

The Arts of Edo Japan



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Asian | Education

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The slides are presented in roughly chronological order. Twenty Asian Art Museum object photos by Kazuhiro Tsuruta unless indicated otherwise.

Map of Japan



Introduction

This workshop focuses on the Edo period (1615–1868) in Japan, and its rich artistic and cultural heritage. Teachers may choose to combine the slides and activities in this packet, which focus on courtly and literati arts, with other packets produced by the Asian Art Museum and other institutions treating this period that are listed in the Bibliography. Teachers may also wish to borrow the museum’s activity trunk on Edo, which includes clothing of different classes, the *Hokusai & Hiroshige* slide packet, and introductory video on the *Hokusai & Hiroshige* exhibit.

Notes to the reader

Japanese names in this text will be listed following the Japanese convention. The family name precedes the given name, for example Ike Gyokuran, with Ike being the artist’s family name. However, unlike the Western practice—which commonly refers to artists by their last names (for example, Picasso or O’Keefe) Japanese artists are often referred to by their first names (for example, Gyokuran). One reason for this is that artists often changed their family name to that of their master or their artistic school (Kano Tanyu, for example). Since there have been hundreds of Kano artists, this name alone is not helpful in distinguishing Tanyu from other Kano artists, such as Kano Eitoku or Kano Hogai.

Notes on pronunciation of Japanese words:

Surprisingly to many English speakers, Japanese is not a very difficult language to pronounce. Most of the sounds, with a few exceptions, exist in English. Unlike English, Japanese does not have stress points within words nor does it have silent letters. Each syllable is given equal emphasis, and vowel sounds are standard. In English the letter “e” can sound very differently depending on the word, or it can be silent, (“eat” vs. “get” vs. “late”). Not so in Japanese. Each vowel has only one sound, which is always pronounced. Below is a basic guide to Japanese pronunciation.

Sounds in Japanese are expressed in syllable-like units that generally consist of a consonant followed by a vowel, the three syllables: ki mo no, for example together make the word kimono (Japanese clothing).

Vowels are pronounced as in the following English words:

- a as in at
- i as in machine
- u as in food (without rounding lips)
- e as in bet
- o as in orange

Consonants are generally pronounced as they are in English with some challenging exceptions:

g	at beginning of word like give, in middle of a word like walking; it never has a “j” sound
tsu	sounds like a “t” and an “s” sound merged, ending in the “u” as in put.
ra, ri, ru, re, ro	to make the “r” sound in Japanese the tip of the tongue touches the back of the upper teeth. It sounds a bit like an English “l” or “d” sound. There is no equivalent of the English “l” or “r” sounds in Japanese. This is why many Japanese speakers have trouble distinguishing l’s from r’s in English, and why English speakers struggle with the Japanese “r”.

The Edo Period (1615–1868): Some Generalizations and Assumptions

Assumption: During the Edo period, Japan was isolated from foreign countries.

While technically true, the reality is more complicated. The Edo government, led by the **Shogun** (supreme military leader) prohibited foreign interaction. (The reasons for the prohibition will be explored in the Historical Background section). Japanese were not allowed to travel out of the country, and if they did they could not return. Foreign traders and missionaries were expelled from the country. Only Dutch traders were permitted to continue business at the Japanese port of Nagasaki; the foreigners were relegated to a small artificial island called Deshima in Nagasaki Harbor. However, these regulations could not quell Japanese citizens' curiosity with other cultures. Chinese ideas and aesthetics were widely studied and admired among literate Japanese. On average, 26 Chinese ships per year landed at Nagasaki and indirect trade with Korea continued (Schirokauer, p. 321). Western ideas came into the country via books brought by the Dutch. This gave rise to a new school of thought called **Rangaku** (Dutch Learning) that focused on scientific analysis of the natural world.

Assumption: Edo period culture was created by the residents of the capital city of Edo (present-day Tokyo).

This is only partly true. Although the city of Edo grew to prominence during the 250 years of the period, and was the locus for the development and dissemination of the woodblock prints, Edoites were very conscious of the cultural heritage of Japan's traditional, imperial capital of Kyoto. A cultural rivalry between the two cities still exists today. The period is characterized by growth and change, often associated with the city of Edo, but it is also marked by a reverence for past traditions, represented by Kyoto. The city of Osaka, strategically located on the coast south of Kyoto, was also thriving in this period, with an aesthetically active intelligentsia. There is a saying from the Edo period that alludes to the flavor of these three great cities: An Edoite is driven to poverty by love of entertainment, a Kyotoite by love of dress, and an Osakan by love of food.

Generalization: Edo period society was strictly divided into four classes: samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant.

The class system instituted by the Shogunate was meant to ensure social stability, but one of the most interesting aspects of Edo culture is that individuals were constantly finding ways around the rules. Commoners, who included farmers, artisans, and merchants, were prohibited from lavish displays of wealth, but subverted sumptuary laws that restricted the decoration of residences, means of transportation, and dress. They did this by, for example, lining their simple kimono with luxurious silks, or by following building restrictions superficially so that from the exterior their home or shop appeared to be only one story when in fact it was two. Although lowest in status, many merchants achieved great wealth during this period. Naturally, they sought to enjoy their success by collecting beautiful objects and spending money on extravagant entertainment. Occasionally, the government cracked down on excess by issuing new edicts and enforcing them more rigorously. Even samurai, who were expected to maintain high standards of conduct, felt constrained—they visited the Kabuki theater and red-light districts in disguise.

Generalization: During the Edo period, artistic production was fueled by a new group of patrons.

Prior to the Edo period, beautiful objects were created for wealthy, privileged patrons, who represented only a small fraction of the Japanese population. During the Edo period, there were several developments that enabled a larger section of the population to focus on the finer things in life:

1) Peace.

Prior to the Edo period, Japan was primarily an agrarian economy. Most people survived by farming the land. They often produced their own clothing, baskets, and tools, and traded for goods, such as ceramics or metal objects, in a local market. There was no centralized government. Instead, several different regions were ruled by powerful local families that were in virtually constant battle with each other. This caused instability and hardship to all, and it was a struggle to simply keep food on the table. With the unification of the various regions under the powerful Shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, peace came to the land and allowed everyone to settle into a more stable routine, which led to a healthier economy. Production became more specialized, new roads and canals facilitated the transport of goods, and farming techniques and land usage were made more efficient.

2) Education and Increased Literacy.

With a more stable environment and increased prosperity, parents of all classes began to focus on educating their children. Although still very low compared to today's standard, more children received some form of formal education than before. Some estimates say that by the end of the Edo period about forty percent of boys and ten percent of girls had received some formal education. (Fister, p. 13) Samurai could not depend upon sheer military skill anymore to further themselves. The first set of laws for warrior houses issued in 1615 declared that samurai should be equally skilled in literary arts (*bun*) as they were in the military arts (*bu*). (Hall, p. 716). Peace also meant that samurai had to redefine their role in society. Some of the lower ranking samurai, who found themselves impoverished or without a position, became teachers to support themselves. For more on Edo period ideas about education, see the **Student Handout 2: Readings on Education for Edo Period Boys and Girls**.

3) Woodblock Printing.

Woodblock printing technology already existed in Japan, but now this technology boomed as a result of refinements in production and increased demand. As more people were able to read, and enjoyed more leisure time, woodblock printed books featuring popular stories, famous places, and pictures of celebrities, such as Kabuki actors and courtesans, sold by the thousands. These books enabled the rapid spread of fashion trends and information. Although now collected by museums as valuable art, most Edo period woodblock books and single sheet prints were affordable to the common person with a modest income.

Edo arts were dominated by the woodblock print.

Edo was perhaps the most prolific period in Japanese art history, not only in volume of works produced but in its diversity of styles. There were more artists and more patrons driving this flourish of art production than ever before. Ukiyo-e (“pictures of the floating world” or Japanese woodblock prints) are just one important development in the period. Some artistic schools continued from previous eras, such as the Kano and Tosa, while others sprouted anew, such as Rinpa and Nanga (definitions of these schools follow in the **Artists and Patrons** section). A few women painters affiliated primarily with the Nanga school achieved renown. The proliferation of styles and models of patronage make the Edo period a rich, yet complex area of study.

Historical Background

Japan's Edo period dates from 1615, when Tokugawa Ieyasu defeated his enemies at Osaka Castle, to 1868, when the Shogun's government collapsed and the Meiji emperor was reinstated as Japan's main figurehead. This 250-year period takes its name from the city of Edo that started out as a small castle town and grew into one of the largest cities of the modern world, now called Tokyo. Much of this tremendous growth happened during the Edo period. The Edo period is also known as the Tokugawa period, named for the ruling family of Tokugawa.

The Edo period was the first stretch of prolonged peace in Japan since the Heian period (794–1156). This meant that the Japanese could again pursue a better standard of living. Although there were occasional natural and economic disasters that disrupted life, the period is one of agricultural development, urbanization, increased education and literacy, commercial prosperity, and a flowering of artistic production.

How did the Edo period come into being?

Prior to Edo, Japan suffered more than a century of civil war (1467–1568) known as the Sengoku period (“country at war”) with regional warlords battling each other for supremacy. From about 1560–1590, the various domains were united through the efforts of two powerful daimyo (regional rulers), Oda Nobunaga (1534–82) and Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536–98) (Figure 1). After Nobunaga was assassinated in 1582, Hideyoshi strove to consolidate control and stability, and secure his own succession. However, his failed attempts to invade Korea in 1592–1598 dwindled his resources. His son was too young to succeed him when he died of illness in 1598. At this point, Hideyoshi's former allies competed for leadership. Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616) emerged the strongest, and completed Japan's unification under Tokugawa hegemony.

Ieyasu stamped out the last remnants of Hideyoshi's family and retainers when he occupied Osaka Castle in 1615, marking the official start of the Edo/Tokugawa period.



Figure 1: Portrait of Toyotomi Hideyoshi. Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk. Inscription by Seisho Shotai, dated 1599. Gift and purchase from the Harry C.G. Packard Collection Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Shujiro Shimada; The Avery Brundage Collection Asian Art Museum, 1991.61. This slide is available in the AAM teachers' packet, Japanese Painting: Form and Function.

What is a shogun, and how did he rule Japan?

Shogun is a title granted by the Emperor that means commander-in-chief. The *bakufu* (warrior government) set up by the Tokugawa, controlled a network of *daimyo* (regional lords), who in turn ruled relatively autonomously over their respective domains that had been granted by the Shogun. Mindful of the civil wars that immediately preceded Edo unification, the bakufu instituted restrictive laws to ensure control. To keep the daimyo in check the Shogun required them to rotate their residence, spending alternate years at home and in Edo. Their families lived in Edo year-round as virtual hostages. Should the daimyo attempt to go against the shogunate, their lives would be in peril. The domains of formerly allied daimyo might be moved to distant areas to keep them from plotting against other daimyo or the Shogun. In addition to controlling activities within the country, the Shogun expelled foreigners, virtually sealing Japan off from direct contact with the outside world.

Why was this exclusion policy thought necessary?

Portuguese traders first arrived in Japan in 1543, marking the beginning of a period of nearly 100 years of contact between Japanese and Europeans, many of whom were Christian missionaries. The first to arrive were traders, who brought firearms that transformed methods of warfare in Japan tipping the scales in favor of the daimyo who quickly mastered this new technology. Later visitors included missionaries, such as the now-sainted Francis Xavier, who arrived in 1549 as a passenger on a Chinese boat. Many of the missionaries were aggressive converters, bringing several daimyo and thousands of commoners into the faith. The Christians angered the shogunate when they involved themselves in political conflicts, posing a real threat to the Shogun's control. In 1614 an official judgment on the subversiveness of Christianity was published stating that Christians were trying to take over Japan, and that their religion taught them to:

“contravene governmental regulations, traduce Shinto, calumniate the True Law [Buddhism], destroy righteousness, corrupt goodness”—in short, to subvert the native Japanese, the Buddhist, and the Confucian foundations of the social order. (Hall, p. 367).

The Shogun banned Christianity, expelled missionaries from the country, and began to persecute those who had converted and refused to renounce the faith.

How was society structured?

Tokugawa rule was founded on Confucian principles, which called for a structured society, with the emperor at the top and educated soldiers (the Shogun and samurai) administering the government. Below them were the primary producers, farmers, who paid stipends in rice to support the military class. Below farmers in status were secondary producers, artisans. Merchants were at the very bottom of the social hierarchy. Ironically, it was the groups with the lowest status, merchants and artisans, collectively called chonin, who seemed to prosper during the Edo period, creating an imbalance between status and actual wealth. (See also section on Edo Society).

The chonin influenced artistic production and Edo period life in general, especially during the first century of the period. The second century, between 1700–1800, was relatively stable with occasional political disruptions and economic hardships. Restrictions on the impor-

tation of foreign books was lifted by Shogun Yoshimune, allowing intellectuals to more freely pursue studies based on Chinese and Western sources. This period also witnessed a flourishing of artistic styles, which we have tried to represent in the slides in this packet.

After 1800, severe problems began to arise resulting from the shogunate's over-reliance on an agrarian economy, with rice as its foundation. Price fluctuations and droughts made the economy very unstable. A bad crop meant samurai stipends dropped below poverty levels, and farmers began to migrate to urban areas to find a more stable income. Local peasant uprisings became more common and were eventually directed against the shogunate.

How did the Edo period end?

The end of the Edo period is often described by Westerners in these terms: US Commodore Matthew Perry's black ships forcibly opened Japan to the outside world, Japanese found themselves unprepared to compete technologically with Western powers, so they rushed to modernize, ultimately becoming one of the world's most technologically advanced countries in only about 100 years. While true to a point, the major changes that happened in Japan from around 1850–1920 had their impetus from within the country as well as from without. The transformation from Edo to Meiji is a complex phenomenon, but is characterized by a shift in the following areas, which began during the Edo period:

- change in class relations from hereditary to merit-based
- from shogun to imperial rule
- from isolation to integration in the world economy
- increasing centralized political control
- enhanced systems for interchange of goods
- compilations of statistics about land, food production and population.

The national security issues brought in by Perry and his demands for treaties caused internal problems in Japan. The Shogunate and the imperial court were in disagreement on what to do, which created dissension among daimyo and courtiers, and among the daimyo themselves who had diverse allegiances. Two domains, Choshu and Satsuma, began to act as mediators between the court in Kyoto and the shogunate in Edo, both leaning their support towards the imperial court. Other samurai followed suit and proclaimed loyalty to the emperor and hostility to foreigners, rallying behind the slogan "Expel the Barbarians!". A civil war in Choshu from 1864–1865 brought in shogunate troops and further fueled anti-shogun sentiment there. In 1866, Choshu defeated the government forces. Two years later, Choshu and Satsuma allied to defeat the Shogun's army at Toba-Fushimi, causing the Shogun to pull out of western Japan, and surrender to imperial forces in 1868, marking the close of the Edo period.

Edo Society

As mentioned in the **Generalizations** section, the Edo government divided society into different classes—samurai, farmer, artisan, and merchant, each with proscribed roles and limitations. The members of the imperial family and the nobility were exempt from this system. They retained trappings of privilege, but were quite powerless, living a marginalized existence. Buddhist clergy were also outside of the system, as were prostitutes and other outcasts such as butchers and leather workers (considered untouchable because of their occupation).

Historian Osamu Wakita has also conceived of the status divisions being drawn between warrior-proprietor, peasant, and townspeople. (Hall, p. 123) It is also helpful to consider the traditional environments for each: warrior-proprietors oversaw their domains throughout the country from castle towns of varying sizes; peasants living in villages worked the land and paid taxes that supported the samurai class; townspeople including artisans and merchants provided services and goods to the growing urban centers. Artisans, among them carpenters, potters, basket makers, lacquer artists, woodblock print designers and carvers, and screen painters, were busy outfitting samurai residences and wealthy merchant homes. Merchants sold the products of others, such as foodstuffs, storage jars, and books. Although their trade stimulated the Edo economy, **neo-Confucian** scholars placed merchants at the bottom of social hierarchy because of the perception that they did not actually produce anything useful to society.

Artists and Patrons

“Since the last hundred years has been an age when the realm is at peace, many Confucian scholars, physicians, masters of poetry, and those accomplished in tea and other elegant arts have come from among the chonin.”

—Nishikawa Joken (1692), cited from Hall, p. 724

The Edo period saw the emergence of a new group of sophisticated art lovers, the townspeople, called chonin (“people of the blocks”). This group included merchants and artisans, many of whom prospered in the booming economy that led to an increased demand for luxury goods. Artists catered to chonin tastes, as well as continuing to produce for the traditional art patrons in the elite classes of the nobility and samurai.

Prior to the Edo period, many painters and sculptors remained anonymous, occupying relatively equal status to carpenters and other artisans. The position of the artist during the Edo period changed, as artists became more successful financially, and better educated. Some of them began to be seen as celebrities, arbiters of taste with eccentric personalities. Although many still worked for low wages in obscurity, the Edo period marks the emergence of the artist as individual, as the genius creator in Japan.

Some Schools of Art in Edo Japan

(note: there are other artistic schools active during the Edo period, we are just focusing on those represented in the slide packet)

The **Kano** school, established by Kano Masanobu (1434–1530), primarily served the samurai class. Their bold designs of powerful animals and symbolic plants and trees, blending aspects of native Japanese with Chinese styles, were the perfect decoration for screens and sliding doors in the large official audience halls in samurai residences. Their academy followed the shogunate from Kyoto to Edo. They were perhaps Japan’s most influential school of painting, since most artists who underwent traditional training began their studies with a Kano master. They are associated with *kanga* or “Chinese painting” style, although Kano Eitoku and Kano Tanyu were both innovators who skillfully blended the expressive brushwork of *kanga* with the brilliant colors and gold prevalent in native Japanese painting style. (See slides #4–5)

The **Tosa** school, which originated in Kyoto during the Muromachi period (1392–1573), traditionally painted for the imperial family and nobility. They took as their subjects classical Japanese literature, such as the *Tale of Genji* and the *Tales of Ise*. Painting on a variety of formats, but most commonly associated with the narrative handscroll, they developed a refined painting style called *yamato-e* (pictures of Yamato—an old-fashioned name for Japan). As its name suggests, *yamato-e* is considered a purely Japanese painting style, in which paint is applied in opaque layers with strong outlines. Faces, which are indicated by abbreviated strokes, are not individualized. (See slides #1–3, and 10)

Nanga (southern painting) or **Bunjinga** (scholar or literati painting) artists took a form of Chinese painting as their model. The Chinese Ming dynasty artist/theorist Dong Qichang (1555–1636) established two categories of painting: northern painting, which was orthodox and academic (painters were formally trained and sold their work for a living); and southern

painting, which was freely executed and expressive (ideally these artists were scholar-amateurs who did not paint for a living). Japanese literati artists, although forbidden to travel to China, studied and emulated the southern style of painting and Chinese art theories through imported books. Nanga painters generally declined to serve the samurai class, and preferred instead to survive by selling works to educated merchants and farmers. (Woodson, p. 23). They often painted for each other and prided themselves as being intellectuals, poets, tea masters, raconteurs, as well as painters. They are most associated with smaller formats, such as hanging scrolls and fans, but several Nanga artists also produced screen paintings. Nanga artists primarily resided in Kyoto and Osaka. (See slides #11, 12, and 13)

The **Rinpa** (or Rimpa) school originated with the artist Tawaraya Sotatsu active (1600–1640) but is named for his successor, Ogata Korin (1658–1716)—the second syllable of the name Korin forms the first in Rinpa. These artists came from the merchant class in Kyoto. They became friendly with members of the impoverished nobility and revived courtly aesthetics and themes. Like the Tosa artists they took as their favorite subjects classical literature and poetry, as well as birds and flowers of the four seasons. They are known for brilliantly colored paintings and lavish use of gold. Rinpa artists worked on every format imaginable—screens, scrolls, and fans, lacquer objects and ceramics. Their compositions often accentuate the flatness of the painting surface and emphasize pattern and design. (See slide #18)

Aesthetic Trends in Chanoyu (Japanese tea ceremony)

This section contributed by Scott McDougall of the Urasenke Foundation of San Francisco

Chanoyu is a traditional Japanese cultural practice that has endured the test of time and is practiced all over the world today. It centers on the act of making a bowl of tea and serving it as an everyday activity through which one achieves a state of consciousness that is extraordinary. This article provides a historical overview of the development of this art form and the four main aesthetic schools of *chanoyu* from the Edo period.

Heian-Kamakura Period Tea [794–1338]

The first record of tea drinking in Japan occurs early in the Heian period (794–1185) when it was introduced to Japanese aristocracy by scholar-monks returning from Tang dynasty China. For this form of tea, known as *dancha* (brick tea), tea leaves are harvested and packed into a brick-like mass. The beverage is prepared by adding tea brick shavings to boiling water along with spices and is highly regarded for its stimulating and tonic properties.

For a time, the Heian aristocracy was eager to assimilate aspects of Chinese culture. Tea was served at court poetry gatherings and a number of imperial anthologies contain tea-inspired poems. With the decline of the Tang dynasty, the Japanese court stopped sending official envoys to China and the Japanese aristocracy began to develop their own unique aesthetic sensibilities that much later would come to influence Edo tea taste. The fashion for drinking brick tea was abandoned at court, but, Japanese Buddhist monasteries continued the practice and maintained sporadic contact with China.

A new era of tea culture began with the introduction of *matcha* (powdered green tea), by the Japanese monk Eisai (1141–1215). While in China, Eisai studied Chan (Zen) Buddhism. Tea as ritual offering and communal activity was an integral part of Chinese monastic routine. Eisai returned to Japan an enthusiastic advocate who promoted tea among the aristocracy, high ranking samurai, and monastic community, as a means of preserving health and well being.

