

sound and could be marketed as a toy.

The point is this: Increasingly products need to have more of an interface, to be more attractive, more universal and to have therapeutic or healing properties. As technology becomes more readily available and at a lower cost, individuals are becoming empowered and simultaneously companies are expanding into industries that were previously too complex or component reliant. For example, in Japan we find electrical companies beginning to build cars and jet engines. Alongside this new universality of technology, consumer analysis has assumed a new importance. Studying people, and particularly weaker, disadvantaged people, has become a core facet of a company's program. Rather than competing with the rising sophistication of technology, consumer studies examine cultural trends and compliment technology by introducing a vital human element thereby creating products that people can enjoy for a lifetime.

In conclusion, I wanted to stress a point of shared interest between Britain and Japan. Consider for a moment, the centres of the Classical world. In Europe it was Rome and in Asia it was Nanking, China. At the time it was believed that the further you lived from these centres, the more bestial and savage you were. Consequently, two thousand years ago the Japanese were considered beasts by the Chinese. This may explain why we accept this universal animism in our culture and why it persists to this day. Perhaps, the same can be said of Britain. The fairytale culture of your islands, Celtic and Saxon mythologies, also retain an animistic element. I think this is a kind of 'edge culture' that our two countries share, a barbarian element that can feed emotion into the new era of cultural products I have discussed.

Morinosuke Kawaguchi's book, *Geeky-Girly Innovation: A Japanese Subculturist's Guide to Technology and Design*, is published by Stone Bridge Press.

Meiji Nostalgia: Prints by Kawakami Sumio (1895-1972)

Monika Hinkel

Through my research on the print artist Toyohara Kunichika (豊原国周), 1935-1900, and the influence of 'Civilization and Enlightenment' (*bunmei kaika* 文明開化) on his work, I came across the creative print (*sōsaku hanga* 創作版画) artist Kawakami Sumio (川上澄生), 1895-1972. Kawakami was influenced by his childhood in Meiji period Yokohama and Tokyo and through his upbringing and education had a strong interest in Western cultures and their effect on Japan.

So far the material on Kawakami and his prints in Western languages is fairly scarce. General publications on modern Japanese prints like the books by Oliver Statler (1959) or Helen Merritt (1990) include Kawakami as a representative of the creative print movement. In Japan the interest in his work has been and still is far stronger, resulting in various publications over the years, most notably a 14 volume strong series of his collected works *Kawakami Sumio zenshū* published by Chūō kōronsha in 1979 and various exhibition catalogues. Since the mid- 1970s there have been regular retrospective exhibitions on Kawakami's work in Japan. The most recent ones were: *Kawakami Sumio – The Life of Longing* (*Kawakami Sumio – Akogare no kiseki*) at the Bato machi Hiroshige Museum in 2007-2008, *The Print Maker who Depicted Civilization and Enlightenment: Kawakami Sumio (Bunmei kaika o egaita hangaka: Kawakami Sumio)* at the Yokohama Sogo department store museum in 2009, and *The World of Woodblock Prints by Kawakami Sumio* (*Kawakami Sumio kihanga no sekai*) at the Setagaya Art Museum in Tokyo and Tochigi Prefectural Art Museum. The exhibits for these shows were mainly chosen from the collection of the Kanuma Municipal Art Museum of Kawakami Sumio, located in Kanuma in Tochigi Prefecture, a museum that is solely dedicated to his work. Other important collections that hold works by Kawakami are the Tochigi

Prefectural Art Museum, the Kurefunekan Museum in Kashiwazaki and the Yokohama Art Museum.

