Chapter I. Rimpa Through the Four Seasons

In this section, we focus on nature throughout the four seasons depicted in the work of the Rimpa school. We introduce Rimpa, a decorative art world that continued to thrive throughout the early modern period, and the highly individual artists who formed it.

The Rimpa depiction of nature was colorful. The Rimpa style’s decorativeness, with a lavish use of gold and silver, and its innovative design sense originated in Hon’ami Kōetsu’s Tawaraya Sōtatsu’s day. Generation after generation of Rimpa artists continued those practices. In ink painting, the Rimpa school artists were distinguished by their use of the “surahikomi” technique to create pooled, blurred colors in what is called boneless painting (painting in darker and lighter ink washes, without outlines). Works depicting flora and fauna using “surahikomi” have a generous, heartwarming ambience; we sense in them the gentle gaze these artists directed at nature.

Japanese poetry and prose frequently address the changing seasons. Artists have taken up themes from classic nature sources and personified the distinctive aesthetic of the Rimpa school. To commemorate that significant event in Rimpa history, the Yamatane Museum of Art is holding an exhibition focusing on the Rimpa school and Rimpa-related aesthetics.

The people of Japan, with its rich natural environment, have long cultivated their love of nature’s beauty throughout the four seasons of the year. Rimpa artists, in particular, regarded the expression of the seasons as an important theme and delicately depicted flowers and other seasonal features, using a great variety of techniques. The artistic lineage founded by Tawaraya Sōtatsu and Hon’ami Kōetsu was sustained, generation after generation, throughout the Edo period and continued to influence many Nihonga artists from the Meiji period on.

This special exhibition centered on the Rimpa school offers three perspectives for enjoying it. First, it brings together in one set works that present the subject matter and sense of the seasons distinctive to the Rimpa school, through work by Sōtatsu, Kōetsu, Ogata Kenzan, Nakamura Hōchō, Sakai Hōitsu, and Suzuki Kōitsu. Rimpa masterpieces from the museum’s collection, including Autumn Leaves and Quail (Imagawa Art Object), by Hōitsu and Flowers and Bonsai of the Shinkōkashō Poetry Anthology: Deer, by painting by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, calligraphy by Hon’ami Kōetsu, are joined by rarely exhibited Rimpa works from private collections borrowed for this exhibition, such as Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months Based on Fuwara no Teika’s Poems: February by Kenzan and Crane and Old Pine Tree by Hōchō. Next, it focuses on modern and contemporary Nihonga artists who have been inspired by Rimpa work, including Fukuda Heichirō, whose decorative and design sense are outstanding, and Kobayashi Kosei, who made use of the surahikomi technique to create pooled, blurred colors. In addition, it offers an opportunity to experience autumn to the full, in works that express the sense of the seasons that is a consistent thread throughout all Rimpa work through a taste of carefully selected, splendidly colored Rimpa. These richly varied selections include not only works from the museum but also from collections. Sōtatsu decorated the paper for the scroll with gold or silver powders mixed with glue. The calligraphy is arranged around the painting. Deer are a symbol of good fortune as well as associated with autumn, and the deer motif was probably chosen for its auspicious implications. The latter half of this picture scroll is in the collection of the Seattle Museum of Art in the United States. Using digital imaging, we have reconstructed the entire picture scroll. This work was originally the beginning of a long scroll that has been cut into several pieces, which are now in a number of collections. Sōtatsu decorated the paper for the scroll with drawings of deer in various postures, and Kōetsu transcribed twenty-eight poems related to autumn from the Shinkōkashō poetry anthology. Here we have a waka poem by Saigō that conveys an intense emotion connected to twilight in autumn. The stag standing in the center was painted in flowing strokes using kingindō, gold or silver powders mixed with glue. The calligraphy is arranged around the painting. Deer are a symbol of good fortune as well as associated with autumn, and the deer motif was probably chosen for its auspicious implications.
The alternating curving and straight Chinese black pines contrast with the colorful maple trees and autumn grasses. These pines are often treated as a natural feature of autumn in the world of waka poetry. Here the painting evokes those poetic associations. The composition, with the black pines placed at regular intervals and empty space reserved at the left, suggest a design sense that is trying to turn the scene into an abstraction. In the careful rendering of the pine needles, however, we also sense an inclination to realism. Ogata Kōrin, the next generation Rimpa artist after Sōtatsu, made a copy of this painting in virtually identical dimensions (Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees; Tokyo University of the Arts).

When Hōitsu was in his sixties, he created a series of bird-and-flower paintings for the twelve months of the year based on poems on that theme for each month by the Kamakura period poet Fujiwara no Teika. Multiple sets of paintings on the same theme have been confirmed. Kamedu Ryōtei, a scholar of the Chinese classics, provided the inscription for the two of these paintings in our collection. Others in the series are in the Feenberg Collection and the Freer Gallery of Art in the United States. The September painting, No. 13, depicts chrysanthemums, a subject associated with the Chrysanthemum Festival, one of the traditional five seasonal festivals, on the ninth day of the ninth lunar month, together with a red-flanked blue tit (Parus major), perched on a chrysanthemum stalk and displaying its white breast. The November painting, No. 14, includes a pair of herons among reeds. Fine snow dusts the small chrysanthemums and the reeds’ feathery flower clusters.

The seven plants of autumn are arrayed against the moon in the background: golden lace (Patrinia scabiosifolia), silver grass (Miscanthus sinensis), Chinese bellflower (Platycodon grandiflorus), pinks (Dianthus), honen (Eupatorium fortunei), kura (Paravia lobata), and bush clover (Lespedeza). They are accompanied by a haiku poem (a form of poetry consisting of seventeen syllables in metrical units of five, seven, and five syllables). Hōitsu was fond of compositions with the plants of the season arranged in front of the moon, and that preference was carried on by Edo Rimpa school artists. In ink painting, it was usual to render the moon in light ink using the sotoguma ink painting technique (a shading technique in which, instead of painting the object itself, ink or color is applied outside the object to accentuate its whiteness and brightness). Here, however, Hōitsu applied not ink but kindai (gold paint) not to the moon itself but outside it, in the area that would be expressed as its shadow. The gold paint was, however, placed quite thinly, suggesting that Hōitsu was taking great pains in expressing the subtle moonlight.
The alternating curving and straight Chinese black pines contrast with the colorful maple trees and autumn grasses. These pines are often treated as a natural feature of autumn in the world of waka poetry. Here the painting evokes those poetic associations. The composition, with the black pines placed at regular intervals and empty space reserved at the left, suggest a design sense that is trying to turn the scene into an abstraction. In the careful rendering of the pine needles, however, we also sense an inclination to realism. Ogata Kōrin, the next generation Rinzai monk after Sōtatsu, made a copy of this painting in virtually identical dimensions (Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees; Tokyo University of the Arts).

2. Paintings by TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown], Calligraphy by HON’AMI Kōetsu [1563-1642].
Album of Paintings and Poems 17th Century
Ink, Gold, Silver and Color on Paper
- Pine Trees on the Shore 37.6×5.9cm
- Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees 37.6×5.9cm
- Camellias 37.6×5.9cm
- Pine Trees on the Shore 37.6×5.9cm

Yamatane Museum of Art
141.0×50.2cm
Color on Silk
Egrets in Snow
Hōitsu 140.3×50.2cm
Color on Silk
Chrysanthemums with Bird
Hōitsu 134.6×35.2cm
Ink and Light Color on Paper
Crane and Old Pine Tree 16.0×23.0cm
Color on Paper
Based on Fujiwara Teika’ s Poems: February
OGATA Kenzan 109.8×42.9cm
17th Century
Ink and Light Color on Paper
Pine and Plum Trees
OGATA Kenzan 109.8×42.9cm
17th Century
Ink on Paper
Pine and Plum Trees
OGATA Kenzan 102.2×23.8cm
Color on Paper
Autumn Plants
SAKAI Hōitsu 140.3×50.2cm
19th Century
Color on Silk
Emperor Nintoku (Study)
SAKAI Hōitsu 94.5×29.5cm (each)
Color on Silk

Yamatane Museum of Art
94.5×29.5cm (each)

The alternating curving and straight Chinese black pines contrast with the colorful maple trees and autumn grasses. These pines are often treated as a natural feature of autumn in the world of waka poetry. Here the painting evokes those poetic associations. The composition, with the black pines placed at regular intervals and empty space reserved at the left, suggest a design sense that is trying to turn the scene into an abstraction. In the careful rendering of the pine needles, however, we also sense an inclination to realism. Ogata Kōrin, the next generation Rinzai monk after Sōtatsu, made a copy of this painting in virtually identical dimensions (Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees; Tokyo University of the Arts).

