

**Torii Kiyonaga (1752-1815)**

***Woman with Straw Hat***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), 1782

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Anna Rice Cooke, 1934

(10140)

## **Torii Kiyonaga (1752-1815)**

### ***Three Drunken Women***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), late 18<sup>th</sup> century

Hanging scroll; ink and color on paper

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1957

(2389.1)

*How boisterous those intoxicated women are! One is merrily laughing and another is bullying the others.*

*- Yomo no Akara*

This painting depicts three women from the pleasure quarters. Together, they are meant to signify the three stages of drunkenness. The woman on the left is the “angry” drunk. She crossly gestures with her pipe at the woman in the middle, who represents the “crying” drunk. The third woman is the “giggling” drunk, shown reeling backwards with laughter.

This work is an interesting collaboration between two very influential artists in Edo. The painter, Torii Kiyonaga, was the most significant *ukiyo-e* artist of the 1780s. He is best known for his woodblock prints and book illustrations of elegant women with elongated, slender figures in urban settings capturing the vibrancy of Edo during his time. In addition, Kiyonaga was the last famous artist of the Torii School, which dominated the Kabuki print genre in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The poem was written by the famous humorist Ōta Nampo (1749-1823), one of the most popular comic poets and fiction writers of his time.

**Torii Kiyonaga (1752-1815)**

***Woman with Umbrella***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), 1783

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1957

(13874)

**Anonymous**  
***Houses of Entertainment***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), c. 1640s

One of a pair of eight-fold screens; ink, color and gold on paper

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1960

(2757.1)

By the middle of the 1600s, the Tokugawa shogunate had initiated a period of peace and prosperity that differed dramatically from the instability of the preceding century. As a result, leisure activities began to be portrayed in the arts, resulting in a genre that came to be known as *f zokuga*, or "paintings of popular customs." This established a precedent for the rise of *ukiyo-e*, or "pictures of the floating world," including one of the most distinctive art forms that characterized the Edo period, woodblock prints. The range of artistic subjects was expanded beyond the traditional canon, which favored classical themes deriving from the tastes of the ruling class, to embrace depictions of daily life, entertainments like Kabuki Theater, and most notably the pleasure quarters, especially the Yoshiwara outside Edo with its courtesan culture.

One of a pair, this screen is an exceptional early example of *f zokuga*. The narrative begins on the right with a depiction of a bathhouse, followed by people playing various games, a circle of dancers, and perhaps the most iconic representation of the transitory beauty of the "floating world," merrymaking under spring cherry blossoms by a stream.

## **Anonymous**

### **Wakash *Entertainments***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), 18<sup>th</sup> century

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

Gift of Mrs. L. Drew Betz, 1981

(4891.1-2)

Referred to by some modern scholars as a "third gender," *wakash* were a category of adolescent males that featured prominently in urban culture in Japan during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. They can be recognized by their distinctive hairstyle, in which the back of the head was shaved (and usually covered with a distinctive cap) but a forelock was left. Many *wakash* attained a high degree of celebrity (especially those serving as prostitutes or entertainers), and their social exploits (including love and sexual relationships with adult males) were popular subjects for both the visual and literary arts. At the same time, when *wakash* reached the age of adulthood (around 19), they were expected to shave their forelock and take on the social roles of adult males, in particular ending their relationships with other men, and in this sense *wakash* differ from modern Western concepts of homosexuality.

These screens depict groups of *wakash* in a variety of social settings, in performances, such as dance and Kabuki Theater, on pleasure cruises, playing games and interacting with their adult male patrons. The dating of these works has been debated; while they are in a manner that was characteristic of the Genroku period (1688-1704), some scholars have suggested that they might be copies in the Genroku style from later in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. In this regard, it is worth noting that *wakash* began to decline in popularity as an artistic subject after the middle of the century.

