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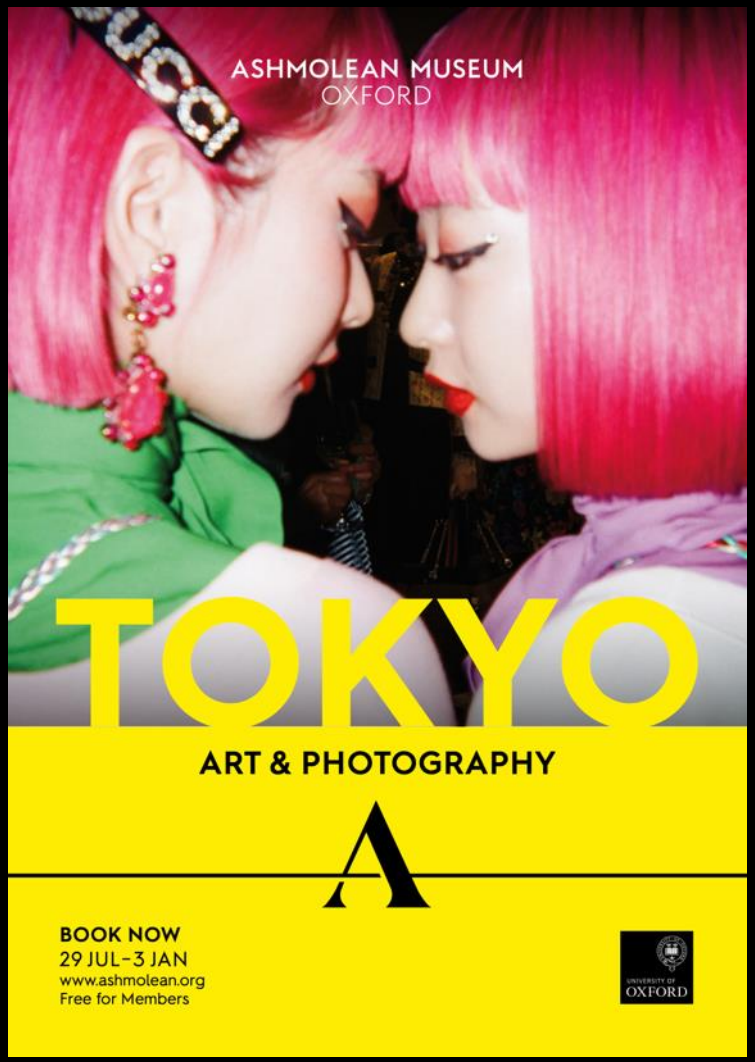

Tokyo: Art & Photography exhibition at Ashmolean Museum Oxford

Yoshiwara Pleasure Quarters, Hanging Scroll, *c.* 1670-85
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Kawakami Sugio, *Night of Ginza* from *One Hundred Views of New Tokyo*, 1929
Ashmolean

Sugiura Hisui, *Mitsukoshi Ginza Branch Open on April 10,* 1930

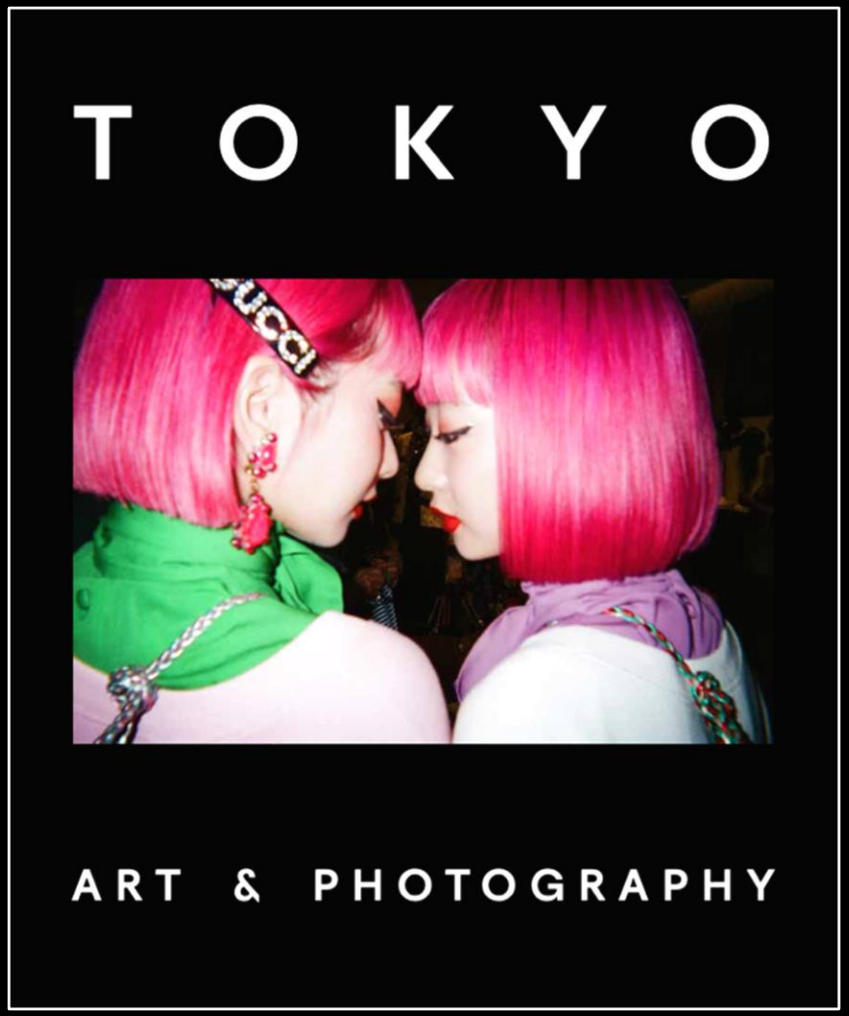
National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo

Shinohara Ushio, *The Doll Festival*, 1966
Ashmolean

Hosoe Eikoh, *Simmon, a Private Landscape*, 1971

Aida Makoto, *Tokyo 2020*, 2019
Private Collection

Ninagawa Mika, *Tokyo* from *Utsurundesu* series, 2018



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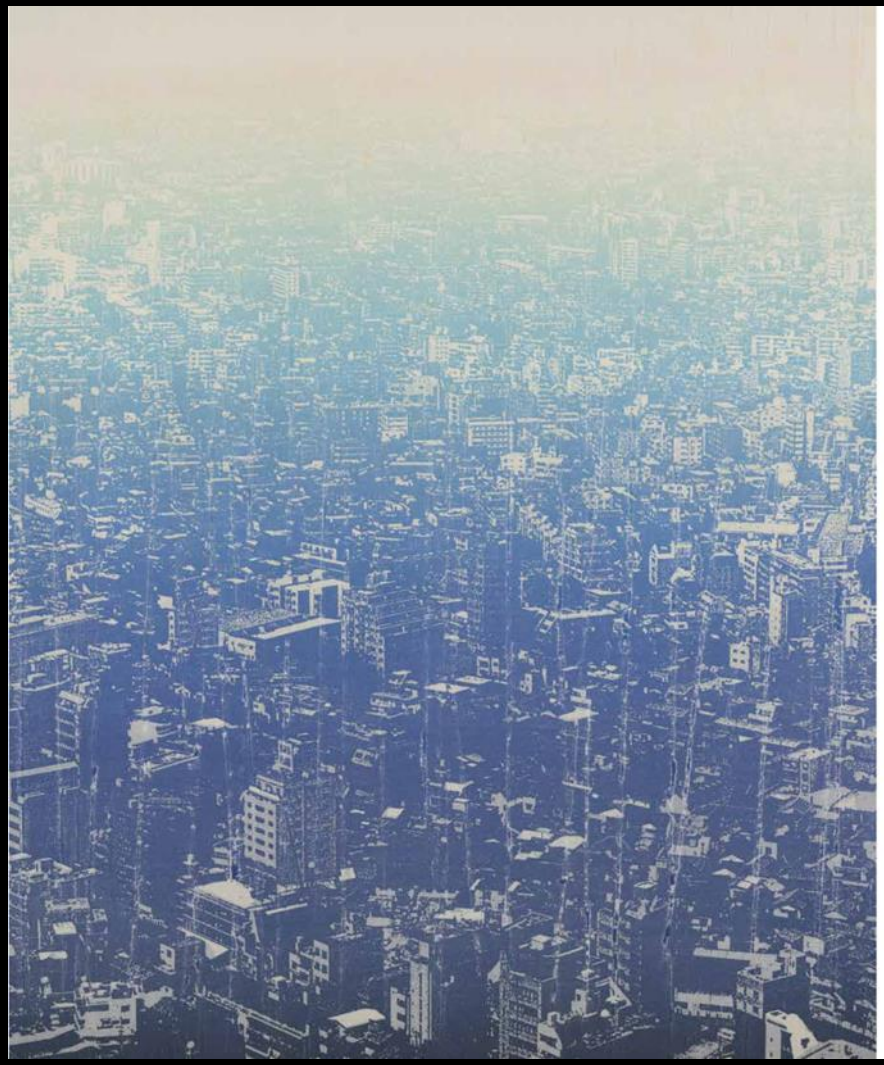

