

Japanese Art at the University of Oregon

Kevin Trent McDowell*

As an undergraduate I studied history at the University of Oregon, after which I moved to Japan and worked as an ESL instructor for six years. Following that I went to the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, CANADA to study Japanese history. My Master's thesis was on the program to support the immigration of Japanese farmers to Manchuria from 1931-1945. Following the completion of my MA program at UBC I went to the University of Arizona's School of Information and Library Science and received my Master's degree in Library Science in 2003. While I was at the University of Arizona, I had the opportunity to work as the Ansel Adams Intern at the UA's Center for Creative Photography, where I processed the manuscripts the archival collection of the photographer John Gutmann. I then returned to Japan to take a position as a Visiting Lecture at Tokushima Bunri University, where I worked from 2004 to 2007.

Since 2009, I have been working as a Japanese Studies Librarian. In that position, I am responsible for selecting Japanese language books, DVDs and other materials, with Japanese art being one of the primary collection areas. Also, I act as a liaison to Japanese Studies faculty in the East Asian Languages and Literature Department Art History Department and the History Department. I provide research assistance for Japanese academic assignments to undergraduate and graduate students and regularly teach information literacy classes for Japanese art history, history, language and literature classes, as well classes in UO Special Collections that highlight the UO Library's holdings of Japanese illustrated

books, travel guides, etiquette guides, and so on from the Edo Period.

While I was the Japanese Studies Librarian at the University of Colorado, from 2009-2012, I collaborated with colleagues in the Special Collections Department on two East Asian/Japanese exhibits in the library. One, *Wandering in the World of Chinese Characters*, focused on the development of Chinese characters in China and the transmission of kanji to Japan. The other, *Heading East, Writing West*, featured illustrated depictions of China and Japan, written by Western travelers, as well as art works by Hokusai, Hiroshige and others.

At the University of Oregon, I am currently working on a variety of projects centered on Japanese votive slips (*nosatsu/senja-fuda*). The University of Oregon Libraries holds the only known collection of Japanese shrine and temple votive slips (*nosatsu* or *senhafuda*) in North America. The *nosatsu* prints were collected from 1910 to around 1925 by Frederick Starr, an anthropologist from the University of Chicago, who was intrigued by the religious nature of the votive slips and the transmission of Ukiyo-e printing techniques and tropes from the Edo period to the *nosatsu* of the Meiji and Taisho eras (1868-1925). Starr became a regular participant in the *nosatsu* exchange clubs (*nosatsu-kai*) that were experiencing a renaissance during that time and, like other members, commissioned highly decorative and vividly illustrated votive slips to exchange at *nosatsu-kai* meetings. Starr became such an engaged and recognized figure in the *nosatsu-kai* community that he

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was known as *O-fuda Hakushi* (“Professor of votive slips”).

The *nosatsu* images in our collection cover a wide range of themes and topics including landscapes; depictions of figures from Edo-period popular fiction and theatre; shrine and temple pilgrimage routes; seasonal celebrations; mythical creatures; firefighters; Japanese toys and collectibles; and prints showing the activities of the *nosatsu-kai* members themselves.

The main goal of the nosatsu related projects is to digitize and add metadata to the more than 40 albums of nosatsu images in the collection. When the digitization and cataloging of the materials is completed, the collection will be openly available to scholars and students. In conjunction, I am collaborating with colleagues to curate a variety of exhibits featuring nosatsu, with the aim of promoting the visibility of the collection. A small exhibit is currently on display in the Library’s Administration Office [show picture]. Later, I hope to organize a larger exhibit in the Library’s main display areas. In addition to the nosatsu collection held in the UO Special Collections Department, the UO’s Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art has a collection of individual nosatsu prints that have yet to be cataloged in a systematic way so, as a long-term objective, it would be ideal to have the opportunity to collaborate with the Museum to make their collection more accessible to scholars and researchers.

