KIMONO AESTHETICS

A Brief History and Overview

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THE ICONIC "T-shaped" kimono has over the centuries been a canvas for a large number of aesthetic concepts. Has there been any other culture in recent centuries that has assimilated and invented as many aesthetics as the Japanese? During the past 150 years, has any country influenced and enriched the world of architecture, art and aesthetics in general more than Japan? According to Mara Miller, "... the Japanese did not separate art and aesthetics (as we have done) from ethics religion, and daily life". Unlike in the West, the Japanese hold to the practice of not abandoning older aesthetics as new ones arise; therefore, kimono artists over time had an increased selection of aesthetics from which to choose. In this article, I will take a brief look at the history of major kimono aesthetic influences.

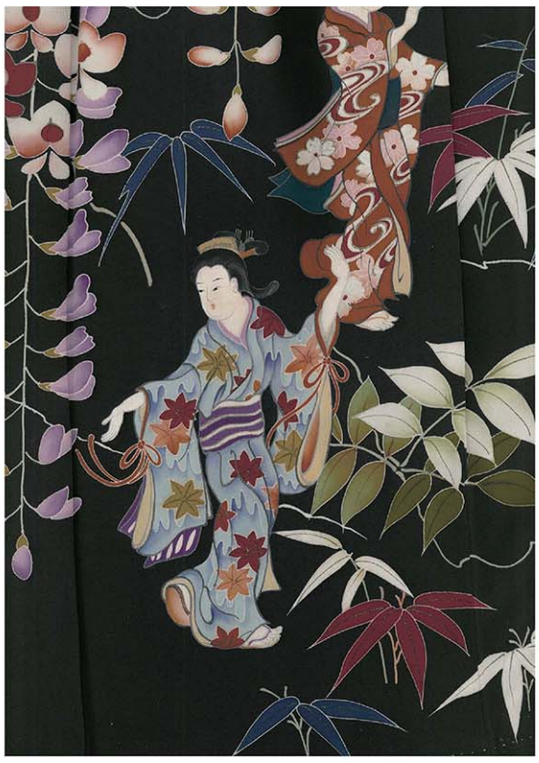
The China factor

Japanese art aesthetics prior to the Meiji period (1868–1911) originated from two main sources: China and home-grown. As early as the 6th and 7th centuries, members of the Japanese upper class took up Chinese-derived Confucian and Buddhist art and culture. During the following Heian period (8th to 12th century), a Chinese-inspired court style, called "*furyu*", emerged in Japan that involved the refined and elegant activities of the court, such as unusual displays of garden flowers, opulent art, poetry competitions, spectacular banquets and religious festivals (**1**).

Japanese art was stimulated and inspired over time by new Chinese schools of painting. During the 15th century, one of the most profound of these influences occurred when the Japanese painter-monk, Sesshu, and a student arrived in China, where they were exposed to new styles of Chinese landscape painting. Bringing these fresh styles back to their home country, the Kano and Unkoku schools of Japanese art were established.

During the 15th and 16th centuries, Japanese Buddhist Zen monks visited China, where they were influenced by what is called "Neo-Confucianism", a philosophy and aesthetic that married the ideals of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism (Taoism). Neo-Confucian philosophy was rational and secular, involving the belief that human reasoning could create a harmonious balance between the universe and the individual (**2**). Neo-Confucianism was popularised during the Edo period (the 17th to the mid-19th century), when the samurai leadership eagerly promoted the rational and secular nature of this philosophy. By backing Neo-Confucianism, the warrior class had a secular tool to challenge the moral supremacy of powerful Buddhist monasteries.

The final major aesthetic influence from China, occurring during the mid to late Edo period (1700–1868), was called the Southern Tradition (*nanga*), or literati painting (*bunjinga*). This aesthetic school heralded amateur painters instead of the traditional professionals, and emphasised personal expression of one's inner character, including a sense of vitality not evident in previous Chinese artistic styles.



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Home-grown art styles

The Japanese have a love of the lavish and ornate while at the same time searching for simplicity through discipline and restraint. The latter has dominated over the past five centuries, although it is during those periods of history when the combination of the two forces were roughly equal that resulted in some of Japans most ebullient and important art: the Momoyama period during the late 16th century; the turn of the 18th century in the Edo period; and the late Meiji to Taisho period of the early 20th century (1900–1940).

