

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
Bulletin

Summer 1985





HOKUSAI

BY
A. HYATT MAYOR



WITH AN ESSAY BY YASUKO BETCHAKU
ASSISTANT CURATOR, DEPARTMENT OF FAR EASTERN ART

THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

COVER: Fuji from Kajikazawa in the province of Kai. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*, about 1831–33.

INSIDE COVERS: Fencers. From the *Manga*, Vol. VI, 1817.

TITLE PAGE, PAGES 3, 5, 7: Galloping horse and two archers. From the *Manga*, Vol. VI, 1817. Man swallowing a sword. From the *Manga*, Vol. X, 1819.

ABOVE, RIGHT: Some prize-winning “talents” of gluttony. A tough-jawed eater bites greedily into a persimmon suspended by a string. One glutton races through bowls of noodles; another tosses whole rice cakes into his mouth. From the *Manga*, Vol. X.

BELOW, RIGHT: Various magical talents. A magician turns into a frog; another makes irises bloom from the burning charcoal in a brazier; a third multiplies himself; a fourth turns sheets of paper into birds. From the *Manga*, Vol. X.



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From the publication of its first volume in Japan in 1814, Hokusai's *Manga* was an enormous success. Its delightful melange of small energetic figures set the style for fourteen more volumes, the last of which was published in 1878, twenty-nine years after the artist's death. It was an immense project, and one that had an impact surprisingly far beyond the shores of Japan. The lightly tinted woodcuts of the *Manga* were among the first Japanese prints seen in the West after Japan ended her two hundred years of isolation in 1854. Traditionally, their discovery has been set in Paris, about 1856, when the etcher Félix Bracquemond spotted a volume in the shop of his printer, who had found it in the packing materials in a shipment of porcelain. Bracquemond shared his discovery with his artist colleagues, including Edouard Manet, who adopted several motifs from the *Manga* in his own prints. Other artists—Degas, Cassatt, Bonnard, Vuillard, Lautrec, Pissarro, van Gogh, Gauguin—responded enthusiastically to the new and fascinating images by Hokusai, as they did to other Japanese prints by Harunobu, Utamaro, and Hiroshige. The woodcuts' flatter spaces and shapes, decorative patterns, and novel viewpoints reaffirmed the new ways of seeing that the French artists were exploring. Wrote Pissarro in 1893, "These Japanese confirm my belief in our vision."

While such immediately appealing images as Hokusai's can be thoroughly enjoyed apart from their own culture, our appreciation deepens when they are seen within the richness and diversity of the art of Japan from prehistory to recent times. In the Museum's new galleries for Japanese art, scheduled to open in the spring of 1987, Hokusai's pictures will join some two hundred other masterpieces in settings designed to evoke their original context, which is essential for the full understanding of many Japanese works. Upon completion of this second phase in the installation of our Far Eastern collections, ten architecturally varied spaces will provide appropriate and intimate surroundings for the traditional display of sculpture, screens and scrolls, ceramics, textiles, arms and armor, and prints.

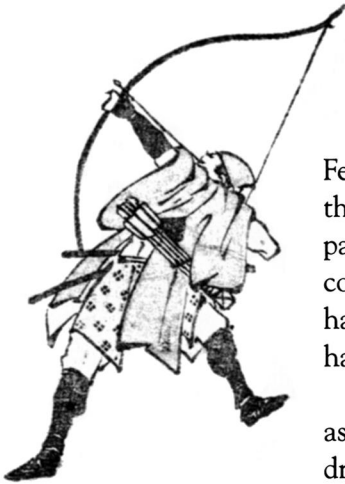
The introduction to this *Bulletin*, the selection of prints, and the captions are by A. Hyatt Mayor and were originally published by the Museum in another format in 1967. Hyatt Mayor, who died in 1980, was Curator of Prints from 1946 until he retired from administrative duties in 1966 to do much of his best writing, including his monumental *Prints & People* (1971). The notes on Hokusai's prints were contributed by Yasuko Betchaku, Assistant Curator of Far Eastern Art, who has also played an indispensable role—both here and in Japan—in the preparations for the new galleries.

PHILIPPE DE MONTEBELLO



Additional magical talents. One magician produces a procession of small figures from his sleeve; a second vanishes; a third eats rice and exhales a swarm of bees; a fourth emerges from a vase; a fifth breathes out a saddled horse; a sixth projects a giant face in incense smoke; a seventh swallows a sword; an eighth pours a gushing stream of water from his cupped hands. From the *Manga*, Vol. X.

THE OLD MAN MAD ABOUT PAINTING



Few artists would bear looking at every day for a year; their work does not have the variety and personality. It is not enough merely to be great, for the great painter may impound us unendurably in the singleness of his obsession. To be continuously interesting through a year's worth of pictures, an artist must have eyes that gluttonize in every direction and an absolute command of hand. Such a one was Hokusai.

Hokusai was born in 1760 in what is now Tokyo. All his life he was as poor as his father, who polished mirrors for a subsistence. When he was a small boy drawing pictures, the Japanese began to print woodcuts in several colors. In his early teens, Hokusai was cutting wood blocks for publishers, and at eighteen he started to draw for other cutters in the studio of Shunshō. He adopted part of his master's name, calling himself Shunrō, to show how completely he succumbed to Shunshō's rather weary style in prints of sulky, silken courtesans and the actors who impersonated them. If Hokusai had died before he was forty, while still lingering in this listless elegance, he would have been forgotten. He developed late in his eighty-nine years of life by dint of making over 10,000 woodcuts and some 30,000 to 40,000 drawings. Thus he was not altogether assuming humility when he said, at the age of seventy-five: "I have drawn things since I was six. All that I made before the age of sixty-five is not worth counting. At seventy-three I began to understand the true construction of animals, plants, trees, birds, fishes and insects. [He omits men.] At ninety I will enter into the secret of things. At a hundred I shall certainly have reached a magnificent level; and when I am a hundred and ten, everything—every dot, every dash—will live."

Hokusai died in 1849, four years before Commodore Perry introduced foreigners into Japanese life. For over two centuries a few Dutch merchants had been tolerated on a three-hundred-yard rectangle of earth dumped into Nagasaki harbor for the confinement of outsiders. Hokusai, observing everything, once shows a "high nose" peering out of a window beyond a board wall, and being peered at from the street. Even though the Dutch were forbidden to cross the narrow bridge to the mainland, their clothes, their guns, their magnifying glasses, and their books did. Hokusai, living just when Japanese ideas were beginning to rub against ideas from Europe, can no longer quite believe in the fairy tale esthetics of the Lady Murasaki a thousand years before. Even the old ways of representing the world are going, for in one of his prints a Japanese street converges to a vanishing point, with figures diminishing in the distance, just like a plate in any western perspective book. His studies of fat people and thin people could well be Dürer's anatomical comparisons set to capering.

Whenever and wherever old ideas begin to be questioned, the unsettling generates energy. The breakup of ancient Japanese ideas supplies the motor that convulses Hokusai's wrestlers, fishermen, and jugglers. The pace of change drives him to explore every doing and happening of Japanese daily life as he saw it in his studio, the street. He is the only Japanese printmaker who threw himself into the turmoil of the slums rather than the high-flown sham of the stage.

Hokusai traveled fast because he traveled light, carrying little more than his brushes and his paper, changing his abode ninety-three times, and as restlessly adopting over thirty different names. As he flew, he absorbed every style that he saw, keeping consistently only the Japanese convention that ignores shadows. Shadows would have obstructed the racing of his line as it describes things with disembodied subtlety.

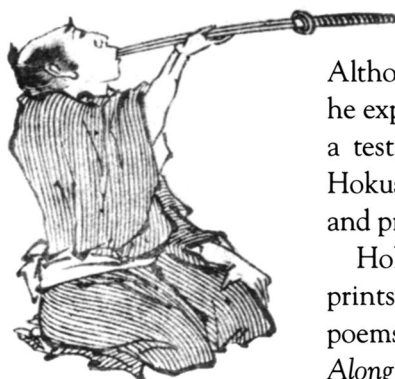
Japanese and Chinese artists are able to fling out lines writhing like strings in the wind because they do not move their brushes with the little muscle of their fingers, as we might do, but with the large muscles of their arm and shoulder. Nothing touches the paper but the brush tip that goes and goes, driven by the dread of a pause that might drop a blot. Such a way of drawing puts its effort in outline and summarizes inner detail. The Japanese and Chinese see no interior logic of bone and muscle in their shadowless figures, and they escape our Greek abstract ideal of the body—never realized in nature—to concentrate their convention on the painted face of the geisha and the actor.

In Japanese prints the clean lines bound the transparent colors without crossing and obscuring them—sky tints that stain through the tough diaphanous tissue of the mulberry paper. These air colors capture the out-of-doors for a people who live more at the mercy of nature than we do, the rain stinging their cheeks through the splits in their straw rain clothes, the chill in their paper houses disjointing their fingers. In Hokusai's prints, the wind-squalls scatter hats and bully people, the snow blinds with awesome cold. We are far from the mild valleys of classic Chinese painting, where a philosopher pauses to contemplate the October mist on the cliffs, and time runs visibly in the rivers. Hokusai lived in the knockabout struggle of today. Like Daumier, he seemed a graphic buffoon to his contemporaries, but has grown with the years to a stature of command.

A. HYATT MAYOR



Two women at leisure: one reads—a tobacco pipe is on the floor behind her—the other lies propped on her elbows flexing her leg and wriggling her toes. Brush drawing in ink.



Although Hokusai did not live to be one hundred years old, the age at which he expected to reach “a magnificent level,” the bulk of work he left behind is a testimony to his remarkable achievement as an artist. Even excluding Hokusai’s paintings, one can easily see the scope of his work from his drawings and prints, as demonstrated in the following pages.

