



# ABSTRACT TRADITIONS

Postwar Japanese Prints from the  
DePauw University Permanent Art Collection

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David T. Prosser Jr. '65

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**Cover image:**

TAKAHASHI Rikio

*Tasteful (No. 5)* / 1970s

Woodblock print on paper

19-1/16 x 18-1/2 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2015.20.1

Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

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## Postwar Japanese Prints from the DePauw University Permanent Art Collection

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**Figure 1.**  
ONCHI Koshiro  
*Poème No. 7 Landscape of May / 1948*  
Woodblock print on paper  
15-3/4 (H) x 19-1/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.12.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Like so many great colleges and universities, DePauw University can trace its own history – as well as the history and intellectual pursuits of its talented alumni – through generous gifts of artwork. *Abstract Traditions* examines significant twentieth century holdings drawn from the DePauw University permanent art collection. From *Poème No. 7: Landscape of May* by Onchi Kōshirō (Figure 1) to abstract works by Hagiwara Hideo (Figure 2), the collection provides a comprehensive overview of experimental printmaking techniques that flourished during the postwar years.

Original works of art are an invaluable educational resource for our students, faculty, and community. With many of us spending increasingly large amounts of time engaged in the virtual world, the DePauw University art collection provides students with an opportunity to decelerate and hone visual and critical thinking skills. The Arthur E. Klauser Education and Community Outreach 5th-Year Fellowship Program, Extended Studies courses in museology (Figure 3), and student-curated exhibitions provide ample opportunity for DePauw students to integrate the visual arts in their undergraduate education.

A great deal of time and effort is required to bring original gallery exhibitions from concept to finished form. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the many students, faculty, and staff who kindly gave precious time and talent to this four-year project.

My heartfelt thanks go out to Christie Anderson, Registrar of Exhibitions and University Collections, and Katie Kraska '13 who both worked tirelessly during the summer months of 2013 to catalog, measure, condition report, photograph, and re-house 112 Japanese postwar prints from the estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40. Many of their high resolution photographs are reproduced within these pages, with added compliments to Kelly Graves, Creative Director, for a superb catalog design.

Grant funding from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation enabled the conservation matting and framing of all the prints featured in the exhibition, as well as financial support for catalog printing. Under the direction of Christie Anderson, and with support from Rachel Miller '15 (Figure 4), the prints were carefully prepared for museum-quality framing during the summer months of 2015. Summer Research Fellow Tiffany Miller '18 worked closely with gallery staff during the summer of 2016 to provide research and image support in preparation for catalog production. Funding from the Japan Foundation (New York), David T. Prosser Jr. '65, the Office of Academic Affairs at DePauw University, and the Asian Studies Department at DePauw University provided additional financial support for catalog printing.

DePauw University faculty Dr. Hiroko Chiba, Professor of Modern Languages, and Dr. Pauline



Ota, Associate Professor of Art History, graciously contributed their scholarly expertise and translations to the essays found within this catalog. Professor Paul Watt at Waseda University, Tokyo – instrumental in founding the Asian Studies program at DePauw – penned the forward remarks, while former 5th-Year Fellow, Taylor Zartman '15, provided an eloquent piece on Azechi's *Gloomy Footsteps*. It is my sincere hope that their insightful essays will shed new light and understanding on this important collection of postwar Japanese prints for many years to come.

In closing, this catalog and the exhibition would not be possible without the foresight of three noteworthy alumni who entrusted DePauw University with their wonderful art collections: Arthur E. Klauser '45, David T. Prosser Jr. '65, and Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40. Their support has made it possible for us to be a leader in educating the next generation of scholars and well-rounded undergraduates who appreciate the value of the visual arts.

Craig Hadley  
Director/Curator  
July 15, 2016



**Figure 3.**  
Students enrolled in the May Term '16 course, Museum Exhibition Workshop, receive instruction on proper object handling and care from Christie Anderson.



**Figure 4.**  
Rachel Miller '15 prepares the Japanese postwar print collection for matting and framing.



**Figure 2.**  
HAGIWARA Hideo  
*Ancient Song No. 8 / 1965*  
Woodblock print on paper  
36-1/4 x 23-3/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.8  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40





## FORWARD

This handsome catalog and the exhibit of modern Japanese prints it accompanies stands as the latest evidence of the vitality of Asian Studies at DePauw University. Beginning with the early teaching on East Asia done by the late Professor of History Clifton J. Phillips, the program has grown over the decades with the support of alums, administrators, a number of departments, and individual faculty members. Today the Asian Studies program offers courses on South as well as East Asia and covers the fields of history, literature, film, religion, politics, economics, the arts, and East Asian languages.

DePauw alums have played an especially important role in enriching our Asian art collection. In the following section, Craig Hadley, Director and Curator of Exhibitions and University Collections, acknowledges the support that alums have given in this regard, but I would like to express my sincerest thanks as well. There are few liberal arts colleges that can offer students, not only the range of courses on Asia that DePauw does, but also the breadth and depth of its Asian art collection. At a time when Asia is becoming an ever greater presence in the world and in the lives of our students, one can only hope that DePauw will continue to build on this rich tradition.

Dr. Paul B. Watt

Professor Emeritus of Asian Studies and Religious Studies, DePauw University

Professor, Center for International Education, Waseda University, Tokyo

## A PASSION FOR NEW: DEPAUW'S POSTWAR PRINT COLLECTORS

Craig Hadley, Director/Curator

"I hope [Japanese] arts and crafts continue to flourish vigorously as they do today, and will help to alleviate the tiresome monotony that sometimes seems to be an inescapable curse."<sup>1</sup>

– Dr. Leland D. Stoddard

For many, collecting artwork is a lifelong passion that brings incredible personal joy and intellectual pleasure. All three major contributors to DePauw University's modern and contemporary Japanese print collection – Arthur E. Klauser '45, David T. Prosser Jr. '65, and Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40 – shared a passion for new and emerging printmakers in postwar Japan. While many print enthusiasts gravitated towards historic, well-researched *ukiyo-e* masters, these three collectors sought works that were often bold experimentations in expressionism and self-discovery.



### ARTHUR E. KLAUSER '45

Arthur Ebbert "Bud" Klauser was born in Toledo, Ohio, on April 26, 1923. He enrolled at DePauw University in 1941, but was unable to complete his undergraduate degree after enlisting in the U.S. Army. In 1943, the Army reassigned him to Japanese language training: first at the University of Chicago and then at the University of Michigan. He spent several years stationed in Japan immediately after the war and was tasked with language translation.<sup>2</sup>

As World War II came to an end, Klauser transferred his Japanese language skills to the Central Intelligence Agency and, eventually, to the corporate sector. Klauser joined general trading company Mitsui & Co. as Senior Vice President in 1979, and eventually became the adviser to Mitsui's president. He was tasked with advancing the Americanization of the U.S. Mitsui organization and established the Mitsui USA Foundation. Klauser retired in 1992 from Mitsui & Co. and in 1993 as Director Emeritus, Mitsui USA Foundation.

Mr. Klauser was an avid collector of Japanese art and cultural objects, many of which he subsequently donated to DePauw University's art collection as the Arthur E. Klauser '45 Asian and World Community Art Collection. Many of the most impressive works in the collection, including a series of *ukiyo-e* prints, Buddhist icons, and *noh* theatre masks, can be viewed in the Shidzuo Iikubo '23 Asian Art Gallery within the University's Emison Building. He served on the University's Board of Visitors from 1980 to 1983, and the Board of Trustees from 1983 until his death in 2011.

<sup>1</sup> *Foundation and Alumni News*. Augusta, Georgia: Medical College of Georgia, 1963.

<sup>2</sup> *DePauw Mourns the Passing of Trustee and Art Donor Arthur "Bud" Klauser '45*. Accessed 21 June 2016. <http://www.depauw.edu/news-media/latest-news/details/26601/>.



**DAVID T. PROSSER JR. '65**

Written by David T. Prosser Jr.

David Prosser was born in Chicago in 1942, but grew up in Appleton, Wisconsin. He graduated from DePauw University in 1965 with a major in political science, and then obtained a law degree from the University of Wisconsin.

After a year teaching at Indiana University-Indianapolis Law School, Prosser moved to Washington, D.C., to work as an attorney/speechwriter at the United States Department of Justice. Since 1968 he has served in all three branches of government and worked at the federal, state, and local levels. He was an elected district attorney; a member of the Wisconsin State Assembly for 18 years, including two years as Speaker; and a justice on the Wisconsin Supreme Court from 1998 until 2016.

Due to a long-term interest in art, Prosser has been a collector since 1973. He became interested in modern Japanese prints when he spotted a woodcut of the United States Capitol by Un'ichi Hiratsuka discarded in a trash barrel in a government office building. Relying on the growing literature on *sōsaku hanga*, Prosser built a small museum-quality collection of Japanese prints to contribute to DePauw.



**DR. LELAND D. STODDARD '40**

A native of Hillsboro, Illinois, Dr. Leland Douglas Stoddard was born on March 15, 1919. He completed his undergraduate degree in pre-medicine at DePauw University, and was inducted into Phi Mu Alpha (music honorary for men) and Delta Omicron Chi (doctors of tomorrow). Following his graduation from DePauw, Dr. Stoddard attended and received his medical degree from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine.

Immediately after medical school, Dr. Stoddard was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Army and served four years in Japan from 1943-1947. During this time, he acquired a large collection of Japanese *sōsaku hanga* prints, many of which appear in this catalog.

Following an honorable discharge from the army, he was appointed as Professor and Chairman of Pathology at the Medical College of Georgia in Augusta. He made several return trips to Japan – many of which provided him with ample opportunity to grow his collection of Japanese prints. During one visit from 1961-1962, Stoddard acquired additional prints when he served as the lead pathologist for the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission.