The origins of Japanese indigenous culture were mainly the product of the educated court culture of the "Golden Age" Heian period (794–1192). The first classic Japanese aesthetic, referred to as "*miyabi*" (courtly refinement), was a style associated with the Chinese-influenced "*furyu*". *Miyabi* is associated with the quiet pleasures of the educated aristocrat, such as the careful selection of colours on a court robe, a delicate arrangement of blossoms, or the perfume from rare plants (3). To achieve the *miyabi* aesthetic, the artist sought to eliminate what would be considered as vulgar or absurd. *Miyabi* is often associated with the notion of "mono no aware"—a bittersweet awareness of the transience of life, and its inevitable decline. *Miyabi* strived for a perfection of form and colour. Although *miyabi* originally was a class-differentiating aesthetic of the courtly upper class of Heian times, "the concept, however, eventually became a universal Japanese value of the Tokugawa period (17th–19th century) and is one of the most distinguishing characteristics of the modern Japanese world view".[1]

In his important work on Japanese aesthetics, "Essays of Idleness", Kenko, the 14th century Buddhist priest and poet, stated: "In everything, no matter what it may be, uniformity is undesirable. Leaving something incomplete makes it interesting and gives one the feeling that there is room for improvement."[2]

The enduring Kano school—with its emphasis on brushwork and Chinese subjects such as Zen patriarchs and landscapes—refers to an influential and pragmatic school of painting that arose in the 15th century courtesy of the illustrious Kano Masanobu (1434–1530). This tradition was adhered to by professional secular painters, who created works for the elite. The Kano school initially favoured the restrained ink monochrome popular among the Chinese, however, over the next several centuries it soon took on the decorativeness, colour and pattern associated with native Japanese forms (4).

Wabi-sabi is the quintessential Japanese aesthetic. The Zen priest, Sen no Rikyu (1522–1591), revolutionised both the tea ceremony and Japanese aesthetics, and is considered one of the most significant leaders of Japanese cultural history. Rikyu established a philosophy and aesthetic of spiritual sincerity, which involved appreciating natural imperfections, along with the nobleness of humility and poverty. This philosophy and aesthetic came to be referred to as "*wabi*" and "*sabi*", respectively, and came to influence profoundly Japanese philosophy and

[1] Http://richard-hooker.com/sites/worldcultures/GLOSSARY/MIYABI.HTM. Copyright 1995, Richard Hooker, updated 7-2-97.

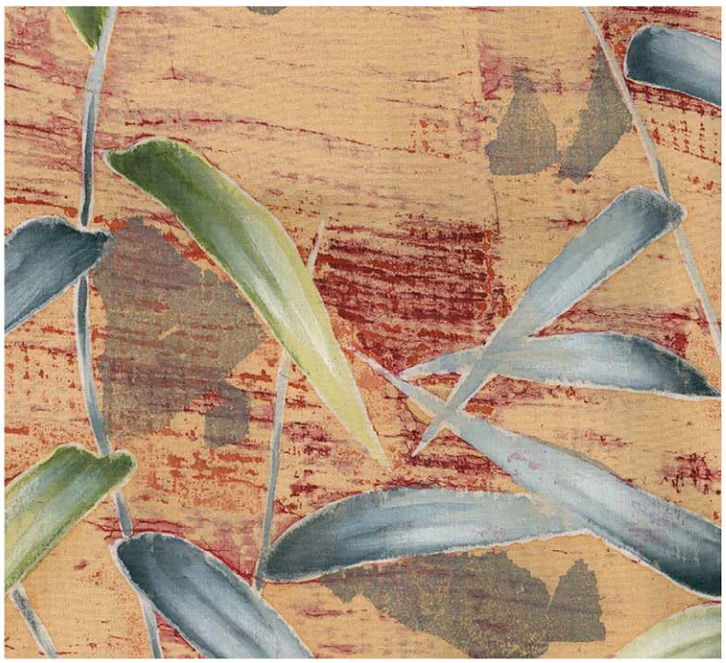
[2] *Essays in Idleness—The Tsurezuregusa of Kenko* by Yoshida Kenkō, paperback, second paperback edition, 240 pages, published May 26th, 1998 by Columbia University Press (first published 1332), original title 徒然草 (Tsurezuregusa).

1
Detail of a formal kimono. Late Edo to mid-Meiji period, 1840–1880. These depictions of elegant Heian courtiers are in the spirit of *furyu* and *miyabi*. Sakai Hoitsu, a Rinpa artist, created in 1815 a two-panel screen, "Thirty-Six Immortal Poets", that displays similarities to this example.

