

R103, Japanese Printmaking

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Eras and Print Movements and Periods

Era	Emperor	Dates
Edo 江戸 or Tokugawa 徳川	De facto military dictatorship Tokugawa family	1603-1868
Meiji 明治	Meiji	1868-1912
Taishō 大正	Taishō	1912-1926
Shōwa 昭和	Shōwa	1926-1989
Heisei 平成	Akihito	1989 - present

Note: Emperors are posthumously renamed, with the name of their respective Era. Emperor Hirohito was renamed “Emperor Shōwa. On his death, current Emperor Akihito will be renamed Emperor Heisei.

Each era starts with the exact date an Emperor ascends the throne, and ends 1 day after that Emperor dies and the next rule succeeds to the throne. The above is a partial list: eras start with the year 498 (Western calendar).

Unfortunately, there is only a rough correspondence between eras and print movements and periods. But having some idea of the eras is useful. Dealers often refer to them when identifying prints. For example, many HASUI Kawase prints are being republished. The originals are shin-hanga (see below). The republished prints are often referred to as “Heisei printing” or similar terminology.

Print movements and periods are defined in part by time period, but also by the method of production, and to some extent by subject-matter. There are only a few important terms.

Movement/Period	Era	Dates
Ukiyo-é	Edo and Meiji	17th - 19th C.
Shin-hanga (“new prints” or “new made prints”)	Taishō, Shōwa, and into pre-WWII period	approx. 1912 to approx. 1939
Sōsaku-hanga (“creative prints”)	Shōwa	early 20th C.
modern	Shōwa	approx. 2nd half of the 20th C.
contemporary	Heisei	approx. last decade of 1900’s to present

The following information is **very general!** Remember that individual artists, starting with the shin-hanga movement, may fall into more than 1 movement or period.

UKIYO-É Edo and Meiji Eras (17th-19th C), woodblocks

1. Prints were produced collaboratively. The designer/artist worked with a carver/engraver, a printer, and a publisher (who was usually also a bookseller) to produce and market each design.
2. Each participant's "signature" or stamp is part of the resulting print.
3. Ukiyo-é are not numbered. Prints could be made until the blocks wore out.
4. Ukiyo-é subjects are usually "the floating world" of entertainers and courtesans, romantic vistas, and historical events.
5. Ukiyo-é were for popular consumption and were not considered "art." Ukiyo-é were published to sell and make money, period.

SHIN-HANGA "new made prints" (early 20th C. until 1939), woodblocks

1. A ground-breaking movement in printmaking. Artists began to break free of the old system and work became more individualistic. Western influence is apparent in shin-hanga prints, which are less stylized than ukiyo-é and more realistic. Artists experiment with light and shade and depth. Shin-hanga prints are similar to ukiyo-é in subject matter and collaborative printmaking continued as the main method of production.
2. The shin-hanga and sōsaku-hanga (see below) movements overlapped in time. There was a great deal of tension between advocates of each approach, especially as to which was the most creative.
3. With the coming of WWII, overseas markets for prints dried up. Also, in 1939 the military government of Japan exerted greater control over artists and began rationing art supplies, making it almost impossible to do independent work. Shin-hanga did not survive the War.

SŌSAKU-HANGA "creative prints" (early 20th C., starting about 1910, continuing into 2nd half of 20th C.), mainly woodblocks

1. Another ground-breaking movement in Japanese printmaking. The collaborative printmaking traditional was largely abandoned. Artists drew their own designs, carved their own blocks, and pulled their own prints. As artists were in control, they were free to express themselves through their prints. They were also free to use, and did use, a variety of printmaking techniques, though woodblocks remained predominate.
2. Sōsaku-hanga production after WWII was supported and encouraged by sales to US Occupation forces. Prints were sent back to the US, opening up more markets.
3. In Japan, there was a recognition that prints could be fine art, not just a commercial venture.

MODERN and CONTEMPORARY

1. "Modern" does not refer to any definite time, style, or technique. It is very vague. But if someone refers to a print as "modern", they usually mean it was produced between approximately 1950/1960 and approximately 1980/1990.
2. "Contemporary" is also vague, but definitely includes any prints being produced today. Prints made as long ago as 1980 might also be called "contemporary."

3. There is no limit on subject matter or techniques for either modern or contemporary prints.

NEW HANGA and KINDAI-HANGA

I have heard the term “new hanga” used to mean contemporary prints by Western artists, produced using collaborate ukiyo-é methods and having subject matter consistent with traditional ukiyo-é subject matter. There are several Australian artists who do this. However, as far as I can tell, “new hanga” is not catching on as standard terminology.

