

ASIAN ART

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IMPERIAL PORCELAIN BOWL REIGNS SUPREME

The sale, at Sotheby's in Hong Kong, in early April, of a well-documented imperial *falangcai* 'swallow' bowl was highly anticipated. It was the highlight of the series and it did not disappoint. Offered as a stand-alone single lot, it was expected to achieve HK\$200 million (over \$25 million). It sold for HK\$198.2 million (\$25.3 million). The Dr Alice Cheng *falangcai* bowl ranks among the most celebrated pieces to have been offered at auction and broke a world record for Chinese art when it was sold in 2006 for HK\$151,320,000.

Falangcai (foreign colours), porcelains painted in the imperial workshops of the Forbidden City in Beijing, are the rarest and most sought-after wares of the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The idea that porcelains from Jingdezhen could be enamelled close to the imperial living quarters, to enable the emperor to follow and examine the results first-hand, was initiated by the Kangxi Emperor (r 1662-1722) late in his reign. Pieces painted with such sparse and refined motifs from

nature as seen on the Dr Alice Cheng bowl, 'wrapped' around the vessel like an unrolled handscroll, were produced in Beijing for only a very short period. They are characteristic of the Yongzheng reign (1723-1735) and the present bowl with its imperial Qianlong reign mark (1736-1795) must date from the earliest years of that period. In quality and decorative style, it would be difficult to distinguish from Yongzheng examples. This small group of porcelains, today mostly preserved in the National Palace Museum, Taipei, represents the peak of painting on porcelain, an artistry that was never surpassed – or even equalled – in the imperial kilns at Jingdezhen under the supervision of Tang Ying.

During the latter years of the Qing dynasty in the late 19th century, the bowl – and its pair – entered the collection of Captain Charles Oswald Liddell, whose collection was sold in 1929. Thereafter, one bowl entered the collection of Sir Percival David, the greatest private collector of Chinese Imperial



Enamalled imperial *falangcai* 'swallow' bowl, blue enamel mark and period of Qianlong, diam. 11.3 cm, sold for over \$25 million at Sotheby's, in Hong Kong, on 8 April

porcelain in history is currently held in the British Museum collection. The other bowl meanwhile entered the collection of Charles Ernest Russell, Barbara Hutton, JT Tai, Tianminlou, Robert Chang and since 2006 has been the 'crown jewel' of the collection of Dr Alice Cheng. Few collectors in recent history

have enlivened the Hong Kong salerooms to the same extent as Dr Alice Cheng, and her dramatic entrance at an auction often heralds a new record price for Chinese porcelain. With great passion and style, Dr Cheng has assembled, since the late 1990s, a formidable collection of imperial Chinese porcelain that

reflects her impeccable taste. Her discriminating eye has, over the years, mostly focused on the finest wares of the Kangxi, Yongzheng and Qianlong periods, the Qing dynasty's greatest emperors. When asked what motivates her acquisitions, Dr Cheng would simply say, 'I buy what I like'.

The momentum was seen throughout this 50th anniversary in Asia series, from another private collection, the TY Chao 'dragon' blue and white ewer, from the Ming dynasty, Yongle period, sold for HK\$107.4 million (\$13.7 million) in the Important Chinese Art sale on 8 April. Other ceramics that sold well included an imperial puce-enamel *falangcai* 'dragon' vase, Yongzheng period, selling for HK\$60.3 million (\$7.7 million), offered in a single-lot sale on 8 April. In the Sotheby's 50th Anniversary sale on 5 April, Zhang Daiqian's two-panel *Pink Lotus on Gold Screen*, from 1973, and from the CS Loh family collection, sold for HK\$251.6 million (\$32 million), achieving the third highest price for the artist at auction.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

JAMINI ROY HOUSE, KOLKATA

The Delhi Art Gallery (DAG) has announced that they have acquired the historic home of the Indian Modernist artist Jamini Roy (1887-1972). The heritage building in Kolkata will be turned into India's first private, single-artist, museum and cultural resource centre that pays homage to the pioneering artist's legacy. Roy began his career as a commissioned portrait painter. Somewhat abruptly in the early 1920s, he gave up commissioned portrait painting in an effort to discover his own style. However, he changed style from his academic Western training and created a new style based on Bengali folk traditions.

Roy's underlying quest was threefold: to capture the essence of simplicity embodied in the life of the folk people; to make art accessible to a wider section of people; and to give Indian art its own identity. Jamini Roy's paintings were put on exhibition for the first time in the British India Street of Calcutta (Kolkata) in 1938. During the 1940s, his popularity touched new highs, with the Bengali middle class and the European community becoming his main clientele. In 1946, his work was exhibited in London and in 1953, in New York. He was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1954.

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ASIAN ART, WASHINGTON DC

From May 1 to 14 May, the National Museum of Asian Art is marking its centennial by hosting the inaugural festival as part of the five-year initiative. Programming includes headline performer such as the internationally acclaimed singer-songwriters Eric Nam and Raveena, plus panel discussions, interactive experiences, culinary adventures, art-making projects and programming from the Middle East, Asia and America's Asian American communities.

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ANILA QUAYYUM AGHA

by Olivia Sand

Winning the ArtPrize (US) award in 2014 provided Pakistani artist Anila Quayyum Agha (b 1965 in Lahore) with the exposure and the platform to promote various issues by exhibiting her work. Beyond their aesthetic quality, her elaborate laser-cut cube installations have become a hallmark for triggering conversations around gender, migration, space and light, amongst other topics. Growing up in an environment with a repressive culture towards women, Anila Quayyum Agha is extremely outspoken when it comes to the discussions she would like to see taking place and the changes in society she strongly supports, encourages, and hopes for. Coming from Pakistan to the US in 2000, she has personally experienced the issues her work alludes to, making her an artist with ideas to defend. With a broad practice that ranges from drawings to installations, and sculpture, the artist shares her experiences that have been not only challenging, but also been most rewarding.



Anila Quayyum Agha

Asian Art Newspaper: Your trajectory was not linear, as you built your practice based on various professional experiences you had gained earlier.

Anila Quayyum Agha: Since I was not well-off, I had to have a day job, which for me, up to then, had always been in the textile industry. I would moonlight as a designer, as a magazine editor for artistic covers, start a line of furniture, create a fashion design line and basically gain a lot of experience in different design fields. I was trying to make money, but somehow Pakistan, at the same time, was not geared to women achieving in the artistic field. There were very few successful females, if I remember correctly. However, one of them was my mentor, Salima Hashmi (b 1942), who eventually became a professor and dean of the National College of Arts and is a very well-known artist in Pakistan. I understood what being an artist implied and how you could live as an artist, once I had the opportunity to visit her home. Art was everywhere – and they would host evenings of discussions with people working in the humanities, such as poets, writers, and artists. It was a lovely introduction to a way of life that I desperately wanted, – to be surrounded by creative people, people who had ideas, and who were getting on and doing things. Of course, once I got to the US, it was a new struggle to start all over again!

NEWS IN BRIEF

A series of 2023 'Journeys', public programmes throughout the year experiment with new forms of storytelling and create opportunities for visitors and staff to share their own experiences. Throughout the year, a dedicated film series allows audiences to travel through the eyes of filmmakers. Other 2023 partners include Pulitzer Prize-winning author Viet Thanh Nguyen, contemporary artists such as Ravi Agarwal, Musicians from Marlboro and the Shanghai Quartet and numerous Asian embassies and cultural centres. Annual celebrations like Nowruz, Diwali, the National Cherry Blossom Festival and Lunar New Year create journeys through cultural practices. There will also be a new annual celebration of Korean art and culture that will coincide with the mid-autumn festival of Chuseok.

As part of the centennial celebrations, the museum is also presenting a landmark number of scholarly programs, with major symposia on every discipline in the museum.

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND, NEW YORK
The World Monuments Fund (WMF) and Tiffany & Co have announced the launch of Japan's first professional gold leaf craftsman training programme in Kanazawa, a coastal city north-east of Kyoto. The project aims to collaborate with the city of Kanazawa in ensuring the sustainable preservation of traditional craftsmanship of

Kanazawa Haku gold leaf production, which was recently inscribed on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List. The launch of this project marks the 50th anniversary of Tiffany's arrival in Japan and the 20th anniversary of WMF's work in the country.

APSARA NATIONAL AUTHORITY, CAMBODIA
The Apsara National Authority (ANA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Cultural Heritage Commission of South Korea to cooperate on museum management, staff training, conservation techniques and research to provide assistance to ensure the stable, sustainable storage of the Cambodia's cultural treasures.

SONY WORLD PHOTOGRAPHY PRIZE, LONDON
A special curation of around 20 photographs by the Sony World Photography Awards' 2023 Outstanding Contribution to Photography recipient Japanese photographer Rinko Kawauchi is currently on show in London. Kawauchi is the 16th recipient of the award which honours a person or group that have made a significant impact on the photographic medium. The display will be a substantial mix from her career, including highlight works from her series *Utatane* (2001), *ALLA* (2004) and *Illuminance* (2009) – which all

exemplify her idiosyncratic style. The exhibition also features work from Ametsuchi (2013), a series originating from a dream Kawauchi became fascinated by 'noyaki (burning field)', a 1000-year old tradition where farmland is burned before replanting.

SAITAMA TRIENNIAL, JAPAN
The dates have been announced for the next Saitama Triennial, entitled *Wz*, from 7 October to 10 December, 2023. Since holding the first edition in 2016, together with artists from Japan and abroad, the festival has expanded according to the idea to revitalize the region and enhance its appeal by means of art, with the ultimate goal to establish Saitama as a city of art and culture.

NGV TRIENNIAL, AUSTRALIA
From robotics to tapestry, weather patterns to war, mysticism to megacities – NGV Triennial 2023 (National Gallery of Victoria) is a powerful and moving snapshot of the world today as captured through the work of 100 artists, designers and collectives at the forefront of global contemporary practice. Bringing contemporary art, design and architecture into dialogue with one another and traversing all four levels of NGV International, the NGV Triennial features more than 75 extraordinary projects that invite us to reflect on the world as it is, while also asking how we would like it to be. Tokyo-based artist Azuma

Makoto will present a room sized installation as an homage to the magical beauty and life force of plants. After freezing a multitude of Australian flowers and botanicals into crystalline acrylic blocks, the artist places these jewel-like sculptural elements in dialogue with a beguiling multi-screen film depicting the life and death of flowers. The triennial will run from 3 December to 7 April 2024.

PROJECT HIMALAYAN ART, NEW YORK
The Rubin Museum has launched Project Himalayan Art, the first initiative to offer comprehensive resources for students, teachers, and researchers with an interest in Himalayan art, with a focus on the cross-cultural exchange of Tibetan, Himalayan, and Inner Asian art and cultures, spanning from the Neolithic to contemporary. The three-pronged project comprises the new scholarly publication 'Himalayan Art in 108 Objects', an interactive digital platform and a travelling exhibition of works from the Rubin's collection.

TOURS FAIR, FRANCE
This year's fair is celebrating its centennial. Each year the fair honours a different country – and this year it is South Korea and Tours twin-town Suwon. The fair runs from 5 to 14 May and will showcase a variety of arts, culture and gastronomy from Korea.

AAN: Once in the US, did you have to put your practice on hold for a while?
AQA: When I reached the US, it was more about survival, finding a job, and figuring out how the culture worked. Even though I came to the US as an educated person who spoke English perfectly, it was still very hard for me. I cannot imagine how challenging it is for people who come here without that basic knowledge. I worked for a few years as a design assistant for a company in Dallas, Texas, while going to school because I did not have a support system. After I started graduate school specialist in fine art, I became very serious about my practice. Suddenly, things just started to fall into place. It felt strange because I had done all these other things in business, merchandising, textiles, but then, once I went back to school, I realised that all these things were coalescent.

AAN: Was being a woman and coming from Pakistan perceived as detrimental? How did you manage your new situation?

AQA: What I learned at graduate school in Texas, is that no-one is going to help you unless you helped yourself. America is very much about coming up on your own. I feel that it is rather like an experience you see in a film, a 'cowboy mentality', where a single person fights against society. After my experience in the textile industry, I realised that what made me happy was to make art. Coincidentally, at the time, a popular trend was bracelets using letters to make statements – I choose to wear the one saying 'failure is not an option'. And it truly was not an option, as by then I was separated from my husband, had a young child, and was trying to be an artist. Everything seemed to be set against me.

However, I was extremely determined, even during studio critiques (where you try to convince people that what you do is legitimate), some people referred to my work as 'decorative', 'feminine', 'not important', or simply 'beautiful'. To the question whether I was going to make it in the art world, one of my graduate-school professors emphasised that it was going to be difficult, but that I had the necessary discipline to put in the hard work. Basically, being an artist is like any job in the world, you cannot be a dilettante. That thought stuck in my mind. I understood that I would have to hustle and constantly keep a day job.

I decided to start applying for teaching positions at universities. It took five years before I got my first job as an assistant professor at Indiana University and finally had a monthly salary. From then on, I just started to focus on my son and making art. I had already found a gallery in Houston and working with them I quickly understood that they wanted me to make a certain type of work they could sell. Despite a very successful debut solo show, where most of my drawings sold-out on opening night, I wanted to continue to develop, to progress, and make cutting-edge work.

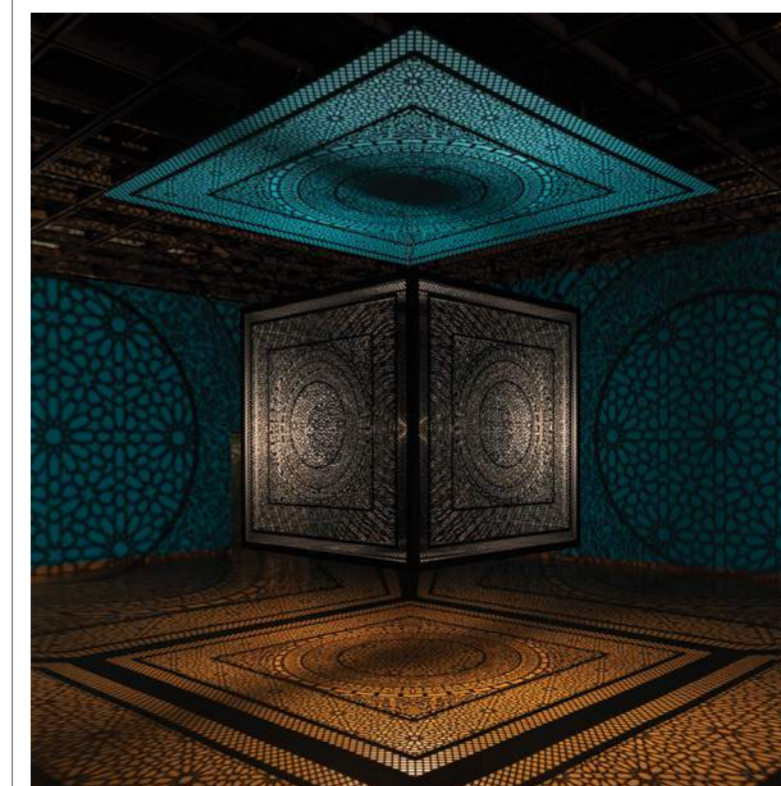
The second show I had with the gallery, two years later, did not do so well, probably because I had introduced script into the work. We need to keep in mind that it was Houston, which, in my opinion, can often be considered Islamophobic. That provided me with my first experience of what works in the art world and what does not. As I continued, I was quick to acknowledge that my salary was not

going to pay for my supplies, and I therefore started applying for grants. During the first eight years, I built my practice by writing a grant every year, getting a lot of grants not only from the university, but also from elsewhere. This finally provided me with the means to create larger works, and after a while, my artistic life just started happening.

AAN: The comments at graduate school about your work being 'decorative', or 'feminine' seem quite condescending. Do you agree?

AQA: That is exactly what happened to me. It is sad that I had to deal with racism on an integral intrinsic level. I never let it faze me. On the contrary, these are probably some of the experiences that generated the work that I make now. People first would think that, as a woman, I was never going to make it. Secondly, as an Asian woman, it was impossible. And thirdly, I should better forget about making work that was 'decorative' and get a teaching job instead, sitting out my life somewhere quietly – but they did not know who I was. I am often told that I am very determined and that I go where people do not usually go. In my studio I could do whatever I wanted. In addition, I had a regular salary, so I did not have to report to or please anybody, which makes a huge difference. Witnessing so much racism and so much negation of the non-Western world, so much negation of craft-work empowered me to do something about it and to help elevate women in spite of the negative responses. I did not have a strategy, as such, but mainly used my intuition, I knew where I wanted to go. It was about pushing slightly, like Magritte's apple in that painting that is expanding slowly, getting bigger and bigger.

