

Chōbunsai Eishi (1756-1829)

***The Poetess Izumi Shikibu* from the
series *The Thirty-six Immortal Women
Poets in Color Prints***

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1801

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1958

(14209)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

The print was first published in an album entitled *Nishikizuri onna sanjūrokkasen* (*The Thirty-six Immortal Women Poets in Color Prints*), an idea inspired by the original selection of thirty-six immortal poets made by the courtier Fujiwara Kintō (966-1041). Each print shows a poetess on the left and her poem reproduced in calligraphy on the right. All prints in the album were designed by Chōbunsai Eishi, who created a number of them with literary themes. His style was elegant, often featuring women in graceful poses.

This beautiful print depicts the renowned poetess Izumi Shikibu (ca. 970-ca. 1036). Wearing a twelve-layered, female formal-court dress, she appears as a Heian-period court lady. Her long black hair and eyebrows drawn high on her forehead symbolize the beauty of an ideal aristocratic woman.

However, Eishi presents her standing and provocatively looking over her shoulder like an Edo courtesan, which shows how radically this depiction departs from the ancient model where a woman is usually seated.

The poem that accompanies the print was composed in honor of Izumi's deceased daughter Koshikibu (?-1025) after Empress Shōshi (988-1074) sent robes to Koshikibu, as she had done for years.

Upon seeing Koshikibu's name attached to the robes, Izumi wrote:

*This name of hers
not buried together with her
and not decaying
underneath the moss
oh, seeing it brings such sorrow!*

(translation by Andrew J. Pekarik)

Unidentified artist

Princess Sotoori and the Spider

Japan, Edo period, 1740s

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1971

(16077)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This early black and white print presents Princess Sotoori, legendary beauty and concubine to Emperor Ingyō (412-456). The eighth-century *Nihongi* (also known as the *Nihonshoki*, or *Chronicles of Japan*) describes her countenance as so radiant that it shone out through her clothes (*sotoori*).

The intricate composition of the print depicts the princess as a Heian-period female aristocrat standing on a veranda, dressed in a twelve-layered formal court dress and holding a fan. The depiction is historically inaccurate, since Princess Sotoori lived centuries before the formal dress styles of the Heian court were developed.

This scene portrays a well-known episode from the *Nihongi* in which the princess thinks fondly of the emperor, unaware that he is observing her, and composes the following poem, visible on the left side of the print:

*I know in advance
from the acts of the spider
like a tiny crab:
tonight is surely a night
when my beloved will come.*

(translation by Helen Craig McCullough)

In ancient Japan, it was believed that a spider clinging to one's garments was a sign of a lover's arrival. This poem made Princess Sotoori famous, and she later became a deity of poetry.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)

Narihira in Self-Exile

Japan, Edo period, 1843-1847

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1984
(19187)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This double print portrays a scene from episode nine of the *Tales of Ise*, a text attributed to the ninth-century poet Ariwara no Narihira (825-880), who was notorious for numerous love affairs and renowned for composing beautiful romantic poems. The print depicts Narihira going into exile in remote eastern Japan after his illicit affair with Fujiwara Kōshi (842-910), a lady who had been betrothed to Emperor Seiwa (850-880). The tale expresses Narihira's sorrow and attachment to his lost love.

Most famous for his landscapes, in this print Hiroshige focuses on Narihira, who was a popular subject in Japanese woodblock prints. He is portrayed with an entourage, clearly emphasizing the high status of courtiers who, even if punished and humiliated by exile, never traveled alone. The upper part of the print depicting Mount Fuji balances the images that fill the lower section. Hiroshige faithfully follows the description of the scene in the *Tales of Ise*, which mentions Mount Fuji covered with pure snow.

Kajita Hanko (1870-1917)

Princess Nukata

Japan, Meiji period, ca. 1909

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Philip H. Roach, Jr., 2002

(27258)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

Kajita Hanko was one of the key artists in the transition from traditional ukiyo-e to modern Japanese prints. He produced many *kuchi-e*, woodblock-printed illustrations inserted into the front of novels and magazines during the Meiji era (1868-1912). Beautiful women were frequently the subject matter for *kuchi-e*, just as they had been idealized as romantic reflections of the “floating world” in woodblock prints.

