



The Tokyo Metropolitan Edo-Tokyo Museum is scheduled to close for major renovations until spring 2026.

Fiscal 2024

# Introducing New Acquisitions

In fiscal 2024, we once again acquired many new museum pieces. Here, we showcase a few of these acquisitions.



Uchikake with Plum Tree Motif on a Hanada Satin Background  
Late Edo Collection ID 24200003

## Blue Wedding Robe

### Uchikake with Plum Tree Motif on a Hanada Satin Background

The *uchikake* is a formal outer robe for women, worn draped over a *kosode* (short-sleeved kimono) tied with an obi sash. It is slightly longer and wider than the *kosode*, with an extended hem. This robe is made from glossy *hanada* (bright indigo) satin, with a design motif of a tree rising from the center-right hem.

The twisted trunk and branches of the plum tree, embroidered in gold, reflect the shape of an aged tree more than eighty years old. The plum blossoms, depicted in colored threads, show both the front and back (*uraume*) of the blossoms and the buds are rendered with realistic shape.

Recent research has shown that *uchikake* with blue backgrounds were often used as wedding attire by wealthy townswomen, and several such garments have been handed down to posterity. The auspicious motif of the plum tree, expressing prayers for longevity, was fitting for celebratory life events, and a bride wearing a *hanada* blue *uchikake* would have shone out brilliantly.

Nishimura Naoko, Curator

## Depicting Daily Life in Yoshiwara

### Yoshiwara Junitoki Gajo (Picture album of Yoshiwara at 12 times of day)

CHOBUNSAI Eishi (1756–1829), who was born into the family of a *hatamoto* (direct retainer of the shogun) and later became an ukiyo-e artist, divided a day in Yoshiwara into the twelve traditional time periods and painted them as twelve hand-rendered illustrations in this album.

From the first scene in the early morning (the *u no koku* period) to the twelfth scene (the *tora no koku* period), the album depicts a series of various scenes: drunken guests being ushered out, a samurai receiving his sword at a *hikite* teahouse that introduces clients to prostitutes, *kamuro* (young female attendants for high-class prostitutes) getting their hair done and the first bonito seller of the season, courtesans before business hours, pounding rice cakes and serving soba noodles eaten at the beginning of the year at a teahouse storefront, courtesans on daytime display behind a grille, men carrying lanterns beneath cherry trees, geisha called to a guest room, geisha enjoying sake and appetizers, passing men striking *hyoshigi* (wooden clappers) on the nighttime



Yoshiwara Junitoki Gajo (Picture album of Yoshiwara at 12 times of day)  
1804–1818 (Bunka era) Collection ID 24200013

streets at *hike-yotsu* (10:00 pm), a courtesan writing a letter to a regular client, and men cleaning a bamboo fence.

Rather than focusing on the public facade, the album highlights the daily lives of people, conveying well the routines of the diverse individuals who supported Yoshiwara.

Tandō Masako, Curator

## Omocha-e Depicting Shifts in Culture

### Shinpan Buppin Sumo Zukushi

#### (New Edition, A Sumo Showdown of Goods)

This item is an *omocha-e* (“toy print”) featuring new cultural items that flowed into Japan due to Meiji era Westernization—depicted using the format of sumo wrestling. Each panel depicts wrestling matches between old and new culture, such as “*chonmage* (traditional topknot haircuts) vs. short-cropped hair,” “*manju* (buns with sweet bean filling) vs. bread,” and “Japanese liquor vs. Western liquor.” The *chonmage* loses to short-cropped hair, *manju* and bread have a close contest, and Japanese liquor defeats Western liquor. By looking at which wins, loses, or draws, we can know how the common people of that time accepted or did not accept the new culture that came from abroad.

The faded print lines in some areas show that the woodblocks were used so much and for so long that they wore down, indicating how this print was in demand for a long time.

This is an intriguing woodblocks print shedding light on the interest in and acceptance of foreign culture among the common people.



Shinpan Buppin Sumo Zukushi  
(New Edition, A Sumo Showdown of Goods)  
Early Meiji Collection ID 24200060