Another term I have heard is “kindai-hanga.” I am not sure what it means. It seems to refer to either “new hanga” or simply to contemporary prints. However, it is not in general use.

Definitions

Original Print

1. **artwork conceived to be a print, and the artist personally creates the image.**
2. **each print is hand-pulled**, that is, printed directly by the artist or by an assistant directly supervised by him.
3. **each print is numbered and signed, by hand, by the artist**
4. when an edition is complete, the plate/block/printing medium is destroyed or damaged in such a way that no more copies can be made.

Reproduction:

A mass-produced copy of a piece of artwork, made using equipment that allows unlimited, identical copies to be made. Simply signing and numbering a reproduction does not turn it into an original print.

Restrike/Reprint/Later Edition

Restrike: print pulled from original blocks, but after the original edition is complete.

Reprint: print pulled from new blocks, but identical in appearance to original edition.

Later edition: A very confusing term, but usually the same as a reprint, though later editions may have minor differences from the original edition.

Edition:

The maximum number of prints to be made of a given design, not including trial proofs, the bon a tirer print (if any), and artist's proofs.

The artist chooses the size of the edition. Some techniques, such as woodblock, can only be printed in relatively small editions, because the blocks wear out and the lines and edges become fuzzy. Others, such as lithographs, can be printed in much larger number without any noticeable deterioration in the image.

Normally, the edition number is written in the bottom margin of the print, in pencil. Usually it appears as X/Y, occasionally as X--Y. Y is the number of prints in the edition. X is the number of that particular print. X does not necessarily indicate the order in which the prints were made; X is more likely the order in which the artist signed the prints.

An edition can be as small as one print. There is no maximum, though with hand-pulled prints, 100 is a large edition.

Just because an artist decides on an edition of, for example, 25 copies, they may not print that many. Some artists print an entire edition at once; others print a copy only when they have a sale.

An unlimited edition is just that--the artist has not set a limit on the number of copies. You cannot know how many there are. There is no edition number on such a print, though it may be signed.

Bon a tirer

From the French, "good to pull." It is the final, perfect state of the print: the model for every print in the edition. Every print in the edition should be compared to it. Marked B.T. in pencil. I have never seen one for sale, and feel sure not every artist makes an official B.T.

Artist's proof

“Artist proof” used to mean a trial print. Now it means a small number of prints set aside for the artist’s personal use. Artist’s proofs are usually no more than 5-10% of the total edition. Artist’s proofs are marked, in pencil, “A.P.” or “E.D.” (French for “Épreuve d’artiste”) in the bottom left margin of the print.

Some galleries refuse to sell artist’s proofs, especially of new works. Some collectors will not buy artist’s proofs. Arguments against buying them are:

(1) they may be inferior (though they should not be);

(2) there is no set number of artist’s proofs, so you don’t know how many copies there are. I have heard that some artists cheat: if a design is popular and they sell out the edition, they simply print more artist’s proofs. Obviously, if they have destroyed the plates, as they should have, this is impossible.

Monotype

A print made by applying ink to a smooth, unworked printing surface and then printing it. There is no way to make another copy that looks same. The edition is therefore limited, of necessity, to one. There are no trial proofs, no B.T., and no A.P.’s. The artist can make more, similar prints, but each print is unique. I have seen monotypes marked, in pencil, “monotype” and “1/1.”

Monoprint

A print limited to an edition of one, not because more cannot be printed, as with monotypes, but because the artist chooses to make only one. Monoprints are numbered, 1/1.

Acid-free/Buffered matting and storage materials

Acid-free: having a neutral or basic pH of 7 or slightly higher. Also look for paper that is lignin-free. Acid-free lignin-free papers will not turn yellow and brittle over time.

Buffered: “Extra” base, usually calcium or magnesium bicarbonate, is added to acid-free paper when it is manufactured. This neutralizes any remaining acids and helps prevent future acid formation.

Always use buffered acid-free mats, paper, tissue paper for displaying or storing your prints.

Arches (paper)

100% cotton paper made in France, for printmaking.

Chine collé

A method to fix thin pieces of colored paper to a print at the concurrently with printing the image. The added colored paper becomes part of the printed surface.

Embossing/Embossed

Raised area in a print. It can inked or not inked.

Foxing

Small brown marks. There are various theories as to the cause, including mold and age-related deterioration of the paper. For all practical purposes, foxing cannot be removed.

Hand-colored

Color applied, by hand, to a print after printing. Like hand-coloring a photograph.

Laid paper

Western paper with a visible (but often very subtle) mesh or line pattern.

