the time when peasant martyrs were becoming a popular motif, some popular songs of resistance employed the shamisen, likely as it was an easy instrument to transport that still left the player able to sing and spread their message verbally.[25] Another group that often used the shamisen are the gannin monks, who attracted viewers both through their provocative choice of clothing and through their song and dance. During their performances, viewers would often get caught up in frenzied dancing, all to the tune of the shamisen and its sister instruments.[26] The shamisen is also the backbone of many different storytelling performance traditions. These traditions range across a span of different subjects.[27] Some have to do with romantic dramas culminating in double suicides. Some have to do with political intrigues and back-stabbings.

The shamisen was also used in other, less sordid applications, such as in music specifically composed to accompany a hanami.[28] We do not know exactly what genre of shamisen music is being played here, as all kinds of music were popular during hanami and there are no further indications. However, it is clear that whatever style of music, it goes with the atmosphere of celebration and appreciation of nature. Music was far from the only diversion during a hanami, however - another important element of the celebration was communal drinking.

As we can see in the print, the middle woman holds a blue and white porcelain haisen filled with water, and a set of two floating sake cups. It is important to note the relative novelty of the haisen's material. In the early 19th century in Edo, blue-and-white porcelain featuring designs made with a cobalt underglaze became immensely popular. It became increasingly present among the ceramic utensils used in day-to-day life, and in domestic decorative art.[29]. This haisen has a typical shape. Haisen were often decorated with auspicious motifs, here we see flowers and patterns that are lucky charms like chrysanthemum, morning glory. In the Edo period, live flowers returned to the gardens of both urban commoners and upper-rank samurai, who favored "grass flowers" (such as chrysanthemum and morning glory) over the "tree flowers" (cherry, plum, wisteria, and mandarin orange) (Shirane 2013, 20), which implies that the garden might belong to this group. We might ask - why is it that three women are only bringing two cups

21 Tokita, Alison McQueen. "Mode and Scale, Modulation and Tuning in Japanese Shamisen Music: The Case of Kiyomoto Narrative." 4*Ethnomusicology* 40, no. 1 (1996): 1–33. https://doi.org/10.2307/852434.

22 Sekiguchi, Sumiko, and Michael Burtscher. "Gender in the Meiji Renovation: Confucian 'Lessons for Women' and the Making of Modern Japan." *Social Science Japan Journal* 11, no. 2 (2008): 201–21. http://www.jstor.org/stable/40649637.

23 Tanimura, Reiko. "Practical Frivolities: The Study of Shamisen among Girls of the Late Edo Townsman Class." *Japan Review*, no. 23 (2011): 73–96. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41304924.

24 Huai, Yu, Narushima Ryūhoku, and Emanuel Pastreich. "The Pleasure Quarters of Edo and Nanjing as Metaphor: The Records of Yu Huai and Narushima Ryūhoku." 211 *Monumenta Nipponica* 55, no. 2 (2000): 199–224. https://doi.org/10.2307/2668427.

25 Walthall, Anne. "Japanese Gimin: Peasant Martyrs in Popular Memory." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1076–1102. https://doi.org/10.2307/1864377.

26 Groemer, Gerald. "The Arts of the Gannin." *Asian Folklore Studies* 58, no. 2 (1999): 275–320. https://doi.org/10.2307/1179098.

27 William P. Malm, *Japanese Music and Musical Instruments* (C. E. Tuttle Company, 1959), 187-190.

28 Elizabeth May. *Ethnomusicology* 13, no. 1 (1969): 208–10. https://doi.org/10.2307/849851.

29 Henry Smith II. *Hokusai and the Blue Revolution in Edo Prints*. in John T. Carpenter, ed. "Hokusai and His Age: Ukiyo-e Painting, Printmaking, and Book Illustration in Late Edo Japan," Hotei Publishing, Amsterdam, 2005. 248

with them to the hanami? But this is an irrelevant question, as no matter how many people will be present at the hanami, they would likely be sharing them. There is a custom of drinking sake from another's cup at formal parties, although it is dying out due to young people's objection on the grounds of hygiene. One asks a senior, 'Please allow me to drink from your cup,' and that person then empties the cup and passes it to the junior, who receives it respectfully with both hands. The cup is filled and drained, then returned, and the junior refills it from the flask, which completes the process of exchange.[30] This exchange is called kenshū.

The antecedents of this practice include the formal drinking party of the Heian period, which began with the ritual of three rounds of sake in which everyone, starting with the guest of honor, would sip from the same large cup. The custom of sharing one's drink originated as a religious observance, still practiced at some Shinto festivals, in which sake that has been offered to the deities is poured into a large cup and passed along according to the order of seating. Becoming intoxicated from the same cup is clearly a means of establishing solidarity among the drinkers. In the early tea ceremony, too, the custom of drinking from a common bowl was borrowed from the sake-drinking etiquette of the late sixteenth century.

The presence of those customs implies that sake and tea were for many centuries drunk mainly in group settings. Literary and historical records show that there were some nobles, high-ranking samurai, and wealthy people who regularly drank alone, but sake was consumed predominantly at festivals, community events and formal parties, that is, at ceremonial moments which were separate from the flow of normal life. The essence of the tea ceremony is a spirit of giving and receiving in a shared moment, and it is held for a small group in a special room that is separated from ordinary life.[31] One must note that many East Asian cultures have a sense of humility, and because of the influence of Confucius, Laozi, and Buddhism, there is a sense of order and class among young people and their elders. Kenshū is a ritual that blurs this relationship and allows participants to all enjoy the moment by sharing and passing it on. We believe the three ladies' friendship would be warmed up from this activity.

The sound of drinking could also be a part of natural sound, like a subtle sound of flowing water. A feature of the Edo period is that the kabuki stage of the time (1600–1867) had props and stage sets, but the architectural structure on the stage (usually a residence) reveals both the exterior and the interior (oku) at the same time, making the audience aware of the season even when the main action is indoors.[32] Following the context, the performance music integrates with nature. Through the music, we can see the river in the environment, hear the breeze blowing on the lake, hear the sounds of aquatic insects and pheasants, see petals falling from their trees - the intertwined voices of the instruments and singers often symbolise the harmony between nature and people.[33] In the Edo period, the elegant world of birds and flowers spread to urban commoners' cultural sites, particularly the pleasure quarters and kabuki theatres (what were called the akusho [bad places] in the major cities), and became part of a world of "drink and sensuality."[34] For urban commoners, cherry-blossom viewing was more akin to a festival, a time out of ordinary time, when the social rules and boundaries were temporally lifted.[35] The festival blurs the boundary just like the practice of kenshū — hierarchy is not important in the festival.

The custom of viewing cherry blossoms is also associated with the contemplation of life. What may have been forgotten is one of the ancient roots of cherry blossom viewing: the

30 Ishige. History Of Japanese Food. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=799925&site=ehost-live&scope=site.p26

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31 Ishige. History Of Japanese Food. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014. https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=nlebk&AN=799925&site=ehost-live&scope=site.p264

32 Haruo Shirane, "Chapter Six Annual Observances, Places, and Entertainment," in Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), 94.

33 William Malm. "On the Nature and Function of Symbolism in Western and Oriental Music." 236 Philosophy East and West 19, no. 3 (1969): 235–46. https://doi.org/10.2307/1397576.

34 Haruo Shirane, "Chapter Six Annual Observances, Places, and Entertainment," in Japan and the Culture of the Four Seasons: Nature, Literature, and the Arts (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2013), 67

35 Ibid., 173

belief that green leaves and sprays of flowers, when rubbed against the body or placed in the hair or clothing, bring new life to the individual.[36] Many East Asian cultures believe in the concept of reincarnation, where departed lives may return in a natural form. Some verses also depict this beautiful continuation. For example, the Chinese poet Gong Zizhen mentions that falling red is not a heartless thing, but turns into spring mud to protect the flowers, meaning that the petals fall into the mud and appear that the flowers have passed away, but in fact they melt into the mud and turn into nutrients that continue to take care of other creatures, becoming a continuation of life. This is a gentle translation of death. And is the cherry blossom viewing event, while celebrating this moment of falling flowers, not also a celebration of this reincarnation of life?

This print is a beautiful representation of many aspects of Japanese life and culture in the Edo period. As cherry blossoms and connected leisure activities are popular motifs in Japanese art, it is interesting to compare and analyse different interpretations of these themes - coming down from earlier times and painted, not printed. Compared with these other two artworks that also depict cherry blossoms, the prints we chose are the most colorful, with the most prominent protagonists. The other two artworks focus more on group portraits. Kano Naganobu's "Merrymaking Under the Cherry Blossoms" [Fig. C], a large-scale folding-screen painting dating back to the 17th century, zooms in a scene, depicting a group of ladies under a double-petal cherry tree, especially focusing on the dancers in beautiful robes bending gracefully. The four women holding swords on the far right side of the screen are believed to be performing a fashionable dance called Okuni Kabuki. [37]

Fig. C. Kanō Naganobu (1577-1654). *Merrymaking Under the Cherry Blossoms* (花下遊楽図屏風). Ink and colors on paper. Folding screen, important cultural property. Height: 148.60 mm (5.85 in); Width: 355.80 mm (14 in). Tokyo National Museum.[38]

Unkoku Tōgan's "Cherry Blossoms Viewing and Hawking" [Fig. D], another large-scale folding-screen painting made in the late 16th century, focuses on portraying the activities of women and children, depicting a spontaneous playground scene in the Momoyama era. The screen on the left is a scene of men observing a falcon, which was a favorite pastime of the samurai class at the time. Judging from the painting style and landscape layout of trees and rocks, it is considered to be the work of Yunguo Dongyan. [39] Although it is also a depiction of the activities of female groups during cherry blossom viewing, the protagonists have different status and classes, so they are partaking in completely different activities.

