



Okumura Togyū (1889–1990)

Born in Tokyo. Given name Yoshizō. Studied with Kajita Hanko, also learning from more senior student Kobayashi Kokei. Work first selected for the *Inten* in 1927; became a senior member in 1932. Joined the faculty of the Imperial Art School in 1935. Became a member of the Imperial Art Academy in 1947. Awarded the Order of Culture in 1962. Became chairman of the Japan Art Institute in 1978 and chairman emeritus in 1990. Established a warm, generous style characterized by use of light colors.

Cat. No. 2 Okumura Togyū *Poetic Rain*

In 1926, Togyū moved to Azabu Tanimachi (near today's Roppongi 1-chōme). That summer, it rained almost constantly, making taking excursions difficult. Instead, Togyū sketched the area near his new home in the rain. In this painting, he adopted a bird's-eye view from a hilltop in depicting Akasaka, hilly and green as it was then. He used myriad of lines with *gofun* (a white pigment made from pulverized seashells) and pale ink to depict the rain, line by line. When he first exhibited it, "It's not necessary to paint the rain line by line, is it?" was the criticism voiced.

Cat. No. 20 Okumura Togyū *Sacred Cattle*

Togyū, who was born in the year of the ox, produced many paintings of cattle throughout his career. Among them, this painting stands out for his expressing the visual presence, the materiality of the cattle with pale *sumi* outlines and layers of *gofun* (a white pigment made from pulverized seashells); the structural beauty of the lines and color planes is distinctive. Having heard that two cattle from India had been donated to Zenkō-ji Temple in Nagano prefecture, he set out with his son to see them and spent a week sketching them. Togyū said that the mother cow, after giving birth, seemed "calm and dignified."

Cat. No. 24 Okumura Togyū *Himeji Castle*

In 1954, Togyū received the news that the central keep of Himeji Castle would be dismantled and restored. That year and the next he went to Himeji and made countless sketches of the castle. Initially, he considered painting a bird's eye view of the castle, but ultimately he depicted it as seen from its side, looking up, after going through the "Ro" (second) Gate. This bold, unique composition emphasizes the magnificence of the castle, while the limited number of colors and use of planes suggests considerable influence by Cézanne, a painter whom Togyū adored.

Cat. No. 25 Okumura Togyū *Ballerina*

Tani Momoko (1921-2015) was Togyū's model in one of his few paintings of the human figure in Western-style clothing. He saw her performance in *Swan Lake* twice and then sketched her from life a dozen or more times. Traces of charcoal are visible on this painting because he began directly to create what would become the finished painting, with no preparatory drawings. Initially he had in mind "A painting of a dancer as in Edgar Degas's work, practicing at the barre," but ultimately he depicted Tani at rest, her hand on her hip.

Cat. No. 29 Okumura Togyū *Nachi Falls*

Nachi Falls in Wakayama prefecture is famed, along with Kegon Falls and Fukuroda Falls, as one of Japan's three famous waterfalls. Togyū visited this site, a seven-hour journey from Kyoto, and while there sketched the falls daily. The rough rock surface, expressed in a restricted number of color planes, calls to mind Paul Cézanne's style of painting. For the white falls plunging downward, he painted the water with different senses of texture at the top and bottom of the falls to express the cascade's sublime form: "Falls that give a sense of nobility," as Togyū said.

Cat. No. 31 Okumura Togyū *Maelstroms at Naruto*

In 1959, Togyū stopped by Naruto in Tokushima prefecture and had an opportunity to observe, from shipboard, the maelstroms or whirlpools for which Naruto is famous. While his wife held onto his *obi*, the sash for his kimono, to steady him, he made several dozen sketches. Then, based on them, he completed this painting without making a preparatory painting. Meticulously painting in layered azurite blue, pale green, and *gofun* (a white pigment made from pulverized seashells), Togyū skillfully captures the depth of the sea and its movements in a work that was acclaimed as soon as he showed it. The simple composition, with an island glowing brightly in the distance and the maelstrom in the foreground, has the force to call up the wild roar of the sea.

Cat. No. 32 Okumura Togyū *Lotus Flowers*

These lotuses are blooming in a pond at a temple near Hōryū-ji Temple. Red buds turning white as they open and a rich scent are characteristic of lotus blossoms. To avoid missing their scent and bright color, Togyū rose at four each morning to sketch at the pond. He has rendered the flowers and leaves without outlines, using only light and dark shades of color to express texture and a sense of depth. The blossoms are placed so that they unfold, starting from the buds. That approach to expressing changes brought by time is often seen in traditional Buddhist paintings.

