

# The world of the Japanese Woodblock Print

## Week 4 Western artists and shin hanga

U3A 4 August 2025 Michael Harrington

# Week 4 outline

Week 3 review

Western woodblock artists in Japan and beyond

Historical backdrop

The shin hanga revival

The artists

1<sup>st</sup> generation      The pioneers

2<sup>nd</sup> generation      The “Watanabe” generation

3<sup>rd</sup> generation      Independent directions

Western Artists as Cultural Intermediaries  
Reception in Japan and Abroad



# Review: Japonisme

‘Japonisme’, the term coined by the art critic Philippe Burty in 1872, refers to the fascination for Japanese art and culture that swept across Europe and North America during the second half of the nineteenth century. The classic period of Japonisme extended from the late 1850s to the 1890s and was associated with Impressionism and Post-Impressionism in Europe, and the Aesthetic movement in England. Following Japan’s opening up of trade with the West, an influx of goods began arriving in Europe. These goods covered the spectrum of Japanese art and culture, including fans, kimonos, silks, ivories, ceramics, lacquer, bronzes, furniture and woodblock prints. Among the prints arriving were many by the great masters of the so-called ukiyo-e, or pictures of the floating world, school of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, including Katsushika Hokusai, Kitagawa Utamaro and Utagawa Hiroshige whose works were to become enormously influential upon European artists and designers.

Japonaiserie >>> Japonisme

<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/a-radical-style/>

# Review: Van Gogh as a Japan tragic

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eCllbeOxR1c>



Turning Japanese

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGy9uomagO4>

# Western Woodblock Artists in Japan: 1890–1940

# Historical Context

- Japan reopened to the West in the 1850s
- Foreign interest in Japanese culture surged
- Western artists drawn to traditional methods





# Shin Hanga: A Revival of Ukiyo-e

- Shin hanga ('new prints') emerged in early 20th century
- Revived collaborative model of ukiyo-e: artist, carver, printer, publisher
- Seen as 'neo-ukiyo-e' for modern audiences

