

### Illustrations for *Yomihon* (Books for Reading)

In his forties, Hokusai played a leading role in developing the genre of *yomihon*, literally, ‘books to read’ (as distinct from ‘books to watch’ and ‘books to study’). These were serially published illustrated adventure stories with both historical and fantastic elements, which adapted Chinese vernacular novels as well as Japanese records and legends. *Yomihon* were a genre of popular fiction. They mixed historical events and legends with fantastic elements, and had often complicated, meandering storylines. While the text played the main part, every volume contained some illustrations, arranged to be viewed as double-spreads. As they presented usually only single impressive scenes, their understanding required a significant amount of knowledge. And they were mostly monochrome. These restrictions posed a big challenge for the artist who was supposed to make the illustrations as attractive as possible for the reader. Hokusai began to work in this field in his late 40s, and he would create more than 1,400 such illustrations during the latter half of his life. In other words, *yomihon* illustrations form a significant part of his oeuvre. Characteristics of his illustrations are a free use of horizontal and vertical lines, an occasional transgression of the picture frame, expressive human figures, deliberately rendered details, the use of central and shadow perspectives in pictorial space, and highly dramatic settings, all of which draw the viewer into the story world. Sometimes more highly appreciated than the novels themselves, *yomihon* illustrations established Hokusai’s reputation as a popular artist. But these illustrations have not received much attention so far, overshadowed by *The 36 Views of Mount Fuji* and *The Hokusai Manga*. This exhibition presents illustrations for three *yomihon*, which introduce both the world of Hokusai as an illustrator and his excellent technique in woodcut illustration.

[In the exhibition, the arrangement follows the Japanese reading direction, from right to left.]

***Strange Tales of the Crescent Moon*** 鎮西八郎為朝外伝 椿説弓張月

second part and fifth part<sup>1</sup>, published 1807–1811, by Kyokutei Bakin (author) & Katsushika Hokusai (ill.), block-printed book (*yomihon*), woodblock-printed illustrations

#### Main characters:

- Minamoto no **Tametomo** (1139 – 1170) (also called Chinzei Hachirō, i.e. Hachirō, who unified Kyushu), a warrior exiled to Ōshima Island (part of the Izu islands south of the Izu Peninsula),

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<sup>1</sup> Actually the second, which was intended to be the last but due to the huge popularity the series saw three more parts were published. The exhibition displays pages from the 2nd and the 5th out of a total of 5 volumes.

from which he eventually escapes.

- his loyal retainers Oniyasha, Yanada Tokigasu, Shōju (married to Chitose), Kiheiji
- Takama no Tarō and his wife Isohagi
- Kudō **Mochimitsu**, his antagonist
- **Shiranui**, Tametomo's first wife, mother of Sutemaru
- **Sasarae**, one of Tametomo's secondary wives, mother of Tomowaka and Tameyori
- **Sahori Nyoko**, one of Tametomo's secondary wives
- Tametomo's son **Sutemaru**, who later becomes King of Ryūkyū and marries Princess Nei
- his son Tomowaka
- his oldest son Tameyori

The first part of the story introduces Tamemoto as a 2 meter tall young man with a temper. His father Tameyoshi sends him to Kyushu, where he exhibits extraordinary skills as a military leader. Then he is summoned to Kyoto to fight, together with his father, in the Hōgen War between the retired Emperor Sutoku and Emperor Goshirakawa (1156) on Emperor Sutoku's side. After the defeat he is exiled to Ōshima Island [south of the Izu Pensinsula]. There he earns the respect of the residents and assumes the reins of government by overpowering the wicked magistrate Tadashige. With Tadashige's daughter **Sasarae** he conceives a son.

At the beginning of the second part of the story [displayed here] Tametomo, the ruler of Ōshima Island, is bringing the neighboring islands (such as the Island of Women and the Island of Ogres) under his control.