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Intersections, Mysterious Inner Worlds (2022) at The University of New Mexico Art Museum, Albuquerque, NM 2022, lacquered steel and halogen bulb, 78 x 78 x 78 in. Photo: Stefan Jennings Batista. Courtesy of University of New Mexico Art Museum

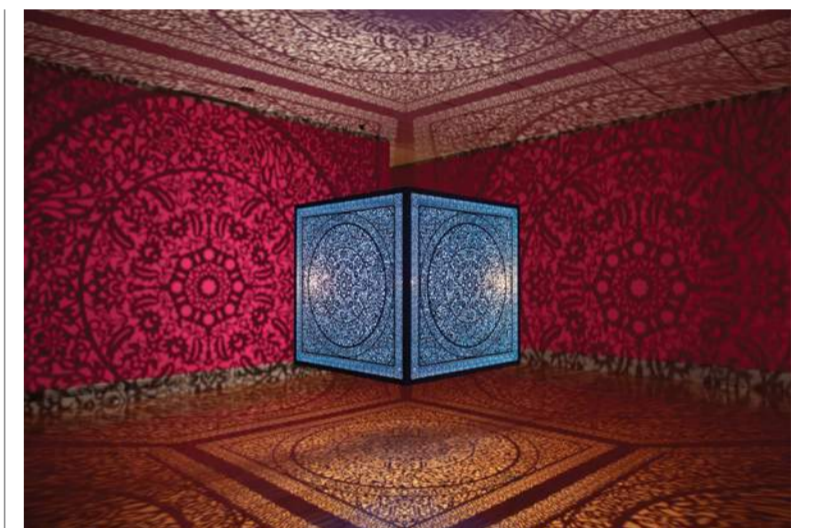


A Beautiful Despair: Orange Re-Orientations (2023) at Kunsthau Zürich, lacquered steel and halogen bulb, 60 x 60 x 60 in

AAN: In a way, your work captures many of the issues you have faced over the years. It nevertheless required persistence to pursue an avenue that to many people made no sense at the time. Do you agree?

AQA: The work that I do was instigated by the critiques in graduate school. I was frequently told that my work was not that important or relevant, and that I would be better if I looked at Jackson Pollock and other well-known artists. I kept wondering why I was supposed to look at these artists and do something that was alien to me? However, it is complicated to push back at the professors since you need their recommendations.

Once I graduated, I opened up to the idea of further exploring the shadow work I had started. Also, in graduate school, I began sewing, which certainly had to do with the fact that I wanted to elevate women's work first in order to make sure people saw it had a value. At that time, I looked at the work of various women artists like Rosemarie Trockel (b 1952), who inspired me greatly, Magdalena Abakanowicz



All the Flowers are for Me: Turquoise, Let a Million Flowers Bloom (2017), at The Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC, 2022, lacquered steel and halogen bulb, 60 x 60 x 60 in. Photo: The Columbia Museum of Art, Drew Baron

(1930-2017), Mona Hatoum (b 1952) and Shirin Neshat (b 1957). I saw they were women sticking to their guns, doing things that made sense to them. In addition, they were creating work about their culture, and therefore it encouraged me to continue exploring my own life and views. Back then, I was not concerned whether I was going to sell anything, as I had the day job. I was just trying to start my career as an artist.

In education, you generally look up to your professor and there is a tendency to believe what they tell you. Once you graduate, you realise that your professors had feet of clay and when the floods came, they just disappeared. To tell you honestly, I learned what not to do as a teacher when I was at graduate school. I do not want to be part of too many encyclopaedic shows where I am going to be put in that box labelled 'Islamic'. Although, in this particular case, it made sense to participate.

In education, you generally look up to your professor and there is a tendency to believe what they tell you. Once you graduate, you realise that your professors had feet of clay and when the floods came, they just disappeared. To tell you honestly, I learned what not to do as a teacher when I was at graduate school. I do not want to be part of too many encyclopaedic shows where I am going to be put in that box labelled 'Islamic'. Although, in this particular case, it made sense to participate.

AAN: You are presently part of the exhibition *Re-Orientations. Europe and Islamic Art from 1851 to Today* at the Kunsthau Zurich, Switzerland.

What prompted you to take part in this show?

AQA: I often do not enjoy participating in exhibitions that show my work as Islamic art as opposed to contemporary art. Today, there is such a tendency to put people in boxes, and initially, I considered saying no. Then, I read the curators' statement and I thought it was a good start. I may not do something like this again, in the future, but I think it is important to show what contemporary artists from that part of the world are doing. I am an atheist, and I do not care about religion, but I like culture. I like Pakistani, Indian, South Asian culture in general and I also enjoy the Islamic traditions, because I grew up with them. However, I can critique them and through my work, I am critiquing them. Although I do not want to be part of too many encyclopaedic shows where I am going to be put in that box labelled 'Islamic'. Although, in this particular case, it made sense to participate.

AAN: When you say that you critique the Islamic traditions through your work, can you elaborate?

AQA: The first cube I created was in response to how Islam, Christianity, and Judaism have a tendency of repressing women's voices. In my opinion, it is not part of the religion, but it is more cultural. Patriarchy has been termed as being under religious dogma, but patriarchy is its own thing and religious dogma can be used to

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This is NOT a Refuge! 2 (2019), Let a Million Flowers Bloom, at The Columbia Museum of Art, Columbia, SC, 2022, laser-cut, resin-coated aluminum, light bulb, 93 x 58 x 72 in

create repression. I was using this platform as a sounding box to create a contradiction. The cube represents the Kaaba, but the actual Kaaba is totally covered. In my practice, I am blowing it open, putting a very feminine pattern on it derived from architecture. In addition, it bears an architectural scale: it is huge and, if it fell on you, you would be squashed, because it is made out of steel. Yet, it has this fragility that is associated with it that makes it look very light. It is also levitating so there is this tendency of it feeling that it is full of contradictions. I was trying to underline that life is contradictory: female/male, race/class, these being all constructs that are made by humans to categorise people. Somebody has to be at the top and feel the hierarchal power for other people to be below them. My work is in response to all the things I experienced over the past 15 to 20 years, trying to be an artist, trying to be a female artist, trying to do work that was strong, yet considered really weak. Basically, the cube is a contradiction in terms.

The first cube I built in 2014 was black and, therefore, it had a sombre feel to it. However, this black cube was letting all this light out and people coming in the space felt they were coming into a mosque, a religious environment, or simply a place where they could contemplate. I came to realise the cube was a great way not only to introduce things that were alien to people in the US, but also to make them think, leading them to explore the history, where it comes from, and the reasons behind its existence. I was very fortunate to win the 2014

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ArtPrize (the first time an artist won the jury's as well as the public's vote) for that first cube, the \$300,000 award provided me with enough funding to build additional installations.

I want to point out that the context in the US is not simple: I feel that Christianity is often white-centric, rejecting other religions. In my opinion, this element of society treats their



Black Tinted Flower (2020), mixed media on paper (paper cutout, pastels, encaustic wax, silver embroidery, 30 x 30 in

women quite abysmally upholding an ongoing hierarchy, which is frequently blamed on religious dogma. People often think my work is about religion, but it is not. It is about the intersections and contradictions of things that we need to address, in order to go to the other side and explore. So ultimately, the work is inviting people in, also allowing you to be alone with your own thoughts, or speak to other people who you cannot see because you get kind of fudged. It allows for that ability to cross boundaries.

AAN: Another issue you address is climate change. Can you be more specific?

AQA: Yes, indeed. Ultimately, climate change will globally affect those same regions that have already gone through colonisation and loss of resources. In addition, they are going to end up paying for the Western world's... should we call it greed? There is greed and corruption everywhere and with the various conflicts in the world, there is this constant desire to be on top. Who benefits? Politicians, and no-one else. In the end, who suffers the most? Women, because they end up getting left with children and homes to fix while men are off to war. The question remains: who deals with all this? I often think about how climate change and food shortages are affecting us globally right now. My practice is becoming concerned with this issue and since climate change can affect human rights and ultimately human rights are women's rights. It is all connected. I do worry. I want to leave a legacy to make people think that there is more to the world than just having power.

AAN: Do you feel that your work is helping this discourse?

AQA: I wonder about that. Not many museums want to acquire these pieces, because they require large spaces. I am a woman artist who is being given these big spaces that were usually kept for men, such as Carl Andre (b 1935), or Richard Serra (b 1928). And here I am commanding this huge space. I wonder when the time will come for people to talk about it in a critical way? The comment I tend to hear about my work most is 'I love the piece', but I want people to dig further, to think about the layers that I am trying to construct. When you experience the work at Kunsthaus Zurich, you will see that it has multiple lights inside. There are shadows over shadows over shadows, and it is almost like the history of the world. It is a metaphor for how we build layers: the sediment of the earth is built by layers and layers of deposits. I think about those things.

When working on a new piece, I have to start from what I know. Then, I have to make it more expansive with my aesthetic that covers both East and West. So it is not an aesthetic born solely in a South-Asian context, it becomes a combination of both. The same applies when I appropriate a pattern that I have photographed, trying things out, and then adding something to it later. There is a push-and-pull between the Western and the Asian continent. I am excited about where I am going, always looking for what I can build next.

AAN: What is next?

AQA: I would like to build a large work that is held-up by only a wall, like a cube tumbling off the wall. I



Paradise II, Mughal Gardens/Patterned Cube (2022), CNC engraving/carving, coloured resin, 47 x 47 x 2 in. Photo courtesy of Sundaram Tagore Gallery

imagine lighting up the space in a way that deals with the cube, yet flattens it in the shadows. Also, I would like to move towards a more architectural scale, not to have a Rothko Chapel but more an 'Anila Chapel'. In order to achieve that, an artist needs funding, and presently, I think there is still very little investment in female artists. In the US, women artists still represent a very small amount of acquisitions. I often wonder when that will change, probably not in my lifetime.

AAN: Institutions seem to be committing to acquire and showing more female artists. Have you felt the impact of this strategy?

AQA: A lot of museum curators are often women and either they do not have the funding, or they do not have the support to acquire women artists. I speak for the US, as I do not know enough about Europe's acquisition policies. I read a lot of periodicals addressing the issue, and even now, with the Me Too movement, women still represent only 7% of all acquisitions across the US. Institutions tend to buy a token small work while an artist like Richard Serra was occupying the whole space of the World Trade Center, and it was often not well-liked. Of course, this makes me wonder how many women artists does one see occupying public spaces?

AAN: As a child in Pakistan, you experienced exclusion from mosques based on your gender. How are you relating to it in your work?

AQA: My desire was not so much being able to visit a mosque, but being excluded from a place. In a country like Pakistan, which in so many ways is so poor, a mosque is not just a religious centre, but it is a library, a place where people get married, where people hang out together and youngsters go to make friends. Basically, it is more a community centre and women are culturally – not religiously – often recommended not to go in. My thought process was not so much about not being able to just pray, but being part of a creative environment, where I am restricted from entering the same space as the male population. That is what I was trying to show. I grew up in an environment where public space was never mine and where I never felt safe walking around. There were many instances of harassment: for example, in order to just walk through a market to buy art supplies, I deliberately became very androgynous.

In my work, I am trying to say that I want nobody to feel that they are not allowed to enter a space because of their gender. In certain parts of the world, if you are LGBTQ, you will be killed. Who gives you the right to take another

human's life? If we are all made in the image of God according to religious dogma, why are we killing some of them? To me, it is this insane differential between how to treat women and how to treat people who are different from men? On a larger level, it excludes people on so many different levels, be it race, colour, religion, or the place from which you originate. At school, many of my colleagues would tell me I was never going to amount to much because I was from Pakistan. Who gives somebody the right to say something like this? I am trying to unpack this concept of exclusivity versus inclusivity, and the contradictions that exist within that space.

I built my entire practice around the play of the tensions between the really beautiful and the really ugly. I am making these objects that are beautifully crafted, and they are talking about repression. There is that contradiction and how do you navigate that inner space? I find that very interesting.

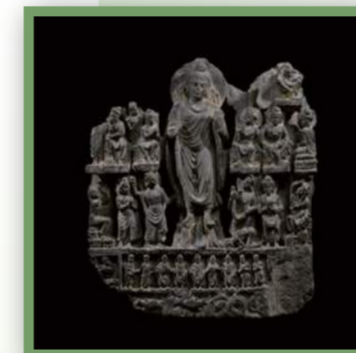
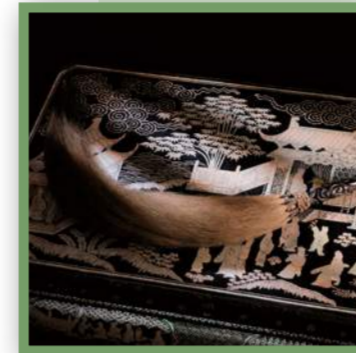
AAN: Based on your own experience, what next steps would you like to see taken?

AQA: I believe we need to elevate women. I think history should be rewritten to reflect the contribution of women and all other LGBTQ representations. Our environments and actions should reflect that. Our architecture should reflect that. In my opinion, women should sit at the table and be part of the decision making process.

For the longest time, I have been a single parent raising my son and there are so many women in that same situation. Under such circumstances, why do I need to apologise that I am interested in having a career? In my opinion, it should never be a question asked of a woman. We need equity in all walks of life. Art makes you think and maybe that will allow people to change their own minds? This brings me back to the reason why I am making these beautiful environments which is to charm you softly, to make you think on compassionate terms what it means to be a woman.

Similarly in my practice, people would often see me make these patterns that are very decorative. What is wrong with being decorative in art? I often wonder about that too. There is this concept of how it has to be ugly to be art. When I was in graduate school, that was always a discussion topic. Is it craft or is it fine art? In the East, in Pakistan where I am from, we live with art, be this carpets, baskets, drapery, etc. With women being often enclosed within the household, they are living the life of a carer for everybody, with their father first, their husband second, their children third, and then their grandchildren. How often do you think they would have an internal life where they are purely living for themselves? Therefore, whatever they made is art for them because they lived with it. On the contrary in the West, the concept of art is very much about going to look at a beautiful print or painting that a man made. But what about the embroideries that women made? You use them. This is the definition that I would like to change.

● Anila Quayyum Agha's work is presently on view in the following exhibitions: Kunsthaus Zurich, Switzerland, Re-orientations. Europe and Islamic art, from 1851 to today, until 16 July; Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew: All the Flowers are for Me, until 17 September; Atlanta Contemporary: New Worlds: Georgia Women to Watch, Atlanta, Georgia, until 24 June; Museum for Art in Wood: Philadelphia, Seeing Through Space: The Mashrabiya Project, until 23 July



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貴賓預展 VIP Preview date 26/5
展覽日期 Exhibition date 27/5 - 30/5

展覽活動 EVENTS

- 古玩現場鑑定 Antiques Appraisal • 專題講座 Lectures • 導賞團 Guided Tours • 茶道 Tea Ceremonies

特別展覽 SPECIAL EXHIBITION

- 工夫茶 · 杯必若深珍藏展 The Art of Kungfu Tea, Ruoshen Teacup

27/5

• 12:00 - 13:30 古玩現場鑑定

貴賓預展 VIP Preview

5/26 18:00 - 21:00

• 14:00 - 14:30 新書發佈會

《圖說說陀羅文明》

何平、孫英剛 著

• 14:30 - 16:30 講座 (名額50位)

說陀羅與大乘佛教的興起

講師: 孫英剛 普林斯頓大學博士

語言: 普通話

28/5

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• 16:00 - 17:30 講座 若深杯起源初考 (名額50位)

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FROM DAWN TO DUSK

LIFE IN THE FORBIDDEN CITY



Round lidded box with cranes and longevity character, Ming dynasty, Jiajing mark and period, (1522-1566), carved red lacquer, Palace Museum

The Hong Kong Palace Museum has received over 900,000 visitors since it opened its doors in July 2022. Its success undoubtedly comes from the ongoing fascination of the public with life in the Forbidden City and the lives and tastes of the Qing-dynasty emperors. A new rotation of artefacts is currently on show, including five grade-one national treasures, on display with nearly 600 other artefacts from the Palace Museum in Beijing. Thousands lived in the Forbidden City when it was imperial China's centre of power and one of the world's most extravagant palaces. The Palace was strictly off limits to all but the emperor, his family, and his servants. Made up of more than 90 architectural complexes, the complex comprised about 980 buildings and approximately 8,700 rooms.

The design of the Forbidden City reflected the absolute power and cosmic status of the emperor, the Son of Heaven. When the Yongle Emperor, architect of Beijing, planned his capital in 1405, he decreed that it should be laid out in accordance with his astrologers' symbolic conception. All spaces and buildings corresponded to part of the human body – the main gates on the outer defensive walls represented the head, shoulders, hand and feet; the Gate of Heavenly Peace (Tiananmen) the tissue enclosing the heart; and the imperial palace the viscera and intestines. The location of the palace itself was linked to the position of the Pole Star. The high vermilion palace walls that kept the emperor hidden further enhanced his mystique and glory.

From the early 15th century to the beginning of the 20th century, the halls and palaces of the Forbidden City had slowly filled with lot and tribute gifts from the many military campaigns, conquests, tribute and ambassadorial



Portrait of the Qianlong Emperor, Qing dynasty, Qianlong period (1736-1795), hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, Palace Museum

gifts lavished on the imperial family. These objects comprised jades, ivories, gold and bronze vessels and religious figures, porcelains, paintings, as well as embroidered fabrics and such specialised gifts and objects such as Emperor Qianlong's collection of clocks and automata. Each reigning emperor was also a patron of the arts and created work for thousands of skilled craftsmen.

One object in the show is a Ming-dynasty carved cinnabar lidded box decorated with cranes and a 'longevity' character. The Yongle Emperor of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) established the Imperial Lacquer Workshop, which produced carved lacquer wares until the end of the dynasty. The Yongle Emperor is well known as an active patron of the arts, which as a result flourished during his reign. The remarkable workmanship of imperial lacquer objects from this period can be attributed to the strict supervision by the Court on the

Guoyuanchang (Orchard Workshop), which was set up by the Yuyongjian (Office of Imperial Use), following the re-establishment of Beijing as the imperial capital. Located outside the Forbidden City, the workshop was staffed with the most skilled craftsmen summoned from all over China.

