

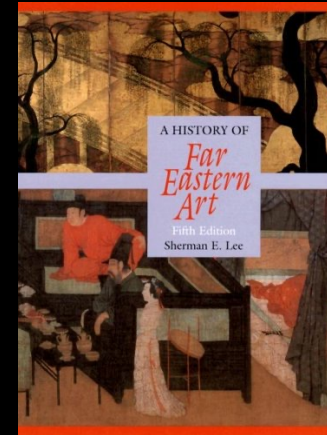
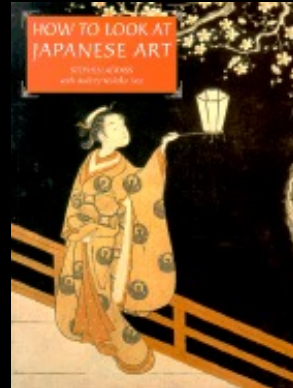
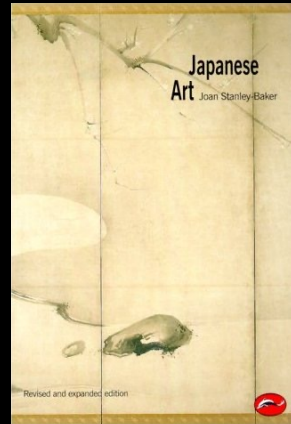
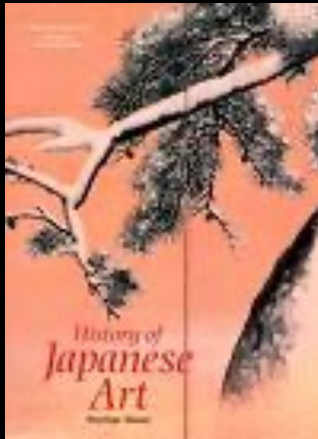
# Keys to Understanding the Arts of Japan

Matthew McKelway, Professor of Japanese Art, Columbia University



## Where to begin?

Textbooks, museums, on-line resources



Penelope Mason, *History of Japanese Art*

Joan Stanley-Baker, *Japanese Art*

Stephen Addiss and Audrey Seo, *How to Look at Japanese Art*

Sherman Lee, *A History of Far Eastern Art*

# Where to begin? Museums

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Cleveland Museum of Art

Freer Gallery of Art/Sackler Museum

Metropolitan Museum of Art (including [Timeline of Art History](#))

Detroit Institute of Art

Minneapolis Institute of Art

Nelson-Atkins Museum

Indianapolis Museum of Art

Art Institute of Chicago

Kimbell Art Museum (Fort Worth)

Denver Art Museum

New Orleans Museum of Art

Richmond Art Museum

Ackland Museum (UNC)

Seattle Art Museum

Asian Art Museum (SF)

LA County Museum

# Where to begin? On-Line Resources

[Museum of Fine Arts, Boston](#)

[Metropolitan Museum of Art \(including \[Timeline of Art History\]\(#\)\)](#)

[Tokyo National Museum highlights](#)

[Google Arts and Culture](#)

How to begin?

# How to begin?

*From "Arts of Japan"*

*Professor McKelway*

*Fall, 2008*

Comparison: Which is older?



# How to begin?

From "Arts of Japan"

Professor McKelway

Fall, 2008

Comparison: Which is more "realistic"?



Unkei, *Muchaku*, 1212



Statue of George Washington created by [Horatio Greenough](#)

