

*Japanese painting is one of the oldest and most highly refined of the Japanese visual arts, encompassing a wide variety of genres and styles. The long history of Japanese painting exhibits synthesis and competition between native Japanese aesthetics and the adaptation of imported ideas.*

By Rory Goulding 22 August Nowhere else can you find so many Japanese art forms in one place as in the ancient capital of Kyoto. Meet six people working to pass on its artistic heritage, in new ways and old. Meet the artists of Kyoto Calligraphy Japan learnt the art of writing from China between the 5th and 7th centuries AD. By then, the characters had evolved into a standard form – a crisp but elegant style which continues to set the benchmark today. Sunlight shines through the paper in the sliding doors, casting latticework shadows on the tatami mat floor in the room where Hiroko Harada arranges the tools of her art: Japan began to adapt the Chinese writing system for its own use around 1, years ago, and it is still something of a mixed blessing. Yet kanji have a strange power, which comes out clearly when Hiroko stands over the paper and bends to write the characters as large as she can, in black brushstrokes that are sometimes firm and sometimes sinuous, as the smell of fresh ink fills the room after each new movement. The white is more important, as it brings out the black. Emptiness has a value of its own, not least in a country where many people must live without the luxury of space. What others might describe as an art or a skill or even a hobby, is in Japan a way to follow. The centre is named after the style of calligraphy founded by her father-in-law, Kampo Harada, who taught hundreds of thousands of students during his life. As well as calligraphy courses, the centre also holds regular half-day events mixing calligraphy and flower arranging. Local company Windows to Japan offers the opportunity of seeing a calligraphy master at work as part of its customised tours. Temples around the city are also good places to see examples of the art on display. Weaving Japan has long excelled in silk weaving. Kimonos are its best-known products, and even while most Japanese rarely wear them today, many women visiting Kyoto will put one on especially to look the part in this guardian city of traditional culture. The sound of an old-fashioned loom is dependable. First there is a low wheeze as the hanging heddles raise and lower alternating sets of warp threads to create a space for the shuttle to draw the weft through. And then comes a satisfying wooden thump as the warp threads fall back in parallel, the fabric now one line nearer completion. Repeat thousands of times and the result is a piece of silk brocade that almost glows. Weaving in Kyoto has traditionally been concentrated in the district of Nishijin – a place dotted with types of old-fashioned neighbourhood shops that have disappeared from most Japanese streets, including one where locals can bring their own rice to be polished. Amane Tatsumura is the fourth generation in his family to produce silk brocade, in the Koho workshop named after his father. Koho is also unusual in continuing to use punch cards. These strings of cards with patterns of holes in them help to control the heddles which move the warp threads. The punch cards, like the shuttles, are made by only one person in the whole country. The multitude of parts and processes that go into weaving helps to sustain dozens of artisans, almost like an ecosystem. When the cloth is purple, the purple threads in the sash seem to light up. When the cloth is green, the eye sees the green silk stand out. Blue, yellow, black and salmon-pink all follow in turn. Knowledge like that can only be acquired after generations. Discover more The Koho workshop displays some of its signature pieces, such as the wave design pictured on this page, and a wall hanging showing a small deer that appears and disappears as you walk past. Visitors can sometimes watch weavers at work, by appointment only. In the traditional silk-weaving district of Nishijin, the Orinasukan workshop has an earlyth-century feel, apart from the odd digital display. Visitors can book sessions to learn the basics of weaving, making multi-coloured table settings. He has just completed a series of tall folding screens drawn in manga style, based on a famous work by the 17th-century artist Tawaraya Sotatsu showing the dramatic encounter of the wind god and the thunder god. Manga artists on the whole shun wordy speech bubbles and captions in every panel, believing it is tiring for the eye to have to switch constantly from pictures to small text. Discover more The Kyoto International Manga Museum is based in a former primary school near the busy downtown crossroads of Karasumadori and Oike-dori. Six years after the museum opened, local people still use its playing field for baseball and come here to vote in elections. In

addition to its exhibitions and collection of around 50, manga titles, the museum runs a studio on weekends and holidays where visitors can watch artists at work. Manga tends to be divided by age group and gender – shonen and shojo manga for boys and girls respectively, and seinen and josei manga for men and women. Fantasy and sci-fi are always popular subjects, but manga is very broad: Jun is the 14th generation in a family of potters, a lineage that is not unusual in the world of Japanese arts. For the first approach, he shapes a wettened cone of clay on a fast-spinning wheel, gradually turning a small dimple in the top into a bowl shape, which he smooths with a deerskin cloth and releases from its base with one quick draw of a taut wire. For his second work, however, he builds a bowl by hand from the base up with rings of clay, smoothed only a little with a wooden spatula. In pottery, there is a delicate line between the unevenness of a beginner and the unevenness of a master. If you do it a thousand times rather than ten, you understand the way the clay wants to react. It was a new kind of beauty. In a room decorated with little more than a single arrangement of flowers and a seasonal piece of calligraphy, guests sit on the floor, sipping thick green tea from bowls of rustic appearance, and forget the world for a while. Kyotos pottery style is named Kiyomizu-yaki after the neighbourhood temple. Plus Alpha Japan can arrange programmes for groups in the art of traditional ceramics. The Raku family has been making some of the most prized bowls used in the tea ceremony since the 16th century. The Raku Museum is a few blocks west of the old Imperial Palace. Shops selling pottery are common in the streets below Kiyomizu-dera, and the section of Teramachi-dori between Marutamachi-dori and Oike-dori. Woodblock In the Japan of years ago, the woodblock print brought art to the masses. A striking design would be copied in the thousands, and people could buy prints, it is said, for the same price as a bowl of noodles. Later in the 19th century, these prints even influenced Western artists such as Toulouse-Lautrec. One of the joys of Kyoto is the number of cottage industries dotted throughout the city. The woodblock printing workshop of Takezasa-do is one such place. Down a dog-leg alleyway off a nondescript stretch of busy Shijo Avenue, and up one of the narrowest flights of stairs I have ever climbed, I meet the fourth and fifth generations of the Takenaka printing family. The division of labour runs thus: The printing is done in stages: Each has to be aligned exactly on the block – one millimetre out and the effect would be spoiled. The scene is the forested foothills of Arashiyama in the northwest of Kyoto – a tourist magnet even in the s, when the prolific woodblock artist Hiroshige drew the master design for the first edition of this print. Most of the woodblock prints that are popular today were not considered high art in their time. Each colour impression adds a little more to the cost of a finished print, so the cheaper designs kept the number of colours low and the style as bold as possible. The original woodblocks have long since worn out and been destroyed. Discover more The alleyway leading to Takezasa-do is a left turn off Shijo Avenue, west from the crossing with Shinmachi-dori and before the crossing with Nishinotoin-dori. Take a look at the Takezasado website for a map and examples of prints sold at the workshop. The Kyoto Handicraft Center stocks a huge range of woodblock prints in different styles, and runs classes where visitors can try making their own prints from two designs. She is still learning the art of ikebana from a Buddhist monk, no less. One of the fundamentals of ikebana is taking away unnecessary elements, and so a large sprig of witch hazel is reduced to the ideal branch. Two smaller sprigs are added to create an asymmetrical triangle, along with some feathery pinks, a couple of closed irises and a single peony just beginning to open. The second style, keshiki, is more naturalistic. In it, Ayumi seeks to evoke the feeling of a landscape, in this case a marsh with irises. Like all ikebana, it is only meant to be seen from one side, in contrast to Westernstyle degree arrangements. The thought that goes into it is a marvel: For her, making an arrangement is always an immersive experience. Yet all ways have this in common: Discover more Ayumi Ikushima teaches ikebana to guests staying at restored townhouses, known as machiya , rented through Windows to Japan. The company also organises garden tours in Kyoto, which can include an ikebana demonstration. Ikebana is divided into a number of different schools. Ikenobo is the oldest, dating back more than years, while Ayumi works in the Saga Goryu style.

