

The Story of Kyoto’s Early Western-Style Painting Scene as Told by Kuroda Jutaro

Kuroda Jutaro was a leading figure in the Kansai Western-style painting (yoga) scene. Fluent in French and deeply familiar with contemporary Western art, he was not only a dedicated painter but also a prolific writer on art theory. In his later years, he turned to education, teaching both in independent studios and at universities, and played a crucial role in nurturing the next generation of artists. Kuroda is an essential figure in understanding the history of Western-style painting in Kansai. This special display highlights works from our collection, guided by Kuroda’s book *Kyoto Yoga no Reimeiki* (“The Dawn of Kyoto Western-style Painting”), offering visitors a glimpse into the emergence of Western-style painting in Kyoto.

The exhibition begins with a section titled “Pioneers of the Western-style Painting,” centering on Tamura Soryu and featuring works by artists who followed in his footsteps: Ito Yasuhiko, Sakurai Tadataka, and Makino Katsuji. Born in the late Edo period, Tamura originally painted Buddhist and literati-style paintings. Driven by a desire to depict subjects with greater realism, he began exploring techniques of light and shadow on his own—creating artworks that were neither traditional Japanese nor fully Western. Eventually encountering oil painting, Tamura even studied English in order to better understand Western art. His efforts paid off: he worked at a hospital as both interpreter and painter, copying anatomical diagrams and learning oil painting techniques from foreign doctors. He also studied under Charles Wirgman, who taught oil painting and printmaking to Japanese artists in Yokohama. Upon returning to Kyoto, Tamura continued his studies despite the difficulty of sourcing art materials and became a true pioneer of Western-style painting in the city. Kuroda identified this period as the first stage in the dawn of Kyoto’s Western-style painting, with a second stage marked by Tamura’s tenure as an instructor at the Kyoto Prefectural School of Painting (present-day Kyoto City University of Arts).

Ito, Sakurai, and Makino were all of the same generation and studied under Tamura. Ito was captivated by Takahashi Yuichi’s *Salmon* as a child, which inspired him to pursue Western painting—a story that reflects the precision of his artistic style. Sakurai, born into a distinguished family of feudal lords from Amagasaki, moved to Tokyo, worked as an assistant to Katsu Kaishu, and later turned to painting. Unusually for an artist, he also became the first mayor of Amagasaki. Makino studied Western painting in Tokyo and later taught at the Kyoto College of Technology and Craft. All three were involved in the founding of the Kansai Bijutsukai(Kansai Art Association).

Another key figure was Asai Chu, who came to Kyoto during this period. Asai had studied Western painting under Antonio Fontanesi at the Technical Art School (present-day Tokyo University of the Arts), helped found the Meiji Art Society, and contributed significantly to the development of modern Western-style painting in Japan. After studying in France and being influenced by the Barbizon School, Impressionism, and Art Nouveau, he returned to Japan and settled in Kyoto. There, while teaching at the Kyoto College of Technology and Craft, he energetically produced works in watercolor and decorative design. As interest in Western-style painting grew in Kyoto, there was a movement to unify the many small private studios into a single research institute—leading to the establishment of the Shogoin Western Painting Research Institute. This institute was led by Asai, Tamura, Ito, Makino, and Tottori Hideki, and later joined by Kanokogi Takeshiro, who had also returned from France. The Institute eventually gave rise to the Kansai Bijutsuin.

The Kansai Bijutsuin became the central institution for Western-style art education in the region, producing renowned artists such as Umehara Ryuzaburo, Yasui Sotaro, and Suda Kunitaro. Though Asai’s life in Kyoto was brief—only five years before his untimely death—his impact on the development of Western-style painting in the city was profound. He truly was a guiding light in the early days of Kyoto’s Western-style painting scene—a light that illuminated the path for future generations of artists.

Curator – Nakayama Maiko

Collection Room Summer

Special Display: The Dawn of Western-style Painting: Following the Footsteps of Kuroda Jutaro

Jun. 20 (Fri.) – Aug. 31 (Sun.), 2025

Main Building (South Wing) 1F



*🎧: audio guide
*Due to various reasons, exhibited items may change.
*List order and exhibit order are not intended to match.