This print could have been inspired by the *kuchi-e* tradition, as it portrays one of the greatest poetesses of Japanese antiquity, Princess Nukata (ca. 638-ca. 690), who was also famous for her beauty. Nukata was one of the first poets to introduce purely lyrical and aesthetic elements into Japanese poetry, as opposed to earlier verse that often emphasized religious themes.

The print presents a scene from one of the love poems that the princess composed while she was longing for Emperor Tenji (626-671):

*As I wait for you
longing
moving the blinds of my house
an autumn wind blows.*

(translation by Hiroaki Sato)

The autumnal sadness of the poem perfectly exemplifies the traditional romantic ideal of a woman passively waiting for her lover's arrival, here connoted by the moving blind.

Takeuchi Keishū (1861-1943)

The Poetess Ben no Naishi

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1896

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Philip H. Roach, Jr., 2004

(27978)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

During the Meiji period, a new genre of woodblock prints emerged that consisted of single-sheet illustrations (for popular novels). Since they resembled a mouth when unfolded from inside the book, they were called *kuchi-e* or “mouth pictures.” *Kuchi-e* mostly accompanied romantic stories, and consequently they reveal a softer, more lyrical style than their *ukiyo-e* predecessors from the end of the Edo period. Although Takeuchi Keishū was not a professional *kuchi-e* artist, he became well known for his *kuchi-e* produced to illustrate the novels of Ozaki Kōyō (1867-1903).

In this print Keishū portrays the court lady and poetess Ben no Nashi, who served as one of the highest-ranking officials of the Office of Female Courtiers at the court of retired Emperor Gofukakusa (1243-1304). She was responsible for conveying and safeguarding the three imperial regalia (the mirror, the sword, and the jewel) during enthronement and abdication ceremonies. Here she is portrayed under a cherry tree, admiring its blossoms.

Although it is not directly indicated, the print seems to refer to one of her poems composed in 1259, when Gofukakusa abdicated and her time at the court was coming to an end:

*My heart has been dyed
by the flowers of every spring.
Oh!
Cherry blossoms dwelling in the clouds
do not forget me.*

The blossoms in the clouds symbolize the imperial court and thus represent the abdicating Emperor.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)
***The Monk Kisen* from the series**
One Hundred Poems by One Hundred
Poets

Japan, Edo period, 1830s-1840s
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1959
(14394)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Considered to be one of Japan's greatest woodblock print artists, Kuniyoshi created a series of a hundred prints based on the renowned poetry collection known as *Hyakunin Isshu* (*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*), compiled by the famous poet Fujiwara Teika (1162-1241). The anthology was also the subject of many prints by such artists as Utagawa Toyokuni (1769-1825) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858), both from the same school of print design as Kuniyoshi.

The author of the poem depicted in this print is Kisen, a Heian-period Buddhist monk and poet of whom little is known except that he lived near Mount Uji in present-day Hyōgo Prefecture. He is shown seated at the edge of his hut overlooking a nearby lake and a mountain, while a servant sweeps up fallen leaves.

At the top of the print is Kisen's poem:

*My hut
is to the capital's southeast
and thus I live.
But people call it 'Uji, hill of one weary of the
world,'
I hear.*

(translation by Joshua S. Mostow)

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
***The Gods Izanagi and Izanami on the
Floating Bridge of Heaven***

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1847–1852

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(22014)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Izanagi and Izanami were deities who created Japan by swirling a spear into the ocean and lifting it out. The droplets from the spear fell back to the water and created the first land, Onogoroshima. They crossed the floating bridge of heaven and made the island their home. When they decided to mate, they walked around the pillar of heaven and Izanami spoke first. Their first child was a deformed leech child, Hiruko. They asked the gods what to do and the gods said Izanagi should have spoken first. Izanagi and Izanami walked around the pillar of heaven again and this time Izanagi spoke first. They slept together and Izanami gave birth to the islands of Japan.

A text of the story is provided along with captions for Izanami (left), Izanagi (right), and the Floating Bridge of Heaven. Land floats along the sides, signaling that Izanagi has already dipped the spear into the water.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)

The Gods Perform Music to Lure the Sun

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1847-1852

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(22011)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

After her brother Susanoo damaged her fields and palaces, the enraged Sun Goddess Amaterasu hid inside a cave, plunging the world into darkness. The other gods tricked Amaterasu into coming out by playing music and dancing outside the cave. When Amaterasu emerged to inspect the noise, they said that the celebration was for a new goddess. The other gods placed a mirror in a tree and told Amaterasu, who had never seen her reflection before, that her reflection was the new goddess. She returned with the other gods, bringing sunlight back to the land.

