



Surimono by  
Ryuryukyo Shinsai  
(active 1790—)

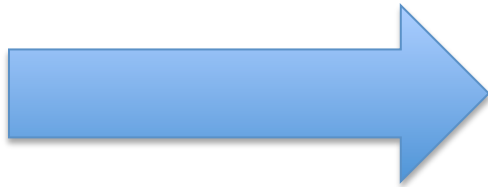
# Visualization of **TIME AND ETERNITY IN JAPANESE WOODBLOCK PRINTS**

**TUULA MOILANEN**  
IMC2017 Hawaii USA

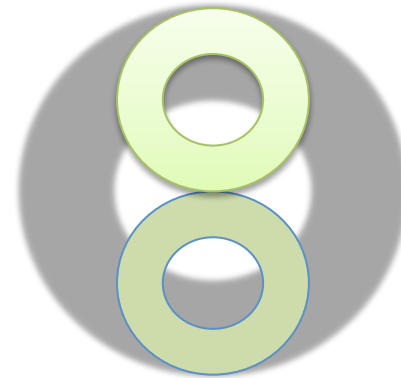
# Sense of Time

Time is a personal human experience

Time becomes visible in movement and change



Western Sense of Time :  
**Linear movement from  
Past to Future**

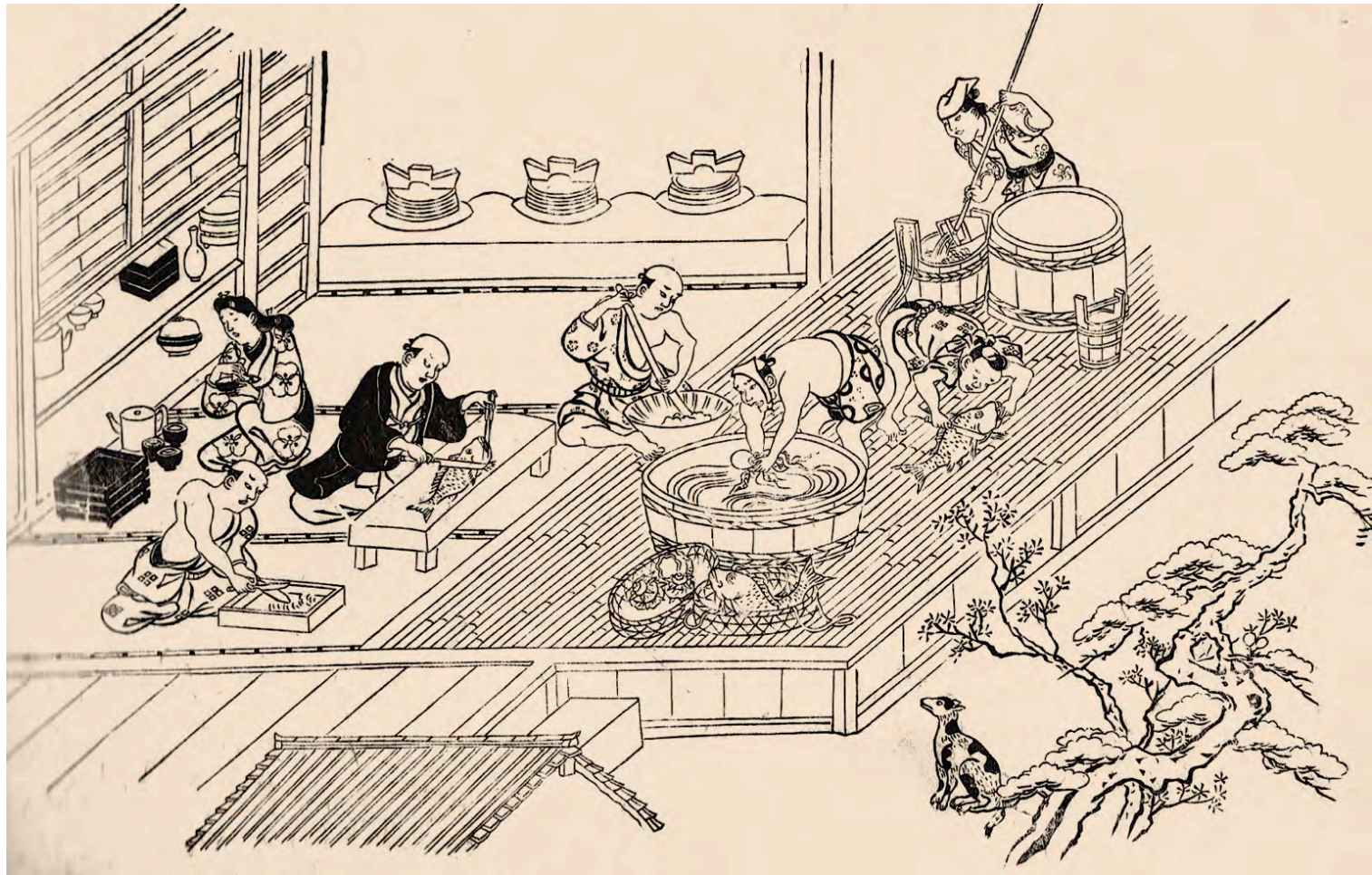


Japanese Sense of Time:  
