

# Kiyochika's Tokyo — II

Master of Modern Melancholy (1876-1881)

Visual Narratives by James T. Ulak

The City by Night

The City by Day

## The City by Night

These street-level views capture details of Tokyo on the cusp of change. Light from both natural and manmade sources suffuses the prints in a way that is distinctive to Kiyochika. The format of these Visual Narratives helps convey the delicacy, detail, and depth of these everyday scenes. Viewers can scroll down through the entire section, or use the menu below. The Visual Narratives are as follows:

- 1 – Gaslit City*
- 2 – Spectacle & Spectatorship*
- 3 – Moonlight & Shadows*
- 4 – Night as Veil*
- 5 – Modern Dissonance*

### 1 – GASLIT CITY

*Edo had maintained a “nightlife” as a traditional city culture, but it was mainly confined to the pleasure quarters. In his studies of Tokyo, Kiyochika demonstrates how new forms of illumination began to substantially transform the way life was lived. Although electric power would not be widely available until 1886, gas-fueled street lamps made a limited appearance in Tokyo around 1874, when around 80 were placed in the neighborhood of the Diet, or parliament building. The kerosene lamp was also becoming a fixture of modernity.*

*The ability to engage in labor and leisure activities during what were once largely inaccessible hours changed the city's appearance. Kiyochika used the opportunity to describe the newly illuminated night, indulging his continuing interest in lighting effects.*



### **Mount Fuji from Edobashi at Dusk, 1879**

With Tokyo's first gasworks, which began operating in 1874, the streetlamp joined telegraph wires and the ubiquitous rickshaw as a marker of new technology on the urban landscape. In this work, the gas lamp is a prominent framing device, though partially obstructed by a pine tree. Oil torches line the embankment, their flickering flames contrasted with the enclosed and steady stream of gas.

The vantage point is from Edobashi, a bridge crossing Nihonbashi River, which recently had been re-built in stone. Nihonbashi, visible in the far distance, was built in wood, albeit in the Western style. Shown in vague silhouette behind it are Mount Fuji and a towering cumulonimbus cloud.

Map location: #27

[s2003\_8\_1137]



Map of Kiyochika's Tokyo:

Click on the map location # to find a print on the 1879 map





**Night at Nihonbashi**, 1881

Nihonbashi was Tokyo's commercial center. It was also the first of the fifty-three stations of the Tōkaidō, a major artery connecting Edo and Kyoto. Traditional representations of the site included symbols of power, prosperity, and divine protection—the castle, central fish market, and Mount Fuji, respectively. However, these motifs are absent from Kiyochika's composition.

Instead, the artist focuses on capturing the ambiance of a gas-lit metropolis. Wrapped in the purplish haze of new artificial light, people strolling through the city take on a ghost-like appearance. Landmark buildings are indistinguishable in the shadows, heightening the sense of disorientation. A year after this print was created, the horse-drawn carriage seen proceeding down the sectioned off center would be superseded by trolley cars.

Map location: #28

[s2003\_8\_1187]





**Summer Night at Asakusa Kuramae, 1881**

The setting of this print is north of Asakusa Bridge, the former location of shogunal rice granaries at which Kiyochika's maternal family had been employed. The artists returned to this place of childhood at dusk, during the magic hour when streetlamps are lit one by one. Tonal gradations from sooty grey to blue to purple express the gradually darkening sky with traces of lingering daylight. Silhouetted figures of pedestrians are black and defined in the foreground, soft grey and barely visible in the distance, thus evoking the breadth of the newly widened boulevard. The regular spacing of streetlamps on the far side of the thoroughfare is discerned only by star-shaped emissions of light.

Map location: #29

[s2003\_8\_1190]





**Night Snow at Honchō-dōri, 1880**

A horse-drawn carriage thunders by Honchō-dōri, in Nihonbashi's wholesale pharmaceuticals district. A dog racing alongside underscores a sense of urgency and speed. The gas lamp illuminates a store sign that reads "drugs". The street appears deserted, save for a lone pedestrian trudging forward against heavy snow.

Kiyochika's visual acuity is demonstrated in the way he attempts to show the effects of gaslight in snow. Here a street lamp casts a pool of diffused light on the white blanket of snow, giving the scene a stage-like, spotlighted aspect. Silently falling snow is visualized only when in proximity to light sources, such as the lamp stand or suspended lanterns flanking the moving vehicle.

[s2003\_8\_1122]

## 2 – SPECTACLE & SPECTATORSHIP

*Few things are more distinctive and striking in Kiyochika's views of emerging Tokyo than his depictions of people. Particularly in nocturnal*



settings, Kiyochika renders the human form in silhouette, or as somehow remote, singular, and absorbed. His compositions often suggest a stage; the viewer looks at the depicted audience, which in turn observes an event, frequently a new phenomenon within the city or some new form of light.

The pleasure traditional Japanese artists took in depicting the variety and vitality of human activity has nearly vanished from Kiyochika's scenes. Kiyochika left no written record of his intentions, but the severe disconnect between his cityscapes and those of his predecessors suggests that he was trying to depict a new kind of human walking the roads and bridges of Tokyo—one who is disengaged, alert, observing, and waiting.



**Fireworks from Ikenohata, 1881**

The buoyant atmosphere of spectacles at night is captured in this scene depicting fireworks at the Ryōgoku Bridge. A variety of pleasure boats is shown, from open-roof to covered ones for private hire. A fruit vendor peddles "water sweets" at this popular summer attraction.

The vantage point is at water level. Kiyochika enhances the realism of this perspective by focusing on the theatrical animation of spectators in the foreground. The figures are shown in silhouette, marveling at the spherical halo of light. The rippled surface of the water, illuminated by the fiery explosion, appears as an almost photographic rendering.



