

## EXHIBITION

# あ!っと北斎 ~みて、みつけて、みえてくる浮世絵~

Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e

## Composition and Highlights

The Sumida Hokusai Museum (Sumida City, Tokyo) holds Exhibition “Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e” from June 24 to August 31, 2025.

Katsushika Hokusai, one of Japan’s preeminent artists, employed a multitude of devices that make the viewer gasp with astonishment. Noticing one, we wonder what devices he used in other works. Excited, we turn to the next work—eager to learn more about Hokusai and *ukiyo-e*. The *Wow, Hokusai!* exhibition invites visitors to experience Hokusai’s appeal through the discoveries they find in his works. The process is clear: look at his pictures, examine each work with care, and make new discoveries. Here we introduce the work of Hokusai and his students through simple descriptions that will, we hope, spur your interest in Hokusai and *ukiyo-e*. Please have a delightful time discovering that “Ah!” moment, that “Wow!” sensation.

### 【Summary of Exhibition】

Title	Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e
Term	June 24 - August 31, 2025 *Some exhibits will be changed during the period. 1st term: June 24 to July 27 2nd term: July 29 to August 31
Closed	Mondays, July 22, and August 12 *Open: July 21 (Holiday), August 11 (Holiday)
Venue	3rd floor Exhibition Room in The Sumida Hokusai Museum 2-7-2 Kamezawa, Sumida-ku, Tokyo ZIP:130-0014
Hours	9:30 am - 5:30 pm (last entry 5:00 pm)
Organizers	Sumida City, The Sumida Hokusai Museum
Admission	Adults ¥1,000, Students (high school and university), 65 and over ¥700, Students (middle school) ¥300, Visitors with disabilities ¥300, Children in primary school and younger Free
Website	<a href="https://hokusai-museum.jp/at-hokusaiEN/">https://hokusai-museum.jp/at-hokusaiEN/</a>
Instagram	<a href="https://www.instagram.com/hokusai_museum/">https://www.instagram.com/hokusai_museum/</a>



- Visitors can also enter all exhibitions on the same day of the visit with the exhibition ticket.
- Identification card is necessary to get a discount ticket.
- Admission for visitors with disabilities is also available for one accompanying person with a visitor with disabilities.
- Please see the latest information about the starting date of ticket sales and the way of purchase for same-day tickets and other discount tickets on our website.

## Composition and Highlights of the Exhibition

### Prologue *Ukiyo-e* and Hokusai: A Quick Guide

#### What are *Ukiyo-e*?

The term *ukiyo* had, by the Edo period, when Hokusai was alive, come to mean “contemporary” or “present-day.” *Ukiyo-e* are depictions of the lives of the common people and other contemporary subjects during the Edo period. The people who drew them are called *ukiyo-eshi*, *ukiyo-e* artists.

*Ukiyo-e* include *nikuhitsu-ga*, brush-drawn paintings, which the artist creates directly, and *mokuhanga*, woodblock prints, which are produced by a division of labor organized by the *hanmoto* or producer: the artist created the drawing, the carver prepared the many woodblocks needed to print it, and the printer used them to pull the final image. These works could be *hanga*, prints created as stand-alone works, or *hanpon*, woodblock-printed books, such as *Sketches by Hokusai*.

#### Who was Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849)?

Hokusai was an *ukiyo-e* artist active in the latter half of the Edo period whose signature works include the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*. He made his debut as an *ukiyo-e* artist at the age of twenty and was active as an artist throughout his life, until his death at the ripe old age of almost ninety. His work was also carried overseas and had a great influence on artists in other countries.

### 1. First, see Hokusai's works

The *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji* are iconic!