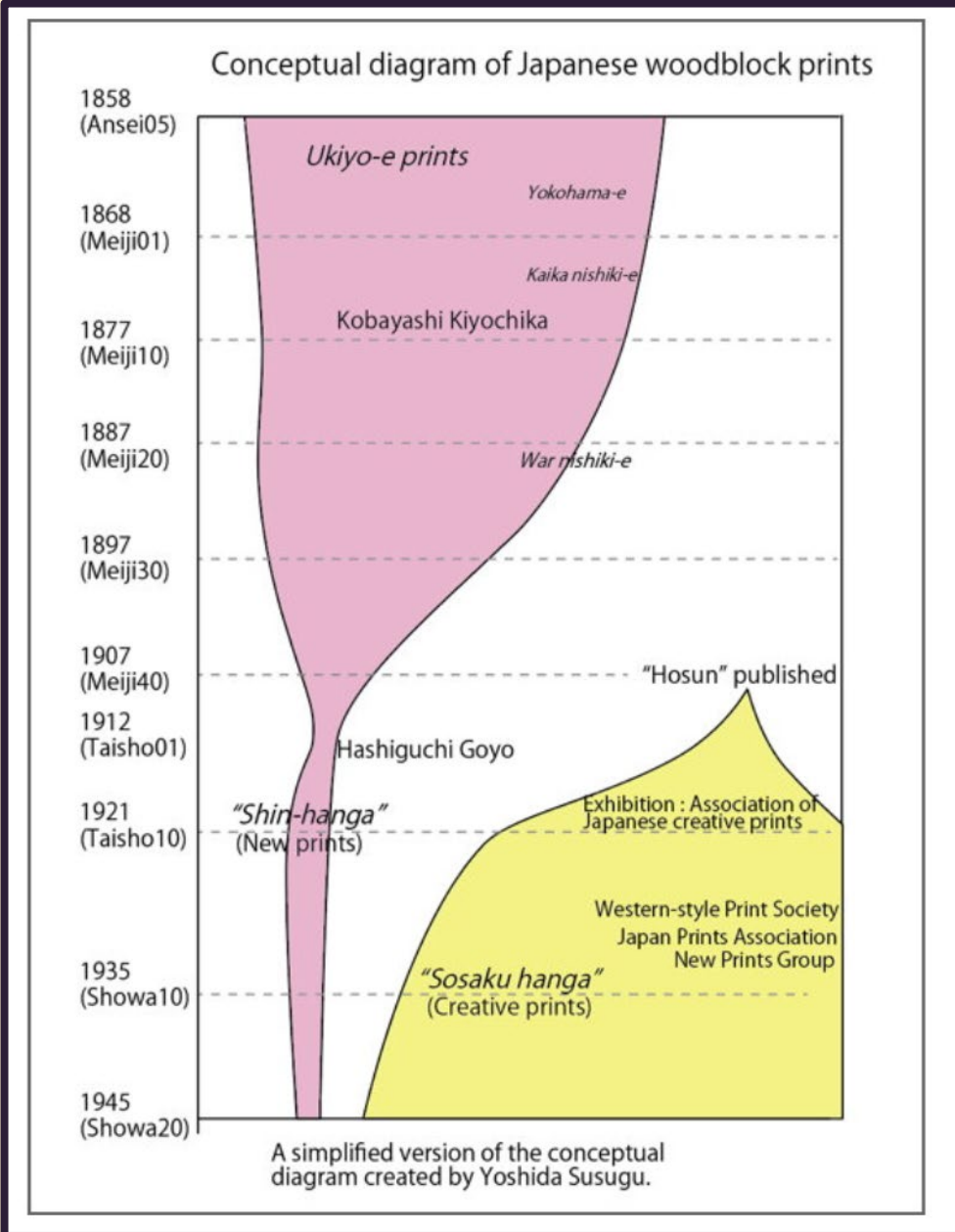
## 新版画



Before the Mirror (1916),  
Itō Shinsui (1898–1972)

# Shin Hanga vs. Sōsaku Hanga

- Shin hanga: collaborative, traditional subjects, commercial focus
- Sōsaku hanga: 'creative prints', artist does all stages
- Sōsaku hanga emphasized personal expression over craftsmanship



Hosun was an art magazine founded by Yamamoto Kanae and others.

[studio-sakyo.jp/wp/en/archives/6995](http://studio-sakyo.jp/wp/en/archives/6995)



# Western woodblock artists in Japan

1 <sup>st</sup> generation  Pioneers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emil Orlik (1870-1832)</li> <li>• Helen Hyde (1869-1912)</li> <li>• Bertha Lum (1869-1954)</li> </ul>
2 <sup>nd</sup> generation  Emergence of shin hanga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fritz Capelari (1884-1950)</li> <li>• Charles W. Bartlett (1860-1940)</li> <li>• Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956)</li> </ul>
3 <sup>rd</sup> generation  Individual directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lillian May Miller (1895-1943)</li> <li>• Pieter Irwin Brown (1903-?)</li> <li>• Paul Jacoulet (1896-1960)</li> </ul>

*Eyes Toward Asia: Ukiyo-e Artists  
from Abroad*  
Yokohama Museum of Art, 1996



# Generation I — Pioneers (c. 1899–1912)

Emil Orlik • Helen Hyde • Bertha Lum

# Generation I: Pioneers

Emil Orlik • Helen Hyde • Bertha Lum

- Early Western adopters in Japan (c. 1899–1912)
- Learned or adapted traditional workshop methods
- Set the stage for later shin hanga collaborations

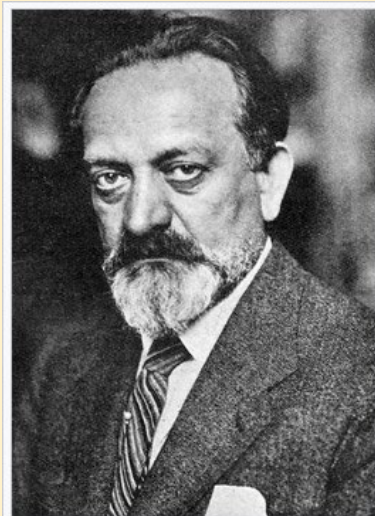
Emil Orlik 1910  
Two Japanese Men





# Emil Orlik 1870-1932

- Czech-German artist in Japan 1900–01
- Documented kabuki and daily life
- Influenced European artists, not shin hanga directly



Emil Orlik



Emil ORLIK (1870 - 1932)

Geishas



## Emil Orlik 1870-1932



Painter, Woodcutter and Printer in Japan 1902



Japanese resting on the mountain 1901

# Helen Hyde (1869-1912)

- American pioneer in Japan (arrived 1899)
- Studied with Kanō Tomonobu, a famous painter,  
and worked with carvers/printers
- Subjects: women/children; traveled China, India, Mexico





# Helen Hyde (1869-1912)



The Bath, 1905



Moon Bridge at Kameido, 1915



A Day in June, 1910



# Bertha Lum 1869-1954

- American artist trained in Japan
- Trained under master carver Igami Bonkotsu in 1907
- Carved and printed her own blocks
- Focused on Japanese folklore and mysticism
- <https://www.bertha-lum.org/en/biography/>
- <https://www.artelino.com/articles/bertha-lum.asp>





## Bertha Lum 1869-1954



Kites, 1913



The Bridge, 1913

# Bertha Lum 1869-1954



Four children dancing beneath  
blossoming cherry trees, 1913



The Fox Woman, 1923



The Land of the Bluebird. Woodcut by Bertha Lum, copyrighted  
1916. <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/ppmsca.09572>