List of Works


No.	Inv.no.	Artist	Birth and Death	Title	Date	Material; Shape	Size (cm)	First exhibition	Audio guide
Forms of Water: Modern Textiles and Lacquerware from Kyoto									
Gallery 106									
1	K – 351	ITO, Hiroshi	1930 – 2023	The Great Wave: Landscape with the Sun and Moon	1993	Lacquer on wood with lid	20.0 × 50.5 × 18.0cm	32nd Gendai Kogei Group Exhibition	
2	K – 323	HATTORI, Shunsho	1943 – 2018	Ornamental Box with Abalone Shell Inlay "Sea at Dawn"	1990	Lacquer and abalone shell inlay on wood	22.0 × 42.5 × 20.0cm	42nd Kyoten (awarded Kyoten Prize)	
3	K – 305	MIZUUCHI, Kyohei	1909 – 2001	Lacquered Sideboard with Engraved Wave Design	1960	Lacquer on wood	72.8 × 151.7 × 44.0cm	3rd Shin Nitten	
4	K – 134	MINAGAWA, Gekka	1892 – 1987	Pictoral Dye "Whirlpool"	1977	Wax-resist dyeing on silk; two-panel folding screen	168.0 × 185.5cm	9th Kaiso Nitten	
5	K – 465	ISA, Toshihiko	1924 – 2010	Rapids	1996	Stencil dyeing on paper; two-panel folding screen	140.0 × 142.5cm	48th Kyoten (commissioned exhibit)	
6	K – 826	NAITO, Hideharu	1946 –	Wave Pattern	1978	Stencil dyeing, with indigo on hemp cloth; two-panel folding screen	170.0 × 167.4cm	26th All Kansai Art Exhibition (3rd prize of the Kansai Exhibition Award)	
7	K – 187	BAN-URA, Shogo	1901 – 1982	Tide Patterns	1977	Lacquer on wood; framed	115.3 × 91.0cm		
Reexamining the Exhibition Series, <i>Art of Kyoto: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow</i> – Works of Inumaki Kenji (1996)									
Gallery 110									
8	Y – 386	NUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Deep Red Vertical Wave Pattern	1996	Oil on canvas	259.1 × 193.9cm	Art of Kyoto 18 - Works of Inumaki Kenji (Kyoto Municipal Museum of Art, 1996)	
9	Y – 440	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space No.8, from the Right: Black, Purple, Deep Green	1994	Oil on canvas	53.0 × 45.5cm		
10	Y – 441	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space No. 1, from the Bottom: Cerulean, Red, Black	1994	Oil on canvas	53.0 × 45.5cm		
11	Y – 442	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space No. 33, from the Right: Red, Green, Yellow Deep	1994	Oil on canvas	227.3 × 181.8cm		
12	Y – 443	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space, Colors from the Top: Ivory Black, Cadmium Red	1995	Oil on canvas	194.0 × 130.0cm		
13	Y – 448	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space, Colors from the Top: Cerulean Blue, Cadmium Yellow Light	1995	Oil on canvas	116.5 × 91.0cm		
14	Y – 450	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Silhouette of Space, Colors from the Right: Cadmium Green, Cadmium Yellow Orange	1995	Oil on canvas	116.5 × 91.0cm		
15	Y – 823	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	D-3	1983	Oil on canvas	62.0 × 46.0cm	Contemporary Art in Japan: Five Japanese Contemporary Artists (Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, 1983)	
16	Y – 824	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	D-4	1983	Oil on canvas	66.0 × 46.5cm	Contemporary Art in Japan: Five Japanese Contemporary Artists (Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, 1983)	
17	Y – 825	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	D-5	1983	Oil on canvas	66.0 × 51.0cm	Contemporary Art in Japan: Five Japanese Contemporary Artists (Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf, 1983)	
18	Y – 826	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Work 92-57	1992	Oil on canvas	28.5 × 20.5cm	Solo exhibition (Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo, 1992)	
19	Y – 827	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Untitled (ik-96-12)	1996	Colored pencil on graph paper	76.0 × 106.0cm		
20	Y – 828	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	Untitled (ik-96-24)	1996	Ink on graph paper	76.0 × 106.0cm		
21	Y – 829	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	The Shape of Green 1	1998	Oil on canvas	100.0 × 80.3cm	Solo exhibition (Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo, 1999)	
22	Y – 830	INUMAKI, Kenji	1943 – 2023	The Shape of Green 2	1998	Oil on canvas	100.0 × 80.2cm	Solo exhibition (Muramatsu Gallery, Tokyo, 1999)	

