

Japanese Art: Lecture and Discussions

A series of four lectures will be presented relating to art forms that the Japanese developed to levels of sophistication and craftsmanship unparalleled even to modern times. Each lecture/discussion will start with the historical context of the subject, including the political and technological and economic forces that propelled the art form, and the technical process used to create the resulting art form. Numerous examples, both projected images and antiques, will be used to illustrate the range of art forms. The significance of the illustrated art will be discussed in terms of pertinent myths and history.

Lecture 1: Japanese Woodblock Prints

This lecture/discussion will focus on the historical context and the evolution of the woodblock printing process; the printing process and the production team will be described, as will the important tools of the trade. Various woodblock styles will also be described and illustrated.

Lecture 2: Japanese Lacquer

This lecture/discussion will describe and discuss this Japanese lacquer art form. Emphasis will be placed on lacquer from the *Edo* and *Meiji* periods during which the Japanese lacquer industry reached its zenith. Emphasis will be placed upon the Japanese developed *Maki-e* [i.e., sprinkled pictures] techniques.

Lecture 3: Japanese Netsuke and Inro

This lecture will discuss both the netsuke and inro. First, the historical context of these art forms will be discussed. This will be followed by a discussion of materials utilized for creating netsuke and the various types of netsuke. Typical netsuke subjects will be discussed as will related mythology and historical events. This will be followed by a discussion of construction of inro and use of Japanese lacquer techniques. Typical inro will be presented and discussed as will depicted mythology.

Lecture 4: Japanese Okimono and Japanese Painting

Okimono is a Japanese term meaning "ornament for display," i.e., a decorative object. Unlike netsuke, which had a specific utilitarian function, okimono were purely decorative. This lecture will start with a discussion of historical events and the reaction of the Japanese to these events that led to the development of okimono. Typical okimono subjects will then be discussed and numerous examples will be presented.

The discussion of okimono will be followed by a discussion of Japanese paintings. Japanese painting is one of the oldest and most highly refined of the Japanese visual arts, encompassing a wide variety of genres and styles. Several painting styles and schools will be discussed including Zen, Tosa, Kano, Rimpa, Maruyama/Shijo schools. Important artists associated with these schools will be identified and examples of their paintings will be presented and discussed.

Leader: Joel S. Greenberg is a retired aerospace, energy, and gaming industry consultant, and an active art collector specializing in Japanese art.

Thursdays: 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., 4 weeks: September 26 through October 17

Location: PSRC, Maximum 20 seats