The Qianlong Emperor (r 1736-1795) commented that these wares, which required much time and effort to produce, evidenced the fatuousness of last emperors of the former dynasty. Ironically, he revived imperial commissions of carved lacquer in 1739, ordering the Imperial Silk Manufactory in Suzhou to produce wares with designs referencing Ming-dynasty carved lacquer works. Qianlong was an enthusiastic patron of art and literature, and the imperial collection of books and paintings was greatly enlarged during his reign. The emperor himself was an accomplished calligrapher and poet, so



Pale blue male court robe with dragons and clouds, Qing dynasty, Qianlong period (1736-1795), embroidered silk satin, Palace Museum

many temple inscriptions around China contain examples of his works.

The latest 25 objects on show explore key moments in the busy and well-regulated life inside the Forbidden City during the 18th century. Highlights include five paintings from the 16-page *Album of the Victorious Jinchuan Campaigns* by the court painter Xu Yang (active circa 1750-1777). These famous Jinchuan Campaigns were created by a power struggle between Qing empire and the rebel forces based in Jinchuan county in the northwest of Sichuan province, and are considered part of Emperor Qianlong's Ten Great Campaigns, which helped to unify China and improved the stature of the imperial court and its policies. However, in reality, these wars were waged at considerable expense and accelerated the worsening economics of the empire during the 18th century and ultimately indirectly helped bring about the fall of the empire.

The album is classified as a grade-one national treasure. One scene depicts, on 13 June 1776, the Qianlong Emperor greeting General Agui (1717-1797) and his army after their triumphant return from Jinchuan. In this scene, flags fly on the platform, and musicians play

ceremonial music around them. The Qianlong Emperor enters the scene for the upcoming ceremony, in which he will make an offering to the military flags. Riding on horseback, he leads a group of civil and military officials with gifts to be bestowed on soldiers.

Another area of the exhibition features several royal portraits, including one of the Empress Dowager Ci'an (1837-1881) dressed in informal attire, from the Tongzhi period, dating circa 1872-72. Empress Dowager Ci'an did not make a lasting impression. Only two portraits of her in leisure costumes are in wider circulation today. In contrast, Empress Dowager Cixi (1835-1908) had multiple portraits painted and loved having her photograph taken. A seal of the 'Tongzhi Emperor', the 'Seal of Respecting Parents', appears on this painting, along with his personally written inscription: 'May the sun forever shine upon women's residences', a common wish for a mother's birthday.

Another portrait is of the Qianlong Emperor, shown alongside a pale blue court robe embroidered with dragons and clouds from the same period. This type of court robe was the most formal ceremonial attire worn at the Qing imperial court. Although the Qing rulers were of Manchu origin, their costumes reflect multiple traditions. Its tight-fitting sleeves and 'horse hoof' cuffs are of Manchu and Mongolian designs, originally intended to facilitate ease of movement on horseback. The pleated lower part, dragon patterns, design of stylised waves and peaks, and the Twelve Emblems are Han Chinese imperial traditions.

The Forbidden City became the Palace Museum in 1925, one year after Puyi (1918-1997), the last emperor, went into exile and spans approximately 727,000 square metres, housing the largest collection of China's imperial collections of paintings, ceramics, and decorative objects. Designated as one of that country's most important protected cultural heritage sites in 1961 by China's State Council, it became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1987.

● Until 30 June, Hong Kong Palace Museum, Hong Kong, westkwoon.hk



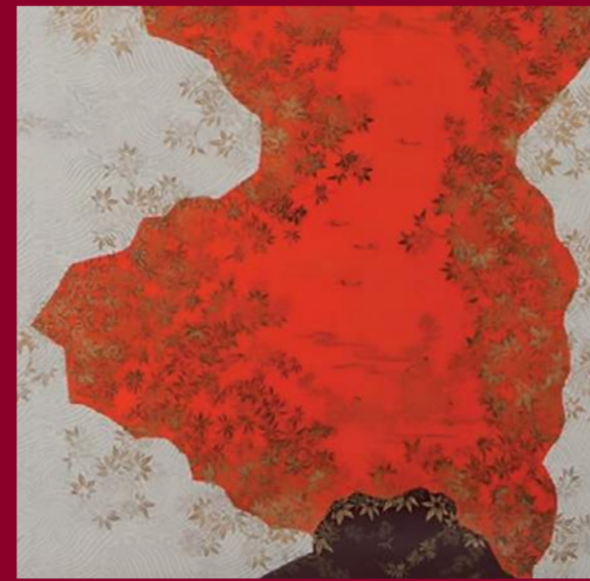
Welcoming General Agui after his triumphant return, from Victorious Jinchuan Campaigns (1777) by Xu Yang (active 1750s-after 1777), Qianlong period, album leaves, ink and colour on paper, Palace Museum

Empress Dowager Ci'an, Qing dynasty, Tongzhi period, circa 1872-1873, hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, Palace Museum



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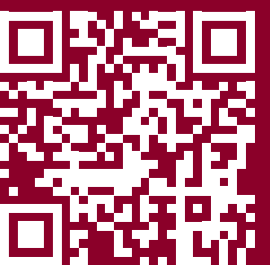


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Handscroll by Tawaraya Sotatsu (flourished circa 1600-1643), Momoyama period, early 1600s, Japan, ink, gold, silver, and mica on paper, 33 x 968.3 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, gift of Charles Lang Freer

WATCH
Ink Painting and
the Rinpa Tradition
from The Met

RINPA SCREENS

Whether displayed in private households or in temples, screens were an integral part of traditional Japanese interiors. Artists could experiment with painting techniques and motifs on these large, decorative surfaces. The three-dimensional folded format allowed them to play with perception and to cleverly trick the viewer's eye so that scenes of undulating dragons, stormy seas, and elegant foliage came to life and animated a room.

The screens on show at the Freer are painted in the Rinpa style, a movement known for stylised forms in bright colours that spanned the 17th to the 19th centuries. This notable new development in the decorative arts was first seen with the emergence of the Rinpa School.

The school was based on an informal lineage of painters from the founding of the movement by Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558-1637) and Tawaraya Sotatsu (fl. 1600-1643). The name for this movement comes from the second character of the family name of Ogata Korin (1658-1716), who is considered the leading exemplar of the Rinpa school of decorative art with the school later named after him (Korin plus 'ha' - school of).

Rinpa art is usually associated more with Kyoto, its nobles and elite



Dragons and Clouds, one of a pair of six-panel screens Tawaraya Sotatsu (flourished circa 1600-1643), Momoyama or Edo period, 1590-1640, ink and pink tint on paper, 171.5 x 374.3 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, gift of Charles Lang Freer

“
The movement, known for
stylised forms in bright colours,
was associated with Kyoto
”

craftsmen, along with an artistic tradition influenced by courtly, poetic ideals, together with the practice of Zen and the tea ceremony. All were much inspired by the area's rich nature. The sober, monochrome aesthetics of the tea ceremony had almost a monopoly on taste through the 15th and 16th centuries and it is as if in defiance of this – as well as to celebrate the new political stability and affluence – that extraordinarily talented artists and craftsmen began

to explore a freer, more exciting use of colours, pattern and form.

Foremost among these were followers of the Rinpa school that has continued in a recognisable form into the modern world and our contemporary era. While other formal schools were more regimented with a teacher/pupil system for the lineage of artists, the Rinpa school was less regulated and did not have a continuous teacher/pupil system in place. Many artists mastered the style through their own independent study and observance of existing works and not through direct pupillage. Artists also expanded their practice to encompass lacquerware, ceramics, and textile design.

Characteristic of Rinpa art is a dramatic sense of design and pattern, unusual techniques of painting, and a flair for exciting composition. Drawn outlines were often ignored, and tarashikomi – the application of ink or pigment to pool on wet paper – was a chosen method for shading or colouring. Gold or silver was often used in leaf-form as background, or as a finely ground dust mixed with liquid agent for painting, and, as clients for Rinpa works tended to be from the elite classes, both materials and pigments were usually of the best quality.



Maple leaves on a stream by Ikeda Koson (1801-1866), pair of screens, showing front painting (mountains on reverse), Edo period, 1856-1858, ink and colour on gilded paper, ink on paper, each screen 166.3 x 343.2 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, purchase Harold P Stern Memorial Fund and funds from Friends of the Freer and Sackler Galleries in appreciation of James W Lintott



Camellias by Suzuki Kiitsu (1796-1858), one of a pair of two-panel screens, Edo period, 19th century, ink, colour, and gold on paper, 152 x 167.6 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, purchase Charles Lang Freer Endowment



Waves at Matsushima, pair of six-panel screens by Tawaraya Sotatsu (fl. ca 1600-1643), Edo period, 17th century, ink, colour, gold, and silver on paper, each 166 x 369.9 cm, Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC, gift of Charles Lang Freer



treatment in style, technique and material differed considerably from that of the *Dragons and Clouds* screens, an ink monochrome work depicting the auspicious moment when dragons miraculously appear in watery clouds, leading white wave crests to rise up and soar. Waves, which was probably conceived later, is a powerful seascape with unique mountain-like waves in gold and sumi ink, forming a 'thousand waves' pattern with eddies and wave crests.

Although the manner of depicting waves was influenced by Ming-dynasty painting, Japanese themes that were incorporated include *kizai* 'auspicious omens' or 'miraculous events' usually found in the traditional painting of oceans. Elements suggesting the realm of the

immortals also borrowed from the *hamamatsu zu byobu*, 'pine shore screens' genre dating from the Muromachi (1333-1568) to the Momoyama (1568-1615) periods.

Nature has always provided a wealth of inspiration for writers and artists and the Rinpa artists made spectacular screens showing trees, grasses and flowers painted in compositions that demonstrate their strong sense of design.

A complementary display of ceramics demonstrates the aesthetic exchange facilitated by trade between Japan and China and interrogates what makes a work of art Japanese.

● Until 28 January, 2024, Freer Gallery of Art, Gallery 5, Washington DC, si.edu

While the Rinpa artists had no enforced limits to their artistic expression, they all seemed bound by an awareness of the refined taste that is associated with Kyoto – a taste for colour, line, texture and form that has become easily recognisable and harmonises with modern aesthetic ideals. Also inspired by the monumental paintings of the Momoyama period (1573-1615), Rinpa painters began to create large screen-paintings with a gold or silver background that were mainly used for delineating space in aristocratic

and court households, and temples. The Detroit industrialist Charles Lang Freer (1854-1919), who made five visits to Japan between 1895 and 1911, managed to assemble a formidable collection of Japanese art. On 18 October 1906, he acquired *Waves at Matsushima*, a pair of six-fold screens by Tawaraya Sotatsu, a Japanese artist little known in the West at the time. By then Freer had amassed most of the Japanese section of his multi-faceted collection of Asian art, whose quality was dependent on his own discerning eye,

as well as on the best critical advice offered by a distinguished circle of connoisseurs whom he had cultivated. The same year, Freer pledged his collection of Asian art to the American nation through the vehicle of the Smithsonian Institution.

Today, *Waves at Matsushima*, is acknowledged as one of Freer's most noteworthy acquisitions and is part of this installation. This pair of screens marks an important stage of Sotatsu's career and shows his transition from ink painting to polychrome *yamato-e* painting. Its

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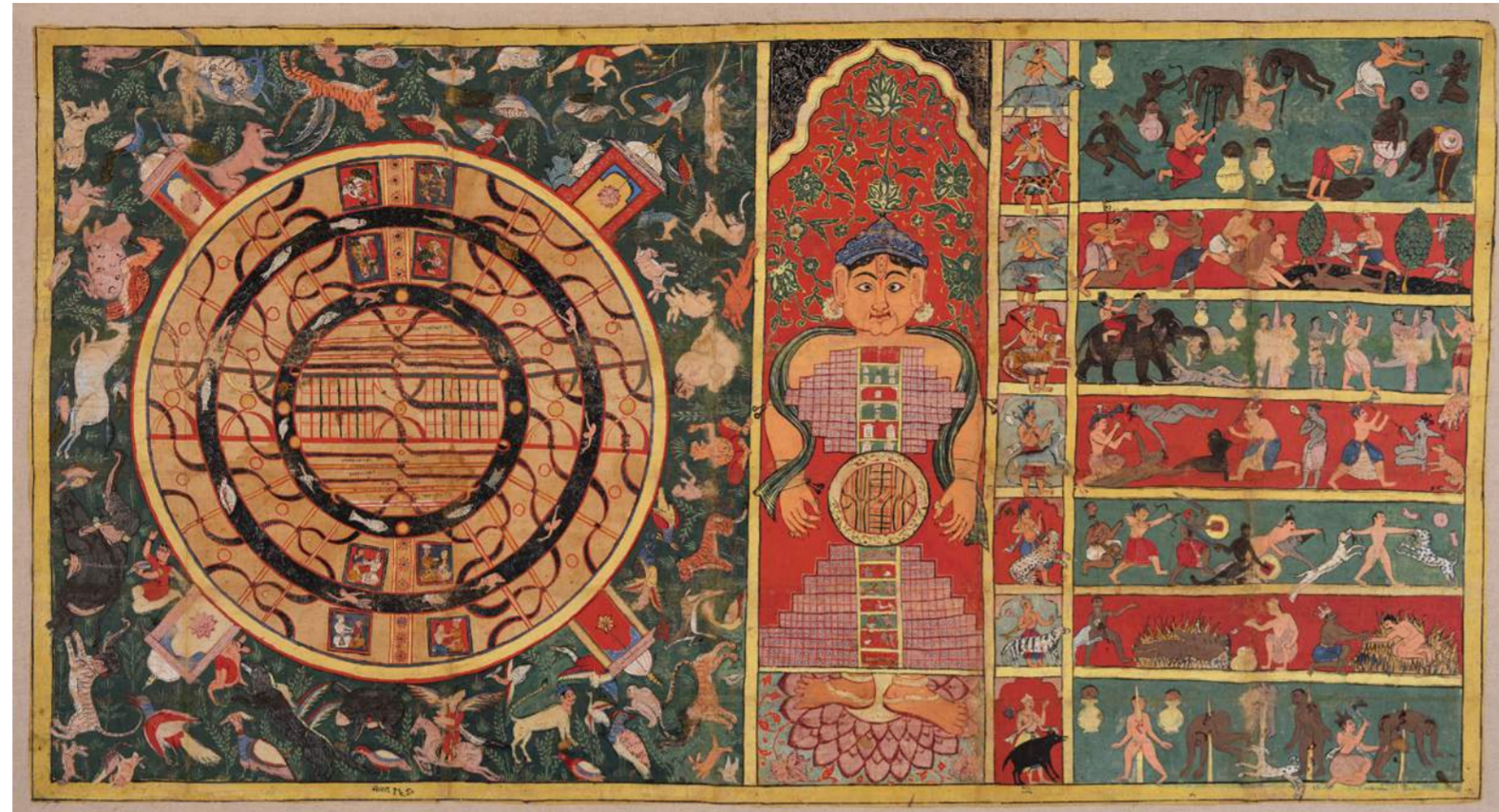
Enma-oo, King and Judge of Hell, Japan, Muromachi period (1392-1573), 16th century, Wood with gesso and traces of polychrome, inlaid glass eyes, Brooklyn Museum, gift of Mr and Mrs H George Mann

The latest exhibition at Asia Society in New York explores portrayals of hell across the Asian religious traditions of Buddhism, Hinduism, Jainism and Islam. *Comparative Hell: Arts of Asian Underworlds* examines how systems of belief and the underworlds within them are manifest in the rich artistic traditions of Asia. The works provide insight on how ideas of the underworld have influenced artistic production and how artworks in turn have been used as didactic tools, enhancing and influencing religious doctrine. Distinctive artistic practices and commonalities and differences in conceptions of the afterlife across religions and cultures are also explored. Didactic paintings, sculptures, and sacred objects introduce the notions of Buddhist, Hindu, Jain, and Islamic cosmology, as well as concepts about judgment, punishment, and salvation after death – many of which are shared by these traditions. Exhibition artworks portray religious threats of fiery torture as a means to shape values and beliefs, to instill virtuous behaviour, and to encourage atonement for sins, reflecting a universal human desire for spiritual transformation.