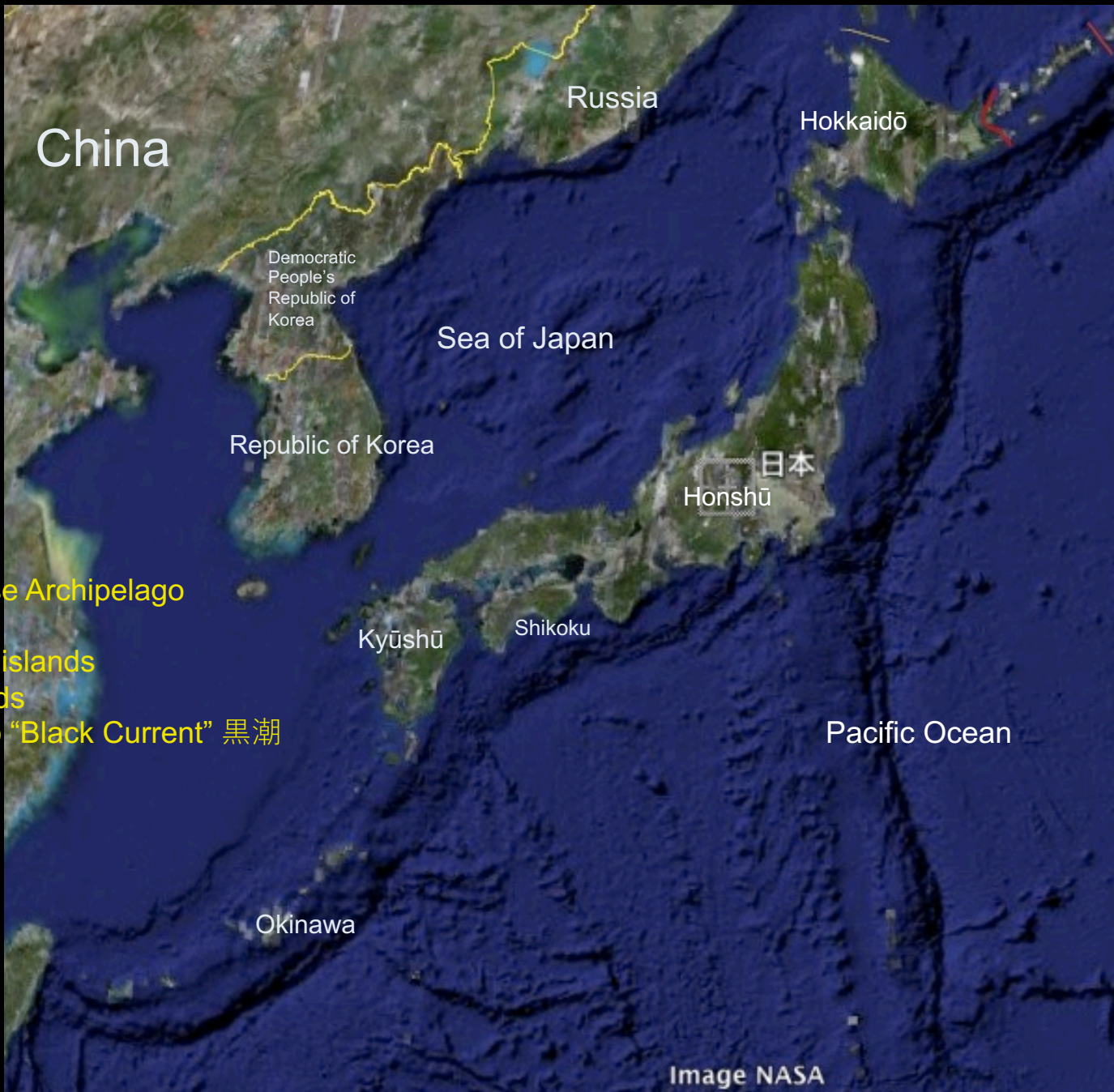
# How to begin? PLACE

## The Japanese Archipelago in East Asia

- Proximity to Asian continent
- Location in temperate zone
- Location in “Ring of Fire”
- Geographic origins of the Japanese







China

Russia

Hokkaidō

Democratic  
People's  
Republic of  
Korea

Sea of Japan

Republic of Korea

日本  
Honshū

Kyūshū

Shikoku

Pacific Ocean

Okinawa

Image NASA

### The Japanese Archipelago

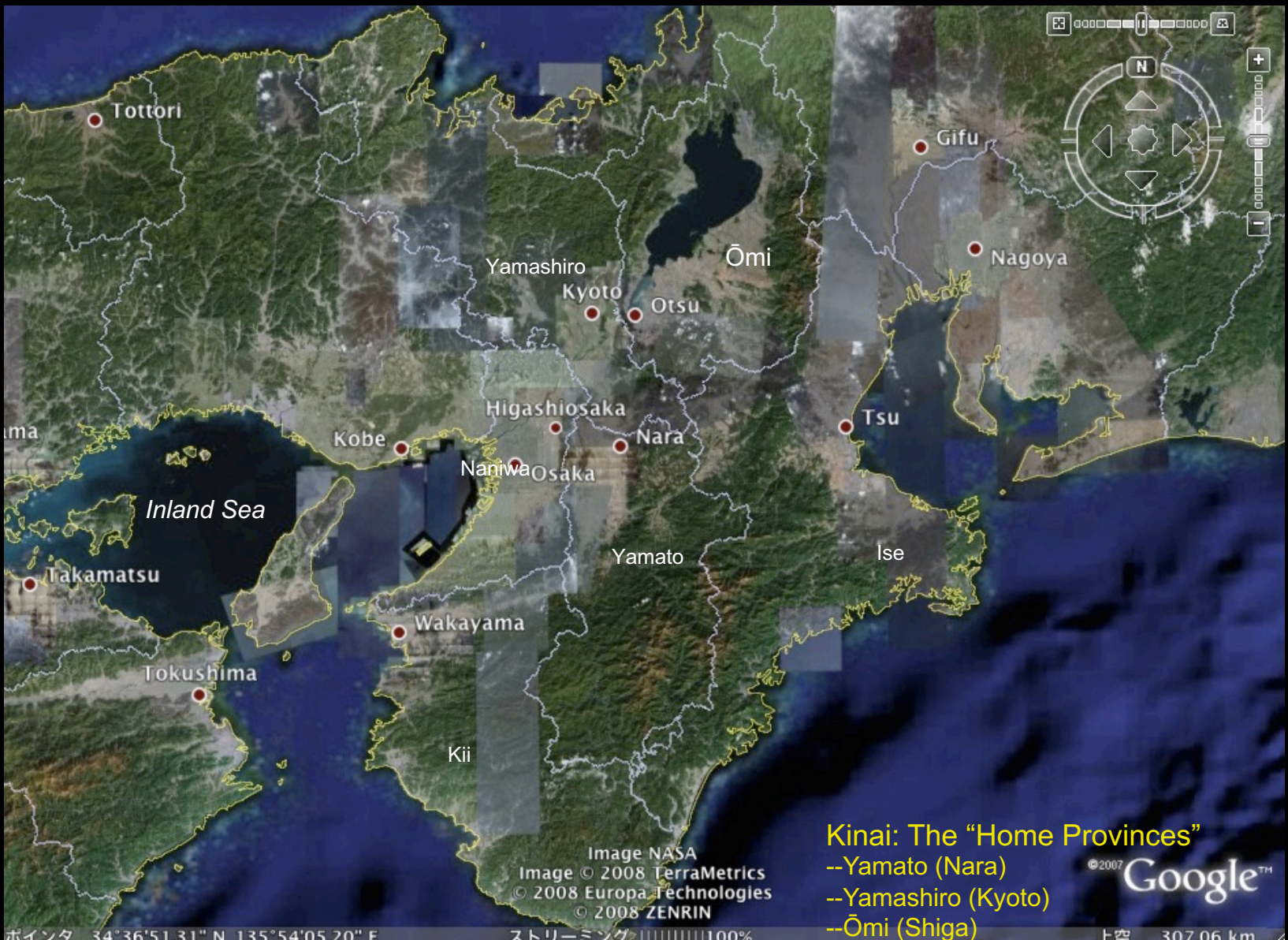
- Four major islands
- Outer islands
- proximity to "Black Current" 黒潮
- climate





Historical Japan  
--San'in / San'yō  
--West / East  
--Sea routes, land transportation

Image NASA  
Image © 2008 TerraMetrics  
© 2008 Europa Technologies  
© 2008 ZENRIN



**Kinai: The "Home Provinces"**

- Yamato (Nara)
- Yamashiro (Kyoto)
- Ōmi (Shiga)
- Naniwa (Osaka)
- Kii (Wakayama)
- Ise (Mie)

## General questions / issues:

What makes Japanese art unique?