36 Ibid.
37 "Merry-Making under Aronia Blossoms | about the Works | Tsuzuri Project." TSUZURI Project | Canon. Accessed November 20, 2021. https://global.canon/en/tsuzuri/works/57.html.
38 Kano Naganobu (1577 - 1654). Merrymaking Under the Cherry Blossoms (花下遊楽図屏風). Folding screen, important cultural property. Height: 148.60 mm (5.85 in); Width: 355.80 mm (14 in). Tokyo National Museum. https://global.canon/en/tsuzuri/works/57.html
39 Moa Museum of Art " コレクション " Cherry blossom viewing and hawking. Accessed November 20, 2021. https://www.moaart.or.jp/en/?collections=062.

Fig. D. Attributed to Unkoku Tōgan (1547-1618). *Cherry Blossoms Viewing and Hawking*. Pair of six-fold screens, colors on paper. 142×347 cm each. Momoyama period, 16th century. MAO Museum of Art, Atami, Japan. [40], [41]

The landscape depiction of these two works is more towards the feeling of freehand brushwork and ink and wash, so only the plants are colored to highlight the colors of the characters. This work reminds one of the pictures of the scroll Along the River during the Qingming Festival, where the long scroll expresses a warm atmosphere by showing the flow of different groups. The two folding screens and Utagawa Kunisada's much smaller printed triptych are all beautiful artworks that showcase different methods of relaxation and examples of friendship from different social statuses expressed in different mediums. In terms of visual rhetoric, painting by Kanō Naganobu represents the relationship of people to one another, painting by Unkoku Tōgan represents the relationship from near to far, and the ukiyo-e printed triptych by Utagawa Kunisada represents the relationship of people to their environment.

The shamisen was a very important instrument both in the context of societal dynamics and in the context of the specific activity depicted in Enjoying Flowers in the Inner Garden. The shamisen was both a class divide and an intrigue, with commoners and samurai alike finding joy in its music. While the higher-classes typically viewed (or at least portrayed themselves viewing) themselves as being above peasant delights such as the shamisen, they nonetheless enjoyed its music.[42] Indeed, if they did not, could anyone have associated the shamisen with the perceived moral corruption of daimyo wives? The shamisen was a very versatile instrument, capable of accompanying stories, conveying feelings of drunkenness, and imitating natural and human sounds.[43] Thanks to its inclusion in this print, we can infer many things not only about the subjects' affinity for music, but also about the social dynamics of the subjects, and the importance of the cultural activity for which they are preparing. These ladies are bringing a shamisen, an instrument that for many symbolises a breakdown in cultural norms and expectations. Previously, only commoners ever played the shamisen. They are going to drink from the same cup as people regarded as their betters, thus contributing even more to this supposed breakdown. Whether it is in the context of festivities or not, in the context of a highly conservative and stratified culture like Japan's, one cannot ignore the significance of this exchange. Despite the difference in status, everyone from the samurai to the peasants working in the fields shared the ritual of hanami and shared the shamisen's music - music that unites commoners with samurai, life with death and rebirth, and people with their surrounding, beloved nature.

What may appear to simply be a picture of three friends walking by a tree can turn out to be an artwork rich with meaning and symbolism. Each individual aspect of this image was carefully chosen, and each inclusion adds another layer of meaning. From the sakura blossoms on the unmarried woman's furisode mirroring the ephemeral beauty of the sakura blossoms of the hanami, to the shamisen hinting at the intertwining sounds of nature, this print represents all the most wonderful aspects of youth, spring, and nature alike. All these individual elements are united, just as the daimyo's household is united during the hanami, lord and servant alike

40 Attributed to Unkoku Togan (1547/1618). CHERRY BLOSSOMS VIEWING AND FALCONRY. MAO Museum of Art, Atami, Japan https://www.moaart.or.jp/en/?collections=062

41 MOA Museum of Art, Atami, Japan: https://www.moaart.or.jp/en/?collections=062

42 Shūhei, Hosokawa. "音楽 Ongaku, Onkyō/Music, Sound." Review of Japanese Culture and Society 25 (2013): 9–20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43945378.

43 William Malm. "On the Nature and Function of Symbolism in Western and Oriental Music." Philosophy East and West 19, no. 3 (1969): 235–46. https://doi.org/10.2307/1397576.

joined together to observe the blossoms to the gentle, flowing sound of the shamisen. Among all of these elements, the shamisen is crucial, for it is both the main entertainment during the hanami and the most obvious symbol of the social dynamics at play. Just as the ladies, covered in flower motifs, disappear into the rich floral background, so too does the world disappear when one hears the delicate tones of the shamisen, celebrating the short-lived blossoms.

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Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Futakawa: Monkey Plateau (Futakawa, Sarugababa),
from the series *The Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*, ca. 1833.
Polychrome woodblock print.
RISD Museum. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.34.

Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Fushimi, from the series *The sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidō*, late 1830s
Polychrome wood block. The RISD Museum. Bequest of Isaac C. Bates 13.1055.

Along Japan's Official Roads: Vistas, Travelers, Blind Musicians, in Prints by Utagawa Hiroshige

Jack Wulf

Utagawa Hiroshige, one of the finest artists in ukiyo-e history, was skillful in all genres of this style but first and foremost, he is known for his landscapes. In them, he captured Japan's nature in all its versatility with remarkable keenness. Mountains and flatlands, groves and distinctive trees, lakes and rivers, vistas and close-ups, all appear in every season and in every weather. In all these landscapes human life is aligned with that of nature.

Among Hiroshige's greatest achievements in the landscape genre are his depictions of the post stations along the five official routes maintained by the Tokugawa government. Good roads were necessary for the daimyo, regional lords, to travel with their retinue as demanded by the alternate attendance system, *sankin kōtai*. Every daimyo had to alternate a year spent in his domain with a year in service of the shogun in the capital city of Edo (now Tokyo). These roads between Edo and Kyoto were also traveled by many others - merchants, pilgrims, and professional entertainers. Two Hiroshige's views of post stations are included in the exhibition. These two prints belong to Hiroshige's famous print series dedicated to the most traveled governmental routes, the Tokaido, the Road of the Eastern Sea, and the Kisokaido, an inland route. Presence of the itinerant blind musicians in these prints testifies to music's omnipresence in the daily life of the country.

Hiroshige's *Futakawa Station* from the series *The Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō Road*

Three blind women-musicians known as *goze* are walking at the edge of a vast landscape dominated by a continuous grey hill. It sweeps across the receding valleys throughout the composition. The nature view is vast and lonely. Dark grey pine saplings are scattered over the slope of this hill. Two tall thin pine trees stand among the saplings. Behind this hill there are small dots, perhaps representing bushes, and more small trees further away in the distance. The

hills take the entire surface of the print - no top of the distant hill is visible. The image simply fades into dark grey color at the top edge. This absence of the skyline with the hills taking the entire surface makes the landscape look endless. The emptiness of the scene creates a feeling of loneliness, however, renders it atmospheric.

In the very center of the foreground the three musicians are the primary focal point. They are approaching a teahouse on the left, while another traveler is about to enter it. Human presence is pushed to the bottom and is small in relation to the rolling hill landscape behind, yet this part of the scene is colorful and lively [**Fig. A**].

Fig. A. Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Futakawa:Monkey Plateau (Futakawa, Sarugababa),
RISD Museum. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.34. Detail.

The blind women-musicians, licensed by local authorities, traveled rural roads in small groups playing shamisen, a three-stringed instrument. Each of the musicians is carrying a shamisen either wrapped in fabric and without a cover. Two have their shamisen tied to their backs, while one has her coverless instrument carried over a shoulder anytime ready to use it. Women are wearing dark blue colored robes with some occasional green. The textiles of their garments, of their instrument cases and their *furoshiki* -wrapping cloth used to transport small goodi are conspicuously patterned. Beneath their outer robes they are all wearing an underlayer of white, that can be seen near their knees, extending past the dark blue robes. There are red accents on the clothing of each of them - either in their undergarments or the wrapping fabric depicted. These decorative details indicate that though visually impaired, goze cared about what they were wearing and using. The fact that such patterned textiles belonged to wandering musicians, obviously not particularly wealthy, characterizes a high level of the development of the textile-related crafts. It is also noteworthy that depiction of these patterns

was considered important enough to be taken care of in the tiny figures included into the landscape ukiyo-e prints.