Hokusai’s surviving early work is mainly book illustration and *surimono*, prints privately issued for special occasions and frequently accompanied by poems. In *Ehon Sumidagawa Ryōgan Ichiran* (*The Picture Book of the Views Along Both Banks of the Sumida River*), about 1801–2, Hokusai presents in panorama a continuous view of the river, beginning at the mouth and ending at the upper stream, and closing with a scene of the Yoshiwara quarter of Edo (now Tokyo). The illustrations continue page by page, in the same way that a scroll painting is unrolled section by section. Hokusai not only includes the people engaged in different activities on the near shore but also incorporates the distant view across the river (p. 14). A similar depiction of the far shore, though less prominent, is also seen in a single-sheet print, *Imado River* (p. 23, below).

Hokusai’s subjects ranged from animals, plants, landscapes, and human figures to historical and supernatural themes. He produced voluminous sketches covering all these subjects on a trip to Nagoya in 1812, when he stayed with one of his pupils, Gekkōtei Bokusen. From these drawings, craftsmen made wood-block prints that were published as *Hokusai Manga* in 1814 (vol. 1). Further volumes, created from other drawings, followed in 1815–19 (vols. 2–10), 1834 (vol. 12), 1849 (vol. 13), and 1878 (vol. 15). The dates of volumes 11 and 14 are not yet certain. The full title *Denshin Kaishu: Hokusai Manga*, which may be translated as “beginner’s manual for transmitting the true image: as Hokusai pleases,” was commonly known as *Hokusai Manga* or *Manga*. The word *manga* then denoted “a manual of drawing,” as opposed to its contemporary meaning of “comics or satires.”

Many pages of the *Manga* are randomly filled with small figures engaged in different activities, a variety of birds and plants probably drawn from nature, or landscapes in all kinds of weather conditions. Others are more thought-out designs that could easily have become pages of an illustrated book (pp. 19, above and below; 27, below; 29). The freely rendered brush drawing of a man riding a donkey (p. 48) shows a striking resemblance to the images in the *Manga*; this or a similar drawing could have served as a *hanshita-e* (under-drawing) for the *Manga*.

Among Hokusai’s other instructional books was *Hokusai Gashiki* (*Method of Drawing by Hokusai*), a selection of designs on a variety of subjects, published in collaboration with Hokusai’s Osaka pupils—Senkakutei Hokuyō, Sekkatei Hokushū, and Shunyōsai Hokkyō—in 1819. In contrast to the *Manga*, whose pages are crowded with small designs, *Hokusai Gashiki* has on each double page a single design that clearly demonstrates a style of the master in a larger format (p. 12).

Ehon Musashi Abumi (*Picture Book of the Stirrups of the Braves*), 1836 (p. 28, below) and *Ehon Wakan no Homare* (*Picture Book of the Glory of Japan and China*), 1850 (pp. 27, above; 28, above)—two of three books generally known as the Warrior Trilogy—display the linear style often associated with Hokusai’s work of around the 1830s. The blocks for *Ehon Musashi Abumi* were probably made about 1836 but were not printed until after Hokusai’s death. Figures are executed with fine strokes in combination with

accentuated contour lines, whereas landscapes are shaded with angular strokes and dots—a common convention in Chinese landscape painting as well as in Nanga, the Japanese literati painting inspired by Chinese painting of the same kind.

Hokusai's spontaneous brushwork may be seen not only in his printed books, but also in his drawings. He captures playful sparrows hopping around an old hat with the utmost simplicity and economy of line. The sparrows and the hat are drawn with dabs of brown wash and broad brushstrokes that are contoured with contrasting thin lines (p. 13, above).

Countless images produced for the *Manga* may have served as a groundwork for Hokusai's best-known single-sheet prints, *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*, about 1831–33, where landscape became the major theme for the first time in the history of Japanese prints. Ten prints with black outlines, the so-called “rear-view Fuji,” were subsequent additions to the initial set of thirty-six, with blue outlines.

In *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit* (pp. 46–47), Mt. Fuji towers peacefully above the turbulent weather suggested by the white rain clouds and the thunderbolt. Here the majestic Fuji dominates an entire scene in which human figures are completely eliminated, while in other prints in the set (pp. 40–41; 44, below; 45) the human element is unobtrusively present. In *The Great Wave off Kanagawa*, for example, huge anthropomorphic waves appear to engulf the tiny people holding onto their wooden boats. The viewer's eye is directed by the boats toward the left, swiftly taken upward by the splashing waves, and then returned to the center where Fuji stands undisturbed beyond the rough waves. Other prints in the series (pp. 33, above; 34–35; 36–37; 38; 39; 42–43; 44, above) depict landscapes and activities of ordinary people set against the familiar presence of Mt. Fuji. Throughout the series, the viewer's attention is always directed to the graceful view of this admired mountain, no matter how small Fuji may be portrayed.

In other genres, Hokusai proved that birds and flowers could be just as exciting subjects for single-sheet prints as actors and beauties, themes favored by the masses. His images of plants are based upon observation from nature, but he goes far beyond morphological accuracy, capturing his subjects' very essence. In the print of irises (pp. 10–11), a sense of vibrant life is suggested by the flowers in different stages of bloom, as well as by the torn leaf that may have been eaten by the grasshopper discreetly holding onto it.

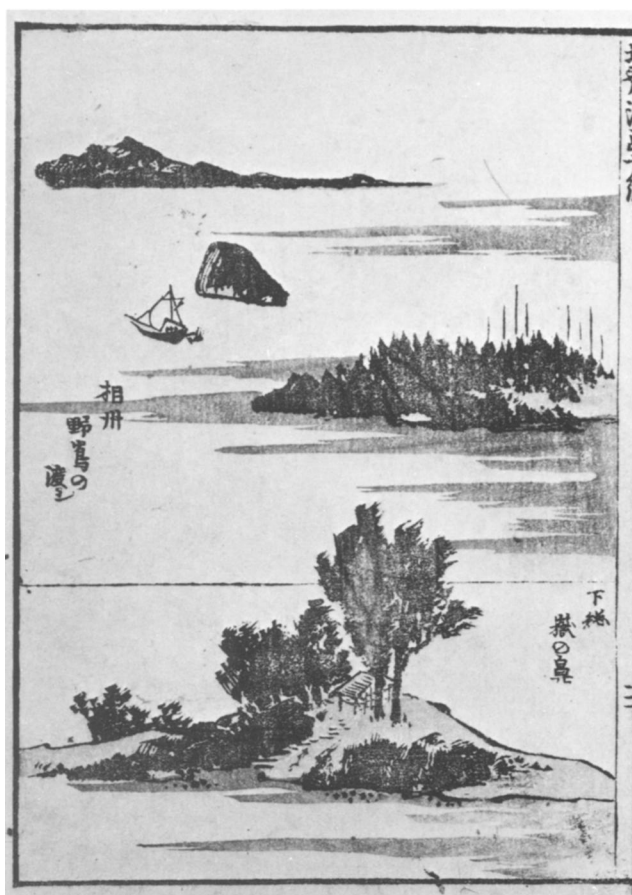
In his later years, Hokusai frequently sought ideas from the classics. In one of the prints from the series *Famous Bridges in Various Provinces*, about 1833–34, Hokusai adopts the theme of *yatsuhashi* (eight-plank bridge). The *yatsuhashi* in Mikawa province, now Aichi prefecture, was a place celebrated for the lovely irises surrounding the bridge and was one of the subjects favored by artists ever since it was mentioned in the tenth-century *Tales of Ise*, a collection of romantic episodes in the life of a courtier. In Hokusai's print (pp. 30–31), the familiar zigzag pattern of the *yatsuhashi* is slightly altered to form a triangle in the center that echoes the shape of the mountain. Iris flowers, usually shown filling the space, are reduced to scattered dots under the prominent bridge. Hokusai has replaced the Heian period (794–1185) ideal of *yatsuhashi*, usually associated with elegant court nobles and large iris flowers, with a genre scene of the Edo period (1615–1867) showing ordinary people crossing the bridge to pursue their daily activities.

Another series, *The Hundred Poems Told by the Nurse*, about 1835–36, derives from an anthology of one hundred poems by one hundred poets compiled in 1235 by the famous poet Fujiwara no Teika. For some reason the series was never completed; twenty-eight designs are known to exist as prints—twenty-seven color and one black and white—and forty-one designs as *hanshita-e* are in the Freer Gallery. The title of the series along with the poet's name and poem are presented in a rectangle and a square cartouche, the shapes of the sheets of paper traditionally used for writing poems. Whether workers repairing roof tiles, hunters warming up by a fire, or men rowing boats (pp. 22, below; 24–25; 33, below), the images depicted are not those of the Heian period, but those of Hokusai's own. A *Winter Scene*, where streaks of smoke are set against a flat mass of black and gray, exemplifies Hokusai's abstract sense of color, shape, and design, as well as his inexhaustible originality—some of the qualities that have given his art its universal appeal.

YASUKO BETCHAKU



ABOVE: Landscapes: trees in the rain;
islands in the sea. From the *Manga*,
Vol. VII, 1817.



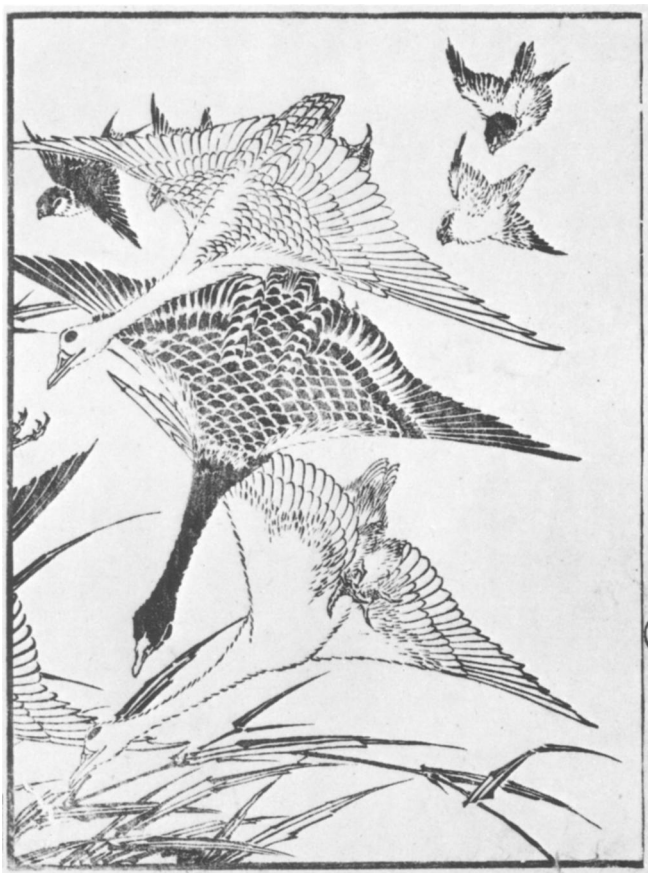
RIGHT: Assorted leaves. From the
Manga, Vol. III, 1815.