〈Prints—polychrome prints and privately commissioned prints〉



Katsushika Hokusai, *Under the Wave off Kanagawa*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms) \*

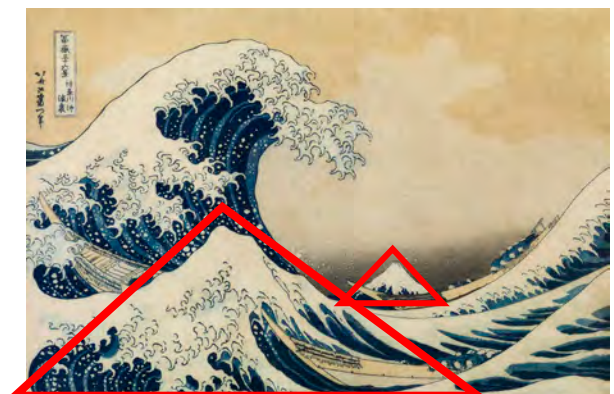
\*The work will be replaced with different print of same title during the period.

This iconic print from the *Thirty-six View of Mount Fuji* depicts Mount Fuji as seen off shore of the Kanagawa post station on the Tōkaidō road (now Kanagawa Ward, Yokohama). The boats visible between the waves are *oshiokuribune*, fast cargo boats that rapidly transported fresh seafood from Edo Bay (now Tokyo Bay) and nearby regions to Edo. This work presents the contrast between the huge wave, rising powerfully, spray surging, the people in the boats being shaken by it, and the tranquilly standing Mount Fuji. Known overseas as The Great Wave and used for the design of the back of Japan's ¥1000 note since July of 2024, this print is familiar throughout the world.



**Wow!**

Repeated triangles resembling Mt. Fuji!?



from illustrating novels to creating drawing manuals?!  
 〈Woodblock printed books〉



Katsushika Hokusai, *Kusunoha Transforms from a Fox into a Human and, Facing Yasuna and their Son, Reports that Akuemon Is Their Enemy*, from *Revenge for Kusunoha*, Vol. 4, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms)

**Wow!**



The place where pale ink was used has been eliminated in a late impression. Instead, there is a large blank space.



A painting created directly with Hokusai's own brush!  
 〈Brush-drawn paintings〉



Katsushika Hokusai, *Fish and Shellfish*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (1st term)

Hokusai is thought to have produced this painting of seven types of fish and shellfish, in his early forties: hermit crab, mussel, abalone, squid, inshore fish, shrimp, and pen shell. The unique texture of fish and shellfish is expressed using techniques such as "tarashikomi," which makes use of the ink's bleeding, and "tsuketate," which involves laying the brush flat to create shading.



**Wow!**

The white parts of the squid and abalone were painted in *gofun*, a white pigment made from powdered seashells, and *sumi* ink!



## 2. Examining them and discovering the “Wow!”

### 1 Find shared features



Katsushika Hokusai, *In the Mountain of Tōtōumi Province*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms) \*

\*The work will be replaced with different print of the same title during the period.

Tōtōumi was the name of a province in the western part of today's Shizuoka prefecture. Hokusai has depicted workers splitting logs and turning them into lumber. Beneath the massive piece of lumber, we can see a craftsman sharpening his saw, a woman carrying a baby on her back, and a boy minding the fire.



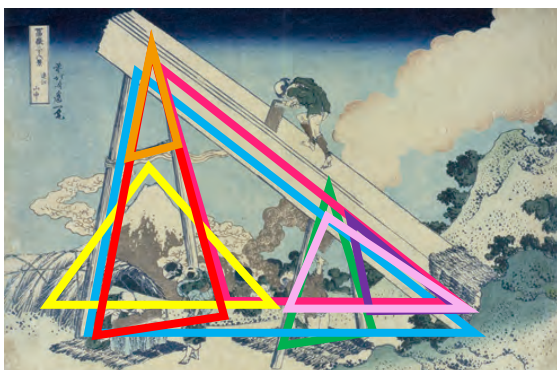
Katsushika Hokusai, *Harumichi no Tsuraki*, from the series *One Hundred Poems Explained by a Nurse*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (2nd term)

This print is from Hokusai's series on the *A Hundred Poets, One Poem Each* poem anthology. Its subject is a *waka* poem by the Heian-period poet Harumichi no Tsuraki on autumn leaves flowing down a river, but here the focus is on craftsmen sawing lumber. Under the large piece of lumber, we see, as in *In the Mountain of Tōtōumi Province*, a worker sharpening his saw, plus a man probably fishing. A mother and child, who is leading his turtle, are crossing the bridge.