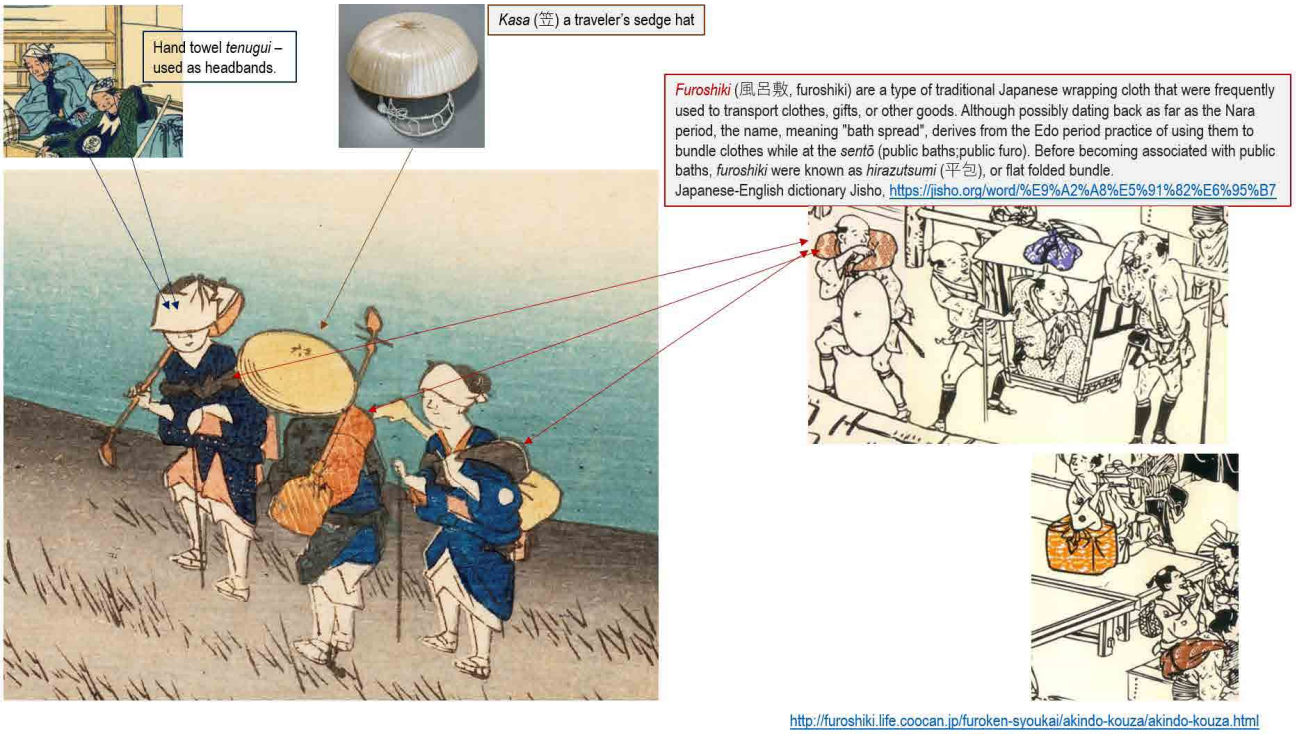

Fig. B. Utagawa Hiroshige, 1797-1858
Futakawa:Monkey Plateau (Futakawa, Sarugababa),
RISD Museum. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 41.080.34. Detail.
Wrapping cloth *furoshiki*, hand towels *tenugui* for headbands, traveler's hat *kesa*.

All three women have their headgear for traveling. The woman in the center, as well as a person at the teahouse door, are wearing a traveling sedge hats *kasa*. Two women to her right and left have hand-towels, *tenugui*, tied over their hair. *Tenugui* are handy pieces of cotton cloth applied as needed. The length of *tenugui* varied from about 35 cm to up to 90 cm, but most commonly in the Edo period they were about 40 cm long. Usually *tenugui* were nicely printed but here they are plain white. *Tenugui* were used for a wide variety of purposes, as washcloths or headbands, for example [**Fig. B**].

With simple sandals on, women are using canes to better determine the path and support themselves as they walk.

Hiroshige shows them as experienced travelers and masterfully arranges them in a group. He defines the course of their movement by the direction of their feet, but shows them turned to each other in what seems to be a casual and friendly communication [**Fig. A**].

Hunched over slightly, these women must be tired from walking through this seemingly never-ending landscape. The hardships of their lives were many and some of them are mentioned below. Blind itinerant musicians would travel from village to village and perform music and sing traditional songs to people they met along their travels. The villagers they performed for would give them rice, food, and money in return for their performances and entertainment.[1] Scholar Gerald Gomer writes about traveling of the blind musicians, "Touring musicians and teachers [...] encountered many obstacles in pursuing their careers. Traveling was hampered by poor roads, endless snowstorms, a lack of accurate maps, inadequate lodging, and the ever-present possibility of being robbed, as well as by isolationist policies."[2] Such isola-

1 Hashimoto, Shoko. "Goze - Blind Female Musicians"". 2020. Tokyo Art Beat. https://www.tokyoartbeat.com/en/events/-/2020%2F16AB
2 Groemer, Gerald. "Visual Disability, Religious Practices, And The Performing Arts During The Edo Period In Northern Japan." 2008. Chiiki-Gaku 6. P. 9

tionist policies referred to the decision of some daimyo to limit the freedom of crossing domain borders. These musicians did not have easy lives and faced many hardships.

In spite of all the deprivations that *goze* had to deal with in their lives, they are shown here with a certain optimism. They are walking up a hill to a rest stop. As has been said, the lower part of the print is enlivened by human presence. The traveling musicians are colorful, the trunks of tall cypress trees likewise are shown in color. Polychromatic also is the person right next to the entrance to the teahouse. Perhaps he is a traveler about to enter the lonely eatery - no people are there at the platforms placed in front of the building. The sign on the tavern says, "*Famous product kashiwa-mochi.*" Expression "famous product" or *meibutsu* refers to a regional specialty. Production of region specific goods or dishes became exceedingly popular during the Edo period when traveling boomed. *Kashiwa mochi* is a mochi (rice cake) stuffed with sweet bean paste and wrapped in an oak leaf. So, the signboard promises to our tired travelers not only respite but delicacy.

It is not clear if the itinerant blind musicians are going to have a chance to entertain some people in the tavern with their music but their presence in this lonely place can be considered an evidence of music being integrated with Japan's daily life.

This print comes from the first of at least twenty Hiroshige's Tokaido print sets. This first series is recognized as Hiroshige's masterpiece. All prints within each series share the same seals and inscriptions except for the indication of the name of the specific location. On this print inscription is made in black characters. It is located half-way of the height of the print and says, *Fifty-three stations of the Tokaido. Futagawa River*. This inscription is followed by the red cartouche on which in white the name of the specific place is indicated, *Sarugababa, the Monkey Plateau*. A little bit closer to the right, below, there is Hiroshige's signature and the squarish red publisher's seal.

The overall color scheme of this composition is quite remarkable. It is so subtly coordinated that it seems to possess almost musical quality. Most of the print's surface is covered by just two colors, grey and green, that are modulated through a subtle gradation. The slopes of the hills create a distinct rhythm based on the diagonals. The colors in the lower part of the composition are coordinated with equal subtlety. The reds of the seals on the right are echoed by the reddish tones on the *goze*'s attire and accoutrements in the center. Those reds are then picked up by the warm light brown of the tree trunks and finally by the reddish face of the lonely person on the left. The free style of the inscribed Chinese characters resonates with the multiple pine saplings running through the entire view, uniting life of nature and people and their actions.

Hiroshige's *Fushimi Station* from the series *The sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidō Road*

If the view of Futagawa station on the Tokaido Road was vast and lonely, Fushimi station on the Kisokaido Road appears busy and lively. Its never-stopping traffic offers a cross-section of Japanese society at the time. The center stage is taken by travelers moving in opposite directions along the picture plane. They are walking in front of a giant old cypress tree dominating over a vast and incredibly lush field. This ancient tree has a bushy black, grey crown near the top of the frame. This print only features the bottom area of the tree, the middle portions and top portions of the trees are cut off by the top of the frame. To the right of that big tree, there is also a smaller tree that is tilting towards the big one. The foliage of both trees merges into a shelter-like complex irregular configuration in the upper third of the composition.

The field is extending far away - to the mountains at the horizon. The flatness of the field keeps the vista open, and one can see the villages in groves flanking the mountain on both sides. The sky is clear and bright on this hot summer day, its light blue tone accumulating some intensity towards the very top of the composition by the application of the gradation, *bokashi*.

Travelers are walking on the road at the forefront of the composition. Beginning from the right and thus following the direction of reading in East-Asian tradition, we see a group of three blind women musicians *goze*. They share many features with the group on the Futagawa print from the Tokaido series, just discussed. To remind, blind musicians were licensed by local authorities to earn their living as itinerant entertainers offering door-to-door services. Governmental routes such as Kisokaido here were promising for their trade. With about eight kilometers between the stations, the distance was walkable and offered opportunities for performing at the traveller-oriented towns.

Fig. C. Utagawa Hiroshige, *Fushimi Station*,
series *The sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidō*, late 1830s. RISD. Goze - the blind musicians

Similar to the *goze* in the other print, these women are carrying their shamisens on the shoulder or in hand. Small bundles of their belongings are tied in *furoshiki* wrapping cloth and transported as backpacks. They have hand-towels, *tenugui*, on their heads - two neatly tied over the hair and one has it just draped over her head, which was also a common way to wear tenugui as headgear. They are wearing knee-length jackets over their undergarments, simple sandals on their feet. Two of the women are holding one sun umbrella - obviously, this is a hot day. Women seem to be engaged in casual conversation. Hiroshige masterfully captures interaction of people within small groups, as is obvious here.

Before the goze, right in front of the massive trunk of the tree there are two samurai from the procession of a daimyo - regional lord.[3] As has been mentioned above, daimyo were constantly on the go because of the alternate attendance system, *sankin kōtai*. These are minor samurai who were members of the daimyo's retinue. These samurai attendants are wearing dark grey thigh-length coats and have bright red fabric bands around their lower legs and arms. They are also sporting large yellow sedge traveler hats that will help shade them from the sun during their travels. Additionally, there are both carrying swords that are stuck into their belts of light blue fabric wrapped around their waists. The samurai attendant to the left is carrying a *tategasa*, a tall umbrella. The samurai attendant on the right is carrying a *daigasa* rounded rain hat on a pole.[4] *Tategasa* and *daigasa* are a necessary part of a daimyo procession.