2
Detail of a "*fukusa*" (gift cloth), in the Neo-Confucianism style. Early to mid-Meiji period, 1868–1900.

3
Detail of silk kimono exhibiting the influence of *miyabi* aesthetics. Late Taisho to early Showa period (1920–1940).

4
A silk padded boy's ceremonial kimono featuring large "*shishi*" motifs. Taisho period, 1912–1926. Stencilling. 33 × 34 inches. The artwork closely follows that of the Kano school. Japanese *shishi* (mythological lions) guard the entrance to Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines. *Shishi* are fierce looking creatures, with flowing manes and barrel chests, that adopt a powerful stance as they await approaching visitors. The mythology surrounding the creature underscores their strong, steadfast nature. Legend has it that *shishi* throw each cub over a cliff to test its vitality and toughness. Thus, the parents who commissioned this ceremonial winter kimono wish their son to have the same positive attributes as the strong and steadfast *shishi*.



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art. A "*wabi-sabi*" scene might show nature devoid of animation, except for the image of a moving stream clearing away fallen leaves. Humility and a deeper meaning to life are achieved when one accepts the inevitability of the relentless march of time, and the accompanying submission to decline and decay (5). Japanese Zen Buddhists held that there were seven aesthetic principles in nature that formed the foundation of *wabi-sabi*: asymmetry, spontaneity, simplicity, unworldliness, mysteriousness and tranquility. In his book, *Wabi-sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*, Leonard Koren postulates that *wabi-sabi* holds "roughly the same position in the Japanese pantheon of aesthetic [that is, the philosophy of beauty] values as do the Greek ideals of beauty and perfection in the West".[3] "Western beauty is radiance, majesty, grandness and broadness. In comparison, Eastern beauty is desolateness. Humility. Hidden beauty." So says kendo sensei Shozo Kato in a video (caption) from The Avant/Garde Diaries.[4] Andrew Juniper also attempts to describe his take on its meaning: "*Wabi-sabi* is an intuitive appreciation of the transient beauty of the physical world that reflects the irreversible flow of life in the spiritual world. It is an understated beauty that exists in the modest, rustic, imperfect, or even decayed, an aesthetic sensibility that finds a melancholy beauty in the impermanence of all things."[5] "*Wabi-sabi*" is significant to the kimono story as it—and its similar aesthetic "*shibui*" ("astringent or unostentatious taste")—came to influence Japanese fashion throughout the Edo and later periods.

Another significant Japanese aesthetic is "*ma*"—meaning "emptiness" or "absence"—a space-time concept that involves both a consideration of the interval between two or more spatial or temporal objects, as well as the broader understanding of the importance of placement and space in creating an overall perception (6). "*Ma* is not something that is created by compositional elements; it is the thing that takes place in the imagination of the human who experiences these elements. Therefore, *ma* can be defined as experiential place understood with emphasis on interval."[6] On a kimono, a Japanese artist could

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utilise the *ma* aesthetic by creating patterns on one part of the fabric, while leaving another empty, thus allowing the viewer mentally to complete the picture.

The shogunate leadership of the Edo period (1603–1868) initiated an isolationist policy called "*sakoku*", allowing an artistic environment relatively free from outside influence that would persist for over two centuries. Home-grown Japanese aesthetics innovated and flourished during this period, with artists experimenting with discontinuity, asymmetry, and inverse proportion. One of the aesthetics, popular among some wealthier Japanese, is referred to as "*kabuku*", a type of reckless and playful extravagant elegance (7). The *kabuku* aesthetic was the antithesis to *wabi-sabi* and its Zen origins.

The early Edo period also saw the establishment of the Rinpa school, adhered to by independent-minded artists, who were interested in promoting indigenous Japanese aesthetic ideas. The Rinpa artists utilised vibrant colours in a highly decorative manner, with themes that favoured nature, the seasons and references to Japanese classical literature from the highly regarded Heian period (8, 9, 10). Artists of the Rinpa school always had a close relationship to Japanese

[3]Leonard Koren, *Wabi-Sabi for Artists, Designers, Poets and Philosophers*, Berkeley, California: Stone Bridge Press, 1994, p. 21.

[4]Https://vimeo.co/channels/theavantgardediaries/86960593.

[5]Andrew Juniper, *Wabi Sabi: The Japanese Art of Impermanence*, Tuttle Publishing, 2003, p. 51.