(1) second part, volume 1, sheet 9 recto & verso<sup>2</sup> [=2 pages]

[Introduction of characters:] [right page:] Chinzei Hachirō Tametomo, the protagonist, as a Shintō deity (worshipped in a shrine on Hachijōjima Island)

[left:] His loyal retainer Oniyasha on Ōshima Island

(2) second part, volume 1, sheet 10 verso [=1 page]

[Introduction of characters:] Sahori Nyoko, one of Tametomo's wives

(3) second part, volume chapter 1, sheet 11 verso, sheet 12 recto, [=2 pages]

[Introduction of characters:] [right page:] Takama no Tarō, [left page:] his wife Isohagi

(4) second part, volume 1, sheet 19 verso, sheet 20 recto [=2 pages]

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<sup>2</sup> recto (front), verso (back), due to Japanese reading direction: the right-hand page of a double-spread is the back of a printed and then folded sheet, the left-hand page is printed on another sheet.

Tametomo [on the right] arrives at the Island of Women [Hachijōjima] in stormy sea and raises the ship to land.

(5) second part, volume 1, sheet 23 verso, sheet 24 recto [=2 pages]

The Xu Fu Event 秦徐福の故事

[Legend has it that Xu Fu who was sent by an ancient Chinese ruler to the eastern seas, i.e. Japan, in his search of the elixir of life, left a girl on the Island of Women [Hachijōjima] and a boy on the Island of Ogres [Onigashima], and thus became the ancestor of the islands' population.]

(6) second part, volume 1, sheet 26 verso, sheet 27 recto [=2 pages]

Tametomo [on the left] being warmly welcomed by the people of the Isle of Women.

(7) second part, volume 1, sheet 30 verso, sheet 31 recto [=2 pages]

Sahori Nyoko [on the right] defys a wildcat monster (*yamaneko*) which tries to escape with an infant.

(7-8) second part, volume 2, sheet 3 verso, sheet 4 recto & verso [=3 pages]

At the coast of the Island of Ogres, Tametomo smashes a rock with one arrow.

(9) second part, volume 2, sheet 9 verso, sheet 10 recto [=2 pages]

Tametomo expels the ogres.

(10) second part, volume 2, sheet 14 verso, sheet 15 recto [=2 pages]

Tametomo brings Tadashige, the wicked Magistrate of Ōshima, to justice.

(11) second part, volume 2, sheet 18 verso, sheet 19 recto [=2 pages]

Tametomo sends the brave retainer Oniyasha from Ōshima Island to Izu to threaten his rival [Kano Kudō] Mochimitsu.

(12) second part, volume 2, sheet 22 verso, sheet 23 recto

The loyal Yanada Tokigasu delivers a secret message to Ōshima Island.

(13) second part, volume 3, sheet 3 verso, sheet 4 recto

Tametomo scolds his son Tomowaka for breaking the precious flute he had given to him, when trying to fly a kite.

(14) second part, volume 3, sheet 7 verso, sheet 8 recto

Tied to the kite, Tomowaka gets airborne. (In actuality, Tametomo's anger was feigned in order to arrange his son's escape from Ōshima Island to Shimoda on the Izu Peninsula.)

(15) second part, volume 3, sheet 12 verso, sheet 13 recto

An army [foreground, left side] comes from the capital to quell Tamemoto [background, right side], but he makes it drown by shooting their ship with his arrows.

(16) second part, volume 3, sheet 17 verso, sheet 18 recto

Tametomo's eldest son Tameyori and his secondary wife, Sasarae, commit suicide to not impede him in his fight against the enemy.

(17) second part, volume 3, sheet 20 verso, sheet 21 recto

Tametomo has managed to escape from Ōshima to Hachijōjima Island, and in order to fool the troops of his enemies, the local Oniyasha commits ritual suicide in his place [upper left].

(18) second part, volume 3, sheet 24 verso, sheet 25 recto

The spirits of his late wife and son, Sasarae and Tameyori, prevent Tametomo from also committing ritual suicide.

(7-19) second part, volume 4, sheet 4 verso, sheet 5 recto

Considering suicide in deference to the late Emperor Sutoku, Tamemoto has departed for Sanuki Province [today's Kagawa Prefecture], where the Emperor was exiled to. A strange old man appears (actually Tametomo's tutelary deity) [on the left] in front of his inconsolable [secondary] wife Sahori Nyoko and suggests to establish a shrine with Tametomo's bow as the object of worship.

