



Shogun's Road at Shitaya [detail], from the series 'Comical Views of Famous Places in Edo', Utagawa Hirokage, Kyoto International Manga Museum

PUBLIC TALK

***Giga* Prints and Edo Society**

A window into old Tokyo.

The Japan Foundation, Sydney presents [“*Giga Prints and Edo Society*”](#), a public talk on woodblock prints and the culture of old Japan, on October 16 (Friday), 6:30 – 7:30pm at **The Japan Foundation, Sydney**. The speaker is **Dr Takeshi Moriyama**, an Australian-based specialist in the culture of Edo-period Japan.

Giga (literally, ‘funny pictures’) are comical woodblock prints that flourished in early modern Japan, during a time known as the Edo period (1603-1868). Amusing and cheap, they were widely available forms of entertainment for regular people. *Giga* were to Edo times what internet memes are to us today: shareable media dripping with cultural references, gags and parodies, and made by and for pop-culture savvy consumers who loved nothing more than a good laugh.

This talk offers a window into Edo (old Tokyo) at a time when *giga* prints were being produced and consumed *en masse*. Drawing on maps and a range of prints, it looks at the cultural lives of Edo dwellers and the streetscapes they inhabited, uncovering the social backdrop to the *giga* that boomed at the time.

The talk is part of the event program, [“*Lines on Paper: Demystifying Woodblock Prints and Manga*”](#), which runs in conjunction with the exhibition [*EDO GIGA: Comical Woodblock Prints from Japan \(Part 2\)*](#), on display October 13 – November 2 at The Japan Foundation Gallery. Attendees are encouraged to test their new-found knowledge in the gallery after the talk.

Says **Dr Moriyama**, “There are so many questions we can ask about *giga* in Edo society. Who made, bought, loved or frowned at what, and why? *Giga* prints open up the story of one of the most exciting times in Japan’s past—a time when regular people began surpassing elites in their ability to shape Japan and its culture.”

Says **Nao Endo, Director of The Japan Foundation, Sydney**, “Japan’s woodblock prints are iconic artforms that are loved and recognised across the world. The talks in the ‘Lines on Paper’ series will help local art lovers to boost their knowledge about these prints, and in doing so, enjoy them even more.”

Event Details

Date:	October 16 (Friday), 2015
Time:	6:30pm - 7:30pm (Doors open 6pm)
Venue:	The Japan Foundation, Sydney Level 4, Central Park (Access via lifts) 28 Broadway, Chippendale NSW 2008
Entry:	Admission free. Bookings essential.
RSVP:	Online via www.jpff.org.au
Enquiries:	reception@jpff.org.au / (02) 8239 0055
Website:	www.jpff.org.au



Free CHOYA tastings available on the night

ALSO IN THE *LINES ON PAPER* PROGRAM:



PUBLIC TALK

■ Reading Fashion in Ukiyo-e

Yuzuruha Oyama (Curator, Tokyo National Museum)

October 30 (Friday) @ 6:30 – 7:30pm (Doors open 6pm)



WORKSHOP

■ Tricks of the Trade: Lines & Shading in Manga

Sookyung Yoo (Curator, Kyoto International Manga Museum)

November 2 (Monday) @ 6:30 – 8:00pm (Doors open 6pm)

ABOUT TAKESHI MORIYAMA

Dr Takeshi Moriyama is a senior lecturer in Japanese at Murdoch University, WA. He specialises in the history, culture and literature of early modern Japan, and his research projects look at cultural and social transformation and people's construction of their own lives, with a focus on the interactions between the centre and periphery of society. He has a keen interest in the popular literature, print culture and publishing industry of early modern Japan. Dr Moriyama is Fellow of the Asia Research Centre at Murdoch University in Perth, and is the author of *Crossing Boundaries in Tokugawa Society: Suzuki Bokushi, a Rural Elite Commoner* (2013).

ABOUT GIGA PRINTS

Giga (lit., 'funny pictures') flourished in the latter half of Japan's Edo period (1603-1868), so named because Edo (present-day Tokyo) was the seat of power for the shogunal lineage which ruled during that time. *Giga* are cheeky, satirical woodblock prints which typically feature human and animal caricatures, and contain cultural references that would have been well known at the time. These prints appealed to common people, as they were affordable and often parodied upper-class society. Their often exaggerated composition and occasional use of panels and speech bubbles are echoed in modern manga.

ABOUT THE LINES ON PAPER PROGRAM

'Lines on Paper: Demystifying Woodblock Prints and Manga' is a public event program in conjunction with the exhibition, '*EDO GIGA: Comical Woodblock Prints from Japan (Part 2)*'. The program consists of two talks about woodblock prints and a manga workshop, and is designed to empower gallery audiences by sharing basic tools for understanding and interpreting some of Japan's most iconic artforms to make the viewing experience more engaging and enjoyable.

ABOUT THE EDO GIGA EXHIBITION

'*EDO GIGA: Comical Woodblock Prints from Japan*' is an exhibition of rare, 200-year old woodblock prints from the Kyoto International Manga Museum collection. The exhibition includes pieces by artists Utagawa Kuniyoshi, Utagawa Hirokage and Utagawa Yoshitora. Part 2 of the exhibition is on show at The Japan Foundation Gallery from October 13 to November 2.

ABOUT THE JAPAN FOUNDATION, SYDNEY

The Japan Foundation, Sydney is the Australian arm of the Japan Foundation, which was established by the Japanese government to promote cultural and intellectual exchange between Japan and other nations. It runs a diverse range of programs and events, including exhibitions, talk events, grant programs and Japanese language courses for all levels from beginner to advanced. The Japan Foundation was established in 1972 with a global network of 22 offices in 21 countries. The Australian office was founded in 1978.



For more information please see www.jpff.org.au or contact:

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