Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
***Ichikawa Danjūrō V as Atomi no Ichii* from the play**
Miyabashira Iwao no Butai
Japan, Edo period, 1773
Color woodblock print
Purchase, 1951
(12993)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Nakamura Nakazo I
Japan, Edo period, c. 1781-1785
Color woodblock print
Purchase, 1954
(13426)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Sawamura Sōjūrō II as Shunkan and Azuma Tōzō II as Oyasu
Japan, Edo period, 1768
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1955
(13691)

According to Timothy T. Clark and Osamu Ueda, this print depicts the actor Sawamura Sōjūro II on the right in the role of the priest Shunkan while Azuma Tōzō II, a young *onnagata* (female impersonator), takes the role of Oyasu in the play "*Hime Komatsu Nenohi- no Asobi* " (Outing to Pick Pine Seedlings on the Rat-Day of the New Year) performed at the Ichimura-za Theater in the ninth month of 1768.

In 1177, the Hōshōji Temple (in Kyoto) monk Shunkan was exiled to Kikaijima Island for plotting against the powerful Taira clan. This tragic historical event inspired a medieval Nō play that would later be developed into even more intricate Bunraku (Puppet Theater) and Kabuki performances.

In the Kabuki play, Shunkan escapes and travels to Horagadake to protect the emperor's concubine (Kogō no Tsubone). A village girl named Oyasu assists him. Curious about the identity of the secretive Shunkan and the woman who is about to give birth, Oyasu attempts to prove her loyalty to them by swearing an oath of secrecy on Shunkan's sword, but Shunkan, who is afraid of endangering the mission and possibly their lives, stops her in mid vow. However, as he is doing so, he catches a glimpse of himself in a mirror. The extent to which he has aged while on Kikaijima shocks him into sharing his tale of exile with her. Oyasu then acts as a midwife, ensuring that the emperor's son is born safely.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Osagawa Tsuneyo II as the Prostitute of Kanzaki, Naniwa-zu Disguised as the Shirabyōshi Fuyō and Nakamura Rikō I as Kikuchi Hyōgo's Wife Michishio Disguised as Another Shirabyōshi
Japan, Edo period, 1785
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(13852)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Danjūrō V as Miura Arajirō and Nakamura Nakazō I as Taira-no-Tokitada
Japan, Edo period, 1786
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(14080)

This print depicts Ichikawa Danjūrō V as Miura Arajirō in *shibaraku* costume with *kumadori* makeup, and Nakamura Nakazō I as Taira no Tokitaka in ornate Chinese robes. It documents the Miyako-za Tenmei 6 (1786) production of "*Mutsu no hana Izu no Hatage*," presented for the theater's *kaomise* (the opening of the season) offering in the 11th month.

According to Timothy Clark and Osamu Ueda, an evil courtier is about to order the execution of some hapless victim onstage when cries of "*Shibaraku*!" (Stop right there!) are heard from the back of the theater, and a hero dressed in a distinctive persimmon-colored costume with fantastically large square sleeves enters down the *hanamichi* walkway to save the day. The "*Shibaraku*" scene is the ultimate confrontation between good and evil in Kabuki, and the most perfect display of the bombastic, stylized *aragoto* (rough stuff) acting style associated with the Ichikawa Danjūrō line of actors. First performed by Danjūrō I in 1697, it became obligatory from the early eighteenth century to include the scene in *kaomise* (the opening-of-the-season) productions held at every theater in the eleventh month of each year.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Danjuro V With a Carp Design On His Robe
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(14084)

Kabuki actors were celebrities who led the way in popular culture and fashion during the Edo period (17th-19th centuries). In the early 18th century, as culture flourished, members of the middle class began to establish their own sense of aesthetics. Edo “dandyism” was also established during this time, and Danjūrō V thus became a role model for many men. This print depicts the ideal man as masculine, dynamic, bold, bellicose and slightly naughty, yet friendly and kind to others. The carp design on his kimono symbolizes that he is ambitious and accomplished.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Danjuro V as Moriya no Daijin Disguised as Rokujūrokubu* from the play *Miyabashira Iwao no Butai
Japan, Edo period, 1773
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(14086)

