

Jakuchū

The Colorful Realm of Living Beings

15 September – 14 October 2018

PRESS KIT
September 2018



Petit Palais
Musée des Beaux-Arts
de la Ville de Paris

Tuesday - Sunday, 10 am - 6 pm
Open late: Friday until 9 pm, Saturday and Sunday until 8 pm.

INFORMATION
www.petitpalais.paris.fr/en



Itō Jakuchū, *Old Pine and White Phoenix*, 1765-1766, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)

This exhibition is being shown to mark the 160th anniversary of diplomatic relations between France and Japan in 2018, on the theme of «Japonismes 2018». It is jointly organized by the Japan Foundation, Nikkei Inc., the Imperial Household Agency of Japan, the Petit Palais, and Paris Musées.

This exhibition is co-organized by



NIKEI

Imperial
Household
Agency

#Jakuchū

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PRESS RELEASE

The Petit Palais is honoured to be presenting in its entirety, for the first time in Europe, the series of 30 hanging scrolls titled *Dōshoku sai-e* [*The Colorful Realm of Living Beings*], painted by Itō Jakuchū approximately between 1757 and 1766. This exhibition has been made possible by exceptional loans from Japan's imperial collection. Active in the middle of the Edo period (1603-1867), Jakuchū is much appreciated in Japan for his subtle brushwork and vivid colors. Only ever shown once outside Japan – at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, in 2012 – the series is considered his masterpiece. Because of their extreme fragility the works will be on show for only a month, as part of the season *Japonismes 2018*.

Little known in Europe, Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800) is nonetheless regarded as one of the greatest Japanese artists of all time. A vegetable wholesaler, at the age of 40 he decided to hand over the family business to his brother and devote himself to the painting that had been his passion since he was 10. Already a recognised artist, in 1757 he set to work on *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings*, pictures of animals and plants whose realism and precision were rooted in close observation of his subject matter. These 30 scrolls – portrayals including cocks, fish, peacocks, phoenixes, ducks and trees in flower – reveal an astonishing delicacy of line and vividness of color, allied to an extraordinary talent and technical mastery.

The outstanding feature of this remarkable series is its combining of all the silk painting techniques. Application of paint on both sides of the fabric, the absence of outlining, use of both mineral and natural pigments – Itō Jakuchū blended all these complex techniques with enormous ingenuity and control. In *Old Pine and White Phoenix*, for example, the use of ochre on the back of the silk enables the tour de force of suggesting gold without having to use it. And his *Mandarin Ducks in Snow* scroll is a striking example of capturing snow right down to its actual texture. His portrayals of the living world, whether animal or vegetal, teem with details, including those most difficult to catch with the naked eye. The result of endless hours of attentive observation, these meticulous images point up a deep affection for his subject matter. At the same time he transcends reality by using it as the basis for a remarkable world of painterly imagination.

Jakuchū's piety meant Buddhism was the core of his existence; even before his 30 scrolls were completed he had decided to donate them to the Shōkoku-ji monastery in Kyoto, together with his Buddhist triad *Shaka Sanzon-zō* [*Sakyamuni Triad*]. Only this later work has remained in the temple, but the Petit Palais is offering the public the opportunity to see the ensemble as its creator originally intended it.



Itō Jakuchū, *Old Pine and White Phoenix*, 1765-1766, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)

CURATORS :

Aya Ōta, Chief Curator of the Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)

Manuela Moscatiello, in charge of the Japanese collection at the Musée Cernuschi in Paris

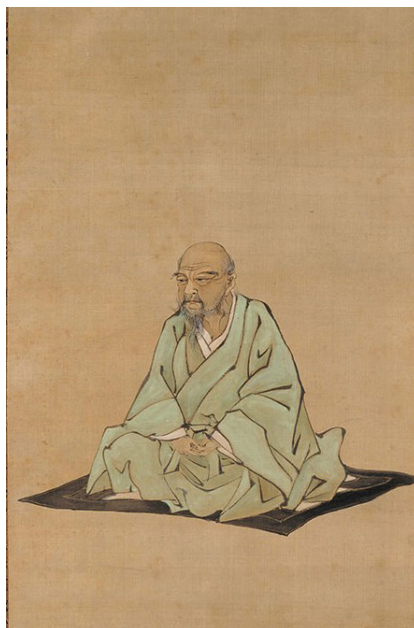
GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