**Simultaneous cycles  
or a chain of events**





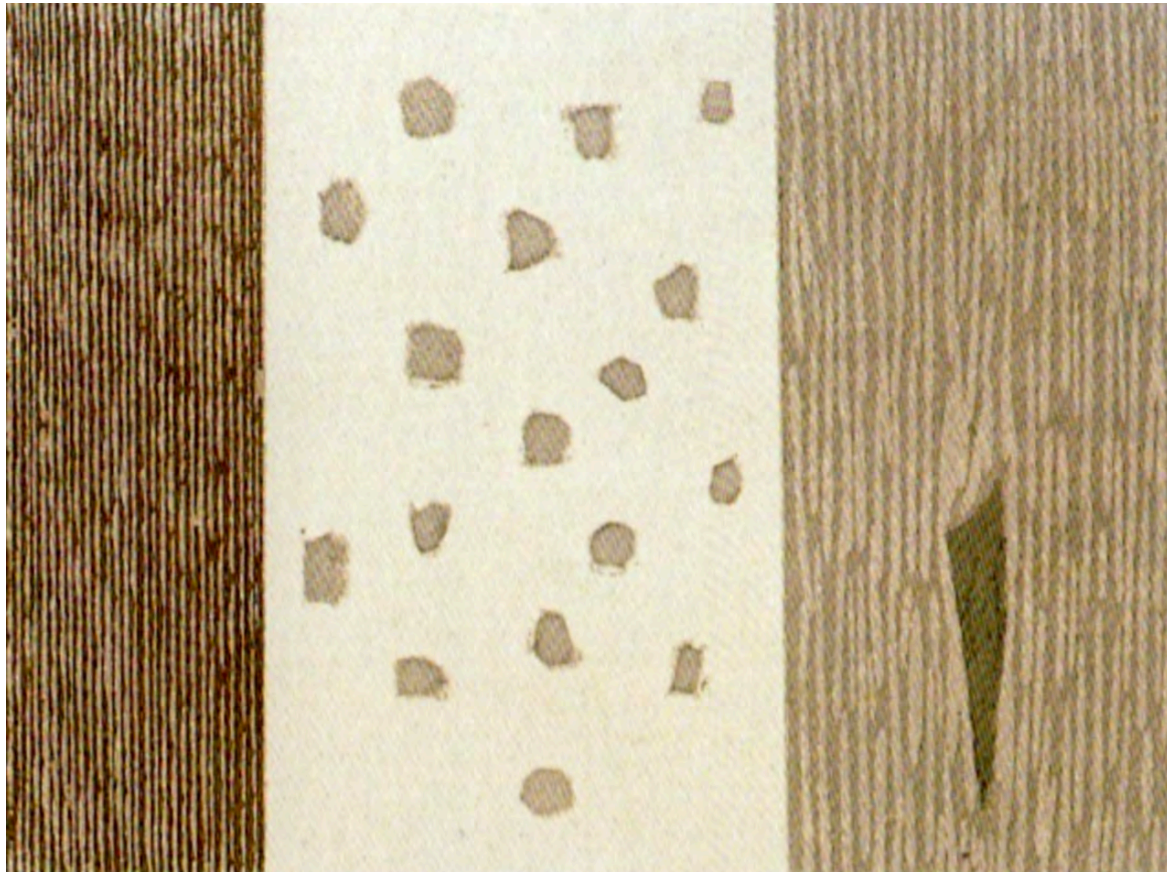




### Bird's eye view

State of affairs in connection to surroundings

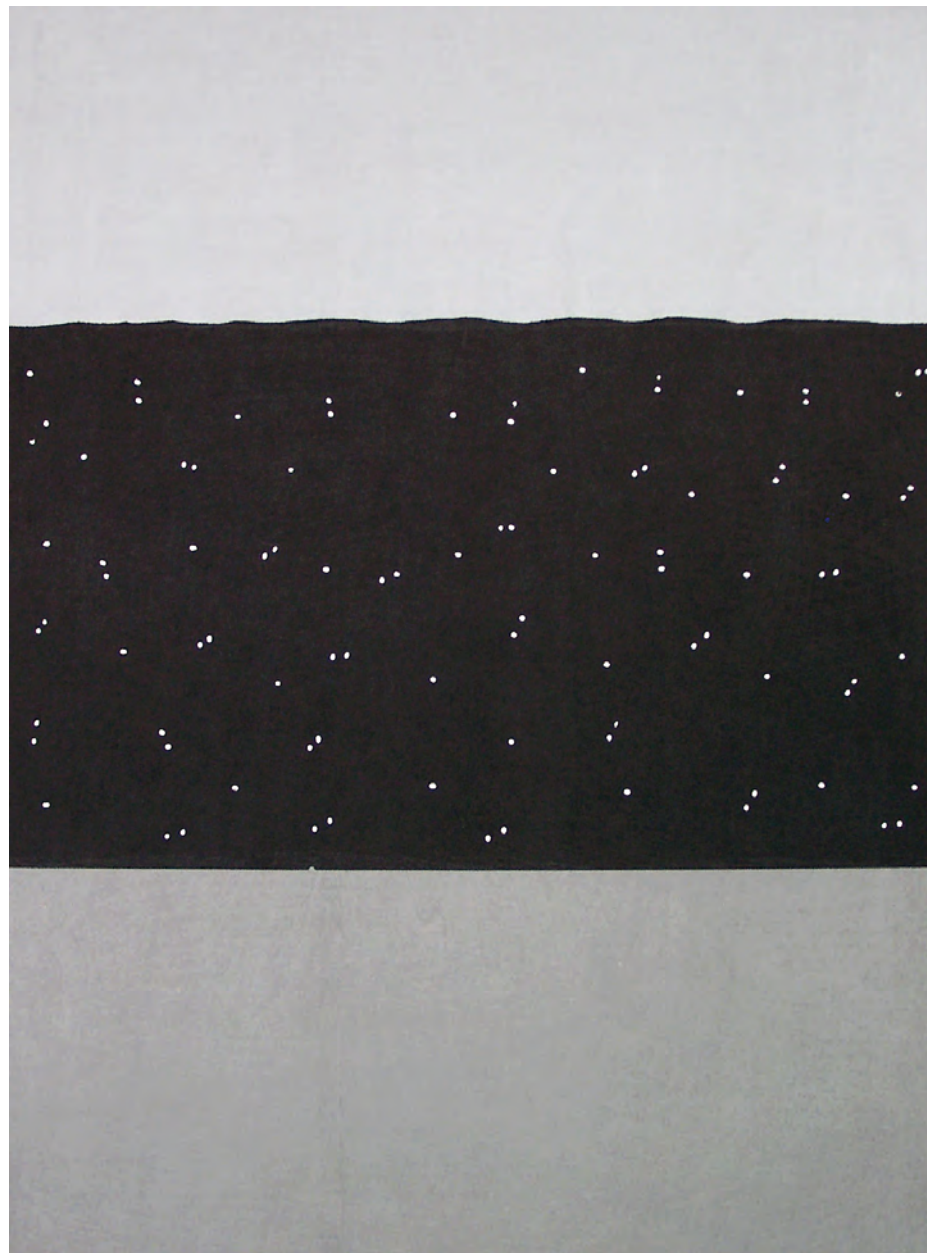
Hishikawa MORONOBU (1618-1694)  
Yoshiwara, Kitchen scene