[6]Quote written by Emma Thurston, Columbia University, November 30th, 2011 on website https://emmathurston1328976.wordpress.com/2015/11/30/the-japanese-spatial-expression/.

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Detail from a woman's silk *haori* (light jacket). 1960s. *Wabi-sabi* aesthetic.

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Silk *kurotomesode* (formal kimono for married women). Early to mid-Meiji period, 1868–1880. *Ma* aesthetic. Inner lining is hand spun and handwoven. 51 × 60 inches. This kimono features refined bouquet motifs constructed of extremely refined *yuzen*-painting, with embroidery highlights and stencilling.

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Silk *furisode* displaying the *kabuku* aesthetic. Mid-Meiji to mid-Taisho period, 1880–1920. Five *mon* (family crests). 50 × 67 inches. Although the layout and design of this kimono may seem to be quite "modern", it is in fact very similar to at least one 18th century example (see Jill Liddell, *The Story of The Kimono*, plate 200). The prominent motif on this *furisode* is that of the Tabane-Noshi: "*noshi*" originally means narrow strips of dried abalone bundled together in the middle, and was the ritual offering to God in the Shinto religion. This motif was created through *yuzen* resist-painting with embroidery highlights and metallic couching outlining.

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Silk *uchikake* (wedding robe). Early to mid-Meiji period, 1868–1900. Rinpa aesthetic. 48 × 62 inches. The style and imagery on this *uchikake* resembles that on an early 19th century kimono designed by the artist Sakai Hoitsu (see *When Art Became Fashion*, page 185, no. 62). *Yuzen*-painting and embroidery highlights on *rinzu* (damask) ground. This unusual and stunning antique silk *uchikake* features a *rinzu* (damask) base, with large fan and paulownia motifs. The main design consists of wonderful *yuzen*-dyed plum blossom motifs. The *mon* (family crest) and other highlights are finely embroidered. The plum blossom is symbolic of purity and nobility due to its enriched smell and elegant appearance. In the cold winter snow, the plum blossom grows new flowers from seemingly dead branches. The depiction of a five-petal blossom represents new life at the end of the winter and is highly revered in Japan as an auspicious symbol.

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Silk winter kimono. Taisho period (1912–1926). Rinpa aesthetic. 49 × 63 inches. *Yuzen*-painting with metallic embroidery highlights. This kimono features a "*shou-chiku-bai*" design of *yuzen*-dyed pine trees, bamboo and ume blossoms. Silk and metallic embroidery highlights worked on both outside and inside. The ensemble of pine, bamboo and plum blossoms—all symbols of winter, long life and the cultured person—are rendered very artistically and graphically. Referred to as the "Three Friends of Winter" by the Japanese, these three plants are associated with the New Year. It is, therefore, likely that this kimono was created to be worn during the New Year, perhaps as a stage or theatrical robe, judging by its bold design and height. In addition to the winter motifs already mentioned, this kimono possesses a double inner lining to provide additional warmth.

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A summer silk kimono. Late Edo period (1840–1867). Rinpa aesthetic. 49 × 57 inches. A remarkable *chirimen* (crepe) silk unlined summer kimono featuring pigmented painted *fatsia japonica* leaves and cherry blossoms. The silk is a very pronounced crepe (twisted silk threads). The artist has created gradations in colour within the fatsia leaves to great effect. The *fatsia japonica* is rarely utilised as a motif on Japanese kimonos. One of Japan's most common household garden plants—often referred to as "*yatsude*"—the large evergreen leaves look like giant outstretched hands which are useful for gathering good fortune and prosperity. Cherry blossoms, the other motif on this kimono, symbolise clouds due to their nature of blooming en masse, besides being an enduring metaphor for the ephemeral nature of life. The transience of the blossoms, their beauty and quick death, means this plant has often been associated with mortality.

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textiles, bringing a painterly aspect to kimono design. One design characteristic that evolved with subsequent Rinpa artists, such as Korin, was the simplification and abstraction of natural forms beyond what was seen on Rinpa paintings. Along with literary and poetic subjects, primitive natural motifs, such as streams and stylised waves, were favoured in kimono design, often with bold colours and crisp and distinct images. The Rinpa style initially flourished in the cultural heartland triangle, bounded by Kyoto, Osaka and Nara; however, by the early 20th century, its influence was nationwide.