8. Paintings by TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown], Lotus Pond and Bird
Attributed to TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown]
Ink and Light Color on Paper
102.5×47.4cm

Yamatane Museum of Art
37.6×5.9cm
37.6×5.9cm
37.6×5.9cm
34.6×5.9cm
49.3×5.9cm

TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown]
Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees
Attributed to TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown]
Ink and Light Color on Paper
108.3×47.3cm

Yamatane Museum of Art
37.6×5.9cm
37.6×5.9cm
7 Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees

Yamatane Museum of Art
151.3×362.4cm

Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees
Attributed to TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown]
Ink on Paper
114.0×60.1cm

Yamatane Museum of Art

The alternating curving and straight Chinese black pines contrast with the colorful maple trees and autumn grasses. These pines are often treated as a natural feature of autumn in the world of waka poetry. Here the painting evokes those poetic associations. The composition, with the black pines placed at regular intervals and empty space reserved at the left, suggest a design sense that is trying to turn the scene into an abstraction. In the careful rendering of the pine needles, however, we also sense an inclination to realism. Ogata Kōrin, the next generation Rinzai monk after Sōtatsu, made a copy of this painting in virtually identical dimensions (Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees; Tokyo University of the Arts).

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Ink and Light Color on Paper
102.5×47.4cm
This work is based on Arisawa no Nariko’s “Journey to the East” in Episode 9 of the Tales of Ise. In this famous episode, the protagonist is traveling from Kyoto towards the Kanto area when, on Mount Utsu in the province of Suruga (now Shizuoka Prefecture), he encounters a traveling Buddhist ascetic whom he knew. He promptly writes a letter to his love, whom he has left in the capital, and entrusts it to the ascetic. Mount Utsu is located in Shizuoka prefecture and is famous for the pass over it, known as the “ivy way.” The Tales of Ise frequently provided subjects for Rimpa works, from Sōtatsu on.

In Episode 23 of the Tales of Ise, a man is described as watching a woman inside her home. The man had been visiting a woman in Takayama, in the province of Kawachi (now Osaka). She had originally seemed quite refined but gradually grew more casual, even helping herself to the rice paddle to fill her bowl, a vulgar act, as he watched. That night disgusted him, and he stopped his visits. Sōtatsu, Kōrin, and many other artists used this subject.

After studying kirikane techniques, in which metal foil is cut into slender strips or small shapes and applied to create delicate patterns, Kaya began, from the mid-1960s, to incorporate the Rimpa and kumano-e styles in his work, creating richly decorative folding screens with extensive use of gold and silver leaf. This work references Rimpa folding screens decorated with scattered fans. Flowers and grasses are painted on the fans; the screen’s ground suggests the tsuegami technique of using multiple sheets of paper joined together to create ornamental effects.

This section of the exhibition introduces two perspectives on modern and contemporary artists’ work that has been influenced by Rimpa. One aspect is the decorative and design qualities characteristic of the Rimpa school, the other its characteristic style of ink painting, especially the use of “tarashikomi” (a technique to create poured, blurred colors). The Rimpa influence is multifaceted and ranges from composition to technique to color washes, extensive use of gold and silver, bold trimming of images, and the use of “tarashikomi”. These works, which include examples that directly quote motifs from actual Rimpa paintings, allow us to explore how modern and contemporary artists have revered the Rimpa school, learned from it, and incorporated what they have learned in their own styles and paintings.

### Chapter 2. Learning from the Rimpa School

The Meiji period’s waves of Westernization wrought major changes in the world of Japanese art. At the same time, Japanese art was attracting intense interest in the West, where the Rimpa school came to be highly regarded. That led, in the twentieth century, to a reassessment of Rimpa in Japan and a full-scale Rimpa boom, extensive research, and the enthusiastic collection and display of Rimpa works. Works that showed Rimpa influence began to appear, particularly from about 1910 on. Artists had the opportunity to encounter Rimpa work not only through exhibitions and published collections of paintings but also through the works that collectors, who were also their patrons, had assembled. These interactions inspired artists to deepen their study of the Rimpa school and incorporate the results in their work.

This painting depicts three colors of peony blossoms in all their glory. Here, however, instead of a characteristically Rimpa style with simplified petals and the use of tarashikomi (see No. 37) on the stems, we see a careful, careful depiction down to the finest details, suggesting the style of Chinese court painters. The inclusion of a dandelion and other elements, however, reflects the Rimpa love of small flowers and grasses. As one of the few extant works by Kōitsu inscribed with a date, this work is especially rare and valuable.

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**ARAKI Jippo** [1872-1944]

**Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons: Autumn (Scarlet Leaves: A Treepit Brocade)**

1937

Color on Silk

183.5×85.0cm

Yamatane Museum of Art

This set of four gorgeous hanging scrolls presents a dense array of flowering plants, rendered in bright, clear colors composed to contrast spring and winter, summer and autumn. The simplified figurative forms show the influence of the Edo Rimpa school. We see, however, in the extensive use of natural colors a grappling with realistic depiction of nature. New approaches can also be seen in the use of natural light and in perspective in rendering the stand of trees in lighter and darker hues. Here we sense Jippo’s desire to move away from conventional, formulaic use of line and color to break new ground.

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**KOYABASHI Kokei** [1883-1957]

**Red and White Lotuses, White Wisteria Blossoms, and Maple Leaves**

19th Century

Color on Silk

194.3×55.0cm (each)

Yamatane Museum of Art

Persimmons were one of Kokei’s favorite subjects. He had built a new house beside his studio in Magome, Tokyo, the area around it was filled with persimmon orchards and bamboo groves. His studio was surrounded by a rough-woven fence and old stone walls, and the garden had a persimmon tree that bore fruit in the fall. In this painting, the brushwood fence and persimmon branches are in black, their restrained color accentuating the rich red of the fruit and the gold of the leaves. Kokei has applied his acute powers of observation in rendering the leaves, using two types of kindsu (gold paint) for the color changes that occur as the leaves wither and to differentiate the leaves’ top and bottom sides.

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**FUKUDA Heichihirō** [1892-1974]

**Autumn Leaves**

1943

Color on Silk

52.5×68.7cm

Yamatane Museum of Art

Persimmon leaves changing colors are depicted in a combination of hues. The silver grass below is rendered with great simplicity. This painting, created by selective omission following the subject for the Yamatane Museum of Art. Hōshun began working on that commission, but died before its completion. He left for our museum only this work, a reproduction of the same painting earlier, and this subject became a recurring theme in Kōshun’s work, although he never left for our museum only this work, a reproduction of the same painting earlier, and this subject became a recurring theme in Kōshun’s work, although he never

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**KAYAMA Matazō** [1927-2004]

**Screen with Floral Fans**

1966

Color on Silk

167.6×380.0cm (each)

Yamatane Museum of Art

After studying kirikane techniques, in which metal foil is cut into slender strips or small shapes and applied to create delicate patterns, Kaya began, from the mid-1960s, to incorporate the Rimpa and kumano-e styles in his work, creating richly decorative folding screens with extensive use of gold and silver leaf. This work references Rimpa folding screens decorated with scattered fans. Flowers and grasses are painted on the fans; the screen’s ground suggests the tsuegami technique of using multiple sheets of paper joined together to create ornamental effects in decorating papers for calligraphy. The silver leaf, which the artist treated to produce various hues, symbolizes the classical period. In several places, silver, long, thin strips of gold foil, are scattered on the ground in wave-like forms.

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**KAYAMA Matazō** [1927-2004]

**Light of the Full Moon**

1973

Color on Paper

173.3×365.0cm

Yamatane Museum of Art
This section of the exhibition introduces two perspectives on modern and contemporary artists’ work that has been influenced by Rimpa. One aspect is the decorative and design qualities characteristic of the Rimpa school, the other its characteristic style of ink painting, especially the use of “tarashikomi,” a technique to create pooled, blurred colors. The Rimpa influence is multifaceted and ranges from composition to technique in color washes, extensive use of gold and silver, bold trimming of images, and the use of “tarashikomi.” These works, which include examples that directly quote motifs from actual Rimpa paintings, allow us to explore how modern and contemporary artists have revered the Rimpa school, learned from it, and incorporated what they have learned in their own styles and paintings.

**Decoration and Design**

28

**ARAKI Jippo** (1872–1944)

*Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons: Autumn (Scarlet Leaves: A Treepoint Brocade)*

1917

Color on Silk

185.5×85.5 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

This set of four gorgeous hanging scrolls presents a dense array of flowering plants, rendered in bright, clear colors composed to contrast spring and winter, summer and autumn. The simplified format shows the influence of the Edo Rimpa school. We, however, see in the extensive use of neutral colors a grappling with realistic depiction of nature. New approaches can also be seen in the use of natural light and of perspective in rendering the stand of trees in lighter and darker hues. Here we sense Jippo’s desire to move away from conventional, formulistic use of line and color to break new ground.