Eisai is credited with bringing tea seeds from China that were cultivated in the mountains of northern Kyushu. It is also said that Eisai gave tea seeds to the priest Myoe (1173–1232) who planted them at Kozanji temple in the Toganoo hills northwest of Kyoto. Tea produced at Toganoo came to be called *honcha* (true tea) and was prized over *hicha* (lesser tea) grown elsewhere. By the fourteenth century, tea was cultivated throughout much of Japan and tea drinking was no longer limited to the nobility, warrior-aristocrats and monks.

As powdered green tea became fashionable among the ruling elite, so did the passion for collecting Chinese art and utensils associated with it. Objects that entered Japan originally intended for religious or scholarly purposes such as Buddhist altar fittings, Zen inspired monochromatic ink paintings, celadon vases, temmoku teabowls, came to be regarded as items worthy of connoisseurship. Drinking tea was once again incorporated into the entertainments of secular society. In one popular tea amusement, known as *tocha* (tea gambling) guests attempted to distinguish between tea grown at Toganoo and that grown elsewhere. Records indicate that as many as one hundred bowls of tea were drunk at times and the winning contestants received sacks of gold dust as their prize.

Muromachi Period Tea [1338–1573]

During the Muromachi period the vogue for Chinese art, especially among the Ashikaga shoguns (the Ashikaga family ruled as the military leaders of Japan in this period), led to the development of new architectural environments in which to display such collections. Art, architecture, tea, and temple etiquette melded, to produce a secular style of tea known as *shoin*, after the rooms in which it was served that were modeled on a Chinese scholar's study. The Ashikaga collection became so vast that a staff of curators was necessary to maintain it. They were responsible for the care of the objects, the creation of a setting that allowed the beauty of the objects to show forth, and for the preparation and presentation of tea. At early *shoin* gatherings, the host did not make tea himself, but sat with the guests and was served tea by the curators. Reflecting the wealth and power of the early Ashikaga shoguns, *shoin*-style tea emphasized collection, evaluation, and display of Chinese art in its characteristic perfection of form, superlative technique, and flawless surface beauty.

The rule of the eighth Muromachi shogun, Ashikaga Yoshimasa (1436–1490) corresponds with the beginning of the century of civil strife known as the Sengoku “Country at War” era (1467–1568). Under these turbulent circumstances, Yoshimasa retired to a villa popularly known as Ginkakuji, Temple of the Silver Pavilion, located in the eastern hills of Kyoto. Through Yoshimasa's patronage of the arts of poetry, calligraphy, painting, No drama and *shoin*-style tea, his villa became the locus of an aesthetic known as Higashiyama Bunka (eastern hills culture). Higashiyama culture, while still based on Chinese objects, tended toward the spare and understated, reflecting the aesthetic concept of *yugen*, a subtle, mysterious elegance. Despite this subtle shift in emphasis, Yoshimasa's tea remained within the elevated *shoin* tradition that subsequently served as the classic model from which other forms of tea would emerge.

Toward the end of the Muromachi period aesthetic trends led away from the formal, Chinese influenced *shoin*-style tea. This change is personified in the figure of townsman tea master Murata Shuko (1423–1502) who conceived of tea as a form of aesthetic discipline based on the literary ideals of *hie karu* (chill and withered), some say through the influence of the Daitokuji Zen abbot Ikkyu Sojun. Shuko's tea is best expressed in the aphorism, “The moon not glimpsed through rifts in clouds holds no interest.” Shuko championed the pairing of rustic Japanese ceramics from Bizen and Shigaraki with reticent Chinese tea bowls and tea containers whose imperfections would have barred them from the Ashikaga collection. *Sakui* (skillful inventiveness) and *toriawase* (interesting combinations of utensils) became the focus of townsman gatherings, as the role of host came to include the act of personally preparing tea in front of the guests. At the same time, there developed to be a growing preference for small retreat-like environments, constructed in the style of native farmhouses, in which to hold tea gatherings. The deliberate meagerness of the structure was intended to convey it as a shelter conducive to an investigation into truth by minds that cared nothing for worldly matters. The word *soan* (grass hut) is used to describe this new urban pastoral aesthetic.

The transition from *shoin* to *soan* aesthetics continued to develop and mature in the hands of increasingly powerful merchant townsmen from Kyoto, Nara, and Sakai. They eagerly sought out pieces dispersed from the collection of the now virtually powerless Ashikaga, but used the objects in contexts much removed from *shoin* forms. The merchants saw tea as a medium to give voice to their own social, philosophical, and aesthetic concerns. In this tumultuous era the spirit of communion fostered by the atmosphere of the tearoom

assumed central importance. A realization of the unrepeatable uniqueness of each encounter completed the conceptual framework of *soan*-style tea. Such developments from the time of Shuko prompted the naming of the cultural practices that had grown around powdered green tea, called *chado*, or the Way of Tea. Those who wished to emphasize the integration of these intellectual-spiritual endeavors with everyday life preferred the simple term *chanoyu*, hot water for tea. Simultaneously recognizing the mundane and the extraordinary, the term echoes ninth century Chinese tea scholar Lu Yu's exclamation "How remarkable! I gather firewood, draw water and make tea!"

The Sakai merchant Takeno Joo (1502–1555) established the concept of *wabi* (a deep and abiding appreciation of the sufficient) as central to *soan*-style tea. Joo trained in a variety of artistic disciplines. However, it was his appreciation of classical literature that deepened his *wabi* aesthetic. For Joo, connoisseurship and the exercise of taste were not simply following the established canon. Substituting the phrase "aesthetic illumination," Joo actively sought out new utensils and incorporated found objects that reflected classical Heian court culture. He valued the ability to perceive and savor both Chinese and Japanese modes of beauty and to combine them in novel ways. The following monochromatic poem by the court poet Fujiwara Teika (1162–1241) is often used to describe Joo's *wabi* ideal:

mi wataseba	Casting wide my gaze,
hana mo momiji mo	Neither flowers
nakari keri	nor scarlet leaves:
ura no tomaya no	A bayside hut of reeds
aki no yugure	In the autumn dusk.

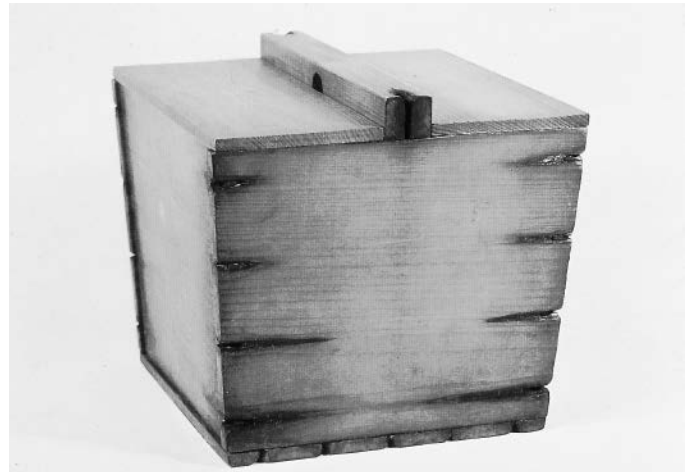
Another Sakai merchant, Sen Rikyu (1522–1591) was the most highly regarded of Joo's many students. He began his studies at age nineteen while Joo was at the peak of his creative powers. Previously, Rikyu had studied older *shoin*-style tea with another master. Throughout his life, Rikyu combined his practice of tea with the practice of Zen at Daitokuji temple. Through Rikyu's renown he came to serve as *sado* (tea master/cultural advisor) to both Oda Nobunaga and Toyotomi Hideyoshi, two of the "three unifiers" of Japan. Rikyu is characterized as a man of *wabi*, however his duties as teamaster/cultural advisor required he be adept at both formal *shoin* and informal *soan* styles of tea.

The Azuchi-Momoyama period (1573–1615) of Nobunaga and Hideyoshi is characterized as being a time of social dynamism, called *gekokujo* (those below overcoming those above). In the last decade of his life, amid this political and cultural fomentation, Rikyu developed *wabi* tea to its most extreme limits. Contemporaries described Rikyu's tea as being like a "deciduous tree in winter" and as "reducing mountains into valleys." When asked to define *wabi*, Rikyu would quote a poem by Fujiwara Ietaka (1158–1237) suggesting spring's nascent vigor:

hana o nomi	to those who wait
matsuran hito ni	only for flowers
yamazato no	show them a spring
yuki ma no kusa no	of grass amid the snow
haru o misebaya	in a mountain village

In Rikyu's Zen-inspired minimalist *wabi*, objects were stripped to their essential function, thereby placing more importance on human interaction than connoisseurship. Rikyu designed tearooms in which both space and light were severely reduced. Within these dim

and narrow confines, Rikyu favored using contemporary calligraphy, a few modest flowers placed in a newly fashioned bamboo vase, and utensils of his own design. (Refer to slides # 6 and 20). More radically, Rikyu brought common utilitarian objects into the tearoom for his guests' appreciation, such as wooden well buckets (at right). In the wider culture of tea, Chinese objects and especially those from the Ashikaga collection still held preeminent place. Rikyu sought to break with the ruling class past, with prevailing taste predicated on that past, with emphasis on elite cultural and monetary values.



Well bucket adapted for use as a fresh water container in the tearoom by Sen Rikyu, 16th c. Ordinarily used only so long as the wood exhibited pristine freshness, this well bucket was kept as a memento of its owner Rikyu by his grandson, Sen Sotan.

Over the years *wabi* has become canonized itself so that now it is difficult to appreciate the subversive qualities of Rikyu's aesthetic. Rikyu's *wabi* is perhaps best expressed in the teabowls produced through his collaboration with the potter Chojiro. Known today as Raku ware, the bowls created by Chojiro then were called simply *ima yaki* (recent ware) or Rikyu-shaped teabowls. Raku means "pleasure" "comfort" and objects in this style are hand sculpted, revealing the individual expression of the potter. The ware is covered with multiple coats of glaze, which results in a thick soft surface that after firing appears either red or black, depending on the minerals used in the glaze. Rikyu and Chojiro allowed form to follow function by designing the bowls specifically for the physical acts of making and drinking tea. The simple unadorned surfaces of Raku teabowls appear created by natural processes, like a stone worn smooth and hollow from the workings of water. The appeal of Raku lies in the transparency of its low technology: hand built, formed of locally dug clay, quickly fired in small kilns. Moreover for Rikyu the appeal was its non-attachment to illustrious history or monetary value, at least initially. As ceramic scholar Richard Wilson has said, "These artless wares seemed an inversion of the values invested in precious celadons and porcelains from China. For that reason alone Raku ware spoke."



Black Raku teabowl by Chojiro. Named "Oguro" [literally big black in contradistinction to a bowl now lost named little black] by Sen Rikyu, 16th c.

As Rikyu's master Hideyoshi moved closer to unifying the country, he grew less tolerant of the spirit of *gekokujo* (social mobility). For reasons we may never fully know, Rikyu was forced to commit ritual suicide under Hideyoshi's order. The death of Rikyu ended the unique relationship of tea master/cultural advisor with spheres of authority. The later Tokugawa shoguns would not tolerate the appearance of anyone other than they as the rightful rulers of Japan, even in the field of culture.

The Edo Period (1615–1868)

Tea continued to play an important role in the shaping of culture in the Edo period. The various types of tea that flourished in the Muromachi Period, described above as monastic, refined *shoin*, and rustic *soan*, enjoyed unabated popularity. These three styles acted as historical foundations to be combined and compounded in complex modifications of concept that evolved into Edo practices of tea. Below a contemporary comic verse describes four major tea masters of early Edo and the prevailing aesthetic trends associated with them. [Furuta Oribe's *kabuki* (distortion/warp); Kobori Enshu's *kireisabi* (antiquated elegance); Sen Sotan's *wabi* (minimalism); Kanamori Sowa's *miyabi* (courtliness)]

ori rikutsu	Oribe is disputatious
kirei kippa wa	Enshu has refined beauty
totomi	and a cutting blade
ohime sowa ni	Sowa is princess-like
musashi sotan	and Sotan is squalid

The world of tea in the early Edo period was much like the salon culture of seventeenth and eighteenth century Europe. Within the culture of tea, aristocrats, daimyo, and townsmen participated in a lively exchange of ideas and aesthetic developments that belies the prevalent view of the Edo period as being oppressively class-bound and rigid. Although centered in the cities of Kyoto, Osaka, and Edo, the aesthetic trends these salons forged were to diffuse throughout Japan and Edo society. Edo tea taste began with strong, highly individual aesthetics. Mid-Edo tea taste, as with society as a whole, moved toward the decorative and came to be suffused with vitality and humor that could border on parody. What follows is a brief examination of these trends and the figures closely associated with them.

Kabuki [distortion/warp]: Furuta Oribe (1544–1615)

The daimyo Furuta Oribe served Nobunaga, Hideyoshi and Tokugawa Ieyasu. Although Oribe began the study of tea rather late in life, he quickly displayed an uncommon sensibility to the art. Oribe enjoyed a close and enduring relationship with his teacher Rikyu despite differences in temperaments and social backgrounds. Like Rikyu, Oribe owed his rise to fame as a tea master to the freewheeling spirit of the age. In many important ways the *chanoyu* of Oribe was divergent from that of his teacher but he learned well the lesson of how to shape and express a unique point of view. Rikyu supported Oribe's probing aesthetics, himself owning objects in Oribe's taste and saying at times, "on this point I shall learn from Oribe."

Oribe's aesthetic has been described as *kabuki* (distortion/warp). This warped quality is especially evident in the ceramic style associated with his name, Oribe ware, produced in his native Mino. Records of tea gatherings hosted by Oribe indicate that he often used bowls that contemporaries described as irregular, disfigured, or warped. Such bowls had been used in the past, but they were the products of the vagaries of the kiln. Oribe's bowls, on the other hand, were self-conscious productions. Contemporary critics charged that Oribe ware represented an artificial beauty all too typical of Oribe's *chanoyu*.

Oribe's admiration for his teacher did not prevent him from expressing his own divergence, evident in the tearooms that he created. Oribe incorporated into his tearooms the low guests' entrance pioneered by Rikyu. Unlike Rikyu's taste, Oribe's rooms tended to have many more windows indicating a returning concern for the display of objects. Perhaps the

Examples of *Kabuki* [distortion/warp] Taste



Kuro Oribe [black Oribe] teabowl, 17th c. Note the distinctive shape known as *kutsugata* or shoe-shaped.



Ao Oribe [green Oribe] slab-built, cubic fresh water container, 17th c.



Tokonoma display area of the Kyusho'in tearoom [Kenninji], designed by Furuta Oribe, 17th c. Note the unusual manner in which the hanging scroll passes through a wooden shelf.



Exterior view of the Hasso'an tearoom, designed by Furuta Oribe, 17th c. Note that, although the structure is in the *soan* style, its name, meaning eight windows, draws attention to its brightly illuminated interior, contradicting *soan* taste.

most innovative aspect of Oribe's tearoom design is the creation of separate seating areas for his high-ranking guests' retainers. Here, Oribe, a member of the warrior class, returns to an older preoccupation with social hierarchy. In general Oribe tearooms tend to feature unusual twists on standard forms. However disparaged as being too willful or as lacking critical discernment, Oribe is a pivotal figure linking the aesthetic trends crystallized by Rikyu with the social realities of the Edo period.

***Kireisabi* [antiquated elegance]: Kobori Enshu (1579–1647)**

Kobori Enshu studied *chanoyu* under Furuta Oribe and on Oribe's death became the tea advisor to the third Tokugawa shogun Iemitsu. Enshu taste for *kireisabi* came to be synonymous with the culture of tea practiced by daimyo and upper ranking samurai. When thinking of Enshu's contributions to the development of tea, it is important to consider that he was the construction overseer for the Tokugawa and, as such, thoroughly versed in the language of design.

Enshu patronized a number of Japanese kilns to which he would submit designs for tea containers, teabowls and freshwater containers for production. It is said that he would order one hundred objects, keep ten, and smash the rest. These pieces are characterized by their light, refined and elegant style, some even based on Chinese prototypes. Enshu and Oribe were the first tea masters to send painted and cut-paper designs to Korea, China and even Holland for production. Most famous among such pieces is the *Gohon tachizuru* teabowl, produced at the Pusan kilns in Korea. Enshu sketched out its shape, while the third Tokugawa shogun Iemitsu painted the image of a standing crane to be incised and inlaid with colored clay on the bowl. Such wares quickly gained popularity. Ceramics associated with Enshu's taste have interesting decorative shapes, organic without the self-conscious or willful distortion of Oribe ware. Even when he patronized such kilns as Shigaraki, it was said that with Enshu, the untamed, raw extravagance of the Momoyama age vanished.

Another feature of Enshu tea was his fondness for naming individual tea utensils, particularly Japanese ceramic thick tea jars. *Utamei* (names taken from court poetry or prose) were often inscribed by Enshu on the storage containers using a style of calligraphy. By linking newer objects with the classical past, Enshu imbued these utensils with a fame almost equal to that of Chinese objects and with a particular authority that directly appealed to a contemporary daimyo's desire to create a form of tea suitable for their class. The environments that Enshu created for tea also reflect an appreciation for the classical past, that is a return to the formalities of *shoin* architecture with a faint reference to *soan*. Enshu's tearooms are spacious, well-lighted, and provide ample opportunities for display of host, guests, and objects. Most are to be found in temples and other quasi-public spaces, indicating the nature of daimyo tea as a public act rather than private, reflective gathering.

***Wabi* [minimalism]: Sen Sotan (1578–1658)**

Sotan was thirteen when his grandfather, Sen Rikyu was forced to commit suicide. At the time Sotan was an acolyte at Daitokuji Zen temple in Kyoto and was spared the vicissitudes of the Sen family after Rikyu's death. Through the intervention of several influential daimyo, Hideyoshi was persuaded to restore the Sen household with Sotan as successor, on a grant of land just south of Daitokuji. Sotan set about securing the position of the Sen tradition of tea. As a townsman, Sotan taught tea for a living, and perhaps because of Rikyu's eventual fate, he refused any official positions as tea advisor. Even though Sotan refrained

Examples of *Kireisabi* [antiquated elegance] Taste



Gohon tachizuru-style teabowl, Hagi ware. Asian Art Museum, B72 P17. In 17th century tea society, the practice of making tea utensils after famous originals enjoyed great popularity. This example follows a teabowl that had been made to Enshu's order at the Pusan kilns in Korea. (See slide #7)



Takatori gourd-shaped fresh water container, 17th c. Takatori in Kyushu, was one of the so-called Seven Kilns of Kobori Enshu to receive his guidance and patronage.



View towards the garden from Bosen tearoom [Daitokuji], both designed by Kobori Enshu, 17th c.



Interior of the Mittan tearoom [Daitokuji], designed by Kobori Enshu, 17th c. Note the well lit quality of the space, and the many shelves for display.

from serving the powerful he was nevertheless a popular figure in the multiple cultures of tea in the early Edo period. With the revival of interest in Rikyu's *chanoyu*, Sotan established three of his sons as tea masters to serve powerful daimyo creating three separate lineages through which Rikyu's style of tea continues to be taught.

Rikyu's austere *wabi* had been hard pressed by the more easily accessible trends of *kabuki* and *kireisabi*. However, Sotan's interpretation of Rikyu's *chanoyu*, focusing on the historical link between tea and Zen and on an unworldly mind that seeks out purity, quickly restored the veneration of *wabicha*. Nicknamed "Beggar Sotan" for his various stances, he continued the *wabi* aesthetic by creating and using utensils that rejected all ostentation. For example, Sotan had a tea container fashioned from two sections of bamboo lightly rubbed with lacquer. When it cracked, rather than discarding it as useless, Sotan mended it with three metal staples. This act is the quintessence of Sotan's understanding of *wabi*.

Collaboration between the Sen family and the masters of Raku pottery continued with Sotan, as it has to the present day. [Currently both the Urasenke tradition and the Raku tradition are in the fifteenth generation.] Although clearly operating within *wabi* taste, the Raku teabowls produced by second generation Jokei (1561–1635) and favored by Sotan are more strongly modeled with distinct areas of scenery in the glaze. Sotan sought to encourage a revival of the style of Joo and Rikyu at other contemporary kilns, especially the nearby Shigaraki. In Joo and Rikyu's day, Shigaraki fresh water containers stood as the very epitome of *wabi chanoyu*. Massive and craggy, these containers were called "demons" (*oni*) for a quality defined by Komparu Zempo (1454–1532) as: "unmoving, showing a fierce mien, yet in practice possessing the quality of a flower." (Translation by Louise Cort)

Of the tearooms built by Sotan, the classic four-and-a-half-mat room called Yuin (see slide #6) and the one-and-one-half-mat room called Konnichian stand as the supreme examples of Sotan's *wabi* tea. Again Sotan sought to reflect Rikyu's style with the simple articulation of vertical and horizontal lines, naturally weathering materials, low light level, and absence of distraction from thought. Since its construction, Yuin has been held to be the most perfectly realized tea environment and many later tearooms were modeled on it. The small four-and-one-half mat room traces its history back to the essay, "The Ten-Foot Square Hut," written by recluse Kamo no Chomei c. 1225, and from an even earlier story about the famous debate between the Buddhist diety of knowledge, Manjushri, and the layman, Vimalakirti, in the latter's tiny room. According to the Vimalakirti Sutra, despite its small size, 10,000 arhats were able to enter Vimalakirti's room to witness the debate.

