

# ASIAN ART

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## 18 New York Gallery Shows

prized individual expression and was thus a member of the traditional literati. In his richly atmospheric 1996 *Landscape*, included in this exhibition, he sums up the almost semi-detached *shimato* that conveys the energies found in the forces of nature and the cosmos

Erik Thomsen Asian Art, 23 East 67th Street, New York 10065, tel 212 288 2588, info@erikthomsen.com, www.erikthomsen.com. Hours: Mon-Fri 11-5.

### KOKON BIENNIAL FALL 2012

6-27 September

As is his wont, Koichi Yanagi is presenting a distilled exhibition of works of art, all infused with *shibui*, his seventh, that will include some objects that have only been recently discovered: a pair of screens, one painting, one calligraphy, one lacquer, one sculpture and one ceramic.

The pair of 16th/17th-century, ink and gold on paper screens of geese, egrets and hawk are attributed to Soga Chokuan (fl.1596-1610) and the erstwhile peaceful scene of geese on the screen on the left is interrupted by a group of egrets taking flight on the right from the intensively interested hawk at the far end of the screen on the right. The sole painting, *Birds, Animals, and Flowers*, is firmly given to Soga Shohaku (1730-1781) and is a study in greys with red hot spots.

The single sculpture is a 12th-century Heian figure of a boy Shinto deity while the lacquer is slightly later in date as Muromachi, a handsome circular *Kamakura-bori* box and cover in red lacquer with black undercoat. The ceramic piece is an unusual *Ko-Kiyomizu mizusashi*, not so much because of its circular cross-section with sharply angled side, but because of its sparse decoration of iron brown bands of stylised grasses about the top of the bottom and bottom of the lid. Koichi Yanagi Oriental Fine Arts, 17 East 71st Street, 4F, New York 10021, tel 212 744 5577, kokon@earthlink.net. Hours: Mon-Fri, 10-6.

### MASTERWORKS OF JAPANESE ART, IMPORTANT JAPANESE SCREENS, PAINTINGS AND WORKS OF ART

Leighton R. Longhi, Inc. Oriental Fine Art, longhiart@aol.com, www.leightonlonghi.com, tel 212 722 5741. Hours: by appointment only.

### REVISITING RIMPA: DESIGN, FUNCTION, AND THE ART OF NAKAMURA TAKUO

12 September to 19 October The works of Nakamura Takuo, born in 1945, are the sole subject of this exhibition which is timed to coincide with the exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and at Japan Society. The ceramics will include freestanding sculptural and functional vessels that

incorporate the uniquely Japanese painting aesthetic known as *Rimpa*, sometimes spelled these days as *Rinpa*. Because of his strength of form, copacetic decoration and excellence of execution, Nakamura's work can be found in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art in Kanazawa.

The whole concept of the compositions, planes and colours of the movement began in the early 17th century with the master artists Koetsu and Sotatsu, who felt unsympathetic to the flamboyance of Momoyama taste, continued in the work of Ogata Korin (1658-1716), and later with those two mid-Edo artists influenced by him, Sakai Hoitsu (1761-1828) and Suzuki Kiitsu (1796-1858.)

The movement not only incorporated painting, but also calligraphy, lacquer and, of course, ceramics, much in the same way the 20th-century Art Deco Movement expanded. *Rimpa/Rinpa* began with inspiration from the ancient tradition of *yamato-e* and adventurously branched out from there, like Nakamura's works. Starting with a foundation of the overlapping two-dimensional planes of the *yamato-e* tradition, the movement utilised forms and lines of soft and straight or curved lines to form the actual composition, but used sometimes unexpected combinations of colours or materials to achieve the final effect.

Following this established tradition, Nakamura takes it one step further by a method of sculpting he calls 'destroying the clay', which somehow allows the viewer to discover the process of how he arranged his functional forms. Many of his new works are multi-piece deconstructions of traditional forms, allowing for greater freedom through the various permutations of assembly and affecting the balance between interior and exterior spaces. Nakamura explains, 'The true completion of any vessel is derived through the creative implementation on the part of the user'. This is an obvious statement of fact, but more incisively, he comments that, 'During the act of creation and flattening and manipulating the thin walls of my work, the clay expresses its own hidden form and plays a critical role in determining the final structure', sometimes insinuating the somewhat rustic colour patterns of 17th



*Monkeys and Moon* by Mori Sosen (1747-1821), hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, signed and sealed, painting: 131 x 54 cm, overall 224 x 69 cm, Leighton Longhi

century Ko-Kutani porcelains and sometimes not. Joan B. Mirviss, Ltd., 39 East 78th Street, 4th Floor, New York 10075, tel 212 799 4021 info@mirviss.com. www.mirviss.com. Hours: Mon-Fri 11-6, or by appointment.

### RINPA: CLASSICAL CONNECTIONS

5 to 15 September This month promises to be a veritable *Rimpa* marathon, what with exhibitions at Scholten, and at Joan Mirviss, the Japan Society and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The revolutionary movement now called *Rimpa/Rinpa* began in the early 17th century with the master artists Hon'ami Koetsu (1558-1637) and Tawaraya Sotatsu (fl. ca. 1600-1640) as a reaction to the sometimes over-the-top flamboyance of the Momoyama period. (The name *Rimpa/Rinpa* was a Meiji-period term using the second character of 'Korin', as in 'School of Rin'). They conceived a theory of designed that was based on the two-dimensional *yamato-e*, but employed radically new use of colours, planes and unusual compositions that continued in the work of Ogata Korin (1658-1716), and later with those two mid-Edo artists influenced by him, Sakai Hoitsu (1761-1828) and Suzuki Kiitsu (1796-1858.) The movement was to not only incorporate painting forms, but also expanded into ceramics,

calligraphy and lacquer. This subject-specific exhibition will include works by Hoitsu, his contemporaries and his followers. An elegant composition by two artists (*gassaku*) of a red and a white poppy in rain by Hoitsu deeply sums up the pictorial essence of this exhibition.