29

**KOBAYASHI Kokei** (1885–1957)

*Wild Duck at Night* (c. 1929)

Color on Silk

129.0×41.1 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

Kokei has made his own copies of the same paintings earlier, and this subject became an ongoing tradition among Edo Rimpa artists. By the late Edo period, wisterias (spring), lotuses (summer), and maple leaves (fall) had become the favored botanical features representing each of the seasons. Persimmons were one of Kokei’s favorite subjects. He had built a new house beside his studio in Magome, Tokyo, the area around it was filled with persimmon orchards and bamboo groves. His studio was surrounded by a rough-woven fence and old bamboos, and the garden had a persimmon tree that bore fruit in the fall. In this painting, the brushwood fence and persimmon branches are in black, their restrained color accentuating the rich red of the fruit and the gold of the leaves. Kokei has applied his acute powers of observation in rendering the leaves, using two types of kindai (gold paint) for the color changes that occur as the leaves wither and to differentiate the leaves’ top and bottom sides.

30

**KOBAYASHI Kokei** (1885–1957)

*Autumn Persimmon* 1934

Color on Paper

110.0×98.8 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

This painting depicts three colors of peony blossoms in all their glory. Here, however, instead of a characteristically Rimpa style with simplified petals and the use of tarashikomi (see No. 37) on the stems, we see a clear, careful depiction down to the finest details, suggesting the style of Chinese court painters. The inclusion of a dandelion and other elements, however, reflects the Rimpa love of small flowers and grasses. As one of the few extant works by Kitei inscribed with a date, this work is especially rare and valuable.

26

**SAKAI Hōitsu** (1796–1858)

*Red and White Lotus, White Wisteria Blossoms, and Maple Leaves* 1900s

Color on Silk

190.7×155.4 cm (each)

Yamatake Museum of Art

Here Hōitsu has copied three paintings by Kihō, grandson of Hon’ami Kōetsu. Hōitsu’s copies are faithful to the originals, down to Kōetsu’s seal, applied in the hidden signature style (a brushed copy, not the real seal). Sakai Hōitsu had made his own brushed copy, not the real seal). Sakai Hōitsu had made his own copies of the same paintings earlier, and this subject became an ongoing tradition among Edo Rimpa artists. By the late Edo period, wisterias (spring), lotuses (summer), and maple leaves (fall) had become the favored botanical features representing each of the seasons.

27

**TANAKA Hōjirō** (1812–1885)

*Rabbits and Bush Clover* 19th Century

Color on Silk

96.1×41.0 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

This piece was a preparatory painting for panels of Japanese cedar in the New Imperial Palace, built in 1968. The actual panels were four times larger than this painting. Of the Cherry Tree and Maple Tree panels in the eastern corridor of the State Hall, Hōshun was responsible for Maple Tree. After wandering through places in Kyoto and elsewhere in Japan famous for their maple trees and autumn foliage, he discovered his ideal, a majestic maple tree in a national park in Fukushima prefecture, on which he based his painting. Yamaraki Taneji (the founder of our museum) was impressed by Hōshun’s Maple Tree for the palace and commissioned him to create another work on the same subject for the Yamatane Museum of Art. Hōshun began working on that commission, but died before its completion. He left for our museum only this work, a preparatory paintings for the public wall and a small preparatory painting for his section version of Maple Tree.

33

**KAYAMA Matazo** (1927–2004)

*Screen with Floral Fans* 1956

Color on Silk

167.6×350.4 cm (each)

Yamatake Museum of Art

After studying kirikane techniques, in which metal foil is cut into slender strips or small shapes and applied to create delicate patterns, Kayama began, from the mid-1960s, to incorporate the Rimpa and kinnako styles in his work, creating richly decorative folding screens with extensive use of gold and silver leaf. This work references Rimpa folding screens decorated with scattered fans. Flowers and grasses are painted on the fans; the screen’s ground suggests the tsuzugami technique of using multiple sheets of paper joined together to create ornamental effects in decorating papers for calligraphy. The silver leaf, which the artist treated to produce various hues, symbolizes the classical period. In several places, saxe, long, thin strips of gold foil, are scattered on the ground in wave-like forms.

34

**KAYAMA Matazo** (1927–2004)

*Light of the Full Moon* 1973

Color on Paper

173.1×365.5 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

Persimmons leaving changing colors are depicted in a combination of hues. The silver grass below is rendered with great simplicity. This painting, created by selective omission following thoroughly sketching his subjects (here, the persimmon leaves and silver grass) looks virtually like an abstract work. The composition, boldly cutting off the subject at the edge of the picture plane, the clear colors, and the simplified forms all convey the design sense characteristic of Rimpa artists. After showing it as Autumn Persimmon Leaves at the eighth Kyoto City Art Exhibition, Fukuda Heihachirō changed the title to the one used here.

22

**SUZUKI Kitiu** (1796–1858)

*Mistress of the Takayasu District: Scene from the Tales of Ise* 19th Century

Color on Silk

43.7×59.7 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

In Episode 23 of the Tales of Ise, a man is described as watching an incident. In this famous episode, the protagonist is traveling from Kyoto towards the Kanto area when, on Mount Utsu in the province of Burata (now Shizuoka Prefecture), he encounters a traveling Buddhist ascetic whom he knew. He promptly writes a letter to his love, whom he has left in the capital, and entrusts it to the ascetic. Mount Utsu is located in Shizuoka prefecture and is famous for the pass over it, known as the “ivy way.” The Tales of Ise frequently provided subjects for Rimpa works, from Sōtatsu on.

23

**SUZUKI Kitiu** (1796–1858)

*Arirara no Narithia’s Journey to the East: Scene from the Tales of Ise* 19th Century

Color on Silk

43.7×59.7 cm

Yamatake Museum of Art

This work is based on Arirara no Narithia’s “Journey to the East” in Episode 9 of the Tales of Ise. In this famous episode, the protagonist is traveling from Kyoto towards the Kanto area when, on Mount Utsu in the province of Burata (now Shizuoka Prefecture), he encounters a traveling Buddhist ascetic whom he knew. He promptly writes a letter to his love, whom he has left in the capital, and entrusts it to the ascetic. Mount Utsu is located in Shizuoka prefecture and is famous for the pass over it, known as the “ivy way.” The Tales of Ise frequently provided subjects for Rimpa works, from Sōtatsu on.

Chapter 2. Learning from the Rimpa School

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Ceramic Plates by Ban'ura (paint).
The Nihonga artist Kayama Matazō began decorating ceramics created by his brother-in-law, the ceramic artist Iwan'ura Shirō, in the 1970s. Having seen a large bowl with painted decor that was one of their collaborative works, Yamazaki Tomiji (the second director of our museum) commissioned Ban'ura to decorate ceramic plates for our entrance lobby as the welcoming face of the Yamatane Museum of Art. In creating this mural, Kayama expressed what he described as “a planar world” and “a world of craft beauty making effective use of the texture of the clay,” depicting the lines of the breaking waves in iron powder and the thousand cranes in kindei (gold paint).

Chapter 3. Autumn Colors

In Japan, with its rich natural environment, people have long treasured the charms of the four seasons and have cultivated their love of nature’s beauty. Spring and fall, with their lovely weather and beautiful flowers and foliage, are particularly beloved by artists, who have expressed their beauty in paintings and poetry. Spring or fall: which is the greater favorite? In classic collections of waka poetry such as the "Kokinshū" (Collection of Poems, Ancient and Modern) and the "Shin Kokinshū" (New Collection of Poems, Ancient and Modern), verses about spring and fall make up the majority of poems about the seasons, with fall having the largest number. Fall offers a rich choice of scenes: landscapes brilliantly awash in autumn foliage, or scenes of fallen leaves TVS in the countryside or out in the wild, sunsets, or the moon. It presents opportunities for paintings filled with sadness, loneliness, and other emotions. The possibilities are endless. Among the many Rimpa works taking their subject matter from waka, we can sense the aesthetic associated with autumn in, for example Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees (No. 6, attributed to Tawaraya Sotatsu), with its memorable depiction of autumn foliage, or Sakai Hōitsu’s painting of the moon over autumn plants in his work (No. 15).

This section includes a rich variety of views of autumn in the work of modern and contemporary Nihonga artists who have addressed the moods of autumn in approaches they shared with the Rimpa school. These works include Kawai Gyokudō’s lyrical Autumn Landscape with Colored Maple Trees (No. 42), Okuda Gen’ō’s Oirase Ravine: Autumn (No. 47), a large painting depicting blazing autumn leaves, Takeuchi Sei’i’s affectionate gaze at familiar flora and fauna in Autumn Evening (No. 50), and Okumura Togyū’s Squirrel (No. 60).

