



Shunga: Erotic Art in Japan

By Rosina Buckland



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Featuring paintings, handscrolls, prints, and illustrated books of erotica produced in Japan between 1600 and 1900, Shunga showcases some of the finest examples of Japanese erotic art, created with opulent materials and special printing effects.

This book includes work by Kitagawa Utamaro (1753-1806) and Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), who produced erotic imagery as a standard part of their work.

The erotic encounters depicted in *shunga* reflect multiple perspectives--male, female, heterosexual, and same-sex. There is a particular emphasis on sexual situations in everyday life: a wife catches her husband seducing a maid, a couple is spied on by a curious servant, and mice start copulating in imitation of the humans. Japanese erotic art was characterized by exaggeration and fantasy and, as one verse-writer warns, "The foolish couple copy *shunga* and pull a muscle." *Shunga* examines this underexplored area of Japanese culture and is fully illustrated with fascinating images from the rich collections of the British Museum, many of which have never been published before.



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