Irises. From an untitled group known as the "large-sheet flower series," late 1820s.









OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Birds in flight over reeds; cormorants, finches, and geese. From *Hokusai Gashiki*, 1819.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Birds on a tree at the water's edge: thrushes, cranes, finches, and geese. From *Hokusai Gashiki*.

ABOVE: Old hat and house sparrows. Brush drawing in ink and color.

RIGHT: Various birds. From the *Manga*, Vol. III.

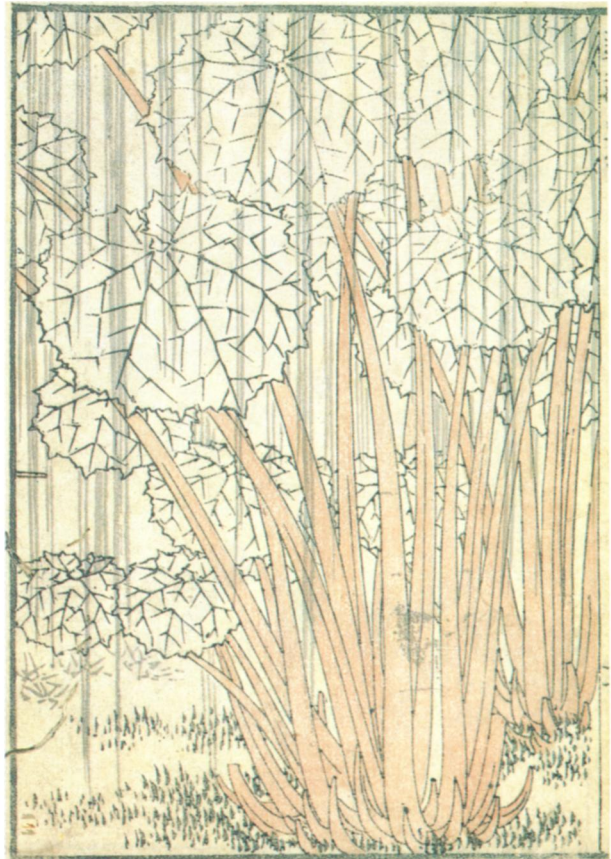
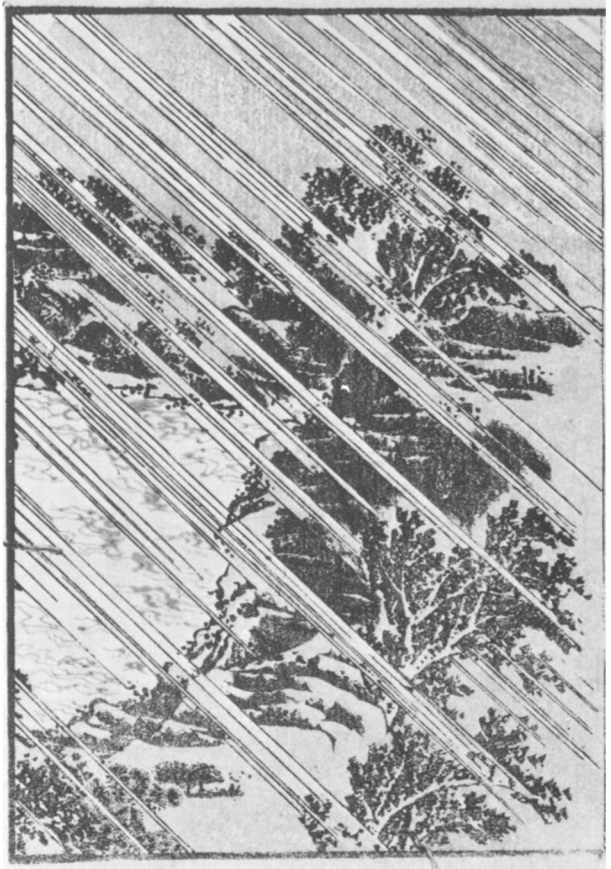
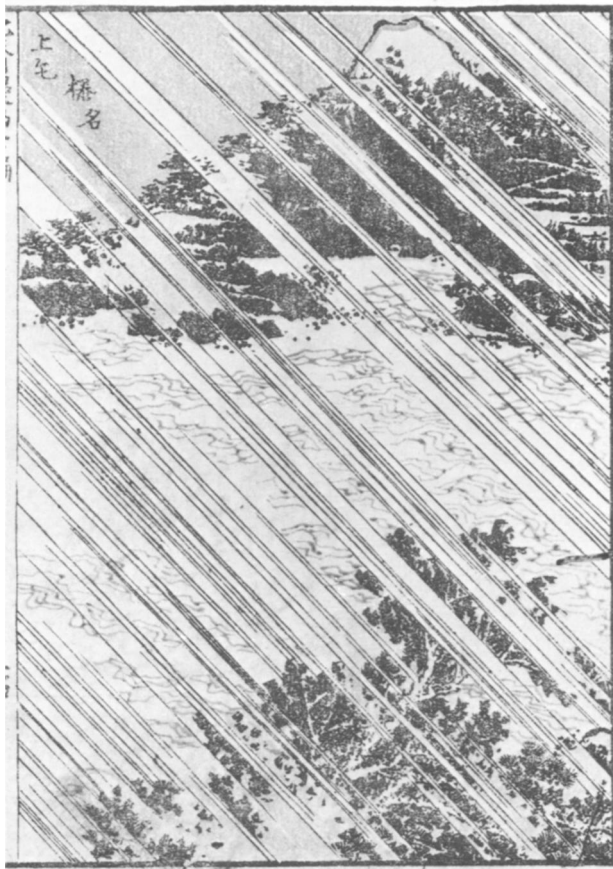




ABOVE: Rainbow at Mitakegura. A shower falls at the new Yanagi Bridge over a canal joining the Sumida River. Wayfarers, rushing across the bridge, hastily raise umbrellas and cover themselves with coats and rugs. In the background is a panoramic view of the far bank of the Sumida. From *Ehon Sumidagawa Ryōgan Ichiran*, about 1801–2.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Mount Haruna in the rain. One of a series of views of famous places drawn in various weathers. From the *Manga*, Vol. VII.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Bog rhubarb of Akita in the rain. Hokusai has enlarged the rhubarb of Akita to preposterous size with leaves large enough to serve as umbrellas. This may be his comment on the boastful tales of the residents. From the *Manga*, Vol. VII.



富嶽千景 駿州 紅尾

東山新富尾





A gust of wind at Ejiri, in the province of Suruga. Pale Fuji is seen from the plain. Travelers on the raised path through the rice fields struggle against the wind. Sheets of paper are swept into the air, and one man has lost his hat. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*, about 1831–33.



ABOVE: The maddening wind. To Hokusai, gestures spoke louder than words. These studies caricature the reaction of the harassed pedestrians to the unpredictable gusts of the wind. From the *Manga*, Vol. XII, 1834.

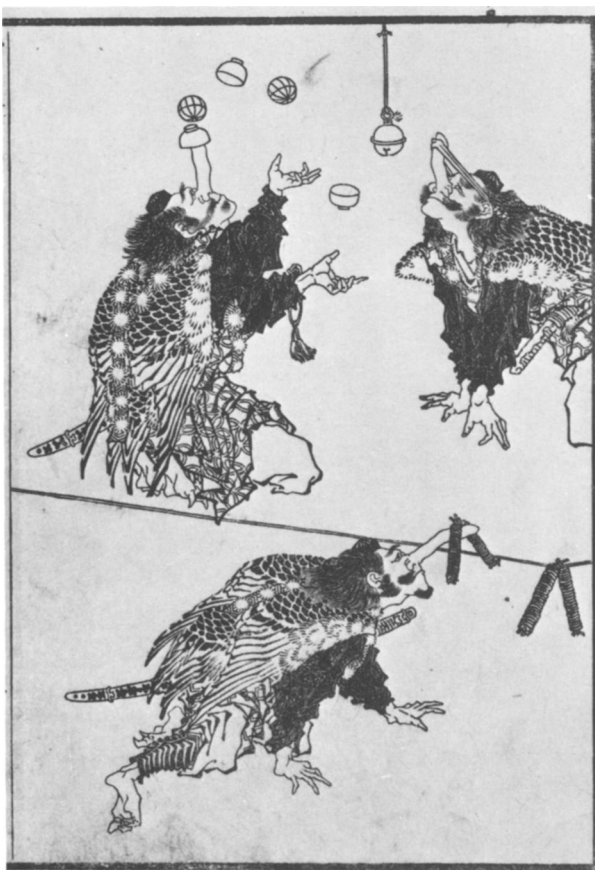
OPPOSITE, ABOVE: A woman of remarkable strength. A rearing wild horse is held fast by the delicate high wooden clog of the woman's sandal on the halter rope. The woman, oblivious of the plunging animal, admires a bird flying above the irises in the lake. From the *Manga*, Vol. IX, 1819.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Another woman of remarkable strength. A mighty and muscular warrior pushes with all his strength, but the woman continues to walk at her relaxed and unhurried pace. At the edge of the path an empty saké bottle has been stuck upside down on a bamboo pole. From the *Manga*, Vol. IX.