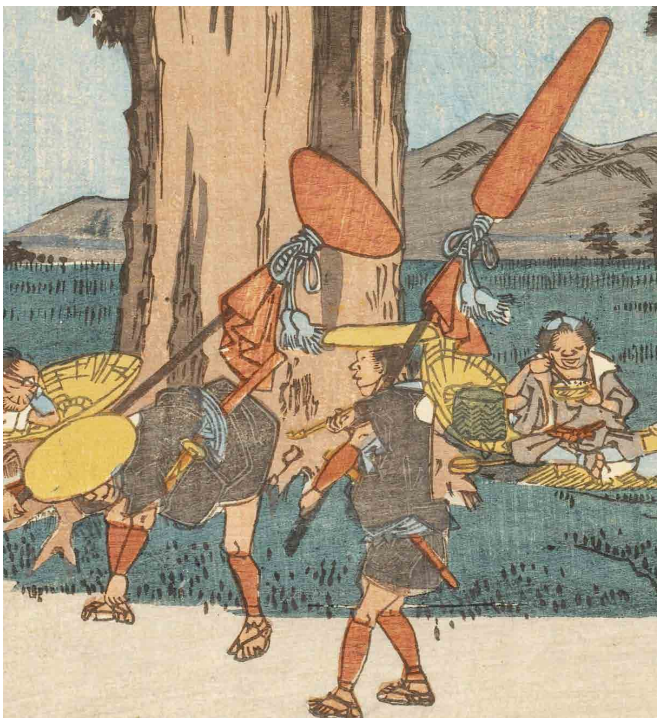

Fig. C. Utagawa Hiroshige, *Fushimi Station*,
series *The sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidō*, late 1830s. RISD.
Members of a daimyo procession carrying tall umbrella (tategasa) and round rain hat (daigasa)

On the left side of the path, moving in the opposite direction, there is an older man holding an umbrella. He is wearing light blue clothes, with a dark grey cloak-like robe over his light blue

3 Varshavskaya, Elena. 2021. Course instructor. PowerPoint presentations & lectures, RISD, 2021.
4 Ibid.

outfit. He is holding a bright red fan in his right hand and a sun umbrella in his left. Behind his back there is a box in the wrapping cloth *furoshiki* - a common way to carry small packages at that time. We have just seen similar bundles carried by the blind musicians. He is holding a light red umbrella to shade himself from the sun and is wearing brown sandals. This man is perhaps a commoner, despite carrying a sword at his waist. Samurai are entitled to wear two swords while this man seems to be carrying just one. Is he in fact carrying two swords and we just don't see it because he is turned to us only with his right side? He is smiling and appears to be having a wonderful time during this warm and sunny day.

Within the midground of the composition, there is a man on the left side of the ancient tree laying down in the grass. He has his eyes closed, has his legs crossed, and is leaning up against his sedge hat and a large root of the tree. He appears to be taking a very peaceful nap. He is wearing soft white and blue colored clothing, very similar to the clothing that the musicians are wearing on the right side of the path. Based on this white coat this man is wearing, he is most likely a pilgrim.[5]

To the right side of this large central tree, there are two men, sitting on what appears to be a straw mat. The hair at the top of their heads is shaven and the rest of the hair is tied in a topknot according to the official regulations of the day. The blue color on the headtop of one of the eaters stands for the stubble traditionally rendered in this way. These both travelers are eating with chopsticks out of bowls that they are holding. They are both wearing grey and blue clothing. These characters also have their hats off since they are resting in the shadow provided by this large tree.

This quick glance at the road reveals that the path between stations is a place where many people with diverse backgrounds will ultimately come together in direct contact and interact. This print features a variety of activities that happen along this path [**Fig. D**], from resting and eating to offering music.

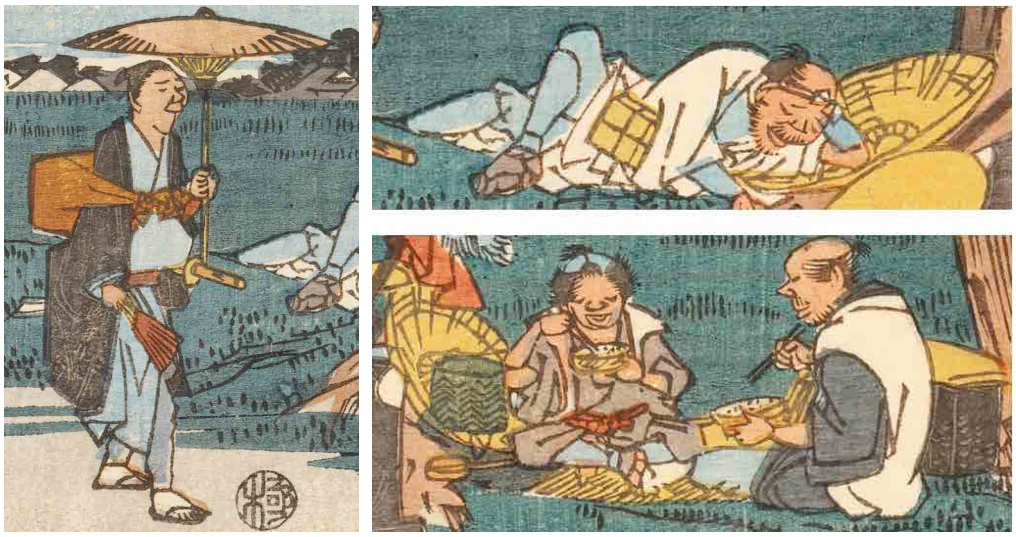

Fig. D. Utagawa Hiroshige, *Fushimi Station*,
series *The sixty-nine Stations of the Kisokaidō*, late 1830s. RISD.
Road life: walking, sleeping, eating…

The wide range of bright and saturated colors gives this print a very energetic and lively air, while also projecting a calming feeling as it depicts people resting underneath the tree.

5 Ibid.

From a technical standpoint, this print is a good example of the complexity of a ukiyo-e print and mastery required to design and produce it. The print renders multiple details with remarkable precision - they range from facial expressions to the small trees and houses in the background. Full-colored woodcuts were usually printed from seven or eight color carved blocks to achieve a wide range of colors like this is done here. Hiroshige is a master of using color, and one can see brilliant usage of color across all his landscape prints. In the book "In Context of Yamato-e" Pamela Boles and Stephen Addis point out that "Blues and greens dominate his landscapes, as one would expect, but his use of red and yellow is clearly an emotional effect, as in the yamato-e tradition"[6] [in medieval illustration of narrative handscrolls]. The authors discuss another print (from "Vertical Tokaido, print #41: Narumi) and remark that, "The use of red tends to carry the eye to the edges of the print; one feels that much of the narrative description of the scene has only been suggested and continues beyond the woodblock itself. We are given a glimpse of a larger reality."[7] Although speaking of a different Hiroshige print, this use of bright red leading the eye to the edges of the frame can be directly seen within this print. Both figures on the furthest sides of the path are wearing red *furoshiki* cloth, tying an object to their backs. This use of red extends the frame beyond what is specifically seen here and alludes to the path continuing.

In these prints Hiroshige gives equal attention to depicting people and nature and captures both with keenness and warmth. Henry D. Smith II, a leading scholar in Japan studies, writes about how prolific Hiroshige was, how large is his artistic legacy and how publicly seen Hiroshige's works have become. Then the author goes on to touch upon why Hiroshige's works turned out to be timeless. Hiroshige scholar Uchida Minoru claimed that "Since Nature itself was Hiroshige's true teacher, it follows that the artist was not really a part of his own era, but rather subject to the more universal and timeless laws of adherence to Nature itself."[8] This quote argues the timeless aspect of Hiroshige's work comes from the beautiful views of nature being timeless within themselves. This seems convincing, as Hiroshige's subject matter is universal to all cultures and across the globe, his work is embraced by and connects to a broad range of viewers.

Two prints considered here show the world of nature and that of humans fully integrated. References to music's presence in this most mundane context of the busy road proves again that music was inseparable from daily life of Edo period Japan, and broader - remains inseparable from human life on the whole.

6 Pamela Boles and Stephen Addiss. "Hiroshige's Tokaido Prints in the Context of Yamato-E, the Traditional Painting of Japan." Tokaido: Adventures on the Road in Old Japan, University of Kansas, 1983. 84.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.

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Varshavskaya, Elena, course instructor, PowerPoint presentations, RISD, fall 2021

Utagawa Yoshimori, 1830-1884
Cockerel, Ivy, and Drum, ca. 1860s
Polychrome woodblock print. RISD. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.289.

Kitagawa Utamaro II, 1804-1855
Cockerel, Hen, Chicks, and Drum, ca. 1830s
Polychrome woodblock print. RISD. Gift of Mrs. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. 34.596.

Kanko-dori - "fowl on a drum" in Ukiyo-e

Tzu-Chun Hsu

Kanko-dori or "fowl on a drum" is a symbol of peace in ancient Chinese traditions[1]. The drum (*kanko*) is often used as a tool for reporting a complaint or even to call for a soldier's assembly. When the government is doing a great job and a nation is at peace, a tool that assembles soldiers for war or reports/files a complaint is no longer in operation. Thus, the drum is left aside. In fact, it is so untouched that animals like roosters took over and built a nest within. Interestingly, both Utagawa Yoshimori (1830-1884) and Kitagawa Utamaro II (d. 1831?) have decided to design prints with the symbol of peace right at the edge of two historical turning points of the eighteen century Japan, the 1830s and 1860s. Displayed at the exhibition are two *kachōga* prints (花鳥画, flower-and-bird pictures), affordable and often used for home decoration,[2] one *Cockerel, Ivy and Drum (Tsuta ni niwatori to taiko)"* by Utagawa Yoshimori and the other *Cockerel, Hen, Chicks and Drum (Taiko ni niwatori)* by Kitagawa Utamaro II, both in the collection of the RISD Museum. They illustrate perhaps the desire for peace of Japanese people in that rather chaotic period. Let's now explore how these two prints use unique styles, settings, tones, and techniques to conjure a peaceful atmosphere for the spectators.