Quick Guide to our Survey

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No.	Inv.no.	Artist	Birth and Death	Title	Date	Material; Shape	Size (cm)	First exhibition	Audio guide
23	Reference exhibit	Ufer ! Art Documentary (filming & editing)		Video Documentation of the Re-creation of <i>Untitled</i>	2020	Video documentation	5'30"		
24	Reference exhibit	Ufer ! Art Documentary (filming & editing)		Video Documentation of the Exhibition Series, Art of Kyoto: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow 18 - Works of Inumaki Kenji (1996)	1996	Video documentation	5'43"		
Newly Acquired Works of Kokufu Osamu									
Gallery 109、Sky Courtyard									
25	T – 177	KOKUFU, Osamu	1970 – 2014	Attic Garden	2011	Steel, sand, earth, water, plant seeds, and others	115.0 × 220.0 × 220.0cm	TRA: Edge of Becoming, (Palazzo Fortuny, Venice, 2011)	
26	T – 176	KOKUFU, Osamu	1970 – 2014	Electric Tricycle	1994 – 2004	Motorcycle parts, FRP, steel, motor, battery (treated with eletrolytic water deletion)	58.0 × 117.0 × 242.0cm	Solo exhibition (Artspace Niji, Kyoto, 1994)	
27	T – 178	KOKUFU, Osamu	1970 – 2014	Drawing for "Cosmosphere" – Electric Tricycle	2013	Ink on paper	21.0 × 29.0cm	Osamu Kokufu:Cosmosphere (Otani Memorial Art Museum, Hyogo, 2013)	
28	T – 178	KOKUFU, Osamu	1970 – 2014	Drawings (1986 – 1990)	1986 – 1990	Pencil, colored pencil and ink on paper (advertising flyer, coarse paper, etc.)	Scrapbook (42.0 × 31.8cm, 40pages)		
29	Reference exhibit	KOKUFU, Osamu / ONISHI, Kazuki (filming & editing)		KOKUFU Osamu Electric Tricycle	2005 – 2015	Video documentation	1'36"		
30	Reference exhibit	KATAYAMA, Tatsuki (filming & editing)		Video Documentation of the Installation of KOKUFU Osamu's <i>Attic Garden</i>	2025	Video documentation	11'58"		
Birds Across Time									
Former South Hall									
31	K – 077	KIYOMIZU, Rokube V (Rokuwa)	1875 – 1959	Ornament of Pheasants	1933	Porcelain	17.0 × 15.5 × 59.0cm, 10.5 × 11.5 × 32.0cm		
34	T – 174	MIYANAGA, Aiko	1974 –	The Sea Asleep in the Void – Waterfowl	2022	Glass, air, created with plaster molds from the Miyanaga Tozan kiln	7.0 × 6.5 × 14.0cm		
32	K – 517	NUMATA, Ichiga	1873 – 1954	Mandarin Ducks	Early Showa Period	Stoneware	14.5 × 23.0 × 16.0cm		