[s2003\_8\_1197]



**Fireworks at Ryōgoku**, ca. 1880

Spectators climb a willow tree to get a better view of fireworks from the edge of Shinobazu Pond in Ueno. Kiyochika makes a visual pun, juxtaposing the tree's branches with cascading ribbons of light known in fireworks parlance as "the weeping willow." While Edo-period fireworks had been monochrome, the slow-falling trail of sparks shown here is tinted with color, pyrotechnically made possible in the Meiji era with the use of imported chemicals. Silhouetted spectators lining the bank and in the tree frame the object of attention.

[s2003\_8\_1194]





### ***Night Stalls at Asakusa, 1881***

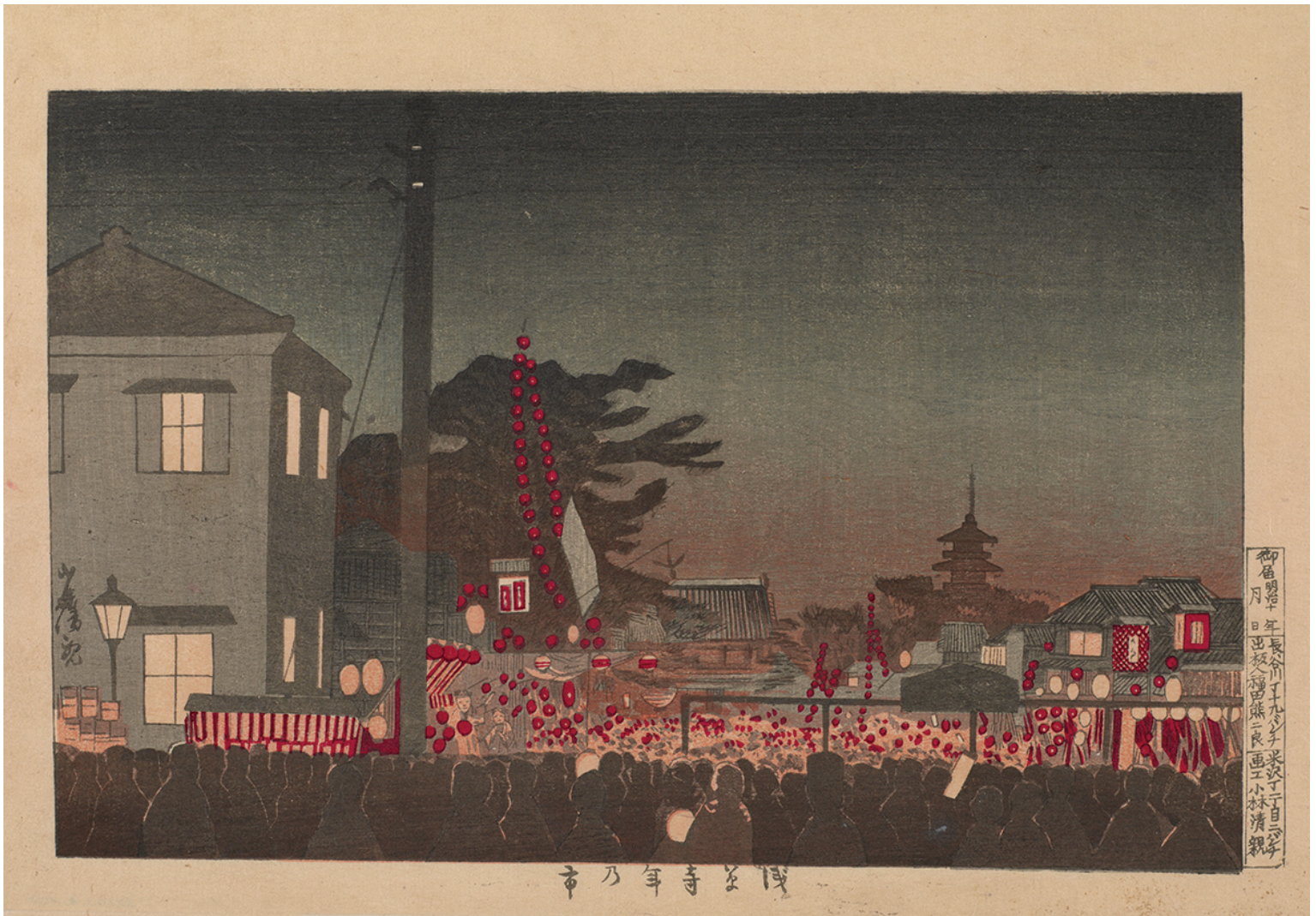
The myriad shops that lined the approach to the Asakusa Temple constituted one of Edo's oldest and most popular shopping arcades. Previously depicted by Utagawa Hiroshige (1797-1858) and other traditional designers from a bird's-eye perspective, Kiyochika's view of the nighttime throng is that of a slightly detached participant.

New forms of lighting technology, including the supernatural glow of carbide lamps, emerge from the center of the market's activity and command the scene by defining the night and its spectators. Individuals, whether depicted in silhouette or seemingly mesmerized by light, have lost the animated postures of engagement typically seen in market transactions; instead, they stand transfixed.

*Location on map: #34*

[s2003\_8\_1191]





**Year-end Market at Sensōji, 1881**

The *toshi no ichi* was a traditional market held toward the end of the year, when the people of Edo would make their annual excursion to purchase decorations and specialty food items for New Year festivities. The turning of old to new is underscored by the juxtaposition of new Meiji-era symbols, such as the telegraph pole, streetlamp, and Western-style building, with more traditional elements, such as street performers, paper lanterns, and temple structures, shown in silhouette.

