

Attention: Members of the press

2025.06
Fukuda Art Museum
Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture

SHŌEN

UEMURA

上村松園と美人画の軌跡 Uemura Shōen and the Trajectory of Bijin-ga



Fukuda Art Museum : 「Uemura Shōen and the Trajectory of Bijin-ga」

Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture : 「Ukiyo-e, the Launch pad for Bijinga」

To celebrate the 150th anniversary of Uemura Shōen's birth, our museum presents a selection of exquisite *bijin-ga* (paintings of beautiful women) from our collection, featuring works by Shōen and other artists.

Explore the legacy of modern *bijin-ga* through the remarkable artistry Shōen brought to this genre.



October 11 (Sat.) 2025 – January 18 (Sun.) 2026

1st period: October 11 (Sat.) – December 1 (Mon.)

2nd period: December 3 (Wed.) – January 18 (Sun.) 2026

【 Organized by 】 Fukuda Art Museum、Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture

【 Supported by 】 Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Kyoto City Board of Education

【 Venue 】 Fukuda Art Museum、Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture

Section 1. Trajectory of *Bijin-ga* Paintings Traced by Shōen and Others

The *bijin-ga* genre arose at the beginning of the Edo period (1603 onwards), when public taste started favoring paintings and woodblock prints showing, rather than in groups, single figures of beautifully dressed women. In this section, you can see Kanbun beauties, depicted during the Kanbun era (1661–1673), and subsequent works by *ukiyo-e* artists who continued the tradition.

Until the early modern period, artists primarily painted according to the wishes of their patrons. In the modern era, however, painters began to dedicate themselves fully to subjects they wished to depict, submitting their works to government-sponsored public exhibitions and refining their skills through personal artistic pursuit.

Uemura Shōen (1875–1949), all of whose works in this exhibition explore feminine beauty, is one of Japan's pioneering artists. Throughout her life, she focused on discovering new ways of expressing her ideal of beauty. Younger artists looked up to her and many also began to specialize in *bijin-ga* depicting female beauty.

You can also view paintings by other female painters inspired by her work, such as Ikeda Shōen (1886–1917) , Shima Seien (1892–1970) , Itō Shōha (1877–1968) . On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Shōen's birth, enjoy this opportunity to visit the enchanting world of beauty inspired by her artistry.



Section 2. Divergent Trajectories: Tokyo and Kyoto

While Shōen was absorbed in painting *bijin-ga* in Kyoto, Kaburaki Kiyokata (1878–1972) was pioneering a similar path in Tokyo. Working with a vision born from Tokyo's debonair, urbane culture, Kiyokata developed his modern style from the traditions of Edo *ukiyo-e*.

An excellent painter, Kiyokata was also an outstanding teacher. His art school attracted a diverse group which included Itō Shinsui (1898–1972) , Ōbayashi Chimaki (1887–1959) , and Kadoi Kikusui (1886–1976) . Tutored by Kiyokata each was able to develop their own distinctive talent.

During the Taishō era (1912–1926), young artists under Kiyokata were active in Tokyo.

Meanwhile, in Kyoto, Kainoshō Tadaoto (1894–1978) , Okamoto Shinsō (1894–1933) , and other painters of the same generation were also discovering their own unique styles. Tanikado Hisaharu (1893–1971) , for example, created many elegant representative paintings of beautiful women and then, in his later years, his work became boldly abstract as he attempted to capture *reisai*, the aural color of soul and spirit. Richly diverse *bijin-ga* painting continues to evolve.



Section 3. Continuing Flight Path

In Japan, the fascination with capturing essential female beauty also gripped artists working, in a more Western tradition, with oils and other materials. Works by these early 20th century artistic rivals, including Kishida Ryūsei (1891–1929) , Okada Saburōsuke (1869–1939) , Koiso Ryōhei (1903–1988) , and Tōgō Seiji (1897–1978) are also on show. See how they competed to express beauty in the simple figure of a village girl, the fuller body of a mature woman, women in Western and ethnic clothing, innocent girls at play... Enjoy following complete trajectories of *bijin-ga*, an art that has endured for centuries.

At the second venue, the Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts and Culture, the exhibition continues with Ukiyo-e, the Launch Pad for Bijin-ga.

And thanks to the many positive feedbacks about Lively Tuesday event which have been conducted since last summer, we now make every Tuesday and Sunday as a permanent 'Art Chat Day'. We warmly invite you to visit Arashiyama in its brilliant autumn colors and serene winter beauty.

【Number of Works】

Fukuda Art Museum: Total approx. 80 pieces

※Of which approx. 20 pieces are being exhibited for the first time

Venue 2 : Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture

Section 1. Beauties Flourish in an Unbound Floating World

Ukiyo-e literally means floating-world picture.

Originally a Buddhist term, *ukiyo* denoted a sad world of grief and worry. In time, the main meaning referred to a world in motion, wavering like floating weeds. During the settled, peaceful days of the Edo period, the word became associated with hedonistic respite from every-day worries. Eventually, the floating world came to refer, even, to an exciting joyful space in which the heart could flutter.