Adriana Proser, in her essay in the exhibition catalogue, writes: 'like Christian traditions, Islam, Buddhism Hinduism, and Jainism all assert that, following death, humans will be judged based on how they lived. The weighing of good and bad behaviour is an important feature in each tradition. Artists sometimes use the visual representation of a scale to emphasise the process of adjudication. For example, scales of justice are one of the prominent features at the centre of the diagram of the cosmos in the



Kayu kepuh (Gateway to the Underworld) Shadow Puppet (Wayang kulit), from Wayang Cupak Tabanan Set, Indonesia, Bali, early 20th century



Adhai-dvipa: The Two and a Half Continents, the Universe in the Shape of a Person (Cosmic Man, Lokapurusha), and the Seven Levels of Hell, India, Gujarat, Samvat, 1670/1613, ink, opaque watercolour, and gold on cloth. The Cleveland Museum of Art, Purchase and partial gift from the Catherine and Ralph Benkaim Collection, Severance and Greta Millikin Purchase Fund

ARTS OF ASIAN UNDERWORLDS

Ma'rifatnama (Book of Gnosis), a compilation of astronomy, mathematics, anatomy, psychology, philosophy, and Islamic mysticism – on show in the exhibition. Artists in other cultures in Asia portray a variety of Judges'. In the Hindu, Jain, and Buddhist traditions, artists have depicted judges carrying out sentencing of the deceased. Some form of Yama, the god of death and lord of judgement whose origins lie in the Hindu traditions, hands down judgement. Variant imagery of Yama and depictions of judgement have emerged at different times and places, often depending on the influence of regional faiths and the development of religiously syncretic popular beliefs. The most complex of these images are the representation of the Ten Kings of Hell and their highly bureaucratized system of judgment that emerged during the Tang dynasty (618-907) in China and spread as far as Korea, Japan and Vietnam. Yama is known in Japan as Enma, and a Muromachi period (1392-1573) wooden figure of the god is featured in the exhibition. The influence of Chinese Buddhism, Daoism, and popular stories had transformed the Indian king of the underworld into a well-known deity in East Asia. In Japan, he is recognised individually and also as one of the Ten Kings of Hell. Wooden figures, like the one in the exhibition, often appear in temples together with sculpture of the other Kings of Hell. Enma must impart penalties of harsh retribution as well as beneficent judgments. The faithful appeal to this severe figure for clemency not only for themselves but also on behalf of their recently deceased relatives. Phyllis Granoff adds the discourse in her essay from the catalogue,



Mountain Deity, Korea, Joseon dynasty (1392-1910), 19th century, panel, ink and colour on cotton, 69.9 x 45.1 cm, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, purchased with museum funds

Seeing Hell in South Asia, by remarking that descriptions of hells abound in Buddhist texts with their graphic language, they provided ample raw material for the imagination of painters. To be most effective as moral instruction, however, accounts of the tormented beings in hell also needed to include information about the sins that brought them there. In the *Mahavastu*, an early Sanskrit biography of the Buddha, after colourful descriptions of the tortures witnessed by the monk, the text turns to the question of what these miserable creatures had done to warrant such punishment. Among the sins listed are the taking of human and animal life, the shackling and branding of slaves, the imprisonment of people, and the cardinals sins of Buddhism: killing an arhat,

harbouring hatred of the Buddha, and killing one's father and mother. Buddhist were not alone in regarding violence to living beings as the gravest of all wrongdoings, which would result in multiple torments in hell. Jains, with their emphasis of *ahimsa* (non-violence), saw in violence the root of all sins. A large Jain map of the worlds, featured in the exhibition, shows the many hells into which sinners can be reborn and the tortures that are inflicted upon them. Recollection of past births, including those in one of the many hells, is often the stimulus for entering the monastic life in Jain stories.

An image of a mountain deity from Korea is linked to the Korean practice of shamanism, common in the country prior to the arrival of Buddhism in the 4th century. As a result, some shamanistic rituals came to be incorporated into Korean Buddhist practice. Many Buddhist temples and monasteries were constructed on mountains already considered sacred by shamans and the general population. By the 19th century, when this painting was created, it was regular practice to incorporate depictions of shamanistic mountain gods, *sansin*, in the murals and hanging scrolls found in Buddhist temples and monasteries in Korea. Most Korean temples include a shrine to the *sansin*, and Buddhist monks and believers appeal to Kings of Hell, who often appear seated in a similar manner and may wear a crown that includes two stacked books, like the figure in the exhibition. This deity was likely to have been worshipped by adherents seeking protection or salvation from hell for the deceased family members or themselves. The exhibition presents these beliefs and depiction of hell across the selected religions in

“ Visions of hell can always be found in the rich artistic traditions of Asia ”

five thematic sections. Situating Hell places hell in the larger religious cosmos, including paradises associated with the religious traditions represented in the exhibition. Judgment comprises images showing humans being condemned after death for their behaviour during life. Graphic scenes of torture are included in Punishment in manuscript illuminations intended for teaching or display in religious edifices. In a number of religious traditions, the hope of an opportunity to escape from hell exists through the assistance of an intercessor, and Salvation is dedicated to images of such saviours and scenes of their acts of mercy. Finally, Contemporary Hell includes a small selection of works by contemporary Asian artists—Afruz Amighi, Luis Lorenzana, Tsherin Sherpa, and Lu Yang, whose works present historical interpretations of hell in innovative ways to resonate with contemporary fears and tragedies. ● Asia Society, New York, asiasociety.org. Catalogue available.



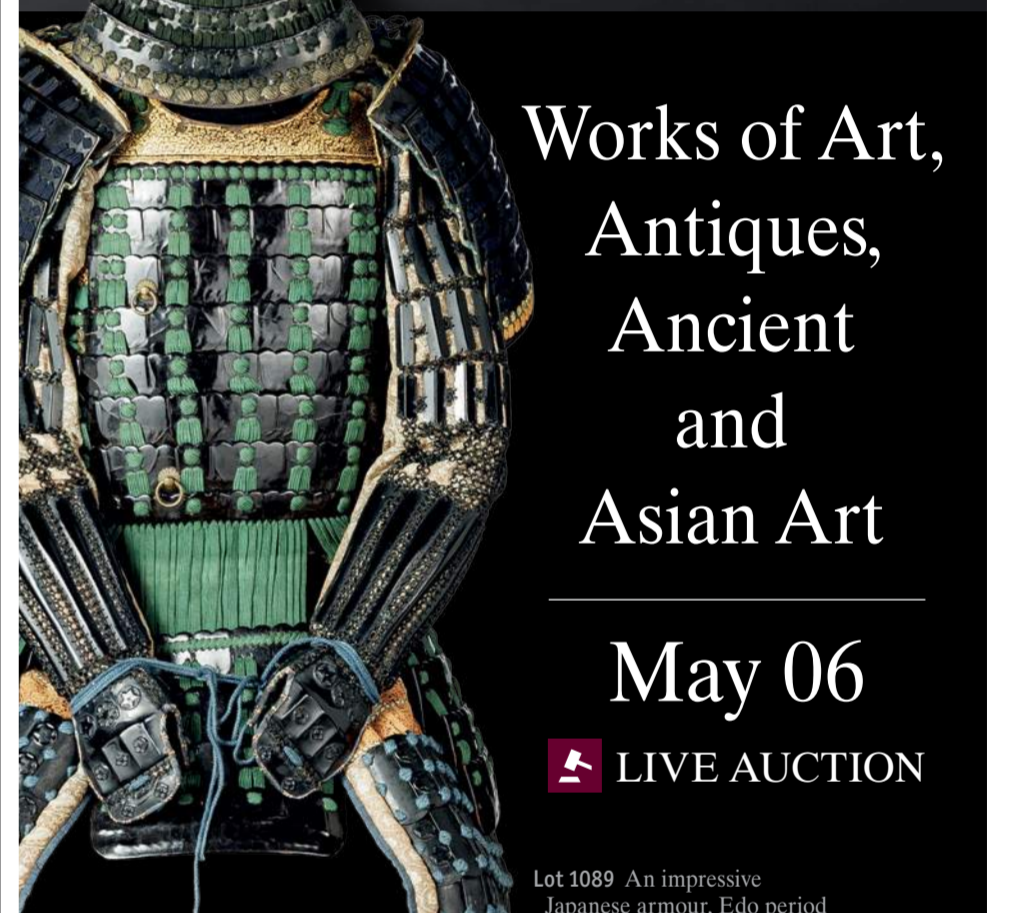
Even in Hell Money Counts (Jigoku no sata mo kane shidai), Bugs in the Food of the Hungry Ghost (Gaki no mono ni mushi) by Kawanabe Kyosai (1831-1889), from the series One Hundred Pictures (1615-1868), circa 1863-66, woodblock print (nishiki-e), ink and colour on paper, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, William Sturgis Bigelow Collection



The Fathers of the People of Error Are Punished in Hell, miniature from a copy of Hamla-Haydari (Ali's Exploits) India, Deccan, Hyderabad (?), circa 1800, manuscript page: ink, opaque watercolour, and gold on paper, The David Collection, Copenhagen



Lot 131 A small Chinese red lacquer table, circa 1900



Lot 1089 An impressive Japanese armour, Edo period

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Bretonischer Ring 3
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JAPONISME AND ARCHITECTURE IN FRANCE 1550-1930

by Olivia Sand

Japonisme is a widely acknowledged term, generally associated with the creation in the West as the Japanese influence on art and design from the 19th century onwards. Surprisingly, one field has so far been overlooked when it comes to the study of Japonisme: architecture. In his book, the archaeologist and architect Jean-Sébastien Cluzel, a professor at the Sorbonne in Paris, examines the rise of Japonisme in France through the lens of architecture, highlighting unique realisations such as the pavilions at the Paris Universal Exhibitions (1867-1900), the first Japanese house completed in France in 1886, and commissions for the financier Albert Kahn's from 1897 at his residence in Boulogne-Billancourt.

A passionate advocate for the preservation and restoration of endangered buildings, Jean-Sébastien Cluzel demonstrates these buildings unique impact, not just in the context of Japonisme in France, but also more globally in Japan's history of architecture. Here, he discusses his book *Japonisme and Architecture in France: 1550-1930*, in the interview below.

Asian Art Newspaper: Why has it taken so long for architecture to be incorporated into Japonisme creating the term 'architectural Japonisme'?

Jean-Sébastien Cluzel: In my opinion, it is mainly a matter of competence or interest. Up until now, research conducted by scholars at the university or museum level primarily concentrated on sculpture and painting. Architecture historians represented a completely separate entity and there was very little communication between the art and architecture departments. As a result, certain topics peculiar to painting, sculpture, or illustration rarely appeared within literature addressing the history of architecture. In the past, there have been very few articles bringing both worlds together and I can think of only two people who have been interested in the topic and can be considered pioneers in the field: Geneviève Lacambre with her thesis presented at the Ecole du Louvre in the 1960s and Clay Lancaster, an American architect who was writing on this topics as early as the 1950s.

It is astonishing to observe that architecture historians are only now beginning to be interested in what art historians have said about



Photograph of a Japanese gardener (hata wasauke) in front of the entrance to the Japanese house of Midori no Sato, the oldest Japanese pavilion in France, which no longer exists © Collection of the Friends of Old Reims society - Le Vergeur museum

painting, leading to more connections between the different fields. Perhaps it is not that obvious in Europe where architecture history and art history are being taught at the same university. Therefore, there have always been exchanges and communication between both specialities. In Japan, however, the situation is different, as the history of architecture is not taught with art history. They are seen as two very distinct entities with no communication between disciplines and, therefore, their topics do not overlap. Within my own curriculum,

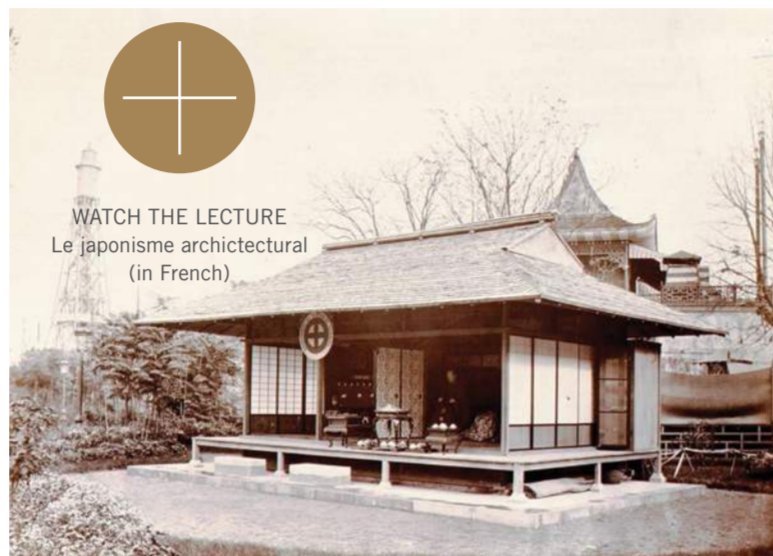
I experienced this at first-hand – as after obtaining my degree in architecture in France, I went to Japan to study the history of architecture, and personally experienced this separation between art and architecture. This is how I came to make it my priority to have these two worlds meet. Today, everything I publish, for example, whether it is about Japonisme or Hokusai, is an attempt to connect the history of architecture and the history of art. And this is what makes the book truly innovative.

AAN: Was there one event in particular that triggered this project?

JSC: The triggering event was the restoration of the Japanese pavilions in the garden of the banker and philanthropist Albert Kahn (1860-1940) in Boulogne-Billancourt, near Paris. I was appointed to be head of restoration and the overall project took almost 10 years to complete. I began being involved in 2006 and we started working on the actual project in 2014. It was finally reopened to the public in April 2022. The preliminary stages were long, as for such an undertaking a budget had to be secured, politicians had to agree, a strategy had to be defined and unanimously supported by all parties. Once the project started, we realised how extraordinary and exceptional this Japanese heritage was, not just in France, but at a European level, which encouraged the creation of the book. Although it was tempting to highlight the Albert Kahn project as a gem, it seemed more interesting to take a broader approach, looking at the infatuation with the architecture from Japan that had started in the 19th century and to observe this phenomenon through the lens of similar objects from that period. Discussing these different ideas in relation to the architecture from Japan led to the conclusion in the book, that the Albert Kahn garden is one of the only gems of that kind we have left, a gem that was part of an era, an era we should neither forget nor minimise.

AAN: The book focuses on France while also addressing the influences in the rest of Europe. It seems that France was an important anchorage point. Would you say the same applies to other countries in Europe, or is France truly a unique case?

JSC: I believe France is a unique case, perhaps because things that have been appreciated in France are not necessarily those that have been appreciated elsewhere. This contrast in the appreciation of the Japanese works of art has generated a French Japonisme that, in itself, is completely different from anything else; the subjects chosen by the French are not those selected by the British or Americans. With this in mind, French Japonisme is unique, encouraging the creation of unusual works. Interestingly among the historians, critics, and amateurs of Japanese art at the time, the British



The Satsuma Japanese Pavilion in the Nations Park, Universal Exhibition of 1867 in Paris © National Archives.



Another view of the western Japanese pavilion, after recent renovation, Albert Kahn Museum gardens, Boulogne Billancourt. © Jean-Sébastien Cluzel

would be looking for classical pieces, giving a lot of importance to the key defining periods of art history in Japan. This was the prominent approach in the UK, slightly less so in the US, but in France people were much more interested in folk art. Logically, the difference of how Japan was understood, as the 'other', varies, leading to different influences coming to the fore in different countries.

AAN: The definition of what Japonisme actually means varies according to the

country. Today, is there a more global consensus that includes architecture that most historians agree upon?
JSC: All too often, there is a tendency to oversimplify and show Japonisme as the influence of Japan on Western creativity. Yet, it is much more complex than that. Japonisme is not an exclusive term, as there are also many other things that can be identified in this sense, like Orientalism to name just that one example. Highlighting all these areas in depth would have made the book utterly complicated. We wanted to

tell a story that was clear and straightforward. In my opinion, Japonisme is an attempt to oppose and reshape the prevailing academic thought before the so-called influence of Japan. Although not a direct influence, it served as a pretext to make profound changes within our society, prompting a burst of creation around the world.

AAN: Would you say that Japonisme is still relevant today?

JSC: I believe it continues to exist for two different reasons: one is that the French are still very much attached to Japanese art, which is a legacy of the 19th century. This leads to the underlying question: why this attraction to Japan, and not China, for example? There are ongoing close ties between France and Japan that are not based on any rational explanation, this allows Japonisme to continue to exist. The other reason, which is perhaps less obvious, is that such an aesthetic, or artistic expression, is generally firmly anchored in a culture and it takes a long time to change it. Let us take the example of architectural photography and compare this to that existing in Japan and in the US today: all great photographers from the US (whether from the 1950s, 60s, and 70s), systematically looked at the buildings in perspective, enhancing these perspectives for the camera view. However, architectural photographers in Japan look at Japanese architecture with an oblique projection, basically in a sequence of shots similar to that used for prints. This cultural and aesthetic basis that is unique to each country (in this case the US and Japan), is an ongoing pattern that was still visible throughout the 1960-1970s, despite the fact that many exchanges took place between the countries at this time. When it comes to the creative process, a different eye and training produce a different result. Today, Japanese photographers are almost more famous than all American architectural photographers, leaving a visual imprint and an influence that is far more important than their American counterparts. In this sense, Japonisme is ongoing and so is Japan's cultural influence. Today, even if cosmopolitan photographers claim to be working in a global world, there may be less of a nationalistic imprint in the creative process, but the cultural aspects cannot be ignored.

AAN: Japanese architects, as well as photographers, are in demand across the world. Why is this so?

JSC: It seems to me that the discourse coming out of Japan is somehow built around the perceptions we Westerners have about Japan and its culture. Taking the example of Kengo Kuma (b 1954), who worked on the Albert Kahn Museum restoration, his architectural language is a traditional one, relying on the *engawa* system (a strip of flooring, usually made of hardwood surrounding the house that represents a filter between the inside and the outside), as it is known in Japanese architecture, including a garden that comes close to a Zen garden. His entire vocabulary, be this in his discourse or within his architecture, is already known and familiar to Westerners, allowing for an immediate recognition. It basically already exists within our culture. On the contrary, the Chinese have to go through an entire process in order to make sure their works are properly understood to a wider audience. The Japanese know



The Japanese pavilion interior, and as it is seen from the west pavilion, after the recent restoration, in Kahn's original 'Japanese Village' in the gardens at the Albert Kahn Museum, Boulogne Billancourt © Jean-Sébastien Cluzel



exactly how to proceed, but it is more difficult with the Chinese concept, where the interpretation and the reception of their message is more complicated. Indeed, the Chinese show works that are new and innovative, but often without referring to the vocabulary we expect or are familiar with. Today, perhaps the Koreans are more straightforward than the Chinese when it comes to commercially selling their new inventions and creations.