相馬
公家



OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Caricatures of the descendants of a noble family. One figure at the top paints eyebrows on his forehead; the other paints his lips and teeth with the aid of a magnifying mirror. At the bottom a posturing dandy treads on another's robe, and in the center a figure slumps like a pile of discarded clothes. From the *Manga*, Vol. XII.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Talents of the long-nosed. Long-nosed *tengu* (monsters, half-human, half-bird) display their skills while an equally long-nosed woman competes with them by writing elegant cursive script on a folding screen with an ink brush tied to the end of her nose. From the *Manga*, Vol. XII.

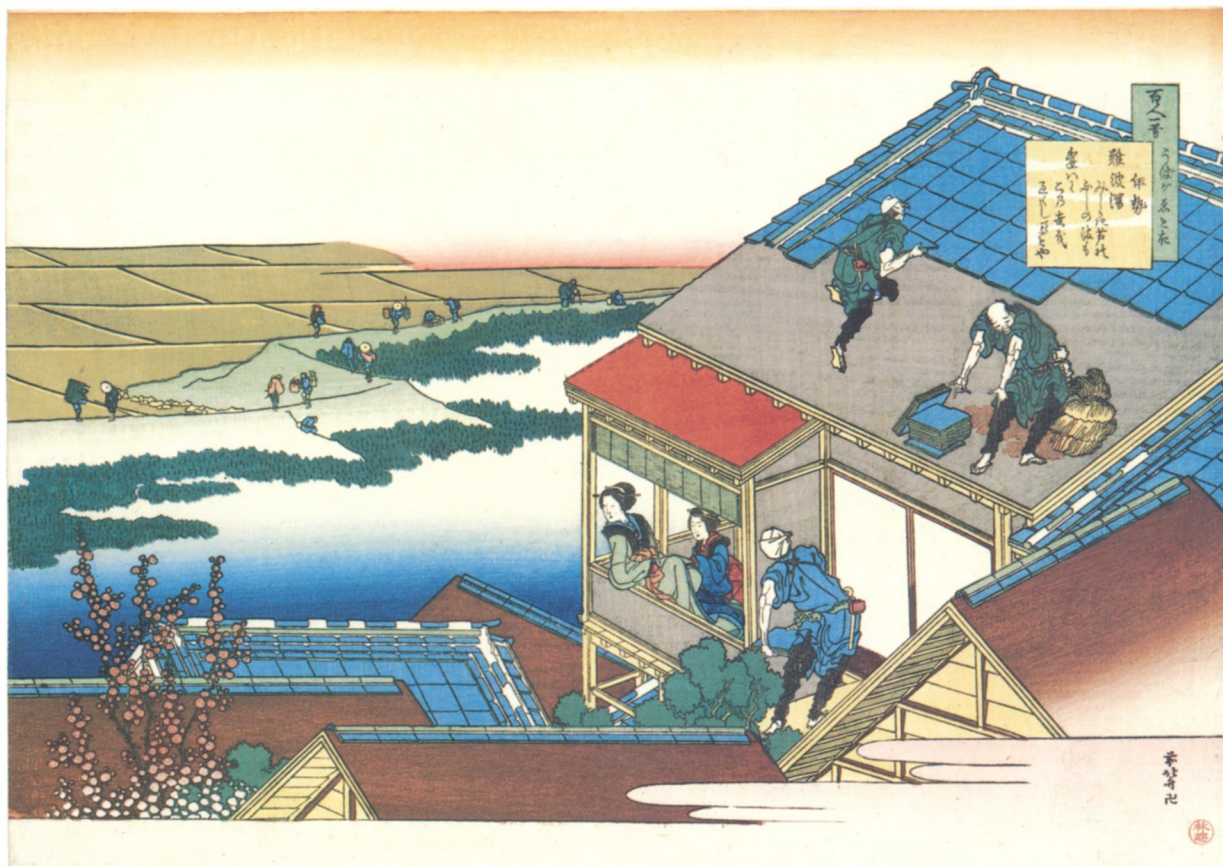
BELOW: Various unseemly sights. At the top a man is about to commit *hara-kiri* with a frog beside him. Below, a woman's face is unflatteringly magnified. Top right, a famous wrestler, Gorō of Matano village, makes an ostentatious display of strength by lifting a boulder. Below, a partially clad woman takes a pickled radish from a barrel. From the *Manga*, Vol. XII.





LEFT: Thin men and thin women. In contrast to relaxed fat people (opposite), thin people are tense and active. They wrestle, carry loads, work, fight, break crockery, and provoke trouble. From the *Manga*, Vol. VIII, 1818.

BELOW: Two women in a house are looking at the peach blossoms below their porch. A workman is throwing tiles to another on the roof above, while a third is laying them in position. In the distance is a well-traveled road. From *The Hundred Poems Told by the Nurse*, about 1835–36.





LEFT: Random sketches of fat men and fat women in various poses. The fat people, for the most part, relax and sleep, read, smoke, or amuse themselves in a comfortable manner. Hokusai finds their character to be vastly different from that of the thin people (opposite). From the *Manga*, Vol. XIII, 1818.

BELOW: Potters making roofing tiles on the bank of the Imado River, a tributary of the Sumida River. Early 1800s.

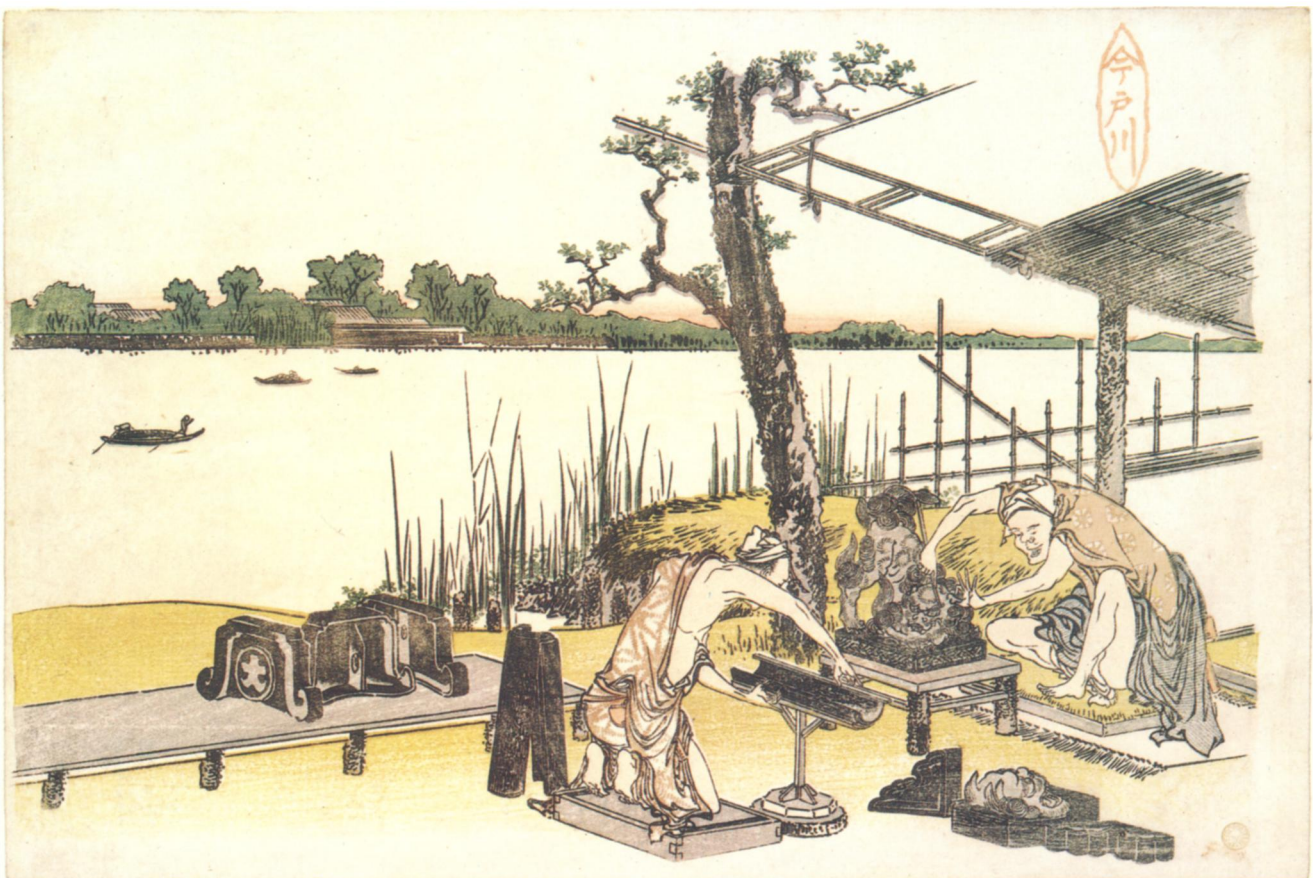






Illustration of a poem by Minamoto no Muneyuki. A winter scene in the mountains. Outside a snow-covered hut, men warm themselves over a fire.

Winter loneliness in a mountain hamlet grows

Only deeper when guests are gone
And leaves and grass are withered;
So runs my thought.

From The Hundred Poems Told by the Nurse.

