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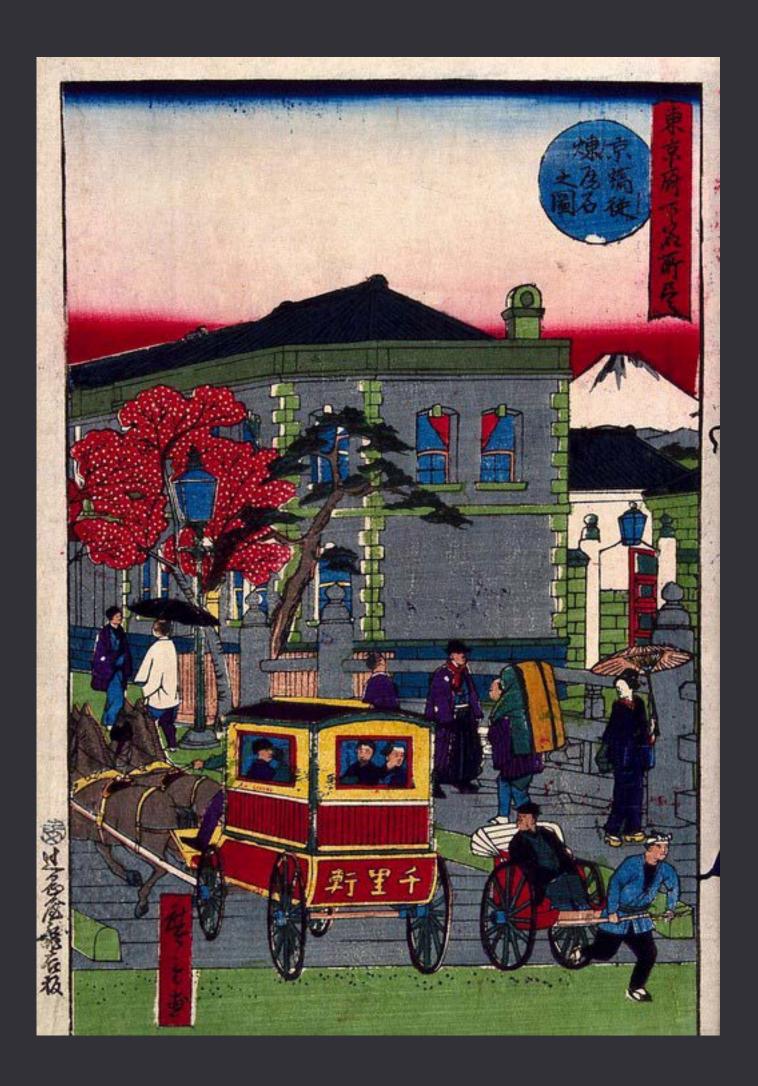
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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

UTAGAWA HIROSHIGE III AND THE ART OF REINVENTING ONESELF

FREYA TERRYN¹

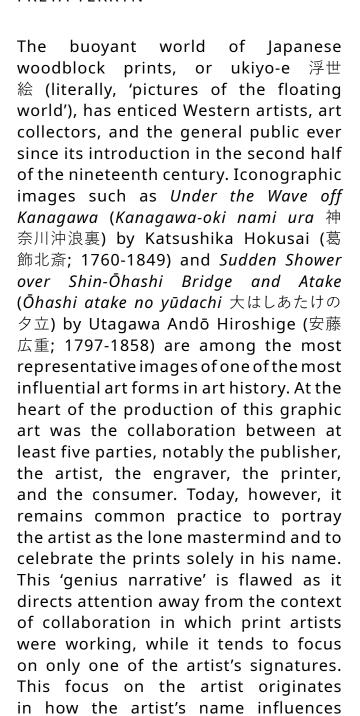


Fig. 1 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代歌川広重 (1842-1894). Collection of Famous Places of Tokyo Prefecture: Brick Stone Street of Kyōbashi (Tōkyō fuka meisho tsukushi: Kyobashi yori renga-ishi no zu 東京府下名所尽: 京橋従煉瓦石之図), October 1874; published by Tsujiokaya Kamekichi 辻岡屋亀吉. Ōban nishiki-e.