Leaf

Ultra-thin sheets of metal, applied during or after printing. Gold, silver and platinum are the commonest.

Matburn (mat stain)

Discolored mark left on the print by acidic matting materials. A paper restorer may be able to improve the appearance.

Mixed media

Artwork created using a mixture of techniques or materials.

Plate

The surface prepared with an image, that is inked and used to transfer that image to a sheet of paper. Virtually any material can be used: paper, wood, metal, stone, or plastic.

Plate mark

Depressed mark left by the edge of intaglio printing plates. It may slight or very deep, but it will be there if an intaglio printing method was used.

Registration

Printing each color so it appears in the correct location relative to all the other colors in an image.

Toning

Overall yellowing of the paper. There are multiple causes, but the major ones are exposure to light and/or use of acidic matting materials. A paper restorer may be able to reduce or remove it.

Trimmed

One or more edges of the print have been cut off. Usually an issue only with ukiyo-é.

Washi

Japanese term for Japanese handmade papers. This is a general term. It refers only to Japanese-made handmade papers. There are hundreds of types, each with its own name. Generally, they are all stronger than commercial papers.

Printmaking Techniques This list is not exhaustive. All explanations are simplified.

A. RELIEF

The artist creates raised surfaces on a plate. The raised surfaces are inked, the paper placed on the block, and pressure applied to transfer the ink to the paper. The resulting print is a mirror image of the image on the plate.

The artist can create raised surfaces by either building them up (e.g. paper block, or by glueing materials onto a plate) or by cutting away material from the plate.

Any material that can be built-up or carved into to produce a flat, raised surface for inking and printing can be used. Erasers, cardboard, potatoes, leather, bars of soap-- anything. But the most common materials are wood and linoleum.

The commonest relief prints are woodcuts, also called woodblocks, wood engravings, linocuts, and collagraphs.

Except for wood engravings, relief prints are usually printed by hand, not with a press.

Woodcuts (woodblocks): The artist carves into a piece of wood, usually the soft side grain, and removes the areas he does not want to print. Any kind of wood can be used, even plywood. The artist can use any kind of tools he wishes to remove wood. Prints can usually be made without a press. The print will show the wood grain.

Wood engravings: The artist cuts into a block of wood. However, the block is a hardwood, often boxwood, cut crosswise, across the grain. Chisels and a tool called a burin are used to cut into the wood. Extremely fine lines and complicated patterns are possible. Wood engraving blocks are usually small. Printing normally requires a press, to get enough pressure.

A finished wood engraving looks a lot like an intaglio, a metal engraving. However, they are not printed the same way. With a wood engraving, the flat (and uncut) raised surface is inked and printed; the lines cut into the block do not print. With a metal engraving it is the opposite: ink is pressed into the incised lines and the flat raised surface is wiped clean. The incised lines print; the flat raised surface does not.

Linocut: Linoleum is carved out using the same techniques as woodcuts. However, linoleum is soft and pliable and has no grain. Carving it is much easier than wood, so designs can be freer, with curves and flowing shapes.

Collagraphs: To make a collagraph, the artist glues various low-relief materials-- leaves, string, heavy paper, sand, paperclips, etc.-- to a printing plate. A protective layer or varnish or gesso is applied on top. Then the plate is inked and printed. Printing can be by hand or using a press, depending on the materials, strength of the paper, and other factors. Collagraphy is normally used in conjunction with other techniques. It is also usually limited to small editions, as the materials, depending on what the artist chooses, tend to flatten out. If the added material are too high-relief, they can leave holes in the final prints.

B. INTAGLIO

From the Italian for “carve” or “cut into”, intaglio involves cutting into the surface of the printing plate. But unlike relief prints, the cut portions are printed. Ink is forced into the cuts in the plate and the raised portions are wiped clean. When the plate is run through a press, the paper is pressed down so it picks up the ink in the cuts. The resulting printing may be slightly raised above the surface of the paper (e.g. an engraved wedding invitation).

All intaglios are printed using a press. The edges of the plate leave a slight, narrow depression in the paper called a plate mark.

Almost any combination of intaglio methods is possible. It is even possible to use more than one color ink on the same plate. The physical size of the prints is limited by the size of the press. All prints are mirror images of the plate.

Engraving: A polished metal plate is cut with a steel burin. Cuts are very sharp, without any rough edges. Tones are created by engraving dense lines or by cross-hatching.

Drypoint: A polished metal plate is scratched with sharp needle or knife. This pushes up a little ridge of metal, called burrs, on either side of the scratches. The burrs hold ink, and the resulting prints are softer looking than metal engravings. The size of an edition is limited because the burrs wear down.