The Land of the Bluebird, 1916



# Watanabe Shōzaburō : Visionary Publisher

- Founder of shin hanga movement
- Revived ukiyo-e collaboration model
- Published both Japanese and foreign artists



Watanabe Shōzaburō (undated photo)



Watanabe Shozaburo Print Shop in Kyobashi  
(present-day Chuo Ward, Ginza, Tokyo)  
Spring 1940



S. Watanabe Color Print Co.  
8-6-19 Ginza Chuo-Ku Tokyo  
The shop as it looks today

Bio details here:

[https://www.artelino.com/articles/watanabe\\_shozaburo.asp](https://www.artelino.com/articles/watanabe_shozaburo.asp)

<https://pages.uoregon.edu/jsmacollections/home/articles/watanabe-shozaburo.html>

# Generation II

## The Watanabe Generation (1910s–1920s)

Fritz Capelari • Charles W. Bartlett • Elizabeth Keith



# Generation II: The 'Watanabe Generation'

## Capelari • Bartlett • Keith

- Artists developed and exported by Watanabe (1910s–1920s)
- High craft standards; overseas dealer networks
- Landscapes, bijin, and Asian subjects for Western markets

The first shin hanga print? →

Fritz Capelari 1915  
Umbrellas/ Returning home in the rain



# Fritz Capelari 1884-1950

- Austrian artist in Tokyo c.1912
- Early collaboration with Watanabe
- Blended Art Nouveau with Asian themes
- <https://woodblock-print.eu/artist/friedrich-capelari-1884-1950.html>



Woman with Pekingese, 1915



Fritz Capelari  
1884-1950



Matsushima Sailboats, 1915



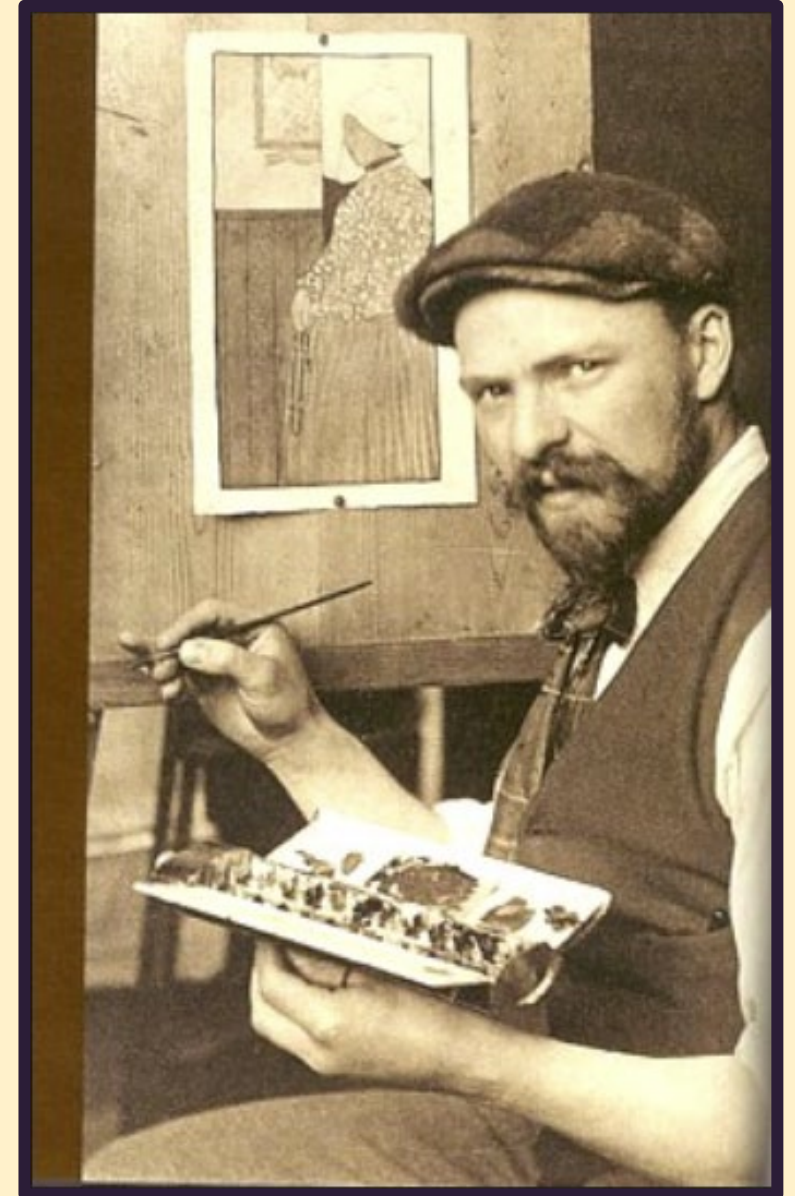
Children at the Fair, 1915



# Charles W. Bartlett (1860-1940)

- English painter trained in Europe
- Worked with Watanabe from 1915
- Fused Western composition with Japanese technique