***Miyabi* [courtliness]: Kanamori Sowa (1584–1658)**

Although born to the Kanamori family of daimyo, Sowa chose not to become a warrior and because of this he was disinherited. Sowa took the tonsure and studied Zen at Daitokuji and tea under Rikyu's son, Sen Doan. As a young monk in Kyoto he came into contact with Furuta Oribe and Kobori Enshu, as well as members of the imperial court. Sowa's familiarity with the worlds of merchant, daimyo, and court reflects the cosmopolitanism of Kyoto in the early Edo period. Though associated with daimyo-style *chanoyu* in his earlier years, Sowa's tea came to be best known by his refined and delicate taste reflecting the *miyabi* (refined/courtly) ethos of Kyoto aristocratic culture. In contrast to Sen Sotan who showed a devotion to old ways, Sowa had a predilection for the new. The two men are often compared, as seen in the comic verse beginning this section, perhaps because they both taught *chanoyu* to the retired empress Tofukumon'in.

Examples of *Wabi* [minimalism] Taste



Black Raku teabowl from the hand of Jokei, early 17th c. Named “Hinso” [poor priest] by Sen Sotan. Later given the alternative name “Asagarasu” [crow in morning] by Sotan’s son, Sen Senso.



Shigaraki fresh water container in the shape of a bucket, 17th c. In the Sotan Shigaraki style, with Sotan’s signature.



Exterior view of Yuin tearoom [Urasenke Konnichian], early 17th c. Built for Sen Sotan in the taste of Rikyu.



Interior view of Yuin tearoom, showing classic features of *wabi* tea environment.

Sowa was highly regarded as connoisseur, designer of tea environments, and maker of tea utensils. The bamboo vases he made were especially popular in aristocratic circles. His authority is attested to by the repeated requests from his contemporaries for evaluation and authentication of tea utensils.

However, it is through the overglaze enamel ceramic ware of Nonomura Ninsei (?–1694), that Sowa is best known to posterity. The gorgeous and elegant designs that Ninsei produced at the Omuro kiln, near Ninnaji Temple on western outskirts of Kyoto, are imbued with the classical aesthetics of the Heian court: an appreciation for elegance, surface decoration, pattern, and idealization of image. The size of many tea utensils made at this time tends to be smaller than those from the Muromachi period. The popularity of Enshu's Korean *Gohon* teabowls influenced the shape of Ninsei's own in the indeterminate line of the torso as it rises from foot to lip. Yet Ninsei rendered the shape with a subtler, more sensuous line. Under Sowa's direction, Ninsei participated in the custom of re-creating famous tea utensils from Korea, Holland, Shigaraki, Seto, and Bizen.

From mid to late Edo, daimyo, aristocrat and commoner tea traditions freely adopted and commingled the four dominant aesthetics described above, but without establishing what could be called a new or distinctive tea taste. Daimyo not infrequently set up personal kilns in their castle towns to create ware exclusively for their own use or distribution as gifts. The Koto Yaki kiln operated under the guidance of Ii Naosuke (1815–1860) in Hikone is one well known example.

Urban dwellers loved good parody, which with the regular circulation of daimyo between Edo and their fiefs, soon made its way to all parts of Japan. Each of the tea aesthetics had the potential to be taken to a degree where it is unclear whether emulation or parody was intended. Matsudaira Fumai (1751–1818) greatly loved the *wabi* style, even while he set out to collect all the greatest tea objects from Ashikaga through Enshu, the majority of which evinced an elite style. The overly exaggerated thatched roof of Fumai's tearoom in Matsue, if not parody, is difficult to accept as simple overstatement of an affinity with *wabi* tea. Yet the simplicity of the interior view seems to affirm that all tea aesthetics were alive and well in the Edo Period.

Examples of *Miyabi* [courtliness] Taste



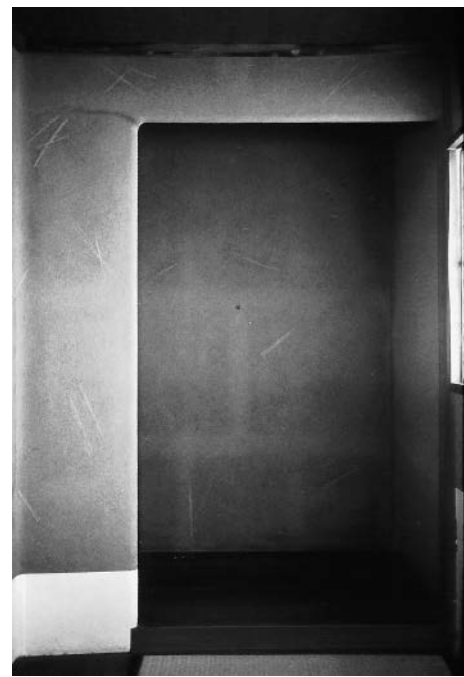
Teabowl with dragon motif in roundel pattern, by Nonomura Ninsei, 17th c. Asian Art Museum, 1991.23. (See slide #8). The shape of the bowl was called Kanamori Sowa's taste at the time.



Koto yaki ware fresh water container with painting of reeds and descending goose in gold overglaze enamel, 19th c. Made at the personal kiln of Ii Naosuke in Hikone Castle.



Exterior view of Kanden'an tearoom, at Matsudaira Fumai's estate in Matsue. Note the exaggerated *wabi* quality of the roof.



Interior view of Kanden'an tearoom exhibiting a modified-*wabi* taste.

Slide Descriptions

Notes to the slides:

The slides are mostly drawn from the museum's permanent collection of Japanese art. Some of these works will be on view on the day of the workshop, but others will come on view after April 3. Asian paintings are very fragile and prolonged exposure to even small amounts of light can fade their vegetable pigments. That is why museums are often dimly lit, and also why our paintings rotate every six months. According to museum policy, after a work has been on view it must "rest" for two years before going on view again.

Teachers might like to review the **Formats of Japanese Painting Student Handout 3** with students before looking at slides.

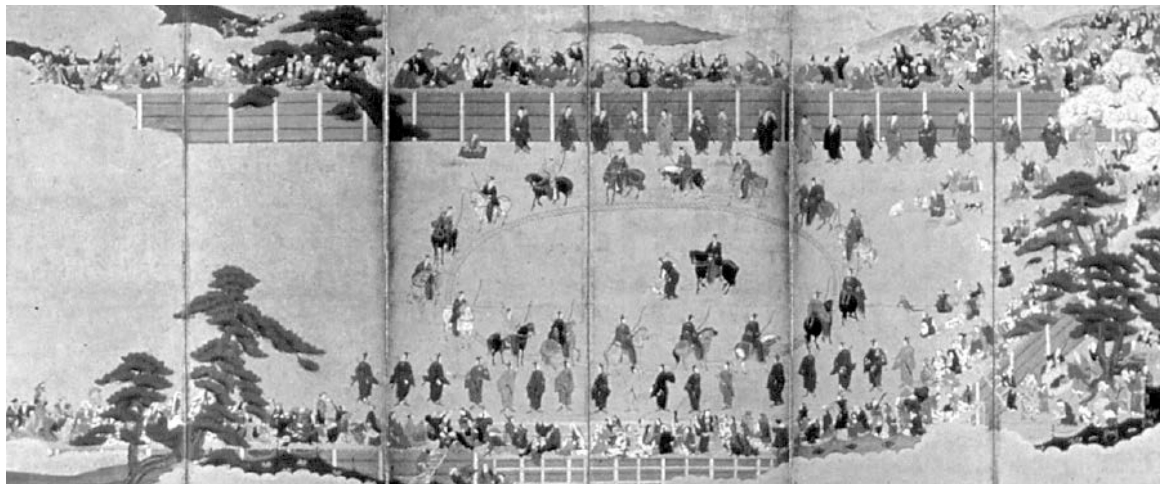
The slides are presented in roughly chronological order. The descriptions contain information about the object: its use, iconography and the artist, as well as activity and discussion suggestions. The activities tie in with one or more slides.

Slide descriptions by Deborah Clearwaters and photos by Kazuhiro Tsuruta unless indicated otherwise.

Slides 1, 2 and 3 (detail of slide 1)



left



right



detail

Artist unknown
Equestrian Archery Drill
Approximately 1640
Pair of six fold screens; ink, color and gold on paper
61 1/2 x 144 inches each screen
The Avery Brundage Collection, B60 D1 (left), B60 D2 (right)

What is this painting about?

This pair of folding screens depicts a samurai archery drill using moving targets—dogs. The arrows are tipped with padding, so the dogs, although probably terrified and bruised were not killed. The dog chase, one of three popular archery drills, had set rules stipulating the number of players and dogs, and the size of the field. The game starts in the right screen with the dog's release within a rope circle. On the left screen, the lead rider takes aim while galloping at full speed. Archery drills and demonstrations like this were part of samurai education to develop and maintain sharp military skills, such as archery, horsemanship, and sword fighting. They presented an exciting spectacle for local townspeople to enjoy, much like a football game in the US.

Who are the people in the crowd?

Earlier screens of this same subject focused on the game itself, whereas painters of this screen and others from the Edo period devoted their attention to the details of the crowd. At the far left is the recorder's booth, where officials watch the contest. Notice the man seated in the center of the booth with paper spread before him to record the game. Surrounding the field are scores of onlookers from all walks of life engaged various leisure activities: eating, drinking, and lively conversation.

Activities

- 1) Describe a person in the crowd.

Ask students to pick someone out of the crowd to describe in a writing project. Who are they? What kinds of clothes do they wear? What are they doing. Who did they come to the Dog Chase with? etc.

- 2) Find the *mon*.

Using **Student Handout 1**, introduce the Japanese *mon*, or emblematic crest. Show this screen and slide #14. Have students come up close and find *mon* on the people's clothing or on the banners. Have them draw some of them, choosing a favorite that they might like to adapt to create their own for the Temple Book Activity 1. Searching for *mon* is one way to get the students to look really close at the painting. Ask if they noticed anything else interesting while they were looking.

Slides 4 and 5



left



right

Kano Tanyu (1602–1674)

Mount Fuji and The Shore at the Pine Forest of Miho

Dated 1666

Pair of six-fold screens; ink, colors, and gold on paper

65 7/16 x 144 1/4 inch each screen

The Avery Brundage Collection, B63 D7A+ (left), B63 D7B+ (right)

Who was the artist?

Kano Tanyu was a prolific and important member of the great **Kano** school of painters. Established by Kano Masanobu (1434–1530), the Kano artists traditionally served elite patrons from the imperial family and the shogunate. They were perhaps Japan's most influential school of painting, since most artists who underwent traditional training began their studies with a Kano master. They are associated with *kanga* or “Chinese painting” style, although Tanyu was known for his mastery of various styles. This painting, compared with **Nanga** paintings in this packet appears to be more *yamato-e* (Japanese) than *kanga* (Chinese) in style. Painting styles are discussed in the **Artists and Patrons** section, and distinctions between Japanese and Chinese styles will be explored further in **Activity 2**.

Tanyu was recognized as a great painter in his day. At the young age of 16, he was already a

painter in the Shogun's court in Edo. He founded a new branch of the Kano school in Edo. Eventually, the remaining Kyoto branch moved to Edo as well.

What is this painting about?

These screens, or *byōbu*, as they are called in Japanese, depict two famous places in Japan: Mount Fuji, which even today is a symbol of Japan, and the Shores of Miho, a much more obscure location to non-Japanese. These were both sites famous for their scenic beauty. Of historical interest is the inclusion of the temple, Kiyomidera, at the upper left, and the ancient post town of Kiyomigaseki below that.

Fuji has endured to the present day as one of Japan's most popular pilgrimage sites (the litter discarded along the trail to the top is a shock to Western tourists, who expect an inspiring natural experience). During the Edo period, the mountain was revered as a home of nature spirits or *kami* by an ever growing mountain worship cult that incorporated elements of Buddhist and **Shinto** ritual. This cult was developed by *yamabushi* (those who prostrate themselves to the mountain), who, beginning in the 800s, "converted" mountain *kami* to become avatars of the Buddha. Pilgrims believed that by climbing the mountain, they paid their respects to the mountain spirit and gained merit that might help them in this life as well as in the next. Now, pilgrimages to Mount Fuji are more focused on recreation and a sense of accomplishment, not to mention the rewards of the wonderful view the summit can provide on a clear day. Fuji is often shrouded in cloud, and pollution from nearby Tokyo has made a clear view even rarer. Climbers try to arrive at the summit by sunrise to increase their chances of viewing through a clearing in the mist.

Where are the Shores of Miho?

The Shores of Miho, located on the Miho Peninsula in the city of Shimizu, Shizuoka Prefecture, are famous for their grove of pine trees and magnificent view of Mount Fuji. Although visible from Miho, Mount Fuji is actually located nearly 31 miles away from Fuji. Do these places appear that far away in the painting?

Why is the crescent moon black?

The moon was originally depicted by placing silver on the screen. It has now tarnished with age to black. The silver moon combined with the warm gold clouds must have made for a radiant art work in its day. The gold has been applied in several different ways. In the far right of the Miho screen, you can see the large squares of gold leaf that cover the entire painting. The colors have been applied on top of this gold leaf surface. The clouds at the top right of the Fuji screen have been decorated with smaller cut gold pieces that are placed on top of the pigment. Gold powder also accents several areas. This is applied by the artist by blowing the powder gently through a tube. Imagine the expense of creating this painting.

Discussion

- 1) What is a pilgrimage?
What are common pilgrimages for Californians (Yosemite? Disneyland?), and what activities are associated with these sites? (Camping, swimming, hiking, amusement rides, special foods, skiing, etc.) Is there a difference between pilgrimages to Fuji in Edo Japan and pilgrimages to Fuji or Yosemite today? (Religious purpose has declined, although it

may still exist in a sense. For example, visitors to Yosemite certainly feel a sense of awe for the power and beauty of nature, and the regenerative results of a camping trip to Yosemite are not much different from what Edo travelers might have sought when visiting Fuji). Use this discussion as an introduction to **Activity 1, Making a Temple Book**.

- 2) How was this painting used? Consider its size and format.

Size: each screen is about 5 1/2 feet tall by 12 feet wide. What kind of room would this fit into? Imagine the space it would take up in the classroom. Remember, the screens stand on their own by arranging the panels like an accordion, so they do not extend to their full 12-foot width.

Format: screens have been used for centuries in Japan not merely as room decoration but as integral parts of interior architecture. Traditional Japanese palaces and castles, where one would find screens, consisted of large, simple rooms. Free-standing screens like these might have been used to section off the room to give privacy or cover a draft. They also showed the affluence and good taste of the owner. Refer to **Student Handout 3, Formats of Japanese Painting**.

Sources:

Extraordinary Persons Teacher Packet slide #4 left screen only.
Kakudo, #61.

Slide 6



Yuin Teahouse, Kyoto
Originally built in 1653, rebuilt in late 1700s
Photo courtesy of the Urasenke Foundation

What is this building?

This famous tearoom, called Yuin (“Further retirement”) was built by Sen Sotan (1578–1658) in the style of his grandfather Sen Rikyu (1522–1591). It reproduces Rikyu’s classic four-and-a-half-mat *wabi* style tea house. *Wabi*, often translated into English as “rustic,” is an aesthetic concept associated particularly with tea ceremony that values imperfection, austerity, simple beauty, and the patina of weathered objects. Followers of the *wabi* aesthetic cultivated non-attachment to financial and social gain, questing for relaxed poverty. The four-and-a-half mat measure is based on the size of a *tatami mat* (thick straw mats measuring about three by six feet, finished with woven grass; the traditional floor covering in Japan)—thus the room is about nine feet square, with a small recessed area for the *tokonoma* (alcove for the display of paintings and flowers). The measure is significant because it contrasted with the large formal *shoin* architectural setting that was prevalent in tea gatherings before. In Rikyu’s only extant tea house, the Taian at Myokian Temple in Kyoto, the floor size is only two mats. The confined space heightened a sense of intimacy and focused participant’s concentration on *wabi*.

What are some of its characteristics?

Guests enter the tea room through the tiny square door at right. This does away with class distinctions, requiring everyone to bow and crawl through the window-like opening, which

is less than three feet square. Notice the broom hanging on the outer wall of the hut. This is to clear fallen leaves or snow from the path before guests arrive. Guests remove their shoes before entering the hut, thus the sandals below the opening. Notice also the sky light in the thatched roof for moon viewing or allowing reflected light from snow to illuminate the small dark hut. Yuin was declared an Important Cultural Property by the Japanese government.

The Tea Garden.

The garden path, called *roji* (“dewy path”), leading to the teahouse was also constructed with care. The path was usually marked by irregular stepping stones interspersed with moss and other plants. Walking along the *roji* guests can prepare themselves for the tea gathering. They leave behind the cares of their daily life, the bustle of the city, and savor the fresh smells and sights of this miniature wilderness. Depending on the size of the garden, the path may be punctuated with a stone lantern, a small pond or stream, and always by a stone basin filled with water for guests to rinse their mouths and hands before entering the tea room.

Activity/Discussion

- 1) What does it mean to designate a place an Important Cultural Property? In Japan, there are also Living National Treasures (also known as holders of Intangible Cultural Properties—masters of traditional Japanese crafts recognized by the government) and National Treasures (objects deemed to be of supreme significance to Japanese identity and protected by the government). Working in groups, have students brainstorm to nominate Living National Treasures (living people) and National Treasures (objects) familiar to them (can be from any culture they know.) Have them present to the class (or write an essay) about their nomination(s) and reasons for their selections.
- 2) Create your own three-dimensional tea house. (See **Activity 4**)
Show students this slide and talk about the different components of the tea house (crawl-through door, tatami mat seating, tokonoma, stone basin, and dewy path). Discuss *wabi* aesthetics of the Japanese tea house (use of unpainted wood, thatched roof, plain brown walls, minimal interior decoration, beautiful garden setting).

Xerox and distribute the diagrams in **Activity 4**. Explain that tea masters like Sen Rikyu and Sen Sotan designed tea houses using three dimensional models like the ones they are about to create. They used these models to visualize their design in three dimensions; to carefully chose spatial relationships and try out different placements of doors, windows, etc.

Have students color and build their tea house. They may like to collect pebbles, twigs, leaves and other natural materials to decorate their garden. They may also prepare a miniature hanging scroll and flowers for their tokonoma inside the tea house. Tea masters usually gave their tea houses interesting names, such as “Further Retreat,” “Cold Cloud Arbor,” and “Hut of Uncertainty.” Have students devise a name for their own retreats.

Slide 7



Gohon Tachizuru-style Hagi Ware Tea Bowl with Crane Design
Glazed stoneware
Approximately 4 in. tall
Asian Art Museum B72 P17

Korean or Japanese?

Although this tea bowl may have been made by a Korean potter through the commission of a Japanese tea master, its use and aesthetics are so attuned to the Japanese tea ceremony, that it resides in the Japanese art collection. Korean ceramics have long been admired by Japanese collectors. The demand was so great that Japanese generals, invading Korea in 1592 and 1598, kidnapped dozens of Korean potters and brought them back to Japan. The generals sought to establish kilns in their domains to bypass the expense of importing them from Korea. This bowl illustrates 17th-century practice of making tea utensils after famous originals. It follows a teabowl that had been made on Kobori Enshu's order at the Pusan kilns in Korea.

What was this used for?

This bowl, like that in slide #8 was used to prepare and make tea in the Japanese tea ceremony (refer to the section on **Aesthetic Trends in Chanoyu**). The tea ceremony sought to cultivate virtues, such as purity and tranquility, goals that were enhanced by the use of simple objects. Using well-practiced movements, the host places green tea powder into the bowl. Then the host pours hot water over the powder, and whisks it with a bamboo utensil to make a frothy green beverage. The host then serves the tea to the guest, who drinks it

and then admires the vessel. The shape of such bowls were inspired by common rice bowls in Korea. The fact that they were so highly prized by elite Japanese baffled Koreans who viewed them as nothing more than everyday utensils. It was this very rusticity and unpretentiousness that attracted the Japanese.

What is the decoration on this bowl?

The crane, a common motif in much Japanese art, symbolizes longevity and Zen enlightenment. According to legend, it lives 1,000 years. It also can represent a Chinese Daoist immortal. (Mason, p. 201) Only a few Hagi wares were decorated this way. Those that bear a design are called *e-Hagi* or “picture Hagi.”

What is Hagi ware?

Hagi, located on the western coast of lower Honshu, was founded as a castle town by the Mori daimyo family during the Edo period. Notice its proximity to the Korean peninsula across the Sea of Japan. The Hagi kilns were set up by the potters brought back after the Japanese invasion of Korea in the 1590s.

The first Korean potter to serve the Mori clan was Yi Sukkwang, who was ordered to Japan by the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1593 (the first invasion into Korea). His brother, Yi Kyung and others were brought to Japan during the second invasion in 1597. The early wares produced by these potters were steeped in traditional Korean techniques, highly prized by Hideyoshi and other members of the warrior elite.

The best known Hagi wares are made with a special clay called Daido, which was a white clay full of tiny pebbles giving Hagi ware a distinctive texture that was loved by collectors. In 1815, responding to the appearance of Hagi on the general market, officials issued a law reserving the special Daido clay for use only in daimyo kilns.

Source:

Kawano, Ryosuke. *Hagi*. Famous Ceramics of Japan. Vol. 11. Tokyo and New York: Kodansha, 1983.

Slide 8



Nonumura Ninsei (died 1695)

Tea bowl with dragon medallions

Glazed stoneware with polychrome enamel decoration

3 1/2 inches high

Gift of the Connoisseur's Council and Bruce and Betty Alberts, 1991.230

Who was the artist?

Nonomura Ninsei was one of the great Kyoto potters active during the Edo period. He helped develop a distinctive overglazed enamel stoneware, with nostalgic motifs drawn from traditional Japanese painting. Ninsei was the first Japanese potter to apply his own seal to his work, making a statement that pottery should be valued as an individualized art form on par with painting. Ninsei mostly created vessels for the tea ceremony, such as tea containers, bowls, and water jars. His refined works were highly prized among tea connoisseurs of the period as they are today.

This bowl was used for the tea ceremony. When and how did the Japanese people begin to drink tea?