Mezzotint: A metal plate is worked all over with a rocker, a curved, serrated tool which leaves little burrs all over the surface. When printed, result is a soft, dense color, almost like velvet. To get lighter areas, the artist removes the burrs and smooths the surface of the plate. Extremely subtle gradations of color are possible. Any area that is burnished completely smooth will not print. Mezzotints are traditionally black and white, but many contemporary artists use color, with or without black.

Etching: Lines are etched in a metal plate, usually zinc or copper, using an acid bath. The plate is first coated with a hard, protective ground. Then the artist, using whatever tools he wishes, scratches through the ground. Drawing is freer than drypoint or engraving, as it is easier to draw through the ground than to cut or scratch into the metal itself. The plate is immersed in an acid bath, which eats into any exposed metal. How long the plate is immersed controls how deeply the lines are etched. The process can be repeated as desired.

Aquatint: Normally combined with etching, to create an effect of blurring and gradation, as in watercolors.

After a plate is etched, the artist dusts powdered resin onto the plate. The plate is heated and the resin melts and bonds to the plate. Each little dot of melted resin protects the plate when it is immersed again in an acid bath. The more densely an area is covered with resin, the more protected it will be and the less it will be etched in the acid. The process can be repeated to get the desired effects.

Soft-ground etching: The plate is covered with a soft protective ground. The artist lays a sheet of paper or cloth over the plate, and draws on it. He then lifts the paper or cloth off the plate. The ground, which sticks to the paper or cloth where he has drawn, comes off

too. The plate is immersed in an acid bath and the unprotected areas are etched. Lines of varying widths and darkness are easy to achieve. Objects can be pressed into the ground and pulled away, leaving their image behind. Textural effects are possible.

Photo-etching (photo-engraving or photogravure): A photochemical process whereby the artist can apply a photographic image to a plate that has been coated with a photosensitive emulsion. The plate is exposed to light and the emulsion hardens. Then the plate is immersed in an acid bath for etching. Photo-etching allows for extreme detail and subtle gradations.

Lift-ground etching (sugar lift or sugar aquatint): The artist brushes the plate with a mixture of sugar and gum arabic. When it dries, the artist covers the entire plate with ground. When the ground dries, the artist dips the plate in water. The sugar/gum mixture dissolves, and the ground above it lifts off the plate, leaving parts of the plate exposed. The plate is then immersed in an acid bath for etching.

Litho-etching: A new technique combining etching and lithography. “First, a zinc plate is coated with an acid-resistant ground into which a design is cut. The plate is immersed in acid, which eats away the metal exposed by the excisions. Then a chemical reaction of a mixture poured over the plate makes the depressed areas become lipophilic, attracting oil, and the rest hydrophilic, attracting water. The oil-based ink, applied repeatedly with a roller, sticks only to the lipophilic sections. To print the image, the plate and the dampened paper are run through an etching press.” (CWAJ Print Show: Introduction to Printmaking, catalog insert 2011”

Polymer-Intaglio or Photopolymer Intaglio (also called “sun plates” or “solar plates”):
No acid required!

The artist uses a thin steel plate, already coated with a photo-sensitive emulsion. The artist lays a transparency over the film, or draws on the film using any medium that blocks light, or lays light-blocking materials/objects on the film. The plate is exposed to the sun or special UV lights. Areas that are not protected react to the light and harden, leaving a smooth, raised surface. Everything else--the protected areas--wash away with water, leaving an etched areas.

The plate can be printed either as an intaglio or as a relief print.

See <http://www.nontoxicprint.com/solarplate.htm> for more detail.

C. PLANOGRAPHIC

The printing surface is totally flat--areas that print and areas that do not print are on the same plane. All prints are mirror images of the plate.

Lithography:

Oldest planographic technique. Literally “stone print”, from the Greek. Formerly required a particular type of limestone. The quarries are now essentially worked out. But newer techniques allow other materials--artificial limestone, aluminum and zinc--to be used.

The basic process: The entire surface of the plate is evenly and finely roughened. The artist creates his artwork directly on it, using oily lithographic tusche (ink), pencils, and crayons. A solution of gum arabic and nitric acid is applied to the plate to etch it. Then the plate is cleaned with a solvent, dissolving the tusche, pencil, and crayon. The design seems to vanish, but it is still on the plate in the form of invisible oily marks. When the plate is inked, the ink, which is also oily, sticks only to the invisible oily marks. The plate is kept wet during inking. Cleanliness is important--fingerprints and other stray greasy marks show up only after the plate is etched and inked!