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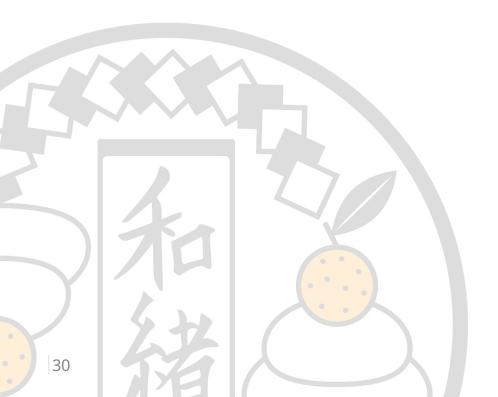
aesthetic and value judgments visual art. The West notably glorifies the artist, as the art market relies on a hierarchy of attribution in which the single signature is the most valuable. Yet, the signature of an artist, when attributed to more than one work. becomes descriptive and can come to both represent and misrepresent all the artist's works. When it comes to Japanese print artists, this results in the neglect of not only their versatility but also of their different art names, or gō 号, for it was common practice to use different signatures throughout their career as well as for different purposes. This article employs Utagawa Hiroshige III (三代歌川広重; 1842-1894) as a case study to investigate the circumstances that prompted a change in his art names and the function served in doing so. Re-examining his names in this way will help to clarify their role in the different stages of his career, as well as what they convey about his self-identification.

1 Freya Terryn is an art historian who specialises in Japanese visual and print culture of the nineteenth century. She holds a PhD in Japanese Studies from the University of Leuven (KU Leuven) and her research was funded by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). She would like toexpress her sincere gratitude to the editorial team of *Wasshoi!* for their insightful comments on earlier versions of this paper .

Hiroshige III as We Know Him

Before we can consider the function of Hiroshige III's art names, it is first necessary to discuss how previous literature has defined him, what art names have been introduced, and more importantly, the limitations this has brought to the discussion of Hiroshige III.² It is generally agreed that Hiroshige III is a representative artist of the Meiji period (1868-1912) who chronicled the Westernisation and modernisation of that time. The discussion of his work revolves around his kaika-e 開化絵: prints representing specific symbols of Westernization, modernisation, and industrialisation such as brick buildings, steam trains, and other new modes of transportation (Fig. 1). Hence, it is argued that Hiroshige III's value is to be found in how his prints work as vital cultural records of the Meiji period. This evaluation, however, culminates in his work being described as 'illustrating the utter decadence' of the time and 'of little artistic importance'; such views

originate from the general contempt that Meiji prints were held in over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries due to their association with a harsh palette of synthetic aniline dyes.3 Moreover, this evaluation is linked to only one of his signatures, namely Hiroshige 広重, and largely overlooks his other signatures such as Shigemasa 重政, Ichiryūsai 一立斎, Ryūsai 立斎, Utashige 歌重, Hiroshige III 三世広重, and Hiroshige II 二世広重. The repetitive and limited evaluation of Hiroshige III in reference books not only proscribes the usage of his different art names but also leaves crucial questions unanswered, such as what prompted a change in his self-identification and why. Ultimately, it halts his evaluation as a versatile and popular woodblock print artist of the Meiji period. So, who was Hiroshige III?



From Torakichi to Shigemasa

Hiroshige III was born as Gotō Torakichi (後藤寅吉) on the twenty-eight day of the twelfth month of the thirteenth year of Tenpō 天保 (1842) — or on 28th January 1843 according to the Western Gregorian calendar — in the Fukugawa district of Edo (modern-day Tokyo), as the son of boatbuilder Gotō Takehira (後藤武平: dates unknown). the age of sixteen he was adopted by Momokawa Mozaemon (百川茂左衛門; dates unknown) who owned a firstclass traditional Japanese restaurant specialising in banquet dishes. It is said that Momokawa introduced the young Torakichi at his restaurant to Utagawa Hiroshige (歌川広重; 1797-1858), who accepted him as a student in 1858 prior to his passing on 12th October. Despite his short apprenticeship with Hiroshige, Torakichi continued to study with Shigenobu 重宣, another student of Hiroshige and born as Suzuki Chinpei (鈴木鎮平; 1826-1869). Shigenobu took over Hiroshige's studio around December 1858 through his marriage to Hiroshige's adoptive daughter Otatsu (お 辰; 1846-1879), allowing Shigenobu to assume his master's name and leaving Hiroshige III with a new master. From that time onward Shigenobu used his master's signatures and is better known today as Hiroshige II.

2 In order to identify the art names associated with Hiroshige III, the author cross-referenced 58 key texts — written in Japanese, English, French, German, and Dutch dating from 1893 to 2019 — relating to the study of Hiroshige, his students, the history of Japanese woodblock prints, and its artists.

3 For more on this see, for example, Oikawa Shigeru, 'The Maintenance of Tradition in the Face of Contemporary Demands: A Reassessment of Meiji Prints,' in The Hotei Encyclopedia of Japanese Prints, ed. Amy Reigle Newland, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Hotei Publishing, 2005), p. 261-265.

