Japanese Art Exhibitions, Film Screenings, and Collections Highlight BAMPFA Program in 2019

Ink, Paper, Silk: One Hundred Years of Collecting Japanese Art
On View December 12, 2018—April 14, 2019

Japanese Film Classics from the BAMPFA Collection
Screening December 12, 2018—January 27, 2019

Masako Miki / MATRIX 273
On View January 9—April 28, 2019

Hinges: Sakaki Hyakusen and the Birth of Nanga Painting
On View October 2, 2019—February 2, 2020

(Berkeley, CA)—The work of Japanese artists and filmmakers is a central focus of the exhibition and film programs in the coming year at the UC Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA). Over the course of 2019, the museum mounts three major exhibitions of work by Japanese artists past and present—including two historical exhibitions and one focused showcase of the Osaka-born, Bay Area-based artist Masako Miki, whose practice draws on Japanese folklore. As part of this yearlong theme, BAMPFA also screens nearly a dozen masterworks of Japanese cinema, presented on pristine 35mm prints drawn from the museum’s film holdings—which encompass the largest collection of Japanese films outside Japan.

BAMPFA’s focus on Japanese art and film in 2019 coincides with the centennial anniversary of the museum’s Japanese art collection, which was established in 1919 by a donation of more than 1,000 woodblock prints from the estate of UC Berkeley Professor William Dallam Armes. A graduate of UC Berkeley’s class of 1882, Armes traveled frequently to Japan and amassed one of the largest private collections of Japanese prints of his generation—all of which were bequeathed to the university following his death. The gift transformed what had formerly been a modest regional art collection into one with an international scope, forming the foundation for BAMPFA’s extensive holdings of Asian art and film.
The hundred-year legacy of BAMPFA’s Japanese art collection is the basis for *Ink, Paper, Silk: One Hundred Years of Collecting Japanese Art*, which opens the museum’s year of Japanese programming on December 12, 2018. The exhibition showcases more than fifty works representing four centuries of Japanese artmaking traditions, including several highlights from Armes’s original print collection alongside outstanding examples of hanging scroll paintings, screens, lacquerware, and ceramics that have been acquired by the museum over the past century.

The delicately painted *White Swallows by a Waterfall* (above) by Okamoto Shūki (1807–1862) demonstrates the artist’s special connection to the natural world. Another highlight of the exhibition is an impressive pair of gilded folding screens, each more than twelve feet wide, attributed to the eighteenth-century painter Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754–1799). In this charming work, young boys line up to climb over a massive, reclining elephant, feeding him tufts of grass and wondering at his enormity. On public view for the first time is a remarkable group of *surimono* prints—small, privately published prints made for special occasions and intended as gifts—along with new translations of the poetry inscribed on these exceptionally beautiful works. The exhibition also features several fine lacquerware and ceramic pieces that have recently joined the collection.

In addition to *Ink, Paper, Silk*, BAMPFA is highlighting its longstanding commitment to Japanese art and film with other major exhibitions and programs throughout 2019. These include:

- **Japanese Film Classics from the BAMPFA Collection** (December 12, 2018–January 27, 2019), a major highlight of BAMPFA’s winter film season, which screens some of the most heralded films of midcentury Japanese cinema. Reflecting the golden age of Japanese film production that lasted from the early 1950s to the 1980s, *Japanese Film Classics* includes iconic classics like *Ugetsu*, *Early Summer*, and *When a Woman Ascends the Stairs*, alongside the rarely seen feature film debuts of Akira Kurosawa and Hayao Miyazaki. All the films are presented on 35mm prints from BAMPFA’s collection; a current schedule of screenings can be found on bampfa.org.

- **Masako Miki / MATRIX 273** (January 9–April 28, 2019), the first solo museum exhibition of work by the artist Masako Miki, who was born in Japan and has lived in Berkeley for more than twenty years. Inspired by Shinto traditions of animism, Miki creates felt-covered forms—often massive in size—that recall the yōkai (shapeshifters) of Japanese folk mythology. Her semi-abstract sculptures are situated among abstract images on the surrounding floor and walls, creating an immersive experience that is both playful and otherworldly. Miki is the latest artist to exhibit in BAMPFA’s **MATRIX Program for Contemporary Art**.