Like Hiroshige's print of Izanagi and Izanami on display nearby, this one includes the story above the image. Amaterasu is not shown, but sunlight is peeking out of the cave. Near the caption on the right side a mirror hangs from the tree.

It is interesting to note that neither this print nor the Izanami and Izanagi print are landscapes, Hiroshige's specialty. These two prints are part of a very rare series of eleven scenes by Hiroshige, the *Honchō nenreki zue*, or *Illustrated Japanese Calendar of Events*.

Utagawa Toyoharu (1735-1814)
Yorimitsu and the Four Heavenly Kings
Killing the Spider Demon

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1770s
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1973
(16502)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

The scene depicted in this print is from the story of Tsuchigumo, the Ground Spider. Various versions of this story exist, each of which recounts the deception of the renowned Heian-period warrior Minamoto no Yorimitsu (944-1021) and his four retainers, nicknamed the Four Heavenly Kings, by a demon ground spider. The spider was said to disguise itself in the forms of a monk, a young boy, or a beautiful woman in order to trick Yorimitsu. The spider also called on other demons to attack his enemies.

Toyoharu was an early innovator in the use of Western perspective in his compositions, as demonstrated by the architecture in this print, which recedes to a single point in the distance. Toyoharu's incorporation of Western perspective distinguished him in the highly competitive woodblock print market of the time, and resulted in many imitators.

Utagawa Toyoharu (1735-1814)

Momotarō at the Ōu Ferry Crossing

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1770s

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1973

(16501)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

In the tale of Momotarō, an old woman finds a large peach floating in the river and takes it to her husband for dinner. Inside the peach they discover a young boy and adopt him, naming him Momotarō, or peach boy. When the boy grows up, he leaves home to battle against ogres who are terrorizing the land. Along his journey he encounters and recruits the help of a dog, a monkey, and a pheasant. They set out to sail for Ogre Island, where Momotarō, the dog, monkey, and pheasant attack and subdue the ogres. After the Ogre King surrenders, Momotarō makes them promise to stop scaring people and to return the treasures they stole. Momotarō and his animal entourage return from Ogre Island victorious.

In this scene, Momotarō is standing over the Ogre King, threatening to kill him. The stiff poses of the monkey and Momotarō resemble those used in Kabuki. Here again, Toyoharu reveals an uncommon talent for using Western perspective.

Utagawa Kunisada II (1823-1880)

Yūgao

Japan, Edo period, 1857

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Anonymous Gift, 2006

(28625)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This print is based on the *Yūgao* chapter of the Heian classic *The Tale of Genji* (ca. 1008). The spirit of the late Lady Rokujō, shown at the top, still loves Prince Genji (right) and plans to kill his new lover, *Yūgao* (left). In the original story, Lady Rokujō's spirit visits Genji in a dream and expresses her jealousy. *Yūgao* dies in her sleep shortly after Genji awakens.

In a contemporizing of the original tale, the print shows various Edo-period items and resembles a scene from a Kabuki play. The kimonos are too elaborate to be Heian-period clothing, and Genji holds two swords, marking him as a samurai rather than a court noble.

Ippitsusai Bunchō (flourished 1760-1794)

The Actor Ōtani Hiroji III

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1769–1770

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(21744)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

The *Tale of the Soga Brothers* is based on an actual event featuring the brothers Soga Jūrō and Gorō, who seek revenge for the death of their father at the hands of the lord Kudō. One night while Kudō and others rest after a hunt, the brothers discover Kudō's whereabouts and kill him. They attempt to escape, but Jūrō is killed and Gorō is captured. Gorō explains their reason for taking revenge and asks for death, wishing to be with his brother and father.

This story was an example of filial piety and duty, important virtues for the people of the Edo period. Many writers used the story as an inspiration, creating new tales with the same characters.

It was common practice for Kabuki prints to include a crest that identified the actor. Ōtani's can be found to the left of his right leg. In this play his role is Shirobei, a merchant.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Three Courtiers, from the series The
Tales of Ise in Fashionable Brocade on
24 Sheets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1772–1773
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(24310)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Unlike his Kabuki actor prints with their vibrant colors, Shunshō's series based on the *Tales of Ise* reveals his earlier style, which was significantly influenced by Harunobu. Each of the 48 designs in the Ise series is marked with one letter of the Japanese kana syllabary, starting with *i, ro, ha*. This print includes the hiragana character *su* within a circle, indicating the last print of the series according to the traditional syllabary order.