What was it about Japanese art that made it so interesting to Europeans?

How does the artist view his/her past?

What is the relationship between artist and patron?

Transhistorical themes to think about:

Relationships between religious and secular

Relationships between the indigenous and the imported

Relationships between the natural and the artificial

Continuity of place; pictures of famous places -- *meisho* / *meisho-e*

## **TIME: Periodization(s) of Japanese Art**

### **Prehistoric**

Jōmon: ca. 10,500 B.C. - ca. 300 B.C.

Yayoi: ca. 300 B.C. - ca. A.D. 300

Kofun: ca. A.D. 300 – 700

### **Historical periods: Ancient**

Asuka-Hakuhō ca. 550-710

Nara 710-784

Heian 794-1185

### **Medieval**

Kamakura 1185-1336

Muromachi 1336-1568

### **Early Modern**

Momoyama 1568-1615

Edo 1603-1868

### **Modern**

Meiji 1868-1912

Taishō 1912-1924

Shōwa 1925-1989

Heisei 1989-present

- What makes each period distinct
- What are the justifications or rationale behind the above periodization?
- How do we characterize the artistic legacy of early Japan?

What makes Japanese art unique?  
Interest in *material*



Middle Jōmon vessel. 46.5 cm. Excav. Sasayama, Niigata Pref.



Clay: Haniwa Figurines. Kofun period.



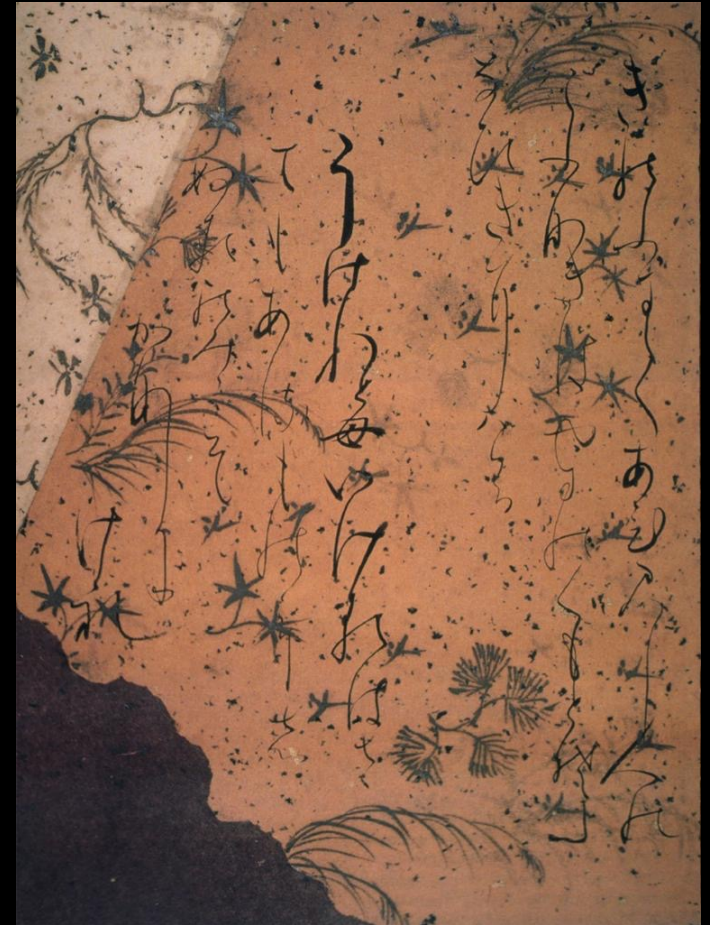
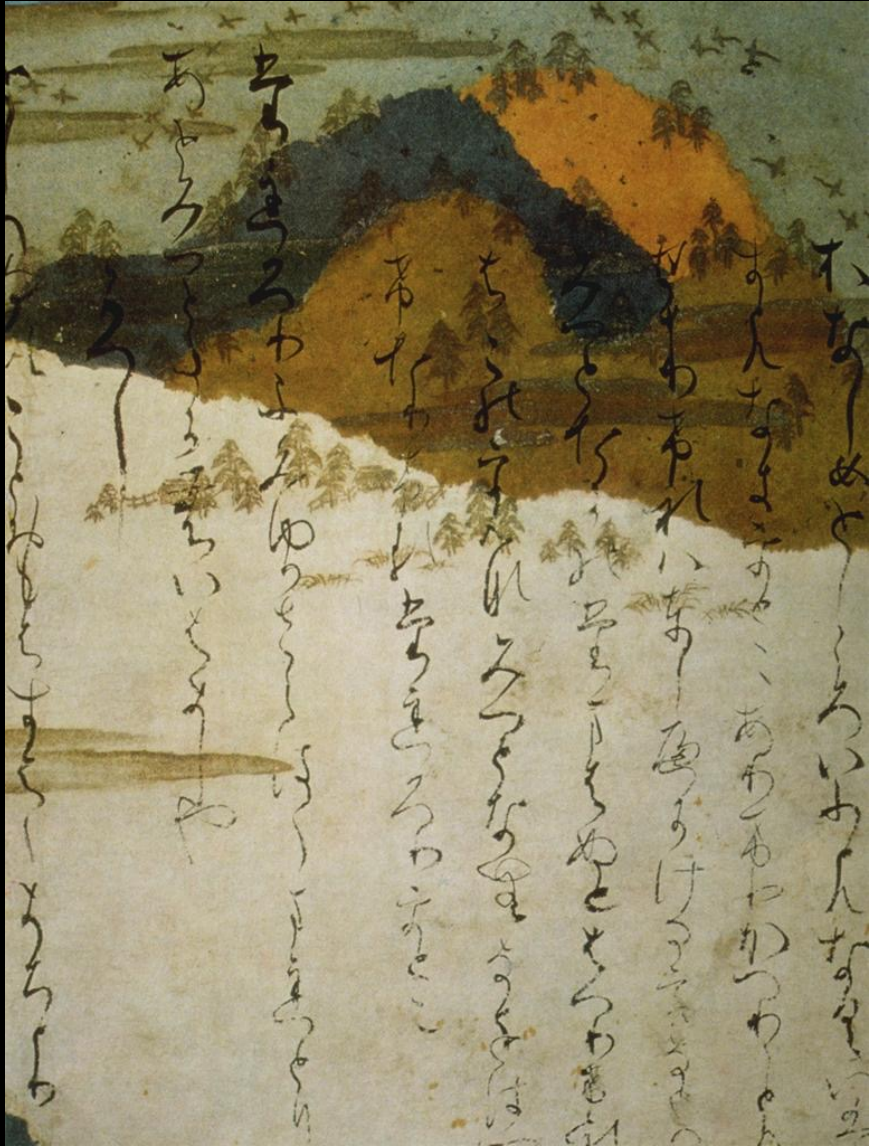
Wood: *Yakushi* (Healing Buddha), Carved from single trunk of nutmeg tree. Late 8th c.



