

Hirai Baisen

(1889-1969)

Plum in Snow/Rising Sun

Japan, Taishō period, late 1910s

Set of three hanging scrolls; color on silk

Purchase, 2005

(13213.1-3)

The rising sun is one of the premier auspicious symbols in Japan, a painting of which graced the alcoves of traditional Japanese houses at the beginning of each New Year holiday. The plum also has symbolic significance in East Asia, where scholar-painters have long celebrated its virtues of quiet beauty and strength in expressive ink paintings. In this triptych, Baisen combined the two subjects to create a dynamic visual statement.

In both plum paintings, Baisen emphasized the earthy vigor of the plant by crowding the composition with its snow-covered branches. Within the complex layering of the branches in the left piece, however, there is a sensitively rendered Japanese bush warbler perched on a twig in the upper left corner. Flanked by the active, near-monochromatic plum compositions, the rising sun stands out in its brightness and minimalism.

Nukina Kaioku

(1778-1863)

Plants of the Four Seasons

Japan, Edo period, late 1840s

Set of four hanging scrolls;

ink and color on satin

Purchase, 2005

(13179.1-4)

A distinguished scholar of Chinese studies and renowned calligrapher, Kaioku was also an accomplished painter, known for his ink landscapes. *Plants of the Four Seasons* represents Kaioku's achievement in the bird-and-flower genre, demonstrating the compositional diversity and mastery of the "boneless" technique (using a wet brush to define the forms without outlines). Painted on a lustrous satin ground, its monumental size suggests that the artist produced the set for a special occasion.

In the spring scene, the main theme is the narcissus behind the rock, favored by the literati for its ability to bloom early. The summer is represented by loquat and pomegranate, symbolizing wealth and posterity. The sweet osmanthus and begonia in the autumn complement each other with "heavenly fragrance and luxurious color" as expressed in Kaioku's inscription. The winter season features the aromatic daphne amongst auspicious plants such as pine and *reishi* mushrooms.

Dōmoto Inshō

(1889-1975)

Chinese Garden

Japan, Taishō period, 1923

Pair of six-fold screens;

ink and color on paper

Gift of Terry Welch in honor of Richard Washburn Welch and Renee Clarisse Bonzon, 2005

(13150.1-2)

A successful Kyoto *nihonga* painter, Inshō constantly transformed his painting style throughout his career. In the evolution of his style, literati painting occupied an important place, particularly during the 1920s, as demonstrated by *Chinese Garden*.

Inshō traveled to China on several occasions during the Taishō period. His 1922 trip included Suzhou, famous for its picturesque gardens. This painting was likely based on what Inshō observed while in Suzhou.

In a continuous composition united by a central pond, fantastic rocks and trees fill both screens. The presence of birds and tiny fish provides a feeling of intimacy, while Inshō's animated brush style enlivens the composition. The elegant combination of gray ink and light blue contributes to the freshness of the image.

Yamanaka Shinten'ō

(1822-1885)

Quatrain in Cursive Calligraphy / Bamboo in Snow

Japan, Meiji period, 1884

Pair of hanging scrolls; ink on paper

Purchase, 2005

(13200.1-2)

During the early Meiji period, Shinten'ō was a key figure in the Kyoto literati world who hosted frequent gatherings at his elegant villa. An excellent calligrapher and painter, Shinten'ō was also an accomplished seal carver and connoisseur of Chinese painting. In his calligraphy, Shinten'ō combined various Chinese and Japanese influences to form his individual style, which emphasized the curvature of lines achieved by twisting brush movements. Primarily self-taught, his paintings also often reflected the distinctive brushwork of his calligraphy.

This pair of hanging scrolls provides an easy comparison between his cursive calligraphy and his unique bamboo painting. Shinten'ō placed bamboo leaves at odd angles to one another, rather than arranging them in elegant clusters. They bend and turn, echoing the twisting quality of his calligraphy. Irregular washes darken the area around the bamboo plants and give the impression of piled snow.