The print is from Episode 17, in which the handsome nobleman and poet Ariwara no Narihira visited someone's house to view cherry blossoms with his friends. The lady who lived there composed the poem at the top of the print:

*People call them evanescent
these cherry blossoms
yet they have waited
for someone whose visits
Are months apart.*

The cherry blossoms represent the lady who has been waiting for her lord to visit her.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
***Narihira in the Snow at Ono* from the**
series *The Tales of Ise in Fashionable*
Brocade on 24 Sheets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1772–1773

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(24312)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

This scene is from the Episode 83 of the *Tales of Ise (Ise Monogatari)*. In the first month, Narihira went to pay his respect to Prince Koretaka in the snow at Mount Hiei. The prince, who had left court to live as a monk, looked bored and kept reminiscing about the past.

Narihira's poem expresses his concern for the retired prince:

*When for an instant I forget
how like a dream it seems...
never could I have imagined
that I would plod through snowdrifts
to see my lord.*

The print shows the journey to Prince Koretaka's lodging on Mount Hiei. The pine tree and the umbrella (carried by one of the attendants) are covered with snow. One interesting aspect of this print is that Narihira has different facial features from the two older attendants. While Narihira possesses the standard characteristics of Heian beauty (high eyebrows, eyes drawn like one continuous line, and a small, pointy nose) the two attendants appear comical, indicating their lower status.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Akutagawa, from the series The Tales of Ise in Fashionable Brocade on 24 Sheets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1772–1773

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(24316)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This scene is from *Tales of Ise* Episode 6, in which a man runs off with a court lady. The couple pass a stream called Akutagawa. Seeing dewdrops on the grass, the lady asks the man what they are. That evening he finds shelter for his beloved, and stands guard all night long. But the next morning, the lady has disappeared. In despair, the man recites the following poem:

*When my beloved asked,
'Is it a clear gem or what might it be?'
I had replied 'a dewdrop!'
and it perished.*

Shunshō depicts the couple in Heian court dress, not the clothing of the eighteenth century. The woman wears multi-layered brocade robes and the man is in a black lacquered hat and hunting robe. Both are looking at the dewdrops on the grass. The green willow tree above them adds a lyrical touch.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Narihira Presents a Chancellor with a Pheasant, from the series The Tales of Ise in Fashionable Brocade on 24 Sheets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1772–1773

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(24588c)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This scene is from Episode 98 of the *Tales of Ise*, in which, during the ninth month, Narihira presents a high-ranking courtier with a pheasant attached to a branch of artificial plum blossoms. It is accompanied by the following poem:

*Just as my devotion
is ever unchanging
so to these blossoms
plucked for my lord
all seasons are alike.*

Neither plum blossoms nor pheasants represent autumn in classical Japanese literature; thus the artificial branch of plum blossoms appear with the pheasant in the print to emphasize Narihira's unchanging devotion to his lord regardless of the season.

Artistically these *ise* prints have proven to be important as an early indicator of Shunshō's skills in areas other than Kabuki actor portraits. In many of them, he introduced strong narrative elements that distinguish his work from the more atmospheric images by Harunobu.

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
Crowds at the Height of the Cherry Blossoms

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1809–1813
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(21851)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

This print depicts the beautiful spring scenery with cherry blossoms at Yatsuyama Mountain in the district of Shinagawa, part of present-day Tokyo. Known during the Edo period for its cherry blossoms and the Zen temple Tōkaiji, Shinagawa was also a bustling way station and the southern gateway in and out of the city of Edo.

In this print the street vendors, crowds of people, and boats loaded with cargo illustrate the busy town's atmosphere. At the same time, the delicate use of various shades of pink in the misty clouds and cherry blossoms lend a sense of tranquility to the scene. According to art historian Wakasugi Junji, by obstructing some areas of a print, misty clouds such as these allow the viewer to imagine what is beyond them.

Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
***Ancient View of the Yatsunashi Bridge in
Mikawa Province, from the series
Unusual Views of Famous Bridges in
Various Provinces***

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1833–1834

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1970
(15935)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

This print depicts the scene from Episode 9 of the
Tales of Ise, in which Ariwara no Narihira
composed an acrostic poem at an eight-planked
bridge (*yatsunashi*) over a bed of irises
(*kakitsubata*), starting each of its five lines with a
letter from the word *kakitsubata*.

