

Arts of Asia Lecture Series Fall 2016
From Monet to Ai Weiwei: How We Got Here
Sponsored by The Society for Asian Art

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Rise of Imperial Japan: Arts & Crafts of Taishō and Early Shōwa

September 2, 2016

1. Periods: Imperial Japan (Dai Nippon Teikoku) (1867-1945)
Meiji 明治 (“Enlightened Rule,” 1868-1912), Emp. Mutsuhito
Taishō 大正 (“Great Virtue”, 1912-26), Emp. Yoshihito
Shōwa 昭和 (“Enlightened Peace”, 1926-89), Emp. Hirohito

- 2.. New concepts: *bijutsu* (fine art), *kōgei* (crafts), *bijutsu kōgei* (artistic crafts).
nihonga (“Japanese painting,” neo-traditionalism), *seiyōga* (“western painting”)
shin hanga (new prints, neo-ukiyo-e), *sōsaku hanga* (“creative prints”)

3. Exhibition Structures:
1873, Vienna World’s Fair; 1893, Chicago, World’s Columbian Exposition
1883, gov’t closes Kobu bijutsu gakkō (Art School of Ministry of Public Works),
1887 gov’t opens Tokyo bijutsu gakkō (Tokyo Fine Art School), 1st class 1889
Ministry of Education Art Exhibition (*Monbusho bijutsu tenrainkai*)
(juried exhibition of painting and sculpture, craft & prints from 1927)
1907-1918 (Bunten); 1919-1935 (Teiten) Imperial Art Exh 1936-44 (New Bunten)

4. Themes:
 - a. People: Women
The Daughter of Japan (*bijin*): Good Wife, Wise Mother; Woman of the Soil
Anti-Bijin
Ambivalence of Fashion
(Heroic Male Bodies)

 - b. Places:
The Sacred Landscape
Despoiled Land
Ambivalent City
(The apotheosis of nature)

 - c. Things/Ideas: Cultural Dialogue
Japanizing Europe
Modernizing Tradition (Presenting the Past)
Transcending History

- Further Reading:
Rimer, JT., ed. *Since Meiji: Perspectives on the Japanese Visual Arts, 1868-2000* (2012)
Conant, Ellen, ed. *Nihonga, Transcending the Past* (St. Louis Art Museum, 1995)

Winther-Tamaki, B. *Maximum Embodiement: Yoga: Western Painting of Japan* (2012)
Ming Tiampo et al eds. *Art and War in Japan and Its Empire: 1931-1960* (2015)
Brown, Kendall, ed. *Japan Deco: Shaping Art and Culture, 1920-1945* (2012)