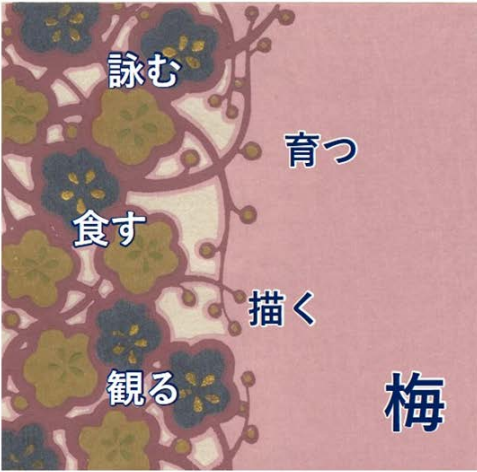


Selections from NDL collections

Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan (21)

All kinds of *Ume*—Japanese poetry, paintings, and delicacies

国立国会図書館関西館 第21回小展示
梅尽くし
 —和歌から絵画、食卓まで—



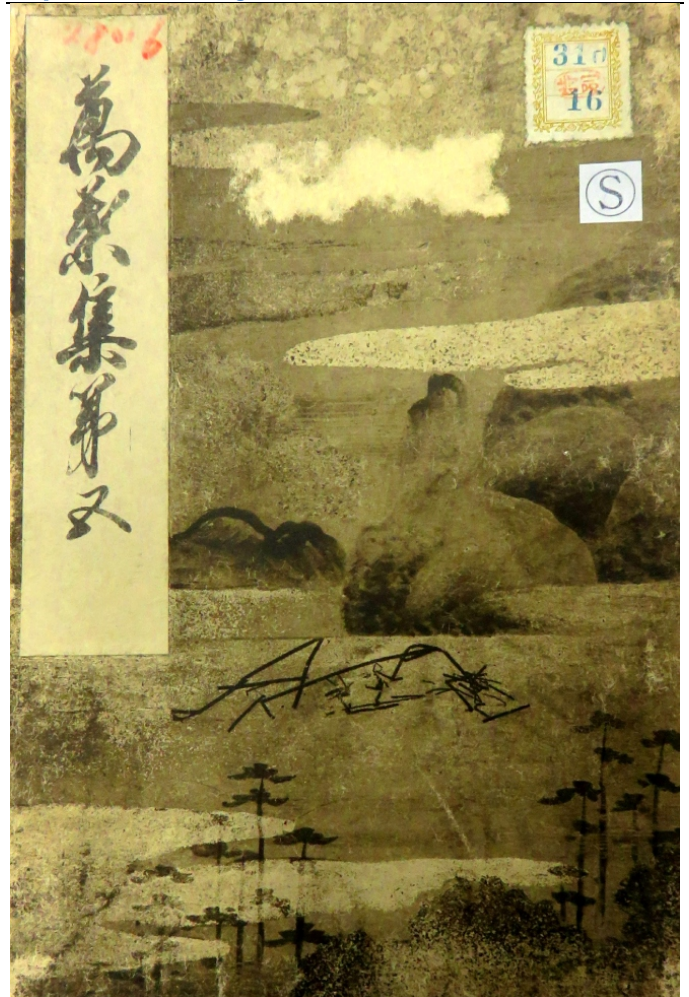
平成29年
 2月16日(木)～3月14日(火)
 展示会場：国立国会図書館関西館 閲覧室（地下1階）
 年齢制限：なし
 （18歳未満の方は受付でお申し出ください）
 入場料金：無料
 開館時間：10:00～18:00（日曜日は休館）
 お問い合わせ：☎ 0774-98-1341
 （関西館資料案内 9:30～17:00）

Poster of the small exhibition

The *ume* tree has many names, including Chinese Plum and Japanese Apricot, but its flowers are traditionally called "plum blossoms" in English. In Japan, the *ume* is also known as a harbinger of spring, because it blooms early in the year, one step ahead of other spring flowers. A small exhibition, entitled *All kinds of ume—Japanese poetry, paintings, and delicacies*, was held from February 16 to March 14, 2017, at the Kansai-kan.

The *ume* has been a beloved part of Japanese culture for more than a thousand years. It delights the eye and has inspired countless poems and paintings, not to mention its usefulness in dyeing fabrics and for medicinal purposes. The *ume* is also a popular delicacy with health benefits that researchers continue to study today. This exhibition featured approximately 100 different books and magazines describing the *ume* and its place in Japanese culture. In this article, we present some of the exhibited content.

Japanese Poetry

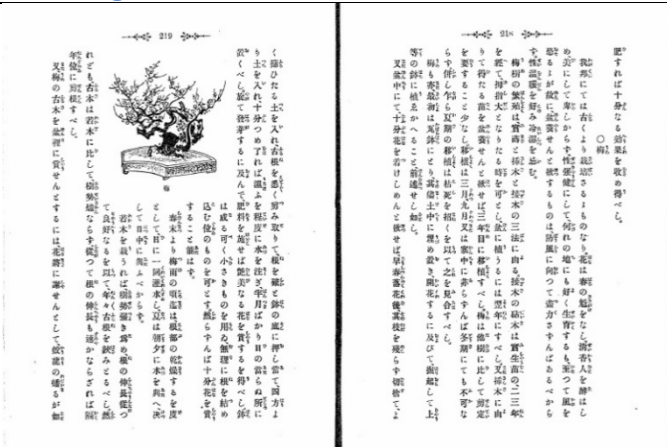


Kishubon man'yōshū, vol. 5, Published by Goto Yasushi Hoonkai in 1941. NDL Call No. 310-16.

* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

This is a facsimile edition published in 1941 of the *Kishubon man'yōshū*, which was transcribed at various times from the 13th to the 15th century. The *ume* was so revered during this era that the *Man'yōshū*, which is the oldest existing collection of Japanese poetry, includes 119 poems that make reference to *ume*—second only to *hagi* or the Japanese bush clover. Of particular note are the *32 Poems on Plum Blossoms*, which were read during a banquet at the house of the famed poet Otomo no Tabito, and are known as *The Banquet of Plum Blossoms*.

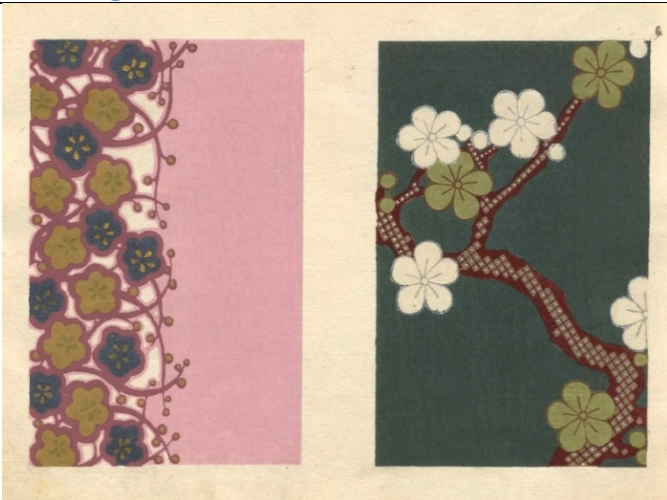
Growing



Kaki to bonsai: Katei engei; Written by Sakuma Yosaburo;
Published by Okura shoten in 1905; NDL Call No. 99-178
* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

This is taken from a book on home gardening that was published in 1905, which according to the author was a time during which "gardening has recently come into fashion." *Ume* are mentioned along with cherry and sasanqua camellia in a chapter on growing bonsai trees with flowers. The book includes tips for successful cultivation, including the best time for replanting, frequency of watering, and how to prune.

Painting



Umezukushi; Written by Furuya Korin; Published by Yamada
Unsodo in 1907; NDL Call No. 22-387
* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

This is a pattern design book by the designer Furuya Korin, who was a teacher at the Kyoto Municipal School of Art and Crafts (now Kyoto City University of Arts). Trained in western-style painting, he eventually became known as a pattern designer in Kyoto. This collection of pattern designs included many motifs based on plum blossoms. Korin's designs were noteworthy for bright colors and novel line work that broke free from the stylized images of plum blossoms that had been used since ancient times.



Jicchikusai shogafu. vol. 13; Written by Ko Seigen;
Edited by Kitahara Yoshio; Published by Atoriesha in 1937;
NDL Call No. 303-30
* Available in the [NDL Digital Collections](#)

This is a facsimile edition published by Atoriesha in 1937 of *Jicchikusai shogafu*, which is about paintings and calligraphy with colored woodblock prints in China in the 17th century. Although its original is unknown, the illustration shown above is titled "Subtle Fragrances in the Spring Darkness" and depicts sweet-smelling plum blossoms under the moon. Handbooks of Chinese painting styles were reproduced by many painters in Japan and serve to illustrate the preferred aesthetic of the day. Books like this contain numerous examples of how a single subject can be depicted in a number of styles utilizing differing techniques.

Celebrating



Nihon zue zenshu. Second series, vol.3;
Edited by Nihon Zuihitsu Taisei Kankokai;
Published by Nihon Zuihitsu Taisei Kankokai in 1928;
NDL Call No. 291.08-N691-N

This is a facsimile edition of *Miyako rinsen meisho zue*, a book depicting a garden (*rinsen*) in Kyoto (*miyako*), which was published in 1799. *Meisho zue* is a kind of guidebook that was popular during the Edo period. Sprinkled with citations from the classics and reproductions of paintings of various genres, these *meisho zue* introduced readers to places of scenic beauty and historic interest as well as annual events in Edo (now Tokyo), Kinai (near Kyoto), and other areas. The illustration above vividly depicts people in the Edo era enjoying conversation under the plum blossoms.

(Translated by Yuko Kumakura)

Related articles from the National Diet Library Newsletter:

- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(22\) "Making and utilizing light: from illumination to architecture and art"](#) (No. 214, October 2017)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(20\) "Robots are evolving! - from myth, mechanical dolls to the latest robots"](#) (No. 209, December 2016)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(18\) A collection of living creatures from all times and places: real, virtual and extinct creatures](#) (No. 202, October 2015)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(17\) Tomorrow's dinner will be a full-course meal: Find the recipe you want to cook](#) (No. 199, April 2015)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(16\) Dreams of Space, from the ancient view of the universe to the Hayabusa Project](#) (No. 196, October 2014)
- [Small exhibition in the Kansai-kan \(15\) Modernization of Japanese sake and domestic production of Western liquor](#) (No. 193, April 2014)