Autumn Scene

42 KAWAI Gyokudō [1873-1977]

Autumn Landscape with Colored Maple Trees

1946

Color on Silk

55.3×72.2cm

Yamatane Museum of Art

In the foreground are trees with vivid autumn foliage. The trees in background are peacefully rendered in blurred tones of black ink. Mist rises in the valley between. This painting is very characteristic of Gyokudō, who pursued “the beauty of water” in it he skilfully depicts many aspects of water, including rain, a mountain stream, and water falling from a waterfall. Gyokudō was passionately fond of scenes with a watermill that he and his student Kōno Kibō discovered when they set out to sketch from life and created many paintings on that subject. In his later years, he built a waterwheel in his garden and enjoyed listening to its sound.

43 OMODA Seiju [1891-1933]

Mountain Pass

1916

Color on Silk

141.1×56.4cm

Yamatane Museum of Art

From about 1914, under the influence of Imamura Shikō, a more modern style of landscape painting emerged. Gyokudō began creating lyrical landscape paintings in the Nanga style (a Japanese painting style inspired by the ideals of the Chinese literati). His Six Scenes Outside Kyoto (last in the Great Kantō Earthquake), which he painted in Kyoto after he moved there in 1917, was highly praised by Yokoyama Taikan and other leading artists. Gyokudō was then nominated to become a senior member of the Japan Art Institute at the mere age of twenty-three. This painting, which dates from the same year, could be described as representing the culmination of his work in the Nanga style.
Matazō, feeling he had reached a dead end an autumn exhibit, had an opportunity to go to the foothills of Mount Asama, in Shinshū (Nagano prefecture), and drew his impressions of it in this work. Emotionally moved by the mountain’s volcanic activity “rumbling like distant rolls of thunder” and “belching gases dyed a seductive pink,” Matazō felt “a strangely alluring quiet intensity” in the harmony between the shape of the mountain and the flowers and grasses of early autumn. The contrast between the huge form of the mountain, lit by the moon, and the delicate plants in the foreground is striking.

35 KAYAMA Matazō [1927-2004] Waves and Cranes (Study) 1977 Color on Paper 28.0×42.5cm (each) Yamatane Museum of Art

36 Paintings by KAYAMA Matazō [1927-2004], Ceramic Plates by BAN’URA Shirō [1941-2001] A Thousand Cranes 1941 Color on Paper 138.0×65.0cm (set of 2) Yamatane Museum of Art

The Nihonga artist Kayama Matazō began decorating ceramics created by his brother-in-law, the ceramic artist Ban’ura Shirō, in the 1970s. Having seen a large bowl with painted decor that was one of their collaborative works, Yamazaki Tomonobu (the second director of our museum) commissioned A Thousand Cranes (No. 36), a mural of ceramic plates now permanently displayed in our entrance lobby as the welcoming face of the Yamatane Museum (No. 36), a mural of ceramic plates now permanently displayed by its director of our museum) commissioned this work; this painting reflects Shunoo’s study of those earlier works.

38 KOBAYASHI Kokei [1883-1987] Puppy c. 1949 Inkwash and Color on Paper 43.0×55.0cm Property of Mr. Sayama Tomomi


In creating this mural, Kayama expressed what he described as “a planar world” and “a world of craft beauty making effective use of the texture of the clay,” depicting the lines of the breaking waves in iron powder and the thousand cranes in kindei (gold paint).

Tarashikomi: Pooled, blurred sumi ink with gradations

37 HISHIDA Shunō [1874-1915] The Moon in the Four Seasons: Autumn c. 1899-1910 Ink and Light Color on Silk 108.8×41.4cm Yamatane Museum of Art

This work is the autumn scroll from a set of four that combine the full moon with seasonal flowers and trees to express the four seasons. The color scheme is restricted; the basic hues are shades of sumi black, to which gofun (a white pigment made from pulverized sea shells) and kindei (gold paint), creating a transparent effect. Shunō made his own moon using the sumie-cho (ink painting technique) (see No. 15). In painting the trees, he selectively used tarashikomi (a technique in which pale black ink is brushed on and then, before it has dried, darker ink is added to create an effect of pooled shades with softly blurbed edges) and mokkotsu (a technique in which objects are rendered without lines), to express the ambiance and charm of each season. Earlier examples of ink paintings combining the moon and the flowers and grasses of the four seasons can be found in Edo Rimpa work; this painting reflects Shunoo’s study of those earlier works.

38 KOJ容纳 Kokei [1883-1987] Puppy c. 1949 Color on Paper 43.0×55.0cm Property of Mr. Sayama Tomomi


40 HAYAMI Gyoshū [1894-1935] Eggplants in Autumn 1934 Ink and Color on Paper 42.9×49.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art

Gyoshū produced a series of three Eggplants in Autumn paintings around the same period. Of three, two include a grasshopper and one a cricket. Here a grasshopper sits on a leaf; the green of the grasshopper and the purple of the eggplant flower add an accent to a sumi-based painting. The stems of the plant, which turn as they grow, have an energy that suggests they were painted without pause. Late in life, Gyoshū devoted himself to the calligraphy of Yan Zhenqing (Tang dynasty, 709-785), saying “I at last understand how to use the brush.”

Chapter 3. Autumn Colors

In Japan, with its rich natural environment, people have long treasured the charms of the four seasons and have cultivated their love of nature’s beauty. Spring and fall, with their lovely weather and beautiful flowers and foliage, are particularly beloved by artists, who have expressed their beauty in painting and poetry. Spring or fall: which is the greater favorite? In classic collections of waka poetry such as the “Kokinshū” (Collection of Poems, Ancient and Modern) and the “Shin Kokinshū” (New Collection of Poems, Ancient and Modern), verses about spring and fall make up the majority of poems about the seasons, with fall having the largest number. Fall offers a rich choice of scenes: landscapes brilliantly awash in autumn foliage, or combinations of fall scenes in the countryside or out in the wild, sunsets, or the moon. It presents opportunities for paintings filled with sadness, loneliness, and other emotions. The possibilities are endless. Among the many Rimpa works taking their subject matter from waka, we can sense the aesthetic associated with autumn in, for example Chinese Black Pines and Maple Trees (No. 6), attributed to Twamon Sinsai, with its memorable depiction of autumn foliage, or Sakai Hōitsu’s painting of the moon over autumn plants in his work (No. 15).

This section includes a rich variety of views of autumn in the work of modern and contemporary Nihonga artists who have addressed the moods of autumn in approaches they shared with the Rimpa school. These works include Kawai Gyokudō’s lyrical Autumn Landscape with Colored Maple Trees (No. 42), Okuda Genso’s Oirase Ravine: Autumn (No. 47), a large painting depicting blazing autumn leaves, Takeuchi Seiitsu’s affectionate gaze at familiar flora and fauna in Autumn Evening (No. 50), and Okumura Togyū’s Squirrel (No. 60).

42 KAWAI Gyokudō [1873-1947] Autumn Landscape with Colored Maple Trees 1946 Color on Silk 55.3×72.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art

In the foreground are trees with vivid autumn foliage. The trees in the background are peacefully rendered in blurbed tones of black ink. Mist rises in the valley between. This painting is very characteristic of Gyokudō, who pursued “the beauty of water,” and in it he skilfully depicts many aspects of water, including rain, a mountain stream, and water falling from a waterwheel. Gyokudō was passionately fond of scenes with a watermill and he and his student Hōsho Koho discovered when they sat out to sketch from life and created many paintings on that subject. In his later years, he built a water mill in his garden and enjoyed listening to its sound.

43 OMODA Seiju [1891-1933] Mountain Pass 1916 Color on Silk 141.1×56.4cm Yamatane Museum of Art

44 HAYAMI Gyoshū [1894-1935] Autumn in Yamashina 1917 Color on Silk 110.0×58.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art

From about 1914, under the influence of Imamura Shikō, a more modernistic painter at the same painting school, Gyoshū began creating lyrical landscape paintings in the Nanga style (a Japanese painting style inspired by the ideals of the Chinese literati). His Six Scenes Outside Kyoto (last in the Great Kantō Earthquake), which he painted in Kyoto after he moved there in 1917, was highly praised by Yokoyama Taikan and other leading artists. Gyoshū was then nominated to become a senior member of the Japan Art Institute at the mere age of twenty-three. This painting, which dates from the same year, could be described as representing the culmination of his work in the Nanga style.
This painting, with its small pile of firewood and a katydid, expresses the mood of an autumn evening, skillfully addressing the subtleties of nature. The subdued brown of the firewood and the vivid green of the katydid provide an impressive color contrast. The composition uses devices characteristic of Seihō, including reserve white space in the upper part of the painting and the effective use of the contrast in size between the firewood and the insect. A fan of haiku poetry, Seihō focused on the changing seasons and the many faces of nature. This painting is a fine work that expresses the sensitivities of haiku as well.

