



Masterworks of the Kano School from the Hara Rokuro Collection

Part I: March 9 (Saturday) – May 8 (Wednesday), 2019

Part II: May 10 (Friday) – June 30 (Sunday), 2019

Venue: Kankai Pavilion, Hara Museum ARC

The Kano school was the most influential school of pre-modern painting in Japan, holding sway for close to 400 years, from the Muromachi period to the Edo period. Drawing upon the considerable holdings of works by Kano school artists in the Hara Rokuro Collection, this exhibition seeks to highlight their expressive charm by focusing on two major groups of hanging scrolls: *Paintings used for wallpaper and Fusuma (Japanese sliding door) at Nikko-in in Mi'idera temple* and *Set of twelve hanging scrolls by painters of the Kano school*.

About *Paintings used for wallpaper and Fusuma (Japanese sliding door) at Nikko-in guest hall in Mi'idera temple*

As indicated by this title, these images were originally partition paintings that adorned the Nikko-in guest hall of Mi'idera temple (now called Onjo-ji temple) in Shiga Prefecture. In 1892, Rokuro Hara acquired the Nikko-in and had it moved to his property in Tokyo. The painted partitions were later removed and converted into hanging scrolls or folding screens. The guest hall itself, renamed Gekko-den, was transferred to Gokoku-ji temple (Bunkyo ward, Tokyo) where it now stands as an Important Cultural Property designated by the Japanese government.



[1] *Tiger in a bamboo grove*, Kano Eitoku, hanging scroll, Momoyama period (Part I)

In the picture, a mother tiger and her cub are resting in a wind-blown bamboo grove. The mother's tense expression and fluid posture imply a readiness to defend her sleeping cub. As a spirit animal from across the ocean, the tiger represented wealth, high status and fecundity and was often depicted on *fusuma* (sliding doors) as a symbol imbued with auspicious meaning. Eitoku (1543-90), who is thought to be the artist, established the gorgeous, monumental style of Momoyama-period painting. Few of his paintings have survived the flames of war, making this one all the more precious.

[1]



[2] *Birds and flowers*, Kano school, four hanging scrolls, Momoyama-Edo period (Part I)

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These paintings show a scene at the water's edge where geese play, wagtails rest on rocks and a pair of turtle doves sit on the branch of a large pine tree. Water fowl symbolize prosperity and happiness, while turtle doves symbolize marital harmony and fecundity. The dove is also a symbol of peace. Bird and flower pictures often decorated rooms used to entertain close friends and associates.



[3] *Tiger in a bamboo grove*, Kano Eitoku, four hanging scroll, Momoyama period (Part II)



What is the set of twelve hanging scrolls by painters of the Kano school?

This is a set of twelve paintings by ten artists who comprised the core of the Kano school at the end of the Momoyama period and the early Edo period, including a young Eitoku and his father Takanobu. Originally panel paintings in the form of folding screens, they were converted into their current state as hanging scrolls for easier viewing and preservation.

In these paintings, a number of figures from the Chinese pantheon of famous people are featured, as indicated by their titles, *Princess Yang Guifei playing chess*, *King Wu at the palace*, *Taigongwang (Fisherman) by a shore* and *Li Bai, viewing waterfall*, as well as the various schools of thought such as Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism. This choice of subject matter underscores the official nature of the Kano school

Left: [4] *Princess Yang Guifei playing chess*, Kano Sotoku, hanging scroll Edo period (Part I)

Right: [5] *Taigongwang (Fisherman) by a shore*, Kano Tan'yu hanging scroll Edo period (PartII)

Featured Works

[Part I & II] Traditional Art: *Landscape of Yodo River*, Maruyama Okyo, Edo period / *Inkstone case with the Eight Views of Omi in makie*, Edo period and others

[Part I] *Tiger in a bamboo grove*, Kano Eitoku, Momoyama period / *Birds and flowers*, Kano school, Momoyama period / *Princess Yang Guifei playing chess*, Kano Sotoku, Momoyama-Edo period / *Huangshi-gong and Zhang Lian under a pine tree*, Kano Takanobu, Momoyama-Edo period / *King Wu at the palace*, Kano Sa'yemon, Momoyama-Edo period / *Inside view of Xianyang-gong Palace*, Kano Jin'no-jo, Momoyama-Edo period / *Professor Tongxuan under a pine tree*, Kano Hayato, Momoyama-Edo period