**Chapter 2 : The Art of Japanese Life (TV Mini-Series) - IMDb**

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Kofun art[ edit ] The third stage in Japanese prehistory, the Kofun period c. The period is named for the large number of kofun megalithic tombs created during this period. In this period, diverse groups of people formed political alliances and coalesced into a nation. Typical artifacts are bronze mirrors, symbols of political alliances, and clay sculptures called haniwa which were erected outside tombs. Asuka and Nara art[ edit ] A dragon-head pitcher with Pegasus pattern incised, gilded bronze with silver, Asuka period, 7th century, former Horyu-ji Temple treasures, Tokyo National Museum During the Asuka and Nara periods , so named because the seat of Japanese government was located in the Asuka Valley from to and in the city of Nara until , the first significant influx of continental Asian culture took place in Japan. The transmission of Buddhism provided the initial impetus for contacts between China, Korea and Japan. The Japanese recognized the facets of Chinese culture that could profitably be incorporated into their own: Throughout the 7th and 8th centuries, however, the major focus in contacts between Japan and the Asian continent was the development of Buddhism. Not all scholars agree on the significant dates and the appropriate names to apply to various time periods between , the official date of the introduction of Buddhism into Japan, and , when the Japanese capital was transferred from Nara. After the Chinese Northern Wei buddhist art had infiltrated a Korean peninsula, Buddhist icons were brought to Japan by Various immigrant groups. At the four corners of the platform are the Guardian Kings of the Four Directions , carved in wood around Only a few fragments of the original statue survive, and the present hall and central Buddha are reconstructions from the Edo period. Clustered around the Daibutsuden on a gently sloping hillside are a number of secondary halls: The term Heian period refers to the years between and , when the Kamakura shogunate was established at the end of the Genpei War. The period is further divided into the early Heian and the late Heian, or Fujiwara era , the pivotal date being , the year imperial embassies to China were officially discontinued. At the core of Shingon worship are mandalas , diagrams of the spiritual universe, which then began to influence temple design. Japanese Buddhist architecture also adopted the stupa , originally an Indian architectural form , in its Chinese-style pagoda. The temples erected for this new sect were built in the mountains, far away from the Court and the laity in the capital. The irregular topography of these sites forced Japanese architects to rethink the problems of temple construction, and in so doing to choose more indigenous elements of design. Cypress-bark roofs replaced those of ceramic tile, wood planks were used instead of earthen floors, and a separate worship area for the laity was added in front of the main sanctuary. In the Fujiwara period , Pure Land Buddhism , which offered easy salvation through belief in Amida the Buddha of the Western Paradise , became popular. This period is named after the Fujiwara family , then the most powerful in the country, who ruled as regents for the Emperor, becoming, in effect, civil dictators. Concurrently, the Kyoto nobility developed a society devoted to elegant aesthetic pursuits. So secure and beautiful was their world that they could not conceive of Paradise as being much different. They created a new form of Buddha hall, the Amida hall, which blends the secular with the religious, and houses one or more Buddha images within a structure resembling the mansions of the nobility. It consists of a main rectangular structure flanked by two L-shaped wing corridors and a tail corridor, set at the edge of a large artificial pond. Inside, a single golden image of Amida c. Applied to the walls of the hall are small relief carvings of celestials, the host believed to have accompanied Amida when he descended from the Western Paradise to gather the souls of believers at the moment of death and transport them in lotus blossoms to Paradise. Dating from about , the Genji Monogatari Emaki , a famous illustrated Tale of Genji represents the earliest surviving yamato-e handscroll, and one of the high points of Japanese painting. Written about the year by Murasaki Shikibu , a lady-in-waiting to the Empress Akiko , the novel deals with the life and loves of Genji and the world of the Heian court after his death. The 12th-century artists of the e-maki version devised a system of pictorial conventions that convey visually the emotional content of each scene. In the second half of

the century, a different, livelier style of continuous narrative illustration became popular. The Ban Dainagon Ekotoba late 12th century, a scroll that deals with an intrigue at court, emphasizes figures in active motion depicted in rapidly executed brush strokes and thin but vibrant colors. There are many fine differences in the two styles, appealing to the aesthetic preferences of the genders. But perhaps most easily noticeable are the differences in subject matter. Onna-e, epitomized by the Tale of Genji handscroll, typically deals with court life, particularly the court ladies, and with romantic themes. Otoko-e often recorded historical events, particularly battles. With the shift of power from the nobility to the warrior class, the arts had to satisfy a new audience: Thus, realism, a popularizing trend, and a classical revival characterize the art of the Kamakura period. In the Kamakura period, Kyoto and Nara remained the centres of artistic production and high culture. The Kei school of sculptors, particularly Unkei, created a new, more realistic style of sculpture. The Keron Engi Emaki, the illustrated history of the founding of the Keron sect, is an excellent example of the popularizing trend in Kamakura painting. The Keron sect, one of the most important in the Nara period, fell on hard times during the ascendancy of the Pure Land sects. The wives of samurai had been discouraged from learning more than a syllabary system for transcribing sounds and ideas see kana, and most were incapable of reading texts that employed Chinese ideographs kanji. Thus, the Keron Engi Emaki combines passages of text, written with a maximum of easily readable syllables, and illustrations that have the dialogue between characters written next to the speakers, a technique comparable to contemporary comic strips. The plot of the e-maki, the lives of the two Korean priests who founded the Keron sect, is swiftly paced and filled with fantastic feats such as a journey to the palace of the Ocean King, and a poignant mom story. One of the most beautiful passages illustrates the episode in which Murasaki Shikibu is playfully held prisoner in her room by two young courtiers, while, just outside, moonlight gleams on the mossy banks of a rivulet in the imperial garden.