Ukiyo-e celebrated the common people's hunger for amusement and shared enjoyment. Edo-period people hungered for a distinctive euphoria often expressed in *ukiyo-e* images. While woodblock prints, transformed from paintings, are well known, here you can see actual hand-painted originals. Some were specially commissioned and not reproduced. These images are rarer and less often seen. *Ukiyo-e* and Edo publishing have been attracting unbound attention recently. Responding to this interest, we are showing all the hand-painted *ukiyo-e* held in the Fukuda Collection. Come and re-live the joy and beauty of Edo's floating world.

Section 2. Ukiyo Beauties: Dreams Performed and Portrayed

While *ukiyo-e* pictures cover different themes, in the art business both prints and paintings had to generate income. Artists had to make a living, but woodblock printing also involved a publisher and the refined skills of engravers and printers. Hoping for a hit, the publishers typically commissioned works they thought would sell well. The most popular images were *shibai-e* (stage scenes). Famous scenes from kabuki, *jōruri*, and other theatrical works generated reliable income.

Famous courtesans of Yoshiwara and other red-light districts also became subjects for *ukiyo-e*. These women, the celebrities of their day, were not easily encountered. If they were known for plucking the shamisen, dancing, or other art, in *ukiyo-e* portrayal, an effort was made to acknowledge their skill.

Painted in this tradition, depicting themes such as storybook heroines, courtesans, geisha and maiko, and Japanese dance. Modern *bijin-ga* are also on show. The works are arranged thematically so that you can explore and enjoy their appeal.

【Number of Works】

Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture

Full Term: 33 pieces

First Half: 9 pieces, Second Half: 9 pieces

Total: 51 pieces

※Of which, 9 pieces are being exhibited for the first time.

Exhibition Overview

■ T i t l e	「Uemura Shōen and the Trajectory of Bijin-ga」 「Ukiyo-e, the Launch pad for Bijinga」
■ D a t e s	October 11 (Sat.) 2025 – January 18 (Sun.) 2026 1st period: October 11 (Sat.) – December 1 (Mon.) 2nd period: December 3 (Wed.) – January 18 (Sun.) 2026 *Every Tuesday and Sunday will be “Feel Free to Talk” days
■ Opening Hours	10:00～17:00 (last entry 16:30)
■ C l o s e d	November 11(Tue.), December 2(Tue.), December 16(Tue.), December 30(Tue.), December 31(Wed.), January 1(Thu)
■ O r g a n i z e r	Fukuda Art Museum、Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture
■ Supported by	Kyoto Prefecture, Kyoto City, Kyoto City Board of Education, Kyoto Chamber of Commerce and Industry
■ A c c e s s	○Venue 1 / Fukuda Art Museum 3-16 Susukino-Baba-cho, Sagatenryuji, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto-shi, Kyoto 616-8385 12-minute walk from JR San'in Main Line (Sagano Line) “Saga-Arashiyama Station”／11-minute walk from Hankyu Arashiyama Line “Arashiyama Station”／4-minute walk from Randen (Keifuku Electric Railway) “Arashiyama Station” ○Venue 2／Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture 〒616-8385 11 Susukinobabacho, Sagatenryuji, Ukyo-ku, Kyoto City 14-minute walk from JR San'in Main Line (Sagano Line) “Saga-Arashiyama Station”／13-minute walk from Hankyu Arashiyama Line “Arashiyama Station”／5-minute walk from Randen (Keifuku Electric Railway) “Arashiyama Station”
■ E n t r y F e e	General / University student: ¥1,500 (¥1,400) High school student: ¥900 (¥800) Elementary / Junior high school student: ¥500 (¥400) Disabled person and up to one helper: ¥900 (¥800) * Prices in parentheses are for groups of 20 or more. * Free for preschool children <Combo Tickets with Saga Arashiyama Museum of Arts & Culture> General / University student: ¥2,300 High school student: ¥1,300 Elementary / Junior high school student: ¥750 Disabled person and up to one helper: ¥1,300

About the Fukuda Art Museum

A Harmony of Beautiful Nature and Japanese Art – A New Place to Transmit Japanese Culture

Since ancient times, the Saga-Arashiyama area, home to the Fukuda Art Museum, has been loved by nobles and cultured people, and served as a source of inspiration for outstanding art. Based on the concept of creating a facility that lasts for 100 years, the Fukuda Art Museum will convey Japanese culture, passed down over hundreds of years to the present day, to successive generations in order to foster its further development.

The museum's founder, Fukuda Yoshitaka, was born and raised in Kyoto, launched his business in the city, and remains active there today. Fukuda's decision to establish a museum was rooted in his sincere desire to repay local residents and the entire Kyoto area for the generous support he has received over the years. And the Fukuda Art Museum was established in October 2019. Today, Arashiyama has become one of Japan's leading tourist destinations, attracting domestic sightseers as well as visitors from all over the world.

By enabling viewers to enjoy the beautiful natural landscape along with works of Japanese art, it is our hope that Arashiyama will become one of the world's leading sites for culture.



Japanese Architecture Suited both to Arashiyama and the Future

Koichi Yasuda, the architect of the Fukuda Art Museum aimed for a new kind of Japanese architecture that will serve as a standard for the next 100 years, including galleries that are inspired by *kura* storehouses or a corridor that recalls a traditional *engawa* (verandah). A large basin in the garden reflects Arashiyama, functioning like a water mirror connected to the Oigawa (Katsura) River, which flows right there in front of you. Inside the museum is a café, which was designed to provide the most beautiful view of the Togetsukyo Bridge, a local landmark.