Cockerel, Ivy, and Drum (Tsuta ni niwatori to taiko) is a print by Utagawa Yoshimori. The print has a longitudinal layout and a singular significant character, the rooster. The rooster is standing on a large barrel drum, the *taiko*, surrounded by brownish-toned ivy leaves and vines, with two small chicks standing on the rooster's left and right. The size of the chicks is so insignificant that they are almost hard to see at first glance. However, the chicks actually play a significant role in the symbolism of peace in the prints. This indicates that the cockerel not only is just standing on the drum, but it has settled in it and created a family around or within the drum. This, in turn, suggests that the drum was left untouched and unused for

1 諫鼓鶏. 東京都神社庁. 2019, December 28
2 Ellis Tinios. Hotei Encyclopedia of Ukiyo-e, pp. 214-215

such a long period of time that small chicks have hatched from their eggs undisturbed. The chicks also play an important role in the overall composition. Not only does their light-yellow color balance out the white feather of the cockerel, but also continues the flowy pattern of the ivy that leads the spectator's eyes from the top right corner of the print all the way down to the bottom of the drum.

The white feathers of the cockerel is also a unique feature that Utagawa Yoshimori used to bring out the depth of a seemingly flat composition and give the objects a hierarchy for symbolistic purposes. The strokes of color on the cockerel are not only dark but also very broad, even heavy compared to the line weight of the chicks, ivy, and drums. The dark black and pure white feathers give the body of a rooster a 3D representation. This pops the cockerel out from the light grey toned drum that serves as a background. This is significant as it suggests that the rooster has completely overshadowed the importance of the drum (an object that is almost twice as big as the Cockerel in the print. The drum appears no longer important when the society is at peace. In addition, the stroke used for the depiction of the drum is not only lighter but also seems dry. The line on the drum's surface consists of both grey and black. This is clearly intentional as it is most likely that a separate layer was used for the print. This could be Utagawa Yoshimori's intention to indicate that the drum has been left unused for a while, which results in dryness and degradation of the drum's surface.

The color of the ivy in Utagawa Yoshimori's print is printed in brown and yellow. This indicates that most likely the season is autumn. It is noteworthy that ivy doesn't grow during the autumn. Ivy tends to grow, expand or "crawl" over spring and summer before the leaves turn brown as they stop photosynthesis (breakdown of the chloroplast) and store their nutrients in the root for the upcoming winter.[3] This means that the drum had been left untouched for more than a few seasons as the ivy has already grown and surrounded the entire drum. In addition, the line strokes and color of the ivy leaves are much heavier than the line strokes and color used for the drum. The black outline of the ivy is almost as dark as the tail of the cockerel. These dark colored lines not only echo each other and provide balance with the dark black lines of the cockerel's tail, but furthermore take spectators' attention away from the drum, as it is not significant during a peaceful period.

The same symbolism of peace is also the message in Kitagawa Utamaro II's *Cockerel, Hen, Chicks, and Drum (Taiko ni niwatori)*. Now with hen and chicks being placed in the foreground, it illustrates the sense of family even better than Utagawa Yoshimori's print, in which only two chicks were present. Like Utagawa Yoshimori, Kitagawa Utamaro II also plays with the hierarchy of objects in his print. The drum is once again made insignificant and almost background objects through several techniques. First, a large portion of the drum is either behind the hens or the cockerel's tail. It is as if the drum is turned into a stage or podium for the display of the cockerel standing on top. This suggests that the drum is not in equal status with the rest of the objects. Second, the side of the drum has stripes that are thin at the top and bottom. This not only balances out the cockerel's dark black tail but also suggests that a drum is a 3D object in a subtle way. This might be Kitagawa Utamaro II's intention to avoid using large strokes that could potentially pop the drum out too significantly, which might contradict the concept of *kanko-dori*.

Movement and playfulness are more abundant in Kitagawa Utamaro II's print than in Utagawa Yoshimori's. The rooster in Kitagawa Utamaro II's print has its body placed

3 Clennett, C. (n.d.). *Why do leaves change colour in autumn*. Kew Gardens. https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/why-do-leaves-change-colour#:~:text=As%20the%20tree%20becomes%20dormant,it%20drops%20to%20the%20ground.

to face the spectator while its head is turned away. However, although it is not looking directly at the hen or the chicks, this position of the rooster's body and head gives a sense that it is paying attention to the fowl on the print. It looks as if it is standing on high ground (on the drum) to detect any danger for the hen and chicks. It is for this reason its body and neck are facing different directions since the neck is constantly changing direction in vigilance. All these movements suggest that the fowls are indeed settled near or within the drum. It is a normal living pattern for them to perform such acts without being disturbed as the drum is left abandoned, which symbolizes peace and tranquility.

The major difference between the two prints by Kitagawa Utamaro II and Utagawa Yoshimori is perhaps the color usage. Utagawa Yoshimori's print consists of seven colors: black for outline, blue, orange, light orange, grey, yellow, and red. Kitagawa Utamaro II's print consists of only three colors: black, grey, and yellow. This makes the print very different in terms of weight. Utagawa Yoshimori's print looks actually much like a painting. Kitagawa Utamaro II's print gives out an earthy tone and could be easily distinguished as a print due to its lightness. This can be due to the fact that these prints are separated by almost 30 years and the techniques in the printing industry must have improved when Utagawa Yoshimori designed this work. The blue background in Utagawa Yoshimori's print perhaps best demonstrates this. The blue ties together with the technical advancement of Berlin blue, a color that was made known in Japan by the Dutch from the last third of the 18th century. However, it appears mostly in painting and landscape prints. It was from 1829 onwards that the technique is economically feasible to be used in *kachōga* for broader customers[4].

Despite this, it is still interesting to see how two artists have decided to illustrate in their prints the same concept of *kanko-dori* years apart, while the story behind this symbol of peace is also quite fascinating. As mentioned before, the concept of *kanko-dori* originates from Chinese culture. In ancient Chinese society, *yagu*[5] (衙鼓) was a type of drum that was installed right in front of *yamen* (衙門), the local administrative office of a city. Similar to *yagu*, *denwengu* (登聞鼓) was a higher level drum than the *yagu* and reported to the emperor directly. When one felt uneasy about his/her conditions, the person (any person, regardless of their social class) could hit the *yagu* drum ten times. This acted as an emergency call for the state official to come as soon as possible, regardless of the official's location. For *denwengu*, one had to have a valid and major reason to hit it, because, as has been mentioned, *denwengu* reported to the emperor directly. In an interesting story that has been passed down for centuries, it is said that the founder and the first emperor of the Song dynasty, Emperor Taizu of Zhao Kuangyin, once received a complaint from a peasant. The peasant hit the *Denwengu* which means something major must have happened. Thus, Emperor Taizu actually went to drum personally, only to discover that the peasant hit a drum only because his pig went missing. Emperor Taizu got mad but still restrained his temper in front of his people. He gave the peasant a thousand Southern Song dynasty coinage as compensation for the loss of the pig. After the peasant left, Emperor Taizu called the officer in charge of *denwengu* with rage and demanded an explanation. The officer praised how wise the Emperor was at ruling his country. The entire nation is at peace so such minor disturbances can be considered *denwengu*-worthy. Perhaps due to this kind of incident, this tradition only lasted until the end of the Song Dynasty (960-1279). Although this tradition continued to be practiced until the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), to hit a *yagu*, one had to first hit a giant block

4 Tinios, E. (2010). *Japanese prints: Ukiyo-e in Edo, 1700-1900*. British Museum Press.
5 网易. 古代百姓们怎么告御状？敲登闻鼓，丢了猪也可以向皇帝诉苦. 2021, June 4

of wood 30 times. This rule was introduced to prevent people from reporting non-important matters (in such cases hitting just 10 times was already considered fatal.) This means that the *kanko-dori* illustrated in these prints was not a direct reference to Chinese lore, but served as a symbolic representation, which reflects the significance of Chinese cultural influence that is commonly seen in *kachōga*.

From the later 1820s to 1842, publishers promoted the sale of large sets of prints that illustrated stories or objects different from those commonly seen figures. This included landscapes, warrior images, and prints of the *kachōga* genre. Such prints often acted as interior decoration. The bulk of *kachōga* prints are likely to have been cheap, large-volume and low-prestige products entered to serve domestic decorative purposes. It is for this reason that many *kachōga* prints produced in the first third of the 19th century are characterized by simple design[6]. Chinese models were important in the development of the genre. By the beginning of the 18th-century Chinese woodblock-printed books with nature motifs circulated widely in Japan.[7] Perhaps the *kanko-dori* subject matter was seen in or taken from some of the imported paintings.