Koki often painted dogs, cats, and other familiar animals, and this painting, of a cat with Chinese bellflower, can be counted among them. This work, however, shows the cat facing straight ahead, its four paws together in a static pose which is often seen in a sculpture of a god on a pedestal and suggests nobility and divine solemnity rather than cuteness. The sketches Koki produced while in Europe include an image of a cat that suggests the Egyptian cat goddess Bastet, with the same upright ears and pose as found in the current painting.

YASUDA Yukihiko [1884-1978]

Rabbit

1938

Color on Silk

54.3×70.3cm

Yamatane Museum of Art


**ARTISTS’ BIOGRAPHIES**

**ARA KI Jippo**

1872-1944

Born in Nagasaki Prefecture; original family name To-monaga, given name Tejirō. Studied with Araki Kanpo and became his adopted son and heir. Participated in the Japan Art Association and the Japan Youth Painters’ Association. In 1898, participated in founding the Japan Painting Association with Nomura Bunyō and others. In 1904, received a prize at the St. Louis World’s Fair. In 1908, became a member of the jury at the second Bunten (Ministry of Education Fine Arts Exhibition), and continued to be active in the Bunten. Working on a foundation of sound traditional techniques, he made his forte bird-and-flower paintings depicted with well-grounded realism.

**FUKUDA Heihachirō**

1890-1944

Born in Oita Prefecture; graduated from the Kyoto City College of Painting. Work first selected for exhibition in the Teiten (Imperial Art Exhibition) in 1919. In 1930, formed the Rikubōhōkai circle with Yamaguchi Hōshin and others. Participated in the Nitten (Japan Fine Arts Exhibition) after World War II. He was a member of the Imperial Art Academy in 1947, and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1961. From his beginnings in the traditional realism of the Kyoto art world, he developed, starting in the early Showa period, his distinctive style of simplified colors and forms and fresh angles.

**HAYAMI Gyoshū**

1894-1935

Born in Tokyo; original family name was Makita, given name was Eiichi. Studied with Matsumoto Fuku and participated in the Tatsumigakai and Kōjikai art circles. Organized the Sekiyōkai group with Imamura Shikō and others in 1914. After Shikō’s death, was active in the Japan Art Institute, becoming a senior member in 1917. Visited Europe in 1930. Initially worked in the Nanga style (a Japanese painting style inspired by the ideals of the Chinese literati), then opened new territory, shifting to detailed depiction, a symbolic style, a style combining realism and decorative-ness, and then to ink painting and figure painting.

**HIGASHIYAMA Kaii**

1908-1999

Born in Kanagawa Prefecture; his given name was Shinkichi, graduated from the Tokyo Fine Arts School (now Tokyo University of the Arts); studied with Matsuoka Eiyō. His work was first accepted for the Teiten while he was still in school. In 1940, was appointed the lead artist in a project to reproduce a wall painting in the Kondō or Golden Hall at Hōryūji temple. In 1948, took part in the formation of the Sozō Bijutsu Fine Art Society, but withdrew in 1950 and returned to exhibiting in the Nitten. Became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1971 and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1974. Established a distinctive style in figure paintings outlined with thick lines.

**HASHIMOTO Meiji**

1904-1991

Born in Shimane Prefecture; given name was Akeharu. Graduated from the Tokyo Art School (now Tokyo University of the Arts); studied with Matsuoka Eiyō. His work was first accepted for the Teiten while he was still in school. In 1940, was appointed the lead artist in a project to reproduce a wall painting in the Kondō or Golden Hall at Hōryūji temple. In 1948, took part in the formation of the Sōzō Bijutsu Fine Art Society, but withdrew in 1950 and returned to exhibiting in the Nitten. Became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1971 and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1974. Established a distinctive style in figure paintings outlined with thick lines.

**BAN’URA Shirō**

1941-2001

Born in Kyoto; father was the lacquer artist Ban’ura Shōgo. Brother-in-law of Kayama Matatō. Graduated from the Kyoto City School of Arts and Crafts. Studied with Kawamura Ittarō in Kita Kamakura. Established a kiln in Iga Ueno (Mie prefecture) in 1968. Sought practical beauty in tableware and other pieces; mainly active in solo exhibitions. Applied Momoyama-style décor, with floral motifs, expressing the Rimpō aesthetic. His A Thousand Cranes ceramic plates in the Yamatane Museum of Art’s collection are among his masterpieces.
Persimmons are a subject depicted by Seihō as well as many other artists. They clearly speak of late autumn, and the subtleties of nature. The subdued brown of the firewood provides an impressive color contrast. The composition uses devices characteristic of Seihō, and the vivid green of the katydid provide an impressive color.

The painting, with its small pile of firewood and a katydid, expresses the mood of an autumn evening, skillfully addressing the subtleties of nature. The subdued brown of the firewood and the vivid green of the katydid provide an impressive color contrast. The composition uses devices characteristic of Seihō, including reserved white space in the upper part of the painting and making judicious use of the contrast in size between the firewood and the insect. A fan of hakuji pottery, Seihō focused on the changing seasons and the many faces of nature. This painting is a fine work that expresses the sensitivities of haiku wood and the insect. A fan of poetry, Seihō focused on the relationships between the colors and adjust them as a whole to finish the work as he intended. (Seihō kunsō, 1943.)

OKUMURA 26.8×23.7cm 20th Century Color on Paper and Gold Leaf C. 1929 Autumn Night Yamatane Museum of Art

This painting, with its small pile of firewood and a katydid, expresses the mood of an autumn evening, skillfully addressing the subtleties of nature. The subdued brown of the firewood provides an impressive color contrast. The composition uses devices characteristic of Seihō, including reserved white space in the upper part of the painting and making judicious use of the contrast in size between the firewood and the insect. A fan of hakuji pottery, Seihō focused on the changing seasons and the many faces of nature. This painting is a fine work that expresses the sensitivities of haiku wood and the insect. A fan of poetry, Seihō focused on the relationships between the colors and adjust them as a whole to finish the work as he intended. (Seihō kunsō, 1943.)

Kokei often painted dogs, cats, and other familiar animals, and this painting, of a cat with Chinese bellflower, can be counted among them. This work, however, shows the cat facing straight ahead, its four paws together in a stately pose which is often seen in a sculpture of a god on a pedestal and suggests nobility and divine solemnity rather than cuteness. The sketches Kokei produced while in Europe include an image of a cat that suggests the Egyptian cat goddess Bastet, with the same upright ears and pose as found in the current painting.

55 YASUDA Yukihiko [1984-1978] Rabbit c. 1956 Color on Silk 54.5×70.5cm Yamatane Museum of Art


57 KAWASAKI Shikō [1880-1977] Autumn Wind (Sparrows and Miller) 1943 Color on Paper 84.0×100.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art

58 OKUMURA Togyō [1889-1980] Akebi Fruit c. 1944 Color on Silk 45.0×37.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art


Kokei often painted dogs, cats, and other familiar animals, and this painting, of a cat with Chinese bellflower, can be counted among them. This work, however, shows the cat facing straight ahead, its four paws together in a stately pose which is often seen in a sculpture of a god on a pedestal and suggests nobility and divine solemnity rather than cuteness. The sketches Kokei produced while in Europe include an image of a cat that suggests the Egyptian cat goddess Bastet, with the same upright ears and pose as found in the current painting.

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60 OKUMURA Togyō [1889-1980] Red Squirrel 20th Century Ink and Light Color on Paper 31.5×23.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art

Artists’ Biographies

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62 FUKUDA Heihachirō [1892-1974] Autumn Leaves c. 1959 Color on Silk 38.0×30.5cm Yamatane Museum of Art

HAYAMI Gyoshū 1893-1945

Born in Tokyo; original family name was Makita, given name was Eiichi. Studied with Matsumoto Fuku and participated in the Tatsunagakai and Kōjikai art circles. Organized the Sekiyōkai group with Imamura Shikō and others. Participated in the Nitten (Japan Fine Arts Exhibition) after World War II. Huguarts a member of the Imperial Art Academy in 1947, and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1961. From his beginnings in the traditional realism of the Kyoto art world, he developed, starting in the early Showa period, his distinctive style of simplified colors and forms and fresh angles.