In 1996, Dr. Stoddard was invited to serve as a visiting professor at Osaka University Medical School in Japan. He continued to be active in the medical community and in the Augusta Symphony Orchestra until his death in 2000.<sup>3</sup> Shortly thereafter, his entire collection of 112 Japanese prints arrived at DePauw University, with the wish that they be used for undergraduate teaching and exhibition.

3 "Dr. Leland Stoddard – Pathologist," *The Augusta Chronicle*, August 27, 2000.



**Figure 1.**  
SHINODA Toko  
*Untitled* / late 20th century  
Lithographic print on paper  
27-9/16 x 21-3/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2016.5.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# JAPANESE POSTWAR PRINTS – REPURPOSING THE PAST, INNOVATION IN THE PRESENT

Dr. Pauline Ota, Associate Professor of Art and Art History

## INTRODUCTION

In art, as in life, the past can inspire creativity in the present. Though not always readily apparent, many of the prints represented in this exhibition result from an artist's fruitful dialog with the past. Printmaking itself exemplifies a centuries-old tradition in East Asia.<sup>1</sup> In seventeenth century Japan, the dominant print form was the woodblock print or *ukiyo-e*. To generate an *ukiyo-e* print, a team of skilled individuals engaged in a multi-step process, which at its core required the manipulation of a surface (woodblocks) through which multiple identical images were created.<sup>2</sup> The Japanese postwar prints of this exhibition however differ from the *ukiyo-e* print in a number of ways. One type of postwar print, *sōsaku hanga* or creative prints, for example, can be distinguished from *ukiyo-e* in their production process and *raison d'être*. The *sōsaku hanga* artist designs the image, processes the surface on which the image will be produced, and prints the image; the artist alone executes all aspects of the printmaking process. And, the artistic product stands not as an object for mass reproduction and broad dissemination, but rather as a unique creation expressing a larger theme or idea.<sup>3</sup> This creativity in support of a central concept identifies *sōsaku hanga* as a modern art form, one that was fully engaged in twentieth century discourses. In short, *sōsaku hanga* are understood as "works of original artistic expression."<sup>4</sup> At the same time, *sōsaku hanga*, as well as the other prints included in this exhibition, can often be described as *repurposing* the past, from their method of creation to their subject matter.<sup>5</sup> This is not to imply an intentional engagement with tradition on the artist's part (though at times that indeed was the case); rather, the past might serve as a foil against which the artist could assert an individual creative impulse, a response to societal conditions, or a sense of identity through the celebration (or denial) of preserved artistic conventions. To study Japanese postwar prints therefore often demands an analysis that employs *visual historicism* – referring to the identification and interpretation of visual phenomena of the past for the purposes of commentary or critique – to borrow the scholar John Szostak's term.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, these prints also arise from a transcultural interchange between Japan and the Euro-American West, an artistic exchange that has a long history, dating back to pre-modern times. Thus, these postwar prints are not just part of a Japanese art movement, but also, in their dialog with techniques and designs prevalent outside Japan, they represent groundbreaking contributions to the contemporary print genre internationally, as well as to the larger realm of postwar contemporary art.



## **UKIYO-E, THE WOODBLOCK PRINTS OF EARLY MODERN JAPAN, AND POSTWAR PRINTS**

In order to approach Japanese postwar prints with an analytical arsenal that allows for visual historicism, it is important to discuss the printmaking culture of Japan's early modern or Tokugawa period (also known as the Edo period, 1603-1868), which immediately preceded the modern or Meiji era (1868-1912). Contemporary prints rely upon one or a combination of four production processes – relief, intaglio, planographic (lithograph), and stencil; the traditional print form in Japan however is the woodblock print, resulting from the relief method applied to blocks of wood.<sup>7</sup> The commercially produced woodblock prints of the Tokugawa period, *ukiyo-e* or pictures of the floating world arose from the vibrant popular culture of the time.<sup>8</sup> People of all walks of life enjoyed *ukiyo-e* prints, which featured images of famed beauties, Kabuki actors, cityscapes, scenic views of famous places, and so much more. During the mid-nineteenth century, *ukiyo-e*'s popularity spread to Western Europe and the United States, the evidence of which can be found in the private collections and museum inventories of today.<sup>9</sup>

Production of an *ukiyo-e* print was a group effort.<sup>10</sup> An artist designed the print. Then, a key drawing representing that design was handed off to the block carver, who pasted the drawing onto a block of wood, cut along the grain, and carved away the back surface until a reverse relief of the image remained. All areas that would not be printed in black would be scooped out – the carver cut along each side of the outlines. This sculpted piece of wood was called the key block. A printer would then ink the key block with *sumi* (a Japanese black ink) and apply a sheet of paper, gently rubbing the back of it with an implement called a *baren* to ensure even application of ink. The resulting work was the key print with which the woodblocks for each color would be carved. The printer would apply a sheet of paper first on the key block, then on the color blocks (woodblocks would be carved on both sides for efficiency, and thus were used to print two different colors, one on each side), following a guide mark or *kentō* composed of raised ridges typically found near a corner of the block and approximately one inch below the edge of the print-to-be.<sup>11</sup> Experienced printers aligned paper with impressive accuracy. The colors employed on these prints were water-based vegetable and mineral pigments. Such color woodblock prints or *nishiki-e* (brocade pictures) were mass produced, fairly inexpensive, and extremely popular.<sup>12</sup> In short, *ukiyo-e* printmaking was a commercial venture, which relied upon a team of skilled individuals, managed by a publisher.

In the twentieth century, *sōsaku hanga* artists repurposed this traditional form of printmaking, converting the finished print from a commercial object to a singular work of art through the consolidation of labor into the hands of the individual artist – she became designer, carver, and printer. In 1904, Yamamoto Kanae (1882-1946) produced a self-carved and self-printed effort, *Fisherman*.<sup>13</sup> With this work, Kanae embraced the creative potential of the print medium while concurrently rejecting the collaborative format of pre-modern

*ukiyo-e*, as well as the mass production of the image. Kanae envisioned such prints as a “people’s art,” due to the medium’s origins in the more populist woodblock tradition; thus, the self-carved, self-printed work was promoted initially through art programs targeted at peasants and farmers.<sup>14</sup> But, as *sōsaku hanga* developed into an art movement, it achieved success first in the international art world and then in Japan as a fine art. As Alicia Volk has demonstrated, the relationships built between *sōsaku hanga* artists and interested Americans during the U.S. occupation of Japan following the end of World War II proved crucial to the wider dissemination and international success of the movement.<sup>15</sup> The artists, Yoshida Hiroshi (1876-1950) and Onchi Kōshirō (1891-1955), one of the leaders of the *sōsaku hanga* movement along with Hiratsuka Un’ichi (1895-1997), hosted printmaking demonstrations for Americans in their homes. Onchi’s First Thursday Society (Ichimokukai) welcomed artists, the art historian Fujikake Shizuya (1881-1958), Oliver Statler (1915-2002) who would author *Modern Japanese Prints: An Art Reborn* in 1959, William C. Hartnett (n.d.), director of recreational activities for the Occupation forces, and later, the collector and novelist James Michener (1907-1997).<sup>16</sup> These interactions in Japan stimulated American interest in Japanese printmaking, particularly *sōsaku hanga*.

By the early 1950s, *sōsaku hanga* was achieving international recognition. Saitō Kiyoshi (1907-1997) received first prize for his woodcut *Steady Gaze* (and Komai Tetsurō (1920-1976) won second prize for *Momentary Illusion*, a copperplate etching) at the 1951 Sao Paolo Biennale.<sup>17</sup> Saitō and Komai were the only Japanese awarded honors – their fellow countrymen exhibiting paintings and sculptures received no acknowledgement from the jury. Japanese print artists, particularly those producing *sōsaku hanga*, continued to be successful at international venues, prompting Onchi Kōshirō to form the International Print Association (Kokusai Hanga Kyōkai) in 1953 and Japan to host the 1957 International Print Biennial in Tokyo.<sup>18</sup> Through these triumphs, Japanese printmaking became entrenched in the larger realm of contemporary art. Visually engaging with the societal concerns and the international art movements of the times, *sōsaku hanga*’s zenith of popularity occurred from the 1950s to the 1970s.<sup>19</sup>

In their repurposing of the *ukiyo-e* tradition, *sōsaku hanga* artists explored new methods and the impact of these experimental methods on the finished print. As the art historians Helen Nagata and Helen Merritt explain, “while the *ukiyo-e* tradition emphasized perfecting techniques, the creative print [*sōsaku hanga*] movement stressed the discovery of effects through techniques.”<sup>20</sup> Artists also explored other print production processes, particularly in the postwar period. For example, Shinoda Tōkō’s (1913- ) untitled print is a lithograph, not a woodblock print (figure 1). Moreover, although she designed the image, Shinoda relied upon the master lithographer Kihachi Kimura (1934-2014) to print the work, thus engaging with the division of labor common in the pre-modern era.<sup>21</sup> Indeed a number of the artists represented in this exhibition not only created *sōsaku hanga*, but also various other types of prints, as well as sculptures and paintings. Shinoda herself, like many print artists, is also a painter.<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 2.**

Okumura Masanobu (1693-1768).

Interior of Nakamura-za theatre in Edo, 1745 (ca. 11th month). Depiction of renowned actor Ichikawa Ebizo performing 'Ya no ne Goro'. Published by Okumura Genroku.

Hand colored woodblock print on paper. 43.8 x 65 cm. Obj. Ref. No. 1910,0614,0.2

British Museum, London, Great Britain

© The Trustees of the British Museum / Art Resource, NY



**Figure 3.**

Shiba Kokan (1747-1818), *Ryogoku Bridge* (Tweelandbruk, Bridge between Two Lands).

Hand-colored, copperplate etching print. 1787.

© The Trustees of the British Museum. 1949,1112,0.10.