(20) second part, volume 4, sheet 13 verso, sheet 14 recto

Upon his arrival in Sanuki Province, Tametomo [sitting on the right] saves his relative, the courtier Fujiwara no Suenari [sitting on the left side on board of the ship] from a bandit.

(21) second part, volume 4, sheet 21 verso, sheet 22 recto

Tametomo attempts to commit suicide in front of the grave of Emperor Sutoku, but the Emperor's spirit [hidden in the palanquin in the upper left corner, and surrounded by the warriors who had fought with him] halts him and suggests to go to Higo [in today's Kumamoto Prefecture, Kyushu].

(22) second part, volume 4, sheet 25 verso, sheet 26 recto

The spirits of Emperor Sutoku as well as the courtiers and warriors who fought with him, including Tametomo's father [Rokujō Hōgan] Tameyoshi.

(23) second part, volume 5, sheet 2 verso, sheet 3 recto: Upon his arrival in Higo, Tametomo kills a boar in the snow.

(7-24) second part, volume 5, sheet 5 verso, sheet 6 recto: The boar's hunter, Takama no Tarō, and his wife Isohagi capture Tametomo after having poured him poisoned wine.

(25) second part, volume 5, sheet 9 verso, sheet 10 recto

In the mansion Tametomo is taken to, he incidentally reencounters his wife Shiranui, who had been missing for a long time.

(26) second part, volume 5, sheet 16 verso, sheet 17 recto

Tametomo and Shiranui are having a son, Sutemaru. A white crane appears [on the upper left] as a good omen.

(27) second part, volume 6, sheet 4 verso, sheet 5 recto

On their journey to visit Tametomo in Kyūshū, his diseased retainer Yanaga Togyasu [on the left] gets killed by the bandit Uzumaru, while his son Tomowaka is captured and imprisoned in a basket [on the right]. (After his escape from the exile island, Tomowaka had lived as the adopted child of Ashikaga Yoshiyasu in Shimotsuke [today's Tochigi Prefecture]. When he learned about his father's whereabouts in a dream, he set out for Kyushu together with Yanaga Togyasu.)

(28) second part, volume 6, sheet 8 verso, sheet 9 recto

Tomowaka kills the bandit by using his knife from inside the basket.

(29) second part, volume 6, sheet 14 verso, sheet 15 recto

In search of his father Tomowaka encounters Shiranui and her son Sutemaru in their mansion [on the left]. The skull of Tomowaka's mother, Sasarae, is placed inside, and Sasarae's spirit watches over them from the garden.

(30) second part, volume 6, sheet 18 verso, sheet 19 recto: Knowing that a fierce battle is about to take place, Shiranui does not tell Tomowaka that she is Tametomo's wife and that his father lives with her. She gives him Sasarae's skull and sends him back to Shimotsuke.

In the **third and fourth parts** the reader learns that Tametomo and Shiranui had gathered troupes to subjugate their longtime enemy Taira Kiyomori in Kyoto, but on the way there their ship wrecked in a storm, Shiranui lost her life, and Tametomo went to the Ryukyu Islands [today's Okinawa] instead. Turmoil dominated there due to a power struggle between the sorcerer Mōun Kokushi and the old lady Kumagimi. Tametomo saves Princess Nei from an attack by Mōun Kokushi's soldiers and supports her further to overthrow Mōun Kokushi who had killed King Shō Nei in order to establish his rule over the islands.

(31) fifth part, volume 1: sheet 1 verso

[Introduction of characters] Emperor Sutoku's divine messenger Kurōbō Tamenaka

(32) fifth part, volume 1: sheet 2 verso, 3 recto [Introduction of characters]

Old Kumagimi with the King's son (abducted by her when she was chased by the sorcerer Mōun Kokushi); Senpu Chitose (Shōju's wife)

(33) fifth part, volume 1: sheet 9 verso, 10 recto

The divine messenger Kurōbō Tamenaka [center top], arriving at a village of fishermen in Ryukyu to help Tametomo against the troupes of Mōun Kokushi.

(7-34) fifth part, volume 1: sheet 15 verso, 16 recto

On Hamashima Island, Tametomo and Princess Nei meet a wizard kid who tells them to go to the small island of Koha.