63 YAMAGUCHI Hōshun [1895-1971] Autumn Colors 1963 Color on Paper 40.0×70.0cm Yamatane Museum of Art


SHIRŌ BAN‘URA 1941-2001

Born in Kyōto; father was the lacquer artist Ban‘u Shōgo. Brother-in-law of Kayama Matasō. Graduated from the Kyoto City School of Arts and Crafts. Studied with Kawamura Ittarō in Kita Kamakura. Established a kiln in Iga Ueno (Mie prefecture) in 1968. Sought practical beauty in tableware and other pieces; mainly active in solo exhibitions. Applied Momoyama-style décor, with floral motifs, expressing the Riongo aesthetic. His A Thousand Cranes ceramic plates in the Yamatane Museum of Art’s collection are among his masterpieces.

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Born in Shimane Prefecture; given name was Akeharu. Graduated from the Tokyo Fine Arts School (now Tokyo University of the Arts); studied with Matsuoka Eikyo. His work was first accepted for the Teiten while he was still in school. In 1940, was appointed the lead artist in a project to reproduce a wall painting in the Kondō or Golden Hall at Hōryūji temple. In 1948, took part in the formation of the Sōzu Bijutsu Fine Art Society, but withdrew in 1950 and returned to exhibiting in the Nitten. Became a member of the Japan Art Association in 1971 and was awarded the Order of Culture in 1974. Established a distinctive style in figure paintings outlined with thick lines.

HIGASHIYAMA Kais 1908-1999

Born in Kanagawa Prefecture; his given name was Shinkichi. Graduated from the Tokyo Fine Arts School, studied with Yuki Somei. Work selected for exhibition in the Teiten repeatedly, starting while he was still in school. Studied in Germany from 1933 to 1935. After World War II, was mainly active in the Nitten; became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1964. In 1968, completed a mural for the New Imperial Palace; was awarded the Order of Culture in 1969. Known as the most popular painter of the Shōwa era, he used a richly lyrical style to paint scenes of natural beauty throughout Japan.
HISHIDA Shunsō
1874-1911
Born in Nagano Prefecture; given name was Mioji. First studied with Yūki Masaki of the Kanō school, then at the Tokyo Fine Arts School. He visited old temples and shrines in the Kyōto-Osaka area to make copies of their pre-modern paintings. One of the core artists in the Japanese Painting Association and Japan Art Institute. With Yokoyama Taikan, experimented with mōrōtai ("vague" or "indistinct"), a style using blurred colors and no outlines. After travel in India, Europe and America, searched for a new style, fusing realism and decorativeness.

HON'AMI Kōetsu
1558-1637
Born in Kyōto, as the progeny of a leading commoner family whose business was polishing and apraising swords. Demonstrated talent in art-related fields including lacquerware, ceramics, and publishing. In calligraphy, was regarded as one of the Three Great Calligraphers of the Kan'ei era. Established an art village in Takagaminne, north of Kyōto, which inspired the role of leader and mentor. Produced works rich in innovation and design sense and is regarded, with Tawaraya Sōtatsu, as the father of the Rinpū school.

IKEDA Yōsō
1895-1958
Born in Okayama Prefecture; given name Shōichi. From Western-style painting, shifted to Nihonga (Japanese style painting), studying with Takeuchi Seiichi. A graduate of the Kyoto City College of Painting. Work selected for the Teiten in 1919. Joined the faculty of his alma mater in 1936. Active in the Niten after the World War II; became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1976 and was designated a Person of Cultural Merit in 1984. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1950.

KAWAI Gyokudō
1873-1957
Born in Aichi Prefecture. His given name was Yoshisaburō. Studied in Kyōto with Sakai Kōetsu and Kōtō Bairei before moving to Tokyo and studying with Hashimoto Gahō. Participated in the founding of the Japan Art Institute; thereafter mainly showed work in the government exhibitions. Joined the faculty of the Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1915 and became an Imperial Household Artist in 1916. Was awarded the Order of Culture in 1940 and designated a Person of Cultural Merit in 1951. He depicted mountain villages and pastoral scenes with a distinctively Japanese sensitivity.

KAWASAKI Shōko
1886-1977
Born in Gifu Prefecture with given name Ryūichi. Studied with his grandfather, Kawasaki Chitora, and with Kōbō Tomoto. After graduating from the Tokyo Fine Arts School, organized the Kōjūsha research group. Work first selected for the Bunten in 1914. Joined the faculty of the Imperial Painting School in 1929 and of the Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1943. After the World War II, was mainly active in exhibitions by the Niten and the Nihonge-in (a modern Japanese painting group) Painted historical scenes and human figures in a lyrical style, and tried his hand at ink paintings in his later years.

KAYAMA Matazō
1927-2004
Born in Kyōto. Graduated from the Kyoto City School of Arts and Crafts and the Tokyo Fine Arts School. Studied with Yamamoto Kyūjirō. Work first selected for the Sōtō Bijutsu (Creative Arts) Fine Art Exhibition in 1950; in 1974, participated in the formation of the Sōga-kai (Creative Painting Society). Professor at Tama Art University and Tokyo University of the Arts. Awarded the Order of Culture in 2003. Produced innovative works reflecting Rinpū and other styles, from decorative folding screens to ink paintings. His wide creative range included ceramics and textiles as well.

KITAGAWA Sōsōtsu
Date Unknown
An artist active in the latter half of the seventeenth century; successor to Tawaraya Sōsōtsu, who inherited Tawaraya Sōsōtsu’s studio. Kitagawa Sōsōtsu is thought to have been mainly active in Hokusai province, on the Japan Sea side of Honshū. He used the same I’nen seal as Sōtatsu and Tawaraya Sōsōtsu and later included the hokeyō rank with his signature. Created distinctive paintings of plants using ink and pale colors on paper; his works have been noted for their influence on Ogata Kōrin and other later artists.

KOBAYASHI Kokei
1883-1957
Born in Niigata Prefecture; given name Shigeru. Studied with Kajita Hanko. After being active in the Bunten and other government exhibitions, participated in the Society for Refinement of Japanese Painting and the Kōjūsha circle, both oriented to innovation in Nihonga. Became a senior member of the Japan Art Institute in 1914. In 1923 he copied the Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies, a picture scroll attributed to the Chinese artist Gu Kaizhi (c. 345-406) in the British Museum, and awakened to the beauty of line drawing. After returning to Japan, he established a style making use of scrupulous line drawings and clear colors. Joined the faculty of the Tokyo Fine Arts School and also became an Imperial Household Artist in 1944. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1950.

NAKAMURA Höchū
7-1819
Born in Kyōto; active mainly in Osaka. Interacted with literati and was an accomplished haima poet. After working in Nangō, shitōga (in which the fingertip or fingernail is used instead of a brush), and other styles and techniques, was strongly influenced by Ogata Kōrin. Moved to Edo for a time, publishing the Kōrin gafu (Kōrin album) in 1802; given name was Narutaki. He later appeared as an artist working in Kōrin’s style. Making extensive use of sarashikomi (a technique to create pooled, blurred colors), he developed a humorous, heartwarming style.

OKUDA Gensō
1912-2003
Born in Hiroshima Prefecture. Given name Genzō. Studied with Kodama Kibō. Work first selected for the Bunten in 1936. Mainly showed in the Niten after World War II. Became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1973 and served as chairman of the Niten in 1977. Selected in 1981 as an advisor for the Imperial New Year’s Poetry Reading and was designated a Person of Cultural Merit. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1984. Depicted bold natural landscapes at times in subdued and at times in vivid colors.

OKUDERA Togyū
1889-1990

OMODA Seijū
1891-1933
Born in Saikama Prefecture; original family name Kojima. Studied with Yōji Shigeyoshi; later used the name Shigeru. Studied with Matsumoto Fukō. In 1914, organized the Sekiyōsha with Imamura Shihō, Hayami Gyosyū, and others. Work first selected for the Reestabbed Inten in 1915; became a senior member in 1921. Organized the Sanritusha in 1929; in 1930, provided guidance at the Imperial Art School. Broke new ground with elaborate landscape paintings and highly decorative reveries of birds and flowers.

OKURA KōETSU
1761-1828
Born in Edō as second son of the Sakai family of the Himeji domain. Used the names Tōyō and Uge’an. Talented at haima verse and other art forms, he studied the paintings of the Nanpin school, skyō-e, and a wide range of other media and styles. At 37, he entered the Buddhist memorial priesthood and as an ardent admirer of Ogata Kōrin, organized a Buddhist memorial service for the centennial of Kōrin’s death together with retrospective exhibition, and published Kōrin kyokuzu (One hundred paintings by Kōrin). Based on Kōrin’s paintings, he developed an elegant, unconventional style characteristic of an urban man about town and laid the foundations for the Edō Rinpū school.