Each color requires a separate plate, and a special press is required if using a stone. Extremely large editions can be printed by lithography.

It can be difficult to tell the difference between a drawing or watercolor and a lithograph: lithographs have no plate marks and they can be as detailed and nuanced as drawings and watercolors.

Waterless lithography:

Technique developed around 1990. Artist draws or paints with any water-based medium on an a specially-treated aluminum plate (often a recycled offset printing plate). The image is dried with heat. Then the plate is coated with a water-repellent silicon bond, which adheres to the plate, but not the image. After drying overnight, the artist cleans the image areas. After cleaning, the plate is inked. The ink adheres only to the image. No printing press is required, though a regular etching press can be used.

Woodblock lithography:

Another relatively new technique, invented in 1977. Plywood is used instead of metal or stone. This allows to use all the traditional planographic techniques, AND to carve the wooden plate. Plywood is first coated with water-repellant ground. The artist draws or paints on that with oily pencils, crayons, or tusche. Carving into or removing the ground will expose the wood grain. A fixative is applied and dried. Then the plate is inked and printed.

Multiple colors can also be used if the artist applies both water-based and oil-based inks. The water-based ink will adhere to the carved surfaces and the oil-based ink to the planographic image.

It is sometimes possible to print the plate without a press, using hand and body pressure.

Offset lithography:

This technique employs both lithographic and offset printing methods. The inked image on a plate is directly transferred onto paper by a cylinder-shaped rubber roller. Non-printed areas are kept wet in order to keep them ink-free. The plate is usually made photo-chemically.

D. STENCIL

Stencil printmaking is essentially printing through holes. Fabric, paper, plastic, are cut or perforated to make holes, or conversely, existing holes are blocked. The result is to allow ink to pass only through selected areas.

Stencil prints are not reversed! This is the only printmaking technique that does not produce a mirror image.

Traditional Japanese Stencil (kappa-ban, or “paper screen”):

A sheet of metal or water-resistant material, such as treated paper, is cut out to make a design. The stencil is placed directly on the paper, and the ink applied directly to the cut-out areas.

Silk Screen/Serigraph (referred to in Japan as “screen print”):

The most common method. Silk mesh or other fabric, such as nylon, or even metal screening, are stretched taut over a frame. Then a stencil is created. The three main methods to create a stencil are:

- (1) cut a stencil out of paper and bond it to the screen. If it is a small edition, it may be enough to use the printing ink itself to “glue” the paper to the screen;
- (2) apply varnish, or other screen filler to the screen with a brush; or
- (3) apply a photosensitive emulsion to the screen.

No matter how areas are blocked out, the printing method is the same. A squeegee is pulled across the screen, forcing ink through the mesh in the fabric and through the holes in the stencil.

Hard-edge designs are especially suitable for serigraphy. Large, flat areas of color are also easy to produce.

As with a lithograph, there is no plate mark. But lithographs and serigraphs are usually easy to tell apart: the ink in a serigraph is usually thick enough to be visibly raised or felt with the finger tips. Also, in serigraphs, the texture of the screen may show, especially in large, flat areas.

Very large editions can be printed, depending which blocking method the artist chooses. Photosensitive emulsions last the longer than varnish, which lasts longer than paper.

Web Resources This list is NOT exhaustive, not by any means!!!

A = auctions; G = sales galleries (both “brick and mortar” and on-line-only);
I = substantial information; P = artists’ personal website; O = other (competitions,
organizations, museums, etc.)