Yamanaka Shinten'ō

(1822-1885)

Deep in the Woods, a Thatched Hut

Japan, Meiji period, c. 1875

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

Purchase, 2005

(13198.1)

Shinten'ō was best known for his landscapes, although he painted various subjects including rocks, pine trees, birds, and flowers. Rarely employing color, his landscapes often display rough ink brushwork in dramatic compositions of tall mountains with knotty protrusions of rocks.

Such assertive portrayal of simplified landscape elements was shared by many literati painters of the early Meiji period. This phenomenon might have mirrored the turmoil of the time, which was marked by dynamic political and social changes. Shinten'ō's bold painting style inspired Tomioka Tessai (1836-1924), his younger friend, who ultimately achieved a highly expressive style of his own.

Yamanaka Shinten'ō

(1822-1885)

One Hundred Things as You Wish

Japan, Meiji period, 1878

Hanging scroll; ink on satin

Purchase, 2005

(13197.1)

In *One Hundred Things as You Wish*, Shinten'ō assembled various plants and vegetables in and around a basket as though they had just been collected on a trip to the country. However, the combination of lily bulb, persimmon, and *reishi* mushroom shown in the foreground points to a specific message. The Chinese writing for lily includes the character meaning “hundred.” The word for persimmon is pronounced as *shi*, which is the same as the word for “affairs.” Because of its form, *reishi* is associated with *nyoi*, a staff held by a Buddhist monk, the name of which literally means “as you wish.” Together, those objects represent the auspicious theme of the painting. Shinten'ō's long inscription in his famous cursive style confirms this play between the words and images while expressing a classic literati emphasis on the meaning and enjoyment of life.

Kondō Kōichiro

(1884-1962)

Rocky Seashore

Japan, Shōwa period, late 1930s

Hanging scroll; ink on paper

Purchase, 2005

(13223.1)

Kōichiro's interest in *sumi* ink had emerged even while he was studying oil painting in Tokyo. After transitioning to *nihonga* (modernized Japanese-style painting) during the early Taishō period, he pursued experiments with monochrome style and achieved fame as an innovative ink painter.

Rocky Seashore displays Kōichiro's unconventional ink brush technique. In depicting the powerful rays of the sun, the artist layered long irregular strokes, as if inspired by Van Gogh. In contrast, swirls and wavy lines of rushing water were brushed with playful freedom.

The full variation of ink tonalities represents many "colors" of ink and contributes to the richness of the expression, while the humorous depiction of cormorants hints at his background as a cartoonist-illustrator.

Kondō Kōichiro

(1884-1962)

Winter Mountain

Japan, Taishō period, ca. 1920

Hanging scroll; color on paper

Purchase, 2005

(13222.1)

Initially trained in *yōga*, or Western-style oil painting, Kōichiro established a successful career as a cartoonist-illustrator. During the 1910s, he developed a fascination with the traditional Japanese medium of ink and brush, eventually leading him to abandon *yōga* practice. *Winter Mountain* is an important example from Kōichiro's transitional period when he experimented with a wide variety of *nihonga* (literally "Japanese painting") styles and techniques. In this quiet winter scene, Kōichiro employed minimal linear definition, layering ink and color in broad, loose sweeps as if working in Western watercolor. The translucent veil of white and gold wash is particularly effective in evoking a sense of muted light and atmosphere.

Kameda Bōsai

(1752-1826)

A Life of Drinking Sake

Japan, Edo period, ca.1820

Hanging scroll: ink on paper

Purchase, 2005

(13169.1)

Known for his exceptional scholastic aptitude, Bōsai opened a private Confucian academy at the age of twenty-two. After initial success he experienced hardship, but eventually he gained fame as a calligrapher-poet-painter. Although Bōsai was quite accomplished in regular and semi-cursive scripts, he earned most acclaim for the dancing quality of his wild cursive script as displayed in this work.

A Life of Drinking Sake is one of five quatrains that Bōsai composed in 1801, expressing his outlook on life at age fifty. Renowned for his fondness of wine, which led him to participate in drinking competitions, Bōsai celebrated the benefits of drinking wine and urged people to transcend the ideas of failure and success.