<https://art-now-and-then.blogspot.com/2016/09/charles-w-bartlett.html>



Charles W. Bartlett  
(1860-1940)

Surfriders, Honolulu, 1921





## Charles W. Bartlett (1860-1940)



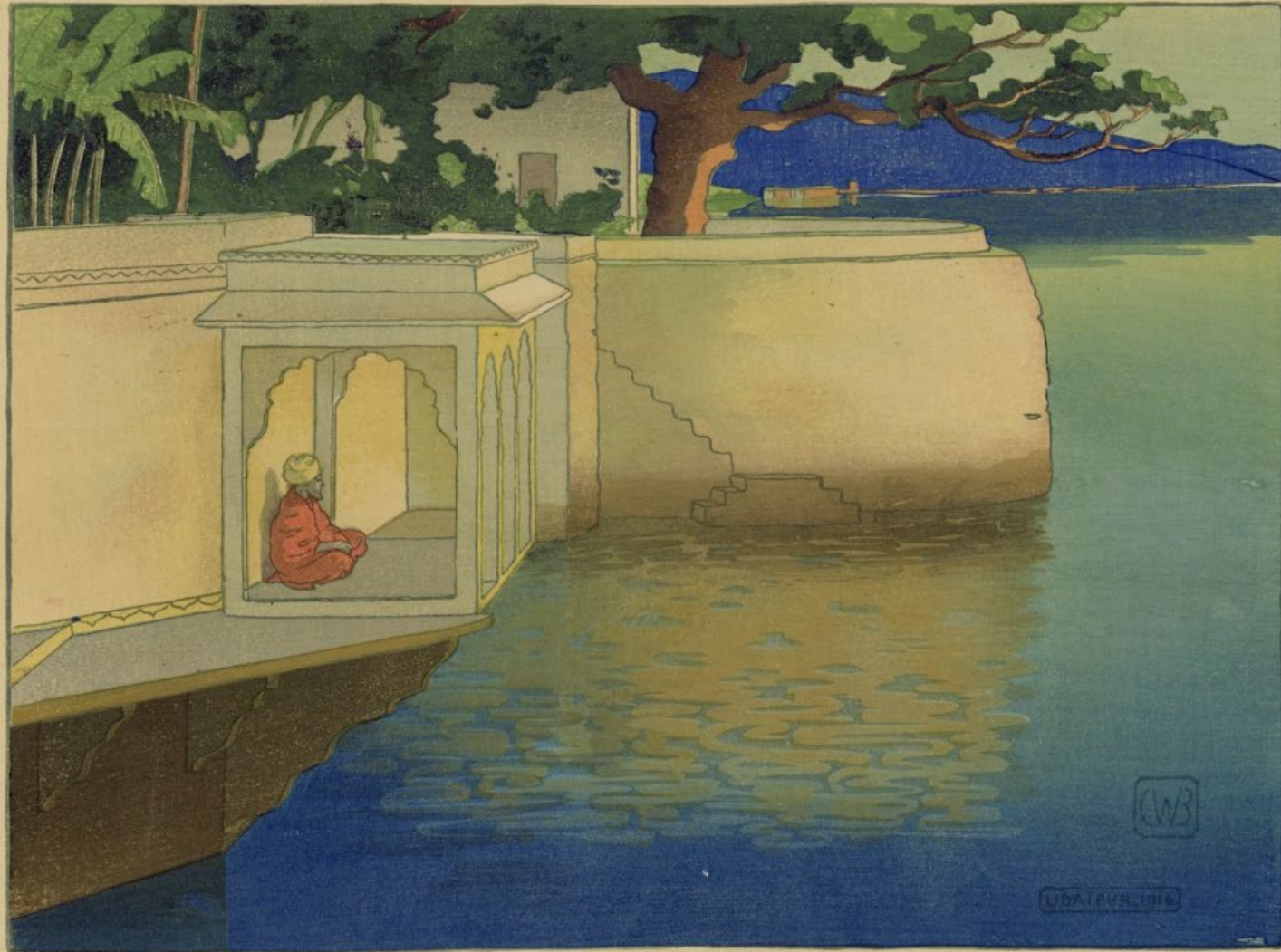
*Shoji, Japan, 1916*



*Kamakura, 1916*



Charles W. Bartlett  
(1860-1940)



*Udaipur, India, 1916*

Imperfect Copy. No 2



# Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956)

- Scottish artist in Japan from 1915
- Introduced to Watanabe via diplomatic circles
- Known for portraits of Asian women and landscapes

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_Keith](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_Keith)

<https://elizabethkeith.art/>





## Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956)