Higashiyama period During the Muromachi period "新様", also called the Ashikaga period, a profound change took place in Japanese culture. The Ashikaga clan took control of the shogunate and moved its headquarters back to Kyoto, to the Muromachi district of the city. With the return of government to the capital, the popularizing trends of the Kamakura period came to an end, and cultural expression took on a more aristocratic, elitist character. Because of secular ventures and trading missions to China organized by Zen temples, many Chinese paintings and objects of art were imported into Japan and profoundly influenced Japanese artists working for Zen temples and the shogunate. Not only did these imports change the subject matter of painting, but they also modified the use of color; the bright colors of Yamato-e yielded to the monochromes of painting in the Chinese manner, where paintings generally only have black and white or different tones of a single color. Typical of early Muromachi painting is the depiction by the priest-painter Kao active early 15th century of the legendary monk Kensu Hsien-tzu in Chinese at the moment he achieved enlightenment. This type of painting was executed with quick brush strokes and a minimum of detail. Executed originally for a low-standing screen, it has been remounted as a hanging scroll with inscriptions by contemporary figures above, one of which refers to the painting as being in the "new style". In the foreground a man is depicted on the bank of a stream holding a small gourd and looking at a large slithery catfish. Mist fills the middle ground, and the background mountains appear to be far in the distance. It is generally assumed that the "new style" of the painting, executed about 1460, refers to a more Chinese sense of deep space within the picture plane. Landscape of the Four Seasons Sansui Chokan; c. Oda, a minor chieftain, acquired power sufficient to take de facto control of the government in 1466, and five years later, to oust the last Ashikaga shogun. A massive ume tree and twin pines are depicted on pairs of sliding screens in diagonally opposite corners, their trunks repeating the verticals of the corner posts and their branches extending to left and right, unifying the adjoining panels. The shogunate survived until 1568, when it was forced to capitulate because of its failure to deal with pressure from Western nations to open the country to foreign trade. One of the dominant themes in the Edo period was the repressive policies of the shogunate and the attempts of artists to escape these strictures. The foremost of these was the closing of the country to foreigners and the accoutrements of their cultures, and the imposition of strict codes of behavior affecting every aspect of life, the clothes one wore, the person one married, and the activities one could or should not pursue. The whole complex is surrounded by a beautiful garden with paths for walking. Three Beauties of the Present Day, by Utamaro, c. 1790. Perhaps his finest

are the screen paintings of Red and White Plum Blossoms. The school of art best known in the West is that of the ukiyo-e paintings and woodblock prints of the demimonde, the world of the kabuki theater and the pleasure districts. Ukiyo-e prints began to be produced in the late 17th century; in Harunobu produced the first polychrome print. Print designers of the next generation, including Torii Kiyonaga and Utamaro, created elegant and sometimes insightful depictions of courtesans. In the 19th century the dominant figures were Hokusai and Hiroshige, the latter a creator of romantic and somewhat sentimental landscape prints. The odd angles and shapes through which Hiroshige often viewed landscape, and the work of Kiyonaga and Utamaro, with its emphasis on flat planes and strong linear outlines, had a profound impact on such Western artists as Edgar Degas and Vincent van Gogh. Via artworks held in Western museums, these same printmakers would later exert a powerful influence on the imagery and aesthetic approaches used by early Modernist poets such as Ezra Pound, Richard Aldington and H. Just as ukiyo-e artists chose to depict figures from life outside the strictures of the Tokugawa shogunate, Bunjin artists turned to Chinese culture. Japanese pottery and porcelain and Japanese export porcelain Traditional, mostly stoneware, styles continued in many parts of Japan, but Japanese ceramics were transformed around the start of the Edo period, by a large influx of Korean potters, captured or persuaded to emigrate in the course of the Japanese invasions of Korea in the s. Many of these were settled on the southern island of Kyushu, and they brought with them experience of versions of the Chinese-style chambered climbing kiln, called noborigama in Japan, which allowed high temperatures with more precise control. By around they had discovered deposits of kaolinite, and started to make porcelain for the first time in Japan. The early wares called "Early Imari" were relatively small and imitated the Chinese underglaze blue and white porcelain, which Japan had been importing for some time. The first great period of Japanese export porcelain lasted until about the s, and the great bulk of Japanese porcelain was made for export, mostly to Europe, but also the Islamic world to the west and south of Japan. During the Prewar period, The introduction of Western cultural values led to a dichotomy in Japanese art, as well as in nearly every other aspect of culture, between traditional values and attempts to duplicate and assimilate a variety of clashing new ideas. This split remained evident in the late 20th century, although much synthesis had by then already occurred, and created an international cultural atmosphere and stimulated contemporary Japanese arts toward ever more innovative forms. A lot of artistic new Japanese gardens were built with Jihei Ogawa. Manga cartoons flourished the Meiji period, influenced greatly by English and French political cartoons. This style of building was built in urban areas. The first response of the Japanese to Western art forms was open-hearted acceptance, and in the Technological Art School was opened, employing Italian instructors to teach Western methods. This was a strategy that eventually served to extend the influence of Japanese art as far as Calcutta, London, and Boston in the years leading up to World War I. Art of the Postwar period[ edit ] After the end of World War II in, many artists began working art forms derived from the international scene, moving away from local artistic developments into the mainstream of world art. But traditional Japanese conceptions endured, particularly in the use of modular space in architecture, certain spacing intervals in music and dance, a propensity for certain color combinations and characteristic literary forms. Art from to Edo period and Prewar period were supported by merchants. Counter to Edo period and Prewar period, art of Postwar period was changed to the art which is supported by people as consumers. The wide variety of art forms available to the Japanese reflect the vigorous state of the arts, widely supported by the Japanese people and promoted by the government. In photography, Kansuke Yamamoto was prominent. American art and architecture greatly influenced Japan. Though fear of earthquakes severely restricted the building of a skyscraper, technological advances let Japanese build larger and higher buildings with more artistic outlooks. Cartoons imported from America led to anime that at first were derived exclusively from manga stories. Japan also flourishes in the fields of graphic design, commercial art e. Contemporary art in Japan[ edit ] Japanese modern art takes as many forms and expresses as many different ideas as modern art in general, worldwide. It ranges from advertisements, anime, video games, and architecture as already mentioned, to sculpture, painting, and drawing in all their myriad forms. Many artists do continue to paint in the traditional manner, with black ink and color on paper or silk.