As far as can be reliably established, Hiroshige III's first art name, Shigemasa, appeared for the first time in 1864, suggesting that he made his artistic debut after six years of training. He contributed illustrations to the ninth volume of the illustrated woodblock-printed book Picture Book of Edo Souvenirs (Ehon Edo miyage 絵本 江戸土産). The following year Hiroshige III produced his first woodblock print, to the author's knowledge, entitled The Great Commercial Goods Tree (Shōeki shobutsu no taiju 商易諸物の大樹; 1865/ III), which was simultaneously his first satirical print. To his signature, which reads Shigemasa, he attached the word giga 戱画 (literally 'frolicking pictures') to stress the print's intention to ridicule and satirise people's attachment to material goods by depicting figures trying to get a hold of rice, sake, textiles, and other goods hanging from a giant tree.

Shigemasa Reborn as Hiroshige

A change in Hiroshige III's signature followed in early 1867 when he married Otatsu after Hiroshige II divorced her sometime between 19th October 1865 and 26th June 1866.4 Although it remains unclear what prompted Hiroshige II to leave the Andō household and studio, it has been suggested that his bad relationship with Otatsu as well as the twenty-year age gap between them were the main causes of the divorce. Additional reasons are found in the contrasting physical appearance of Hiroshige II and Hiroshige III. Hiroshige II is often described as an ugly man with a square-shaped, pock-marked face, whereas Hiroshige III, who was roughly the same age as Otatsu, was said to have been a man with a slender build, a handsome face, and a gentle nature. Whatever the reason might have been, in the end Hiroshige II was stripped of his right to sign his works as Hiroshige — or prohibited from using any other signature or seal associated with the studio — and henceforth signed his works as Risshō 立祥.

Hiroshige III did not immediately marry Otatsu after her divorce for he still signed his prints as Shigemasa as late as the twelfth month of the second year of Keiō 慶応 (1866), or between 6th January and 4th February 1867. That same month, however, he also used the signatures Ryūsai Hiroshige 立斎広重 and Ichiryūsai -立斎 (Fig. 2). These prints confirm that he had inherited the leadership over Hiroshige's studio through his marriage to Otatsu, allowing him to assume his master's

name and to employ his signatures. They are known as uke-e 有卦絵/有気 絵, or prints of good fortune (fuku 福), designed according to the five elements of water, earth, wood, fire, and metal. As pictures of good fortune, they announce that the person born in this year would enter a seven-year period of good luck, which the pictures represent through the inclusion of seven features, each beginning with the sound fu. In the case of Figure 2, this is Mount Fuji; the large-headed male doll which brings good luck known as Fukusuke 福助; a letter (fumi 文); Okame 阿亀 or Otafuku 阿多福 here identified as the 'woman of good luck' (fuku onna ふく女); a bag (fukuro 袋); a calabash (fukube ふ くべ); and Fukurokuju 福禄寿, who is one of the Seven Lucky Gods. Henceforth, Hiroshige III identified himself with the signatures Ryūsai, Ichiryūsai, and Hiroshige — or he combined Ryūsai/ Ichiryūsai with Hiroshige — while he reserved Utashige solely for his satirical prints, just as his masters had done before him.

Fig. 2 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代歌川広重 (1842-1894). People Born under the Element of Fire, Second Month Seventh Day Hour of the Rabbit: Good Luck for Seven Years until the Year of the Rooster (Kinshō nigatsu nanoka u no koku uke ni iru tori no toshi made nananen no aida uke nari 金性二月七日卯の刻うけに入酉の年迄七年の間有気也), 1866/XII; published by Maruya Heijirō 丸屋平次郎. Ōban nishiki-e.



4 These dates are the result of an examination of both Hiroshige II and Hiroshige III's signatures from 1865 to 1867. Reference books, in contrast, merely suggest this happened in 1865.





Hiroshige III's 'acquisition' of these signatures simultaneously launched his career as the sole print artist continuing the studio's specialty, notably landscapes and views of famous places in and around Edo, of the stations on the Tōkaidō 東海道 (main highway between Edo and Kyoto), and of the various provinces. In 1868 he used the signature Hiroshige for his first serialised print series dedicated to views of Edo, celebrating the city which had just been renamed Tokyo in 50 prints published over the span of two years under the title Pictorial Record of Scenic Spots in Tokyo (Tōkyō meishō zue 東京名勝図絵; 1868/X-1870/VII; 50 prints and title page). Prior to the publication of this print series, however, Hiroshige III made the effort to clarify that he had indeed assumed leadership of Hiroshige's studio. In 1867 he co-designed with Toyohara Kunichika (豊原国周; 1835-1900) a print series which matched kabuki actors with the stations on the Tōkaidō, entitled Tōkaidō — One Look at a Thousand Ryō

