April 18, 2011

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Exhibition Announcement

Encore! Japanese Actor Prints from the Permanent Collection
May 21 – August 7, 2011

The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro is pleased to present the exhibition Encore! Japanese Actor Prints from the Permanent Collection. The show examines the subject of Kabuki and Noh actor prints from the Edo period (1603-1868). Artists in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries tapped into the enthusiasm for Kabuki and Noh theater with a wide range of imagery that catered to the experiences and desires of its fans. Dramatic compositions and colorful designs effectively captured and transmitted the theatrical experience long after the performance ended. The exhibition also considers the role these prints played in popular culture and in advancing Japanese aesthetics and cultural traditions. Work by some of the major leaders of the prominent ukiyo-e schools are featured, including Torii Kiyonaga, Katsukawa Shunshō, and Utagawa Toyokuni. These prints demonstrate the complexity of the printmaking and theater genres, as well as how these forms intertwined with the
fields of poetry, literature, music, and entertainment.

Featuring 41 ukiyo-e prints and 1 watercolor by 23 multi-generational Japanese woodblock designers, the exhibition is presented as part of the Weatherspoon Art Museum’s 70th Anniversary year, which is highlighting many works from the permanent collection. The majority of prints on display were gifted to the Weatherspoon Art Museum by Dr. Lenoir C. Wright (1911-2003), a professor emeritus of History and Political Science at the UNCG. The Lenoir C. Wright Collection of Japanese Prints is the only collection of its kind and depth in North Carolina, numbering in excess of four hundred and fifty works of art.

This exhibition is organized by Elaine D. Gustafson, Curator of Collections, Weatherspoon Art Museum. Special thanks to Dr. David Phillips, Associate Professor, Program in Humanities and Core Faculty, Women’s and Gender Studies at Wake Forest University for assistance with reading the Japanese text. Funding for this exhibition was made possible through the generous support of the Blue Bell Foundation and Fairway Outdoor Advertising.

Images at top, left: Torii Kiyomitsu I (Japanese, 1735-1785), The Kabuki Actor Mizuki Tatsunosuke, about 1750, Woodblock print on paper, Gift of Dr. Lenoir C. Wright, 1997.

Middle: Utagawa Toyokuni I (Japanese, 1769-1825), Kabuki Actors Ichikawa Komazo II in role Soma no Yokizo, Bando Mitsugoro II as Yogoro, and Iwai Kumesaburo I as Kojiro, from the play “Tametomo Yumiya no Ayafune,” 1799, Woodblock print on paper, Gift of Dr. Lenoir C. Wright, 1999.


All events are free. For a complete, updated list of programs, visit http://weatherspoon.uncg.edu.

Related Education and Public Programming

Noon @ the ‘Spoon Tour
Tuesday, June 14, 12 pm

Teachers’ Workshop
Wednesday, June 29 + Thursday, June 30, 10 am-3 pm
A two-day woodblock printmaking workshop for teachers will be held on June 29th and 30th from 10 am-3 pm, led by the artist Mona Wu. Pre-registration is required.

Cost: $45 members/$60 non-members. Lunch on your own; materials provided.
Contact Terri Dowell Dennis at 336.256.1449 or t_dowell@uncg.edu

Special Lecture: The World of Japanese Actor Prints
Thursday, June 30, 5:30 pm
Dr. David Phillips, Associate Professor, Program in Humanities and Core Faculty, Women’s and Gender Studies at Wake Forest University

Guided + Self-Guided Visits
School and community groups are invited to visit the museum on their own or via a docent-led tour. Admission and tours are free. Please contact us at least three weeks in advance to schedule your visit, 336.334.5770 or weatherspoon@uncg.edu.
About the Weatherspoon Art Museum

Mission
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro acquires, preservest, exhibits, and interprets modern and contemporary art for the benefit of its multiple audiences, including university, community, regional, and beyond. Through these activities, the museum recognizes its paramount role of public service, and enriches the lives of diverse individuals by fostering an informed appreciation and understanding of the visual arts and their relationship to the world in which we live.

History
The Weatherspoon Art Museum at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro was founded by Gregory Ivy in 1941 and is the earliest of any art facilities within the UNC system. The museum was founded as a resource for the campus, community, and region and its early leadership developed an emphasis—maintained to this day—on presenting and acquiring modern and contemporary works of art. A 1950 bequest from the renowned collection of Claribel and Etta Cone, which included prints and bronzes by Henri Matisse and other works on paper by American and European modernists, helped to establish the Weatherspoon’s permanent collection. Other prescient acquisitions during Ivy’s tenure included a 1951 suspended mobile by Alexander Calder, Woman by Willem de Kooning, a pivotal work in the artist’s career that was purchased in 1954, and the first drawings by Eva Hesse and Robert Smithson to enter a museum collection.

In 1989, the museum moved into its present location in The Anne and Benjamin Cone Building designed by the architectural firm Mitchell Giurgula. The museum has six galleries and a sculpture courtyard with over 17,000 square feet of exhibition space. The American Association of Museums accredited the Weatherspoon in 1995 and renewed its accreditation in 2005.

Collections + Exhibitions
The permanent collection of the Weatherspoon Art Museum is considered to be one of the foremost of its kind in the Southeast. It represents all major art movements from the beginning of the 20th century to the present. Of the nearly 6,000 works in the collection are pieces by such prominent figures as Sol LeWitt, Robert Mangold, Cindy Sherman, Al Held, Alex Katz, Henry Tanner, Louise Nevelson, Mark di Suvero, Deborah Butterfield, and Robert Rauschenberg. The museum regularly lends to major exhibitions nationally and internationally.

The Weatherspoon also is known for its adventurous and innovative exhibition program. Through a dynamic annual calendar of fifteen to eighteen exhibitions and a multi-disciplinary educational program for audiences of all ages, the museum provides an opportunity for audiences to consider artistic, cultural, and social issues of our time and enriches the life of our university, community, and region.

Weatherspoon Art Museum
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