**Chapter 3 : Japanese art - Wikipedia**

*Nowhere else can you find so many Japanese art forms in one place as in the ancient capital of Kyoto. Meet six people working to pass on its artistic heritage, in new ways and old. Japan learnt.*

Possible translations include "giving life to flowers" and "arranging flowers". It shows various arranging styles of tatebana ogibana wide-mouth right and upright styles. Plants play an important role in the native Shinto religion. Yorishiro are objects that divine spirits are summoned to. Evergreen plants such as kadomatsu are a traditional decoration of the New Year placed in pairs in front of homes to welcome ancestral spirits or kami of the harvest. Offering flowers at Buddhist altars became common. Although the lotus is widely used in India where Buddhism originated, in Japan other native flowers for each season were selected for this purpose. For a long time the art had no meaning and was merely the placing in vases, without system, of the flowers to be used as temple offerings and before ancestral shrines. The first flower arrangements worked out with a system were known as shin-no-hana, meaning "central flower arrangement". A huge branch of pine or cryptomeria stood in the middle, and around the tree were placed three or five seasonable flowers. These branches and stems were put in vases in upright positions without attempt at artificial curves. It was the first attempt to represent natural scenery. The large tree in the center represented distant scenery, plum or cherry blossoms middle distance, and little flowering plants the foreground. The lines of these arrangements were known as centre and sub-centre. Also displayed in these spaces were flower arrangements in vases that influenced the interior decorations, which became simpler and more exquisite. Together they form the basis for the original purely Japanese derivation of the practice of ikebana. The eighth shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa " " , was a patron of the arts and the greatest promoter of cha-no-yu, the ceremonial tea, and ikebana flower arrangement. Yoshimasa finally abdicated the office in order to devote his time to the fine arts. It was he who said that flowers offered on all ceremonial occasions and placed as offerings before the gods should not be offered loosely, but should represent time and thought. Rules then commenced to be formulated. At this time ikebana was known as rikka. Rikka and nageirebana are the two branches into which ikebana has been divided. Popularity of the two styles vacillated between these two for centuries. In the beginning, rikka was stiff, formal, and more decorative while nageirebana was simpler and more natural. It was at this period that cha-no-yu reached its highest development and strongly influenced the flower art. A practitioner of tea was most probably also a follower of ikebana. So, while these two branches both started in the Higashiyama period, rikka better represents the taste of that time, and nageirebana more reflects the taste of the Momoyama period. Rikka lost some of its popularity in the Momoyama period, but in the first part of the Edo period " " it was revived and became more popular than ever before. Rikka reached its greatest popularity during the Genroku era. They gave few rules and their chief object seemed to be to withhold all information. Although of little instructional value, these books were fully illustrated, thus documenting the gradual progress of the art. Books about ikebana were published in succession. This was carefully written and very instructive, with rules and principles freely given. Although the text is similar to the contents of commentaries of the Muromachi period, the illustrations showed how to enjoy Tachibana. Tachibana had spread from monks to warriors and further on to townspeople. This was an age of utmost elegance. All the fine arts were highly developed, above all pattern-printing for fabrics and decoration. In this period, the combination of a pattern or design with lines that followed the natural growth of the plant produced the most pleasing and graceful results. Still, there were occasional departures into unnatural curves and artificialities that caused a shift, and nageirebana again revived. Until then only one branch of ikebana had been taught at a time, following the taste of the day, but now rival teachers in both rikka and nageirebana existed. From the decline of rikka, nageirebana, the origin of the present ikebana, grew in power and popularity. From this time on, it ceased to be called nageirebana and took the name of ikebana. In the Tenmei era " " nageirebana, or ikebana, advanced rapidly in favour and developed great beauty of line. The exponents of the art not only studied nature freely, but combined this knowledge with that of rikka, the result bringing ikebana to a very perfect state of development. After the Tenmei era, the purest and best taste in ikebana began to diminish, and a formal and artificial form of

arrangement came into existence. This is the present form, which has a fixed rule or model known as heaven, human, and earth. A school is normally headed by an iemoto, oftentimes passed down within a family from one generation to the next. Some of the most historic and well-known schools are: He became a priest at the temple and spent the rest of his days practicing flower arranging. As time passed, other schools emerged, styles changed, and ikebana became a custom among the whole of Japanese society.

Chapter 4 : The Arts of Japan: Ancient and medieval - Seiroku Noma - Google Books

*Dr James Fox explores the art of the Japanese home. The clean minimalism of Japan's homes has been exported around the world but has its origins in spiritual and philosophical values. The clean minimalism of Japan's homes has been exported around the world but has its origins in spiritual and philosophical values.*

This cultural interaction was facilitated in part by land bridges thatâ€¦ General characteristics The study of Japanese art has frequently been complicated by the definitions and expectations established in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Japan was opened to the West. The occasion of dramatically increased interaction with other cultures seemed to require a convenient summary of Japanese aesthetic principles, and Japanese art historians and archaeologists began to construct methodologies to categorize and assess a vast body of material ranging from Neolithic pottery to wood-block prints. Formulated in part from contemporary scholarly assessments and in part from the syntheses of enthusiastic generalists, these theories on the characteristics of Japanese culture and, more specifically, Japanese art not unexpectedly bore the prejudices and tastes of the times. There was, for example, a tendency to cast the court art of the Heian period â€” as the apex of Japanese artistic achievement. The aesthetic preference for refinement, for images subtly imbued with metaphoric meaning, reflected the sublimely nuanced court mores that permitted only oblique reference to emotion and valued suggestion over bold declaration. Existing in tandem with the canonization of the Heian court aesthetic was the notion that the aesthetic sensibilities surrounding the tea ceremony were quintessentially Japanese. This communal ritual, developed in the 16th century, emphasized the hyperconscious juxtaposition of found and finely crafted objects in an exercise intended to lead to subtle epiphanies of insight. It further highlighted the central role of indirection and understatement in the Japanese visual aesthetic. As the author of such works as *The Ideals of the East*, *The Awakening of Japan*, and *The Book of Tea*, he reached an even wider audience eager to find an antidote to the clanging steel and belching smokestacks of Western modernity. Japanâ€”and, writ large, Asiaâ€”was understood as a potential source of spiritual renewal for the West. This surprisingly bellicose Japan was clearly more than tea and gossamer, and it seemed that perhaps an overly selective definition of Japanese arts and culture might have excluded useful hints of violence, passion, and deeply influential strains of heterodoxy. At the opening of the 21st century, superficial impressions of Japan still fostered a nagging schizophrenic image combining the polar characteristics of elegant refinement and economic prowess. The pitfalls of oversimplification have been noted above, however, and a century of scholarship, both Japanese and Western, has provided ample evidence of a heritage of visual expression that is as utterly complex and varied as the wider culture that produced it. Nevertheless, within the diversity discernible patterns and inclinations can be recognized and characterized as Japanese. Most Japanese art bears the mark of extensive interaction with or reaction to outside forces. Buddhism, which originated in India and developed throughout Asia, was the most persistent vehicle of influence. It provided Japan with an already well-established iconography and also offered perspectives on the relationship between the visual arts and spiritual development. Notable influxes of Buddhism from Korea occurred in the 6th and 7th centuries. The Chinese Tang international style was the focal point of Japanese artistic development in the 8th century, while the iconographies of Chinese Esoteric Buddhism were highly influential from the 9th century. Major immigrations of Chinese Chan Japanese: Zen Buddhist monks in the 13th and 14th centuries and, to a lesser degree, in the 17th century placed indelible marks on Japanese visual culture. These periods of impact and assimilation brought not only religious iconography but also vast and largely undigested features of Chinese culture. Whole structures of cultural expression, ranging from a writing system to political structures, were presented to the Japanese. Various theories have thus been posited which describe the development of Japanese culture and, in particular, visual culture as a cyclical pattern of assimilation, adaptation, and reaction. The reactive feature is sometimes used to describe periods in which the most obviously unique and indigenous characteristics of Japanese art flourish. For example, during the 10th and 11th centuries of the Heian period, when, for political reasons, extensive contact with China ceased, there was consolidation and extensive development of distinctive Japanese painting and writing styles. Similarly,