SAKAI Höitsu
1880-1841
Born in Edo, the second son of Jūchū (Setsuemon), who was eight abbot of Ichigaya Jōjō (a branch of Tsukiji Honganji temple). His childhood name was Yasomaru. As the age of twelve, he was adopted by Sakai Höitsu and studied calligraphy and literature, becoming Höitsu’s invaluable assistant. After Höitsu’s death, he inherited the name Uge’an II. His early death, at the age of 34, meant he left a small number of works, but those he completed attest to his sound style and demonstrable ability.

SUZUKI Kiitsu
1796-1858
Born in Edo to a dyer. Became a private pupil of Sakai Höitsu, and later, as a retainer of the Sakai family, produced paintings under Höitsu’s name. While basing his work on his master’s style, he pioneered new aspects through his clear color sense and acute sense of spatial design, features in common with modern sensibilities. He instructed many students after Höitsu’s death and contributed to the spread of the Edō Rinpū style.
Europe and America, searching for a new style, fusing realism, using blurred colors and no outlines. After travel in India, association and Japan Art Institute. With Yokoyama Taikan, experimenting with merōtsui (“vague” or “indistinct”), a style using blurred colors and no outlines. After travel in India, Europe and America, searched for a new style, fusing realism and decorativeness.

HON’AMI Kōetsu
1558-1637
Born in Kyoto, as the progeny of a leading commoner family whose business was polishing and appraising swords. Demonstrated talent in art-related fields including lacquerware, ceramics, and publishing. In calligraphy, was regarded as one of the Three Great Calligraphers of the Kan’ei era. Established an art village in Takagamine, north of Kyoto, where he pioneered the role of leader and mentor. Produced works rich in innovation and design sense and is regarded, with Tawaraya Sōtatsu, as the father of the Rōmpa school.

IKEDA Yōson
1895-1988
Born in Okayama Prefecture; given name Shōichi. From Western-style painting, shifted to Nihonga (Japanese style painting), studying with Takeuchi Seihō. A graduate of the Kyoto City College of Painting. Work selected for the Teiten in 1919. Joined the faculty of his alma mater in 1936. Active in the Nitten after the World War II; became a member of the Japan Art Academy in 1976 and was designated a Person of Cultural Merit in 1984. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1967. After the war, opened up a free atmosphere in paintings that at times call to mind paintings for children.

KAWASAKI Shōko
1886-1977
Born in Gifu Prefecture with given name Ryūichi. Studied with his grandfather, Kawasaki Chitora, and with Kobori Tomomo. After graduating from the Tokyo Fine Arts School, organized the Kūjūsha research group. Work first selected for the Bunten in 1914. Joined the faculty of the Imperial Painting School in 1929 and of the Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1943. After the World War II, was mainly active in exhibitions by the Nitten and the Nihonga-Itō (a modern Japanese painting group) Painted historical scenes and human figures in a lyrical style, and tried his hand at ink paintings in his later years.

KAWAI Gyokusō
1873-1957
Born in Aichi Prefecture. His given name was Yoshisaburō. Studied in Kyoto with Kōetsu Gyokusō and Kōnō Bairei before moving to Tokyo and studying with Hashimoto Gahō. Participated in the founding of the Japan Art Institute; thereafter mainly showed work in the government exhibitions. Joined the faculty of the Tokyo Fine Arts School in 1915 and became an Imperial Household Artist in 1916. Was awarded the Order of Culture in 1940 and designated a Person of Cultural Merit in 1951. He depicted mountains, villages and pastoral scenes with a distinctively Japanese sensitivity.

KAYAMA Matazō
1927-2004
Born in Kyoto. Graduated from the Kyoto City School of Arts and Crafts and the Tokyo Fine Arts School. Studied with Yamamoto Kyūjirō. Work first selected for the Sōtō Bijutsu (Creative Arts) Fine Art Exhibition in 1950; in 1974, participated in the formation of the Sōgakai (Creative Painting Society). Professor at Tama University Art School and Tokyo University of the Arts. Awarded the Order of Culture in 2003. Produced innovative works reflecting Rōmpa and other styles, from decorative folding screens to ink paintings. His wide creative range included ceramics and textiles as well.

KITAGAWA Sōsetsu
Date Unknown
An artist active in the latter half of the seventeenth century; successor to Tawaraya Sōsetsu, who inherited Tawaraya Sōtatsu’s studio. Kitagawa Sōsetsu is thought to have been mainly active in Hokuriku region, on the Japan Sea side of Honshu. He used the same I’nen seal as Sōtatsu and Tawaraya Sōsetsu and later included the kokkyō rank with his signature. Created distinctive paintings of plants using ink and pale colors on paper; his works have been noted for their influence on Ogata Kōrin and other later artists.

KOBAYASHI Kokei
1883-1957
Born in Niigata Prefecture; given name Shigeru. Studied with Kajita Hanko. After being active in the Bunten and other government exhibitions, participated in the Society for Refinement of Japanese Painting and the Kūjikai circle, both oriented to innovation in Nihonga. Became a senior member of the Japan Art Institute in 1914. In 1923 he copied the Admonitions of the Instructress to the Court Ladies, a picture scroll attributed to the Chinese artist Gu Kaizhi (c. 345-406) in the British Museum, and awakened to the beauty of line drawing. After returning to Japan, he established a style making use of scrupulous line drawings and clear colors. Joined the faculty of the Tokyo Fine Arts School and also became an Imperial Household Artist in 1944. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1950.

LOKAMURA Hōchū
7-1819
Born in Kyoto; active mainly in Osaka. Interacted with literati and was an accomplished hokai poet. After working in Nanga, shitōga (in which the fingerpint or fingernail is used instead of a brush), and other styles and techniques, was strongly influenced by Ogata Kōrin. Moved to Edo for a time, publishing the Kōrin gafu (Kōbin album) in 1802; governed as an artist working in Kōrin’s style. Making extensive use of sarashikomi (a technique to create pooled, blurred colors), he developed a humorous, heartwarming style.

OMODA Seiju
1891-1933
Born in Saitama Prefecture; original family name Kojima. Given name Shigezohō; later used the name Shigeru. Studied with Matsumoto Fūko. In 1914, organized the Sekiyōkai with Imamura Shihō, Hayami Gyōshū, and others. Work first selected for the Reestablished Inten in 1915; became a senior member in 1921. Organized the Sanritsu-sha in 1929; in 1930, provided guidance at the Imperial Art School. Broke new ground with elaborated landscape paintings and highly decorative reverties of birds and flowers.

SAKAI Hōitsu
1761-1828
Born in Edo as second son of the Sakai family of the Himeji domain. Used the names Toyō and Uge'an. Talented at hokai verse and other art forms, he studied the paintings of the Nanga school, shitei-e, and a wide range of other media and styles. At 37, he entered the Buddhist memorial priesthood and, as an ardent admirer of Ogata Kōrin, organized a Buddhist memorial service for the centennial of Kōrin’s death together with retrospective exhibition, and published Kōrin kyakuyō (One hundred paintings by Kōrin). Based on Kōrin’s paintings, he developed an elegant, unconventional style characteristic of an urbane man about town and laid the foundations for the Edo Rōmpa school.

SAKAI Oho
1808-1841
Born in Edo, the second son of Juichū (Setsusen), who was eighth abbot of Ichigujiyō (a branch of Tsukiji Honinjō temple). His childhood name was Yasomaru. At the age of twelve, he was adopted by Sakai Hōitsu and studied calligraphy and literature, becoming Hōitsu’s invaluable assistant. After Hōitsu’s death, he inherited the name Uge’an II. His early death, at the age of 34, meant he left a small number of works, but those he completed attest to his sound style and demonstrable ability.

SUZUKI Kiitsu
1796-1858
Born in Edo to a dyeer. Became a private pupil of Sakai Hōitsu, and later, as a retainer of the Sakai family, produced paintings under Hōitsu’s name. While basal his work on his master’s style, he pioneered new aspects through his clear color sense and acute sense of spatial design, features in common with modern sensibilities. He instructed many students after Hōitsu’s death and contributed to the spread of the Edo Rōmpa style.
Takeuchi Seihō 1864-1942
Born in Kyōto; given name was Tsunekei. Studied with Köno Bairei. Initially used the art name 輔雨 (Seihō). After traveling to Europe, replaced the first character of his name with a homophone of the original character but including the Chinese character element for “west” (西). Worked to modernize Nihonga and was a driving force in the Kyōto Nihonga School. Appointed an Imperial Household Artist in 1913 and awarded the Order of Culture in 1937. His meticolous ability to depict subjects so that “if he painted an animal, it was there, scent and all” and his unrestrained style were highly regarded.

Tanaka Höji 1812-1885
Born in Edō; at thirteen, became Sakai Hōitsu’s pupil at the very end of Hōitsu’s life. In the Meiji period, exhibited works in the Competitive Show for the Promotion of National Painting and the Vienna International Exposition (1873). Particularly in his bird-and-flower paintings, he faithfully continued Hōitsu’s style, communicating his essential honesty.