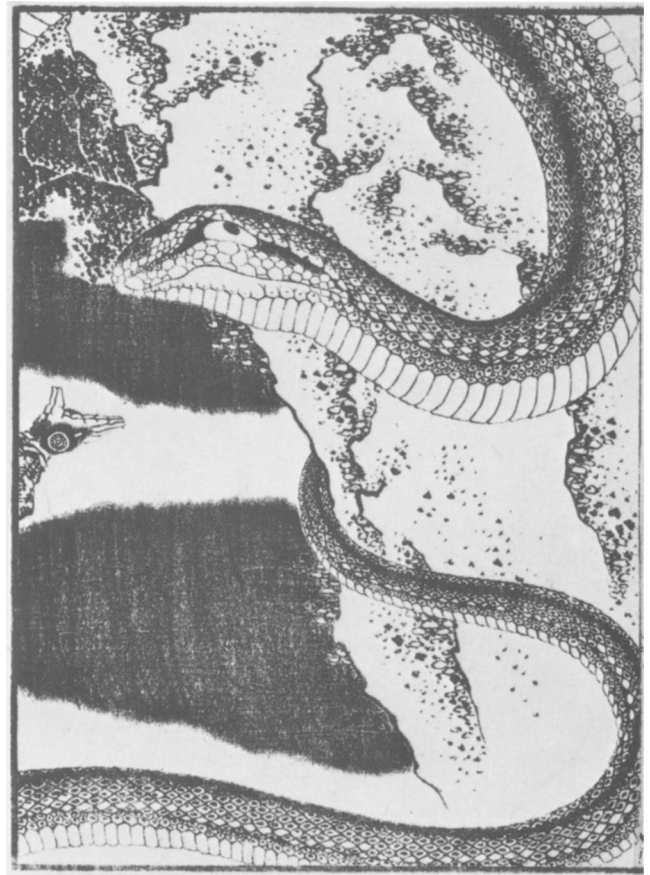
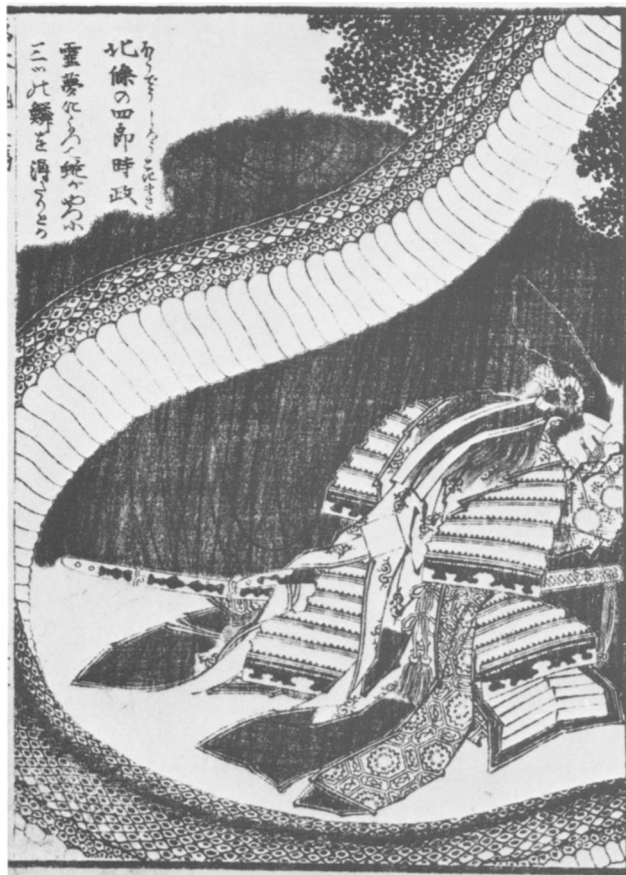


ABOVE: Various modes of fencing. The lances are tipped with protective cushions. The helmeted figures in the center wear gauntlets and wield swords of wood. From the *Manga*, Vol. VI, 1817.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE: General Nitta no Yoshisada praying to the dragon god in the sea. In response, the god turned the sea waves into sand, so that the general could cross to the opposite shore. A wave of sand following the contour of a wave of water may be seen in the foreground. From *Ehon Wakan no Homare*, 1850.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: An episode in the life of the Chinese warlord, Liu Hsüan-te (A.D. 161–223). The warlord, bent low in his saddle, plunges down a cliff into the foaming torrent of the river as he escapes from his enemies. From the *Manga*, Vol. VI.







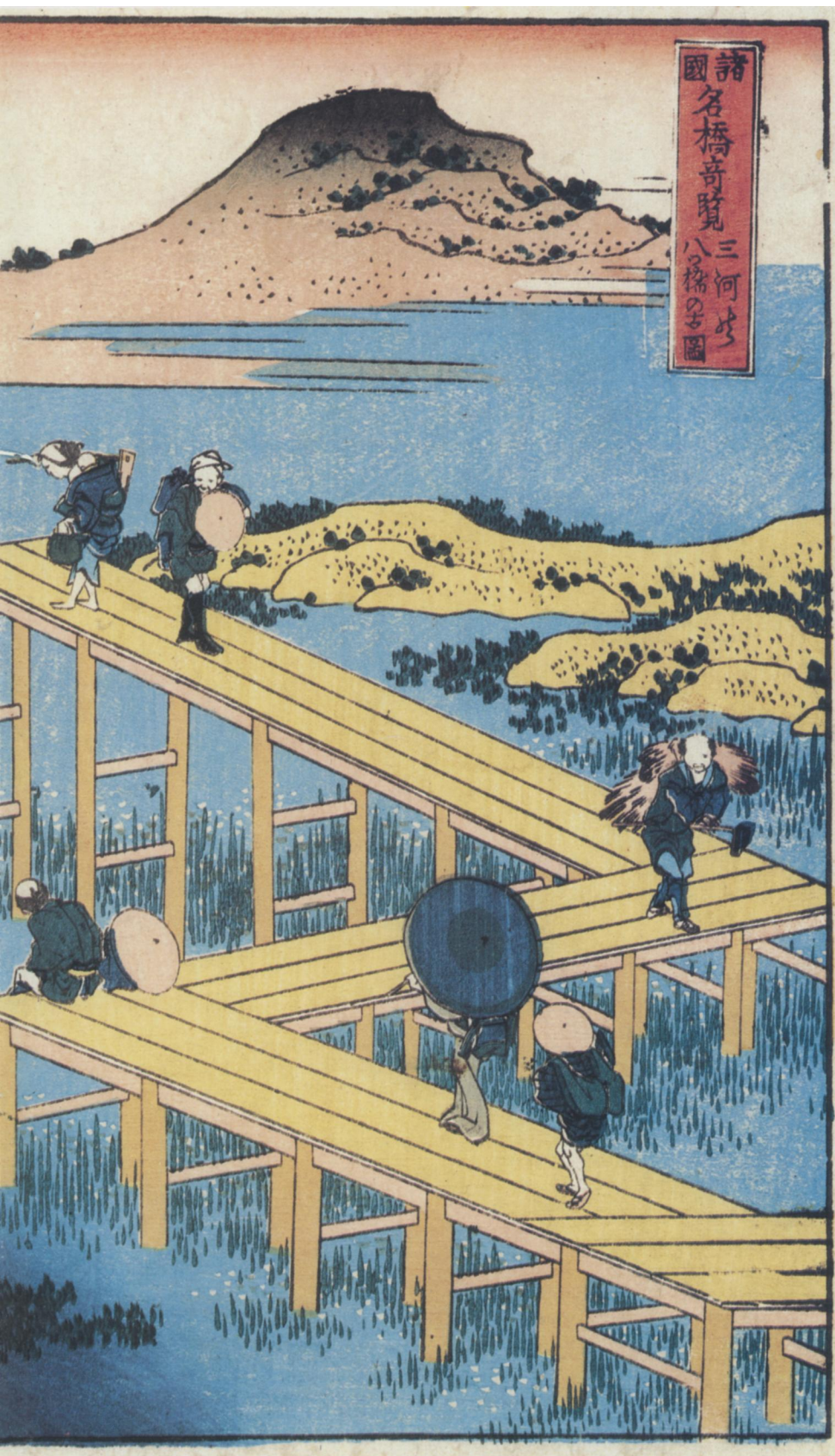
OPPOSITE, ABOVE: At the request of the emperor, Nitta no Tadatsune (d. 1203) set out to slay the monster that was said to inhabit the dark caverns deep under Fuji. Tadatsune is shown here apparently lighting a magic torch from rays of sunlight reflected on the sea. From *Ehon Wakan no Homare*.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Vision of Hōjō no Tokimasa (1138–1215). According to the legend, Tokimasa prayed to the Goddess Benzaiten for her protection. After three weeks of incessant prayer, Tokimasa was granted a vision of Benzaiten in the form of a serpent. As she disappeared, Benzaiten left behind her three serpent scales, which were treasured by Tokimasa as a pledge of divine protection. From *Ehon Musashi Abumi*, 1836.



ABOVE: Sun Wu-K'ung, the legendary Buddhist-follower monkey, performing magic. Hairs that the monkey has plucked from his beard form themselves into other monkeys carrying staves. On the left is the double manifestation of T'a Fei, the famous cruel and beautiful concubine of the last emperor of the Shang dynasty. Her scattered ashes were said to have turned into a many-tailed fox. From the *Manga*, Vol. X.





Yatsubashi (The Eight-plank Bridge), in the province of Mikawa, a construction of narrow platforms built out zigzag over a swamp. The middle part of the bridge is raised in an arch, and men and women on different parts of the bridge admire the iris blossoms in the water below. From *Views of Famous Bridges in Various Provinces*, 1833–34.

