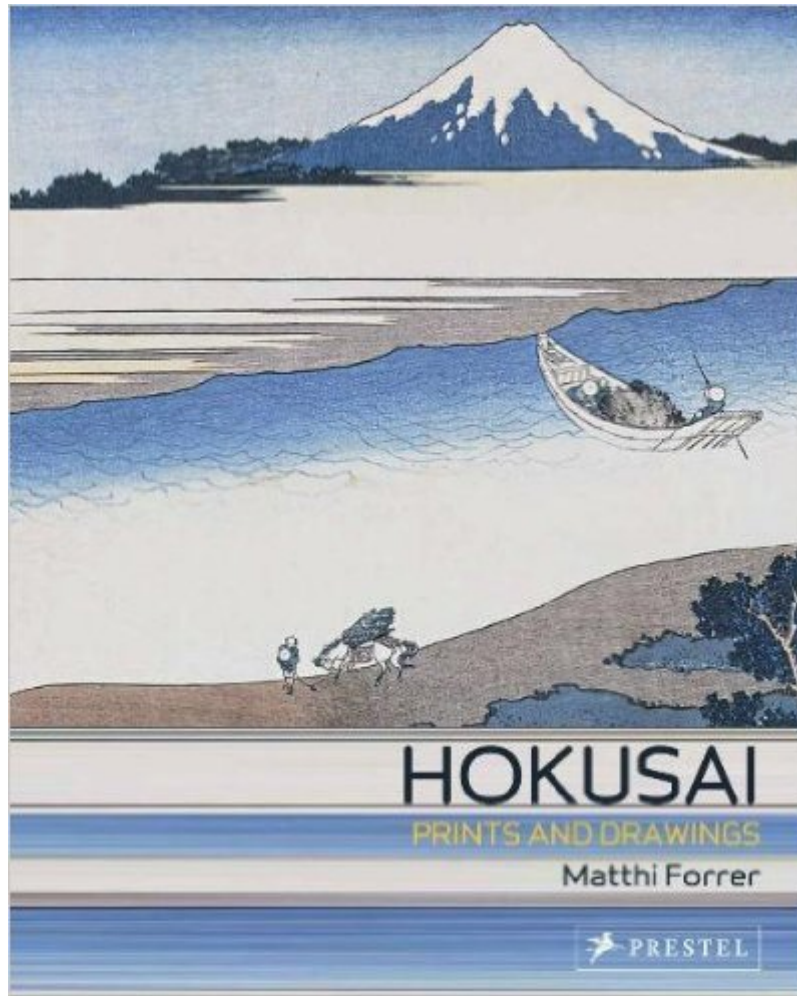


The book was found

Hokusai: Prints And Drawings



Synopsis

This volume includes full-color reproductions of drawings and woodblock prints by Japan's most beloved artist. These landscapes-including his famous views of Mount Fuji- portraits of lovers and kabuki actors, nature and animal illustrations, as well as scenes of daily life in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Japan reveal the artist's genius for rendering a wide variety of subjects. Matthi Forrer discusses in his essay Hokusai's life and lasting popularity while placing his work within the context of Japanese society and the work of his contemporaries.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Forrer starts this book with about 35 pages of historical notes, which sketch Hokusai's career and the social milieu in which he lived, albeit with some maddening omissions. The timeline on page 37 notes a brief period in which he was "reduced to penury" - something the narrative seems to skip over. No matter, this book is really about the artwork: 130+ works, prints with a few drawings, in color or B&W to match the original work. Opaque, bright paper carries the printing well. Colors tend not to be saturated, something that disappointed me until I realized that it's probably true to the natural fading of inks 150-200 years old. In fact, the one real annoyance in the printing (plate 85) could have gotten its over-processed look from a misguided attempt to pull more contrast from a faded print than the print had to give. A few paragraphs describe each image. The more helpful notes identify the site of a scene, or pick out "product placement" of the publisher's name among kanji characters that I could not make sense of unaided. A few times, descriptions of the obvious seemed un-needed. In a number of places, the author added art-historian notes on the different inking of

other known impressions of an image. That could have been helpful in a more scholarly study, but the brevity of this catalog makes such detail seem a bit much. None of that detracts from the art itself. Although the pieces aren't presented chronologically, they cover many parts of Hokusai's career. They include extracts from several series of prints, including the famous "36 Views of Mt. Fuji." No series appears in its entirety (the brevity I mentioned earlier), but I was happy to see selections from groups that I had not heard of before.

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