The drinking of *macha* (powdered green tea) was introduced to Japan from China in around 1200 as part of Zen (Chan in Chinese) Buddhist practice. Tea helped monks stay awake during meditation as they sought to achieve enlightenment. Drinking tea became a common feature of monastic life in Japan, eventually spreading beyond the monastery, becoming a favorite social pastime of Japanese aristocrats beginning in the Heian period (794–1185) and continuing to the present day. (For more on the history of tea in Japan, see [Aesthetics Trends in Chanoyu](#) section).

What does the dragon symbolize?

Although the dragon is a fearful creature in Western mythology, in China and Japan the dragon represents the most powerful of all supernatural animals. It is the ruler of rain and wind and the producer of water sources, thus very appropriate decoration on a tea bowl, for pure, fresh water was essential to the tea ceremony. The dragon is believed to bring blessings of wealth, harmony, virtue, and long life. Ninsei's ingenious design of a dragon coiled within a circle may remind students of the *enso* painting (slide # 19). It is possible that Ninsei intentionally alludes to this Zen form in his bowl.

Activity/Discussion

- 1) The Year of the Dragon in the Chinese Zodiac.
From February 5, 2000 to January 23, 2001 is the year of the dragon in the Chinese zodiac, which is followed in Japan as well. Have students research their Chinese zodiac sign and the characteristics associated with it. Have them compare the features of the Chinese zodiac with their Western sign (e.g. Leo, Pisces). Are there conflicting features or similar ones? Which characteristics do they think accurately describe themselves and which don't.
- 2) Make a tea bowl.
Using self-drying clay, students can hand-build a tea bowl. See Macdonald, p. 60–61 for detailed instructions.

U-gene Kim contributed to this entry.

Slide 9



left



right

Artist unknown

Tale of Genji Screen

Early 1600s

Left side of a pair of six-fold screens; ink, colors and gold on paper

60 7/16 x 137 3/4 inches each screen

The Avery Brundage Collection, B60 D46+ (left), B60 D47+ (right)

What is this painting about?

This pair of screens illustrates scenes from four chapters of Japan's classic literary work, *The Tale of Genji*, written by a female courtier by the name of Murasaki Shikibu in around the tenth-eleventh centuries. It is a romantic novel that follows the relationships of a legendary Prince Genji and the generation following him. Divided into 54 chapters, the English translation by Edward Seidensticker takes up 1,090 pages. It is required reading in Japanese schools today.

The book is full of palace intrigue, but more important is the attention Murasaki paid to describing the beauty and emotions of the story, from the perfect kimono ensemble to the sprig of plum blossom attached to a bittersweet love letter. The Japanese have a term for

this—*mono no aware*, a pathos for the fleeting moments of beauty, joy, even heartbreak that are part of being human. These emotions and actions are portrayed using subtle means in the pictures. For example, once we know that the figures on the boat are lovers stealing away together, the inclining of their heads towards each other takes on new significance. On the other hand, the scene in the lower left represents a woman trying to deflect unwanted advances.

The book was first illustrated in handscroll form, with sections of text interspersed with select images. It was painted in a consciously Japanese style called *yamato-e*. The text was written in Japanese—during Murasaki’s day, men generally studied and wrote poetry in Chinese, whereas women excelled in writing verse and prose using their native language and script called *kana*.

How does this 17th century screen relate to the 12th century handscrolls?

These screens were painted some 600 years after Murasaki wrote her novel, and some 400 years after the earliest surviving paintings of the subject. There are hundreds of Genji images in collections all over the world, in a variety of formats and styles, from handscrolls to writing boxes, and from refined courtly paintings to irreverent spoofs in woodblock prints. The subject was particularly popular during the Edo period, as part of a revival of courtly aesthetics particularly among courtiers and merchants in Kyoto. With increased literacy of the Edo populace, and woodblock renditions of the story available relatively cheaply, more people could read the book and were familiar with the standard images.

What scenes are depicted here?

(Note: only the left screen is included in the slides. For information on the right screen, see Kakudo, pp. 120–121.)

Viewer discretion advisory: The Tale of Genji is a romantic novel about the various affairs of the nobility; it contains some steamy love poetry and a good deal of innuendo. We provide uncensored information here, leaving it for teachers—you know your students best—to decide how to introduce the material.

Imagine the left screen is divided into two sections, upper and lower. In the upper section, chapter 51 *Ukifune* (A Boat upon the Water) is portrayed. The lower section illustrates chapter 30 *Fujibakama* (Purple Trousers).

Chapter 30 *Fujibakama* (Purple Trousers)

The bottom half of this screen depicts one scene from Chapter 30, “Purple Trousers,” a playful name for a lavender flower that blooms in fall. Yugiri, the son of Genji, comes as a messenger to the home of Tamakazura, who is seated inside the building behind transparent curtains. One of her attendants is seated on the verandah. Due to a recent death in the court, all the characters are supposed to be in mourning, but that does not stop Yugiri from pursuing Tamakazura.

Perhaps thinking that there would be another occasion to let her know of his interest, he had come provided with a fine bouquet of “purple trousers.”
“We may find in these flowers a symbol of the bond between us.” He pushed them under her curtains and caught at her sleeve as she reached for them.

Dew-drenched purple trousers: I grieve as you do.
And long for the smallest hint that you understand.
Was this his own hint that he hoped for a union at “journey’s end?” [this is a reference to a poem about marriage at the end of a journey] Not wanting to show her displeasure openly, she pretended she did not understand and withdrew a little deeper into the room.
It grew, if you ask, in the dews of a distant moor.
That purple is false which tells of anything nearer.
“I think this conversation will mark our nearest approach.”

Reading between the lines, Tamakazura’s poetic reply indicates that she does not wish Yugiri to come any closer. Her feelings towards him are expressed in this indirect way, but he is sure to understand her meaning.

Chapter 51 *Ukifune* (A Boat upon the Water)

The upper part of this screen depicts two different scenes from Chapter 51, “A Boat upon the Water.” The scenes are cleverly divided by the Uji bridge, located south of Kyoto, which spans the river in the central panels. On the right, Kaoru (the young man) and Ukifune (the young woman, whose name is taken as the Chapter name) sit on a verandah gazing over the river.

At a loss to console her, for it seemed her tears were about to spill over, he offered a poem:

“No need to grieve. The Uji bridge stands firm.
They too stand firm, the promises I have made you.
I am sure you know what I mean.”

She replied:

“The bridge has gaps, one crosses gingerly.
Can one be sure it will not rot away?”

The bridge is used as a metaphor by both characters, symbolizing loyalty on the one hand and uncertainty on the other.

In the upper left, is a scene that takes place several days later. A different suitor, Niou, is with Ukifune, taking her by boat to a secret hideaway.

“See,” said Niou, “they are fragile pines, no more, but their green is so rich and deep that it lasts a thousand years.

A thousand years may pass, it will not waver,
This vow I make in the lee of the Islet of Oranges.”

What a very strange place to be thought the girl.

“The colors remain, here on the Islet of Oranges.
But where go I, a boat upon the waters?”

The time was right, and so was the girl, and so was her poem: for him at least, things could not have been more pleasingly arranged.

Ukifune expresses a feeling of discomfort, but Niou is delighted that he has managed to steal away with his love. Later in the chapter, Ukifune in a terrible dilemma having to choose between two suitors, and being very restricted by codes of behavior, became so distraught that she eventually killed herself by throwing herself into the river.

Activity/Discussion

1) Seasonal Signals.

Ask students to examine the plant life and see if they can identify when the two scenes (top and bottom) took place. Hint: brown grasses and red-tinged maple symbolize autumn, plum blossoms early spring. Chapter 30 takes place in autumn, Chapter 51 takes place in late-winter/early spring.

2) How is pictorial space treated?

Ask students to examine this painting and discuss the way it is organized. How has the artist separated the three scenes? (clouds divide top from bottom; bridge divides top right from top left). Where has the artist situated us, the viewers? (we are above looking down) Japanese artists cleverly maximized their painting space. By bringing the viewer up higher/tilting the ground, they had more space to depict the story. Subtle devices like clouds give the viewer visual clues about where one scene ends and another begins.

Source:

Shikibu, Murasaki. *The Tale of Genji*. Translated by Edward G. Seidensticker. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977.

Slide 10



left



right

Yamamoto Soken (active 1683–1706)

Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months, detail

Late 1600s–1700s

Two panels from the left screen of a pair
of six-fold screens; ink and colors on silk

44 1/2 x 17 3/8 inches each panel

The Avery Brundage Collection, B60 D82+a (right), B60 D82+b (left)

What is this painting about?

These two panels represent the eleventh and twelfth months from a pair of six-fold screens depicting flowers, birds, and poems of the twelve months by Yamamoto Soken. Paintings that combine imagery and poetic texts are common in East Asian art, but this work contains a poetic structure unique to Japan, the *waka*, or 36-syllable poem. In it the Japanese poet subtly expresses emotions through metaphors of nature. The poems on this screen were not written by the painter, but were originally composed by Fujiwara Teika (1167–1241), the foremost poet of the Kamakura period (1185–1333). Teika, a member of the nobility, wrote the “Flowers of Birds of the Twelve Months” in 1214. Some 500 years later, they experienced a renaissance of interest among the disenfranchised courtiers as well as the newly rich merchant class who sought ownership of cultural sophistication. Different styles of writing are represented suggesting it was several calligraphers, perhaps even members of a poetry club who contributed to this work. Only Konoe Iehiro (1667–1736) has been identified as one of the calligraphers.

Who was the artist?

Soken, the painter, was trained in both the *Tosa* and *Kano* schools of painting, which he blended in his work. For example, energetic Kano brushstrokes are used in the tree branches, whereas delicate Tosa coloring renders the distant hills and misty clouds. He was the teacher of the important Rinpa artist Ogata Korin.

What is the poetry about?

As in most Japanese screens, the panels are read from right to left. The first panel to the far right of the right screen represents the first month, the far left panel on the left screen represents the twelfth. In this work, Soken has closely adhered to the content of the poems. The birds, flowers, plants and seasonal references all converge to celebrate the changing aspect of nature.



detail of left screen representing 11th and 12th months

The poems, which follow on a separate sheet that can be xeroxed as a handout, may serve as a starting point for seeing what is depicted in the paintings.

Discussion/Activities

1) Write a poem.

These poems may be used for a lesson in poetry, where students read them and write their own poems celebrating nature, the changing seasons, and local festivities using references familiar to them, such as fog, the ocean, California poppies, eucalyptus trees, Chinatown New Year's parade, Japan Town Cherry Blossom festival, etc.

2) Interpret a poem.

Before showing the paintings, hand out the poems for students to read. Ask them to pick one and read it carefully. Then ask them to draw a picture of what the poem describes. Students then pass their pictures around so others can guess which poem their neighbor's picture represents. Then show the Soken painting and discuss it. Did Soken represent everything in the poems? Did he add new ideas in the pictures?

“Flowers of Birds of the Twelve Months” by Fujiwara Teika (1167–1241)

First Month

Willow

Day by day,
green deepens the willow.
Is it the color of the spring wind
fluttering and swaying?

Uguisu (Japanese nightingale)

The first uguisu
in the bamboo bush.
An early morning
near the terraces.

Second Month

Cherry Blossom

The February sky of cherry blossoms,
Fragrant reflections
On the sleeves of passers-by;
Sprigs in their hair.

Pheasant

A spring time hunter,
His trail in the mist.
The cry of a pheasant
Calling his mate.

Third Month

Wisteria

Wisteria blooms
The memories of spring.
Your color carries
Passing remembrance.

Skylark

Within the cries of skylarks
I rejoice
In the violet field.
Oh, spring days.

Fourth Month

Cuckoo

Oh, cuckoo, feel at home,
In a distant village.
Unohana blossoms, and
May is around the corner.

Unohana (Flower of Dentzia)

With summer’s arrival,
The airing of white robes.
Unohana at the fence
Heavy with blossoms.

Fifth Month

Tachibana (Wild Oranges)

Cuckoo sings
In May.
At every door
Fragrant wild oranges.

Kuina (Water Rail)

Summer dawn,
Kuina tapping at the door.
Somebody, or is that
Only her fragrance?

Sixth Month

Nadeshiko (Pinks)

The blazing sun
Of the summer
Yet, nadeshiko bloom adoringly.

Comorant

Short summer nights
Amid the blazes,
Comorant-fishing
In the stream.

Seventh Month

Ominaeshi (Patrina)

As has been vowed,
Only in autumn
Ominaeshi bloom
In the sky of the Star Festival.

Kasasagi (Magpie)

Over autumn sky
Kasasagi bridge their wings
For the night of distant lovers.

Eighth Month

Hagi (Bush clover)

Autumn deepens
With the winds of many colors.
Soon the sparse bush clovers
Will change their coats.

Wild Geese

Half the autumn has passed,
Watching and waiting for
The first flock of geese;
Their sharp cries.

Ninth Month

Hana-susuki (Japanese Pampas Grasses)

Hana-susuki,
The dew on their sleeves.
Alas, the passing autumn,
The heartless one.

Quail

Paths of silence
Thick bushes withered.
In early winter's frost,
Quails chirp.

Tenth Month

Chrysanthemum

Chrysanthemums—
If not their fragrance in the frost,
What could be
A remembrance of autumn?

Crane

In the setting sun,
Cranes flock.
Rain clouds of winter
Circle the hill.

Eleventh Month (right panel of slide)

Loquat

Greenless fields
Of wintry days,
Loquat blossoms on evergreen branches—
Or, is that a frost?

Plover

Plovers chirp on
Shoals in the Kamo River.
From the moonlight
The hills play hide and seek.

Twelfth Month (left panel of slide)

Prunus

Snow on the fence
Reflecting—
Prunus branches
On this side of the New Year.

Mizudori (Mandarin Duck)

Flakes of snow
Float onto the pond
Year after year,
Like layers of feathers.

(Translations from Yoshiko Kakudo and So Kam Ng, *Art with the Written Word from China and Japan*, exhibition brochure (San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 1985).

Slide 11



Ike Gyokuran (1727 or 28–1784)
Spring Landscape
1700s
Hanging scroll; ink and wash on silk
44 1/8 x 19 1/4 inches
The Avery Brundage Collection, B76 D3

Who was the artist?

This painting depicts an imaginary landscape in springtime by one of Japan's best known women artists from the Edo period—Ike Gyokuran. Like her mother and grandmother before her, Ike Gyokuran was a renowned poet. Her given name was Machi, but she later took the artistic name Gyokuran, written with the Chinese characters meaning “jade orchid,” and later “jade wave.” Her father was a member of the samurai class, but her parents were separated when her father was called away from Kyoto to Edo. Her mother is said to have reminded her: “Your father was a samurai. You must respect yourself as a woman—never look down on yourself!” (Fister, p. 74) Her grandmother, Kaji (active in the early 1700s), ran a teahouse called Matsuya in the historic Gion entertainment district of Kyoto. Gyokuran's mother inherited the shop, raising her daughter amongst the fascinating Kyoto clientele. Gyokuran learned *waka* poetry from her mother and began to study painting with one of Japan's first literati (Nanga) painters, Yanagisawa Kien (1706–1758) at around age 10. She married the famous literati painter Ike Taiga (1723–1776) in 1746, and together they devoted their lives to creating poetry and painting, learning from and encouraging one another. Gyokuran's painting was profoundly influenced by her husband, who made painting manuals for her to study. They were both included in a book of famous eccentrics called

the *Kinsei kijin den* (Legends of Eccentrics in Recent Times, 1790). The image illustrating their entry depicts the couple in simple clothes playing music together amongst a jumble of paintings, calligraphy, and brushes. Taiga, unshaven and grinning, strums a lute. Gyokuran plays the koto. (See Fister, p. 74 for reproduction.) They cared little for money, living a simple life with earnings from their calligraphy and painting.

Discussion/Activities

- 1) Explore the role of women in Edo society.
Ike Gyokuran and Otagaki Rengetsu (slide #15) were unconventional women in a highly structured society. You may like to introduce and discuss **Student Handout 2 Readings on Education** as part of this discussion. They both associated with other unconventional or eccentric people, which provided a nurturing environment for them to develop as artists and poets. What are the expected roles for men and women in US society? Do the roles change depending on generation, where people come from, the region of the country they live in, or their religious beliefs? Think about eccentric people you have known. What made them different? Was their eccentricity valued or not?
- 2) This painting by Gyokuran is drawn from her imagination. Have students imagine walking through this painting, and write an essay of their experience. Where would you go? Who would you meet? What smells are in the air, what sounds can you hear? Would you stop for a picnic, go fishing, or take a boat ride? Would you climb one of the mountains?

Sources:

Fister
Selected Works, p. 199.
Kakudo, p. 134

Slide 12



Aoki Shukuya (died 1802)
Gakuyoro (Yueyang) Tower
Dated 1802

Two-fold screen, ink and colors on gold
Approx. 65 7/8 x 73 5/8 inches

Gift and purchase from the Harry C.G. Packard Collection Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Shujiro Shimada; The Avery Brundage Collection, 1991.69

What is this painting about?

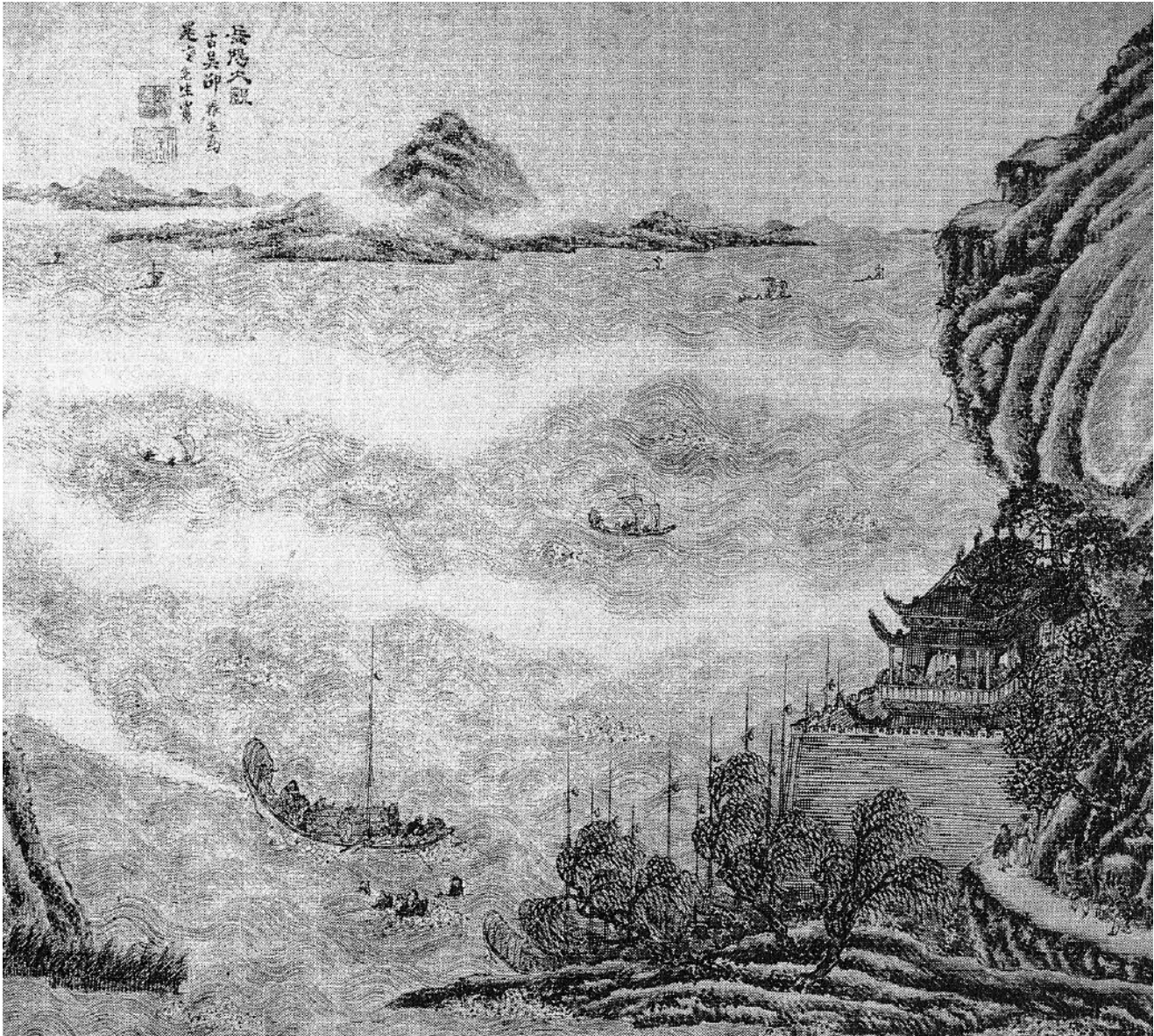
This painting depicts a famous place in China, the Yueyang Tower, known in Japan as the Gakuyoro. The tower was built in the Tang dynasty (618–906) on a site known as the Western Gate of Yuezhou city in southern China. The tower overlooks Lake Dongting (a famous lake in China often represented in Chinese painting). Mountains and the Yangzi river can be seen in the distance. We are led into the painting by a scholar and attendants walking up the path to the tower. Other scholars are in the tower at a party. Some of them lean over the balcony enjoying the view and watching an approaching boat with anticipation. Other boats under sail recede into the distance.

Who was Aoki Shukuya?

Aoki Shukuya was born in Kyoto. He was proud of his family's claim to be descendants of a mythological Korean king—one of the three seals on this painting reads: "Descendant of the Korean King Yo Sho-o." Shukuya studied with the famous literati painter, Ike Taiga. (Taiga was married to the artist Ike Gyokuran, whose painting is reproduced in slide number 11.) After Taiga died, Shukuya with other students converted Taiga's Kyoto home into a memorial hall to their departed teacher, and named it *Taiga-do*, or Hall of Taiga. Shukuya became the caretaker of Taiga-do and spent his remaining years there. The inscription on this painting reads: "Painted at Taiga-do in the third month of 1802 by Yo Shukuya." This was Shukuya's last year alive.

