



The Tokyo Metropolitan Edo-Tokyo Museum is scheduled to be closed for major renovations until 2025.

Fiscal 2022

Introducing New Acquisitions

In 2022, we were able to collect many museum materials. This showcases some of these collections.

* The commentary for each piece was done by Suda Sayaka, Uno Chito, and Terada Sanae.



Twelve Months : Yayoi, Hina Matsuri Print by Utagawa Toyokuni III 1854 Collection ID 22200176-22200178

Spectacular Annual Event, Hina Matsuri (Doll Festival)

These scenes of Yayoi are part of a series of nishiki-e (colored woodblock prints) by Utagawa Toyokuni III (1786 - 1864) that depict annual events throughout the year and beautiful women. The print depicts the appearance of women and girls dressed in colorful kimonos celebrating Hina Matsuri (Doll Festival) on March 3.

The children are enjoying the Hina Matsuri dishes of fish and soup while the two women are serving them with food and white sake. A Hina Matsuri display is visible on the left side of the room and Hina accessories, such as a palanquin, a thirteen-stringed koto, and a Go Board are placed on the display.

In the Edo period, Hina Matsuri was held as one of the five seasonal festivals. However, the opulence of this festival increased each year to the point that it was once the subject of a Bakufu crackdown. This piece can provide a glimpse into the elegant annual event in the late Edo period.



Tokyo Scenery Photo Collection in the Late Meiji Period Late Meiji Era Collection ID 22750001

Tokyo Scenery Photo Collection in the Meiji Period

This piece is a photo collection that contains 32 photos taken in Tokyo between the 30s and 40s of the Meiji era. Locations that were topical at the time were photographed. For instance, the collection shows Yodobashi Purification Plant in Meiji 31 (1898) and Ryogokubashi Bridge that was rebuilt as an iron bridge in Meiji 37 (1904).

The photo above shows the ring entering ceremony of Umegatani Tōtarō II who, together with Hitachiyama Taniemon, established the golden age of sumo in the late Meiji period.

He stands in a ring that was setup outside Ekoin Temple before 1909 when the Kokugikan Sumo Arena was built. Pillars were erected in the four corners of the ring and the referees were waiting in front of the pillars. Many people around the ring held their breath as they watched the ring-entering ceremony of Umegatani.

The photo collection is a fascinating piece that provides a glimpse into landscapes that were of interest at the time and keeps alive the sights of the Meiji period not present in the modern day.



A Doll Set Depicting a Scene in a Birthing Room Late Edo Era Collection ID 22200018-22200033

Reproduction of the Delivery Room Scene: Valuable Doll Display

This piece is a doll display that recreates the appearance of the maternity room in a miniature size. This is a complete set with dolls and accessories, including an infant sleeping in a white sleeved quilt. The inscription on the box states that Kōdai-in, who was the legal wife of the Eleventh Shōgun, Tokugawa Ienari, presented the doll display to the legal wife of the Fifth Head of the Shimizu Tokugawa Clan, Tokugawa Narikatsu, after Ienari had died.

The pine, bamboo, crane, and turtle on some of the accessories were painted with a technique called "Shiroe" to create patterns in white on a white base of plain wood and other materials. It had been customary since the Middle Ages for high-ranking samurai families and nobles to apply Shiroe to implements during the preparation of a birthing room. This is also faithfully recreated in this piece.

Analogous dolls to this are very rare, and therefore it is extremely valuable for gaining an insight into the appearance of private maternity rooms.

I Am the Dance Virtuoso Utaemon

Text by Nishimura Naoko, Curator



Figure 1 *Degatari* (narrative musicians with shamisen) in *Cat Kabuki* (Fan Print) 1839 by Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Published Ibasen, Collection ID 06200460

〜 Cause you're cute, I come from Kanda
If I hate you, would I commute from Kanda

This song is *Tokiwazu-bushi* (narrative music with shamisen) and is sung by the cat on the top left of Figure 1. It was also a popular song in 1839 (Tempo 10) when this fan print was first produced.

