



Hiroshige, 100 Views of Edo

Melanie Trede , Hiroshige Utagawa (Illustrator) , Lorenz Bichler

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Hiroshige's Edo: Masterful ukiyo-e woodblock prints of Tokyo in the mid-19th century Literally meaning "pictures of the floating world," [b]ukiyo-e refers to the famous Japanese woodblock print genre[/b] that originated in the 17th century and is practically synonymous with the Western world's visual characterization of Japan. Because they could be mass produced, ukiyo-e works were often used as designs for fans, New Year's greeting cards, single prints, and book illustrations, and traditionally they depicted city life, entertainment, beautiful women, kabuki actors, and landscapes. The influence of ukiyo-e in Europe and the USA, often referred to as Japonisme, can be seen in everything from impressionist painting to today's manga and anime illustration. This reprint is made from one of the finest complete original set of woodprints belonging to the Ota Memorial Museum of Art in Tokyo.

Hiroshige, 100 Views of Edo Details

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Author : Melanie Trede , Hiroshige Utagawa (Illustrator) , Lorenz Bichler

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From Reader Review Hiroshige, 100 Views of Edo for online ebook

Ghia Arroyo says

I have not read all of it yet since it is more of an art book with captions but I was just super excited to share how wonderful and eye-catching this book is! The photos are vibrant along with captions that invoke the senses. For me I believe in law of attraction and visualization. Although I have been to Japan once I would like to live there in the future so I feel these images really give me a mental view of what more I would see in Japan. Throughout the captions for each image Trede and Bichler share rich history and further the depth in these woodblock prints.

Jan says

This is a beautifully put together art book. The design of the cover is captivating, and the traditional Japanese style binding a delight. The paper quality is excellent, with each page a double fold and the soft cover in what feels like a mulberry washi.

Melanie Trede's introduction puts Hiroshige's prints in their historical context of pictures of famous places (meisho) that date back to the 10th century and the poetry collection "One Hundred Poets, One Poem Each". Trede explores the influence Hiroshige's work had on painters like Whistler, Pissarro and Van Gogh, but also the influence that Western art techniques had on Hiroshige. Of more interest, perhaps, is the discussion of Hiroshige's methodology and how his approach to recording Edo differed to that taken by Hokusai. The pictures weren't just a record of Edo life but a means of promoting the city and creating a cultural narrative that appealed to residents and potential visitors alike. I was interested to learn about the prohibition on depicting Edo castle and other official buildings of the Shogun and how Hiroshige sometimes got around that restriction, even getting views that contained hints of the castle past the censors. Also on the censors' hit list was anything that might place the shogunate in a bad light. Some ukiyo-e artists got into bother by depicting the devastation caused by the 1855 earthquake, but Hiroshige's views are focused on the positive, showing the glories of a newly reconstructed and vibrant Edo after the earthquake, but contain hidden political allusions designed to circumvent the censors' sensibilities. There is information on the publisher, Sakanaya, and a detailed description of the process from proof drawing to woodblock engraving to printing, in Trede's introduction as well.

The book reproduces one of only a few surviving complete sets of views from the first print run. The set is held by the Ota Memorial Museum of Art in Tokyo, a museum we haven't visited yet, but which I now hope to include on a future trip to Tokyo. The reproductions glow on the page, with the full depth of colour that must exist in the originals. Trede is joined by Lorenz Bichler in writing the commentaries for each view, discussing the content of the print, its meaning and the craftsmanship involved in bringing each element of the image together.

Sharon Barrow Wilfong says

This is the most stunningly beautiful book I own. The pages are glossy with color photos of Hiroshige's artwork based on views of the town of Edo.

Utagawa Hiroshige was a Japanese artist from the first half of the 19th century in the genre of "ukiyo-e", which literally means, "floating world".

Hiroshige painted everyday life, the good, the bad, the ugly in the village of Edo in rich watercolors of blues, pinks, greys, and greens. Each painting is a feast for the eyes.