The *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints) school was an influential group of artists who created widely circulated prints that had a profound influence on the Japanese arts. Catering to the newly wealthy merchant class of the mid and late Edo period, woodblock print design often involved drawing attention to horizontal and vertical relationships, with oftentimes asymmetrical compositions with a viewpoint at odd angles, images cropped, and sharply defined contour areas. The colourful and ostentatious aesthetics of these woodblock prints contrasted with the more reserved and subtle ones of the other Japanese art schools. Many of the early creators of woodblock prints came from families associated with kimono design, so perhaps it was natural that these artists gave kimonos a prominence in their artworks, with actors and courtesans sporting the latest kimono designs. The shapes and patterns of kimonos on woodblock prints are usually finely detailed. Some kimonos display the influence of these woodblock prints, including those with representations of woodblock prints boldly stencilled (**11**).

In the 19th century, the understated chic known as "*iki*" was born as a reaction to the ruling class taboos on opulence for commoners. The initial utilisation of the word "*iki*", in the late 18th century, described the sophisticated aesthetic tastes of the geisha and kabuki actors of the entertainment districts, with their tasteful, fine kimonos and other garments. Artists, who followed the "*iki*" ideal during the 19th century, aimed to eliminate much of what was thought to be superfluous, while creating true beauty in what remained. On kimonos, this often involved reducing bright colours in favour of more subtle ones or avoiding obvious and ostentatious decoration; and instead creating fine and laborious detail in an unobtrusive part of the garment (**12**). "*Iki*", in part, refers to the spirit that motivated the lower-class Japanese to keep outwardly reserved in terms of feelings and appearance, while retaining a cool and rebellious spirit. The plain and striped kimonos, so popular during the 19th and the early 20th century, were partially manifestations of "*iki*": the regular townspeople purchased subdued narrow-striped kimonos, while urban sophisticates favoured somewhat bolder wide-striped kimonos. Geishas were unconsciously instrumental in promoting the "*iki*" aesthetic: their preference for stripes, certain browns, greys and blues, and subdued patterns, propelled the mode of "*iki*" into the zeitgeist of the 19th and the early 20th century.

The end of the feudal samurai establishment during the early years of the Meiji period released many painters from the patronage of the fallen upper class, and many artists, having lost their jobs, switched to creating the design underdrawings of elite kimonos commissioned by wealthy merchants. *Yuzen*-dyeing on the kimono—a form of painting—originated during the Edo period, but saw a resurgence during the late Meiji and Taisho periods as these painters experimented with using the kimono as a canvas. Some extant kimonos from the 1880s to the 1920s reflect some of the talented work accomplished by these professional artists (**13**). Bright pastel colours were popular during the 1890s, with the most coveted hue at the turn of the century being a purple red. During this time, the older style of subdued stripes and plaids lost appeal as interest grew—courtesy of the geishas—in intricate repeat patterning, called "*komon*".

During the late Meiji and Taisho periods, the entry of many professional artists into the kimono design field, combined with economic prosperity and a growing confidence, resulted in the perfect conditions for a kimono and art renaissance. During the early decades of the 20th century, nativism returned in force with the appearance of dramatic, colourful, large-scale nature-themed kimono designs based loosely on those of the artistically brilliant Genroku period (1688–1704) and the corresponding Rinpa art style. Art Nouveau was also associated with this style, as this movement derived much from Rinpa aesthetics (**13**). Japanese-influenced Art Deco, with it's simple strength and poignancy, became popular in kimono design during the Taisho and early Showa periods, as did various other European art styles.

Japanese aesthetics revolutionise art in the West

Japanese art, particularly woodblock prints, had a profound influence on Western art beginning with the Impressionists. As early as

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the 1860s, many early impressionist painters collected woodblock prints and other Japanese art, incorporating their themes and styles into their art. Manet was one of the first to adopt both themes and devices from the art of Japan. In 1886, Van Gogh wrote to his brother Theo: "In a way all my work is founded on Japanese art" and "We like Japanese painting, we have felt its influence, all the Impressionists have that in common."[7]

A book that wonderfully details the influence of Japan on Europe is the monumental *Japonisme* (1981) by Siegfried Wichmann. Mr Wichmann states on page 10: "To the Impressionists and their second-generation successors, Japonisme spelt liberation, the revelation of techniques which released them from the old traditional concepts of classical modelling taught in the academies. The dictatorship of naturalistic illusionism was now to be overthrown by an art which understood painting primarily as the disposition of brilliant color on flat surfaces" and "the

[7]Section of letter from Vincent van Gogh to Theo van Gogh, Arles, June 5th, 1888.