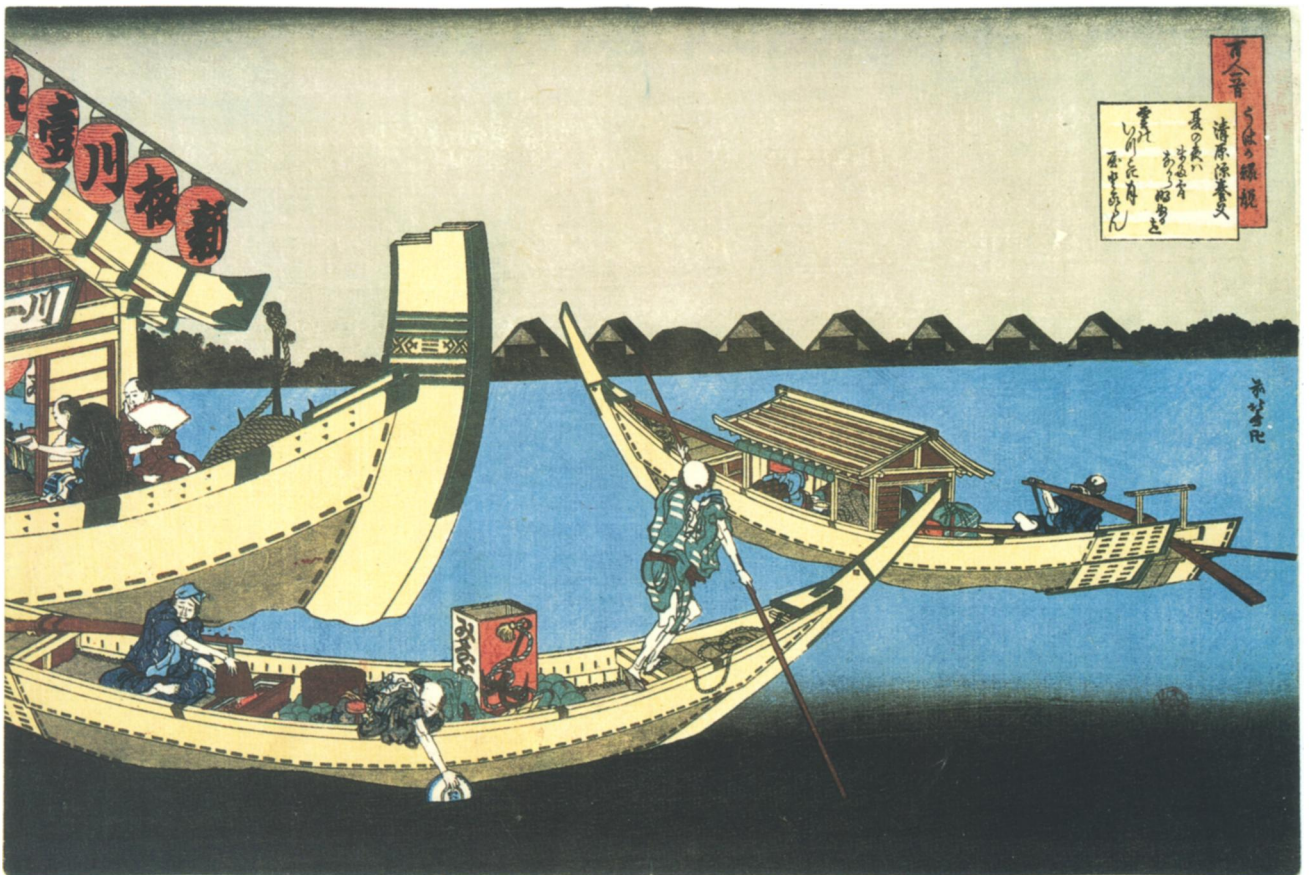


ABOVE: A ferryboat crossing the bay.
Late 1790s–early 1800s.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Viewing the sunset over Ryōgoku Bridge from the bank of the Sumida River at Ommayagashi. The broad Sumida is spanned by the great bridge. Beyond its far end Fuji rises dark and clear against the evening sky. From the near shore a ferryboat full of men and women is starting to cross the water. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Illustration of a poem by Kiyowara no Fukayabu. The large prow of a pleasure boat is hung with lanterns, and two other boats are moored on the river. Silhouettes of houses are seen on the opposite bank.

How quickly the night flows in summer
And dawn breaks.
Long I sought the cloud-covered moon.
From *The Hundred Poems Told by the Nurse*.



富嶽三千景

深川
万年橋下

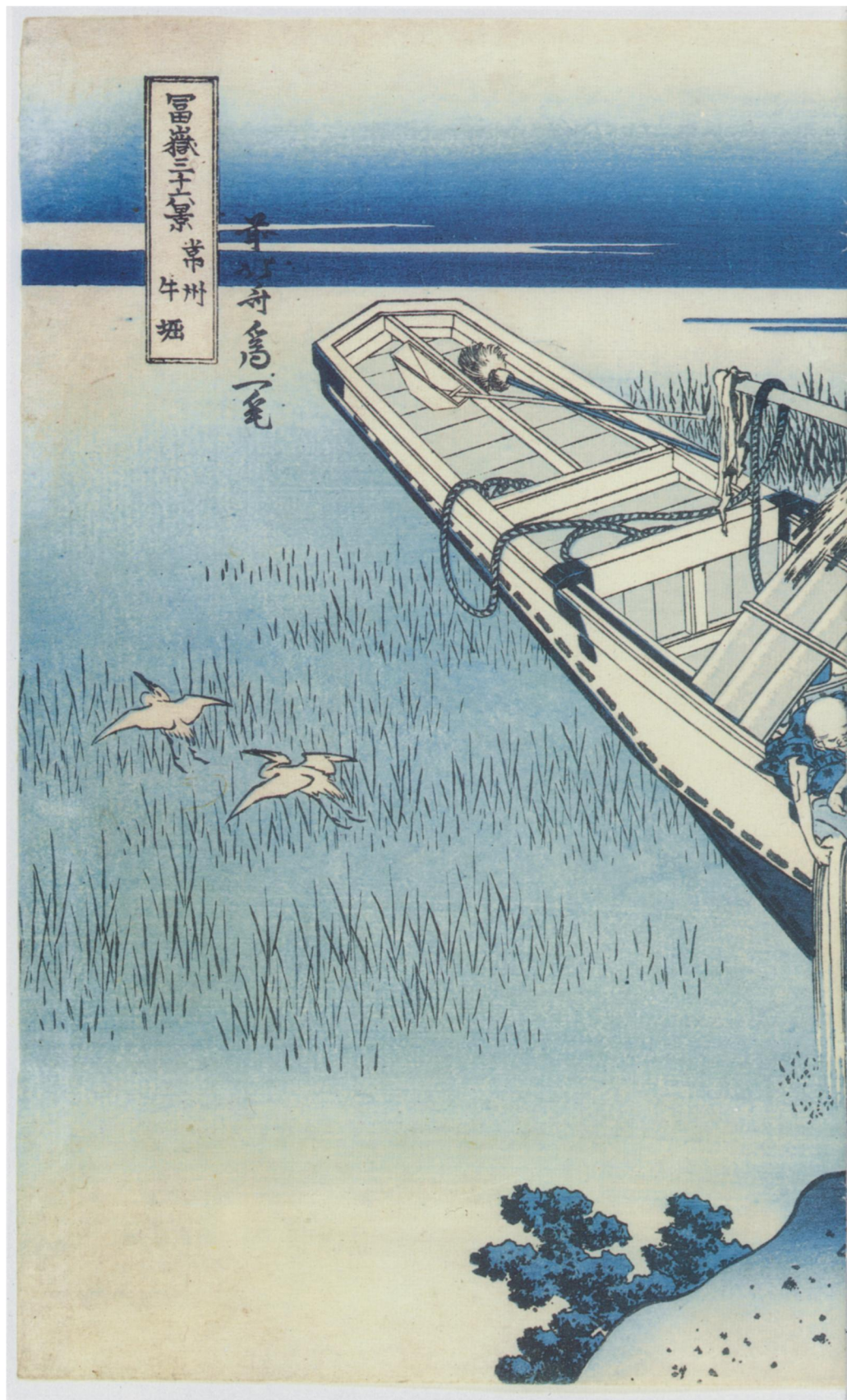
北条氏康

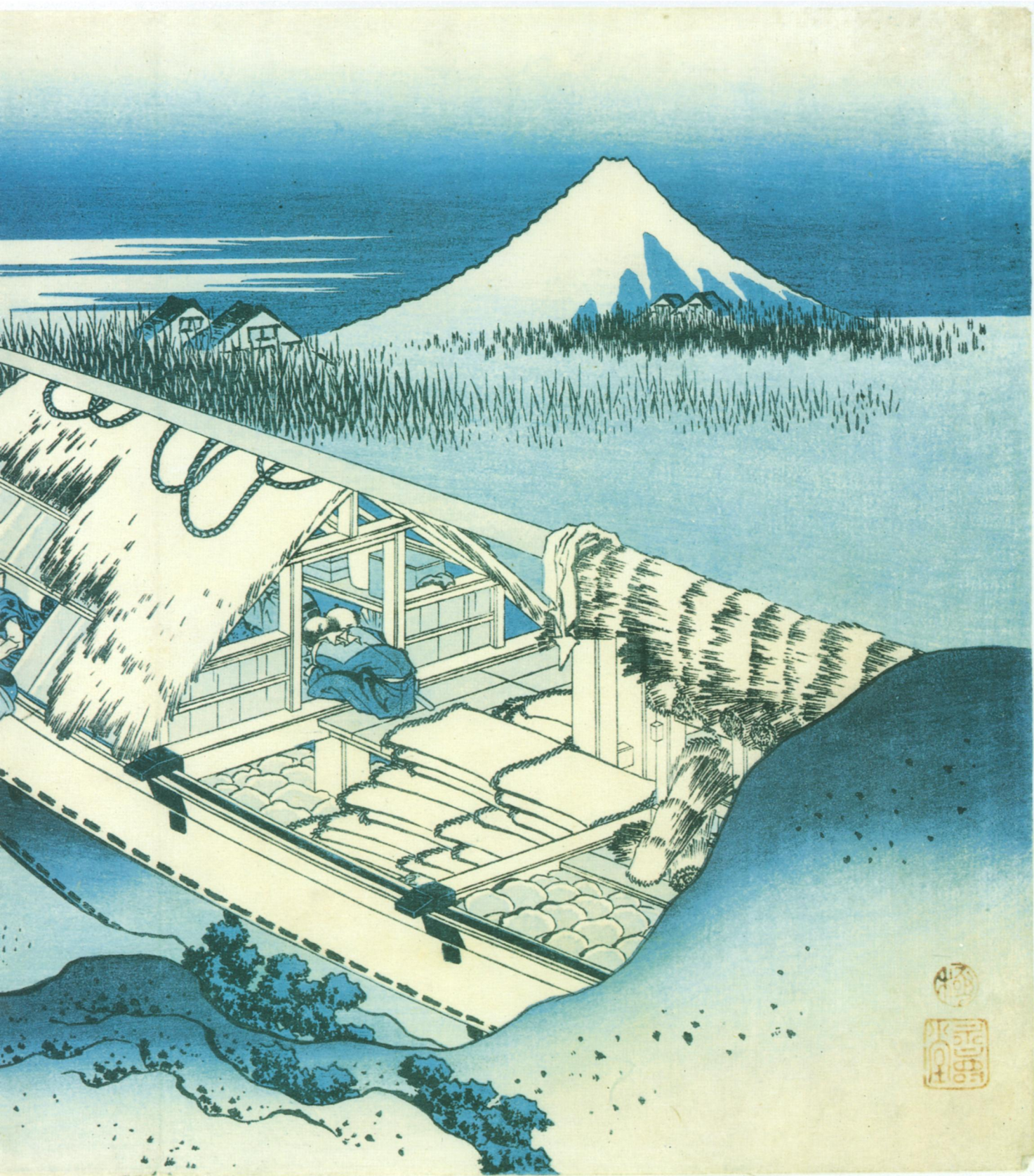




Under Mannen Bridge at Fukagawa. Distant Fuji is seen between the tall piers of the wide arch of Mannen Bridge over the Fuka River. People cross the bridge, a laden boat is poled upstream in the foreground, and a man fishes from a rock in the stream. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