13th Mini print international of Cadaques	http://www.miniprint.org/in/in.html	O
Abe Publishing	http://www.hanganet.jp/art_c/index.html	G/I
Annex Galleries	http://www.annexgalleries.com/	G
Art of the Print	http://www.artoftheprint.com	G/I
Artelino	http://www.artelino.com/	A/I
Augen Gallery	http://www.augengallery.com/	G
Azuma Gallery	http://www.azumagallery.com/	G
Brandt Collection	http://www.trocadero.com/Hanga	G
Cameron Campbell	http://cameronjcampbell.name/Home.html	O/I
Carolyn Staley	http://www.carolynstaleyprints.com/	G
Castle Fine Arts	http://www.castlefinearts.com/	G
Davidson Galleries	http://www.davidsongalleries.com/home.php	G
ebay	http://www.ebay.com/	A
Ebo Gallery	http://ebogallery.com/	G
etsy	http://www.etsy.com/	O
Floating World Gallery	http://www.floatingworld.com/	G/A
Galleria Grafica Tokio	http://www.galleriagrafica.com/en/about/index.html	G
Gallery A.C.S	http://www.geocities.jp/acs235/	G
Gunnar Nordstrom	http://www.gunnarnordstrom.com	G
Hanga Ten	http://www.hangateng.com/	G/I
Hendricks Art Collection	http://www.hendricksartcollection.com/	G
INOUE Shigeko	http://www2.big.or.jp/~adel/inoue/E/inoue-1E.html	P
ISHIGURO Takamune	http://ishiguro.myexpose.com/	P
Japan Prints	http://www.japanprints.com/	G/I
Japanese Art Society of America	http://www.japaneseartsoc.org/	O
Jeanne Davidson Fine Arts	http://www.jdavidsonfineprints.com/	G
Joan B. Mirviss	http://www.mirviss.com/	G
John Fiorillo	http://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/index.html	I
Kazari Gallery	http://www.kazarigallery.com/ukiyo-e-and-prints	G
KELLY, Daniel	http://www.danielkellystudio.com/	P
KUBO Takuji	http://takujikubo.com/	P
Kyoto International Woodprint Association	http://www.kiwa.net/	O
Lavenberg Collection	http://www.myjapanesehanga.com/home	I
Lessedra Gallery	http://www.lessedra.com/	G
Library of Congress	http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/cwaj/	O

MIYAZAKI Fumiko	http://www.fumikomiyazaki.com/	P
MOILANEN, Tuula	http://www.tuulamoilanen.net/	P
O Gallery	http://www4.big.or.jp/~ogallery/	G
OHYA Masaaki	http://www.ohyamasasaki.com/	P
Printsaurus	http://theprintsaurus.com	O
Rakuten main pg	http://www.rakuten.co.jp/	O
Ren Brown Gallery	http://www.renbrown.com/	G
ROME, Joshua	http://joshuaromestudio.com/index.html	P
Ronin Gallery	http://www.japancollection.com	G
Ronin Gallery	http://www.roningallery.com/	G
Saru Gallery	http://www.sarugallery.com/	G
Scholten Japanese Art	http://www.scholten-japanese-art.com/	G
Scott Gallery	http://www.scottgallery.com	G
Scriptum	http://scriptum.com/	G
Shirota Gallery	http://gaden.jp/shirota.html	G
Shogun Gallery	http://www.shogungallery.com/	G
Shonandai MY Gallery	http://www.shonandai-g.com/art/artists_e.html	G
Society for Japanese Arts	http://www.society-for-japanese-arts.org/	O
sosoku hanga (Saru)	http://www.sosakuhanga.net	G/I
STEWART, Joel	http://joelstewartart.com/joelstewart/Main.html	P
Taiwan Museum	http://www1.ntmofa.gov.tw/print13/award_list02_en.html	O
TATSUNO Toeko	http://www.tatsunotoeko.com/	P
Tokyo Art Beat (TAB)	http://www.tokyoartbeat.com/	O
Tokyo screen print biennale	http://www.nbc-jp.com/biennale/images/Biennale_2nd.pdf	O
Tolman Collection	http://www.tolmantokyo.com/	G
Verne Gallery	http://www.vernegallery.com/	G/I
viewing Japanese prints	http://www.viewingjapaneseprints.net/	I
White Lotus Gallery	http://www.wlotus.com/	G
Wikipedia	http://www.wikipedia.org	I
Yoseido Gallery	http://www.yoseido.com/	G
youtube	http://www.youtube.com/	I

Ebay sellers who specialize in or always offer modern or contemporary Japanese prints (use “advanced” search and enter seller name):

<u>Seller</u>	
belsipe	store: Ukiyoe Gallery Woodblock Prints
fridaysman	-----
gyudon	store: guydon
hangadealer	store: JAPANESE PRINTS (see also website Brandt Collection)
jemason	store: Japanese Woodblock Prints
doggles	store: doggles

Strategies to find interesting prints on the web

1. If you know the title or the artist's name, try your favorite search engine.
 - a. enter the title, in quotes
 - b. enter the artists name, without quotes
 - c. enter the artist's name, in quotes, using both possible name orders
 - d. if using Google, use regular Search and Images. From an image, you can go to the website. Also, you can spot artwork in Images that you would miss in a regular search.