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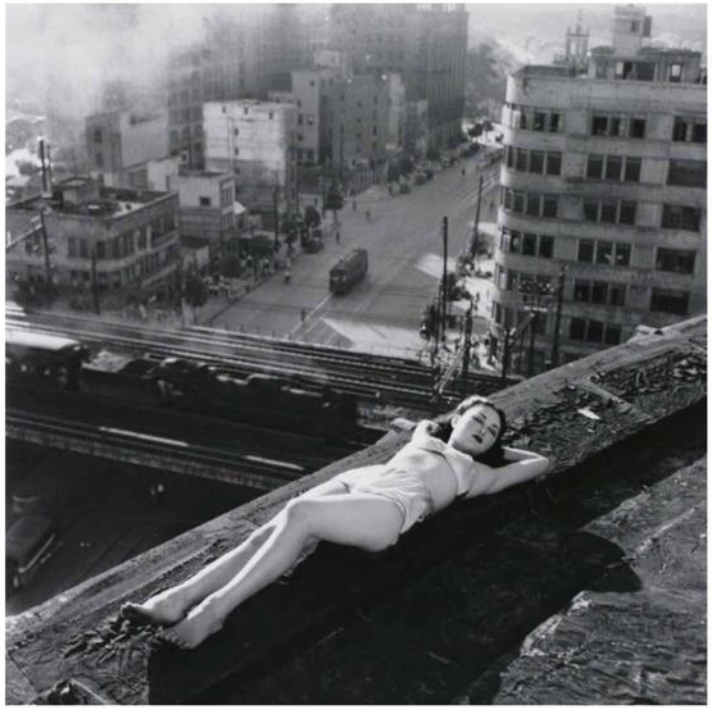

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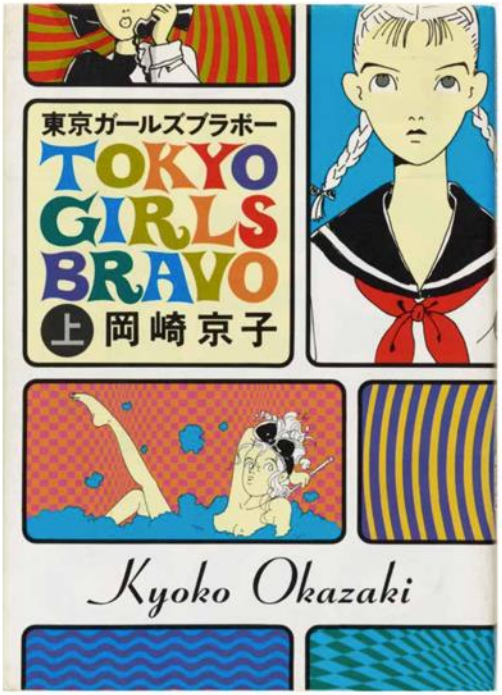

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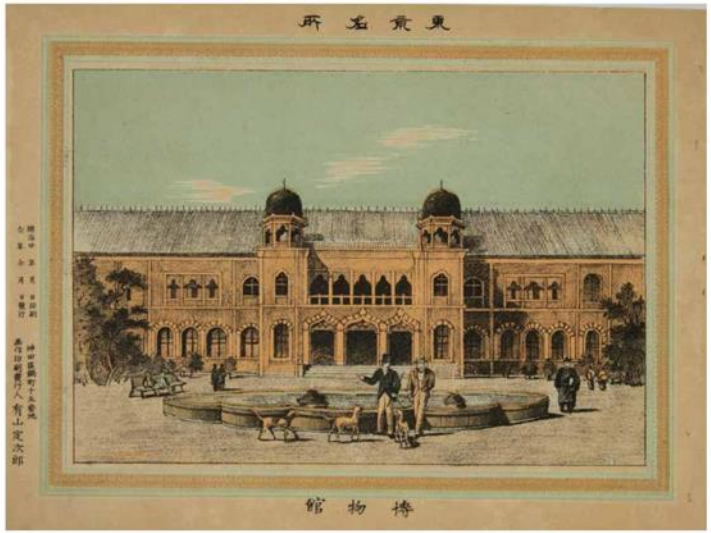

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CHRONOLOGY

628
The Buddhist temple Sensō-ji (also known as Asakusa-dera) is founded.

Twelfth century
The earliest settlement at Edo is established by the Edo warrior clan, who construct a fortified residence in a bay to the east of the Kantō Plain. During Japan's turbulent fifteenth century, the Edo clan surrender their base to Ōta Dōkan, a retainer of the rival Uesugi family. In 1457 Ōta begins building Edo Castle on the same site. Following Ōta's assassination in 1486, development of the settlement ceases and the site is abandoned.

1590
Warlord Tokugawa Ieyasu establishes Edo as his military headquarters. From this base he sets about consolidating control over a war-torn Japan, in which rival warrior clans vie for dominance.

1603
Beginning of the **Edo period**
Tokugawa Ieyasu completes the unification of Japan and appoints himself shogun, or military dictator. He rules from Edo in the name of the politically powerless emperor who remains in Kyoto, the former capital. Ieyasu develops his new power base, reconstructing Edo Castle, excavating a network of canals around the city centre and opening a silver mint (*ginza*), from which he unifies state coinage.

By now the main branch of the influential Kano painting school has moved from Kyoto to the new capital to work for the Tokugawa shogunate. This reflects a shift in Japan's primary source of patronage away from the imperial court.

1617
The Yoshiwara red light district is opened in central Edo. The Tokugawa shogunate plans the Yoshiwara as a means of restricting prostitution, but the area soon asserts itself as a lively entertainment district in which social classes mix with comparative freedom. Yoshiwara's atmosphere of leisure and sophistication provides the setting for popular *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints ('pictures of the floating world').

1629
Women are banned from performing in *kabuki*, an emergent form of theatre pioneered by the female dancer Izumi no Okuni. In Edo the first *kabuki* theatres are established in the Yoshiwara district. This elaborate, stylised dance-drama proves popular with diverse crowds.

1635
Tokugawa Iemitsu establishes the *sankin kōtai* system of alternative attendance, requiring over 250 regional lords (*daimyō*) periodically to travel to and reside within Edo. The system is designed to strengthen the shogun's control over regional rulers by requiring sufficient expenditure of time and money to prevent the rise of any political rival. Local artistic activity is fuelled by the presence of the *daimyō* and the large retinues that accompany them. The merchants and artisans catering to the needs of the samurai prosper despite their low social rank, providing a new base of patronage for the arts.

1633–9
The government issues a series of *sakoku* (closed country) edicts in an attempt to control contact with the outside world. The shogunate bans Christianity, introduced by Portuguese missionaries in the sixteenth century, before restricting foreign trade to Chinese and Dutch ships at specifically designated ports. It also prohibits Japanese people from leaving and foreign visitors from entering Japan.

1657
A fire ravages Edo, killing an estimated 100,000 people, destroying almost two-thirds of the city's buildings and significantly damaging Edo Castle. The Yoshiwara district burns down and is relocated to the northeastern outskirts of the city. The eclipse of Edo Castle as the city's focal point gives rise to the gradual disintegration of social segregation between samurai and 'common' townspeople.

1660
The artist Hishikawa Moronobu moves to Edo. Here he begins to design black and white woodblock prints, both book illustrations and single-sheet prints, sometimes coloured by hand. Thought to be the first print designer to sign his work, Hishikawa is instrumental in popularising *ukiyo-e*. Edo becomes the centre of production for a thriving woodblock print industry, creating affordable images of popular subjects such as courtesans and *kabuki* actors for a mass audience.

1716
The Tokugawa shogunate introduces the repressive Kyōhō Reforms. In an attempt to quell social unrest prompted by economic difficulties, the government clamps down on all forms of perceived excess and dissenting behaviour. New regulations curb the trend for oversize prints. Publishers dealing with subjects deemed detrimental to public morality, such as current affairs and erotica, contrive new ways to circumvent censorship.

1720
Tokugawa Yoshimune relaxes restrictions on the importation of foreign books. Previously, foreign materials had been forbidden, with the exception of those relating to medical and nautical matters. *Rangaku* (Dutch studies) develops as a diverse body of learning, drawing information from international sources.

1721
Edo's first census estimates the city's population to be around 1.3 million, making it the world's largest city. In 1772 the city falls behind Beijing in size following a fire.

1740s
Ukiyo-e printers develop two- (and later three- and four-) colour woodblock prints by making use of separate blocks to print each colour in sequence. Small marks known as *kentō*, positioned at the corner of a print, are used to register the woodblocks in precisely the right place.

1765
The print designer Suzuki Harunobu develops the first 'full-colour' prints, known as 'eastern brocade pictures' (*azuma nishiki-e*).

1789
The Tokugawa shogunate issues the reactionary Kansei Reforms. These repressive measures – in particular censorship legislation – deal a temporary blow to the world of publishing, while stiffening popular resistance to shogunal authority.

1798
Artist Hokusai assumes the name Katsushika, referring to the area of Edo in which he was born. Hokusai, Japan's first great designer of landscape prints, goes on to publish numerous views of the city, including two highly successful series of woodblock prints: *Famous Sights of the Eastern Capital* (*Tōto meisho ichiran*) and *Eight Views of Edo* (*Edo hakkei*).

1830s
The arts flourish under long-serving and pleasure-loving shogun Tokugawa Ienari. The *Edo genzon meika ichiran*, a local directory of over a thousand artists, scholars and writers in the city, is published. *Ukiyo-e* artists, including Hokusai, Hiroshige, Kunisada and Kuniyoshi, form the second most numerous occupation listed.