- **Hinges: Sakaki Hyakusen and the Birth of Nanga Painting** (October 2, 2019–February 2, 2020), the first US exhibition focusing on the legacy of Sakaki Hyakusen (1697-1752), the founding father of Nanga school painting in Japan. The exhibition complements *Ink, Paper, Silk* by highlighting another underseen area of BAMPFA’s Japanese holdings, specifically the museum’s exceptional holdings of Japanese screen paintings—including a rare six-screen
landscape painting by Hyakusen that has been recently conserved. BAMPFA will publish a catalog of new scholarship in conjunction with the exhibition.

BAMPFA complements its year of Japanese exhibitions and films with a range of public programs, including an **Ink, Paper, Silk** Gallery Talk with Elizabeth Sharf, a visiting scholar in UC Berkeley’s Center for Japanese Studies, on December 13 at noon; an Artist’s Talk with Masako Miki on January 16 at noon; and family-friendly art workshops inspired by **Ink, Paper, Silk** and **MATRIX 273** on February 9 and January 12, respectively. Additional public programs in conjunction with **Hinges** will be announced in 2019; visit bampfa.org for a current schedule. All programs are free with museum admission.

Thanks

**Ink, Paper, Silk: One Hundred Years of Collecting Japanese Art** is organized by Senior Curator for Asian Art Julia M. White in collaboration with independent scholar Elizabeth Sharf and Associate Professor Jonathan Zwicker, Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, UC Berkeley. Yisheng Tang, a student working with Zwicker, contributed translations for the gallery labels. Assistant Curator Stephanie Cannizzo and curatorial intern Jiaqian Zhu provided logistical support. The exhibition is made possible in part by the Asian Art Endowment Fund. Additional in-kind support is provided by Farrow & Ball.

**Masako Miki / MATRIX 273** is organized by Julia M. White, senior curator for Asian art, with Matthew Coleman, curatorial assistant. The MATRIX Program is made possible by a generous endowment gift from Phyllis C. Wattis and the continued support of the BAMPFA Trustees.

**Japanese Film Classics from the BAMPFA Collection** Series Sponsors: Susan and Kevin Consey Series organized by Senior Film Curator Susan Oxtoby, with thanks to Collections Curator Mona Nagai and Film Archivist Jon Shibata.

Above

1) Yoshitoshi Tsukioka: *Saito no Oniwaka-maru (Oniwaka-maru of Saito)*, 1870s; full color woodblock print; 13 1/2 x 9 in.; BAMPFA, gift of William Dallam Armes.

2) Okamoto Shūki: *White Swallows by a Waterfall*, 19th century (detail); ink and color on silk; 38 1/4 x 14 in.; BAMPFA, gift of Dr. Eugene C. Gaenslen, Jr.

Visitor Information

Address
2155 Center Street, Berkeley, CA 94720

Hours
Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Fridays and Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

$13 general admission
$11 non-UC Berkeley students, disabled, 65+
FREE BAMPFA members; UC Berkeley students, faculty, staff; 18 & under; one adult per child 13 & under

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About BAMPFA
An internationally recognized arts institution with deep roots in the Bay Area, the University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (BAMPFA) is a forum for cultural experiences that transform individuals and advance the local, national, and global discourse on art and film. BAMPFA is UC Berkeley’s premier visual arts venue, presenting more than 450 film screenings, scores of public programs, and more than twenty exhibitions annually. With its vibrant and eclectic programming, BAMPFA inspires the imagination and ignites critical dialogue through art, film, and other forms of creative expression.

The institution’s collection of more than 25,000 works of art dates from 3000 BCE to the present day and includes important holdings of Neolithic Chinese ceramics, Ming and Qing Dynasty Chinese painting, Old Master works on paper, Italian Baroque painting, early American painting, Abstract Expressionist painting, contemporary photography, and Conceptual art. BAMPFA’s collection also includes more than 17,500 films and videos, including the largest collection of Japanese cinema outside of Japan, impressive holdings of Soviet cinema, West Coast avant-garde film, and seminal video art, as well as hundreds of thousands of articles, reviews, posters, and other ephemera related to the history of film.