Lacquer: Ogata Kōrin (1658-1716). *Writing Box*. Tokyo National Museum



Paper: *Thirty-Six Immortal Poets*; album leaf from the Ishiyama-gire anthology. Early 12th century. Ink with gold and silver on decorated and collaged paper. 20.3 x16.1 cm. Freer Gallery of Art



What makes Japanese art unique?

*Playfulness*



Soga Shōhaku (1730-1781). *Lion and Tiger*. Two-panel screen; ink on paper. Chiba City Museum.





Soga Shōhaku (1730-1781). *Lion and Tiger*. Two-panel screen; ink on paper. Chiba City Museum.



Kano Eitoku. *Chinese Lions*. Late 16th c. Six-panel screen, 222.8 x 452 cm. Imperial Collection, Japan.

Scroll of Frolicking Animals (*Chōjū giga*). Heian period, 2d qtr.-mid-12th c. Handscroll; ink on paper. 30.6 x 1149.6 cm. Kōzanji, Kyoto. National Treasure. First scroll (of four).



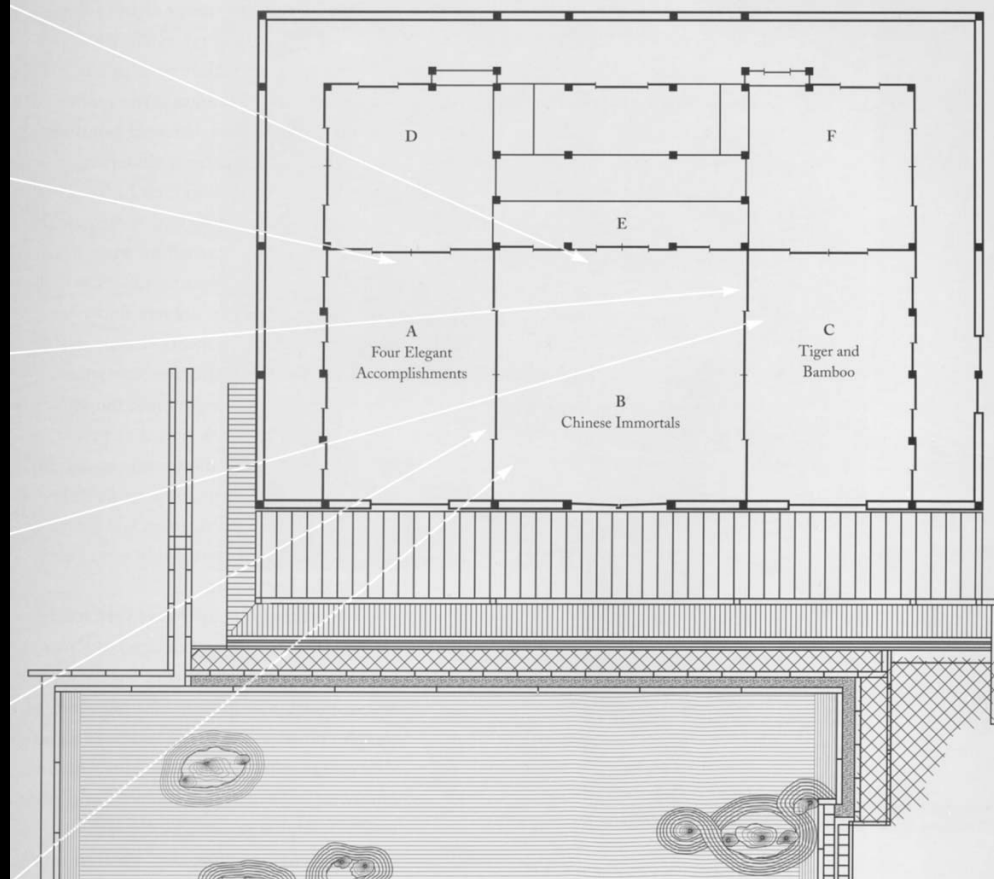


Relationship between natural and artificial



Dry landscape (karesansui). Garden possibly designed by Sōami ca. 1490.  
Ryōanji, Kyoto.