1842
Britain defeats China in the first Opium War. Japan's fear of suffering a similar fate to Qing China at

Joe Hazell

MURAKAMI TAKASHI

Murakami Takashi (b.1962 in Tokyo) is an internationally acclaimed and widely exhibited artist. A major characteristic of his work is the fusion of traditional 'fine art' mediums, such as painting and sculpture, with modern 'commercial' mediums, such as animation, fashion and toys.

His artistic career began at the prestigious Tokyo University of Fine Arts in 1986, where he obtained a PhD in *nihonga*, the 'Japanese-style' of painting. Drawn to *otaku* subculture, he turned his attention to *manga* and *anime* as artistic inspiration. *Otaku*, which translates literally as 'your house', is a term typically applied to young males who are obsessed with popular culture. Murakami perceived *otaku* subculture (and the *manga*, *anime*, toys and consumer goods so ubiquitous within it) as something highly representative of Japanese culture.

Following Murakami's early works, which utilised an eclectic mix of media and were often linked to social commentary, his painting *727* from 1996 is the first piece that features his enduring motif 'Mr DoB'. The acrylic triptych, which shows a ferocious Mr DoB riding a wave, underlines the influence of traditional Japanese art on his practice. The wave itself is a nod to Hokusai's famed *ukiyo-e* print, while the atmospheric impressions on the background, which were made by scraping layers of acrylic, owe much to the style of *nihonga* artists. The omnipresent and generally jovial Mr DoB, who is said to be an 'alter-ego' of the artist,[214] is one of many recurring characters that Murakami has created. Each of his creations ceaselessly morph depending on the specific artwork and atmosphere he wishes to generate, making them both versatile yet easily identifiable figures.

In 2000 Murakami coined the term '*superflat*' to illustrate his artistic approach, implementing fine art and pop culture into one coherent plane. *Superflat* also refers to the two-dimensionality of traditional as well as contemporary Japanese art, and to the perceived 'shallowness' of consumer culture in post-war Japan.[215] Throughout the 2000s the artist featured in group and solo exhibitions worldwide. In addition, he began to receive commissions from the world of fashion and media, culminating in a partnership with Louis Vuitton. His collaboration with musician Kanye West on the album cover of *Graduation* (2007) revealed Murakami's willingness to engage with youth culture, making him a recognisable figure among younger generations.

As well as creating works himself, Murakami also nurtures artists in his role as president of *Kaikai Kiki Co.*, his production and artist management company. Originally established as *Hiropon Factory* in 1996, it consists today of three studios in Tokyo, Los Angeles and New York, employing 350 people.[216] From these studios works by Murakami and other artists are churned out in a manner reminiscent of the 'factories' of Andy Warhol or Jeff Koons. Despite the high commercial value of his works in the art market, Murakami's approach could be considered 'democratic' in the way he seeks to blur the lines between popular culture and 'high art'. Producing inexpensive pencils, wallpaper and toys featuring his designs alongside unique works, Murakami's art seeks to be both accessible and affordable to the population at large.

DEATH MULTI AND HOLLOW BLUE

The acrylic paintings *Hollow Blue* and *Death Multi* were created by Murakami and *Kaikai Kiki Co* staff in 2015. The artist began by making small drawings, which were then scanned, computerised and silk-screen printed by members of his studio, before Murakami reviewed and manually refined them. At the end of this long creative process, the artist completed the paintings with his chosen words in spray-paint. Multicoloured cartoonish skulls permeate the surface of *Hollow Blue*, covering the entire canvas. They are flawlessly rendered and painted with immaculate precision, chiefly in purple, dark blue and white. The accumulation of countless skulls conveys a sinister atmosphere. To enhance this ominous impression, the message 'HOLLOW', written in large black letters in a style akin to graffiti and dripping down the canvas, dominates the composition. In 2014, when discussing his solo exhibition *In the Land of the Dead, Stepping on the Tail of a Rainbow* at Gagosian gallery, New York, Murakami commented on his use of the term 'hollow' as a reference to traditional and symbolic buildings (such as the *Bokuramon* temple that was included in the exhibition) and the way in which they have become devoid of genuine meaning. Through the changes in culture, such objects have been literally 'hollowed' out – they are now nothing more than 'forms'.[217]

In *Death Multi* the canvas is covered with smiling flowers, painted predominantly in bright red, yellow, purple and white, and occasional skulls. The word 'DEATH' that is scrawled on top of these introduces a stark sense of foreboding, however,

Murakami Takashi, *Death Multi*, 2015
Acrylic on canvas, mounted on aluminium frame, 100 x 100 cm

NAITŌ MASATOSHI

You see the real Tokyo only in the districts that come alive around midnight. By one or two o'clock in the morning, the city exposes a completely different character. There I found the spirit of human nature in plain sight.[175]

Naitō Masatoshi, *Smoking Vagrant*, 1981
from *Tokyo: A Vision of its Other Side* series

Naitō Masatoshi, *An Entertainer, Asakusa*, 1970
from *Tokyo: A Vision of its Other Side* series

MORIYAMA DAIDŌ

Moriyama Daidō, untitled, 1977

I feel love for Tokyo and the paradoxical catharsis of those who live there – in this chaotic metropolis in which people lose even their shadow inside the swirl of an unbelievable number of things.[176]

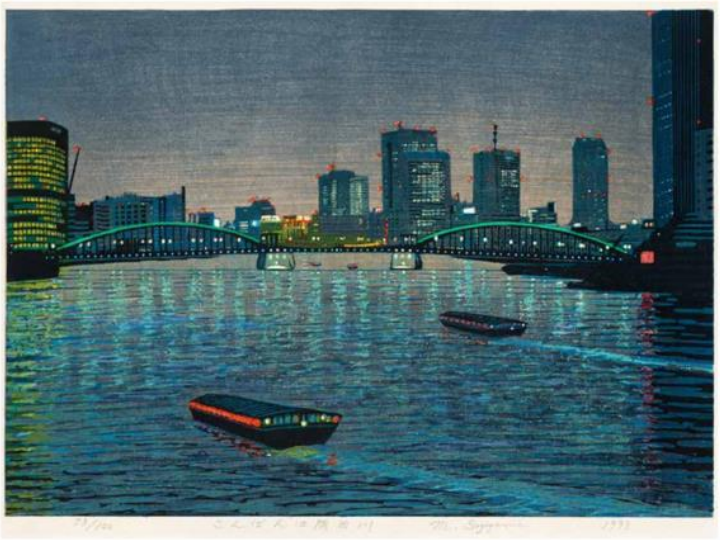
Chim↑Pom, *Love is Over*, 2014
Above: Photograph by Shinoyama Kishin. Left: Photograph by Leslie Kee.

Tokyo is our hometown. All our members met in Tokyo and it was in Tokyo that we formed our group. We made Tokyo our base, and there are also projects that we have created to represent Tokyo. Tokyo is the stage of Chim↑Pom's life. We get bored easily, but Tokyo always provides us with new themes because it is a city full of good changes as well as bad. In the fourteen years since we were founded, the city has continued to be a motif for Chim↑Pom and it probably also will in the future.

To put it more objectively, this city is inhabited by demons who are actually indifferent to outsiders but captured by their own obsession for *omotenashi* hospitality.[259]

Clare Pollard

FAMOUS VIEWS OF THE EASTERN CAPITAL: DEPICTING THE CITY IN PAINTINGS AND PRINTS



Sugiyama Matatsugu, *Good Evening Sumida River (Konban wa Sumidagawa)*, 1993, Colour woodblock print, 36 x 45 cm

From the seventeenth century onwards, the city of Edo/Tokyo has been characterised by its impressive size and cultural vibrancy. Yet when the warlord Tokugawa Ieyasu occupied Edo in 1590, it was just a small settlement surrounded by marshy land in the inhospitable Kantō region, far from the capital city of Kyoto where the imperial court was located. It was in fact the lack of a city, the very absence of civilisation, that characterised the earliest depictions of the area.

The representation of place has been an important subject of Japanese art for more than a millennium. Perhaps the strongest landscape tradition in Japan was for idealised, imagined places, often inspired by paintings imported from China – a country long admired in Japan as a source of cultural legitimacy.[4] These imported models were initially Buddhist paintings of the Tang dynasty, with their colourful landscape settings, and, later, mountainous ink landscapes. However, from around the ninth century, real places were also depicted. According to Japan's indigenous *shintō* beliefs, spirits reside everywhere in the natural world – in mountains, trees and waterfalls. The notion of 'place' as something special and spiritual is thus embedded deep within Japanese consciousness. Sacred sites, as well as places admired for particular topographical landmarks, for their seasonal appeal or for a historic event that had occurred there, became known as *meisho* – literally 'places with names' or 'famous places'. Many of these famous places were first described in poetry, but by the late ninth century the imperial aristocracy began to display folding and sliding screens depicting images of landscapes referred to in imperial poetry anthologies or literary classics such as *The Tale of Genji*. Viewers would immediately have understood the literary associations linked to the geographic places shown.[5]