[Part II] *Tiger in a bamboo grove*, Kano Eitoku, Momoyama period / *Birds and flowers*, Kano school, Momoyama period / *Li Bai, viewing waterfall*, Kano Tan'yu, Edo period / *Taigongwang (Fisherman) by a shore*, Kano Tan'yu, Edo period

Contemporary Art: Aaron Fink / Toshimitsu Imai / Shiro Kuramata/ David Smith / Kohei Nawa/ Robert Mapplethorpe and others

Kankai Pavilion

The Kankai Pavilion was built in 2008 as part of an expansion of the Hara Museum's annex, Hara Museum ARC, that took place to mark the 20th anniversary of its founding in 1988. Its purpose is to provide a showcase for the Hara Rokuro Collection of traditional East Asian art. At present, about 120 works comprise the collection, including a number of works designated National Treasure or Important Cultural Property. The design of the Kankai Pavilion (by Arata Isozaki who also designed Hara Museum ARC) incorporates features of the Japanese *shoin* (drawing room). It thus offers the viewer a new spatial experience that lies at the intersection between the traditional and the modern.



Installation view of Kankai Pavilion

Hara Museum ARC

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<https://www.haramuseum.or.jp> (official website) <https://twitter.com/HaraMuseumARC> (Twitter)

Hours: 9:30 am - 4:30 pm (last entry at 4:00 pm)

Closed: Thursdays (except March 21) *Subject to temporary closure in the event of severe weather.

Admission: General 1,100 yen, Students 700 yen (high school and university) or 500 yen (elementary and junior high), Free for Hara Museum members, 10% discount for a group of 20 or more, Combination ticket for Hara Museum ARC and Ikaho Green Bokujo (except during Golden Week): General 1,800 yen; Students 1,500 yen (high school and university) or 1,400 yen (junior high), 800 yen (elementary), half price for those over 70, discount for groups of 20 or more

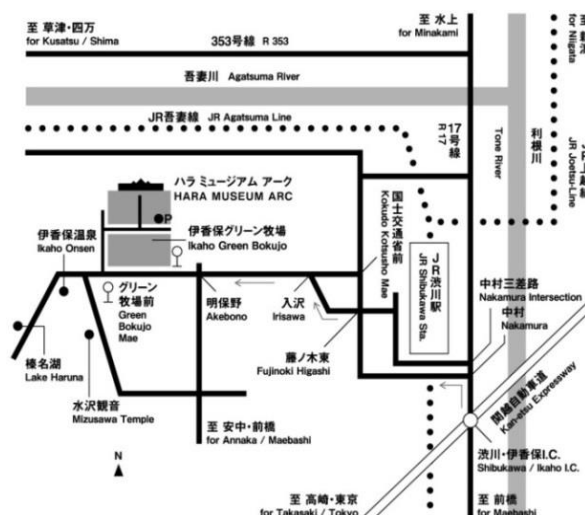
*Visitors to the Kankai Pavilion can view the on-going exhibition in the contemporary art galleries as well.

*Children must be accompanied by an adult.

*For residents of Gunma Prefecture: Free admission for elementary and junior high school children every Saturday during the school term/200-yen-discount on admission for up to five persons upon presentation of the Guchoki Passport.

*Visitors to the Kankai Pavilion can view the on-going exhibition in the contemporary art galleries as well.

Directions: By train: Take the Joetsu Shinkansen to Takasaki, change to the Joetsu Line, and disembark at Shibukawa. From Shibukawa, ARC is 10 minutes away by taxi or 15 minutes by bus (take the Ikaho Onsen bus to "Green Bokujo Mae"). By car: 8 kilometers (about 15 minutes) from the Kan-etsu Expressway Shibukawa Ikaho Interchange (in the direction of Ikaho Onsen)



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