Kawakami's life

Kawakami Sumio was born in the western-influenced city of Yokohama where his father was the editor-in-chief of the *Yokohama Trade Newspaper* (*Yokohama Bōeki Shinbun*, now *Kanagawa Shinbun*). In 1898 when Kawakami was three, his father changed to a newspaper in Tokyo and the family moved to the Aoyama district in Tokyo. Kawakami first went to Fujimi primary school in Ushigome in Shinjuku-ku and later entered Aoyama Gakuin Middle and High School. Here he befriended the son of print artist Gōda Kiyoshi (合田清), 1862-1938, Hiroichi. Gōda, a traditional Japanese printmaker, had studied wood engraving in France with Yamamoto Hōsui (1850-1906) in the 1880s and introduced the technique to Japan. As Kawakami frequently visited Hiroichi after school, he spent a lot of time at Gōda's studio, and started to take an interest in printmaking. Beside his interest in prints and poetry, Kawakami formed with three of his fellow pupils, among them Gōda Hiroichi, a choir named *Pastoral Society* with Kawakami as second tenor.

After Kawakami graduated from Aoyama Gakuin in March 1916, he continued making prints, writing poems and singing in the choir. But in October 1917 he followed his father's advice to spend some time abroad and traveled to Victoria in Canada where he stayed with family friends until March 1918. Even though he had arranged to enter an arts school in Toronto, he briefly moved to Seattle before deciding to work in a fish-canning factory in Herendeen Bay, Alaska for five months. He returned to Seattle for a short while and had planned to enter a commercial art school in Chicago, but when one of his younger brothers died he decided to go back to Japan. After his return in October 1918 he worked briefly as an advertising board painter in Tokyo and got involved with print societies and literary magazines. Through the head of his former high school, Kawakami learned about an English teaching job at a

middle school in Tsuruda, a suburb of Utsunomiya in Tochigi prefecture. He decided to take the job and moved to Tsuruda in April 1921, becoming not only a teacher for English, but also for baseball. After the Great Kantō Earthquake in 1923 his father and younger brother also moved to Utsunomiya, as Kawakami's childhood homes in Yokohama and Tokyo had been destroyed by the quake. With financial support from his father Kawakami was able to lease a bit of land and built a house near Tsuruda station, which he named *Bokkakyō* (朴花居). The name was a reference to the Japanese magnolia tree (*hō*) in his garden and to the Italian renaissance author and poet Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), who he admired.

In April 1938, aged forty-three, Kawakami got married. He and his wife Chiyo had a son named Fuji in February 1939 and a daughter named Mifune in February 1942. After the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 the Ministry of Education banned the teaching of English, and all teachers at Kawakami's school were made redundant in March 1942. As Kawakami had only received a small financial settlement, his former students raised a few thousand yen to support his family. Even though Kawakami and his wife were able to survive for a while from his production of books, they decided in March 1945 to escape the wartime destruction and evacuated to his wife's hometown Abiramura in Yutsugun in Hokkaido. Here their second daughter Sayaka was born the following month and in August 1945 Kawakami started working as a teacher at a middle school in Tomakomai. After the war the family returned to Tsuruda in January 1949, and Kawakami found a teaching position at Utsunomiya Women's High School where he taught until his retirement in 1958 at the age of sixty-three.¹ In 1959 the American collector and creative print specialist Oliver Statler, who had the chance of meeting many *sōsaku hanga* artists of the time, wrote about Kawakami: 'Today Kawakami is very grey, round-faced and a little heavy. He has difficulty walking, so he lives close to his school.'² Not even five months after the death of his wife, Kawakami died on 1 September 1972 after suffering a heart attack at home.

Kawakami's work

Kawakami's work is instantly recognizable because of its strong characteristics and originality. Kawakami was a self-taught print maker who saw himself as a part-time amateur artist and poet. He had been interested in art from an early age and had made woodblock prints at school, but never received any formal training as a print artist. He largely carved his own blocks and most of his prints were self-printed. In his early years as a print artist he made multi-colour prints with multiple blocks, but later preferred single blocks printed in black. Kawakami explains the change in an interview he gave for a special edition of the magazine *Kōgei* or *Craft* in May 1939: 'I used to make landscapes in multi-colour prints, but people are what I'm really interested in, and ever since I switched to nanban prints I've brushed on my colour.' Statler comments on this matter: 'This seems a perfectly logical method for Kawakami because he is primarily interested in narrative quality which is conveyed by his line block, and colour is merely an accessory element.'