## POSTWAR PRINTS AND TRANSCULTURAL DIALOG

Many modern Japanese printmakers participated in a transcultural dialog with the Euro-American art world, training in Western art academies and familiarizing themselves with the ideas arising from various Euro-American art movements. Ties between postwar printmaking and modern painting, as evinced by the work of Shinoda Tōkō among others, were particularly strong.<sup>23</sup> As Bert Winther-Tamaki has convincingly explained, the impact of Japanese and U.S. artistic exchange produced a rich hybridity often denied due to identity politics.<sup>24</sup> The case of abstract expressionism, about which Winther-Tamaki argues for the clear influence of Japanese calligraphy and metaphysical ideas on what is consistently touted as a uniquely American form of modernism,<sup>25</sup> is particularly germane to a discussion of postwar Japanese prints for two reasons: first, because of the engagement of print artists with modern painting, mentioned above, and second, because of the calligraphic quality evident in a number of abstract, postwar prints, a few of which will be discussed below.

In fact, such transnational discourses on the subject of prints, albeit indirect, occurred as far back as the eighteenth century. In Japan, Okumura Masanobu (1686-1764) created prints evincing a slightly flawed form of single point perspective known as *uki-e* (floating pictures) in the mid-eighteenth century (figure 2).<sup>26</sup> Within a decade after Masanobu's passing, Maruyama Ōkyo (1733-1795) would produce *megane-e* (eyeglass pictures), which are prints or small paintings designed for viewing through an *optique* or a peep box;<sup>27</sup> *megane-e* demonstrate the mastery of perspectival technique, which was highly valued in Euro-American visual culture but not in East Asia.<sup>28</sup> Masanobu and Ōkyo learned about this Western method of representation through imported imagery and self-study. The Tokugawa period's policy of national seclusion (*sakoku*) prevented direct interaction between Japanese and Euro-American artists. Nonetheless, foreign books and prints facilitated the mastery of the intaglio print method on copperplates, which required the processing of a metal plate in order to create not only the finished image, but also the various textures evident within it.<sup>29</sup> Shiba Kōkan (1747-1818) experimented with and produced copperplate etchings, relying upon his knowledge of metalworking, a skill typically applied to the decoration of sword guards (figure 3).<sup>30</sup> It was Aōdō Denzen (1748-1822) however, who with the support of his feudal lord, created copperplate etchings that surpassed Kōkan's in overall quality, realism, and detail.<sup>31</sup> Thus, it can be said that Japanese postwar print artists not only reaped the benefits of a transcultural exchange, but also repurposed Tokugawa-era engagement with European compositional strategies and printmaking methods, supplementing them through the study of modern Euro-American artistic techniques and motifs in order to serve their own agendas.

## FOUR POSTWAR PRINTS – REPURPOSING THE PAST, INNOVATION IN THE PRESENT

The vast majority of the works in this exhibition are abstract prints, an art form particularly suited to the woodblock medium "... because it was conducive to the creation of flat, monochromatic shapes and varied textures."<sup>32</sup> Irrespective of the print method however,

the abstraction serves as a means of artistic expression, which at times references or honors the past. In *Dice, Utamaro* (figure 4), an etching employing the intaglio method,<sup>33</sup> Ōuchi Makoto (1926-1989) includes two motifs that consistently appear in his works: the cube and *ukiyo-e* imagery. Ōuchi was a lifelong fan of Kabuki theatre and often included references to representations of Kabuki actors or beautiful women by famed *ukiyo-e* artists in print designs.<sup>34</sup> Floating slightly to the left of center, a yellow-orange cube dominates the composition with a bluish-green-backed fish posed in the midst of a backflip to the cube's right. Just above the cube, a horizontal bar of stylized waves (a decorative motif also dating back to the pre-modern period) runs across the print. Four pink petals, one above the stylized waves and three below it, also appear. Three of the petals are placed in a manner that if connected by lines would form a triangle, suggesting a linkage between the cube, the fish, and the waves. A sense of flatness pervades the image, which is broken by the three-dimensional cube; indeed, it is the cube that provides the clue as to the possible larger meaning of the work.

Three sides of this cube can be seen. On one face, a woman with a pre-modern, upraised hairstyle appears to be lost in thought with her right hand resting on her chin. She closely resembles the subject of the famed *ukiyo-e* artist Kitagawa Utamaro's (1753?-1806) print "Reflective Love" from the series *Anthology of Poems: the Love Section* (Kasen koi no bu) of 1793/94 (figure 5). On the other face, two upside-down images are side-by-side. A slender strip with a set of four wigs vertically aligned appears next to the representation of another woman in pre-modern attire looking down at what seems to be a letter. The former refers to the equivalent of *ukiyo-e* paper dolls – the wigs could be cut out and placed upon similarly cut out figures of Kabuki actors, for example.<sup>35</sup> The second alludes to another Utamaro print, "Love that Meets Each Night" from the same series *Anthology of Poems: the Love Section* of 1793/94. On the top face of the cube, part of a red seal enclosed in a circle is visible; given that the two other faces of the cube refer to specific works by Utamaro, it is likely that the seal is one that was employed by this *ukiyo-e* artist.

What then is the connection between all of these compositional elements? The key lies in the title of the Utamaro print series that is referenced in Ōuchi's work, *Anthology of Poems: the Love Section*. The underlying theme could be interpreted as love. The two women depicted appear to be caught up in love affairs – one is thinking about her lover while the other has received a letter from a paramour. Romantic love, however, is fleeting, like blossoms after a full bloom; the emotion, all too often, falls away like flower petals. The Japanese word for love, "koi," also is a homonym for the name of the well-known fish, one of which seems to be depicted in the print, just to the right of the cube. Lastly, like the waves in the ocean, lovers come and go, with a former flame cast aside for a new love interest just as actors might dispose of one wig in favor of another. Ōuchi himself has described the cubes in his prints as representing man-made confinement, a loss of freedom.<sup>36</sup> Love can also be thought of as a prison of sorts, though many might disagree. In the end, Ōuchi's design can be understood





**Figure 4:**  
 OUCHI Makoto  
*Dice, Utamaro / 1948*  
 Etching on paper  
 25 x 30-1/16 inches  
 DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.54  
 Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 5:**  
 Kitagawa Utamaro I, Japanese, (?)-1806  
 Publisher: Tsutaya Jūzaburō (Kōshodō), Japanese  
*Reflective Love (Mono omou koi)*,  
 from the series *Anthology of Poems:  
 The Love Section (Kasen koi no bu)*  
 Japanese, Edo period, about 1793-94  
 (Kansei 5-6)  
 Woodblock print (nishiki-e);  
 ink and color on paper  
 Vertical ōban; 39 x 26.1 cm  
 (15 3/8 x 10 1/4 in.)  
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston  
 William S. and John T. Spaulding Collection  
 21.6415  
 Photograph © 2016 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



**Figure 6.**  
MAKI Haku  
*Work 73-49 (Moon-Water)* / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
9-11/16 x 17-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.38  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 7.**  
Franz Kline (1910-1962).  
*Mahoning, 1956*  
Oil and paper on canvas  
80 3/8 x 100 1/2in. (204.2 x 255.3 cm)  
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; purchase, with funds from the  
Friends of the Whitney Museum of American Art 57.10  
Photograph by Sheldon C. Collins

in many different ways – this visual repurposing of the past is multivalent. The image can be about the expressive power of flattened forms set in the expanse of white, empty space; the composition might be read as a clever discourse on love, relying upon the symbolism of *ukiyo-e*; or, the work is simply about freedom and confinement, a subject commensurate with the climate of the Cold War and associated conflicts that pervaded the latter half of the twentieth century. Ōuchi's innovation lies in his ability to suggest so much with so little, as well as to bring the past skillfully into the present.

While Ōuchi engaged with the art of Japan's Tokugawa era, Shinoda Tōkō and Maki Haku (born Maejima Tadaaki, 1924-2000) incorporated the calligraphic forms of *kanji* or Chinese characters into their designs. Maki, who trained under Onchi Kōshirō, created simple works of elegance, relying upon the at times playful rendering of *kanji* with *sumi* ink to articulate emotion.<sup>37</sup> From the 1960s onward, a splash of color was added to compositions as evident in *Work 73-49 (Moon-Water)* (figure 6) dating to the 1970s.<sup>38</sup> *Moon-Water* features the character for water (水) dynamically rendered on the print with a confident hand and a prominent, egg-shaped mass of yellow-orange that represents the moon, tilting in parallel to the *kanji* beside it. The use of Chinese characters for ink play and for personal expression dates back centuries to Japan's Muromachi period (1392-1573), but Maki's use of double paper, embossed using a still-wet cement block, is a modern innovation.<sup>39</sup> The textured, pure white paper further enhances the dynamic character and splash of color in *Water-Moon*. Shinoda's untitled lithograph (figure 1) instead suggests the brushstrokes making up a *kanji*, possibly even depicting a Chinese character or two, albeit in highly abstracted form. The artist's use of oil-based black ink (which differs from *sumi* ink) and the planographic method produces a subtle, but powerful, bubbling effect on the final image. The result is a work of concise, abstract expressionism in print – Shinoda lived in New York from 1956-1958 and interacted with the art dealer Betty Parsons (1900-1982), as well as the painters Jackson Pollock (1912-1956), Franz Kline (1910-1962), Robert Motherwell (1915-1991), and Willem de Kooning (1904-1997), all of whom likely had an impact on her artistic vision.<sup>40</sup> If Maki's work is dynamic, then Shinoda's can be described as an embodiment of confident understatement (perhaps a Japanese woman's response to an art world dominated by white men?). Both repurpose the modern ink play of the recent past – which in turn was a transcultural repurposing of traditional Japanese calligraphy – engaging with a visual discourse with the work of the abstract expressionists such as Franz Kline (figure 7). It is their experimentation with materials and method, however, that marks Shinoda's and Maki's contributions to contemporary printmaking, as well as to the contemporary art world.