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A tall geisha silk "*susohiki*". *Ukiyo-e* aesthetic. 50 × 68 inches. This *susohiki*—trailing kimono for dance—features *yuzen*-painted portraits of famous stage actors with embroidery highlights and five *mon* (family crests). A "*susohiki*" (literally "trailing skirt") is a type of formal dance kimono worn by maiko (apprentice geisha) and geisha that is designed to trail on the ground. This example was worn by a geisha, as it has short, plain sleeves. While all female kimonos are longer than the length of the body, modern kimonos are designed to be folded over at the hip. *Susohiki* are not, so they are even longer and have a padded hem, so as to drape more attractively. Another word for *susohiki* is *hikizuri*. Although both the dancing *susohiki* and wedding *uchikake* share the characteristic of having a padded hem, *susohiki* are designed to be worn closed in front and tied with an obi, contrasting to the *uchikake*, which is worn with front open without an obi. This *susohiki* is decorated with famous kabuki stage actors in the manner seen on 18th and 19th century *ukiyo-e* (woodblock) prints, with a bamboo fence at the bottom, perhaps alluding to a specific performance. This example was an expensive garment to commission, and is the work of a talented textile artist for a senior and wealthy geisha to perform important dances.

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Detail of silk kimono. Mid to late Meiji period (1880–1911). *Iki* aesthetic.

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Detail of a *yuzen*-painted *kurotomesode*, late Meiji to mid-Taisho period (1900–1920). Rinpa and Art Nouveau influences.

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A silk *uchikake* (wedding robe). Taisho period (1912–1926). Rinpa influences. 49 × 66 inches. This stunning silk wedding gown was created by a master *yuzen* artist. The colour range is unusually broad, and patterning techniques include profuse *yuzen* resist-dye work with much metallic couching outlining, metal thread embroidery and brush-painted highlights. It has a red *rinzu* silk inner lining. This *uchikake* is an extraordinary testimony to the renaissance in kimono art that took place in Japan in the early 20th century. The design is complex and graphic, seamlessly uninterrupted—a rare feat—notwithstanding the fact that all kimonos are constructed of four separate panels sewn together, making art continuity extremely difficult over the entire canvas of the textile. There are various flower and plant garlands, *kikko* tortoiseshell motifs, as well as a large type of paradise scene, however, the centre of gravity are the two large flying cranes on the upper back of the robe. White cranes are among the premier symbols of longevity and good fortune—the Japanese view them as living to great ages and as being able to navigate between heaven and earth.

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Taisho period (1912–1926). Detail of a woman's *haori* (silk jacket) with an unusual design: metallic-thread-insert creating nobles (*miyabi* influence) on a large checkered background (mixture of early 20th century and Edo period kabuki theatre influences). The chequerboard colours may all have been created from *yuzen* brush painting to create a desired exact matte-finish effect.

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enormous swing away from the imitative and photographic and towards the decorative as a valid artistic means, was probably the greatest gain attributable to the impact of Far Eastern art." Mr Wichmann continues: "Japonisme provided some of the central concepts of 20th century modernism, for it introduced new and astonishing angles of vision—from below, from above—and the separation of planes by a strong, diagonal, combined with the framing function of truncated foreground shapes…This crossing of the boundaries of pictorial perception revolutionized the Impressionists composition and made it boundless…The European encounter with the Art of the Far East, and in particular with that of Japan, gave rise to a whole new range of subject matter, new techniques and new artistic devices."

Full circle: Japanese and European artists synthesise styles

The development of Art Nouveau and Art Deco in Europe and America was inspired by Japanese art, and so it is not surprising that the Japanese had an affinity to these styles. The cultural dialogue between Japan and the West influenced many kimonos created between 1900 and 1940, including the arabesques and simple floral forms so popular in Art Nouveau.