YAMANAKA, Gen  
Shape of Time 1992



YAMANAKA, Gen  
Lights of Time  
2006



## Many-layered Time



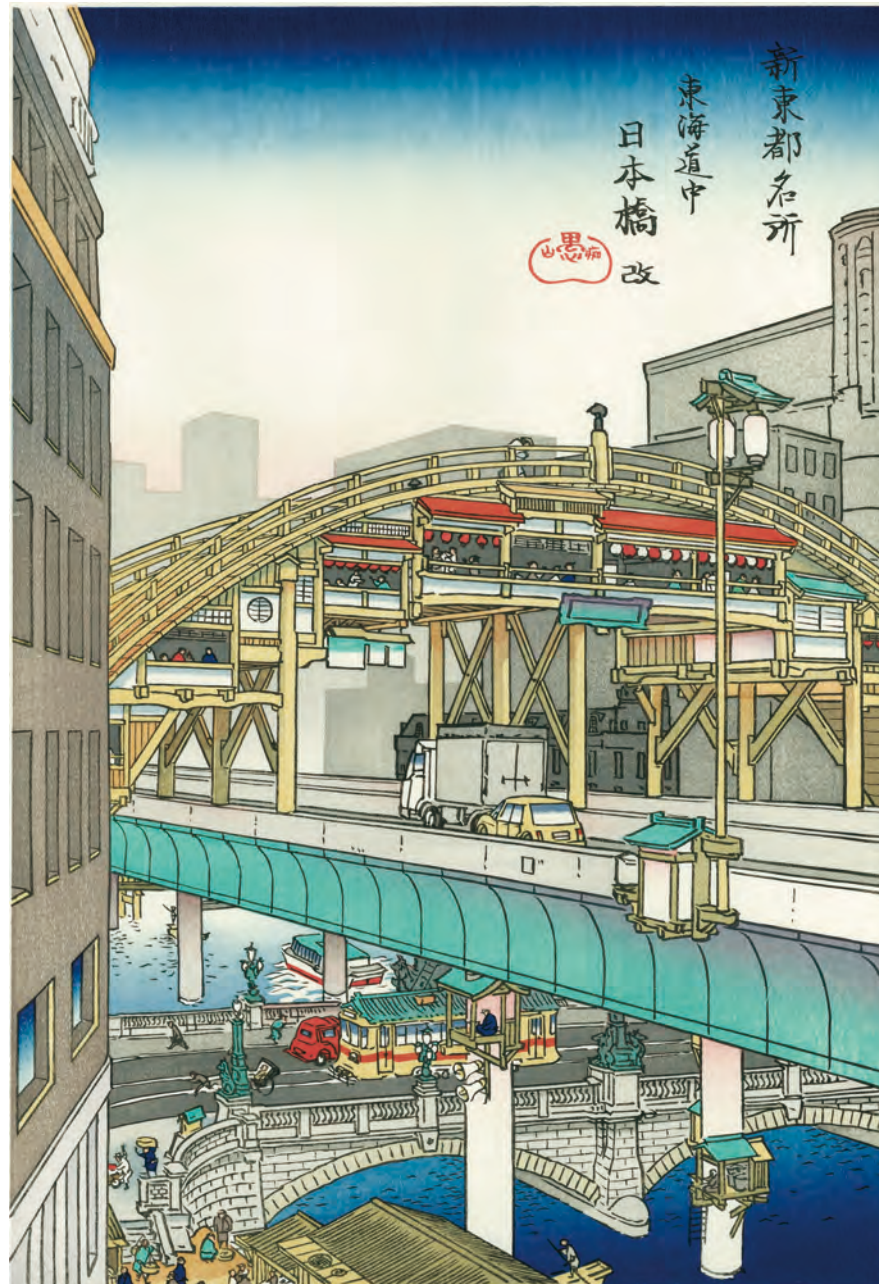
Utagawa, SADAFUSA  
Full Bloom in Edo –Kinegawa 1830-1844