In contrast to the minimalist compositions of Shinoda Tōkō and Maki Haku, Mizufune Rokushū (1912-80) created richly layered and complex woodblock prints such as *Shade Bone* (figure 8). Although he studied printmaking with one of the leaders of the *sōsaku hanga* movement, Hiratsuka Un'ichi, Mizufune is known more for his sculptures in his native Japan.<sup>41</sup> His two-dimensional work tends towards the thoughtful and experimental, rather than bold.<sup>42</sup> Mizufune himself once explained:

I like the weak and tired objects that have been forgotten. I don't search out the gorgeous or the gay. I am inspired by the imperfect and the helpless. That is an Oriental thought (Buddhist philosophy) that controls my art expression.<sup>43</sup>

For example, *Shade Bone* (figure 8) results from a meticulous artistic process. When designing a print Mizufune worked with cut out pieces of colored paper, moving and layering them in various ways, much like a collage. Then, the artist would cut into the wood, working against the grain and leaving rough markings along the edges of the shapes. Lastly, for the printing process, Mizufune employed thick, opaque paints. The initial layer typically is a solid black across the entire paper upon which the rest of the colors were added.<sup>44</sup> This bottom layer of black is visible along the edges of *Shade Bone*, peeking out from the layer of grey pigment, which had been applied over the black. Indeed the paper is so saturated with layers of colors that it no longer lays flat – the weight of the pigments has rippled the print.

Such a combination of abstract shapes and thick lines with lighter shades of color contrasted against a darker one might affect a soothing calm in the viewer. The composition is centered in a sea of grey, but the thick black line running from the center right of the print across the middle of the amalgam of colors and shapes serves as an anchor, like a stabilizing hand grasping a clutch of forms. Above, a series of thick white lines constitute an arch of sorts before a blue background; within this sea of blue a vertical black line meets a short horizontal line, suggesting another arch. The overall effect is a rendering of infinite space receding into the blue. This contained sense of eternal space is balanced below with two somewhat parallel white lines placed before a mustard-brown backdrop and framing two circles, one above the other. The upper circle is lime green and set against a rectangular area of forest green. Below this lime green circle is a misshapen square of brown; underneath this is another circle of white. A slightly diagonal line of purple marks the bottom of the brown square, above which is a thick swath of black, the "foot" of the entire abstract ensemble. Taken together, the two circles, brown square, line of purple, and black swath suggest an Atlas-like support, balancing the open endlessness of the forms above. The composition is deceptively complex, yet pleasing. The shapes are indeed imperfect, evidence of Mizufune's cutting of the woodblocks appears on the final print, and the image is decidedly not gorgeous; yet, viewers can be drawn to the work anyway. True to the aims of the *sōsaku hanga* movement, Mizufune experimented with effects and placed a spotlight on them in *Shade Bone*. In repurposing the traditional woodblock print, Mizufune also seems to have engaged in a dialog with modernist painting discourses dominant during the postwar years, particularly in his interest in the layering of thick pigments vis-à-vis the abstract expressionists. Compared to the spare elegance of Maki's *Work 73-35 (Space)* (figure 9) of the 1970s, *Shade Bone* seems quite dense. Mizufune's achievement lies in the sense of calm that belies this complexity, situating this print in a different artistic sphere, one worlds away from the frenetic energy of, for example, a Jackson Pollack drip painting.



**Figure 8.**  
MIZUFUNE Rokushū  
*Shade Bone* / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print on paper  
23-1/2 x 17-1/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.44  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 9.**  
MAKI Haku  
*Work 73-35 (SPACE)* / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
20-3/4 x 15-1/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.36  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



## CONCLUSION

The past lives in the present. The Japanese postwar prints of this exhibition clearly demonstrate this notion in their expressive creativity, which results from the repurposing of traditional techniques and/or motifs. The artists who produced these prints also continued a dialog with their peers outside Japan – one begun long before the modern era – that enriched and inspired their work. Indeed these printmakers contributed significantly to the genre of contemporary prints. And, the larger realm of contemporary art is richer due to their efforts. While it remains to be seen what the lasting legacy of Japanese postwar prints will be, their variety and depth are evident in the sampling represented by this exhibition. When studying the simple beauty of one of Maki Haku's works, the elegant assemblage of an Ōuchi composition, the mesmerizing effects of a Shinoda lithograph, or the rich complexity of a sculptural print by Mizufune Rokushū, a sense of awe arises. These images demand careful scrutiny as they articulate a stimulating individualism, a response to the present that is emboldened by their engagement with the artistic past. It can be said therefore that the future of Japanese printmaking is quite promising indeed.

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1 The most prevalent pre-modern print form in East Asia, the woodblock print, is a Chinese invention. The oldest surviving woodblock printed Chinese works were found in the Library Cave at Dunhuang and date to the Tang dynasty (618-907). In Japan, the *Hyakumantō darani* (Million Pagoda Dharani, c. 764-770), a Buddhist text preserved at Hōryū-ji temple in Nara represents the earliest extant example of a woodblock printed text. See Hans Bjarne Thomsen, "Chinese Woodblock Prints and Their Influence on Japanese Ukiyo-e Prints" in *The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints*, volume 1, edited by Amy Reigle Newland (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), 87.

2 Margaret K. Johnson and Dale K. Hilton, *Japanese Prints Today* (Tokyo: Shufunotomo Co., Ltd., 1980), 14.

3 It should be made clear that not all pre-modern Japanese prints were produced for commercial purposes. There were privately commissioned prints, known as *surimono*, as well as literary works, reproduced using moveable type, not woodblocks. See

John T. Carpenter, *Reading Surimono: the Interplay of Text and Image in Japanese Prints* (Zurich, Leiden, and Boston: Museum Rietberg in association with Hotei Publishing, 2008).

4 Alexandra Munroe, "Art is My Life: Gaston Petit and the Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Japanese Prints" in *Expanding Frontiers: the Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Postwar Japanese Prints* (Eugene, OR: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2015), 10.

5 John Szostak, "Visual Historicism as Creative Hermeneutics: the Cast of Neo-Rimpā" (Panel on "Repurposing the Past: Historicism in Contemporary Japanese Art," Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Seattle, WA, April 1, 2016).

6 Ibid.

7 Johnson and Hilton, 16-31. As discussed in this essay, pre-modern Japanese employed other forms of printmaking besides relief printing in woodblock, such as the intaglio method

on copperplates. But, before the modern era, the vast majority of printed matter was produced via the woodblock relief method.

8 Ukiyo-e include paintings as well. Nonetheless, the best known examples of ukiyo-e both within and without Japan remain woodblock prints. For a comprehensive overview of the subject see Amy Reigle Newland, ed., *The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints*, volume 1 & 2 (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005).

9 A recent exhibition at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts focused on this phenomenon, as well as Euro-American interest in other forms of Japanese art such as textiles and ceramics. See the exhibition catalog, Helen Burnham, *Looking East: Western Artists and the Allure of Japan* (Boston: MFA Publications, 2014).

10 Based on Helen M. Nagata and Helen Merritt, "Revisiting the History of Modern Japanese Prints" in *Revisiting Modern Japanese Prints: Selected Works from the Richard F. Grott Family Collection*, edited by Helen M. Nagata and Helen Merritt (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Art Museum, 2008), 12; Helen M. Nagata, "Ukiyo-e in the Eyes of the Creative Print Artist" in *Made in Japan: the Postwar Creative Print Movement*, edited by Alicia Volk (Milwaukee and Seattle: Milwaukee Art Museum in Association with the University of Washington Press, 2005), 24-25; and Shiho Sasaki, "Materials and Techniques" in *The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Woodblock Prints*, volume 1, edited by Amy Reigle Newland (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), 338-341.

11 In print parlance, the guide mark is known as the registration key. Registration or registry refers to the exact placement of the paper onto the color blocks over successive blocks. See Ronald G. Robinson, *Contemporary Printmaking in Japan* (New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1965), 14.

12 Julie Nelson Davis cites the writer Santō Kyōden (1761-1816) who recalled that a single sheet print cost 20 *mon* in the early nineteenth century; given that the a bowl of noodles was 16 *mon* and the price of entry to a public bath was 10 *mon*, Davis concludes that ukiyo-e prints were quite affordable. See Davis, *Utamaro and the Spectacle of Beauty* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 15.

13 Tsuji Nobuo辻惟雄, *History of Japanese Art* 日本美術の歴史 (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 2005), 384.

14 Nagata, "Ukiyo-e in the Eyes of the Creative Print Artist," 23 and Nagata & Merritt, "Revisiting the History of Modern Japanese Prints," 17.

15 Alicia Volk, "Japanese Prints Go Global: *Sōsaku Hanga* in an International Context" in *Made in Japan: the Postwar Creative Print Movement*, edited by Alicia Volk (Milwaukee, Seattle: Milwaukee Art Museum in association with the University of Washington Press, 2005), 5-17.

16 Ibid, 7-9.

17 Ibid, 11.

18 Ibid, 6 and Maureen de Vries, "Printmaking During the War Years and After: 1931-1960" in *Waves of Renewal: Modern Japanese Prints, 1900-1960: Selections from the Nihon no Hanga Collection, Amsterdam*, edited by Chris Uhlenbeck (Leiden: Hotei Publishing, 2016), 89.

19 Anne Rose Kitagawa, "Expanding Frontiers in Japanese Art at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art" in *Expanding Frontiers: the Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Postwar Japanese Prints* (Eugene, OR: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, 2015), 17.

20 Nagata and Merritt, 16.

21 Johnson and Hilton, 54.

22 Ibid, 55-56.

23 Nagata and Merritt, 17.

24 Bert Winther-Tamaki, *Art in the Encounter of Nations* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 5-18.

25 Bert Winther-Tamaki, "The Asian Dimensions of Postwar

Abstract Art: Calligraphy and Metaphysics" in *The Third Mind: American Artists Contemplate Asia, 1860-1989*, edited by Alexandra Munroe (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2009), 145-157.