In Kiyochika's composition, there is none of the rowdy, rambunctious atmosphere that surrounded the festivals and spectacles of Edo. In spite of the obvious range of activity depicted, the foreground row of silhouetted figures defines the intended perspective; Kiyochika invites the viewer to observe the observers.

Location on map: #35

[s2003\_8\_1107]



*The writer Nagai Kafū (1879-1959) was one of a number of 20th-century Japanese intellectuals who championed Kiyochika's work. He used his collection of Kiyochika's prints both as inspiration for his novels and as a nostalgic guide for his strolls through Tokyo, seeking relics of a transitional city already escaping his grasp. Lamenting the demise of old Edo's appearance and ambiance, Kafū read in Kiyochika's views a similar longing for the past, as well as a sense of unease about the future.*



**Sumidagawa at Night, 1881**

One of Kiyochika's iconic works, this print is often associated with Nagai Kafū's 1909 novel *Sumidagawa* (The Sumida River), in which the protagonists serve as pretexts to write about Tokyo's vanishing famous sites. In the print, the two characters silhouetted against the night sky are a geisha, with a traditional hairstyle, and her patron, wearing a Western-style hat. The couple stands on the eastern bank of the Sumida River at Mukōjima and looks to the western bank at Asakusa and Imado. The humpbacked bridges in the distance and the reflection of distant lights in the river contrast with the nocturnal sky and its subtle shades of grey and black.

[s2003\_8\_1202]

Map location: #1





### ***Rainy Night at Yanagiwara, 1881***

The neighborhood of Yanagiwara takes its name from willow trees lining a stretch of the south bank of Kanda River. Barely visible in the far distance at left is a faux-Western/Japanese hybrid building identified as the Tax Bureau Office. Obstructing the view is a covered rickshaw and a cabby captured mid-gesture as he calls to clients. Only a stray dog takes notice.



Kiyochika created a number of impressions for this design, evidencing his experimentation with tonalities. Night is not simply rendered in the classic raven-wing black but expressed as a subtle array of grey, dark blue, and greenish hues. In one impression, he added diagonal streaks of silver mica, presenting a more overt representation of night rain.

*Map location: #31*

[s2003\_8\_1181-1185]





**Before Tarō Inari Shrine at the Asakusa Ricefields, 1881**

In Japan, the spirit of Tarō Inari is revered in a vast number of Shinto shrines. Distinguished by vermillion-painted gateways (*torii*), these sites also have images of foxes (*kitsune*), usually in male-female pairs. The fox was thought to be an incarnation of the Inari spirit or a messenger to that deity. In addition, the fox, a wily shape-shifter, often was associated with seduction. Thus, Inari shrines were often in close proximity to pleasure quarters.

This print suggests nothing of the gaiety, noise, and color that surrounded an Inari shrine filled with petitioners. Kiyochika's view is of a deserted shrine near an area of ramshackle brothels known as Asakusa Yoshiwara. The path meanders beyond the gateway to an indeterminate future. One of the last of Kiyochika's ninety-three images of Tokyo, its sense of haunting desolation permeates the view.

Map location: #23

[s2003\_8\_1174]



#### 4 – NIGHT AS VEIL

*At night, the modernizing enthusiasms of the Meiji government became cloaked in shadows. With the city embraced in darkness, topographical boundaries between old and new, center and periphery, urban and rural, became soothingly blurred. A romanticized, countrified, lyricizing view could be mediated by the presence of fireflies or, more often, by moonlight.*



**Teahouses by Imadobashi**, ca. 1877

The Imado Bridge, built over the Sanya Canal, was in its heyday one of the major points of access to the Yoshiwara pleasure quarters. Under the bridge and all around it were landing places for the slender roofless boats that carried Yoshiwara's visitors. Kiyochika's print focuses on two teahouses connected by this bridge, though, in the moonlit night, no sign of traffic is observed on the canal. In Kiyochika's day, Imado was becoming rundown and distant in style and clientele from those of Edo times. This work emphasizes the contrast between the lit interiors of the teahouses and lanterns carried by attendants—the flicker of the past and the anonymity of the new "classless" society.

Map location: #3

[s2003\_8\_1114]





***Distant View of Ichinohashi from the Banks of Sumida River, 1880***

When accommodating early Western diplomatic and commercial missions, the Japanese strove for a polite isolation of these still unknown and thoroughly exotic visitors. Ishikawa and Tsukiji, two islands reserved for habitation by foreigners, were in the bay just to the east of Shinbashi, the new Tokyo's central transportation hub. Ichinohashi Bridge connected the islands. On outings and excursions to the foreign concessions, the Japanese could gawk at the novelty of transplanted Western customs, all the while unwittingly becoming modern.

Kiyochika combines some of his favorite themes in this print: a nocturnal landscape, various sources of light, and silhouettes of characters and buildings. In this nightscape, he subtly associates the pleasures of the old Edo (the geisha) and modern innovations (the rickshaw). He also provides one of the last views of a site that would soon be completely transformed.

*Map location: #4*

[s2003\_8\_1119]





***Koromogawa River at Tennōjishita*, 1880**

The title of this print alludes to a tributary nestled in the swampy area of Yanaka, in Ueno, and near a new museum designed by Josiah Conder. The proximity to the encroaching modern landscape is not evident in this scene, yet the contemporary Japanese viewer would have understood Kiyochika's suggestion that two distinct worlds coexist under the cover of darkness.