ISHII, Hakutei  
12 sceneries from Tokyo – Shibaura 1916



YAMAGUCHI Akira  
New sights of Tokyo:  
Tokaido Nihonbashi  
revisited, 2012







2003 雪中小りもくる 秋山巖

*From Birth to Death,  
snow drifting down  
without cease*

*Print:  
Akiyama Iwao, 2003*

*Poem by  
Santōka (1882-1940)*



Hiroshige, Artificial Fuji in Meguro, 1857

## The Four Seasons

SPRING = **Birth** (sowing)

AUTUMN = **Life** (harvest)

SUMMER = **Purification**

WINTER = **Death** (nature rests)



IDO, Masao

Series of the 12 months of Old Nara, 2005

November print: Tanzan-shrine



## The Moon Cycle

Utagawa  
HIROSHIGE  
Full Moon in  
Shinano

c.1854-1856



HASEGAWA Yuichi  
The Passage of Time  
2001





AKI Mana  
*Hibi* (Days)  
2002





## DIVIDING DAY AND NIGHT

12 KOKU / 24 HOURS



**Kitagawa Utamaro**

The Hour of the Dragon (8-10 am)  
from the series The Twelve Hours  
in Yoshiwara, c.1795





Toyohara  
KUNICHIKA  
Scenes of the 24 hours,  
1 am. 1890



[illegible]