26 Oka Yasumasa岡泰正, "A Study of Chinese Optical Paintings And 'Uki-e' Japanese Perspective Prints - On 'An Essay Regarding Chinese Peepshow History' By E Ying" 中国の西湖景と日本の浮絵 - 阿英「閑話西湖景「洋片」発展史略」をめぐって," *Bulletin of the Kobe City Museum* 15 (1999): 1-22.

27 Also known as "Dutch glasses," an *optique* is a viewing device through which a perspective print or painting would be reflected on a piece of glass and then studied, enhancing the illusion of depth. Pictures created for the *optique* must therefore be reverse images. Peep boxes resemble *optiques*, but the image viewed is not reflected in a mirror; thus images for peep boxes are not executed in reverse.

28 Oka Yasumasa岡泰正, *A New Consideration of Megane-e* 眼鏡絵新考 (Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1992).

29 For a concise overview of the subject, see Akiko Walley, "Broadening the Scope: Early History of Intaglio, Lithography, and Screenprinting in Japan" in *Expanding Frontiers: The Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Postwar Japanese Prints* (Eugene, OR: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2015), 20-27.

30 Calvin French, *Shiba Kōkan: Artist, Innovator, and Pioneer in the Westernization of Japan* (New York: Weatherhill, 1974) and Tsukahara Akira, "The Early Copperplate Prints of Shiba Kōkan and Aōdō Denzen" in *Japan Envisions the West*, edited by Yukiko Shirahara (Seattle: Seattle Art Museum, 2007), 119-133.

31 Tsukahara, 128-133 and *The Age of Aōdō Denzen* 亜欧堂田善の時代 (Tokyo: Fuchu Art Museum, 2006).

32 Alicia Volk, "Points of Appreciation for Sōsaku Hanga" in *Made in Japan: The Postwar Creative Print Movement*, edited by Alicia Volk (Milwaukee and Seattle: Milwaukee Art Museum in association with University of Washington Press, 2005), 61

33 Akiko Walley notes that the content of Ōuchi's work, which typically references pre-modern motifs, leads one to expect the employment of woodblocks; nonetheless, Ōuchi defies expectations by working with the intaglio or planographic technique. See Walley, "Ōuchi Makoto 大内マコト 1926-1989" in *Expanding Frontiers: the Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Postwar Japanese Prints* (Eugene, OR: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2015), 90.

34 Johnson and Hilton, 51-53.

35 *Comical Ukiyo-e: Humorous Pictures and the School of Kuniyoshi* 笑う浮世絵—劇画と国芳一門 (Tokyo: Ukiyo-e Ota Memorial Museum of Art, 2013), 136.

36 Johnson and Hilton, 52.

37 Francis Blakemore, *Who's Who in Modern Prints*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (New York, Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1983), 99.

38 Daniel Tretiak, *The Life and Works of Haku Maki* (Denver: Outskirts Press Inc., 2007), 74. The seal on the print matches those identified as having been used by Maki in the 1970s.

39 Blakemore, 99.

40 Esther Weng, "Shoda Tōkō 篠田桃紅 Born 1913" in *Expanding Frontiers: The Jack and Suzy Wadsworth Collection of Postwar Japanese Prints* (Eugene, OR: Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, University of Oregon, Eugene, 2015), 62.

41 Helen Merritt and Nanako Yamada, *Guide to Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints: 1900-1975* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992), 93-94.

42 Blakemore, 116.

43 Johnson and Hilton, 72.

44 Adapted from Ibid, 78.



**Figure 1.**  
KAWANO Kaoru  
*TWILIGHT* / 1955  
Woodblock print on paper  
15-1/2 x 22-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.21  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 2.**  
MAKI Haku  
*Work 73-49 (Moon-Water)* / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
9-11/16 x 17-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.38  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# SŌSAKU HANGA AND THE MONOZUKURI SPIRIT

Dr. Hiroko Chiba, Professor of Modern Languages (Japanese)

*Hanga* 版画 (block prints) is a long-standing art form in Japanese art history and one of the art forms that many Japanese personally experience. Some print *hanga* on their New Year greeting postcards. Some cut a potato and carve a picture on the flat surface as a signature seal (despite its perishability). *Hanga* was, and still is, part of the elementary school art curriculum in Japan. *Hanga*-making represents the long tradition of *monozukuri* – making things.

The concept of *monozukuri* traditionally implies the spirit of craftsmanship that has been the driving force behind traditional arts and crafts making throughout Japanese history. It stresses the importance of process, constant improvement, and details. The concept has been adapted in the contemporary manufacturing industry, including the automobile and technology sectors. In education, the approach is implemented early on as a curricular goal in arts and crafts which is found in the guidelines written by The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. The arts and crafts curriculum provides opportunities for children to find joy in creating and crafting art as well as appreciating great works.<sup>1</sup>

I believe I was introduced to the genre of *hanga* as a fourth or fifth grader. I still remember the excitement of getting a set of engraving tools – a small u-gouge and v-gouge, a wide gouge, perhaps a small knife, and a round *baren* (a disc used to burnish the back of a sheet to transfer ink) nicely wrapped with a bamboo leaf, all neatly lined up in a compact case. The subject for our *hanga* was typically a classmate, a scene from school or some form of still life. Our teacher instructed us on the three steps involved in the making of *hanga* – drawing, carving, and printing. *Hanga*-making is probably the first serious encounter with *monozukuri* for many Japanese children.

It was exciting to see how the carved wood was printed on the paper, despite the fact that the objects on the prints did not look quite the way we imagined. It was our *monozukuri*. It was only much later that I learned there was an artistic movement called *sōsaku hanga*. The three steps involved in making *hanga* – self-drawing, self-carving, and self-printing – reflect the principle of the *sōsaku hanga* movement which took place in early 20th century Japan. The principle of “do-it-yourself” (in lieu of having a specialist carry out each step, as in the process of creating *ukiyo-e*<sup>2</sup>) gave a great deal of freedom to the artists in creating their art. This process was carried out by remarkable artists such as Yamamoto Kanae, Onchi Koshiro, Maki Haku, Takehisa Yumeji, Munakata Shiko, and many others.

I had the privilege of seeing the collection of *sōsaku hanga* at DePauw University before the exhibition was installed. The collection of *hanga* brought back memories of my childhood, while reminding me again of the craftsmanship and artistry that go into these works. For example, when I saw “Twilight” by Kawano Kaoru, I felt that our art teacher in grade school might have had something like this in mind when he taught us. The big fish in the dark blue-greenish water appears to be entering the sunlit balloon. It is a simple design, but the details of the carving make the *hanga* much more organic and animated. (Figure 1)

The works by Haku Maki were quite intriguing to me as well, especially as *moji* (characters or letters) art. “Work 73-113 (Flower)” and “Work 73-49 (Moon-Water)” remind one of beautiful calligraphy. The *washi*, hand-made Japanese paper, gives a natural feel. If we look closely at the works, we can tell the surface of the paper is uneven. Each line has its own dynamic and is intricately crafted. I can sense the artist’s attention to detail during the process of making these works. (Figures 2 and 3)

I was also drawn to Hagiwara Hideo’s works – “Withering Blast” and “Three Windows.” I was intrigued by the thin lines that describe the movements of air. The curly lines in “Withering Blast” make the blue, black, and white objects appear as though they are dancing in the withering wind. The three windows witness various air movements – swirling, swiveling, turning, and tapping around them. There is something almost melodic about this use of line. (Figures 4 and 5)

When I saw these strong and beautiful works, I imagined the labor that went into the process of making the artwork, picking materials, conditioning the tools, thinking about details, imagining the outcomes, and the many other intricacies of *monozukuri*. Every *hanga* in the collection has a story to tell in its form – the melodic lines, piquant designs, vibrant colors, and unique gouge traces. Our imaginations are catalyzed to try and see the story being told by the artwork. The *monozukuri* spirit, very much alive in this exhibit, is deeply ingrained within the Japanese experience. I fancy whether my childhood *hanga*, had I kept them, would surprise me with the stories they told of the world a child lived in. After seeing the collection, I am tempted to revisit *hanga*-making (though admittedly, I am not certain how much better my current skills would be) for a new *monozukuri* experience – what stories would my creations tell now?

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to thank Mr. Mitsuo Kakutani, an artist in Richmond, Indiana, for an inspiring conversation that influenced this essay.

1 The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, Sports, and Technology, “Art and Crafts”, Shogakko Gakushu Shido Youryo, last modified March, 2009, [http://www.mext.go.jp/a\\_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/syo/zu.htm](http://www.mext.go.jp/a_menu/shotou/new-cs/youryou/syo/zu.htm).

2 Ukiyo-e were popular woodblock prints in the Edo period (1603-1868)





**Figure 3.**  
 MAKI Haku  
*Work 73-49 (Moon-Water)* / mid-20th century  
 Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
 9-11/16 x 17-1/2 inches  
 DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.38  
 Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 4.**  
 HAGIWARA Hideo  
*Withering Blast* / 1961  
 Woodblock print on paper  
 20-1/4 x 26-13/16 inches  
 DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.12  
 Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Figure 5.**  
 HAGIWARA Hideo  
*Three Windows* / 1966  
 Woodblock print on paper  
 22-5/16 x 29-3/8 inches  
 DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.11  
 Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



*Gloomy Footsteps* / 1962  
Woodblock print on paper  
23 x 15-11/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.4  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# Complicating Modernity in Azechi's *Gloomy Footstep*

Taylor Zartman '15, Former Arthur E. Klauser Fellow

Modernity revels in the Industrial Revolution, celebrating heightened production and technological advancement. Azechi Umetaro nuances this definition of modernity. Self-described as an appreciator of the simple and rustic, Azechi's prints call the viewer to reconnect with the natural world, now presented to the viewer through the topography of production.<sup>1</sup> A mass production method – printing – is reasserted as organic through its approach and subject matter. The natural tool of wood is now a tool of industry, pressing imperfect patterns over and over. The industry is maintained; the natural is maintained. Common, naturally occurring forms are now modernized through Azechi's duplication.