Production of ukiyo-e prints was affected by the Tenpō crisis - the crisis of the Tenpō era period, 1830-1844. As scholar Henri Smith II explains, the Tenpō crisis was in fact a succession of two related crises. An extended period of famine in 1832 - 1838 triggered a series of economic dislocations and social unrest that was followed by a period of political reforms by the Tokugawa government in 1841-1843.[8] In 1842 - 1860, the print market was struck due to the Tenpō Reforms of 1842. It was at that time that the government imposed strict limitations on the traditional ukiyo-e genres such as *bijinga*, the beautiful women genre, and *yakusha-e*, kabuki actor prints. The subject matter of ukiyo-e prints diversified significantly with new genres developing prominently. This refers to the landscape genre and the genre of flowers and birds, closely related to the landscape. The genre of flowers and birds acquired new strength. Whether offering a detailed representation or a simplified image, *kachōga* prints reflected the Japanese reverence of nature, while also incorporating symbolic and mythological meaning. There was a long tradition of representing flowers and birds in China and in numerous schools of painting in Japan throughout centuries and particularly during the Edo period. In ukiyo-e one of the early influential designers was Kitao Masayoshi (1764-1824) who is represented in the current exhibition in a collaborative print of the Seven Gods of Good Fortune. Kitao Masayoshi was known for his fluid linework that captured essential characteristics of birds and animals in a simplified, abbreviated manner. Perhaps repercussions of his style can be seen in Utagawa Yoshimori's print. One of the greatest contributors to the flower-and-birds theme in ukiyo-e was Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858) who belonged to the leading landscape artists in ukiyo-e. Utagawa Yoshimori, Hiroshige's younger contemporary and an artist of the same Utagawa lineage shows affinity to Hiroshige's style in his print discussed here.

The two prints *Cockerel, Ivy and Drum (Tsuta ni niwatori to taiko)"* by Utagawa Yoshimori and *Cockerel, Hen, Chicks and Drum (Taiko ni niwatori)* by Kitagawa Utamaro II are two examples of how ancient foreign traditions are being appreciated and expressed with unique ukiyo-e printing technique by Japanese artists. These two pieces of art can still be appreciated as masterful *kachōga* even by those who don't understand the meaning behind it. For those who are familiar with the symbol, it perhaps served as a comforting home decoration that reflects people's desire for peace in a chaotic period. The two prints are also a good pair that shows the advancement of the printing technique within three decades, which includes the

6 The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints, ed. Amy Reigle Newland, Amsterdam, 2005. V. 1, 215
7 Ibid., 214
8 Henry Smith II, *Hiroshige in History*, in Matthi Forrer, Hiroshige: Prints and Drawings, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1997, 40.

introduction of colors like the Berlin blue. These two prints, though perhaps less significant in their monetary value when compared to perhaps other more complex ukiyo-e prints, played a significant role in telling the history and development of ukiyo-e prints in a historical event like the Tenpō Crisis, where the government imposed strict limitations on the traditional ukiyo-e. Returning to the music in ukiyo-e as the theme of this exhibition, it should be noted that although the *kanko-dori* allegory of peace originated in China, specific details in these two prints are characteristically Japanese and remain relatable. This refers to the sensitive depiction of the long-tailed rooster, of the climbing ivy, and of the *taiko* drum, still widely played throughout Japan.

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Ukiyo-e Artists Represented in This Book

(roughly chronological)

Kitao Shigemasa (北尾重政), 1739-1820 (exhibition catalog, No. 3).

A founder of the Kitao School of Edo print designers, Kitao Shigemasa was a prolific book illustrator and print designer, a painter, calligrapher, and poet. His early work is said to show the influence of Torii Kiyomitsu I (q.v.). He is credited with creating a new statelier ideal of beauty in his *bijinga* prints. Many features of his style are said to have impacted such prominent artists as Torii Kiyonaga (q.v.) and Kitagawa Utamaro (q.v.). (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Torii Kiyomitsu I (鳥居 清満), 1735-1785 (exhibition catalog, No. 10).

Torii Kiyomitsu comes from the Torii School, the preeminent Edo lineage of ukiyo-e print designers. A book illustrator and print designer, he specialized in *yakusha-e* (images of kabuki theater actors), posters for Kabuki theater, and *bijinga* (images of beauties). Many of his prints were *benizuri-e* (red and green prints, No. 10), an early form of mostly two color printing before the development of full-color printing. He was the third head of the Torii School, and had many pupils, including Torii Kiyonaga (q.v). (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Torii Kiyonaga (鳥居清長), **1752-1815** (exhibition catalog, Nos. 4, 5, 11).

Torii Kiyonaga, a leading artist of the *bijinga* and actor prints during the 1780s, was one of the most impactful ukiyo-e print designers. A student of Torii Kiyomitsu I (q.v.), the founder of the Torii School, Torii Kiyonaga took up the Torii hereditary tradition in designing actor prints but excelled also in the *bijinga* genre, in which he introduced a new ideal of regal elegance. He favored groups of several figures, often including

elements of landscape setting in his compositions. In his kabuki theater prints he pioneered *degatari-zu* - a subgenre, in which narrators and musicians involved in kabuki performances are depicted on stage along with actors. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Torii Kiyomitsu II (二代目鳥居清満) or Torii Kiyomine (鳥居清峰) , 1787-1868 (exhibition catalog, No. 9).

Ukiyo-e painter, book illustrator and print designer, Torii Kiyomine designed prints related to the kabuki theater and the *bijinga*, a fine example of which is represented at the exhibition. He was a student of Torii Kiyonaga (q.v.), a highly influential artist in these both areas. He was the son-in-law of Torii Kiyomitsu I and later became the fifth head of the Torii School under the name of Torii Kiyomitsu II. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Kitagawa Utamaro (喜多川歌麿), 1753-1806 (exhibition catalog, Nos. 15, 17).

Kitagawa Utamaro, an outstanding ukiyo-e print designer, book illustrator, and painter, was a culminating figure in the *bijinga* genre in ukiyo-e prints in the last decade of the 18th century. He is said to have radically altered the manner of representing beautiful women in ukiyo-e, imbuing his tall, slender beauties with subtle emotionality. In his multifarious works he explored every facet of femininity and female life, including literary and historic references as can be seen in the current exhibition. Utamaro introduced close-up head-and-shoulder images known as *okubi-e*, often worked in extended formats of polyptychs. He is famous for his color harmonies and inclusion of mica in the background of his prints. Utamaro's style influenced the art of his contemporaries. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Kitagawa Utamaro II (二代目 喜多川歌麿), active c. early 1800s – 1831 (exhibition catalog, No. 22).

Kitagawa Utamaro II is print designer, book illustrator, painter, and author. He is said to have collaborated with Kitagawa Utamaro on some of his last prints and after Kitagawa Utamaro's death in 1806 to have taken his teacher's name and continued as Kitagawa Utamaro II. In this exhibition he is represented by a *kachōga* - a print of "flower-and-bird" genre. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Chōbunsai Eishi (鳥文斎 栄之), 1756-1829 (exhibition catalog, No. 16).

Chōbunsai Eishi came from a high-ranking samurai family and was first trained as a painter by the Chief painter-in-attendance to the shogun. He later resigned from his official duties to become a ukiyo-e artist. He concentrated on *bijinga* that became distinguished for the refinement of style. He is said to be affected by the manner of Torii Kiyonaga (q.v.)and Kitagawa Utamaro (q.v.), his great contemporaries in the *bijinga* innovations. It is said that throughout his career, Eishi was fond of reworking classical themes into his *bijinga* designs of which there is an example at the exhibition. In later years he stopped making prints and devoted himself to painting. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Sonzai Koitsu (存斎 光一), fl. 1818-1831 (exhibition catalog. No. 6).

Sonzai Kōitsu, whose name is also pronounced as Kōichi, was involved in book

illustration, including collections of *kyōka* - "playful verses," as well as in the design of *surimono*, privately commissioned prints. He perhaps was a disciple of Hokusai and is said to have been influenced by him. Koitsu is represented in this exhibition with a refined surimono bearing three poetic inscriptions and boasting luxurious printing techniques such as embossing and printing with metallic powders. Very little is known about this artist. (USSD, JW)

Utagawa Toyokuni I (初代 歌川豊国), 1769-1825 (exhibition catalog, No. 2).

Utagawa Toyokuni is one of the most important and influential ukiyo-e artists, a painter, book illustrator and print designer. A pupil of Utagawa Toyoharu, founder of the Utagawa School, Utagawa Toyokuni focused on figurative genres of *bijinga* and *yakusha-e*. Interestingly, his print in this exhibition is a fusion of the two as it represents Benzaiten, the goddess of good fortune, as a beautiful woman impersonated by a male kabuki actor on stage (No. 2). His major fame rests with *yakusha-e*. His actor images are distinguished for the boldness of design and realistic manner of face rendering known as "likeness pictures" - *nigao-e*. Utagawa Toyokuni codified the standardized appearances of the kabuki actors in a highly influential book "Quick Instructions in the Drawing of Edo Likenesses" (1817). His style became extremely influential and was adopted and popularized by his talented students Utagawa Toyokuni II, Utagawa Kunisada, Utagawa Kuniyoshi and others. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Utagawa Toyokuni II (二代目 歌川 豊国), the same as Utagawa Toyoshige (歌川豊重), 1777-1835 (exhibition catalog, No. 8).

Utagawa Toyoshige was a pupil and adopted son of Utagawa Toyokuni I, perhaps his son-in-law. After the death of his teacher, he became the head of the Utagawa School as Utagawa Toyokuni II although some of his contemporaries refused to recognize his right to this position. Utagawa Toyoshige worked in the style of his teacher, specializing in *bijinga* and *yakusha-e*. The print in the exhibition (No. 8) is a playful combination of both genres, the *bijinga* genre with theatrical references. He is said to have run a pottery business, but this is not confirmed (HEJP, BM)

Utagawa Toyokuni III (三代目歌川豊国), the same as Utagawa Kunisada (歌川国貞), 1786-1865 (exhibition catalog, Nos. 12, 13, 18).