Itō Jakuchū and his era

Itō Jakuchū (1716-1800) practiced the art of painting in Kyōto in the Edo period (1603-1867), during the second half of the 18th century. This period was a fertile one for the arts in Japan and saw the emergence of striking artistic currents including ukiyo-e (literally ‘images of the floating world’), the realist school of Maruyama-Shijō, and the pictorial current of Nanga, which drew on Chinese influences. Much like artists such as Soga Shōhaku (1730-1781) and Nagasawa Rosetsu (1754-1781), who belong to no academic movement and forged a style all their own, Jakuchū was highly regarded for his inspired singularity.

The eldest son of a vegetable wholesaler of the Nishiki market in Kyōto (still thriving today), Jakuchū was raised in a privileged environment. Upon the death of his father in 1738, he took over the reins of the family business. Although he began painting as a teenager, it was only at the age of 40 years that he was able to entirely devote himself to art and entrust management duties to his younger brother.

Nonetheless, by the time he withdrew from the family trade he was already famous as a bird-and-flower painter (*kachō-ga*). Jakuchū remained a bachelor his entire life. Strongly influenced by Daiten, abbot of Shōkoku-ji Temple, the artist was a committed Buddhist. The great fire that broke out in Kyōto in 1788 reduced the artist’s home and studio to ashes, leaving him confronted with an entirely new situation: that of having to paint to earn a living. He retired to a residence located near the Sekihō-ji Temple south of Kyōto, where he continued to paint until his death, which took place during his 85th year in a Buddhist context, amidst a grove of stone statues representing *The Five Hundred Arhats* that he himself designed.



Kubota Beisen, *Portrait of Jakuchū*, 1885, ink wash and color on silk, Kyōto, Shōkoku-ji Temple

GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

Dōshoku sai-e: The Colorful Realm of Living Beings

The Colorful Realm of Living Beings comprises thirty scrolls of imposing dimensions whose contents are inspired by the plant and animal kingdoms. The work reveals Jakuchū's keen sense of observation and his highly personal worldview, reproduced and filtered according to skillful formal solutions and a strikingly original use of color. Jakuchū himself donated these polychrome paintings on silk to the Shōkoku-ji Temple, where they were displayed in the main building during the religious ceremony for *Kannon senpō*.

This monumental group, considered the artist's masterpiece, bears witness to the richness of his palette and to his mastery of various techniques from the traditional Japanese painting repertoire.

The restoration of *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings*, which commenced in 1999 and lasted six years, made it possible, among other things, to confirm his use of the technique known as *urazaishiki*. This consists notably of coloring certain areas on the back of the work to intensify or dampen the effect of the color on the silk.



Itō Jakuchū, *Mandarin ducks in the snow*, 1759, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)



Itō Jakuchū, *White peacock and peonies under a pine*, 1757-1760, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)



Itō Jakuchū, *Fowls*, 1761-1765, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)

GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

Shōkoku-ji Temple

Built starting in 1392 at the behest of Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu (1358-1408), Shōkoku-ji is one of the largest Zen monasteries of the *Five mountains and ten temples* system (*Gozan jissetsu*) founded in the 13th and 14th centuries. Located in the center of Kyōto, north of the Imperial Palace, its dominion includes two of the city's illustrious temples, the Rokuon-ji or Golden Pavilion (Kinkaku-ji), and the Jishō-ji or Silver Pavilion (Ginkaku-ji). Its museum houses an exceptional collection of artworks relating to Kyōto and Zen Buddhism, including several by Jakuchū. Shōkoku-ji is one of the religious and spiritual sites that the artist was most attached to, largely due to his friendship with 6 the literati monk Baisō Kenjō (1719-1801), better known as Daiten, who was the monastery's 113th abbot. Although the younger of the two men, Daiten proved not only a loyal friend to Jakuchū, but also a mentor, playing a crucial role in his personal and artistic development. This friendship is likely what prompted Jakuchū to donate *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings*, as well as the *Śākyamuni Triptych* to Shōkoku-ji, in view both to achieving eternal peace for his soul after his death, and also contributing to the temple's greatness.