EGOYOMI  
Rat year 1804





Utagawa  
YOSHITSUNA  
c.1848-68  
*Uke-e*



## Visual Symbols of ETERNITY



### *Timelessness*

SINGLE DOT  
CENTER LOCATION  
CIRCLE – WHEEL



### *Steadiness*

CROSS (pointing at center)  
EQUILATERAL TRIANGLE  
SYMMETRICAL COMPOSITION





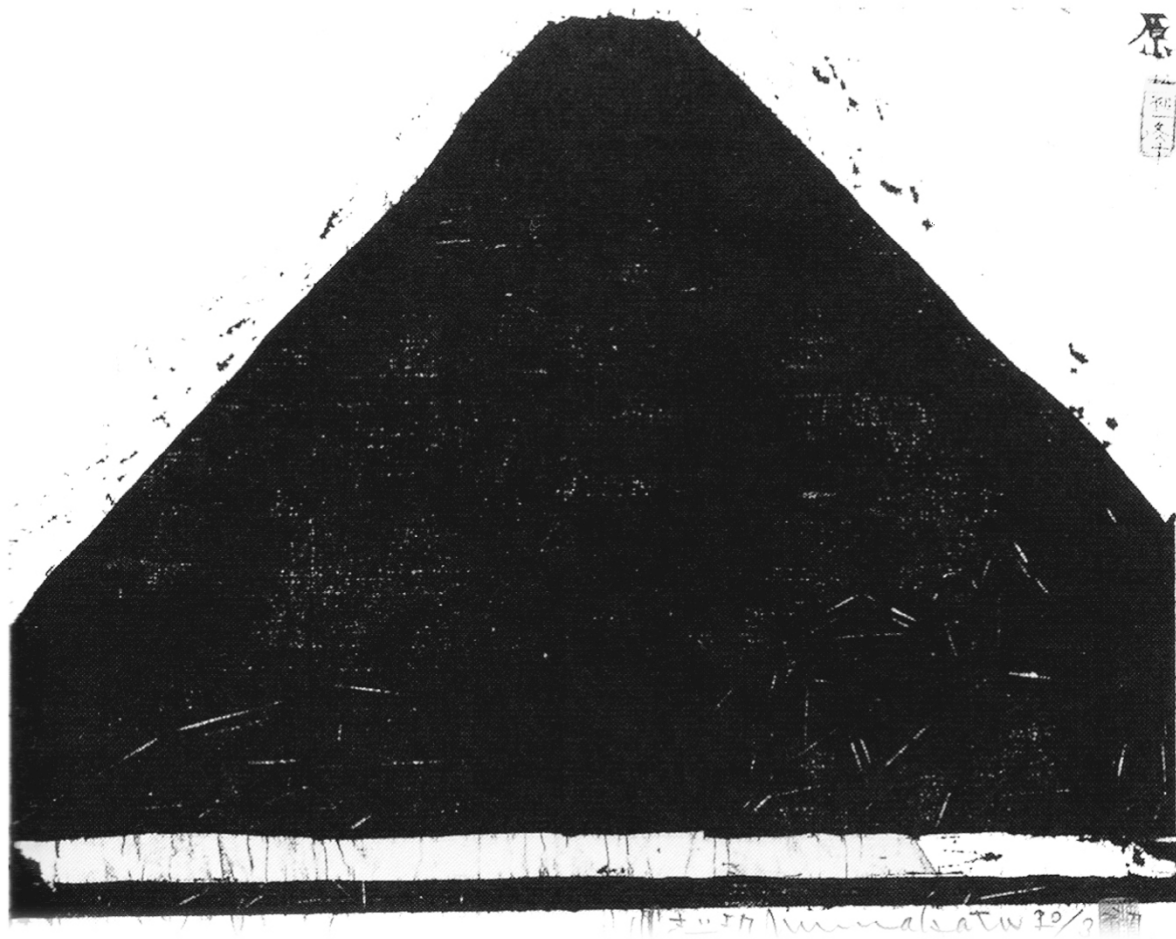
Ryokai-mandala  
13<sup>th</sup> century (part)