Utagawa Kunisada is one of the most versatile and prolific ukiyo-e designers of his time. He was born to an owner of a ferry boat service and that provided him with financial support in the beginning of his career. A preeminent student of Utagawa Toyokuni, he advanced the Utagawa style in ukiyo-e becoming the leading artist of figurative genres, the yakusha-e and bijinga (Nos. 12, 18). Kunisada excelled in book illustration, of which perhaps the most significant were his illustrations to the 19th century reworking of the 10th century classic *The Tale of Genji* by Murasaki into *The False Murasaki's Rustic Genji* (Nise Murasaki Inaka Genji) by Ryutei Tanehiko. Not only had Kunisada created the visual equivalent to the adventure stories of the book, but many of his book illustrations were later adapted into often luxuriously published

commercial prints (No. 13). Kunisada later became the head of the Utagawa School and is known as Utagawa Toyokuni III. Kunisada led a large studio and left a vibrant legacy of some 20,000 designs standing out for inventiveness and complexity of compositions and intensity of color. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Utagawa Hiroshige (歌川広重), 1797-1858 (exhibition catalog Nos. 7, 19, 20).

Utagawa Hiroshige was born into a low-ranking samurai family in service of the fire department. A painter, book illustrator and print designer, he contributed to different genres but is particularly famous for his decisive contribution to the development of the landscape genre and the related "small form nature genre" - the *kachōga*, flower-and-bird pictures. Among his best known landscape designs are views of the post-stations on the government-maintained routes that connected the shogun's capital, Edo (now Tokyo) with the provinces. Hiroshige's landscapes are admired for their realism and lyricism, sensitivity to the life of nature captured in every moment of day and night, every season, every weather condition. Hiroshige was equally keen in rendering the life of people within nature views thus reflecting the life of Japan of his day in its fullness. Among Hiroshige's prints at the exhibition there is one bijinga print (No. 7) that wittily incorporates numerous nature motifs. Hiroshige's work had a profound influence on Western art towards the end of the 19th century. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (歌川 国芳), 1797-1861 (exhibition catalog, No. 14).

Utagawa Kuniyoshi, a preeminent ukiyo-e artist, was proficient in all ukiyo-e genres but became mostly famous for his *musha-e*, warrior pictures. Born to a textile dyer, he was apprenticed to Utagawa Toyokuni I (q.v) in whose studio Kuniyoshi mastered characteristic features of the Utagawa School and formulated a unique style of his own. His works stand out for their originality, inventiveness, choice of subversive themes. Kuniyoshi combined enthusiasm for the past and the unbridled artistic imagination. Kuniyoshi's countless and versatile characters from history and lore are full of vigor and are made believable with many precise period details. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

Utagawa Yoshimori (歌川芳盛), 1830-1884 (exhibition catalog, No. 21).

Utagawa Yoshimori, one of the major students of Utagawa Kuniyoshi, worked in all genres that were current at that time. He contributed to musha-e - the warrior genre that was his teacher's specialty, but worked also in the *kachōga* genre, created humorous pictures and views of the westerners in the so-called *yokohama-e*; he also illustrated numerous books, including children books and political satire. At this exhibition he is represented with a fine, painterly image of a rooster on a drum. (HEJP, BM, VJP)

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Glossary of Terms

Bijinga (美人画): literally, pictures of beautiful people, the term was initially gender neutral, referring to both men and women as objects of appreciation, but since the second half of the 18th c. bijinga became the name for pictures of women. Most often portrayed were dazzling courtesans from the "pleasure quarters," first of all from Yoshiwara, the government licensed red light district in Edo (now Tokyo). Later for various reasons this genre got to include representations of beautiful women from a variety of social backgrounds. Women depicted on the prints were idealized sensual beauties, spectacularly attired and coiffered, shown as skillful entertainers and embodying the very spirit of the floating world culture. These women were represented not only in contemporary settings, but also as playful substitutes for historic or literary characters of any gender (Nos. 16, 17).

Biwa (琵琶): Japanese short-necked lute distinguished by its graceful, teardrop-shaped hollowed out wood body. The biwa has a shallow, rounded back and four silk strings. There are three small sound-holes on the soundboard: two half-moon shaped visible ones (hangetsu 半月) and a hidden one (ingetsu 隠月) beneath the string holder. The strings are sounded with a large, thick, fan-shaped plectrum called a bachi (撥), traditionally made of wood or ivory. The origin of the Japanese biwa dates back to around the year 700 CE when the pipa was first introduced to Japan from China as part of ensembles gifted to the Japanese Emperor. Over the centuries, several types of biwa were created, each having a certain size plectrum, a specialized purpose, a unique performance technique, and varying numbers of strings and frets. Among the major variants are the gaku-biwa (楽琵琶, used in court music), the mōsō-biwa (盲僧琵琶, used by Buddhist monks for the chanting of sutras), the heike-biwa (平家琵琶, used to chant stories from the Heike monogatari). Biwa is an attribute of Benzaiten, goddess of good fortune, music, and knowledge. Nos. 1, 2. Encyclopedia Britannica, Grinnel College website.

Bokashi (ぼかし): a woodblock printing technique for creating color gradation.

Chōyō (重陽): the Chrysanthemum Festival celebrated on the ninth day of the Ninth Month. It originated in China in ca. 1st century CE, where it is known as the "double nine" festival. It was adopted by the imperial court in Japan from China in the Nara period (8th century) as one of five annual observances, gosekku. (No. 5).

Degatari-zu (出語図): "pictures of narrators onstage," a subgenre of ukiyo-e in which kabuki theatre narrators and musicians are depicted on stage along with actors (No. 10).

Fue (笛): Japanese flute; two types of fue in use are the traverse flute yokobue (横笛), and the vertical flute tatebue (縦笛), usually know a shakuhachi (尺八), literally, one foot eight, from its length. Shakuhachi - came to prominence in the beginning of the Edo period.
The yokobue (the same as ryūteki 竜笛 - dragon flute) is medium-pitched bark-covered bamboo transverse flute with seven holes. This kind of flute is used in the ancient music of the ceremonies in the temples and shrines, and in orchestras of the Noh performance. The sound of the ryūteki is said to represent the dragons which ascend the skies between the heavenly lights and the people of the earth. The transverse flute is a classical and aristocratic instrument, and there are many stories relating to it in the romantic medieval literature of Japan. Particularly famous legendary transverse flute players are Minamoto Yoshitsune (1159-1189) and his flute called Usuzumi no fue (薄墨の笛); yokobue figures prominently in the Tale of Genji. Nos. 13, 14,15,16. Josho dictionary.

Furisode (振袖): "swinging sleeves" style of kimono distinguished by its ankle-long sleeves. Initially furisode had relatively short sleeves and was used as everyday wear; over time as the sleeves became more exaggerated it became an elegant form of dress worn by women mainly on special occasions. During the Edo period, influenced by courtesans who would dress in furisode to display their beauty and elegance, furisode of various patterns also became a trend of fashion. (Nos. 3, 5, 7, 9,18)

Gassaku (合作): Paintings, drawings, prints, or other visual Japanese art that were the product of collaboration by two or more artists. Many ukiyo-e artists participated in collaborative efforts and projects. (No. 1).

Gekkin (月琴): a moon lute originates from the Chinese instrument called yueqin. It belongs to the family of flat, round-bodied lutes found in Central and East Asia. Its development is dated to the Jin dynasty (265-420). It has a short neck and a round resonator of some 12 inches (30 cm) in diameter. It has two pairs of silk strings, tuned (in relative pitch) to c–g. The strings are plucked by either the fingers or a small plectrum. The instrument's characteristic sound is produced when a metal plate that is hung inside the body vibrates against it when the instrument is played. (No. 6). Encyclopedia Britannica.

Goze (瞽女): visually impared female itinerant musicians licensed for their trade by local authorities. They walked along the roads in groups of two or three, doing door-to-door entertainment as visiting blind geisha. They combined playing shamisen with recitation of ballads or with singing of popular songs. (Nos. 19, 20).

Hanami (花見): literally, flower viewing, Japanese cultural custom of enjoying the beauty of flowers, in this case referring to cherry blossoms - sakura, and thus celebrating the season of spring. Hanami was practiced by aristocracy during the Heian and Kamakura periods and became a pastime for commoners during the Warring States period (1477-1573). The Edo period is marked by cherry blossom viewing craze across the society. (No. 18).

Hanetsuki (羽根つき): the same as oibane, is battledore and shuttlecock game akin to badminton but played without a net. Rooted in Shinto rituals, this game has a long history of being associated with the New Year. It is traditionally played by young girls. A wooden paddle hagoita is used to hit a shuttlecock hane made of soapberry seed with feathers attached to it. The goal is to keep the shuttlecock in midair as long as possible. (No. 4).

Jinjitsu (人日): literally, human day, one of five annual observances gosekku. It is celebrated on the 7th day of the First Month. Originally of Chinese origin, it is believed to be the day when humans were created by the Chinese mother goddess, Nu Gua (Nuwa) - after six other creatures, one per day. Thus, on the seventh day, divinations were performed for man, and punishments were not to be carried. An important part of the observances is consuming a seven-herb porridge. Nanakusa, the seven young herbs, are believed to possess good fortune value and that gathering them and eating them strengthens the body and wards off evil spirits.(No. 4).

Jōruri (浄瑠璃): a narrative-musical form accompanied by shamisen, it took the name of a highly popular ballad that described the romance between Ushiwakamaru (young Yoshitsune) and Princess Joruri - Jōrurihime (No. 15). It was then incorporated in the art of puppeteering and received the name of ningyo jōruri. (No. 15).