Itō Jakuchū, *Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*, 1765, Shōkokuji, Kyōto



Itō Jakuchū, *Buddha Śākyamuni*, 1765, Shōkokuji, Kyōto



Itō Jakuchū, *Bodhisattva Manjusri*, 1765, Shōkokuji, Kyōto

GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

The Museum of the Imperial Collections, Sannomaru Shōzōkan

Located in the East gardens of the Imperial Palace in Tōkyō, Sannomaru Shōzōkan houses the art collections of Japan's Imperial Family. These include no less than nine thousand five hundred artefacts, including paintings, calligraphy and works of art from all periods, handed down from generation to generation. When the Emperor Shōwa passed away in 1989, a great many of these treasures belonging to the Imperial Family were bequeathed to the State, including the thirty scrolls that make up *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings* by Jakuchū, which had been acquired from Shōkoku-ji Temple in 1889. Sannomaru Shōzōkan was built in 1993 to make the Imperial Collection more accessible, allowing the public to view the precious works of art managed by the Imperial Household Agency (Kunaichō) on a rotating schedule. Since it opened, the museum reorganizes the galleries four times a year, in addition to special exhibitions held to commemorate important events associated with the Imperial family. Other priorities of the museum include scientific research, preventive conservation and restoration of the masterpieces in its collections.



Itō Jakuchū, *Shellfish*, 1761-1765, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)



Itō Jakuchū, *Roses and birds*, 1761-1765, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)



Itō Jakuchū, *Fish and Octopus*, 1765-1766, Tōkyō, Museum of Imperial Collections (Sannomaru Shōzōkan)



GUIDE TO THE EXHIBITION

Genpo yōka: Exquisite Flowers from the Mysterious Garden

The term *Genpo* refers to the legendary Xuanpu, a mythical site in the Kunlun mountain range where immortals known as *sennin* live, whereas *yōka* conjures flowers as beautiful as jade. From this we can deduce that the album shows us plants of such beauty that they recall those adorning the gardens of immortal beings. This work is based on Chinese botanical treatises focused on medicinal herbs and pharmacognosy (*honzōgaku*), which were much circulated in Edo-period Japan (1603-1867). In this album, flowers, plants, fruit and vegetables, in addition to insects and small animals, are all presented in the foreground, seen very close up and framed in unexpected ways, resulting in a masterpiece of Japanese printmaking. Built around a strong dramatic tension established by the ‘negative’ images appearing in white on a deep black ground, *Genpo yōka* is the most accomplished of Jakuchū’s *takuhanga* prints. This technique is inspired by the Chinese tradition of ink rubbings used to reproduce the engraved inscriptions from stone steles on paper.



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EXHIBITION CATALOGUE



The catalogue is an invitation to discover the masterwork of Itō Jakuchū (1716–1800), *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings*, a treasure from Japan's imperial collection on show for the first time in Europe.

A talented, prolific painter of the Edo period, this singular figure from Tokyo is famed as one of his country's artistic eccentrics: pledging allegiance to no art movement in particular, he was the creator of a totally personal style.

Born into the third generation of a family of fruit wholesalers, Jakuchū dutifully followed the path laid down for him until the age of forty, when he was able to devote himself full-time to painting. Created over more than a decade, from 1758 to 1771, the monumental group of thirty silk scrolls making up *The Colorful Realm of Living Beings* is one of the most remarkable examples of 18th-century Japanese painting.

Jakuchū
The Colorful Realm of Living Beings

Curated by Manuela Moscatiello, in charge of the Japanese collection at the Musée Cernuschi, and Aya Ōta, chief curator of the Museum of Imperial Collections in Tokyo.

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76 illustrations

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Paris Musées is a publisher of art books and makes available some thirty volumes per year, including exhibition catalogs, guides to the collections and small publications. These beautiful books are worthy testimonials to the wealth of the City of Paris museums and the diversity of temporary exhibitions.

www.parismusees.paris.fr

TO EXTEND THE EXPERIENCE

The treasures of Kyōto, three centuries of Rinpa creation
Musée Cernuschi, Museum of the Asian Arts of Paris

The exhibition *Treasures from Kyoto* presents one of the leading schools of Japanese painting, the Rinpa decorative art movement, which appeared at the start of the 17th century and whose production has endured until the present day. The ancient capital of Japan and the cradle of the country's traditional culture, Kyoto has always been a centre of artistic production and the origin of the refined style of the Rinpa school.

