

PRESS RELEASE (Feb. 16, 2017)

Dawn of Japanese Photography: The Anthology

Tuesday March 7 - Sunday May 7, 2017



Portrait of Hijikata Toshizo by Tamoto Kenzo (photographed 1869, later print). Hakodate City Central Library. (On view April 25 - May 7)

Tokyo Photographic Art Museum is pleased to announce “Dawn of Japanese Photography: The Anthology,” which present the highlights of four previous exhibitions that broke new ground in the understanding of early photography in Japan. For those exhibitions, held at this museum every other year from 2007 to 2013, we surveyed the early photographic holdings of museums, libraries, universities, and other institutions all over Japan, bringing together photographs and related materials from the late Edo period and first three decades of the Meiji period (about 1853 to 1900). The exhibitions were organized geographically, each with a focus on specific district: Kanto (2007); Chubu, Kinki and Chugoku (2009); Shikoku, Kyushu and Okinawa (2011); and Hokkaido and Tohoku (2013).

In the history of early photography, numerous photographic technologies were developed over the years to facilitate duplication, enhance quality, and increase convenience, starting immediately after the invention of the medium. The oldest extant photograph taken in Japan is a daguerreotype, but it dates only from 1854, long after the technology was invented and even after the advent of glass-plate photography. It is interesting to consider that during the 19th century, Asia, as well as many other parts of the world, did not keep pace with the latest developments in photography.

We can see these fascinating early photographs of Japan and Japanese people together today only because they have been carefully preserved over the years in local communities across the country. Each work carries special meaning precisely because it is an original that has survived a long history. In 2011, while this project was in progress, a devastating earthquake and tsunami struck the Tohoku region. We have therefore included a special section of early Meiji photographs that record the natural disasters of that period. It is our

hope that these somber images of an early disaster will encourage visitors to think in new ways about the informative value of early photographs.

Number of works: 373 (tentative)

There will be changes of exhibits on March 22, April 11 and April 25.



Portrait of Toyoko, wife of Matsudaira Tadanari. Yamanouchi Studio, c.1868-1882, Ambrotype
Left: Kochi Prefectural Museum of History
Right: Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

The value of a comprehensive survey: It was previously known that the photograph on the left was made by the Yamanouchi Studio, but the subject was unknown. The photograph on the right, on the other hand, was known to be a portrait of Toyoko, the wife of Matsudaira Tadanari, but it wasn't known where the photograph was made.



Portrait of Tanaka Mitsuyoshi taken by Eliphalet M. Brown Jr., 1854, Daguerreotype, Private collection. National Brown came to Japan in 1854 as official photographer to Commodore Perry. This is one of the first portraits of a Japanese person taken in Japan. (On view to April 11-May 7).



Left: Images of the damage sustained in the 1896 Sanriku tsunami, in an album of photographs by Nakajima Matsuchi. Albumen prints, Collection of the JCI Camera Museum. Right: Collapsed Yadaishimon Gate, Asuka Shrine, Photographer unknown, 1894, Albumen print, Homma Museum of Art

Many of the early photographs taken in Tohoku and Hokkaido were intended as records or for informational purposes, like news photographs today. They include photographs of natural disasters that occurred during the Meiji period.



Left: Portrait of Ueno Yaeko by Ueno Hikoma, c. 1902, Hand-colored albumen print, Nagasaki Museum of History and Culture (on view March 7 - April 9) Right: Boy wearing armor, by Suzuki Shinichi, c. 1882-1897, Hand-colored albumen print, Goto Shinpei Memorial Hall

Early Japanese photographers often used their own children and grandchildren as models to create sample portraits for display in their studios.



Panorama of Edo from Atagoyama Hill, Felice Beato, c.1863-1864, Albumen print, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Panoramic views like this are difficult to make and required a skilled photographer. This photograph was taken to show people outside of Japan what Edo looked like, and is believed to be the basis for a lithograph published in *The Illustrated London News* on October 20, 1864.

International Symposium: Photography in Bakumatsu Japan

Sunday, March 26, 2017, 3 to 6 pm, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, 1F Hall

Speakers: Takahashi Hidenori, Nihon University College of the Arts

Photography in the Final Two Decades of the Edo Period

Christian Philippe Polak, Independent Scholar and Collector

Yokosuka Shashin: Émile de Montgolfier in Japan

Sebastian Dobson, Independent Scholar

Under Eagle Eyes: Photographs from the Prussian Expedition to Japan, 1860-61

Luke Gartlan, St. Andrew's University

Shimizu Tokoku and the Japanese carte-de-visite: Redefining Yokohama Photography

Fan Juju, National University of Tainan

Bakumatsu Photographs: Japan and Taiwan as seen by Foreign Photographers

Philippe Dallais, Independent Scholar and Consultant

A Swiss Photographer in Bakumatsu Japan: New Discoveries on Pierre J. Rossier

Moderator: Mitsui Keishi, Curator, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum

Free. Limit 190 people; tickets will be distributed from 10 am on the day of the symposium at the 1F ticket counter.

Gallery Talks (in Japanese)

March 17, 31 from 2 pm

April 7, 21 from 2 pm

May 3, 4, 6, 7 from 2 pm

Gallery Talks (in English)

April 13 from 4 pm

April 14 from 6 pm

(guide is Japan Times writer Alice Gordenker)



View of the 2011 exhibition "The Dawn of Japanese Photography: Shikoku, Kyushu and Okinawa."

All gallery talks are free with regular museum admission; no reservations required.

Organized by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, Tokyo Photographic Art Museum, The Yomiuri Shimbun, The Japan Association of Art Museums

Sponsored by Lion Corporation, Dai Nippon Printing Co., Ltd., Sompo Japan Nipponkoa Insurance Inc, Nippon Television Network Corporation with Nihon University College of Art, Japan Camera Industry Institute

Hours: 10:00 to 18:00 (20:00 on Thursdays and Fridays). Last entry 30 minutes before closing

Closed Monday (if Monday is a national holiday or a substitute holiday, it is the next day) *May 1 is open day

Admission : Adults ¥500/College Students ¥400/High School and Junior High School Students, Over 65 ¥250

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