Katsukawa Shunshō was an ukiyo-e artist who established the style of *Nigao-e* (likeness pictures). His depiction of Danjūrō V is an excellent example of this style. The big hooked nose and elongated face were Danjūrō's most prominent characteristics.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Danjuro V Slashing a Large Bell
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(14090)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Danjūrō V as a Warrior
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1957
(14097)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Arashi Sangorō II as Sakura-maru
Japan, Edo period, 1772
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1959
(14270)

The actor Arashi Sangorō II appears in the role of Sakura-maru, in an Ichimura-za Theater production of "*Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami*," presented in the New Year of Meiwa 9th (1772). In the role of a samurai, he stands beneath a plum tree, his two ubiquitous swords identifying his warrior status.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Nakamura Noshio I as a Woman in an Embossed Robe, Holding a Pipe
Japan, Edo period, c. 1772
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1959
(14274)

This print depicts the *onnagata* actor (female impersonator), Nakamura Noshio I. People have often wondered how ladies in prints such as this one can be identified as female impersonators. Female impersonators always wore a purple head cloth on their foreheads to cover their shaven skin because they were in fact men whose heads were supposed to be shaven in their real lives.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Actor Ichikawa Yaozō II
Japan, Edo period, c. 1764-1772
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1959
(14275)

This print depicts a well-known Kabuki actor of the Ichikawa family in an elaborate costume and make-up with two long swords. The distinctive make-up is called *kumadori*, which is used in Kabuki to represent different characters: red lines for bravery, blue lines for evil people or spirits. There are approximately five different *kumadori*. This print shows an actor in “loyal warrior” make-up. He stands and strikes the *mie* pose (which demonstrates the restrained and resolute posturing of wrath) that we commonly associate with Shunshō's Kabuki actor images.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichimura Uzaemon IX as Sōshōbō Disguised as Benkei
Japan, Edo period, 1769
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1971
(16009)

Ichimura Uzaemon IX appears in the role of Sōshōbō disguised as Benkei, the chief retainer and personal friend of Minamoto Yoshitsune. It is from the 11th month *kaomise* (the "face-showing" ceremony of a theater) production of Meiwa 6 (1769), "*Kumadori Ataka no Matsu*," presented at the Ichimura-za Theater.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
The Actor Nakamura Sukegorō II and the Onnagata Actor Segawa Kikunojō II
Japan, Edo period, c. 1769
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1971
(16147)

Katsukawa Shunshō was trained in the genre-painting schools of Miyagawa Chōshun (1682-1752) and Hanabusa Itchō (1652-1724). Starting in the late 1750s, he began to develop a more realistic style of his own. He learned much from the color harmonies of Suzuki Harunobu (1725-1770). His specialization, the actor print, soon overshadowed the dominant Torii School works. Michener thought that Shunshō ranked up with Kiyonobu and Sharaku in his influence upon Kabuki prints. He is known to have had numerous pupils. The most rebellious of them was Hokusai, who left Shunshō's studio after a quarrel with him.

A confrontation between two actors in a snowy setting; this probably reflects a suggested snowfall onstage. The actor Nakamura Sekugoro II appears in the bold makeup of an heroic male role. The play may be "*Soga Moyō Aigō no Wakamatsu*."

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Raizō II as Sukeroku
Japan, Edo period, 1769
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1972
(16264)

Ichikawa Raizo II appears in the role of Sukeroku in the Nakamura-za Theater production of "*Soga Moyō Aigō no Wakamatsu*" presented in Meiwa 6 (1769), the fifth month.

Sukeroku was in reality Soga no Gorō, who, in the disguise of a gallant townsman, sought to recover a precious sword that had been stolen from his stepfather. In due course, Sukeroku finds the sword in the possession of Hige no Ikyū, lover of Agemaki, the famous beauty, who, in the meantime, has renounced her lover in favor of Sukeroku. Ikyū is finally slain by Sukeroku, who recovered the lost weapon. Agemaki is one of the great heroines of Edo-period Japan, and Sukeroku is one of the three most famous *otokodate* (chivalrous men), who were viewed as champions of the people.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Matsumoro Koshiro III
Japan, Edo period, c. 1768
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1972
(16265)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichimura Uzaemon IX as Hanagata Shumenosuke (Morihisa)
Japan, Edo period, 1769
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1973
(16472)

Ichimura Uzaemon IX appears as Hanagata Shumenosuke (Morihisa) in the New Year Ichimura-za Theater production of Meiwa 6 (1769). He stands holding a ceremonial hat over his head and wears red *kumadori* makeup that is meant to express his rage and excitement.

