

Animal Motifs in Crafts and Paintings

June 30 (Tue) - August 23 (Sun), 2015

THE JAPAN FOLK CRAFTS MUSEUM

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This exhibition introduces animal motifs in crafts and paintings from the museum collection. Soetsu Yanagi (1889-1961) founded the museum under the slogan of 'mingei', an abbreviation of folk crafts or common crafts literally and the museum houses various crafts of various field common craftspeople or ordinary people have been concerned with. When you look at the collection, you could find rich expressions of animal motifs in Ōtsu-e (folk paintings sold as a souvenir around Ōtsu, Shiga prefecture) and *ema* votive pictures as well as ceramics, dyed and woven materials and urushi ware.

Yanagi collected these crafts with his original and unique aesthetics eyes and there exists some preferences of his own compared to a general history of paintings or crafts. Considering that works made by ordinary people have tended to be paid little attention to in the history of crafts, the works in the museum collected by Yanagi clearly and evidently show us rich and abundant expressions of animal motifs made by ordinary people in the history of crafts.

In addition to works by ordinary people, paintings by artists which have been rarely introduced in the museum so far are also on display. These paintings were collected by Yanagi as well with his deep interests. For example, ink paintings of Muromachi period, fine and delicate paintings of the Korean Peninsula and China which were descended from animal paintings of Southern Song Dynasty, China. These paintings indicate that the viewpoint of crafts by Yanagi was originally widespread, even though it tends to be observed from only one aspect 'mingei'. In this sense, they have significant meanings.

Why have so many crafts and paintings with animal motifs been produced? This might be because people had had deep relationship with animals in their daily life or culture as coexistences in the natural world. It would be an honor if you enjoy an abundant and expressive world of animal motifs in crafts and paintings.

Special Exhibition

Thematic Exhibition

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Chinese Ceramics

Chinese ceramics such as old *some-tsuke* and red enamel ceramics produced in the 17th century (known as *tenkei-akae* in Japan) which have been popular in Japan are introduced. Paintings with animal motifs which had been shipped from China or the Korean Peninsula before Edo period and introduced into Japan are also on display in this room.

Crafts of the Korean Peninsula

In crafts of the Korean Peninsula various animal motifs are found such as tigers, frogs, fish and so on. These motifs were applied with techniques like mother-of pearl inlay, horn finish, and iron glazes. Please enjoy charming expressions of animals.

Japanese Animal Motifs – Paintings and Crafts

A wide variety of Japanese animal motifs in paintings such as Ōtsu-e and votive pictures, ceramics and urushi wares are introduced.

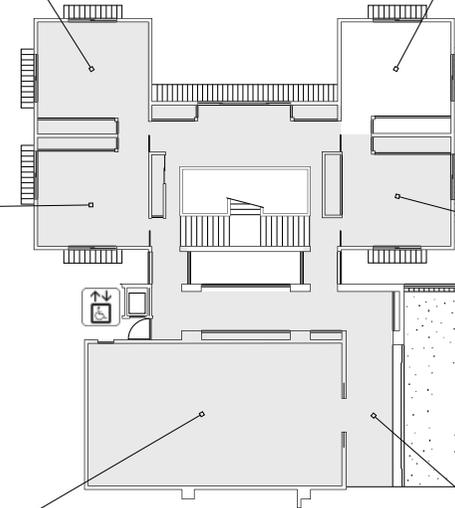
Glass and Metal

Japanese glass works including Buddhist religious objects and glass works produced in Germany, Mexico and other countries are on display. In addition, metal works made of iron, copper and brass from Japan and the Korean Peninsula are introduced. Please enjoy diverse wares which would deliver you a cool impression.

Japanese Porcelain

The museum houses about a thousand porcelains made in Imari, Seto and Hirasa in Kagoshima prefecture. Most of them have motifs like stripes, flowers and landscapes in *gosu*. In this room, about 50 pieces of precious porcelain works made in Imari are on display including the Ko-Kutani style.

SECOND FLOOR



Animal Motifs in Works by Artists

Animal motifs could be seen in works by artists who promoted the Mingei Movement. In this room, ceramics and paintings by Bernard Leach, woodcut prints and paintings by Shiko Munakata, paintings by Kenkichi Tomimoto and ceramics by Kenji Funaki are exhibited. They are dynamic and filled with lively.

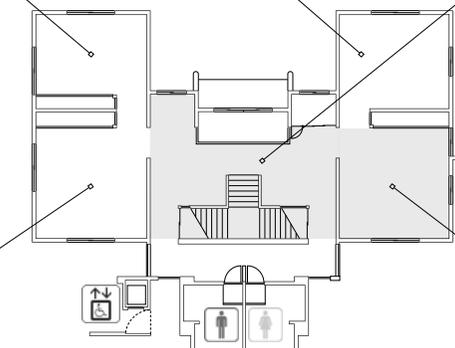
Japanese Animal Motifs – Paintings in the Middle Age

In the Middle Age, many paintings of motifs like horses, flowers or birds were drawn. In this room, paintings with animal motifs in the Middle Age collected by Yanagi are mainly exhibited.

Ceramics of Europe and America

Here ceramics with animal motifs from Europe and America are exhibited; slipware, tiles from the Netherlands, colored ceramics from Spain and so on.

Museum Shop



FIRST FLOOR

Folk Paintings of Joseon Dynasty

In the late Joseon Dynasty, folk paintings were drawn in free compositions and styles. These paintings have been highly estimated since Taisho period and introduced into Japan. In this room animal expressions in folk paintings of Joseon Dynasty are mainly exhibited.

Animal Motifs in Dyed and Woven Materials

Splendid Okinawan *bingata* kimonos have various animal motifs such as cranes, wild geese, mandarin ducks, turtles and shells. From the mainland of Japan, on the other hand, a motif of cranes and turtles woven in the *e-gasuri* technique, indigo-dyed bed materials and kimonos are on display.

Thematic Exhibition

Special Exhibition

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