Did Shukuya ever visit China and the Gakuyoro Tower?

No. Then how did he paint this scene? It was very common for Japanese artists to depict landscapes they had never seen, even those in Japan. They used literary descriptions, and took inspiration from other artists' renditions of the place. The beauty of this tower was famous in China, and its fame spread to Japan. The Chinese scholar Fan Zhongyuan wrote an essay about it, titled the Record of Yueyang Tower, in which he said: "The magnificent view is enhanced by Lake Dongting, and the lake's rippling water seems to expand boundlessly." Shukuya probably saw a painting entitled "A Grand View of Yueyang Tower" by a Chinese artist from Suzhou, Shao Zhenxian (active 1600s), reproduced on the following page, which may be used as a handout.



“A Grand View of Yueyang Tower” by Shao Zhenxian (active 1600s), album leaf, ink and light color on paper; private collection, Tokyo.]

This work, which was the model for Shukuya’s painting of the Yueyang Tower, was included in an album of Qing dynasty (1644–1911) Chinese paintings that made its way to Japan. Taiga also copied some of the leaves from it. Notice the clear similarities between the Japanese and Chinese renditions of this subject. Notice too the differences. This Chinese album wound up in a private collection in Tokyo.

Discussion/Activities

- 1) How did Shukuya transform this subject from the Chinese model?
Distribute copies of the Chinese version, or make an OHT and show the slide of Shukuya's version. Compare them considering the following:

Format—The album leaf that provided the model was about the size of a sheet of notebook paper. Shukuya's screen is about 5 feet by 6 feet. Ask students to consider these different formats (see **Student Handout 3, Formats of Japanese Painting**) and their impacts.

Gold—Shukuya covered the entire surface with gold leaf squares before painting in black ink. Some Chinese artists covered the surface of their paper with a kind of gold paint made with gold dust in a watery glue, but they never used the gold leaf squares that were common in Japanese screen paintings. The effect was very different in these two techniques. The gold leaf is much more reflective, and the squares create their own pattern. The Chinese gold wash had a softer, more subtle, wash effect like that seen in slide #13.

Proportion—The pavilion takes up much more space in Shukuya's version. How does this affect the appearance of the size of the mountain? What do you think Shukuya wished to emphasize in his painting? the exotic Chinese architecture, the people, the landscape?

- 2) The problem of copying.
When is it okay to copy? In East Asian painting, it was considered natural and quite appropriate for an artist to make copies of works he or she admired. Copying was the first step in learning to paint, and to make a copy was a sign of respect for the artist who painted the original. How does this attitude compare with the United States or elsewhere? Unlike this painting, which bears the correct signature, some Japanese artists forged the signature of the original in hopes of selling their work as an ancient work of art at a high price. Is this ethical?
- 3) Depict a far away land.
Japanese artists often painted idealized landscapes of far away places that they heard about from a traveler or from books and paintings. Have students research a distant place that interests them. They can search the web, travel magazines and guides, encyclopedias, etc. Ask them to write a short description or poem about it, and/or draw it. They may embellish it and make it better than it is in reality.

Source:

Woodson, pp. 111–113.

Slide 13



Left



Right

Noro Kaiseki (1747–1828)

Landscape

Dated 1812

Left side of a pair of six-fold screens; ink on gold

162.5 x 360 cm each screen

Gift and purchase from the Harry C.G. Packard Collection Charitable Trust in honor of Dr. Shujiro Shimada; The Avery Brundage Collection, 1991.66.1–2

Who was the artist?

Noro Kaiseki was born into a merchant family in Wakayama prefecture, a coastal region south of Osaka. At age 20, living in Kyoto, he began to study with the famous and influential Nanga painter Ike Taiga (1723–1767), the husband of Ike Gyokuran, whose work is featured in slide #11. (Aoki Shukuya, slide #12, also studied with Taiga). Moving back to his hometown, Kaiseki was appointed to a low-ranking office in charge of the domain's copper mines. His job took him on long walks through the countryside, where he was able to observe nature first hand—a factor that influenced his landscape paintings.

He was an avid scholar, particularly interested in Chinese painting theories. The foundation of the Nanga painting tradition was based on the theories of a Chinese scholar artist, Dong Qichang, who stated that the Southern school was made up of scholar-amateur artists and the Northern school consisted of professional academy painters. Scholar painters were encouraged to practice the amateur style, to shun painting as a professional activity. Kaiseki was among the first Japanese to fully understand the distinctions Dong made between the Northern and Southern schools of painting in China. His studies of painting theories led him to publish his own book on the subject in 1827. In this painting, Kaiseki pursued a literal interpretation of the southern style of Chinese scholar-painting.

In contrast to Chinese Southern painting, which was exclusively practiced by the scholar-bureaucrat class, Nanga painting in Japan was not confined to one class of artist. Scholarly samurai first imported Southern painting and their ideals, but a large number of Nanga painters came from the merchant class. Kaiseki is one such example.

Discussion

1) Compositional Techniques.

This painting depicts a wide river backed by a panorama of mountains that recede into a hazy distance. What techniques has the artist used to give a sense of the towering mountains, misty atmosphere, and distance? How has the artist depicted water? (blank paper) How does he make the mountains that are furthest away appear to be far away? (they are depicted using a wash of diluted ink). How do things that are close look? (They are clearly drawn with detailed lines)

2) Comparison with a Japanese style painting.
See **Activity 2**.

Entry by U-gene Kim

Slide 14



Artist unknown
Fireman's ceremonial costume
Approx. 1700–1900
Silk, linen, and arrowroot (kuzu)
The Avery Brundage Collection, 1991.137

Who were the Edo firemen?

Fires in Edo Japan were a constant danger. Buildings were built primarily of wood and paper, and open hearth fires were common. Earthquakes often precipitated terrible fires, and this is a continued threat in Japan today, as realized in the Kobe earthquake of January 17, 1995. Between 1601 and 1806, four major fires destroyed much of the city, and numerous smaller fires caused untold damage and hardship. Merchants expected to be burned out once or twice per decade and planned this expense into their accounts. Firemen, therefore, were important people in Edo society. Their brigades were often organized from samurai ranks. They were heroic figures, who swaggered about town and even affected a special kind of macho lingo. They were much admired and imitated. Fires also held a fascination for the people, and were popularly called the “Flowers of Edo,” a surprising phrase that shows the capacity of Edoites to find humor and beauty even in extreme danger.

How was this costume used?

This costume, consisting of a jacket, bib, and headband, is for ceremonial purposes not fire-fighting (a fire-fighting outfit consisted of a leather or padded cotton jacket and leggings that were soaked in water to prevent them catching fire). This jacket was probably created

for occasions and processions such as the annual fire fighters' parade, at which firemen showed off their skills as in the photo below. Although fire fighting methods have changed drastically since the Edo period, the parade, known as the *Dezome shiki* still takes place every January 4, and spectators can view the daring acrobatics of the traditional fire-fighter. A similar jacket to this, made of cheaper material like cotton, was worn by the brigade's standard bearers to the fire.



What is the decoration?

Every fire brigade in Edo had an identity that was symbolized by its *mon* (a crest, or a kind of graphic logo). Firemen raced to the scene of a fire behind the standard bearer, who held high a large red lantern boldly painted with the brigade's *mon* for all to see. He and his assistants then ascended a nearby building to supervise the efforts of the brigade and warn them of back drafts or changes in the fire's direction. The *mon* is repeated three times across the back of the jacket and decorates the bib.

Why was the *mon* so prominent and important? Just like firefighters in our culture, who support their facilities with a combination of government funds and public charity, firefighters in Edo depended on gifts from grateful townspeople, whose homes or businesses had been rescued or salvaged by the firemen. These *mon* served as proud advertisements for the brigade.

Discussion/Activities

- 1) What makes a hero?

The firemen of Edo were admired for their bravery, physical skill, appearance, and mannerisms of speech. Who are our heroes today and why? This could be a research assignment, where students write about someone they admire, be it a rock star, athlete, family member, or friend.

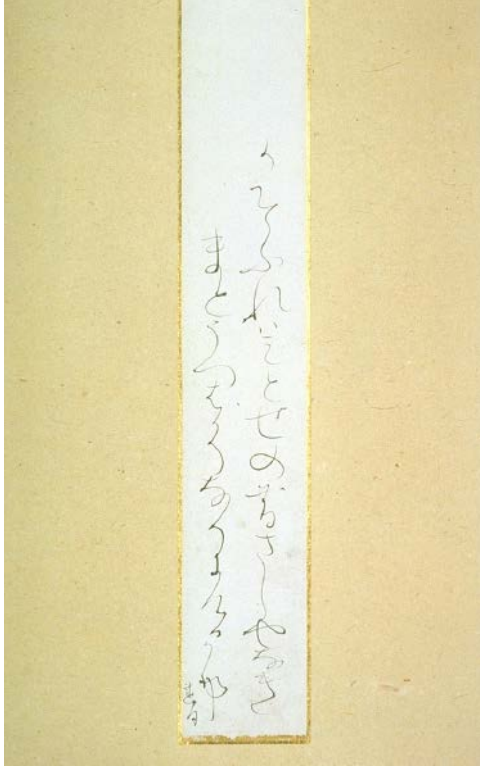
- 2) Design your own *mon*.

As part of **Activity 1, Making a Temple Book**, distribute the handout of *mon* and ask students to draw one they like. You may also combine this with slides 1–3, which feature several figures wearing kimono decorated with *mon*. Have students create their own *mon* that in some way represents their identity, hobbies, favorite animal, etc. Have them create a stamp with their design as in Activity 1.

Source:

Lee A. Makela, "Pruning the Flowers of Edo," *Orientalism* (Feb. 1996), pp. 43–50.

Slide 15



Otagaki Rengetsu (1791–1875)

Willow Tree

1800s

Tanzaku (rectangular writing card) calligraphy mounted on a hanging scroll

calligraphy: 14 9/32 x 2 3/8 inches

total dimensions: 57 x 10 3/8 inches

Gift of the Connoisseur's Council and J. Sanford and Constance Miller, The Avery Brundage Collection, 1990.213

Who was Rengetsu?

This slide shows the calligraphy of Otagaki Rengetsu's *waka* poem. Rengetsu is celebrated as one of Kyoto's eminent poet/artists from the late Edo period, popular then as she is now among collectors. She was born in Kyoto and lived a fascinating, but difficult life. Soon after her birth, she was given up for adoption to a samurai family named Otagaki. At age eight, she was sent to serve as a lady in waiting to the Matsudaira family at the Kameoka castle, where she studied calligraphy and literary and martial arts. She married twice surviving both husbands who died young. Her three children all died in infancy. At age 33, Rengetsu—along with her adoptive father, Furuhiya—renounced secular life, cut her hair, and took Buddhist vows. It was then that she took her Buddhist name, Rengetsu, meaning “lotus moon.”

A few years later, her father died leaving Rengetsu without finances. She left the temple, eventually making Chinese-style ceramic tea utensils as a means to support herself. Scholars speculate that Rengetsu's unique calligraphy style in paintings, identified by crisp and pre-

cise strokes, stemmed from the technique she used when inscribing poetry on her ceramic wares. Her use of *kana* script (as opposed to Chinese characters) also made her poems easier to read. She was a beautiful woman, but in her forties she reportedly pulled out all her teeth to make herself less attractive to men who made uninvited advances. Her works were very popular, bringing collectors banging on her door. To escape this constant intrusion, Rengetsu moved often, earning the sobriquet “Yagoshi no Rengetsu” (Rengetsu who moved often). In 1865, Rengetsu again retired to a Buddhist temple and lived out the rest of her life immersed in the study of Buddhism, continuing to create painting, poetry, and pottery.

What is this calligraphy about?

This particular piece, entitled “Willow Tree” is painted on a *tanzaku* format, which is a long card or piece of paper intended for poems. In recent years, this *tanzaku* was mounted onto a hanging scroll format. The poem, written in the cursive *kana* syllabary, reads and translates as follows:

Kazoueba mitoshi no kuksahi sashiyanagi
Madoutsubakari narinikeru kamo—Rengetsu

As I count
only three years ago
Planted there a willow sprig.
Already its branches
Pound against a window.—Rengetsu

The poem wonders at nature’s energy, while at the same time expresses bitter nostalgia for the rapid passage of time.

Entry by Lisa Nguyen

Slide 16



inside cover and inkstone



cover

Teijosai (dates unknown)
Suzuribako (writing box) with lid decorated with a duck and reeds
Edo period (1615–1868)
Lacquered wood
The Avery Brundage Collection, B69 M29

What is this?

The writing box was an essential accessory of an educated man or woman in traditional Japan. It contained all the instruments necessary for writing: inkstone on which to grind down the compressed ink, water dropper, and a brush. They were not only functional but

were highly valued for their beauty. They became central objects of display at poetry parties where guests created long poems of linked verses that were collaborative efforts—guests took turns writing a stanza that connected to the one before it, so the verses created one long, cohesive poem.

The outer surface of the lid is decorated with a duck swimming among reeds, the inside of the lid continues the reed decor. The inkstone base is covered with gold cloud-like forms. The round metal object above the inkstone is a water dropper that lifts out. To transform the pressed block of black ink into liquid form, the water dropper is used to moisten the stone on which the ink is gently ground.

What is lacquer?

Lacquer is a hard covering that is made from the sap of the lacquer tree. A wooden core is carefully prepared, and is then covered with several thin layers of the lacquer coating, each allowed to dry and is polished before the next is applied. Decorations of gold and pigment are often applied while the lacquer is still wet. The final layer of lacquer is polished to achieve a smooth shiny finish.

What does the duck and reed symbolize?

Writing boxes were usually decorated with themes relating to nature or literary traditions. The duck and reed motif refers to the season of autumn or winter (remember slide #10).

Activity

- 1) Create a *renga* (linked verse) in the class. The poet Socho (1448–1532) provided the following first stanza of a linked verse in response to his visit to tea house:

After last night's storm—
Picking up the first maple leaves.

Start with this phrase, a phrase selected by the class, or use one of the poems in this packet. Have each student/or group of students contribute a word or phrase to the poem and record the final result.

- 2) Create your own origami box. (See **Activity 3**)

Slide 17



Artist unknown
Festivities of the Twelve Months
Late 1800s
Handscroll; ink and colors on paper
10 1/4 x 267 inches
The Avery Brundage Collection, B86 D19

What is this painting about and how was it viewed?

This painting depicts annual festivities associated with the twelve months. It is in a handscroll format, which means it was held in the viewer's hands and read like a book. Opening the scroll at the right, the reader would gradually unroll the scroll with their left hand revealing each scene like the sequences of a movie. When ready to move onto the next scene, the right hand would roll up the scroll at right as the left continued to roll out new images on the left, so the total length of open scroll remained comfortably between the right and left hands. There are twelve distinct scenes separated from each other by empty space and landscape elements such as trees or hills.

New Year's in Japan.

This slide represents the first scene in the scroll, the festivities at New Year. New Year's in Japan is a family festival, one of the most important events of the year. It is a time to eat, drink, play, and pray for good things in the coming year. The New Year celebration involves visits to temples and shrines, special auspicious decorations, and eating special foods. The concept of renewal, based on Shinto beliefs developed around the cyclical nature of life, is fundamental to New Year's in Japan.

What is going on here?

Children are playing a variety of games associated with the New Year. At far right, a woman and two girls play a Japanese version of "Cat's Cradle" with a baby. Below them, two girls play ball. To the left of them, a small boy winds up to throw a top. Two girls play a game of

shuttle cock with specially decorated paddles. Behind them, two boys play a ball game with special New Year's bats. New Year's decorations can be seen hanging from the eaves of the house. Behind the women in a recessed alcove, is a tray with a New Year's offering of *mochi*, a sticky rice treat, and pine decorations. The plum blossoms tell us this is the first blush of spring, comparable to February in California. Japanese followed the Chinese lunar calendar until the modern era, so New Year's celebrations generally occurred in February.

Discussion/Activity:

1) New Year's Activities Discussion.

What games and activities are associated with New Year or other holidays in the US?
What was important about the recent New Year celebration (2000)?

2) Create your own handscroll calendar.

Glue together sheets of paper end to end and attach each end to a tube or stick of bamboo. Draw or paint a scene for each of the twelve months starting with January on the far right and ending with December on the left. In each scene depict the major holidays (these can be of personal significance such as birthdays or national holidays) and seasonal references associated with each month. You may also include text in your handscroll.

Slide 18



Kamisaka Sekka (1866–1942)
White Phoenix on a Branch
Late 1800–early 1900 (Edo-Meiji periods)
Hanging scroll; ink and colors on silk
45 x 15 inches
The Avery Brundage Collection, 1995.50

Who was the artist?

Kamisaka Sekka was born in Kyoto in 1866, at the very end of the Edo period. He was one of the last masters of the Rinpa (Rimpa) school that grew out of Kyoto in the early 1600s. Sekka was a successful artist working in a broad range of media—painting, ceramics, lacquer, textiles, woodwork and metalwork. He received commissions from both imperial and wealthy merchant families, and participated in many domestic and international exhibitions

What is this painting about?

This painting is a bold rendition of a phoenix perched on a branch. The phoenix is a mythological bird that is an auspicious symbol of peace and prosperity. The brushwork is swift and sure, and the coloring rich and beautiful. In the branch area, different colors of paint were allowed to bleed together creating a puddled ink effect, known as *tarashikomi*. Sekka has distilled his subject to only the most essential elements—the bird and its perch. The end result of this simplification is a bold graphic presentation.

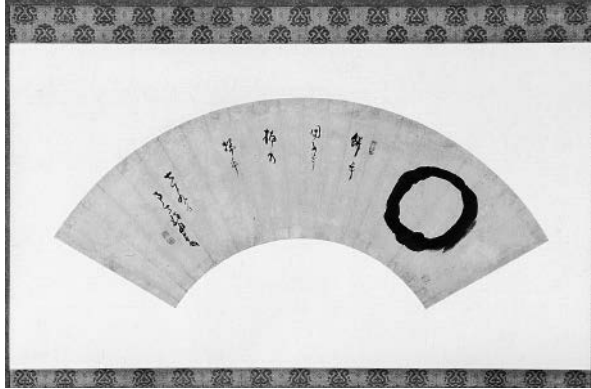
What format is this?

Hanging scrolls are vertical paintings hung on the wall. Because they can be rolled up and stored in their own box, they were easily changed taking into account the season or mood of the collector.

Discussion

1. Compare this work to slide #10, *Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months* by Soken (active 1683–1706). They are both paintings that feature birds, but how are they different? (Soken includes poetry as well as more detailed landscape; this work is a hanging scroll, Soken's is painted on the screen format). What is the focus of each painting? (There is no right answer in the case of Soken—it is really a combination of the poetry and his interpretation of it—but Sekka's focus is the bird, or even the painting surface itself).
2. How does the hanging scroll format compare to western style frames?

Slide 19



detail

Nantembo Toju (1839–1925)
Enso with inscription
1918
Fan painting mounted on hanging scroll
Collection of Urasenke Foundation San Francisco

Inscription:

mochi ka	is it a rice cake
dango ka	a sweet dumpling
oke no	or just the bottom
soko ka	of a bucket

(signed) the 79 year old fellow Nantembo Toju

What is the *enso* (Zen circle painting) all about?

According to the sixteenth century tea record kept by Yamanoue Soji, the practice of displaying *bokuseki* (literally “traces of ink” or calligraphy by Zen monks) originates with Murata Shuko (1421–1502). Shuko’s tea was greatly influenced by the famous Zen priest, calligrapher, and poet Ikkyu Sojun (1394–1481), who presented Shuko with a Chinese scroll that Shuko displayed in the room in which he served tea.

After Shuko, merchant tea masters of Sakai and Kyoto maintained close ties with priests from the Zen temples Myoshinji and Daitokuji. Despite the impact of Zen on the development of chanoyu, only gradually did *bokuseki* replace Chinese paintings as the preferred object in the tearoom. Initially, there was a marked preference for Chinese religious text that in time gave way to the use of single-line Zen phrases by contemporary Japanese calligraphers.

The compendium of teachings on *chanoyu* attributed to Rikyu (1522–1591) states: “no utensil ranks with the hanging scroll in significance,” and “writings done by men in secular life should not be displayed.” From Rikyu’s time only the works of those who have spent their lives in pursuit of understanding or enlightenment are used in the tearoom. Most

often the phrases brushed upon the scroll are taken from collections of Zen text. At their best, these phrases can be obtuse and ambiguous. Yet as such, they are rich with possible interpretations.

How might this painting have been used in a tea gathering?

Reading the scroll aloud to the guests is one of the first acts the host performs at a tea gathering. Through the medium of conversation the scroll informs and enriches the experience of both host and guest.

Let's imagine we are guests at a tea gathering at which this Nantembo painting has been displayed. The host reads:

mochi ka	is it a rice cake
dango ka	a sweet dumpling
oke no	or just the bottom
soko ka	of a bucket

(signed) the 79 year old fellow Nantembo Toji

What is does the circle, called enso represent?

Is this a character or a painting? Fire, water, wind, earth, void, all the elements of the universe are united with just one stroke. Empty form, the enso leaves the content up to the reader/viewer. A sweetmaker thinks cake, a washerperson thinks bucket, but the *enso* remains empty. In Zen one works toward enlightenment. What is known with enlightenment? What is the nature of enlightenment? Are the truest things inexpressible? If so, perhaps the essence can be suggested in an all-encompassing *enso*.