Cat. No. 33 Okumura Togyū *Tea Ceremony Room*

The Shinju-an, a sub-temple of Daitoku-ji Temple in Kyoto, was established by the Zen priest Ikkyū Sōjun in the Muromachi period. Togyū has depicted a corner of the Shinju-an's elegant tea ceremony room, whose garden has a good view of Mount Hiei. Greatly impressed by the structural beauty created by the colors and lines in the interior and its elegant simplicity, Togyū thought nostalgically about the passage of time and days of old in creating this painting. He used layers of pigment to distinguish the textures of the pillars and walls. The exterior scene visible through the latticed window and the light pouring in through the paper-covered *shōji* sliding doors gives the space, which resembles an abstract painting, breadth and depth.

Cat. No. 37 Okumura Togyū *Sumō Wrestlers*

Here Togyū has painted three Sumō wrestlers, Tochinishiki Kiyokata (1925-1990) and, behind him, young wrestlers of the lowest rank. Togyū accepted a commission to sketch Tochinishiki, a wrestler of the highest rank, at his retirement and created this painting in the course of visiting his Sumō stable. Togyū had been fond of Sumō since his childhood and said that it was a miniature of human life, a presence granting courage, and, like painting, an art. At Tochinishiki's retirement ceremony, when the distinctive topknot worn by high-ranking wrestlers is cut off, Togyū wielded the scissors.

Cat. No. 38 Okumura Togyū *Gate*

Himeji Castle formerly had fifteen gates named in *iroha* order (a *kana* ordering system based on a poem in which each *kana* occurs once) and sixty-nine other gates: a total of eighty-four. Of them, twenty-one have survived. The gate shown here is the "*ha* gate" from the fifteen *iroha* ones. The painting is based on sketches Togyū made when he visited Himeji Castle in 1955 to paint *Himeji Castle* (No. 23). The contrast between the colors of the gate doors and the white walls, the sense of space at the back of the arrow and gun ports, and the changing hues of the tiles and ground make this a work that brilliantly expresses an expanse of space.

Cat. No. 44 Okumura Togyū *Cherry Blossoms at Daigo-ji Temple*

This painting depicts the cherry blossoms of Daigo-ji temple in Kyoto, famous as the spot at which Toyotomi Hideyoshi held a lavish cherry-blossom-viewing banquet. Togyū visited Daigo-ji on the sixth anniversary of the death of his teacher, Kobayashi Kokei and, feeling that its weeping cherry trees were extraordinarily beautiful, decided he wished to paint them. For the front-facing cherry blossoms' petals, he carefully applied dozens of layers of dilute paint to produce a sense of the plump, pale pink flowers' mass. This work, created when Togyū was 83, combines elegance, tranquility, and gentleness.

Cat. No. 52 Okumura Togyū *Spring in Yoshino*

Mt. Yoshino is now covered with about 30,000 cherry trees of two hundred varieties. The sight of the mountain when they are in full bloom is magnificent. Togyū visited Yoshino three times, including trips there in autumn and to see the fresh green leaves of spring. On the first visit, he said the impression made by the cherry blossoms was too strong; "I could not see the whole." The weight of history there also captured his heart; he was so moved that, experiencing the sense that he was producing a history painting, he almost wept as he created this work.

Special Exhibition Commemorating a Decade since the Yamatane Museum of Art Opened in Hiroo

Celebrating the 130th Anniversary of His Birth: **The Art of Okumura Togyū**

2 February (Sat.) – 31 March (Sun.) 2019 (Closed on 12 February and on Mondays, except for 11 February.)

Hours: 10am - 5pm (Last admission at 4:30pm)

Organized by: Yamatane Museum of Art and The Asahi Shimbun.

List of Works

All works are the property of the Yamatane Museum of Art.