In 1912 Kawakami produced his first print at high school, which was inspired by the frontispiece print of *Izumi Dye Shop* (*Izumiya Somemono Ten*) from 1911, a play by Kinoshita Mokutaro (木下杢太郎), 1885-1945. The original illustration was by Torii Kiyotada VII (鳥居清格), 1875-1941 and carved by Ikegami Bonkotsu. For this print Kawakami carved the woodblock with a sharpened umbrella stay and printed the design by using the base of an ashtray wrapped in a handkerchief as a *baren* or brayer. The motif showed a woman strolling along a riverbank, her hair in a typical *bakumatsu*-style *ichōgaeshi* coiffure,



holding a Western-style umbrella.³

In 1913 Kawakami took the pen name Hiramine Ryūkichi (平峯劉吉), which was partly influenced by the artist Kishida Ryūsei (岸田劉生), 1891-1929, and entered a frontispiece competition for the journal *Shūsai Bundan* (秀才文壇) and won the second prize with his design. Around the same time he and some friends formed the *Clover Art Society*, organizing exhibitions and publishing a magazine. Kawakami would not only submit prints for this society, but from 1914 also to magazines like *Bunshō Sekai* (文章世界) or *Chūgaku Sekai* (中学世界) and continued to enter competitions for *Shūsai Bundan*. During his stay in Canada and America Kawakami had made many notes and sketches, which he would later use as inspirations for his print designs. After his return to Japan, Kawakami resumed his interest in prints and poetry and submitted drawings and prints to magazines. During the day he was an English teacher and in the evenings he was a print maker and poet. The January 1921 issue of *Chūgaku Sekai* featured the first magazine article about Kawakami titled 'Poet – artist – writer Kawakami Sumio.' In February 1922 the fourth exhibition of the Creative Print Society of Japan (*Nihon Sōsaku Hanga Kyōkai* 日本創作版画協会) was held at Nihonbashi's Mitsukoshi department store. Kawakami got accepted for the first time with his print *Black Cat* (*Kuroki neko*). After the great Kanto earthquake in September 1923 Kawakami turned more seriously to making *hanga*. It seems that he tried to conserve the Yokohama and Tokyo of his childhood in his prints that got destroyed by the earthquake and tried to recreate the ambience of the Meiji period to preserve the memory of his childhood.

In the following years Kawakami got involved with various *hanga* societies and magazines as well as the Folk Craft Society (*Nihon Mingei Kyōkai* 日本民芸協会). In Utsunomiya he organized a *hanga* club for schoolteachers called *Prints of the Village* (*Mura no Hanga* 村の版画) that also published their own magazine. *Harbour* (*Minato* 港), *Wind* (*Kaze* 風), *Woodpecker* (*Kitsutsuki* 啄木鳥) and *Print Art* (*Han Geijutsu* 版芸術) were other journals he contributed to as a print artist and poet. In the summer of 1938 the Chamber of

Commerce and Industry in Utsunomiya hosted his first solo exhibition.

In his early years Kawakami produced mainly single sheet designs. But through the 1930s he designed one or two books a year, preferring the creation of books to making single sheet prints. These were usually produced and distributed by his publishers, like Aoi Shobo. Kawakami would provide the ink blocks and hand-coloured copies of the design. He had no trouble selling as many books as he cared, while he could rarely sell single sheet prints. Before the war, with his teaching salary and proceeds from his books, his income was as good as that of a school principal. When Kawakami lost his job as a teacher of English after the attack on Pearl Harbor, he supported himself and his family by making books at a furious rate, completing twenty-one between the autumn of 1942 and the autumn of 1944. Of these, six were printed commercially and fifteen were produced by hand. For the texts, Kawakami printed the Japanese characters from hundreds of moveable cherry woodblocks, which he had carved himself. He then fastened these blocks in a wooden frame, inked them, covered the frame with paper, and rubbed the back of the paper with a *baren*.⁴

During his stay in Hokkaido, Kawakami became a member of the Tomakomai Art Society (*Tomakomai Bijutsu Kyōkai* 苫小牧美術協会) and exhibited at their shows. In June 1946 a solo exhibition of his work was held at the town hall in Tomakomai and he contributed his prints to other displays in Sapporo and Tokyo while he was living in Hokkaido.