Blue and White, 1925  
1925



Embroidering, Korea, 1921,



Japanese children of yesteryear,



## Elizabeth Keith (1887-1956)



Japanese carpenter 1925



Kamakura. Summer Reflections 1922

# Lilian May Miller, 1895 -1943

- American raised in Tokyo
- Self-carved and printed works
- Bridged U.S. and Japanese aesthetics



Lilian May Miller, passport photo, 1918

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilian\\_May\\_Miller#cite\\_note-Guliver\\_p.\\_116-23](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lilian_May_Miller#cite_note-Guliver_p._116-23)



Lilian May Miller,  
1895 - 1943



Rain Blossoms, Japan, 1928

Cathedral Cliffs, Diamond Mountains, Korea, 1928



Lilian May Miller,  
1895 - 1943



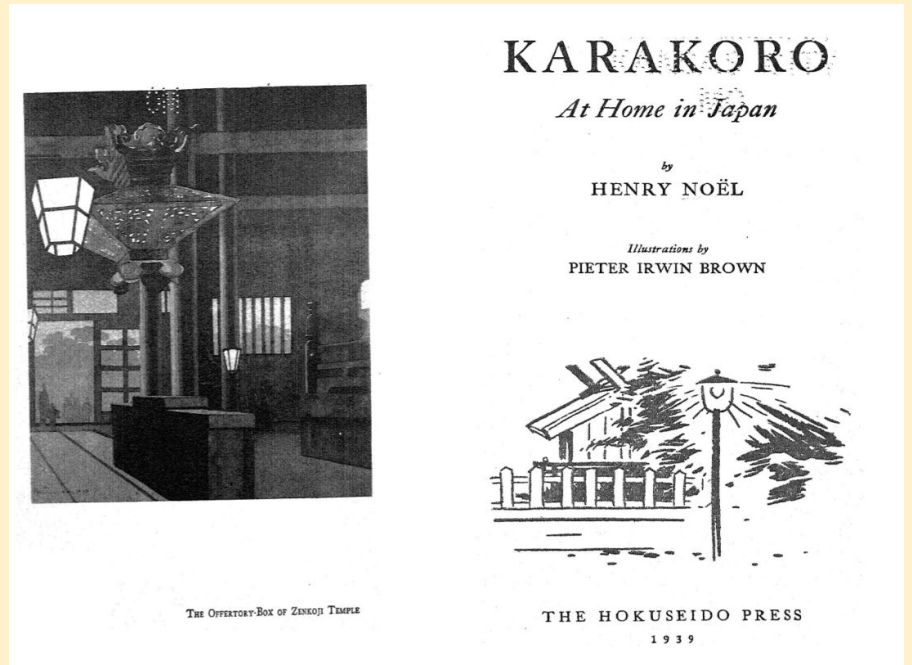
Snow on Temple Roofs (Grey Sky), c. 1934



Moonrise over Kyoto, 1924

# Pieter Irwin Brown 1903 - ?

- Dutch-Irish artist active in Japan mid-1930s
- Sold designs to Watanabe; Manchuria/Korea/Japan subjects
- Also worked with Adachi; illustrated 'Karakoro' (1939)



# Pieter Irwin Brown

## 1903 - ?

Volcano Asama, Karuizawa Japan, ca 1935-40



Bridge Over River at Jehol, Manchuria, 1937  
Also *Winter in Manchukuo*; and *Early Morning Sleigh Ride*