the vast influence of Chinese Zen aesthetic that marked the culture of the Muromachi period – typified by the taste for ink monochrome painting – was eclipsed at the dawn of the Tokugawa period – by boldly colourful genre and decorative painting that celebrated the blossoming native culture of the newly united nation. The notion of cyclical assimilation and then assertion of independence requires extensive nuancing, however. It should be recognized that, while there were periods in which either continental or indigenous art forms were dominant, usually the two forms coexisted. Another pervasive characteristic of Japanese art is an understanding of the natural world as a source of spiritual insight and an instructive mirror of human emotion. An indigenous religious sensibility that long preceded Buddhism perceived that a spiritual realm was manifest in nature see Shinto. Rock outcroppings, waterfalls, and gnarled old trees were viewed as the abodes of spirits and were understood as their personification. This belief system endowed much of nature with numinous qualities. The cycle of the seasons was deeply instructive and revealed, for example, that immutability and transcendent perfection were not natural norms. Everything was understood as subject to a cycle of birth, fruition, death, and decay. Imported Buddhist notions of transience were thus merged with the indigenous tendency to seek instruction from nature. Attentive proximity to nature developed and reinforced an aesthetic that generally avoided artifice. In the production of works of art, the natural qualities of constitutive materials were given special prominence and understood as integral to whatever total meaning a work professed. When, for example, Japanese Buddhist sculpture of the 9th century moved from the stucco or bronze Tang models and turned for a time to natural, unpolychromed woods, already ancient iconographic forms were melded with a preexisting and multileveled respect for wood. Union with the natural was also an element of Japanese architecture. Architecture seemed to conform to nature. The symmetry of Chinese-style temple plans gave way to asymmetrical layouts that followed the specific contours of hilly and mountainous topography. The borders existing between structures and the natural world were deliberately obscure. Elements such as long verandas and multiple sliding panels offered constant vistas on nature – although the nature was often carefully arranged and fabricated rather than wild and real. The perfectly formed work of art or architecture, unweathered and pristine, was ultimately considered distant, cold, and even grotesque. This sensibility was also apparent in tendencies of Japanese religious iconography. While some of those features were retained in Japanese adaptation, there was also a concurrent and irrepressible trend toward creating easily approachable deities. Kshitigarbha bodhisattva or Kannon Bosatsu Avalokiteshvara to levels of increased cult devotion. The inherent compassion of supreme deities was expressed through these figures and their iconography. The interaction of the spiritual and natural world was also delightfully expressed in the many narrative scroll paintings produced in the medieval period. Stories of temple foundings and biographies of sainted founders were replete with episodes describing both heavenly and demonic forces roaming the earth and interacting with the populace on a human scale. There was a marked tendency toward the comfortable domestication of the supernatural. The sharp distinction between good and evil was gently reduced, and otherworldly beings took on characteristics of human ambiguity that granted them a level of approachability, prosaically flawing the perfect of either extreme. Even more obviously decorative works such as the brightly polychromed overglaze enamels popular from the 17th century selected the preponderance of their surface imagery from the natural world. The repeated patterns found on surfaces of textiles, ceramics, and lacquerware are usually carefully worked abstractions of natural forms such as waves or pine needles. In many cases pattern, as a kind of hint or suggestion of molecular substructure, is preferred to carefully rendered realism. The everyday world of human endeavour has been carefully observed by Japanese artists. For example, the human figure in a multiplicity of mundane poses was memorably recorded by the print artist Hokusai – The quirky and humorous seldom eluded the view of the many anonymous creators of medieval hand scrolls or 17th-century genre screen paintings. Blood and gore, whether in battle or criminal mayhem, were vigorously recorded as undeniable aspects of the human. Similarly, the sensual and erotic were rendered in delightful and uncensorious ways. The reverence and curiosity about the natural extended from botany to every dimension of human activity. In summary, the range of Japanese visual art is extensive, and some elements seem truly antithetical. An illuminated sutra manuscript of the 12th century and a macabre scene of seppuku ritual disembowelment rendered by the 19th-century print artist Tsukioka Yoshitoshi can be forced into a common