After his return to Utsunomiya he was honored in November 1949 by Tochigi prefecture for his contributions to cultural activity with the *First Prize of Tochigi Prefecture for outstanding cultural contributions* (*Daiikkai Tochigiken Bunka Kōrōshō* 第一回栃木県文化功労章) and the *Mingei Kyōkai* organised a special exhibition with Kawakami's works in Utsunomiya. A further exhibition put together by Tochigi members of the *Mingei Kyōkai* nine years later in 1958 was the biggest solo show of his work so far and exhibited two hundred of his prints and printed books. After his retirement as a teacher in the same year he continued to produce a plethora of works in various styles, techniques and formats and continuously

participated in exhibitions of the *Nihon Sōsaku Hanga Kyōkai*, the *Shun'yōkai* (春陽会 Spring Principle Association) and *Kokugakai* (国画会 National Picture Association). As he was recognized as one of the prominent members of the *sōsaku hanga* movement he was awarded the *Merit of the Fourth class of the Orders of the Sacred Treasure* (*Kunshitō Zuīhōshō* 勲四等瑞宝章) in November 1967.⁵

Meiji Nostalgia

Kawakami's background provides the explanation to his preoccupation with the impact of foreigners on Japan. He was born in Yokohama, which opened its port to Western diplomats and merchants in July 1859. In Yokohama and in Tokyo where he spent his childhood days, Kawakami was exposed from an early age to foreigners and was surrounded by the unique hybrid atmosphere of these two cities during the late-Meiji period. Most of his artistic life, Kawakami was stimulated by the effect of foreigners on Japanese culture in his oeuvre, but he not only took inspiration from the evident impact of the *bunmei kaika* phase, he also refers to earlier encounters with Western nations, like the Portuguese in the sixteenth century. His interest lay always in the interaction between East and West and the effect and adaptation of imported objects into Japanese culture. Although the juxtaposition of bizarre and curious objects in his prints goes beyond their novelty aspect, as by Kawakami's time these goods had been completely absorbed into the hybrid culture of Japan. In an interview for the May 1939 special issue on his work in *Craft* magazine (*Kōgei* 工芸), Kawakami comments on this matter. 'With reference to my so-called exoticism, it is not oriented towards the West at all. Rather it is nostalgia for the particular poetic feeling generated by the crazy mixed-up Meiji culture in which I felt secure. It is looking at Japan through the eyes of a Japanese. In other words, the man dressed in high boots, a bowler and an Inverness - is the image of my father; the woman, her hair in a chignon, with her hands in her sleeves pressed closed to her bosom, and standing against a foreign looking background - that will always be to me the image of my mother.'⁶

The word nostalgia stems from the Greek *nostos*, 'to return

home' and *algia* 'a painful condition' - thus, a painful yearning to return home. In her article *Furusato Japan: The Culture and Politics of Nostalgia*, the American sociologist Jennifer Robertson, describes nostalgia as follows: '... Nostalgia is a state of being provoked by a dissatisfaction with the present on the grounds of a remembered, or imagined, past plenitude.' She defines nostalgia as '... a barometer of present moods' and as something that is '... provoked by estrangement from the old.' Furthermore she writes: 'Nostalgia figures as a distinctive way of relating the past to the present and future. It does this by juxtaposing the 'uncertainties and anxieties of the present with resumed verities and comforts of the ... past.' Keeping this interpretation of nostalgia in mind, one comes to understand Kawakami's strong interest in foreign countries and his particular longing for Meiji period paraphernalia.