[s2003\_8\_1178]





***Fireflies at Ochanomizu*, 1880**

A roofed pleasure boat slowly floats down the water at twilight. Despite the summer pastime's bucolic association, the setting is Kanda River, in the heart of the city. In this composition, Kiyochika employs a vanishing-point perspective and subtle tonal gradations to express the depth of the quickly descending darkness. The delicate glow of fireflies—rendered in two shades of yellow—serves to emphasize the night's seductive pull. It is interesting to note that the American artist James McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), who was fascinated with the “veiling” effect of the evening on the Thames, also used numerous pinpoints of light to structure darkness in his paintings.

*Map location: #36*

[s2003\_8\_1131]

## ***5 – MODERN DISSONANCE***

*The infusion of Western technology into Japan from the beginning of the*



*Meiji era (1868–1912) spurred widespread visual documentation of the new developments. Railroad transportation, telegraphic communication, gas—and later, electric—lighting, steam-powered river and ocean vessels, and new materials and designs for bridges and buildings were crammed into the Japanese landscape over two decades. While not always technically precise, Kiyochika's renderings captured the essence of these modern innovations. In an interpretive context of light, shadow, delicately controlled chromatics, and subtle juxtaposition, he gave a highly nuanced commentary on the emerging values of the new world.*



**Shinbashi Station, 1881**

Japan's first railway line was inaugurated in 1872 amidst much fanfare. While the Renaissance-style station in Tokyo was celebrated in countless *kaika-e* (enlightenment pictures), here it appears to sink back into shadows. Kiyochika seems more interested in describing how light flooding from the structure's interior is refracted on the rain-soaked ground and the glistening, shimmering aspect of the wet surface. At the foreground of this picture is the complex play of station lights, lantern lights, and light diffused through oil-coated paper umbrellas. The resulting polyphony of luminosities is one of the most masterful in his entire series.

Map location: #30

[s2003\_8\_1199]





**View of Takanawa Ushimachi under the Shrouded Moon, 1879**

Kiyochika made this print in 1879, seven years after a rail line opened to connect Shinbashi in central Tokyo with Takanawa, about four miles down the coast of the bay. However, it seems that Kiyochika was depicting a type of locomotive that had yet to make its appearance in Japan. In anticipation, he borrowed liberally from a Currier & Ives lithograph of the engine.

This study of light—perhaps Kiyochika’s most highly regarded—posits the train as the vehicle of modernity; it belches controlled fire and casts transforming rays from its headlamp, cabin, and carriage. The illumination provided by the dramatic, shifting, and grandly unpredictable sky contrasts with the modern light. Passengers in this journey are ghostly silhouettes, a form used again and again by Kiyochika to depict humans in this newly available night.

Map location: #5

[s2003\_8\_1179]





***Moonlit Sea at Kawasaki*, 1879**

Kiyochika again creates an imaginary scene in this print, likely inspired by another Currier & Ives lithograph. The point of view here is ambiguous, but it presumably suggests that Japanese people are observing foreign battleships in a firing exercise, held in Tokyo Bay off of Kawasaki to the south of Tokyo. The print is an essay on light—Kiyochika's mix of natural moonlight and the violent bursts emitted from these dark and relatively unfamiliar hulks.

This image is prescient. Later in his career, Kiyochika would produce woodblock-print accounts of two of Japan's expansionist wars with China (1894–95) and Russia (1904–5). In each instance, Kiyochika relied on reports from the front to imagine dramatic scenes of land battles, and engagements on the high seas.

[s2003\_8\_1143]





***Rainy Moon at Gohon-matsu, 1880***

The Japanese language first accommodated the concept of "steamboat" in 1853. Here, Kiyochika establishes contrasts between the figures who stroll along the bank carrying traditional lanterns and umbrellas and the sleek steamboat slicing through the canal. Light reflected on the rain-dampened path and on the river are two irresistible points of observation for the artist.

Gohonmatsu (five pines), an auspicious bend on the Onigawara Canal in Edo, was named for five auspicious pines. The trees grew on the estate of Baron Kuki Ryūichi (1852–1931), keeper of the imperial art collections and a prominent art collector who had significant interactions with Westerners. By Kiyochika's time, only one tree remained, but it still encapsulated the pine's essential meaning of longevity.

*Map location: #6*

[s2003\_8\_1192]





**Kudanzaka at Night in Early Summer, 1880**

With the establishment of Yasukuni Shrine in Kudanzaka in 1869, the site became a landmark as a memorial to Japanese fallen soldiers. The adjoining Western-style lighthouse, constructed purportedly to appease the souls of those who had died bringing about the Meiji Restoration, also guided ships in Shinagawa Bay. In his novella *Black Hair*, Meiji-era writer Izumi Kyōka (1873-1939) notably feminized the structure, likening the stone base to the fall of a woman's kimono.

Kiyochika achieved this print's rich nuances of dark sky with the *bokashi* technique. He rendered hues ranging from light to dark by applying pigment in a gradient to a moistened woodblock. The standard process of inking the whole block with a single pigment value was much more efficient, but the effect was less subtle.

Map location: #32

[s2003\_8\_1106]





**Umay Bridge**, ca. 1880

In 1874, the Umay Bridge was built over the Sumida River, connecting the areas of Kuramae and Komagata on the western bank and Honjo on the eastern bank. This bridge was one of the first modern infrastructures constructed in the reign of the Meiji emperor. *Umay* means "horse stables" and refers to the shogun's stables, which were once located near the bridge's western end.

The scene described here is a torrential storm. Pedestrians scurry under lashing rain. Kiyochika contrasts poles that uphold telegraph wires with the ominous force of the storm.