Rokudo-mandala  
18<sup>th</sup> century



## Mandala

CENTER LOCATION  
CIRCLE – WHEEL  
SYMMETRY



MUNAKATA Shiko (1903-1975) Fuji Mountain



WATANABE Yuji  
Moonlit Fuji  
2002





Katsushika HOKUSAI, The Great Wave of Kanagawa, c. 1831



KAWACHI Seiko  
Gold Space I  
2009





## BRIDGE as a symbol of *MA*, intermediate space & time



Utagawa KUNIMARU (1794-1829)  
Fireworks in Ryogoku



Naka BOKUNEN  
Flowers of Light  
-Rainbow Bridge  
2006



## REPETITION - Passport to Eternal Bliss

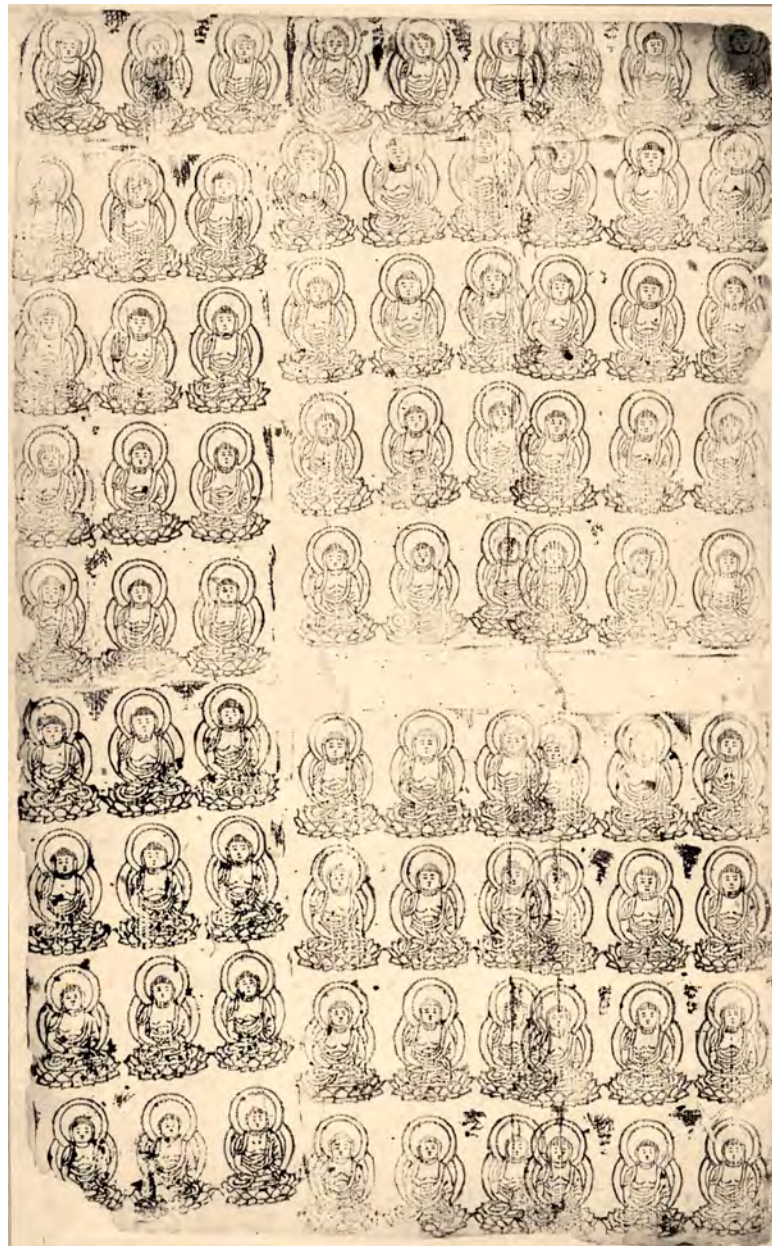


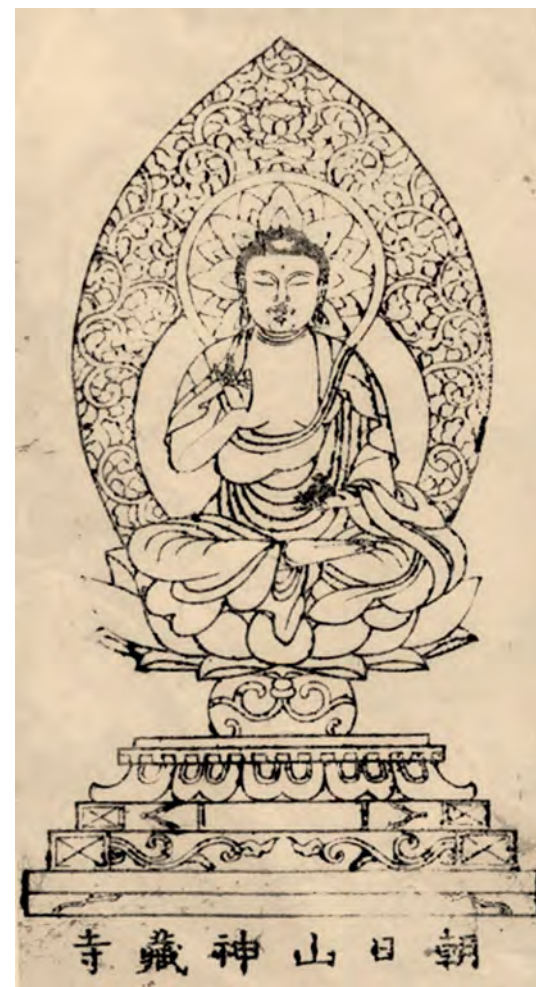
HYAKUMANTŌ DARANI

770



*SURIBOTOKE*  
Buddha images  
from woodblock





Woodcut amulets,  
printed in temples



YAMADA Kiyoharu  
Shala flowers on  
Busseki (Buddha's  
footprints)  
2010







SHIOMI Nana, Here comes the Thunder God, 2011  
(Part of bigger work including the Wind God)



