

Arts of Edo-period Japan, 1615-1868

Date/Time	Mondays 1 st -29 th October (5 weeks) 2.30-4.30pm	Price	£90
Venue	Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, 235 Shaftesbury Avenue, London WC2H 8EP	Lecturer	Julia Hutt

1. Fashion, Dress and Samurai Arts

Edo-period Japan was an exciting time to live in, experiencing fundamental political and social changes, along with massive urbanisation centred on Edo (modern Tokyo). This session will look at the importance of female fashion and dress in this context, as well as the concept of conspicuous consumption. By contrast, it will also examine the traditional arts of the male samurai, and the phenomenon that arts of war flourished during this prolonged period of peace.

2. Ukiyo-e (Pictures of the Floating World) Prints

Of all the various art forms, the Japanese print undoubtedly best encapsulates the Edo period. This session will discuss, in particular, such issues as who the prints were made for, how they were used and the choice of subjects they depicted, ranging from the Kabuki theatre or beautiful women of the Yoshiwara pleasure-quarters, to landscapes. It will also examine their influence on artists of late nineteenth-century Europe.

3. Engagement with Europe

Although contact with countries beyond Asia was strictly forbidden during the Edo period, trade with some European countries was permitted under strict supervision, with porcelain and lacquer being the main art-objects exported. The talk will examine how such items differed from those for domestic consumption, how and where such goods were disseminated in Europe and whether this was a two-way influence.

4. Ceramic Traditions and the Tea Ceremony

Despite a long Japanese ceramic tradition, the session will look at why porcelain was not produced in Japan until the early seventeenth century, shortly after which decorative innovations not found elsewhere in East Asia were being produced. It will also look at why stoneware has endured as such a vibrant tradition until the present day.

5. Lacquer

Lacquerware, a medium closely associated with Japan and the Japanese lifestyle, has always been an expensive, luxury item. This talk will look, among other aspects, at the role lacquerware played in Edo society, what it was used for and why.

Lecturer

Julia Hutt is Curator of Japanese art in the Asian Department of the V&A, specialising in the arts of the Edo period, in particular lacquerware and ivory carvings. She also teaches widely on various courses, most notably at Sotheby's Institute of Art, London. She has published extensively on various aspects of Japanese art, including lacquer, prints and netsuke. Her main publications include *Understanding Far Eastern Art* (Phaidon 1987), *Japanese Inrō* (V&A 1997) and *Japanese Netsuke* (V&A 2003). She is currently working on a book on Japanese lacquer based on the V&A's internationally renowned collection.