*Map location:* #7

[s2003\_8\_1110]

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These prints by Kobayashi Kiyochika are from  
The Robert O. Muller Collection of the Freer Gallery of Art  
and the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution



# Kiyochika's Tokyo — II

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*1 – The City Unchanged*

*2 – The Changing City*

### ***1 – THE CITY UNCHANGED***

*Kiyochika revealed a city with its pins knocked out from under it, reeling from the simultaneous collapse of an old system and the quick imposition of a new one. While much has been made of Tokyo's scramble to absorb the new, less often commented on is the dissolution of the daimyo and samurai structures, leaving once active and vital areas of the city startlingly reduced in population and activity. Vast estates and land holdings were abandoned. The topographical "high ground" of the city, frequently a metaphor for wealth, was open at least for an afternoon's stroll that offered new vistas. The visual satisfactions achieved by the bird's-eye view, employed brilliantly by Kiyochika's predecessors Hokusai and Hiroshige, are effectively brought down to earth, to the realistic heights of the high grounds that rose up beyond the castle. It was Kiyochika's choice to select and interpret the vista.*

*In this thematic grouping of images, "The City Unchanged," Kiyochika's scenes depict a variety of activities in Tokyo, including the river and outlying areas. It follows the tradition of noting the passing of the seasons. The graphics show the artist's love of the gentle, timeless quietude of a city on the verge of change.*





電 戸 橋 屋 賣

**Kameido Umeyashiki**, ca. 1880

Kameido, on the eastern side of the Sumida River, was the site selected in 1662 for a shrine dedicated to the spirit of Sugawara Michizane (845-903). Establishment of the shrine was part of a larger effort to disperse dense populations and develop the eastern side of the Sumida River after the devastating Meireki fire of 1657.

Known posthumously as Tenjin, Michizane was the patron of scholars. As a high-ranking official in the Heian court he sided with the Emperor Uda's attempts to throw off domination of the Fujiwara clan. Backing this losing cause led to his banishment to Dazaifu in Kyūshū. Ever after, his spirit not only was the guardian of scholars but also embodied a potential for vengeance on official corruption. His carefully-tended plum tree in Kyoto was said to have miraculously transported itself to Kyūshū to comfort him in exile. Thus, the central Tenjin shrine in Kyushu and auxiliary shrines including this one in Edo were sites of well-tended plum groves.

Earlier artists, particularly Hiroshige, had focused on depiction of the most famous of the plums, Garyūbai, or "sleeping dragon" plum. Here, as in other nostalgic scenes selected by Kiyochika, the focus is not on a dazzling composition or unique perspectives but simply on a seemingly satisfied population enjoying a moment of leisure. Men and women relax near a teashop, several of the men notably sporting the Western-style hat in vogue since the early 1870s.

[s2003\_8\_1125]





**Wisteria at Kameido, 1881**

The wisteria, or *fuji*, is a symbol of the Fujiwara family—ironically, the enemies of Sugawara Michizane and agents of his exile to Dazaifu in the early-10th century. The visitors depicted by Kiyochika may or may not have appreciated the irony of this gentle “subordination” of the Fujiwara within the grounds of the shrine dedicated to this great statesman and scholar.

[s2003\_8\_1133]





**Along Shinobazu Pond in the Rain**, ca. 1880

Space, vast amounts of space, seems a recurrent theme in Kiyochika's Tokyo. Thanks in part to the high-ground views, new ways of perceiving the low lands were explored. The crowded and claustrophobic sense of the lower, denser sections of the city are averted. Even marshy river banks open on to seemingly endless expanses of sky, river, and the bay beyond. Kiyochika's views of the low lying areas of the old city include this homage to Shinobazu Pond. Only a dozen years before the print was created, Shinobazu was within the confines of the Kan'eiji, the great Tokugawa sponsored temple that served as a spiritual sentry for the city at its northeast extreme. The grounds of Kan'eiji were the site of the last major battle between Imperial and Tokugawa forces—an interesting choice of location for a veteran of the losing side. The vantage is from the south shore of Shinobazu Pond with a view of Benten Shrine in the distance. The site was a favored subject for early practitioners of Western-style art in Japan, notably the great painter Takahashi Yuichi (1828-1894) who exhibited the oil painting *Evening View of Shinobazu Pond* in 1880, the year of Kiyochika's print rendering. Kiyochika's desire to emulate Western styles is hinted at in his signature, scribbled out horizontally. As well, perhaps he and his publisher sensed a commercial advantage by linking to an image produced by a more famous artist. A close up look at the profusion of lotus flowers show an almost Impressionist expression of colors, freed of reliance on line and contour. For the keyblock outline, Kiyochika employed softer brown instead of black—a striking departure from the norm of traditional woodblock printing.

Map location: #16



Map of Kiyochika's Tokyo:  
Click on the map location # to  
find a print on the 1879 map





**Morning Sea at Omori, 1880**

On the coast of the bay just south of central Tokyo, Kiyochika offers the time-honored view of two seaweed gatherers. He borrows from a view made famous in a print by Utagawa Kuniyoshi (1797-1861) but chooses a decidedly up-to-date background. In the distance, the forms of high-masted Western vessels mingle with sails of traditional Japanese ships. The bread-loaf shaped *daiba* or man-made fortress islands add a foreboding touch. Constructed as part of a series of coastal defenses in 1853 by the military strategist Egawa Tarozaemon (1805-1855), these batteries juxtaposed with Western vessels give a sharply contemporary cast to an otherwise idyllic scene.

On the immediate shore at Omori, implied, unseen, and balancing the panorama of naval activity in the distance is the suggestion of the presence of the American zoologist Edward Sylvester Morse (1838-1925), whose discovery of prehistoric artifacts at Omori in 1877 marked the first scientific archeological excavation in Japan. He published his findings in 1879. These discoveries would have been very much in the range of Kiyochika's awareness.