EXHIBITION COMMITTEE

Yoshiyuki Hosomi, director of the Hosomi Museum, Kyōto

Ryuichi Matsubara, vice-director of the National Museum of Modern Art, Kyōto

Manuela Moscatiello, head of the Japanese collections at the musée Cernuschi

from 26 October 2018 to 27 January 2019

Open everyday from 10h to 18h, except Mondays

Evening visits available on Fridays until 21h.

Full: 9 euros/reduced: 7 euros

cernuschi.paris.fr



Tawaraya Sōtatsu, *Gods of Wind and Thunder*, 17th century, pair of two-panel folding screens, ink and colours on gold leaf, Kyōto, Kennin-ji



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JAPONISMES 2018

Japan and France jointly organize an extensive cultural season to showcase the unrevealed beauty of Japanese culture in Paris, the capital of art, and other cities in France.

In the 19th century, “Japonism” spread rapidly after ukiyo-e and other aspects of Japanese culture were introduced to France, having great influence on artists such as van Gogh and Claude Monet. In 2018, the 160 years of friendship between Japan and France, Japonism is gaining popularity once again, inspired by the creativity of modern day Japan, which still has the power to surprise and attract.

“Japonismes 2018: les âmes en resonance” introduces many different forms of art and culture through an official program of events such as exhibitions and stage performances nearly 100 venues in Paris and other locations during an 8-month period.

The diversity of Japanese culture will be introduced through presentations ranging from works of the ancient Jomon period that is the origin of Japanese culture, Ito Jakuchu, and Rinpa School painting; to the latest media arts, animation, and comics; as well as Kabuki, contemporary drama, and Hatsune Miku performances. There will also be opportunities to participate in cultural exchange programs with themes taken from everyday Japanese life, including cuisine and traditional regional festivals.

In advance of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, people in Paris and all over the world will be able to discover the fascination of Japanese culture in various aspects. The Japonismes 2018 Official Program is accompanied by the Japonismes 2018 Associate Program, which recognizes other Japan-related events organized in France in line with the aim of Japonismes 2018. The Associate Program enables an even broader audience to enjoy Japonismes 2018, communicating Japanese culture more widely.

Plus d'informations : <https://japonismes.org/fr/>





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PARIS MUSÉES A NETWORK OF PARIS MUSEUMS

Under the aegis of the Établissement public Paris Musées, the fourteen museums of the city of Paris contain collections of exceptional diversity and quality: fine arts, modern art, decorative arts, Asian arts, history, literature, archaeology, fashion – they cover a huge number of fields and reflect the cultural diversity of the capital of France and its rich history.

In an important gesture of outreach and an urge to share this fabulous heritage, admission to the permanent collections was made free of charge in 2001*. This has been completed by new policies for welcoming visitors, and more suitable admission charges for temporary exhibitions; particular attention is also now being paid to a public deprived of cultural amenities. The permanent collections and temporary exhibitions therefore include a varied programme of cultural activities.

In addition to this, developments in the frequentation of the museums are being accompanied by a policy of seeking a more diverse public. Paris Musées, in partnership with people working in the social sectors of the greater Paris area, is consolidating and developing activities for a public unfamiliar with museums. In 2014, more than 8000 people took advantage of these activities in the museums of the city of Paris. Our outreach extends to the Internet, with a website giving access to the complete programme of museum activities and to online details of the collections, so that people can prepare their visit.

www.parismusees.paris.fr

This breakdown of visitor numbers confirms the success of the museums: 3 150 000 visitors in 2017

*Except for establishments charging an admission fee for temporary exhibitions as part of the visit to their permanent collections (the archaeological Crypt under the forecourt of l'île de la Cité and the Catacombs). The Palais Galliera collections are only shown during temporary exhibitions.

PARIS MUSÉES CARD FOR EXHIBITIONS AT YOUR OWN PACE!