The poem goes:

*Traveling far away
I recall the days
wearing Chinese-style robes
and being with my beloved wife.*

According to the *Sarashina Diary* (11th century), the bridge had already ceased to exist in the middle Heian period, but the scene inspired many artists including Hokusai, and numerous prints and drawings of *yatsunashi* have been produced.

The most interesting visual element of the print is the zigzag pattern of the bridge. If drawn without the use of perspective, the print would have shown only horizontal lines. However, Hokusai drew the bridge in a mountain-like shape, with some parts of it higher than others even though there are no obstacles under the bridge.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
The Ōi River Wholesaler, from the series
Adventures Down the Tōkaidō
(Tōkaidōchū hizakurige)

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1843-1847
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(23483)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Travel literature such as journals and maps appeared long before the Edo period, but it was with Jippensha Ikku's comic series of 1802-09, *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō (Tōkaidōchū hizakurige)*, that this genre reached its height of popularity. Public demand for illustrated versions of the series culminated a couple of decades later in Utagawa Hiroshige's popular *Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō*, some of which is displayed here.

In the 1840s there were few Japanese who were not familiar with the author Jippensha Ikku's tale of the comically belligerent duo featured in the center of this print, Yaji and Kita. In this scene the two are on the Shimada side of the Ōi River. Kita is pulling Yaji by the arm, saying, "Hey, Yaji, you just don't know when to quit... hurry up, let's go!" The problem is that Yaji was attempting to impersonate a samurai—a serious crime—in order to get a discount on the expensive toll for being ferried west across the dangerous Ōi River to Kanaya, visible in the distance.

This print offers an intriguing visual and textual presentation, chronologically faithful to Ikku's text. On the far left is the wholesaler, seated high on his post. To his left is some loose change and other items; in front of him stands a strong-armed assistant. In the center, the perturbed Kita is scolding Yaji, still arguing his case about being the descendent of a famous samurai, despite having a sword with a broken tip. Finally, on the far top right is the title of the print followed by a comic *tanka* poem: "An off-the-peg, dull samurai's mark it is said to be: The tip of his sword is broken in shame."

The Ōi River flows in a southeasterly direction, down from the mountains into Suruga Bay. The river still runs between Shimada and Kanaya and on its way passes under major train lines and expressways.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
A Teahouse with Local Specialties at
Mariko (Station #21) from the series
Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1833-1834

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1979

(17422)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Hiroshige produced one series of prints dedicated solely to the adventures of Yaji and Kita in *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō*, but he also placed characters from this story and hints that allude to it in prints from other series. In this print the teahouse owner's wife is modeled after the woman who serves at a similar Mariko establishment in *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō*.

In the book this woman “has tousled hair and an unweaned baby on her back, and drags her straw sandals as she walks.” Here she is wearing wooden clogs, but we can also see similarities. In *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō* the woman has such an intense altercation with her husband that Yaji and Kita are driven away without eating their meal. We can, therefore, deduce that the two travelers seated here are not modeled precisely on the bawdy protagonists.

The local specialty featured at this teahouse is *tororojiru* (yam paste soup). Mariko is located approximately five miles southwest of modern day Shizuoka City, about three miles from Suruga Bay.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
Women Stopping Travelers at Goyu
(Station #36), from the series *Fifty-three*
Stations of the Tōkaidō

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1833-1834
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1978
(17230)

**This print was conserved with the support
of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

The inn ladies of Goyu (today part of Toyokawa City, Aichi Prefecture) made a name for themselves as aggressive competitors for the patronage of travelers who passed through. They are mentioned in *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō*:

As Yaji made his way from behind, he came to the station town of Goyu. Wanting to snag him quickly for the night, women flanked him from both sides. Both looked like they were smothering his face and kneading him. Though they tugged on his sleeves and made quite a ruckus, Yaji was eventually able to shake them off and slip away.

The traveler shown in this print may very well be Yaji. If it is, we know that the traveler being harassed immediately behind him is not his companion Kita, who at this point in the story has gone ahead to find a decent inn before nightfall.

Of special interest in the print, aside from the caricatures, are the signs featured just inside the inn. The four on the far right (from right to left) say, “Continuation of the Tōkaidō Pictures,” “Jirobei, Engraver,” “Heibei, Printer,” and “Drawings by Ichiryūsai” (another name of Hiroshige’s).