AAN: Over the past few decades, Japanese architects seem to have influenced an entire generation of other architects, showing a certain fluidity and clarity in their projects. Would you agree?

JSC: It is true that in the West there is a great appreciation of minimalist architecture, which by its nature is very pure, etc. However, in my opinion, the most successful projects continue to be found in Japan, for reasons we rarely acknowledge, which have to do with the quality of finish of the project. In France, when referring to something very pure, the architect will encounter great difficulties identifying artisans with the ability to fully execute what he has designed, with all being perfect. In Japan however, a high level of craftsmanship is something normal. Following contemporary architectural walk-throughs in Japan, you can clearly see that the details are pushed to the limits and extremely well executed. This is something we do not find in Europe, perhaps for reasons depending on the artisans' qualifications. For example, it is a known fact that the architect Tadao Ando (b 1941) has a terrible reputation, especially among masons, because if the aesthetics of a wall in concrete does not match his expectations, he has it torn down and built again. This is unimaginable in France, or anywhere else, I think. It thus comes as no surprise that the execution and the quality of the details, as well as the technical care,

are much more successful in Japan. There is a different kind of detail-oriented culture that also surpasses those found in other Asian cultures.

AAN: People outside the architectural world do not necessarily see the subtlety of Japanese construction and the complexities of producing something that looks stunningly simple out of concrete.

JSC: This is absolutely true. We are wrong to keep thinking that putting together concrete walls is extremely easy and can be done by anyone. In my case, I was quite struck when I visited the first buildings completed by Tadao Ando in Japan 25 years ago. I came to the conclusion that they had nothing to do with the concrete found in Europe, even if it came from the finest European artisans like Carlo Scarpa (1906-1978) in Italy, for example. This is all the more surprising as originally, masonry is not Japanese, but Italian. Therefore, how is it possible that the Japanese craftsmen came to master, with such excellence, a field that was not known in their own country? I remember being quite struck by this at that time.

AAN: You are currently involved with the restoration of the cinema La Pagode, built in 1896, and situated in rue Babylone in Paris. It is an extraordinary building. How did such a jewel fall into disrepair?

JSC: Initially, there was a conflict between the previous owner and her tenant, who was in the film theatre business, but never had any work done to preserve the building. Planning to make a functioning film theatre out of it, the owner wanted the tenant to leave. At the time, and for safety reasons, the city of Paris refused to enlarge the theatre in the basement as the digging may have affected the structure of the building. Finally, after 20 years, an almost identical project has been selected with the theatre indeed being enlarged in the basement and in the garden. This required a wonderful

tree to be removed which caused quite a stir.

Presently, works are in progress as the building has been sold to Charles Cohen, an American producer, who collects historic movie theatres and who is ready to finance its restoration. He is determined to have the movie theatre operate again, with an additional theatre in the basement. La Pagode is a landmark building and as such, there is no obligation to renovate, which is a process entirely left up to the owner. Charles Cohen is financing a restoration that so far nobody wanted to take on, simply because it is tremendously expensive. My role is the one of a historian and as a specialist of Japonisme in architecture. The building has been closed for the past five years, but its reopening is scheduled within one or two years. The glasses, lamps, paintings, carpentry, everything is being restored by very skilled craftsmen. The whole process is quite long because until the 1930s, film theatres also allowed smoking which makes the cleaning of the interior quite laborious. The entire restoration process needs to be completed with a great deal of precautions.

I believe it is going to be wonderful when it reopens as a film theatre. Initially, we were not sure if we could pull this off, since La Pagode is located in a very upmarket neighbourhood, where the square footage is tremendously expensive and the project, per se, entails a considerable budget. I even began to consider whether it would not be best to let the building fall apart and recuperate the pieces that could somehow be saved. Ultimately, the project, as it is moving forward now, is a good compromise. It is almost a utopian project, and we should salute this American businessman who decided to invest his money and save this iconic building.

AAN: Coming back to the book, is it the result of your personal vision, or was it an approach that was starting to be widely shared, gaining some ground among scholars?

JSC: I am one of the first to highlight a different time-frame with regards to Japonisme, which as indicated in the title of the book, starts in the 16th century and not as previously acknowledged in 1868 – with the reopening of Japan to foreigners. My position underlines the fact that this passion and movement towards Japan is not new: it grows considerably in the 19th century, but it had existed for a long time before that. If it picked up so quickly abroad, it was because there was already a background to the culture in existence.

For the book, I realised that, all

too often, experts on Japan hardly talked to the specialists on Western art. Moving forward, it became clear that we were in between both fields and would need the knowledge from various scholars, regardless whether they were specialists of Japan or not. It became a matter of convincing these scholars to collaborate with me as, so far, specialists on Western architecture would not venture into speaking about Japan since they were not experts in the field. I suggested that I would bring the Japan side, with its history and culture, and they would bring their insight on the archives in France. The same goes for architecture: I decided to get in touch with art historians, who did not necessarily have all the knowledge in architecture, but could rely on my expertise in the field and we could build on that. It seemed logical to collaborate, since reaching the expertise of my colleagues in their respective fields would have taken me at least 10 years. Fortunately, my colleagues were all very enthusiastic about the project. Most of all, I wanted to avoid the various experts who had committed to collaborate on the book to each work separately, making the book a mere sequence of research papers. I decided on another approach, organising a seminar that would be continue over two years and I would invite one of the contributors for each of the panels. The book is truly the result of a collective and collaborative undertaking.

AAN: The book is the winner of the Society for the Study of Japonisme Award. Has it made an impact?

JSC: Absolutely. The book follows a different approach to architecture, relying on the principle that in the absence of written archives, one can work on the architecture itself, provided the architecture exists. This is what we did with La Pagode, with the Albert Kahn garden, and with the Stork Chamber set, trying to get these spaces and works to speak for themselves. This is something new, with archaeology coming to the rescue of art history on a scientific level.

The book also served as a trigger for the restoration of additional projects. Just before its publication, we gave a number of talks about the necessity and obligation to restore a heritage building that is falling apart. This is actually how I became involved La Pagode in the first place, because it became known in the field that I was campaigning for this type of restoration. For the Stork Chamber, for example, an part of an operatic set salvaged by the industrialist and collector Emile Etienne Guimet (1836-1918) in 1911 – I openly complained in the book that it had not been restored and that nothing was being done to get the project to move forward. We are presently trying to raise money for this project and I strongly believe that the book, perhaps somehow shocking or provoking, has also motivated various institutions into action. I never expected it to have that much of an impact, but it has unquestionably allowed institutions to become aware of the importance of the Japanese architecture and heritage we have in France.

Overall, I have one mission: making sure that many more buildings in France, which stand as a testimonial to these types of cultural exchanges, can be saved and renovated.

• The book has been translated from French to English by John Adamson, for more information johnadamsonbooks.com/japonisme



Carlo Songa, design set for Act II of Madam Butterfly by Puccini, Milan, Teatro alla Scala, 1904, historic archive Ricordi © Ricordi & C.S.r.l. Milano

TEXTILES MASTERS TO THE WORLD

The Global Desire for Indian Cloth

The Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore is presenting its latest installation in the Fashion and Textiles Gallery of garments and cloths from India. Indian textiles have been traded to South East Asia for nearly 2,000 years and were highly prized as wedding dowry, ritual objects, ceremonial dress and even as currency. As with India's other export markets, many types of cloth were made specifically for the different tastes of this diverse region. They included block-printed cottons, *ikat* fabrics, and woven silks from Gujarat, and fine chintzes from coastal southeast India. As well as treasured heirloom pieces, simpler printed cottons were made to cater for everyday use.

This installation features pieces from the National Collection, as well as loans from private collections and explores the historic global impact of textile production in India along with its role as evidence of trade and cultural exchange between India and other regions such as East and Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe. An important trade that spanned the 14th to the 19th centuries, and is still in evidence, to a lesser extent, today. The show also looks how Indian textile designs influenced local designs where these goods were imported and traded.

Among the earliest surviving examples of Indian textiles are cottons made in Gujarat and intended for export. Their designs range from botanical motifs and mythical birds to figural depictions of women entertainers and hunting scenes. Such important early fabrics did not survive in India, but were preserved in places where they were traded. Numerous fragments have been found in Egypt, but some of the largest and best-preserved examples have been collected in Southeast Asia. Notable are the cloths that were prized for centuries within Toraja family treasuries in Sulawesi. There such textiles are known as *maa'*, sacred cloths believed to possess tremendous spiritual powers, and their use was strictly reserved for



General view of the new installation in the Fashion and Textile Gallery. All images courtesy of Asian Civilisations Museum

major ceremonial events related to life transitions of birth, marriage, and death.

The patterns on these early cotton plain-weave cloths were block-printed and/or hand-drawn with mordant before dyeing with red and brown. Further use of wax as a resist could protect an area of colour from the next dye bath of indigo blue. Deliberate over-dyeing of indigo with red was often used to add another layer of depth to the colour palette. Indian dyers excelled in the use of mordants to achieve colourfastness.

Indian textiles played a major and

historic role in the trade across Maritime Southeast Asia. A different style developed for Southeast Asia based on the *ikat* technique. Gujarati weavers made *patola* especially for the Indonesian market using techniques such as the double-*ikat* *patolu* (plural *patola* in Gujarati) method. Today, the term *patolu* refers to a type of sari made in the town of Patan, in Gujarat. These saris are characterised by a rich red colour and bold patterns composed of small squares, created by first tying and dyeing the warp and weft threads, then weaving the pre-dyed threads to reveal the complete design.

Used in India as wedding *saris* and ceremonial cloths, *patola* hold a very important place in the history of Indian textile exports to Southeast Asia.

This primary market for these types of textiles had a huge influence on locally produced designs with many Indonesian textile patterns deriving from and interrelated to the major designs found in Indian *ikat* textiles. In Java, for example, the sultan and members of his court wore waist-sashes and trousers made from *patola* sporting a variety of geometric patterns based on stylised flowers and leaves. Such *patola* were

not only for garments, they were also used for furnishings and display.

Patola boasts a variety of patterns, but those with geometric and floral motifs were subsequently adapted as items of attire for the *priyayi*, Javanese nobility, in the courts of Jogjakarta and Surakarta. The *kain dodot*, a voluminous 'skirt cloth' gathered at the waist with a *sabuk*, 'sash' became male court dress. Some were transformed into trousers. Less expensive *patola* were reworked into formal *selandang*, 'shoulder cloth' for noblewomen and as *kemben*, 'breast cloths'. An example of this type of cloth on show in the gallery is seen in a pair of 19th-century breeches with an eight, pointed star pattern, tailored in Indonesia, but of silk *patola* (double *ikat*) original from Gujarat. These tailored garments made from silk *patola* were worn by the wealthy elite of Indonesia.

Some documented examples of Gujarati cloths found on other Indonesian islands, appear to reflect the scale of mediaeval Indian trade. The cloths assumed new functions in their destinations. Islam, introduced earlier in the Arab world, had created Muslim communities who approached textiles as precious items of wealth. They played an important part in the local social contract and were exchanged as reciprocal gifts. Markers too for rites of passage, such as birth, circumcision, marriage and death, they were highly valued as



Ceremonial cloth, betel leaf design (daun bolu), Gujarat, 14th to 16th century, cotton (mordant and resist dyed, block printed and painted). Cloths like this were popular in eastern Indonesia, especially in Toraja, Sulawesi. They were used as hangings in house building and harvest ceremonies



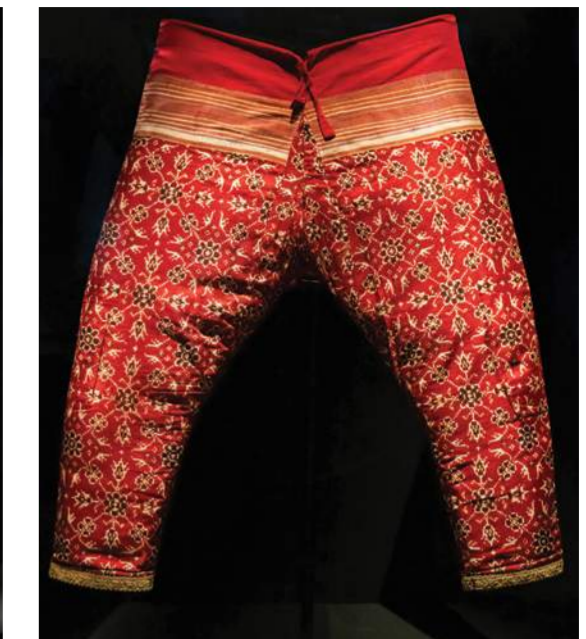
Hanging with temple motifs, Coromandel Coast, 18th century, cotton (drawn and painted, mordant and resist dyed). The repeating motif on this cloth is a processional chariot, which takes the form of a temple set on wheels and flames or nagas surround the chariot, giving it a sacred presence. This design was traded to both Indonesia and Japan



Open gown, cotton (mordant and resist dyed), Coromandel Coast, late 18th century. On loan from the Collection of Mr and Mrs Lee Kip Lee



Men's inner kimono (aigi). Tailored in Japan, Taisho period (1912-26), silk, Japan, 19th century, cotton patches (drawn and painted, mordant and resist dyed), Coromandel Coast, 17th and 18th century, with 19th century with European chintz. On loan from the collection of Mr and Mrs Lee Kip Lee



Breeches with an eight, pointed star pattern, tailored in Indonesia, silk *patola* (double *ikat*), Gujarat, 19th century, gold and silver thread. These loose fitted breeches have a wide draw string waist band, and the legs are edged with a heavy gold and silver braid.



Jacket, tailored in Persia, 19th century, cotton (mordant and resist dyed), Coromandel Coast, 19th century. The pattern on the cloth would have appealed to consumers in both Mughal India and Persia. The tailoring, with open arm pits and small flaps at the hips, is in the Persian style. It was originally edged and cuffed with a contrasting fabric, but most of this has been lost. On loan from the collection of Mr and Mrs Lee Kip Lee



Coat with a whimsical floral motif, tailored in the Coromandel Coast or Sumatra, cotton (drawn and painted, mordant and resist dyed), Coromandel Coast, early 18th century. This coat was fashioned from a textile with eccentric patterns, birds, and large flower heads, likely inspired by French 'bizarre' silks. Sometimes called a *baju Panjang*, it is a long, loose coat that relates to the Indo-Arabic *banyan* worn by Gujarati merchants, which became popular with European traders in the late 17th and 18th century. Gift of Mr and Mrs Lee Kip Lee



Jacket with floral motif, tailored and gold painted (perada) in southern Sumatra, late 19th century, cotton (mordant and resist dyed), Coromandel Coast, late 18th or early 19th century

was popular in Britain in the later part of the 18th century and the current gown has been altered from a robe of the 1780s to suit the neoclassical fashion of the period. The bodice has been folded to shorten at the waist, and the skirt re-padded to join a higher waistline. It would have been worn over a petticoat of silk or matching chintz.

At times the growing popularity of chintz led to restrictions on importation of Indian cloths in efforts to protect local European textile manufacturers, which in turn fuelled a practice of recycling and repurposing precious Indian chintzes. There were specific preferences for each market, and textiles made for the French, Dutch, and English markets are easily distinguishable. The considerable variation in skill, aesthetic detail, and composition by the individual artist producing the textile can be discerned in many extant works.

This repurposing of fabrics was also seen in Japan. The Japanese trade came from India via Banten, Batavia (Jakarta), Pattani, and Ayutthaya (Siam), with the same textiles traded to Southeast Asia also traded to Japan. An intriguing example in the exhibition is a man's inner *kimono* (*aigi*), from the Taisho period (1912-26), made of silk with Indian cotton patches, drawn and painted, mordant and resist dyed, from the Coromandel Coast dating to the 17th and 18th centuries, with 19th century with European chintz.

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The bulk of Indian textiles either came from Gujarat or the Coromandel Coast
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acquired them in India mainly for re-export to Southeast Asia where they could be bartered for spices and other forest products. In the mid-17th century, chintz began to be exported in large quantities to Europe. European taste for chintz favoured undulating floral patterns in brilliant reds, blues, and greens on a light or white background. Such fabrics were used for a variety of purposes, from hangings to household furnishings to dress cloths. Europeans also creatively manipulated chintz cloth through techniques such as piecing, appliqué, and quilting to produce unique garments or furnishings that reflected a distinctively Western aesthetic. Soon these textiles also gained popularity in European markets where, by the 18th century, they were commonly being used as hangings, in furnishings, dress fabrics and scarves at many levels of society.

using a *kalam* bamboo pen, the term *kalamkari* (literally 'pen work') came into common usage to describe them. Artisans used the *kalam* to apply mordants and resists that would reveal the designs upon immersing the cloth in successive dye baths of *chay* red and indigo blue, with only the occasional painting on of dyes, such as yellow, for particular details.