## Pieter Irwin Brown 1903 - ?



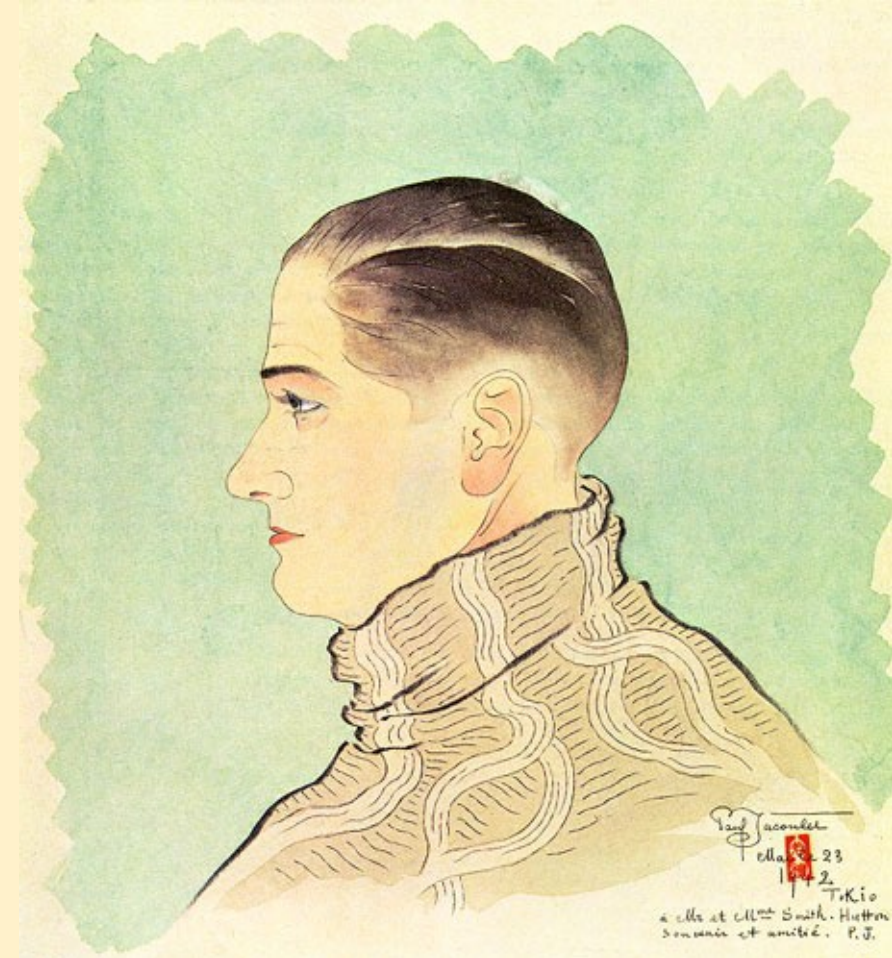
Ginza in the Snow, Tokyo, 1937



Starry Night over Mt. Fuji, 1937

# Paul Jacoulet (1896-1960)

- French artist raised in Japan
- Ran own studio, not linked to Watanabe
- Used deluxe materials and exotic subjects
- *More about Jacoulet over the next four sessions*





# Bridging Worlds: Western Artists as Cultural Intermediaries

- Western artists shaped how Japan was seen abroad
- Acted as cultural translators or interpreters of 'the East'
- Their lens filtered Japanese and colonial realities

## IMPRINTING THE EMPIRE: WESTERN ARTISTS AND THE PERSISTENCE OF COLONIALISM IN EAST ASIA

Tessa Morris-Suzuki

*The Australian National University*

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From Sakai & Yoo (editors) 2012. *The Trans-Pacific Imagination: Rethinking Boundary, Culture and Society*. World Scientific Press, pp 75-96.



# Women, Empire, and Representation

- Lum, Keith, Miller and depicted Korea/China under Japanese rule
- Prints often romanticized or aestheticized empire, esp for tourist market
- Gender shaped themes, access, and reception





# Reception in Japan and Abroad

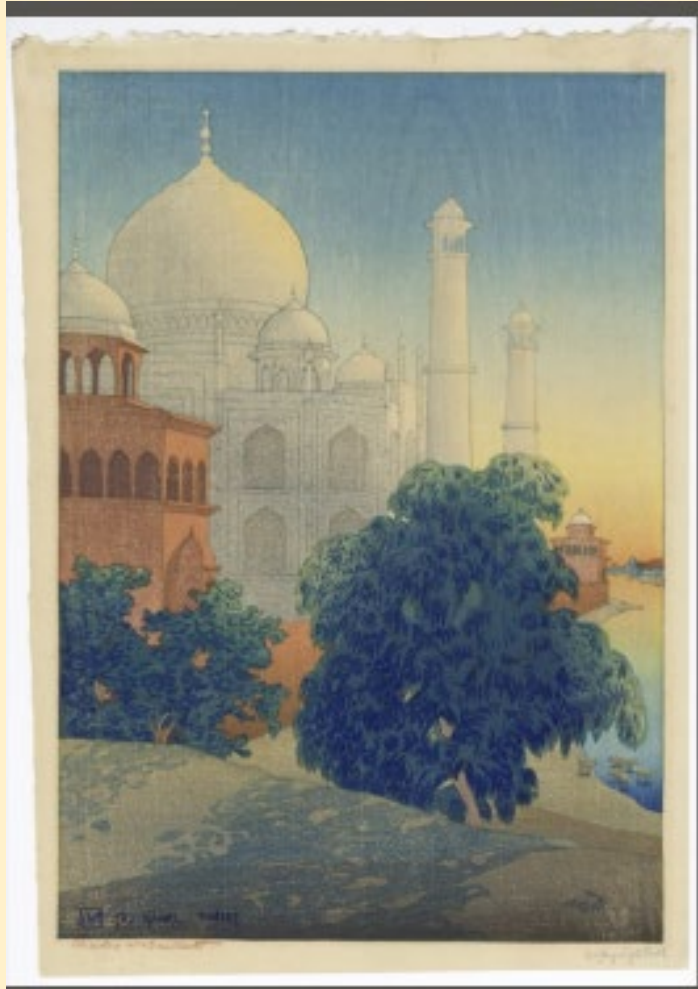
- Foreign buyers valued 'insider' perspective
- Japanese reception was mixed
- Many works now in major museum collections