A card can be bought from Paris Musées, which gives unlimited access, ahead of the queue, to the temporary exhibitions in all 14 of the museums of Paris*, as well as special tariffs for activities. It entitles the holder to reductions in the bookshop-boutiques and the cafe-restaurants, and to receive prior information about events in the museums. In 2014, the card was bought by 9000 people.

Information is available at the Museum ticket offices or via the site:

www.parismusees.paris.fr

*Except the archaeological Crypt under the forecourt of l'île de la Cité and the Catacombs.

ABOUT THE PETIT PALAIS



Petit Palais, Paris Museum of Fine Arts © C. Fouin



Petit Palais, Paris Museum of Fine Arts © B. Fougérol



Petit Palais, Paris Museum of Fine Arts © B. Fougérol

Built for the Exposition Universelle de 1900, the Petit Palais building is a masterpiece by architect Charles Girault. In 1902, it became the City of Paris Museum of Fine Arts and presents a very beautiful collection of paintings, sculptures, furnishings and art objects dating from Antiquity to 1914.

Among the museum treasures are an exceptional collection of Greek vases and a very large group of Flemish and Dutch paintings from the seventeenth century, displayed around the famous *Self-Portrait with Dog* by Rembrandt. A magnificent collection of French paintings from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries includes major works by Fragonard, Greuze, David, Géricault, Delacroix, Courbet, Pissarro, Monet, Sisley, Cézanne and Vuillard. The museum is also very proud of a very beautiful collection of sculptures by Carpeaux, Carriès and Dalou. The collection of decorative art is especially noted for objects from the Renaissance and the 1900s, including glasswork by Gallé, jewelry by Fouquet and Lalique and a dining room designed by Guimard for his private mansion. Finally, the museum has an outstanding graphic arts room featuring complete series of engravings by Dürer, Rembrandt and Callot and a rare collection of Nordic drawings.

Since 2015, the collection presentation has been extensively reworked. It has been enriched by two new galleries on the garden floor level, one of which is dedicated to the Romantic period. In one gallery, restored large-format paintings by Delaroche and Schnetz are surrounded by works of artists such as Ingres, Géricault and Delacroix. In the second gallery, decorative paintings by Maurice Denis are interspersed with works by Cézanne, Bonnard, Maillol and Vallotton. In the fall of 2017, the collection of icons and Eastern Orthodox arts, which is the largest one in France, will benefit from a new museographic presentation. An area will also be dedicated to sketches of the major nineteenth-century Parisian settings. Early in 2018, these new presentations will be complemented in the North Gallery by collections of monumental sculptures from the nineteenth century.

The program of temporary exhibitions at the Petit Palais alternates ambitious major subjects like *Paris 1900*, *Baccarat*, *Les Bas-fonds du Baroque* (*Baroque Slums*) and *Oscar Wilde* with monographs that allow rediscovering forgotten painters such as Albert Besnard or George Desvallières. Since 2015, contemporary artists (Thomas Lerooy in 2015, Kehinde Wiley in 2016, Andres Serrano in 2017) have been invited to exhibit in the Petit Palais permanent collections in order to create a dialog with these paintings and reveal links between their works and those of the museum.

A café-restaurant opening on the interior garden and a new bookstore-boutique on the ground floor of the museum round out the services available to visitors.

petitpalais.paris.fr



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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Jakuchū

The Colorful Realm of Living Beings

15 September – 14 October 2018

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Closed on Mondays

From 15 September until 14 October, exceptionnally open until 9pm on Fridays and until 8pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

ADMISSION CHARGES

Free entry to the permanent collections

Charges for temporary exhibitions:

Full price: 11 euros

Reduced price: 9 euros

Free up to and including age 17

PETIT PALAIS

Musée des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris

Avenue Winston Churchill - 75008 Paris




Tel: + 33 1 53 43 40 00

Accessible to handicapped persons.

TRANSPORT

Metro stations

Champs-Élysées Clemenceau   

Franklin D. Roosevelt   

Invalides  

Bus : 28, 42, 72, 73, 83, 93

Café Restaurant 'Le Jardin du Petit Palais'

Open from 10:00 am to 5:00 pm

Bookshop-Boutique

Open from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm,

Late closing: Fridays, 9 pm