The play relates the legendary tale of the warrior Taira Morihisa. When he was about to be executed, a bird flew to Morihisa's side and transformed into a protective Bodhisattva. After witnessing this event, Minamoto Yoritomo, an opponent, decided against taking Morihisa's life. The story was based on the epic battles between the Taira and Minamoto clans, which actually happened in the twelfth century.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Monnosuke II as Soga no Gorō
Japan, Edo period, c. 1781-1785
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1973
(16474)

This print depicts a scene from the *Tale of the Soga Brothers*, a famous tale that has frequently been transformed into Kabuki plays. In the story, two young boys lose their father after he is murdered by his cousin, Kudō Suketsune, in 1177. Their mother remarries, and her new husband adopts the elder son, Jūrō Sukenari. The younger boy, Gorō Tokimune (Soga no Gorō), depicted here, is sent to a Buddhist temple to become a monk.

The two brothers never forget what happened to their father, and, seeking revenge, secretly train for years so that they will be ready when the time comes. One day, after reaching adulthood, they discover Kudō Suketsune in a hunting camp near Mount Fuji, and kill him. An altercation with Kudo's retainers follows, in which Jūrō dies and Gorō is captured and later executed. In the Kabuki version of this tale, the death of the Soga brothers brings about a positive outcome, for the Shogun Yoritomo honors the brothers by returning their dead father’s estate to their mother.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Actor Ōtani Hiroji III
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1973
(16475)

One very important contribution that Shunshō made was his *nise-e* or *niga-o* (likeness paintings), which are stylized but accurate renditions of actors. Shunshō revitalized the conventional Torii actor prints by introducing a greater measure of realism and individuality into ukiyo-e actor portraiture.

Actor prints began functioning more and more like today's pop star's posters. Along with his own pupils, artists from other studios followed suit in developing *niga-o*, particularly artists of the Utagawa School. According to leading Japanese scholar Dr. Tadashi Kobayashi, Utamaro's ōkubi-e ("large head pictures" which focus on the upper half of the sitter's body) were developed from Shunshō's stylized *niga-o.*

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Matsumoto Kōshirō IV as Asamazaemon Terumasa
Japan, Edo period, 1773
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1973
(16479)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Nakajima Mihoemon as Tokihira
Japan, Edo period, c. 1747
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986
(19714)

The actor Nakajima Mihoemon appears in the role of Tokihira (Shihei), in *Kurumabiki* (a carriage stopping sequence) from the play, "*Sugawara Denju Tenarai Kagami*," presented around 1747 at the Ichimura-za Theater. The play was originally written for the puppet theater (*Bunraku*) and staged for the first time in August 1746 in Osaka at the Takemotoza Theater. It was adapted to Kabuki the following month and staged for the first time in Kyoto. It was also performed for the first time in Edo, at the Ichimuraza Theater, in March 1747. The play is made up of five acts. "*Kurumabiki* " is the scene that opens Act III. It was not in the original puppet play. This Kabuki-created scene was so successful that it was later integrated into Bunraku performances as well.

The play is based on the life of Sugawara no Michizane (845~903), a famed scholar who was promoted to the prestigious rank of *udaijin* ("Right Minister," one of the two close advisors of the Emperor). After being falsely accused by Fujiwara no Shihei, the "Left Minister" (*sadaijin*), of plotting to seize power, Michizane was exiled to Kyushu. He dedicated his last years to writing poetry that expressed both his homesickness and his innocence. After his death, a number of unusual weather disturbances and agricultural disasters occurred. Furthermore, the Emperor's residence was repeatedly struck by lightning. Many attributed the bad luck to Michizane's vengeful spirit. A shrine was built in Kyoto to appease his spirit (Kitano Temmangū), and Michizane was deified as the God of Scholarship. In the play Michizane is called Kan Shōjō.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ōtani Hiroji III as Sōma Tarō Yoshikado
Japan, Edo period, 1772
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986
(19718)