Like the Nantembo scroll, a short phrase is often written next to the *enso*. Depending on the words, one's interpretation of the scroll can change almost mysteriously. Frequently the words, "what is this," can be found. How would you answer such a question? Another thought-provoking phrase is, "emptiness is inexhaustible," which also has the sense, "emptiness is filled to overflowing." How else could this be represented? Of course, to these questions there is no one right answer, only continually evolving impressions and reactions.

The meaning of a circle.

Cultural associations with shapes such as the circle are interesting. The character representing circle in Japanese figures in words such as round, tranquil, perfection, harmony, smoothness, integrity, completeness. What associations or values are made with roundness or the circle in the cultures represented in your class? Are there common sayings that involve roundness? The best known saying in Japanese is, "round without, square within." First, what do you imagine this means? The Japanese take it as meaning a person should be gentle and understanding (round) with others (without) and strict (square) within themselves.

Everyone can draw the enso.

In drawing an *enso* or enacting the gestures for making tea everyone follows the same form, thinking only of how to realize the form in its ideal. The person wholeheartedly following the form immerses himself or herself in the process, something outside the ego; reaching for the ideal, stretches beyond his or her present ability without pressure or complacency; leav-

ing behind willfulness, discovers and reveals an individuality that is clear and distinct.

Activity

1) Drawing *enso*.

This is a good project for a class to experience various attitudes inherent in Japanese traditional arts: first, the artistic creativity in following a form; second, what appears simple can be quite difficult; third, a single person's repetition of a form can reveal their state of mind at a given moment; fourth, a group's repetition of a form instantly reveals the uniqueness of each individual in the realization of the form; fifth, sustained interest in a form has a direct correlation to the amount of energy and intelligence a person brings to it; sixth, skillfulness is not a value or goal, rather what is sought is an understanding/expression of one's humanity.

Using brush and sumi ink, let each student draw a number of *enso*. Have each student select the one they like best and say why. Was it one of the first or last the student did? Compare the group's *enso* paintings in terms of individual expression. Have them think of an additional phrase or element they would add to the *enso* to complement/compound the meaning. What if this exercise was repeated every day for a week or once a week for the duration of the study of Japan?

Entry by Christy Bartlett

Slide 20



Signed Chikuhosai
Katsura River-style Basket
1900s
bamboo
Lloyd Cotsen Collection
Photo: Pat Pollard

What is this?

Although this work dates to the 1900s, its style and associations relate to the late Momoyama and early Edo period. This style of basket takes its name from the Katsura River on the outskirts of Kyoto. It is associated with the famous tea master Sen Rikyu (1522–1591), who is said to have discovered the rustic beauty of this type of basket when he happened upon on a fisherman on the Katsura River using it as a fishing creel. Rustic Japanese baskets are considered most appropriate for intimate gatherings in a smaller tea room, and the arrangement would consist of spare groupings, often a single stem, of wildflowers and/or grasses.

Some baskets are refined, symmetrical works known as *karamono* (literally “Chinese things”) that trace their lineage to China. Others, called *wamono* (“Japanese things”), are woven with broader, coarser bamboo strips, displaying the Japanese love for asymmetry and irregularity. This basket is an example of *wamono*.

What is bamboo and where does it grow?

Bamboo is a grass, but it branches and gives shade like a tree. Although it is hollow, it is extremely strong. It sways and bends in a breeze, yet its tenacious underground branches are powerful enough to break through walls. It may flower only once in a hundred years, yet it grows very fast. Bamboo has been used for millennia in Japan, where about half of the world's varieties of bamboo have been identified. It grows everywhere in Japan except on the northernmost island of Hokkaido. Of course, it also grows very well in the Bay Area.

What else can be made with bamboo?

A house can be built largely with bamboo, furniture, musical instruments (shakuhachi flute for example), cooking utensils and food storage containers, the stem of a calligraphy brushes, and bamboo baskets.

Baskets and the Tea Ceremony

Collecting of baskets as art objects developed in the context of *chanoyu*, the Japanese tea ceremony, and ikebana, the art of flower arranging. Ritual tea drinking began in Japanese Zen Buddhist monasteries around the 1100s and was later adopted by Kyoto elite in the late Muromachi period (1392–1573). The tea ceremony, centered around the formalized preparation and drinking of strong, powdered green tea, was a chance to appreciate one's collection of tea utensils, flower containers, and hanging scrolls. At first, collections focused on Chinese objects exclusively, but two tea masters in the 1500s began to introduce Japanese objects in the tea ceremony: Murata Shuko (1423–1502) and his student Sen Rikyu. (Refer to **Aesthetic Trends in Chanoyu** section for more details.)

Shuko and Rikyu appreciated rustic, found objects and praised the beauty of seemingly incomplete and imperfect things, attitudes that led to the tradition of *wabicha* or “rustic tea.” According to Rikyu, “For the flower container in a small room, a length of bamboo, basket, or gourd is best.” This was in opposition to standard practice of using imported Chinese metal or ceramic vases that were often extremely expensive.

Ikebana

A highly developed appreciation of flowers is already evident in Japan's early poetry anthologies, the *Manyoshu* (700s) and the *Kokinshu* (compiled around 905). Flowers are also a dominant subject of Japanese paintings, often intending to remind the educated viewer of a well-known verse, person, or place associated with the flower or its fragrance. It is no wonder then that Japan has a refined form of floral arrangement, known as ikebana (“to arrange and give life to flowers”). For some basket makers like Ikeda Hyoa, baskets and flowers are integral to each other: “If a basket is made in complete perfection it does not have a place for the beauty of flowers.”

Like the tea ceremony, ikebana traces its development to Buddhist ritual. As early as the sixth century, flowers would be placed in front of a Buddhist image along with incense and candles. During the 1500s and 1600s, a style of flower arranging called *rikka* (“standing flowers”) flourished among the aristocracy as a secular art. Baskets, along with ceramic and metal vases, were used as containers. In a traditional Japanese reception hall or tea room,

flowers were placed or hung in the tokonoma—a platformed alcove that served as the focal point of the room. In the Edo period, flower arranging was practiced by women and men of the merchant classes, popularizing this previously exclusive art form. Today ikebana is the umbrella term for a stunning array of styles of flower arranging from the traditional to the avant-garde, involving nearly 3,000 schools in Japan and abroad.

Basketry Training

Basket artists traditionally learned their skills in an age-old family apprentice system, but students today are increasingly coming from outside the family, and more women are entering the field. The current generation of masters talk about spending their first months doing nothing but cleaning the workshop. Then, they spent months or years learning to split, strip, and polish the bamboo, and to care for their tools. Their first baskets are usually copies of *karamono* masterpieces. Only having mastered all of this—which can take ten years according to some—would they begin to develop a personal style and exhibit their own works.

Discussion/Activity

- 1) The basketmaker Hayakawa Shokosai V said, “When I was young, I tried to conquer bamboo, but now I do my work by talking with the bamboo.” What does he mean by this?
- 2) What does “rustic” mean when used to talk about art, flowers, or architecture? Have students think of other examples in their neighborhood or in San Francisco of places that have a rustic beauty or charm which is appreciated. (e.g. the dog head diner near the Zoo, the arcade at Cliff House, the trolley cars on Powel and the street cars on Market, the old windmills in Golden Gate park, even the de Young Museum). Are these rustic in the same way?
- 3) *A Basketmaker in Rural Japan* Video Discussion
Show the video *A Basketmaker in Rural Japan* (11 minutes) available from the Freer/Sackler Galleries (www.si.edu/organiza/museums/freer) or on loan from the Asian Art Museum. Ask students to note things that surprised them about the film. Discussion points include:
 - rural lifestyle in contemporary Japan (what is wealth? can people be happy with less?)
 - overcoming disability
 - the replacement of handmade baskets with cheaper plastics (what impact will this have on the environment and people?)
 - the artist’s relationship with nature
- 4) Make baskets inspired by Japanese baskets using recycled materials

Activity 1

Making a Temple Book or Pilgrimage Passport

Hands-on portion developed by Sherie Yazman, Mentor Teacher, George Washington High School, SFUSD, and recent Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program (Japan) recipient.

Documenting Pilgrimage

Japanese have a long history of religious pilgrimage. During the Edo period, when domestic travel was restricted by the government, religious pilgrimage offered a legitimate excuse for travel to explore not only temples and shrines, but to experience different foods and customs. Thus marked the birth of the intrepid Japanese tourist.

Many Edo period travelers kept diaries of their adventures on the road, and some of these became best-selling books that in turn inspired other would-be travelers. Matsuo Basho's, *Narrow Road to the Deep North*, is the best known of these. It chronicles a fascinating road trip full of beautiful, sorrowful, and terrifying moments written in detailed prose interspersed with poetry:

This year, 1689, the thought came to me of going on a walking trip to the distant provinces of Oku. It did not matter if I should have the misfortune to grow gray on my travels, for I wanted to see places I had heard so much about but never visited. . . .

The sky had cleared a little after a steady rain. Under the faintly shining evening moon the island of Magaki across the water seemed close enough to touch. Little fishing boats were rowing towards the shore, and I could hear the voices of the fishermen as they divided up the catch. I thought to myself with pleasure, "Now at last I understand the poem

In Michinoku
Every place has its charm
But Shiogama
When the boats are rowed to shore
Is most wonderful of all."

(Translated by Donald Keene, excerpted from Keene, p. 364 and p. 366)

Travelers in Japan today continue to document their experiences. An example of this can be witnessed at Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples. Many visitors carry small books with blank pages. For a donation, monks will place the temple or shrine's stamp in red, and then inscribe the name of the institution and date in your book with black Chinese characters.

In Activity 1, students will create their own books and stamps, and can inscribe poetry or good wishes on each others books. Have them take their books with them on a pilgrimage to the museum, the Japanese tea garden, or the beach, and record their impressions.

Screen Painting Option:

This booklet format can also be adapted to create a miniature screen painting. Simply change the dimensions of the paper to 6 x 18 inches. This will make a 6-fold screen with panels measuring 3 x 6 inches. For screens, it is best to use heavy card stock as your form, then cover this with gold foil to use as a painting surface.

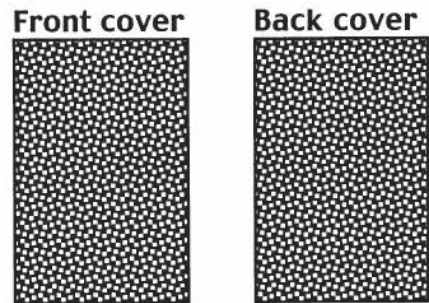
Temple Book Activity

created by Sherie Yazman, Mentor Teacher, SFUSD,
Fulbright Memorial Fund Teacher Program recipient, Japan 1999

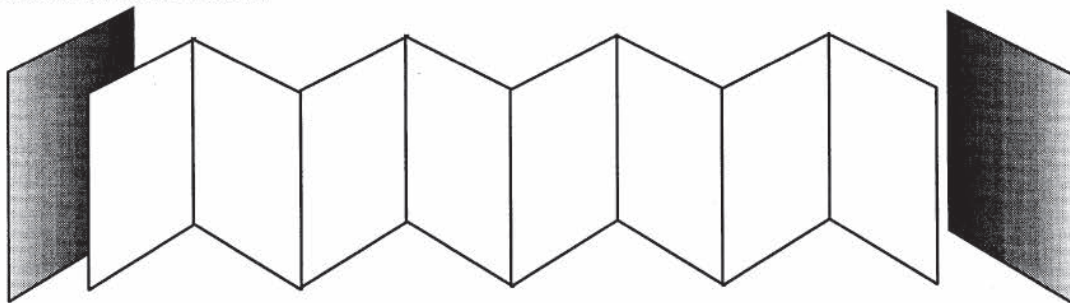
Materials needed: Two cardboard or mat board covers
(example, each board = 4 1/2 inches by 6 1/2 inches)
oblong strip of paper for pages (4 inches by 32 inches)
glue sticks
white vinyl eraser for carving stamps
linoleum carvings tools
commercial rubber stamps
ink stamp pads, metallic gold and red colors
small bamboo brushes and sumi ink

Cut two panels of cardboard or scrap mat board for the covers of the book. They should be slightly larger than the dimensions of the accordion folded paper pages.

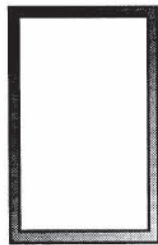
Use commercial rubber stamps or carve your own motifs from white vinyl erasers. Use gold ink and stamp designs on the cover for all over decorative effect.



Fold a long strip of paper into equal sections to make the accordion folded section of the book's pages. Make certain you have an equal number of folds so that the first and last fold can be used as end papers to glue the pages of the book to the covers.



center the pages on the cover board before gluing them to the cover.



carve stamp with reversed image



prints correctly when stamped

Use bamboo brushes and sumi ink to write messages of good will or examples of Haiku poetry on each page. Students could also use the pages to create small paintings or drawings in addition to the writing. To complete the project, stamp Mon crest designs or the artist's initials with red ink onto the printed pages, either on top of the writing or on the borders of the pages to enhance the overall effect.

Activity 2

Comparing Japanese style (yamato-e) and Chinese style (kanga) painting in Japan

Objectives:

- 1) Students will learn how to describe visual artworks.
- 2) Students will be able to identify characteristics of Japanese style and Chinese style paintings by Japanese artists. (Note: Often Japanese paintings combine the two styles making it difficult to draw firm lines between where the Chinese aesthetic ends and the Japanese aesthetic begins. Japanese artists adapted Chinese style to their tastes, therefore Chinese style painting by Japanese artists are usually quite different from works by Chinese artists.)
- 3) Students will be able to recognize these characteristics in other works.

Suggested Lesson:

- 1) Introductory Discussion
Ask students to define the word “style.” They can look it up in the dictionary, and discuss what it means in groups coming up with examples. As an art historical term, style can be identified as the combination of form and content that make a work distinctive. They may make reference to styles of clothing, music, or art. Have each group identify some artistic styles, and describe them to the rest of the class. (e.g. Impressionism, pop art, graffiti art, they can even compare the cartoon styles of *The Simpsons* vs. *King of the Hill*, or whatever pop imagery they are familiar with).
- 2) Look at examples of Chinese style (slides 11, 12, 13) and Japanese style (slides 1–3, 4, 5, 10, 17, 18) paintings. Use two examples to make comparisons listing the characteristics on a chart. Get students to come up to the screen and look closely at color, line work, figures, facial expressions, format. A chart comparing slide 10 with slide 13 might look something like this:

Characteristics	Japanese style Kano Tanyu's Mount Fuji (slide #4)	Chinese style Noro Kaiseki's Landscape (slide #13)
format	6-panel folding screen	6-panel folding screen
color	lots of gold, lush greens, a bit of red	black ink and washes on gold
line (brushwork)	fine lines define trees, buildings, waves, as well as outlines of hills, but flat areas of color most important in defining forms	all forms are defined using lines of varying sizes and shapes, line is most important in this work to define forms
subject matter	landscape in Japan, a famous place with literary and religious meanings	landscape in China, also a famous place in Chinese and some Japanese literature
human figures	tiny figures from various classes are drawn using sketchy simple lines they are going about daily chores, such as carrying goods, shopping at market, harvesting salt (right screen)	can you find them? One solitary figure can barely be seen in the hut, meditating on the spectacular view
appearance of rocks, landscape	Fuji is dramatic, but other hills are soft, rolling, covered with lush green grass and pine trees. there are red-leafed maples near the temple, and bamboo behind the village	craggy, steep, rocky hills covered with pine trees, with willow trees near the water
use of gold	at least three kinds of gold used: gold leaf under the painting, and smaller cut gold squares and powder on top of painting	painted on gold leaf squares

3) Wrap up discussion.

Summarize the main characteristics of each style, then review the other painting slides to see if the students can recognize the style of the other works. It is okay if students recognize aspects of both Japanese and Chinese styles in one painting, since many works combine them, but they should be able to point to specific characteristics of each.

Activity 3

Make an Origami Box

Materials:

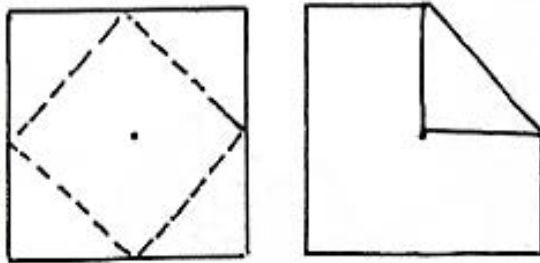
Plain paper bags (You can use any kind of heavy paper, e.g. magazines, posters, old calendars using its design for the outer decoration on your box)
scissors

Instructions:

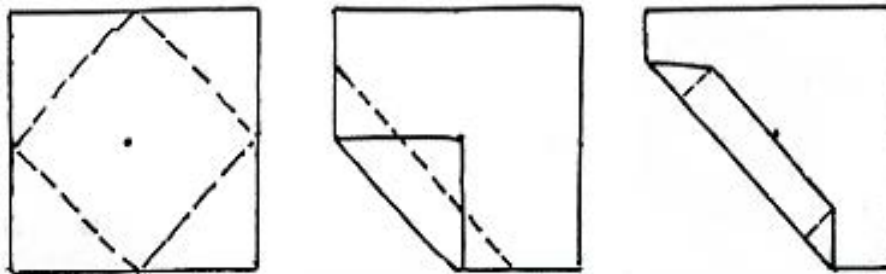
For each box you will need two square sheets of paper, one 1/4 inch smaller than the other so that it will fit inside the other to create to the bottom of the box.
The squares can be any size, but it is recommended not to use anything smaller than 10–15 inches square (smaller sheets are harder to work with and make very tiny boxes).

Once you have the squares ready, follow these steps:

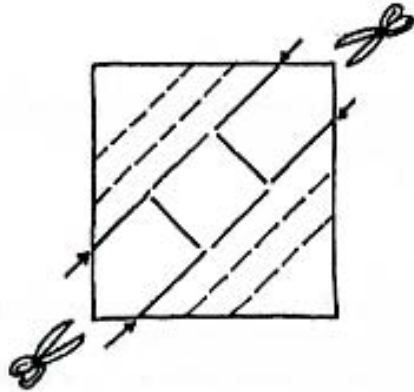
- 1) Fold all four corner points of your square to the center and crease. The central square will form the bottom of your box. Unfold to the full size.



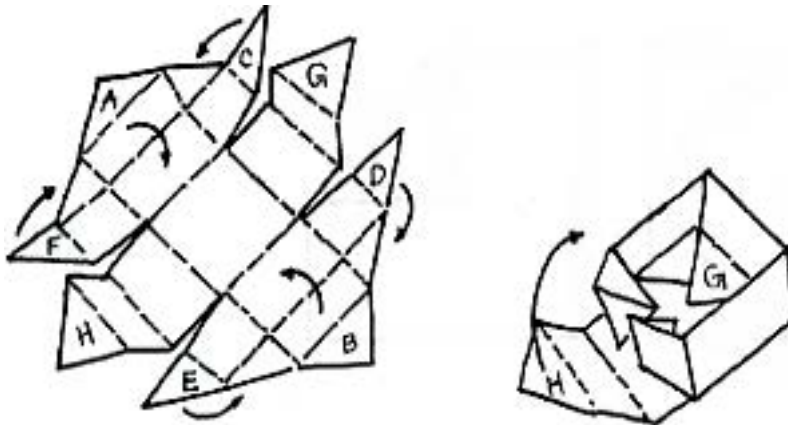
- 2) Take each side in turn, fold the corner in again, then fold the straight edge it forms to the center point. Unfold this side and repeat with the other three sides.



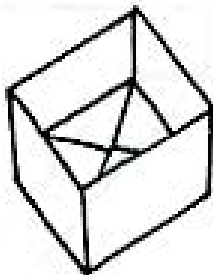
- 3) Cut two crease lines on either side of the central square from the outer edge of the paper to the corner of the central square.



- 4) Fold sides A and B in to form two sides of the box. Fold in flaps A,B,C,D to form other two sides of the box. Fold over them the corners E and F to finish the last two sides. Fold corners H and G over to finish the box.



- 5) This is the top of your box.



Diagrams by Brian Hogarth

Starting with a new sheet $\frac{1}{4}$ inch smaller than the top sheet, repeat steps 1–6. This will be the bottom of your box.

If you used paper with a design your box is finished, if you used plain paper you can now decorate your box. You can give it a Japanese lacquer effect by painting bird and flower designs and using gold/silver foil or paint.

Activity 4

Chashitsu: Japanese Teahouse Model Make Your Own Three Dimensional Tea House

Illustrated by Stephanie Kao

Floor Plan

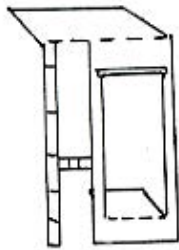
Cut out the floor plan. Fold on the dashed lines. Glue the corners of the bottom flaps to form a box. Glue the bottom of the box to a tagboard surface.

Teahouse Walls

Cut out each of the walls. Align dashed lines and tabs and tape the inside and outside of the wall back to back so that the illustrations appear on each side. Fold along all dashed lines. Cut out slots on walls 1, 2, 4, 7, 8.