Coromandel Coast textiles were exported to Southeast Asia from as early as the 5th century, but the volume of trade increased significantly with the participation of Portuguese and Dutch traders, who at first

form revered Balinese double *ikat* cloths with the sacred cosmic *geringsing* motif. However, it is the *pagi-sore*, 'morning-evening' double format *batik* that has an exceptional ancestry. Revealing a different pattern when worn in the reverse, it might be traced to identical Indian leaf motifs from 14th- and 15th-century fragments found among the Toraja and on Egyptian archaeological sites. These and other cloths are emblematic records of links between India, Southeast Asia and elsewhere that go beyond trade, religion and history and contribute to an entirely new chapter on scholarship.

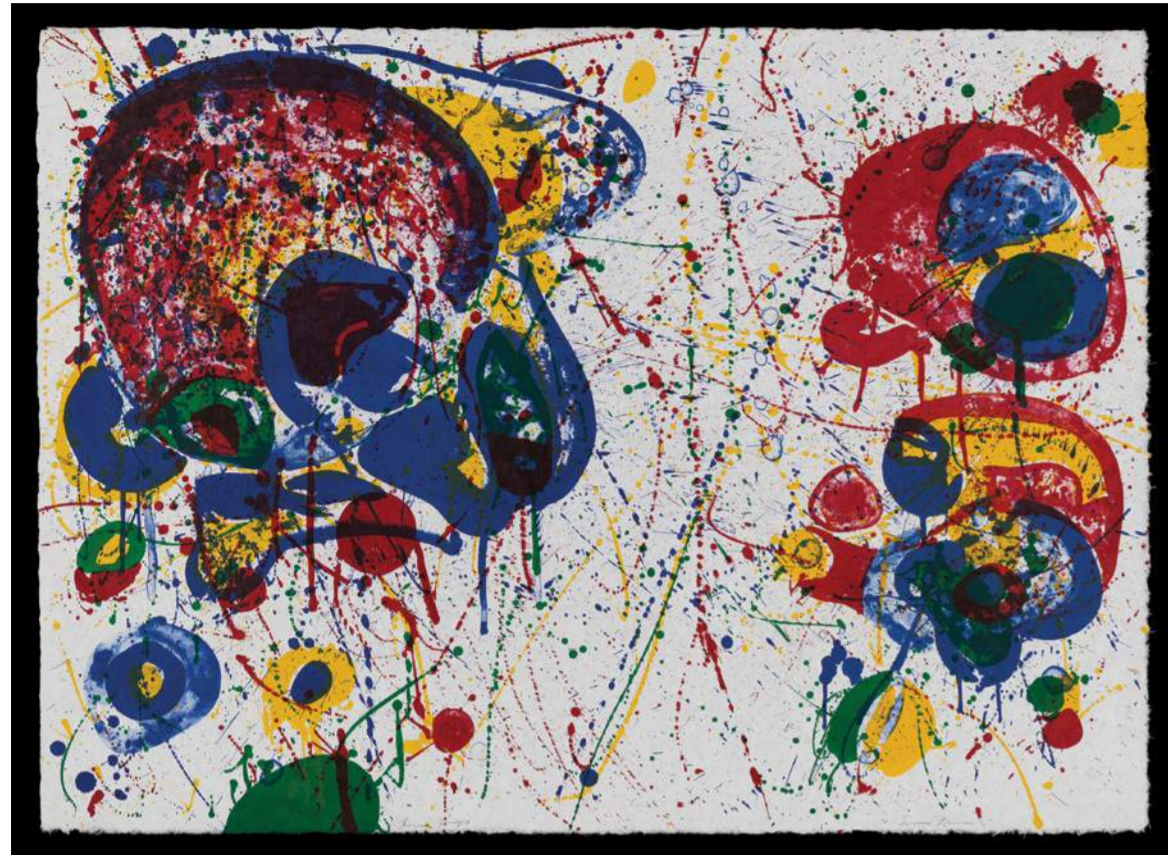
Another source in India for textiles was the Coromandel Coast. Finely woven cotton cloths with exquisite hand-drawn designs in a palette dominated by red and blue were produced along this coast, known for trade, in southeast India. The towns of Masulipatan, Pulicat, Negapatam, Pondicherry, and Fort St George (Madras) served as ports of call for trade vessels and became centres of thriving textile production both for domestic and trade textiles. These cloths, which were sometimes given a burnished surface, came to be known in the West as chintz, and because their designs were drawn

pusaka, 'heirlooms'. They were ascribed with spiritual and protective qualities as ancestral shrouds passed down the generations. Some were used as coffin covers. However, faced with unforeseen circumstances, supplies of Gujarati cloths gradually dwindled and local cloths became to be made.

An example of an early textile from Gujarat in the gallery is a ceremonial cloth with a betel-leaf design (*daun bolu*) and dates to 14th to 16th century. This long textile is divided into two halves, one with a denser pattern than the other – sometimes called a *pagi sore*, meaning night/day. Only one edge has a border, suggesting that it was designed to be cut in two and joined together to produce a square. Both halves are decorated with stylised flowering trees, or *daun bolu*. Cloths like this were popular in eastern Indonesia, especially in Toraja, Sulawesi. They were used as hangings in house building and harvest ceremonies. Cloths with similar designs dated to the 14th century have been found in Egypt.

Through the generations, Indian cloths were seamlessly absorbed into the Indonesian textile repertoire and continue to play a significant role today. The *patola* has survived to

SAM FRANCIS AND JAPAN



Untitled (1963) by Sam Francis, Irwin Hollander, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Dorothy and Benjamin B Smith through the Modern and Contemporary Art Council © Sam Francis Foundation, California / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York. Photo © Museum Associates/LACMA

This is the first exhibition to explore the practice of American artist Sam Francis (1923-1994) in relation to historic and contemporary Japanese art and aesthetics. Presenting works by Francis alongside Japanese art, both pre-modern and contemporary, the show introduces a new way of looking at the artist's work that emphasises his aesthetic sense and his intellectual exchange with artists in Japan.

Comprising 80 works, largely from LACMA's collection, the exhibition includes landmark paintings and prints by Francis such as *Towards Disappearance* (1957-58) and *Meteorite* (1986), as well as a number of works from the museum's Prints and Drawings and Japanese Art departments, with some works on view to the public for the first time in the museum. Juxtapositions of works by Francis and historic Japanese works illustrate the pictorial and philosophical affinities they share. The exhibition also presents works by contemporary Japanese artists whom Francis knew from his extensive time in Japan, including many associated with the Gutai and Mono-Ha artist movements of the 1950s and 1960s. Archival material lent by the Sam Francis Foundation and the Getty Research Institute accompany these artworks.

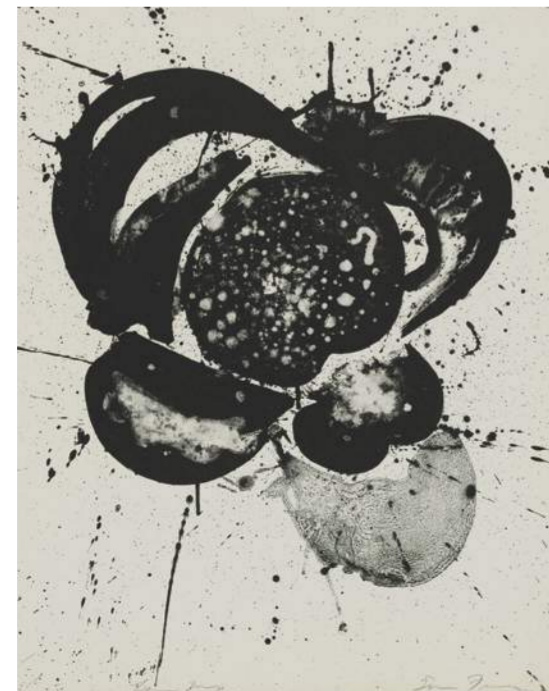
Founded in 1956, the Gutai group forged radical new ways of making abstract paintings in terms of both their actions and as an overarching philosophy. Encouraged by Gutai founder Jiro Yoshihara to 'do what no one has done before!', the artists used unorthodox techniques including inciting explosions, crashing jars of paint against surfaces and using the artist's body to paint in novel ways. Started four years after the end of the allied occupation that transformed Japan into a democratic state, Gutai rejected traditional art styles in favour of performative practices. They declared freedom of expression, an emphasis on individualism and had a desire to express the true natures of their materials, whilst also being in an open dialogue with artists from around the world, from Jackson Pollock to the Dadaists. Politically, Gutai marks a clear break from Japan's autocratic and isolationist

past and a desire to build a new language for art after the horrors of the Second World War.

The Mono-ha school of thought emerged in Tokyo in the late 1960s, led by the Lee Ufan (b 1936) and Nobuo Sekine (b 1942), and was Japan's first contemporary art movement to gain international recognition. It rejected Western notions of representation, focusing on the relationships of materials and perceptions rather than on expression or intervention. The artists of Mono-ha present works made of raw physical materials that have barely been manipulated.

Western and Eastern aesthetics engage in a profound intercultural dialogue in the work of Sam Francis. While he is most often associated with abstract expressionism, his bold use of white space and fluid and gestural application of paint also evoke the aesthetics of East-Asian art and calligraphy.

Beginning in the 1950s, Francis travelled extensively and immersed himself in artist communities in New York, Paris, and elsewhere. In Paris, he encountered members of the Gutai group, and continued to exchange ideas



Mount Fuji by Yamaguchi Soken, late 18th/early 19th century, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Hans and Margot Ries

The first gallery compares works by Francis with historic Japanese paintings to highlight their undeniable visual similarities. The works in this gallery illustrate the concepts of *ma* and *yohaku* in visual art, and their influence on Francis's practice. *Ma* is the dynamic between form and non-form and *yohaku* describes a larger open space that is both visually weighty and ambiguous. In Yamaguchi Soken's screens, *Flowers and Plants of the Four Seasons* (late 18th-early 19th century), open space fills the surface, differentiated as ground or sky only through placement of painted objects. Similarly, in Francis's *Spleen (Red)*, 1971, open space between painted forms is undefined as to its extent or depth.

The second and third galleries reflect Francis's interest in contemporary, as well as historic, Japanese art. From the mid-1950s through the 1970s in Japan, artists associated with the groups Mono-Ha and Gutai experimented with radically new ways of creating art with an emphasis on concept, materials, and, in the case of Gutai, process. Francis knew and exhibited with many of these artists in Tokyo. This gallery demonstrates their shared interest in bold and fluid colour, circular forms, and experimentation with scale. Works on view here by Shiraga Kazuo, Atsuko Tanaka, Shimamoto Shozo, and



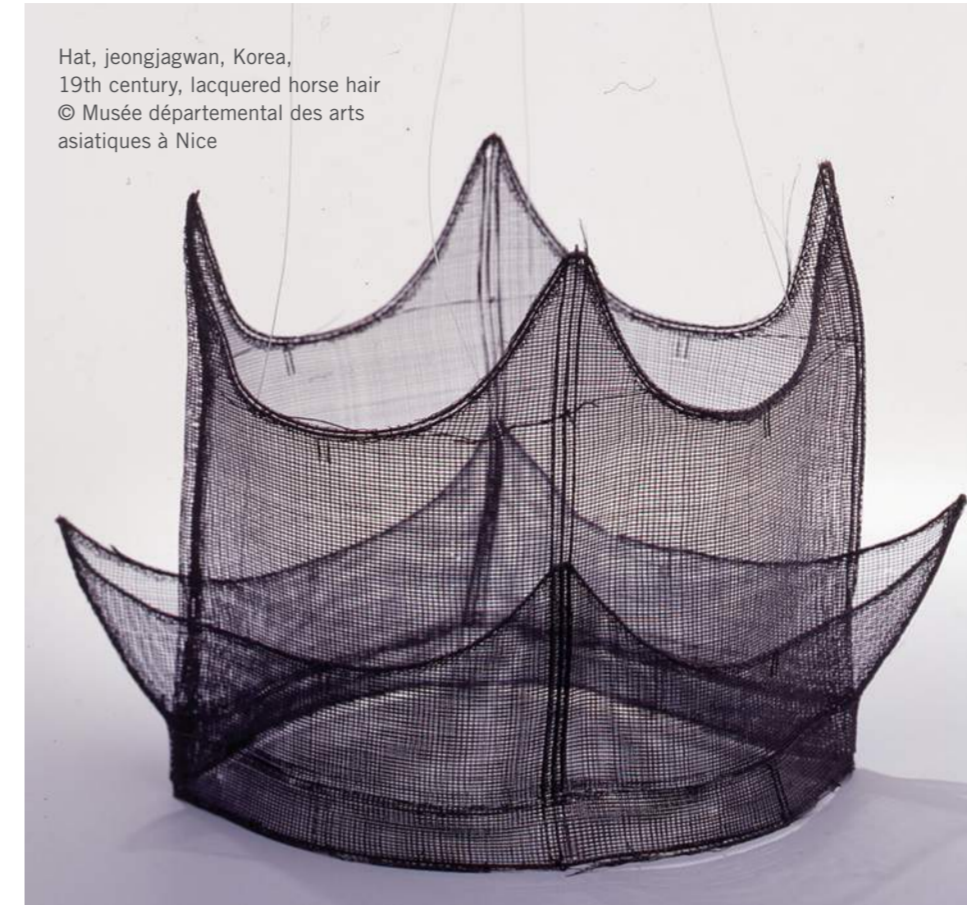
One Silence Like a Clap of Thunder by Gocho Kankai, late 18th/early 19th century, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of the 1988 Collectors Committee

work on the horizontal plane, rather than vertically on a wall or easel. Francis was one of many Western artists of the mid-20th century (especially those associated with abstract expressionism), who were drawn to East Asian calligraphy as a form of gestural expression, while at the same time abstract expressionism intrigued experimental calligraphers in Japan. Francis incorporated the qualities of calligraphy he observed into his paintings and prints, such as maintaining a sense of flow, as in Kasumi Bunsho's *Ten Thousand Years* (1992).

The final gallery presents Francis's series of *Edge* paintings and prints, in which his use of space finds its most radical expression. Space seems to be the very subject of a large untitled painting from 1969 in which the white is 'framed' by varicoloured edges. While space traditionally suggests absence (or the void) in Western art, Francis seems instead to suggest its presence, thereby relating to the Japanese notion of *yohaku*. In Francis's prints where brushwork moves inward from the edge, there is a direct relationship with compositional formulas seen in traditional East Asian ink painting.

Francis stayed in Japan for extended periods in the 1960s and 1970s, deepening his lifelong affinity for Japanese art and his intellectual exchange with Japanese artists. Richard Speer, co-curator of the exhibition, explained, 'Francis and a core group of Japanese patriots found in one another kindred spirits who would nurture one another's creativity for the duration of their lives.'

● Until 16 July, LACMA, Los Angeles, lacma.org



Hat, Jeongjagwan, Korea, 19th century, lacquered horse hair © Musée départemental des arts asiatiques à Nice

ASIA WITHOUT RESERVE

A new exhibition marks the beginning of a wide-ranging project for this departmental museum, whose mission is to promote their collections of Asian art around the region and in Monaco. *Asia Without Reserve* is an invitation to discover Asian works that are rarely presented, for various reasons, to the public as they are either too fragile to be exhibited and remain permanently in storage to allow their long-term conservation, they are outside the current collections areas of the museum, or not enough is known about the origins of the object.

This long-term project is planned in several stages with the first being a discovery of the reserve collections of the museum in Nice. It is also an opportunity to share with as many people as possible new discoveries and uncovering the history of many of these objects that have remained out of sight.

Inaugurated in 1998, the Asian Art Museum in Nice first opened its doors with the majority of works on show being loans from other museums in France, a necessary choice until the museum had the chance to build its own collections. Marie-Pierre Foissy-Aufrère, first curator of the museum, began in 1997 to collect works and to gradually install the core permanent exhibition. The successors, Didier Rochette and Hélène Capodano Cordonnier, continued to enrich the collection, which the current team continues today.

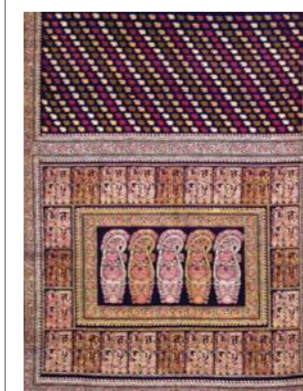
One area that is particularly strong is the textile collection, made up of around 50 costumes and accessories. These works have been collected over 25 years to allow the public to discover a wide variety of representative textiles and gain an overview of clothing traditions in Asia. It is far more exhaustive,



The Hare, circa 1854, by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861), from the series Japanese Heroes for the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac, woodblock print, musée des Beaux-arts de Menton - Palais de Carnolès © Musée des Beaux-arts de Menton - Palais de Carnolès

unlike reference collections such as that of the Musée Guimet in Paris, but nonetheless the collection is unique to the region and is the result of a careful planning carried out by Marie-Pierre Foissy-Aufrère.

The textile collection aim is to give context to the different cultures in Asia and to allow for an exploration of daily life, by presenting a great diversity of themes, such as social and religious uses, changes in taste, trends in fashion and



Sari, India, Baluchar, middle of the 19th century, cotton muslin enhanced with gold thread © Musée départemental des arts asiatiques à Nice

other influences. Other elements are also explored such as the source of the textiles, manufacturing techniques, and trade. These textiles, in the first-phase of the exhibition, are only going to be on display for four months, as most of them are very sensitive not only to handling, but also to light.