Tawaraya Sōtatsu Date Unknown
Artist active from the Momoyama to the early Edo period. Used the seals “Iten” and “Taiiseiken,” among others. He operated the Tawaraya, a shop producing paintings, underpaings for handscrolls, and decorated poem slips for caligraphy. In Kyōto, but widened his creative domain though increasingly deep relationships with the leading men of culture of his day, including Hon’ami Kōetsu and Karasumaru Mitsusada. Amidst a drive to revive the classics, he boldly incorporated both literate (sukashi-style painting) and ink painting techniques in his work, establishing a serene style with superb design sense. He is known as the father of the Rimpa school.

Watanabe Seiiti 1851-1918
Born in Edo; studied with Kikuchi Yōsai. From 1875, created designs at Kiyō Kōshi Kaisha, a company established to manufacture and market goods for export. Received a prize at the National Industrial Exhibition in 1877 as well as the Paris Expo in 1878. Traveling to France to observe the exposition, he encountered Western culture directly. Received prizes at each subsequent international exhibition and was highly regarded. His forte was bird-and-flower painting; he established a vividly colorful style with polished brushwork.

Yamaguchi Hōshun 1893-1971
Born in Hokkaido; given name Saburō. At The Tokyo Fine Arts School, trained in the department of Western painting to the Nihonga department. Participated in the Yamato-e Revival Society as a student of Matsuoka Eikyū. Work first selected for exhibition in the 70th in 1924, received many prizes thereafter. Joined the faculty of the Imperial Art School in 1930 and participated in the formation of the Rikuchōkai circle. After World War II, centered activities on the Nitten, showing work with a strong Modernist/Fin-de-siècle nature. In 1965, was awarded the Order of Culture.

Yasuda Yukihiko 1884-1978
Born in Tokyo; given name Shinzaburō. Studied with Kobori Tomoto and organized the Shikōkai circle. Participated in the founding of the Society for Refinement of Japanese Painting in 1907. Took part in the reestablishment of the Japanese Art Institute in 1914, becoming one of its administrative members. Was appointed an Imperial Household Art member in 1934 and a member of the Imperial Fine Arts Academy in 1935. Joined the Tokyo Fine Arts School faculty in 1944. In 1948, was awarded the Order of Culture and became chairman of the Imperial Art School in 1958. His oeuvre includes a number of masterpieces, primarily in the genre of historical paintings.

Next Exhibition: Special Feature: Featuring Nude by Murakami Kagaku, Newly Designated as an Important Cultural Property Murakami Kagaku and Kyoto Artists
Period: 31 October – 23 December, 2015 (Closed on 11/24, and on Mondays, except for 11/23)

Special Exhibition: Celebrating the Rimpa School’s 400th Anniversary The Rimpa School and Autumn Colors in Japanese Art
Period: 1 September – 25 October (Sun.) 2015 (Closed on 9/24, 10/13 and on Mondays, except for 9/21 and 10/12)
Hours: 10 am – 5 pm (Last admission at 4:30 pm) Birds and Flowers of the Four Seasons, Suzuki Kōitsu, (No. 25) is not displayed. No. 36 is a mural on permanent display in the museum entrance lobby on the 1st floor.

Foreword
In 1955, we celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the launch of an art colony north of Kyoto in Takamagane by Hon’ami Kōetsu as the Rimpa.∞ This exhibition, which commemorates that significant moment in Rimpa history, the Yamatane Museum of Art is holding an exhibition focusing on the Rimpa school and Rimpa-related aesthetics. The people of Japan, with its rich natural environment, have long cultivated their love of nature’s beauty throughout the four seasons of the year. Rimpa artists, in particular, regarded the expression of the seasons as an important theme and delicately depicted flowers and other seasonal features, using a great variety of techniques. The artistic lineage founded by Tawaraya Sōtatsu and Hon’ami Kōetsu was sustained, generation after generation, throughout the Edo period and continued to influence many Nihonga artists from the Meiji period on.

This special exhibition centered on the Rimpa school offers three perspectives for enjoying it. First, it brings together in one set works that present the subject matter and sense of the seasons distinctive to the Rimpa school, through work by Sōtatsu, Kōetsu, Ogata Kenzan, Nakamura Hōchū, Sakai Hōitsu, and Suzuki Kōitsu. Rimpa masterpieces from the museum’s collection, including Autumn Plants and Quails (Imperial Art Object), by Hōitsu and Fragment of the Shinkokinshū Poetry Anthology: Deer, by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, calligraphy by Hon’ami Kōetsu, are joined by rarely exhibited Rimpa works from private collections borrowed for this exhibition, such as Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months Based on Fujiwara Teika’s Poems: February by Kenzan and Crane and Old Pine Tree by Hōchū. Next, it focuses on modern and contemporary Nihonga artists who have been inspired by Rimpa works, including Fukuda Heiichirō, whose decorative and design sense are outstanding, and Kobayashi Kosuke, who made use of the tarashikomi technique to create pooled, blurred colors. In addition, it offers an opportunity to experience autumn to the full, in works that express the sense of the seasons that is a consistent thread throughout all Rimpa work through a taste of autumns’ richly varied selection. These richly varied selections, both from the museum’s collection and borrowed, have been selected to reflect the distinctive aesthetic. Fragment of the Shinkokinshū Poetry Anthology: Deer (No. 1), painting by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, calligraphy by Hon’ami Kōetsu presents the world of waka poetry through calligraphy and lavishly decorated paper. Ogata Kenzan made a special waka his theme in Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months Based on Fujiwara no Teika’s Poems: February (No. 11), while Sakai Hōitsu combined motifs from the waka tradition in his Plum Plants and Quails (No. 16). Waka were particularly favored as a source of inspiration for paintings of nature in its many aspects, interwoven with the seasons throughout the history of the Rimpa school.

Chapter 1. Rimpa Through the Four Seasons
In this section, we focus on nature throughout the four seasons depicted in the work of the Rimpa school. We introduce Rimpa, a decorative art world that continued to thrive throughout the early modern period, and the highly individual artists who formed it.

The Rimpa depiction of nature was colorful. The Rimpa style’s decorativeness, with a lavish use of gold and silver, and its innovative design sense originated in Hon’ami Kōetsu and Tawaraya Sōtatsu’s day. Generation after generation of Rimpa artists continued those practices. In ink painting, the Rimpa school artists were distinguished by their use of the “tarashikomi” technique to create pooled, blurred colors in what is called boneless painting (painting in darker and lighter ink washes, without lines). Works depicting flora and fauna using “tarashikomi” have a generous, heartwarming ambience; we sense in them the gentle gaze these artists directed at nature.

Japanese poetry and prose frequently address the changing seasons. Rimpa artists have taken up themes from classic natural verses and portrayed the aesthetic scenes of the four seasons reflecting their distinctive aesthetic. Fragment of the Shinkokinshū Poetry Anthology: Deer (No. 1), painting by Tawaraya Sōtatsu, calligraphy by Hon’ami Kōetsu presents the world of waka poetry through calligraphy and lavishly decorated paper. Ogata Kenzan made a special waka his theme in Flowers and Birds of the Twelve Months Based on Fujiwara no Teika’s Poems: February (No. 11), while Sakai Hōitsu combined motifs from the waka tradition in his Plum Plants and Quails (No. 16). Waka were particularly favored as a source of inspiration for paintings of nature in its many aspects, interwoven with the seasons throughout the history of the Rimpa school.

This work was originally the beginning of a long scroll that has been cut into several pieces, which are now in a number of collections. Sōtatsu decorated the paper for the scroll with drawings of deer in various postures, and Kōetsu transcribed twenty-eight poems related to autumn from the Shinkokinshū poetry anthology. Here we have a waka poem by Saigyō that conveys an intense emotion connected to twilight in autumn. The stag standing in the center was painted in flowing strokes using kingōi, gold or silver powders mixed with glue. The calligraphy is arranged around the stag so that the text works together with the painting. Deer are a symbol of good fortune as well as associated with autumn, and the deer motif was probably chosen for its auspicious implications. The latter half of this picture scroll is in the collection of the Seikō Museum of Art. We hope that our visitors will enjoy savouring autumn as it deepens as expressed in these paintings.

Painting by TAWARAYA Sōtatsu [Date Unknown], Calligraphy by HON’AMI KōETSU [1560-1637]
Fragment of the Shinkokinshū Poetry Anthology: Deer
Publisher: Inku, Gold and Silver on Paper
Size: 33.5 × 70.5 cm
Yamatane Museum of Art

Yamatane Museum of Art
3-12-36 Hiroo, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0012, JAPAN
Tel: 03-5777-8600 (Hello Dial, English available)

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