2. For trawling:
 - a. search for "japanese print" and whatever printmaking technique you like.
 - b. go to the Tokyo Art Beat website (<http://www.tokyoartbeat.com>). Go to "events" and "venues". If you see anything of interest, you can go directly from TAB to the relevant website. TAB gives you access to galleries, museums, and shows in and near Tokyo. There may be similar websites for other cities. If you find any, let me know!
 - c. search for "print prizes", "print exhibit", "print competition", "print show", or "print gallery", along with "Japanese", "Japan", or the name of any big city in Japan. Keep it general, so you get lots of websites and images.
 - d. When you find a gallery, exhibit, or competition website, check it for lists of artists. Photographs of each artist's work are almost always attached. Save artists' names and images to your computer so you can pursue them later.
 - e. Always remember, no matter what your search terms are, look not only at the regular search results, but also look in Images.

3. Search in both English and Japanese. Cut and paste names, in Japanese, from websites. It doesn't matter that you can't read it--you can still search for it. If you have the name, in Japanese, but it's in a book or other form such that you can't transfer it to the computer, you can enter the kanji yourself, IF you know how the name is pronounced. It is a bit laborious, but can be done.

4. Some Japanese websites offer language options. Usually it is obvious: a clickable block that says "English 日本語". Sometimes little flags are used. Look for an American or British flag. If the site is Japanese-only, try Google Translate or another on-line translator.

5. If on a Japanese-only website, click everything clickable. You can do no harm, and you might find something interesting.

6. If you are interested specifically in woodblocks, check out the Kyoto International Woodprint Association website (<http://www.kiwa.net/>). This is also a good place to ask questions about woodblock artists. The head of the Association is from Oregon, so English is welcome.

7. If you find a print you like, but cannot identify the artist, or you know the artist but not the title, copy the image to your computer and send it to a gallery you feel comfortable with. Ask them for more information.

8. If you find a gallery or website that you want to return to, bookmark it! I also print out the home page, with headers and footers. That way I have a record of the web address, and a snapshot of words I can search for if I lose track of the site. Many Japanese web addresses have nothing at all to do with the name of the gallery, or they use a lot of Kanji (Chinese characters). Don't assume you can find something again.

Useful words in Japanese

printmaker	版画家
print (hanga)	版画 or プリント
painting (kaiga)	絵画
acrylic	アクリル
aquatint	アクアチント
collagraph	コラグラフ
lithograph	石版 or リトグラフ
mezzotint	メゾチント or 銅版画の一技法
oil painting	油絵画法
pastel	パステルカラー
silk screen (serigraph)	シルクスクリーン
stencil	ステンシル or kappa-ban (paper screen), kappa zuri, or 合羽版
waterless lithograph	ウォーターレス・リトグラフ
wood engraving	木彫,木版術 or 木版,版木 or 木版画 ...
woodblock	木版,版木 or 木版画 or 木れんが
home page	メイン (main); ホーム (home); トープ (top)
art	アート
artists	作家紹介
catalog	カタログ
date	written year, month, day. e.g.: "June 5, 2012 to June 26, 2012" is "2012年6月5日～6月29日"
email	メル or イメル
gallery	ギャラリー
list	リスト

venue スペース (spaces)

yen 円

Tokyo 東京

Kyoto 京都市

Osaka 大阪

Japanese (language) 日本語

English/American (language) 英語

German (language) ドイツ語

French (language) フランス語

Japanese names:

Family name comes first, then “first” name. On Japanese websites, artist’s names are always alphabetized using the family name. But not necessarily on non-Japanese websites. For Japanese websites, use the order given below under “Japanese alphabetizing”.

If the list is on an American or European website, you may have to figure out what name order they are using. Sometimes they (and Japanese galleries too) will capitalize the entire family name. But if they don’t, you may have to figure out what name order they are using. First, look for the name “Tanaka” or 田中. As far as I know, this is always a family name. If there are no Tanakas on the list, look for names that end in “gawa” or “kawa” or 川. These are almost always family names. Or look for names that end in “ko” or 子. These are almost always first names (and almost always women’s names).

Japanese “alphabetizing”

Japanese gallery websites usually list the artists they carry. However, many lists are in Japanese “alphabetical order.” There is a good example at the O Gallery website:

<http://www4.big.or.jp/%7Eogallery/>

The Japanese hiragana are used, in order, just as we use our alphabet. However, names in Japanese are not written using hiragana. This means, unfortunately, that you must look instead for the beginning sound of the name. For example, an artist named FUDEZUKA would be found under は, includes the sound “fu”.