aesthetic only in the most artificial way. The viewer is thus advised to expect a startling range of diversity. Yet, within that diverse body of expression, certain characteristic elements seem to be recurrent: Formative period The arrival of Buddhism and its attendant iconography in Japan in the mid-6th century ce serves as a dramatic dividing line in the consideration of the history of Japanese visual expression. With the advent of Buddhism, a vast array of already matured iconography and artistic technique was assimilated with comparative speed. This moment determined the course of the development of Japanese art. What preceded the introduction of Buddhism is a matter of complex and constantly revised archaeological record. Pre- and protohistoric sites have been noted and chronicled in Japan as early as the 8th century ce, but the evidence was usually interpreted according to prevailing mythologies and narratives of national origin. It was not until the Tokugawa, or Edo, period that occasional attempts were made to provide systematic surveys and detailed drawings of archaeological sites. The new interest in collecting and categorizing data was in part due to the influence of Neo-Confucian thought and to the introduction, primarily through contacts with the Dutch, of European methodology. For the most part, however, Edo, like preceding periods, was indisposed to the relative objectivity required to interpret archaeological findings. Concurrently, Japanese universities began to introduce these studies into their curricula. It was not until the second decade of the 20th century, however, that Japanese archaeologists achieved a consensus on the need for the application of a rigorous and disciplined archaeological method. Essential to this process were carefully recorded stratigraphic excavations. Paleolithic stage Until about 18, years ago, what is now known as the Japanese archipelago was connected to the East Asian landmass at several points. Similarly, the now divided islands were also joined at some points. These land passages account for the discovery of the remains of both prehistoric animals and microlithic cultures but no pottery of types usually associated with the continent. Continued warming trends, beginning about 20, years ago, eventually raised sea levels, thus cutting off all but the northern passage from Siberia, which had originally been too cold for but was now more hospitable to human access. The earliest human populations on the archipelago had subsisted on hunting and foraging, but with the warming trends the bounty of large, easy-to-fell animals began to die out while the variety and density of plant life rose dramatically. The increase in the number of sites discovered dating from 15, to 18, years ago suggests that once-roaming bands of hunter-gatherers were becoming gradually more sedentary and less dependent on foraging. Approximately 12, to 10, years ago the definitive conditions for what is termed a Mesolithic stage became apparent: Just as the use of microlith weapons increased as a result of a decline in the numbers of big game, the manufacture of pottery was probably necessitated by a food supply crisis that required a means of storage and, perhaps, a method for boiling or otherwise cooking plants. The pottery was low-fired, and reassembled pieces are generally minimally decorated and have a small round-bottomed shape. This early transitional period seems to lack convincing evidence of plant cultivation which would, along with microlith and pottery production, allow it to meet the criteria for a Neolithic culture. The profile which emerges is that of inhabitants gradually isolated on an island chain with a generally temperate climate and abundant food sources. Changes in temperature accounted for population movements to and from mountains and coastal areas, with attendant dietary changes and adaptation to the preparation and storage of food. The tapered bases of the pots were designed to stabilize the vessels in soft soil and ash at the centre of a fire pit. Decorative schemes included markings made by pressing shells and cords or by rolling a carved stick into the clay before it hardened. The shapes and worked surface textures of these early vessels suggest their probable precursors—leather, bark, or woven reed containers reinforced with clay. A general climatic warming trend encouraged habitation in the mountain areas of central Honshu as well as coastal areas. Each house consisted of a shallow pit with a tamped earthen floor and a grass roof designed so that rainwater runoff could be collected in storage jars. The characteristic markings were impressed on damp clay with a twisted cord or cord-wrapped stick to produce a multiplicity of patterns. Other techniques, including shell impressions, were also used. In addition to the flared-mouth jars, shallow bowls and narrow-necked bottles were also introduced. The discovery of increasing varieties of flat-bottomed vessels appropriate for cooking, serving, and providing storage on flat earthen floors correlates with the evidence of the gradual formation of pit-house villages. Ropes, reed baskets, and wooden objects have been found at the Torihama mound site in Fukui prefecture.

## Chapter 5 : Japan: Historic Background

*Art Sep 25, Hokusai: Examining the enduring allure of a Japanese icon. by Alex Martin. The year is and the artist known as Hokusai is in his 80s. He has already lived nearly twice the.*

Bring fact-checked results to the top of your browser search. The arts Delicacy and exquisiteness of form, together with simplicity, characterize traditional Japanese artistic taste. The Japanese tend to view the traditional Chinese arts generally as being too grandiose or showy. The more recently introduced Western arts are felt to suffer from flaws of exuberant self-realization at the expense of earnest exploration of the conflicts in human relations, in particular the notions of divided loyalties between community , family, and self that create the bittersweet melancholy so pervasive in Japanese traditional drama. Traditional forms The highly refined traditional arts of Japan include such forms as the tea ceremony , calligraphy, and ikebana flower arranging and gardening, as well as architecture, painting, and sculpture. The performing arts are distinguished by their blending of music, dance, and drama, rooted in different eras of the past. Ikebana, the tea ceremony, and calligraphy are popular pursuits, particularly as aesthetic accomplishments for women. However, traditional Japanese painting, dance, and music have lost much of their earlier popularity, though the poetic forms of haiku and waka have continued to flourish. A woman performing a traditional tea ceremony, Japan. With the advance of modernization, many folk traditions and forms of folklore are disappearing. The widespread use of standard Japanese has accelerated this trend, since local cultures are directly related to dialects. Folk songs , for example, are generally no longer commonly sung except in some remote areas in northern and southwestern Japan. Some, however, still enjoy a great popularity, which has been increased through the mass media. On informal social occasions, even in the large cities, folk and popular songs are often sung. Western forms Western art forms have been fully embraced by the Japanese. Major cities often have several symphony orchestras, and Western-style painting, sculpture, and architecture are widely practiced. Numerous venues for Western classical music have been constructed throughout the country since the s. The number of Japanese moviegoers has dropped from its high point in the midth century, because of competition from television, videotapes and later DVDs , and video games, but innovations such as multiplex theatres venues with multiple auditoriums have increased attendance. A number of national museums and research institutes of cultural properties are attached to the agency. This program helps preserve many of the forms and styles that otherwise might disappear. The National Diet Library in Tokyo which also includes branch libraries is the single largest library in Japan. In addition to the many public institutions, there are numerous private museums, art galleries, theatres, and gardens throughout the country, and Japanese department stores also play a role in the dissemination of culture by offering free or low-cost exhibitions. Daily life and social customs Popular culture Contemporary Japanese society is decidedly urban. Not only do the vast majority of Japanese live in urban settings, but urban culture is transmitted throughout the country by a mass media largely concentrated in Tokyo. Young urban Japanese in particular have become known for their conspicuous consumption and their penchant for trends and fads that quickly go in and out of fashion. Modern, usually Western, popular music is ubiquitous in Japan. Jazz, rock, and the blues are enjoyed by the generations of Japanese who were born after World War II , along with half-Westernized or half-Japanized folk and popular songs. Many basically Japanese songs are sung to the accompaniment of Western musical instruments, and many basically Western subjects are treated in Japanese-style drama or song. The two orbits around which family life typically revolves are the workplace and school. Role specialization between men and women, once widespread, gradually has been changing. Men traditionally are the family breadwinners, while women are responsible for home finances, child rearing, and care of the extended family; an increasing number of women, the majority of them married, work outside the home, although often in part-time jobs. In rural agricultural areas, women have growing responsibilities in running agricultural operations, since many male heads of household are engaged in full-time employment in manufacturing facilities often at some distance from the family farm. Entertaining typically is not done at home, in part because of the small size of most Japanese homes and also because much of it is business-related. The commercial landscape of most