# Week 4 wrap-up



# Appendix

Charles W. Bartlett  
(1860-1940)



*Taj Mahal, Sunset, 1919*



*Kobe, 1916*



*Madura, India 1916*

Elizabeth Keith  
(1887-1956)



Forbidden City 1935



Korean bride 1928



Embroiders, Soochow 1936





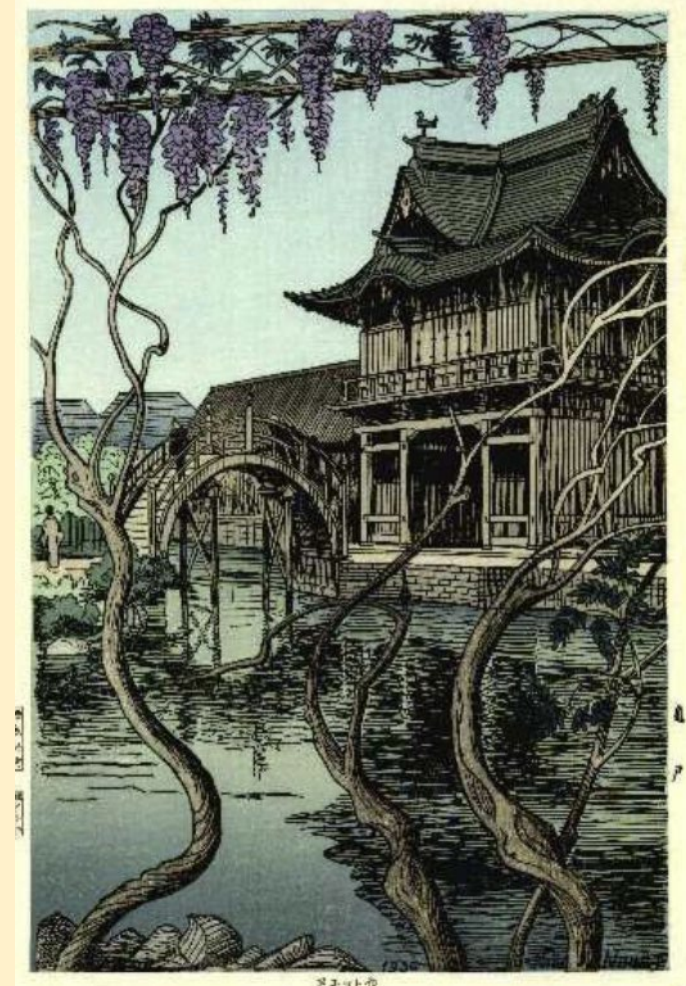
# Interactions Among Western Artists

- Few direct collaborations, but shared artistic circles
- Watanabe-linked artists (Bartlett, Keith, Capelari) likely crossed paths
- Lum and Miller shared methods; Jacoulet worked independently

# Other Publishers and Independent Models

- Some artists self-published (Jacoulet, Lum)
- Watanabe's model was not universal
- Alternative networks and printers existed

Noel Noett, 1885-1944  
Kameido Bridge, 1936





# Review: Van Gogh's practice

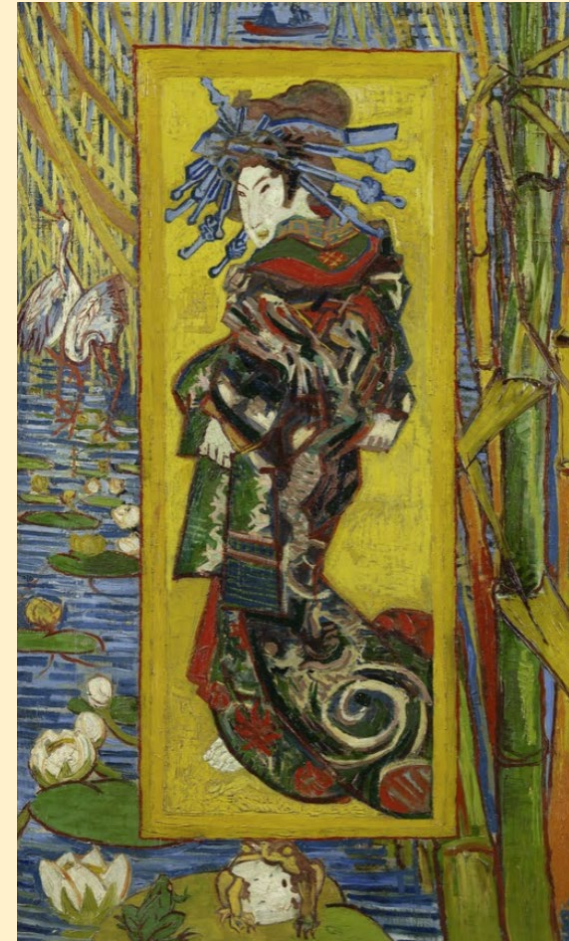


Flowering plum orchard: after Hiroshige,  
Van Gogh, 1887

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Plum Park in Kameido,  
Hiroshige, 1857