Looking to *Gloomy Footsteps*, Azechi's press of the woodblock serves as the step creating the print. A footprint declares that a mark has been left. And whereas the word "tracks" tends to implicate animals as the markers, a "footstep" is the print left by a human. It is an interaction with the natural world – a land infiltrated more and more by modernity. Azechi's print is a mark, but one that places nature back into modern processes and subjects.

This layered "footstep" features a foundation of pointed shapes reminiscent of leaves. Atop these imperfect geometrics rest willowy lines, possible sticks or claw scratches in the ground. The layering continues with a hatched texture like one might see on a stone. Topping this "step" is a red circle framed by an oblong, navy square. The grain of the circle is like that of tree bark, but the shape of it is like a fruit, possibly a fallen apple or a berry. All of these layers float in a pool of dark, dusky blue, destabilizing exactly what landscape is framing this potential footprint.

While the title of *Gloomy Footsteps* suggests the viewer is confronted with a singular footprint, Azechi's choice of color palette complicates this perspective. With the use of blues comes a formal association with the ocean or the sky. What could be a footprint from one perspective can now be regarded as an iceberg amongst the waves or the layers of a puddle from recent rain or a full moon spotlighting a mountainside. Many of the forms and color choices in this image rest on precisely this line of ambiguity. Azechi offers the viewer a walk through the countryside, full of suggestions of flora, fauna, stone, and various locations, all in a single gloomy footprint.

1 Statler, Oliver. *Modern Japanese Prints: An Art Reborn*, 140.



# Catalog of Selected Works

Highlights from the DePauw University  
Permanent Art Collection



HAGIWARA Hideo  
**Early Spring** / 1959  
Woodblock print on paper  
18-13/16 x 22-3/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.10  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# AMANO Kazumi

尼野和三

Born 1927

“Disdaining the easy way, Amano undertakes the most challenging formulas for composing his prints. Linear forms are combined with curves and sharp angles; flat treatment is blended with shaded areas to form new images. Unlimited too in color application, warm and cool, pale and intense unite in a forceful abstract pattern.”

– Frances Blakemore





**Self-Image (Wrap) B** / 1966  
Woodblock print on paper  
36 x 21-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.1  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# AZECHI Umetaro

畦地梅太郎

1902-1999

"My roots are in the country, and I like simple rustic work. I don't like slickness or sophistication. I respect Munakata [Shiko]'s approach, and I agree with him that Japanese artists imitate too much. In my own case I think my lack of training saves me from that kind of thing ..."

– Azechi Umetaro

## **Sound from the Far** / 1961

Woodblock print on paper

23-3/8 x 16-1/16 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.3

Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40





**Gloomy Footsteps** / 1962  
Woodblock print on paper  
23 x 15-11/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.4  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# HAGIWARA Hideo

萩原英雄

1913-2007

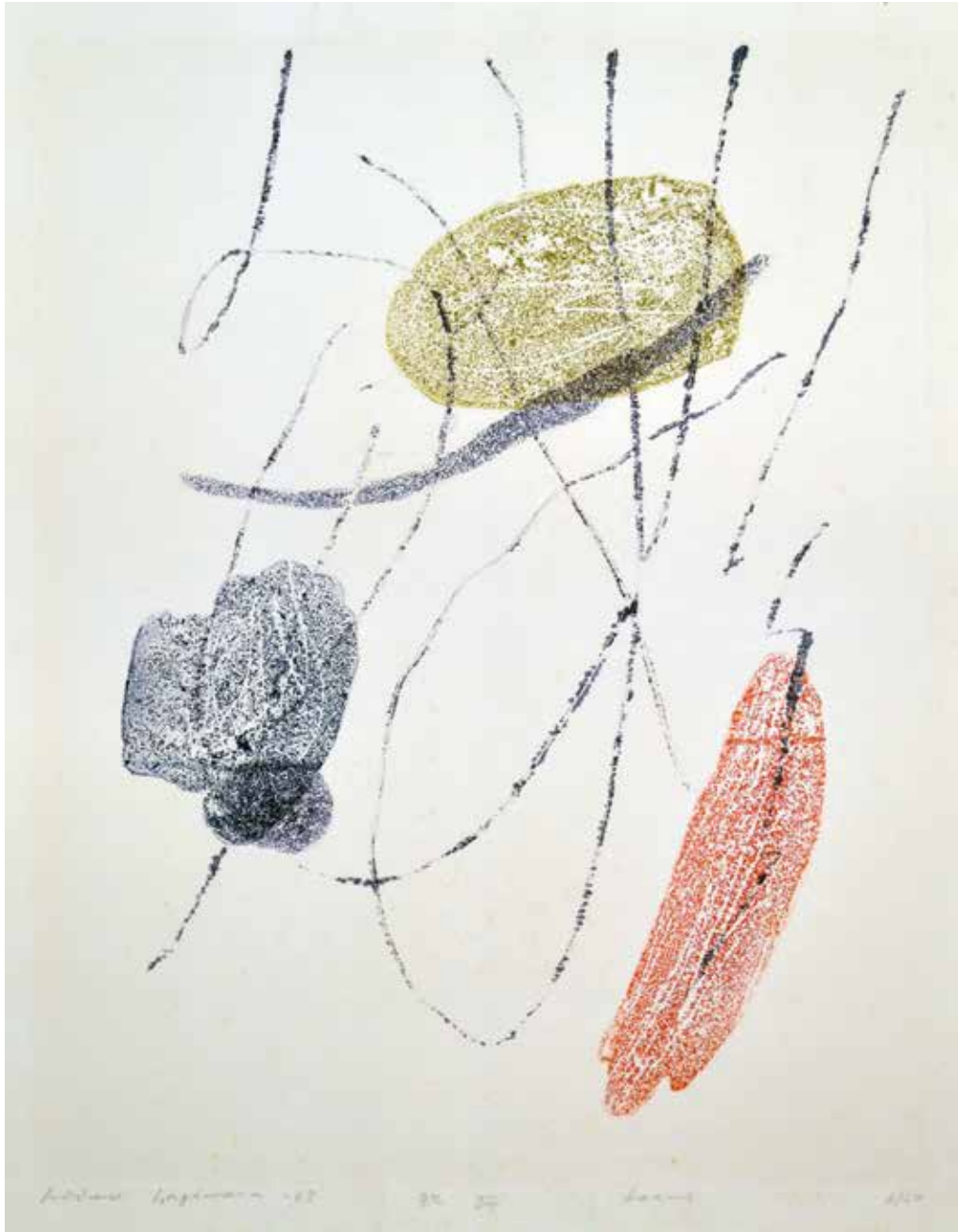
"From the beginning of mankind's history, the thing that flows at the bottom of the human heart is unchangeable. There is no such thing which can be called a new thing or old thing. A spiritually genuine thing is always new, at any time or any age. It is always surprising for me to find the new in old things."

– Hagiwara Hideo



**Mask No. 12** / 1964  
Woodblock print on paper  
23-7/8 x 35-11/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.7  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40





**Locus** / 1965  
Woodblock print on paper  
23-1/8 x 17-15/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.9  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# HATSUYAMA Shigeru

初山滋

1897-1973

"My imagination – my dreams – create pavilions with the stroke of my brush. With the lines, my mind, too, is invited into the pavilions, and becomes lost in them."

– Hatsuyama Shigeru



**Play on Sharaku: Elopement Role / 1963**

Woodblock print on paper

25-7/8 x 20 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.106

Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40





**Play on Sharaku: Ruffian Role / 1963**  
Woodblock print on paper  
26 x 20 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.105  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# HOSHI Joichi

星襄一

1913-1979

“Mr. Hoshi explained to me the inspiration for his work. He had traveled to Mongolia especially for the purpose of star gazing. He told me enthusiastically that he is sure the sky is darker there than anywhere else in the world and the brightness of the stars is unbelievable. This is one of the inspirations for the long series which he did on galaxies and constellations.”

– Kappy Hendricks, The Hendricks Art Collection





**The Sixth Month** / 1962  
Woodblock print on paper  
18-1/2 x 24-1/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.17  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# IWAMI Reika

岩見礼花

Born 1927

"This is one of two prints by the same title ... since the deadline for the contest was the first day of December, I picked the theme of winter for my compositions. It was partly with a feeling of resistance against the cold and cruel impression of winter that I worked on these prints. What I wanted to express, however, was that even though winter is cold and severe, it is at the same time secretly nursing the buds of hope."

– Iwami Reika





**Winter Composition No. 2** / 1959  
Woodblock print on paper  
17-5/16 x 12-1/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2016.5.3  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65



**Water Shadows** / 1976  
Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
28 x 20 inches  
DePauw Art Collection  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# KUROSAKI Akira

黒崎彰

Born 1937

“It is not surprising for an artist to be able to achieve luminosity and depth of color in the silkscreen technique, but what surprised us about Kurosaki Akira’s [work] was that, along with unparalleled use of shading and embossing, he could achieve this almost psychedelic effect with the traditional woodblock medium.”

– Mary and Norman Tolman





**Lost Paradise 9** / 1972  
Woodblock print on paper  
24-3/8 x 17-5/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 1998.7.9  
Gift of Dr. Steven G. Conant '71

# MAKI Haku

卷白

1924-2000

"My goal has been to create one hundred works per year, but I have come of the age when I should reduce the number of my works, and should quietly create what I really admire. It's about time that I drew pictures that may not sell."

– Maki Haku



**Work 73-113 (Flower)** / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print and embossing on paper  
9-11/16 x 17-9/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.37  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Poem 71-75 / 1964**  
Woodblock print on paper  
17-1/2 x 10-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.34  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# MIYASHITA Tokio

宮下登書雄

1930-2011

“If people ... like what they see, it is enough. I do not seek philosophical meanings. I use bright colors to show the bright side of life.”