(35) fifth part, volume 1: sheet 22 verso, 23 recto

On Koha Island, Tametomo [center left, with the bow] meets a hermit [the bearded man in the lower left corner] who leads him to his son Sutemaru, who had been lost since the shipwreck [on the upper right, together with Tametomo's retainer Kiheiji at the far right].

(36) fifth part, volume 2: sheet 12 verso, 13 recto

Tametomo asks for a night stop at a mansion in the mountains.

(37) fifth part, volume 2: sheet 18 verso, 19 recto

Tamemoto's subordinate Shōju protects his master from assassins. (They had been sent by Mōun Kokushi, the sorcerer who had killed Princess Nei's father and brought the whole land under his control.)

(38) fifth part, volume 2: sheet 4 verso, 5 recto

Tamemoto's subordinate Shōju kills his own wife Chitose, whom Tamemoto suspected to be Mōun Kokushi's spy.

(39) fifth part, volume 2: sheet 15 verso, 16 recto

Old Kumagimi collects freshly severed heads from the Tenson Mausoleum. (She intends to use them for a ritual by which she can enthrone the abducted prince.)

(40) fifth part, volume 2: sheet 24 verso, 25 recto

Kumagimi is being killed by the brothers Crane and Turtle.

(41) fifth part, volume 4: sheet 6 verso, 7 recto

Tamemoto's retainer Kiheiji shoots Shurin (one of Mōun Kokushi's officers) with a stone.

(42) fifth part, volume 4: sheet 17 verso, 18 recto

With the help of the gods, Tamemoto is able to behead Mōun Kokushi.

(43) fifth part, volume 5: sheet 3 verso, 4 recto

[upper part:] Girls playing on a seesaw

[lower part:] Mermaid and *mizuchi* [a mythical beast, which is said to poison humans] (It turns out that Mōun Kokushi was actually a *mizuchi*.)

(44) fifth part, volume 5: sheet 22 recto

Sutemaru, the son of Tamemoto and Shiranui, ascends the Ryukyu throne under the name of King Shuten, bringing peace to the country.

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***Yuriwaka and the moor's edge falcon***, 1808 (5 volumes) 由利稚野居鷹

Mantei Sōma (author) & Katsushika Hokusai (illustrations)

block-printed book (*yomihon*), woodblock-printed illustrations

This story has been called a Japanese Odyssey. Its actual historical background is the Mongol invasion of Japan in the 13th century.

**Yuriwaka**, the young Lord of Dewa Province is sent by the Emperor to quell marauders on the distant island of Kyūshū, but on his way home his trusted officers, the **Beppu brothers**, treacherously abandon him on another island, stealing his ship and his iron bow. His **hawk Midorimaru** finds him and carries a message to his faithful wife **Nadeshiko**. Meanwhile, the

Beppu brothers claim that Yuriwaka was killed on a pirate-exterminating mission, and are named lords in his place; they imprison the wife and try to force her to marry one of them. But Yuriwaka is rescued by fishermen, returns, gets a job in the stables, and exacts his revenge by killing the Beppu brothers with his bow.

- **Beppu Tarō**, the older brother, also called Beppu Shōji Motooshi in the novel.
- **Beppy Jirō**, the younger brother, also called Bizō Chōja.
- **Fusekinu**, one of Lady Nadeshiko's ladies-in-waiting
- **Tadasaki**, Yuriwaka's loyal vassal

(1) volume 1: Inside front cover with title

(2) volume 1, sheet 5

[right page:] Bizō Chōja, the younger Beppu brother

[left page:] Lady Nadeshiko, the protagonist Yuriwaka's wife

(3) volume 1, sheet 6 verso, 7 recto

[right page:] Fusekinu, one of Lady Nadeshiko's ladies-in-waiting

[left page:] Yuriwaka's treacherous chief retainer Beppu Shōji Motooshi, the older one of the Beppu brothers

(4) volume 1, sheet 8 verso, 9 recto — Yuriwaka (the story's protagonist with the giant bow that only he can draw)

(5) volume 1, sheet 13 verso, 14 recto — A deity from within the Iwashimizu Shrine [in Yawata, south of Kyoto] appears in Yuriwaka's dreams and hands him over a written oracle.

