

## See *ukiyo-e* prints at Tokyo National Museum!

東京国立博物館の浮世絵を知ろう！



### Experience Japanese Culture Making *The Great Wave* : A Demonstration of Japanese Woodblock Printing

日本文化との出会い 浮世絵摺り実演

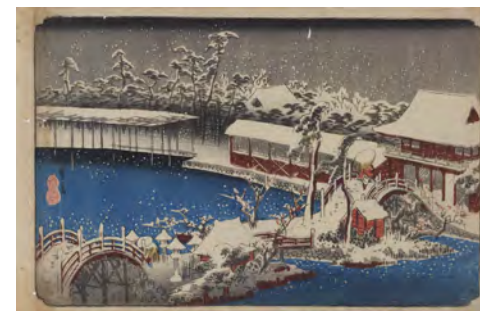
Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji: *The Great Wave off the Coast of Kanagawa*

By Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849); Edo period, 19th century  
富嶽三十六景・神奈川沖浪裏 葛飾北斎筆 江戸時代・19世紀

## What is *ukiyo-e*? 浮世絵って何？

*Ukiyo-e* is a style of art born in Japan during the Edo period (1603-1868). Many *ukiyo-e* works were mass produced in the form of multicolor woodblock prints. Rather than expensive works of art, these prints spread and gained popularity among ordinary people as commercial goods. As a result, *ukiyo-e* prints offer a glimpse into the lifestyles, interests, and fashions of people who lived in that era.

江戸時代 (1603-1868) に日本で生まれた浮世絵は、その多くが多色摺木版画として大量生産されました。高価な芸術品というより、庶民の間に商品として広まり、親しまれたものです。そのため、当時の人々の暮らしの様子や、どんなことに興味をもち、何が流行していたのかが、浮世絵を通して見えてきます。



### Famous Places of the Eastern Capital: Tenmangu Shrine at Kameido in Snow

By Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858)  
Edo period, 19th century

[https://colbase.nich.go.jp/collection\\_items/tnm/A-12171?locale=en](https://colbase.nich.go.jp/collection_items/tnm/A-12171?locale=en)

This quiet, snowy scene depicts Kameido Tenmangu Shrine in present-day Koto City, Tokyo. Arched bridges cross the pond in the foreground, while a roofed corridor and a wisteria trellis can be seen further back. The red of the buildings, bridges and plum blossoms stands out vividly against the chilly hues of the blue pond, grey sky, and white snow. Utagawa Hiroshige was a master of woodblock prints, as revealed in the use of shading to achieve gradation effect in the sky and pond. He has fully demonstrated his expertise in this work.

### 東都名所・亀戸天満宮境内雪

歌川広重筆  
江戸時代・19世紀

[https://colbase.nich.go.jp/collection\\_items/tnm/A-12171?locale=ja](https://colbase.nich.go.jp/collection_items/tnm/A-12171?locale=ja)

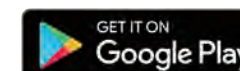
静かな雪の景色です。ここは東京都江東区にある亀戸天満宮、手前の御手洗の池には太鼓橋がかかり、奥には回廊や藤棚が描かれています。池の青、空のグレー、雪の白と、冷たい色合いの中に、建物や橋、そして紅梅の赤が鮮やかに映えています。空や池の色に濃淡のグラデーションをつけるぼかし表現など、版画の技術を知り尽くした広重がその効果を存分に利用しているようです。

You can enjoy audio and text breakdowns of our favorite pieces from our current exhibits in TNM Art Guide: official guide app for the Tokyo National Museum's cultural exhibits.

※If you have access to a wireless network, you can even use it from the comfort of your own home.

鑑賞ガイドアプリ「トーハクナビ」では現在展示されているおすすめ作品の解説をお楽しみいただけます。

※ネットワーク環境があれば、ご自宅でもお使いいただけます。



# The *ukiyo-e* printmaking process

浮世絵版画ができるまで

Experience Japanese Culture  
**Making *The Great Wave* :**  
A Demonstration of Japanese Woodblock Printing

*Ukiyo-e* prints were not produced by just one person. Instead, they brought together the sophisticated techniques of three craftspeople: the artist who created the master drawing and determined the color layout, the carver who cut the woodblocks, and the printer who inked the woodblocks and transferred the image onto paper.

浮世絵版画は一人で作るものではありません。下絵を描き、色の指定をする絵師、版を彫る彫師、版を使って摺る摺師。それぞれの職人の高度な技の結晶が浮世絵版画になるのです。

## 1 Publisher:

The publisher was responsible for planning, promotion, and sales.

版元： 今でいう出版社。企画から宣伝、販売を行います。

## 2 Artist:

The artist created a master drawing on commission from the publisher. Later, it was also the artist's job to determine the color layout. Well-known creators of *ukiyo-e* like Katsushika Hokusai and Utagawa Hiroshige were artists.

絵師： 版元からの依頼を受けて下絵を描き、色の指定もします。葛飾北斎や歌川広重など、浮世絵の作者として名前が知られているのは絵師です。

## 3 Carver:

The carver first cut a woodblock of just the outlines, known as the key block, according to the master drawing created by the artist using only black ink (Photo 1).

彫師： 絵師が一色で描いた下絵に従い、輪郭だけの主版を作ります。

Next, the carver cut color blocks according to the colors designated by the artist, with one for each color (Photo 2).

その後、絵師が指定した色に従い、彫師は赤の版、青の版というように色数に合わせ色版を彫ります。

## 4 Printer:

Using the finished woodblocks delivered from the carver, the printer inked and printed one color at a time.

Four basic pigments were used: black, red, yellow, and blue. These basic colors could be combined to create a variety of hues (Photo 3).

First the pigment was applied to the woodblock, and then the paper was laid on top. The printer pressed down on the paper using a large circular pad called a *baren* to transfer the pigment from the woodblock (Photo 4). Printmaking tools are shown in Photo 5; the *baren* is on the right end.

In multicolor printing, a single sheet of paper is printed with multiple woodblocks in sequence. To prevent the paper from becoming misaligned, registration marks indicating the position of the paper were carved into each woodblock by the carver.

The printing stand was sloped to make it easier for the printer to apply pressure.

摺師： 彫師から版を受け取り、一色ずつ摺り重ねます。絵具は基本、墨・赤・黄・青の4色。これらを混ぜ合わせてさまざまな色をつくりだします。

版に絵具を載せ、その上に紙を置き、上から馬連(ばれん)で摺っていきます。摺りには様々な道具を用います。

多色摺りの場合、1枚の紙に複数の版を重ねて摺ります。紙がずれないように、それぞれの版には、紙をのせる位置を示した印「見当(けんとう)」が彫師によって刻まれます。

力が入れやすいよう、摺るときに使う台は斜めになっています。

## 5 Completed print:

Various publishers released new works one after another, which were easily available for purchase by the public.

完成： 様々な版元から次々と新作が発売され、誰もが気軽に買えたようです。

Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3

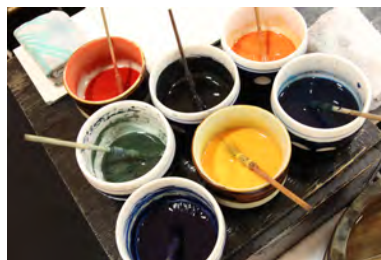


Photo 4



Photo 5