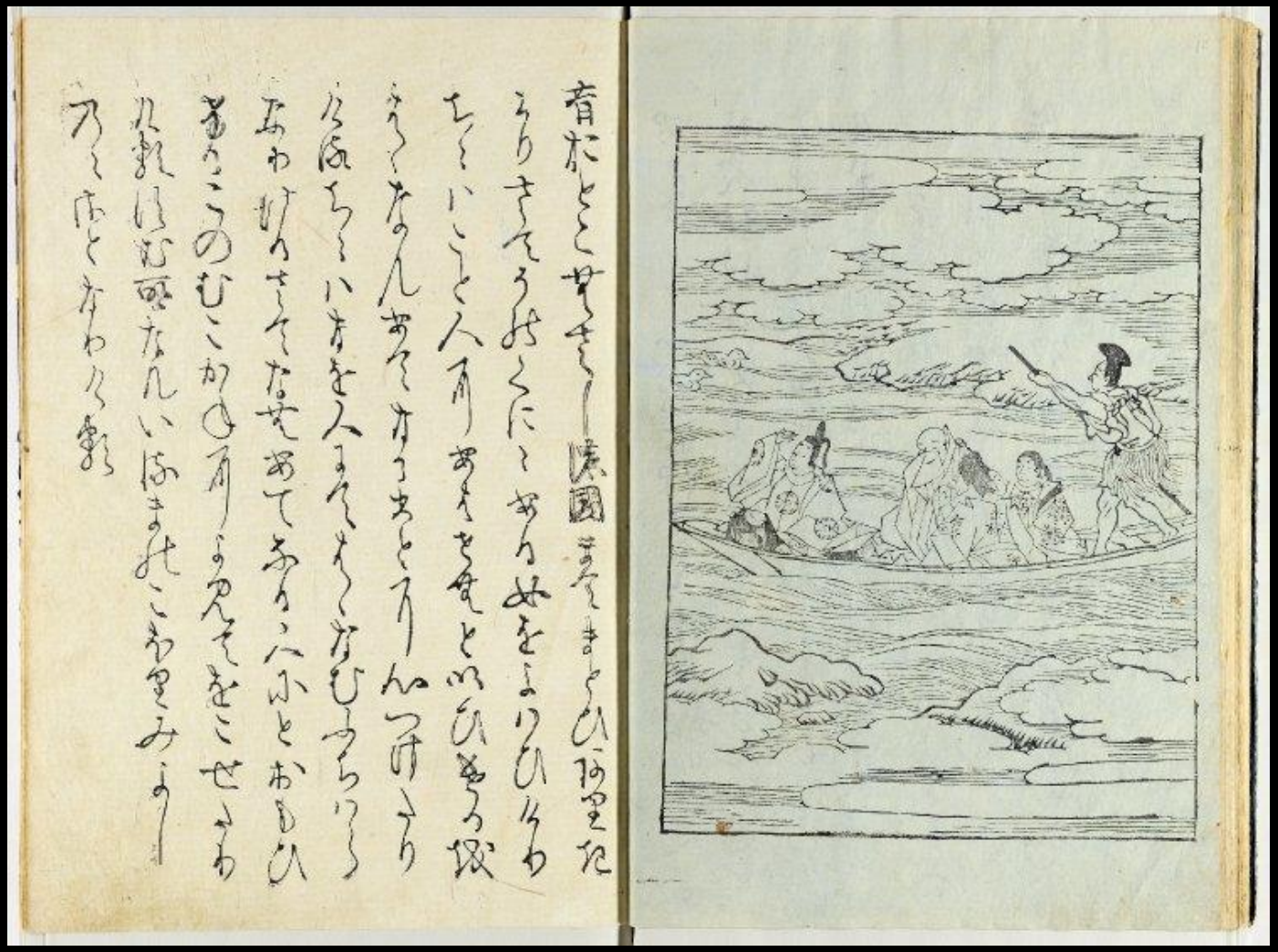
The first *meisho* were mostly found near the ancient imperial capitals of Nara and Kyoto. However, a few relate to what we now know as Tokyo, even though this had not yet become a city. One of these *meisho* was Musashino, or Musashi Plain, now a densely populated area of northwest Tokyo. In poetry, this remote area, located nearly 500 km from Kyoto, symbolised all that was wild and uncivilised, in direct contrast to the refinement of the imperial capital. It was first mentioned in Japan's earliest poetry anthology, the eighth century *Man'yōshū*, where an anonymous poet wrote of crying quails and grasses bent this way and that by the wind. Further layers of poetic association were added over the centuries, each subsequent poem also alluding to wild grass and remoteness. Depictions of Musashino, in both poetry and image, invariably represent the season of autumn, a time associated in Japanese tradition with sadness and desolation (p.25).

Another early 'Tokyo' *meisho* was the Sumida River, which flows through eastern Tokyo into Tokyo Bay. The river became a *meisho* thanks to its appearance in *The Tales of Ise*, a tenth-century collection of poems and narratives relating episodes in the life of a young courtier and poet. Chapter 9 describes the protagonist's journey to the 'Eastern Wilderness', having been exiled from the court in Kyoto. While crossing the Sumida River he spots a type of plover that he has not seen before. On asking the boatman what kind of birds these are, he is told that they are *miyakodori* or 'capital birds', which makes him long for the faraway capital and his lover there (p.24).

Although early depictions of the region were rare, its image as a bleak wilderness changed dramatically after Tokugawa Ieyasu established his military headquarters in Edo in 1590. Once Ieyasu achieved victory over rival warlords in 1603, he unified Japan and became shogun (military ruler). Edo thus became the *de facto* capital of the country. Ieyasu quickly set about turning the city into a fitting base for a ruler, reconstructing the medieval castle, reclaiming land and creating a network of canals. Edo developed rapidly – not just as a political centre, but also increasingly as a place of commercial and cultural importance. As it grew the city became well worthy of its own 'famous places' to compete with those of Kyoto. Indeed, in order to enhance its dignity and authority, the Tokugawa shogunate constructed versions of several of Kyoto's most auspicious landmarks in Edo, a deliberate 'encoding' of the old capital within the new castle town. Mostly built at geomantically important points related to the flow of spiritual forces through the city, these included several versions of famous Kyoto temples, lakes and hills.[6] The Kiyomizu Hall in the grounds of the Kan'eiji Temple in northeast Edo, for example, was a smaller-scale reconstruction of one of Kyoto's most splendid temples, Kiyomizudera (p.24).

Among the earliest depictions of the city as a whole were richly coloured, panoramic folding screen paintings made during the seventeenth century. These were modelled on earlier screens of notable sites in and around Kyoto, commissioned by elite patrons to celebrate the renaissance of the imperial capital after its destruction during the civil wars of the late fifteenth century. The Edo screens provided a bird's-eye view of a modern, prosperous and sophisticated metropolis. The example featured here (pp.26–7) was probably commissioned by a high-ranking samurai in the 1660s. It was clearly designed to bolster Tokugawa authority, as it focuses almost entirely on the impressive landmarks built by, or related to, the third shogun Iemitsu (reigned 1623–51). These include the mighty Edo castle and various Tokugawa family temples, while the shogun is himself depicted ten times across the twelve panels of screens, participating in hunts or martial exercises or visiting the Taitokuin mausoleum where his father was buried.[7] Another pair of surviving Edo screens, believed to have been painted for a wealthy merchant (now in the Idemitsu Museum, Tokyo), focuses more on the buildings and activities of the commoner classes, depicting a variety of scenes from bath houses to *kabuki* theatres. The selection of significant landmarks depended very much on the agenda of the patron.

The range of 'famous places' in Edo expanded as the city grew and prospered under Tokugawa rule. By the early eighteenth century it had become one of largest cities in the world, with a population of over one million and its own distinctive culture, fostered by both samurai and commoner patrons. Around half of Edo's population belonged to the warrior class. These warriors included not just members of the Tokugawa family and their

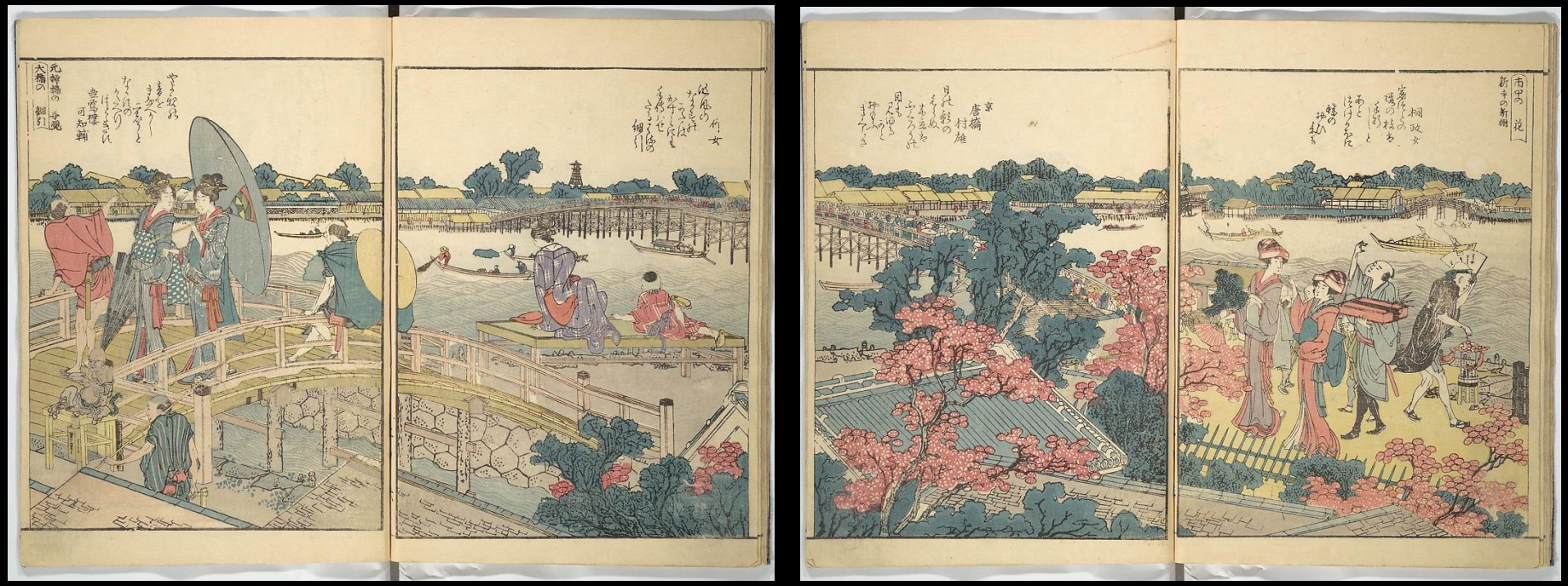


Unknown artist, *Capital Birds on the Sumida River*, from the *Tales of Ise*, Saga edition, 1608