Ushibori in the province of Hitachi. A large junk is moored among reeds. Two herons take wing as a man leans out of the cabin to pour away water in which rice has been washed. In the distance across the marshes is Fuji. From The Thirty-six Views of Fuji.









OPPOSITE, ABOVE: In the Tōtomi Mountains. A huge square log is supported aslant on tall trestles; between the poles is a view of the cloud-wreathed cone of Fuji. Two men saw, one kneeling below, the other standing on the log. A woman and a child watch. A workman sits by a fire, which sends up a dense column of smoke. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

ABOVE: Fuji-view Fields in the province of Owari. The peak of the mountain appears on the horizon through the circle of a great unfinished vat upon which a cooper is at work. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: The waterwheel at Onden. A great waterwheel is turned by a stream running under it. In the foreground a boy draws a tortoise by a string, a woman carries a bucket, and another woman washes herbs in the stream. Beyond the stream two men with bundles appear over the hill. Fuji rises over fields and mists. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

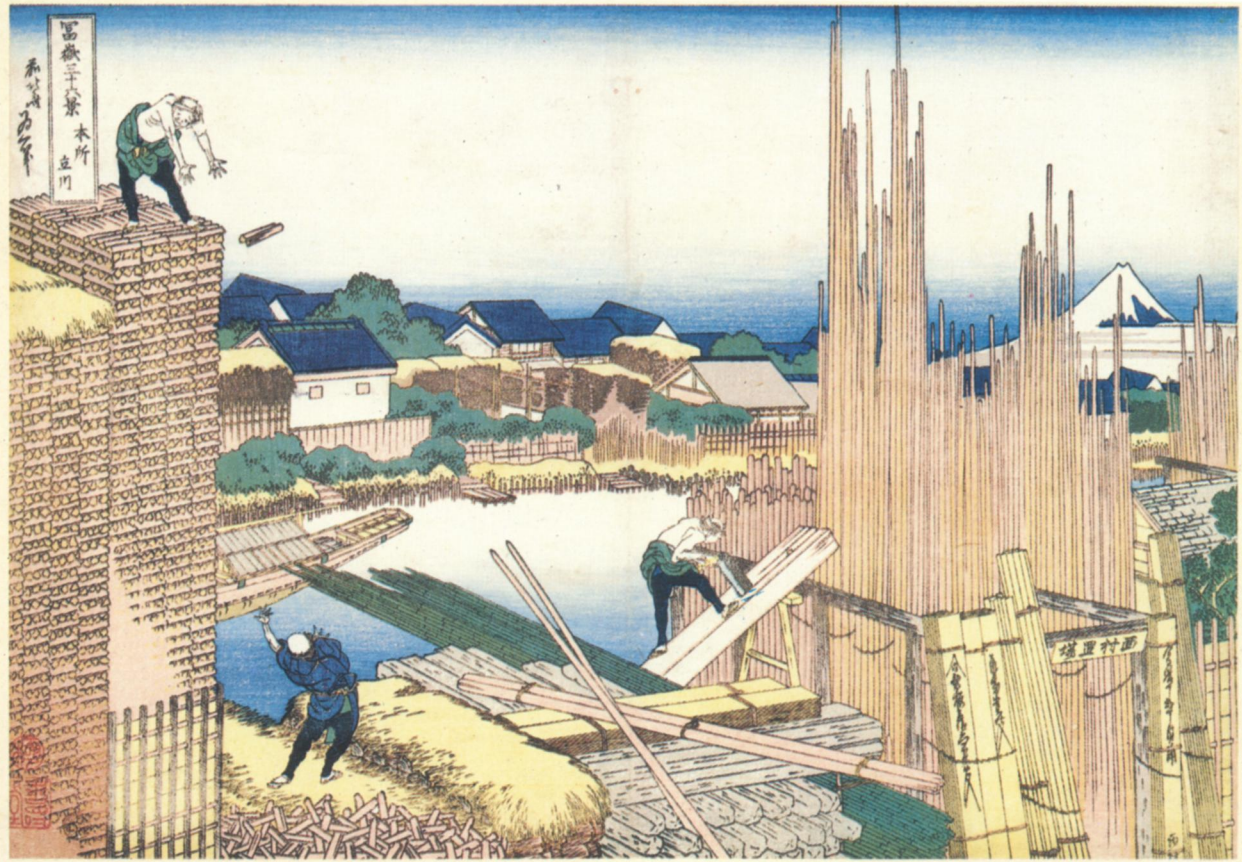
富嶽三十六景 神奈川沖
浪裏

江村 長谷川





The great wave off Kanagawa. The dark blue water crests above three fragile boats, which speed like arrows through the trough of the wave. Fuji appears, snow-capped, on the distant horizon. From The Thirty-six Views of Fuji.

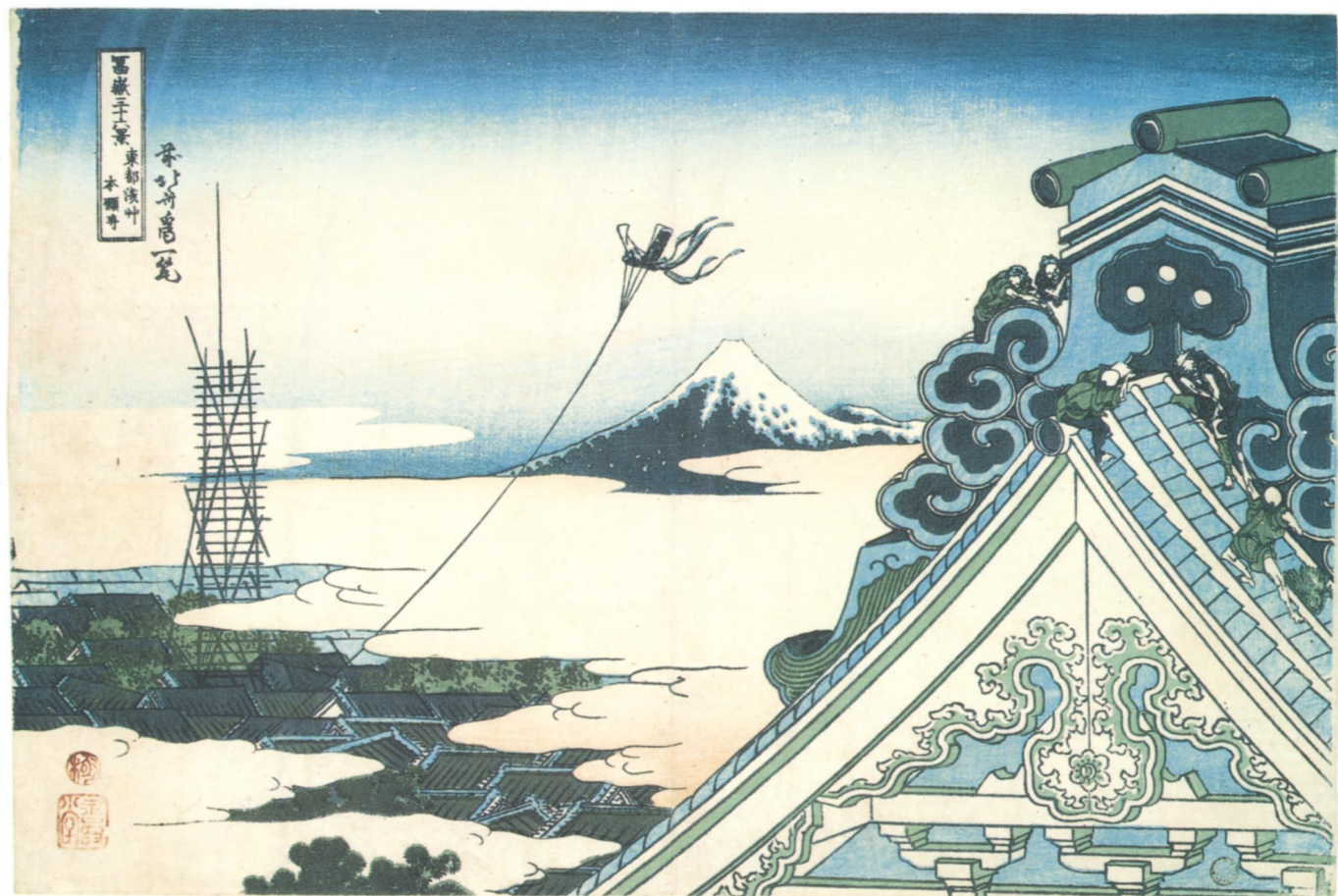


ABOVE: Tatekawa at Honjō. View of Fuji from a lumber yard in the Honjō district. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Sazai Hall of the Temple of the 500 Rakan. On a balcony adjoining the hall of the temple, men and women look out across a silver-gray lake to Fuji. The mountain rises beyond a bank, which partly hides the roofs of Edo and the stacks of a timber yard. A man and a woman sit on the floor of the balcony resting against boxes containing the images of Kannon, God of Mercy. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Yoshida on the Tōkaidō. A room in the Fujimi tea-house. A waitress is pointing out Fuji to two ladies seated on the balcony of the wide window. Two workmen are resting. At the left are two litter bearers, one of them softening his sandal by beating it with a mallet. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.