**Ryōgokubashi viewed from Senbongui, 1881**

A particularly striking perspective of the lowlands, Kiyochika's view of the Ryōgoku Bridge from Senbongui gives a sense of heroic scale that matches any view from the Tokyo high ground. The view is from the Sumida River's eastern bank toward the south and the Ryōgoku Bridge at twilight. Viewed at water's level are a few of the stakes (*senbon*, meaning "one thousand stakes," and *gui*, "a bend in the river") that protected the banks from erosion. The lone fisherman indicates that Senbongui was a favored fishing location where saltwater and freshwater fish mingled. The stakes provided prime habitats for giant carp, still prized in Edo cuisine. Notable is Kiyochika's delicate, almost watercolor-like treatment of the skies. In this impression, a thin ray of yellow delineates two states of the atmosphere: clear and burnt pink to the west, rolls and patches of clouds to the east. The color spectrum suggests the transitional hour between sunset and dusk/nightfall.

Map location: #17

[s2003\_8\_1171]





**View Inside Ueno Park, 1879**

In a scene identified as the interior of Ueno Park, a woman and child approach the gate of a temple. Statues of guardian figures flank the gate, and fencing in front of the gate is vaguely suggested. A sketchily rendered figure, perhaps in military uniform and carrying a rifle, seems to patrol in front of the temple.

Several Buddhist structures remained in Ueno Park, remnants of and outlying affiliates of Kan'eij, the great Tokugawa sponsored temple whose precincts comprised much of what became Ueno Park. As well, this large expanse of land was the site of one of the last battles between Tokugawa and Imperial forces in 1868. Its transformation into an area of leisure and culture advanced the aspirations of the Meiji "enlightenment" project and politely erased memories of division and conflict.

[s2003\_8\_1100]





### **View of Takinogawa, 1878**

The maple trees at this scenic point in Oji in the northern Tokyo suburbs were planted by Tokugawa Yoshimune (1684-1751) in the 1730s as a viewing treat for the general populations. Takinogawa (literally, "waterfall river") was the name given to that stretch of the west-to-east flowing Shakujigawa, which flows into the Arakawa, which again becomes the north-south flowing Sumida River. In the Edo period, the site was close to the Nakasendō, a northerly route to Kyoto, different from the Tōkaidō, which hugged the seacoast.

The colorful autumn foliage, distinctive landscape, gorges, and falls made it a popular spot. Kiyochika's image is populated with several groups of Tokyo ladies. A sense of comfortable respectability and completeness pervades the print.

[s2003\_8\_1146]





**View of Street in Hikifune at Ko'ume in Snow, 1878**

After the Meireki fire of 1657 the Edo government sought to disperse some of its dense population to the more rural areas to the east of the Sumida River. This required the creation of new transportation and water sources for the population. Just beyond the eastern banks of the Sumida, Yotsuji-dōri—a man-made canal—diverted water from a northerly stream onto a north-south axis, providing drinking water to the growing area of Fukagawa to the south. As Edo's only tow path it also facilitated transportation to and from the northeast of Edo. The village of Kurume was singled out for depiction because it was approximately there that natural flow from the northeast turned south into the canal proper. As an early engineering feat, it was often depicted but always in a pastoral guise. In this unusual winter depiction, Kiyochika renders two women, one wearing a distinctive combination of hat and veil called the *okōsozokin*, a kind of retro fashion harkening back to much earlier times. This was perhaps a style counterbalance to the massive infusion of Western-style garb.

[s2003\_8\_1105]





**Asakusa Temple in Snow, 1880**

The artist reverses Hiroshige's classic depiction of 1856, in which the viewer sees the temple in a snowy distance at the end of a long entry road. A huge lantern is the foreground device. The scale of the temple, its monumentality, is domesticated by a mother and child—whose garments may suggest a New Year visit—looking outward onto a not-particularly-busy winter scene. The hustle and bustle often associated with images of the great temple is not present. Familiarity rather than bravado is the tone set.

[s2003\_8\_1163]

## 2 – THE CHANGING CITY

*Kiyochika's portrait of Tokyo evokes natsukashii, a romantic nostalgia for the past. His is not a vision of modernity, but instead a quiet tribute to the pastimes and nuances of life in a beautiful city. Yet, many views are subtly streaked with signs of encroaching modernization. The classic view of Mount Fuji is streaked with electric wires. Western clothing, architecture, and occasionally Westerners themselves enter the traditional scenes.*



*Though the artist presents a graceful city of leisure rather than a jagged city of industrialization—shown, for example, in the ca. 1930s “100 views” by Koizumi Kishio—hints of modernization and militarization intrude into the timeless tranquility.*



**Clear Weather after Snow at the Old Imperial Palace, 1879**

The Imperial Palace is, at the time this print depicts, a rather new concept and designation for the Edo Castle. The residence of the Meiji Emperor from 1868 was understood by Kiyochika as a worthy subject, foregrounded by a line of mounted soldiers. In this print Kiyochika is still some decades distant from the well-articulated military figures found in his images of the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese Wars. But the old castle as a central topic is surprisingly recent. In the acclaimed series of views of Edo created by Hiroshige, only tangential glimpses of this imposing structure are seen. This perhaps reflects the low regard for the shogunate in the 1850s, and also reflects Kiyochika's perception of the centrality of the imperial concept emerging in the new world order.

