

ACKLANDARTMUSEUM

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL

***Flash of Light, Fog of War* spotlights Dramatic Japanese Prints in Innovative Installation**

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Chapel Hill, N.C. — This fall, the Ackland Art Museum presents [*Flash of Light, Fog of War: Japanese Military Prints, 1894-1905*](#), an expansive exhibition showcasing 75 Japanese prints of battle scenes from the First Sino-Japanese War and the Russo-Japanese War at the turn of the 20th century.

Drawing from a recent, major gift to the Ackland of over 240 Japanese prints from Gene and Susan Roberts, *Flash of Light, Fog of War* presents these military scenes in an unprecedented manner: rather than being arranged chronologically, the dramatic atmospheric and luminescent effects depicted in the prints organize the exhibition. Starting with prints featuring moonlight, the exhibition moves through scenes that include electric searchlights, pyrotechnic explosions, and the fog and smoke of the aftermath of battle.



The show's emphasis on technique provides a unique opportunity to examine how late 19th-century Japanese printmakers adapted to the realities of rapidly modernizing warfare. By tweaking the centuries-old tradition of *ukiyo-e* (woodblock printing), printmakers achieved altogether new atmospheric and light effects that were part reportage and part dazzling artistic display.

A major feature of *Flash of Light, Fog of War* is its stunning installation, which utilizes not only elegant colors to bring out visual features of the works on view, but also subtle electrical effects—including very occasional projected explosions—that underscore the thematic content. “This is a show that really must be seen and experienced,” commented Ackland Director Katie Ziglar. “We are enormously proud of our innovative and fresh installations, and *Flash of Light, Fog of War* represents a high point in these efforts.”

Of his final exhibition as the Ackland's Associate Curator of Asian Art, Bradley M. Bailey noted, “The inspiration for the exhibition comes from the vivid imagery and descriptions of a Japanese soldier, Tadayoshi Sakurai, whose memoir of the Russo-Japanese War, *Human Bullets (Nikudan)*, was published to wide acclaim and success in 1904.”

Within the exhibition, the prints are supplemented with new acquisitions and loans of Japanese textiles and ceramics from the collection of Jacqueline M. and Edward G. Atkins.

Flash of Light, Fog of War, on view through Sunday, January 7, 2018, has been made possible by the Henry Luce Foundation and the Ackland's Ruth and Sherman Lee Fund for Asian Art. Support for the exhibition catalogue was provided by Gene and Susan Roberts.

About the Ackland

Featuring a year-round calendar of special exhibitions and dynamic public programs, the Ackland Art Museum—located on the historic campus of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill—encourages visitors to engage with the rich legacy of the artistic past as well as with living artists from around the world. The Ackland's holdings consist of more than 18,000 works of art, featuring significant collections of European masterworks, twentieth-century and contemporary art, African art, North Carolina pottery, and folk art. In addition, the Ackland has North Carolina's premier collections of Asian art and works on paper (drawings, prints, and photographs). This universal collection of artworks from antiquity to the present makes the Ackland uniquely able to advance the teaching and research missions of the University.

The Ackland Art Museum is located at 101 South Columbia Street, just south of Franklin Street, on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus.

Museum hours are Wednesday through Saturday 10-5, and Sundays 1-5. The Museum is open until 9PM on second Fridays of the month for Chapel Hill-Carrboro's 2nd Friday ArtWalk.

Admission to the Ackland Art Museum is free. More information is available at ackland.org.

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