(Tōkaidō hitome senryō 東海道一 卜眼千両; 1867/II-IV; 55 prints of which 34 are known; Fig. 3), in which he used not one but five different signatures. Among the signatures are those that



confirmed his leadership, such as Hiroshige, Ichiryūsai Hiroshige, and Ryūsai Hiroshige. There are also two additional signatures which accentuate his change in self-identification. Firstly, with the signature 'Hiroshige formerly Shigemasa' (Shigemasa aratame Hiroshige 重政 改広重) Hiroshige III confirmed that he had given up his art name Shigemasa in favour of Hiroshige. Secondly, with the signature 'Hiroshige III' (Sansei Hiroshige 三世広重; Fig. 3) he clearly stressed that he was the third generation Hiroshige to assume control of the studio. Hence, with these new signatures Hiroshige III announced that he was the third artist to adopt the art name Hiroshige and would henceforth continue to use the art names attached to the studio.

Fig. 3 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代歌川広重 (1842-1894) and Toyohara Kunichika 豊原国 周 (1835-1900). *Tōkaidō— One Look at a Thousand Ryō: Fuchū—Teranishi Kanshin (Tōkaidō hitome senryō: Fuchū Teranishi Kanshin* 東海道一卜眼千両: 府中·寺西閑心), 1867/III; published by Maruya Tetsujirō 丸屋鉄次郎. *Ōban nishiki-e*. Photograph © Museum of Fine Arts, Boston

Hiroshige III or Hiroshige II?

Although Hiroshige III identified as the third generation in 1867, he came to revisit this self-identification later in his career, for on six occasions he introduced himself — or was introduced — as Hiroshige II. In 1878, the popular fiction writer Kanagaki Robun (仮名垣魯 文; 1829-1894) published his work Album of One Hundred Cats (Hyaku neko gafu 百 猫画譜), for which Hiroshige III provided illustrations. The Tokyo Newspaper (Tōkyō Nichi Nichi Shinbun 東京日日新聞) and Tokyo Illustrated Newspaper (Tōkyō E-iri Shinbun 東 京絵入新聞) promoted its publication and asserted that the illustrations were by 'Andō Hiroshige II' (nisei Andō Hiroshige 二世安藤広重).5 As far as can be reliably established, this is the first contemporary source to identify Hiroshige III as the second generation. This new self-identification suggests that his acquaintances perceived him to be the second generation or that Hiroshige III had requested Kanagaki to identify him as such for the advertisement. Later in 1883 this art name resurfaced when the illustrated book and parodic poetry anthology Lessons in Civilisation: One Hundred Poets, One Humorous Poem Each (Kaika kyōkun: Dōge hyakunin isshu 開化教訓: 道戱百人一首) was published, for which Hiroshige III was not only

the illustrator but also the editor. Here as well, it was Kanagaki who identified him as Andō Hiroshige II in the book's introduction.

Alongside illustrated books art name can also be found on two privately published prints and on two paintings. Firstly, Hiroshige III selfidentified as Hiroshige II on the prints he had published to commemorate the memorial service and the erection of a stone monument for his master Hiroshige in 1882 (Fig. 4) and for Toyohiro Utagawa (歌川豊広; 1828), Hiroshige's master, in 1887. These prints not only served as a memento and proof of his dedication to his master and to the history of the art name Hiroshige, but were also a means to attract sponsors (as was the case with the print for Toyohiro's memorial). On these prints Hiroshige III self-identified as 'Ryūsai Hiroshige II' (Ryūsai Hiroshige nisei 立斎広重二世) in 1882 and as 'Ichiryūsai Hiroshige II' (nisei Ichiryūsai Hiroshige 二世一立斎広 重) in 1887, practically erasing Hiroshige II's use of the art name Hiroshige.

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5 'Robun chinpō hachi hen kyū hen hyaku neko gafu,' *Tōkyō Nichi Nichi Shinbun*, February 23, 1878; 'Robun chinpō hachi hen kyū hen hyaku neko gafu,' *Tōkyō E-iri Shinbun*, February 24, 1878.



Fig. 4 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代 歌川広重 (1842-1894). Stone Memorial for Hiroshige, April 1882; publisher unknown. Ōban single sheet.