The earliest work in this exhibition is a *sumi* painting of Tekkai Sennin by Tawaraya Sotatsu. While the *Rimpa* tradition first blossomed in the Imperial capital of Kyoto with the artistic efforts of Koetsu, Sotatsu and Korin, by the 18th century the style emerged in the political and economic capital of Edo where it was developed to a high degree by Sakai Hoitsu (1761-1828). In his early years, Hoitsu studied a variety of contemporary paintings styles, including Kano, Nagasaki and *ukiyo-e*, before focusing on the style of Korin. While Hoitsu had no direct teacher in the *Rimpa* line, he learned by copying works of Korin and Koetsu which he was fortunate enough to have access to from his family's collection. His distinctive style contributed to a revival of *Rimpa* and the establishment of a new line of artists.

Another Hoitsu painting, *Jurojin with a Crane* (both symbols of longevity), is inscribed with a poem (likely by Hoitsu) that further references longevity: 'The bud of plum is like a star's facing to South'. As the plum is associated with both the winter and old age and the South Star is Jurojin himself. Following the models set by Hoitsu, many gifted pupils developed the *Rimpa* style. While earlier *Rimpa* artists tended to focus primarily on decorative motifs either derived from nature or Japanese literary sources, later *Rimpa* artists expanded their repertoire of subjects to include a broad range of subjects including views of daily life.

The show also includes one painting Tawaraya Sotatsu, by four paintings by Sakai Hoitsu, two paintings by Sakai Oho (1808-1841), as well as others. This exhibition, combined especially with the two at the Metropolitan Museum of Art should provide rich visions and deep understanding for this peculiarly Japanese, pre-Art Deco, artistic movement

Following the precedent set by the current presentation at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Scholten is including 20th- and 21st-century *Rimpa*-style works in this exhibition. Lesley Kehoe Galleries (Melbourne, Australia) have generously loaned a remarkable pair of folding screens, aptly titled *Ode to Rinpa*, by the contemporary artist Maio Motoko.

There is an open house weekend (29 Sept-1 Oct), which coincides with a symposium related to the Hoitsu exhibition at the Japan Society on 29 September, with a programme related to the ongoing *Rimpa* exhibition the following day at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Scholten Japanese Art, 145



*Peonies in Rain Storm* by Sakai Hoitsu (1761-1828), with poem by Kameda Bosai (1752-1826), ink and colors on silk, hanging scroll, 104 x 40.8 cm, Scholten Japanese Art

West 58th Street, suite 6D, New York 10019, tel 212 585 0474, kmartin@scholtenjapanese-art.com, www.scholten-japanese-art.com. Hours: Mon-Sat, 11-5; open house weekend, 29 September to 1 October, 11-5 (no appointment needed).

### JAPANESE ART, WORKS ON PAPER AND CERAMICS

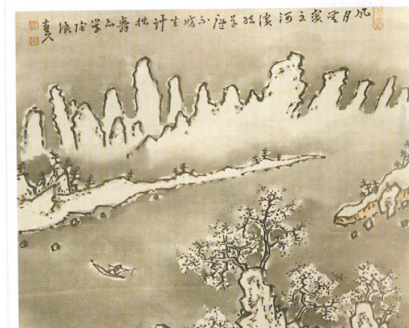
7 to 9 September This will be a three-day exhibition of a few, carefully selected works of art of Zen and Zen-like taste, with most everything being a work on paper. There are exceptions to this rule, however, and they are in the form of newly discovered ceramic works by the quirky, 19th-century woman artist, Otogaki Rengutsu (1791-1875.) Her calligraphy, elegantly executed in her rare poem slips, *tan-zaku*, appears works apart from her small, grey clay objects with uneven surfaces, weave-impressed bases and sometimes contorted shapes - all ideal for *cha*.

The paintings and calligraphy clamber for attention in this exhibition, each one equally suited for first place: a *gassaku* (collaborative work) by Matsumura Goshun (1752-1811) and Yosa Buson (1716-1783) of a *chimaku*

dumpling by Goshun and a poem by Buson, a light touch because of Buson's well-known love of food; a *kakemono* of a man gazing at the moon by Kobayashi Issa (1763-1827); a long calligraphy by the famous female poet/calligrapher of Gion, Chitoyo-ni (1703-1775), rare because she is mostly known for her short poems; plus a number of scrolls by the 'last great Nanga painter' Fukuda Kodojin (1865-1944.) BachmannEckstein.com, www.BachmannEckstein.com. Hours: Fri-Sun, 11-6. Opening reception, Friday, 7 September, 4-9.

### PRE-SONG DYNASTY CERAMICS

8 to 15 September Eric Zetterquist's exhibition of pre-Song Dynasty ceramics features works from a private American collection, many of which have previous American and Japanese provenance. The earliest works are two thinly potted black wares from the Longshan Culture, which date back to approximately 2500 BC. There are also two fine examples from Warring States Period (403-221 BC). The



*Landscape* by Fukuda Kodojin (1865-1944), ink on silk, BachmannEckstein



*Dragon Cloud*, two piece kutani stoneware sculpture, about 6.5 x 13 x 6 inches, Joan B Mirviss