– Miyashita Tokio





**Untitled** / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print on paper  
27-1/4 x 20-1/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.42  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# MIZUFUNE Rokushū

水船六州

1912-1981

“Sculpture taught me the mastery of tools, and a similar precision with tools is required for *sōsaku hanga* (modern creative prints). The *sōsaku hanga* artist paints his sketch, carves his block, and prints his picture, a creative approach to the woodcut that was born out of Western contacts in the early part of the 20th century. Through the *sōsaku hanga* movement, woodblock prints have reached a high level of esteem equal to that of the other art forms such as painting and sculpture.”

– Mizufune Rokushū





**Shade Bone** / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print on paper  
23-1/2 x 17-1/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.44  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

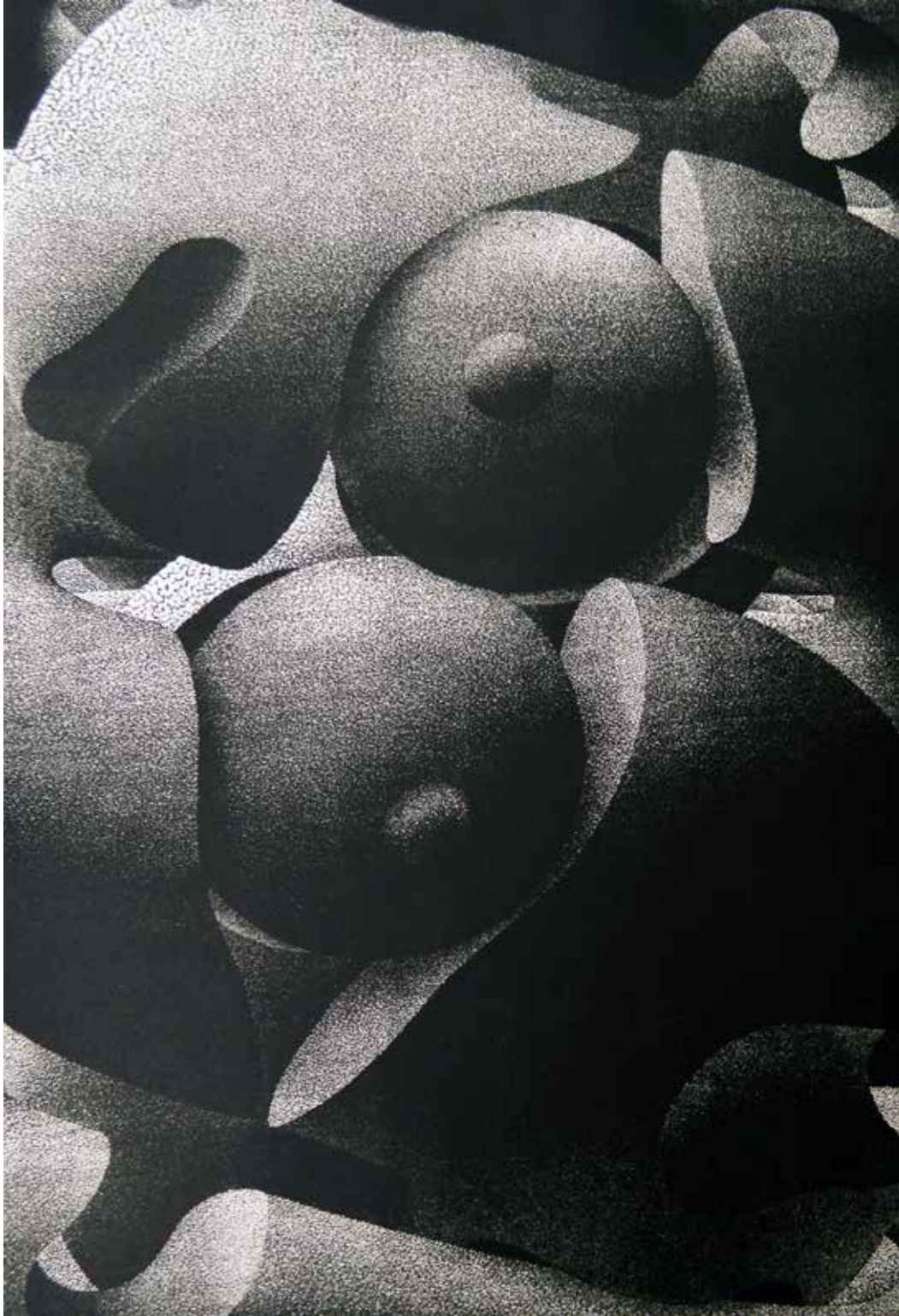
# MOROZUMI Osamu

両角修

Born 1948

“It takes a certain amount of courage to abandon almost all the methods one has learned at school and to strike out on one’s own with a comparatively new method that even requires the devising of appropriate instruments ... Morozumi’s approach demonstrates that it is not necessary to use elaborate techniques to make good prints.”

– Gaston Petit



**No. 46** / 1970s  
Woodblock print on paper  
20 x 21-15/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.19.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# ONCHI Koshiro

恩地孝四郎

1891-1955

Words vault over words and emotions turn somersault,  
Life loses its footing and the spirit tumbles down.  
Even a single truth becomes covered with a veil of sham.  
The foolish retina quite diffuses the light,  
Words are but reflections,  
Verse is victimized by words.  
Poetry, too, is falsehood. (Sakutarō grasped “nothingness”  
from this falsehood, grasped it as he  
would a dream.)  
Emotions turn somersault and words vault over words,  
Truth is made bare,  
Phenomena congeal.  
There, falsehood, scattering light, takes on a shape.  
A poem is the lens,  
And the dark box a whirlpool of light.

– Onchi Koshiro





**Poème No. 7 Landscape of May / 1948**

Woodblock print on paper

15-3/4 x 19-1/4 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2015.12.1

Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

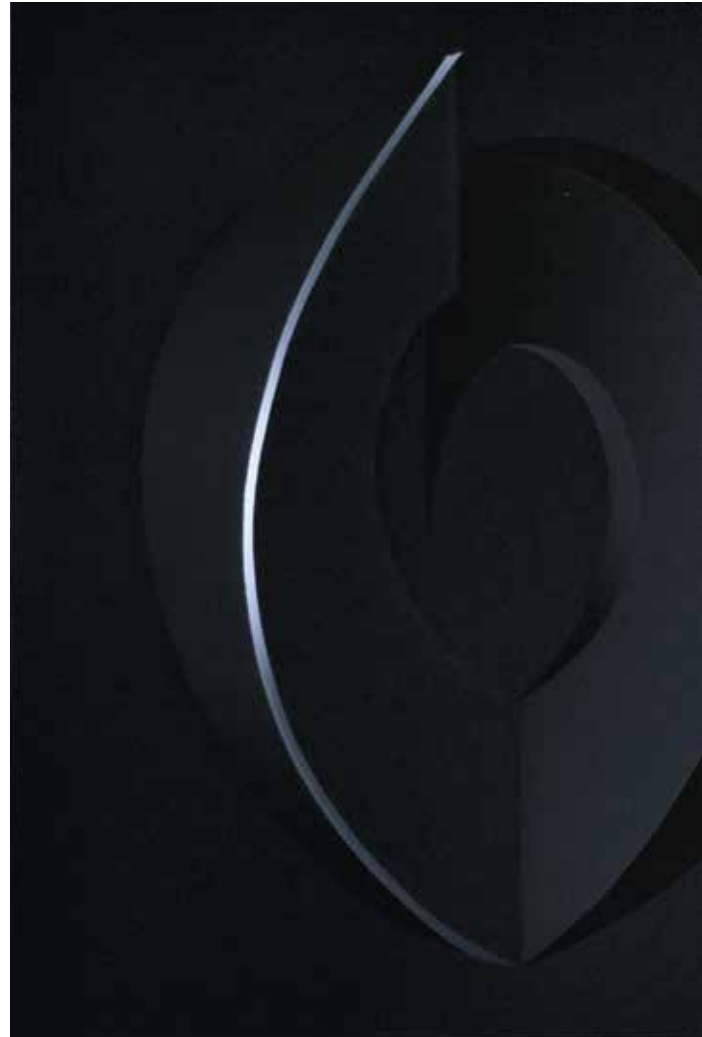
# ONOGI Gaku

小野木学

1924-1976

"Landscape is not an assemblage of that which confronts the self; it takes in the 'act of flowing' of that which is called 'self.' In other words, the selfhood of that which is named landscape is expanded and is expressed from the summation of every awareness of oneself. I would like to draw that time/moment, which continues eternally from eternity."

– Onogi Gaku





**Landscape - T.L.D / 1970s**

Silkscreen print on paper  
24-1/8 x 19-5/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.15.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65



**Landscape - T.L.V. / 1970s**

Silkscreen print on paper  
20 x 21-15/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.18.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# OUCHI Makoto

大内マコト

1926-1989

"Ouchi explains that the cube to him represents the man-made confinement of mankind, the intrusions on man's freedoms. 'Right angles are made by man, while curved lines – of fruits, for instance – are made by nature.'"

– Margaret Johnson and Ouchi Makoto



**Dice, Utamaro / 1948**

Etching on paper

25 x 30-1/16 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.54

Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# SAWADA Tetsuro

沢田哲郎

1933-1998

“The mysterious light penetrates the tranquil landscape,  
echoes gradually disappear from the folds of the hills.

The mist, hazy in the distance reveals an untold beauty.

This natural scene, like the pervasive sounds of a  
musical score emanating from a piano,  
is carving out a light and airy rhythm.

The elusive, kaleidoscopic changes of nature.

But, still the light remains, sustaining the quietude as  
though nothing ever passed before.”