33	K – 524	NUMATA, Ichiga	1873 – 1954	Horned Owl	Early Showa Period	Plaster	23.0 × 10.0 × 11.5cm		
35	K – 523	NUMATA, Ichiga	1873 – 1954	Snow Grouse	Early Showa Period	Stoneware	22.5 × 28.0 × 14.5cm		
36	K – 520	NUMATA, Ichiga	1873 – 1954	Crane-Shaped Incense Burner	Early Showa Period	Stoneware	10.0 × 26.0 × 12.0cm		
37	K – 533	FUNATSU, Hideharu	1911 – 1984	Comorant	Early Showa Period (Original Form)	Stoneware	23.5 × 29.5 × 18.0cm		
38	K – 027	TSUDA, Shinobu	1875 – 1946	Peacefully Sleeping Goose (Waterfowl Ornament)	1940	Stoneware with white glaze	16.0 × 13.0 × 27.0cm	Osaka Exhibition for the Promotion of Craft Work	
Special Display: The Dawn of Western-style Painting – Following the Footsteps of Kuroda Jutaro									
Pioneers of Western-style Painting: Tamura Soryu, Sakurai Tadakata, Ito Yasuhiko, Makino Katsuji									
Gallery 108									
39	Y – 745	TAMURA, Soryu	1846 – 1918	Court Lady Plays the Koto; a Japanese zither	c. 1897	Oil on canvas; framed	56.7 × 88.5 cm	3rd Exhibitions of Modern and Ancient Art	 52
40	Y – 747	TAMURA, Soryu	1846 – 1918	Mt. Fuji	c. 1880	Oil on canvas; framed	50.7 × 76.4 cm		
41	N – 794	TAMURA, Soryu	1846 – 1918	The Bodhisattva Kannon (Avalokiteshvara)	unknown	Hanging scroll; pigment on silk	115.8 × 41.2cm		
42	Y – 549	SAKURAI, Tadakata	1867 – 1934	Noh Play (Ataka)	Late Meiji period	Oil on lacquered board; framed	39.0 × 136.4cm		
43	Y – 551	SAKURAI, Tadakata	1867 – 1934	Plum Blossoms	Meiji period	Oil on board; framed	22.7 × 35.3cm		
44	Y – 058	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867 – 1942	Portrait of a Girl	c. 1891	Oil on board; framed (oval shape)	24.0 × 19.0cm		
45	Y – 481	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867 – 1942	View of Kamo River, Kyoto	1897	Oil on canvas; framed	32.0 × 135.0cm		 166
46	Y – 123	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867 – 1942	Woman from the Inner Chambers	1908	Oil on canvas; framed	78.0 × 54.5cm	2nd Bunten	 56
47	Y – 777	ITO, Yasuhiko	1867 – 1942	[Young Fisherman]	1890	Oil on canvas; framed	88.5 × 65.8cm		
48	Y – 223	MAKINO, Katsuji	1864 – 1942	Fallen Leaves	1903	Oil on canvas; framed	90.8 × 151.8 cm	5th National Industrial Exposition, Osaka	 54