OPPOSITE, ABOVE: Hodogaya on the Tōkaidō. Fuji, blue and white, is seen between the trunks of pines fringing the high road. In the foreground a man leads a horse ridden by a woman, and the bearers of a litter rest. The crest of the print publisher, Eijudō, appears on the horse cloth. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

OPPOSITE, BELOW: Honganji Temple at Asakusa in Edo. In the foreground is the gable of the temple with workmen repairing the tiles of the roof. Below are the roofs of Edo with the scaffolding of a fire station rising above them. A kite is flying high in the air, and over floating mist appears the cone of Fuji. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

ABOVE: The Mishima Pass in the province of Kai. A huge cyptomeria tree rises in the foreground, and travelers are measuring its girth with joined hands. From *The Thirty-six Views of Fuji*.

Rainstorm beneath the summit. A forked flash lights up the lurid gloom, and snow-streaked Fuji rises red into a clear sky with white clouds at the horizon. From The Thirty-six Views of Fuji.





CREDITS

Unless otherwise specified in captions, all illustrations are wood-block prints.

Captions of the wood-block prints other than those from the *Manga* are based on descriptions by Laurence Binyon. The identification of the birds (pp. 12–13) was made by John Bull of the American Museum of Natural History.

Ehon Musashi Abumi: The Howard Mansfield Collection, Gift of Howard Mansfield, 1936 (Japanese illustrated book no. 107)

Ehon Wakan no Homare: The Howard Mansfield Collection, Gift of Howard Mansfield, 1936 (Japanese illustrated book no. 110)

Manga, Vols. III, VII–X, XII. The Howard Mansfield Collection, Gift of Howard Mansfield, 1936 (Japanese illustrated book no. 111)

Manga, Vol. VI: Purchase, Rogers Fund, 1931 (Japanese illustrated book no. 81.6)

Hokusai Gashiki: The Howard Mansfield Collection, Gift of Howard Mansfield, 1936 (Japanese illustrated book no. 120)

p. 6: Charles Stewart Smith Collection, Gift of Mrs. Charles Stewart Smith, Charles Stewart Smith, Jr. and Howard Caswell Smith; in memory of Charles Stewart Smith, 1914 (14.76.60[25])

pp. 10–11: Frederick Charles Hewitt Fund, 1911 (JP747)

pp. 13, above; 40–41: Bequest of Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer, 1929. The H. O. Havemeyer Collection (JP1859; 1847)

pp. 14, 16–17, 36–37, 45: Purchase, Rogers Fund, 1936 (JP2580; 2553; 2565; 2556)

pp. 22, below; 39: Purchase, Rogers Fund, 1936 (JP2548; 19)

p. 23, below: Gift of Samuel Isham, 1914 (JP1013)

pp. 24–25; 33, above; 33, below; 34–35; 38, above; 38, below; 43, above; 44; 46–47: The Henry L. Phillips Collection. Bequest of Henry L. Phillips, 1939 (JP2935; 2997; 2939; 2983; 2966; 2967; 2984; 2973; 2961)

pp. 30–31; 42; 43, below; 44: Rogers Fund, 1922 (JP1398; 1285; 1324; 1323)

p. 32: Purchase, Rogers Fund, 1919 (JP1108)

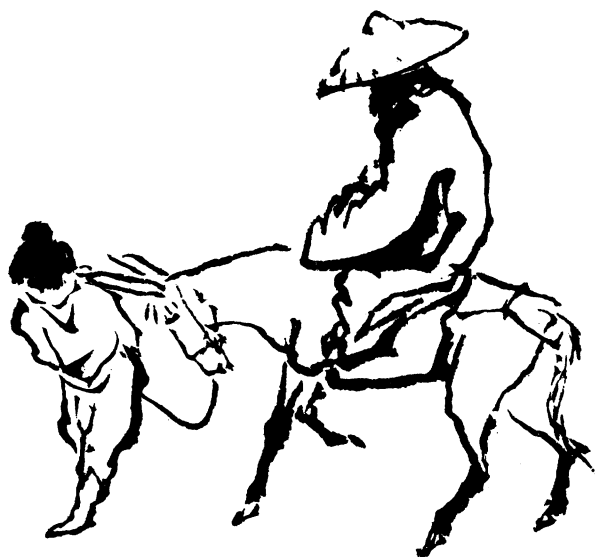
p. 48: Charles Stewart Smith Collection, Gift of Mrs. Charles Stewart Smith, Charles Stewart Smith, Jr. and Howard Caswell Smith; in memory of Charles Stewart Smith, 1914 (14.76.60[106])

THE PRINTING OF JAPANESE WOOD BLOCKS

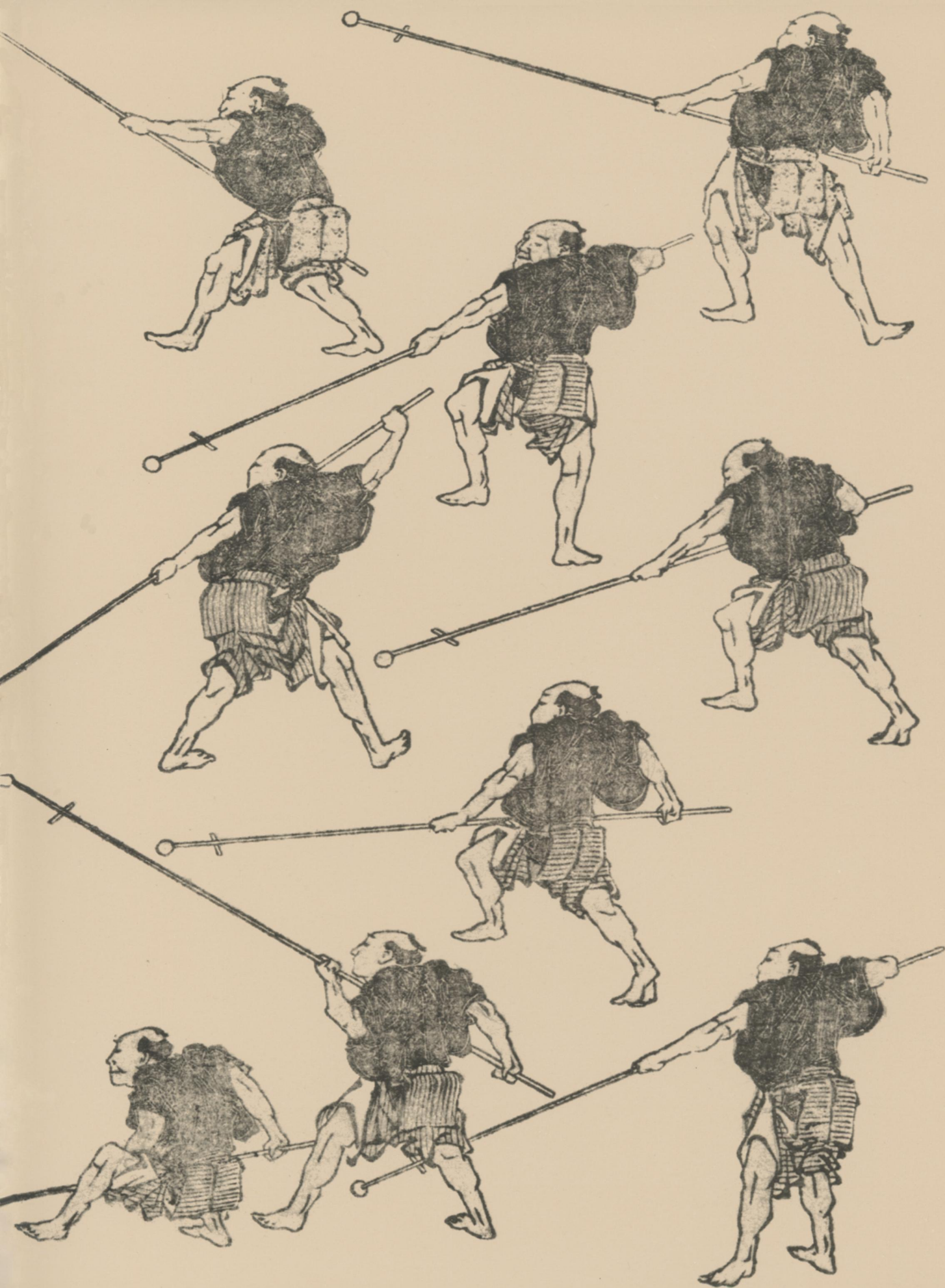
Multicolor prints, which originated in 1765, were the collaboration of an artist, a carver, a printer, and a publisher, who coordinated and directed the entire production. The artist carefully laid his slightly moistened final drawing face down on the paste-covered surface of a wood block. When the block and drawing were dry, the carver cut away parts of the block, leaving the lines to be printed in relief. The artist made color notes on monochrome impressions made from this key block. The monochrome impressions were used for cutting additional blocks, usually one for each color. On every block *kento*, or L and horizontal-shape guide marks, were cut to register the colors in the correct position. Pig-

ment was brushed on the raised surface of the block and a sheet of paper placed over it. The paper was rubbed with a *baren*, a circular pad covered with the tough sheath of a bamboo shoot. This process was repeated for each color. The colors were printed in the order of lighter to darker colors. The gradual shading often seen in representations of sky and water was achieved by wiping the block with a wet cloth and then going over the area with a wet brush dipped in pigment. Special effects, such as embossing, were done last.

Y.B.



Man riding a donkey. Brush drawing in ink.



富嶽三土雲

甲

州
石
手
澤

第廿舟席一色