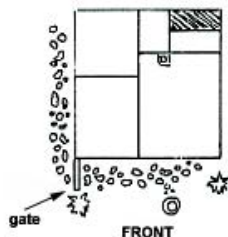
Special instructions for wall #6:

Carefully cut out the section with a large "X" on it. Bend on the dashed line. The result should loom like this:

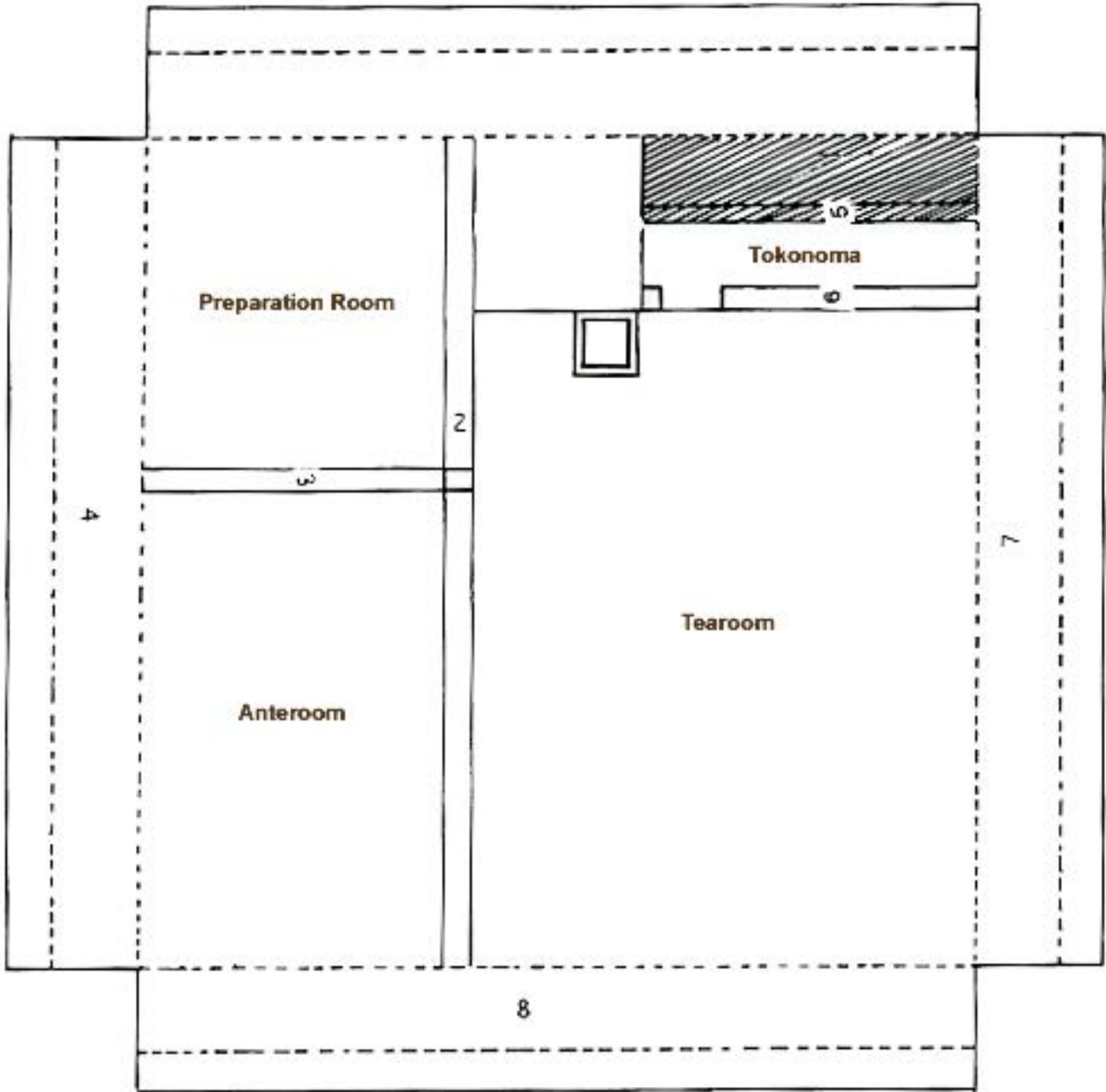


Gate

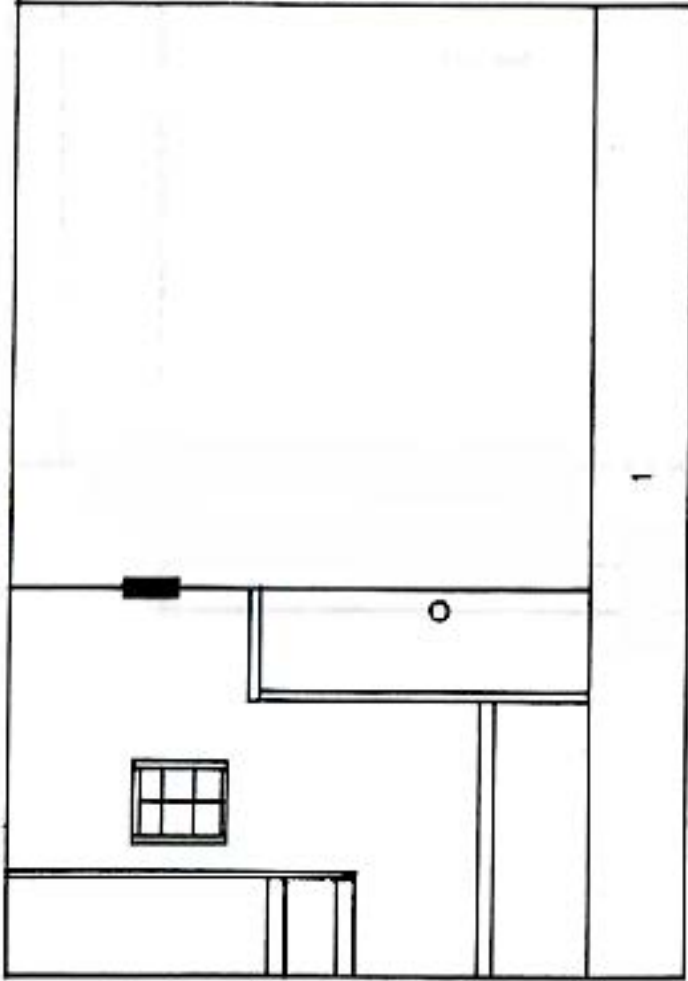
Cut out both sides of the gate. Tape both sides of the gate together. Fold on the dashed lines. Glue the gate next to the left side of the front wall. The gate is placed in the front, left of the teahouse as in this illustration:



Floor Plan



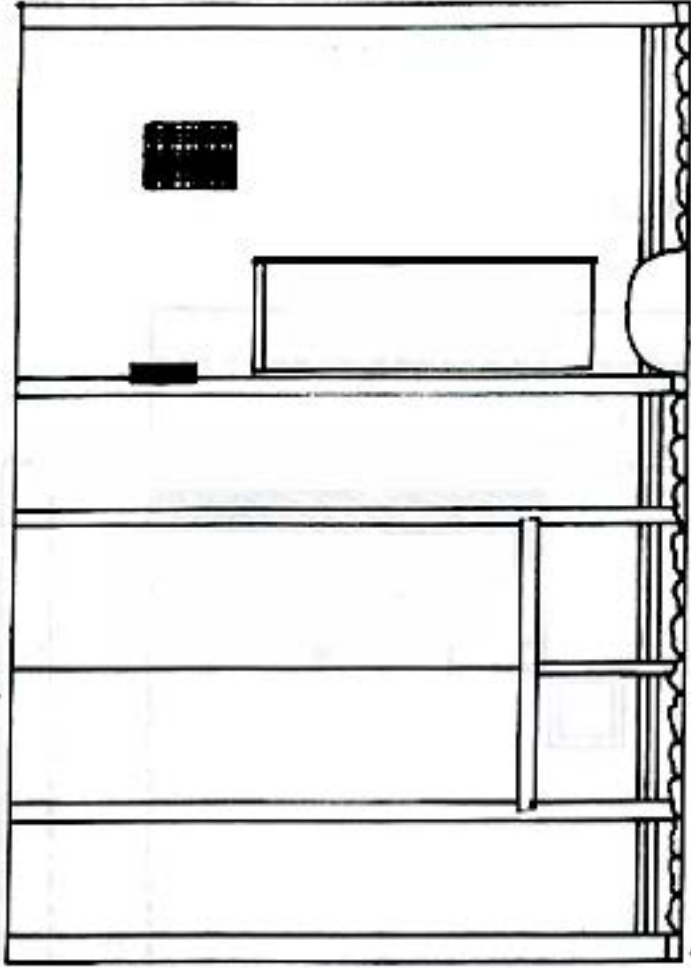
Wall #1



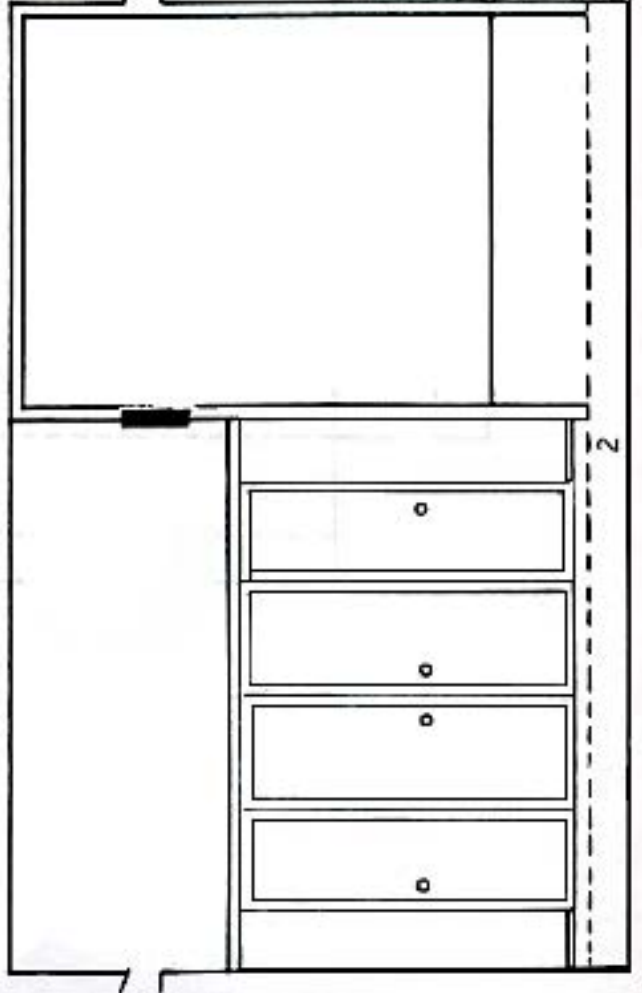
inside

1

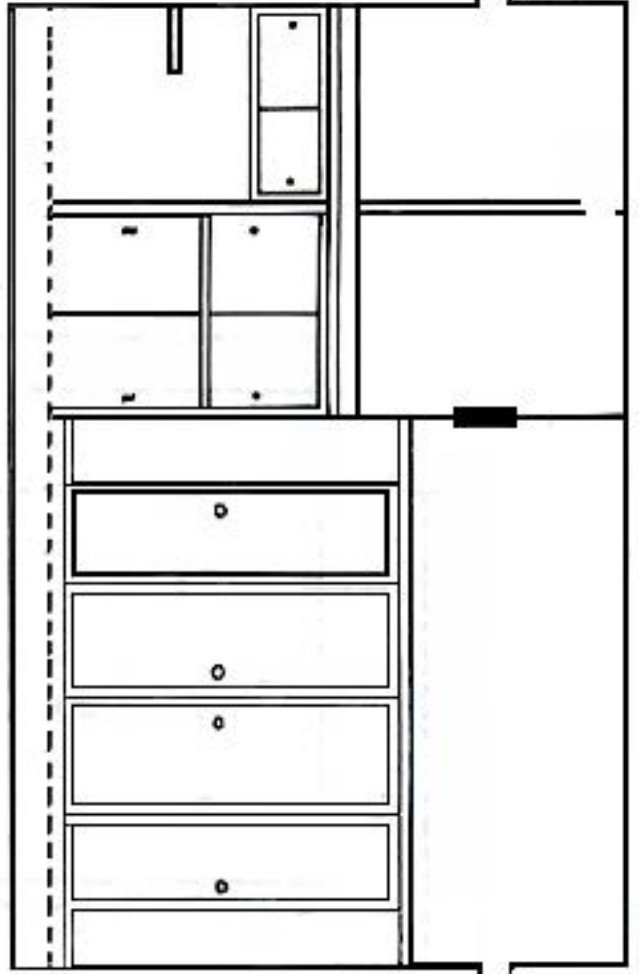
outside

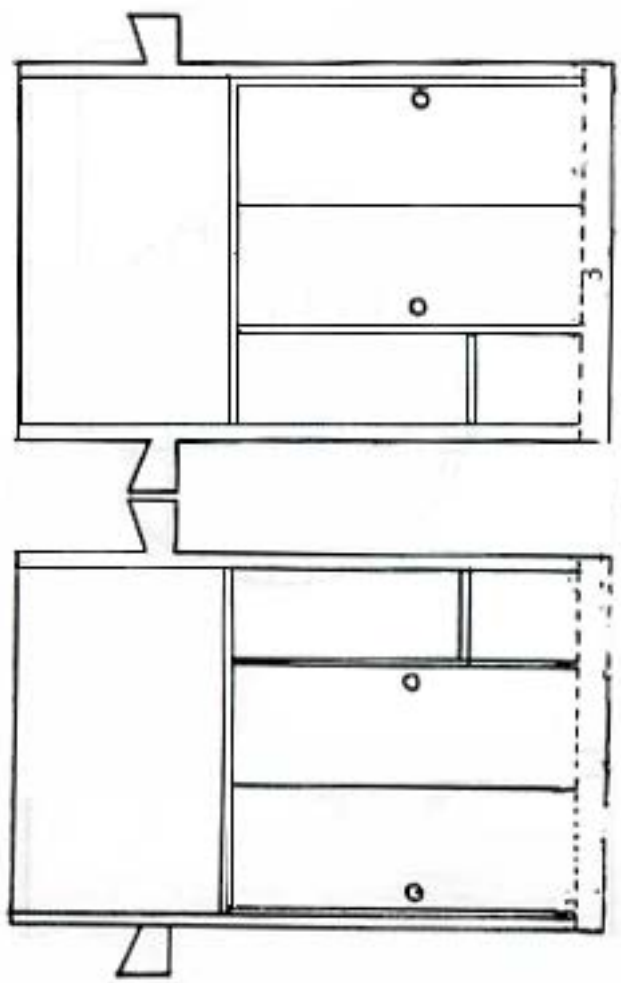
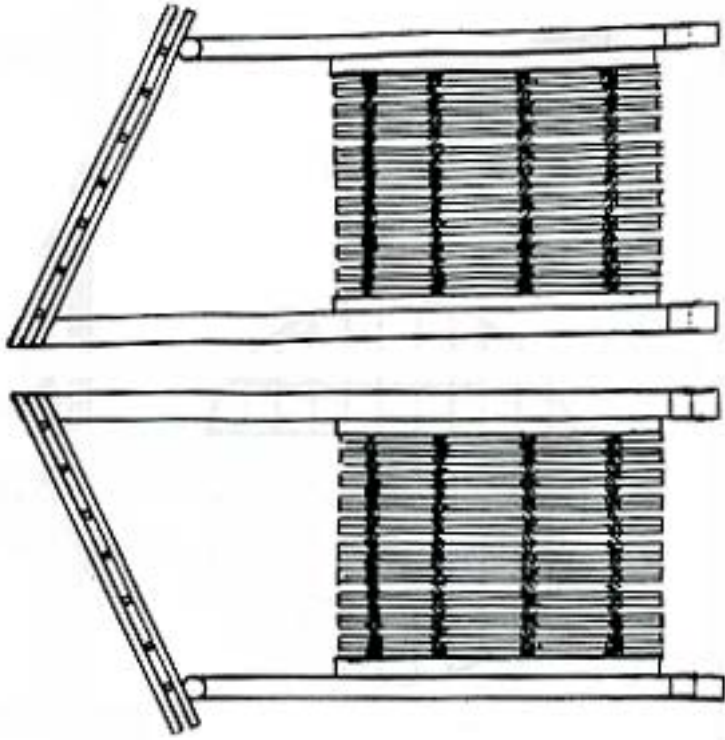