Japanese cities is among the most diverse and service-oriented in the world, where all manner of food, Japanese or otherwise, can be found. However, because such a large portion of the entertainment sector depends on business clientele, the sector has been subject to downturns in the economy that affect the corporate world. Cuisine Japanese cuisine, which often is served raw or only lightly cooked, is noted for its subtle and delicate flavours. Perhaps the best-known dish worldwide is sushi – cooked, vinegared rice served with a variety of vegetable, sashimi raw seafood, and egg garnishes and formed into various shapes; in addition, sashimi is commonly served on its own. Also popular inside and outside Japan is tempura, usually consisting of portions of seafood and vegetables dipped in a rice-flour batter, deep-fried, and served over steamed rice, and various dishes made with tofu soybean curd; tofu may be served on its own or in preparations such as miso soup made from fermented soybeans. Other notable dishes include sukiyaki and its variation shabu-shabu which both involve cooking meat and other ingredients in a shallow pot at the table and various noodle preparations, including soba made from buckwheat and often served cold and udon made from wheat and usually served after quick-frying on a hot grill or in hot broth. Kapichu Japan is renowned for its green tea, much of it cultivated on or near the slopes of Mount Fuji in Shizuoka prefecture. Sake, a brewed alcoholic beverage made from fermented rice, is also especially associated with Japan, where typically it is served heated in small porcelain cups. Beer production in Japan dates to the mids, and several brands have become well known throughout the world. Japan also produces a variety of distilled beverages, notably whiskey. Rows of tea growing in Japan, with Mount Fuji in the background. It is still common for a family friend, relative, or mentor to act as a go-between nakodo, even if the marriage is a love match. The wedding ceremony itself often consists of a blend of East and West: Shichi-go-san Japanese girls dressed for the Shichi-go-san festival. Dan Short Japan has 15 national holidays. For three days thereafter people visit shrines and temples, their families, and the homes of friends. May Day May 1 is celebrated by many workers. The occurrence of multiple holidays in late April – early May popularly called Golden Week is one of the most popular vacation times for the Japanese, as is the week of the Bon festival in mid-July or mid-August, when the spirits of deceased ancestors are honoured. Many temples and shrines celebrate their own specific festivals, attracting large numbers of people. City, town, and village authorities, as well as local communal bodies, often organize local festivals. Most popular are the cherry blossoms of spring in some areas, around Golden Week. Sports and recreation The Japanese are ardent sports fans and competitors. In addition, the annual National Invitational High School Baseball Tournament is televised nationwide and is eagerly followed throughout the country. Many other sports were introduced to Japan in Meiji times as contact with the West increased. These include team sports such as basketball, volleyball, and football soccer and more individual activities such as golf, tennis, and badminton. An emphasis on sports in the military and in schools contributed to the popularization of sports in general. Football has grown considerably in popularity, to the point of rivaling baseball. A professional football league, established in, has grown to include more than two dozen teams, and there are numerous youth leagues. Notable among these are kendo, judo, and karate, the latter two also widely practiced worldwide. Other, generally noncompetitive, martial arts, such as jujitsu and aikido, also have large numbers of practitioners in Japan and throughout the world. The great traditional sport of Japan is sumo wrestling, the origins of which can be traced to the 8th century. Individual bouts between two wrestlers are often brief and are preceded by sequences of ritualistic preparations. The six major professional tournaments held annually are avidly followed throughout the country, and the best wrestlers – notably the grand champions yokozuna – often become enormously popular. Japan began competing in the Olympic Games in The country has hosted the Olympics three times: Japanese athletes have excelled in many sports and have been especially strong in gymnastics and judo competitions. For much of the postwar period Japanese workers did not exploit the full allowance of vacation time allotted to them, but since the s the country as a whole has become more leisure-conscious. Japan has an extensive and well-utilized system of national parks, quasi-national parks, and prefectural natural parks. Travel within Japan is widespread, and as a result the Japanese are highly knowledgeable about their cultural geography. Many institutions help promote nature studies and recreation through public and private youth hostels, national lodging houses, and national vacation villages. As the country became increasingly affluent, it became more common for Japanese to travel

abroad. In addition to pursuing a great variety of indoor and outdoor recreational, fitness, and sports activities, the Japanese are fond of playing board and card games, notably shogi and go both similar to chess and mah-jongg.

**Chapter 6 : 22 Japanese Arts & Crafts - Japan Talk**

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When Japanese art finally exploded onto the world stage in the s, it changed everything. For example, Japanese art was one of the inspirations for the Impressionist movement in Europe and America. The following are a few major Japanese arts and crafts. The art mostly evolved at temples and has been greatly influenced by Japanese Buddhism. Works of shodo often look vaguely like a landscape painting. Most Japanese people have studied it and have an appreciation for the art. Ukiyo-e Ukiyo-e is a genre of Japanese art that thrived from the s to s. They were printed in great numbers using wood block printing methods. In most cases, they depicted popular topics such as kabuki , geisha , travel, history, myth and politics. Ukiyo-e greatly influenced European artists such as Vincent Gogh. Japanese Architecture Most historical structures in Japan such as temples, shrines, castles and palaces are made of wood. The Japanese had unique techniques with wood and were able to create remarkably large wooden structures. For example, the great wooden stage of Kiyomizu-dera was constructed without a single nail. Modern Japanese architecture is equally interesting with hundreds of buildings and mega-projects such as bridges that have been recognized for their design. Manga Manga are Japanese comic books. Japan began producing dark, irreverent, sensual, violent graphic novels as early as the s that were essentially comic books. These books were largely banned in but the art continued nonetheless. Modern Japanese manga represent an vibrant and popular form of art and writing. Origami Origami is the Japanese art of folding paper to create decorative art. The classic origami that every school child in Japan learns is the crane. According to myth, anyone who strings together origami cranes is granted a wish. The Japanese traditionally believed that cranes live years. Sculpture Japanese sculpture is traditionally associated with religion. Wooden sculptures of protectors of Buddha such as Nio and Shitenno guard the gates to many temples. Shinto gods known as kami are often depicted in sculpture at shrines. Several of these are priceless cultural artifacts including sculptures that rank amongst the largest in the world such as the Buddha of Todaiji. Bonseki Bonseki are miniature landscapes on black lacquer trays that make use of white sand, pebbles, and small rocks. The art dates back to the 7th century and was historically used to plan real gardens. Bonseki faded with time but interest in it has recently resumed and a number of bonseki classes are now available in Japan. Japanese Fans The folding fan was invented in Japan. Japanese fans are considered a cultural item that are used in ritual, dance and festivals. They were also historically used as a weapon of war by the samurai. Japanese folding fans, known as Sensu, vary widely in quality and often feature original art. Kirigami Kirigami, literally cut paper, is like origami except that the paper can be cut to create more elaborate designs. Kirigami are made from a single piece of paper without gluing. Maki-e Maki-e are a type of Japanese lacquerware decorated with powdered metal such as gold or silver. An artist uses a fine brush to shape the powder into decorative patterns. It has an old fashioned and elegant feel and is used in Japanese interior design. Amigurumi Amigurumi is the Japanese craft of knitting or crocheting small stuffed animals and creatures. Designs typically adhere to the kawaii aesthetic. Chochin Chochin are collapsible bamboo lanterns covered in paper or silk that emerged in Japan around the year They are usually adorned with shodo or a painting. Chochin are hung at temples and as decorations for matsuri. They are also traditionally used to mark shops and restaurants such as izakaya. Temari Temari, literally "hand ball", are a Japanese folk craft that were historically created with old silk kimono as a toy for children. The outside of the ball are covered in a detailed embroidery. It was once common for parents to put a small paper at center of a temari with a goodwill wish for a child. Irezumi Japan has a rich tradition of tattooing known as Irezumi that was historically influence by Ukiyo-e art. Tattoos were once used to punish criminals in Japan and are still considered incredibly taboo. Byobu Byobu are Japanese folding screens that were historically used to partition rooms for privacy. They are typically adorned with shodo or landscape paintings. Gyotaku Gyotaku is the Japanese art of fish printing that evolved as a way for fishermen to record their impressive catches. Samurai Masks Samurai Masks, known as Mempo, are a type of battle armor designed to protect the face and strike fear into the heart of an opponent.