Ryōanji. Garden and plan of Hōjō.



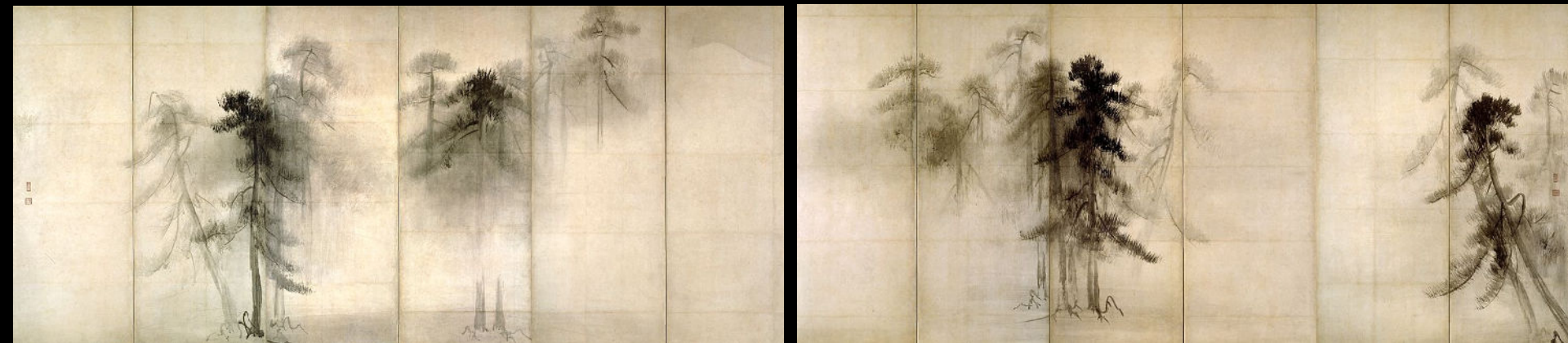


Ryōanji

*Dry Landscape Garden. Ca. 1513. Daisen'in subtemple, Daitokuji monastery, Kyoto.*



Hasegawa Tōhaku. *Pines in Mist*. Pair of six-panel screens; ink on paper.  
Each 156 x 347 cm. TNM.



Hasegawa Tōhaku. *Pines in Mist*. Pair of six-panel screens; 156 x 347 cm. TNM

Maruyama Ōkyo. *Pine Trees in Snow*. 1770s. Pair of six-panel screens; ink and gold on paper. Each 155 x 362 cm. Mitsui Memorial Museum, Tokyo.

*tsuketate*



Hasegawa Tōhaku. *Pines in Mist*. Pair of six-panel screens; 156 x 347 cm. TNM



Maruyama Ōkyo. *Pine Trees in Snow*. 1770s. Pair of six-panel screens; ink and gold on paper. Each 155 x 362 cm. Mitsui Memorial Museum, Tokyo.





“Torn Bag”  
(Iga Ware Vase)  
Momoyama pd., late  
16th c.

“Torn Bag” (Iga Ware Vase). Momoyama pd., late 16th c.  
Ogata Kenzan. “Tatsutagawa” Dish. Stoneware with enamel overglazes.





Katsura Villa, early 17th c.



- (1) Ornament
- (2) Light
- (3) Material
- (4) Scale
- (5) Function: public / private





How does the artist view his/her past?

What is the relationship between artist and patron?

*Illustrated Scrolls of The Tale of Genji*

# Illustrated Handscrolls of the *Tale of Genji*.

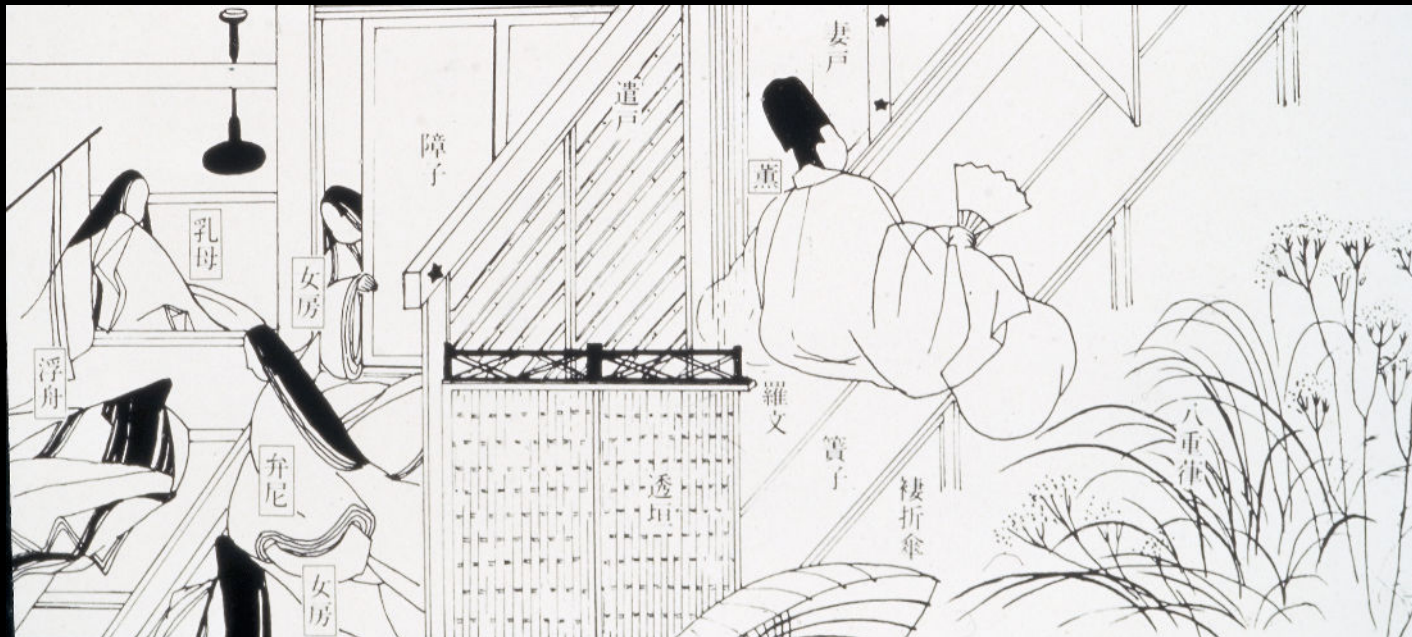
Late Heian period, early 12th c. Colors and ink on paper. Divided among:  
Tokugawa Museum of Art, Nagoya; Gotoh Museum, Tokyo; Tokyo National  
Museum. National Treasure. Each section approx. 22 cm (h).