Kawakami's dominant recurring subjects were scenes and objects of the 'southern barbarian' (*nanban* 南蛮) culture, the portrayal of the exotic and bustling atmosphere of his birthplace Yokohama and rendering topics of Western civilization and cultural enlightenment of the *bunmei kaika* period. His depictions seem to allude to earlier genres like *nanban* art, Nagasaki pictures (*Nagasaki-e* 長崎絵), Yokohama pictures (*Yokohama-e* 横浜絵) or prints of Enlightenment (*kaika-e* 開化絵). Kawakami's interest was to show colourful renderings of the dissonance and harmony between the Japanese and the foreign visitors. Kawakami's pupil and fellow *sōsaku* hanga artist, Kawanishi Hide (川西秀), 1894-1965, explains both their fascination with Western cultures in reference to Nagasaki prints: 'I like *Nagasaki-e*. . . Had I lived in those days, I would have made prints like *Nagasaki-e*. They have the same exotic atmosphere I try to recreate. . . When I say *Nagasaki-e*, however, I mean I like their subject matter and atmosphere, but not their technique. I believe that Sumio Kawakami and I share the same approach: we like to look at Japanese subjects through Western eyes, or Western subjects through Japanese eyes.'⁷

Kawakami was an avid collector of old books, especially those to acquaint the Japanese with *nanban* culture and to teach English to the Japanese, as well as miscellaneous *nanban* objects like clocks,

lamps and pipes. Even though the word *nanban*, which literally means 'southern barbarian', was originally used in reference to the Portuguese who came to Japan in the sixteenth century, by Kawakami's time the meaning of the term also included the Dutch, who had settled on Deshima in the bay of Nagasaki and other Westerners who lived in Yokohama after the opening of the port.

Kawakami drew many ideas from his large collection of old books, with which the Japanese learned Western languages during the Meiji period. One of these was *The Standard first Reader for Beginners* by Epes Sargent (1813-1880), which was published in America in 1866, and Barnes' *New National Reader* (1883). Another source of inspiration was booklets distributed by the Education Ministry in the early 1870s, in which objects were accompanied by their German, English and French translation. These old illustrations not only show contemporary costumes, accoutrements and vehicles, but gave an insight into what the Japanese found most engrossing in the new world that was opening up to them. They also provided the occasional amusement as when 'school playground' is translated into Japanese as 'digestive area'.⁸

As Kawakami was an English teacher it seems only natural that he showed a strong interest in these kinds of publications. In 1935 he designed the book *English Alphabet Characters* (*Egeresu Iroha Jinbutsu* えげれすいろは人物) where he gave sample words for each letter, with short explanations and a drawing. For the letter 'I' for example he chose 'Instructor,' explaining that it refers to schoolteachers and points out that he is one himself. Kawakami complemented the definition with a self-portrait of himself. A similar work is a pair of hand-coloured monochrome woodblock prints titled *The English Alphabet illustrated with Still Lifes*, (*Egeresu Iroha Seibutsu* えげれすいろは静物) 1936, but here he illustrates the English alphabet solely by rendering simple corresponding items. These two sheets are very closely modeled after a monochrome printed folding book (*orihon* 折り本) with the same title, which was published in the same year. The term '*egeresu*' is a Meiji era pronunciation of '*igirisu*' (England) and '*iroha*' does not strictly mean alphabet, but refers to the traditional ordering of the Japanese

syllabary. The two publications *Kawakami's Strange Reader* (*Kawakami's Henna Reader*), 1934, and *Kawakami's Pictorial Reader* (*Kawakami's Riidoru Ehon*), 1937, were both modeled on genuine examples of children's alphabet and picture books used for teaching English to the Japanese at the beginning of the Meiji period. In *Henna Reader* Kawakami pairs a picture with each letter, giving the following example in lesson 1: the image of a man is accompanied by the text 'I am a man. Yo was danshi nari.' As Kawakami was particularly fascinated with the topics of alphabets, he even designed an alphabet screen (*Arufuabetto Byōbu*) in 1938, which was exhibited in the autumn exhibition of the Japan Folkcraft Museum (*Nihon Mingeikan* 日本民芸館). Examples of these alphabet books were published in his special edition of *Kōgei* magazine in 1939, with commentaries by Yanagi Sōetsu (柳宗悦), 1889-1961.