They were designed by special craftsmen to reflect the personality and preferences of each Samurai. The country currently produces more than films a year. In most years, Japanese films do slightly better at the box office in Japan than foreign films. Countless Japanese films have received international awards and recognition with several considered amongst the top films of all time. This historically posed a problem, particularly for men who tended to travel light. A solution evolved in the Edo-era whereby men hung decorative containers known as netsuke from the obi of their kimono. These containers, known as netsuke, were typically hand-crafted sculptures that depicted historical scenes, myths, lucky symbols, women and other themes that Edo-era men found interesting. Many are comical with a double or hidden meaning. Contemporary Japanese Art Creative professions are extremely popular amongst young generations of Japanese students. Art programs at colleges and universities are thriving. Creative professions are extremely competitive in Japan but many graduates manage to find a niche and pursue a productive career as an artist.

Chapter 7 : Ikebana - Wikipedia

*Japanese architecture, like other arts, is more preoccupied with form than with surface embellishment. This temple at Kamakura is an example of Japanese architecture from the 13th century.*

Historic Background Although there is much in Japanese culture that is distinctive, it also bears a strong relationship to Chinese culture. However, for many centuries, Japan avoided all contact with the outside world, a policy that isolated Japanese society, which as a result developed in unique ways. In particular, Japan was closed to contact with Europeans from the 17th to the mid 19th century, when the American Admiral Perry forced the Japanese to open trade with the west. Once contact was made, Japanese arts became the sensation of the later 19th century in Europe and the United States, and were very important in the development of both fine arts and decorative arts in Europe and America throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The most distinctly Japanese religious tradition is Shintoism, based on ancient belief systems. Nature, in the most ancient religions, is filled with gods, so that the world is animated by the divine. The sun goddess is chief among these deities, and the emperor is her son. Shintoism continues to be an important feature of Japanese spiritual life. Buddhism reached Japan in the late 6th century AD. Along with the new religion came a period of strong Chinese influence which can be seen in all of the arts. This remained a strong factor during the Nara period through the 8th century, but after the 9th century, Chinese influence became weaker. A peculiarly Japanese strain of Buddhism arose in the 14th century, which came to be known as Zen Buddhism. Zen Buddhists follow the teachings of Amida Buddha, which stress a life of contemplation and study, and in which contemplation of nature plays an important part. The purpose of the contemplative withdrawal from the world, however, is to renew the spirit in order to return to the world and serve. Although a phonetic alphabet was also developed, the pictographic characters remained important, and as in China, the result was that visual symbolism associated with plants, animals, and other objects strongly affected the content and meaning of Japanese art and design. Chinese painting style was influential in the early development of Japanese painting, but particularly after the 14th century, Japanese painting developed in different ways. These differences became pronounced during the 17th and 18th centuries when Japan isolated herself from the outside world. Japanese painting tended to be both more abstract and more naturalistic than Chinese painting, depending on the artist and the subject. Japanese style allowed for greater spontaneity and individuality. Although Japanese landscapes and panoramic scroll painting featured shifting perspective, like Chinese painting, many works focussed on more intimate and limited subjects, permitting more explicit perspective and lighting effects. Individual portraits, scenes of daily life, studies of plants and animals were done, and these images were handled with spontaneity and individualism. In contrast to the more decorative Chinese aesthetics, Japanese style tends toward a paring down to essentials, an attempt to capture the basic form and characteristics of a specific subject. Also a style of painting called Ukiyo-e, which became known to Westerners mainly through woodcut prints in the 19th century, developed very distinctive, dramatic ways of using line and color in landscape, portraiture, and other subjects. Ukiyo-e prints had an important effect on the work of Western artists. The fact that Japan is an island has also contributed to the way in which visual ideas have developed there. With clearly limited space, and the need to manage it well, the Shinto and Buddhist love of nature is harnessed. Since unlimited wilderness is not available, the essence of wilderness is sought. The art of landscaping and gardening has developed to a high level of sophistication, in which carefully designed informal arrangements create the illusion of "natural" settings, in which the essence of nature is captured and tamed. In the same way, individual flowers, trees, or other plants or animals- even insects- are isolated and celebrated by the artist; all this in the context of the ancient symbolism attached to each selected image. This link will take you to an exhibition of the beautiful contemporary work of Itchiku Kubota, a master of shibori who has produced a series of magnificent kimonos inspired by nature. The way in which Japanese artists used natural forms in decorative design and painting was of importance in the development of Art Nouveau style. Architecture is also a blend of Chinese influences and Japanese innovations. The traditional methods of architecture are based on Chinese methods of timber construction. Chinese influence can be most clearly seen

in the great structures that have survived from the Nara period 8th century. Japanese architecture, like other arts, is more preoccupied with form than with surface embellishment. This temple at Kamakura is an example of Japanese architecture from the 13th century. Japanese exteriors and interiors stress space and form, with decoration and furnishing limited to essentials. The forms of Japanese architecture and furniture were also a factor in the early development of the Arts and Crafts style in England. Wright was also impressed by the Japanese preoccupation with the landscape, and the design of architecture as an extension the landscape. This became an important feature of his own work. Japanese paintings and prints particularly the woodcuts of Hiroshige, influenced a number of European and American artists in the late 19th century. Other printmakers, such as Sharaku, were known for their portraits of actors and theater characters. The use of neutral backgrounds, unusual perspectives, and simplification of forms were of particular importance to Manet and Whistler. Van Gogh also copied the techniques and textures of Japanese woodcuts. Japanese painting, particularly ink painting, influenced numerous Western watercolor artists such as John Marin. If you are interested in further information about the mutual influences of Japan and the West , try this link. Let us know at caj7 cornell.

### Chapter 8 : BBC Four - The Art of Japanese Life

*Japanese art covers a wide range of art styles and media, including ancient pottery, sculpture, ink painting and calligraphy on silk and paper, ukiyo-e paintings and woodblock prints, ceramics, origami, and more recently mangaâ€”modern Japanese cartooning and comicsâ€”along with a myriad of other types.*

### Chapter 9 : The Art of Japanese Funeral Floral Arrangements | Colossal

*The Japanese take their candy shops very seriously.*