Here is a key for using this type of “alphabetical” list:

<u>Order</u>	<u>Hiragana</u>	<u>Sound</u>
1.	あ	a, i, u, e, o (sounds like: ah, ee, oo, eh, oh)
2.	か	ka, ki, ku, ke, ko ga, gi, gu, ge, go

3.	さ	sa, shi, su, se, so za, ji, zu, ze, zo
4.	た	ta, chi, tsu, te, to da, ji, zu, de, do
5.	な	na, ni, nu, ne, no
6.	は	ha, hi, fu, he, ho ba, bi, bu, be, bo pa, pi, pu, pe, po
7.	ま	ma, mi, mu, me, mo
8.	や	ya, yu, yo
9.	ら	ra, ri, ru, re, ro la, li, lu, le, lo
10.	わ	wa

Japanese addresses

In Japan, the address is written in order from largest unit to smallest. The addressee's name comes last. When writing in Roman letters, reverse the order. Here is the format recommended by the Japanese post office:

Mr. Tanaka Shin-ichi
Tokyo Central Post Office
1-5-3 Yaesu, Chuo-ku
Tokyo 100-8994

Tokyo is the prefecture; Chuo-ku is one of the special wards; 1- refers to the city district and 5- is the city block and 3 the building number.

Use all block letters, preferably all capitals

If possible, especially if your letter/package is going outside Tokyo, address it in Japanese. Cut-and-paste the address from the website or from an email. Here is the above address, Japanese style:

〒100-8994
東京都中央区八重洲1-5-3
東京中央郵便局
田中伸一

If the address is in Japanese, add “JAPAN” under the last line. This is so the USPS knows where to send your letter!

Finally, If you know the addressee's phone number, you can put it discreetly in the bottom left-hand corner of the envelope. It should look like this: Tel: 03-1234-5678

Sending money overseas

1. Personal check on US bank. The least expensive option, but usually impossible. It takes forever for recipient to get their money, so most galleries will not accept a personal check.
2. International Postal Money Order. Buy at your post office. Maximum amount you can send overseas in 1 money order is \$700. To find out the current fee, go to the USPS website. Money Orders can sometimes be replaced, but when sending them to Japan, I recommend you send them registered mail. Add up the total cost. It may be nearly as much as sending a bank wire. Money orders to Japan can only be denominated in US dollars. Confirm with the gallery how many dollars to send, who to make the money order out to, the correct address, etc.
3. Bank wire. A lot of work, especially the first time you send one, and expensive. Different banks charge different amounts. I have been charged everything from \$45 to \$0, so shop around. In my experience, bank wires are also unpredictable--they can take anywhere from 2 days to 3 weeks for the recipient to get their money. And if there is any error, you may have to pay for correcting it, which adds another fee. Therefore, do not make mistakes! Find out what information your bank requires, ask the would-be payee to provide it, and then double-check and double-check again.

How to make international phone calls

1. Check what time it is where you are calling to. Is it a reasonable time to call? You may have to stay up late or get up early to make a call. For example, Japan is 13 or 14 hours AHEAD of Eastern Time; 13 hours AHEAD when we are on daylight savings time; 14 hours AHEAD the rest of the year.
2. Is the gallery open? Check their website for open days and hours. Don't forget the time difference: it may be Monday here, but if you are calling Japan, it could be Tuesday there.
3. Is it a holiday where you are calling? Use www.timeanddate.com to find out. Again, don't forget the time difference.
4. Use all the proper international dialing codes. If you want to call Yoseido Gallery, for example, here is their entire number:

XXXXXXXX - 011 - 81 - 3 - 3571 - 1312

XXXXXXXX = dial around code, if you use one

011 = code telling operator you are making an international call
81 = country code for Japan
3 = city code for Tokyo
3571-1312 = Yoseido Gallery's phone number

Country codes are in the front of your phone book, along with city codes for major cities. If you don't find the code you need there, look online. Googling "country code" is usually enough, or try "international call" and the name of the city you want.

I usually write out the entire number before I call anyone. And I may send an email before I call, to make sure the person I want to speak with is available.

Hints for email and letters to Japan

Use short sentences. Avoid dependent clauses.
Avoid "fancy" words.
Do not use double negatives.
Do not use contractions.
Be very polite.
Use formal language.

Avoid saying "no." Find another way to get the idea across. Don't say you dislike a print-- say you prefer another one. Say it is different; say it is interesting; say it is too big, or too small, or just don't say anything.

The Japanese do not want to say "no" either. In fact, they may not even answer your question if the answer is "no." In turn, they seem unaware that this is frustrating for Westerners. It is not an issue with galleries in Tokyo and other big cities with lots of foreign tourists. But even then you may not get a straight answer. If the answer seems unduly vague or equivocal, it probably means "no." If you email a gallery and there is no response at all, either no one there can write in English (but it would be impolite to respond in Japanese), or the answer to your question is "no."

If English fails, but you can write in French or German, try those languages. After English, they are the most commonly studied Western languages in Japan.