The commentaries of each print is in English, French and German and describe what is happening and what to look for. I found this very helpful because there were details I did not notice until I read the commentary which brought it to my attention. Also, it explained the action in the print which I would not have understood.

There is action and drama that transpires in every print, yet the colors and form exert only calm. It is a paradox but makes Hiroshige's paintings so successful.

Yuri Faulstich says

Incredibly beautiful, as expected from a Taschen book.

The work of Hiroshige is amazing, portraying the old Edo in every possible way. By the end, you just wanna visit everyplace depicted in the series!

Psychophant says

It is difficult to score a work like this. I like a lot Japanese prints and Hiroshige's in particular, or I would not have got it (as a present). The edition is beautiful, at the same size as the original. And yet the text sometimes feels like filling, which is not surprising considering that not all the views have an anecdote or a tale associated with it.

In the end the beautiful presentation and the fact that I have the prints easy to see and find at my fingertips make me give it a high score. After all, the text is something I will go through once, while the prints I will revisit often.

NoBeatenPath says

A book of art prints that is a work of art in its own right. It comes in a beautiful presentation box covered in printed silk. The book itself is a Japanese stab binding, with a silk cover. The images within it are wonderful, and are reproduced to the highest quality; and the commentary is fascinating and well read. Whether you are a fan of Hiroshige, Japanese art, Japanese culture or beautiful books, you should try to get your hands on a copy of this.

Angela Aagenborg says

Prachtig vormgegeven met prachtige platen.

Andrej says

The 2016 hardcover is an absolutely exquisite piece of jewelry. It may be the most beautiful book from Taschen that I've read. I admire all its attention to detail: Japanese-style binding, a wooden-like case, a unique choice of paper, an extremely high quality of print. Hiroshige's woodblock prints themselves are magical and the authors' accompanying text very informative despite being concise.

Marilyn says

Beautiful presentation with beautiful paper. Good little descriptions of the prints.

Julie Davis says

I have been leisurely perusing this book on Sunday mornings when we get up and sit on the back porch with our coffee and the dogs running crazily after squirrels and mockingbirds. (Those of you with little ones, this time will come again for you, do not despair.)

This was a Christmas gift from my husband who knows of my fondness for looking at art on those Sunday mornings. Obviously, I haven't been always examining it on the back porch or even on every Sunday. Do not judge it by my leisurely pace. I'd find it hard to believe that you could find a better book about Hiroshige's famous series of woodblock prints.

*The way the shadows are elongated and distorted
gives the impression we are really seeing
moonlit playgoers in the puppet district*

Author Melanie Trede first puts Hiroshige in context by explaining that these types of series were common as travel guides. You'd get the latest series and admire the artistry while planning your next trip. Her explanations of the influences traded between Western and Japanese art, the constraints of the woodblock printing process, the Japanese government's censorship and other such information put me not only in the mood to better appreciate each piece, but put me mentally in that time and place. I especially loved little details such as the fact that a crane's feathers would be colorless but have a 3-D texture applied by the printer using his elbow to push the paper into hollowed out areas.

*Think how this crane would have seemed to soar
into your room with those feathers lifting from the paper*

All of this combines to make one appreciate what an artist's eye Hiroshige had, and his printer too for that matter. Impossible points of view, interesting framing, an insistence on showing the lowly facts of life as well as the noble things ... these keep the prints continually fresh and interesting.

*Horse dung. A fact of life but very controversial
for a piece of art. I myself loved seeing the straw horseshoes*

The book itself is also lovely, bound like a Japanese book, in a case with bamboo-like clasps. This setting prepares one for the treasury of art contained within. Just as Hiroshige would have wanted, one suspects.