Another recurring subject matter in Kawakami's oeuvre is nostalgic renderings and accounts he remembered from his childhood. When he was asked about the print *Eighteen People* (*Danjo Jūhachinin* 男女十八人), 1960, which shows nine Meiji couples portrayed in a mixture of Japanese and Western clothing, he said: 'Yes, when I was a boy I saw that. A derby hat worn with a kimono, a Japanese raincoat accessorized with a Western umbrella, Western shoes and a necktie. It made me feel very strange. That is what this print is about.'⁹ Similar portrayals of Meiji era people are two print sets titled *Meiji Customs* (*Meiji fuzoku* 明治風俗) dated 1936 and 1968 and the print *Men and Women* (*Otoko to onna* 男と女) from the year 1960.

The two books *Civilization and Enlightenment Handbook* and *Recollections of a Meiji Child* go a step further and provide the reader with illustrated written accounts of Kawakami's schooldays.



Official in Western-style attire

In his 1941 designed *Civilization and Enlightenment Handbook* (*Bunmei Kaika Ōrai* 文明開化往来), Kawakami paired thoughts on the Meiji period with ten multi-coloured illustrations of street scenes depicting new transportation, a postman, primary school children and lamps. Similar to this book is *Recollections of a Meiji Child* (*Meiji Shōnen Kaikō* 明治少年懐古), published by Meiji Bijutsu Kenkyūjō in 1944 as an edition of 3000 copies with 200 deluxe copies. In sixty-three chapters Kawakami describes things he experienced personally and observed during his primary school years between 1901 and 1905.



Basha (horse-drawn carriage)

through the eyes of a primary school child are a valuable source. Kawakami refers to a plethora of topics that are linked to the *bunmei kaika* period like Western-style umbrellas, clocks, lamps, shops for beef or milk, the post-office, barbers and new transportation modes like horse-drawn carriages (*basha*), rickshaw, bicycle and steam train. *Recollections of a Meiji Child* was actually a reprint of the



Jinrikisha (rickshaw)

book *Some Anecdotes* (*Shōshō Mukashibanashi* 少々昔噺) that had been published in 1936 by Hangan and was reprinted many times under the original title by other publishers thereafter.

One of the representative enlightenment themes were newly erected gaslights in Meiji Yokohama and Tokyo. In his 1963 print entitled *Various Gas Lights* (*Sekiyu Ranpu Iroiro* 石油ランプいろいろ), Kawakami is not only stimulated by this exemplary *kaika* symbol, but actually emulates a scene of Kobayashi Kiyochika's (小林清親), 1847-1915, print *Illumination* (イルミネーション) from 1877. Gas lights or lanterns are one of the most frequently recurring themes in Kawakami's work which he sometimes groups with other Meiji items like clocks or they serve as a backdrop with groups of women or a single female figure. For Kawakami these lamps were a symbol of his childhood home and a strong reminder of his grandmother and in particular his mother.

In 1941 Kawakami made a set of ten prints that he called *Yokohama Nostalgia* (*Yokohama Kaikō* 横浜懐古), which was printed by the Japan Folk Craft Society and displayed at the tenth exhibition of the Japan Print Society (*Nihon Hanga Kyōkai* 日本版画協会). It portrays a selection of famous sights of Yokohama during the *bunmei kaika* period like the train station, a variety of bridges around town, the foreign settlement and the Government building of Kanagawa prefecture. This series is not only a display of Kawakami's appreciation for his birthplace, but also a reference to the earlier Ukiyo-e (浮世絵) print series of famous places (*meisho-e* 名所絵).