Not studying the Immortals, not studying the Buddhas,

Nothing to look at and nothing to say.

A life of drinking sake ends with no money,

Half a life, fifty years, knowing human affairs.

Fusen Tetsu (1891-1976)
with Inui Katsuji
(active 1940s and after)
Scenes of the South Sea Islands

Japan, Shōwa period, 1944
Handscroll; ink and color on paper
Purchase, 2005
(13156.1)

This stunning scroll includes twelve separate scenes depicting the landscapes and lifestyles of islands in the South Pacific. Intended to be enjoyed one by one, the viewpoint changes dramatically from one scene to another. Tetsu's exhilarating ink brushwork is evident throughout the scroll, occasionally dissolving into pure abstraction.

During the 1920s and 1930s, Japanese artists began to turn to the South Pacific for exotic subjects, some actually traveling to the area. Tetsu may have based his paintings on photographic images and reports that were available in Japan.

The son of a Buddhist priest, Tetsu went through preliminary Buddhist training, worked as a fisherman, and eventually became an artist known for his intensely personal painting style. *Scenes of the South Sea Islands* stands out in Tetsu's career for its unusual subject matter and collaborative production. Katsuji, who contributed figures to this work, was a Nara artist and possibly Tetsu's pupil.

Tanomura Chokunyū

(1814-1907)

Great View of Rivers and Mountains

Japan, Meiji period, 1896

Handscroll; ink and color on silk

Purchase, 2005

(13155.1)

Great View of Rivers and Mountains is a rare handscroll by Chokunyū, one of the most prolific and long-lived literati painters in Japanese history. The painting depicts a broad river flowing through a peaceful mountain valley. A variety of architecture and figures are incorporated into the bucolic landscape accented with autumn colors. The detailed portrayal of an idealized natural world in delicate brushwork exemplifies Chokunyū's mature landscape style from the final years of his life.

When the scroll was remounted in 1924, twenty-eight years later, the owner requested that Tanaka Hakuin (1866-1934), Chokunyū's prominent pupil, add a title and a postscript, following the Chinese custom for landscape handscrolls.

Kondō Kōichiro
(1884-1962)
Cormorant Fishing

Japan, Shōwa period (1926-1989)
Hanging scroll; ink on paper

Purchase, 2008
(13847.1)

Anonymous
Food and Sake Container

Japan, Edo period (1615-1868)
Lacquerware; lacquer, gold, silver

Gift of David W. Hall, 1986
(5470.1)

Shibata Zeshin
(1807-1891)
Tray for Memorial Tea Ceremony

Japan, late Edo period (1872-1891)
Lacquerware; *tsuge* wood with black and gold lacquer

Gift of the James Edward and Mary Louise O'Brien Collection, 1977
(4558.1)

Shibata Zeshin

(1807-1891)

Sake Cup Washer (*Haisen*) with Parsley Design

Japan, late Edo-early Meiji period (19th century)

Lacquerware; lacquer

Gift of the James Edward and Mary Louise O'Brien Collection, 1977
(4553.1)

Shibata Zeshin
(1807-1891)
***Teoke* (Tea Caddy)**

Japan, late Edo period (19th century)
Lacquerware; Paulownia wood with red-brown and black lacquer,
silver and gold *maki-e*

Gift of the James Edward and Mary Louise O'Brien Collection, 1977
(4561.1)

Anonymous
***Bundai* (Writing Table)**

Japan, Meiji period (late 19th-early 20th century)
Lacquerware; gold, black lacquer, silver, mother-of-pearl inlay

Gift of Glenn and Margaret Y. Oda, 2003
(12399.1)

Anonymous
***Suzuri Bako* (Ink Box Set)**

Japan, Meiji period (late 19th-early 20th century)
Lacquerware; gold, black lacquer, silver, mother-of-pearl inlay

Gift of Glenn and Margaret Y. Oda, 2003
(12399.2a-g)