## **Anonymous**

### ***Houses of Entertainment***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), c. 1640s

One of a pair of eight-fold screens; ink, color and gold on paper

Gift of Robert Allerton, 1960

(2758.1)

By the middle of the 1600s, the Tokugawa shogunate had initiated a period of peace and prosperity that differed dramatically from the instability of the preceding century. As a result, leisure activities began to be portrayed in the arts, resulting in a genre that came to be known as *f zokuga*, or "paintings of popular customs." This established a precedent for the rise of *ukiyo-e*, or "pictures of the floating world," including one of the most distinctive art forms that characterized the Edo period, woodblock prints. The range of artistic subjects was expanded beyond the traditional canon, which favored classical themes deriving from the tastes of the ruling class, to embrace depictions of daily life, entertainment such as Kabuki Theater, and most notably the pleasure quarters, especially the Yoshiwara outside Edo with its courtesan culture.

One of a pair, this screen is an exceptional early example of *f zokuga*. After an introductory scene of a kickball game in a garden, it culminates with the depiction of a two-story interior in which people enjoy a party, participating in various activities ranging from dancing to an archery competition. A particularly amusing episode is found on the second panel from the left, where a monk has fainted from too much liquor, causing his companions some consternation, especially the woman trapped underneath him.

**Torii Kiyonaga (1752-1815)**  
***Thunder Deities Watching a Courtesan  
Through a Telescope***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), 1782  
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper  
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986  
(19664)

The Torii School dominated the market for woodblock prints, in particular those depicting Kabuki actors, for much of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Kiyonaga was the last major representative of this school, and his work marks a shift in subject matter to portrayals of beauties (*bijinga*), often in settings that reveal the dynamic social climate of Edo in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Kiyonaga developed a distinctive style that emphasized statuesque women with elongated forms, particularly well-suited to the narrow vertical format of *hashira-e* or "pillar prints," of which this is a fine example.

Kiyonaga's beauties attracted such attention that even the gods took notice, in this marvelous parody that shows two thunder deities spying on a woman from above the clouds (the telescope they use was newly introduced by European traders, and adds an element of novelty to the composition). This was a popular subject for *ukiyo-e* artists at the time, and in some cases it is more ribald, with the deities stirring up a gale that blows open the woman's robe for a better look at her figure, but in this case Kiyonaga has rather chosen a more restrained approach.

**Anonymous**

***Festival at Sumiyoshi Shrine***

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868), 17<sup>th</sup> century

Handscroll; ink, color and gold on paper

Gift of the Robert Allerton Fund, 1960

(2789.1)

*F zokuga* or "paintings of popular customs" offer an interesting glimpse into the activities of local people and events in the various cities and their institutions during the Edo period, including this depiction of a festival for the Sumiyoshi Shrine, located in Osaka. The shrine houses four deities and is thought to offer protection for fishermen, *waka* poets, and merchants. The shrine buildings, visible in the painting, characterize a distinctive type of architecture known as the Sumiyoshi style.

The main subject is a crowd of festival-goers carrying a *mikoshi* (portable shrine), which houses one of the shrine's deities, across a river. The painting is rich in details of the city and its inhabitants, and includes many shops. In one of these, a man inspects a rifle, while two more men nearby wear rifles over their shoulders. Firearms were relatively new at the time, having been introduced by Portuguese traders in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and their inclusion in this painting adds an element of novelty.

**Anonymous**

***Bundai (Writing Table) and Suzuri Bako (Ink Box Set)***

Japan, Meiji period, (1868-1912)

Gold, black lacquer, silver, mother-of-pearl inlay

Gift of Glenn and Margaret Y. Oda, 2003

(12399.1, 12399.2a-g)

Used in the practice of calligraphy, a writing table and box may also have been used to record business transactions. The writing box traditionally held writing implements such as those on display here: an ink stone, water dropper, brushes, awl and knife.

This elegant lacquer set is decorated in gold, mother-of pearl, and silver. On the table, gold is applied in various ways to depict two men floating a raft downstream, and pine and maple trees, reflected faintly in the river. The edges and sides of the table are covered in silver and embossed with a chrysanthemum design. On the writing box, different applications of gold delineate a design of pine and flowering cherry trees growing near a riverbank. On the inner surface of the lid is a stream with water plants and herons. Lastly, in keeping with the theme, the silver water dropper is in the shape of a raft.