

Keys to the collection— Faces

Chokosai Eisho

“...if you who want to make colour prints you couldn't dream of anything more beautiful...”

—Mary Cassatt, 1890

Chokosai Eisho was working in the period from 1780 to 1800 as an 'ukiyo-e' painter and print designer.

His teacher was Chôbunsai Eishi (1756–1829), who came from a samurai family. As an eldest son, he was destined to assume responsibility as head of the family, but he preferred to become an artist, renouncing his birthright.

Eisho created numerous 'okubi-e' (close up portraits), 'bijin-ga' (beautiful person pictures) and several 'kibyoshi' (Japanese picture books) works. Both Chokosai Eisho and his teacher Chobunsai Eisha worked at the same time as pre-eminent artist, Kitagawa Utamaro, which was known as the 'golden age of bijin-ga'.



Beautiful courtesan with flower fan—

The image of *Beautiful courtesan with flower fan* shows a woman with a high-ranking courtesan hairstyle that had four sections: forelock, side locks, back hair and topknot which was then tied to make a puff at the back. Hairstyles during the Edo period became more complex and were decorated with kanzashi (hair ornaments), kogai (sticks), and kushi (combs). It is believed the courtesans may have used these objects for defence in an emergency.

What do these words mean:

Ukiyo-e—

Japanese art form which depicts subjects from everyday life. 'Ukiyo-e' translates as 'pictures of the floating world', comprised from three Buddhist terms; 'uki' (float), 'yo' (world), 'e' (picture).

**Geelong
Gallery**

Victorian Curriculum level 2 to 6
geelonggallery.org.au/learn

Chokosai Eisho
*Beautiful courtesan with
flower fan* 1790s
hand coloured woodblock with
mica
Collection: Geelong Gallery

G E E L O N G
E E L O N G
E E L O N G
L O N G
O N G
N G A L L E R Y
G A L L E R Y



Chokosai Eisho

born 1726;
died 1801

Beautiful courtesan with flower fan 1790s
hand coloured woodblock with mica
40.5 x 27.1 cm
Collection: Geelong Gallery
Gift of Sir Thomas Maltby, 1964

Questions

Explain with at least 3 examples where you would find the 'ukiyo-e' style of drawing and painting being used today?

Research

Find out what 'ukiyo-e' means and how the woodcuts were made?

You could create this in a story board.

Activity

Use thick water proof markers and water colours or water coloured pencils to create a manga drawing of a popular character or actor from a drama or comedy in the 'ukiyo-e' style.