Ishiguma Satomi, Curator



# A Fish Dealer in Kyoto, Then on to Tokyo

Text by Miyamoto Hanae, Curator

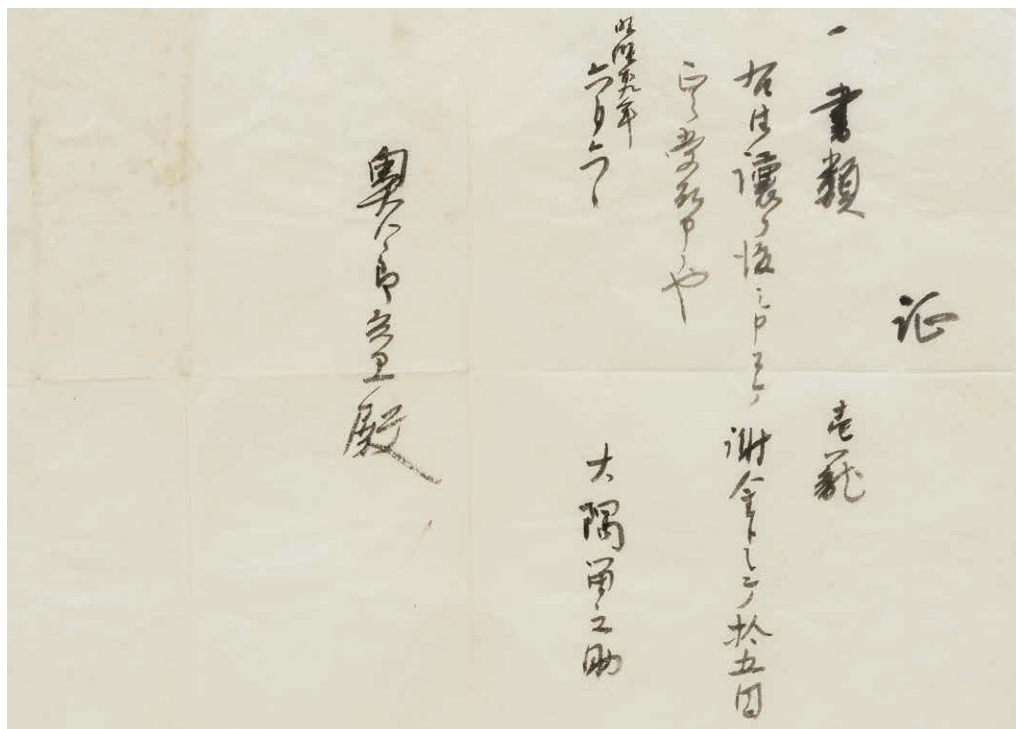


Photo (1): Receipt Collection ID 02004789

The Edo-Tokyo Museum Digital Archives is engaged in various tasks aimed at digitizing all our objects. We have gained many insights while organizing data as part of that process. As one example, I would like to present the OKU Hachirobei family documents, donated in 2002. This collection consists of about 600 items, mainly documents related to the food culture of townspeople and court nobles.

The OKU Hachirobei family (hereafter, the Oku family), known as Kawachiya in Kyoto, supplied fish to the Imperial Court. When Emperor Go-Komyo passed away, their ancestor, OKU Hachibei (died 1669) pleaded that the emperor be buried according to his wishes, respecting his devotion to Confucianism during his life. This created an opportunity for the abolition of imperial cremation. Due to

this loyalty, the family was elevated to samurai status after the Meiji Restoration, and Hachibei was posthumously awarded the Senior Fifth Rank.

According to the book *Kumoi no Kari* by Katsumi SASAYAMA (1908), the business of supplying fish to the Imperial Palace, called *gyosei-kata*, was entrusted to “Kawahachi” (Kawachiya, OKU Hachirobei) when the capital was moved to Tokyo in the Meiji period. For this reason, the documents include records that the Oku family acquired knowledge of and wrote down in the course of their official duties. These are materials that convey trends in the Imperial Court in the early Meiji period.

The Oku family also managed Hoshigaoka Saryo, a teahouse/restaurant on the former grounds of Hie Shrine in Nagatacho. In addition to tea ceremony, traditional meals were served here, and it became a social gathering place for the upper class.

Perhaps because of this, the family purchased a set of what appear to be old records on traditional cooking methods in 1896 (Meiji 29) for 15 yen (about 300,000 yen today) (Photo (1)).

The original owner of these old records was the Osumi family, who served as lower court officials responsible for preparing the Emperor’s morning and evening meals, as well as sake and appetizers for seasonal court banquets. For example, one of the records is *Shogatsu Sansechie Gozen Kyoshin no Shidai* (Photos (2) and (3)), which details the meal service for New Year’s court banquets.

According to the postscript of the records, they were written in 1685 (Jokyo 2), and based on the original material, a newly transcribed scroll was prepared for inspection by the emperor and stored in the government archives. These records are also valuable for understanding court customs and precedents.

Due to their occupation, the Oku family recorded and collected documents related to food. We hope to deepen understanding for further use of these materials.



Photo (2)(3): *Shogatsu Sansechie Gozen Kyoshin no Shidai* Collection ID 02004605

## Hyper Edohaku : Taisho Romantic Asakusa Edition Released!

The fourth installment of the popular smartphone app Hyper Edohaku—Taisho Romantic Asakusa Edition—was released on May 22. The setting is Asakusa during the Taisho period. Using the Asakusa Twelve-Story Tower as a landmark, the city has been recreated based on period photographs, maps, and architectural drawings, depicting the streets where people gather for various purposes—motion pictures, Asakusa opera, dining out, shopping, and more.

The player becomes a female detective apprentice who has lost her memory. She is running around the town of Asakusa in search of clues for a case she has been hired to solve, and of her own memories. The screen has been changed from the previous vertical orientation to horizontal, allowing for a more immersive experience. We hope you will download the app and experience the romance of Taisho-era Asakusa.

(Kutsusawa Hiroyuki, Curator)



Download the app here.