(6) volume 1, sheet 20 verso, 21 recto — In the mansion of the State Councillor, Yuriwaka [on the left] catches a glimpse of Nadeshiko and falls in love with her.

(7) volume 2, sheet 2 verso, 3 recto

In the northern Mutsu Province, the older Beppu kills a pair of seagulls to make an aphrodisiac.

(8) volume 2, sheet 7 verso, 8 recto

The younger Beppu being out of his mind after he has mistakenly drunk the wine with the aphrodisiac which was actually meant for Nadeshiko.



(9) volume 2, sheet 11 verso, 12 recto

When the drugged younger Beppu brother creeps into Nadeshiko's room, her beloved *nekomata* cat and its fellows hurt him to rescue her.

(10) volume 2, sheet 16 verso, 17 recto

[Sashiba Rokurō no] Tadasaki, one of the vasalls of Yuriwaka and Lady Nadeshiko, falls into the elder Beppu's hands and is banished from Dewa, his home province [today's Yamagata and Akita].

(11) volume 3, sheet 1 recto: *Kappa* [a water imp] 河童

(12) volume 3, sheet 3 verso, 4 recto

The doctor, who is treating the banished Tadasaki, rescues a dying *kappa* [water imp].

(13) volume 3, sheet 6 verso, 7 recto

Tadasaki rescues Midorimaru, the son of Yuriwaka and Nadeshiko, who was held captive in the mansion of the Beppu brothers.

(14) volume 3, sheet 11 verso, 12 recto

Fusekinu, Nadeshiko's lady-in-waiting [on the left], is attacked by the bandit Konori, and the treasured sword gets broken.

(8-15) volume 3, sheet 18 verso, 19 recto

Sent by the bandit to the bottom of a valley, Fusekinu meets a mountain wizard who is living among *tengu*.<sup>3</sup>

(16) volume 3, sheet 22 verso, 23 recto

When Fusekinu [on the left] and the wizard [on the right] part company, he throws a fan that turns into a hawk leading her the way.

(17) volume 5, sheet 2 verso, 3 recto

Yuriwaka drawing the iron bow.

(18) volume 5, sheet 5 verso, 6 recto

Yuriwaka's arrow pierces a rocky mountain and astonishes the people.

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<sup>3</sup> *tengu*: long-nosed goblins, able to fly, sometimes translated as bird-dogs.

(19) volume 5, sheet 7 verso, 8 recto

Under the spell of a dancing girl, performed by Narashiba who was sent by the wizard, the older Beppu carouses day and night.

(20) volume 5, sheet 10 verso, 11 recto

Having returned to the Dewa Province, Yuriwaka punishes the Beppu brothers.

(21) volume 5, sheet 13 verso, 14 recto

Reinstated as the Lord of Dewa Province, Yuriwaka rewards his retainers.

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***Illustrated Life of Shakyamuni*** [Buddha] 『釈迦御一代記図会』

1845 (total of 6 volumes)

Yamada Isai (author) & Katsuhika Hokusai (illustrations)

block-printed book (*yomihon*), woodblock-printed illustrations

This book narrates the life of the founder of Buddhism, from his birth through entering priesthood and practicing asceticism to his enlightenment, the spread of the law and his entering the Nirvana.

Hokusai was already around 85 years old, when he illustrated this book. The widely known legend is retold as a suspense-packed narrative by means of bold compositions, including the handling of the vertical and the horizontal, energetic linework, and strong contrasts between black and white.

Good and bad characters are clearly recognizable in this extraordinary work.

Main characters:

- Gautama [=family name] Buddha, also known as Siddhārtha Gautama, Shakyamuni Buddha or Shaka, or just Buddha.
- Devadatta, his cousin and follower, who later betrays him

(1) Volume 2: sheet 5 verso, 6 recto

The condition of Buddha's mother Māyā is being examined by the doctors.

[The woman on the right is Maya's older sister Gotami, also married to Siddhārtha's father. She raises the child after Maya's has died on the seventh day after giving birth. The woman on the left is Maya's servant.]