William Southwell-Wright says

This is a captivating and incredibly beautifully rendered complete reproduction of Hiroshige's "One Hundred Famous Views of Edo. The volume is presented as a beautiful Japanese-style bound collection of the reprints, all of them reproduced as excellent quality large images, and presented in a bound box. Anyone who has any other Taschen art books will know that their presentation is always top notch, and this volume is no exception. All 120 of the original woodblock prints of the series, including both those made by Hiroshige in his lifetime and those finished by his successor Hiroshige II posthumously, are presented with detailed commentaries on their location and social context. A detailed introductory chapter includes excellent contextualising of the series of prints as a whole, Hiroshige's artistic biography, the production of woodblock prints, and their publication. An extensive bibliography and set of appendices provide further reading material for those who are interested in delving deeper, though this volume will prove to be pretty exhaustive and fulfilling for anyone but the most ardent researcher. Highly recommended.

Jimmy van der Hoeven says

prachtig

Caro the Helmet Lady says

LOVED IT.

I absolutely couldn't part with this book, that's why it took me so long to finish it. It's not about the text, it's about the art of course. Hiroshige together with Hokusai is my favourite classic Japanese artist. Definitely would make a great gift for me!!!.

Tanya Mulkidzhanova says

One of the books impossible to ever finish reading and viewing. I open it at random pages or at the ones that

are most memorable or best suit my mood every now and again. Also, the "japanese album" edition is much better than the hardcover.

Chris says

Het blijft lovenswaardig hoe Taschen erin slaagt om voor een relatief lage prijs zulke prima gedocumenteerde en mooi uitgegeven kunstboeken op de markt te brengen. Dat gaat zeker op voor deze uitgave, in een hardcover hoes met houtje-touwtje-sluiting en een uitneembare en mooi gebonden binnenbundel met dubbelgevouwen bladzijden op glad papier in groot formaat. De kleurafdrukken van Hiroshige's uitzichten op Edo (geen 100, maar 119) zijn bovendien van erg goede kwaliteit.

Toegegeven, ik bezit dit boek al enkele jaren en grasduinde er dan wel regelmatig in, maar zoals wel vaker met kunstboeken bleef de uitgebreide hoeveelheid aan informatie grotendeels ongelezen. Ten onrechte, want er viel heel wat op te steken van auteur Melanie Trede. Niet alleen over de manier waarop deze houtsnedes tot stand kwamen (een intense samenwerking tussen kunstenaar, houtsnijder, drukker en uitgever), maar bv. ook over het feit dat ze stuk voor stuk een censor moesten passeren die ze van een stempel ter goedkeuring voorzag en dat zulke uitgaven in het toenmalige Tokyo (halverwege de 19e eeuw, kort voor het land na 2 eeuwen isolement weer buitenlandse invloeden zou toelaten) reeds op grote schaal op de markt werden gebracht en vooral dienden als toeristische propaganda voor reizigers en pelgrims.

Tegelijk was Hiroshige oud en eigenwijs genoeg om er als kunstenaar zijn ding mee te doen. Terwijl hij ons de stadstaferelen en de nog grotendeels ongerepte landschappen met tempels, schrijnen, theehuizen en andere bezienswaardigheden voorschotelt van wat nu vrijwel allemaal tot de verstedelijkte omgeving van Tokyo behoort, geeft hij met subtile ingrepen de maatschappelijke tegenstrijdigheden van de Japanse maatschappij weer, doorpspekt ze met de boeddhistische en poëtische symboliek van dieren, bomen en bergen en grijpt hij waar nodig zelfs in in het landschap om het effect van (het altijd originele) perspectief en de compositie te versterken. Ook speelde hij kort op de bal wat de actualiteit betreft, o.a. door sommige door aardbevingen, tsunami's of branden getroffen bouwwerken in hun oude of nog niet helemaal gerestaureerde grandeur weer te geven.

En ik zou nog even door kunnen gaan over zijn onderhuidse humor of de subtiliteit waarmee hij met details en weglatingen de hoofdthema's of belangrijkste plaatsen eerder suggereert dan ze in hun volle glorie centraal te stellen. Kort gezegd: een waar genietboek (althans voor de liefhebbers).
