



The Tokyo Metropolitan Edo-Tokyo Museum is scheduled to close for major renovations by fiscal 2025.

Fiscal 2023

Introducing New Acquisitions

In fiscal 2023, we were able to collect many museum materials. This showcases some of these collections.



Oshie Gajo (Embossed fabric picture album) Matsuda Sekka Late Edo – Early Meiji period Collection ID 23200077

(1) Occupations of Edo portrayed by Matsuda Sekka, master craftsman of *oshie* (embossed fabric pictures)

A man and a woman in a folding fan shop provide product guidance to a female customer sitting at the storefront. Beside her sits a craftsman, affixing an illustrated fan to a fan frame.

The lifelike people, who seem to pop out from the background, are made three-dimensional through a technique called *oshie*, where cloth is affixed after plumping with puffy batting.

Compared to the simple background painting, the *oshie* part is intricately crafted, including clothing, accessories, facial expressions, and hairlines.

The artist, Matsuda Sekka, was a master craftsman of *oshie* pictures, active in the late Edo and Meiji periods. This piece is a bound album of 12 pictures featuring scenes of customs and occupations in the Edo period. Through this work, we can see the lost occupations of Edo, and appreciate that *oshie* was a popular genre that produced a diverse range of works in the past.

Haruki Shōko, Curator



Zatsue Gajo
(Album of miscellaneous pictures)
Fukawa Kazunori
Early Meiji period
Collection ID 23000639

(2) Picture album of FUKAWA Kazunori, an apprentice of Hokusai in his later years

Fukawa Kazunori (1824–1876) was the eldest son of the popular fiction writer Gohensha Hanku. He was apprenticed to Katsushika Hokusai at the age of 12. He took the name Hokurei (or Hokushin), and worked as an artist, but after the death of Hokusai, he was asked to do sword fitting designs and switched to the path of metalcraft. Kazunori's name was derived by taking one character each from Hokusai's pseudonym "Iitsu" and the name of Chizuka Hisanori, the master who was his teacher.

This picture album was owned by Fukawa Kazunobu (1891–1979), a member of the Kazunori School. Kazunobu's father came from the Miyasaka family of shrine wood carvers from Suwa in Shinano Province, and he was an apprentice of Kazunori. His son Kazunobu studied under Kazunori II and III, and was active in the metal repoussé and chasing field into the Showa period. Kazunobu heard from his father that Kazunori enjoyed drawing pictures for his apprentices in the evening, after they'd finished work. Brushstrokes closely resembling his master Hokusai are evident in Kazunori's art.

Ochiai Noriko, Curator



Ehon Kukuri-zome (tie-dyed picture book) Utagawa Toyokuni
1794 (Kansei 6) Collection ID 23200001–23200002

(3) Beautiful *kyōka* (humorous tanka poem) picture book with few copies in existence

This color-printed picture book, featuring spots famous for *sakura* (cherry blossoms) and autumn leaves, brings together pictures of women visiting each site with humorous tanka poems. The pictures are by Utagawa Toyokuni (1769–1825), reviver of the Utagawa school, and the tanka poems are by the Sukiya-ren circle of poets, led by Shikatsubeno Magao (1753–1829), who inherited the professional names of Ōta Nanpo after his death.

Kyōka are humorous, witty tanka poems. In the Tenmei era (1781–89), there was a *kyōka* boom, with enthusiasts composing poems together across divisions of social class. People also liked to produce works with illustrations for the poems. The humorous tanka picture books published by Tsutaya Juzaburo, a figure with close ties to *kyōka* poets, are well known, but this book was produced by Izumiya Ichibei who ran a shop in Shibashinmei. Izumiya was a supporter of Toyokuni when he started out as an artist.

This is an important, rare book for understanding the Edo publishing world in the Kansei era.

Tandō Masako, Curator

Universality at Museums

Text by Tsuda Hiroko, Curator



Printing block (reproduction) for picture of sumo wrestling and "Hands-on Ukiyo-e"



"Hands-on Ukiyo-e" with raised texture applied to the print so it can be felt with the fingertips (partial)

"Universal" and "inclusive" are words we hear often in recent years, and our museum is making a broad effort to meet the needs of the diverse people who want to know more about the history and culture of Edo-Tokyo.

Visitors are often not allowed to touch pieces exhibited at museums in order to prevent deterioration or damage, but by using "touchable objects" such as reproductions or models, we can create a space where all sorts of people—even those with disabilities—can enjoy the museum's exhibits. Our Mobile Edo-Tokyo Museum (which goes out into the community) presents reproductions of ukiyo-e printing blocks, musical instruments used for sound effects in Kabuki, black rotary dial telephones, and other items that people can hold in their hands.

Many insights for operators can be gained through workshops for people with disabilities. People with visual impairments often ask "What material is this made of?" If you adopt the other person's perspective, touch the object again, and carefully observe it while attending to the sensations of your hand, you notice information about many details you inadvertently overlook due to normally obtaining most of your information from vision. I saw people with hearing impairments checking the

sound of the bell of a black rotary dial telephone via the vibrations transmitted from their hand, and that helped me understand the diversity of information obtained from the senses.

From these experiences, I gained a strong awareness of the need to consider universality at museums. We must do this with understanding and respect for the differences in people's senses—how they gather information about things and what points they have an interest in—without applying simplistic labels like "can or can't" or "interested or not interested" to the disabled. This is true not just for disabilities, but for all kinds of differences, such as language, culture, and age group.

Many museums already have programs to enable participation by anyone, providing the necessary support for each kind of disability, such as subtitles, interpreting, use of tactile tools, and volunteers.

Going forward, we hope to continue in this way, developing supportive approaches and tools, and enriching programs through interaction with diverse people. The aim is broader options for enjoying the museum suited to each individual, within the shared space for all that we call a museum.

Fiscal 2023 International Exchange Program Report

Post-COVID International Conferences

Our museum participated in two international conferences in fiscal 2023.

The first was the annual conference of the International Committee for the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities (CAMOC), one of the international committees of the International Council of Museums (ICOM), held at the Museum of the City of New York.

Another was the Japan-China-Korea International Symposium on Museum held at the Shenyang Imperial Palace Museum, China.

I had the opportunity to participate in these two conferences. The community issues, missions, and other challenges facing museums are diverse, but I was able to engage in personal exchanges with participants regarding their passion for transmission and protection of culture, as well as their efforts to address issues in their local communities, both today and in the future. This experience reconfirmed my appreciation of the significance of continuing to interact face-to-face rather than via the web.

Takahashi Hidehisa, Curator



Annual Conference 2023 CAMOC



2023 Japan-China-Korea International Symposium on Museum
Touring the Shenyang Imperial Palace Museum
International conferences have returned to normal.