

# Last chance to see Museum's Japanese prints exhibition!



This week is the last chance to catch spectacular artwork and larger-than-life characters from a 19<sup>th</sup> century Japanese cultural phenomenon. *Kabuki: Japanese Theatre Prints*, which has attracted over 20,000 visitors, shows off the highlights of National Museums Scotland's collection of Japanese woodblock prints.

Striking designs present vivid depictions of Kabuki, the popular form of traditional, all-male, Japanese theatre which combines drama, music, dance and acrobatics in convoluted plots concerning dramatic, emotional conflicts and feats of derring-do.

The woodblock prints were a cheap and colourful medium of entertainment, much like magazines and posters today. Their visual style will be familiar to fans of Manga comics, Japanese cinema and even David Bowie, some of whose 70s costumes and performances were influenced by the Kabuki style. Publishing houses commissioned designs from the very greatest artists of the era, but the prints were affordable to the average person on the street.

In all, National Museums Scotland holds approximately 4,000 Japanese woodblock prints. These were acquired in the 1880s, at the peak of the craze for Japanese art and design in Europe (known as Japonisme). The collection is concentrated on the nineteenth century, the period of greatest expansion of the medium. The exhibition represents the finest examples in the collection and includes many precious and rarely seen examples.

The last day of the exhibition is Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> February.  
Admission is free.

**Exhibition ends Sunday 2 February 2014**

**National Museum of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh**

**Free**

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