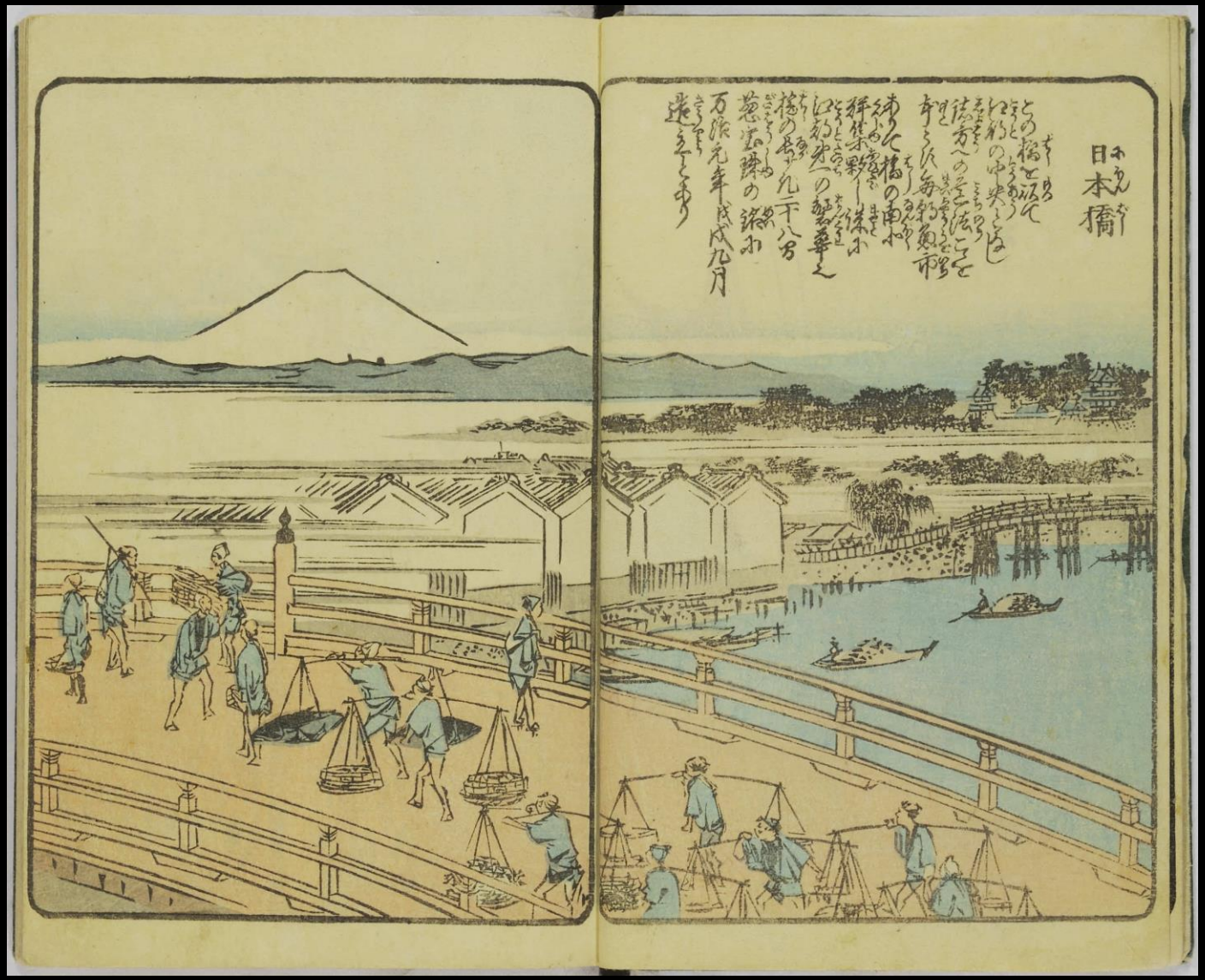
Hishikawa Moronobu (*c.* 1618–1694)
Viewing Cherry Blossoms at Ueno: View of the Replica of Kiyomizudera, 1681-4

Okumura Masanobu (1686–1764)
Large Perspective Picture of Evening Cool by Ryōgoku Bridge, *c*. 1748

Tosa School, *Edo in Musashi Province*
Record of Famous Sights of the Tōkaidō Road, late 17th century



Katsushika Hokusai (1760–1849)
Panoramic Views of Both Banks of the Sumida River at a Glance, c . 1806



Utagawa Hiroshige (1797–1858), *Nihonbashi*, *Illustrated Souvenirs of Edo*, vol. 5, 1846

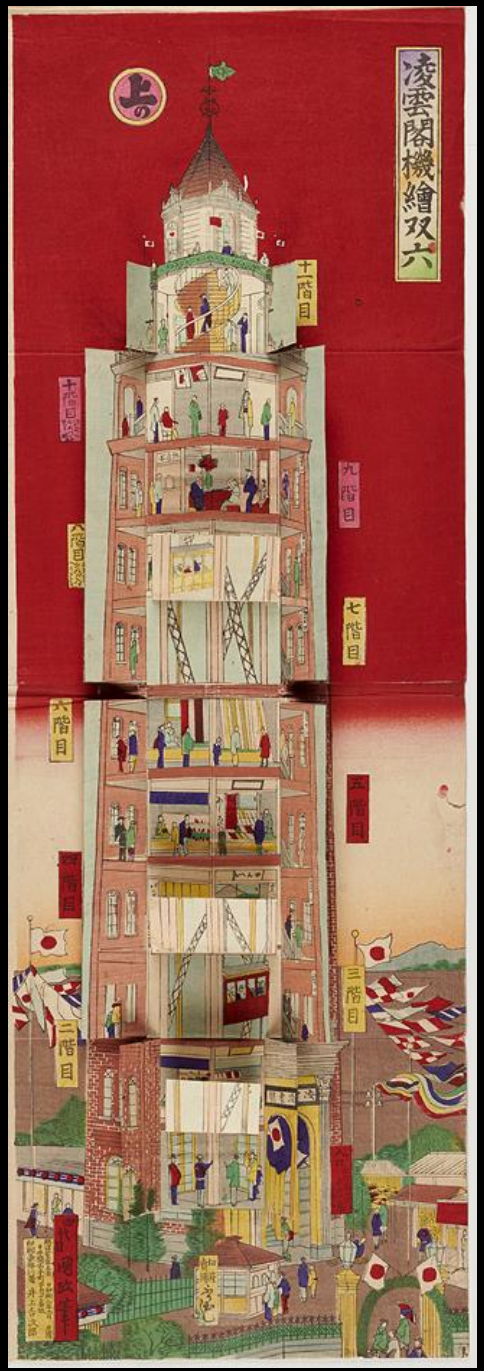







Utagawa Hiroshige, *One Hundred Famous Views of Edo,* 1856-8

Utagawa Kunimasa IV (1844–1920)
Ryōunkaku Tower game, 1890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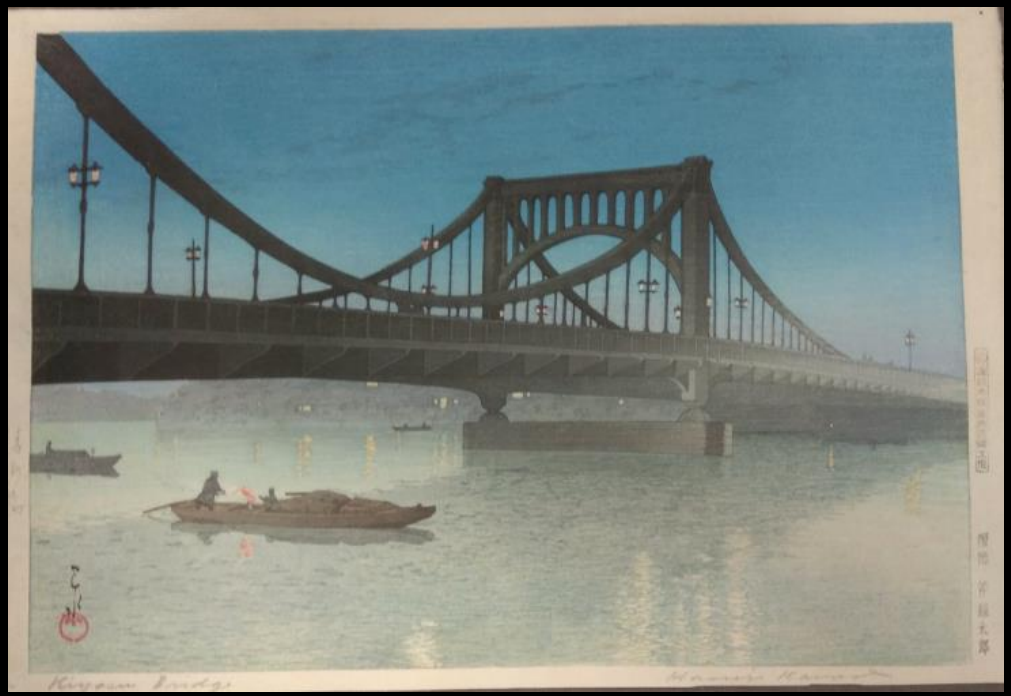
Kobayashi Kiyochika (1847–1915), *View of Takanawa Ushimachi under a Shrouded Moon, Pictures of Famous Places in Tokyo*, 1879