Inside the big white circle on the wall in partial view are the characters for the publisher’s name, Takeuchi. It was common to give the designer and publisher credit in prints, but rare to identify the printers and engravers. This may reflect Hiroshige’s empathy for the usually anonymous craftsmen who produced his prints.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
Akasaka (Station #37), from the series
Fifty-three Stations of the Tōkaidō
Japan, Edo period, ca. 1833-1834
Woodblock print; ink and color on paper
Gift of James A. Michener, 1979
(17421)

**This print was conserved with the support
of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Here Hiroshige offers a voyeuristic look from behind a sago palm and stone lantern, above a neighboring thatched roof, into the goings on at an unidentified teahouse in Akasaka, one station past Goyu (today both are part of Toyokawa City in Aichi, Japan). This print reminds one of the Akasaka scene in *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō* in which Yaji and Kita stop at a teahouse inn for the night.

The two men on the left, one returning from the bath, one lounging with *kiseru* pipe and *sake*, are presumably Kita and Yaji. In the story, as depicted in this print, the two are served dinner. Details that add to the *Hizakurige* atmosphere in the viewer's mind are the blind masseur kneeling next to the server and the country geisha applying makeup and talking in the next room.

In the story, when the establishment settles down for the night Yaji and Kita peep through sliding paper doors into an adjoining room where newlyweds are making love. The protagonists become so excited that they end up knocking the doors out of their grooves, falling into the next room.

Yaji makes a clean getaway, leaving Kita to answer for the alarming intrusion:

“Listening to them sleep, splendid to find them in love! Like the printed paper, torn away was the latch on his jaw.”

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
Yodo River, from the series *The Famous Sights of Kyoto*

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1834

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1991

(24124)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

The ferryboat pictured here is called a *sanjikkoku* (thirty-busheler) because it can carry a load of thirty bushels of rice (approx. 190 cubic feet). In the Edo period *sanjikkoku* were also used as passenger ferries. One of the most hilarious scenes in *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō* is that which takes place on one of these Yodo River ferryboats. The happenings include fervent regional singing showcases, impressions of Kabuki actors, witty repartee, and a fight breaking out.

The comic highlights of the scene entail scatology—Yaji needs to relieve himself at an inopportune moment. He urinates in a bottle, which is soon mistaken by another passenger for *sake*. Yaji receives his just desserts, however, when he too mistakenly drinks another passenger's urine.

The night ferry that Yaji and Kita board looks like the one in this print. Here we see commoners—one yawning—monks, a woman breastfeeding her infant, and two men, apparently traveling poets, drinking *sake*. The boatmen gaze at the moon as they punt along. Tethered to the ferry is a *kurawanka* (“won’t you eat?”) vending boat. Hiroshige’s Yodo River scene is more serene, though less comically entertaining, than Jippensha Ikku’s.

Gakutei Gokaku (1786?-1868)
Mt. Tenpō Rain Shelter Overlooking the
Aji River in Osaka, from the series A
Look at the Superb Views of Mount
Tenpō

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1834

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of Mrs. C.M. Cooke, Sr., 1933

(09793)

**This print was conserved with the support
of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

Here we see revelers trying to make their way through small square passageways that have been cut into large pillars. Legend has it that if one is able to wriggle through such a hole, which is supposed to be the size of the nostril of the Great Buddha (Birushana), she or he can ascend to the brain (i.e., wisdom) of the Buddha. Another version of the legend says that one will be granted long life for climbing through the pillar.

The figures featured in this print are too well-to-do to be Yaji or Kita (who could never afford the company of courtesans), but they are enjoying the same amusements that the *Adventures Down the Tōkaidō* protagonists enjoyed in the Hall of the Great Buddha at Hōkō Temple in Kyoto. Kita makes it through the pillar, while Yaji creates an embarrassing yet hilarious scene when he gets stuck:

KITA: Hey, I have a good idea! Let's buy a cup of vinegar and have you drink it!

YAJI: What good will drinking vinegar do?

KITA: I heard drinking vinegar makes you lose weight.

PILGRIM 1: Ha ha ha! Nah, if you do that you won't make it in time, so how about knocking him out by hitting him on the head with a hammer!

KITA: That sounds logical, but we'd be putting his life at risk.