Kachōga (花鳥画): literally, flowers and birds, a term for a genre that depicted small forms of the natural world. Prints of the kachōga genre also embrace images of plants, grasses, small animals, fishes, etc. Many prominent ukiyo-e artists contributed to the development of this genre. Representations of small natural forms in the kachōga genre are often distinguished for their sensitivity. Contentwise, kachōga prints may or may not express seasonal references and often carry religious, mythical, and symbolic meaning. (Nos. 21, 22).

Kakko (羯鼓): a double-headed Japanese drum laid sideways on a stand so that it could be played with drumsticks on both heads. The heads are held together by a leather tension cord that weaves through holes on each drum face.

Kanko-Dori (閑古鳥): rooster (tori, bird) on a drum of remonstrance (kanko), is an idiom for peace. This expression has Chinese origin: in ancient China a drum was installed in front of the palace gates to report a complaint or to call for a soldier's assembly. When the government ruled well and there was no cause for complaints, drums remained silent and roosters nested in them.

Karazuri (空摺): blind embossing or gauffrage is a printing technique for adding texture to paper. A hard carved surface is pressed into the paper without applying ink to create a slight yet distinct 3D effect (see Nos. 6, 7).

Kenshū (献酬): a practice of exchanging sake cups at a banquet to increase the unity of the gathering, mutual understanding and closeness of all the members.

Koma (駒): a bridge of a musical instrument; it is shamisen's main fret. People use it to change the tone of the shamisen by placing the koma in different positions on the shamisen sound box. The shamisen's sound would get higher once koma is placed in the middle of the shamisen body.

Kosode (小袖): predecessor of kimono that evolved from the straight cut style in the Heian period. It is characterized by the unisex outer garment with the same proportions for the main-body panels and the sleeve panels, the rounded edges and small armholes.

Koto (琴): is a long Japanese board zither having 13 silk strings and movable bridges. The body of the instrument is made of paulownia wood and is about 190 cm (74 inches) long. When the performer is kneeling or seated on the floor, the koto is held off the floor by two legs or a bridge-storage box. ⋯ The koto appeared in the Japanese court during the 8th century⋯. The koto is played by plucking the strings with the thumb and first two fingers of the right hand, which are fitted with ivory plectrums called tsume. The left hand, in traditions after the 16th century, may alter the pitch or sound of each string by pressing or manipulating the strings to the left of the bridges. Various pentatonic tunings are used, depending on the type of music being played. (Nos. 7, 15). (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Kyōka (狂歌): "wild or mad poetry", witty and intelligent poem of 5-7-5-7-7 - thirty-one syllable lines that parodied traditional topics. They relied on sophisticated cultural allusions and word play and were exceedingly popular in the 1780th with their popularity lingering to the 1830s. They were published as kyōka anthologies (No. 1, although without a kyoka) and kyōka surimono (No. 6).

Mitate-e (見立絵): a mind-teasing intelligent artistic method of layering meanings, it is widely used in ukiyo-e. Most often mitate-e relies on wittily presenting a classical subject matter in a contemporary guise. (Nos. 16, 17)

Onnagata (女形): 'woman person', is a term for a Kabuki theater male actors who play female roles or the roles themselves. (SL, 498)

Sasarindō: sasa l笹) bamboo leaves looking downs, and rindō (竜胆) - gentian flowers, the same as autumn bell-flower - together these two plant motifs form a design used by the Minamoto clan as a family crest. This crest was primarily associated with Minamoto Yoritomo, Japan's first shogun, and Minamoto Yoshitsune, Yoritomo's younger half-brother and an object of the latter's hatred.

Shamisen (三味線): long-necked fretless Japanese lute. The instrument has a small square body with a catskin front and back, three twisted-silk strings, and a curved-back pegbox with side pegs. It is played with a large paddle-shaped plectrum. Different types of plectrums produce distinct tone colours for specific types of music. The samisen was derived from the similar Chinese sanxian, a version of which reached Japan from the Ryukyu Islands in the 16th century. It is widely played in folk and art music as an accompaniment to lyric and narrative song and in the orchestras of Bunraku (puppet) and Kabuki dramas. (Nos. 5, 8, 9, 18). (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Shichifukujin (七福神): Seven lucky gods from Japanese mythology. The gods originate from various religions, including Shintoism, Buddhism and Hinduism. Shichi directly translates to "seven," fuku to "luck," and jin to "divinities." The number seven originates from the Buddhist notion of the SEven Blessings that would replace the Seven Misfortunes for a righteous person. These gods promise happiness in the form of well-being, joyfulness, abundant offspring, and longevity.

Shichigenkin (七絃琴): seven-string koto - originally, fretless Chinese board zither with seven strings, it appeared in Japan during the Nara period (8th century); it was used during the Heian period but was discontinued after that; it was once again borrowed from China in the Edo period and became popular, particularly among the literati. (No. 3) [Tokugawa Art Museum].

Shimada-mage (島田髷): women's hairstyle in Japan, similar to a chignon. During the Edo period it was the predominant style of hairdo. Generally the hair is gathered together at the crown of the head and a small portion of the bun is sectioned off to point outward. (Jisho Dictionary).

Shinme (神馬): literally, "sacred horse." This term is used to refer to a horse that is dedicated to a Shinto shrine or is used in rites and festivals. There are no rules about the kind of horses to be chosen, and they are believed to be ridden by gods (deities, spirits). No. 9.

Shō (笙): the Japanese mouth organ descended from the Chinese sheng, is used in gagaku (court music). It consisted usually of 17 bamboo pipes set in a small wind-chest into which a musician blows through a mouthpiece. Each pipe has a free reed, made of metal (or formerly of bamboo or reed), that vibrates to produce sound when a finger hole on the pipe is covered. The pipes, which are of five different lengths, are arranged in two triangular shapes to symbolize the folded wings of a phoenix bird. (No. 15) (Encyclopedia Britannica).

Surimono (摺物): literally translated to "printed things," the term refers to privately commissioned and issued prints the limited editions of which were not sold but rather distributed within a circle of connected and likely minded individuals. Surimono often combined an image with poetic inscriptions both steeped in cultural allusions. Surimono were often printed in association with the New Year but not only. Both professional artists and amateurs designed surimono. Though surimono were designed in a number of formats, from the 1810s most often surimono were printed on small, nearly square sheets around 20.5 x 18.5 cm in a format known as shikishiban (色紙判). Being a private commission, surimono are distinguished for the marked elegance and luxury of production. Surimono were printed on thicker hosho paper (奉書紙) with best pigments, metallic powders, embossing karazuri (q.v.), etc. (No. 6).

Tōrōbin shimada (燈籠鬢): literally translated as "lantern sidelocks," a variation of the shimada hairstyle that broad semi-transparent sidelocks that are said to resemble lanterns. This arrangement of hair was possible thanks to a half-moon-shaped strut made from tortoise-shell placed across the head laterally.

Toshidama (年玉): literally a "year jewel," is a term for a decorative frame that was a symbol of the Utagawa School of ukiyo-e. Originally round with a short thickened arc in the upper right quarter, the shape of toshidama is derived from the cursive form of the character for "year" – toshi, and originally symbolized a New Year gift. With time there developed variations of the toshidama seal - sometimes the swelling part was given little horn-like projections, and then it was described as moustached round toshidama (cartouche No. 8); sometimes the toshidama shape was used as an artist's seal (No. 8), sometimes as a cartouche for the title (No. 18), sometimes it was elongated to serve as a cartouche for a signature (Nos. 12, 13) or it could be doubled into a gourd-like shape making it even more auspicious .

Tsuzumi (鼓): a family of Japanese two-headed drums with hourglass-shaped (waisted) bodies.
The main types are ko-tsuzumi (smaller drum) and the ō-tsuzumi (larger drum) that are quite similar in appearance, but the manner in which they are played and the sound and tone they produce are quite distinct.
Ko-tsuzumi (小鼓): has both heads made of horsehide. The instrument is held on the player's right shoulder and hit with fingers of the right hand. The drummer can produce four soft sounds by changing encircling rope

tensions with gentle left-hand squeezes. The resonance of the drum is altered by the application of thin paper (chōshigami) to the centre of the rear drumhead. (Nos. 10, 17). Encyclopedia Britannica.
Ō-tsuzumi (大鼓): is a larger drum with the cowhide skins on both heads heated before being tied tightly against the body of the drum. The instrument, held on the left hip, produces a cracking sound when one head is struck with the central fingers of the right hand, which sometimes are covered with hard paper thimbles to intensify the sound. (No. 17). Encyclopedia Britannica.

Umemi (梅見): plum blossom viewing, an ancient tradition associated with the Tang period Chinese poetry extolling the plum as the first tree to bloom after the winter. Plum blossoms and their all-pervading scent heralded the beginning of spring and called for appreciation (No. 12).

Yakusha-e (役者絵) : actor (yakusha) picture (e) - a ukiyo-e genre of kabuki actor images, whether onstage or offstage.

Yoshiwara (吉原): a government-licensed red-light district in Edo (now Tokyo). First opened in 1618 in the central part of the city, it was moved in 1656 to its northern outskirts close to the Asakusa Temple where it continued to exist until 1956. Trained to provide sophisticated leisure to the clients, they became renowned for their cultural accomplishments, beauty, and fashion. Although sad realities of their lives rarely found their way to glorious images of courtesans in prints, hints on their hopes to escape their fate sometimes are present in ukiyo-e (No. 7).

Yuiwata (結い綿): a popular traditional hairstyle among young women until the early Meiji Era. A chignon wrapped with cloth hair ornament made of chirimen (縮緬) silk crepe fabric or kanoko (type of shibori tie-dye with all over fawn spots).