No.	Inv.no.	Artist	Birth and Death	Title	Date	Material; Shape	Size (cm)	First exhibition	Audio guide
Asai Chu's Settlement in Kyoto									
Gallery 107									
49	Y – 049	ASAI, Chu	1856 – 1907	Willow Trees in Grez-sur-Loing, France	1901	Oil on canvas; framed	59.5 × 79.5cm	Produced in Europe	 53
50	Y – 244	ASAI, Chu	1856 – 1907	View of Nyakuoji, Kyoto	unknown	Watercolor on paper; framed	29.0 × 23.0cm		
51	Y – 245	ASAI, Chu	1856 – 1907	The Garden at Shogoin, Kyoto	1903	Watercolor on paper; framed	34.4 × 24.7cm		
52	Y – 246	ASAI, Chu	1856 – 1907	Girl from a Fishing Village	c. 1897	Oil on canvas; framed	45.3 × 33.5cm		
Artists Around Asai Chu and the Kansai Bijutsuin									
Gallery 107									
53	Y – 017	KANOKOGI, Takeshiro	1874 – 1941	Wife of the New Age	1909	Oil on canvas; framed	94.0 × 90.0cm	3rd Bunten	 57
54	Y – 018	KANOKOGI, Takeshiro	1874 – 1941	Portrait of a Widow	1912	Oil on canvas; framed	93.0 × 62.0cm	6th Bunten	
55	Y – 799	KAWAI, Shinzo	1867 – 1936	Kamigamo, Kyoto	Late Meiji-Early Taisho Period	Oil on canvas; framed	92.0 × 53.5cm		
56	Y – 129	TOTORI, Eiki	1873 – 1943	Basket Maker	1909	Oil on canvas; framed	79.0 × 58.0cm	8th Kansai Bijutsukai Exhibition	 58
57	Y – 141	TOTORI, Eiki	1873 – 1943	Montigny at Dusk	1921	Oil on canvas; framed	62.5 × 79.5cm	Produced in Europe	
58	Y – 092	OTA, Kijiro	1883 – 1951	Garden in Autumn	1915	Oil on canvas; framed	99.0 × 87.0cm		 146
59	Y – 093	OTA, Kijiro	1883 – 1951	Summer Day	1919	Oil on canvas; framed	180.0 × 241.0cm	1st Teiten	 147
60	Y – 217	NAKABAYASHI, Sen	1879 – 1937	Shade of Trees	1911	Watercolor on paper; framed	47.0 × 64.0cm		
61	Y – 204	KATO, Gennosuke	1880 – 1946	Fine Autumn Day	1906	Watercolor on paper; framed	27.9 × 38.8cm		
62	Y – 513	ARAI, Kinya	1884 – 1966	Acacia Flowers	1939	Oil on board; framed	26.5 × 20.4cm		
63	Y – 128	SAWABE, Seigoro	1884 – 1964	Park in Paris	1913	Oil on canvas; framed	39.0 × 49.0cm	Produced in Europe	 165
64	Y – 127	SAWABE, Seigoro	1884 – 1964	Girl Drawing a Picture	1912	Oil on canvas; framed	51.5 × 43.5cm	Produced in Europe	
65	Y – 746	TANAKA, Zennosuke	1889 – 1946	Early Spring in the Tropics	1934	Oil on canvas; framed	80.5 × 117.0cm	Inaugural Exhibition	 197
66	Y – 097	KURODA, Jutaro	1887 – 1970	Woman Carrying Hay	1917	Oil on canvas; framed	49.5 × 60.0cm	6th Nika Group Exhibition (produced in Europe)	
67	Y – 166	KURODA, Jutaro	1887 – 1970	Study of a Nude Woman	1918	Oil on canvas; framed	48.5 × 59.0cm	Produced in Europe	
68	Y – 067	YASUI, Sotaro	1888 – 1955	Self-Portrait	1906	Oil on canvas; framed	47.5 × 35.0cm		
69	Y – 068	YASUI, Sotaro	1888 – 1955	View of Awataguchi, Kyoto	1905	Oil on canvas; framed	31.0 × 43.5cm		 55
70	Y – 168	KANOKOGI, Takeshiro	1874 – 1941	Seaside	1930	Oil on canvas; framed (round shape)	Diam.58.0cm		
71	Y – 169	TERAMATSU, Kunitaro	1876 – 1943	Angel	1930	Oil on canvas; framed (round shape)	Diam.58.0cm		
Summer Attire									
Gallery 106									
72	N – 608	KITANO, Tsunetomi	1880 – 1947	Sisters of a Merchant Family	1936	Color on paper; pair of two-panel folding screens	159.5 × 172.8cm each	1st Kaiso Teiten	 41
73	N – 075	INOUE, Tsusei	1903 – unknown	Early Summer	1940	Color on paper; six-panel folding screen	168.0 × 369.0cm	Commemorative Exhibition	
74	N – 146	KIKUCHI, Keigetsu	1879 – 1955	Girl in Yuzen-dyed Kimono	1933	Color on silk; framed	152.0 × 88.0cm	9th Kikuchijuku Exhibition	
75	N – 1026	NIWA, Akiko	1900 – 1988	Flower Market	1943	Color on silk; framed	188.0 × 177.0cm	8th Shiten	
76	N – 1118	KAJIWARA, Hisako	1896 – 1988	Playing Cards	1980	Color on paper; framed	133.0 × 87.0cm	12th Kaiso Nitten	
77	N – 870	FUJIKI, Ako	1896 – 1943	A Summer Day	1939	Color on silk; framed	208.0 × 184.0cm	3rd Shin Bunten	