

# Hokusai: The Master's Legacy

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**By**

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More than 200 works by Japanese ukiyo-e artist Katsushika Hokusai and his students will go on display at Rome's Ara Pacis, including his famed woodblock print "The Great Wave", in a show curated by Japanese art expert Rossella Menegazzo.

The exhibition, sponsored by Rome's Superintendency for Cultural Heritage with the support of the Japanese Embassy, includes Hokusai's entire collected works, drawings and paintings, displayed in a two-phase rotation through to January 14, 2018.

The Master's Legacy features approximately two hundred ukiyo-e works ("images of the Floating World"), in the form of polychrome woodblock prints and painted scrolls, to be displayed in two separate turns so as not to compromise the fragile material.



The works of Hokusai, undisputed master of the genre, constitute the main body of the exhibition but are accompanied by those of other artists who adopted his artistic legacy, first and foremost, Keisai Eisen. Although Eisen is relatively unknown in the West today, he was well-respected in the 1800s in his own country and among European connoisseurs of Japanese art, especially for his portraits of beautiful women, which were copied even by the likes of Van Gogh. While clearly inspired by Hokusai for his landscapes, Eisen developed new, original imagery that reflected Edo's lively culture and the world of the seduction offered by the pleasure quarters, in which he exalted the beauty of the courtesans and their kimonos.





On view to compare with Hokusai's work are also numerous scroll paintings by his students Katsushika Hokumei, Teisai Hokuba, Ryuryukyo Shinsai, Gessai Utamasa, and Totoya Hokkei, which show how style could change radically, depending on the artist, even when the subjects were largely codified.





Landscapes and perspective views of Japan's famous sites, the beauty of women, the world of seduction and the erotic, greeting cards and images of animals and nature, whose essence was condensed by Hokusai in his fifteen-volume Manga, are the themes explored here in works from major public and private Japanese collections, including those of the Chiba City Museum of Art, the Kawasaki Isago no Sato Museum, and the Museo d'Arte Orientale Edoardo Chiossone in Genoa.



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