(2) Volume 2: sheet 12 verso, 13 recto [vertical! the book was supposed to be turned to emphasize the extraordinariness of the event] — Gautama Siddhārtha's birth

(3) Volume 2: sheet 23 verso, 24 recto

[right=bottom] Siddhārtha in an archery competition with other princes

[left=top] Devadatta, his cousin and later brother-in-law, engaged in a trial of strength with another prince

(4) Volume 2: sheet 26 verso, 27 recto — Devadatta beats a giant elephant.

(5) Volume 2: sheet 35 verso, 36 recto — Siddhārtha [on the right] having a horse race with Prince Dharva in Kapilavastu

(6) Volume 3: sheet 3 verso, 4 recto

[right page (initially left page in the book):] A bhikkhu monk, who is actually a reincarnation of Deva, teaches Siddhārtha about impermanence.

[left page, bottom:] Two children tell Siddhārtha stories about foreign countries.

(7) Volume 3: sheet 9 verso, 10 recto

[right:] Consorts [princesses] bemoaning that Prince Siddhārtha left his home secretly.

[left:] Siddhārtha on his way to Mount Dandaka.

(8) Volume 3: sheet 21 verso, 22 recto

Siddhārtha receiving rigorous instruction from his first teacher, Ālāra Kālāma.

(9) Volume 3: sheet 33 verso, 34 recto

The Buddha Vairocana turns into an octahedral nine-foot ogre to put Siddhārtha to the test and initiate him into the Four *ghata* (i.e. the Noble Truths of impermanence, endless cycle of rebirth and death, going beyond life and death and entering Nirvana, freedom from one's desire's as the true bliss).

(10) Volume 3: sheet 36 verso, 37 recto

[right:] The three Kassapa [or: Kashyapa] brothers cheat Shakyamuni and lock him in a rock chamber. [left:] The three Kassapa brothers convert to Shakyamuni's teachings.

(11) Volume 4: sheet 2 verso, 3 recto

[right:] King Bimbisara, deeply moved by Shakyamuni's teaching, releases criminals from prison.

[left:] Āśvajit explains the Buddhist teachings to Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana (later Shakyamuni's closest disciples).

(12) Volume 4: sheet 8 verso, 9 recto

The deva-rāja god-kings, with the Four Heavenly Kings (caturmahārāja) leading the way [upper left], safeguard Shakyamuni as he heads for the mountains.

(13) Volume 4: sheet 14 verso, 15 recto — Shakyamuni's power makes the devil's army surrender.

(14) Volume 4: sheet 23 verso, 24 recto

Shakyamuni presents the three underworlds where the souls of the dead go astray.

(15) Volume 4: sheet 29 verso, 30 recto

[right:] The disciple Revata called Khadira-Vaniya dries his habit which he had dyed with red resin.

[left:] The villagers, who mistake it for a cowhide [skin, leather], accuse him of cow theft. (He stays ten years in prison, atoning for badmouthing enlightened people in his previous life.)

(16) Volume 5: sheet 3 verso, 4 recto

The three Kassapa brothers fighting the devil's army with spiritual power.

(17) Volume 5: sheet 12 verso, 13 recto [vertical!]

Devadatta, who tried to kill Shakyamuni, falls alive into hell.

(18) Volume 5: sheet 15 verso, 16 recto

At Shakyamuni's command, the disciple Maudgalyāyana retrieves Devadatta from hell.

(19) Volume 5: sheet 22 verso, 23 recto

The rich merchant Sudatta invests an innumerable amount of gold to buy Prince Jeta's grove and build the Jetavana Monastery (jetavane 'nāthapiṇḍadasya-ārāme) there.

(20) Volume 5: sheet 27 verso, 28 recto

Disciple Śāriputra employs divine power to fight the six heretic teachers.

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*One Hundred Poems by One Hundred Poets, Explained by the Nurse*, 1835

『百人一首 うばがえとき』 4 exhibits, polychrome woodcut prints (*nishiki-e*)

(1) Sangi no Takamura

Wata no hara/ yasoshima kakete/ kogiidenu to/ hito ni wa tsugeyo/ ama no tsuribune  
わたの原 (はら) 八十島 (やそしま) かけて 漕 (こ) ぎ出 (い) でぬと  
人 (ひと) には告 (つ) げよ 海人 (あま) の釣舟 (つりぶね)

Fishing boats upon this sea!