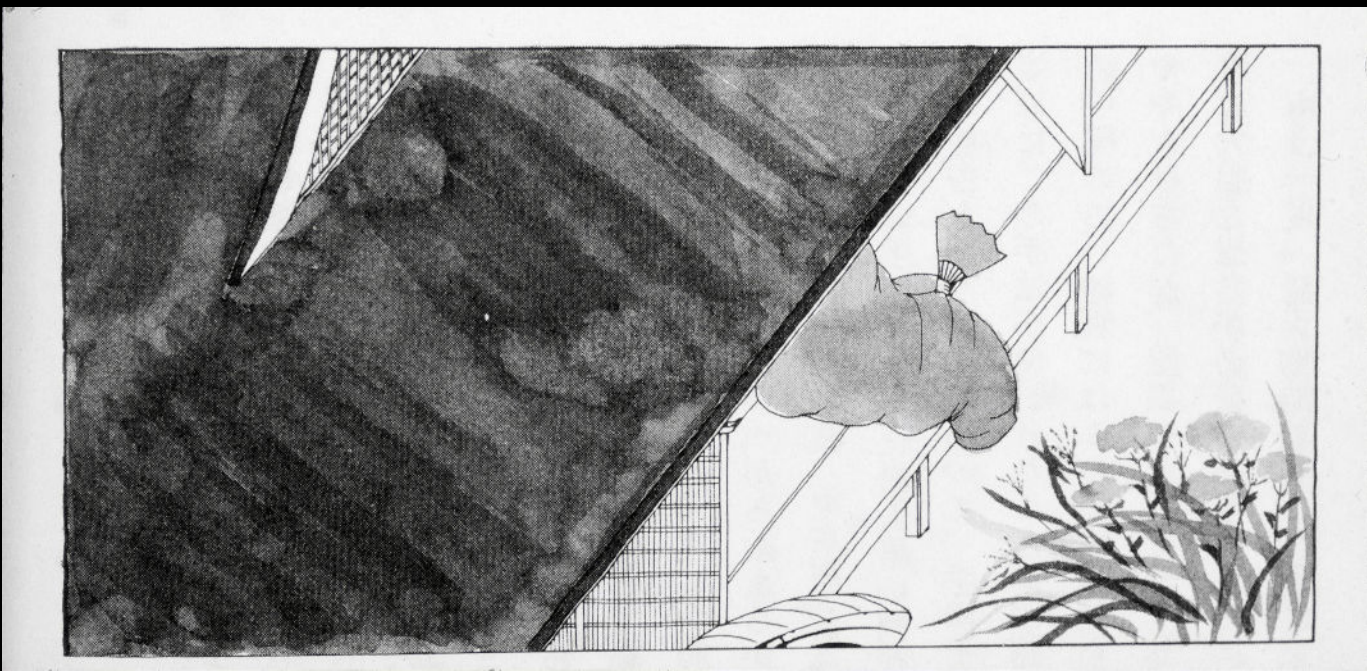
Format: The handscroll (*makimono*)







Ch. 50, "The Eastern Cottage" (Azumaya), Scene 2





吹抜屋台の手法

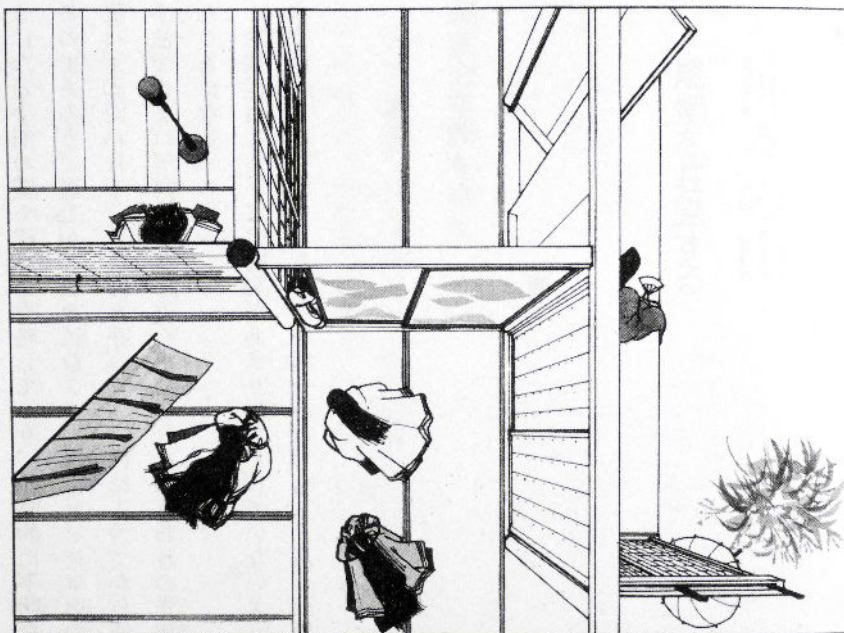


図3 「東屋」の帖第2段の図を現代的手法で描いた図。絵巻の図は建築的に不明な部分が多

*Illustrated Handscrolls of the Tale of Genji* 源氏物語絵巻. Ch. 36, "The Oak Tree" (Kashiwagi), scene 3.

major characters: Genji, Kaoru, Third Princess





*Heiji monogatari emaki* (Scrolls of Events of the Heiji Era). Late 13th c. Divided into three handscrolls in Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Tokyo National Museum; and Seikadō Bunko, Tokyo.