PILGRIM 2: Well then, how about cutting his leg and rubbing hot pepper in it? Then he'd get himself out of there!

Suzuki Harunobu (1725-1770)

Empress Jitō

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1767-1768

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1959

(14484)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

*Spring has gone away
and summer come, it would seem
from those white hemp robes
laid to dry in the sunlight
on Kagu's Heavenly Hill*

(translation by Steven D. Carter)

The *Ogura Hyakunin Isshu* (One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets) anthology, compiled by the renowned court poet Fujiwara no Teika (1162-1241), is a personal selection of one hundred *tanka* poems which document the changing poetic tradition from the earliest days of the Japanese imperial court (7th century) to Teika's own time (13th century). It comprises representative poems selected from ten imperially commissioned poetry anthologies, arranged historically so that readers can enjoy five centuries of court poetry within one collection.

Although many people today associate the *Hundred Poems* with *utakaruta*, a poem-matching card game commonly played during the Japanese New Year holiday, the anthology originally circulated in text format and was not printed with illustrations until the beginning of the Edo period. Poem-cards conventionally paired poems with pictorial representations of the poets, while ukiyo-e artisans were more daring in their interpretations of these popular poems.

In this clever interpretation by Harunobu, Empress Jito's (r. 690-697) original poem, featured in script above, is juxtaposed with a commonplace scene of a mother and daughter washing and drying their clothes at the beginning of summer, while a young boy vies for the mother's attention.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)

Abe no Nakamaro, from the series One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1840

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1959

(14374)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

*When I gaze far out
across the plain of heaven
I see the same moon
that came up over the hill
of Mikasa at Kasuga*

(translated by Helen McCullough)

Abe no Nakamaro (690-770) left Japan at the age of sixteen to study in China. There, he served as a court official under Emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-756) of the Tang dynasty, and became acquainted with several Chinese poets, including the renowned Li Bai (701-762).

This poem was composed by Nakamaro in 752, when he decided to finally return to Japan after several decades of working in China.

Unfortunately, his boat was caught in a storm and shipwrecked in Vietnam. Nakamaro returned to China and spent the rest of his life there, never setting eyes on his homeland again. His poem, however, was transmitted back to Japan and became a part of the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern* (905), and later the *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*.

This print by Kuniyoshi portrays Nakamaro as he beholds the moon in Meishū, or current day Ningpo (Zhejiang Province, China). Note the distinctively foreign hairstyles and clothing of the children, and the elaborate court robes worn by the gentlemen. The upper right cartouche presents a detailed explanation of Nakamaro's original poem.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)

The Priest Jakuren, from the series One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1840

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1959

(14393)

This print was conserved with the support of the Robert F. Lange Foundation.

*Needles on the black pines
are not yet dry of raindrops
from a passing shower
when already mist is rising
on an evening in autumn.*

(translation by Steven D. Carter)

The Priest Jakuren (formerly Fujiwara no Sadanaga, d. 1202) was a nephew of the eminent poet Fujiwara no Shunzei, and the adoptive heir to the Mikohidari line of poets until the birth of Shunzei's son Fujiwara no Teika, who would later become the compiler of the *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*. After taking Buddhist orders at the age of twenty-three, Jakuren moved to Saga, Kyoto, and continued to write poetry reflecting the style of his mentor Shunzei.

In 1201, he was commissioned by the retired Emperor Go-Toba (r. 1183-1198) to become one of the compilers of the *New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems* (1205). Though Jakuren did not live to see the anthology's completion, this poem became one of his representative compositions in the collection, and was also featured later in *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*.

In this print by Kuniyoshi, an aged Jakuren and a young temple girl take a stroll outside after a passing autumn shower, using paper umbrellas and raised wooden clogs to protect themselves from the rain. Rays of sunlight suggest a break in the passing showers, and dapple the needles of the pine trees still fresh with dewdrops. Kuniyoshi has portrayed the pine trees so realistically that they appear to materialize from within the shroud of autumn mist.

Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861)
Ōe no Chisato*, from the series *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1840

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1987

(20001)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

*Autumn does not come
for me alone among men
yet I am burdened
with a thousand vague sorrows
when I gaze upon the moon.*

(translation by Helen McCullough)

Ōe no Chisato (late 9th-early 10th century) was a nephew of Ariwara no Narihira (also featured in this exhibition), and a renowned Heian court poet and scholar of Chinese poetry. His expertise in the Chinese language enabled him to actively translate Chinese poems into *waka* compositions, many of which were collected in his personal anthology *Kudai Waka (Japanese Poems Based on Lines from Chinese Verse, 894)*. This poem, which was included in the *Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern (905)* and eventually *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*, is a translation of a poem originally composed by the Tang dynasty poet Bai Juyi (772-846).

Staying true to the poem's original meaning, Kuniyoshi has made the full moon the focal point of his print, but also included some interesting features quite unlike conventional portrayals of this autumn motif. Instead of setting the moon against a dark background, Kuniyoshi has set it in pale blue with an intense white halo, creating an impression of the full moon illuminating the entire sky.

To indicate that this is a nighttime scene, he has colored the mountains, trees, and shadows cast on the ground in black. The flock of wild geese flying toward the moon is another sign of autumn. One of the palanquin bearers presumably feels a thousand sorrows as he experiences the same feelings as the poet beholding the autumn moon in the night sky. Both the poem and an explanation of this scene are contained in the upper right cartouche.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)

***Ki no Tomonori* from the series *Ogura
Imitation of the One Hundred Poems by
One Hundred Poets***

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1847

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1959

(14504b)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

*On a peaceful day
so warm in the tranquil light
of the springtime sun
how is it that the blossoms fall
with so little sense of calm?*

(translation by Steven D. Carter)

Ki no Tomonori (d. 905) was a prominent court poet, and one of the four compilers of the *Kokin Wakashū* (*Collection of Poems Ancient and Modern*, 905), the first of eight imperially commissioned poetry anthologies compiled during the Heian period (794-1185). Though he passed away shortly before the anthology was completed, Tomonori contributed a traditional Chinese preface and a large number of notable poems to this collection, one of which was eventually included in *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets*.

Tomonori's original poem, featured in the striped cartouche at top, captures the fleeting beauty of a warm spring day, where everything but the soft sunlight and fluttering cherry petals is suspended in stillness. However, in its revisualization by Hiroshige, the spring motif of cherry blossoms is tied to an actual scene from the popular Noh play *Miidera* (ca. 15th century).

In this play, a mother driven insane by the disappearance of her child is led by divine inspiration to Miidera Temple, where her deranged hopes of finding him cause her to strike the temple's bell. Here Hiroshige portrays the "Madwoman of Miidera" as she sings of the evanescence of spring, her gaze fixed on the bell surrounded by scattering cherry blossoms. Though the paper fan is a prop from the actual play, Hiroshige has also given the madwoman a mallet for striking the bell. The details of her plight are summarized in the upper left corner of the illustration by Ryūkatei Tanekazu (1807-1858), a popular fiction writer of the time.

Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)
***Sone no Yoshitada*, from the series**
Ogura Imitation of the One Hundred
Poems by One Hundred Poets

Japan, Edo period, ca. 1847

Woodblock print; ink and color on paper

Gift of James A. Michener, 1959

(14504a)

**This print was conserved with the support of
the Robert F. Lange Foundation.**

*Over Yura bar
go fishermen in their boats
oarless, just drifting
with no more sense of direction
than have I on my path of love.*

(translation by Steven D. Carter)

Sone no Yoshitada (fl. late 10th century) was a notable Heian period poet whose poems were prominently featured in several imperial anthologies. This poem, which was included in the *New Collection of Ancient and Modern Poems* (1205), was eventually selected by Teika for inclusion into the *One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets* collection.

In an imaginative re-visioning of this classic poem, Hiroshige depicts the figure lost on the path of love as the lady Usuyuki, heroine of a popular seventeenth century tale called *Usuyuki Monogatari* (The Story of Usuyuki), which recounts the brief love affair between a married woman (Usuyuki) and her lover (Sonobe no Emon) and climaxes with Usuyuki's untimely death after Sonobe departs on a journey.

Though Usuyuki never pursues Sonobe on his journey, Ryūcatei Tanekazu, a popular fiction writer of the Edo period, explains that Usuyuki has set out in hope of seeing him (upper right corner of illustration). The love letters featured in this story were so popular that they became a model for letter writing during the seventeenth century, and the story was adapted into several puppet and Kabuki plays. Hence, it is possible to imagine the enjoyment that viewers would have derived from seeing Usuyuki embarking on a boat, uncertain of where her love will ultimately take her.