



Looking East: Western Artists and the Allure of Japan

Helen Burnham, Sarah Thompson, Jane Braun

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A craze for all things Japanese in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries brought a correspondingly radical shift in Western art, dubbed Japonisme. Leading artists, including Vincent van Gogh and Claude Monet, were inspired by Japanese art and culture to create works of singular beauty. This lavishly illustrated publication explores an extraordinary moment of cross-cultural exchange by presenting a selection of major paintings, prints, drawings and decorative arts from the renowned collections of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Masterpieces by European and American artists are shown along with rare objects, paintings and prints from the Museum's Japanese collection, which is one of the finest in the world. Among the Western artists influenced by Japonisme, and included here, are Henry Roderick Newman, Frank Weston Benson, Alfred Stevens, John La Farge, Arthur Wesley Dow, Margaret Jordan Patterson, James McNeill Whistler, Edvard Munch, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, Pierre Bonnard, Edouard Vuillard, James Ensor, Paul Gauguin, Edgar Degas, Henri Rivière and Frederick Elkington. Their works are juxtaposed with works by Japanese artists such as Utagawa Hiroshige, Katsushika Hokusai, Okumura Masanobu, Maruyama Okyo, Kubo Shunman, Isoda Koryusai and Kikugawa Eizan, among many others. With its two introductory essays, emphasizing first Western and then Eastern perspectives, and its four thematically organized chapters, *Looking East* imparts the sense of discovery and excitement that characterized the development of Japonisme in Europe and North America.

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