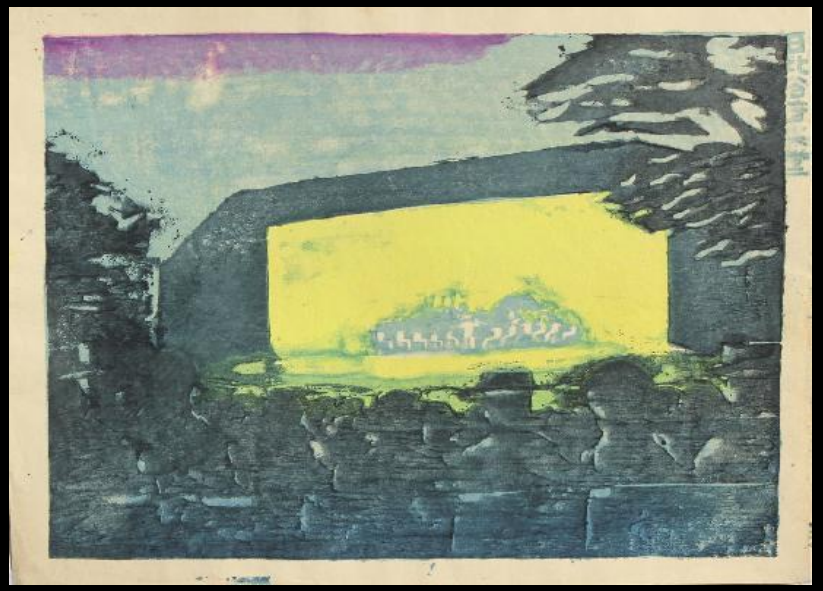
Kawase Hasui (1883–1957)
Shinagawa, 1931

Kasamatsu Shirō, Great Lantern at Asakusa Kannondō, 1934

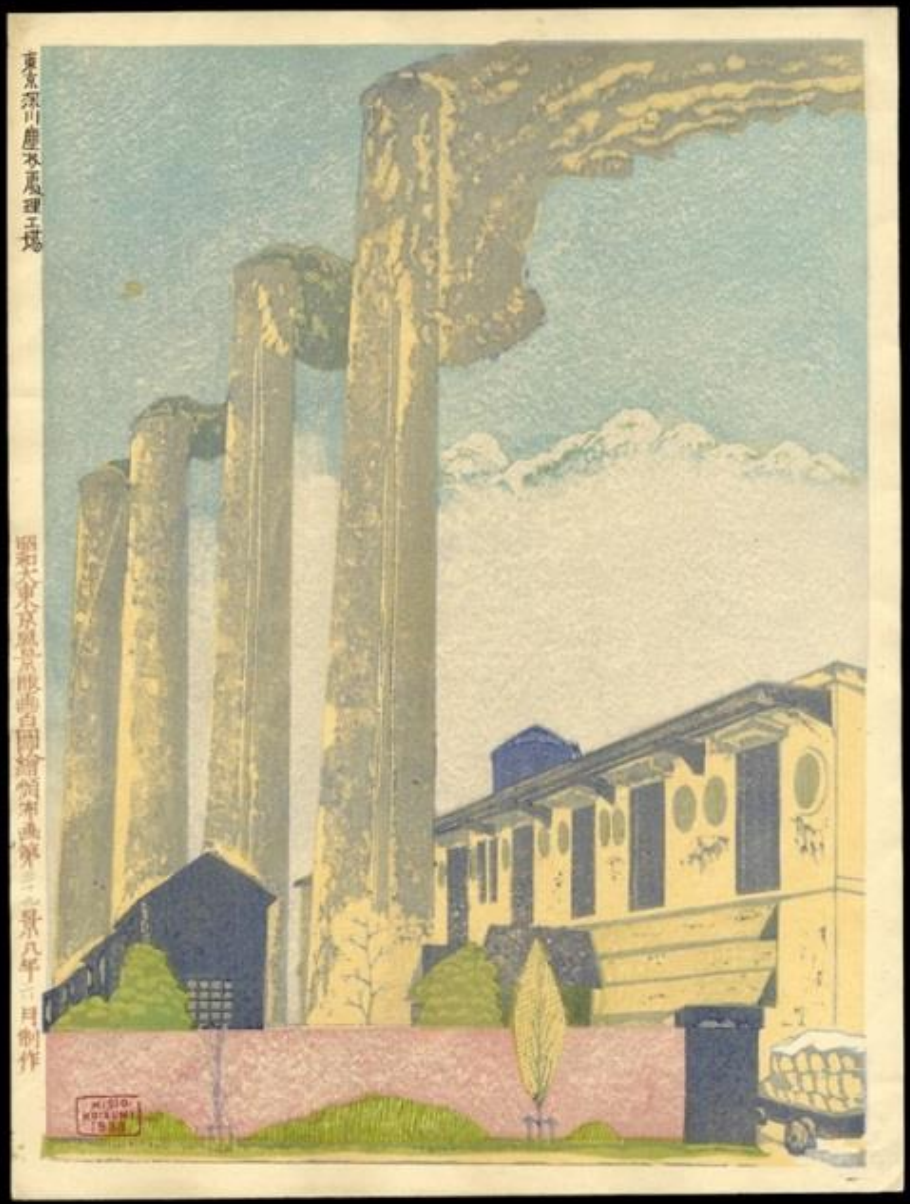


Kawase Hasui
Kiyosu Bridge, 1940s
(1st published 1931)

Isoda Chōshū (1880–1947)
Ruins on the Road
Collection of Woodblock Prints of the Taishō Earthquake, 1924