Tell whoever asks [or: tell her, please]

I am being rowed away to exile

out past the many islets

to the vast ocean beyond.<sup>4</sup>

Ono no Takakura (802–853) sent this poem to someone in the capital, when he had to go into exile on the island of Oki. After his pardon he was appointed the Emperor's associated counselor, *Sangi*. Hokusai depicts the boat which heads towards the islands in the background on the upper left, while reading the word *ama* in the last verse (*ama no tsuribune*) not as fishermen but female divers and placing them in the foreground. Their facial and bodily expressions appear simplified (including the color hues) to such an extent that they do not radiate any eroticism. Rather than in that Hokusai seems to have been interested in the rendering of the water surface, that is, its gradations of blue as well as its delicate lines, and in the depiction of the islands and rocks, which suggests to watch his picture as a beautiful landscape leaning on the poem's content.

(2) Funya no Asayasu

Shiratsuyu ni/ Kaze no fukishiku/ Aki no no wa/ Tsuranuki tomenu/ Tama zo chiri keru  
白露 (しらつゆ) に 風 (かぜ) の吹 (ふ) きしく 秋 (あき) の野 (の) は  
つらぬきとめぬ 玉 (たま) ぞ散 (ち) りける

When the wind gusts

over the autumn fields

the glistening white dewdrops

lie strewn about

like scattered pearls

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<sup>4</sup> All English translations taken from Peter McMillan (2008), *One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each: A Translation of the Ogura Hyakunin Isshu*, Columbia University Press, e-book edition [@SUB].

Funya no Asayasu was a low-ranking official at the imperial court. This poem extols the beauty of dew, or waterdrops, on autumn leaves swirled up by the wind.

Brings the poem's imagery of dew close to everyday life, Hokusai's picture shifts the scenery to a summerly pond, where children crop lotus leaves with white-looking waterdrops on top. For Hokusai's contemporaries, lotus was a common plant; they enjoyed the flowers, but also ate the seeds and roots.

In the picture, the poem's wind comes to move not only the waterdrops, but also the boat. With their rods the children seem to perform flowing movements, and even the folds of their cloths are precisely depicted. The blue of the pond, the red of the boat and the green of the shore form a perfect balance, and in the distance the blue gets blurry due to the use of gradation, so that the whole picture achieves a sense of depth.

### (3) Fujiwara no Michinobu Ason

Akenureba/ Kururu mono to wa/ Shiri nagara/ Nao urameshiki/ Asaborake kana

明（あ）けぬれば 暮（く）るるものとは 知（し）りながら  
なほうらめしき 朝（あさ）ぼらけかな

As the sun rises

I know that when

it sets at night

I can see you again.

Yet even so, how hateful –

Parting in this cold light of dawn.

In this poem, courtier Fujiwara no Michinobu Ason (972-994) expresses how much he hates it to have to leave his wife every morning. Hokusai's picture transfers the medieval practice of 'walking marriage' to the Edo period, but instead of a husband returning in the morning from his wife's place to his own, it depicts a palanquin which carries a male client home after a night at the licensed district of Yoshiwara. The slightly reddish sky and the silhouette of the forest in front of it form a beautiful contrast. The palanquin bearers are arranged on a diagonal in a way which suggests dynamic movement.

### (4) Sanjōin sanjouin

Kokoro ni mo/ Arade ukiyo ni/ Nagaraeba/ Koishikaru beki/ Yowa no tsuki kana

心（こころ）にも あらでうき世（よ）に ながらへば  
恋（こひ）しかるべき 夜半（よは）の月（つき）かな

Though I do not want  
To live on in this floating world,  
If I remain here,  
Let me remember only  
This midnight and this moonrise.

Sanjōin (976-1017) was enthroned as Emperor Sanjō in 1011, but only five years later he had to abdicate. In this poem he expresses his bitter feeling about it addressed to a beautiful moon in the middle of the night.