"Night Attack on the Sanjō Palace." ca. 1275. 41.3 x 700 cm. Handscroll, ink and colors on paper. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Heiji Era (1159-1160)

Minamoto Yoshitomo, Yoshihira

Fujiwara Nobuyori

Taira no Kiyomori, Shigemori

Shinzei (Fujiwara no Michinori)

Emperor Nijō

Retired (Cloistered) Emperor Go-Shirakawa ("Shirakawa II")





信濃の御家將士も多し高田に於ては  
 亦今も其の跡を尋ねて見ゆれば  
 徳も亦不問ひ申す所なき事なり  
 難く今も申す事なき事なり  
 然るも今も徳も亦不問ひ申す事  
 なく今も徳も亦不問ひ申す事  
 なく今も徳も亦不問ひ申す事  
 なく今も徳も亦不問ひ申す事

越後中納言成信様乃再小幡布  
 敷行軍の事なりと云て中納言成  
 信様の御行軍の事なりと云て  
 中納言成信様の御行軍の事  
 なりと云て中納言成信様の御  
 行軍の事なりと云て中納言成  
 信様の御行軍の事なりと云て  
 中納言成信様の御行軍の事  
 なりと云て中納言成信様の御  
 行軍の事なりと云て中納言成  
 信様の御行軍の事なりと云て











Anonymous. *Red-robed Daruma*. Inscription by Lanqi Daolong. 13th c. Ink and colors on silk. Kōgakuji, Yamanashi Pref.



Soga Shōhaku. *Daruma*. Late 18th c.

Murakami Takashi. *I open wide my eyes but see no scenery. I fix my gaze upon my heart.*  
2007



Soga Shōhaku. *Daruma*. Late 18th c.

Relationships between the indigenous and the imported

Sesshū. *Landscapes of the Four Seasons*. 1468. Four hanging scrolls, ink, light colors on paper. Each 149.2 x 75.4 cm. TNM.



Fan Kuan, *Travelers among Mountains and Streams*. No. 1.  
Song Dyn., ca. 1000. Ink & light color on silk. NPM, Taipei.





Anon. *Pine Trees on the Beach (with Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons)*. Pair of six-panel screens, each 106 x 312.5 cm. Muromachi pd., 16th c. TNM.







Continuity of place; pictures of famous places --  
*meisho / meisho-e*

Kano Hideyori, *Viewing Maple Leaves at Takao*. Mid-16th c. Six-panel screen; ink, colors, and gold on paper. Tokyo National Museum.





Kano Hideyori, *Viewing Maple Leaves at Takao, TNM*



Kano Hideyori, *Viewing Maple Leaves at Takao, TNM*



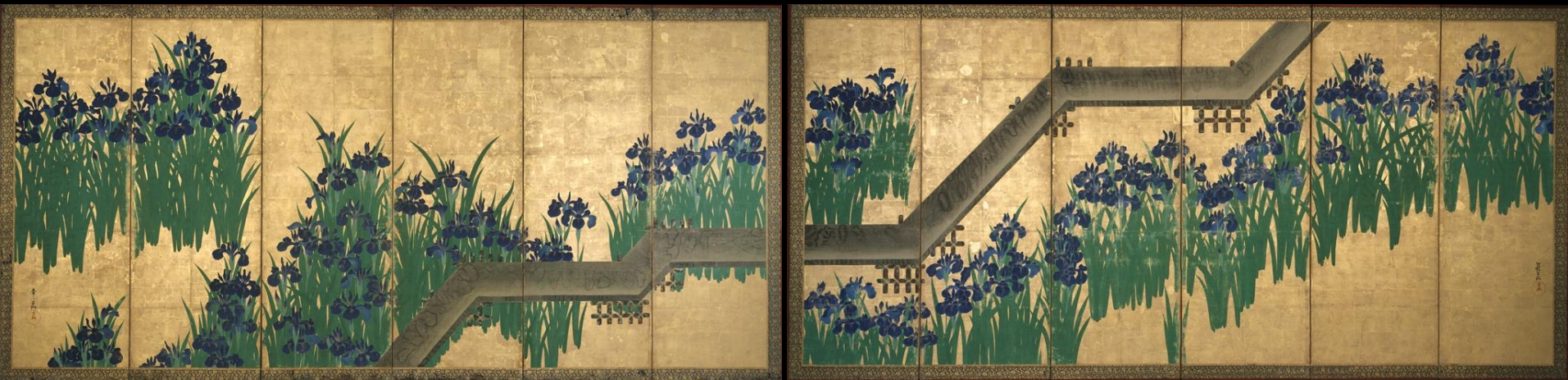
"I have a beloved wife,  
Familiar as the skirt  
Of a well-worn robe,  
And so this distant journeying  
Fills my heart with grief."

Karagoromo  
kitsutsu narenishi  
tsuma shi areba  
harubaru kinuru  
tabi wo shi zo omou

*Kakitsubata* 燕子花 = "Iris"

Ogata Kōrin. "Yatsunashi" episode from  
*The Tales of Ise*. Early 18th c. Hanging  
scroll; ink and colors on silk. 95.7 x 43.3 cm.  
TNM

"Hokkyō Kōrin" 法橋光琳  
"Iryō" 伊亮



Ogata Kōrin. "Yatsubashi" screens. Pair of six-panel folding screens; colors and gold leaf on paper. Each 179.1 x 371.5 cm. Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Anonymous. "Yatsubashi" episode from the *Tales of Ise*. Edo period, 17th c. 154 x 355 cm. Yamato Bunkakan.