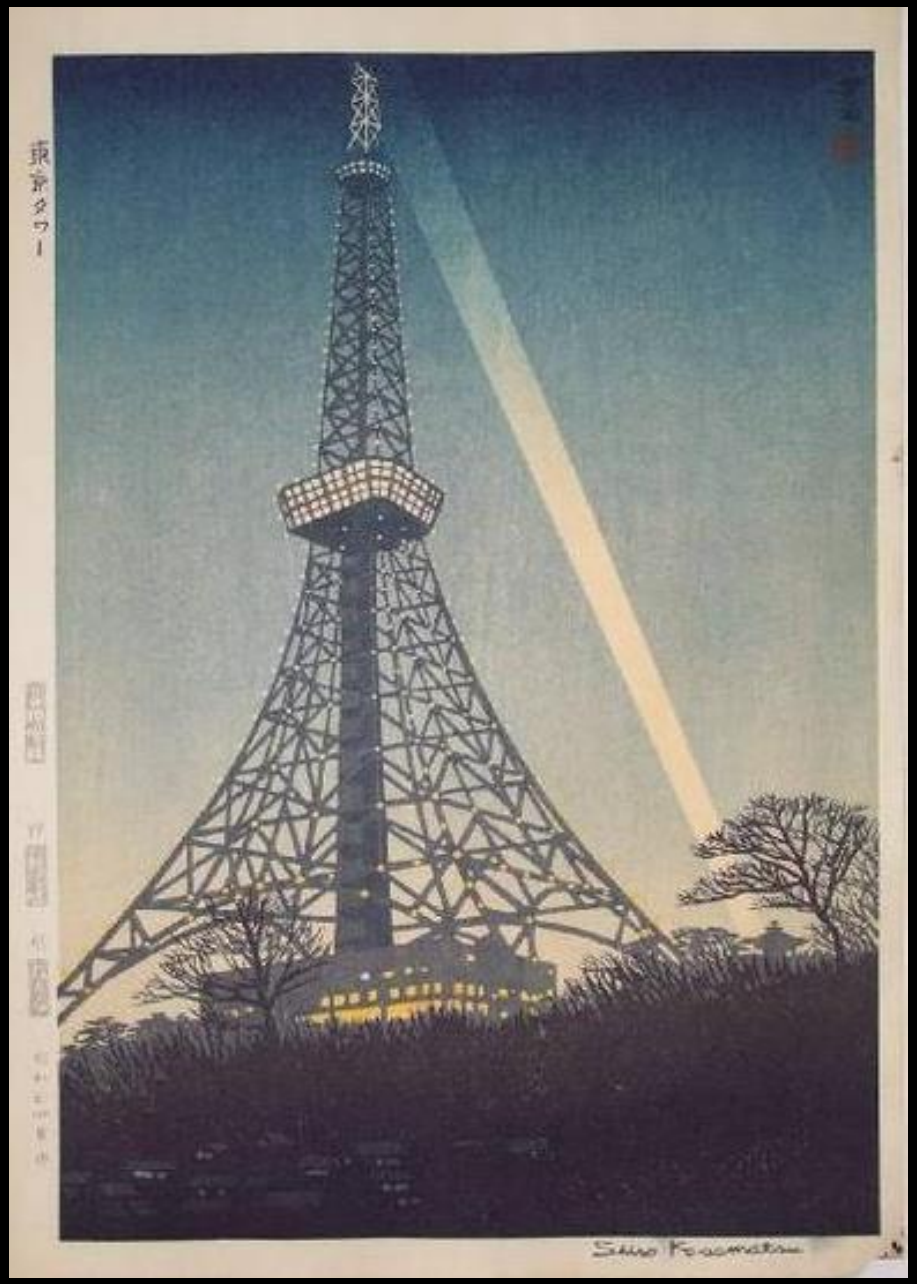


Various artists, *100 New Views of Tokyo*, 1929–1932

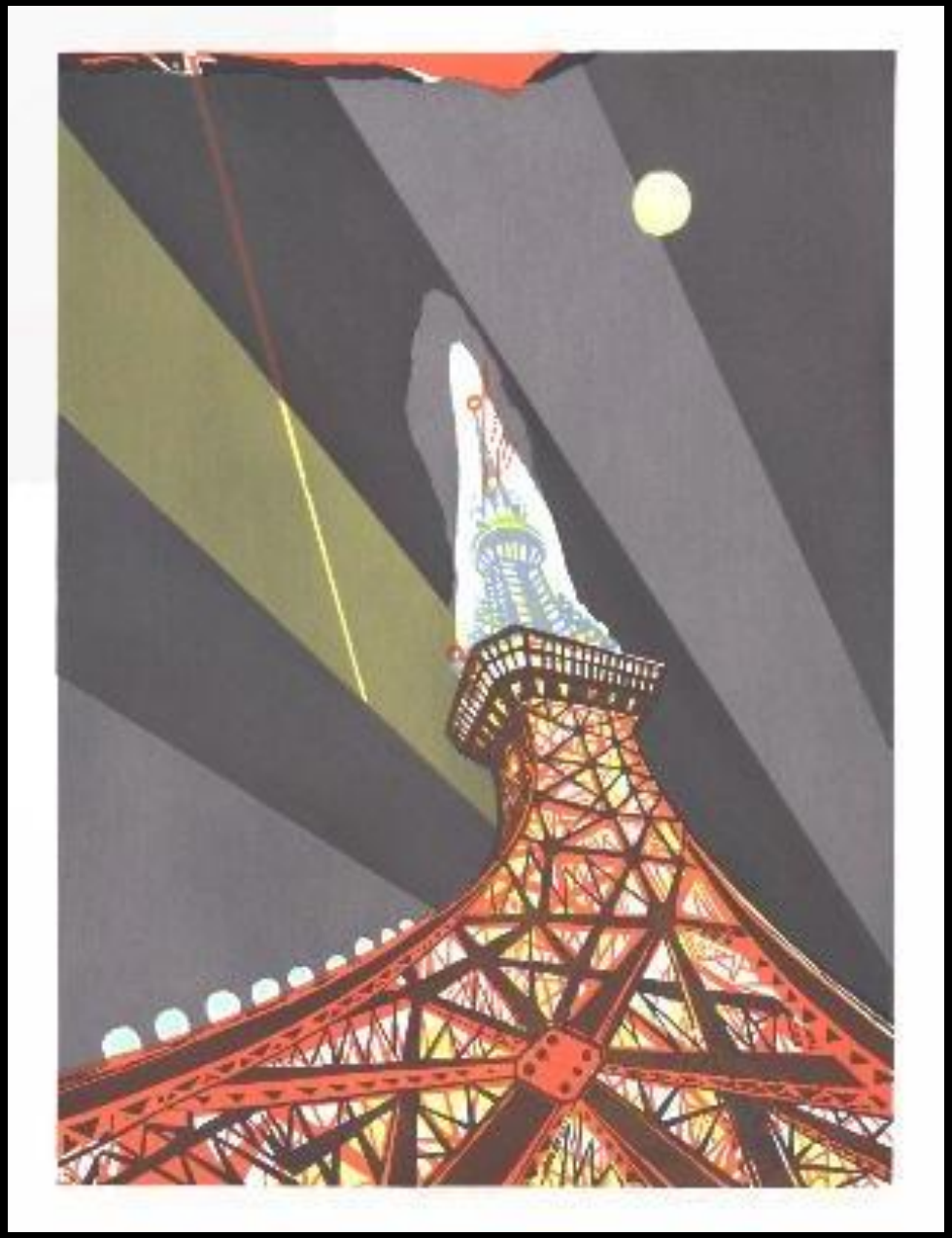


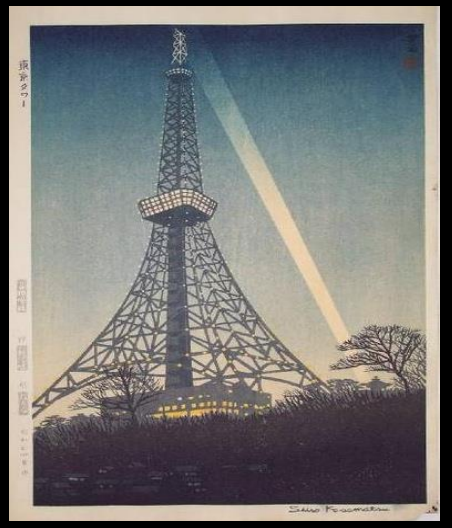
Koizumi Kishio (1893–1945)
Fukagawa Garbage Treatment Facility, 1933
One Hundred Pictures of Great Tokyo during the Shōwa Era

Onchi Kōshirō (1891–1955), *Tokyo Station, Scenes of Last Tokyo*, 1945

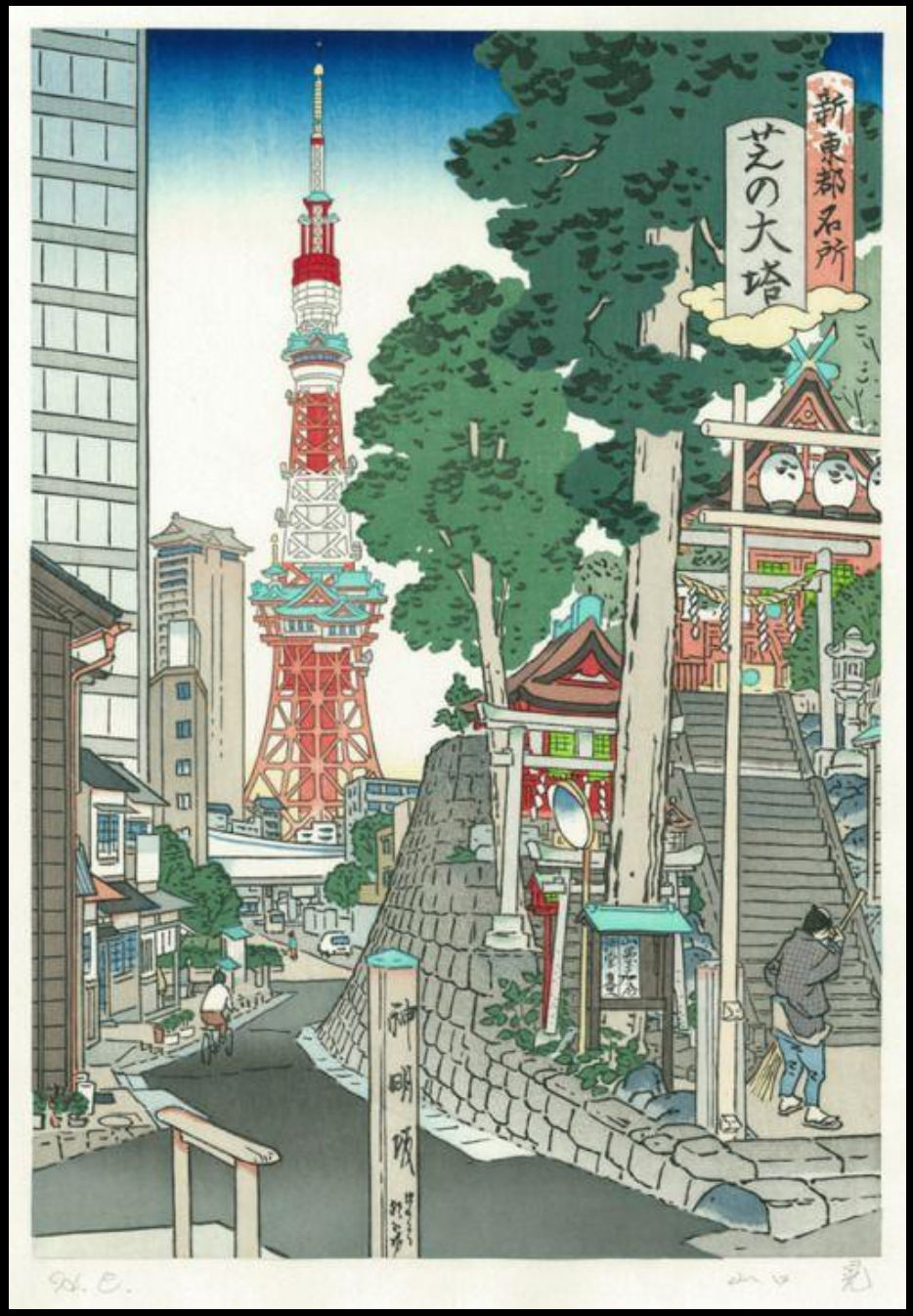


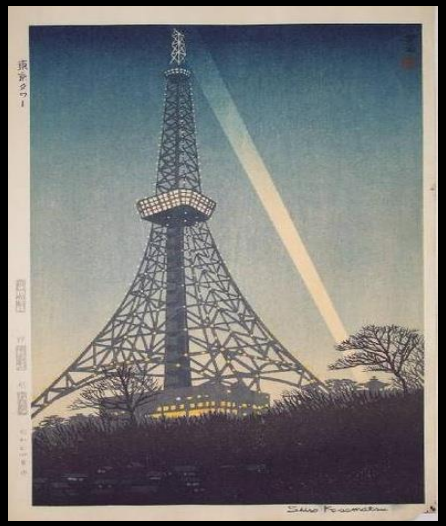
Kasamatsu Shirō (1898–1991), *Tokyo Tower,* 1959