**Wow!**

So many triangles are hidden here!  
Cleverly worked out composition with  
the lumber and supports create  
repeated triangles.



## 2 Note what's different



Katsushika Hokusai, *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (1st term)



**Wow!**

The same title, but each picture is a little



Katsushika Hokusai, *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji* (Variant Edition), The Sumida Hokusai Museum (2nd term)

Black clouds envelop the foothills, thunder is rumbling, lightning striking. In the sky above, however, clouds are floating in the blue sky. By depicting two contrasting weather events centered on Mount Fuji, Hokusai express how large and tall the mountain is. This print, along with *Under the Wave off Kanagawa* and *Fuji Under Clear Skies*, is one of the iconic images from the *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji* series. The lightning bolt, by the way, is the basis for the design of the Sumida Hokusai Museum's logo.



すみだ北斎美術館



Katsushika Hokusai, *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, Yoshino Gypsum Collection, deposited in The Sumida Hokusai Museum (2nd term)

## 3 Look at the picture, and what do you discover?



Katsushika Hokusai, *The Sazaidō Hall of the Gohyaku Rakanji Temple*, from the series *Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms)\*

\*The work will be replaced with different print of the same title during the period.

The Gohyaku Rakanji Temple was located in today's Koto City, Tokyo. The official name of the Sazaidō is Sansōdō. The inside has a three-layered spiral structure, which resembles a turban shell, *sazai* in Japanese, hence it was also called Sazaidō. Here the structure of the building and the postures of the people there produce a composition inviting our eyes to view Mount Fuji.



**Wow!**

From somewhere, birds singing...



【Related Event】

Free-to-talk Time (Enjoy Freely)	
Schedule	The fourth Wednesdays and Thursdays in July and August July 23 and 24, August 27 and 28 and the following days July 19 and 21, August 2 and 9
Time	1:00 pm to 4:00 pm
Site	In all the exhibition rooms of the museum *During this time, everyone can view the exhibitions. Especially, this event encourages primary schoolers, middle school students and their families to view artworks.

● Please see the latest information on our website.



# EXHIBITION: Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e Request Form to Use Press Images

Please read the following notes before requesting the images. All points are required for use.

◀ the important points of using the images from the museum ▶

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- Please use the images only for presentation of the exhibition.  
Other purposes such as use and reprint for publications and videos not related to publicizing the exhibition and commercial use are not permitted.
- Copying, lending, distributing for a charge or for free and selling images are not permitted.
- Please use the images as the whole image. Partial use is not permitted.
- Please delete the data after use.
- Some exhibits might be changed for some reason.

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- ☐ EXHIBITION: Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e flyer front page
- ☐ EXHIBITION: Wow, Hokusai! See, Examine, and Discover Ukiyo-e square visual (1080px×1080px)
- ☐ 1. Katsushika Hokusai, *Under the Wave off Kanagawa, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms)\*
- ☐ 2. Katsushika Hokusai, *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms)\*
- ☐ 3. Katsushika Hokusai, *Rainstorm Beneath the Summit, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji (Variant Edition)*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (2nd term)
- ☐ 4. Katsushika Hokusai, *Swallow and Willow*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (1st term)
- ☐ 5. Katsushika Hokusai, *The Sazaidō Hall of the Gohyaku Rakanji Temple, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji*, The Sumida Hokusai Museum (all terms)\*

\*The work will be replaced with different print of the same title during the period.

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