Courtesan: after Eisen  
Van Gogh, 1887



Eisen, reproduced in *Paris  
Illustré le Japon* in 1886



# Review: Van Gogh and Hiroshige



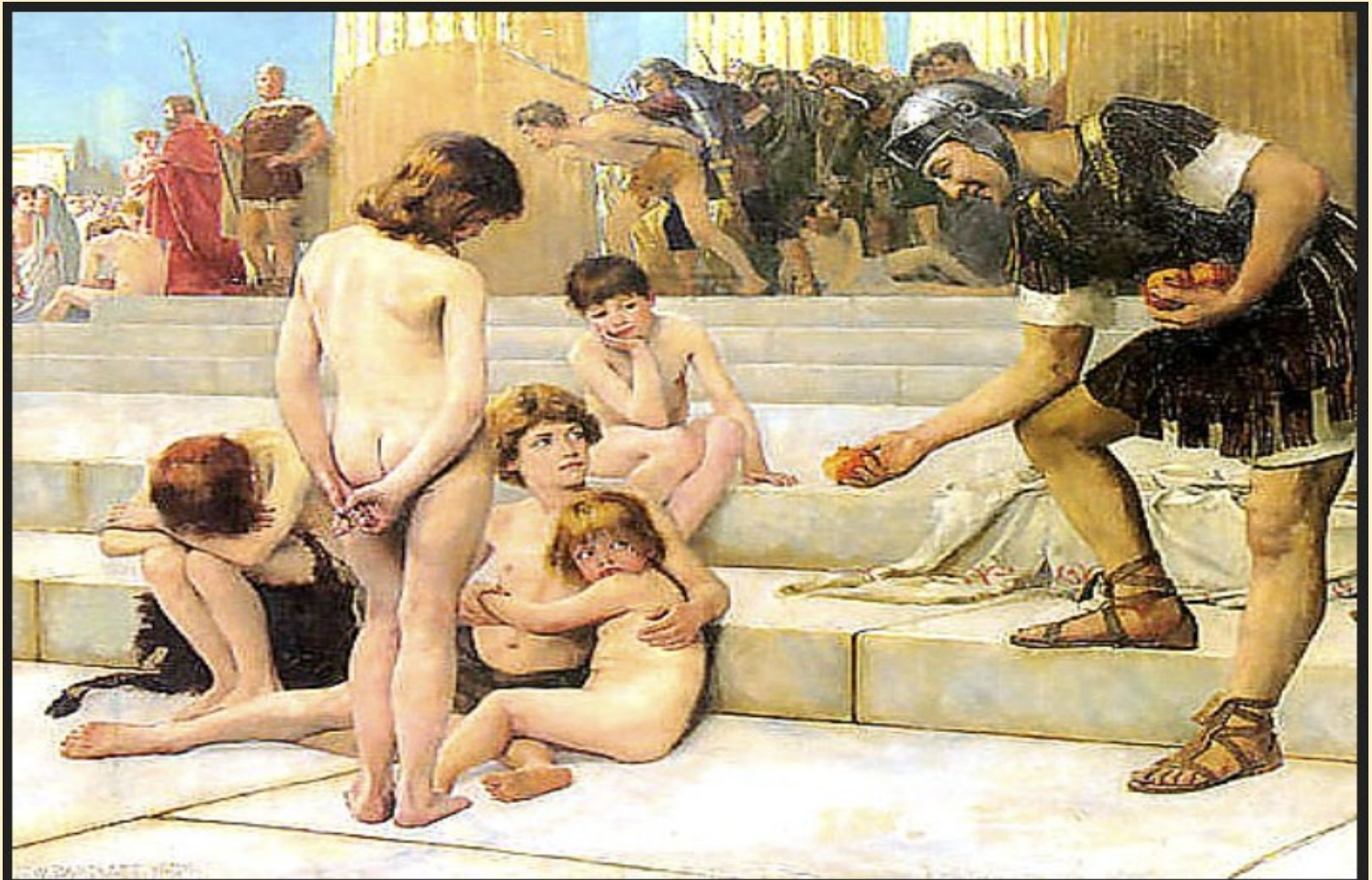
Vincent van Gogh, Bridge in the Rain (after Hiroshige), oil on canvas, 1887. Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam. Detail.



Utagawa Hiroshige, Sudden Shower over Shin-Ohashi Bridge and Atake from the series *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo*, color woodblock, 1857, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA.



Charles W. Bartlett  
(1860-1940)



***Captives in Rome, 1888, Charles W Bartlett. The children's faces, hairstyles, and pale flesh tones seem quite anachronistic.***

<https://art-now-and-then.blogspot.com/2016/09/charles-w-bartlett.html>