No.	Title	Techniques / Materials	Date	No.	Title	Techniques / Materials	Date
Okumura Togyū (1889-1990)							
The Foundations of Okumura Togyū's Art							
1	<i>The Kōshū Highway</i>	Color on Paper	1924	35	<i>Cormorants</i>	Color on Gold-Leafed Paper	1966
2	<i>Poetic Rain</i>	Color on Silk	1928	36	<i>Chinese Vases</i>	Color on Paper	1966
3	<i>A Girl Under a Loquat Tree</i>	Color on Silk	1930	37	<i>Sumō Wrestlers</i>	Color on Paper	1966
4	<i>Feeding</i>	Color on Silk	1936	38	<i>Gate</i>	Color on Paper	1967
5	<i>Rabbits</i>	Color on Silk	1936	39	<i>Deer</i>	Color on Paper	1968
6	<i>Ground Cherries</i>	Color on Silk	c. 1936	Passing the Century Mark			
7	<i>Rabbits</i>	Color on Silk	1938	40	<i>Clematises</i>	Color on Paper	1969
8	<i>Deer</i>	Color on Silk	1939	41	<i>Woman at a Morning Market</i>	Color on Paper	1969
9	<i>Iris</i>	Color on Silk	c. 1939	42	<i>The Road to Nara</i>	Color on Paper	1970
10	<i>Akebi Fruit</i>	Color on Silk	c. 1944	43	<i>Rose</i>	Color on Gold-Leafed Paper	1970
11	<i>Snow-covered Mountain</i>	Color on Silk	1946	44	<i>Cherry Blossoms at Daigo-ji Temple</i>	Color on Paper	1972
12	<i>Carp</i>	Color on Silk	1947	45	<i>Wajima in the Evening Glow</i>	Color on Paper	1974
13	<i>Woodpecker</i>	Color on Silk	1947	46	<i>Siamese Cat</i>	Color on Paper	1974
14	<i>Rabbit</i>	Color on Silk	c. 1947	47	<i>Gerberas</i>	Color on Paper	1975
15	<i>Pumpkin</i>	Color on Paper	1948	48	<i>Mt. Tanigawadake</i>	Color on Paper	1975
16	<i>Tulips</i>	Color on Paper	c. 1948	49	<i>Early Spring</i>	Color on Paper	1976
17	<i>Gamecocks</i>	Color on Paper	1950	50	<i>View of Mt. Fuji from Lake Yamanaka</i>	Color on Paper	1976
18	<i>Goats</i>	Color on Silk	c. 1951	51	<i>Kitayama Cypress</i>	Color on Paper	1976
19	<i>Flowers</i>	Color on Silk	1952	52	<i>Spring in Yoshino</i>	Color on Paper	1977
20	<i>Sacred Cattle</i>	Color on Silk	1953	53	<i>Buddhist Priests</i>	Color on Paper	1978
Okumura Togyū's Approach				54	<i>Peony</i>	Color on Gold-Leafed Paper	1978
21	<i>Maiko, Apprentice Geisha</i>	Color on Silk	1954	55	<i>Red Plum Blossoms and White Plum Blossoms</i>	Color on Gold-Leafed Paper	1979
22	<i>Water Lilies</i>	Color on Silk	1955	56	<i>Niece</i>	Color on Paper	1980
23	<i>Himeji Castle (Sketch)</i>	Pencil and Color Pencil on Paper	1955	57	<i>The Sea at the Bōsō Peninsula (Chiba)</i>	Color on Paper	1981
24	<i>Himeji Castle</i>	Color on Paper	1955	58	<i>Mt. Fuji Viewed from Fujinomiya</i>	Color on Paper	1982
25	<i>Ballerina</i>	Color on Paper	1956	59	<i>The Year of the Boar</i>	Color on Paper	1983
26	<i>Dainichi Buddha</i>	Color on Paper	1957	60	<i>Calf</i>	Color on Paper	1984
27	<i>Nachi Falls (Sketch)</i>	Pencil and Color Pencil on Paper	1958	61	<i>The Year of the Rat</i>	Color on Paper	1984
28	<i>Magnolia</i>	Color on Paper	1958	62	<i>Mt. Fuji</i>	Color on Paper	1987
29	<i>Nachi Falls</i>	Color on Paper	1958	63	<i>Calligraphy: Commemorating a Ninety-Ninth Birthday</i>	Ink on Paper	1987
30	<i>Maelstroms at Naruto (Sketch)</i>	Pencil on Paper	1959	Ref. 1	<i>Book of Sketches by Okumura Togyū</i>		1917
31	<i>Maelstroms at Naruto</i>	Color on Paper	1959	Ref. 2	<i>Illustrated Letter to Yamazaki Taneji from Okumura Togyū: The Year of the Ox</i>		20th Century
32	<i>Lotus Flowers</i>	Color on Paper	1961				
33	<i>Tea Ceremony Room</i>	Color on Paper	1963				
34	<i>Interior</i>	Color on Paper	1964				

Next Exhibition: Special Exhibition Commemorating a Decade since the Yamatane Museum of Art Opened in Hiroo:

A World of Flowers —Coloring the Four Seasons

Period : **6 April (Sat.) – 2 June (sun.) 2019**

(Closed on 7 May, and on Mondays, except for 29-30 April and 6 May.)

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Tanomura Chokunyū, *A Hundred Flowers* (detail)
1869, Yamatane Museum of Art