16
Taisho period (1912–1926). Silk *uchikake* (wedding robe). Rinpa and Art Nouveau influences. 49 × 61 inches. *Yuzen* painting, likely utilising pigment inks. A vivid and remarkable silk wedding kimono featuring a masterful depiction of a phoenix and paulownia and peony flowers. The patterning technique is *yuzen* on a smooth, plain-spun high-quality silk. The phoenix and the paulownia are intimately associated in Japanese legend—the phoenix will only alight on the branches of this tree. A composite of several animals, the phoenix is a symbol of peace and the rising sun, a bird whose song is particularly musical and auspicious. As the phoenix is the female counterpart of the male dragon and its varied coloured feathers represent the traditional virtues

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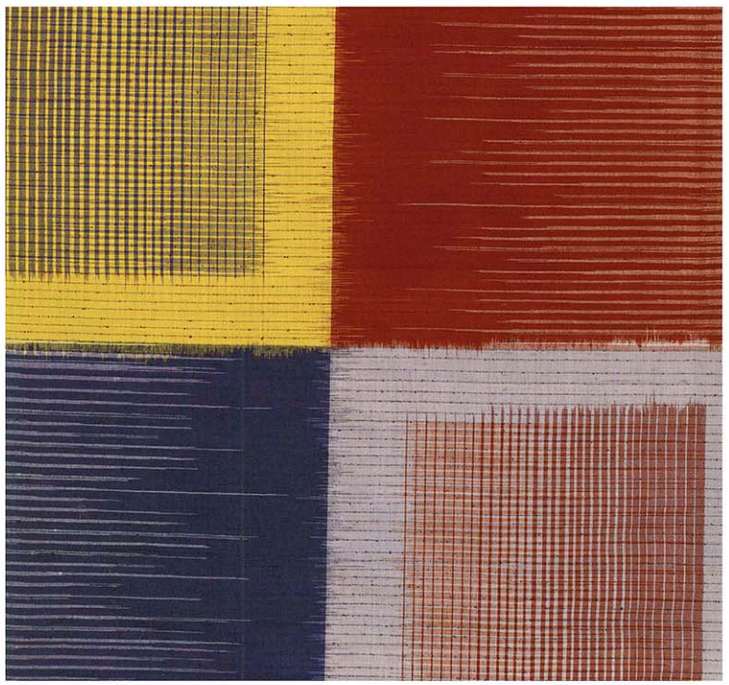

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of truthfulness, propriety, righteousness, benevolence and sincerity, it is an auspicious bridal motif. The peony is an auspicious flower, known as the flower of riches and honour and is an emblem of wealth and distinction. It symbolises prosperity, happiness, and peace. An emblem of love and affection, the peony is often a symbol of feminine beauty.

17
Mid-Showa period (1940–1960). A *meisen* (ikat) silk kimono. 49 × 58 inches. May be influenced by the Russian Avant-Garde movement.

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Late Taisho to early Showa period (1920–1930). 49 × 61 inches. A *meisen* silk kimono with an abstract curved line polychrome seamless pattern, curved lines. Similarities to Colour Field Painting movement art, however, this example predates that American school.

19
Early Showa period (1927–1940). 49 × 59 inches. A black and white *chirimen* (crepe) silk kimono featuring stencilled abstract patterning. There has been little research on the cross-pollination of art influences between the Japanese and the West during the decades preceding the Second World War.

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Detail of a *meisen* (ikat) silk kimono. Mid-Showa period (1940–1960). Cubism influence.

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Detail of *meisen* (ikat) silk kimono. Early Showa period (1927–1940). Impressionist influence.

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Detail of *meisen* (ikat) silk kimono. Mid-Showa period (1940–1960). Art Nouveau influence.

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Detail of a silk kimono with silver metallic thread inserts. Early Showa period (1927–1940). De Stihl influence.

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Art Deco satisfied many Japanese artists during the 1920s and 1930s, who wished to express in the kimono design a combination of Western artistic ideas with Japan's own indigenous spirit, thus creating a style of kimono that was both modern and traditional. Beginning in the 1920s, Japanese textile artists were influenced by various European and American art movements, including Cubism (**20**), Colour Field Painting (**18**), Russian Avant-Garde (**17**), Bauhaus (**24**), De Stihl (**23**), Art Deco (**25**), and Pop Art (**26**). It is of interest that although Pop Art made its breakthrough in America and Europe in the 1960s, the antecedents to this school evolved in Japan during the early years of the Showa period (late 1920s to the 1930s) thanks to Harue Koga and his photomontage-style paintings.

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Detail of a *meisen* (ikat) silk kimono. Mid-Showa period (1940–1960). Bauhaus influence.

25
Detail of kimono. Late Taisho period (1920–1926). Art Deco influence.

26
Detail of woman's *meisen* (ikat) silk *haori* (jacket). 1950s or 1960s. Pop Art influence.

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