[s2003\_8\_1108]



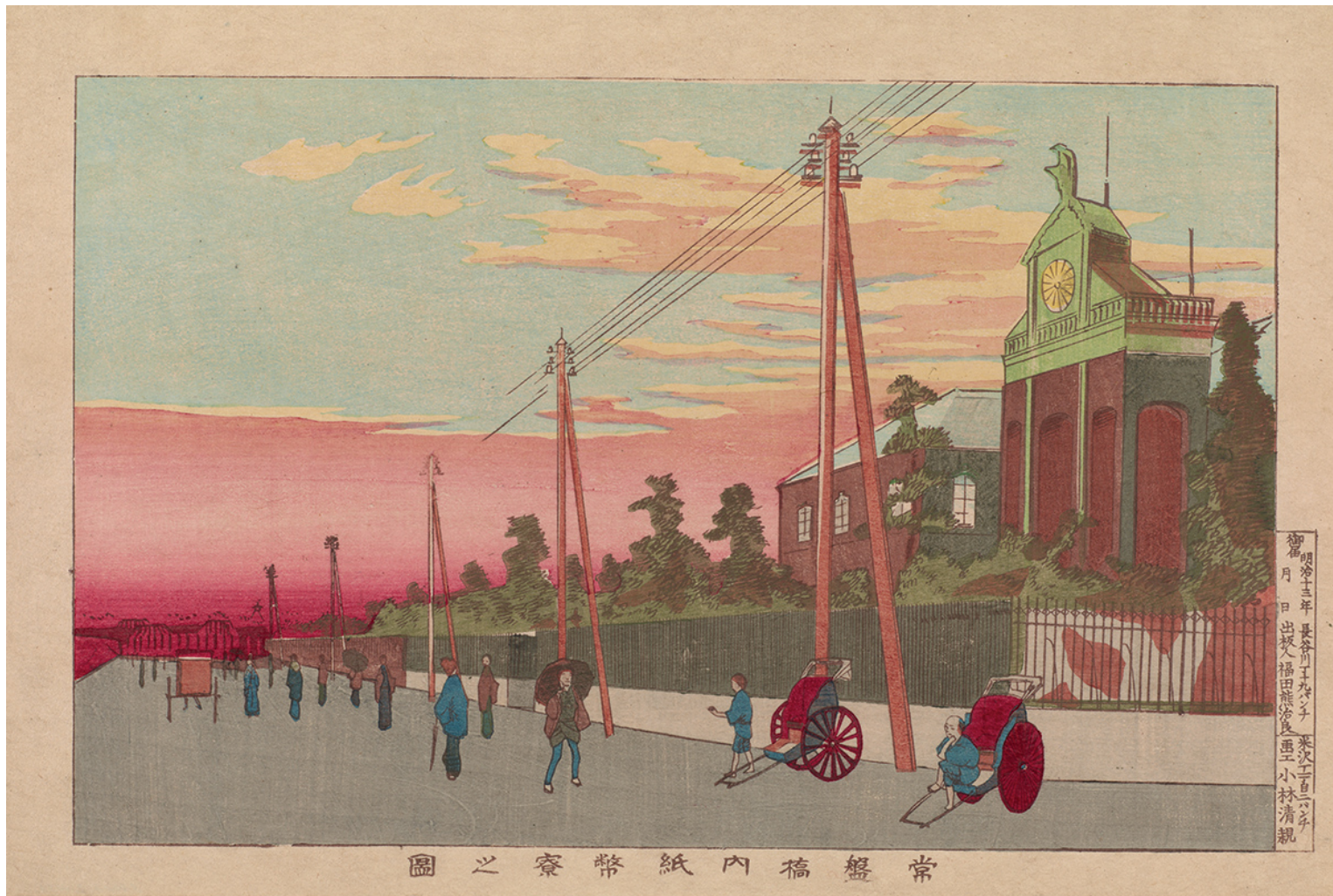


***Snow at Ryōgoku, 1877***

The single vanishing point again references Hiroshige's accomplishments. Kiyochika foregrounds the bold shape of open umbrellas as the business of the street, cart-drawn and walking, moves toward an inarticulated distance obliterated by a heavy winter sky. The modern addition of telegraph poles and lines parallels and reinforces the trajectory of movement.

[s2003\_8\_1124]