Hokusai's print depicts a ritual at a kind of shrine. Purportedly it is an enthronement ceremony, and the person who is holding a jar with both hands could be Sanjōin or his successor Emperor Go-ichijō. The solemn ceremony conducted under a full moon is rendered in calm colors dominated by indigo, and the representation of the interior, seen from above diagonally through omitted roofs and ceilings, employs a technique of Heian-period painting (*fukinuke yatai*).

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### **Surimono — a unique find in Millesgården's art collection**

(1) Woman beating a small drum and monkey 鼓を打つ女と猿  
ca. 1800; Surimono, no signature

A woman with a small drum and a dressed monkey are training for a monkey street performance. As monkey dances were regarded as good luck charms and often performed on New Year's, this surimono was likely exchanged among friends as a New Year's lucky charm. 1800 was the Year of the Monkey according to the Chinese zodiac; therefore the surimono was probably created for the beginning of the year 1800.

(2) Man carrying a little monkey on his back 子猿を背負う男  
1800; Surimono

Artist: Hokusai (sign.: *Dokuryū Hokusai-ga*)

A male street performer carrying a small monkey. This surimono was created as a lucky charm for the Year of the Monkey, 1800. It exhibits particularities of Hokusai's surimono style: of that time: the restrained coloring, the simple composition, the oval face of the man and his slender stature.

(3) Travelling Komachi, from the series *The Seven Legends of Komachi*

七小町 かよひ, ca. 1800; Surimono

Artist: Hokusai (sign.: *Gakyōjin Hokusai-ga*)<sup>5</sup>

This surimono refers to one of seven Noh plays about the matchless beauty Ono no Komachi. The slender lady with her white oval face, who walks down a snow-covered road, is typical for Hokusai's depiction of beauties (*bijinga*) of that period. Since the artist started to use the name "Hokusai" in 1798, it must have been created around 1800.

Legend has it that Fukakusa no Shōshō, who courted Komachi, was told by her: "if you pass by me one hundred nights, I will answer to you." He took her words at face value and came to her place every evening and finally he died in a snowy night without having been answered. In Hokusai's image this man has been replaced by a woman. The ox carriages' wheels in the background allude to fact that Fukakusa marked the days in the wooden platform for the carriages. The willow tree stands in for Saohime, the goddess of spring, who appears in the poem.

七小町かよひ 落款・狂歌

布子千旦丸

こひ風も

柳ことしに

打解やすき

春のあハ雪

一瓶活安

佐保姫や

繰出しろん

けさ春の

ひねもす

なひく

青柳のいと

(4) Plum twigs and fresh-water clams

折梅としじみ

1807; Surimono

Artist: Katsushika Hokusai (sign.: *Katsushika Hokusai-ga*)

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<sup>5</sup> Signature *Gakyōjin* = The old man made about drawing.



This surimono, which shows a *kyōka* poem, plum twigs and clams, was apparently created as a souvenir of a *kyōka* session, held on the beginning of spring (according to the old calendar, in January) in 1807. It is characterized by a diagonal composition and elegantly restrained color hues. It can be clearly dated, and as such it is an important work that exhibits the transformation of Hokusai's style in his late 40s.

(5) The white shell, from the series *Genroku poetry shell games* 元禄歌仙貝合 白貝

1821; Surimono

Artist: Hokusai (sign.: *Getchi rōjin Iitsu hitsu*)

Being one of a series of 36, this is a spring *kyōka surimono*, which conjoins a poem associated with the name of the shell and Hokusai's picture. It brings together a poem that likens the white shell to plum blossoms reminiscent of snowflakes, with the workplace of a painter, where one finds panels of a folding screen which depict a plum tree – leaning on a poem about white shells washed by the waves at the shore of Miho no Matsubara, from where Mount Fuji can be seen – and fans that depict Miho no Matsubara and Mount Fuji. The series *Genroku poetry shell games*, which was created in 1821, was the longest among Hokusai's surimono series, but only few prints have survived, among them this precious one.

折梅としじみ 落款・狂歌

折梅も  
いと  
の  
蜆に  
はらはらと  
あ  
おはる  
花の

青陽舎白馬

松極舎□九

家やとのさとの蜆や□も

花廼屋道頼

□神の桜も匂ふ梅やしき 花の□取の松も月に□く

文化四

卯の孟春