Kawakami's prints were also stimulated by even earlier encounters with European



Oil lamp with oblong brazier

visitors to Japan, in particular the arrival of the Portuguese and Spanish in the sixteenth century. Kawakami's excursions into this period are usually referred to as *nanban* prints. *Nanban* denotes art that was either favoured by the foreign visitors, introducing their fashions and customs, or even Japanese imitating their clothes and manners. But Kawakami points out that although *nanban* refers specifically to the Portuguese and Spanish and the term 'red-head people' (*kōmō* 紅毛) was used for the Dutch, that his prints portray as much of the Dutch as the Portuguese. Even though the titles of his prints include the word '*nanban*' and the subject matter alludes to *nanban* art, Kawakami states that his prints are not *nanban* art, nor are they intended to be.¹⁰ During the Taishō period and first half of the Shōwa period Kawakami showed a strong interest in the ships of 'southern barbarians' (*nanbansen* 南蛮船), black ships (*kurofune* 黒船) or foreign ships (*kōmōsen* 紅毛船) as they were called. He rendered many colourful depictions of their arrivals, as well as the captains, gatherings of the ship crews and the unloading of goods.

One of Kawakami's representative works *Nanbanesque Behaviour* (*Nabanburi* 南蛮ぶり), 1945, was printed on a background that was pre-dyed with a rich mustardy yellow, maybe to emulate the gold leaf background of *nanban* screens. The image was printed in black ink, in parts mixed with animal glue to gain a shiny surface and with opaque colours. The scene shows a Japanese couple reclining on a peculiar brass bed where both enjoy a smoke from long stemmed tobacco pipes. Kawakami had found out that Toyotomi Hideyoshi (1536-1598) actually slept in a brass bed, of which he had several installed in Osaka castle. Tobacco was also introduced to Japan about the same time, and old pipes were another of Kawakami's hobbies.¹¹ Helen Nagata comments on the print as follows: 'Is this a simple scene of contentment and companionship or a study of subtle human disconnection, perhaps, boredom? A lovers' tryst or an entrapment? By zooming in closely on the main figures, cropping their legs and simplifying the interior space, Kawakami added a layer of potential symbolism or metaphor.' With this design Kawakami not only alludes to *nanban* screens, but

also to earlier Ukiyo-e prints and their depiction of the pleasure quarters. He considered Ukiyo-e in terms of East-West interaction and referred to Japan's adaptation or assimilation of exotic Western devices during that period.¹²

The Kanuma Municipal Art Museum of Kawakami Sumio (*Kanuma shiritsu Kawakami Sumio Bijutsukan* 鹿沼市立川上澄生美術館) opened in 1992. The core collection of around two thousand works, was donated to the city of Kanuma by Hasegawa Katsusaburō (長谷川勝三郎), 1912-2001, a former citizen of Kanuma. While at junior high school in Utsunomiya, Hasegawa he had studied prints under Kawakami and later graduated from Tokyo Higher Crafts School. Like Kawakami he contributed to various *sōsaku hanga* magazines and exhibited with the *Nihon Hanga Kyōkai* in 1932. But Hasegawa mainly worked for a newspaper in Tokyo and collected prints by Kawakami he saw in galleries in the Kanda district. The Kanuma museum building was constructed in reference to a print Kawakami had designed in 1955. *Nihon Echigokuni Kashiwazaki Kurofunekan* (日本越後国柏崎黒船館), was, as the print title indicates, originally planned as a design for the Black Ship Museum (*Kurofunekan* 黒船館) in Kashiwazaki in Echigo province, part of today's Niigata prefecture. But as the plans could not be realized in Kashiwazaki, the city of Kanuma chose Kawakami's print as a model for their museum.¹³ The building is designed in a Meiji period style brick architecture that somehow brings Kawakami's vision of Meiji back to life.