From 2002 to 2015, there was only one Japanese print in the collection - by the celebrated *ukiyo-e* artist Kitagawa Utamaro (d 1806). However, an extensive donation by Hans Herli, made between 2015 and 2017, boosted the collection with the gift of some 1,100 prints. The Japanese woodblocks date from the end of the Edo period (1603-1868) to the end of the Showa era (1926-1986).

Other prints, on loan from French museums, also enrich the collection, such as the print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861) on show in this exhibition, *The Hare*, from the series *Japanese Heroes for the Twelve Signs of the Zodiac*.

● Asian Art Museum Nice, maa.departement06.fr/musee-des-arts-asiatiques

Asian Art
Wednesday 24th May
at 10am



Matched pair of Transitional period Wucai vases and covers, 41 and 40.5cm high. Provenance: The collection of Paul Whitfield (1942-2018)

For further details:
www.mallams.co.uk
cheltenham@mallams.co.uk

26 GROSVENOR STREET, CHELTENHAM, GL52 2SG 01242 235712

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PRINTEMPS ASIATIQUE

Printemps Asiatique from 7 to 16 June, where dealers and auction houses will not only be showing in their galleries around Paris, but also at the landmark Pagoda building in the 8th arrondissement. As well as gallery shows, there is a full programme of gallery and museum tours, lectures, and conferences to accompany the event

GALLERY SHOWS AT THE PAGODA



The Pagoda was originally constructed as a hôtel particulier in the French Louis-Philippe style, the building was bought in 1925 by Ching Tsai Loo (1880-1957), better known as CT Loo, a celebrated collector and dealer of Chinese and Asian art and antiques.

With the help of the architect Fernand Bloch, and under the careful supervision and direction of Mr Loo, the building was transformed into the Pagoda, which served as the home for the family and the gallery. Apart from its striking exterior, the original Shanxi lacquer panels from the 18th century have been restored.

The Pagoda, 48 rue de Courcelles, 75008, Paris, printemps-asiatique-paris.com, pagodaparis.com

Eight galleries are presenting at the Pagoda in 2023

- Alexis Renard
Galerie Hioco
Runjeet Singh Antiques Arms and Armour
Vandervan Oriental art
Alan Kennedy Asian Art
Susan Ollemans
Clare Chu Asian Art
Nicolas Fournery Gallery



THE PAGODA

PRINTEMPS-ASIATIQUE

GALLERY SHOWS IN PARIS

Here is a selection of dealers holding shows in their galleries around Paris, from 8 to 16 June. Check the event's website for up to date information on the gallery shows nearer the time.

Currently some 20 dealers will be showing in galleries around Paris: Galerie Jacques Barrère, Galerie Béaullu & Fils, Ateliers Brugier, Galerie Catier, Galerie Jean-Christophe Charbonnier, Galerie ChinArts, Galerie Espace 4, Gauchet Art Asiatique, Galerie Hioco, Galerie Indian Heritage, Galerie Bertrand de Lavergne, Galerie Valérie Levesque, Galerie Louis & Sack, Mandarin Mansion (The Netherlands), Galerie Mingei, Galerie Cristina Ortega & Michel Dermigny, Galerie Tiago, Galerie Le Toit du Monde, W Shanshan, and Zebregs & Röell (The Netherlands)



Throne, zitan wood, 19th century/first half of the 20th century...



Japanese export lacquer cabinet, Edo period, late 17th century...



Imperial lacquer box, China, 18th century, height 21 cm, diam. 28 cm...



Tigers, suzuribako inkstone made by Nakamura Chobe, Japan, Edo period (1603-1868)...



Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara gilt bronze sculpture, China, 6th-7th century, Sui (581-618) /early Tang dynasty, height 16.5 cm...



Chinese blanc de Chine porcelain figure of an elephant, Dehua kilns (Fujian province), Kangxi period (1662-1722)...



Noh mask Ko-Omote type, signed with seal 'Tenka ichi Yamato' (Omiya Sanemori Yamato), circa 1680...



Suurya, black stone, Northeast India, Bengal-Bihar, 11th/12th century, Pala or Sena dynasties...



Kodansu (small cabinet), Japan 19th century, height 10 cm, Ateliers Brugier



Surasundari, circa 11th century, Madhya Pradesh (Central India), sandstone, height 96 cm, Indian Heritage

Paris Auctions in June

Below is a selection of sales taking place in Paris in June during Printemps Asiatique



Large white-glazed porcelain basin, China, Qing dynasty, Kangxi period (1662-1722), Artcurial, 13 June



Chinese porcelain flower pot, 18th century, Millon, 9 June



Libation cup, carved rhinoceros horn, China, 18th century, Collin du Bocage, 13 June



Large wood figure of a bodhisattva, Jin dynasty (1115-1234), Bonhams

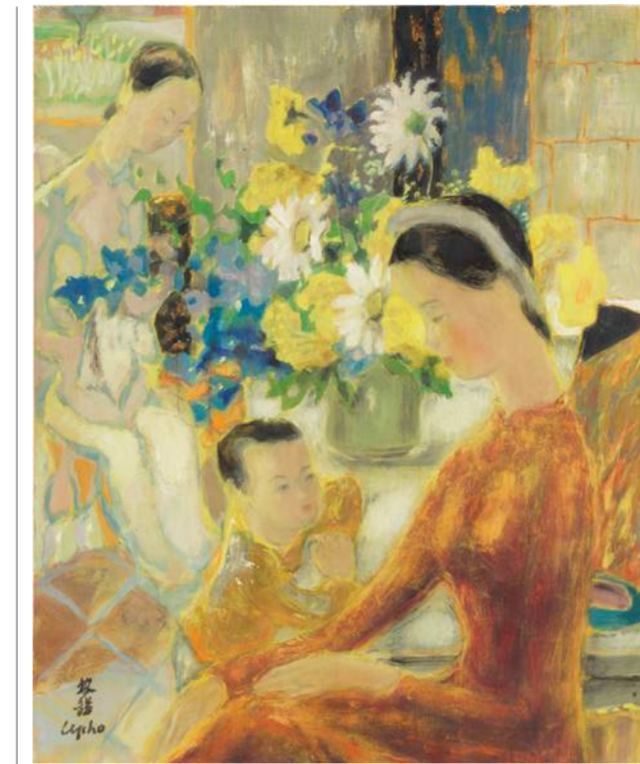
Artcurial Asian Art 13 June at 2pm

Bonhams-Cornette de Saint Cyr The Claude de Marteau, Part III, 12 June

Chinese Art 13 June Mythes, Malice et Magie: La Collection de Netsuke de Guy de Lasteyrie 14 June

Online auction, Art de la Chine 9 to 16 June Online auction, Vietnamese Art, 15 to 21 June

bonhams.com



La famille by Le Pho (1907-2001), circa 1955, oil and gouache on silk, 44.5 x 36 cm, Bonhams online Vietnamese sale, 9 to 15 June

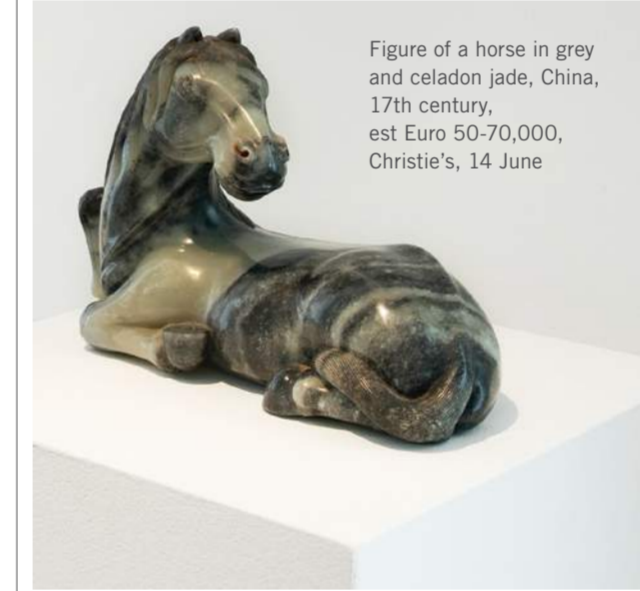


Figure of a horse in grey and celadon jade, China, 17th century, est Euro 50-70,000, Christie's, 14 June

Christie's Asian Art 14 June at 2pm

Collin du Bocage 13 June at 2pm

De Baecque Arts of Asia 14 June at 2 pm, Hotel Drouot

De Baecque Arts of Asia 14 June at 2 pm, Hotel Drouot Viewings 13 June from 11 am to 6 pm and 14 June from 11 am to 12 pm

Millon Arts of Asia 9 June Arts of Japan 10 June

Sotheby's Arts of Asia 15 June at 10.30 am Viewings 9 to 12 June, see website for hours



Collection of Chinese ritual bronzes, from the beginning of the Western Zhou dynasty (11th / 10th century BC) to the Han dynasty (206 BC - AD 220) De Baecque

Events in June

A full programme of events has been organised to accompany Printemps Asiatique, from 7 to 16 June, 2023. This year they are organised by subject matter: Paper on 7 June, Painting on 8 June, Ceramics on 9 June, Orientalism on 10 June, Textiles on 11 June and Stone on 12 June.

Bibliothèque Nationale de France 7 June at 10 am Conference: Paper, From Prints to Manga

Restoration Workshop with Marion Boyer 8 June at 10 am Visit the workshop of Marion Boyer, who specialises in the restoration of Tibetan thangka

Musée Gustave-Moreau 8 June at 1pm Guided tour of the Asian collection at the museum

Musée-Cernuschi 8 June Guided tour at 3.30pm Exhibition of artist Kim Tschang-yeul and other collections

Phillippe and Claude Magloire Gallery 9 June Guided tour of the gallery at 10-10.45 am and 11-11.45 am

Manufacture de Sevres 16 June at 2.30pm Guided tour of Asian collections

Tajan 9 June at 6pm and 7pm Guided tour of the Asian sale followed by a discussion

Château de Versailles 13 June at 3.30 pm Guided tour of the Asian collections

Musée d'Ennery 10 June at 10 am Guided tour of recently reopened museum

Musée Guimet 13 June at 2.30-4.30 pm Guided tour of the exhibition Medecines d'Asie

Musée d'Ennery 11 June at 10-11 am Guided tour of the collections with Asian influences

Dior Gallery 11 June at 11.30 am-12.30 pm Visit collections with Asian influences

Yes Saint Laurent Foundation 11 June at 11.30 am-12.30 pm Visit collections with Asian influences

Kenzo House 11 June at 3pm (tbc) Guided tour

Musée Guimet 11 June at 3.30 pm Conference: Cross-influence in Asian and European Costumes in the 19th-20th Centuries

Christie's 12 June at 10 am Guided tour of the Asian department

Musée Guimet 12 June at 3.30 pm Visit the collection of the National Museum of Asian Art

Hioco Gallery 12 June at 4 pm Guided tour of the gallery

Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine 12 June at 6 pm Discussion: Museums as Cornerstones of Transmission in Asia

Cristina Ortega & Michel Dermigny Gallery 13 June at 10.30 am Guided tour of the gallery

Château de Versailles 13 June at 3.30 pm Guided tour of the Asian collections

Musée d'Ennery 10 June at 3-5pm and at 6pm Conference: Les Belles Lettres and Indian Painting followed by gala cocktail party at 6pm

Musée des Arts Décoratifs 13 June at 6.30 pm

Guided tour of the Asian ceramics 107, rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris

Musée du quai Branly - Jacques Chirac 14 June at 10 am Guided tour of the wood collection held in the Asian department

Ateliers Brugier 14 June at 2.30 pm Guided tour of the atelier, including Chinese furniture

Ecole Française de l'Extrême-Orient 15 June at 10 am Conference on photography

Musée Clémenceau 15 June at 3 pm Guided tour of the Asian collections

Compagnie française des Poivres et des Épices 16 June at 10 am Workshop on spices in the shop

New Jawad Restaurant 16 June at 12.30 pm Discussion over a meal - The French East India Company

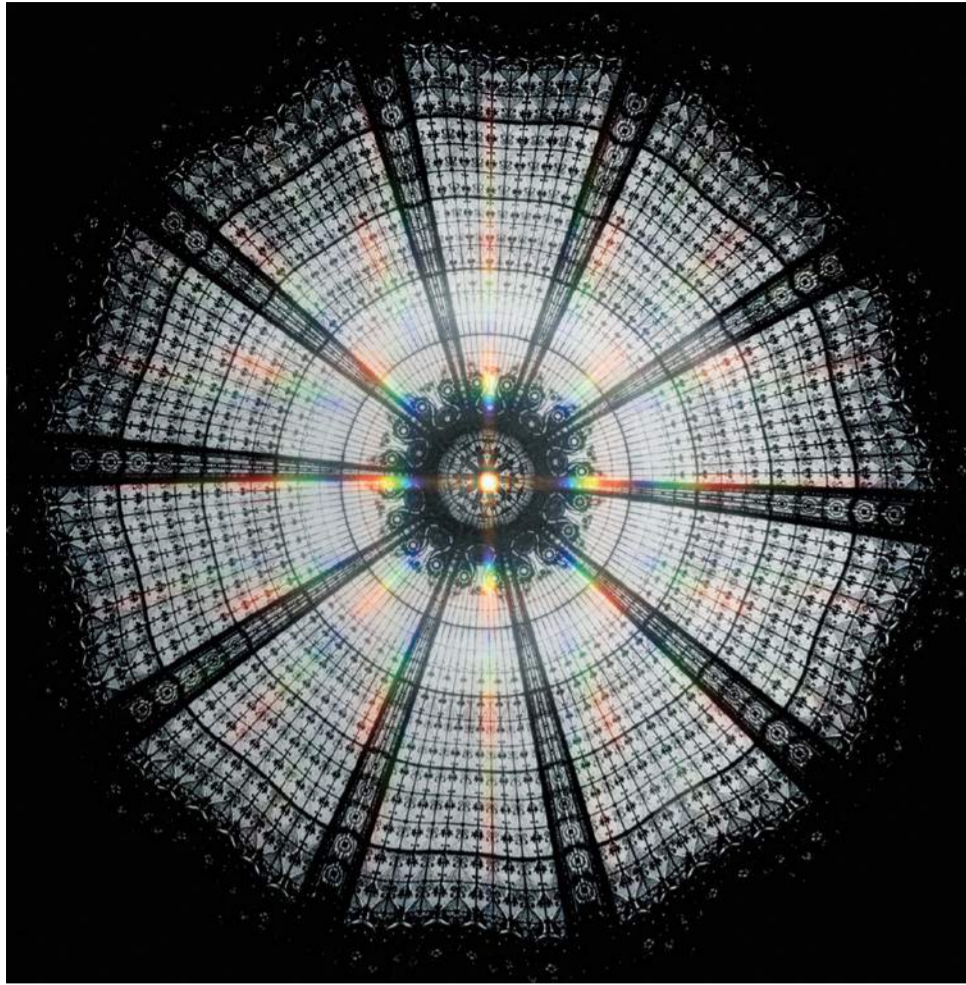
Musée des Arts Décoratifs 16 June at 2.30 pm Guided tour of the Asian collection

Musée Guimet 16 June at 4 pm Conference: Centennial of the Société des Amis du Musée Guimet

Musée des Arts Décoratifs 16 June at 6 pm Closing cocktails for Printemps Asiatique 2023



The Musée d'Ennery reopened in April 2023



Evocation To Breathe by Kim Sooja © Galeries Lafayette

KIM SOOJA To Breathe

In 2006, artist Kim Sooja (b 1957, Korea) initiated at the Crystal Palace in Madrid the project *To Breathe*, an ongoing series that has constantly been taking different forms over time, be this at the Korean Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2006, at the Centre Pompidou Metz in 2015-2016, at the Boghossian Foundation in Brussels in 2020-2021, at the Lemur Museum of Art in Seoul or at the Metz Cathedral in 2022. The latest version is currently on view at the Galerie Lafayette Hausmann following the department store's invitation for Kim Sooja to create a site-specific work.

To Breathe is originally based on one of the earliest projects completed by the artist, *botari*, a bundle of

colourful Korean bedcovers brought together. *To Breathe* expands the original concept of *Botari* to large scale architecture by placing a diffraction grid film on the surface of the building – in this case the dome of the Galerie Lafayette – creating a rainbow like effect all over its surface.

Interestingly, when the building was completed in 1912, it featured stained-glass windows designed by Jacques Gruber before later being removed and replaced by white glass. Kim Sooja's installation thus brings back the original glow to the department store, creating a poetic atmosphere that changes according to the outside weather and the time of the day. The installation is accompanied by a sound

device featuring the recording of the artist breathing, the artist's inhaling and exhaling providing an environment favouring contemplation and meditation. *To Breathe* also allows visitors to access the terrace around the dome, something the Parisians were very fond of in the early 20th century, as it allowed them to breathe fresh air and have a panoramic view of the capital.

In many ways, Kim Sooja is reconnecting with history, also encouraging people to pause and reflect. With *To Breathe*, Kim Sooja brilliantly took up the challenge of presenting an installation in a legendary historic building with a complex architecture.

