

MEDIA RELEASE



Edo Style: Art of Japan exhibition opens at The David Roche Foundation

Adelaide. The David Roche Foundation will open a major new exhibition ***Edo Style: Art of Japan (1615-1868)*** which will showcase more than 150 exquisite works of art, drawn predominantly from the renowned Japanese art collection at the Art Gallery of South Australia, with additional items from The David Roche Collection and private collections.

'This new collaboration between The David Roche Collection and the Art Gallery of South Australia brings together outstanding works of Japanese art. David Roche had a close and longstanding relationship with the Art Gallery with a number of his works displayed in important exhibitions at the Gallery from the 1990s. David had a love of Japanese art and travelled extensively to Japan to add small items to his vast collection. David would be thrilled with this collaboration' said Robert Reason, Senior Curator, The David Roche Foundation.

Edo Style presents a kaleidoscopic selection of ceramics, folding screens, hanging scrolls, netsuke, robes, woodblock prints and lacquer ware, all created during the Edo period (1615-1868) in the new capital of Edo (modern-day Tokyo), the old capital of Kyoto and beyond. *Edo Style* demonstrates the pervasive interest in projecting prestige and even power, through the acquisition and display of art and material culture in Japan.

The Edo period is defined by the 'great peace' and new eastern capital established by the Tokugawa shogunate which resulted in an expansion of urban centres and artistic communities that flourished under a diverse patronage and competing aesthetic sensibilities.

The Art Gallery of South Australia's Associate Curator of Asian Art Russell Kelty says '*the vast array of characters represented during this period are depicted amidst golden clouds on folding screens and in vivid colours on woodblock prints. Prints in particular, portray elegantly dressed courtesans, captivating kabuki actors, sumo wrestlers and grand narratives of Japanese history.*'

Edo Style also includes a selection of prints by iconic landscape artists Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849) and Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858), whose works have defined our vision of the 'famous places' and great vistas of Edo, which at the time was the largest city in the world.

A particular focus of the exhibition is the pursuits and stylish accoutrements of the military elite. During the largely peaceful Edo period the shogun, daimyo and samurai were required by law to cultivate moral virtue and aesthetic sensibilities. Armour and swords became symbols of an illustrious past and symbols of the wearer's status and refinement.

Russell Kelty says '*a highlight of the exhibition from the Art Gallery's collection is a suit of Armour, with breastplate depicting Fudō myōō created in 1699 by the master metalsmith and sword connoisseur Myochin Munesuke (1643–1735?). This is an example of the ingenious integration of local and international materials which provided light weight and flexible protection as well as evoking the aesthetic sophistication of its owner.*'

Other highlights include scenes of hunting and majestic hawks, symbols of martial prowess and connoisseurship. A hanging scroll, *Deep valley, old pine* depicts one such hawk on an old pine tree in an elegant display of brush and ink painting by one of the most accomplished *literati* of the late Edo period, Yamamoto Baiitsu (1783-1856).

Edo Style will be complemented by a wide range of talks, workshops and monthly evening openings.

DETAILS:

Edo Style: Art of Japan (1615-1868)

5 September to 1 December 2018

The David Roche Foundation

241 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 4pm. Closed Sunday-Monday.

Cost is \$10 or \$8 concession. Children under 5 free. No bookings required. Exhibition only.

www.rochefoundation.com.au

Caption: Hishikawa Ryukoku, Japan active c.1801-1818, *The courtesan Akashi of the Tamaya (Tamaya uchi Akashi)*, early 1800s, Edo (Tokyo), woodblock print, ink and colour on paper, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

For further information please contact Susanne Briggs susanneb1@ozemail.com.au or 0412 268 320

The David Roche Foundation was the 2018 Winner - Best Attraction or Experience - City of Adelaide