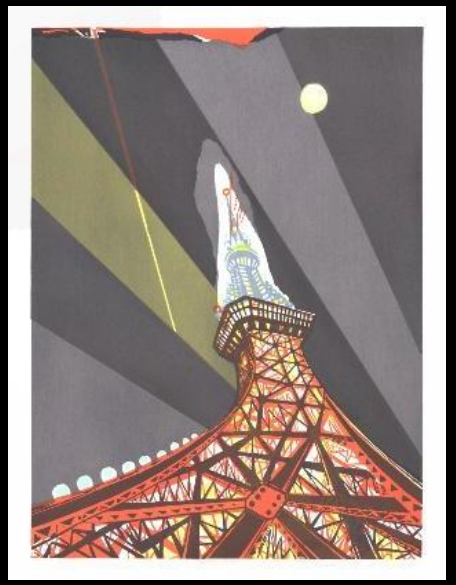




Takahashi Rikio (1917–1999)
Tokyo Tower
One Hundred Views of Tokyo: Message to the 21st Century, 1990







Yamaguchi Akira
New Sights of Tokyo: Shiba Tower, 2014

Lena Fritsch

CARDBOARD HOUSES AND LOVE HOTELS: PHOTOGRAPHY BEYOND LANDMARKS

Kanemura Osamu, *Spider's Strategy 035*, 2001

In contemporary discourse and imagery, the city of Tokyo is dominated by skyscrapers, rush hour crowds, colourful, state-of-the-art electronics, cutting-edge fashion and outrageous entertainment. Landmarks, endlessly reproduced in tourist guides and traveller reviews on the internet, include the intersection in Shibuya, Tokyo Tower and, since 2012, the Tokyo Skytree. Depictions of the ultra-modern city are often juxtaposed with temples in Asakusa or the Meiji shrine, which are presented as 'traditional' landmarks. Such representations are intertwined with a Japanese memory culture as well as economic marketing strategies – needless to say, representations of every city and its 'heritage' are dynamic and they speak more of contemporary discourse and imagery than of everyday reality.[219] This essay complements Tokyo stereotypes and tourist representations by exploring the work of selected Tokyo-based photographers, focusing on photographs of cityscapes and buildings from the last 30 years. What are the stories that Tokyo photographers tell us today about the urban environment in which they live?

One of the most photographed locations in Tokyo is the crowded, pentagon-shaped crossing in Shibuya, surrounded by neon billboards, shops and restaurants. Known as the world's largest pedestrian scramble, it is referred to in Japanese as '*sukuranburu kōsaten*' (literally 'scramble crossing'). Shibuya Community News even offer a live camera, streaming the photogenic intersection 24 hours a day on Youtube. When the *Tennō* emperor abdicated in 2019 and the new Reiwa era began on 1 May, masses of people went to the intersection (also a popular location during New Year's Eve) before midnight. National television reporters broadcasted live from the site. There was no official count-down event and it rained heavily, yet people nevertheless stood with their umbrellas, counting down, cheering and welcoming in the new era at a famous location that they felt represented their country best.

Satō Tokihiro (b.1957), who switched to photography after studying sculpture at Tokyo University of the Arts, has been fascinated by the relationship of light and photography, and long-exposure techniques. His works are often surreally beautiful photographs, able to come into existence only through the passing of time. His atmospheric diptych *An Hour Exposure – Shibuya* (1990–2017) captures Shibuya crossing in the early morning hours (pp.214–5). The intersection is famous for the large number of people that walk through it every day, but in this work Satō shows it completely empty. Not only does this convey an unusual sense of calmness: it also presents the viewer with a familiar Tokyo landmark in a highly unfamiliar way. The photographer has explained his choice of Shibuya Crossing as a motif: 'I saw it as a symbolic place representing the chaos of Tokyo. … The first time I photographed it was at the heyday of the Bubble Economy era, in 1990. Following this, the bubble burst and Japan's economic recession has continued ever since. Around thirty years later I photographed Shibuya Crossing again: A lot had changed and although I am not too interested in the documentary character of photography, these works capture the feel of the cityscape and of the different eras'.[220]

Takano Ryūdai (b.1963) is best known internationally for his photographs of nude men that won him the 2006 Kimura Ihei Award. However, the strong link between his Tokyo life and photography is more evident in works that he has taken from his apartment since 1998, originally with the intention of photographically recording the weather. Realising that a landmark would make the documentation of different weather conditions more apparent, he chose to include Tokyo Tower (p.208). This communication and observation tower – at 332.9 metres the second largest structure in Japan, after Tokyo Skytree – was built in 1958 in Minato ward, close to where Takano lives. The orange-red and white tower, inspired by the lattice structure of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, is one of the most visited landmarks in Tokyo. Since 2007 Takano has used a tripod at the same location next to his apartment window, making sure that the shooting angle remains exactly the same. He has explained his routine: 'Until today, I have continued to shoot Tokyo Tower daily at noon, as a principle. Repeating the same thing every day, I seek to reproduce a sense of the ordinary'.[221] Photographing the Tokyo landmark from his own apartment, the artist links a public and urban image with his own private space. He thus records not only the changes of the city, but also his personal life.

Cityscapes and urban structures that visitors unfamiliar with the metropolis might not notice at first sight can be as typical of Tokyo as images of landmarks or neon advertisements. Since 2001 Takano has captured common environments and 'shabby' urban details that others might consider too banal to photograph in a series entitled *Daily Snapshots* (p.17, pp.216–7) and published in a book entitled *kasubaba* (a neologism coined by the artist meaning 'junk-places'). Instead of focusing on spectacular scenes or dynamic constellations, Takano has deliberately created photographic compositions of buildings, urban constructions and details in Tokyo that he finds, in his words, 'helplessly boring' or 'annoying'.[222] As the photography critic Shimizu Minoru has argued, Takano's works offer an alternative to the 'postmodern theatricality' that urban photographs often adopt. His images provide no 'artificial luster to the city scenery by overexposure'; they are also very different from the 'rough, blurred, and indistinct' aesthetic that has characterised the work of many Japanese photographers since the 1970s.[223] Takano's photographs convey a sense of imperfection that can be encountered when walking through the city. This feeling is as characteristic of Tokyo as the restless energy that one experiences at Shibuya crossing.

The carefully composed, dense photographs by Kanemura Osamu (b.1964) in his *Spider's Strategy* photobook (2001) also present a highly characteristic face of the city. Here the photographs focus on shop signs, advertisements and – above all – the overhead wires in Japanese cities. Although the black and white images are 'crowded' with buildings and signs, they feature hardly any people (p.206, p.209, p.218). The electricity wires, typical of Tokyo's urban landscape, are reminiscent of a spider's web spreading organically throughout the city. Kanemura took these photographs a few years after he started photography: 'I really liked Lee Friedlander's work at the time and was strongly

Sato Tokihiro, *An Hour Exposure – Shibuya, 1990–2017*

Takano Ryudai, *2014.02.01. #a22*, 2014

Takano Ryudai, *2014.06.17. #b28*, 2014

Takano Ryudai, *2014.06.27. #27*, 2014

Takano Ryudai, *2014.07.01. #04*, 2014

Takano Ryudai, *Tokyo Tower*, 2014

Takano Ryudai, *Tokyo Tower*, 2014

Kanemura Osamu, *Spider's Strategy,* 2001

Kanemura Osamu, *Spider's Strategy,* 2001

Kanemura Osamu, *Spider's Strategy,* 2001

Kanemura Osamu, *Spider's Strategy,* 2001

Miyamoto Ryuji, *Cardboard Houses, Tokyo 18th April 1994*

Miyamoto Ryuji, *Cardboard Houses, Tokyo 20th April 1994*

Mohri Yuko, *Moré Moré Tokyo* fieldwork, since 2009

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Tsuzuki Kyoichi, *Satellite of Love*, 2001

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Tsuzuki Kyoichi, *Satellite of Love*, 2001

Hosoe Eikoh, *Simmon, a Private Landscape*, 1971

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Moriyama Daido, untitled

Moriyama Daido, untitled

Moriyama Daido, untitled

Araki Nobuyoshi, untitled, 1991

Ninagawa Mika, *Tokyo* from *Utsurundesu* series, 2018

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Thank you!
Any questions?