



Fiscal 2021 Introducing New Acquisitions

In fiscal 2021 (ended March 31, 2022), our museum was able to make many additions to the collection, thanks to the generous cooperation of our supporters. We introduce some of those works here.

*The explanations are by Terada Sanae, Okamoto Kaya, and Tandō Mako.



One Hundred Scenes from the Tokyo Metropolis in the Showa Era, No. 27,
The May Sports Season, Jingū Gaien
By Koizumi Kishio, 1932

1: The Context of "One Hundred Scenes from the Tokyo Metropolis in the Showa Era"

Women with parasols and men who look like office workers are depicted on the road leading to the Jingū Gaien Stadium. The stadium itself is packed with spectators.

This print is from the *One Hundred Scenes from the Tokyo Metropolis in the Showa Era*, by Koizumi Kishio (1893-1945). He created this series to depict the new Tokyo cityscape, after its recovery from the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. Koizumi pursued this project with great care. He began the series in 1930 and, still not satisfied, continued working on it even after having reaching his objective of a hundred prints. In 1940, he selected one hundred from the group and declared the series complete. Since this print is not given in Koizumi's list of the finished series, it may have been excluded. It is, however, a refreshing view of a new post-recovery famous place in the city, with crowds of people, young and old, male and female, enjoying watching a sporting competition.

2: An equipment for a Birdsong Competition

Those enjoying the hobby of birdsong competitions would raise *uguisu* (bush warblers) and other birds from infancy and teach them songs artificially, using a flute, for example. Then their owners would have the birds compete to see who had the better singing voice.

The equipment for this pastime included a cage container and a singing stand. They are depicted in *Shunchōdan* (Tales of Spring Birds, 1845), which introduces

how to raise *uguisu* and how birdsong competitions were held. The cage container shown here was made in the Showa period (1926-89) but follows the forms shown in that book. The cage container held not only held the cage and the bird but also was made with wavy interior walls, so that the bird's voice would reverberate more strongly. The lavish decoration of its hatch gives us a sense of the craftsmen's skills at that time as well as the devotion of the enthusiast to this hobby.



Cage Container, Ebony
Latter half of Showa period

3: Sashiko Quilted Local Fire Brigade Jacket

The city of Edo suffered repeated major fires. To minimize the damage, in 1720, the neighborhoods west of the Sumida River were divided up and forty-seven (later forty-eight) fire brigades were assigned to them. (Each brigade was given one of the Japanese syllabary as its name, in the *iroha* order.) Later, eighteen additional brigades were formed, with their headquarters in Fukagawa.

The garment shown here is a *sashiko* quilted *hanten* or jacket worn by firemen in the "Ha" unit, which was responsible for the Nihonbashi - Odenma area. A large *ha* character has been quilted on its back. Near the hem are *keshifuda* talismans with the name "Ha" unit and its *keshikuchi* written on them. The *keshikuchi* were the places at which the brigade had halted the spread of a fire. The talismans with the name of the brigade and the places it had protected celebrated the glorious deeds it had accomplished.

The inside of this *sashiko* quilted jacket is decorated with a dragon and cloud design, plus a waterfall.

Motifs that invoke the idea of water were popular decorations for these jackets. Both the outside and inside of the jacket are this perfectly appropriate for a member of a local fire brigade.



Sashiko Quilted Hanten, worn by
the head of a local fire brigade
Late Edo period

Composition: Superb Skills at Work

Katsushika Hokusai's *Picture Book: Panoramic Views of Both Banks of the Sumida River*

Text by Park Mihee, Curator

Katsushika Hokusai is the most famous *ukiyo-e* artist in the world. He is best known for *Sketches by Hokusai* and *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, but his extensive oeuvre also included many illustrated books of *kyōka*, satirical verses. More than forty of those collections are known today, including *Picture Book of Kyōka: Mountains Upon Mountains, Sumida River*, and *A View of the Famous Sights of the Eastern Capital*. One of Hokusai's signature works in this genre is his *Picture Book: Panoramic Views of Both Banks of the Sumida River*. Hokusai, who was born in what is now the Kamezawa area of Sumida City and had a thorough knowledge of the course of the Sumida River, developed a group of subjects and a carefully calculated composition in this picture book, which is regarded as a work incorporating several rules he set himself.