The actor Ōtani Hiroji III appears in the role of the samurai, Sōmatarō Yoshikado in the *kaomise* production, "*Edo Katagi Hikeya Tsunasaka*," given at the Ichimura-za Theater in 1772. He holds a banner in one hand and his unsheathed sword in the other. Hiroji III was a very successful actor of *aragoto* (rough style) roles.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ōtani Hiroji III
Japan, Edo period, 1773
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986
(19721)

The actor Ōtani Hiroji III appears in the Nakamura-za performance of "*Gohiki Kanjinchō"* presented in the second month of An-nei era 2 (1773). The scene comes from the *Jōruri* (Puppet Theater) performance *"Rottazuna Koi no Sekifuda*." He strikes a sustained pose (*mie*) next to a stream. A twisted willow trunk is behind the actor; the juxtaposition makes for a satisfying composition.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726–1792)
Actor Segawa Kikunojō III
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986
(19722)

The *onnagata* Segawa Kikunojo III appears in traveling garb in an unidentified role. Travel sequences often involve a dance. The posture of the actor, with a closed fan held in one hand and a long cloth held in the other (draped over his shoulder) suggests that a dance is being depicted. This is the right-hand sheet of a larger composition.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Actor Ichikawa Yaozō II as Soga no Gorō Tokimune
Japan, Edo period, 1778
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1986
(19723)

According to James A. Michener:

"No artist, regardless of the field in which he worked or the nation from which he came, ever had a clearer understanding of what he wanted to accomplish than Katsukawa Shunshō, who designed actor prints."

Most of Shunshō's prints were done in the same *hosoban* (narrow picture) format, which measures about 30 x 15 cm, and is slightly narrower than the regular *chūban* format (28 x 20 cm). Prints such as this one of a Kabuki actor (as seen in this print) produce a pleasing upright panel housing a single figure. Michener praised him in the following way: Shunshō is excellent at placing a figure "in the exact spot on the paper where it will be most effective."

The actor Ichikawa Yaozō II as Soga no Gorō Tokimune (An Officer of Kitsunetsuri), is depicted in this fine print by Katasukawa Shunshō. The print documents Yaozō's performance in the *kaomise* play, "*Kagamiga Ike Omokage Soga*." The *Tales of the Soga Brothers*, the source of endless Kabuki plots (some historians suggest as many as 300 plays have been spawned from this one story) is based on an actual event of the early Kamakura period (12th century). The story concerns the Soga brothers, Jūrō Sukenenari (1172-93) and Gorō Tokimune (1174-93), and their various attempts to revenge the death of their father at the hands of the villainous Kudō Suketsune. The brothers finally carry out their vendetta in Kudō's camp at the foot of Mt. Fuji. Other protagonists that figure in the varied and complex plots that have developed around this

historical legend are Jūrō's lover, the courtesan Tora-gozen, Gorō's sweetheart, the courtesan Kewaizaka no Shōshō, and a relative, the heroic Asahina.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Ichikawa Danjūrō V
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(21768)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Arashi Sangorō II as Kawazu Saburō and Segawa Kikunojō III as the Sprit of a Mandarin Duck
Japan, Edo period, 1775
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(21771)

This print depicts the famous dance performance (*shosagoto*) called "Spirits of Mandarin Ducks (*Oshidori*)." Many dance performances were based on the Mandarin Duck theme, which symbolizes marital bliss and fidelity.

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Matsumoto Kōshirō IV
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(21778)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Bandō Mitsugorō II
Japan, Edo period, c. 1770s
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(21780)

Katsukawa Shunshō (1726-1792)
Nakayama Kojūrō VI as Minamoto no Tametomo Disguised as Hotoke Gozen, Osagawa Tuneyo II as Courtesan Naniwa-zu, and Sawamura Sōjūrō III as Komatsu Shigemori
Japan, Edo period, 1785
Color woodblock print
Gift of James A. Michener, 1991
(24462)