



Hokusai: 100 Poems by 100 Poets & Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji - Katsushika Hokusai - Ukiyo-e

By Daniel Ankele

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(Revised 11/2014 - Hokusai: 100 Poems by 100 Poets & Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji now includes all matching short poems (tanka) for the series. The poems were mostly written by noble members (Emperors, princesses) and high functionaries of the Imperial courts. Paintings have been reproduced in 'HD' for the highest resolution possible.)

Hokusai: 100 Poems by 100 Poets & Thirty-six views of Mount Fuji Art Book contains 125 HD Reproductions (89 from the 100 poem series and 36 from the Mount Fuji series.) Book includes; Biography, Short poems, Annotations, Table of Contents, Top 50 Museums of the World and is compatible with all Kindle devices, Kindle for iOS and Android tablets (use rotate and/or zoom feature on landscape/horizontal images for optimal viewing).

(See our other Hokusai art book with over 215 more images from this wonderful Ukiyo-e artist.)

The Japanese artist best-known as Katsushika Hokusai was born in Edo (now part of Tokyo) on what is commonly accepted as October 31, 1760. His family were artisans, with a mirror-making business in the Katsushika district. As early as five years old his passion for art was evident. Once he began working polishing mirrors for the family business at the age of six, he could often be found after-hours, studying and copying the painted designs from the backs of the mirrors onto scraps of wrapping paper.

When he was twelve, Hokusai went to work at a Japanese lending library. These were popular institutions at the time, providing entertainment in the form of books made from wood-cut blocks which, for a fee, were read by the middle and upper classes. By fourteen, he was apprenticed to a wood-carver, and then at the age of eighteen, he entered the studio of Katsukawa Shunsh?, who was a member of the ukiyo-e school of artists. These artists focused on a specific style of wood-block prints and painting, and Shunsh? was the head of the “Katsukawa” school. From Shunsh? Hokusai would learn and eventually master ukiyo-e, which at that time focused on images of the actors and courtesans of the day. It was here that

he would also make the first of at least thirty changes to his name during his lifetime; this time, to “Shunr?,” which was a respectful way of identifying him as a student of Shunsh?. Under this name, he produced his first series of prints, images of popular Kabuki actors. Also during this time he met and married his first and second wives, both of whom died young. With them he had two sons and three daughters. His youngest daughter Sakae, later known as ?i, followed in her father’s footsteps and became an artist herself.

In 1793, Shunsh? died, and Hokusai then began to expand his artistic exploration, including attempting European styles from French and Dutch copper engravings he acquired. This deviation from traditional ukiyo-e methods led to his expulsion from the Katsukawa school by Shunk?, who was the highest-ranking disciple of Shunsh?. As humiliating as this was, Hokusai was later to credit this expulsion with the true development of his artistic style. (cont.)

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- Rank: #521544 in eBooks
- Published on: 2011-12-21
- Released on: 2011-12-21
- Format: Kindle eBook

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