– Sawada Tetsuro



**Blue Skyscraper / 1975**  
Silkscreen print on paper  
15 x 23-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2016.6.3  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65



# SEKINO Jun'ichiro

関野準一郎

1914-1988

"... there is no retirement or retirement age for artists, and there is nothing happier than an artist who can hold a brush and draw until he dies. In a sumo wrestler's case, his career can only be verbalized, but in the case of an artist, no words are necessary because we can understand what the artist was from his works."

- Sekino Jun'ichiro





**Portrait of ONCHI Koshiro / 1952**  
Woodblock print on paper  
26-13/16 x 20-3/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.80  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Stars and Bird / 1956**  
Woodblock print on paper  
12-1/8 x 24-7/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.16.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# SHINODA Toko

篠田桃紅

Born 1913

“The most important element is my heart, that I try to express through my body and my hands. When I take a brush in my hand, my heart searches for lines, and tries to create forms.”

– Shinoda Toko



**Untitled** / late 20th century  
Lithographic print on paper  
27-9/16 x 21-3/4 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2016.5.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# SORA Mitsuaki

空充秋

Born 1933

"Sora is actually a sculptor who has transferred to the woodblock medium the principles he nurtured in learning the art of mass and volume. Ponderous yet delicate, his two-dimensional figures are as huge as our imaginations can make them."

– Francis Blakemore





**No. 170-A / 1969**  
Woodblock print on paper  
9-1/4 x 12-1/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.43  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# TAJIMA Hiroyuki

田嶋宏行

1911-1984

"In Tajima's work there is always a feeling of sublimation, restraint. Like the top of an iceberg, only fragments of dreams, songs, or poetry are revealed at one time. Nevertheless, through their careful execution, these details have a dignity and power of evocation which fully reflect the strength and high caliber of the artist. The magic of Tajima's prints acts upon reality with a vigor and persuasion resulting from long discipline."

– Gaston Petit



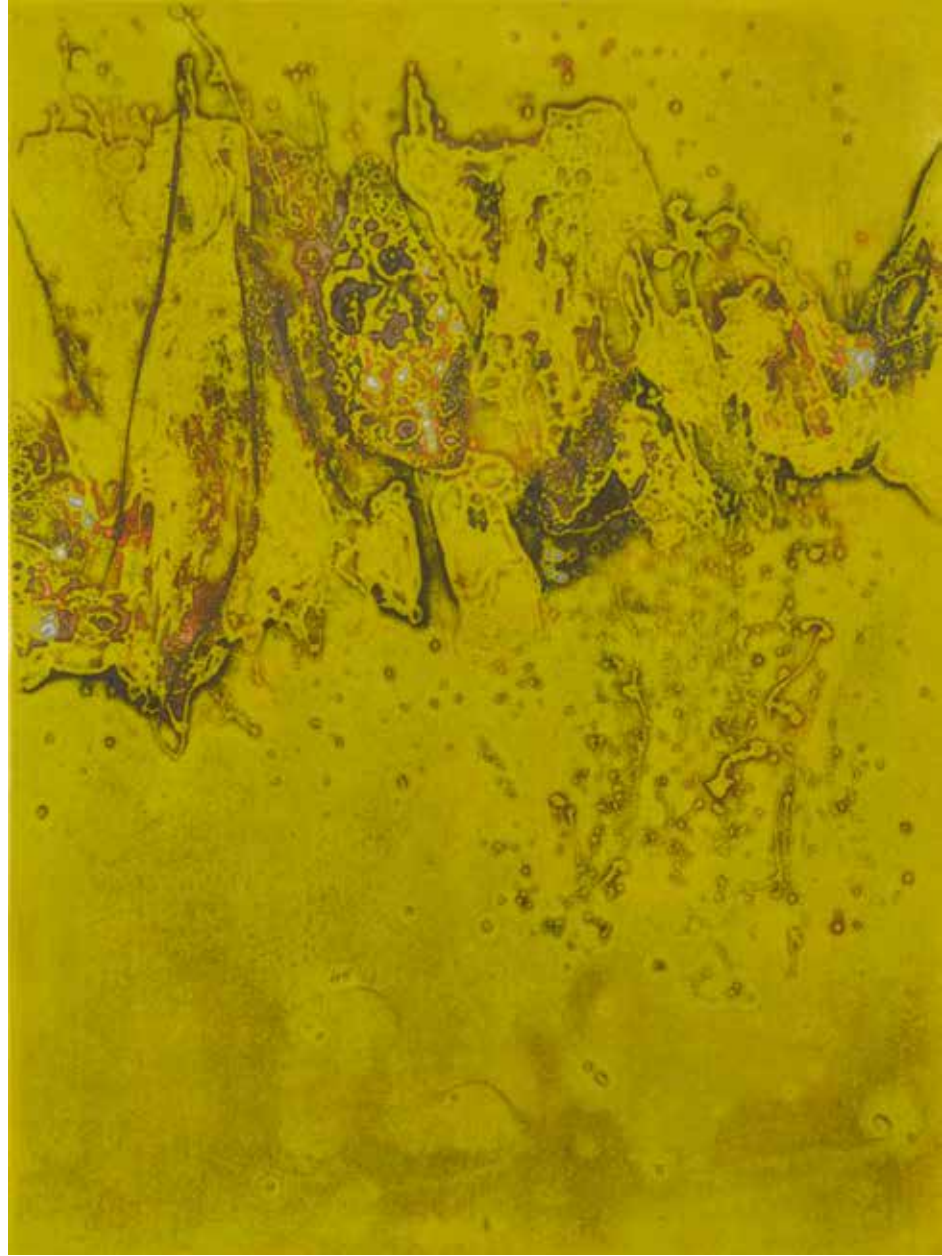
**Kuraukera** / 1961

Woodblock print on paper

24-7/8 x 19-9/16 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.85

Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



**Popox** / 1964  
Woodblock print on paper  
24-15/16 x 19-5/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2016.5.5  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# TAKAHASHI Rikio

高橋力雄

1917-1999

"All forms of Japanese culture are structured as a *do*, a way or path. The prescribed path must be taken to approach these practices – *kendo* (the way of the sword), *judo* (the soft way of wrestling), *shodo* (the way of writing), *kado* (the way of flowers), *kodo* (the way of incense), and *sado* (the way of tea.) However, there is no *do* in my work. I am hoping to convey something true, hopefully not something false or pretentious."

– Takahashi Rikio





**Tasteful (No. 5)** / 1970s  
Woodblock print on paper  
19-1/16 x 18-1/2 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.20.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65



# TAKAHASHI Shinichi

高橋信一

1917 – 1986

“Takahashi’s *Retreat* provides a reassuring moment of blues, yellows, and greens for the viewer in an otherwise oppressive world of dark pigments and energetic, swirling movement. Translated as “hermitage,” we can be certain that Takahashi has left this small sanctuary to placate what would otherwise be a world dominated by visual angst and uncertainty. The artist’s scraping and layering of woodblock elements echoes the aesthetic of his contemporary, Tajima Hiroyuki.”

– Craig Hadley



**Hermitage** / mid-20th century  
Woodblock print on paper  
22 x 24-7/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.87  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# TASHIMOTO Simon

Born 1946

“Tashimoto’s bold geometric silkscreens – reminiscent of work by hard-edge painters Karl Benjamin and Frederick Hammersley – is a radical departure from the softer, organic forms created by postwar Japanese artists of the 1960s. *Columns* highlights the artist’s technical ability to manipulate his chosen medium with exacting precision and thoughtfulness, while also signaling a departure from the spontaneity often found in works by earlier *sōsaku hanga* artists.”

– Craig Hadley



**Columns** / 1970s  
Silkscreen print on paper  
34-3/4 x 24-7/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.17.1  
Gift of David T. Prosser Jr. '65

# YAMAGUCHI Gen

山口源

1896-1976

"What Onchi taught me was the attitude of an artist, the attitude becoming to an artist. I remember that years earlier I had seen an old cracked tile. I thought it was beautiful and wondered why such elements couldn't be incorporated into art. In Onchi's work I found acceptance of this and much more and a door was opened for me."

– Yamaguchi Gen



**A Solo** / 1964  
Woodblock print on paper  
25-5/8 x 36-15/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.94  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40





**Ballad B** / 1960s  
Woodblock print on paper  
37-1/8 x 26-7/8 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.95  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40

# YAMANAKA Gen

山中現

Born 1954

“There is a frame in front of me and in it, a ‘form’ is drawn. I somehow hesitate, however, to call it a ‘form.’ The thing called ‘form’ has its size, color, and certain quality. This will become the power that brings a new image to a viewer’s gaze. When we replace with words what is drawn, I wonder if we will lose the very place where the image is rendered?”

– Yamanaka Gen



11/35 形と時

89. Jan

**Shape and Time** / 1989  
Woodblock print on paper  
13-1/4 x 19-3/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2015.22.1  
DePauw University Purchase

# YOSHIDA Hodaka

吉田穂高

1926 - 1995

"Primitive art ... and the rhythm of life that is seen in it, challenges us. It is the life power (*seimei ryoku*) of the primitive. There is an absolute in human existence that defies the flow of civilization. I wonder, if this in primitive art is not a significant point."

- Yoshida Hodaka



**Three Circles / 1961**  
Woodblock print on paper  
36-3/4 x 12-11/16 inches  
DePauw Art Collection: 2000.7.96  
Gift of the Estate of Dr. Leland D. Stoddard '40



# YOSHIDA Masaji

吉田政次

1917-1971

“Why did I switch from oil to woodblock prints? There is no clear answer. I was subconsciously attracted by the effect of lines produced in woodblock work. I found a great sense of reward in seeing the traces of my chisel and knife. Woodcut lines are tender and warmer and are very human and Japanese in sentiment, while etching is basically a free-hand exercise on a copper plate.”

– Yoshida Masaji





**Mystery #2 / 1961**

Woodblock print on paper

23-3/4 x 21-15/16 inches

DePauw Art Collection: 1968.24.1

Gift of the Great Lakes College Association and Earlham College



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## COLOPHON

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