Secondly, Hiroshige III employed this art name for two hanging scroll paintings (kakemono 掛物). These paintings, although signed Hiroshige, carry a seal that reads 'painting seal of Ichiryūsai Hiroshige II' (nisei Ichiryūsai Hiroshige gain 二世一立斎広重画印; Fig. 5 & 6). Despite the lack of a production date, the seal and the motif of Mount Fuji in the spring suggest that he painted them circa 1885-1887. In Figure 5 the slopes of Mount Fuji provide the setting for two women strolling along the embankment of the Sumida River from which the red temple buildings of Sensō-ji 浅草寺 in Asakusa can also be seen. Figure 6 then offers a distant view of a snow-covered Mount Fuji, while two women are boarding a covered pleasure boat (yane-bune 屋根船) at a landing stage near the Ryōgoku bridge. At the time, Mount Fuji could easily be viewed from both the locations depicted in the paintings but also from Asakusa, the neighbourhood where Hiroshige III was living between 1883 and 1889. He was especially proud to be living in such a place as several sketches from 1885 and 1887, as well as a newspaper article on the upcoming memorial service for Toyohiro in 1887, stressed that he was living 'with a view of Mount Fuji'.6

Considering that the seal exactly matches the signature he used for the privately published print of the 1887 memorial service, it can be inferred that the scroll paintings were painted at the banquet, calligraphy, and painting event that Hiroshige III organised to accompany the memorial.



Fig. 5 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代歌川広重 (1842-1894). *The Sumida Embankment*, late 19th century. Ink and color on silk, painting 88.8 x 29.8 cm.





Fig. 6 Utagawa Hiroshige III 三代歌川広重 (1842-1894). *Ryōgoku Bridge*, late 19th century. Ink and color on silk, painting 88.8 x 29.8 cm.

6 Watanabe Akira, Sandai Utagawa Hiroshige ni kan suru ikkōsatsu: Itōke shozō shiryō o chūshin ni. *Ukiyo-e Kenkyū*. 2013, vol. 4, p. 11-14; 61-107; Yokota Yōichi. 'Sandai Hiroshige to Bunmei Kaika no nishiki-e (1).' *Kanagawa Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan Kenkyū Hōkoku*. 1987, 13, p. 56-93

So who was Hiroshige III?

It remains unclear what prompted Hiroshige III's collaborators introduce him as Hiroshige II, or why he chose to adopt this new art name himself. Was he deliberately trying to ignore the prior short-lived use of the name by his predecessor Hiroshige II?7 If so, why would he want to distance himself from the previous head of the studio from whom he had received training? Unfortunately, there are no contemporary sources that shed light on this matter. Nevertheless, it is very clear that Hiroshige III assigned a specific purpose to each of his art names. By using different art names Hiroshige III gave himself greater freedom to be creative and to go beyond the usual constraints or responsibilities attached to one specific name. As a starting print he used the art name Shigemasa to illustrate books and to produce mainly prints. When he married satirical Otatsu and assumed leadership of the studio, he adopted the art name Hiroshige to continue the established topics for which the studio was known, specialising in the changing cityscape of Tokyo and its famous places. However, with art names such as Andō Hiroshige II, Ryūsai Hiroshige II, and Ichiryūsai Hiroshige II he was able to detach himself from his main work and engage in new ventures and collaborations, ranging from popular fiction and poetry to paintings and privately published prints commemorating the history of his studio. In other words, Hiroshige III changed his art name depending on his public: for the general printbuying public he signed his work first as Shigemasa and then as Hiroshige but for a more targeted audience with interest in popular literature and poetry, and those wanting to pay respect to the print master Hiroshige, he signed it as Hiroshige II. Thus, it is in these latter works that Hiroshige III's personality and new aspects of his career come forward, allowing us to rewrite his biography through the study of his art names.

7 Timothy Clark, ed., 100 Views of Mount Fuji (London: British Museum Press, 2001), 36.





Suggested Readings

Terryn, Freya. 'Japanese Woodblock Prints and the Meiji State: Production, Reception, and Intention in the Prints of Tsukioka Yoshitoshi and Utagawa Hiroshige III.' PhD dissertation, KU Leuven, 2021.

Watanabe Akira. Sandai Utagawa Hiroshige ni kan suru ikkōsatsu: Itōke shozō shiryō o chūshin ni. *Ukiyo-e Kenkyū*. 2013, vol. 4, p. 11-14, 61-107.

Yokota Yōichi. 'Sandai Hiroshige to Bunmei Kaika no nishiki-e (1).' *Kanagawa Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan Kenkyū Hōkoku*. 1987, 13, p. 56-93.

What's in a Name? Utagawa Hiroshige III and the Art of Reinventing Oneself

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