Wall #2

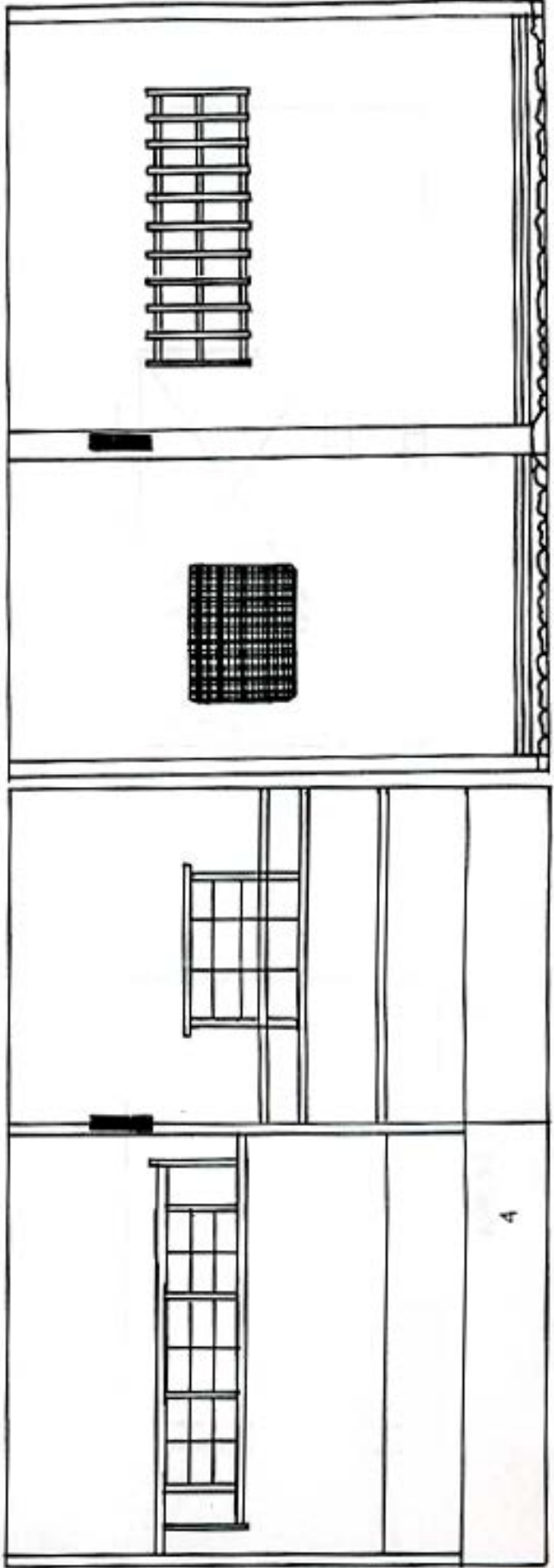


2





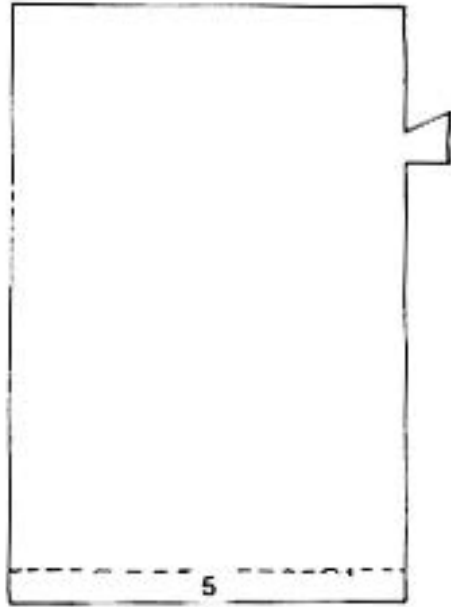
Wall #4



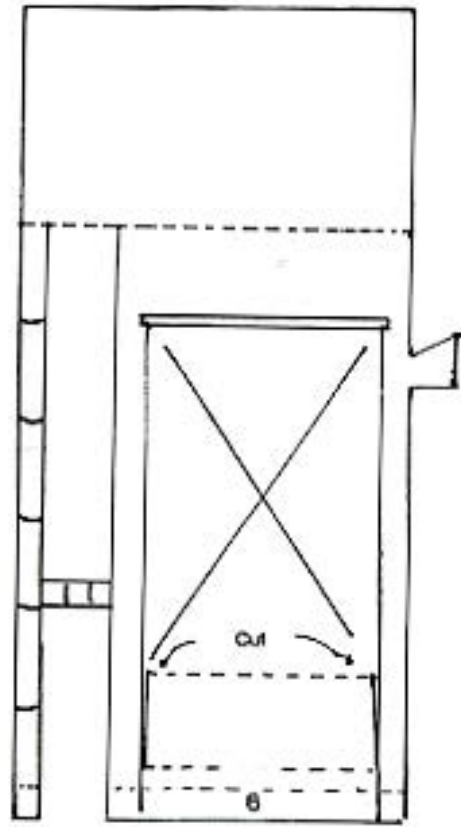
inside

outside

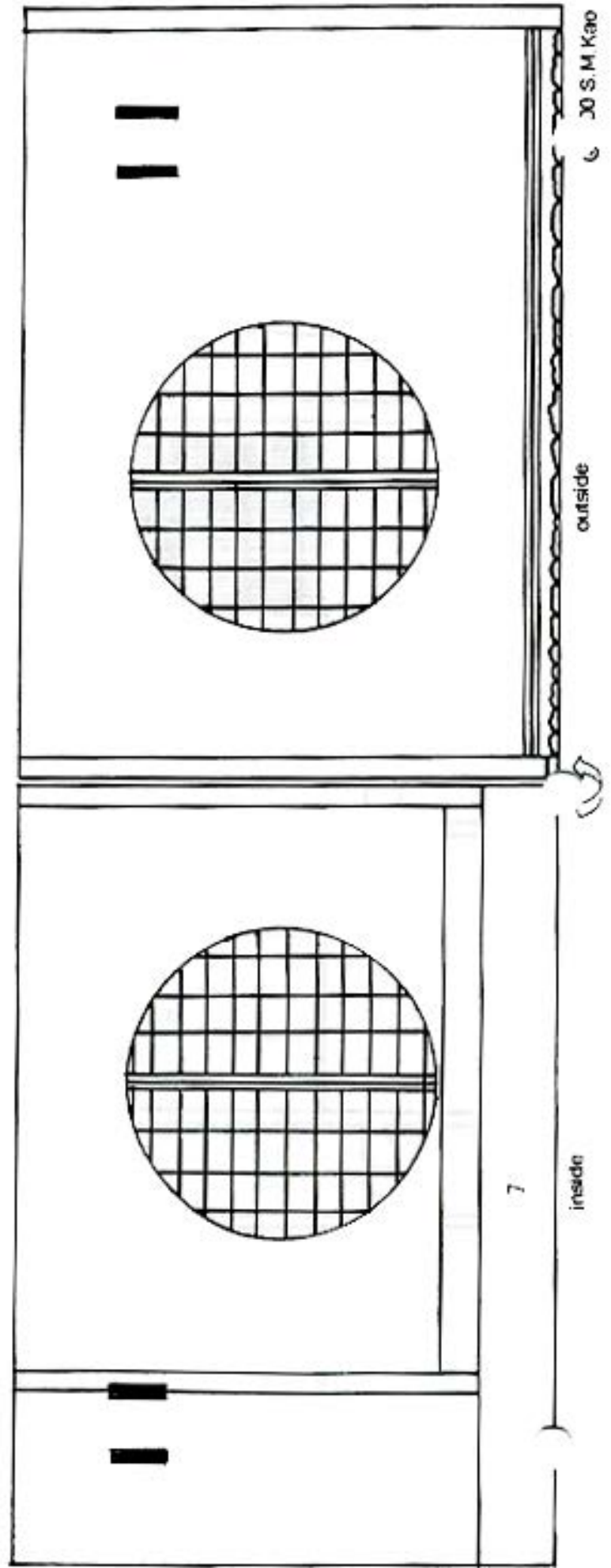
Wall #5



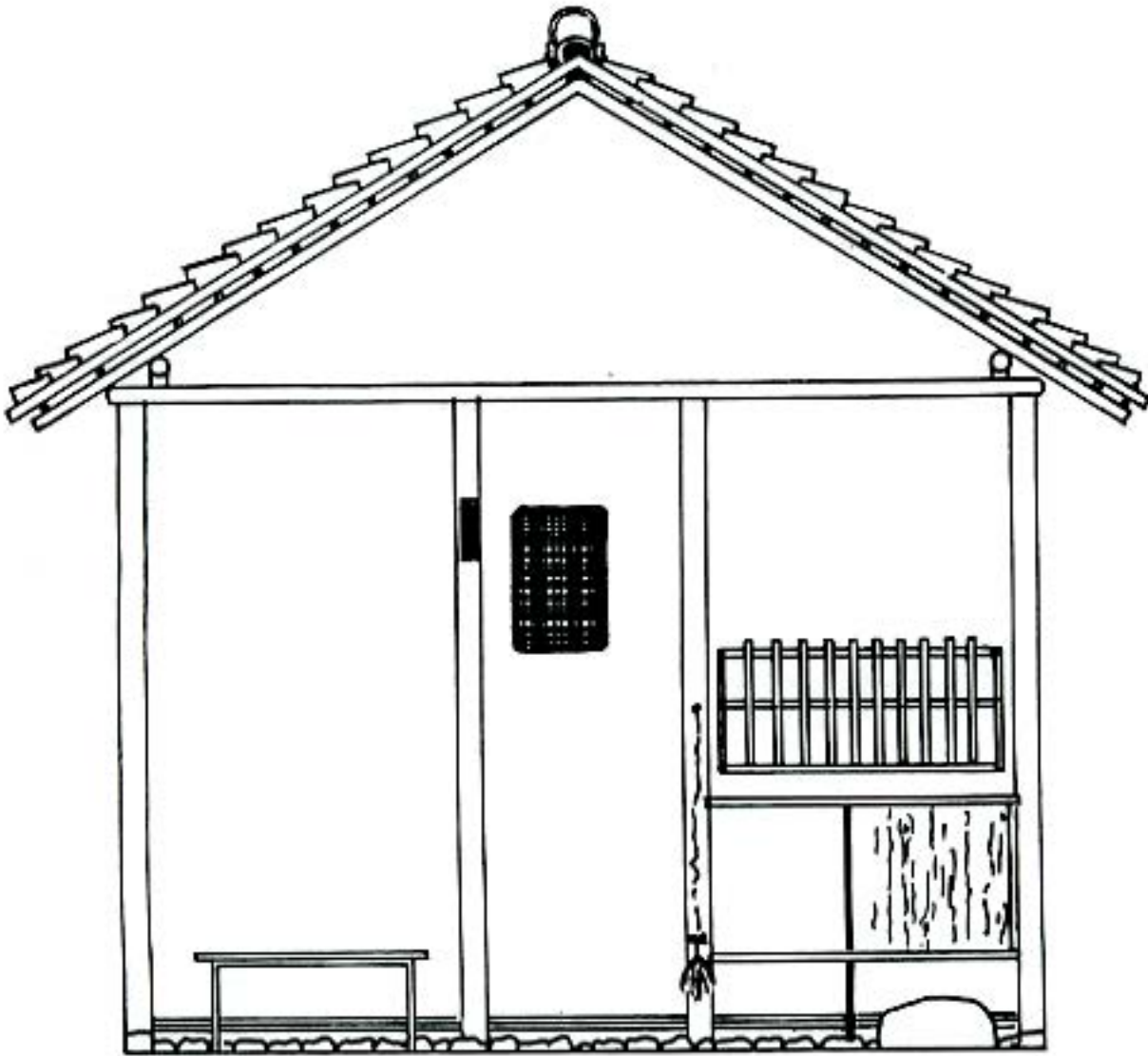
Wall #6



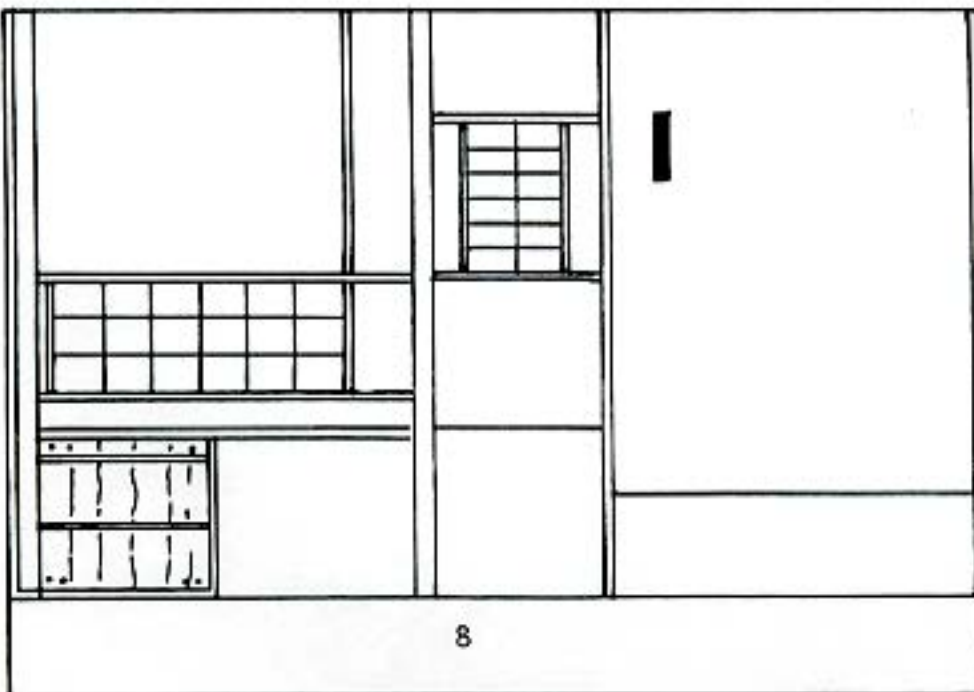
Wall #7



Wall #8



outside



8

inside

Student Handout 1

Japanese Mon (family crests)

Mon are symbolic artistic emblems adapted by Japanese individuals, families, or groups (such as fire brigades, see slide #14) as insignia. They appear on almost anything—clothing, buildings, luggage, banners, and fans. Several people pictured in the Equestrian Archery Drill slides # 1–3 painting wear clothing decorated with *mon*. Their usage might be compared to American clothing marked with a brand icon, such as the Nike swoosh, except the *mon* represents the identity of the wearer, not a commercial product.



Student Handout 2

Readings on Education for Edo Period Boys and Girls

A model curriculum for young samurai was set forth in 1670:

Those born to a warrior family should have lessons in sequence as follows: first, from ages seven or eight, practice in writing the first characters; from eleven, twelve or thirteen, reading the words of the Four [Confucian] Books, and also learning the tea ceremony, deportment, recitation of noh [theater], and playing the noh hand drum; from fourteen to seventeen, defensive fencing, swordsmanship, handling the spear, horseriding, archery, musketry, and next falconry and board games [go, chess, and backgammon]; and from eighteen or nineteen, military administration, tactics, the composition of Chinese and Japanese poetry, and medicine.

—Adapted from the translation in Hall, p. 717.

What about education for girls?

“A woman does not need to bother with learning; she has nothing to do but be obedient.”

“When women are learned and clever in speech it is a sign that civil disturbance is not far off.”

—Matsudaira Sadanobu (1758–1829) Edo statesman, cited in Fister, p. 12.

Up to the age of seven, girls are to be instructed in the same way as and together with boys; but beyond that age they are to be segregated. Thereafter, they are to be taught reading and writing through the Japanese kana syllabary, while they are also to learn to make supplementary use of Chinese characters. They are to commit to memory ancient poems of classical type, to become acquainted with the primary Chinese classics, and also read treatises on women by orthodox scholars. After the age of ten they are not to be allowed to go outside their homes, where they are taught sewing, weaving, and arithmetic at the same time that their attention is devoted to household economics.

—Guidelines for the education of women written by Kaibara Ekken in the *Wazoku dojikun*. Adapted from Fister, p. 12.

Seeing that it is a girl's destiny, on reaching womanhood, to go to a new home, and live in submission to her father-in-law and mother-in-law, it is even more incumbent on her than it is on a boy to receive with all reverence her parents' instructions. Should her parents, through excess of tenderness, allow her to grow up self-willed, she will infallibly show herself capricious in her husband's house, and thus alienate his affection, while, if her father-in-law be a man of correct principles, the girl will find the yoke of these principles intolerable. She will hate and decry her father-in-law, and the end of these domestic dissensions will be her dismissal from her husband's house, and the covering of herself with ignominy. Her parents, forgetting the faulty education they gave her, may indeed lay all the blame on the father-in-law. But they will be in error; for the whole

disaster should rightly be attributed to the faulty education the girl received from her parents. . . .

—Moral instruction for women from the Onna daigaku (Great Learning for Women) written by Kaibara Ekken in 1715. Excerpted from Chamberlain, pp. 531–536.

Discussion

1) What do you think?

Have students discuss these readings. What surprised them? Are there any similarities between the Edo student curriculum and theirs? What aspects of these do you think are still learned today? Which are not.

2) Education of Women.

Do you think the two women artists in this packet (slides #11 and #15) received an education like the one described on this sheet? How do you think they managed to become so successful? (Even though there were standards of conduct, people found ways to get around them. Both women led unconventional lives. Gyokuran married an unconventional man who encouraged her. Rengetsu retired to a Buddhist monastery, where she could pursue her studies without reproach.)

Student Handout 3

Formats of Japanese Painting

Japanese painting can be found on a variety of formats, such as screen, hanging scroll, hand scroll, and fan painting. How were these different formats used?

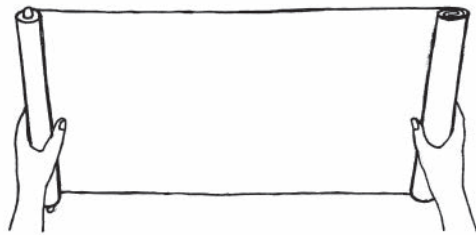
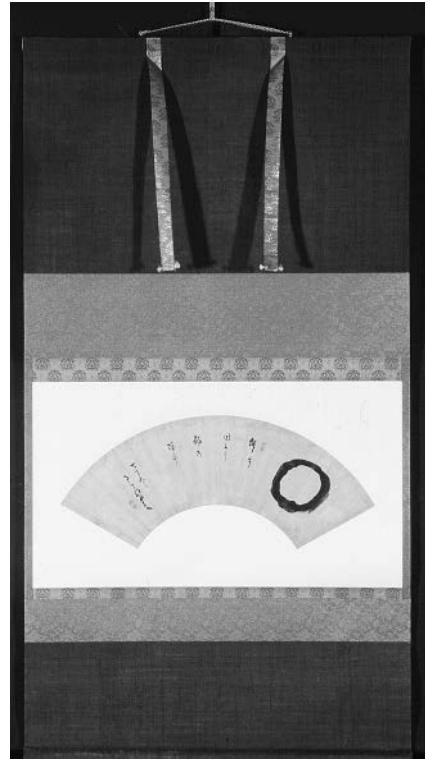
Hanging Scroll (Japanese: *kakemono*)

A vertically conceived scroll for hanging on the wall. Easily stored in rolled form, and easily changed according to the seasons. (See slides 11 and 18)

Fan (Japanese: *ogi*)

Japanese painted fans, originally served a practical purpose—to keep one cool on a hot day. They were considered an essential accessory carried by both men and women of any social class. The Edo period witnessed the heightened popularity of fan painting, which meant that fans progressed from being utilitarian objects to decorative ones worthy of collection. Being made of paper, fans in functional use were easily damaged. Favorite fans were removed from the fan structure and mounted on a hanging scroll to preserve them.

(see slide #19)

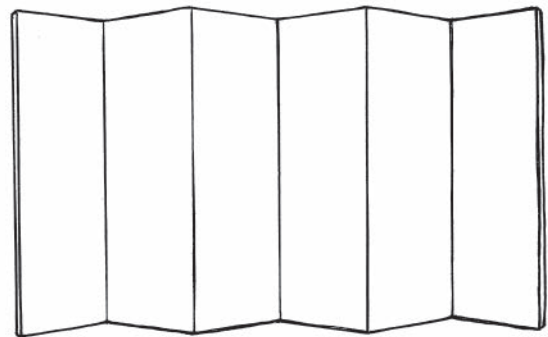


Hand Scroll (Japanese *emakimono*)

Conceived horizontally, meant to be viewed by holding in the hands, often featuring narrative subject matter that unfolds cinematically as one unrolls the scroll. (See slide 17)

Screen (Japanese *byōbu*)

A free-standing screen often about 6 feet tall, with anywhere from two to eight panels. It is built from a light wooden frame with a supporting lattice of thin wood strips. It is covered with paper or silk and painted with imagery chosen by the patron. Screens function as movable room dividers. They can be used to set off an area of a large room, block a draft or provide privacy. (See slides 1–3, 4–5, 10, 12, 13)



Glossary of Terms

bakufu:	warrior government
byobu:	a folding screen made of paper or silk covering a wooden, hinged frame, often painted
Chanoyu:	Japanese tea ceremony, the ritualized preparation and drinking of macha (powdered, green tea) in a highly aesthetic environment
chonin:	“people of the blocks,” used to refer to merchants and artisans who lived in urban areas
daimyo:	regional warrior leaders who ruled autonomously over the various regions of Japan
enso:	in Zen painting, a circle painted with a brush and ink as an act of meditation; often accompanied by a poem or Zen parable, the enso has infinite meanings, has been called “the all, the void, and enlightenment itself.” (Addiss, p. 12)
Kabuki:	among all the Japanese theatrical arts (No, Bunraku, Kabuki), it is the most popular form, featuring beautiful costumes and elaborate sets. The plots deal with historical events, morality tales, and ghost stories. Kabuki actors were revered like modern-day Hollywood stars.
kami:	nature spirits that exists in all things living or not, basis of the Shinto religion, which is native to Japan
kana script:	Japanese alphabet system, or syllabary
kanga	“Chinese painting” or more accurately, Chinese-style painting by Japanese artists, particularly associated with Kano painters of the 15th–19th centuries
Kano school	painting school that primarily served the samurai class; bold designs of powerful animals and symbolic plants and trees; associated with kanga or “Chinese painting” style, although blended the expressive brushwork of kanga with the brilliant colors and gold prevalent in native Japanese painting style.
literati painter:	also known as a Nanga artist or Bunjinga (literati painter); an artist who studied Chinese texts and paintings and adapted Chinese style in their work
mon:	a family crest used to design clothing, banners, luggage etc.
mono no aware:	a pathos for the fleeting moments of beauty, joy, even heartbreak that are part of being human; often used to describe literature, particularly The Tale of Genji

Neo-Confucian:	the prefix “neo” is used because Confucian ideology was revived and reframed by Chinese scholars in Song dynasty China; refers to a new set of ideas about human relations and governance that were expanded from Confucius’ original teachings [check]
Rangaku:	“Dutch Learning” referring to the study of Western ideas
roji:	“dewy path;” garden path, usually made of stepping stones, leading to a tea house; an important place to mark transition from worlds outside and inside the tea room
Shinto:	“the way of the gods,” the native Japanese religion based on agrarian concerns, which reveres spirits that dwell in natural phenomena, such as rocks, water, trees, and mountains. Shinto beliefs are still practiced, featuring prominently in marriage rites and the plethora of annual festivals and parades in modern Japan.
Shogun:	supreme military leader
Shogunate:	government of the Shogun, also called bakufu
Tokugawa:	the name of the ruling Shogun family that was in power during the Edo period
Tosa school:	Kyoto painting academy for the imperial family and nobility; took classical Japanese literature as subjects; developed a refined painting style called <i>yamato-e</i> (pictures of Yamato—an old fashioned name for Japan).
Nanga (southern painting) or Bunjinga (scholar or literati painting):	modeled on Chinese Ming dynasty artist/theorist’s conception of southern painting, which was freely executed and expressive by scholar-amateur artists; Japanese literati artists often doubled as poets, tea masters, raconteurs, as well as painters; most associated with Kyoto and Osaka.
Rinpa (or Rimpa) school:	merchant class artists from Kyoto who revived courtly aesthetics and themes; known for brilliantly colored paintings and lavish use of gold on every format imaginable; compositions often accentuate the flatness of the painting surface and emphasize pattern and design.
Sengoku period:	“country at war,” a civil war that plagued Japan from 1467–1568
sumptuary laws:	regulations that restrict the owning of luxury goods
tatami mat:	thick straw mats measuring about three by six feet, finished with woven grass; the traditional floor covering in Japan
tokonoma:	raised alcove in a traditional room used for the display of paintings and flowers
Wabi:	often translated as “rustic;” the aesthetic values for imperfection, austerity, simple beauty, and old objects that show their wear.

waka: a 36-syllable poem

yamato-e: “pictures of Yamato;” Yamato is an old fashioned name for Japan, therefore yamato-e is considered a purely Japanese painting style, consciously distinguished from kanga

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Singer, Robert T., *Edo: Art in Japan, 1615–1868*. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1999. A gorgeous full-color catalogue with meaty essays of 281 Edo period works, including nearly fifty National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties that rarely, if ever, leave Japan. Note the teacher packet and CD-ROM for this exhibition as well.

Asian Art Museum (AAM) Publications

Asian Art Museum of San Francisco: *Selected Works*. San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 1994.

Kakudo, Yoshiko. *The Art of Japan: Masterworks in the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*. San Francisco: Asian Art Museum and Chronicle Books, 1991. Overview of major objects in the collection.

Asian Art Museum Education Department

Woodson, Yoko with Richard L. Mellott, *Exquisite Pursuits: Japanese Art in the Harry G.C. Packard Collection*. San Francisco: Asian Art Museum, 1994.

Teacher Packets/Books

Asian Art Museum packets on Japan, available for loan from the Education Department, call (415) 379-8710 or email tours@asianart.org:

Bushido: The Code of the Samurai in Japanese Art and Literature

Extraordinary Persons: Japanese Artists 1560–1860

A Feeling for Clay: Japanese Pottery from Ancient to Pre-Modern Times

Hokusai & Hiroshige: Great Japanese Prints

Japanese Design: Traditional and Modern

Japanese Painting: Form and Function

Mingei: Two Centuries of Japanese Folk Art

Guth, Christine et. al. *Edo, Art in Japan 1615–1868 Teaching Program*. Washington, DC: National Gallery of Art, 1999. General packet on Edo including slides of important art works rarely seen outside of Japan. Can be combined with the cd-rom for the same exhibition, see multimedia resources.

Loudon, Sarah M. Spring Blossoms, *Autumn Moon: Japanese Art for the Classroom*. Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 1989. An excellent packet with thorough lesson ideas covering seasonal themes, calligraphy, poetry and textiles with slides and audio tape.

Lyons, Nancy Hague and Sarah Ridley. *Japan: Images and Words, An Interdisciplinary Unit for Sixth-Grade Art and Language Arts Classes*. Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1994. Contains thorough, step-by-step lesson plans and activities. www.???

Macdonald, Fiona. *Step Into Ancient Japan*. New York: Lorenz Books, 1999. A colorful, activity packed book introducing Japanese culture and annual festivities. Lots of great hands-on suggestions.

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World Affairs Council of Northern California Bay Area Global Education Program. A great resource for teachers offering curriculum materials, workshops, and information about opportunities with other institutions. www.wacsf.org

Multimedia Resource

CD-ROM *Exploring Virtual Edo*. Washington DC: National Gallery of Art www.exploringedo.com

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