Conclusion

Kawakami was born in mid-Meiji in the harbour town of Yokohama and grew up in the Yamanote area of western Tokyo, in the 'high collar' society of Aoyama. These two cities of his childhood served as a life-long inspiration to his artistic life as a printmaker and poet. Kawakami devoted his intrinsically amateur artistic career to record the impact of foreign influences on Japan, digesting and portraying the customs that used to be around him. In particular the *bunmei kaika* era, which he remembered with passionate fondness from his childhood, is the home of his heart (*kokoro no furusato* 心の

ふるさと). But the title of my talk could also have been *Nanban* art, *Nagasaki-e*, *Yokohama-e* revisited, as Kawakami's subject matter is not confined to the Meiji period. One thing that drove Kawakami throughout his artistic life was a longing for foreign countries and cultural enlightenment, as well as being captivated by the consequences when Japan encountered the Western world. Kawakami once stated: 'I was never much in the swim of things as far as prints were concerned. . . Since I didn't live in Tokyo I never knew many of the print artists and never was much influenced by them. I've just gone my own way, doing what interested me, and hoping it would interest somebody else. If it has, I'm happy.'¹⁴

All illustrations after: Meiji Shōnen Kaikō (明治少年懐古, Recollections of a Meiji Child), published by Meiji Bijutsu Kenkyūjō, 1944. British Museum collection.

Notes

- 1 Harada Toshiyuki/Moriya Mio (2009) *Bunmei kaika o egaita hangaka: Kawakami Sumio* (The Print Maker who depicted Civilization and Enlightenment: Kawakami Sumio), Yokohama: Kanagawa Shinbunsha: 206-221.
- 2 Statler, Oliver (1959) *Modern Japanese Prints: An Art Reborn*, Rutland/ Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle: 93.
- 3 Harada/Moriya 2009: 207, Merritt 1990: 225-226.
- 4 Merritt, Helen (1990) *Modern Japanese Woodblock Prints, The Early Years*, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press: 271.
- 5 Harada/Moriya 2009: 206-221.
- 6 *Kōgei* 96/1939, Merritt 1990: 227.
- 7 Statler 1959: 117.
- 8 Statler 1959: 92.
- 9 Merritt 1990: 227.
- 10 Statler 1959: 90.
- 11 Statler 1959: 92.
- 12 Nagata, Helen (2005) *Ukiyo-e in the Eyes of the Creative Print Artist*, in: *Made in Japan, The Postwar Creative Print Movement*, Alicia Volk (ed.), Milwaukee: Milwaukee Art Museum: 27/28.
- 13 Harada/Moriya 2009: 153.
- 14 Statler 1959: 93.



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From the Editor

As our members have been particularly concerned with Japan's reconstruction efforts in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of 11 March 2011, this edition of *Proceedings* includes a special section on the Japan Society Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund. In May we organized a roundtable discussion in support of the fund which is reproduced here to illustrate initial reactions and responses. Building on this theme, Christopher and Phillida Purvis report on the activities of the fund and their assessment of progress towards recovery six months after the disaster.

Our next big event was the second annual Carmen Blacker Lecture co-organized with the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures. Anne Bouchy generously shared both her memories of working with Professor Blacker and research examining Shugendō and Japan's mountain landscape paintings.

Alternative approaches to examining art and visual culture were also presented by Susan House Wade and Morinosuke Kawaguchi. The former lectured on the role of Japan Society members in forming impressions of Colonial Korea while the latter presented a framework for innovative technology and design influenced by contemporary Japanese subcultures.

In art history this year, Monika Hinkel illustrated the life and work of poet printmaker Kawakami Sumio. Gregory Irvine gave both a lecture and gallery tour for the Victoria and Albert Museum Exhibition *Japanese Enamels: The Seven Treasures*. And Jonathan Watkins of Ikon Gallery presented on curating Japanese contemporary art.

There were many visual arts related events this year, but we were also pleased to host a talk given by author Roger Pulvers about his new novel on the life and work of Lafcadio Hearn. William McOmie also joined us from Japan to lecture on the 1804-05 Nikolai Rezanov naval mission.

We are very grateful to everyone who gave their time to the 2011 lecture and events programme. And a special thanks to the Japan Research Centre at the School of Oriental and African Studies, the executors of Carmen Blacker's estate, and all of our corporate members who help support the Japan Society's programme.

Jennifer Anderson