### **Paper Money Bureau at Tokiwabashi, 1880**

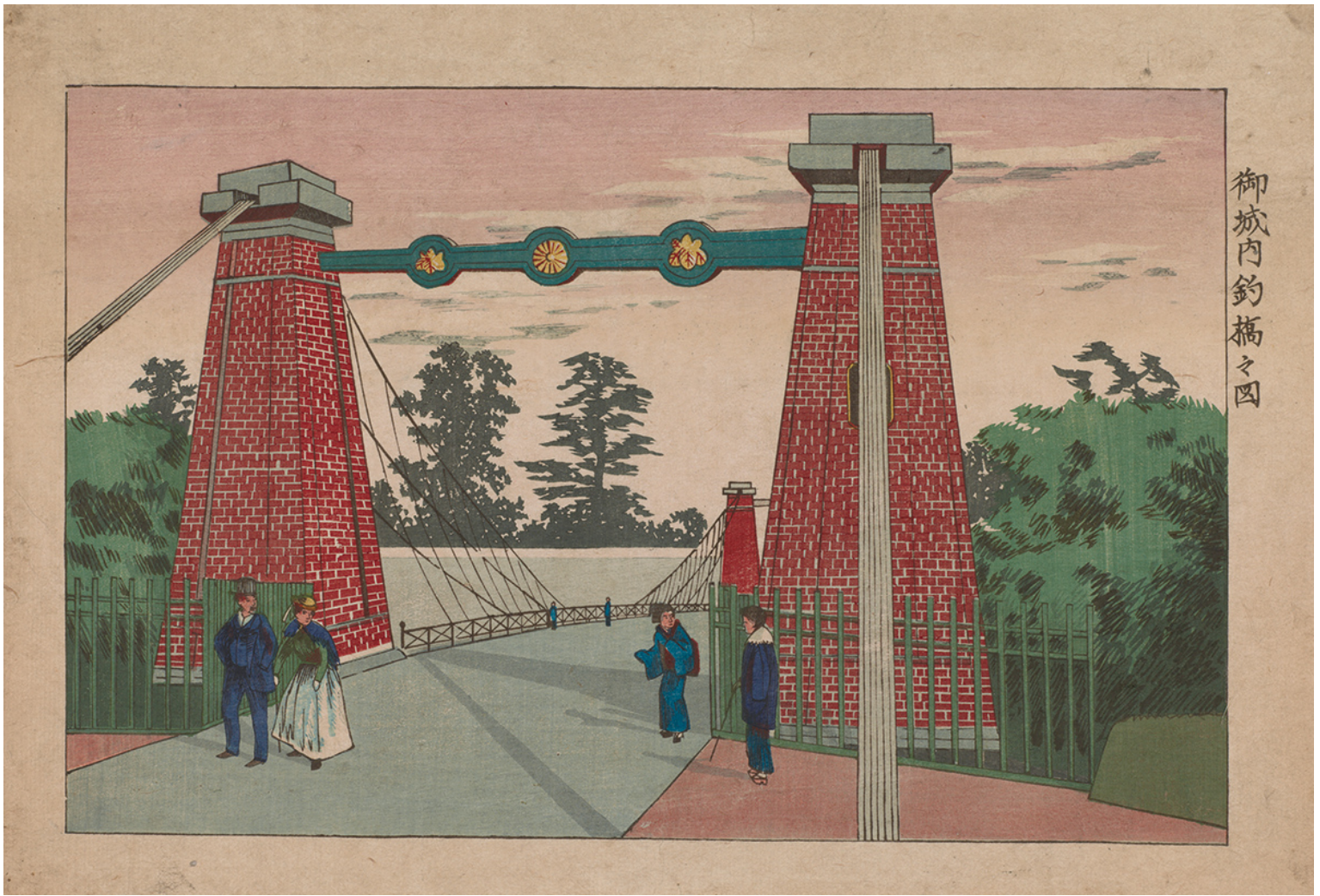
The *Shiheiryō* (Paper Money Bureau) was established in 1871. As demand grew for domestically-produced paper currency, the bureau sought to expand its scope of work to include the design and printing of banknotes, securities, and postage stamps. To this end, Italian engraver Edoardo Chiossone (1833-1898) was recruited to implement Western technologies of ink printing on watermarked paper.

The bureau was housed in a two-story redbrick factory building with a phoenix crown, popularly known as *Asahikaku* (Pavilion of the Rising Sun). In this representation of the building, Kiyochika rendered the dawning sky in pinkish tones. In another, later print, he depicted the scene in broad daylight.

Map location: #13

[s2003\_8\_1138]





***Suspension Bridge on Castle Grounds***, ca. 1879

Tokyo's first suspension bridge was designed by the Irish-born engineer Thomas Waters (1842-1898), one of the many "foreigners for hire," or resident foreign advisors, working for the Meiji government.

Kiyochika depicts the redbrick-and-stucco structure with wire cables and steel braces, the pillar beam adorned with the imperial chrysanthemum crest. The man-and-horse bridge crossed a private moat within the grounds of the Imperial Palace, and in fact was closed to the public. Kiyochika likely relied on photographs to create his design. The couple shown to the left marks one of the few instances that he included Westerners in his Tokyo views.

*Map location: #9*

[s2003\_8\_187]





**View from the Former Yushima Seidō, 1879**

Originally a private school housed in the residence of neo-Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan (1583–1657), Yushima Seidō during the Edo period became the official training academy for Tokugawa samurai. During the Meiji era, the school shared its premises with the Ministry of Education, Tokyo College for Teachers, and Japan's first state-run women's college for teachers, earning its appellation as the "birthplace of public school education." In Kiyochika's print, the venerable site of learning is obscured behind woods. He offers a prosaic view from atop the slope leading down to the Kanda River. The double arches of Yoro-zubashi Bridge, nicknamed "four eyes," are visible from afar. The telegraph wires lead the viewer's eye to the far distance.

Map location: #15

[s2003\_8\_1142]





**Atagoyama, 1878**

Atop Atago Hill, the city's highest natural elevation, two men relax in a teahouse. One wears traditional kimono; the other is in Western clothes. The latter, with his hat, tobacco, and shopping basket, resembles the flâneur look Kafū adopted when he set forth on his city wanderings. Close inspection of the print (for example, around the cloud of smoke emitting from the Western-style figure) shows areas of mesh-like patterns, similar to cross-hatchings used in copperplate lithography. In addition, the waitress' red and purple accents may have been inspired by hand-tinted photography. Such experimentations attest to Kiyochika's voracious interest in the variety of new visual media that were just beginning to emerge in Japan.

*Map location: #14*

[s2003\_8\_1136]





**View of Sunrise at Hyappongui, 1879**

"Hyappongui" refers to the stakes in the water along the western bank of the Sumida River at Ryōgoku. These pilings were put in place to secure the banks from erosion caused by the current. Again, Kiyochika chooses to create a conceptual counterpoint to the master Hiroshige's perspective of this same scene. Kiyochika observes from the opposite, western shore, depicting the pilings in the relative foreground. The bridge itself goes unobserved and the early morning quiet, deserted feeling of the scene is in stark contrast to the normal perceptions of the vitality of this area of substantial commerce, connecting the provinces of Musashi in the west and Shimōsa to the east.

[s2003\_8\_1173]

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