2. Japanese Art in the library: Special collections:

Gertrude Bass Warner Collection: Gertrude Bass Warner (1863–1951) was an adventurous traveler who made her first

trip to Japan in 1904. While she was there she developed a deep and lasting interest in East Asian art and began collecting ukiyo-e prints, pottery, paintings, books and other decorative arts. After moving to Eugene, Oregon she worked to found and develop the University of Oregon’s Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA) and later donated her art collection to the museum and the University of Oregon Library’s Special Collections Department. The collection includes publications from the Edo period, books on Japanese art, over 5,000 lantern slices, Gertrude Bass Warner’s correspondence and travel writing, as well over types of manuscripts. The University of Oregon’s Digital Scholarship Center is currently working to digitize all the materials in the Gertrude Bass Warner Collection

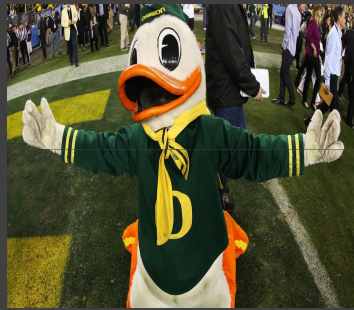
3. Japanese Art at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art

Gertrude Bass Warner’s donation to the JSMA forms the core of the Japanese art collection held by the museum. The collection includes “more than three thousand Edo-period (1615-1868) *ukiyo-e* as well as modern and contemporary Japanese prints, traditional paintings in screen, scroll and album formats, Buddhist sculptures, ceramics, lacquer, metalwork, textiles, arms & armor, dolls, and assorted other decorative objects”¹

One of my main objectives for participating in the JAL Project is to develop a better understanding of Japanese art and the principles of Art librarianship in Japan so that I can collaborate with curators at the JSMA to organize and promote the University of Oregon’s Japanese art collection.

1. Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art. Web. September 28, 2015

University of Oregon Libraries



オレゴン大学日本語司書ケビンマクドウェル
kevinmc@uoregon.edu

1

学歴

オレゴン大学 学士号取得
(歴史学専攻)

ブリティッシュコロンビア大学
修士号取得(日本史専攻)

アリゾナ大学 修士号取得
(図書館情報学専攻)

2

職歴

徳島文理大学非常勤講師

ブリティッシュコロンビア大学
修士号取得(日本史専攻)

オレゴン大学 学士号取得
(歴史学専攻)

3

コロラド大学ノルリン図書館での二つ 展示を計画



4

オレゴン大学日本語司書

日本語資料(本、DVD、雑誌、など)を選択。特に日本文学、日本史、美術関連。

納札・千社札のデジタル化

5

オレゴン大学日本語資料

❖ 本: 42, 500+

❖ 雑誌: 176

❖ DVD: 600+



6



ガートルード・バス・ワーナー

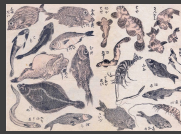
ガートルード・バス・ワーナーの幻灯



オレゴン大学の日本美術所蔵品



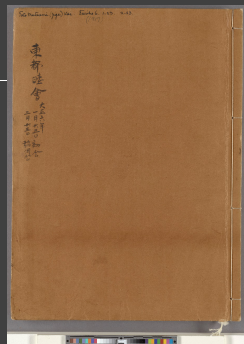
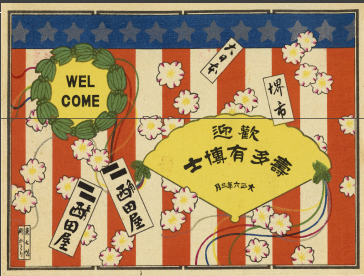
スペシャル・コレクション閲覧室



シカゴ大学の文化人類学者
フレデリック・スター博士



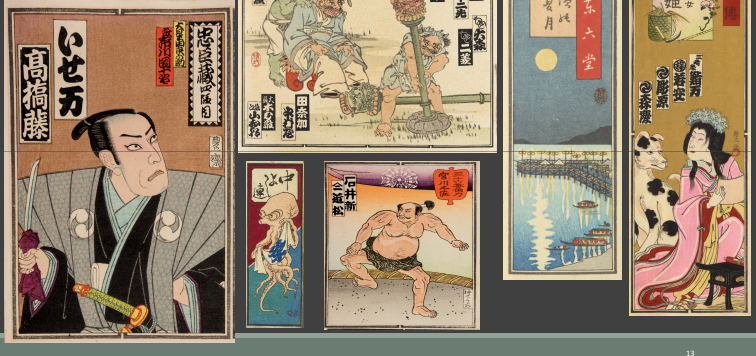
納札



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オレゴン大学美術館