Olivia Sand
● Until 30 June at Galeries Lafayette Hausmann, Paris, kimsooja.com

KIM TSCHANG-YEUL Drop and Strokes

Throughout the 1990s and the decade that followed, contemporary art from Korea has largely been overshadowed by art from China which absorbed people's attention. Of course, there were individual artists from Korea who were shown internationally, but such exhibitions were rare. It was not until the Venice Biennale in 2015, which highlighted seminal figures of Dansakhwa, that global interest towards what had been taking place in Korea over the past decades suddenly arose. Members of Dansakhwa, a group advocating the creation of art that was neutral in terms of content, became the subject of important solo exhibitions. That wave of interest also had an impact on a broader scale, benefiting a variety of artists who kept a highly prolific practice. Such was the case for the late Kim Tschang-Yeul (1929-2021), who became a household name in the later part of his life, with a vocabulary that was his hallmark: *trompe l'oeil* water drops. Although the artist had experimented in Korea with his fellow artists in the Hyundai Association in the 1950s, he was later exposed to



Récurrence (1993) by Kim Tschang-Yeul (1929-2021)
© Paris Musées-Musée Cernuschi

colour-field painting and Pop Art while living in New York in the late 1960s, however, it was not until the early 1970s that the water drops appeared obsessively in his work. As the title *Drop and Strokes* indicates, the exhibition at the Musée Cernuschi focuses on Kim Tschang-Yeul's most renowned works, the ones bringing together *trompe l'oeil* water drops on a background of Chinese characters which he completed later in his career. For Kim Tschang-Yeul, filling the background of the canvas with Chinese characters was a way to bring more diversity into his

recurring motif, opening the works to endless new combinations. Originally from North Korea, Kim Tschang-Yeul went to South Korea when seventeen to escape communism. Enrolled in the Korean War, painting water – in his case water drops – was a way to wash off the memories and the atrocities of the conflict. Photographing water drops under all possible angles, he kept representing them, changing their layout, number or shape on top of Chinese characters he completed equally and selected from the *Thousand Character Classic*, a book traditionally used to teach children the writing of Chinese characters.

Based in France from the early 1970s onwards, Kim Tschang-Yeul returned to Korea in 2013 and remained involved with the creation of the museum dedicated to his work on the island of Jeju. The museum opened in 2016. *Drop and Strokes* now provides an opportunity for an in depth view into the practice of one of the great masters of Korean art.

Olivia Sand
● Until 30 July, Musée Cernuschi, cernuschi.paris.fr

KEN DOMON Master of Japanese Realism

The spring-summer 2023 exhibition at the Maison de la culture du Japon in Paris is the first in France devoted to one of the most significant figures in the history of Japanese photography: Ken Domon (1909-1990). It will bring together around a hundred images by this pioneer of realistic photography, produced between the 1930s and 1970s. The many facets of his work will be revealed here: his approach to photojournalism at the start of his career, the inevitable turn towards photography of propaganda in the 1930s, then his fascination with ancient temples and Buddhist sculpture, his touching portraits of street children and celebrities, and his moving testimony on Hiroshima.

● Until 13 July Maison, de la culture du Japon, Paris, mcjpf.fr



Promenading girls in Sendai (1950) by Ken Domon, collection of Ken Domon Museum of Photography



Acupuncture manikin, China, Qing dynasty, 18th century, paper and cardboard, lacquered and painted, 46.5 x 14 cm, Paris, National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet, gift Sir Humphrey Clarke (1967) © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris) / Thierry Ollivier



Doctor taking his patient's pulse by Felice Beato (1832-1909), from Views and Costumes of Japan album, studio S Giffried & Andersen Japan, Yokohama, 1877-1880, albumen print on paper, coloured, 19.5 x 24.2 cm, National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet, © MNAAG, Paris, dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Guimet Museum image



Yakushi-nyorai (Bhaishajayaguru, Master of Remedies), Japan, 19th century, lacquered, gilded and painted wood, 150 x 58 cm x 41 cm, Paris, National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet, Old Collection, © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris) / Thierry Ollivier

ASIAN MEDICINES

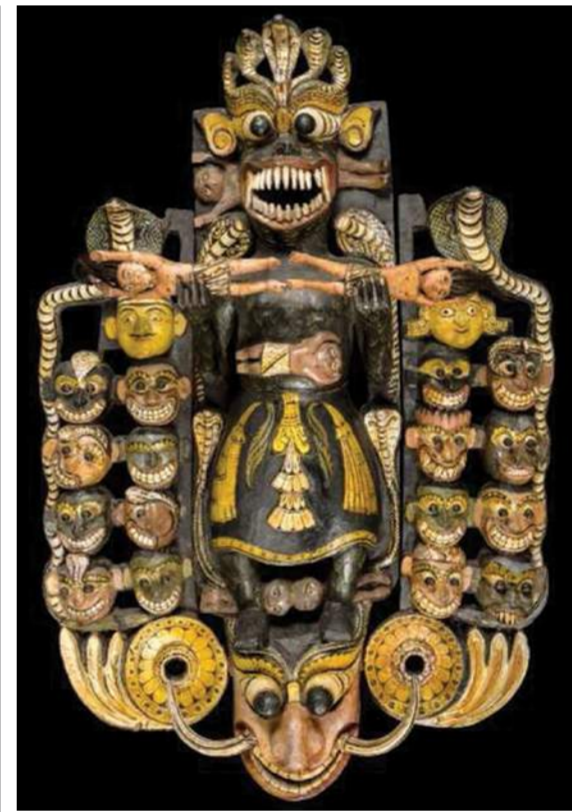
The new major exhibition at Musée Guimet is designed to give the visitor a completely different experience – an introspective journey between the body and the supernatural, *Médecines d'Asie* is the first major exhibition in France devoted to the three great Asian medical traditions from India, China, and Tibet. Creating a scenic journey crossing borders and time, the exhibition transports the visitor to a universe where thousand-year-old medical practices and exceptional works of art meet, evoking meditation and shamanism, the balance of energies and the pharmacopoeia, massage and acupuncture along with astrology and exorcism. The exhibition creates this experience by using four major themes and some 300 works to set the scene. Most of the works on show will be seen by the public for the first time and come from French national collections as well as major European heritage institutions.

The first section is called From

Myth to History and presents the fundamental aspects of the three great traditions of medicine, through works of great aesthetic and spiritual strength, including a video to show the circulation of energy and vital flows in the human body, a common point of understanding in all of the therapies offered by traditional medicine. The visitor gradually discovers the mythology, history and development of medical traditions based on the balances between 'infinitely large' and 'infinitely small'. The journey continues with the presentation of the pantheon of deities linked to medicine, in which the concepts of disease or healing are embodied, emphasising the links between medicine and spirituality.

The second room, called Diagnosis and Care, invites the visitor to continue the journey in a more intimate and warm space. The central point of the exhibition is a space designed specifically as a dream apothecary where pharmacopoeia, acupuncture and moxibustion (expelling cold, promoting the circulation in meridians and collaterals, clearing away heat, detoxification, using for circulating *qi* – energy in Chinese – and blood flow). Surrounding the specially created pharmacy and the cabinet of curiosities, there are acupuncture mannequins, a section on medicinal plants, and a display of precious medicine boxes. Physical treatment techniques such as massage and energy practices (*qi gong, tai chi, yoga*) are also discussed in this area. In the enveloping atmosphere of a room dedicated to rest and spiritual introspection, the visitor also has the opportunity to indulge in meditation exercises, while contemplating works imbued with great serenity.

The third section, Soul Medicine, looks beyond the physiological body. The use of medicines in treating and healing the mind and psyche are also considered an important part of Asian traditional practice. This includes astrology, the use of charms



Exorcism mask, Sri Lanka, 19th century, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford



Portrait of King Jayavarman VII (1181-circa 1220), Cambodia, Angkor, Ta Prohm, late 12th-early 13th century, sandstone, 41 x 26 x 33 cm, Musée Guimet, permanent deposit of the Faculty of Sciences of Marseille (1965) © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris) / Michel Urtado

and rituals, amulets and talismanic clothing – all are means to fight against the unspeakable affections of the soul, or can guard against harm in battle. A common thread in this third section is dedicated to the medicine of the soul, to spirits and to demonic forces, as nine astral divinities guide the visitor in the meanderings of the unconscious. Two alcoves, devoted respectively to shamanism and exorcism, invite the

visitor to have a one-on-one with supernatural medicines in these traditions. An emotional section is devoted to the symbolic protection of children through objects imbued with intimacy and love. The final section, East and West: the Dialogue of Opposites discusses the differences in the different disciplines. The popularity and effectiveness of Asian medicines is undeniable today, both in an

approach to well-being and in hospital care. The end of the journey in this exhibition evokes the medical dialogue between East and West that has been active continually since the 16th century. Here, the visitor can discover precious encyclopaedic works presented in a setting that evokes the atmosphere of an old library. On show in this section is a unique Japanese acupuncture dummy, brought back to Europe in the 17th century, revealing the long-standing interest of the West in Asian treatment and diagnostic techniques. Echoing this, an exceptional and disturbing Japanese painted scroll, deployed over eight metres in length, illustrates the scientific dissection of a condemned man, revealing the desire for analysis and understanding shown by the Orient with regard to Western medicine approach.

● From 17 May to 18 September, Musée Guimet, guimet.fr

REOPENING OF MUSEE D'ENNERY

This private mansion is now the Musée d'Ennery, is along with the Hôtel d'Heidelberg and the main building on Place d'Iéna, one of the three sites of the National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet. It reopened its doors to the public in April 2023. The cabinet of arts and curiosities, relatively unknown to the general public, is a testimony to the late 19th-century taste and for collecting objects from East Asia. The building and collection has remained preserved, without any addition or modification to break the homogeneity of the personal collection, still in the location that it was intended to be exhibited.

The d'Ennery family started to collect – well before the

craze for Japonisme restarted a curiosity for the East. Clémence d'Ennery (1823-1888) in particular bought lacquer boxes from Japan and blue-and-white porcelain from China and added regularly to her collection, purchasing from the major Parisian Asian art dealers of the day, such as Bing and Sechel, as well as the department stores, such as Le Bon Marché, that catered to the growing demand for goods from the East. Clémence d'Ennery, who was the wife of the playwright Adolphe Philippe Ennery, gradually assembled a collection of art objects bringing together nearly 8,000 works, including 2,500 *netsukes* at the time of their bequest to the state in 1894.

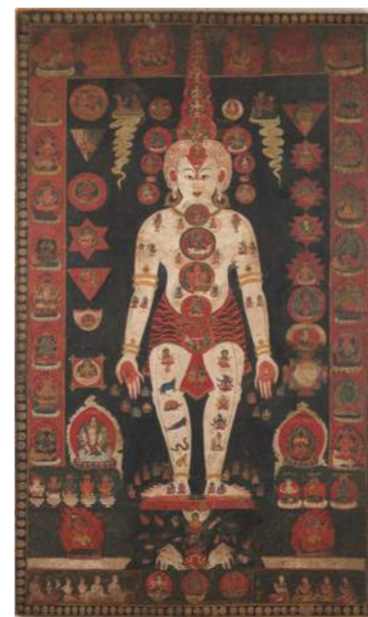
Émile Guimet and Georges Clemenceau, who were executors of the d'Ennery estate and made sure this exceptional collection was not dismantled.

Chimeras, fabulous animals, masks, demons and other strange creatures in bronze, jade, ivory, rock crystal, ceramics and gilded wood, from China or Japan, are all arranged in a unique architectural setting that is now once again seen by the public. This 'fantastic menagerie', a phrase used by the Goncourt brothers is still a relevant description today, in situ, and as it was imagined by Clémence d'Ennery, in the heart of her private apartments.

● Musée d'Ennery, 59 avenue Foch, Paris



Views of the d'Ennery Collection in the original purpose built cabinets © Musée national des arts asiatiques – Guimet, Paris / photo Vincent Leroux, 2021



Purusha, Nepal, dated 1806, distemper on canvas, 159 cm x 95 cm, Paris, National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet, donation Lionel and Danielle Fournier (1989), © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris) / Michel Urtado

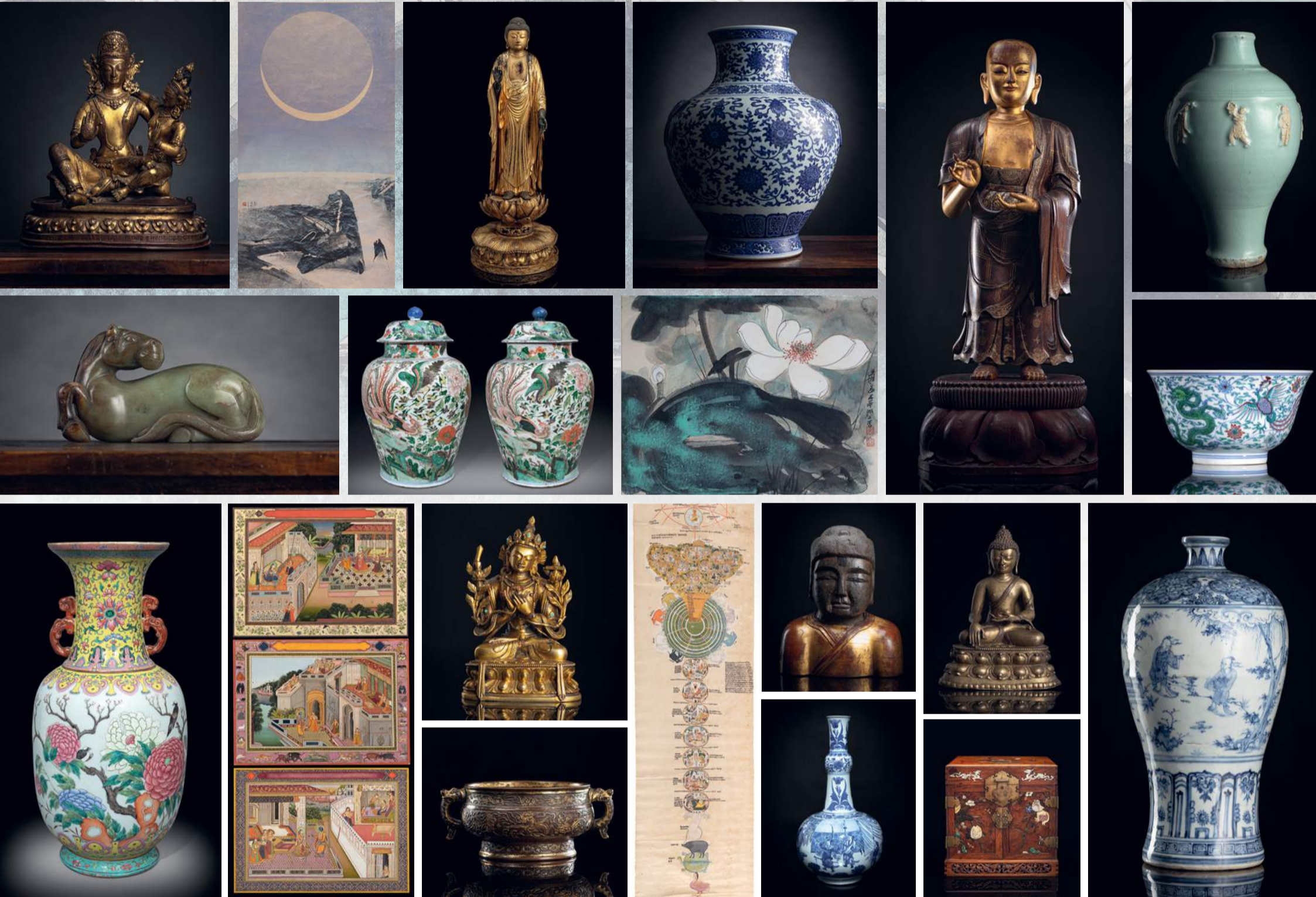


Illustrated collection of herbaceous plants (Honzo zufu) by Iwasaki Tsunemasa (Kan'en, 1786-1842), Japan, 19th century, Xylography and manuscript in ink and colours on paper, 26.8 x 18.2 cm, National Museum of Asian Arts – Guimet, donation Louise Andrieu (1985) © RMN-Grand Palais (MNAAG, Paris) / Thierry Ollivier

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FINE CHINESE ART

AUCTION: JUNE 12TH - 14TH 2023
VIEWING: JUNE 8TH - 11TH 2023, 10 AM - 5 PM



The Alfred Julius Forkel Collection (1873 - 1934), assembled in China between 1901 and 1910

Collection Dr. Rainer Kreissl (1974 - 2005) - Important Southern German private collection, purchased before 2000

Old European private collection, mostly assembled before 1970

Old German private collection of a scholar, collected between 1950 and 1970

Important estate of a South German collector, largely received by inheritance in 1955

Decorative arts and non-European art from the estate of the Ludwig Bretschneider Collection (1909 - 1987), collected from the 1950s to the early 1970s

Old Austrian private collection, assembled before 1990

Tibetan and Chinese art from an old German private collection, purchased from the 1970s to 1995

Bronzes and archaic jades - Property from the collection of Georg Friedrich Zeileis

Fan paintings and paintings from an important European private collection, mostly in the family since the 1920s and 1950s

Chinese porcelain and sculptures from the Bavarian royal family of the Wittelsbach and the Saxon royal house of the Wettins (Albertine line), many of them from the collection of August the Strong (1670 - 1723)

Jain paintings and bronzes, Indian miniatures and sculptures from an old German private collection, assembled largely prior 1970

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