Ogata Kōrin. *Iris*. Pair of six-panel folding screens; colors and gold leaf on paper. 150.9 x 338.8 cm. Nezu Institute of Fine Arts. National Treasure.  
R & L: "Hokkyō Kōrin" 法橋光琳 / "Iryō" 伊亮



Suzuki Harunobu (1725-1770). Travelers at Yatsuhashi. Edo period, about 1767–68 (Meiwa 4–5). Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper. Vertical chuban; 28.4 x 21.3 cm (11 3/16 x 8 3/8 in.). Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

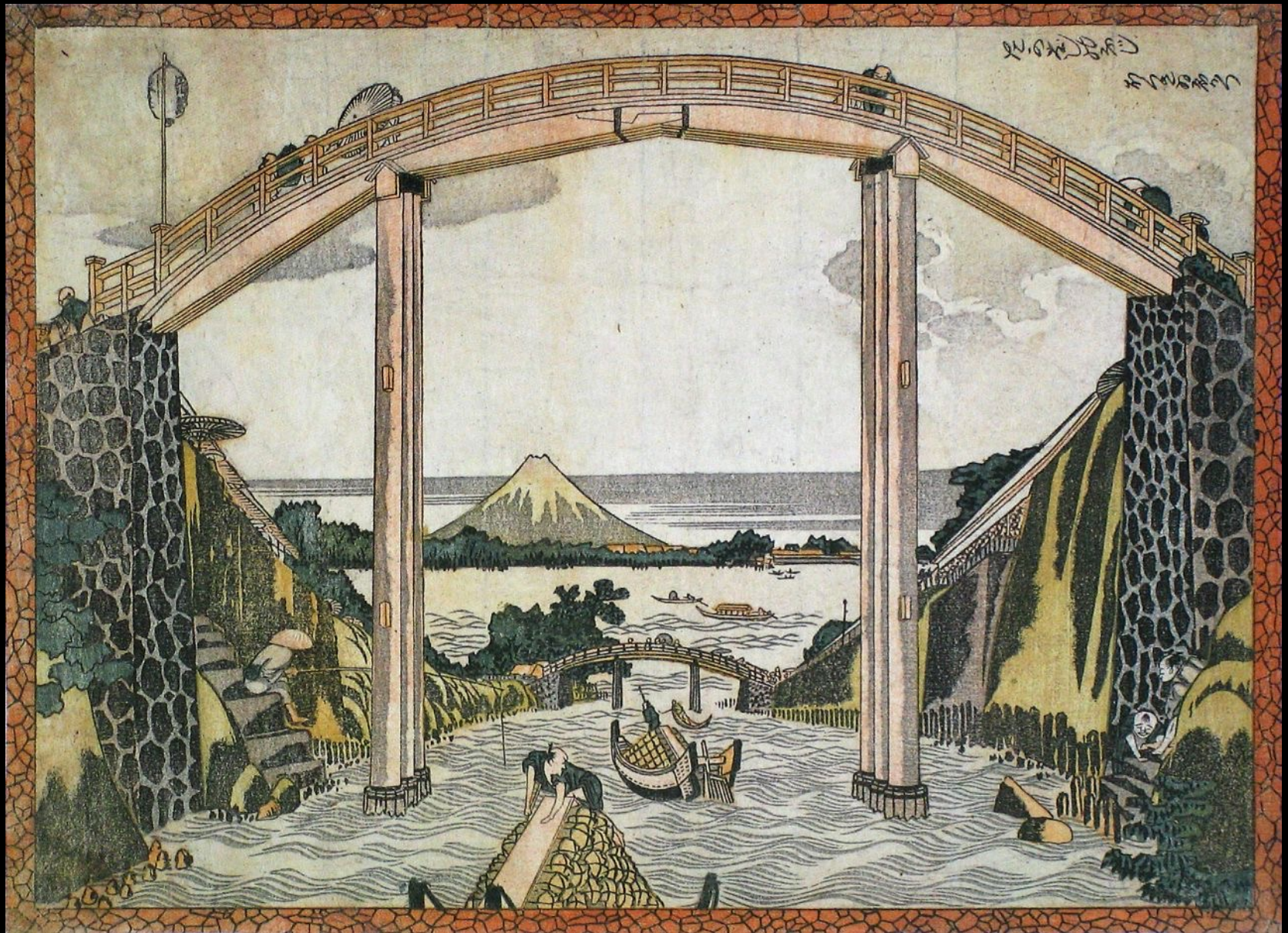


Katsushika Hokusai. *Old View of the Eight-part Bridge at Yatsuhashi in Mikawa Province* (Mikawa no Yatsuhashi no kozo), from the series *Remarkable Views of Bridges in Various Provinces* (Shokoku meikyō kiran). Edo period, about 1834 (Tenpō 5)

Woodblock print (nishiki-e); ink and color on paper. Horizontal ōban; 25.2 x 36.9 cm (9 15/16 x 14 1/2 in.)  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Katsushika Hokusai [Sōri period] (1760-1849). *Mount Fuji Viewed from under Takahashi Bridge*.  
Ca. 1804-1807. Horizontal chūban print.



Hokusai. *A Mild Breeze on a Fine Day*. From *36 Views of Mount Fuji*. Ca. 1830-1832. Horizontal ōban. MFA.



Hokusai. *Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa*. From *36 Views of Mount Fuji*. Ca. 1830-1832. Horizontal ōban. MFA.