The cats that appear in *Degatari* (narrative musicians with shamisen) in *Cat Kabuki* (Fan Print) have unique human-like personalities. As can be seen on the print, the cats don't have names. However, by decoding the images, the customs of Edo at that time, such as the previous song, are revealed as if opening a treasure box. We would like to showcase some of these customs here.

First, there is the three-legged Kendai (book stand) in the background of the print. While the stand appears to have cabriole legs, it is actually a tentacled kendai and is used by the performers of *tokiwazu* consist of a narrator known as a *tau*. The orange *kataginu* vest and Kakumokkō crest indicate that they are part of the Tokiwazu clan. The museum had previously estimated that this piece was published around 1842 (Tempo 13). This was because Kuniyoshi frequently produced



Figure 2 *Omangaame* candy vendor (from *Kinsei Shobaizukushi Kyoka Awase*; Collection of comic tanka on modern jobs) 1852, Collection ID 93200397

caricatures of cats in 1841 - 1842 (Tempo 12 - 13) and during this period publishing actor ukiyo-e prints was prohibited in June 1842 (Tempo 13) as part of the Tempo Reforms. However, no mention of a relevant Tokiwazu narrative performance could be found in Kabuki-related documents from that year.

The key driver of this is the outfit of the cat dancing in the center. The outfit is similar to that of an omangaame, a traveling peddler of candy in Edo city. (Figure 2) Omangaame is a candy vendor, a popular character played by cross-dressing male actors in their 50s wearing a sedge hat and red apron who sang the song at the beginning and danced in an exaggerated way in a Tokiwazu narrative.

The Actor Nakamura Utaemon IV played a part modeled after this omangaame in the performance of *Iwai Uta Soga no Kaomise: Hanagoyomi Iro no Showake* at the Nakamura-za Theater from March to April, 1839 (Tempo 10). He learned the gestures from an actual candy vendor and was a hit on the stage when he danced. Throughout Edo, adults and children would imitate the song, singing “〜 Cause you're cute, I come from Kanda”. The sleeve of the cat dancing in Figure 1 bears a crest that combines the Tokiwazu crest and the Kakumokkō and Utaemon family crest and gionnokami (emblem).

The cat in the kamishimo to the left of the dancing cat bears a plum crest. The kaemon (the sub-crest) of Utaemon is the Ura-ume (reversed plum flower). Utaemon played Gotobei in a *kamishimo* in the April production of *Iwai uta Soga no Kaomise: Yoshitsune Koshigoejō*. The leading character of the fan print was actor Nakamura Utaemon IV.

The names of the cats of *Tokiwazu* performers in the print are also known. The original copy of the Tokiwazu narrative, *Iwai Uta Soga no Kaomise: Hanagoyomi Iro no Showake* still exists and is in the National Theater of Japan collection. The names of the performers, venue, and leading actor are mentioned on the cover. This information corresponds to the fan print as shown in Figure 3.

Sales of the fan print peaked in the summer of the lunar calendar from the end of April to June. When this print illustrating seasonal theater lined the stores of fan wholesalers and Ibasen stores, the customers certainly hummed that opening song.



Launch of Hyper Edohaku: Meiji Ginza Edition, Smartphone App!

The Meiji Ginza Edition was launched on April 26. This is the second edition of the popular Hyper Edohaku smartphone app that was released the previous year. This app recreates the Ginza Bricktown of the Meiji period with 3D computer graphics. The players can collect 100 items about the culture and trends of the time while exploring four distinct periods of

the streets of Ginza from the start to the end of the Meiji period. While watching how the streetscape changes over time, the players will gain insight into the origin of various objects with connections to the contemporary world, including those related to food, modes of transport and fashion. Download the app and enjoy time traveling to the Meiji period!

(Kutsusawa Hiroyuki, Curator)



Download the app here.