ICHIDA Yoshikazu  
Oni staring into his  
own face  
2009



## Inspiring DEATH

*Shini-e* of  
Ichigawa  
Danjuro VIII  
1854





## The shape of THE SOUL

Toriyama SEKIEN  
*Hitodama* 1779

Soul departing  
from the body

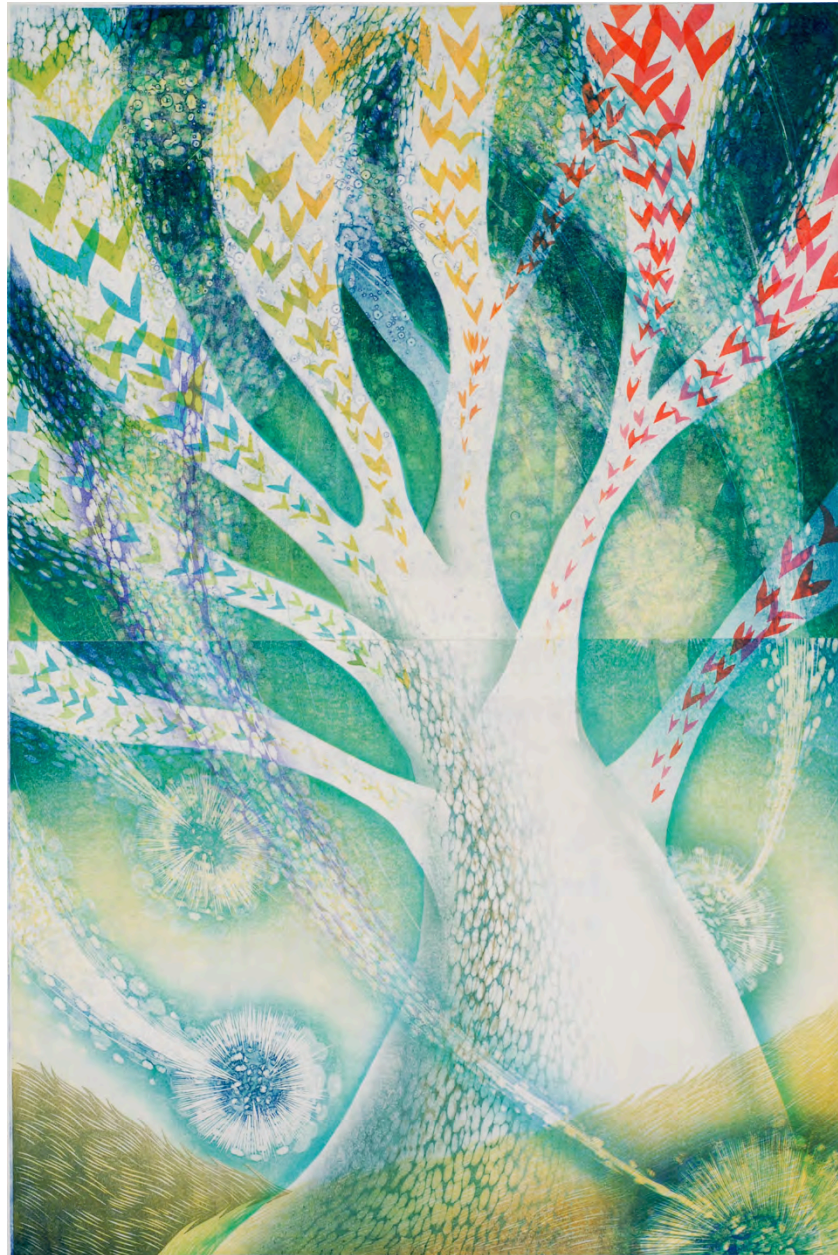


FUJIMORI Shizuo  
Death of Flesh  
1915





KAWABATA Chie  
Returning to our  
Birth Star  
2011



Thank you  
for your TIME

*RŌKOKUSAI*  
Omi-shrine in Otsu.  
Annual celebration of  
Time, on June 10th