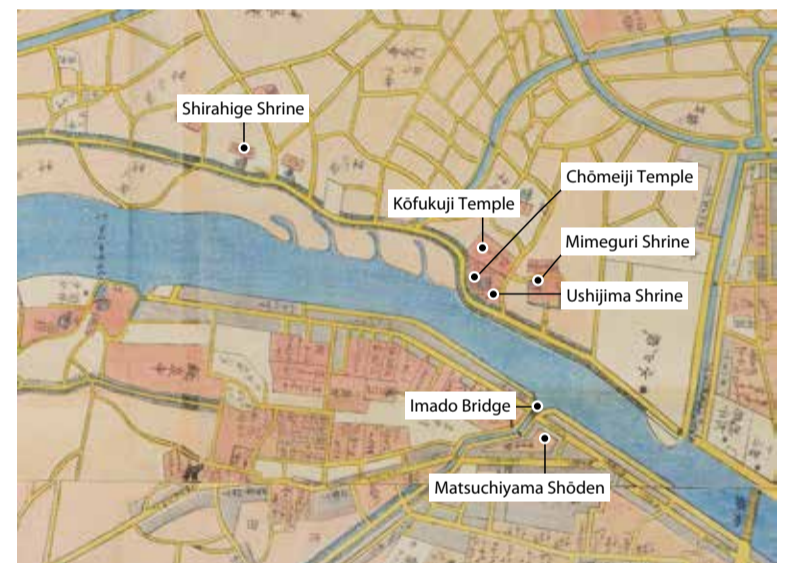
One of those rules was that each two-page spread in the book was completed so that all the illustrations connected, as in a picture scroll. A second is that the book proceeds upriver on the Sumida, including famous places along both banks. Moreover, he has followed the flow of the four seasons, presenting each place in the season that reveals its glory most attractively. In conformity with the third rule, he would depict the scenes and people in accord with the seasons. Meeting those requirements while creating this work required precise calculations and great skill on the part of the artist. Hokusai not only followed those rules but earnestly and clearly depicted the course of the Sumida River.

For example, let us have a look at the series of illustrations that address the Matsuchiyama Shōden temple. In *ukiyo-e* paintings and prints, because the temple overlooks the Sumida River and is on a small hill quite near the Takeya ferry crossing, the area as a whole is often addressed from a bird's-eye-view perspective and the height of the hill is exaggerated. Hokusai, however, boldly captures the Matsuchiyama Shōden in an entire two-page spread, depicting it looking down on the Mimeguri Shrine on the opposite side of the river. His rendering adopts a different point of view but shares the emphasis on height with other examples. The stone *torii* gate in the foreground, which links to the picture on the previous two pages, is positioned to contrast with the

torii at Mimeguri Shrine while emphasizing the comparison formed by single-point perspective.

The next scene is the workshop area at Imado, against a background of the Sumida River at sunset. Comparing this picture with an illustrated map suggests that the grove of trees depicted across the river is probably around the Shirahige Shrine. Looking closely at the center of the grove, we can see what appears to be a small rendering of the *torii* of Shirahige Shrine.

Picture Book: Panoramic Views of Both Banks of the Sumida River, Hokusai has brilliantly met his requirements by bringing together scenes on both sides of the river and individual places in a manner not seen in conventional views of the setting and famous places. It is a Sumida River landscape that only Hokusai, with his characteristic brilliance, could create.



Large Illustrated Map of Edo, Tenpō Revision (detail), 1846



Picture Book: Panoramic Views of Both Banks of the Sumida River
By Katsushika Hokusai,
Tsuruya Kiuemon, publisher.

Evening Glow at Imado Shirahige Kijimatsu Pines

Autumn Foliage at Matsuchiyama

Prayers at Hanakawado Shower at Mukōjima

Hyper Edohaku, our smartphone app, has been launched!

On April 22, we released Hyper Edohaku, our app for smart phones. The app has had recreated in 3D based on the Edo-Tokyo Museum's model of the area to the west of Ryōgokubashi Bridge. Scattered among this 3D rendering, overflowing with diverse people and commodities, are one hundred items selected from the Edo-Tokyo Museum's collection for you to find. Show

tents presenting various spectacles, fires, fireworks, and a variety of characters like Hokusai designed on the basis of Edo-period materials: your chance to meet them awaits you. This is the first museum-provided app in Japan making full use of a game engine. Be to sure to enjoy the "walking with it around Edo" sensation it delivers. (Haruki Shoko, Curator)



Download the app here.